

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Wokingham Cricket and Tennis Club, Wellington Road,
Wokingham, Berkshire**

**Archaeological Evaluation
Phase 1**

by Susan Porter

Site Code: WCC05/87A

(SU 8076 6835)

**Wokingham Cricket and Tennis Club,
Wellington Road, Wokingham, Berkshire**

An Archaeological Evaluation (Phase 1)

for Taylor Wimpey

by Susan Porter

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

SiteCodeWCC05/87A

March 2012

Summary

Site name: Wokingham Cricket and Tennis Club, Wellington Road, Wokingham, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 8076 6835

Site activity: Archaeological Evaluation phase 1

Date and duration of project: 12th – 14th March 2012

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Susan Porter

Site code: WCC 05/87A

Area of site: 1.7ha

Summary of results: A ditch was recorded on a north-south alignment visible in three trenches, however, it remains undated. A possible gully (more likely to be root disturbance) and a natural linear hollow were also recorded.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Reading Museum in due course, with accession code REDMG.2010.99

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford ✓ 28.03.12
	Steve Preston ✓ 26.03.12

Wokingham Cricket and Tennis Club, Wellington Road, Wokingham, Berkshire An Archaeological Evaluation (Phase 1)

by Susan Porter

Report 05/87A-2

Introduction

This report documents the results of the first phase of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Wokingham Cricket and Tennis Club, Wellington Road, Wokingham, Berkshire, SU 8076 6835 (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Gary Webster of Taylor Wimpey West London, Stratfield House, Station Road, Hook, Hampshire, RG27 9PQ.

Planning permission (app no O/2007/0277) has been gained from Wokingham Borough Council on appeal (APP/X0360/A/07/2046044) to develop the site for housing. This consent is subject to a condition relating to archaeology requiring a programme of archaeological works prior to the development. This report is concerned with the first phase of that programme; a second phase of work on the northern portion of the site will be reported separately.

This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Planning Policy Guidance, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990), although it is acknowledged that this has been superseded by the Department for Communities and Local Government's Planning Policy Statement, *Planning for the Historic Environment* (PPS5 2010), and the Borough Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Mary Neale, Archaeology Officer with Berkshire Archaeology, advisers to the Borough on matters relating to archaeology. The site work was monitored by Ms Mary Neale. The fieldwork was undertaken by Susan Porter and Jackie Pitt on 12th -14th March 2012 and the site code is WCC 05/87A. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Reading Museum in due course, with accession code REDMG.2010.99.

A desk-top study of the site (Preston 2005) consulted cartographic and documentary sources, which appear to show that the site has never been developed beyond the requirements of the sports club. The study suggested that there is little potential for remains of national importance to be present on the site, however, more ephemeral features may be present and due to its lack of previous development, the site may have greater archaeological potential than nearby parts of Wokingham.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located beyond the historic core of Wokingham, on the west of Wellington Road (Fig. 1). Currently the site consists of a cricket ground and tennis courts with car parking. A railway line borders the site to the west with trees to the south and west and a hedge to the east. The site covers an area of approximately 1.7ha and lies at a height of 60m above Ordnance Datum (Fig. 2). The cricket ground itself rises slightly towards the square and overall there is a very slight slope from the north-east (c. 61m aOD) to south-west (c. 58m aOD). The site is mapped as being on the junction between the London Clay and Lower Bagshot Beds (BGS 1946). The geology observed on site was damp orange grey silty sand, occasionally with some gravel.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a desk-based assessment (Preston 2005). The town of Wokingham is thought to have late Saxon origins, although this has yet to be archaeologically demonstrated. A modest range of archaeological finds and sites have been recorded for the area, findspots comprising a Palaeolithic handaxe, Roman coins and pottery are recorded for the general environs of Wokingham, in addition to the medieval town. The site lies outside the medieval and post-medieval extent of the town, but within the area likely to have been exploited to feed the settlement. To the south (c. 300m) was the site of a medieval and post-medieval water mill, and the western boundary of the site is formed by the Reading to London (Waterloo) railway line. Previous archaeological investigations in the vicinity have all proved negative, although this may be due (in all cases) to modern truncation. The relatively large size of the plot of land, and the lack of major development, suggested moderate, generalized, potential for remains of almost any period.

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. This work would be carried out in a manner which would not compromise the integrity of archaeological features or deposits which might warrant preservation *in situ*, or might be better excavated under conditions pertaining to full excavation.

The specific research aims of the project were:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on this site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present; and
- to provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological mitigation strategy.

It was proposed to dig 21 trenches, 25m long and 1.6-2m wide to cover 5% of the proposed development area. Sixteen of these trenches were to be dug on the former cricket pitch in this phase of site work; the remaining five trenches are to be excavated as a separate phase of work.

The trenches were to be dug by a JCB-type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket to expose archaeologically sensitive levels. This was to take place under archaeological supervision. All potential archaeological features were to be cleaned and excavated using hand tools. Spoil heaps were to be monitored for finds including use of a metal detector.

Results

The sixteen trenches were dug as intended but one trench (13) had to be re-located from the northernmost corner of the site due to the presence of live services in that area (Fig. 3). This adjustment took place in consultation with the monitor. The trenches ranged in length from 24m to 27.30m and in depth from 0.59m to 1.07m the width of all trenches was 1.60m. All spoil heaps were monitored for finds with a metal detector.

