

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Land at Winnersh Farmhouse, Reading Road,
Winnersh, Berkshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Daniel Bray

Site Code: WFH14/105

(SU 7875 7030)

Land at Winnersh Farmhouse, Reading Road, Winnersh, Berkshire

An Archaeological Evaluation

for CgMs Consulting

by Daniel Bray

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code WFH 14/105

June 2014

Summary

Site name: Land at Winnersh Farmhouse, Reading Road, Winnersh, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 7875 7030

Site activity: Archaeological Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 4th June 2014

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Daniel Bray

Site code: WFH 14/105

Area of site: 1.10 ha

Summary of results: Four excavated trenches revealed no archaeological features or finds. The site is not considered to have archaeological potential.

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

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

Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 06.06.14 Steve Preston ✓ 06.06.14

Land at Winnersh Farmhouse, Reading Road, Winnersh, Berkshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Daniel Bray

Report 14/105

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out on land at the former Winnersh Farmhouse, Reading Road, Winnersh, Berkshire (SU 7875 7028) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Paul Chadwick of CgMs Consulting Limited, 140 London Wall, London EC2Y 5DN.

Wokingham Borough Council has resolved to grant planning permission (reference F/2013/2342) for the construction of a 62-bed care home with associated landscaping. The permission will include a condition (5) which requires a programme of archaeological work to be carried out.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012), and the Borough Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Fiona MacDonald, Principal Archaeologist at Berkshire Archaeology, advisers to Wokingham Borough Council on archaeological matters. The fieldwork was undertaken by Daniel Bray and Steven Crabb on the 4th June 2014 with the site code WFH 14/105. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at a suitable museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site comprises an irregular shaped parcel of land on the north side of Reading Road, to the west of Woodward Close, Winnersh, Wokingham, Berkshire (Fig. 1). The railway line from Reading to London Waterloo marks the northern boundary of the site (Fig. 2). The site is approximately 1.10ha in area and currently consists of ground cleared of the former structures, with scrub present. The site has previously been used as a compound during construction of the nearby M4 motorway located to the south. The natural geology is mapped as London Clay Formation with undifferentiated Fourth Terrace gravel on the easternmost side of the site (BGS 1971, Wymer 1999). The site lies at a height of 52m above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a desk-based assessment (CgMs 2003). In summary its potential stems from its location within an area where there is a moderate range of archaeological finds and sites recorded within the wider area, with for example two Bronze Age urns recorded from a site to the north. A general perspective on settlement in the environs comes from various field surveys in East Berkshire (Ford 1987) and Loddon Valley (Ford 1994-7) which examined areas to the west and east of the proposal site with several Roman and prehistoric sites recorded. More recent fieldwork to the south has revealed further Bronze Age pottery but also a large Iron Age ironworking complex (Lewis *et al.* 2013). However, other fieldwork relatively nearby found little of interest (eg Bray 2013; Taylor 2010). The former farmhouse was demolished without record but was possibly of 16th/17th century construction and may have had earlier, late Medieval origins.

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. Specific research aims of this project are:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on this site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present; and
- to provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological mitigation strategy.

It was proposed to excavate four trenches each 1.60m wide and 25m in length. The trenches were to be excavated using a JCB-type machine equipped with a toothless ditching bucket and supervised at all times by an archaeologist, with the spoil removed being monitored for finds. All potential archaeological deposits were to be hand-cleaned and sufficient of the archaeological features and deposits exposed were excavated or sampled by hand to satisfy the aims of the project.

Results

All trenches were dug close to their intended positions except for Trench 2, which had to be moved due to site constraints. Trenches were between 24.50m and 25.20m in length and 0.35 and 0.60m in depth (Fig. 3). All trenches were 1.60m wide. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1 (Figs 3, 4; Pl. 1)

Trench 1 was aligned NW - SE and was 24.50m long and 0.50m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.25m of topsoil and 0.20m of mid grey silty clay subsoil overlying the natural yellow/brown clay geology. Modern truncations containing plastic bags, bricks and china were observed but no features of archaeological interest were revealed.

