

T H A M E S V A L L E Y
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
S E R V I C E S

**Leventhorpe School, Cambridge Road,
Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire**

An Archaeological Evaluation

by Andrew Weale and Heather Hopkins

Site Code: LSH09/94

(TL 4819 1580)

**Leventhorpe School, Cambridge Road,
Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for CgMs Consulting**

by Andrew Weale and Heather Hopkins
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code LSH09/94

November 2009

Summary

Site name: Leventhorpe School, Cambridge Road, Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire

Grid reference: TL 4810 1580

Site activity: Archaeological Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 26th – 28th October 2009

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Andrew Weale

Site code: LSH 09/94

Area of site: c 1.24ha

Summary of results: Only undated or relatively recent features were identified and the site is considered to have low archaeological potential.

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

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Report 09/94

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Leventhorpe School, Cambridge Road, Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire, located at NGR TL 4810 1580 (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Matthew Smith of CgMs Consulting, Morley House, 26 Holborn Viaduct, London, EC1A 2AT on behalf of Leventhorpe School. Planning permission (3/09/0918/FP) has been granted by East Hertfordshire District Council for the construction of an all weather pitch, three floodlit replacement tennis courts and two further unlit tennis courts. Reserved permission 3/09/0919/RP has been approved for a new sports hall, classroom building, replacement tennis courts, extended hard play area, car parking and access works. The consent is subject to a condition requiring the provision of a programme of archaeological work in advance of development.

This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Planning Policy Guidance, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990), and the District's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification provided by CgMs Consulting after consultation with Ms Alison Tinniswood, archaeological adviser to the council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Andrew Weale, James Lewis and Aigi Castle between 26th–30th October 2009 and the site code is LSH 09/94. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Bishop's Stortford Museum in due course. A desk-based assessment (AA 2007) concluded that the development area lies within a zone of low to moderate archaeological potential. However, cropmarks are located 200m to the west so it is possible that archaeological remains may be present. An evaluation was requested to investigate the archaeological potential further.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the northern outskirts of Sawbridgeworth in Hertfordshire, to the north of Harlow. The site is bounded by school buildings to the east, school fields to the south and west and agricultural land to the north (Fig. 2). The site is at a height of 70m above Ordnance Datum. The underlying natural geology is boulder clay but with underlying London Clay outcropping to the north east and with the possibility of thin patches of glacial

sand and gravel being present (BGS 1981). Brown clay and weathered chalk were observed during the evaluation.

Archaeological background

A desk-based assessment (AA 2007) has detailed the archaeological potential of the site. In summary, a range of prehistoric and later sites and finds are recorded in the county's Historic Environment Record. A possible early Neolithic long barrow is recorded to the south east and a flint arrowhead to the east. To the south of the town (at some distance from the site) is an early Neolithic causewayed enclosure. An undated large circular cropmark visible from the air 200m to the west is possibly of prehistoric origin. The site lies beyond the margins of historic Sawbridgeworth which is a medieval settlement with Saxon origins.

The proposal site has been subject to a geophysical survey but no anomalies definitely of an archaeological nature were revealed (WYAS 2007).

Objectives and methodology

The objective of the archaeological trenching was to determine if any archaeological remains were present and if so, allow for the development of a strategy to mitigate the effects of construction on these remains.

The aims of the trenching were to:

- clarify the presence/absence and extent of any buried archaeological remains within the site that may be threatened by development;
- identify, within the constraints of the evaluation, the date, character, condition and depth of any surviving remains within the site;
- assess the degree of existing impacts to sub-surface horizons and to document the extent of archaeological survival of buried deposits.

It was proposed to dig 9 trenches, each 1.6m wide. Six trenches were to be 30m long, two trenches 10m long and one trench 5m long. A contingency of a further 25m was made should it be necessary to further explore areas where archaeological features had been discovered. All trenches were to be excavated using a machine fitted with toothless ditching bucket, under the direct supervision of an appropriately experienced archaeologist. Machine excavation was taken down to the top of the natural geology or the top of any archaeological level, whichever is the higher. Stripped material was examined for archaeological material and scanned with a metal detector. Where features or possible features were present, these areas were to be hand-cleaned. Archaeological features were only to be sampled sufficiently to characterize and date them.

