

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 27-8 Upper Pavenhill, Dogridge,
Purton, Swindon, Wiltshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Susan Porter

Site Code: UPP14/128

(SU 0800 8765)

**Land to the rear of 27-8 Upper Pavenhill, Dogridge,
Purton, Swindon, Wiltshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Hills Homes Developments Ltd**

by Susan Porter

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code UPP 14/128

January 2015

Summary

Site name: Land to the rear of 27-8 Upper Pavenhill, Dogridge, Purton, Swindon, Wiltshire

Grid reference: SU 0795 8770

Site activity: Archaeological Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 26th - 28th January 2015

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Susan Porter

Site code: UPP 14/128

Area of site: 1.5ha

Summary of results: A single gully of post-medieval date was observed but otherwise no features of archaeological interest were present. Two struck flints, one of which was a microliths point to a low level of Mesolithic activity in the area.

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

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

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| Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 03.02.15 Steve Preston ✓ 03.02.15 |
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Land to rear of 27-8 Upper Pavenhill, Dogridge, Purton, Swindon, Wiltshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Susan Porter

Report 14/128c

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out on land to the rear of 27-8 Upper Pavenhill, Dogridge, Purton, Swindon, Wiltshire (SU 0795 8770) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Andrea Andrews, for Hills Homes Developments Ltd, Wiltshire House, County Park Business Centre, Shrivenham Road, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN1 2NR.

An application to construct new housing on a 1.5ha parcel of land to the rear of 27-8 Upper Pavenhill, Purton is to be made to Wiltshire County Council. As a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits on the site which may be damaged or destroyed by groundworks, a programme of archaeological fieldwork has been requested to accompany the application.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012), and the County Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger, County Archaeologist for Wiltshire, with a site visit conducted by Ms Clare King, Assistant County Archaeologist. The fieldwork was undertaken by Susan Porter and Lizzie Lewins between 26th-28th January 2015 and the site code is UPP 14/128. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Wiltshire Heritage Museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site forms an irregular parcel of land covering c. 1.5ha located on the north-west of the village of Purton behind the houses on the north of Pavenhill (Fig. 1). The site currently forms an open area of land with public pathways. It is bounded to the south and west by housing, allotments to the north and further fields to the east. The site lies mainly on the plateau of Dogridge, at a height of c.140m above Ordnance Datum with the land beginning to slope down towards the west, and the underlying geology is mapped as Second River Terrace deposits (BGS 1974).

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a desk-based assessment (Ford 2014). In summary the site does not contain any known heritage assets, but lies in a zone which has recorded extensive Roman deposits with high status building and pottery production present. A site to the south, at 6 Battlewell, revealed Roman features comprising pits and postholes along with the remains of a drying oven and a well containing the partial remains of an inhumation, partial walls were also noted (McNicoll-Norbury in prep). Geophysical survey undertaken on the present site revealed little of archaeological interest other than ridge and furrow field systems (Dawson 2014).

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. This work was to be carried out in a manner that would not compromise the integrity of archaeological features or deposits which warrant preservation in-situ, or might be better excavated under conditions pertaining to full excavation.

The specific research aims of this project were:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels had survived on the site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period were present;
- to determine if any Roman deposits were present which relate to the other Roman deposits within this area of Dogridge; and
- to provide information to draw up an appropriate mitigation strategy if required.

It was proposed to dig 13 trenches, each 1.6m wide and 25m long, partly targeted at geophysical anomalies, but otherwise to provide a stratified random coverage of the site. A contingency of 25m of trenching was included should it be required to clarify initial findings. Trench positions could be altered and/ or subdivided once details of services were known or to avoid trees or other obstacles.

Topsoil and overburden were removed using a small 360° tracked machine equipped with a bladed ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision. Where archaeological features were present or possibly present they were hand cleaned. Sufficient of the archaeological features and deposits exposed were to be excavated or sampled by hand to meet the aims of the project.

