

**T H A M E S      V A L L E Y**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL**

**S E R V I C E S**

**23 High Street, Odiham,  
Hampshire**

**Archaeological Evaluation**

**by James McNicoll-Norbury**

**Site Code: 23HSW07/118**

**(SU 7432 5105)**

**23 High Street, Odiham,  
Hampshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation  
for Genepi Property**

by James McNicoll-Norbury  
Thames Valley Archaeological Services  
Ltd

Site Code 23HSO07/118

**November 2010**

## Summary

**Site name:** 23 High Street, Odiham, Hampshire

**Grid reference:** SU 7432 5105

**Site activity:** Evaluation

**Date and duration of project:** 11th–16th November 2010

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** James McNicoll-Norbury

**Site code:** 23HSO 07/118

**Area of site:** 0.40 ha

**Summary of results:** The site has been shown to have archaeological potential with a variety of periods of activity represented, the principal of which, are probable occupation deposits of Early Roman and Late Saxon date. Other features are tentatively dated to Late Iron Age and Early Medieval times. A Late Saxon pit is notable for evidence of small scale ironworking (smithing).

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

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford✓ 29.11.10 Steve Preston✓ 29.11.10
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# 23 High Street, Odiham, Hampshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by James McNicoll-Norbury

Report 07/118b

## Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at 23 High Street, Odiham, Hampshire (SU 7430 5110) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Henry Thornton of Genepi Property, Hillgreen Farmhouse, Church Road, Cholsey, Oxfordshire.

Planning consent (09/00557/Major) has been gained from Hart District Council on appeal (APP/N1730/A/09/2106576) for the construction of new retirement housing on a parcel of land accessed off the High Street. The consent is subject to a condition (3) relating to archaeology.

This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Planning Policy Guidance, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990) (since superseded by Department for Communities and Local Government's Planning Policy Statement, *Planning for the Historic Environment* (PPS5 2010)), and the District Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Hannah Fluck, Senior Archaeologist for Hampshire County Council, archaeological adviser to the District. The fieldwork was undertaken by James McNicoll-Norbury and Susan Colley between 11th and 16th November 2010 and the site code is 23HSO07/118. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Hampshire Museum Service in due course.

## Location, topography and geology

The site is located in the centre of Odiham, on the south side of the High Street (Fig. 1). It currently consists of a bungalow with a garden to the rear. The site is accessed through a narrow lane leading between 21 and 27 High Street (Fig. 2). The site covers 0.4ha on uneven ground and lies on the boundary of Upper Chalk and Reading Beds (BGS 1980). It lies at a height of 90m above Ordnance Datum with the site sloping down slightly from south west to north east.

## Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a desk based assessment (Hopkins 2007). In summary the town of Odiham is located in north-eastern Hampshire at the junction of roads from Basingstoke,

Farnham, Reading and Alton. A large number of finds and sites from all periods have been recorded from Odiham and the surrounding area (Roberts 2002). The town is thought to have Saxon origins, although very little archaeological evidence for Saxon activity has been recorded: several sherds of possibly Saxon pottery were retrieved during work at the cemetery close to Kings Street (Moorhouse 1972, Roberts 2002).

Work carried out on the site of the castle, located to the north of the town, has revealed an octagonal keep which was constructed later than the original castle, possibly in the mid 13th century (Barton 1982, Allen 1984, Barton and Allen 1985). Further investigations to the east of the Palace Gate produced just two sherds of medieval pottery (Saunders 1995) and work at Palace Gate itself failed to record any finds or features associated with late medieval royal residence (TWA 1988). Excavation at 106 High Street recorded medieval features including pits and a gully (and later features) (Taylor 2002 and in press) however a watching brief immediately to the east of the site revealed yard surfaces of late post-medieval date but nothing earlier (OAU 1994).

## **Objectives and methodology**

The aims of the evaluation were to determine the presence/ absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological or palaeoenvironmental deposits within the area of development. This work was to be carried out in a manner which would not compromise the integrity of archaeological features or deposits which might warrant preservation *in situ*, or might better be excavated under conditions pertaining to full excavation.

The specific research aims of this project are:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on the site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present;
- to determine if archaeological deposits or finds representing Saxon occupation are present;
- to determine if archaeological deposits and finds are present representing Medieval activity, which relates to the medieval buildings certainly or probably present on the street frontage; and
- to determine if archaeological deposits and finds representing Medieval boundary divisions (burgage plots), or alternatively, medieval village farms (crofts and tofts) are present.

