

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Land at former Farnham Police Station, Longbridge,
Farnham, Surrey**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Andrew Muddin

Site Code: PSF14/257

(SU 8406 4662)

**Farnham Police Station, Longbridge,
Farnham, Surrey**

An Archaeological Evaluation

for CgMs Consulting

by Andrew Muddin

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code PSF 14/257

January 2015

Summary

Site name: Land at former Farnham Police Station, Longbridge, Farnham, Surrey

Grid reference: SU 8406 4662

Site activity: Archaeological Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 9th to 13th January 2015

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Andrew Muddin

Site code: PSF 14/257

Area of site: 0.4 ha

Summary of results: Four trenches were excavated at the site following demolition of the previous structures. They revealed broadly the same sequence of development. The natural gravel geology was overlain with what appear to be alluvial deposits followed by dumped land raising deposits in the later 19th century. A number of late post-medieval/modern brick walls and modern artefacts were recorded but no remains or finds of archaeological interest. The site is considered to have low archaeological potential.

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

Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 29.01.15 Steve Preston ✓ 16.01.15

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Report 14/257

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out on land of the former site of Farnham Police Station, Longbridge, Farnham, Surrey, GU9 7QA (SU 8406 4662) (Fig.1). The work was commissioned by Mr Peter Reeves of CgMs Consulting, 140 London Wall, London, EC2Y 5DN, on behalf of Churchill Retirement Living Ltd, Mill Stream House, Parkside, Ringwood, Hants, BH24 3SG.

Planning permission for development has been granted by Waverley Borough Council (WA 20140394) with a condition relating to archaeology. This is to ensure the protection of heritage assets in accordance with Policy HE14 of the Waverley Borough Local Plan, 2002. The evaluation took place after demolition of the former buildings on the site. The trial trenching is also in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012). The field investigation was carried out to a specification prepared by Mr Reeves of CgMs, and approved by Mr Nicolas Truckle, Archaeological Officer with Surrey County Council, adviser to the Borough. The fieldwork was undertaken by Andrew Muddin between the 9th to 13th January 2015. The site code is PSF 14/257. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Farnham Museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located to the north of the River Wey, on the floor of the valley. The main route to the south of the town, Longbridge, bounds the site to the east, and leads up the valley edge at Firgrove Hill. The River Wey bounds the southern edge of the site (Fig. 2). The underlying geology is alluvium most likely overlaying sandy loam of the Folkstone Beds, with the Upper Chalk ridge to the north (BGS 1976). The site is at a height of 65m above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological background

Farnham is first recorded in a documentary reference in AD685-8 when King Cadwalla of Wessex made a grant of 60 hides of land for the formation of a minster church (Robertson 2004). This Saxon origin makes it one of

the oldest attested place names in Surrey. It was a substantial manor at the time of Domesday Book and had become a town (borough) by the 13th century and prospered in post-medieval times. Farnham has been subject to many archaeological investigations and there is a wealth of archaeological detail for the medieval settlement. It is thought that for the proposal site, the northern half may have lain within the later, 18th century development of the town.

In contrast, there is only a modest range of prehistoric and Roman finds recorded for surrounding areas. A recent evaluation carried out on West Street revealed a large post-medieval pit or terracing and a single undated posthole (Taylor 2013).

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 establish the presence or otherwise of prehistoric or Romano-British and any later activity, and to define the date and nature of such activity;

- to establish the environmental context of prehistoric, Roman or later activity;

- to evaluate the likely impact of past land use and development; and

- to provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological mitigation strategy if necessary.

