

**T H A M E S      V A L L E Y**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL**

**S E R V I C E S**

**Land at the rear of 11, 15 and 17 Yew Tree Road,  
Slough, Berkshire**

**Archaeological Evaluation**

**by Pierre-Damien Manisse**

**Site Code: YTR17/86**

**(SU 9841 7945)**

**Land to the rear of 11, 15 and 17 Yew Tree Road,  
Slough, Berkshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation  
for CISSH Property Group**

by Pierre-Damien Manisse  
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code YTR 17/86

**December 2020**

## Summary

**Site name:** Land at the rear of 11, 15 and 17 Yew Tree Road, Slough, Berkshire

**Grid reference:** SU 9841 7945

**Site activity:** Archaeological Evaluation

**Date and duration of project:** 10th December 2020

**Project coordinator:** Tim Dawson

**Site supervisor:** Pierre Manisse

**Site code:** YTR 17/86

**Area of site:** c. 1460 sq m

**Summary of results:** Three trenches were opened. They had to be repositioned compared to the initial plan as the building groundworks had already taken place. However, no deposits nor artefacts of archaeological interest were observed and the site is considered to have no archaeological potential.

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading.

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[www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp](http://www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp).*

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# Land at the rear of 11, 15 and 17 Yew Tree Rd, Slough, Berkshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Pierre-Damien Manisse

Report 17/86

## Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at land at the rear of 11, 15 and 17 Yew Tree Rd, Slough, Berkshire, SL1 2AB (SU 9841 7945) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Albert Ogunsanya of Zyntax Architects, 8 Arborfield Close, Slough, Berkshire, SL1 2JW on behalf of CISSH Property Group, 279 High Street, Slough, Berkshire, SL1 1BN.

Planning consent (P13519-1) has been granted by Slough Borough Council to build a new apartment block. The consent is subject to a condition (9), which requires the implementation of an archaeological field evaluation in order to inform a mitigation strategy if necessary. This was in accordance with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012), and the Borough Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Roland Smith of Berkshire Archaeology, the advisers to the Borough Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Pierre-Damien Manisse on 10th December 2020. The site code is YTR 17/86. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading.

## Location, topography and geology

The site is located to the rear of nos 11, 15 and 17 Yew Tree Road, in the south-east part of Slough, about 650m from the town centre (Fig. 1). It is accessed from the south via Harewood Place. It sits in a residential area though this plot of land was occupied by a limited garden and under grass and partly derelict. It is a sub-rectangular plot, approximately 1460 sq m (Fig. 2). It stands at 29m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). The recorded underlying geology according to maps (BGS 1999) is third terrace gravels (Taplow Gravel).

## Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site derives from its location within the archaeologically rich Thames Valley although until recently the environs of Slough would not have been thought as rich as neighbouring areas but fieldwork in the last three decades has altered this perception (Ford 1987; Ford *et al.* 2003; Foreman *et al.* 2002;

Gates 1975; Lambrick *et al.* 2009; Booth *et al.* 2007; Platt 2017; Taylor 2012; Preston 2014). The immediate vicinity of the site, however, has still produced little of archaeological note. Only a few stray finds are known (Roman coins, Medieval pottery) from this area.

## **Objectives and methodology**

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological or palaeo-environmental deposits within the area of development.

The specific research aims of this project are:

to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on this site; and

to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present.

It was proposed to dig three trenches, each 12m long, and each 1.6m-2 wide. Topsoil and other overburden were to be removed by a machine under constant archaeological supervision. A ditching bucket was to be used to expose archaeologically sensitive levels. Spoil heaps were to be checked for artefacts.

Where archaeological features were certainly or probably present, the stripped areas were to be cleaned using appropriate hand tools and sufficient of the archaeological features and deposits exposed will be excavated or sampled by hand to satisfy the aims of the brief, without compromising the integrity of any features or deposits which might warrant preservation *in situ*, or might better be excavated under conditions pertaining to full excavation.

The process was to follow the guidelines of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014). Any archaeologically relevant level or deposit will be assessed in accordance to the research priorities, as expressed in general (EH 2005) or more specific to the area (Hey and Hind 2014).

## **Results (Figs 3 and 4; Pl. 1-4)**

The proposed layout of the trenches had to be modified as the contractors had already completed. To compensate, two trenches were repositioned to in the back garden of the new development to the east, with and a third one to in the front. This was carried out in consultation with Mr Matt Saywood of Berkshire Archaeology. The machine used was a mini-digger, equipped with a toothless blade. The trenches were 1m wide.

A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1. They are also described separately below. No archaeological features were observed. The

natural geology encountered was mostly a gravel deposit in a mid grey silty clay matrix. A total length of 34.6m was opened. No finds earlier than the 20th century were seen in spoil heaps.

