

**Mallards Court, Park Lane,  
Stokenchurch, Buckinghamshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation  
for Plansplus**

by Andy Taylor

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code MCS 08/116

**November 2008**

## Summary

**Site name:** Mallards Court, Park Lane, Stokenchurch, Buckinghamshire

**Grid reference:** SU 7616 9672

**Site activity:** Evaluation

**Date and duration of project:** 30th October 2008

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** Andy Taylor

**Site code:** MCS 08/116

**Area of site:** c.750 sq m

**Summary of results:** No deposits or finds of an archaeological nature were found

**Monuments identified:** None

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Buckinghamshire Museum Service in due course.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 04.11.08 Steve Preston ✓ 05.11.08
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# Mallards Court, Park Lane, Stokenchurch, Buckinghamshire

## An Archaeological Evaluation

by Andy Taylor

Report 08/116

### Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Mallards Court, Park Lane, Stokenchurch, Buckinghamshire (SU 7616 9672) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Martyn Phillips of Plansplus, 29 Windmill Road, Towersey, Oxfordshire, OX9 3QQ.

Planning permission (app no 08/07145/FUL) has been sought from Wycombe District Council to construct a single-storey detached pool with mezzanine and subterranean rooms at Mallards Court, Park Lane, Stokenchurch, Buckinghamshire. In light of the possibility that this development may affect archaeological remains, a field evaluation has been requested, in order to inform the planning process.

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 Sandy Kidd Senior, Senior Archaeological Officer with Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service, advisers to the District on matters relating to archaeology. The work was monitored by Ms Eliza Alqassar, Archaeological Officer with Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service. The fieldwork was undertaken by Andy Taylor and Vanja Blomqvist on 30th October 2008 and the site code is MCS 08/113. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Buckinghamshire Museums Service.

A rapid desk-based assessment was requested prior to the evaluation taking place. This identified that no finds or sites were recorded on the site or within the immediate vicinity on the Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Record (Appendix 2). The SMR does contain records for documentary sources referring to a manor, which has been presumed to be at Mallard's Court, and cartographic sources for the park/ gardens. The Register of Parks and Gardens deemed the gardens 'not to merit further assessment'. It is recorded as being depicted on the First Edition Ordnance Survey 6 inch map (1874) as parkland with two ornamental lakes adjacent to the driveway: the position of the lakes is well south of the proposal site; both the park and the formal gardens are mainly to the south and east of the buildings (Fig. 4). The proposal area itself is shown as (apparently) plantation, though at this scale it is unclear. The more detailed 25-inch First Edition (viewed from microfiche) is unfortunately unclear at this point, but also appears to show a mixed palantation rather than formal

garden. Some modification to the gardens is noted after the majority of the grounds of the manor house were sold off (sections to the west becoming playing fields). Several further maps were consulted including the 1842 Tithe Map (Fig. 3) and several editions of the Ordnance Survey maps (Appendix 3). The tithe map may show one of the lakes, but there is no indication of parks or gardens at this time. The 1921 map (surveyed 1910; Fig. 5) shows the site as open ground with no hint of formal gardens. Subsequent maps show no significant change in land usage on the site over the years, although the buildings to the east, and the grounds, have been modified extensively.

### **Location, topography and geology**

The site is located to the north of the village of Stokenchurch in the garden of Mallard's Court. It is a relatively flat plot of land and is surrounded by fields, once associated with the manor house (Fig. 2). The underlying geology consists of clay with flints (BGS 1980), which was observed in all trenches. The site lies at a height of c.216m above Ordnance Datum.

### **Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its association with the medieval manor of Mallards as recorded from the 13th century onwards. Mallards Court is thought to be named after Robert Malet who held land in the parish in 1279. The manor of Mallard appears to later become known as Stokenchurch Manor. Prior to the 13th century there is little mention of Stokenchurch, with no reference of it in Domesday Book (1086). However, by c.1200 there is reference to *Stockenechurch* meaning 'church made of logs' (Mills 1998). Formal gardens were laid out on the site in the 19th century.

