

Former Petrol Station, Stockbridge Road, Winchester, Hampshire

An Archaeological Recording Action

For CgMs Consulting

by David Platt

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code AY336

January 2008

Summary

Site name: Former Petrol Station, Stockbridge Road, Winchester, Hampshire

Grid reference: SU 465 307

Site activity: Archaeological Recording Action

Date and duration of project: 10th December 2007 – 3rd January 2008

Project manager: Jennifer Lowe

Site supervisor: David Platt

Site code: AY336

Area of Site: c. 0.375 ha

Summary of results: A ditch, two gullies and a possible pit were found.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Winchester Museum in due course, with accession code AY336.

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Report 07/97b

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological recording action carried out at the Former Petrol Station, Stockbridge Road, Winchester, Hampshire (SU 465 307) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Lorraine Darton of CgMs Consulting, Morley House, 26 Holborn Viaduct, London EC1A 2AT.

Draft planning consent has been granted by Winchester City Council, for mixed use development of the site. This is subject to a draft condition relating to archaeology, which requires the implementation of a programme of archaeological work to better inform the planning process. An archaeological desk-based assessment had concluded that there was potential for prehistoric and/or Roman deposits surviving on the site (Darton 2005) and an archaeological watching brief of geotechnical test pits (Wallis 2007), confirmed the archaeological potential of the site.

In light of this potential, a recording action (strip, map and sample) was requested. This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Planning Policy Guidance, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990), and the City Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification prepared by Ms Lorraine Darton of CgMs Consulting, and approved by Ms Tracy Matthews, Winchester Sites and Monuments Officer. The fieldwork was undertaken by David Platt and Simon Cass between 10th December 2007 and 3rd January 2008.

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Location, topography and geology

The site comprises a rectangular plot of land, situated to the north-west of the historic core of Winchester. It is bounded by an open area to the north-west, a residential block to the north-east, Stoney Lane to the south-east and Stockbridge Road to the south-west (Fig. 2). The site was, until recently, occupied by various buildings associated with the former filling station, car showroom, and workshops. All these structures were demolished during the current project. According to the British Geological Survey, the underlying geology consists of Upper Chalk (BGS 1975), and this was confirmed during the fieldwork. The site lies at a height approximately 72m above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a desk-based assessment (Darton 2005). In summary, the site lies within an extensive prehistoric agricultural and ritual landscape and in close proximity to two Roman roads. The early medieval village of Weeke, which was deserted following the Black Death, lay further south of the present village and the development site. There is specific archaeological potential for prehistoric and Roman deposits surviving on the site due to its location, and the fact that a number of Roman coins have been found within the study area and nearby. These include a bronze coin of Claudius II (AD270–3) and another of the House of Constantine (AD 335–41) both found on the site, and four further coins within the near vicinity. The archaeological potential for other periods was thought probably to be low (Darton 2005).

Methodology

The purpose of the strip and record exercise was to record and sample any archaeological deposits which may be affected by the proposed groundworks. This was to involve stripping the entire area down to the archaeologically relevant horizon, mapping any features exposed, and investigating these following an agreed sampling strategy.

Results (Figs 2 and 3)

An area of 0.365ha was stripped using a 360⁰ machine under continuous archaeological supervision. Overburden was removed to a depth of approximately 2m at the south-east side of the site, but only approximately 0.80m at the north-west side. The material removed from the south-east of the site consisted of mainly a Tarmac surface, approximately 0.20m thick, above approximately 0.75m of modern made ground containing moderate amounts of brick and tile. Below this, approximately 1m of buried clayey silt soil horizons lay above the natural chalk. At the north-west side of the site, the surface Tarmac lay directly above a clayey silt soil horizon which lay on the chalk natural. Across the site were areas of disturbed ground from the previous removal of the petrol tanks and soakaways. These contained modern demolition rubble from the former petrol station. They were approximately 3m deep but the demolition rubble was only removed to the level of the natural geology as any archaeology which lay below would have been destroyed during the installation of the tanks.

In addition to the pit (1) already discovered in the watching brief (Wallis 2007), a ditch (6) and two gullies (100) and (101) were also noted (Fig. 2).

Ditch 6 was aligned SE–NW parallel with Stockbridge Road. The ditch extended the width of the site but was truncated by various modern features associated with the petrol station fuel tanks and soakaways. Some of the ditch was not exposed as the limit of excavation was brought in to avoid causing subsidence to Stockbridge Road. Due to the extent of the truncation there was limited scope for archaeological excavation and only a single 1.50m slot was possible. The south-east end of the ditch was cut by a pond recorded on the 1844 Tithe Map of Weeke Parish and known to have been filled in during the 1930s. Ditch 6 was approximately 0.70m deep and contained a dark orangey-brown clayey silt fill with frequent large flint inclusions. No finds were recovered.

