

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Area K, Manor Farm, Kempford,
Gloucestershire**

Draft Excavation Report

by James McNicoll-Norbury

Site Code: MFK14/214

(SU 1680 9751)

Area K, Manor Farm, Kempsford, Gloucestershire

**A Draft Excavation Report
for Aggregate Industries Limited**

by James McNicoll-Norbury
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code MFK 14/214

October 2014

Summary

Site name: Area K, Manor Farm, Kempsford, Gloucestershire

Grid reference: SU 1680 9751

Site activity: Archaeological excavation

Date and duration of project: 1st - 10th October 2014

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: James McNicoll-Norbury

Site code: MFK 14/214

Area of site: c. 0.8ha

Summary of results: An area previously used to store topsoil was stripped of overburden prior to gravel extraction. A small number of linear features were identified in the strip which contained post-medieval/modern material including pipes. Several of these features had been previously recorded in adjacent areas. Two modern stone-built wells or silos were also recorded.

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

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

Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 24.10.14 Steve Preston ✓ 21.10.14

Area K, Manor Farm, Kempsford, Gloucestershire An Archaeological Excavation

by James McNicoll-Norbury

Report 14/214

Introduction

This report documents the results of archaeological excavation carried out in advance of gravel extraction on land known as Area K at Manor Farm, Kempsford, Gloucestershire (SU 1690 9752) (Fig. 1). The site comprised a near-rectangular-shaped plot of land covering *c.* 0.8ha within a much larger overall quarry complex.

Model condition 55 from circular 11/95 has been attached to the planning permission for the quarry (CT.6788/D; CT.6788/A). This condition relates to archaeology and requires a programme of archaeological excavation and recording in advance of extraction as the site is considered to have high archaeological potential. The work was required under PPG16 (1990) and the County Council's policy on archaeology (although it is acknowledged that *National Planning Policy Framework* NPPF 2012 has now superseded PPG16). As a result of the inevitable damage to or destruction of archaeological deposits during the extraction of gravel, a formal programme of archaeological excavation was required for the site. The specification for the excavation was approved by Mr Charles Parry, Senior Archaeological Officer with Gloucestershire County Council, in order to satisfy the archaeological condition placed on the planning permission.

This report deals with only the latest in a series of investigations and the site code for this phase of the work is MFK 14/214. James McNicoll-Norbury supervised this phase of the fieldwork between 1st and 10th October 2014. The archive is currently held by Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd but it is anticipated that it will be deposited with Corinium Museum, Cirencester in due course.

The quarry is located between the villages of Kempsford and Whelford to the south-east of RAF Fairford (Fig. 1). Area K lies in a central area towards the west of the complex (Fig. 2), almost surrounded by previous extraction which has been the subject of previous archaeological monitoring, and is at an average height of *c.* 74m above Ordnance Datum. The Thames flows past some 2km to the south, with the Coln around 1.6km to the north-east. Geological maps (BGS 1974) indicate that the underlying geology is first terrace gravels, which were observed during fieldwork.

Archaeological background

Archaeological interest in the Manor Farm site arose from features identified on aerial photographs and subsequently evaluated (OAU 1991). The cropmarks on the quarry site included linear features on at least three alignments.

Evaluation (OAU 1991) carried out in the area following the assessment of aerial photographic evidence demonstrated the presence of archaeological deposits in the adjacent areas and concluded that these were likely to be field boundaries and enclosures of Roman date. Subsequent investigations to the south (Hindmarch 2003; Hammond 2003; Hammond and Taylor 2004; Hammond *et al.* 2005), north (Hammond and McNicoll-Norbury, 2004) and north east (Cass and Taylor 2010; Lewis; McNicoll-Norbury 2010; Milbank and Pine 2011, Platt 2011 and Platt 2013) revealed an extensive and well ordered pattern of landscape division, largely of Roman date, comprising field boundaries and trackways, with evidence of development of the pattern over time (Fig. 2), with a clear stratigraphic sequence, although it must be admitted that dating evidence is patchy.

