

**T H A M E S      V A L L E Y**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL**

**S E R V I C E S**

**468–480 Portswood Road,  
Southampton, Hampshire**

**Archaeological Evaluation**

**by Genni Elliott**

**Site Code: SOU1643**

**(SU 4343 1503)**

**468–480 Portswood Road, Southampton,  
Hampshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation  
for Brick Projects (Chertsey) Limited**

by Genni Elliott

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code SOU 1643

**November 2013**

## Summary

**Site name:** 468–480 Portswood Road, Southampton, Hampshire

**Grid reference:** SU 4343 1503

**Site activity:** Archaeological Evaluation

**Date and duration of project:** 6th-7th November 2013

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** Genni Elliott

**Site code:** SOU 1643

**Area of site:** c. 1224 sq m

**Summary of results:** No deposits of archaeological interest were revealed but with much late post medieval made ground and several foundations present. The geology of the site was complex with colluvial and/or alluvial deposits present probably relating to a stream (Furzewells Stream) which was recorded on a map from 1658 prior to being culverted. A single sherd of medieval pottery was recovered with further post-medieval pottery and a 19th century Islamic coin retrieved. However, it is considered that the site has no archaeological potential .

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Southampton Museum in due course, with accession code 2013.64.

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[www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp](http://www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp).*

Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford✓ 22.11.13 Steve Preston✓ 22.11.13
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# 468–480 Portswood Road, Southampton, Hampshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Genni Elliott

Report 13/212

## Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at 468–480 Portswood Road, Southampton, Hampshire, NGR SU 4343 1503 (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Rodney Bailey of Brick Projects (Chertsey) Limited, Hilltop, Orchard Hill, Windlesham, Surrey, GU20 6DB.

Planning permission (09/00409) has been granted from Southampton City Council for the redevelopment of the site for residential flats and a retail unit. The consent is subject to two conditions relating to archaeology. These require a programme of archaeological fieldwork, which was to take the form, initially, of field evaluation, based on the results of which a mitigation strategy could be formulated as required. This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012), and the City Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Kevin White, Historic Environment Group Leader for Southampton City Council, and was monitored by him.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Genni Elliott and Dan Strachan on 6th–7th November 2013 and the site code is SOU 1643. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Southampton Museum in due course, with accession code 2013.64.

## Location, topography and geology

The site is located to the north of Southampton city centre in the area of Portswood (Fig. 1). Specifically it is located on the eastern side of Portswood Road at its junction with Belgrave Road (Fig. 2). The site slopes down from west to east from 6.12m to 4.10m above Ordnance Datum and from north to south from 6.12m to 5.84m AOD. The site was formerly a car sales centre and there is evidence of terracing within the slope of the hill. The underlying geology is mapped as London Clay (BGS 1987) but the geology at the top (west) of the site consisted of a thin skim of overlying gravel and sand (Wittering Formation). To the east, grey clay (London Clay) was encountered.

## **Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location within the local area of archaeological potential (LAAP10) of Portswood, Highfield and northern St Denys; identified in the Historic Environment Record of Southampton City Council and included in the Local Plan of 2006. Area 10 includes medieval Portswood Village. Roman and prehistoric features and findspots have been found within the area.

## **Objectives and methodology**

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits within the area of development.

The specific research aims of this project were:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on this part of the site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period were present; and
- to provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological mitigation strategy.

It was proposed to dig four trenches, each 1.6m wide by 8m long and one trench 1.6m wide and 16m long targeted within the footprint of the proposed buildings and within a central area of landscaping. More specifically the 16m trench was to be located along the street frontage and one of the 8m trenches was to be located across a property boundary seen on the 1846 Royal Engineers map of Southampton

Tarmac and overburden was to be removed by machine using a toothless ditching bucket under archaeological supervision down to the natural geology or archaeologically significant deposits, whichever was the higher. Where archaeologically significant levels were encountered, these were to be cleaned by hand and investigated through excavation and soil sampling.

