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S E R V I C E S

**Land at High Ridge Farm, Newnham Road,  
Hook, Hampshire**

**Archaeological Evaluation**

**by Daniel Bray and Susan Porter**

**Site Code: HRH14/114**

**(SU 7160 5425)**

# **Land at High Ridge Farm, Newnham Road, Hook, Hampshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation  
for Taylor Wimpey (West London)**

by Daniel Bray and Susan Porter  
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code HRH 14/114

**December 2014**



## Summary

**Site name:** Land at High Ridge Farm, Newnham Road, Hook, Hampshire

**Grid reference:** SU 7160 5425

**Site activity:** Archaeological Evaluation

**Date and duration of project:** 24th -28th November 2014

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** Daniel Bray

**Site code:** HRH 14/114

**Area of site:** 10.4ha (2.2ha to be developed and 8.2ha retained as open space)

**Summary of results:** A very modest quantity of potential archaeological deposits was revealed, with only a single datable artefact, a sherd of early medieval pottery. All the potential features were located to the west of a probable boundary ditch. The site is considered to have low archaeological potential.

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

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[www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp](http://www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp).*

Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 04.12.14 Steve Preston ✓ 03.12.14
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# Land at High Ridge Farm, Newnham Road, Hook, Hampshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Daniel Bray and Susan Porter

Report 14/114

## Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out on land at High Ridge Farm, Newnham Road, Hook, Hampshire (SU 7160 5425) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Jo Derbyshire, of Taylor Wimpey West London, Stratfield House, Station Road, Hook, Hampshire, RG27 9PQ.

Outline planning permission (APP13/02567) has been gained from Hart District Council to develop the southern part of the site for housing, with the northern area designated as (undeveloped) greenspace. The permission is subject to a condition (9) relating to archaeology which requires the implementation of a programme of archaeological work prior to the commencement of any ground works.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012), and the District Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Dr Hannah Fluck, Senior Archaeologist for Hampshire County Council, advisers to the District on matters relating to archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Daniel Bray with the assistance of Anna Ginger and Dan Strachan between 24th and 25th November 2014. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Hampshire Museum Service in due course.

## Location, topography and geology

The site forms an irregular parcel of land located on the western margins of Hook, Hampshire (Fig. 1), High Ridge Farm lies immediately to the south of the site and a residential area forms the eastern boundary of the site (Fig. 2). Hill Copse and College Copse bound the site to the north. The site currently consists of pasture and the underlying geology is recorded as London Clay (BGS 1981). This was observed in the trenches as a clayey silt, usually with gravel patches. The overall site falls from around 90m above ordnance Datum (aOD) in the south to below 80m aOD in the north. Only the southern part of the site was the subject of the current investigation (Fig. 2).

## **Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential of the site has been considered in a desk-based assessment (Hawkins 2013). In summary Hook itself is of late Saxon date and is recorded in Domesday Book (Williams and Martin 2002). There are few finds of any period located within the environs of the site itself, although a number of listed buildings of medieval and post-medieval date are located in Hook. A Bronze Age axe is recorded for the parish and a Roman site is thought to lie below modern day Hook, however this lack of recorded finds may relate to the lack of any systematic survey. Survey work to the north-west on a similar range of geological outcrops has revealed the presence of prehistoric, Roman and medieval settlement albeit at a lower density than on chalk or gravel geology (Ford *et al.* 2011). Hampshire County Council's Historic Landscape Characterization classes the area as 'assarts' that is agricultural land carved out of forest in medieval (or later) times.

## **Objectives and methodology**

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological and palaeoenvironmental deposits within the area of development. This work was to be undertaken in a manner which would not compromise the integrity of archaeological features or deposits which warrant preservation *in situ*.

The specific research aims of the project were:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on the site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period have survived;
- to determine if archaeological deposits from the prehistoric period were present;
- to determine if any deposits from the Roman period were present; and
- to inform a strategy for mitigation if required.

It was proposed to dig 20 trenches, each 22m in length and 2.0m wide positioned in a random stratified pattern, to be subdivided or repositioned should trees or services be present causing obstructions. A contingency for the equivalent of 44m of trenching was included within the proposal should it be required to clarify initial findings.

Topsoil and overburden were removed by a 360° type tracked machine equipped with toothless ditching bucket to expose the archaeological horizon. This was undertaken under constant archaeological supervision. All spoil heaps were searched for finds. Where archaeological features were present or probably present they were

cleaned and excavated by hand, and sufficient of the deposits excavated or sampled by hand to satisfy the aims of the project.