At Stubbs Farm, only around 0.5km to the south (Fig. 2) the linear cropmarks of the field system with trackways described above, continue and incorporate a further rectangular enclosure and a sub-circular enclosure, which have been excavated (Cromarty *et al.* 2007). That site consists of a complex multi-ditched circular enclosure some 50m across, uncertainly dated, perhaps Iron Age but still in use until the early Roman period, and a Roman double-ditched quasi-rectangular enclosure of similar proportions to the south; an extension of this latter enclosure cut across the circular enclosure. Almost all the dating evidence here points to the 2nd century AD, the site almost certainly did not extend to the end of the Roman period. Further evaluation in the north-west of that area (i.e., south of the area reported below), showed the presence there of at least two buildings, one with masonry foundations, representing a modest Romanized farmstead. Field systems associated with this farm have also been explored, and showed a familiar pattern of a late Iron Age field layout being replaced in the early 2nd century by a more regular network of tracks and fields. These field systems continue to the south and east.

Evidence for Iron Age and Roman occupation has also been recorded in the wider area, at sites such as Lechlade (Boyle *et al.* 1998), Somerford Keynes, Whelford Bowmoor, Thornhill Farm and Claydon Pike, and results from a number of these sites have been brought together for publication (Miles *et al.* 2007). Extensive Iron Age and Roman occupation has also been excavated at Horcott to the west (Pine and Preston 2004).

Results

The excavation covered an area which had been formerly used to store topsoil from earlier phases of extraction. The complete area stripped is shown in Figure 3. Topsoil and overburden were removed by a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket to expose the uppermost surface of archaeological deposits.

Four ditches were found during the excavation. Two ditches broadly aligned N-S which relate to modern ditches found in Area 8 to the south were found to contain fragments of brick and tile and glass, and cut the gullies aligned NW-SE. A third ditch (13300) which was identified contained large amounts of roots and also contained fragments of brick, metal and glass, the large amount of roots observed could suggest it was related to a former hedgerow. This ditch turned and merged with the large ditch to the east.

A fourth ditch (13306) aligned NW-SE which also relates to a ditch (2021) found in Area 8 to the south and Area D truncated gully 13305 and also contained fragments of brick. In Area 8, ditch 2021 was regarded as an integral part of a Roman field system, but finds were very few and the dating relied mainly on extrapolation of a landscape pattern over large areas.

Ditch 13300 was truncated by cut (13301) which contained a stone built structure (13351) which was 1.2m in diameter and 1.4m deep, the stones were irregular in shape and size and no mortar was present, the feature was filled with three deposits all of which contained modern fragments of brick, metal and glass bottles and generally comprised loose dark soils. Being relatively shallow, it appears to have been a silo or water tank rather than a well (Pls 1 and 2). A second cut (13302) containing a similar structure (13353) was found to the north which 1.16m wide and was 0.80m deep and again was found to contain modern artefactual evidence contained within loose dark grey soils.

The excavation revealed evidence of two gullies, one of which was found to contain a land drain (13305), the gully measured 0.45m wide and was 0.27m deep (Pl. 3). The other was found to the south and on a similar alignment. Two slots were excavated in the gully (13303 (Pl. 4) and 13304) which measured 0.40m wide and up to 0.13m deep and contained grey brown silt (13359 and 13360) from which fragments of brick and plastic were found. In addition to these gullies a small number of other drains were observed in the area during the strip which relate to the areas of modern truncation in the area. These gullies were on roughly the same alignment as a series of gullies in Area 8 to the south thought to be part of the same (Roman) field system as ditch 2021 and also apparent in Area D to the north, where again they were dated based purely on resemblance to those to the south.

Two large truncations were recorded during the excavation which also contained glass bottles, brick and concrete, metal and fence-posts. These disturbances may relate to the former barns that existed in the area and both respect the nearby ditches.

Conclusions

The excavation has revealed a small number of linear features along with large areas of modern truncation which relate to the former barns that existed in the area, the linear features themselves also appear to have been modern from the stratigraphic sequence they share with a gully containing a drain and modern finds found during investigations. Interestingly many of these features share similar alignments with those found in Areas 8 and D of previous work and whilst these features in the past have been tentatively dated as Roman due to patchy dating this new evidence could suggest that these features are from more recent times.