A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1

Trench 1 was aligned NW – SE and was 24.50m long and 1.07m deep at the south-east end, and 0.82m at the north-west end. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.24m of topsoil above 0.40m of mid brownish grey soft sandy silt with pebble inclusions subsoil (51) overlying 0.40m of mottled grey orange sand subsoil (57), which in turn overlay yellow orange sand with grey sandy patches (natural geology). A test pit was excavated at the north-west end of the trench to confirm that the natural geology had been correctly identified. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 2

Trench 2 was aligned east–west and was 24m long and 0.80m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.25m of topsoil above 0.30m of subsoil (51), overlying 0.24m of lower subsoil (57) which in turn overlay natural geology. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 3

Trench 3 was aligned roughly east–west and was 24.50m long and 0.70m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.21m of topsoil above 0.39m of subsoil (51) overlying 0.10m of lower subsoil (57), which in turn overlay yellow orange sand with gravel natural geology. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 4 (Figs 4 and 5)

Trench 4 was aligned NE–SW and was 24.70m long and 0.68m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.19m of topsoil above 0.34m of subsoil (51) overlying 0.14m of lower subsoil (57), which in turn overlay sand with gravel natural geology. An irregular linear feature (1) was recorded at 12m from the south-west end of the trench. This was 1.60m wide and 0.20m deep and filled with a light yellowish grey soft silty sand (52). No finds were recovered and this feature is most likely to be a natural depression.

Trench 5

Trench 5 was aligned ENE–WSW and was 26.10m long and 0.74m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.14m of topsoil above 0.24m of subsoil (51) overlying 0.31m lower subsoil (57), which in turn overlay natural geology of yellow orange sand with gravel and grey sand patches. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 6 (Figs 4 and 5; Pl. 1)

Trench 6 was aligned NW–SE and was 25m long and 0.51m deep at the south-east end, increasing to 0.72m at the north-west end. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of topsoil above 0.26m of subsoil (51) overlying 0.21m of lower subsoil (57), which in turn overlay yellow orange sand with gravel natural geology. A possible gully terminus (2) was recorded between 13m and 15m from the south-east end of the trench. This was 0.30m wide and 0.10m deep and filled with a mid greyish brown friable silty sand (53). No finds were recovered and it is possible that this may be a natural feature (root action).

Trench 7

Trench 7 was aligned NNW–SSE and was 24.2m long and 0.72m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.21m topsoil above 0.22m of subsoil (51) overlying 0.27m of lower subsoil (57), which in turn overlay yellow orange sand with grey sandy patches natural geology. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 8

Trench 8 was aligned E–W and was 25m long and 0.72m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.18m topsoil above 0.30m of subsoil (51) overlying 0.23m of lower subsoil (57), which in turn overlay yellow orange sand with grey sandy patches natural geology. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 9 (Figs 4 and 5)

Trench 9 was aligned E–W and was 25m long and 0.72m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m topsoil above 0.27m of subsoil (51) overlying 0.21m of lower subsoil (57), which in turn overlay yellow orange sand

with gravel and grey sandy patches natural geology. A ditch (3) was recorded at the west end of the trench, which was aligned approximately NNE–SSW and is considered to be a continuation of the ditch found in trenches 13 and 15. It was 0.80m wide and 0.18m deep and filled with a mid yellowish grey soft silty sand (54). No datable finds were recovered but a soil sample <1> was found to contain 14 burnt flints with a combined weight of 150g, and a few tiny flecks of charcoal.

Trench 10

Trench 10 was aligned NE – SW and was 24m long and 0.72m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.16m of topsoil above 0.34m of subsoil (51) overlying 0.20m of lower subsoil (57) which in turn overlay yellow orange sand with gravel natural geology. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 11

Trench 11 was aligned ENE–WSW and was 24.80m long and 0.70m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.23m of topsoil above 0.33m of subsoil (51) overlying 0.13m of lower subsoil (57) which in turn overlay yellow orange sand with gravel natural geology. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 12

Trench 12 was aligned NW–SE and was 24.20m long and 0.83m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.16m of topsoil above 0.26m of subsoil (51) overlying 0.35m of lower subsoil (57) which in turn overlay yellow orange sand with gravel natural geology. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 13 (Figs 4 and 5)

Trench 13 was aligned ENE–WSW and was 27.30m long and 0.62m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.19m of topsoil above 0.19m subsoil (51) overlying 0.19m of lower subsoil (57) which in turn overlay yellow orange sand with gravel natural geology. A north-south aligned ditch (5) was recorded between 22m and 26m from the west end of the trench. Ditch 5 was 1.10m wide and 0.30m deep and filled with a mid brownish grey silty sand (56) (Pl. 3). This ditch is probably a continuation of that seen in Trenches 9 and 15. No finds were recovered.