Results

Nine trenches were dug in total, ranging from 9.5m to 31m in length and in depth from 0.46–0.97m. (Fig. 2). All trenches were 1.6m wide. The small variations to the trench positions and lengths were agreed with the archaeological monitor. Spoil heaps were searched for finds including use of a metal detector. A full list of trenches giving details of dimensions, stratigraphy and geology is given in Appendix 1. A list of excavated features forms Appendix 2.

Trench 1 (Plate 1)

Trench 1 was 10.5m long and 0.6m deep, orientated SW-NE. The northern end of Trench 1 joined the eastern end of Trench 2 at 90° to form an L-shaped trench. The stratigraphy comprised topsoil 0.24m thick, above 0.36m of subsoil. This overlay the natural geology which consisted of a brown clay. A service trench was encountered within this trench but no features of archaeological interest were discovered. A sondage 2m long and 0.5m deep was dug at the northern end of the trench to confirm the interpretation of the stratigraphy.

Trench 2 (Plate 2)

Trench 2 was 9.5m long and 0.97m deep, aligned SE-NW and joined the northern part of Trench 1. The stratigraphy comprised topsoil 0.2m thick, above made ground 0.54m. thick. The made ground contained modern debris such as brick, tile, clinker and plastic. Below this was the subsoil 0.20m thick which overlay the natural geology of brown clay. No finds or features of archaeological interest were encountered.

Trench 3 (Plate 3)

Trench 3 was 10.85m long and was 0.5m deep, orientated NW–SE. The stratigraphy comprised topsoil 0.23m thick overlying subsoil 0.27m thick. This overlay the clay natural geology. No finds or features of archaeological interest were encountered.

Trench 4 (Plate 4)

Trench 4 was 30.7m long and 0.42m deep, aligned NE –SW. The stratigraphy comprised topsoil 0.24m thick above subsoil 0.18m thick. This overlay the natural geology, which was clay for 7m from the southern end giving way to degraded, weathered chalk. Two possible pits were identified, one of 0.8m diameter at 9m from the southern end of the trench, and one of 0.7m diameter at 16.7m. These were investigated and both found to be of modern origin containing 20th century brick and tile, and probably relating to construction of tennis courts

sited immediately to the east. A sondage 0.5m deep was excavated at the southern end to confirm that the interpretation of the stratigraphy was correct. No finds or features of archaeological interest were encountered.

Trench 5 (Plates 5 and 10)

Trench 5 was 30.5m long and 0.66m deep, aligned NNE - SSW. The stratigraphy comprised topsoil 0.25m deep. At the north end this was overlying 0.33m of brown clayey subsoil which overlay a clay with some flint forming the natural geology. At the south end the topsoil overlay 0.25m of subsoil over the natural geology of weathered chalk. A modern field drain was the only cut feature identified in this trench.

Trench 6 (Figs 3 and 4, Plate 6)

Trench 6 was 31m long and 0.67m deep, aligned roughly E-W. The stratigraphy comprised topsoil 0.3m deep above subsoil 0.37m deep above the natural geology which was weathered chalk. A pit (1) identified at 18.3m from the western end had a diameter of 1.1m with a bowl-shaped profile and was 0.33m deep. It was fully dug within the trench but it's full extent is unknown as it continued beyond the baulk. No dating evidence was recovered.

Trench 7 (Figs 3 and 4; Plate 7)

Trench 7 was 30.6m long and 0.52m deep, aligned E-W. The stratigraphy comprised topsoil 0.17m deep overlying a subsoil 0.35m deep. This overlay the natural geology of weathered chalk. A linear feature (2) was identified at 9.4m from the west end. It had a width of 0.8m and a depth of 0.18m. The feature had medium-steep sides and an uneven base. An excavated section produced post-medieval or modern tile, glass, a metal plate and a modern button. It is interpreted as a post-medieval field boundary and it's alignment suggests contemporaneity with boundaries shown on the tithe map of 1839. However, it is not actually depicted on any cartographic sources (AA 2007).

Trench 8 (Plate 8)

Trench 8 was of 30.4m long and 0.46m depth, aligned NW-SE. The stratigraphy comprised topsoil 0.18m deep above 0.28m of subsoil. This overlay natural geology of weathered chalk with patches of brown mottled clay. Two service pipes and a land drain were identified, but nothing of archaeological interest was encountered.

