

**T H A M E S      V A L L E Y**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL**

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

**Fort Hill Community School, Winklebury,  
Basingstoke, Hampshire**

**Archaeological Watching Brief**

**by David Sanchez**

**Site Code: FSW15/193**

**(SU 6125 5280)**

# **Fort Hill Community School, Winklebury, Basingstoke, Hampshire**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief**

**For Hampshire County Council**

by David Sanchez

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code FSW 15/193

**November 2015**

## Summary

**Site name:** Fort Hill Community School, Winklebury, Basingstoke, Hampshire

**Grid reference:** SU 6125 5280

**Site activity:** Watching Brief

**Date and duration of project:** 26th October - 5th November 2015

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** Kyle Beaverstock

**Site code:** FSW 15/193

**Summary of results:** No deposits or artefacts of archaeological interest were observed.

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Hampshire County Museum Service 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 ✓ 20.11.15 Steve Preston ✓ 19.11.15
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# Fort Hill Community School, Winklebury, Basingstoke, Hampshire An Archaeological Watching Brief

by David Sanchez

Report 15/193

## Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at Fort Hill Community School, Winklebury, Basingstoke, Hampshire (SU 6125 5280) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Adam Girling, of HCC Property Services, Three Minsters House, 76 High Street, Winchester, Hampshire SO23 8UL on behalf of Hampshire County Council. The school lies within Winklebury Camp Iron Age hillfort which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (1003559).

Scheduled Monument consent (S00109129) has been gained for the digging of replacement postholes for a fence, and planning permission has been gained for a new turning circle in a car park at Fort Hill Community School. The Scheduled Monument consent and the planning permission are subject to conditions requiring an archaeological watching brief to be maintained during the works.

This is in accordance with the *Ancient Monuments and Scheduled Areas Act* (1979), the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012), and local plan policies on archaeology. The written scheme of investigation was approved by David Wilkinson of Historic England and by David Hopkins, Hampshire County Archaeologist. The fieldwork was undertaken by Kyle Beaverstock, Aidan Colyer and David Sanchez, between 26th October and 5th November 2015 and the site code is FSW15/193.

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

## Location, topography and geology

The site is located within the grounds of Fort Hill School which is in itself situated within Winklebury Camp Iron Age hillfort, in the west Basingstoke suburb of Winklebury. The site occupies an irregular parcel of land consisting of a heavily landscaped area to the west which encompasses the school buildings. A playing field makes up the rest of the internal area of the hillfort and this area is flat. The earthworks on the southern extent of the site have maintained their original form. However those on the north and east have been heavily landscaped due to the creation of a modern housing estate and a single much reduced bank is all that remains in this area.

The site lies at a height of 120m to 125m above Ordnance Datum at the summit of a locally prominent hill, and the original earthworks broadly follow the natural contours. The underlying geology is mapped as Cretaceous Upper Chalk (BGS 1974) and this was uncovered in most of the groundworks.

## **Archaeological background**

Iron Age hillforts are generally strongly defensive sites and many are found within the chalklands of Wessex. Some forts, such as that at Danebury near Stockbridge, were intensively used with the latter's interior containing concentrated settlement evidence including numerous large grain storage pits and round houses (Cunliffe 1984). Others appear largely empty and may have served as no more than cattle kraals in times of stress, or meeting places only sporadically visited rather than permanently occupied.

The area of groundworks lies within the perimeter of the Scheduled Monument of Winklebury Camp (SAM no 1003559). A large area within Winklebury Camp Iron Age hillfort was archaeologically excavated prior to the construction of a new school in the 1970s. This revealed a number of round houses and other features, but relatively few storage pits and with surprisingly few cut features present (Smith 1977).

A previous watching brief was carried out on two other fence lines, but despite the fact that these groundworks were undertaken on the bank and the internal perimeter of the site (Fig. 2), no archaeological features or finds were observed (Castle 2013).

## **Objectives and methodology**

The purpose of the watching brief was to examine, record and excavate any archaeological deposits affected by the works. This involved the archaeological monitoring of all areas of intrusive groundworks, in particular the digging of fence posts, any ground reduction, etc. All fence postholes were to be excavated by hand under archaeological supervision and spoilheaps were to be checked for finds. Archaeological deposits that were threatened by the works were to be excavated and recorded.

## **Results**

The fieldwork comprised two components: monitoring of ground reduction in the car park for a new turning circle, and examination of the postholes for new fences (Fig. 2).

