

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Land at Cranes Court, Cranes Lane,
Basildon, Essex**

Archaeological Evaluation

by James McNicoll-Norbury

**Site Code: CCB10/48
(TQ 7133 8987)**

Land at Cranes Court, Cranes Lane, Basildon, Essex

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for CgMs Consulting**

by JamesMcNicoll-Norbury
ThamesValleyArchaeologicalServices
Ltd

SiteCodeBACC10

June 2010

Summary

Site name: Land at Cranes Court, Cranes Lane, Basildon, Essex

Grid reference: TQ 7133 8987

Site activity: Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 20th May – 23rd June 2010

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: James McNicoll-Norbury

Site code: BACC10

Area of site: 0.52ha

Summary of results: Three modern gullies were identified on the eastern side of the site, the remainder of the site had been subject to previous work including terracing resulting in differing levels of the natural geology across the site.

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

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford ✓ 30.06.10
	Steve Preston ✓ 30.06.10

Land at Cranes Court, Cranes Lane, Basildon, Essex An Archaeological Evaluation

by James McNicoll-Norbury

Report 10/48

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Cranes Court, Cranes Lane, Basildon, Essex (TQ 7133 8987) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Lorraine Darton of CgMs Consulting, Morley House, 26 Holborn Viaduct, London, EC1A 2AT on behalf of Denne Construction.

A planning application for the construction of a new residential development (10/00130/FUL) has the following condition added to its approval stating that ‘No development, or preliminary groundworks of any kind shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work and recording in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant, and approved by the local planning authority.’

This is in accordance with *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 Richard Havis, Senior Historic Environment Officer from the Historic Environment Branch of Essex County Council who acts as the archaeological adviser to Basildon Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by James McNicoll-Norbury and Dan Bray between 20th May and 23rd June 2010 and the site code is BACC10. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Southend Museum or a similar agreed repository, in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located in Cranes Court that lies immediately south of Cranes Farm Road and west of Church Road in the northern area of Basildon, a tributary of the River Crouch flows 900m west of the site. The site was previously occupied by a residential development comprising four blocks of flats and a car park with gardens to the west and north of the site, the site had also been previously terraced (Fig. 2). The site lies on London Clay (BGS 1976) and the site lies between 40.65m in the west and 44.48m in the east Above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological background

The archaeological background stems from the position of the site in a historic suburb of Basildon called Fryerns. Fryerns appears to have medieval origins as it is not mentioned in Domesday Book (Williams and Martin 2002). The site lies just to the north west of the church of the Holy Cross at Fryerns which has its origins in the 14th Century. Further to the south east is Fryerns Moat- a medieval manor house or hunting lodge. It is usually considered that the parish church lay originally at the centre of the settlement, though it is possible that the moated site was also a focus for contemporary occupation.

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 evaluate the likely impact of past land use and development, to identify any evidence of medieval or post medieval occupation and its nature and extent and identify any evidence of the relationship of any occupation with the nearby Church.

Seven trenches were to be dug using a JCB-type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision at different positions across the site to target areas of the proposed new development. Any identified archaeological features were to be excavated by hand and spoilheaps were to be monitored for finds and scanned with a metal detector.

Results

Watching Brief

Prior to the evaluation a watching brief was carried out during the demolition works, during this phase it was observed that the site had previously been terraced quite substantially in different areas across the site and in the lower levels the natural geology was seen to have already been heavily truncated by the footings of the previous buildings, which were then removed. No archaeological deposits were identified during the course of the watching brief.

Evaluation

The trenches were dug more or less where intended but some had to be shortened or re-aligned, due to the presence of site constraints (Fig. 3). Trench 5 had to be moved from its intended position due to the presence of a live gas main and other services. The trenches ranged from 18.4-25.2m in length and were 0.40-1.20m deep.

A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1

Trench 1 was aligned WSW-ENE and was 18.8m long and 0.50m deep. The stratigraphy comprised 0.15m topsoil overlying 0.32m made ground which in turn overlay natural clay. No archaeological deposits were identified.

