

**Sand Lodge, 659 Bath Road, Burnham,
Buckinghamshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Churchgate Premier Homes**

by Andrew Mordin

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code BRB 08/46

May 2008

Summary

Site name: Sand Lodge, 659 Bath Road, Burnham, Buckinghamshire

Grid reference: SU 9235 8115

Site activity: Archaeological Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 23rd–25th April 2008

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Steve Ford

Site code: BRB 08/46

Area of site: c.1400 sq m

Summary of results: No archaeological features were discovered. Two flint flakes indicate a low level of prehistoric activity in the area

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held by Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd, 47–49 De Beauvoir Road, Reading, RG1 5NR, and will be deposited with Buckinghamshire Museum Service in due course.

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Sand Lodge, 659 Bath Road, Burnham, Buckinghamshire

An Archaeological Evaluation

by Andrew MUNDIN and Steve FORD

Report 08/46

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at land to the rear of 658, 659 (Sand Lodge), and 660 Bath Road, Burnham, Buckinghamshire (SU 9235 8115) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Chris Dale of Churchgate Premier Homes, Albany House, Market Street, Maidenhead, SL6 8BE.

Planning permission (app no. 08/00289/FUL) has been sought from South Buckinghamshire District Council to construct five new properties at the rear of Sand Lodge. This will require the demolition of the existing Sand Lodge with construction of a replacement and new access to the rear for these new properties. In light of the possibility that archaeological remains might be present on the site and might be adversely affected by the proposed development, a scheme of archaeological investigation has been requested. This was to take the form, initially, of a field evaluation by means of trial trenching. A scheme for further mitigation could be drawn up based on the results of this fieldwork if necessary.

This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Planning Policy Guidance, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990), and the District Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr David Radford, County Archaeological Officer for Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service, advisers for the District Council in matters relating to archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Steve Ford, with assistance from Hayley Wiggs between 23rd and 25th April 2008. The site code is BRB 08/46. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Buckinghamshire County Museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located within the rear gardens of 658, 659 (Sand Lodge), 660 Bath Road, Burnham (Fig. 2). Burnham itself once was a settlement separate from Slough, but is now merging with the north-western side of Slough, encompassing the southern development of Burnham by the Bath Road (A4) and the railway line. The site itself is situated on the northern side of the Bath Road, just to the west of its junction with Lake End Road (B3026). The site is relatively level at a height of c.25m above Ordnance Datum (OD). The underlying geology

is a transition of sand and gravel between the Taplow Terrace to the north and the Flood Plain Terrace to the south (BGS 1974).

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential for this site was highlighted by a brief prepared by Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service (Radford 2008). In summary the site lies in an area where a range of sites and finds have been recorded (Appendix 2). Primarily, the site lies in the vicinity of Saxon inhumation burials found during the construction of the Great Western Railway in the mid 19th century along with evidence of ‘hut floors’ and Bronze Age pottery including what appears to have been an urned cremation (amongst a range of other prehistoric material) in a field known as the ‘Windmill Field’ (MBC 4598), recognized today as the triangular parcel of land between Bath Road and Hag Hill Lane (Radford 2008). Some of these finds are positively located, others are only conjectured to have come from this location. At least two and perhaps as many as six or seven inhumation burials may have been uncovered (Radford 2008, although the SMR only notes one), with a sword and shield boss from this Saxon discovery currently stored in the British Museum.

A range of historic maps were examined showing the development of the immediate area around the site, showing the triangular land parcel and the development during the construction of the railway (Appendix 3: Figs 3–5).

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits or palaeoenvironmental deposits within the area of development. The work was to be carried out in such a way that would not compromise the integrity of archaeological features or deposits which warrant preservation *in situ*, or might better be excavated under conditions pertaining to full excavation. The specific research aims of this project were:

To determine if archaeological relevant levels have survived on this site.

To determine if archaeology of any period were present.

Establish whether there is evidence/potential for prehistoric occupation or Saxon burials or related activity on this site and any relationship to the previous 19th-century observations.

Four trenches were to be excavated in total all 1.4-1.6m wide and between 10m and 12m long depending on the type of machine used.

Trenches were to be dug to examine the full depth of stratified deposits above underlying geology. The trenching was to be undertaken using a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. Where archaeological features or deposits are certainly or probably present, the stripped areas were to be cleaned using appropriate hand tools and a portion of the deposits examined or sampled by hand to satisfy aims of the project. A contingency for an extra 10m of trenching was available to clarify initial findings.

Results

All four trenches were excavated as intended and ranged in length between 8.9m and 10.6m long. In addition, two test pits were excavated within the ends of Trenches 1 and 4 respectively.

