

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Ondine, Tor Lane, St George's Hill
Weybridge, Surrey**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Kyle Beaverstock and Tim Dawson

Site Code: SGW24/127

(TQ 0861 6171)

Ondine, Tor Lane, St George's Hill, Weybridge, Surrey

An Archaeological Evaluation

for Peter Hunt

by Kyle Beaverstock and Tim Dawson

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code SGW 24/127

December 2024

Summary

Site name: Ondine, Tor Lane, St George's Hill, Weybridge, Surrey

Grid reference: TQ 0861 6171

Site activity: Archaeological evaluation

Date and duration of project: 10th December 2024

Project coordinator: Tim Dawson

Site supervisor: Kyle Beaverstock

Site code: SGW 24/127

Area of site: c. 0.28ha

Summary of results: A single trench and three test pits were excavated in locations around the existing house. No finds or features of archaeological interest were identified and it is possible that sections of the ground encountered had been disturbed during the construction of the current dwelling. This, however, appears to have not extended to a depth where it might have impacted any archaeology if it had been present.

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

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

Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford✓ xx.xx.21 Steve Preston✓ 11.12.24
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Ondine, Tor Lane, St George's Hill, Weybridge, Surrey **An Archaeological Evaluation**

by Kyle Beaverstock and Tim Dawson

Report 24/127c

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Ondine, Tor Lane, St George's Hill, Weybridge, Surrey (TQ 0861 6171) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Peter Hunt of Ondine, Tor Lane, St George's Hill, Weybridge, Surrey.

Planning permission is to be sought from Elmbridge Borough Council with accompanying Scheduled Monument Consent from the Secretary of State (as advised by Historic England) for the construction of a single storey rear extension on the north side of the existing house. The proposal also includes the addition of a loggia on the east side of the building, supported on three pairs of columns. Two further columns to the west are proposed, to support a first-floor balcony. Due to the site's location within a Scheduled Monument, an initial desk-based assessment and archaeological evaluation trenching were requested in order to inform the planning process.

This is in accordance with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2023), the *Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act* (1979) and the Borough Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Ellie Crew, Assistant Inspector of Ancient Monuments at Historic England, and in accordance with Scheduled Monument Consent no. S00246466 from the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. The fieldwork was undertaken by Kyle Beaverstock on 9th December 2024 and the site code is SGW 24/127.

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

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the southern edge of Weybridge, on St George's Hill, a prominent ridge running north-south with a hillfort itself at its southern tip, between Byfleet and Cobham (Fig. 1). The River Thames flows to the north while the rivers Wey and Mole, both tributaries to the Thames, lie to the west and east respectively. St George's Hill itself is a gated community characterized by large houses set within private grounds, and properties such as these border Ondine (Fig. 2). The development area consists of an irregularly-shaped plot centred on NGR TQ 0861 6171 with the house at its north-western end and the ramparts of the hillfort occupying the south-eastern half.

The area to be developed is wholly within the Scheduled Area of the hillfort. The part of the site nearest the house and where the investigations that are the focus of this report took place is flat at *c.*78m above Ordnance Datum but the lawn to the south-east slopes downhill to the ramparts. The site is located on the interface of a Pleistocene/Holocene pebbly gravel-sand of uncertain origin and the Camberley Sand Formation of fine-grained pale brown to yellow sand, embedded with local clays and scattered grains of glauconite (BGS 1998). This was seen as a brown-yellow loose sandy gravel in the bases of the excavated trenches.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location within the Scheduled Ancient Monument of St Georges Hill multivallate Iron Age hillfort (HE UID 1008475, SM 23001), and has been summarized in a desk-based assessment (Madden 2024). In summary, most of the banks of the hillfort have survived, although many of the ditches are partially or completely in-filled. Excavations in the early 20th century (Gardiner 1911) located Iron Age pottery, confirming the broad dating of the site, whilst subsequent work found both Early and Late Iron Age pottery and iron slag. More recent fieldwork has uncovered the sequence of construction of the ramparts (Poulton and O'Connell 1984), and a shallow linear feature was found immediately to the south-west of the hillfort (Hawkins and Douglas 1999). However, several archaeological evaluations and watching briefs inside the hillfort, including a series at The Ramparts, adjacent to the current proposal site (Poulton 2001; Bray and Dawson 2012; Bennett *et al.* 2013), have found nothing of archaeological interest in the interior.

