

# **Northern Avenue, Andover, Hampshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation  
for Lamron Estates Ltd**

by Sarah Coles

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code NAA05/05

**April 2005**

## Summary

**Site name:** Northern Avenue, Andover, Hampshire

**Grid reference:** SU3650 4645

**Site activity:** Evaluation

**Date and duration of project:** 31st March to 5th April 2005.

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** Sarah Coles

**Site code:** NAA05/05

**Area of site:** c. 2.1 ha

**Summary of results:** Five features cutting the gravel were located of which four were ditches dated to the late 19th or 20th centuries. A tree hole contained a small amount of prehistoric struck flint. A modest amount of struck flint of Mesolithic and later dates was recovered from the topsoil.

A peat filled former channel of the river Anton was located and a column sample obtained for future analysis.

**Monuments identified:** None

**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 ✓ 27.04.05
	Steve Preston ✓ 29.04.05

# Northern Avenue, Andover, Hampshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Sarah Coles

**Report 05/05**

## **Introduction**

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at land off Northern Avenue, Andover, Hampshire (SU 3650 4645) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr A Rogers of Madlin and Maddison, Devonshire House, 60 Station Road, Addlestone, Surrey, KT15 2AF on behalf of Lamron Estates Limited.

Planning permission has been granted by Test Valley Borough Council (Appl. No. TVN.07194/1) for the construction of a new retail warehouse and garden centre, drive-through restaurant and associated car parking and access facilities. The consent is subject to a condition (7) requiring an archaeological evaluation to be carried out.

This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Planning Policy Guidance, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990), and the Borough's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Frank Green, Borough Heritage Officer. The fieldwork was undertaken by Sarah Coles, Simon Cass, Steve Ford and Roy Krakowicz between 31st March and 5th April 2005. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Hampshire Museum Service in due course.

## **Location, topography and geology**

The site is located north of Andover town centre on a piece of unused scrubland between the River Anton to the west, the Ring Road (Northern Avenue) to the south and the Enham Arch Roundabout to the east (Fig. 1). The site comprises of an irregular parcel of land covering c. 2.1 hectares and the underlying geology is alluvium and river gravel (BGS 1975). The geology observed on site was chalk, marl and gravel. Chalk was observed in Trenches 1 and 4, marl in Trenches 6 and 11, and gravel in Trenches 2, 3, 5, 7–10 and 12. The elevation of the site is approximately 60m above Ordnance Datum throughout.

## **Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential of the site is derived its location on the floodplain and terrace margins of the river Anton. This type of location is favoured for occupation in earlier prehistoric times when the subsistence pattern was based on hunting/gathering/fishing. It is also possible that later (Bronze Age/Iron Age) occupation took place before increased flooding and alluviation made low-lying areas unsuitable for occupation. The coincidence of human occupation and adjacent areas of waterlogged deposits (alluvium/peat) may also provide sources for palaeoenvironmental reconstruction and the recovery of artefacts made from organic materials.

A search was made of the Hampshire Archaeology and Historic Buildings Record for a 500m radius around the site. One entry (23115; SU365465) is for the finding of a handaxe of Palaeolithic date on the site itself, or very close to it, but there is no information about the circumstance of discovery. Elsewhere the site of the medieval hospital of St John the Baptist, which is documented from AD1247, is thought to lie to the south-east of Enham Arch roundabout (23121; SU36804633). In the same general location was found a collared urn of Early Bronze Age date (23142; SU368463). Other entries relatively close to the site relate to listed buildings, watercress beds identified on late post-medieval maps, and several archaeological investigations with negative results.

The site is well to the north of the projected extent of the Saxon and medieval towns (HCC and EH 2002, maps C and D). The course of a prehistoric trackway (the Harroway), which was still in use as a pilgrims' route in the Medieval period, is thought to pass just to the south of the site (HCC and EH 2002, 2 and map A).

## **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 objectives were:

- a) To determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on this site.
- b) To determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present.