Trench 2 (Fig. 3; Pl. 2)

Trench 2 was aligned E - W and was 25.50m long and 0.35m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.25m of topsoil and 0.05m of subsoil overlying natural yellow/grey silty clay geology. A modern linear feature was observed on at the eastern end of the trench, aligned WNW–ESE, and relates to a boundary seen on Ordnance Survey maps.

Trench 3 (Fig. 3)

Trench 3 was aligned SE - NW and was 25.00m long and between 0.40m deep and the western end and 0.60m in the eastern end. At the western end the stratigraphy consisted of 0.30m of topsoil and 0.05m of subsoil overlying natural yellow/brown clay geology. At the eastern end 0.40m of modern made ground material overlay 0.15m of topsoil and 0.05m of subsoil. The modern made ground most likely relates to the compound associated with the construction of the M4 motorway. No archaeological features were identified and no finds recovered.

Trench 4 (Figs 3, 4; Pl 3)

Trench 4 was aligned SE - NW and was 25.20m long and 0.55m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.05m of humic material above 0.05m of gravel. These deposits were on top of 0.30m of topsoil and 0.10m of subsoil all above the natural yellow/brown clay geology. A modern service trench was seen cutting the through the topsoil. No archaeological features were observed

Conclusion

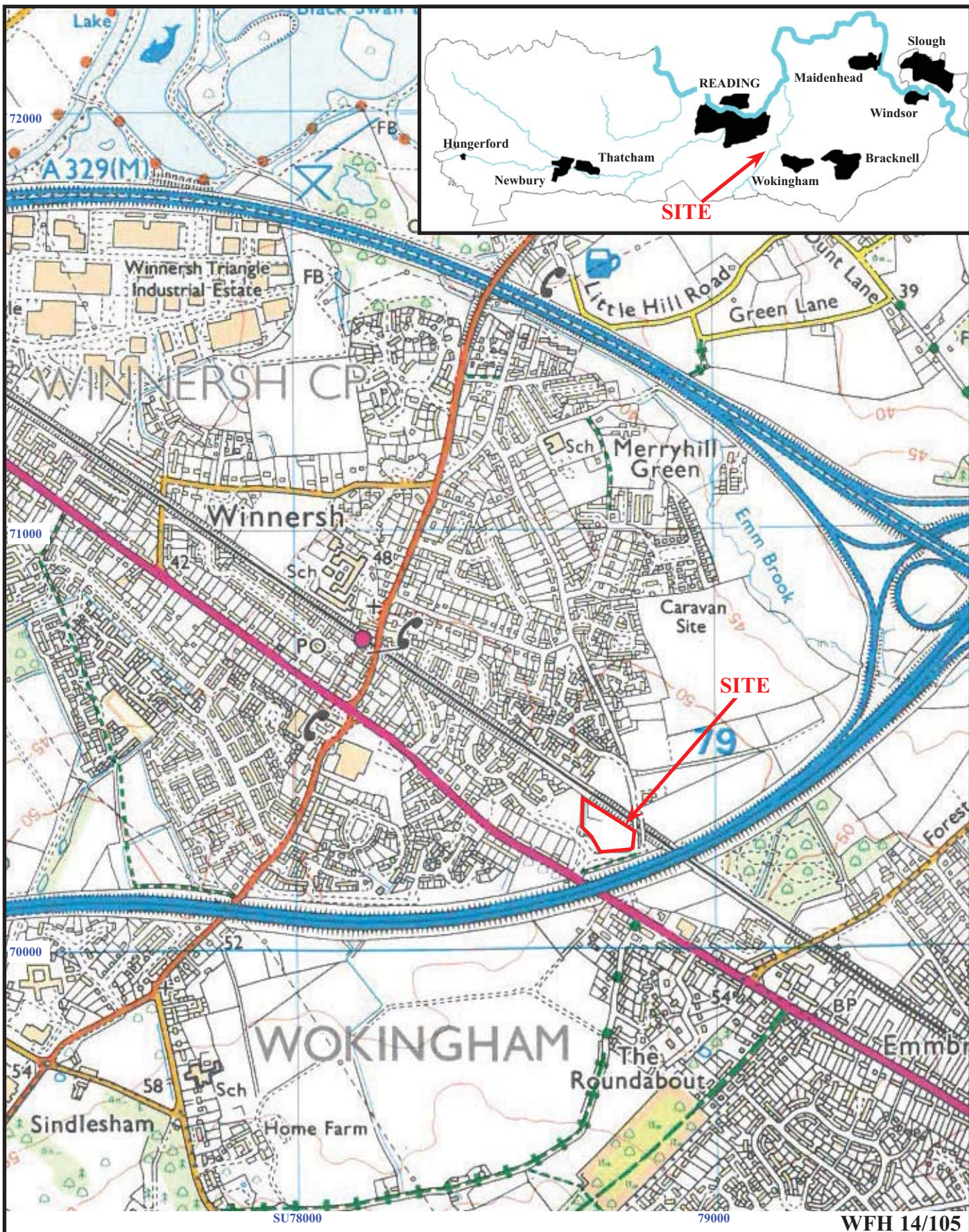
The trenching exercise revealed only modern truncations and made ground most likely relating to the compound or other activity associated with the construction of the M4 motorway. No archaeological features or artefacts of archaeological interest were revealed. It is therefore concluded that the development site has no archaeological potential.

