



Southampton Archaeology Unit
Report 1296

**Archaeological watching brief on land to the rear of
the Vine Inn, High Street, Stockbridge, Hampshire.
A2017.10**

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2017
Client: D. C. Li (Builders) Ltd)



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Cover photo: Looking south from the rear of the Vine Inn to Area 3.

Report on the Archaeological Watching Brief on land to the rear of the Vine Inn, High Street, Stockbridge, Hampshire, A2017.10

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Site code A2017.10
Archaeology Unit report 1296
Ordnance Survey grid reference 435757 135037

1. Summary

A watching brief was carried out by Southampton City Council Archaeology Unit on 14 March 2017 on land to the rear of the Vine Inn, High Street, Stockbridge, Hampshire. The groundworks to be observed had been dug, and some backfilled, before the archaeologist was called in, but the open trenches were examined and a few small sondages were dug to check the stratigraphic sequence. The deposits exposed were similar to those exposed on other sites in Stockbridge, with layers of river gravel and peat, overlain by post-medieval make-up deposits. The lack of medieval material from the observations reflects a similar dearth of medieval material from other archaeological work in the town. There are also differences in the deposits seen elsewhere. For instance at the *Roxtons* site 40m to the west the peat was 1.4m below present ground level rather than the 0.5m at the Vine. This might indicate deep palaeo-channels with the river at a much lower level in the past, whereas the present situation is one of shallow channels with water level close to present ground level. The date of this change is not known, but the layers of silt, soil and chalk rubble found on the various watching briefs in the town all indicate widespread raising of the ground level in the post-medieval period. The recorded late medieval decline of Stockbridge was perhaps due to silting of the river channels, followed by flooding that made the area uninhabitable. A programme of widespread raising of the ground surface in the early post-medieval period was probably required before the town could become prosperous again, and the evidence from the Vine Inn suggests this process continued into the late 18th century. Any evidence of medieval occupation will lie at a greater depth.

2. Introduction

2.1 Mr and Mrs Dique Li (D. C. Li (Builders) Ltd) obtained planning permission 14/02148/FULLN for the erection of a commercial and residential building to the rear of the Vine Inn. The new buildings were to be linked to the present foul system by a north-south trench along much of the plot. A number of conditions were applied by Test Valley Borough Council. Condition 10 related to archaeology:

No development shall take place (including site clearance within the application site/area indicated red), until the applicant or their agents or successors in title has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work, in accordance with a written brief and specification for a scheme of investigation and mitigation, which has been submitted by the developer and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: The site is potentially of archaeological significance in accordance with Test Valley Borough Local Plan 2006 policy ENV11.

2.2 Hampshire County Council, acting on behalf of the local planning authority, agreed that the archaeological work would take the form of a watching brief on the groundworks.

2.3 The observations were made by Dr AD Russel on 14 March 2017. The groundworks to be observed had been dug, and some backfilled, before the archaeologist was called in, but the open trenches were examined and a few small sondages were dug to check the stratigraphic sequence.

2.4 This report was written by T Riley BA (Hons), MSc and was edited by Dr AD Russel BA PhD MCIfA.

3. Site location, topography, and geology

3.1 The site lies to the south of the main street of Stockbridge at grid reference 435757 135037 (fig 1). The ground level in the High Street outside the site is 35.2mOD. Stockbridge lies in the bottom of the valley of the river Test, and the area is level.

3.2 The deposits beneath the site consist of alluvium overlying the Lewes nodular chalk (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

