

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**New Community Building, Wheatley Ringmead,
Great Hollands, Bracknell, Berkshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by Luis Esteves and David Sanchez

Site Code: SHB14/210

(SU 8529 6788)

New Community Building, Wheatley, Ringmead, Great Hollands, Bracknell, Berkshire

**An Archaeological Watching Brief
For 2nd Easthampstead Scout Group**

by Luis Esteves and David Sanchez
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code: SHB 14/210

November 2015

Summary

Site name: New Community Building, Wheatley, Ringmead, Great Hollands, Bracknell, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 8529 6788

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 25 August –30th November 2015

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Tim Dawson

Site code: SHB 14/210

Area of site: c. 250 sq m

Summary of results: The watching brief successfully investigated the part of the site which would be affected by the construction of a community building and associated alterations to carpark, access and landscaping. Seven footing trenches were excavated, but no archaeological finds or features were recorded.

Monuments identified: None.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading. The site archive will be deposited with an approved local museum willing to accept material.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 01.12.15 Steve Preston ✓ 01.12.15

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Report 14/210

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at the site of a New Community Building, Wheatley Ringmead, Great Hollands, Bracknell, Berkshire (SU 8529 6788) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Paul Stockham, of 97 Crowthorne Road, Bracknell, Berkshire RG12 7EL, on behalf of 2nd Easthampstead Scout Group.

Planning permission (app no 14/000331/FUL/AFULZ) has been gained from Bracknell Forest Borough Council for the construction of a community building and associated alterations to car park, access and landscaping. The permission was subject to a standard condition (18) relating to archaeology and the historic environment, requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological works.

As a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits on the site which may be damaged or destroyed by the planned building work, it was proposed to carry out a watching brief, as set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012)*. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Roland Smith of Berkshire Archaeology, the advisers to the Borough on archaeological matters.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Tim Dawson and David Sanchez between 25th August and 30th November 2015 and the site code is SHB14/210. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at local approved Museum willing to accept it in due course.

Location, topography and geology

Bracknell is located south-east of Reading, south-west of Windsor, in eastern Berkshire (Fig. 1). The site lies on the edge of the built up area of Bracknell, on the north side of Ringmead, opposite Wheatley and north of Great Hollands (Fig. 2). The site is a flat lawn, at around 75m above Ordnance Datum. The underlying geology is mapped as London Clay with outcrops of Bagshot Beds (BGS 1946): the geology observed in the trenches was a mid yellow light brown silty sand probably of the latter.

Archaeological background

The site lies within an area of East Berkshire that has in the past not been especially noted for its archaeological heritage (Ford 1987). To the south-east lies the Iron Age hillfort of Caesar's Camp and there are a number of upstanding round barrows such as those on Bill Hill, Easthampstead to the north and to the south-east at Woodenhill, (both being Scheduled Ancient Monuments). Fieldwork carried out in recent times within Bracknell has recorded more archaeology with Bronze Age, Iron Age and post-medieval remains at the former Staff College to the north (Lowe 2013) and more extensive Iron Age settlement with Mesolithic and Bronze Age occupation at Peacock Farm to the west (Simmonds 2009).

Objectives and methodology

The aims of the project are to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the groundworks. This was to involve examination of all areas of intrusive groundworks, in particular any overburden stripping prior to ground reduction, the digging of foundation trenches and service runs and any landscaping as necessary.

Results

Foundation trenches

Seven footing trenches were excavated (8.65m length, 0.60m width, 0.90–1.50m deep) on the area of the new building (Fig. 3; Pl. 1). The stratigraphy recorded comprised 0.14m of topsoil over 0.21m of subsoil onto a natural mid yellow light brown silty sand (Fig. 4; Pl. 2).

Service trench

One service trench (0.35–0.50m width, 0.60m depth) was dug in the area between the new building and an existing connection on the edge of Ringmead. The stratigraphy recorded was very similar to the footing trenches with 0.18m of topsoil above 0.26m of subsoil over natural geology (Pl. 3).