References

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APPENDIX 1: Trench details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	24.50	1.60	0.50	0-0.25m topsoil; 0.25m-0.45m mid grey silty clay subsoil; 0.45m+ natural yellow clay geology. [PI. 1]
2	25.50	1.60	0.35	0-0.25m topsoil; 0.25m-0.35m subsoil; 0.35m+ natural yellow grey silty clay geology [PI. 2]
3	25.00	1.60	0.40-0.60	W end: 0-0.30m topsoil; 0.30m-0.35m subsoil; 0.35m+ natural yellow clay geology. E end: 0-0.40m modern dumped material; 0.40m-0.55m topsoil; 0.55m-0.60m subsoil; 0.60m+ natural geology
4	25.20	1.60	0.55	0-0.05m humic material; 0.05m-0.10m gravel; 0.10m-0.40m topsoil; 0.40m-0.50m subsoil; 0.50m+ natural geology [PI. 3]

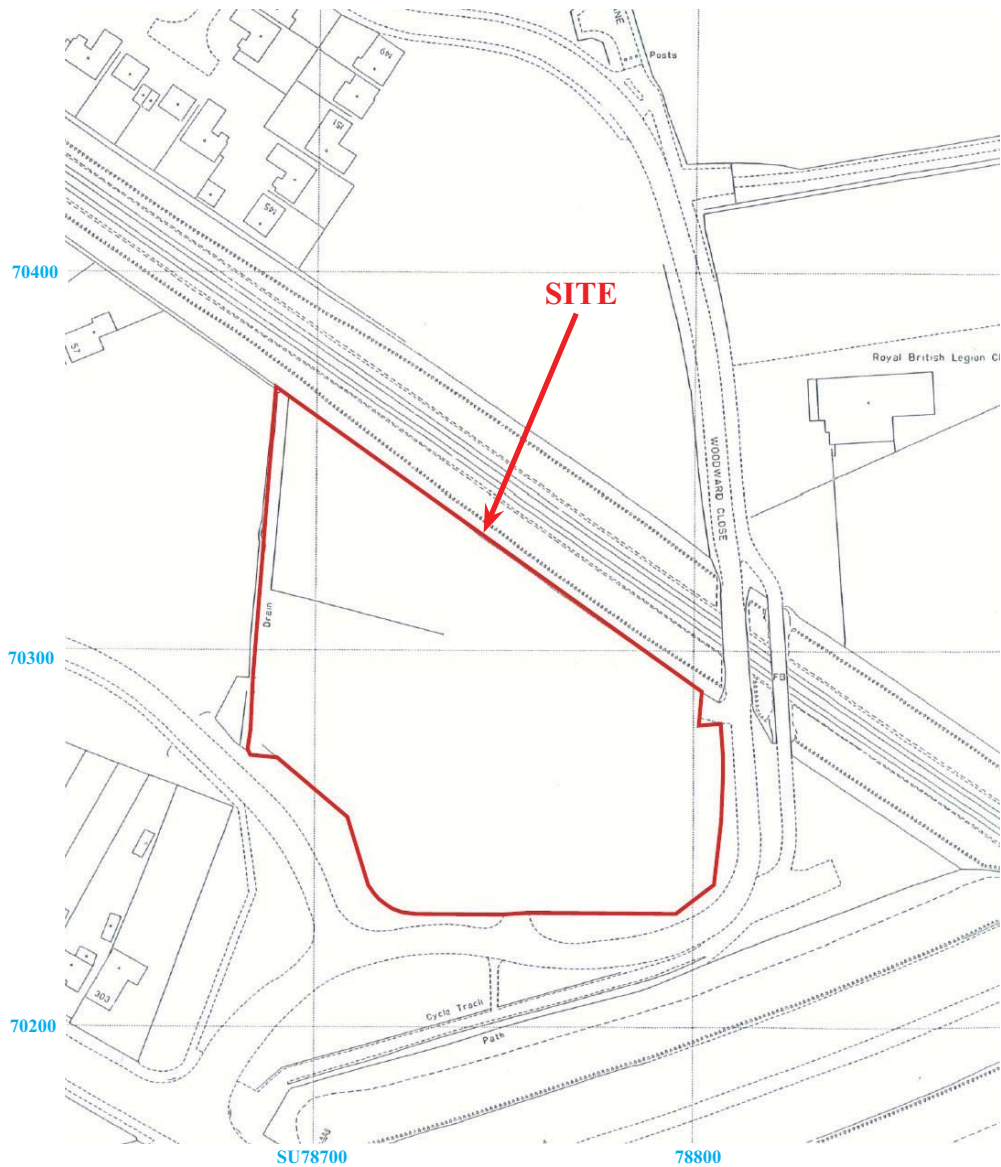


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Figure 1. Location of site within Winnersh and Berkshire.

