

T H A M E S V A L L E Y

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Village Farmhouse, Bidden Road, Upton Grey,
near Basingstoke, Hampshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by Pierre-Damien Manisse

Site Code: UPG21/155

(SU 6998 4819)

**Village Farmhouse, Bidden Road
Upton Grey, near Basingstoke, Hampshire**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief
for Bates Finance (Southend) Ltd**

by Pierre-Damien Manisse
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code UPG 21/155

August 2022

Summary

Site name: Village Farmhouse, Bidden Road, Upton Grey, near Basingstoke, Hampshire

Grid reference: SU 6998 4819

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 27th April to 17th June 2022

Project coordinator: Danielle Milbank

Site supervisor: Will Attard, Danielle Milbank and Jon Tierney

Site code: UPG 21/155

Area of site: c. 300 sq m

Summary of results: During renovation works in a 17th-century barn, part of a farmhouse, a post-medieval dry stone lined well was observed. Outside the building, an L-shaped area was reduced and a single modern pit was noted. No trace was found of the line of the Roman road projected to cross the site. No artefacts of archaeological interest were found.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Hampshire Cultural Trust or the Archaeology Data Service in due course.

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford ✓ 12.08.22
	Steve Preston ✓ 12.08.22

Village Farmhouse, Bidden Road, Upton Grey, near Basingstoke, Hampshire An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Pierre-Damien Manisse

Report 21/155b

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at Village Farmhouse, Bidden Road, Upton Grey near Basingstoke, Hampshire RG25 2EX (SU 6998 4819) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Rob McLennan from Lyons, Sleeman and Hoare Ltd, Nero Brewery, Cricket Green, Hartley Wintney, Hook, RG27 8QA, on behalf of Bates Finance (Southend) Ltd, c/o Edward Belcher, The Old Rectory, Tunworth, Hampshire, RG25 2NB.

Planning consent (21/01058/HSE) and Listed Building consent (21/01059/LBC) were obtained from Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council for the demolition of modern outbuildings, erection of a new garage and other groundworks on the site. The consents were each subject to conditions (respectively nos 3 and 4) which required the implementation of a programme of archaeological work. This is in accordance with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2021) and the Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr David Hopkins, County Archaeologist for Hampshire County Council, the archaeological adviser to the Borough. The fieldwork, taking the form of a watching brief, was undertaken by Will Attard, Danielle Milbank and Jon Tierney between 3rd May and 22nd June 2022 and the site code is UPG21/155.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Hampshire Cultural Trust or the Archaeology Data Service in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located in the southern part of the small village of Upton Grey in the North Hampshire Downs, about 7km south-east of Basingstoke (Fig. 1). The site is south of the junction between Bidden Road and Church Street. It is occupied by a Grade II Listed farmhouse, surrounded by other residential properties (Fig. 2). The site lies at a height between 95m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) at the street front and 97m aOD at the back. The underlying geology as shown on maps (BGS 1981) is recorded as Upper Chalk with First terrace deposits at the front of the property. The village is arranged along roads aligned NW–SE and NE–SW (Weston Road/Bidden Road) on the sides of a steep dry valley, and the site nestles at almost the lowest point in the village.

Archaeological background

The site's archaeological potential was highlighted in a desk-based assessment (Baljkas 2021). It is thought that the Roman road between Chichester and Silchester passed through Upton Grey (Margary's (1955) route 155), though no evidence has been found so far within the village to confirm this hypothesis. Nonetheless evidence of Roman occupation is proven nearby (Teague 2003; Hopkins 2004a and b). The village of Upton Grey is probably mentioned in Domesday Book of 1086 under the name of *Odingetone* (Williams and Martin 2002). The Church of Saint Mary is Grade I listed, with elements surviving from the 12th or 13th century. There are three other Grade II listed building in the village (Manor House, Old Manor Lodge and Cleves Farmhouse). The earliest part of the building on the site dates from the 17th century, and it is listed at Grade II.

An archaeological evaluation (Weaver 1998) around 500m to the north-west, off Cleves Lane, only revealed an undated (probably modern) posthole and no sign of the Roman road.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the works. Any intrusive groundworks, for example overburden stripping, digging of foundation and service trenches were to be undertaken under constant archaeological monitoring, both outdoor and also indoor during work on the floor surface. Archaeological work was to follow the recommendations of the Cifa (Cifa 2020). Any discoveries were to be assessed in regards to general (HE 2017) or more local/thematic (Hey and Hind 2014) research priorities as necessary.

