

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Moor Park House, Moor Park Lane,
Compton, Farnham, Surrey**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by James McNicoll-Norbury

**Site Code: MPF06/86
(SU 8620 4660)**

**Moor Park House, Moor Park Lane,
Compton, Farnham, Surrey**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief
For Farnham Developments Ltd**

by James McNicoll-Norbury
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code MPF 06/86

March 2011

Summary

Site name: Moor Park House, Moor Park Lane, Compton, Farnham, Surrey

Grid reference: SU 8620 4660

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 21st October 2010 – 14th March 2011

Project manager: Steve Ford and Andrew Munding

Site supervisor: James McNicoll-Norbury, David Platt, Jacqueline Pitt, Andrew Munding, Natasha Bennett

Site code: MPF 06/86

Area of site:

Summary of results: A small amount of medieval and post medieval pottery was recovered from the reduced level dig in the walled garden, however, no features were identified. The anti-tank defences and pill boxes on the site were not affected by the development work.

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

*This report may be copied for bona fide research or planning purposes without the explicit permission of the copyright holder. All TVAS unpublished fieldwork reports are available on our website:
www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp.*

Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford✓ 29.03.11 Steve Preston✓ 31.03.11

Moor Park House, Moor Park Lane, Farnham, Surrey An Archaeological Watching Brief

by James McNicoll-Norbury

Report 06/86c

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at Moor Park House, Moor Park Lane, Farnham, Surrey (SU 8620 4660) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Michael de Courcy, Bell Cornwell Partnership, Oakview House, Station Road, Hook, Hampshire RG27 9TP on behalf of Farnham Developments Ltd, Moor Park House, Moor Park Lane, Farnham, Surrey, GU10 1QP.

A planning consent (WA/2009/1319) and listed building consent (WA/2009/1320) have been gained from Waverley Borough Council to change the current listed building to residential use with restoration of both the house and grounds. Fourteen new houses are to be built within the existing walled garden. The planning consent is subject to a condition (8) relating to archaeology requiring a programme of archaeological work. In this instance this was determined to be a watching brief during groundworks and a programme for the retention of Second World War defences present on the site.

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 Tony Howe, Archaeological Officer with Surrey County Council, advisers to the Borough on matters relating to archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by James McNicoll-Norbury, Andrew Munding, David Platt, Natasha Bennett and Jacqueline Pitt between 21st October and 14th March 2011 and the site code is MPF06/86.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Farnham Museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on a roughly square plot of land within the walled garden of Moor Park House. It lies to the south-east of Farnham, and the River Wey (north branch) flows to the west of the site (Fig. 2). The underlying geology consists of Folkestone Beds (Sandy Beds) (BGS 1976), which were observed across the site. It would appear that the northern half of the site has been backfilled at some point as it was considerably deeper than the

southern half, with brick fragments visible throughout the layers. This may be due to land reclamation during the construction of the Moor Park House. The site slopes down westwards from c.62m to c.59m above Ordnance Datum; the valley side rises steeply to over 100m immediately to the east.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a desk-based assessment (Preston 2006) and in a subsequent evaluation (Taylor 2007) which examined a part of the proposal site. In summary, the site lies within a registered garden and the site of an important historic landscape garden. A small number of sites and finds of various periods are recorded for the vicinity of the site. The site also lies on or close to the greensand - a geological outcrop particularly favoured for Mesolithic occupation (Rankine 1954; Ellaby 1987; Cotton *et al.* 2005) and the Farnham area has a notable cluster of findspots (Ellaby 1987, fig 3.4). To the southeast of the site around Waverly Abbey was a major focus of the Second World War anti-invasion defences 'GHQ Defence Line B'. In the sector south of Farnham, the Line was heavily defended to prevent enemy forces crossing the River Wey. The Line itself passed across a track running to Moor Park House where roadblocks, formed of concrete cylinders were constructed, along with two type 24 pill boxes (Foot 2009) and a type 28 anti-tank gun emplacement (the latter on the opposite side of the road).

