



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

AT

ST JOSEPH'S COLLEGE,

UPPER REDLANDS ROAD, READING,

BERKSHIRE

NGR SU 73254 72417

On behalf of

St Joseph's College

MAY 2016

REPORT FOR St Joseph's College
c/o Planning Insight
73 Watling Street
London
EC4M 9BJ

PREPARED BY Steve Leech

ILLUSTRATION BY Andrej Čelovský and Autumn Robson

EDITED BY John Moore

AUTHORISED BY John Moore

FIELDWORK 9th – 17th May 2016

REPORT ISSUED 25th May 2016

ENQUIRES TO John Moore Heritage Services
Hill View
Woodperry Road
Beckley
Oxfordshire OX3 9UZ

Tel: 01865 358300
Email: info@jmheritageservices.co.uk

JMHS Project No: 3450
Site Code: RGURR 16
Archive Location The archive currently is maintained by John Moore Heritage Services and will be transferred to Reading Museum under accession number REDGM: 2016.1

CONTENTS

	Page
SUMMARY	1
1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Site Location	1
1.2 Planning Background	1
1.3 Archaeological Background	1
2. AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION	3
3. STRATEGY	3
3.1 Research Design	3
3.2 Methodology	3
4. RESULTS	4
5. FINDS	4
6. DISCUSSION	4
7. ARCHIVE	7
8. BIBLIOGRAPHY	7
 FIGURES AND PLATES	
Figure 1. Site location	2
Figure 2. Plan of MUGA 1 and sections	5
Plate 1. Section 1	6
Plate 2. General view of site	6

Summary

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief at St Joseph's College field on the north side of Upper Redlands Road, Reading (NGR SU 7325472417 centred). No archaeological features were observed throughout the watching brief. The southwestern extent of the site was relatively undisturbed with the turf / topsoil (01) overlying subsoil (03) that overlay the natural clay and sands (04). Further east and south was a layer of modern made ground (02) increasing in thickness to the northeast from 0.2m to over 1m thick.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The site is on the north side of Upper Redlands Road, Reading (NGR SU 7325472417 centred). The underlying geology is London Clay Formation (BGS 269). The site lies at approximately 60m OD.

1.2 Planning Background

Planning consent has been granted by Reading Borough Council for installation of two Multi Use Games Areas (MUGA) together with associated fencing and floodlights and erection of single storey changing room building and removal of bike sheds and installation of a ramp for disabled access. Due to the site's potential to contain archaeological remains Berkshire Archaeology recommended a condition be attached to the permission for a programme of archaeological work to be carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which had been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Berkshire Archaeology indicated that this should be a watching brief during the course of groundworks. This was in line with NPPF and the Local Plan.

1.3 Archaeological Background

Evidence for prehistoric activity within the area has been previously identified with Middle to Late Iron Age features recorded just over 100m to the south west of the school at Whiteknights Hall. Here an archaeological evaluation in advance of the construction of new halls of residence produced evidence for Middle to Late Iron Age activity, consisting of N-S aligned post-holes, a gully, pit and a ditch.

Slightly further afield at Addington playing fields a Bronze Age pit and an Iron Age currency hoard were discovered during an archaeological evaluation. There was therefore considered to be the potential that similar archaeological remains could survive within this area of the college site.

The above archaeological information has been taken from Berkshire Archaeology's advice note.