In the area around the monument, findspots and remains of various periods are recorded, with Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, and later prehistoric archaeology well represented. A round barrow was discovered in 1830 with three hand-made cinerary urns to the south within the grounds of Silvermere (VCH 1911). Archaeology of later periods recorded locally include a hoard of 35 Roman coins recorded in 1913, at the north of St George's Hill. An Anglo-Saxon earthwork (the '*Fullingdic*'), surviving as a fragmentary boundary bank, is tentatively identified in the north-west corner of St George's Hill.

A watching brief was carried on the Ondine site itself (then known as Ardenne Cottage) in 2000-2001 (SCAU 2001). This monitored the construction of the current house and associated service trenches and soakaways but identified nothing of archaeological interest.

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. The specific research aims of this project are:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels had survived on this site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period were present; and
- to allow the preparation of a mitigation strategy if necessary.

A single trench and three test pits were excavated using a minidigger with a 1m-wide toothless ditching bucket. The excavations targeted the locations of the proposed northern extension and the three column bases for the eastern loggia respectively (Fig. 3). No test pits were proposed to investigate the area of the proposed new porch on the western side of the house as the supporting columns were to be placed too close to the existing structure to allow for safe archaeological excavation. All machining was supervised by an archaeologist who also monitored spoil heaps for finds and hand-cleaned the exposed trench bases and sides to facilitate recording of stratigraphic deposits and any potential archaeological features, were they to be present.

The project was carried out in accordance with the CIfA Standards and Universal Guidance for archaeological field evaluation (2023a; 2023b).

Results

All trenches and test pits were dug as intended although the trench to the north of the house bordered on an existing open service trench which had been opened inadvertently prior to attendance on site (Fig. 3). The excavations ranged in length from 1.2m to 3.2m and in width from 1.0m to 1.9m. The depths varied between locations from 1.00m at the deepest to 0.74m at the shallowest. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1 (Fig. 4, Pl. 1)

Trench 1 was excavated to the north of the existing house with a length of 3.2m, width of 1.9m and depth of 1.0m, and was aligned east-west. The upper levels of ground were found to be penetrated by dense roots while the southern edge of the trench was partially truncated by a previously-dug service trench. The latter was inadvertently dug prior to archaeological involvement with the site and has been reported on separately in a letter to Historic England dated 25th November 2024. The excavation exposed stratigraphy consisting of 0.30m of topsoil, overlying 0.40m of loose brown-yellow sandy gravel and 0.30m of loose light grey sand with gravel inclusions,

which had been heavily disturbed by root action. The underlying natural geology was encountered at a depth of 1.00m and consisted of a loose light brown-yellow sandy gravel. No finds or features of archaeological interest were identified.

Trench 2 (test pit) (Fig. 4, Pl. 2)

Trench 2, the northernmost of the column base test pits, was excavated 1.9m east of the existing house and measured 1.7m north-south by 1.1m east-west. It exposed a stratigraphy of 0.30m of compacted yellow-grey gravelly sand with inclusions of fragments of modern building materials (made ground), over 0.16m of loose grey sand with gravel inclusions and further building material (made ground), and 0.36m of loose patchy dark grey and brown-yellow mixed sandy gravel. This overlay the natural loose light brown-yellow sandy gravel geology which was identified at a depth of 0.82m. No finds or features of archaeological interest were identified.

Trench 3 (test pit) (Fig. 4, Pl. 3)

Trench 3 was dug 3.75m south of Trench 2 with a length of 1.4m north-south and a width of 1.2m east-west. The upper layer of 0.16m of compacted yellow-grey gravelly sand made ground overlay 0.1m of loose yellow-orange gravelly sand, likely a redeposited layer of natural material, above 0.28m of loose grey sand with gravel inclusions made ground and 0.2m of loose patchy dark grey and red-yellow sandy gravel. The underlying natural geology was recorded at a depth of 0.74m and consisted of loose light brown-yellow sandy gravel. No finds or features of archaeological interest were identified.

Trench 4 (test pit) (Fig. 4, Pl. 4)

The southernmost test pit was excavated at a distance of 4.8m from the existing house and measured 1.2m long north-south and 1.0m wide east-west. The stratigraphy exposed consisted of 0.21m of compacted yellow-grey gravelly sand made ground, 0.09m loose yellow-orange gravelly sand redeposited natural geology, 0.25m of loose grey sand with gravel inclusions made ground and 0.21m of loose patchy grey and brown-yellow sandy gravel. The base of the excavation at a depth of 0.76m exposed the natural geology which, as in the other trenches, consisted of loose light brown-yellow sandy gravel. No finds or features of archaeological interest were identified.