It was proposed to dig 5 trenches, all 1.6m wide. Four were to be 20m long and two 10m long (4% of site area). The trenches were to be located to examine the footprints of the proposed new structures and the location of a proposed relocated tree but avoiding the footprint of the bungalow to be demolished. Topsoil and any other overburden would be removed by a JCB-type or 360<sup>0</sup>-type machine. A ditching bucket was to be used to expose archaeologically sensitive levels. Where archaeological features were certainly or probably present, the stripped areas were to be cleaned using appropriate hand tools, and sufficient of the archaeological features and deposits exposed would be excavated or sampled by hand to satisfy the aims outlined above.

## **Results**

The trenches were dug as intended although the alignment of Trench 1 had to be changed (Fig. 3). The trenches ranged in length from 10.0m to 21.2m and in depth from 0.54m to 0.80m. A metal detector was used on the spoilheaps and the surface of trenches but no metallic finds were recovered by this machine.

A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1, and a list of all excavated features forms Appendix 2.

### Trench 1

Trench 1 was aligned south-north and was 10.0m long and 0.80m deep. The stratigraphy comprised 0.24m topsoil over 0.08m yellowish clay with brick and tile fragments, above 0.15m of dark grey/brown clay with chalk inclusions. This, in turn, overlay 0.22m of mid brown/grey silty clay which overlay the natural geology which consisted of yellow clay. No archaeological features were revealed.

### Trench 2 (Fig. 4 and Plate 1)

Trench 2 was aligned west-east and was 19.8m long and 0.54m deep. The stratigraphy comprised 0.26m topsoil and 0.24m of mid grey/brown silty clay (subsoil) overlying natural geology. Two postholes [1, 2] and a gully [3] were identified. Posthole [1] contained a sherd of late Saxon pottery and a fragment of fired clay and gully [3] contained a sherd of Late Iron Age pottery. The postholes were 0.40 [1] and 0.28m [2] wide and 0.11 and 0.20m deep. The gully was 1.15m wide and 0.40m deep with gradual sloping sides. All three features were filled with grey silty clay, although the gully had an additional lower fill consisting of a more orange grey clay.

### Trench 3

Trench 3 was aligned south-north and was 18.9m long and was 0.80m deep. The stratigraphy comprised 0.19m topsoil above 0.21m of grey silty clay with chalk inclusions and 0.38m of mid grey/brown silty clay overlaying natural geology. Two possible features were identified but were revealed to be a treebole and a subsoil patch. No archaeological features were revealed.

### Trench 4 (Fig. 4)

Trench 4 was aligned south east - north west and was 19.7m long and 0.63m deep. The stratigraphy comprised 0.20m of topsoil and 0.33m of subsoil overlaying natural geology. Pit [4] and gully terminal [5] were identified. Pit [4] was 0.80m deep with three fills, the bottom of which contained large amounts of charcoal. Seven sherds

of late Saxon pottery were recovered from the pit. The gully terminal [5] contained 14 sherds of Early Roman pottery sherds and was 0.60m wide and 0.30m deep with a grey silty clay fill.

#### Trench 5 (Fig. 5 and Plate 2)

Trench 5 was aligned west-east and was 21.2m long and 0.62m deep. The stratigraphy comprised 0.18m of topsoil and 0.34m of subsoil overlaying natural geology. Three gullies [6-8], a pit [9] and a rectangular spread (63) were recorded. The gullies all contained dark grey silty clay. Gully [6] contained a single sherd of medieval pottery whereas gully [7] containing two sherds of Early Roman pottery. Unlike the features identified in trenches 2 and 4, these gullies were all much shallower and narrower. Spread 63 was about 4m across and 0.2m deep comprising mid grey/brown silty clay. It is of uncertain function. It was examined by a sondage from which was recovered a sherd of Early Roman pottery. Pit [9] which was 0.35m deep cut the spread (63) and contained two fills. The bottom fill was charcoal rich. No finds were recovered from either fill.

#### Trench 6

Trench 6 was aligned west-east and was 10.2m long and 0.69m deep. The stratigraphy comprised 0.24m of topsoil and 0.38m of subsoil overlying natural geology. Two possible features were identified at the western end of the trench but upon examination these were found to be a treebole and a subsoil patch. No archaeological features were revealed.

## **Finds**

### *Pottery* by Malcolm Lyne

A small collection comprising 27 sherds were recovered from the site with a wide range of date represented from Late Iron Age through to Early Medieval. The pottery is detailed in Appendix 3.

## **Fabrics**

### **Iron Age**

IA.1. Rough-smoothed handmade black fabric fired brown externally with sparse 0.10 < 3.00 mm. ill-sorted calcined-flint filler.

## **Roman**

R1A. Coarse-sanded Alice Holt/Surrey greyware

R1B. Fine-sanded Alice Holt/Surrey greyware.