Trench 9 (Figs 3 and 4, Plates 9 and 11)

Trench 9 was 30.6m long and 0.57m deep, aligned E–W. The stratigraphy comprised topsoil 0.2m deep above 0.37m of subsoil. This overlay natural geology of weathered chalk with patches of brown mottled clay. Two land drains were encountered. One possible posthole (3) and one linear feature (4) were identified. The posthole-sized feature was 0.28m in diameter and 0.1m deep. It was half-sectioned but no artefacts were discovered. An excavated section across feature 4 revealed that it was 1.7m in width and 0.44m deep. It had medium-steep sides and rounded base. The ditch contained two fills, the upper was 0.2m deep, the lower was 0.24m deep. The upper fill (55) contained a quantity of post-medieval or modern tile, a sherd of post-medieval or modern brick and a modern metal grill that was identified as a drain cover. In the lower fill (56) a single sherd of post-medieval glazed earthenware pottery was discovered. It seems likely that ditch 4 is a boundary depicted on the Tithe map of 1839 (AA 2007, fig 2).

Finds

Pottery

One sherd of pottery was found weighing 17g. This was discovered in ditch 4 (56) and identified as glazed post-medieval red earthenware.

Brick/tile

Eighteen fragments of tile were discovered. Four fragments together weighed 163g and were discovered in ditch 2 (53) and Thirteen fragments of tile had a combined weight of 206g and were discovered in ditch 4 (55). These fragments were all identified as late post medieval or modern terracotta. A single fragment of brick was discovered in ditch 4 (55) weighing 56g. This too was late post medieval or modern terracotta.

Metal

Four pieces of metal were discovered, weighing 350g in total. One weighed 96g and was identified as being part of a plate with the nail still in place. This was discovered in ditch 2 (53). Two further pieces of metal were of a total weight of 3g, discovered in ditch 2 (53) and when combined form a single modern button. Another weighed 251g. The piece was identified as a fragment of a modern drain cover. This was discovered in ditch 4 (55).

Glass

Three pieces of glass were discovered, weighing 42g. These were from ditch 2 (53) and were identified as part of the base of a modern wine bottle.

Conclusion

The evaluation revealed very few cut features of possible archaeological interest with most trenches devoid of such features. Several of these were subsequently shown to be of natural origin. One ditch section (4) corresponds with a boundary on the tithe map of 1839. The alignment of the second ditch section (2) is such that it is also thought to be a part of the same post-medieval field pattern but had gone out of use before the making of the tithe map. A pit and a posthole-sized feature are possibly of archaeological interest but provided no dating evidence. A search of the spoilheaps revealed no artefacts of archaeological interest. The site does not appear to have significant archaeological potential.

References

- AA 2007, 'Land at the Leventhorpe School Cambridge Road, Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire, Archaeological Desk-based assessment', Albion Archaeology rep **SA1259**, Bedford
- BGS, 1981, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000, Sheet 240, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- PPG16, 1990, *Archaeology and Planning*, Dept of the Environment Planning Policy Guidance **16**, HMSO
- WYAS, 2007, 'Geophysical Survey: Land at the Leventhorpe School, Cambridge Road, Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire', West Yorkshire Archaeological Services rep **1732**, Leeds

APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at South or West end

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	10.5	1.8	0.60	0–0.24m topsoil; 0.24 –0.6m subsoil; 0.6m+ natural geology (brown clay).Test pit at north end to 0.5m. [Pl. 1]
2	9.5	1.8	0.97	0-0.2m topsoil; 0.2–0.74m made ground; 0.74–0.97m subsoil; 0.97m+ natural geology (brown clay) [Pl. 2]
3	10.8	1.8	0.50	0-0.23m topsoil; 0.23–0.5m subsoil; 0.5m+ natural geology (brown clay) [Pl. 3]
4	30.7	1.8	0.42	0-0.24m topsoil; 0.24–0.42m subsoil; 0.42m+ natural geology (brown clay, south 7m , weathered chalk, north). Test pit at south end to 0.5m [Pl. 4]
5	30.5	1.8	0.66N 0.50S	0-0.25m topsoil; 0.28 – 0.5m subsoil: North: 0.66m+ natural geology (brown clay with flint fragments). South 0.5m+ natural geology (weathered chalk) [Pls 5 and 10]
6	31.0	1.8	0.67	0-0.3m topsoil; 0.3–0.67m subsoil; 0.67m+ natural geology (weathered chalk). Pit 1 [Pl. 6]
7	30.6	1.8	0.52	0-0.17m topsoil; 0.17–0.52m subsoil; 0.52m+ natural geology (weathered chalk). Ditch 2 [Pl. 7]
8	30.4	1.8	0.46	0-0.18m topsoil; 0.18-0.46m subsoil; 0.46m+ natural geology (brown clay with chalk fragments) [Pl. 8]
9	30.6	1.8	0.57	0-0.2m topsoil; 0.2-0.57m subsoil; 0.57m+ natural geology (brown clay with chalk fragments) posthole 3, ditch 4. [Pls 9 and 11] .

APPENDIX 2: Feature details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
6	1	52	Pit		
7	2	53	Linear: field boundary	Post medieval/ modern.	Modern metal, tile, glass. Same as cut 4?
9	3	54	Pit		
9	4	55, 56	Linear: field boundary	Post-medieval, modern	Pot, modern metal, tile. Same as cut 2?

APPENDIX 3: HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD SUMMARY SHEET

Site name and address: Leventhorpe School, Cambridge Road, Sawbridgeworth		
County: Hertfordshire	District: East Herts	
Village/Town: Sawbridgeworth	Parish: Sawbridgeworth	
Planning application reference: 3/09/0918/FP , 3/09/0919/RP		
Client name, address, and tel. no.: CgMs Consulting, Morley House, 26 Holborn Viaduct, London, EC1A 2AT.		
Nature of application: Full permission for construction of an all weather pitch, three floodlit replacement tennis courts and two further unlit tennis courts. Reserved permission for a new sports hall, classroom building, replacement tennis courts, extended hard play area, car parking and access works.		
Present land use: Tennis courts and playground		
Size of application area: 1.24ha	Size of area investigated: 386.28m ²	
NGR (to 8 figures): TL 4810 1580		
Site code (if applicable): LSH 09/94		
Site director/Organization: Steve Ford		
Type of work: Archaeological evaluation by trial trenching		
Date of work: October 2009	Start: 26th October 2009	Finish:30th October 2009
Location of finds & site archive/Curating museum: Bishop's Stortford Museum		
Related HER Nos:	Periods represented: Post medieval (19 th century), modern	
Relevant previous summaries/reports Albion Archaeology, 2007, 'Land at the Leventhorpe School Cambridge Road, Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire, Archaeological Desk-based assessment', Albion Archaeology rep SA1259, Bedford		

