

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Chalgrave Manor Golf Club, Dunstable Road,
Chalgrave, Bedfordshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by Tim Dawson

Site Code: CMB09/44

(TL 0115 2750)

**Chalgrave Manor Golf Club, Dunstable Road,
Chalgrave, Bedfordshire**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief
For Woodland Environmental Ltd**

by Tim Dawson and Andrew Munday

Thames Valley Archaeological
Services Ltd

Site Code CMB09/44

June 2010

Summary

Site name: Chalgrave Manor Golf Club, Dunstable Road, Chalgrave, Bedfordshire

Grid reference: TL 0115 2750

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 28th April - 7th May 2010

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Tim Dawson

Site code: CMB 09/44

Area of site: c.1.6ha

Summary of results: Four features, consisting of a possible shallow pit and three possible plough furrows, were identified. The features are of later medieval or later date. Two sherds of later medieval pottery were found

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

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford✓ 12.06.10 Steve Preston✓ 12.06.10
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Chalgrave Manor Golf Club, Dunstable Road, Chalgrave, Bedfordshire

An Archaeological Watching Brief

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Report 09/44

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at Chalgrave Manor Golf Club, Dunstable Road, Chalgrave, Bedfordshire (TL 0115 2750) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Gary Owen of Woodland Environmental Ltd, 3 Priestlands Lane, Sherborne, Dorset, DT9 4HL.

Planning permission (SB/TP/2008/1178) has been gained from Central Bedfordshire Council (formerly Bedfordshire County Council) for the creation of an irrigation reservoir, landscaping and construction of a bridleway at Chalgrave Manor Golf Club. The consent was subject to a condition requiring a programme of archaeological investigation. This report only encompasses the works affecting the northern edge of the golf club.

This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Planning Policy Guidance, Archaeology and Planning (PPG16 1990), and the Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was based on a brief (CBCC 2009) supplied by, and carried out to a specification approved by, Mr Martin Oake, Archaeologist for Central Bedfordshire Conservation and Design Team and monitored by him. The fieldwork was undertaken by Tim Dawson between 28th April and 7th May 2010. The site code is CMB 09/44.

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

Location, topography and geology

The golf club is located 0.5km south of Toddington, 1.5km north-west of Chalton and 2.5km north of Houghton Regis (Fig.1). The overall golf course site covers roughly 24ha, but the work carried out for this report covers c. 1.6ha of the total area. This area is located on the northern edge of the golf course, which is bounded by an east-west bridleway to the north (Fig. 2). The underlying geology is Woburn Sand Formation, overlying Gault Clay (BGS 1992).

Archaeological background

The site is located in an area of known archaeology summarized by the design brief for this site (CBCC 2009). Field systems and track ways are noted on the site, noted as cropmarks and earthworks. The broad historical

background for the parish has been summarized in a parish survey (Coleman 1986). The later Medieval Manor, with associated fish ponds, is situated to the east of the golf course.

Of specific significance in relation to the site area is the former presence of a motte and bailey castle known to have existed at Chalgrave (HER 721), the significance of which, along with the location of the parish church (HER 946), vicarage (HER 11804) and chantry chapel (HER 11803), indicates the importance of the parish in the Medieval period. The castle, at the north-west corner of the golf course, was excavated in 1970. It was built in the 11th century over earlier occupation, extended in the 12th century, and had fallen from use by the 14th when the site was occupied by agricultural buildings (Pinder and Davison 1988). No sign of an earthwork remains. Cropmarks in the form of field systems, also probably of Medieval date, are also noted (HER 9076 and 11975).

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the removal of topsoil and/or subsoil. This involved continued supervision of machining which was undertaken using a bladed 360° mechanical excavator. If any archaeologically significant deposits, primarily of Medieval date, but potentially of any date, were present, hand definition, sampling and excavation would take place to identify date, character and function, within a potentially large landscape use.

Specific research objectives for the project were informed by regional research frameworks (Glazebrook 1997; Brown and Glazebrook 2002; Oake *et al.* 2007). The project aimed to answer the following questions about the site:

What is the nature and date of the landscape features (eg fields, boundary features, large enclosures) and what is their spatial organization?
How did these landscape features relate to occupied areas?
Are there occupied areas within the proposal site? If so when were the sites first occupied and when were they abandoned? and
What is the palaeoenvironmental setting of the area?