No archaeological finds or features were recorded.

Finds

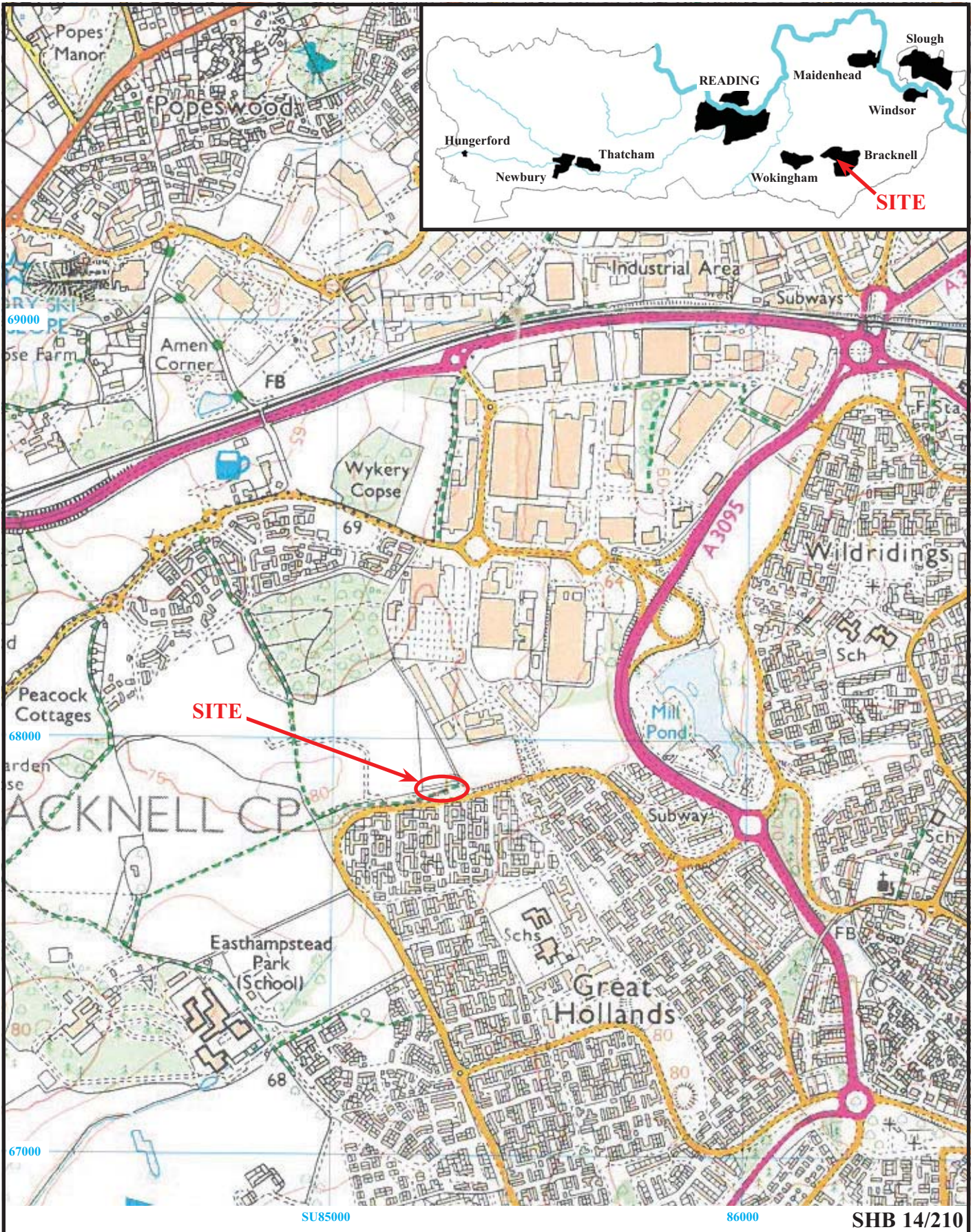
No finds of any archaeological interest were recovered during the watching brief.

