

**PROPOSED MANEGE,
HILL HOUSE, HYDE HEATH, LITTLE MISSENDEN,
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
MONITORING AND RECORDING**

Authors: Zbigniew Pozorski MA (Fieldwork & Report) Hannah Tweedie MPhil (Research)	
NGR: SU 9275 9956	Report No. 3485
District: Chiltern	Site Code: AS 1279
Approved: Claire Halpin MIFA	Project No. 3756
Signed:	Date: February 2010

98-100 Fore Street, Hertford SG14 1AB

Unit 6, Brunel Business Court, Eastern Way,
Bury St Edmunds IP32 7AJ

Tel 01992 558170

Fax 01992 553359

e-mail info@ascontracts.co.uk

www.archaeologicalsolutions.co.uk

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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	<i>Proposed Manege, Hill House, Hyde Heath, Little Missenden, Buckinghamshire</i>		
<p><i>In February 2010 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording on land at the Hill House, Chalk Lane, Hyde Heath, Little Missenden, Buckinghamshire (NGR SU 9275 9956). The monitoring was commissioned by Mr Robert Greenshields, and was undertaken in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning approval for the construction for the creation of a new manege at the site.</i></p> <p><i>The site had a potential for archaeological remains, in particular for medieval remains associated with the medieval motte-and-bailey site of Castle Tower located to the north of the site.</i></p> <p><i>In the event the monitoring revealed no archaeological features or finds.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	<i>16th & 17th February 2010</i>		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>	Future work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>
P. number	<i>3756</i>	Site code	<i>AS 1279</i>
Type of project	<i>Archaeological Monitoring and Recording</i>		
Site status	<i>-</i>		
Current land use	<i>Pasture</i>		
Planned development	<i>Manege</i>		
Main features (+dates)	<i>-</i>		
Significant finds (+dates)	<i>-</i>		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Buckinghamshire</i>	<i>Chiltern</i>	<i>Hyde Heath</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>Buckinghamshire HER</i>		
Post code (if known)	<i>HP6 5SA</i>		
Area of site	<i>c. 1200m²</i>		
NGR	<i>SU 9275 9956</i>		
Height AOD (max/ min)	<i>155 -157m AOD</i>		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>Zbigniew Pozorski</i>		
Funded by	<i>Mr Robert Greenshields</i>		
Full title	<i>Proposed Manege, Hill House, Hyde Heath, Little Missenden, Buckinghamshire. Archaeological Monitoring and Recording</i>		
Authors	<i>Pozorski, Z.</i>		
Report no.	<i>3485</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>February 2010</i>		

PROPOSED MANEGE, HILL HOUSE, HYDE HEATH, LITTLE MISSENDEN, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING

SUMMARY

In February 2010 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording on land at Hill House, Chalk Lane, Hyde Heath, Little Missenden, Buckinghamshire (NGR SU 9275 9956). The monitoring was commissioned by Mr Robert Greenshields, and was undertaken in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning approval for the construction a new manege at the site.

The site had a potential for archaeological remains, in particular for medieval features associated with the motte-and-bailey site of Castle Tower located to the north of the site.

In the event the monitoring revealed no archaeological features or finds.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In February 2010 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording on land at Hill House, Chalk Lane, Hyde Heath, Little Missenden, Buckinghamshire (NGR SU 9275 9956; Figs. 1 & 2). The monitoring was commissioned by Mr Robert Greenshields, in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning approval for the creation of a new manege. It was required by the local planning authority (Chiltern District Council Planning Ref. CH/2009/1378/FA). The monitoring was carried out during the groundworks for the new manege.

1.2 The monitoring was undertaken in accordance to a brief issued by Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service (BCAS; dated 15/12/2009), and a written scheme of investigation (specification) prepared by AS (dated 18/12/2009), and approved by BCAS. The project conformed to the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (revised 2001).

1.3 The project aimed to identify and record any archaeological remains revealed by the groundworks, with particular regard to:

- The identification and recording of any significant archaeological remains, in particular the potential for medieval and post-medieval features relating to buried remains of settlement or other activity associated with the nearby scheduled medieval motte and bailey site of Castle Tower.

Planning policy context

1.4 The relevant planning policies which apply to the effect of development with regard to cultural heritage are Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 'Planning and the Historic Environment' (PPG15) and Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 'Archaeology and Planning' (PPG16) (Department of the Environment).

