

T H A M E S V A L L E Y

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Land at Mason's Court, Brook Path,
Cippenham, Slough, Berkshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Joanna Pine

Site Code: MCS10/25

(SU 9450 8097)

Land at Mason's Court, Brook Path, Cippenham, Slough, Berkshire

**An Archaeological Evaluation
For RAP Building and Developments**

by Jo Pine
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

SiteCodeMCSC10/25

May 2010

Summary

Site name: Land at Mason's Court, Brook Path, Cippenham, Slough, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 9450 8097

Site activity: Field Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 5th May 2010

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Jo Pine

Site code: MCS 10/25

Area of site: c.0.08 ha

Summary of results: Although modern cut features were noted in all three evaluation trenches, no deposits or finds of archaeological interest were recorded.

Monuments identified: None

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Reading Museum in due course.

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| Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford✓ 06.05.10 Steve Preston✓ 06.05.10 |
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Land at Mason's Court, Brook Path, Cippenham, Slough, Berkshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Jo Pine

Report 10/25

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Mason's Court, Brook Path, Cippenham, Slough, Berkshire (SU 9450 8097) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Jim Spink on behalf of RAP Building and Developments, Clayfield House, Whitepit Lane, Wooburn Green, Buckinghamshire HP10 0HR.

Planning permission has been granted by Slough Borough Council on appeal (P/00545/016) to build new housing and associated carparking on the site. This is subject to a condition relating to archaeology, which requires that a programme of work be undertaken to establish whether any archaeological deposits exist on the site which may be affected by the proposed development, and in order to inform the preparation of a scheme to mitigate any such effect as necessary..

This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Planning Policy Guidance, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990), and the Borough Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Fiona Macdonald, Principal Archaeologist with Berkshire Archaeology, who act as archaeological advisers to the Borough council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Steve Crabb and Jo Pine on the 5th May 2010 and the site code is MCS 10/25. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Reading Museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the north side of Cippenham, to the west of Brook Path which runs southwards from the A4. Cippenham lies to the west of Slough town centre (Fig. 1). The front (north) of the site consists of a rectangular block of land where a dwelling had recently been demolished. The rear (south) part of the site is currently occupied by garages and hard standing (Fig. 2). The site is relatively flat, and lies at a height of approximately 25m above Ordnance Datum. The geology of the site is Taplow terrace gravel (BGS 1974) which was observed in all three trenches.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been summarized in a brief provided by Berkshire Archaeology. In summary the potential of the site stems from its location on a terrace of the Thames Valley which is usually regarded as archaeologically rich, with a range of sites and finds of many periods recorded from field survey, aerial photography and trial trenching (Ford 1987; Gates 1975; Foreman *et al.* 2002). The site lies within an area relatively rich in archaeological deposits, although relatively little explored until recently. Extensive excavations took place to the south-west of the development area prior to development of the 'Cippenham Sector' in 1995-7, which examined a wide range of deposits of prehistoric, Roman and medieval dates (Ford *et al.* 2003). These finds included Neolithic and Bronze Age occupation, a Bronze Age ring ditch (levelled burial mound), Iron Age and Roman enclosures and field systems, and part of the medieval village of Cippenham. Excavations of a Roman site also took place further to the north-east (Howell and Durden 2003). Recent evaluations and subsequent excavations, to the south-east of the development area, have also discovered archaeological deposits ranging in date from the Bronze Age to the Medieval period (Taylor 2009a and b). However, evaluation closer to the site to the south revealed little of interest (Wallis 2008).

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits within the area of development. This work was to be carried out in a manner which would not compromise the integrity of deposits which might warrant preservation *in situ* or which might be better excavated under conditions pertaining to full excavation. The specific aims of this evaluation were:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on this site; and
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present.

Three 9m long evaluation trenches were proposed to target the footprints of the development, but excluding areas of previous ground disturbance. The trenches were excavated by a machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision. All spoilheaps were to be monitored for finds, and trenches were hand-cleaned where appropriate.

