

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Proposed Garden Centre, Amesbury Road,
Weyhill, Andover, Hampshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by Luis Esteves

Site Code: WNA15/188

(SU 3025 4615)

**Proposed Garden Centre, Amesbury Road,
Weyhill, Andover, Hampshire**

**An Archaeological watching Brief
for Rosebourne Limited**

by Luis Esteves

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code WNA15\188

January 2016

Summary

Site name: Proposed Garden Centre, Amesbury Road, Weyhill, Andover, Hampshire

Grid reference: SU 3025 4615

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 23 November - 4 December 2015

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Luis Esteves

Site code: WNA 15\188

Area of site: 1.47ha

Summary of results: The watching brief successfully investigated the part of the site which would be affected by the construction of a new garden centre, and which involved extensive overburden stripping. A single ditch was recorded during the observation (the same that was found during the evaluation), but further slots across it produced no dating evidence, though its compact fill still suggested it was not of recent origin. No other finds nor deposits were revealed during the groundwork.

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

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 22.01.16 Steve Preston ✓ 22.01.16

Proposed Garden Centre, Amesbury Road, Weyhill, Hampshire An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Luis Esteves

Report 15/188b

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at Amesbury Road, Weyhill, Hampshire (SU 3017 4605) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Carla Fulgoni of Turley, 6th Floor North, 2 Charlotte Place, Southampton, SO14 0TB on behalf of Rosebourne Limited, 8-10 Grosvenor Gardens, London, SW1W 0DH.

Planning permission (15\01583\FULLN) was gained from Test Valley Borough Council for a new garden centre and post office with ancillary cafe, storage, access, parking and landscaping. The consent is subject to conditions (16-18) relating to archaeology which require a programme of archaeological works. An archaeological evaluation (Beaverstock 2015) had been carried out prior to groundworks, and the watching brief has been requested on the basis of the results of the evaluation.

This is 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 Neil Adam, Archaeological Officer for Hampshire County Council, archaeological advisers to the Borough. As a result of the possibility of damage or destruction of archaeological deposits in the vicinity of the ditch (trenches 4 and 7) uncovered during the evaluation phase of work, a watching brief was required to take place during groundworks. The fieldwork was undertaken by Luis Esteves between 23 November and 4 December 2015 and the site code is WNA15/188. 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 is located approximately 1.5km to the west of the village of Weyhill between Amesbury Road and the A303 (Fig. 1). The site lies within a relatively flat parcel of land approximately 87m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) and was formerly used as a garden centre with a post office, nursery and parking area (Fig. 2). The underlying geology as seen in the groundworks area is Upper Chalk (BGS 1975).

Archaeological background

The site lies within an area rich in prehistoric and Roman activity. During the construction of the A303, 20m to the south of the site, two parallel ditches dated to the Bronze Age were recorded (Harding 1992). Observations during a watching brief at The Fairground, Weyhill to the east of the site discovered a single inhumation speculatively dated to the Roman period, as well as a prehistoric ditch which appeared to be a continuation of a north-west to south-east aligned ditch identified in previous watching briefs to the north-west. The Hampshire Archaeology and Historic Buildings Record also notes the presence of several ring ditches (levelled round barrows) attributed to the Bronze Age identified from aerial photography in the area surrounding Weyhill Road.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was to examine, record and excavate any archaeological deposits affected by the works. This involved the archaeological monitoring of all areas of intrusive groundworks, in particular any overburden stripping prior to ground reduction, the digging of foundation trenches and service runs and any landscaping as necessary.

Results

An initial strip of the whole site took place (Fig. 3, red outline) to a depth of 0.3m and a ground reduction to a depth of 0.40m at the south end of the site and 1.10m in the north (Fig. 3, blue outline). The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of topsoil overlying a light brown silty clay (0.10m) of subsoil. The natural geology observed was a pale white Upper Chalk.

