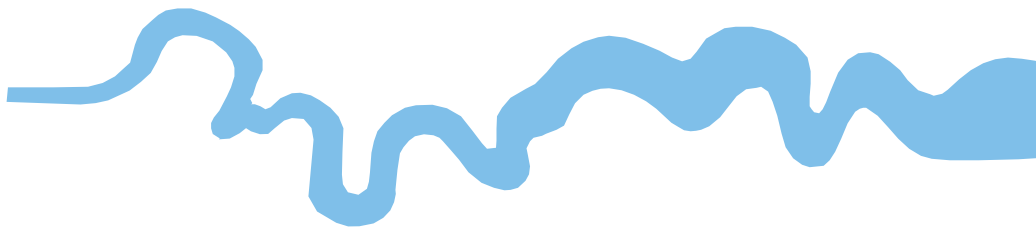


**T V A S**



**SOUTH WEST**

**Downton Manor Farm, Downton,  
Lymington, Hampshire**

**An archaeological excavation  
Phase 2 (northern area)**

**By Andrew Weale**

**DMD03/20  
(SZ 2714 9319)**

# **Downton Manor Farm, Downton, near Lymington, Hampshire**

## **Phase 2 Excavation**

**(Field 2 Northern Area and Field 1 Southern edge)**

**for New Milton Sand & Ballast**

by Andrew Weale

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code DMD03/20

**September 2017**

## Summary

**Site name:** Downton Manor Farm, Downton, Nr Lymington, Hampshire

**Grid reference:** SZ 2714 9319

**Site activity:** Excavation

**Date and duration of project:** 3rd to 18th July 2017

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** Andrew Weale

**Site code:** DMD 03/20

**Area of site:** c.1.28 ha

**Summary of results:** Two lengths of ditch which were not closely dated were encountered which appear to be continuations of features found previously on other parts of the site. A single undated post hole was also found. A pit containing two fired clay artefacts, possibly crucibles were uncovered towards the western limit of the area excavated.

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Southwest Office, Taunton and will be deposited with Hampshire Cultural Trust in due course with accession number A2003.14

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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✓	15.09.17
	Steve Preston✓	12.09.17

# **Downton Manor Farm, Downton, near Lymington, Hampshire**

## **An Archaeological Excavation**

by Andrew Weale

**Report 03/20c**

### **Introduction**

This report documents the results of an excavation carried out of *c.*1.28 ha of land at Downton Manor Farm Quarry (SZ 2714 9319) (Fig 1). The Downton Manor Farm quarry is eventually to cover *c.*18ha and the extraction is to take place over several years. The work was commissioned by Mr Darren Hazell of New Milton Sand and Ballast, Caird Avenue, New Milton, Hampshire. BH25 SPX.

Planning permission (APP/Q1770/A/06/2014823) has been granted at appeal from Hampshire County Council to extract minerals from this area. The consent has been gained subject to a condition (15) which required a programme of archaeological works to excavate and record archaeological deposits prior to extraction or other damage.

The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr David Hopkins of Hampshire County Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Andrew Weale, William Attard, Sara Gallagher, Maisie Foster and Lizzi Lewins between 3rd and 18th of July 2017 the site code is DMD03/20. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services South West, Taunton and will be deposited with the Hampshire Cultural Trust in due course.

### **Location, topography and geology**

The site is located on the south coast, south of the New Forest (Fig. 1), on the south side of the A337, Lymington to New Milton Road. It lies to the east of the village of Downton and north-west of Milford-on-Sea. The overall site comprises four fields all to the south-east of the farm, bounded by a farm track to the west and the remains of Blackbush Copse and a stream to the east. The topography slopes down gently from the north at 25m above Ordnance Datum with occasional gentle undulations towards the stream, with the land dropping to less than 15m aOD here. This may have been enhanced by modern extraction of gravel for farm use close to the stream. The current phase of fieldwork was undertaken on arable farmland. The underlying geology is Quaternary River Terrace Deposits (undifferentiated) which overlie Palaeogene Headon Beds and Osborne Beds (undifferentiated Clay, Silt and Sand) (BGS 2014). The centre of the current phase of work lies approximately at 19m above

