

Hall Farm, Bentworth, Alton, Hampshire

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For Mr and Mrs Brooking

by Steve Ford

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code HFB 04/74

March 2005

Summary

Site name: Hall Farm, Bentworth, Alton, Hampshire

Grid reference: SU 6629 3995

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 25th November to 9th December 2004

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Helen Moore

Site code: HFB04/74

Summary of results: No archaeological deposits were encountered and no finds retrieved.

Monuments identified: Nil

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

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Report edited/checked by: Jennifer Lowe ✓ 04.04.05 Steve Preston ✓ 04.04.05
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Report 04/74

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at Hall Farm, Bentworth, Alton, Hampshire (SU 6629 3995) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Nicholas Care-Thomas of Radley House Partnership, Radley House, 8 St. Cross Road, Winchester, Hampshire, SO23 9HX on behalf of Mr and Mrs Brooking.

A planning consent (F.26002/018/FUL/KO) has been granted by East Hampshire Council for the construction of a new house and garage on part of the farmyard at Hall Farm. The consent was subject to a condition (10) relating to archaeology, which requires a watching brief to be carried out during groundworks. This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Planning Policy Guidance, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990), and the District's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Stephen Appleby, Archaeological Officer with Hampshire County Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Helen Moore and Pamela Jenkins on 25th and 26th November and 9th December 2004 and the site code is HFB04/74.

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 on the southern margins of Bentworth on the south side of Holt End Lane (Fig. 2). The site was occupied by farm buildings and areas of hard standing. The underlying geology is clay-with-flints above chalk (BGS 1975) and the site lies at height of *c.* 177m above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its position on the margins of the historic core of the village which is of medieval origin, but is not mentioned in Domesday Book. Hall Farm is the site of the medieval manor. The 12th-to 13th-century church of St Mary, which stands to the north is now much rebuilt and Hall Farm farmhouse is a 14th-century medieval hall house with gabled crosswings. The farm complex also includes a 14th-century chapel, incorporated within other farm buildings just to the north-east of the new building site.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the new construction work. This was to involve the examination of areas of topsoil stripping, landscaping, ground reduction and the digging of trenches for foundations and services as necessary.

Results

The groundworks of potential archaeological interest for this project concerned construction of the house and comprised the digging of foundations for the walls and an excavation for a cellar (Fig. 3). Other groundworks on the site were superficial or involved minor intrusions into the natural geology at most.

The cellar work comprised the excavation of a rectangular hole *c.* 7m x 4m to a maximum depth of 2.9m below the existing ground level. The hole was larger than the actual cellar to enable access for construction. Part of the initial stripping involved removal of 0.5m of topsoil from a garden plot which revealed 0.2m of an orange-brown subsoil overlying clay-with-flint natural (an orange-red silty clay). Other parts of the stripped area required removal of chalk/flint demolition rubble directly overlying the clay-with-flint natural. The underlying undulating chalk was also exposed beneath the clay-with-flint. No archaeological deposits were observed nor finds recovered.

Topsoil was stripped from the remainder of the house footprint prior to the digging of the footing trenches (Figs 3 and 4). The remaining footing trenches were 0.6m wide and dug typically to a depth of up to 1.5m. They revealed a simple stratigraphy of chalk and flint rubble above a grey-brown silty clay subsoil above the clay-with-flint natural geology with undulating chalk present in places. No archaeological deposits were observed nor finds recovered.

