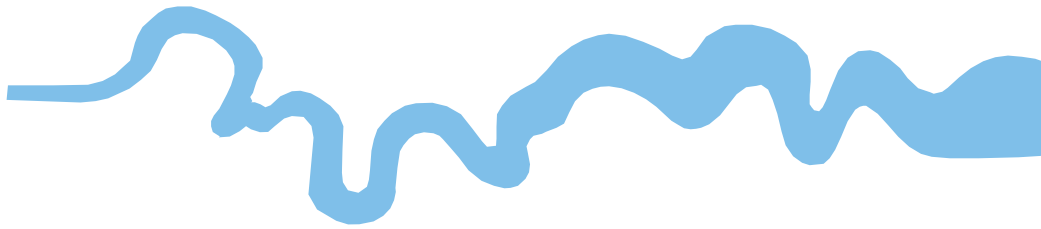


**T V A S**



**SOUTH WEST**

**The Park School, Kingston,  
Yeovil, Somerset**

**Archaeological Evaluation**

**by Agata Socha-Paszkiwicz**

**Site Code: PSY23/23**

**(ST 5537 1629)**

# **The Park School, Kingston, Yeovil, Somerset**

**An Archaeological Evaluation  
for Armour Heritage Ltd**

by Agata Socha-Paszkiwicz

TVAS South West

Site Code PSY 23/23

**May 2023**

## Summary

**Site name:** The Park School, Kingston, Yeovil, Somerset

**Grid reference:** ST 5537 1629

**Site activity:** Archaeological Evaluation

**Date and duration of project:** 4th and 5th April 2023

**Project manager:** Agata Socha-Paszkiwicz

**Site supervisor:** Agata Socha-Paszkiwicz

**Site code:** PSY 23/23

**Area of site:** *c.* 0.95ha

**Summary of results:** The evaluation revealed one ditch of late Saxon/early Norman date (AD 950 to 1100) towards the east of the site. The western and central part of site proved to be severely truncated by 19th and 20th century development and is considered to have negligible archaeological potential.

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at TVAS South West, Taunton and will be deposited with the Somerset Heritage Centre under museum accession number TTNCM 2/2023 in due course.

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[www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp](http://www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp).*

Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford ✓ 12.05.23
	Steve Preston ✓ 14.05.23

# **The Park School, Kingston, Yeovil, Somerset An Archaeological Evaluation**

by Agata Socha-Paszkiwicz

**Report 23/23**

## **Introduction**

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at The Park School, Kingston, Yeovil, Somerset (ST 5537 1629) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Sue Farr of Armour Heritage Limited, Foghamshire Timber Yard, Foghamshire Lane, Trudoxhill, Frome, Somerset, BA11 5DG on behalf of the client.

Planning permission (20/01087/FUL) has been gained from South Somerset District Council for the redevelopment of the former school for residential development and associated works.. The consent is subject to a condition (7) requiring that a programme of archaeological work is undertaken. This is in accordance with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2021), and the District Council's policies on archaeology. The Senior Historic Environment Officer at South West Heritage Trust (the archaeological advisers to the District) has indicated an archaeological evaluation is required in the first instance to assess the archaeological potential of the development site and to inform a mitigation strategy if appropriate.

The work was carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (Farr 2023) approved by South West Heritage Trust. The fieldwork was undertaken by Agata Socha-Paszkiwicz, Mariusz Paszkiwicz, Dominika Golebiowska and Arkadiusz Piszcz between the 4th and 5th April 2023 and the site code is PSY 23/23. The archive is presently held at TVAS South West, Taunton and will be deposited with the local Somerset Heritage Centre under museum accession number TTNCM 2/2023 in due course.

## **Location, topography and geology**

The site is located within the northern part of Yeovil town centre (Fig. 1). To the north-east it is bounded by the A37 with Yeovil District Hospital beyond, to the south-east by Hospital Roundabout and by the A30 to the south. The Park Road with Swallowcliffe Gardens beyond is adjacent to the south-west of the site and residential areas lie further to the west (Fig. 2). The development site was formerly occupied by The Park School which relocated in 2018 leaving the site vacant. The site includes Kingston House, a Grade II Listed Building and two curtilage-listed structures comprising the former stables and a carriage house. In addition to the Listed structures,

there are several other structures including a 1906 school building facing The Park road, and the Cottages along with two former tennis courts and Tarmacked car parking. A retaining boundary wall and steps define northern boundary. The site undulates rising up from the northern boundary and slopes down towards east and south lying at the elevation of 62m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) in the north and 64m aOD in the south. The underlying geology is mapped as Bridport Sand Formation - Sandstone. No superficial geological deposits are recorded (BGS 2017).

## **Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in the written scheme of investigation (Farr 2023). In summary the site lies within the Yeovil Centre Area of High Archaeological potential (Gathercole 1993). The earliest data recorded within 1km study area relate to the Late Iron Age/Roman period with a settlement recorded some 900m to the north at Yeovil Recreation Centre which was excavated following discovery of a Roman coin hoard. The Somerset Historic Environment Record (HER) also notes Roman settlement remains south of Westland Road (LEN: 1020547) 750m to the south-west of the site, including remains of several Roman town houses and at least two minor roads. These formed part of a Roman town, which once stood astride a major road linking *Lindinis* (Ilchester) to *Durnovaria* (Dorchester); the Roman name for Yeovil is not known.

There is documentary evidence of a royal Saxon site at Kingston, immediately to the east of site, however there is no archaeological evidence to indicate its location. Yeovil is mentioned in Domesday Book (1086) as being held by Hugh from William de Eu. There was land for 6 ploughs, 33 acres of meadow, 30 acres of pasture and 1 mill rendering 10s (Williams and Martin 2002, 266). The site is recorded on Watts's 1806 map as an *R Vining* brickyard. His eldest son, Charles is recorded as having built Kingston House, on the site of his father's brick yard. From 1949 to 2018 Kingston House had been occupied by The Park School.

Some 94 Listed Buildings are recorded within 1km of the Site, all Grade II, with the exception of the Grade I Listed Church of St John The Baptist (LE: 1055713).

## **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.

Specific aims of the project are:

to clarify the presence/absence and extent of any buried archaeological remains within the site that may be impacted by development;

to identify, within the constraints of the evaluation, the date, character, condition and depth of any surviving remains within the site;

to assess the degree of existing impacts to sub-surface horizons and to document the extent of archaeological survival of buried deposits; and

to produce a report which will present the results of the evaluation in sufficient detail to allow an informed decision to be made concerning the site's archaeological potential.