Objectives and methodology

The aims of the project are to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the new construction work. This involved examination of areas of topsoil stripping, landscaping, ground reduction and the digging of trenches for strip foundations and services. The bulk groundwork excavation was to be carried out by machine. Archaeological deposits which are threatened by development were too be excavated and recorded. Where practicable, the sample proportion of deposits excavated was to be that usually expected on formal excavation sites within the county, however it was acknowledged that the partial exposure of deposits typical of most active groundworks might limit this aspiration.

Results

The Walled Garden

The majority of the work took place in the area covered by the previous evaluation, in the form of ground reduction in the north-east corner of the walled garden in advance of the laying of a piling mat (Pl. 1). The

ground was reduced along the northern and eastern walls of the walled garden by between 0.50–0.90m although one area was reduced by as much as 1.70m, namely for the insertion of an inspection chamber (Fig. 3). In most places this ground reduction was only partly through a brown sandy silt subsoil (151) although natural gravel was observed in the inspection chamber. Modern wall footings in these areas were the remains of previous greenhouses located along the northern wall of the gardens, but no archaeological features were identified although a small amount of medieval pottery was recovered from the subsoil layer.

The hexagonal (type-24) pill box in the south-western corner of the garden is a concrete and brick built structure and although slightly dilapidated it was in good condition and showed no sign of damage from the building works in the immediate area (Pl. 2).

Garages

On the eastern side of the site footings were observed which were dug to a depth of 0.75m through 0.14m topsoil and 0.26m subsoil which overlay natural geology. No archaeological features were identified.

Plant Store

The footings of the building were dug to a depth of 0.75m. The stratigraphy here comprised 0.25m topsoil and 0.37m subsoil overlying natural geology. No archaeological features were identified.

The Grounds

On the main access road of the site two concrete anti-tank bollards were observed, these were both in good condition and had been unaffected by the building work adjacent to them (Pls 3 and 4). A hexagonal-shaped pill box, with an additional hexagonal external wall, located adjacent to the tennis court at the southern end of the grounds was predominantly in good condition although part of its east facing wall had collapsed due to the growth of a tree there and the interior was becoming overgrown with vegetation.

Finds

Pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 18 sherds with a total weight of 132g. Although redeposited in subsoil context 151, the assemblage was entirely medieval in date. It was recorded using the codings and chronology of the provisional type series of the Surrey County Archaeological Unit (Jones 1998, 211-238), as follows:

IQ, Ironstone sandy wares, late 11th – 12th century. 8 sherds, 81g

Q2, Grey/Brown Sandy Wares, 12th – 13th century. 9 sherds, 49g

QFL, Quartz and Flint tempered wares, 12th century. 1 sherd, 2g

The fabrics are typical finds from medieval sites in Surrey, and suggests a general date of the 12th – early 13th century for activity here, especially as White Wares (Surrey fabric WW), a common find from around the mid-13th century onwards, are entirely absent. This is a similar picture to the evaluation, where IQ was the only medieval pottery type noted.

