

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Walton Cottage, Church Street,
Wargrave, Berkshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by David Platt

Site Code: WCW12/142

(SU 7850 7860)

**Walton Cottage, Church Street,
Wargrave, Berkshire**

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For Mr Michael Simpson

by David Platt

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code WCW12/142

March 2013

Summary

Site name: Walton Cottage, Church Street, Wargrave, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 7850 7860

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 1st March 2013

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: David Platt

Site code: WCW12/142

Area of site: c. 70 sq m

Summary of results: No features or finds of archaeological interest were observed during the groundworks.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at an appropriate designated museum or repository (to be decided by the local planning authority).

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 12.03.13 Steve Preston ✓ 06.03.13

Walton Cottage, Church Street, Wargrave, Berkshire An Archaeological Watching Brief

By David Platt

Report 12/142

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at Walton Cottage, Church Street, Wargrave, Berkshire (SU 7850 7860) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Michael Simpson of Walton Cottage Church Street, Wargrave, Berkshire, RG10 8EP.

Planning permission (app no F/2012/1140) has been granted by Wokingham Borough Council to construct a new extension, replacement garden wall and various refurbishments on the site. The consent is subject to a condition relating to archaeology which requires a watching brief to be carried out during groundworks. This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012) and the Borough's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by the Council as advised by Berkshire Archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by David Platt on 1st March 2013 and the site code is WCW12/142. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at an appropriate designated museum or repository (to be decided by the local planning authority) in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the northern side of Church Street within the village of Wargrave, close to the historic centre (Fig. 2). The River Thames passes 0.2km to the north-west and the underlying geology is chalk (BGS 1946) although this was not observed in any of the trenches. The area examined was a paved and bricked courtyard previously used as a storage area for a furniture shop and before that it was part of a butcher's store. The site is *c.* 35m aOD (above Ordnance Datum).

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location close to the historic core of Wargrave as well as being located within the archaeologically rich Thames Valley. Wargrave was possibly first documented in late Saxon times (early 11th century) but was recorded in Domesday Book as a Royal manor. It was granted a market in 1218 and was referred to as a borough in 1222, and is possibly a medieval town, though details of this are

vague. In any event, its urban status was short-lived (Astill 1978). Only a small number of archaeological investigations have taken place within Wargrave but one of these revealed a medieval boundary feature to the north west of the site (Dawson 2011). Field survey and aerial photography to the south-west of the site has revealed a range of sites of earlier prehistoric, Roman and Saxon date (Ford 1997).

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the groundworks. This involved the monitoring of foundation trenches for a replacement garden wall and extension to the garden room. Other intrusive groundworks such as the excavation of service trenches and overburden removal were also to be monitored however these were not of a sufficient depth to affect the archaeologically relevant level.

Results

The foundations for the new garden wall and toilet room were 9.50m long, 0.60m wide and went to a depth of 0.50m (Fig. 3; Pls 1 and 2). The existing floor of the garden room was dug out by approximately 0.30m and a single hole was dug measuring 0.40x0.40m and 0.60m deep. The digging of a single test pit on the western edge of the cottage was also observed, this was 0.60x0.60m and 0.80m deep.

The stratigraphy for the foundations of the toilet consisted of 0.07m of concrete overlying 0.11m of hardcore, this in turn overlay 0.17m of Tarmac which overlay 0.14m of pale greyish brown silty clay made ground with post-medieval brick inclusions. This overlay a mid greyish brown clayey silt which may have been a buried subsoil. Natural chalk was not reached (Fig. 4).

The stratigraphy observed for the wall foundation consisted of 0.10m of brick overlying 0.36m of pale greyish brown silty clay made ground containing post-medieval brick and tile.

The test pit inside the garden room consisted of 0.25m of redeposited chalk overlying 0.35m of a dark greyish brown clayey silt which could have been a buried subsoil.

