

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Land at Foxfield and Estcots, Aldbourne Road,
Baydon, Wiltshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Steve Ford

Site Code: ARB11/99

(SU 2775 7780)

**Land at Foxfield and Estcots,
Aldbourn Road, Baydon, Wiltshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Messrs Flett and Agar-Hutty**

By Steve Ford
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

SiteCodeARB11/99

September 2011

Summary

Site name: Land at Foxfield and Estcots, Aldbourne Road, Baydon, Wiltshire

Grid reference: SU 2775 7780

Site activity: Archaeological Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 26th September 2011

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Steve Ford

Site code: ARB 11/99

Area of site: 0.38ha

Summary of results: No deposits of archaeological interest were revealed and only a single prehistoric struck flint was recovered. It is considered that the archaeological potential of the site is low.

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

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www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp.*

Report edited/checked by: Steve Preston ✓ 27.09.11
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Land at Foxfield and Estcots, Aldbourne Road, Baydon, Wiltshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Steve Ford

Report 11/99

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out on land at Foxfield and Estcots, Aldbourne Road, Baydon, Wiltshire (SU 2775 7780). (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Iain Stevenson of Carter Jonas LLP, 16–18 Market Place, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 5AZ on behalf of Mr C Flett of Estcots, and Mr Agar-Hutty of Foxfield, Aldbourne Road, Baydon, Wiltshire, SN8 2HZ.

Planning permission (app E/2011/1021/OUT) is being sought from Wiltshire Council to construct four new houses and a double garage on the site. As a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits which could be damaged or destroyed during construction on the site a field evaluation has been requested to determine the archaeological potential of the site and enable a mitigation strategy to be drawn up if necessary. 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 council's policies on archaeology.

The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr David Vaughan of Wiltshire County Archaeological Service. The fieldwork was undertaken by Steve Ford and Jacqui Pitt on 26th September 2011 and the site code is ARB11/99. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Devizes Museum in due course

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the southern margins of Baydon on the west side of Aldbourne Road in the grassed gardens to the rear of the two properties (Fig. 2). The ground slopes gently down to the south and west before the slope steepens into the dry valley to the west. The site lies at a height of about 229m above Ordnance Datum. The underlying geology is mapped as Clay-with Flints (BGS 1947). This was observed in all trenches but with some underlying chalk present in small patches.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site area has been highlighted in a briefing document prepared by David Vaughan of Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service. In summary the site lies within the archaeologically rich Wiltshire/Berkshire Downs. The Wiltshire Historic Environment Record notes that the downlands surrounding

Baydon are rich in prehistoric monuments, most notably round barrows of Bronze Age date along with Iron age and Roman settlements and field systems now best observed by aerial photography. To the east a number of prehistoric ditches have been recorded and to the north through the centre of the village runs the Roman road of Ermin Street from Silchester to Cirencester via Wanborough. Various finds of Roman pottery are recorded from the general area of the site along with some Saxon pottery and a buckle. The site lies on the margins of the historic (medieval) settlement though the latter does not appear to have late Saxon origins as it is not mentioned in Domesday Book of 1086 when it was part of Ramsbury; its first mention by name is in 1196 (VCH 1983). To the west are cultivation terraces (strip lynchets) considered to be of medieval date and constructed to be able to farm steep ground when land was in short supply.

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 area of development. The work 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 a full excavation.

The specific research aims of this project are:

- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present;
- to determine if any prehistoric occupation or landscape features are present on the site; and
- to determine if any Saxon or Medieval occupation is present on the site.

Three trenches were originally proposed to be excavated, targeting where possible, the footprints of the new houses and garage. They were to be 15m long and 1.60m wide. All trenches were to be excavated by a machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, under direct archaeological supervision. Machine excavation was to be taken down to the top of the natural geology or the top of the relevant archaeological level. Topsoil and subsoil heaps were to be examined for archaeological artefacts including use of a metal detector.

Results

Five trenches were eventually dug, between 5.0m and 17.5m in length and all 1.60m wide (Fig. 3). Due to various site constraints some of the trenches had to be repositioned or shortened but additional trenches were excavated to compensate for this shortfall. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1 (Pl 1; Fig. 3)

This trench was 9.5m long and 0.43m deep. The stratigraphy comprised 0.12m of turf/topsoil above 0.25m of brown clayey subsoil with flint nodules overlying red/brown sandy clayey, usually with flint nodules which was the natural geology. No archaeological features were present.