The agreed specification was for the excavation of twelve trenches each 1.8m wide and 20m long located to give random spatial covering of the site area with some trenches specifically located parallel to the river to search for preferential waterside occupation. The trenches were dug under continuous archaeological supervision by a 360<sup>0</sup>-type machine fitted with a toothless bucket. Spoilheaps were searched for finds.

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

## **Results**

The twelve trenches dug ranged in length from 10m to 28.50m as shown on Figure 2.

### Trenches 1 and 4

Trench 1 was only 10m long due to the proximity of overhead power cables. The stratigraphy showed 0.30m of a humic topsoil onto 0.60m of a mid-pale grey brown silty clay subsoil onto chalk with clay banding. A similar stratigraphy was present in Trench 4. Trench 4 was 28.5 m long to compensate for the area lost in Trench 1 and showed 0.20m of topsoil onto 0.25m of subsoil which overlay 0.45m of gravel onto chalk with clay banding. These two trenches were located on the margins of the flood plain. No archaeological finds or deposits were observed in either of these trenches.

### Trench 2

This trench was 21.4m in length. It showed 0.20-0.50m of topsoil onto dumps of 20th-century rubbish, which lay above river gravel. No archaeological finds or deposits were observed.

### Trench 3

This trench was 25.5m long. It contained 0.10m of topsoil overlying 0.20-0.40m of peat which overlay gravel at the southwestern end and a mid yellow grey clay with gravel at the northern eastern end of the trench. The peat appears to be infilling a shallow basin. Some redeposited gravel was present at the south end of the trench. No archaeological finds or deposits were observed

### Trench 5 (Plate 1)

This trench was 21.7m long and had 0.20m of topsoil which overlay three ditches. Ditch 1 was 2.90m wide and 0.50m deep and contained a single fill (50), which had pottery dating it to the late 19th century. Ditch 1 cut an earlier ditch (2) which had a single fill (51) and contained one sherd of Roman black burnished ware pottery; however, it also contained the base of a 19th-century glass bottle. Ditch 2 was 1.10m wide and 0.30m deep. Ditch 4 was 1.50m wide and 0.80m deep and had three fills (53, 55 and 56) all of which contained pottery dating to the late 19th century. All three ditches were aligned NW–SE and were not present in any of the other trenches. At the northeastern end of the trench the stratigraphy showed 0.20m of topsoil onto 1.10m of peat and the continuation of the palaeochannel which also appears in Trenches 7 and 11.

### Trench 6

This trench was 21m long and showed 0.40m of topsoil onto marl. No archaeological finds or deposits were observed.

### Trench 7 (Plate 2)

This trench was 23.5m long and at the west end showed 0.20m of topsoil onto possible archaeological features onto gravel (Fig. 3). Ditch 5 was 0.15m deep and 1.60m wide and a 12m length was exposed aligned NW-SE. The ditch contained a single dark brown peaty fill (54) from which a modern plastic bag was retrieved. Ditch 5 cut feature 3. The trench side was extended to further expose feature 3 to clarify its nature and this indicated that although elongated it tapered to a point and was not a gully but probably a tree hole. Feature 3 was sectioned and had a single silty gravel fill (52) which produced 8 prehistoric struck flakes.

At the eastern end of the trench the stratigraphy changed and 0.20m of topsoil overlay 1.10m of peat onto gravel. This is part of the palaeochannel noted in other trenches (5, 11).

### Trenches 8, 9 and 12 (Plate 3)

These trenches ranged in length from 20.5m to 24m. The topsoil in these trenches ranged between 0.15m–0.40m deep and overlay river gravel. No archaeological finds or deposits were observed in these trenches.

### Trench 10

This trench was 21m in length. The topsoil was 0.30m deep onto redeposited chalk at the northwest end of the trench onto river gravels. A shallow depression was investigated near the centre of the trench and was shown to be a tree hole. No archaeological finds or deposits were observed.