The potential and significance of any such deposits located were to be assessed according to research priorities such as those set out by Historic England (2017) or any more local or thematic research priorities as necessary (e.g., Webster 2007).

Four trenches were proposed to be excavated mechanically under constant archaeological supervision to expose the top of the archaeologically relevant horizon or the natural geology. 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 were to be excavated or sampled by hand to satisfy the aims outlined above, without compromising the integrity of any features or deposits which might warrant preservation *in situ*, or might better be excavated under conditions pertaining full excavation.

## **Results**

All four trenches were excavated as more-or-less intended; however, trenches 2 and 4 were short of the planned 30m due to existing concrete structures and potentially live power cables nearby (Fig. 2). The trenches' lengths ranged from 18.50 to 29.90m and from 0.68m to 1.40m in depth. All trenches were 1.6m wide. A list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and description of stratigraphy and geology is given in Appendix 1. All investigated features are summarized in Appendix 2.

### Trench 1 (Figs 2, 3, 4 and 6; Pls 1 and 3)

Trench 1 was aligned SW – NE and was 27.80m long and from 0.30m deep at the SW end to 1.20m deep at the NE end of the trench. From the SW end of the trench to approximately 15m the stratigraphy consisted of 0.15m of dark grey topsoil (50) above 0.20m dark yellow redeposited natural clay (71) above 0.42m dark brown silty clay made ground (58) above dark brown silty clay demolition layer (59) with both of the latter deposits containing very frequent 19th century and later fragments of ceramic building material and coal. At 15m from SW end of the trench and beneath demolition layer (59) was a 0.60m thick, dark brown sandy clay made ground (85) with occasional brick and tile fragments and some charcoal. This terminated at 21m from the SW end of the trench above 0.40m of very dark grey to black silty clay demolition layer (68) with very frequent whole and

broken fragments of brick and tiles with either lime or cement mortar still attached on many. At 23m from the SW end of the trench and beneath demolition layer 68 was 0.28m of dark grey brown silty clay (69) with occasional brick and tile debris, some lime mortar and fragments of modern glass. The latter was found above 0.22m of brown grey clay made ground (70) with traces of brick debris and a few coal fragments, above grey brown silty clay buried subsoil (86) and above dark yellow clay and sandstone – the natural geology.

At approximately 0.50m from the SW end of the trench and sealed by made ground (58) was a base of a modern structure (61) of some sort. It was aligned SE-NW and comprised two concrete slabs with cement mortar at the top. Some 3m further to the north-east was foundation trench (6) filled with rubble limestone bounded by cream yellow sand and lime mortar (60). It was aligned N-S and in section appeared to be abutted by made ground 58 at the west and by demolition layer 59 at its east side. At 13m from the SW end of the trench were the remains of a building (14). The building was aligned SE-NW and comprised two parallel brick walls (62 and 63) bounded by lime mortar both sealed by demolition layer 59.

Some 2m further to the north-east were the remains of a second building (15). This was aligned SW-NE, sealed by demolition layer 68 and comprised a foundation trench (7) filled with rubble stone loosely bonded by cream white sandy mortar (64) with a preserved corner fragment of brick and lime mortar wall (65) with a short stretch of similar brick wall abutted to its outer side (72). There was also a fragment of brick and lime mortar wall/internal structure (66) on the inside of the building but not connected to the outer wall.

All three structures were as shown on the 1886 Ordnance Survey map. Foundation trench 7 was a close match with a boundary wall dividing parcels occupied by Arbutus and Park Villas whilst buildings 14 and 15 matched an L-shaped and adjacent square buildings (respectively) occupying the parcel immediately to the north. All were demolished sometime in late 1970s/early 1980s ahead of construction of the hospital with adjoining A30 and A37 dual carriageways. The later 19th- to mid 20th-century date range was well reflected in finds and ceramic building material found within deposits in Trench 1: as such these were noted but not retained.

At 25m from the SW end of the trench and cutting from below the yellow grey brown silty clay buried subsoil (87) was ditch 1. It was aligned SE-NW, 1.30m wide and 0.46m deep. Its fill comprised a single deposit of dark grey to black silty clay (52) with frequent large chunks of charcoal, which produced nine sherds of late Saxon/early Norman pottery of the most probable date of c. AD 950–1100, and four fragments of animal bone.

#### Trench 2 (Figs 2, 4 and 7)

Trench 2 was aligned SE – NW and was 18.50m long and 0.68m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of topsoil (50) and 0.25 m of grey brown subsoil (51) above light yellow silty clay sandstone - natural geology. At 10m from the NW end of the trench was SE-NW aligned ditch 2. It was 0.93m wide and 0.36m deep and

contained a single deposit of grey brown sandy clay (54) which produced several sherds of creamware of clearly later 19th/early 20th century date (not retained). The ditch cut the subsoil and, at its western side was sealed by 0.42m thick rubble in a sandy matrix deposit (53) extending for 4.60m. Some 2m further to the south-east and extending beyond the trench was a cut feature, likely a second ditch (3) with the same fill as in ditch 2, namely grey brown sandy clay with no datable finds. It was left unexcavated. The location of the two ditches and the rubble stone deposit were a close match with a footpath flanked by a garden feature depicted on the Ordnance Survey Town Plans 1840s-1890s map of Yeovil (Somerset LXXXIII.13.19) published in 1886.

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

The trench was aligned close to N-S. It was 29.90m long and up to 1.24 m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of topsoil (50) above 0.97m of mottled grey/yellow/brown silty clay made ground (87) with frequent late 19th- to early 20th-century building material debris and waste above yellow silty clay and light yellow - natural geology. At approximately 13.40m from the south end of the trench were two ditches (4 and 5). They were aligned SE-NW and some 1.20m apart. Both were filled with the same dark grey silty clay deposits (56 and 57 respectively) with frequent modern waste material and as such they were left unexcavated and the finds were not retained. The location of the two ditches again matched with the footpath as shown by the 1886 Ordnance Survey map.

