

12 CITY ROAD,
WINCHESTER,
HAMPSHIRE
(NGR SU 479 299)

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



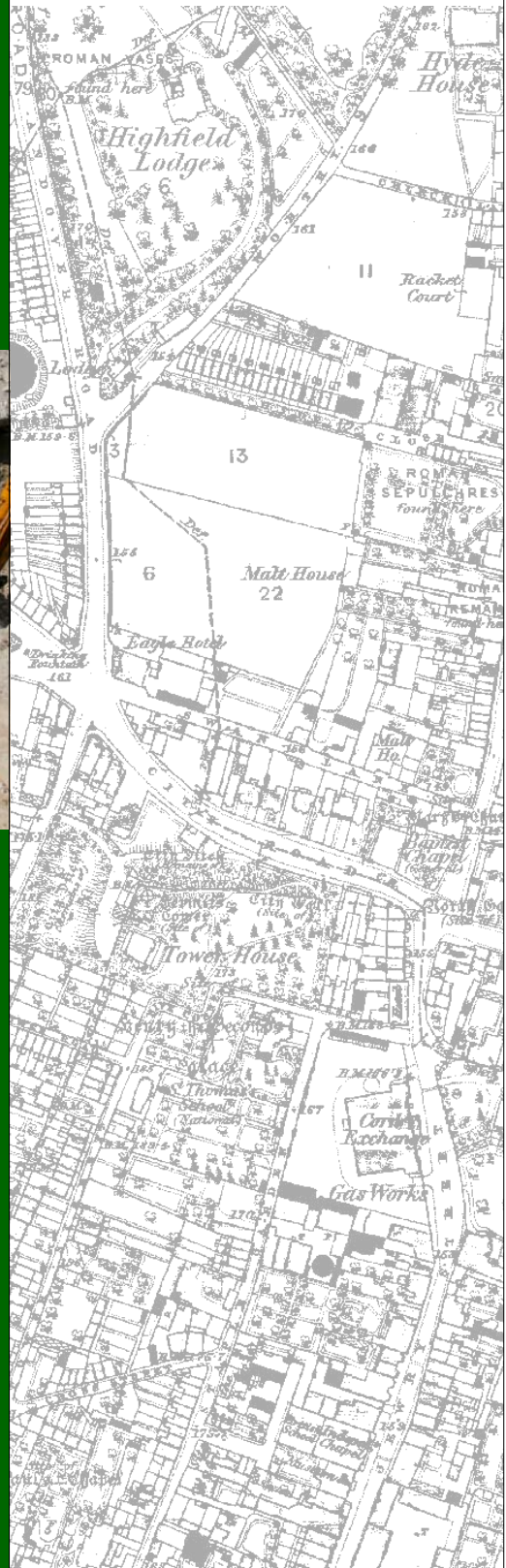
by
Martin Wilson

April 2010

Commissioned by
Richard Steel & Partners

Souterrain

Archaeological Services Ltd



12 City Road, Winchester, Hampshire
(NGR SU 479 299)

Archaeological Watching Brief

Planning Application Reference No. 09/01211/FUL

by

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Souterrain Project No. SOU10/155

April 2010

for

Richard Steel & Partners Ltd

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CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES & PLATES	3
SUMMARY	4
1. SCOPE OF THE REPORT	5
2. INTRODUCTION	5
3. SITE LOCATION	5
4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL	5
5. OBJECTIVES	6
6. METHODOLOGY	6
7. RESULTS	7
8 CONCLUSION	8
9. ARCHIVE	9

List of Figures & Plates

Figure 1	Location of site
Figure 2	Plan of features and location of section drawings
Figure 3	Section 1: post-medieval pits
Figure 4	Sections 2 to 4; Features 1, 5 & 7
Plate 1	General aspect of site and watching brief area (red), facing west
Plate 2	General aspect of site and watching brief area (red) during excavation, facing east
Plate 3	Section 1: post medieval pit facing south-west
Plate 4	Depth of modern overburden; Features 1, 3, 5 & 8, facing north-west
Plate 5	Excavated sections through Features 1 and 3, facing north-east

(Illustrations are at the end of the report)

SUMMARY

Over a period of two days in April 2010, Souterrain carried out archaeological ground monitoring and recording during the excavation of foundations for a rear extension at 12 City Road, Winchester. The main objective was to identify and record features that might be associated with the Roman and / or Late Saxon outer town defences, or the city's historic suburb.

The monitoring work revealed no evidence of an intermediate Roman or Saxon defensive ditch in the area investigated. There was, however, a large pit or quarry close to the existing building which was rapidly backfilled in the 18th or 19th century. Elsewhere in the area under observation, the geology (chalk) was located directly below the modern surface of concrete and hardcore. A group of discrete undated 'negative' (i.e. cut and fill) features were also recorded, which are considered to be anthropogenic in origin, having the appearance of timber slots or post-holes, although interpretation was inconclusive in such a limited area under investigation.

