

**A targeted archaeological watching
brief on land at School Lane,
Nether Wallop, Hants**

NGR: SU 2949 3750

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Summary statement

It is proposed to build five semi-detached houses on an empty plot of land in School Lane, Nether Wallop, Hampshire (NGR: SU 2949 3750). A targeted archaeological watching brief was requested by the local planning authority, Test Valley Borough Council, following the discovery of the remains of an undated post-built structure near the western boundary of the site during a previous evaluation. The client, Hampshire Voluntary Housing Society, asked C K Currie of CKC Archaeology to undertake the work in order to satisfy a planning condition placed on the site.

Only one further possible post-hole was located to supplement those found during the previous evaluation, together with a single sherd of possible prehistoric or Saxon pottery, and five waste flakes of worked flint. This evidence was insufficient to draw any conclusions other than to say there was the possibility of non-intensive prehistoric activity of the site. No further archaeological work will be required for this development.

A targeted archaeological watching brief on land at School Lane, Nether Wallop, Hants (NGR: SU 2949 3750)

This report has been written based on the format suggested by the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief*. (Birmingham, 1994). The ordering of information follows the guidelines given in this document, although alterations may have been made to fit in with the particular requirements of the work. All work is carried out according to the Code of Conduct and By-laws of the Institute of Field Archaeologists, of which CKC Archaeology is a IFA-registered archaeological organisation (reference: RAO no. 1).

1.0 Introduction (Fig. 1)

It is proposed to build five semi-detached houses on an empty plot of land in School Lane, Nether Wallop, Hampshire (NGR: SU 2949 3750). A targeted archaeological watching brief was requested by the local planning authority, Test Valley Borough Council, following the discovery of the remains of an undated post-built structure near the western boundary of the site during a previous evaluation (Currie 2001a). The client, Hampshire Voluntary Housing Society, asked C K Currie of CKC Archaeology to undertake the work in order to satisfy a planning condition placed on the site.

2.0 Historical background

The development site lies less than 200m SE of the centre of Middle Wallop, thought to be a hamlet of medieval origin. Middle Wallop is sandwiched between the two medieval manors of Nether and Over Wallop, both settlements of great antiquity. Nether Wallop church is thought to be of Saxon origin and contains some of the finest medieval wall paintings in Hampshire (Pevsner & Lloyd 1967, 344). It is thought that ribbon development may have existed along the main road leading from Nether to Over Wallop. The development site is also only 2.5km from Danebury hillfort, one of the finest prehistoric hillforts in the UK. This fort has been shown to have been surrounded by an intensive area of prehistoric activity, including burial monuments, field systems and signs of contemporary settlement. This area of intensive prehistoric activity may have extended into the Wallop valley, a possible natural focus for contemporary activity (because of the water supply there) that probably extended through the medieval and early post-medieval periods to the present. The development site seems to lie on the side of an ancient holloway leading out towards the prehistoric landscape known to surround Danebury, and may therefore have existed from the earliest times.

The proposed development site lies near the north edge of the historic parish of Nether Wallop. This was a large parish covering 7,391 acres in 1911. The hamlet of Middle Wallop extended over the parish boundary into Over Wallop. The two parishes are not distinguished at the time of Domesday Book. The majority of this large estate was crown property in 1086, although a portion was attached to the manor of Broughton. This later became the property of Gods House, Portsmouth. The manor of Nether Wallop was itself subdivided into five sub-manors by the later medieval period. The main manor belonged to Amesbury Abbey in

Wiltshire, passing to the family of Lord Bolton in the post-medieval period (Hollings et al 1911, 525-6). At the time of the tithe survey of 1840, the development site fell within plot 431 designated as 'An inclosure adjoining homestead', and was held by lease by one Thomas Farley from Lord Bolton (HRO 21M65/F7/166/1-2). It is possible, therefore, that the present site had once been part of monastic land.

There is no sign that any but the south boundary had formed by 1840. This continued to be the case until after 1910, although a footpath is shown along part of the present west boundary of the site on the 1910 Ordnance Survey 25" plan (sheet 31.9). Certainly the wooded plot by the road containing the derelict wooden building had not formed at this date. It would appear that the west boundary of the site did not form until later in the 20th century.

An archaeological evaluation on this site recorded an air-raid shelter that was probably associated with World War II defences to nearby Middle Wallop airfield. This work also located six large post-holes near the western boundary of the site. Although no dating evidence for these features was forthcoming, they showed that there had been a post-built timber structure here at one time (Currie 2001a). It was hoped that a watching brief targeted on the vicinity of these post-holes might recover further information on this structure and its environs.

