



**20mph ZONE, HIGH STREET, FORDINGTON,
DORCHESTER, DORSET
Archaeological Observations and Recording**

Report No. 5090.1

April 2002

**20mph Zone, High Street, Fordington, Dorchester, Dorset
Archaeological Observations and Recording,
October 2001 – February 2002**

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20mph Zone, High Street, Fordington, Dorchester, Dorset Archaeological Observations and Recording, October 2001 – February 2002

SUMMARY

Archaeological observations were carried out during roadworks to install new speed bumps along High Street Fordington, Dorchester (SY 6961 9073 – SY 6992 9044). No archaeological deposits were observed.

INTRODUCTION

This project was commissioned by Dorset County Council Environmental Services Division following advice from Steven Wallis, Senior Archaeologist, Dorset County Council.

The 20mph zone scheme comprised a large number of alterations and improvements along High Street, Fordington, Holloway Road, Dukes Avenue, and Fordington Cross. The majority of these works were not judged to have any potential archaeological impact. The archaeological observations and recording were limited to the construction of four speed humps along High Street, Fordington (Figure 1). These speed humps were about 4 m by 2.4–3.8 m across and were excavated about 0.3 m below the road surface.

The site of the observations was on four locations along High Street Fordington, between Ordnance Survey NGR SY 6961 9073 and SY 6992 9044 (Figure 1). The northwestern end of the road is fairly flat at a height of about 55.5 m OD, then it curves round and rises quite steeply up to the top of Fordington Hill at a height of about 69 m OD, then drops down again towards Fordington Cross. The underlying geology is mapped as Upper Chalk (Geological Survey of Great Britain1: 50,000 Sheet 328 *Dorchester* 1981).

The fieldwork was carried out between 30th October 2001–28th February 2002.

Terrain Archaeology would like to acknowledge the following for their help and cooperation during this project: Matthew Piles (*Dorset County Council*), Steven Wallis (*Dorset County Council*). The fieldwork was undertaken by Peter Bellamy.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A number of archaeological sites have been found along the course of High Street, Fordington. The northern end of the road lies just outside the eastern side of the Roman town and possible traces of the Roman town gate and other Roman buildings were observed during sewage works at the junction of High Street Fordington, and Salisbury Street (Woodward and Ashford 1997). About 50 m to the east, parts of a substantial late Roman house with a fine mosaic floor were uncovered in the earlier part of the 20th century, lying at a depth of about 0.9–1.2 m partly beneath the footpath outside 12 and 14 High Street Fordington and the foundry yard to the south (RCHME 1970, Vidler 1928). Further traces of Roman activity have been found on the other side of the road at the old foundry (Cox and Robinson 1998).

Several hundred Roman burials have been discovered on the northern slopes of Fordington Hill (RCHME 1970).

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The objective of the archaeological observations is to establish and make available information about the archaeological resource existing on the site.

The archaeological works aimed to observe and record all the in situ archaeological deposits and features revealed during the groundworks to an appropriate professional standard.

METHODOLOGY

The observations were carried out in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (1994, rev. 1999), though no written brief for the work was issued.

The locations and the site numbers are those used by the client for the works and taken from Drawing No. DC2348/11/1, provided by the client. All archaeological deposits and features exposed during the works were recorded using components of the Terrain Archaeology recording system of complementary written, drawn and photographic records.

RESULTS

No archaeologically significant features or deposits were observed.

Site 2 was not observed by Terrain Archaeology but Steven Wallis (Senior Archaeologist, Dorset County Council) confirmed that no archaeological features were visible. Observations about 15 m to the east during February 2002 indicated that there was recent disturbance down to a depth of about 1.5 m in this area (Terrain Archaeology 2002).

Sites 3 and 7a on the northern slopes of Fordington Hill revealed nothing more than disturbed chalk below the present surfaces. Both of these sites lie in the area of the road which was lowered in 1838–9 (RCHME 1970, 573) and the evidence suggests that all traces of archaeology had been removed by this work.

Site 15 on the southern slope of Fordington Hill also revealed chalk beneath the present surfaces.