Ordnance Datum (AOD). Geology observed on the site was fine silty clay brickearth overlying orange brown gravels

## **Archaeological background**

The overall site has already been subject to several phases of archaeological investigation. An archaeological desk-based assessment had highlighted the archaeological importance of the site (WA 2002) before the series of fieldwork investigations of which this is the latest phase. Cropmarks observed on aerial photographs, show a curvilinear and linear feature in the northeast corner of Field 3 and various other indistinct and amorphous features were observed throughout fields 3 and 4. Many prehistoric stray finds have come from the vicinity indicating widespread human activity from the Palaeolithic onwards, as the site lies on gravel terraces known to be rich in archaeological material. Only stray evidence existed for the Roman period, and none for the Saxon period even though The hamlet of Downton is first mentioned in 1160 as a 'new place'. Downton Manor Farm does not appear in maps until the Second Edition of the Ordnance Survey (1898).

Field 3 was evaluated by fieldwalking (Anthony 2003), with geophysical Survey in Fields 1, 3 & 4 (Mercer 2003) and by trial trenching in Fields 3 and 4 (Anthony 2003). The fieldwalking located a small number of prehistoric flints towards the west of Field 3 but neither subsequent geophysical survey nor trenching revealed bellow ground features. The geophysical survey revealed several anomalies but subsequent trenching revealed they were natural features. Trial trenching, within Fields 3 and 4, revealed a ditch, gully and six postholes or pits none of which produced dating evidence.

Subsequently, excavations were carried out over the northern part of the overall site (Field 1) with watching briefs across the eastern side of the southern part (Fig. 2) (Beaverstock *et al.* 2017). This revealed Bronze Age burial both as ring ditches (levelled burial mounds) and urned cremation burials along with an Iron Age date ditched enclosure and round houses. Elsewhere, a series of ditches with rectilinear plan are thought to represent a Bronze Age organized landscape

## **Objectives and methodology**

The general objectives of the project are to:

- sample excavate and record all archaeological deposits and features within the areas threatened by the proposed development;
- produce relative and absolute dating and phasing for deposits and features recorded on the site;
- establish the character of these deposits in attempt to define functional areas on the site such as industrial, domestic, etc; and

produce information on the economy and local environment and compare and contrast this with the results of other excavations or palaeoenvironmental studies in the region.

Specific research objectives for the area are to address the following questions:

When was the site first occupied?

When was the site abandoned?

What activities were taking place on the site?

Are there any prehistoric occupation sites which relate to the scatter of finds found by fieldwalking?

What is the date of the ditch and postholes found during the evaluation trenching?

If, when and how was the site used in prehistoric, Roman and medieval times for occupation, burial, agricultural or other purposes?

The whole of the current phase of extraction area (Field 2 and the southernmost strip of Field 1) (Fig. 3) was stripped of topsoil and any subsoil under archaeological supervision to fully expose any archaeological deposits. Care was taken to leave *in-situ* deposits such as mound material and *in-situ* flint scatters for subsequent hand excavation. All potential archaeological features were planned and sectioned as a minimum objective. Full excavation of isolated, discrete features such as pits and postholes not belonging to structures took place following half-sectioning and recording. Linear features were excavated in 1-3m wide slots to an agreed sampling fraction depending on significance.

## **The excavation**

The whole of the current phase of extraction area (Field 2 and the southernmost strip of Field 1) (Fig. 3) was stripped of topsoil and any subsoil under archaeological supervision to fully expose any archaeological deposits. All potential archaeological features were planned and sectioned as a minimum objective.

The excavation covered an area of c.1.28 ha, and consisted of the northern half of Field 2 together with a part of Field 1 which was previously left as a standoff to the field boundary hedge which had now been removed. Topsoil and subsoil were either removed for use in restoration in the previous extraction areas, or placed in wind rows for later removal after the areas beneath the wind rows were examined for any archaeological features.