A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1

This trench was orientated west–east and was 8.9m long. It was positioned in the rear garden of 660 Bath Road. The stratigraphy comprised garden turf (topsoil) overlying recent made ground comprising brick rubble to a depth of 0.19m (Fig. 7). Underlying this was a subsoil of a brown clayey sand with some gravel which was at a depth of 0.51m. This overlay undisturbed natural brickearth deposits comprising and orange brown sandy clay. A layer of grey silty clay, c. 0.0-5m thick was revealed at the eastern end of the trench of uncertain origin. It was removed to expose the brickearth to ensure that it did not mask any archaeological deposits. A test pit dug in the east end of the trench, to a depth of 0.69m which was 1.15m long and 0.6m wide. No archaeological deposits were found in this trench but two flint flakes were recovered from the spoilheaps.

Trench 2

This trench was aligned NNW–SSE and was 10.45m long. This trench was located in the back of the rear garden of Sand Lodge. The stratigraphy showed garden turf over subsoil to a depth of 0.59m. Natural geology (brickearth) was exposed across the base of this trench and showed no signs of prior disturbance. No archaeology or finds were found in this trench.

Trench 3

This trench was aligned north–south and was 10.6m long. This trench was towards the front (south) of the rear garden of Sand Lodge. The stratigraphy showed garden topsoil over subsoil to a depth of 0.55m (Fig. 7). Natural geology (brickearth with some fine gravel) was exposed across the base of this trench. No archaeology or finds were found in this trench.

Trench 4

This trench was aligned NNW–SSE and was 9.9m long. This trench was in the rear of 658 Bath Road. The stratigraphy showed garden turf over subsoil to a depth of 0.47m. Natural geology was exposed across the base of this trench and showed no signs of disturbance. A test pit was dug into the base of the trench to a depth of 0.9m to investigate the stratigraphy of the natural geology. It was 0.5m long by 0.6m wide. No archaeology or finds were recovered from this trench.

Finds

Struck flint by Steve Ford

Two broken flint flakes were recovered from trench 1. Neither piece was closely datable and only a broad Neolithic or Bronze Age date can be suggested.

Conclusion

Although this evaluation was located in the vicinity of previously recorded archaeology, No deposits of archaeological interest were revealed. Two flint flakes were the only items of archaeological interest but are likely to represent no more than casual loss or discard within a landscape setting. On the basis of these results the site is considered to have very little archaeological potential.

References

- BGS, 1974, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50 000, Sheet 255, Drift Edition, Keyworth
PPG16, 1990, *Archaeology and Planning*, Dept of the Environment Planning Policy Guidance 16, HMSO
Radford, D, 2008, 'Brief for an archaeological field evaluation, Sand Lodge, Bath Road, Burnham',
Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service, Aylesbury

