

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Ringstead, Cupernham Lane,
Romsey, Hampshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Maisie Foster

Site Code: CLR19/72

(SU 3619 2271)

Ringstead, Cupernham Lane, Romsey, Hampshire

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Doswell Projects**

by Maisie Foster

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code CLR19/72

March 2022

Summary

Site name: Ringstead, Cupernham Lane, Romsey, Hampshire

Grid reference: SU 3619 2271

Site activity: Archaeological Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 9th March 2022

Project coordinator: Tim Dawson

Site supervisor: Maisie Foster

Site code: CLR 19/72

Area of site: 0.7ha

Summary of results: Due to the site being stripped of overburden and the top of the archaeological horizon, with a large bund covering the eastern third of the site, only 4 of the proposed 7 trenches were excavated as planned with a further 2 being moved into areas free of rubble and banded material. No finds or features of archaeological interest were recorded though to what extent this is due to the recent truncation is unknown. Either way, the site is considered to no longer have any archaeological potential.

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

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www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp.*

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Ringstead, Cupernhan Lane, Romsey, Hampshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Maisie Foster

Report 19/72b

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Ringstead, Cupernham Lane, Romsey, Hampshire (SU 3619 2271) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Samuel Doswell of Doswell Projects, Shawford, Winchester SO21 2FN. Planning consent (19/02698/FULLS) has been granted by Test Valley Borough Council for development on the site. As a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits on the site, the consent is subject to a condition requiring a programme of archaeological investigation. One component of work is proposed initially, namely evaluation trenching to assess the need for and scope of any further archaeological mitigation that may be necessary.

This is in accordance with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2019) and the Borough Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr David Hopkins, County Archaeologist for Hampshire County Council, the archaeological adviser to the Borough. The fieldwork was undertaken by Maisie Foster and Richard Dewhurst on 9th March 2022, and the site code is CLR19/72. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Hampshire Cultural Trust in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site lies on the northern outskirts of Romsey on the western side of Cupernham Lane and comprises a rectangular parcel land covering an area of approximately 0.9ha (0.7ha to be developed) centred on NGR SU 3619 2271 (Fig. 1). The site is bounded by Cupernham Lane to the east, beyond which is Abbotswood nature reserve, by Oxlease House and gardens to the north, Oxlease Meadows (a new housing development) to the west and another new development site to the south. The site was previously the location of a residential property and gardens which has recently been demolished (Fig. 2). The underlying bedrock geology has been mapped as Wittering Formation (sand, silt and clay) capped by 4th terrace river gravels (BGS 1987). The geology encountered in the trenches varied but was mostly a combination of the mapped geology. The site lies at a height of 25m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) in the west, rising to 35m aOD at Cupernham Lane.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a desk-based assessment (Baljkas 2019). While the town itself has relatively intensive archaeological attention for most periods, little archaeology is recorded in its outskirts, the marked exception being numerous records for Palaeolithic tools. There are no recorded features or finds on the site itself but fieldwork to the west, an archaeological evaluation followed by excavation at Oxlease Farm, recovered an assemblage of Mesolithic or Upper Palaeolithic struck flints (Whelan and Ellis 2016) and late Roman pottery derived from a later (?medieval) field system. A recent archaeological evaluation in the adjoining field to the south revealed no deposits of archaeological interest aside from a few undiagnostic prehistoric struck flints (Attard 2021).

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological or palaeoenvironmental deposits within the area of development. The specific research aims of this project were:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on this site;
- to determine if any prehistoric occupation is present on the site represented by clusters of struck flint;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present; and
- to inform a strategy for mitigation if required

Seven trenches were to be dug using a 360⁰-type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision. Topsoil and any other overburden was to be removed to expose archaeologically sensitive levels. Where archaeological features were certainly or probably present, the stripped areas were to be cleaned using appropriate hand tools and sufficient of the archaeological features and deposits exposed would be excavated or sampled by hand to satisfy the aims outlined above, without compromising the integrity of any feature that might warrant preservation *in situ* or be better investigated under the conditions pertaining to full excavation. Spoil heaps were to be monitored for finds and scanned with a metal detector.

