

T H A M E S      V A L L E Y

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Brindledown, High Street, Upper Lambourn,  
West Berkshire**

**Archaeological Evaluation**

**by James McNicoll-Norbury**

**Site Code: BDL13/209**

**(SU 3115 8058)**

**Brindledown, High Street,  
Upper Lambourn, West Berkshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation**

**for Mrs Forbes**

by James McNicoll-Norbury

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code BDL 13/209

**December 2013**

## Summary

**Site name:** Brindledown, High Street, Upper Lambourn, West Berkshire

**Grid reference:** SU 3115 8058

**Site activity:** Evaluation

**Date and duration of project:** 27th November 2013

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** James McNicoll-Norbury

**Site code:** BDL 13/209

**Area of site:** c. 0.2ha

**Summary of results:** A modern ditch and an area of modern dumping was identified on the site. No deposits nor artefacts of archaeological interest were recorded and the site is considered to have no archaeological potential.

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

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford ✓ 05.12.13
	Steve Preston ✓ 05.12.13

# **Brindledown, Upper Lambourn, West Berkshire An Archaeological Evaluation**

By James McNicoll-Norbury

**Report 13/209**

## **Introduction**

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out adjacent to Brindledown, High Street, Upper Lambourn, West Berkshire (SU 3115 8058) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Richard New, Architect, Downside, 4 Charles Street, Newbury, RG14 6QP, on behalf of the land owner, Mrs Forbes.

A planning application (13/01988/OUTD) has been made for an area of land adjacent to Brindledown in Upper Lambourn for the development of two new properties. It is possible that the development area may contain archaeological deposits, situated as it is in the archaeologically rich Berkshire Downs. In order to better inform the planning process as to the site's potential for archaeology, a trial trench evaluation has been requested by West Berkshire Council.

This work was in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012), and the Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Sarah Orr, Acting Archaeological Officer for West Berkshire Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by James McNicoll-Norbury and Aidan Colyer on 27th November 2013 the site code is BDL 13/209. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at West Berkshire Museum in due course.

## **Location, topography and geology**

The site is located to the north of High Street in the centre of Upper Lambourn, with residential properties to the north, east and west along with associated gardens (Fig. 2). The site is currently in use as grazing for alpacas, and is generally flat although it drops away to the south to the High Street. The underlying geology is Middle Chalk (BGS 1947) which was observed in both trenches.

## **Archaeological background**

The site's potential has been highlighted in a briefing note provided by Ms Sarah Orr of West Berkshire Council. In summary, the site lies in an area particularly rich in archaeological remains of the late prehistoric to Roman

periods (Richards 1978; Bowden *et al.* 1993) with Upper Lambourn itself of probable Saxon date. Saxon material is rather less evident but a few finds of early or middle Saxon date along with a Saxon occupation site are recorded further south in the valley at Lambourn itself. Probable Late Saxon and medieval features were recorded during a small watching brief to the south-east of the village, at Uplands (Ford 2001). A watching brief at Weathercock Stables found a sherd of medieval pottery, a few prehistoric worked flints and a human burial.

Little is known of the hamlet archaeologically and the topography of the late Saxon and medieval settlement is unknown (Richards 1978). 19th century maps show the presence of two cottages originally on the site of unknown date.

## **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. The specific aims of the project were to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on site and to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present. Particular significance would be determined if deposits of Saxon and medieval date were present.

Two trenches were to be dug at a length of 15m and a width of 1.6m in the locations of the two proposed properties (Fig. 3). These were to be dug by a machine fitted with a ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision. Archaeological deposits were to be investigated by hand and spoilheaps were to be searched for finds.

## **Results**

The two trenches were dug as intended and were both 15m long and 1.6m wide. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

### Trench 1 (Fig. 4;Pl. 1)

This trench was 15.0m long and excavated to a depth of 1.3m deep. The stratigraphy comprised topsoil 0.2m thick above two layers of made ground. The upper layer of made ground contained sarsen stone and brick fragments, probably derived from demolition of the previous standing building on the site. This layer was 0.47m thick. This overlay an occupation soil, which contained glassware. Most of this material is of Victorian or later date. Beneath the made ground was the natural chalk geology at a depth of 0.85m, with no undisturbed subsoil

deposits surviving at this location. This trench had no cut features nor artefacts of archaeological interest. A well of unknown date was observed immediately to the west of trench 1 but was not further investigated.