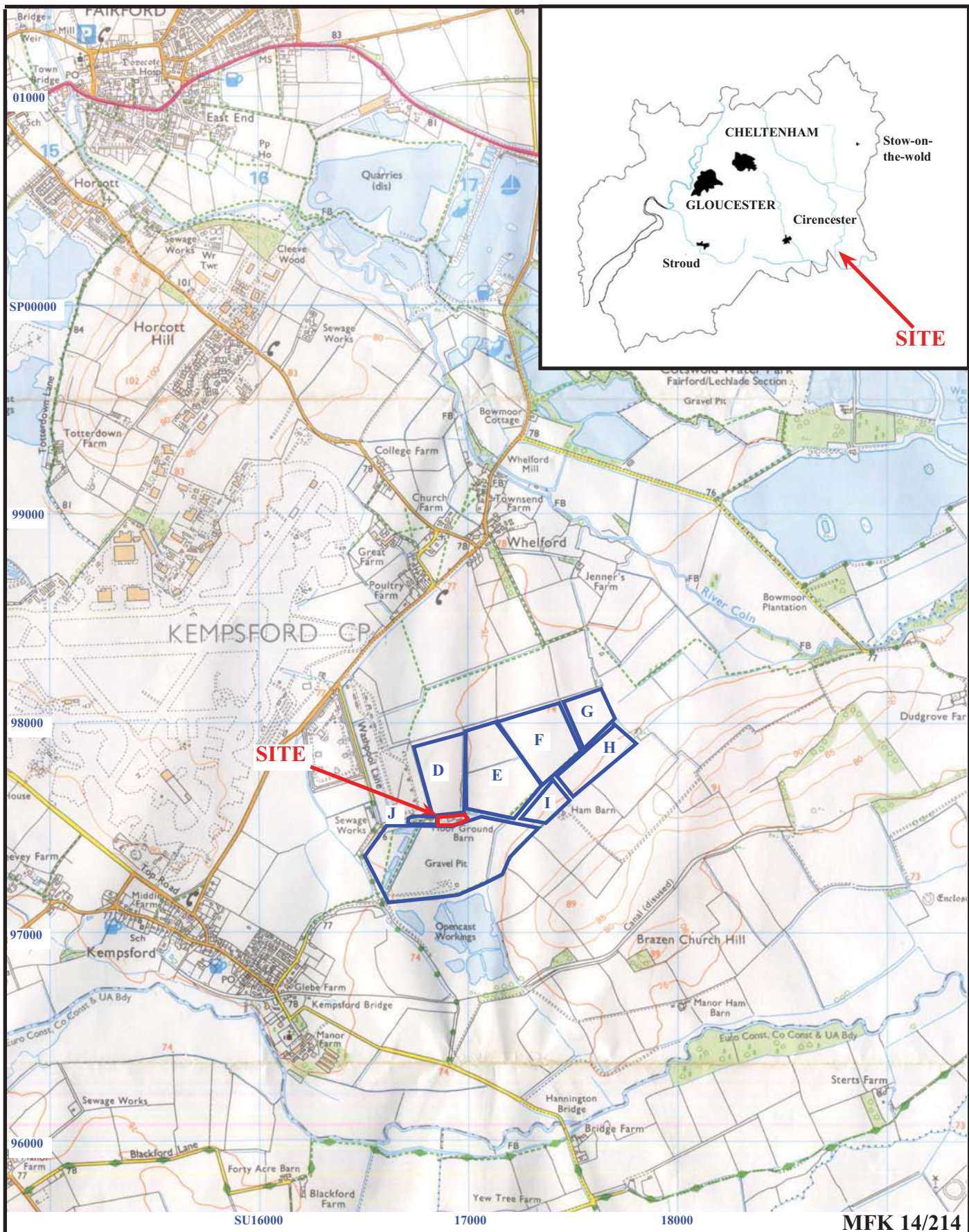
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APPENDIX 1: Feature details

<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
13300	13350	Ditch	Post-medieval - modern	Brick, metal
13301	13351, 13352, 13353, 13357	Silo	Modern	Brick, tile, glass
13302	13354, 13355, 13356, 13358	Silo	Modern	Brick, tile, glass
13303	13359	Gully	Modern	Plastic
13304	13360	Gully	Modern	Plastic
13305	13361	Drain	Modern	Pipe
13306	13362	Ditch	Modern	Brick