Trench 2

Trench 2 was aligned SSW-NNE and was 24.8m long and between 0.60-1.20m deep. The stratigraphy in the centre of the trench comprised 0.05m Tarmac, 0.15m hoggin gravel, 0.33m made ground consisting of silty clay and demolition rubble over natural geology. The northern and southern ends of the trench had been deeply truncated by foundations and natural geology was not observed. No archaeological deposits were identified.

Trench 3

Trench 3 was aligned SW-NE and was 24.6m long and 0.40m deep. The stratigraphy comprised 0.25m made ground overlying natural geology, the northern end of the trench was heavily truncated by previous foundations. No archaeological deposits were identified.

Trench 4 (Plate 1)

Trench 4 was aligned W-E and was 25.0m long and 0.40m deep. The stratigraphy comprised 0.33m topsoil which in turn overlay the natural geology. The natural geology was variously truncated by previous foundations. No archaeological deposits were identified.

Trench 5

Trench 5 was aligned S-N and was 24.8m long and 0.45m deep. The stratigraphy comprised 0.42m made ground overlying natural geology. No archaeological deposits were identified.

Trench 6 (Fig. 4 and Plate 2)

Trench 6 was aligned SW-NE and was 17.9m long and 0.48m deep. The stratigraphy comprised 0.20m topsoil overlying 0.23m made ground which in turn overlies natural geology. Three gullies [1, 2 and 3] were identified in the trench; upon examination these were found to contain modern debris in the form of drain pipe, brick, tile and slate. No archaeological deposits were identified.

Trench 7 (Plate)

Trench 7 was aligned NW-SE and was 25.2m long and 0.52m deep. At the western end of the trench for the first 3m, the stratigraphy comprised 0.33m topsoil overlying natural geology. The remainder of the trench had been truncated by previous foundations.

Finds

Various fragments of modern debris were identified on the site in all of the trenches with further fragments of modern brick, tile, slate and fragments of drain pipes being found in Gullies 1-3 in Trench 6. These were retained on site.

Conclusion

The evaluation has revealed that the archaeologically relevant level, that is the top of the undisturbed natural geology has survived on the site but only in fragments of varying extent. The earlier watching brief had observed the presence of terracing on the site some of which had led to truncation of the top of the natural geology in addition to areas where the former buildings stood. For the less disturbed parts of the site, no artefacts of medieval or earlier date were observed and the only cut features (three linear features) were unambiguously of modern date. On the basis of this evaluation exercise, the site therefore has no archaeological potential.

References

BGS, 1976, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 258/259, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
PPG16, 1990, *Archaeology and Planning*. DoE Planning Policy Guidance note 16. (HMSO).
Williams, A and Martin, G H, 2002, *Domesday Book, a complete translation*, London

APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at S or W end

Trench	Length (m)	Breadth (m)	Depth (m)	Comment
1	18.8	1.8	0.5	0-0.15m topsoil; 0.15-0.47m made ground; 0.47m+ clay (natural geology). No archaeology
2	24.8	1.8	0.60-1.20	0-0.05m tarmac; 0.05-0.20m hoggin gravels; 0.20-53m made ground; 0.53m+ natural geology. At north and south ends made ground extends down to 1.20m. No archaeology
3	24.55	1.8	0.40	0-0.25m made ground consisting of gravels; 0.25m+ natural geology. Modern services identified in trench.
4	25.0	1.8	0.40	0-0.33m topsoil; 0.33m+ natural geology. No archaeology [Plate 1]
5	24.8	1.8	0.45	0-0.42m made ground consisting of gravels; 0.42m+ natural geology. Trench truncated at north end. No archaeology.
6	17.8	1.8	0.48	0-0.20m topsoil; 0.20-0.43m made ground consisting of crush; 0.43m+ natural geology. Gullies 1-3 [Plate 2]
7	25.2	1.8	0.52	0-0.33m topsoil; 0.33m+ natural geology. Trench truncated after 3m. No archaeology

