

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Land at Manor Farm,
West Overton, Wiltshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Daniel Bray

Site Code: MOW13/153

(SU 1287 6797)

Land at Manor Farm, West Overton, Wiltshire

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Mr Ted Cartlidge and Colburn**

by Daniel Bray

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code MOW 13/153

February 2015

Summary

Site name: Land at Manor Farm, West Overton, Wiltshire

Grid reference: SU 1287 6797

Site activity: Archaeological Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 4th – 10th February 2015

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Daniel Bray

Site code: MOW 13/153

Area of site: c. 0.9ha

Summary of results: Despite the archaeological potential of the site no features of archaeological interest were revealed. A few modern truncations and a former tiled farmyard were recorded. It is not considered that the proposed development will have any archaeological impact.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Devizes Museum or another local museum in due course.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 16.02.15 Steve Preston ✓ 13.02.15

Land at Manor Farm, West Overton, Marlborough, Wiltshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Daniel Bray

Report 13/153b

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out on land at Manor Farm, West Overton, Marlborough, Wiltshire (SU 1287 6797) (Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by Mr Martin Evans of Colburn, on behalf of Colburn, Gap House, Longwood Court, Love Lane, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 1YG and Mr and Mrs Ted Cartlidge, Manor Farm, West Overton, Marlborough, SN8 4ER.

Planning permission (14/05847/FUL) has been gained from Wiltshire County Council for the demolition of buildings and sections of walls and the erection of 10 dwellings, access, parking and associated landscaping, together with the erection of ancillary outbuildings for Manor Farmhouse and the removal and regrading of a former concrete clamp to paddock. As a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits on the site which may be damaged or destroyed by groundworks, the consent was subject to a condition requiring a programme of archaeological fieldwork.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012), and the Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Rachel Foster, Assistant County Archaeologist at Wiltshire Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Daniel Bray, Natasha Bennett and Sophie Frampton between 4th and 10th February 2015 with the site code MOW 13/153. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Devizes Museum or another local museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the western edge of the village of West Overton which lies south of the A4 road, west of Marlborough and c. 3km south-east of Avebury (Fig. 1). The site is at a former farmyard at Manor Farm and is formed of a roughly rhomboidal-shaped plot with an area of c. 0.9ha (Fig. 2). To the north the site is bounded by Manor Farmhouse and gardens, and to the east and south by brick wall, wooden fencing and a hedge following the angled road passing through the north-west of the village. A small number of cottages and modern bungalows are south and east of the road. On the west side it is separated from fields of pasture by wooden fencing and a hedge. West Overton lies on Quaternary sand and gravel terrace deposits in the valley bottom on the south side of

the River Kennet (BGS 1974). Chalk, chalk marl, clay with flints and gravel natural geology was recorded within the evaluation trenches. The site lies on land that slopes down from c. 148m above Ordnance Datum (aOD), at the south to c. 143m aOD, to the north.

Archaeological background

The site's archaeological potential has been highlighted in a desk-based assessment (Tabor 2013). In summary, the site is within the Marlborough Downs which are of exceptional archaeological interest for several periods. The site lies only 140m south of where the southern boundary of the Avebury World Heritage Site is defined by the course of the River Kennet. It lies within an area with one of the richest Neolithic and Bronze Age landscapes in Britain, including Windmill Hill causewayed enclosure and Avebury henge, Silbury Hill and West Kennet and East Kennet long barrows and The Sanctuary, (a hengiform monument). Land division on the Marlborough Downs during the Middle Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age, consisted of extensive organized field systems. The linear earthwork known as Wansdyke which passes within 3km to the south of the site is thought to delineate the boundaries of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms of Mercia and Wessex.

The place-name, Overton is first recorded in a charter of AD939 (Mills 1998). There are two listings of *Ovretone* in Domesday Book. The name 'East Overton' appears only to have been introduced in the late 16th century, although 'West Overton' had been in use since at least AD1275 (VCH 1980, 188–9). The current site, however, despite its present name, may have formed part of the easterly Overton which comprised 15 hides at the time of the Norman Conquest in 1066. At that time it was held by the Bishop of Winchester and remained so in 1086 when 8.5 hides were in demesne. It is described as having land for seven ploughs and included 15 acres of meadow, as well as pasture and woodland and was valued at £8 (Williams and Martin 2002, 165).