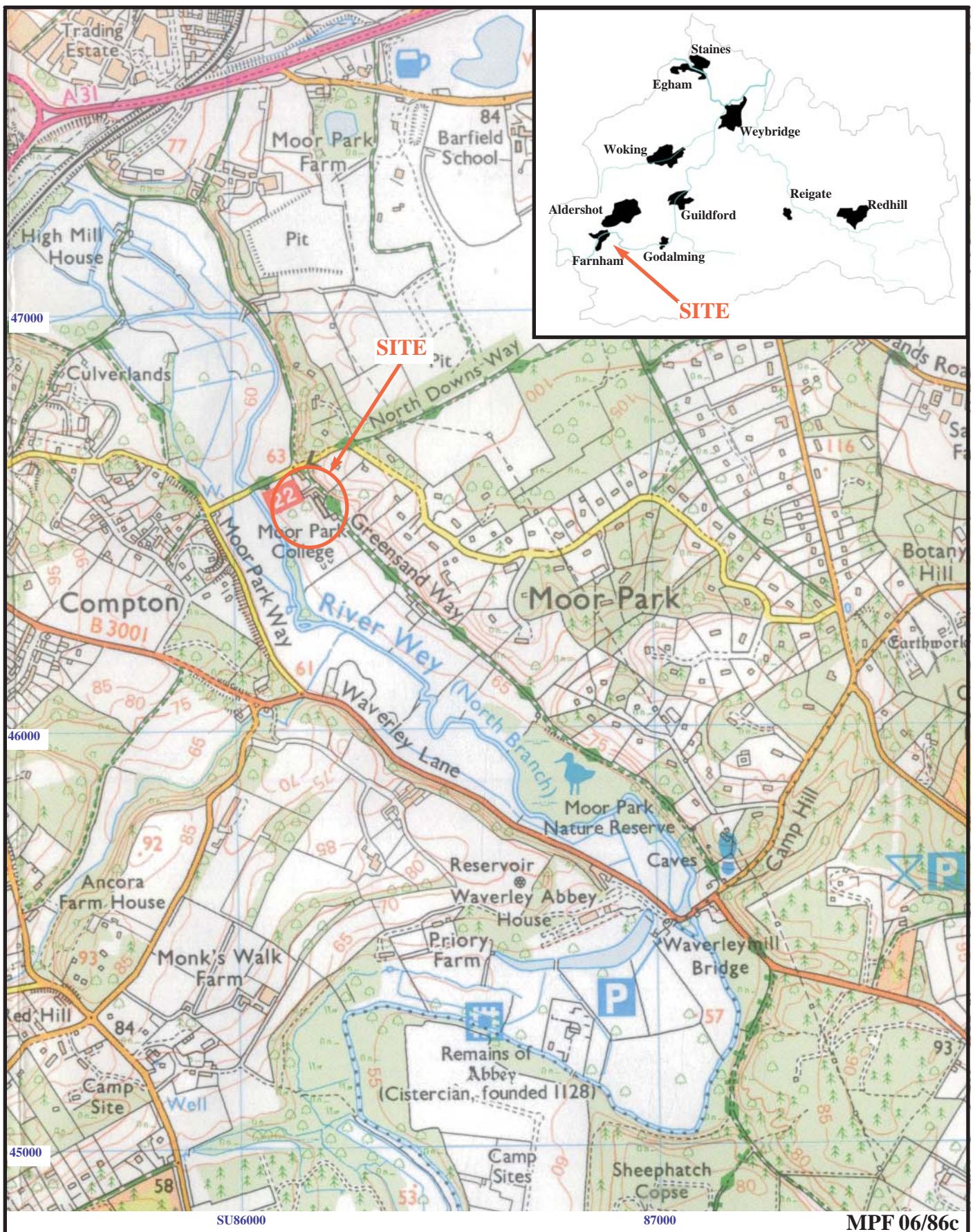
The assemblage comprised entirely bodysherds apart from the rimsherd of a fairly large jar (260mm diameter, 7% complete) in fabric IQ, and a possible strap-handle fragment or bowl rim in the same fabric. It appears a typical domestic assemblage of the period.

Conclusion

No archaeological features were identified during the watching brief due to the limited depth of ground reduction required, which did not reveal the natural geology. However, a small amount of medieval pottery was recovered from the subsoil layer immediately above the natural geology. The Second World War defences located on the site were seen to be in good condition, unaffected by the building works although the pill box located near the tennis courts had sustained damage from natural causes.

