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ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**16 Honey Lane, Cholsey,  
Oxfordshire**

**Archaeological Watching Brief**

**by Andrew Muddin**

**Site Code: HLC17/57**

**(SU 5881 8644)**

**16 Honey Lane, Cholsey,  
Oxfordshire**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief**

**For Ms Philippa Cullen**

by Andrew Muddin

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code HLC 17/57

**September 2017**

## Summary

**Site name:** 16 Honey Lane, Cholsey, Oxfordshire

**Grid reference:** SU 5881 8644

**Site activity:** Watching Brief

**Date and duration of project:** 22nd August - 6th September 2017

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** Andrew Munding, Tim Dawson

**Site code:** HLC 17/57

**Area of site:** 606 sq m

**Summary of results:** Monitoring of the excavation of footings for a house with associated garage and a large soakaway took place. A number of features cutting the natural geology were observed, including a ditch, in addition to several natural features. None of these features contained dating evidence but it is considered that they are of relatively modern date. No deposits nor artefacts of certain archaeological interest were encountered.

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Oxfordshire 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 ✓ 22.09.17 Steve Preston ✓ 22.09.17
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# 16 Honey Lane, Cholsey, Oxfordshire An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Andrew Muddin

**Report 17/57**

## **Introduction**

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at ground which was the front garden of 16 Honey Lane, Cholsey, Oxfordshire, OX10 9NL (SU 5881 8644) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Philippa Cullen, of the above address.

Planning permission (16/S0199/FUL) has been gained from South Oxfordshire District Council for the construction of a new property in front of the existing address. The consent is subject to two conditions (5 and 6) relating to archaeology. Due to the potential of archaeological deposits being present in the area an archaeological watching brief has been requested to occur during groundworks.

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 approved by Mr Richard Oram, Planning Archaeologist for Oxfordshire County Archaeological Service, advisors to the District Council on archaeology issues within the planning process. The fieldwork was undertaken by Andrew Muddin on the 22nd and 29th August and Tim Dawson on 23rd August and 6th September 2017. The site code is HLC 17/57.

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 within the village of Cholsey, on land on the west side of Honey Lane (Fig.2). Cholsey itself lies c.3km south-west of Wallingford. The church of St. Mary's lies to the north west of the village centre next to Manor Farm. The land was part of the eastern side of the garden of No.16 which lay to the south of the house, but is now separated by a new wooden fence. The underlying geology is West Melbury (Lower) Chalk (BGS Geoindex); a porous poorly-bounded silt (BGS 1980). The site lies at a height of c.47m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) with no step from road to garden and with the surrounds generally flat.

## **Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential derives from remains found from small scales observations made in this part of Cholesey that have identified Roman and Medieval deposits (eg Fig.2). The route of a Roman Road (Margary 1973; Henig and Booth 2000) is projected to follow the NNW-SSE line of Honey Lane through the village. The exact course of the road is not clear as fieldwork at 34A Honey Lane located the line of a road, 15m to the west of the current line of Honey Lane (Riccoboni 2012). Neighbouring the current development, other infill development at 25 Station Road, have located Roman and Medieval ditches, in the its garden, prior to the development for Willow Close (Taylor 2010; Mundin 2011, Bray 2012). Works to the south at 20 Honey Lane, only discovered a small number of modern deposits cutting the natural chalk geology (Bennett 2006).

Cholesey developed during the medieval period finally from its late Saxon origins with a Benedictine Abbey established by King Æthelred in AD 986 (Blair 1994,114). The settlement was also mentioned in Domesday Book (1086) (William and Martin, 2002. Deposits of 11th century date have been found during developments works at The Hazels, close to Manor Farm and the Church (Coles 2005).

## **Objectives and methodology**

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the works. This was to involve examination of footing trench excavation and any other large scale excavation involving topsoil removal and drainage pits or runs. All excavation was undertaken by 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a bladed bucket, 0.6m wide. All spoilheaps were checked for finds.

## **Results**

### *Soakaway*

A large trench required for the storm water soakaway was (Fig.3). This trench was 5m long (N-S) by 4.6m wide (W-E). It was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.8m deep. An even layer of topsoil, 0.54m thick was observed in section. This overlay brown silt subsoil to the top of the chalk natural geology at the base of the trench (Pl.3). The chalk was cut by a linear feature on the western side of the trench. This fill was brown yellow, silty gravel and relatively firm. Investigation of the surface of this feature did not recover datable finds but appears to have been cut from relatively high in the stratigraphic sequence and is possibly of fairly modern date. A second cut which contained no dating evidence was just present in the north east corner of the trench (Pl. 3).