The farm house is listed Grade II (Edwards 2014), apparently post-dating 1820 (Tabor 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 the project are:

- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present;
- to determine if any Saxon or Medieval deposits representing ancillary settlement features such as enclosures, field systems or cemeteries are present;
- to determine if there are any Post-medieval deposits related to the farm as shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1887 but thought to have been present from the 1830s onwards are present; and
- to determine the impact of the development on the archaeological resource.

It was proposed to dig nine trenches, 20m long and 1.6m wide positioned in a 'stratified random' layout across the site. A contingency of 20m of trench was included should it be required to clarify initial findings. Where archaeological features were encountered they were to be hand cleaned and excavated, with environmental samples taken from the deposits.

Results

The nine trenches were excavated, however Trenches 1, 4 and 7 were repositioned to avoid known services and to retain access to parts of the farm (Fig. 3). Concrete and Tarmac were broken using a 360° type machine equipped with a breaker before other overburden was removed using a toothless ditching bucket to expose the archaeologically relevant horizons. This was monitored under constant archaeological supervision. The trenches ranged in length from 17.0m to 21.0m and in depth from 0.45–1.15m. Spoil heaps were checked for finds.

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; Pl. 1)

Trench 1 was aligned East–West and was 19.8m long and 1.15m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.07m of Tarmac above 0.10m of pink hoggin and 0.26m of black silty clay with rubble. Below this was a chalk layer 0.26m thick above 0.27m of mid red brown silty clay (buried topsoil?) and 0.19m of dark grey red sandy clay with gravel which was most likely natural geology. Below this was a dark grey red sandy clay with frequent gravel and occasional chalk inclusions. No archaeological features were present and no finds were recovered.

Trench 2 (Fig. 3)

Trench 2 was aligned North–South and was 19.5m long and 0.70m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.08m of Tarmac above 0.20m of reinforced concrete and 0.06m of hoggin. Under this was 0.40m of mid grey sandy clay which overlay the natural geology. This comprised of banded layers of light yellow red sandy clay, chalky marl and gravel. No archaeological features were present and no finds recovered.

Trench 3 (Fig.3; Pl. 7)

Trench 3 was aligned N - S and was 20.8m long and 0.65m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.05m of Tarmac above 0.20m of reinforced concrete and 0.10m of dark black clay with frequent brick inclusions. Under this was crushed brick and chalk made ground layer 0.20m thick above the natural geology. At the southern end of the trench this was clay with flint changing to chalk at the northern end. No archaeological features were present and no finds recovered.

Trench 4 (Fig. 3)

Trench 4 was aligned NNE - SSW and was 18.2m long and 1.10m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.32m of topsoil and 0.40m subsoil overlying natural clay-with-flint geology. No archaeological features were present and no finds recovered.

Trench 5 (Figs 3 and 4; Pl. 2)

Trench 5 was aligned E - W and was 20.7m long and 0.59m deep at the western end and 1.10m deep at the eastern end. The stratigraphy at the western end consisted of 0.23m of sand and gravel above 0.16m of mid brown clay made ground layer and a very thin amount of hoggin. This was above 0.03m of very dark contaminated layer and 0.17m of brown clay made ground layer. This was above the natural clay with flint geology. At the eastern end the stratigraphy consisted of 0.15m of sand and gravel above 0.12m of hoggin and 0.54m of very dark clay with modern material such as asbestos and steel reinforcement wire. Below this was 0.20m of clay with flint and smaller amount of modern material above the clean natural clay and flint geology. No archaeological features were present and no finds recovered.

Trench 6 (Fig. 3; Pl. 5)

Trench 6 was aligned NNW - SSE and was 21.0m long and 0.57m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of topsoil and 0.20m of subsoil and 0.17m of dirty chalk and clay overlying the natural geology. No archaeological features were present and no finds recovered.

