

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 W E S T

**Hurn Court Farm, Parley Lane, Hurn,
Bournemouth, Dorset Phase 5**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Andy Weale

Site Code: HCF12/186

(SZ 1195 9679)

Hurn Court Farm, Parley Lane, Hurn, Bournemouth, Dorset (Phase 5)

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for New Milton Sand & Ballast**

Andrew Weale

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code HCF 12/186

November 2016

Summary

Site name: Hurn Court Farm, Parley Lane, Hurn, Bournemouth, Dorset: Phase 5

Grid reference: SZ 1195 9679

Site activity: Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 1st to 2nd September 2016

Project manager: Andrew Weale

Site supervisor: Andrew Weale

Site code: HCF 12/186

Area of site: c. 3.9 ha

Summary of results The evaluation has revealed a number of archaeological features across the site though few are well dated. However, one area contained a number of Roman features. Some prehistoric pottery was also recovered.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, South West in Taunton and will be deposited with Dorset County Museum in due course

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Hurn Court Farm, Parley Lane, Hurn, Bournemouth, Dorset, Phase 5 An archaeological evaluation

by Andrew Weale

Report 12/186c

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Hurn Court Farm, Parley Lane, Hurn, Bournemouth, Dorset (SZ 11952 96795). The work was commissioned by Mr Steve Haughton, Hurn Quarry Manager for New Milton Sand and Ballast, Caird Avenue, New Milton, Hampshire BH25 5PX.

Planning permission (8/2001/0192) has been gained from Dorset County Council to extract mineral from a c. 53ha parcel of land at Hurn Court Farm, Hurn, Bournemouth, Dorset (SZ 1210 9680) (Fig. 1). The consent includes a condition (24) relating to archaeology as guided by *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16, 1990) and the County Council Mineral Policies. It is acknowledged that the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012) has superseded PPG16. This document is only concerned with extraction Phase 5 of that permission centred on SZ 1195 9679.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Andrew Weale, Arkadiusz Piszcz, Mariusz Paszkiewicz, Agata Socha-Paszkiewicz, Piotr Wróbel and Dominika Golebiewska, between 1st and 2nd September 2016 and the site code is HCF 12/186.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services South West, Taunton but it is anticipated that it will be deposited with Dorset County Museum in due course..

Location, topography and geology

Hurn is located on the north-eastern outskirts of Bournemouth/Christchurch (Fig. 1). The site lies to the south-east of Bournemouth Airport and to the east of Hurn Court Farm house and buildings. Parley Lane to the north forms the northern boundary of the quarry. The ground dips gently down eastwards towards the Avon from c. 7.5m above Ordnance Datum in the west to 5m aOD on the east side. The underlying geology is Quaternary fourth river terrace sand and gravel (BGS 1991).

Archaeological background

The village of Hurn was part of the parish of Christchurch until 1894 when it became a civil parish in its own right (VCH 1912, 83). Its name derives from *OE hyrne* indicating a place within an angle or corner of land (Mills 1998, 192), presumably a reference to its position between the Rivers Stour and Avon. The area around the site is notable for Early to Middle Bronze Age activity represented by a number of round barrow cemeteries, one on the low ridge on the east side of the River Avon and a second, looser group on the low-lying ground at East Parley Common, to the west. Both groups were the object of important early 20th-century exploration (Calkin 1964). An enclosure on St Catherine's Hill to the east may date to the Iron Age.

At the time of the Domesday survey (AD1086) Hurn was assessed as one hide held from the Bishop of Bayeux by Hugh de Port within the Hundred of Edgegate. There was land for one plough and half a fishery rendering 2d. The households comprised three bordars with a slave. Its value at the time had risen to 36s compared with 20s prior to the Norman conquest when it had been held by two freehold tenants (Williams and Martin 1992, 110). Early Heron or Hurn Court was granted to the Priory of Christchurch, remaining a rural seat for the priors until the dissolution (VCH 1912).

Previous archaeological work on the site

Conditional planning permission was granted for mineral extraction following a desk-based assessment (WA 1999), fieldwalking (WA 2000) and an evaluation (Wells 2000) covering the proposal areas referred to as Phases 1-4: Phase 5 (the current site) was unavailable at that time for evaluation. The previous evaluation recovered Mesolithic to post-medieval finds from the topsoil and subsoil and identified various archaeological features. The most significant was confirmation of the presence of an Early Bronze Age ring ditch (levelled round barrow) in the south-east corner of the site (Phase 3) (Wells 2000, figs 2 and 12). Early to Middle Iron Age and Roman pottery were also found in a palaeochannel deposit (Wells 2000, figs 2, 10 and 11). There were also a number of undated ditches and gullies along with a cremation burial (Wells 2000).

No further archaeological work was deemed necessary in the north of the site (Phases 1 and 2) but was for Phases 3 and 4 to the east (Tabor and Weale in prep). The ring ditch discovered during the original evaluation in the south-east corner of the site was to be preserved *in situ*. The Phases 3 and 4 fieldwork have revealed additional deposits including another ring ditch, urned cremation burials and an intense settlement complex dating from the later Iron Age though to late Roman times.

