

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**8 Rose Gardens, Wokingham,
Berkshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by David Sanchez

Site Code: RCW16/21

(SU 8129 6875)

**8 Rose Gardens,
Wokingham, Berkshire**

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For Mr Neil Patterson

David Sanchez

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code RGW 16/21

March 2016

Summary

Site name: 8 Rose Gardens, Wokingham, Berkshire.

Grid reference: SU 8129 6875

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 4th-6th March 2016

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Danielle Milbank

Site code: RGW 16/21

Summary of results: The excavation of footing trenches for the new porch and the house extension were observed during the watching brief. No features or deposits of archaeological significance were observed and no finds recovered.

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

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 17.03.16 Steve Preston ✓ 14.03.16

8 Rose Gardens, Wokingham, Berkshire An Archaeological Watching Brief

by David Sanchez

Report 16/21

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at 8 Rose Gardens, Wokingham, Berkshire (SU 8129 6875) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Neil Patterson of 4 South Drive, Wokingham, Berkshire.

Planning permission and listed building consent are to be sought from Wokingham Borough Council for the construction of a two-storey extension. As a condition of the planning consent it is likely a field observation will be required, as set out in *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012, para 141) and the Council's policies on archaeology. This watching brief has been requested in order to provide additional information to inform the planning process. These works took place according to a written scheme of investigation approved by Wokingham Borough Council as advised by Berkshire Archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Danielle Milbank on 4th–6th March 2016 and the site code is RGW 16/21.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at a local approved museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located near the centre of Wokingham (Fig. 1). The project is an extension of an existing house in the garden area, bounded by Rose Gardens to the north-west (Fig. 2). The underlying geology is mapped as sixth terrace deposits (BGS 2000) however the base of the foundations observed were within sandy clay and sand.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location within the historic core of the town. The place name of Wokingham has Saxon origins but no finds or deposits of Saxon date have yet been found. Wokingham is not mentioned in Domesday Book but this is probably a quirk of the administrative set-up with its entry subsumed within that for Sonning as a detached portion of Wiltshire (Astill 1978). In medieval times the settlement was chosen by the Bishop of Salisbury as the site for a planned town, with the site located close to what are considered to be the two main streets of the town, Peach Street and Rose Street. The most notable

fieldwork within the town took place on Cross Street which revealed a succession of medieval and post-medieval buildings (Morris and Jones 1990) with additional medieval deposits found at 2 Rose Street (WA 1988). Several post-medieval listed buildings are located in the vicinity of the site allowing for the possibility of earlier, medieval deposits to be present.

Objectives and methodology

The aims of the project were to excavate and record any archaeological features or deposits affected by the groundwork involved in the two extensions of the existing house. In general the watching brief was to involve examination of the footing trenches of the new porch and the house extension. Archaeological deposits which were threatened by groundworks were to be excavated and recorded.

Results

The excavation of the footing trenches for the two extensions was observed to a maximum depth of 1.15m (Figs. 3 and 4). A footing trench for a new porch was excavated in the north-east side of the house, 2.50m long and 1.5m wide (Pl. 1). The width of the trench was 0.70 to 0.90m and the stratigraphy observed consisted of 0.20m of turf above 0.40m of topsoil (garden soil), on top of 0.40m of greyish brown sandy silt subsoil with occasional flint inclusions. The natural geology was observed at 1.00m depth, consisting of sandy clay and clay sand with occasional sub angular flint inclusions.