Results (Figs 3-4; Pls 1-5)

The watching brief involved two elements, terracing of ground to the south-east and south-west of the house and reduction of the floor level inside the former barn (Fig. 3). A catalogue of features is included in Appendix 1.

Outdoor ground reduction (Pls 1-3)

An L-shaped area, covering about 235 sq m was stripped at the rear of the standing structures. Part of it had previously been occupied by a patio, now demolished, and the rest a garden. In the topsoil or subsoil (up to 0.6m deep in places), no material older than late 17th to 18th century was present. A few possible cut features were investigated but proven of a recent date according to the materials found within. A single pit, (1), was recorded, about 1.04m in diameter and cut into the natural geology but extending outside the reduced area. It was 0.42m deep with an upper deposit (52) consisting of a dark grey brown clayey silt while its basal fill (53) was rather

silty clay, both with frequent inclusions of flint gravels (Fig. 4). The top fill also contained modern pottery and brick fragments and some animal bone.

Indoor ground reduction (Pls 4-5)

A ground reduction was also undertaken in two buildings, adjacent to the main house and including a 17th-century and a 19th-century barn. The depth was reduced of about 0.26m below the ground surface, outside the building.

The area reduced within the 17th century barn was 4.45m x 6.60m. The soil removed was a layer of mixed rubble (54), a brown clayey silt with frequent early post-medieval tiles, bricks, bits of chalk and various sized natural flints. Though the natural geology was not exposed, the base of the excavated area, still a brown clayey silt, appeared in places cleaner, without intrusive material. A well, 2, was discovered roughly central to the area. The outer cut was relatively unclear, probably about 2.20 x 2.30m. It possessed a lining composed almost exclusively of subangular medium to large flint pieces, tightly packed and likely two courses wide (0.20-0.24m). Some lumps of white chalk and occasional clayey silt could also be seen in its build. The outside edge of this stone lining was 1.44m while the inner shaft was 0.96m in diameter. The shaft was 1.30m deep. The gap between the cut and the flint lining was occupied by a moderately compact to firm dark brown silt (55), slightly clayey, with occasional small and medium angular natural flints and chalk flecks. It was not possible to ascertain if the well cut predated or post-dated the construction of the barn.

The other area designated for a ground reduction was a room adjacent to the barn, part of the 19th century 'Ost Barn'. It had its floor slabs broken and removed. The level of reduction was minimal, 0.05m below the outside ground level and 0.25m below the former floor level. Underneath the floor in the north-east half of the room was the same deposit as in the barn, (54), a mix of chalk rubble, brown silt and occasional large flint nodules. The other half showed a dark brown clayey silt with no chalk inclusions, and considered equivalent to subsoil (51). A test pit was made in a corner, 0.43m deep, and natural geology appeared at 0.39m below the former floor level. No features or finds were observed on this area.

Finds

No finds were considered for retention, all being modern or late post-medieval.

Conclusion

Archaeological supervision of groundworks did not reveal any feature pre-dating post-medieval times. A clearly modern pit was seen during the ground reduction in the backyard of the building while the interior reduction revealed a flint-lined well. All the evidence collected was fairly recent. The well would seem an improbable feature to have inside a 17th-century barn and as it had clearly not been filled, even more unlikely that it predated the barn. The buildings are marked as 'brewery' on the Ordnance Survey map of 1871 (Baljkas 2021 fig. 11) and this is the most likely date for the well, in which case it would have been put out of commission by 1896 when the brewery is no longer shown on the Ordnance Survey map of that date but there is a well further north in the grounds (Baljkas 2021 fig. 12).