### Trench 11 (Plate 4)

This trench was 20.5m in length and had 0.40m of topsoil onto 0.40m of a mid brown/black peat onto 0.30m of grey alluvial clay which overlay 0.90m of an earlier peat deposit. No archaeological finds or deposits were observed. A column sample (and bulk samples) of the peat and other deposits for the full depth of stratigraphy above gravel were taken for future study into the palaeoenvironmental development of the area by Reading University.

## **Finds**

### *Pottery* by Sarah Coles

Three sherds of pottery were retrieved during the evaluation. Two of these were found in topsoil. These were two body sherds of a coarse flint-tempered medieval ware. One of these has the diagnostic signs of a saggy bottomed vessel. Both pieces of pottery weigh 14g each.

A single sherd (12g) of black burnished Roman pottery was retrieved from ditch 2 (51), however part of a 19th-century glass bottle was also retrieved.

### *Struck flint* by Steve Ford

A small collection of 66 prehistoric struck flints was recovered during the course of the evaluation as detailed in Appendix 3. Eight pieces were recovered from an elongated pit (3) which is not considered to be of archaeological origin but is a tree hole or similar. The remaining pieces were all recovered from the surface of the vegetation-free topsoil from areas between the trenches, without any marked concentrations being noted. The material is of variable condition with some pieces in near-mint condition with others being slightly rolled, iron stained or patinated.

The collection includes items of Mesolithic (or possibly earlier Neolithic date) comprising blades/narrow flakes and corresponding cores. Other material is chronologically undiagnostic and could belong to any period from the Mesolithic through to the end of the Bronze Age, but is clearly not representative of a single phase of activity. Some of the material might be a result of procurement activity, roughing out or testing debris from nodules to be transported and used elsewhere. Whilst the collection is of moderate size, for a location where good raw material is easily available, any prehistoric occupation site even if only used for a short period could be expected to have yielded considerably more struck flint than was actually recovered here.

## **Conclusion**

A selection of cut features were observed and excavated during the evaluation exercise and comprised four ditches and one tree hole. One of the ditches (5) dates to the 20th or 21st century as it contained plastic. The other three ditches all date to the late 19th century or later as evidenced by china found in features 1 and 4. Feature 2 is of the same date from the fragment of glass jar it contained despite containing a sherd of a black burnished type Roman pottery. Feature 3 was a tree hole that contained a small number of struck flints.

A modest quantity of struck flint from various prehistoric periods was also retrieved from the topsoil which had been stripped of vegetation. Some, perhaps most, of these could be *in situ* (insofar as topsoil contexts can ever be described as *in situ*) and correspond with the flints stratified within the tree hole. The flints did though show much variation in condition suggesting a variety of post-depositional histories. The presence of a few sherds of medieval pottery in the topsoil suggests that the site might have been ploughed in this era, if these finds had been introduced by manuring. There was also evidence that gravel had been dumped on the site in some areas (such as Trench 3) and there is a possibility that some of the struck flint could have been imported with this from elsewhere. The quantity and nature of the struck flint suggests that these finds derive from casual loss or discard of the struck flint, perhaps repeatedly so, and is typical of the distribution of prehistoric struck flint across the landscape in the Andover region.

A former channel of the river Anton was also identified traversing the site and found to be peat filled. These channel deposits were not associated with archaeological deposits and will be retained beneath the development with relatively minor intrusions from foundations. A sample column of the deposits has been taken for future study.

It is concluded therefore that the archaeological potential of the site is low.

