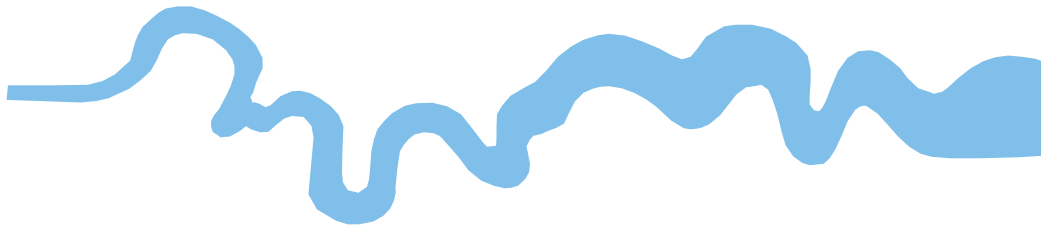


**T V A S**



**SOUTH WEST**

**Land at the Honiton Inn,  
Paris Street, Exeter, Devon**

**Archaeological Watching Brief**

**by Nicholas Dawson**

**Site Code: HIE18/58b**

**(SX 9257 9281)**

# **Land at the Honiton Inn, Paris Street, Exeter, Devon**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief**

**For Galliard Homes Ltd**

by Nicholas Dawson

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code HIE 18/58

**January 2019**

## Summary

**Site name:** Land at the Honiton Inn, Paris Street, Exeter, Devon

**Grid reference:** SX 9257 9281

**Site activity:** Watching Brief

**Date and duration of project:** 27th - 30th July 2018

**Project manager:** Agata Socha-Paszkwicz

**Site supervisor:** Nicholas Dawson

**Site code:** HIE 18/58

**Area of site:** 840 q m

**Summary of results:** The watching brief monitored the demolition and removal of footings belonging to The Honiton Inn. The upper part of a Post-medieval or Victorian well was recorded but no cellars were identified.

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at TVAS South West, Taunton and will be deposited at Royal Albert Museum, Exeter in due course.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 16.01.19 Steve Preston ✓ 16.01.19
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# Land at the Honiton Inn, Paris Street, Exeter, Devon An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Nicholas Dawson

**Report 18/58b**

## **Introduction**

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at the Honiton Inn, Paris Street, Exeter, Devon, EX1 2JY (NGR SX 92576 9281) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Peter Stone of PSP Consultants, Bishops Park House, 25-29 Fulham, High Street, London, SW6 3JH on behalf of Galliard Homes Limited, Sterling House, Langston Rd. Loughton, IG10 3TSA.

Planning permission has been granted (appln 16/2110/03) by Exeter City Council (ECC), subject to a variation (17/1658/VOC) for demolition of the former Honiton Inn to build a mixed use development. The permission is subject to a condition (4) which requires the implementation of a programme of archaeological work that includes a building survey of structures to be demolished, a watching brief on the removal of the inn's footings and an archaeological evaluation on the site post-demolition of the original structure. This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012) and Exeter City Council's policies on archaeology. This report is to be submitted pursuant to the application (18/0675/DIS) for discharge of that condition (among others).

The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Andrew Pye, the ECC Principal Project Manager (Heritage). The fieldwork was undertaken by Nicholas Dawson, on 27th and 30th July 2018 and the site code is HIE 18/58. Building recording of elements of the structure took place before demolition (Milbank 2018).

The archive is presently held at TVAS South West, Taunton and will be deposited at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Art Gallery, Exeter or Archaeology Data Service in due course.

## **Location, topography and geology**

The site is located on the south side of Paris Street (B3183) in the centre of the city some 930m from the banks of the River Exe (Fig. 1). It is the site of a disused former public house and its car park. To the east it is bordered by a triangle of raised grassy bank with trees which lies between the site Western Way (B3212). This green area continues to the south of site. On the site's western side sits a block of offices and car park (Fig 2). The

underlying geology is mapped as a Whipton Formation Sandstone. No superficial geological deposits are recorded (BSG 1995). The front of the site occupied by the Inn sits at a height of 39m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) with a raised car park at the rear at 40m aOD.

