

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Land to the South of Kings Reach, Ditton Park,
Slough, Berkshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by David Platt

Site Code: DPS16/19

(SU9920 7855)

Land to the South of Kings Reach, Ditton Park, Slough, Berkshire

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for CgMs**

by David Platt

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code DPS16/19

April 2016

Summary

Site name: Land to the South of Kings Reach, Ditton Park, Slough, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU9920 7855

Site activity: Archaeological Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 1st - 7th March

Project manager: Tim Dawson

Site supervisor: David Platt

Site code: DPS16/19

Area of site: 0.32ha

Summary of results: A number of pits and postholes were discovered in the south-eastern corner of the site which are certainly or probably of the late Bronze Age date. Three undated ditches were observed, one was seen aligned east - west across the north of the evaluation area and two were observed in Trench 5, both aligned NE–SW. Three undated pits and a possible ditch terminus were also observed in this area of the site. The site is considered to have high archaeological potential

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at a museum willing to accept it in due course.

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	Steve Preston✓ 18.04.16

Land South of Kings Reach, Ditton Park, Slough, Berkshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by David Platt

Report 16/19

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Land South of Kings reach, Ditton Park, Slough, Berkshire (SU9920 7855) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Sally Dicks, CgMs Consulting, 140 London Wall, London EC2Y 5DN on behalf of Galliford Try Plc, Womersley House, The Guildway, Old Portsmouth Road, Guildford GU3 1LR.

Planning consent (P/11425/022) has been gained from Slough Borough Council for the proposed Ditton Park Academy. This consent is subject to a condition relating to archaeology requiring a programme of investigation prior to the development. It was determined that the investigation should take the form, initially, of an archaeological excavation within the northern part of the site where geophysical anomalies have been identified and an evaluation comprising trial trenching within the central and southern parts of the site.

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 Roland Smith, Archaeological Officer for Berkshire Archaeology, the archaeological advisers to the Borough. The work was undertaken by David Platt, Jon Tierney, Benedikt Tebbitt and Luis Estevez, between 1st and 7th March 2016 and the site code is DPS16/19. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at a museum willing to accept it, in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the southern edge of Slough, bordered to the north and east by new housing development, to the west by Upton Court Park and to the south by playing fields (Fig. 1). The site lies at 21m above Ordnance Datum and the underlying geology was flood plain gravel in the northern trenches and alluvium in the southern trenches (BGS 1981) and this was observed in the trenches as a red brown sandy gravel in the north and mid red brown clayey sand in the south.

Archaeological background

An archaeological excavation was conducted to the north of the site prior to the housing construction (WA 2013). This revealed archaeological features dating from the Neolithic to Saxon periods. These included three possible Middle-Late Neolithic pits, an early Bronze Age cremation and a possible Bronze Age Ditch. An Iron Age trackway, flanked by ditches and enclosures, pits and post-holes was also observed. Most of the settlement pattern appeared to have originated in the Middle Iron Age. Adjacent to the east end of the trackway was a Late Iron Age penannular enclosure associated with iron smithing and copper alloy casting, but no hearths or structural remains survived.

The Roman period showed a much reduced level of activity from the Iron Age. There was continued use of the trackway, several shallow enclosure ditches, a small number of pits and possibly two wells, with activity apparently spanning the 1st- – 4th centuries AD. The Anglo-Saxon period was represented by three Saxon sunken-featured buildings, of probable 6th-7th century date. A possible beam-slot structure and one or more fence lines may also have belonged to this phase.

A magnetometer survey was undertaken across the site in February 2012 (Butler 2012). The survey suggests that the Iron Age enclosures revealed in the excavations on the adjacent site continue into the site. In addition, other isolated geophysical anomalies recorded by the survey could be further evidence of any of the above phases or settlement or activity.

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 specific aims were;

- to clarify the character and extent of Middle-Late Neolithic activity on the site.
- to clarify the character and extent of Early Bronze Age/Bronze Age activity and burial on the site.
- to define the extent, character and chronology of the Iron Age settlement and Iron working activity on the site.
- to define the extent and character of Roman settlement and activity on the site.
- to define the extent and character of Saxon settlement and activity on the site.
- to clarify spatial and chronological changes in activity on the site.

to establish the character of archaeological remains and to place these within the context of the landscape, settlement and activity patterns in the area.

Ten trenches were to be dug, each measuring 25m in length and 1.8m in width. The trenches were to be positioned to target the footprints of the new buildings and roads. These were to be dug using a 360° type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision. All spoilheaps were to be monitored for finds. Where archaeological features were present these were to be excavated or sampled by hand sufficiently to meet the objectives set out above.

