

T V A S



SOUTH WEST

**Land at St Martin's Hospital,
Midford Road, Bath**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Agata Socha-Paszkievicz

Site Code: SMB19/96

(ST 7426 6219)

Land at St Martin's Hospital, Midford Road, Bath

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Colburn Homes**

by Agata Socha-Paszkwicz
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code SMB 19/96

July 2019

Summary

Site name: Land at St Martin's Hospital, Midford Road, Bath

Grid reference: ST 7426 6219

Site activity: Archaeological Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 18th July 2019

Project coordinator: Agata Socha-Paszkievicz

Site supervisor: Agata Socha-Paszkievicz

Site code: SMB 19/96

Area of site: c. 0.2ha

Summary of results: The trenching revealed no finds or features of archaeological interest and the site is considered to have no archaeological potential.

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

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www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp.*

Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 29.07.19 Steve Preston ✓ 29.07.19

Land at St Martin's Hospital, Midford Road, Bath An Archaeological Evaluation

by Agata Socha-Paszkievicz

Report 19/96

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at St Martin's Hospital, Bath, (ST 7426 6219) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Martin Evans of Colburn Homes, 4 Lewiston Mill, Toadsmoor Road, Brimscombe, Stroud, GL5 2TE

An application for planning permission (19/00021/FUL) has been submitted to Bath and North East Somerset Council for the removal of existing structures and erection of five townhouses and car parking. The Senior Historic Environment Officer of South West Heritage Trust, the adviser to the Planning Authority, has indicated that the site is the likely location of a 19th century pauper's cemetery and archaeological evaluation needs to be carried out prior to determination of the application. This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2019), and the Council's policies on archaeology.

The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation approved by the archaeological adviser to the Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Agata Socha-Paszkievicz and Dominika Golebiowska on 18th July 2019 and the site code is SMB 19/96. The archive is presently held at TVAS Southwest, Taunton and will be deposited with the Roman Baths Museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the southern outskirts of the City of Bath and within the substantial grounds of St Martin's Hospital (Fig. 1). It is bounded by Clara Cross Lane to the south-east, Midford Road to the north-east and by the buildings of the former union workhouse, now converted to apartments to the north-west (Fig. 2). The application site is an irregularly shaped parcel occupied by a modern single-storey prefab office fronting Clara Cross Lane and a chapel (now redundant) at the northern end of the parcel. The remaining area is set to lawn and overgrown by mature trees. The site is generally flat but slightly undulating and lies at a height of *c.* 165m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). The underlying geology is mapped as Twinhoe Member Limestone (BGS 2017).

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a desk-based assessment (Insole 2001). In summary a search for Historic Environment Record (HER) entries within 900m revealed little in the way of Prehistoric activity. There is good evidence of Roman occupation in the vicinity of the site, notably the possible line of the Fosse Way along the western boundary of St Martins Hospital grounds. The Roman origins of that route are supported by the discovery of the Roman stone coffins. Two were found *c.* 800m to the south-west and one *c.* 300 to the north-east of St Martin's Hospital site. There are also records of Roman pottery being found during the excavation of a gas main near the junction of Midford Road and Wellsway in 1855. The site of St Martin's probably formed part of the agricultural land of the local estate, possibly centred at South Stoke, some 1km to the south-east of the site.

Later periods are represented by part of West Wansdyke, tentatively dated to the late 6th century. This earthwork consisting of a bank and ditch on an east-west course through most of Somerset and passes 200m of the south-east corner of St Martin's Hospital grounds. This part of the Wansdyke coincides with the boundary between the parishes of Lyncombe and Widecombe indicating that the feature remained an important boundary in medieval times. At the time of Domesday book (AD 1086) Lyncombe (Lincume) was held by the Church of Bath and was a fairly minor manor assessed at 4 hides and with arable land for just four ploughs, although with two mills, 30 acres of meadow and 200 of pasture (Williams and Martin 2002, 242).

