

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

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S E R V I C E S

S O U T H W E S T

**Land at 3 Gardeners Close, Bradford on Tone,
Somerset**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by Richard Tabor and Andrew Weale

Site Code: GCT14/163

(ST 1740 2284)

Land at 3 Gardeners Close, Bradford on Tone, Somerset

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For Mr and Mrs P Lester

by Richard Tabor and Andrew Weale
Thames Valley Archaeological Services
(South West) Ltd

Site Code GCT
14/163

September 2014

Summary

Site name: Land at 3 Gardeners Close, Bradford on Tone, Somerset

Grid reference: ST 1740 2284

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 11th – 13th August 2014

Project manager: Andrew Weale

Site supervisor: Richard Tabor

Site code: GCT 14/163

Summary of results: No archaeological features or artefacts were observed. A few features of mid to late 20th century date were encountered which are likely to represent previous agricultural buildings on the site.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services (South West), Taunton and will be deposited with the Somerset County Museum Service in due course, with accession code TTNCM 68/2014.

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

Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford✓ 11.09.14 Steve Preston✓ 11.09.14

3 Gardeners Close, Bradford on Tone, Somerset An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Richard Tabor and Andrew Weale

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Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at 3 Gardeners Close, Bradford on Tone, Somerset, TA4 1HT (ST1740 2284; Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr P Albrow of Acorn House Ltd, 28 Silver Street, Ilminster, Somerset TA19 0DR on behalf of Mr and Mrs P Lester.

Planning permission (7/14/0001) was obtained from Taunton Dean District Council for the construction of a new dwelling and garage/log store to the rear of the existing house. In view of prehistoric and medieval remains found in and around the village, the consent was subject to a condition relating to archaeology requiring a programme of archaeological work. Mr Steven Membrey (Senior Historic Environment Officer, Somerset County Historic Environment Service) indicated that this was to take the form of a watching brief during groundworks.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012) and the District Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Membrey and in accordance with the recommendations of Somerset County Council Heritage Service Archaeological Handbook (Membrey 2011). The fieldwork was undertaken by Richard Tabor between 11th–13th August 2014 and the site code is GCT 14/163.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services South West, Taunton, and will be deposited with the Somerset County Museum Service in due course, with accession code TTNCM 68/2014.

Location, topography and geology

Bradford on Tone lies 5km west of Taunton, Somerset and occupies the eastern side of a low ridge above the river Tone (Fig. 1). The site comprised the garden to the rear of 3 Gardeners Close and the access to it (Pls 1 and 2). The site is at c. 41m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). According to geological mapping the ridge is formed of Triassic sedimentary sandstone of the Mercia Mudstone Group (BGS 2014). A red silty clay was observed in the trenches.

Archaeological background

The name Bradford on Tone derives from the Old English (Anglo-Saxon) meaning ‘broad ford’, with Tone referring to the river which passes north of the village (Mills 1998, 405). As *Bradeford* it is recorded in Domesday Book as held by Alfred the Butler from the Count of Mortain, having been held by Edwin before the Norman conquest (Thorn and Thorn 1980, para 19/39). The Somerset Historic Environment Record notes several archaeological finds from within the village. Prehistoric artefacts include a Palaeolithic discoidal core and a handaxe, and as well as flaked stone tools. During a watching brief 10th- to 11th-century pottery was collected and a ditch and pit were dated to the 12th to 14th century AD. The bridge over the River Tone may have originated in the 13th to 15th centuries. Most recently, and closest to the site, a few medieval pottery sherds and a ditch infilled during the 18th to 19th century was discovered during a watching brief at 1 Gardeners Close.

Ordnance Survey maps of the site from 1930 to 1989, pre-dating the construction of the extant house, show that a number of buildings associated with the neighbouring farm were constructed and demolished within that span of time.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was to identify, excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the works. This involved examination of any areas stripped of overburden and the excavation of foundation and service trenches, as necessary.