Trench 14

Trench 14 was aligned NNE–SSW and was 26.70m long and 0.70m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of topsoil above 0.22m of subsoil (51) overlying 0.25m of lower subsoil (57) which in turn overlay yellow orange sand with gravel natural geology. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 15 (Figs 4 and 5; Pls 2 and 4)

Trench 15 was aligned NE–SW and was 24.50m long and 0.59m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.16m of topsoil above 0.19m subsoil (51) overlying 0.23m of lower subsoil (57), which in turn overlay yellow orange sand with grey sandy patches natural geology. A ditch (4) was recorded halfway along the trench aligned north-south and is probably a continuation of the ditch recorded in Trenches 13 and 9. Ditch 4 was 1.10m wide and 0.30m deep and filled with a mid yellowish grey soft silty sand (55) (Pl. 4). No finds were recovered but a bulk soil sample <2> was taken and was found to contain 29 burnt flints with a combined weight of 224g, and a few tiny flecks of charcoal.

Trench 16

Trench 16 was aligned NNW–SSE and was 24.60m long and 0.62m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.22m of topsoil above 0.22m of lower subsoil (57) overlying 0.18m of mottled grey orange gravelly sand, with in turn overlay natural geology of mottled grey orange gravel with substantial root activity. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed.

Environmental Samples by Jo Pine

Two soil sample flots from cuts 3 (54) and 4 (55) were rapid assessment for their environmental potential; examination made by hand lens at x10 magnification. None of the samples contained any charred cereal remains. Samples [1] 3(54) contained charred weed seeds but at low occurrence. Charcoal with potential for species identification was not found in either sample as the fragments were too minute

Conclusion

Although the site was initially considered to have a moderate archaeological potential there was very little possible archaeological activity observed. No pre-modern artefacts were recovered from anywhere on the site. Several anomalies were investigated but were considered to be of geological or animal origin. Three trenches (9, 13 and 15) contained a single ditch-like feature each (3, 4 and 5) on a similar north-south alignment and which are thought likely to be the same ditch. No artefactual dating evidence was recovered from any of the three slots dug with only some undated burnt flint and charcoal being recovered from sample sieving. The ditch is likely to be a field boundary. It is not present on the early maps of the area dating from the 19th century (Preston 2005). Based on the results of this evaluation the site is considered to have low archaeological potential.

References

- BGS, 1946, *British Geological Survey*, 1:63360, Sheet 268, Drift Edition, Keyworth
- PPG16, 1990, Dept of the Environment Planning Policy Guidance, 16, *Archaeology and Planning*, HMSO
- PPS5, 2010, *Planning for the Historic Environment*, The Stationery Office, Norwich
- Preston, S, 2005, 'Wokingham Cricket and Tennis Clubs, Wellington Road, Wokingham, Berkshire; an archaeological desk-based assessment', Thames Valley Archaeological Services unpubl rep 05/87A, Reading