Finds

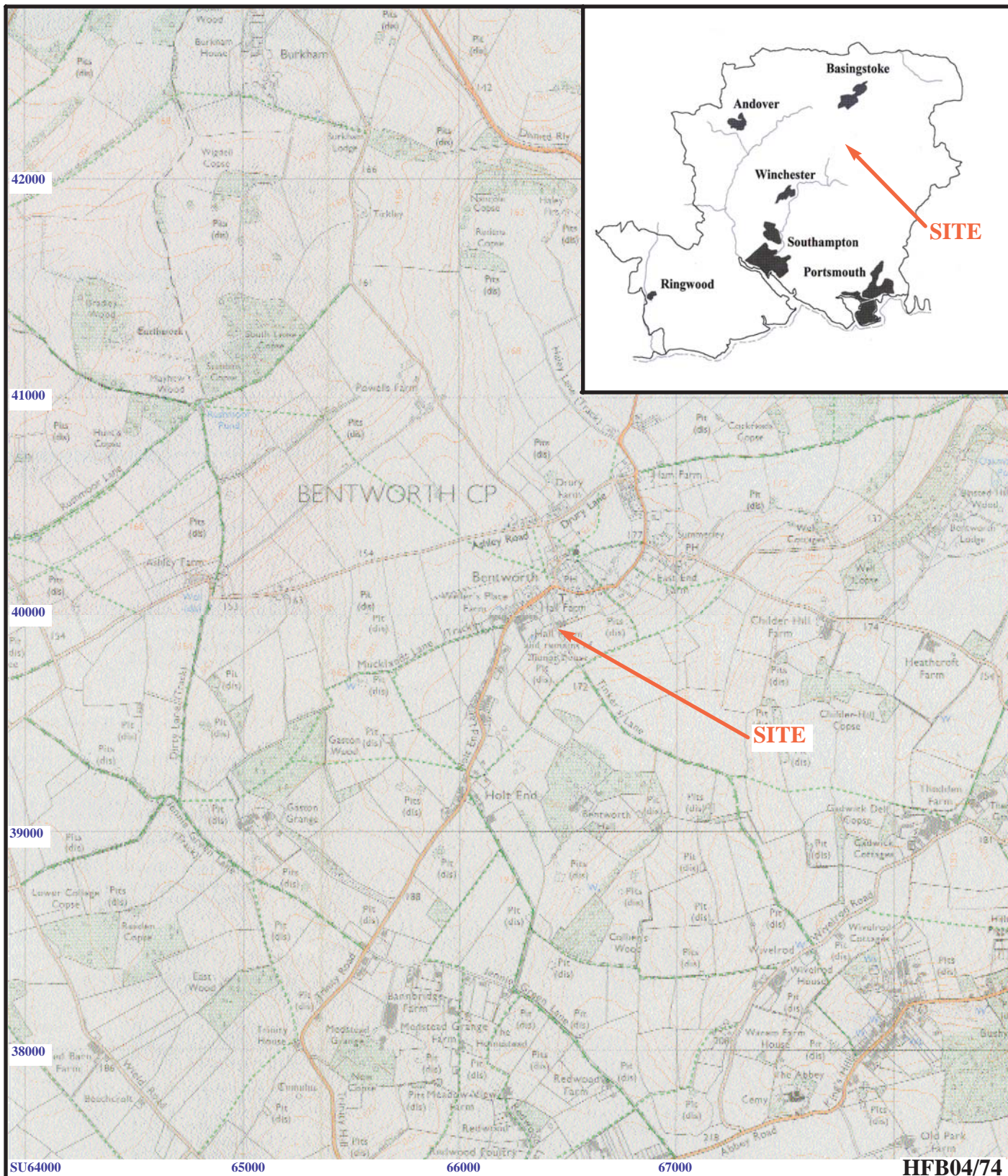
No finds other than occasional fragments of modern pottery (not retained) were noted.

Conclusion

The watching brief has not revealed any finds or deposits of archaeological interest.

