THAMES VALLEY

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

SERVICES

1A Upper Redlands Road, Reading, Berkshire

Archaeological Evaluation

by Ellen McManus-Fry

Site Code: URR16/240

(SU 7338 7236)

1A Upper Redlands Road, Reading, Berkshire

An Archaeological Evaluation

for CgMs Consulting

by Ellen McManus-Fry

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code URR16/240

January 2017

Summary

Site name: 1A Upper Redlands Road, Reading, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 73382 72363

Site activity: Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 9th-10th January 2017

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Ellen McManus-Fry

Site code: URR16/240

Area of site: c. 0.5 ha

Summary of results: No features or finds of archaeological significance were uncovered during the course of the evaluation. The site is therefore considered to have no archaeological potential.

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

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford✓ 17.01.17 Steve Preston✓ 17.01.17

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1A Upper Redlands Road, Reading, Berkshire
An Archaeological Evaluation

by Ellen McManus-Fry

Report 16/240

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at 1A Upper Redlands Road, Reading (SU 73382 72363) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Richard Smalley of CgMs Consulting, Burlington House, Lypiatt Road, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL50 2SY on behalf of The University of Reading.

Planning permission (application no. 150890) has been granted by Reading Borough Council for the demolition of the existing industrial units and the development of 10 residential units for staff accommodation in connection with the University of Reading, associated car parking, bin stores, access and landscaping. This consent is subject to condition (13), relating to archaeology. As a possibility of archaeological deposits on the site which may be damaged or destroyed by the groundworks, a field evaluation has been required as detailed in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012, para. 128), and the Council policies on archaeology.

The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms. Ellie Leary, Archaeology Officer for Berkshire Archaeology, archaeological advisors to the Borough Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Ellen McManus-Fry and John Tierney, on 9-10th January 2017 and the site code is 16/240. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located to the southeast of Reading town centre, on the eastern end of Upper Redlands Road at the northern edge of the University of Reading's Whiteknights campus (Fig. 1). The site is bordered to the north by the gardens of residential houses along Upper Redlands Road, to the east and west by wooded areas, and to the south by the university campus service road. The site lies at approximately 60m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) and the underlying geology consists of London Clay formation (BGS 2000). This geology was observed in all trenches as light reddish yellow clay. Some staining/reduction of the clay from overlying made ground and concrete to produce a blue grey colouration was also observed. The site currently consists of a small complex of

industrial buildings formally known as the Barnat Works; two small grassed areas, previously parts of the back gardens of two houses on Upper Redlands Road; and a car park. Due to the focus of the proposed development, the areas examined in the evaluation are the central courtyard of the Barnat Works and the two back garden areas.

Archaeological background

The site is located within an area of known archaeological potential. Previous archaeological work at Whiteknights Hall, 150m west of the site, uncovered evidence of prehistoric activity, and investigations ahead of development at Childs Hall, 150m to the south, found a post-medieval pit and two undated gullies (WA 2009a and b). A late Bronze Age pit and a hoard of Iron Age currency bars were found during investigations at a site on Addington Road (Ford 2010) c. 700m north-west of the site, although an evaluation just to the south of that site, at Wells Hall, uncovered no archaeological finds or features (Platt 2012).

Objectives and methodology

The aims of the project can be summaries as follows:

- To determine the presence/absence, extent, and character of any archaeological evidence on the site and to considered the archaeological interest of these in the wider context
- To generate an accessible and usable archive which will allow future research of the evidence to be undertaken if appropriate
- To disseminate the results of the work in a format and manner proportionate to the significance of the findings

Four trenches were to be dug, measuring between 7m and 13m in length and no less than 1.5m wide. These were to be dug using a JCB-type machine fitted with a toothless bucket, and under constant archaeological supervision, either down to the natural geology or until archaeological features were encountered. All archaeological deposits were to be hand cleaned, excavated and recorded, except where such remains might warrant preservation *in situ* or might better be investigated under the conditions appertaining to full excavation. All spoil heaps were to be monitored for artefacts and metal detected to allow analysis of the spatial distribution of artefacts. Discovery of human remains were to be reported to the coroner but no further action taken as part of the evaluation exercise. Environmental samples were to be taken from any suitable archaeological deposits.

