

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Land west of Bredon Road, Tewkesbury,
Gloucestershire**

An archaeological excavation

By Luis Esteves

BRT13/60

(SO 9015 3399)

**Land west of Bredon Road, Tewkesbury,
Gloucestershire**

An Archaeological Excavation

For Bellway Homes

by Luís Esteves

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code BRT13/60

January 2017

Summary

Site name: Land west of Bredon Road, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire.

Grid reference: SO 9015 3399

Site activity: Excavation

Date and duration of project: 10th October to 2nd December 2016

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Luís Esteves

Site code: BRT 13/60

Area of site: c. 1.96 ha

Summary of results: The excavation revealed a moderate volume of archaeological deposits. A group of undated pits all appear to be Iron Age in date, related to one which contained the very partial remains of an unsexed adult human, radiocarbon dated to the 4th or more likely 3rd century BC. One ditch might also belong to this period, based on a small assemblage of pottery it contained. The main focus of this site is of medieval date comprising a small square medieval enclosure apparently set within a larger open enclosure, all probably of 13th century date. These probably reflect agricultural or pastoral use of an area located away from any core areas of occupation.

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

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	Steve Preston✓ 19.01.17

Land west of Bredon Road, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire An Archaeological Excavation

by Luís Esteves

with contributions by Paul Blinkhorn, Aidan Colyer, Ceri Falys, Lizzie Lewins and
Rosalind McKenna

Report 13/60b

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological excavation carried out at land west of Bredon Road, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire (SO 9015 3399) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Steven Weaver of CgMs, on behalf of Bellway Homes, Park Ground Corner, 500 Park Avenue, Aztec West, Almondsbury, Bristol, BS32 4RZ.

Planning permission (14/00211/OUT) has been gained from Tewkesbury Borough Council for residential development on the site. The consent is subject to a condition (11) relating to archaeology, requiring a programme of archaeological investigation and, if necessary, mitigation. Geophysical survey and evaluation trenching had confirmed the archaeological potential of the site, so that in this case mitigation was determined to require excavation, recording and publication covering a *c.* 1.96ha area. A Written Scheme of Investigation (Weaver 2016) for a programme of archaeological mitigation was agreed with the Council. The area identified for detailed excavation focused on areas of noted archaeological remains and development impacts.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012) and the Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Charles Parry, Archaeologist for Gloucestershire County Council, the archaeological adviser to the Borough. The fieldwork took place between 10th October and 2nd December 2016 and the site code is BRT13/60. The excavation team consisted of the author assisted by Cosmo Bacon, Kyle Beaverstock, Jesse Coxe, Michael Johnson and Ben Tebbit.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Cheltenham Museum in due course. Ministry of Justice Licence 16-0282 was obtained for the removal of human remains.

Location, topography and geology

The overall development site consists of an irregular parcel of land *c.* 3ha in extent in the Mitton area, to the north of Tewkesbury town centre (Fig. 1) in the Avon Valley. It lies to the north-west of Bredon Road and east

of the River Avon. The site was in use as pasture and is mapped as being mostly on Blue Lias with some first and second terrace gravel and alluvium present to the south and west (BGS 1988) . The geology encountered on site comprised pebble gravels in a coarse sand matrix with patches of silty clay. The land slopes down from the east at about 20m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) to the west at about 12m aOD.

Archaeological background

The site itself had already been subject to an archaeological desk-based assessment (Elliott 2013), geophysical survey (Stratascan 2014) and evaluation by means of trial trenching (CA 2014), while the wider area benefits from a number of assessments, as summarized below.

Tewkesbury, located at the confluence of the Rivers Avon and Severn has long been an important river crossing, where numerous sites and finds of all periods have been recorded (Douthwaite and Devine 1998). Severe flooding has been recorded from the 15th century and early settlement was predominantly on the higher ground on outcrops of gravel and lias. Finds of stone tools from the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods have been recorded over much of the modern town. Human activity continued into the Bronze Age with significant activity around Oldbury Hill, north-east of the town centre, and to the south of the modern town (Hannan 1993; Thomas 1997; Thomas and Walker 1998). Less Iron Age activity has been recorded but excavations at Holm Hill in the 1970s found ditches containing Iron Age pottery (Hannan 1997), and recent work just across the river from the site suggests that Iron Age or Roman remains may be present in comparable low lying areas (NPA 2011).

