

T V A S



SOUTH WEST

**The Knoll, 24 Church Street,
Pewsey, Wiltshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by Andrew Weale

Site Code: CSP17/87

(SU 1629 5989)

**The, Knoll, 24 Church Street,
Pewsey, Wiltshire**

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For Savernake Homes Ltd

by Andrew Weale

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code CSP 17/87

February 2018

Summary

Site name: The Knoll, 24 Church Street, Pewsey, Wiltshire

Grid reference: SU 1629 5989

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 14th September 2017 to 14th February 2018

Project manager: Andrew Weale

Site supervisor: Andrew Weale

Site code: CSP 17/87

Area of site: c.0.19ha

Summary of results: Topsoil stripping, trenches dug during demolition and for the new buildings, were all observed. However no archaeological features or artefacts were encountered during the watching brief.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at TVAS South West Office, Taunton and will be deposited at Wiltshire Heritage Museum in due course.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 22.02.18 Steve Preston ✓ 22.02.18

The Knoll, 24 Church Street, Pewsey, Wiltshire An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Andrew Weale

Report 17/87

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at The Knoll, 24 Church Street, Pewsey, Wiltshire (SU 1629 5989) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Claire Welburn of Fowler Architecture & Planning Ltd, 19 High Street, Pewsey, Wiltshire SN9 5AF on behalf of Savernake Homes Limited, Round Shaw Farm, Ipsden Heath, Ipsden, Wallingford, Oxon, OX10 6QR.

Planning permission (16/11708/FUL) has been granted by Wiltshire Council for the demolition of the existing dwelling and garage and the erection of two dwellings with garages at The Knoll, 24 Church Street, Pewsey. The permission is subject to a condition (5) relating to archaeology that requires a programme of archaeological work. This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012) and the Council's policies on archaeology. It was determined that this programme would take the form of a watching brief during groundworks. The Knoll itself was also subject to a building recording (Edwards 2017). The site lies within the Pewsey Conservation Area and The Knoll was an unlisted building of local interest (KDC 2007).

The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Rachel Foster, Assistant County Archaeologist of Wiltshire Council Archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Andrew Weale between the 14th September 2017 and 14th February 2018. The site code is CPS 17/87. The archive is presently held at TVAS South West, Taunton and will be deposited with the Wiltshire Heritage Museum, in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located within the village of Pewsey in the Vale of Pewsey which lies between the Marlborough Downs to the north and Salisbury Plain to the south (Fig. 1). The River Avon, mostly canalized to the north but forming several streams to the south, flows through the village. The site occupies a large plot to the north of the junction between Church Street and The Crescent, with the existing house and garage still standing at the start of the project with a large mature garden (Fig. 2), the plot being elevated by over 2.0m above the level of Church Street at its eastern boundary, the difference reducing slightly to the west. The Church of St John the Baptist stands directly opposite the site on Church Street to the east. The site lies at an elevation of c. 119m above OD.

The underlying geology is mapped as Cretaceous Upper Greensand with a Quaternary Head deposits in the-north west of the site. (BGS 2008). Greensand was encountered across the site during the works.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location within the historic (Saxon) core of the settlement which was known as *Pefesigge* in AD880. The parish church, which has Saxon origins, stands just to the east of the site. The church is usually considered to lie close to the original centre of a settlement. The medieval component of the village is focused further to the north-east. A modest range of prehistoric and Roman finds is recorded for the village centre. The wider area around Pewsey has high archaeological potential and there have been finds from the Palaeolithic period onwards. There are the remains of prehistoric field systems and ditches. On the top of Martinsell Hill 4km to the north of the village is an Iron Age fort, barrows and enclosures. There was early Saxon occupation in the area and a 6th-century cemetery with over 100 graves has been excavated at Black Patch on the lower slopes of Salisbury Plain, 2km to the south-west of the village (Annable and Eagles 2010). These overlay an Iron Age domestic site.

King Alfred left Pewsey to his son Edward, who succeeded him as king in 899 (VCH 1999). In 940 Pewsey was granted to St. Peter's Abbey, Winchester (later Hyde Abbey). The abbey continued to hold most of Pewsey by the time of Domesday Book in 1086 (Williams and Martin 2002), when it was a very substantial manor. There were also three smaller holdings, including the church, which was probably was built before 940, or was on the site of an earlier church.

