

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**44 High Street, Haddenham,
Buckinghamshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by David Platt

Site Code: 44HSH12/22

(SP 7387 0835)

**44 High Street, Haddenham
Buckinghamshire**

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For Ian Slater

by David Platt

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code 44HSH 12/22

February 2012

Summary

Site name: 44 High Street, Haddenham, Buckinghamshire

Grid reference: SP 7387 0835

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 20th-22nd February 2012

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: David Platt

Site code: HSH 12/22

Area of site: c. 55 sq m observed

Summary of results: No deposits relating to late Saxon, medieval or early post-medieval settlement were present. Intercutting pits and layers were all of 19th or 20th-century date and a witchert wall was seen to be stratigraphically later than these.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Buckinghamshire County Museums Service in due course.

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|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Report edited/checked by: | Steve Ford ✓ 23.02.12 |
| | Steve Preston ✓ 23.02.12 |

44 High Street, Haddenham, Buckinghamshire An Archaeological Watching Brief

by David Platt

Report 12/22

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at 44 High Street, Haddenham, Buckinghamshire (SP 7388 0845) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Ian Slater of 44 High Street, Haddenham, Buckinghamshire, HP17 8ET.

Planning permission (11/02550/APP) has been gained from Aylesbury Vale District Council to add an extension to the existing building at 44 High St, Haddenham, Buckinghamshire (SP 7387 0835). This consent is subject to a condition relating to archaeology. A single component of work was proposed, a watching brief during the digging of foundation and service trenches. The condition has been guided by *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 Ms Eliza Alqassar, Archaeological Planning and Conservation officer for Buckinghamshire County Council, who advises the Local Planning Authority in archaeological matters.

The fieldwork was undertaken by David Platt on 20 – 22nd February 2012 and the site code is HSH 12/22. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Buckinghamshire County Museums Service in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the west side of the High Street of Haddenham and is surrounded by residential properties. It is currently occupied by the garden of no. 44 (Fig. 2). Haddenham itself is located between Thame and Aylesbury with the river Thame to the north. The site is surrounded on three sides by wicket walls, a wall constructed of earthen walling (cob) on stone footings. The site slopes down from west towards High Street to the east. The eastern half of the new extension footprint lies on an area of disturbed ground from a previous smaller extension. The underlying geology is mapped as Purbeck Sand Formation (BGS 1994), which consisted of non-marine limestone with marl and clay. This was observed in the foundation trenches. The site lies at a height of *c.* 75m above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its position within the historic core of Haddenham. A detailed summary of Haddenham as a whole has also recently been produced (BCC 2008). Haddenham has, until recently, witnessed little archaeological fieldwork. The village has late Saxon origins and is mentioned in Domesday Book (as *Nedreham*) (Williams and Martin 2002) but has little documented history of note. However, topographically it is of unusual plan with three greens and four ponds. Field evaluations (Weale 2007; Taylor 2011) some 100m to the north-east have revealed a post-medieval building on the street frontage, medieval pits, ditches and an infilled stream channel, and a residual sherd of Bronze Age pottery. A watching brief to the east also revealed probable medieval pits. Further to the north, in Townsend, recent excavations produced evidence for the late Saxon and medieval layout of that area (Wallis 2007; Weale 2012). It was anticipated that a similar range of deposits may be present on the current site.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the groundworks. This was to involve examination of all areas of intrusive groundworks, in particular the digging of foundation trenches and service runs.

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; and
- to determine whether archaeological deposits relating to late Saxon, medieval and early post-medieval settlement are present.

Results

An area measuring 5.30m x 11.30m was stripped under continuous archaeological supervision down to a depth of approximately 0.90m. A single trench was observed being dug at the western end of this area down to a depth of 1.30m, this was 5.30m long and 0.80m wide.