APPENDIX 1: Trench details
0m at South or West end

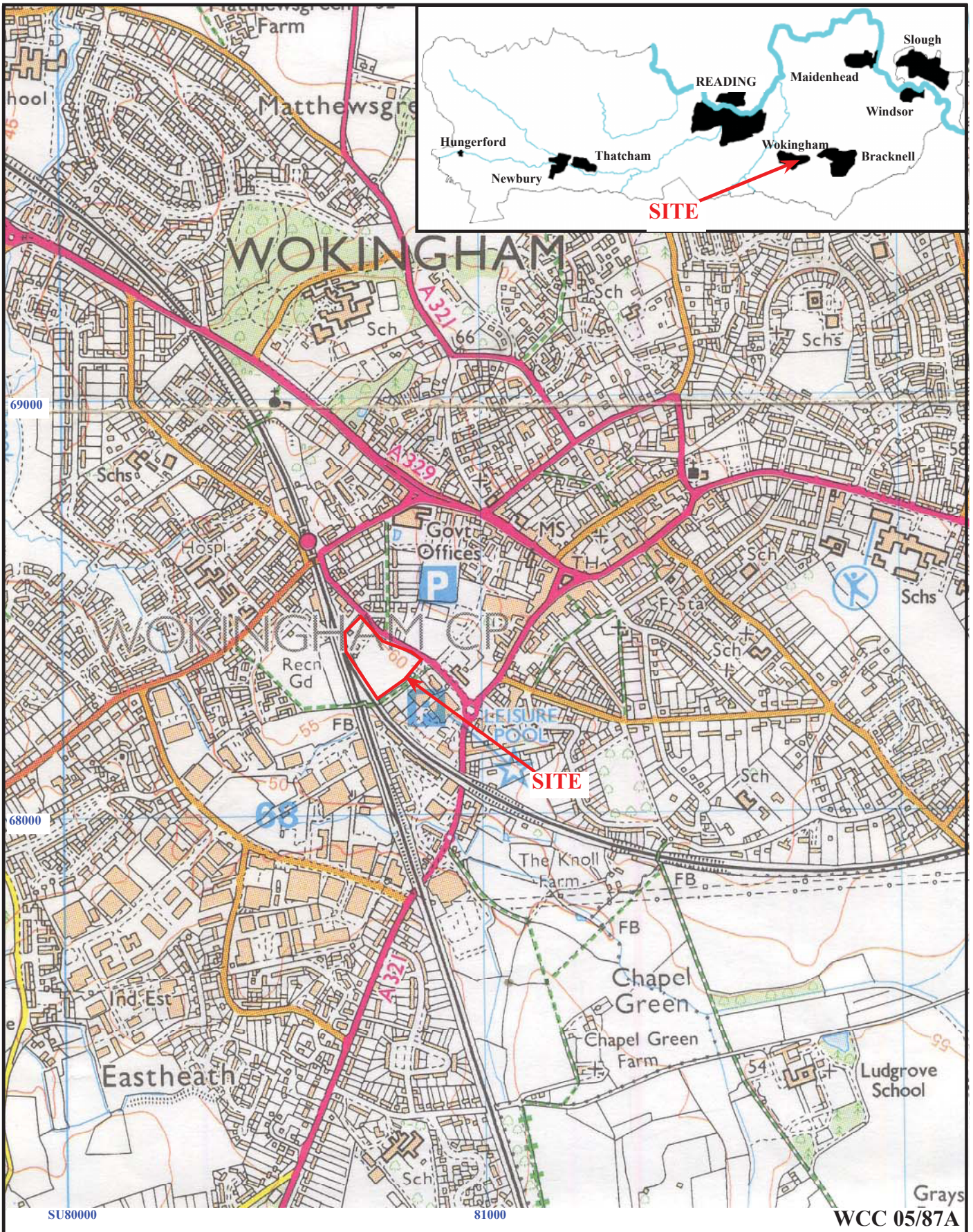
<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	24.50	1.60	SE: 1.07 NW: 0.82	0–0.24m topsoil; 0.24-0.64m mid brown grey sandy silt with pebbles subsoil (51); 0.64 – 1.04m mottled grey orange sand subsoil (57); 1.04m+ yellow orange sand with grey patches natural geology.
2	24.00	1.60	0.80	0–0.25m topsoil; 0.25-0.55m subsoil (51); 0.55 – 0.79m subsoil (57); 0.79m+ yellow orange sand with grey patches natural geology.
3	24.50	1.60	0.70	0–0.21m topsoil; 0.21-0.60m subsoil (51); 0.60 – 0.70m mottled grey orange sand; 0.70m+ yellow orange sand with gravel natural geology.
4	24.70	1.60	0.68	0–0.19m topsoil; 0.19-0.53m subsoil (51); 0.53 – 0.67m subsoil (57); 0.67m+ yellow orange sand with gravel natural geology. Linear feature [1]
5	26.10	1.60	0.74	0–0.14m topsoil; 0.14-0.38m subsoil (51); 0.38 – 0.69m subsoil (57); 0.69m+ yellow orange sand with grey patches and gravel natural geology.
6	25.00	1.60	NW: 0.72 SE: 0.51	0–0.20m topsoil; 0.20-0.46m subsoil (51); 0.46 – 0.68m subsoil (57); 0.68m+ yellow orange sand with gravel natural geology. Gully [2] [Pl. 1]
7	24.20	1.60	0.72	0–0.21m topsoil; 0.21-0.43m subsoil (51); 0.43 – 0.70m subsoil (57); 0.70m+ yellow orange sand with grey patches natural geology.
8	25.00	1.60	0.72	0–0.18m topsoil; 0.18-0.48m subsoil (51); 0.48 – 0.71m subsoil (57); 0.71m+ yellow orange sand with grey patches natural geology.
9	25.00	1.60	0.72	0–0.20m topsoil; 0.20-0.47m subsoil (51); 0.47 – 0.68m subsoil (57); 0.68m+ yellow orange sand with grey patches natural geology. Ditch [3]
10	24.00	1.60	0.72	0–0.16m topsoil; 0.16-0.50m subsoil (51); 0.50 – 0.70m subsoil (57); 0.70m+ yellow orange sand with gravel natural geology.
11	24.80	1.60	0.70	0–0.23m topsoil; 0.23-0.56m subsoil (51); 0.56 – 0.69m subsoil (57); 0.69m+ yellow orange sand with grey patches natural geology.
12	24.20	1.60	0.83	0–0.16m topsoil; 0.16-0.42m subsoil (51); 0.42 – 0.77m subsoil (57); 0.77m+ yellow orange sand with grey patches natural geology.
13	27.30	1.60	0.62	0–0.19m topsoil; 0.19-0.38m subsoil (51); 0.38 – 0.57m subsoil (57); 0.57m+ yellow orange sand with gravel natural geology. Ditch [5] [Pl. 3]
14	26.70	1.60	0.70	0–0.20m topsoil; 0.20-0.42m subsoil (51); 0.42 – 0.67m subsoil (57); 0.67m+ yellow orange sand with gravel natural geology.
15	24.50	1.60	0.59	0–0.16m topsoil; 0.16-0.35m subsoil (51); 0.35 – 0.58m subsoil (57); 0.58m+ yellow orange sand with grey patches natural geology. Ditch [4] [Pls 2 and 4]
16	24.60	1.60	0.62	0–0.22m topsoil; 0.22-0.42m subsoil (51); 0.42 – 0.60m subsoil (57); 0.60m+ yellow orange sand with gravel and substantial root activity natural geology.