It was proposed to excavate four trenches, three at 25m long and one 20m long, all 1.8m wide. The trenches were to be dug to the top of the natural geology or to a depth of c. 1m which was the approximate formation level of the new development. Test pits were to be dug to explore deeper stratigraphy on the site. The trenches were positioned to target the areas most likely not affected by previous development. The trenches were to be excavated using a JCB-type machine equipped with both a toothed bucket to break through brick rubble, a breaker to break concrete and a toothless grading bucket, carried out under direction from an archaeologist, with the spoil removed being monitored for finds. All potential archaeological deposits were to be hand-cleaned and sufficient of the archaeological features and deposits exposed were to be excavated or sampled by hand to satisfy the aims of the project.

Results

All four trenches were dug to the intended coverage but their shape was altered. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1 (Figs 3 and 4; Pls 1 and 5)

Trench 1 was aligned NW - SE and was 14.4m long, 2.9m wide at the top and initially 0.9m deep. A narrower trench 1.2m wide was dug below 0.73m to 1.67m. The stratigraphy consisted of the recent demolition deposits covering the top 0.2m of the trench, overlying an imported light brown sandy gravel layer with brick fragments to 0.57m. This in turn overlay a brick rubble dump to 0.73m. Beneath this was a light to medium brown clayey silt with some brick fragments and other late post-medieval items such as modern 'china' and metal to 1.15m.

Below this to a depth of 1.23m in the middle of the trench, was a light brown silt lens with chalk occupying a slight hollow, also considered to be of fairly modern date. This overlay a dark brown/blue silty clay with occasional gravel inclusions. The base of this deposit was reached at a depth of 1.6m when the natural gravel geology was encountered within a dark bluish brown silt matrix.

Trench 2 (Fig. 3, Pl.2)

This trench was aligned NW - SE and was 11.2m long and 3.2m wide at the top and initially 1.32m deep. A sondage 1.2m wide was dug down to 1.52m for most of the length of the trench.. The stratigraphy of this trench consisted of brick rubble mixed with granular Tarmac (50) to a depth of 0.22m. This overlay broken concrete and brick rubble made ground contained within a grey silt (51) to a depth of 0.92m. Angled across the trench for most of it's length was a brick wall (52) which was made from 19th century bricks. A second segment of 19th century brick wall, which corresponds with another wall seen in Trench 3 was also observed in the southern end of this trench (56). The wall construction cut was visible, cutting a brown silty clay which was observed to a depth of 1.33m and considered to be alluvial in origin.

The presence of the walls only allowed a small area to be dug at the northern end of the trench to examine deeper deposits. This test pit revealed that below 1.33m to a depth of 1.52m was a dark blue/brown silty clay also considered to be alluvial in origin. The latter overlay a dark brown silt with gravel natural geology at the base of this trench.

Trench 3 (Figs 3 and 4, Pls 3 and 6)

Trench 3 was aligned NW-SE and was 14.7m long and 2.9m wide at the top and initially 1.0m deep. A sondage 1.2m wide was dug along most of the trench to a depth of 1.74m. The stratigraphy consisted of demolition brick crush overlying concrete, which needed to be broken out, and brick crush to 0.52m deep. This overlay a thin brown black silty clay to a depth of 0.68m and overlay powdered older brick rubble to a depth of 0.88m. This overlay grey dark grey silty clay (53) to a depth of 1.64m and then a grey brown silty clay (alluvium?) to the base of the sondage at a depth of 1.74m deep. The natural gravel geology was not encountered.

The top of a brick wall (54) was encountered at 8m from the southern end of this trench at a depth of c. 0.95m beneath modern brick rubble. It cut deposit 53 which was possibly the fill of a large cut. The wall was made from bricks of 19th century or later date.

Trench 4 (Fig. 3; Pl.4)

Trench 4 was aligned NW - SE and was 14.22m long and 3.2m wide. It was initially excavated to a depth of 0.93m, with a sondage 1.2m wide dug down to 1.59m for most of the length of the trench.. The stratigraphy consisted of brick rubble to a depth of 0.27m overlying a modern dump of concrete rubble to 0.47m. Under this was a dark brown black clay to a depth of 0.62m, which in turn overlay more crushed brick rubble to a depth of 0.93m with a mixed grey clay and brick rubble down to 1.47m. Below this was a grey brown silty clay alluvium excavated to a depth of 1.59m where excavation ceased. The natural gravel geology was not encountered.