Results

With the exception of Trench 1, all 13 trenches were dug as intended (Fig. 2). Trench 1 was moved following consultation with Assistant County Archaeologist Clare King during a site visit. The original intended position of the trench was within the rear garden of house 59b, however access was unavailable for the machine and it was decided to move the trench into the field as close to its original location as possible. However the presence of a substantial drain in the access trackway and a large electric cable hampered this and Trench 1 was eventually excavated alongside Trench 5 (see Fig. 2). The trenches ranged in length from 24m-26.70m and in depth from 0.30m-0.52m. ridge and furrow was observed in most of the trenches

A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 summarizes the only feature excavated.

Trench 1 (Fig. 2)

Trench 1 was aligned South west - North east and was 24m long and 0.49m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of topsoil and 0.29m light grey brown silty clay subsoil overlying light cream brown with yellow patches silty clay and limestone brash natural geology. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no finds were recovered.

Trench 2 (Fig. 2)

Trench 2 was aligned South west - North east and was 25.10m long and 0.30m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.17m of topsoil and 0.13m dark grey brown silty clay subsoil overlying dark yellow brown silty clay with sub-angular stone inclusions natural geology. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no finds were recovered.

Trench 3 (Figs 2 and 3; Pls 1 and 2)

Trench 3 was aligned South West - North East and was 25m long and 0.45m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.22m of topsoil and 0.22m dark grey brown silty clay subsoil overlying dark yellow brown silty clay with sub angular stone inclusions natural geology. A gully (1) was recorded at 4-4.3m from the south-west end of the trench, aligned east-west, which was 0.40m wide and 0.12m deep and filled with soft dark brown grey clayey silt (52). Animal bone, and pottery of post-medieval date and two residual Mesolithic flints, one of which was a microlith, were recovered.

Trench 4 (Fig. 2)

Trench 4 was aligned East - West and was 25.10m long and 0.50m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.26m of topsoil and 0.24m dark grey brown silty clay subsoil overlying mid yellow brown silty limestone brash natural geology. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no finds were recovered.

Trench 5 (Fig 2 and Pl. 3)

Trench 5 was aligned South West - North East and was 25.10m long and 0.40m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of topsoil and 0.20m dark grey brown silty clay subsoil overlying dark yellow brown silty clay with sub angular stone inclusions natural geology. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no finds were recovered.

Trench 6 (Fig 2 and Pl. 4)

Trench 6 was aligned East - West and was 26.30m long and 0.52m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.22m of topsoil and 0.30m dark grey brown silty clay subsoil overlying mid yellow brown silty clay limestone brash natural geology. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no finds were recovered.

Trench 7 (Fig. 2)

Trench 7 was aligned South East - North West and was 26.10m long and 0.40m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.23m of topsoil and 0.17m light grey brown silty clay subsoil overlying mid yellow brown silty clay limestone brash natural geology. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no finds were recovered.

Trench 8 (Fig. 2)

Trench 8 was aligned East - West and was 26.20m long and 0.37m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.19m of topsoil and 0.18m light grey brown silty clay subsoil overlying dark yellow brown silty clay with sub-angular stone inclusions natural geology. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no finds were recovered.

Trench 9 (Fig. 2 and Pl. 5)

Trench 9 was aligned North - South and was 26m long and 0.50m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.24m of topsoil and 0.26m light brown grey silty clay subsoil overlying mid yellow brown silty clay limestone brash natural geology. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no finds were recovered.

Trench 10 (Fig. 2 and Pl. 6)

Trench 10 was aligned South West - North East and was 25.30m long and 0.38m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of topsoil and 0.18m light grey brown silty clay subsoil overlying mid yellow brown silty clay limestone brash natural geology. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no finds were recovered.

Trench 11 (Fig. 2)

Trench 11 was aligned West South West - East North East and was 24.40m long and 0.34m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.12m of topsoil and 0.22m light grey brown silty clay subsoil overlying mid yellow brown silty clay limestone brash natural geology. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no finds were recovered.

