

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Land adjacent to Wing Cottage,
Hampstead Norreys, West Berkshire**

Archaeological watching brief

by Andrew Mundin

Site Code: WCHN 10/70

(SU 5286 7645)

**Land adjacent to Wing Cottage, Water Street,
Hampstead Norreys, West Berkshire**

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For Mr Paul Bethall

by AndrewMundin
ThamesValleyArchaeologicalServices
Ltd

SiteCode: WCHN10/70

February 2011

Summary

Site name: Land adjacent to Wing Cottage, Hampstead Norreys, West Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 52865 76445

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 8th–10th February 2011

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Andrew Muddin

Site code: WCHN 10/70

Area of site: 150 sq m

Summary of results: No archaeological deposits were identified during groundworks. Single sherds of late Medieval and Post-Medieval pottery were recovered from a layer of modern made ground.

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

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 23.02.11 Steve Preston ✓ 23.02.11

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by Andrew Muddin

Report 10/70

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out on land adjacent to Wing Cottage, Hampstead Norreys, West Berkshire (SU 52865 76445) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Philip Bellew, of Mathewson Waters Architects, The Old Surgery, Crowle Road, Lambourn, Berkshire, RG17 8NR on behalf of Mr Paul Bethall, Garden House, River View Road, Pangbourne, Berkshire, RG8 7AQ.

Planning consent (10/01242/COND1) has been gained from West Berkshire Council for the construction of a new single dwelling, on land to the north of Wing Cottage, which was driveway access to the garage for this property. The consent includes a condition (14) relating to archaeology, which requires that a programme of archaeological work, in this case a watching brief, be carried out to a specification agreed by the Local Planning Authority.

This work was carried out in accordance with the Department of the Environment's *Planning Policy Guidance, Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990) and the Council's policies on archaeology. It is acknowledged that Department of Communities's *Planning for the Historic Environment Statement* (PPS5 2010) has superseded PPG16. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Duncan Coe, Archaeological Officer for West Berkshire Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Andrew Muddin between 8th to 10th February 2011. The site code is WCHN 10/70.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at West Berkshire Museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located within the centre of the village, on the eastern side of Water Street which runs parallel to the River Pang, which lies to its eastern side (Fig. 2). The site, currently part of the driveway access to the garages of Wing Cottage, lies between the road and the river. The underlying geology is Valley Gravel over Upper Chalk (BGS 1947). The site lies at 85m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its position within the historic core of the settlement. The village probably has late Saxon origins (if not earlier), as reference is made to '*Hanstede*' in Domesday Book of AD 1086 (William and Martin 2002) though this may refer to another 'Hampstead' in this part of Berkshire (Hampstead Marshall). Once owned by William de Sifrewast after the Norman Conquest, where the village is reference to as '*Hanstede Sifrewast*', it became Hampstead Norreys in the 15th century, when owned by the Norreys family of Bray (VCH 1924).

Older recorded archaeological finds and deposits are common both for the chalk downland and within the Pang Valley (Richards 1978). Perborough Castle, an Iron-Age hillfort lies *c.*2km north west of the village, while the site of a Roman building and possible villa site is to the east of Eling, *c.*1km south of the village. Other earthworks have also been recorded, Bronze Age barrows on Folly Hill and within Park Wood, to the east and south-west. A Norman *motte*, or mound earthwork is also thought to exist, located on the southern edge of the village in Westbrook Copse. The parish church of St. Mary the Virgin, is generally of 13th century date but with some Saxon and 12th-century elements.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the construction, mostly notably the excavation of the new foundation trenches of the new house. During monitoring of the excavation, exposed trench sections were to be recorded, artefacts of archaeological interest recovered and hand excavation of any archaeological deposits under immediate threat by disturbance from machine excavation.

The specific research aims of this project are:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on this site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present;
- to determine if archaeological deposits representing the origins of the settlement in late Saxon times are present and if encountered, determine their nature; and
- to determine if archaeological deposits representing the development of the settlement in medieval and post-medieval times are present and if encountered, determine their nature.

Results

The watching brief comprised the examination of the new house foundation trenches (Fig. 3; Pl.1) with only superficial removal of vegetation taking place prior to the digging. All footing trenches were 0.8m wide, and were excavated to a depth of between 0.99m to 1.16m deep. The trenching was carried out with a small 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a 0.8m wide, bladed ditching bucket.

