

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Cannon Court Farmhouse, Cannon Court Road,
Maidenhead, Berkshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Danielle Milbank

Site Code: CCF 13/40

(SU 8750 8327)

**Cannon Court Farmhouse, Cannon Court Road,
Maidenhead, Berkshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for CgMs Consulting**

by Danielle Milbank

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code CCF 13/40

April 2013

Summary

Site name: Cannon Court Farmhouse, Cannon Court Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 8750 8327

Site activity: Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 10th April 2013

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Danielle Milbank

Site code: CCF 13/40

Summary of results: A single trench was excavated and revealed no deposits nor finds of an archaeological nature.

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.

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

Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford ✓ 25.04.13
	Steve Preston ✓ 25.04.13

Cannon Court Farmhouse, Cannon Court Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Danielle Milbank

Report 13/40

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Cannon Court Farmhouse, Cannon Court Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire (SU 8750 8327) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Paul Chadwick of CgMs Consulting Ltd, 140 London Wall, London, EC2Y 5DN.

Planning permission (app no 12/034454/FUL) has been gained from the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead for demolition of part of the existing structure and construction of a new extension. The consent includes a condition (4) relating to archaeology, which requires a programme of archaeological work to be carried out in order to provide information on the archaeological potential of the site and allow a scheme to be devised to mitigate the effects of the construction on any archaeological deposits that may be present.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012), and the Royal Borough Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Fiona Macdonald of Berkshire Archaeology, who advise the council on matters relating to archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Danielle Milbank on the 10th April 2013 and the site code is CCF 13/40. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Reading Museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located 1km to the north of the centre of Maidenhead, with the River Thames 1km to the east (Fig. 1). The surrounding area is largely agricultural, with farmland to the west, north and south, and Cannon Court Lane to the east. The site is in use as a farm and livery stables and is located on ground which slopes gently from the north down towards the south, though the area of the evaluation trench is relatively flat. The site lies at a height of *c.*48m above Ordnance Datum, and the underlying geology is mapped as Seaford and Newhaven Chalk formations with the possibility of Lynch Hill Gravel overlying it in the northern part of the site (BGS 2005). The geology encountered in the excavated trench took the form of orange-brown sandy clay with occasional sub-rounded small and medium flint inclusions.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location in the archaeologically rich Thames Valley with a range of sites of all periods recorded (Ford 1987; Gates 1975). More specifically the location of the site itself is notable from the large volume of Palaeolithic finds and some faunal remains that were encountered during the earlier part of the last century during gravel extraction of the surrounding areas (Wymer 1968, 221–5, figs 78 and 79). However, the current development proposal is likely to be too shallow to impact on the deeply buried Palaeolithic horizons and it is more recent, post-glacial archaeology such as recorded at Furze Platt (Lobb 1980) which is more likely to be encountered. Recently, Saxon pottery has been found to the south (Bray *et al.* 2012) but several small investigations in the area have failed to produce any archaeological material (Hull and Ford 1997; Saunders 1999; Muddin 2008; McNicoll-Norbury 2009).

Cartographic Evidence

A range of Ordnance Survey and other historical maps of the area were consulted in order to ascertain what activity had been taking place throughout the site's later history and whether this may have affected any possible archaeological deposits within the proposal area (see Appendix 2 and Figures 2-5).

The earliest map available of the area is Saxton's map of Berkshire (1575) (not illustrated). The town of Maidenhead is well established as a substantial town by this time but due to the scale of this map, no detail can be obtained for the site itself. Furze Platt, unsurprisingly, is not shown. This is equally true of a later map of Berkshire by John Speed in 1611 which is typical of the maps of this period (not illustrated). A map by Norden of Windsor Forest in 1607 shows more detail than Speed, though this again is largely schematic. Maidenhead is shown as a substantial town, set well west of the bridge but Furze Platt is not identifiable (not illustrated).

A more detailed map made by Rocque in 1761 (Fig. 2), shows the main settlements, rivers and the road network, with a basic similarity to the modern layout. Cannon Court Farm itself is shown and named (Canon Court). It appears to consist of three buildings around a courtyard close to the road, but it is uncertain if that level of detail should be regarded as accurate. As the farm is named, however, it is possible that it is depicted accurately rather than schematically. The buildings do not appear to extend as far south as the current site area, which is in a field, and if the current farmhouse is shown, it is on the wrong orientation, so the overall impression is that the group of buildings is schematic.