R2. Silty grey fabric with some <0.10 mm. calcareous and larger black ferrous inclusions fired orange-brown with black smudges.

R3. Silty orange fabric with sparse <0.50 mm. hard black inclusions.

R4. Coarse black fabric with profuse angular and subangular <1.00 mm. white and colourless quartz-sand filler. External knife trimming.

## **Late Saxon**

LS1. Handmade black fabric fired brown externally with profuse <1.00 mm. rounded vesicles and occasional <2.00 mm. crushed shell.

LS2. Handmade black fabric with profuse <0.50 mm. white and colourless quartz filler and occasional <2.00 mm. crushed flint, fired rough reddish-brown externally.

LS3. Black fabric with sparse 1.00 < 3.00mm. crushed flint

LS4. Grey fabric fired smooth pink-brown externally with profuse <0.30 mm. glauconitic sand filler and occasional <1.00 mm. calcite.

LS5. Wheel-turned grey-black fabric fired rough grey with profuse <0.20 mm. quartz-sand filler.

## **Medieval**

M1. Hard grey fabric with ill-sorted <1.00mm. alluvial flint and quartz-sand filler and external blackening.

## *Animal Bone* by James McNicoll-Norbury

Five fragments of unidentifiable animal bone were found in the sample taken from the bottom layer (57) of Pit 4.

Despite the layer showing signs of burning present the fragments of bone were not burnt.

## *Slag and Industrial Residue* by Steve Crabb

A small amount of slag was recovered from Late Saxon pit [4] (57). Although broken into a number of pieces it is still identifiable as a smithing hearth bottom, from the overall form and layered nature of the cross section. The broken section of the slag has revealed a dense purplish black to greyish black slag with inclusions of charcoal



and hammerscale sandwiched between the layers of slag built up during sequential smithing events. Both charcoal and burnt clay were recovered from this fill, suggesting a cleaning event of a hearth in the immediate vicinity. The probability of finding direct archaeological evidence for a hearth or anvil is limited as current thinking assumes that they would have been at waist height, therefore any evidence would be limited to isolated postholes with an associated scatter of smithing debris in the form of slag, slag spheres and hammerscale (Bachmann, 1982).

### *Metalwork* by Steve Crabb

A single metal artefact was recovered from gully 5 (59) weighing 78g. The object does not have a consistent cross section along its length and has a round socket at one end. The socket has been bent over from a flat sheet of metal to form the socket. The other end is flattened in section. On inspection with a hand lens the flat end is lozenge in shape, with the outer surface as a separate layer which has been wrapped around the core.

The form and presence of a socket suggest that this object is a spearhead, and from the form of the blade and socket and presence of a single rivet suggests that this spearhead is Manning's V32 form. This type of spearhead has been dated to possibly mid 1<sup>st</sup> century (Manning 1985, 161).

### *Fired Clay* by James McNicoll-Norbury

Twelve fragments of fired clay weighing a total of 62g was recovered from site, the bulk of this came from the bottom layer (57) of Pit 4. Considering the fragments being found with other forms of industrial residue it is likely that these fragments were part of a nearby hearth, due to the small size of the fragments however little additional evidence can be gained from them.

### *Environmental Samples* by James McNicoll-Norbury

Three samples were taken for an assessment of charred plant remains from pits 4 (2 samples) and 9. Sub-samples of 5-15L were floated and sieved using a 0.25mm mesh. The 5L sub-sample from pit 9 (65) only revealed moderate-sized (up to 10mm) pieces of wood charcoal. The 15L sub-sample from the basal fill of pit 4 (57) contained abundant wood charcoal but no obvious seed remains. The 15L sub-sample from the upper fill of pit 4 (56) contained no charred remains.

## Conclusion

The evaluation has revealed that archaeological deposits with a range of dates are present on the site. Tentatively, the earliest activity may be of Late Iron Age date, though only a single sherd of Iron Age pottery was recovered and it may be a residual find. More significant activity dates from Early Roman times with several cut features and the bulk of the pottery, which was usually in a fresh condition, being of this date. The deposits present are likely to represent an occupation site. Late Saxon occupation is also represented by the presence of a posthole and a large pit, the latter including material representing small scale industry (iron smithing). A single gully of medieval or later date was also recorded.