## **Results**

The 20 trenches were excavated as planned (Fig. 3). They ranged in length from 20.70-26.90m and in depth from 0.30-0.55m. All were 2.0m wide. The stratigraphy in all trenches consisted of 0.1m to 0.2m of mid grey brown sandy silt topsoil above 0.15–0.30m mid brown grey sandy silt subsoil overlying the natural geology of light orange-grey to mid grey-orange silty clay, darkening to orange-brown in Trenches 11 and 12, and which contained frequent gravel patches in all but Trenches 9, 10, 14 and 17, and Trench 10. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1. A summary of excavated features forms Appendix 2.

### Trench 1 (Fig. 3)

Trench 1 was aligned north–south and was 24.40m long and 0.37m deep. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no finds were recovered.

### Trench 2 (Fig. 3)

Trench 2 was aligned NE–SW and was 24.20m long and 0.35m deep. Two modern field drains were observed at 5-6.60m and 7.60-10.30m. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no finds were recovered.

### Trench 3 (Fig. 3)

Trench 3 was aligned east–west and was 22.40m long and 0.35m deep. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no finds were recovered.

### Trench 4 (Fig. 3)

Trench 4 was aligned NNE–SSW and was 22.10m long and 0.36m deep. A field modern drain was recorded at 11-13m, but no deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no finds were recovered.

### Trench 5 (Fig. 3)

Trench 5 was aligned north–south and was 22.10m long and 0.45mm deep. Unstratified pottery was recovered from the surface and a possible feature was investigated at 12.5-15.5m but was found to be of natural origin.



Trench 6 (Fig. 3, Pl. 1)

Trench 6 was aligned NW–SE and was 22.10m long and 0.35m deep. A field drain was observed at 11-13m, however no deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no finds were recovered.

Trench 7 (Fig. 3)

Trench 7 was aligned NNE–SSW and was 21.20m long and 0.38m deep. A possible terminus was excavated at 14m but was not deemed to be archaeological in origin. No finds of archaeological interest were recovered.

Trench 8 (Figs 3, 4, 5 and 6)

Trench 8 was aligned north–south and was 23.70m long and 0.36m deep. A pit or possible ditch terminus (9) was recorded at 5.50m extending to west beyond the trench. It was 1.22m wide with gently sloping sides to a flat base at a depth of 0.14m, a single fill (61) comprising soft mid grey silty clay with occasional gravel was recorded, but no finds were recovered.

Trench 9 (Fig. 3)

Trench 9 was aligned NE–SW and was 26.00m long and 0.35m deep. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no finds were recovered.

Trench 10 (Fig. 3)

Trench 10 was aligned north–south and was 24.50m long and 0.45m deep. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no finds were recovered.

Trench 11 (Fig. 3)

Trench 11 was aligned east–west and was 26.00m long and 0.40m deep. Ditch 1 was observed at 17-18m: it was 0.52m wide with steep sides and a curved base 0.22m deep with a single fill (53) comprising soft mid brown grey clayey silt from which no finds were recovered.

Trench 12 (Fig. 3, 4,5 and 6, Pl. 3)

Trench 12 was aligned NE–SW and was 26.90m long and 0.30m deep. At 8-9m a ditch (2) was observed. It was 0.71m wide with gradual sides and a curved base at a depth of 0.19m containing a single fill (54) comprising soft mid brown grey clayey silt. No finds were recovered.

#### Trench 13 (Figs 3, 4, 5 and 6)

Trench 13 was aligned NW–SE and was 26.50m long and 0.35m deep. Ditch 3 was observed at 7-9m: it was 0.68m wide with steep sides and a curved base at a depth of 0.21m. It had a single fill (55) comprising soft mid grey brown clayey silt, but again no finds were recovered.

#### Trench 14 (Fig. 3)

Trench 14 was aligned east–west and was 25.80m long and 0.40m deep. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no finds were recovered.

#### Trench 15 (Fig. 3, 4, 5 and 6)

Trench 15 was aligned NW–SE and was 26.80m long and 0.35m deep. A ditch (4) was recorded between 13-22m. It was 0.78m wide with gradual sides to a flat base 0.20m deep and contained a single fill (56) comprising soft mid grey brown clayey silt which contained a fragment of undated iron hook.

#### Trench 16 (Figs 3, 4, 5 and 6)

Trench 16 was aligned north–south and was 23.50m long and 0.33m deep. A gully (5) was observed at 22m. It was 0.29m wide with steep sides and a curved base 0.13m deep with a single fill (57) comprising soft light brown grey clayey silt with occasional gravel inclusions, from which no finds were recovered.