1. SCOPE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report documents the results of an Archaeological Watching Brief carried out during groundwork for a rear extension at No. 12 City Road, Winchester Hampshire (Fig. 1) on the 15th and 16th April 2010 in compliance with a condition attached to planning consent. The work was commissioned by Richard Steel & Partners Ltd, the planning applicant.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Planning permission was granted by Winchester City Council (WCC) on 14^h August 2009 for the demolition of a single storey rear extension facing Swan Lane and its replacement with a single storey flat roofed extension (Planning Application 09/01211/FUL). The proposed area of the new extension measured 4.05m x 3.05m¹.

2.2 Due to the archaeological sensitivity of the locality, Condition 03 of the planning consent required the applicant to secure the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), in order to enable important information to be recovered in the event of archaeological remains being located within the area and depth of new ground works. This was in accordance with the Department of Environment's Planning Policy Guidance *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16, 1990) and policy HE.1 of the Winchester District Plan.

2.3 The Historic Environment Officer (Archaeology) for Winchester City Council (hereafter, HEOA) advised that a Watching Brief would be the appropriate form of archaeological mitigation works. A WSI² was subsequently prepared by Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd (Souterrain) on behalf of the applicant, and approved by the HEOA. The Watching Brief was carried out by Martin Wilson.

3. SITE LOCATION

3.1 The development site is located north-west of Winchester city centre, within a private car-parking area at the rear of the building No.12 City Road. It is c.47.78 m above mean sea level.

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

4.1 The site lies within the historic northern suburb of Winchester which is an archaeologically sensitive area. A search of the HER returned 14 records of archaeological significance within c.60m of the site³. A number of ditches have been discovered in proximity to the site which may relate to the Roman and/or Late Saxon outer town defences. The outer defensive circuit of Winchester is not well understood and the site was thus considered to have the potential to contain associated evidence, together with remains associated with settlement and activity within the historic suburb. Archaeological evaluation of the wider site has confirmed that despite some disturbance from the construction of the extant buildings and their previous uses, archaeological remains do survive within the area occupied by these buildings.

4.2 The site is located approximately 20m north of the defensive perimeter of the medieval city of Winchester⁴, the line of which, in this area, is understood to have more or less followed the course of antecedent defensive works of the Saxon *burgh*, the Roman *Civitas (Venta Belgarum)*, and, before that, a Middle Iron Age enclosure known as Orams Arbour.

4.3 In the Roman period the site would have been situated between the projected courses of two Roman streets from the west which probably converged at the northern entrance to the

¹ See Goadsby Building Consultancy Department, Project: 12-14 City Road Winchester, Drawing No. BS/09/883760/01, June 2009, Rev A

² Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief: 12 City Road, Winchester Hampshire (NGR SU 479 299) Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd, VER. 1. 5th April 2010

³ A more detailed assessment of these records with regard to archaeological potential is given in the WSI. The numbers given in the footnotes denote the Sites and Monument Record (SMR) and/or Urban Archaeology Database event number.

⁴ Scheduled Ancient Monument HA 247, Winchester City Wall and associated monuments

Roman town. The course of the southern road is about 22m away from the development site, while the northern one, which follows the course of Swan Lane, is about 10m away and was exposed during digging of a service trench in 1929⁵. Beyond Swan Lane to the north lay the Roman necropolis, which has been attested by various major excavations in advance of re-development between 1971 and late 1990s⁶, as well as discoveries of burials during minor development work elsewhere along Swan Lane⁷. The full extent of the necropolis has not been proved. There has been no evidence of Roman burials south of Swan Lane, which suggests that its Roman antecedent marked a division between the *civitas* and its necropolis.

4.4 The excavations also revealed evidence of Saxon buildings. One of these, a large house⁸ of 9th or 10th century date, was situated about 45m northwest of the site and fronted a precursor of Swan Lane. It is possible that the remains of other buildings of the period are to be found along the boundary of Swan Lane. A row of refuse pits⁹ of 10th to 12th century date were also found, which were understood to denote the rear boundary of a property, suggesting that the remains of medieval tenements may also exist alongside Swan Lane.

4.5 Concerning the defensive circuit, just 13m to the north-east of the site at No.12 City Road, a shallow flat-bottomed ditch was observed in 1980 during an excavation to insert a large petrol tank¹⁰ at the former garage. The ditch was understood to be part of the late Saxon / Saxo-Norman outer defensive system and is believed to have resembled a ditch found at 10 City Road in 1971¹¹ about 29m southeast of the site. At the latter site there were two parallel ditches one metre apart, which had been constructed in the late 9th century, and were completely silted up by c. AD1100. Assuming that these interpretations are correct, there remains the possibility that an intermediate ditch exists in the locality of the site. Additionally, a medieval ditch¹² was exposed c.16m to the west of the site in 2006 during an archaeological evaluation of the neighbouring property (16A City Road). The ditch contained pottery sherds of 11th-14th century date, but it is presently uncertain as to whether it relates to the medieval defensive ditch system or to the medieval suburban layout.

