

**T H A M E S      V A L L E Y**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL**

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

**Land to the rear of 1 The Square, Long Crendon,  
Buckinghamshire**

**Archaeological Evaluation**

**by James McNicoll-Norbury**

**Site Code: SLC14/167**

**(SP 6942 0867)**

**Land to the rear of 1 The Square, Long Crendon,  
Buckinghamshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation**

**for Mr & Mrs Lamb**

by James McNicoll-Norbury

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code SLC 14/167

**October 2014**

## Summary

**Site name:** Land to the rear of 1 The Square, Long Crendon, Buckinghamshire

**Grid reference:** SP 6942 0867

**Site activity:** Evaluation

**Date and duration of project:** 23rd September 2014

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** James McNicoll-Norbury

**Site code:** SLC 14/167

**Area of site:** c. 360 sq m

**Summary of results:** Two linear features and a possible pit of likely early medieval date were identified in the trenches, along with several sherds of unstratified early medieval pottery. The site is considered to have archaeological potential.

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

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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 ✓ 08.10.14 Steve Preston ✓ 08.10.14
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# Land to the rear of 1 The Square, Long Crendon, Buckinghamshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by James McNicoll-Norbury

Report 14/167

## Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at 1 The Square, Long Crendon, Buckinghamshire (SP 6940 0816) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Jake Collinge, 4 Arnold Way, Thame, Oxfordshire, OX9 2QA on behalf of Mr and Mrs Lamb of 1 The Square, Long Crendon, Buckinghamshire.

Planning permission (14/ 01101/APP) has granted by Aylesbury Vale District Council to erect a new house, following demolition of existing structures, on a plot of land to the rear of 1 The Square, Long Crendon. The consent is subject to a condition (8) relating to archaeology. The site lies in an 'archaeological notification area' and as a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits on the site which may be damaged or destroyed by groundworks a field investigation has been requested. A single component of work was initially proposed, field evaluation by means of machine trenching, with further work potentially being required if archaeological deposits are encountered which cannot be preserved *in situ*.

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 Ms Eliza Alqassar, Archaeological Planning Officer for Buckinghamshire County Council, the archaeological adviser to the District. The fieldwork was undertaken by James McNicoll-Norbury and William Attard on 23rd September 2014 and the site code is SLC 14/167. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Buckinghamshire Museum Services in due course.

## Location, topography and geology

The site is located to the rear of 1 The Square at the south-western end of Long Crendon, close to the Buckinghamshire border with Oxfordshire (Fig. 1), and west of Thame Street covering around 360 sq m (Fig. 2). The site is a flat, turf covered garden with a wooden structure at the northern end. To the west and south are hedgerows and to the east a stone wall. A capped well also exists in the NW corner of the site. The underlying

geology is mapped as a complex area where many tilted strata outcrop, but mainly as Purbeck Formations (mostly limestone) to the north and Upper Chalk to the across most of the site to the south (BGS 1994). The geology which was observed in the trenches was chalk and the site lies at 103m above Ordnance Datum.

## **Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential of the environs of the site has recently been summarized in the *Long Crendon: Historic Town Assessment Report* (BCC 2009). The site lies within or marginal to the historic core of the settlement and may be in the location of one of two suggested sites for the Saxon and/or medieval manor in the town, both The square and Church End having been proposed as the location of early settlement (BCC 2009, figs 16, 26). The settlement is mentioned in Domesday Book (Williams and Martin 2002) and it is anticipated that any Saxon origins to the settlement will be in the general vicinity of the church. The site lies c.400m south-west of the parish church which has 12th century origins. A medieval manorial complex lies to the south-east of the church. To the north-east of the site, Iron Age and/or Roman occupation has been identified, including deposits in a water trench (Carstairs 1984) and another small investigation immediately to the north-east recorded Iron Age deposits (Cowell 1978), though there is little other prehistoric evidence recorded for the town. A recent evaluation at Chearsley Road (McNicoll-Norbury 2014) revealed no archaeological deposits, although it is suggested that Chearsley Road is of Roman origin (BCC 2009, fig. 15).

## **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 are:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on this site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present;
- to determine if any medieval and/or early post-medieval activity is present reflecting the use of the properties on the street frontage; and
- to provide information to develop a mitigation strategy for the site.