Trench 7 (Fig. 3; Pl. 6)

Trench 7 was aligned NW – SE and was 17.5m long and 0.45m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.10m of Tarmac above 0.10m of grey clay and 0.15m of hoggin. Below this was 0.15m of dark brown grey clay silt above the natural clay and flint geology. A gully aligned east-west contained a modern water pipe, and a concrete footing also aligned east-west was observed. No archaeological features were present and no finds recovered.

Trench 8 (Fig 3)

Trench 8 was aligned NNE - SSW and was 17.0m long and 0.50m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.06m of Tarmac and 0.20m of hoggin above 0.16m of crushed Tarmac above the natural chalk geology. No archaeological features were present and no finds recovered.

Trench 9 (Fig 3; Pls 3 and 4)

Trench 9 was aligned E - W and was 20.0m long and 0.40m – 0.55m deep. The stratigraphy at the western end consisted of 0.10m of concrete above 0.13m of hoggin and 0.17m of dark brown clay above the natural chalk marl geology. The stratigraphy at the eastern end consisted of 0.12m of concrete above 0.30m of hoggin onto the old tiled farm yard surface. Directly to the west and below the tiled surface was a modern truncation containing china, glass and slate. No archaeological features were present and no finds recovered.

Conclusion

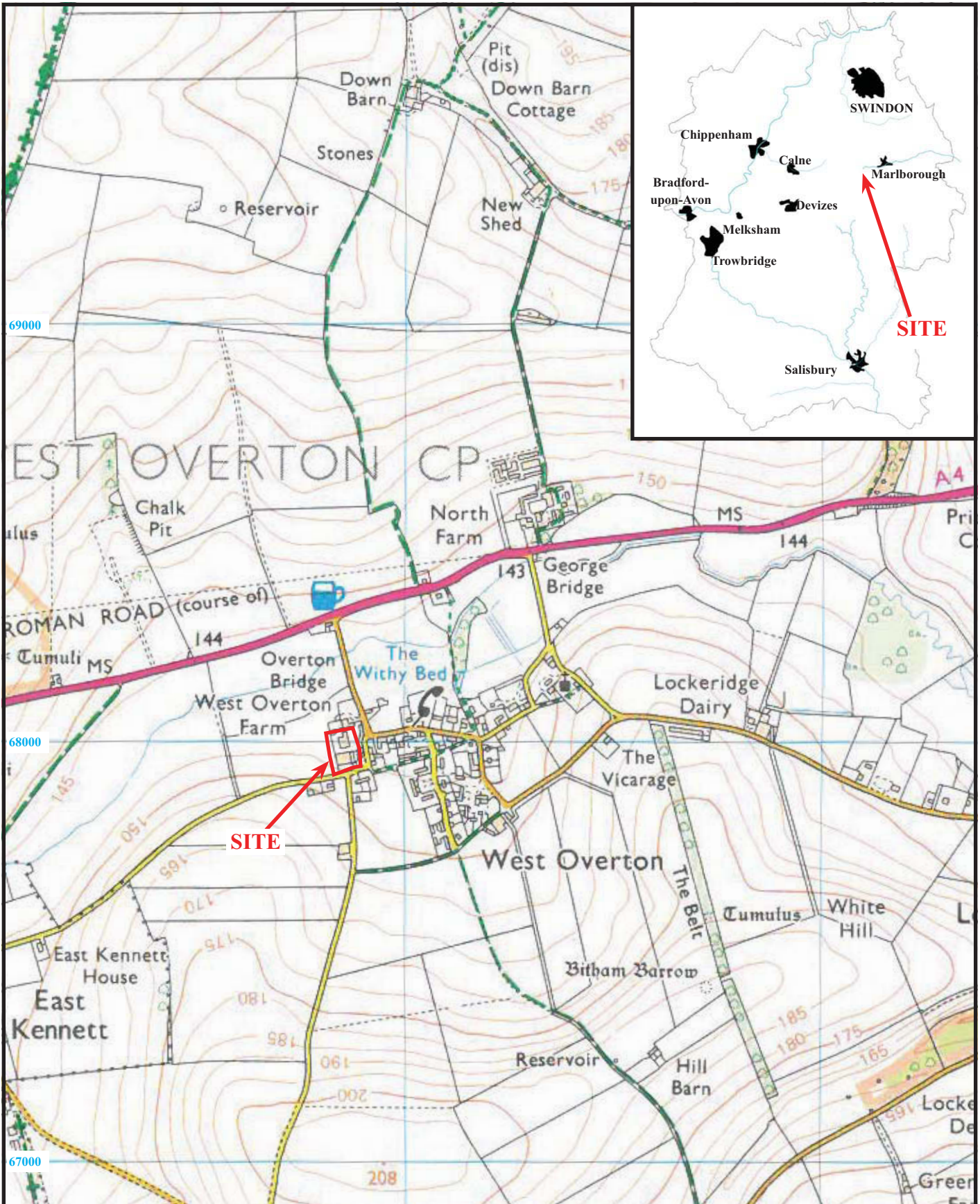
Despite the archaeological potential of the site, no deposits of archaeological interest were revealed. The top of the site has been built up to create a level area and the archaeological relevant horizon does survive. At the southern end a possible buried topsoil suggests that the archaeological relevant horizon survives there too while in the middle of the site no topsoil or subsoil was present suggesting this area has been truncated to create a level yard surface. A tiled surface representing an old farmyard was revealed in the centre of the site and a modern truncation containing china, glass and slate was also revealed. It is not considered that the proposed development will have any archaeological impact.

