

**Land adjacent to 103 Pound Lane,
Sonning, Berkshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Hicks Development Ltd**

by James McNicoll-Norbury
Thames Valley Archaeological Services
Ltd

Site Code PLS 09/50

June 2009

Summary

Site name: Land adjacent to 103 Pound Lane, Sonning, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 7637 7451

Site activity: Archaeological Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 17th-19th June 2009

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: James McNicoll-Norbury

Site code: PLS 09/50

Summary of results: No archaeological deposits were identified. The site is considered to have no archaeological potential

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

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford✓ 19.06.09
	Steve Preston✓ 19.06.09

Land adjacent to 103 Pound Lane, Sonning, Berkshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by James McNicoll-Norbury

Report 09/50

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out adjacent to 103 Pound Lane, Sonning, Berkshire, RG4 6GG (SU 7637 7451) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Ian Walton, of Hicks Developments Ltd, 15 Headley Road, Woodley, Berkshire, RG5 4JB.

Planning permission (app no F2008/2319) has been granted by Wokingham Borough Council to construct a new house on the site. The consent is subject to a condition (14) relating to archaeology, which requires the implementation of a programme of archaeological work prior to groundworks commencing.

This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Planning Policy Guidance, Archaeology and Planning (PPG16 1990), and the Borough Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Mary O'Donoghue, Archaeology Officer for Berkshire Archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by James McNicoll-Norbury and Aidan Coyler on 17th June 2009 and the site code is PLS 09/50. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Reading Museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site occupied a rough rectangular plot of land located adjacent to 103 Pound Lane, Sonning lying on the east side of the road and 50m north of the main railway line from Reading to London and south of the A4 (Bath Road) (Fig. 2). The underlying geology is described as Plateau Gravel (BGS 1946), which was observed in the trench. The land was previously used as a garden area for 103 Pound Lane with a variety of small trees occupying areas of the development area. The site lies at c 53.8m above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location in an area of the Thames Valley rich in archaeological finds and deposits (Ford 1987; Gates 1975). A number of sites of prehistoric and Roman date have been identified from the air to the north of the site, including a Neolithic cursus monument and mortuary

enclosure (Gates 1975; Slade 1964). Several levelled round barrows of probable Bronze Age date, and apparent enclosures and field boundaries likely to date from the Roman period are also recorded in this area, many of which are scheduled (under SAM 176-182). To the south of the site less is known, but recent investigations have recorded Bronze Age and other probable prehistoric occupation activity (Hardy 1999; Taylor 1997). Evidence of early Roman occupation was found during a watching brief some 60m west of the site, where a large number of pottery sherds were recovered from a ditch (Cass and Wallis 2006).

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 aims of this project were to determine if archaeologically relevant levels had survived, to determine if archaeological deposits of any period were present, to determine if any deposits associated with prehistoric activity were present and to determine if any deposits associated with Roman activity were present.

One trench was to be dug, 9.0m long and 1.6m wide (c. 6% of the proposed development area) using a JCB-type or 360⁰ type mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket to expose the archaeologically sensitive levels. Stripped areas were to be hand cleaned should any archaeological features be present.

Results

The trench was dug in the position as intended but was longer than the original proposal. A description of the trench with section and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1 (Plate 1)

Trench 1 was aligned NW-SE and measured 13.2m long, 1.6m wide and 0.54m deep (Figs 3 and 4). The stratigraphy comprised 0.32m topsoil overlaying 0.15m grey gravelly clay subsoil which in turn overlay natural geology consisting of orange brown sandy gravels with root disturbances. No finds nor archaeological deposits were revealed.

Finds

No archaeological finds were recovered from the trench or the spoil heaps.

Conclusion

The evaluation has revealed that archaeological relevant levels have survived on site. However, no archaeological deposits nor artefacts were revealed and the site is considered to have no archaeological potential.