## **Results**

Four trenches were dug but with a different configuration than intended (Fig. 3). A trench at the eastern end of the site had to be abandoned due to the thickness of the concrete and the presence of an extant building, this with the agreement of Mr White, archaeological officer of Southampton City Council. The trenches ranged in length from 8.40m to 11.30m and in depth from 0.57m to 1.20m. A further 2m length of trench was excavated to provide further information. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in. Appendix 1.

#### Trench 1 (Fig 3; Pl. 1)

Trench 1 was aligned north-east to south-west and was 11.30m long and a maximum of 0.57m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of Tarmac and hoggin (contexts 50 and 51) above 0.09m of reddish ceramic building material and lime mortar rubble (context 52) above natural gravel in a yellowish brown sandy clay matrix (context 53). There were no features and no finds were recovered.

#### Trench 2 (Fig 3; Pl. 2)

Trench 2 was aligned south east to north west and was 8.40m long and had a maximum of 1.10m deep at the east end. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.18m of Tarmac and hoggin (contexts 50 and 51) above 0.22m of dusky reddish pink ceramic building material and lime mortar rubble (52) above natural gravel geology in a yellowish brown sandy clay matrix (53) which contained less gravel to the east before it was cut by a Victorian wall foundation aligned north – south. To the east of the wall the natural geology was greyish blue clay, presumably London Clay. There were no features or finds recovered.

#### Trench 3 (Fig 3 (Pl. 3)

Trench 3 was aligned south west – north east and was 8.60m long and had a maximum of 1.20m deep at the northeast end. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of Tarmac and hoggin (50 and 51) above 0.36m of redeposited gravel (54), above 0.16m of reddish pink ceramic building material and lime mortar rubble (52). This in turn was above 0.13m of very dark greyish brown, silty clay containing ceramic building material (55), which was above greyish blue clay (London Clay). Cut diagonally through the trench were various ceramic services, and a Victorian wall; thus the trench was not extended to its full width.

#### Trench 4 (Figs 3 and 4; Pls 4-6)

Trench 4 was aligned south east – north west and was 8.80m long and had a maximum depth of 0.98m. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of Tarmac, concrete and hoggin (50 and 51) above 0.11m of reddish pink ceramic building material and lime mortar rubble (52). This in turn was above 0.23m of very dark greyish brown, silty clay containing ceramic building material (55), above 0.09m of lime mortar, slate and ceramic building material (57). Cut through this layer were numerous early modern pits containing china, porcelain and a glass bottle of 'A. Faithfull, Winchester mineral water' dating from 1885. Below context 57 was 0.05m of greyish blue, silty clay (56), which was above 0.20m of another greyish blue, silty clay(58), above gravel in a matrix of greyish blue, silty clay (59). It is considered that the latter is an eroded/disturbed surface of the London Clay natural geology with some remnants of overlying gravel present. It may also relate to stream deposits that came

down the valley between Broadlands and Sirdar Roads to the River Itchen which was later diverted via culverts to the south side of The Brook Public House. Evidence of this stream was also found at a watching brief to the south of the site at The Brook Public House (SOU 1319) and identified as Furzewells Stream as seen on a map from 1658.

Finds consisted of brick, tile, post-medieval pottery and a pipe clay quill holder from context 55 and animal bone, burnt flint, brick, tile, water-rolled chalk, a fragment of granite, an iron nail, high medieval and post-medieval pottery from context 56. A soil sample from context 58 recovered burnt flint, animal bone, small fragments of clinker, charcoal and an Islamic jetton.

## **Finds**

### *Pottery* by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 15 sherds with a total weight of 473g (Appendix 2). It was recorded using the codes and chronology of the Southampton City type-series (Brown 2002), as follows:

**EST: English Stoneware**, late 17th – 18th century. 1 sherd, 4g.

**PMR: Post-medieval Redware**, 16th – 19th century. 5 sherds, 37g

**STCW: Southampton Coarseware**, 1250 -1350. 2 sherds, 7g.

**VER: Verwood-type Ware**, 17th – 18th century. 7 sherds, 425g.

The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Appendix 2. The range of fabric types is typical of the city, and suggest that the group is of late 17th – 18th century date. The seven sherds of Verwood Ware all came from a single vessel, a large pancheon or bowl with an internal yellowish-green glaze. This is a typical product of the tradition.