#### Trench 4 (Figs 2, 5 and 7; Pl. 4)

Trench 4 was aligned SW – NE and was 23.30m long and up to 1.40 of m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of: 0.05m of Tarmac (80); above 0.10m of dark grey scalpins (81); above 0.18m of dark grey sterile clay built up/levelling layer (82); above 0.34m of grey brown silty clay made ground (83) with frequent whole and broken pieces of modern bricks; above 0.10m of light yellow sand levelling deposit (84); above 0.40m of dark grey brown silty clay subsoil (51); above dark yellow silty clay – natural geology.

The trench revealed six drains/service trenches (8-13). All were cut from below the levelling sandy deposit (84) and subsoil and were aligned either N-S (8 and 11) or W-E (10, 12 and 13). Drains/service trenches 8 and 11 were near 1m wide, service trench 10 was 1.80m wide, and service trench 12 was 2.80m wide. All but service/drain trench 10 were filled with the same light grey brown silty clay deposit (73, 77, 78 and 79 respectively) which contained whole or broken fragments of unglazed terracotta pipe but were otherwise sterile. Service trench 10 was filled with fine white-gray gravel in a sandy matrix (75) cut by brick and lime mortar built remains of a Victorian manhole (76). All were recorded in plan but left unexcavated and the finds were not retained.



## **Finds**

### *Pottery* by John Allan

Nine sherds weighing 249g were recovered from a ditch found in Trench 1 (ditch 1, fill 52). All are unglazed and hand-made; the only recognisable vessels are jars. Two fabrics are represented, as follows:

#### Fabric 1: Upper Greensand- Derived

The sherds show the angular flint/chert, as well as angular to well-rounded quartz sand, typical of 'Upper Greensand- Derived wares (UGSD) as defined by Allan *et al.* (2010). The dark grey-brown surfaces of most sherds are also typical of these wares. Two thick jar rims are present. No. sherds: 4; Minimum No. of Vessels: 2; Maximum No. of Vessels: 4.

#### Fabric 2: calcareous inclusions

Sherds show voids typical of the leaching of calcareous content from the body, but also moderate quartz and in one sherd angular chert/flint, one piece brownish-grey. No. sherds: 5; Min. No. Vessels: 3 Max. No. Vessels: 5.

Although little is known of the medieval pottery of Yeovil, valuable local reference collections have been published from Ilchester, about 8km to the north (Pearson 1982) and Sherborne Old Castle in Dorset, about the same distance to the east (Allan 2003; Mephram 2015). Other important reference material comes from the late Saxon occupation of South Cadbury, to the north-east (Alcock 1995), the Norman castle of Castle Neroche, about 30km to the west (Davidson 1972), and from the major pottery production centre of Donyatt (Coleman-Smith and Pearson 1988).

The UGSD sherds of Fabric 1 belong to a widely distributed class of pottery made on the fringes of the Blackdown Hills of Somerset and east Devon (Allan *et al.* 2010). The industry had a long life from the late 10th to the early 14th century, and it is sometimes difficult to place small collections within this broad period, but in this instance the two thick rims are helpful, being typical of the late 10th/11th-century rather than the 12th/early 13th centuries (compare the rims from Periods III and IV at Castle Neroche, which probably date from the early 12th century, or the group of *c.* 1200 from Sherborne Old Castle (Davidson 1972; Allan 2003) – evidence which supports the dating initially proposed by Pearson (1982, 181–2, Nos 544–70).

The presence of limestone-tempered sherds of Fabric 2 supports this conclusion. The sequences from Sherborne, Castle Neroche and elsewhere show that in the 12th and early 13th centuries UGSD wares had come to dominate the pottery used in this part of Somerset; hardly any other wares are found. By contrast, the late Saxon pottery from South Cadbury consists of a mix of UGSD and limestone-tempered wares whose calcareous component is thought to derive from the Lias (Williams in Alcock 1995, 92). The Yeovil finds show this second characteristic, supporting a date in the late Saxon or early Norman periods, probably *c.* AD950–1100.

## *Animal bone* by Piotr Wrobel

Four animal bones were recovered from ditch 1 (52) in Trench 1. They weighed a total of 93g. The overall condition is fair with a medium degree of fragmentation. Two elements can be identified. One is a molar (25g) of an immature cow and the other fragment (58g) of scapula of medium sized animal (such as pig or sheep/goat). The other two small fragments are unidentifiable

## **Conclusion**

The evaluation has successfully investigated the site. The trenches excavated in the western part of site revealed that it has been truncated by 19th- and 20th-century development which would have removed most if not all evidence of earlier than modern activity. Trench 1 excavated to the east of the site, apart from remains of structures built in the late 19th and demolished in the later 20th century, revealed one ditch of late Saxon/early Norman date. The latter was found at significant depth under buried subsoil which could indicate that further Medieval deposits could have survived under later development. This part of site is considered to have some archaeological potential.

