

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

S O U T H

**16 Westmeston Avenue,
Saltdean, East Sussex**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by Sean Wallis

Site Code: WAS15/146

(TQ 3770 0257)

**16 Westmeston Avenue, Saltdean,
East Sussex**

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For Mr Greg Redwood

by Sean Wallis

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code
WAS15/146

August 2015

Summary

Site name: 16 Westmeston Avenue, Saltdean, East Sussex

Grid reference: TQ 3770 0257

Planning reference: BH2014/03516

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 13th July 2015

Project manager: Sean Wallis

Site supervisor: Teresa Vieira

Site code: WAS 15/146

Area of site: c. 600 sq m

Summary of results: The watching brief successfully investigated the area of the site which would be affected by the creation of an underground storage area. Despite the archaeological potential of this site and the fact that the area had not been significantly disturbed in the past, no archaeological finds or features were recorded.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Brighton Museum or a viable alternative in due course.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 14.08.15 Steve Preston ✓ 12.08.15

16 Westmeston Avenue, Saltdean, East Sussex An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Sean Wallis

Report 15/146

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at 16 Westmeston Avenue, Saltdean, East Sussex (TQ 3770 0257) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Greg Redwood, the property's owner.

Planning permission (BH2014/03516) had been gained from Brighton and Hove City Council for the creation of an underground storage area immediately to the rear of the existing house. The permission was subject to standard conditions (4 and 5) relating to archaeology and the historic environment, requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological works prior to the development. As a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits on the site which may be damaged or destroyed by the planned building work, it was proposed to carry out a watching brief, in accordance with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF, 2012) and the City Council's policies on archaeology and the historic environment. This approach had been recommended by Mr Greg Chuter, the East Sussex County Council Archaeological Officer, who acts as archaeological adviser to the City Council.

The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation approved by the East Sussex County Council Archaeological Officer. Where appropriate and relevant, the recommendations in *Sussex Archaeological Standards* (ESCC 2015) were followed. The fieldwork was undertaken by Teresa Vieira on 13th July 2015, and the site code is WAS 15/146.

The preferred repository for the site archive is Brighton Museum. Unfortunately the museum is not currently accepting new material, and the archive will therefore be held by Thames Valley Archaeological Services until a suitable repository can be found.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the east side of Westmeston Avenue, Saltdean, and consists of a house with front and rear gardens (Fig. 2). According to the British Geological Survey the underlying geology consists of Tarrant Chalk Member, part of the Culver Chalk Formation on the border with Newhaven Chalk Formation (BGS 2006). This was confirmed during the watching brief, when chalk was encountered in the area monitored. The site slopes

eastwards from the road towards the rear of the property, and lies at a height of approximately 77m above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological background

A search of the East Sussex Historic Environment Record (ESHER 2015, reference 077/15) was carried out to provide archaeological background information on the site. In summary, the site lies within an Archaeological Notification Area associated with two Saxon inhumation burials which were found in the back garden of 43 Ashdown Avenue (north-east of the present site) in about 1959. Both burials were middle aged males, and were orientated approximately north-south. Flint fossils were found in both graves, and one also contained a copper alloy ring decorated with annular grooves. Traces of another possible Saxon burial were found in 1950 at Saxon Close, to the north-east of the present site. A number of Bronze Age barrows have been noted in the surrounding area, and field systems dating from the late Iron Age or Roman period have been identified on the downland to the north of the present site. Roman coins have been found at Saltdean Gap, to the south-east of the present site, along with an Iron Age cremation burial. However, a recent watching brief at 30 Westmeston Avenue (Thompson 2015) recorded nothing of archaeological interest.

Objectives and methodology

The aims of the watching brief were to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the proposed groundworks. This was to involve the monitoring of ground reduction for the new underground storage area to the rear of the property. Where it was not possible or practicable to preserve archaeological remains *in-situ* the features were to be excavated by hand and fully recorded, to ensure their preservation by record. The watching brief was to be carried out in accordance with the relevant sections of Sussex Archaeological Standards (ESCC 2015) and the guidelines issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