Objectives and methodology

The aims of the evaluation were to determine the presence/ absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological or palaeoenvironmental deposits within the area of extraction. The general objectives of the project were to:

- excavate and record all archaeological deposits and features within the areas threatened by the proposed development;
- produce relative and absolute dating and phasing for deposits and features recorded on the site;
- establish the character of these deposits in attempt to define functional areas on the site such as industrial, domestic, etc.; and
- produce information on the economy and local environment and compare and contrast this with the results of other excavations in the region.

The specific research aims of this project are:

- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present.
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any post-glacial period are present
- the potential and significance of any such deposits located will be assessed according to the research priorities such as set out in English Heritage Research Agenda (English Heritage 2005) or any more local or thematic research priorities as necessary (Webster 2007).

A total of 8 trenches, each 25m long and 2m wide were to be excavated across the site (Phase 5). Topsoil and any other overburden was to be removed by a 360° tracked machine. A toothless ditching bucket was used to expose archaeologically sensitive levels, under constant archaeological supervision. Where archaeological or palaeoenvironmental remains were exposed, these were to be cleaned and investigated by hand. Sufficient of the archaeological features and deposits exposed were to be excavated or sampled by hand to satisfy the aims of the brief, without compromising archaeological features or deposits which warrant preservation *in-situ*, or might better be excavated under conditions pertaining to full excavation.

A programme of environmental sampling swat to take place where sufficiently well stratified subsoil deposits were located. Metal detectors were to be used to enhance the recovery of metal finds.

Results

Five of the trenches were excavated as intended. Trenches 1, 2 and 6 were moved to the south and east of their intended positions due to a large soil bund containing the topsoil from the plant area and Phase 1 Area forming a bund around the southern edge of the plant area and Hurn Court Farm itself. The trenches varied from 22.80m to 26.80m long and from 0.41m to 1.17m deep and all were 2.40m wide. Only those trenches containing certain or probable archaeological features are described in detail below.

A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1. A complete list of features investigated forms Appendix 2.

Trench 1 (Figs 2, 3 and 5; Pl 1)

Trench 1 was aligned W-E and was 23.40m long and a maximum of 0.90m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of topsoil which was 0.34m thick beneath which was a subsoil 0.52m thick which overlay natural sand and gravel geology. At the eastern end of the Trench was Ditch 2200 which was aligned north-east to south-west. It was 0.49m deep and was filled with a mid red brown silty sand with gravel (2252) which contained no datable artefacts.

Trench 5 (Figs 2, 3 and 5; Pls 2 and 5)

Trench 5 was aligned SW-NE and was 29.40m long and a maximum of 1.10m. The stratigraphy consisted of topsoil which was 0.58m thick beneath which was a subsoil 0.48m thick which overlay natural sand and gravel geology. Ditch 2201 at the north-east end of the trench was aligned south-west to north-east and was 0.80m wide and 0.49m deep. It was filled with 2253, a friable mid grey brown silty clay with occasional stone. It contained no datable artefacts

Trench 6 (Figs 2, 4 and 5 Pls 3, 7–10)

Trench 6 was aligned SE-NW and was 31.0m long and a maximum of 1.10m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of topsoil 0.45m thick overlying subsoil 0.60m thick which overlay natural bedded gravel geology At the south-east end was a linear feature aligned roughly north to south which was 3m wide. On excavation this was seen to be made up of 5 gullies that appear to represent the redefining of the same boundary over time with the boundary slowly moving eastwards. 2. The latest was gully 2212 which was 1.08m wide and 0.54m deep and filled with a mid yellow/grey silty sand (2264). Gully 2212 cut 2211 which was 0.76m wide and 0.44m deep and filled with a mid grey/black silty sand (2263). In turn Gully 2211 cut 2210 which was 0.96m wide and 0.40m deep and filled with a mid grey/brown silty (2262). Gully 2210 cut 2209 which was 0.90m wide, 0.48m deep and filled with a mid grey/brown silty sand (2261) Finally Gully 2209 cut 2208 which was 0.86m wide and 0.46m deep and filled with a light grey/brown silty sand (2260).

Further north-west was pit 2206 which was oval in plan, 1.60m long, 1.05m wide and 0.28m deep. It was filled with a light grey loose silty sand (2258) which contained five sherds of Roman pottery. Pit 2206 cut Pit 2207 which appeared circular in plan, 2.20m in diameter and 0.18m deep. It was filled with a mid grey loose silty sand (2258) and contained one sherd of prehistoric and one sherd of Roman pottery.

Ditch 2213 was aligned south-west to north-east and was 2.90m wide but was not excavated. The north west edge of Ditch 2213 appeared to be cut by Pit 2205.

Pit 2205 was oval in plan 2.55m long 0.61m wide and 0.35m deep. It was filled with a dark grey silty sand (2257) that contained a single sherd of Roman pottery. Pit 2005 also cut Ditch 2203.

