

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

S O U T H

**Holly Cottage (Formerly Little Blackhall Cottage),
Blackhall Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by Teresa Vieira

Site Code: BLS14/57

(TQ 5429 5538)

Holly Cottage (Formerly Little Blackhall Cottage), Blackhall Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For Millwood Designer Homes

by Teresa Vieira

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code BLS14/57

May 2016

Summary

Site name: Holly Cottage (Formerly Little Blackhall Cottage), Blackhall Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent

Grid reference: TQ 5429 5538

Planning reference: SE/15/02117/FUL

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 5th May 2016

Project manager: Sean Wallis

Site supervisor: Teresa Vieira

Site code: BLS 14/57

Area of site: c. 850 sq m

Summary of results: The watching brief successfully investigated the area of the site where a new house was to be built. It became apparent that, due to the pre-existing buildings the area was mostly badly truncated and no archaeological features or finds were observed.

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

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 23.05.06 Steve Preston ✓ 23.05.16

Holly Cottage (formerly Little Blackhall Cottage), Blackhall Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Teresa Vieira

Report 14/57b

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at Holly Cottage (formerly Blackhall Cottage), Blackhall Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent (TQ 5429 5538) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Ray Pearson of Millwood Designer Homes Ltd, Bordyke End, East Street, Tonbridge, Kent, TN9 1HA.

Planning permission (SE/15/0211/FUL) had been gained from Sevenoaks District Council to demolish the existing house on the site and construct a replacement dwelling. The planning permission is subject to a condition (10) relating to archaeology. As a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits on the site which may be damaged or destroyed by the planned building work, it was proposed to carry out a watching brief set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF, 2012) and the County Council's policies on archaeology and the historic environment. The work was to be carried out to comply with the Kent County Council requirements for archaeological fieldwork, and in accordance with the generic specification for watching briefs prepared by the Kent County Council's Heritage Conservation Group (KCC 2011).

The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation approved by Ms Wendy Rogers, the Kent County Archaeological Officer, the archaeological adviser to Sevenoaks District Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Teresa Vieira on 5th May 2016, and the site code is BLS14/57.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at a local approved museum in due time.

Location, topography and geology

Sevenoaks lies at the south end of the Darent valley where that river cuts through the North Downs, and is set in a broad vale at the foot of the slope of the Downs (Fig. 1). The site is located south of Blackhall Lane, to the east of the town, and north of the estate of Knole Park, which occupies the high ground to the south-east of the town. The site is centred at TQ 5429 5538 (Fig. 2) at an elevation of *c.* 122m above Ordnance Datum, on ground that slopes down to the north. The underlying geology is mapped as Folkestone Beds (BGS 1990), which can be characterized by loose, unconsolidated sandstone and sands of varying grain size. This was observed in all the footing trenches investigated. The site consisted of Holly Cottage (recently demolished) and its gardens.

Archaeological background

The archaeological background of the site has been considered in a desk-based assessment (Wallis 2014). In summary, very little of archaeological interest has been found in the surrounding area, although this may reflect the paucity of archaeological projects undertaken. However, several finds have hinted at activity in the Mesolithic period, including the discovery of over forty flint implements which were found in "drift sand at Blackhall", to the south of the site. Stray finds dating from the Neolithic and Bronze Age periods have also been recorded in the surrounding area, particularly from the Knole Estate. Historic maps suggest that there have been buildings on the site from at least the 1830s, although it is not entirely clear if these would have destroyed any archaeological deposits which may have been present. Little Blackhall to the north-west is a listed building.

Objectives and methodology

The aims of the watching brief were to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the proposed groundworks. This was to involve the monitoring of footing trenches for a new house. Where it was not possible or practicable to preserve archaeological remains *in-situ* any features were to be excavated by hand and fully recorded, to ensure their preservation by record.

