

**T V A S**



**SOUTH WEST**

**Land at Seymour Place, Savernake,  
Marlborough, Wiltshire**

**Archaeological Evaluation**

**by Agata Socha-Paszkwicz**

**Site Code: SPS17/38**

**(SU 2086 6831; 2047 6805; 2032 6813)**

# **Land at Seymour Place, Savernake, Marlborough, Wiltshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation**

**For E G Carter & Co Ltd**

by Agata Socha-Paszkiwicz

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code SPS 17/38

**April 2017**

## Summary

**Site name:** Land at Seymour Place, Savernake, Marlborough, Wiltshire

**Grid reference:** SU 2086 6831; SU 2047 6805; SU 2032 6813

**Site activity:** Evaluation

**Date and duration of project:** 27th – 28th March 2017

**Project manager:** Agata Socha-Paszkiewicz

**Site supervisor:** Agata Socha-Paszkiewicz

**Site code:** SPS 17/38

**Area of site:** c. 0.39ha within an overall site of c. 15ha

**Summary of results:** The evaluation has only revealed machine cut features of modern date along with natural features. A few Neolithic or Bronze Age struck flints were recovered. The sites of the proposed new bunds are considered to have low archaeological potential.

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at TVAS South West in Taunton and will be deposited at Devizes Museum in due course

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford✓ 12.04.17 Steve Preston✓ 12.04.17
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# Land at Seymour Place, Savanake, Marlborough, Wiltshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Agata Socha-Paszkievicz

Report 17/38

## Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Seymour Place, Savanake, Marlborough, Wiltshire (centred on SU 205 683) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Claire Welburn of Fowler Architecture and Planning on behalf of E G Carter & Co Ltd, Bybrook House, Lower Tuffey Lane, Gloucester GL2 5EE

Planning consent is to be sought from Wiltshire Council to construct three new soil bunds on separate areas of land totalling c. 0.3939ha within the site. As a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits on the site which may be damaged or destroyed by groundworks, field evaluation has been requested by means of machine trenching prior to the determination of the planning application to determine the archaeological potential of the site and to help formulate a mitigation strategy as necessary. This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012) and Council's policy on archaeology.

The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Clare King, Assistant County Archaeologist of Wiltshire Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Agata Socha-Paszkievicz and Mariusz Paszkievicz on 27th and 28th March 2017 and the site code is SPS 17/38ev. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services South West, Taunton and will be deposited at Devizes Museum in due course.

## Location, topography and geology

The site lies c.2 km south-east of the town of Marlborough in the Kennet Valley and on north-east outskirts of Savanake Forest. It lies on the Savanake Plateau, which is rolling downland dissected by small valleys. The proposed three bunds lie in separate locations within a 15ha site (SU 2086 6831; SU 2047 6805; SU 2032 6813). The site lies within parkland which is set with extensive areas of open grassy land, scattered groups of mature trees in the middle and along the borders and a coppice to the north-east. It is relatively flat but gently undulates and lies at a height between 195m and 201m above Ordnance Datum. According to the British Geological Survey the underlying geology is comprised of Upper Chalk capped by clay-with-flints (BGS 1974).

## **Archaeological background**

Savernake has records of numerous prehistoric sites and finds including a group of eight Bronze Age barrows, Iron Age enclosures to the north, south and west and an Iron Age(?) field system on Postern Hill to the west (Crutchley et al 2009). There is possibility of a Roman settlement at Pantawick in the north-east with a hoard of Roman coins found nearby on Graham Hill. Two Roman roads cross the area, one from Mildenhall to Old Salisbury and the other between Cirencester and Winchester. At Mildenhall was the Roman station of *Cunetio* and remains of significant Roman villa at Bedwyn Brail. The forest was also the heart of the Savernake Ware Roman pottery industry. Medieval archaeology is represented by the Wansdyke which dates to the 5th/6th century and possible site of the Great Lodge, one of five hunting lodges in the vicinity. The 17th century earthworks of the Great Enclosure can be found within north-eastern core of the forest.