References

- Cotton, J, Crocker, G and Graham A 2005, *Aspects of archaeology and history in Surrey: towards a research framework for the county*, Surrey Archaeol Soc, Guildford
- BGS, 1976, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 285, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- Ellaby, R, 1987, 'The Upper Palaeolithic and Mesolithic in Surrey', in J Bird and D G Bird (eds), *The Archaeology of Surrey*, Guildford, 53–70
- Foot, W 2009, *Defence Areas – a national study of Second World War anti-invasion landscapes in England*, CBA, York
- Jones, P, 1998, 'Towards a type series of medieval pottery in Surrey', *Surrey Archaeol Collect* **85**, 211–38
- PPG16, 1990, *Archaeology and Planning*, Dept of the Environment Planning Policy Guidance 16, HMSO
- Preston, S, 2006, 'Moor Park House, Farnham, Surrey, an archaeological desk-based assessment', Thames Valley Archaeological Services unpubl rep 06/86, Reading
- Rankine, W F, 1954, 'Mesolithic research in east Hampshire', *Proc Hampshire Fld Club Archaeol Soc* **15**, 157–72
- Taylor, A, 2007, 'Moor Park House, Farnham, Surrey, an archaeological evaluation', Thames Valley Archaeological Services unpubl rep 06/86b, Reading