Results

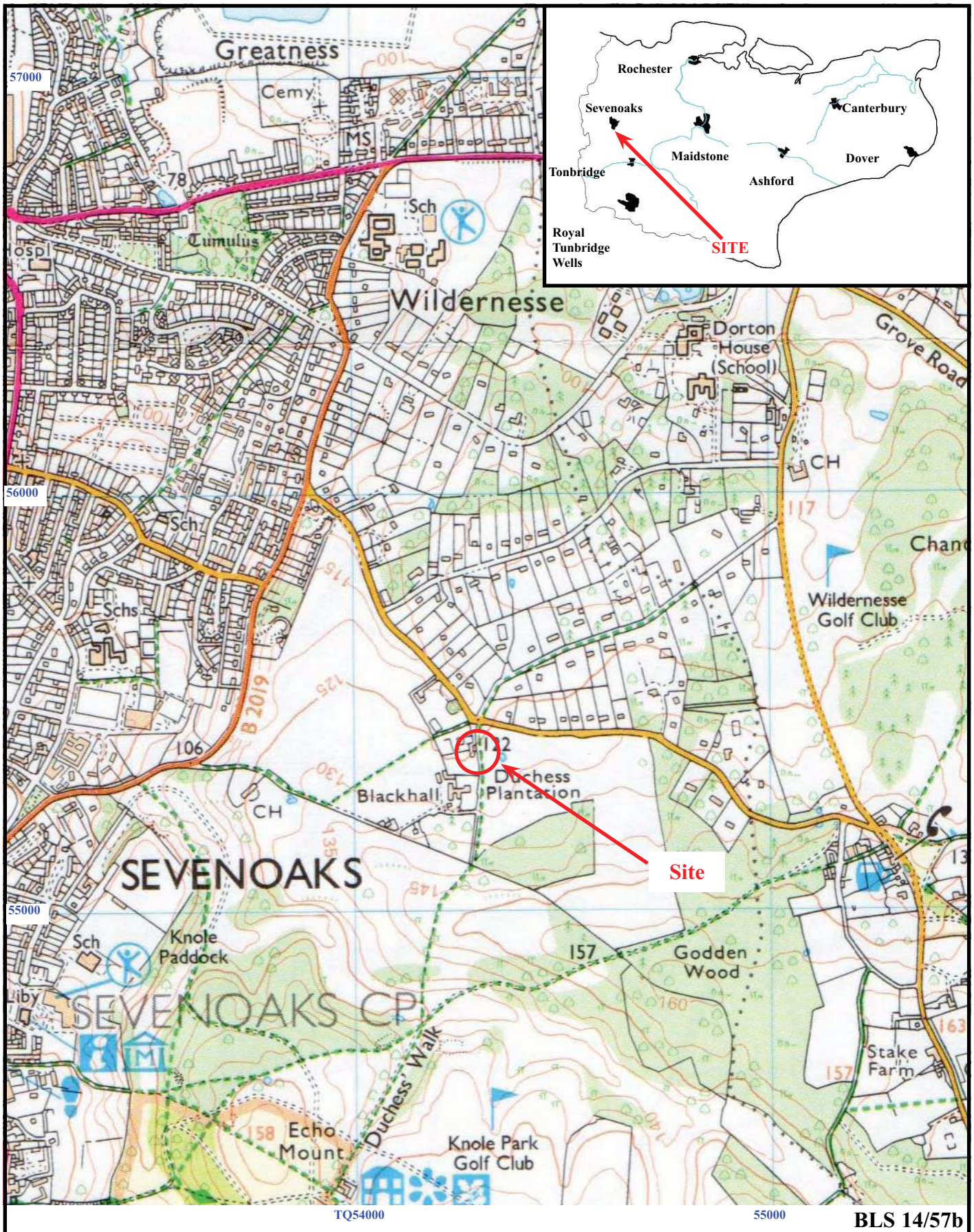
The area for the new foundations was almost wholly within the footprint of the previous building (Fig. 3). The excavation of the footing trenches was observed after the demolition and clearance of the site and exposed stratigraphy of 0.60m to 0.80m of made ground directly upon the natural geology (Fig. 4). The footing trenches measured approximately 0.80m in width and up to 1.60m of depth. The existence of the previous building along with other constructions that appear to have existed at the site since the early 19th century had significantly disturbed the area and no archaeological remains were observed during the monitoring of the works.

Conclusion

The watching brief at this site successfully examined the area which was to be affected by the construction of the new house. The previous building appears to have significantly disturbed the site, and no archaeological finds or features were observed.

References

- BGS, 1990, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 287, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- KCC, 2011, 'Specification for an archeological watching brief in Kent', Kent Heritage Conservation Group, Kent County Council, Maidstone
- NPPF 2012, National Planning Policy Framework, Dept Communities and Local Government, London
- Wallis, S, 2014, 'Land at Blackhall Cottage, Blackhall Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent: an archaeological desk-based assessment', Thames Valley Archaeological Services unpublished report 14/57, Brighton.



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Figure 1. Location of site within Sevenoaks and Kent.

