

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**29-30 Peascod Street,
Windsor, Berkshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by Tim Dawson

Site Code: PSW10/98

(SU 9664 7675)

**29–30 Peascod Street,
Windsor, Berkshire**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief
For Westbeach Group**

byTimDawson
ThamesValleyArchaeologicalServices
Ltd

SiteCodePSW10/98

January 2011

Summary

Site name: 29–30 Peascod Street, Windsor, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 9664 7675

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 22nd–26th November 2010

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Susan Colley, Tim Dawson, James McNicoll-Norbury, David Platt

Site code: PSW 10/98

Area of site: c.100 sq m

Summary of results: One undated pit was recorded.

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 ✓ 21.01.11 |
| | Steve Preston ✓ 21.01.11 |

29–30 Peascod Street, Windsor, Berkshire An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Tim Dawson

Report 10/98

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at 29-30 Peascod Street, Windsor, Berkshire (SU 9664 7675) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Andrew Raczynski, of Westbeach Group, Castle Hill House, 12 Castle Hill, Windsor, SL4 1PD.

A planning consent (08/02993) has been granted by the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead to refurbish and extend the property at 29–30 Peascod Street, Windsor. The consent has been issued with a condition (8) relating to archaeology which requires that a watching brief be carried out during groundworks.

This was in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Planning Policy Guidance, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990), and the Royal Borough's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Fiona MacDonald, Principal Archaeologist at Berkshire Archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Susan Colley, Tim Dawson, James McNicoll-Norbury and David Platt between 22nd and 26th November 2010 and the site code is PSW 10/98.

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 is located on the south side of Peascod Street in the centre of the town of Windsor, c.250m south-west of Windsor Castle. The area of the site being subjected to groundworks is to the rear of the properties fronting onto Peascod Street and is bordered by the existing structures of 29 and 30 Peascod Street to the north, a rear access alley for 27 and 28 Peascod Street to the east, Mellor Walk and a public car park to the south and Peascod Place alleyway to the west (Fig. 2). Prior to works, the land was used as concrete-covered rear yard space for 29 and 30 Peascod Street. The underlying geology is described as River Terrace Deposit Flood-plain Gravel though it is adjacent to the border of an area of Reading Beds (BGS 1981). The geology uncovered during the groundworks corresponded with this as it was observed to be a compact sand with patches of gravel. The site is at a height of c.25m above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location within the historic centre of (New) Windsor on one of the main town streets. The town is of medieval origin having developed to serve the nearby castle. Astill (1978) suggests that the earliest elements of the town lie to the east of the proposal site but with the latter still lying within the medieval and early post-medieval urban area. The part of the site lying adjacent to the street frontage has been cellared which has presumably removed most of the medieval deposits present, but areas to the rear could be expected to contain medieval deposits representing activities carried out at the back of the burgage plots such as rubbish disposal or craft/industrial activities.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the groundworks. This involved examination of all areas of intrusive groundworks, in particular removal of existing foundations, the digging of new foundation trenches and service trenches and any deeply invasive ground reduction.

All groundworks observed were dug using a mini-digger with a toothed bucket. A toothless bucket could not be used due to the hardness of the majority of the ground. Where possible, spoil was monitored for finds and possible archaeological deposits were investigated by hand. However, due to the small size of the site, the large depth of some of the excavations and the loose nature of patches of ground, it was unsafe, and therefore not possible, to closely observe all areas of groundworks to their full depth.

Results

Three areas of excavation were observed (Fig. 3). These ranged from 2.50m to 3.30m in depth and exposed a consistent stratigraphic sequence across the site. This comprised 0.40m of rubble directly overlying the compact yellow-brown sand and gravel natural geology. The western-most footing trench measured 3.10m long by 1.00m wide and 3.30m deep and followed the course of the foundations of the 1980s building that previously occupied the site. The central area of excavation measured 1.60m × 1.60m and 3.20m deep with a short trench extending south from the southern corner. The largest area of groundworks covered an area of 2.39m × 5.81m and, due to the unstable ground, varied in depth from 2.20m to *c.*3.00m.