Trench 12 (Fig. 2)

Trench 12 was aligned South East - North West and was 26.70m long and 0.42m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.24m of topsoil and 0.38m light grey brown silty clay subsoil overlying mid yellow brown silty clay limestone brash natural geology. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no finds were recovered.

Trench 13 (Figs 2 and 3)

Trench 13 was aligned West - East and was 24.9m long and 0.43m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.18m of topsoil and 0.25m light grey brown silty clay subsoil overlying dark yellow brown silty clay with sub-angular stone inclusions natural geology. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no finds were recovered.

Finds

Pottery by Susan Porter

A single sherd of pottery was recovered from gully 1. This body sherd is in a coarse grey fabric with green glaze present on the outer face and is post-medieval in date. The edges are fresh rather than abraded and it seems likely to be reliably stratified.

Struck Flint by Steve Ford

A collection comprising 2 struck flints was recovered during the course of this fieldwork from gully 1 (52). They are both of Mesolithic date. One is an unpatinated oblique blunted point. The other is a broken blade segment with blade scars on its dorsal surface which is patinated bluish white. Both pieces are residual finds within this feature.

Burnt flint

One unworked burnt flint fragment (<1g) was recovered from a sieved sample taken from gully 1 (52).

Animal Bone by Danielle Milbank

A small assemblage of fragmented, disarticulated animal bone was hand collected from gully 1. The preservation of the fragments was good, with most of the pieces large and lacking surface erosion or abrasion. They consisted

of 7 fragments, mostly co-joining, which comprise most of the left tibia of a horse. The size and very robust proportions of the tibia indicates a large individual of substantial build. An additional small fragment (unidentified) was recovered from a sieved soil sample taken from the same context. No butchery marks, pathologies or other features were identified.

Conclusion

Despite the archaeological potential of the site, little evidence was suggested by the previous geophysical survey and the results of the evaluation tally with the geophysical results. Evidence for medieval ridge and furrow was noted in many of the trenches and a single gully, likely to be of post-medieval date was observed. The recovery of residual microliths may suggest prehistoric activity within the vicinity, although the flints are clearly redeposited in the context in which they were found. Based on these results, it appears that the site has very low archaeological potential.

References

- BGS, 1974, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000, Sheet 252, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- Dawson, T, 2014, Land to the rear of 27-8 Upper Pavenhill, Dogridge, Purton, Swindon, Wiltshire, geophysical survey (magnetic), TVAS unpubl rep **14/128b**, Reading.
- Ford, S, 2014, 'Land to the rear of 27-8 Upper Pavenhill, Dogridge, Purton, Swindon, Wiltshire, an archaeological desk-based assessment', TVAS unpubl rep **14/128**, Reading
- McNicoll-Norbury, in prep, 6 Battlewell, Purton, Swindon, Wiltshire, an archaeological excavation, Thames Valley Archaeological Services, report 13/151, Reading
- NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London