APPENDIX 1: Trench details

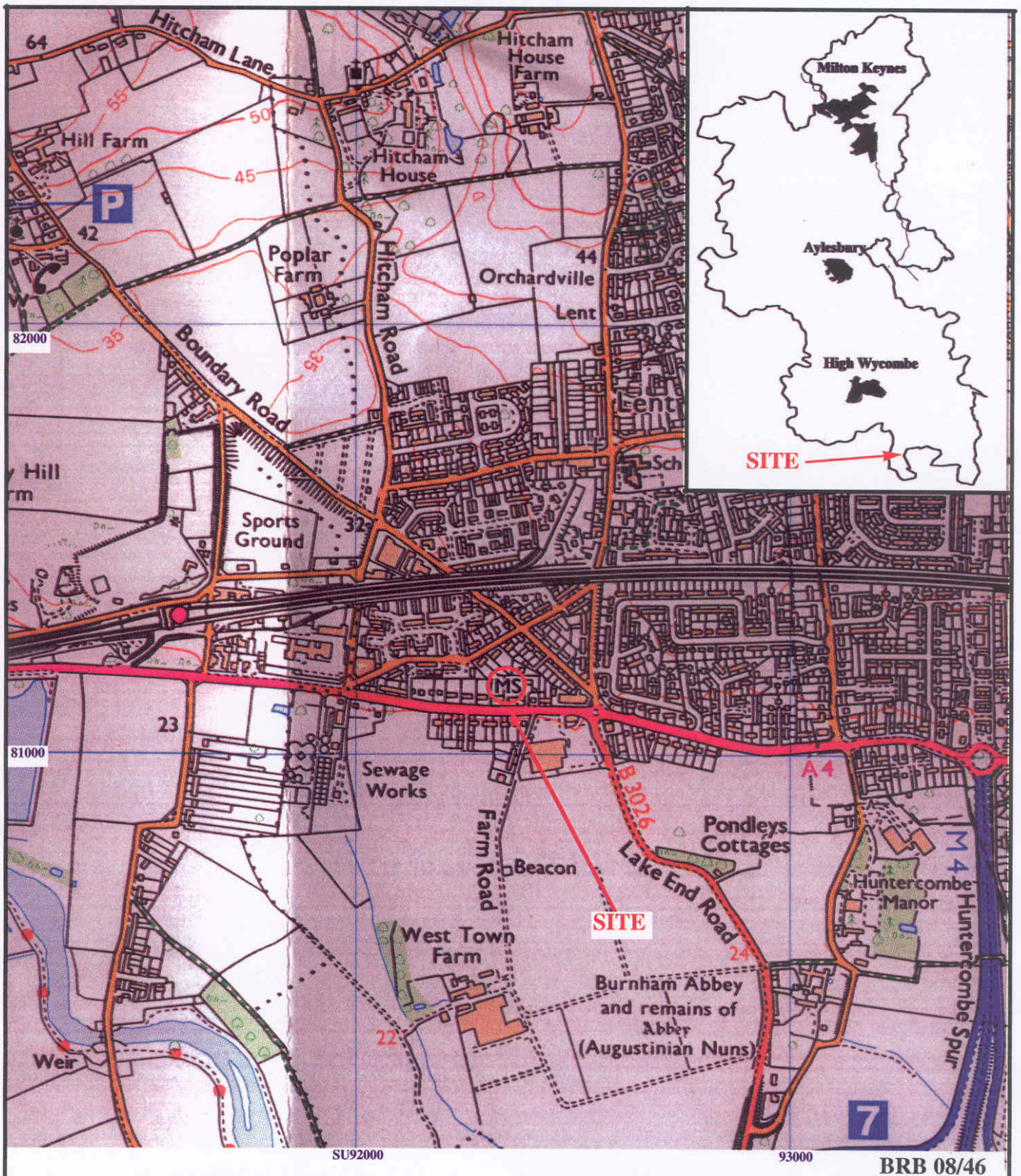
<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	8.9	1.5	0.6 Test pit 0.69m	0-0.11m turf/topsoil; 0.11-19m made ground (brick rubble); 0.19-0.51m subsoil (brown clayey sand with some gravel); 0.51-0.56 (east end) greyish sandy clay 0.51m+ orange/brown sandy clay (brickearth). natural geology Test pit at east end to 0.69m [Plate 1]
2	10.45	1.5	0.64	0-0.23m turf/topsoil; 0.23-0.59m subsoil; 0.59m+ natural geology, brickearth [Plate 2]
3	10.6	1.5	0.65	0-0.25m turf/topsoil; 0.25-0.55m subsoil; 0.55m+ natural geology, brickearth with some fine gravel patches [Plate 3]
4	9.9	1.5	0.6	0-0.2m turf/topsoil; 0.2-0.47m subsoil 0.47m+ natural geology, brickearth. Test pit at north end to 0.9m [Plate 4]

APPENDIX 2: Sites and Monuments Records in close proximity to the development site

<i>No.</i>	<i>SMR Ref</i>	<i>Grid Ref (SU)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	01552000000 0155201000 0152202000 0152203000 0152203001 0152203002 0152203003 0152203004 0152203005 0152203006 0152203007 0155204000	92170 81190	Excavation	Palaeolithic Neolithic, Bronze Age Iron Age Saxon Medieval	19th century excavation: Palaeolithic flint scraper, six Neolithic axes, Neolithic and Bronze Age pottery, including a Bronze Age cinerary urn, containing bones and a flint flake, 'hut floors' that could be Bronze Age or Saxon, animal bones, Iron Age pottery, possible early Saxon warrior grave including iron sword, shield fragments and knife, also Saxon pottery and medieval pottery
2	0155210000	921 812	Documentary	Medieval	Windmill known from place name and documentary source
3	1213400000	92523 81090	Listed Building	Post-medieval	re-used 18th- or 19th-century milestone, listed Grade II
4	1213500000	92490 81090	Listed Building	Post-medieval	17th century timber-framed Inn, Grade II.
5	0628800000	92264 80980	Watching brief	Iron Age	Two ditches with Iron Age pottery
6	0934900000	97704 80598	Structure	Post-medieval	Great Western Railway (1835-41)

APPENDIX 3: Historic and modern maps consulted

- 1822 Ordnance Survey Old Series, 25 inch series (Fig. 3)
- 1825 Bryant's county map (Fig. 4)
- 1895-6 Second Edition Ordnance Survey, 25 inch series (Fig. 5)

