

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Land at Hoad Way,
Theale, West Berkshire**

Archaeological Desk-based Assessment

by Gordana Baljkas

**Site Code: HWT 19/167
(SU 6475 7150)**

Land at Hoad Way, Theale, Berkshire

Archaeological Desk-based Assessment for Panattoni Europe

by Gordana Baljkas

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code HWT 19/167

December 2019

Summary

Site name: Land at Hoad Way, Theale, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 6475 7150

Site activity: Archaeological desk-based assessment

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Gordana Baljkas

Site code: HWT 19/167

Area of site: c. 5.37ha

Summary of results: One possible heritage asset is located within the proposal site: aerial photographs reveal ditches forming no coherent pattern, concentrated in the western section of the proposal site. These features are as yet undated, but at least two can be matched to features shown on 19th-century mapping and the remainder are probably more likely to be late post-medieval drainage than of any archaeological significance. The wider study area around the site contains few other archaeological entries with just one findspot each for prehistoric and Saxon periods, and one area of possibly medieval ridge and furrow cultivation. There is more substantial evidence for post-medieval and modern occupation. However, the prehistoric deposits lie adjacent to the site to the north and may extend into the site area. There is also a possibility that the old Bath Road (A4) which forms the boundary of the site and is perhaps of Medieval origin, may have been a focus for roadside settlement. The proposal site has never been developed, although embankment works for the M4 and A4 may have encroached into the site area. Any below-ground archaeological features and finds, should they have been present, could be expected to have survived relatively intact. The proposed development could therefore carry the potential to damage or destroy archaeological deposits if present, in areas of building footprints, landscaping and service trenches. It will be necessary to provide further information from field observation in order to establish the archaeological potential of the proposal site. This could be achieved by an appropriately worded condition to any consent gained.

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford✓ 06.12.19 Steve Preston✓ 06.12.19
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Land at Hoad Way, Theale, Berkshire Archaeological Desk-based Assessment

by Gordana Baljkas

Report 19/167

Introduction

This report is an assessment of the archaeological potential of land at Hoad Way, Theale, Berkshire (Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by Ms Hannah Knowles of Turley, The Pinnacle, 20 Tudor Road, Reading, Berkshire RG1 1NH on behalf of Panattoni Europe, The Smiths Building, 179 Great Portland Street, London W1W 5PLP and comprises the first stage of a process to determine the presence/absence, extent, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains which may be affected by redevelopment of the area.

Planning consent is to be sought from West Berkshire Council for development of the site. This assessment will accompany the application in order to inform the planning process with regard to potential archaeological and heritage implications. This is in accordance with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2019) and the Council's heritage policies.

Site description, location and geology

The proposal site lies at the eastern edge of the village of Theale between High Street to the north and Bath Road (the A4) to the south. It comprises an irregular parcel of land covering an area of *c.* 5.37ha centred on NGR SU 6475 7150 (Fig. 1). The site is bounded by properties fronting High Street to the north, the M4 to the east, Bath Road (the A4) to the south and Hoad Way to the west. Both of the major roads (A4, M4) are carried on embankments which are predominantly wooded. A site visit conducted on 5th November 2019 showed that the site is currently undeveloped. It is mostly grassed and the only structure present within it is an electricity pylon in its eastern section (Pls 1-4). The underlying geology is recorded as Alluvium over Upper Chalk with small areas of Beenham Grange Gravel in the north-western section and Langley Silt in the north-eastern corner (BGS 2000). The site lies at a height of approximately 47m above Ordnance Datum.

Planning background and development proposals

Planning permission is to be sought from West Berkshire Council for development of the site. The proposed development entails construction of three industrial units comprising offices and warehouse space, car parking, access roads and other infrastructure (Fig. 2).

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* as revised in 2019 (NPPF 2019) sets out the framework within which local planning authorities should consider the importance of conserving, or enhancing, aspects of the historic environment, within the planning process. It requires an applicant for planning consent to provide, as part of any application, sufficient information to enable the local planning authority to assess the significance of any heritage assets that may be affected by the proposal. The Historic Environment is defined (NPPF 2019, 67) as:

'All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.'

Paragraphs 189 and 190 state that

'189. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.'

'190. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.'

A 'heritage asset' is defined (NPPF 2019, 67) as

'A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).'

'Designated heritage asset' includes (NPPF 2019, 66) any

'World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.'

'Archaeological interest' is glossed (NPPF 2019, 65) as follows:

'There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.'

Specific guidance on assessing significance and the impact of a proposal is contained in paragraphs 192 to 197:

'192. In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:
'a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
'b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and

‘c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

‘193. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

‘194. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

- a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;
- b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional⁶³.

Footnote 63 extends the application of this provision considerably:

‘Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest, which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets.’

‘195. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- ‘a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
- ‘b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
- ‘c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- ‘d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

‘196. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

‘197. The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.’

Paragraph 199 requires local planning authorities to ensure that any loss of heritage assets advances understanding, but stresses that advancing understanding is not by itself sufficient reason to permit the loss of significance:

‘199. Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted.’

‘200. Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.’

‘201. Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 195 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 196, as

appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.’
In determining the potential heritage impact of development proposals, ‘significance’ of an asset is defined (NPPF 2019, 71) as:

‘The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site’s Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance.’

while ‘setting’ is defined as:

‘The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.’

West Berkshire Council implements local policies contained in the *West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026* (adopted July 2012). The policy pertaining to the historic environment and landscape states:

Policy CS 19

‘In order to ensure that the diversity and local distinctiveness of the landscape character of the District is conserved and enhanced, the natural, cultural, and functional components of its character will be considered as a whole. In adopting this holistic approach, particular regard will be given to:

- ‘(a) The sensitivity of the area to change.
 - ‘(b) Ensuring that new development is appropriate in terms of location, scale and design in the context of the existing settlement form, pattern and character.
 - ‘(c) The conservation and, where appropriate, enhancement of heritage assets and their settings.
 - ‘(d) Accessibility to and participation in the historic environment by the local community.
- ‘Proposals for development should be informed by and respond to:
- ‘(a) The distinctive character areas and key characteristics identified in relevant landscape character assessments including Historic Landscape Characterisation for West Berkshire and Historic Environment Character Zoning for West Berkshire.
 - ‘(b) Features identified in various settlement character studies including Quality Design – West Berkshire Supplementary Planning Document, the Newbury Historic Character Study, Conservation Area Appraisals and community planning documents which have been adopted by the Council such as Parish Plans and Town and Village Design Statements.
 - ‘(c) The nature of and the potential for heritage assets identified through the Historic Environment Record for West Berkshire and the extent of their significance.’

The site does not lie within a Conservation Area. The West Berkshire Historic Landscape Characterization currently classes the proposal site as reorganised fields (mid-20th century-present) previously pre-18th century irregular fields (<https://gis1.westberks.gov.uk/applicationtemplates/onlinemap/>; accessed 4th December 2019).

Methodology

The assessment of the proposal site was carried out by the examination of pre-existing information from a number of sources recommended by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists’ paper *Standards in British Archaeology* covering desk-based studies (CIfA 2014). These sources include historic and modern maps, the West Berkshire Historic Environment Record (HER), geological maps and any relevant publications or reports.

Archaeological background

General background

The wider area around Theale, including for example, the lower Kennet Valley, has a rich and varied archaeological background that includes Neolithic domestic sites to medieval villages (Gates 1975; Lobb and Rose 1996; Featherby 2013). Early prehistory is generally under-represented with a marked dearth in earlier Neolithic finds or sites (Ford 2013) but Bronze Age occupation is significant and focused within the Kennet Valley. Important excavations of Bronze Age sites took place at Aldermaston Wharf and Knights Farm (Bradley *et al.* 1980). The Iron Age is less well recorded but fieldwork on a pipeline to the north of Theale which traversed a cropmark complex (Raymond 1997) demonstrated an extensive Roman settlement which also revealed a medieval presence. These studies highlight the low occurrence of Saxon occupation in contrast to a relatively high density of later medieval settlement particularly in the area of the Kennet and Pang river valleys. In post-medieval times industrial activity is best represented by watermills and later by improved transport networks, namely the Kennet and Avon Canal and the Great Western railway.

West Berkshire Historic Environment Record

A search was made on the West Berkshire Historic Environment Record (HER) on 6th November 2019 for a radius of 500m around the proposal site. This revealed 54 entries relating to monuments and listed buildings and thirteen entries for archaeological ‘events’ i.e. investigations within the study area. The HER entries were then collated to take into account duplicates or sites which have more than one entry and to exclude desk-based assessments. The resulting 30 entries are summarized as Appendix 1 and their locations are plotted on Figure 1.

Prehistoric

An evaluation carried out at White Hart Meadow to the north of the proposal site revealed a possible prehistoric site comprising a small number of ditches, a posthole containing Iron Age pottery and a potential pit as well as a sherd of middle Bronze Age pottery, along with flint tools and debitage which, with an exception of a Mesolithic blade fragment, can be broadly dated to the later Neolithic to later Bronze Age [Fig 1: 1]. The features have been interpreted as possible enclosures or field boundaries of a prehistoric date (Anthony 2004).

Roman

There are no entries pertaining to the Roman period recorded in the HER within the study area.

Saxon

An evaluation at Theale Industrial Estate [2] to the south of the site revealed a wooden stake radiocarbon dated to AD 785-960. The stake was possibly part of a fishing related structure.

Medieval

The village of Theale [3] is first recorded as *Teile* in 1208 and the Bath Road (listed as two sections from Newbury to Theale [5] and from Theale to Readings [6]) is generally considered to date from the medieval period. Further evidence for medieval activity around Theale was identified from aerial photography and during an evaluation south-west of White Hart Meadow in the form of ridge and furrow indicating agricultural use [4].

Post-medieval

The two sections of Bath Road [5 and 6] were turnpiked in 1728 and 1714 respectively.

The evaluation to the south-west of White Hart Meadow revealed the use of the site as a water meadow [7] while an evaluation carried out within the former United Reform Church and land adjacent revealed post-medieval or modern backyard rubbish pits, a brick drain and a garden boundary [16].

The post-medieval entries recorded in the HER within the study area mostly comprise listed and historic buildings. All listed buildings bear a Grade II designation and are all located on High Street: Nos 1 (mid/late 19th century) and 4 (Westfield House, 18th/late 19th century) [3]; The Falcon Inn (17th century with early 18th century refacing) and 29 (17th century timber framed house, 18th century house, 20th century shop) [8]; Nos 33 and 35B (17th century timber framed house, 18th century house, 20th century shop), 35–37A (17th and 18th century) [9]; former Brewery (early 18th and early 19th century, possibly earlier) [10]; Nos 43–45 (Brewery Court, No 43 c. 1820, No 45 1770) and 47 (Lukers, 18th century) [11]; Nos 48 (17th century timber framed house, 20th century shop), 50 (18th century) and 52 (17th century) [12]; No 49 (late 18th century) [13]; and Nos 58, 58A and 58B (18th century) and 60 (The Chestnuts, 18th/19th century) [14].