A Roman road ran close by linking the Roman towns of Worcester and Gloucester (Margary's (1955) route 180) and it is likely that a settlement was established during this period with extensive finds made around the Oldbury area, the modern settlement and the abbey church. Little is known of Anglo-Saxon activity around the area, but it is likely that settlement would have continued with two possible areas of activity - a monastery or minster (possibly in the location of the abbey) and a timber hall at Holm Hill (Hannan 1976).

By the Medieval period, the settlement of Tewkesbury is firmly established with an abbey, mills, a fishery and a market. The battle of Tewkesbury, of 4 May 1471, fought to the south of the town, was one of the most important battles of the Wars of the Roses.

Of more immediate relevance for the site itself, Mitton Chapel (extant from the 13th to 17th centuries) and its associated cemetery were noted to lie to the east of Bredon Road, and it was considered possible that associated remains could extend into the site. An extraction pit or pond (dating to at least 1702) was identified

within the eastern extent of the site, in addition to the potential for linear features outside of the site to the south to run into it (Elliott 2013).

The geophysical survey (Stratascan 2014) identified a number of potential archaeological features, including ridge-and-furrow, a pit or pond and a small number of linear and pit-like features. The evaluation trenching (CA 2014) confirmed a correlation between the geophysical anomalies and linear features, but no discrete features were identified apart from the pond, and very few finds recovered, so that the majority of the features remained undated. Where dated, the features could be assigned to the Middle Bronze, possibly Iron Age, and one medieval ditch (not detected by the geophysical survey) and the pond was confirmed as post-medieval.

Objectives and methodology

As a result of the evaluation, excavation was required over most of the eastern part of the overall development site. The purpose of the excavation was to excavate and record all archaeological deposits and features within the area threatened by the development.

The general research aims of this project were:

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

Priority was to be given to establishing an overall plan of the site and determining the various phases and subphases of activity in order to address the specific research aims of this project (Weaver 2016), which were to gather data to answer the following questions:

- What is the evidence for Bronze Age occupation activity on the site and at what date did it commence and how does it develop?
- Are deposits present within identified features that contain dateable or function specific artefacts/eco-facts to help characterise activity and/or resource exploitation?
- How does this relate to other recorded archaeological evidence of this period in the area?
- What is the evidence for Iron Age occupation activity on the site and at what date did it commence, how does it develop, and how does it relate to other recorded activity of this period in the area?
- Is there any evidence to suggest a continuity of settlement and/or use of the site through the Prehistoric period, and if so, how does this change over time?
- What is the evidence for medieval activity on the site and at what date did it commence and how does it develop?
- Is medieval use of the site entirely agricultural in character or is there evidence for domestic/industrial activity, and if so, what is its form and function and when does it fall out of use?
- How does this evidence relate to the foci of contemporary medieval settlement recorded within Mitton to the south-east?
- What is the evidence for post-medieval activity within the site?
- Does this reflect any continuity with the pattern of use established in the Medieval period?

- How does it develop and was it purely agricultural in character or is there evidence of other activity?

The full area intended for excavation covered *c.* 1.96ha corresponding with the areas to be occupied by new buildings and their access roads. The area was stripped of topsoil and overburden in three phases, all using a 360° type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision. An area corresponding to the former pond was excluded from the area to be investigated (Fig. 2).

Discrete features such as pits and postholes not belonging to structures were to be half-sectioned as a minimum with the intention to fully dig all such features. Full excavation was to take place if either insufficient or no dating evidence was recovered from a half-section or if the deposit was unusually rich, special or contained placed deposits. In the event, after half-sectioning, as finds were so rare, all pits were fully excavated (Pl. 2). Other types of feature/deposit were to be sampled to an agreed level sufficient to characterize them and satisfy the aims outlined above.