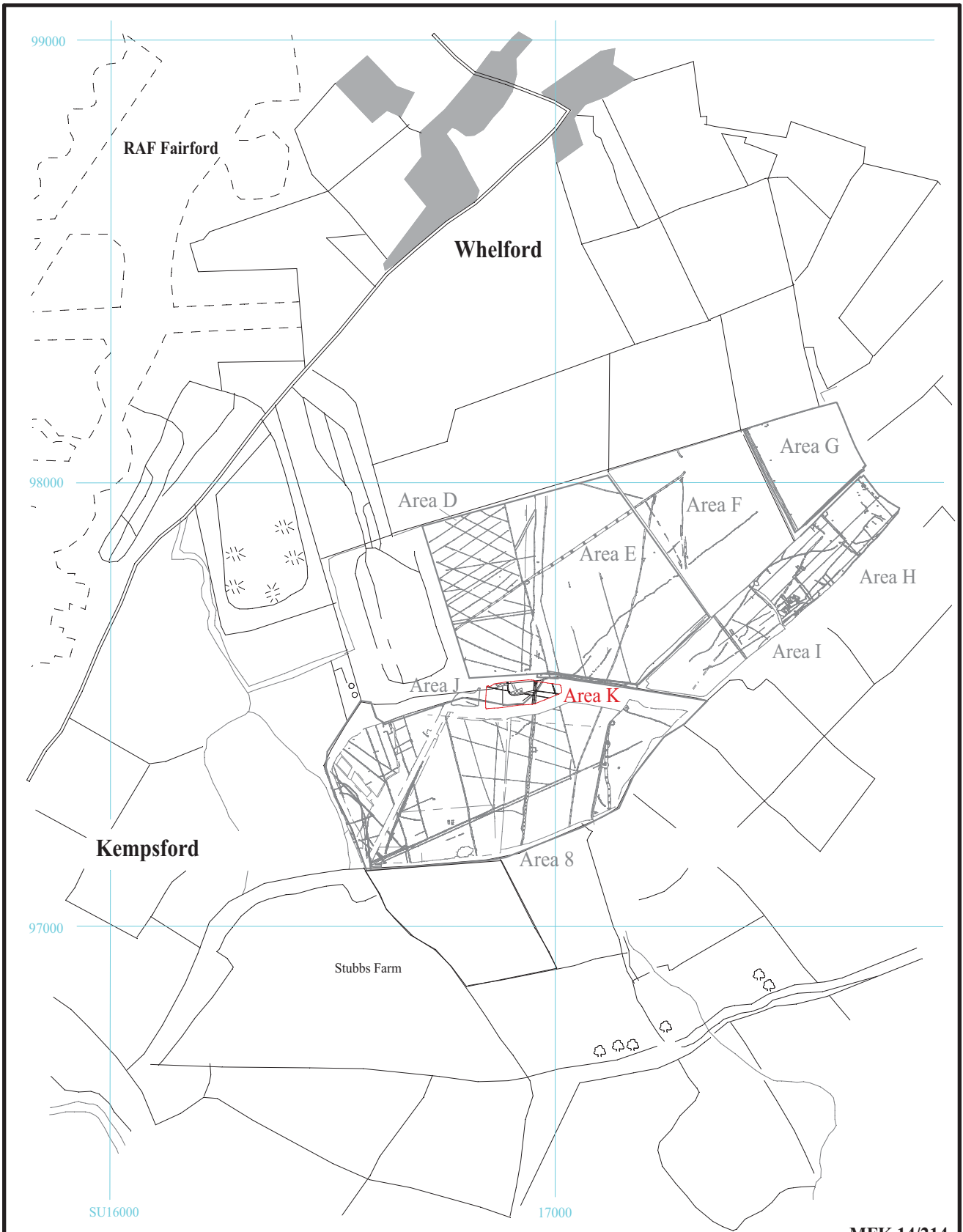


**Area K Extension, Manor Farm, Kempsford, Gloucestershire, 2014
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Figure 1. Location of site in relation to Kempsford and within Gloucestershire.