Trench 2

This trench was 10.5m long and 0.42m deep. The stratigraphy comprised 0.11m of turf/topsoil above 0.29m of brown clayey subsoil with flint nodules overlying the natural geology. No archaeological features were present.

Trench 3 (Pl 2; Fig. 4)

This trench was 17.5m long and between 0.3m and 0.43m deep. The stratigraphy at the south east end comprised 0.11m of turf/topsoil above 0.26m of brown clayey subsoil with flint nodules overlying the natural geology. Some chalk patches were observed in the latter the south western end. No archaeological features were present but a single flint flake was recovered from the spoilheaps.

Trench 4

This trench was 6.5m long and 0.37m deep. The stratigraphy comprised 0.11m of turf/topsoil above 0.19m of brown clayey subsoil with flint nodules overlying the natural geology. No archaeological features were present.

Trench 5

This trench was 5.0m long and 0.35m deep. The stratigraphy comprised 0.10m of turf/topsoil above 0.17m of brown clayey subsoil with flint nodules and many roots overlying the natural geology. No archaeological features were present.

Struck flint by Steve Ford

A single flint flake was recovered from the topsoil or subsoil of Trench 3. It is not closely datable but is of prehistoric (Neolithic/Bronze Age) date. It presumably represents a casually lost or discarded item well away from any occupation site and is a typical find for the flint rich chalklands where the site lies.

Conclusion

No archaeological deposits were identified in any of the five trenches dug and only a single prehistoric struck flint was found which is of archaeological interest. As such the site is considered to have low archaeological potential.

