

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

**WATCHING BRIEF:
ELMWOOD CLOSE
OAKLEY
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE**

NGR: SP 6396 1210

on behalf of Hastoe Housing Association Ltd



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Alex Thompson BSc AIFA

September 2008

ASC: 1067/OEC/2

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Site Data

<i>ASC project code:</i>	OEC	<i>ASC Project No:</i>	1067
<i>OASIS ref:</i>		<i>Event/Accession no:</i>	2008.70
<i>County:</i>	Buckinghamshire		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Oakley		
<i>Civil Parish:</i>	Oakley CP		
<i>NGR (to 8 figs):</i>	SP 6396 1210		
<i>Extent of site:</i>	c. 1560m ²		
<i>Present use:</i>	Agricultural land		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Residential development		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	07/03131/APP		
<i>Local Planning Authority:</i>	Aylesbury Vale District Council		
<i>Date of fieldwork:</i>	9 th – 24 th June 2008		
<i>Commissioned by:</i>	PDD Surveyors Chancery House 199 Silbury Boulevard Milton Keynes MK9 1JN		
<i>Client:</i>	Hastoe Housing Association Ltd Marina House 17 Marina Place Hampton Wick Kingston-upon-Thames KT1 4BH		
<i>Contact name:</i>	Elizabeth Leyland		

Internal Quality Check

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<i>Revisions:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	
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<i>Edited/Checked By:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	
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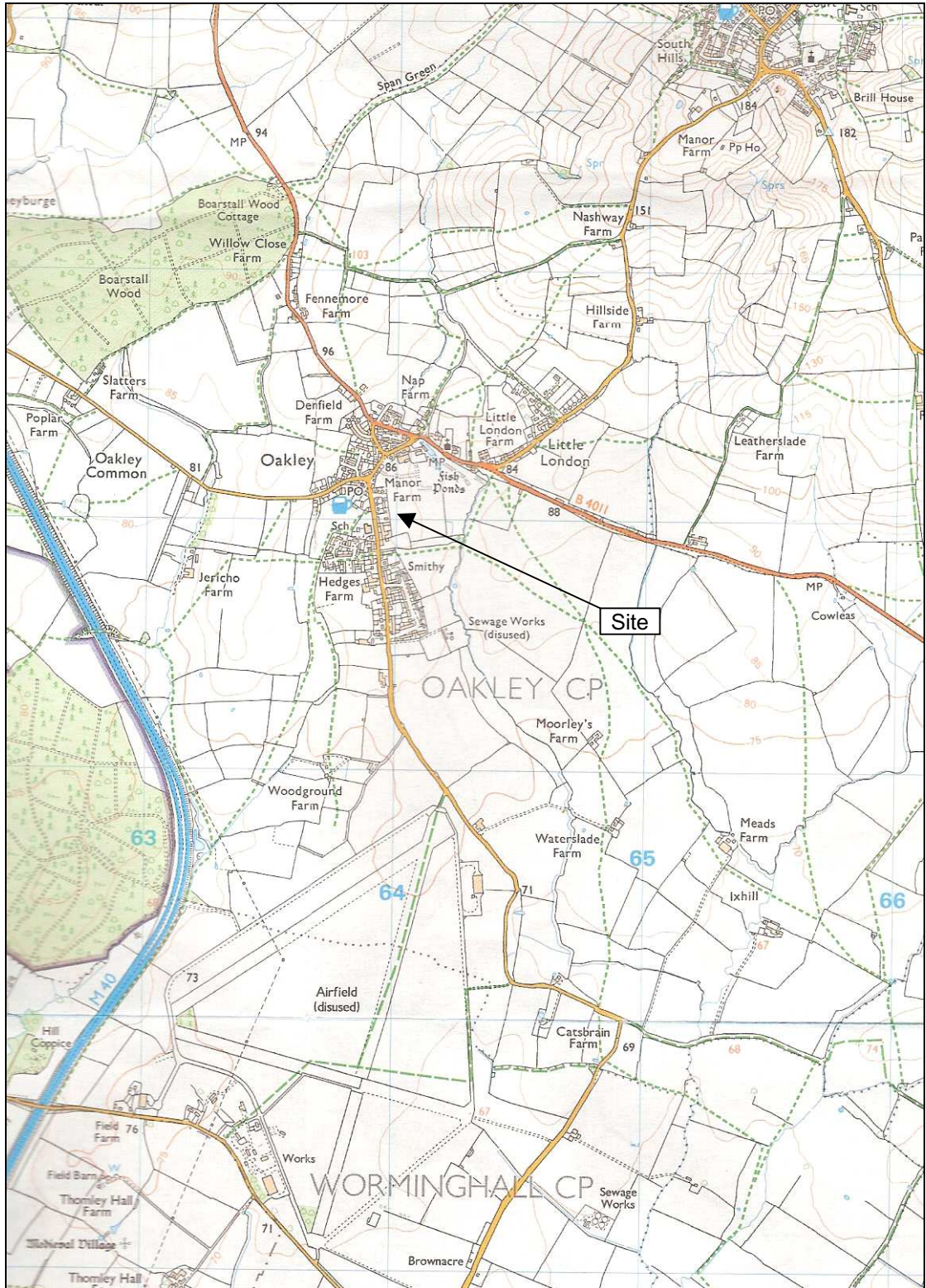


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

Summary

In June 2008 ASC carried out a watching brief at Elmwood Close, Oakley, Buckinghamshire during groundworks for a new housing development. The presence of tree throws suggest that the site lay on the edge of the Saxon royal hunting forest of Bernwood. Pottery recovered from some of these features show that it was cleared during the late medieval period, when it was peripheral to the settlement of Oakley. A number of pits, ditches and gullies were also recorded, several of which cut the infilled threethrows. A large pit containing burnt flint, degraded animal bone fragments and pottery of Bronze Age date was also noted.

1. Introduction

1.1 In June 2008 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out a watching brief at Elmwood Close, Oakley, Buckinghamshire. The project was commissioned by *PDD Surveyors* on behalf of *Hastoe Housing Association*, and was carried out according to a brief (Radford 2008) prepared on behalf of the local planning authority (LPA), *Aylesbury Vale District Council*, by their archaeological advisor (AA), *Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service*, and a project design prepared by ASC (Rouse & Barclay 2008). The relevant planning application reference is 07/03131/APP.

1.2 *Planning Background*

This watching brief was required under the terms of *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16* (PPG16), as a condition of planning permission for the development of the site.

1.3 *Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd*

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd (ASC) is an independent archaeological practice providing a full range of archaeological services including consultancy, field evaluation, mitigation and post-excavation studies, historic building recording and analysis. ASC is recognised as a *Registered Archaeological Organisation* by the Institute of Field Archaeologists, in recognition of its high standards and working practices.

1.4 *Management*

The assessment was managed by Karin Semmelmann BA MA AIFA, and was carried out under the overall direction of Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA.

1.5 *The Site*

1.5.1 *Location & Description*

The site is located on the east side of the village of Oakley, in the administrative district of Aylesbury Vale, Buckinghamshire. It is centred on NGR SP 6396 1210 (Fig. 1). The site is roughly rectangular in shape, and lies on the western side of an arable field to the south of Manor Farm. Access is from Elmwood Close (Fig. 2).

1.5.2 *Geology & Topography*

The soils in the area comprise the Denchworth Association, which consists of “*Slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged clayey soils with similar fine loamy over clayey soils. Some fine loamy over clayey soils with only slight seasonal waterlogging and some slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils.*” (Soil Survey 1983, 712b). The underlying geology is the Ampthill Clay Formation from the Upper Jurassic, which consists of grey mudstone with sporadic bands of limestone nodules (BGS, Sheet 237). The site lies at a height of c. 80m OD.

1.5.3 *Proposed Development*

The proposal is for a residential development (Fig. 3). Six houses will be built with a north-south access road leading in from Elmwood Close. Topsoil for the garden area will be imported since the existing site topsoil was removed due to high levels of natural arsenical contamination.