Results

Initially 10 trenches were dug as intended but an additional 2 trenches were added after consultation with the monitor, in order to clarify results from other trenches. The trenches ranged in length from 20.60m to 29.30m and in depth from 0.36m to 0.62m.

A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1. The excavated features are summarized in Appendix 2.

Trench 1 (Figs 2, 3 and 4)

Trench 1 was aligned SE - NW and was 24.40m long and 0.50m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.25m of topsoil and 0.20m subsoil overlying natural sandy clay geology. A ditch (9) was recorded which was 1.80m wide and 0.30m deep and contained a single fill (62) which consisted of a mid brown grey sandy silt with frequent gravel inclusions. No finds were recovered.

Trench 2 (Figs 2, 3 and 4)

Trench 2 was aligned SW - NE and was 25.50m long and 0.54m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.32m of topsoil and 0.20m subsoil overlying natural sandy gravel geology. A ditch (7) was recorded which was 2.0m wide and 0.66m deep and contained a single fill (60) which consisted of a mid brown grey sandy silt with frequent gravel inclusions (Pl. 4). No finds were recovered.

Trench 3 (Figs 2, 3 and 4; Pl. 1)

Trench 3 was aligned S - N and was 24.80m long and 0.55m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.36m of topsoil and 0.15m subsoil overlying natural sandy gravel geology. A ditch (1) was recorded which was 1.25m wide and 0.38m deep and contained a single fill (52) which consisted of a mid brown grey sandy silt with frequent gravel inclusions. No finds were recovered.

Trench 4 (Figs 2, 3 and 4)

Trench 4 was aligned SW - NE and was 25.40m long and 0.56m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.54m of topsoil overlying natural sandy gravel geology. Two intercutting pits and ditch terminus were observed, pit 3 was 0.18m deep and contained a single fill (55) which consisted of a dark brown grey sandy silt with frequent gravel inclusions. No finds were recovered. Pit 4 was 0.10m and contained a single fill (56) which consisted of a dark brown grey sandy silt with frequent gravel inclusions, no finds were recovered, the relationship between these two pits was not evident. Ditch terminus 5 was 0.70m wide and 0.27m deep and contained a single fill (57) which consisted of a mid brown grey sandy silt with frequent gravel inclusions. No finds were recovered.

Trench 5 (Figs 2, 3 and 4)

Trench 5 was aligned S - N and was 25.40m long and 0.42m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.36m of topsoil overlying natural sandy gravel geology. Two ditches and a pit were observed. Ditch 6 was 1.69m wide and 0.42m deep and contained a two fills (58 and 59), the primary fill (58) consisted of a dark brown grey silty gravel with frequent gravel inclusions, the secondary fill (59) consisted of a mid red brown sandy silt with frequent gravel inclusions. No finds were recovered. Ditch 8 was 0.55m wide and 0.19m deep and contained a single fill (61) which consisted of mid red brown silty sand with frequent gravel inclusions. No finds were recovered. Pit 10 was 0.70m in diameter and 0.26m deep and contained a single fill (63) which consisted of a dark grey brown sandy silt with frequent gravel inclusions. No finds were recovered.

Trench 6 (Figs 2, 3 and 4)

Trench 6 was aligned S - N and was 24.80m long and 0.47m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.31m of topsoil and 0.14m subsoil overlying natural sandy gravel geology. A ditch (2) was recorded which was 2.15m wide and 0.80m deep and contained two fills (53 and 54). The primary fill (53) consisted of a dark brown grey sandy silt with frequent gravel inclusions, no finds were recovered. The secondary fill (54) consisted of a mid brown grey sandy silt with frequent gravel inclusions, no finds were recovered.

Trench 7 (Fig. 2)

Trench 7 was aligned SW - NE and was 25.80m long and 0.57m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.46m of topsoil and 0.08m subsoil overlying natural sandy clay geology. No features were observed or finds recovered.

Trench 8 (Fig. 2)

Trench 8 was aligned SE - NW and was 25.10m long and 0.56m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.47m of topsoil and 0.07m subsoil overlying natural sandy clay geology. No features were observed or finds recovered.

Trench 9 (Fig. 2)

Trench 9 was aligned W - E and was 24.40m long and 0.54m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.36m of topsoil and 0.10m subsoil overlying natural sandy clay geology. No features were observed or finds recovered.