Historically the first reference to “the wood which is called Safernoc” occurs in a charter referring to a grant of lands at Oare by King Athelstan to Wilton Abbey in AD993 (Dugdale 1693). It was established as a royal hunting forest by the time of Domesday book (1086).

The archaeological potential of the site itself stems from its location in an area containing a number of earthworks probably of prehistoric date recorded in the Wiltshire Historic Environment Record. At Forest Hill Farm to the north are an Iron Age hillfort, earthworks and Roman villa. An early Saxon burial was recorded at the Savernake Hospital site. An undated enclosure lies immediately to the east and undated linear bank to the west of site. At Furze Coppice was a demolished 19th-century farm and cartographic evidence of a route leading from the farm to the Salisbury Road Gate from maps between 1886 and 1970. The remnants of this route survived in the form of hollow way visible in the south-west corner of site.

## **Objectives and methodology**

The aims of the evaluation were to determine the presence/ absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological or palaeoenvironmental deposits within the area of development.

The specific research aims of this project were:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on this site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present; and
- to provide information in order to draw up and appropriate mitigation strategy if required;

It was proposed to dig a total of 12 trenches, each 10m long and 1.6–2m wide across the site. Topsoil and any other overburden was to be removed by a JCB-type machine. A toothless ditching bucket was to be used to expose archaeologically sensitive levels, under constant archaeological supervision. Sufficient of the

archaeological features and deposits exposed were then to be excavated or sufficiently sampled by hand to satisfy the aims of the project.

## **Results**

Trenches were excavated as intended and varied from 9.70m to 11.20m in length and from 0.30m to 0.60m in depth (Fig.2). All were 1.6m wide. A list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1. Trenches 1-4, 7, 10 and 12 contained no features nor were any artefacts recovered from them. All features of possible archaeological interest were cleaned and investigated using hand tools and are described in detail below. A list of features investigated forms Appendix 2.

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

Trench 5 was aligned SE-NW and was 9.70m long and a maximum of 0.58m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.25m of dark brown grey topsoil which contained two struck flints, above 0.33m of subsoil (grey brown silty clay) overlying reddish brown clay with gravel, the natural geology. At c.0.45m from the south-east trench end was an irregular linear feature (2) which was investigated and determined to be of natural origin, aligned WSW-ENE, 1.55m wide and 0.25m deep filled with yellowish brown silty clay with moderate amount of round quartz pebbles (53).

### Trench 6 (Figs 2, 3 and 4)

Trench 6 was aligned SE-NW and was 9.90m long and a maximum of 0.45m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.25m of topsoil above 0.13m of subsoil. The topsoil and subsoil were similar to Trench 5. Beneath the subsoil was reddish brown clay with gravel, the natural geology. At the western trench end possible feature 1 was investigated but is considered to be a root hole (Pl. 4).

### Trench 8 (Figs 2, 3 and 4; Pl. 5)

Trench 8 was aligned north-west to south-east and was 12m long and a maximum of 0.30m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of light grey brown topsoil and 0.05m thick subsoil (light yellowish brown clay) overlying reddish brown clay with gravel, the natural geology. At c.1.70m from north-west trench end was machine cut feature 3 which was c.2.0m wide and a maximum of 0.47m deep. The sides of cut were vertical and there were clear machine tool marks at the bottom. It was clearly modern. Parallel to feature 3 and aligned south-west to north-east was a modern service which was left unexcavated.

#### Trench 9 (Figs 2.3 and 4 Pl. 3)

Trench 9 was aligned SE-NW and was 10.20m long and a maximum of 0.35m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of topsoil 0.25m thick directly overlying reddish brown clay with gravel, the natural geology. Extending for 2.10m from the northern trench end was a continuation of the modern service trench which was left unexcavated. Another feature 6 towards the southern end of trench, was clearly a clearly modern machine cut.

