

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Busta Triangle, Eversley Quarry,
Eversley, Hampshire**

Archaeological Recording Action

by David Platt

Site Code: BTE11/110

(SU 7875 5960)

Busta Triangle, Eversley Quarry, Hampshire

**An Archaeological Recording Action
for Lafarge Aggregates Ltd**

by David Platt

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code BTE11/110

June 2013

Summary

Site name: Busta Triangle, Eversley Quarry, Eversley, Hampshire

Grid reference: SU 7875 5960

Site activity: Archaeological recording action

Date and duration of project: 22nd August 2012 – 11th June 2013

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: David Platt

Site code: BTE 11/110

Area of site: c.13ha (overall)

Summary of results: A single zig-zag ditch or trench was found during the watching brief phase of the works, which was most likely a part of the defences built in the Second World to defend the airfield at RAF Hartford Bridge (now Blackbushe). The examination of a mound considered to possibly be a Bronze Age round barrow or possible 18th-century military field kitchen revealed that it was a modern dump of no archaeological significance.

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

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

Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford✓ 14.06.13
	Steve Preston✓ 13.06.13

Busta Triangle, Eversley Quarry, Eversley, Hampshire An Archaeological Recording Action

by David Platt

Report 11/110

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Busta Triangle, Eversley Quarry, Eversley, Hampshire (SU7875 5960) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Andy Richmond of Phoenix Consulting Archaeology Ltd, Studley House Station Road, Turvey Bedfordshire, MK43 8BH on behalf of Lafarge Aggregates Ltd. Lafarge Aggregates has planning permission for an extension to their Eversley Quarry, Hampshire. The permitted area covers c.13 ha and forms a western extension to their existing workings. The permission (Reference 10/01971/CMA) contained a condition (25) relating to archaeological issues:

“Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority, the archaeological work shall be carried out only in accordance with the measures in the archaeological assessment as submitted with the application and contained in the Environmental Statement.”

This is in accordance with *Planning for the Historic Environment* (PPS5 2010) and the County Council’s policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr David Hopkins, County Archaeologist for Hampshire. The fieldwork was undertaken by David Platt and Tim Dawson between 22nd August 2012 and 11th June 2013 and the site code is BTE11/110. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Hampshire County Museums Service in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located in the general area of the former Eversley Common and Warren Common, in the north of Hampshire near the Berkshire border (Fig. 1). It lies 1.2km west of the settlement of Yateley, 2.5km south-east of Eversley village and approximately 0.75km north of the A30, Camberley to Basingstoke road. This site is bordered to the east by the B3016 and to the west by the A327, which come together at the south of the site; the northern edge is bounded by enclosed and hedged fields. The site is approximately 95m above Ordnance Datum and the underlying geology is ‘High Level Terrace Deposits’ (formerly: Plateau Gravel) (BGS 1981) and this was observed as a reddish brown sandy gravel.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a desk-based assessment (Richmond, 2010). In summary there is good evidence for Prehistoric activity in the area, two probable barrows (burial mounds) survive within 800m of the eastern edge of the extension area, attesting to the presence of Bronze Age groups in this landscape, there are also finds of Neolithic and Bronze Age flintwork and burnt flint to the south of the extension area and, to the west, possible Mesolithic flint working areas have been reported.

There is specific evidence of post-medieval military activities in the area of the recording action. In some areas clear evidence of this activity remains in the form of surviving redoubts and field kitchens. In the 1990s, two earthwork mounds were identified in conifer woodland on the existing Eversley Quarry. Investigations in 2002 showed these were likely to represent the remains of 18th-century military field kitchens of a type recorded elsewhere in the surrounding landscape in Berkshire and Hampshire (Duncan 2002), mainly dating from the period of the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars. Although these can resemble prehistoric burial barrows, they are generally much smaller.

A structured walk over survey was conducted in August 2011 (Planas, 2011) and seven possible man made earthwork features were identified (E 1-7). These comprised four ditches, two mounds and a pit. Two of these features are outside the site boundary, three are ditches of little archaeological interest (relatively modern), one is a likely modern pit for gravel extraction and one is a mound of uncertain origin. This mound (feature E3) could potentially represent the site of an 18th-century military field kitchen. Following the survey it was the only earthwork feature identified as of potential archaeological interest.