The only feature observed in the strip was a single ditch, at least 76m long, 1.80m wide and with a depth between 0.50–0.70m, aligned broadly NE–SW, with a slight curve (Pl. 2). This was the same ditch as that uncovered during the evaluation phase of work. In this phase of work, two further slots were excavated (100 and 101); and recorded (Pl. 1) to go with the two slots dug in the evaluation slots (1 and 2). The ditch was between 1.8m and 1.9m wide, up to 0.55m deep, and both slots showed two fills (Fig. 4), in both cases, a thin band of light brown silty sand (151, 153) with 60% small subangular stones at the base was overlain by a more leached, light brown-grey silty sand with fewer (*c.* 20%) stones (150, 152).

No finds or dating evidence were recovered from any of the fills in this phase of work. Modern debris from what was probably remnant topsoil rather than a genuine tertiary ditch fill in the evaluation, was not taken to

date the underlying fills nor the use of the ditch. The depth of the cuts suggests an older heritage, although this cannot be proven due to a lack of dating evidence.

Finds

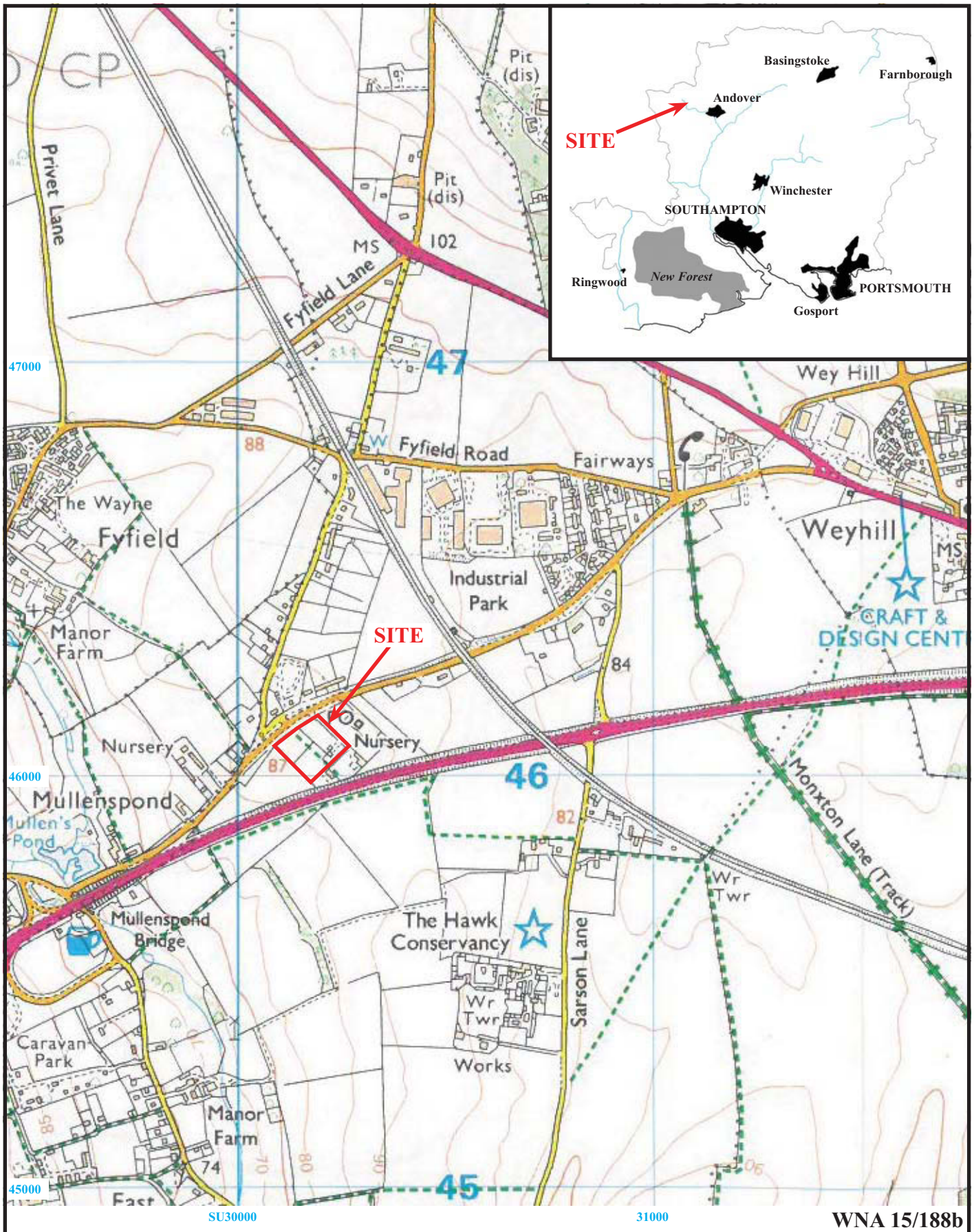
No finds of archaeological interest were recovered.