#### Trench 11 Figs 2, 3 and 4: Pl. 6)

Trench 11 was aligned south-west to north-east and was 10.60m long and a maximum of 0.45m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of similar to Trench 8 topsoil which was 0.22m thick which overlaid four land drains aligned south-east to north-west. One at c. 0.20m from eastern trench end was investigated and recorded as land drain 7 which was 0.50m wide and a maximum of 0.52m deep and filled with light yellowish brown clay (60). Although no pipe of any kind was found the shape of the cut suggested it has been dug by machine trench cutter. The land drains cut 0.05m subsoil which was similar to Trench 8 and overlaid reddish brown clay with gravel, the natural geology.

## **Finds**

### *Struck Flint by Steve Ford*

Two struck flints were recovered from the topsoil of trench 5 (50). Both were flakes, one of which had been fire damaged. The flints are not closely datable, but are likely to be of Neolithic or Bronze Age date.

## **Conclusion**

The evaluation has been carried out as intended. The trenches located in south-west part of site (Trenches 1-3) contained no features nor were any artefacts recovered from them. The trenches located in southern part of site (Trenches 4-6) revealed some features of possible archaeological interest which upon investigation appeared to be of natural origin. Two Neolithic or Bronze Age struck flints were recovered from the topsoil of this trench. Trenches located in north-east part of site (Trenches 7-12) contained series of features which revealed no datable artefacts but their form and shape suggested that they were machine made and of Modern date. On the basis of the results the areas where the bunds are proposed to be sited can be considered to have very negligible archaeological potential.

## References

BGS, 1974, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000 Sheet 266, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth

Crutchley, S, Small, F and Bowden, M, 2009, *Savernake Forest. A report for the National Mapping Programme*, English Heritage, Swindon