An inspection of the Hampshire County Council Archaeology and Historic Buildings Record (AHBR) identified two features that were not identified in the walk over survey, these consisted of woodland boundaries and zig-zag trenches. This has been identified from aerial photographs and could potentially be the buried remains of a Second World War zig-zag trench.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the recording action was to determine the character and date of the mounded feature (E3). If it was seen to be a military field kitchen it was to be cleared of its surface vegetation and leaf litter that appears to have built up to a depth of c. 20cm. The mound will then be excavated and recorded by quadrants.

A watching brief was proposed for the area of the suspected zig-zag trench in order to record any identified archaeology. Soils would be stripped across the area of the suspected WWII trench using a mechanical excavator

fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. If archaeological features are identified, these were to be recorded before machining was allowed to continue.

Results

Mound E3 (Figs 2 and 3)

A quadrant of the possible field military kitchen (E3) was excavated as planned and found to be a mound of mixed sands and old vegetation (Fig. 3; Pls 1 and 2), no finds were recovered and this was discounted as a field kitchen and was of no archaeological interest.

Possible WW2 Trench (Figs 2 and 3)

In the NW quadrant of the site, north of Welsh Drive, two trenches (Trenches A and B) were placed across the approximate location of the zig-zag feature identified in the aerial photographs (Fig. 2). No features were identified in these trenches.

An area was stripped to the south of Welsh Drive in the SE quadrant of the site and this identified the feature seen in the aerial photographs. This turned out to be a ditch which was zig-zag linear in plan with 5 turns of approximately 90° (Pl. 4). Two slots (1 and 2) were excavated through this ditch and these varied in width from 1.0m to 1.06m and in depth from 0.48m to 0.60m. The ditch had very steep (in places vertical) slightly curved sides, a slightly curved base and was stepped on the southern side (Fig. 3; Pl. 3), leaving a slightly deeper base to the north.

Ditch slot 1 showed 4 fills (52-55). The primary fill (55) was 0.04m thick and consisted of a dark grey silty sand with occasional gravel inclusions, this was overlain by the secondary fill (54) which was 0.07m thick and consisted of a mid reddish yellow silty sand with frequent gravel inclusions. These two fills were confined to the deeper section of the trench. The tertiary fill (53) was a 0.40m thick and was a mottled pale grey and reddish brown silty sand with frequent gravel inclusions, this was overlain by fill (52) which was 0.17m thick and consisted of a dark grey/black sandy silt with occasional gravel inclusions. No finds were recovered from any of the fills.

Ditch slot 2 showed a similar profile and consisted of 3 fills (56-58), the primary fill (58), which in this case extended the full width of the trench, was approximately 0.20m thick and consisted of a dark brown grey silty sand with frequent gravel inclusions, this was overlain by the secondary fill (57) which was approximately 0.30m thick and consisted of a mid brown grey silty sand with frequent gravel inclusions. The tertiary fill (56)

was a pale yellow grey sand with frequent gravel inclusions and was 0.16m thick. No finds were recovered from any of the fills.

After hand excavations of the trench a machine was used to remove the remainder of the fill in order to attempt to locate any dating evidence, however none was found.

Conclusion

The recording action and watching brief successfully examined the two features identified in the desktop study and field survey. The Mound (E3) was located and excavated but was found to be of no archaeological significance. The zig zag trench that was identified in the aerial photographs was not located in the NW section of the site but was identified to the south of Welsh Drive. Although no dating evidence was recovered from the feature the nature of the trench and the near vertical sides do suggest that it was used as a defensive slit trench. Although as recorded it was shallow, allowance should be made for (nominally) a further 0.3m or so of top- and subsoil and the upcast. The proximity to Blackbushe airfield, less than 1km to the south-east, which was used extensively in WW2 (at that time it was called RAF Hartford Bridge), could suggest that this trench was associated with this and the general militarized landscape of 1939–45. Airfield defences started appearing in the summer of 1940 as airfields were thrust into the front line being exposed to the risk of enemy bombing and paratroopers. Prior to this the majority of air defence had been passive such as camouflage and shelter trenches (Brown *et al.* 1995). The stepped area on the southern side of the trench seen in both slots may have been a rudimentary firing step. If this is the case then the troops would be aiming towards the airfield suggesting an emphasis on a prevention of a break-out after a successful enemy landing at the airfield, rather than defence against a land-based enemy attempting to take the base. This was a major theme the airfield defence in the 1940s.

As there was no positive dating evidence from either feature, the possibility of the zig-zag trench being a practice or field exercise trench of the period 1790 to 1815 should also be considered (cf Babbie 1994), even though the mound is not considered to date from this period. This might better account for what would otherwise be the strange orientation of the trench with respect to the airfield.