At the western end of the area observed, the stratigraphy exposed comprised 0.24m of building rubble (52) overlying 0.16m of dark grey silty clay made ground (53). This deposit extended the entire length of the reduced area, except where truncated at the east end. Made ground 53 in turn overlay the top fill (54) of pit 1 (see below). In the middle of the excavation area the stratigraphy was as follows: 0.10m of topsoil (50) overlying 0.08m of

topsoil (51), this overlay 0.18m of dark grey clayey silt made ground (53) which in turn overlay 0.08m of redeposited limestone natural geology, which overlay 0.40m of mid brownish grey silty clay, probably a buried soil horizon. This overlay the natural limestone geology. The 3m at easternmost end of the excavation had been disturbed by the previous extension, and any archaeology that may have been present there will have been truncated.

A number of intercutting pits were uncovered on the west of the site, these are dated to the late post-medieval period as they included animal bone, glass, metal and several pieces of 19th- or 20th-century mass produced white ware, including some transfer printed ware. These were mostly observed in plan (Fig. 3), however the trench dug at the western edge of the excavation cut through one of the pits (1) by *c.* 0.40m showing that it had at least two fills (54) and (55) (Fig. 4).

At 6.30m from the west end of the excavation the foundation of a wicket wall was uncovered. The continuation of this wall itself was still standing, approximately 1.50m to the south but the section revealed in the trench had most likely been demolished prior to the building of either number 44 or the pre-existing extension. The cut for this foundation (2) can be seen in section (Fig. 4) to cut the made ground (53) which overlay the 19th-20th century pits. This suggests that this wall is of fairly modern date. A boundary on the same line is first shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1900: it is not present on maps of 1820 or 1834 and probably not in 1880 (this is less clear).

Finds

The 19th- and 20th-century material was retained on site and no older finds were present.

Conclusion

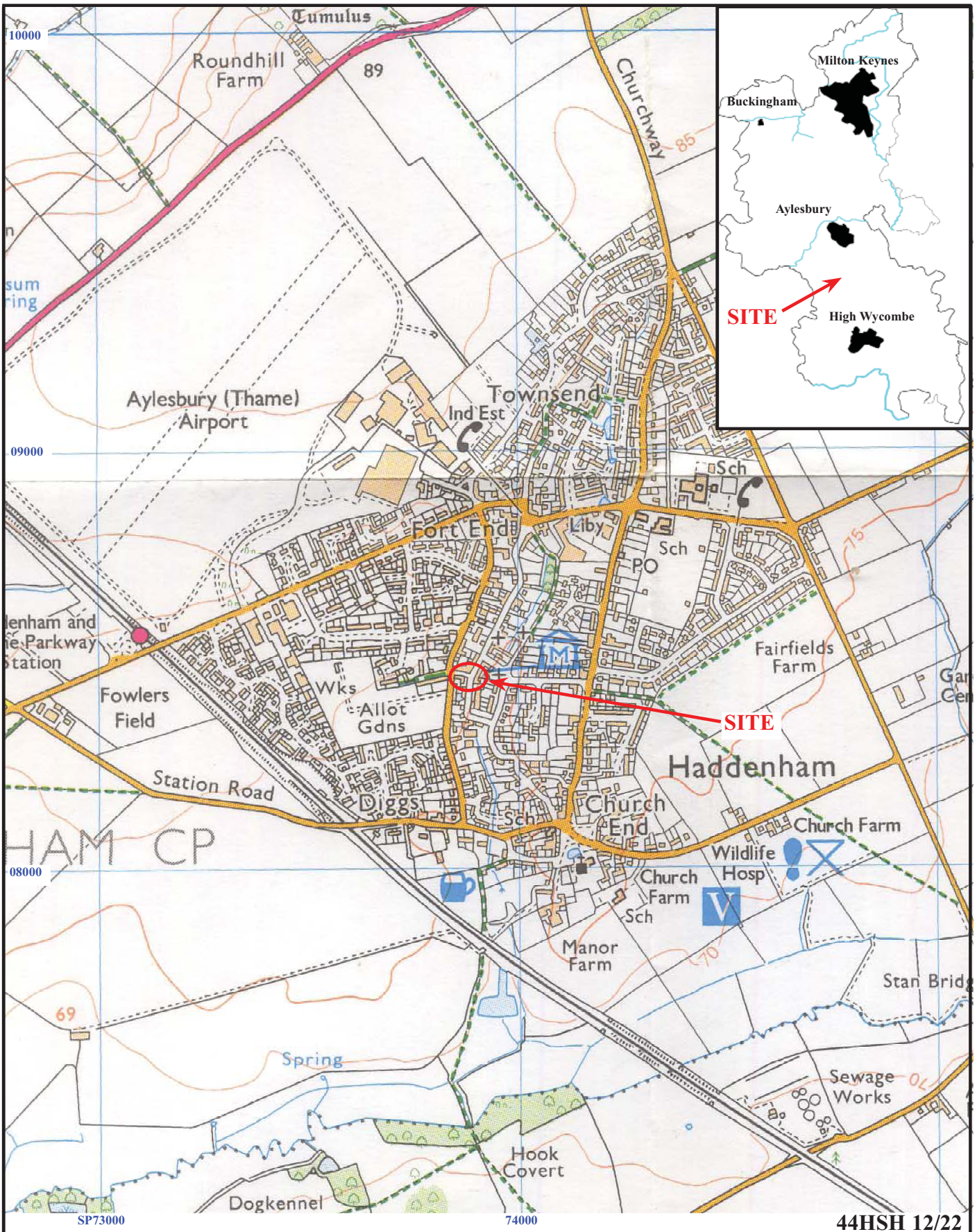
The watching brief successfully examined the areas which were to be disturbed by the new extension to the existing building. These revealed no cut features of medieval or earlier date. Much pottery and other material of 19th and 20th century date was observed within pits and made ground layers, but none were seen of an earlier period. This truncation by modern and late post-medieval features will have meant that any earlier archaeology that had been in the area would not have survived, there was however a reasonable area of relatively undisturbed natural geology in the middle of the area examined where, had any been present, archaeological features could have survived.