The Cookham tithe map of 1844 shows considerably more detail (Fig. 3). The farm is a large complex of around a dozen buildings and outbuildings, which, unusually, are listed as occupying several separate land

parcels. A building occupying roughly the position of the current main house is picked out in red and so is presumably the main farmhouse at this period too, all the grey buildings being barns, stables, etc. However, the detailed footprint at this period does not resemble the modern farmhouse very closely but again this need not be surprising given the level of detail to be expected from a map of this nature.

The First Edition Ordnance Survey of 1875 does show the farmhouse in plan as similar to the extant building (Fig. 4) but not in every detail. The name is now given as Cannoncourt. There are formal gardens to the east of the main house, and probably also to the south, so some landscaping has presumably taken place in these areas.

Subsequent Ordnance Survey maps show little change except for what appears to be a change in convention whereby the bays are no longer mapped in detail. The maps of 1899, 1912, 1925, 1931 and 1972 all show the building in the same form. The modern Ordnance Survey digital mapping (Fig. 5) also shows little change.

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 was to be carried out by means of a single trench, positioned within the footprint of the new extension.

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

The specific research aims of this project were:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on this site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present;
- to determine if artefacts and deposits relating to Palaeolithic archaeology are present.;
- to determine if any archaeologically significant deposits are present so as to inform the development of a mitigation strategy.

It was proposed to dig one trench 10m, long and 1.6m wide to be targeted at the footprint of the new extension. Overburden was to be removed by a JCB-type or small 360°-machine equipped with a ditching bucket to expose archaeologically sensitive levels. Where archaeological features or deposits were present the stripped areas were to be cleaned using appropriate hand tools. A metal detector was to be used in order to enhance the recovery of metal finds, and spoil heaps were to be monitored and searched to enhance finds recovery. If

Palaeolithic deposits were encountered, provision was made for specialist Palaeolithic archaeology and quaternary sediment advice.

Results

The trench was excavated close to its intended position. It was moved c.0.5m to the south as a result of the presence of a subterranean tank identified by groundworkers. The length was limited to the west by a substantial footing and to the east by live electric cable. The trench dimensions and a description of sections and geology are given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1 (Figs 6 and 7; Pls 1 and 2)

Trench 1 was aligned west–east and was 7.8m long and 1.35m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.80m of subsoil with very frequent brick rubble, above 0.25m of mid brown (slightly orange) subsoil with a moderate amount of rubble, overlying natural geology of orange brown sandy clay with occasional small sub-rounded flint. A modern pipe was left *in situ* in the east end of the trench. At 2.8m from the west end, a wall consisting of five courses of late 19th- or early 20th-century brick was observed in section only, set into the upper made ground layer, corresponding with the recently demolished structure. A similar wall, but only 2 courses high, was present 1.5m from the eastern end of the trench, also a part of the demolished structure.

No finds or features of archaeological interest were recorded.

Conclusion

The trench was excavated in its intended location and the underlying deposits were examined. Despite some post-medieval truncation associated with the recently demolished building, the archaeologically-relevant level had survived largely intact. However no features nor finds of archaeological interest were encountered and the site is considered to have no archaeological potential.