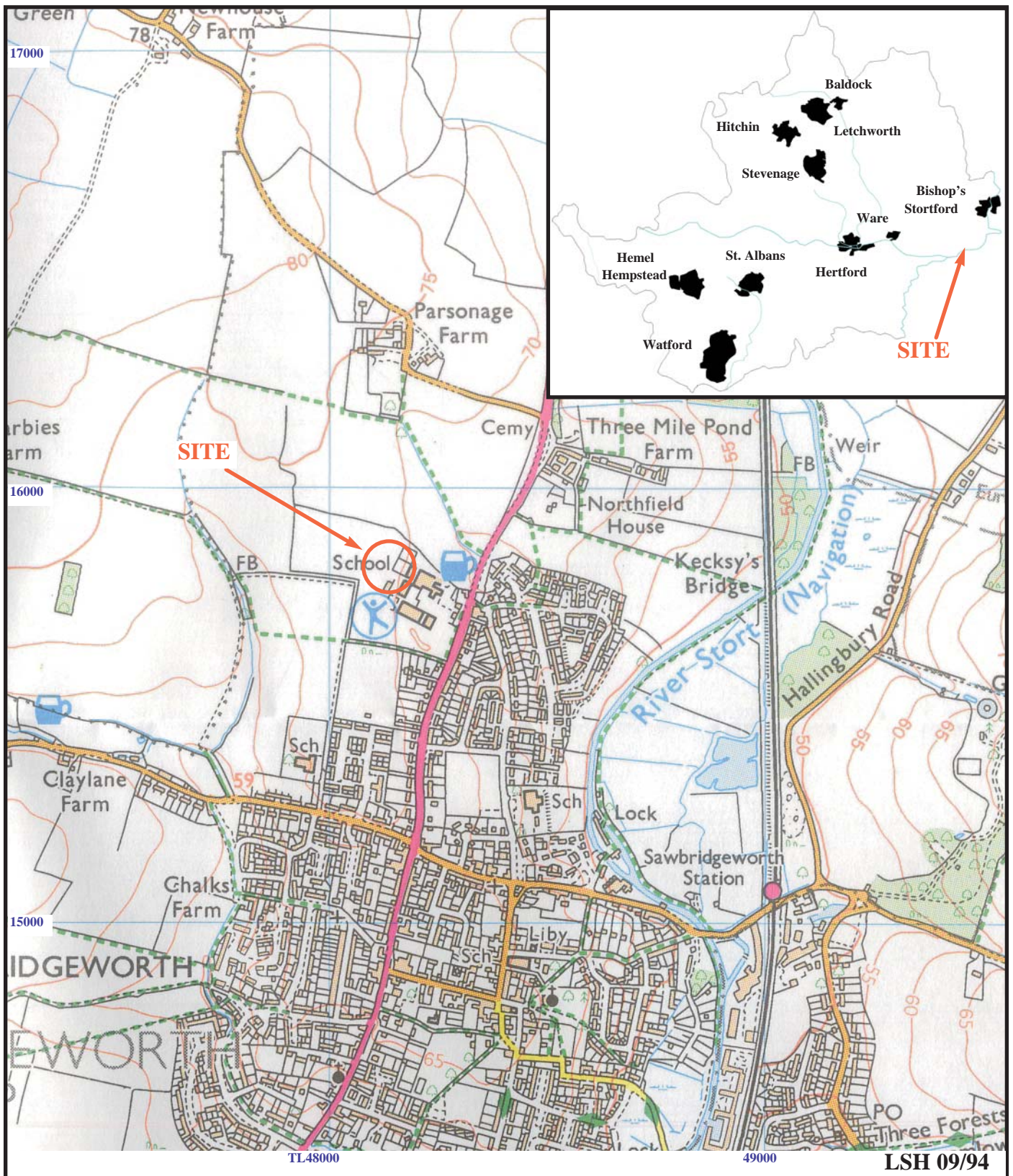
WYAS, 2007, 'Geophysical Survey: Land at the Leventhorpe School, Cambridge Road, Sawbridgworth

Summary of fieldwork results:

Nothing of certain archaeological significance was encountered. Two linear features (possibly the same feature) contained 19th century and modern finds. A pit and a posthole were undated.