The only archaeological feature observed in the excavated ground was pit 1 which was seen in the southern corner of the central excavated area (Fig. 3). It measured 1.70m in diameter and 1.40m deep and had steep,

slightly curved, sides and a rounded base. Four layers were identified as filling the pit (52-55) none of which yielded any finds (Fig. 4). The primary fill, 55, consisted of a soft dark grey sandy silt c.0.40m thick; this was covered by 54, a 0.60m-thick layer of soft dark brown-grey silty sand. Above this was observed 53, a firm mid brown silt containing >90% crushed chalk, which was capped by 52, a firm mid brown-grey silty sand.

Finds

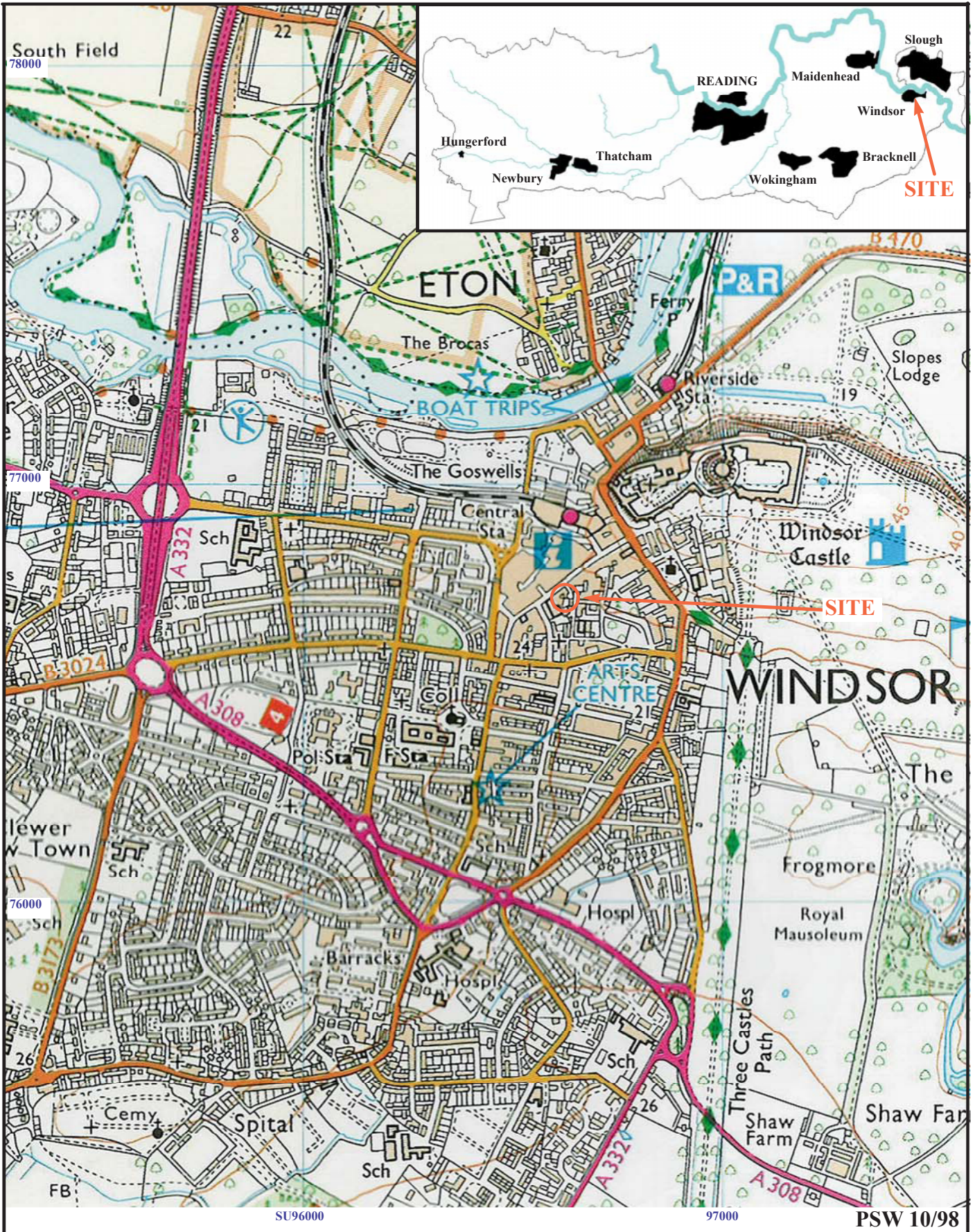
No finds of archaeological significance were recovered.

