

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Payton House, Gorse Road,
Cookham Rise, Berkshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Genni Elliott and Andy Mundin

Site Code: GRC13/231

(SU 8806 8488)

Payton House, Gorse Road, Cookham Rise, Berkshire

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Shanly Homes**

by Genni Elliott and Andrew Muddin
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code GRC 13/231

December 2013

Summary

Site name: Payton House, Gorse Road, Cookham Rise, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 8806 8488

Site activity: Archaeological Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 12th December 2013

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Genni Elliott

Site code: GRC 13/231

Area of site: c.0.34ha

Summary of results: Four trenches were excavated, around the grassed areas of the extant Payton House and at the southern end of the site. No archaeological deposits nor finds were encountered in the works. 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 pending availability of a suitable repository.

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

Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford ✓ 18.12.13
	Steve Preston ✓ 18.12.13

Payton House, Gorse Road, Cookham Rise, Berkshire An Archaeological Evaluation

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Report 13/231

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Payton House, off Gorse Road, Cookham Rise, Berkshire, SL6 9LL (SU 8806 8488) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Alan Durrans, of Shanly Homes (North London) Ltd, 'Sorbon', Aylesbury End, Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire, HP9 1LW.

Planning permission (app no 13/03208/DEM and 13/02621) has being gained from the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead to demolish the existing apartment building and construct sixteen new homes at the site, linked by access with associated parking. The consent includes a condition (24) relating to archaeology.

These works are in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012), and the Borough Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Roland Smith, Archaeological Officer of Berkshire Archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Genni Elliott and Dan Strachan on 12th December 2013 and the site code is GRC 13/231. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading pending availability of a suitable repository.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located in the west of Cookham Rise, which is c.1km from the centre of Cookham to the north east which is situated by the River Thames (Fig. 1). The site is surrounded by residential development, with a short *cul-de-sac* off Gorse Road ending at the site. Payton House is now disused, and was formerly a substantial residential apartment block. It is yet to be demolished. The site lies at between 43m and 46m above Ordnance Datum, with a gradual slope across the site, running north to south. The underlying geology is Lynch Hill Gravel above Chalk (BGS 2005).

Archaeological background

The potential of the site stems from its location within the archaeologically rich Thames Valley, with a wealth of prehistoric and later archaeological finds recorded in the area (Ford 1987, Gates 1975). The site also lies on a geological outcrop noteworthy for the presence of Palaeolithic remains. The Berkshire Historic Environment Record (HER) contains entries for a number of Palaeolithic hand-axes recovered during gravel extraction to the north-west. Though the site is some distance from the historic core of Cookham, archaeological features are well known in the outlying area, especially towards the river on Cock Marsh, in the form of several round barrows. Several small scale fieldwork projects have occurred in Cookham Rise itself, at The Strand and Whyteladyes Lane (Cass 2007; Ford 2009), which did not uncover archaeological remains.

The centre of Cookham is thought to have Saxon origins and to have had a minister church by the 8th century AD (Astill 1978). Cookham had borough status until it was eclipsed by Maidenhead after the building of the Thames crossing there. Fieldwork at Spencers on The Pound, has complicated the topography of what is thought to be known about the early settlement (McNicoll-Norbury and Mundin, in press). Besides neolithic pottery, that site uncovered Early Saxon remains, and suggests a bi-focal concentration of settlement on Cookham Moor, linked to the known and present centre by the river, possibly by a causeway over marshy ground.

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 research aims of the project were to:

- determine if archaeologically relevant levels had survived on the site;
- determine if archaeological deposits of any period were present;
- determine, if any archaeological significant deposits were present, a mitigation strategy as necessary to protect such deposits.

In total, four trenches were proposed to be excavated. These were positioned around the existing structures on the site. Three sampled the north, east and west by Payton House, and one trench would sample the south of the site, between two existing garages. All trenches were excavated with a JCB-type mechanical excavator, which needed to break the concrete at the location of Trench 4. All works were supervised by an archaeologist. All trenches were to be 1.6m wide and 8m long.

Results

All four trenches were excavated as intended with one trench substantially lengthened. The trenches ranged in length from 8m to 19.5m and 0.2-0.63m in depth. A list of the trench descriptions can be found in Appendix 1.