In the 18th century the area of the site appears to have been part of the land belonging to Lower Barracks Farm and known as Seven Acres. In 1838, following the introduction of The Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, a hexagonal workhouse was built on site. It was founded by Bath Poor Law Union on 28 March 1836 to designs by Sampson Kempthorne. Originally a room within one of the diagonal wings served as a chapel, but by 1843-6 a purpose-built chapel, known today as St Martin's Chapel, was constructed by John Plass, an inmate, to designs by GP Manners. The land by the chapel was consecrated by the Bishop of Bath on 27th July 1847 and used as a pauper's burial ground until 1858. According to the Burial Register for the Bath Union Workhouse (Southern and Noad, 1995), during this period 1107 paupers were laid to rest in unmarked graves by the chapel (Register of Burials, 443). The exact locations and extent of the burials are not known and the site is described only as "land adjoining the chapel". Both the former workhouse blocks and St Martins Chapel are Grade II Listed Buildings.

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 are:

- to clarify the presence/absence and extent of any buried archaeological remains within the site that may be impacted by development;
- to identify, within the constraints of the evaluation, the date, character, condition and depth of any surviving remains within the Site;
- to assess the degree of existing impacts to subsurface horizons and to document the extent of archaeological survival of buried deposits;
- to determine if the 19th century paupers burials are present on site; and
- to produce a report which will present the results of the evaluation in sufficient detail to allow an informed decision to be made concerning the site's archaeological potential.

Two trenches were proposed to be excavated mechanically under constant archaeological supervision to expose the top of the archaeologically relevant horizon or the natural geology. Where archaeological features were certainly or probably present, the stripped areas were to be cleaned using appropriate hand tools and sufficient of the archaeological features and deposits exposed were to be excavated or sampled by hand to satisfy the aims outlined above, without compromising the integrity of any features or deposits which might warrant preservation *in situ*, or might better be excavated under conditions pertaining full excavation.

Results

The location and extent of both of the planned trenches had to be changed to avoid damage to modern services not recorded on the site survey plan but observed on site at the time of excavation (Fig. 2). The alterations were made with agreement of Mr Steven Membery, of South West Heritage Trust. A list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and description of stratigraphy and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1 (Figs 2 and 3; Pl. 1)

Trench 1 was aligned NW - SE and was 3.80m long, 1.60m wide and 0.60m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.15m of turf and topsoil and 0.45m grey-brown silty clay subsoil above red brown sandy silt with frequent white limestone debris (natural geology). No archaeological features or finds were recovered.

Trench 2 (Figs 2 and 3; Pls 2-4)

Trench 2 was aligned SW - NE and was 3m long, 2.10m wide and 0.50m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.07m of Tarmac (52), above 0.11m of black scalpins (53), above up to 0.25m of made ground (54) consisting of light yellow/white sandstone overlying red brown sandy silt with frequent white limestone debris (natural geology). No archaeological features or finds were recovered.

