

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Hill Farm, Jouldings Lane, Farley Hill,
Reading, Berkshire**

Archaeological Evaluation phase 1

by Lizzi Lewins

Site Code: HFJ15/241

(SU 7541 6380)

**Hill Farm, Jouldings Lane, Farley Hill,
Reading, Berkshire**

An Archaeological Evaluation phase 1

for Messrs V J and R J Butler

by Lizzi Lewins

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code HFJ 15/241

April 2016

Summary

Site name: Hill Farm, Jouldings Lane, Farley Hill, Reading, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 7541 6380

Site activity: Evaluation phase 1

Date and duration of project: 7th April 2016

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Danielle Milbank

Site code: HFJ 15/241

Area of site: c. 600 sq m

Summary of results: Some truncation of the subsoil and natural geology had occurred, although the archaeologically relevant level was largely intact. However, no archaeological features or finds were encountered during the course of the evaluation.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at a suitable local museum or repository (to be decided by the local planning authority) in due course.

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford ✓ 18.04.16
	Steve Preston ✓ 18.04.16

Hill Farm, Jouldings Lane, Farley Hill, Reading, Berkshire An Archaeological Evaluation phase 1

by Lizzi Lewins

Report 15/241

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Hill Farm, Jouldings Lane, Farley Hill, Reading, Berkshire RG7 1UR (SU 7541 6380) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Robin Bradbeer of Bradbeer Planning Ltd, Lypiatt Green, Nether Lypiatt, Stroud, GL6 7LS on behalf of Messrs V J and R J Butler.

Planning consent (F2015/0767) has been gained from Wokingham Borough Council for the construction of a new anaerobic digester and lagoon on the site. The consent is subject to a condition (10) relating to archaeology which requires an archaeological evaluation take place before the commencement of construction due to the possibility of archaeological features on site which may be damaged or destroyed during the groundworks.

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 Ms Ellie Leary, Archaeological Officer for Berkshire Archaeology, the advisers to the Borough on archaeological matters. The fieldwork was undertaken by Danielle Milbank on 7th April 2016 and the site code is HFJ 15/241.

The fieldwork was undertaken as the first stage of trenching (trenches 5 to 8) on the area of the proposed anaerobic digester plant, with a second stage (trenches 1 to 4) to be carried out to address the area of the proposed lagoon. The results of the second stage will be the subject of a separate report.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at a suitable local museum or repository (to be decided by the local planning authority) in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the north side of Jouldings Lane and the south side of Farley Hill, north of Blackwater River and southeast of Swallowfield (Fig. 1). The site comprises a sloping parcel of arable and pastoral land as well as commercial buildings and yards (Fig. 2). The southern edge of the site lies at a height of 45m above Ordnance Datum sloping upwards to the north to a height of 80m above Ordnance Datum. The site sits atop

three separate geological formations which are mapped (from south to north) as London Clay Formation, Bagshot Formation and Sixth Terrace Deposits (BGS 2000). The natural geology in the northern section of the site was observed as a greyish yellow sandy clay. The area covered by this report is at the north end of the site.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location in the corridor of the Roman road from London to Silchester, locally known as the Devil's Highway. There is a possibility of encountering Roman road-side settlement or burials. The site also lies close to a relatively rich region of the Loddon Valley with extensive cropmarks visible from the air recorded to the west representing Iron Age and Roman occupation (Gates 1975; Lobb and Morris 1993). A small number of previous investigations have taken place around the area of Farley Hill of which seven produced no archaeological features, although two un-stratified struck flints and a single Roman/Medieval potsherd were recovered from one of the sites (Ford 1989; 2006; Hammond 2003; Hardy 2001; McNicoll-Norbury 2008; Pine 1999). The phased investigation of Baird Road, Arborfield Garrison to the north-east of the site, however, produced evidence for an early/middle Iron Age farmstead, including the discovery of a roundhouse ring gully and evidence for iron smelting (Hammond 2011). The site of the former Whitehall Brick and Tile Works, also situated within the garrison, produced further evidence for Iron Age occupation continuing into the mid-third century AD, as well as further evidence for iron smelting (Pine 2003).