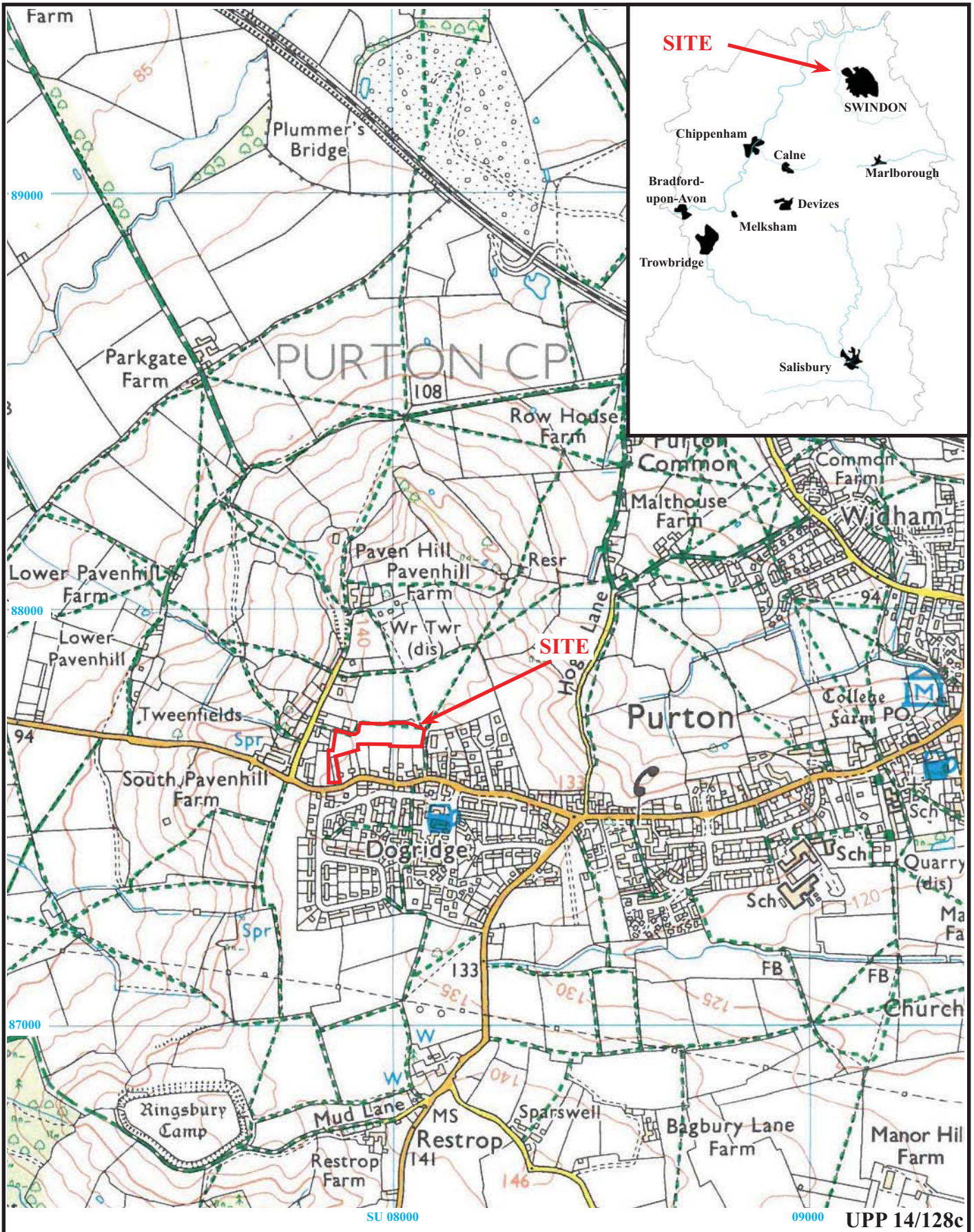
APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at South or Western end