In total, just two lengths of ditches, a pit and a post hole were encountered (Appendix 1).

### Ditch 1010 (Figs 3 and 4; Pl. 1)

Ditch 1010 was aligned ENE to WSW and was 54m long with this extraction area, between 0.51m and 0.65m wide and between 0.12m and 0.22m deep. It was excavated in four slots (501-4) and found to contain a light to mid grey red silty clay fill (551-4) however the only find it contained was a single piece of burnt flint (504).

Ditch 1010 continued a further 18m to the ENE into the Phase 1 extraction area where it was planned but not excavated by Southern Archaeological Services and considered to be modern.

#### Ditch 505 (Figs 3 and 4; Pl. 2)

Ditch 505 was aligned WNW to ESE was 13m long, and the one excavated slot was 0.76m wide and 0.17m deep. The edges of ditch 505 were heavily disturbed by root action associated with the hedge boundary to the south. Ditch 505 contained a single fill, 555, a mixed grey brown, grey yellow silty clay. Only a short section of ditch was encountered during this phase and appeared have continued to the ESE into Phase 1 as a segmented ditch planned by Southern Archaeological Services but not excavated. In Field 1 in the TVAS 2015 excavation a Ditch 1004 appears to have a similar alignment but terminates at cut 34 to the WNW of ditch 505. No opposing terminal end was seen in the current excavation however it may have been within the junction of several phases of work and not observed. A single fragment of tile was recovered from the fill of ditch 505. Any relationship between ditch 505 and the hedge boundary lay outside the current area of investigation. Ditch 1004 was stratigraphically the earliest of the ditches excavated in Field 1 Area 2, and initially considered to be modern. Ditches cutting it or contemporary with it, however, produced Bronze Age pottery and a Bronze Age radiocarbon date.

#### Pit 500 (Figs 3 and 4; Pls 3 and 4)

Pit 500 was roughly circular in plan, 0.36m in diameter and 0.20m deep. On cleaning the top of the pit a quantity of what appeared to be prehistoric pottery was revealed. Pit 500 was filled with deposit 550 a mid to dark yellow grey silty clay. On excavation it appeared that the artefacts were in extremely poor condition and not a pottery vessel but fired clay of uncertain function. A single flint flake of broadly prehistoric date was also present in this deposit.

#### Posthole 506 (Figs 3 and 4)

Posthole 506 was circular in plan, 0.14m in diameter a single fill (556) a black silty clay with a high proportion of comminuted charcoal. Posthole 506 contained no artefacts.

## **Finds**

### *Fired clay by Richard Tabor*

A total of 55 sherds of fired clay weighing 459g were recovered, all from pit 500 (550). They were all in a broadly similar fabric, although local variation gave the impression of a more diverse range prior to refitting.

Refitting demonstrated that probably two similar objects were represented (Fig. 5). The fabric differs from those of fired clay objects found previously on the site but the given code has been accommodated within the earlier scheme.

#### Fabric

**F-feG2:** Moderately hard, laminated, dark grey fabric including sparse poorly-sorted grog (<4mm) and sparse red iron oxides (<2mm) with sparse to moderate sub-rounded and sub-angular voids (<4mm) and up to 1mm wide, 8mm long impressions.

The objects were formed over long, 48mm wide bases, in places slightly expanded, with rounded ends and flat under surfaces. The sides of the objects rose steeply from the base before flaring, reaching an externally rounded bevelled or simple rounded rim at 66mm above the base on one vessel. The interior base was concave, giving a rounded V profile.

Refitting allowed the reconstruction of one object to a length of 143mm (Fig 5.1) and the other to 90mm (Fig. 5.2). An isolated rim sherd was from the side of one end, probably from the smaller object (Fig. 5.3). The linear impressions were mainly on the outer sides of the larger object and on the underside of the base of the smaller one. There is no saline residue on either object as might occur on the interiors of briquetage vessels. The objects appear in effect to have been small troughs. At present no closely analogous vessels have been found, although the rounded ends of a much shallower, lozenge-shaped vessel from Danebury are similar (Poole 1991).