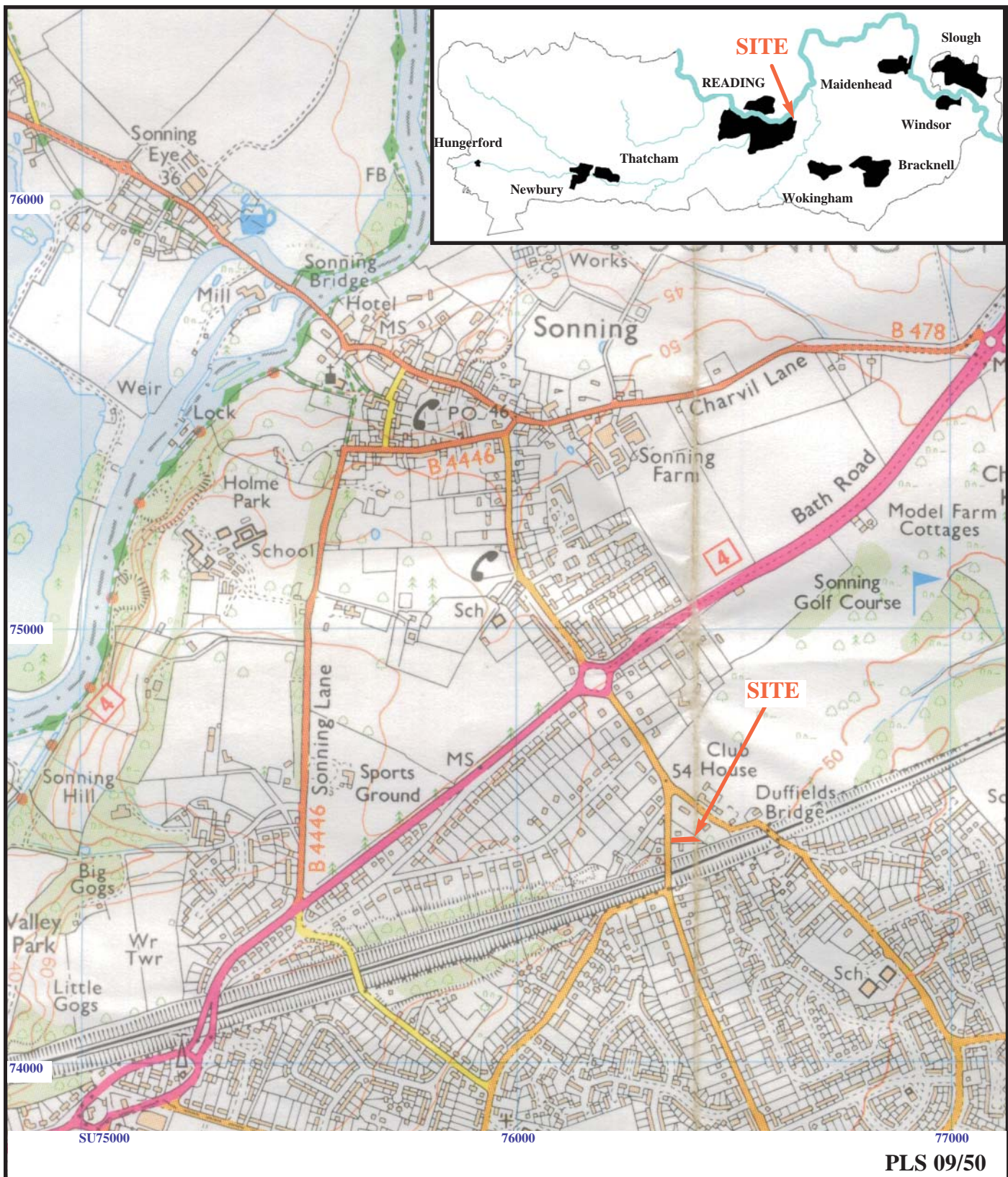
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APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at SE end

Trench	Length (m)	Breadth (m)	Depth (m)	Comment
1	13.2	1.6	0.54	0-0.32m Topsoil; 0.32-0.47m grey gravelly subsoil; 0.47m+ dark orange brown sandy gravel with root disturbance (natural geology). [Plate 1]