Unlisted buildings located on High Street include Nos 3–9 (mid-19th century) [3]; Nos 19 (19th century, remodelled in 1912 and 1960s), 21 (late 17th/18th century), 23, 25, 25A, 27 and 27A (19th century) [8]; No 41 (The Bull, 17th century) [11]; Nos 44 and 46 (16th/17th century with an 1890s brick façade) [12]; No 51–57 (18th century) [13]; Nos 18–18A (19th century) and 20 (19th century) [15]; Nos 28–36 (19th century), 40 (19th century), 40A (19th century) and 42 and 42A (late 19th century) [16]; No 62 (early 19th century) [17]; and Nos 64, 66 and 68 (19th century) [18]. Also unlisted are Nos 20–30 Crown Street (late 19th century) [19].

The HER also records a number of no longer extant post-medieval buildings shown on late 19th century maps and demolished in the 20th century: Methodist Chapel () [13]; Independent Chapel [16]; Blossomend Farm [20]; a smithy [21] and the White Hart Inn [22].

Modern, undated, negative

Modern unlisted buildings include 6-8 High Street (early 20th century) [3]; 1-7 (1908) and 9-15 (early 20th century) Station Road [23] and Arlington Business Park (c. 1990 office blocks set within landscaped grounds including a lake) [24]. Also recorded is the site of the second Congregational Chapel [16] on High Street demolished in the early 21st century. It was built in 1913 on the site of the former Angel Inn, and presumably replacing the 19th century chapel. The building became a United Reform Church around 1972 and was used as a place of worship until 1999.

The HER also records the M4 motorway [22] which opened in 1971, a modern quarry near Nunhide Lane [25] and the site of a WWII munitions factory demolished in the later 20th century [26].

Two areas of undated linear features have been identified from aerial photographs. The first area comprises cropmarks of regular ditched linear features forming incomplete enclosures [27] north-east of Englefield Road to the north-west of the proposal site. The second area comprises ditched features including major parallel linears and more minor linears forming no coherent pattern [28] which are located within the proposal site (features are plotted on Fig. 1). While these could be of any date, their morphology does not particularly suggest any recognizable archaeological site type.

Two archaeological investigations carried out within the area immediately around the proposal site found no archaeological features or finds. These include an evaluation of to the rear of 22-26 High Street [29] and a watching brief on land to the rear of 40-58 High Street [30].

Scheduled Ancient Monuments

There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments located within the study area.

Cartographic and documentary sources

The proposal site was historically located in the parish of Tilehurst. In 1894 the tithing of Theale and part of Calcot hamlet were divided from it and formed into the parish of Theale (VCH 1923, 329-36).

The toponym Theale derives from the Old English noun *thel* (plural *thelu*) meaning ‘plank’ and is thought to refer to the former presence of a bridge or building and is first recorded as *Teile* in 1208 (Mills 2011, 455). The place-name Tilehurst derives from Old English nouns *tigel* meaning ‘a tile’ and *hyrst* denoting ‘a wooded hill’ giving the composite meaning of ‘Wooded hill where tiles are made’. The first record of a settlement at Tilehurst dates from 1167 when it was recorded as *Tigelhurst* (Mills 2011, 460).

Theale was a manor without its own church that unusually gave its name to the hundred that contained several parishes including Aldermaston, Bradfield, Burghfield and Englefield amongst others. Neither Tilehurst nor Theale are mentioned in Domesday Book of 1086 and were likely included in the entry for the manor of Reading when the whole was assessed at 111 hides and 2 virgates; earlier in the reign of Edward the Confessor the assessment had been 146 hides (VCH 1923, 329-36).

Tilehurst came into the possession of Reading Abbey before the 13th century, and the manor was held by the abbey until the Dissolution. In 1545, the manor of Tilehurst was granted by Henry VIII to Francis Englefield. In 1585 Englefield forfeited his lands and, after having granted the lease of the Tilehurst manor to Humphrey Foster and George Fitton, Elizabeth I finally sold it in c. 1600 to Henry Best and Francis Jackson. The manor was then sold in 1604 to Sir Peter Vanlore who built a house in Tilehurst. The manor remained in the possession of Vanlore's heirs until 1687 when it was sold to John Wilder of Nunhide. In 1759 the manor was sold to John Blagrove of Southcot, who built Calcot House which passed with the manor, the old Vanlore house having been demolished. The Blagraves held the manor until the lapse of manorial rights (VCH 1923, 329-36).

Evidence for medieval occupation in Theale is sparse, most of the houses along the main street are relatively modern with only two buildings dating from the middle of the 17th century. The Church of the Holy Trinity was consecrated in 1832. Theale's location between Reading and Bath meant it was an important stop on the main road between the two towns, which was turnpiked in the 18th century and remained a vital link until well into the 20th. As will be seen from the cartographic evidence (below) the modern A4, which more or less follows the turnpike road for much of the distance between Reading and Bath, was moved considerably to the south in this particular location. The village was also an important link in the London to Bristol transport chain with the completion of the Kennet and Avon Canal in 1810.

A range of Ordnance Survey and other historical maps of the area were consulted at West Berkshire Record Office and online in order to ascertain what activity had been taking place throughout the site's later history and whether this may have affected any possible archaeological deposits within the proposal area (see Appendix 2).

The earliest map available of the area is Saxton's map of Berkshire from 1574 (Fig. 3). While the proposal site cannot be identified with precision or in detail at this scale, it would be located at the eastern edge of a smaller settlement of *Thele* (Theale). *Purley* is depicted to the north, *Tileherst* (Tilehurst) to the north-east, *Kenet flu* (the River Kennet) to the east and south, and *Ingelfelde* (Englefield) to the north-west. *Redinge* (Reading) is shown further to the north-east.

Speed's map of Berkshire from 1610 (Fig. 4) names the settlement as Thele in Theal Hundred, but otherwise provides no new detail regarding the site or its immediate environs. Morden's county map from 1695 (Fig. 5) shows Theal Reading Hundred and gives it a layout as a small linear settlement straddling the road. The site would have been located to the south of the Bath Road just to the east of the village development. Rocque's map of Berkshire from 1767 (Fig. 6) allows for a fairly precise identification of the site as it gives a rather detailed layout of the village of Theal. The village is shown as a linear settlement straddling the modern High Street. The map also names Nunhide Lane. The site appears located in a large arable field to the east of the village, probably attached to Bean Sheaf Farm to the east. No structures are shown within this area. Very similar layout is depicted on the 1790 map of Berkshire by Pride (Fig. 7).

The first map to allow for reasonably detailed identification of the proposal site is Tilehurst Inclosure map of 1811-7 (Fig. 8), although none of the boundaries are yet defined as at present. The site is shown as comprising part of five undeveloped plots. The main feature within the site is a watercourse/drain crossing the south-western and southern sections. This watercourse/drain splits into two arms towards the south-western part of the proposal site, while a third arm running towards the northern boundary of the proposal site is also indicated. The distinctive bend towards the west of the site would probably correspond with one of the cropmarks plotted from aerial photographs (Fig. 1), while the field boundary more or less in the middle of the area accounts for another of these. The Tilehurst Tithe map of 1844 (Fig. 9) shows the proposal site as comprising parts of plots 868, 872, 869, 861 and 862. All plots are undeveloped and again the only feature other than plot boundaries shown within the site is the watercourse/drain in its south-western and southern sections. However, some changes can be detected within the watercourse/drain. The third arm leading to the northern boundary of the site is clearly marked while the remaining two arms appear to circle a small section of land, making it effectively appear as a small island.

The First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1879 (Fig. 10) depicts the site as comprising parts of plots 750, 751, 818, 817, 816 and 749. All of the plots are undeveloped. The watercourse/drain system has two additional arms, one following part of the boundary between plots 750 and 751 (the remainder of the boundary is tree-lined) and the other along the boundary between plots 817 and 818. Further trees are depicted along the watercourse/drain system in the south-western part of the proposal site and on the small island. The proposal site is bounded by plots 748, 750 and 751 to the north, plot 751 to the east, plots 751, 818 and 817 to the south and plots 817, 816 and 749 to the west. The Second Edition Ordnance Survey map from 1899 (Fig. 11) shows that the plots making up the site have been renumbered to 204, 203, 202, 205, 206 and 207. The watercourse/drain

arm between plots 203 and 204 (plots 750 and 751 on the previous map) has been extended along the entire length of the boundary between the two plots while trees are only depicted on the small island in the south-western section. Also a small structure has been constructed close to the western boundary of plot 204. The structure appears to have been replaced by another by 1912 (Fig. 12) and again by 1936 (Fig. 13). The road corresponding to modern High Street was widened by 1912 and since that time bounds the site to the north. Also the 1912 map shows a small break in the watercourse/drain in the southern section of the site.

Following a 29-year gap in mapping, the 1965 Ordnance Survey map (Fig. 14) shows that the watercourse/drain system has been somewhat altered, possibly following the redistribution of the land so that now the site comprises one entire plot and parts of another four. In terms of the watercourse/drain system changes the most notable is the loss of the arm leading from the south-western section towards the site's northern boundary and one of the arms in the south-western section. The structure in the north-western section appears to have been extended while another structure has been constructed to the south of the small island and it now only partly falls within the site.

By 1973 (Fig. 15) significant changes have taken place in the area with the M4 being constructed to the east of the site, the A4 to the south as well as some road widening to the north. The site now comprises two plots separated by a drain. The eastern plot is bounded by drains to the south and part of east and there is an electricity transmission line with an electricity pylon bisecting it from north to south. The western plot has lost all of the drains, and the structure that was partly within the site, while the structure in the north-western section is still present and appears unchanged. However, the latter structure has been removed by 1978 (Fig. 16). The drain bisecting the site has been removed by 1985 (Fig. 17). No changes to the site are shown on subsequent Ordnance Survey maps from 1988, 1989, 1992, 1994 (not illustrated) and 1995 (Fig. 18).

Listed buildings

None of listed buildings located within the study area will be negatively impacted by the proposed development due to distance and the intervening modern development.

Registered Parks and Gardens; Registered Battlefields

There are no registered parks and gardens or registered battlefields within the study area.

Historic Hedgerows

There are no hedgerows on the site that would qualify as ‘important’ as defined by Schedule 1 of the Hedgerows Regulations 1997.