### **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 were;

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

To determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present.

To determine if archaeological deposits relating to the medieval manor are present.

Three trenches were excavated (Fig. 3) using a small 360° type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. These measured 1.80m wide and between 10.00m and 10.10m in length. All spoilheaps were monitored for finds.

## **Results**

### Trench 1 (Plate 1)

This trench measured 10.00m in length and 0.40m deep, It consisted of topsoil overlying a clayey soil mix overlying flinty clay natural.

### Trench 2 (Plate 2; Figure 4)

This trench measured 10.10m in length and 0.40m deep. It consisted of topsoil overlying a clayey soil mix overlying flinty clay natural.

### Trench 3

This trench measured 10.00m in length and 0.45m deep. It consisted of topsoil overlying a clayey soil mix overlying flinty clay natural.

No archaeological features were present in any trench.

## **Finds**

Only pieces of modern brick and tile were observed in the topsoil layers. None of these were retained.

## **Conclusion**

Despite the potential for archaeological deposits relating to the medieval manor house being present no features or finds of any archaeological interest were observed during the evaluation. It seems unlikely that the proposed building would affect any archaeological remains during development.

## **References**

BGS, 1980, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 254, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth  
Mills, A D, 1998, *Dictionary of English Place-Names*, Oxford  
PPG16, 1990, *Archaeology and Planning*, Dept of the Environment Planning Policy Guidance 16, HMSO

**APPENDIX 1: Trench details**

0m at S or W end

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	10.00	1.80	0.40	0.00m-0.32m topsoil; 0.32m-0.38m clayey soil mix; 0.38m-0.40m flinty clay natural.
2	10.10	1.80	0.40	0.00m-0.29m topsoil; 0.29-0.38m clayey soil mix; 0.38m-0.40m flinty clay natural.
3	10.00	1.80	0.45	0.00m-0.32m topsoil; 0.32m-0.42m clayey soil mix; 0.42m-0.45m flinty clay natural.

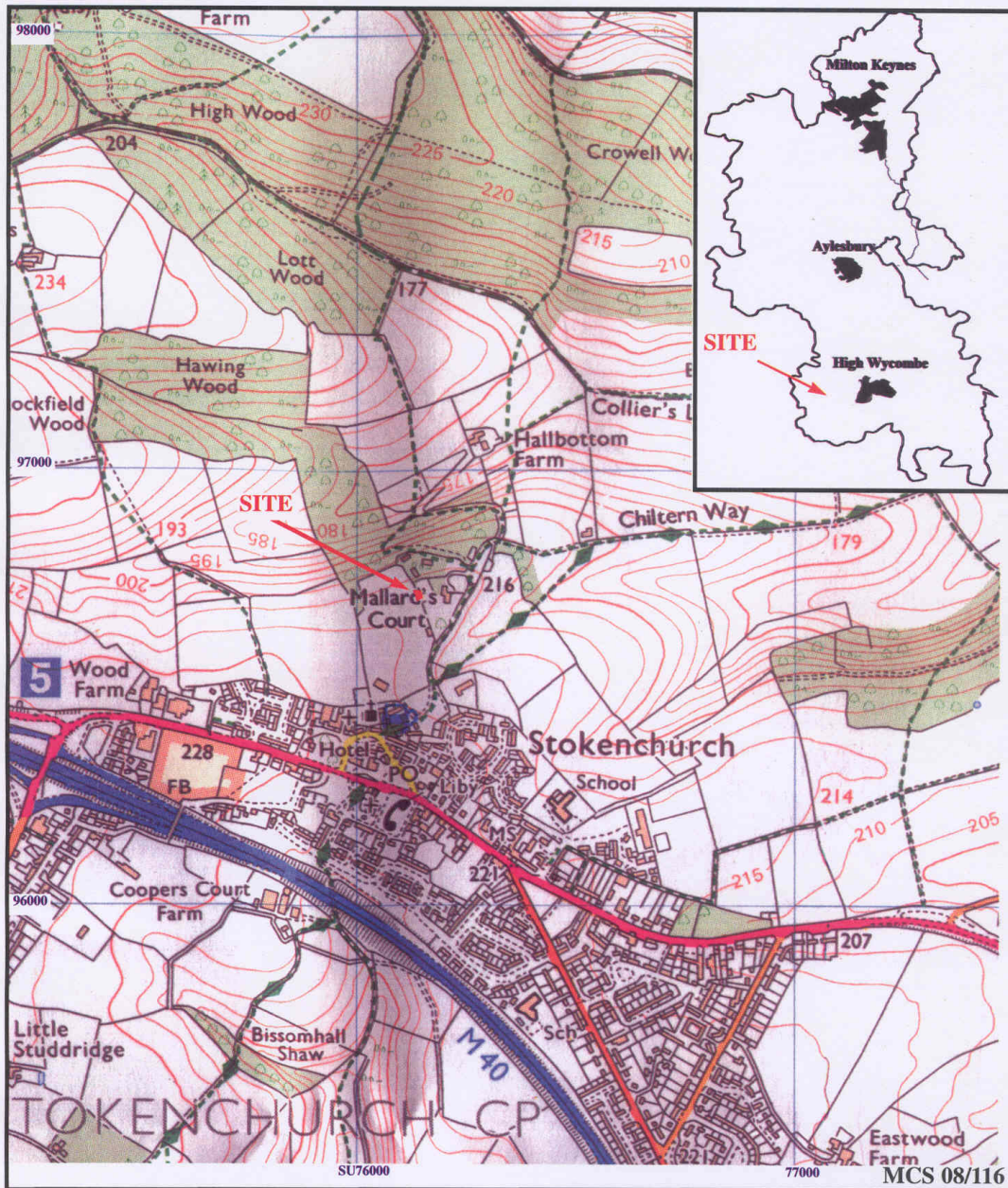
**APPENDIX 2: Sites and Monuments Records within the immediate vicinity of the development site**