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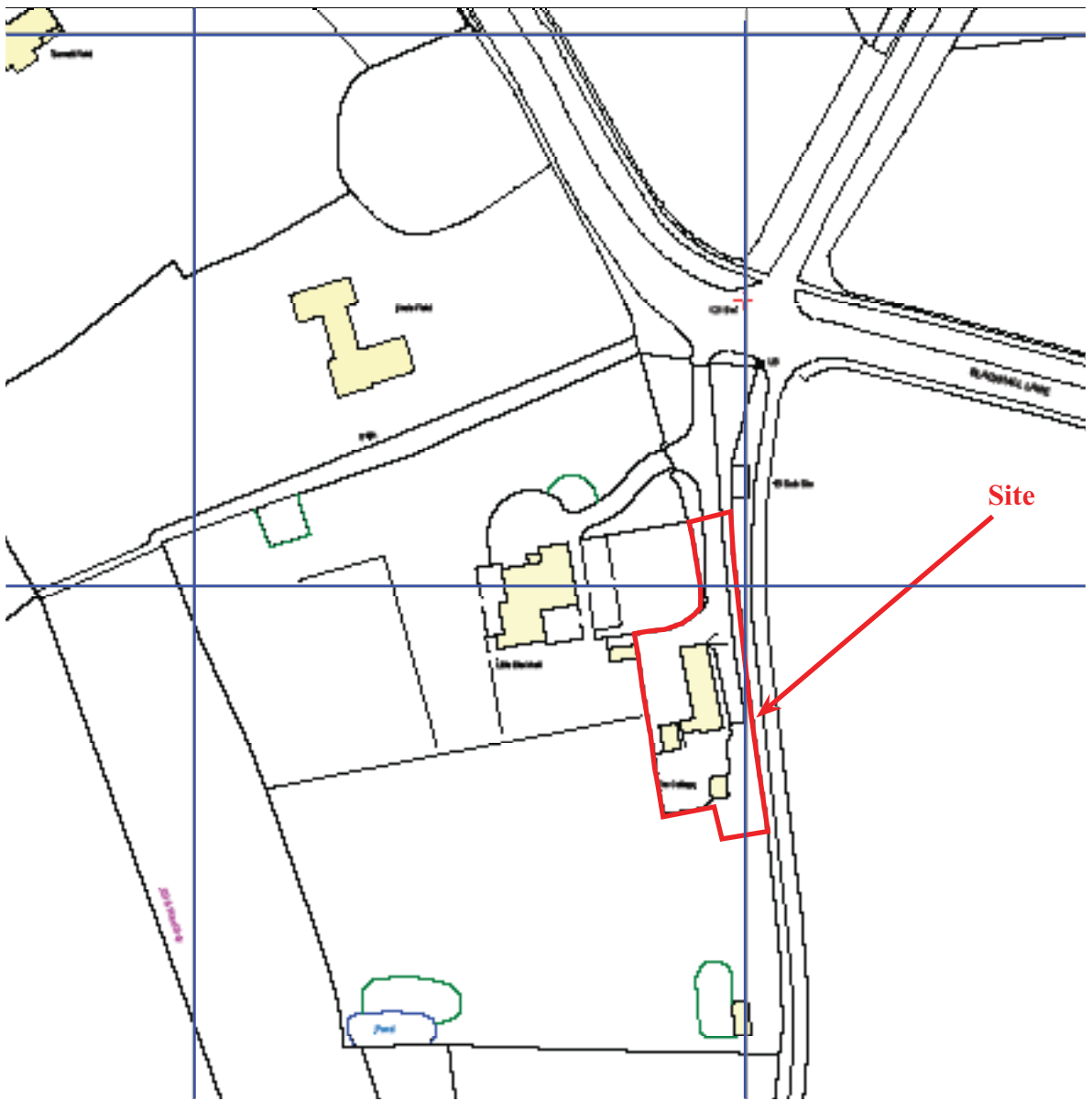
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Site