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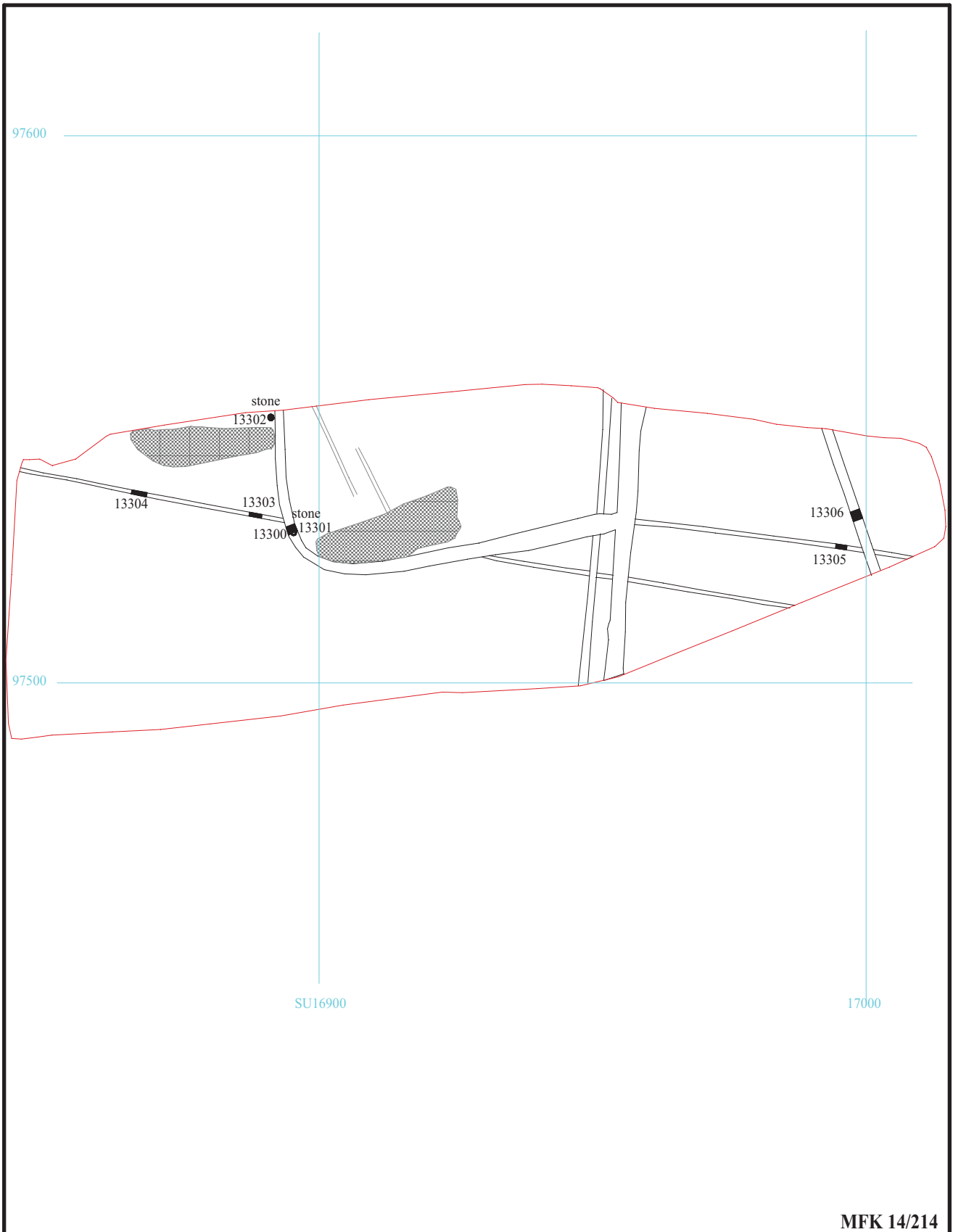


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Area J and Area I Excavation and previous excavation areas.