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## APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at S, W or SE end

Trench	Length (m)	Breadth (m)	Depth (m)	Comment
1	10.00	1.6	0.80	0-0.24m topsoil, 0.24-0.32m yellowish clay with tile fragments, 0.32-0.47m dark grey brown silty clay with chalk inclusions, 0.47-0.69m mid grey brown silty clay, 0.69m+ natural geology yellow clay.
2	19.80	1.6	0.54	0-0.26m topsoil, 0.26-0.50m subsoil, 0.50m+ natural geology. Postholes 1, 2, gully 3. <b>[Pl. 1]</b>
3	18.90	1.6	0.80	0-0.19m topsoil, 0.19-0.40m dark grey silty clay with chalk inclusions, 0.40-0.78m mid grey brown silty clay, 0.78m+ natural geology.
4	19.70	1.6	0.63	0-0.20m topsoil, 0.20-0.53m subsoil, 0.53m+ natural geology. Pit 4, gully terminus 5. <b>[Pls 3 and 4]</b>
5	21.20	1.6	0.62	0-0.18m topsoil, 0.18-0.52m subsoil, 0.52m+ natural geology. Gullies 6, 7, 8, pit 9, spread 63. <b>[Pls 2 and 5]</b>
6	10.20	1.6	0.69	0-0.24m topsoil, 0.24-0.62m subsoil, 0.62m+ natural geology. No archaeology.

## APPENDIX 2: Feature details

Trench	Cut	Fill (s)	Type	Date	Dating evidence
2	1	52	Posthole	Late Saxon?	Pottery
2	2	53	Posthole		None
2	3	54, 55	Gully	Late Iron Age?	Pottery
4	4	56, 57, 58, 66	Pit	Late Saxon	Pottery
4	5	59	Gully Terminus	Early Roman	Pottery
5	6	60	Gully	Medieval	Pottery
5	7	61	Gully	Early Roman	Pottery
5	8	62	Gully	-	-
5	9	64, 65	Pit	Roman or later	Stratigraphy
5		63	Spread	Early Roman	Pottery