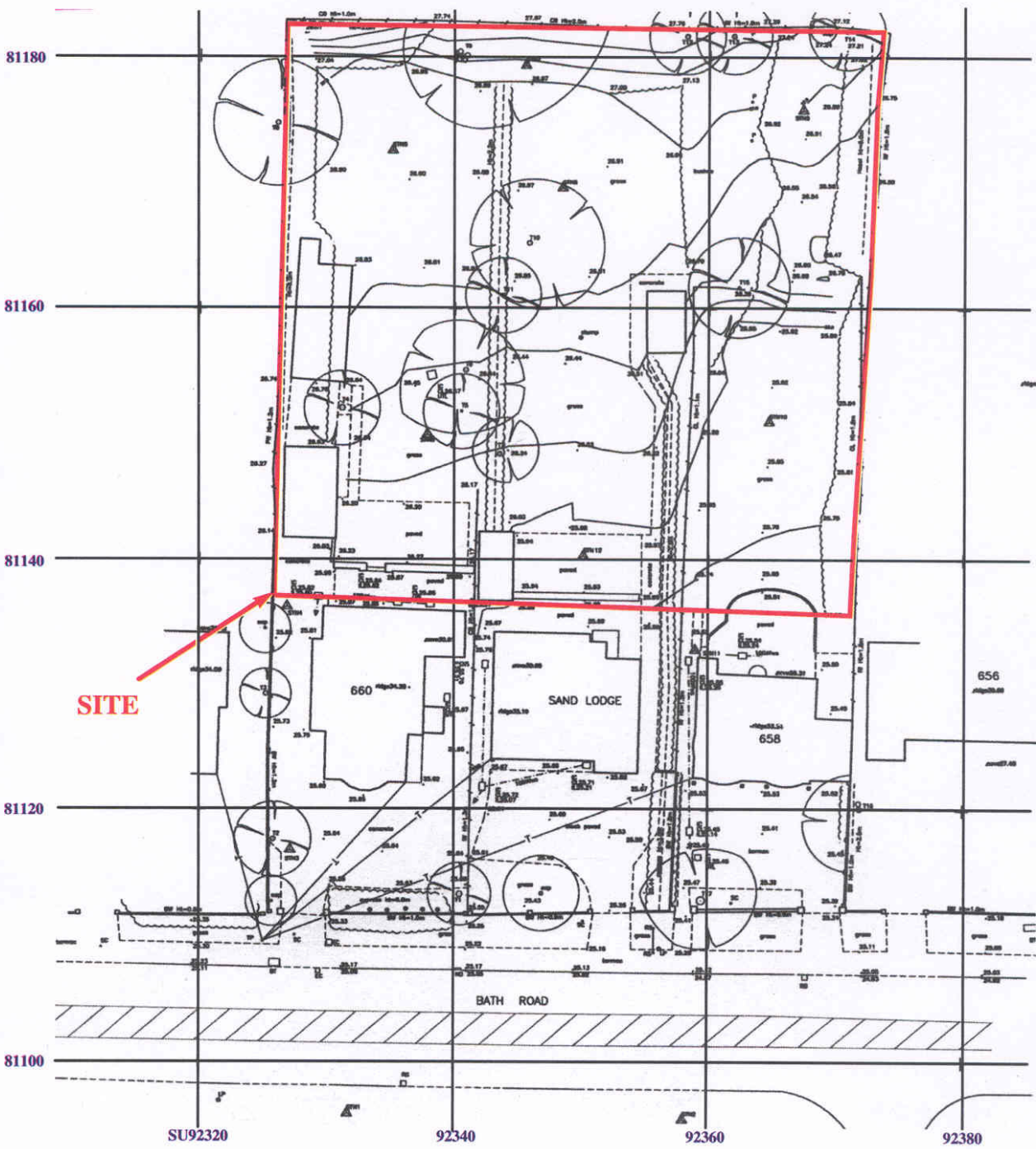


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Figure 1. Location of site within Burnham and Buckinghamshire.

