

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Land adjacent to Oak Cottage, School Road,
Hurst, Wokingham, Berkshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by James McNicoll-Norbury

Site Code: OCH10/45

(SU 7988 7372)

**Land adjacent to Oak Cottage, School Road,
Hurst, Wokingham, Berkshire**

An Archaeological Evaluation

for Mr Ray Smith

by JamesMcNicol-Norbury
ThamesValleyArchaeologicalServices
Ltd

SiteCodeOCH10/45

October 2010

Summary

Site name: Land adjacent to Oak Cottage, School Road, Hurst, Wokingham, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 7988 7372

Site activity: Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 20th October 2010

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: James McNicoll-Norbury

Site code: OCH 10/45

Area of site: c. 1000 sq m

Summary of results: An undated gully or garden feature was recorded. The site is considered not to have any archaeological potential.

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

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www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp.*

Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford✓ 26.10.10
	Steve Preston✓ 26.10.10

Land adjacent to Oak Cottage, School Road, Hurst, Wokingham, Berkshire An Archaeological Evaluation

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Report 10/45

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out on land adjacent to Oak Cottage, School Road, Hurst (SU7988 7372) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Ray Smith of Oak Cottage, School Road, Hurst, RG10 0DR.

Planning permission has (app. no. F.2009/0323) has been granted by Wokingham Borough Council on appeal (App. X0360/A/09) to construct a new house and garage. The consent is subject to a condition relating to archaeology, which requires the implementation of a programme of archaeological work prior to groundworks commencing.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's Planning Policy Statement, *Planning for the Historic Environment* (PPS5 2010), and the Borough Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mary O'Donoghue, Archaeological Officer for Berkshire Archaeology on behalf of the Borough. The fieldwork was undertaken by James McNicoll-Norbury and Jackie Pitt on 20th October 2010 and the site code is OCH 10/45. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Reading Museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the south eastern side of School Road in Hurst on a patch of land adjacent to Oak Cottage just south of the A321 between Wokingham and Twyford (Fig. 2). The area of the site is currently in use as a private garden with several trees occupying the flat area, the underlying geology is described as Valley Gravel (BGS 1946) which was observed in the trenches, and the site lies at 38.0m above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location within the archaeologically rich Loddon Valley (Ford 1987; 1997). To the north-west, a Mesolithic occupation site and Roman enclosures have been excavated

in advance of gravel extraction (Harding and Richards 1993; Barnes and Hawkes 1991). To the north at Whistley Green, which is mentioned in the Domesday Book, medieval deposits are suspected from the presence of a medieval pottery scatter (Ford 1987) and it is possible that further medieval occupation may be present on or near the proposal site. Nothing of archaeological interest was revealed in a watching brief on works for a new footpath at Lodge Road, to the west of the site (Ford 2006).

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. Specific research aims of the project were to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on the site and to determine if any archaeological deposits of any period are present, in particular those associated with medieval occupation.

Two trenches were to be dug each 10.0m long and 1.6m wide. These were to be excavated using a JCB-type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket and any archaeological deposits were to be excavated by hand.

Results

The trenches were dug as intended and were both 10.0m long with depths of 0.45m and 0.48m; the alignment of the trenches had to be altered slightly due to the presence of trees in the proposed locations (Fig. 3).

A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1. Feature details form Appendix 2.

Trench 1

Trench 1 was aligned NW-SE and was 10.0m long and 0.45m deep. The stratigraphy comprised 0.18m topsoil and 0.17m subsoil overlying natural geology consisting of gravel. No archaeological features were identified.

Trench 2 (Fig. 4; Pls 1 and 2)

Trench 2 was aligned W-E and was 10.0m long and 0.48m deep. The stratigraphy comprised 0.20m topsoil and 0.14m subsoil overlying natural geology. A broad but shallow linear feature (1) 0.90m wide and 0.10m deep was recorded at the eastern end of the trench which was filled with a light grey sandy silt (52). The gully was fully excavated but no finds were recovered and both its date and function are uncertain. An area of disturbance nearby was also investigated but determined to be that of a former tree root.