Within the foundation trenches, a similar stratigraphy was present over much of the site. Gravel hardstanding (which formed the surface of the old access road) was 0.05m thick and overlay a former topsoil (0.15m deep). This in turn overlay a homogenous soil deposit (50) which was noted to a depth of 0.89m initially on the southern side of the footings. Deposit 50 was generally a dark brown sandy silt with gravel inclusions, but also contained brick and tile and china pottery. A small area (1.2m wide) was noted in the south-eastern corner of the footing trench, which contained dense quantities of peg tile with sand (53). This deposit seems only to be a small dump, probably laid at the same time as Deposit 50. Generally, this is probably an imported soil, which had raised the ground level over the gravel natural. No original topsoil or subsoil deposits were present in section.

In the central-west of the site, an area of characteristically different soil (51) was noted in section (Fig. 4). This deposit (51) was recorded beneath a band of chalk (52), seen in two of the long sections of footings, Deposit 51 (Fig. 4, Pl. 2), was a grey, reddish-brown silty sand. It was 0.27m thick. The natural gravel at this point was measured at a depth of 0.55m. This seemed to be an older deposit of hard standing laid down for vehicle access. This was devoid of finds. Deposit 51 did, however, contain two pottery sherds of archaeological interest (see below). They were recovered, however along with more material of late post-medieval date as found in deposit 50.

Finds

Pottery by Andrew Muddin

All finds identified on site within deposits are noted in Appendix 1. Most of the assemblage identified from this site was of modern date from deposit 50, was all of post-19th century date. White porcelain, blue and white glazed earthenware pottery and red ceramic earthenware (flower pots) were frequently found throughout this fill as was fragments of brick and tile.

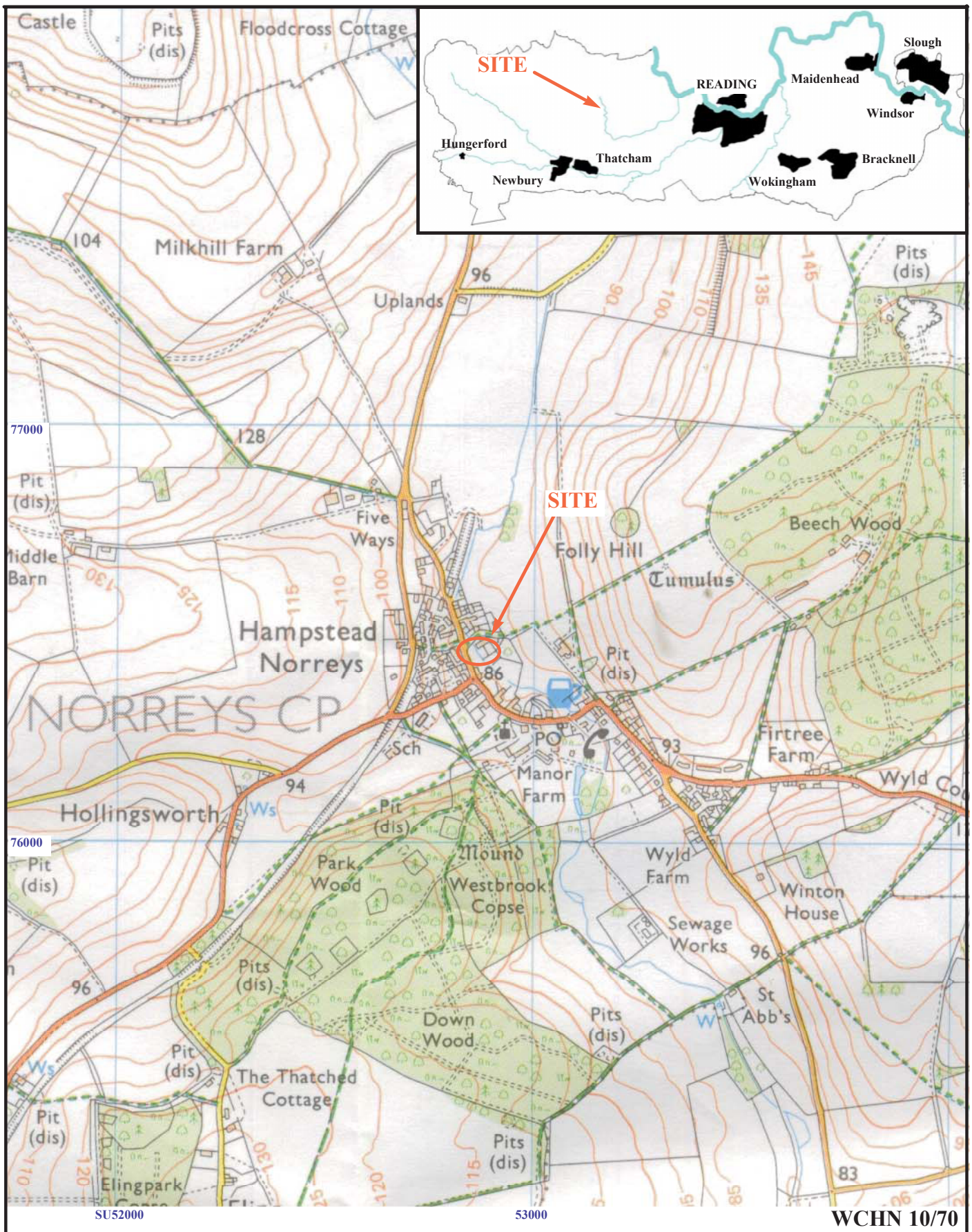
From deposit 51 was recovered one sherd of brown glazed red ware, of Post-medieval date. A second small sherd (<3g) of late medieval or possibly early post-medieval pottery was green glazed internally and externally with a very fine sandy fabric. A sherd of mass-produced white earthenware from a plate was also recovered from this context.

