

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Land east of Berricot Lane, Badbury,
Swindon, Wiltshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Kyle Beaverstock

Site Code: BLB19/159

(SU 1951 8065)

Land east of Berricot Lane, Badbury, Swindon, Wiltshire

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Bower Mapson Homes**

by Kyle Beaverstock

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code BLB19/159

April 2020

Summary

Site name: Land east of Bericot Lane, Badbury, Swindon, Wiltshire

Grid reference: SU 1951 8065

Site activity: Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 9th - 10th April 2020

Project coordinator: Danielle Milbank

Site supervisor: Kyle Beaverstock

Site code: BLB19/159

Area of site: c. 0.8ha

Summary of results: Three gullies were recorded in the central area of the site, one of which contained a fragment of post-medieval pottery and one contained a fragment of Anglo-Saxon pottery. The site is considered to have some archaeological potential.

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

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

Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford ✓ 23.04.20
	Steve Preston ✓ 23.04.20

Land east of Berricot Lane, Badbury, Swindon, Wiltshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Kyle Beaverstock

Report 19/159c

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Berricot Lane, Badbury, Swindon, Wiltshire (SU 1951 8065) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Peter Mapson on behalf of Bower Mapson Homes Limited, Willow House 7, The Avenue, Stanton Fitzwarren, Swindon, Wiltshire, England, SN6 7SE .

Planning permission is to be sought from Swindon Borough Council to construct new housing on a parcel of land of 0.8ha east of Berricot Lane. A field evaluation as been requested in order to inform the planning process with regard to potential archaeological implications. This is in accordance with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2019), and the Borough's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger, County Archaeologist for Wiltshire Council, the archaeological adviser to the Borough. The fieldwork was undertaken by Kyle Beaverstock between 9th and 10th April 2020 and the site code is BLB 19/159. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Swindon Museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the northern edge of Badbury (Fig. 1) 400m south-east of Junction 15 of the M4, 6km south-east of Swindon and 1.1km north-east of Chiseldon. The site is an irregular parcel of land which slopes from a height of 149m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) in the south-west to 140m aOD in the north-east. The site is currently under pasture and the underlying geology is mapped as Upper Greensand (BGS 1974).

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site was initially highlighted in a desk-based assessment (Balkikas 2019) and subsequently by geophysical survey (Beaverstock 2020). In summary this potential stems from the site's location on the margins of the hamlet of Badbury, which has Medieval origins. However, it is prehistoric and Roman sites and finds which are more frequently recorded in the county Historic Environment Record in the vicinity.

The landscape is dominated by the Iron Age hillfort on Liddington Hill to the east. A number of earthworks are reported for the village including for an area immediately north of the proposal site (Muller and Dyer 1999, 37).

The geophysical survey revealed a number of anomalies (two linear, four discrete) of possible archaeological interest.

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. The specific research aims of this project are:

- 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 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.

It was proposed to excavate eight trenches, each 20m long and 1.6m wide. These were to be dug by a JCB-type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, under constant archaeological supervision. Any features uncovered would be excavated using the appropriate hand tools and fully recorded.

Results

The trenches were mostly as intended with some slight alterations to avoid overhead cables and other services. They ranged in length from 16m to 22.2m long and 0.3m to 0.64m deep. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1. The excavated features, with dating evidence, are summarized in Appendix 2.

Trench 1 (Figs 2 and 5)

Trench 1 was aligned SW - NE and was 21m long and 0.3m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.3m of topsoil overlying natural geology. A truncation at the south-west end of the trench was investigated but only contained post-medieval material such as glazed 'china' and green bottle glass.

Trench 2 (Figs 2 and 5)

Trench 2 was aligned SSW - NNE and was 16m long and 0.64m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.34m of topsoil 0.2m of made ground overlying natural geology. A truncation at the north-east end of the trench was investigated but again only contained post-medieval material such as glazed 'china' and green glass.

