

**Warren Road, Woodley, Wokingham,
Berkshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Cala Homes (South) Ltd**

by Stephen Hammond
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code 03/113

December 2003

Summary

Site name: Warren Road, Woodley, Wokingham, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU7590 7411

Site activity: Archaeological evaluation

Date and duration of project: 2nd–11th December 2003

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Stephen Hammond

Site code: WRW 03/113

Area of site: 1.6 ha

Summary of results: Two gullies of unknown date were located; both are considered to be of modern origin and relate to drain laying.

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

This report may be copied for bona fide research or planning purposes without the explicit permission of the copyright holder

Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford✓ 18.12.03
	Steve Preston✓ 18.12.03

Warren Road, Woodley, Wokingham, Berkshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Stephen Hammond

Report 03/113

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Warren Road, Woodley, Wokingham, Berkshire (SU 7590 7411) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Sally Randall of CPM Environmental Planning and Design, Akeman Barns, Coln St Aldwyns, Cirencester, Gloucestershire on behalf of Cala Homes (South) Ltd, Burgan House, The Causeway, Staines, Middx, TW18 3PR.

Planning permission has been sought from Wokingham District Council (O/2001/2568), to build 39 houses on the site. As a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits on the site, which may be damaged or destroyed by ground works, a field evaluation was requested.

This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Planning Policy Guidance, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990), and the District's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Kev Beachus of Babtie, archaeological advisers to Wokingham District Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Stephen Hammond with the assistance of Simon Cass, Sean Wallis and Jennifer Lowe between the 2nd and 11th December 2003 and the site code is WRW 03/113. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Reading Museum Service in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is an irregular plot of land approximately 1.6 hectares in size, located off Warren Road, Woodley forming part of two former gardens, just south of the railway line. The site is at a height of c. 58m above Ordnance Datum, with the land sloping moderately down towards the south-east. A large area of the site towards the east consisted of dense undergrowth and trees. The geology is on the interface between plateau gravels and London clay (BGS 1946). Both were observed during the evaluation.

An area of the site was set aside because of the presence of a badger sett, and some was to be left as open space, reducing the developable area to just over 1 ha.

Archaeological background

The site lies in an area relatively rich in archaeological deposits. Various Palaeolithic finds have been made in the vicinity especially during the cutting of the railway to the north (Wymer 1999, map 6). To the east, Bronze Age occupation has been recorded (Hardy, 1999). To the north, aerial photography has revealed cropmarks of enclosures probably of Iron Age and Roman date. To the north-east are prehistoric monuments comprising a *cursus*, mortuary enclosure and levelled round barrows, and another Roman enclosure (Gates 1975).

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. The specific research aims of the project were:

- To determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on the site.
- To determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present.

In order to achieve these aims 15 trenches were to be dug 25m in length across the site representing 6% of the developable area, using a JCB-type vehicle fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. It was intended to dig these trenches as close as possible to the positions agreed in the project specification but consideration would have to be given logistical problems encountered on site. Where archaeological features were certainly or probably present, the stripped areas would be cleaned using appropriate hand tools before being investigated further. Sufficient of the archaeological features and deposits exposed would be excavated or sampled by hand to satisfy the aims of the brief, without compromising the integrity of those features or deposits which warrant preservation *in situ*, or might be better excavated under conditions pertaining to full excavation

A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1. Feature details are listed in Appendix 2.

Results

In total 15 trenches were dug ranging in length from 15.50m to 26.00m, which varied in depth from 0.30m to 0.78m. Due to the problems caused by the large numbers of trees in the wooded area towards the eastern part of the site and the location of retained trees elsewhere, some trenches became impractical to dig and were relocated and their lengths changed. However, a broad spatial coverage was maintained (Fig. 3).