### *Ground reduction in car park*

The ground reduction in the car park showed that the area was previously landscaped and heavily truncated by the original car park groundworks (Pl. 1). Tarmac, or in the westernmost part of the small area stripped, turf and topsoil, overlay 0.16m of light brown silty made ground directly above the natural chalk, which was much degraded. The maximum depth of the stripping was 0.40m in the west, shallower to the east. No archaeological features or finds were observed during this part of the watching brief.

### *North-western fence line*

A total of 12 postholes were dug in the north-western area of the hillfort running NW-SE. The postholes maximum extents were 0.34m by 0.30m and the maximum depth recorded was 0.50m. No archaeological features or finds were observed.

The stratigraphy encountered was the same in all the postholes, consisting of 0.05m of Tarmac on top of a modern made ground with small and medium size gravels. Underneath this made ground the natural chalk was recorded at 0.43m depth.

### *Southern fence line (Pls 2–4)*

A total of 13 postholes were dug in the south area of the hillfort for the erection of the new fence, 12 of which were running NW-SE from the southern building of the school and one (posthole 8) was offset to the east from this line, connecting the new fence with the playground fence. The postholes' maximum extents were 0.60m by 0.58m, the minimum extents were 0.37m by 0.36m and the maximum depth recorded 0.75m. The stratigraphy recorded during the watching brief of southern fence postholes was not so homogeneous as that recorded in the northern fence so a full list of postholes details from the south fence including dimensions and stratigraphy can be seen in Appendix 1. No archaeological features or finds of interest were observed.

The general stratigraphy encountered comprised between 0.04 to 0.08m of Tarmac on top of a made ground (52) with small and medium size gravels. Underneath this made ground, in postholes 1 to 6, was recorded the natural chalk at 0.30m depth. Postholes 9 to 13 have the same succession of Tarmac and made ground on top of a light brown clay silt sediment (55) with small and medium size chalk (75%) and flint (2%) inclusions and very occasional fragments of modern bricks and tiles. This is probably due to previous groundworks in the area for the creation of the nearby playground or the school building foundation.

Variations of stratigraphy were observed in postholes 7 and 8, in the southern end of the fence, with 0.04m of Tarmac (only in posthole 7) on top of light brown silt topsoil (50). Underneath the topsoil a redeposited layer of chalk (54) was recorded on top of a light brown silt sediment (53) with small size gravel (2%) and chalk (20%) inclusions, on top of natural chalk. The stratigraphy related in both postholes could again be due to previous groundworks related with the creation of the playground, which is only 2.60m from posthole 8.

## **Conclusion**

No archaeological features or finds were observed during the watching brief. This is not surprising considering the minimal intrusion of the postholes dug and previous ground reductions only a few metres from this area, related to the playground construction, as well as the original car park groundworks.