Trench 3 (Figs 2 and 5; Pl. 1)

Trench 3 was aligned WSW - ENE and was 22.2m long and 0.32m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.32m of topsoil overlying natural geology. No features or finds were recovered.

Trench 4 (Figs 2 and 5)

Trench 4 was aligned S - N and was 21.1m long and 0.32m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.32m of topsoil overlying natural geology. No features or finds were recovered.

Trench 5 (Figs 2, 3, 4 and 5; Pls 2, 4 and 5)

Trench 5 was aligned SW - NE and was 21m long and 0.38m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.38m of topsoil overlying natural geology. Three gullies were recorded and excavated, at the north-east end of the trench. Gully 1 was orientated south-east to north-west. It measured 0.74m wide and 0.16m deep and containing a single fill (52) consisting of a mid grey brown silty clay. It is most likely related to gully 5 in Trench 6 as suggested by the geophysical survey. A single sherd of post-medieval pottery was recovered from the sample (1) from deposit 52. A second gully (2) was orientated south-west to north-east along the alignment of the trench. It measured 0.5m wide and 0.2m deep and contained a single fill (53) which consisted of a dark greyish brown silty clay and contained a single sherd of Anglo-Saxon pottery. A third gully (4) was recorded at the south-west end of the trench. Orientated south-east to north-west, it measured 0.8m wide and was filled with a mid greyish brown silty clay (55) and was recorded in plan but not excavated. It was most likely related to gully 3 in Trench 6 also linked by the geophysical survey.

Trench 6 (Figs 2, 3, 4 and 5; Pls 3 and 6)

Trench 6 was aligned SW - NE and was 20.1m long and 0.36m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.36m of topsoil overlying natural geology. Two gullies were recorded. At the north-east end of the trench, gully 5 was orientated south-east to north-west. It measured 0.74m wide and was filled with a mid greyish brown silty clay (56) and recorded in plan. It is a continuation of gully 1 recorded in Trench 5. At the south-west end of the trench, gully 3 was excavated. It measured 0.9m wide and 0.17m deep and filled with a mid greyish brown silty clay (54). It is a continuation of gully 4 seen in Trench 5. No finds were recovered.

Trench 7 (Figs 2 and 5)

Trench 7 was aligned NW - SE and was 22.2m long and 0.32m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.32m of topsoil overlying natural geology. No features or finds were recovered.

Trench 8 (Figs 2 and 5)

Trench 8 was aligned SW - NE and was 21m long and 0.3m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.3m of topsoil overlying natural geology. A series truncations in the centre of the trench were investigated but only contained post-medieval material such as glazed pottery and green glass.

Finds

Struck flint by Steve Ford

A single flint flake was recovered from gully 3 (54) from sieved sample 3. It is not closely datable but is likely to be of later Neolithic or Bronze Age date.

Pottery by Christina Mateos

The pottery assemblage comprised just 2 sherds weighing 8.5g (Appendix 3).

A single body sherd was recovered from the sample (1) of gully 1 (52). It weighed <1g and was identified as an orange glazed redware body sherd of later post-medieval date.

The second body sherd was recovered from sample 2 of gully 2 (53). It had a fabric of a hard light grey organic (grass)-tempered ware, smoothed on both surfaces. It is of early-middle Anglo-Saxon date.

Animal Bone by Ceri Falys

A total of eight fragments of animal bone were recovered from two contexts: gullies 2 (53) and 3 (54). Weighing a total of 44g (Appendix 4), the remains demonstrated excellent preservation of the cortical bone surfaces, in addition to a moderate degree of fragmentation.

The majority of fragments were not identifiable, due to their small and non-descript appearance. However, a minimum of one, large-sized animal (e.g. horse or cow) was suggested within gully 3 (54), based on the presence of a portion of distal humerus and long bone shaft fragments recovered from 3 (54). It was not possible to identify the fragments excavated from 2 (53), with the exception of a single piece of “medium or large” mammal (horse, cow, sheep/goat or pig) tooth. No further information could be retrieved from this small assemblage of non-human bone.