<i>No</i>	<i>SMR Ref</i>	<i>Grid Ref (SU)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	MBC11990	76213 96702	Documentary	Medieval Post-medieval	Mallard's Court, 'presumably' site of medieval and later manor. Current building has no relation to any manor.
2	MBC11989	76210 96710	Documentary	Medieval Post-medieval	Presumably duplicate record, although refers to '2nd manor'
3	MBC21945	76188 96709	Cartographic	Post-medieval	Gardens, Parkland, lakes on 19th century maps
4	MBC24119	76055 96818	Cartographic	Post-medieval	Chalk pit
5	MBC24125	76480 96643	Cartographic	Post-medieval	Chalk pit

### **APPENDIX 3: Historic and modern maps consulted**

1842	Stokenchuch parish tithe map (Fig. 3)
1874	Ordnance Survey First Edition 6 inch series sheet 41, 25 inch series sheet 41.5 (Fig. 4)
1921	Ordnance Survey revision of 1910 survey, sheets 41.5, 41.9 (Fig. 5)
1960	Ordnance Survey six inch
1977	Ordnance Survey 1: 2500
1980	Ordnance Survey Six inch
1980	Ordnance Survey 1: 2500
1985	Ordnance Survey 1: 2500
1990	Ordnance Survey 1: 2500