References

BGS, 1975, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 300, Drift Edition, Keyworth
PPG 16, 1990, *Archaeology and Planning*, Dept of the Environment Planning Policy Guidance 16, HMSO

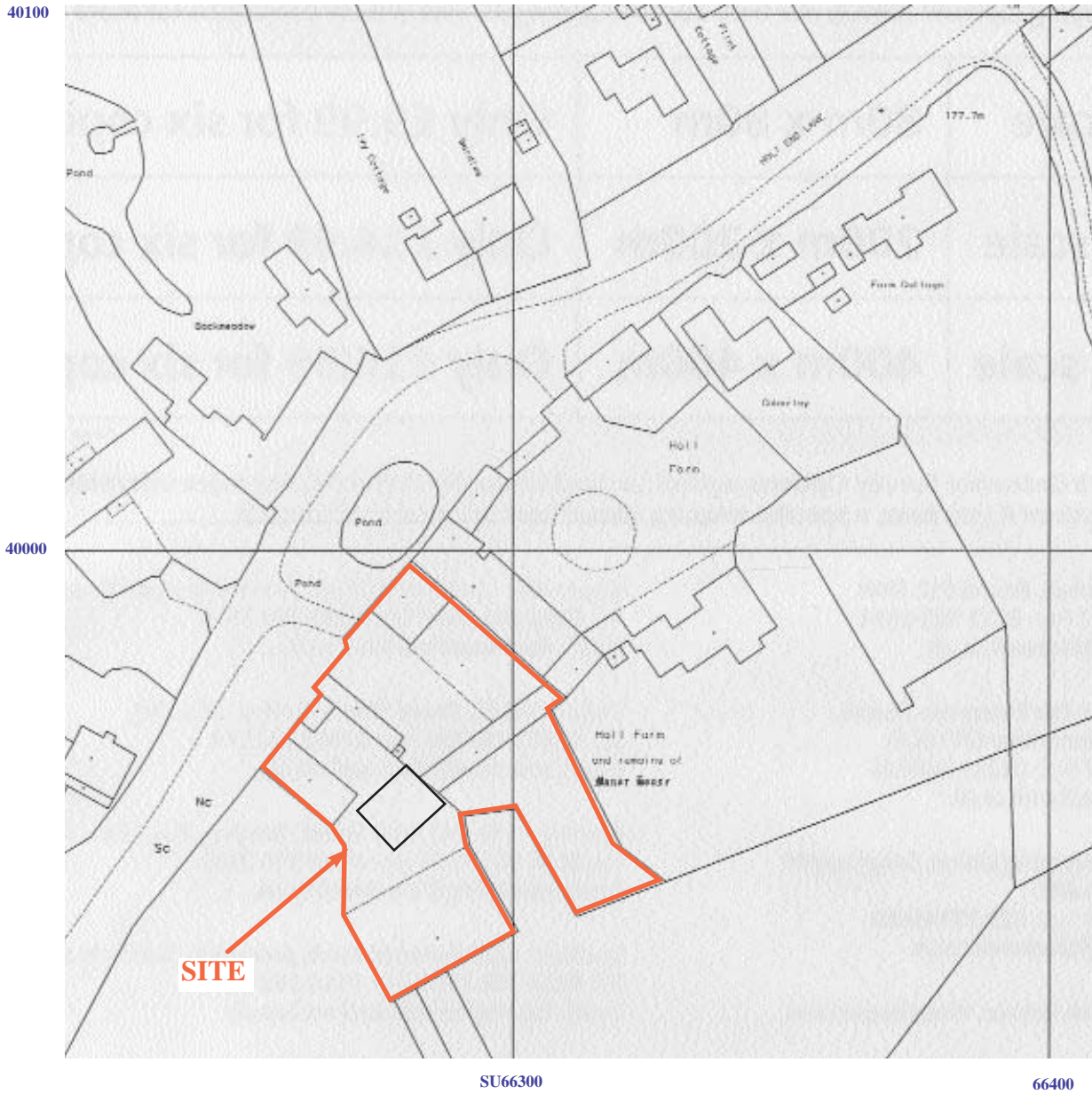


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Figure 1. Location of site within Bentworth and Hampshire.