### *Copper Jetton* by Susan Porter

A heavily worn copper jetton 12mm in diameter and weighing less than 1 gram was recovered from the environmental sample of deposit 58. The copper is tarnished slightly but not overly degraded however the reverse is heavily worn and no distinguishing features can be discerned. The obverse remains in good condition with an Islamic legend (untranslated) in plain and dotted circles divided by two lines. This design is known to be of Ottoman origin with a suggested mint of Al-Jaz'ir (Algeria) and dates *c.* 1827 (paralleled in the University of Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum collection ref 104546).

### *Animal Bone* by Genni Elliott

A small assemblage of animal bone was recovered from two contexts within trench 4. A total of 18 pieces of bone were present for analysis, weighing 110g (appendix 3). The preservation of the remains was fair, with no complete bones for analysis. The surface preservation was also generally good. Where possible, specific identification to species was made otherwise the bones were sorted into categories based on size, as either large (horse and cow) or medium (sheep/goat and pig). The minimum number of animals present within this assemblage was three: one cow, one pig and one sheep. The cow was represented by a single tooth from context 56, the pig by a tibia/fibula from context 56 and the 2nd/5th phalange from context 58 and the sheep from a jaw, two separate teeth and a tibia/fibula from context 56. No evidence of butchery cut marks was observed on any of the skeletal elements.

### *Ceramic Building Material* by Danielle Milbank

Tile fragments weighing 1244g were recovered during the evaluation (Appendix 4). They were examined under x10 magnification, and the fabric was typically a hard, evenly-fired sandy clay with groggy and occasional sandy inclusions. Several examples of brick were recovered, with a smaller number of tile fragments, though several were too small to be identified. No complete tiles were recovered.

Six brick fragments were recovered from deposit 55. These included one which has slight vitrification on one side. The fabric is hard and homogenous, with a red colour, and the fabric and sharp arrises suggest that it is of post-medieval date. A more abraded piece from this context is of a rough sandy fabric, slightly soft, with a slightly irregular form (thickness varying from 48–55mm) that suggests it is a handmade brick of broadly medieval date. This context also included a tile fragment of 10mm thick with a rough underside indicating a sandy mould was used, though the piece is not closely dateable.

A single piece of tile of the type described above was recovered from deposit 56, and is also of broadly medieval or post-medieval date.

Overall, the ceramic building material assemblage is very modest and represents domestic types. The durable nature of brick and tile is shown by the early example included in a later context.



### *Macrobotanical plant material and charcoal* by Joanna Pine

A single sample from context 58 was processed. The resulting flots were sieved to 0.25mm and air dried. It was examined under a low-power binocular microscope at a magnification of x10m. A single charred seed (barley) was identified together with a few charred weed seeds. Charcoal was also present however the majority was too poor or too small (less than 2mm) to enable identification.

### *Stone* by Genni Elliott

Four fragments of stone were recovered from context 56. Three of them, weighing 104g were chalk that had been water-rolled. The fourth fragment weighing 132g was granite.

### **Conclusion**

No deposits of archaeological interest were found but with numerous late post-medieval foundations and service trenches present. A number of artefacts of medieval and post-medieval date were recovered from trench 4. However, it is considered that the site has no archaeological potential .

### **References**

BGS, 1987, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50 000, Sheet 315, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth  
Brown, DH, 2002, *Pottery in Medieval Southampton c 1066 – 1510*, Southampton Archaeology Monographs 8  
NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London

