

T H A M E S V A L L E Y

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Nightingale Lane, South Marston,
Swindon, Wiltshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Kyle Beaverstock

Site Code: NLS18/186

(SU 1972 8791)

**Nightingale Lane, South Marston,
Swindon, Wiltshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Bower Mapson Homes Ltd**

by Kyle Beaverstock

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code NLS 18/186

March 2019

Summary

Site name: Nightingale Lane, South Marston, Swindon, Wiltshire

Grid reference: SU 1972 8791

Site activity: Archaeological Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 26th February - 1st March 2019

Project coordinator: Tim Dawson

Site supervisor: Kyle Beaverstock

Site code: NLS 18/186

Area of site: c. 1ha

Summary of results: The evaluation was carried out as intended and 11 trenches were successfully excavated. A single gully containing a few fragments of Bronze Age pottery was encountered. The site is considered to have low archaeological potential.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Swindon Museum in due course.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 04.03.19 Steve Preston ✓ 04.03.19

Nightingale Lane, South Marston, Swindon, Wiltshire

An Archaeological Evaluation

by Kyle Beaverstock

Report 18/186b

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Nightingale Lane, South Marston, Swindon, Wiltshire (SU 1972 8791) (Fig. 1.) The work was commissioned by Mr Peter Mapson of Bower Mapson Homes Ltd. 7 The Avenue, Stanton Fitzwarren, Swindon, SN6 7SE.

Planning permission (S/18/1483) is being sought from Swindon Borough Council to construct new housing on the site. As a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits on the site which may be damaged or destroyed by ground works, a programme of archaeological work has been requested in order to inform the planning process with regard to potential archaeological implications of the proposal. This is in accordance with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2018) and the Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger, County Archaeologist for Wiltshire Council, the archaeological adviser to the Borough.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Kyle Beaverstock and Kayce Herrick between 26th February - 1st March 2019 and the site code is NSL 18/186. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Swindon Museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the eastern side of South Marston, approximately 6km north-east of Swindon (Fig. 1). The site is bounded by a residential estate to the south-west, Nightingale Lane to the south-east and farmland to the north-west and north-east (Fig. 2). This relatively flat parcel of land is currently under pasture for the grazing of horses and sits at a height of 97m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). The underlying geology is mapped as being Kimmeridge Clay in the south-west and Alluvium in the north-east (BGS 1974).

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a briefing document produced by Wiltshire County Archaeology Service. This stems from its location within the historic (medieval) core of the village.

South Marston is not mentioned in Domesday Book of 1086 (Williams and Martin 2002). The parish church of St Mary Magdalene lies c. 100m to the north-west and is usually considered to lie close to the original centre of the settlement. Geophysical survey to the west of the site has revealed a wide range of probable archaeological sites. However, a geophysical survey carried out on the site itself showed no magnetic anomalies indicative of possible archaeological features (Beaverstock 2019).

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits within the area of development.

Specific aims of the project were:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on this site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present;
- to determine if any deposits of Roman or Medieval date are present;
- to determine if any geophysical anomalies are of archaeological origin;
- to provide information in order to draw up an appropriate mitigation strategy if required; and
- to report on the findings of the evaluation.

Eleven trenches, 25m long and 1.6m wide were to be dug using a machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision. Topsoil and any other overburden was to be removed to expose archaeologically sensitive levels. Where archaeological features are certainly or probably present, the stripped areas were to be cleaned using appropriate hand tools and sufficient of the archaeological features and deposits exposed would be excavated or sampled by hand to satisfy the aims outlined above, without compromising the integrity of any feature that might warrant preservation *in situ* or be better investigated under the conditions pertaining to full excavation. Spoil heaps were to be monitored for finds and scanned with a metal detector.

Results

All eleven trenches were excavated as intended (Figs 2 and 3). The trenches ranged from 24.6m to 28.1m in length and 0.53m to 1.2m in depth. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadth, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1 (Fig. 2)

Trench 1 was aligned NW - SE and was 28.1m long and 0.54m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.25m of topsoil and 0.29m subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds were recovered or features observed.

Trench 2 (Fig. 2; Pl. 1)

Trench 2 was aligned NE - SW and was 25.2m long and 0.57m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.2m of topsoil and 0.32m subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds were recovered or features observed.