## **References**

BGS, 1975, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50 000, Sheet 283, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth  
HCC and EH, 2002, *An Extensive Urban Survey of Hampshire's and the Isle of Wight's Historic Towns: Archaeological Assessment Document*; Andover, Hampshire County Council and English Heritage  
PPG16, 1990, *Archaeology and Planning*, Dept of the Environment Planning Policy Guidance 16, HMSO

**APPENDIX 1: Trench details**  
0m at S or W end

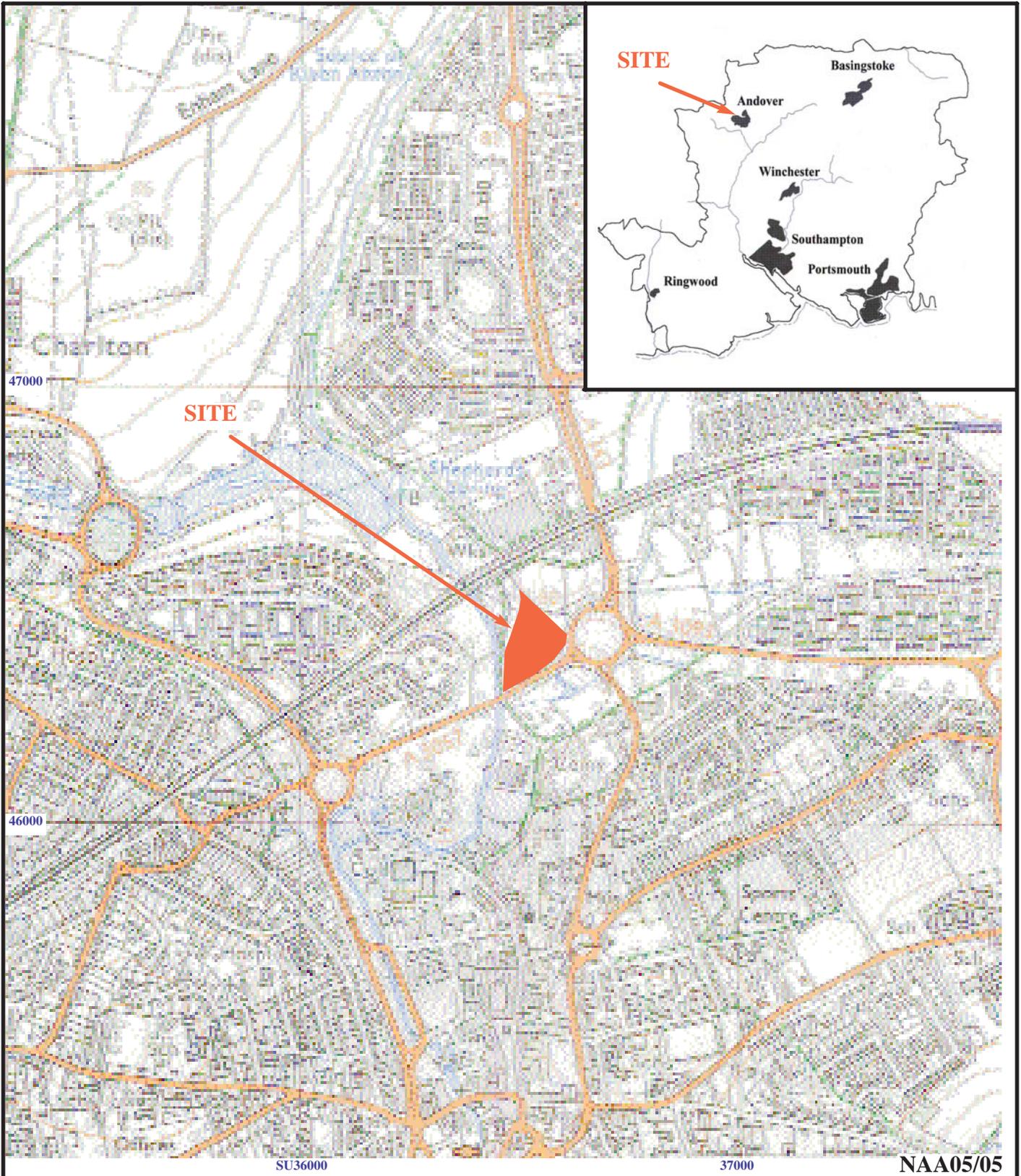
<i>Trench No.</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	10.00	1.80	N 1.00 S 0.80	0.30m of topsoil onto 0.60m of a mid-pale grey brown silty clay subsoil onto chalk with clay banding. No archaeology observed.
2	21.40	1.80	N 0.60 S 0.65	0.20-0.50m of topsoil onto Post-medieval dumps onto gravel.
3	25.50	1.80	N 0.70 S 0.70	At the southern end of the trench the stratigraphy showed 0.10m of topsoil onto 0.20m of peat onto flint gravels. The northern end of the trench showed 0.10m topsoil onto 0.20m peat onto a mid yellow grey clay with flints. No archaeology observed.
4	28.50	1.80	NW 0.90 SE 1.10	At the south east end of the trench the stratigraphy shows 0.20m of topsoil onto 0.25m of subsoil onto 0.45m of gravel onto chalk with clay banding. No archaeology observed.