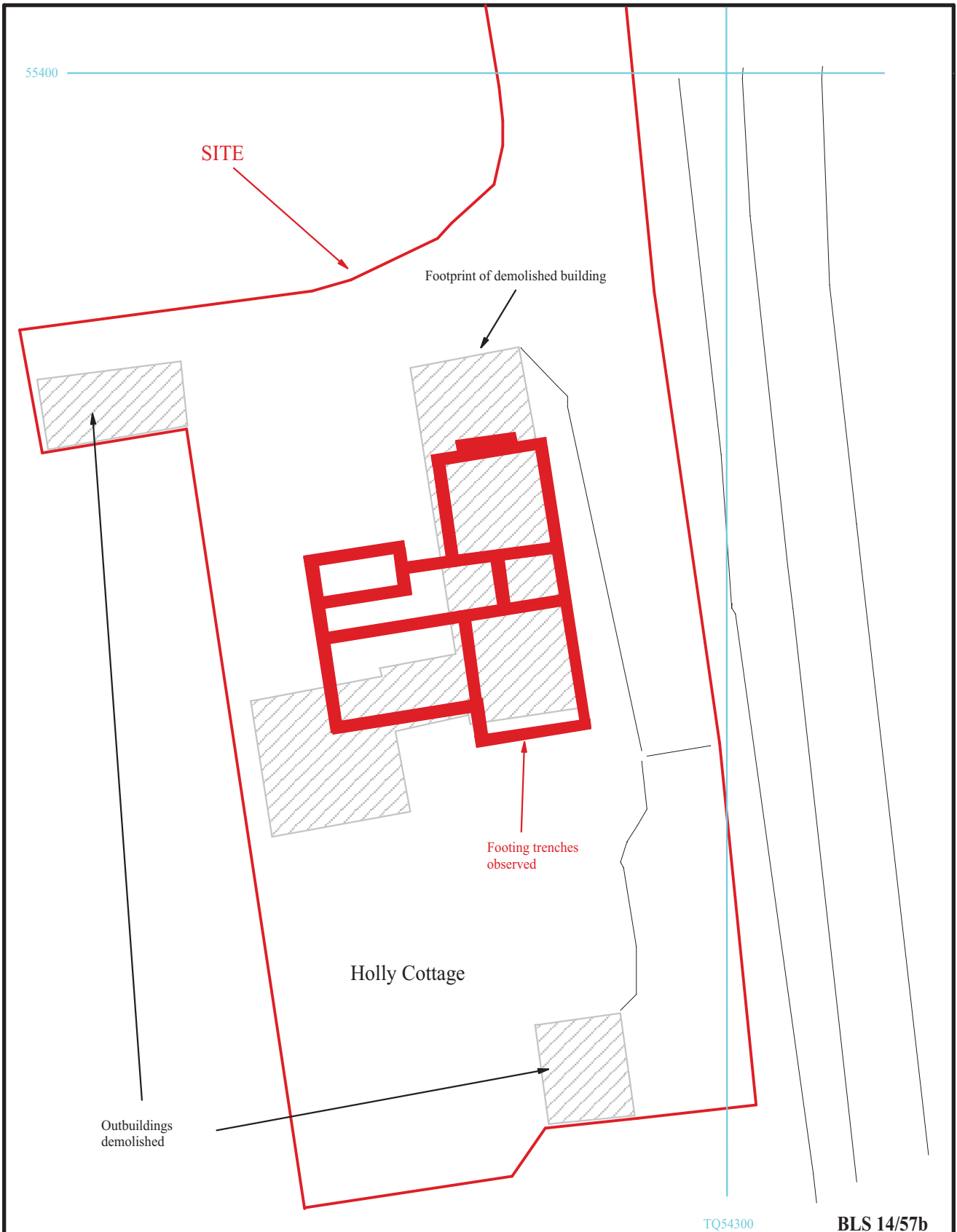
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 Figure 2. Detailed location of site

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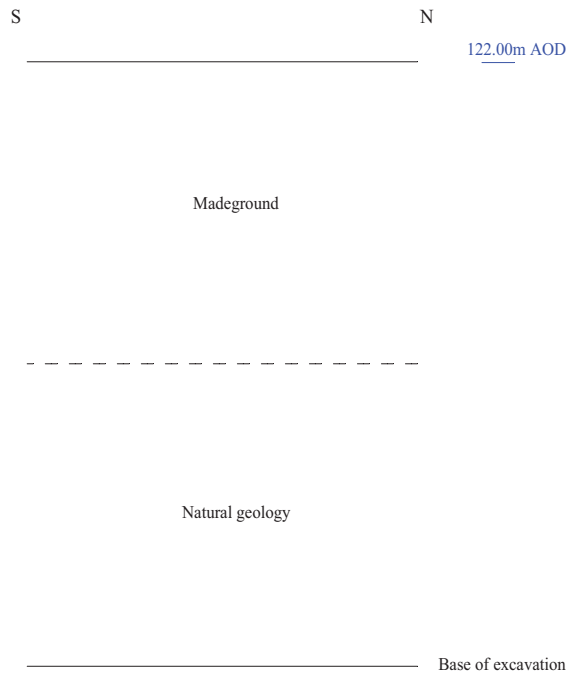


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Figure 3. Location of monitored area.



