

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Land adjacent to Sheards Lane, 11 Lane End,
Stanford in the Vale, Oxfordshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by Andy Taylor and Daniel Strachan

Site Code: LEO15/41

(SU 3447 9321)

**Land Adjacent to Sheards Lane, 11 Lane End,
Stanford in the Vale, Oxfordshire**

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For Mr Nick Ponting

by Andy Taylor and Daniel Strachan

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code LEO 15/41

August 2015

Summary

Site name: Land Adjacent to Sheards Lane, 11 Lane End, Stanford in the Vale, Oxfordshire

Grid reference: SU 3447 9321

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 8th-9th June 2015

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Daniel Strachan

Site code: LEO 15/41

Area of site: c. 900 sq m

Summary of results: The archaeological watching brief successfully investigated all areas that were to be affected by groundworks. No deposits nor artefacts of archaeological interest were observed. One modern backfilled ditch was observed marking the southern boundary of the pre-existing garden.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museums Service in due course.

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

Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 11.08.15 Steve Preston ✓ 11.08.15

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Report 15/41

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at land adjacent to Sheards Lane, 11 Lane End, Stanford in the Vale, Oxfordshire (SU 3447 9321) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Robert Buchanan, BHP Harwood Architects, The White Barn, Manor Farm, Manor Road, Wantage, Oxfordshire, OX12 8NE, on behalf of Mr Nick Ponting, 11 Lane End, Stanford in the Vale, Oxfordshire.

Planning permission (P14/V1429/FUL) had been gained from the Vale of the White Horse District Council for the construction of a new three bedroom dwelling with attached garage on land adjacent to Sheards Lane, 11 Lane End, Stanford in the Vale, Oxfordshire. Due to the potential disturbance of below ground archaeological features, conditions (5 and 6) relating to archaeology had been attached to the planning permission requiring that an archaeological watching brief be maintained during the period of groundworks.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012) and the District's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Joanne Robinson, Assistant Archaeological Officer for Oxfordshire County Council, advisers to the District on matters relating to archaeology, and based on a brief supplied by her (Robinson 2015). The fieldwork was undertaken by Daniel Strachan on 8th and 9th June 2015, and the site code is LEO 15/41.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museums Service in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the southern fringe of Stanford in the Vale, c.6.4km to the south-east of Faringdon and c.7km north west of Wantage, Oxfordshire (Fig. 1). It comprised the gardens associated with the adjacent property (Fig. 2). The underlying geology is mapped as Limestone Sand (BGS 1971), which was observed on site and it lies at a height of c.70m above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential has been highlighted in a brief prepared by Oxfordshire County Archaeological Service (Robinson 2015). In summary, the proposed development lies in an area of considerable archaeological potential. A watching brief just to the south-west of the site recorded Roman pits containing adult human burials, with possible Saxon features near by. Additional Roman features were found north-east of the site along with Iron Age to medieval pottery. Trial trenching north-west of the site also identified Roman and medieval deposits.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits which would be affected by the works. This involved monitoring of all areas of intrusive groundworks/operations and included observation of surface stripping, excavation of foundations and service trenches, landscaping works and all other invasive work as necessary. Archaeological deposits which were exposed by the footings excavations were to be recorded but not excavated further unless threatened by the groundworks.

Results

The fieldwork comprised two components- monitoring of overburden removal and monitoring of foundation trench digging.

Overburden removal

An area measuring c. 20mx20m was stripped of topsoil. This ground reduction was carried out by a 360° type machine fitted with a toothless grading bucket under constant archaeological supervision and all spoilheaps were monitored for finds. The topsoil was c. 0.3m thick and overlay subsoil. The topsoil strip exposed numerous deposits of made ground and one recently backfilled modern ditch roughly diagonally from east to west across the north of the building footprint, corresponding with the recently removed boundary (Fig. 3). The made ground contained frequent occurrences of modern china, pottery and glass bottles/fragments and the ditch backfill contained modern brick and tile (Pl. 1). No deposits of archaeological interest were observed.