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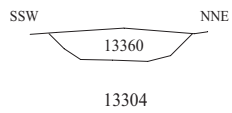
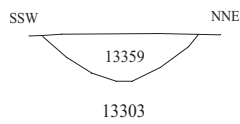
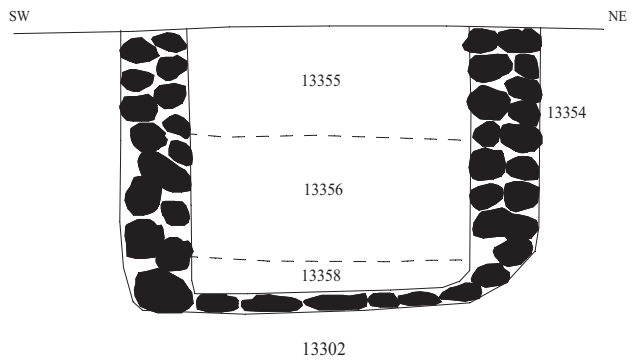
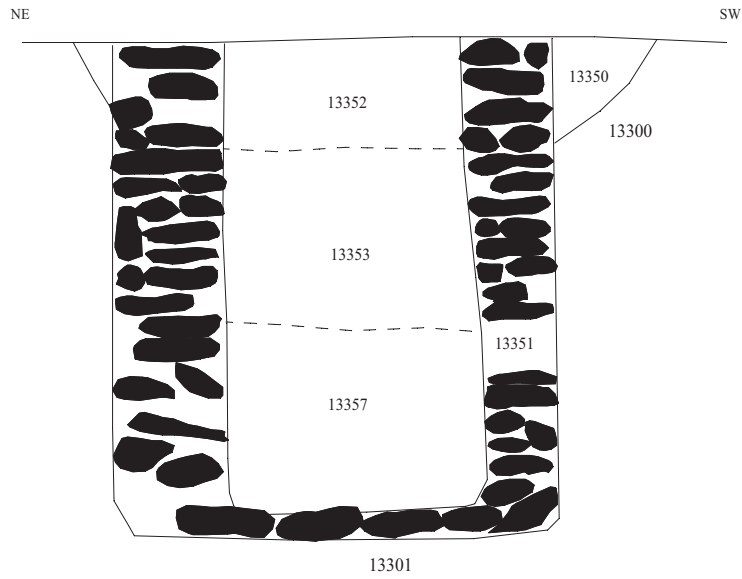
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Figure 3. Detail of Area K.



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Figure 4. Sections.





Plate 1. Feature 13301, looking south east, Scales: 0.5m.



Plate 2. Feature 13301, looking south east, Scales: 1.0m.

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**Area K, Manor Farm, Kemspford,
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Plates 1 - 2.**

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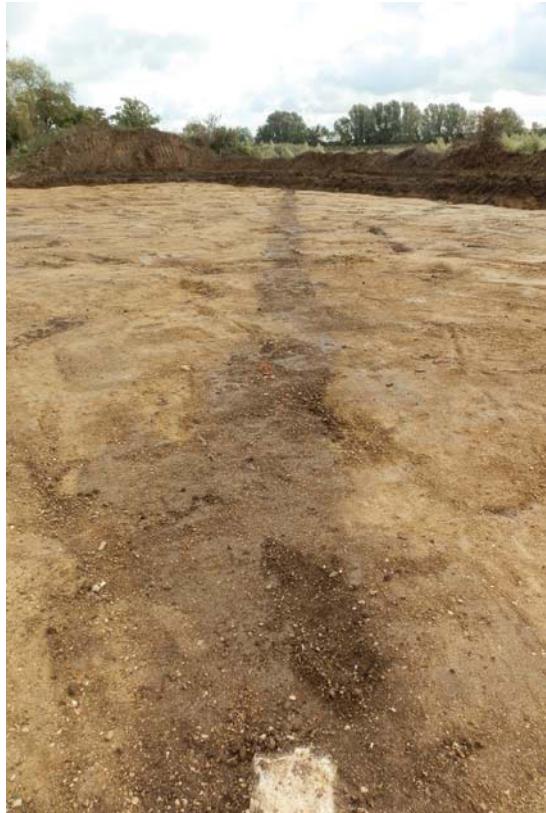