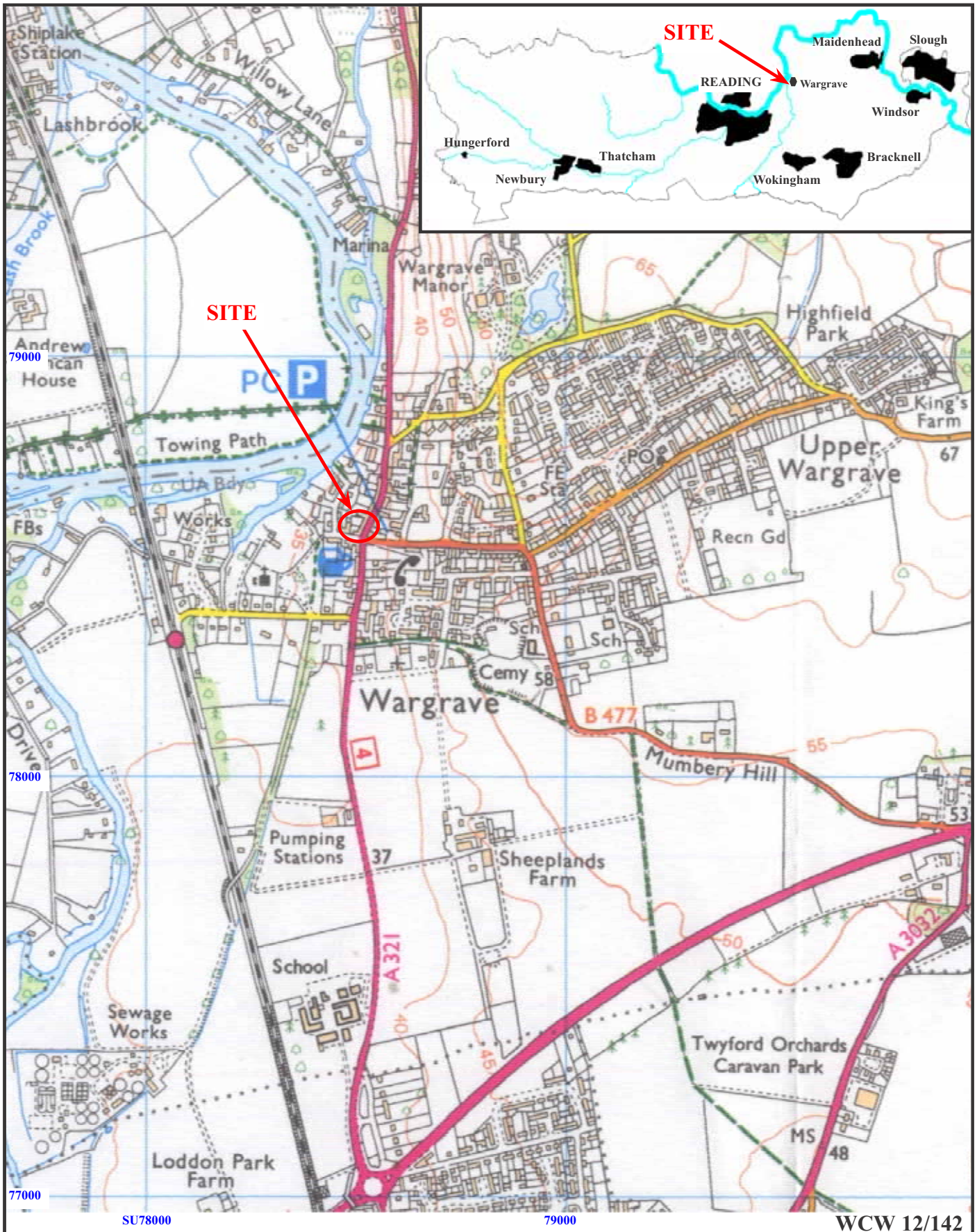
The test pit on the western wall of the cottage was within the cut for the foundation of the house and consisted of a reddish brown sandy silt abutting the cottage wall.

Conclusion

No finds or features of archaeological interest were observed, however none of the foundation trenches were deep enough to observe the natural geology, so there is the potential that an archaeologically relevant layer may still exist, preserved *in situ* under the made ground layers.