Foundation trenches

All footings were dug to 0.60m wide and ranged between 0.50m and 1.50m in depth. Roughly 120m of footings was excavated altogether (Fig. 3). At the north western end, typically the stratigraphy comprised 0.3m of topsoil

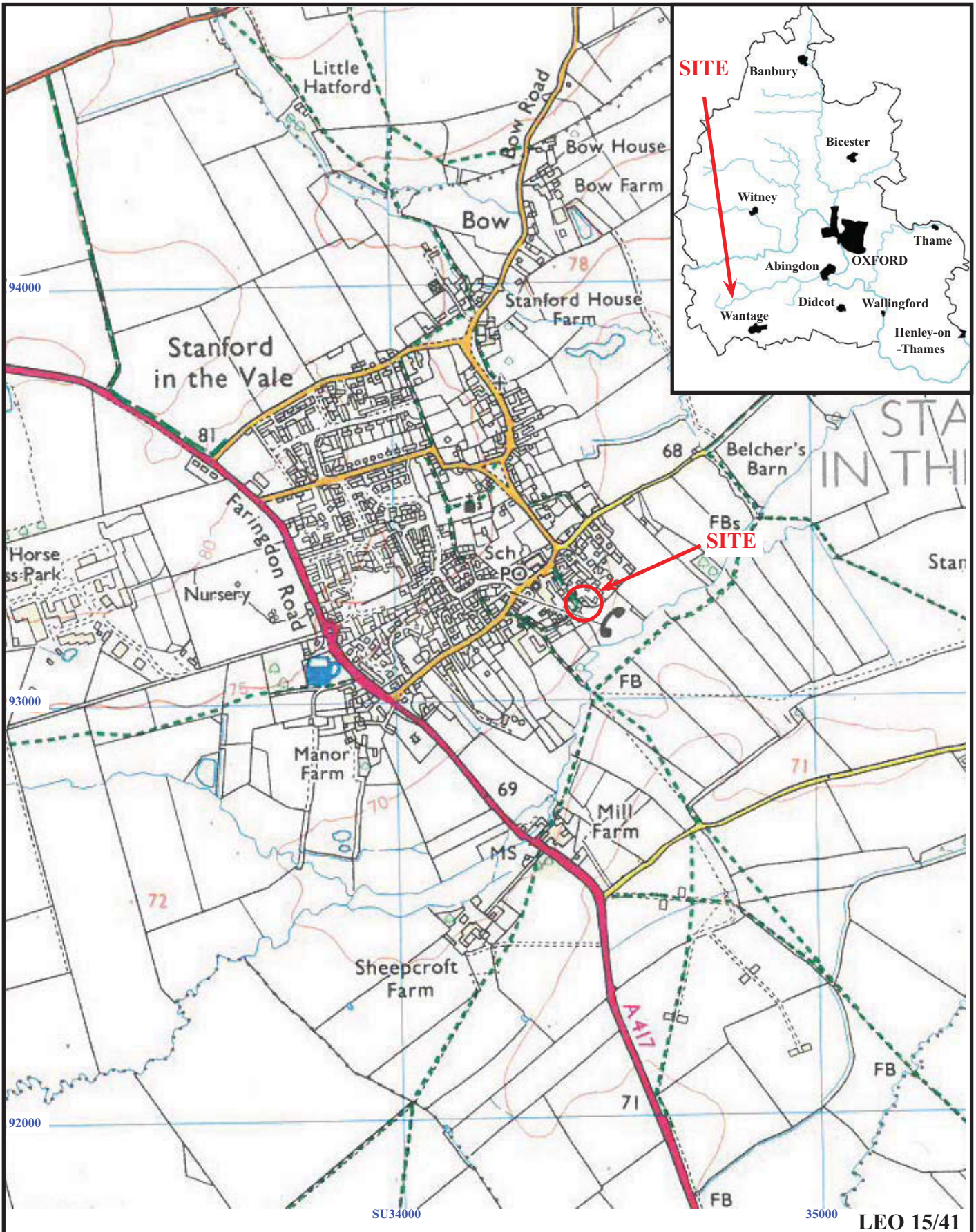
overlying 0.6m of dark grey sandy clay subsoil above yellow brown sandy clay natural geology changing to solid limestone at depth. A changeable natural geology was observed. North of the backfilled modern ditch where the ground level was slightly raised (ie, the made ground), the natural geology was mid-pale yellowish brown sandy clay; whereas to the south of the site the mid-pale yellowish brown sandy clay appeared to overly solid rock and in some cases this was all that was observed (Fig. 4; Pl. 2).