Finds

No finds were recovered from the site.

Conclusion

No deposits of certain archaeological interest were recorded on the site and neither were any archaeological artefacts recovered. A wide, shallow linear feature was located and examined but produced no datable material. It is possibly a farmland or garden feature of no great antiquity. On the basis of these results it is not considered that the site has any archaeological potential.

References

- Barnes, I and Hawkes, J W, 1991, 'Archaeological excavations at Broadwater, Hurst', *Berkshire Archaeol J* **74**, 95–108
- BGS, 1946, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 268, Drift Edition, Keyworth
- Ford, S, 1987, *East Berkshire Archaeological Survey*, Berkshire County Council Dept Highways and Planning Occas Pap **1**, Reading
- Ford, S, 1997, 'Loddon Valley (Berkshire) fieldwalking survey', *Berkshire Archaeol J* **75**, (for 1994–7), 11–33
- Ford, S, 2006, 'New footpath, Lodge Road, Hurst, Twyford, Berkshire: an archaeological watching brief', Thames Valley Archaeological Services rep 06/72, Reading
- Harding, P and Richards, J C, 1993, 'Sample excavation of a Mesolithic flint scatter at Whistley Court Farm', *Berkshire Archaeol J* **74** (for 1991–3), 145
- PPS5, 2010, *Planning for the Historic Environment*, The Stationery Office, Norwich

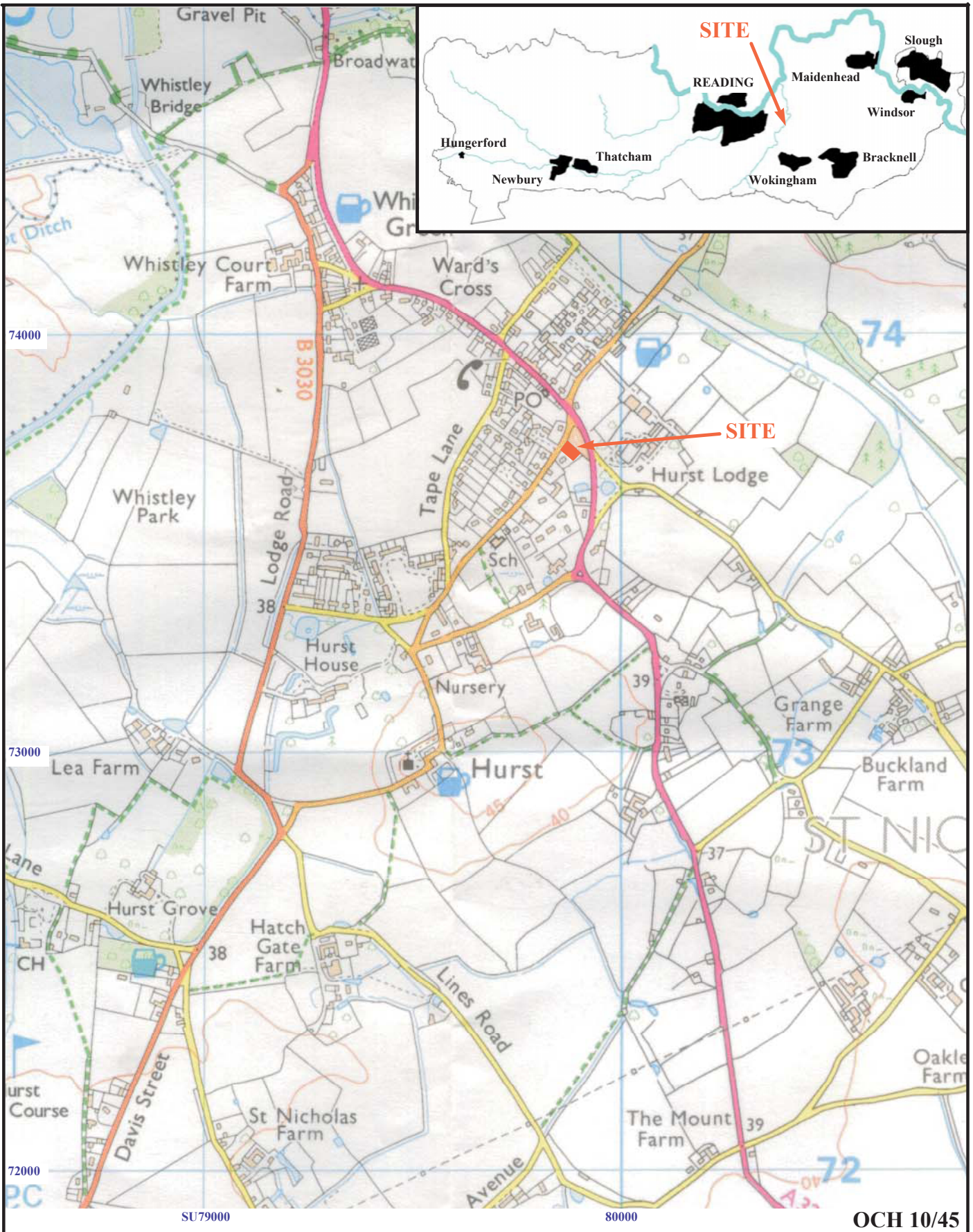
APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at W or NW end