Conclusion

Despite the site's location within the historic core of Windsor, the only archaeological feature recorded was an undated pit. The absence of archaeological features could reflect the disturbance of the area caused by the construction of the existing 29 and 30 Peascod Street and the demolition of the building which previously occupied the site where digging took place. The stratigraphy of the area, rubble directly overlying the natural geology, supports this theory as any stratification that might have been present appears to have been removed.

References

- Astill, G G, 1978, *Historic towns in Berkshire; an archaeological appraisal*, Berkshire Archaeol Comm Publ 2 Reading.
- BGS, 1981, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 269, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth.
- PPG16, 1990, *Archaeology and Planning*, DoE Planning Policy Guidance note 16, (HMSO).



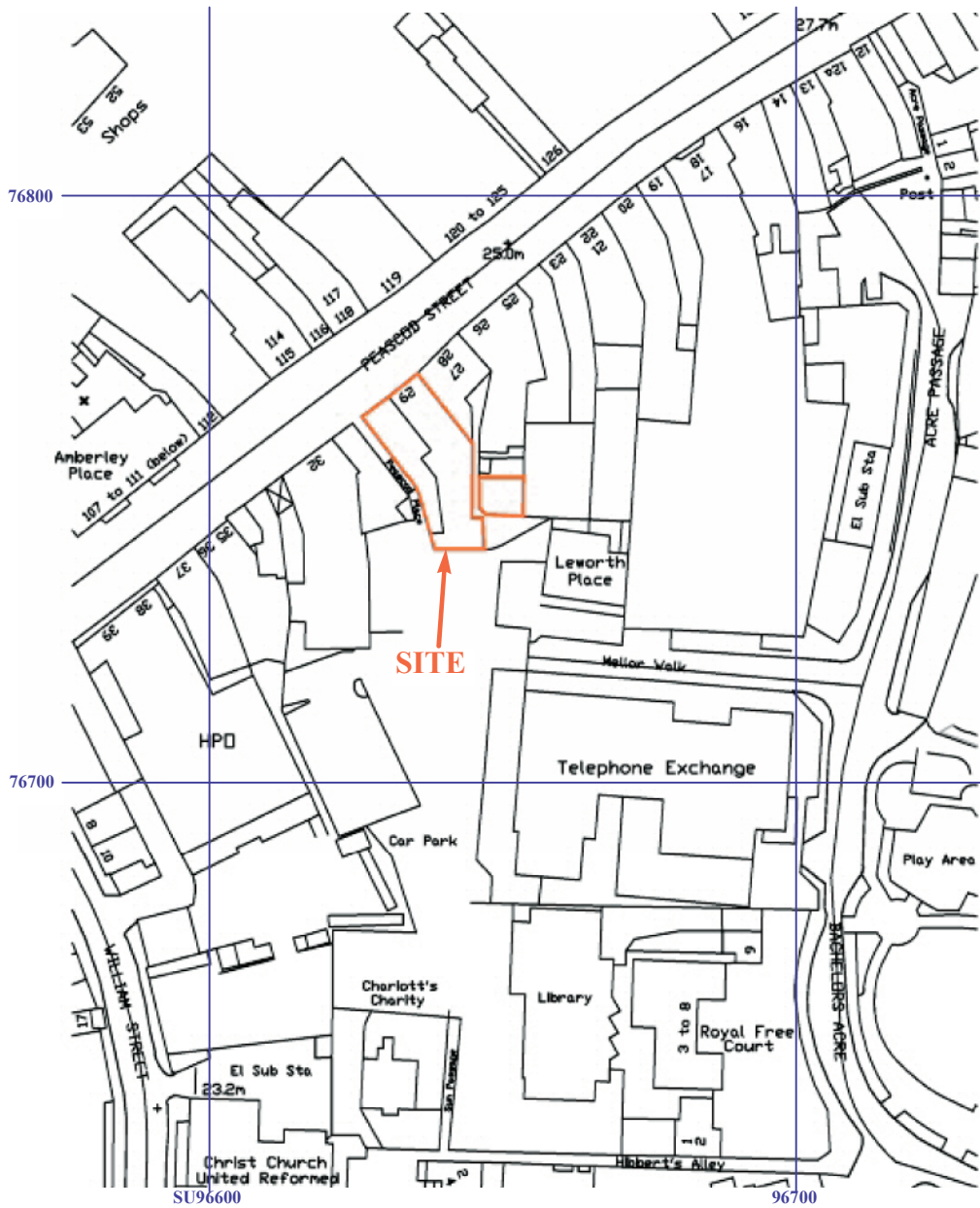
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Figure 1. Location of site within Windsor and Berkshire.