Results

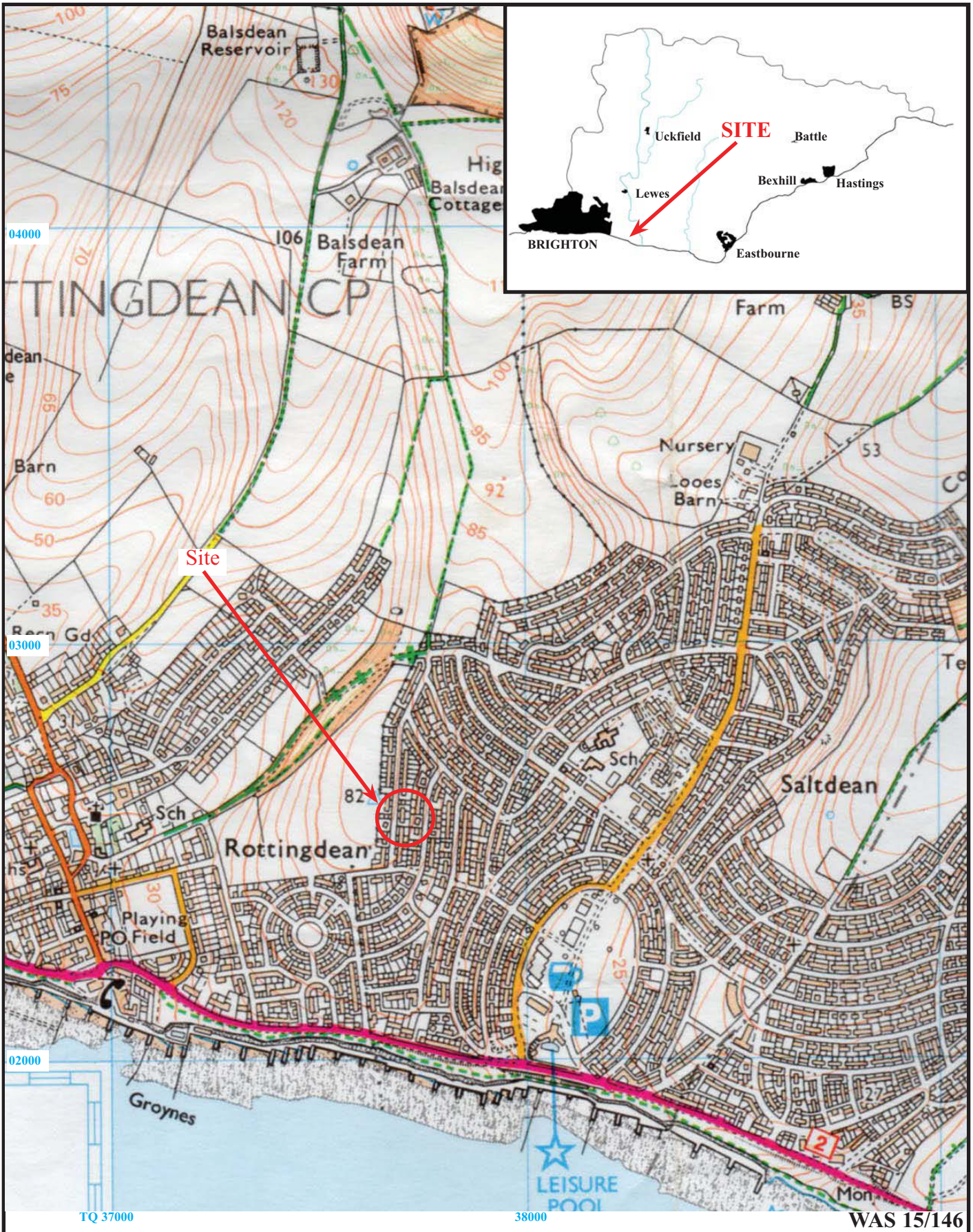
The area which was stripped in respect of the new storage area measured approximately 4.50m by 5.00m (Fig. 3; Pl. 1). The area was stripped down to the natural chalk geology and in general the stratigraphy above the chalk consisted of 0.05m of turf and topsoil and 0.17m of subsoil (50). The area was initially stripped to a depth of approximately 0.24m, although further ground reduction was planned following the watching brief (Fig. 4; Pl. 2). No archaeological finds or features were observed, although a modern soakaway was noted in the southern part of the stripped area.

Conclusion

The watching brief at this site successfully examined the area which was to be affected by the new storage facility. Despite the archaeological potential of the surrounding area and the fact that the area does not appear to have been significantly disturbed in the past, no archaeological finds or features were observed.