References

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- NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London
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- Williams, A and Martin, G H, 2002, *Domesday Book, a complete translation*, London

APPENDIX 1: Trench details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	19.80	1.60	1.15	0-0.07m Tarmac; 0.07m-0.17m pink hoggin; 0.17m-0.43m black rubble layer; 0.43m-0.69m chalk levelling layer; 0.69m-0.96m mid red brown silty clay occ gravel (buried topsoil?); 0.96m-1.15m dark grey red sandy clay with gravel (dirty natural?) 1.15m+ dark grey red sandy clay with occ chalk and gravel inclusions. [Pl. 1]
2	19.50	1.60	0.74	0-0.08m Tarmac; 0.08m-0.28m concrete; 0.28m-0.34m hogging; 0.34-0.74m mid grey sandy clay (buried topsoil?) 0.74m+ light yellow red sandy clay natural geology with gravel patches
3	20.80	1.60	0.65	0-0.05m Tarmac; 0.05m-0.25m concrete; 0.25m-0.35m dark levelling layer with red brick; 0.35m-0.55m red brick and chalk; 0.55m+ mid red brown sandy clay and chalk natural geology. [Pl. 7]
4	18.20	1.60	1.10	0-0.32m topsoil; 0.32m-0.70m subsoil; 0.70m+ clay with flints natural geology
5	20.70	1.60	0.59-1.10	W end; 0-0.23m sandy gravel layer; 0.23m-0.39m medium brown clay made ground; 0.39m-0.42m dark grey contaminated layer; 0.42m-0.59m medium brown clay made ground; 0.59m+ natural clay with flint geology E end; 0-0.15m sandy gravel layer; 0.15m-0.27m hogging; 0.27m-0.81m dark grey made ground layer; 0.81m-1.10m mid brown sandy clay made ground layer; 1.10m+ chalk natural geology. [Pl. 2]
6	21	1.60	0.57	0-0.20m topsoil; 0.20m-0.40m mid brown clay subsoil; 0.40m-0.57m dirty chalk and clay layer; 0.57m+ clay with flint natural geology with chalk patches [Pl. 5]
7	17.50	1.60	0.45	0-0.10 Tarmac; 0.10m-0.20m grey clay made ground; 0.20m-0.35m hoggin; 0.35m-0.45m dark brown grey clay silt; 0.45m+ clay with flint natural geology and occ chalk. [Pl. 6]
8	17.00	1.60	0.50	0-0.06m Tarmac; 0.06-0.26m hoggin; 0.26m-0.42m crushed tarmac; 0.42m+ natural chalk and clay geology
9	20.00	1.60	0.40-0.55	W end; 0-0.10m concrete; 0.10m-0.23m hoggin; 0.23m-0.40m dark brown clay made ground; 0.40m+ clay with flint and chalk natural geology E end; 0-0.12m concrete; 0.12m-0.42m hoggin; 0.42m+ tiled farm yard and modern truncation. [Pls 3 and 4]



