

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

S O U T H

**80 Church Street,
Leatherhead, Surrey**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Sean Wallis

Site Code: CSL09/107

(TQ 1658 5619)

**80 Church Street, Leatherhead,
Surrey**

An Archaeological Evaluation

for Mrs Dee Zamboni

by Sean Wallis

Thames Valley Archaeological Services

Ltd

Site Code CSL09/107

May 2011

Summary

Site name: 80 Church Street, Leatherhead, Surrey

Grid reference: TQ 1658 5619

Site activity: Field evaluation

Date and duration of project: 19th May 2011

Project manager: Sean Wallis

Site supervisor: Sean Wallis

Site code: CSL 09/107

Summary of results: The results of the evaluation suggest that the site has been landscaped in the past, with imported soil deposits being recorded in all four trenches excavated. Although it is possible that some degree of truncation occurred during these landscaping works, archaeological features have survived within the area to be developed. Just one feature provided dating evidence, a small shallow pit containing early to mid Saxon pottery. Another feature, recorded close to this pit, is probably a tree-bole. A few flints possibly of Mesolithic or early Neolithic date were also recorded

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Leatherhead Museum in due course.

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford ✓ 31.05.11
	Steve Preston ✓ 31.05.11

80 Church Street, Leatherhead, Surrey An Archaeological Evaluation

by Sean Wallis

Report 09/107b

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at 80 Church Street, Leatherhead, Surrey (TQ 1658 5619) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by the property's owner, Mrs Dee Zamboni, who also lives there.

Planning permission (App no: MO/2011/0054/PLA) has been gained from Mole Valley District Council to build a new house and garage within the existing garden of the property. The consent is subject to a condition (10) relating to archaeology, and the results of a field evaluation are required in order to provide sufficient information on the archaeological potential of the site, so as to mitigate the effects of development.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's Planning Policy Statement, *Planning for the Historic Environment* (PPS5 2010), and the District Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Gary Jackson, Archaeological Officer with Surrey County Council, who advises the District on matters relating to archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Felicity Howell and Sean Wallis on 19th May 2011, and the site code is CSL 09/107. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Leatherhead Museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site consists of an irregular parcel of land, situated to the west of Church Street, Leatherhead, close to the historic core of the town, and less than 200m from the parish church (Fig. 1). The development site is within the garden to the rear of 80 Church Street, and is currently largely covered with grass, although there are a number of trees, outbuildings and ornamental garden features present, along with a gravel driveway. One building, a small workshop, had been demolished shortly before the evaluation took place. The site slopes down towards the River Mole, to the south-west (Fig. 2). Whilst the area investigated during the evaluation lies at height of between 42m and 45m above Ordnance Datum, the garden drops quite steeply towards the river just beyond this. According to the British Geological Survey the underlying geology consists of Upper Chalk (BGS 1978), and this was confirmed in all of the evaluation trenches, although some overlying orange silty clay was also observed, along with limited evidence of peri-glacial striping.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a desk-based assessment (Hopkins 2009). In summary, the site lies within an area of high archaeological potential, as shown on council planning constraint maps, with Bronze Age finds actually being recorded from the site itself. Finds from the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods have been found nearby, close to the river Mole. There is limited evidence of Roman and Saxon activity in the town, but the settlement was well established by the medieval period, and the parish church dates from the late 11th century.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological or palaeoenvironmental deposits within the development area. The fieldwork results would then be employed to provide the detailed information necessary to draw up a scheme to mitigate the effects of development. The fieldwork was to be carried out in a manner which would not compromise the integrity of archaeological features or deposits which might warrant preservation *in-situ*, or might better be excavated under conditions pertaining to full excavation.

The specific research aims of the projects were:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on this site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present; and
- to determine if any deposits relating to Bronze Age occupation are present.

It was proposed to excavate four trenches, each 6m long and 1.6m wide, in those parts of the site which were to be most affected by the new house, garage and access road. The trenches were to be dug using a JCB-type mechanical excavator, fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, under constant archaeological supervision. A contingency for an additional 5m of trenching was included within the proposal, should this be needed to clarify the initial findings.

