

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**The Coach House, Bishop's Mead,
Farnham, Surrey**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by Genni Elliott

Site Code: BMF13/44

(SU 8362 4668)

The Coach House, Bishop's Mead, Farnham, Surrey

**An Archaeological Watching Brief
For Back to Front Exterior Design Ltd**

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Site Code BMF 13/44

May 2013

Summary

Site name: The Coach House, Bishops Mead, Farnham, Surrey

Grid reference: SU 8362 4668

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 1st May 2013

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Genni Elliott

Site code: BMF 13/44

Area of site: c. 122 sq m

Summary of results: Natural geological deposits were not observed and no soil was excavated from the site. The earliest feature on site was a brick wall running along the boundary between Bishop's Mead and the site butted by a soil and rubble layer. A circular well was observed and had been backfilled in the 19th–20th centuries

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

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford ✓ 28.05.13
	Steve Preston ✓ 29.05.13

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Report 13/44

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at The Coach House, Bishop's Mead, Farnham, Surrey, SU 8362 4668 (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mrs Yolande Hesse of Back to Front Exterior Design Ltd., 37 West Street, Farnham, Surrey, GU9 7DR.

Planning permission (WA/2012/1893) has been gained from Waverley Borough Council for the construction of a new residential dwelling on the site. The consent is subject to a condition (1) relating to archaeology due to the potential disturbance of below ground archaeological features during the period of ground works. This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012), and the Borough Council's policies on archaeology. The watching brief was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Nick Truckle, Archaeological Officer at Surrey County Council, advising the Borough. The fieldwork was undertaken by Genni Elliott on 1st May 2013 and the site code is BMF 13/44. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Farnham Museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located within Farnham town centre on land to the rear of 37 West Street and to the north-east of Bishop's Mead (Fig. 2). The site was originally used as a garage for the property at 37 West Street and has been levelled to a concrete floor. Outside the garage Bishop's Mead slopes down from the north-west to the south-east and the area in front of the former garage slopes from Bishop's Mead to the north-east. The underlying geology is river gravel, specifically from the lower terraces (BGS 1976). Spot heights are recorded in West Street; to the north-east of the site it is given as 70.7m above Ordnance Datum and to the north-west it is given as 71.3m above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a heritage statement (Lambert 2010). In summary the site lies within the historic core of Farnham in a location close to the High Street frontage. There are a large

number of elements representing the medieval and post-medieval town with several upstanding buildings of medieval and early post-medieval date near by with further similar deposits recorded by archaeological investigation. Archaeological investigation has also revealed a variety of prehistoric and Roman sites and finds.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the new construction work.

Results

The groundworks consisted of the removal of three concrete slabs down to the formation level of the new foundations, at a total depth of 0.40m. The foundation design did not require any further excavation, such as for foundation trenches.

The soil layer beneath the slabs consisted of brick rubble in a matrix of very dark brown, sandy clay loam with cement mortar and concrete rubble on the surface, presumably from the demolition of the garage. The bricks within the soil contained shallow frogs and measured 238mm x 100mm x 66mm (9 3/8" x 4" x 2 5/8"); these dimensions suggest that they probably date from the 18th century.

No soil was removed from the site. The archaeologically relevant levels were not exposed

A circular well (feature 1) was identified at the north -west end of the site. No cut was seen and the sides of the well were not exposed. It measured at least 0.90m in diameter by more than 0.60m deep. It was backfilled by a loose, dark brown, sandy clay loam (context 50) containing ceramic building material and mortar. Within the backfill was one sherd of a 'china' tea-cup dating from the 19th – 20th centuries (retained on-site). A second well was apparently found when 37 West Street was extended (Y. Hesse, pers. comm.). This well was located roughly to the north of well 1.