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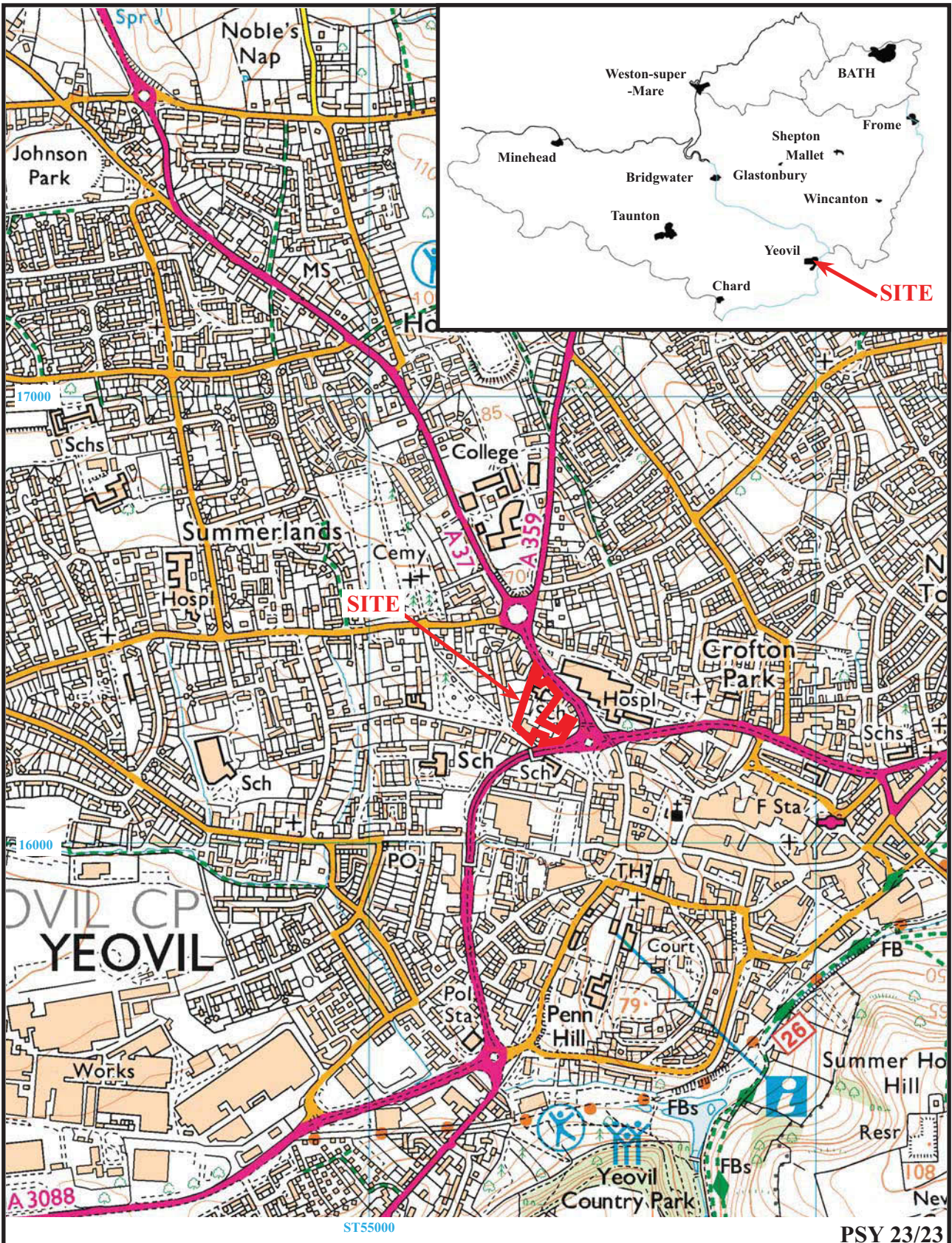
**APPENDIX 1: Trench details**

Trench	Length (m)	Breadth (m)	Depth (m)	Comment
1	27.80	1.60	0.30 - 1.20	0-20m: 0-0.15m Topsoil; 0.15-0.32m Redeposited natural (71); 0.32-0.54m Demolition Layers (58 and 59); 0.54-0.96m Made Ground/Demolition Layer (85). 20-27.80m Topsoil 0-0.20m; 0.20-0.30m Demolition Layer (59); 0.30-0.50m Demolition Layer (85); 0.50-0.65m Demolition Layer (68), 0.65-0.78m Made Ground (69); 0.78-0.90m Made Ground (70); 0.90-1.15m Buried Subsoil (86); 1.15m + dark yellow clay and sandstone - natural geology. Ditch 1, Boundary wall foundation trench (6); buildings 13 and 14. <b>[Pls 1 and 3]</b>
2	18.50	1.60	0.68	0-0.20m Topsoil; 0.20-0.45m Subsoil; 0.45m+ light yellow silty clay and sandstone – natural geology. Ditches 2 and 3, Stone deposit (53) <b>[Pl. 4]</b>
3	29.90	1.60	0.50 - 1.24	0-0.23m Topsoil; 0.23-1.20m Made Ground (87); 1.20m+ yellow silty clay – natural geology. Ditches 3 and 4
4	23.30	1.60	1.10 - 1.40	0-0.05m Tarmac (80); 0.05-0.12m Scalpins (81); 0.12-0.28m Levelling layer (82); 0.28-0.54m Made Ground (83); 0.54-0.62m Levelling layer (84); 0.62-1.10m Subsoil (51); 1.10m+ dark yellow silty clay – natural geology. Drains/Service trenches 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13. <b>[Pl. 2]</b>

*0m at South, West or South West end*

## APPENDIX 2: Feature details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
All		50	Topsoil	-	
2,3,4		51	Subsoil	-	
1	1	52	Ditch	10th/12th-century	Pottery
2		53	Stone above 54	Modern	Modern waste
2	2	54	Ditch	Modern	Cartography, Modern pottery
2	3	55	Ditch	Victorian	Cartography
3	4	56	Ditch	Victorian/Modern	Cartography
3	5	57	Ditch	Victorian/Modern	Cartography
1		58	Demolition layer	Modern	Modern waste
1		59	Demolition layer	Modern	Modern waste
1	6	60	Boundary wall foundation trench	Victorian/Modern	Cartography
1		61	Concrete wall	Modern	Concrete
1	14	62, 63	Building	Victorian	Cartography
1	7	64	Foundation trench of building 15	Victorian	Cartography
1	15	65, 66, 72	Building	Victorian	Cartography
1		68	Demolition layer	Modern	Modern waste
1		69	Made ground	Modern	Modern waste
1		70	Made ground	Modern	Modern waste
1		71	Redeposited natural	Modern	Modern waste
4	8	73	Drain	Modern	Modern waste
4	9	74	Service trench	Modern	Modern waste
4	10	75, 76	Victorian sewer	Modern	Manhole
4	11	77	Modern service	Modern	Modern waste
4	12	78	Victorian sewer	Victorian	Modern waste
4	13	79	Modern service	Modern	Modern waste
4		80	Tarmac	Modern	Tarmac
4		81	Scalpins	Modern	Form
4		82	Levelling layer	Modern	Form/Stratigraphy
4		83	Made ground	Modern	Modern waste
4		84	Levelling layer	Modern	Stratigraphy
1		85	Made ground/Demolition Layer	Modern	Modern waste
1		86	Buried Subsoil	Modern	Modern waste
3		87	Made ground	Modern	Modern waste