Conclusion

This watching brief successfully monitored all areas that were to be affected by groundworks for the erection of the new house. Only modern deposits were encountered and despite the potential for archaeology to be present no deposits or finds of archaeological interest were observed.

References

- BGS, 1971, *British Geological Survey*, 1:63,360, Sheet 253, Drift Edition, Keyworth
NPPF 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London
Robinson, J, 2015, 'Land Adjacent to Sheards Lane, 11 Lane End, Stanford in the Vale, Design Brief for Archaeological Watching Brief', Oxfordshire County Archaeological Service, Oxford

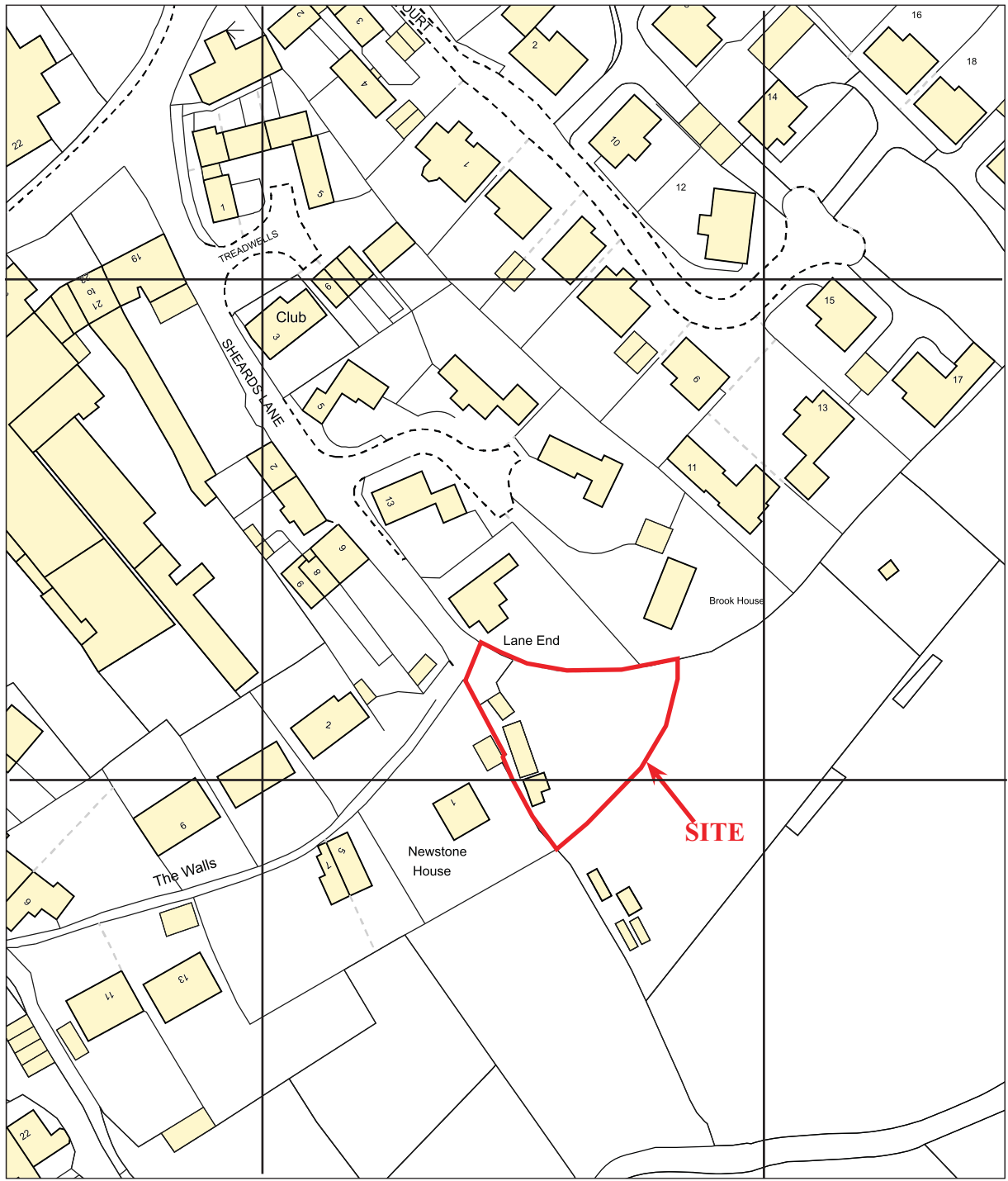


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Figure 1. Location of site within Stanford in the Vale and Oxfordshire

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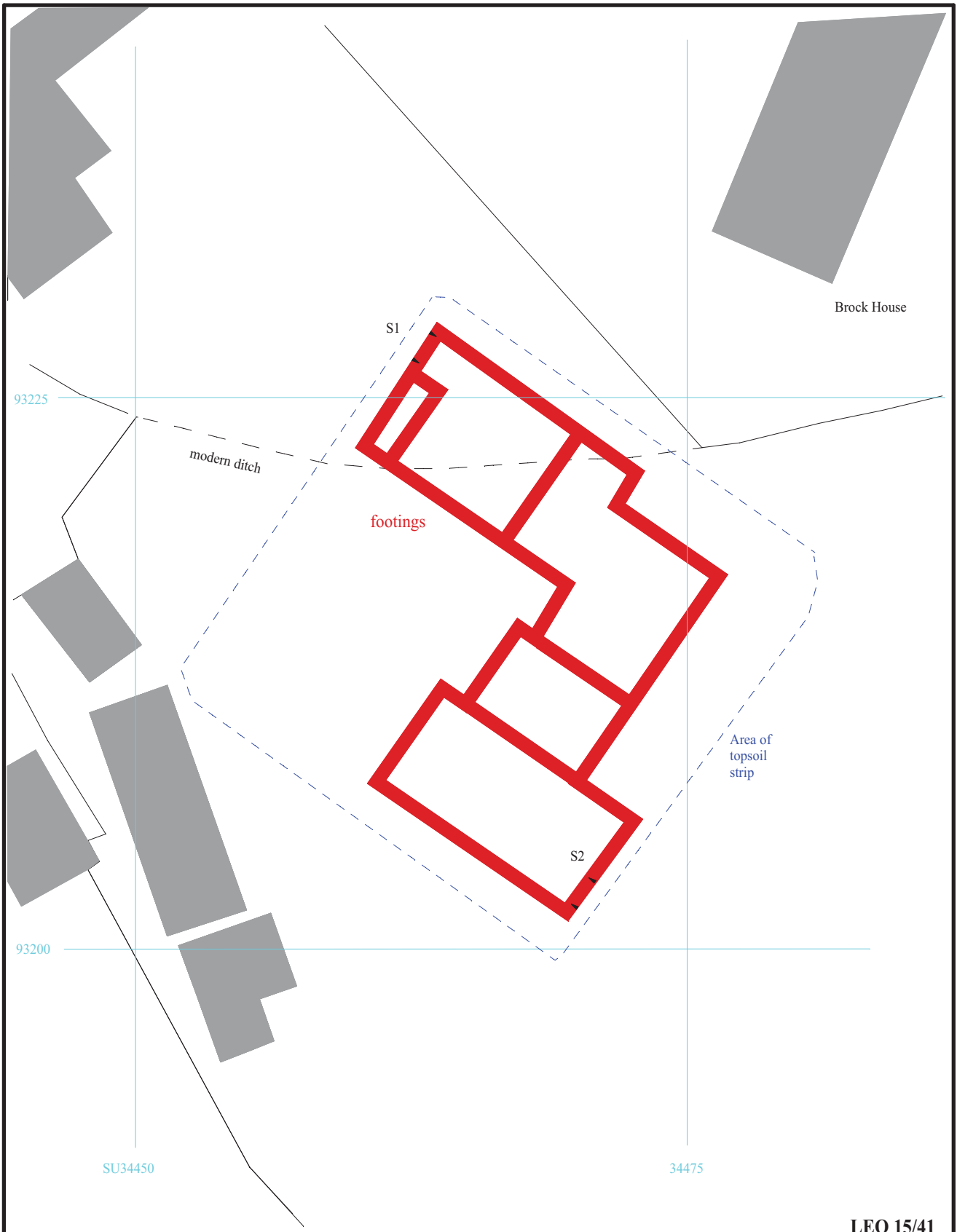
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Sheards Lane.