Two trenches were to be dug, 10m in length and 1.6m wide using a Kubota-type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket and carried out under archaeological supervision. Where archaeological features were

present these were to be cleaned and excavated using appropriate hand tools, spoilheaps were to be searched for artefacts and metal detectors used for recovery of metal finds.

## **Results**

The trenches were dug as intended and were both 10.0m long and were 1.8m wide (Fig. 3) and were respectively 0.82 and 0.91m deep, the spoilheaps contained large amounts of modern finds including modern metallic objects. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1. The excavated features are summarized in Appendix 2.

### Trench 1 (Figs 3 and 4, Pls 1 and 4)

Trench 1 was aligned roughly SW–NE and was 10.0m long and 0.82m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.26m of topsoil and 0.48m subsoil overlying natural geology which comprised chalk. A SW-NE aligned gully (3) was recorded which was 0.50m wide and 0.12m deep and filled with a mid grey brown silty sand with chalk inclusions (55) from which a single sherd of early medieval pottery was recovered.

### Trench 2 (Figs 3 and 4, Pls 2 and 3)

Trench 2 was aligned ESE–WNW and was 10.0m long and 0.91m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.21m of topsoil and 0.47m subsoil and 0.22m of weather natural geology (52) from which four sherds of early medieval pottery was recovered. The latter overlay more solid chalk natural geology.

A linear feature was identified aligned SE-NW before turning onto a SW-NE alignment. Two slots were dug into the linear feature (1) and (2). Ditch slot (1) measured 1.10m wide and was 0.45m deep at the SW end and only 0.12m deep at the opposite end and was filled with mid grey brown silt with chalk inclusions (53). It contained ten sherds of early medieval pottery and some animal bone. It is possible that the deeper part of the cut represents a separate pit cutting a shallower gully, however this was not possible to determine. Ditch slot (2) measured 0.70m wide and was 0.08m deep and filled with mid grey brown sandy silt with chalk inclusions (54). It contained no finds nor dating evidence.

## **Finds**

### *Pottery* by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 20 sherds with a total weight of 171g. It was all of early medieval (mid/late 11th – 12th century) date. The site location means that the range of pottery types is typical of Oxfordshire, with

none of the wares present in the Milton Keynes type-series (e.g. Mynard and Zeepvat 1992; Zeepvat *et al.* 1994) which is usually used for assemblages from the county of Buckinghamshire. Thus, the assemblage has been recorded using the conventions of the type-series for Oxfordshire (Mellor 1994), as follows:

**OXAC:** Cotswold-type ware, AD975-1350. 3 sherds, 20g  
**OXBF:** North-East Wiltshire Ware, AD1050 – 1400. 2 sherds, 7g.  
**OXY:** Medieval Oxford ware, AD1050/75 – 1350. 15 sherds, 144g.

The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Appendix 3.

The range of pottery types is typical at sites in the region, and suggests very strongly that all the features are of mid/late 11th – 12th century date. Certainly, very common 13th-century wares, particularly Brill/Boarstall Ware (Oxford fabric OXAM; MK fabric MS9), are entirely absent, indicating that activity had ceased before they became current. The range of vessel types comprised entirely jars and bowls, which is typical of the earlier medieval period. A ‘piecrust’ jar rim, i.e., one with thumb impressions on the rim, was also noted. These are again typical of the earlier medieval period. Most of the assemblage is in very good condition, with the sherds in the main fairly large and unabraded, indicating that they are reliably stratified.

### *Fired Clay*

A single piece of formless fired clay weighing 12g was recovered from gully 2 (54).

### *Bone by Ceri Falys*

A small assemblage of animal bone was recovered from two separate contexts within the evaluated area. A total of 15 fragments of bone were present for analysis, weighing 219g (Appendix 4). The surface preservation of the remains was good, although the degree of fragmentation differed between the two contexts. The bone recovered from gully 53 was highly fragmented, which demonstrated a maximum size 39.8mm by 11.1mm. In contrast, a nearly complete skeletal element was excavated from gully 54.

A minimum of three animal individuals were represented in this small assemblage: one horse, one sheep/goat and one small foetal animal of an indeterminate species. The proximal half of a right horse tibia was present in gully 54. Gully 53 contained the remains of both a sheep/goat (distal phalanx), and a portion of a foetal long bone (a possible metacarpal), for which a species could not be identified. No further information could be retrieved from this small assemblage of animal bone.