5	21.70	1.80	NE 1.30 SW 0.60	At the south west end of the trench the stratigraphy showed 0.20m of topsoil onto archaeology. Three ditches, two 19th century (1) and (4), aligned NW-SE and ditch (2) was cut by ditch (1). This contained a sherd of Roman pottery and a piece of glass. The north eastern end of the trench shows 0.20m of topsoil onto 1.10m of peat onto gravel. <b>[Plate 1]</b>
6	21.00	1.80	E 1.30 W 0.90	0.40m of topsoil onto marl. No archaeology observed.
7	23.50	1.80	E 1.00 W 0.25	At the West end of the trench is 0.20m of topsoil onto archaeology onto gravel. Feature 5 is a shallow modern ditch which contained plastic, the other treebole (3) contained numerous pieces of struck flint. At the eastern end of the trench the stratigraphy showed 0.20m topsoil onto 0.20m peat onto 0.30m of clay onto 0.30m of peat onto gravel. <b>[Plate 2]</b>
8	24.00	1.80	NE 0.30 SW 0.35	0.25m of disturbed topsoil onto gravel. No archaeology observed. <b>[Plate 3]</b>
9	20.50	1.80	E 0.60 W 0.50	0.30m of topsoil onto gravel. No archaeology observed.
10	21.00	1.80	N 0.90 S 1.40	A testpit was dug at the southeastern end of the trench the stratigraphy shows 0.30m of topsoil onto gravel. At the north western end 0.30m of topsoil onto 0.30m of redeposited chalk onto gravel. No archaeology was observed.
11	20.50	1.80	NW 2.05 SE 2.30	0.40m of topsoil onto 0.40m of peat onto 0.30m of clay onto 0.90m of peat onto marl. A peat column was taken at 2.10m along the trench from the SE end. No archaeology was observed. <b>[Plate 4]</b>
12	23.00	1.80	NE 0.50 SW 0.70	0.40m of topsoil onto gravel. No archaeology was observed.