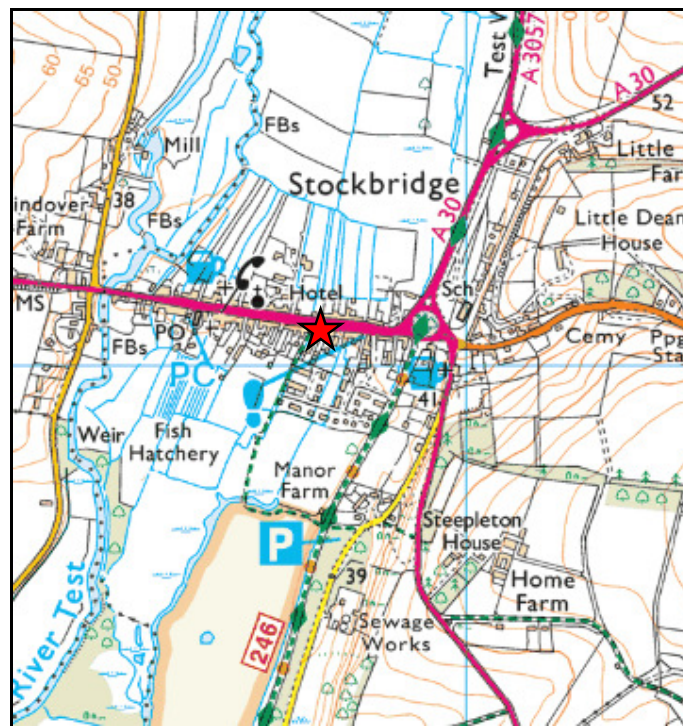


Figure 1. Location of the site marked by red star.

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4. Aim of the investigation

4.1 The aim of the investigation as determined by the Written Scheme of Investigation was *'to determine the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts within the area of the site, and to record such evidence.'* (Southampton Archaeology 2016).

5. Watching brief methodology

5.1 All archaeological records were made using the Southampton City Council archaeological recording system. The colours of deposits were recorded using the Munsell Soil Color Chart and these are used in this report (Munsell Color 2000). The archive will be stored by Hampshire Cultural Trust under accession number A2017.10 on completion of the project. No finds were retained.

6. Historical and archaeological background

6.1 Historical Background

6.1.1 The Hampshire County Council Assessment of Historic Towns in the Test Valley suggests that Stockbridge may have had a Late Saxon/Norman origin but the town does not appear by name in the Domesday Book. William de Briwere, the lord of the manor, was granted a market charter for Stockbridge by Richard I in 1190 and King John confirmed the charter in 1200. Burgages are referenced in the 1230's and in 1264 sixty-four burgage plots were recorded. By 1289 there were ninety-seven burgage properties in the town. In the middle of the 15th century, for some unknown reason, the place became almost deserted and the poverty of the remaining inhabitants was so great that the market which had been confirmed to the town by Henry V and Henry VI was discontinued. The town revived however, and by the reign of Edward VI (1547-1553) there were fifty-eight burgages in Stockbridge, and the later prosperity of the town can be judged from the fact that Queen Elizabeth granted the burgesses the right of sending two members to Parliament in 1562–3, while thirty years later she re-granted to them their weekly market (Page 1911, 483).

6.1.2 The site lies in the core of the historic town in an area identified in the HCC assessment as of High Archaeological Importance.

6.1.3 The Vine Inn itself is listed Grade II as is the stable block adjacent, and both lie within the Stockbridge Conservation Area. A Historic Building Analysis was submitted with the application (Stubbs 2016). *The main three storey element of the building dates to the 18th century and has contemporary two storey wings to the rear. On the west end was a single storey structure, originally added in the late 18th or early 19th century. Late in the 19th century, this was increased in height to a two storey structure and then, at the end of the 19th century, extended to the south. The main building was prestigious in its time, with header bond brick façade, gauged and rubbed brick window arches with block keystones, moulded brick cornice and sash windows. The interior was originally of a high standard, as witnessed by the surviving and complete first floor panelled bedroom at the east end, and a number of panelled doors throughout. The ground floor rooms at the front of the main block had tall ceiling heights requiring a split staircase arrangement to give access to the smaller rooms in the lower south wings. It is not known whether the building was originally constructed as a Coaching Inn, but that has been its use since the early 19th century. During the late 20th century, there has been constructed a number of additions to the rear and the ground floor interior converted to provide a large bar and restaurant areas with a commercial kitchen. The first floor has also been upgraded to provide guest accommodation, with en-suite bathrooms. The single storey range of stables runs north-south down the west side of the Burgage Plot with the structure's west wall rising out of the stream. The northern 18th century bay facing the High Street has been converted into a small shop in the past with a storage bay behind and is*

now in separate ownership. The remaining 19th century structure of six bays, which functioned in the past as stabling, has more recently been used for low key storage and is now in a poor state of repair.