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 work was to be carried out in a manner which would not compromise the integrity of archaeological features or deposits which warrant preservation in-situ, or might be better excavated under conditions pertaining to full excavation.

The specific aims of the project are:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on the site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present;
- to determine if any Roman occupation is present on the site; and
- to provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological mitigation strategy.

It was proposed to dig 8 trenches, each 15m long and 2m wide, four at the northern end of site in the area of the proposed tanks and four at the southern end in the lagoon area. An 8m contingency was in place should the need arise for further clarification of findings, the use of which would be determined in consultation with the client and Berkshire Archaeology. The four trenches excavated as a first stage of evaluation were positioned to target

the footprint of the proposed anaerobic digester to the north of the site. The trenches were excavated with a 360°-type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, supervised at all times by an archaeologist and all spoilheaps were monitored for finds. Any archaeological features exposed were to be hand cleaned and appropriately excavated and recorded.

Results

The four trenches comprising this phase of the evaluation were excavated as intended (Fig. 3). The trenches ranged in length from 13.8m to 15.5m and in depth from 0.4m to 1.12m deep, and all were 1.6m wide. No topsoil survived in any of the trenches.

A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 5 (Pl. 1)

Trench 5 was aligned W - E and was 15.10m long and 0.40m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.30m of demolition rubble overlying the natural geology which was noted to be truncated at 7m. A thin lens (0.05m) of subsoil was noted in some areas within the trench but no definitive subsoil layer survived within this trench.

Trench 6 (Pl. 2)

Trench 6 was aligned S - N and was 15.50m long and 0.42m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.25m of demolition rubble overlying 0.10m of disturbed subsoil overlying the natural geology.

Trench 7 (Fig. 4; Pl. 3)

Trench 7 was aligned SW - NE and was 15.50m long, the depth ranged from 0.58m at the NE end to 0.70m at the SW end. The stratigraphy at the SW end consisted of 0.32m of demolition rubble overlying 0.30m of subsoil overlying the natural geology. The stratigraphy at the NE end consisted of 0.20m of demolition rubble overlying 0.30m of subsoil overlying the natural geology (Fig. 4).

Trench 8 (Pl. 4)

Trench 8 was aligned SSW - NNE and was 13.80m long, the depth ranged from 0.55m at the NNE end to 1.12m at the SSW end. The stratigraphy at the SSW end consisted of 0.70m of demolition rubble overlying 0.35m of subsoil overlying the natural geology. The stratigraphy at the NNE end consisted of 0.10m of demolition rubble overlying 0.38m of subsoil overlying the natural geology. A field drain was recorded at the southern end of the trench but no archaeological features or finds were observed.

Finds

No finds of archaeological interest were recovered.

Conclusion

Despite the location of the site in an area of high archaeological potential, no archaeological features or finds were encountered during the evaluation. It was evident that some truncation of the subsoil and natural geology had occurred, despite this, the archaeologically relevant level was largely intact.