LiDAR

Lidar data tile su6471_DTM_1M was downloaded from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Website (DEFRA 2019) and added to a Geographical Information System programme, QGIS. The tile gave complete coverage of the site at 1m resolution.

Terrain analysis was carried out using the Relief Visualization Toolbox (RVT) v. 2.2.1 to generate multi-direction hillshade plots of the original Lidar data. Virtual shade plot files with a light source with a vertical angle of 15° above the horizon were created at every 45° from azimuth 0° to 315° with no vertical exaggeration. A selection of the most informative plots is presented as Figure 19. It should be noted that the mapping of features is not precise as the virtual light source creates a ‘shadow’ which displaces them in a direction opposite to it. The results were compared with modern and historic Ordnance Survey data to assist with interpretation.

A small number of features were identified (Fig. 20), most of which are the remnants of landscape features visible on pre-A4/M4 maps. Two linear depressions (A and B) can be directly linked to a series of streams or drainage ditches that crossed these areas of the site and which are visible on maps from the 1970s and earlier. A similar feature (C) is not shown on any of the Ordnance Survey mapping but may represent a similar drainage feature which went out of use prior to the late 19th century. At the western end of the site a coarse, almost rectangular mound-like feature (D) corresponds to an area of scrub on the edge of the modern field but is unlikely to be of archaeological origin. Other features visible on the Lidar plot correspond to the electric pylon in the site’s eastern half.

Aerial Photographs

The West Berkshire HER already contains information on the comprehensive mapping of aerial photographic evidence undertaken both in the 1970s by the then Berkshire County Council using planning department photographs and more recently by the National Mapping Programme (1996), with further information updated by English Heritage’s Urban Commons Project at least up to 2003. No photographic collections have therefore been consulted.

Discussion

One potential heritage asset is located within the proposal site: undated ditched features identified from aerial photographs. They are located in the western section of the proposal site (distribution shown on Fig. 1). They form no coherent pattern and conform to no likely archaeological site type. One is clearly a boundary mapped on the enclosure and tithe maps, one is almost certainly a watercourse of the same date, and the others appear more likely to relate to drainage of more recent date, though an archaeological origin cannot be definitively ruled out.

It remains, further, to establish if there may be potential for previously unknown heritage assets, that is, below-ground archaeological remains. In considering the archaeological potential of the study area, various factors must be taken into account, including previously recorded archaeological sites, previous land-use and disturbance and future land-use including the proposed development.

Generally speaking, the proposal site lies within the archaeologically rich Kennet Valley. However, the immediate area contains meagre evidence for Saxon and medieval activity, but more substantial evidence for prehistoric, post-medieval and modern occupation. The evidence for prehistoric activity comprises an Iron Age occupation site just north of the proposal area, while the Saxon period is represented by a single find of a wooden stake possibly originating from a fishing-related structure to the south. The Medieval period is represented by the documentary evidence for the village of Theale. It is unclear if the former line of the A4 (Bath Road) which forms the northern boundary of the site, and thought to be of Medieval date, was also the location of contemporary occupation fronting the road. The majority of post-medieval HER entries relate to listed and historic buildings as well as no longer extant structures.

Cartographic and documentary evidence show that the majority of the proposal site has never been developed and any below-ground archaeological features and finds, should they ever have been present, could be expected to have survived relatively intact within the proposal site. The proposed development could therefore carry the potential to damage or destroy archaeological deposits if present, in areas of building footprints, landscaping and service trenches.

It is considered that it may be necessary to provide further information about the potential of proposal site from the field observations in order to draw up a scheme to mitigate the impact of development on any below-ground archaeological deposits if necessary. A scheme for this evaluation will need to be drawn up and approved by the archaeological advisers to the West Berkshire Council and carried out by a competent archaeological contractor. It could be implemented by an appropriately worded condition to any consent gained.

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APPENDIX 1: Historic Environment Records within a 500m search radius of the proposal site

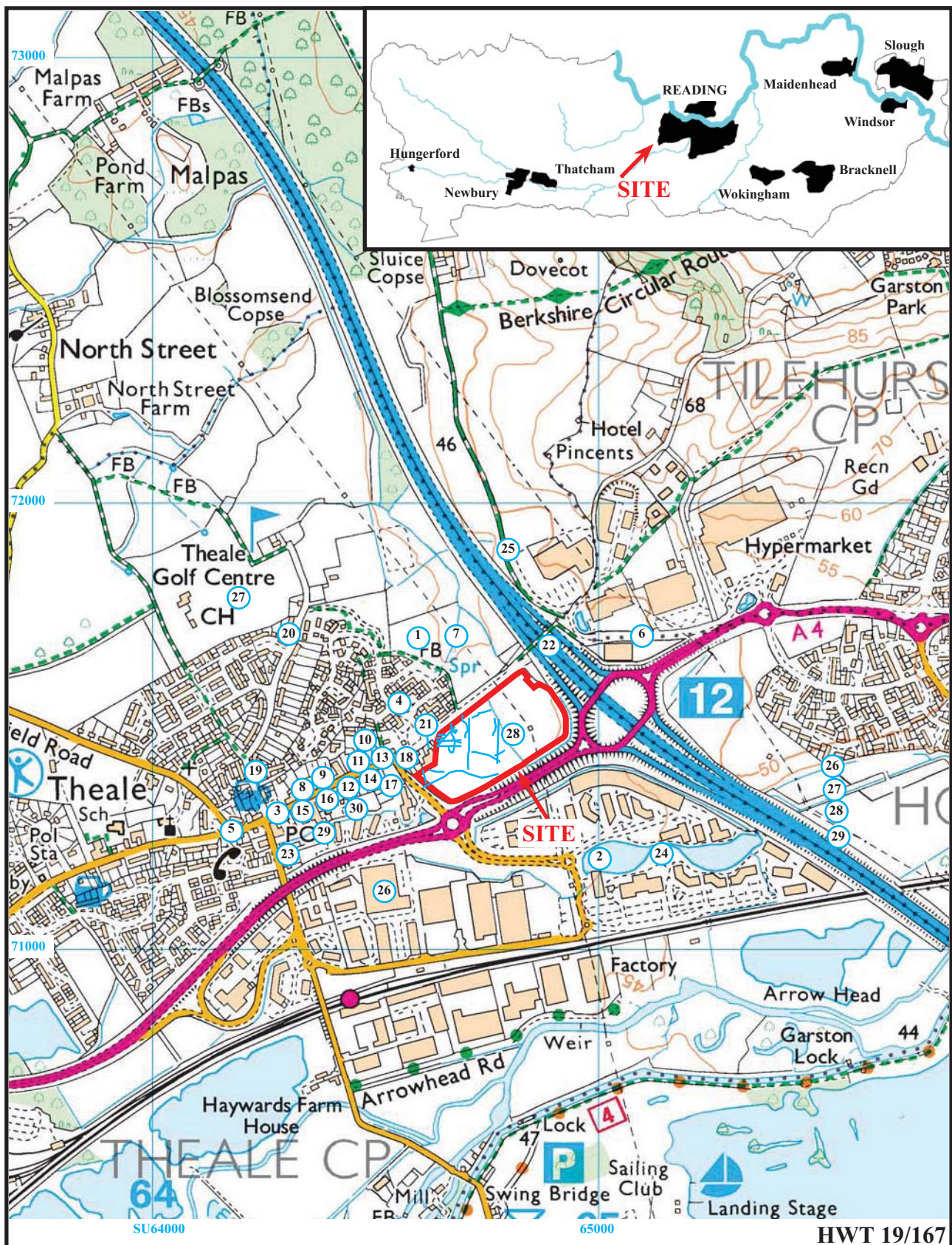
No	HER Ref	Grid Ref (SU)	Type	Period	Comment
1	MWB1652 EWB678	64639 71673 64660 71665	Excavation Evaluation	Prehistoric Neolithic Bronze Age Iron Age	Evaluation at White Hart Meadow (Anthony 2004) revealed a possible prehistoric site comprising a small number of ditches, a posthole containing Iron Age pottery and a potential pit as well as a sherd of middle Bronze Age pottery, flint tools and debitage.
2	MWB10158 EWN338	64999 71200 65076 71218	Evaluation	Saxon	Evaluation at Theale Industrial Estate revealed a wooden stake radiocarbon dated AD785-960, ?part of a fishing structure.
3	MWB3725 MWB18610 MWB18574 MWB20596 MWB20609 EWB1210	64260 71289 64267 71310 64279 71288 64291 71318 64290 71296 640 718	Documentary Listed building Building Building survey	Medieval Post-medieval Modern	Theale village. First recorded in 1208. 1 High Street. Mid/late 19th century. Westfield House, 4 High Street. 18th/late 19th century. 3-9 High Street. Mid-19th century. 6-8 High Street. Early 20th century.
4	MWB2879 EWB339	6455 7155 64660 71665	Photographic Evaluation	Medieval	Ridge and furrow noted on aerial photographs and an evaluation south-west of White Hart Meadow.
5	MWB5936	55753 68990	Documentary	Medieval Post-medieval	A4 Bath Road, probable medieval road, turnpiked in 1728.
6	MWB5962	66161 71769	Documentary	Medieval Post-medieval	A4 Bath Road, probable medieval road, turnpiked in 1714.
7	MWB2876 EWB339	64680 71694 64660 71665	Photographic Evaluation	Post-medieval	Two fields with traces of drainage channels, suggesting water meadow identified from aerial photographs, and an evaluation at White Hart Meadow (Lobb and Rose 1996)..
8	MWB18254 MWB18571 MWB20597 MWB20598 MWB20606 EWB1210	64377 71371 64366 71363 64327 71339 64345 71351 64353 71361 640 718	Listed building Building Building survey	Post-medieval	The Falcon Inn, High Street. 17th century with early 18th century refacing. 29 High Street. 17th century timber framed house, 18th century house, 20th century shop. 19 High Street. 19th century, remodelled 1912 and 1960s. 21 High Street. Late 17th/18th century. 23–27A (odd) High Street. 19th century.
9	MWB18572 MWB18562 MWB18573 EWB1210	64385 71371 64396 71374 64405 71380 640 718	Listed building Building survey	Post-medieval	33 and 35B High Street. 17th century timber framed house, 18th century house, 20th century shop. 35, 35A and 37A High Street. 17th century timber framed house, 18th century house, 20th century shop 37 High Street. 18th/19th century.
10	MWB18255 EWB1210	64468 71449 640 718	Listed building Building survey	Post-medieval	Former Brewery, High Street. early 18th and early 19th century.
11	MWB18563 MWB18606 MWB20607 EWB1210	64471 71410 64488 71415 64444 71407 640 718	Listed building Building Building survey	Post-medieval	Brewery Court, 43-45 High Street. No 43 c. 1820. No 45 1770. Lukers, 47 High Street. 18th century. The Bull, 41 High Street. 17th century.
12	MWB18605 MWB18565 MWB18575 MWB20621 EWB1210	64440 71377 64450 71381 64454 71382 64427 71370 640 718	Listed building Building Building survey	Post-medieval	48 High Street. 17th century timber framed house, 20th century shop. 50 High Street. 18th century. 52 High Street. 17th century. 44 and 46 High Street. 16th/17th century with an 1890s brick façade.
13	MWB18564 MWB20608 EWB1210 MWB18252	64502 71419 64511 71427 640 718 64538 71437	Listed building Building Building survey Cartographic	Post-medieval	49 High Street. Late 18th century. 51-57 High Street. 18th century. Site of Methodist Chapel shown on late 19th century maps, demolished by the late 20th century.
14	MWB18567 MWB18568 EWB1210	64476 71387 64494 71388 640 718	Listed building Building survey	Post-medieval	58, 58A and 58B High Street. 18th century. The Chestnuts, 60 High Street. 18th/19th century.
15	MWB20610 MWB20611 EWB1210	64333 71320 64339 71324 640 718	Building Building survey	Post-medieval	18-18A High Street, 19th century. 20 High Street. 19th century.
16	MWB20612 MWB20618 MWB20619 MWB20620 EWB1210 MWB18250 MWB18251 EWB816 EWB817	64370 71339 64401 71354 64410 71358 64419 71366 640 718 64403 71335 64387 71330 64386 71337 64382 71331	Building Building survey Cartographic Documentary Evaluation	Post-medieval Modern	28-36 High Street. 19th century. 40 High Street. 19th century. 40A High Street. 19th century. 42 and 42A High Street. Late 19th century. Site of Independent Chapel shown on late 19th century maps, demolished by the mid-20th century. Site of second Congregational Chapel built in 1913, demolished in the early 21st century. Evaluation at United Reform Church revealed post-medieval or modern backyard rubbish pits, a brick drain and a garden boundary.
17	MWB20622 EWB1210	64520 71369 640 718	Building Building survey	Post-medieval	62 High Street. Early 19th century.
18	MWB20623 EWB1210	64571 71427 640 718	Building Building survey	Post-medieval	64, 66 and 68 High Street. 19th century.
19	MWB20592 EWB1210	64229 71398 640 718	Building Building survey	Post-medieval	20-30 Crown Lane. Late 19th century.
20	MWB16328	64302 71709	Documentary	Post-medieval	Site of Blossomend Farm, farmstead documented in the 18th