The trenches were to be dug to examine the full depth of deposits above the underlying geology. Where archaeological features or deposits are certainly or probably present, the stripped areas were to be cleaned using appropriate hand tools, and sufficient of the deposits excavated or sampled by hand to satisfy the aims of the project.

Results

The four trenches were excavated close to their original planned positions, as shown on Figure 3, although two of the trenches (1 and 4) had to be moved or orientated slightly differently to avoid services and garden features. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1. A list of excavated features forms Appendix 2.

Trench 1

This trench was aligned approximately E-W, and was moved from its original intended position to avoid a number of garden features. Due to the presence of a water pipe close to its eastern end, the trench was shortened to a length of 4.5m, and was excavated in a narrow grassy area, which sloped down towards the south-west. As a result of this slope, the depth of the trench varied from 0.6m at its western end to 0.85m at its eastern end. In the deepest part of the trench, up to 0.3m of turf and topsoil (50) was removed to reveal a deposit of dark brownish grey soil (54) which contained some late 19th- and 20th-century artefacts (not retained). This deposit was up to 0.25m thick, and lay directly above a layer of dark greyish brown clayey silt (51), which may represent a surviving subsoil horizon. The underlying chalk natural was encountered beneath layer 51. No archaeological features were noted within the trench.

Trench 2

Trench 2 was aligned approximately E-W, and was up to 1.05m deep. Turf and topsoil (50), up to 0.15m thick, was removed to reveal a deposit of buried soil (54). This layer was fairly homogenous, although some modern finds were noted in the upper part of the deposit (not retained). The depth of the deposit (up to 0.75m) was quite striking, and it is likely that it represents material imported onto the site during a previous episode of landscaping. A thin layer (51) between this deposit and the underlying natural may represent a subsoil horizon, although its dark colour and the lack of chalk flecks within it suggest that it too may have been imported.

Two irregular-shaped features (2 and 3) were recorded between 3.8m and 4.5m. Feature 2 appeared to be a pit, measuring 0.8m by 0.6m, but only 0.1m deep with a single fill of dark greyish brown clayey silt (56). This deposit contained occasional charcoal inclusions, along with two very small sherds of pottery dating from the early to mid Saxon period. Other finds from the feature consisted of 2 residual struck flints, 6 fragments of fired clay (34g), 2 iron nails, some iron slag and 4 pieces of burnt flint (34). Sieving of a 15 Litre soil sample from this deposit also produced 11 small amorphous lumps of fired clay (weighing 82g) and 6 fragments of unworked burnt flint (28g) but no palaeoenvironmental remains. The feature could not be seen cutting through any of the deposits above the natural and this, along with the relative shallowness of the pit, suggests that the area may have been truncated to some extent prior to the thick deposits of soil being imported onto the site.

Feature 3 was 0.7m long and 0.4m wide, but was quite irregular in nature. Although a struck flint flake and a fragment of unworked burnt flint (9g) were recovered from its fill of mid greyish brown clayey silt (57), it is highly likely that the feature is a tree-bole.

Trench 3

This trench was aligned approximately NE-SW and was up to 0.85m deep. The trench was lengthened to 8.3m, to compensate for the loss of trenching elsewhere. About 0.25m of turf and topsoil (50) was removed to reveal a thick deposit of soil (54), the upper part of which contained some modern finds (not retained). Layer 54 was up to 0.5m thick, and lay directly above the natural geology. There was no suggestion of any surviving subsoil horizon in this trench, and it is possible that the area had been truncated prior to soil (deposits 50 and 54) being imported onto the site. The natural geology in this trench consisted of chalk, with bands of orange brown silty clay. No archaeological finds or features were recorded.