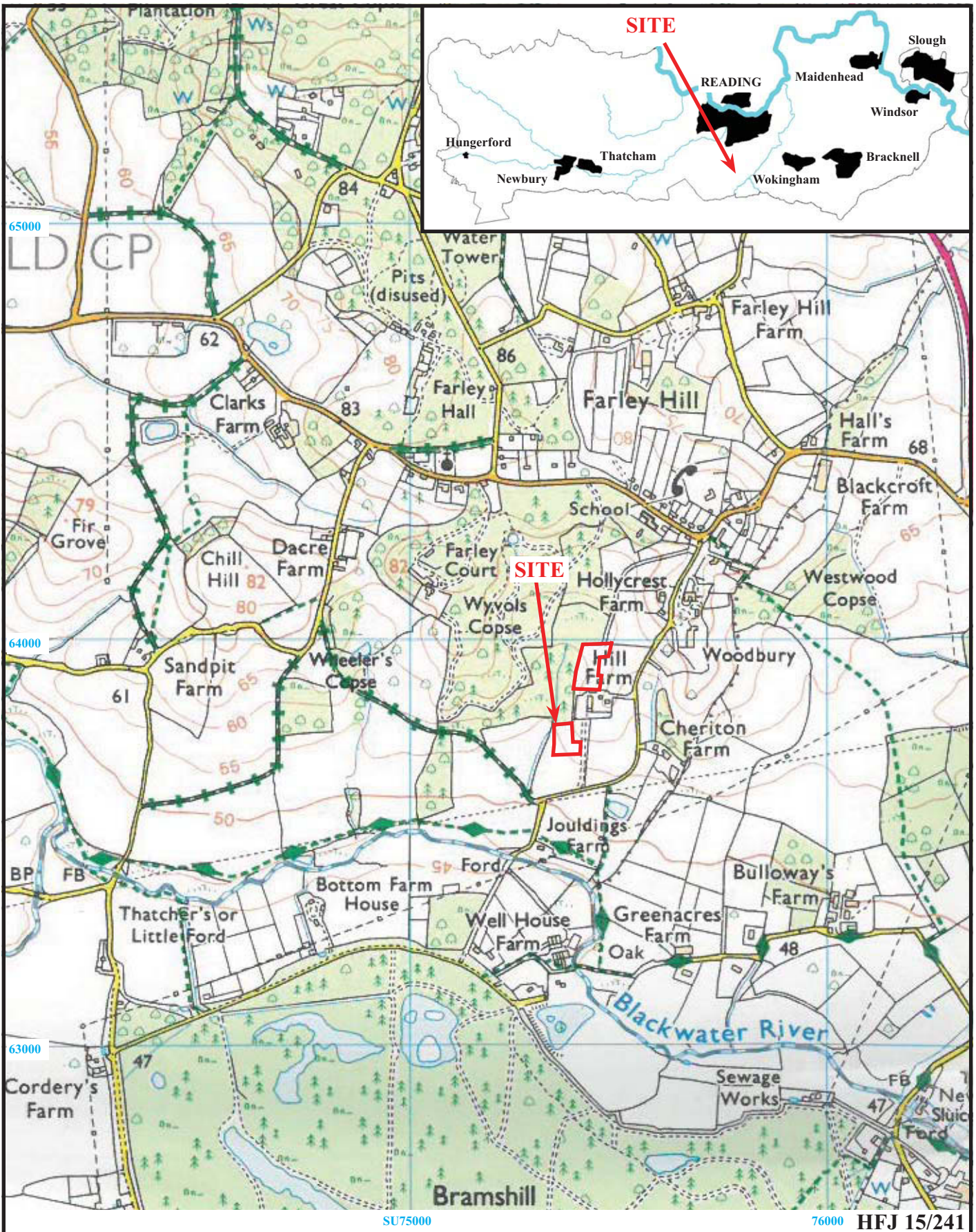
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APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at W, S, SW and SSW ends

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
5	15.10	1.6	0.40	0-0.30m Demolition rubble; 0.30m+ Light greyish yellow sandy clay natural geology; 0.05m Grey sandy clay subsoil lens patch. No archaeology. [PI. 1] .
6	15.50	1.6	0.42	0-0.25m Demolition rubble; 0.25m-0.35m Grey sandy clay subsoil; 0.35m+ Mottled yellowish grey & blue grey sandy clay natural geology. No archaeology. [PI. 2] .
7	15.50	1.6	0.70	SW end 0-0.32m Demolition rubble; 0.32m-0.62m Grey sandy clay subsoil; 0.62m+ Light greyish yellow sandy clay natural geology W end 0-0.20m Demolition rubble; 0.20m-0.50m Grey sandy clay subsoil; 0.50m+ Light greyish yellow sandy clay natural geology. No archaeology. [PI. 3] .
8	13.80	1.6	1.12	SSW end 0-0.70m Demolition rubble; 0.70m-1.05m Grey sandy clay subsoil; 1.05m+ Light greyish yellow sandy clay natural geology NNE end 0-0.10m Demolition rubble; 0.10m-0.48m Grey sandy clay subsoil; 0.48m+ Light greyish yellow sandy clay natural geology. No archaeology. [PI. 4] .