1.5 PPG16 (1990) is the national Planning Policy Guidance Note which applies to archaeology. It states that there should always be a presumption in favour of preserving nationally important archaeological remains *in situ*. However, when there is no overriding case for preservation, developers are required to fund opportunities for the recording and, where necessary, the excavation of the site. This condition is widely applied by local authorities.

1.6 PPG15 (1994) is the national Planning Policy Guidance Note which applies to conservation of the historic environment by protecting the character and appearance of Conservation Areas and protecting listed buildings (of architectural or historical interest) from demolition and unsympathetic change and safeguarding their settings as far as is possible. This condition is also widely applied by local authorities.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

2.1 The site is located c. 600m south-west of the village of Hyde Heath, Buckinghamshire. It is situated on the southern side of Chalk Lane and comprises part of a pasture field, covering a sub-rectangular area of c.1200m². Hill House lies to the west of the site, and dates to the 1950s.

3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

3.1 The site lies on land sloping towards the river Misbourne to the south and at a height of c. 155m AOD. The underlying geology comprises Upper Chalk formation bedrock (BGS 1978) with overlying deposits of clay with flints (SSEW 1983).

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Prehistoric and Romano-British

4.1 Prehistoric activity in the area of Hill House is represented by a findspot of worked flints, including 11 flakes and 1 retouched scraper (HER 4122). To the northwest of the site a fieldwalking project also identified a number of prehistoric finds including a crude Palaeolithic axe, a Mesolithic blade core, 10 Neolithic or Bronze age flakes, and other struck flints (HER 4482). Roman activity in the area is represented by some finds of Roman coins to the

southwest of the site (HER 1449). It has been suggested that a villa site is located within this area, but this suggestion has been inferred from consideration of known villa distribution patterns rather than from any firm archaeological evidence.

Saxon and Medieval

4.2 Saxon evidence within the area of the site is limited to a find of a late Saxon stirrup which was found within the parish of Little Missenden, at an unknown location (HER 6649). Little Missenden parish church of St John the Baptist dates from the Saxon period (the core of the building), and a north aisle was added in 1120. The church is well known for its 13th century wall paintings which depict St Christopher and St Catherine (HER 4379). The church also contains an altar tomb dating to 1432 which is thought to commemorate the former vicar Robert Catall.

4.3 A medieval site, understood to be a farmstead has been identified to the east of the site within Bray's Wood (HER 116); late 13th or early 14th century pottery, iron nails and a gilt bronze plate have been recovered from the site. This farmstead might be related to the site of Castle Tower to the immediate north of Hill House, which is designated as Scheduled Ancient Monument (No.19056; HER 1688). The monument includes an unusually small motte and bailey castle, surviving as a mound of 35 x 30m and 2.26m high when it was surveyed in 1981. The earthworks have been substantially reduced by ploughing; unusually both the motte and the bailey have been subject to ploughing, suggesting that it was never a large mound and that it was probably built during a military campaign in the early post-conquest period and occupied for only a short time.

Post-medieval and modern

4.4 The hamlet of Hyde Heath is believed to date to the post-medieval period, developing from a settlement alongside Hyde Heath Common. The area was subject to enclosure in 1855. In the earlier 20th century the settlement area expanded to cover the southern end of the former common. Hill House dates to the 1950s.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1. The archaeological monitoring comprised the observation of all groundworks, the inspection of the subsoil and natural deposits for archaeological features and the examination of spoil heaps and the recording of soil profiles. Archaeological features and deposits were recorded using *pro-forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed as appropriate. Excavated spoil was checked for finds and the excavated area was scanned by metal detector.

5.2 The principal element monitored was the mechanically-excavated ground reduction for the new manege (20 x 60m; Fig. 2). Initially the area was

stripped of topsoil and levelled as the site is located on a natural slope. Because of the slope the ground reduction below the topsoil was carried out in the northern part of the site only, comprising c. 40% of the area. The monitoring also encompassed a small area (3 x 3m) of a proposed new soakway which is to serve the manege, and was located to the immediate south of the site.