Conclusion

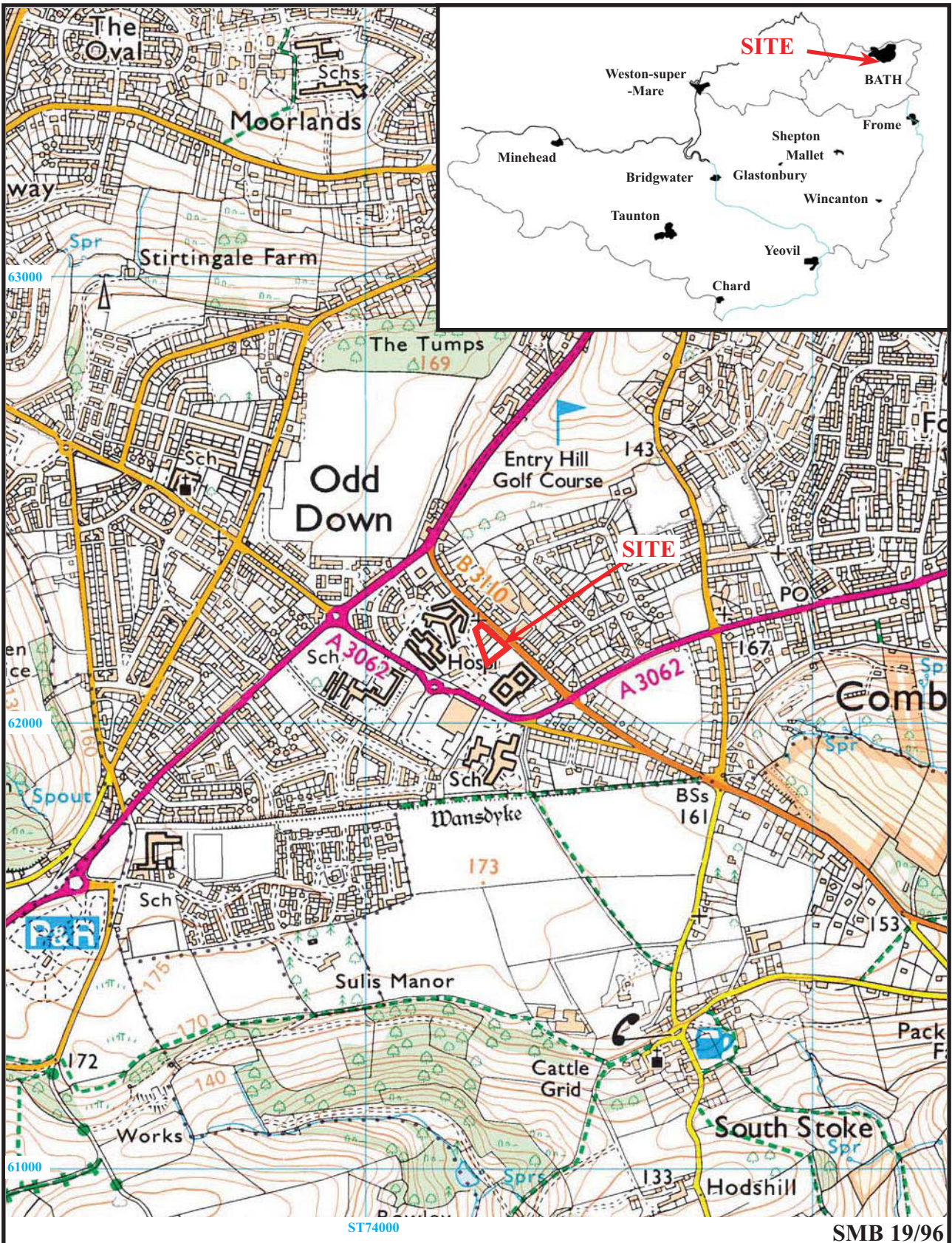
The trenches excavated in the application site revealed no inhumation burials nor archaeological features of any date and the application site appears to have negligible archaeological potential.

References

- BGS, 2017, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000, Sheet **281**, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- Southern D and Noad, H, 1995, Burial Register for the Bath Union Workhouse, vol 1, 443, Bath Record Office, Bath
- Insole, P, 2001, 'Archaeological Desktop Study of the site of St Martin's Hospital, odd Down, Bath', Bristol and Region Archaeological Services, Bristol
- NPPF, 2019, *National Planning Policy Framework (revised)*, Ministry for 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	3.80	1.60	0.60	0-0.15 Topsoil (50); 0.15 - 0.60 Subsoil (51); 0.50 + red brown sandy silt with frequent white limestone debris (natural neology). [Pl. 1]
2	3.00	2.10	0.50	0-0.07 Tarmac (52); 0.07- 0.18 Scalpins (53); 0.18 – 0.41 Made ground (54); 0.41+ red brown sandy silt with frequent white limestone debris (natural geology) [Pls 2–4]