Trench 3 (Fig. 2; Pl. 2)

Trench 3 was aligned WNW - ESE and was 25.0m long and 0.53m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.21m of topsoil and 0.32m subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds were recovered or features observed.

Trench 4 (Fig. 2)

Trench 4 was aligned WSW - ENE and was 24.6m long and 0.62 to 1.2m deep. The stratigraphy at the north-eastern end consisted of 0.16m of topsoil, 0.48m of re-deposited natural, 0.56m of buried soil overlying natural geology. At the and 0.25m of topsoil and 0.37m of subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds were recovered or features observed.

Trench 5 (Figs 2 and 3; Pls 3 and 6)

Trench 5 was aligned NW - SE and was 25.0m long and 0.60m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.24m of topsoil and 0.36m subsoil overlying natural geology. At the north-western end of the trench, gully 1 was recorded. Aligned east-west, but slightly curving, the gully measured 0.67m wide and 0.25m deep and its single fill of mid yellow-grey sandy clay (52) contained a few fragments of Prehistoric pottery.

Trench 6 (Fig. 2)

Trench 6 was aligned NW - SE and was 25.2m long and 0.60m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.18m of topsoil and 0.42m subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds were recovered or features observed.

Trench 7 (Fig. 2; Pl. 4)

Trench 7 was aligned NE - SW and was 25.0m long and 0.90m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.24m of topsoil and 0.23m of subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds were recovered or features observed.

Trench 8 (Fig. 2)

Trench 8 was aligned NW - SE and was 24.8m long and 0.70m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.25m of topsoil and 0.45m of subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds were recovered or features observed.

Trench 9 (Fig. 2)

Trench 79 was aligned NE - SW and was 25.1m long and 0.75m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.21m of topsoil and 0.49m of subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds were recovered or features observed.

Trench 10 (Fig. 2)

Trench 10 was aligned N - S and was 25.0m long and 0.68m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.23m of topsoil and 0.45m of subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds were recovered or features observed.

Trench 11 (Fig. 2; Pl. 5)

Trench 11 was aligned NE - SW and was 25.2m long and 0.70m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.21m of topsoil and 0.41m of subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds were recovered or features observed.

Finds

Pottery by Cristina Mateos

The prehistoric pottery assemblage comprised a total of 4 sherds all recovered from gully 1 (52) in trench 5. There were no rims or decorated sherds. As a consequence dating of the assemblage is determined by the fabric.

Description of later prehistoric fabrics

FL: moderately hard, sandy grey fabric with a sparse frequency of fine angular, calcined flint (<0.5mm) with buff brown to grey exterior and brown interior surfaces. Interior surface is smoothed or burnished.

SF: hard, slightly micaceous sandy grey fabric with oxidized red to grey exterior and buff to grey interior surfaces. Surfaces are smoothed.

The fabrics appear to date the assemblage to the later Bronze Age.

Table 1: Pottery catalogue

<i>Cut</i>	<i>Deposit</i>	<i>Fabric</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt (g)</i>
1	52	SF	Gully	1	21
1	52	FL	Gully	3	19