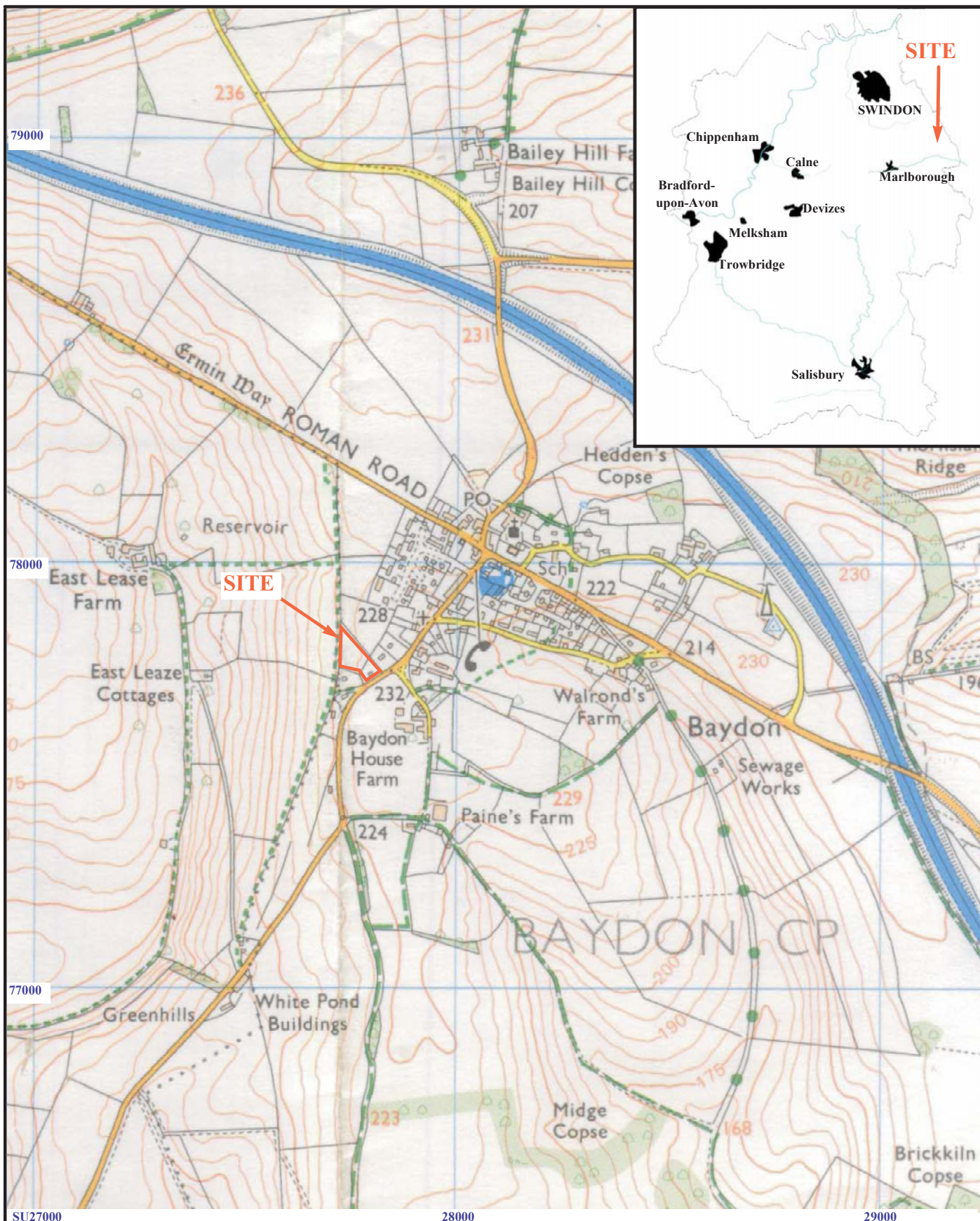
References

- BGS, 1947, *British Geological Survey*, 1:63360, Sheet 267, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- PPS5, 2010, *Planning for the Historic Environment*, Planning Policy Statement 5, The Stationery Office, Norwich
- VCH, 1993, *Victoria County History of Wiltshire*, vol. **12**, London

APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at south or west end

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	9.5	1.60	0.43	0-0.12m Turf/topsoil; 0.12-0.37m brown clayey subsoil with flint nodules; 0.37m+ red/brown sandy clayey, usually with flint nodules (natural geology). [Plate 1]
2	10.5	1.60	0.32 S 0.42 N	0-0.11m Turf/topsoil; 0.11-0.40m subsoil; 0.40m+ natural geology.
3	17.5	1.60	0.43 SE 0.3 NW	0-0.11m Turf/topsoil; 0.11-0.38m subsoil; 0.38m+ natural geology. [Plate 2]
4	6.5	1.60	0.37	0-0.11m Turf/topsoil; 0.11-0.30m subsoil; 0.30m+ natural geology.
5	5.0	1.60	0.35	0-0.10m Turf/topsoil; 0.10-0.27m subsoil; 0.27m+ natural geology.