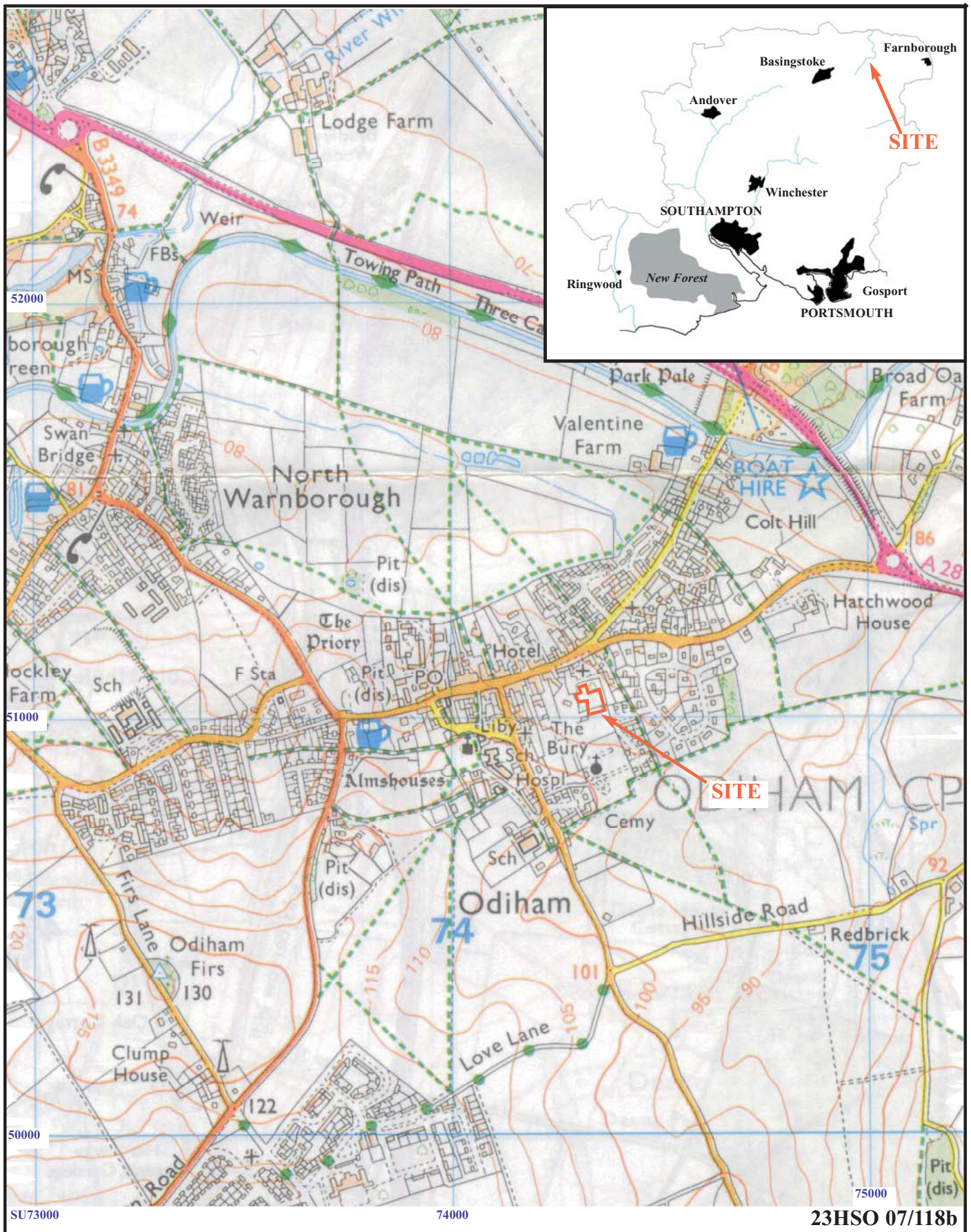
## APPENDIX 3: Pottery Catalogue

### A) From excavation

Context	Fabric	Form	Date-range	No of sherds	Wt (g)	Comments
[1] 52	LS2 Fired cl	Closed	Late Saxon?	1 1 2	6 2 8	Posthole
[3] 54	IA1	Closed	c.100-0BC	1	8	Linear
[4] 57	LS5	Necked jar	Middle-Late Saxon	2	21	Fresh joining. Pit
[4] 66	LS1 LS3	Jar Jar	c.800-950+ c.800-950+	2 1	8 3	Fresh
			<i>Late Saxon</i>	3	11	<i>Pit</i>
[5] 59	R1A R1B R2 R3 R4	Class 1 jar Reeded-rim bowl Reeded-rim jar Class 1 jar GB platter copy Closed form Closed form	c.140-200 c.140-190 c.170-190 c.120-150 c.43-150 c.43-300	13 10 1 1 2	266 150 12 3 25	Fresh Fresh Fresh Fresh Fresh
			<i>c.120-190</i>	14	190	<i>Ditch terminus</i>
[6] 60	M1	Closed	c.1100-1250	1	2	Gully fill
[7] 61	R1B	Closed	c.50-200	2	19	Fresh. Gully fill
63	R1B	Gallo-Belgic Platter copy	c. 43-70	1	14	Fresh

### B) From sieved environmental samples

Context	Fabric	Form	Date-range	No of sherds	Wt (g)	Comments
[4] 57 <1>	LS4		Middle-Late Saxon	2	5	Pit



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Figure 1. Location of site within Odiham and Hampshire.

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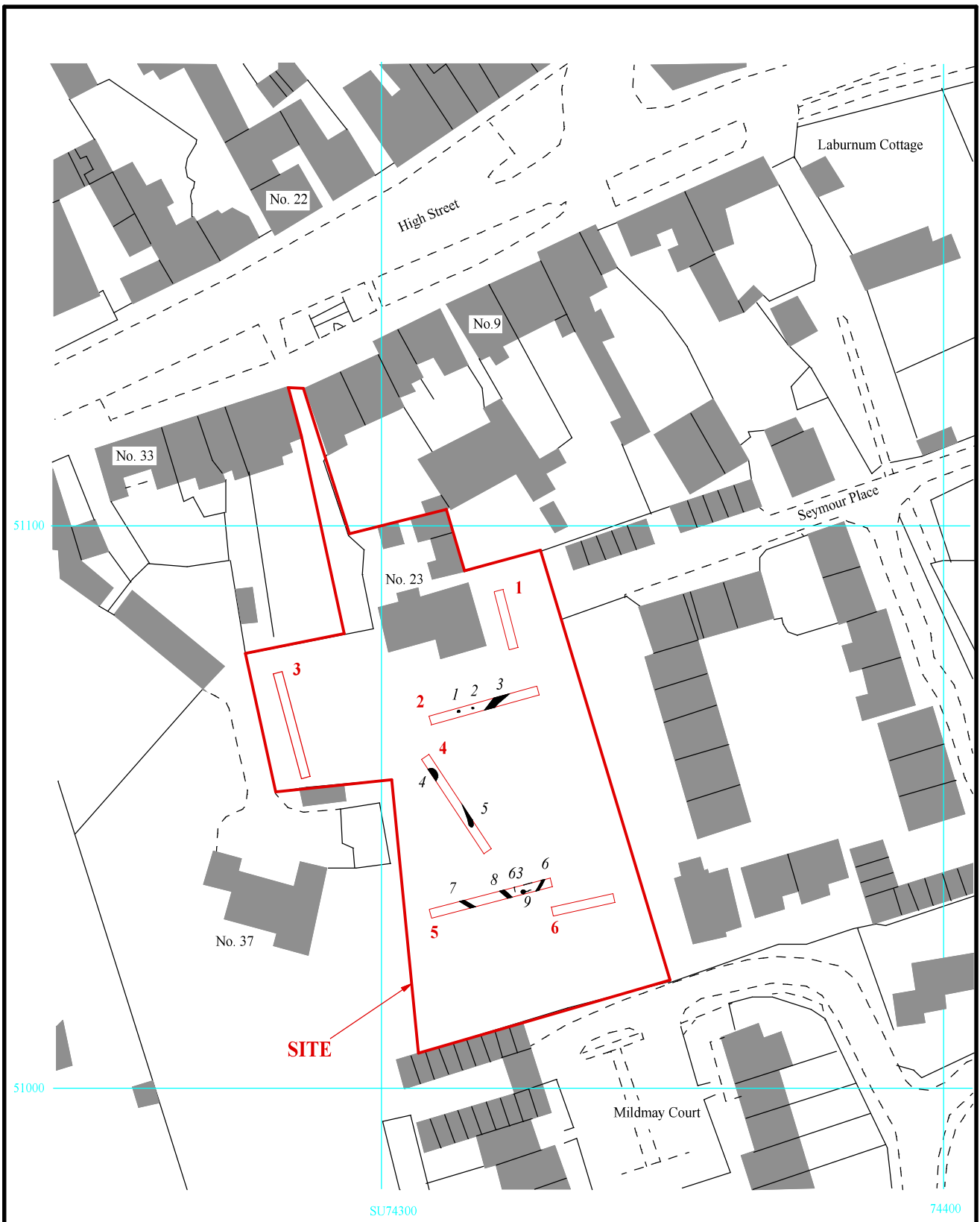
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off High Street.