Trench 4

Trench 4 was aligned approximately N-S, and was shifted slightly from its intended position to avoid a live service. Further services were encountered when excavation began, and in order to avoid these, the northern end of the trench was not fully excavated down to the natural geology. The remainder of the trench was fully excavated, with up to 0.21m of shingle being removed to reveal made ground deposits (53), about 0.4m thick. A buried soil deposit (54) was recorded immediately below the made ground. This deposit was up to 0.55m thick, and fairly homogenous. The lack of any subsoil horizon between layer 54 and the underlying natural suggests that the area again may have been truncated, prior to soil deposit 54 being imported onto the site. A possible pit (1) was recorded at 1.8m, but was not seen fully in plan. The only find from this feature was a piece of unworked burnt flint (2g). However, the dark greyish brown fill of this feature (55) was very similar to the soil deposit immediately above it (54), and it is possible therefore that the feature may be associated with the episode of truncation and importation of soil.

Finds

Pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised two sherds with a total weight of 5g. They both occurred in pit 2 (56), and each is of early/middle Saxon date (c AD450 – 850). Each had organic temper, with one, weighing 4g, also having sparse, sub-angular quartz and sub-rounded red ironstone up to 1mm, whilst the other had no other visible inclusions, and a burnished outer surface. Although small, they are unworn and appear reliably stratified. Such pottery is fairly typical of the period in Surrey, and the Thames Valley generally (Jones 1998, 212–3).

Struck Flint by Steve Ford

A collection comprising four struck flints was recovered during the course of this phase of fieldwork (Appendix 3). Two pieces appear to be narrow flakes but are broken and their assignment is not fully secure. They are likely to be of Mesolithic or possibly Early Neolithic date. The other two pieces are broad flakes both of which are poorly made, which may indicate they are of accidental origin. The larger of these (from cut 2) in particular resembles a fragment from a shattered nodule. It is unclear if these latter two pieces date to the Neolithic/Bronze Age or some later date.

Burnt Flint by Sean Wallis

Ten pieces of burnt flint, weighing 73g, were recovered during the evaluation, from features 1-3. None of the fragments had been worked.

Fired Clay by Sean Wallis

Seventeen small fragments of fired clay, weighing 82g, were recovered from feature 2 (56). None of the fragments showed any evidence to indicate their function.

Metalwork, slag and industrial debris by Steven Crabb

Three iron objects were recovered from this site, all from pit 2. Two of them are iron nails weighing 30g: both are square in section with small square heads. The last piece of iron is a small flat heavily corroded piece which may be the end of a small blade, but the corrosion is too extensive to be sure. Also from this feature was a small piece of undiagnostic iron slag. It is dark grey in colour, dense and has moderate porosity. The surface of the piece shows evidence of having been liquid.

Charred plant remains by Sean Wallis

The 15 Litre sample recovered from pit 2 was wet sieved and the flots recovered using a 0.25mm mesh. This recovered a moderate quantity of wood charcoal, mostly as tiny fragments, but no other remains such as cereals, pulses or nutcases.

Conclusion

The evaluation at 80 Church Street successfully investigated those parts of the site which will be most affected by the new house, garage, and access drive. Whilst it is quite clear that landscaping has taken place within the existing garden, the full extent of the re-modelling which took place before the present owners bought the site about 40 years ago only became apparent during the evaluation. The thick deposits of soil, which were probably imported onto the site, lie directly above the natural geology in two of the trenches (3 and 4), suggesting that the site may have been stripped previously. In the remaining two trenches (1 and 2) a possible surviving subsoil horizon was recorded although, this too, may have part of the of the landscaping process. The shallowness of the features recorded during the evaluation suggests that some amount of truncation may also have occurred in the past, prior to any material being imported onto the site. Although the site has obviously been disturbed to some extent in the past, the survival of a feature possibly dating from the early to mid Saxon period indicates that the level of truncation may vary across the site.