The history of the building (The Knoll) has been detailed in a heritage assessment (Edwards 2016). Up to the 1924 edition of the Ordnance Survey, the plot now occupied by the Knoll was undeveloped. By 1936 this western part of Pewsey was beginning to be developed and The Knoll had been built, its plot including the area now occupied by Chestnut Manor. Upon demolition it was discovered that The Knoll was a traditional timber-framed building but with rendered cement/asbestos panels infilling the framework in place of the traditional wattle and daub (Edwards 2017).

Objectives and methodology

The aims of the project were to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the groundworks. This involved the archaeological monitoring of all areas of intrusive groundworks, in particular the digging of foundations and service trenches, along with ground reduction. Archaeological deposits which were threatened

by groundworks were to be excavated and recorded. Sufficient time was to be allowed to carry this out within the groundworker's schedules.

Results

During the last phase of demolition the existing footings of the buildings on site were removed by a 360° tracked excavator with a 1m wide toothed bucket. Due to the nature of the natural geology (unconsolidated greensand) this was done in short sections and the resulting spoil replaced into the trench after archaeological inspection. The trenches varied from 1.2m to 1.5m wide and from 0.80m to 1.34m deep (Fig. 2)

After demolition of the existing buildings the remaining shrubs and trees were removed by a 360° tracked excavator with a toothless bucket. Topsoil across the site was removed and placed in storage bunds along the southern and western boundaries. Only modern artefacts associated with the demolished buildings, greenhouses and the garden were encountered within the stripped topsoil: these were observed but not collected.

After levelling, footing trenches were excavated for the two new dwellings (Fig. 2). The external footing trenches were 0.70m wide whilst the internal trenches were 0.50m wide and were between 0.60 to 0.75m deep.

Demolition Trenches (Figs 2 and 3; Pl. 1)

In the area of the garage as it was demolished the stratigraphy was loose stone access road 0.13m deep (52) above a layer made ground containing modern brick, plaster and plastic from 0.06m deep (53). Beneath the made ground was buried topsoil that contained modern plastic and flower pots from 0.09m thick (54). Beneath the buried topsoil was humic brown sandy subsoil (51) that was 0.28m thick and contained no datable artefacts. Beneath the subsoil was unconsolidated natural greensand to 1.02m+ deep.

In the area of the old house the stratigraphy was topsoil that contained modern plastic and flower pots from 0.25m thick (50) above humic brown sandy subsoil (51) that was 0.28m thick and contained no datable artefacts. Beneath the subsoil was unconsolidated natural greensand to 0.80m+ deep.

Plot 1 Footing Trenches (Figs 2 and 3; Pl. 2)

All of the topsoil (50) had been removed prior to the excavation of the footing trenches though subsoil (51) that was between 0.15–0.25m thick into natural geology. The subsoil contained no datable artefacts. Beneath the subsoil was unconsolidated natural greensand to 0.50m+ deep.

Plot 2 Footing Trenches (Figs 2 and 3; Pls 3 and 4)

In the area within the footprint of the demolished house the stratigraphy was made ground up to 0.14m deep (55) above 0.10m of buried topsoil (50). Beneath the topsoil was subsoil (51) that was 0.38m thick and contained no datable artefacts. Beneath the subsoil was unconsolidated natural greensand to 0.03m+ deep.

In one area, beneath the made ground was a second layer of made ground (Tarmac and stone) up to 0.07m thick (57). Beneath this layer of made ground was a layer of humic brown salty sand which was up to 0.29m thick and contained no datable artefacts (58). Beneath this layer was subsoil (51) that was 0.09m thick and contained no datable artefacts. Beneath the subsoil was unconsolidated natural greensand to 0.09m+ deep.