References

- BGS, 2006, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000, Sheet 318/333, Bedrock and Superficial Deposits Edition, Keyworth.
- ESHER, 2015, Search of the East Sussex Historic Environment Record (reference 077/15), Lewes.
- ESHER, 2015, *Sussex Archaeological Standards*, East Sussex County Council, Lewes.
- NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Government, London
- Thompson, F, 2015, '30 Westmeston Avenue, Saltdean, East Sussex; an archaeological watching brief', TVAS unpubl rep 15/46, Reading

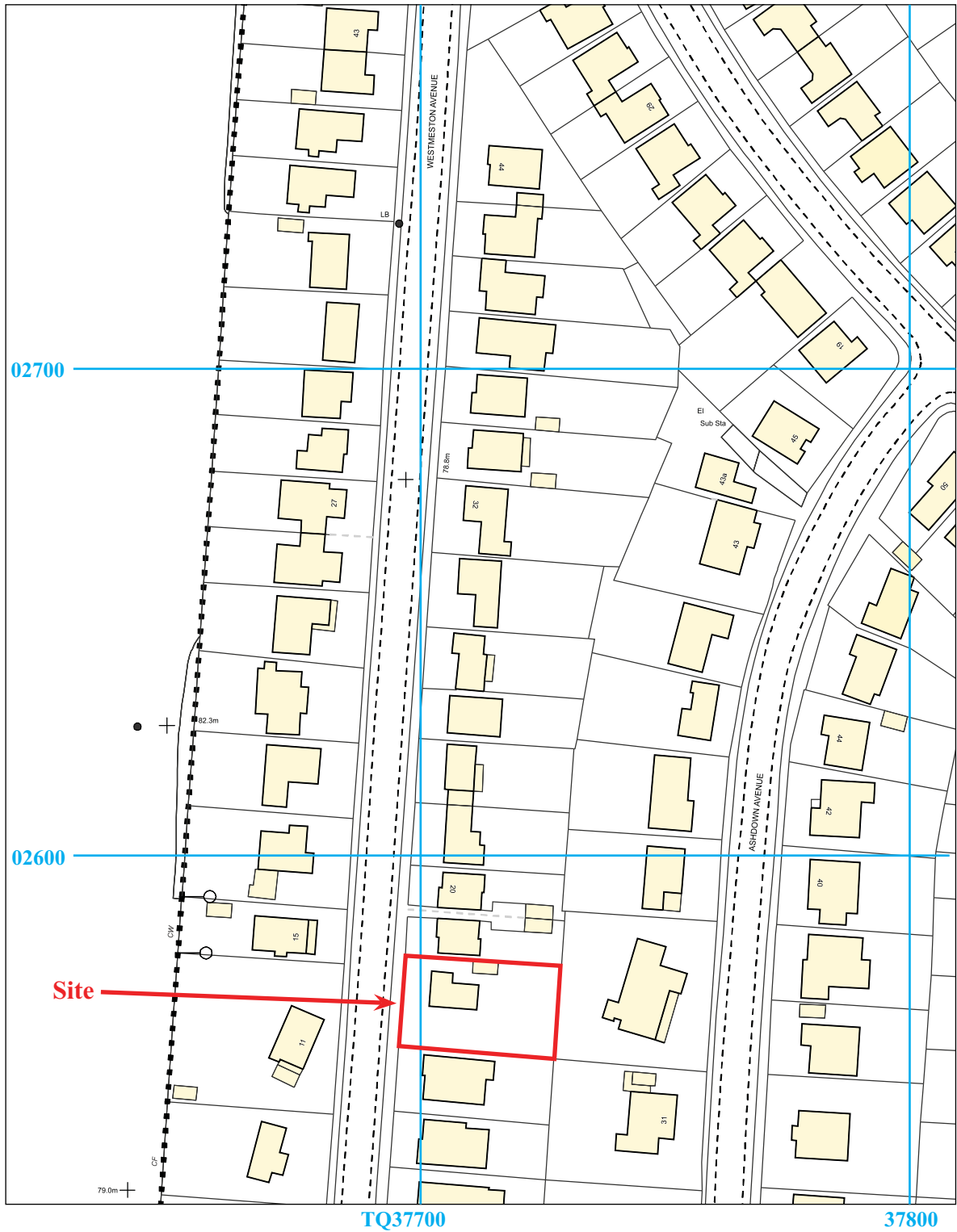


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Figure 1. Location of site within Saltdean and East Sussex.