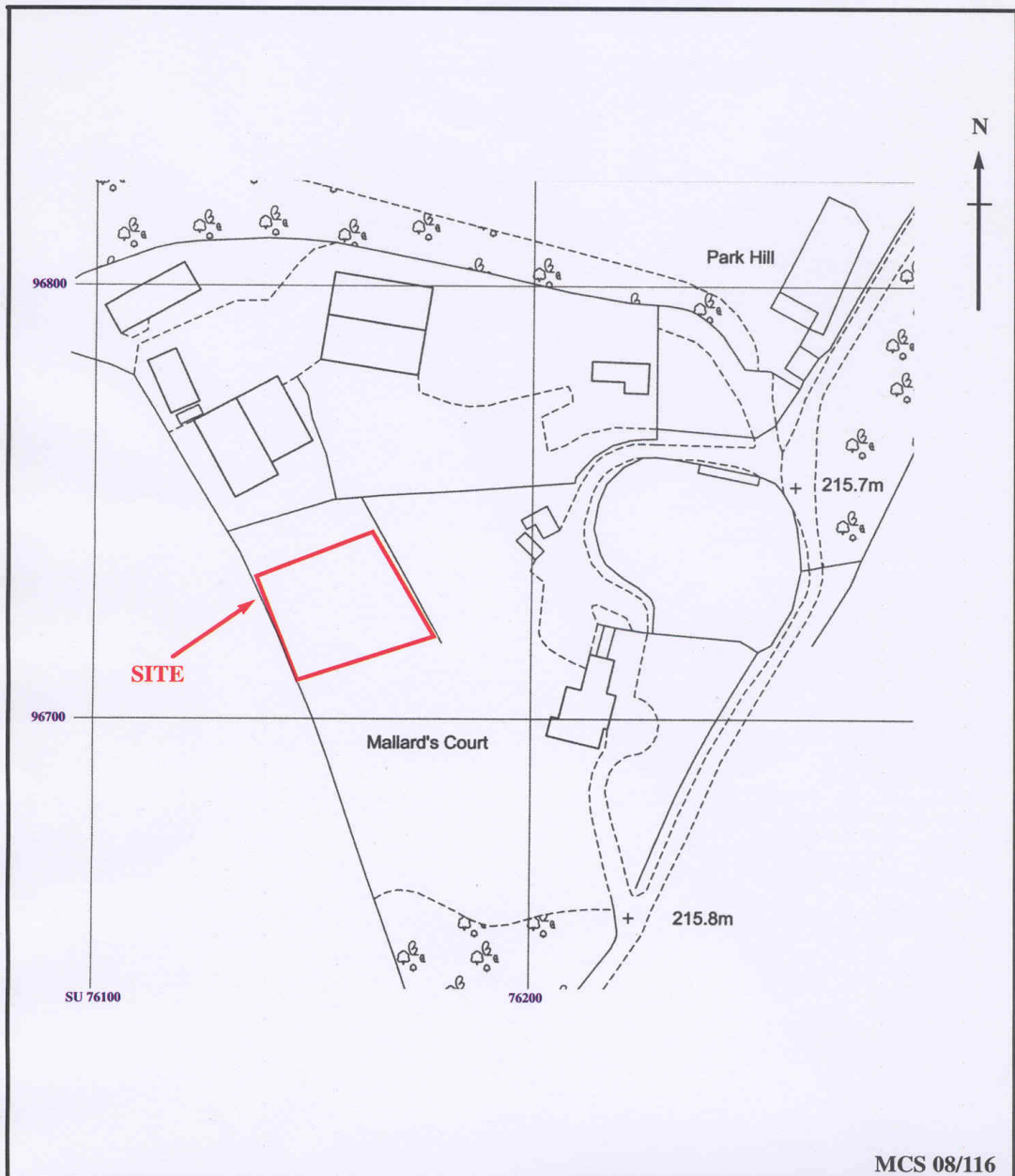


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Figure 1. Location of site within Stokenchurch  
and Buckinghamshire.