Charred plant remains by Joanna Pine

Three soil samples were taken during the evaluation. 8L of each sample were floated and wet sieved using a 0.25mm mesh. All three contained small amounts of carbonised material. Post-medieval gully1 contained charcoal and a few unidentified cereal seeds. Anglo-Saxon gully 2 also contained charcoal and a few unidentified cereal seeds. Gully 3 contained a few flecks of charcoal only.

Conclusion

A number of cut features were recorded by the evaluation. These consisted of a series of gullies seen in trenches 5 and 6. Two of these, in both trenches 5 and 6 were detected by the geophysical survey which reveal them to be parallel and probably related possibly forming a trackway, though at a width of 20m, perhaps a bit too wide. A single sherd of later post-Medieval pottery was recovered to suggest they are of fairly modern date. In trench 5 a third gully was uncovered which contained a single sherd of Early-Middle Anglo-Saxon pottery.

In trenches 1, 2 and 8 a series of truncations were investigated, in areas of magnetic disturbance and shown to contain post-medieval/modern material. These truncations were determined to be of post medieval origin, possibly related to the services or possibly the undated earthworks just to the north of the site mentioned in a study of historic documents for Badbury (Muller and Dyer 1999, fig 17).

Although the evidence for Anglo-Saxon remains comprises just a single sherd of pottery in a single gully, the nature of the evidence for this period is such that artefacts and cut features are infrequently recorded by evaluation trenching in comparison to, say, those of Roman date. As such these finds here take on an added significance and the site is considered to have some archaeological potential.

References

- Beaverstock, K, 2020, Land east of Berricot Lane, Badbury, Swindon, Wiltshire, a geophysical survey (magnetic), Thames Valley Archaeological Services report 19.159b, Reading
- Baljkas, G 2019, Land east of Berricot Road, Badbury, Swindon, Wiltshire, an archaeological desk-based assessment , Thames Valley Archaeological Services report 19/159, Reading
- BGS, 1974, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000, Sheet 266, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- Muller, M and Dyer, C, 1999, Archaeological and documentary research on Badbury, Wiltshire, *Medieval Settlement Research Group*, Annual report **14**, 36
- NPPF, 2019, *National Planning Policy Framework (revised)*, Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government, London

APPENDIX 1: Trench details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	21	1.6	0.3	0-0.3m of topsoil; 0.3m + of natural geology
2	16	1.6	0.64	0-0.34m of topsoil; 0.34 - 0.64m of made ground; 0.64m + of natural geology
3	22.2	1.6	0.32	0-0.34m of topsoil; 0.34m + of natural geology [Pl. 1]
4	21.1	1.6	0.32	0-0.32m of topsoil; 0.32m + of natural geology
5	21.6	1.6	0.38	0-0.38m of topsoil; 0.38m + of natural geology, Gullies 1, 2 and 4 [Pls 2, 4 and 5]
6	20.1	1.6	0.4	0-0.4m of topsoil; 0.4m + of natural geology: gullies 3 and 5 [Pls 3 and 6]
7	20	1.6	0.36	0-0.36m of topsoil; 0.36m + of natural geology
8	19	1.6	0.6	At SW end 0-0.45m of topsoil; 0.45 - 0.6m of subsoil; 0.6m + of natural geology. At NE end 0-0.3m of topsoil; 0.3m+ natural geology