Finds

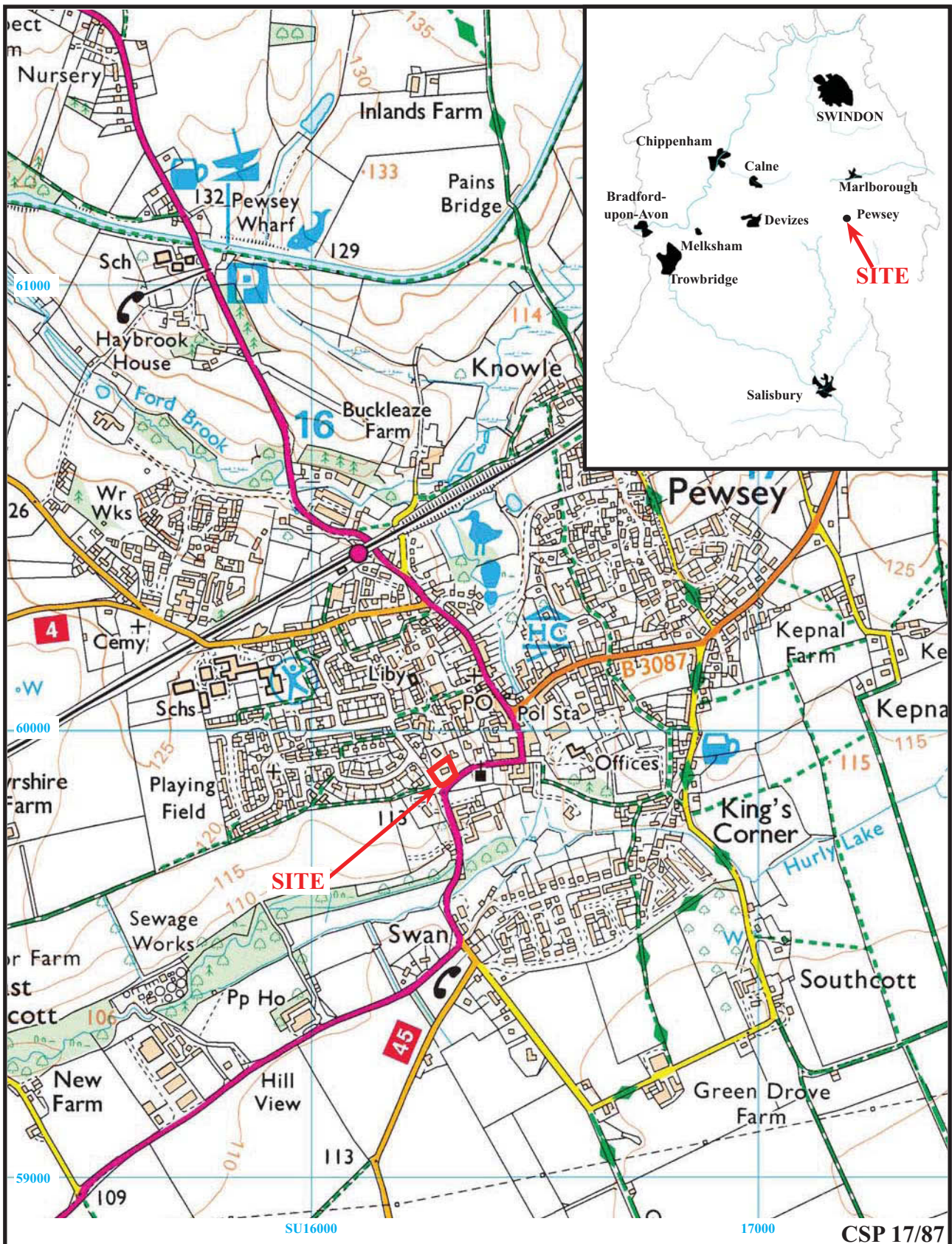
No pre-modern finds were encountered during the watching brief.

Conclusion

The watching brief revealed no archaeological features or pre-modern artefacts, despite the site's location within the historic core of the village of Pewsey and its potential to contain below ground archaeological deposits from the Saxon and medieval settlements. The east of the site in the areas of the previous buildings had been heavily disturbed, however the area of plot 1 which was previously garden showed no such disturbance and if archaeological features were ever present within the footprint of the building in plot 1 they would have been observed.