Conclusion

No archaeological deposits were encountered in the new groundworks, and the bases of all new trenches uncovered natural gravel in their bases. Two pottery sherds, one of possible late medieval and one of post-medieval date, recovered as residual finds, were the only items of archaeological note for the site.

References

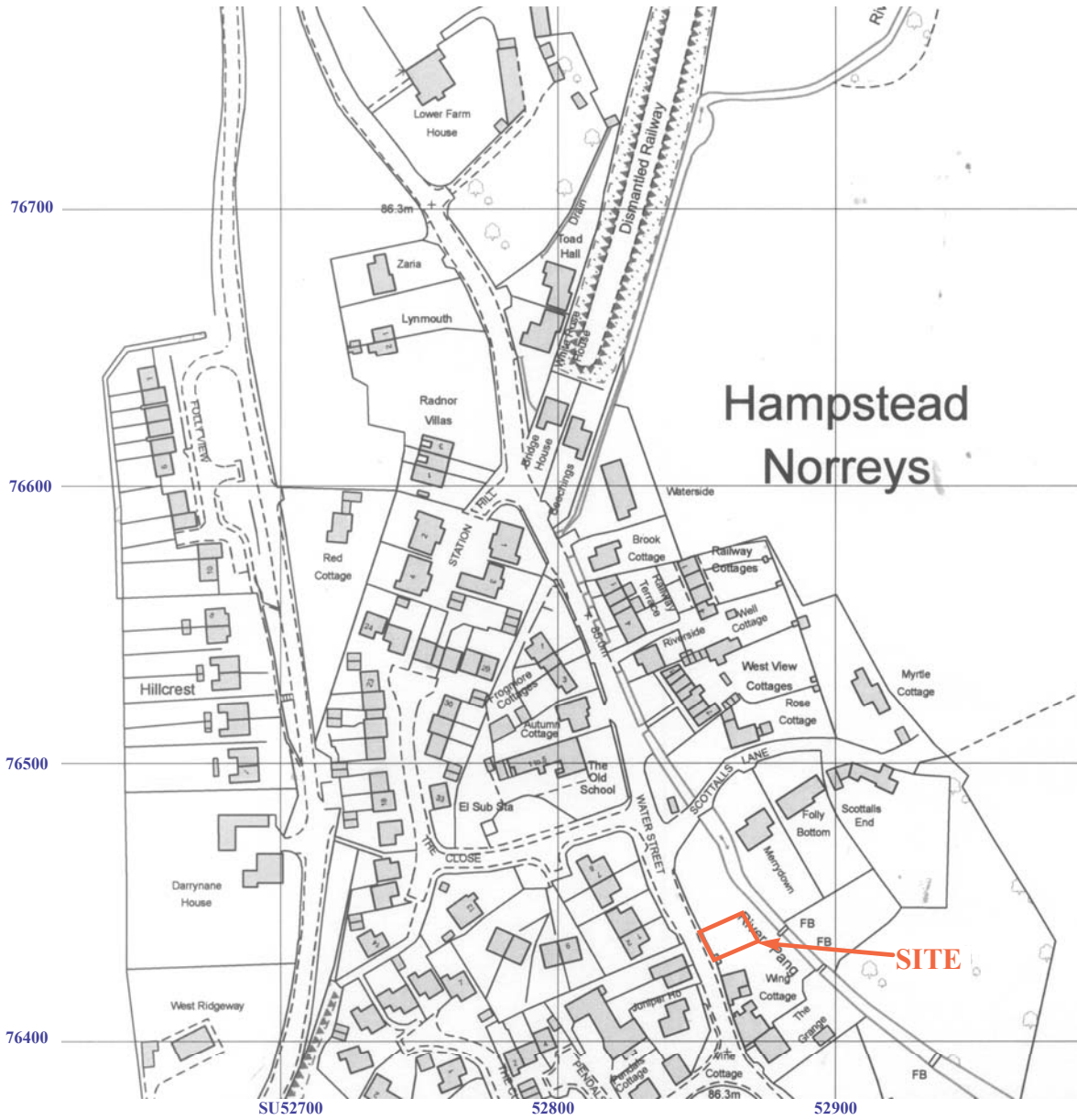
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- Richards, J C, 1978, *The Archaeology of the Berkshire Downs*, Berkshire Archaeol Comm Pubn 3, Reading
- VCH, 1926, *The history of the County of Berkshire*, 4, 73-81, <http://www.britishhistory.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid+62684>. Date accessed 21st February 2011