Results

A moderate amount of archaeological deposits were observed, mainly concentrated in the north-eastern corner of the site, on the higher ground (Fig. 2; Pl. 1). Iron Age activity was identified based on pottery in one ditch and partial human remains in a pit/grave (dated by C¹⁴ dating) (Fig. 3; Pl.s 2 and 4). Based on artefacts recovered, medieval activity was identified with some linear features along with a square enclosure (Fig. 4; Pl. 6). All the other deposits observed and recorded were undated. The excavated features are summarized in Appendix 1.

The north-east of the site was the area with more archaeological features observed. In total, three gullies, two ditches, one gully enclosure, fourteen pits, one shallow spread (possible pit), two possible tree holes and one post hole were recorded in this area, with only two minor gullies and three pits (one clearly modern) across the rest of the site. All the features were investigated. A series of very homogenous pits are summarized in Table 1. All pit fills unless noted were light grey/brown silty clay or a close variant on this, all contained no finds and remain undated.

In general the features were fairly shallow, eroded by cultivation, and can be assumed to be only the bases of originally more substantial features, but to the extent that they did survive, tended to be well defined. It is not felt that the preservation of features has hindered interpretation, although, naturally, the full extent of what might have been lost cannot be estimated.

Table 1 Dimensions of pits, and finds.

<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Diameter (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
4	55	1.4	0.25	
5	56	1.1	0.16	
6	57	0.83	0.81	Possibly tree-throw
7	58	1.35	0.36	
11	62	1.1	0.20	
12	63	1.1	0.2	
13	64	1.2	0.3	
14	65, 86	1.5	0.25	Partial human remains (sk86) Middle Iron Age radiocarbon dating
15	66	1	0.2	Plate 5
16	67	0.8	0.21	
18	69	0.6	0.2	
27	78	0.35	0.15	Post-hole
29	80	1.4	0.43	
30	81	0.75	0.09	Pit or spread/midden? 31 sherds of 12th-15th century pottery, 32 sherds of 14th-17th century pottery. Plate 7
35	87	0.8	0.15	
39	91	1.1	0.15	
40	92	0.6	0.3	Clearly modern post hole (square shape and vertical sides, and some intact wood)
44	96	1.2	0.22	
45	97	1.3	0.23	
46	98	1.4	0.18	
47	99	1	0.12	Possibly tree-throw

Iron Age

The earliest period observed is Iron Age, represented by a small collection of pottery from ditch 102 (slot 100) in the north-west of the eastern part of the site (stripping phase 1). Only 12m of this NE–SW aligned ditch was exposed in the excavated area, and two slots (49, 100) showed it to be 0.95–1.10m wide and 0.2–0.25m deep with gently sloping sides to a flat base. It broadly follows the natural contour and may be marking the edge of habitable (higher) land. It appears to have cut an earlier, slighter gully (48), though the relationship was not entirely clear.

Partial human remains were recovered from pit/grave 14 (Fig. 3; Pl 4) which yielded an Iron Age radiocarbon date (316–208 cal BC). In the same area a group of undated pits were investigated (7, 11, 12, 13 and 29) with the same shape, section and light brown-yellow silty clay fill as pit/grave 14. By association we can infer that these pits are probably contemporary with the carbon-dated feature. In plan, pits 7, 11, 12 and 29 form a rough square, but are much too substantial to be post-holes for a four-post structure typical of the period (Pl. 2). Pit 13 had also been recorded in the evaluation (703), when it was considered to have two fills, the upper of which contained 6 sherds of what was considered to be Middle Bronze Age pottery. It is possible that this pit, therefore is the earliest on the site: it is also possible that the pottery fabric was long-lived and this pit also belongs in the Iron Age as perhaps suggested by the excavation evidence.