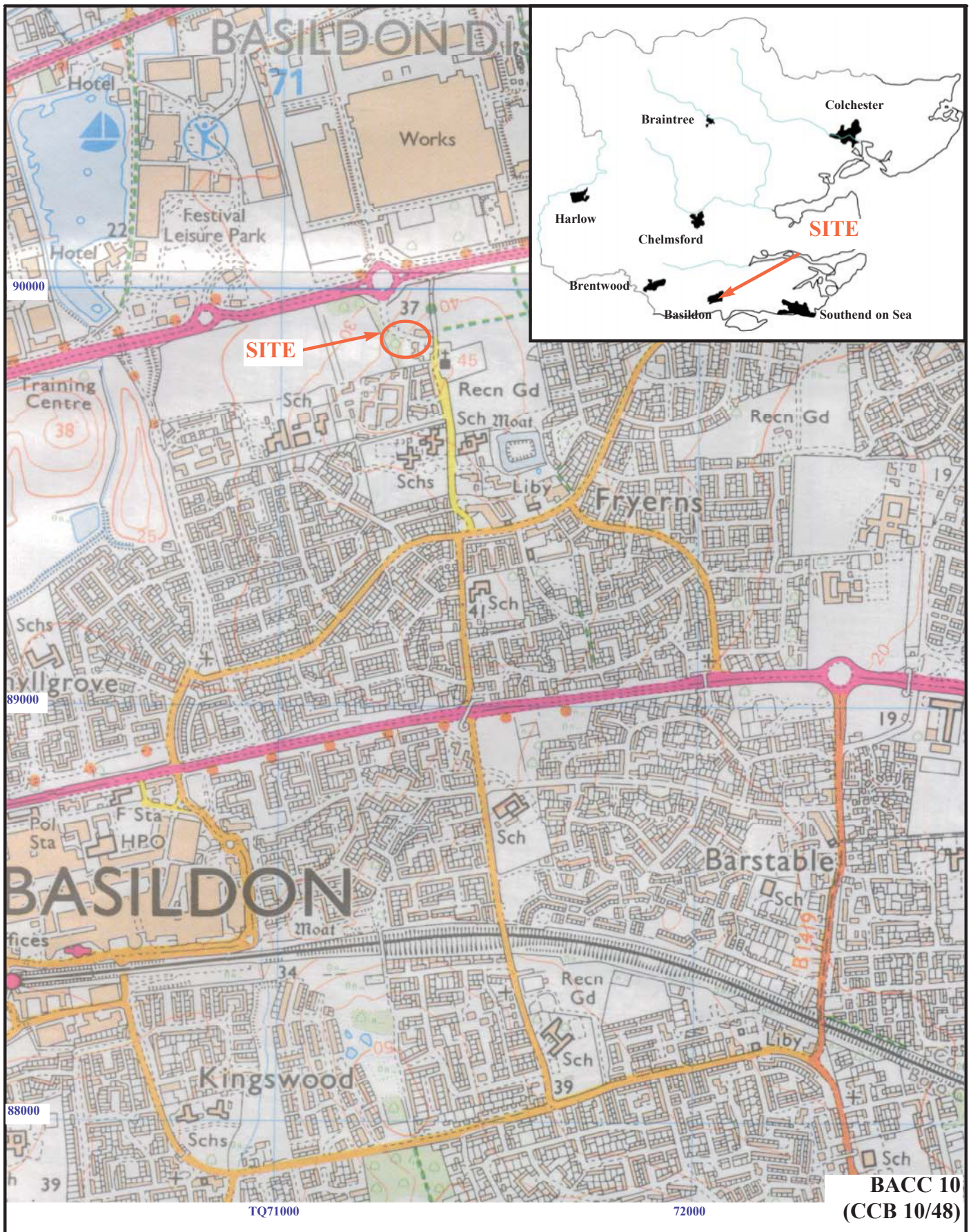
APPENDIX 2: Feature details

Trench	Cut	Fill (s)	Type	Date	Dating evidence
6	1	52	Gully	Modern	Brick/tile, slate, drain pipe
6	2	53	Gully	Modern	Brick/tile, slate, drain pipe
6	3	54	Gully	Modern	Brick/tile, slate, drain pipe