Typically the stratigraphy revealed during the trenching consisted of a mid to dark grey/brown clay silt topsoil overlaying a mid orange/brown sandy/silty clay subsoil which in turn covered a natural orange clay with occasional flint gravel patches (Pl. 2) . Trench 10 was slightly different and was seen to contain a much larger quantity of gravel natural than the other trenches. Trenches 4 and 10 contained test pits at their north-east and westerly ends respectively to check the depths of natural horizons. Many of the trenches contained substantial tree root disturbance. Just two trenches (2 and 6) contained possible archaeological features.

Trench 2

Trench 2 was aligned approximately NE–SW and was 16.00m long with a depth of 0.56m. The stratigraphy noted in section consisted of 0.20m of dark grey/brown clayey silt topsoil with very occasional charcoal flecking and sub-rounded flint inclusions and frequent tree root disturbance. This covered a mid orange/brown sandy/silty clay subsoil 0.28m thick. Below this a mid orange clay natural with occasional patches of gravel was observed to the base of the trench. One possible feature was identified. Gully 1, seen on an east–west alignment, was 0.70m wide and 0.15m deep with a single fill (50) similar to the subsoil. This contained no dating evidence but is likely to be relatively modern as the unconsolidated fill is similar to another clearly modern gully containing a drain seen in Trench 3 (the trench to the immediate east).

Trench 6

This trench was 26.60m long on an approximate east–west alignment, being dug to a depth of 0.60m. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.18m of mid grey-brown clay silt with occasional sub-rounded and sub- angular flint gravel inclusions and frequent tree root disturbance above 0.45m of mid orange-brown sandy clay subsoil. This in turn overlaid a mid orange clay natural with moderate sand and gravel patches which continued to the total depth of the trench. This trench contained one possible feature, a shallow ditch/gully (2), with a single fill (51), on an approximate north-south alignment (Pl. 1). This feature was 1.15m wide and 0.15m deep but contained no dating evidence. From examination of the section, however, it became apparent that feature cut through the subsoil directly below the topsoil and is therefore almost certainly of fairly modern origin (Fig. 4).

Finds

No archaeological finds were discovered during the evaluation.

Conclusion

Despite some restrictions on the placement of trenches, a broad coverage across the site was maintained, but only two trenches contained features of possible archaeological interest. However, neither of these produced any dating evidence and both would appear to be associated with modern land use or drainage. The site therefore does not appear to have any archaeological potential.