#### Trench 1 (Figs 3 and 4; Pl. 1)

Trench 1 was aligned S - N and was 13.80m long. It was 0.85m deep at south end and 0.95m at north. The stratigraphy consisted of about 0.30m of topsoil, a buried topsoil of the same thickness and a 0.25m thick subsoil overlying natural geology. The present-day topsoil is best described as a soft dark brown loamy silt. The former topsoil below was a soft dark grey brown loamy silt with scarce gravels, and occasional modern waste (brick and tile fragments, concrete slabs, plastic, etc.). At the north end of the trench it was filled with roots. Two modern pits, approximately 1m in breadth, filled with construction debris (bricks), were partially observed at 6.70m and 8m. They were dug into the buried topsoil down to the natural geology. No finds of archaeological interest were retrieved and no archaeological features were present.

#### Trench 2 (Figs 3 and 4; Pl. 2)

Trench 2 was parallel to trench 1, a few metres to its west. It was 15.50m long. It was 0.85m deep at its south terminus and 0.70m at its north end. A test slot was made at the south end, 1.05m deep. Towards the south edge of the garden the geology changed and the gravels were replaced by a band of ironstone overlying an orange clay. This had also been partly exposed in trench 1. No archaeological features nor artefacts were noted in this trench.

#### Trench 3 (Fig. 3; Pls 3-4)

Trench 3 was similarly orientated S-N. It was limited to 5.30m long due to site constraints. It was 0.45-0.50m deep. Topsoil had been reduced and in places replaced or mixed with made ground, varying in thickness between 0.25m and 0.40m. This directly overlay the natural gravel geology as seen in trench 1, but with orange silt and greyish blue clayey silt patches. From observations in a service trench left open in a neighbouring property to the north, this geological deposit was at least 0.40m thick and its natural character confirmed. The trench contained no features nor finds of archaeological interest.

## Conclusion

Despite the requirement to reposition trenches all three proposed were dug and provided a representative spread across the site. However, no deposits nor artefacts of archaeological interest were observed and indicate that the archaeological potential of this plot of land is very low.

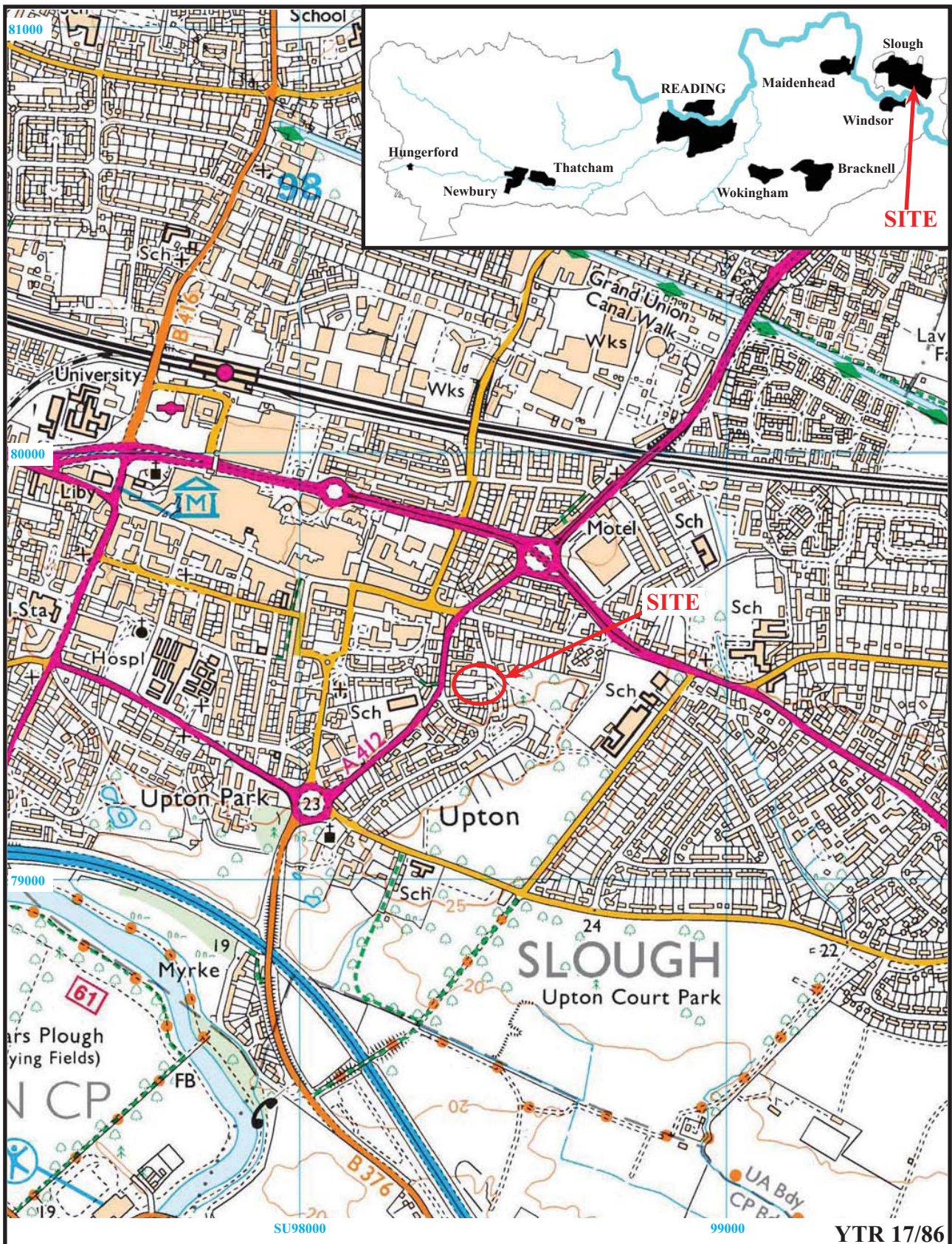
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**APPENDIX 1: Trench details**