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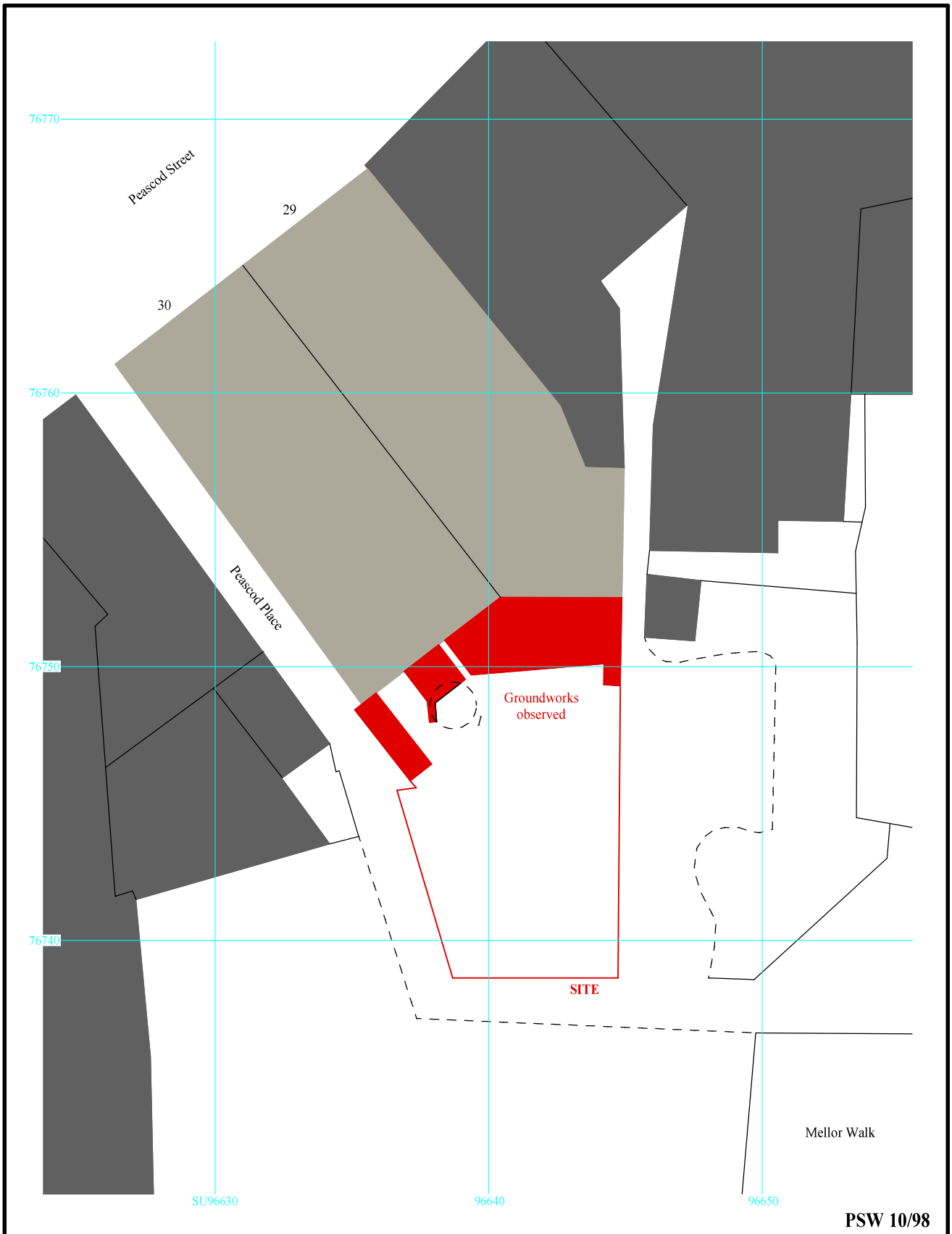
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Peascod Street.