Results

All four trenches were dug as intended, although the position of the courtyard trenches had to be altered slightly from the original plan due to the constrictions on the placement of the JCB in the limited space. The trenches ranged in length from 7.86m to 10.70m and in depth from 0.49m to 0.78m and were 1.5m wide. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1 (Figs 3 and 4; Pl. 1 and 2)

Trench 1 was aligned NW-SE and was 10.2m long and 0.66m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.25m of topsoil (mid reddish-brown silty clay), above 0.21m of mid reddish-brown clay silt subsoil, overlying the natural geology, light reddish-yellow clay. A modern, single course, brick wall foundation was observed crossing the trench at 7.9m. No finds or features of archaeological significance were recovered.

Trench 2 (Fig. 3)

Trench 2 was aligned NNW-SSE and was 10.7m long and 0.67m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.57m of topsoil (mid grey brown silty loam, overlying the natural clay geology. No finds or features of archaeological significance were recovered.

Trench 3 (Figs 3 and 4; Pl. 3)

Trench 3 was aligned E-W and was 7.86m long and 0.49m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.18m of modern concrete, overlying 0.14m of mid grey-brown silty clay, above the natural mid red-brown clay geology. Two modern service pipes crossed this trench. No finds or features of archaeological significance were recovered.

Trench 4 (Fig. 3; Pl. 4)

Trench 4 was aligned NE-SW and was 8.0m long and 0.78m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.16m of modern concrete, overlying 0.36m of mixed subsoil (mid brown/grey silty clay) and made ground, above the natural mid red-brown clay geology, which was discoloured to blue-grey in most of the trench due to the presence of overlying concrete and made ground. One modern service pipe crossed this trench. No finds or features of archaeological significance were recovered.

Conclusion

The evaluation trenching of the site was carried out as intended. However the position of the courtyard trenches had to be adjusted slightly No archaeological deposits nor finds were revealed and on the basis of these results the site has no archaeological potential.

References

BGS, 2000, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000, Sheet 268, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth

Ford, S, 2010 'A Late Bronze Age pit and hoard of Iron Age currency bars at Addington Road, Reading, Berkshire', in S Preston, (ed) *Archaeological investigations to the south of Reading, 2002-2008, Exploring Late Iron Age and Roman settlement south of Reading, Berkshire*, TVAS monograph **13**, Reading, 39–44

NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London

Platt, D., 2012, Wells Hall, Upper Redlands Road, Reading, Berkshire, An archaeological evaluation, TVAS unpublished report.

Wessex Archaeology, 2009a, Land south of Childs Hall, Upper Redlands Road, University of Reading: archaeological evaluation report.

Wessex Archaeology, 2009b, Land at former Whiteknights Halls, Upper Redlands Road, University of Reading: archaeological evaluation report.

APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at SE, SW or W end

Trench	*Length (m)*	*Breadth (m)*	*Depth (m)*	*Comment*
1	10.20	1.5	0.66	0–0.25m topsoil; 0.25-0.46m mid reddish brown clay silt subsoil; 0.46m+ light reddish yellow clay natural geology. **[Pls 1 and 2]**
2	10.70	1.5	0.67	0-0.57 topsoil; 0.57m+ light reddish yellow clay natural geology.
3	7.86	1.5	0.49	0-0.18m concrete; 0.18-0.32 mid grey-brown silty clay subsoil; 0.32m+ mid red brown clay. **[Pl. 3]**
4	8.00	1.5	0.78	0-0.16m concrete; 0.16-0.52m mixed made ground/mid brown-grey silty clay subsoil; 0.52m+ mid red brown clay natural geology. **[Pl. 4]**