References

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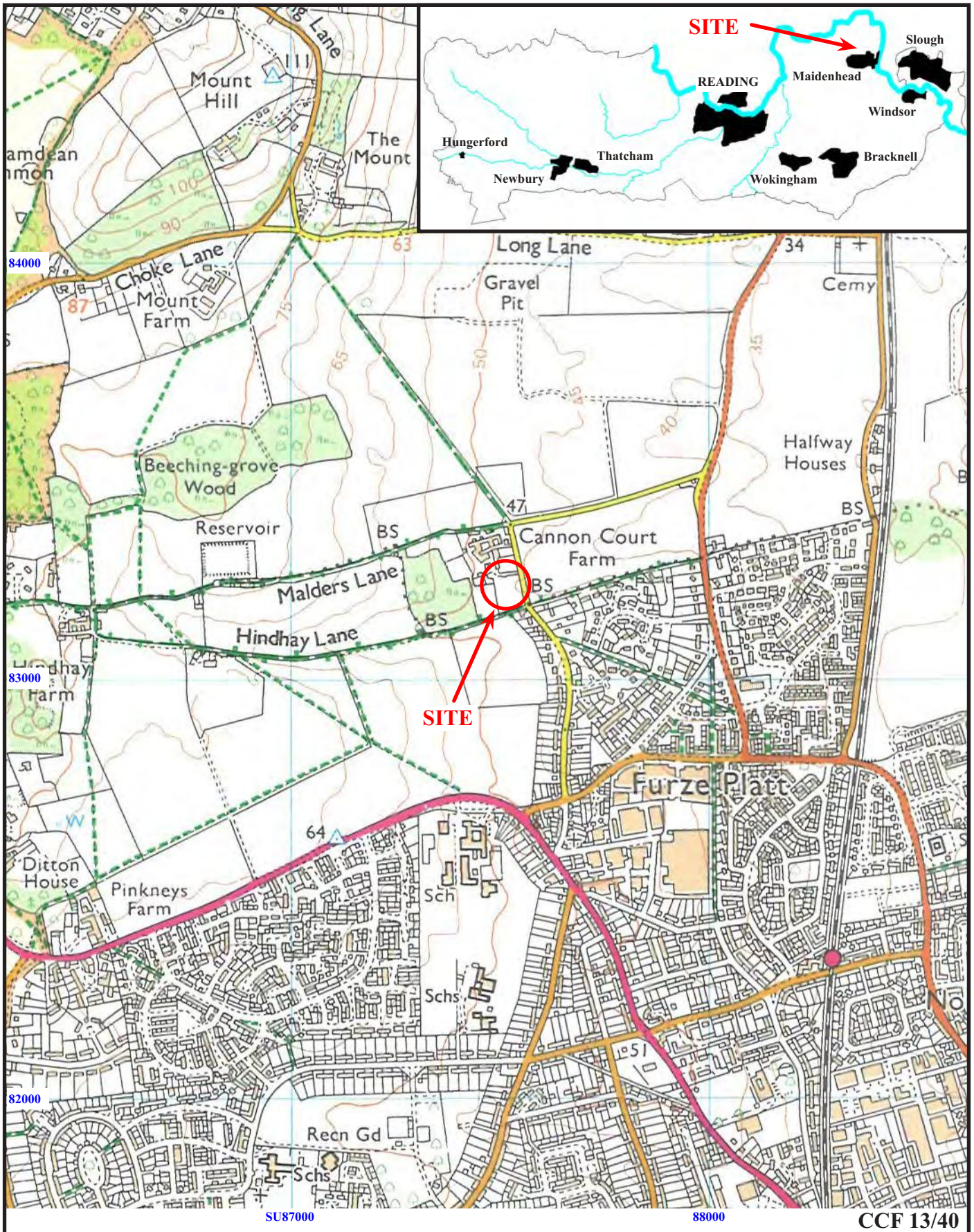
APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at west end

Trench	Length (m)	Breadth (m)	Depth (m)	Comment
1	7.80	1.60	1.35	0-0.80m mid orange-brown subsoil with rubble;; 0.80-1.05m mid brown subsoil with rubble; 1.05m+ orange-brown sandy clay (natural geology. [Pls. 1 and 2])