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	10.0	1.6	0.45	0-0.18m topsoil, 0.18-0.35m subsoil, 0.35m+ sandy gravels (natural geology). No archaeology
2	10.0	1.6	0.48	0-0.20m topsoil, 0.20-0.34m subsoil, 0.34m+ natural geology. Gully 1 [Pls 1 and 2].

APPENDIX 2: Feature details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
2	1	52	Gully	Undated	None



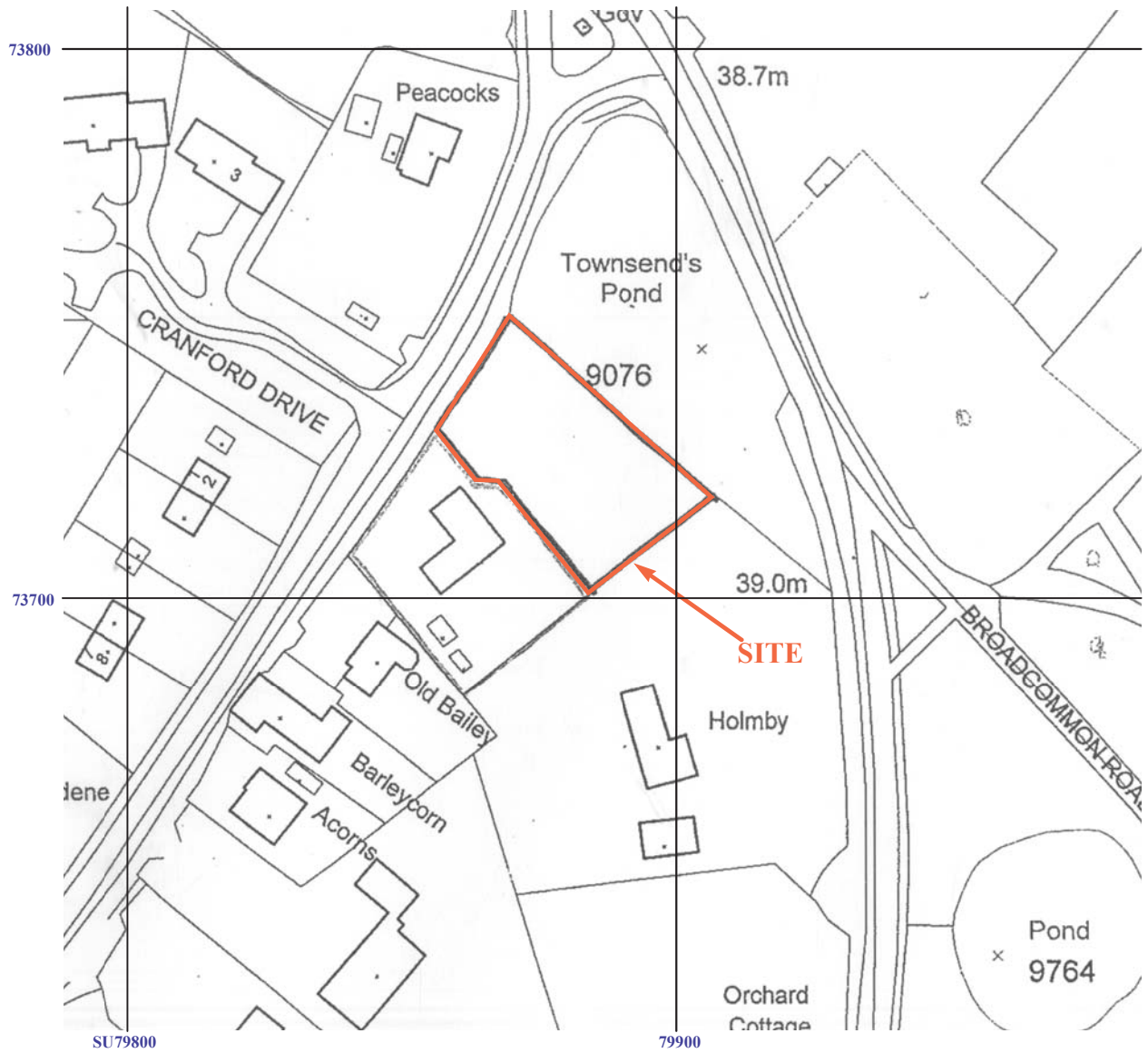
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Wokingham, Berkshire, 2010
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 1. Location of site within Hurst and Berkshire.