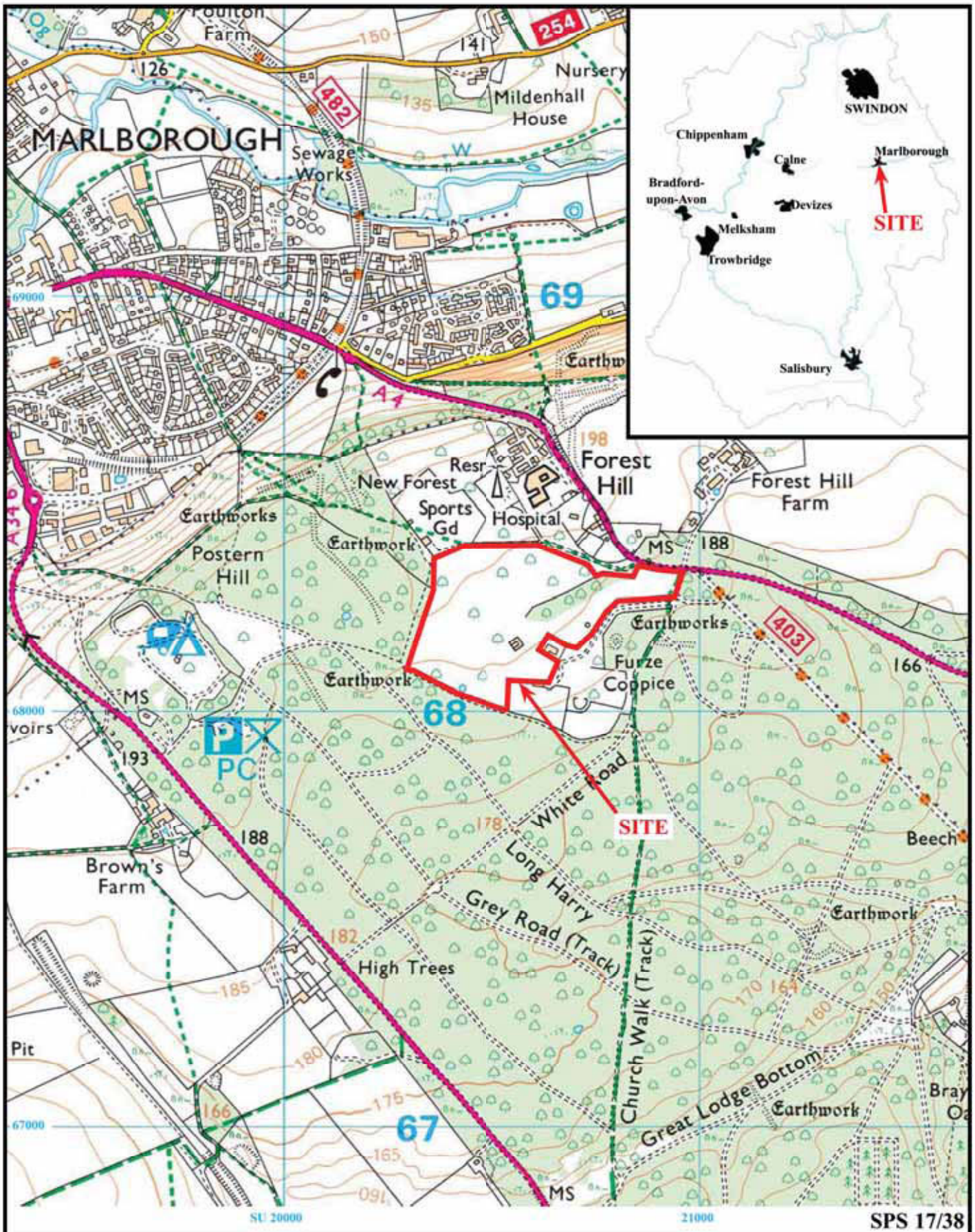


## APPENDIX 1: Trench details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	9.70	1.60	0.50-0.58	South end: 0-0.20 Topsoil; 0.20-0.40 Subsoil; 0.40 + red brown clay with occasional flint nodules (Natural Geology). North end: 0-0.25 Topsoil; 0.25-0.58 Subsoil; 0.58 + red brown clay with occasional flint nodules (Natural Geology).
2	10.80	1.60	0.55	0-0.22 Topsoil; 0.22-0.45 Subsoil; 0.45 + red brown clay with occasional flint nodules (Natural Geology). <b>[PL.1]</b>
3	10.50	1.60	0.43	0-0.22 Topsoil; 0.22-0.39 Subsoil; 0.39 + red brown clay with occasional flint nodules (Natural Geology).
4	10.70	1.60	0.54	0-0.28 Topsoil; 0.28-0.46 Subsoil; 0.46 + red brown clay with occasional flint nodules (Natural Geology).
5	10.10	1.60	0.40	0-0.28 Topsoil; 0.25-0.46 Subsoil; 0.46 + red brown clay with occasional flint nodules (Natural Geology). Paleochannel 2. <b>[PL2]</b>
6	9.90	1.60	0.45	0-0.25 Topsoil; 0.25-0.38 Subsoil; 0.38 + red brown clay with occasional flint nodules (Natural Geology). Root Bole 1. <b>[PL. 4]</b>
7	10.40	1.60	0.50	0-0.25 Topsoil; 0.25-0.45 Subsoil; 0.45 + red brown clay with occasional flint nodules (Natural Geology).
8	12	1.60	0.30	0-0.20 Topsoil; 0.20-0.25 Subsoil; 0.25 + red brown clay with occasional flint nodules (Natural Geology). Machine Cut Feature 3. Service Trench 4. <b>[PL. 5]</b>
9	10.20	1.60	0.35	0-0.20 Topsoil; 0.25 + red brown clay with occasional flint nodules (Natural Geology). Service trench 5. Machine Cut feature 6. <b>[PL. 3]</b>
10	12	1.60	0.49	0-0.25 Topsoil; 0.25-0.36 Subsoil; 0.36 + red brown clay with occasional flint nodules; patch of gravel in central part (Natural Geology).
11	10.60	1.60	0.45	0-0.22 Topsoil; 0.22-0.27 Subsoil; 0.27 + red brown clay with occasional flint nodules (Natural Geology). Land Drain 7. <b>[PL. 6]</b>
12	10.80	1.60	0.30	0-0.20 Topsoil; 0.20-0.25 Subsoil; 0.25 + red brown clay with occasional flint nodules (Natural Geology).