### *Slag and industrial debris* by Steven Crabb

A single piece of slag was recovered from gully 1 (53), weighing 210g. It is a fragment of iron smithing slag, the form is similar to that of a hearth bottom but the small size suggests it is only part of one. This suggests that iron smithing took place at this site.

### *Metalwork*

An iron nail was recovered from subsoil/weathered natural interface layer (52).

## **Conclusion**

The evaluation has revealed that archaeological relevant levels have survived on the site in the form of two linear features of early medieval date. The features were relatively deeply buried by modern made ground. Gully 3 was roughly perpendicular to Thame Road and ditch 2 roughly parallel to it and may thus represent some form of property boundaries which fronts the road. The shallowness of the archaeological features could suggest that they have been subject to some truncation, as large amounts of modern finds were found in the overlying layers. It is clear however that the site has archaeological potential.

## **References**

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Carstairs, P, 1984, 'Iron Age occupation at Long Crendon, Buckinghamshire', *Recs Bucks* **26**, 92–101  
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Zeepvat, R J, Roberts, J S and King, N A, 1994, *Caldecotte, Milton Keynes. Excavation and Fieldwork 1966-91*, Bucks Archaeol Soc Monog Ser **4**, Aylesbury



**APPENDIX 1: Trench details**

0m at W or SE end

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	10.0	1.80	0.82	0–0.26m topsoil, 0.26-0.74m mid brown grey silty sand subsoil, 0.74m+ natural geology consisting of chalk. <b>Gully 3 [Pls 1 and 4]</b>
2	10.0	1.80	0.91	0–0.21m topsoil, 0.21-0.68m subsoil, 0.68m-0.90m silty sand with stone inclusions, 0.90m+ natural geology (chalk). <b>Gully 1 Pls 2 and 3]</b>

## APPENDIX 2: Feature details

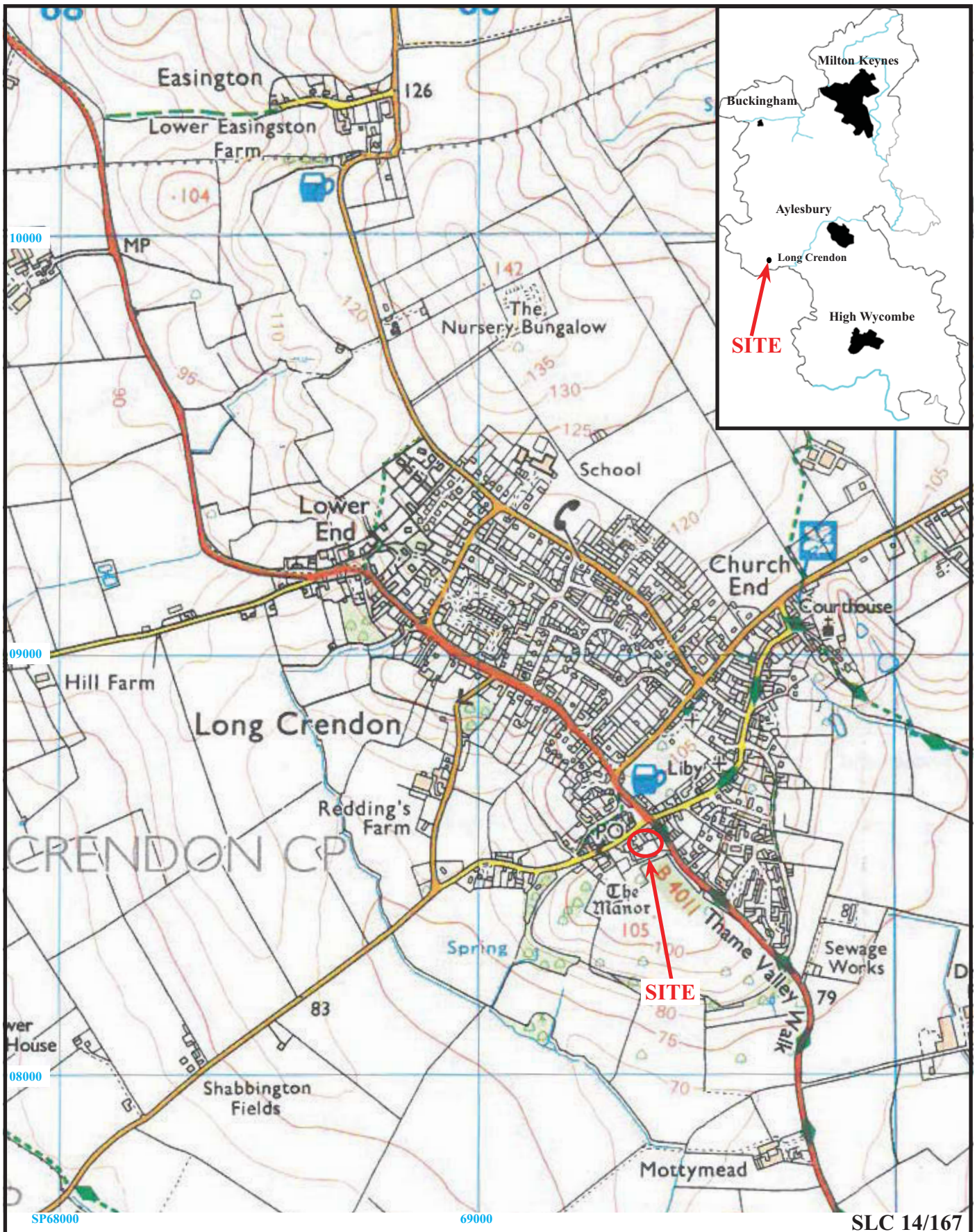
<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
2	1	53	Gully	Early Medieval	Pottery
2	2	54	Gully	Early Medieval	Association and Stratigraphy
1	3	55	Ditch	Early Medieval	Pottery

