

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Palm Hills, London Road, Chavey Down,
Bracknell, Berkshire**

Phase 2

Archaeological Evaluation

by Maisie Foster

Site Code: PHB21/253

(SU 8940 6901)

**Palm Hills, London Road, Chavey Down,
Bracknell, Berkshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation (Phase 2)
for Shanly Homes (Thames Valley)**

by Maisie Foster

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code PHB 21/253

March 2022

Summary

Site name: Palm Hills, London Road, Chavey Down, Bracknell, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 8940 6901

Site activity: Archaeological Evaluation

Date and duration of project: Phase 2: 24th-30th March 2022

Project coordinator: Tim Dawson

Site supervisor: Maisie Foster

Site code: PHB 21/253

Area of site: c. 2.7ha (c. 2ha developable)

Summary of results: The remaining 14 trenches were excavated as intended with only minor alterations to positioning to avoid heavily rooted areas, services and remaining buildings. No finds nor deposits of archaeological interest were encountered. The site is 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 an appropriate museum or Archaeology Data Service in due course.

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

Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 04.04.22 Steve Preston ✓ 01.04.22

Palm Hills, London Road, Chavey Down, Bracknell, Berkshire An Archaeological Evaluation (Phase 2)

by Maisie Foster

Report 21/253b

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Palm Hills, London Road, Chavey Down, Bracknell, Berkshire, RG12 9FR (SU 8940 6901) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Jeff Hughes of Shanly Homes (Thames Valley) 24-26 Aylesbury End, Beaconsfield, HP61LW.

Planning permission (19/00847/OUT) has been gained on appeal (APP/R0335/W/21/3267437) from Bracknell Forest Council for the construction of new housing on the site. As a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits on site the consent is subject to condition (16) relating to archaeology, which requires the results of an archaeological evaluation to inform an appropriate mitigation strategy.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2018) and the Council's policies on archaeology. Due to unanticipated live service runs, occupied properties and access roads being encountered during the initial phase of these works, the evaluation has been split into two phases of work. This report documents the second phase of trenching, the first phase having been reported previously (Foster 2021).

The archaeological evaluation was carried out to a specification approved by Dr Edward Peveler, Archaeology Officer with Berkshire Archaeology, advisers to the Council on matters relating to archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Kyle Beaverstock and Maisie Foster 24th to 30th March 2022 and the site code is PHB 21/253.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with an appropriate Museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located east of Bracknell on the north side of London road (Fig. 1). The development site is split into an east and west side with a band of buildings splitting the area (Fig. 2). The site is accessed by a concrete lane which opens into a small car park surrounded by residential properties and office buildings. To the rear of these properties is a larger car park and a residential property but the majority of the land is open space that appears to

have been used for the dumping of hardcore and other materials. The west side of site is now accessible through the gardens of the residential buildings splitting the land, as the tree band has been removed. The west of the site encompasses one building and surrounding land, backing onto the rear of properties fronting Long Hill Road further west. The site as a whole is fenced off, with residential properties to the south and south-east and woodland surrounding the remaining areas. The site is on a slight incline from c. 100m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) in the north to 85m aOD in the south. The underlying geology is mapped as Bagshot Formation - Sand (BGS 1981) which was recorded as the natural geology during the evaluation.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a briefing document produced by Mr Roland Smith formerly of Berkshire Archaeology. In summary, there are no recorded archaeological sites or finds on the site itself but a number of sites and finds are recorded in the vicinity and wider area (Ford 1987). To the north, Iron Age occupation has been recorded (Torrance and Durden 2003) with further sites of Iron Age, Roman and Medieval date to the north and north-west. To the south-west Middle Bronze Age and Middle Iron Age occupation has been recorded at the former RAF Staff College (Lowe 2013) and to the south-east a number of round barrows are recorded at Heatherwood Hospital (Bradley and Keith Lucas 1975; Esteves 2017). The previous phase of trenching on this site also produced no finds or deposits of archaeological interest (Foster 2021).

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological or palaeoenvironmental deposits within the area of development.

The specific research aims of this project were:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on this site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present; and
- to provide information about the archaeological potential in order to draw up a mitigation strategy if necessary.

