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ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Glebe Farm, Mixbury,  
Oxfordshire**

**Archaeological Evaluation**

**by Andy Mundin**

**Site Code: GFM16/202**

**(SP 6106 3406)**

# **Glebe Farm, Mixbury, Oxfordshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation**

**for Mr John Boshier**

by Andrew Munding

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code GFM 16/202

**October 2016**

## Summary

**Site name:** Glebe Farm, Mixbury, Oxfordshire

**Grid reference:** SP 6106 3406

**Site activity:** Archaeological Evaluation

**Date and duration of project:** 25th October 2016

**Project Coordinator:** Joanna Pine

**Site supervisor:** Andrew Muddin

**Site code:** GFM 16/202

**Area of site:** overall site c.0.11ha; 532 sq m to be developed

**Summary of results:** The evaluation consisted of two trenches that uncovered deposits of possible archaeological interest, one of which contained pottery of Iron Age date. These deposits had been truncated due to the construction of the farm and subsequent development of the barn since the 19th century. The pit containing the Iron Age pottery was cut through subsoil rather than natural geology and is probably modern, and the pottery redeposited.

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

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 31.10.16 Steve Preston ✓ 31.10.16
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# Glebe Farm, Mixbury, Oxfordshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Andrew Muddin

Report 16/202

## Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Glebe Farm, Mixbury, Oxfordshire (SP 6109 3402) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Dr Isobel Lisboa, of Archaeologica Ltd, 7 Fosters Lane, Bradwell, Milton Keynes, MK13 9HD, on behalf of their client, Mr John Boshier, of Glebe Farm, Mixbury, Oxfordshire, NN13 5RP

Planning permission (16/01930/FUL) has been sought from Cherwell District Council for the construction of a new barn to replace the existing structure. Due to the potential of archaeological deposits existing at the site, an archaeological evaluation has been requested to assess their nature, character, date and extent. The site is immediately adjacent to a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM), which might affect the significance of any deposits that might be present.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012), and the District Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification (Lisboa 2016) approved by Mr Richard Oram, of Oxfordshire County Archaeological Service who advise the District Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Andrew Muddin on 25th October 2016, and the site code is GFM 16/202. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Oxfordshire Museum Service in due course.

## Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the east side of the village with the extant earthworks of Beaumont Castle (OX 106; HE 1006354) immediately to the west (Figs 1 and 2). Church Lane and All Saints Church, are to the south and south-west of the site. The farmhouse at Glebe Farm stands just to the south-east, and the site lies immediately east of the boundary ditch of the castle earthwork. The underlying bedrock geology was glacial head deposit; silt, sand and gravel (BGS 2002).

## **Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential of the site has been detailed in the written scheme of investigation (Lisboa 2016). In summary, the site lies immediately adjacent to Beaumont Castle, which is a Scheduled Monument (OX106).

The castle was probably built by Roger D'Ivry, a key supporter of William I in 1066, although in fact little is known about its origins. Reported finds from within the SAM included, besides medieval pottery, late Iron Age and/or early Roman pottery and a single Saxon sherd (Steane 1979). The earthworks consist of a square moated enclosure with two courts, the northern of which is regular in shape and practically square and an outer court of sub-rectangular shape on the southern side. The interior has many bumps which may indicate foundations, and the earthworks are known to have been more substantial even relatively recently in the 20th century (VCH 1959; Steane 1979).

The village probably has origins from the same period, as hinted at by extant fabric at nearby All Saints Church. Earlier (prehistoric) archaeological evidence is known locally at Barrow Hill to the south-west (Oram pers. comm.). There is also the proximity to the village (within 2km) of the Alcester (Warks) to Dorchester (Oxon) Roman Road (Margary 1973) further east. Archaeological evidence of a wider landscape has been under investigation during quarry working at Finmere (Grundon 1999; Mundin and Ford 2008; Hart and Kenyon 2010; Ford 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. It was proposed that one trench 20m long was to be excavated 1.6m wide. This was to be dug using a JCB-type machine fitted with a toothless grading bucket. This was to be done under constant archaeological supervision and all spoilheaps were to be monitored for finds.