<i>No</i>	<i>HER Ref</i>	<i>Grid Ref (SU)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Comment</i>
					century but no longer in existence.
21	MWB21393	64616 71453	Cartographic	Post-medieval	Site of smithy, demolished in the mid-20th century.
22	MWB18256 MWB17771	64885 71678 49359 73500	Cartographic Motorway	Post-medieval Modern	Site of The White Hart Inn shown on the 19th century maps, demolished in the 20th century prior of the construction of the M4. The M4 motorway, opened across West Berkshire in 1971.
23	MWB20629 MWB20630 EWB1210	64293 71228 64299 71196 640 718	Building Building survey	Modern	1, 3, 5 and 7 Station Road. 1908. 9, 11, 13 and 15 Station Road. Early 20th century.
24	MWB19946	65135 71225	Building	Modern	Arlington Business Park. C. 1990. Office blocks set within landscaped grounds including a lake.
25	MWB3628	64799 71900	Quarry	Modern	Earthwork near Nunhide Lane interpreted in the 1930s as possible ancient diggings, but later viewed as modern quarry.
26	MWB15990	64514 71130	Documentary	Modern	Site of WWII munitions factory on the site of the industrial estate off Brunel Road, demolished in the later 20th century.
27	MWB2866	63982 71681	Photographic	Undated	Cropmarks of regular ditched linear features forming incomplete enclosures identified from aerial photographs.
28	MWB2867	64735 71461	Photographic	Undated	Ditched features forming no coherent pattern to the west of M4 junction identified from aerial photographss.
29	EWB1145	64381 71261	Evaluation	Negative	Evaluation of land to the rear of 22-26 High Street revealed no archaeological features or finds.
30	EWB1481	64466 71336	Watching brief	Negative	Watching brief on land to the rear of 40-58 High Street revealed no archaeological features or finds.

Listed buildings Grade II unless stated.

APPENDIX 2: Historic and modern maps consulted

1574	Saxton's map of Berkshire (Fig. 3)
1610	Speed's map of Berkshire (Fig. 4)
1695	Morden's map of Berkshire (Fig. 5)
1767	Rocque's map of Berkshire (Fig. 6)
1790	Pride's map of Berkshire (Fig. 7)
1811-7	Tilehurst Inclosure map (Fig. 8)
1844	Tilehurst Tithe map (Fig. 9)
1879	First Edition Ordnance Survey (Fig. 10)
1899	Second Edition Ordnance Survey (Fig. 11)
1912	Ordnance Survey (Fig. 12)
1936	Ordnance Survey (Fig. 13)
1965	Ordnance Survey (Fig. 14)
1973	Ordnance Survey (Fig. 15)
1978	Ordnance Survey (Fig. 16)
1985	Ordnance Survey (Fig. 17)
1988	Ordnance Survey (not illustrated)
1989	Ordnance Survey (not illustrated)
1992	Ordnance Survey (not illustrated)
1994	Ordnance Survey (not illustrated)
1995	Ordnance Survey (Fig. 18)
2016	Ordnance Survey – Explorer digital edition at 1:25,000 (Fig. 1)



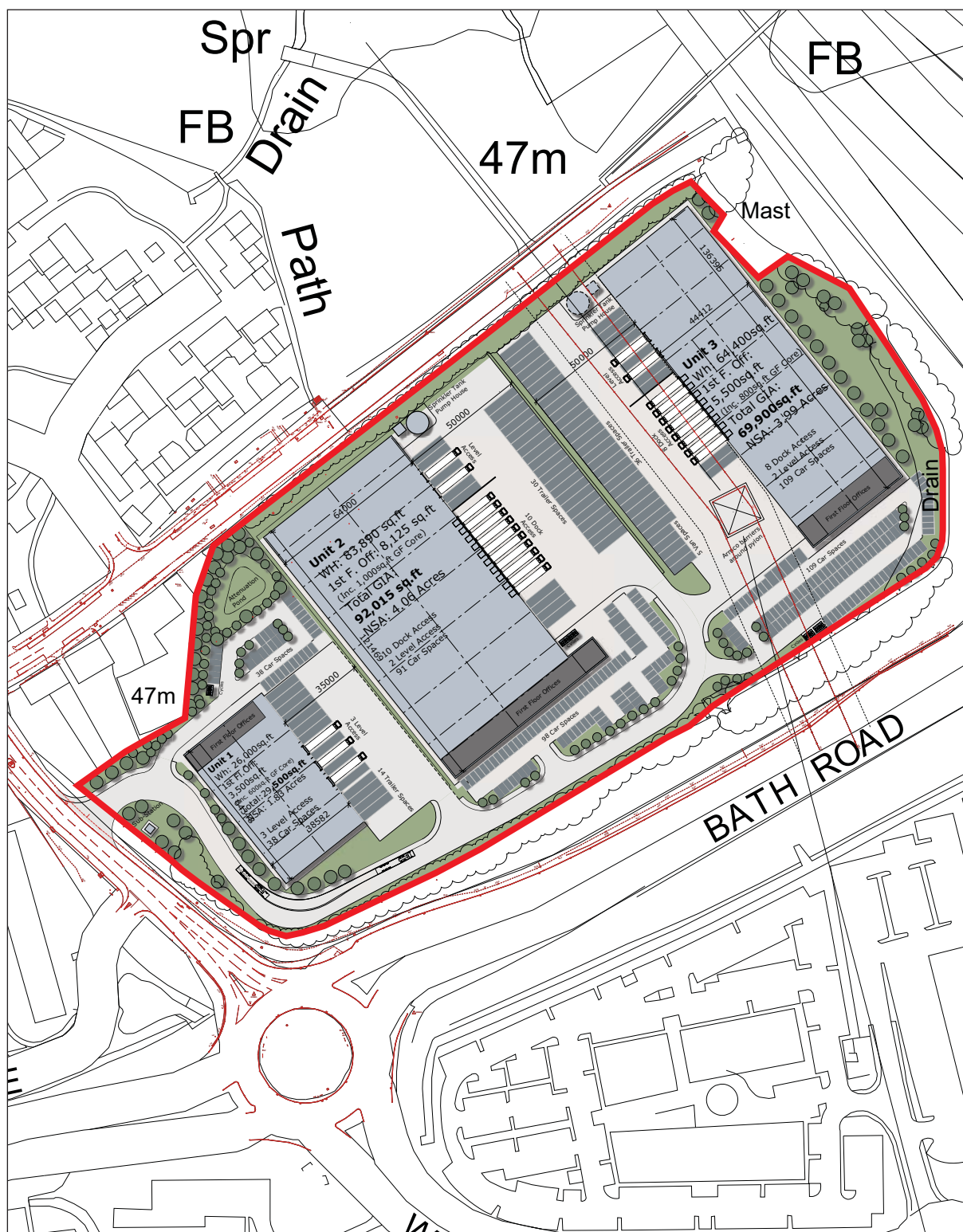
Land at Hoad Way, Theale,
Berkshire, 2019

Archaeological Desk-based Assessment

Figure 1. Location of site within Theale and
Berkshire showing locations of West Berkshire HER results.