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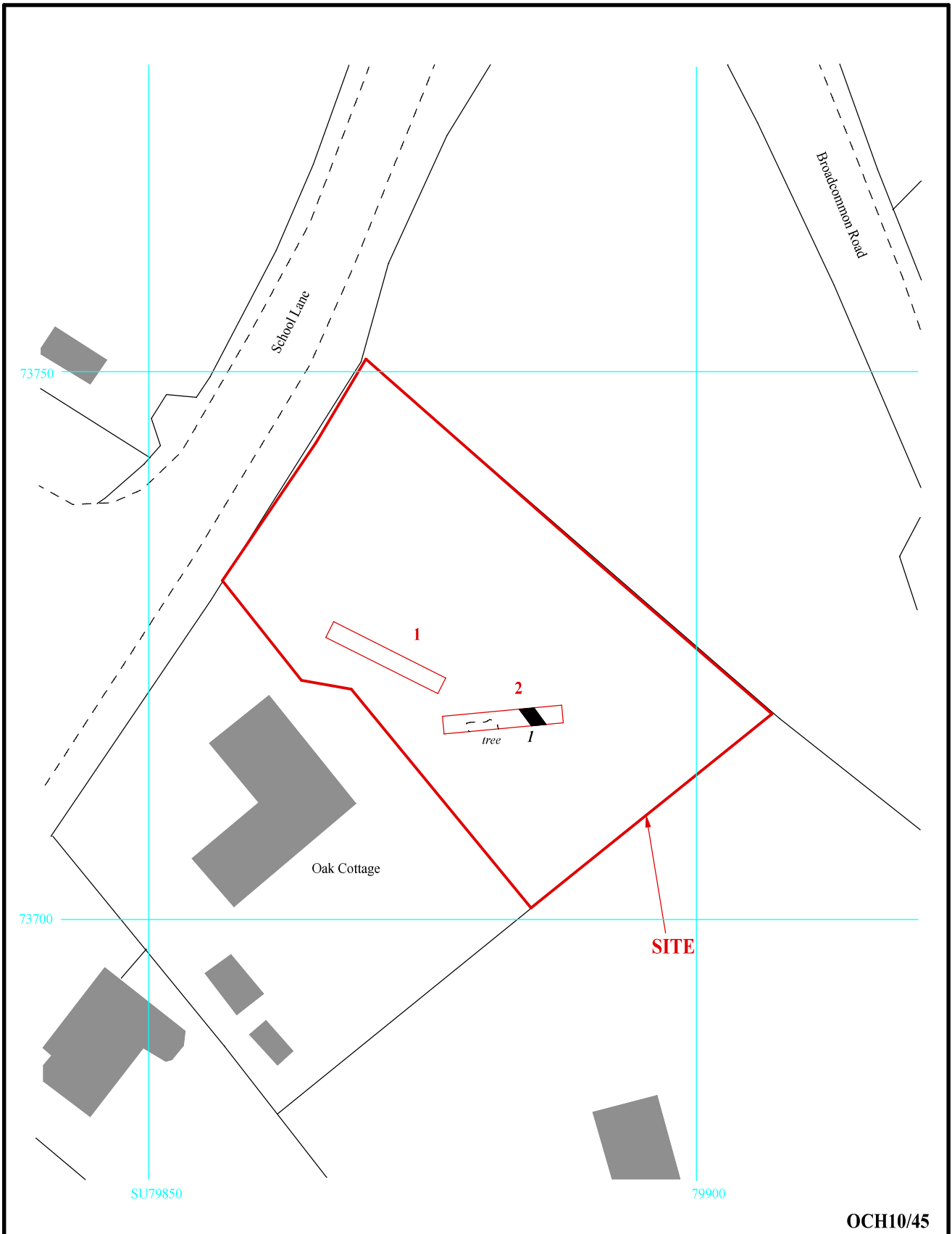