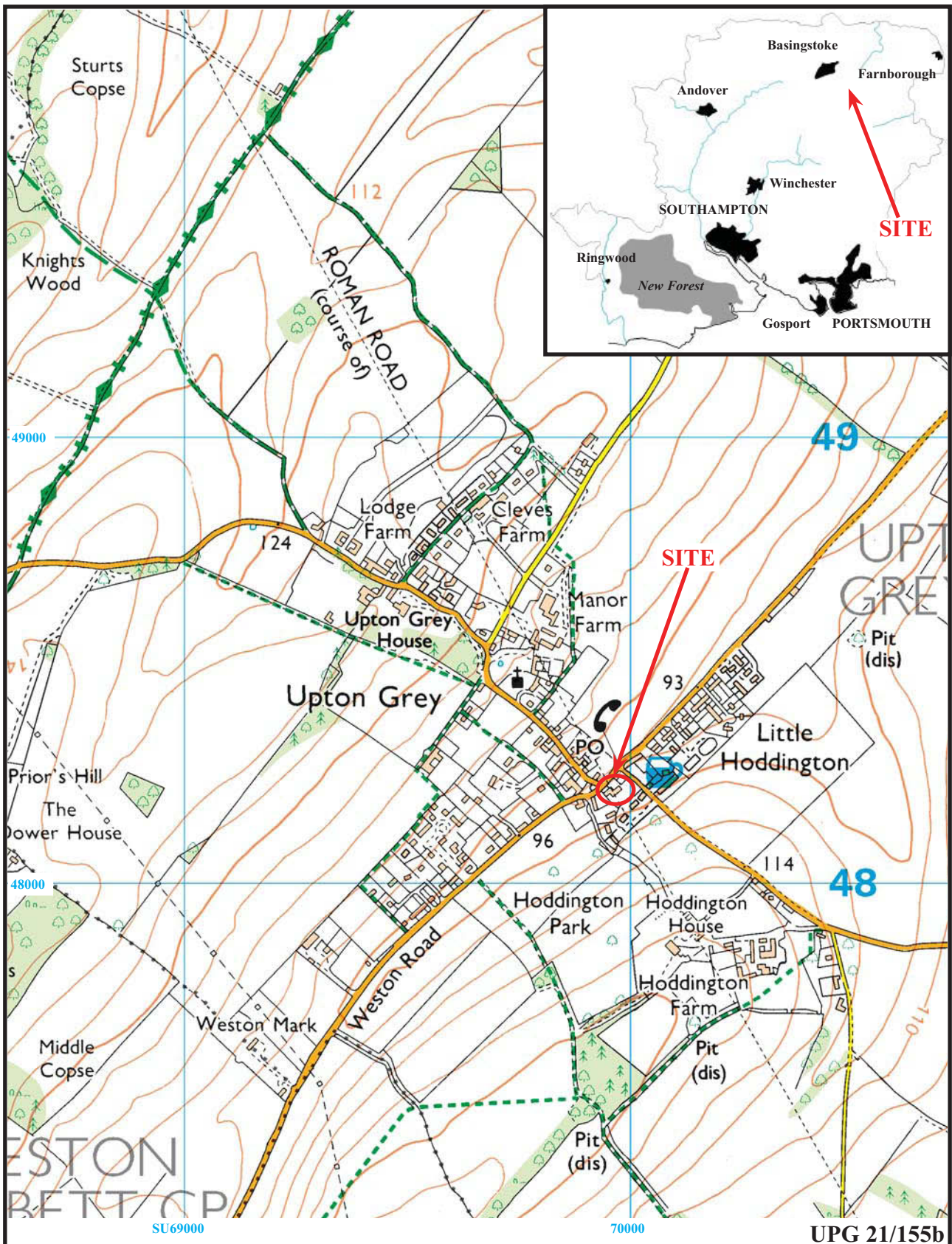
There was no trace at all of the presumed Roman road projected through the property.

References

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Appendix 1: Catalogue of features

<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
	50	topsoil		
	51	subsoil		
1	52-53	pit	modern	pottery
	54	Made ground	post-medieval	glass
2	55-56	well	Post-medieval?	pottery