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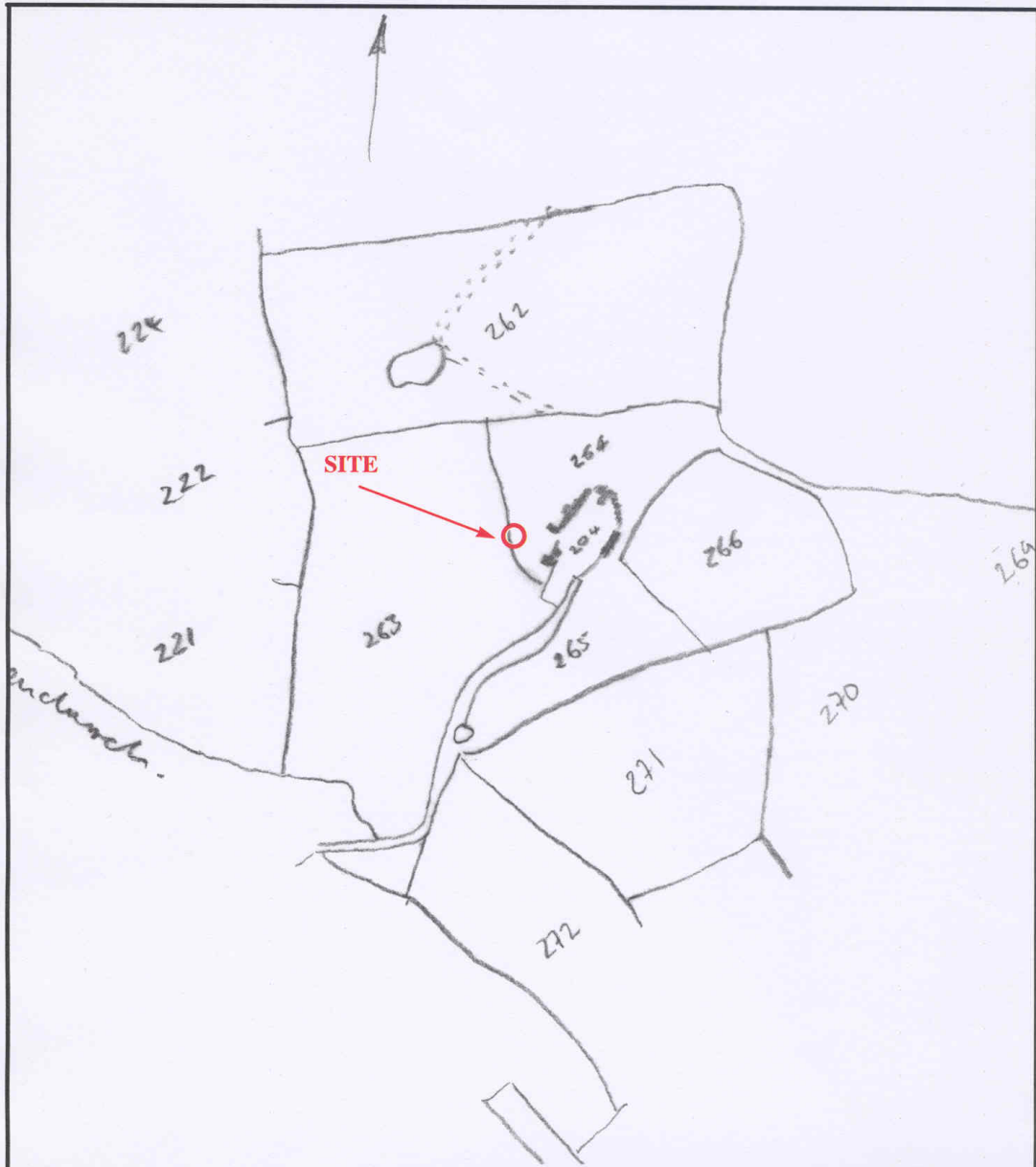
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site at Mallard's Court.