ESSEX HERITAGE CONSERVATION RECORD/ ESSEX ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

SUMMARY SHEET

Site Name/Address: Land at Cranes Court, Cranes Lane, Basildon, Essex	
Parish: Basildon	District: Basildon
NGR: TQ 7133 8987	Site Code: BACC10
Type of Work: Evaluation	Site Director/Group: James McNicoll-Norbury, Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd
Date of Work: 20th May – 23rd June 2010	Size of Area Investigated: 0.52ha
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: Southend?	Funding Source: Denne Construction
Further work anticipated? No	Related EHCR Nos:
Final Report: Land at Cranes Court, Cranes Lane, Basildon, Essex: An Archaeological Evaluation by James McNicoll-Norbury	
Periods represented: Modern	
Summary of Fieldwork Results: Three modern gullies were identified on the eastern side of the site, the remainder of the site had been subject to previous work including terracing resulting in differing levels of the natural geology across the site.	
Previous Summaries/Reports: None	
Author of Summary: Steve Preston	Date of Summary: 30/06/2010



**Cranes Court, Cranes Lane, Basildon, Essex, 2010
Archaeological watching brief and evaluation**

Figure 1. Location of site in relation to Basildon and Essex.

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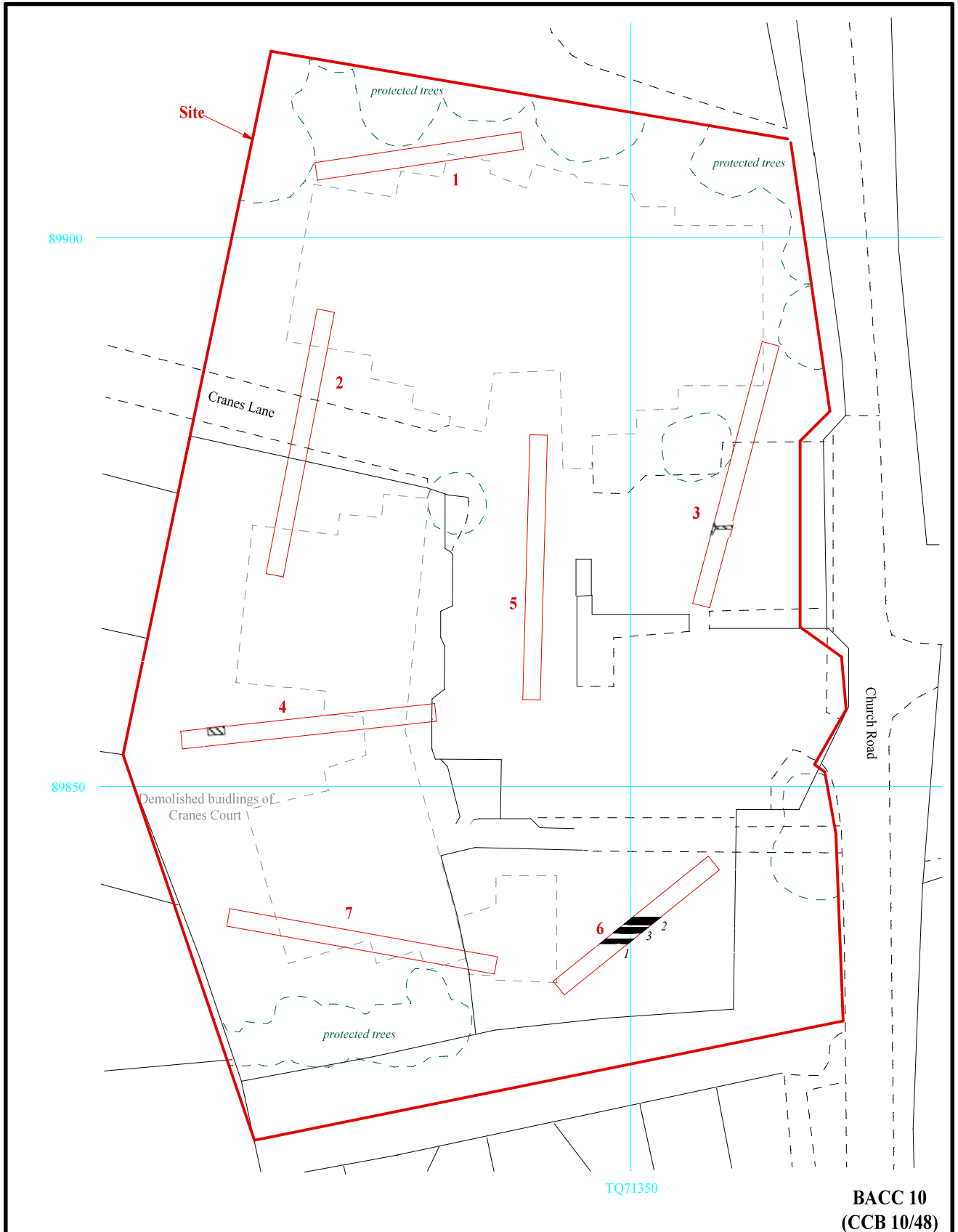