## **Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a heritage statement (GK Heritage, 2016) and in email guidance (dated 12.04.18) provided by the Exeter City Council Principal Project Manager (Heritage). In summary the site lies just outside of the walled perimeters of both Roman and Medieval Exeter but within areas of probable extra-mural settlement. With a Roman road noted as running from the East Gate along the lower portion of Paris Street and up Heavitree Road, it is likely for such a route to have been focus for activity associated with the early Roman legionary fortress of *Isca Dumnoniorum* at Exeter and with the later Roman town. Later the route of Paris Street became one of the principal approaches to the Medieval City of Exeter and it is probable that medieval suburban expansion occurred along its course. Urban expansion along Paris Street is better attested in the late 16th and early 17th century, when buildings are shown on historic maps along the street frontage and on the present site, and a concentration of early clay tobacco pipe manufactories with kilns have been identified in the area. The Honiton Inn is first noted in 1792 in insurance documents; however the current building is likely of Late Victorian date, with significant alterations through the Edwardian period onwards. The site also lies within the Southernhay and Friars Conservation Area and there are 3 Grade II\* and 6 Grade II Listed Buildings within a 250m radius of the site. Previous archaeological work includes a building survey undertaken on the inn prior to its demolition (Milbank in prep).

## **Objectives and methodology**

This watching brief forms part of a wider programme of archaeological work including a building survey carried out prior to the building's demolition and a archaeological evaluation to be carried out after the removal of footings (TVAS 2018). The purpose of the watching brief was to record any archaeological deposits affected by the work. This involved the archaeological monitoring of all areas of intrusive groundworks associated with the removal of the Honiton Inn's footings.

The specific research aims of this project were to:

- observe the demolition and removal of footings belonging to the Honiton Inn; and to
- confirm the presence or absence of cellars beneath the Honiton Inn.

All ground works across the site were undertaken by a mechanical excavator. Archaeological deposits which were threatened or revealed by groundworks were to be excavated and recorded. Sufficient time was to be allowed to carry out with the groundworker's schedules.

## Results

The removal by machine, of the Honiton Inn's footings was monitored as well as footings of two external walls. (Fig. 3; Pl. 1). Across the northern area formerly occupied by the inn the stratigraphy consisted of demolition deposits (66) from the destruction of its upper levels, overlying the concrete floor (85) (Pls 2 and 3). The removal of this surface revealed a red brown silt sand deposit (86) into which the foundation trenches were dug (10). The footings for the original structure of the inn consisted of brick courses built off a very rough concrete base some 0.30–0.40m thick and 0.60m wide, with large quantities of rubble and brick inclusions. Footings for the later western extension consisted of brick built off a much finer concrete base some 0.8m wide and 0.30m deep.

In the southern half of the site where the car park was located the stratigraphy differed. Here 0.04–0.05m thick Tarmac (65) overlay grey-brown sandy levelling layer (76) and beneath this, a reddish silty sand (77) made ground layer observed to a depth of 0.30m for the external wall footings (Fig. 4). The footings (within cut 9) consisted of 0.30m thick and 0.60m wide block of poured concrete (80) with a wall of brick and breeze block (79) built off the centre of its upper surface. To the north, cut 9 truncated an undifferentiated made ground layer (78) probably equivalent to 76 in the south.