| <i>Trench</i> | <i>Length (m)</i> | <i>Breadth (m)</i> | <i>Depth (m)</i> | <i>Comment</i> |
|---------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------|--|
| 1 | 24.0 | 1.6 | 0.49 | 0–0.20m topsoil, 0.20-0.49m light grey brown silty clay subsoil 0.49m+ light cream brown with yellow patches silty clay and limestone brash natural geology. |
| 2 | 25.1 | 1.6 | 0.30 | 0–0.17m topsoil, 0.17-0.30m dark grey brown silty clay subsoil 0.30m+ dark yellow brown silty clay with sub angular stone inclusions natural geology. |
| 3 | 25.0 | 1.6 | 0.45 | 0–0.22m topsoil, 0.22-0.45m dark grey brown silty clay subsoil 0.30m+ dark yellow brown silty clay with sub angular stone inclusions natural geology. Gully (1) at 4m-4.30m containing animal bone pottery and flint. [Pls 1 and 2] |
| 4 | 25.1 | 1.6 | 0.50 | 0–0.26m topsoil, 0.26-0.50m dark grey brown silty clay subsoil 0.50m+ mid yellow brown silty clay limestone brash natural geology. |
| 5 | 25.1 | 1.6 | 0.40 | 0–0.20m topsoil, 0.20-0.40m dark grey brown silty clay subsoil 0.40m+ dark yellow brown silty clay with sub angular stone inclusions natural geology. [Pl. 3] |
| 6 | 26.3 | 1.6 | 0.52 | 0–0.22m topsoil, 0.22-0.52m dark grey brown silty clay subsoil 0.52m+ mid yellow brown silty clay limestone brash natural geology. [Pl. 4] |
| 7 | 26.1 | 1.6 | 0.40 | 0–0.23m topsoil, 0.23-0.40m light grey brown silty clay subsoil 0.40m+ mid yellow brown silty clay limestone brash natural geology. |
| 8 | 26.2 | 1.6 | 0.37 | 0–0.19m topsoil, 0.19-0.37m light grey brown silty clay subsoil 0.37m+ dark yellow brown silty clay with sub angular stone inclusions natural geology. |
| 9 | 26.0 | 1.6 | 0.50 | 0–0.24m topsoil, 0.24-0.50m light grey brown silty clay subsoil 0.50m+ mid yellow brown silty clay limestone brash natural geology. [Pl. 5] |
| 10 | 25.3 | 1.6 | 0.38 | 0–0.20m topsoil, 0.20-0.38m light grey brown silty clay subsoil 0.38m+ mid yellow brown silty clay limestone brash natural geology. [Pl. 6] |
| 11 | 24.4 | 1.6 | 0.34 | 0–0.12m topsoil, 0.12-0.34m light grey brown silty clay subsoil 0.34m+ mid yellow brown silty clay limestone brash natural geology. |
| 12 | 26.7 | 1.6 | 0.42 | 0–0.24m topsoil, 0.24-0.42m light grey brown silty clay subsoil 0.42m+ mid yellow brown silty clay limestone brash natural geology. |
| 13 | 24.9 | 1.6 | 0.43 | 0–0.18m topsoil, 0.18-0.43m light grey brown silty clay subsoil 0.43m+ dark yellow brown grey silty clay with sub angular stone inclusions natural geology. |

APPENDIX 2: Feature details

| <i>Trench</i> | <i>Cut</i> | <i>Fill (s)</i> | <i>Type</i> | <i>Date</i> | <i>Dating evidence</i> |
|---------------|------------|-----------------|-------------|---------------|------------------------|
| 3 | 1 | 52 | Gully | Post-medieval | Pottery |

