

Lautree Gardens
Cookham
Berkshire

Archaeological Evaluation



for
Martin Grant Homes

CA Project: 770166
CA Report: 15138

March 2015



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SUMMARY

Project Name:	Lautree Gardens
Location:	Cookham Berkshire
NGR:	488094 185123
Type:	Evaluation
Date:	25 – 26 February 2015
Planning Reference:	14/01649/FULL
Location of Archive:	There is no current collecting Museum for sites outside of Reading; the archive will be held by CA/the client until such time as a collecting museum is identified
Site Code:	LAGC15

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in February 2015 at Lautree Gardens, Cookham, Berkshire. Three trenches were excavated revealing two small pits of probable late post-medieval/modern date. No evidence of pre-nineteenth century activity was recorded from any of the trenches.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In February 2015 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation for Martin Grant Homes at Lautree Gardens, Cookham, Berkshire (centred on NGR:488094 185123 ; Figure 1). The evaluation was undertaken to meet the requirements of a planning application (14/01649/FULL) prior to the construction of four detached houses with access via Lautree Gardens.

1.2 The archaeological evaluation had been requested and agreed in outline, as an initial stage of investigation by Roland Smith the Archaeological Officer (AO) at Berkshire Archaeology (BA) the archaeological advisor to the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM)), in response to planning condition 16 below:

No development shall take place within the application area, until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, have secured and implemented a programme of archaeological work (which may comprise more than one phase of work) that is in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, which has first been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Reason. To ensure the continued preservation in situ or by record of any finds made in this area of archaeological interest. Relevant policies – Local Plan ARCH2, ARCH4.

1.3 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (December 2014) and approved by Roland Smith. The fieldwork also followed guidance provided in the *General Standards for Historic Environment Projects* (Berkshire Archaeology 2014), *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014), the *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991) and the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (English Heritage 2006).

The site

1.4 The proposed development site is 0.12ha in area; located in the Cookham Rise, part of Cookham parish, close to the Thames and on slightly higher ground than the core of Cookham. The Site is located in the rear garden of an existing dwelling. The site is surrounded by residential development, with the more established and larger plots to the south, west and north and more recent development to the east in Lautree

Gardens. Hillgrove Wood is located a few hundred metres to the north-west and a few hundred metres due east is Cookham railway station. The Site slopes steeply down to the north and is roughly rectangular, measuring approximately 57m south-west to north-east, and approximately 23m east to west. The Site lies between 43 - 25m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).

- 1.5 The geological bedrock to the Site comprises the Seaford Chalk Formation And Newhaven Chalk Formation (undifferentiated). The Chalk, Sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 71 to 89 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 There are no recorded find spots from within the Site boundaries, but important find spots are known to the north of the Site. Less than a kilometre to the north, at Cock Marsh, thousands of early prehistoric stone axes have been recovered. There is also a group Bronze Age barrows (investigated in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries) located in the same area, which are now looked after by the National Trust. Therefore, this area being close to the Thames was clearly of significance in the early and later prehistoric periods. Tradition suggests that a Roman road (known as the Camlet Way) crossed into Cookham (to the east of the Site) via Sashes Island. The route was still clearly important during later periods as, in the Anglo-Saxon period, King Alfred turned the Island into a Saxon Burh to guard against Viking attacks heading upriver (i.e. via the Thames). Cookham was already by this time an important Anglo-Saxon centre, an abbey having been founded there in the early eighth century. The importance of Cookham as a religious centre continued through to the end of the medieval period with the abbey and its surrounding land holdings remaining in the ownership of Cirencester Abbey. With the dissolution of the monasteries the importance of Cookham declined and it was not until the coming of the railway (which encouraged the growth of Cookham Rise) that its economic life revived. Local brickworks were established and gravel extraction increased in scale, the extraction sites being located just to the north of the Thames opposite Cock Marsh.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The objectives of the evaluation were to provide information about the archaeological resource within the site, including its presence/absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality. In accordance with the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (IfA 2009), the evaluation had been designed to be minimally intrusive and minimally destructive to archaeological remains. The information gathered will enable the AO for BCC and archaeological advisor to the RBWM to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset, consider the impact of the proposed development upon it, and to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the development proposal, in line with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The evaluation comprised a 5.5% sample of the development area and involved the excavation of 3no. x 15m x 2m trial trenches in the locations shown on **Figure 2**. Trenches were set out on OS National Grid (NGR) co-ordinates using Leica GPS, and scanned for live services by trained Cotswold Archaeology staff using CAT and Genny equipment in accordance with the Cotswold Archaeology *Safe System of Work for avoiding underground services*.
- 4.2 All trenches were excavated by an 8 tonne tracked mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket. All machining was conducted under archaeological supervision and ceased when the first archaeological horizon or natural substrate was revealed (whichever was encountered first). Topsoil and subsoil was stored separately adjacent to each trench with all trenches being mechanically reinstated upon completion.
- 4.3 Following machining, all archaeological features revealed were planned and recorded in accordance with Technical Manual 1 *Fieldwork Recording Manual* (CA 2007). Each context was recorded on a pro-forma context sheet by written and measured description and drawn sections (scale 1:10) were recorded where appropriate. Where detailed feature planning was required this was undertaken using Leica 1200 series GPS this was carried out in accordance with Technical