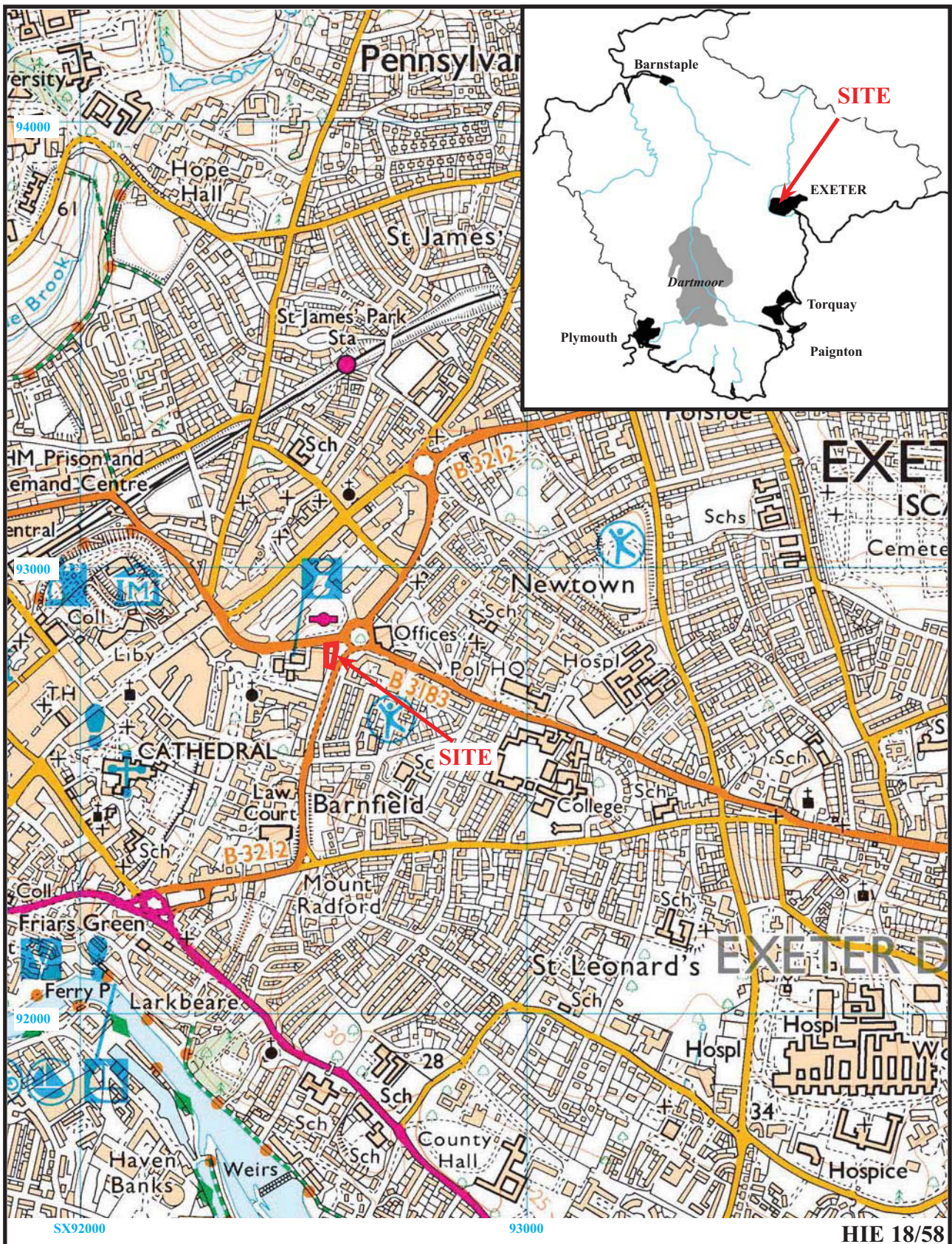
The only archaeological feature identified was the upper part of a brick-lined Post-medieval or Victorian well (8) (Pl. 4). Located within the southern section of the later extension (Fig. 3), below Tarmac (65), rubble levelling (72), and three more layers of modern make up (73–75), the well had an interior diameter of 1m and was capped with concrete (64). The concrete and its brick inclusions used in the capping were consistent with those used in the later western extension suggesting the well was capped at a similar time to the extension's construction. Below the capping was a 0.4m high void (67) with rubble backfill below. Its location within the section meant excavation was not possible during the watching brief. A number of finds were retrieved from rubble deposits across the site including a 1912 George V penny, the base of a Kerswell & Grafton, St. Thomas Waterworks, Exeter glass bottle produced by Kilner & Brothers Ltd, London and a number of clay pipe fragments. The latter were observed but not retained due to their unstratified position.

## **Conclusion**

The demolition and removal of footings belonging to the Honiton Inn were successfully monitored and the absence of any cellars was noted. The only archaeological feature identified during demolition was the upper section of a Post-medieval or Victorian well likely relating to the earlier parts of the public house. Due to the depths of the made up deposits across the site natural geology was not reached.