#### Trench 17 (Figs 3, 4, 5 and 6, Pls 2 and 4)

Trench 17 was aligned roughly north–south and was 23.40m long and 0.45m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.15m of mid grey brown sandy silt topsoil and 0.25m mid brown grey sandy silt subsoil overlying mid grey orange clayey silt natural geology. Two intercutting possible pits or treeboles (7 and 8) were recorded at 18m with gully (6) at 20-22m. The gully was 0.39m wide with gently sloping side to a flat base at 0.09m with a single fill (58) comprising soft light brown grey clayey silt from which no finds were recovered. Pits/ treeboles 7 and 8 were intercutting although the relationship between them could not be discerned. Pit 7 was sub-circular in plan, 0.40-50m in diameter with shallow sides to a flat base, 0.10m deep containing a single soft light brown grey clayey silt fill deposit (59). Pit 8 was also sub-circular in plan, 0.50-60m in diameter with shallow sides to a base 0.12m deep also containing a single deposit of soft light brown grey clayey silt (60) with occasional gravel, from which a sherd of medieval pottery was recovered.

#### Trench 18 (Fig. 3)

Trench 18 was aligned NE–SW and was 21.60m long and 0.50m deep. Two modern field drains were observed within the trench but no deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no finds were recovered.

#### Trench 19 (Fig.3)

Trench 19 was aligned ENE–WSW and was 20.70m long and 0.55m deep. A possible feature at the west end of the trench was found to be of natural origin. No finds were recovered.

#### Trench 20 (Fig. 3)

Trench 20 was aligned east–west and was 23.50m long and 0.45m deep. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no finds were recovered.

### **Finds**

#### *Pottery* by Paul Blinkhorn

A single sherd of pottery weighing 8g occurred in Pit 8 (fill 60). It is a fragment of an unglazed jar in Newbury ‘A’ ware, and dateable to the late 11th -12th century AD (Mephram 1997, 46-51). It is a common find at sites in the region.

Two fired clay fragments weighing 7g occurred in the subsoil of Trench 5. They are heavily degraded, with the fabric containing fragments of rounded grog up to 2mm. They may be Late Iron Age or Roman pottery, or perhaps burnt daub, but their condition makes exact identification impossible.

#### *Metalwork* by Susan Porter

A single narrow piece of ferrous metal was recovered from feature 4. It weighed 11.5g and was 4mm wide and 80mm in length. The piece curves at 40mm to form a hook, although its function beyond this is unclear.

### **Conclusion**

A total of nine features were excavated in seven of the 20 trenches. Four of these were possibly part of the same ditch forming a boundary through trenches 11, 12, 13 and 15. (Fig 6). With the exception of Trench 8 none of the trenches to the east of this line produced any possible archaeological features and it is possible that the ditch appearing in these trenches forms a boundary with activity taking place to the west of these trenches: it is

therefore possible that the eastern area may formerly have been forested, as suggested by the historic landscape character map. There is no corresponding boundary on historic maps (Hawkins 2013) so that a medieval date for forest clearance is possible. The only dating evidence recovered from the site was a single small sherd of (early) medieval pottery from pit 8, which in itself was a dubious feature, possibly a treebole, and as such it must be considered that this pottery may be redeposited and need not reflect medieval activity on the site, but even if redeposited it may lend tentative support to medieval assarting in the area. If so, the land is likely to have remained agricultural rather than settled, as also suggested by the paucity of finds. The results of the evaluation, although mainly undated, suggest a modest potential for archaeological deposits in the western area of the site, and negligible potential in the east and north.