Twenty trenches were intended be dug using a 3600-type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision. Topsoil and any other overburden was to be removed to expose archaeologically sensitive levels. 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 would be excavated or sampled by hand to satisfy the aims outlined above, without compromising the integrity of any feature that might warrant preservation *in situ* or be better investigated under the conditions pertaining to full excavation. Spoil heaps were to be monitored for finds and scanned with a metal detector. Seven of the planned trenches were excavated in Phase 1 (Foster 2021).

Results

In this phase the final 14 trenches were excavated plus an agreed extension to trench 18 (only partly excavated in previous phase). The trenches were opened as intended with only minor alterations to their positioning to avoid services, standing buildings and heavily rooted areas (Fig. 3). The trenches ranged from 15.m to 25.9m in length and 0.25m to 1.04m in depth; all were 1.6m wide. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadth, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 2 (Fig. 3)

Trench 2 was aligned SSE - NNW and was 23.5m long and between 0.8m and 0.45m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.45-0.8m of modern made ground overlying natural geology. Five land drains and a service cable were recorded along the length of the trench but no finds or features of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 3 (Fig. 3; Pl. 1)

Trench 3 was aligned NNW - SSE and was 23.7m long and 1.04m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.4m of tarmac/modern made ground and 0.58m of modern made ground with ceramic building material (CBM) and metal inclusions overlying the natural geology. Thirteen land drains and service trenches were recorded along the full length of this trench. No finds or features of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 4 (Figs 3 and 4; Pl. 2)

Trench 4 was aligned N - S and was 25.5m long and 0.9m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.4m of tarmac/modern made ground and 0.41m of modern made ground with CBM and metal inclusions overlying the natural geology. Seven land drains and service trenches were recorded along the full length of this trench. No finds or features of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 5 (Fig. 3)

Trench 5 was aligned E - W and was 23m long and 0.3m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.3m of topsoil directly overlying the natural geology. A modern trench was observed between 4m and 6m and a monitoring well was recorded at 20m. No finds or features of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 6 (Fig. 3)

Trench 6 was aligned NE - SW and was 25.2m long and 0.3m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.3m of topsoil directly overlying the natural geology. No finds or features of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 7 (Figs 3 and 4)

Trench 7 was aligned N - S and was 25m long and 0.42m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.2m of topsoil, above 0.22m of subsoil overlying the natural geology. No finds or features of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 8 (Fig. 3; Pl. 3)

Trench 8 was aligned close to west-east and was 24.5m long and 0.4m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.18m of topsoil, and 0.18m of subsoil overlying the natural geology. No finds or features of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 9 (Fig. 3)

Trench 9 was aligned south-north and was 25.4m long and 0.25m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.25m of topsoil overlying the natural geology. No finds or features of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 10 (Fig. 3)

Trench 10 was aligned NNE - SSW and was 25m long and 0.30m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.3m of topsoil overlying the natural geology. A single land drain was recorded on a N-S alignment between 13.9m and 18m. No finds or features of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 11 (Fig. 3)

Trench 11 was aligned SSW - NNE and was 25m long and 0.48m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.2m of topsoil and 0.28m subsoil overlying natural geology. A single land drain was recorded on an E-W alignment between 0m and 7m. No finds or features of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 13 (Fig. 3)

Trench 13 was aligned W - E and was 25.2m long and 0.51m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.2m of topsoil which overlay 0.15m modern rubble and 0.16m of modern made ground which overlay the natural geology. No finds or features of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 14 (Fig. 3; Pl. 4)

Trench 14 was aligned E - W and was 25.1m long and between 0.82m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.35m of topsoil which overlay 0.30m of subsoil above 0.11m modern made ground with CBM inclusions which overlay the natural geology. A brick square possibly a drain shaft was observed between 16m and 16.5m and a large modern dump of metal and glass was recorded between 16.7m and 25.1. No finds or features of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 15 (Fig. 3; Pl. 5)

Trench 15 was aligned NE - SW and was 25.9m long and 0.6m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.23m of topsoil and 0.24m of subsoil overlying the natural geology. No finds or features of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 18b (Fig. 3)

Trench 18b was aligned NE - SW from the east end of the former Trench 18, and was 15.1m long and 0.50m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.2m of topsoil and 0.3m of subsoil overlying the natural geology. No finds or features of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 19 (Fig.)