References

- BGS, 1978, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 286, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- Hopkins, H, 2009, '80 Church Street, Leatherhead, Surrey, an archaeological desk-based assessment', Thames Valley Archaeological Services rep **09/107**, Reading
- Jones, P, 1998, 'Towards a type series of medieval pottery in Surrey to c. 1700', *Surrey Archaeol Collect* **85**, 211–38
- PPS5, 2010, *Planning for the Historic Environment*, Planning Policy Statement 5, The Stationery Office, Norwich

APPENDIX 1: Trench details

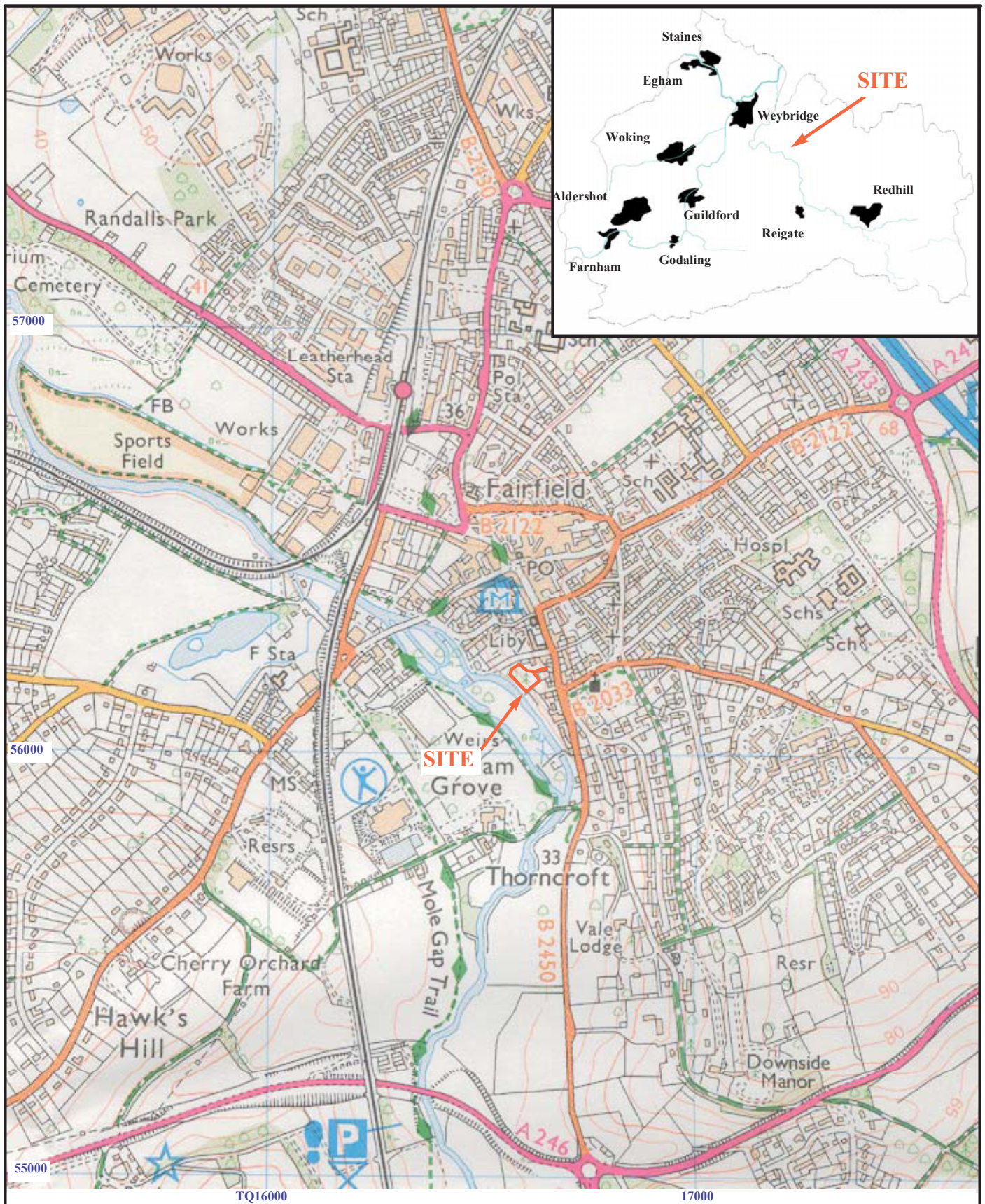
<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	4.50	1.60	0.85 (E) 0.60 (W)	0-0.30m turf and topsoil (50); 0.30-0.55m buried soil (54); 0.55-0.75m possible subsoil (51); 0.75m+ chalk (natural geology).
2	6.30	1.60	1.05	0-0.15m turf and topsoil (50); 0.15-0.90m buried soil (54); 0.90- 1.00m possible subsoil (51); 1.00m+ natural geology. Pit 2 and treebole 3. [Plates 1 and 2]
3	8.30	1.60	0.85	0-0.25m turf and topsoil (50); 0.25-0.75m buried soil (54); 0.75m+ natural geology.
4	6.00	1.60	1.19	0-21m shingle (52); 0.21-0.64m made ground (53); 0.64-1.15m buried soil (54); 1.15m+ natural geology. Possible feature 1.

