

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**St Lucians, Lower Wharf,
Wallingford, Oxfordshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by Andy Taylor

Site Code: LWW16/60

(SU 6085 8902)

St Lucians, Lower Wharf, Wallingford, Oxfordshire

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For Mr and Mrs B Griffiths

by Andy Taylor

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code LWW 16/60

June 2016

Summary

Site name: St Lucians, Lower Wharf, Wallingford, Oxfordshire

Grid reference: SU 6085 8902

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 6th-8th June 2016

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Luis Esteves and Danielle Milbank

Site code: LWW 16/60

Summary of results: Groundworks for the new development were of limited depth and extent and did not clearly expose any archaeologically relevant horizons. A few sherds of pottery of 17th and/or 18th century date were recorded from made ground deposits.

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

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St Lucians, Lower Wharf, Wallingford, Oxfordshire

An Archaeological Watching Brief

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Report 16/60

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at St Lucians, Lower Wharf, Wallingford, Oxfordshire (SU 6085 8902) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Larry Furlong on behalf of Mr and Mrs B Griffiths of the above address.

Planning permission (P15/S3122/HH) has been gained from South Oxfordshire District Council for the demolition of a conservatory and construction of a new extension. Due to the potential disturbance of below ground archaeological features an archaeological watching brief was to be maintained during the period of groundworks. The building is Grade II and the consent is subject to two conditions (4 and 5) relating to archaeology.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012) and the Districts policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Richard Oram, Planning Archaeologist with Oxfordshire County Archaeology Service, advisers to the District on matters relating to archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Luis Esteves and Danielle Milbank between the 6th and 8th June 2016 and the site code is LWW 16/60.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Oxfordshire Museum Service in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the eastern side of Wallingford with the River Thames flowing just to the east of the site (Fig. 2). It is located to the rear of the property and comprised the former conservatory area, now demolished. The underlying geology is mapped as 2nd (Summertown-Radley) Terrace Deposits River Gravels (BGS 1980), although these levels were not reached. The site lies at a height of *c.*45m above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a briefing document for the project prepared by Mr Richard Oram of Oxfordshire County Archaeology Service (Oram 2015). In summary, the site lies within the

historic core of Wallingford which has been extensively investigated archaeologically, albeit often in small-scale projects (Airs *et al.* 1975; Preston 2010; Christie 2013). It lies just to the south of the line of the Saxon defences in an area of likely medieval suburban settlement, with several findspots of Saxon and medieval date to the west. The site of the historically attested St Lucian's church and its graveyard lies to the west and contains burials of Late Saxon and later date (Elliott 2014) though the church had disappeared from the records by the 14th century.

The area affected by the works is within the grounds of Saint Lucian's, a Grade II* Listed Building (National Heritage List Entry Number 1048497). The house is from the middle of 16th century (and perhaps with earlier origins), with an early 17th century maltings and hop kiln, with limestone rubble and flint plinth, roughcast with decorative pargetting and an old plain-tile roof.

In the same area there was a church with the same name, St Lucian Church, on the west side of the present site. The history of the church of St Lucian is obscure with only sparse documentary evidence, but its approximate location is reasonably securely known (Dewey 2009). St Lucian included the chapel of Sotwell in its parish, making it large and probably an important early foundation (possible 10th century or earlier) (Roffe 2009). St Lucian's Church did not survive the downturn in the borough's economy in the later middle ages.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the works. This would involve monitoring of all areas of intrusive groundworks and include observation of surface stripping, the excavation of foundations and service trenches, landscaping works and all other invasive works as necessary.

Results (Fig. 3)

Removal of a concrete slab from the previous conservatory was observed as well as trenches dug to remove earlier foundations and spoilheaps were monitored for finds.

The removed concrete slab measured 0.20m thick and overlay a made ground layer (50) at least 0.35m thick and consisting of brick rubble, clay and glass, all modern (Pl. 1). Two trenches were dug either side of a concrete footing in order to remove it (Pl. 2). The western side measured 0.85m wide and was dug to a depth of 0.61m. This revealed a deposit (51) of dark brown clayey sandy silt that contained 1 sherd of 18th-century (or later) pottery, a piece of clay pipe and a sheep/goat tooth. The eastern side measured 0.95m wide and was dug to a depth of 0.81m This showed the same deposit (51) overlying a dark black brown clayey silt (52). This contained

2 sherds of 18th-century pottery. A single sherd of 17th-century pottery was recovered from the spoil in this area.