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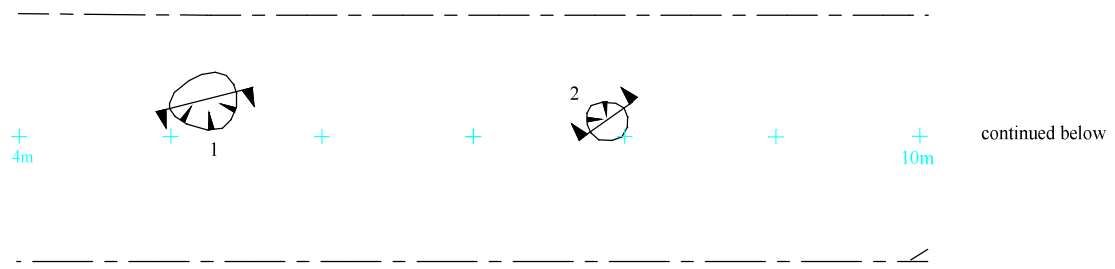
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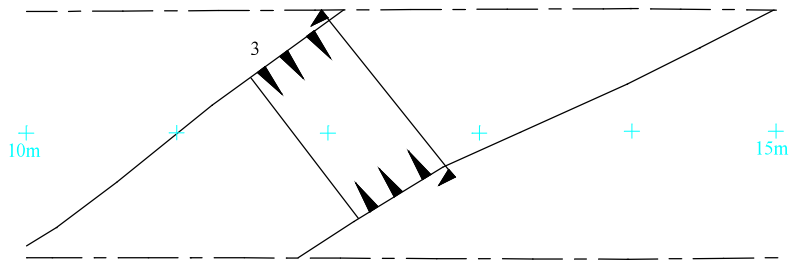
Figure 3. Trench locations



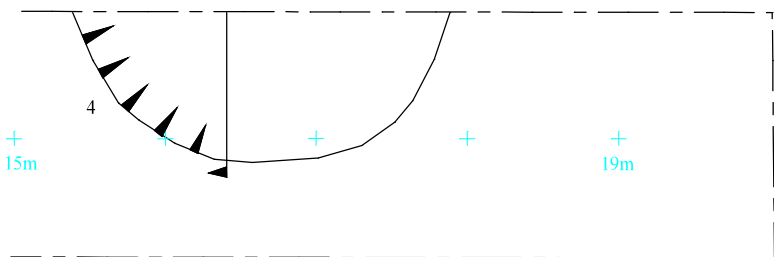
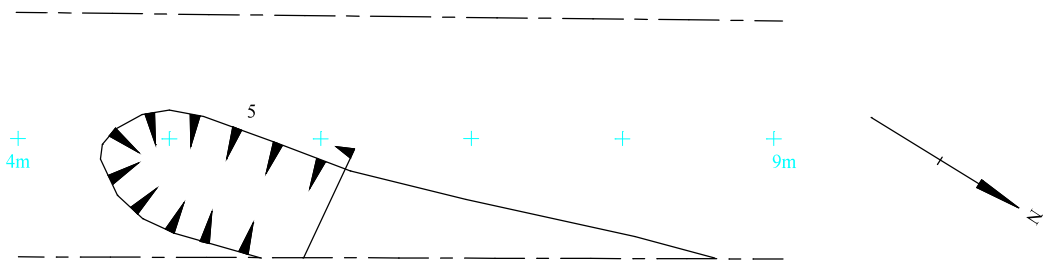
Trench 2