APPENDIX 2: Feature details

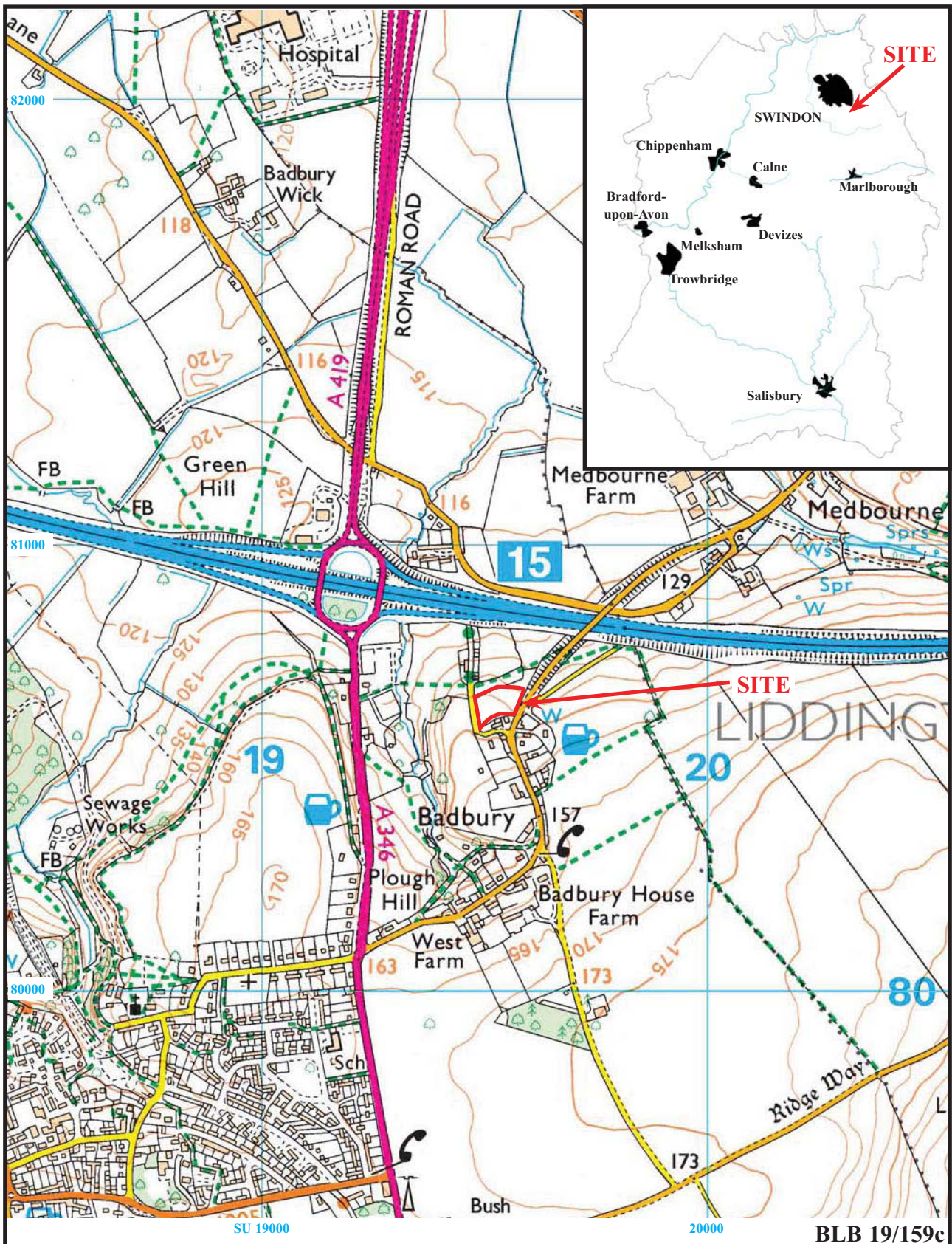
<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
5	1	52	Gully	Post-medieval	pottery
5	2	53	Gully	Saxon	pottery
6	3	54	Gully	Same as 4	
5	4	55	Gully	Post-medieval?	By association
6	5	56	Gully	Same as 1	

APPENDIX 3: Pottery

Cut	Deposit	Type	No	Wt (g)	Date
1	52	Gully	1	<1	Post-medieval
2	53	Gully	1	8	Saxon

APPENDIX 4: Inventory of animal bone

Context		# of Frag	Weight (g)	Identified fragments – by animal size			Unidentified	Comments
Cut	Deposit			Large	Medium	Small		
2	53	4	7	-	-	-	4	tooth fragment of a “medium-large” animal
3	54	4	37	4	-	-	-	fragment of the distal end of a “large” humerus
Total/MNI		8	44g	4 fragments (1 “large” animal)	-	-	4 fragments	-