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Figure 1. Location of site within Hampstead Norreys and
Berkshire.

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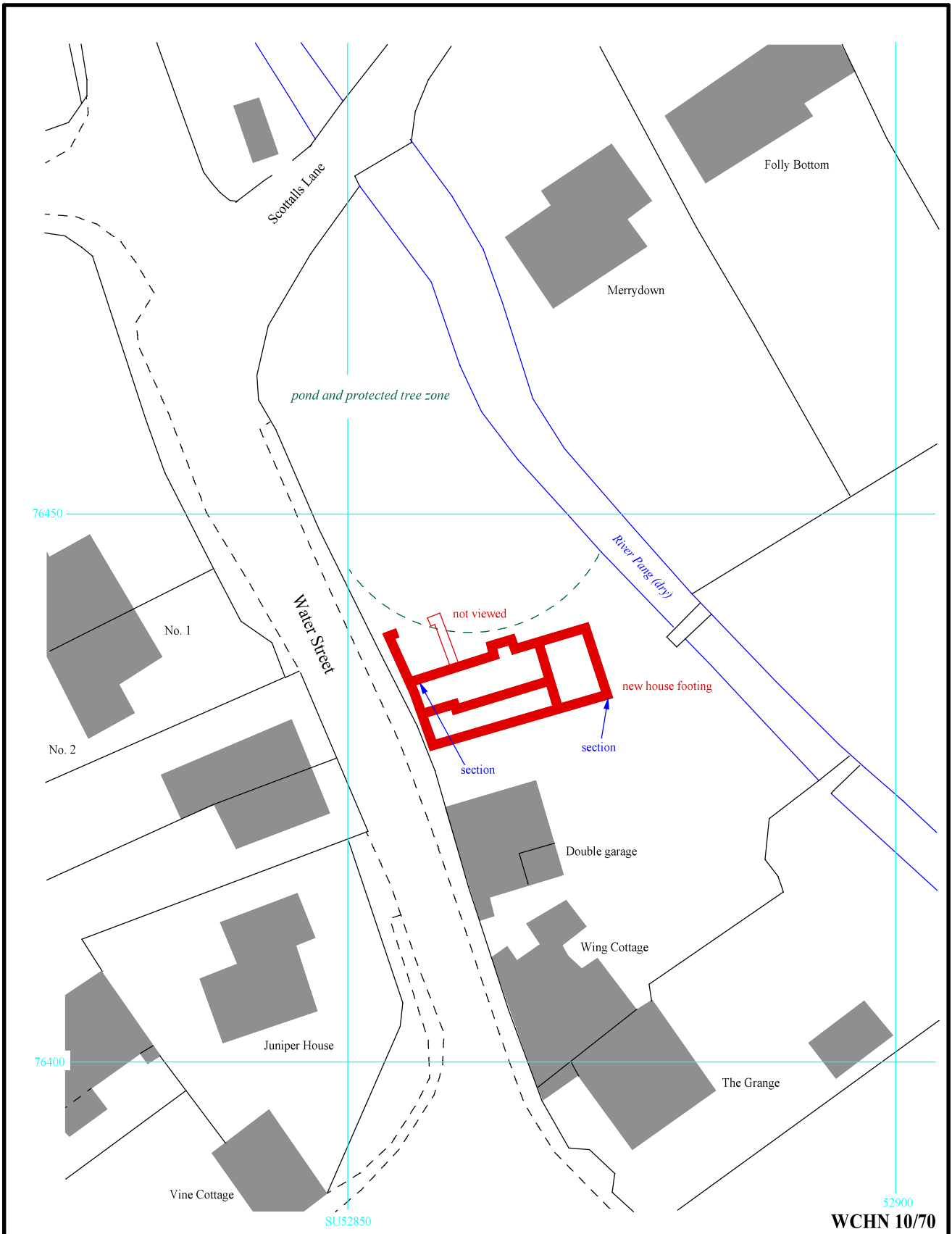
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site on Water Street.