6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

6.1 The site was overlain by modern topsoil, L1000, a thin (0.08 – 0.10m) dark blackish grey, soft, clayey silt. Below L1000, Subsoil L1001 was a mid to dark grey, loose, sandy silt with frequent flint gravel (0.30 – 0.40 thick). The natural geology was encountered at c. 0.40 – 0.50m below the existing ground surface, and it was a mid to dark yellow, compact, clay with frequent flint gravel.

<i>N side of the stripped area, facing SSW (DP 5)</i>		
<i>0.00 = c.156.79m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.08m	L1000	Topsoil. Dark blackish grey, soft, clayey silt
0.08 – 0.40m	L1001	Subsoil. Mid to dark grey, loose, sandy silt with frequent flint gravel
0.40m+	L1002	Natural mid to dark yellow, compact, clay with frequent flint gravel

6.2 No archaeological features or finds were identified within the areas of the proposed new manege and soakway.

7 CONFIDENCE RATING

7.1 It is not felt that any factors inhibited the recognition of archaeological features or finds during the programme of archaeological monitoring and recording.

8 DISCUSSION

8.1 Despite the potential for archaeological remains to be present on the site, in particular for medieval remains, no archaeological features or finds were located within the areas of the new manege and soakaway.

8.2 The site was sloping (downwards from north to south) and in order to create a level surface for the manege, the northern part of the proposed manege was stripped of topsoil and subsoil down to the level of the natural clay. In the southern part of the proposed manege, only the topsoil was stripped, and the natural ground surface not exposed. If any archaeological remains are present within this latter area, they will be effectively preserved *in situ* below the manege formation level.

9 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

9.1 The archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited at Buckinghamshire County Museum. The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross-referenced and checked for internal consistency.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions would like to thank Mr Robert Greenshields for his co-operation and funding of the monitoring, and for his assistance.

AS would also like to acknowledge Ms Julia Wise of Buckinghamshire County Sites and Monuments Record for supplying background information.

AS would also like to acknowledge the input and advice of Ms Ruth Beckley of Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service.

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PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



DP 1. Land at Hill House, Chalk Lane, Hyde Heath, Little Missenden, Buckinghamshire. View SW.



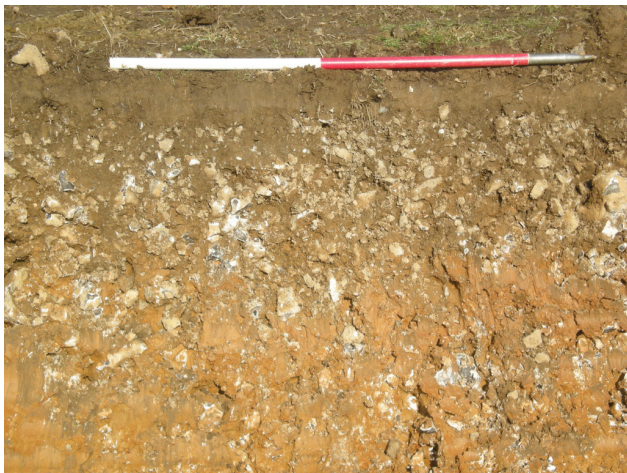
DP 2. The site with topsoil stripped. View SE.



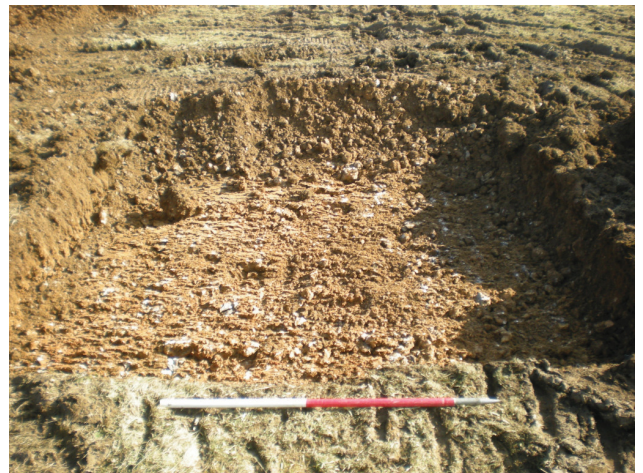
DP 3. W part of the site with ground reduced. View W.