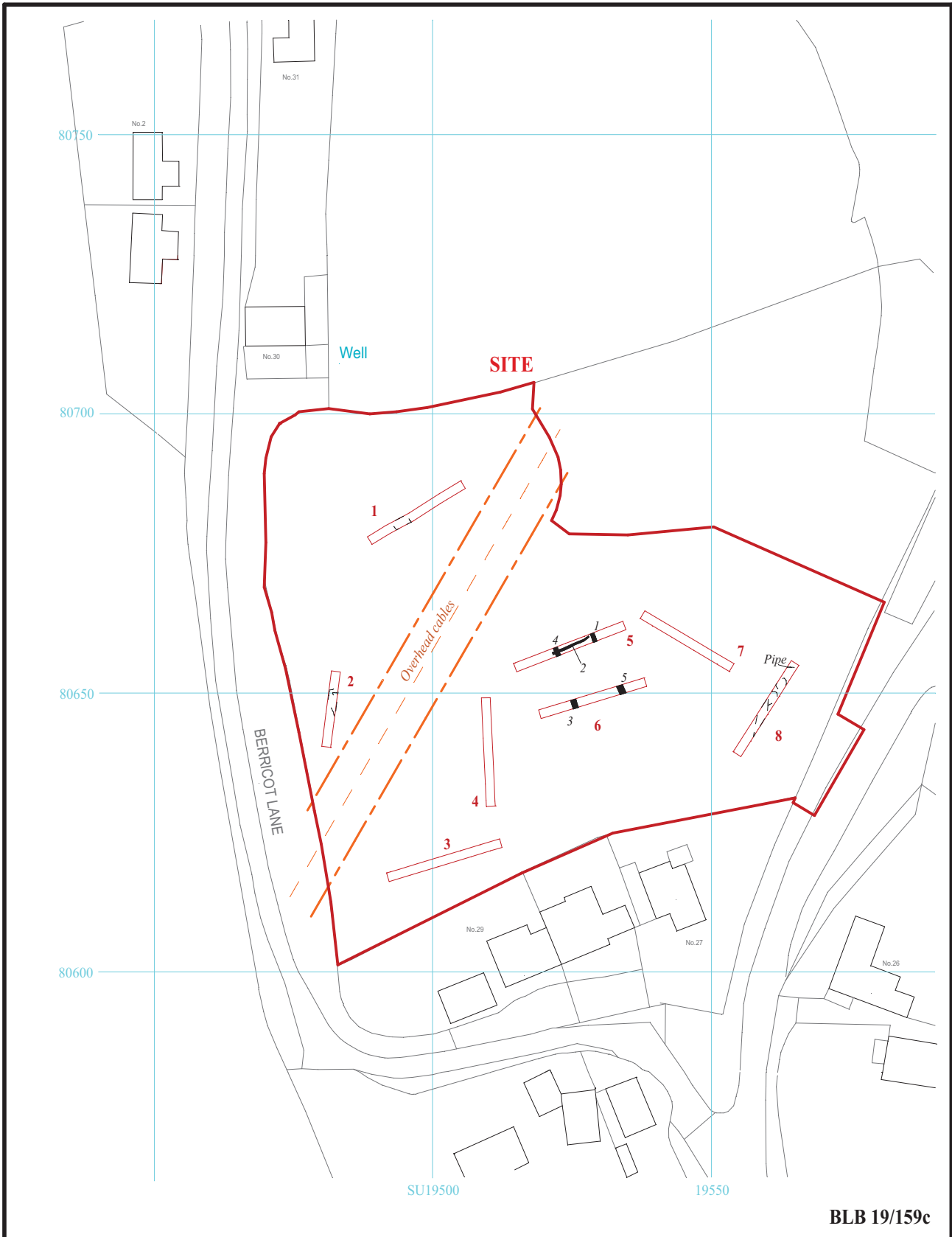


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Figure 1. Location of site within Badbury and Wiltshire.