References

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APPENDIX 1: Feature details

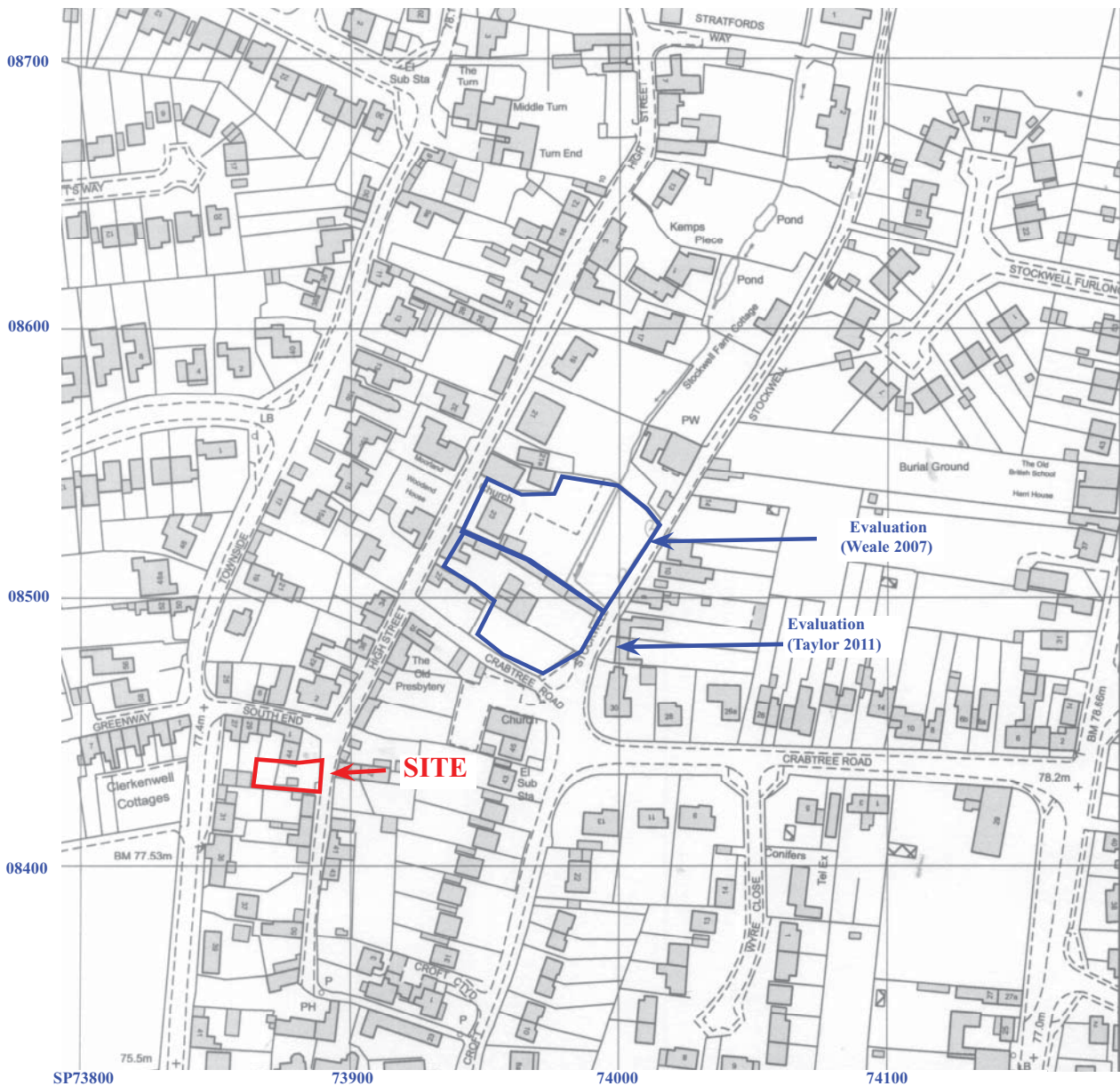
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|------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| 1 | 54 and 55 | Pit | Post medieval/modern | Pottery and Glass |
| 2 | 58 | Foundation Trench | Post Medieval/modern | Stratigraphic |