Ditch 2203 was aligned south-west to north-east and was 2.90m wide but only 0.15m deep. It was filled with a mid grey/brown silty sand (2255) that contained no datable artefacts. Ditch 2203 cut Gully 2204. Ditch 2204 was aligned south west to north east and was 0.78m wide but only 0.17m deep and terminated within the trench. It was filled with a mid grey/brown silty sand (2256) that contained no datable artefacts.

Trench 8 (Figs 3, 4 and 6; Pl. 4)

Trench 8 was aligned W-E and was 26.80m long and a maximum of 0.89m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of topsoil which was 0.40m thick beneath which was a subsoil 0.47m thick which overlay natural hard gravel with patches of loose sand geology. Ditch 2202 which was linear in plan orientated south to north and was 0.98m wide and 0.23m deep. It was filled with a mid red/ brown silty sand 2254 that contained no datable artefacts.

Finds

Prehistoric and Roman pottery by Richard Tabor

A total of one (residual) prehistoric sherd weighing 5g and 8 Roman sherds were recovered during the evaluation (Appendix 3) from three different cuts.

Prehistoric pottery

mvG1 Moderately hard grey micaceous vesicular fabric with grey surfaces including moderate grog (<2mm).

The moderate voids are where curving plates of shell have dissolved. Smoothed exterior.

Grog was included in pottery of Early Bronze Age in the area but was re-introduced in neighbouring west during the Middle Iron Age. The dating of the use of shell is similarly ambiguous.

Roman pottery

Samian Fine silty pink fabric with orangey red slip on both surfaces.

Q1 Hard dark grey fabric with dark grey surfaces including abundant fine (<1mm) and rarely medium (<2mm) rounded quartz. Wheel thrown with smoothed or burnished surfaces.

GW1 Hard grey fabric with dark grey surfaces including abundant quartz sand (<0.2mm). Smoothed exterior.

GW2 Hard grey fabric with buff orange, possibly slipped, surfaces including abundant quartz sand (<0.2mm). Wheel thrown with smoothed or burnished surfaces.

Four sherds from a straight-sided 'dog bowl' classified as Type 20 at Greyhound Yard, Dorchester were in fabric Q1. The form and fabric are typical of South East Dorset Black Burnished Ware but the type is of limited diagnostic value as it was introduced fairly early in the period and remained in circulation until the end of it (Woodward et al. 1993, tab. 36). The two grey ware sherds are also likely to be local products. Samian is typically an import of the Early to Middle Roman period.

Burnt flint

Some 29g of burnt flint was recovered from ditch 2204 (2256) and 10g from pit 2207 (2259), all recovered from the soil samples.

Environmental samples by Joanna Pine

Three soil samples were taken of 20L each, floated and sieved using a 0.2mm mesh. All three produced charred plant remains. Those from samples 400 [ditch 2201 (2253)] and 401 [ditch 2204 (2256)] produced a little charcoal and a few unidentified weed seeds. That from sample 402 [pit 2207(2259)] produced a much greater volume of charcoal along with weed seeds.

Conclusion

The evaluation has revealed a number of archaeological features across the site mostly comprising linear features with a few pits which provided little dating evidence. However one trench (6) showed a dense and complicated sequence of archaeological features of Roman date, though some prehistoric finds are also present.