Results

The site comprised a whole length strip c. 230m long x 13m wide. This strip followed the slightly curved northern boundary and, to the south, the course of the bridleway that runs across this part of the site. The stratigraphy was simply 0.10m topsoil over 0.20m subsoil over natural red/orange flinty clay geology.

The only archaeologically relevant features exposed were found in the extreme western part of the site, all below subsoil. These were partially surviving parallel linear features identified as furrows 8, 9 and 10, and one possible pit (Fig. 3).

Possible pit 1 was 0.34m in diameter and was just 0.05m deep (Pl. 1). Pottery from its fill is late medieval in date, but this single small sherd cannot provide confident dating for the feature. The fill was a mid brownish-grey clay (52), which was free of inclusions.

The parallel linear features have been interpreted as agricultural furrows. However, they were spaced at around 1-2m apart and it is possible that they are of another origin such as wheel ruts. Furrow 10 to the south, was examined in slots 2 and 3. Ceramic building material was the only find recovered from its fill (53 and 54 respectively). This furrow was only seen to disturb the natural to a very shallow depth, 0.02m deep and was 0.15m wide.

Furrow 8 was investigated at slots 4, 5 and 7. All the fills contained ceramic building material. It was 0.3m wide and cut the natural to a depth of 0.06m. A soil sample was retained from slot 7 (see below).

Furrow 9 was only investigated with slot 6, and was similar in character to furrows 8 and 10. It was seen to cut the natural to 0.04m deep and was 0.3m wide. This slot also contained ceramic building material from its fill.

The only other finds of note were occasional sherds of modern pottery, ceramic drain and ceramic building material recovered from the subsoil, over the remaining parts of the site.

Finds

Pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised two medieval sherds with a total weight of 14g. The wares are types which are well-known in the region. They were recorded using the codes and chronology of the Bedfordshire County Archaeology Service type-series (e.g., Baker and Hassall 1979) were used. One piece was identified in the subsoil and the reduced ware was uncovered from Pit 1. The pottery occurrence was as follows:

C59b: Sandy ware, AD1300-1400. 1 sherd, 5g. Subsoil

E01: Late medieval reduced ware, AD1550 – 1700 century. 1 sherd, 9g. Pit 1

Both types are common finds in the region, and likely to have been deposited in manure scatters on open fields.

Ceramic building material

In total, 21 pieces of ceramic building material were recovered from subsoil in Area 1, all being tile, which seems to be late post-medieval or modern in date, and is not highly rolled. This, however, is not the case for the 5 pieces, uncovered from slots 3, 5, 6 and 7, which are more abraded and may well be medieval or early post-medieval. The degree of abrasion, however, makes identification uncertain and in any case indicates they may have suffered several episodes of redeposition, indicative of loss within an agricultural setting, further

weakening their usefulness as potential dating information. A catalogue of material uncovered from subsoil and numbered contexts can be found in Appendix 2.

Clay tobacco pipe

A single clay pipe stem fragment was recovered from an area where the clay natural was disturbed and mixed with the subsoil. This cannot be dated more closely than post-medieval.

Environmental samples

One soil sample was taken from the site, retrieved from furrow slot 7, of which 30 litres were floated with the residues collected using a 0.25m mesh. The flot was examined under a hand lens at x10 magnification. Remains from the sample, though predominately weed seeds, included one charred indeterminate cereal grain, and the small collection of partial charred remains have been retained.

Conclusion

The topsoil and subsoil stripping uncovered very little of archaeological interest comprising three shallow linear features interpreted as agricultural furrows, along with a shallow circular feature. Although it remains possible that these features are medieval, the dating evidence is slender. The furrows are too close together to be convincing as representing medieval ridge and furrow and may, alternatively be wheel ruts associated with uses of the nearby bridleway. Neither pit nor furrows would seem out of context for the edge of agricultural activity on the periphery of a Medieval settlement, such as the 14th-century farm that succeeded the castle, but identifying them as such must be speculative at best. No structural or other evidence suggesting occupation was uncovered during these works.