## **References**

- BGS, 1995, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000 Sheet 325, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- GK Heritage 2016, *The Honiton Inn and the Boundary Wall, Paris Street, Exeter*, Heritage Statement, Bristol, Project GK02/12/12/16
- NPPF 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London
- Milbank, D, 2018, 'Land at The Honiton Inn, Paris Street, Exeter, Devon: Building Recording', Thames Valley Archaeological Services Report, 18/58, Reading
- TVAS, 2018, 'Land at The Honiton Inn, Paris Street, Exeter, Devon: Written scheme of archaeological work', Thames Valley Archaeological Services South West WSI 18-58, Taunton

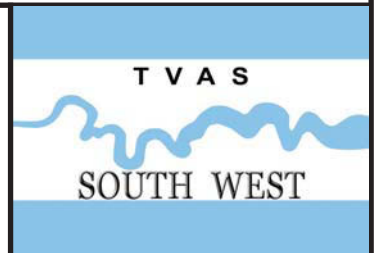


Land at the Honiton Inn, Paris Street,  
Exeter, Devon, 2018

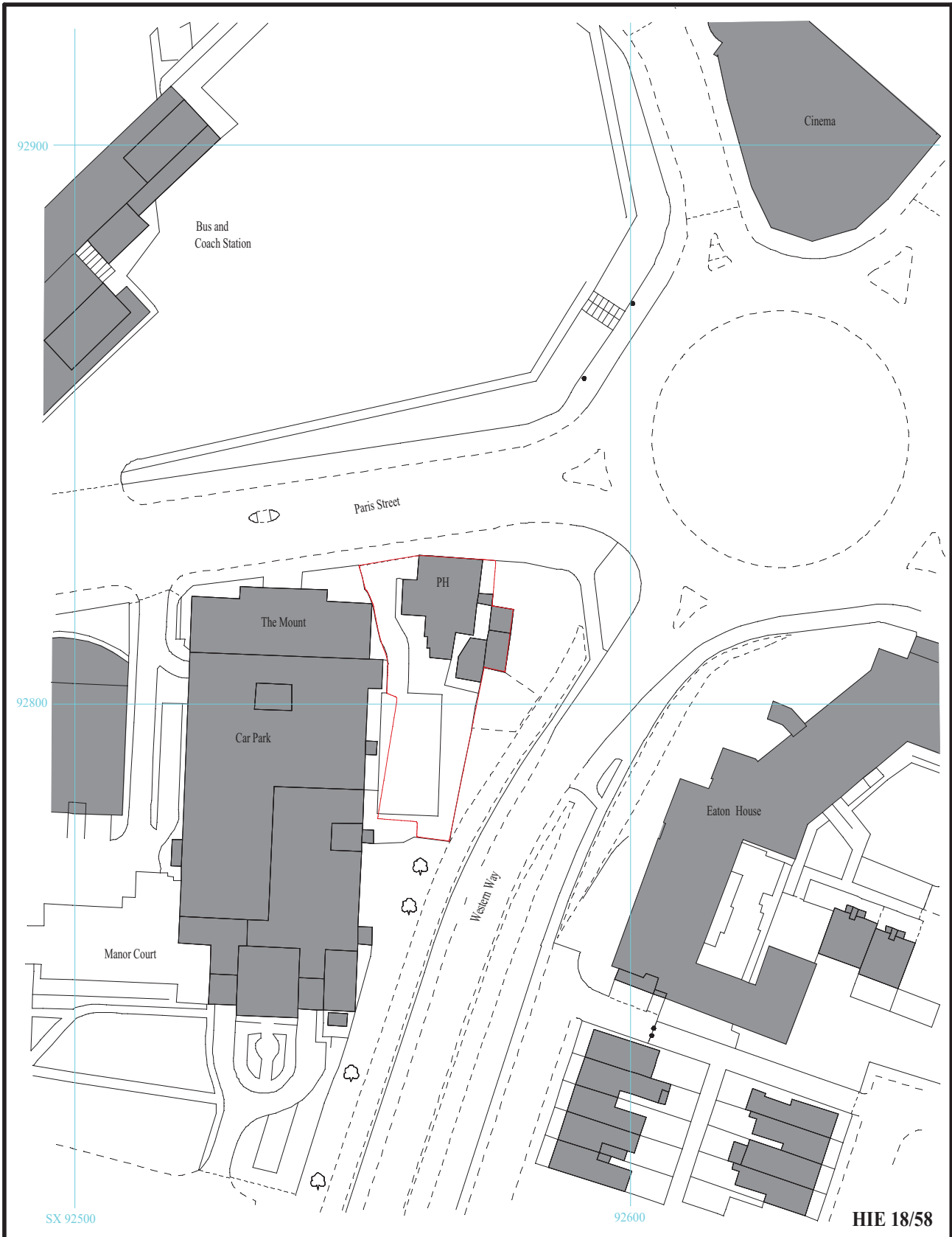
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Figure 1. Location of site within Exeter and Devon.