References

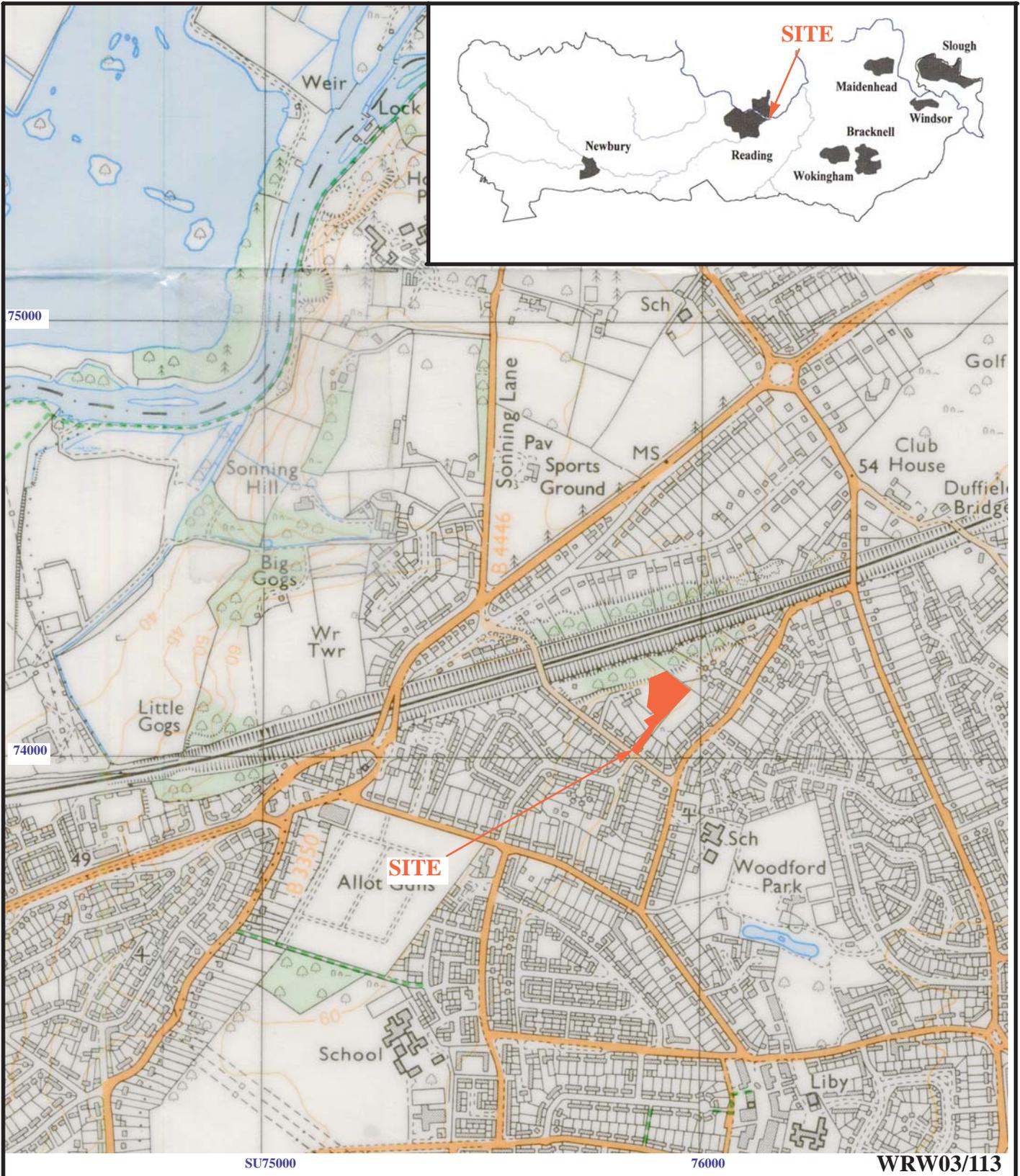
- BGS, 1946, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50 000, Sheet 268, Drift Edition, Keyworth
- Gates, T, 1975, *The Thames Valley, An archaeological Survey of the River Gravels*, Berkshire Archaeol Comm Pubn 1, Reading
- Hardy, A, 1999, *Excavations at Duffield House, Woodley, Berkshire*, Oxford Archaeology Occas pap 4, Oxford
- PPG16, 1990, *Archaeology and Planning*, Dept of the Environment Planning Policy Guidance 16, HMSO
- Wymer, J J, 1999, *The Lower Palaeolithic occupation of Britain*, Wessex Archaeol, Salisbury