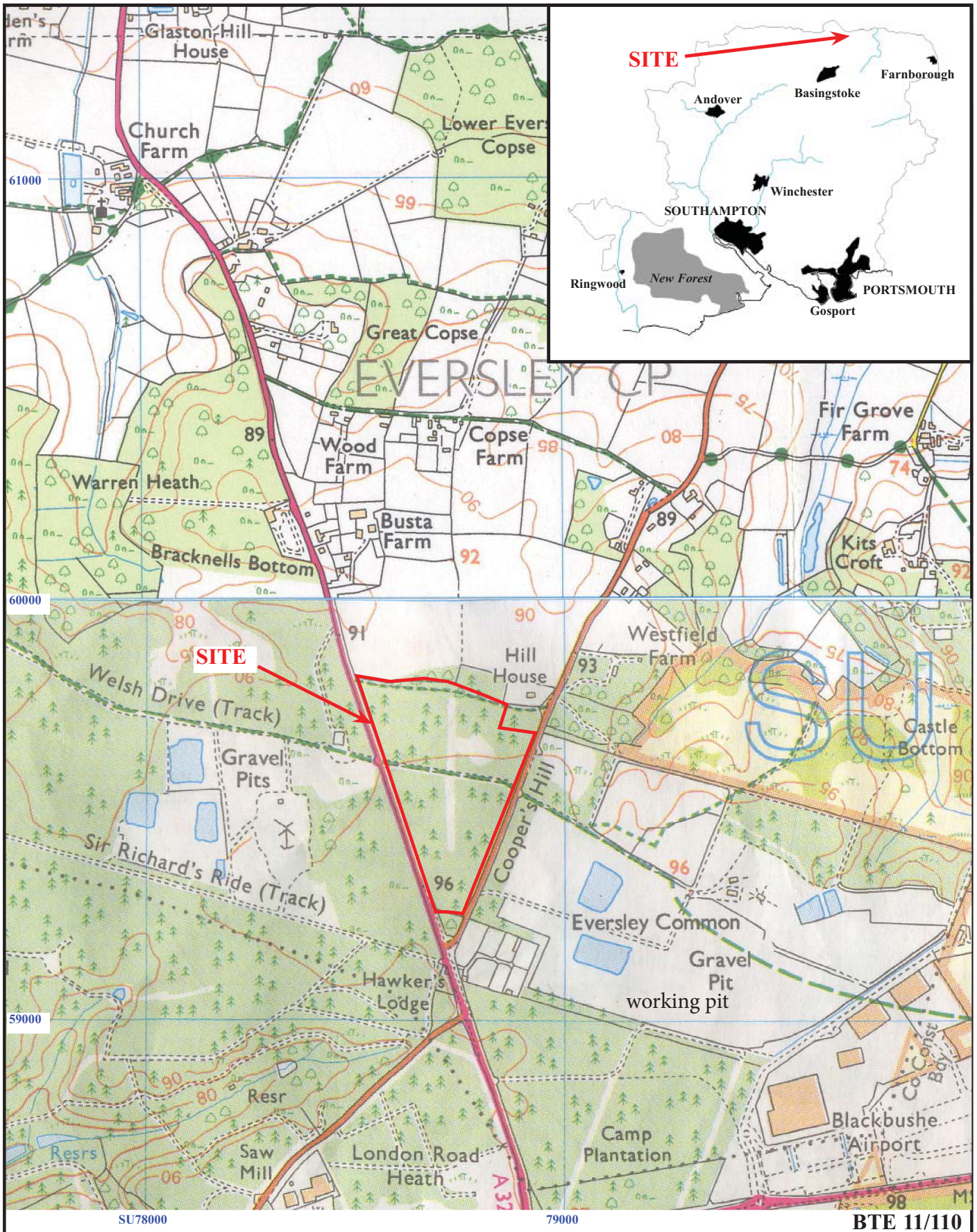
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APPENDIX 1: Feature details