References

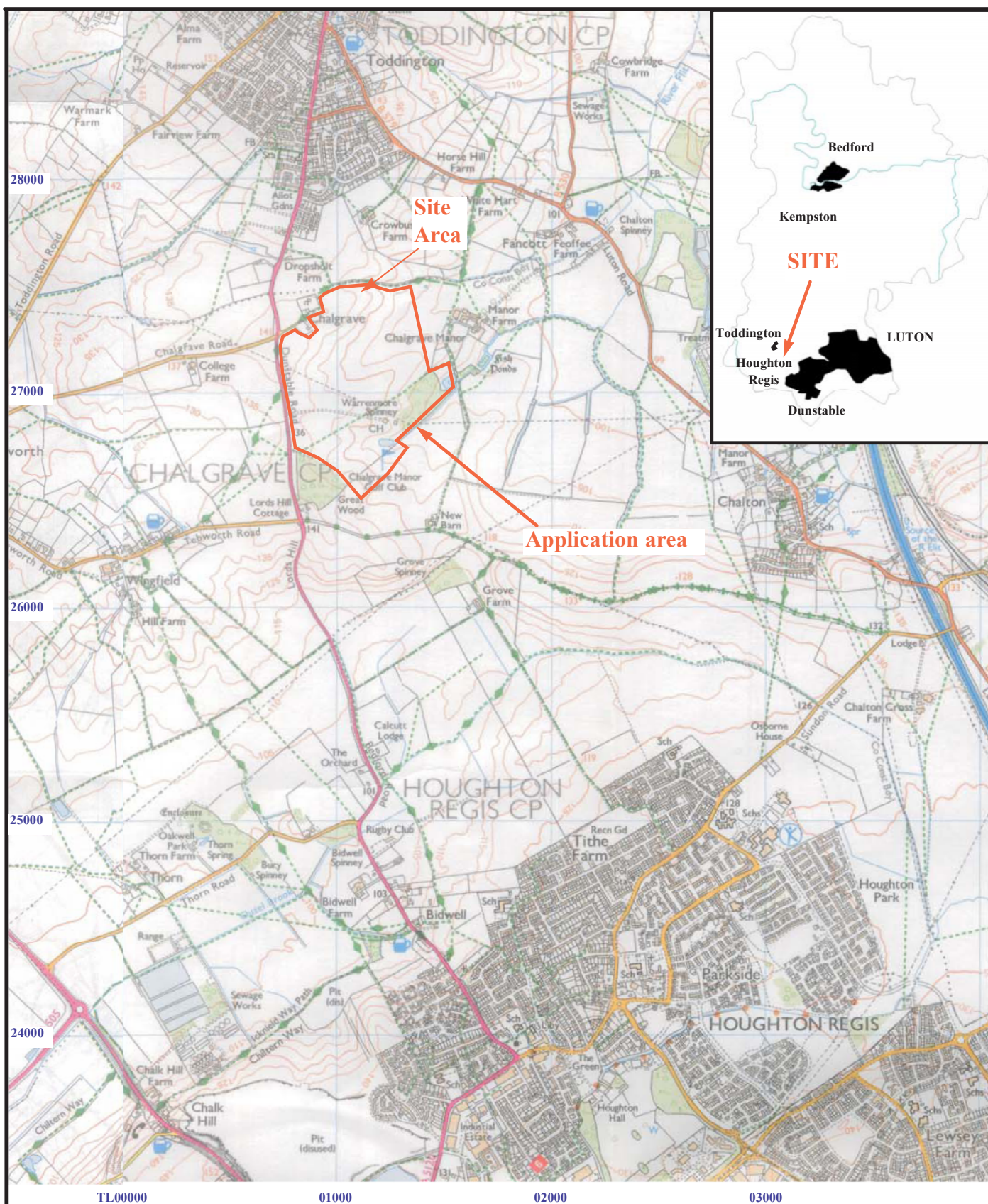
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APPENDIX 1: Feature index

<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
1	52	Pit	Medieval?	pottery
2	53	Furrow slot	Medieval?	-
3	54	Furrow slot	Medieval?	tile
4	55	Furrow slot	Medieval?	None
5	56	Furrow slot	Medieval?	tile
6	57	Furrow slot	Medieval?	tile
7	58	Furrow slot	Medieval?	tile