Conclusion

Despite the potential for significant prehistoric activity on the site only a single ditch observed in groundworks area was uncovered. The ditch had no finds or dating evidence, however, the depth and compaction as well as its alignment to a Bronze Age/Iron Age ditch seen in cropmarks 470m to the north of the site suggests a much older origin. No other finds nor deposits were revealed and apart from this ditch and no other features were affected by the groundworks.

References

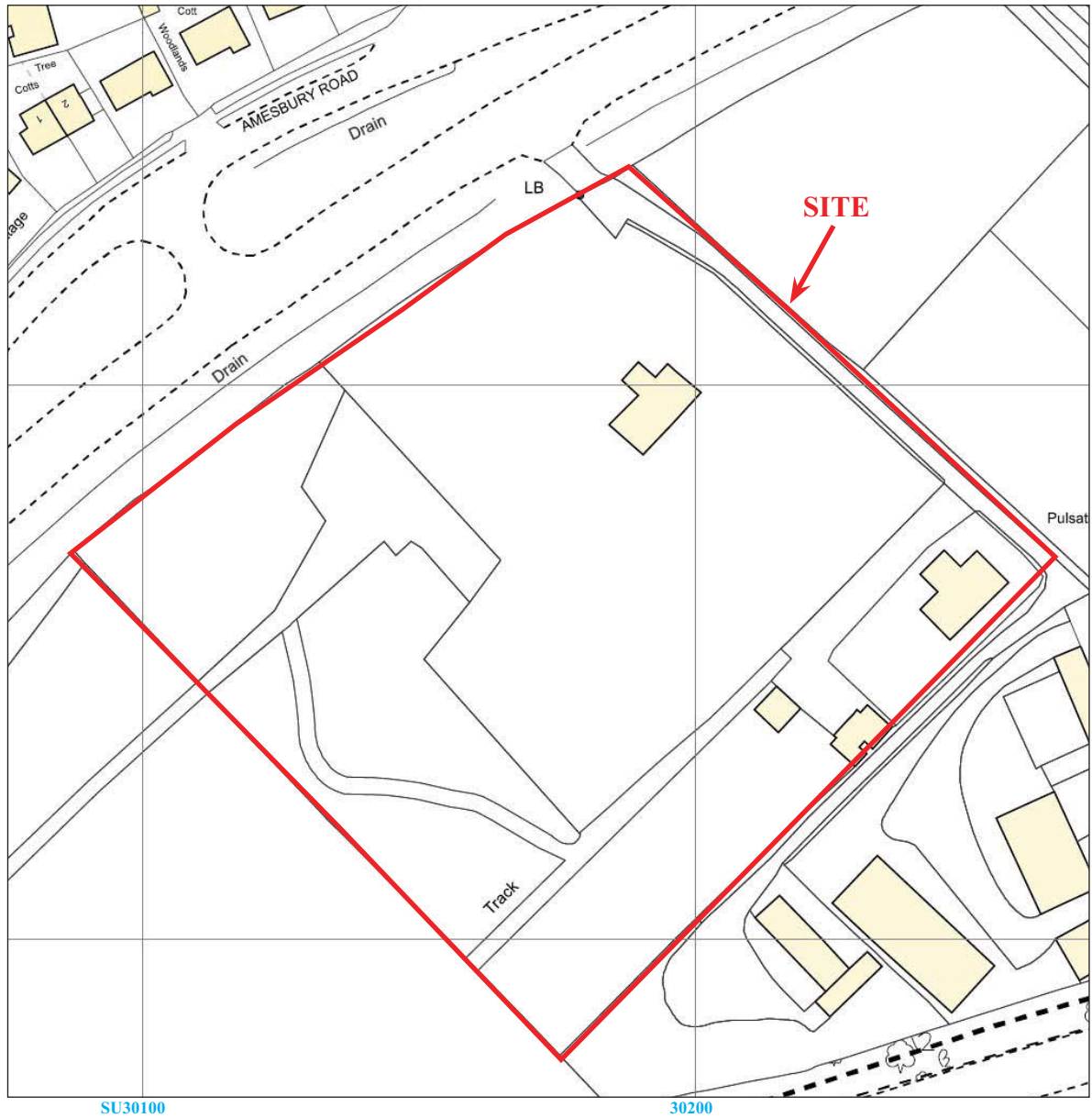
- Beaverstock, K, 2015, 'Proposed Garden Centre, Amesbury Road, Weyhill, Hampshire, an archaeological evaluation', Thames Valley Archaeological Services unpubl rep **15\188**, Reading
- BGS, 1975, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 283, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- Harding, P, 1992, 'Section three: The A303 watching brief: Andover to Thruxton', 63-72 in P S Bellamy, 'The investigation of the prehistoric landscape along the route of the A303 road improvement between Andover, Hants and Amesbury, Wilts, 1984-7', *Proc Hampshire Fld Club Archaeol Soc* **47**, 5-82
- NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London