#### *Ceramic Building Material by Andrew Weale*

A single fragment of tile (22g) was retrieved from ditch 505 deposit 555. The fragment was in a buff orange fabric which was moulded, wire cut and sanded. The profile of the tile was flat, 12mm thick and resembles peg tile however there was no trace of an attachment point so would be considered plain tile. This would give a long date range from the 11th century and could even extend into the modern period (McComish 2015).

#### *Struck Flint by Steve Ford*

A single flint flake was recovered from pit 500 (550). It cannot be closely dated other than to the later Neolithic or Bronze Age.

#### *Burnt Flint by Andrew Weale*

A single fragment of unworked burnt flint was recovered from ditch 1010 (504, 554) weighting 10g.



### *Macrobotanical plant material and charcoal* by Andrew Weale

Two samples <100> and <101> were processed from deposits recovered during the excavation, wet sieved to 0.25mm and air dried. The flots were examined under low-power magnifying glasses with magnifications between x30 and x60.

Sample <100> from pit 500 (550) contained four indeterminate weed seeds and no charcoal.

Sample <101> from ditch 504 (554) contained small amounts of charred plant material and charcoal that was very fragmented and is unidentifiable.

### **Conclusion**

Over much of the area, as anticipated from the from previous phases of work, the stripping uncovered little of archaeological significance, with only continuations of what had been previously interpreted as modern ditches, and an undated posthole and pit. For ditch 1010, a medieval or post-medieval date must be considered based on the tile fragment, and as the other remains undated a similar date can not be ruled out.

Pit 500 contained two fired clay artefacts of unknown origin but which appeared dissimilar to those found to the north-east in the excavation in Field 1 Area 1. Some industrial purpose, such as a crucible for metalworking, seems plausible. This may indicate that there is similar settlement to the west of the current excavation, or may be an outlier in the countryside.

Ditch 1005 clearly extends the previously recorded ditch 1004, part of a large rectilinear field system, which pottery and a radiocarbon date suggested was Bronze Age (Beaverstock *et al.* 2017). No further evidence to date this ditch was found in the current works.

Ditch 1010 was a continuation of the ditch previously found to the east where it was planned only. It was presumed to be modern. This ditch also appears to be part of various agricultural field systems which appeared to be of no great antiquity, and while it may be pushed back into the post-medieval or even medieval periods the single fragment of tile is insufficient dating evidence for an earlier formation date. Although considered likely to be associated with the rectilinear field system to the north, it is in fact not closely aligned on it, so the tile cannot definitively rule out a Bronze Age date for the latter.