Conclusion

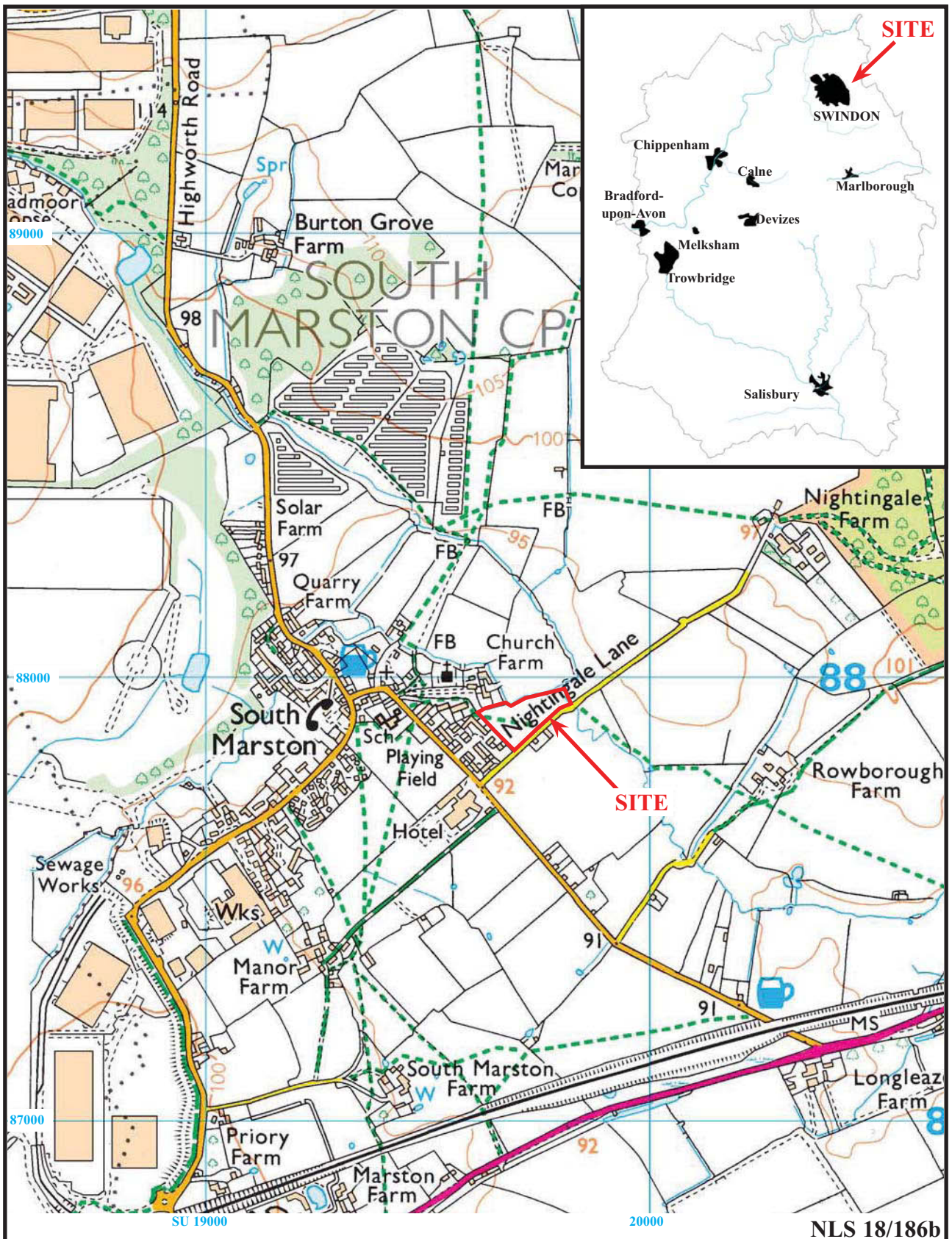
The evaluation has identified a single linear feature of probable Bronze Age date. It is unclear if this represents a simple field or boundary feature or reflects the presence of an occupation site in the vicinity. Further trenching in the vicinity to clarify its status was not possible due to the presence of several services. No other features were identified in the other trenches nor more artefacts recovered. This feature appears to be an isolated deposit, and as such the site is considered to have low archaeological potential.

References

- Beaverstock, 2019, Nightingale Lane, South Marston, Swindon, Wiltshire Geophysical Survey (Magnetic), Thames Valley Archaeological Services report 18/186, Reading
- BGS, 1974, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000, Sheet 252, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- NPPF, 2018, *National Planning Policy Framework, revised*, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, London
- Williams, A and Martin, G H, 2002, *Domesday Book, a complete translation*, London