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APPENDIX 1: Trench details

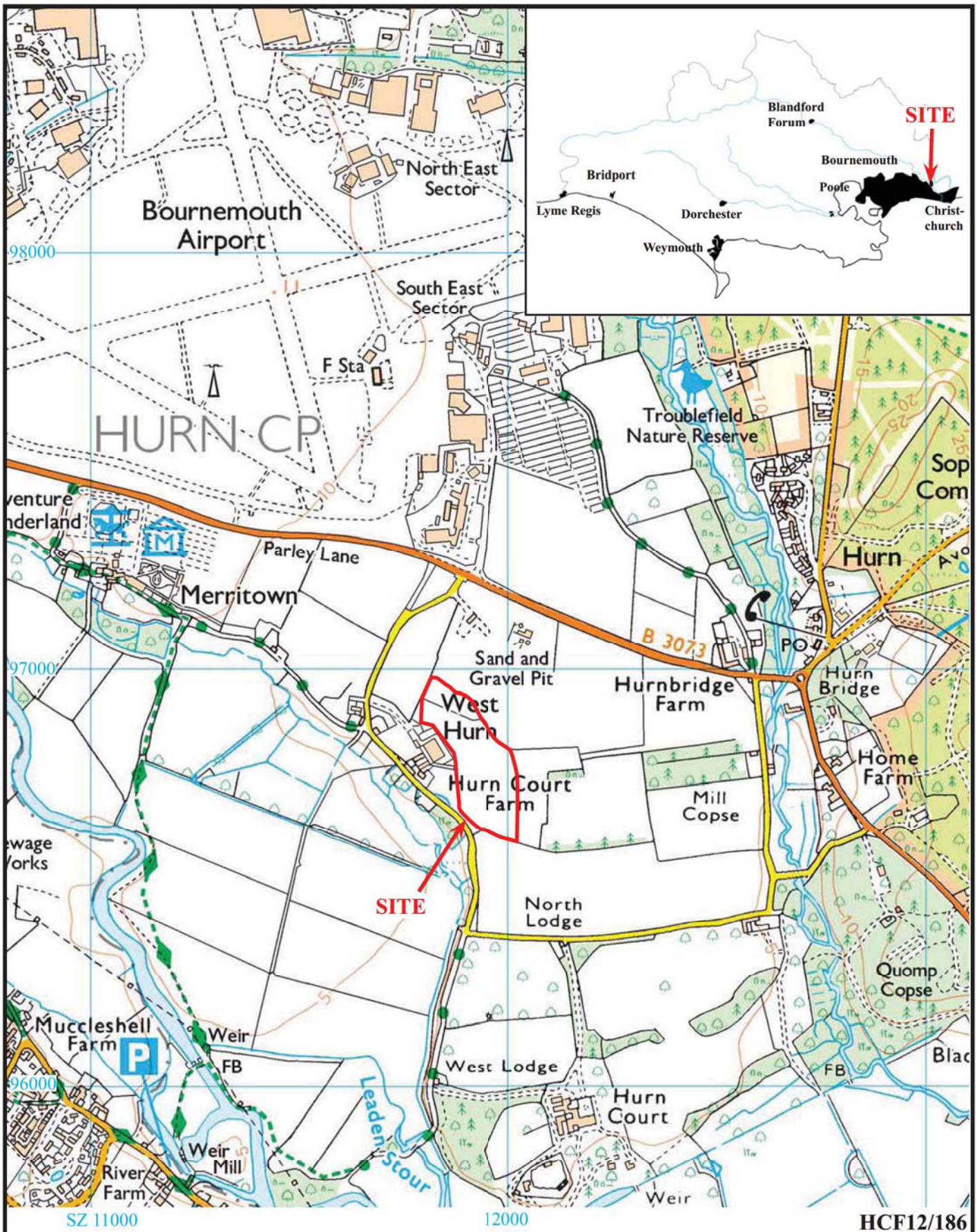
<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	23.40	2.40	0.90	0-0.34m Topsoil; 0.34-0.86 Subsoil; 0.86m+ light red brown sand with gravel (natural geology). Ditch 2200 [Pl. 1]
2	27.20	2.40	0.96	0-0.40m Topsoil; 0.40-0.90m Subsoil; 0.90m+ mid - brown sand and gravel (natural geology).
3	26.90	2.40	1.10	South west end: 0-0.40 m Topsoil; 0.40-1.05m Subsoil; 1.05m+ mid brown sand with patches of gravel (natural geology)
4	27.00	2.40	1.26	0-0.40m Topsoil; 0.40 – 1.21 m Subsoil; 1.21m+ mid brown sand and gravel (natural geology).
5	29.40	2.40	1.10	0-0.58m Topsoil; 0.58-1.06m Subsoil; 1.06m+ mid brown sand and hard gravel (natural geology). Ditch 2201 [Pls 2 and 5]
6	31.00	2.40	1.10	0-0.45m Topsoil; 0.45-1.05m Subsoil; 1.05m+ mid brown sand and hard gravel (natural geology). Pits 2205, 2206 and 2207. Gullies 2204, 2209, 2210 and 2211 Ditches 2203, 2208 and 2212 [Pls 3, 7-10]
7	26.50	2.40	0.75	0-0.30m Topsoil; 0.30-0.70m Subsoil; 0.70m+ mid brown sand (natural geology)
8	26.80	2.40	0.89	0-0.40m Topsoil; 0.40 - 0.87m Subsoil; 0.87m+ Hard gravel with patches of loose mid brown sand (natural geology). Ditch 2202 [Pl. 4]

APPENDIX 2: Feature details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
1	2200	2252	Ditch	Undated	None
5	2201	2253	Ditch	Undated	None
8	2202	2254	Ditch	Undated	None
6	2203	2255	Ditch	Roman/ Prehistoric	Stratigraphy
6	2204	2256	Gully	Roman/ Prehistoric	Stratigraphy
6	2205	2257	Pit	Roman	Pottery
6	2206	2258	Pit	Roman	Pottery
6	2207	2259	Pit	Prehistoric/Roman	Pottery
6	2208	2260	Ditch	Undated	None
6	2209	2261	Gully	Undated	None
6	2210	2262	Gully	Undated	None
6	2211	2263	Gully	Undated	None
6	2212	2264	Ditch	Undated	None
6	2213	2265	Ditch	Roman/ Prehistoric	Stratigraphy (not excavated)

Appendix 3: Pottery fabrics by feature

<i>trench</i>	<i>cut</i>	<i>fill</i>	mvG1		Samian		Q1		GW1		GW2		Total	
			<i>No</i>	<i>Wt(g)</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt(g)</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt(g)</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt(g)</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt(g)</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt(g)</i>
6	2205	2257							1	5			1	5
6	2206	2258			1	5	4	26					5	31
6	2207	2259	1	5							1	9	2	14