APPENDIX 2: Ceramic building material catalogue

<i>Finds</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Deposit</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Fragments</i>	<i>Weight (g)</i>
1		51	Subsoil	2	150
2		51	Subsoil	1	2
3		51	Subsoil	3	45
4		51	Subsoil	1	40
6		51	Subsoil	1	55
7		51	Subsoil	2	145
8		51	Subsoil	1	55
	2	53	Furrow	1	40
	3	54	Furrow	1	10
	5	56	Furrow	3	40
	6	57	Furrow	1	8
	7	58	Furrow	1	3



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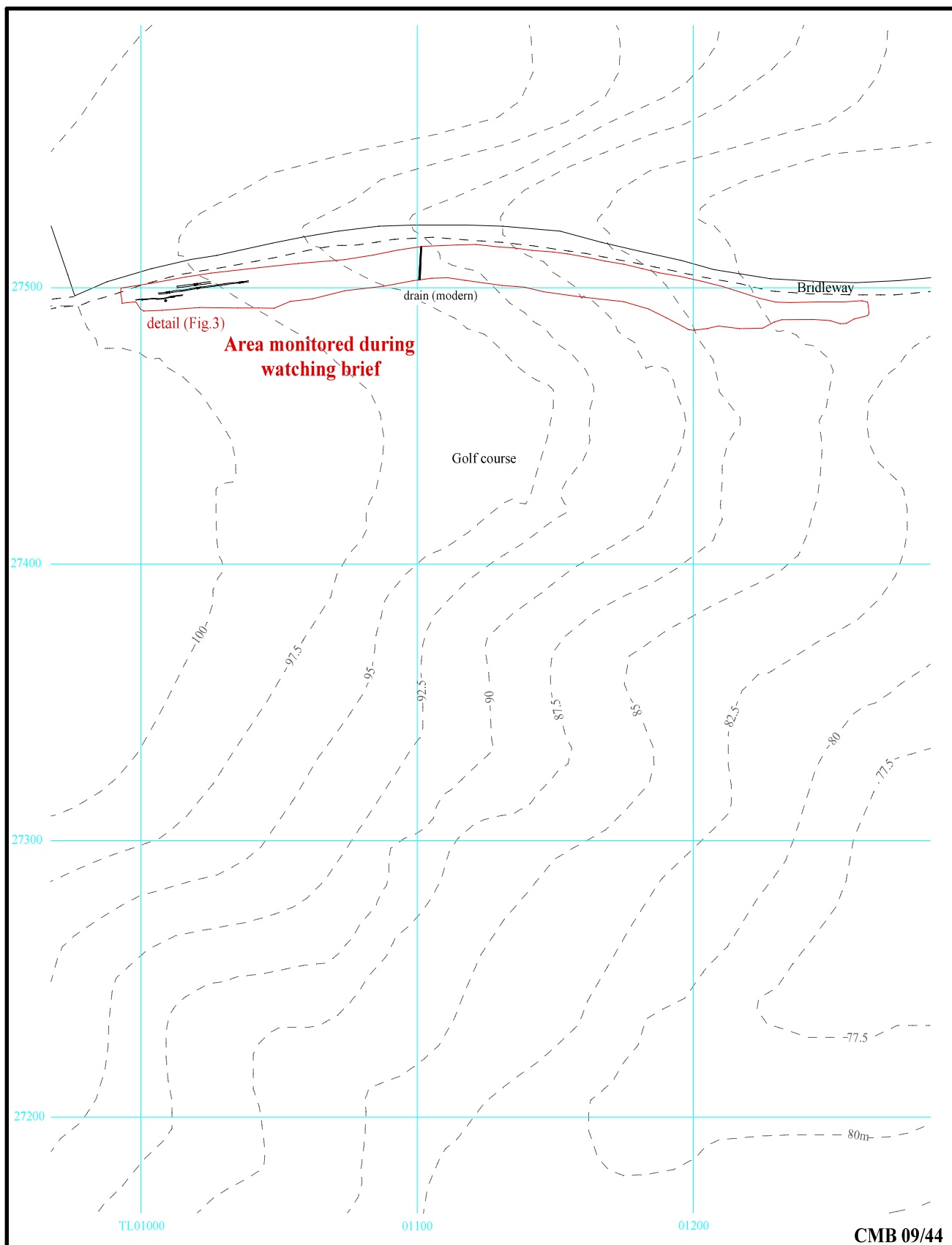
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Figure 1. Location of site in relation to Houghton Regis,
Toddington and within Bedfordshire.