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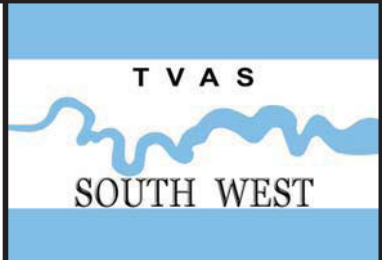


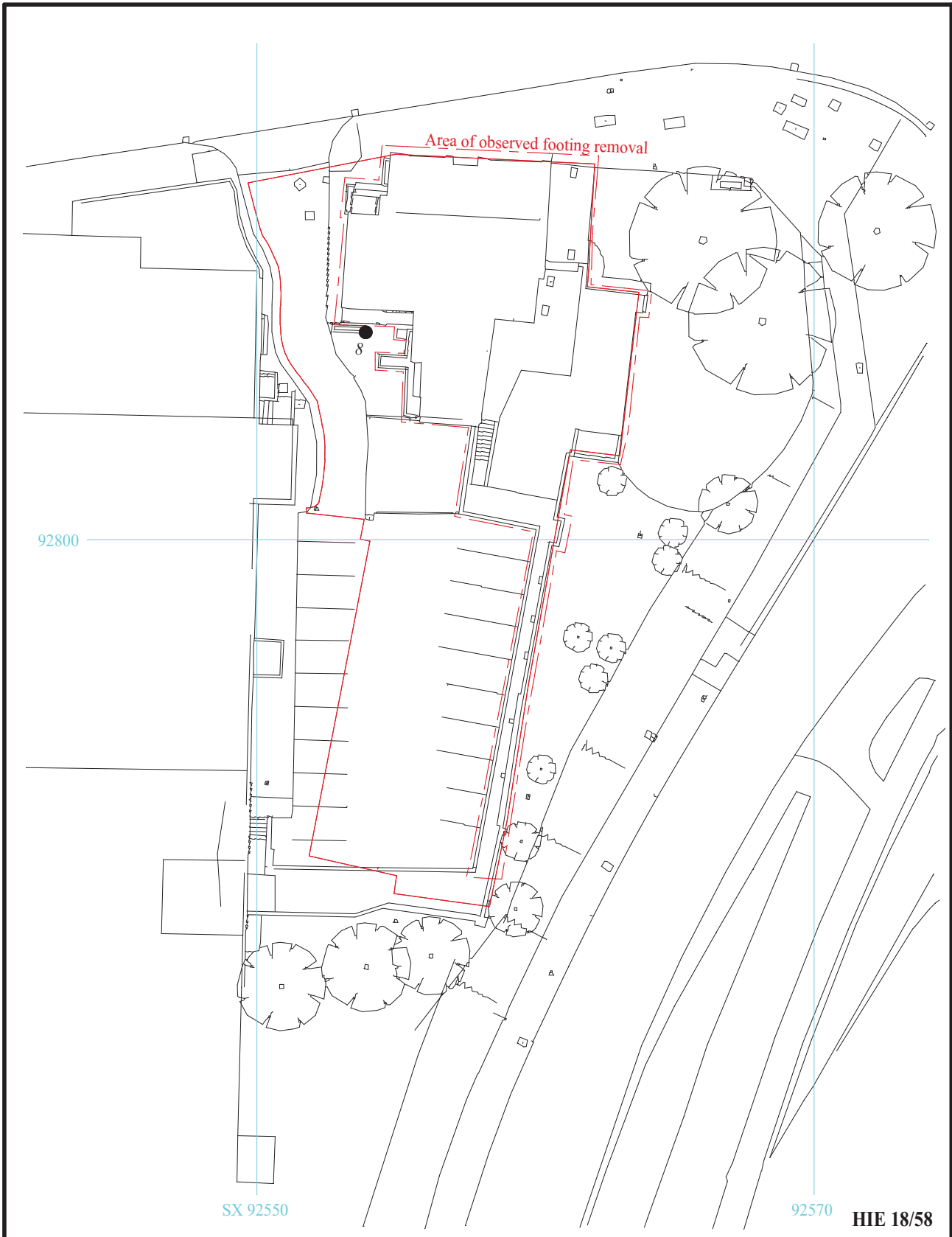




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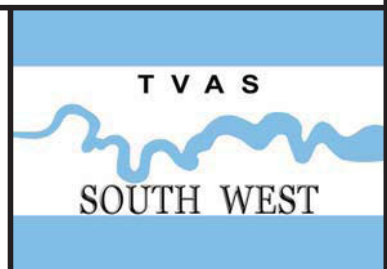
Figure 2. Site plan.

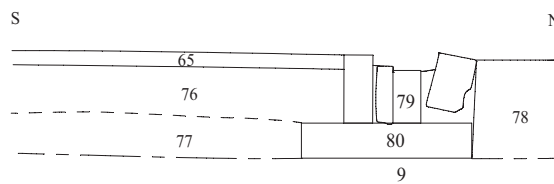
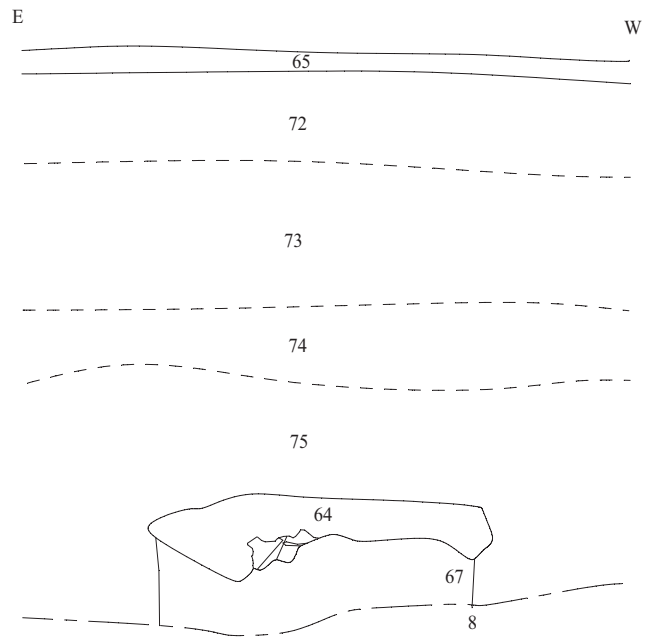




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Figure 3. Footing removal observed.





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Figure 4. Representative section.