Medieval

A significant amount of medieval pottery sherds were recovered and all the features are concentrated in the eastern area of phase 1 (Fig. 2). With chronologies from late 12th century to 17th century, the most significant feature observed was a small square enclosure (Fig. 4; Pl. 6) with an area of 6m x 8.8m formed by ditch 200. This appears to have been set within a larger open enclosure two sides of which were formed by gullies 104 and 105, extending north out of the site, but with the western side apparently open. Enclosure ditch 200 was investigated in 8 slots, (19–26) and the profile varied from 0.45m to 0.90m wide and 0.2–0.5m deep. Combined, these slots produced 42 sherds of pottery suggesting a probable late 13th century date, and three iron nails. A single sherd of Roman pottery was recovered and could suggest a low level of activity on or near the site at that time, almost certainly representing no more than the manuring of farmland.

Gully 104 (appearing discontinuous but probably truncated by the evaluation trench) and gully 105 (which might be two separate features) appear to form a partial enclosure around ditch 200. These were of similar dimensions, but markedly shallower than ditch 200 (gully 104 in places being only 0.04m deep, though mainly around 0.15m. From gully 104 came 31 sherds of pottery and from gully 105 another twelve, with every slot except 1, 17 and 33 producing some, again all suggesting a late 13th-century date (apart from a single residual Roman sherd).

Close to ditch 105 was a very shallow pit (30) and what may be another ditch most of which lay outside the excavated area (34). Pit 30 was under 0.1m deep and may be better seen as the base of a midden. Its fill, unlike other pits on the site, was a dark green-grey clay (Pl. 7) which contained the site's largest assemblage of pottery (63 sherds of the same late 13th–14th-century date as that from the enclosure), and occasional unworked flints. Ditch 34 contained only a single sherd of pottery: its possibly earlier date must be regarded as very tentative and it is just as likely contemporary with the rest of this group of features. Curving ditch 34 was up to 0.85m wide and 0.30m deep at deepest, but petered out to the south-east.

The evaluation had also revealed further features south of this group, but it now seems more likely that these were related to the pond just beyond. The pond was not further explored, as its post-medieval/modern date had been confirmed in the evaluation.

Further south was a small gully 103 (slots 41, 42 and 43) aligned NW-SW, was 9m long, around 0.5m wide and 0.16m deep, filled with a mid brown silt clay. This gully was observed during the archaeological evaluation (trench 6, cut 606), and no dating evidence was recovered in either evaluation or excavation.

On the lower ground to the west, only three features were observed (Fig. 2). A shallow gully (slots 36, 37 and 38) aligned NW-SE, was 20m long, 0.5m wide and only 0.08m deep contained no finds. The pits (35 and 39) were both very shallow and also remain undated despite full excavation.

Finds

Pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage from the excavation comprised 168 sherds with a total weight of 1824g. Where possible, the fabrics were classified using the coding system of the Gloucestershire type-series (eg. Vince 1984a and b).

The following fabric types were noted:

Iron Age

B1: Oolitic Limestone Ware, middle Iron Age. 12 sherds, 23g.

All the sherds appear to be from the same vessel, and all the calcareous material has been leached out, making identification tentative, but it seems likely that it is Peacock's Limestone B1 fabric, and of middle Iron Age date (Peacock 1967, 15).

Roman

TF5: Local Grey Ware, 1st – 3rd century. 1 sherd, 2g.

TF11B: Severn Valley Oxidized Ware, 2nd - 4th century. 1 sherd, 27g.

TF19: Malvernian Rock-tempered, 1st – 4th century. 1 sherd, 1g.

All the Roman pottery was residual or unstratified. The range of fabric types is typical of the region. The unstratified sherd of TF11B is from the base of a small cup. It appears to have been re-worked for use as a gaming-counter or similar.

Medieval

TF40: Unglazed Malvernian Ware, late 12th – 15th century. 93 sherds, 420g.

TF44: Minety-type Ware, early/mid 12th - 16th century. 2 sherds, 20g.

TF52: Oxidized glazed Malvernian Ware, 14th – early 17th century. 51 sherds, 1229g.

TF90: Worcester-type Sandy Glazed Ware, 13th – 14th century. 3 sherds, 16g.