Results

All three trenches were dug as intended and ranging in length from 9m to 12m (Fig. 3). A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1 (Pl. 1)

Trench 1 was 9m in length and 0.80m deep, aligned NW–SE. The stratigraphy of the trench comprised demolition rubble and topsoil mix, 0.30m deep, above 0.25m of dark grey brown sandy silt topsoil. This overlay a light grey brown sandy silt subsoil, which was 0.15m deep, above light reddish brown gravel (Taplow gravel) with patches of reddish brown sandy silt (Fig. 4). A shallow test pit at the north-eastern end of the trench, 0.10m deep, was dug to clarify the interpretation of the geological sequence. Apart from tree root action at the south-eastern end of the trench no archaeological deposits were revealed.

Trench 2 (Pl. 2)

Trench 2 was 9m in length and between 0.70–0.90m deep, aligned west–east. The stratigraphy of the trench comprised demolition rubble and topsoil mix, 0.30m deep, above 0.10m of dark grey/brown sandy silt topsoil. This overlay a light grey/brown sandy silt subsoil, which was 0.30m deep, above light reddish brown gravel with very occasional patches of reddish brown sandy silt. A shallow test pit at the north-eastern end, 0.20m deep, was dug to clarify the interpretation of the geological sequence. At the centre and extending the whole width of the trench was a modern concrete soakaway, which truncated the subsoil (Fig 3). No archaeological deposits were revealed.

Trench 3