5. OBJECTIVES

5.1 The purpose of the Watching Brief was to identify significant archaeological remains, especially pertaining to the defensive circuit and the historic suburb. The Watching Brief would also ascertain the depth of archaeological deposits, the extent of modern ground disturbance, and make observations and records which may inform future planning decisions in the locality.

6. METHODOLOGY

6.1 The foundations were largely excavated by a small mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket under direct control of the archaeologist. As appropriate and as safety allowed, archaeological features and layers were hand-cleaned and investigated by the archaeologist in order to gain an understanding of them.

6.2 An archaeological context recording system was used for registering textual descriptions and stratigraphic relationships of archaeological features. Context numbers were not allocated to modern deposits and features. All records are referenced with the Site Code WINCM: AY 431 allocated for this site by Winchester Museums.

⁵ 591 (EWC6959)

⁶ 1787 (EWC9111)

⁷ AY170 (EWC11791)

⁸ 1787 (EWC9112)

⁹ 1787 (EWC9113)

¹⁰ 955 (EWC7063)

¹¹ 601 (EWC7072)

¹² 5/1/1 (EWC11930)

6.3 Drawings were made on drafting film at appropriate scales for archaeological work. The photographic record comprises 35mm monochrome film and digital images and includes working shots to represent more generally the nature of the fieldwork.

6.4 Archaeological features were surveyed to Ordnance Survey National Grid co-ordinates and orthometric height was obtained by RTK Differential GPS; eastings and northings positions with a quality of 10 to 20mm, and height quality between 20 to 30mm. The archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct and *Standard Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (2001).

7. RESULTS

In the sections which follow, context numbers in square brackets denote 'cuts' (i.e. dug features), whilst those in round brackets denote layers, deposits, fills or structures.

7.1 The new extension was constructed on part of the asphalt-surfaced car park (plates 1 and 2) which fronts Swan Lane. The ground surface was broken in advance of the watching brief, which included a layer of concrete beneath, c.0.3m in thickness, which was formerly the forecourt of a garage and service station. Beyond the line of the new building the asphalt surface was kept intact.

7.2 The ground-work strategy was to excavate strip foundations to a depth of 1m using a mechanical excavator. The smooth bucket fitted in the excavator improved archaeological 'visibility'.

7.3 Work began first on the foundation trench for the north wall, the excavation progressing from the south-east (Fig. 2, section A-A, S.1; plate 2). A brick man-hole surround was revealed immediately below the concrete-hardcore at the south-east end of the trench. Material subsequently removed along the course of the trench for the next c.2m comprised loose, re-deposited chalk and dirty chalky-earth. Much of this proved to be the back-fill of an intact (and possibly 'live'), sewerage pipe which was located at a depth of c.1m.

7.4 The north-facing section of the trench (Fig. 3; plate 3) was hand-cleaned, revealing a large pit-like feature [12] to the east that had been cut into the solid geology (chalk). The pit had a notably steep side (80°). It appeared to have been in-filled from the west-side in a single 'event'. Its fill comprised successive steeply-inclined tip-lines (13) of light brown or dark brown chalky earth, dirty chalk, or relatively clean chalk. A thin stem of a clay pipe was found at a depth of 0.94m below the existing ground surface. The lowermost visible layer, which appeared to be diesel/oil-contaminated sludgy chalk was seen to contain fragments of slate, brick, tile and stone. The depth of the pit and its function are unknown. It is inferred that the pit was manually in-filled sometime between the 17th and 19th century (post-medieval). The top side of another pit [14] (Fig. 3) was discernible at the western end of the trench; also steeply-inclined (65°).

7.5 Given that the sewerage pipe appeared to run the course of the proposed strip foundation, and that the presence of solid geology could not be predicted across the site, the client decided, in consultation with the Buildings Inspector, to revise the building foundation to a rafted design. This required excavation of the extension area to an overall depth of 0.45m. The site was also extended 1m to the north-east. The trench was back-filled with appropriate material to the required level.

7.6 The excavation of the remainder of the site down to 0.45m revealed more of the post-medieval pit to the south-east (Fig. 2), although its full extent could not be defined. Removal of the concrete and hardcore from the extended 1m strip to the north-east, revealed an area of solid geology (chalk) which had a thin dirty surface layer which is presumed to have been 'trample' associated with the ground preparation for the laying of hardcore and concrete. When this surface had been cleaned away by hand-trowel, a series of discrete and distinct 'negative'

(i.e. cut and fill) features were revealed and subsequently investigated (Figs 2 & 4; contexts [1], [3], [5], [7], (9), (10), & [11]; plates 4 and 5). These features had been truncated during the ground preparation for the laying of the former garage concrete forecourt, but were otherwise undisturbed. It is possible that they were archaeological in origin, given that they had the appearance of timber slots for ground beams and post-holes. Additionally, there was a discernible north-east/south-west linear trend to at least three of the features, but otherwise in such a small area (1m x 2m) little could be said of patterning. There were no small finds. Munsell Soil colour values of the fills of the features were recorded (Appendix 1), should the opportunity present itself at a future date to identify their further extent and clarify their origin.