References

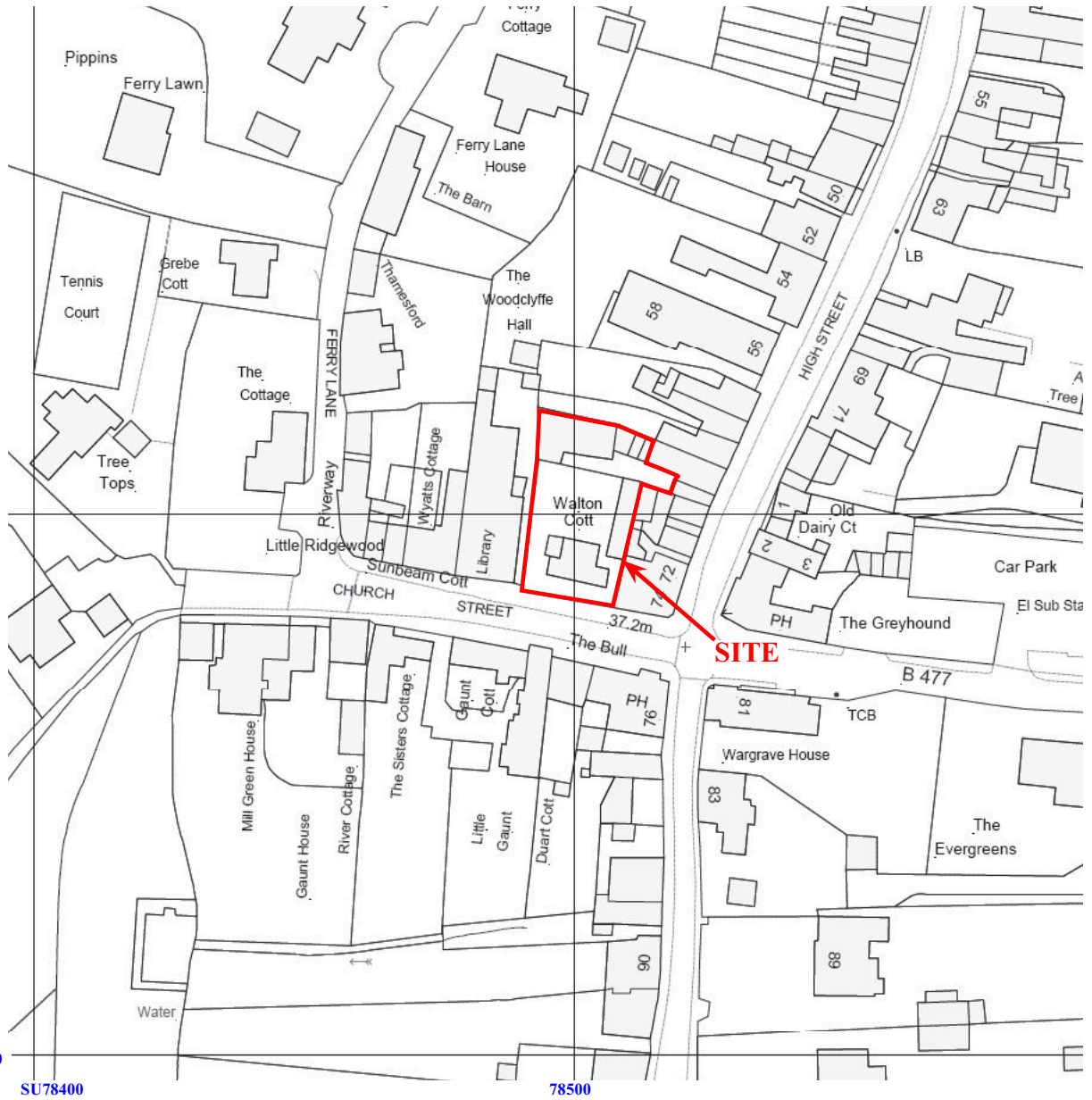
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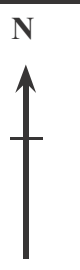
Rear of Walton Cottage, Church Street, Wargrave,
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 Figure 1. Location of site within Wargrave and Berkshire.