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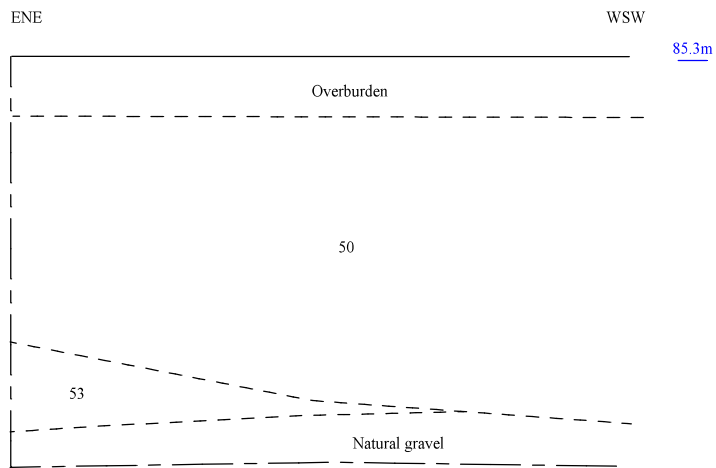
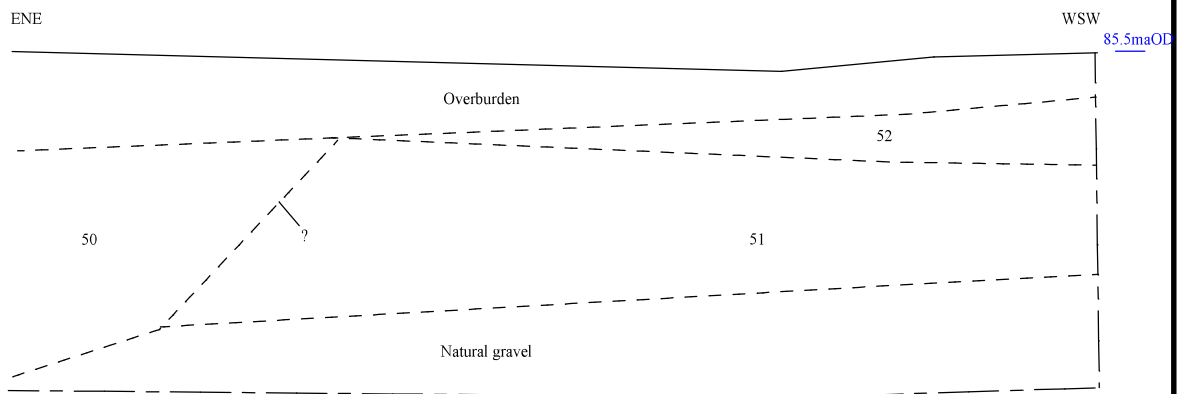
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Figure 3. Location of areas observed during watching brief.