Feature Descriptions

7.7 Feature [1] (Figs. 2 & 4; plates 4 and 5) was linear in form, between 0.2 and 0.3m in width and aligned north-east/south-west. It was truncated to a surviving depth of 0.23m. It survived up to c.0.48m in length having been cut by modern disturbance to the north-east. Its east side was stepped down to a flat-based slot which was c.0.1m wide, and its west side was vertical. The upper edge on the west side appeared to continue 0.2m to the south-west where it had been cut by a modern sewerage pipe-trench. The fill (2) was yellowish brown (Munsell hues 10YR 5/4 to 5/6) silty clay with chalk flecks and occasional angular and sub-angular pieces of flint and stones.

7.8 Feature [3] (Figs. 2 & 4; plates 4 and 5) was parallel to Feature [1] and had a similar stepped-down profile. It was between 0.3 and 0.4m in width and visible in length for c.1.2m, continuing beyond the north baulk. The flat-based slot was c.0.14m wide. Similarly, the feature had been truncated, to a surviving depth of 0.19m. The upper edge of its east side continued c.0.25m to the south-west, where it had been cut by modern sewerage pipe-trench. The fill (2) was similar to that of Feature [1].

7.9 Feature [5] (Fig. 2) was sub-linear in form (0.18 x c.0.29m), and was very shallow (0.03m) having been severely truncated. It was parallel to Features [1] and [3]. Its fill (6) was yellowish brown (Munsell hue 10YR 5/6) silty clay with chalk flecks.

7.10 Feature [8] (Fig. 2) was circular, c.0.28m diameter, with near-vertical sides falling to a flat base (up to 0.22 depth). Its fill (7) comprised pale brown, loose, dirty chalk (Munsell Hue 10YR 6/3) and light yellow brown silty clay (Munsell hue 10YR 6/3), with small stones.

7.11 Features (9) and (10) (Fig. 2) were not excavated. Their fills were alike and similar to those of Features [1] and [3] (Munsell hues 10YR 5/4 to 5/6). The form of Feature [11] is not known, other than its east side which was vertical. Its fill (15) was similar to the fill of Feature [5].

8 CONCLUSION

8.1 There was no evidence of an intermediate Roman or Saxon defensive ditch in the area investigated.

8.2 The excavation for the foundations demonstrated that although the area is very disturbed by service trenches in proximity to the existing buildings, a certain degree of major disturbance took place sometime in the post-medieval period, the reason for which is uncertain, but it appears to have been quarrying. The nature of the fills within a large pit (i.e. [12]) did not have the character of having been domestic or industrial refuse, but moreover it suggested a fairly rapid backfill activity (probably by barrowing) using whatever material was at hand, including fairly clean chalk, which took place probably in the 18th or 19th century.

8.3 The geological chalk, where present, was located directly below the modern concrete surface, generally between 0.3m and 0.4m. The fills of a group of small discrete linear and circular 'negative' features showed up in distinct contrast to the chalk geology. Notably, these features share the same alignment, and upon investigation they had the appearance of

archaeological features – such as timber slots or post-holes. There was no dating evidence recovered and it would be unwise to speculate further as to their origin without examining a wider area.

9. ARCHIVE

9.1 The Winchester City Council Museums Accessions Number for the project is WINCM: AY 431. The paper archive comprises one A3 field drawing sheet, and monochrome & digital photographs with index. The finds comprise a single clay-pipe stem. All artefacts will remain the property of the landowner. The English Heritage OASIS Data Collection Form ID for this project is souterra1-76122

10. COPYRIGHT AND CONFIDENTIALITY

10.1 Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd retains full copyright of commissioned reports and other project documents under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved; excepting that it will provide an exclusive licence to the Client in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the WSI. Souterrain grants a licence to Winchester HER for the use of all reports arising from projects for planning purposes and *bona fide* research requested.