APPENDIX 2: Feature details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
4	1	55	Possible pit	Undated	
2	2	56	Pit	Early – Middle Saxon	Pottery
2	3	57	Probable tree-bole	Undated	

APPENDIX 3: Catalogue of struck flint

Trench	Cut	Fill (s)	Type
2	2	56	2 possible broken blades; broken flake (shattered nodule?)
2	3	57	Intact flake



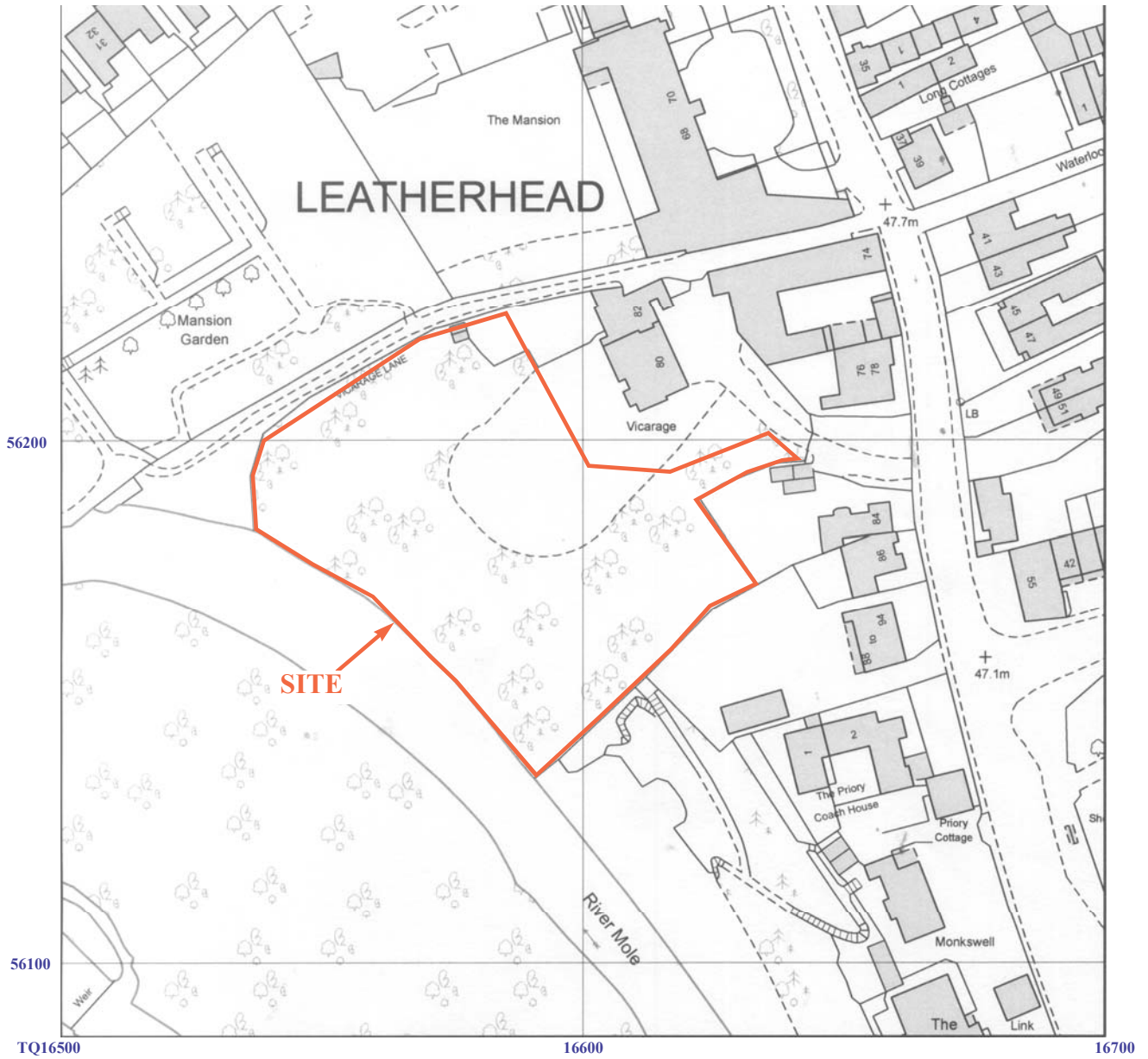
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Figure 1. Location of site within Leatherhead and Surrey.

