

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**124 Andover Road, Newbury,
West Berkshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by Jacqueline Pitt and Tim Dawson

Site Code: ARN12/51

(SU 4621 6527)

**124 Andover Road, Newbury,
West Berkshire**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief
For Rivar Ltd**

By Jacqueline Pitt and Tim Dawson
Thames Valley Archaeological Services
Ltd

Site Code ARN12/51

June 2012

Summary

Site name: 124 Andover Road, Newbury, West Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 4621 6527

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 28th – 30th May 2012

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Jacqueline Pitt and Tim Dawson

Site code: ARN12/51

Area of site: c. 0.2ha

Summary of results: The area of land containing plots A and B was reduced to natural geology. Three undated ditches and the minimal remains of a modern out-building were observed. A modern swimming pool truncated a large portion of the site. The area was thoroughly scanned by metal detector but no significant artefacts were recovered.

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

Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford✓ 18.06.2012
	Steve Preston✓ 18.06.2012

124 Andover Road, Newbury, West Berkshire An Archaeological Watching Brief

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Report 12/51

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at 124 Andover Road, Newbury, West Berkshire, SU4621 6527 (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr James Bull of Rivar Ltd, Mill House, Overbridge Square, Hambridge Lane, Newbury, Berkshire, RG14 5UX.

Planning consent (app 12/00511/FULD) has been gained from West Berkshire Council for the re-development of a parcel of land for two detached houses at 124 Andover Road, Newbury. The consent is subject to a condition relating to archaeology requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological work. Due to the potential disturbance of below ground archaeological features and the fact that the site lies broadly within the widespread site of the First Battle of Newbury in the Civil War a watching brief was to be maintained during the period of groundworks.

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 Duncan Coe, Archaeological Officer for West Berkshire Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Jacqueline Pitt and Tim Dawson between 28th and 30th May 2012 and the site code is ARN12/51.

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 in the south of Newbury, off the A343 within the grounds south-east of the house at 124 Andover Road (Fig. 1). The site is bounded to the south-east by Andover Road and is in the midst of a residential area (Fig 2). The underlying geology is mapped as River and Valley Gravel (BGS 1947) and the site lies at an elevation of *c.* 121m above Ordnance Datum with a very slight slope down from south to north.

Archaeological background

The site is located in the suburbs of modern Newbury in a zone that was farmland until being engulfed by suburban expansion (WBAS 2006). There are a modest range of sites and finds from the area (Lobb and Rose 1996). To the south on Wash Common is a round barrow cemetery (burial mounds) of Bronze Age date which is a Scheduled Monument. To the north at the former hospital site, a watching brief recorded two ditches and a possible pit, none of which were well dated (Jenkins 2005). To the south a watching brief carried out during gas-pipe laying adjacent to the memorial to Lord Falkland found nothing of interest (Gnas and Hopkins 2009). The site also lies broadly within the widespread area across which the First Battle of Newbury was fought in the Civil War (20th September 1643).

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the new construction work. This was to involve examination of the digging of the foundation trench for the new structures and deep trenches for services as necessary. The research objectives of the project were as covered by the emerging Solent Thames research agenda, namely:

- to provide further detail of the nature, date and extent of any archaeological deposits; and
- to recover (metal) artefacts relating to the Civil War battlefield.

Metal detectors were to be used to enhance recovery of metal objects, with no removal of finds without reference to contextual information. Archaeological deposits which were threatened by the groundworks were to be excavated and recorded.

Results

The ground reduction across plots A and B was observed (Fig. 3). The areas were reduced in two spits to allow for metal detecting before, during and after machining. Plot A was reduced in *c.*0.1m spits, while Plot B was reduced in *c.*0.2m spits (Pls 1 and 2).