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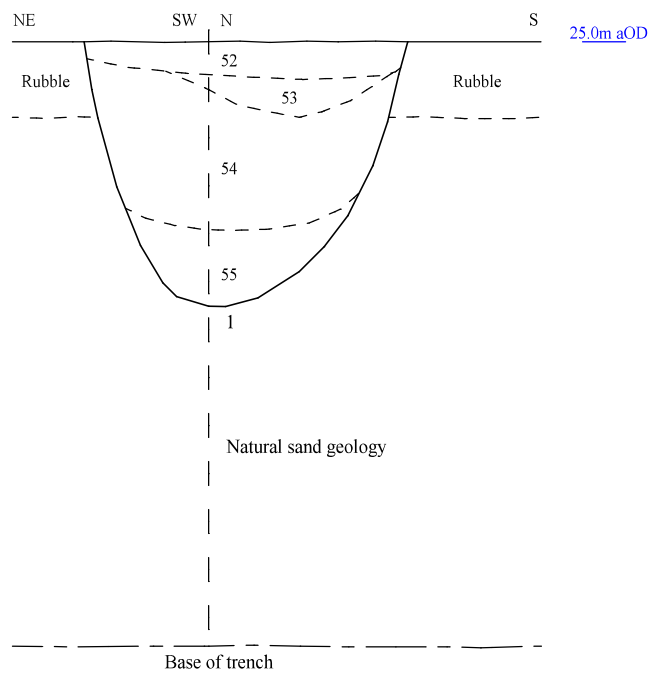
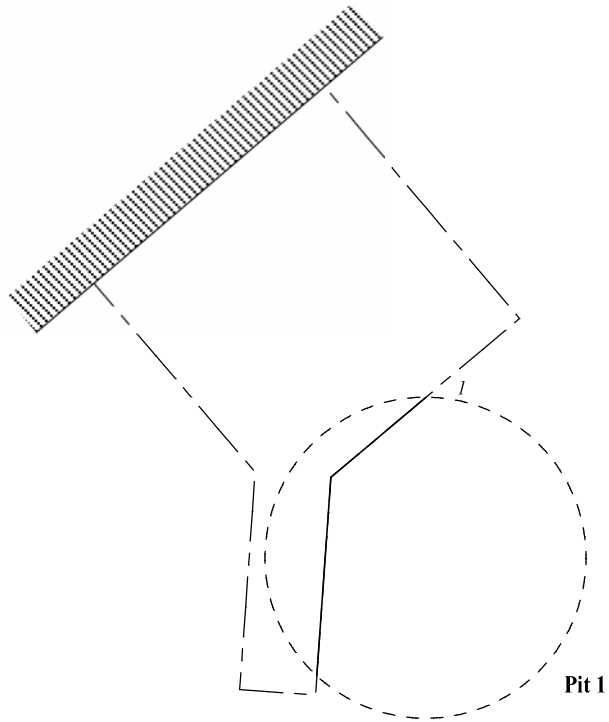


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Figure 3. Plan of the site showing the groundworks observed.