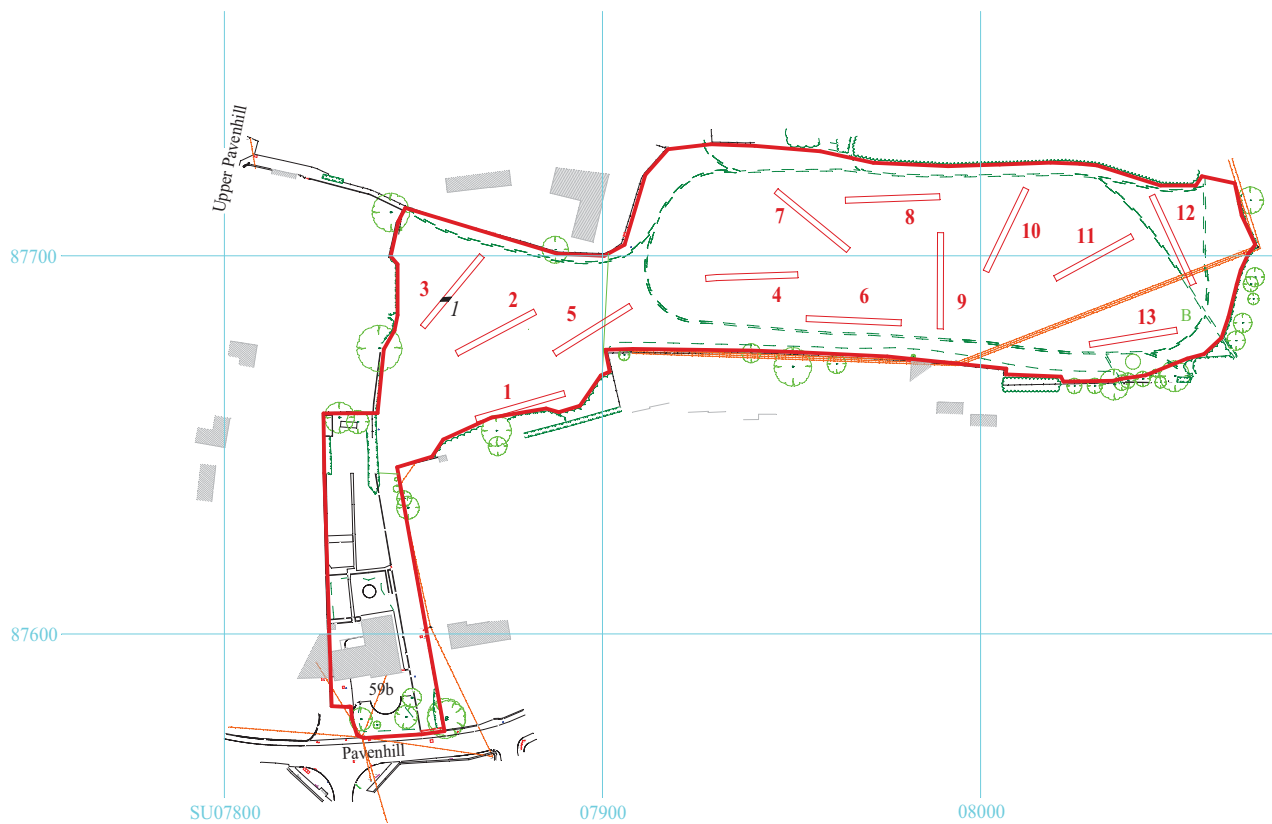


**Land to the rear of 27-28 Upper Pavenhill,
Purton, Swindon, Wiltshire, 2015
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Figure 1. Location of site within Purton and Wiltshire.

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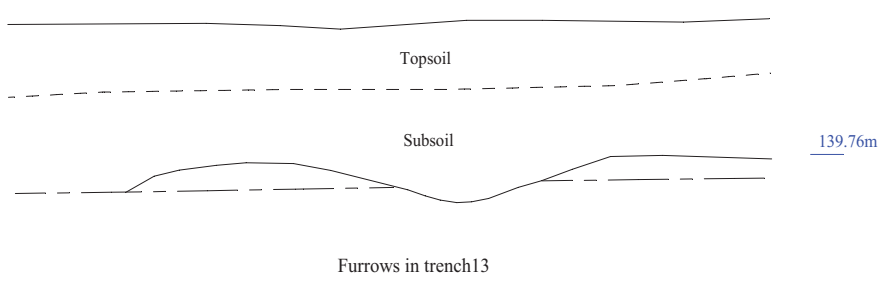
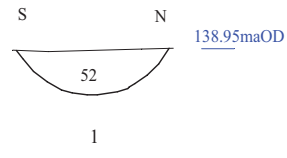
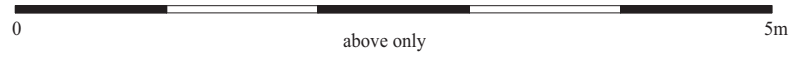
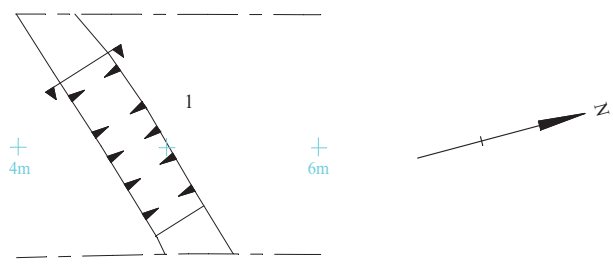
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Figure 2. Location of trenches and feature 1.