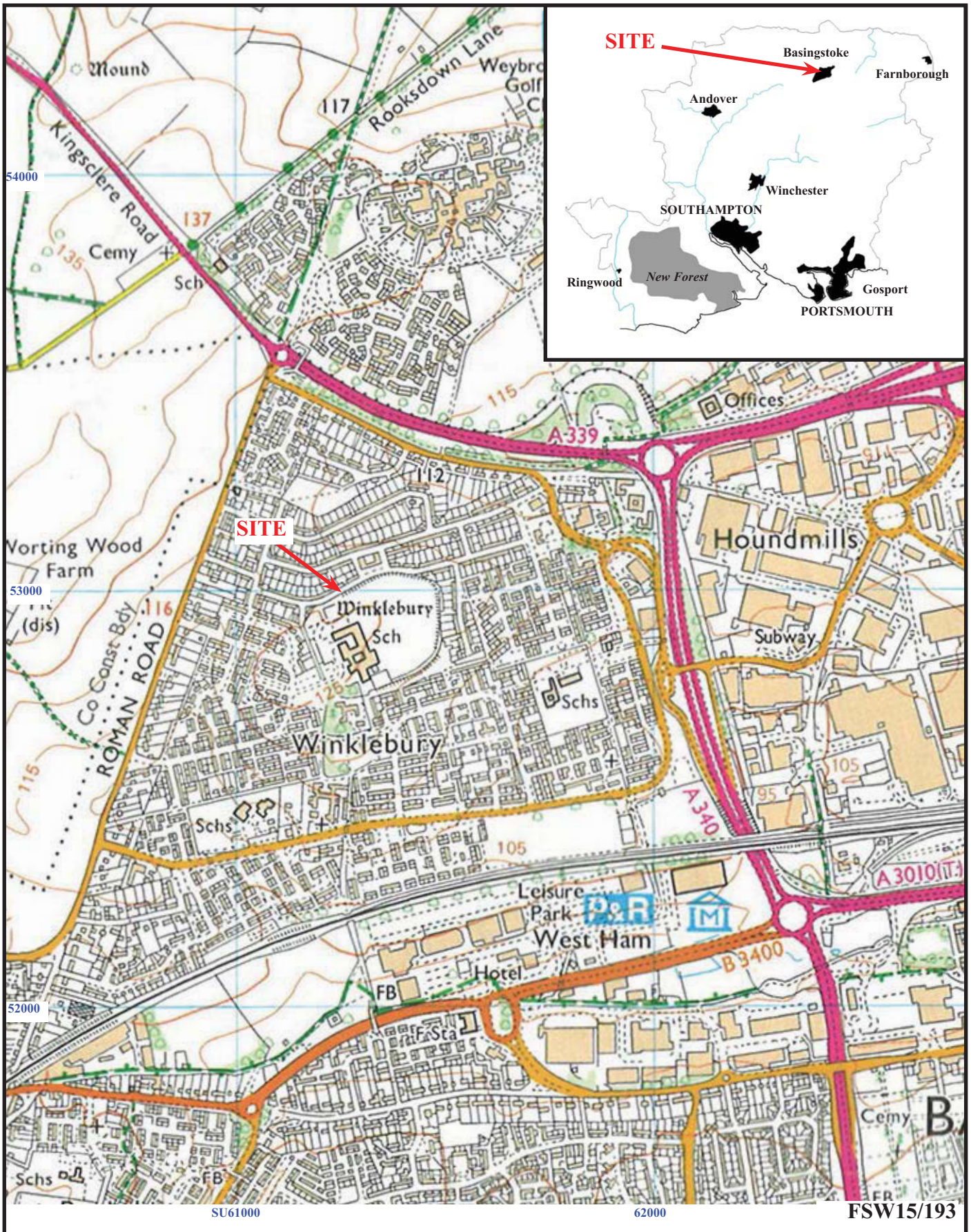
## **References**

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- Cunliffe, B, 1984, *Danebury, an Iron Age hillfort in Hampshire, Vol 1 The excavations 1969–1978: the site*, CBA Res Rep **52**, London
- Castle, A, 2013, 'Fort Hill Community School, Winklebury, Basingstoke, Hampshire. An Archaeological Watching Brief', Thames Valley Archaeological Services report **13/192**, Reading.
- NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London
- Smith, K, 1977, 'The excavation of Winklebury camp, Basingstoke, Hampshire', *Proc Prehist Soc* **43**, 31–139

## APPENDIX 1: South fence postholes details.

<i>Posthole</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1	0.60	0.58	0.45	0.00-0.04m Tarmac; 0.04-0.30m made ground (52); 0.30-0.45m natural chalk (51)
2	0.48	0.40	0.50	0.00-0.04m Tarmac; 0.04-0.30m made ground (52); 0.30-0.50m natural chalk (51) <b>[Pl. 3]</b>
3	0.53	0.34	0.55	0.00-0.04m Tarmac; 0.04-0.30m made ground (52); 0.30-0.55m natural chalk (51)
4	0.58	0.35	0.53	0.00-0.04m Tarmac; 0.04-0.30m made ground (52); 0.30-0.53m natural chalk (51)
5	0.46	0.45	0.50	0.00-0.04m Tarmac; 0.04-0.30m made ground (52); 0.30-0.50m natural chalk (51)
6	0.45	0.37	0.55	0.00-0.04m Tarmac; 0.04-0.30m made ground (52); 0.30-0.55m natural chalk (51)
7	0.50	0.38	0.68	0.00-0.04m Tarmac; 0.04-0.32m topsoil (50); 0.32-0.40m redeposited chalk (54); 0.40-0.62m light brown silt (53); 0.62-0.68m natural chalk (51) <b>[Pl. 4]</b>
8	0.38	0.35	0.59	0.00-0.17m topsoil (50); 0.17-0.22m redeposited chalk (54); 0.22-0.39m light brown silt (53); 0.39-0.59m natural chalk (51)
9	0.37	0.36	0.75	0.00-0.07 Tarmac; 0.07-0.28m made ground (52); 0.28-0.75m light brown clay silt (55), brick and tile fragments
10	0.38	0.38	0.69	0.00-0.08m Tarmac; 0.08-0.26m made ground (52); 0.26-0.69m light brown clay silt (55)
11	0.38	0.38	0.50	0.00-0.07m Tarmac; 0.07-0.25m made ground (52); 0.25-0.50m light brown clay silt (55)
12	0.38	0.25	0.56	0.00-0.07m Tarmac; 0.07-0.36m made ground (52); 0.36-0.56m light brown clay silt (55)
13	0.39	0.39	0.63	0.00-0.06m Tarmac; 0.06-0.35m made ground (52); 0.35-0.63m light brown clay silt (55)