APPENDIX 1: Trench details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	28.1	1.8	0.54	0–0.25m topsoil; 0.25-0.54m mid yellowish brown clay (subsoil) ; 0.54m+ yellowish grey clay with some gravel (natural geology).
2	25.2	1.8	0.57	0–0.25m topsoil; 0.25-0.54m mid yellowish brown clay (subsoil); 0.57m+ yellowish grey clay with some gravel (natural geology). [PI 1]
3	25	1.8	0.53	0–0.21m topsoil; 0.21-0.53m mid yellowish brown clay (subsoil); 0.53m+ yellowish grey clay with some gravel (natural geology). [PI 2]
4	24.6	1.8	W end 0.62 E end 1.2	0–0.16m topsoil; 0.16-0.64m dark yellow clay with concrete (made ground); 0.64-- 1.20m buried soil (mid yellow brown clayey silt with some concrete); 070m+ yellowish grey clay with some gravel (natural geology). Water table reached.
5	25	1.8	0.7-0.9	0–0.24m topsoil; 0.24-0.60m mid yellowish brown clay ; 0.60m+ yellowish grey clay with some gravel (natural geology). [Pls 3 and 6] Gully 1
6	25.2	1.8	0.6	0–0.18m topsoil; 0.18-0.60m mid yellowish brown clay ; 0.60m+ yellowish grey clay with some gravel (natural geology).
7	25	1.8	0.9	0–0.24m topsoil; 0.24-0.47m mid yellowish grey sandy clay ; 0.47m+ yellowish grey clay with some gravel (natural geology). [PI 2]
8	24.8	1.8	0.7	0–0.25m topsoil; 0.25-0.54m mid yellowish brown clay ; 0.54m+ yellowish grey clay with some gravel (natural geology).
9	25.1	1.8	0.75	0–0.25m topsoil; 0.25-0.70m mid yellowish brown sandy clay ; 070m+ yellowish grey clay with some gravel (natural geology).
10	25	1.8	0.68	0–0.23m topsoil; 0.23-0.68m mid yellowish brown sandy clay ; 0.68m+ yellowish grey clay with some gravel (natural geology).
11	25.1	1.8	0.7	0–0.21m topsoil; 0.21-0.54m mid yellowish brown clay ; 0.54m+ yellowish grey clay with some gravel (natural geology). [PI 5]