Plate 3. Modern drain looking east



Plate 4. Gully 13303 looking south east, Scales: 0.5m and 0.1m

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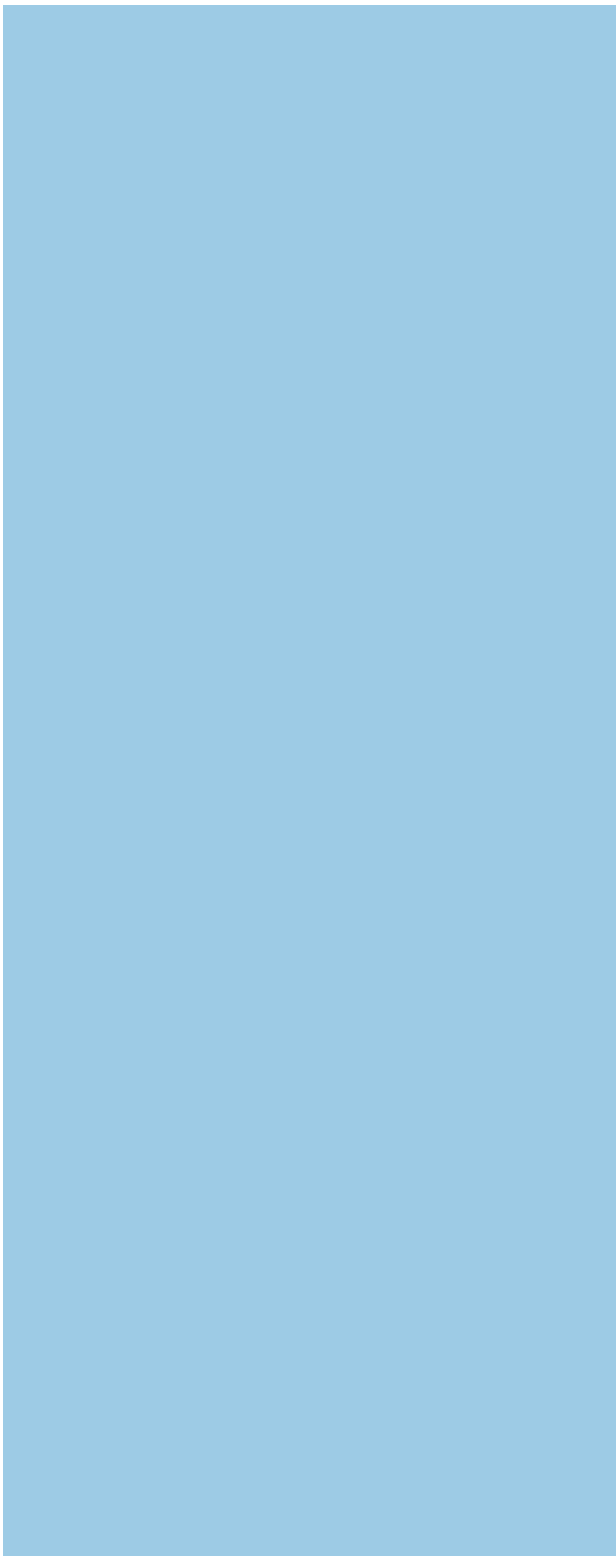
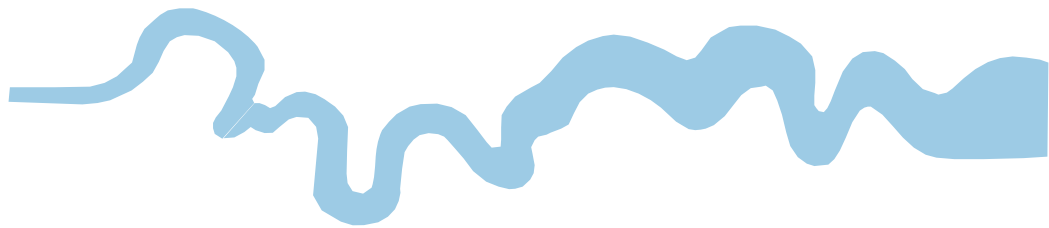
**Area K, Manor Farm, Kempford,
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Plates 3 - 4.**

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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





**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**