**APPENDIX 3:** Pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type.

<i>Cu</i> <i>t</i>	<i>Deposi</i> <i>t</i>	<b>OXAC</b>		<b>OXBF</b>		<b>OXY</b>		<i>Date</i>
		<i>N</i> <i>o</i>	<i>W</i> <i>t</i>	<i>N</i> <i>o</i>	<i>W</i> <i>t</i>	<i>N</i> <i>o</i>	<i>Wt</i>	
	52	1	9	-	-	4	94	Mid/Late 11th century AD
1	53	2	11	2	7	10	38	Mid/Late 11th century AD
3	55	-	-	-	-	1	12	Mid/Late 11th century AD
	<b>Total</b>	3	20	2	7	15	144	

**APPENDIX 4: Inventory of animal bone**

Cut	Deposit	No. frags	Wt (g)	Horse	Sheep/goat	Small	UNID
1	53	12	15	-	1	1 (foetal)	10
2	54	3	204	3	-	-	-
Total / MNI		15	219	1 horse	1	1 (unknown species)	-



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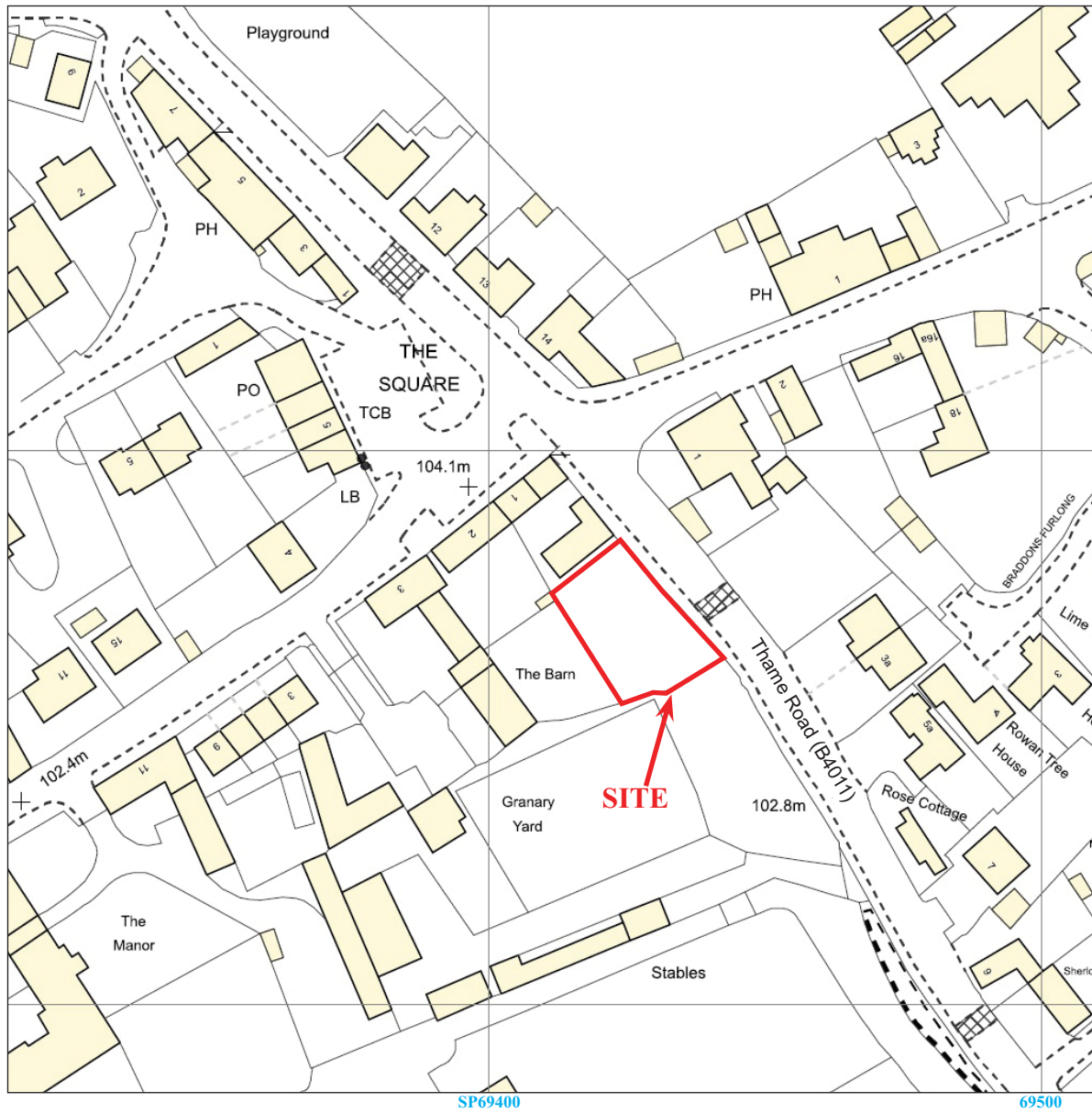
Figure 1. Location of site within Long Crendon and Buckinghamshire.

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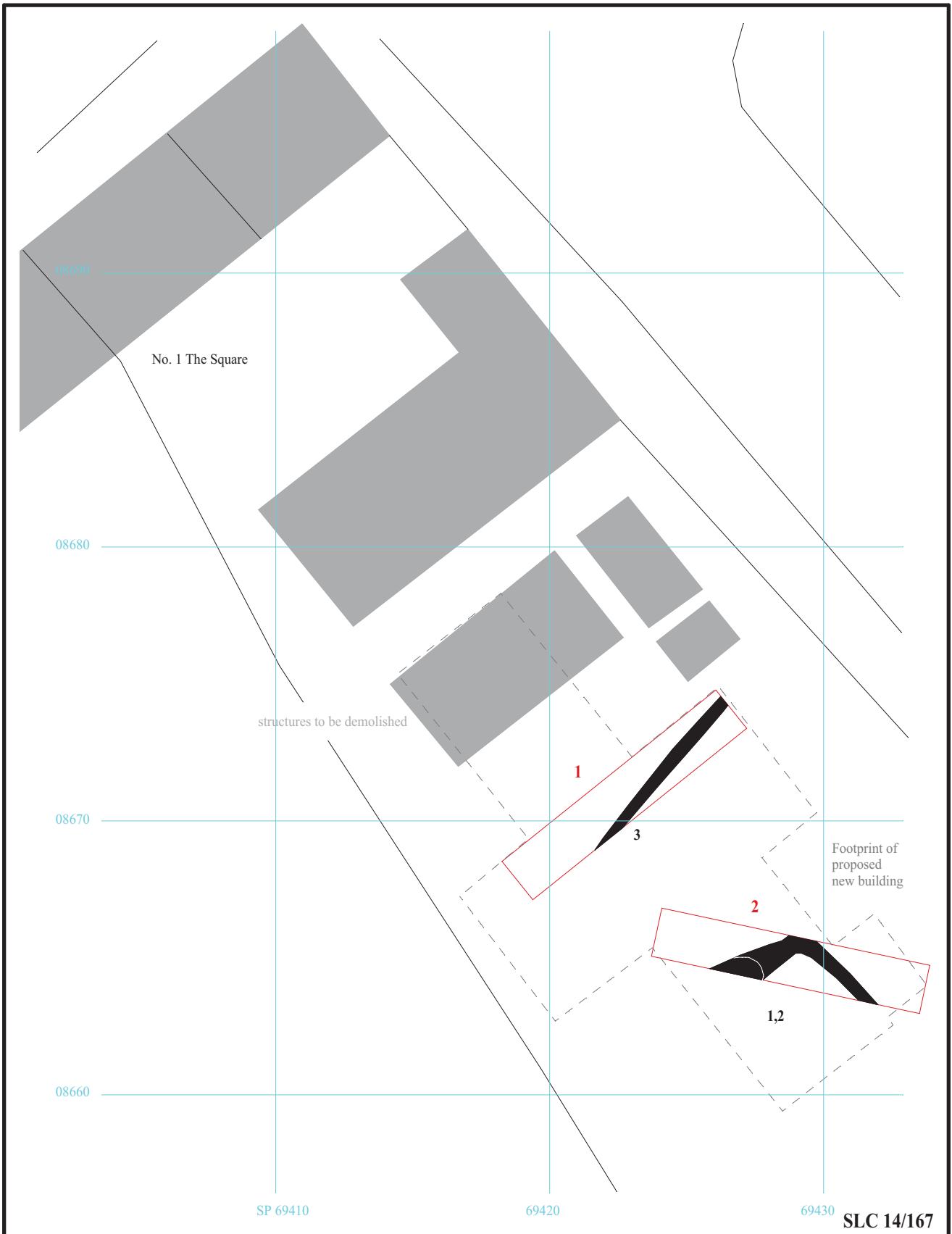


