

**T H A M E S      V A L L E Y**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL**

**S E R V I C E S**

**Land at Croft Yard, Ham Road, Wanborough,  
Swindon, Wiltshire**

**Archaeological Evaluation**

**by Anne-Michelle Huvig**

**Site Code: CYW20/104**

**(SU 2109 8265)**

**Land at Croft Yard, Ham Road, Wanborough,  
Swindon, Wiltshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation  
for Fairwater Homes Ltd**

By Anne-Michelle Huvig  
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code CYW 20-104

**August 2020**

## Summary

**Site name:** Land at Croft Yard, Ham Road, Wanborough, Swindon, Wiltshire

**Grid reference:** SU 2109 8265

**Site activity:** Evaluation

**Date and duration of project:** 5th - 6th July 2020

**Project coordinator:** Tim Dawson

**Site supervisor:** Anne-Michelle Huvig

**Site code:** CYW 20/104

**Area of site:** c. 0.2 ha.

**Summary of results:** The original layout of trial trenches was modified slightly due to site constraints and an extra trench dug to compensate. Much made ground was revealed overlying a buried subsoil, but no deposits nor artefacts of archaeological interest were discovered. The site is now considered to have very 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 or Archaeology Data Service in due course.

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford ✓ 12.08.20
	Steve Preston ✓ 12.08.20

# Land at Croft Yard, Ham Road, Wanborough, Swindon, Wiltshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Anne-Michelle Huvig

**Report 20/104**

## **Introduction**

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out on land known as Croft Yard, Ham Road, Wanborough, Wiltshire, SN4 0DF (SU 2109 8265) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Ray Pethick of Fairwater Homes Ltd, 35 The Whiteway, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 2HH.

Planning permission is being sought (app S/19/1732) from Swindon Borough Council for the erection of nine properties on the site. The area is currently used as a storage yard, and contains several dilapidated buildings. In order to inform the planning process, an initial archaeological survey has been requested establish if there is any potential for archaeological deposits at the site.

This is in accordance with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2019), and the Borough 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 and adviser to the Borough Council on matters pertaining to archaeology within the planning system. The fieldwork was undertaken by Anne-Michelle Huvig on 5th and 6th August 2020. The site code is CYW 20/104. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Swindon Museum or the Archaeology Data Service in due course.

## **Location, topography and geology**

The village of Wanborough occupies a position at the foot of the North Wessex Downs chalk escarpment. It is one of a number of spring-line settlements that lie north of the Ridgeway. The site straddles the eastern edge of a high point of Upper Greensand outcrop on which the historic core of the (Upper) village lies with chalk to the east. (BGS 1974). This division was confirmed in the trenches, mid greyish yellow silt with blueish patches and chalk fragments in Trenches 1, 2 and 4, and a compact white chalk in trench 3. The site lies at c.149m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). The site may have been landscaped in part during the previous farmstead development.

## **Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a desk-based assessment (BA 2020). In summary, Wanborough has late Saxon origins and is mentioned in Domesday Book of 1086 (Williams and Martin 2002, 165). The village has two foci with the proposal site lying within Upper Wanborough. However, the area is noteworthy for the presence of a 'small Roman town', *Durocornovium*, now a Scheduled Monument which lies c.2km north of the modern village, at the junction of the Roman road from Marlborough (*Cunetio*) with Ermin Street (Cirencester to Silchester) . Fieldwork c. 300m to the north east of the site revealed a further Roman settlement (Pine and Taylor 2016).

## **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. This work was to be carried out in such a manner as not to compromise the integrity of any archaeological features or deposits which might warrant preservation *in situ* or might be better excavated under conditions pertaining to full excavation.

The specific aims of the project were:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels had survived on the site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period were present;
- to determine if any deposits of Roman date are present on the site;
- to determine if any deposits of Medieval date are present on the site; and
- to provide information in order to draw up an appropriate mitigation strategy if required;

In total, three trenches were intended to be excavated in accessible parts of the site. All trenches were to be 15m long and 1.6m to 2m wide. They would be dug by a JCB-type or 360° machine fitted with a toothless bucket, under constant archaeological supervision. Any encountered archaeological features would be cleaned by hand, sufficiently excavated and sampled to satisfy the above aims. All spoilheaps were to be checked for finds.