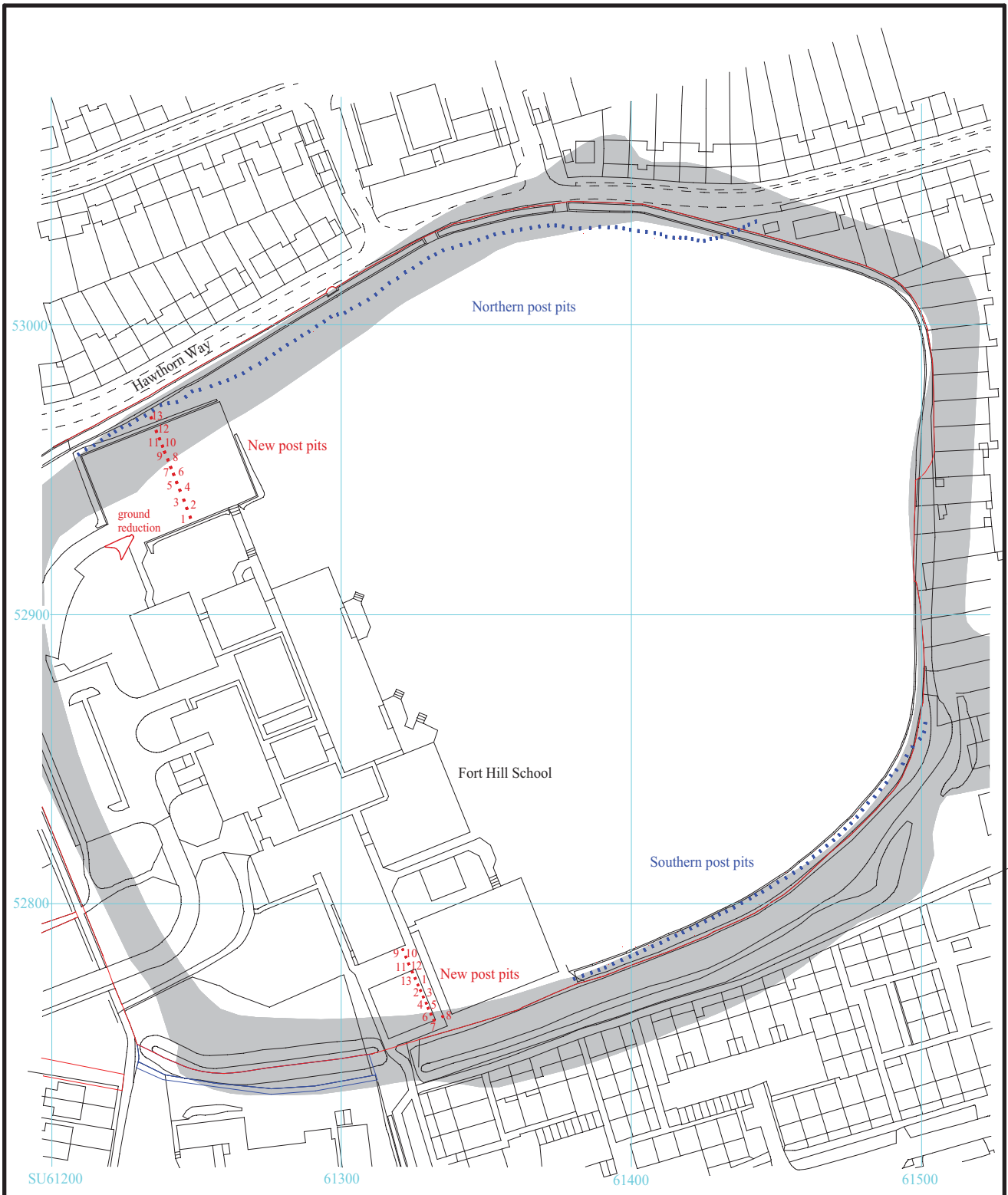


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Figure 1. Location of site within Winklebury and Hampshire.