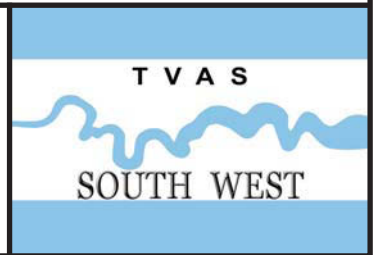


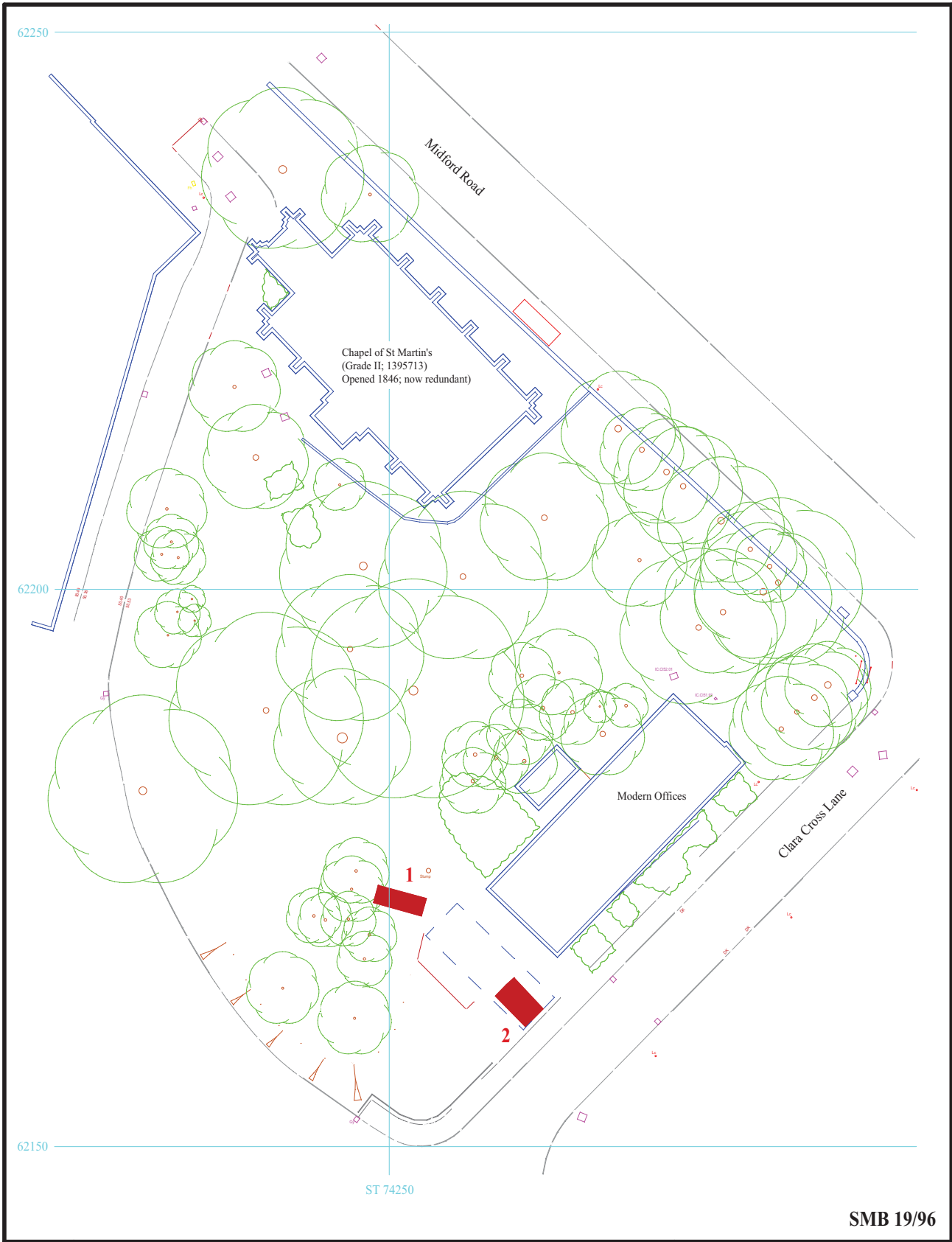
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Bath, 2019

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Figure 1. Location of site within Bath and North East Somerset.

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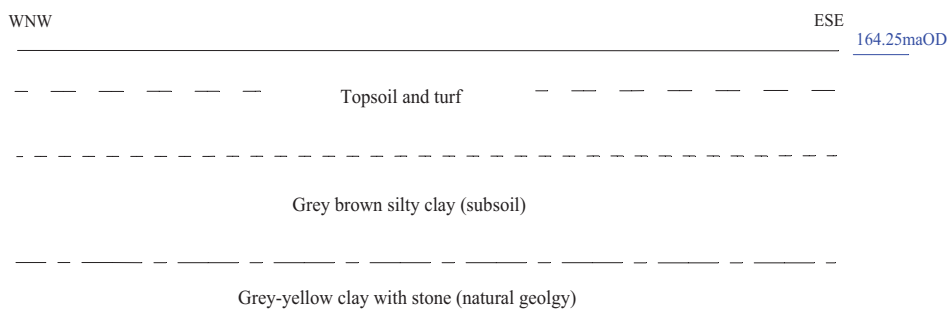