## References

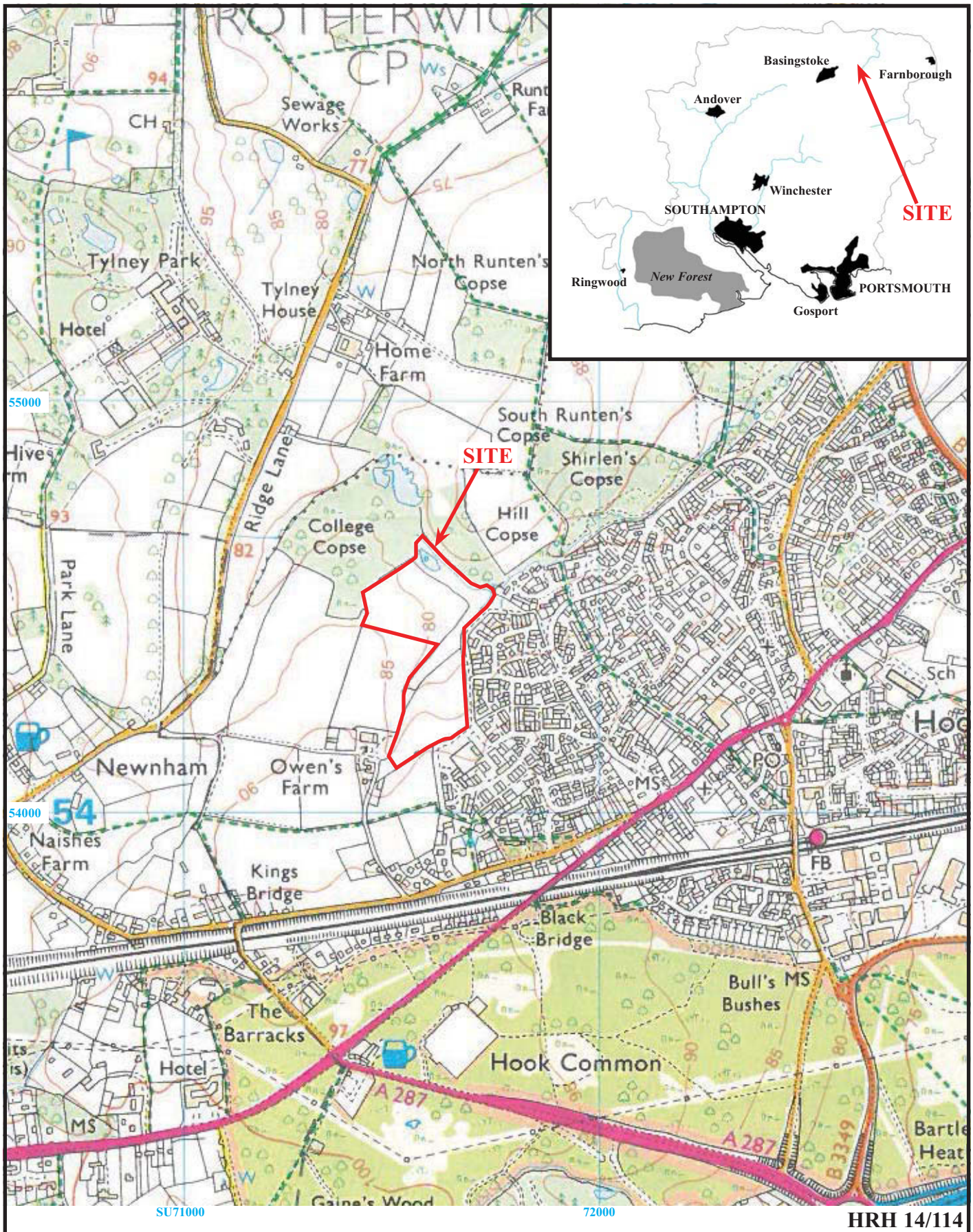
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**APPENDIX 1: Trench details**  
0m at south or west end

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	24.40	2.00	0.37	0–0.20m topsoil, 0.20-0.35m mid grey brown sandy silt subsoil, 0.35m+ light orange grey clayey silt with frequent gravel patches natural geology.
2	24.20	2.00	0.35	0–0.15m topsoil, 0.15-0.33m mid grey brown sandy silt subsoil, 0.33m+ light orange grey clayey silt with frequent gravel patches natural geology.
3	22.40	2.00	0.35	0–0.15m topsoil, 0.15-0.30m mid grey brown sandy silt subsoil, 0.30m+ light orange grey clayey silt with frequent gravel patches natural geology.
4	22.10	2.00	0.36	0–0.15m topsoil, 0.15-0.30m mid grey brown sandy silt subsoil, 0.30m+ light orange grey clayey silt with frequent gravel patches natural geology.
5	22.10	2.00	0.45	0–0.15m topsoil, 0.15-0.35m mid brown grey sandy silt subsoil, 0.35m+ mid grey orange clayey silt with frequent gravel patches natural geology.
6	22.10	2.00	0.35	0–0.15m topsoil, 0.15-0.35m mid brown grey sandy silt subsoil, 0.35m+ mid orange grey clayey silt with frequent gravel patches natural geology. <b>[Pl. 1]</b>
7	21.20	2.00	0.38	0–0.15m topsoil, 0.15-0.30m mid brown grey sandy silt subsoil, 0.30m+ mid grey orange clayey silt with frequent gravel patches natural geology.
8	23.70	2.00	0.36	0–0.15m topsoil, 0.15-0.35m mid brown grey sandy silt subsoil, 0.35m+ mid grey orange silty clay with frequent gravel patches natural geology. Pit or terminus 9
9	26.00	2.00	0.35	0–0.10m topsoil, 0.10-0.30m mid brown grey sandy silt subsoil, 0.30m+ light orange grey clayey silt.
10	24.50	2.00	0.45	0–0.15m topsoil, 0.15-0.40m mid brown grey sandy silt subsoil, 0.40m+ mid orange grey clayey silt natural geology.
11	26.00	2.00	0.40	0–0.10m topsoil, 0.10-0.30m mid brown grey sandy silt subsoil, 0.30m+ mid orange grey clayey silt with frequent gravel patches natural geology. Ditch 1.
12	26.90	2.00	0.30	0–0.15m topsoil, 0.15-0.28m mid brown grey sandy silt subsoil, 0.28m+ mid orange grey clayey silt with frequent gravel patches natural geology. Ditch 2. <b>[Pl. 3]</b>
13	26.50	2.00	0.35	0–0.10m topsoil, 0.10-0.30m mid grey brown sandy silt subsoil, 0.30m+ mid grey orange clayey silt with frequent gravel patches natural geology. Ditch 3.
14	25.80	2.00	0.40	0–0.10m topsoil, 0.10-0.30m mid grey brown sandy silt subsoil, 0.30m+ light orange grey silty clay natural geology.
15	26.80	2.00	0.35	0–0.15m topsoil, 0.15-0.35m mid grey brown sandy silt subsoil, 0.30m+ mid grey orange clayey silt with frequent gravel patches natural geology. Ditch 4.
16	23.50	2.00	0.33	0–0.15m topsoil, 0.15-0.30m mid grey brown sandy silt subsoil, 0.30m+ mid grey orange clayey silt with frequent gravel patches natural geology. Gully 5.
17	23.40	2.00	0.45	0–0.15m topsoil, 0.15-0.40m mid brown grey sandy silt subsoil, 0.40m+ mid grey orange clayey silt natural geology. Gully 6, pits 7 and 8. <b>[Pl. 2, 4]</b>
18	21.60	2.00	0.50	0–0.20m topsoil, 0.20-0.45m mid brown grey sandy silt subsoil, 0.45m+ mid orange grey clayey silt with frequent gravel patches natural geology.
19	20.70	2.00	0.55	0–0.20m topsoil, 0.20-0.50m mid brown grey sandy silt subsoil, 0.50m+ mid orange grey clayey silt with frequent gravel patches natural geology.
20	23.50	2.00	0.45	0–0.20m topsoil, 0.20-0.40m mid brown grey sandy silt subsoil, 0.40m+ light orange grey clayey silt with frequent gravel patches natural geology.