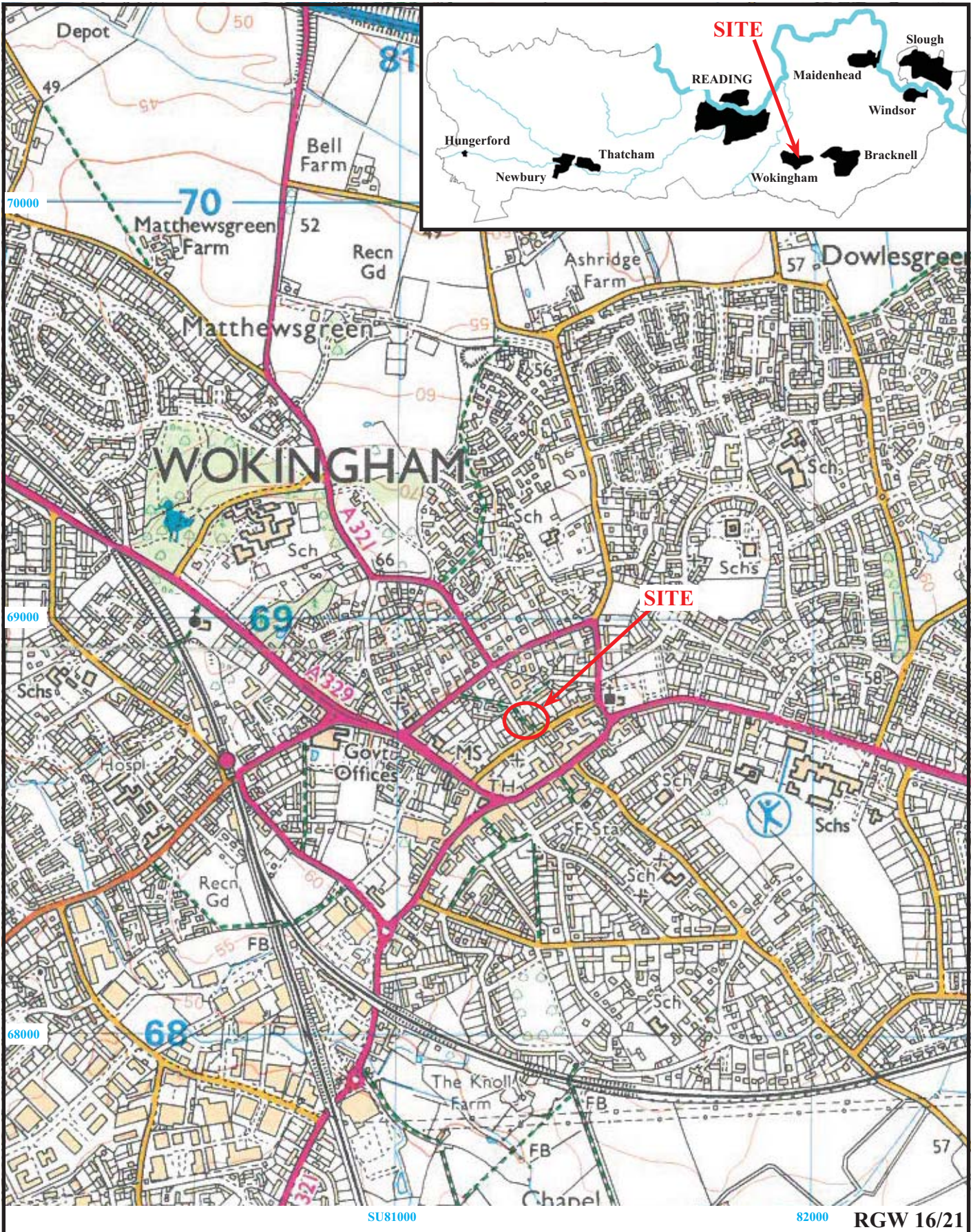
A second footing trench was dug to the south-east of the house, covering an area of 4.60m long and 3.85m wide (Pl. 2). The width of the trench was 0.90m and the stratigraphy observed consisted of 0.20m of turf above 0.64m of topsoil (garden soil) on top of 0.30m of subsoil. The natural geology was observed at 1.14m depth and consisted of orange clay and sand. A modern truncation was recorded in the south corner of the trench, which consisted of a pit cutting the subsoil and natural geology, filled with dark brown black silt and modern construction debris.

Conclusion

The watching brief successfully examined the groundworks involved in the two extensions of the existing house but no features nor deposits of archaeological significance were observed. Only a modern pit was observed truncating the general stratigraphy of the site, located in the south edge of the area affected and dated to the 20th century according to the construction debris of its fill.