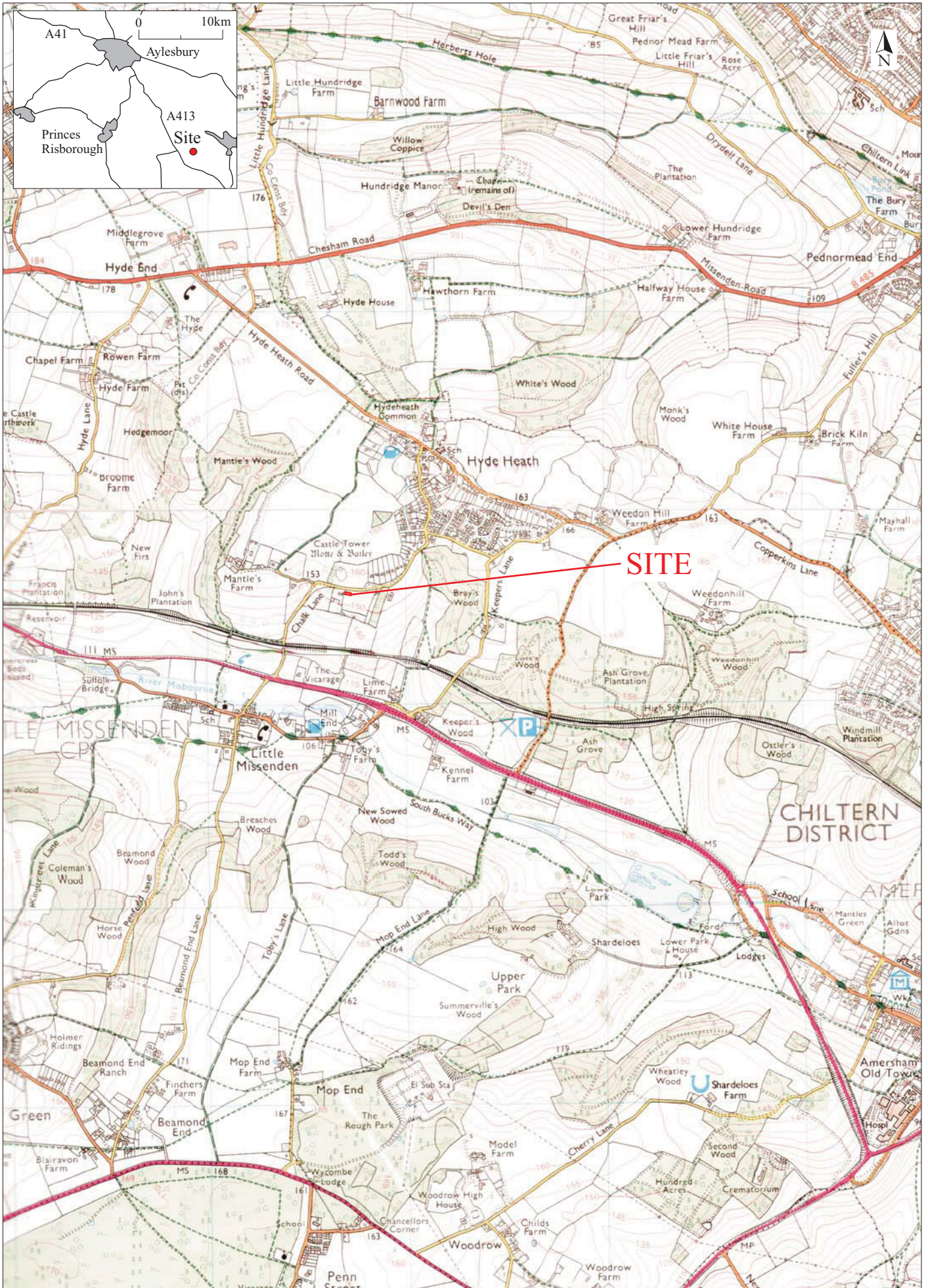
DP 4. E part of the site with ground reduced. View SE.



DP 5. N side of the stripped area. Sample section. View NNE.