**APPENDIX 1: Trench details**

0m at south and west ends

Trench	Length (m)	Breadth (m)	Depth (m)	Comment
1	11.30	1.60	0.57	0–0.06m Tarmac (50); 0.06m–0.20m hoggin (51); 0.20–0.29m rubble (52) 0.29m+ gravel natural geology at 5.01m aOD.
2	8.40	1.60	1.10	0–0.06m Tarmac (50); 0.06m–0.18m hoggin (51); 0.18–0.40m rubble (52); West end: 0.40m+ natural gravel geology at 5.28m aOD; East: 0.75m+ blue/grey clay natural geology at 4.93m aOD.
3	8.60	0.80	1.20	0–0.06m Tarmac (50); 0.06m–0.20m hoggin (51); 0.20–0.56m redeposited gravel (54); 0.56–0.72m rubble (52); 0.72–0.85m very dark greyish brown, silty clay with brick/tile (55); 0.85m+ blue/grey clay natural geology at 3.86m aOD.
4	8.80	3.50	0.98	0–0.08m Tarmac and concrete (50); 0.08m–0.20m hoggin (51); 0.20–0.31m rubble (52); 0.31–0.54m soil and rubble (55); 0.54–0.63m lime mortar, slate and brick/tile (57); 0.63–0.68 blue/grey clay (56); 0.68–0.98m blue/grey clay (58); 0.98m+ blue/grey clay with gravel (weathered natural geology) at 3.46m aOD.

**APPENDIX 2: Pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type**

	STCW		PMR		VER		EST	
<i>Context</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt</i>
55			1	8	7	425	1	4
56	2	7	4	29				
Total	2	7	5	37	7	425	1	4