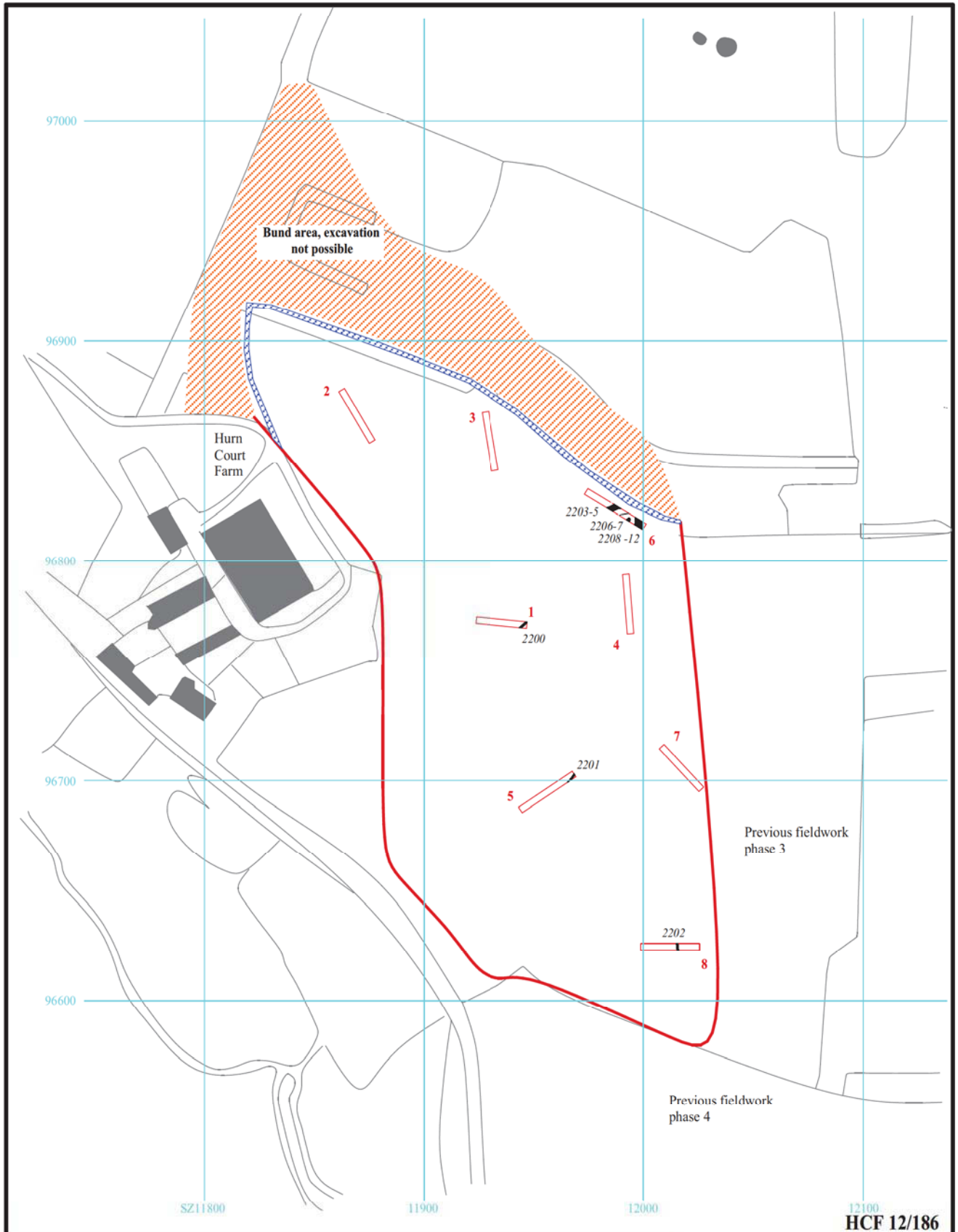


**Hurn Court Farm, Parley Lane, Hurn,
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Figure 1. Location of site in relation to
Bournemouth and within Dorset

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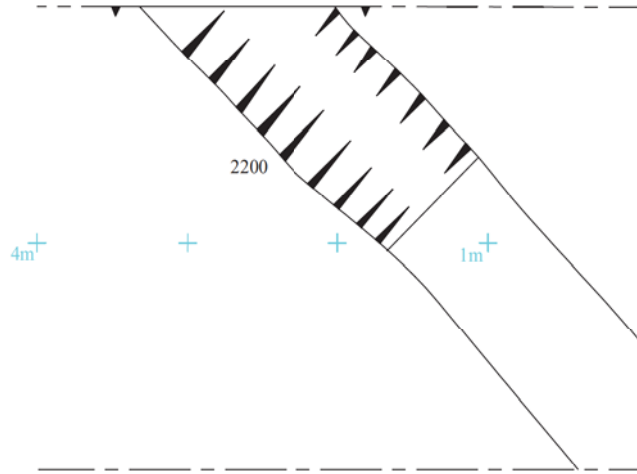
**Hurn Court Farm, Parley Lane, Hurn,
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Figure 2. Location of trenches and features