### *House footing trenches*

The house footing trenches were dug to a depth of 1.4m (Pls 1 and 2; Fig. 4). The stratigraphy revealed topsoil (turf removed) to a depth of 0.65m overlying 0.2m of mixed soil and chalk above chalk natural geology at 0.85m deep. The surface of the chalk was markedly undulating with numerous possible cuts present, though none contained dating evidence. A number of more obvious larger modern cuts (cut from high in the sequence) were also revealed as shown on Figure 3 and an area to the north comprised a wide silty clay patch. No finds of archaeological interest were recovered.

### *Garage footing trenches*

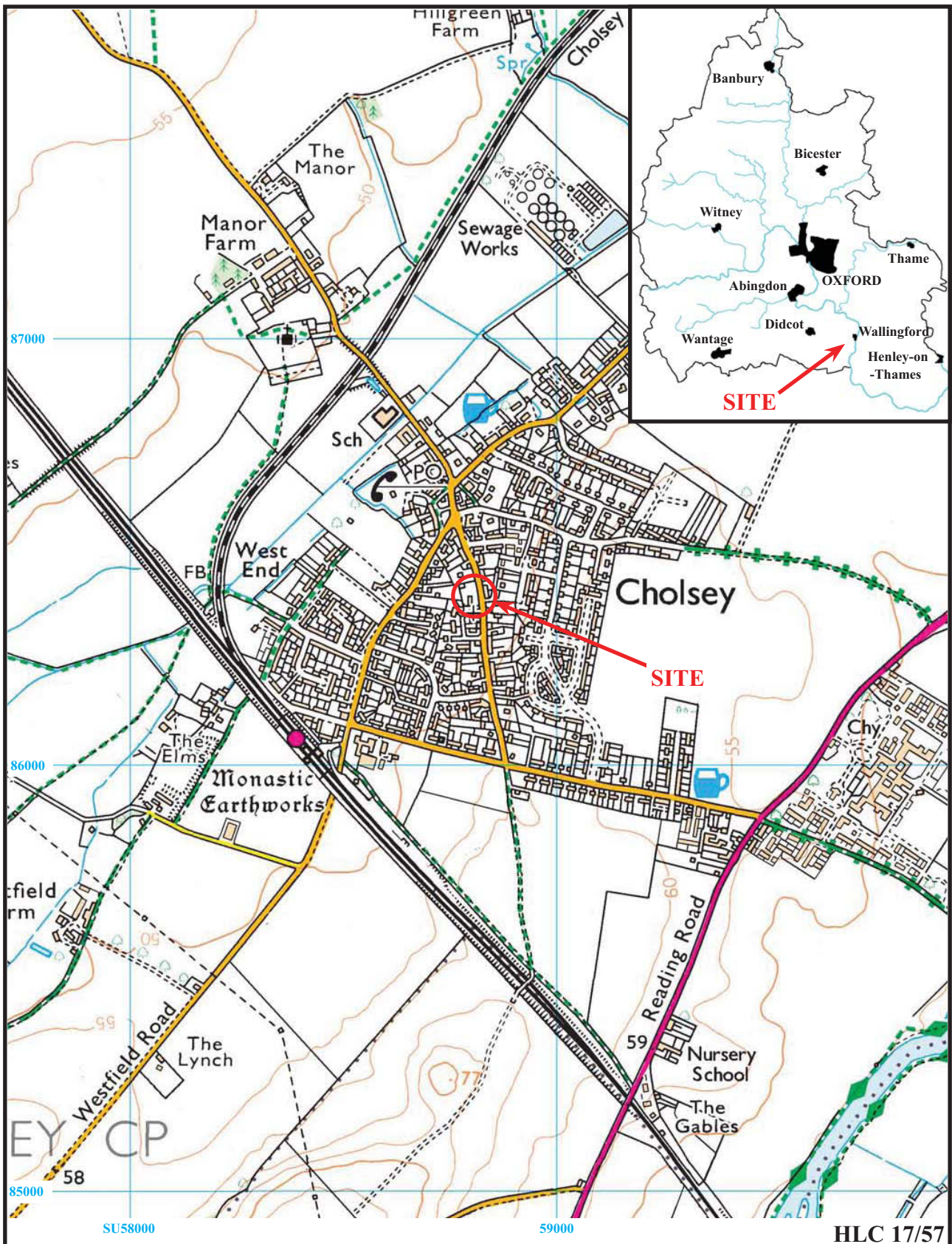
The footings for the garage were dug to a depth of 0.44m. They revealed a stratigraphy of 0.11m of topsoil over 0.32m of subsoil. A large silt filled, truncation, was recorded on the southern side (Fig.3) with a number of other smaller rootholes cutting the natural geology. No finds of archaeological interest were recovered.

## **Conclusion**

The groundworks revealed several features cutting the natural geology though none contained dating evidence and are considered to be either of modern date or are tree roots. No deposits certainly of archaeological interest have been encountered.