## **Results**

Due to access constraints the proposed trench was subdivided. The two trenches were 7m and 9m long and 0.48–0.53m deep. They were both 1.6m wide. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1. A total of two trenches were excavated.

#### Trench 1 (Figs 3 and 4; Pl. 1)

Trench 1 was aligned W - E and was 7m long and 0.48m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.28m of topsoil and 0.2m of subsoil; a brown-red clayey silt. This in turn overlying natural geology; reddish brown sandy silt gravel at the base of excavation. A pit (3) was recorded which was 1.34m in diameter but mostly lay beneath the baulk and was unexcavated. It was filled with a moderately compacted brown-red sandy silt. No finds were recovered.

#### Trench 2 (Figs 3 and 4; Pls 2 and 3)

Trench 2 was aligned N - S and was 9m long and 0.53m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.15m of topsoil mixed with limestone and brick rubble and modern pieces of agricultural metalwork. Under this was more topsoil (50), 0.32m thick. Below this was subsoil (51) observed 0.15m thick, cut by four possible features (Fig. 4; Pl. 3).

Of these, pits 1 and 2 were sampled to establish the potential date and extent of the surviving remains. Pottery of Middle-Late Iron Age date was recovered from the base of the hand defined deposit in pit 1, a moderately firm compacted deposits representing a truncated basal fill of a pit, reddish brown sandy silt (52). Only 0.15m depth of this feature remained.

Pit 2 was present in the northern part of the trench also cutting the subsoil and natural geology to a depth of 0.17m. No finds were recovered from its fill, which was a moderately compacted brown-light yellowish grey sandy silt, with occasional rounded gravel inclusions. This was thought to represent a location disturbed by the removal of a tree.

## **Finds**

### *Pottery by Paul Blinkhorn*

The pottery assemblage comprised five sherds with a total weight of 37g. It is all Iron Age. It all occurred in a single context, pit 1 (52), with the following fabric types noted:

**F1: Coarse Shell.** Moderate to dense shell fragments up to 5mm. 3 sherds, 24g.

**F2: Fine Shell.** Moderate to dense shell fragments up to 2mm. 2 sherds, 13g.

The whole assemblage consisted of bodysherds, other than a single rimsherd in fabric F2. It has an upright and slightly everted profile, with a slight triangular external bead. All the pottery is likely to be of middle-late Iron Age

date; shell-tempered wares are very typical of that period in the region around Brackley (eg. Chapman 2011). The sherds are in reasonably good condition, and appear reliably stratified.

A single fragment of burnt daub in a fine sandy fabric and weighing 9g occurred in the same context.

## Conclusion

The evaluation has been successful in locating potential archaeological deposits, and finds of Iron Age date. Though the base of features cut the subsoil, the extent of their original form seems somewhat truncated under modern levelling layers from the building of the farm and the subsequent 19th- and 20th-century development of the site. The current ground level in the site is somewhat below the natural topography and it seems likely that the Iron Age pottery recovered is redeposited rather than *in situ* in an Iron Age feature. This is consistent with the report that previous finds from within the Scheduled area came from badger/fox disturbance (Steane 1979).

## References

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## APPENDIX 1: Trench details