Trench 1 (Fig. 3; Pl. 1)

Trench 1 was aligned NW-SE and was 8.5m long and 0.63m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.2m of a dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil overlying 0.43m of a dark greyish brown subsoil. This overlay natural geology, which was a brownish yellow gravel, at the base of the trench at 0.63m depth. Two areas of modern disturbance cut the natural geology, one at the NW end of the trench, 0.82m wide, and the other was part of a square-cut pit, 3.9m from the NW end. No archaeological deposits nor artefacts were recovered from this trench.

Trench 2 (Fig.3; Pl. 2)

This trench was roughly west-east aligned at the north end of the site. It was 8m long and 0.2m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.2m of topsoil directly overlying natural gravel geology. No subsoil was present in this trench. One modern pit was partially exposed under the northern section of the trench, 3.7m from its west end. It was 1.3m long. No archaeological deposits nor artefacts were recovered from this trench.

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

Trench 3 was aligned roughly north-south parallel to the western side of Payton House. It was 18.5m long, and was 0.42m deep in the south and 0.58m deep in the north. The ground surface at the northern end of the trench was 46.42m above OD. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.23m of topsoil overlying a dark grey brown soil to a depth of 0.42m, thought to be disturbed topsoil. This thickened to 0.58m in the north. This overlay the natural gravel geology. One small modern pit was seen to cut the natural geology at 3.5m from the southern end, which was 1m in diameter. Services were also present running towards the existing building, perpendicular to the trench at both its north and south ends. No archaeological deposits nor artefacts were recovered from this trench.

Trench 4 (Fig 3 and 4; Pl. 4)

This trench was 8m long and 0.61m deep located at the front (south) of the site. The top of the concrete was recorded at 43.6m above OD. The stratigraphy consisted of concrete 0.18m thick, above 0.18m of gravel

hardcore. This in turn overlay 0.22m of modern made ground, containing modern debris and clinker. Below this was the natural gravel geology.. No archaeological deposits nor features were encountered.

Conclusion

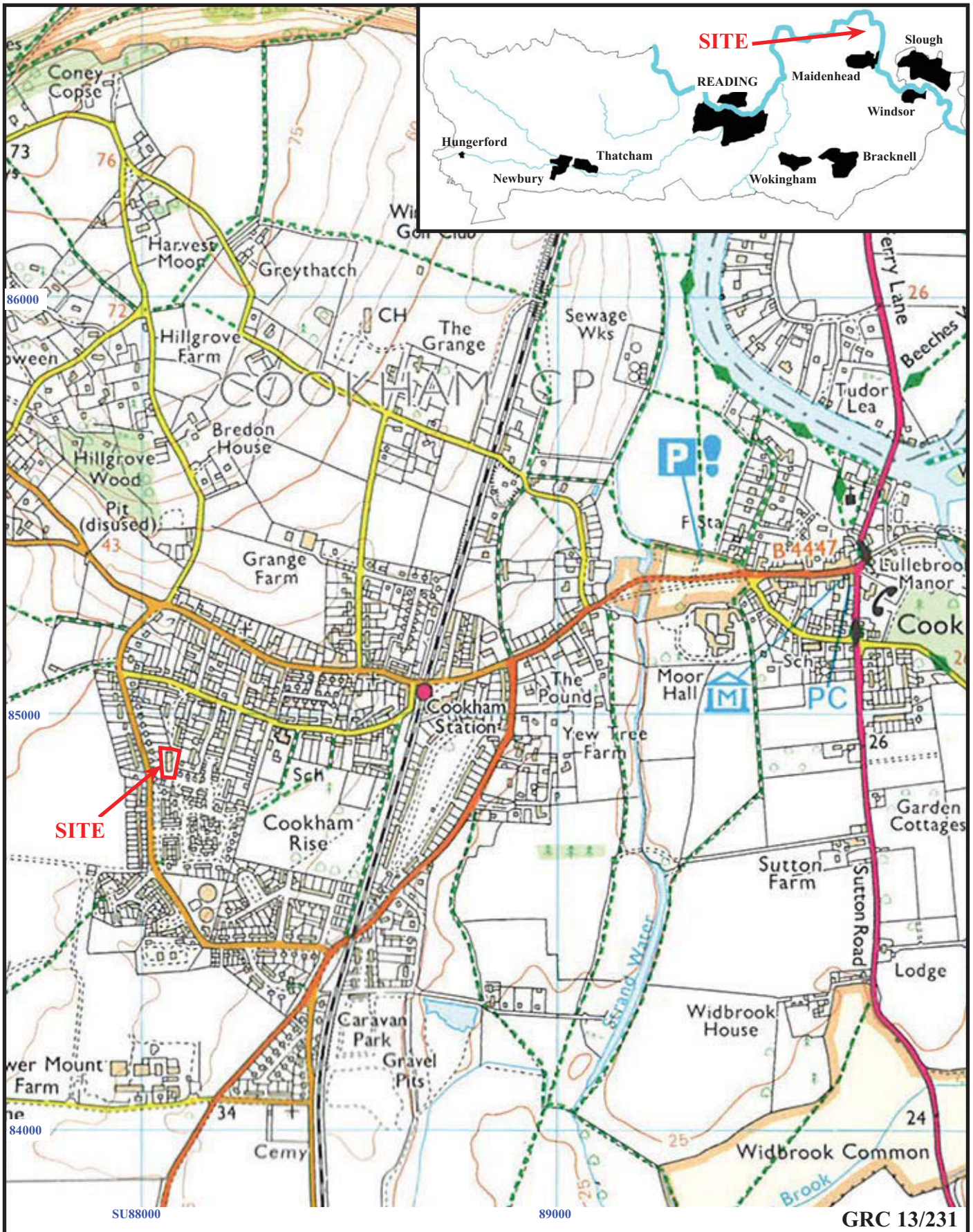
Four trenches were excavated, in the accessible areas surrounding Payton. Some modern disturbance of the natural geology was recorded but no archaeological deposits nor finds were encountered. It is considered that the site has no archaeological potential.