Root activity disturbed much of Plot A. The stratigraphy comprised 0.02m of topsoil above 0.20m of subsoil, overlying natural geology of light yellow-grey sandy gravel with patches of light yellow clay. An undated linear ditch terminal [1] (Figs 3 and 4; Pl. 3) was observed in the south-west of Plot A, with minimal remains of a small modern outbuilding, comprising a rectangular structure of a single course of bricks a single

brick wide, to the north. The metal detector survey revealed two metal objects within the subsoil (Fig. 3). A much corroded fitting was recovered from the unexcavated ground surface between the two plots.

A modern swimming pool truncated a large area in the middle of Plot B, surrounded by modern disturbance. The stratigraphy comprised 0.18m of topsoil above 0.20m of subsoil, overlying natural geology of light yellow-grey sandy gravel with patches of light yellow clay. Two ditches [2] and [3] (Figs 3 and 4; Pl.4) were observed in the south and south-east areas, neither containing any dating evidence. The metal detector survey revealed no finds.

Finds

Metalwork by Steven Crabb

Three ferrous objects were recovered from this site; a piece of plate and a nail were not retained as they were modern. The nail being drawn wire and the plate cast iron. A third ferrous fitting consists of a cap roughly elliptical in shape, roughly similar to a toe guard. It measures 60mm long and 20mm wide. It would have been mounted with two nails one of which is still present and the second has been broken off. This would have fulfilled the purpose of protecting a corner of an object, most likely wood. The artefact has a substantial layer of corrosion products and therefore further identification, including dating, is not possible.

Conclusion

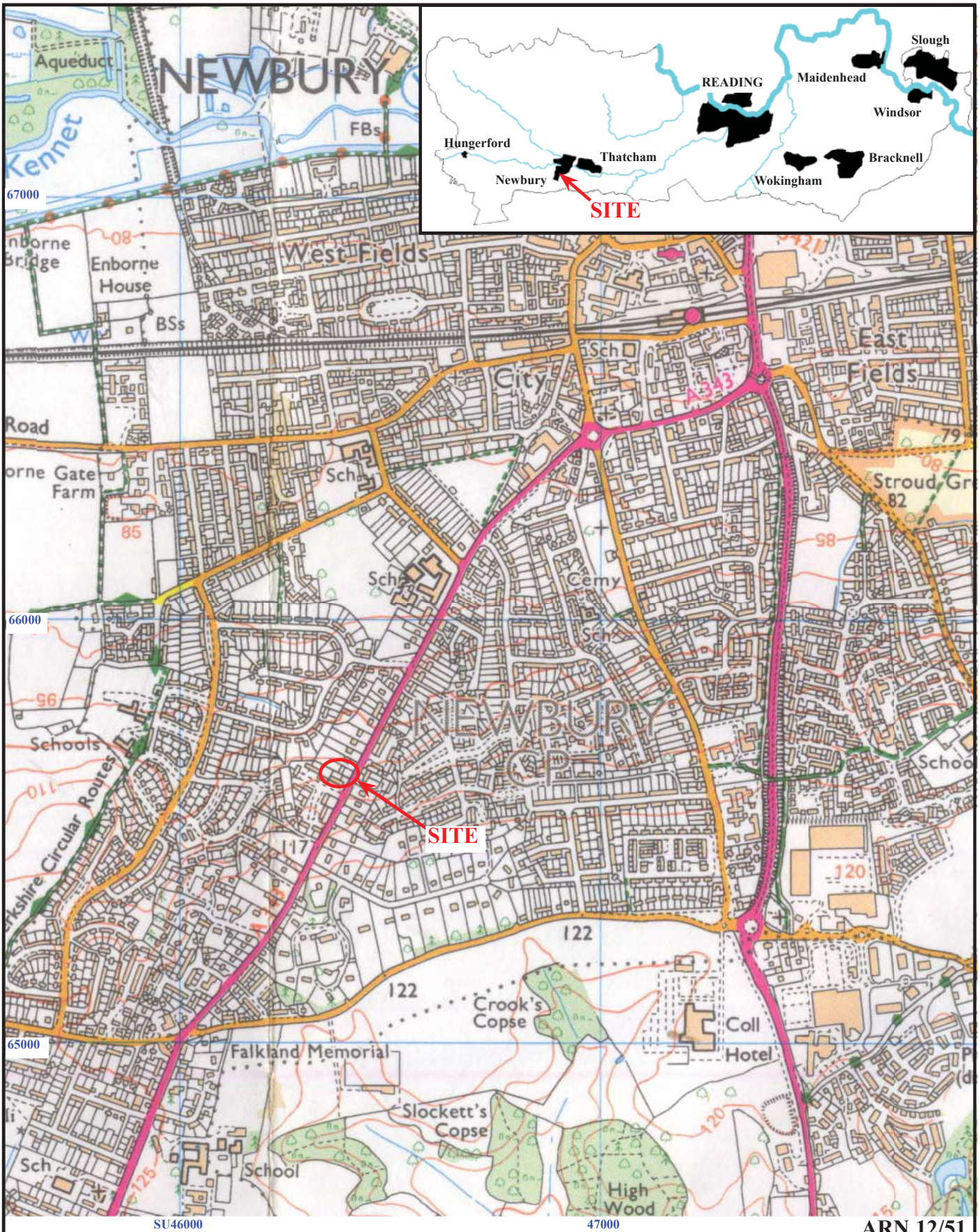
The ground reduction revealed natural geology cut by three ditches which all contained no dating evidence. Remains of a modern outbuilding may have been associated with the swimming pool which truncated a large area of the site. The modern disturbance surrounding the pool and presence of root activity further reduced the potential for archaeology. No finds of significant archaeological interest were recovered, specifically nothing related to the Civil War battle.