Trench 10 (Figs 2, 3 and 4)

Trench 10 was aligned SW - NE and was 24.50m long and between 0.48 and 0.56m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.32 of topsoil and 0.10m subsoil overlying natural sandy clay geology. Two postholes and a pit were observed. Posthole 11 was 0.30m in diameter and 0.20m deep and contained a single fill (64) which consisted of a dark brown grey sandy silt. 2 pieces of burnt flint that appear to be the remnants of sections of blades were recovered from this fill. Posthole 12 (Pl. 5) was 0.30m in diameter and 0.15m deep and contained a single fill (65) which consisted of a dark brown grey sandy silt from which pottery was recovered. Pit 13 was 0.70m in diameter and 0.15m deep and contained a single fill (66) which consisted of a dark brown grey sandy silt from which pottery was recovered.

Trench 11 (Fig. 2)

Trench 11 was aligned SW - NE and was 20.60m long and 0.62m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.30m of topsoil and 0.30m subsoil overlying natural sandy clay geology. No features were observed or finds recovered.

Trench 12 (Figs 2, 3 and 4; Pl. 3)

Trench 12 was aligned SW - NE and was 29.30m long and 0.56m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.35m of topsoil and 0.19m subsoil overlying natural sandy clay geology. Four pits and a posthole were observed. Pit 14 was 0.50m in diameter and 0.12m deep and contained a single fill (67) which consisted of a dark brown grey sandy silt. No finds were recovered. Pit 15 was 0.50m in diameter and 0.25m deep and contained two fills. The primary fill (69) consisted of a mid grey brown sandy silt and the secondary fill (68) consisted of a dark brown grey sandy silt, no finds were recovered from either fill. Pit 16 (Pl. 6) was 0.26m deep and contained a single fill (70) which consisted of a mid brown grey sandy silt from which pottery was recovered. Pit 17 was 0.16m deep and contained a single fill (71) which consisted of a mid brown grey sandy silt from which pottery was recovered. Posthole 18 was 0.27m in diameter and 0.11m deep and contained a single fill (72) which consisted of a mid brown grey sandy silt, no finds were recovered. The relationship between pits 16 and 17 and posthole 18 were unclear.

Finds

Pottery By Jane Timby

The archaeological evaluation resulted in the recovery of some 36 sherds of pottery weighing 576.5 g accompanied by three fragments of fired clay (26 g). The material appears to belong to a single phase of later prehistoric activity. The assemblage was sorted into fabrics based on the colour, texture and nature of the inclusions present in the clay following the PCRG (1997) guidelines.

The sorted assemblage was quantified by sherd count and weight for each recorded context. A summary of the main fabrics recorded can be found in Table 1. In general terms the assemblage was in good condition with a few instances of multiple sherds from single vessels. The overall average sherd weight was 17.5 g. Pottery was recovered from just four cuts with most of the sherds, 28 pieces, coming from feature [12]. Additional material was recovered from cuts [13], [16] and [17].

Description

Most of the sherds are in a coarse, calcined flint-tempered fabric (FL1) with three small pieces from [12] in a slight finer, sparse flint-tempered ware (FL2). The vessels are handmade with no surface treatment or decoration. The group includes two joining sherds from a simple rim, carinated bowl where the shoulder diameter exceeds that of the rim; four sherds from a lid and two other vessels with simple squared-top rims. The character of the assemblage suggests that it belongs to the plain ware assemblages of the later Bronze Age. The angular bowl is very characteristic of similar assemblages from the area; cf. Stanwell, Surrey (O'Connell 1990, 50, form D). Lids are a less common feature at this time but one was noted at Runnymede Bridge (Longley 1980, fig. 26.150).

Fired clay

Three small fragments of fired clay were recovered from feature [12].

Worked Flint by Will Attard

A very small assemblage of 3 pieces of struck flint was recovered.

Post hole 11 produced 2 pieces of burnt flint that appear to be the remnants of sections of blades, although their condition makes this difficult to determine.

The third piece of struck flint was recovered from the topsoil. It has been extensively and invasively flaked on both dorsal and ventral faces, though its intended form (if any) is unclear. Edge quality is generally very good, with edge damage apparently resulting from mis-struck blows rather than rolling or post-depositional

damage. The flint used is a mid-grey (with light grey cherty patches accounting for approx. 20% of the surface area). As the vast majority of flint on this site is heavily flawed and largely unusable for knapping, it is likely to have originated elsewhere. Given the lack of obvious form and the fact that this piece was recovered from the topsoil, it is not possible to assign even a tentative date.

Environmental Sampling

Bulk soil samples for palaeoenvironmental evidence were taken from 7 sealed contexts and wet sieved using standard flotation techniques. All samples had a small amount of charcoal but samples from fills 55, 57, 58, 60 and 61 contained a number of unidentified weed seeds. The sample taken from pit 4 fill 55 also contained one unidentified cereal grain.