Finds

No finds of archaeological interest were recovered during the excavations.

Conclusion

All four trenches and test pits were excavated as intended but none found any evidence for previous activity of archaeological interest. The trench to the north of the house was found to have been heavily disturbed by roots from the trees along the property boundary to the north while the three test pits to the east of the house all showed evidence for ground disturbance likely associated with the construction of the present dwelling. These layers of made ground and redeposited natural sandy gravel extended to a depth of between 0.46m and 0.55m and were separated from the natural geology by a c.0.20m thick layer of what was interpreted on site as an interface layer. This would suggest that any archaeological features, if present, would have survived the previous construction works, even if only on its periphery, and therefore the lack of any features within the excavation indicate that proposed development has no potential to impact on any archaeological remains.

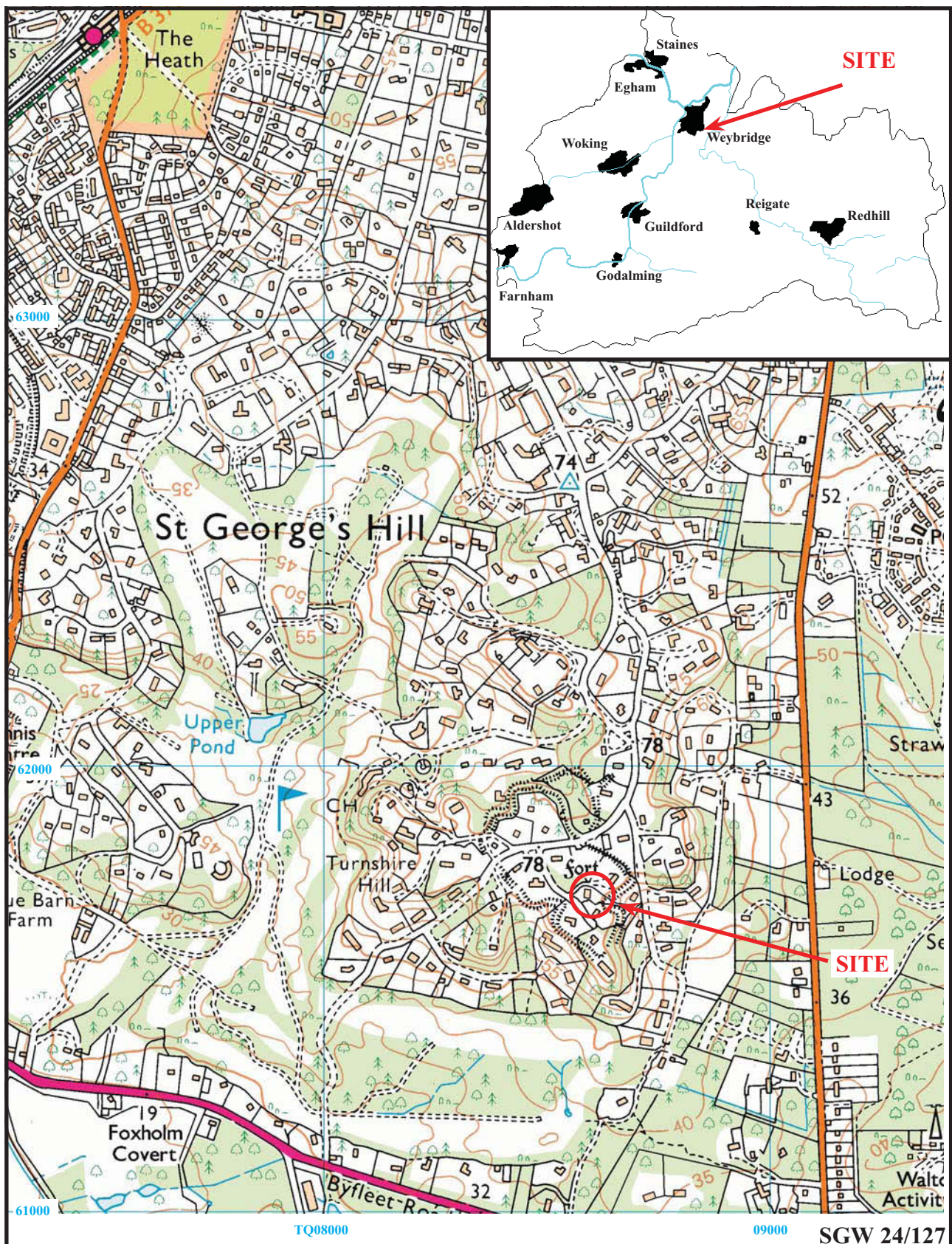
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APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at west and south end