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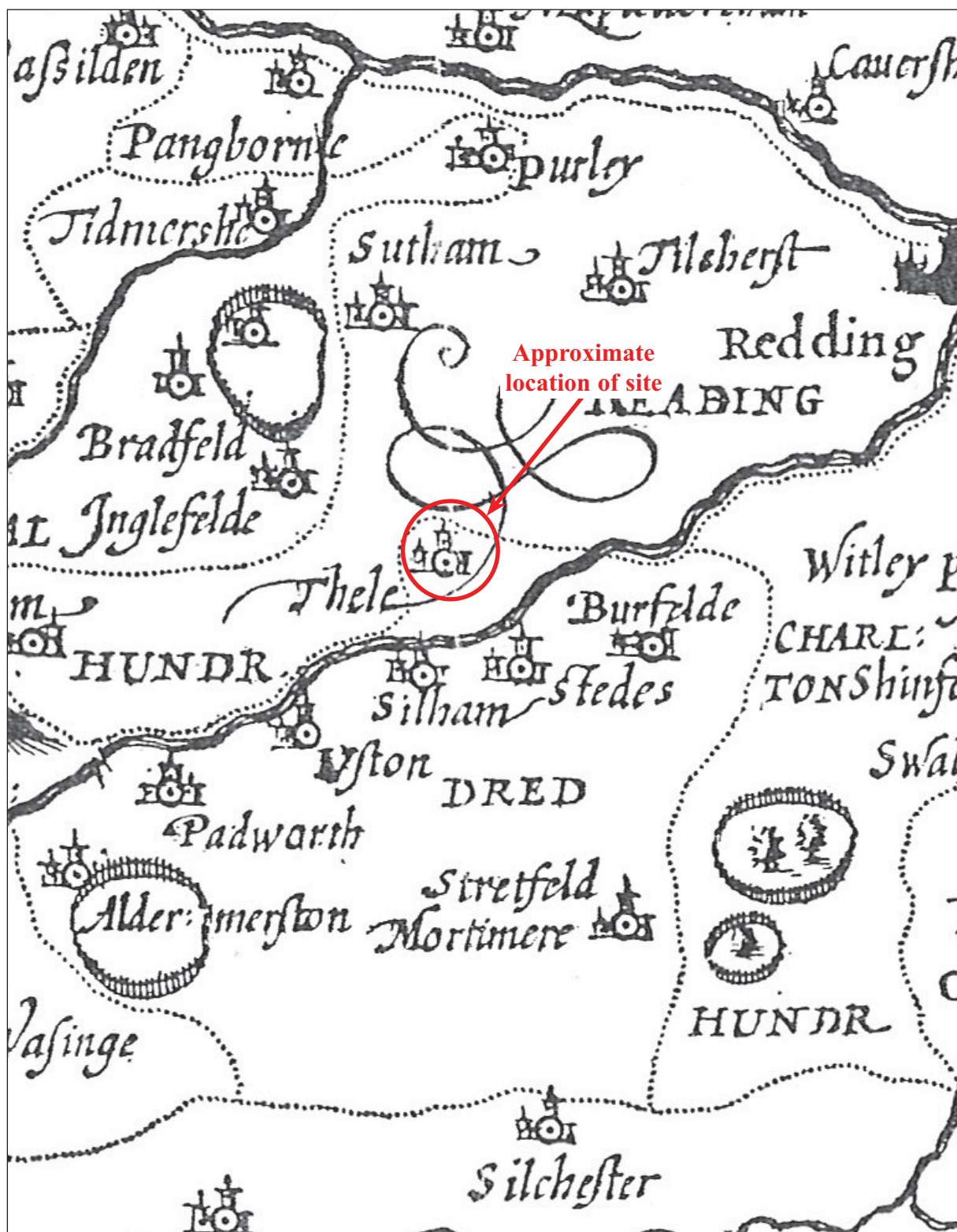


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Land at Hoad Way, Theale,
 Berkshire, 2019
 Archaeological Desk-based Assessment
 Figure 2. Proposed development layout.

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Land at Hoad Way, Theale,
Berkshire, 2019
Archaeological Desk-based Assessment
Figure 4. Speed's map of Berkshire, 1610.

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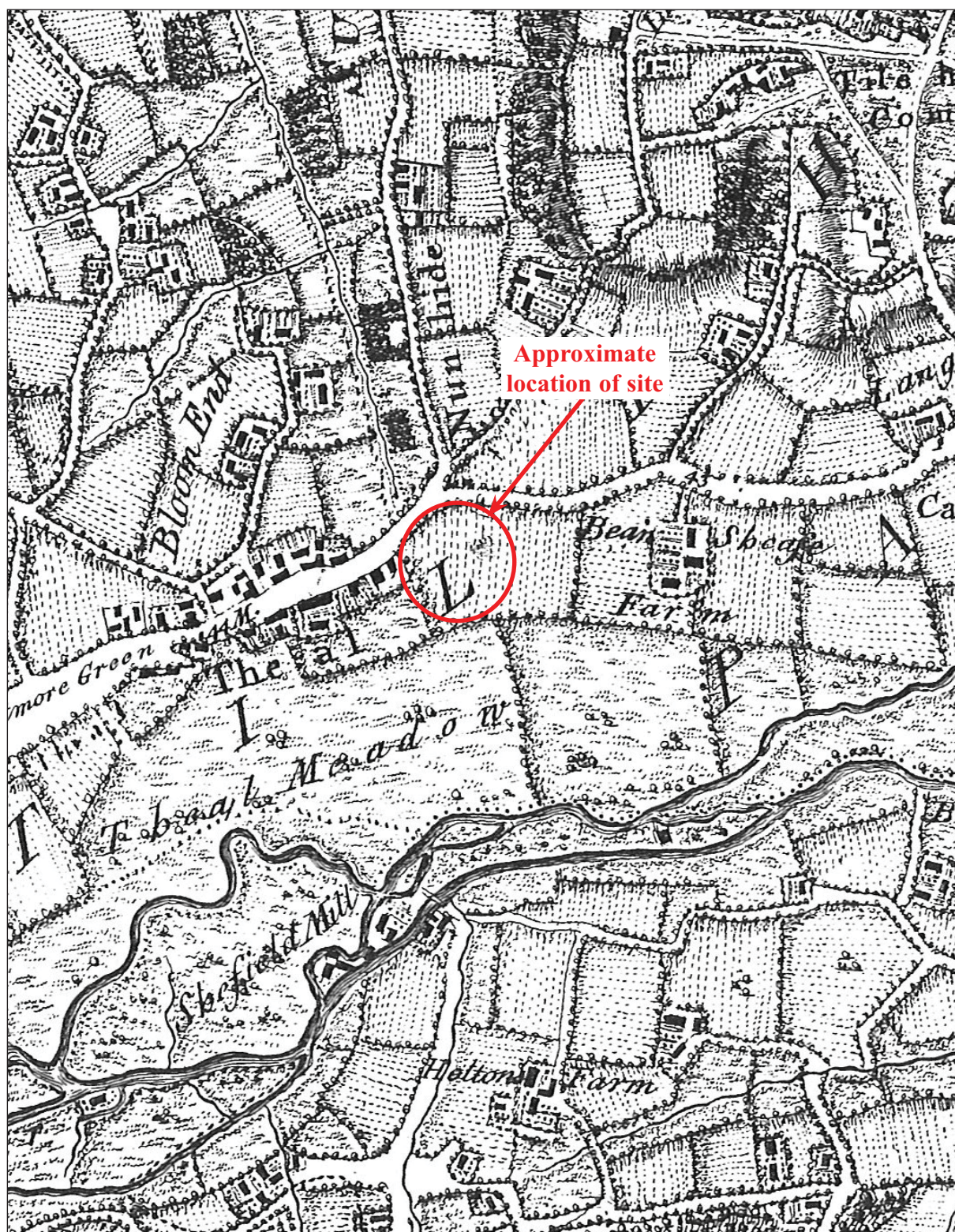


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Berkshire, 2019
Archaeological Desk-based Assessment
Figure 5. Morden's map of Berkshire, 1695.

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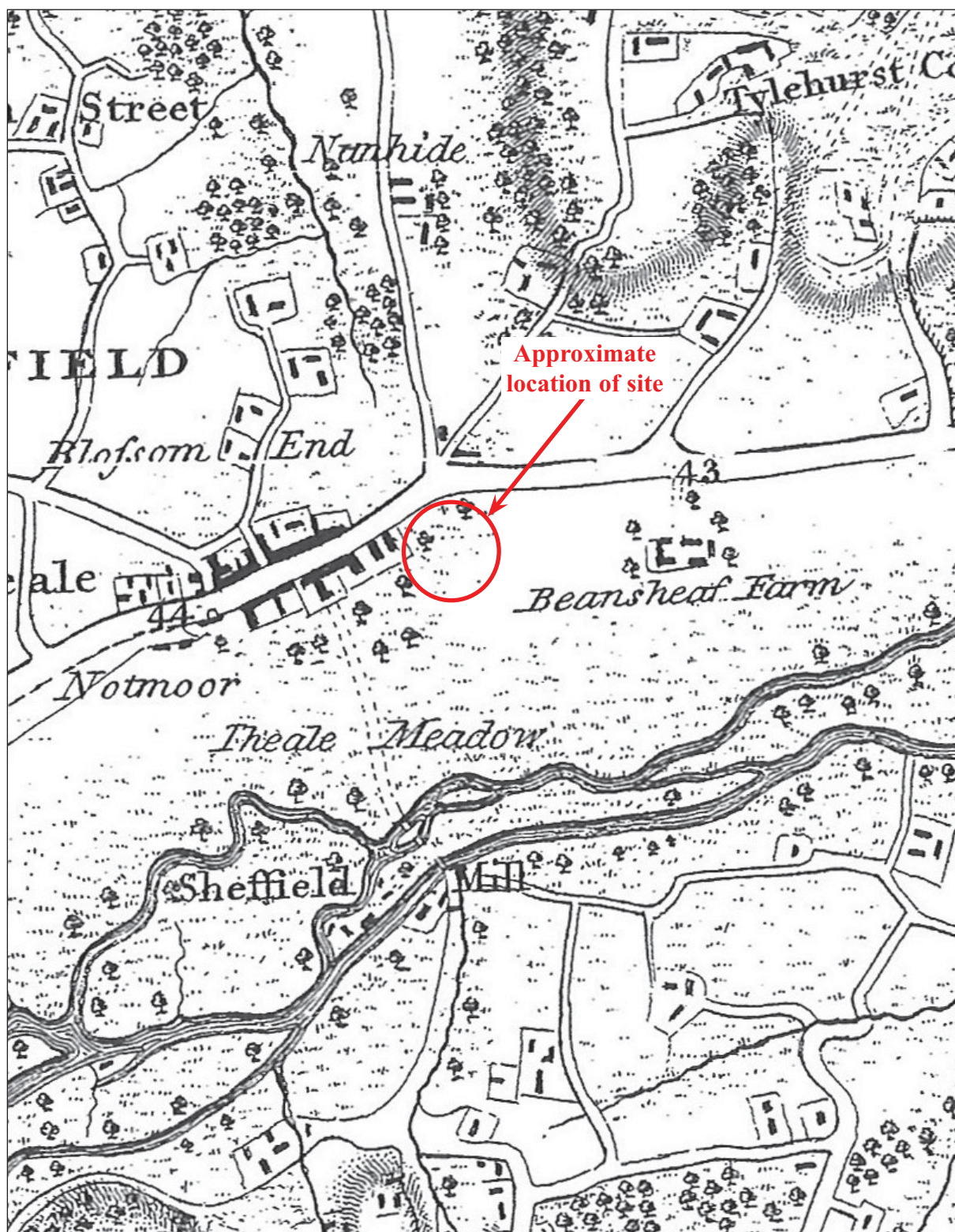


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Figure 6. Rocque's map of Berkshire, 1767.