6.1.4 The 1910 Ordnance Survey sheet (surveyed 1908 shows the building, with a number of linear buildings behind it, and further small structures in the yard to the south. A stream forms the west boundary of the plot,, with a branch stream coming of it and snaking through the plot (fig 2).

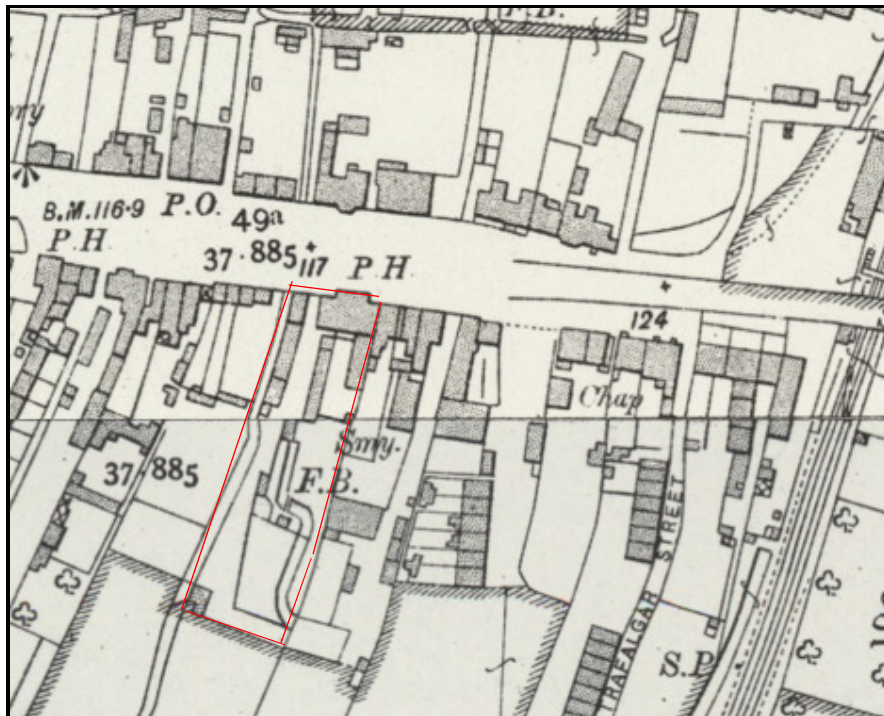


Figure 2. Extract from Hampshire and Isle of Wight 25inch Sheet XXXI.16. Revised 1908, and published 1910. Site boundary marked in red.

6.2 Archaeological Background

A search of the Hampshire AHBR for archaeological evidence within 1000m of the site was carried out on the 24/3/16. Details of twenty-four sites were recovered. A full list was included in the WSI for the project, only the sites close to the Vine Inn will be given here (fig 3):

28464

SU 435500135100

Modern version of the medieval town of Stockbridge was observed on an Air Photo Survey dated 1947.

29996

SU 435900135100

Site of Stockbridge railway station. Railway station opened in 1865 by London and South West Railway Company