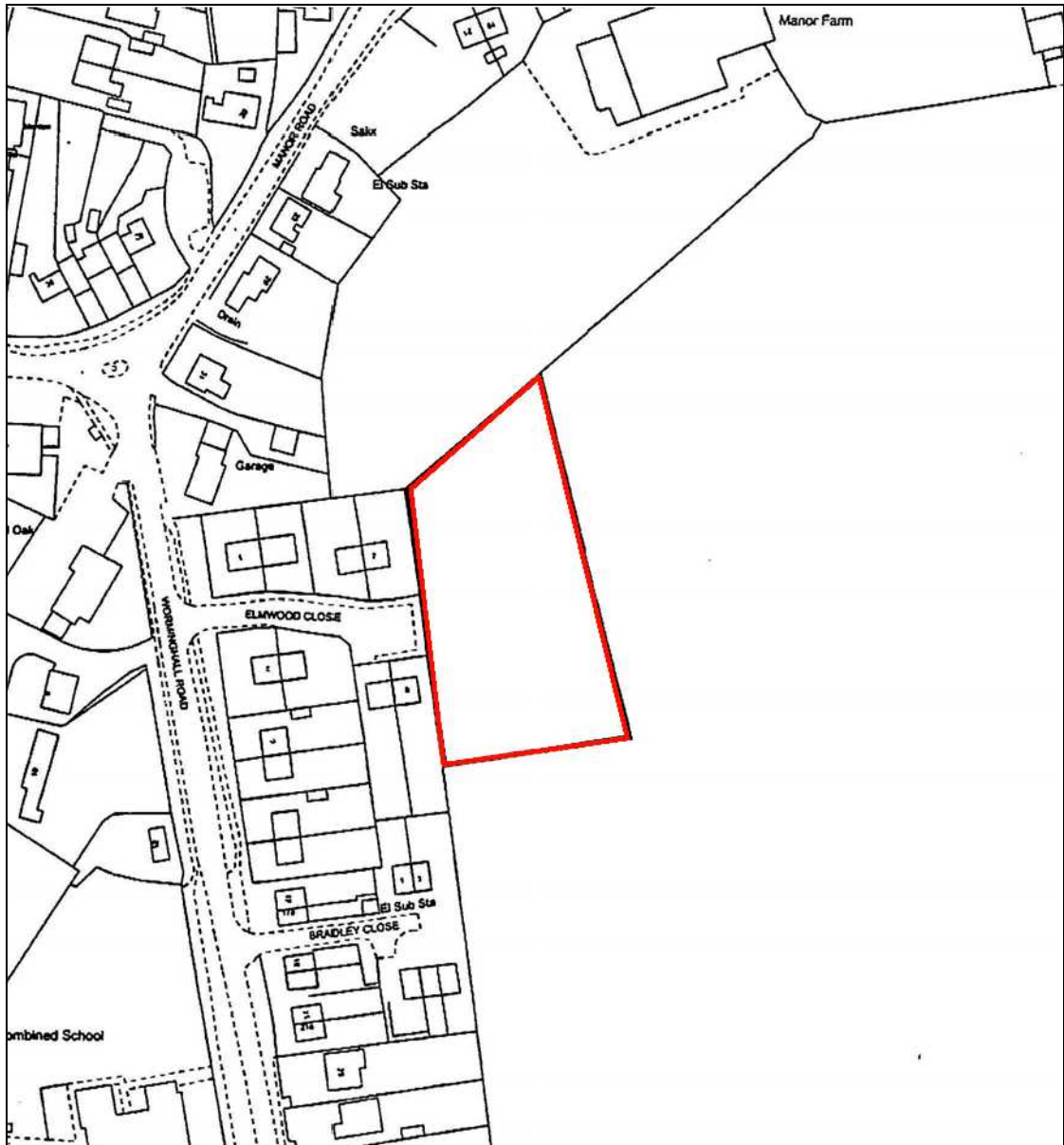


Figure 2: Site plan (scale 1:1250)

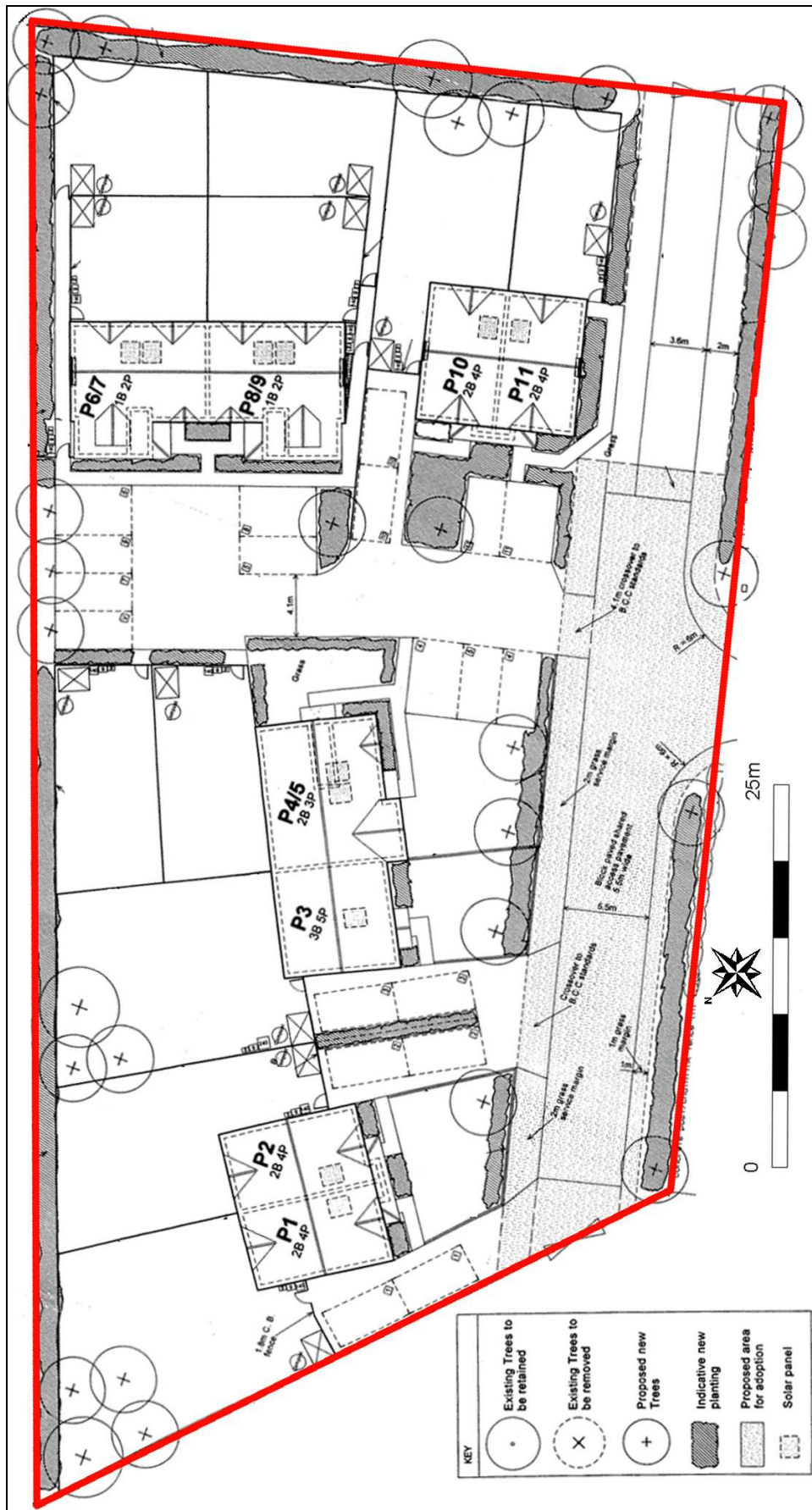


Figure 3: Development (scale as shown)

2. Aims & Methods

2.1 Aims

As described in the brief (Section 6), the aims of the watching brief were:

- To identify and record any significant archaeological remains revealed by the groundworks, paying particular attention to the potential for medieval settlement deposits.
- To establish whether the site lay within the medieval settlement or outside in the open fields.

2.2 Standards

The work conformed to the project design, to the relevant sections of the Institute of Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (IFA 2000) and *Standard & Guidance Notes* (IFA 2001), and to the relevant sections of ASC's own *Operations Manual*.

2.3 Methods

The work was carried out according to the brief (Section 8), which required:

- A detailed watching brief to be undertaken during all relevant groundworks
- Features identified were excavated in order to date and characterise them and fully recorded as appropriate

2.4 Constraints

A small amount of the north-east part of the site could not be monitored due to the location of the spoil heap where contaminated soil was stored prior to its removal from the site (Fig. 4). Similarly the site compound was located at the south-west corner of the site, where topsoil was not removed. Topsoil removal of the remainder of the site was carried out under archaeological supervision.

3. Archaeological & Historical Background

3.1 The following section provides a summary of the readily available archaeological and historical background to the development site and its environs. The site lies within an area of archaeological and historical interest, and has the potential to reveal evidence of a range of periods. Although the main focus of interest is likely to lie in the medieval period, and in establishing whether the site lay within the boundaries of the medieval settlement, there is also potential for Saxon remains.

This section has been compiled with information from Buckinghamshire Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) and other readily available sources.

VCH = Victoria County History

3.2 **Prehistoric** (before AD 43)

Information from the prehistoric periods has not yet been found in the area, and evidence for prehistoric activity is lacking. However, this may be due to a lack of systematic archaeological investigation in the area.