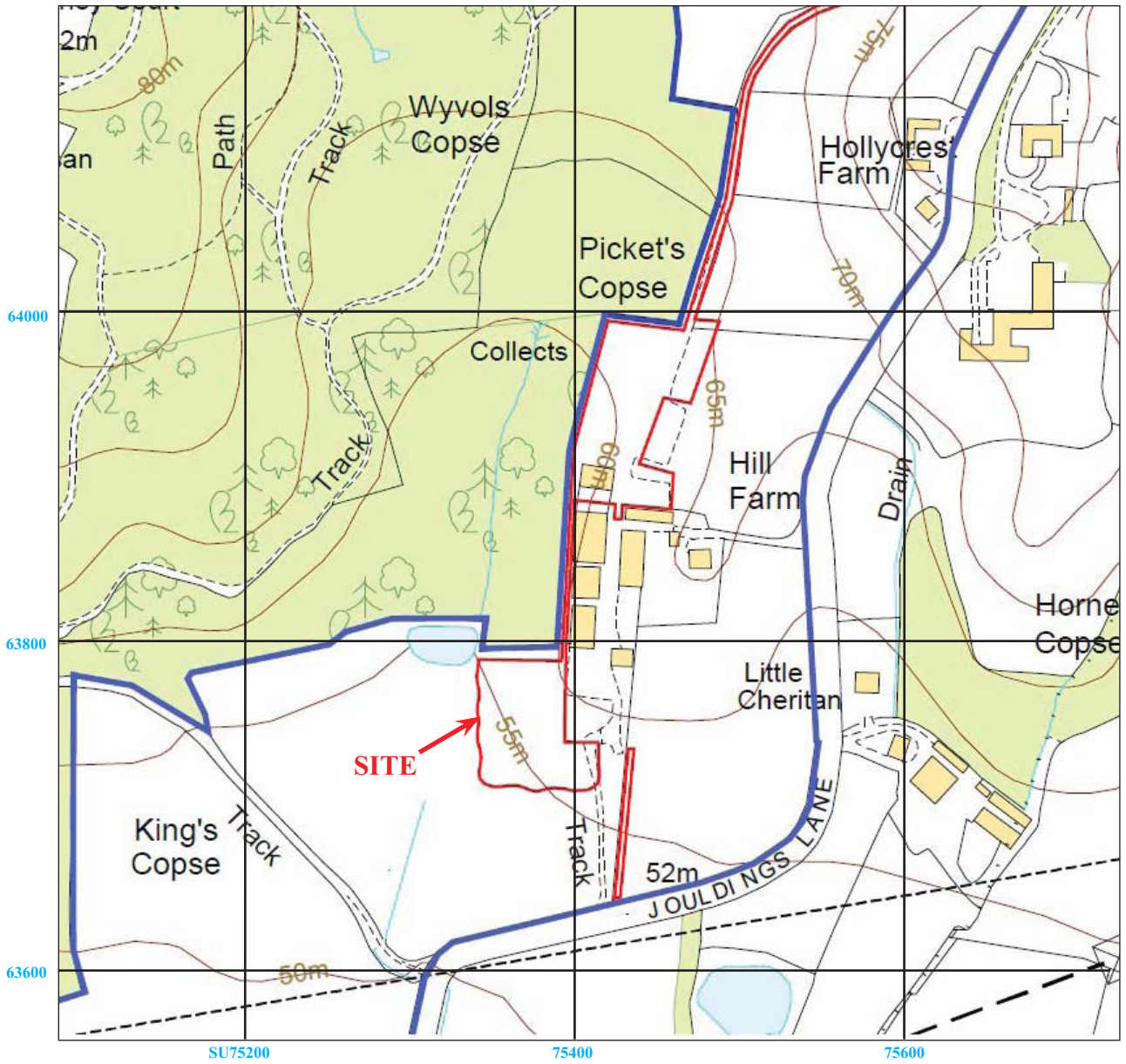


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Figure 1. Location of site within Farley Hill and Berkshire.

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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Jouldings Lane.

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Figure 3. Location of trenches.



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SW

NE

Rubble

Subsoil

60.71maOD

Natural geology (grey/yellow sandy clay)

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Figure 4. Representative section (Trench 7).