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

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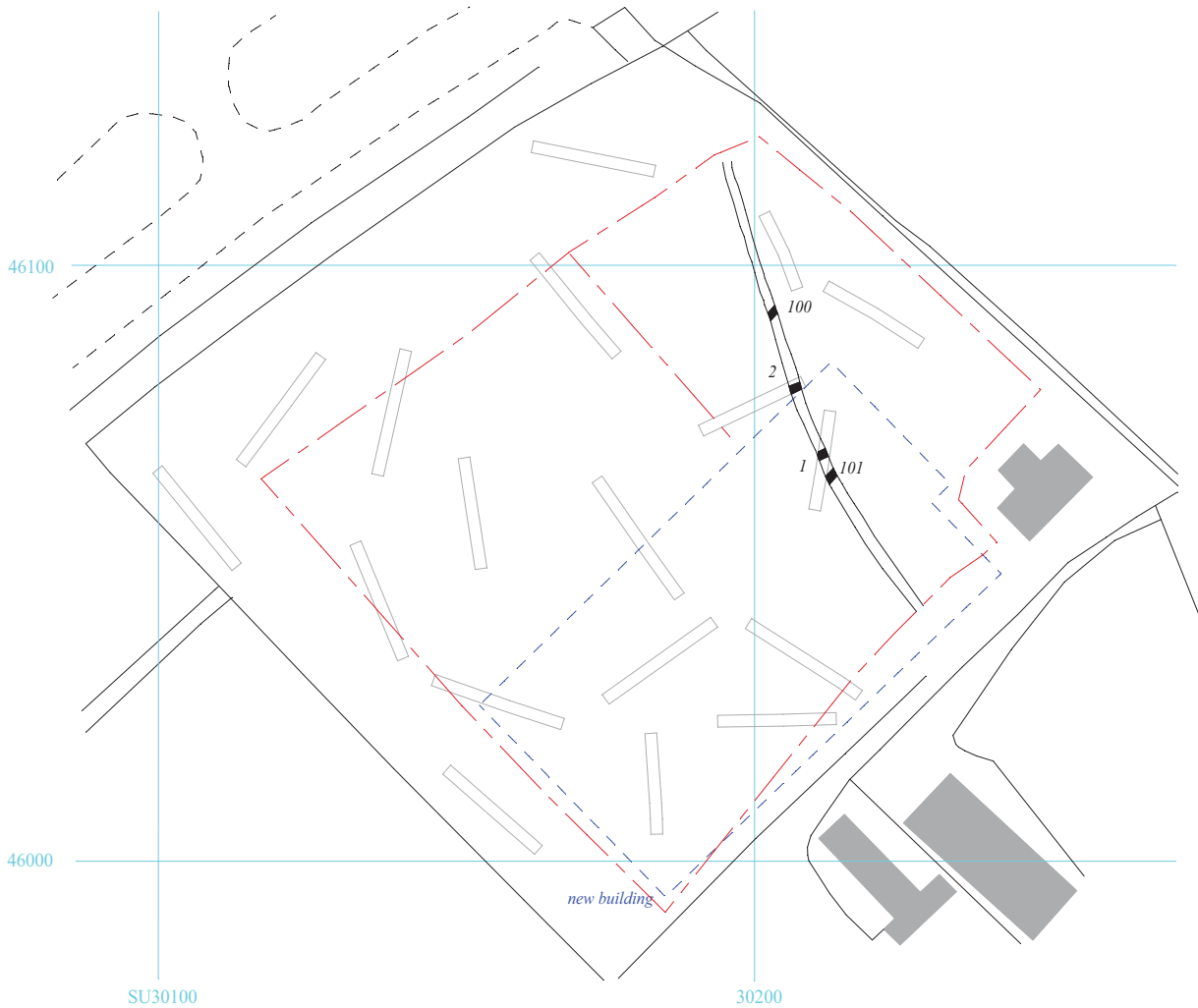
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site.**

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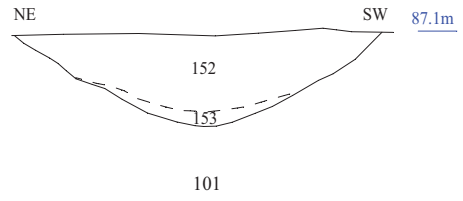
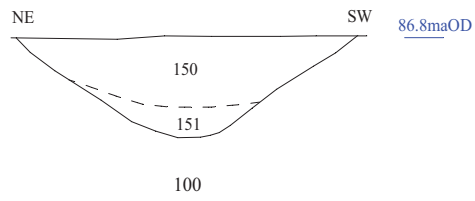
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Figure 3. Location of groundworks.



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Figure 4. Sections.



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Plate 1. Ditch slot 101, looking south east, Scales: 2m and 0.5m.



Plate 2. Overburden stripping revealing ditch looking south west.

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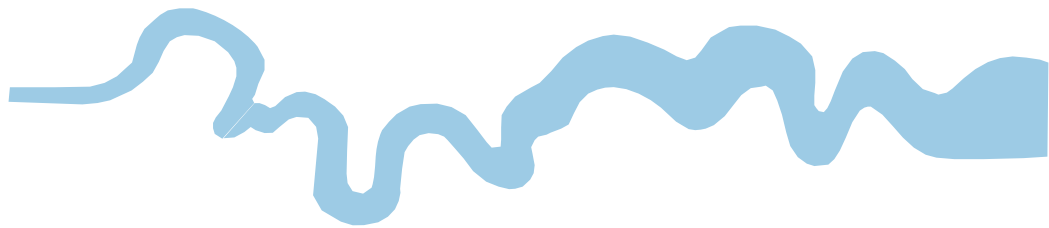
Plates 1 - 2.

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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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