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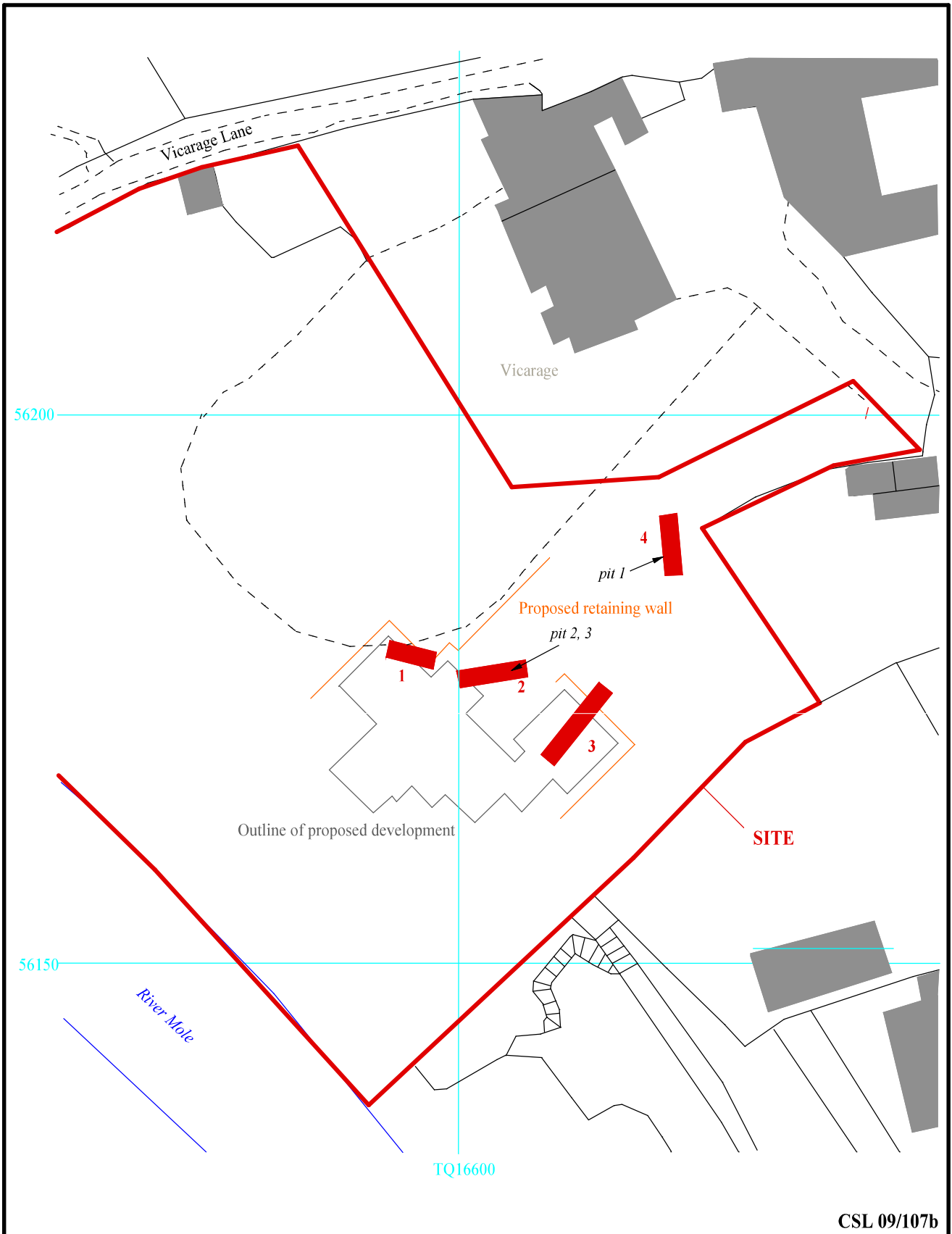
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site.

