

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Land to the rear of 130-148 Windermere Road,
Reading, Berkshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Steve Ford

Site Code: WRR10/134

(SU 7280 7105)

**Land to the rear of 130-148 Windermere Road,
Reading, Berkshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Austin Builders Ltd**

by SteveFord
ThamesValleyArchaeologicalServices
Ltd

SiteCodeWRR10/134

January 2011

Summary

Site name: Land to the rear of 130-148 Windermere Road, Reading, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 7280 7105

Site activity: Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 5th–6th January 2011

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Steve Ford

Site code: WRR10/134

Area of site: *c.* 0.23ha

Summary of results: No deposits nor artefacts of archaeological interest were revealed. Several parts of the site had been truncated by previous development terraced into the slope. The site is now considered to have no archaeological potential.

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

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

Report edited/checked by: Steve Preston✓ 10.01.11

Land to the rear of 130-148 Windermere Road, Reading, Berkshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Steve Ford

Report 10/134

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out to the rear (south) of numbers 130-148 Windermere Road, Reading, Berkshire (SU 7280 7105) (Fig. 1). The site occupies an area of c. 2300 sq m and comprises areas of grass, Tarmac and concrete hard standing. The work was commissioned by Mr. Richard Snell, of Austin Builders Limited, Unit D1, Freham Height, Standard Way, Fareham, Hampshire, PO16 8XT.

Planning permission (09/00129/FUL) has been granted by Reading Borough Council to construct new housing on the site with associated landscaping and re-use of the existing access and carparking. The consent is subject to a condition (13) relating to archaeology. This is in accordance with PPG16, *Archaeology and Planning* and the Borough Council's policies on archaeology though it is acknowledged that *Planning for the Historic Environment* (PPS5 2010) has superseded PPG16. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Mary O'Donoghue of Berkshire Archaeology, advisers to the Borough on matters relating to archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Steve Ford and Marta Buczek from 5th to 6th January 2010 and the site code is WRR10/134. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading.

Location, topography and geology

The site lies within the southern suburbs of Reading with Whitley to the west and Shinfield Road to the east. The site itself is on land that slopes moderately steeply from 74m above Ordnance Datum in the south east to 70m in the north west. Topographically, the site lies on the side of the Kennet Valley/Foudry Brook. The underlying geology is London Clay (BGS 1946). This was observed on site but with some gravel patches present, presumably from the eroded gravel deposits on the higher ground to the east.

The previous development on the site comprised a row of garages with access road. The garages on the southern margins of the site had clearly been constructed on a terrace set into the slope by at least 1.3m whereas an adjacent Tarmaced area and grassed area was at slope that appeared to match that of the original slope. Further truncation was evident adjacent to the northern margins of the site where further terracing was evident to provide level ground for the flats and houses fronting Windermere Road (Pl. 2).

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location within the archaeologically rich Thames and Kennet Valleys with a wealth of sites and finds from both prehistoric and later periods. There are several entries of archaeological interest in the Berkshire Historic Environment Record relating to the surrounding area, though there are none recorded for the site itself. In particular, recent fieldwork has taken place a few hundred metres to the north east which revealed an early Roman occupation site and a small amount of Bronze Age pottery (Milbank 2010). Also to the north east earlier evaluation revealed a small number of cut features with pottery of Roman and medieval date and a prehistoric struck flint (Ford and Pine 1998). Similarly a few hundred metres to the south west lies an unexplained earthwork (known as Marshall's Hill) which is possibly a high status Late Bronze Age ringwork (Bradley 1984, 121). A Roman cremation burial just to the south of the site and Iron Age deposits to the south east are also recorded in the Berkshire Historic Environment Record.

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.

The specific research aims of the project were:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on the site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period were present;
- to determine if any prehistoric or Roman deposits were present;
- to provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological mitigation strategy.

It was proposed to dig six trenches 12m long to be excavated by a machine fitted with a 1.6m wide toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision to remove topsoil and other overburden to expose archaeologically relevant levels. Where archaeological features were certainly or probably present, the stripped areas were to be cleaned using appropriate hand tools. Sufficient of the archaeological features and deposits exposed will be excavated or sampled by hand to satisfy the aims of the project. This work was to be carried out in such a fashion as not to disturb any remains which might merit preservation *in situ* or might better be investigated under conditions pertaining to full excavation. All spoil heaps were to be monitored for artefacts and metal detected.