The following, not covered by the Gloucestershire type-series, was also noted:

OXY: Medieval Oxford Ware, late 11th – 14th century (Mellor 1994). 4 sherds, 86g

The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Appendix 2. The range of fabric types is typical of sites in the region, with the medieval assemblage being dominated by the products of the Malvernian pottery industry. Overall, the assemblage is in fairly good condition, with the mean sherd size reasonably large, suggesting that all the material is reliably stratified.

The large assemblage from pit 30 context (81) appears to be a primary deposit. It mainly comprises fragments of two jars, one of which is partially complete and survives to a full profile. It is a typical early product of the TF52 tradition, being incompletely oxidized, and with a grey core to the fabric. It is a wheel-thrown, squat jar with an even coating of glaze on the inner surface of the base-pad and lower body, and is a very typical of the late 13th – early 14th century product of the tradition (Vince 1977, 265). The vessel is sooted on the exterior, as are most of the jars from this assemblage. A fairly large sherd from the thumb-frilled base of a glazed jug is also present. Overall, most of the Oxidized Malvernian Ware appears to date to the earlier part of the tradition, *ie* the late 13th – 14th century, suggesting that activity at the site had ceased by the 15th century. Certainly, the developed fabrics and vessel forms typical of the 15th – 16th century output of the industry (Vince 1977, 273) are entirely absent, with the assemblage limited entirely to wheel-thrown shallow jars and a few jug sherds.

Metalwork by Aidan Colyer

There were a total of 5 pieces of metalwork recovered during the excavation. Of these 1 piece is copper alloy and 4 pieces are ferrous (Appendix 3).

The copper alloy piece was recovered from context 150 within gully 48. This piece is 30mm in length and 9mm in width with a thickness with 1mm and weighs 1g. The piece has been bent in the centre to an internal angle of 45 degrees. This is post depositional damage and not an intentional part of the design. There are no obvious markings on the piece and as such it is unidentifiable.

Three of the ferrous pieces were nails or parts thereof, all from ditch 200. The fourth ferrous piece was recovered from fill 76 in enclosure 200, slot 25 and is a rough plate but cannot be further identified due to a lack of diagnostic marks or shape and heavy corrosion.

None of these pieces can be securely dated in themselves but the context dating range of late 12th century to the late 13th century would not be unexpected.

Human Remains by Ceri Falys

A single inhumation was excavated from within the investigated area. SK86 was discovered within a circular pit 14. The body was lying on its left side, in a crouched position. The legs were tightly folded together. Very little of the skeleton was present at the time of excavation, the likely result of poor preservation. Osteological analysis was undertaken following guidelines by Brickley and McKinley (2004) and Buikstra and Ubelaker (1994). The aim of the skeletal analysis was to document the preservation of the remains and the completeness of the

skeleton. Assessments of age at death, sex and evidence of pathology (skeletal and dental) of the skeleton were also undertaken, wherever possible. Unfortunately, metric analysis (calculation of stature), identification of non-metric traits and pathological alterations were all hindered by the poor preservation, described below.

Preservation

The skeletal remains are generally poorly preserved. Although the surface preservation is fair in most places, frequent areas of etching of the cortical bone surface are identified. A high degree of element fragmentation is also present, limiting the amount of retrievable demographic and pathological information from the remains. Trabecular bone has not been preserved, resulting in the absence of the ends of the long bones, all vertebrae, ribs, the pelvis and the small bones of the hands and feet. Numerous tooth crowns are present, although chalky in texture and fragile to the touch.

Completeness

Less than 25% of the skeleton is present: small portions of the cranium (left temporal, parietal and occipital regions) and mandible (anterior portion), several loose teeth (15 maxillary and 7 mandibular), and midshaft fragments of both the upper (humeri, radii and ulnae) and lower limbs (femora and tibiae). One of the left maxillary premolars was sent for radiocarbon dating.

Age at Death Estimation

Estimation of age at death relied entirely on the extent of development and wear of the teeth. The presence of fully developed and erupted third molars indicate the individual was adult at the time of death. The amount of wear of the first and second molars suggest an age at death of approximately 25-35 years (Brothwell 1981: 72). Severe wear is also noted on the anterior dentition (the central maxillary and mandibular incisors).