APPENDIX 1: Trench details
0m at S or W end

<i>Trench No.</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	21.00	1.6	0.52	0-0.26m dark grey/brown clayey silt topsoil. 0.26-0.40m mid orange/brown sandy/silty clay subsoil. 0.40m+ natural orange clay with occasional patches of sand and gravel. No finds/archaeology.
2	16.00	1.6	0.56	0-0.20m dark grey/brown clayey silt topsoil. Frequent root action, very occasional charcoal flecking and very occasional sub rounded flint. 0.20-0.48m mid orange/brown sandy/silty/clay subsoil. 0.48m+ mid orange clay natural with occasional patches of gravel. Feature 1.
3	20.60	1.6	0.54	0-0.28m dark grey/brown clayey silt topsoil. 0.28-0.42m mid orange/brown sandy/silty clay subsoil. 0.42m+ mid orange clay natural with occasional patches of gravel and sand. Modern pipe cut 10.20m
4	23.80	1.6	0.55	0-0.25m dark grey/brown clayey silt topsoil. 0.25-0.44m mid orange/brown sandy/silty clay subsoil. 0.44m+ mid orange clay natural with patches of gravel and sand. Test pit at NE end dug to 0.82m to check natural horizons.
5	15.50	1.6	0.47	0-0.20m very dark grey/brown topsoil with frequent root action. Very occasional sub rounded flint. Occasional brick and tile. 0.20-0.41m mid orange/brown sandy/silty clay subsoil. 0.41m+ mid orange clay natural with occasional gravel patches. No finds/archaeology.
6	26.00	1.6	0.60	0-0.18m mid grey/brown clayey silt topsoil. Frequent root action, occasional sub rounded and sub angular flint gravel. 0.15-0.48m mid orange/brown sandy/silty clay subsoil. 0.48m+ mid orange clay with moderate patches of sandy gravel and sand. Feature 2. Plate 1
7	21.50	1.6	0.53 (N) 0.65 (S)	0-0.31m mid grey/brown clayey silt topsoil. 0.31-0.52m mid orange/brown sandy/silty clay subsoil. 0.52m+ mid orange clay natural with patches of sand and gravel. No finds/archaeology.
8	18.90	1.6	0.72	0-0.15m mid grey/brown clay/silt topsoil with frequent root action, occasional sub rounded and sub angular flint gravel. 0.15-0.60m mid orange/brown sandy clayey silt subsoil. 0.60m+ mid orange clay natural with frequent sand and gravel. No finds/archaeology.
9	20.00	1.6	0.60	0-0.14m mid grey/brown clay/silt with frequent root disturbance. 0.14-0.48m mid orange brown sandy/silty clay subsoil. 0.48m+ mid orange brown sandy/silty clay subsoil. 0.48m+ mid orange clay natural with occasional sandy gravel patches. No finds/archaeology.
10	19.05	1.6	0.65	0-0.18m very dark grey/brown clayey silt topsoil with very occasional sub rounded flint gravel. 0.18-0.57m mid orange/brown sandy/silty clay subsoil. 0.57m+ mid orange clay natural with moderate gravel patches changing to gravel natural towards the west. No finds/archaeology. Test pit dug to a depth of 1.00m at w end to check natural horizons.
11	19.90	1.6	0.58	0-0.28m very dark grey/brown clayey silt with very occasional sub rounded flint gravel. 0.28-0.49m mid orange/brown sandy/silty clay subsoil. 0.49+ mid orange clay natural with moderate gravel inclusions. No finds/archaeology.
12	20.00	1.6	0.53	0-0.28m very dark grey/brown clayey silt topsoil. 0.28-0.46m mid orange/brown sandy/silty clay subsoil. 0.46m+ mid orange clay with patches of sand and gravel. Pipe trench noted at 13.7m. Plate 2
13	20.50	1.6	0.63 (E) 0.78 (W)	0-0.35m dark grey/brown clayey silt topsoil. 0.35-0.60m mid orange/brown sandy/silty clay subsoil. 0.60m+ mid orange clay with occasional patches of gravel. Partially flooded after hitting water table.
14	20.60	1.6	0.45(E) 0.55(W)	0-0.25m dark grey/brown clayey silt topsoil. 0.25-0.44m mid orange/brown sandy/silty clay. 0.44m+ mid brown/orange gravel natural with occasional patches of clay. Very wet.
15	20.50	1.6	0.60 (E) 0.30(W)	0-0.20m(E) and 0-0-10m(W), very dark grey/brown clayey silt topsoil. 0.20-0.55m(E) and 0.10-0.25m(W), mid orange/brown sandy/silty clay subsoil. 0.55m+(E) and 0.25m+(W), mid orange clay natural with occasional gravel patches

APPENDIX 2: Feature details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
2	1	50	Drain	Modern?	None; but similar to clearly modern feature in Tr 3.
6	2	51	Ditch/gully	Modern?	Stratigraphy



**Warren Road, Woodley, Wokingham,
Berkshire, 2003**

Figure 1. Location of site within Woodley and Berkshire.