## APPENDIX 2: Feature details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
6	1	52	Natural hollow	Undated	None
5	2	53	Root bole	Undated	None
8	3	54	Machine cut feature	Modern	Form
8	4	55	Service trench	Modern	Form
9	5	56	Service trench	Modern	Form
9	6	57,58,59	Machine cut feature	Modern	Form
11	7	60	Land drain	Modern	Form

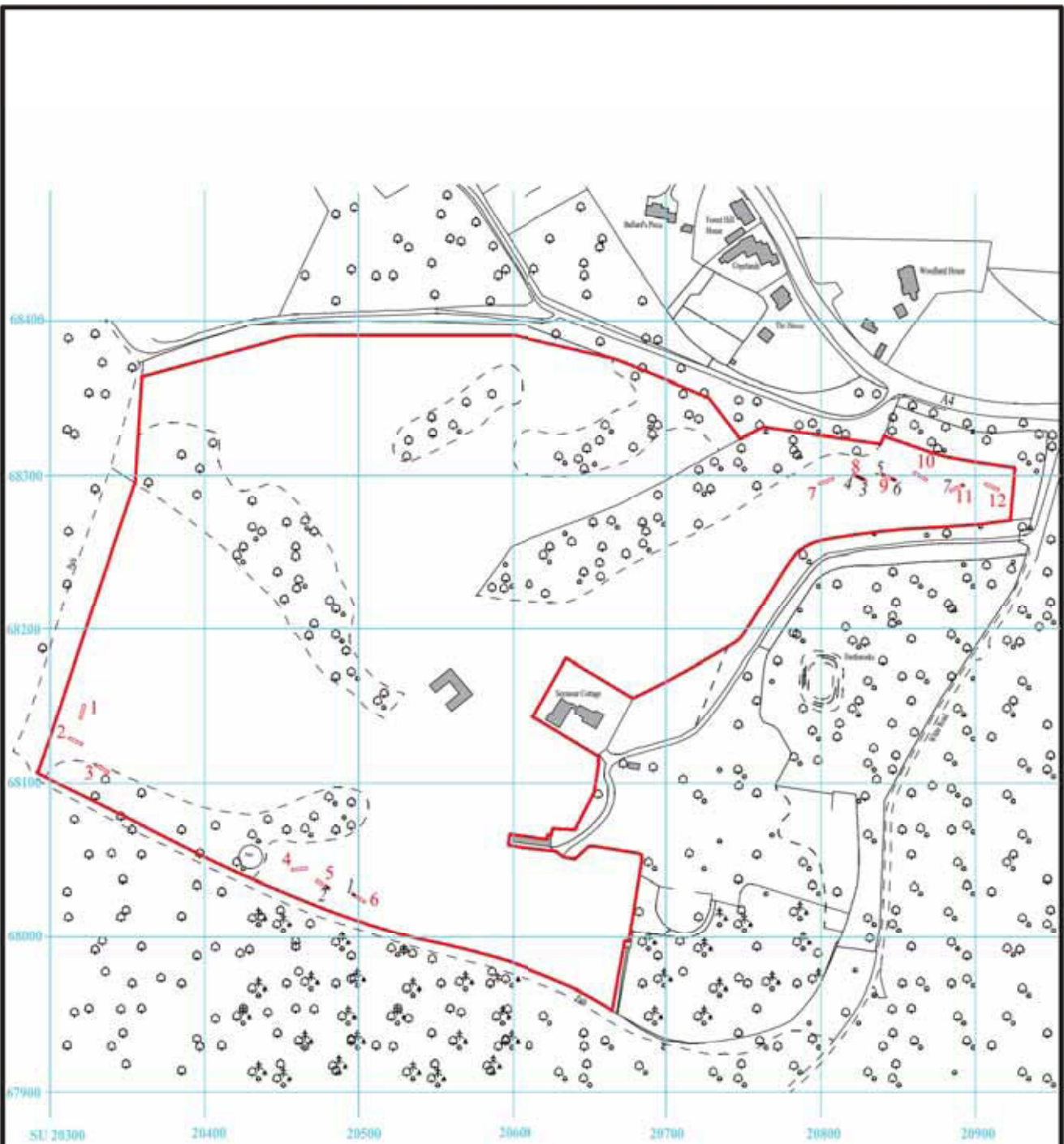


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Figure 1. Location of site in relation to Marlborough and within Wiltshire