This trench was 12m in length and was extended to examine a part of the site previously inaccessible until the dwelling was demolished. The trench was aligned SW–NE and was 0.60m deep. The stratigraphy of the south-western 5m of the trench comprised demolition rubble and topsoil mix 0.20m deep above 0.10m of mid grey/brown sandy silt subsoil, which overlay light reddish brown gravel with occasional patches of reddish brown sandy silt. This geology had been truncated by a modern pit containing plastic and tile fragments and by modern sewer pipes. Within the remainder of the trench (Fig. 4), the stratigraphy comprised demolition rubble 0.17m deep overlying a fine light grey sand which contained occasional red brick, 0.18m deep. No topsoil or subsoil survived here; the sand layer overlay light grey brown gravel geology. A shallow test pit at the north-eastern end, 0.25m deep, was dug to clarify the interpretation of the geological sequence. No archaeological deposits were revealed.

Finds

No artefacts of archaeological interest were recovered. Obviously modern material was not retained.

Conclusion

The evaluation of the site revealed no archaeological deposits and no artefacts of archaeological interest. Some disturbance and truncation of the natural geology by modern features was observed, especially for the footprint of the recently demolished building where the former topsoil and subsoil were also absent. The site is considered to have no archaeological potential.

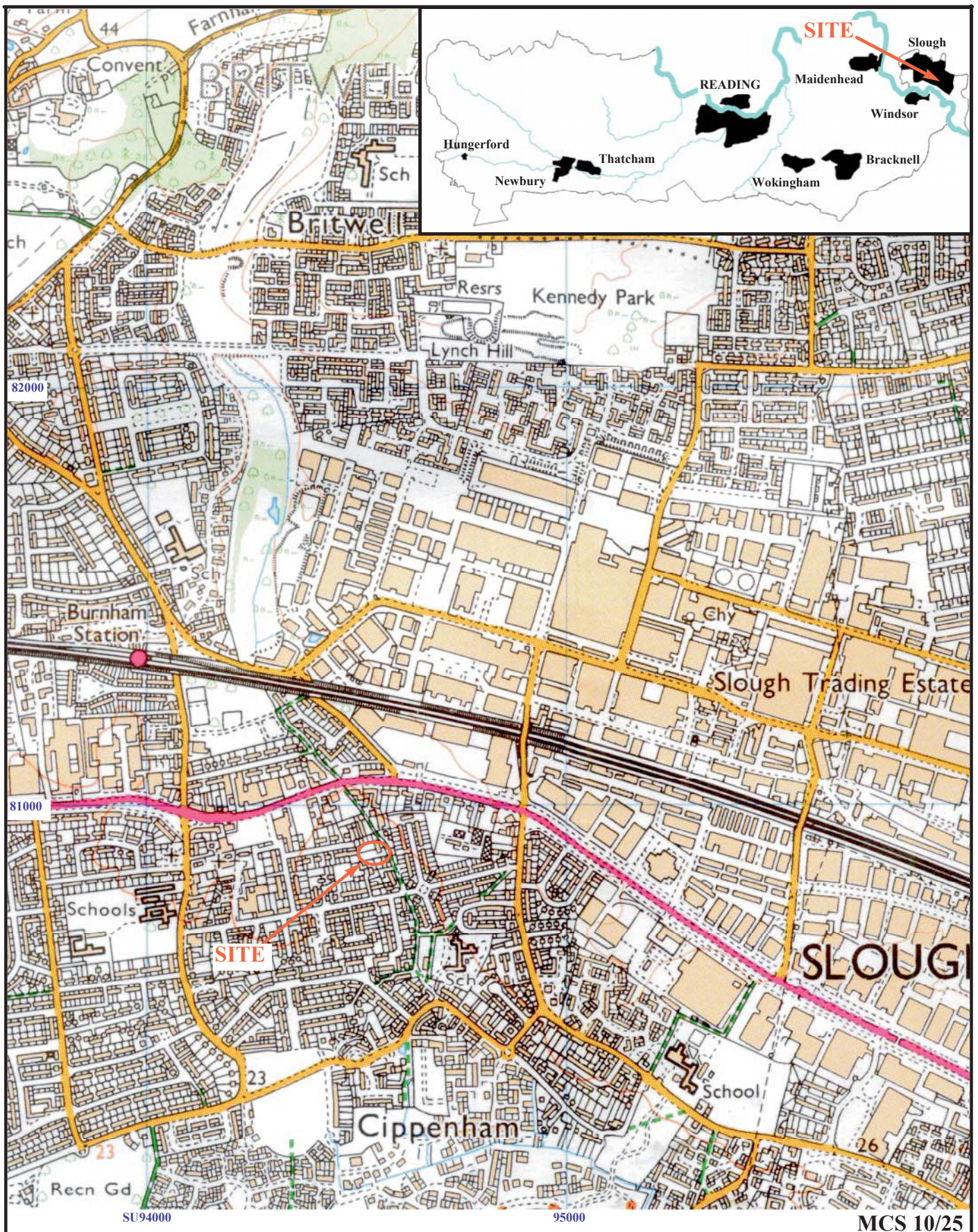
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APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at S or W end