Results

All six trenches were dug but due to areas of modern truncation and the presence of live services, the locations and lengths of the trenches had to be modified (Fig. 3). These alterations were agreed by Ms O'Donoghue of Berkshire Archaeology. The trenches ranged in length from 6.4m to 14.8m.

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

Trench 1 (Fig. 3)

Trench 1 was aligned north-south and measured 12m long and 0.45m deep. The stratigraphy comprised 0.35m of topsoil over 0.1m of brown clayey subsoil above orange/brown clay with gravel patches natural geology (London Clay). No archaeological deposits were recorded.

Trench 2 (Fig. 3)

Trench 2 was aligned east-west and measured 14.8 long and 0.65m deep. The stratigraphy comprised 0.25m of topsoil over 0.4m of brown clayey subsoil above natural geology. The natural geology had been subject to modern disturbed with areas of wheel rutting and possibly truncation observed.

Trench 3 (Fig. 3)

Trench 3 was aligned east-west and measured 14.1m long and 0.65m deep. The stratigraphy comprised 0.25m of topsoil over 0.35m of brown clayey subsoil above natural geology. The natural geology had been subject to modern disturbed with areas of wheel rutting observed.

Trench 4 (Figs 4-6, Pls 2 and 4)

Trench 4 was aligned north-south and measured 9.4m long. The trench was 0.3m deep at the south end and 0.85m at the north end. The stratigraphy at the south end comprised 0.2m of topsoil over 0.1m of made ground over grey mottled sand. It is thought that this sand represent the natural geology present locally. For the majority of the trench to the north, the stratigraphy comprised 0.3m of topsoil over 0.65m of made ground comprising redeposited clay, brick and wood. This overlay orange/brown (with large black mottles from contact with organic material in the made ground) which was the natural geology. Made ground was not removed from the central portion of the trench. The original surface of the natural geology appears to have been truncated in this trench but which had then been infilled to form support for the adjacent carpark area.

Trench 5 (Figs 4–6)

Trench 5 was aligned east-west and measured 12.6m long and 0.4m deep. The stratigraphy comprised 0.05m of Tarmac above 0.25m of concrete above 0.1m of gravel made ground above natural geology. Some areas of disturbance of the latter were observed.

Trench 6 (Fig. 3)

Trench 6 was aligned north-south and measured 6.4m long and 0.44m deep. The stratigraphy comprised 0.05m of Tarmac above 0.25m of concrete above 0.1m of gravel made ground above natural geology.

Conclusion

The evaluation has not located any deposits nor artefacts of archaeological interest. Several parts of the site had been truncated by previous development terraced into the slope, though the majority of the area appears to have not been excessive truncated other than the removal of topsoil and subsoil. Nevertheless, the site is now considered to have no archaeological potential.