continued above



Trench 4



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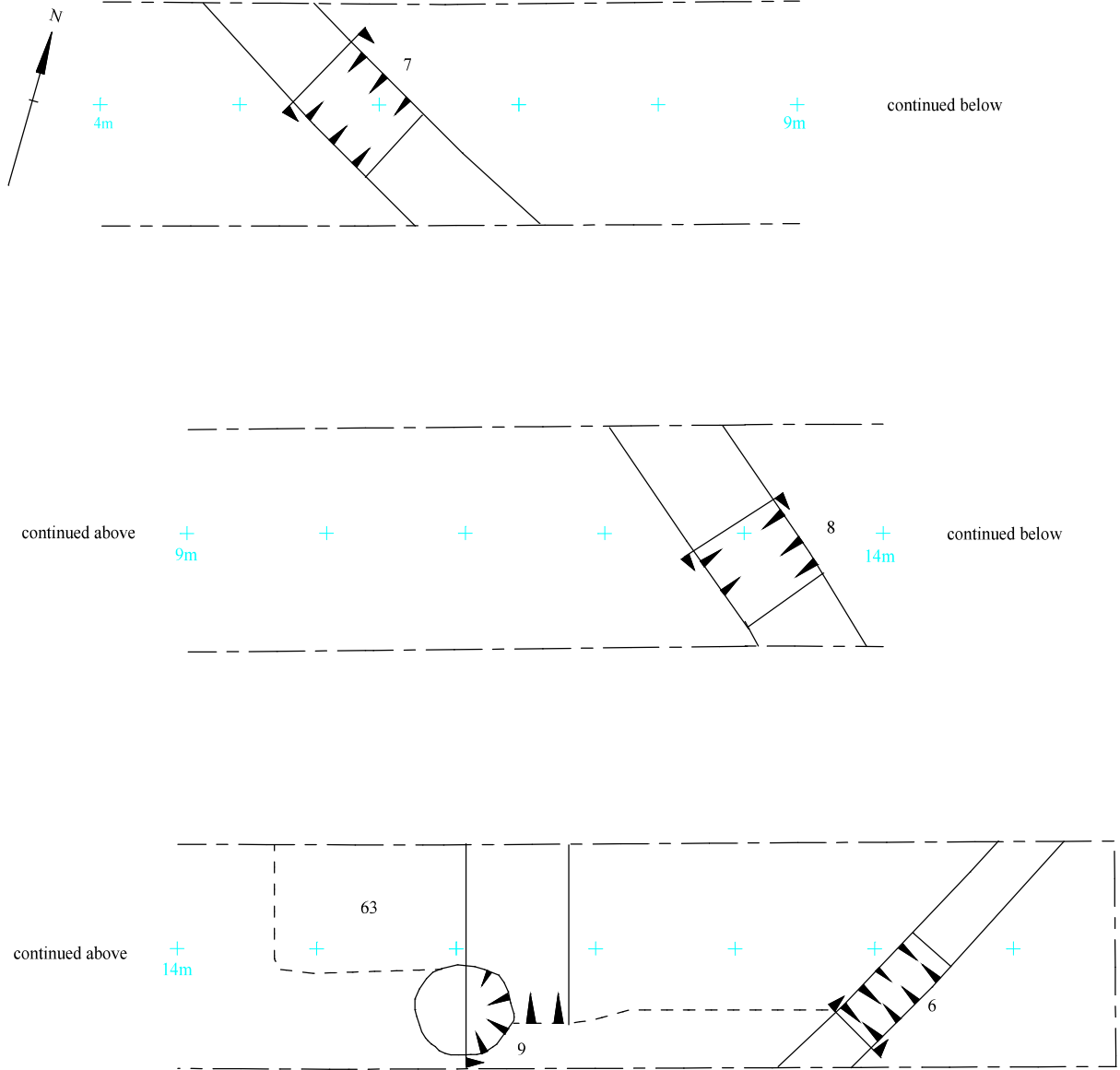
Figure 4. Trench details