(25th April 2010)
V2 27th June 2010

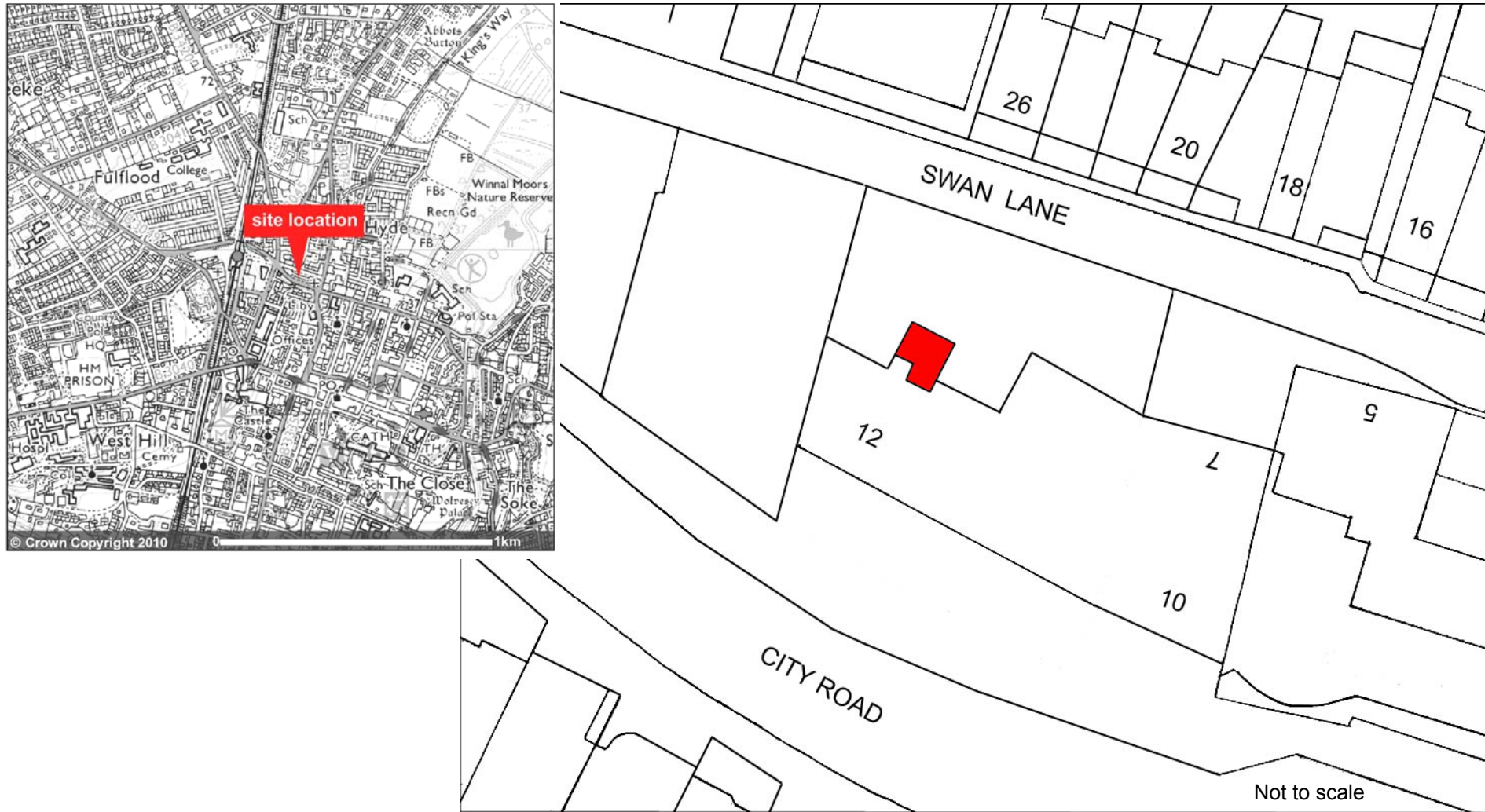
APPENDIX I LIST OF CONTEXTS

WINCM: AY 431, 12 CITY ROAD, WINCHESTER, HAMPSHIRE 2009, ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF, APRIL 2010

KEY: Relationships: **a.** above; **abt.** abuts; **b.** below; **c.** cuts; **cub.** cut by; **co.** contains; **wi** within
 Dimensions: **le.** length; **wid.** width; **de.** depth; **th.** thickness; **dia.** diameter

Context	Type	Description: composition, colour, interpretation, etc.	Relationships	Dimensions	Suggested period	Date of investigation
1	Cut	Linear feature aligned NE-SW; E-side was stepped to a flat-based slot, c.0.1m wide. W-side vt. Poss. Archaeology (?beam slot)	Truncated by mod; cub. mod. disturbance to NE. co. (2); c. geology;	wid. 0.2-0.3m; le. >c.0.48m; Apparent continuation 0.2m to SW; de.0.23m.	undated	16:04:2010
2	Fill	Yellowish brown (Munsell hues 10YR 5/4 to 5/6) silty clay with chalk flecks and occasional angular and sub-angular pieces of flint and stones.	wi. [1]; b. mod. overburden	-	undated	16:04:2010
3	Cut	Linear feature aligned NE-SW; parallel to [1]; E-side was stepped to a flat-based slot, c.0.14m wide. W-side vt. Poss. Archaeology (?beam slot)	Truncated by mod; cub. modern sewerage pipe-trench to SW; co. (4); c. geology;	wid. 0.3-0.4m; le. >c. c.1.2m, cont. beyond N baulk; de. 0.19m	undated	16:04:2010