Results

Topsoil for the project was removed for an area of c. 474sqm. This was found to lie directly over modern made ground and had clearly been imported.

The foundation trenches

The foundation trenches were excavated to depths varying from 1.4m to 3m, by a 360° tracked machine fitted with a 0.60m wide toothless grading bucket. The depth of excavation required varied considerably due to the depth of made ground (51), varying across the site from c. 1.70m on the south-western side to 0.80m in the north-western part of the garage area, and because of modern disturbance which made the ground unstable. Topsoil (50) lying over the made ground was present only at the extreme north-west of the site and filling depressions elsewhere. It had clearly been imported and laid over the make-up deposit and later modern features at around the time that the extant house was built.

A trench on the south-western side of the house exposed six courses of breeze block wall (53) laid over a sand blinding deposit (54) (Pl. 3). The wall trench [4] was cut into a geological deposit of firm, red, silty clay (55) sealed by *c.* 1m of make-up layer of moderately gravelly buff red clay (51) which had been deposited against the wall. On the south-eastern side of the house the make-up deposit (51) varied in depth from 1.5m to 1.7m laid directly over the geological layer (55) (Fig. 4, section 1).

At a depth of 1.10m layer 55 was noted to be softer over a 0.90m wide part of the northern end of the house's north-eastern foundation trench (Pl. 4). The outline of the softer area seen in section was given a nominal cut number [2] as a possible ditch. The boundaries of the 'cut' were, however, extremely diffuse and in all other respects the 'fill' was indistinguishable from 55; this 'feature' was probably only a variation in compaction of the natural clay (Fig. 4, section 2).

In the north-western trench for the garage topsoil lay over a sandy loam deposit (61) which butted against an unmortared stone wall (56) set within a 0.48m wide, 0.48m deep wall trench [3] clipping the western edge (59) of the upper fill of a funnel-shaped linear cut [1] (Fig. 4, section 3). The wall (56) was of blue grey mudstone, with well-cut blocks retaining a rubble core (Pl. 5).

Cut 1 was dug through the made ground (51) and its fill (59) was very similar in composition to the topsoil (50). Below it, a 1.28m+ deep fill (60) comprised soft, dark brown clay including rotting organic matter with including large fragments of red ceramic land drain and poorly sorted medium to large angular mudstones. The distribution of inclusions fluctuated sharply, so that the rubble appeared as a discrete deposit below the organically rich material on the southern side of the trench in which Section 1 was drawn.

No service trenches were examined as these were to lie wholly within the made ground.

Finds

Willow pattern pottery was observed in the upper fill of cut 1 (59) with modern land drain fragments observed in the lower fill (60) (all retained on site). No other artefacts were observed.