## **References**

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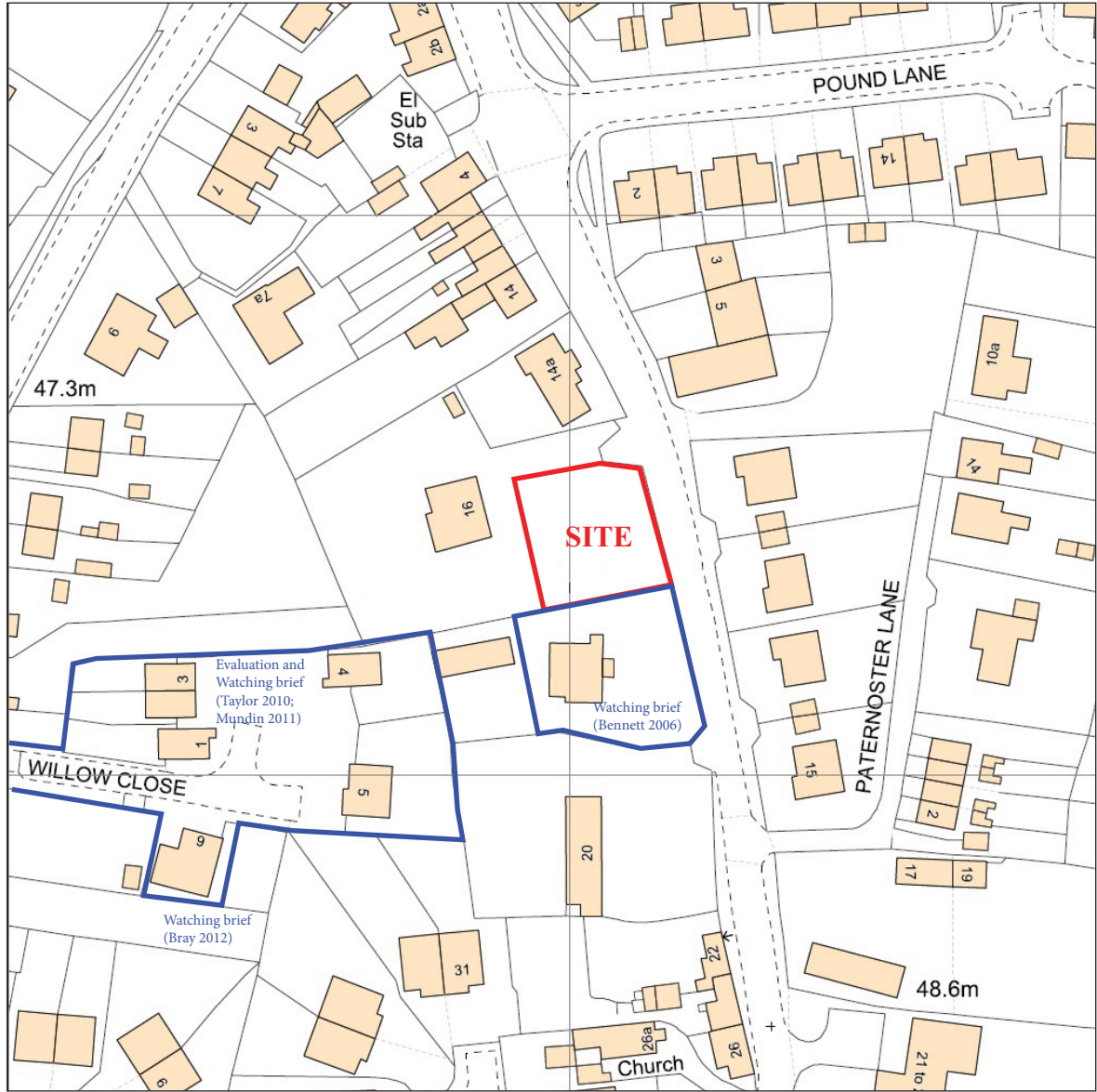
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Figure 1. Location of site within Cholsey and Oxfordshire.