## APPENDIX 2: Feature details

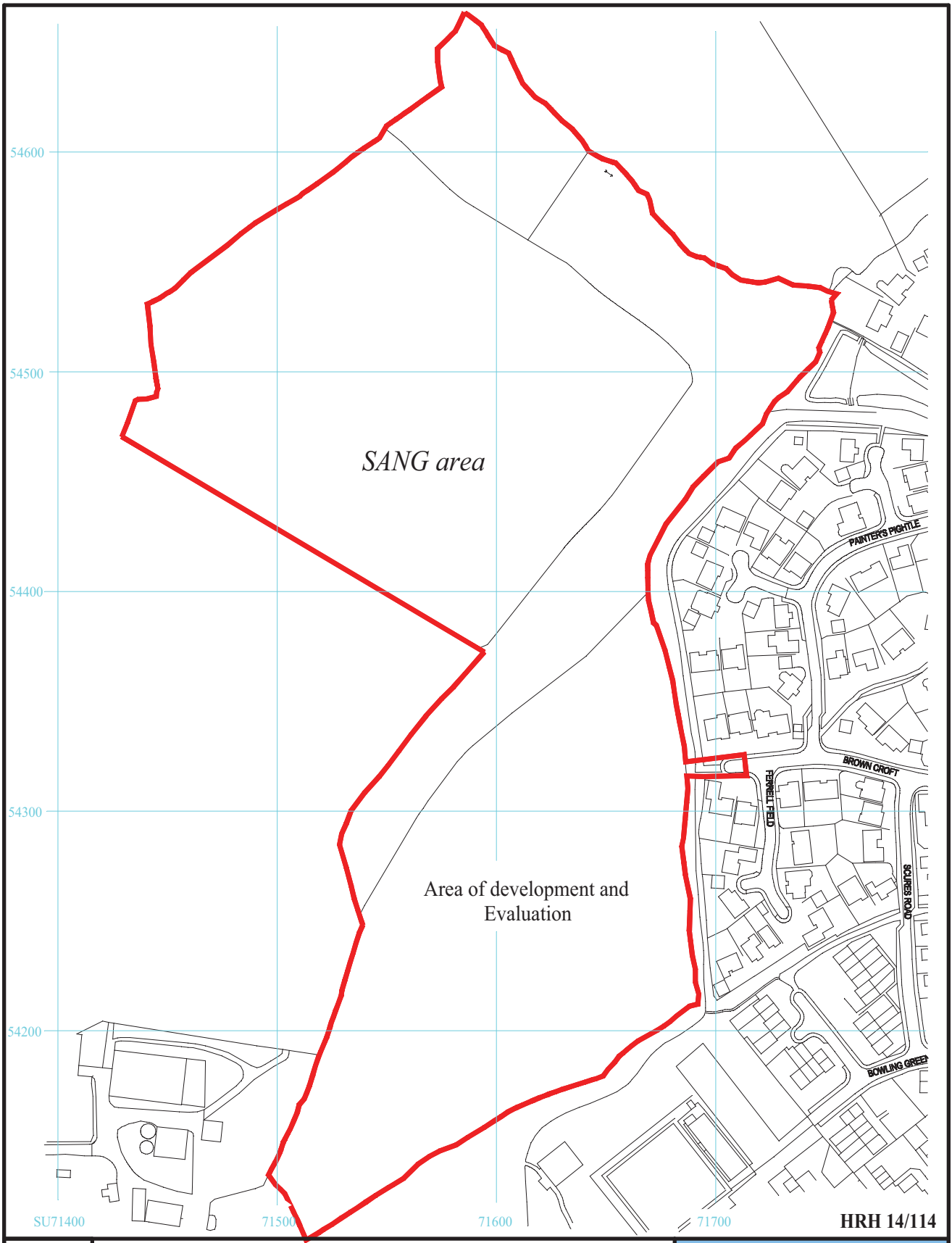
<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
11	1	53	Ditch	Undated	None
12	2	54	Ditch	Undated	None
13	3	55	Ditch	Undated	None
15	4	56	Ditch	Undated	None
16	5	57	Gully	Undated	None
17	6	58	Gully	Undated	None
17	7	59	Pit	Undated	None
17	8	60	Pit	??Medieval	Pottery
8	9	61	Pit/ Terminus	Undated	None