References

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- Morris, E and Jones, N, 1990, 'Excavations at Cross St., Wokingham, 1974-75', *Berkshire Archaeol J* 73, (for 1986-90), 105-15
- NPPF 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London
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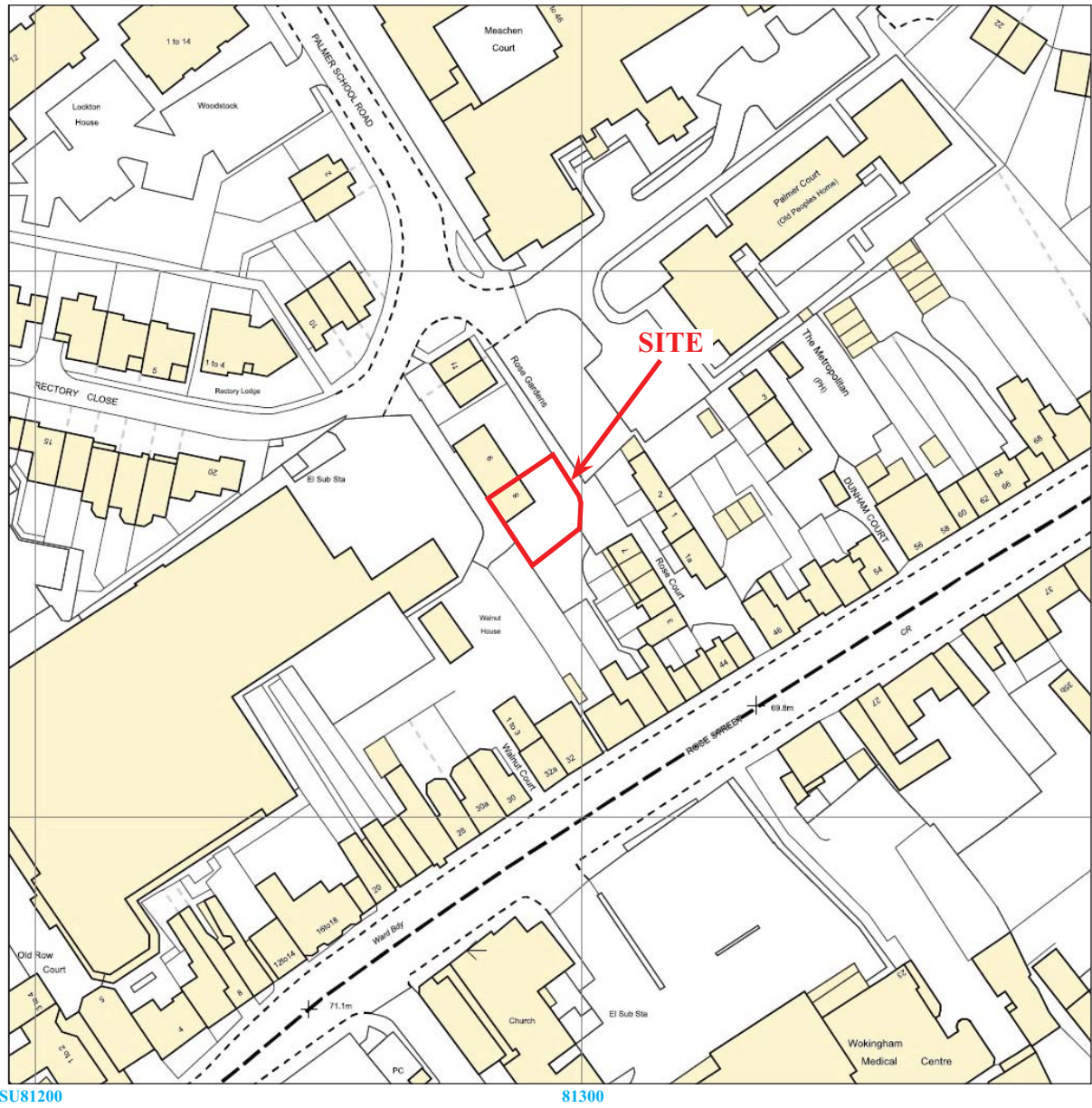


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Figure 1. Location of site within Wokingham and Berkshire.