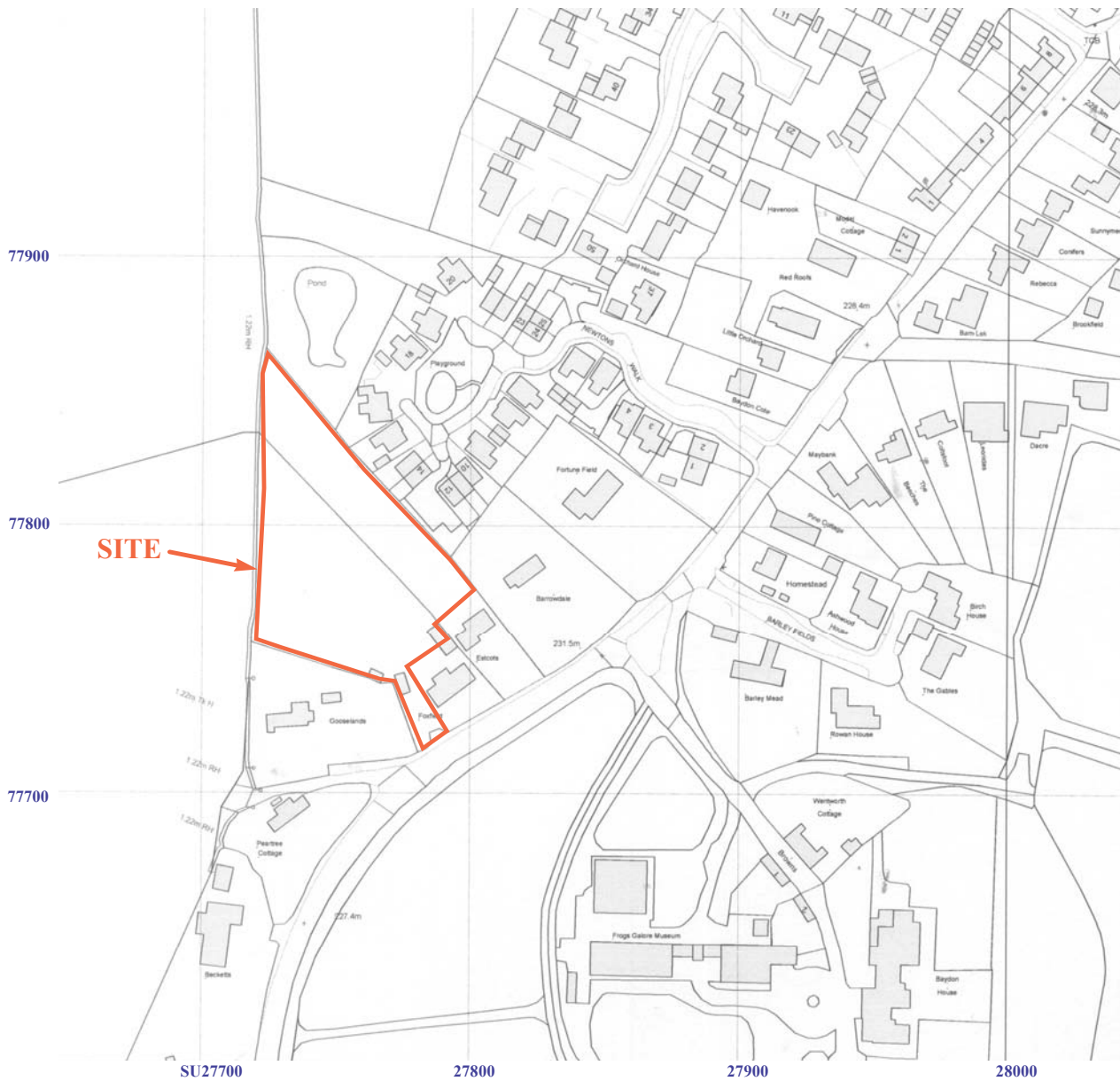


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**Land at Foxfield and Estcots, Aldbourne Road,
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Figure 1. Location of site within Baydon and Wiltshire.