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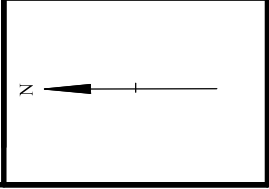
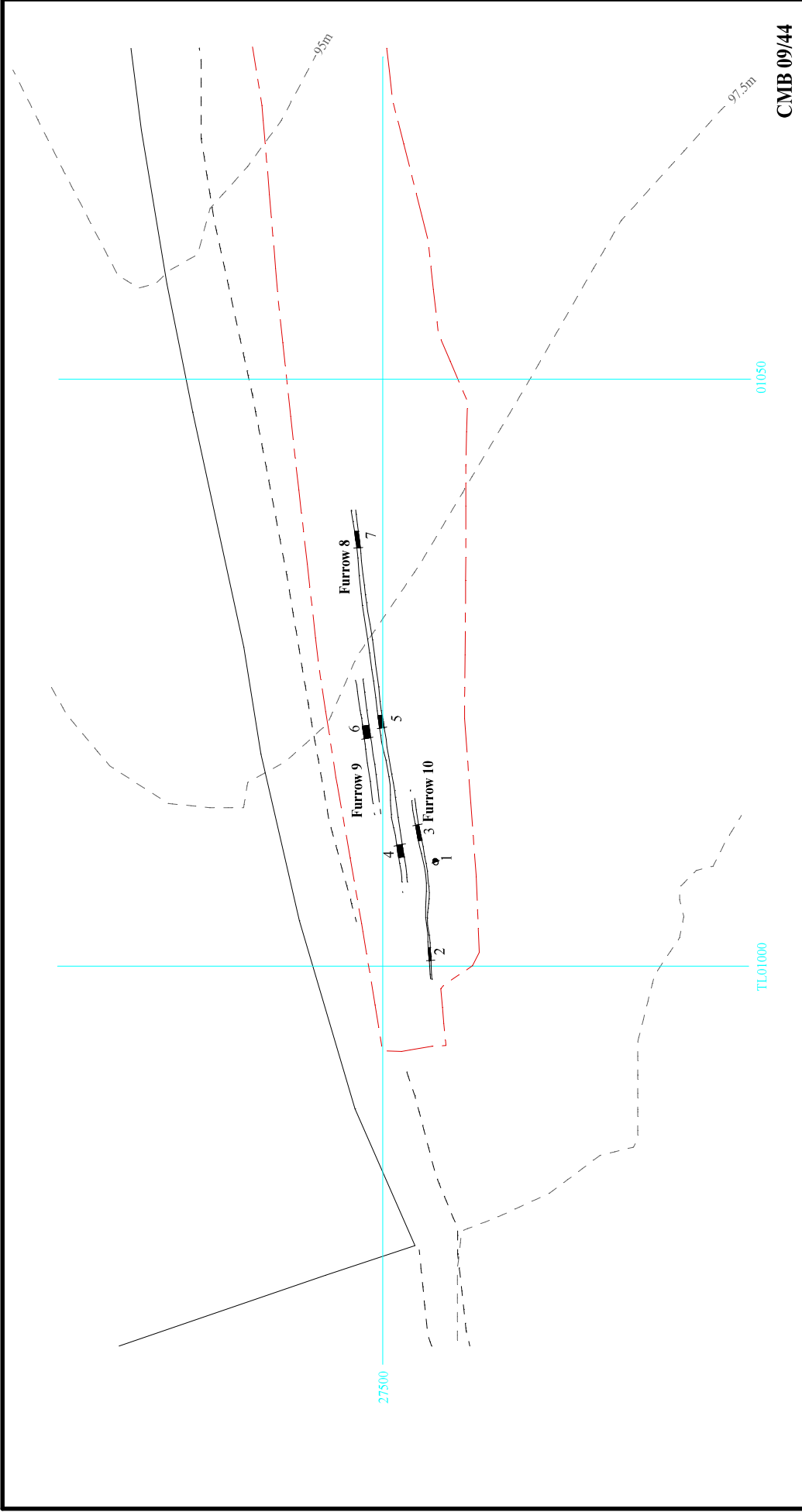


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Figure 2. Location of the observed area within the northern half of the site.