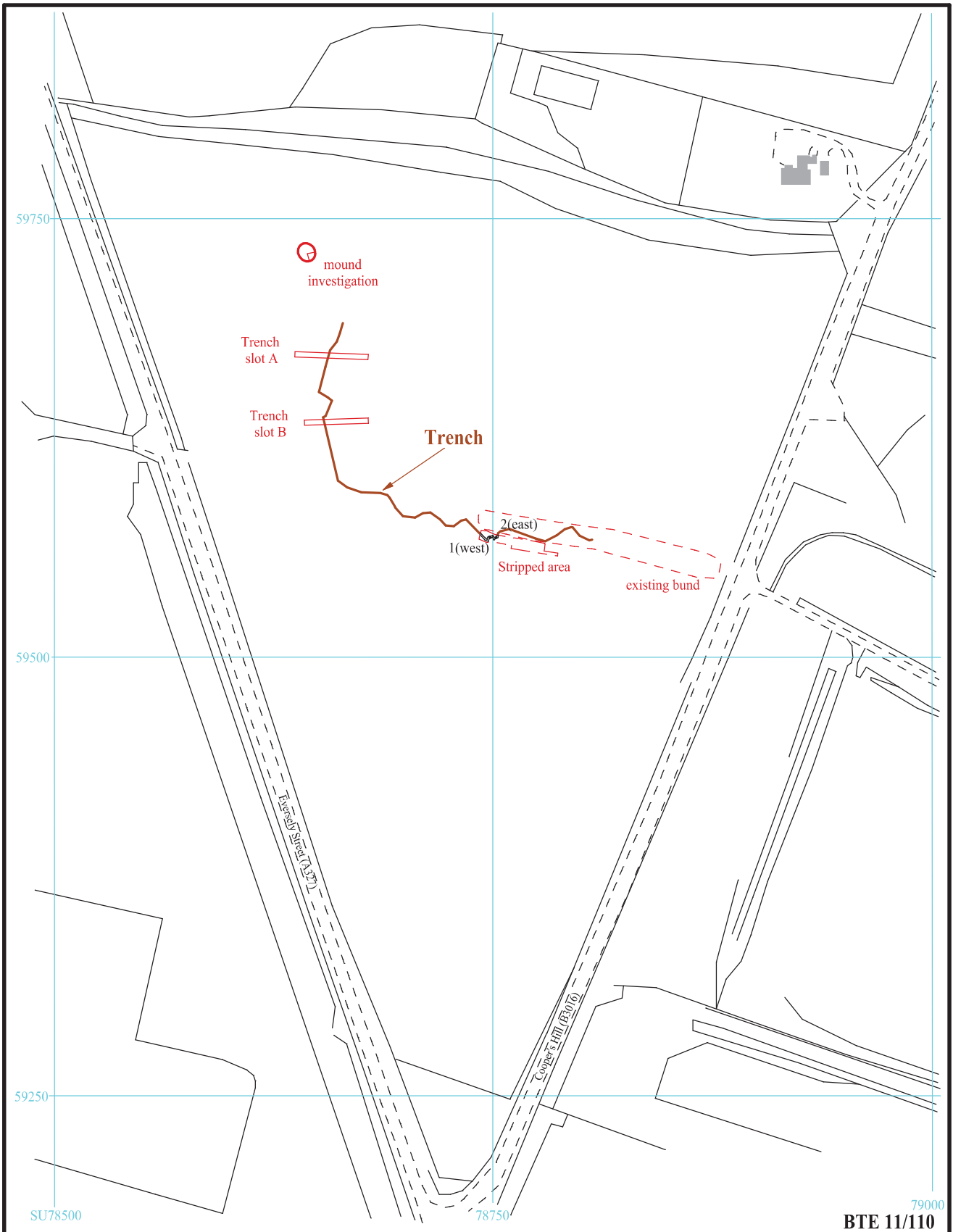
Cut	Fill (s)	Type	Date	Dating evidence
1	52, 53, 54, 55	Ditch	Unknown	-
2	56, 57, 58	Ditch	Unknown	-



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Figure 1. Location of site in relation to Eversley Quarry and within Hampshire.

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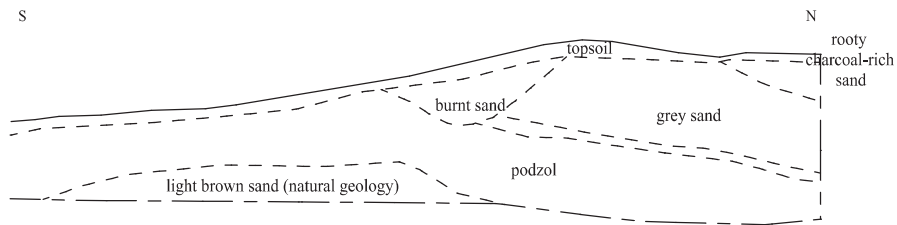
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Figure 2. Location of observed areas.