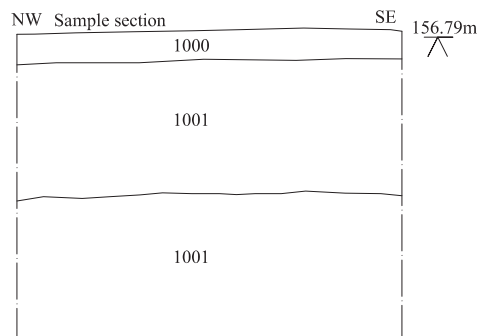
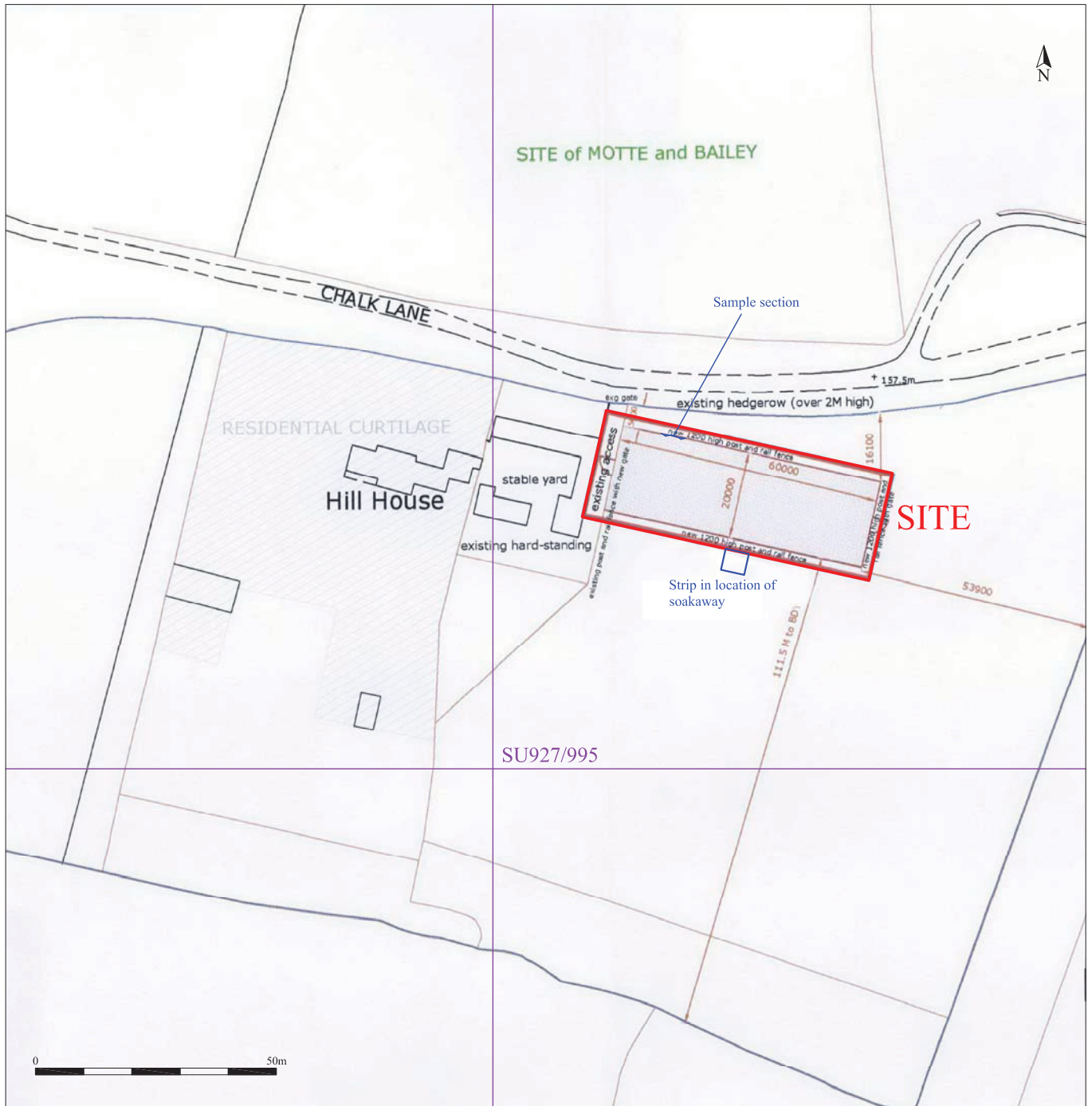


DP 6. The location of a soakway. View SE.



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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4



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Fig. 2 Detailed site location & section
 Scale plan at 1:1250 & section at 1:20 at A4