Trench 19 was aligned E - W and was 25m long and 0.92m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.9m of modern rubble made ground overlying the natural geology. No finds or features of archaeological interest were observed.

Finds

All finds noted were modern and of no archaeological interest, and were not retained

Conclusion

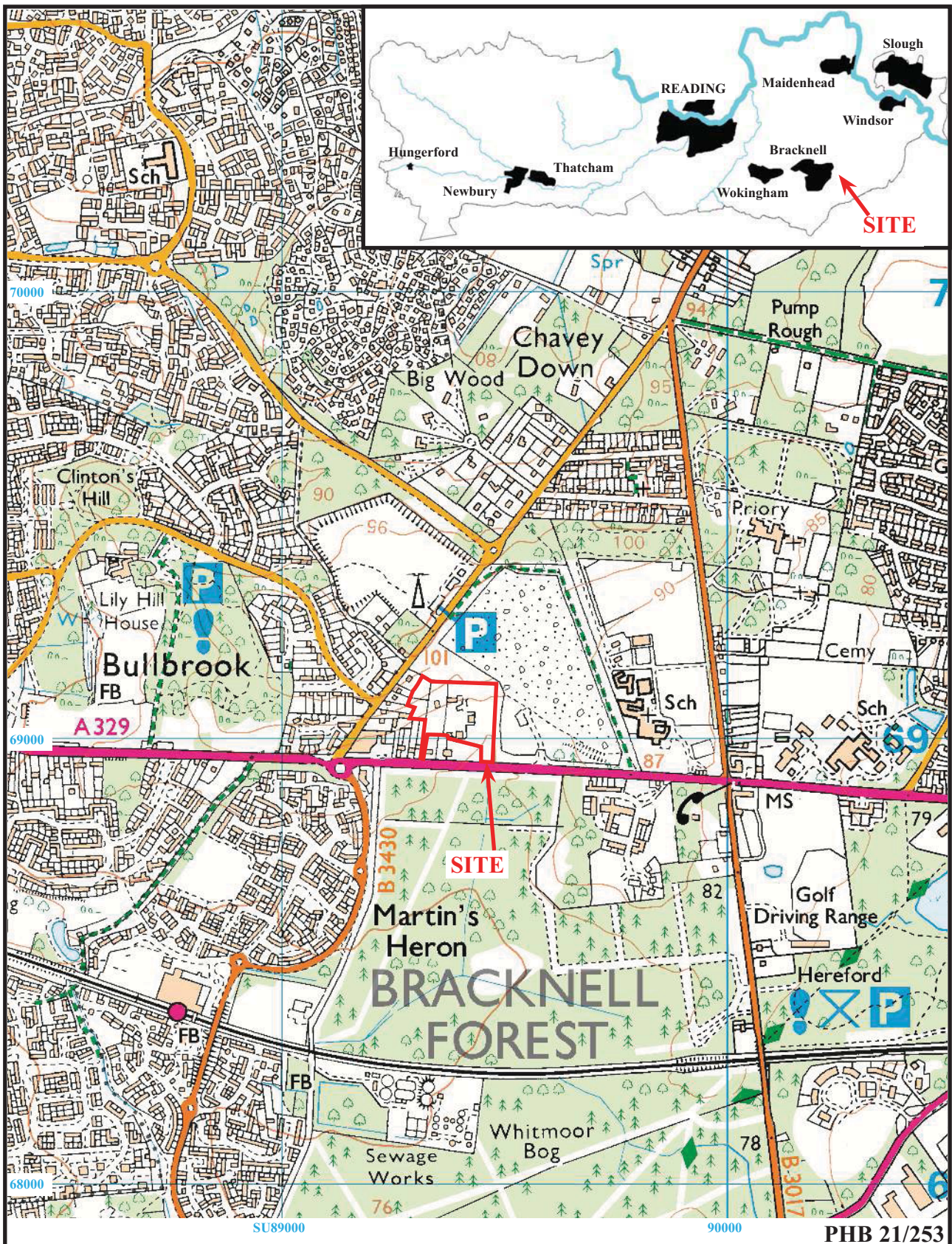
Despite the potential for archaeological deposits being present on site none were encountered during this or the previous phase of works. The site is therefore considered to have negligible archaeological potential.