Conclusion

This evaluation has confirmed the archaeological potential of the site. It has revealed a number of archaeological deposits which were concentrated in trenches 10 and 12 in the south eastern corner of the site. Half of the features in this area contained pottery of late Bronze Age date and it is likely that the other features observed in this area are of a similar date. The features observed in trenches 4 and 5 in the north western area of the site and the ditch that was observed in trenches 1, 2, 3 and 6 were undated.

References

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APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at S, SE, SW and W end

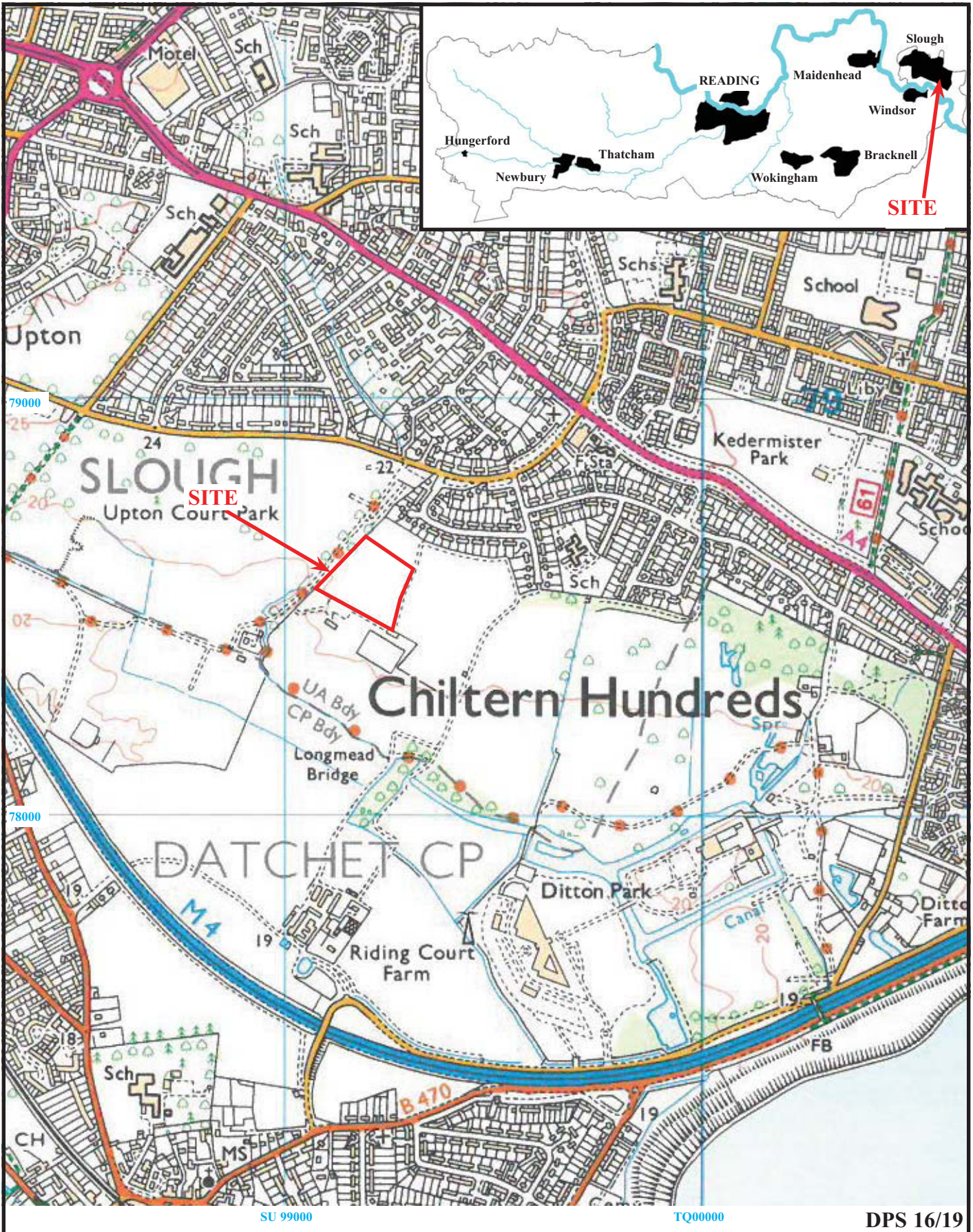
<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	24.40	1.80	0.50	0-0.25m topsoil, 0.25-0.45m subsoil, 0.45m+ natural mid red brown sandy clay geology. Ditch 9. Pl
2	25.50	1.80	0.54	0-0.32m topsoil, 0.32-0.52m subsoil, 0.52m+ natural mid red brown sandy gravel geology. Ditch 7. Pl. 4
3	24.80	1.80	0.55	0-0.36m topsoil, 0.36-0.51m subsoil, 0.51m+ natural mid red brown sandy gravel geology. Ditch 1. Pl. 1
4	25.40	1.80	0.56	0-0.54m topsoil, 0.54m+ natural mid red brown sandy gravel geology. Pits 3 and 4 and ditch terminus 5.
5	25.40	1.80	0.42	0-0.36m Topsoil, 0.36m+ natural mid red brown sandy gravel geology. Ditches 2 and 6 and Pit 10.
6	24.80	1.80	0.47	0-0.31m topsoil, 0.31-0.45m subsoil, 0.45m+ natural mid red brown sandy gravel geology. Ditch 2.
7	25.80	1.80	0.57	0-0.46m topsoil, 0.46-0.54m subsoil, 0.54m+ natural mid red brown sandy clay geology.
8	25.10	1.80	0.56	0-0.47m topsoil, 0.47-0.54m subsoil, 0.54m+ natural mid red brown sandy clay geology.
9	24.40	1.80	0.54	0-0.36m topsoil, 0.36-0.46m subsoil, 0.46m+ natural mid red brown sandy clay geology.
10	24.50	1.80	0.56	0-0.32m topsoil, 0.32-0.42m subsoil, 0.42m+ natural mid red brown sandy clay geology. Postholes 11 and 12 and Pit 13 Pls 2 and 5
11	20.60	1.80	0.62	0-0.30m topsoil, 0.30-0.60m subsoil, 0.60m+ natural mid red brown sandy clay geology.
12	29.30	1.80	0.56	0-0.35m topsoil, 0.35-0.54m subsoil, 0.54m+ natural mid red brown sandy clay geology. Pits 14, 15, 16 and 17 and Posthole 18. Pls 3 and 6