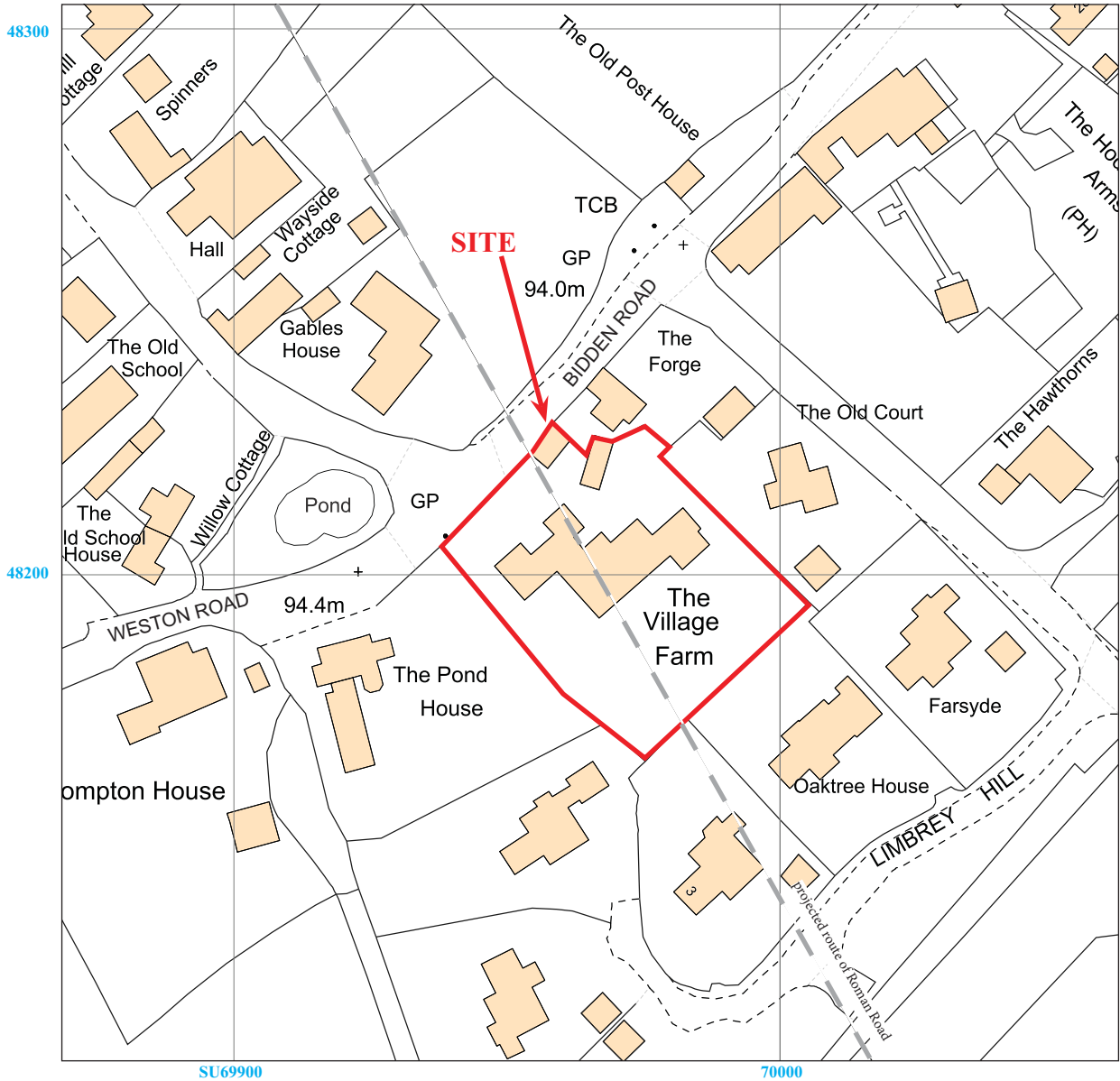
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Figure 1. Location of site within Upton Grey and Hampshire.

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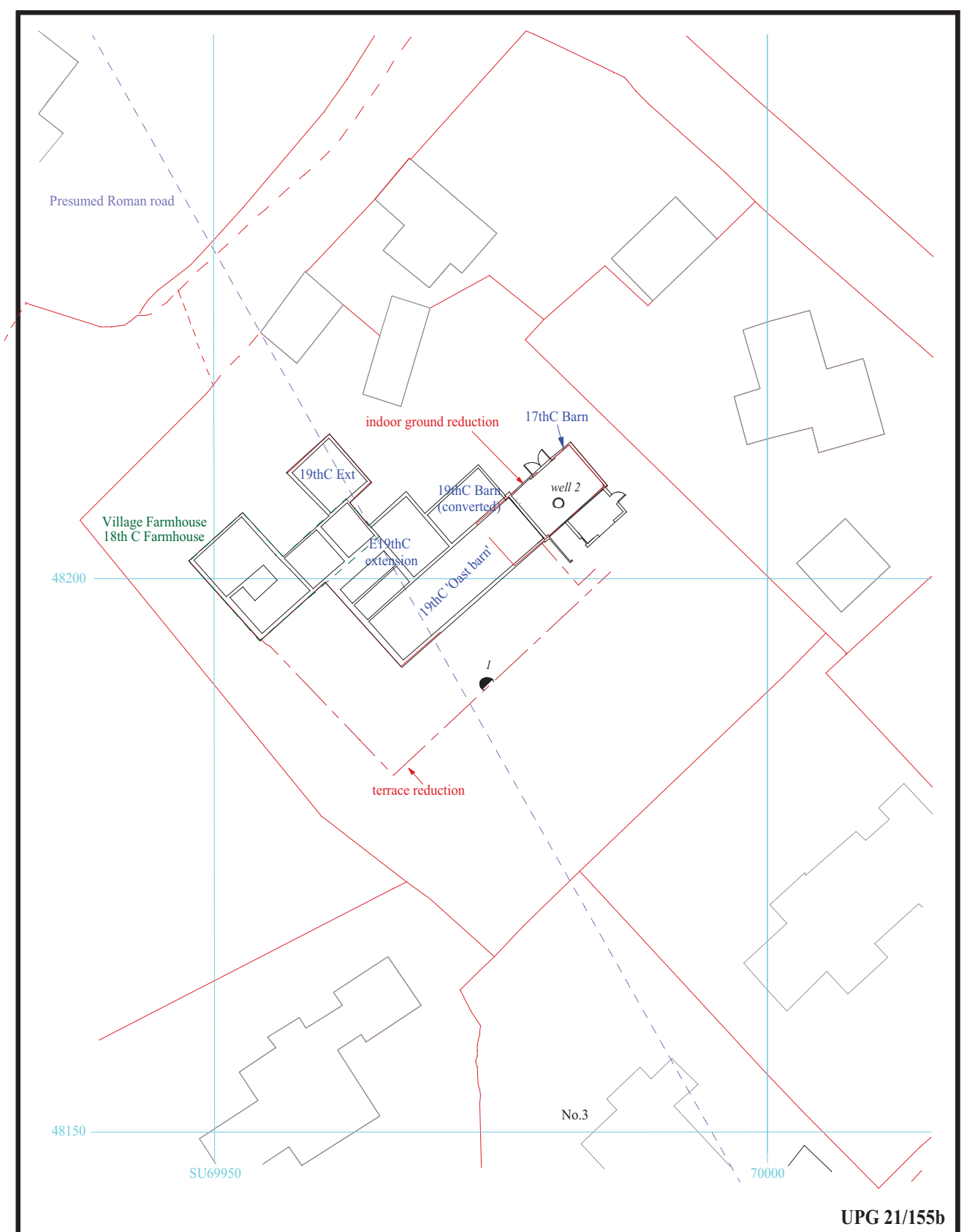
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**Village Farmhouse, Bidden Road,
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Archaeological Desk-based Assessment
Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Bidden Road.