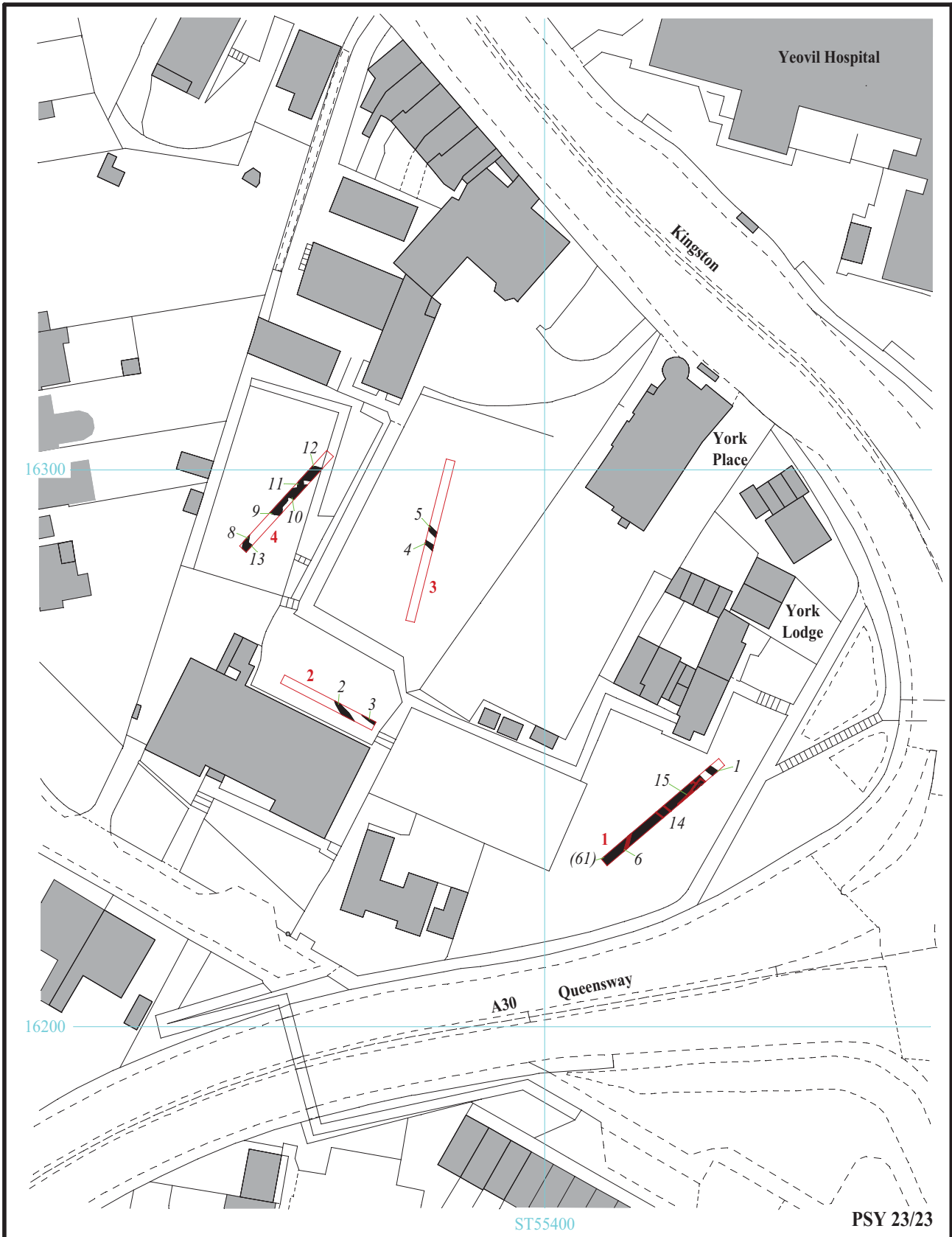


**The Park School, Kingston,  
Yeovil, Somerset, 2023  
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 1. Location of site within Yeovil and Somerset.

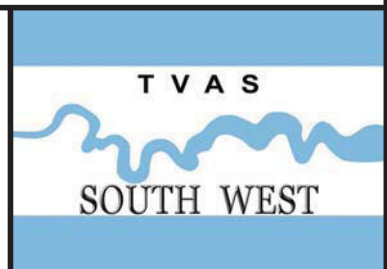
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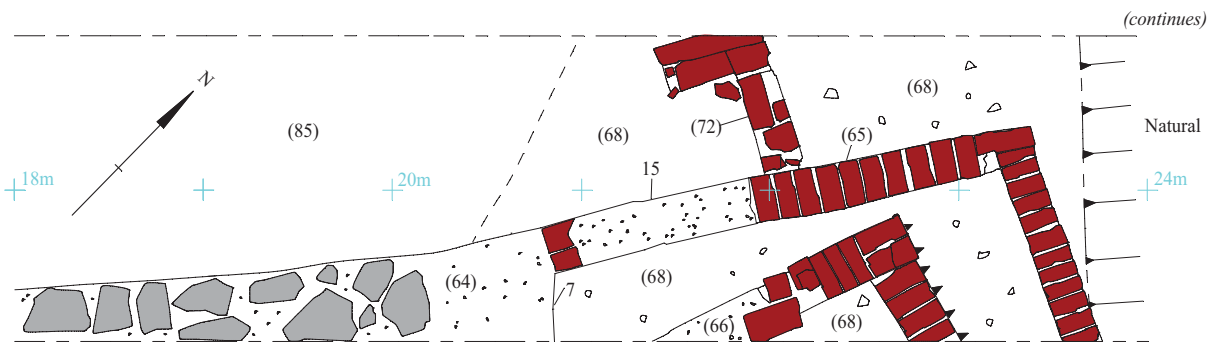
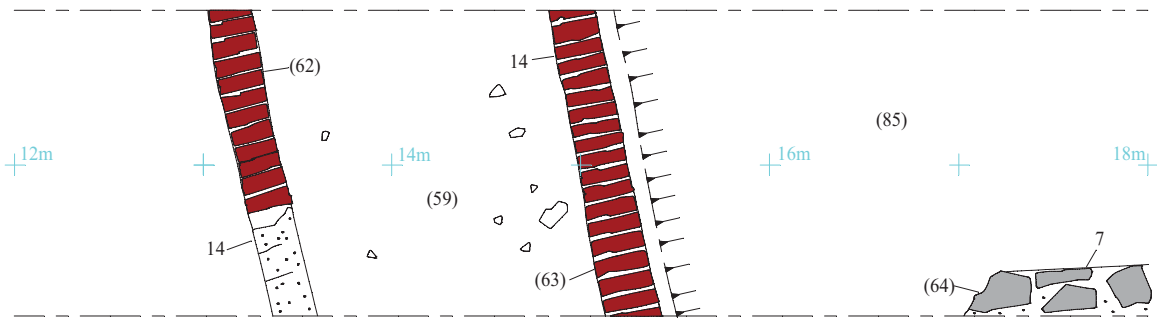
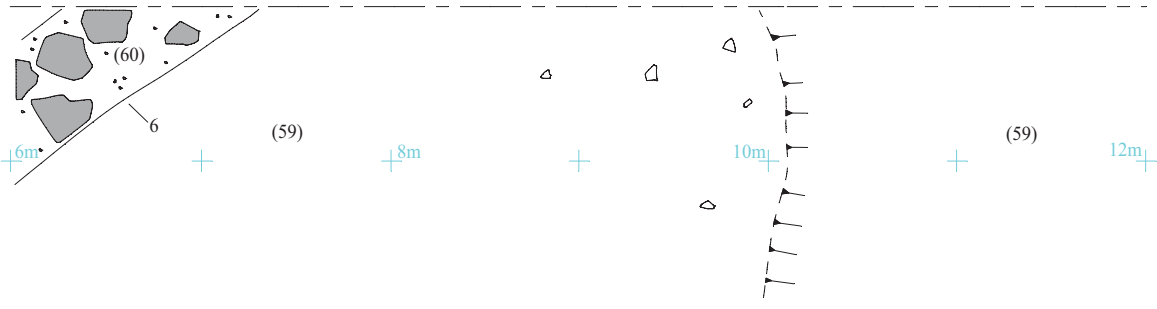
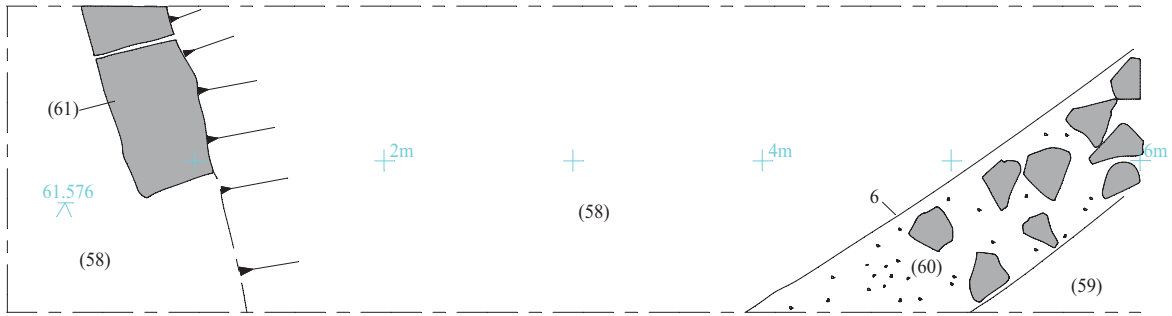