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**Trench 5**



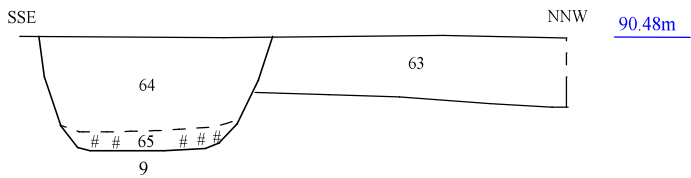
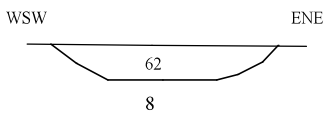
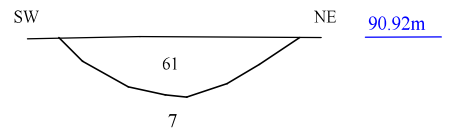
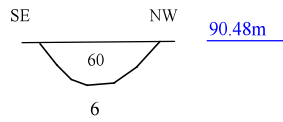
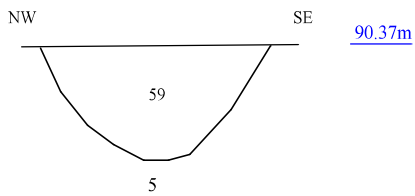
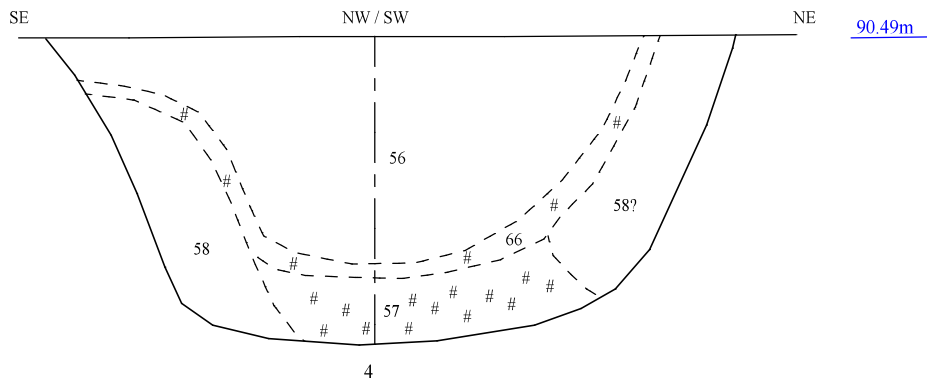
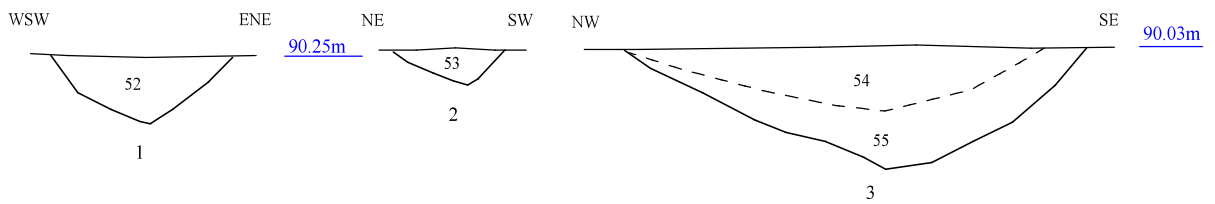
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Figure 5. Trench details



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Figure 6. Sections



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



Plate 2. Trench 5, looking east, scales: 2m, 1m, and 0.5m

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Plates 1 and 2.



Plate 3. Trench 4, pit 4, looking north, scales: 1m and 0.5m.



Plate 4. Trench 4, gully terminal 5, looking north, scales: 0.5m and 0.1m.



Plate 5. Trench 5, pit 9 and spread 63, looking west, scales: 1m and 0.1m

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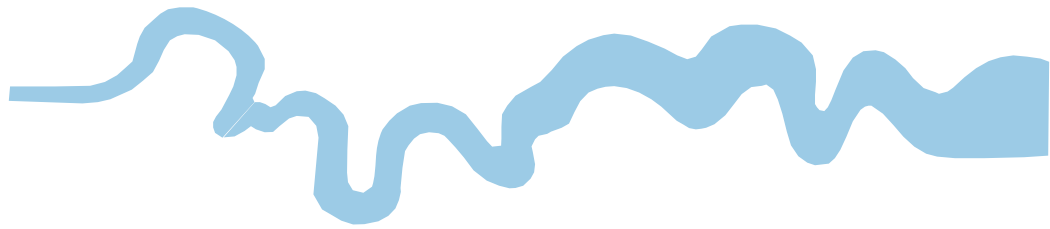
Plates 3, 4 and 5.

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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





**Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd,  
47-49 De Beauvoir Road, Reading,  
Berkshire, RG1 5NR**

**Tel: 0118 9260552  
Fax: 0118 9260553  
Email: [tvas@tvas.co.uk](mailto:tvas@tvas.co.uk)  
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