Plate 1. Site, looking North.



Plate 2. Footings cut 9, looking West, Scale: 0.5m.



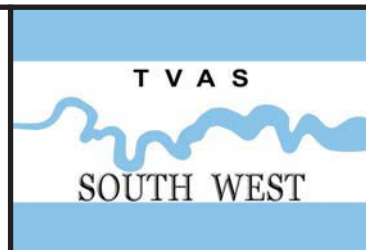
Plate 3. Floor (85), looking SW, Scale: 1m.



Plate 4. Well (8), looking South, Scale: 1m.

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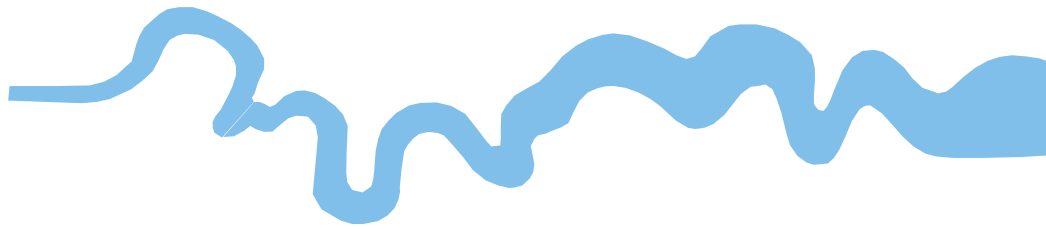
**Land at The Honiton Inn, Paris Street  
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Plates 1 to 4.**



## 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





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