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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Cranes Lane,
prior to demolition.

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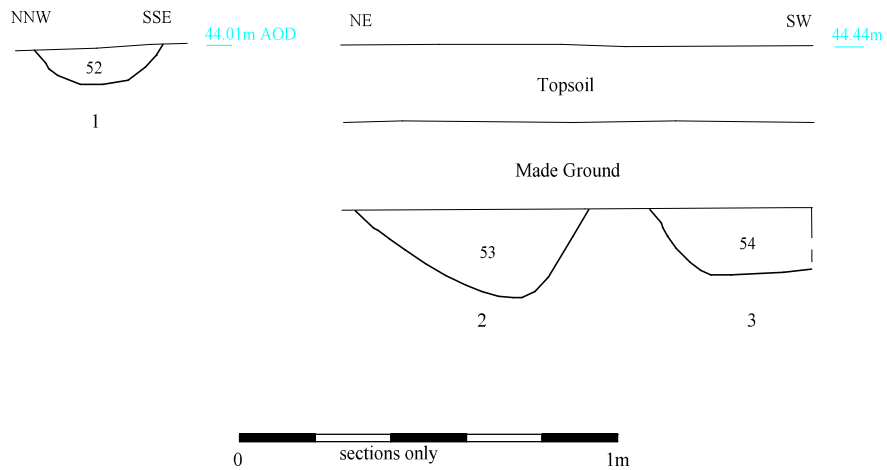
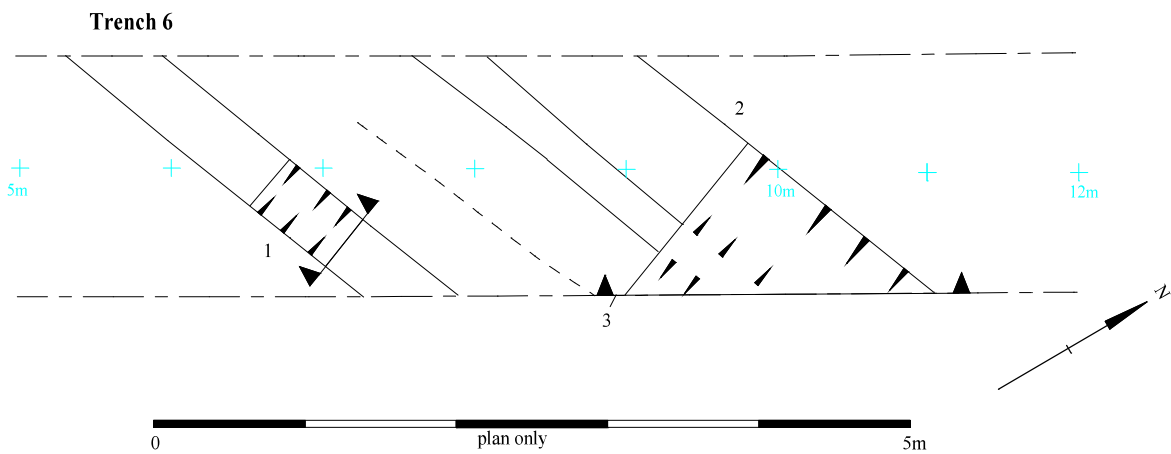
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Figure 3. Location of evaluation trenches





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Figure 4. Detail of Trench 6 and sections.