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	13.80	1	0.85-0.95	0–0.30m topsoil; 0.30-0.60 buried topsoil; 0.60-0.85m subsoil; 0.85m+ natural geology. <b>[Pl. 1]</b>
2	15.50	1	0.70-0.85	0–0.25m topsoil; 0.25-0.50 buried topsoil; 0.50-0.80m subsoil; 0.80m+ natural geology. <b>[Pl. 2]</b>
3	5.30	1	0.45-0.50	0–0.40m topsoil; 0.40m+ natural geology. <b>[Pls 3-4]</b>





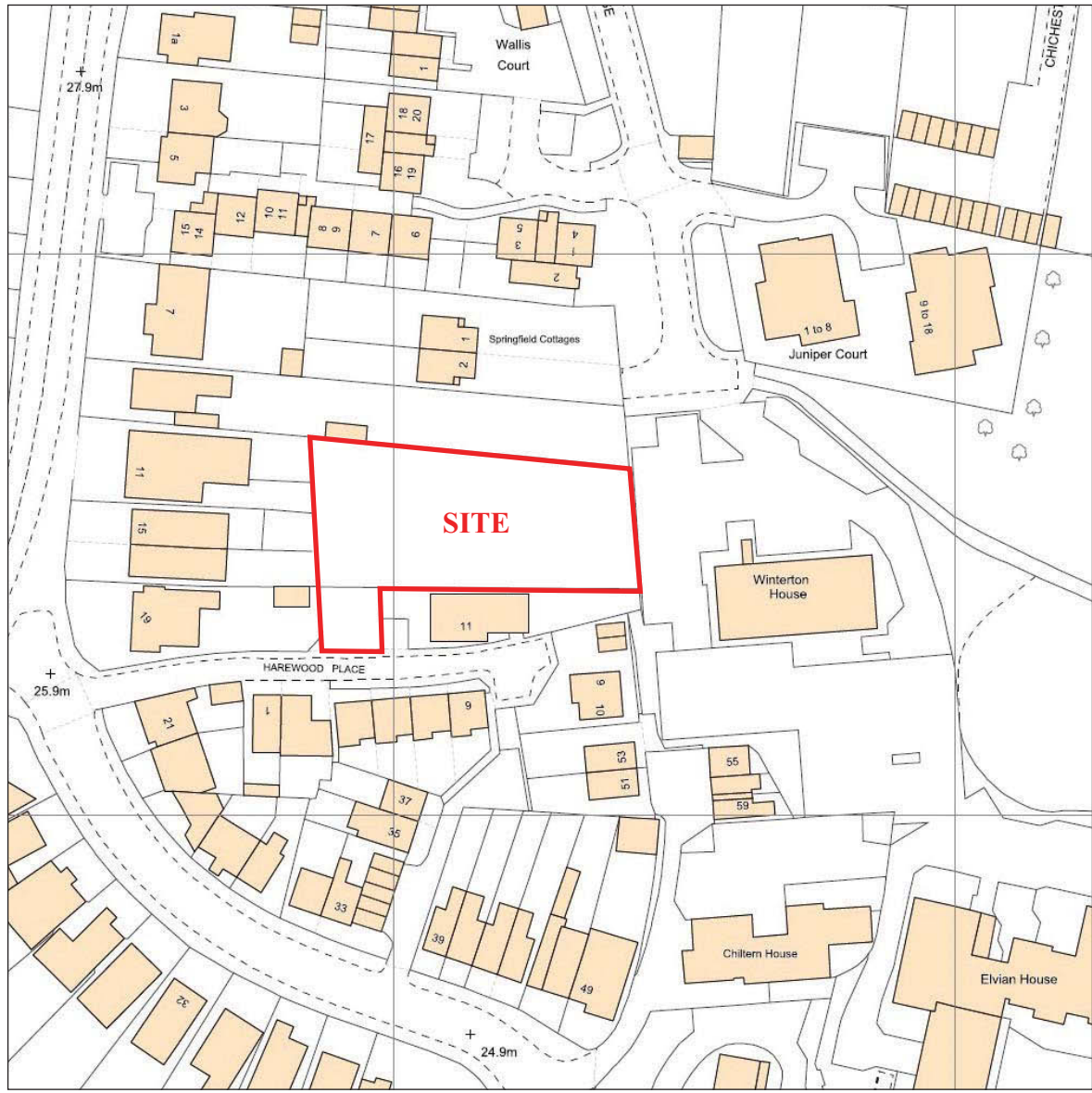
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Figure 1. Location of site within Slough and Berkshire.