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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off The Square and Thame Road.

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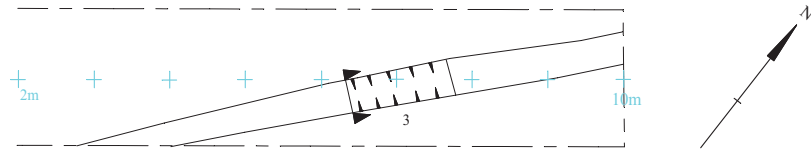


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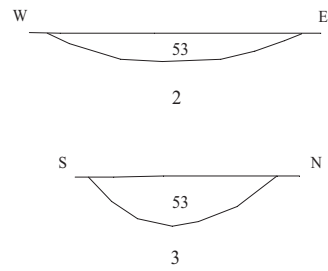
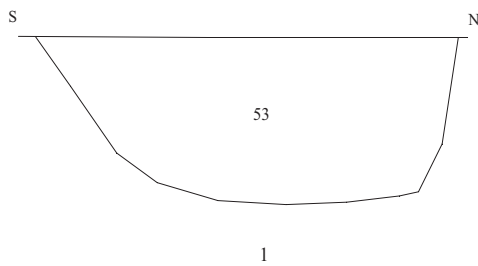
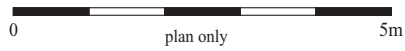
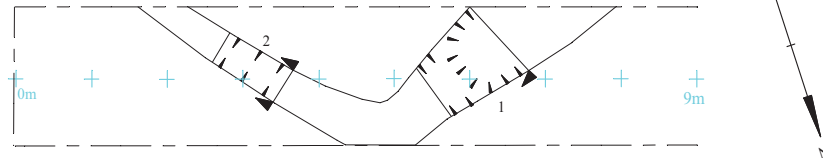
Figure 3. Locationm of trenches.



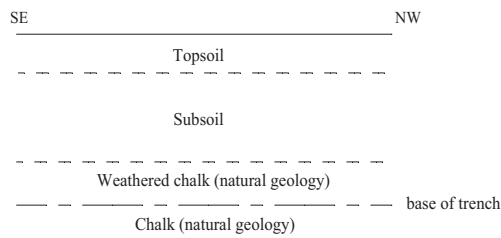
Trench 1



Trench 2



Trench 2



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Figure 4. Details of Trench 1 and 2.

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Plate 1. Trench 1, looking east, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m.



Plate 2. Trench 2, looking north-west, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m.