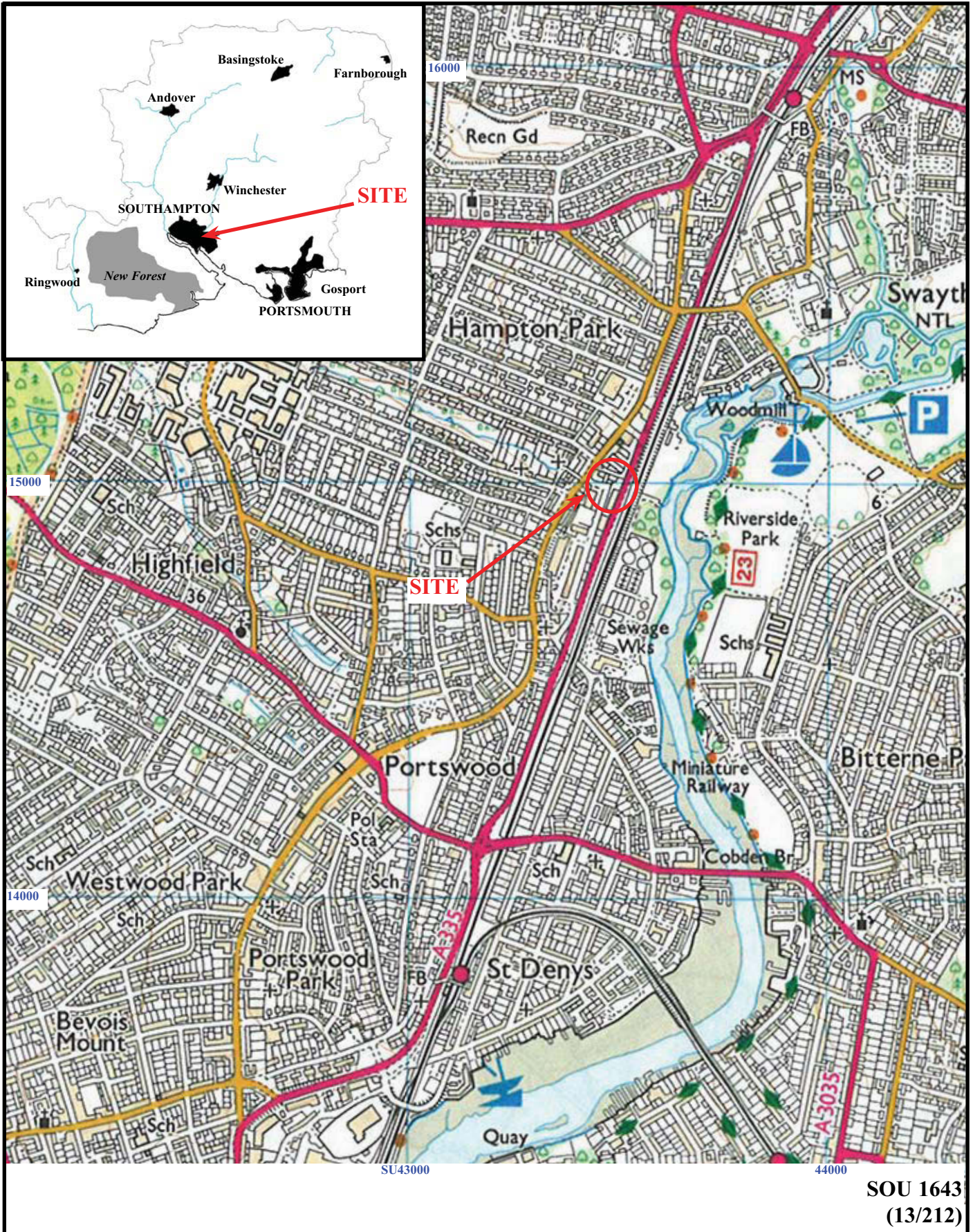
**APPENDIX 3: Animal Bone**

<i>Context</i>	<i>No. Frags</i>	<i>Wt (g)</i>	<i>Cow</i>	<i>Pig</i>	<i>Sheep/goat</i>	<i>Large</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Unident.</i>
	14	106	1	1	3	4	5	
58	4	4		1	1			2
Total	14	110						

#### APPENDIX 4: Ceramic Building Material

<i>Deposit</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt (g)</i>
55	6	1202
56	5	32
58	6	10





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Figure 1. Location of site within Southampton and Hampshire.

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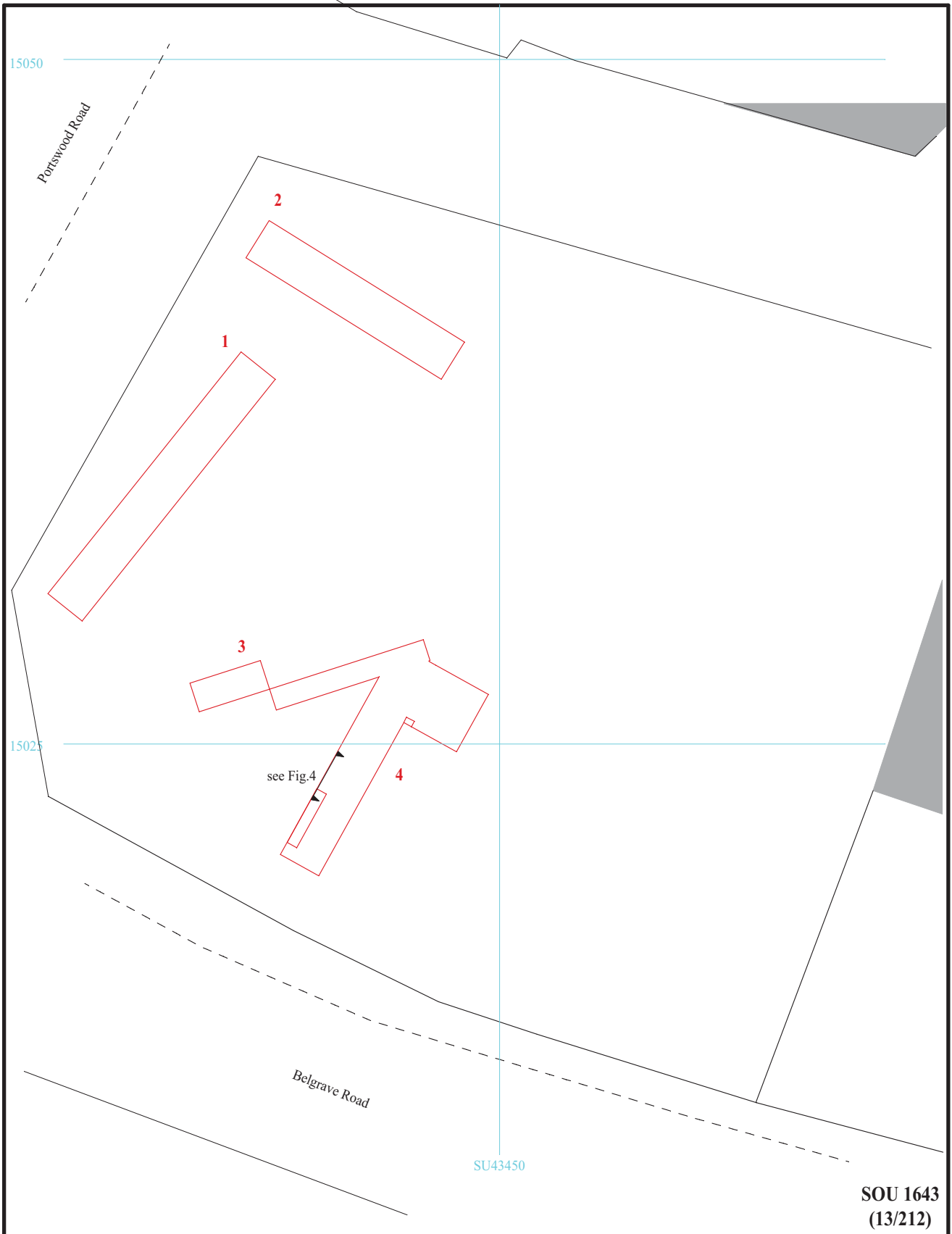