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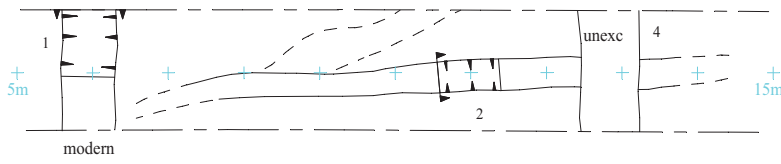
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Figure 2. Location of trenches and features

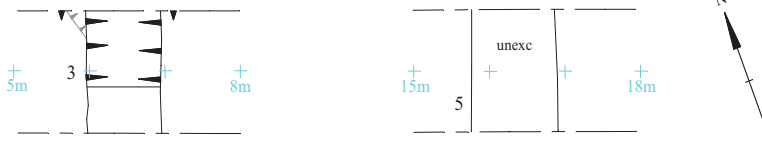


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Trench 5



Trench 6



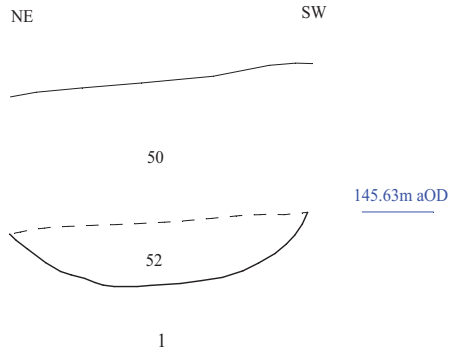
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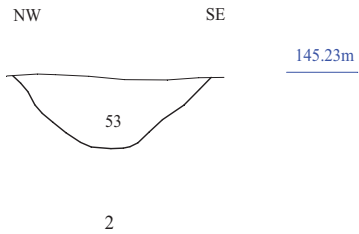
Figure 3. Detail of trenches.