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Chalgrave Golf Course, Dunstable Road, Chalgrave, Bedfordshire, 2009 Archaeological watching brief

Figure 3. Detail of investigated features.





Plate 1. Pit 1, looking west, scales: 0.3m and 0.1m.



Plate 2. Slot 7 in Furrow 8, looking west, scales: 0.3m and 0.1m

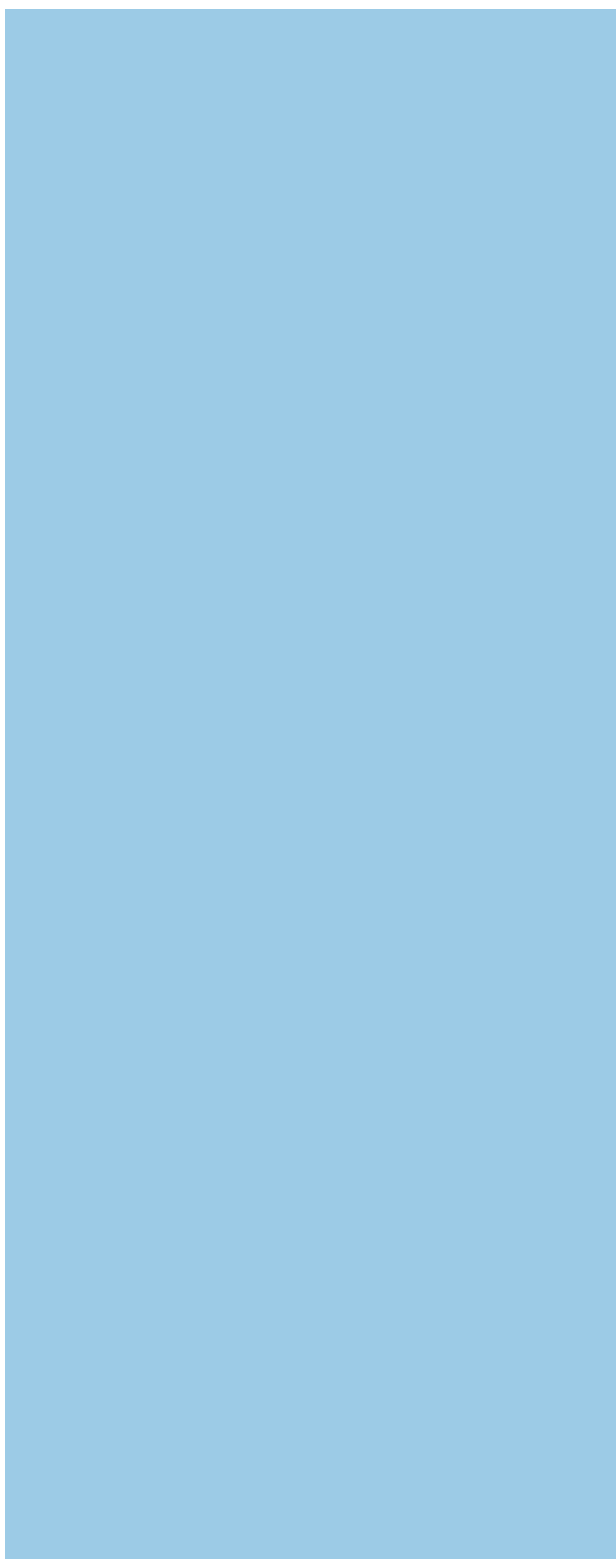
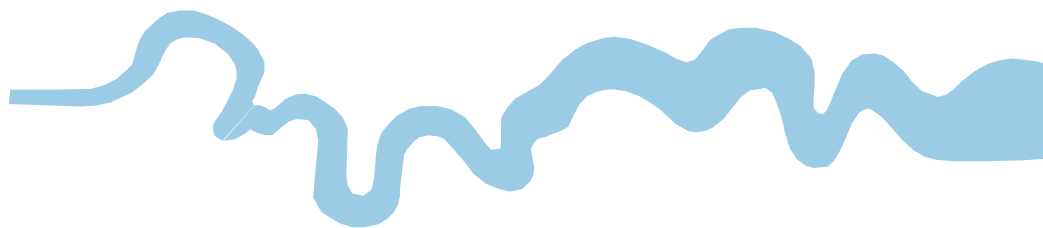
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Plates 1 and 2.

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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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