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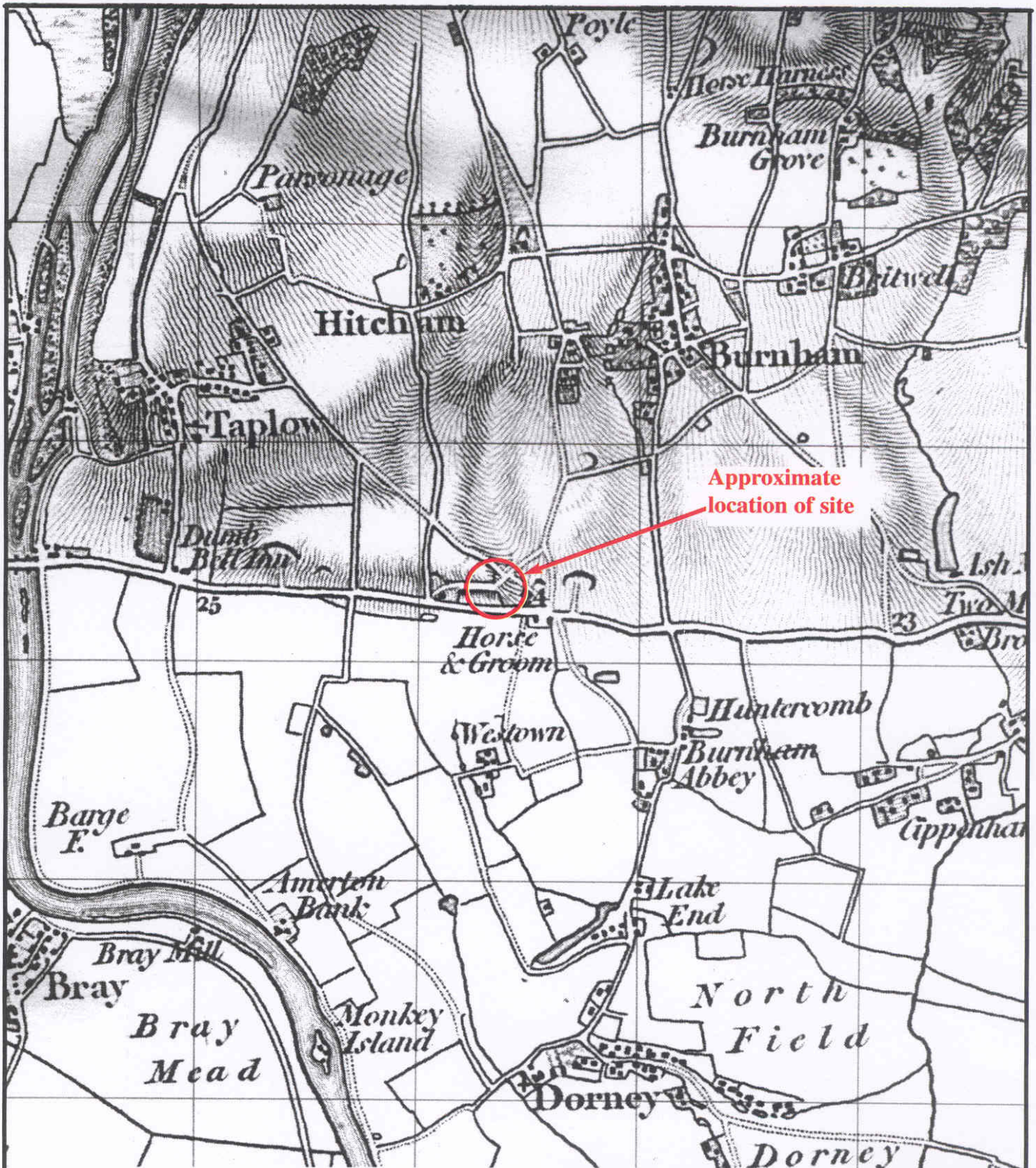
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site on Bath Road.

Scale: 1:500

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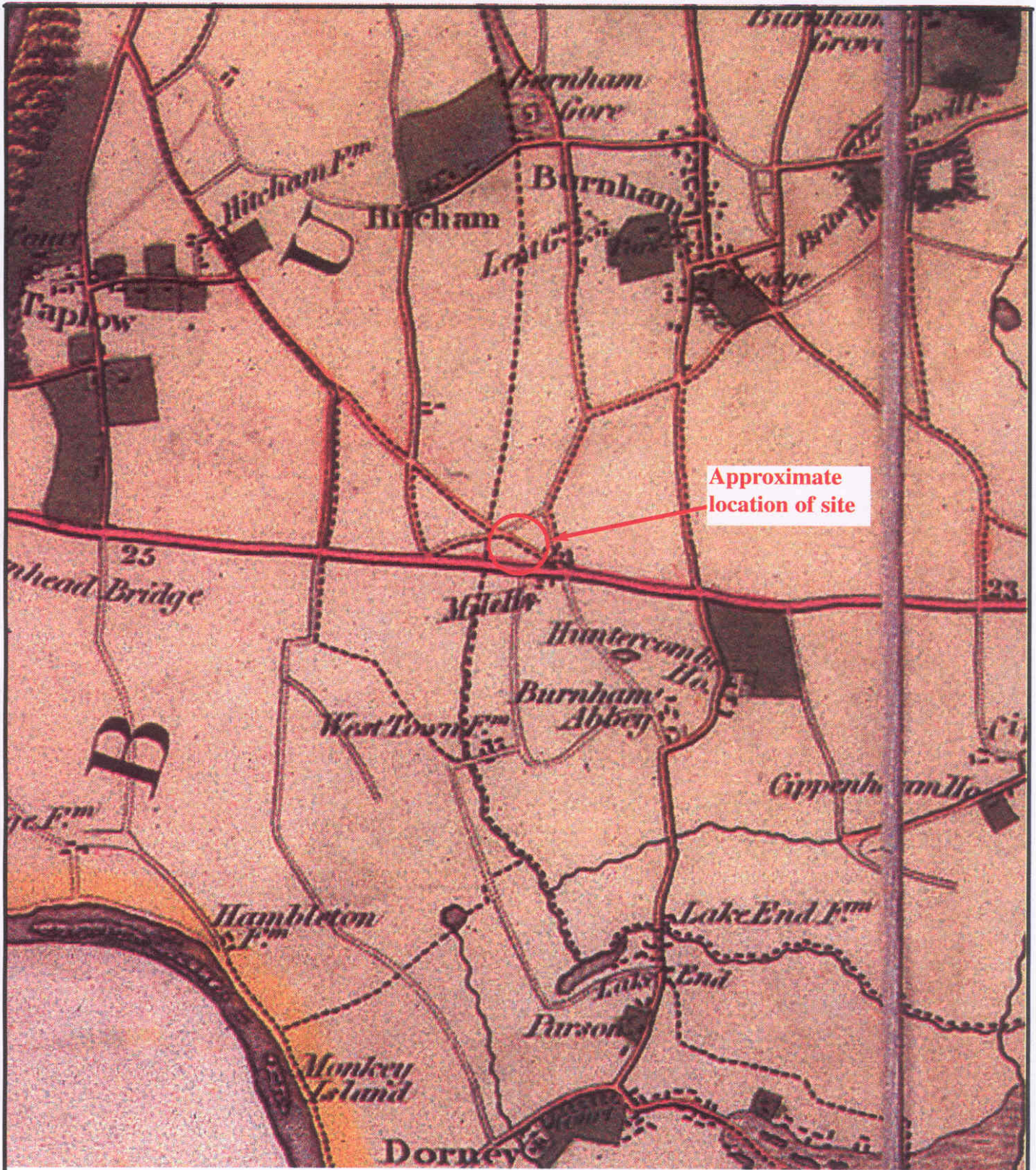
Approximate
location of site