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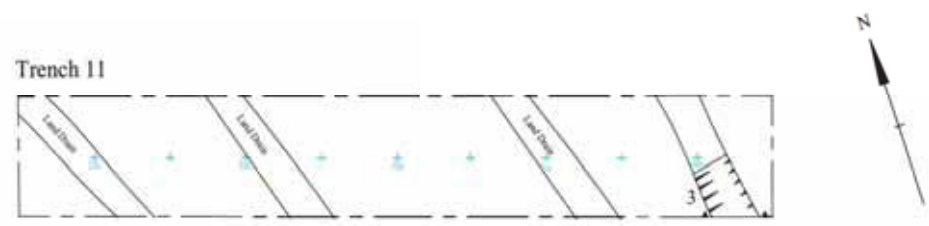
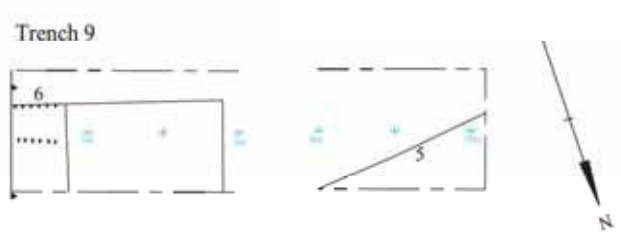
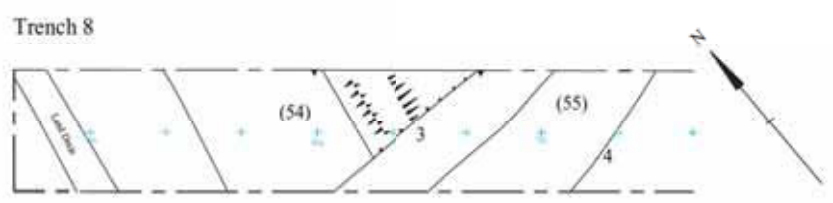
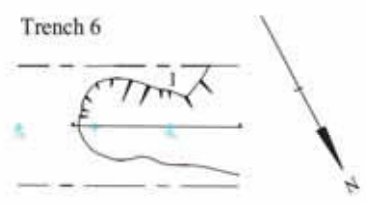
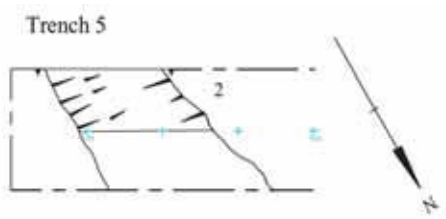


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Figure 2: Location of Trenches