The new extension was to be built on a raft with no disturbance from new foundations and drainage using existing runs. As such no further ground intrusion would take place.

Finds

Pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 4 sherds with a total weight of 63g. It was all post-medieval, and of 17th or 18th century date. It was recorded using the conventions of the Oxfordshire County type-series (Mellor and Oakley 1984; Mellor 1994), as follows:

OXBEW: Staffordshire Manganese Glazed ware, 18th century. 2 sherds, 24g.

OXFI: Chinese Export Porcelain, 18th century. 1 sherd, 2g.

OXRESWL: Polychrome Slipware, 17th century. 1 sherd, 37g

The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Appendix 1. The wares are all common finds in the region. The sherds are all in good condition, and appear reliably stratified, other than the unstratified sherd, which has suffered noticeable attrition.

Clay Pipe by Danielle Milbank

A piece of clay pipe stem was recovered from made ground deposit 51. It is a stem with a small flat spur, with a likely date (based on the bore diameter) in the mid to late 18th century.

Animal Bone by Lizzi Lewins

A single tooth was recovered from the made ground (51) and comprised a small incisor from a medium-sized mammal, likely a sheep/goat.

Conclusion

Despite the potential for archaeology to be present on the site no features were identified. It was unclear if the two deposits identified in the trenches observed were archaeological in nature, although they produced 18th-century pottery and clay pipe and thus clearly post-date the main part of the Listed Building. As the new

extension was to be built on a raft with drainage utilising existing runs little in the way of ground disturbance was actually to take place with correspondingly little opportunity for archaeological observation.

References

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APPENDIX 1: Pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type

<i>Deposit</i>	OXFI		OXREWSL		OXBEW		<i>Date</i>
	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt</i>	
Spoil	-	-	1	37	-	-	
51	1	2	-	-	-	-	18thC
52	-	-	-	-	2	24	18thC
Total	1	2	1	37	2	24	



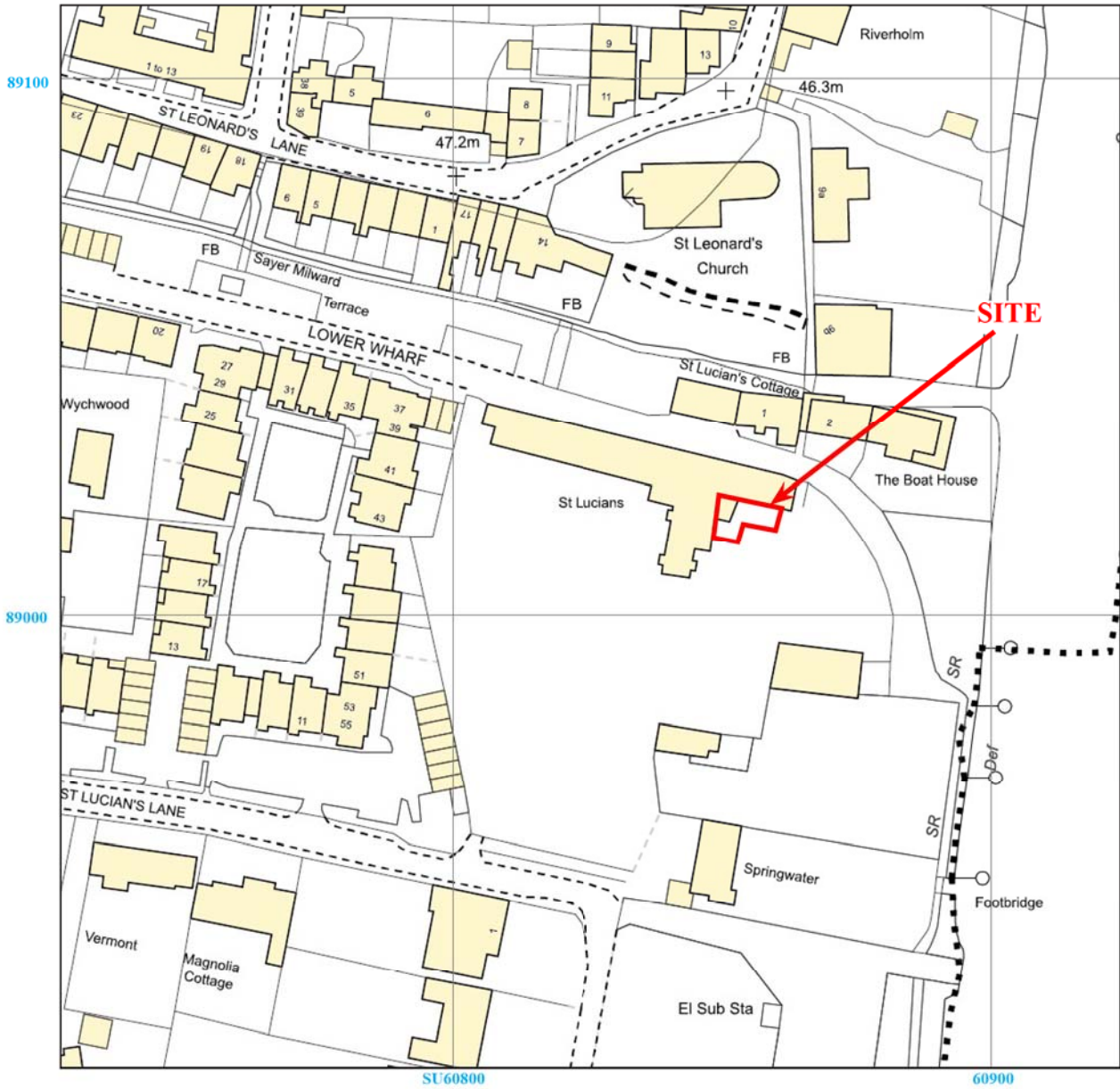
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Figure 1. Location of site within Wallingford and Oxfordshire.