APPENDIX 2: Feature details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
3	1	52	Ditch		
6	2	53, 54	Ditch		
4	3	55	Pit		
4	4	56	Pit		
4	5	57	Ditch Terminus		
5	6	58, 59	Ditch		
2	7	60	Ditch		
5	8	61	Ditch		
1	9	62	Ditch		
5	10	63	Pit		
10	11	64	Posthole		
10	12	65	Posthole	LBA	Pottery
10	13	66	Pit	LBA	Pottery
12	14	67	Pit		
12	15	68, 69	Pit		
12	16	70	Pit	LBA	Pottery
12	17	71	Pit	LBA	Pottery
12	18	72	Posthole		

APPENDIX 3: Pottery details

<i>Cut</i>	<i>Deposit</i>	<i>Fabric</i>	<i>Form</i>	<i>Wt (g)</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Rim</i>	<i>Comment</i>
12	65	fired clay	fragments	26	3	0	
12	65	FL2	bodysherds	9	6	0	sieved
12	65	crumbs	bodysherds	0.5	3	0	sieved
12	65	FL1	bowl	89	1	1	2=1 joins
12	65	FL1	lid?	76	1	3	same vessel
12	65	FL1	base	32	1	0	
12	65	FL1	bowl	8	0	1	
12	65	FL1	bodysherds	332	15	0	
13	66	FL1	bodysherd	9	1	0	
16	70	FL1	bodysherd	11	1	0	
17	71	FL1	?jar/bowl	10	1	1	
TOTAL				602.5	33	6	