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	3.2	1.9	1.00	0–0.30m topsoil; 0.30-0.70m loose brown-yellow sandy gravel; 0.70-1.00m loose light grey sand with gravel inclusions and root disturbance; 1.00m+ loose light brown-yellow sandy gravel natural geology [Pl. 1]
2	1.7	1.1	0.82	0-0.30m compacted yellow-grey gravelly sand made ground; 0.30-0.46m loose grey sand with gravel inclusions made ground; 0.46-0.82m loose patchy dark grey and brown-yellow sandy gravel interface layer; 0.82m+ natural geology (as Tr.1) [Pl. 2]
3	1.4	1.2	0.74	0-0.16m compacted yellow-grey gravelly sand made ground; 0.16-0.26m loose yellow-orange gravelly sand redeposited natural geology; 0.26-0.54m loose grey sand with gravel inclusions made ground; 0.54-0.74m loose patchy dark grey and red-yellow sandy gravel interface layer; 0.74m+ natural geology (as Tr. 1) [Pl. 3]
4	1.2	1.0	0.76	0-0.21m compacted yellow-grey gravelly sand made ground; 0.21-0.30m loose yellow-orange gravelly sand redeposited natural geology; 0.30-0.55m loose grey sand with gravel inclusions made ground; 0.55-0.76m loose patchy grey and brown-yellow sandy gravel interface layer; 0.76m+ natural geology (as Tr. 1) [Pl. 4]