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Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 1. Location of site within Haddenham and Buckinghamshire.

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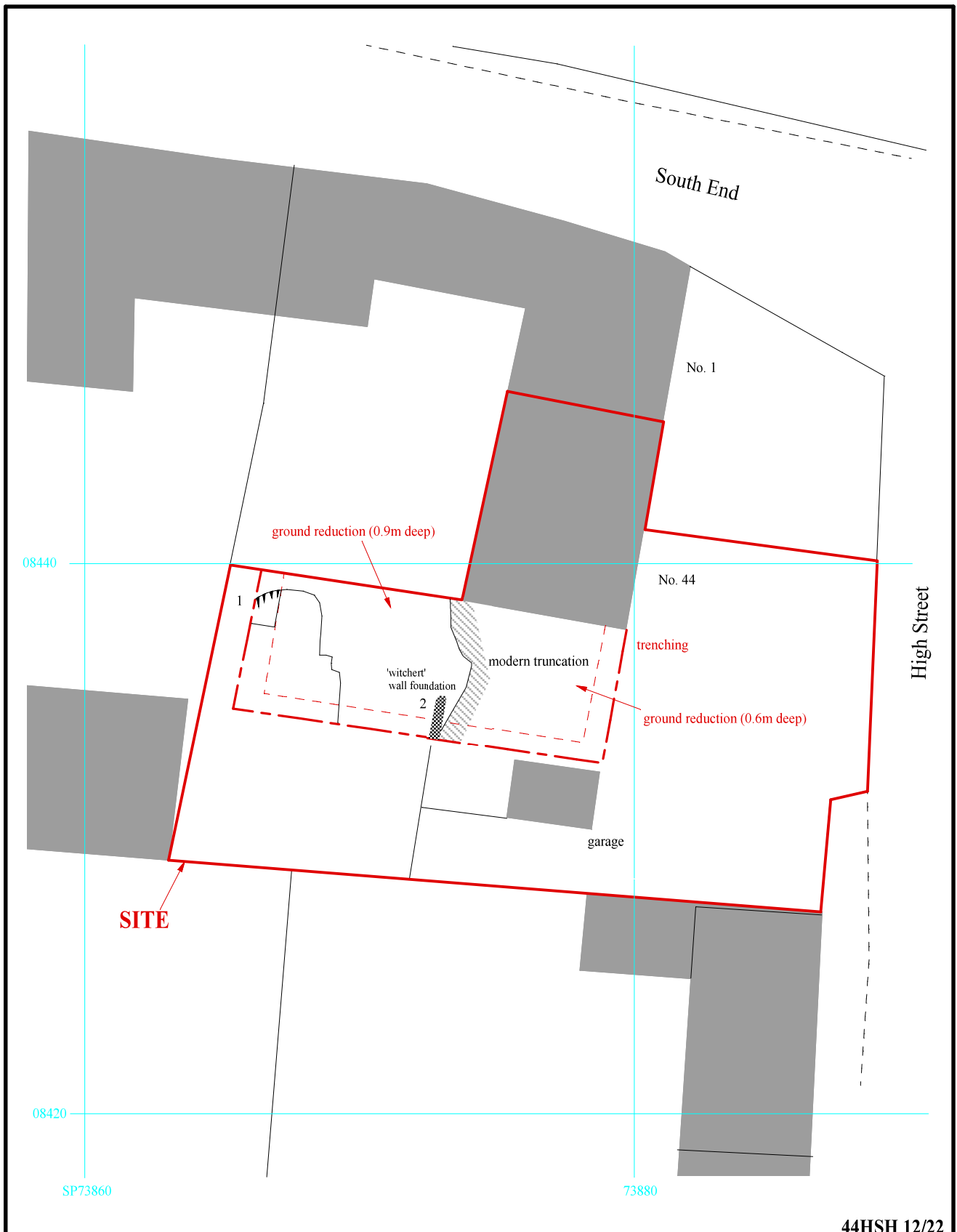