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Figure 4. Representative sections.



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Plate 1. General site shot, looking east.



Plate 2. Footing trench, eastern end of central footing, looking south east, Scale: 1m.

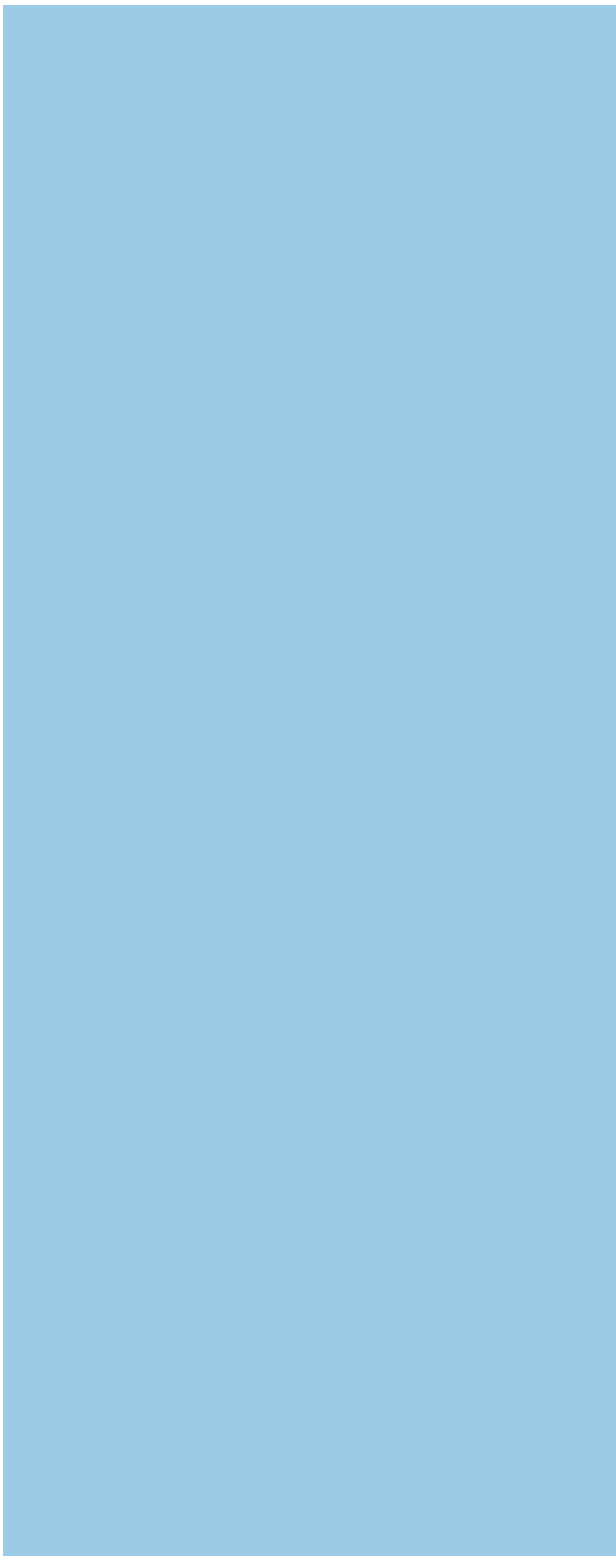
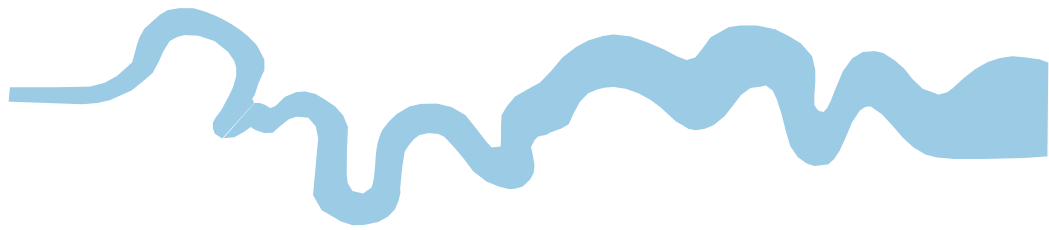
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Plates 1 and 2.**

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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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