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Figure 3. Ordnance Survey, 1822.

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Approximate
location of site

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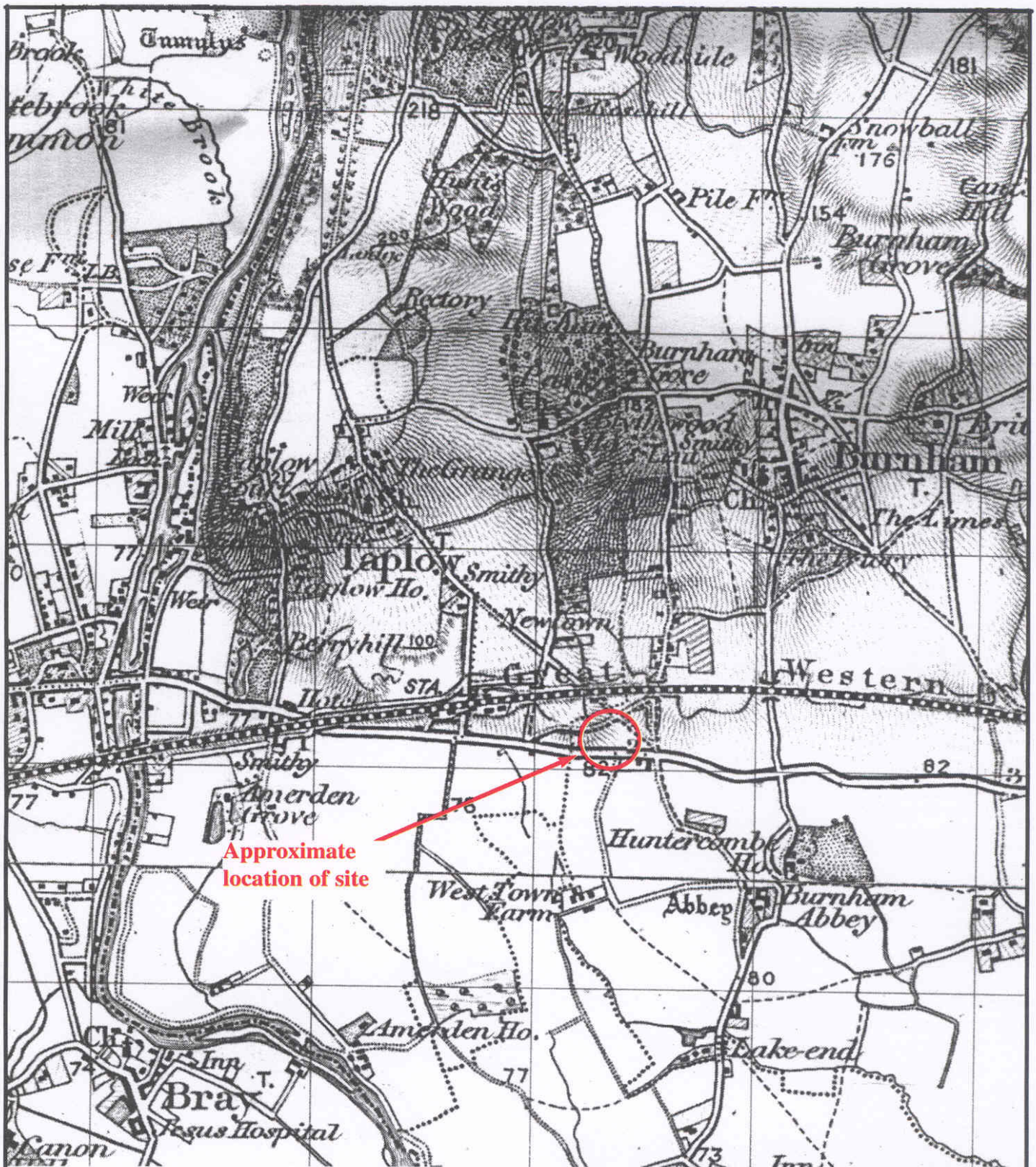
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Figure 4. Bryant, 1825.