| Trench | Length (m) | Breadth (m) | Depth (m) | Comment |
|--------|------------|-------------|----------------------|--|
| 1 | 9.0 | 1.6 | 0.8 | 0–0.3m demolition rubble and topsoil; 0.3–0.55m dark grey brown sandy silt topsoil.; 0.55–0.70 light grey brown sandy silt subsoil; 0.7m+ gravel natural geology. [PI. 1] |
| 2 | 9.0 | 1.6 | 0.70 (E) 0.90 (W) | 0–0.3m demolition rubble and topsoil; 0.3–0.4m dark grey brown sandy silt topsoil.; 0.4–0.70 light grey brown sandy silt subsoil; 0.7m+ gravel natural geology. [PI. 2] |
| 3 | 12.0 | 1.6 | 0.6 | South–western end 0–0.2m demolition rubble; 0.2–0.30 light grey brown sandy silt subsoil; 0.3m+ gravel. North–eastern end 0–0.17m demolition; 0.17–0.35 light grey brown sand 0.3m+ gravel natural geology. |



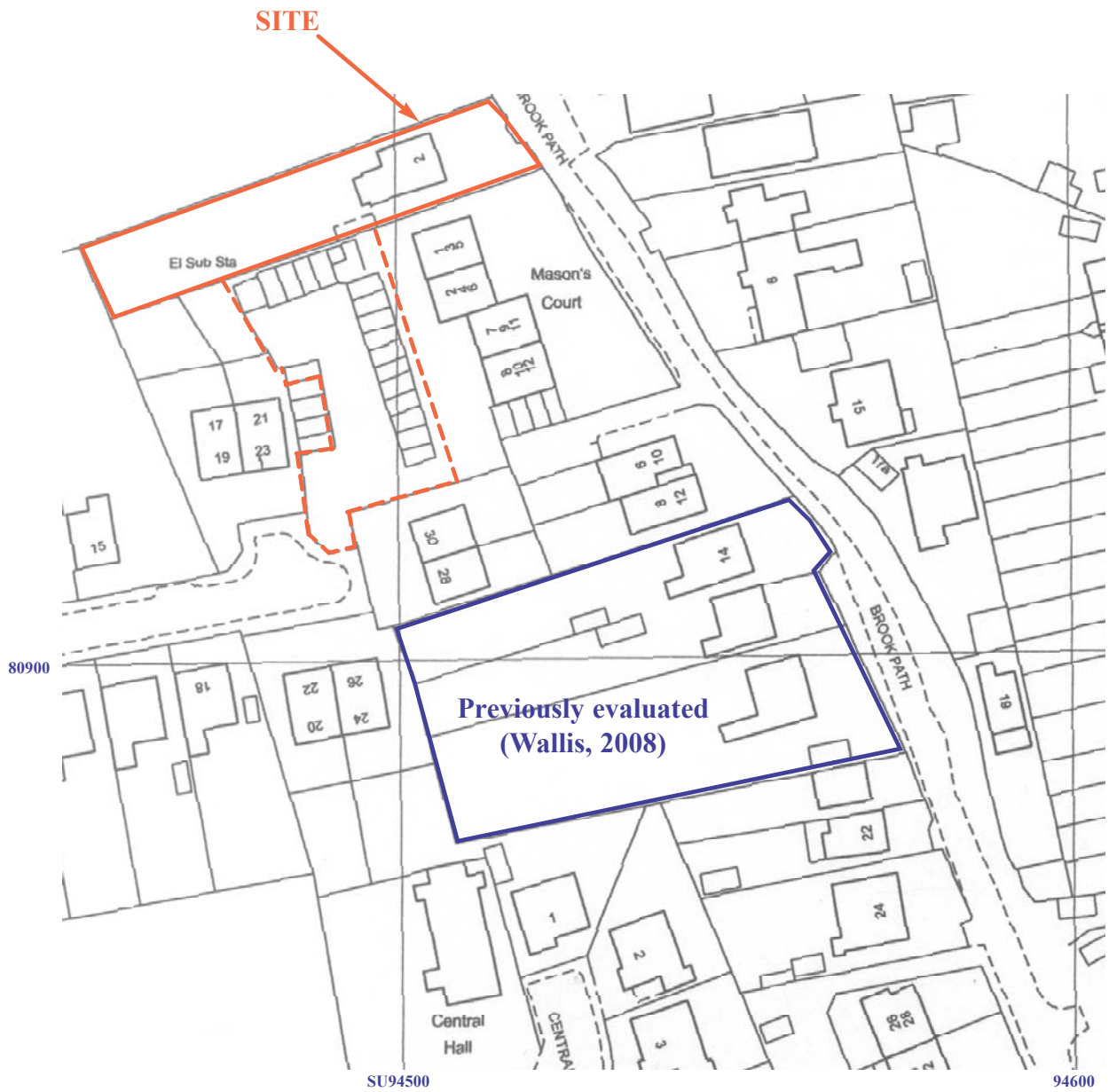
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Figure 1. Location of site within Slough and Berkshire.