Author of summary: Heather Hopkins

Date of summary: 2-11-2009

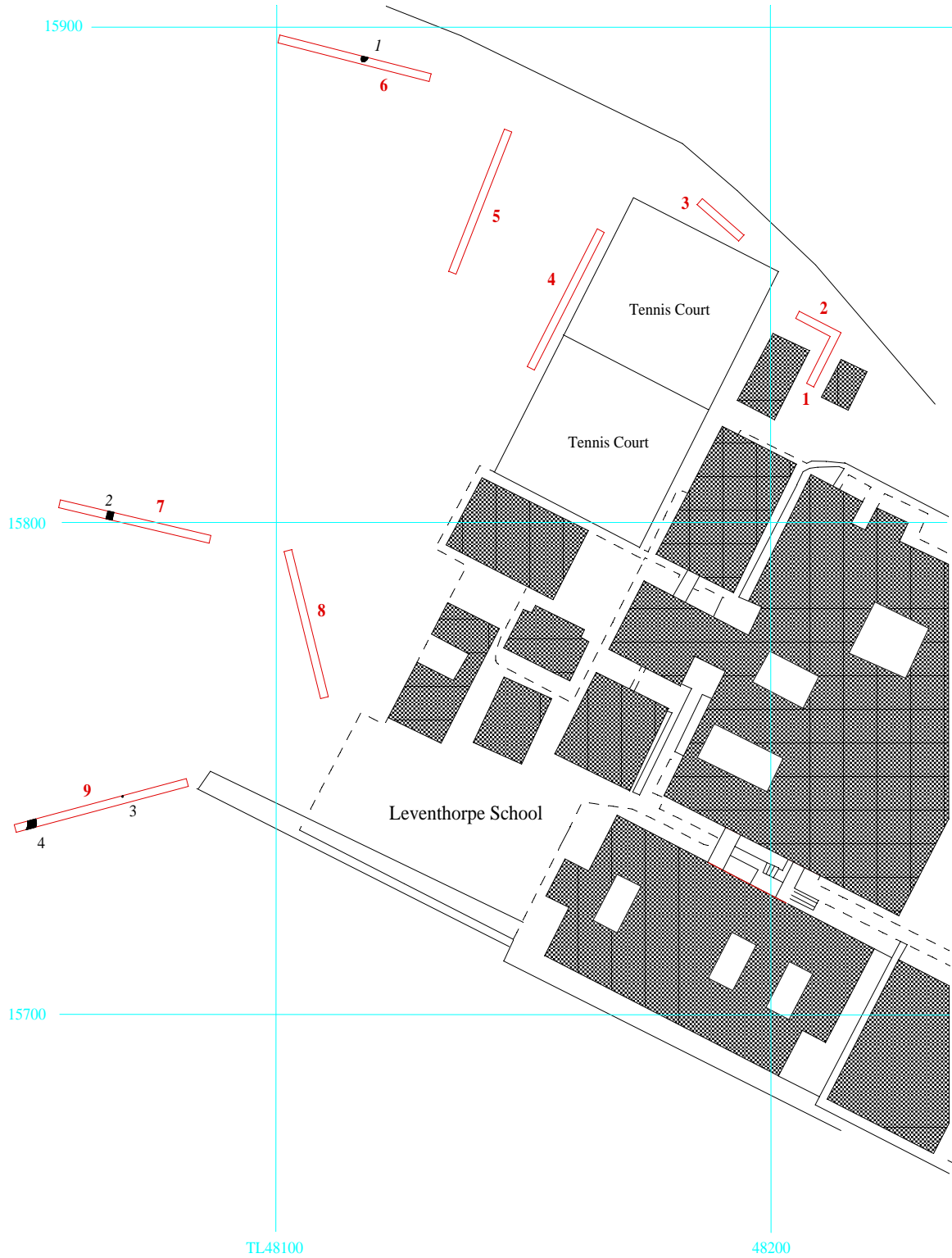


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Figure 1. Location of site within Sawbridgeworth and Hertfordshire.

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125m

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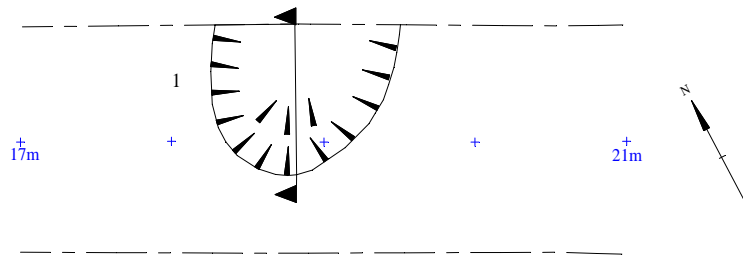
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Figure 2. Location of trenches.

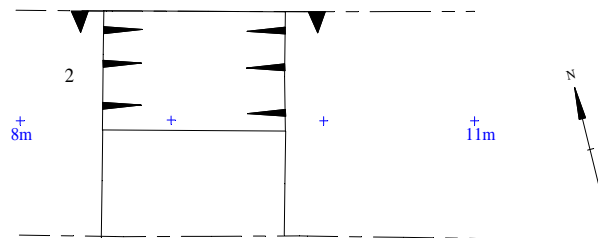


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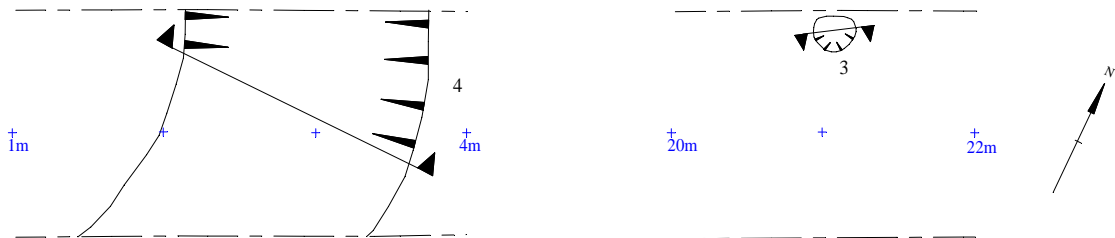
Trench 6