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Figure 5. Ordnance Survey, 1895-96.

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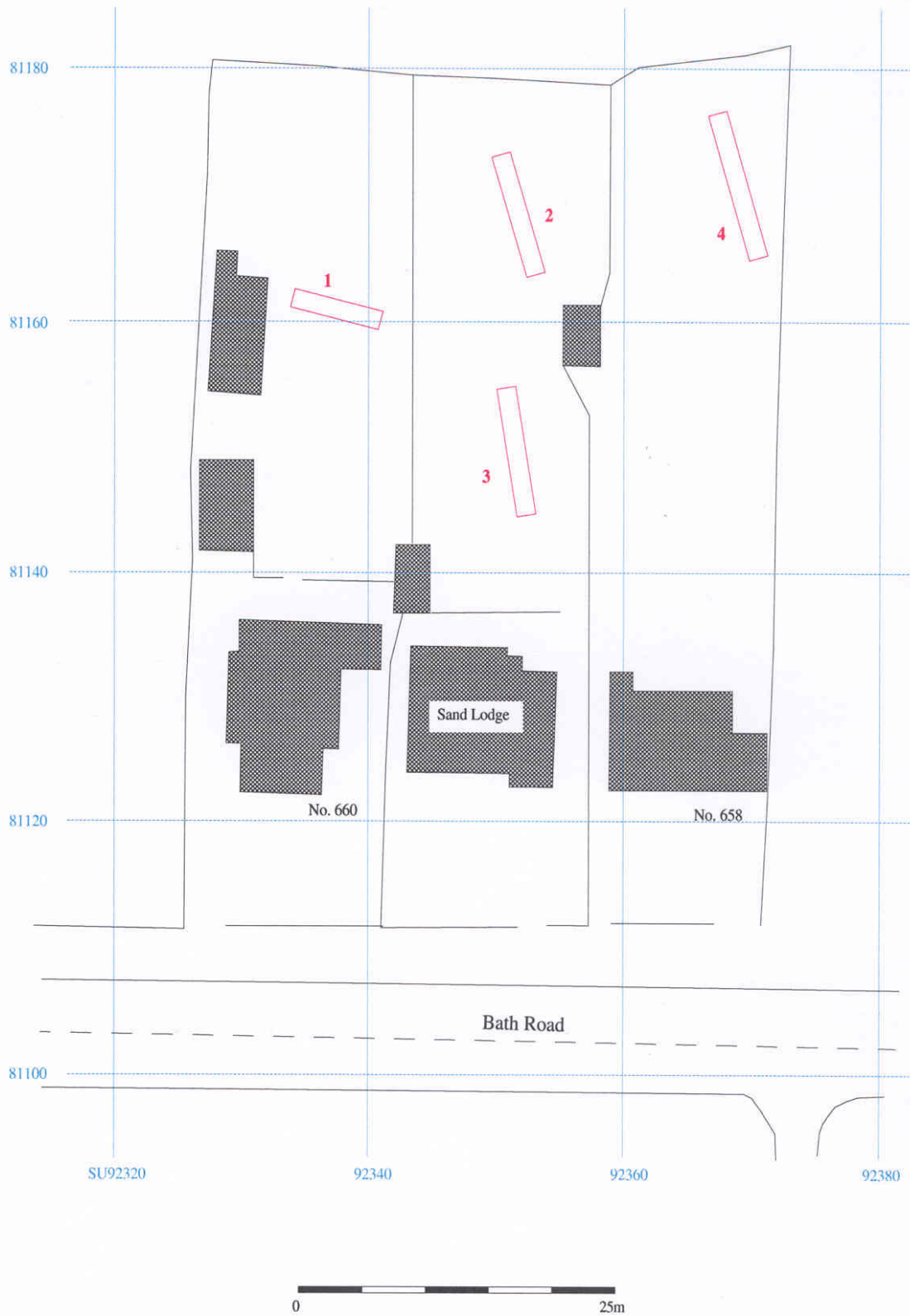


Figure 6. Location of trenches.