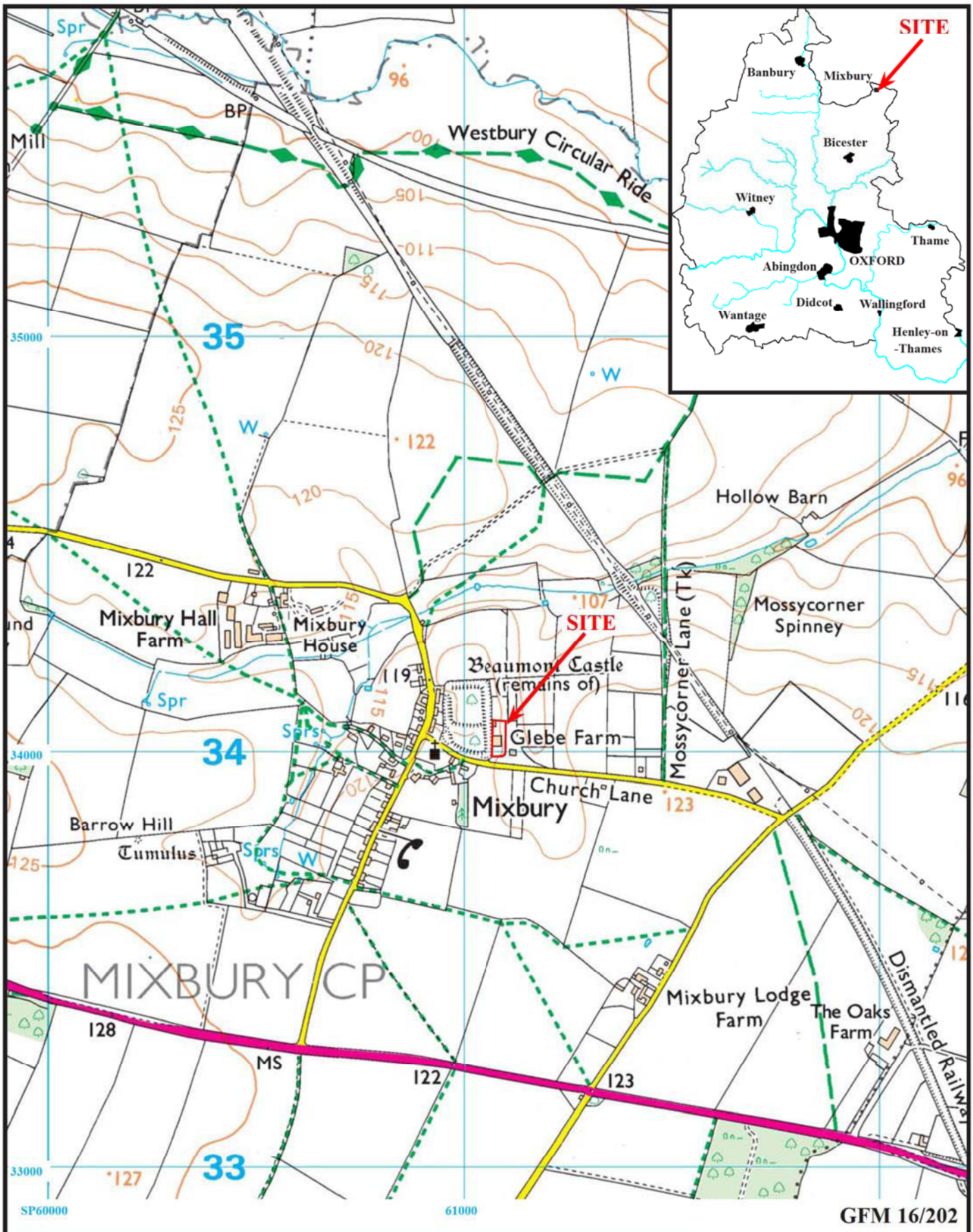
0m at W and S end

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	7	1.6	0.48	0–0.28m topsoil, 0.28-0.48m subsoil, 0.48m+ natural Head deposit (glacial sand and gravel) Pit 3. <b>[Pl. 1]</b>
2	9	1.6	0.53	0-0.15m topsoil/turf and limestone rubble, 0.15-0.37m remnant topsoil, 0.37m-0.53m subsoil, 0.53m+ natural Head deposit. Pits 1 and 2. <b>[Pls 2 and 3]</b>



**APPENDIX 2: Feature details**

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
2	1	52	Pit	Iron Age?	Pottery
2	2	53	Pit	-	-
1	3	54	Pit?	-	-