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>
2	23.5	1.6	0.8 NW 0.45 SE	0–0.45m(SE) and 0-0.8m (NE) modern made ground; 0.45/0.8m+ pale grey yellow silty sand (natural geology).
3	23.7	1.6	1.04	0-0.4m tarmac/modern made ground; 0.4-0.98m dark grey brown sandy silty made ground with CBM and metal inclusions; 0.98m+ light orange green silty sand (natural geology) [Pl. 1]
4	25.5	1.6	0.9	0-0.4m tarmac/modern made ground; 0.4-0.81m dark grey brown sandy silty made ground with CBM and metal inclusions; 0.81m+ light orange green silty sand (natural geology) [Pl. 2]
5	23	1.6	0.3	0-0.3m topsoil; 0.3m+ pale grey yellow clayey sand (natural geology)
6	25.2	1.6	0.3	0-0.3m topsoil; 0.3m+ pale grey yellow clayey sand (natural geology)
7	25	1.6	0.42	0-0.2m topsoil; 0.2-0.42m subsoil; 0.42m+ pale brown grey silty sand (natural geology)
8	24.5	1.6	0.4	0-0.18m topsoil; 0.18-0.36m subsoil; 0.36m+ pale grey yellow clayey sand (natural geology) [Pl. 3]
9	25.4	1.6	0.25	0-0.25m topsoil; 0.25m+ pale grey yellow clayey sand (natural geology)
10	25	1.6	0.3	0-0.3m topsoil; 0.3m+ pale grey yellow clayey sand (natural geology)
11	25	1.6	0.48	0-0.2m topsoil; 0.2-0.48m subsoil; 0.48m+ pale brown grey silty sand (natural geology)
13	25.2	1.6	0.51	0-0.2m topsoil; 0.2-0.35m rubble; 0.35-0.51m modern made ground; 0.51m+ pale grey yellow sandy clay (natural geology)
14	25.1	1.6	0.82	0-0.35m topsoil; 0.35-0.65m subsoil; 0.65-0.76m modern made ground; 0.76m+ mid yellow brown silty sand (natural geology) [Pl. 4]
15	25.9	1.6	0.6	0-0.23m topsoil; 0.23-0.47m subsoil; 0.47m+ light yellow brown silty sand (natural geology) [Pl. 5]
18b	15.1	1.6	0.5	0-0.2m topsoil; 0.2-0.5m subsoil; 0.5m+ mid yellow red silty sand (natural geology)
19	25	1.6	0.92	0-0.9m modern made ground with large rubble inclusions; 0.9m+ mid yellow orange silty sand (natural geology)