Manual 4 *Survey Manual* (CA 2012). Photographs (digital colour) were taken as appropriate. With the exception of a single small fragment of post-medieval / modern CBM no finds were recovered from the three trenches and no environmental samples were taken.

5. RESULTS (FIGURES 2-5)

5.1 This section provides an overview of the evaluation results; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts are to be found in Appendix A.

5.2 All three trenches consisted of natural dark yellow/brown sand/clay with localised patches of flint gravel. This was overlain by dark grey/yellow/brown clay/silt topsoil between 0.24 – 0.47m in depth.

Trench 1 (Figures 2 & 3)

5.3 A single pit [102] was recorded extending north out of the trench. The oval shaped feature measured 1.05m in length by at least 0.82m in width by 0.61m in depth. A single small fragment of post-medieval CBM was recovered from the fill, which consisted of (103) red/brown silt/clay with common flint gravel inclusions. A single modern posthole was also noted in plan but was not excavated.

Trench 2 (Figures 2 & 4)

5.4 A single square modern posthole containing fragments of concrete was noted but was otherwise not excavated.

Trench 3 (Figures 2 & 5)

5.5 A terrace consisting of modern made-up ground constructed from redeposited topsoil with mixed bands of redeposited natural was recorded in **Trench 3** up to a depth of 0.68m. Modern rubble was also noted within the southern trench section, which possibly relates to a former (modern) garden feature. A single pit [303] was recorded close to the east end of the trench. The feature measuring 1.30m in length by at least 1.20m in width extended out of the trench to the north and measured 0.35m in depth. The single undated fill (304) consisted of grey/brown clay/silt with common flint gravel inclusions.

6. THE FINDS

- 6.1 A single small fragment of post-medieval/modern CBM was recovered from the fill of pit **102** in **Trench 1**. Indicating the feature is likely to be a modern garden feature.

7. Discussion

- 7.1 Ordnance Survey maps from 1899 to the 1930's show the land now occupied by Lautree Gardens and the current development site was an orchard.
- 7.2 The pit in **Trench 1** contained one fragment of post-medieval/modern CBM and is most likely associated with the late nineteenth/early twentieth century usage of the site as an orchard or more it may be associated with more recent modern garden landscaping activity. A second undated pit of a similar size from **Trench 3** is also likely to be of modern date and associated with the orchard or the more recent landscaping. There is no indication on the site of any activity pre-dating the nineteenth century.

8. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Joe Whelan, assisted by Tom Hackett. The report was written by Joe Whelan. The illustrations were prepared by Leo Heatley. The archive has been compiled by Joe Whelan, and prepared for deposition by Andrew Donald. The project was managed for CA by Richard Greatorex, who also edited this report.