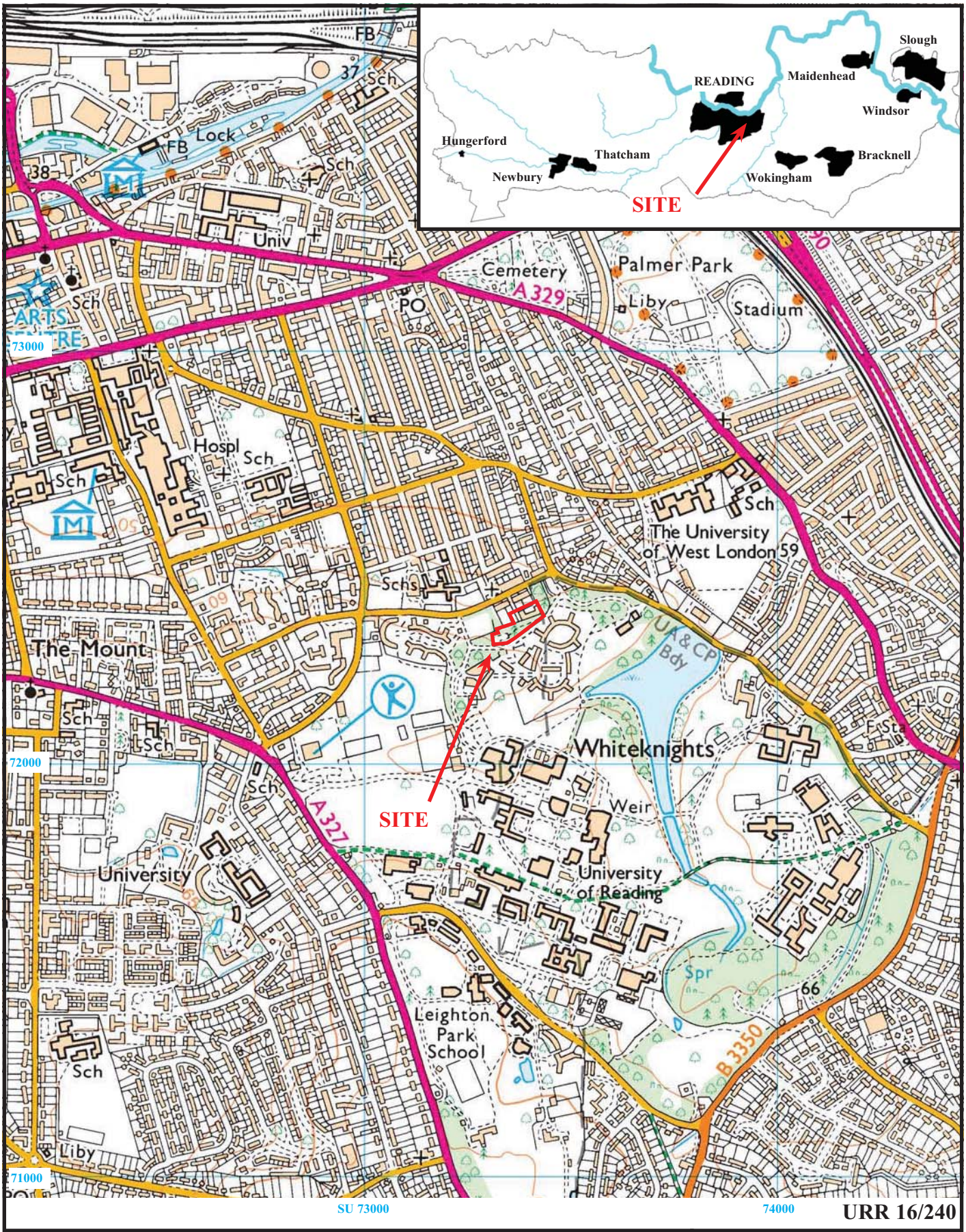

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Figure 1. Location of site within Reading and Berkshire.