## **Results**

All the intended evaluation trenches were opened as planned but their intended length had to be reduced to allow for machine manoeuvrability amidst the derelict buildings and trees. As a consequence a fourth trench was added to maintain the sampling fraction (Fig. 3). The resulting lengths ranged from 5.3m to 13m and all were 1.80m wide. Trench depths also varied due to the presence of more or less deep made ground and a buried soil, from 0.50m to 1.30m. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths, and a description of stratigraphy is

given in Appendix 1. Two different geological horizons were encountered: A mid greyish yellow silt with blueish patches and chalk fragments in trenches 1, 2 and 4 and a compact white chalk in trench 3.

#### Trench 1 (Figs 3 and 4; Pl. 1)

This trench was 10m long and 0.50 to 1m deep. It was orientated roughly West -East. The stratigraphy comprised a 0.10m layer of Tarmac overlying 0.20m of made ground, medium compacted and mostly composed of brownish grey clayey silt. Under this was a mid to dark grey silt, 0.22m thick, understood as a possible buried topsoil. This overlay the greensand natural geology (silt). A backfilled geo-technical test pit was observed but no deposits of archaeological interest were encountered.

#### Trench 2 (Fig. 3; Pl. 2)

This trench was orientated SW-NE, 9m long and 1.10m deep with a 1.50m deep test slot dug at the east end to confirm the correct interpretation of the geological strata. The stratigraphy comprised 0.14m of Tarmac overlying 0.38m of made ground (stones and chalk). Under this was a mid to dark grey silt, 0.40m thick, understood again as a buried topsoil. Below this was a subsoil, a medium compaction, greyish green silt, 0.16m thick, overlying the greensand natural geology. No deposits of archaeological interest were encountered.

#### Trench 3 (Figs 3 and 4; Pls 3 and 4)

This trench was 13m long and 1.10 to 1.15m deep. It was orientated SW-NE. The stratigraphy comprised 0.18m of Tarmac overlying 0.34m of a hard levelling layer comprising lumps of Tarmac and stones. Under this was a mid to dark grey silt, 0.24m thick, understood as a possible buried topsoil and containing a metal pipe, oil canister, Coca Cola can, modern glass, etc. Below this was a medium compacted mid grey silt subsoil, 0.10m thick above chalk natural geology. No deposits of archaeological interest were encountered.

#### Trench 4 (Fig. 3)

This trench was 5.30m long and 0.85m to 1.30m deep. It was orientated SSE-NNW. The stratigraphy comprised 0.16m of Tarmac overlying 0.20m of made ground, medium compacted and mostly composed of dark grey clayey silt. Below this was 0.15m of further made ground, medium compacted and mostly composed of brownish grey clayey silt. Under it was crushed chalk, 0.18m thick. This is interpreted as a possible yard surface, pre-dating the more recent landscaping. It overlay a mid to dark grey silt, 0.20m thick, understood as a possible buried topsoil which in turn overlay c. 0.2m of grey silty subsoil overlying the greensand natural geology. Many modern objects rubbish were found in these various layers. No deposits of archaeological interest were encountered.

## **Finds**

No finds of archaeological interest were recovered. Modern material as noted above was observed but not retained.

## **Conclusion**

The evaluation was carried out more or less as intended with the addition of an extra small trench. Much modern dumping had taken place leaving a buried soil and subsoil *in situ*. However, despite this degree of survival, no deposits nor artefacts of archaeological interest were recorded. The site is considered to have very low potential.