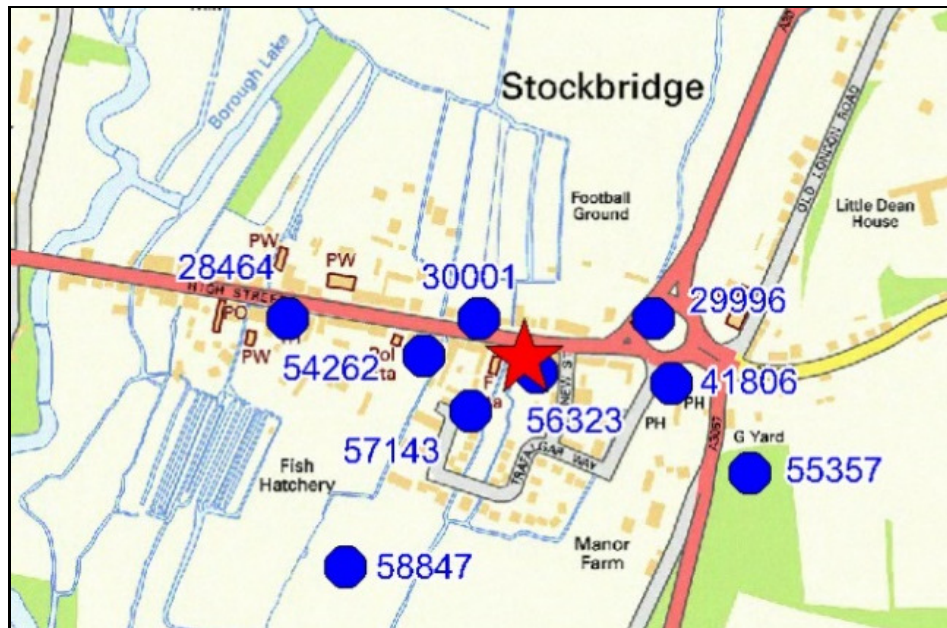


Figure 3: Archaeological background to the Vine Inn, shown by red star. Archaeological find spots close to the site shown with blue circles.

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30001

SU 435710135100

A watching brief at Mead House. No features of archaeological interest were observed during the construction of a raft foundation for an extension (1989).

41806

SU 435920135030

Watching brief at the White Hart Inn. Flint walls found during watching brief may be foundations of a former structure on the site, probably related to the current public house. A possible shallow prehistoric feature was found in the south-west corner of the site.

54262

SU 435650135060

Evaluation at Providence House found six sherds of pottery of Roman to Post Medieval date.

55357

SU 436005134931

Stockbridge Union workhouse was built in 1837 to accommodate 150 inmates. It was built to a design by Mr Hopgood. The workhouse has been demolished.

56323

SU 435773135041

Late C19-early C20 smithy. The building has been demolished.

57143

SU 435700135000

Watching Brief at Jacob's House, Stockbridge. The foundation trenches revealed a sequence of infill layers. The flint fill was part of the foundations of a probable 19th century rear extension to Jacob's House. The chalk and flint layers would seem to be more general infilling to provide rear gardens above the flood-level of the River Test. The soakaway trench, approx. 8m from the house, also showed evidence of infilling and at a depth of 1m a natural deposit of peat was encountered. It is probable that the peat forms a more widespread layer in this area and may therefore be part of the natural surface preceding the 18th century. The finds consist of a small assemblage of C19th pottery, post-medieval or early modern peg tile, and a fragment of medieval or early post-medieval ridge tile.

58847

SU 435563134830

Drainage features associated with medieval or post-medieval water meadows are visible as earthworks on aerial photographs.

Another site not included in the search results was to the rear of 'Roxtons' some 40m to the west (Russel and Fedorowicz 2014). Excavation of trenches some 800mm deep revealed 400mm of modern deposits over 400mm of undated soil. Soil investigation work showed that peat lay 1.4m below the surface, but it was not exposed in the groundworks.

7. Results of the watching brief

The watching brief was carried out on ground works in three distinct areas of the site (Fig 4)

7.1 Area 1

7.1.1 Area 1 was situated to the southwest of the historic Vine Inn. Drainage trenches had been dug, the drains laid and mostly backfilled. One short length of drain trench, some 520mm deep, was still open (fig 5).