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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off the High Street.

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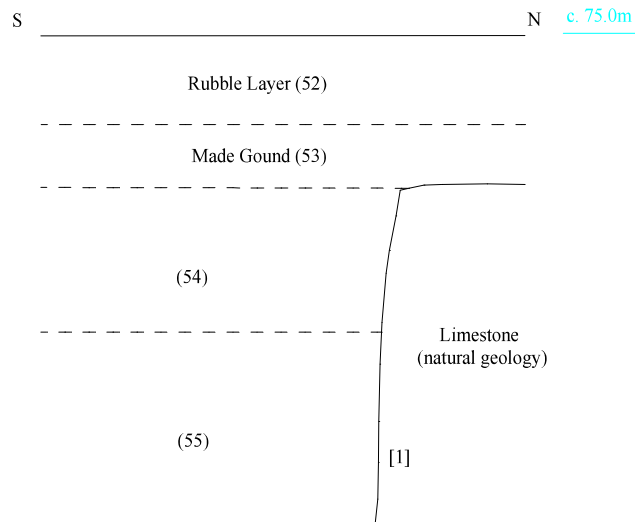
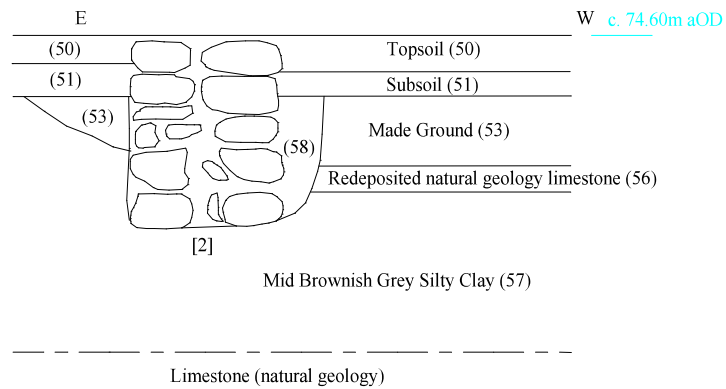


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Figure 3. Location of observed areas.





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Figure 4. Representative Sections





Plate 1. South west corner over feature 1, looking south. Scales: 2m and 1m.



Plate 2. Witchert wall foundation, looking south, Scale: 1m.