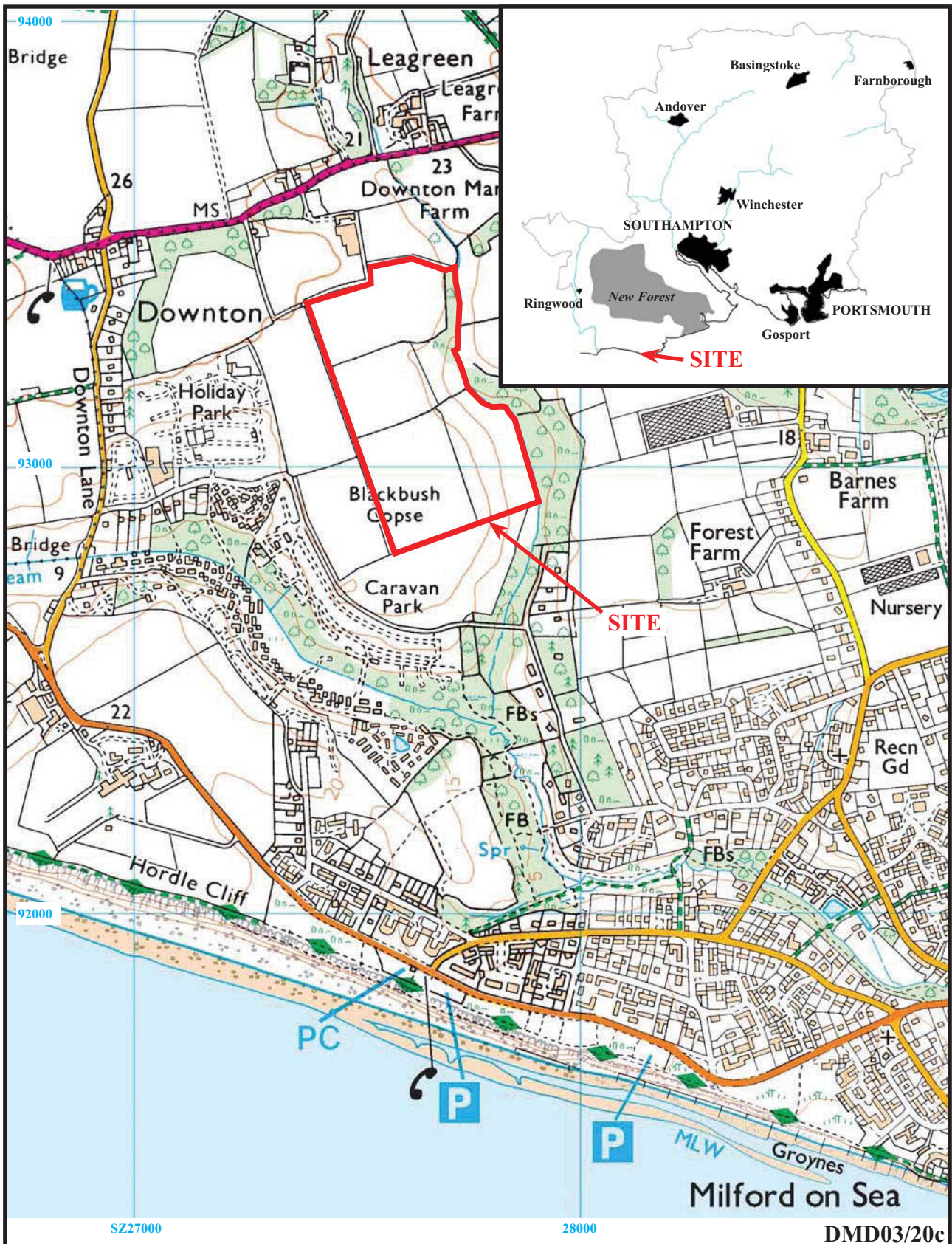
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**APPENDIX 1: Feature details**

<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
500	550		Pit	Undated	Fired Clay
501	551	1010	Ditch	Undated	None
502	552	1010	Ditch	Undated	None
503	553	1010	Ditch	Undated	None
504	554	1010	Ditch	Undated	None
505	555		Ditch	Medieval-Post-Medieval	Tile
506	556		Posthole	Undated	None