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Figure 7. Pride's map of Berkshire, 1790.

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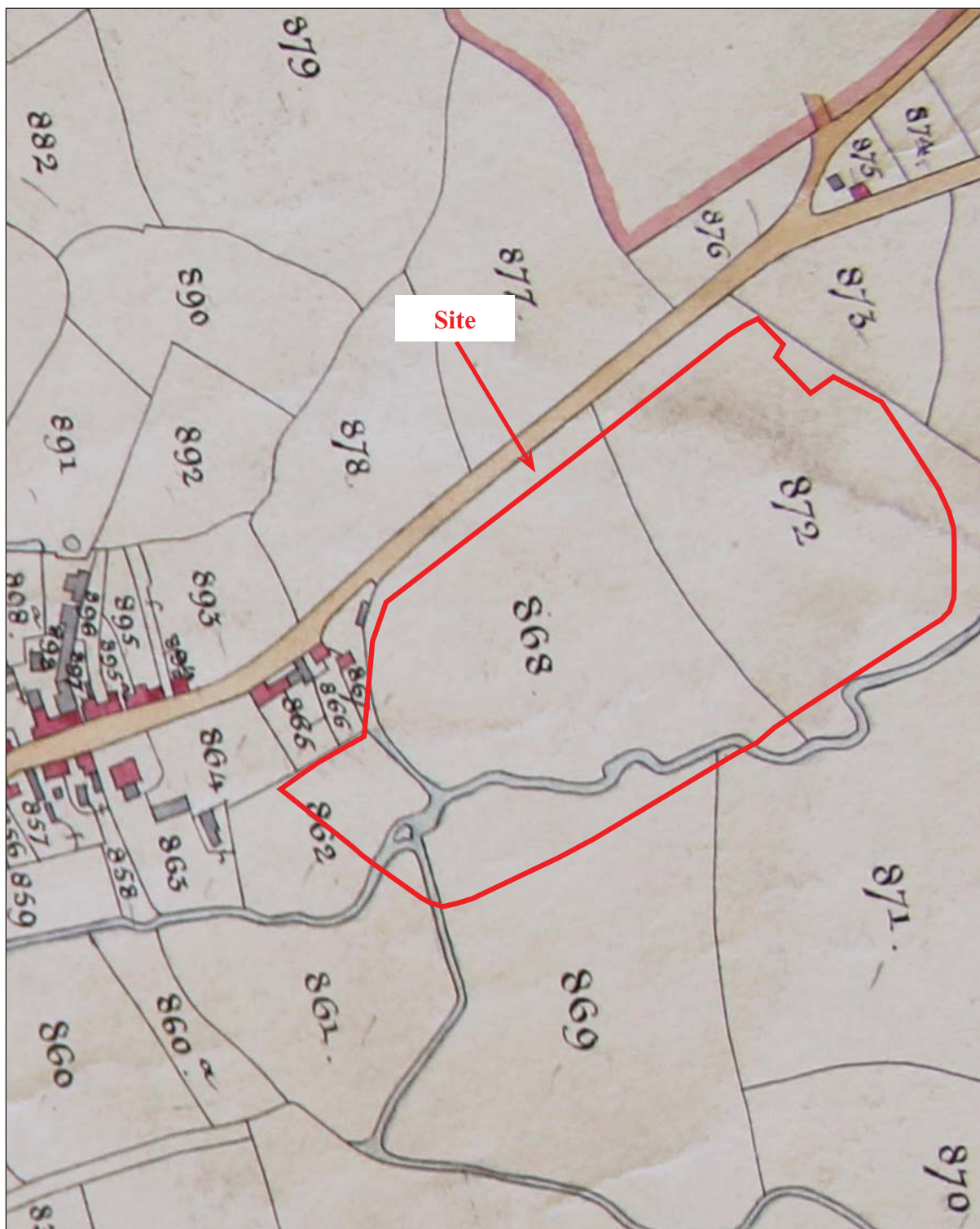


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Figure 8. Tilehurst Inclosure map, 1811-7.

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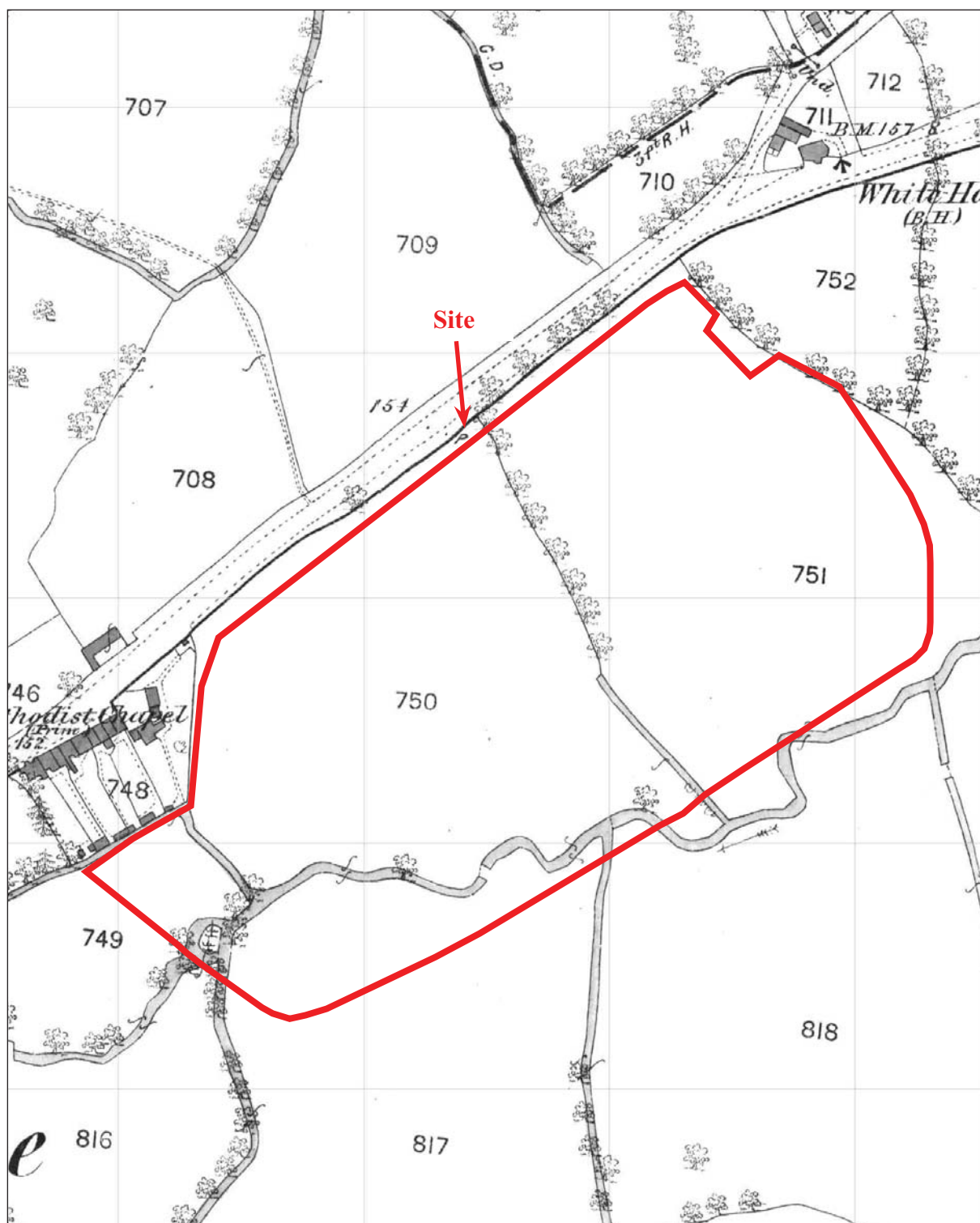


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Figure 9. Tilehurst Tithe map, 1844.

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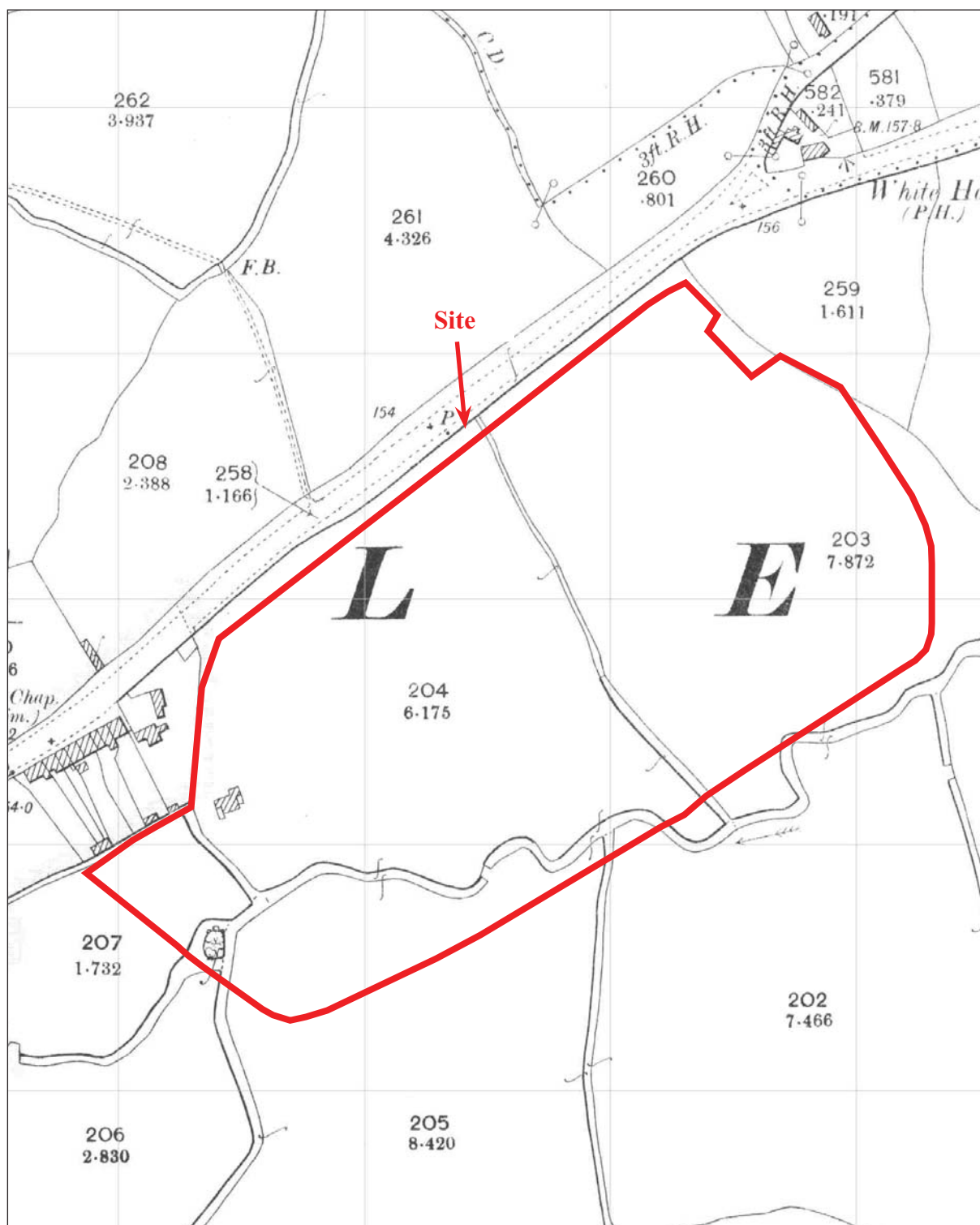


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Figure 10. Ordnance Survey map, 1879.