APPENDIX 2: Historic and modern maps consulted

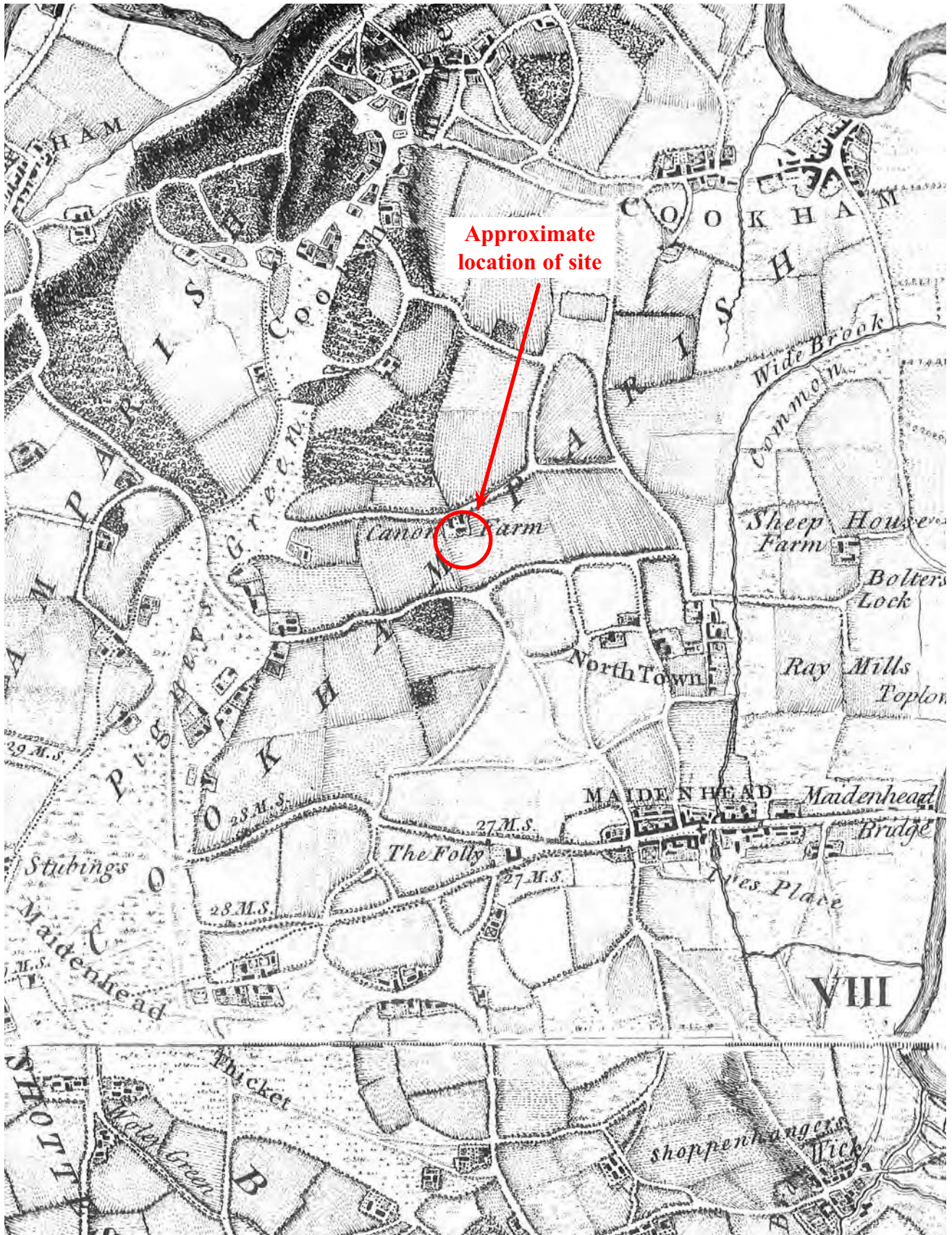
1575	Saxton's Map of Berkshire
1607	Norden's map of Windsor Forest
1610	Speed's Map of Berkshire
1761	Rocque's Map of Berkshire (Fig. 2)
1844	Cookham Tithe map (Fig. 3)
1875	First Edition Ordnance Survey (Fig. 4)
1899	Second Edition Ordnance Survey
1912	Third Edition Ordnance Survey
1925	Ordnance Survey (Fig. 5)
1931	Ordnance Survey
1972	Ordnance Survey
2006	Ordnance Survey
2012	Ordnance Survey Digital mapping (Fig. 6)



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Figure 1. Location of site within Maidenhead and Berkshire.

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Figure 2. Rocque's map of Berkshire, 1761.