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**Land at Yew Tree Road, Slough,  
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site.**

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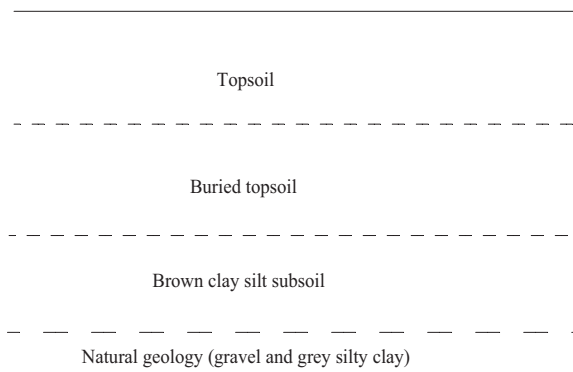
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Figure 3. Location of trenches

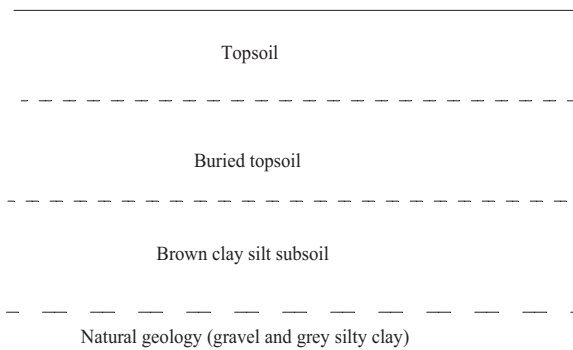


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Trench 1



Trench 2



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Figure 4. Representative sections



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Plate 1. Trench 1, looking North, Scales: 1m.



Plate 2. Trench 2, looking North, Scales: 1m.



Plate 3. Trench 3, looking South, Scales: 1m.



Plate 4. Section in Trench 3, looking West,  
Scales: 1m and 0.5m.

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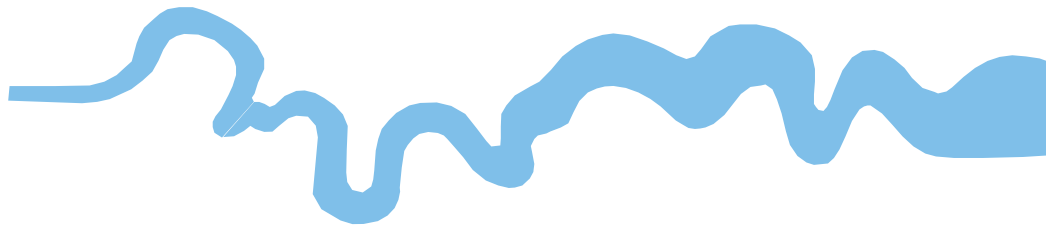
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Plates 1 to 4.

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## TIME CHART

	Calendar Years
Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43 AD 0 BC
Iron Age _____	750 BC
Bronze Age: Late _____	1300 BC
Bronze Age: Middle _____	1700 BC
Bronze Age: Early _____	2100 BC
Neolithic: Late .....	3300 BC
Neolithic: Early .....	4300 BC
Mesolithic: Late .....	6000 BC
Mesolithic: Early .....	10000 BC
Palaeolithic: Upper .....	30000 BC
Palaeolithic: Middle .....	70000 BC
Palaeolithic: Lower .....	2,000,000 BC





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