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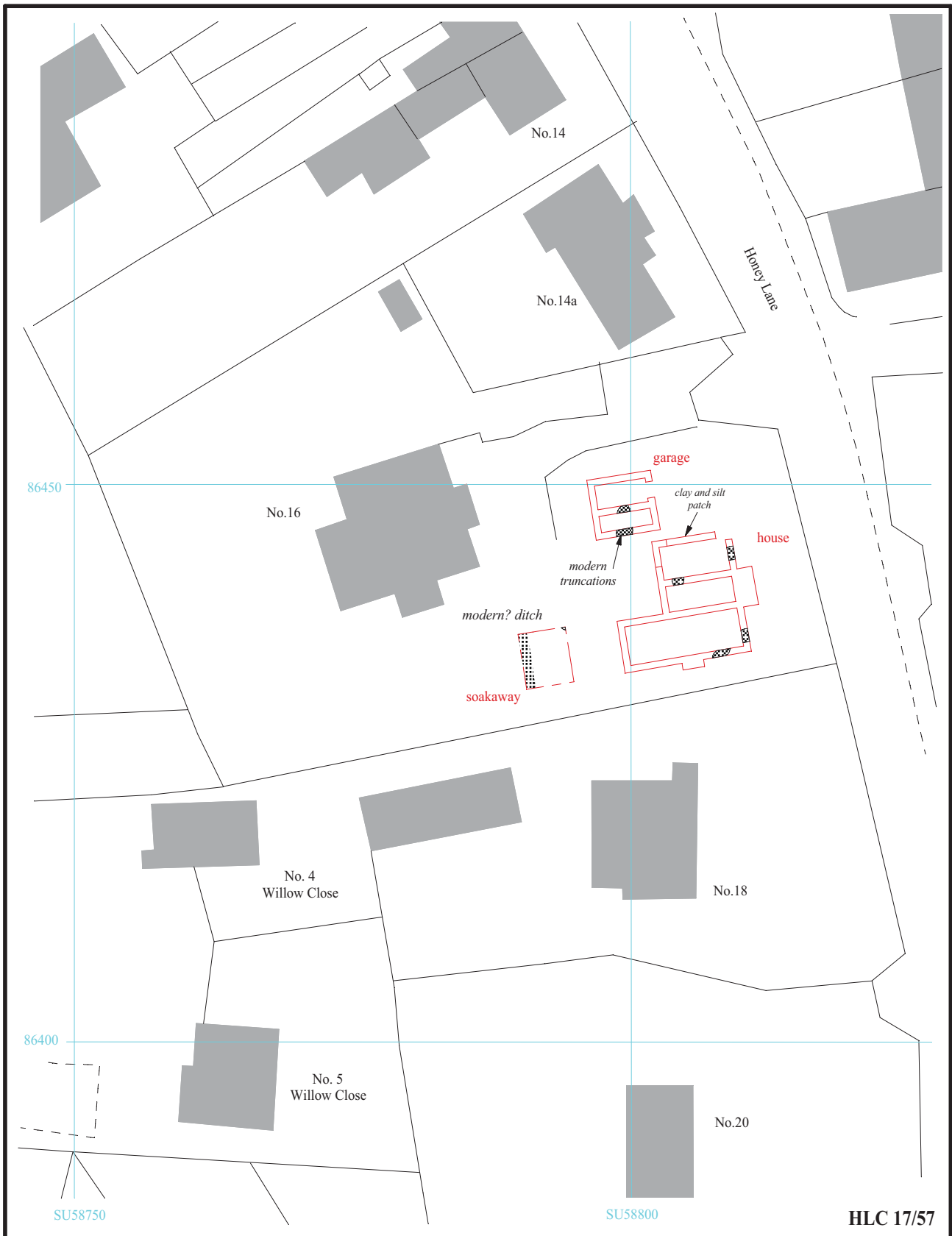


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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Honey Lane.

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Figure 3. Location of observed areas.



NE

SW

[48.4maoD](#)

Topsoil

Chalk natural mixed with grey brown silt

Chalk (natural geology)

base of trench

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Figure 4. Representative foundation trench section.



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Plate 1. Section showing truncation of chalk from topsoil, looking south east,  
Scales: 1m and 0.5m.



Plate 2. Excavated house footings, looking south, Scales: 1m and 0.5m.

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Plates 1 and 2.

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Plate 3. Excavated soakaway trench, looking north,  
Scales: horizontal 0.5m, vertical 1m.



Plate 4. Excavated garage footings, looking east, Scales: 2m and 1m.

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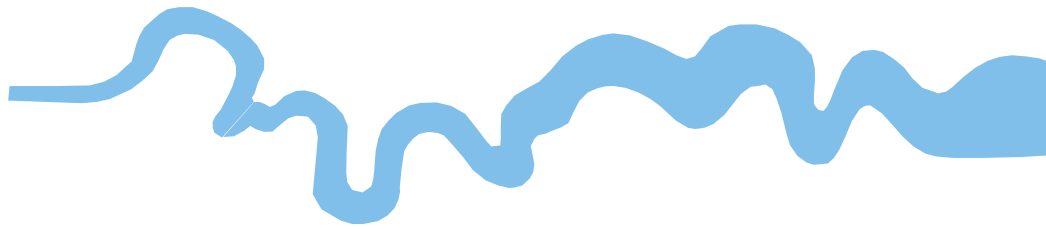
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Plates 3 and 4.

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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 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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