APPENDIX 2: Feature details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
4	1	52	Natural hollow	Undated	None
6	2	53	Gully/ root	Undated	None
9	3	54	Ditch	Undated	None
13	5	56	Ditch	Undated	None
15	4	55	Ditch	Undated	None

Appendix 3: Catalogue of burnt flint

<i>Sample</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>Wt (g)</i>
1	4	54	14	150
2	5	55	29	224



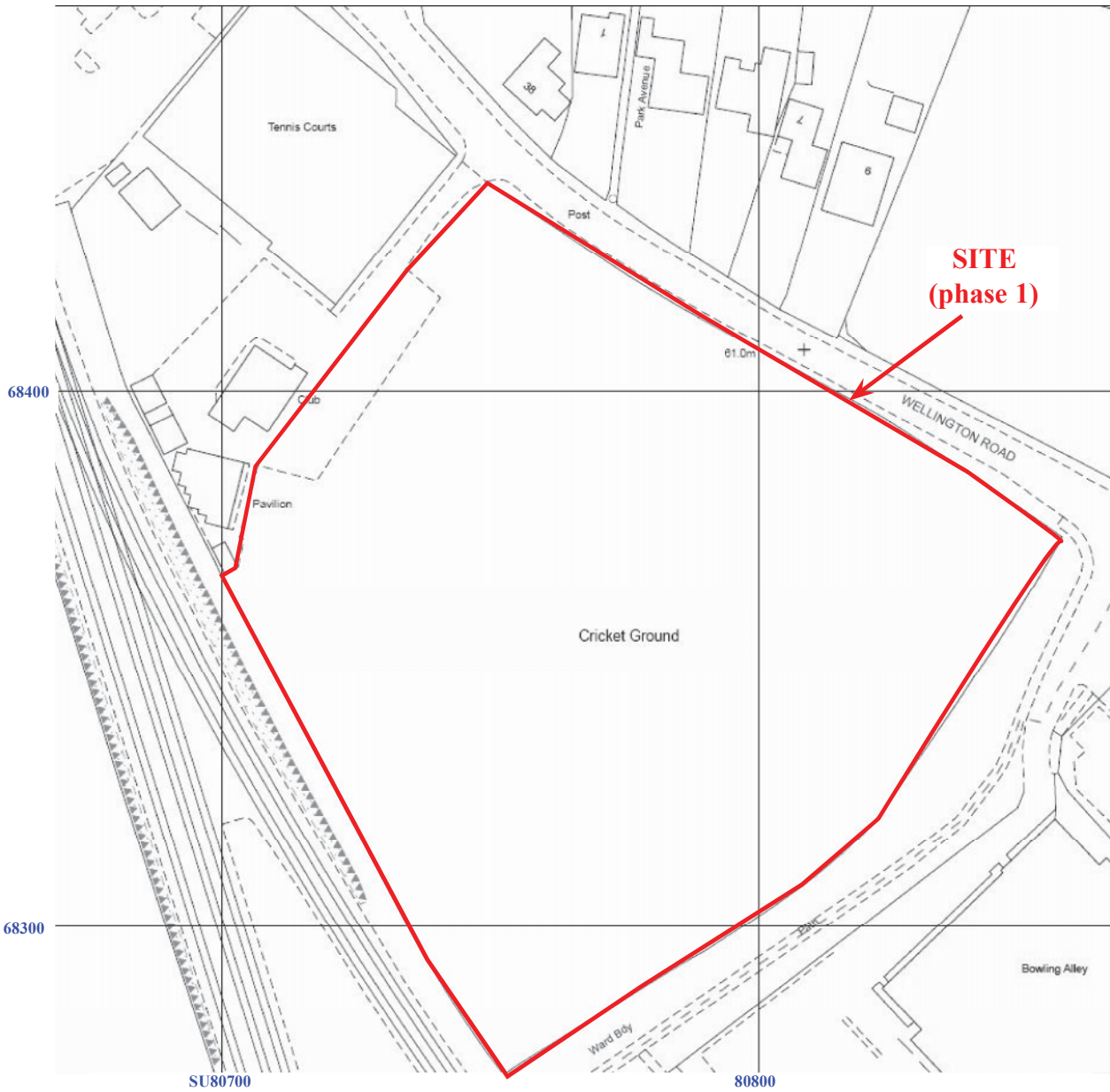
**Wokingham Cricket and Tennis Club, Wellington Road,
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Figure 1. Location of site within Wokingham and Berkshire.