References

- BGS, 1947, *British Geological Survey*, 1:63 360, Sheet 267, Drift Edition, Keyworth
- Gnas, A and Hopkins, H, 2009, 'Replacement gas main, Falklands Memorial, Andover Road, Newbury, West Berkshire, An archaeological watching brief', Thames Valley Archaeological Services unpubl rep 09/89, Reading
- Jenkins, P, 2005, 'Former District Hospital, Andover Road, Newbury West Berkshire, An archaeological watching brief', Thames Valley Archaeological Services unpubl rep 05/46, Reading
- Lobb, S J and Rose, P G, 1996, *Archaeological Survey of the Lower Kennet Valley, Berkshire*, Wessex Archaeol Rep 9, Salisbury
- PSS5, 2010, *Planning for the Historic Environment*, Planning Policy Statement 5, The Stationery Office, Norwich
- WBAS 2006, *Historic Newbury, fit for the future; The Newbury Historic Character Study*, West Berkshire Archaeology Service, Newbury

APPENDIX 1: Feature details

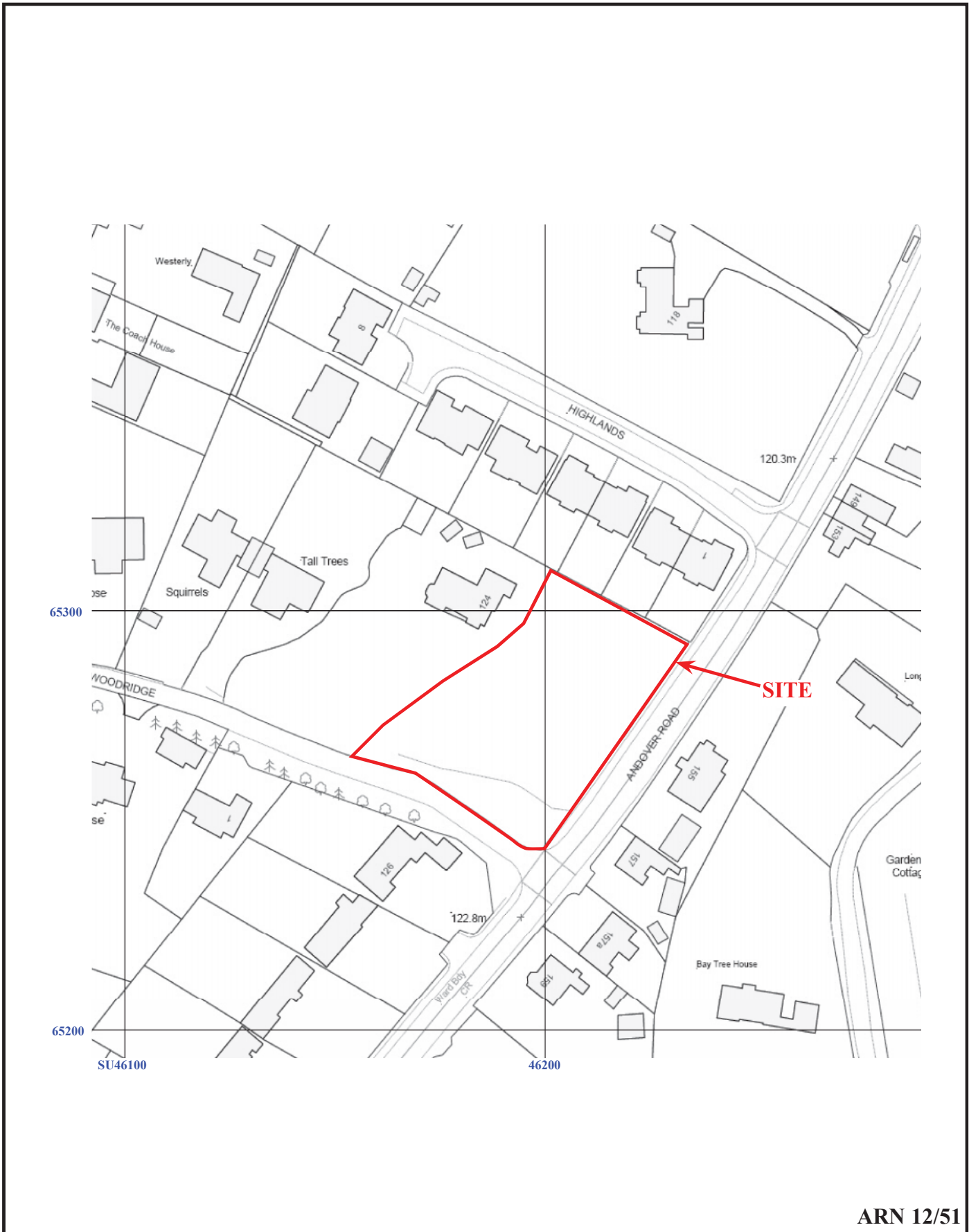
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2	53	Ditch	Undated	None
3	54	Ditch	Undated	None



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Figure 1. Location of site within Newbury and Berkshire.