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Figure 4. Plan and section of feature 1.

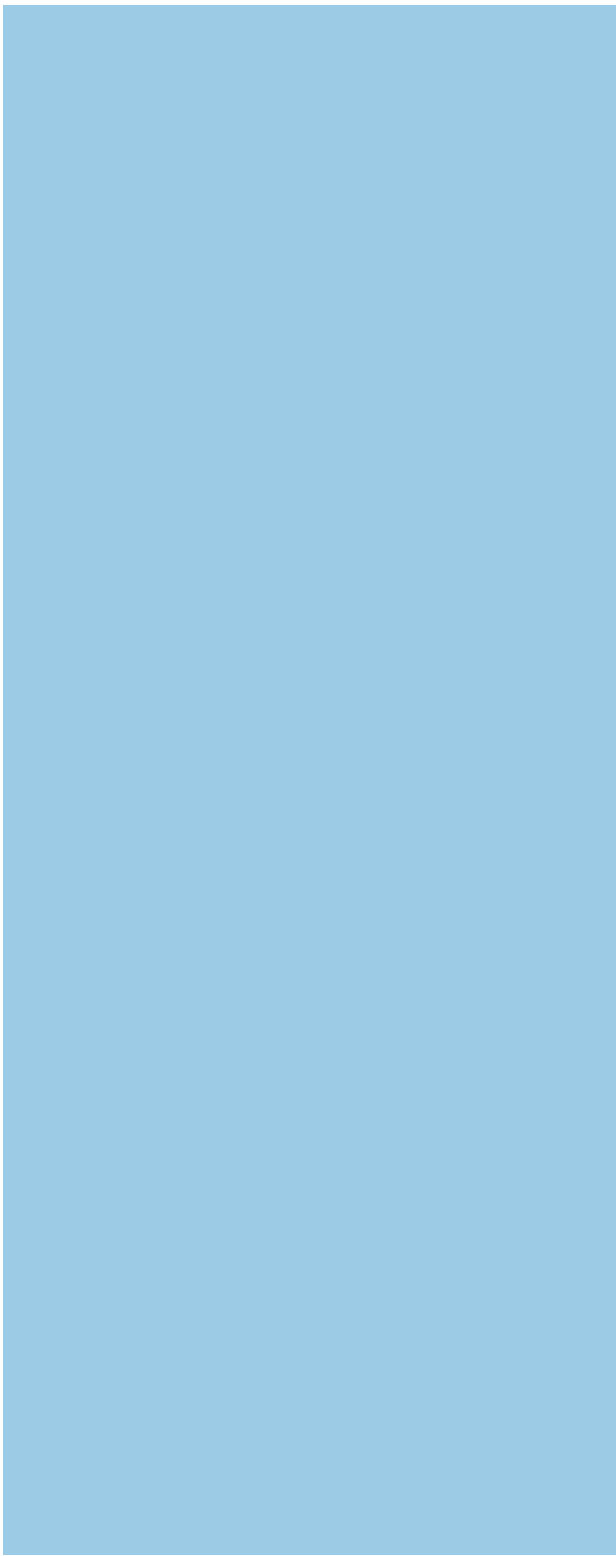
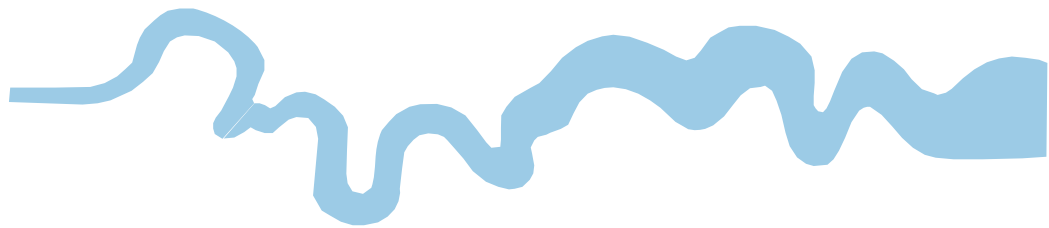


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TIME CHART

| | 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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