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Plate 1. Trench 5, looking west, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



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

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Plates 1 - 2.**

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Plate 3. Trench 7, looking north east, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 4. Trench 8, looking south south west, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.

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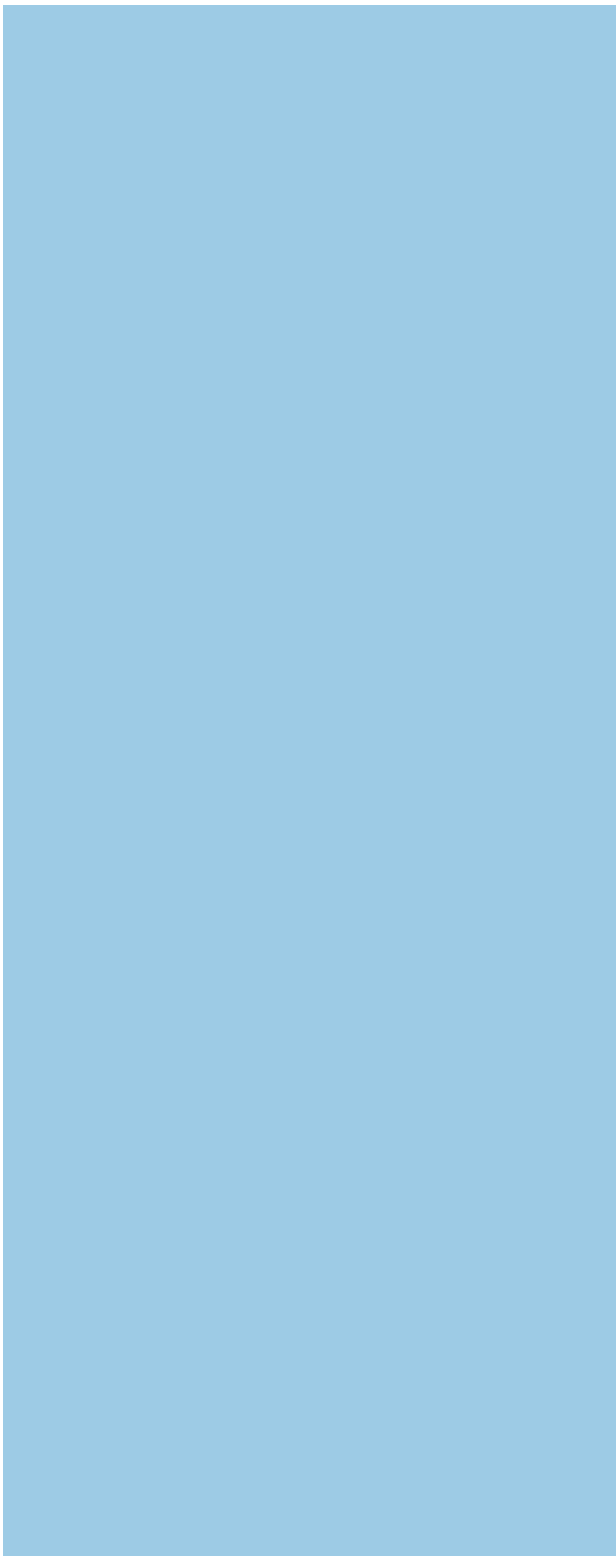
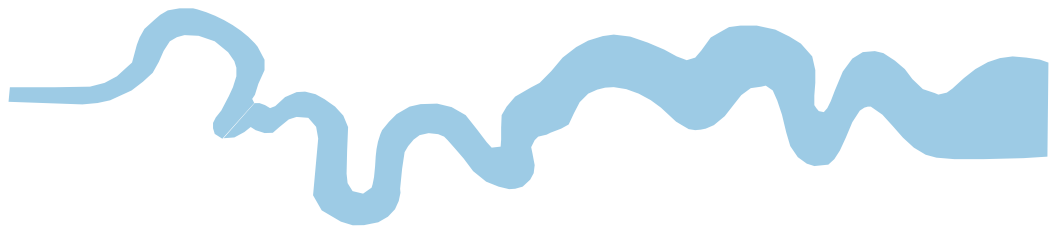
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Plates 3 - 4.**

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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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