Results

The majority of the site had been stripped of overburden including the top of the archaeological horizon prior to the start of the evaluation. The eastern third of the site was also covered by a c.4m high bund made of this

removed material (Pls 7 and 8). As such only six of the proposed seven trenches were excavated. Of these, just three of these had any remaining overburden to remove and the excavation of the remaining trenches consisted of scraping off the churned surface to expose the natural geology underneath (the top surface of which had already been removed) (Fig. 3). The trenches ranged from 24m to 25.7m in length and 0.2m and 0.8m in depth. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadth, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 2 (Fig. 3; Pl. 1)

Trench 2 was aligned WSW - ENE and was 25m long and 0.28m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.2m of churned surface material overlying the surviving level of natural geology. No finds or features of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 3 (Figs 3 and 4; Pl. 2)

Trench 3 was aligned SE - NW and was 24.5m long and 0.8m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.4m of churned surface material overlying 0.2m of mid orange brown clayey silt subsoil overlying natural geology. Two modern truncations and a flint gravel filled land drain were present with Trench 3 but no finds or features of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 4 (Figs 2; Pl. 3)

Trench 4 was aligned SW - NE and was 24m long and 0.2m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.2m of churned surface material overlying the surviving level of natural geology. Modern truncations (the remains of a soakaway) covered the full length of this trench. No finds or features of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 5 (Figs 3 and 4; Pl. 4)

Trench 5 was aligned SE - NW and was 25m long and 0.6m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.3m of churned surface material overlying 0.25m of mid orange brown clayey silt subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds or features of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 6 (Fig. 3; Pl. 5)

Trench 6 was aligned SW - NE and was 25.7m long and 0.36m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.26m of churned surface material overlying the surviving level of natural geology. A field drain with a gravel flint fill was present at the south western end of Trench 6 but no finds or features of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 7 (Fig. 3; Pl. 6)

Trench 7 was aligned SW - NE and was 25.6m long and 0.45m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.11m of churned surface material overlying 0.19m of mid grey orange clay subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds or features of archaeological interest were observed.

Conclusion

Due to the site having been stripped of overburden and the top of the archaeological horizon and a large bund covering the eastern third of the site, only four of the proposed seven trenches were excavated as planned with a further two trenches being moved into areas free of rubble and banded materials. There was no room on site that would allow for the final trench to be excavated. Only three of the six trenches had any overburden to remove and excavation of the remaining trenches consisted of scraping off the churned surface material to expose the surviving surface of the natural geology underneath. Despite the potential for archaeological deposits being present on site, none were encountered during the evaluation, to what extent this is due to the removal of the top of the archaeological horizon is unknown. The site is considered to no longer have any archaeological potential.

References

- Attard, W, 2021, 'Land west of Cupernham Lane, Romsey, Hampshire', Thames Valley Archaeological Services unpubl rep **16/132b**, Reading
- Baljkas, G, 2019, 'Land west of Cupernham Lane, Romsey, Hampshire, an archaeological desk-based assessment', Thames Valley Archaeological Services unpubl rep **19/72**, Reading
- BGS, 1987, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000, Sheet 315, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- NPPF, 2019, *National Planning Policy Framework (revised)*, Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government, London
- Whelan, J and Ellis, C, 2016 'Land at Oxlease Farm, Cupernham Lane, Romsey, Hampshire: Archaeological Excavation', Cotswold Archaeology unpubl rep **16339**, Andover

APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at WSW, SE and SW end

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
2	25	1.8	0.28	(Topsoil and subsoil stripped prior to arrival on site) 0-0.2m churned surface material; 0.2m+ mid yellow orange sandy clay (natural geology) [PI. 1]
3	24.5	1.8	0.8	(Topsoil and partial removal of subsoil prior to arrival on site) 0-0.4m churned surface material; 0.4-0.6m mid orange brown with flint inclusions subsoil; 0.6m+ mid yellow orange sandy clay (natural geology) Two modern truncations and a land drain were present in this trench [PI. 2]
4	24	1.8	0.2	(Topsoil and subsoil stripped prior to arrival on site) 0-0.15m churned surface material; 0.15m+ mid yellow orange sandy clay (natural geology). A large modern truncation (the remains of a soakaway) covered the full length of this trench. [PI. 3]
5	25	1.8	0.6	0-0.3m topsoil; 0.3-0.55m subsoil; 0.55m+ mid yellow orange sandy clay (natural geology). [PI.4]
6	25.7	1.8	0.36	(Topsoil and subsoil stripped prior to arrival on site) 0-0.26m churned surface material; 0.26m+ mid yellow orange sandy clay (natural geology). A flint gravel filled field drain was present in this trench. [PI.5]
7	25.6	1.8	0.45	(Topsoil stripped prior to arrival on site) 0-0.11m churned surface material; 0.11-0.3m subsoil; 0.3m+ mid yellow orange sandy clay (natural geology). [PI.6]