Conclusion

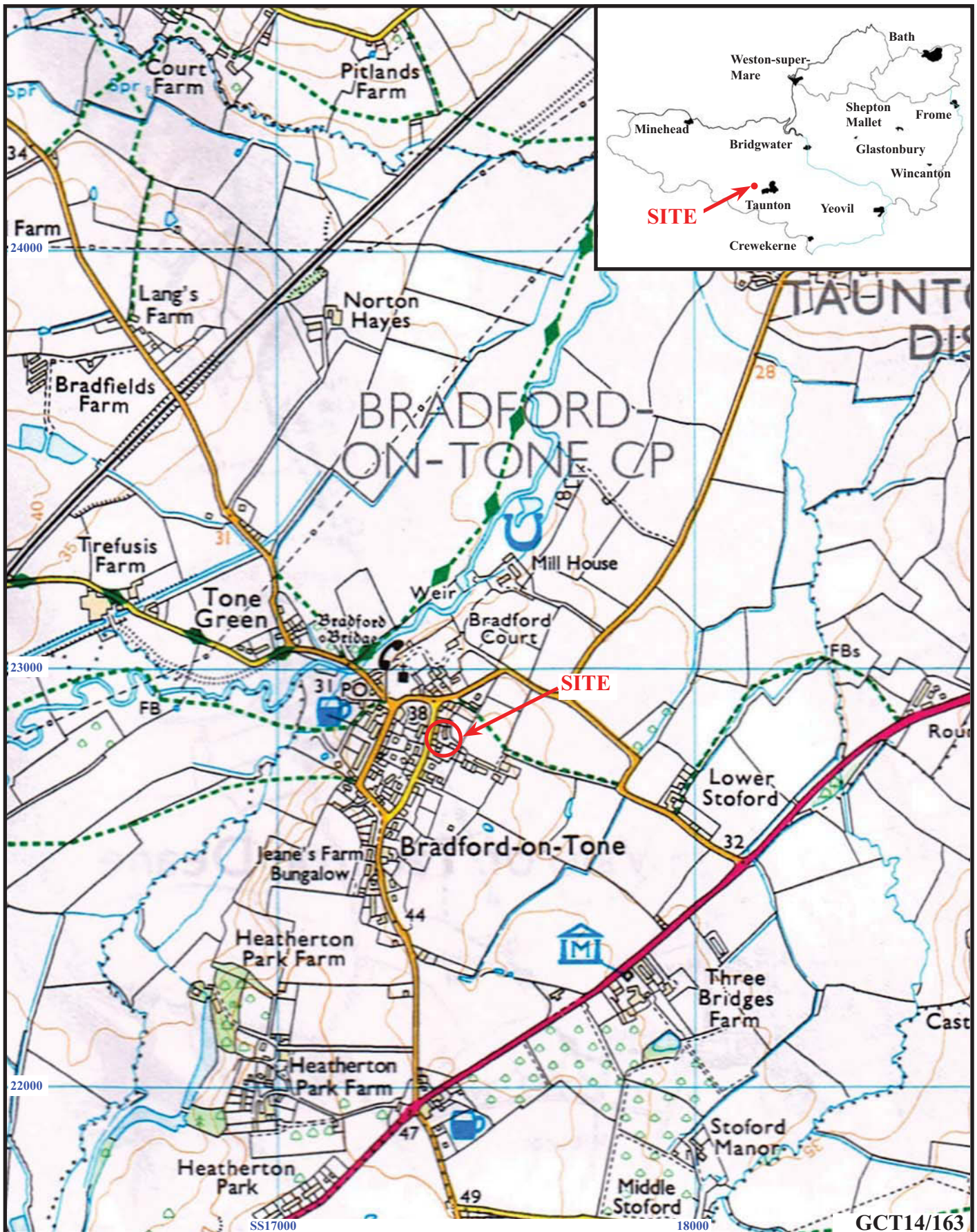
The site is known to have been covered with agricultural structures in the decades prior to the building of 3 Gardeners Close. The wall (53) is likely to have formed part of a silage pit known to have stood in the area. Modern cut 1 may have served as a soakaway channel for farmyard effluent. Wall 3 cutting its upper fills

appears to be a dry stone construction so is unlikely to have been part of an agricultural building. However, it predates the laying of the lawn and is contemporary with or later than the silage pit.

No evidence has been found for archaeologically significant activity on the site pre-dating the mid 20th century. A few sherds of modern pottery were noted but not retained.

References

- BGS, 2014, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000. <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> (accessed: 1st September 2014).
- Membery, S, 2011, *Somerset County Council Heritage Service Archaeological Handbook*, Somerset County Council, Taunton
- Mills, A D, 1998, *Dictionary of English Place-Names*, Oxford
- NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, Norwich
- Thorn, C and Thorn, F, 1980, *Domesday Book: Somerset*, Chichester