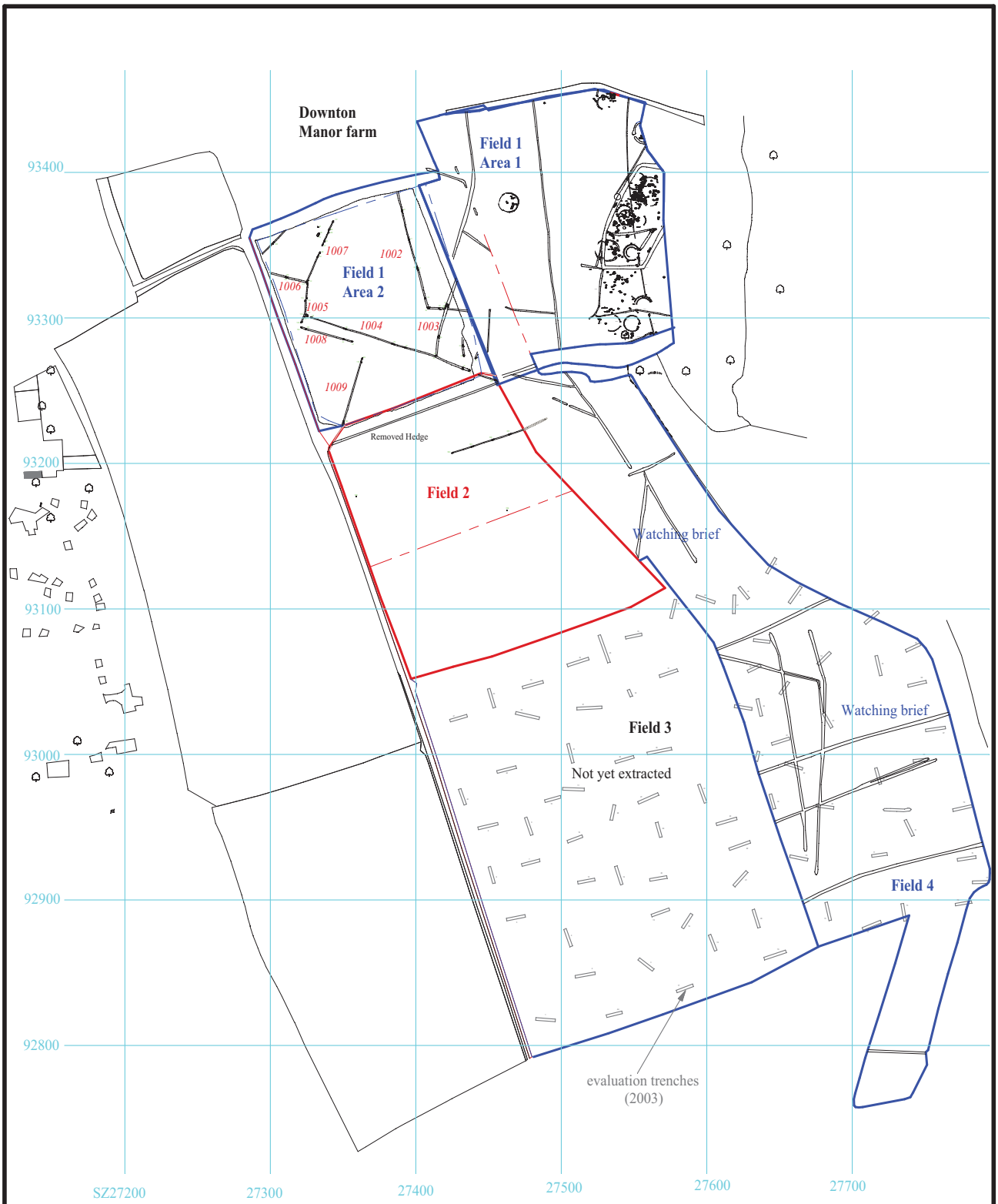


**Downton Manor Farm, Downton,  
near Lymington, Hampshire, 2017  
Archaeological Excavation**

Figure 1. Location of site within Downton and Hampshire.