4	Fill	Similar to (2); Yellowish brown (Munsell hues 10YR 5/4 to 5/6) silty clay with chalk flecks and occasional angular and sub-angular pieces of flint and stones	wi. [3]; b. mod. overburden	-	undated	16:04:2010
5	Cut	Sub-linear feature; parallel to [1] and [3]. Poss. Archaeology, uncertain function	co. (6); Truncated by mod; c. geology	wid. 0.18 m; le. c.0.29m; dia. 0.03m	undated	16:04:2010
6	Fill	Yellowish brown (Munsell hue 10YR 5/6) silty clay with chalk flecks & small stones	wi. [5]; b. mod. overburden	-	undated	16:04:2010
7	Cut	Circular feature; near-vt. sides falling to flat base; Poss. Archaeology (?post-hole)	co. (8); Truncated by mod; c. geology	dia.c.0.28m; de.c.0.22m	undated	16:04:2010
8	Fill	Pale brown dirty) loose chalk (Munsell Hue 10YR 6/3) & light yellow brown silty clay (Munsell hue 10YR 6/3), with small stones	wi. [7]; b. mod. overburden	-	undated	16:04:2010
9	Fill	Fill of feature of uncertain size/form / against baulk; Munsell hues 10YR 5/4 - 5/6	b. mod. overburden	-	undated	16:04:2010
10	Fill	Fill of poss. circular feature (not excavated) Munsell hues 10YR 5/4 - 5/6	b. mod. overburden	-	undated	16:04:2010
11	Cut	Feature of uncertain size / form, visible against baulk. E-side vt.	co. (15); Truncated by mod; c. geology	-	undated	16:04:2010
12	Cut	large pit; only the W side visible, inclined at 80°; in-filled from the west-side in a single 'event'. A thin stem of a clay	co. (13); Truncated by mod; c. geology	de. Unknown; uncertain extent,	c. 17 th -19 th	15:04:2010