3.3 **Roman** (AD43 - c.AD450)

The earliest period from which we have evidence of activity in the area is the Roman period. There have been many finds of sherds of Roman pottery and tile fragments in the vicinity of the site (SMR 2044; 2045), and a small Roman coin was also found in the area (SMR 5505).

3.4 **Saxon** (c.450-1066)

The place name "Oakley" derives from the Anglo-Saxon "clearing in the oaks" (Mills 1998). Oakley was part of the Saxon Royal hunting forest of *Bernwood* (VCH), and there is potential for discovering evidence of Saxon occupation. The manor of Oakley was held by Robert Doyley, son of Walter in 1086 when there was woodland for 200 pigs (Morris 1978). The Domesday Survey records that, prior to 1066, part of the manor of Oakley was held by Aelfgeth, who taught embroidery to the daughter of Godric the Sherrif (*ibid*).

3.5 **Medieval** (1066-1500)

St Mary's Church (SMR 2048) in the village originated in the 12th century, and had considerable work done to it in the 14th century (Pevsner & Williamson 1960). There are also fairly extensive earthworks close to the site, which may be medieval house platforms and hollow ways (SMR 2047). To the north of the site lies Manor Farm, which has some features which could be the remains of a moat, although they could also be the remains of medieval fishponds. Scattered small finds of medieval pottery, tile, etc. have also been made close to the site (SMR 2943; 2044; 2045).

3.6 **Post-Medieval & Modern** (1500-present)

Oakley is still a small village, although it has seen substantial infilling since the latter half of the 20th century. The development site is shown as part of a large field on the earliest Ordnance Survey map of the area, surveyed in 1884. Bernwood Forest was reduced in size from 1217 and was *disafforested* in 1632 (www.buckscc.gov.uk/medieval_life).

4. Results

4.1 *General*

Between 9th and 24th June 2008 a total of six monitoring and recording visits were carried out during the removal of topsoil at the site.

Dark blackish brown silty clay topsoil was removed using a mechanical excavator with a toothless bucket under archaeological supervision and found to be 0.20m thick. This overlay mid brown grey silty clay subsoil 0.20m thick. This sealed all the features observed on the site.

All features cut the underlying natural clay, which was firm and compact, ranging in colour from yellowish to orangeish brown or slightly blue grey, with few surface inclusions noted. Often the bases of features were waterlogged as the clay was impermeable.

Eight vegetational features comprising the location of former trees, ten pits and five linear features were observed within the stripped area, largely located in two linear clusters orientated approximately east-west (Fig. 4). These are described under the headings below. Full details of all the features can be found in Appendix 3.

4.2 *Natural Features*

The northernmost feature observed on the site was Treethrow [41]. This was irregular in plan with smooth sides and an uneven base. It was 4.24m long and 1.84m wide, the excavated section was 0.25m deep and was filled by a mixed blue-grey and reddish-brown silty clay (40), the only inclusions was a single, abraded body sherd of pottery of probable medieval date, found near the surface. An area of redeposited natural was visible to the western part of the feature, indicating that this treethrow had formed through natural processes (Figs 4 and 6; Plate 1).

Towards the east of the stripped area, a group of treethrows ([4] and [8]) were cut by a pit [6]. Treethrow [4] was irregularly shaped in plan with an uneven base and rooted runs. It was 4.70m long, 2.50m wide and 0.26m deep, and was filled by a mid grey brown silty clay (3) with occasional small limestone pebbles and two sherds of pottery of mid 13th 14th century date (Figs 4 and 5, Plate 2).

Treethrow [8] was oval in plan 4.50m long by 3.50m wide and was 0.14m deep, it had an uneven base with obvious rooted runs. It was filled by a soft and sticky dark grey brown silty clay (7) with occasional small limestone pebbles and rare charcoal flecks. (Figs 4 and 5). No finds were recovered from this feature.

Treethrow [14] was oval in plan and extended east beyond the stripped area. It had irregular sides and a flattish base, and was 2.90m long, 1.35m wide and 0.23m deep. Some possible root activity was noted at the sides (Figs 4 and 5, Plate 3). It was filled by a mid orangeish brown silty clay with occasional small limestones (13). No finds were recovered from this feature.

A second sub-circular feature [18] was observed 13.50m south of treethrow [14]. This had slightly irregular sides and a concave base. Some root disturbance was also noted at the sides of this feature (Figs 4 and 5). It was 2.40m long by 1.50m wide and 0.20m deep, and filled by a dark blueish grey soft silty clay (17) with occasional small limestone pieces, and a single sherd of glazed red earthenware of 16th to 17th century date.

The largest feature on the site was the treethrow feature ([27], [31] and [33]), which was 5.59m east-west and 4.63m north-south and was situated towards the southwest of the site (Fig. 4). An area of redeposited natural was visible to the northern part of this feature, which was cut by [35] and [29]. Some machine damage occurred to the northern part of this feature (Fig. 4) during the groundworks (Fig. 4).

A 1m wide slot was excavated into the 1.40m wide linear section of this feature [31], which extended beyond the stripped area to the south of the site. Here the feature had uneven sides and base, it was aligned roughly north-south and was 0.15m deep (Figs 4 and 6). It was filled by a mid orangeish brown silty clay (30) with occasional small rounded stones. A single sherd of pottery of mid 13th to 14th century date was recovered from this section.

A second slot [33] was excavated adjacent to pit [35], here the treethrow was irregular with an uneven base but smooth sides, it was 0.15m deep and was filled by a mid orangeish brown silty clay with occasional small stones, but no finds (Figs 4 and 6).

The terminus [27] of a root running southwest from this large treethrow was excavated, it was 0.40m wide, 1m long and 0.13m deep (Figs 4 and 6). It had gently sloping sides with a flattish base and was filled with a soft orangeish brown silty clay (26), a single sherd of pottery of late 13th to early 15th century date was recovered from this.

To the south east of the site Treethrow [54] was an irregular, roughly T-shaped feature, measuring 2.79m east-west and 2.35m north-south. It was 0.60m wide and filled by mid grey brown silty clay with no finds (Figs 4 and 6). It was cut by small pit [44].

A further treethrow was observed in the southeast corner of the stripped area. This was irregular in plan with irregular sides and an uneven base, it continued to the south and east of the stripped area. An area of redeposited natural was observed to the centre of this feature [46], which was 3.20m north-south and 2.75m east-west and was filled by a dark orangeish brown silty clay (45) with occasional small sub rounded stones. No finds were recovered from this feature (Figs 4 and 6).

4.3 Pits

A circular pit [6] cut treethrows [4] and [8]. It was roughly circular 2.70m long and 2.30m wide. It was 0.26m deep and had smooth sides, it was filled by a soft sticky mid grey silty clay (5) with occasional small limestone pebbles and rare charcoal flecks. No pottery was recovered from this feature, but six fragments of animal bone were observed (Figs 4 and 5, Plate 2).

To the west of Treethrow [8], Pit [10] was irregular in plan with an irregular base, similar to the treethrows but with no root runs (Figs 4 and 5). It was 3m long, 1.80m wide and 0.20m deep and filled by a dark grey brown silty clay (9) with occasional small limestone pebbles and rare charcoal flecks. Three sherds of pottery (ranging from Roman to 14th century in date) and a single fragment of animal bone were recovered, but several pieces of un-biodegraded Mars Bar wrapper were also found towards the base with no apparent signs of modern intrusions.

To the east of Treethrow [4] and butting Treethrow [14], Pit [12] was sub-oval in plan with a flattish base (Figs 4 and 5, Plate 3). 2m long, 0.50m wide and 0.20m deep it was filled by a dark orangeish brown silty clay (11) with occasional small limestones but no finds.

In the centre of the southern row of features was a very large pit [16]. This was irregular in plan, 4m long by 3.50m wide (Figs 4 and 5, Plate 4). A slot 1.60m by 1m by 1.20m deep was excavated into this feature which had steeply sloping sides and a concave base and was 0.75m deep and filled by a dark blackish brown silty clay (15) with a 0.35m thick lens of charcoal rich black silty clay to the base which contained 15 fragments of animal bone and seven fragments of a single sherd of grog-tempered pottery of probable later early Bronze Age date. A piece of heat-affected flint was also recovered from this fill.

Cut into the large treethrow ([27], [31] and [33]) was an oval pit [29] with gently sloping sides and a flattish base, it was aligned roughly north-east to south-west and was 1.20m long, 0.60m wide and 0.13m deep. It was filled by a soft mixed orangeish brown silty clay (28) with occasional small stones but no finds (Figs 4 and 6, Plate 5).