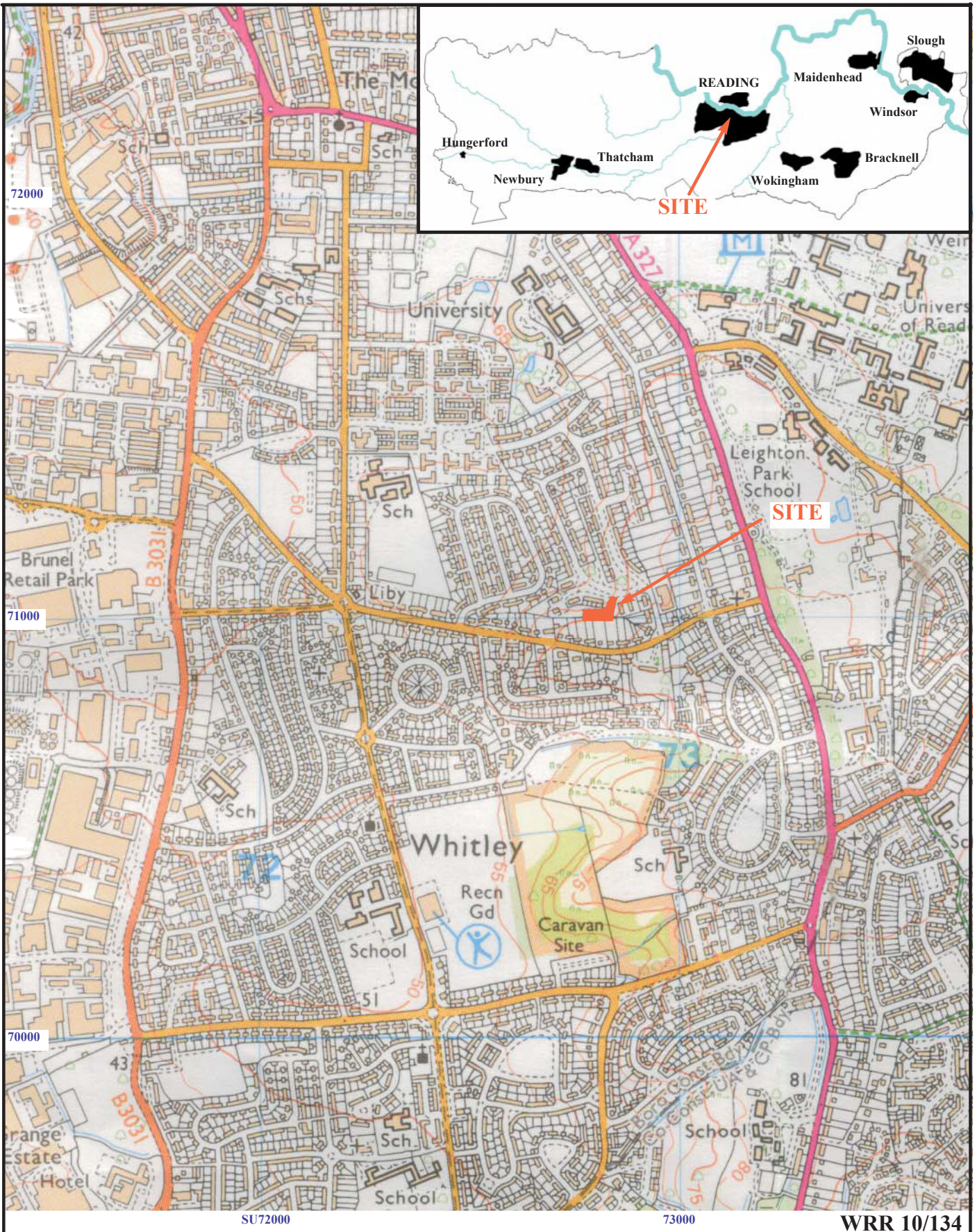
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APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at S or W end

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	12.0	1.6	0.45	0–0.35m topsoil; 0.35–0.45m subsoil; 0.45m+ orange/brown clay with gravel patches (natural geology). Test pit at 1m down to 0.55m [Plate 1]
2	14.8	1.6	0.65	0–0.25m topsoil; 0.25–0.65m subsoil; 0.65m+ orange/brown clay with gravel patches (natural geology). Areas of modern disturbance and truncation
3	14.1	1.6	0.60	0–0.25m topsoil; 0.25–0.6m subsoil; 0.65m+ orange/brown clay with gravel patches (natural geology). Areas of modern disturbance
4	9.4	1.6	S: 0.30 N: 0.85	N: 0–0.2m topsoil; 0.2–0.3m made ground; 0.3m+ grey sand with orange mottles (natural geology). S: 0–0.3m topsoil; 0.3–0.85m made ground; 0.85m+ orange/brown clay with gravel patches (natural geology)
5	12.6	1.6	0.40	0–0.05m Tarmac; Concrete 0.05–0.3m concrete; 0.3–0.4m gravel (made ground); 0.4m+ orange/brown clay (natural geology). Areas of modern disturbance.
6	6.4	1.7	0.44	0–0.05m Tarmac; Concrete 0.05–0.3m concrete; 0.3–0.4m gravel (made ground); 0.4m+ orange/brown clay (natural geology). [Plate 2]



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Figure 1. Location of site within Reading and Berkshire.