3.0 Strategy

The strategy for this evaluation is outlined in the project design, to which the reader is referred (Currie 2001b). Trench numbers, context numbers and photograph number allocation runs on from the previous work. The targeted area was given the trench number 5. It incorporated all of trench 3 and part of trench 2.

4.0 Results (Figs. 2 & 3)

An area approximately 17m by 15m was cleared down to chalk in the vicinity of the position of the previously identified post-holes. Only one further possible cut feature that might have been a post-hole was located. This was an irregular circular shape, approximately 0.25m diameter and cut into undisturbed chalk by about 0.15m. It was about 5m SW of the nearest post-hole located in Trench 3 of the evaluation phase.

It was noted that the depth of soil over undisturbed chalk became progressively deeper towards the western edge of the site. Whereas this was only about 0.35m on the east side of the site, it was almost 0.8 deep on the west. There were numerous irregular shallow depressions in the chalk, but these were thought to have been caused by roots.

One sherd of possible prehistoric or Saxon pottery and five pieces of man-made flint waste were found in residual contexts in the subsoil.

5.0 Discussion

The watching brief proved to be disappointing for recovering further information about the post-holes found during the previous evaluation. The one possible post-hole [context 31] found was not entirely convincing, and was not on any recognisable alignment with the other features. A possible explanation for this apparent absence was the greater depth of soil [contexts 28 & 29] over the chalk [context 30] on the western edge of the site. If the posts were all located to roughly equal depths, then it is possible that those in deeper soil did not penetrate the chalk. Lack of finds on the previous evaluation made conclusions on dating highly tenuous. On this occasion the find density was slightly higher, with a sherd of possible prehistoric or Saxon pottery being located. However, the density of finds was still not sufficient to make any clear statements other than a non-intensive prehistoric presence may have existed in the locality.

6.0 Conclusions

Only one further possible post-hole was located to supplement those found during the previous evaluation, together with a single sherd of possible prehistoric or Saxon pottery, and five waste flakes of worked flint. This evidence was insufficient to draw any conclusions other than to say there was the possibility of non-intensive prehistoric activity of the site. No further archaeological work will be required for this development.

7.0 Finds

7.1 Prehistoric worked flint

Five pieces of waste flake were found in residual contexts on the site. One piece showed signs of use along one edge, making it a possible crude edge scarper. None of the material was sufficiently diagnostic to offer a date beyond that it was within the general prehistoric period.

7.2 Pottery

One body sherd of reduced pottery was found about 10 grms in weight. It contained what appeared to be the impressions of grass and other organic material on its surfaces. The piece was not sufficiently diagnostic to make an accurate assessment of its date, beyond suggesting that it was prehistoric or possibly Saxon.

8.0 Copyright

C K Currie (trading as CKC Archaeology) shall retain full copyright of any commissioned reports or other project documents written by himself or his agents, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act of 1988 with all rights reserved; excepting that it hereby provides an exclusive licence to the client for the use of such documents by the client and the relevant Planning Authorities in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the project design, as well as for *bona fide* research purposes.

9.0 Archive

The archive for this work has been deposited with the Hampshire County Museum Services. Copies of the report were lodged with the client, Test Valley Borough Council, the Hampshire County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), and the National Monuments Record in Swindon, Wiltshire.

10.0 Acknowledgements

Sincere thanks are given to all those involved with this project. Thanks are given to the site engineer, Paul Callum, of Mayhew Callum, who provided site drawings and bore hole information. Andrew Chase of Chase Building Contractors provided the groundwork team and machinery operatives, who co-operated with the watching brief. Derek Webber, Development Director, of Hampshire Voluntary Housing Development liaised between all the above parties and organised efficient co-operation between each. Bruce Howard of the Archaeology Section of Hampshire County Council provided information from the county Sites & Monuments Record (SMR). The staff of the Hampshire Record Office provided the author with access to historic maps of the area. Frank Green MPhil MIFA, Archaeological Officer for Test Valley Borough Council, monitored the site on behalf of the local planning authority.