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Plate 1. Trench 4, looking east, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 2. Trench 6, looking south. Scales: horizontal 2m and 0.5m

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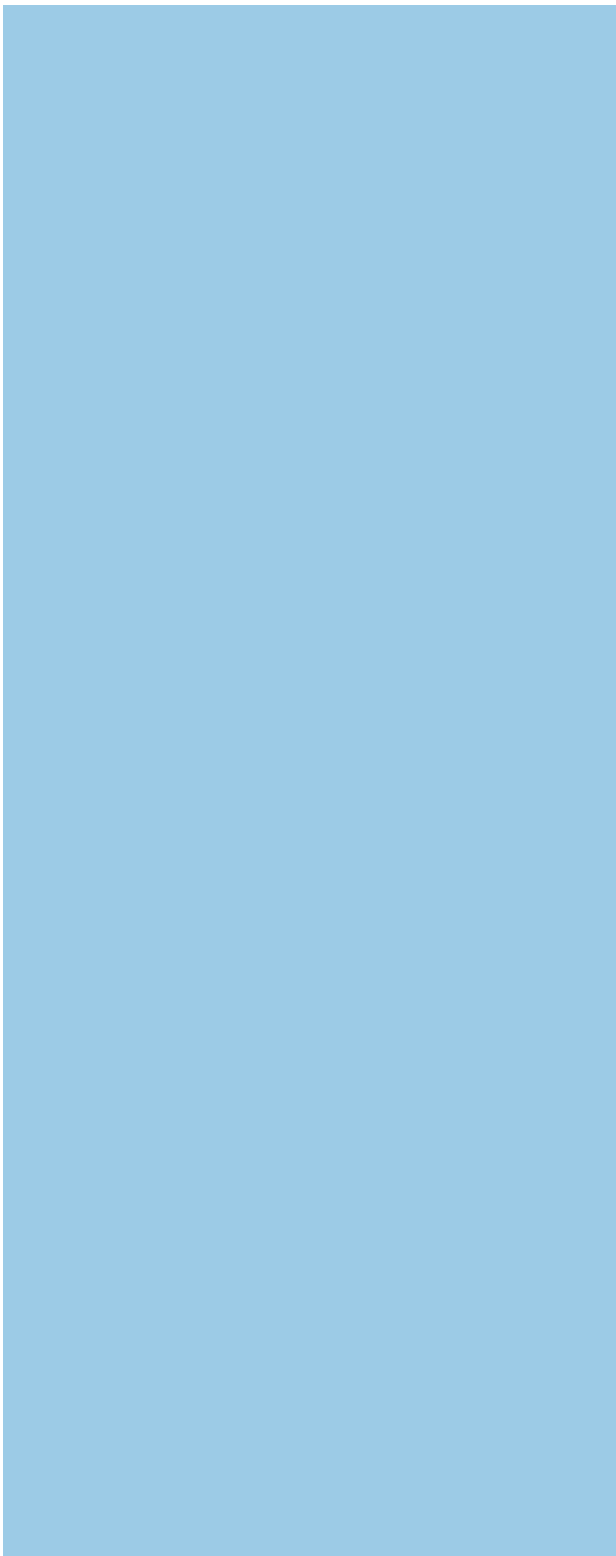
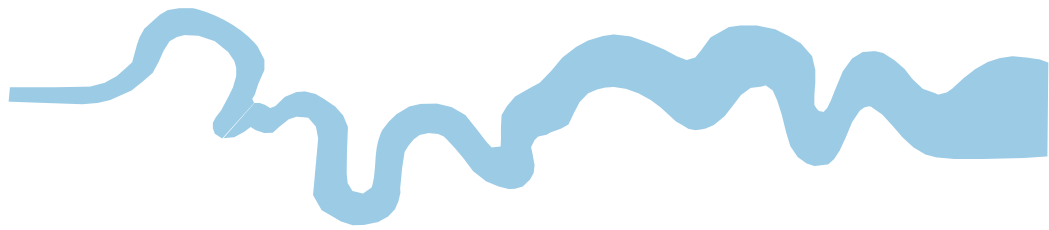
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Plates 1 and 2

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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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