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Figure 1. Location of site in relation to Hook and within Hampshire.

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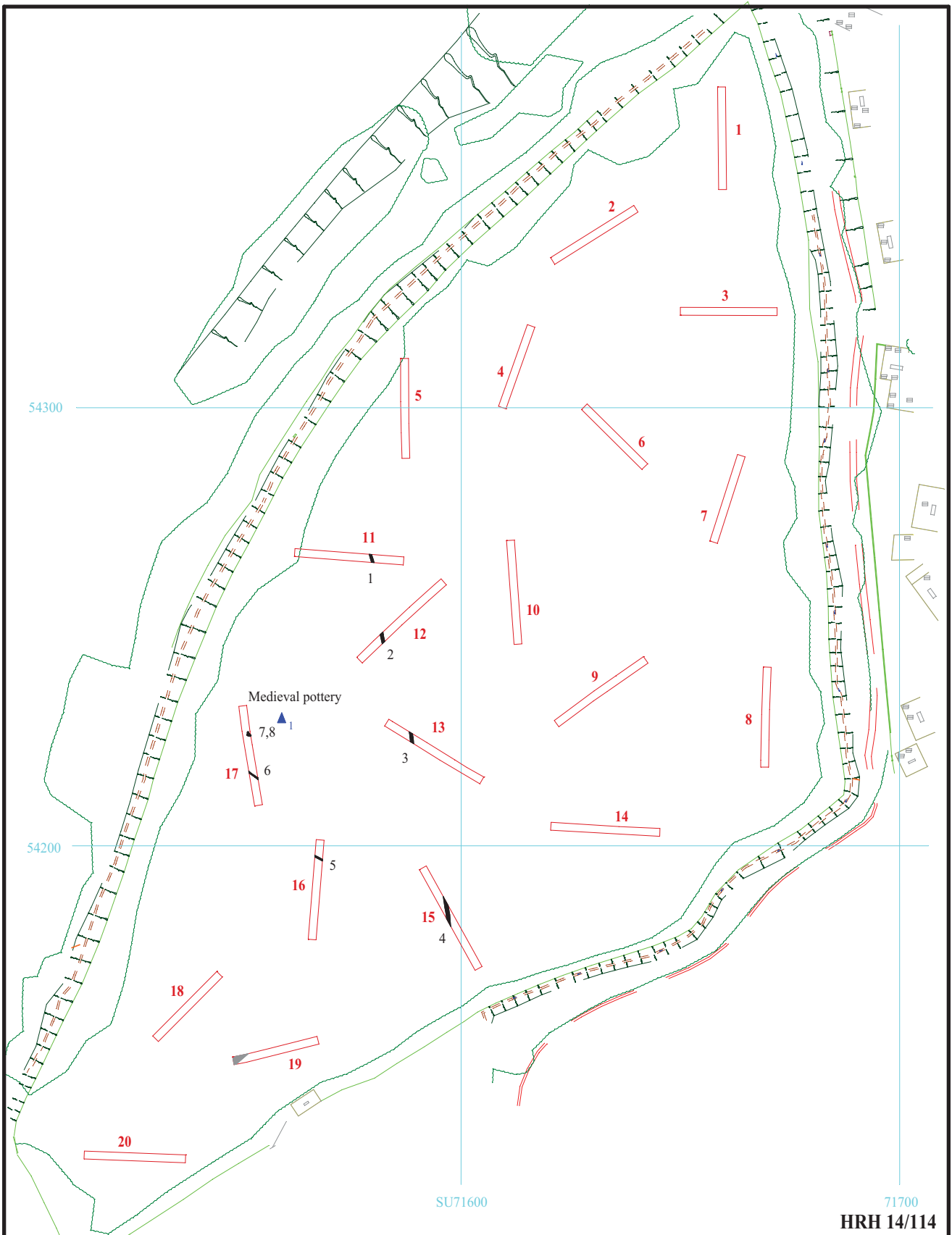
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site.