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Kingston, Yeovil, Somerset 2023  
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 2. Site plan.



**Trench 1**



PSY 23/23

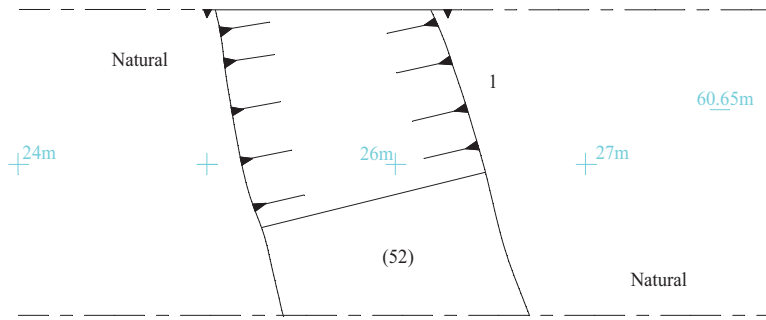
**The Park School, Kingston Site,  
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Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 3. Trench plan

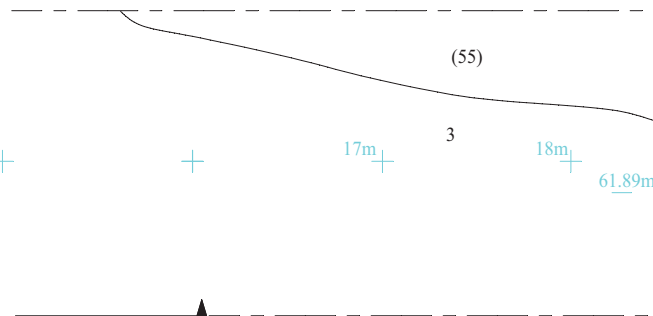
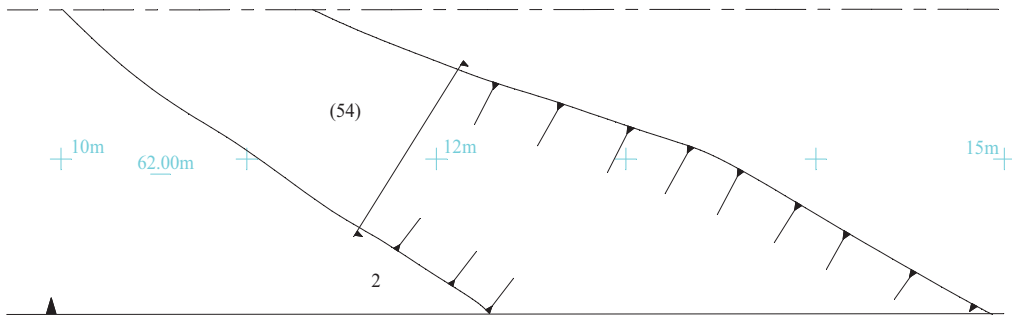


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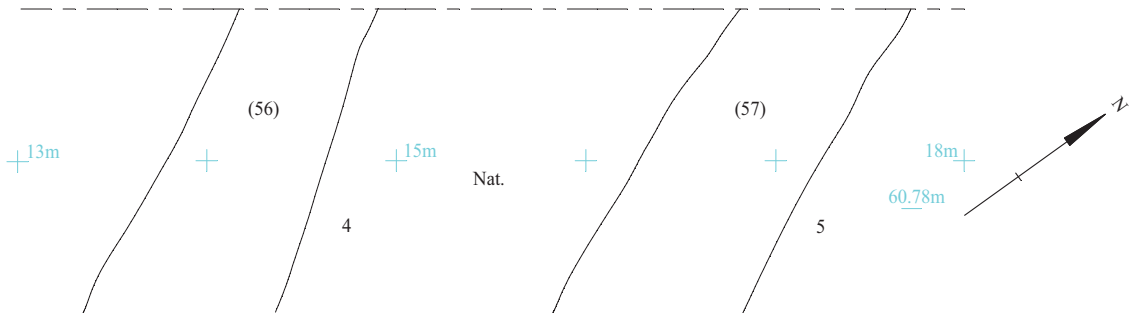
### Trench 1