References

- BGS, 2005, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50 000, Sheet 255, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- Cass, S, 2007, 'Pumping Station, Whyteladyes Lane, Cookham Rise, Berkshire; an archaeological evaluation', Thames Valley Archaeological Services unpubl rep **07/156**, Reading
- Ford, S, 2009, 'Land off the Strand, Cookham Rise, Maidenhead, Berkshire; an archaeological evaluation', Thames Valley Archaeological Services unpubl rep **09/24**, Reading
- McNicoll-Norbury, J and Munding, A, in press, 'Evidence for the Saxon Topography of Cookham, and some late Neolithic Grooved ware pottery', *Berkshire Archaeol J* **81**, (for 2012–13), Reading
- NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London

APPENDIX 1: Trench details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	8.5	1.6	0.63	0-0.2m dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil, 0.2-0.63m dark greyish brown subsoil, 0.63m+ brownish yellow natural grave geology. Two modern pits. [PI. 1]
2	8.0	1.6	0.2	0-0.2m topsoil, 0.2m+ natural gravel geology. One modern pit. [PI. 2]
3	18.5	1.6	S=0.42 N=0.58	0-0.23m topsoil, 0.23-0.42m dark grey-brown soil (disturbed topsoil), 0.42m+ natural gravel geology. Services and one modern pit. [PI. 3]
4	8.0	1.6	0.61	0-0.18m concrete, 0.18-0.35m hardcore, 0.35-0.57m dark brown clay with clinker (modern made ground), 0.57m+ brown sandy clay (natural geology). [PI. 4]



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Figure 1. Location of site within Cookham Rise and Berkshire.