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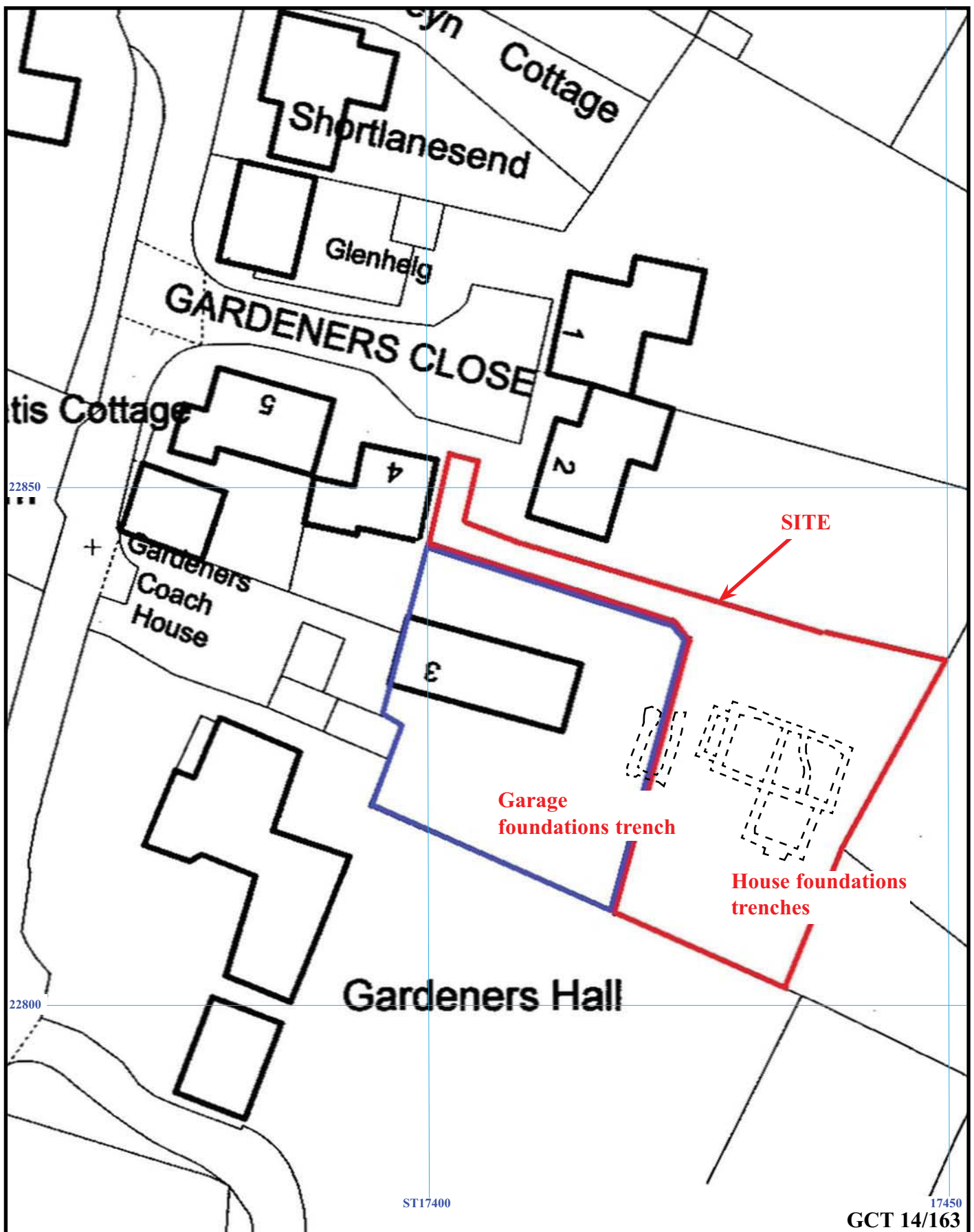
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Figure 1. Location of site in relation to Bradford on Tone and
within Somerset