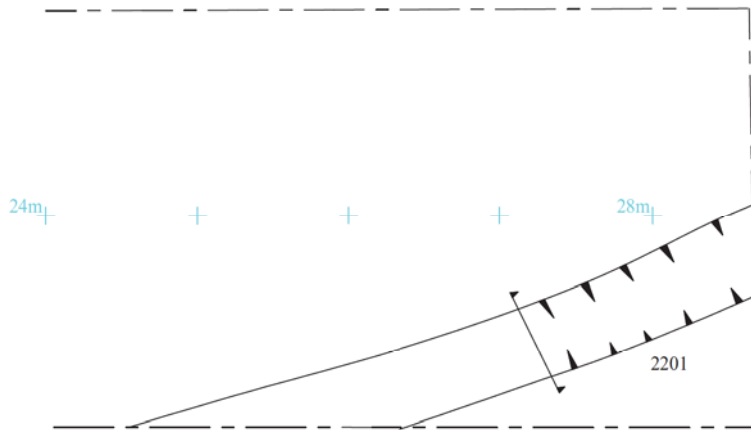


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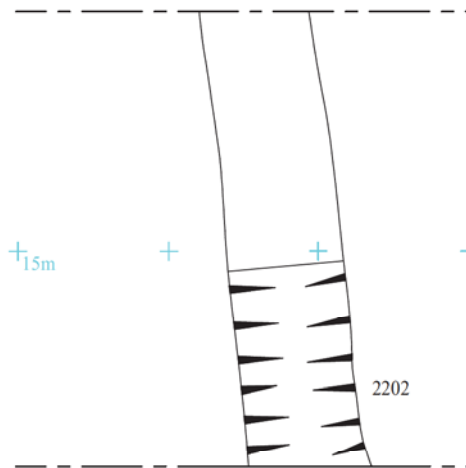
Trench 1



Trench 5



Trench 8



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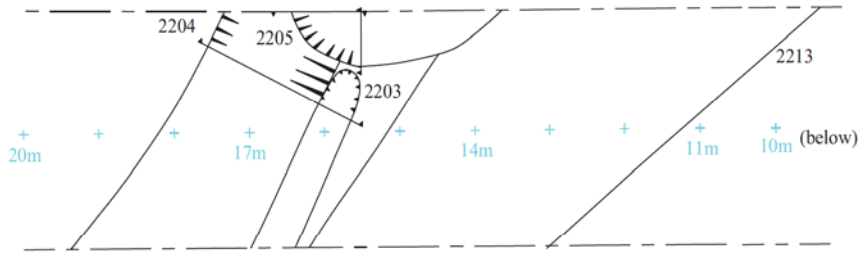
**Hurn Court Farm, Parley Lane, Hurn,
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Figure 3. Trench Plans

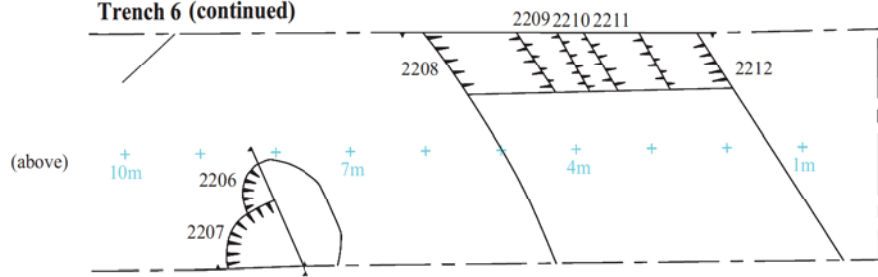


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Trench 6



Trench 6 (continued)