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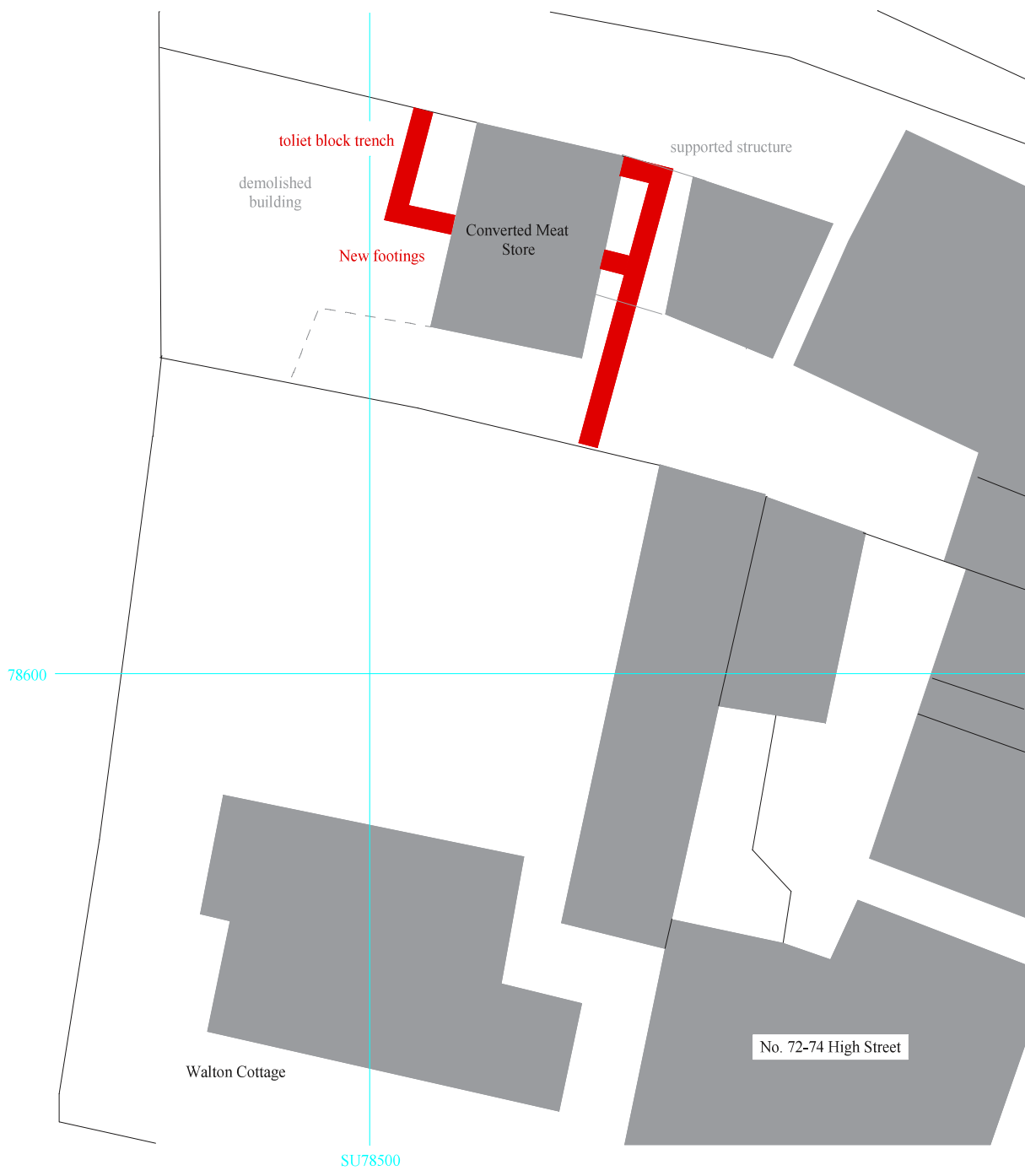
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Church Street.

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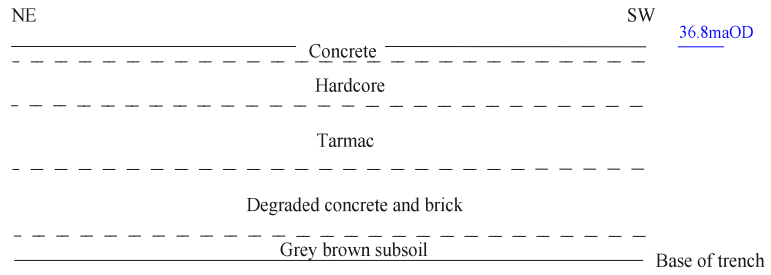
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Figure 3. Location of observed area.



New toilet block trench



Base of tr

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Figure 4. Representative section.



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Plate 1. New foundation trench, looking south, Scales: 1m and 0.3m.