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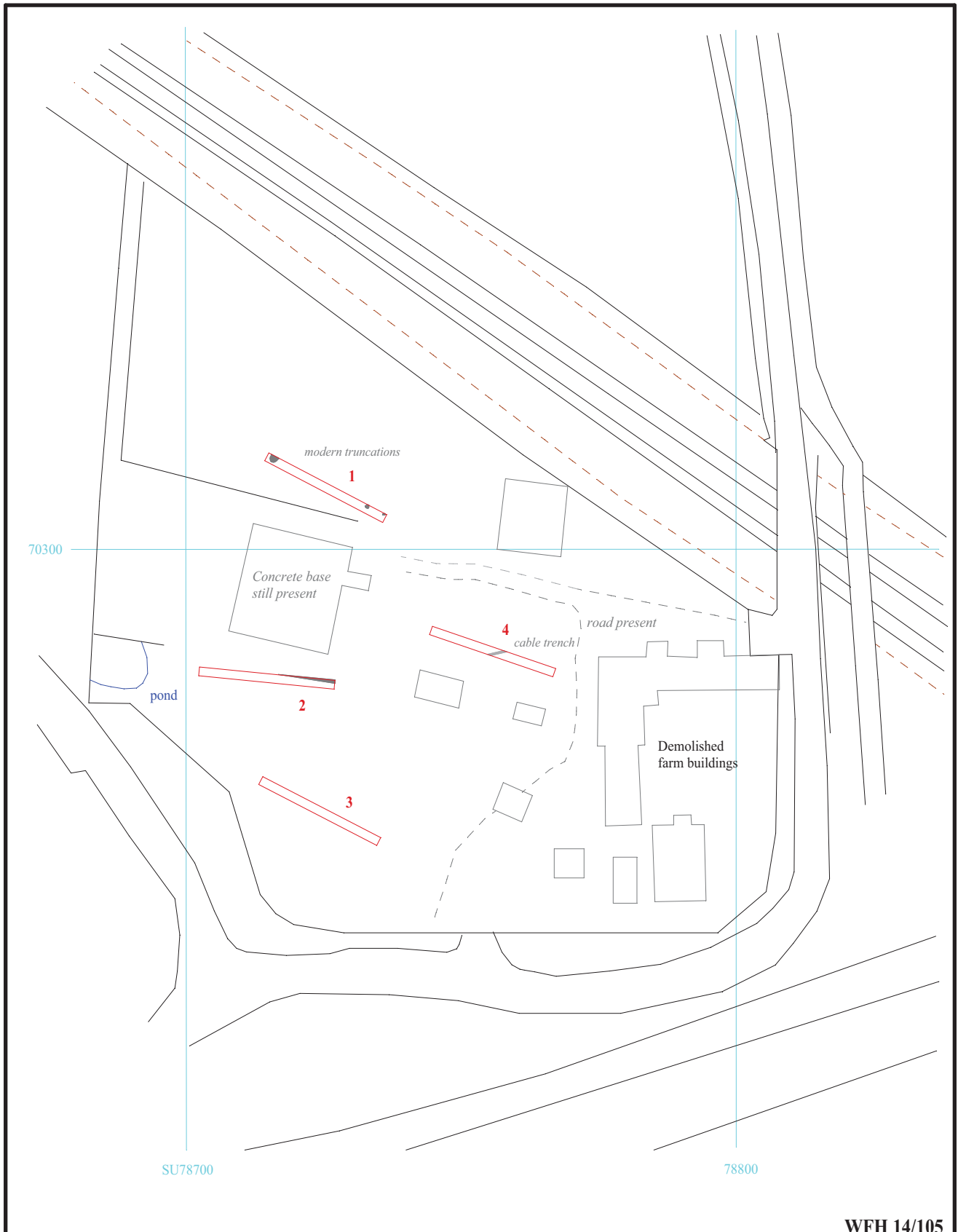


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Figure 2. Detailed location of site.

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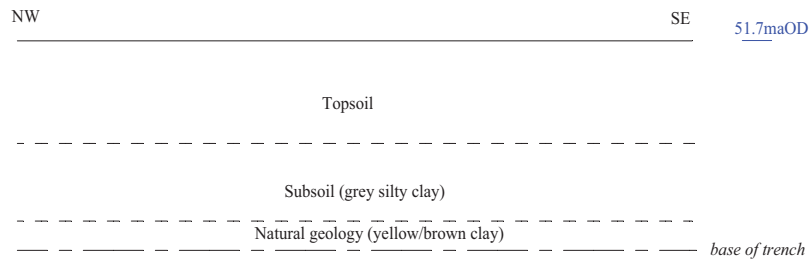
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Figure 3. Location of trenches, and demolished farm buildings.

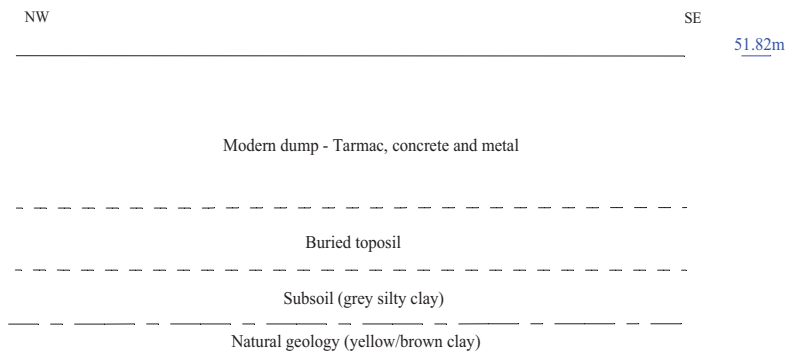


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Trench 1



Trench 3 - East end



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Figure 4. Representative sections.



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Plate 1. Trench 1, looking east, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.3m.



Plate 2. Trench 2, looking east, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.3m.