**APPENDIX 2: Feature details**

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
5	1	50	Ditch	19th century	China
5	2	51	Ditch/Gully	19th century	1 Roman sherd 1 base glass bottle
5	4	53, 55 and 56	Ditch	19th century	China
7	3	52	Tree hole	Prehistoric	Struck flints
7	5	54	Ditch	20th century	plastic

**APPENDIX 3:** Catalogue of struck flint

<i>Context</i>	<i>Flakes</i>	<i>Blades/narrow flakes</i>	<i>Spalls</i>	<i>Blade Cores</i>	<i>Cores</i>	<i>Core fragment</i>	<i>Other</i>
Topsoil	46	6		2	2	1	Scraper
3 (52)	5	2	1				



**Northern Avenue, Andover, Hampshire, 2005  
An Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 1. Location of site within Andover and Hampshire.

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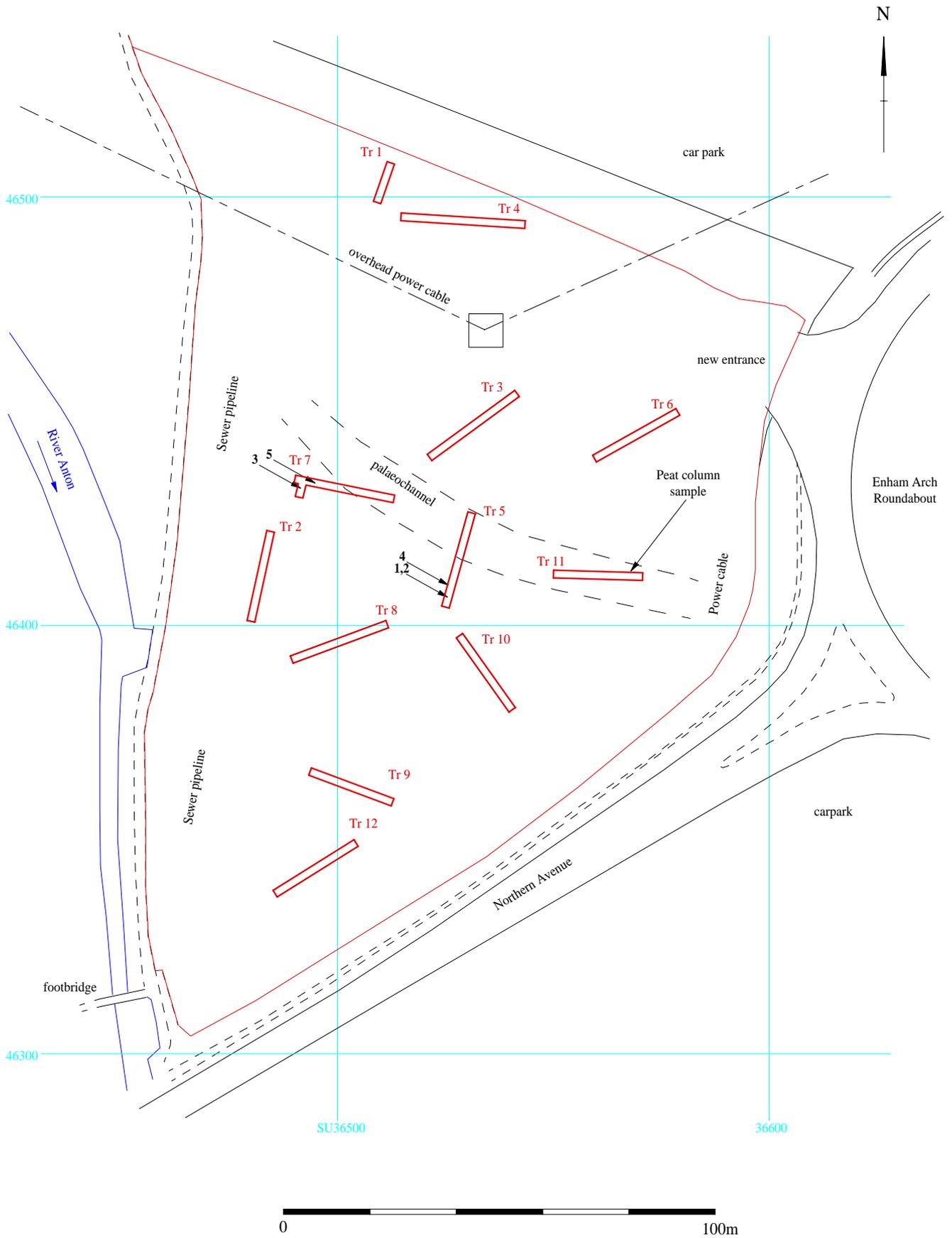


Figure 3. Location of trenches.