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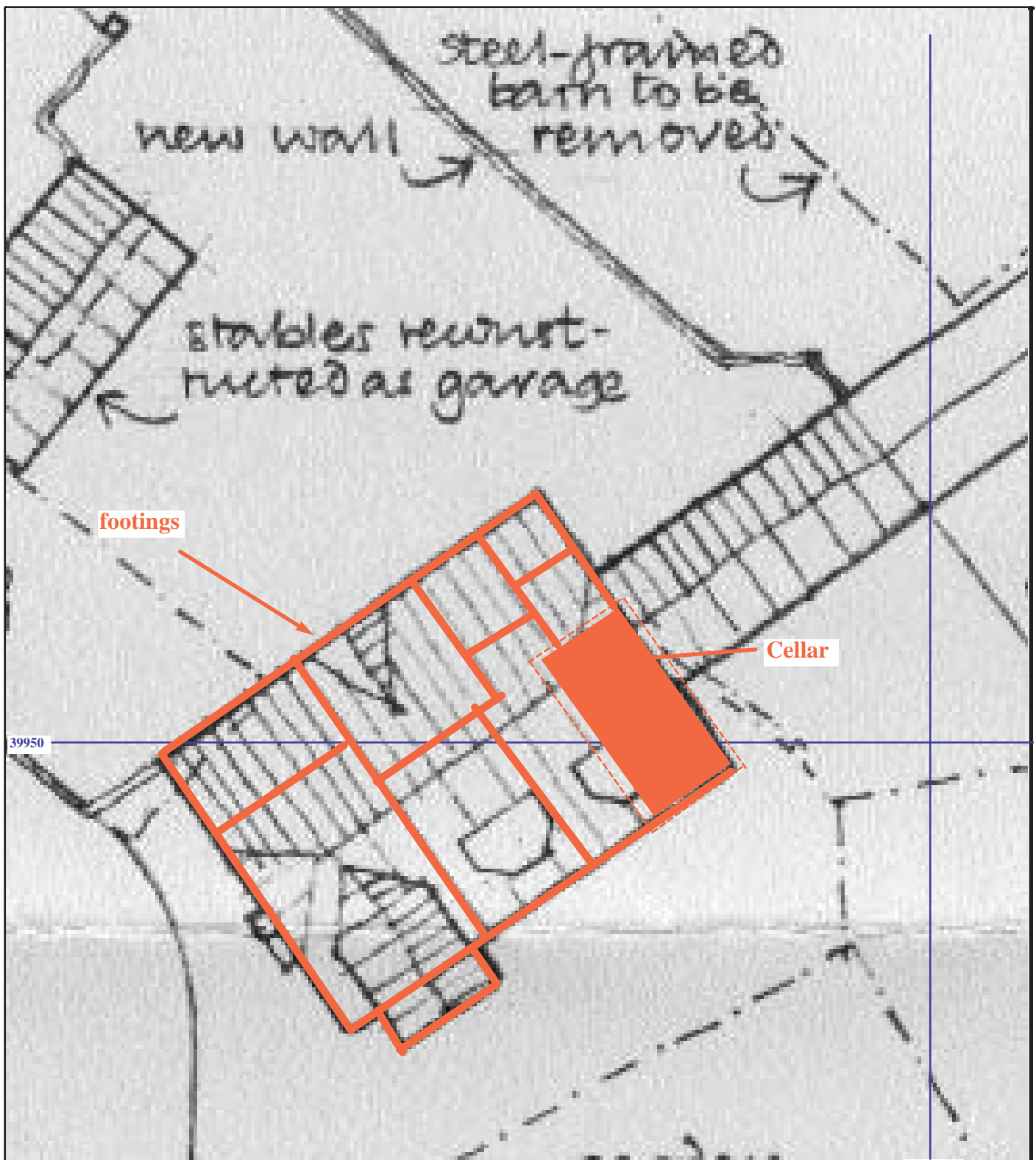
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site within Bentworth.

Scale 1:1250

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Figure 3. Detailed location of watching brief observations.