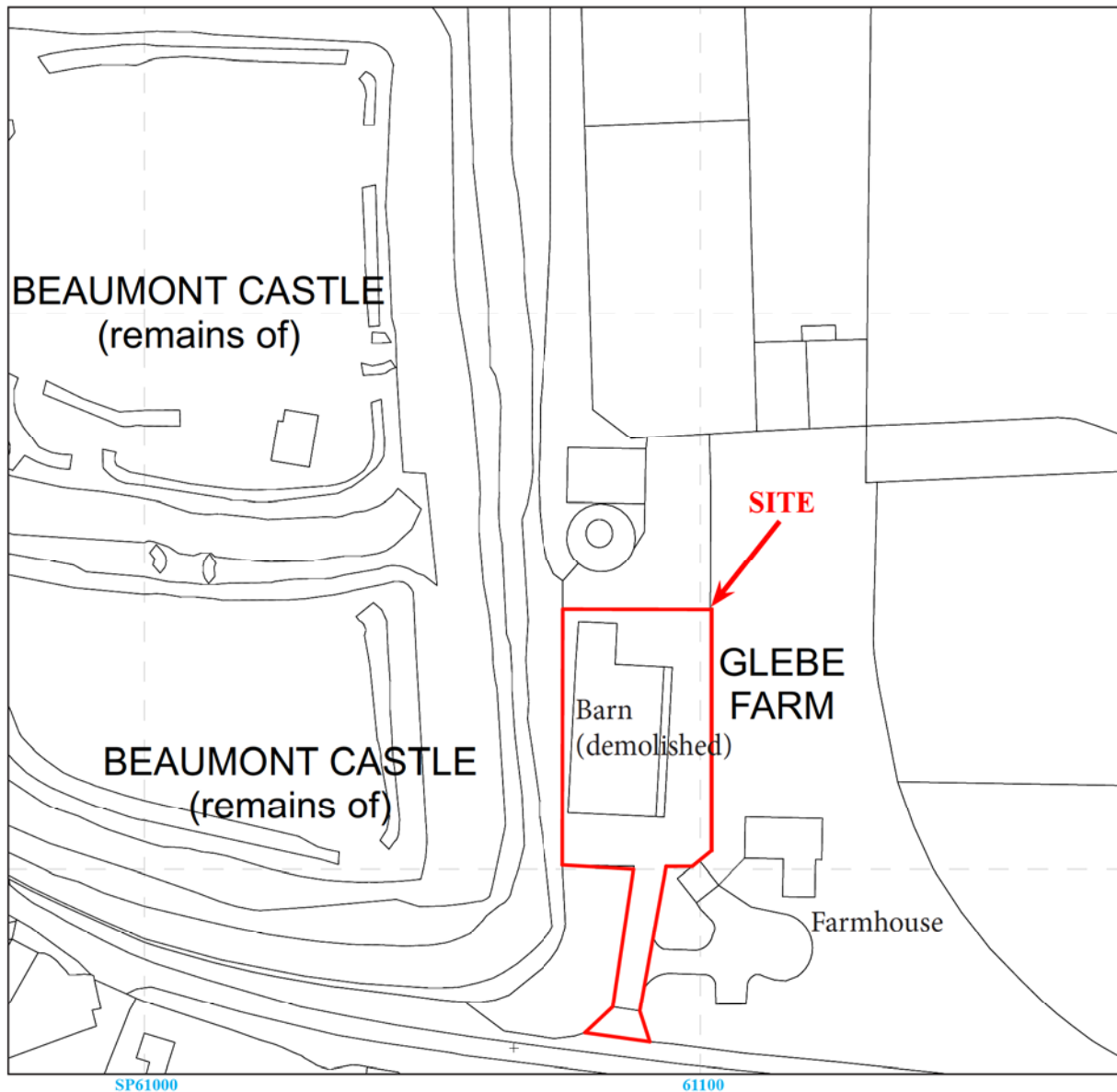


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Figure 1. Location of site within Mixbury and Oxfordshire.