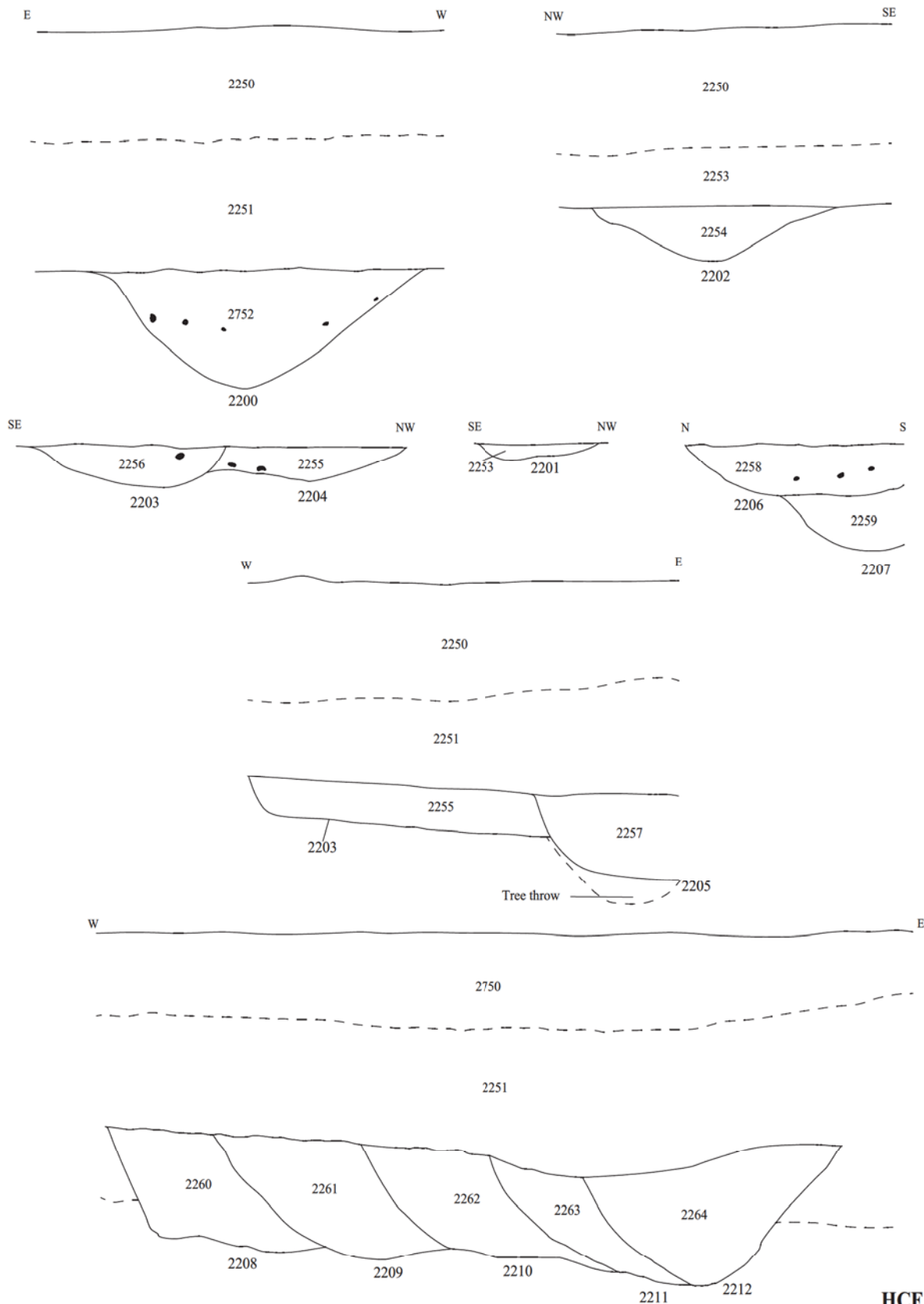
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Figure 4. Trench Plans



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Figure 5. Sections



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Plate 1. Trench 1 looking south west, Scales: 2m



Plate 2. Trench 5 looking north east, Scales: 2m

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**Hurn Court Farm, Parley Lane, Hurn, Bournemouth, Dorset, Phase 5
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Plates 1 and 2.





Plate 3. Trench 6 looking north west, Scales: 2m



Plate 4. Trench 8 looking east, Scales: 2m

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**Hurn Court Farm, Parley Lane, Hurn, Bournemouth, Dorset, Phase 5
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Plates 3 and 4.





Plate 5. Trench 5 Gully 2201 looking south west, Scale: 0.3m



Plate 6. Trench 8 Ditch 2202 looking south, Scales: 2m and 0.3m

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**Hurn Court Farm, Parley Lane, Hurn, Bournemouth, Dorset, Phase 5
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Plates 5 and 6.





Plate 7. Trench 6 Gullys 2204 and 2203 looking south west, Scale: 2m



Plate 8. Trench 6 Ditch 2203 and Pit 2205 looking north, Scale: 2m

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**Hurn Court Farm, Parley Lane, Hurn, Bournemouth, Dorset, Phase 5
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Plates 7 and 8.





Plate 9. Trench 6 Pits 2206 and 2207 looking east, Scale: 1m

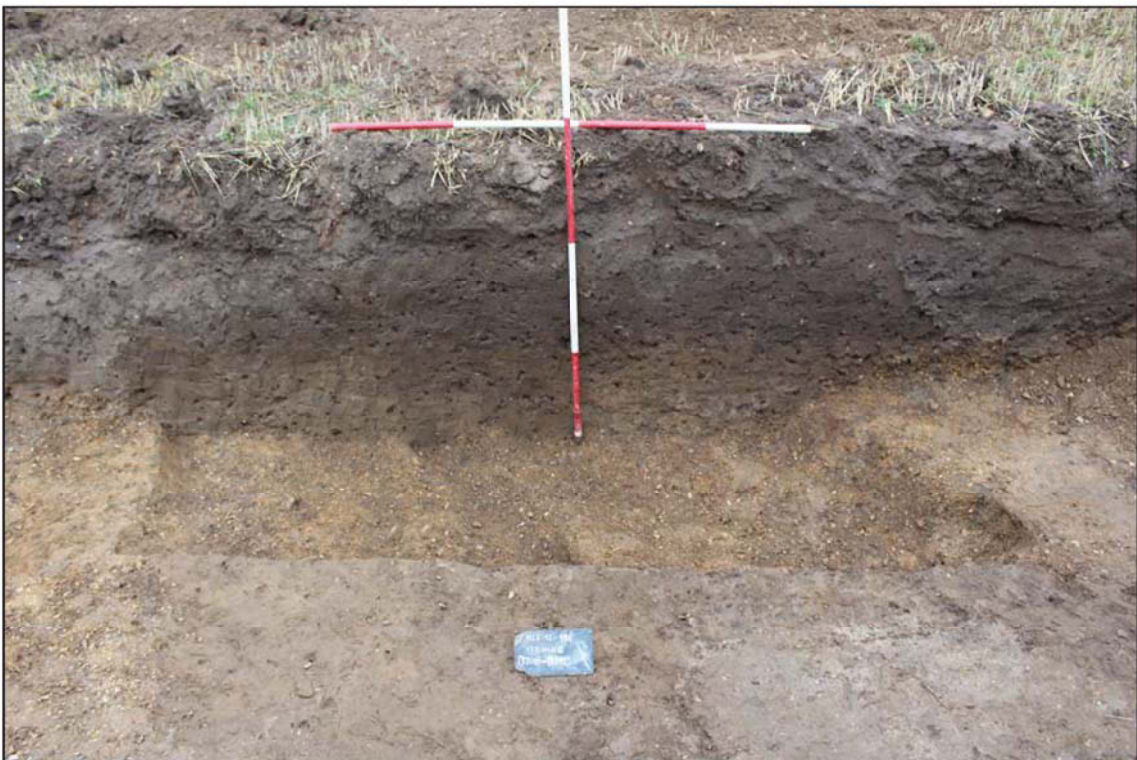
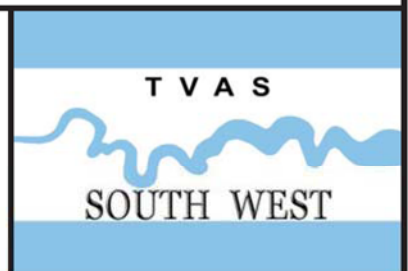