CONCLUSIONS

No archaeological features or deposits were recognised during the works. This is partly a reflection of the very small scale of the works but is also a result of the quite significant amount of disturbance that has taken place along High Street, Fordington over the last 200 years.

REFERENCES

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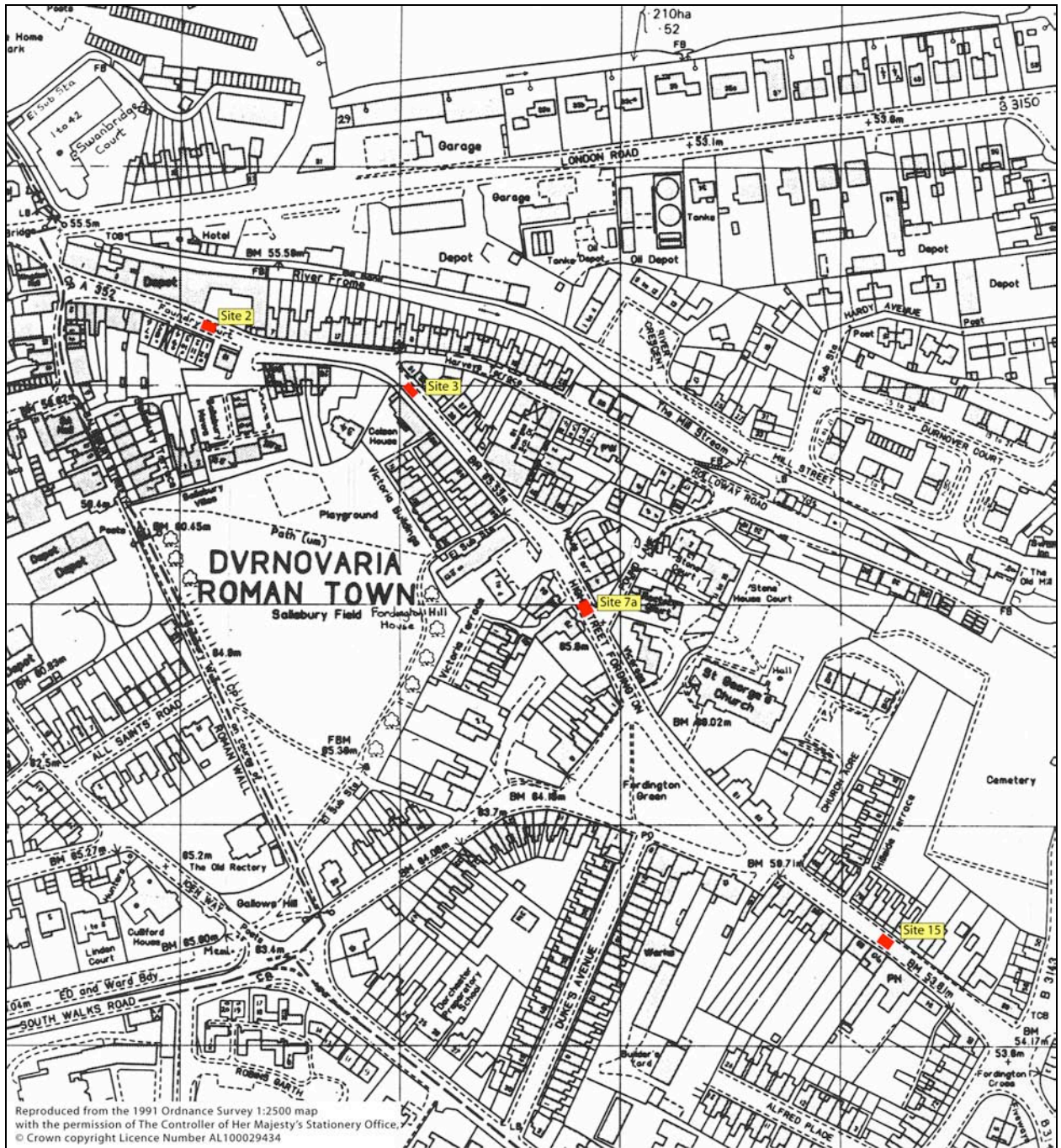


Figure 1: Location Map