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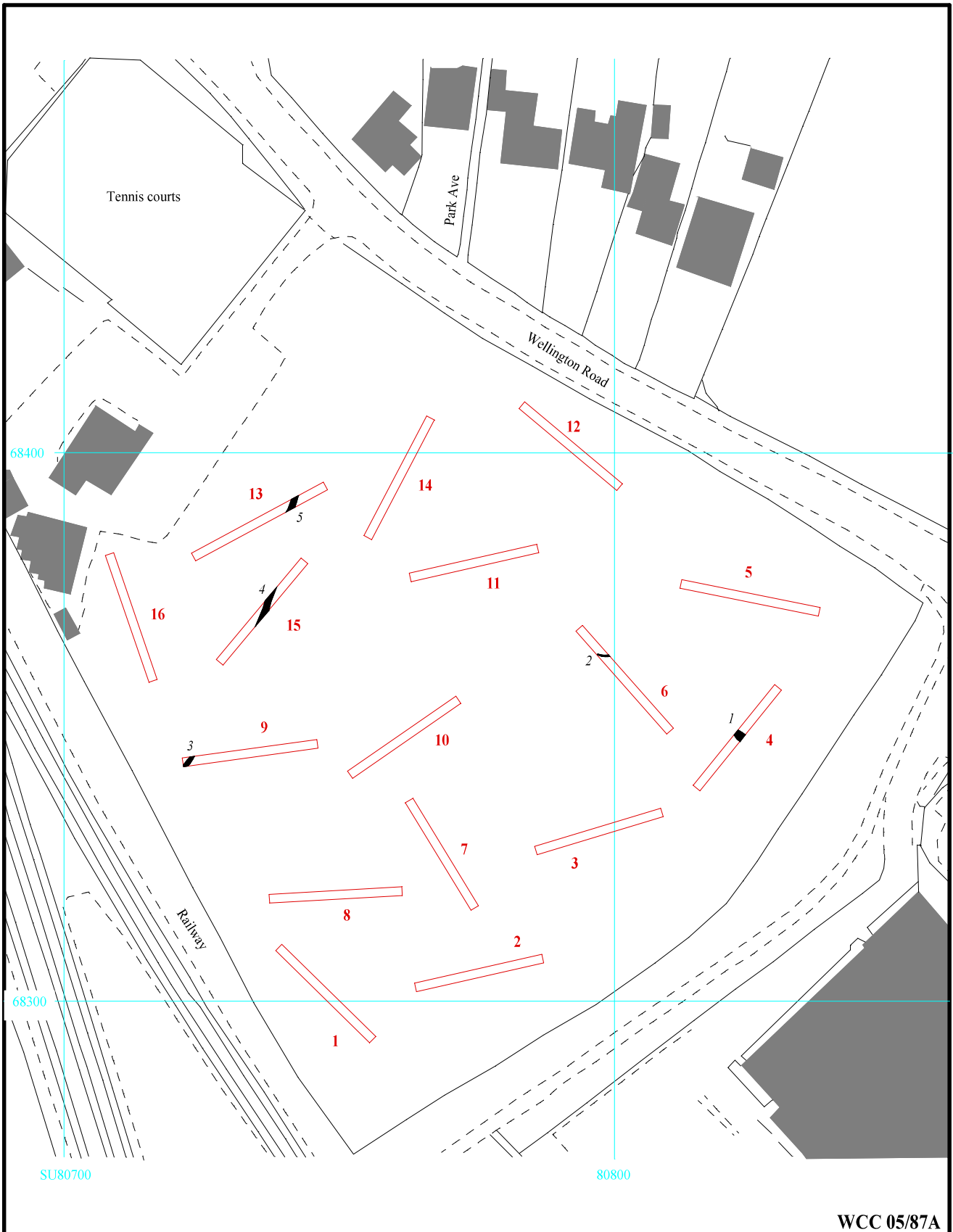


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Figure 2. Detailed location of site.

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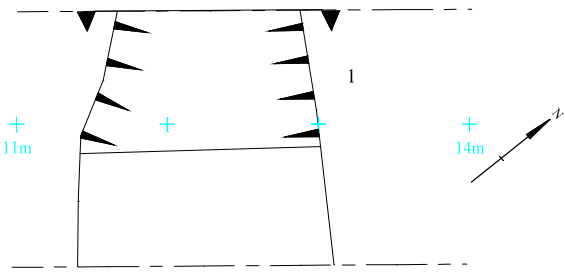
**Wokingham Cricket and Tennis Club, Wellington Road,
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Archaeological Evaluation (phase 1)**

Figure 3. Location of trenches.

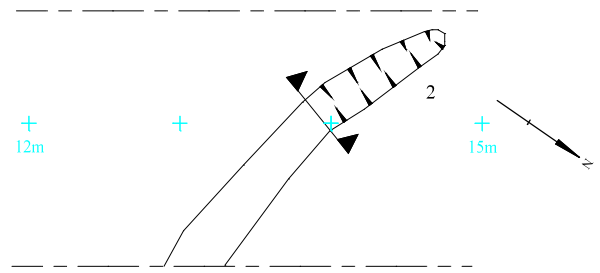


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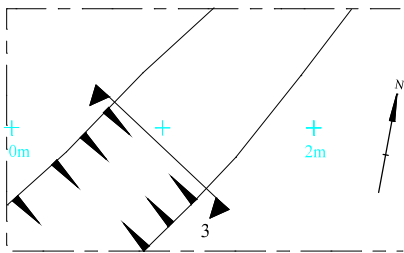
Trench 4