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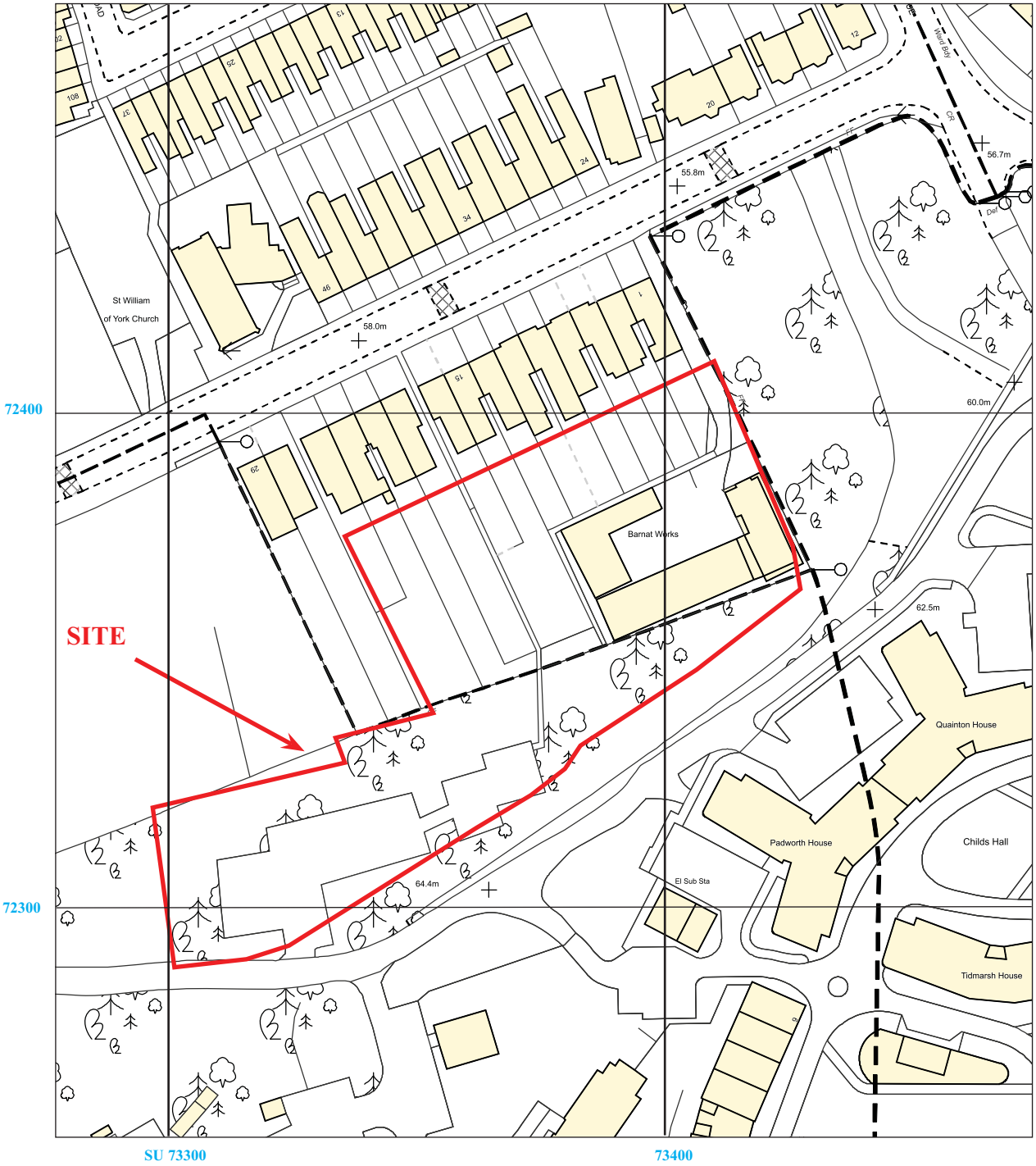

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Figure 2. Detailed location of site on Upper Redlands Road

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Figure 3. Trench locations.

0 25m

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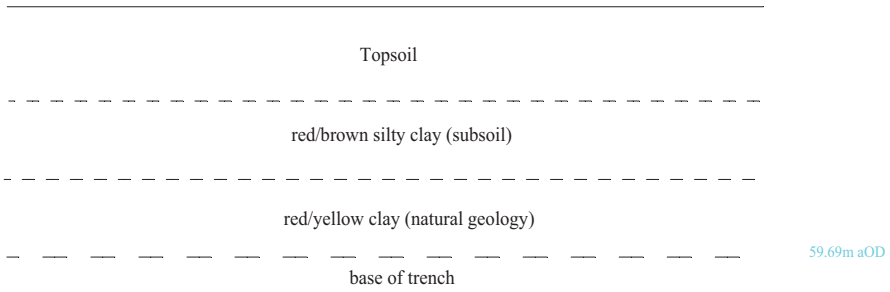
Trench 1



Trench 3

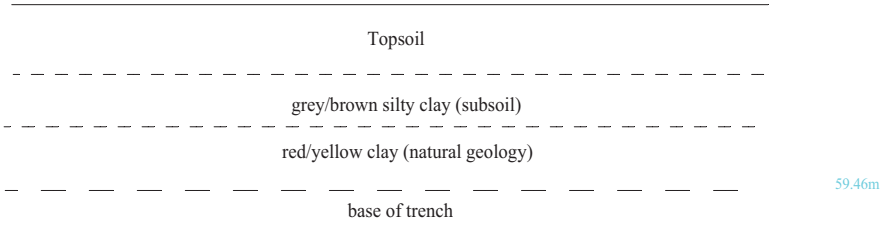


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Figure 4. Representative sections

0 1m

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Plate 1. Trench 1, looking northwest, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m.

Plate 2. Trench 1, modern wall foundation, looking northwest, Scales: 1m and 0.5m.

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Plates 1 - 2.

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Plate 3. Trench 3, looking west, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m.

Plate 4. Trench 4, looking northeast, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m.

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Plates 3 - 4.

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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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