#### Trench 2 (Fig.4 Pl.2)

This trench was also 15.0m long, and excavated to a depth of 0.5m. The stratigraphy comprised topsoil to a depth of 0.24m overlying brown silty clay subsoil to a depth of 0.47m. This overlay the natural chalk geology. One linear feature (1) 0.4m wide and 0.58m deep of relatively modern date was identified cutting through the subsoil and just into the natural geology. It was located at 6m from the western end of the trench on a roughly SW-NE axis. This trench had no cut features nor artefacts of archaeological interest.

### **Finds**

No finds of archaeological interest were recovered from site.

### **Conclusion**

Despite the potential of this site lying within the historic core of Upper Lambourn, no remains of archaeological interest were recorded in either of the trenches. The site is considered to have no archaeological potential.

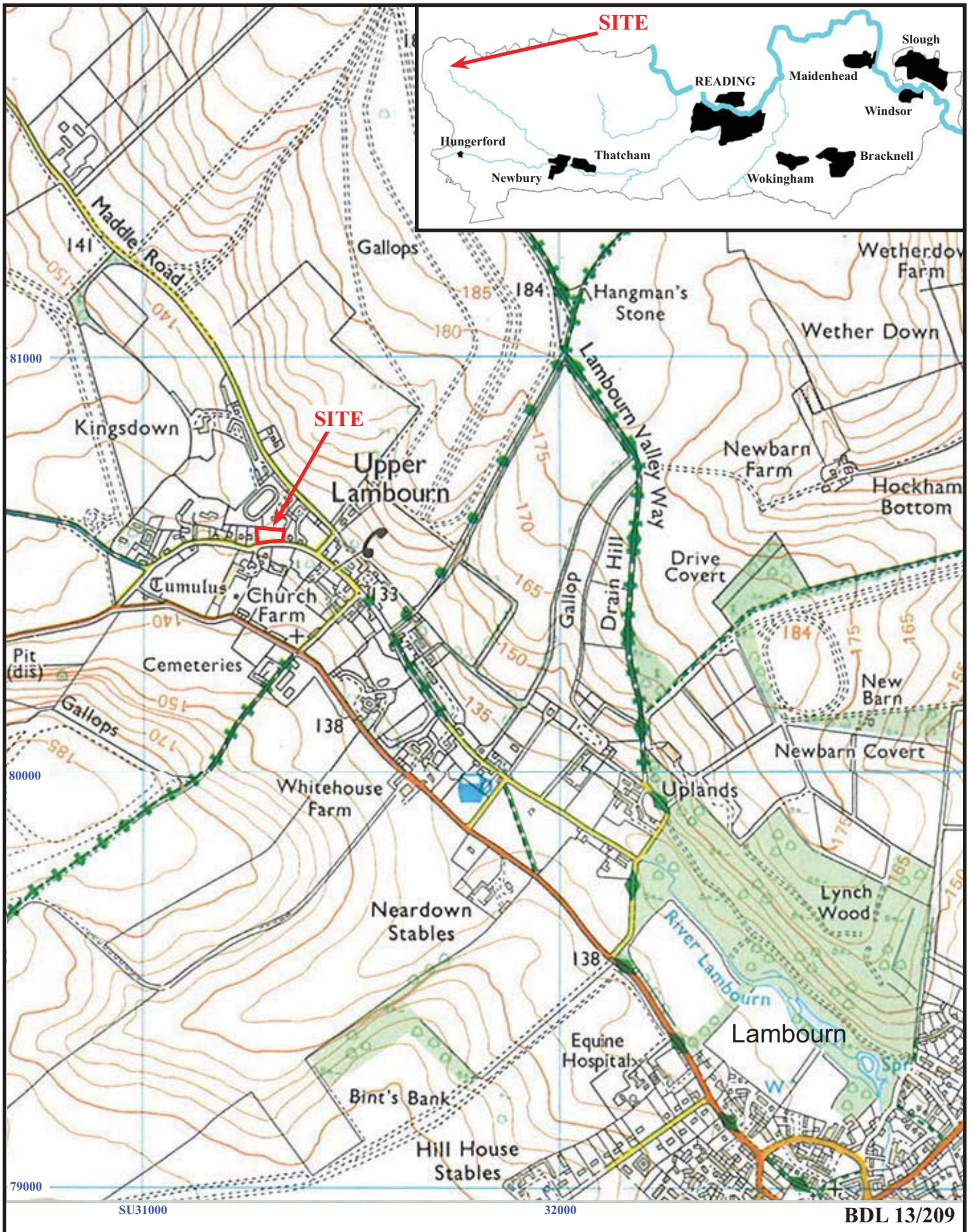
### **References**

- BGS, 1947, *British Geological Survey*, 1:63 360 Sheet 267 Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- Bowden, M, Ford, S and Mees, G, 1993, 'The date of the ancient fields on the Berkshire Downs', *Berkshire Archaeol J* **74** (for 1991-3), 109-133