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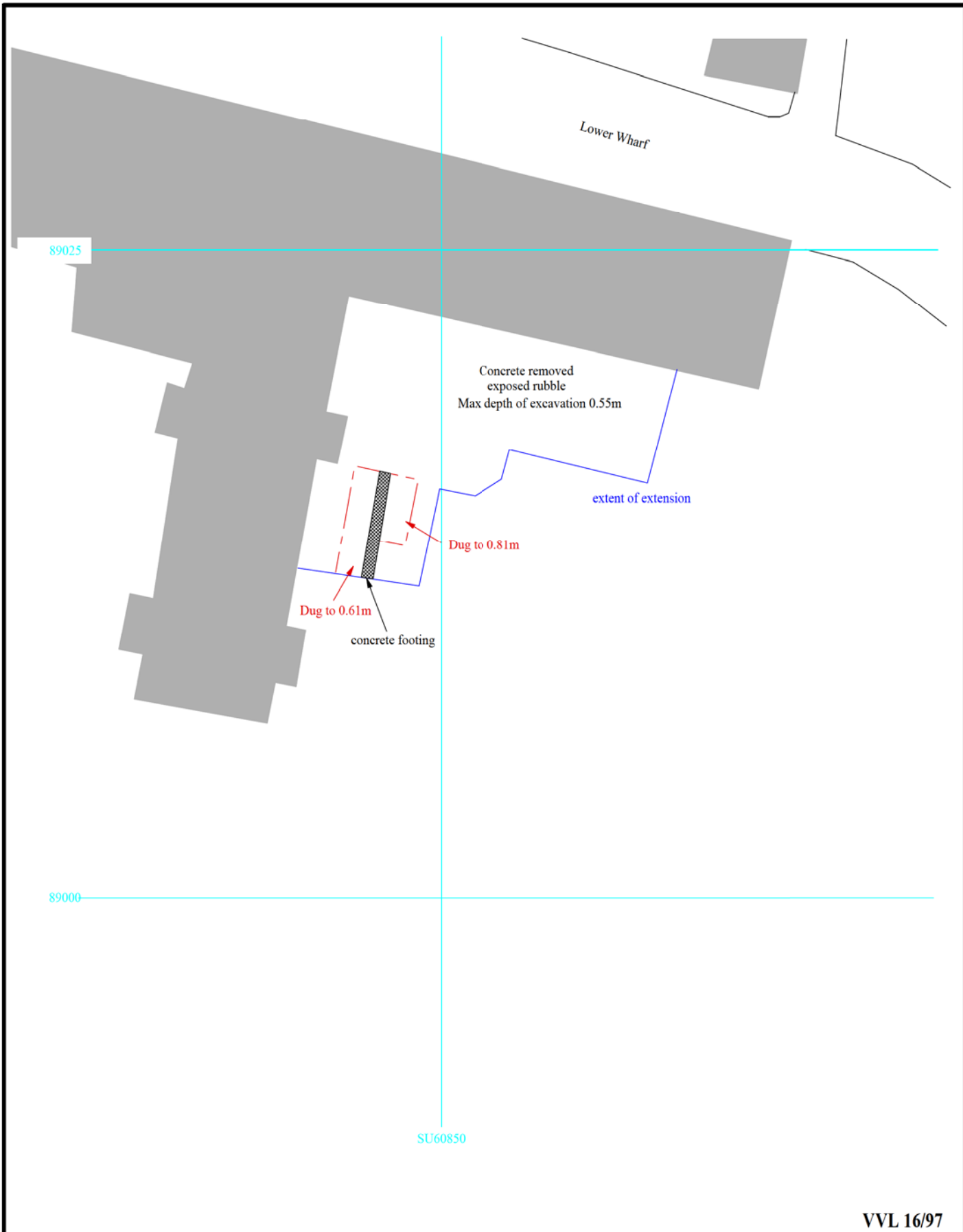
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Lower Wharf.