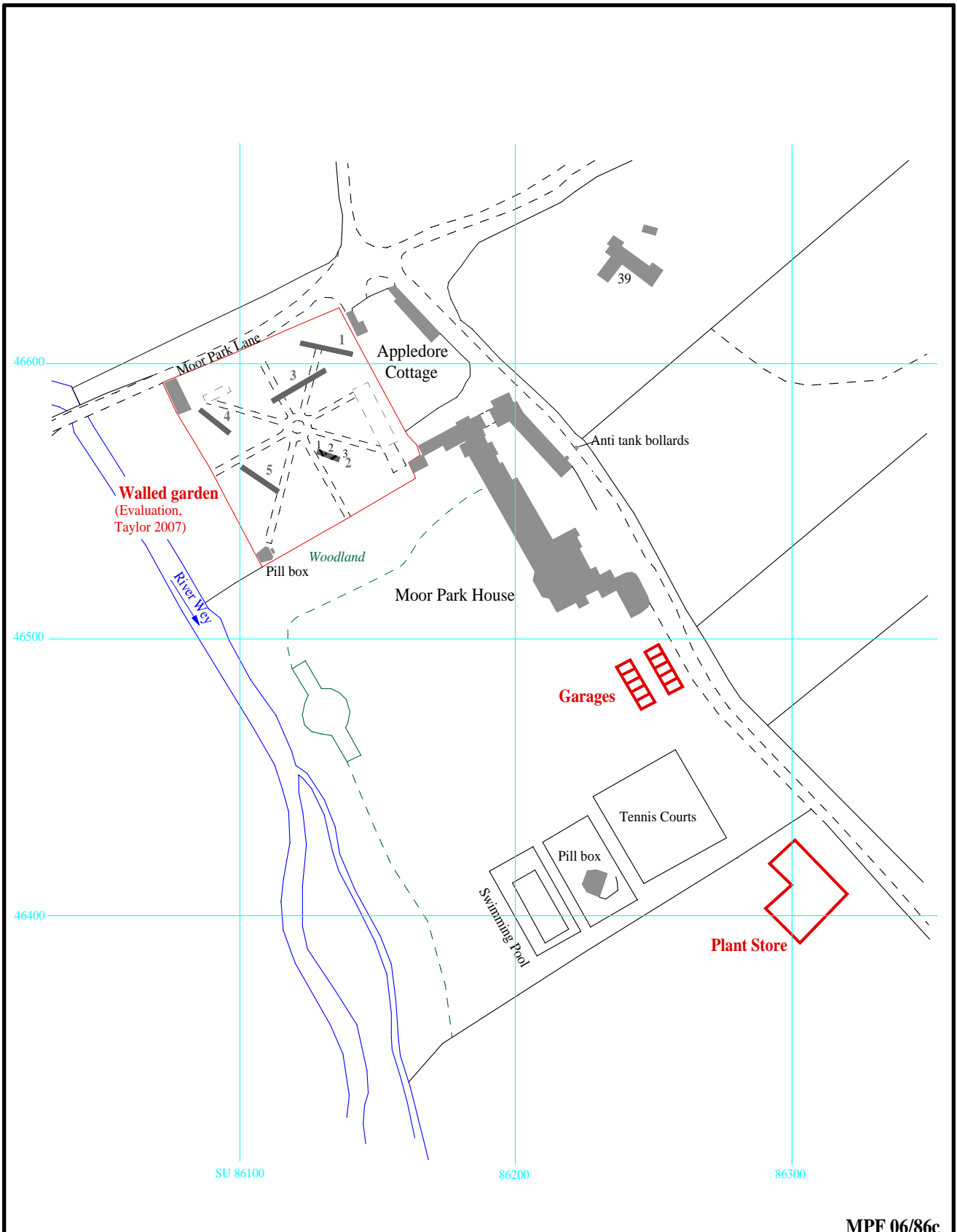


**Moor Park House, Moor Park Lane,
Compton, Farnham, Surrey, 2010-11
Archaeological watching brief**

Figure 1. Location of site in relation to Compton, Farnham and within Surrey.

Reproduced from Ordnance Survey Explorer 145 at 1:12500
Ordnance Survey Licence 100025880