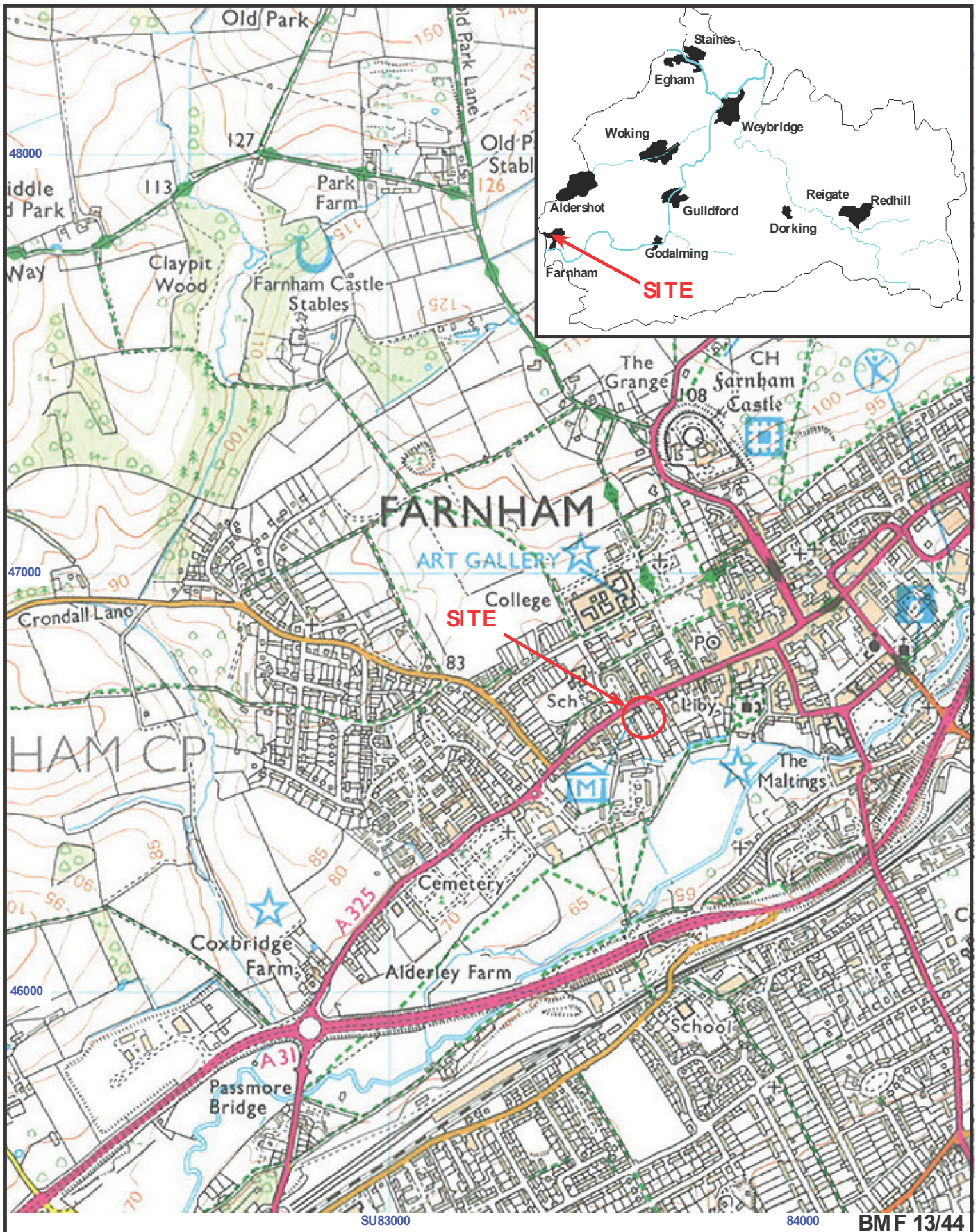
A north-west to south-east aligned wall (context 51) was present along the western edge of the site at the boundary with Bishop's Mead. It consisted of red bricks, laid stretcher bond in a matrix of greyish white lime mortar. The bricks measured 215mm long by 55mm thick (8 1/8" by 2 3/8"). A total of four courses were seen measuring a total height of 0.28m. The soil and rubble layer butted up against the wall, so no cut was seen.

Conclusion

The foundation design for the new development required minimal groundworks. An area strip of the footprint of the new building took place but only exposed relatively modern made ground and was not deep enough to expose either archaeological or natural geological deposits. The earliest feature on site was a brick wall running along the boundary between Bishop's Mead and the site butted by a soil and rubble layer. A circular well, backfilled in the 19th–20th centuries, was also present in the north-west corner of the site.