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Figure 3. Location of observed areas.



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Plate 1. Area of excavation, looking north west.



Plate 2. Excavation showing footing, looking north, Scales: 2m and 1m.

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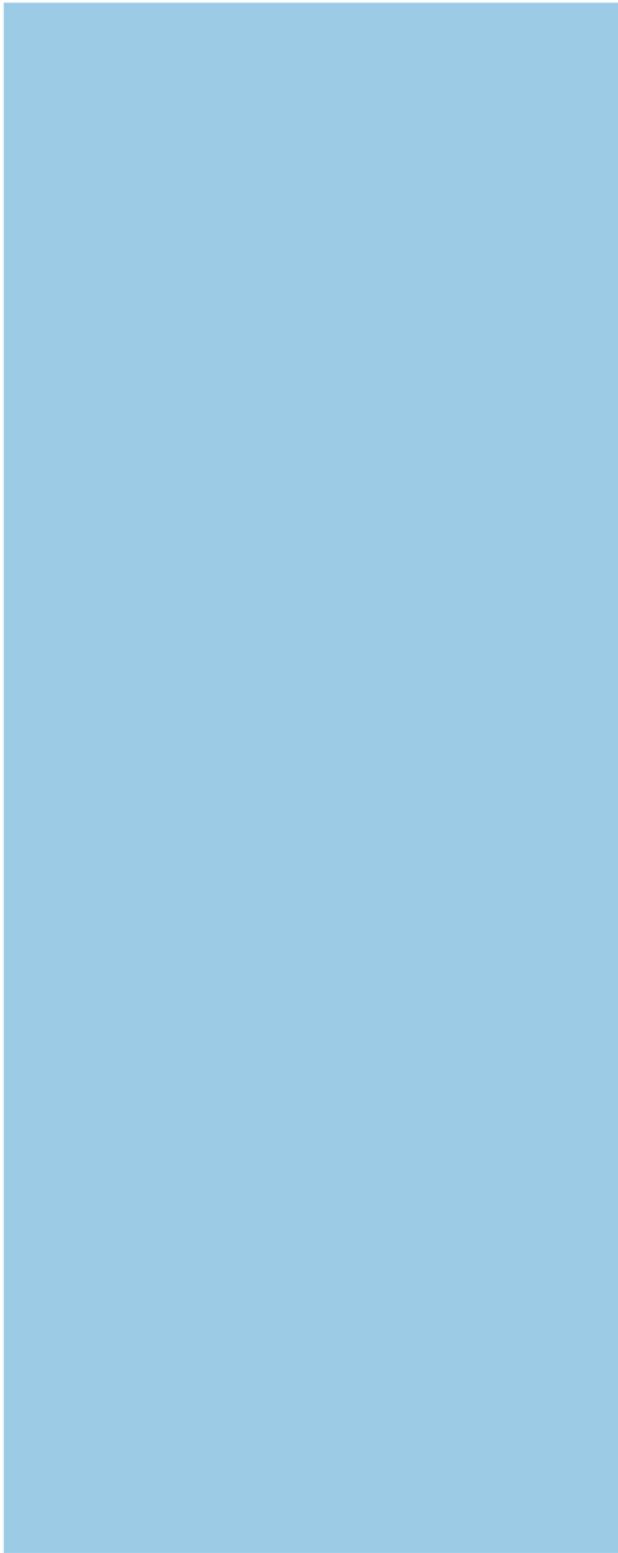
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Plates 1 - 2.

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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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