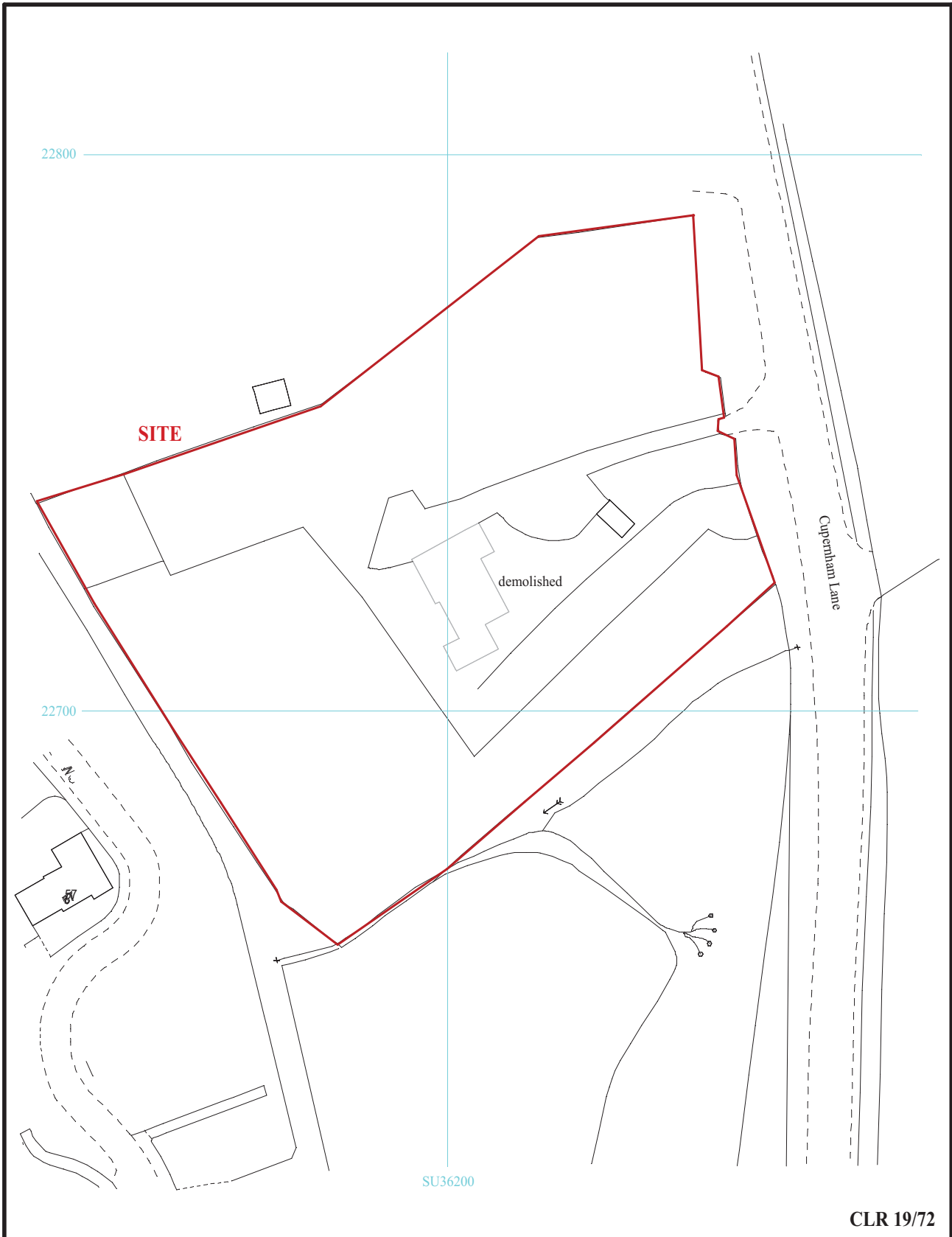


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Figure 1. Location of site within Romsey and Hampshire.