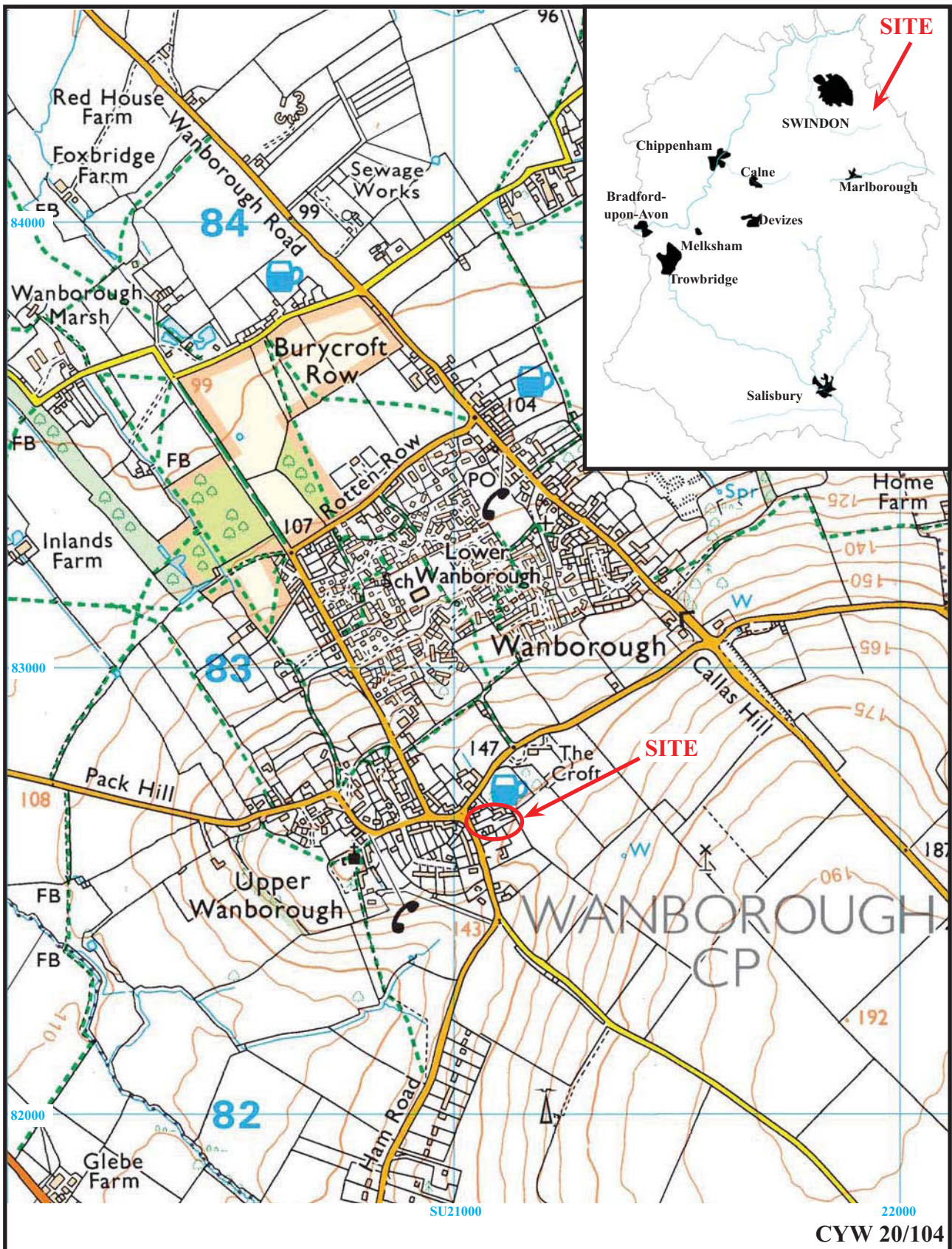
## **References**

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**APPENDIX 1: Trench details**

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	10.0	1.80	0.50 to 1.00	0-0.1m Tarmac; 0.1-0.3m Made ground; 0.3- 0.52m Buried topsoil; 0.52-m+ Natural Geology (silt) [ <b>Pl. 1</b> ]
2	9.0	1.80	1.10 to 1.50	0-0.14m Tarmac; 0.14-0.52m Made ground; 0.52-0.92m Buried topsoil; 0.92-1.08m Subsoil ; 1.08m+ Natural, geology (silt) >0.25m <b>Pl. 2</b>
3	13.0	1.80	1.10 to 1.15	0-0.18m Tarmac; 0.18-0.52m, levelling layer; 0.52-0.86m, Buried topsoil ; 0.86-1.1m, Subsoil; 1.10m+ Natural geology (chalk) [ <b>Pls 3-4</b> ]
4	5.30	1.80	0.85 to 1.30	0-0.16m Tarmac; 0.16--0.36m, Made ground; 0.36-0.51m, Made ground; 0.51-0.69m, Chalk yard? 0.69-0.89m, Buried topsoil; 0.89-1.09m Subsoil; 1.09m+ Natural Geology (silt)