The gravel fill of a service trench was avoided at the western end of the trench, though at least one concrete covered drainage pipe was removed.

Finds

No finds of archaeological interest were encountered, with white 'china' and metal objects of modern origin retained on site. A sample of the bricks from wall 52 in trench 2 were taken and were dated as being of likely 19th century date.

Conclusion

Four evaluation trenches were excavated which revealed broadly the same sequence of development. The natural gravel geology was overlain with what appear to be alluvial deposits suggesting a low-lying situation. Subsequently, the land appears to have been reclaimed and raised by brick dump deposits in the later 19th century

prior to its use for buildings. No remains nor artefacts of archaeological interest were uncovered and the site is considered to have low archaeological potential.

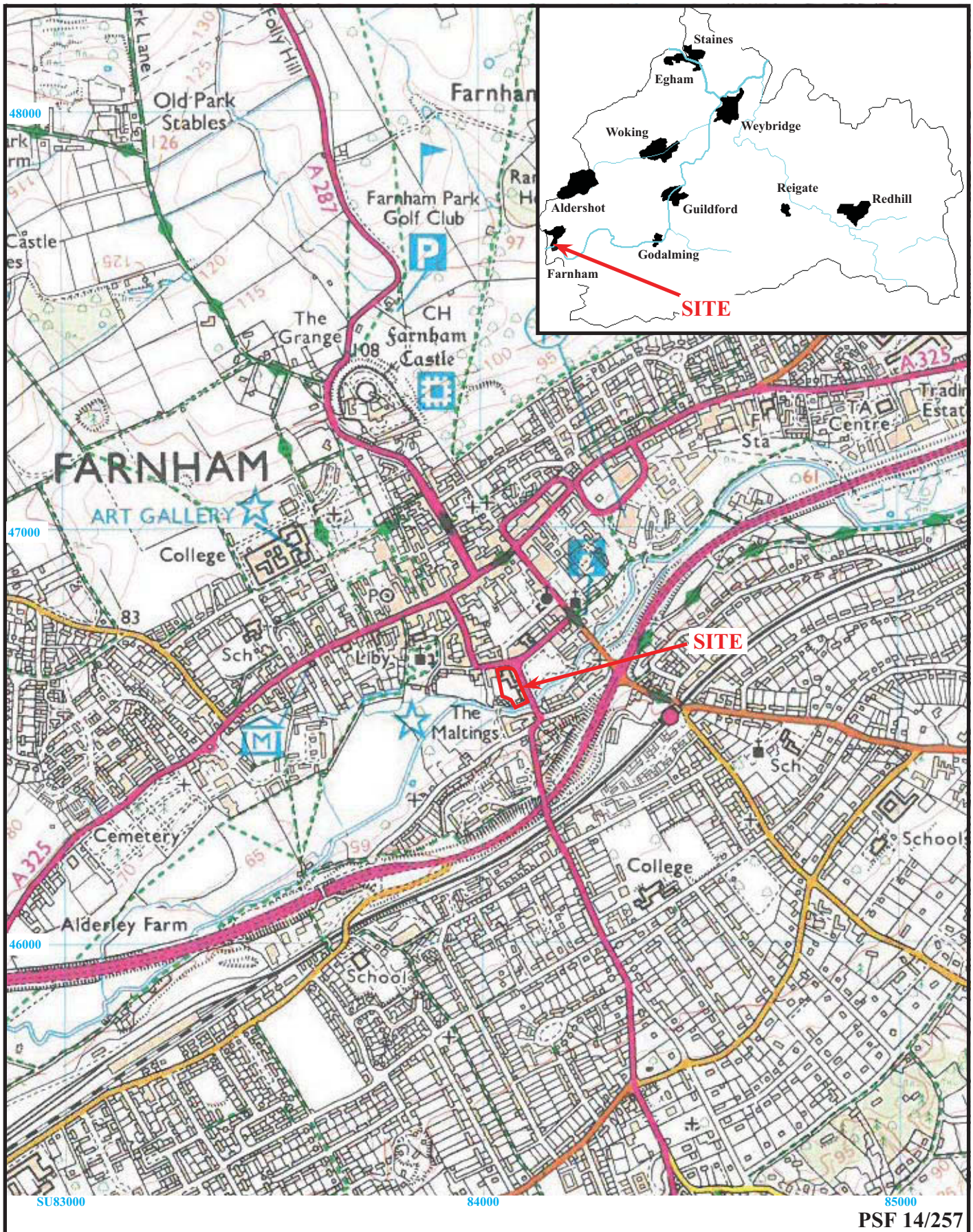
References

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- NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London
- Robertson, J, 2004, *Extensive Urban Survey of Surrey: Farnham* (revised version) Surrey County Council Archaeological Unit, Woking
- Taylor, A, 2013, 'Land at 40 West Street, Farnham, Surrey, an archaeological evaluation', Thames Valley Archaeological Services unpubl rep **12/83b**, Reading

APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at S end

Trench	Length (m)	Breadth (m)	Depth (m)	Comment
1	14.35	2.9	1.67	0-0.2m Tarmac and brick rubble crush, 0.2-0.57m- Brick and light brown imported gravel; 0.57-0.73m brick rubble dump; 0.73-1.15m light to medium brown clay silt with brick fragments; 1.15-1.23m chalk and light brown silt lens, 1.23-1.6m dark brown blue silty clay; 1.6m+ dark brown blue silt gravel. [Pls 1 and 5]
2	11.24	3.2	1.52	0-0.22m brick and concrete rubble crush; 0.22-0.92m concrete and brick with chalky silt; 0.92-1.33m brown silty clay; 1.33-1.52m dark blue brown silty clay; 1.52m+ dark brown blue silt gravel. Wall 52 within cut 1. Wall 56. [Pl. 2]
3	14.7	2.9	1.74	0-0.38m brick crush; concrete and brick crush; 0.38-0.52m brownish black silty clay; 0.52-0.68m brown black silty clay; 0.68-0.88m powdered brick; 0.88-1.64m dark grey silty clay (53); 1.64m+ grey brown silty clay alluvium (55). Wall 54 within cut 2. [Pls 3 and 6]
4	14.22	3.2	1.59	0-0.27m of modern brick rubble; 0.27-0.47m concrete rubble; 0.47-0.62m dark brown black clay; 0.62-0.93m brick rubble; 0.93-1.47m bluish grey clay with brick rubble; 1.47m+ grey silty clay alluvium. [Pl. 4]