Context	Type	Description: composition, colour, interpretation, etc.	Relationships	Dimensions	Suggested period	Date of investigation
		pipe stem found at 0.94m below the existing ground surface. The lowermost visible layer appeared to be diesel/oil-contaminated sludgy chalk contained fragments of slate, brick, tile and stone		visible over an area c.1.8m x 1.5m		
13	Fill	successive steeply-inclined tip-lines (13) of light brown or dark brown chalky earth, dirty chalk, or relatively clean chalk; manually in-filled	wi. [12]; b. mod. overburden		c. 17 th -19 th	15:04:2010
14	Cut	pit; only the W side visible, inclined at 65°; fill similar to (13)	co. (unassigned)	unknown	c. 17 th -19 th	15:04:2010
15	Fill	Fill of cut feature of uncertain form; similar to [5] Munsell hues 10YR 5/4 - 5/6	wi. [11]; b. mod. overburden	unknown; exc. to 0.25m	undated	16:04:2010



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Figure 1: Location of site

Figure 2: Plan of features and location of section drawings

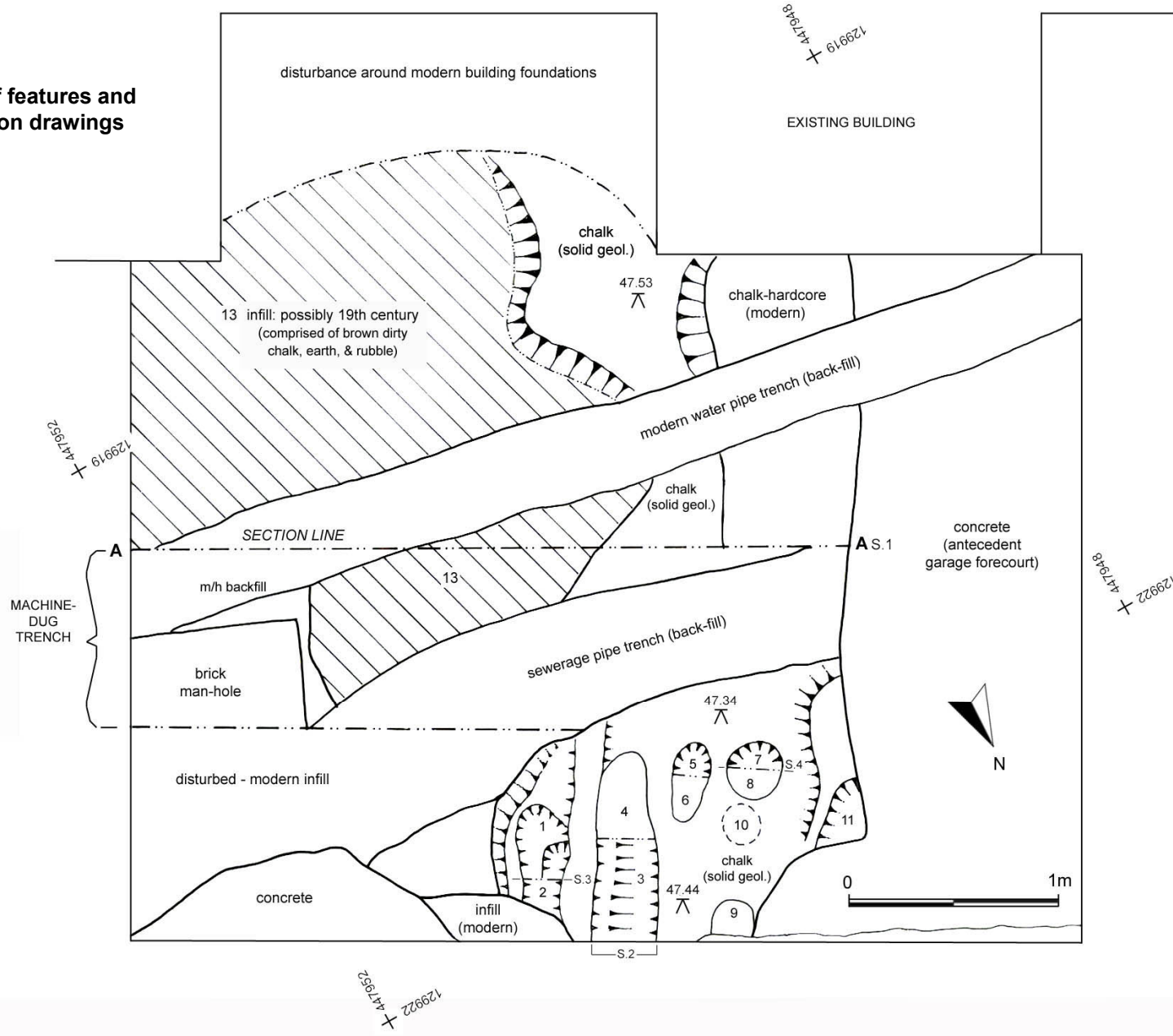
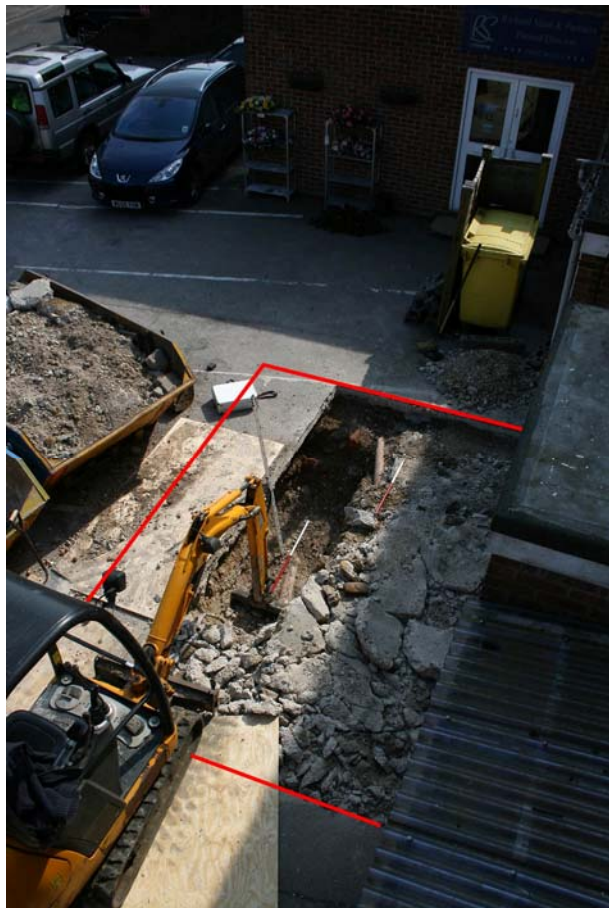


Plate 1: General aspect of site and watching brief area (red), facing west



Plate 2: General aspect of site and watching brief area (red) during excavation, facing east