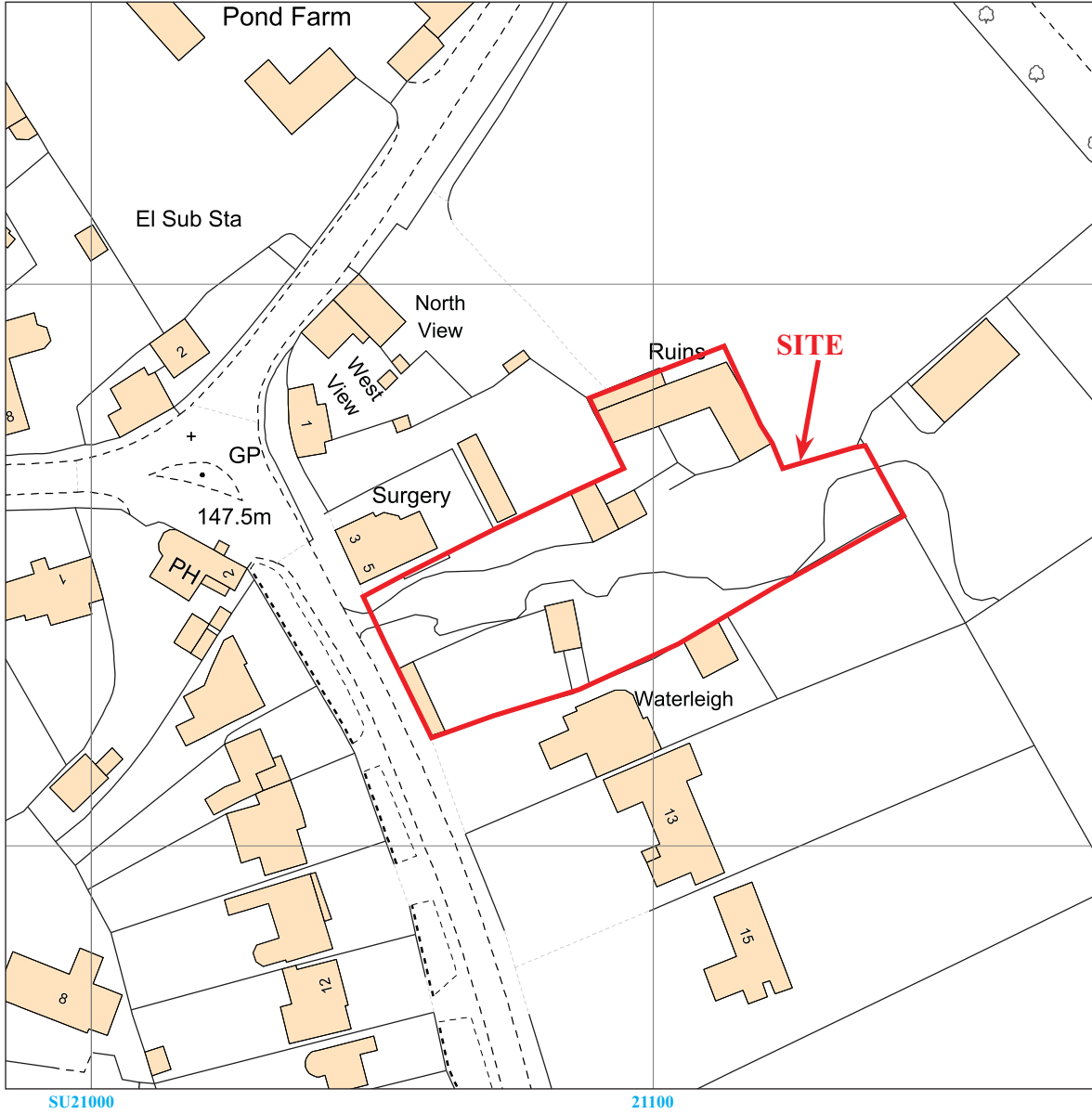


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Figure 1. Location of site within Upper Wanborough and Wiltshire.