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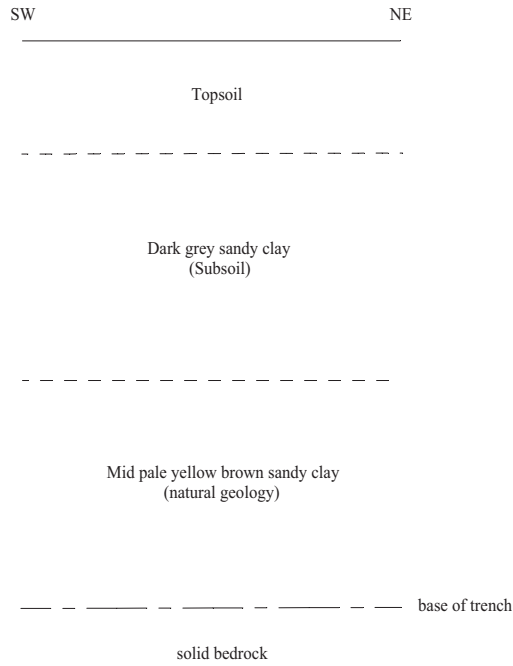
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Figure 3. Location of observed areas

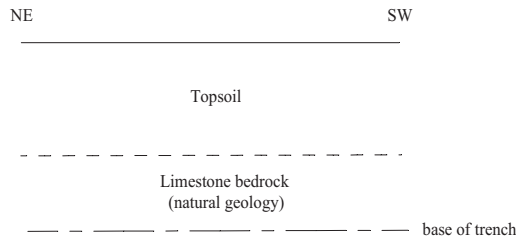


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Section 1



Section 2



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Figure 4. Representative sections.





Plate 1. Site, looking northwest, Scales: 2m and 1m.



Plate 2. Footing section, Scales: 2m and 1m.

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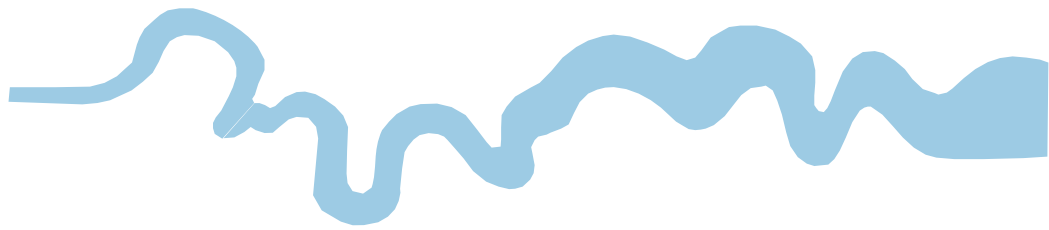
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Plates 1 - 2.**

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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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