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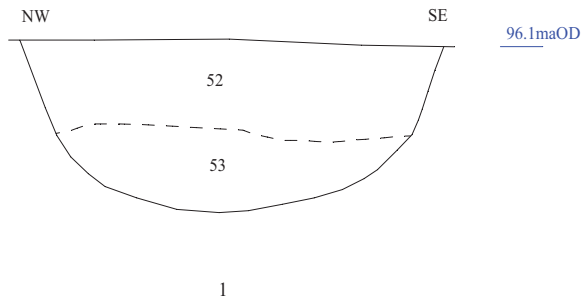
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Figure 3. Location of observed areas.





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Figure 4. Section.



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Plate 1. View over stripped area for rear terrace, looking South West, Scale: 2m.



Plate 2. View of western strip for rear terrace, looking North West, Scales: 2m and 0.5m.



Plate 3. Pit 1, looking South East, Scales: horizontal 0.5m, vertical 0.3m.

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**Village Farmhouse, Bidden Road,
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Plates 1 - 3.**

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Plate 4. Floor reduction in 17th century Barn, well 2, looking South East, Scales: 0.5m and 0.3m.



Plate 5. Interior structure of well 2, North to top, Scales: 0.5m and 0.3m.

UPG 21/155b

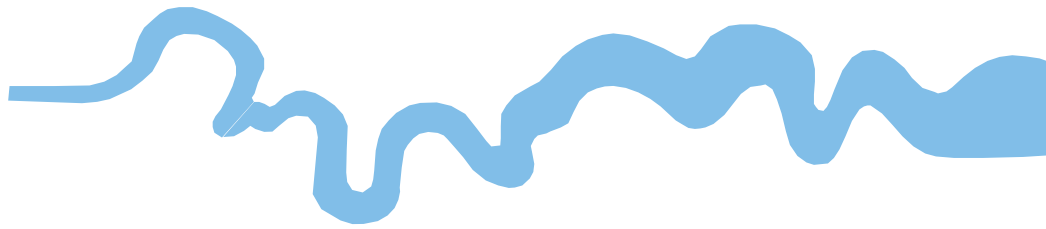
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Plates 4 and 5.**

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TIME CHART

	Calendar Years
Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43 AD 0 BC
Iron Age _____	750 BC
Bronze Age: Late _____	1300 BC
Bronze Age: Middle _____	1700 BC
Bronze Age: Early _____	2100 BC
Neolithic: Late	3300 BC
Neolithic: Early	4300 BC
Mesolithic: Late	6000 BC
Mesolithic: Early	10000 BC
Palaeolithic: Upper	30000 BC
Palaeolithic: Middle	70000 BC
Palaeolithic: Lower	2,000,000 BC





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