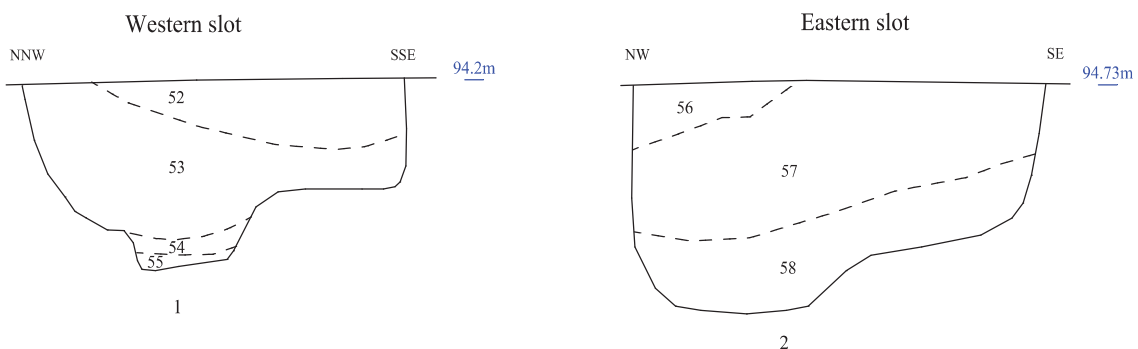


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Mound E3 excavated quadrant



Trench sections



Mound E3 e

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Figure 3. Mound and Trench sections.



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Plate 1. 'Mound', looking north west, Scales: 2m and 0.5m.



Plate 2. 'Mound' section, looking west, Scales: 2m and 0.5m.

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Plates 1 and 2.

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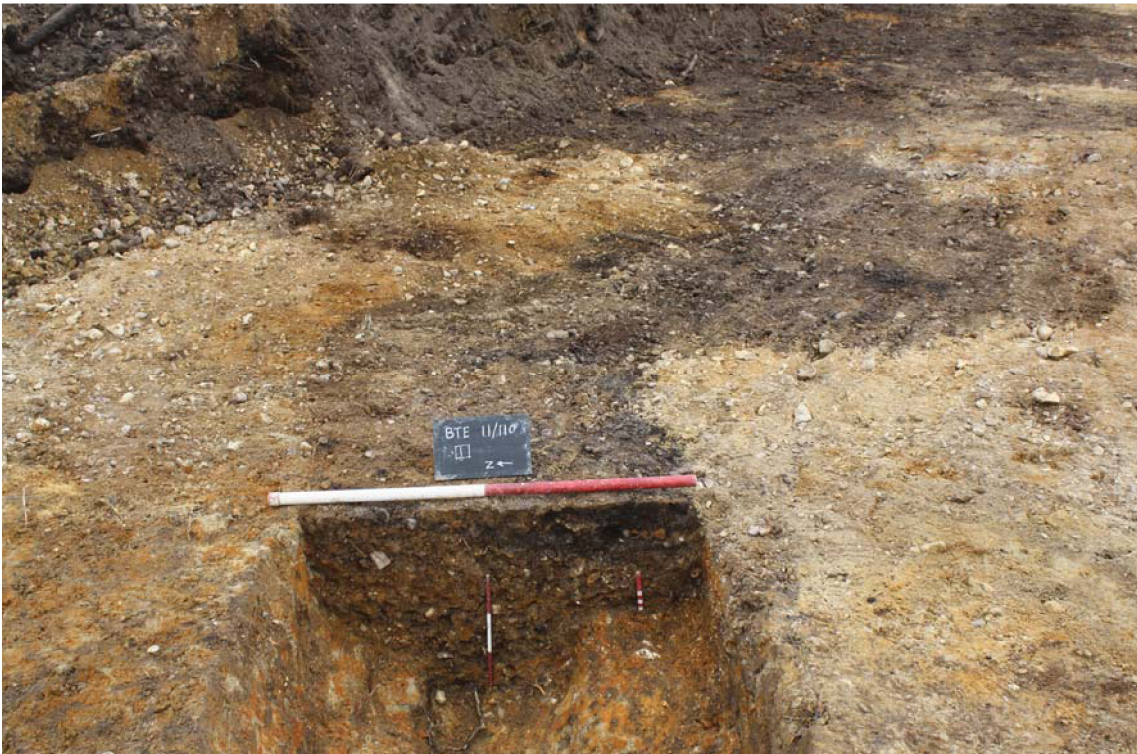


Plate 3. Trench, looking east, Scales: 1m, 0.3m and 0.1m.