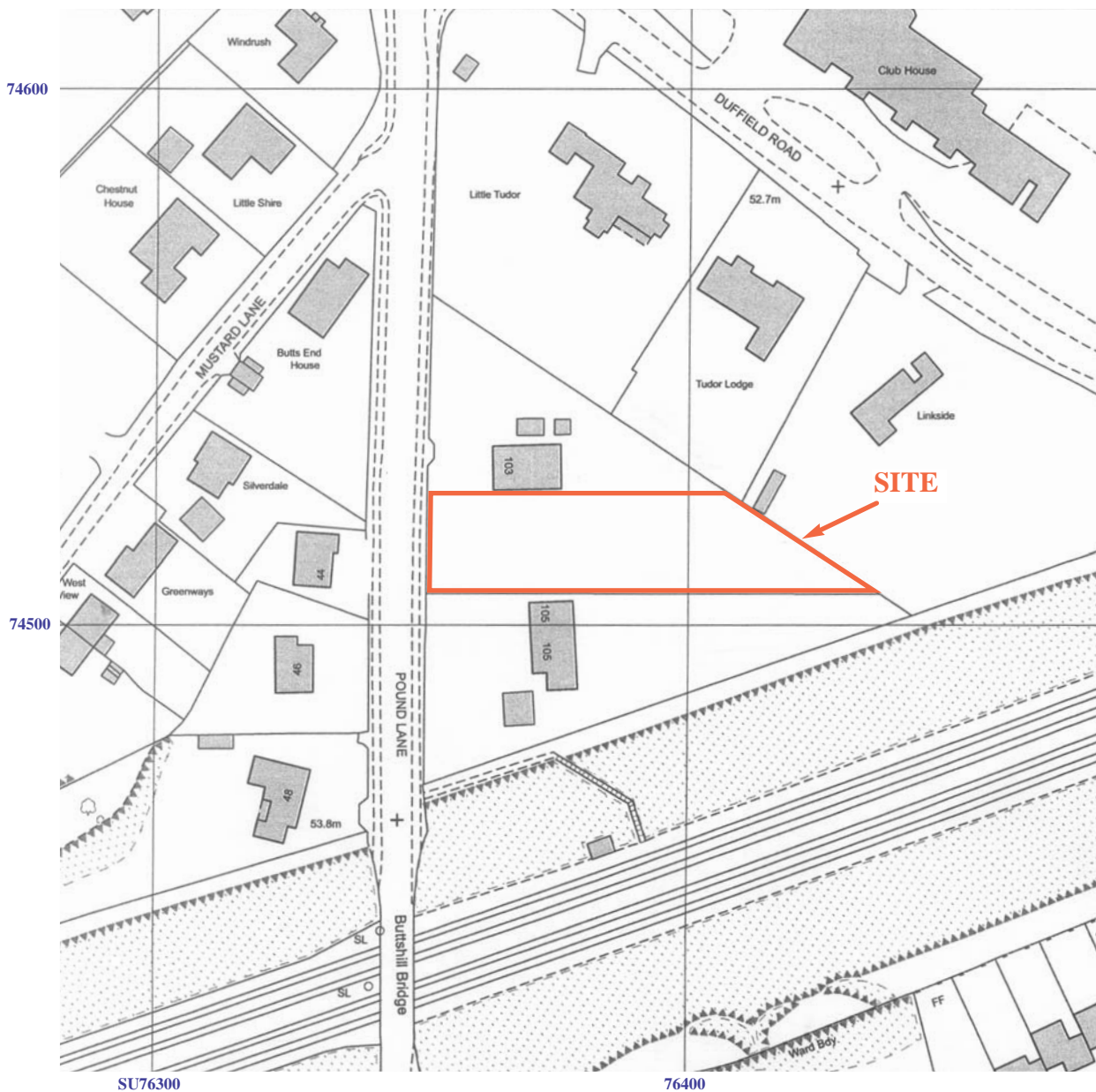
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Figure 1. Location of site within Sonning and Berkshire.

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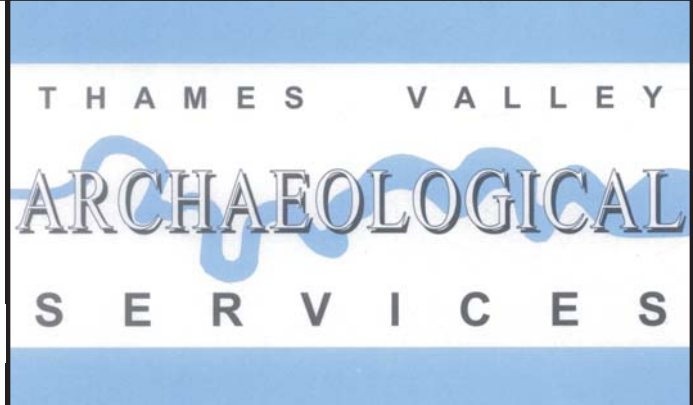