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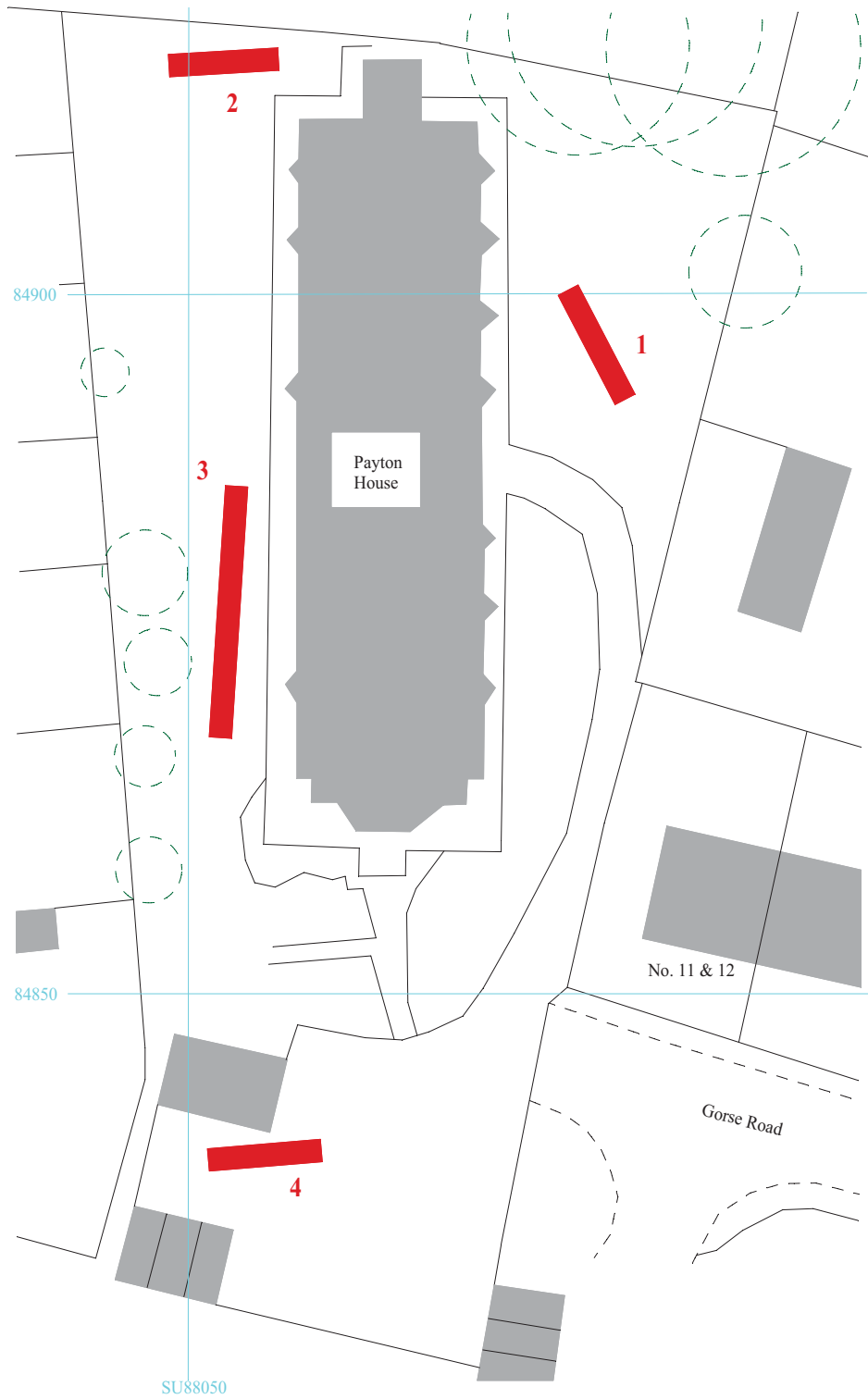
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Gorse Road.

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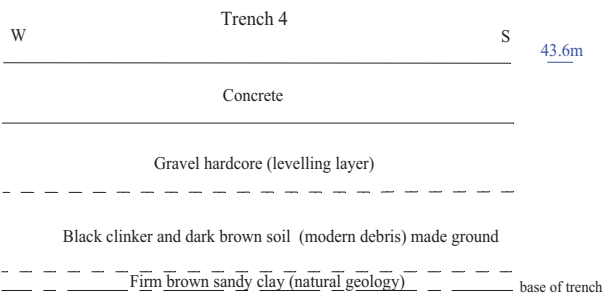
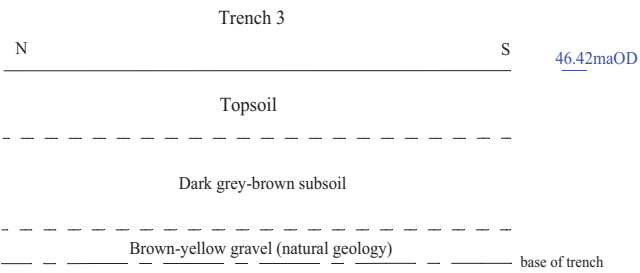
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Figure 3. Location of trenches.



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Figure 4. Representative sections.