Scale 1:200

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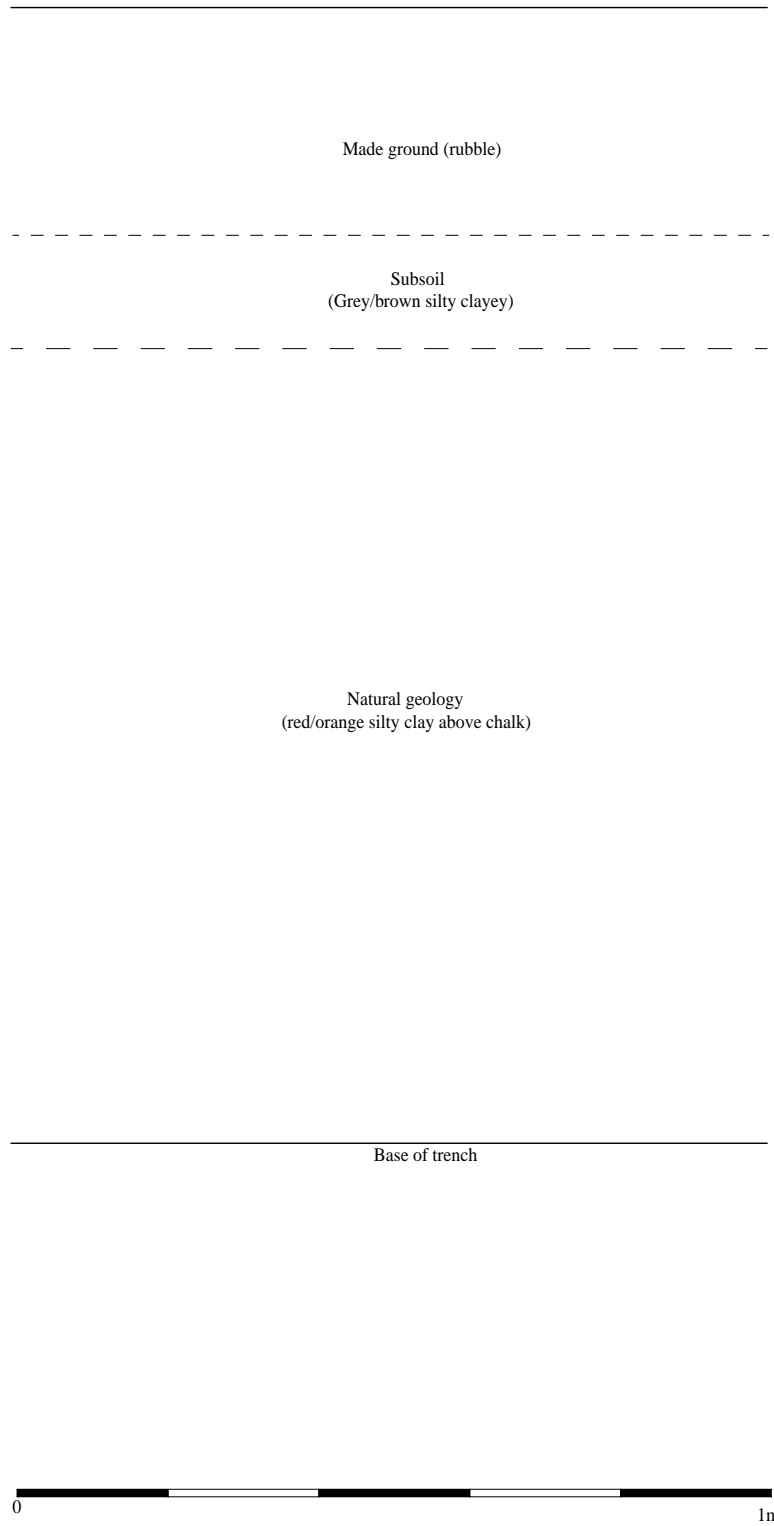


Figure 4: Representative section of footing trench.