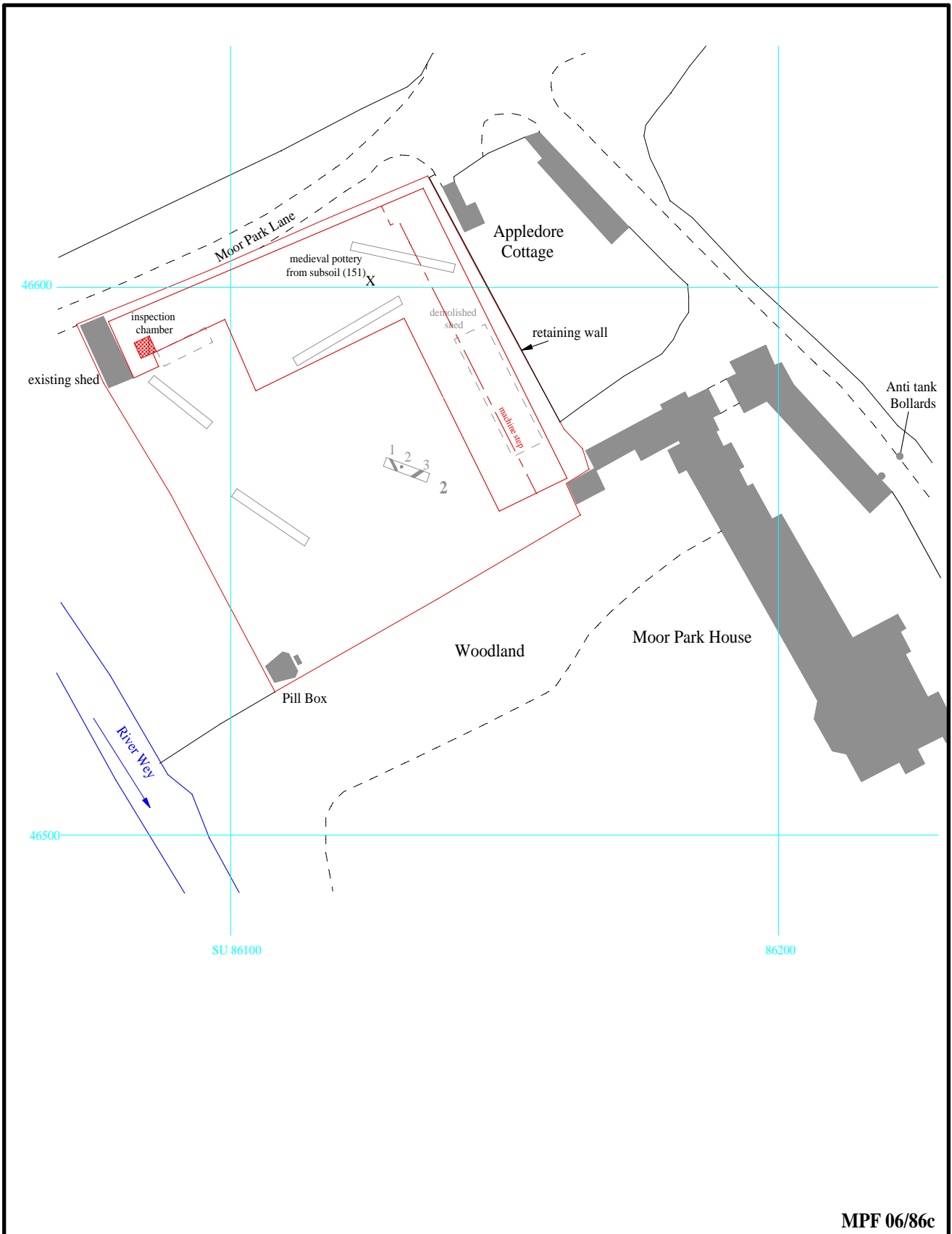
MPF 06/86c

**Moor Park House, Moor Park Lane,
Compton, Farnham, Surrey, 2010-11
Archaeological Watching Brief**

Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Moor Park Lane.



THAMES VALLEY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SERVICES



MPF 06/86c



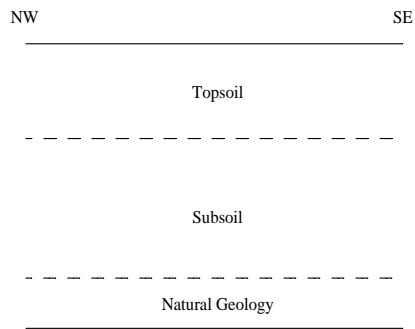
**Moor Park House, Moor Park Lane,
Compton, Farnham, Surrey, 2010-11
Archaeological watching brief**

Figure 3. Ground Reduction



THAMES VALLEY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SERVICES

Plant Store



MPF 06/86c

**Moor Park House, Moor Park Lane,
Compton, Farnham, Surrey, 2010-11
Archaeological Watching Brief**

Figure 4. Representative Sections



THAMES VALLEY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SERVICES



Plate 1. Walled garden stripped area, with subsoil investigation area in foreground, looking south west, Scale: 2m.



Plate 2. Soil piled against pill box in walled garden.

MPF 06/86c

**Moor Park House, Moor Park Lane, Compton,
Farnham, Surrey, 2010-11**
Archaeological watching brief
Plates 1 and 2.

THAMES VALLEY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SERVICES



Plate 3. Anti-tank bollards, on Moor Park Drive, looking north west, Scale: 1m.



Plate 4. Detail of anti-tank bollard.

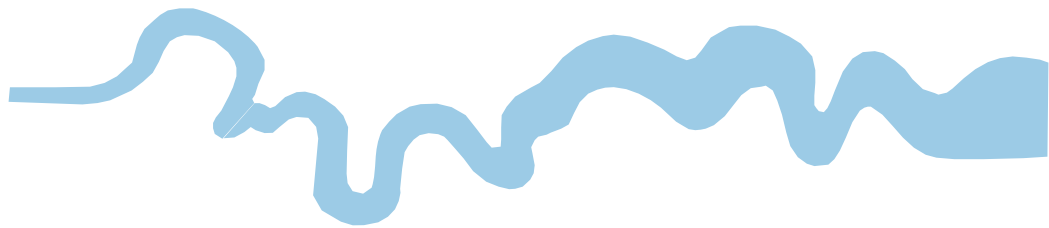
MPF 06/86c

**Moor Park House, Moor Park Lane, Compton,
Farnham, Surrey, 2010-11**
Archaeological watching brief
Plates 3 and 4.

THAMES VALLEY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SERVICES

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: tvass@tvass.co.uk
Web: www.tvass.co.uk**