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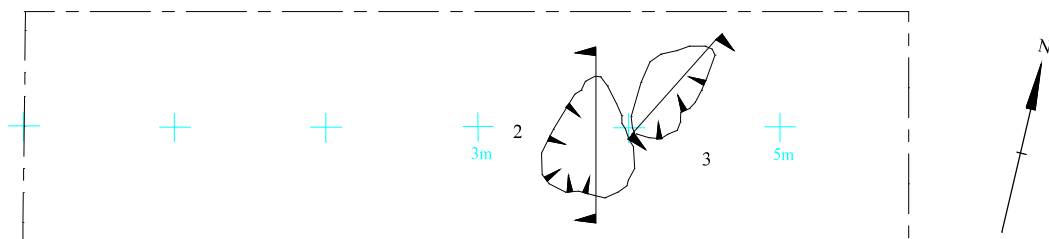
**80 Church Street, Leatherhead, Surrey 2011
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 3. Location of trenches.



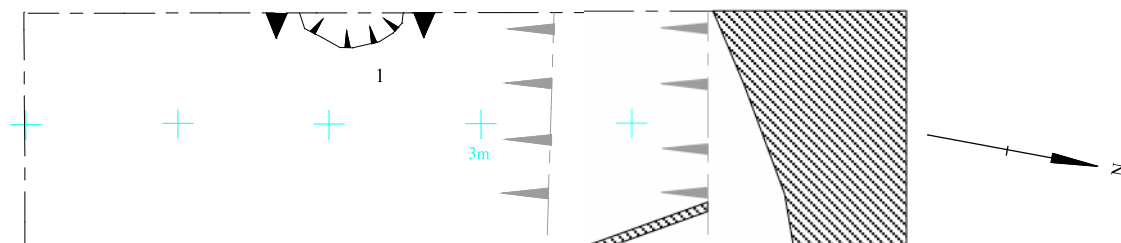
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Trench 2



Trench 4

Stepped to avoid modern services



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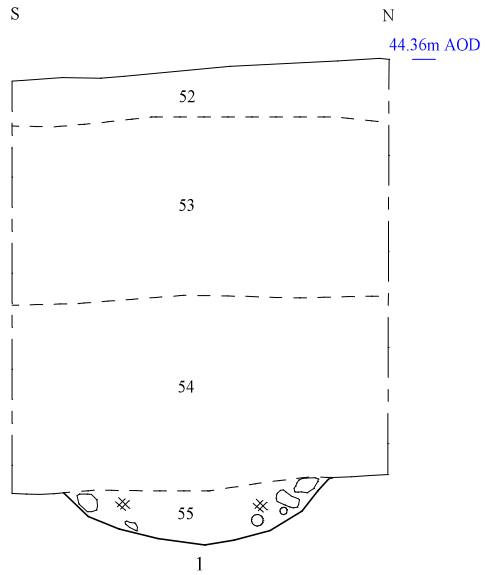
**80 Church Street, Leatherhead, Surrey, 2011
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Figure 4. Detail of trenches.