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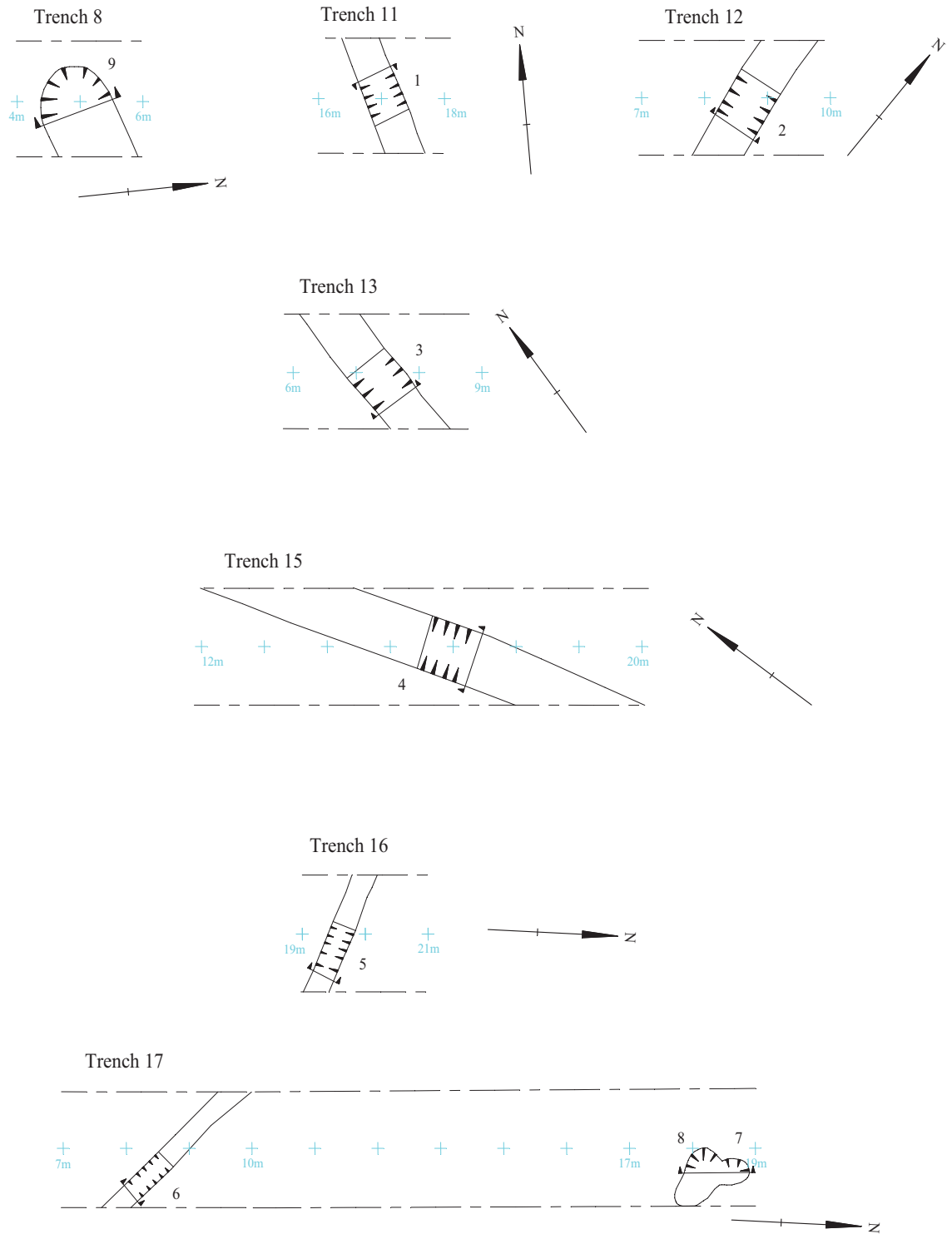
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Figure 3. Location of trenches and features.



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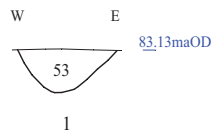
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Figure 4. Detail of trenches.

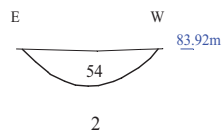


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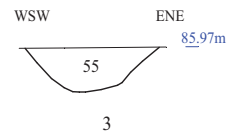
**Trench 11**



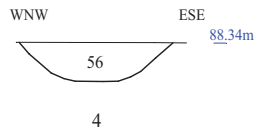
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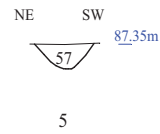
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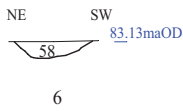
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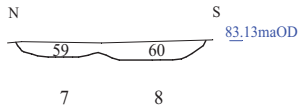
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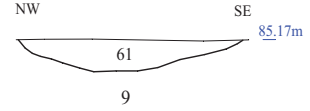
**Trench 17**



**Trench 17**



**Trench 8**



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Figure 5. Sections.