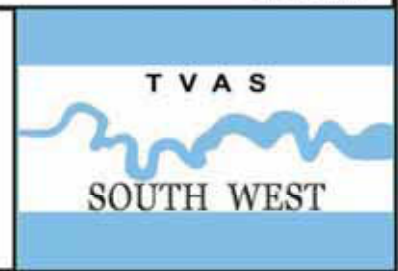


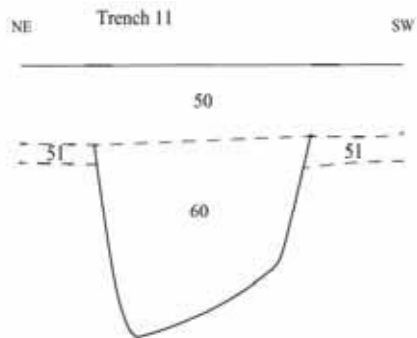
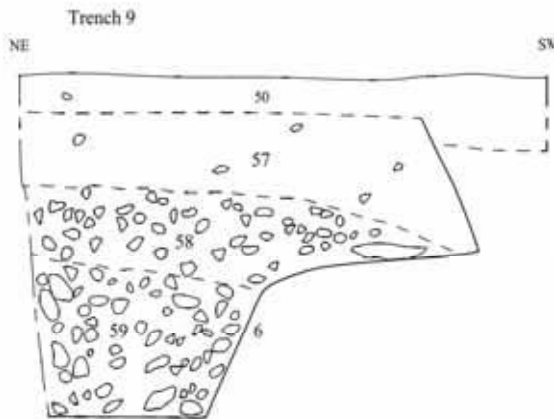
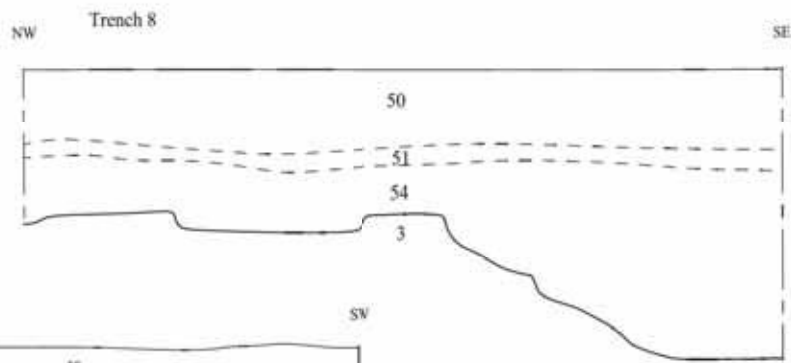
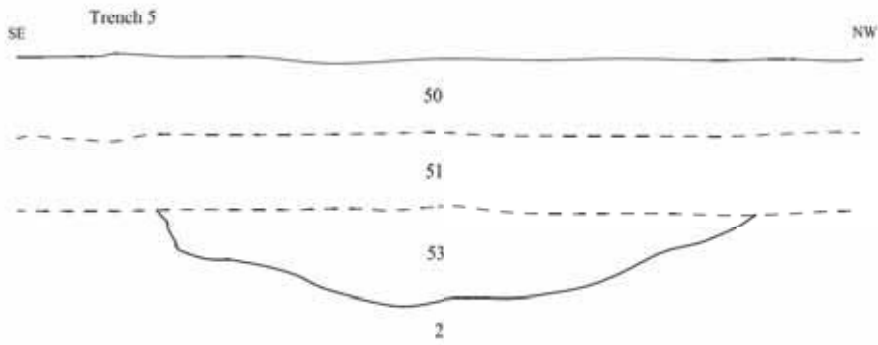
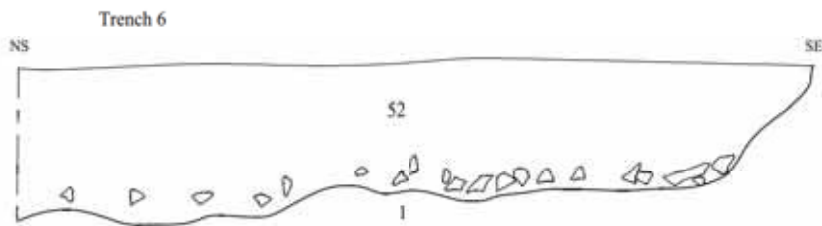


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Figure 3. Trench Plans





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Figure 4. Sections





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



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

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Plates 1 and 2.

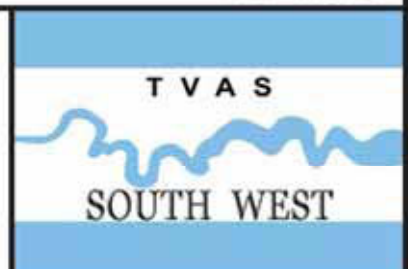




Plate 3. Trench 9, looking north west north. Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m



Plate 4. Trench 6, looking north west. Root bole 1. Scales: 1m and 0.5m

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Plates 3 and 4.