11.0 References

11.1 Original sources in the Hampshire Record Office (HRO):

HRO 21M65/F7/166/1-2 Tithe map & award for Nether Wallop

Ordnance Survey 6" plan, sheet 31 (1875 ed)

Ordnance Survey 25" plan, sheet 31.9 (1910 ed)

11.2 Secondary sources

C K Currie, *An archaeological evaluation on land at School Lane, Nether Wallop, Hants*, unpublished client report to Hampshire Voluntary Housing Society, 2001a

C K Currie, *Project design for a targeted archaeological watching brief on land at School Lane, Nether Wallop, Hants*, unpublished client report to Hampshire Voluntary Housing Society, 2001b

R Edwards, *Historic rural settlement in Basingstoke & Deane and Test Valley, part 3.1 Test Valley*, unpublished report to Hampshire County Council, 1995

English Heritage, *The management of archaeological projects*, London, 1992, revised edition

M Hollings, O M Mogar, M Perry, 'Nether Wallop', in W Page (ed), *The Victoria history of the county of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight*, vol 4, London, 1911, 525-30

Institute of Field Archaeologists, *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief*, Birmingham, 1994

B Lowry (ed), *20th century defences in Britain. An introductory guide*, Council for British Archaeology, Practical Handbooks in Archaeology no 12, York, 1995

N Pevsner & D Lloyd, *The buildings of England. Hampshire*, Harmondsworth, 1967

11.3 Other sources consulted

Hampshire County Council Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) at the Castle, Winchester, Hampshire, SO23 8UE

Appendix 1: contexts excavated

Context Number	Description	Munsell Colour
28	T/5; clay loam layer	10YR 3/3
29	T/5; loamy clay layer	10YR 5/4
30	T/5; chalk bedrock	7.5YR 8/0
31	T/5; irregular circular cut	
32	T/5; loamy clay fill of 31	10YR 5/4

Appendix 2: catalogue of photographs taken

Photographs were taken in both colour slide and monochrome print. In the archive the colour slides are prefixed with the site code (NW), followed by 'S' to indicate photograph type, eg NW/S/* (* indicating the photograph number). Monochrome prints are number NW/M/*, following the same procedure as for slides.

Photo number	Description
45	Targeted watching brief area (T/4) from E
46	ditto
47	Possible post hole 31, unexcavated from W
48	ditto
49	Possible post hole 31, half sectioned from N
50	ditto

Appendix 3: glossary of archaeological terms

Archaeology: the study of man's past by means of the material relics he has left behind him. By material relics, this means both materials buried within the soil (artefacts and remains of structures), and those surviving above the surface such as buildings, structures (e.g. stone circles) and earthworks (e.g. hillforts, old field boundaries etc.). Even the study of old tree or shrub alignments, where they have been artificially planted in the past, can give vital information on past activity.

Artefacts: any object made by man that finds itself discarded (usually as a broken object) or lost in the soil. The most common finds are usually pottery sherds, or waste flint flakes from prehistoric stone tool making. Metal finds are generally rare except in specialist areas such as the site of an old forge. The absence of finds from the activity of metal detectorists is not usually given much credibility by archaeologists as a means of defining if archaeology is present

Baulk: an area of unexcavated soil on an archaeological site. It usually refers to the sides of the archaeological trench.

Context: a number given to a unit of archaeological recording. This can include a layer, a cut, a fill of a cut, a surface or a structure.

Cut: usually used to mean an excavation made in the past. The 'hole' or cut existed in time as a void, before later being backfilled with soil. Archaeologists give a context number to the empty hole, as well as the backfilled feature (called the 'fill').

Evaluation: a limited programme of intrusive fieldwork (mainly test-trenching) which determines the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts within a specified land unit or area. If they are present, this will define their character, extent, and relative quality, and allow an assessment of their worth in local, regional and national terms.

Munsell colour: an objective method of defining soil colour using a specially designed colour chart for soils. The reading defines hue (an objective description of colour; eg YR means yellow-red), value (darkness or lightness of the colour) and chroma (the greyness or purity of the colour). For example 10YR 3/2 is a dark grey-brown.

Natural [layer]: in archaeological reports, this is a layer that has been formed by natural process, usually underlying man-made disturbance.

Period: time periods within British chronology are usually defined as Prehistoric (comprising the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age), Roman, Saxon, Medieval and Post-medieval. Although exact definitions are often challenged, the general date ranges are as given below.

Prehistoric c. 100,000 BC - AD 43. This is usually defined as the time before man began making written records of his activities.