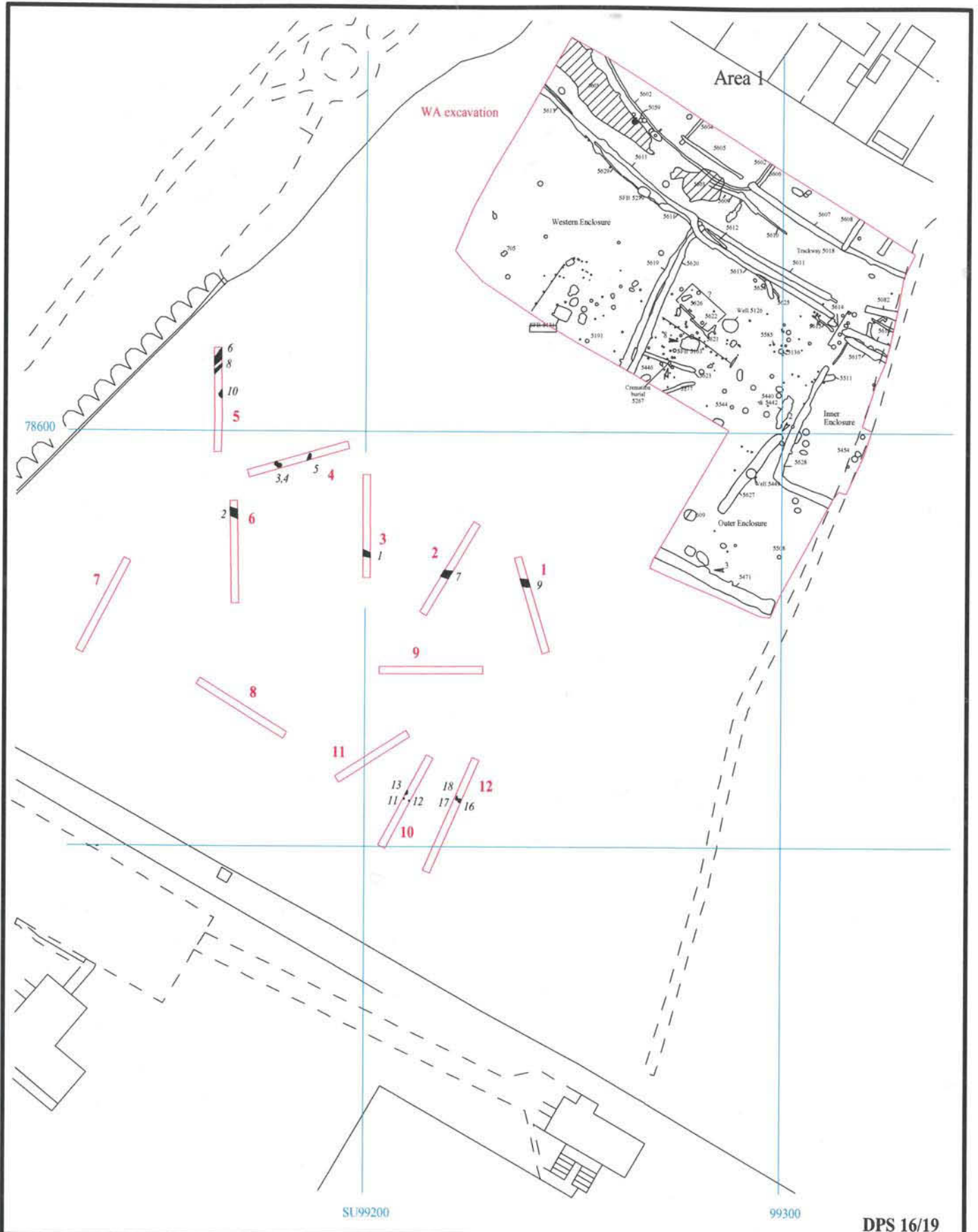
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Figure 1. Location of site within Slough and Berkshire.

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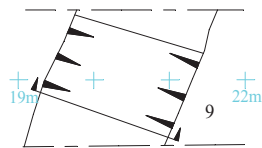
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Figure 2. Location of trenches..

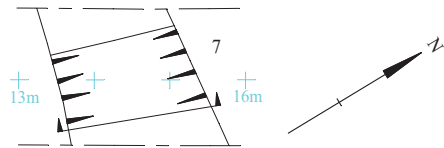


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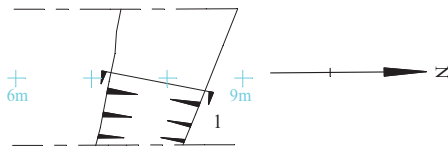
Trench 1