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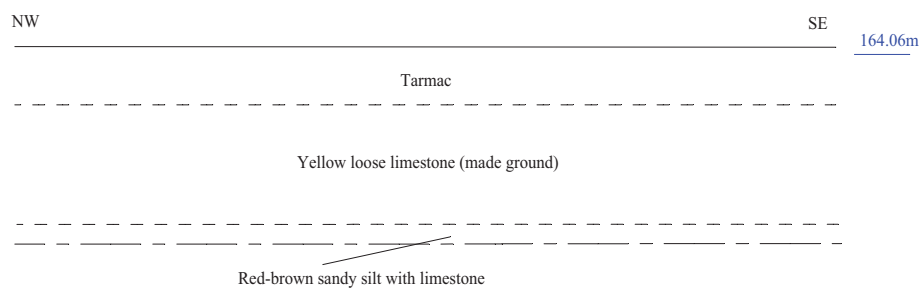
Figure 2. Location of trenches.



Trench 1



Trench 2



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Figure 3. Trench sections.



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Plate 1. Trench 1, looking W, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m.

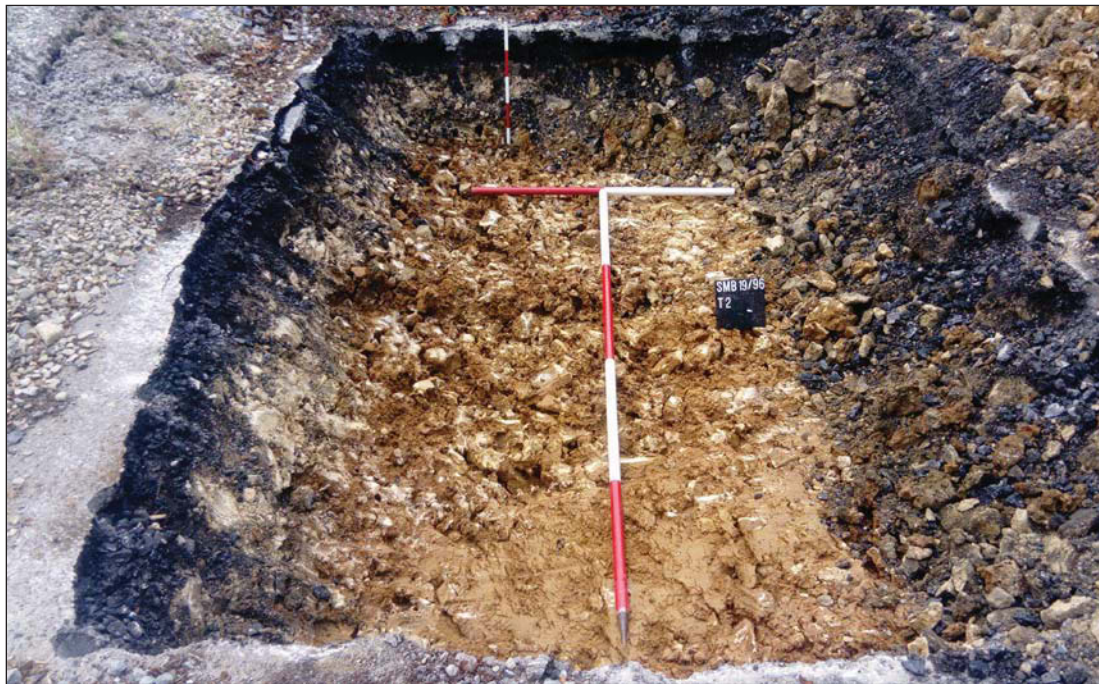


Plate 2. Trench 2, looking NW, Scales: 1m, 2m and 0.5m.

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Plates 1 and 2.**

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Plate 3. General site shot, looking south (Trench 2).



Plate 4. Trench 2, looking SW, Scales: 1m, 2m and 0.5m.

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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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