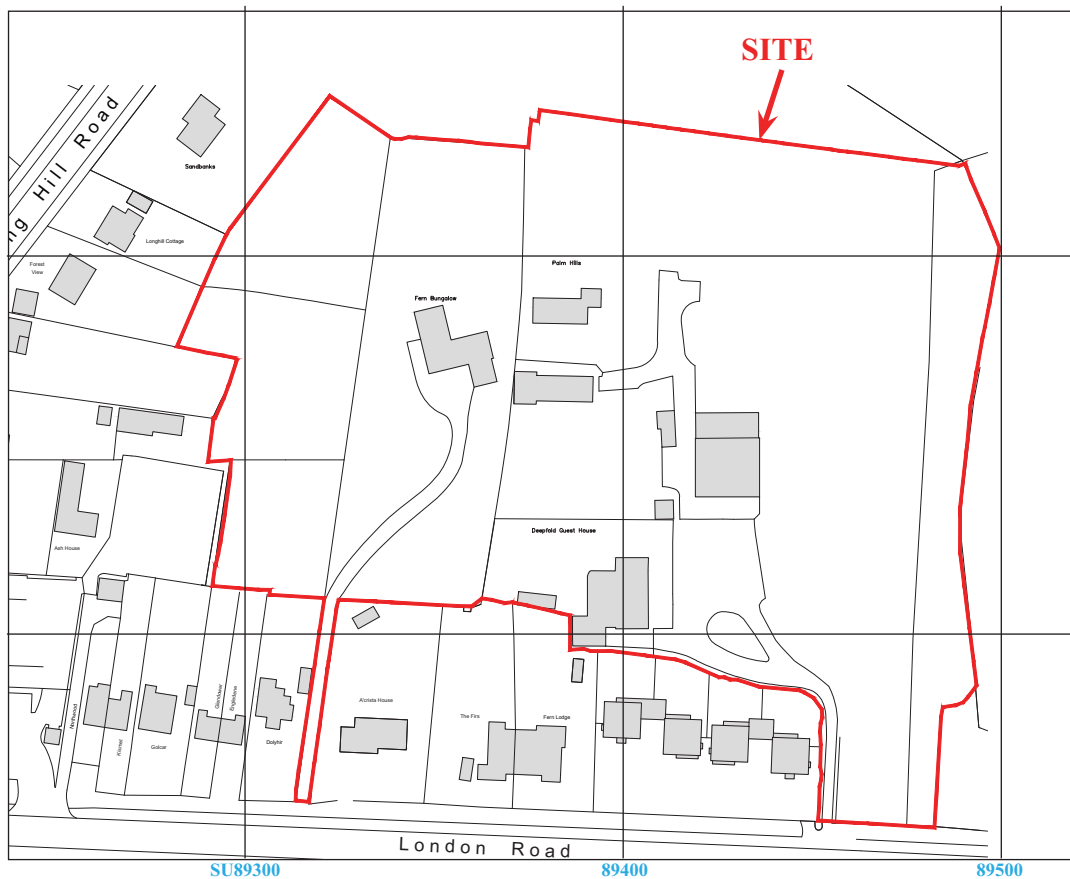
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Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 1. Location of site in relation to Bracknell and within Berkshire.

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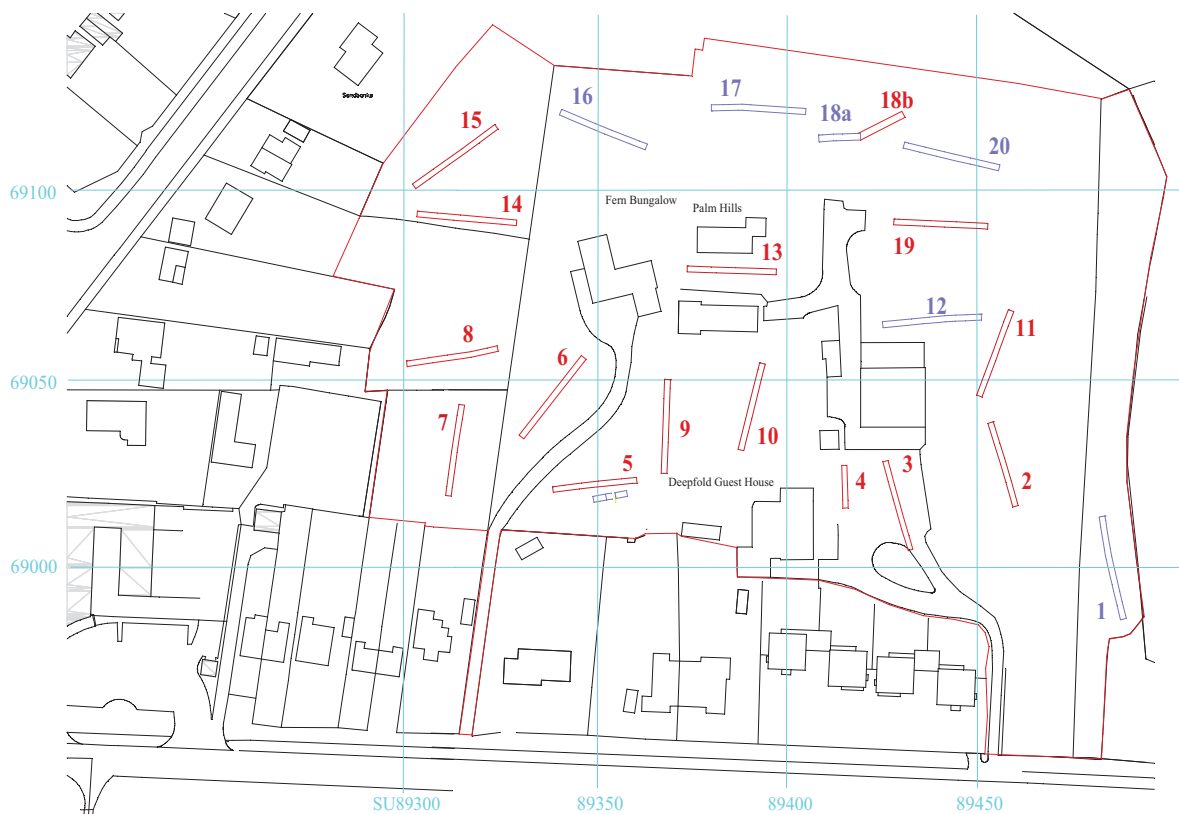