References

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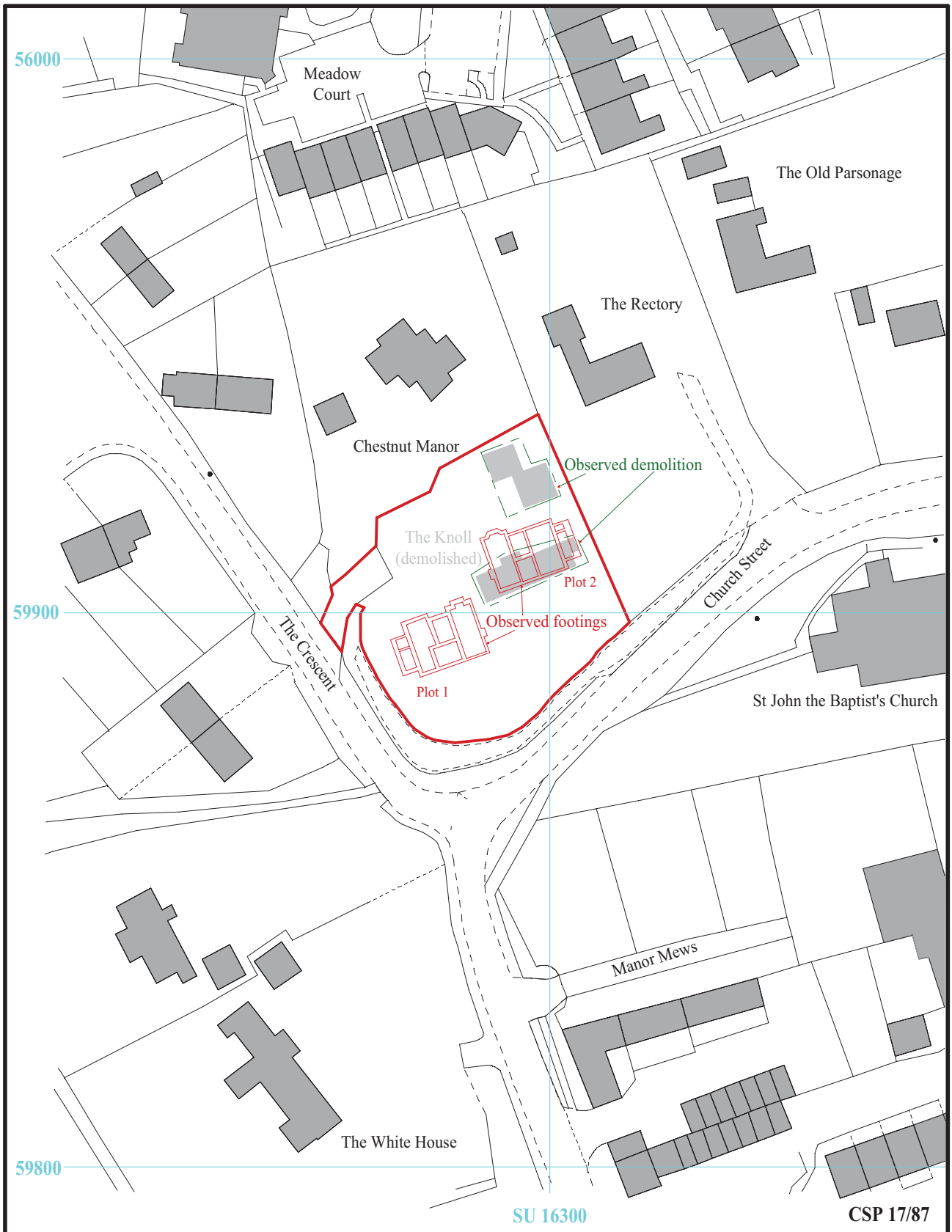


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Figure 1. Location of site within Pewsey and Wiltshire.