References

BGS, 1976, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50 000, Sheet 285, Drift Edition, Keyworth
Lambert, R, 2010, 'A heritage statement to support a planning application for re-development of 'The Coach House', Bishops Mead, Farnham, Surrey', unpublished report
NPPF 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London

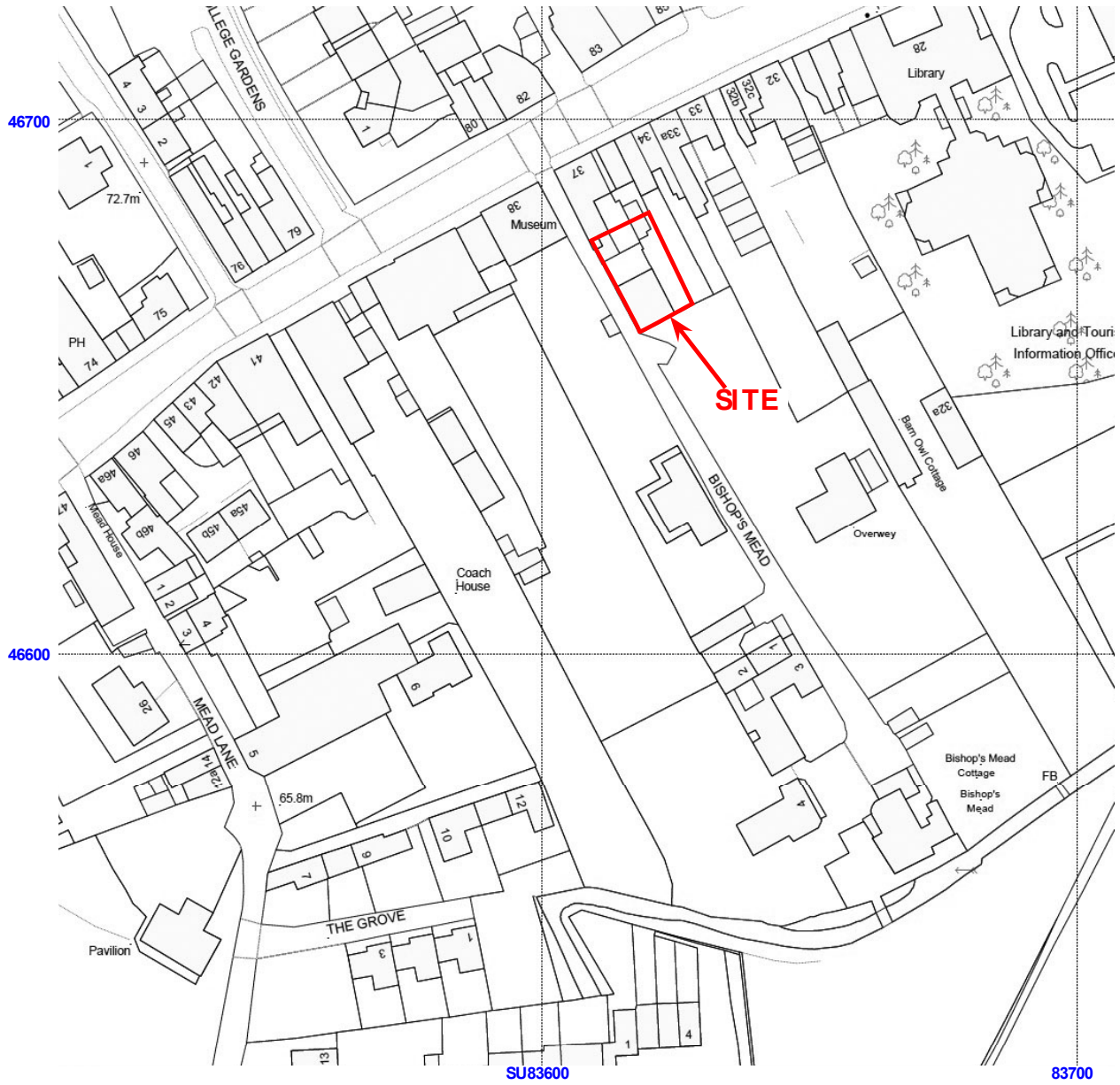


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Figure 1. Location of site within Farnham and Surrey.