Plate 2. Representative section from toilet block trench, looking east, Scales: 1m and 0.3m.

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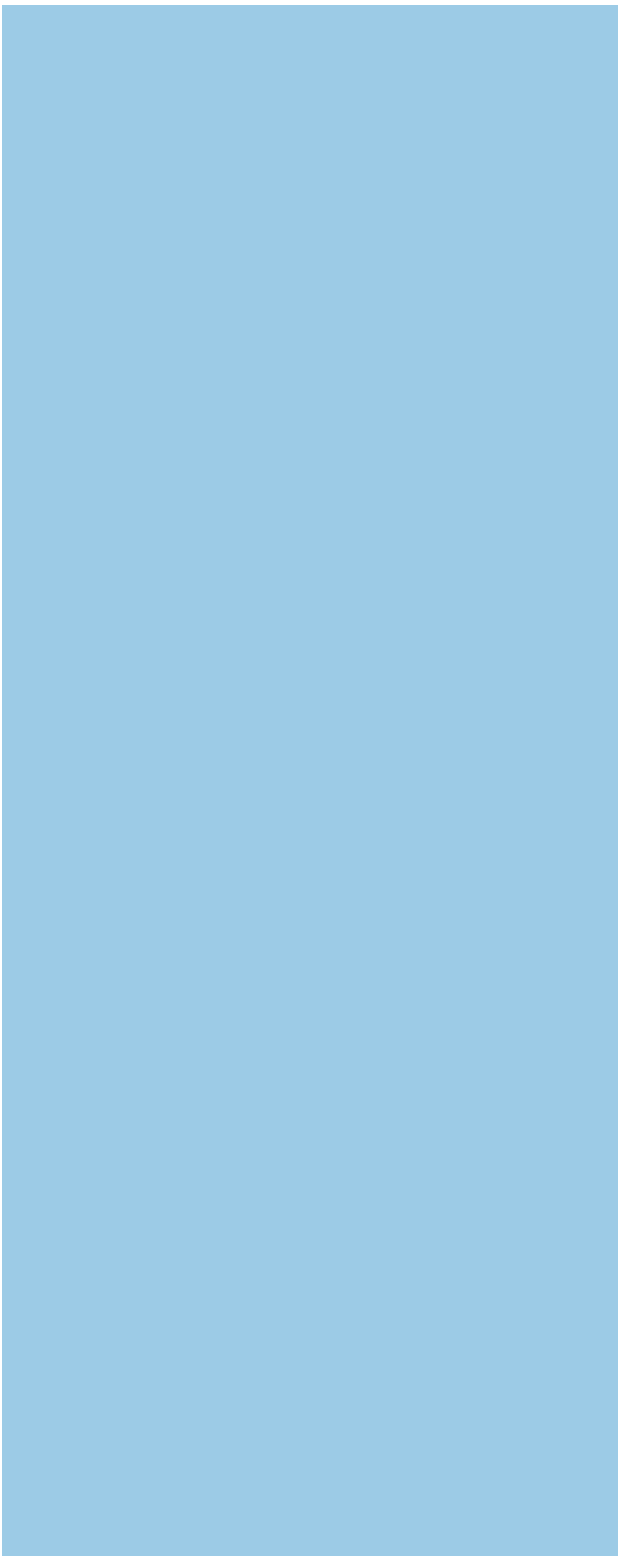
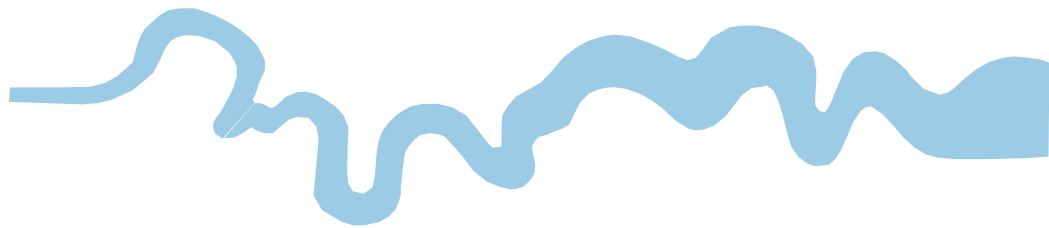
Plates 1 and 2.

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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





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