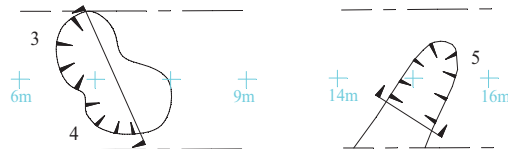
Trench 2



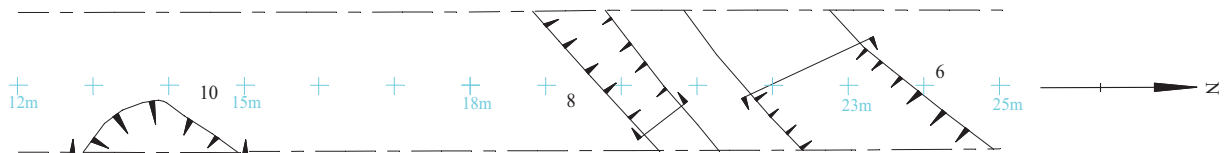
Trench 3



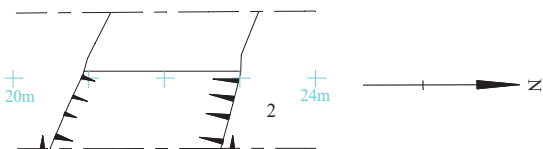
Trench 4



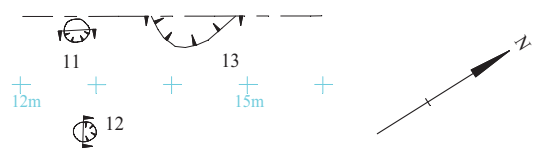
Trench 5



Trench 6



Trench 10



Trench 12

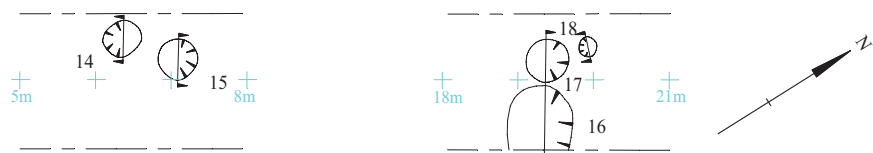
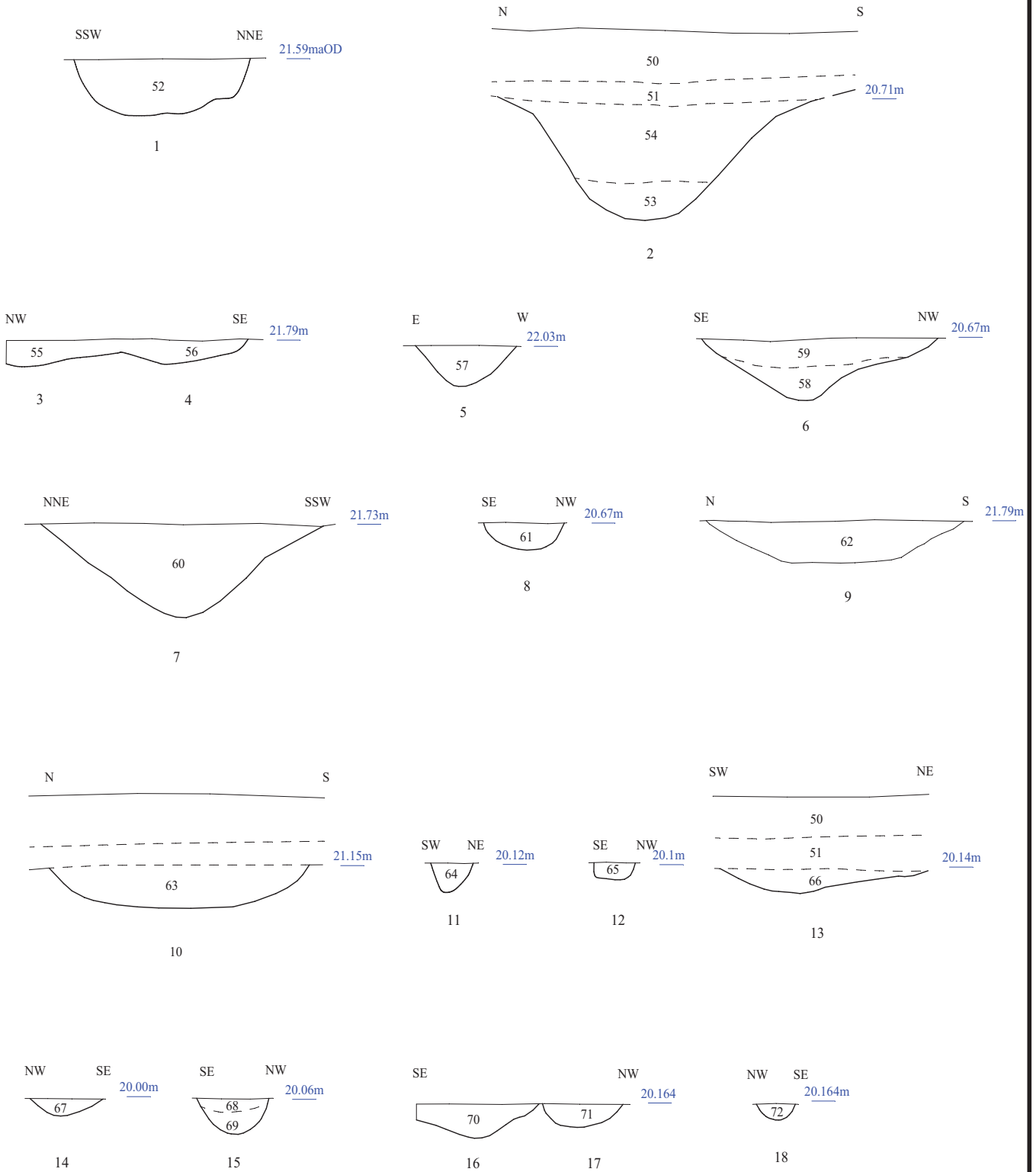


Figure 3. Detail of trenches.