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Figure 2. Detailed location of site**

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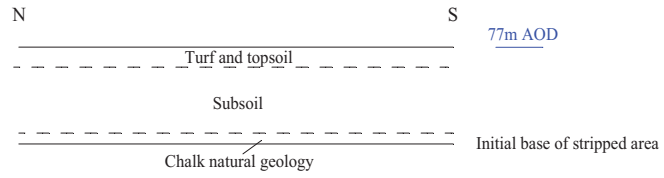


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Figure 3. Location of area monitored.



General stratigraphy observed during ground reduction



Chalk natu

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Figure 4. Section.



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Plate 1: General view of site stripping, looking west



Plate 2: Section, looking east; scales 0.5m and 0.3m

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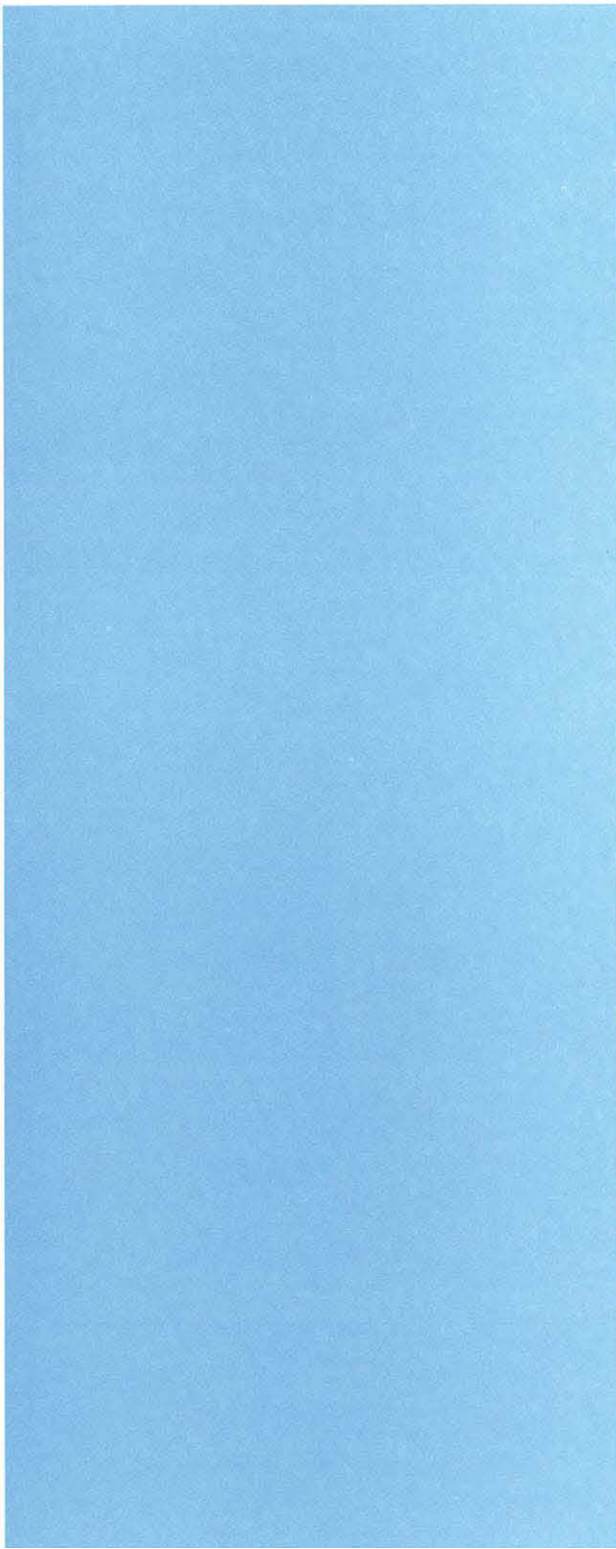
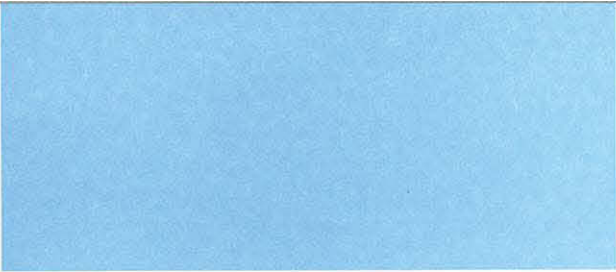
**16 Westmeston Avenue, Saltdean,
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Plates 1 and 2.**

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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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