7.1.2 Layer 1 was a deposit of soil and chalk, recorded as a slightly stony, gray (7.5YR6/1) silt mixed with chalk rubble. It was present in the bottom of the trench and was up to 330mm thick. A fragment of a crude, locally made, brick, and a sherd of late 18th century Staffordshire White salt-glazed stoneware were recovered. Above layer 1 was 180 mm of recent gravel and tarmac.

7.2 Area 2

7.2.1 Area 2 was the excavation of shallow foundations for a garage on the east side of the site. The excavated area had been filled with hardcore and compacted, but the section on the east side showed some 500mm of deposits. The section was cleaned and recorded (fig 6).

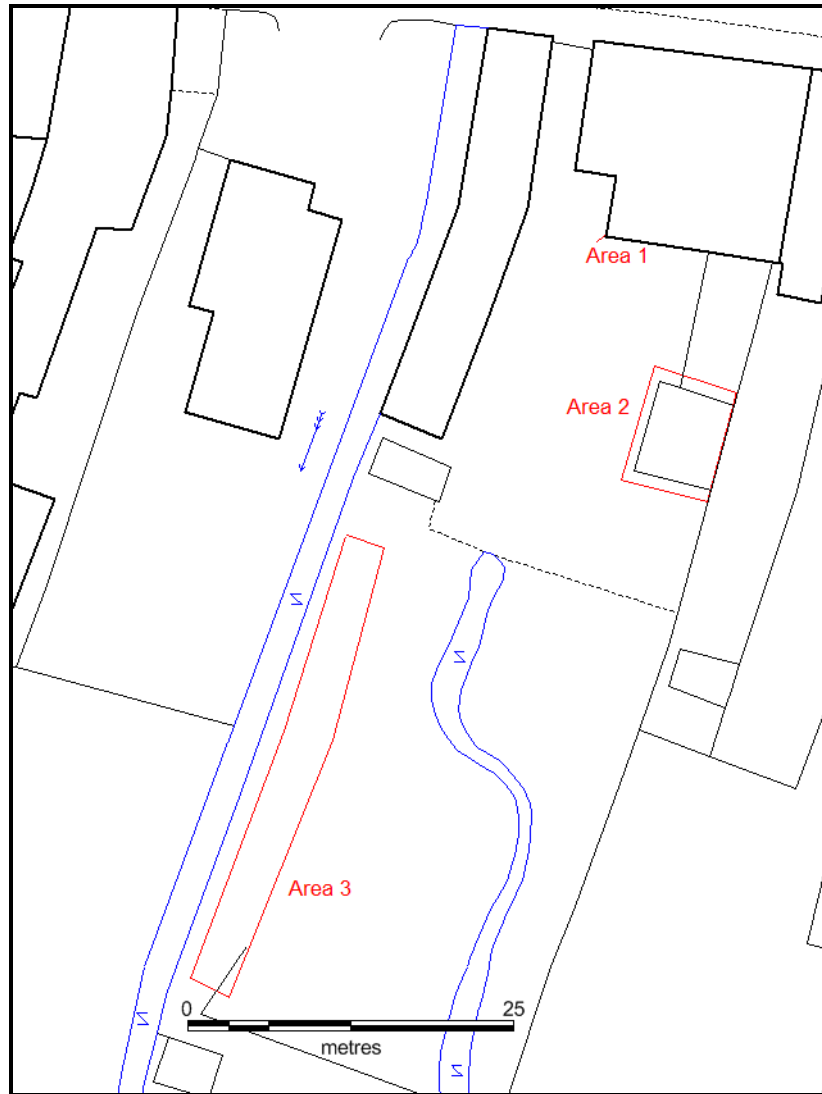


Figure 4: Showing the three areas where groundworks were observed.
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Figure 5. Drainage trench immediately behind the Vine Inn (Area 1).



Figure 6. West facing section on east side of site, showing layers 5 and 2.

7.2.2 The lowest layer, 5, was a very dark gray (7.5YR3/1) silt loam with much flint gravel, it was at least 30mm thick. Modern window glass, late 18th century creamware, and animal bone were present.