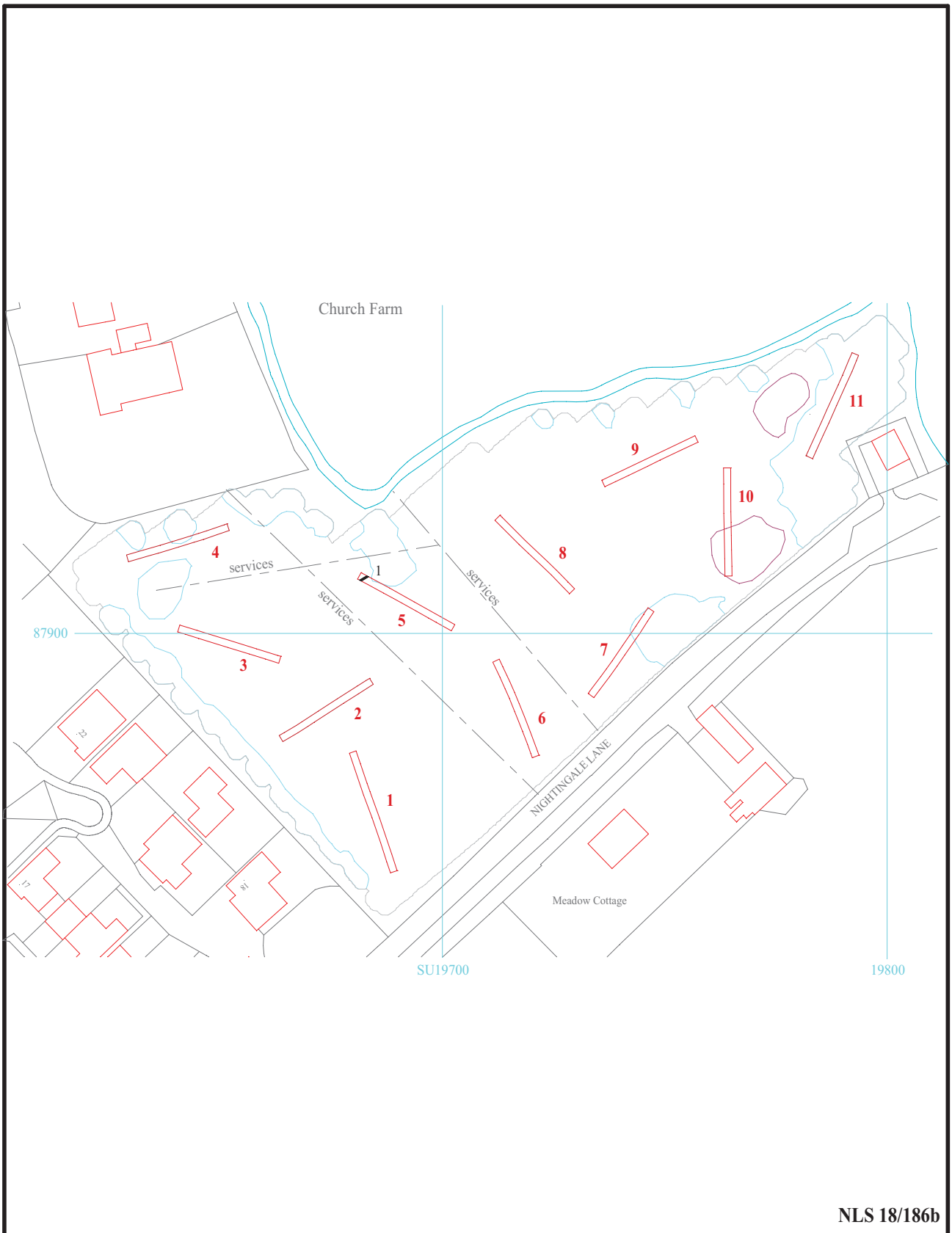


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Figure 1. Location of site within South Marston and Wiltshire.

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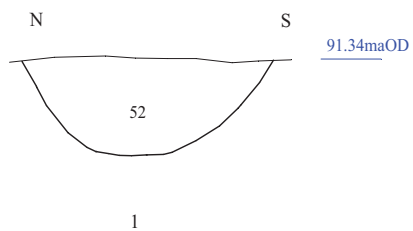
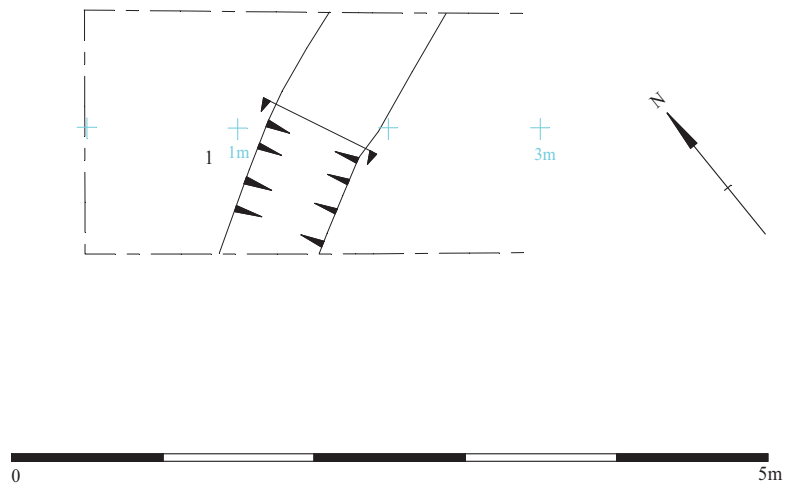


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Figure 2. Location of trenches.



Trench 5



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Figure 3. Detail of Trench 5.

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Plate 1. Trench 2, looking north east, Scales: horizontal, 2m and 1m, vertical, 0.5m.



Plate 2. Trench 3, looking south east, Scales: horizontal, 2m and 1m, vertical, 0.5m.

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**Nightingale Lane, South Marston,
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Plates 1 and 2.**

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Plate 3. Trench 5, looking north west, Scales: horizontal, 2m and 1m, vertical, 0.5m.



Plate 4. Trench 7, looking north east, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.

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Plates 3 and 4.**

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Plate 5. Trench 11, looking south east, Scales: horizontal, 2m and 1m, vertical, 0.5m.



Plate 6. Trench 5 Gully 1, looking east, Scales: horizontal 0.5m, vertical 0.1m.

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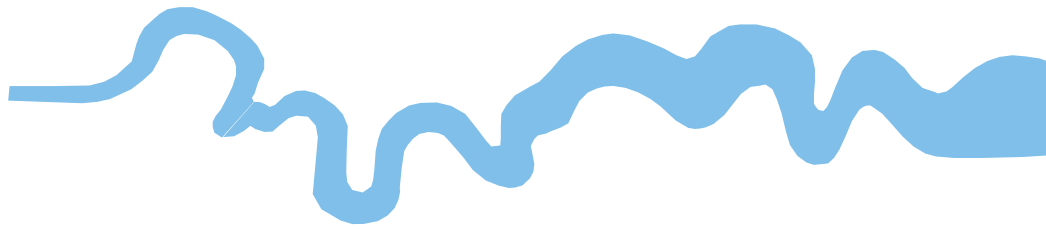
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Plates 5 and 6.**

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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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