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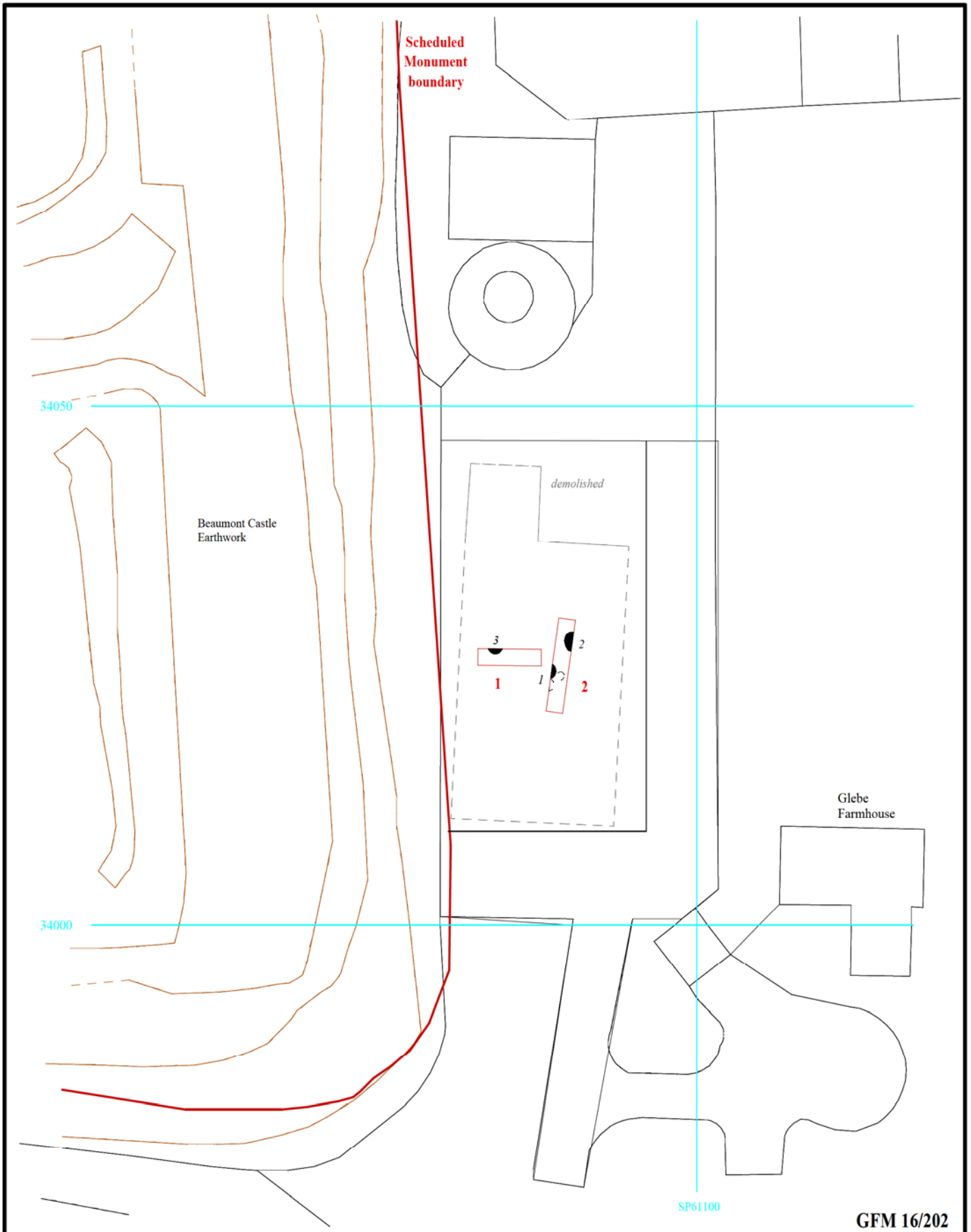
**Glebe Farm, Mixbury,  
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site at Glebe Farm.