# Northern Avenue, Andover, Hampshire 2005

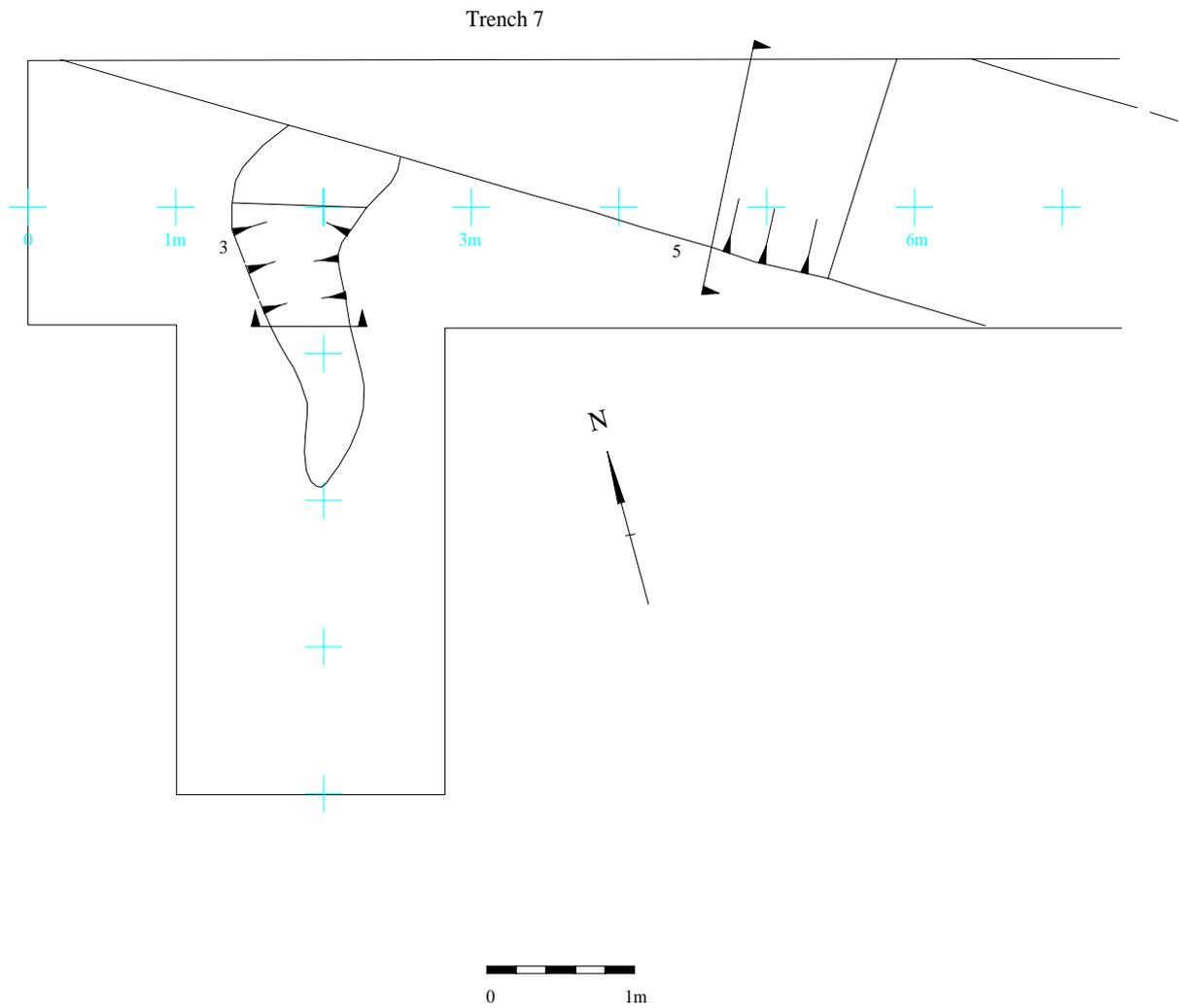


Figure 3: Plan of trench 7.