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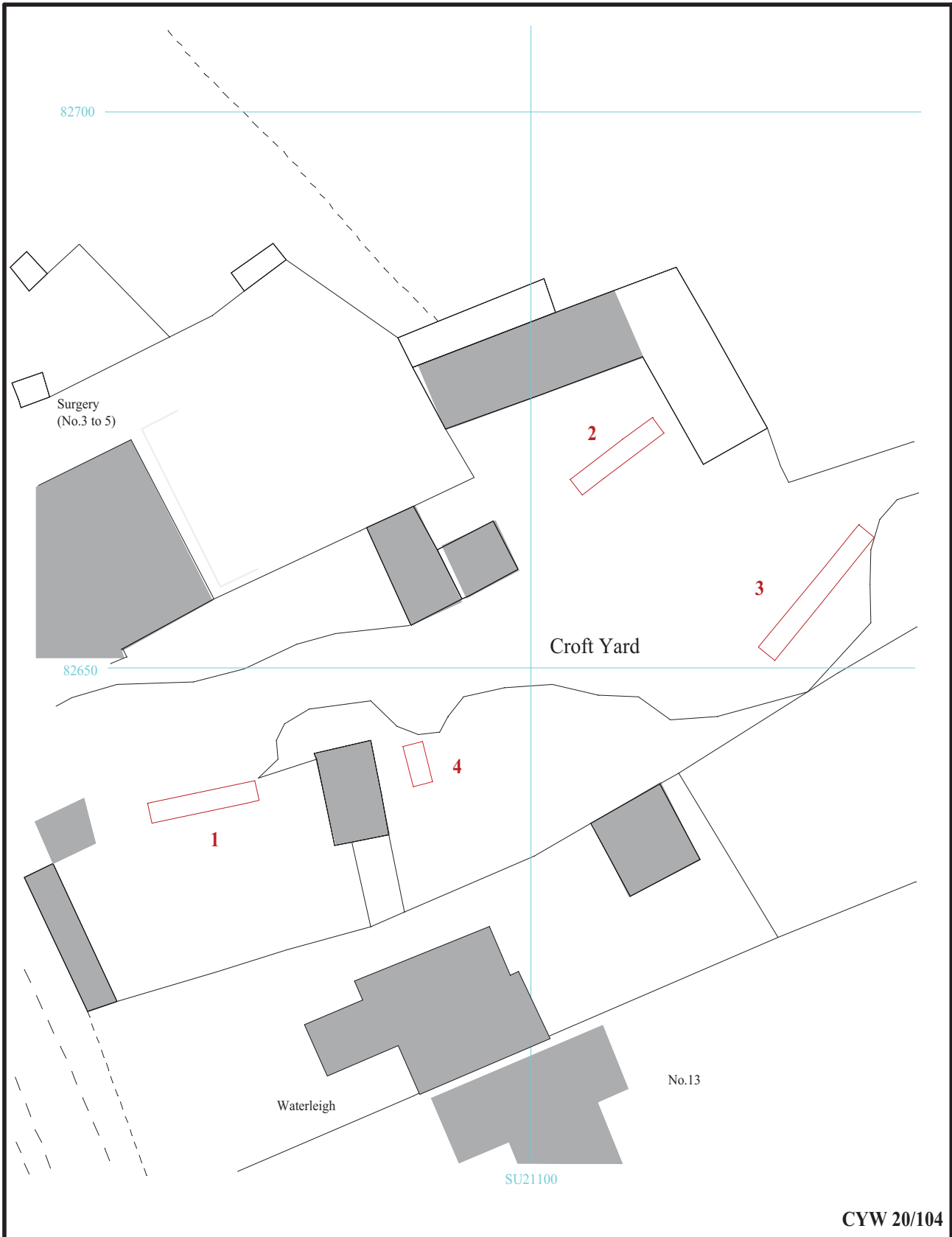


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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Ham Road.