OCH 10/45

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Wokingham, Berkshire, 2010
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 2. Detailed location of site off School Lane.

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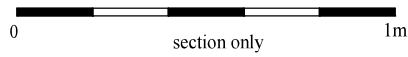
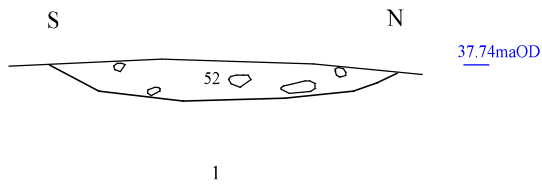
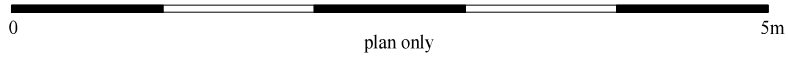
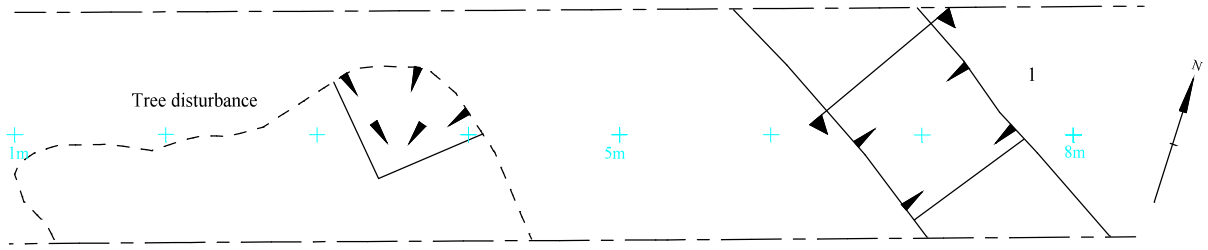
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Wokingham, Berkshire, 2010
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 3. Location of trenches.



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Trench 2



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Wokingham, Berkshire, 2010
Archaeological Evaluation**

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Figure 4. Detail plan and sections of Trench 2.



Plate 1. Trench 2, looking north east, scales: 2m, 1m and 0.3m.



Plate 2. Trench 2, linear 1, looking north west facing section, scales: 0.5m and 0.1m.