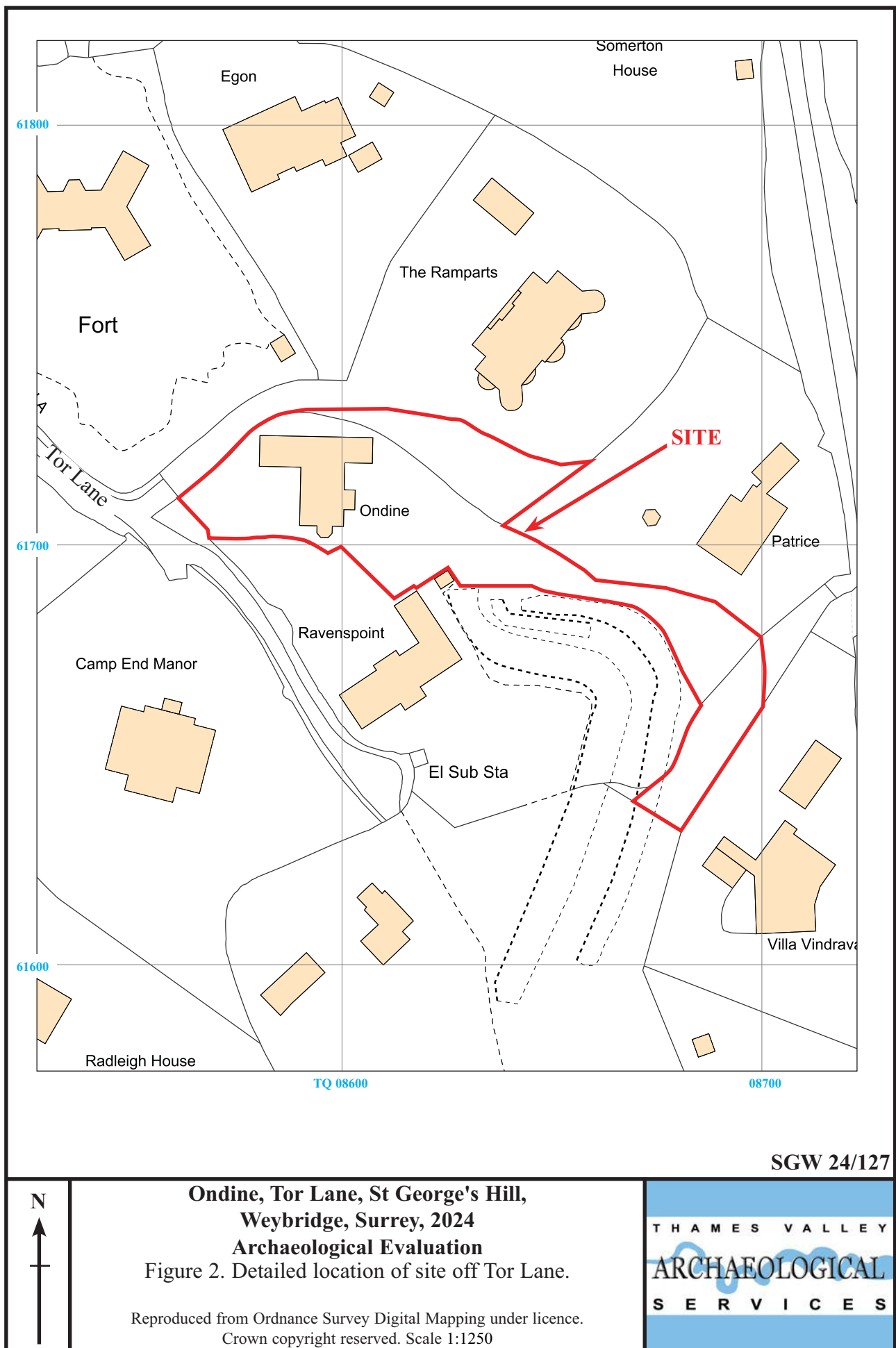


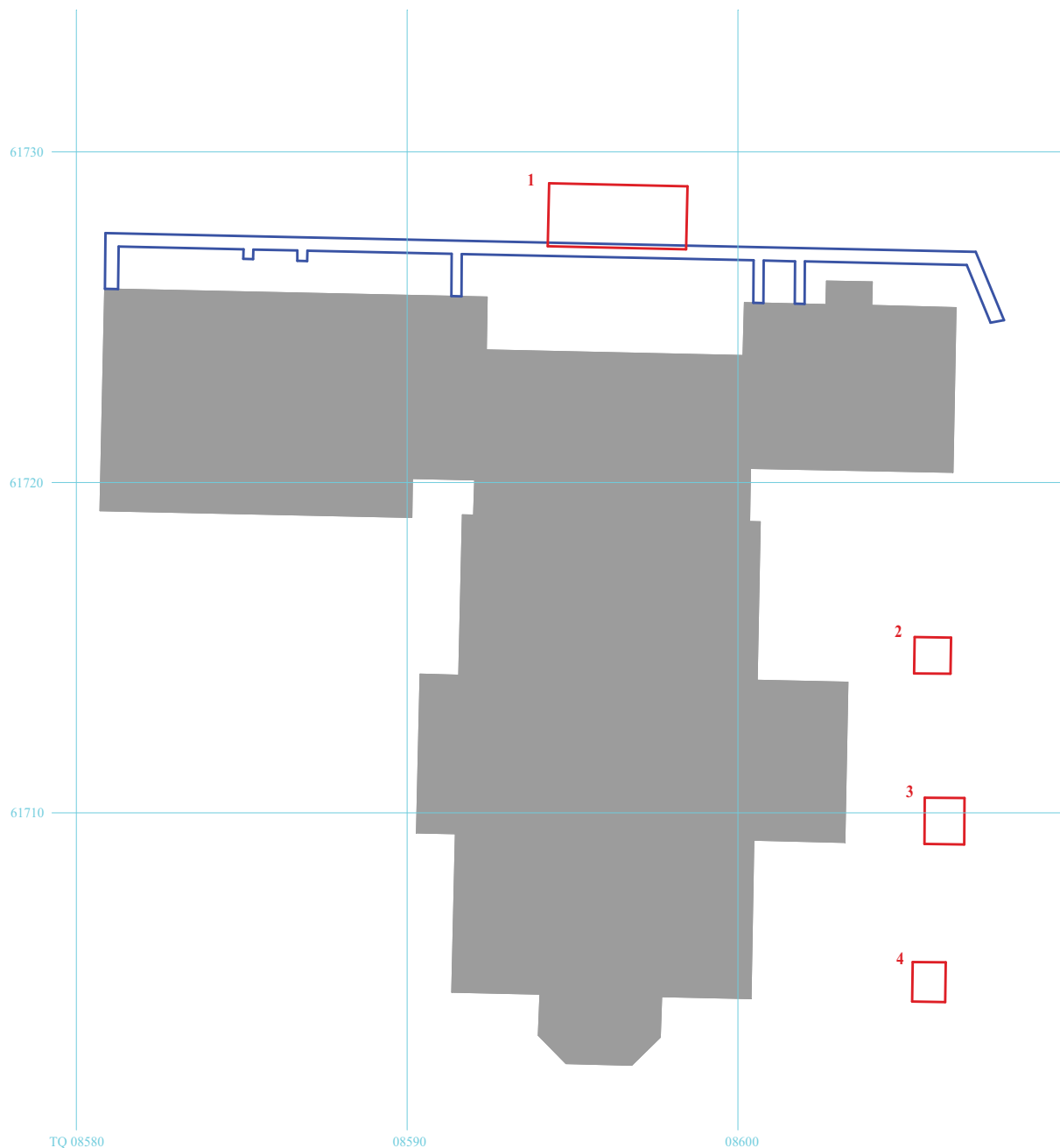
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Figure 1. Location of site within Weybridge and Surrey.