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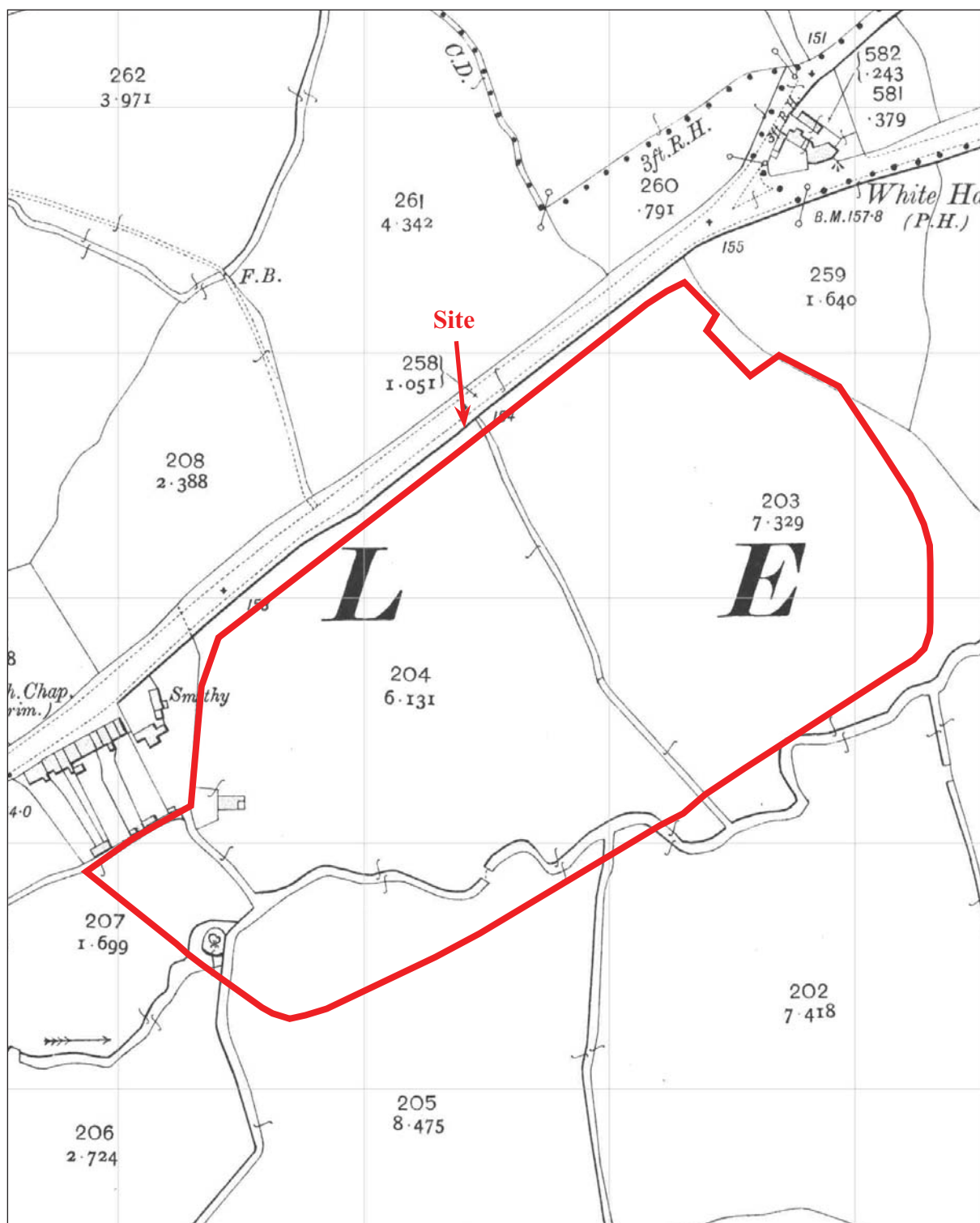


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Figure 11. Ordnance Survey map, 1899.

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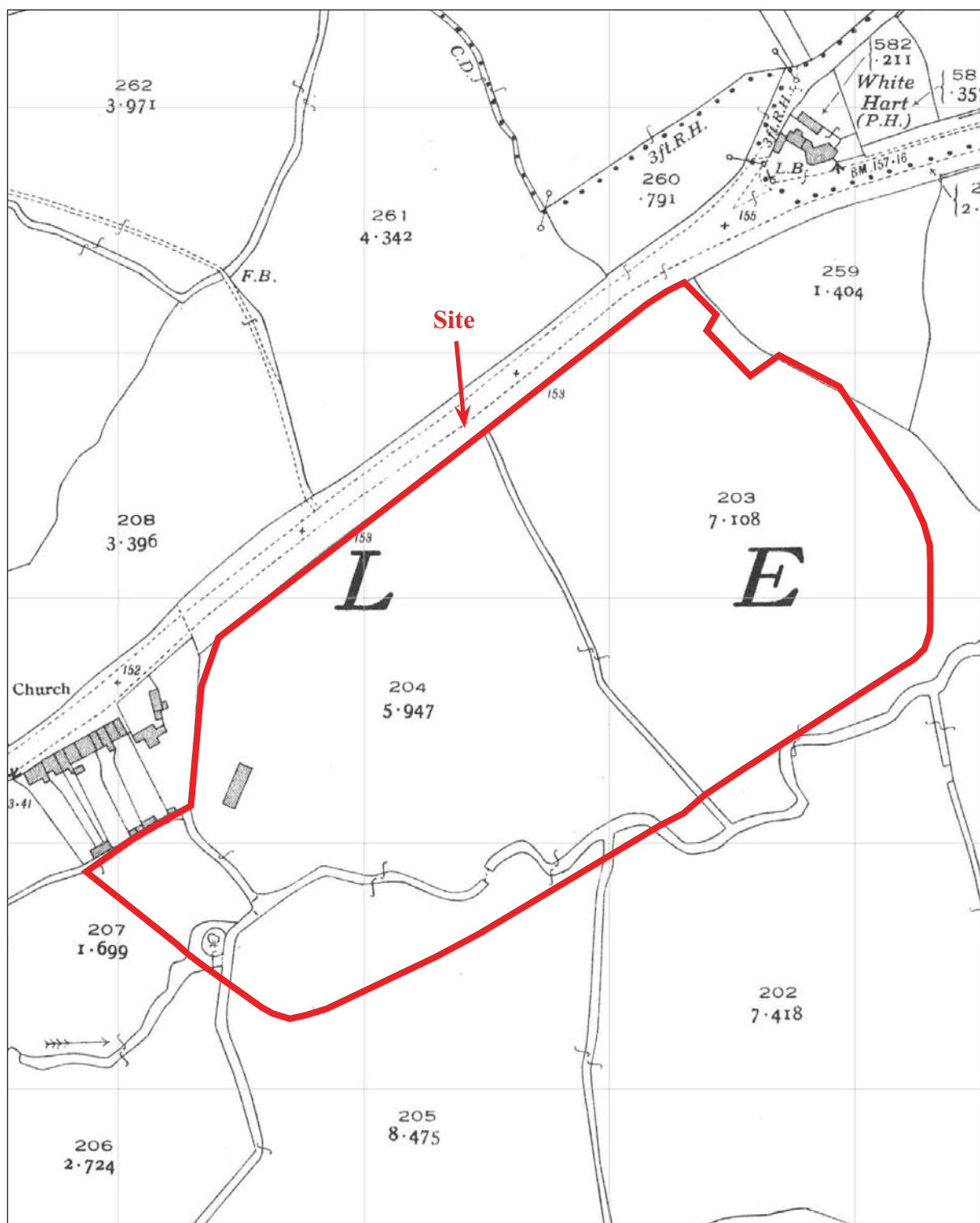


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Figure 12. Ordnance Survey map, 1912.