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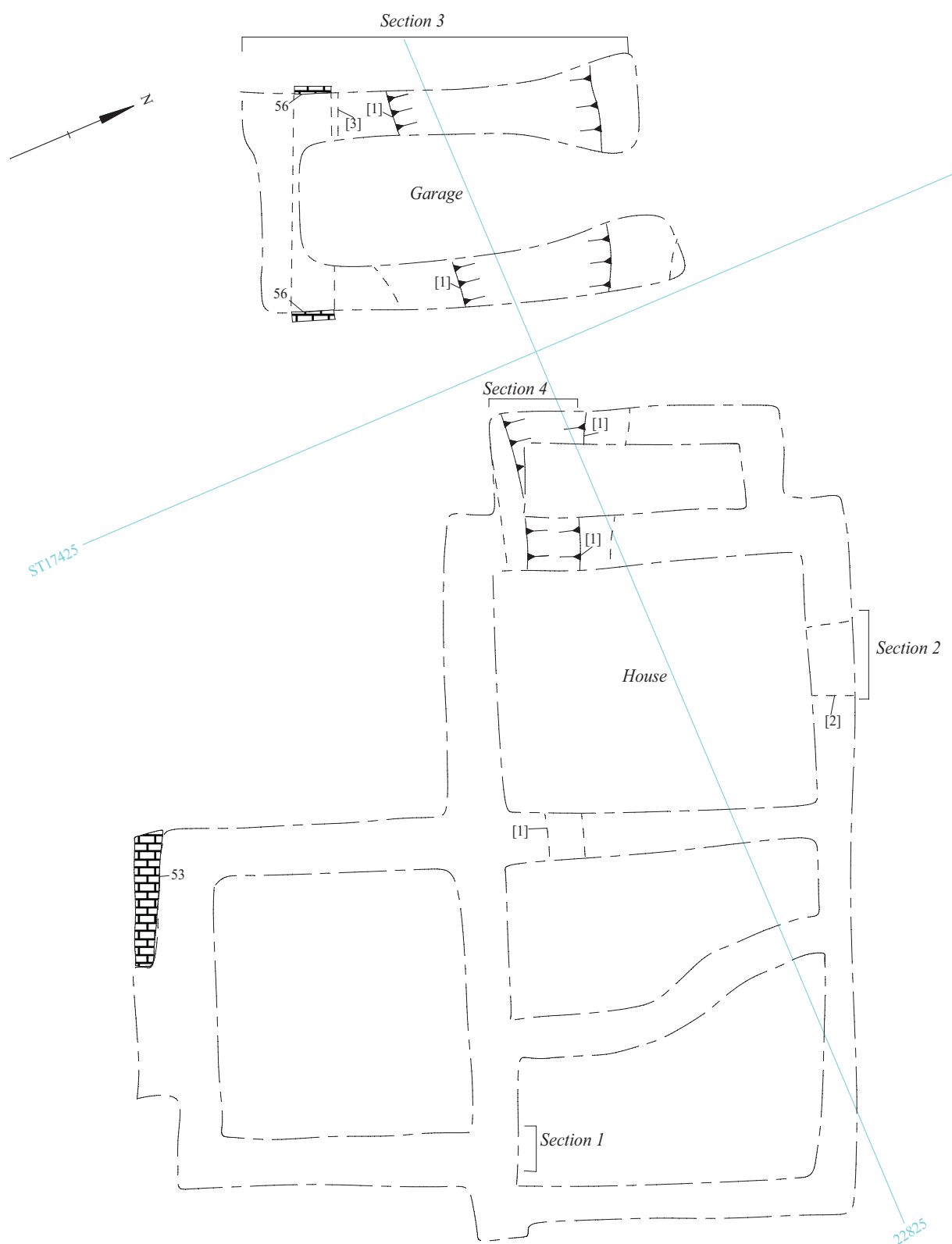
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site in relation to Gardeners Close