Plate 1. Trench 1, looking north west, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.3m.



Plate 2. Trench 2, looking east, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.3m.

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Plates 1 - 2.**

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Plate 3. Trench 3, looking south, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.3m.



Plate 4. Trench 4, looking west, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.3m.

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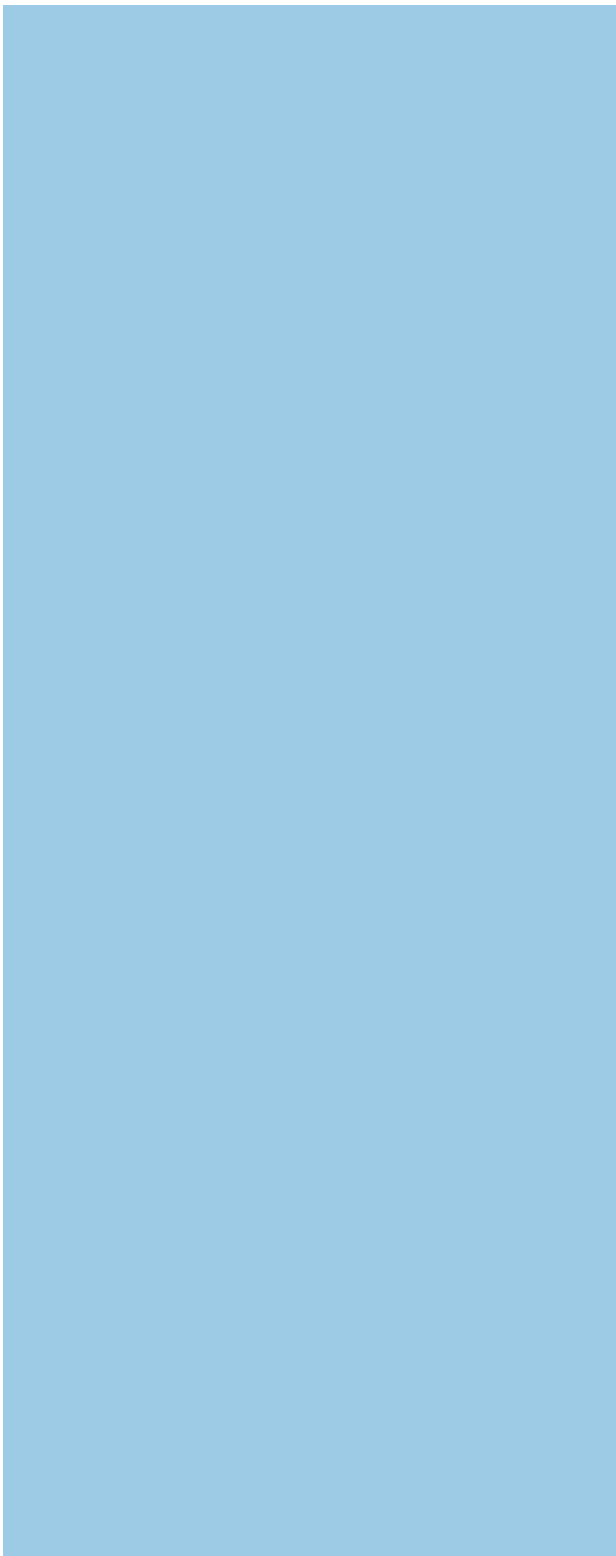
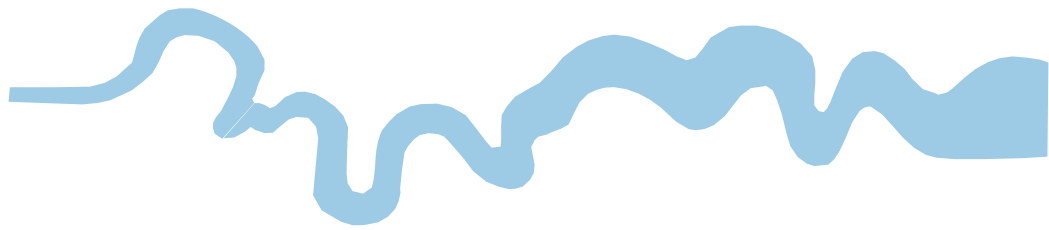
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Plates 3 - 4.**

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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





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