Also cut into the large treethrow ([27], [31] and [33]) was Pit [35], which was roughly circular with gently sloping sides and a flattish base with a slight rise to the south. It was 1.85m long and 1.44m wide and was 0.22m deep. It was filled by a mottled mid orange brown silty clay (34) with occasional small stones. No finds were recovered from this feature (Figs 4 and 6, Plate 6).

South of Treethrow [18] was an oval pit [39]. This was 1m long, 0.43m wide and 0.14m deep with gently sloping sides and a flattish base. It was filled by a dark orangeish brown silty clay (38) with occasional small sub-rounded stones. A single sherd of pottery of mid 13th to 14th century date was found within this feature (Figs 4 and 6, Plate 7).

East of Treethrow [54] and west of Pit [39] was a pit sub-rectangular in plan, oriented east-west with straight sides and a concave base. Pit [20] was 1.48m long, 0.73m wide and 0.14m deep and filled by a dark grey brown silty clay (19) with occasional small limestones and a single sherd of pottery of mid 13th to 14th century date (Figs 4 and 5, Plate 8).

To the east of Pit [16], a small circular pit [44] cut Treethrow [54]. It was 0.64m in diameter and 0.40m deep; filled by a soft mottled orangeish brown silty clay (42) with occasional sub rounded stones, which contained two sherds of pottery, one of which was probably Iron Age in date, and the second was of mid 13th to 14th century date

(Figs 4 and 6, Plate 9). Below this was a layer of soft mid blue-grey silty clay with occasional charcoal and small sub-rounded stone inclusions (43).

A pit [52] 2m in diameter and 0.30m deep was noted to the west of the stripped area close to the entrance to the site. This was filled by a dark grey brown silty clay (51) with plentiful pieces of plastic and undecayed wood together with twelve freshly broken sherds of green glazed jug of mid 13th to 15th century date.

4.5 *Linear Features*

East of Treethrow [54] and south of Pit [20] was a short gully [22]. This was irregular in plan with a concave base, it was 1.63m long, 0.51m wide and 0.14m deep and was filled by a dark grey brown silty clay (21) with occasional small limestones (Figs 4 and 5, Plate 10).

East of Pit [16] was Ditch [24], this was aligned north-south and was 0.68m wide, 2m long and 0.40m deep. It was filled by a dark blueish grey silty clay (23) with occasional rounded pebbles 0.20m thick above a firm orange silty clay mottled with grey (25) 0.20m thick (Figs 4 and 6, Plate 11).

Ditch [24] cut the terminus of an irregular L-shaped ditch, aligned north-east to south-west. Ditch [37] was 4.76m long and 1.17m wide, it had gently sloping sides and an uneven base. It was 0.20m deep and was filled by a mid grey brown silty clay (36) with no inclusions (Figs 4 and 6, Plate 12).

An irregular linear feature [48] was observed in the south west of the stripped area. It was 2m long, 0.30m wide and 0.20m deep with a flat base and almost vertical, but uneven, sides. It was filled by a dark grey brown silty clay (47) with occasional clay flecks and orange mottling, particularly to the base (Figs 4 and 6, Plate 13). Two sherds of pottery and a fragment of tile as well as a small fragment of burnt bone were recovered from this fill. One of the sherds of pottery was of Roman date and the second was of mid 13th to 14th century date.

Twelve metres northeast of Gully [48] was another, more regular, linear feature [50]. This gully was 3.60m long, 0.40m wide and 0.08m deep with a flat base and steep sides (Figs 4 and 6, Plate 14). It was filled by mid grey brown silty clay with orange mottling, which contained two pottery sherds, one of probable Roman date, and the second of late 13th to early 15th century date.



Plate 1: View of Treethrow [41] showing redeposited natural centre suggesting natural felling



Plate 2: Pit [6] and Treethrows [8] and [4] and looking west. Scale 1m.



Plate 3: View north of Pit (12) and Treethrow (14). Scale 1m.



Plate 4: South facing section of Pit [16]. Scale 1m.



Plate 5: Pit [29] from southwest. Scale 1m.



Plate 6: Treethrow [33] and Pit [35] from south. Scale 1m



Plate 7: Pit [39] from southeast. Scale 1m



Plate 8: Pit [20] from west. Scale 1m



Plate 9: Pit [44]. Scale 1m



Plate 10: Gully [22] from west. Scale 1m.



Plate 11: Ditch [24] from north. Scale 1m.



Plate 12: Ditch [37] from south. Scale 1m



Plate 13: Gully [48] from north. Scale 0.50m



Plate 14: Gully [50] from north. Scale 1m

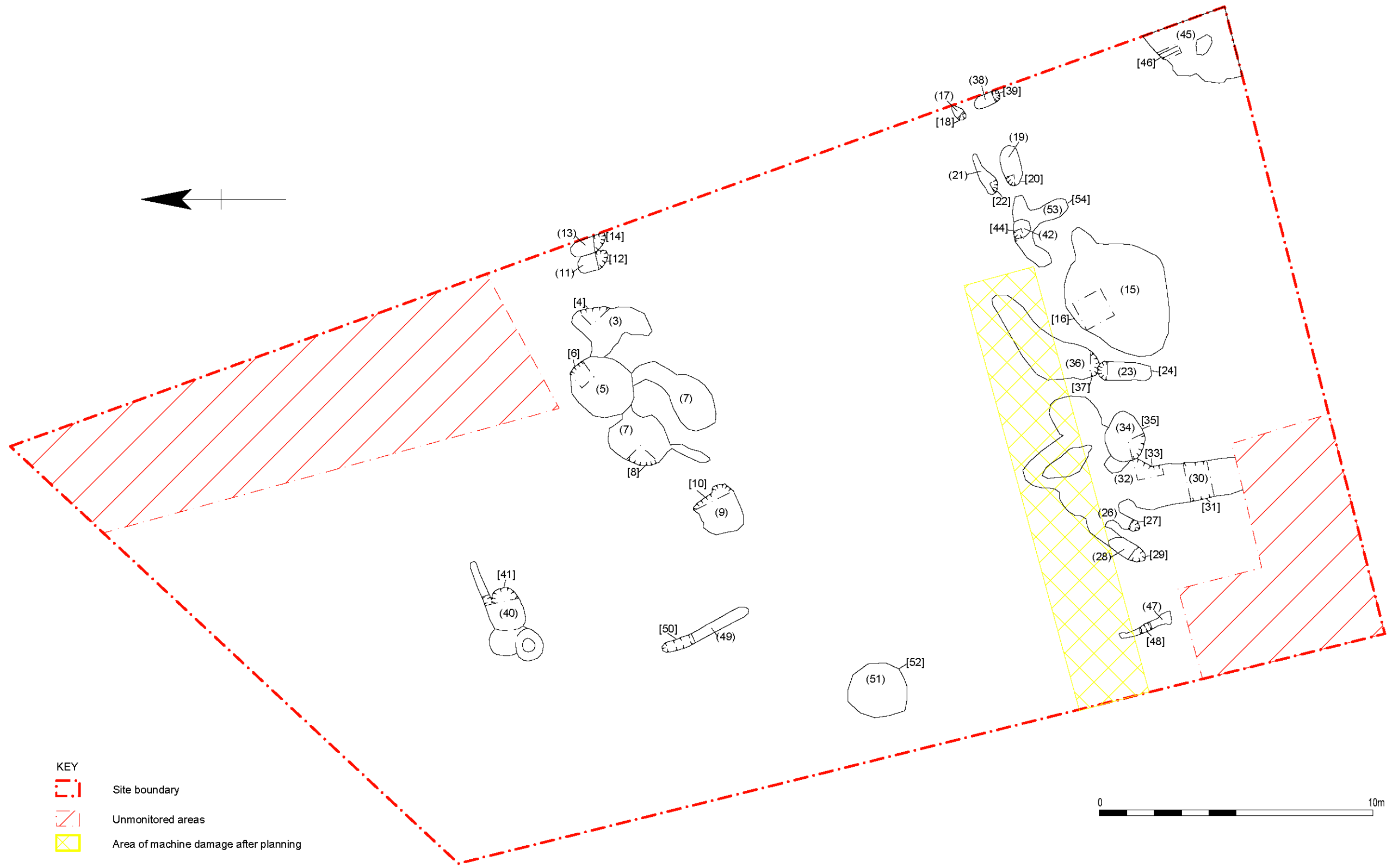


Figure 4: Site plan showing location of features (Scale 1:150)