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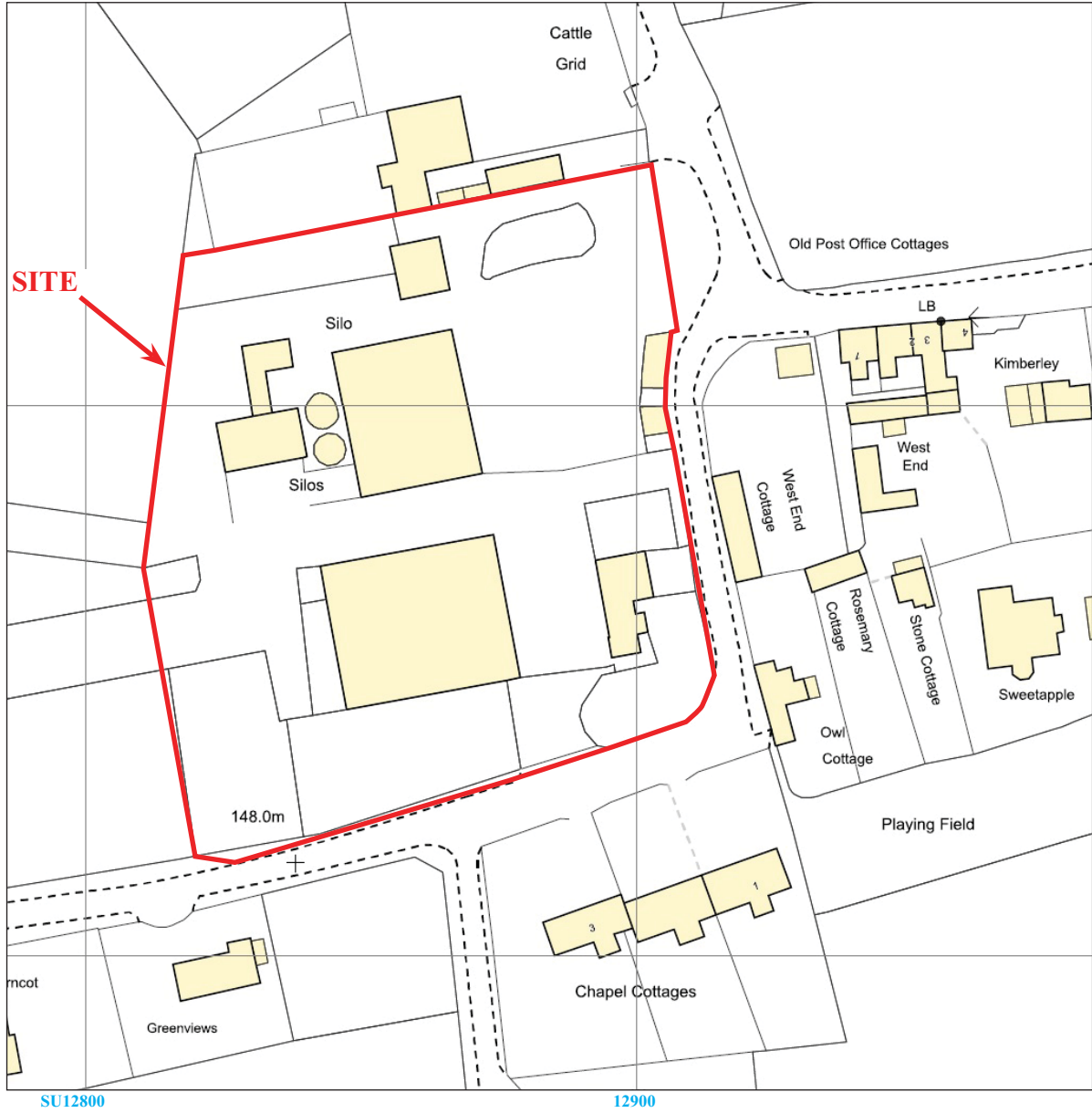
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Figure 1. Location of site within West Overton and Wiltshire.