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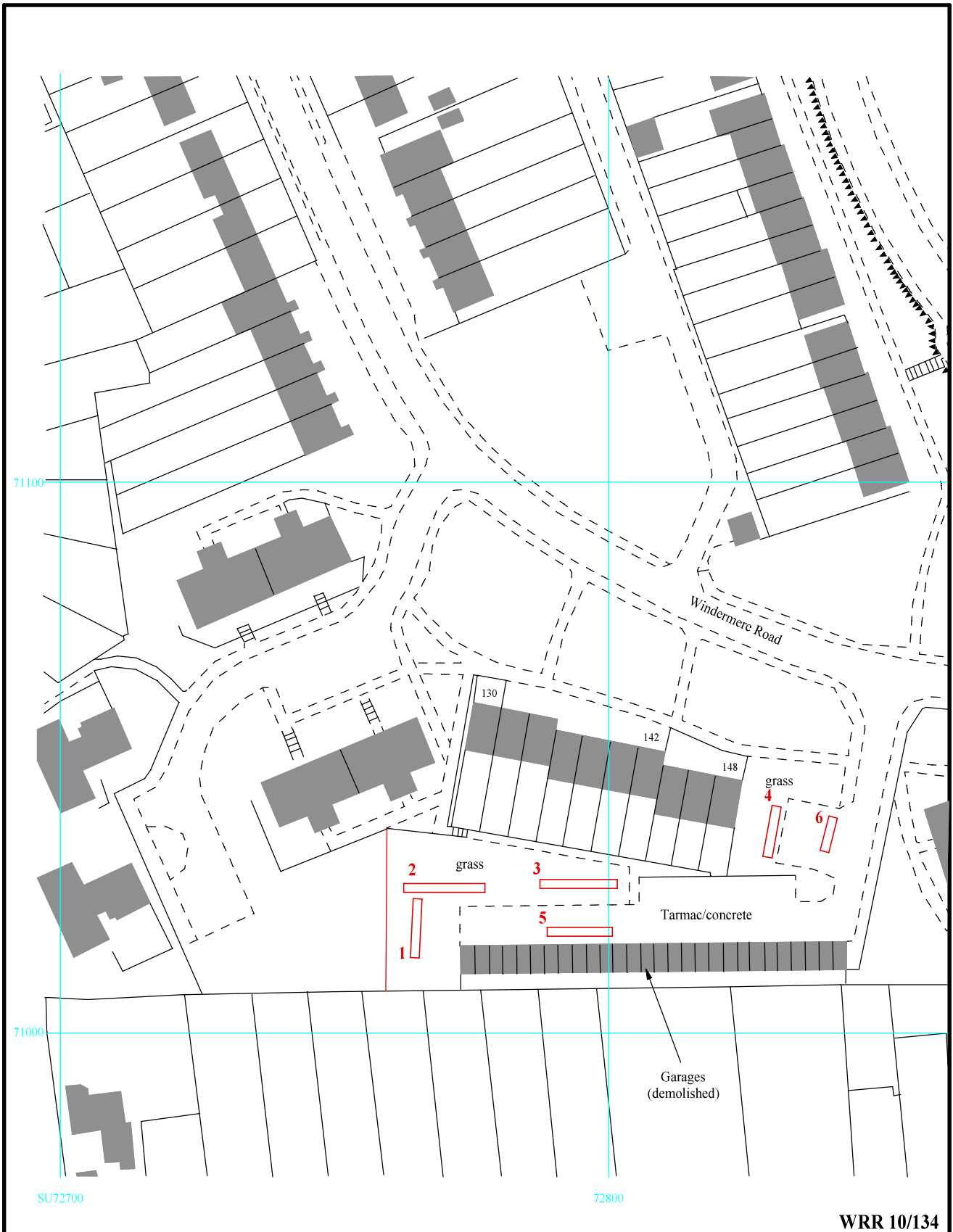


WRR 10/134

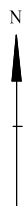
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Windermere Road.

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Figure 3. Trench Locations



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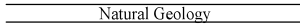
Trench 3

W _____ E 71.9m AOD

Topsoil



Subsoil



Natural Geology

Trench 6

S _____ N 72.2m

Tarmac

Concrete

Gravel (made ground)

Natural Geology

WRR 10/134

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Reading, Berkshire, 2011
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 4. Representative Sections





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



Plate 2. Trench 6 under excavation, looking south west.