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**Approximate
location of site**

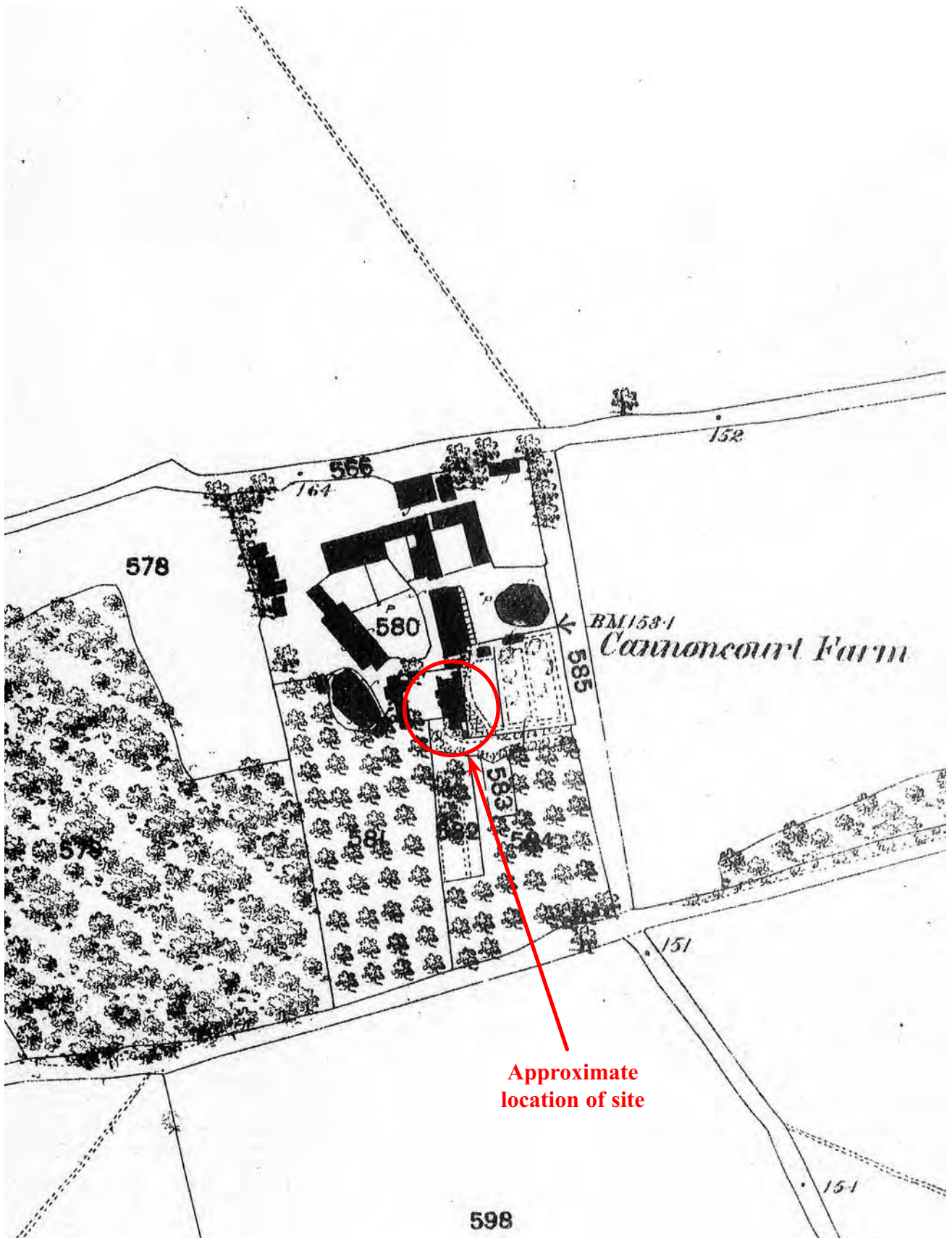
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Figure 3. Cookham tithe map, 1844.