Reproduced from Ordnance Survey Pathfinder 1172 SU67/77 1:25000
at 1:12500 Ordnance Survey Licence AL52324A0001

THAMES VALLEY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SERVICES

Warren Road, Woodley, Wokingham, Berkshire, 2003

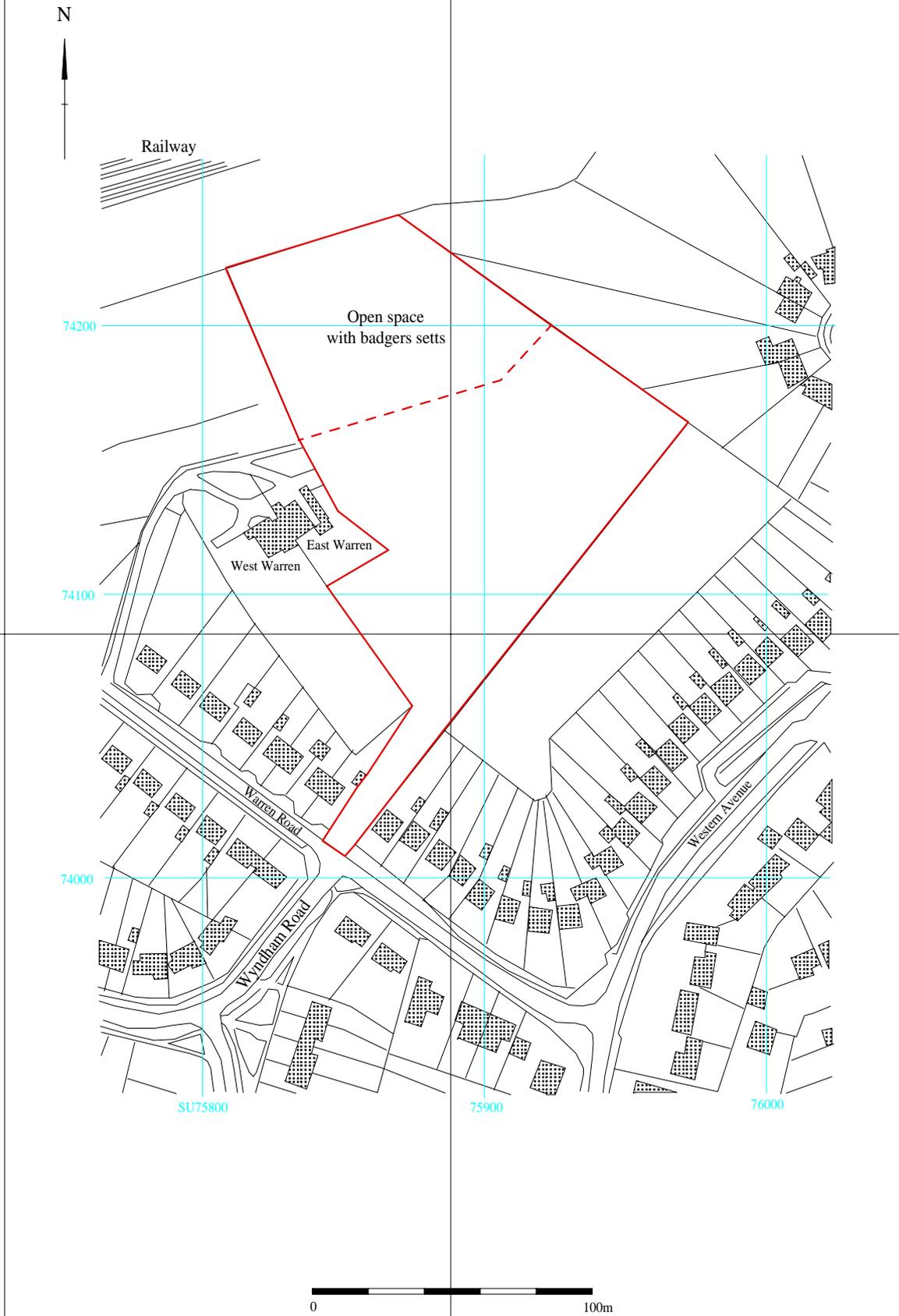


Figure 2. Location of site