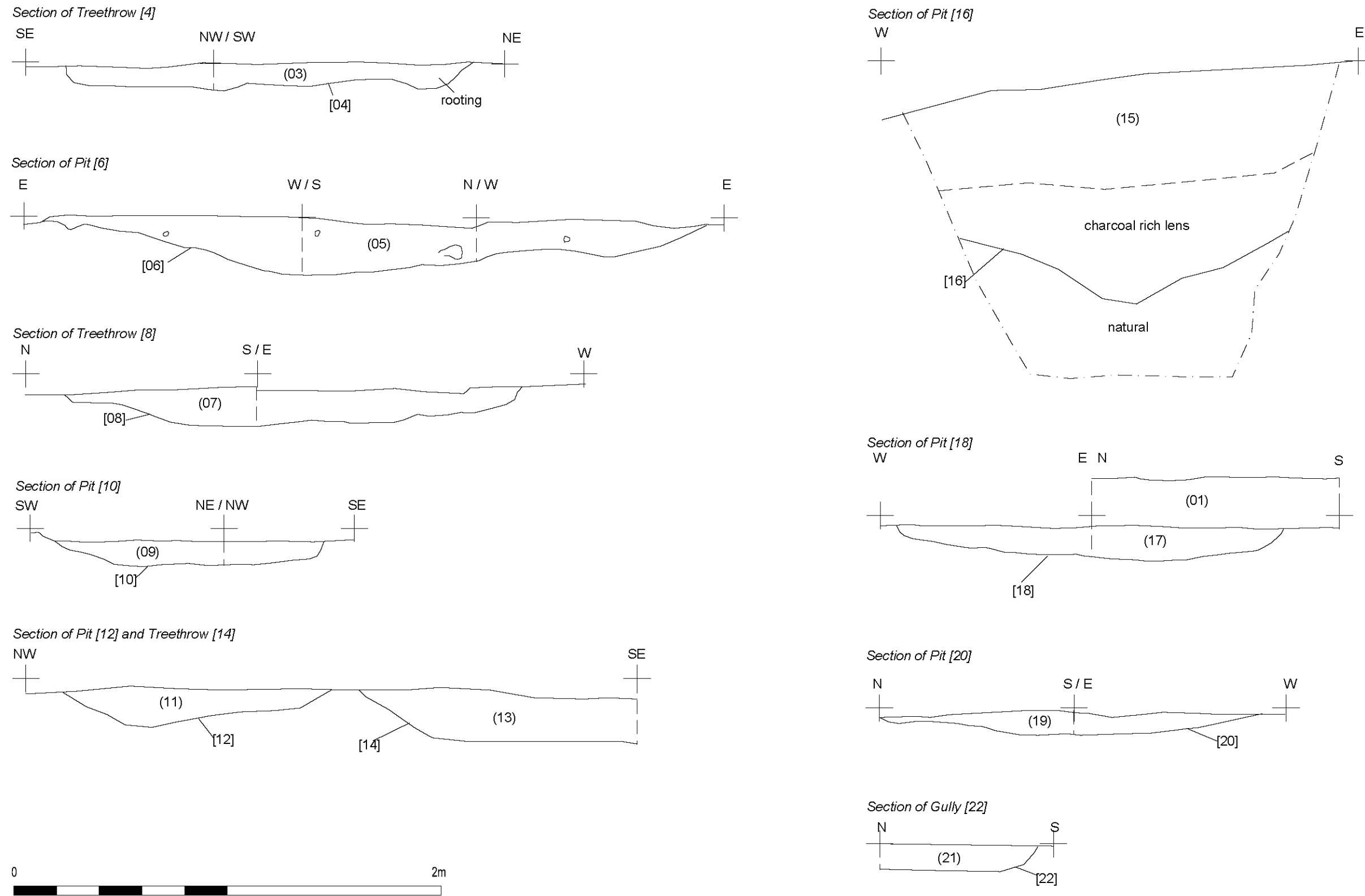


Figure 5: Sections (Scale 1:20)

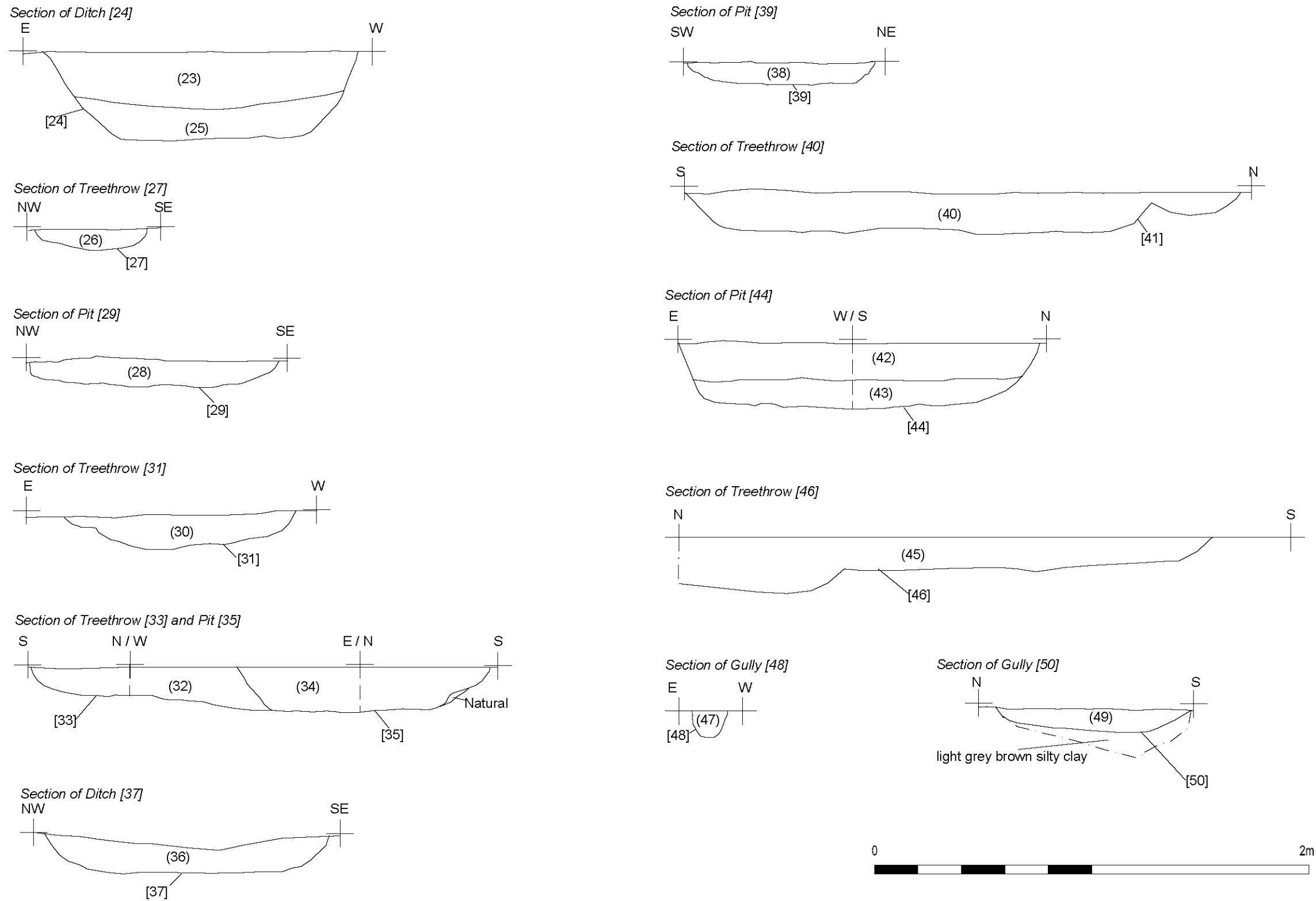


Figure 6: Sections (Scale 1:20)

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The development has provided an opportunity to examine the archaeology to the rear of the main street in Oakley. The confidence with which the archaeology was recorded is high, as despite machine tracking and areas of remnant topsoil surviving in occasional natural undulations in the natural, feature visibility was good. The shallowness of the features suggests a high degree of truncation by prolonged ploughing, and the probability that later features have been lost cannot be ruled out.
- 5.2 A single large sherd of later early Bronze Age pottery, recovered from pit [16], is the first known indication of human occupation at Oakley. The evidence is however too scant to be able to suggest what form this might have taken. This same feature also contained a piece of heat-affected flint, which may also be of prehistoric date.
- 5.3 A single sherd of Oxfordshire Colour-Coat pottery and two other Romano-British pottery sherds add to the growing number of Roman findspots in the Oakley area (e.g. SMR sites 2044-5 and 5505). However one of these sherds was recovered from the topsoil, and the other two from features containing medieval pottery; and therefore these features cannot be dated to the Roman period.
- 5.4 Eight vegetational features comprising the locations of former trees were recorded in the stripped area. Some were discrete cuts, whilst others formed larger intermingled features. Three of the features exhibited a central area of redeposited natural and were characterised by uneven sides and uneven bases with characteristic root holes and root runs indicating that they had been felled by natural processes.
- 5.4 Five of the treethrows had flatter and more regular bases suggesting that the roots had been grubbed up rather than being allowed to decay naturally. Pottery of mid 13th to 17th century date was recovered from the treethrows, but most pottery from the treethrows was of 13th to 14th century date.
- 5.5 The size of some of the tree throws was in excess of 3 and 4m, and shallow which suggests that the species was predominantly oak. This size also suggests some antiquity to the former trees, which can therefore be reasonably assumed to have originated at least several hundred years earlier.
- 5.6 The features were in two 'rows' which could suggest a tree lined access or boundary, or alternatively that wide spaces were deliberately left between to enable coppicing of smaller species such as hazel.
- 5.7 The process of clearing is suggested by the lack of root holes in some instances where it appears that roots have been grubbed up. This is in complete contrast to the deposits of natural geology apparent in at least three features, which is characteristic of natural felling through strong wind action. It may therefore be reasonable to suggest that the woodland was probably no longer being properly managed, allowing old dead trees to blow over. Whether clearance carried on the natural process of deforestation in order to expand agricultural activity, or to enable building of new timber-framed houses in the village cannot be ascertained.