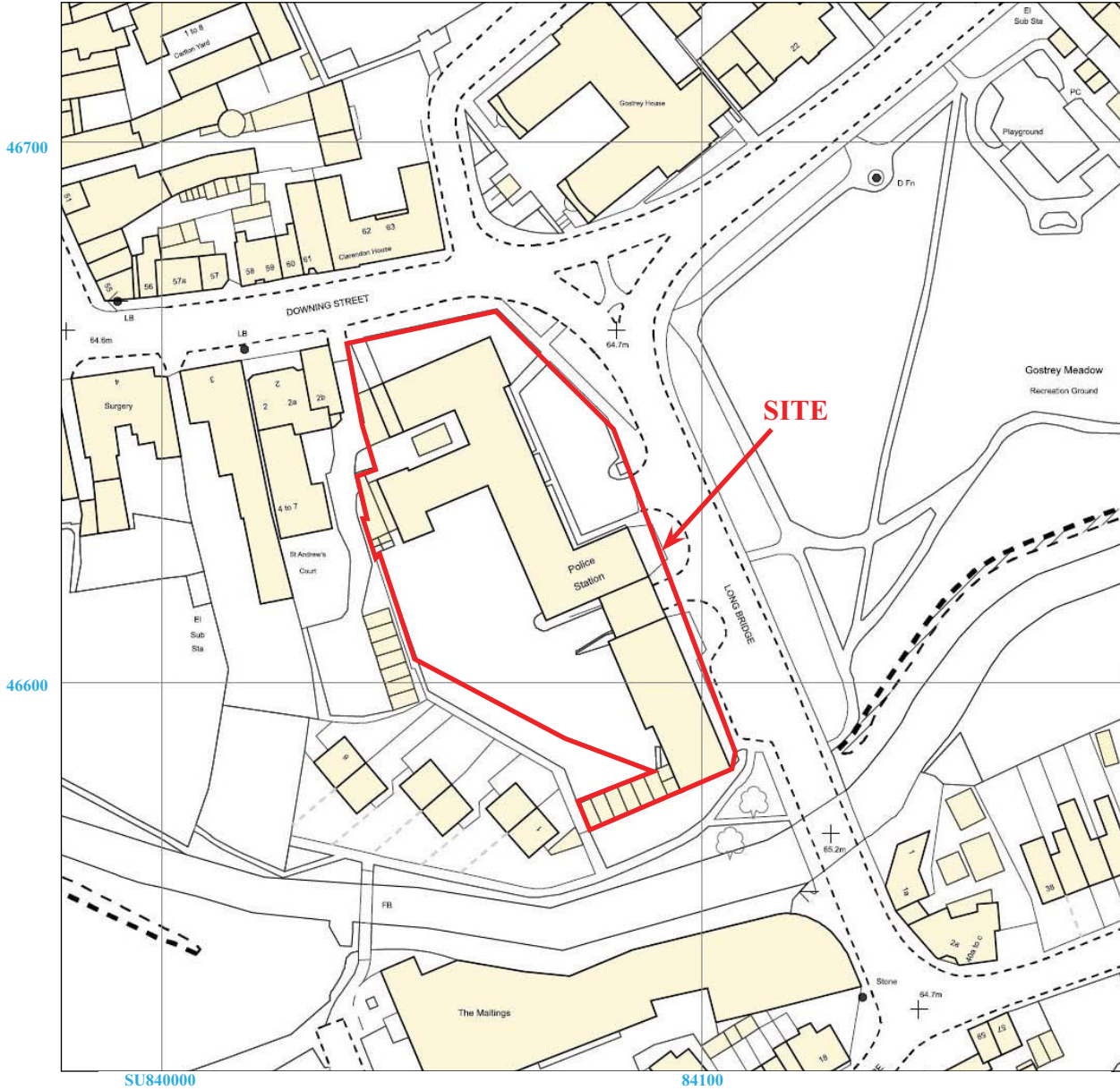
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Figure 1. Location of site within Farnham and Surrey.

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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Longbridge.