Plate 4. Trench, looking south, Scales: 2m and 1m.

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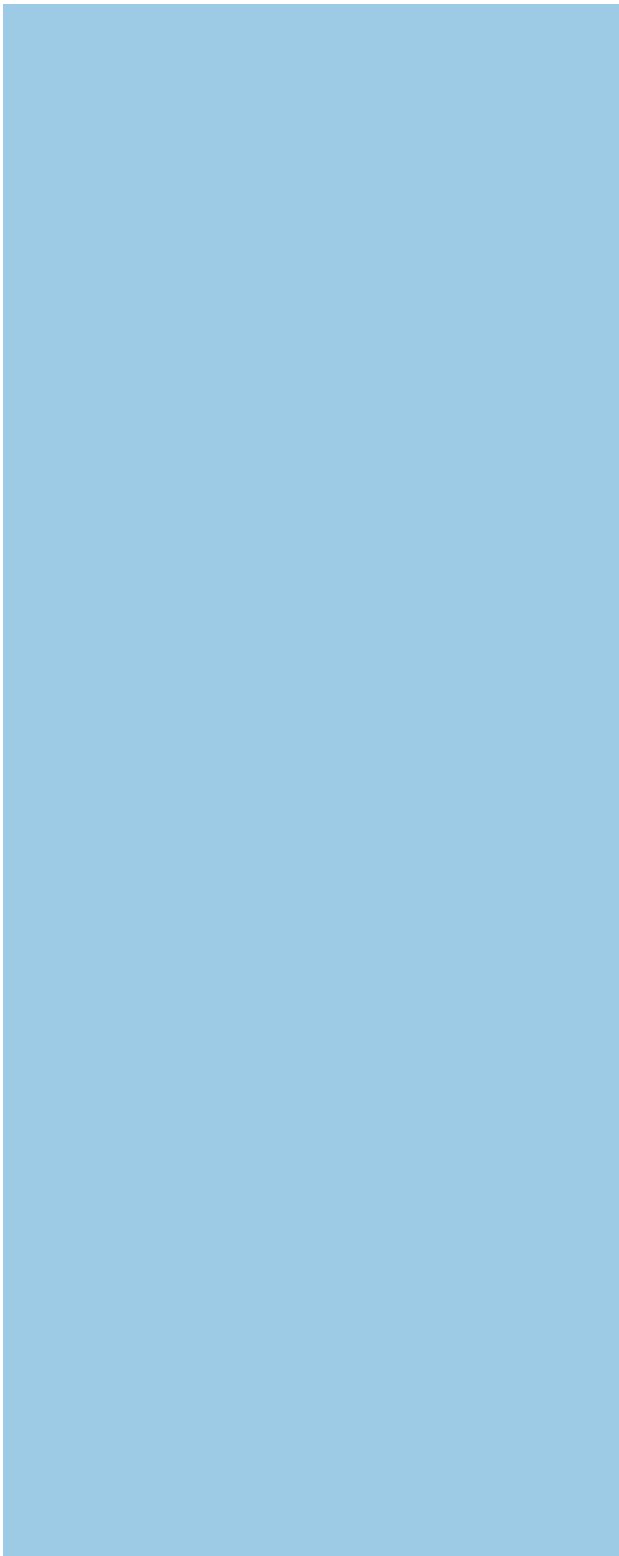
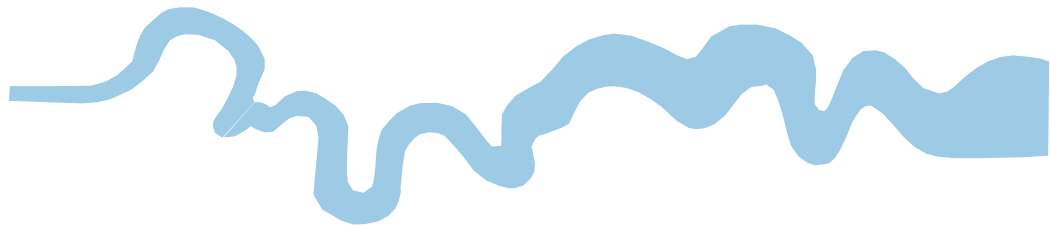
Plates 3 and 4.

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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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