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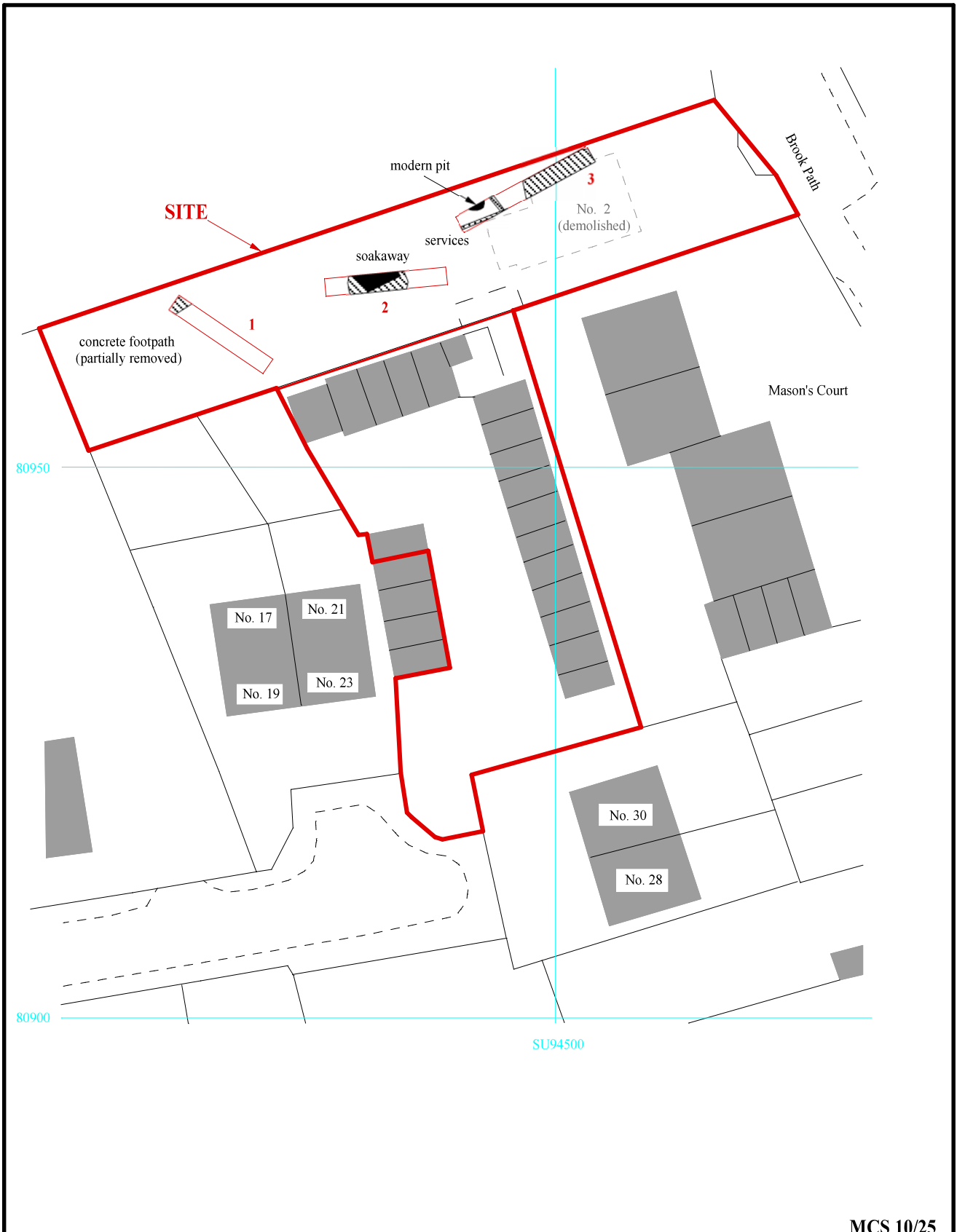


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Figure 2. Detailed location of site.

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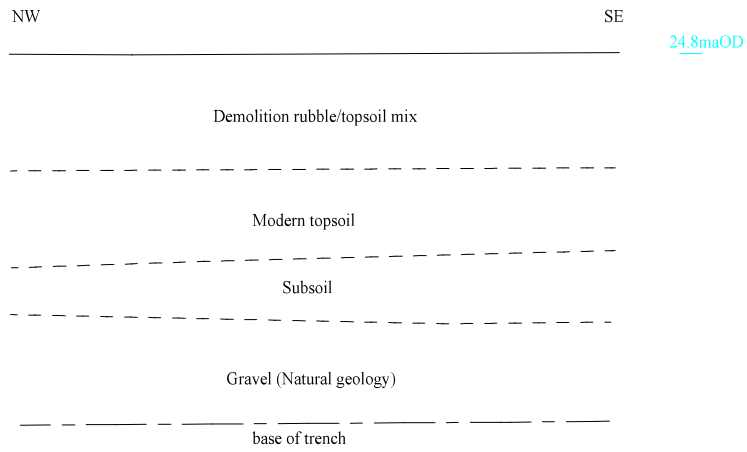
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Figure 3. Location of trenches.

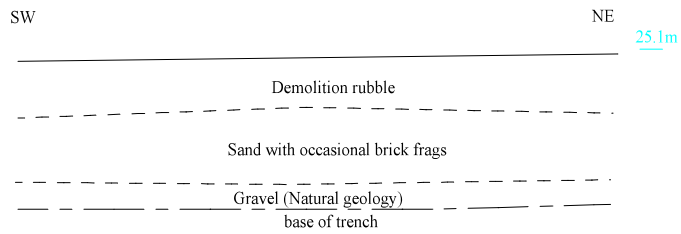


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Trench 1



Trench 3



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Figure 4. Representative sections.