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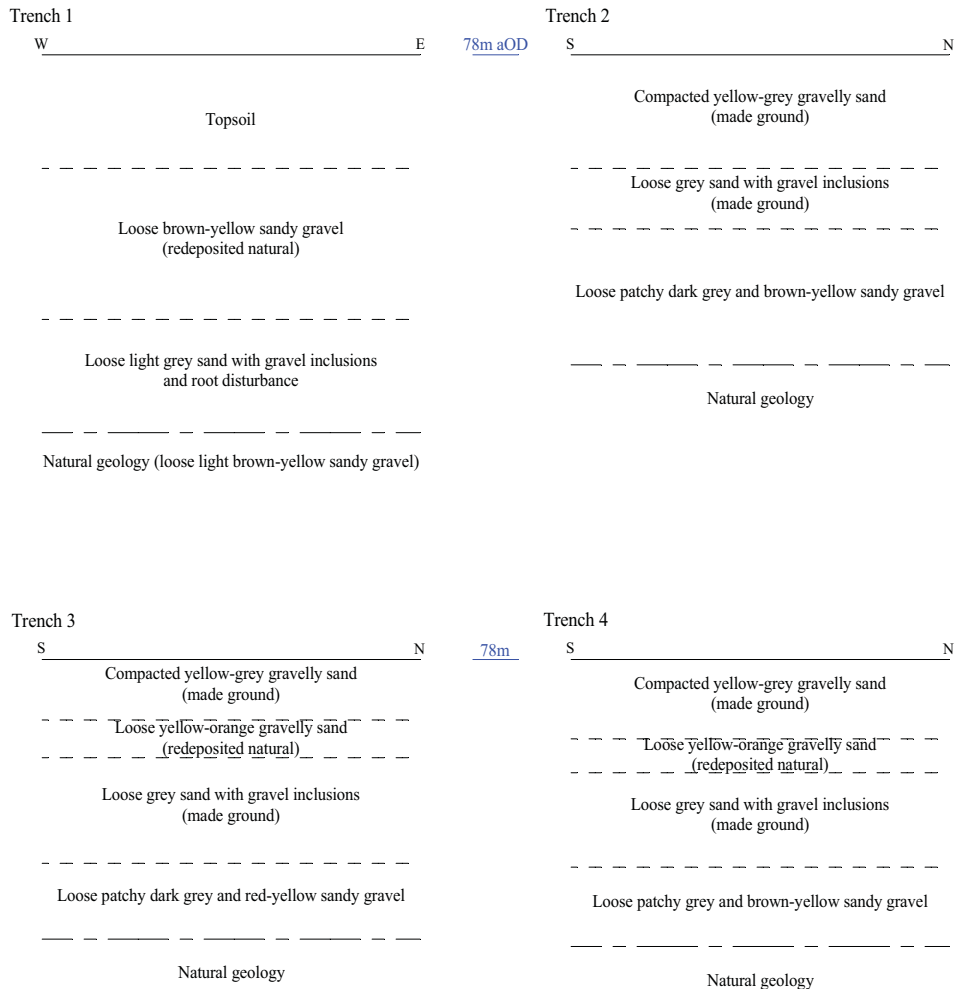


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Figure 3. Excavated evaluation trench and test pits (red).
Previously excavated service trench shown in blue.

0 10m

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Figure 4. Representative sections.

0 _____ 1m

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Plate 1. Trench 1, looking north-east.
Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m.