- Ford, S 2001, 'Uplands, Upper Lambourn, Lambourn, Berkshire, an archaeological watching brief', Thames Valley Archaeological Services report 01/74, Reading
- NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London
- Richards, J C, 1978, *The Archaeology of the Berkshire Downs*, Berkshire Archaeol Comm Pubn **3**, Reading

## APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at W o SW end

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	15	1.6	1.3	0-0.20 topsoil, 0.20-0.67m made ground including bricks and stones, 0.67-1.3m made ground with brick and glass bottles, 1.3m+ white chalk with modern truncations <b>[PL. 1]</b>
2	15	1.6	0.5	0-0.24m topsoil, 0.24-0.47m brown silty clay subsoil, 0.47m+ white chalk natural. Ditch 1 <b>[PL. 2]</b>



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Figure 1. Location of site within Upper Lambourn and in relation to Lambourn and West Berkshire.

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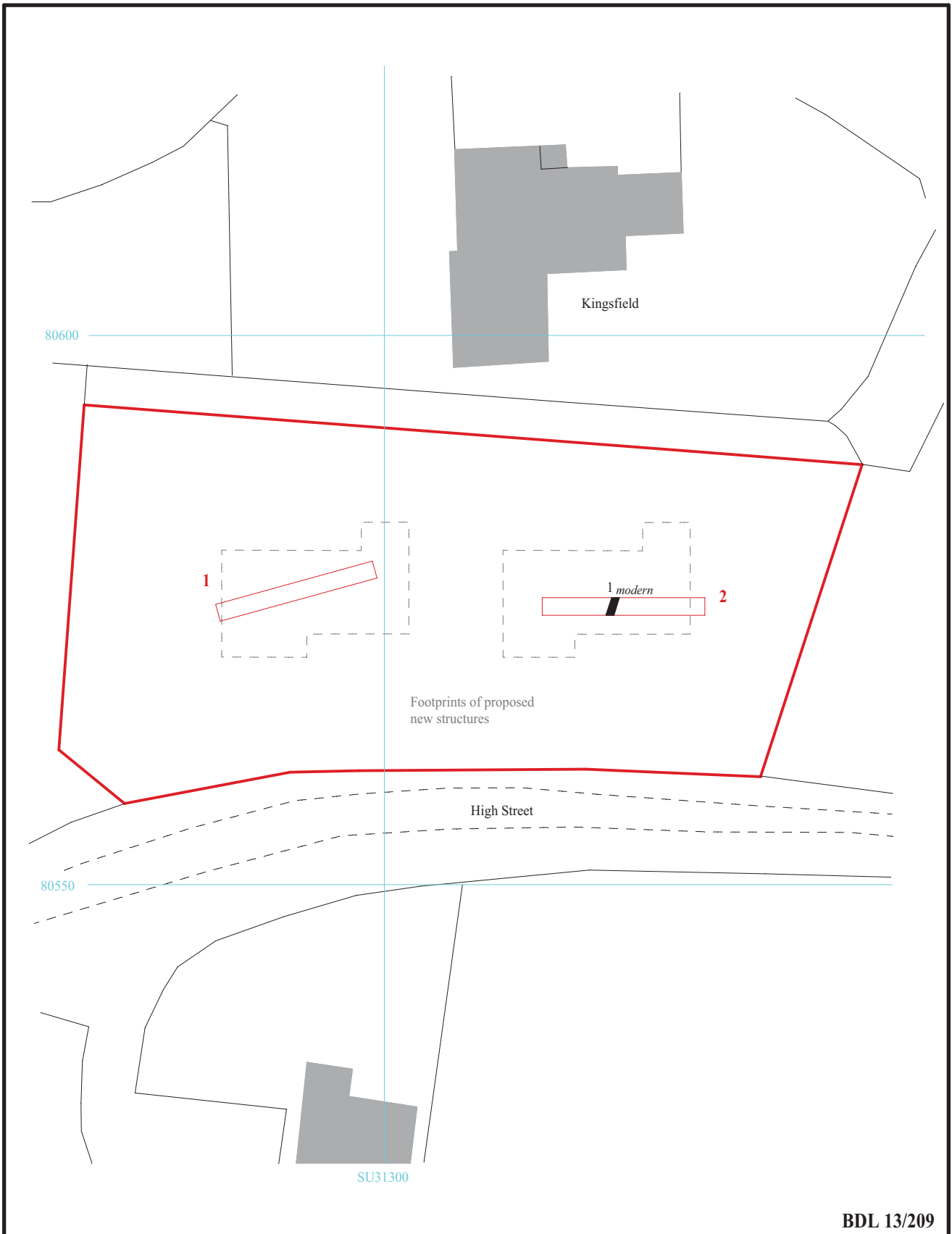