Palaeolithic or Old Stone Age 100,000 - 8300 BC

Mesolithic or Middle Stone Age 8300 - 4000 BC

Neolithic or New Stone Age 4000 - 2500 BC

Bronze Age 2500 - 700 BC

Iron Age 700 BC - AD 43

Roman AD 43-410

Saxon AD 410-1066

Medieval AD 1066-1540

Post-medieval AD 1540-present

Pottery sherds: small pieces of broken baked clay vessels that find their way into ancient soils. These can be common in all periods from the Neolithic onwards. They often find their way into the soil by being dumped on the settlement rubbish tip, when broken, and subsequently taken out and scattered in fields with farmyard manure.

Project Design: a written statement on the project's objectives, methods, timetable and resources set out in sufficient detail to be quantifiable, implemented and monitored.

Settlement: usually defined as a site where human habitation in the form of permanent or temporary buildings or shelters in wood, stone, brick or any other building material has existed in the past.

Site: usually defined as an area where human activity has taken place in the past. It does not require the remains of buildings to be present. A scatter of prehistoric flint-working debris can be defined as a 'site', with or without evidence for permanent or temporary habitation.

Stratigraphy: sequence of man-made soils overlying undisturbed soils; the lowest layers generally represent the oldest periods of man's past, with successive layers reaching forwards to the present. It is within these soils that archaeological information is obtained.

Worked flint or stone: usually taken to mean pieces of chipped stone or flint used to make prehistoric stone tools. A worked flint can comprise the tools themselves (arrowheads, blades etc.), or the waste material produced in their making (often called flint flakes, cores etc.).