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Figure 4. Sections.





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



Plate 2. Trench 10, looking north east, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.

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Plates 1 - 2.**

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Plate 3. Trench 12, looking north east, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 4. Trench 2, ditch 7, looking east, Scales: 1m and 0.5m.

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Plates 3 - 4.**

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Plate 5. Trench 10, pit 12, looking south east, Scales: 0.3m, and 0.1m.



Plate 6. Trench 12, pits 16 and 17, looking south west, Scales: 1m and 0.1m.

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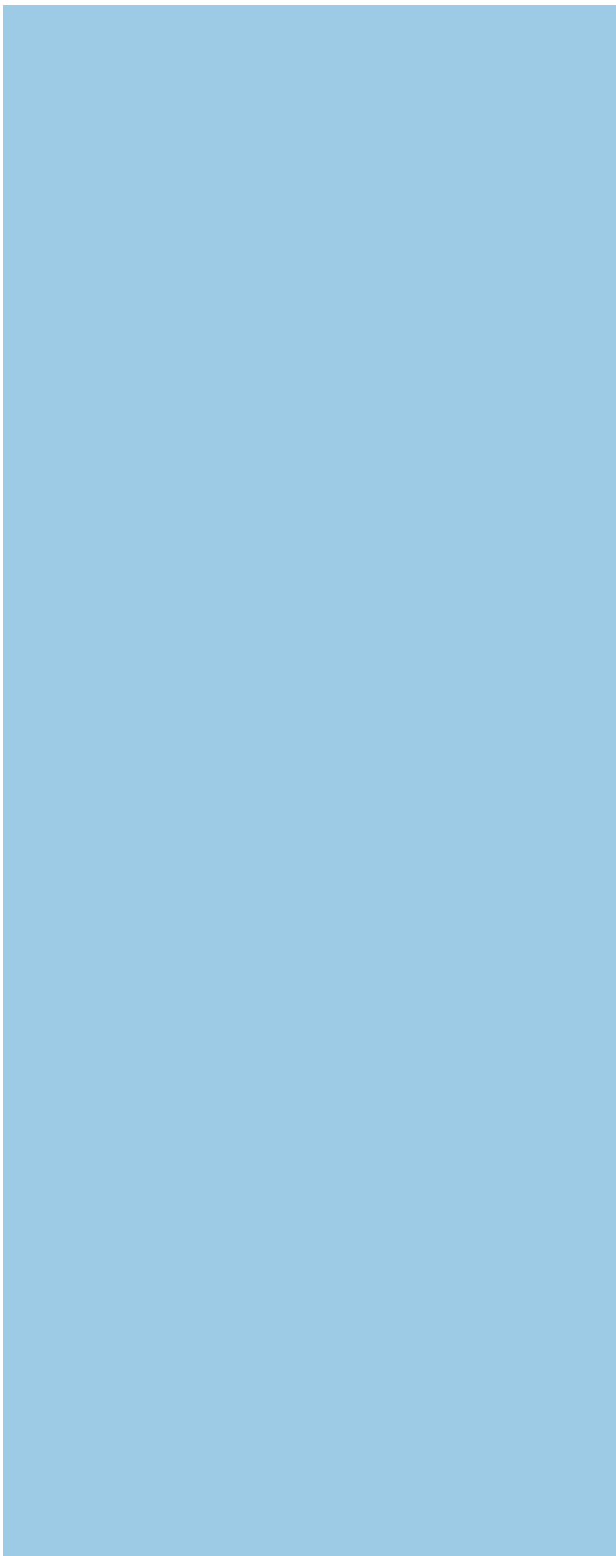
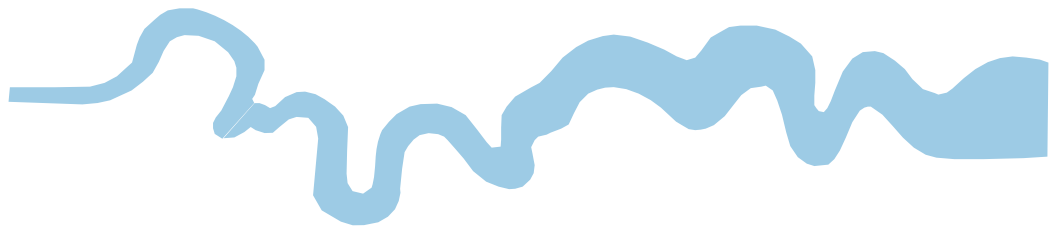
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Plates 5 - 6.**

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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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