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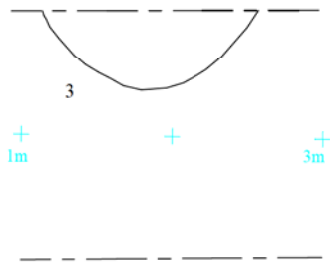
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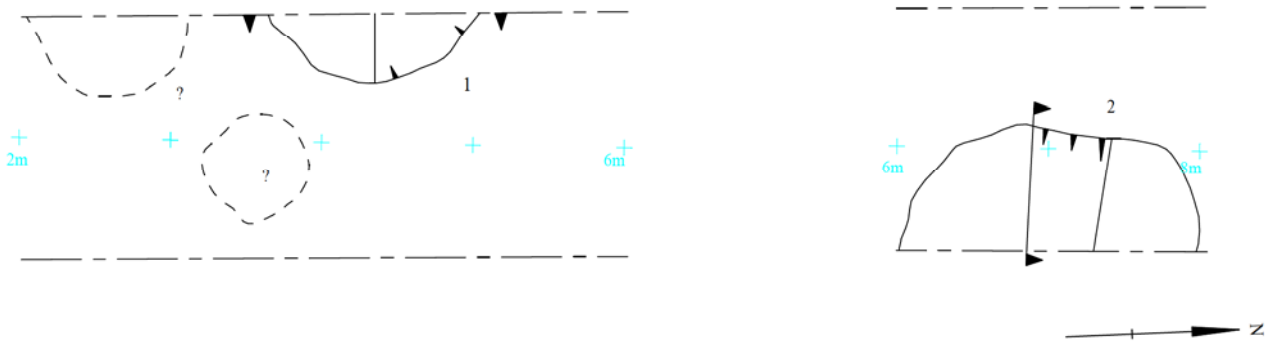
Figure 3. Location of trenches.

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Trench 1

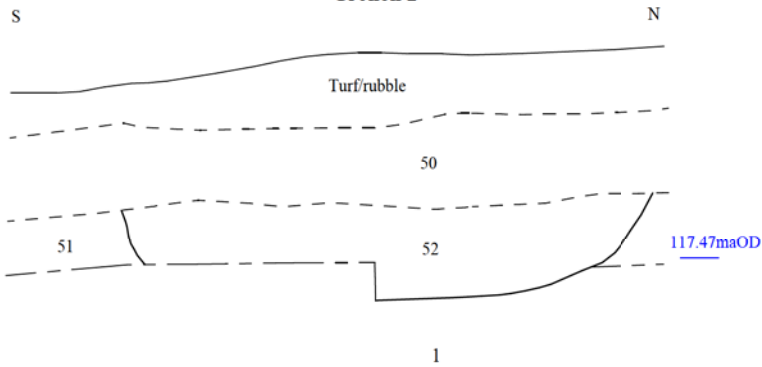


Trench 2



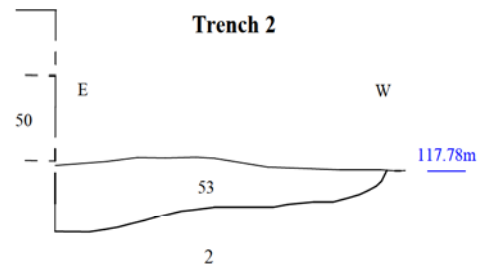
0 plans only 5m

Trench 2



0 sections only 1m

Trench 2



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Figure 4. Details of trench plans and sections

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



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



Plate 3. Trench 2, pit 1, looking west, Scales: 0.5m and 0.1m.

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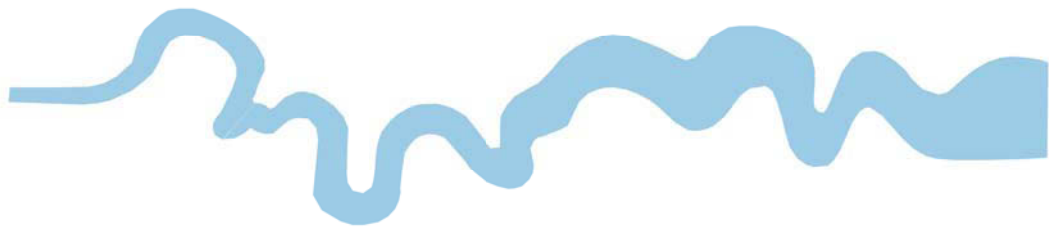
**Glebe Farm, Mixbury**  
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Plates 1 - 3.

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## TIME CHART

	<b>Calendar Years</b>
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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