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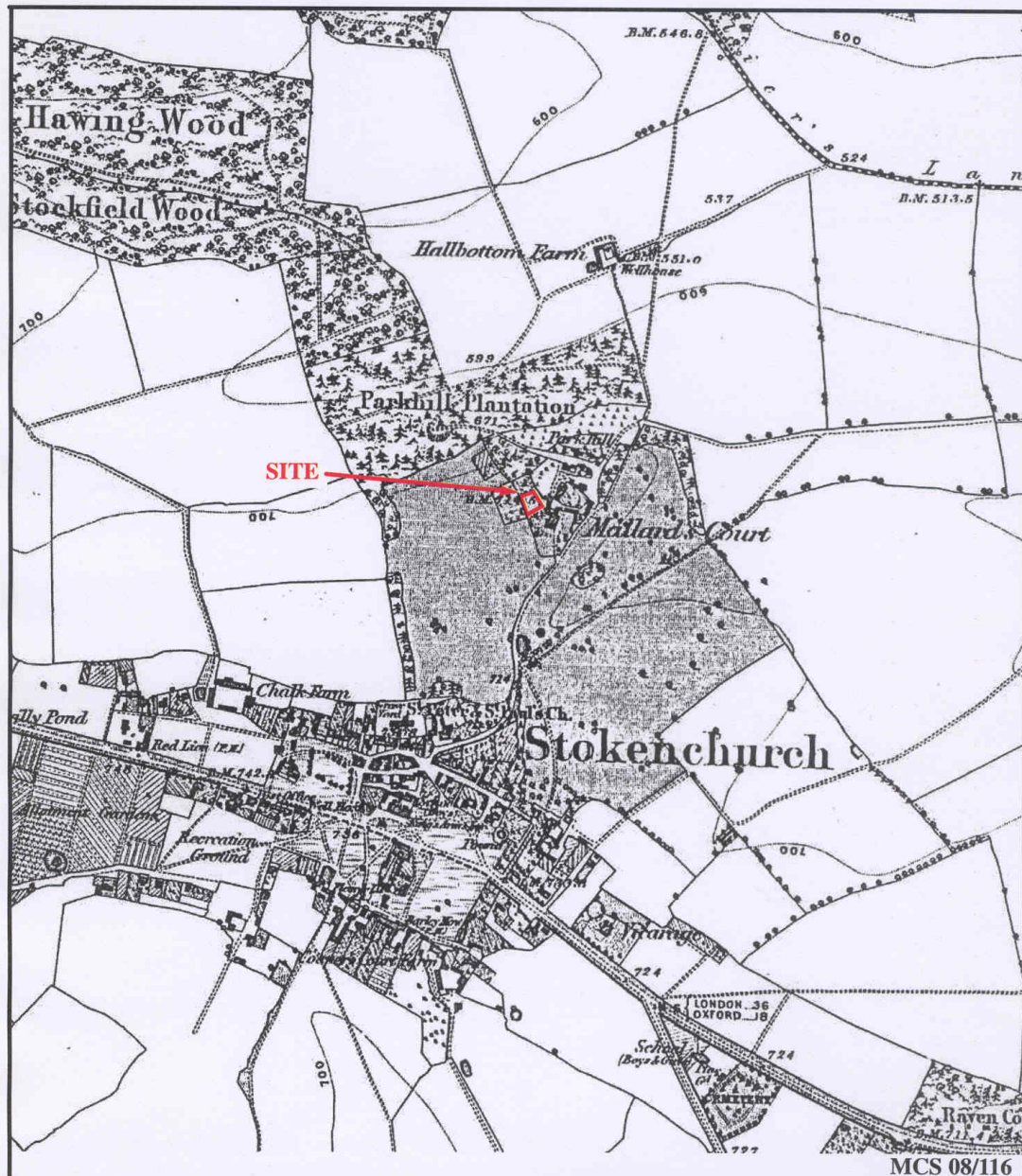


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Figure 3. Tithe map, 1842.

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Figure 4. Ordnance Survey First Edition 6 inch  
(1874).

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Figure 5. Ordnance Survey map of 1921 based on  
1910 survey).