Hampshire

Fig. 1: location

Nether Wallop

N

A343

Over Wallop

Development Site

SU 37 28

B3084

Nether Wallop

Scale 1:10,000

Based on OS Sheet SU 23/33

OS licence AL 100011886

Crown Copyright

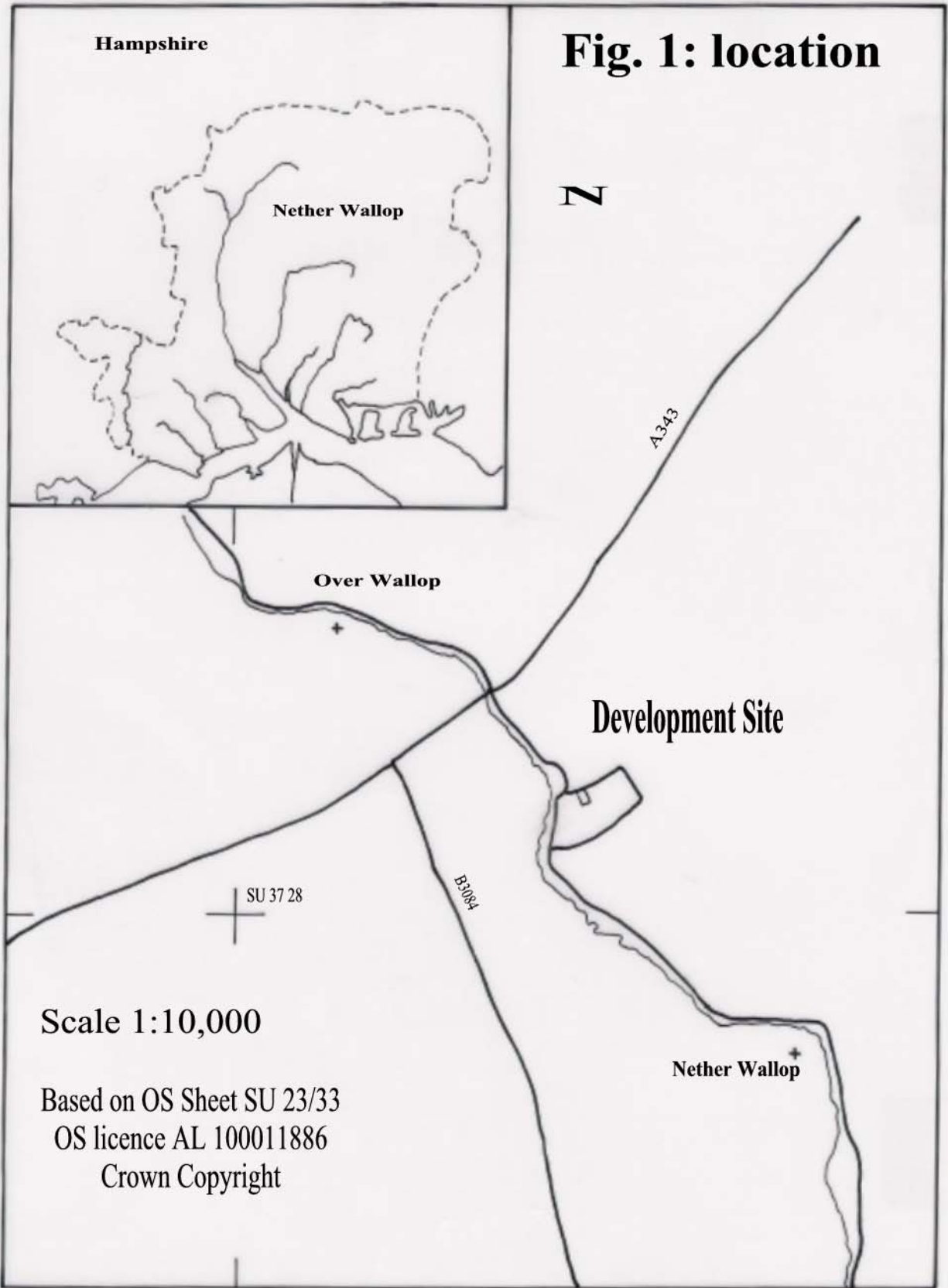


Fig. 2: development site showing area of watching brief in relation to previous evaluation trenches and site grid