7.2.3 Layer 2 was above layer 5. It was topsoil, and was a very dark gray (7.5YR3/1) silt loam, 0.48m thick, with a small admixture of flint gravel.

7.3 Area 3.

7.3.1 Area 3 was the area on the west side of the site where a new single storey structure was to be built. The area had been excavated and mostly filled with compacted Type 2 material, but the edges of the excavated area were cleaned up in a number of places to allow examination of the deposits the trench had cut through.

7.3.2 A greensand staddle stone (fig 7) had been dug up to the north of Area 3. It was 640mm tall, 400mm by 270mm at its base and 170mm by 180mm at its top. Its presence suggests there had been a granary in this location.

7.3.3 Layer 7 was the earliest layer observed. It was a deposit of flint shingle, with flints of c.2mm in size packed around larger flints, all light gray (7.5YR7/1) in colour. This appeared to be a natural water-deposited layer (fig 8). Above it was layer 6, a 230mm thick deposit of black (7.5YR2.5/1) peat. It contained china, 19th century mass-produced earthenware, and a sheep metacarpal. It was variously overlain by layer 4 on the west against the stream and by layer 9 elsewhere. Layer 4 was a light gray (7.5YR7/1) silty clay with flecks of chalk. It was possibly a flood deposit. Layer 9 was a brown (7.5YR5/3) silty clay loam some 140mm thick. It produced post-medieval peg-tile.

7.3.4 Above layer 4 was layer 3, 230mm of very slightly stony white (7.5YR8/1) silt with lenses of chalk rubble.



Figure 7. Greensand staddle stone

7.3.5 Above layer 9 was layer 8, a deposit of recent make-up at the south end of the site. It was mostly white (7.5YR8/1), 180mm thick and comprised of a mixture of chalk, flint and brick rubble (fig 8). Occasional bricks and flint from this layer had been pushed into layer 9 below.



Figure 8. East-facing section showing layers 7, 6, 9 and 8.

8. Conclusions

The deposits exposed were similar to those exposed on other sites in Stockbridge, with layers of river gravel and peat, overlain by post-medieval make-up deposits. The lack of medieval material from the observations reflects a similar dearth of medieval material from other archaeological work in the town. There are also differences in the deposits seen elsewhere. For instance at the *Roxtons* site 40m to the west the peat was 1.4m below present ground level rather than the 0.5m at the Vine. This might indicate a situation in the past marked by deep palaeo-channels with the river at a much lower level, whereas the present situation is one of shallow channels with water level close to present ground level. The date of this change is not known, but the layers of silt, soil and chalk rubble found on the various watching briefs in the town all indicate widespread raising of the ground level in the post-medieval period. The recorded late medieval decline of Stockbridge was perhaps due to silting of the river channels, followed by flooding that made the area uninhabitable. A programme of widespread raising of the ground surface in the early post-medieval period was probably required before the town could become prosperous again, and the evidence from the Vine Inn suggests this process continued into the late 18th century. Any evidence of medieval occupation will lie at a greater depth.

Appendix 1. Context list

Number/letter codes (eg 10YR 3/1) = Munsell soil colour codes.
sa = stone abundance – 0 = virtually stone free; 5 = gravel

Context	Type	Above	Below	Description
1	Layer	N/A	modern	Chalk flint make-up 7.5YR6/1 Silt sa2
2	Layer	5	N/A	Topsoil 7.5YR3/1 Silt loam sa1
3	Layer	4	8?	Soil and chalk make-up 7.5YR8/1 Silt sa1
4	Layer	6	3	Flood deposit? 7.5YR7/1 Silty clay
5	Layer	N/A	2	7.5YR3/1 Silt loam with much small flint gravel sa4
6	Layer	7	4, 9	Peat 7.5YR2.5/1 Silt sa0
7	Layer	N/A	6	Shingle 7.5YR7/1 gravel sa5
8	Layer	9	N/A	Brick rubble, chalk and flint make-up 7.5YR8/1 sa3
9	Layer	6	8	7.5YR5/3 Silty clay loam sa1

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