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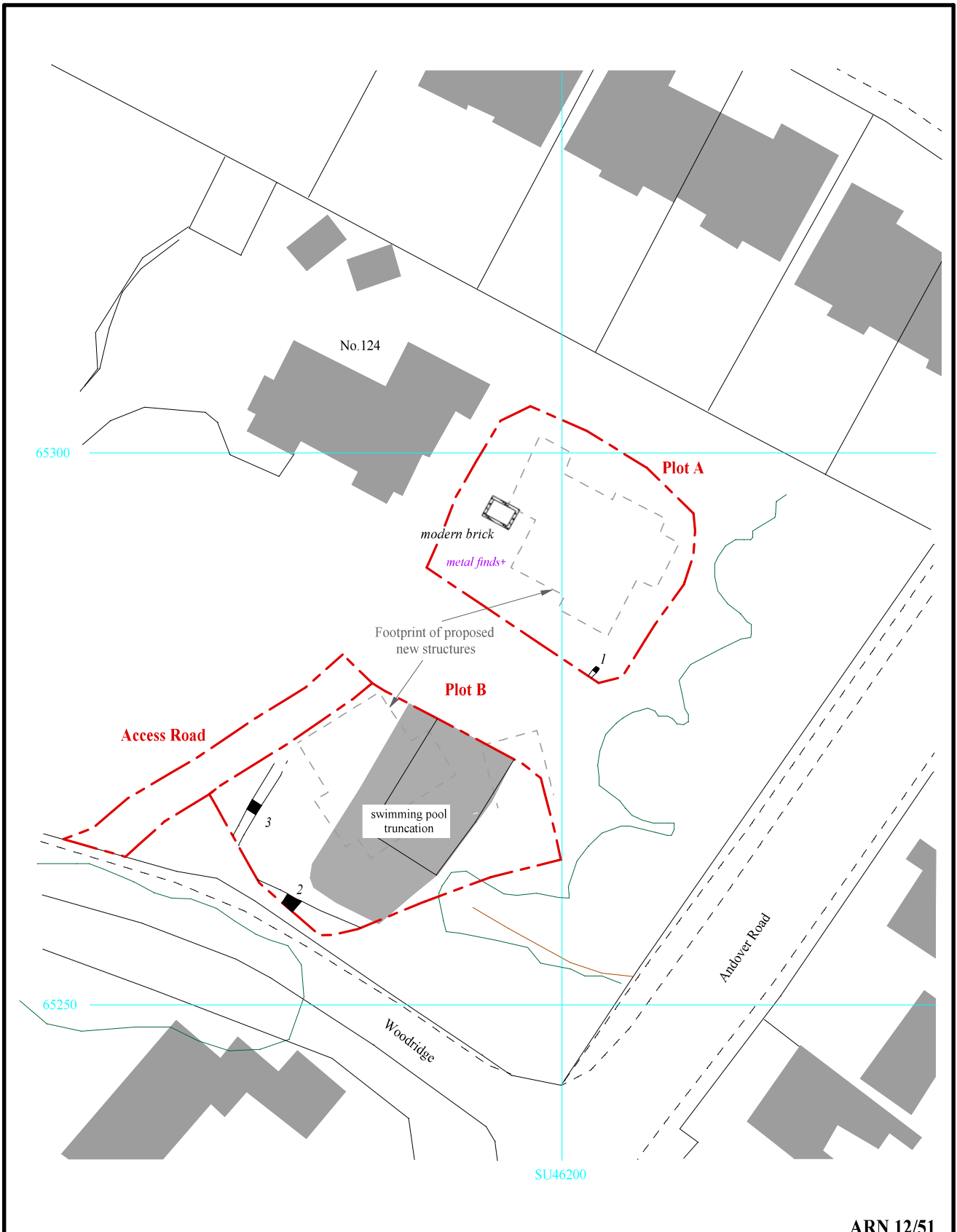


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Figure 2. Detailed location of site.

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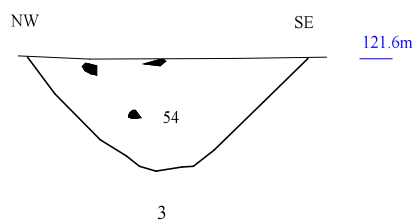
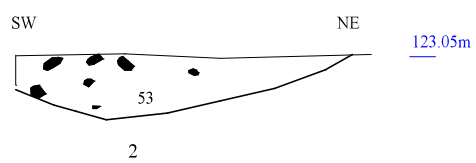
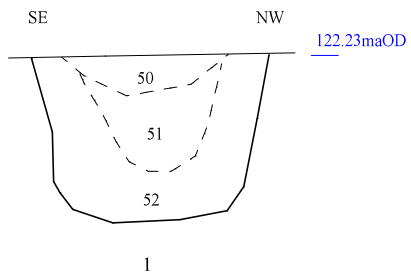
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Figure 3. Area observed at the site.



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Figure 4. Sections.



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Plate 1. Plot A, looking north, Scales: 2m.



Plate 2. Area B, looking north east, Scales: 2m and 1m.

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Plates 1 and 2.

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Plate 3. Terminus slot 1, looking south west, Scales: 0.3m and 0.1m.



Plate 4. Ditch slot 3, looking north east, Scales: 0.5m and 0.3m.