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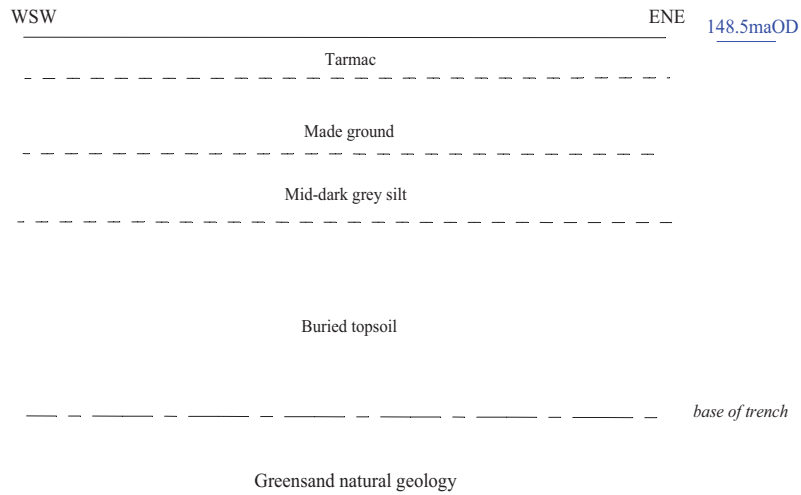
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Figure 3. Locations of trenches.

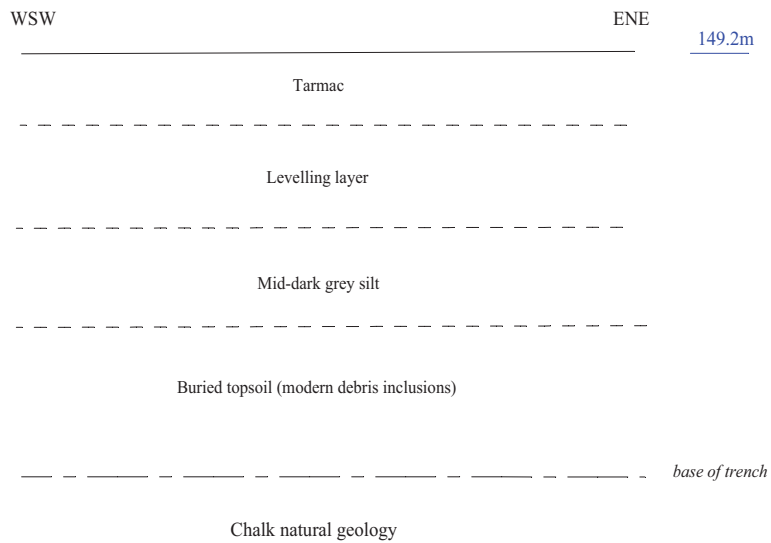


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*Trench 1*



*Trench 3*



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Figure 4. Representative sections.



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Plate 1. Trench 1, looking East,  
Scales: 2x1m



Plate 2. Trench 2, looking North East,  
Scales: 2x1m



Plate 3. Trench 3, looking East,  
Scales: 2x1m



Plate 4. Trench 3, representative section, looking South,  
Scales: 2x1m

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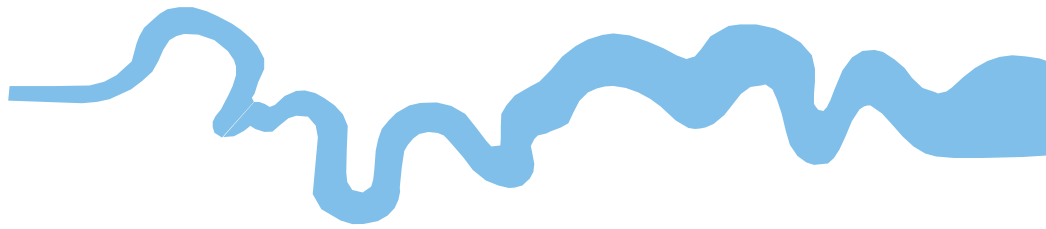
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Plates 1 to 4.

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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





**Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd,  
47-49 De Beauvoir Road,  
Reading RG1 5NR**

**Tel: 0118 9260552  
Email: [tvas@tvas.co.uk](mailto:tvas@tvas.co.uk)  
Web: [www.tvas.co.uk](http://www.tvas.co.uk)**

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