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Plate 1. Trench 1, looking south-east; horizontal scales: 0.5m vertical scale 0.3m



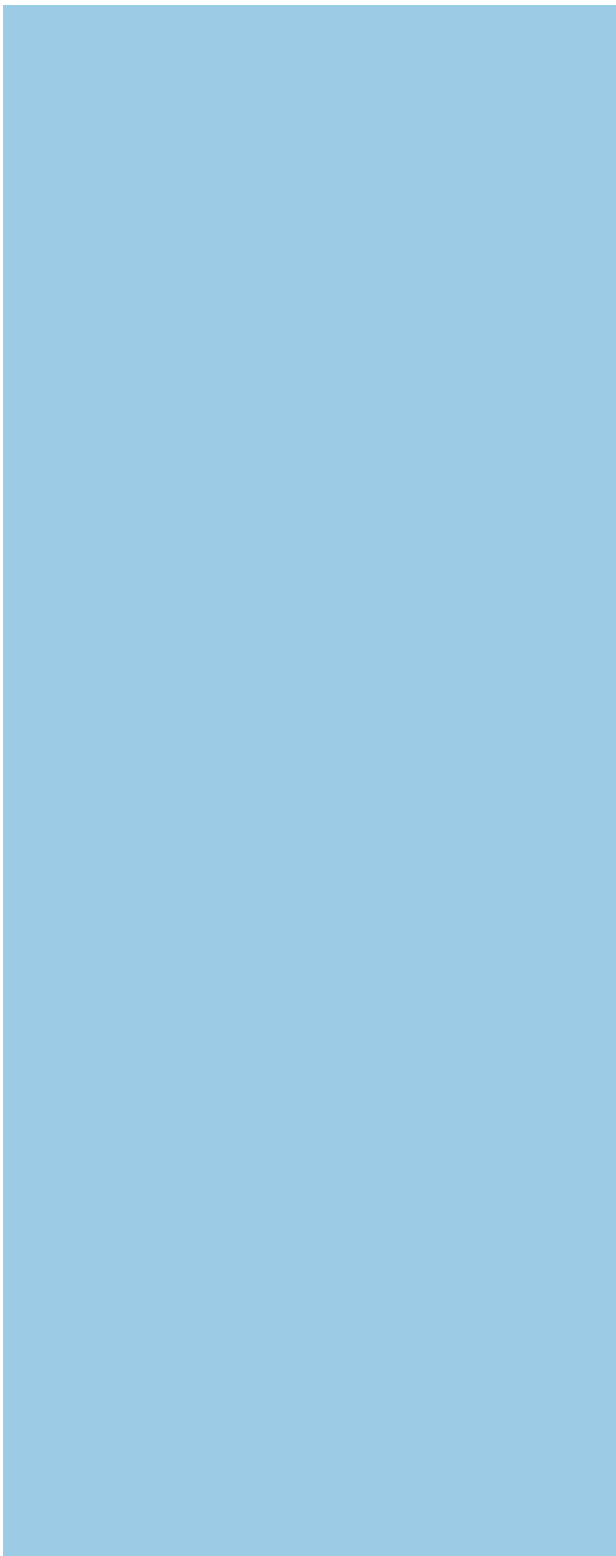
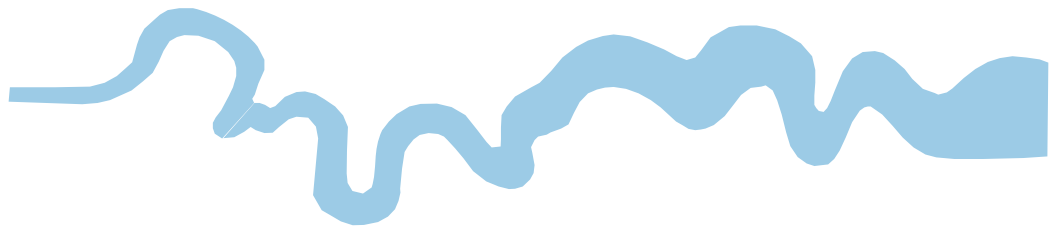
Plate 2. Trench 2 looking east, horizontal scale: 0.5m vertical scale: 0.3m

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Plates 1 and 2.

TIME CHART

| | Calendar Years |
|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Modern _____ | AD 1901 |
| Victorian _____ | AD 1837 |
| Post Medieval _____ | AD 1500 |
| Medieval _____ | AD 1066 |
| Saxon _____ | AD 410 |
| Roman _____ | AD 43 |
| Iron Age _____ | BC/AD 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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