**Palm Hills, London Road, Chavey Down
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Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 2. Detailed location of site off London Road.

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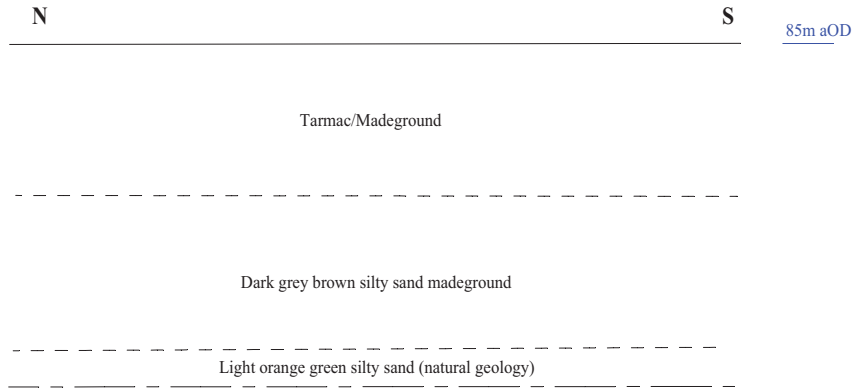
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Figure 3. Location of trenches (Phase 1 blue; Phase 2 red).

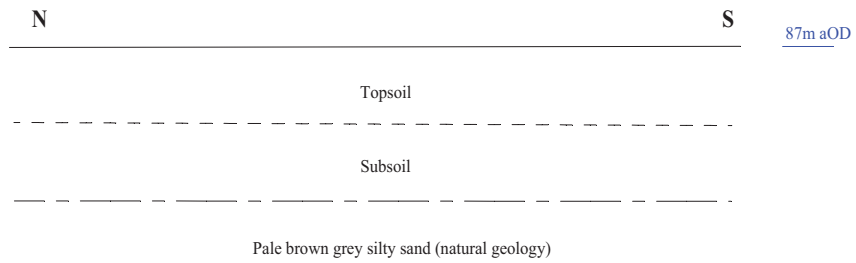


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Trench 4



Trench 7



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Figure 4. Representative sections.



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



Plate 2. Trench 4, looking South,
Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 3. Trench 8, looking West South West,
Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.3m.



Plate 4. Trench 14, looking West North West,
Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 5. Trench 15, looking South West,
Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.

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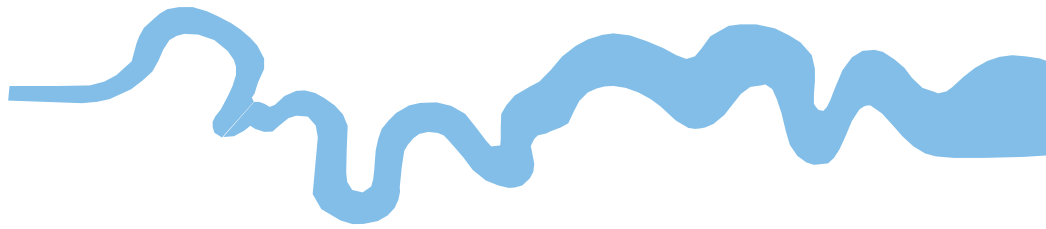
**Palm Hills, London Road, Chavey Down,
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Archaeological Evaluation
Plates 1 to 5.**

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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
Web: www.tvas.co.uk**

***Offices in:
Brighton, Taunton, Stoke-on-Trent, Wellingborough
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