- 5.8 These tree throw features may relate to the gradual deforestation of the Saxon hunting forest of *Bernwood*, and to its disafforestation in 1632 when it was no longer protected by Forest Law and may have been cleared for agricultural land.
- 5.9 The presence of several pits and ditches attest to continued Medieval usage of the site, and as they were relatively isolated it is assumed that these were peripheral to the main settlement on the frontage of Oakley main street or the former village earthworks to the north-east of the site. It is likely that the short sections of ditch and gullies related to rear plot boundaries or subdivisions of the same, but there is not enough to suggest any form to these. Occasional small pits were not apparently for rubbish disposal; although small amounts of 13th to 15th century pottery were recovered, very little animal bone was recovered from the features and no other domestic refuse was associated with them.

6. Acknowledgements

The evaluation was commissioned by *PDD Surveyors* on behalf of *Hastoe Housing Association*. The writers are grateful to David Robinson of *PDD Surveyors*, Terry Byrne of *Basil Wyyat* and Elizabeth Leyland of *Hastoe Housing Association* for their assistance. The project was monitored by David Radford on behalf of the local planning authority. Thanks are also due to Russell Owen of *Tonic Construction Ltd* for his helpful co-operation during ASC's works on site. The input of Barbara Hurman AIFA FAAIS, medieval pottery specialist, and Ben Roberts, Curator of European Bronze Age, *British Museum*, is also gratefully acknowledged.

The project was managed for ASC by Karin Semmelmann MA MIFA. Fieldwork was carried out by Jenny Richards BA PIFA with the assistance of Alex Thompson BSc AIFA and Janice McLeish MA. The report was prepared by Alex Thompson and Jenny Richards and edited by Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA.

7. Archive

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Brief
2. Project Design
3. Initial Report
4. Clients site plans
5. Site Monitoring Sheets
6. Finds records
7. Finds
8. Site record drawings
9. List of photographs
10. B/W prints & negatives
11. Original specialist reports and supporting information
12. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

7.2 The archive will be deposited with *Buckinghamshire County Museum* with the accession code 2008.70.

8. References

Standards & Specifications

- EH 1991 *The Management of Archaeological Projects, 2nd edition*. English Heritage (London).
- IFA 2000a Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct*.
- IFA 2000b Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology*.
- IFA 2001 Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance documents (Desk-Based Assessments, Watching Briefs, Evaluations, Excavations, Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings, Finds)*.
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Appendix 1: Monitoring Sheets

A.S.C. LTD		ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD				
Project: ELMTREE CLOSE, OAKLEY		Project No/Code: 106710EE		Sheet: of		
		Date of visit: 9/6/08.				
Client/Developer HASTOE HOUSING ASSOC.						
Contact:				Phone:		
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):		Start: 10:00		Finish: 16:00		
Completed by: JR						
Development Type:						
Footings	Services	Roads	Levelling <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Quarrying	Pipelines	
Other (specify):						
Site & weather conditions: FORMER PASTURE; DRY, SUNNY BUT GROUND WET IN PLACES						
Observations: MONITORED STRIP FOR NEW ACCESS 20cm TOPSOIL - BLACKISH BROWN SILTY CLAY OVER MID ORANGEISH BROWN SILTY CLAY SUBSOIL. STRIPPED TO MAX 0.40m BELOW GROUND LEVEL FOR HARDCORE ACCESS ROAD. NATURAL - WHERE VISIBLE - LIGHT ORANGE CLAY.						
Comments: FURTHER VISITS NEEDED.						

For sketch plan, use separate sheet

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD

Project: Elmwood Close Harrow Road Oakley		Project No/Code: 1067 / OEC 98	Sheet: 2 of
		Date of visit: 10/6/2008	
Client/Developer MASTOE HOUSING ASSOC.			
Contact: RUSSEL OWEN		Phone:	
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):	Start: 8.30; on site 9.30	Finish: 4.10 & on site 5.00	
Completed by: A??			
Development Type:			
Footings	Services	Roads	Levelling
			Quarrying
			Pipelines
			Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions: Dry, bright/overcast - Ground wet + claggy.			
Observations: Watched entrance strip 9:30 - 10am Approx 300mm topsoil removed to reveal mottled reddish brown silty clay with occasional patches (diffuse!) of yellowish-brown clay natural. Pottery recovered from surface exposed. On N side of strip concentration of pottery from same jug (handle) retrieved from possible feature (edges very diffuse). Investigated this with trowel but no red edges found so probably undisturbed in underlying natural? Quite a few pieces of wood + metal plastic also present in surrounding soil. ∴ could be a modern feature. Next to be stripped - 11.70m wide strip to south of entrance in which there are a couple of possible features which are greyish in colour as opposed to brown - small gully and 2 large ? pits, see sketch plan. The bond was then extended east to the site boundary fence - total length of 49.15 from H&A to fence line. In this strip are speary white look like large pits + ditches but it is difficult to be certain - natural is pulling up horribly despite careful machining. Some could be large tree trunks but are some red features.			
Comments: FURTHER VISITS NEEDED			

For sketch plan, use separate sheet

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD

Project: Elmwood Close, Oakley		Project No/Code: 10671 OEC 08	Sheet: 3 of 3
Client/Developer HASTOE HOUSING ASSOC		Date of visit: 11/06/08	
Contact: Russell Owen		Phone:	
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):	Start: 8.10; arrived 9.00	Finish: 4.30; arrived 5.30	
Completed by: AD			
Development Type:			
Footings	Services	Roads	Levelling
			Quarrying
			Pipelines
			Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions: Hot, sunny, dry. Stripped surface + features like concrete. Underlying clay is moist.			
Observations: Informed on arrival that they would like to lay hardcore from entrance through to back of site + strip to rear (not front). There for Janice + I excavated features exposed yesterday whilst the machine moved spoil. Small area about 3m wide excavated + immediate east of gully excavated yesterday: complex? tree trunks and a gully exposed, one of the former includes sliver of early med/later pottery. Used machine to excavate a slot through large pit (016) at the S extent of the site. Photo this so far, will need proper recording in due course. Features excavated are a mixture of three trunks pits + modern features. Have done these in the area needed tomorrow.			
Comments: FURTHER VISITS NEEDED			



A.S.C. LTD

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD

Project: GLM TREE CLOSE, OAKLEY		Project No/Code: 1067 10EC	Sheet: of 01
Client/Developer		Date of visit: 12/16/08	
Contact:		Phone:	
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):	Start: 8:15	Finish: 16:15.	
Completed by: SR			
Development Type:			
Footings	Services	Roads <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Levelling <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Quarrying	Pipelines
Other (specify):			
Site & weather conditions: SUNNY WITH SHOWERS			
Observations: CONTINUED EXCAVATING FEATURES TO S. SIDE OF TERRAM + AGGREGATE ACCESS ROAD. TWO SURFACE FINDS OF POTTERY COLLECTED AREA OF ARSENIC CONTAMINATION TO SW CORNER WILL BE INVESTIGATED BY SOIL SCIENTIST ON MONDAY, AND WILL BE UP TO 10 DAYS BEFORE STRIPPING CAN CONTINUE INTO THIS PART.			
Comments: FURTHER VISITS NEEDED			

For sketch plan, use separate sheet

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD

Project: ELMWOOD CLOSE, OAKLEY		Project No/Code: 1067/OEC	Sheet: of
Client/Developer HARSTOE HOUSING ASSOC.		Date of visit: 13/06/08	
Contact: RUSSEL OWEN		Phone:	
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):	Start: 8:10.	Finish: 4:10.	
Completed by: JR			
Development Type:			
Footings	Services	Roads	Levelling <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
			Quarrying
			Pipelines
			Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions: RAINED OVERNIGHT, DRY SUNNY DAY.			
Observations: CONTINUED EXCAVATING FEATURES. SW CORNER STRIP STARTED 2PM BUT HALTED 2:30PM AS AGGREGATE FOR NEW ROAD ARRIVED AND MACHINE WAS NEEDED FOR THIS.			
Comments: FURTHER VISITS NEEDED.			