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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Portswood Road.

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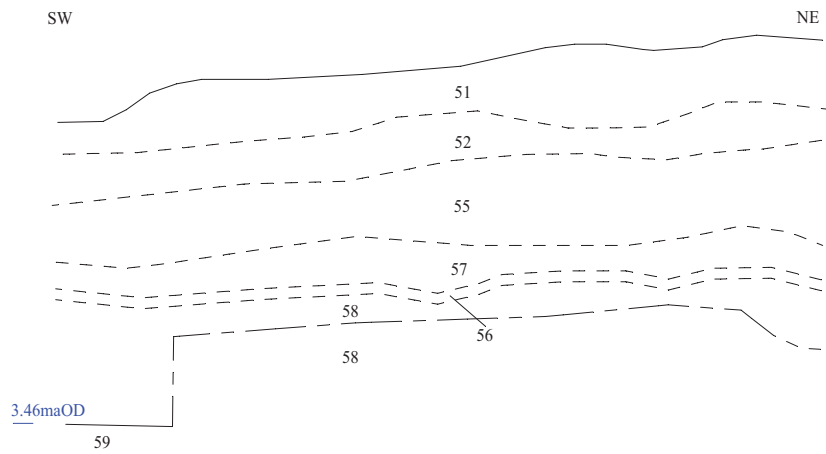
Figure 3. Trench Location



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Trench 4



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Figure 4. Representative section.



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



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

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Plates 1 - 2.

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Plate 3. Trench 3, looking north east, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.3m.



Plate 4. Trench 4, looking north east, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.3m

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Plates 3 - 4.

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Plate 5. Trench 4, extension looking south east, Scales: 2m and 1m.



Plate 6. Trench 4 section, looking west, Scales: 2m and 1m.

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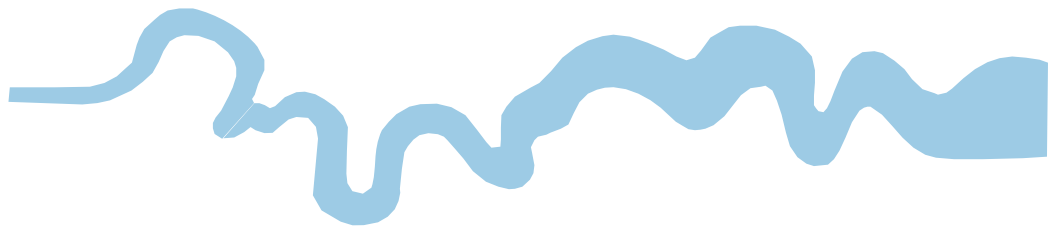
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Plates 5 - 6.

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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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