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Figure 2. Detailed location of site.

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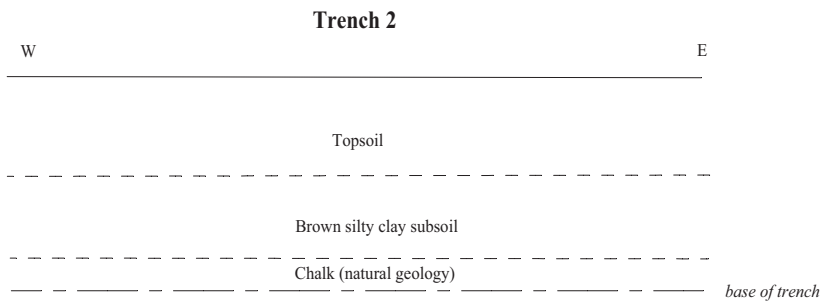
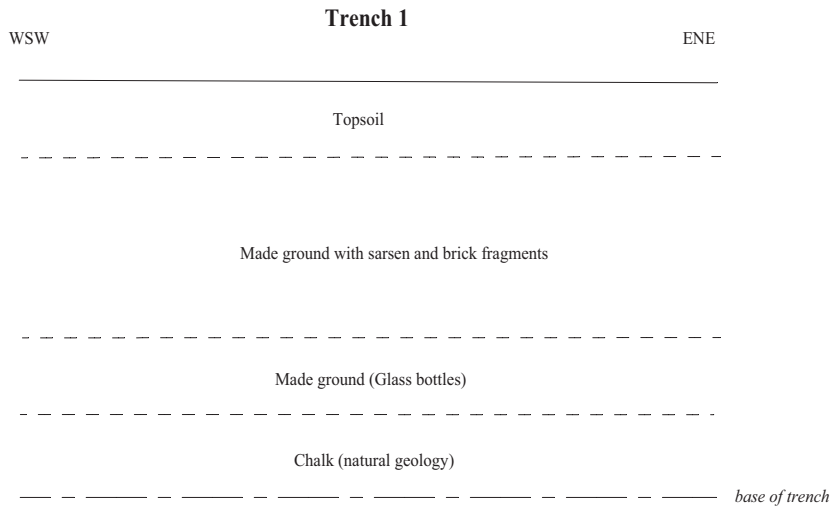
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Figure 3. Location of trenches.