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Plate 1. Trench 6, looking south east, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 2. Trench 17, looking north north east, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.

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**Land at High Ridge Farm, Newnham Road,  
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Plates 1 - 2.**

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Plate 3. Trench 12, ditch slot 2, looking south, Scales: 0.5m.



Plate 4. Trench 17, pit/tree throw 8 and 9, looking east, Scales: 1m.

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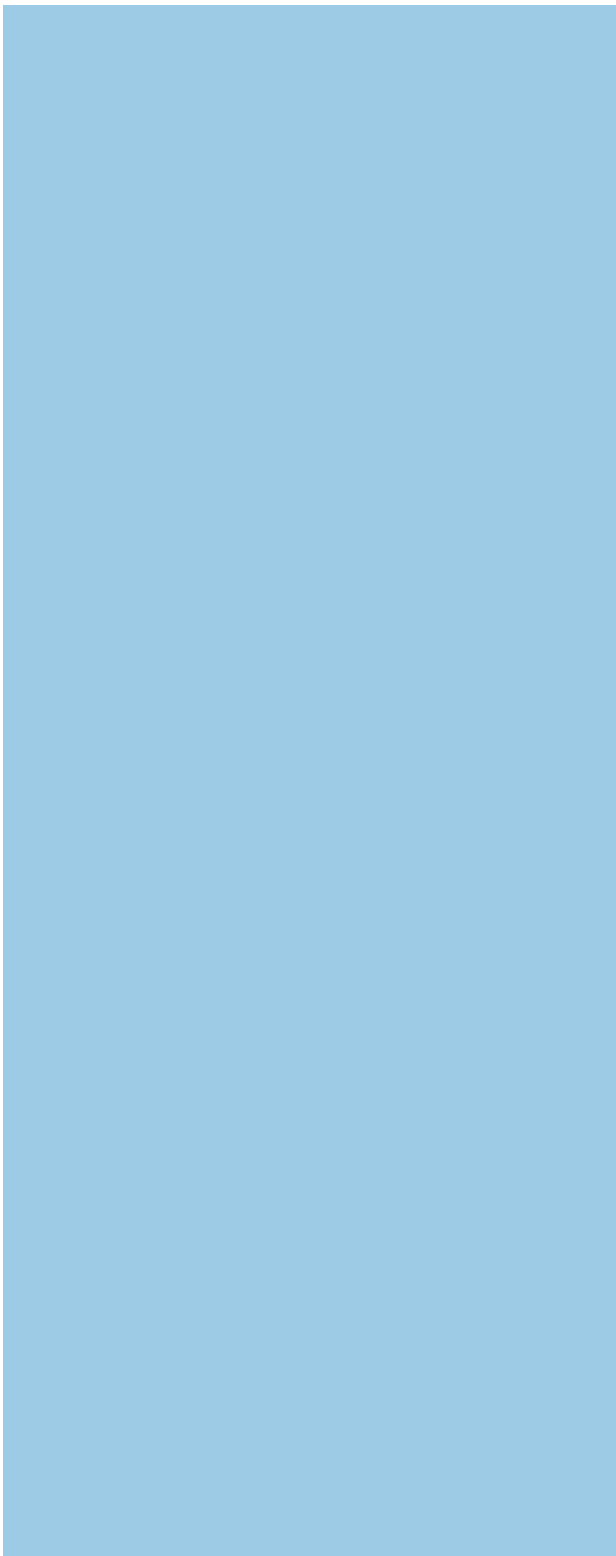
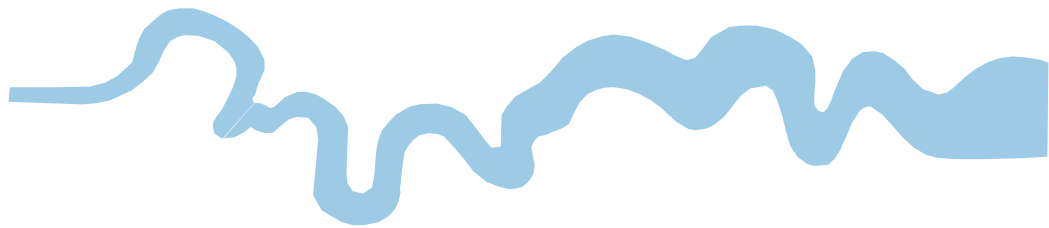
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Plates 3 - 4.**

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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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