Parallel to this ditch was a gully (101) which similarly extended the width of the site and was also truncated by modern features. Gully 101 was approximately 0.35m deep and between 0.55m and 0.80m wide and contained a mid orangey brown clayey silt fill and frequent large flint inclusions. No finds were recovered. Another gully (100) was aligned NE–SW extending beyond the limit of excavation at the north-east and terminating before gully 100. This gully was truncated along its length by modern features including at the terminus. Gully 100 was between 0.60m and 0.75m wide and approximately 0.15m deep and contained a dark greyish brown fill. Again no finds were recorded.

The pit (1) discovered and excavated during the watching brief (Wallis 2007) was re-revealed and planned but no finds were recovered.

Finds

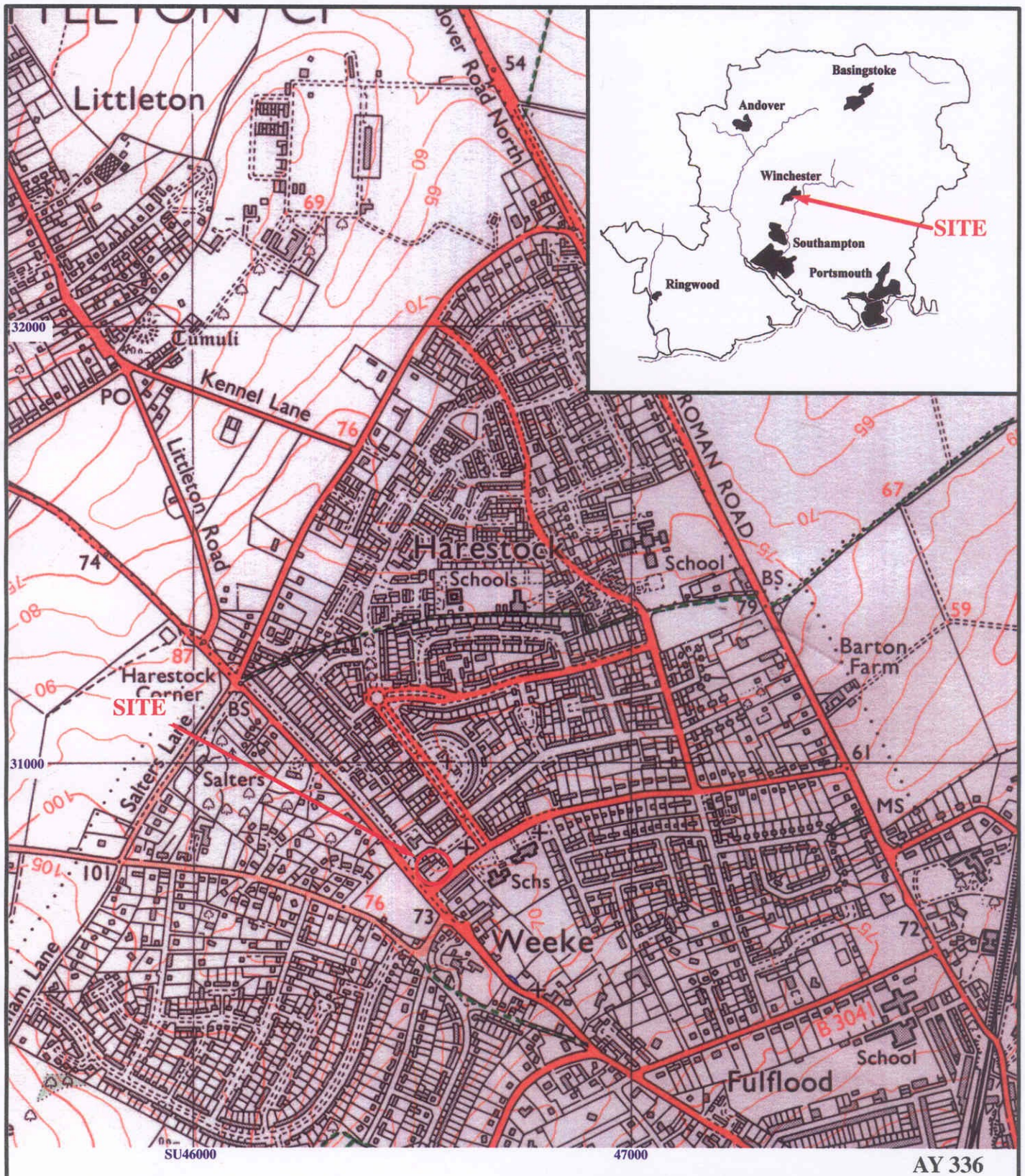
No finds of archaeological interest were recovered. Modern finds were not retained.