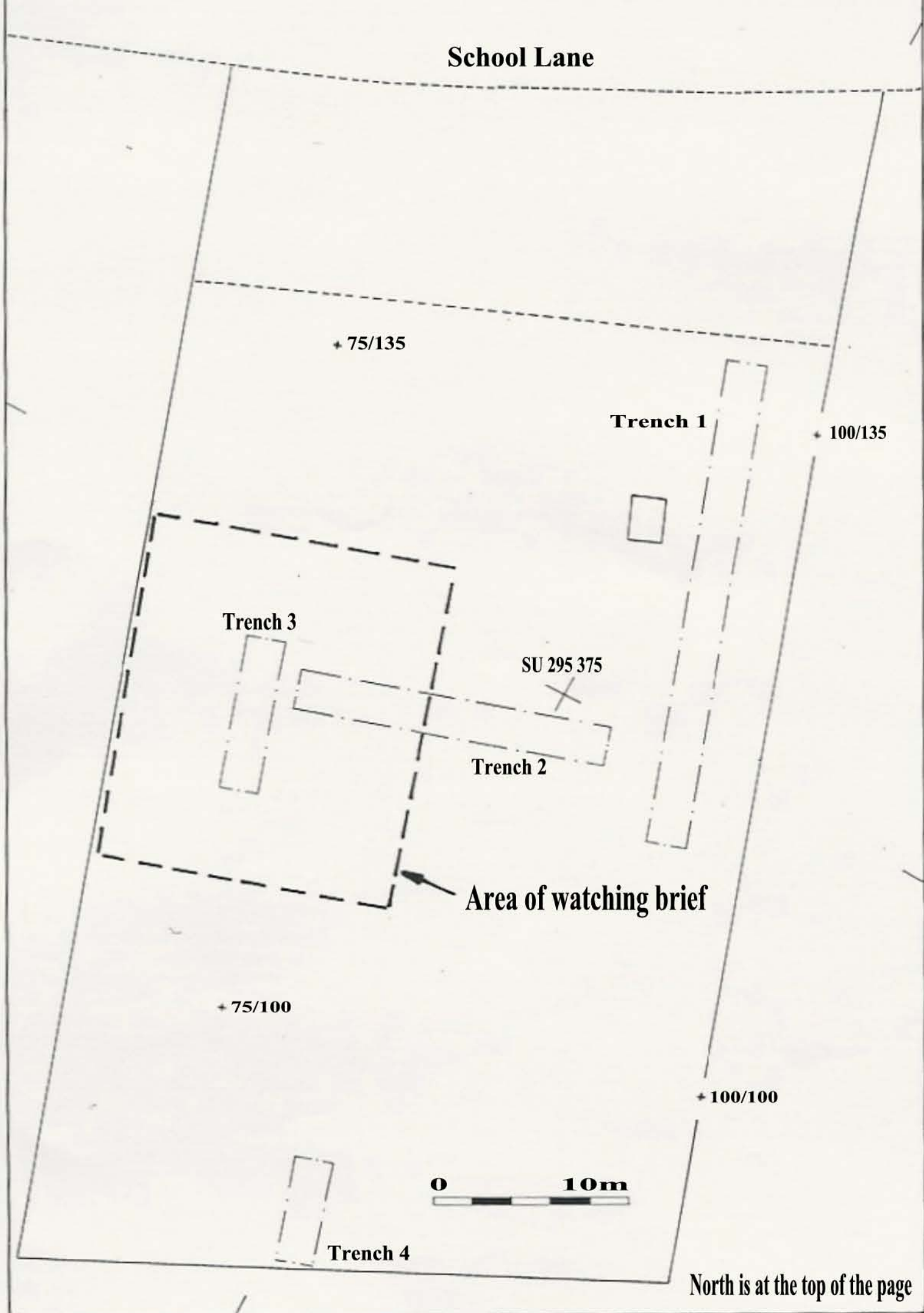
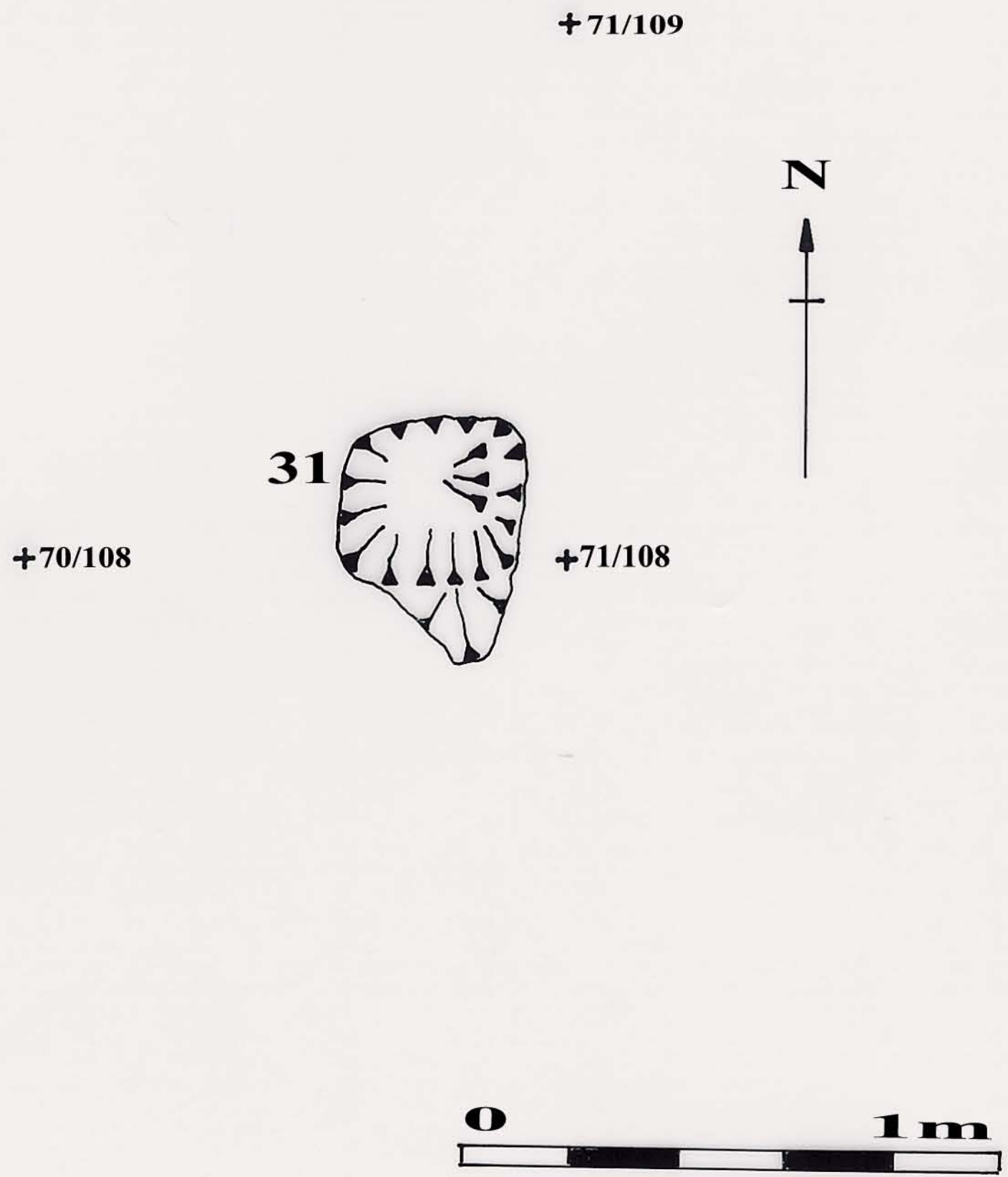


Fig. 3: plan of possible post hole located during watching brief



Edge of watched area