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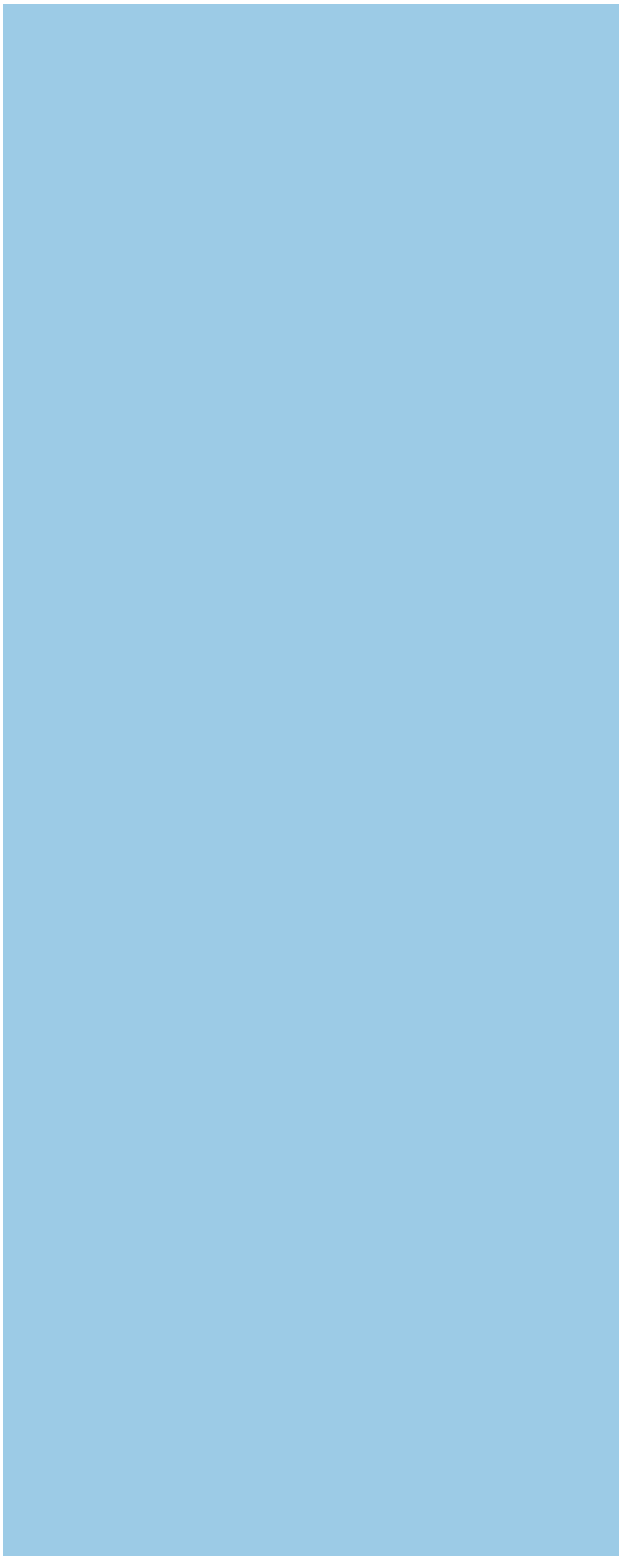
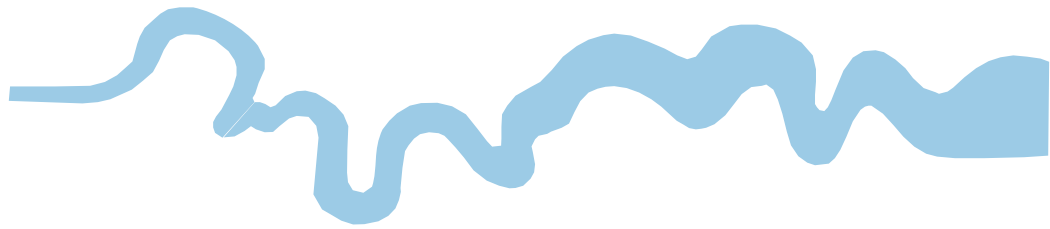
Plates 1 and 2.

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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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