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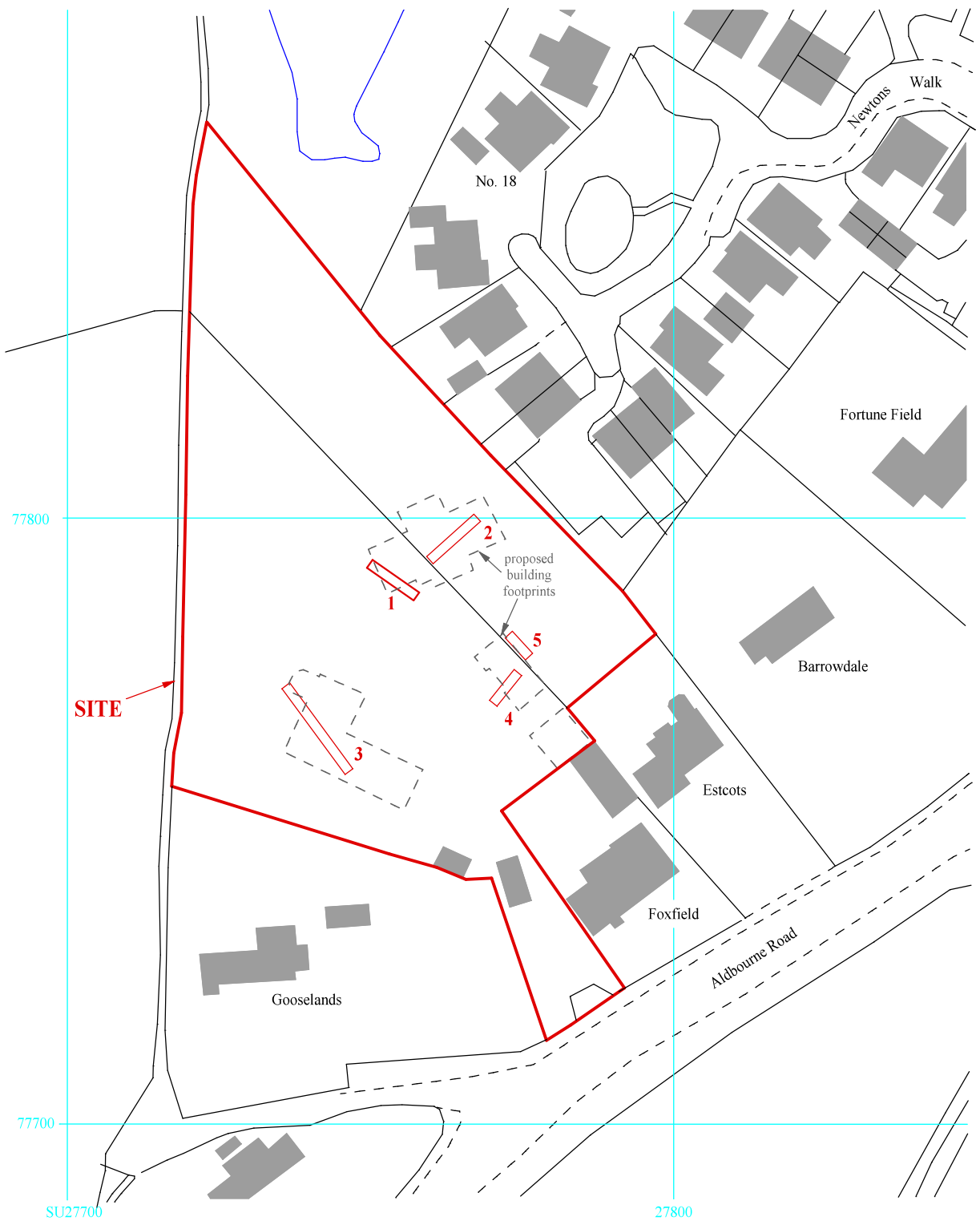


**Land at Foxfield and Estcots, Aldbourne Road, Baydon,
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Aldbourne Road.

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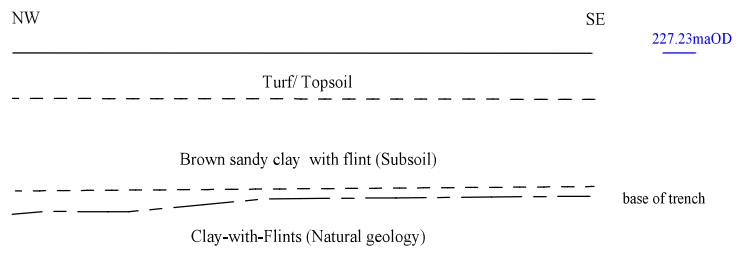


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Figure 3. Location of trenches.



Trench 3



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Figure 4. Representative sections.



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Plate 1. Trench 1, looking south east, horizontal scales: 2m and 1m, vertical scale: 0.5m.



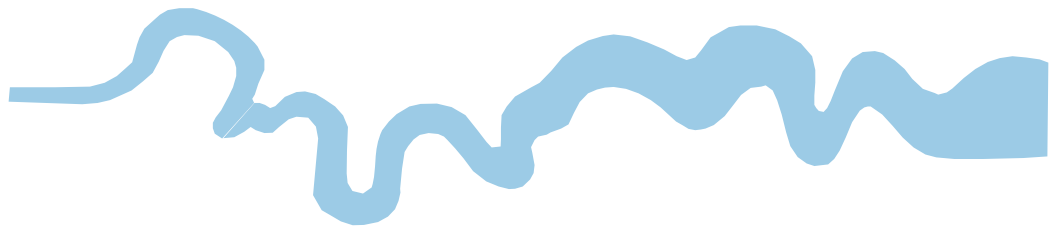
Plate 2. Trench 3, looking north west, horizontal scales: 2m and 1m, vertical scale: 0.5m.

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Plates 1 and 2.

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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