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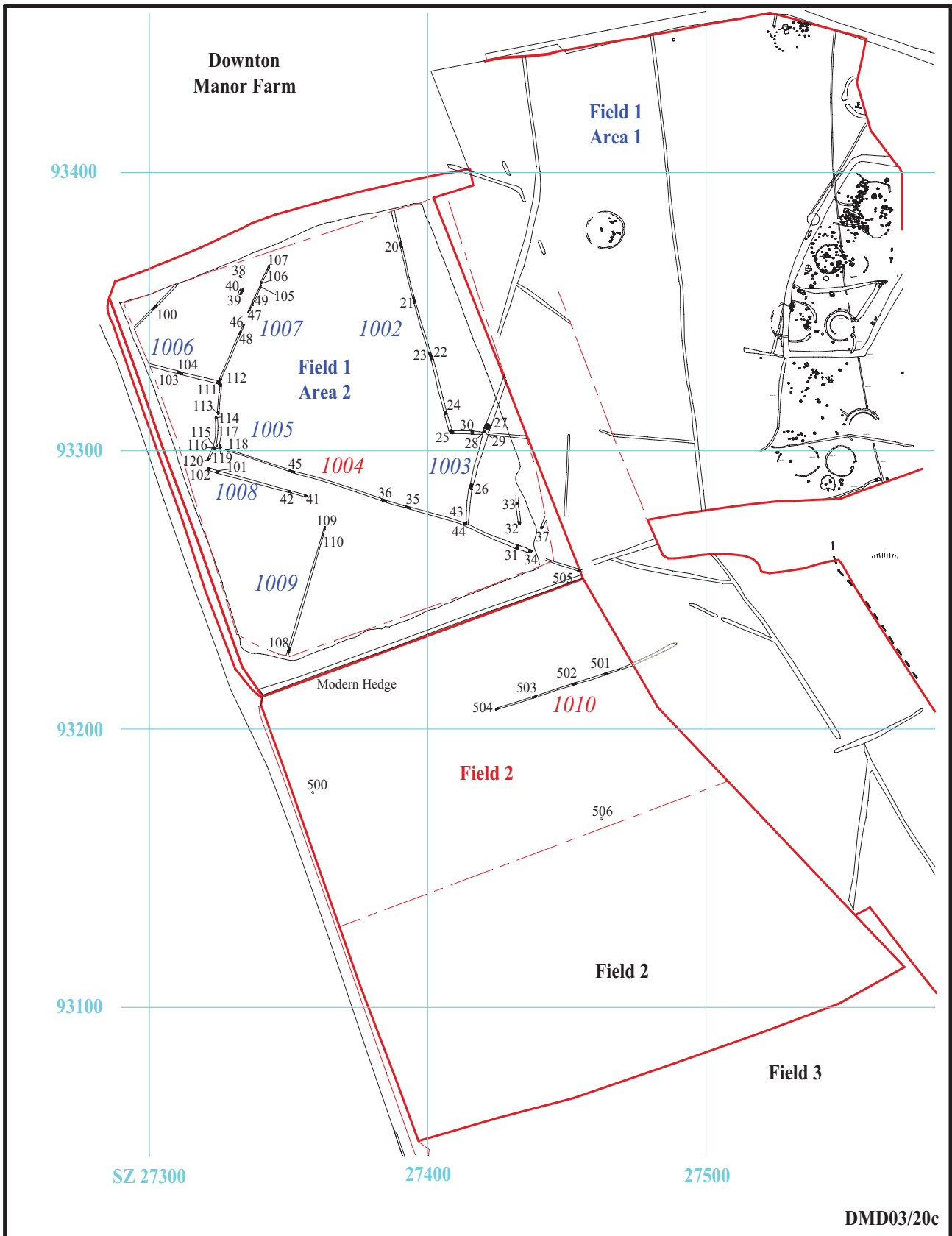


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**Downton Manor Farm, Downton,  
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Figure 2. Overall site plan showing areas previously investigated (blue) and current area of investigation (red).