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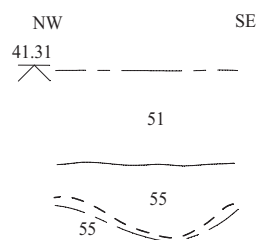
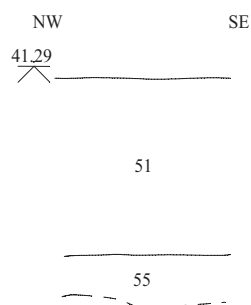
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Figure 3. Plan showing foundation trenches, features and sections

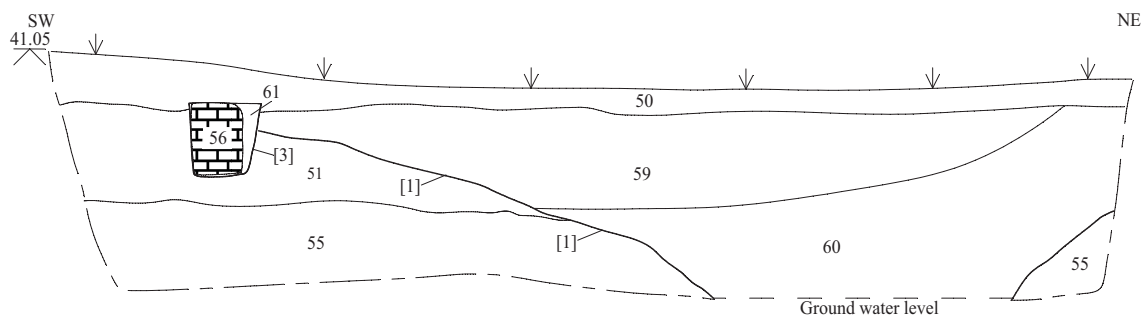
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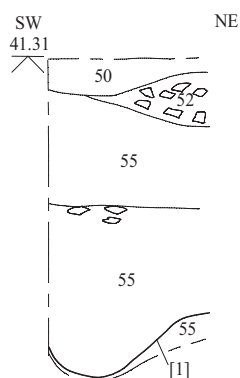
Section 2: House, north-eastern side foundation trench



Section 3: Garage, north-western foundation trench



Section 4: House, north-western side foundation trench



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Figure 4. Sections 1 - 4





Plate 1. House foundation trenches. looking north-north-east (2m scale)



Plate 2. Garage in relation to house prior to excavation, looking north-north-east (2m scale)

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Plates 1 and 2.

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Plate 3. Wall (53), looking north-west (2m scale)