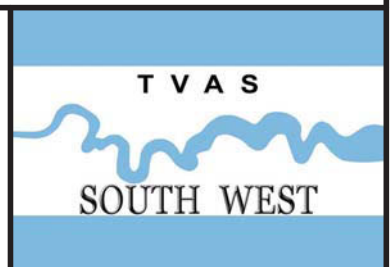
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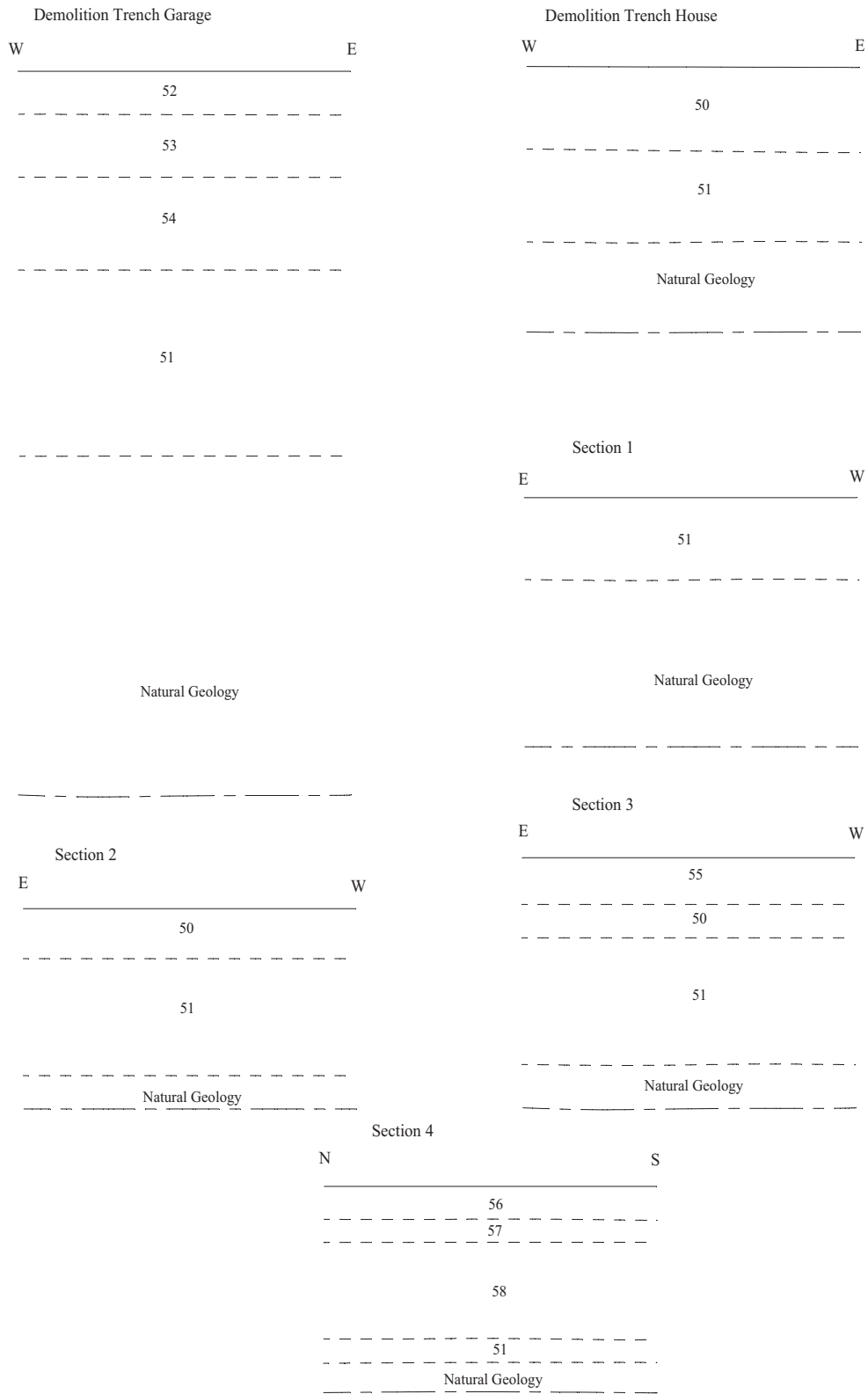




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Figure 2. Detailed location of site





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Figure 3. Representative sections.

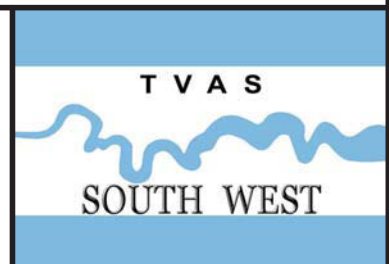




Plate 1. Garage demolition trench looking North. Scales: 2m and 1m



Plate 2. Plot 1 Section 2 looking South. Scales: 1m and 0.5m

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Plates 1 and 2.**





Plate 3. Plot 2 Section 3 looking South. Scales: 1m 0.5m



Plate 4 Plot 2 Section 4 looking East. Scales: 1m 0.5m

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Plates 3 and 4.**



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





**TVAS (South West),
Unit 21 Apple Business Centre,
Frobisher Way,
Taunton TA2 6BB
Tel: 01823 288284
Email: southwest@tvas.co.uk
Web: www.tvas.co.uk/southwest**

*Offices in:
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