For sketch plan, use separate sheet

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD

Project: Elmwood Close, OAKLEY		Project No/Code: 1067 / OEC	Sheet: of
		Date of visit: 24/06/08.	
Client/Developer HASTOE HOUSING ASSOC.			
Contact: RUSSEL OWEN.		Phone:	
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):	Start: 8:15.	Finish: 4:15	
Completed by:			
Development Type:			
Footings <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Services	Roads	Leveling <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Quarrying	Pipelines
		Other (specify):	
Site & weather conditions:			
Observations:			
SOUTHERN PART OF SITE HAS NOW BEEN STRIPPED AND T/SOIL IS BEING TAKEN OFF SITE DUE TO ARSENIC CONTAMINATION. S/SOIL REMAINING SE PLOT FOUNDATION TRENCHES HAVE BEEN DUG AND CONCRETED. SW PLOT FOUNDATION TRENCHES WERE MONITORED S/SOIL OVER NATURAL CLAY WITH CHALK NO FEATURES.			
VERY SOUTHERNMOST 8m MONITORED T/SOIL STRIP. AS THIS WILL GO OFF SITE ALSO. TREE THROWN IN SE corner, slot excavated.			
Comments:			
NO FURTHER VISITS.			

For sketch plan, use separate sheet

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Appendix 2: List of Photographs

SITE NAME: Elmwood Close, Oakley		SITE NO/CODE: 1067/OEC	
B&W		Digital	Subject
Film 1	10	✓	Site before work commenced
	-	✓	Working shot
	11	✓	NW corner strip
	12	✓	NW corner strip
	13	✓	Entrance area as stripped
	14	✓	Feature 1 and section
	15	✓	Feature 2 and section
	16	✓	Feature 2 and section
	-	✓	General shot of central area as stripped
	-	✓	General shot of central area as stripped
	-	✓	General shot of central area as stripped
	-	✓	General shot of central area as stripped
	-	✓	General shot of central area as stripped
	-	✓	General shot of central area as stripped
	-	✓	General shot of central area as stripped
	-	✓	General shot of central area as stripped
	17	✓	Feature 4 and section
	18	✓	Feature 6 and section
	19	✓	Feature 8 and section
	20	✓	Section through pit 12
	21	✓	Section through pit 14
	22	✓	Machine slot through pit 16
	23	✓	Section through shallow spread 18
	24	✓	Section through shallow spread 18
	25	✓	Feature 20 and section
	26	✓	Feature 22 and section
	27	✓	Feature 24 and section
	28	✓	Feature 27 and section
	29	✓	Feature 29 and section
	30	✓	Feature 31 and section
	31	✓	Feature 39 and section
	32	✓	Feature 44 and sections
Film 2	12	✓	SE corner constraints
	13	✓	Plot 10 east foundation trench
	14	✓	Plot 10 north foundation trench
	15	✓	Plot 10 north foundation trench
	16	✓	Tree throw 46
	17	✓	Southern strip
	18	✓	Southern strip
	19	✓	Pier 1
	20	✓	Pier 2
	21	✓	Southern strip
	22	✓	Southern strip

Appendix 3: Context Descriptions

Context Number	Context Type	Description
1	Topsoil	Dark brown silty clay.
2	Natural	Mid yellow brown silty clay
3	Fill	Compact dark grey/mid grey brown silty clay with occasional small limestones and pottery.
4	Cut	Irregularly shaped in plan with rounded corners, 4.70 x 2.50m and 0.26m deep, orientated E-W. Uneven base with rooty runs apparent. Treethrow
5	Fill	Compact/ soft and sticky dark/mid grey silty clay at the surface to /mid grey brown silty clay towards the base, with occasional small limestones and rare charcoal flecks and pottery
6	Cut	Roughly circular with rounded corners 2.70 x 2.30m and 0.26m deep. Treethrow
7	Fill	Compact/ soft and sticky dark/mid grey brown silty clay, with occasional small limestones and rare charcoal flecks
8	Cut	Roughly oval with rounded corners 4.50 x 3.50m and 0.14m deep. Uneven base with rooty runs apparent. Treethrow
9	Fill	Compact dark grey brown silty clay, with occasional small limestones and rare charcoal flecks and pottery. Several pieces of un-biodegraded Mars Bars wrapper found on the base of (10) with no apparent signs of modern intrusions.
10	Cut	Irregularly shaped in plan with rounded corners, 3.00 x 1.80m and 0.20m deep, orientated E-W. Irregular base with absence of rooty runs. Modern pit
11	Fill	Mid-dark orange-ish brown silty clay with occasional small limestone and pottery.
12	Cut	Sub-oval with a flattish base, 2.00m x 0.50m and 0.20m deep.
13	Fill	Mid-dark orange-ish brown silty clay with occasional small limestone.
14	Cut	Continues to east of site area, but oval, with irregular sides, flattish/concave base at least 2.90m by 1.35m and 0.23m deep. Some possible root activity noted at the sides
15	Fill	Dark blackish brown silty clay with 15cm thick lens of charcoal rich black silty clay to base, which contained fragments of animal bone and pottery. Sampled.
16	Cut	Irregularly shaped in plan, steeply sloping sides, concave base. Machine slot excavated, hand cleaned. Large pit, possible pond.

17	Fill	Dark blueish-grey soft silty clay with occasional small limestone pieces.
18	Cut	Irregular/oval cut with slightly irregular sides and a flattish/ concave base. 2.40m x 1.5m and 0.20m deep. Some root disturbance of the sides noted, which also continued beyond the feature
19	Fill	Compact dark grey/mid grey brown silty clay with occasional small limestones and pottery.
20	Cut	Sub rectangular orientated E-W with rounded corners, parallel sides and a dished/flat base. 4.20m x 1.86m and 0.14m deep. Seems to lack the rooty runs seen in less linear features
21	Fill	Compact dark grey/mid grey brown silty clay with occasional small limestones.
22	Cut	Linear, not parallel with adjacent features, but parallel sided with rounded corners and dished – flat base. 5.70m by 1.55m and 0.14m deep.
23	Upper fill	Firm dark blue/grey silty clay with occasional rounded pebbles.
24	Cut	1.60m wide and 0.20m deep Linear orientated north-south with rounded terminal. Cut almost vertical to the east but at 45° at the west. Flattish base. 1.60m wide. 0.65m wide section excavated, 0.40m deep.
25	Lower fill	Firm orange silty clay mottled with grey, 0.20m deep.
26	Fill	Soft, very wet orangeish brown silty clay containing rare pottery
27	Cut	Linear with terminus at the south-west edge changing to more irregular shape towards the north-east. Sides at 30° with flattish base. 0.70m wide, 0.50m section excavated and 0.13m deep.
28	Fill	Soft, mixed orangeish brown silty clay with occasional small stone.
29	Cut	Roughly oval with shallow irregular sides at 30° and a flattish base. Aligned roughly north-east to south-west. Section 0.45m x 1.20m and 0.13m deep.
30	Fill	Mid orangeish brown silty clay with occasional small rounded stones and pottery
31	Cut	Irregularly shaped cut with irregular sides and base aligned roughly north-south. 1.10m wide, section 0.60m and 0.150m deep. Possibly also includes (33) as part of it.
32	Fill	Mid orangeish brown silty clay with occasional small stones. Cut by pit (35) to the west.
33	Cut	Irregular cut, which may include (31); roughly straight sides with irregular base. Partially cut by pit (35). 0.50m wide with 0.50m section excavated, depth 0.15m.