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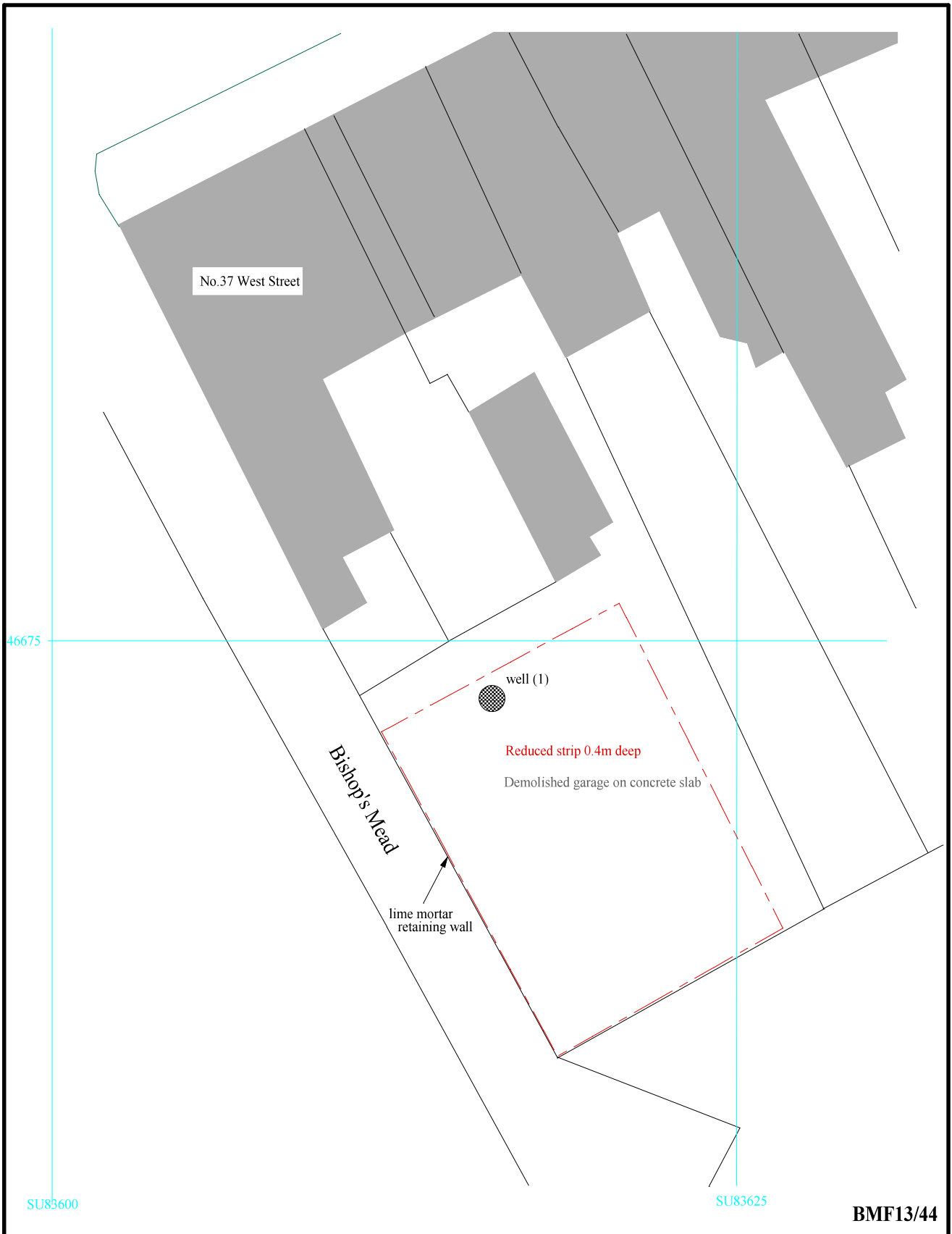


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Figure 2. Detailed location of site on Bishop's Mead.

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Figure 3. Location of observed area



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Plate 1. Site view, during concrete slab removal. looking south east



Plate 2. Top of well (cut 1), looking north east, Scales: 1m.