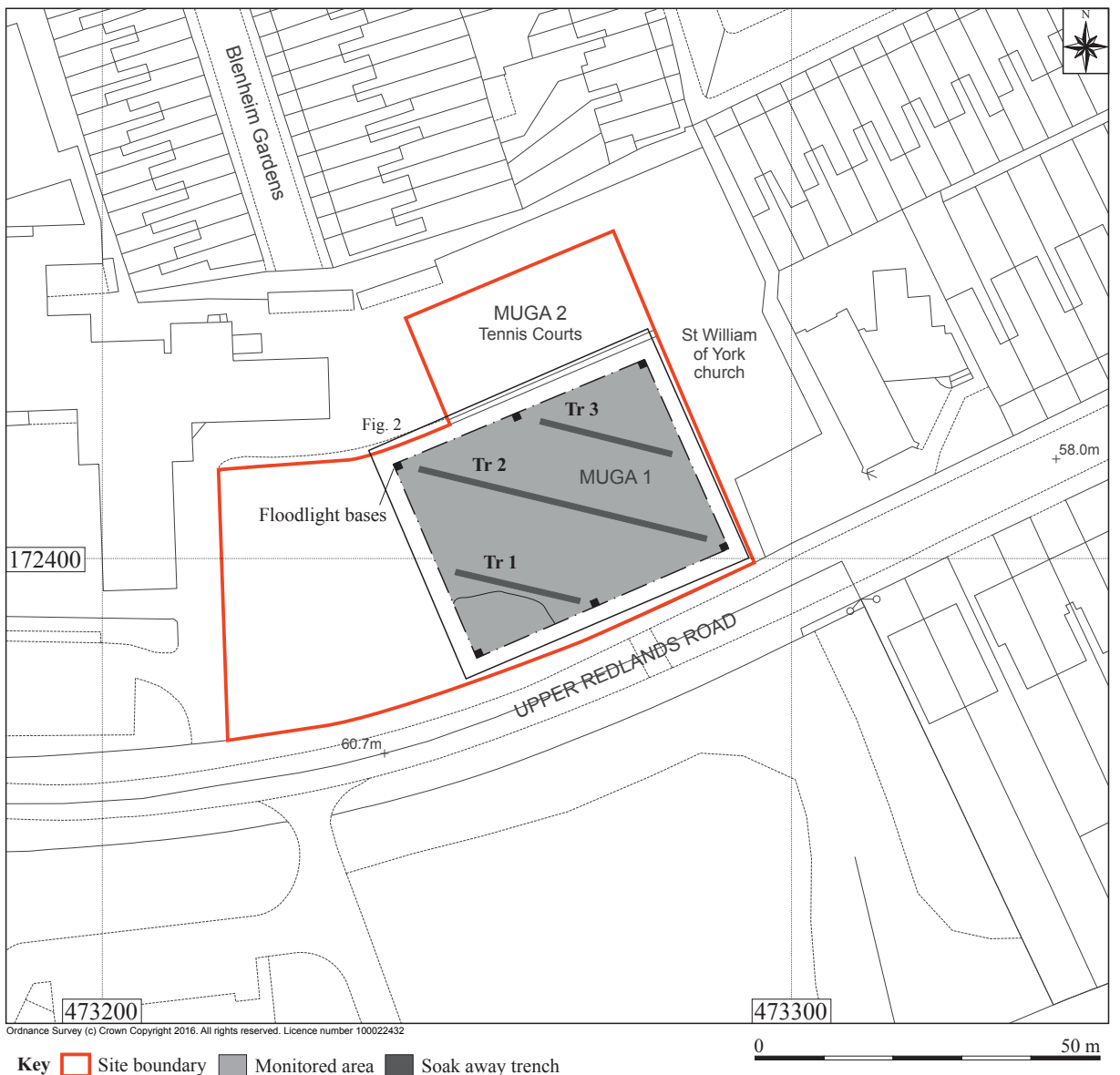
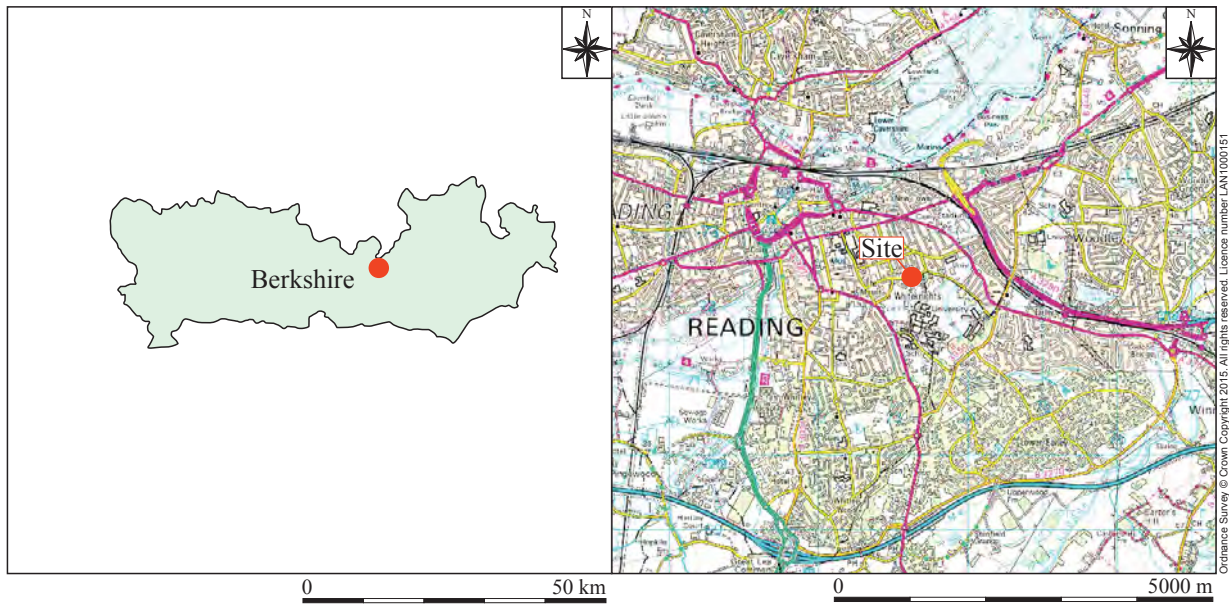