Conclusion

The fieldwork has been moderately successful in recording some deposits of archaeological interest. The features recorded appear to be boundary features perhaps for a field system. Unfortunately the absence of finds from these features means that they cannot be closely dated other than that two of them pre-date a pond present in the mid-19th century. Features 101 and 102 are parallel to Stockbridge Road with gully 100 at right angles. It is unclear whether this rectilinear pattern implies a chronological relationship to the road, but if it does then closer dating relies on the date of the road, itself unclear though a medieval date seems the most likely.

References

- BGS, 1971, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 253, Drift Edition, Keyworth
- Darton, L, 2005, 'Former Texaco Petrol Station, Stockbridge Road, Winchester, Hampshire: Archaeological Desk Based Assessment', CgMs, London
- PPG 16, 1990, *Archaeology and Planning*, Dept of the Environment Planning Policy Guidance 16, HMSO
- Wallis, S, 2007, 'Former Petrol Station, Stockbridge Road, Winchester Hampshire: An Archaeological Watching Brief' , Thames Valley Archaeological Services report 07/97, Reading.



**Former Petrol Station, Stockbridge Road,
Winchester, Hampshire, 2008
Archaeological recording action**

Figure 1. Location of site within Winchester and Hampshire.

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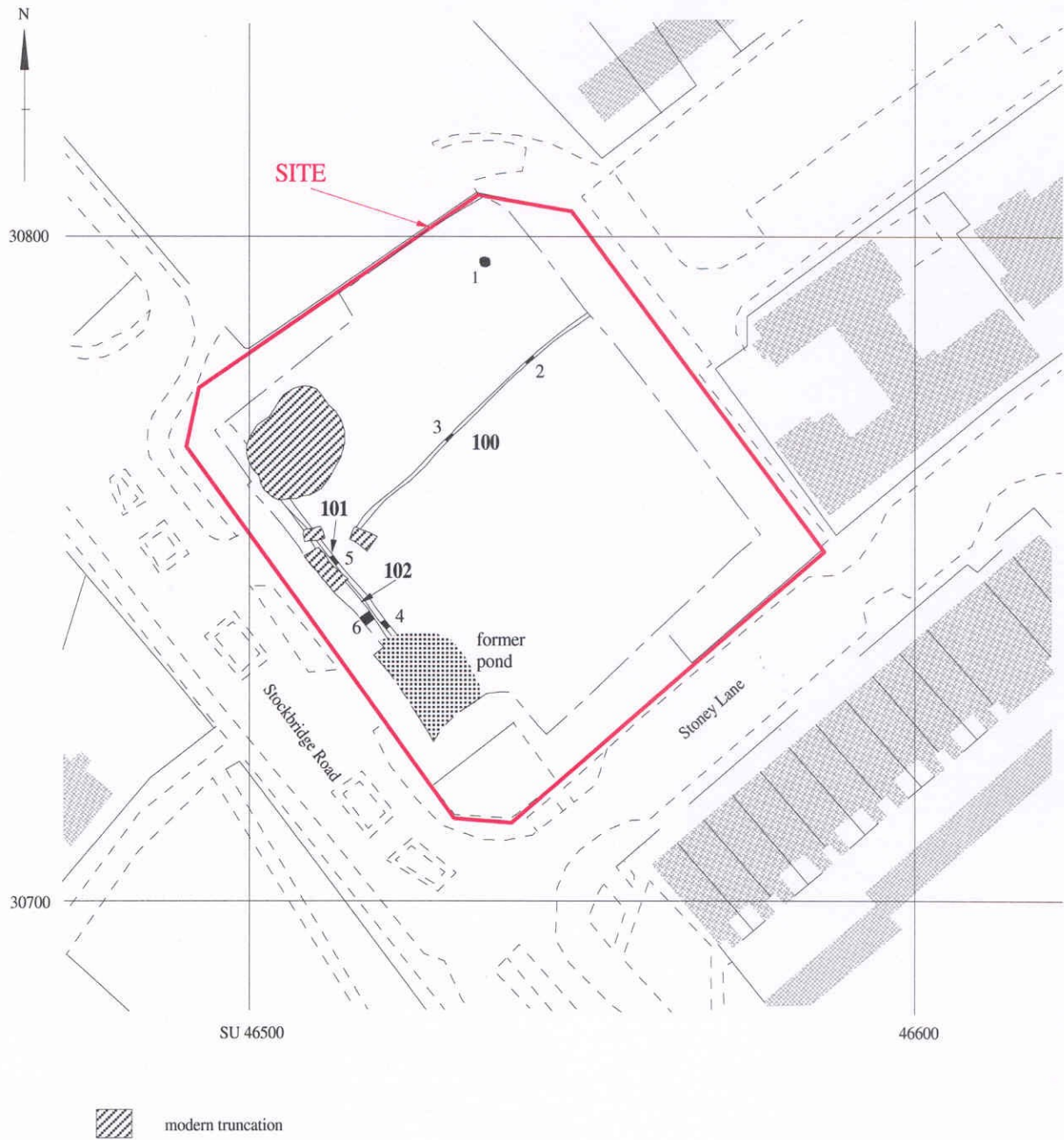