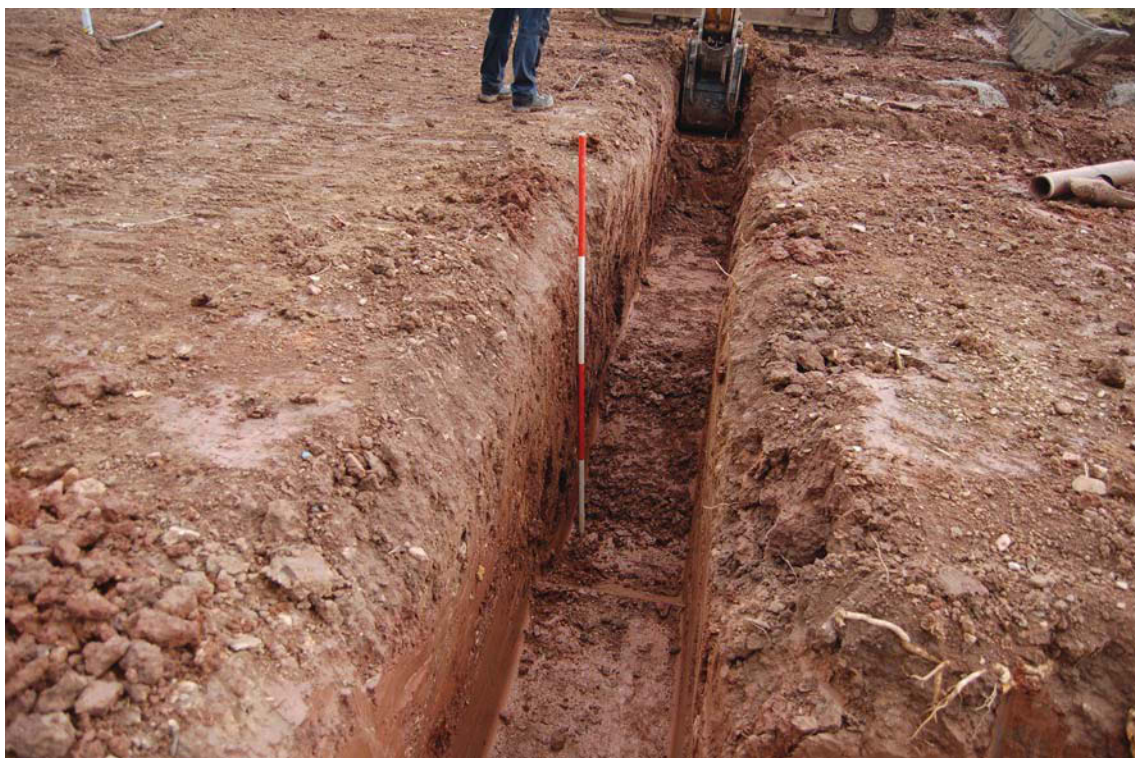


Plate 4. Possible ditch [2], looking south-east (2m scale)

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Plates 3 and 4.

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Plate 5. Wall (56), looking south-east (2m scale)