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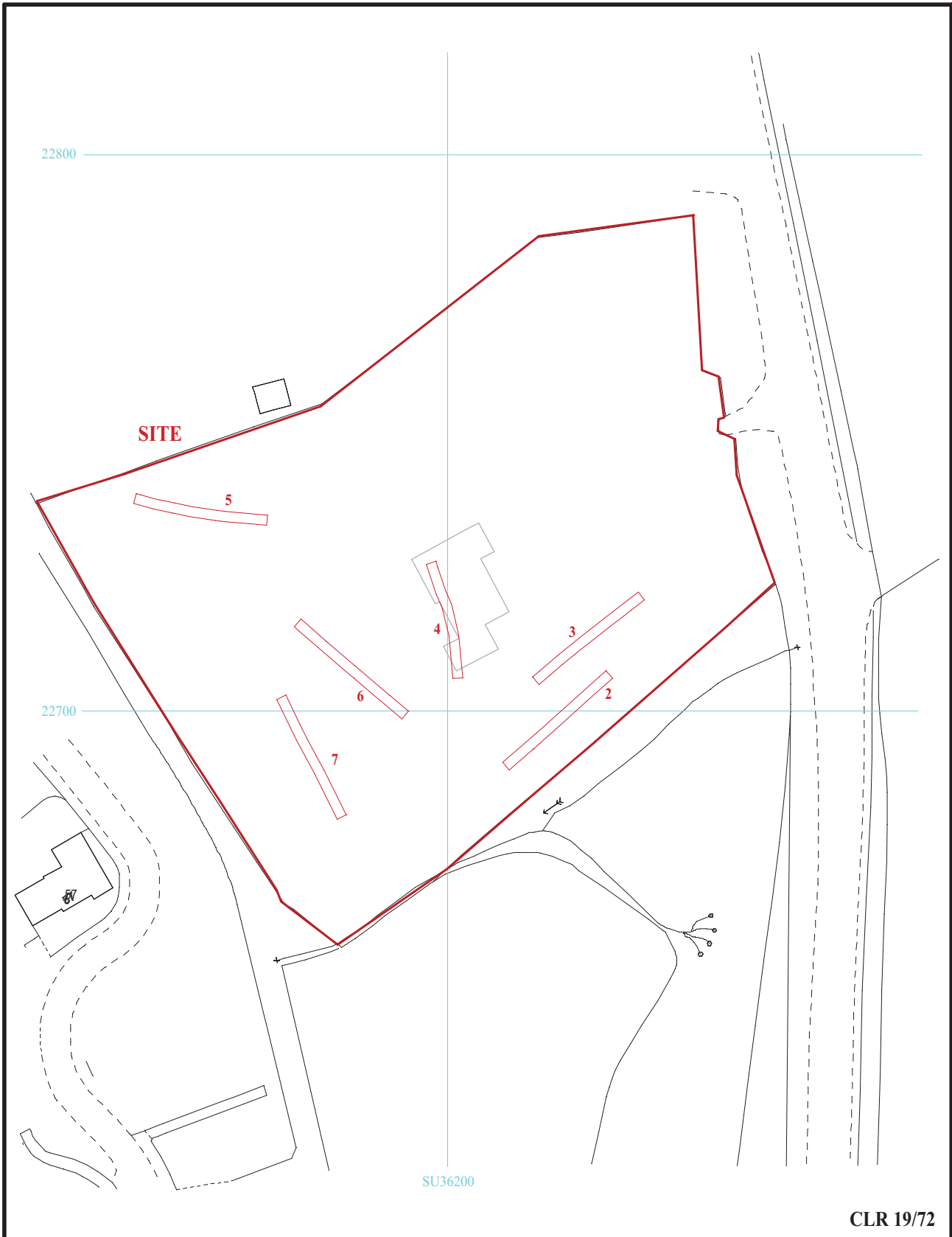
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site.



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Figure 3. Location of trenches.



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Trench 3

SW

NE 31.6m aOD

Churned Surface Material

Subsoil

Mid Yellow Orange Silty Clay (natural geology)

Trench 5

E

W

29.8m

Topsoil

Subsoil

Mid Yellow Orange Silty Clay (natural geology)

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Figure 4. Detail of trenches.



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Plate 1. Trench 2, looking East,
Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.2m.



Plate 2. Trench 3, looking North East,
Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m.



Plate 3. Trench 4, looking North,
Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.2m.