Trench 7



Trench 9

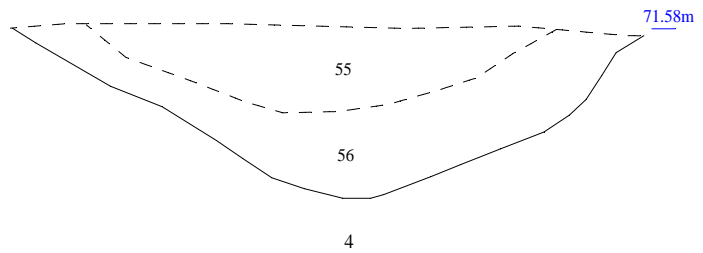
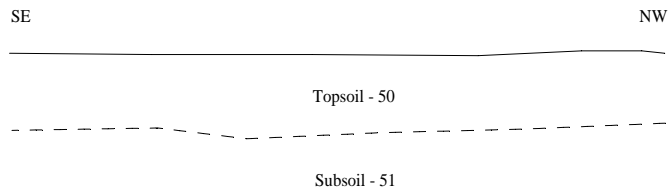
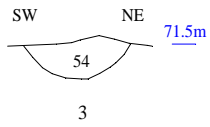
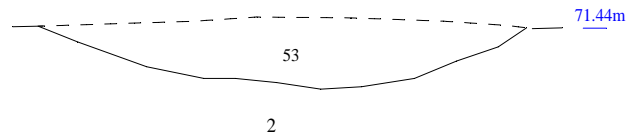
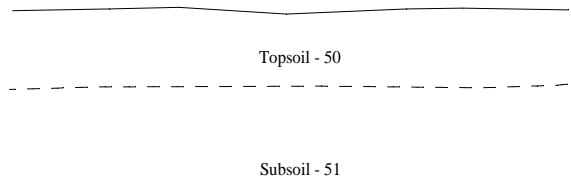
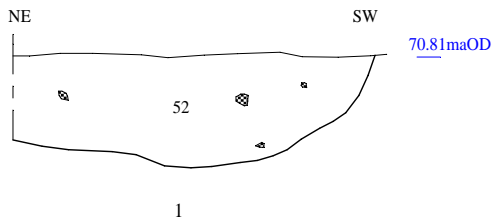


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Figure 3. Plans of features in trenches.

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Figure 4. Sections of excavated features.



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



Plate 2. Trench 2, looking south east, scales: 2m and 0.5m.

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Plates 1 and 2.

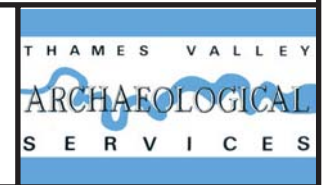




Plate 3. Trench 3, looking south east, scales: 2m and 0.5m.



Plate 4. Trench 4, looking north east, scales: 2m and 0.5m.

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Plates 3 and 4.

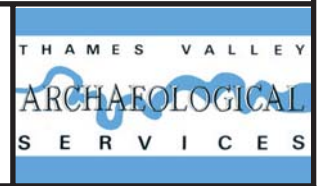




Plate 5. Trench 5, looking north east, scales: 2m and 0.5m.



Plate 6. Trench 6, looking east south east, scales: 2m and 0.5m.

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Plate 5 and 6.

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Plate 7. Trench 7, looking east south east, scales: 2m and 0.5m.



Plate 8. Trench 8, looking north west, scales: 2m and 0.5m.

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Plate 7 and 8.

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Plate 9. Trench 9, looking east north east, Scales 2m and 0.5m.



Plate 10. Trench 6, Feature 1, looking east, Scales 0.5m and 0.1m.