Plate 5. Trench 8, looking north east. Machine cut feature 3. Scales: 2m and 0.5m.

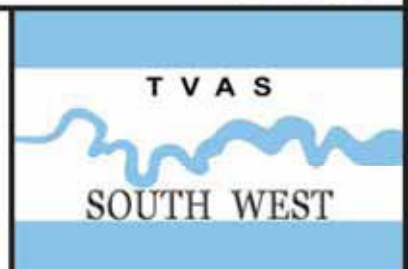


Plate 6. Trench 11, looking south east. Scales: 1m and 0.5m

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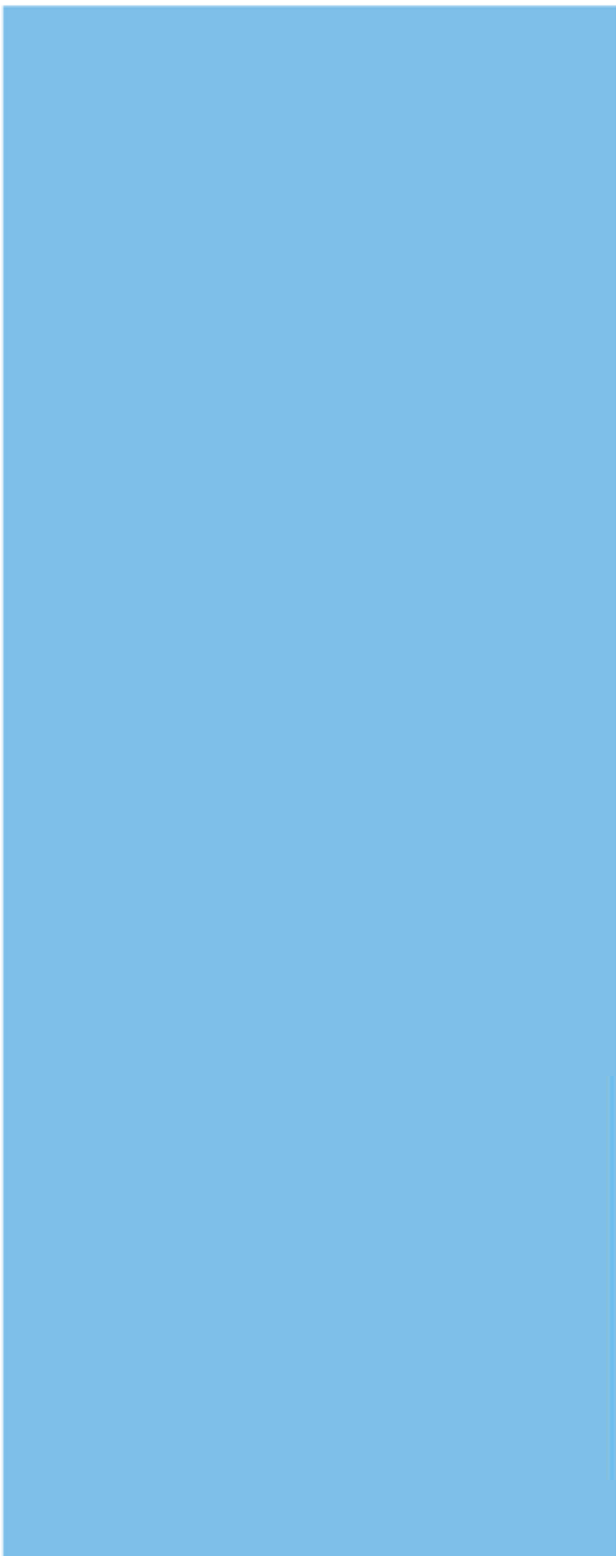
Plates 5 and 6.



## TIME CHART

	Calendar Years
Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43 AD 0 BC
Iron Age _____	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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