34	Fill	Soft mottled, mid orange brown silty clay with occasional small stones.
35	Cut	Roughly circular with 60-70° sides and a flattish base with a slight rise in the natural on the southern edge. Section 0.60m x 0.60m and 0.22m deep. Cuts (31) and (33)
36	Fill	Soft, mid grey-brown silty clay. No inclusions noted.
37	Cut	Irregularly shaped with gently sloping sides and an uneven base. 1.50- 1.80m wide and at least 2.50m long 0.20m deep. Orientated north-east to south-west
38	Fill	Dark orangeish brown silty clay with occasional small, sub-rounded stones and pottery.
39	Cut	Roughly oval area of naturally filled rooting with shallow, 20-30° sides and a flattish base. Section 0.50m x 1.20m wide and 0.14m deep.
40	Fill	Firm, mixed blue-grey and reddish brown silty clay with a pottery sherd from near the surface being only inclusion noted
41	Cut	Irregular in plan with rounded sides and an irregular, sloping base.
42	Upper fill	Soft, mottled orangeish brown silty clay with occasional sub rounded stones and pottery.
43	Lower fill	Fairly soft mid blue-grey silty clay with occasional charcoal and small sub rounded stones noted. Similar to the natural.
44	Cut	Roughly circular with steep sides at 80°sides and a flattish base. Appears to cut general area of treethrows.
45	Fill	Dark orangeish brown silty clay with occasional small, sub-rounded stones. Area of natural to centre suggests treethrow formed by natural felling of tree.
46	Cut	Irregular in plan with irregular sides and uneven base, continues to south and east of stripped area.
47	Fill	Dark-grey brown silty clay with occasional clay flecks and orange mottling particularly towards the base.
48	Cut	Contains pot, tile and burnt bone Linear feature 3m long, 0.26m wide and 0.20m deep with a central flat base and near vertical side. Uneven sides.
49	Fill	Mid-dark grey brown silty clay with orange mottle containing two pottery sherds.
50	Cut	Linear feature 3.40m in length, up to 0.98m wide and 0.08m deep with a wide flat base and short steep sides but a shallow terminal to the north. The feature is wider where it cut an earlier treethrow.

Appendix 4: Finds Concordance

Context Number	Pottery		Bone		Other Finds		
	Number	Grams	Number	Grams	Type	Number	Grams
1	43	436	5	24	Tile Iron object	3 1	110 7
3	2	6					
5			6	2			
9	3	33	1	42			
15	1	42	15	108	Fire cracked flint	1	15
17	1	5					
19	1	12					
26	1	12					
30	1	4					
38	1	1					
40	2	70					
42	2	9					
47	2	45	1	2			
49	2	16					
51	12	172					

Appendix 4: The Pottery by Barbara Hurman AIFA FAAIS

There were 80 sherds of pottery recovered from the excavation weighing approximately 863 gms. This small group of multi-period sherds, upon examination indicated dates from the probable later early Bronze Age (identification pers. comm. Mr Ben Roberts, Curator of European Bronze Age, The British Museum) through to the Post-medieval period.

The bracketed numbers below, apart from (1) Topsoil, relate to the fourteen stratified Context Types where sherds were present, see Appendix 3. The pottery sherd count and weight is recorded in Appendix 4

Sherd identification by period

Context	Prehistoric	Roman	Medieval	Post-medieval
1	1	1	39	2
3			2	
9		1	2	
15	1			
17				1
19			1	
26			1	
30			1	
38			1	
40			2	
42	1		1	
47		1	1	
49			2	
51			12	
TOTAL	3	3	65	3

The precise dating of all the stratified features is difficult with so few diagnostic vessel forms being present. Therefore, it is thought important to include in this report the analysis of the 49 sherds from the Topsoil (1), not only because there are several vessel forms present, but also because of the finding of the first Prehistoric ceramic evidence in Oakley. Comparison of sherd fabrics with the Milton Keynes type series has helped towards dating.

Dating

Natural features

(40)	1 Base MS3, 1 Jar rim TLMS3	- c15 th century.
(3)	1 sherd MS8	- late c13 th - c14 th century
	1 sherd MS9	- mid c13 th - c14 th century
(17)	1 sherd Glazed red earthenware	- c16 th - c17 th century
(30)	1 sherd MS9	- mid c13 th - c14 th century
(26)	1 sherd MS2	- late c13 th - early c15 th century

Pits

- | | | |
|------|--|---|
| (9) | 1 jar Rim | - Romano-British |
| | 1 Jar rim MS3 | - early c12 th |
| | 1 frag MS9 | - mid c13 th - c14 th century |
| (15) | 1 sherd 7 frags, grog tempered | - Later early Bronze Age |
| (38) | 1 sherd small frag MS9 | - mid c13 th - c14 th century |
| (19) | 1 Jar rim MS9 | - mid c13 th - c14 th century |
| (42) | 1 sherd | - Iron Age |
| | 1 abraded sherd MS9 | - mid c13 th - c14 th century |
| (51) | 12 sherds sparsley green glazed Jug rim
with slashed strap handle | - mid c13 th to c15 th |
| | 7 sherds worn external green glaze MS9 | - mid c13 th to c15 th |
| | 1 abraded jug sherd showing slashed
handle plug MS9mid | - c13 th - c15 th century |

Linear features

- | | | |
|------|--------------|---|
| (47) | 1 sherd | - Romano-British |
| | 1 sherd MS9 | - mid c13 th - c14 th century |
| (49) | 1 sherd MS2 | - late c13 th - early c15 th |
| | 1 body sherd | - possibly Roman |

Topsoil (01)

Prehistoric:

1 sherd probable Later early Bronze Age

Romano-British:

1 sherd very abraded Romano-British, Oxfordshire red colour-coated.

Medieval:

1 Thumbed bowl rim MS3 - early c12th century

4 sherds MS8 unidentified forms - late c13th century - c14th century

1 base (oxidized firing) MS8 - late c13th - c14th century Brill/ Boarstall ware
MS9 Mid late c13th - 15th century

3 bases MS9, one has speckled glazed underneath, probably from kiln stacking,
another similar dark green glaze on underside, some kiln scarring.
Vessels may have been sold as seconds!

5 joining base sherds MS9, similar to last entry, dark green glaze on the
underside. Some kiln scarring. Vessels may have been sold as seconds!

12 sherds MS9 unidentified forms

2 sherds MS9 some worn internal olive green glaze (some kiln scarring)

1 Jug sherd MS9 good lead glaze

2 jug sherds MS9 abraded, traces of dark green glaze

3 Jug sherds MS9 brown-green glaze with vertical iron rich strips

1 Bowl rim MS9

1 Jug rim MS9

1 Jug rim MS9 with pouring lip

2 Jar rims MS9

Post-medieval:

1 sherd Stoneware bottle Jar, with remains of an address c18th

1 sherd blue and white patterned, c19th

Whilst taking into consideration the importance of the first evidence of prehistoric pottery from contexts (1), (15) and (42) from Oakley, the Medieval and Romano-British sherds do reflect the known collections of such material from the field walking parish exercises, carried out in previous years by the Bucks County Museum Archaeology Group. In all probability the medieval sherds are associated with the known nearby village earthworks (CAS 2047).

Appendix 5: ASC OASIS Form

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name:	Elmwood Close, Oakley, Buckinghamshire		
Short Description:	In June 2008 ASC carried out a watching brief at Elmwood Close, Oakley, Buckinghamshire during groundworks for a new housing development. The presence of tree throws suggest that the site lay on the edge of the Saxon royal hunting forest of Bernwood. Pottery recovered from some of these features show that it was cleared during the late medieval period, when it was peripheral to the settlement of Oakley. A number of pits, ditches and gullies were also recorded, several of which cut the infilled threethrows. A large pit containing burnt flint, degraded animal bone fragments and pottery of Bronze Age date was also noted.		
Project Type:	Watching Brief		
Site status: (eg. none, SAM, Listed)	None	Previous work: (eg. SMR refs)	None
Current land use:	Agricultural Land	Future work: (yes / no / unknown)	No
Monument type:	Pits and treethrows	Monument period:	Prehistoric to medieval
Significant finds: (artefact type & period)	Medieval pottery fragments, prehistoric pottery fragments, Roman pottery fragments		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County:	Buckinghamshire	OS reference: (8 figs min)	SP 6396 1210
District:	Aylesbury Vale	Parish:	Oakley
Site address:	Elmwood Close, Oakley, Buckinghamshire		
Study area: (sq. m. or ha)	c. 1560m ²	Height OD: (metres)	c. 80
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation:	Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd		
Project brief originator:	D. Radford	Project design originator:	C. Rouse
Project Manager:	K. Semmelmann	Director/Supervisor:	J. Richards
Sponsor / funding body:	Hastoe Housing Association		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date:	9 th June 2008	End date:	24 th June 2008
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical:	Buckinghamshire Museum (2008.70)	Pottery	
Paper:	Buckinghamshire Museum (2008.70)	Report, B&W photos and negatives, site records	
Digital:	Buckinghamshire Museum (2008.70)	CD-Rom with copies of all digital files, including photographs	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title:	Watching Brief: Elmwood Close, Oakley, Buckinghamshire		
Serial title & volume:	ASC Ltd Report ref. 1067/OEC/2		
Author(s):	J Richards BA PIFA and A Thompson BSc AIFA		
Page nos	41	Date:	30 th September 2008