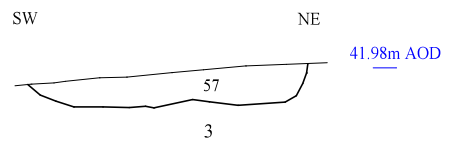
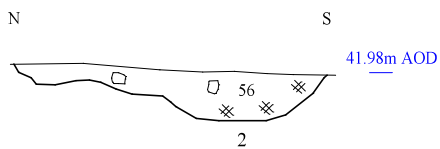
0 5m

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Trench 4



Trench 2



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Figure 5. Sections.





Plate 1. East footing, looking east, Scales: 1m and 0.5m.



Plate 2. Soakway section, looking north, Scales 2m and 1m

KOW 10/92

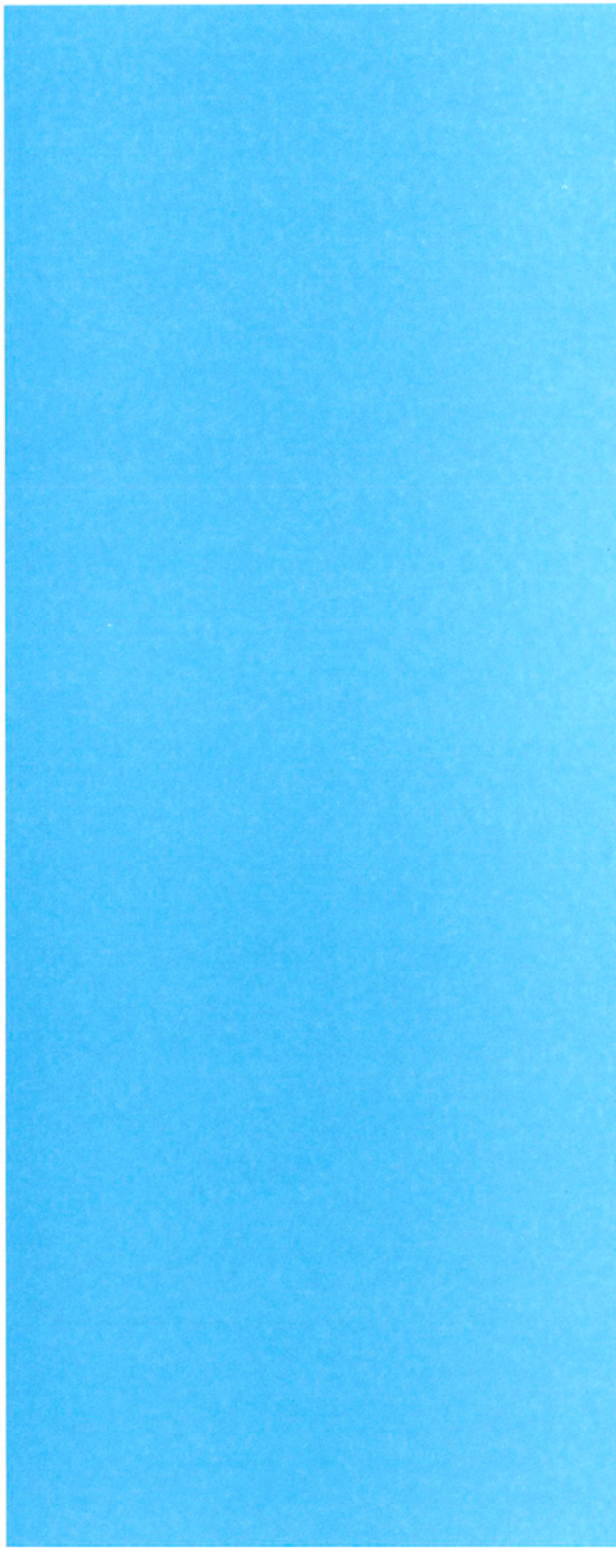
**Kingsbury Cottage, Church Road, Old Windsor,
Berkshire, 2011**
Archaeological watching brief
Plates 1 and 2.

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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
Iron Age _____	BC/AD 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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