### Trench 2



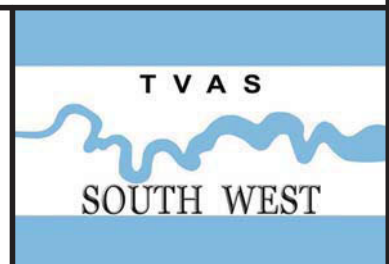
### Trench 3



PSY 23/23

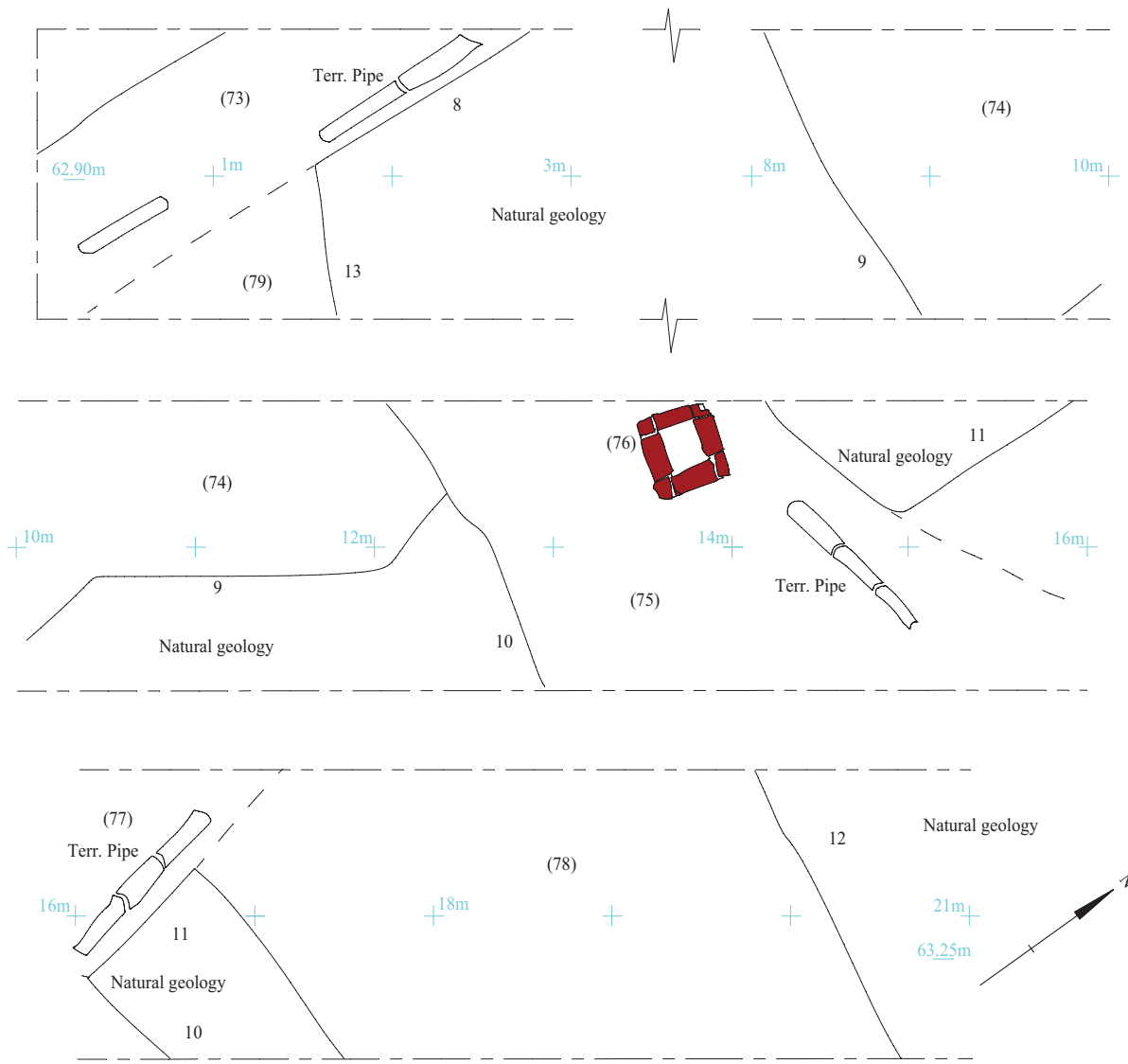
## The Park School, Kingston Site, Kingston, Yeovil, Somerset 2023 Archaeological Evaluation