Plate 4. Trench 5, looking North West,
Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.3m.

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Plates 1 to 4.**

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Plate 5. Trench 6, looking North,
Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.2m.



Plate 6. Trench 7, looking North,
Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.3m.



Plate 7. Site Shot, looking South West.



Plate 8. Site Shot, looking South.

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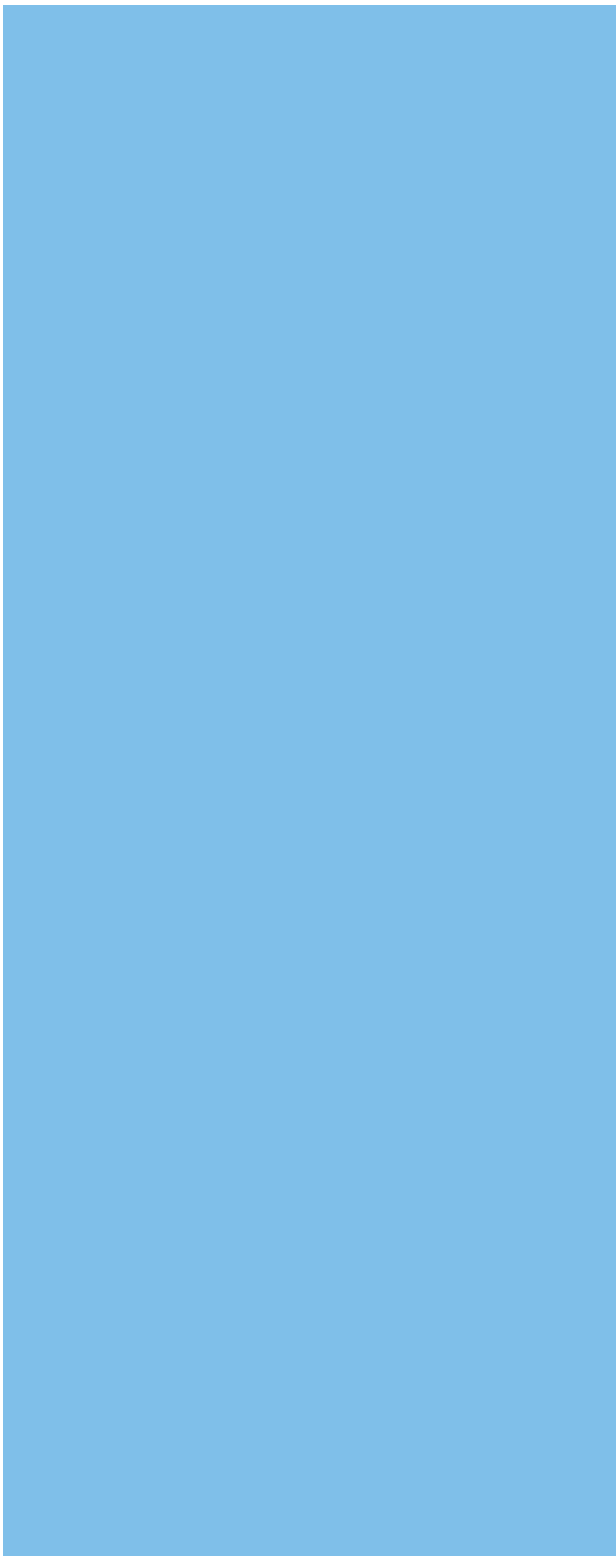
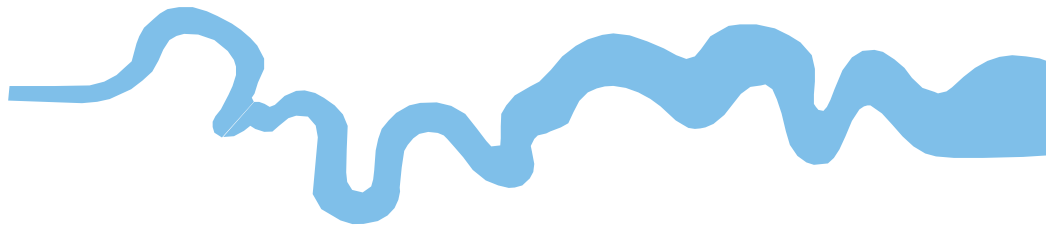
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Plates 5 to 8.**

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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 AD 0 BC
Iron Age _____	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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