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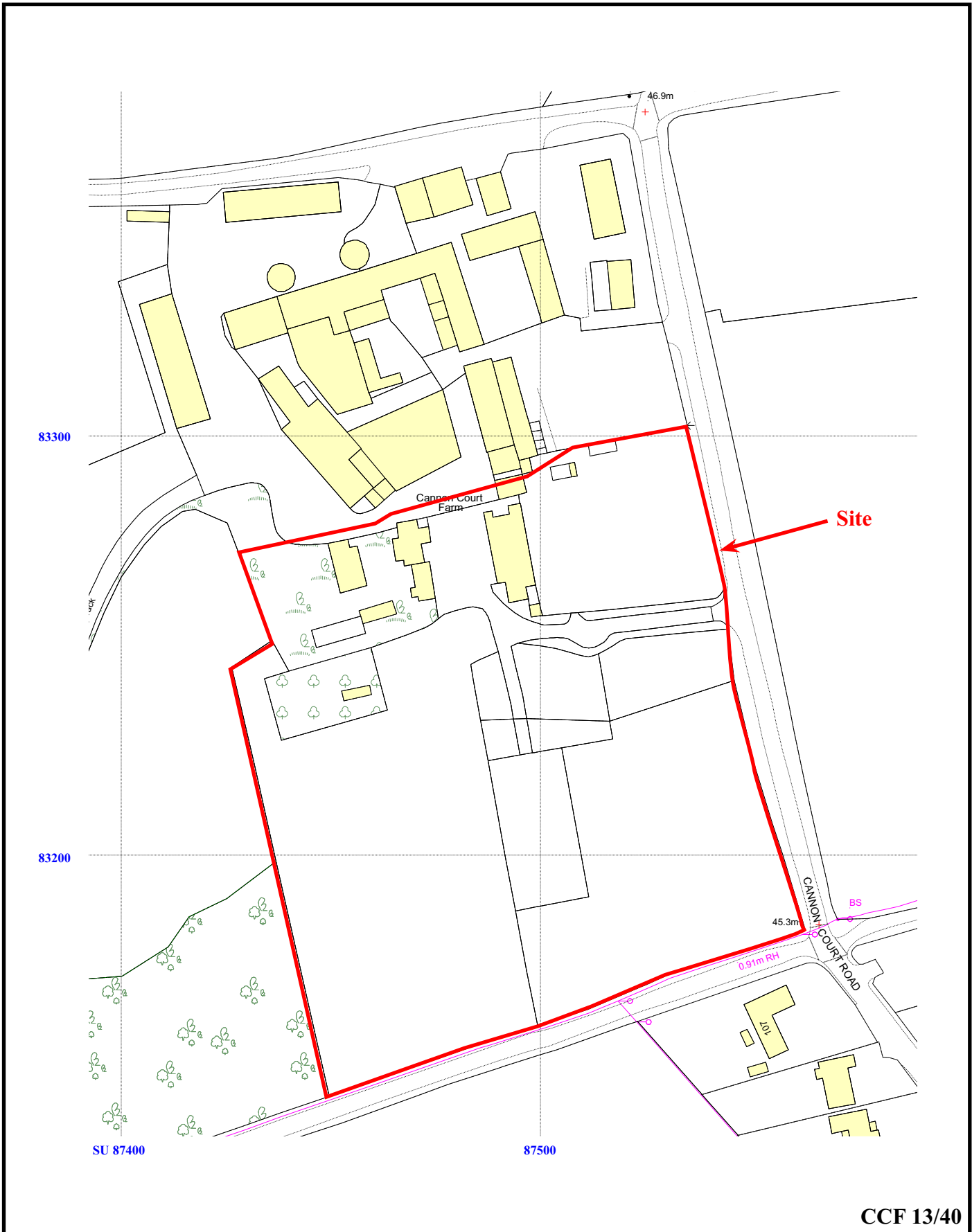
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Figure 4. Ordnance Survey First Edition, 1875.