Plate 2. Trench 4, looking south east, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m., vertical 0.5m

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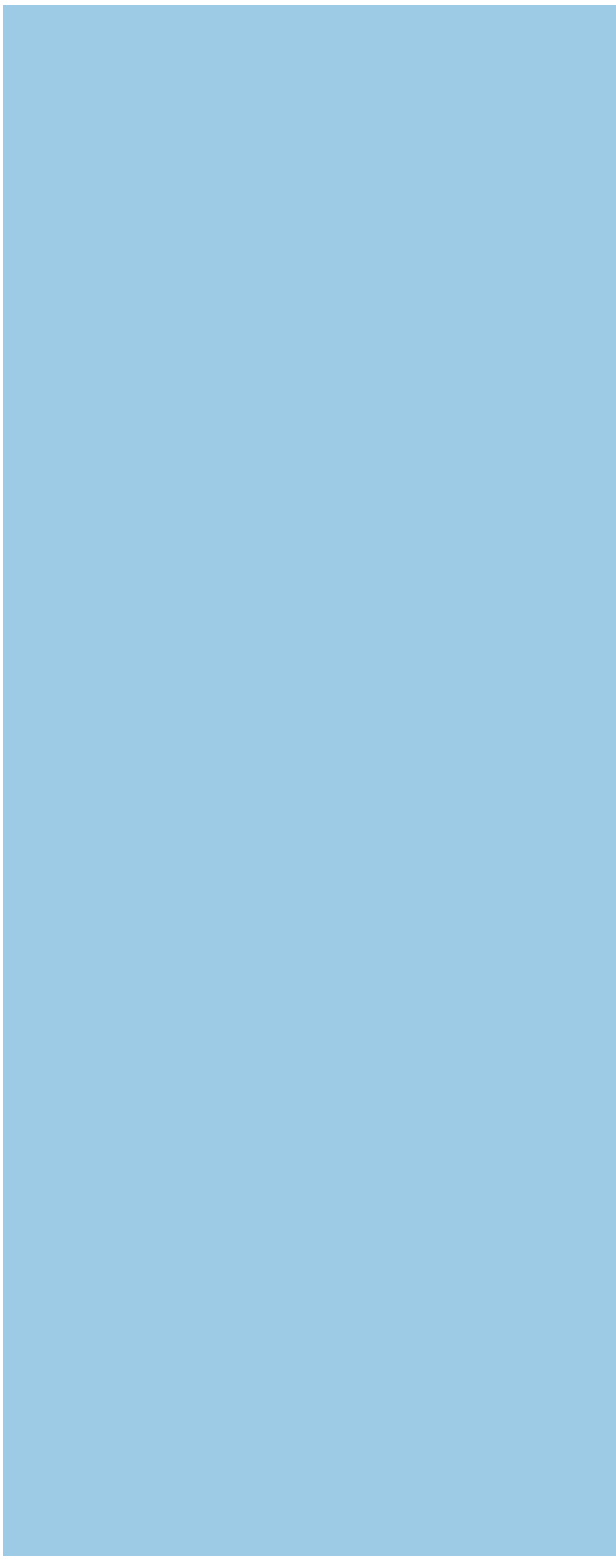
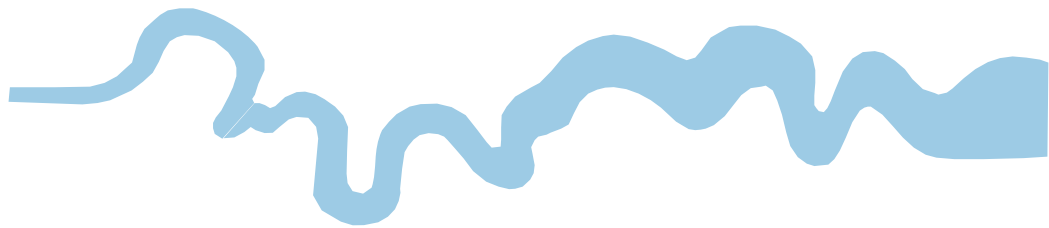
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Plates 1 - 3.**

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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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