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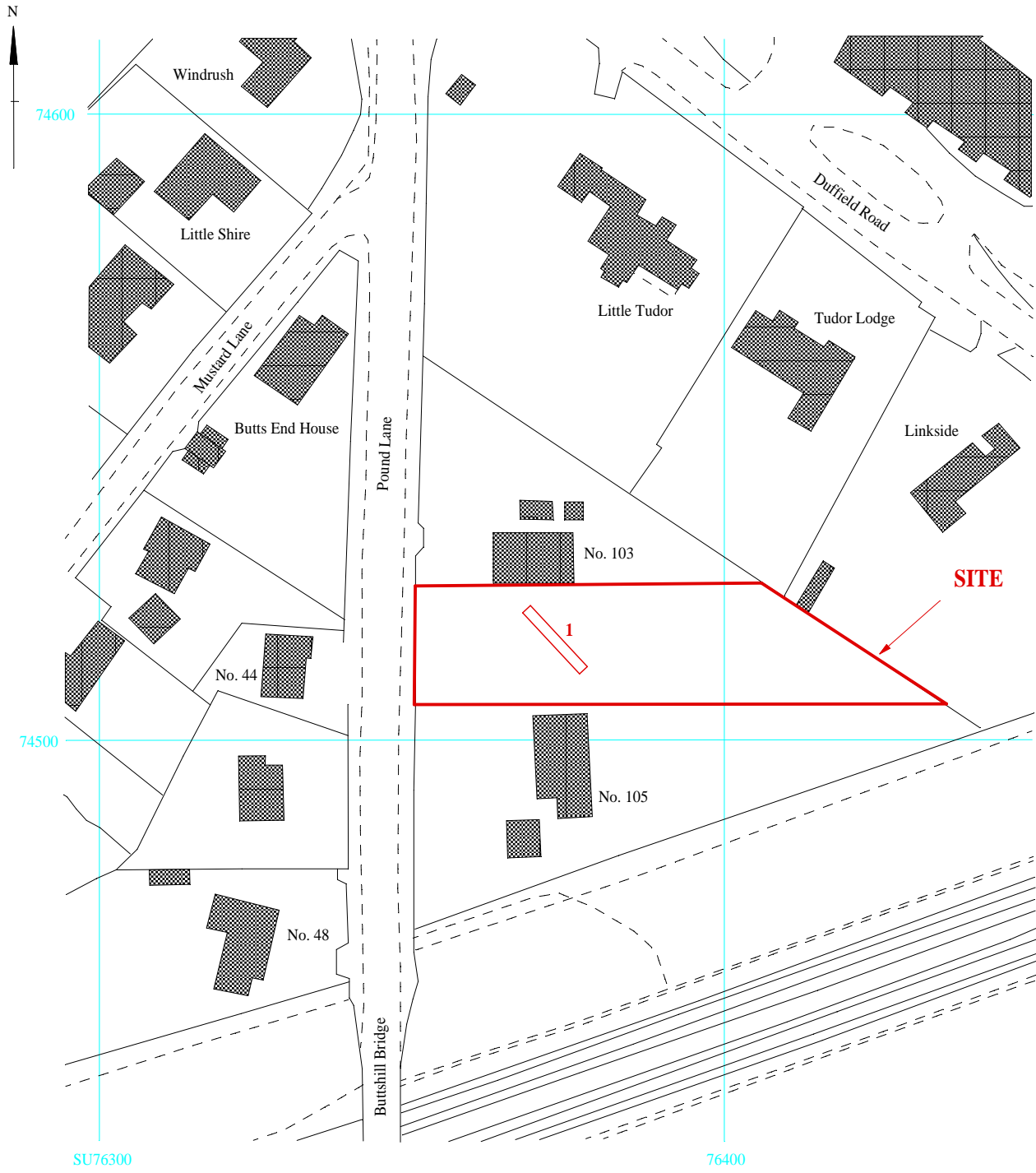
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Figure 2. Location of site off Pound Lane.

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0 50m

Figure 3. Location of trench.

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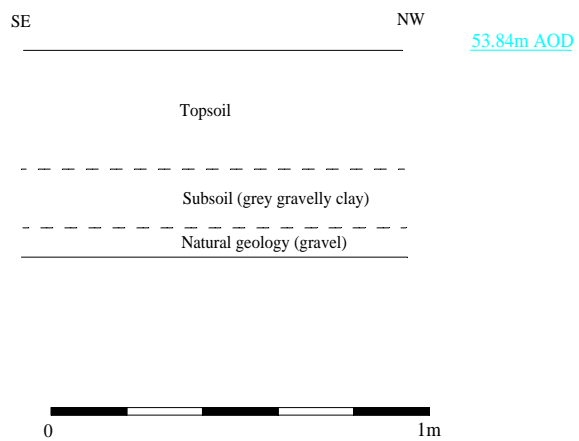


Figure 4. Representative Section



Plate 1. Trench 1, looking north west. Scales 0.50m, 1m and 2m