Figure 2. Location of site on Stockbridge Road, and plan of all features observed.

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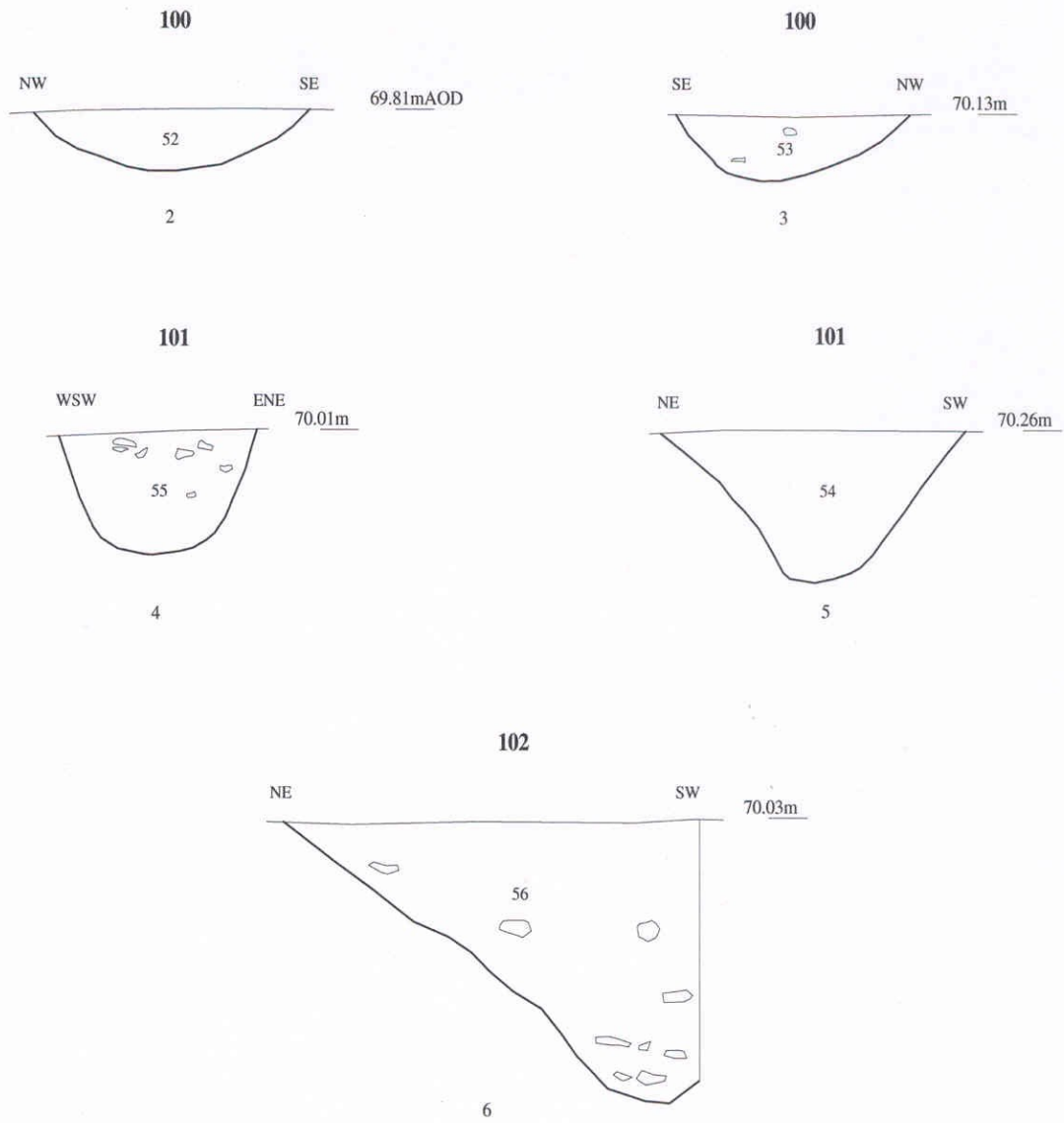


Figure 3. Sections