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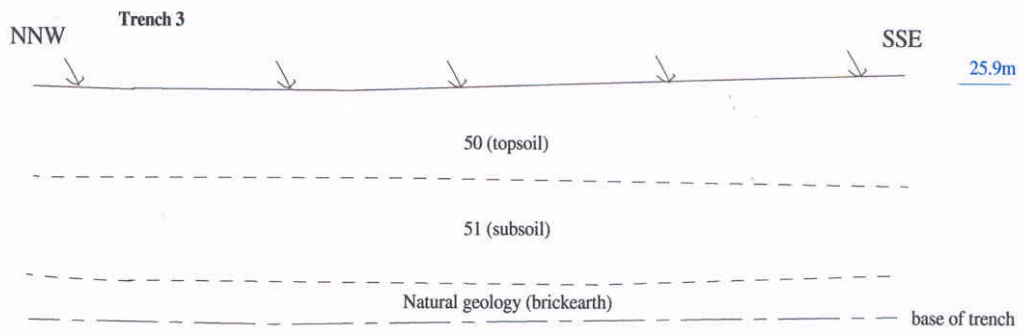
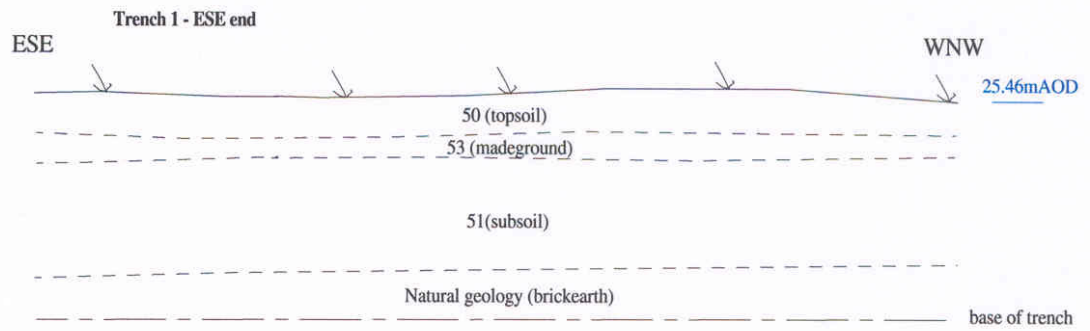


Figure 7. Representative sections of trenches.



Plate 1. Trench 1 looking north-west, Scales 1m and 2m.

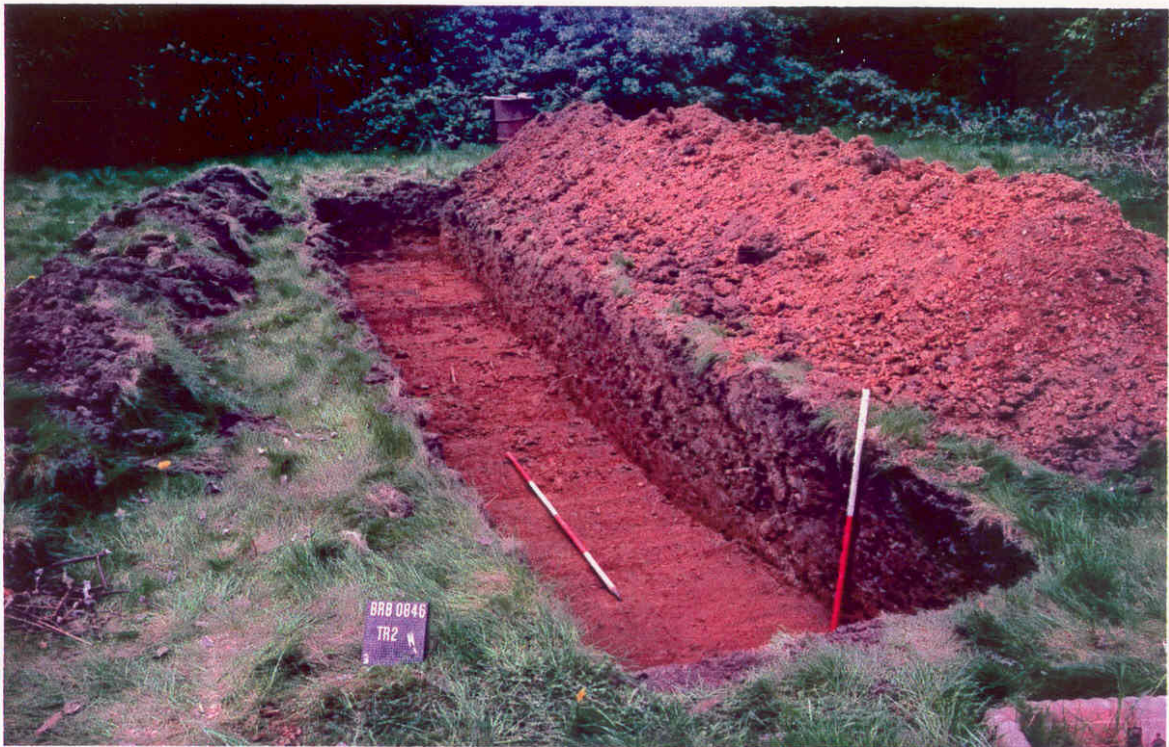


Plate 2. Trench 2 looking north-west, Scales 2m and 1m.



Plate 3. Trench 3 looking north, Scale 2m.



Plate 4. Trench 4 looking north, Scales 2m and 0.3m.