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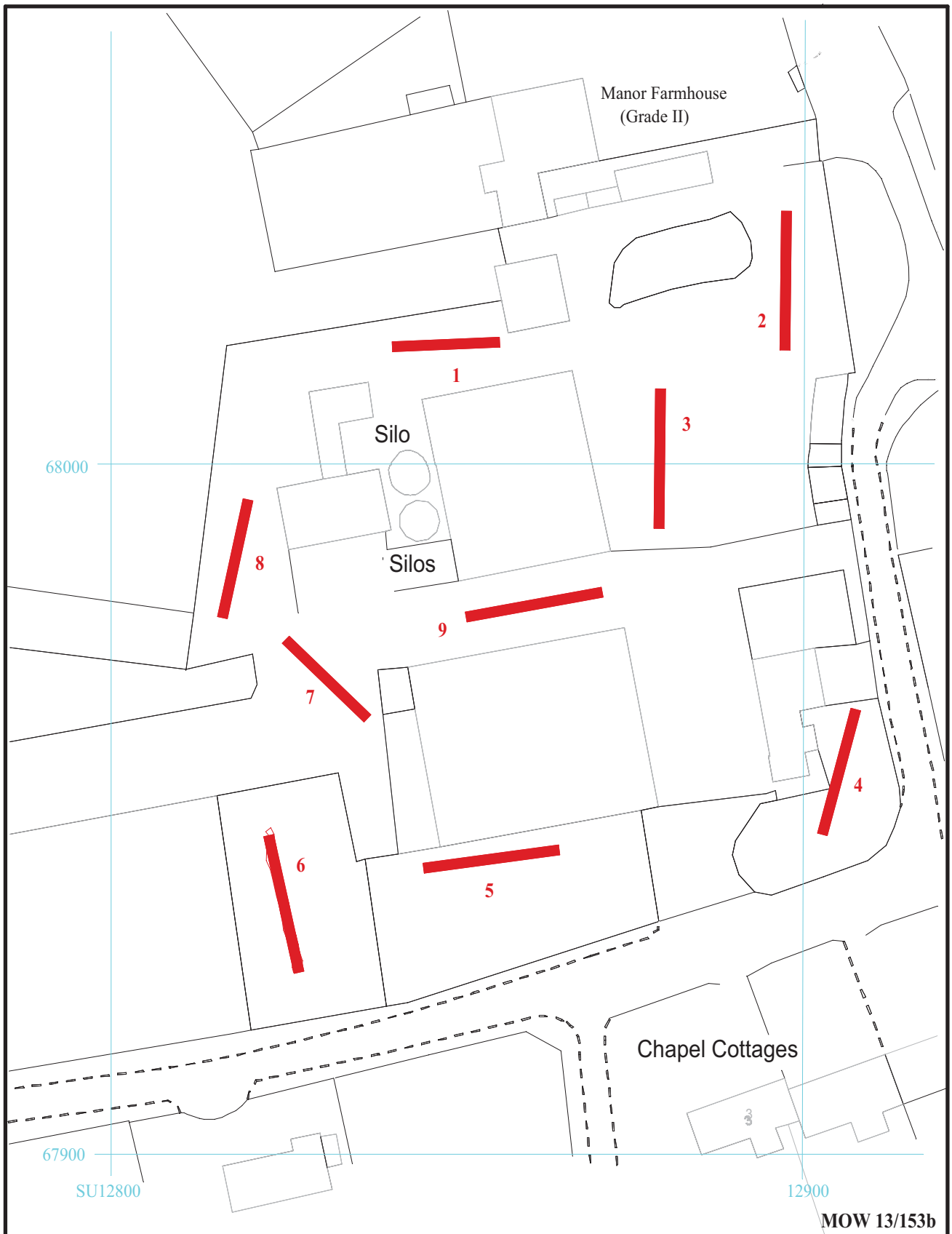
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site.