Plate 10. Trench 6 Gullies 2208-2212 looking north, Scales: 2m

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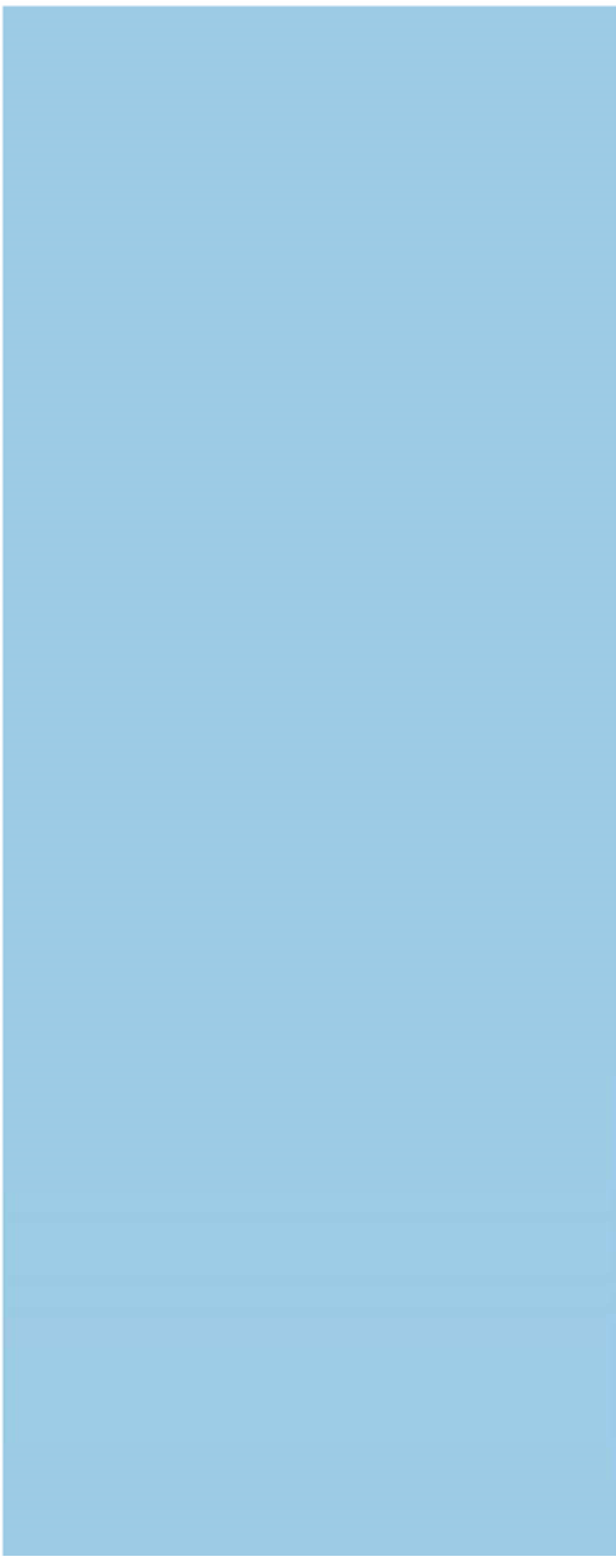
Plates 9 and 10.



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





**TVAS (South West),
Unit 21 Apple Business Centre,
Frobisher Way, Taunton,
Somerset, TA2 6BB**

**Tel: 01823 288 284
Fax: 01823 272 462
Email: southwest@tvas.co.uk
Web: www.tvas.co.uk**