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Archaeological Evaluation

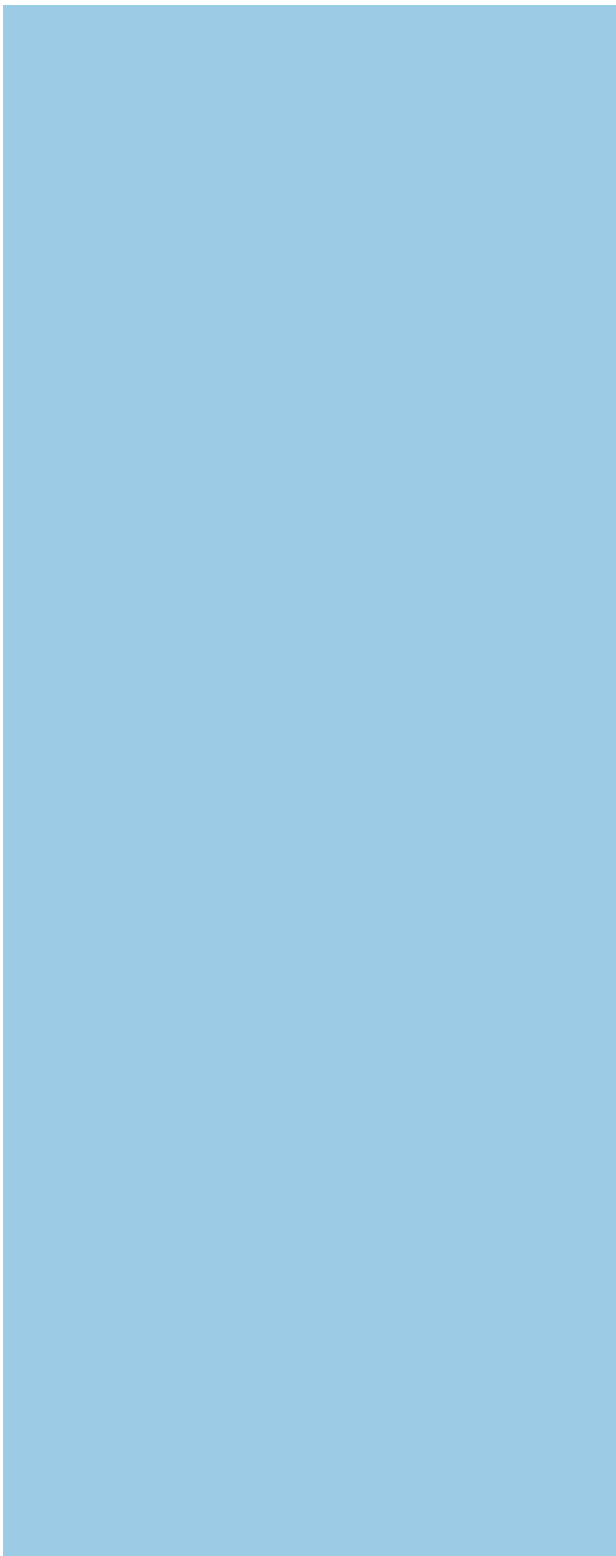
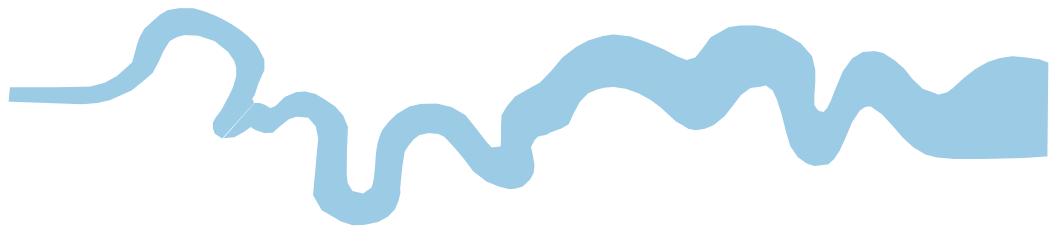
Plates 1 and 2.

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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
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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