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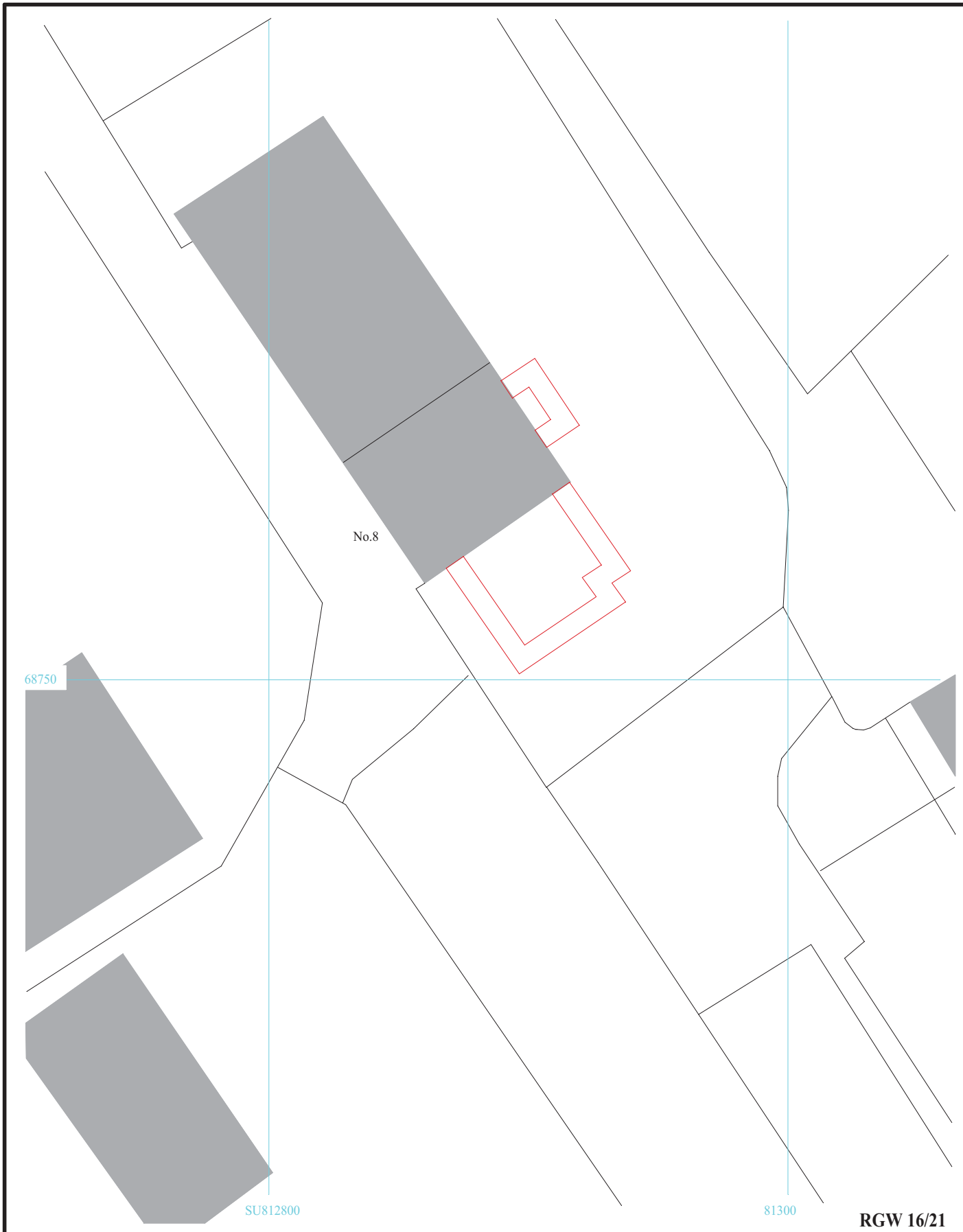


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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Rose Court and Rose Street.

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Figure 3. Location of observed areas.



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SW

NE

69.5m AOD

Topsoil/garden soil

Grey brown sandy silt occasional flint

Orange sandy clay occasional flint (natural geology)

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Figure 4. Representative section



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Plate 1. Footing trench for the porch, looking northwest, Scales: 2m and 1m.



Plate 2. Footing trench for the house extension, looking east, Scales: 2m and 1m.

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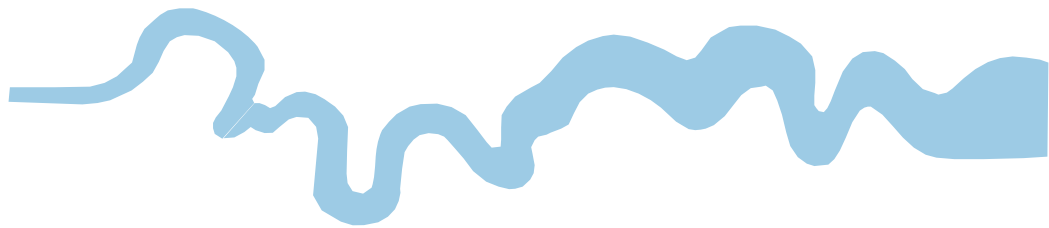
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Plates 1 - 2.**

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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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