Plate 2. Trench 2, looking north-west.
Scales: 1m and 0.5m



Plate 3. Trench 3, looking west. Scales: 1m and 0.5m.



Plate 4. Trench 4, looking south-west.
Scales: 1m and 0.5m

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Plates 1 - 4.**

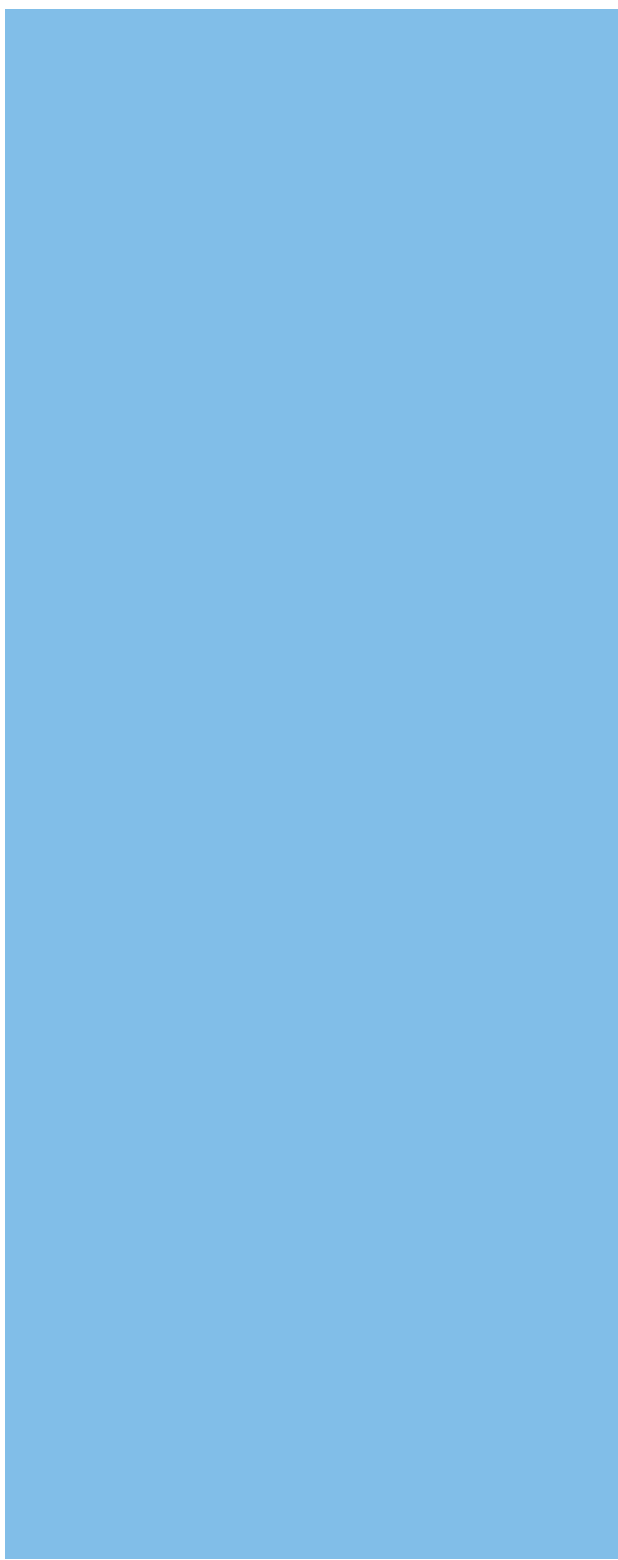
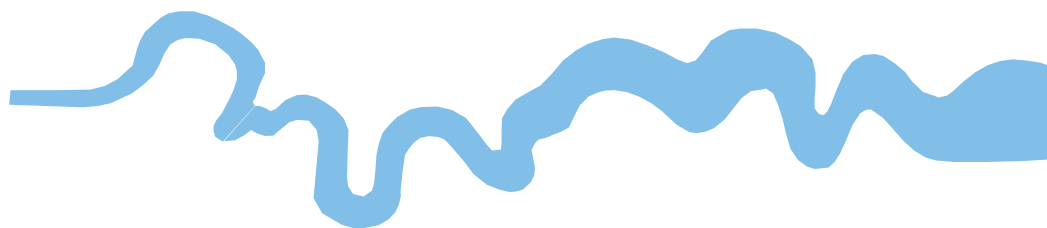
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TIME CHART

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





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