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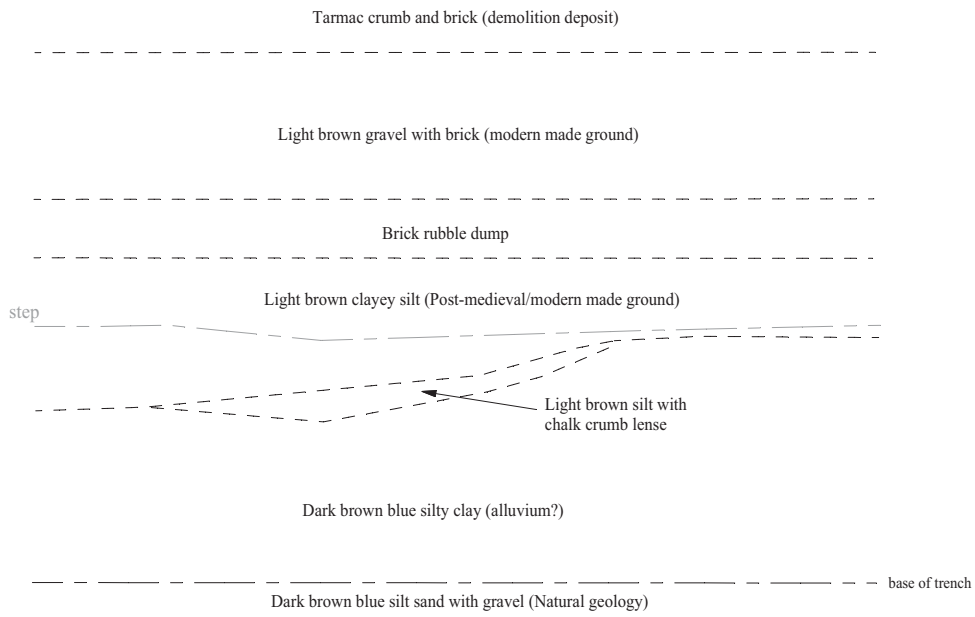
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Figure 3. Location of trenches.

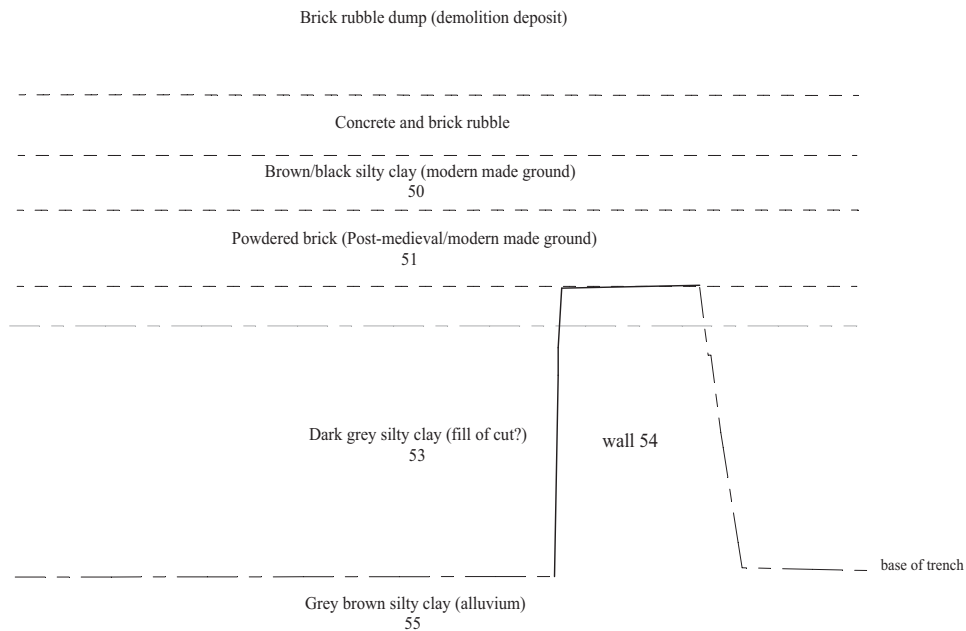


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NW **Trench 1** SE 64.65maOD



NW **Trench 3** SE 64.8m



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Figure 4. Representative sections.





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



Plate 2. Trench 2, looking north west, Scale: 1m.

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Plates 1 - 2.**

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Plate 3. Trench 3, looking south, Scales: 2m and 1m.



Plate 4. Trench 4, looking north west, Scale: 1m.

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Plates 3 - 4.**

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Plate 5. Trench 1, Section looking north east, Scale: 1m.



Plate 6. Trench 3, wall 54 section looking east, Scale: 1m.