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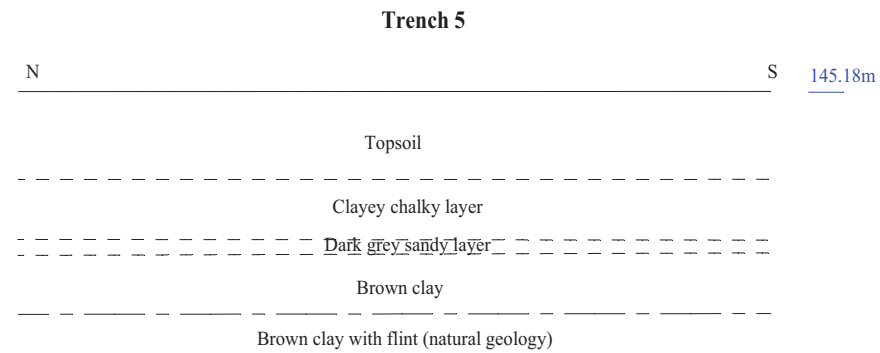
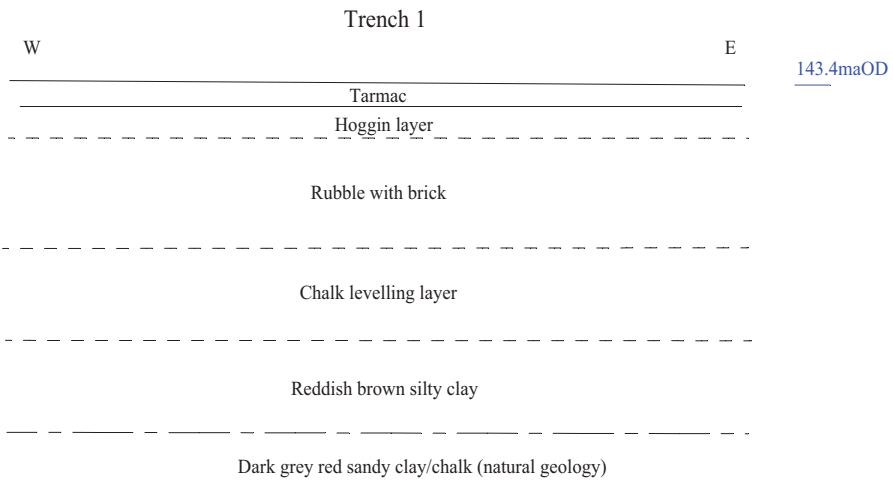


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Figure 3. Location of trenches.



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Figure 4. Representative sections.





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



Plate 2. Trench 5, looking west,
Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 3. Trench 9, looking east,
Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 4. Trench 9, tile yard surfacing, looking west, Scales: 1m.

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Plates 1 - 4.**

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Plate 5. Trench 6, looking north,
Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 6. Trench 7, looking north west,
Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m.



Plate 7. Trench 3, looking south east,

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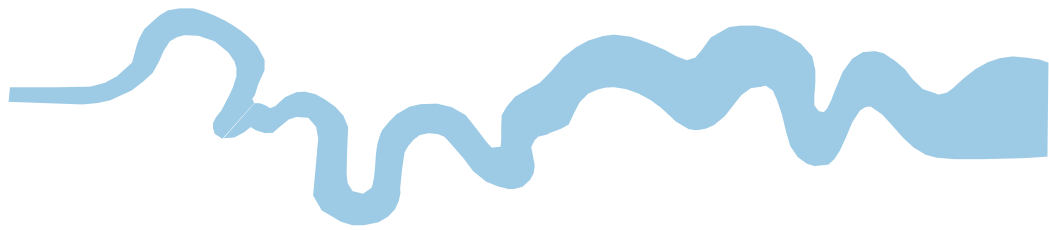
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Plates 5 - 7.**

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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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