Figure 1: Site location

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The aims of the investigation as laid out in the Written Scheme of Investigation were as follows:

- To record any archaeological remains that will be impacted on by the groundworks.

In particular:

- To record any prehistoric or later remains.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed Berkshire Archaeology and Reading Borough Council. The recording was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014).

3.2 Methodology

The watching brief involved the monitoring of any below ground excavations involved during the construction of two MUGA's situated east of St Joseph's College (Fig. 1).

MUGA 1 (Fig. 2) was situated on the school playing field and involved the ground reduction of 0.2m within the 30m x 40m footprint. There was a 0.05m thick layer of grass turf and topsoil (01) that overlay a layer of modern made ground (02) that consisted of an orange / brown silty clay with frequent broken fragments of bricks, tile, metal and plastic. Visible in the southwestern corner of the MUGA at this level was an orange silty sand with frequent natural flint gravels (03), a colluvial subsoil that was underlying the topsoil / turf layer (01) (Fig. 2).

The next phase of work involved the monitoring a 'cut and fill' within the footprint of MUGA 1 to level the area within. This involved the excavation of material from the southwestern extent of the site and depositing the up-cast material within the areas to the south and east.

The next phase of work involved the excavation of three soakaway trenches that were 0.6m wide and 1m deep trench within the footprint of the MUGA (Fig. 2).

Trench 1 was orientated northwest – southeast, 20m long and contained a 0.2m thick layer of modern made ground (02) overlying the natural clay (04), (Fig. 2).

Trench 2 was orientated northwest – southeast, 43m long and contained a 1m thick layer of modern made ground (02) overlying the natural clay (04), (Fig. 2).

Trench 3 was orientated northwest – southeast, 20m long and contained a +1m thick layer of modern made ground (02). No natural deposits were encountered at the base of the trench.

Six 1m x 1m x1m deep pits for floodlight bases were to be excavated within the boundary of MUGA 1 (Fig. 2). These were not monitored as the natural clay was observed in the southwestern extent and elsewhere the pits would have only impacted into the recently deposited levelling material and made ground layer (02).

MUGA 2 (Fig. 1) was to be situated on the former netball court, that itself was constructed upon a previous car park. No below ground work was scheduled for this MUGA.

Where archaeological horizons were encountered they were cleaned by hand and excavated appropriately. Standard John Moore Heritage Services techniques were employed throughout, involving the completion of a written record for each deposit encountered, with scale plans and section drawings compiled where appropriate. A photographic record was also produced.

The resultant spoil from the works was visually scanned and metal detected, especially for finds relating to the Prehistoric through to Post-Medieval periods.

4 RESULTS

All deposits and features were assigned individual context numbers. Context numbers without brackets indicate features i.e. pit cuts, numbers in () show feature fills or deposits of material, while numbers in bold indicate structural features.