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Plates 9 and 10.

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Plate 11. Trench 9, Feature 4, looking north, Scales 0.5m and 0.4m.

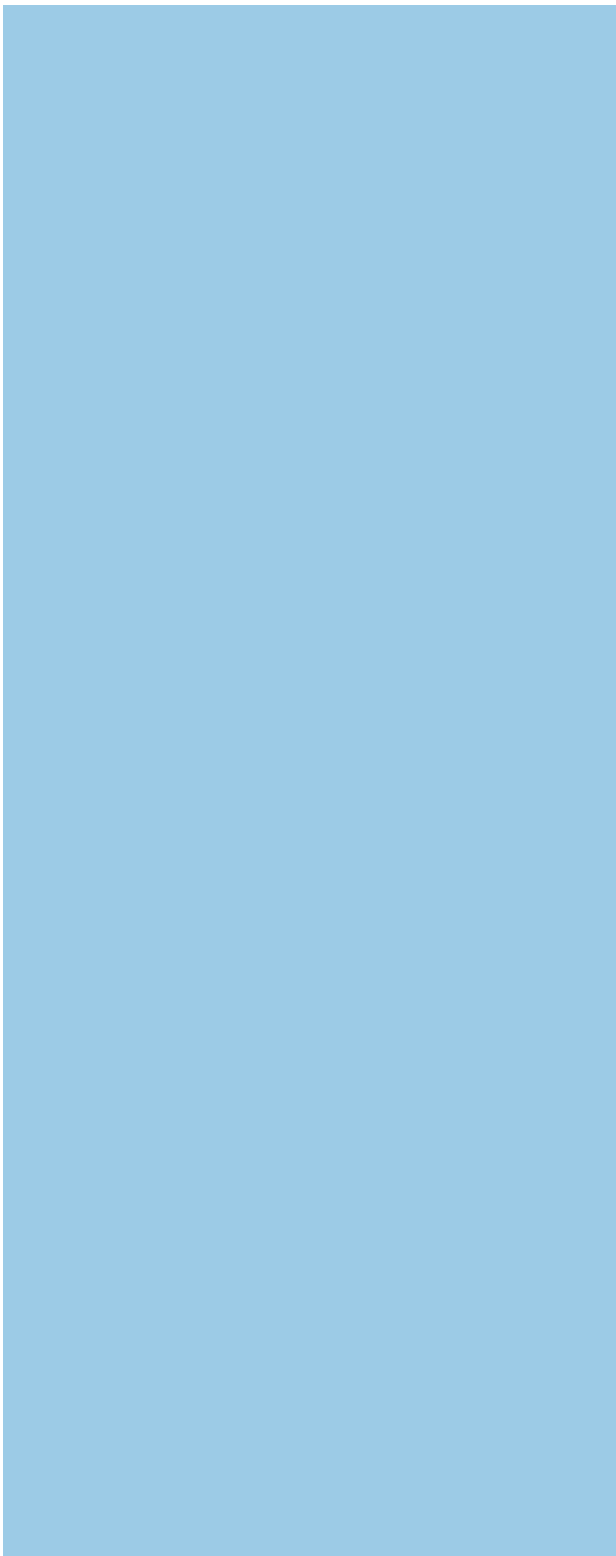
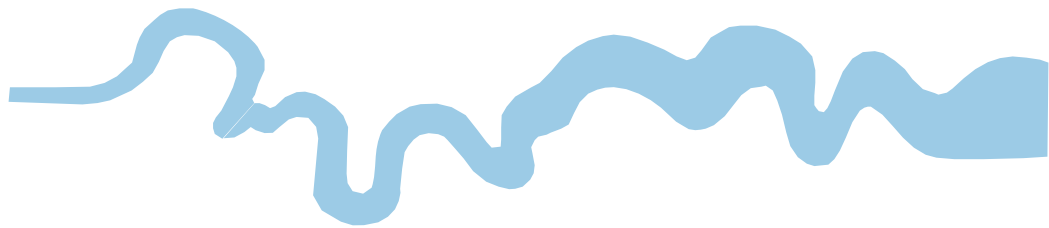
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Plate 11.

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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
Iron Age _____	BC/AD 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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