Conclusion

The watching brief at this site examined the area affected by the construction of the new building. However, no archaeological finds nor features were recorded.

References

- BGS, 1946, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000, Sheet 269, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- Ford, S, 1987, *East Berkshire Archaeological Survey*, Berkshire County Council Dept Highways and Planning Occas Pap 1, Reading
- Lowe, J, 2013, *Middle Bronze Age and Middle Iron Age Occupation and Post-medieval Lime Kilns at RAF Staff College, Broad Lane, Bracknell, Berkshire*, Thames Valley Archaeological Services Occas Pap 3, Reading
- NPPF 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London
- Simmonds, A, Cook, S, Biddulph, E and Score, D, 2009, *Archaeology in the Park: Excavations at Jennett's Park, Bracknell, Berkshire*, Oxford Archaeol Occas Pap 18, Oxford

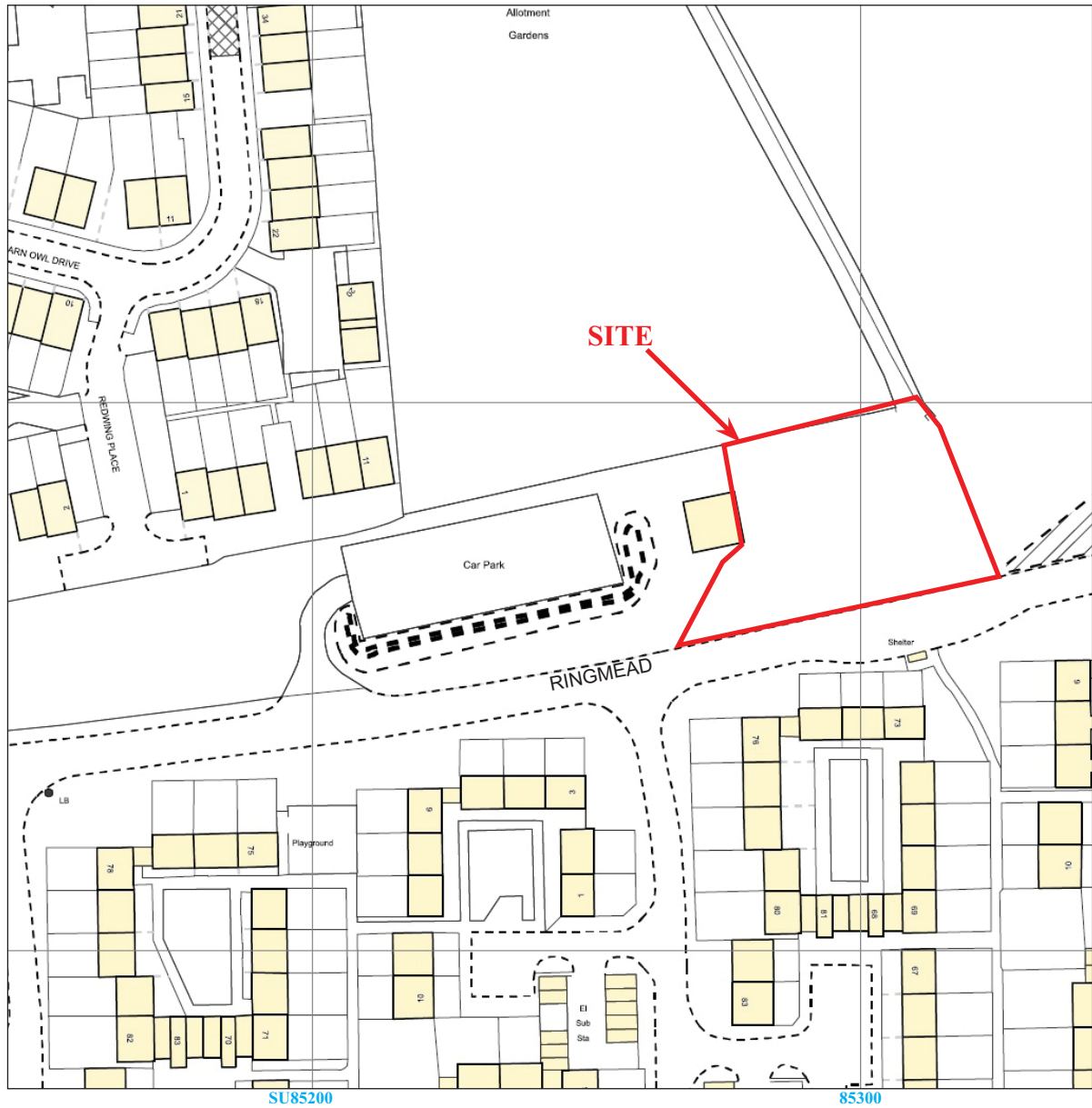


**New Community Building, Wheatley Ringmead,
Great Hollands, Bracknell, Berkshire, 2015
Archaeological Watching Brief**

Figure 1. Location of site within Bracknell and Berkshire.

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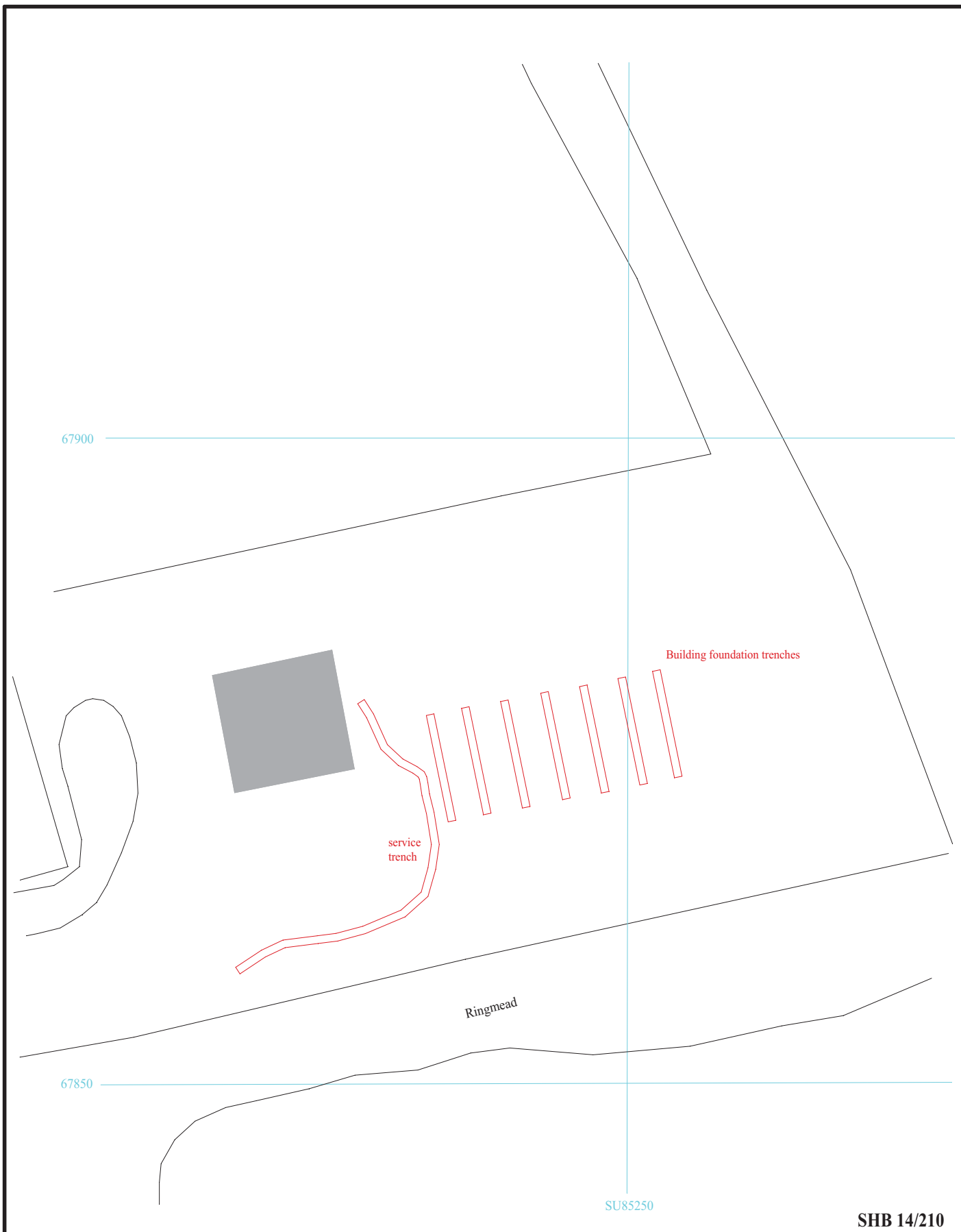