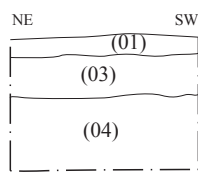
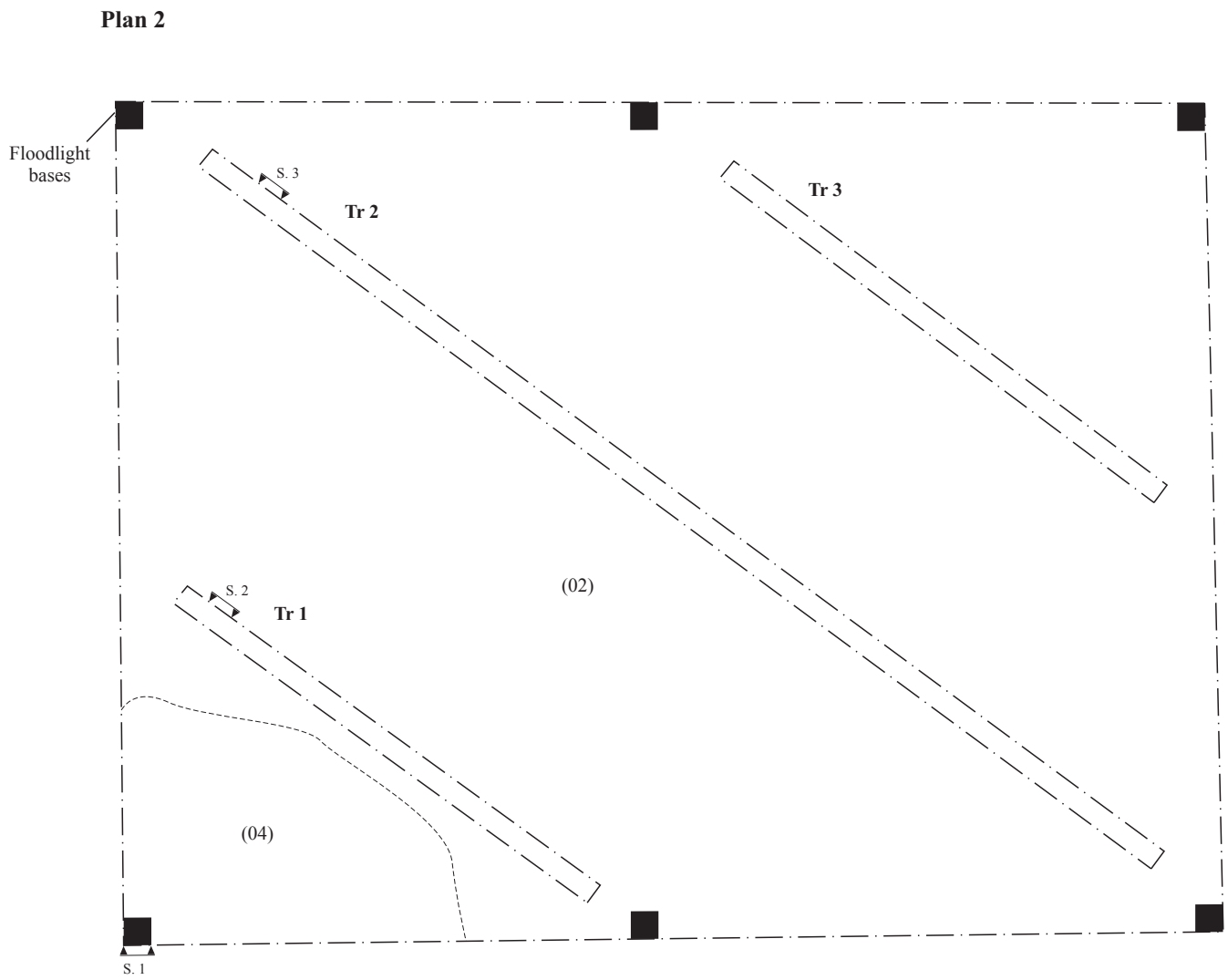
There were no archaeological features present cutting into the natural clay (04) where it was encountered in MUGA 1. The southwestern extent of the site was relatively undisturbed with the turf / topsoil (01) overlying subsoil (03) that overlay the natural clay and sands (04). Further east and south a layer of modern made ground (02) increasing in thickness to the northeast from 0.2m to over 1m thick.

5 FINDS

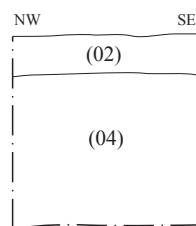
No finds were retrieved from the site.

6 DISCUSSION

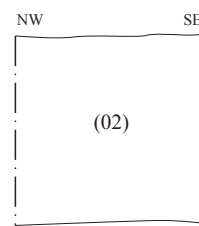
No archaeological features were observed throughout the watching brief. The southwestern extent of the site was relatively undisturbed with the turf / topsoil (01) overlying subsoil (03) that overlay the natural clay and sands (04). Further east and south a layer of modern made ground (02) increasing in thickness to the northeast from 0.2m to over 1m thick.



Section 1



Section 2



Section 3

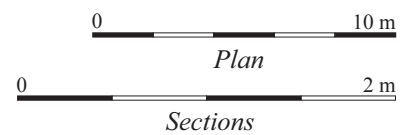


Figure 2: Plan and sections



Plate 1. Section 1 looking southwest



Plate 2. General view of site looking southeast

7 ARCHIVE

The archive currently is maintained by John Moore Heritage Services and will be transferred to Reading Museum under accession number REDGM: 2016.1

8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014 *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*

JMHS, 2015 *St Joseph's College, Upper Redlands Road, Reading Archaeological Watching Brief Written Scheme of Investigation*. (unpublished report)