General stratigraphy in foundation trenches



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Figure 4. Representative Section



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Plate 1. General view of site looking northeast.



Plate 2. Stratigraphy in footing trench, looking west. Scale: vertical 2m, horizontal 1m.

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Plates 1 - 2.**

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Plate 3.Stratigraphy in foundation trench facing north. Scale: vertical 2m , horizontal 1m.

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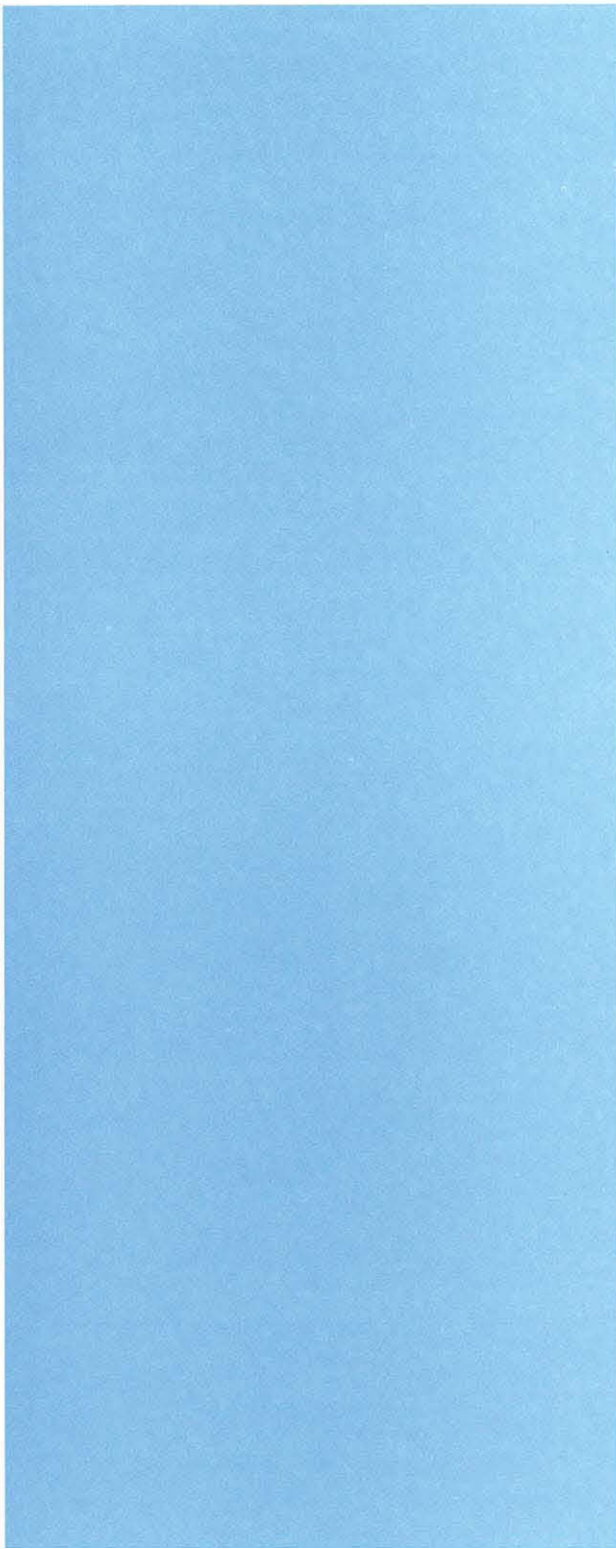
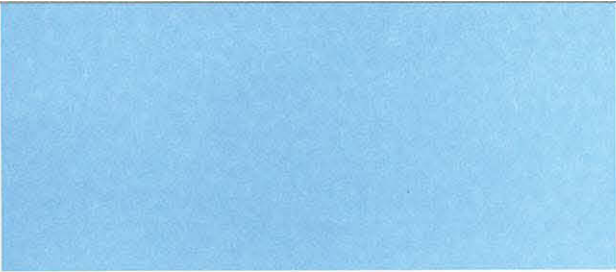
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Plate 3**

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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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