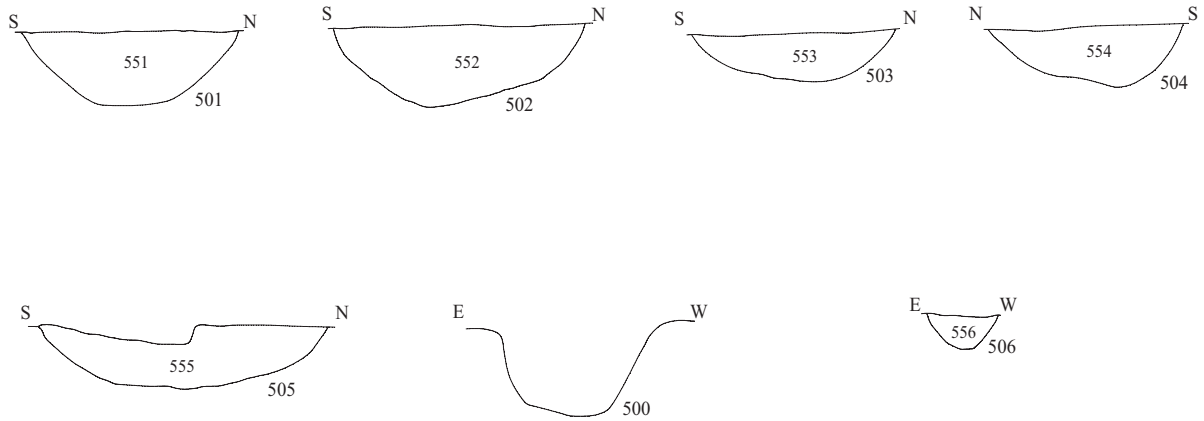
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**Downton Manor Farm, Downton,  
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Archaeological Excavation**

Figure 3. Site Plan



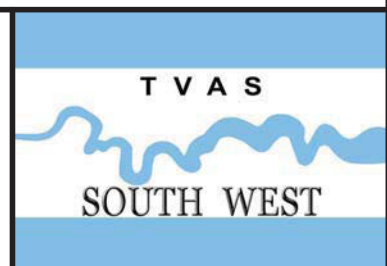
Ditch 1010

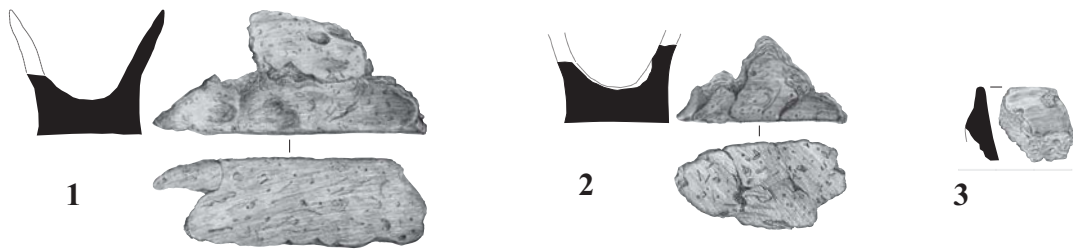


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**Downton Manor Farm, Downton,  
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Archaeological Excavation**

Figure 4. Sections

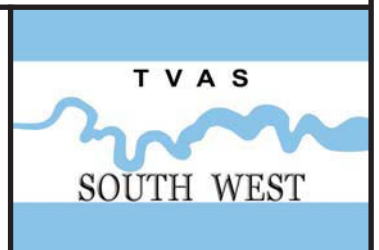




0 100mm

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**Downton Manor Farm, Downton,  
near Lymington, Hampshire, 2017  
Archaeological Excavation**  
Figure 5. Fired clay objects (see text for details).

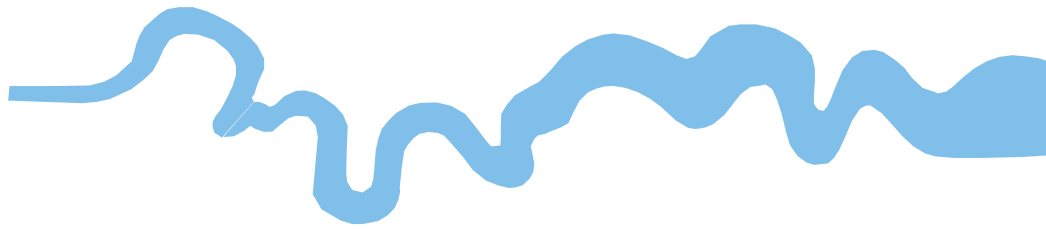




## TIME CHART

	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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