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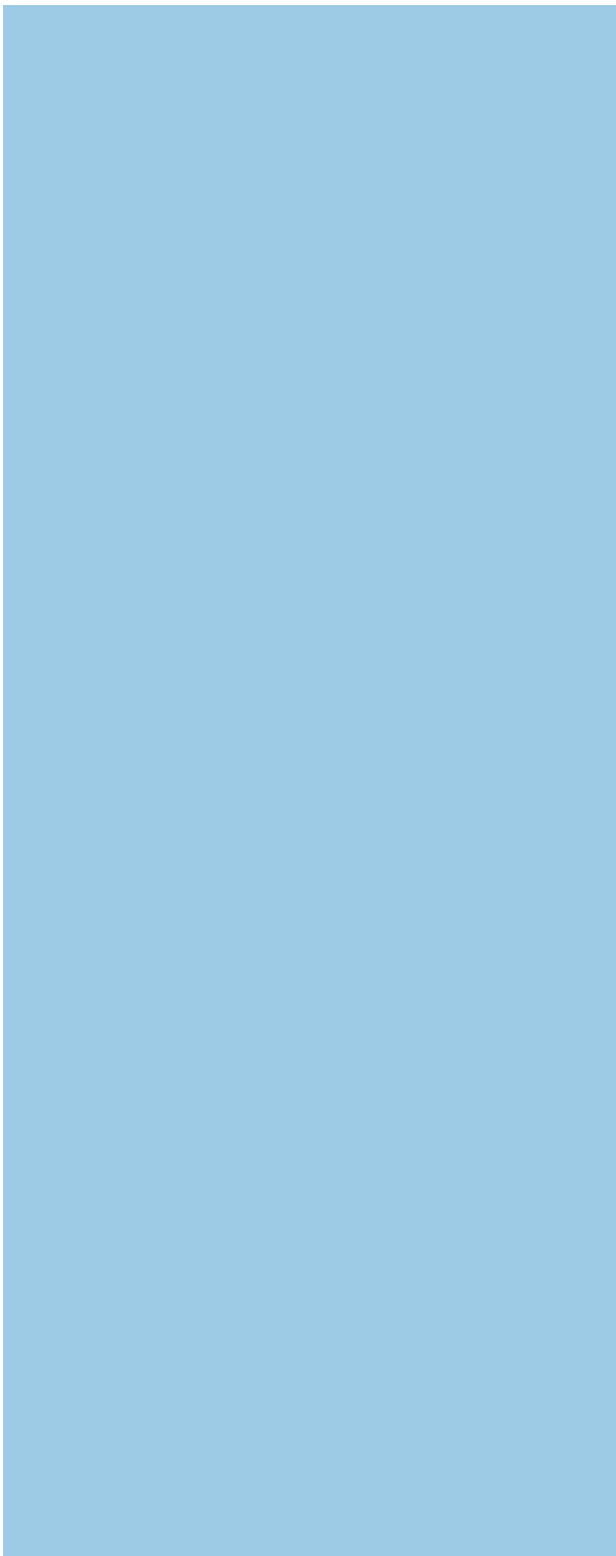
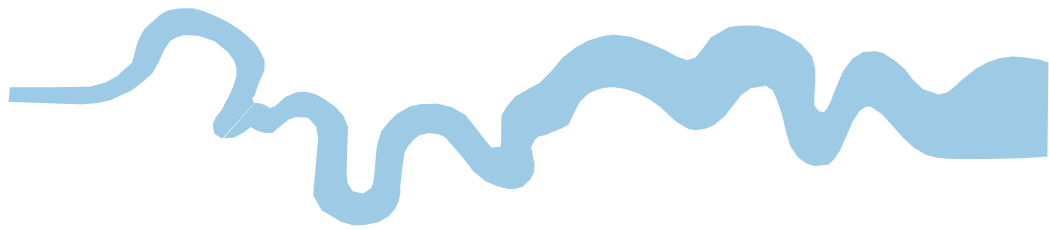
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Plates 5 - 6.**

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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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