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Plates 1 - 2.**

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Plate 3. Gully 1, looking north-west, Scales: 1m and 0.2m.



Plate 4. Gully 3, looking east, Scales: 0.5m and 0.1m.

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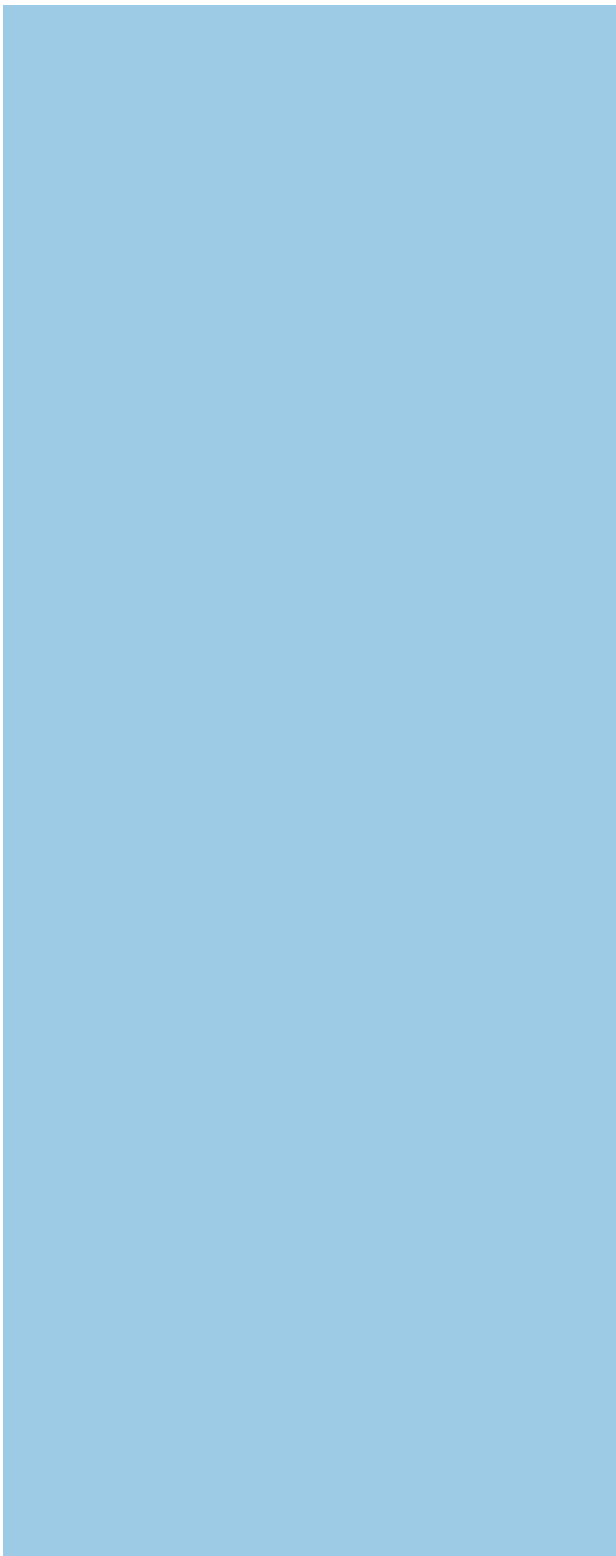
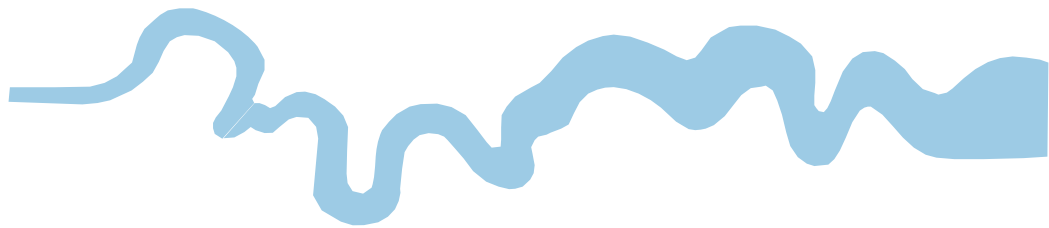
**Land to the rear of 1 The Square, Long Crendon,  
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Plates 3 - 4.**

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## TIME CHART

	<b>Calendar Years</b>
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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