# Northern Avenue, Andover, Hampshire 2005

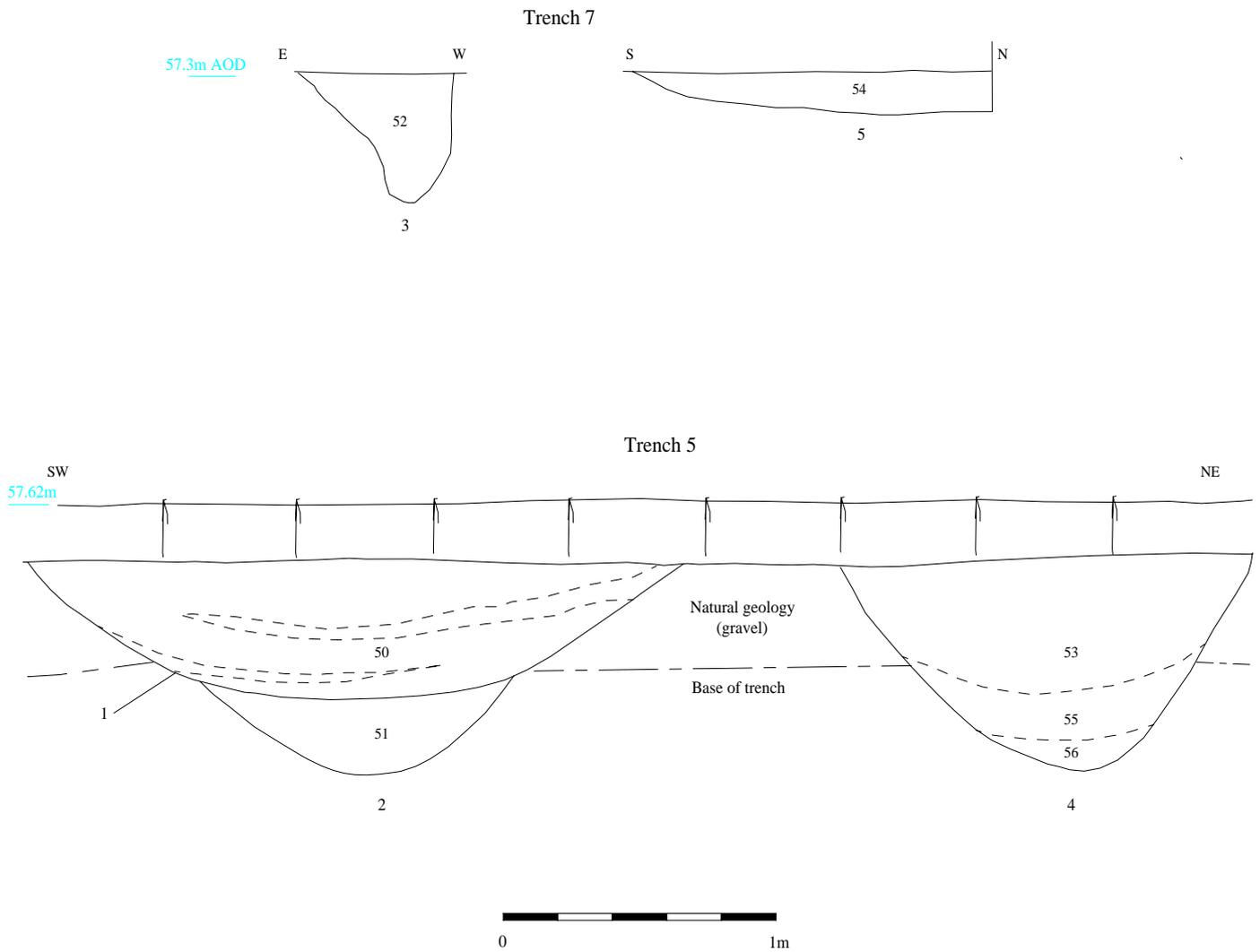


Figure 4: Sections of features



Plate 1. Trench 5, Ditch 1 looking north west, Scales 2m and 1m.



Plate 2. Trench 7, Tree hole 3 looking west, Scales 1m and 0.5m.



Plate 3. Trench 8, looking east, Scales 2m and 1m.



Plate 4. Trench 11, location of column sample through peat looking north east, Scale 2m.