Figure 4. Trench plan





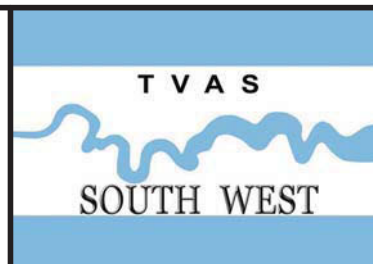
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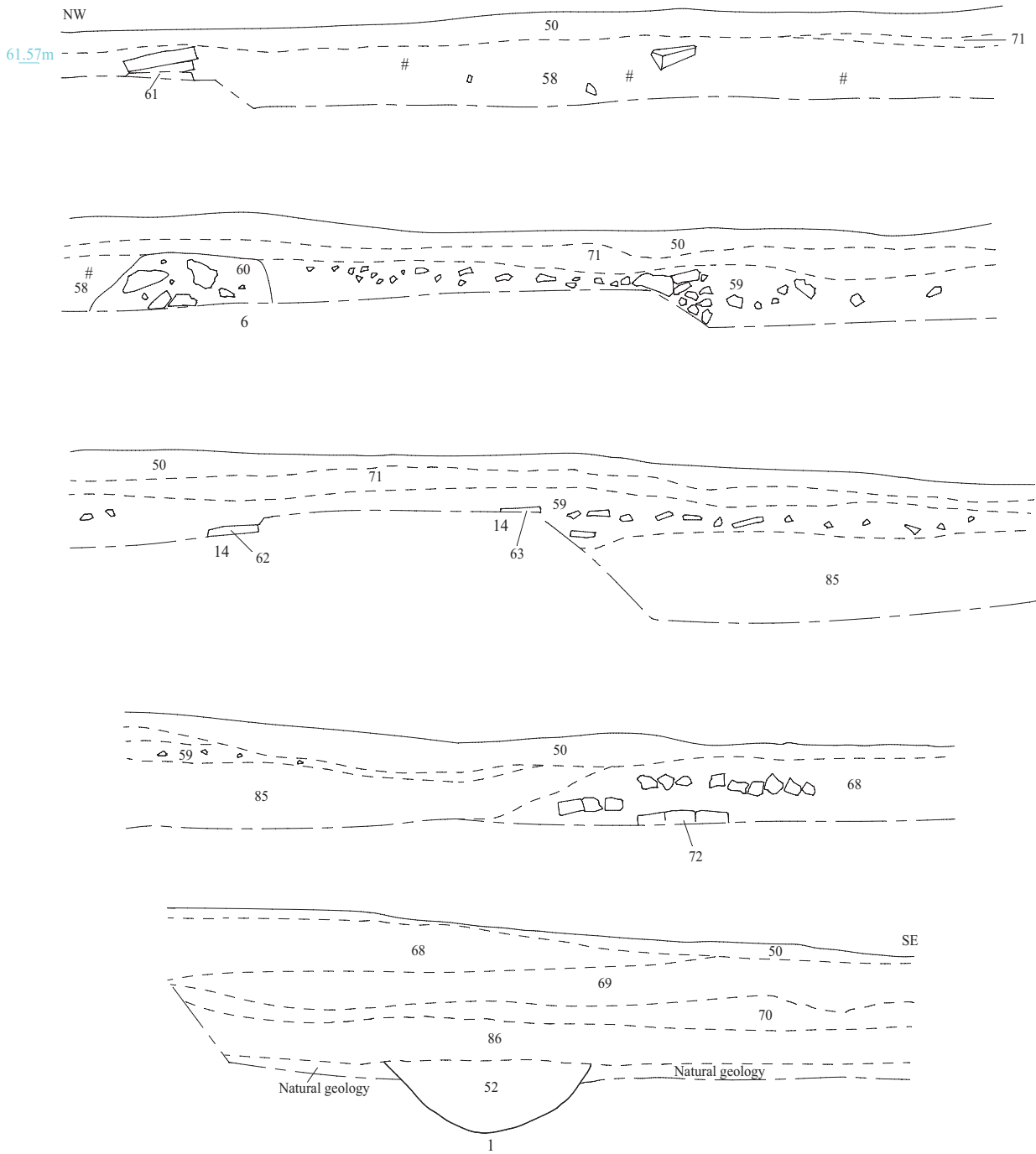
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Kingston, Yeovil, Somerset 2023  
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 5. Trench plan



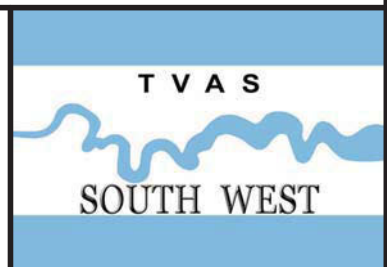
# Trench 1



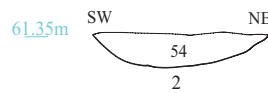
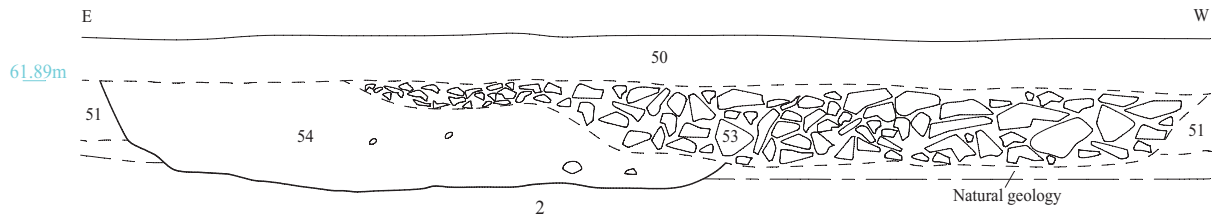
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Archaeological Evaluation

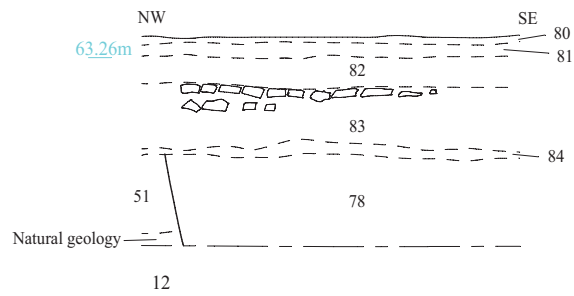
Figure 6. Section



### Trench 2



### Trench 4



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Kingston, Yeovil, Somerset 2023  
Archaeological Evaluation

Figure 7. Section





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



Plate 2. Trench 4, looking North East, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m.

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**The Park School, Kingston Site,  
Kingston, Yeovil, Somerset, 2023**  
Archaeological Evaluation  
Plates 1 and 2.





Plate 3. Ditch 1, looking North West, Scales: 2m and 1m.



Plate 4. Ditch 2, looking North West, Scales: 1m and 0.1m.

PSY 23/23

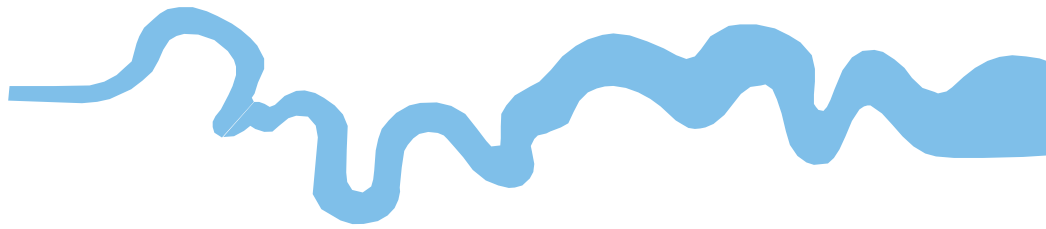
**The Park School, Kingston Site,  
Kingston, Yeovil, Somerset, 2023  
Archaeological Evaluation  
Plates 3 and 4.**



## 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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