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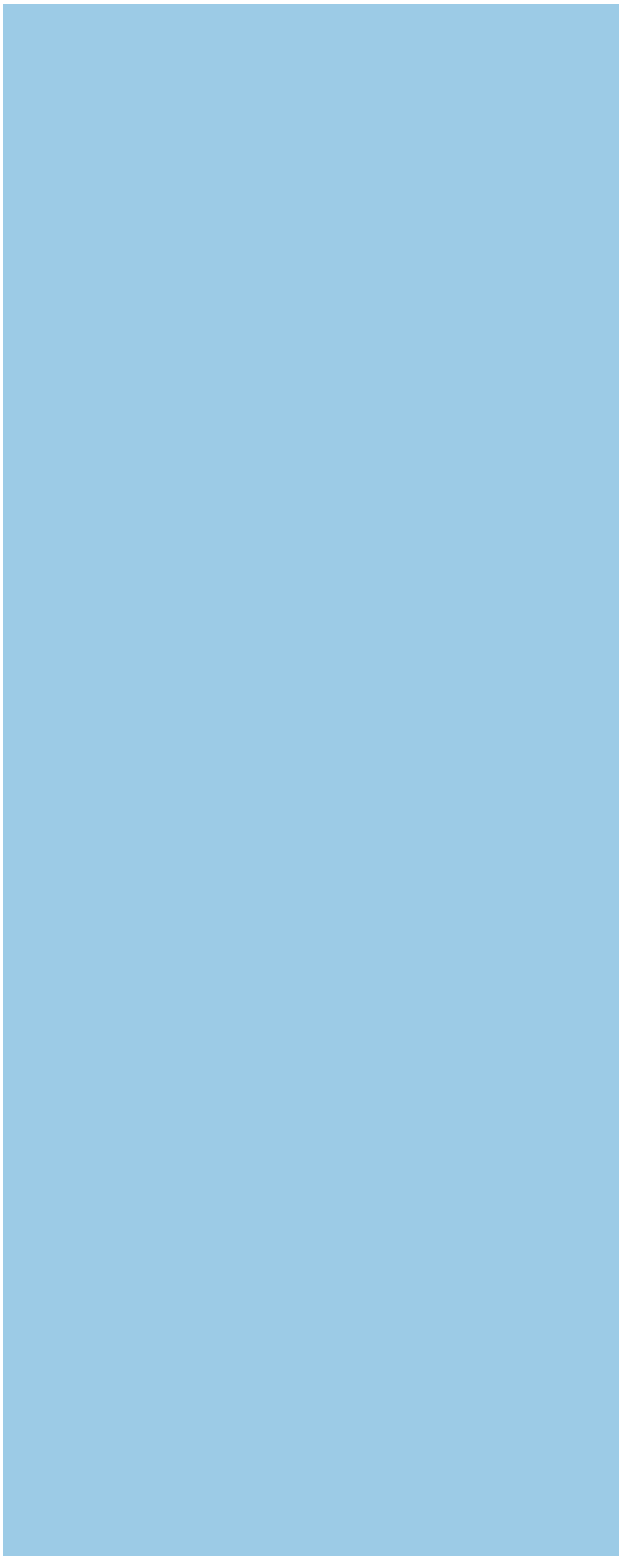
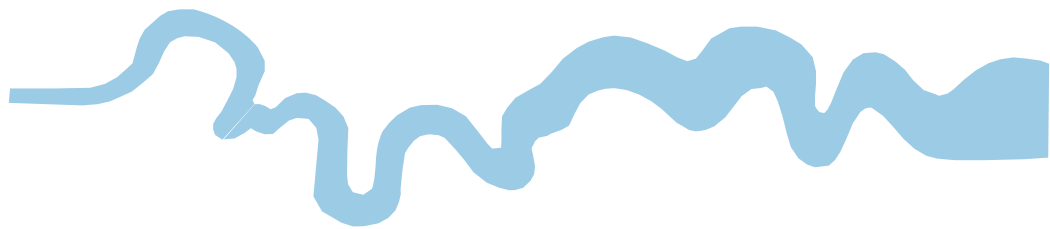
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Plates 1 and 2.

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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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