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Trench 3

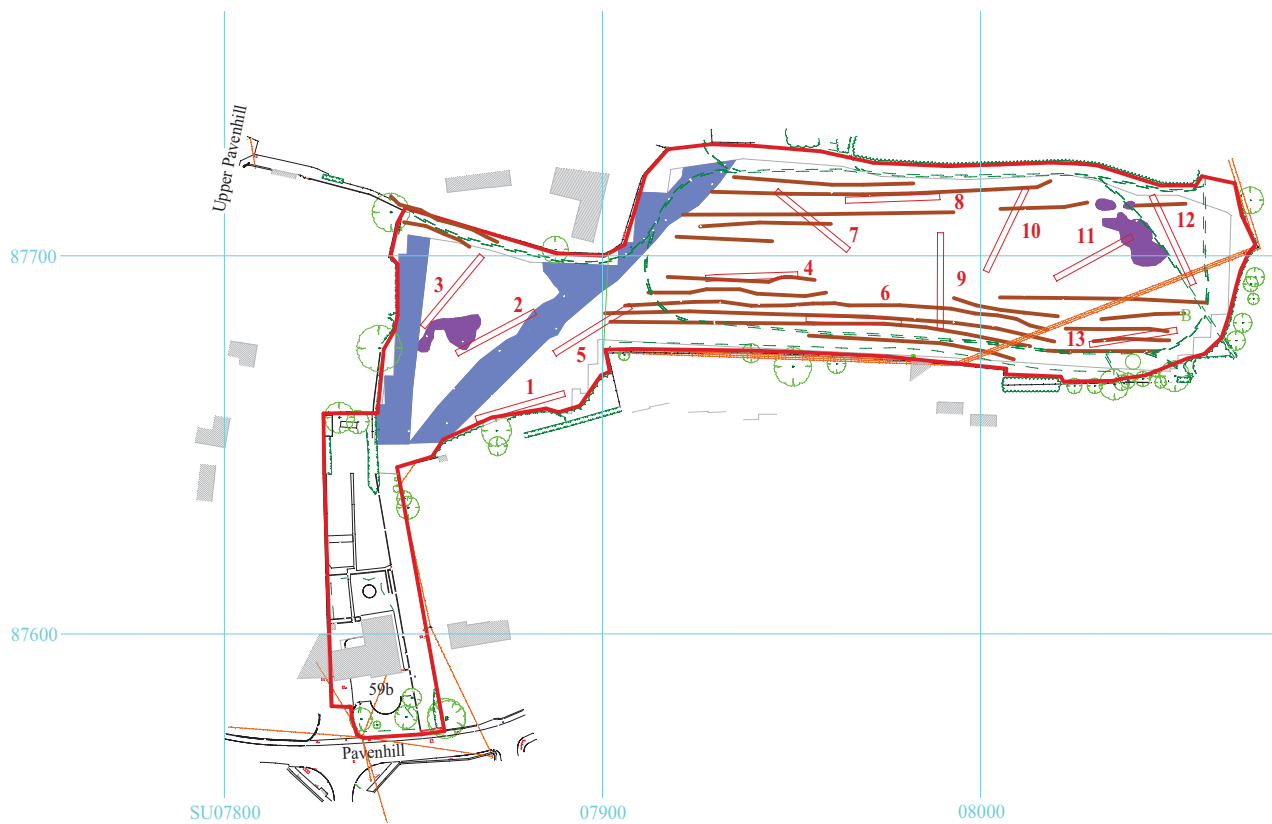


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Figure 3. Detail of trenches.





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Figure 4. Location of trenches, in relation to geophysics results.



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



Plate 2. Trench 3, gully 1, looking west, Scales: 0.3m and 0.1m.

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Plates 1 - 2.

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Plate 3. Trench 5 looking north east, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.3m.



Plate 4. Trench 6, looking east, Scales: 2m,1m and 0.3m.

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Plates 3 - 4.**

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Plate 5. Trench 9 looking north, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.3m.



Plate 6. Trench 10, looking north east, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.3m.