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Figure 4. Representative sections.





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



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

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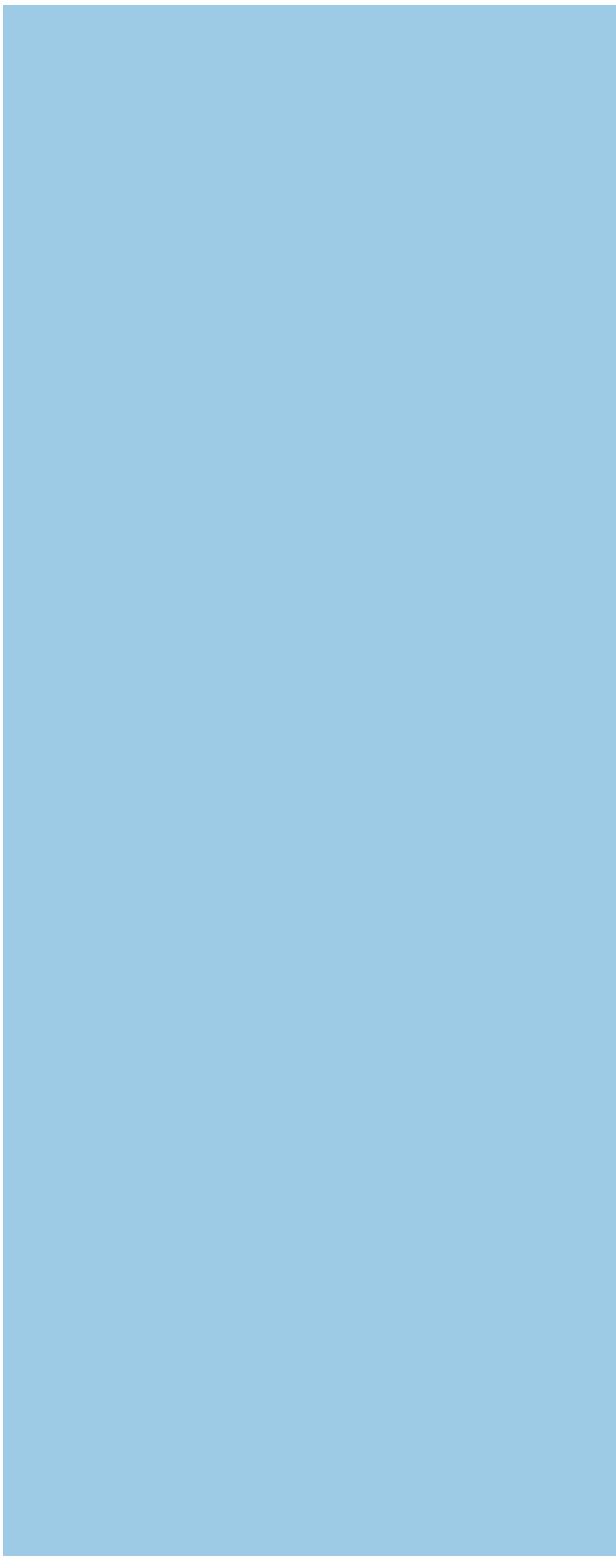
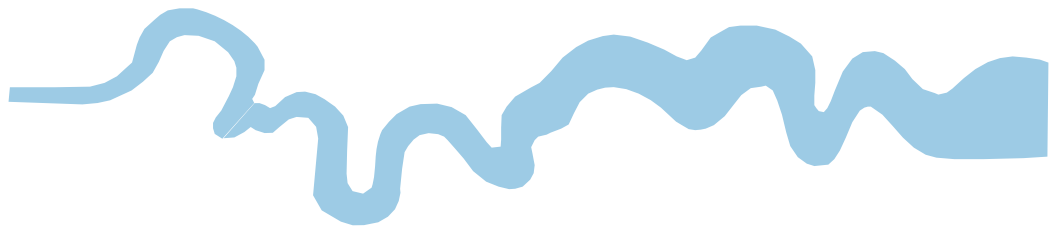
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Plates 1 - 2.**

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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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