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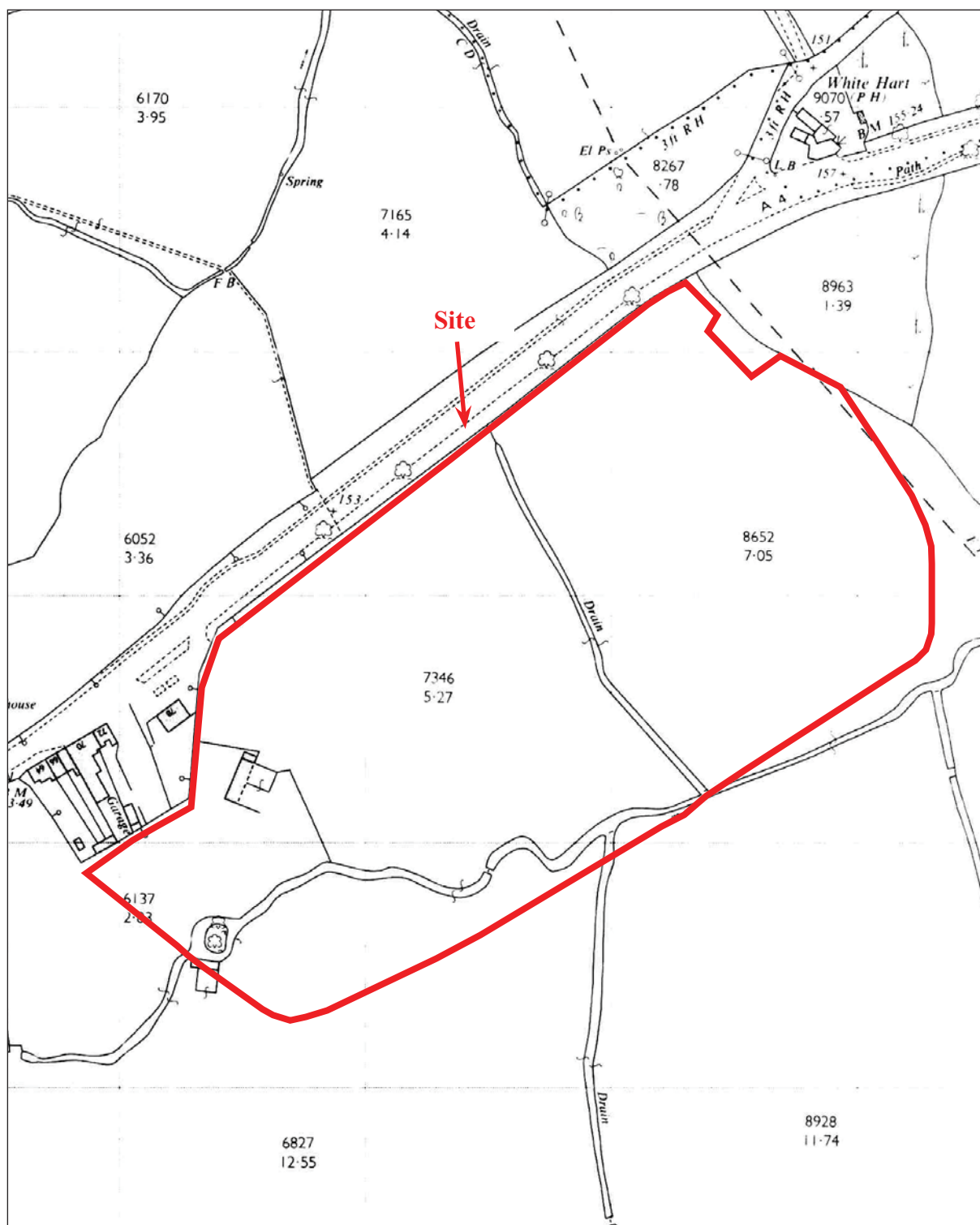


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Figure 13. Ordnance Survey map, 1936.

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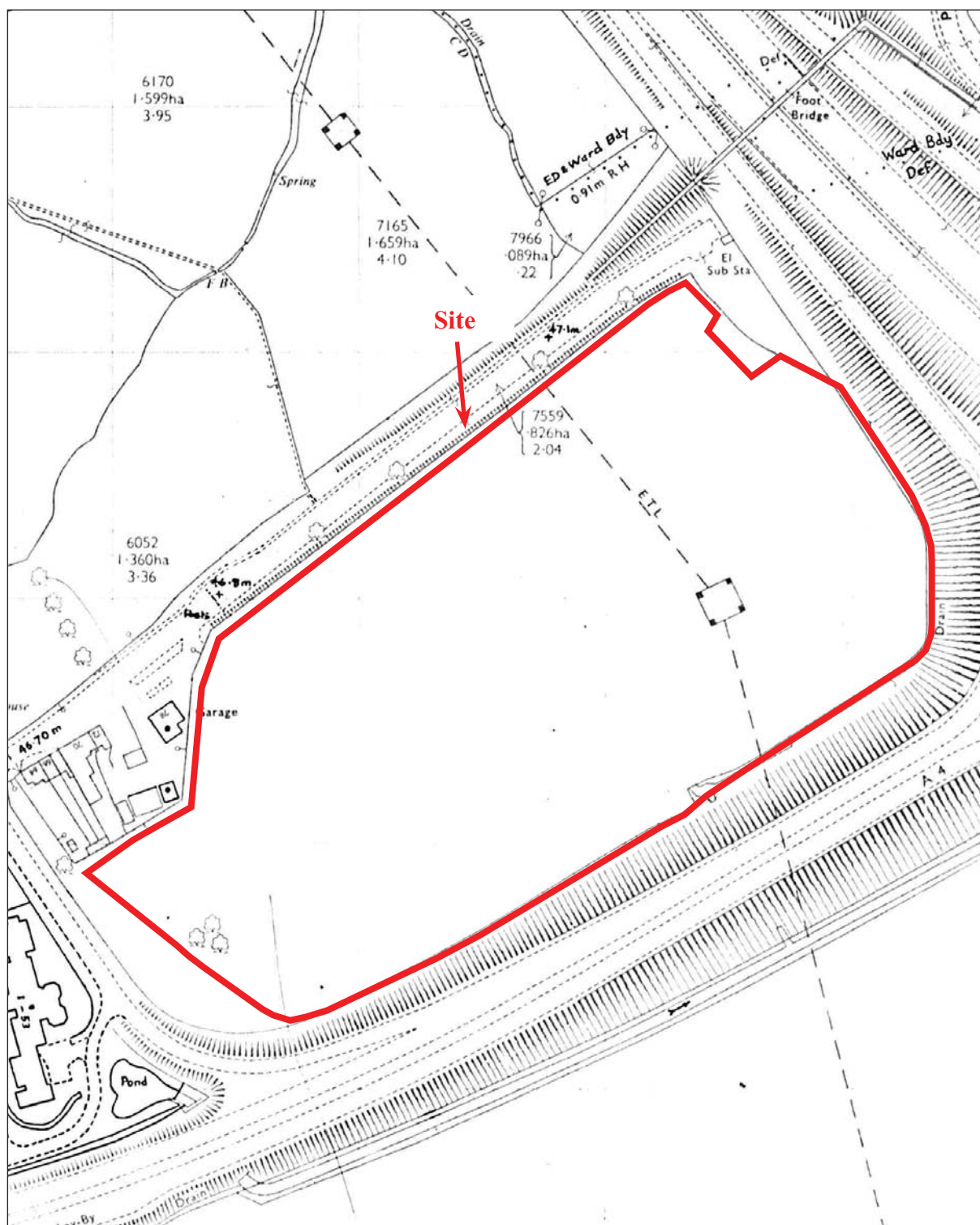


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Figure 14. Ordnance Survey map, 1965.

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Figure 17. Ordnance Survey map, 1985.

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a. Azimuth 0°, vertical angle 15°.



b. Azimuth 90°, vertical angle 15°.



c. Azimuth 135°, vertical angle 15°.



d. Azimuth 270°, vertical angle 15°.

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Figure 19. Lidar hillshade greyscale plots.
Not to scale.

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Plate 1. Site looking south-west from north-west.



Plate 2. Site looking south from north.



Plate 3. Site looking south-east from north-west.



Plate 4. Site east from west.

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**Land at Hoad Way, Theale,
Berkshire, 2019**
Archaeological Desk-based Assessment
Plates 1 to 4.

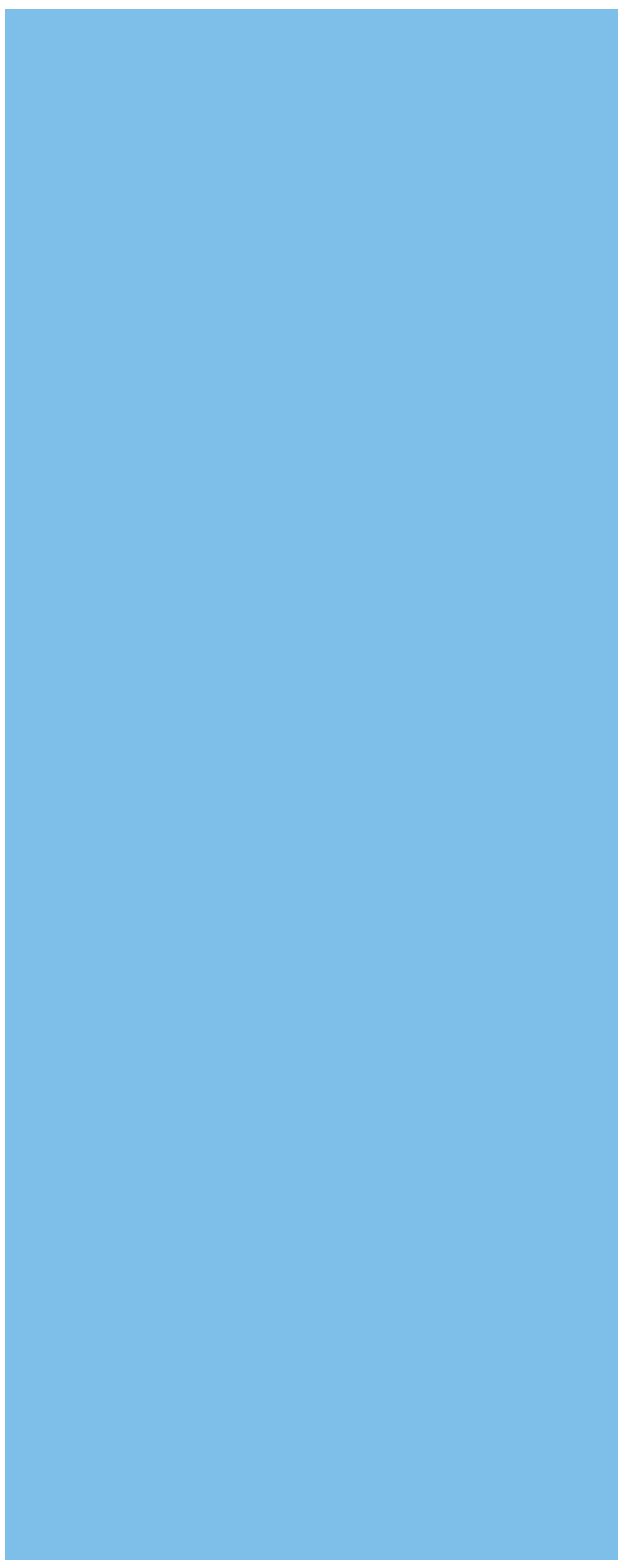
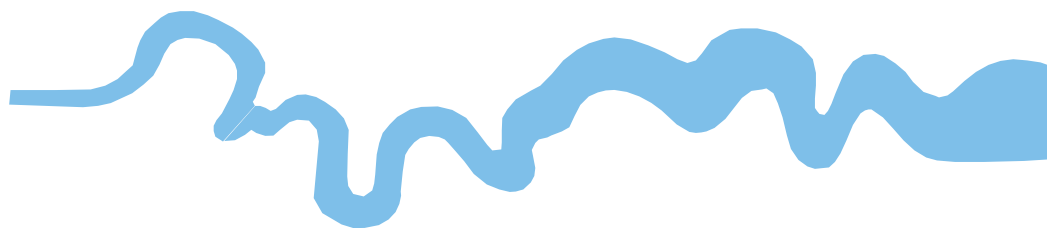
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TIME CHART

Calendar Years

Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43
	AD 0 BC
Iron Age _____	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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