Warren Road, Woodley, Wokingham, Berkshire, 2003



Figure 3. Location of trenches

Warren Road, Woodley, Wokingham, Berkshire, 2003

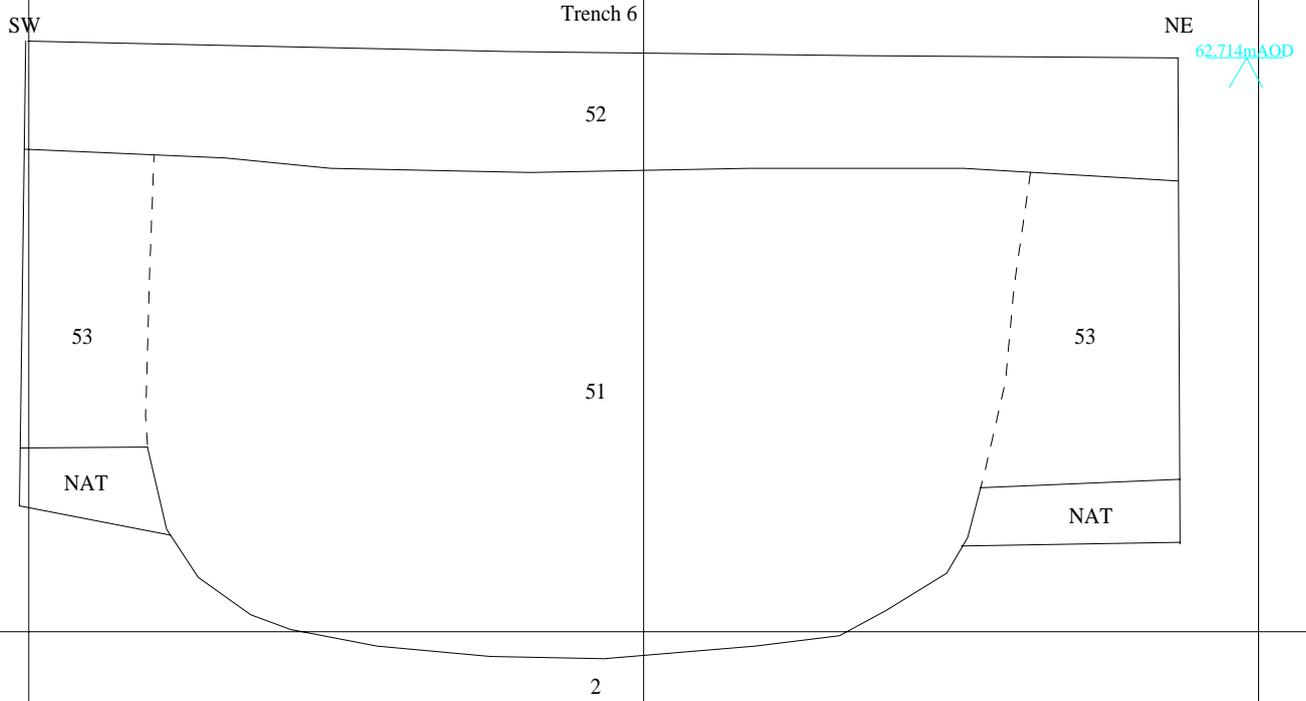


Figure 4. Section



Plate 1. North facing Trench 6, feature 2, scales 1m and 0.1m.



Plate 2. Trench 12, North west facing, scales 2m and 1m.