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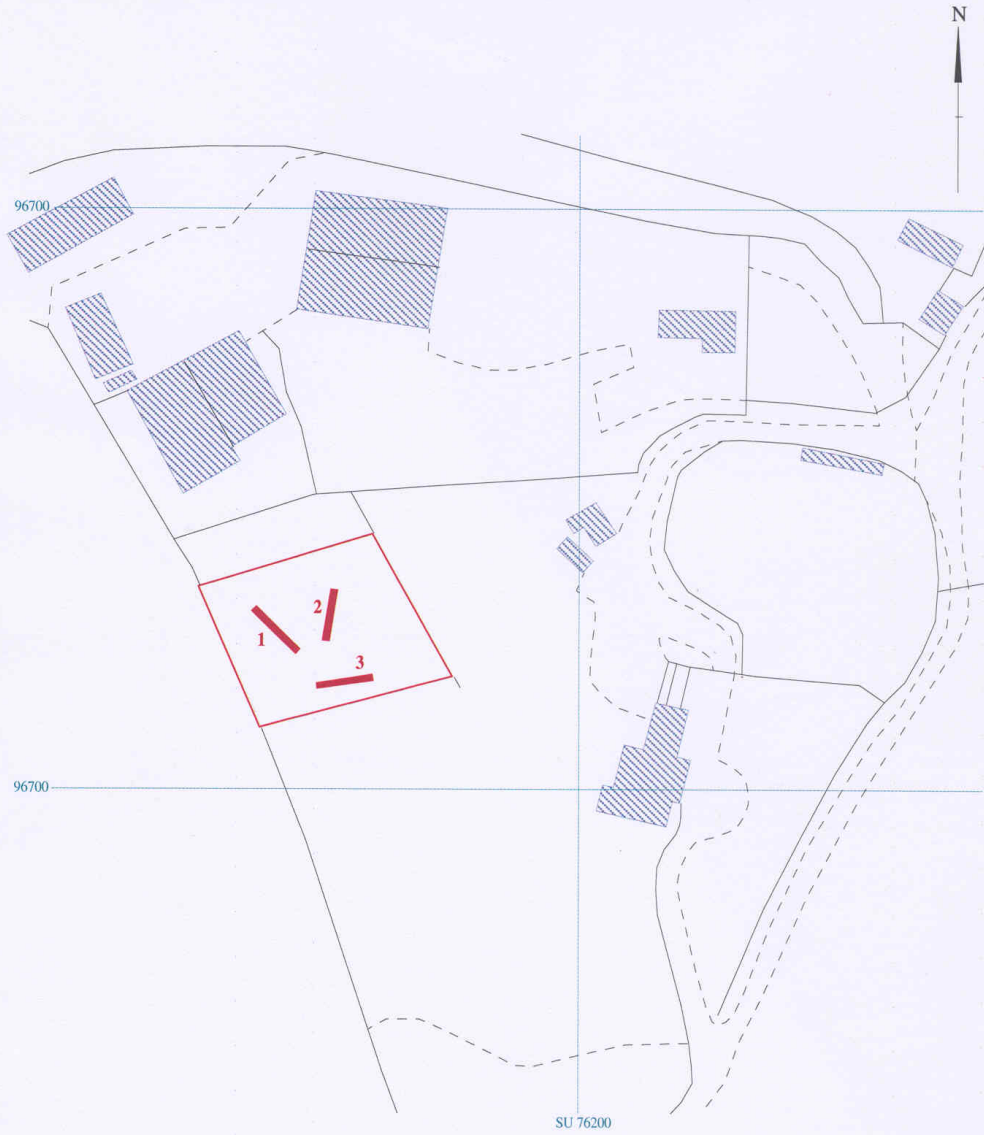


Figure 6: Trench Locations

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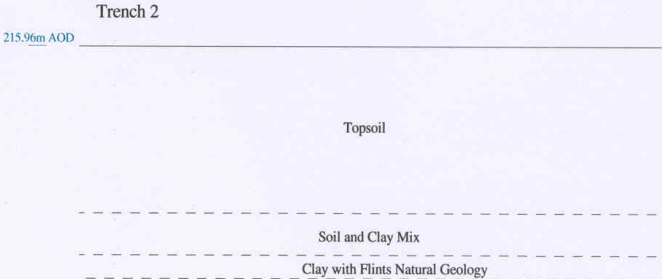


Figure 7: Representative Section



Plate 1. Trench 1 looking north-west, scales 2m (near) and 1m.



Plate 2. Trench 2 looking north, scales 2m (near) and 1m.