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Great Hollands, Bracknell, Berkshire, 2015
Archaeological Watching Brief**

Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Ringmead.

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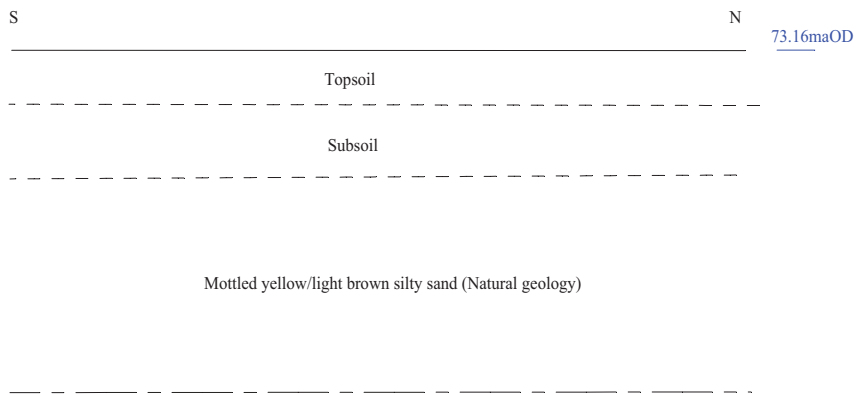
SHB 14/210

**New Community Building, Wheatley Ringmead,
Great Hollands, Bracknell, Berkshire, 2015
Archaeological Watching Brief**

Figure 3. Location of observed areas.



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SHB 14/210

**New Community Building, Wheatley Ringmead,
Great Hollands, Bracknell, Berkshire, 2015
Archaeological Watching Brief**

Figure 4. Representative section.





Plate 1. View over building foundation trenches, looking west, Scales: 2m and 1m.



Plate 2. Representative section, looking west,
Scales: 1m and 0.5m.



Plate 3. Service trench, looking east,
Scales: 2m and 0.5m.

SHB 14/210

**New Community Building, Wheatley Ringmead,
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Archaeological Watching Brief**

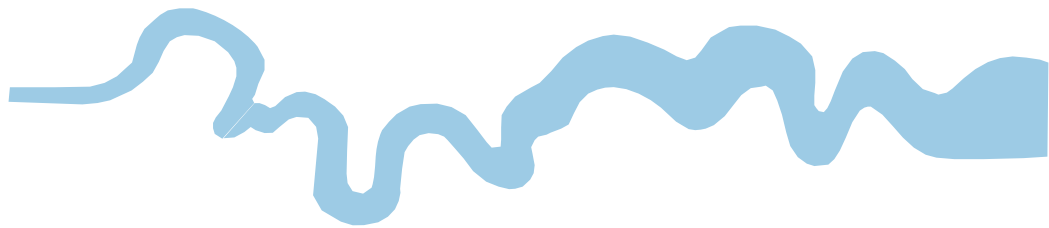
Plates 1 - 3.

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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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