9. REFERENCES

Berkshire Archaeology 2014 *General Standards for Historic Environment Projects*

BGS (British Geological Survey) 2015 *Geology of Britain Viewer*
http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geology_viewer_google/googleviewer.html Accessed 9
November 2014

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2015 *Lautree Gardens, Cookham, Berkshire Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

CIfA 2014 *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation*

DCLG (Department of Communities and Local Government) 2012 *National Planning Policy Framework*

English Heritage 1991 *the Management of Archaeological Projects*

English Heritage 2006 *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide*

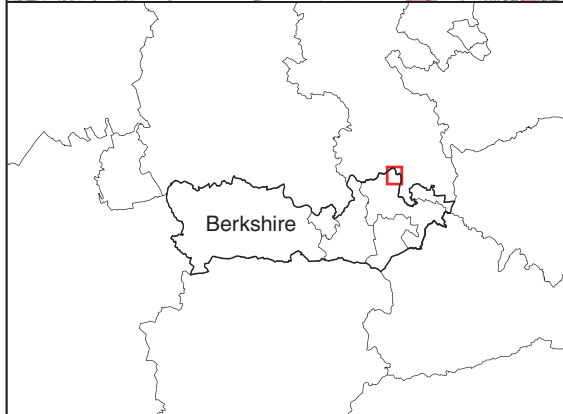
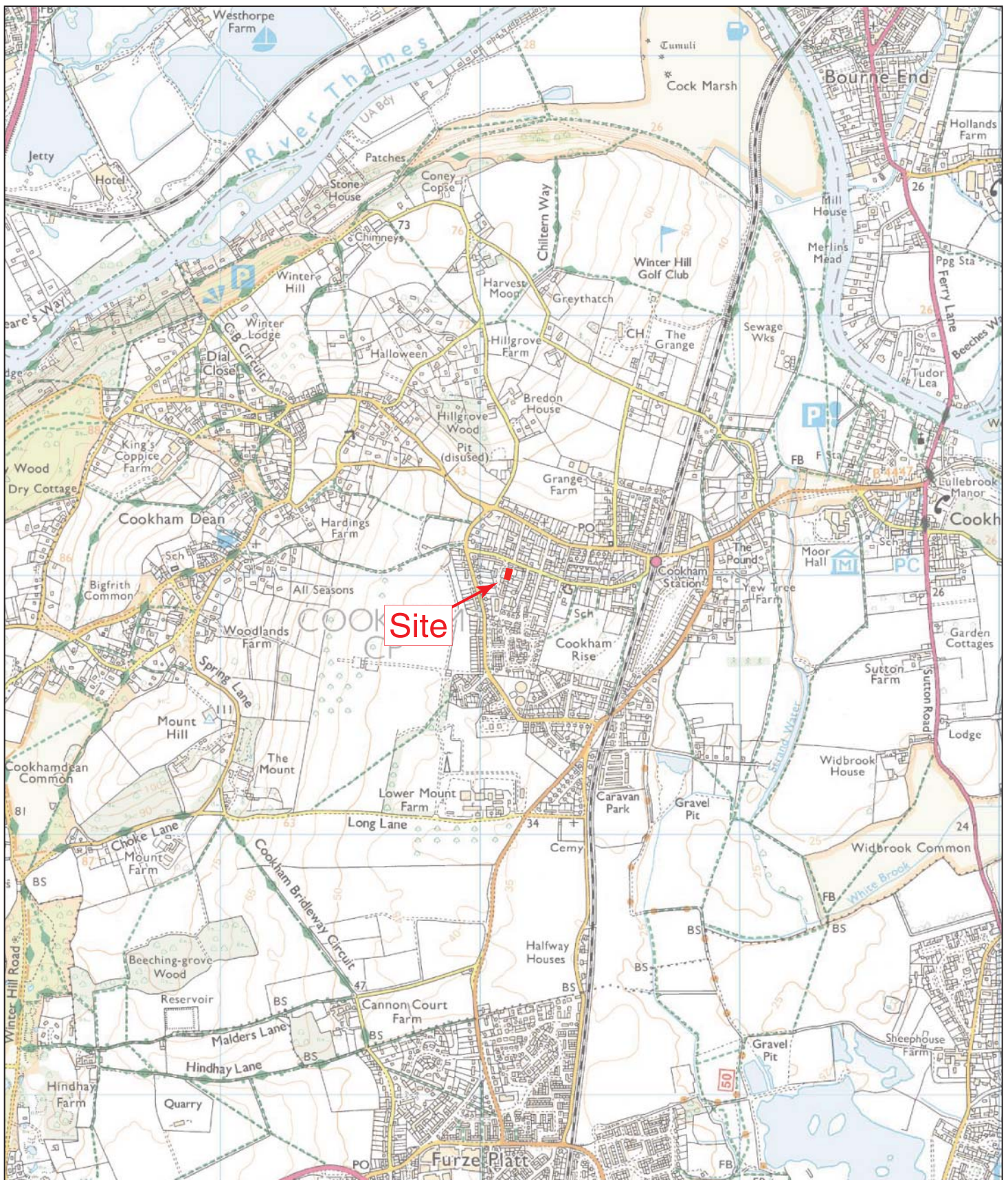


APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	D (m)	Spot-date
1	100	Layer		topsoil	Dark brown clayey silt	20	1.8	0.47	
1	101	Layer		Natural	Reddish brown sandy silty clay	20	1.8		
1	102	Cut		pit	Oval, flat bottomed pit	1.05	>0.82	0.61	P med / modern
1	103	Fill	102	Primary pit fill	Reddish brown silty clay	1.05	>0.36	0.11	P med / modern
1	104	Fill	102	2nd fill of pit	light yellow sand	>0.55	>0.82	0.42	P med / modern
2	200	Layer	102	topsoil	grey yellowy brown clayey silt	20	1.8	0.26	
2	201	Layer		natural	Yellowy brown clayey sand with flint gravels	20	1.8		
3	300	Layer		topsoil	grey yellowy brown clayey silt	20	1.8	0.24	
3	301	layer		Made-up ground	grey yellowy brown clayey silt with bands of redeposited natural	20	1.8	0.44	
3	302	Layer		natural	Yellowy brown clayey sand with flint gravels	20	1.8		
3	303	cut		pit	Oval flat bottomed pit	1.3	1.2	0.35	
3	304	fill	303	Pit fill	Grey brown clayey silt	1.3	1.2	0.35	P med / modern

APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS	
Project Name	Lautree Gardens, Cookham, Berkshire
Short description (250 words maximum)	An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in February 2015 at Lautree Gardens, Cookham, Berkshire. Three trenches were excavated revealing two small pits of probable late post-medieval/modern date.
Project dates	25 – 26 February 2015
Project type (e.g. desk-based, field evaluation etc)	Evaluation
Previous work (reference to organisation or SMR numbers etc)	None
Future work	None anticipated
PROJECT LOCATION	
Site Location	Lautree Gardens, Cookham, Berkshire SL6 9JT
Study area (M ² /ha)	
Site co-ordinates (8 Fig Grid Reference)	488094 185123
PROJECT CREATORS	
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology
Project Brief originator	Cotswold Archaeology
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology
Project Manager	Richard Greatorex
Project Supervisor	Joe Whelan
MONUMENT TYPE	None
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None
PROJECT ARCHIVES	No currently receiving museum available
	Fragment of CBM Written and drawn record 2 files
Physical	One fragment of CBM
Paper	Context and Trench sheets, Drawings
Digital	Database, digital photos
BIBLIOGRAPHY	
<p>Berkshire Archaeology 2014 <i>General Standards for Historic Environment Projects</i> BGS (British Geological Survey) 2015 <i>Geology of Britain Viewer</i> http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer_google/googleviewer.html Accessed 9 November 2014 CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2015 <i>Lautree Gardens, Cookham, Berkshire Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief</i> ClfA 2014 <i>Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation</i> DCLG (Department of Communities and Local Government) 2012 <i>National Planning Policy Framework</i> English Heritage 1991 <i>the Management of Archaeological Projects</i> English Heritage 2006 <i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide</i></p>	