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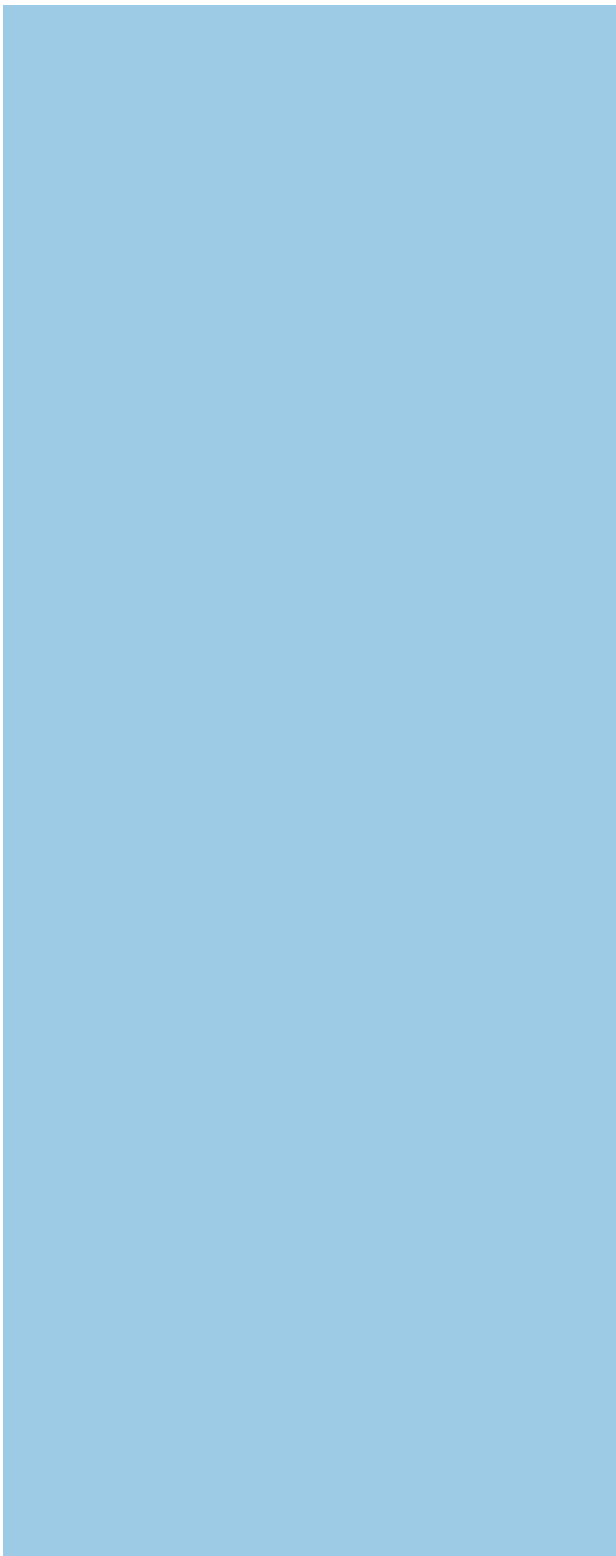
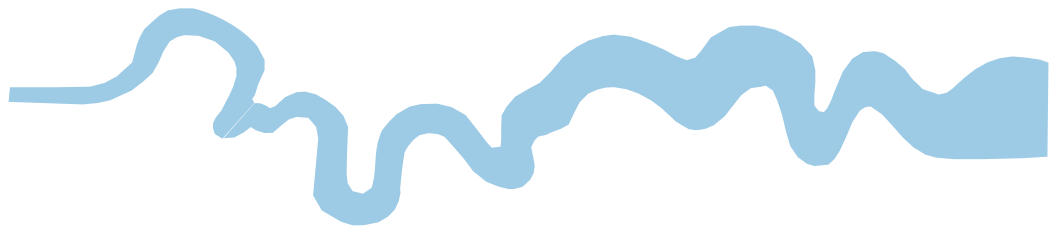
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Plates 5 - 6.

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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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