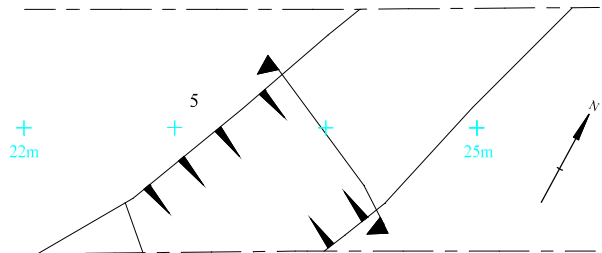
Trench 6



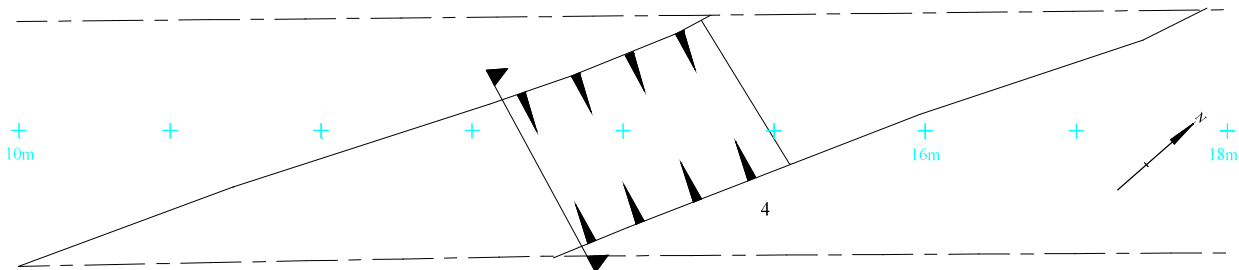
Trench 9



Trench 13



Trench 15



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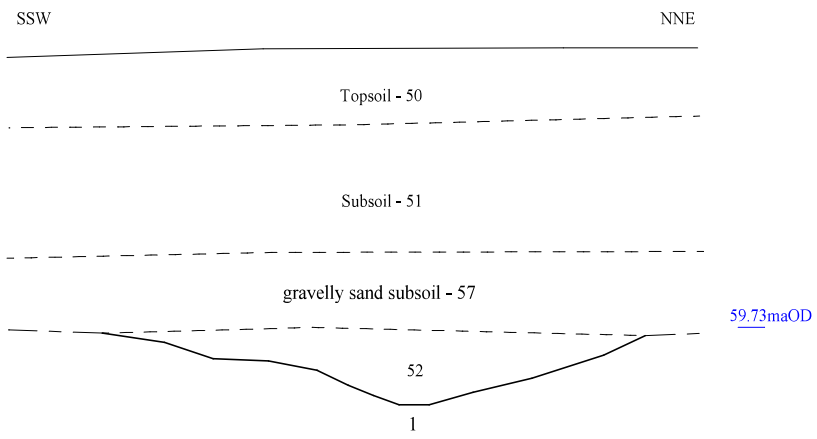
Wokingham Cricket and Tennis Club, Wellington Road,
 Wokingham, Berkshire, 2012
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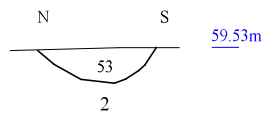
Figure 4. Detail of trenches.



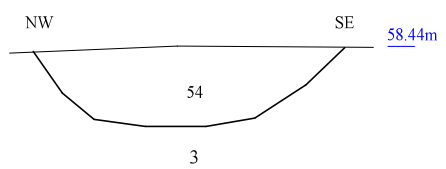
Trench 4



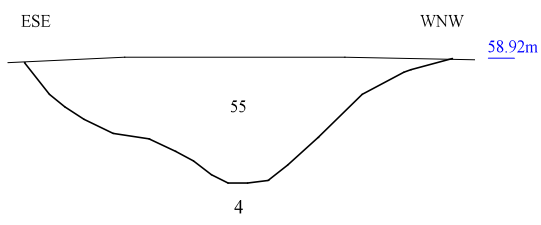
Trench 6



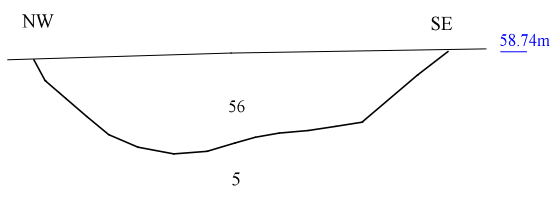
Trench 9



Trench 15



Trench 13



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Figure 5. Sections.



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Plate 1. Trench 6, looking north west, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m.



Plate 2. Trench 15, looking north east, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m.

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Plates 1 and 2.**

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Plate 3. Trench 13, ditch 5, looking north, Scales: 1m and 0.1m.