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PROJECT TITLE

Lautree Gardens, Cookham, Berkshire

FIGURE TITLE

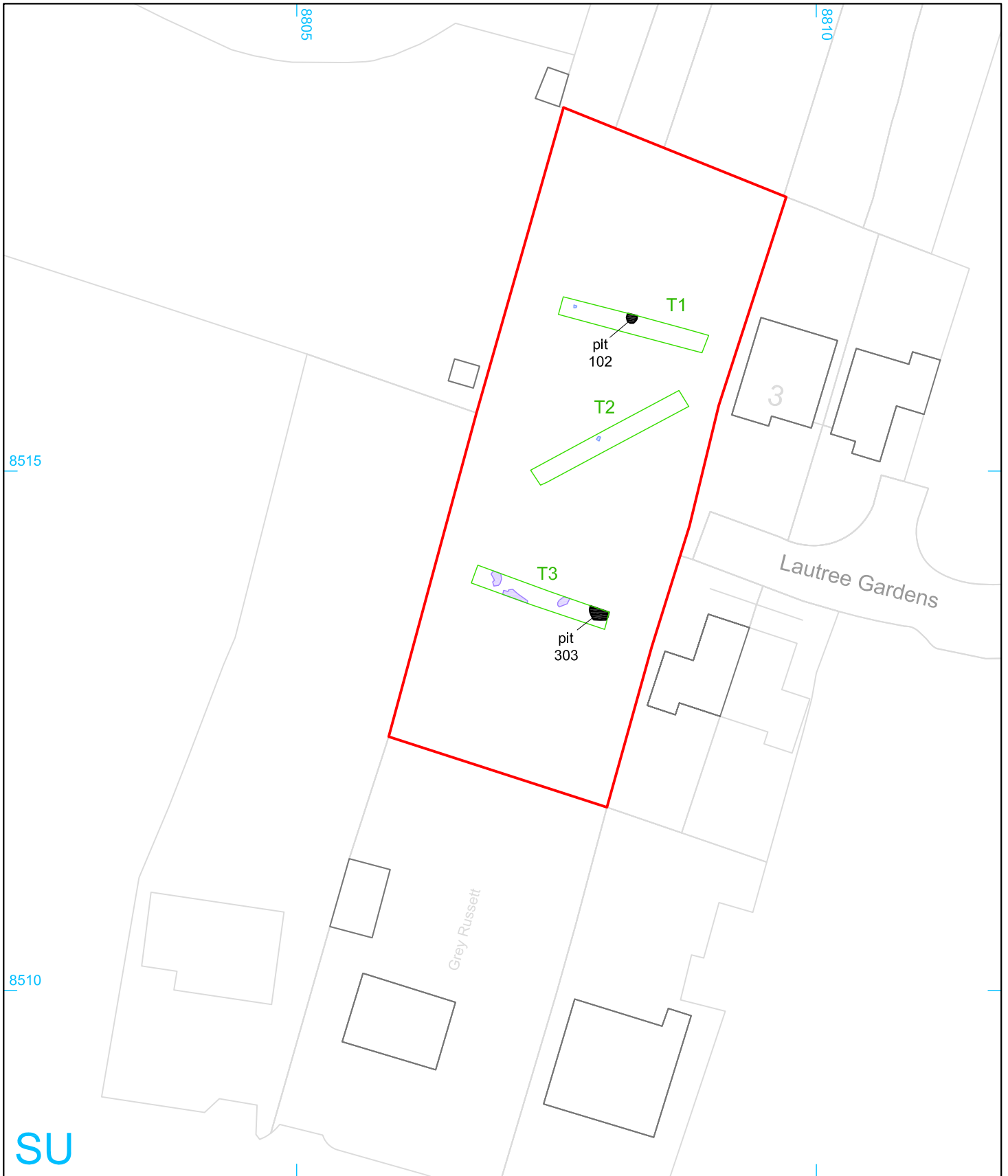
Site location plan

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FIGURE NO.

1



- site
- evaluation trench
- archaeological feature
- geology
- modern



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PROJECT TITLE
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FIGURE TITLE
Trench location plan showing archaeological features



3



3 Trench 1, looking west (2 x 1m scales)



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PROJECT TITLE

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FIGURE TITLE

Photograph

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FIGURE NO.

3



4

4 Trench 2, looking east (2 x 1m scales)



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FIGURE TITLE

Photograph

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FIGURE NO.

4



5

5 Trench 3, looking west (1m & 2m scales)



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FIGURE TITLE

Photograph

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APPROVED BY	REG	SCALE@A4	n/a	5

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