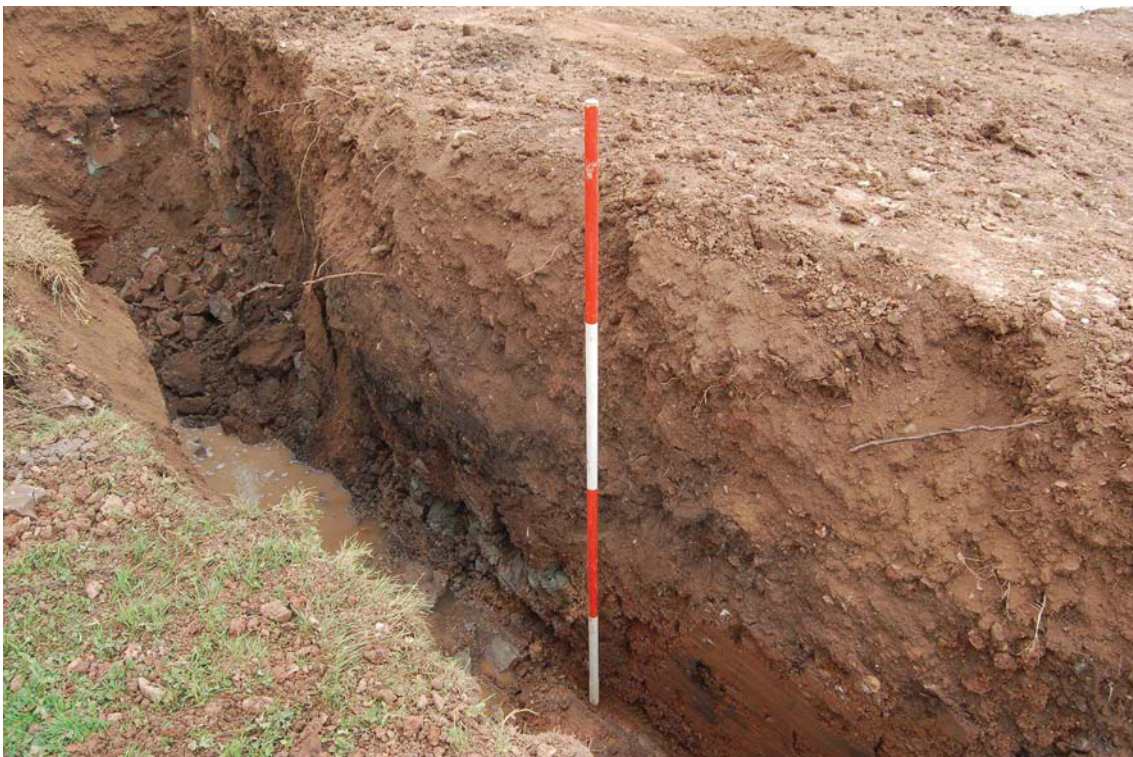


Plate 6. Garage north-western trech, looking east (2m scale)

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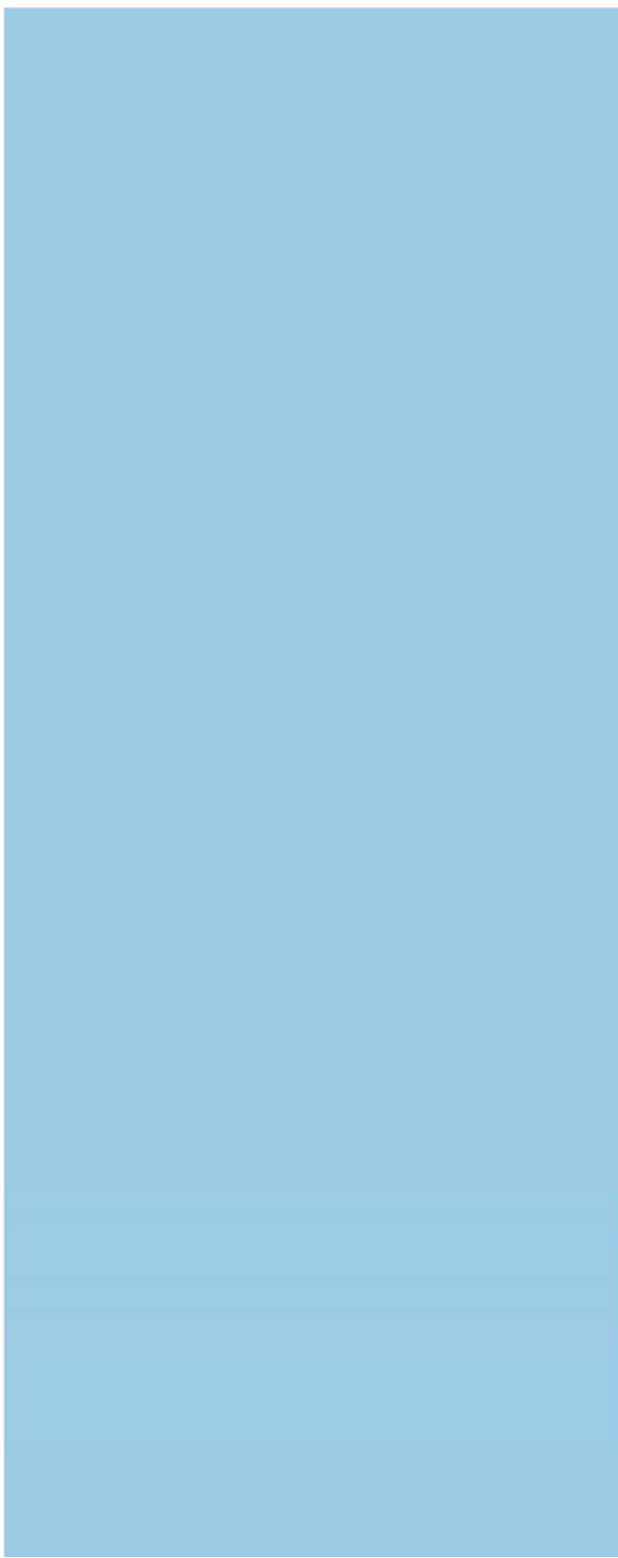
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Plates 5 and 6.

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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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