WRR 10/134

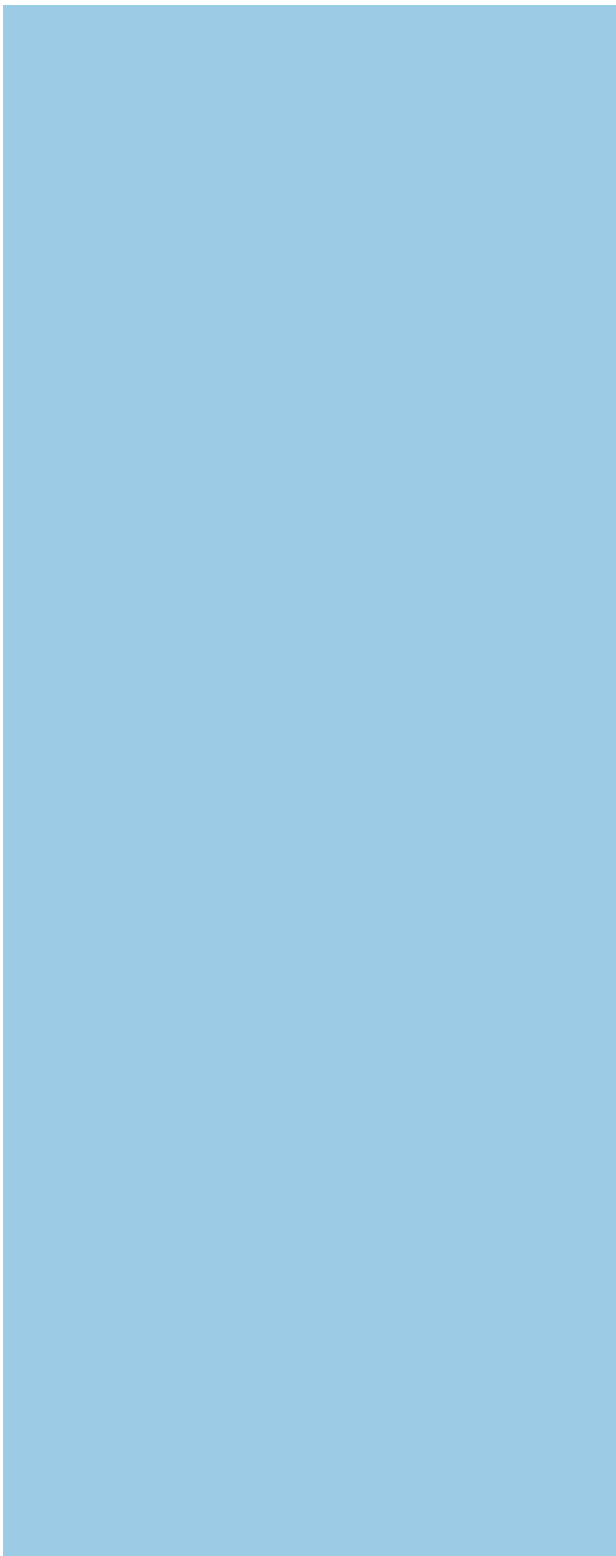
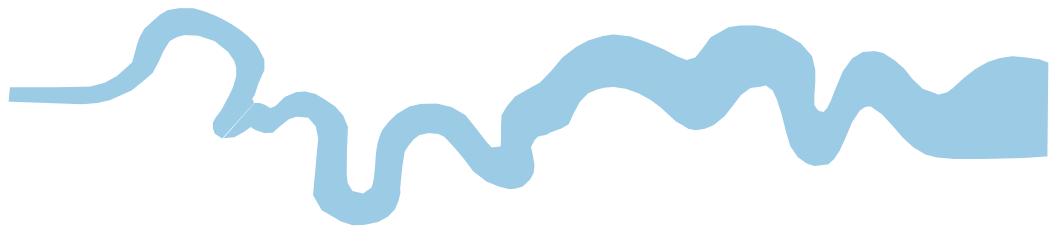
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Archaeological Evaluation**

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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