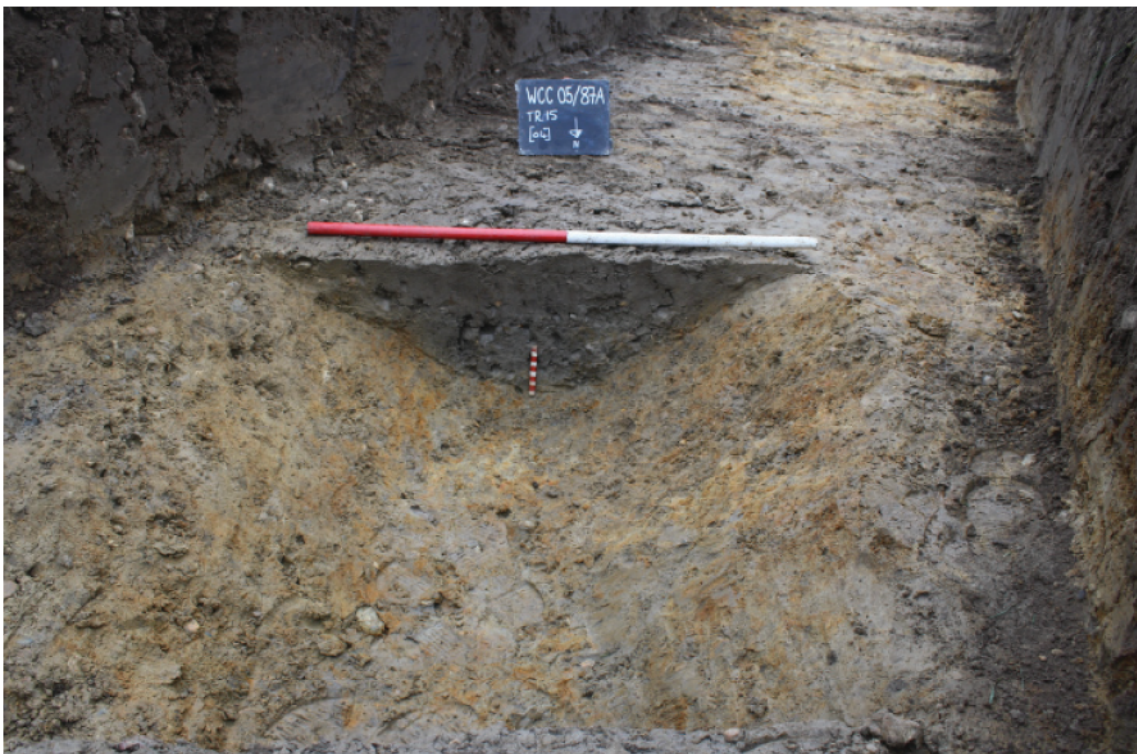


Plate 4. Trench 15, ditch 4, looking south, Scales: 1m and 0.1m.

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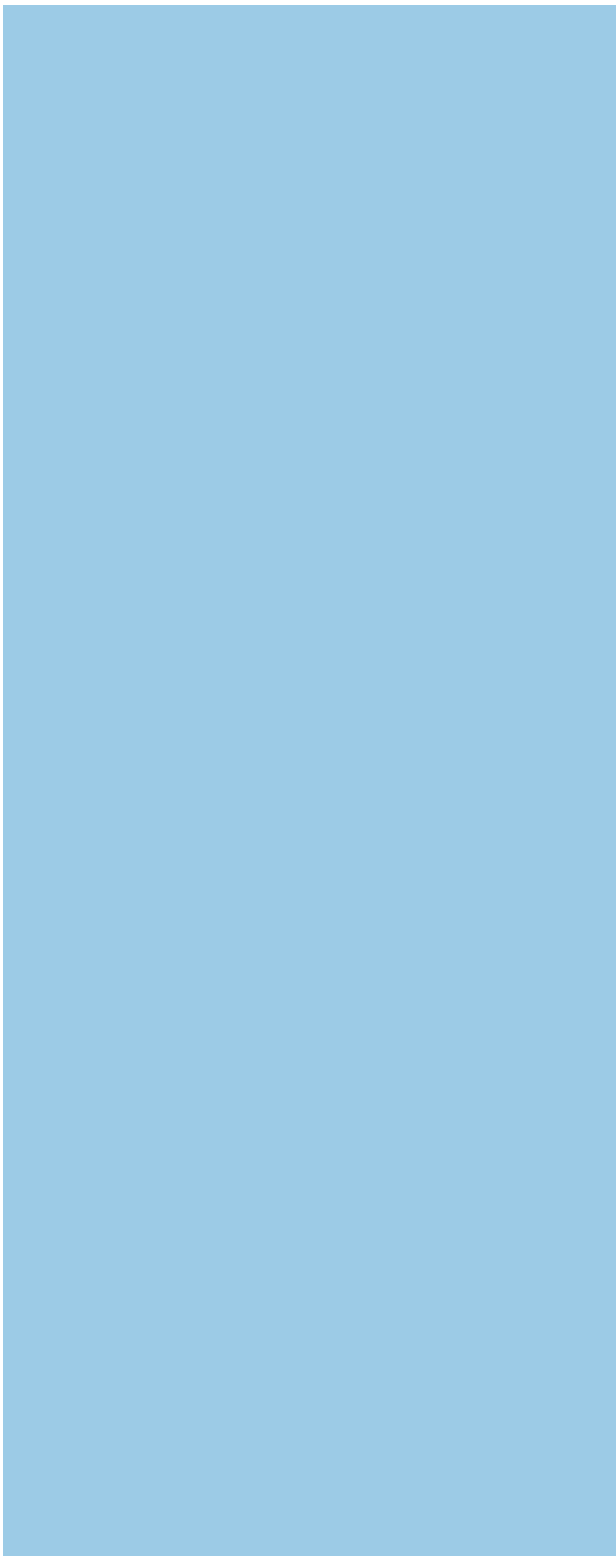
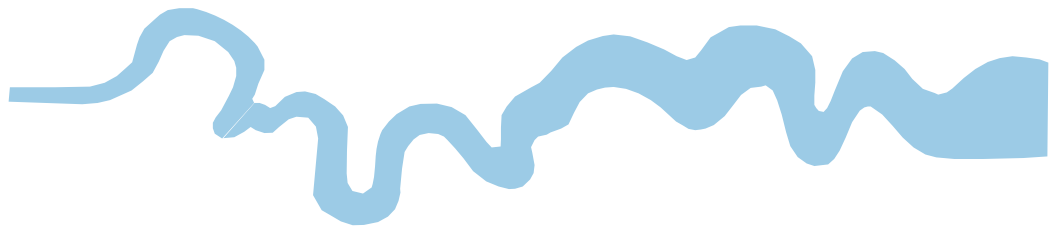
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Plates 3 and 4.**

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