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Figure 2. Location of post pits monitored and previous watching brief (blue)..



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Plate 1. Turning circle ground reduction



Plate 2. Location of southern row of post-pits.



Plate 3. Southern post pit 2, looking south west,  
Scales: 1m and 0.5m.



Plate 4. Southern post pit 7, looking south west.  
Scales: 1m and 0.5m.

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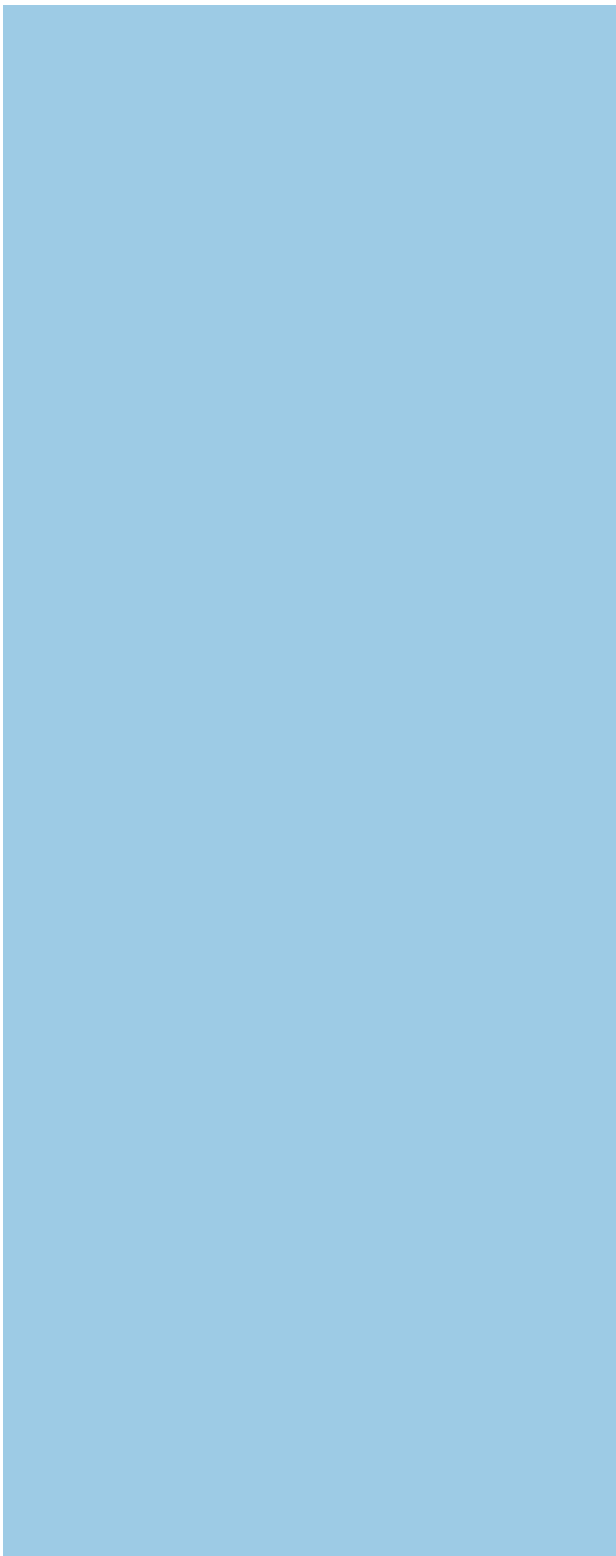
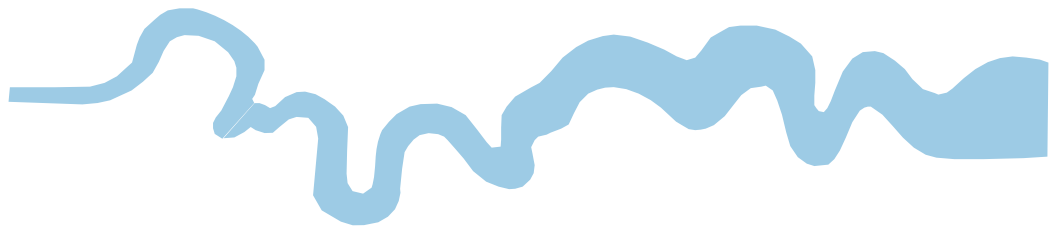
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Plates 1 - 4.**

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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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