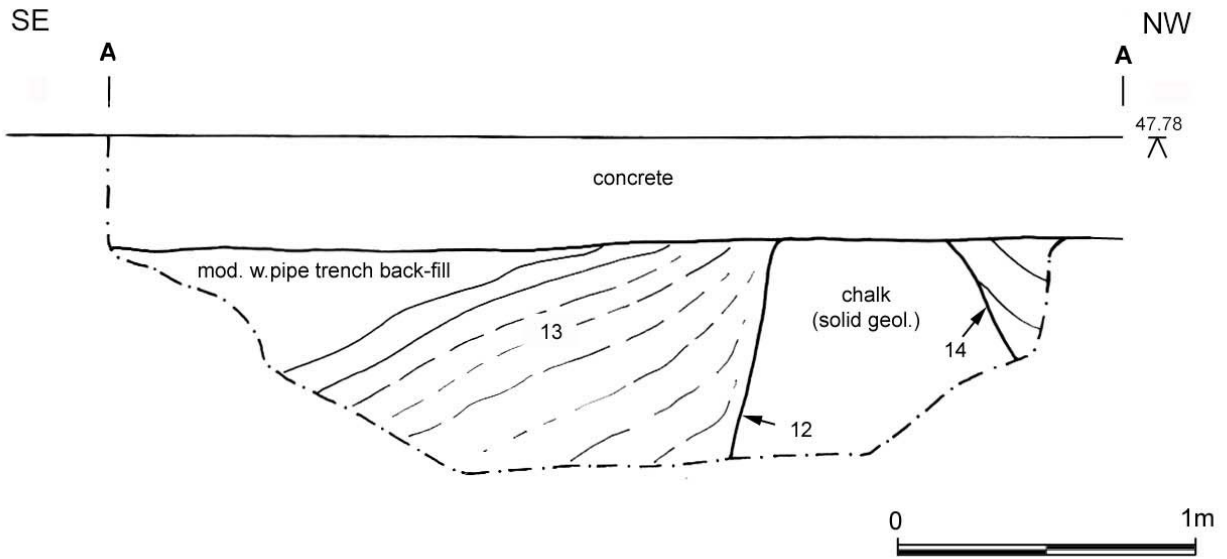


Figure 3: Section 1: post-medieval pits



Plate 3: Section 1: post medieval pit facing south-west

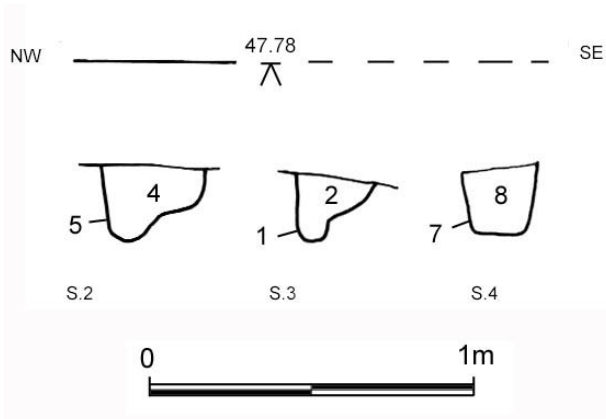


Figure 4: Sections 2 to 4 (Features 1, 5 & 7)



Plate 4: Depth of modern overburden; Features 1, 3, 5 & 8, facing north-west

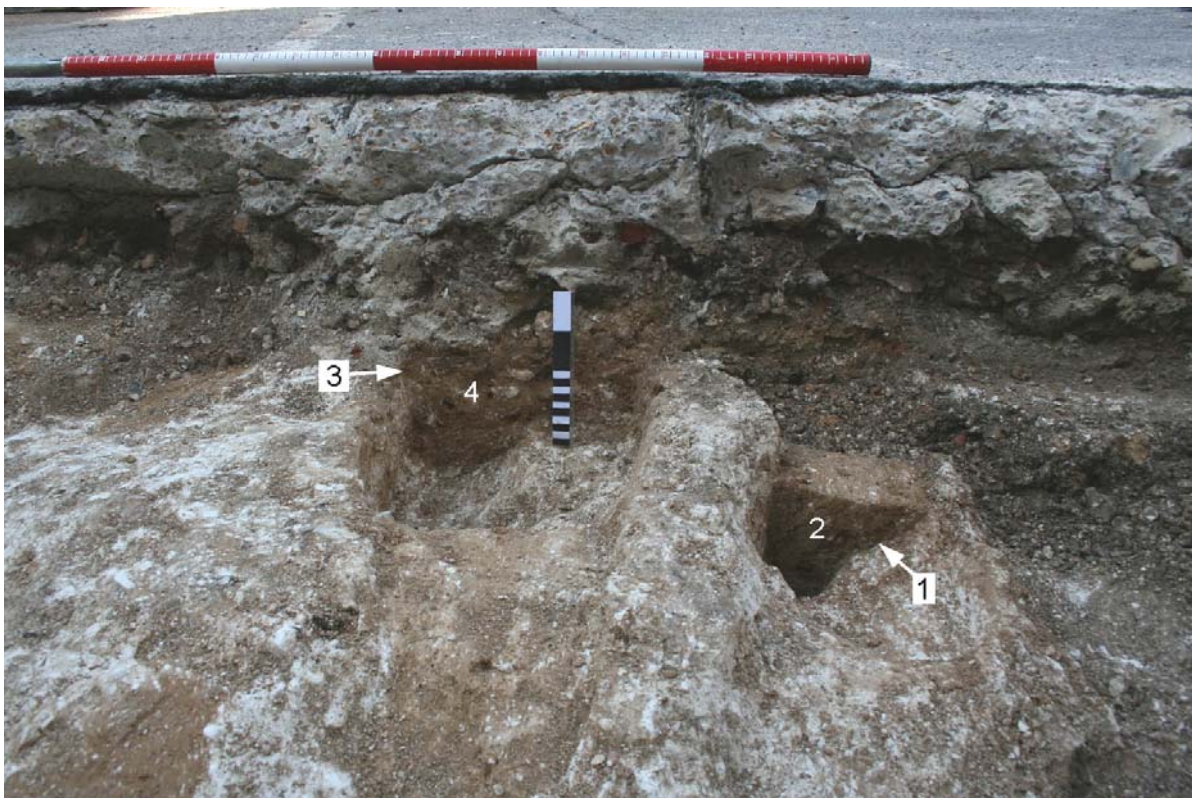


Plate 5: Excavated sections through Features 1 and 3, facing north-east