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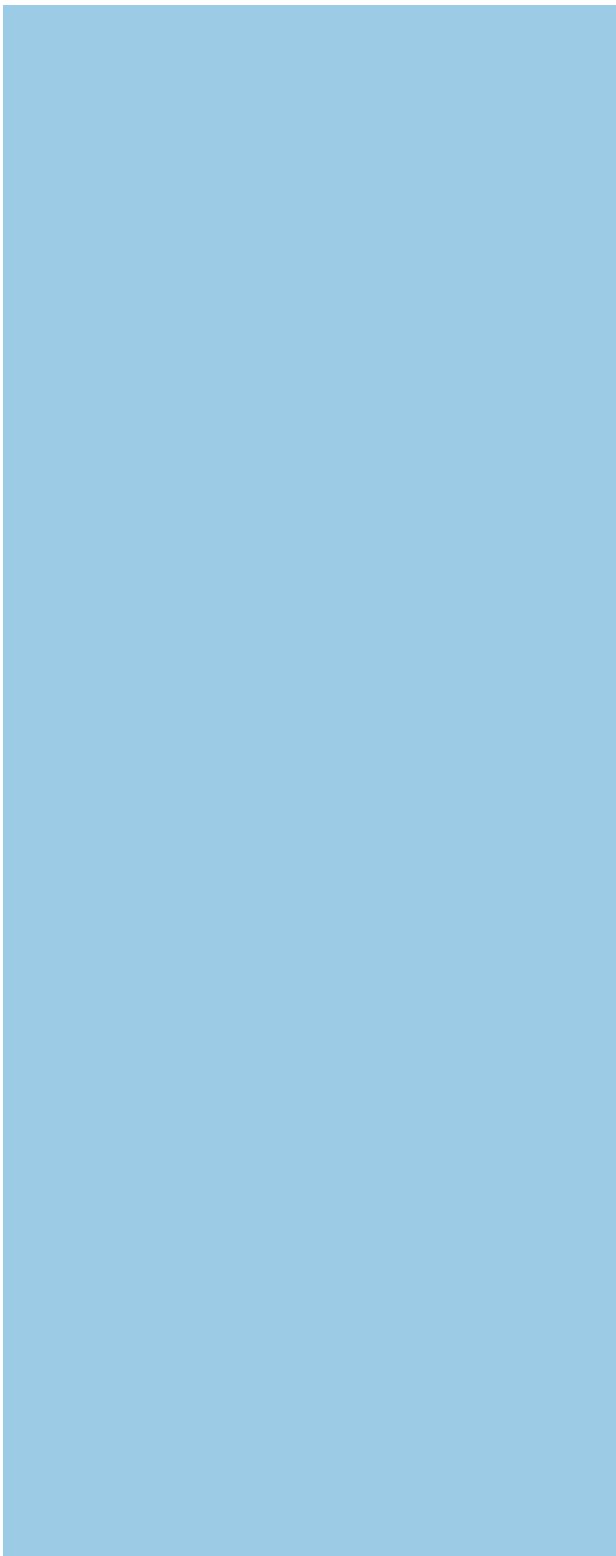
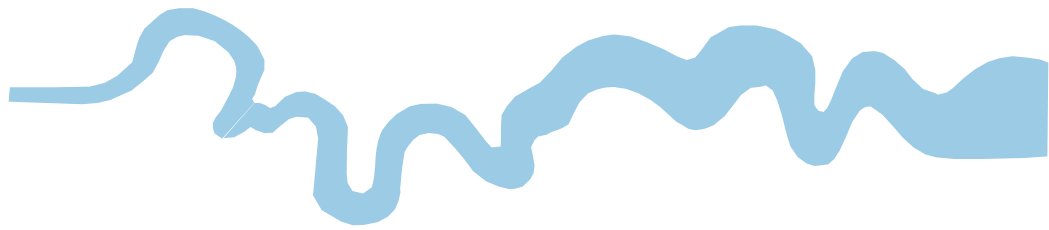
Plates 3 and 4.

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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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