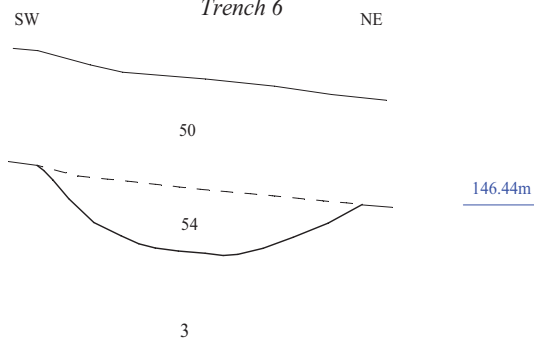
Trench 5



Trench 5



Trench 6



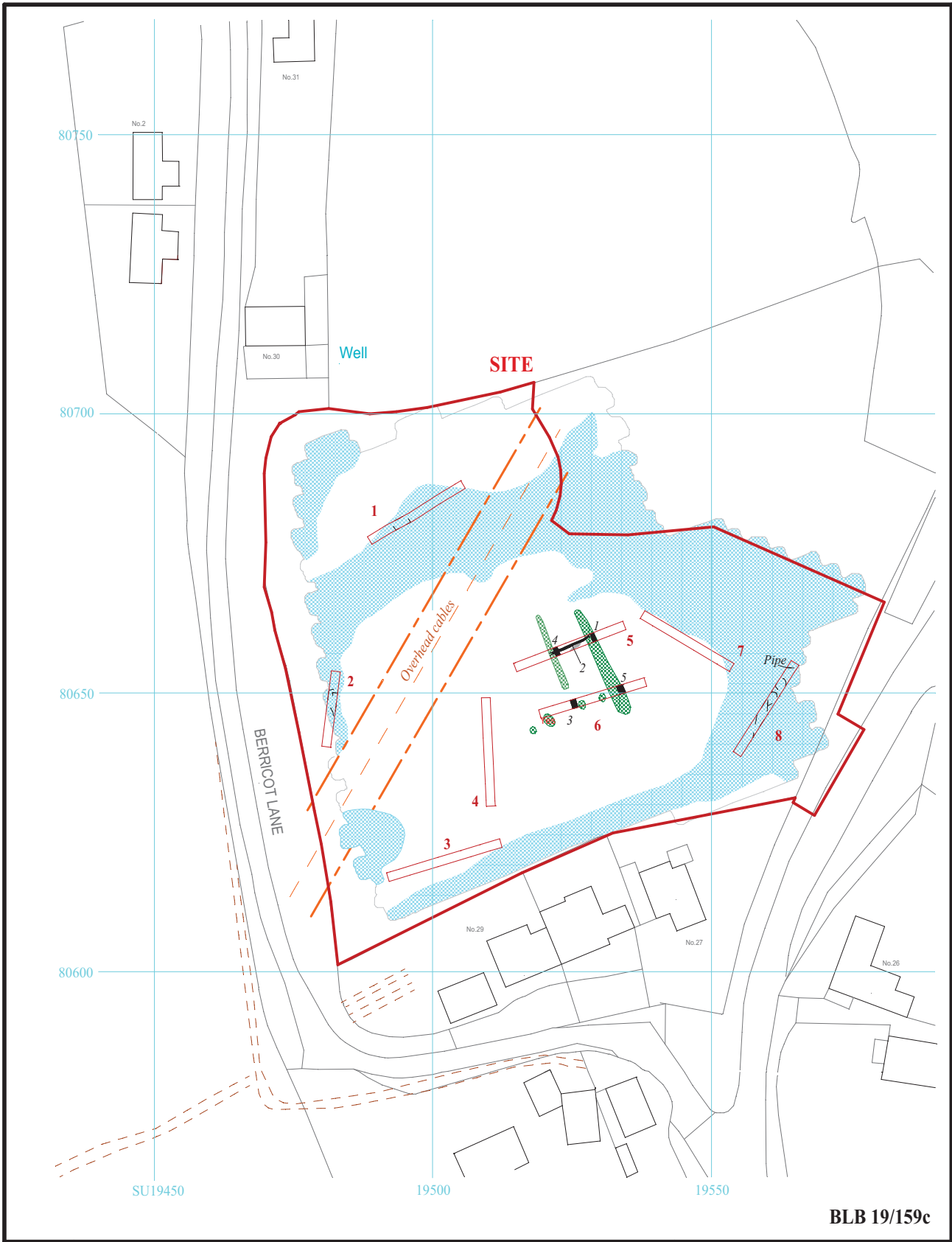
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Figure 4. Sections.



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Figure 5. Location of features, compared to geophysical survey



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



Plate 2. Trench 5, looking NW, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.

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Plates 1 and 2.**

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Plate 3. Trench 6, looking NW, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 4. Trench 5, ditch 1, looking S, Scales: 0.5m and 0.3m..

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Plates 3 and 4.

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Plate 5. Trench 5, gully 2, looking E, Scales: 0.3m and 0.1m.



Plate 6. Trench 6, ditch 3, looking N, Scales: 0.5m and 0.3m..

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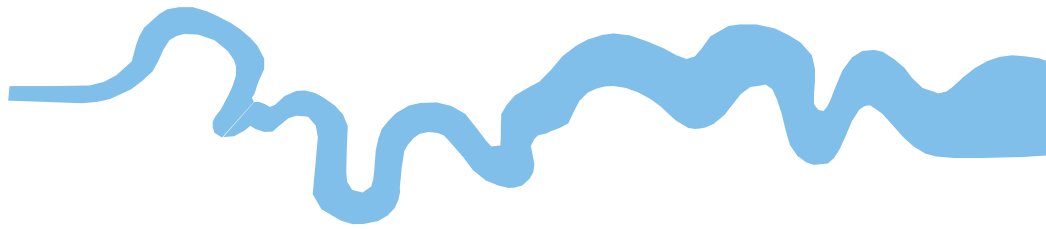
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Plates 5 and 6.**

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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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