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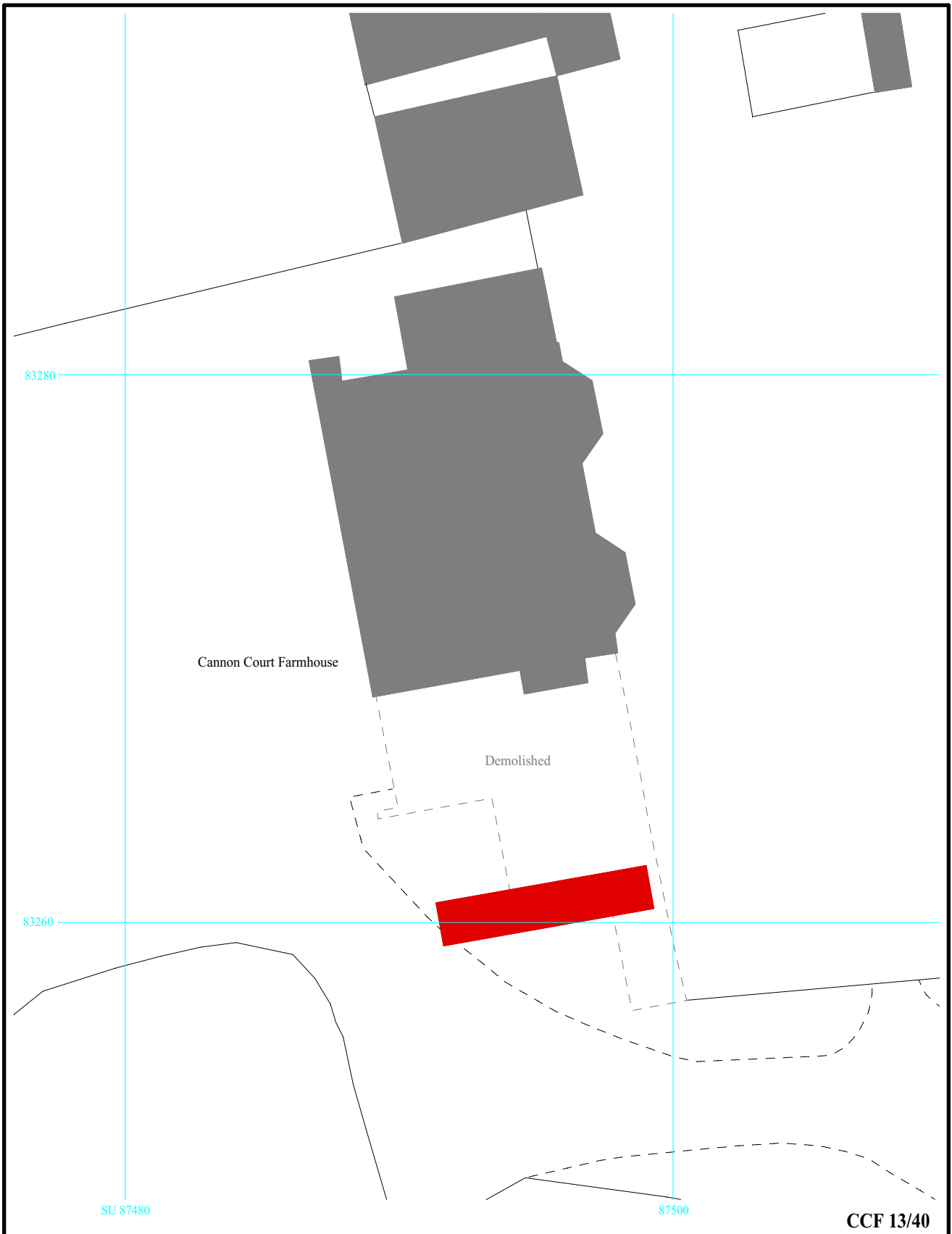
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Figure 5. Detailed location of site off Cannon Court Road.

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Figure 6. Trench location.



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W _____ E 47m aOD

Mid orange-brown subsoil with frequent brick rubble

Mid brown subsoil with moderate rubble

Orange-brown sandy clay with occasional flint (natural geology)

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Figure 7. Representative section.

0 _____ 1m

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



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

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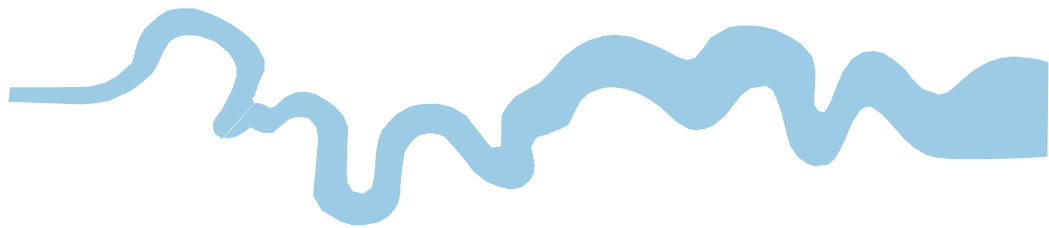
Plates 1 and 2.

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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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