Sex Determination

The sex of SK86 could not be determined. The overall appearance of the long bones was neither markedly robust or gracile.

Health Status

No evidence of pathological alterations (skeletal or dental) was identified.

Animal Bone by Lizzi Lewins

A small assemblage of animal bone (14 fragments) weighing a total of 39g was recovered during the course of the excavation (Appendix 4). Only one fragment was identifiable, a fragment of long bone shaft classified as a medium-sized mammal (sheep/goat, pig, deer) from enclosure 200 slot 25 (76). Four pieces of burnt bone were included amongst the remains but comprised only small fragments (totalling 6g) and were unidentifiable. No further analysis was possible.

Charred plant remains by Rosalind McKenna

The programme of soil sampling implemented included the collection of soil samples from 31 sealed contexts. The samples were wet sieved using standard flotation techniques: details of the methodology and identification guides used are in the archive. The preservation of both the charred remains and charcoal was poor.

Charred plant macrofossils were present in twelve of the samples. (Appendix 6: Table A6.1). Indeterminate cereal grains were recorded in eleven of the samples, and were the most abundant remain within the samples. Grass seeds were present in four of the samples, dock (*Rumex*) seeds were present in a single sample and unidentified seeds that were poorly preserved and fragmentary were recorded in two samples.

Charcoal fragments were present in the majority of the samples, but identifiable remains were present in small numbers in only eight (Appendix 6: Table A6.2). The total range of charcoal taxa comprises oak (*Quercus*), willow/poplar (*Salix/Populus*), and hazel (*Corylus avellana*). Oak was present in five samples, willow/poplar in four samples and hazel in three. It is possible that these were the preferred fuel woods obtained from a local environment containing a broader choice of species.

Other than stating the presence of the taxa identified, the tiny quantity of surviving material means that little meaningful information can be gained from these results.

Radiocarbon dating

A molar from SK86 in pit 14 was submitted to the Chrono lab at Queen's University, Belfast, for AMS radiocarbon dating (Appendix 5). Details of methodology are in the archive: in summary the laboratory considered the result reliable. The date was calibrated using Intcal13 with data from Reimer *et al.* 2013 and is quoted at 2-sigma (95.4%) probability, and falls within the 4th to 3rd century BC. The calibration curve for this period is notoriously 'difficult', turning apparently tight 'raw' dates into very wide calibrated ranges, and this is again the case here, with a 36% chance of a date in the first half of the 4th century, and a 64% chance that it is between 316–208 cal BC. However, even this uncertain span is a welcome increase in precision over attempting to date the burial by any other means, as there were no accompanying finds, and the burial rite itself, crouched inhumation (if complete) could as easily have belonged in the Neolithic, Bronze Age or Saxon periods.

Assessment of results in relation to research aims

The excavation successfully dated the main features on the site, although several smaller features could not be dated. Only very limited evidence was recovered for function or economic analysis.

The specific research questions (grouped by period) can now be addressed as follows:

What is the evidence for Bronze Age occupation activity on the site and at what date did it commence and how does it develop? Are deposits present within identified features that contain dateable or function specific artefacts/eco-facts to help characterise activity and/or resource exploitation? How does this relate to other recorded archaeological evidence of this period in the area?

The pit interpreted as Bronze Age in the evaluation might be the only evidence for this period, but it is now considered more likely that it in fact belongs to the Iron Age phase. The artefact assemblage (as for all periods) was very limited and no specific function can be attributed other than the disposal of human remains in (Iron Age) pit 14.

What is the evidence for Iron Age occupation activity on the site and at what date did it commence, how does it develop, and how does it relate to other recorded activity of this period in the area?

The middle Iron Age phase on the site consisted of a ditch at the north of the site and a human burial from a pit/grave radiocarbon dated to (most probably) 316–208 cal BC. A handful of undated pits are considered likely to belong to this period, based purely on proximity and similar morphology to pit 14. There is very little other comparable Iron Age evidence in the vicinity, and what little there is appears to be early rather than middle Iron Age (Hannan 1997).

Is there any evidence to suggest a continuity of settlement and/or use of the site through the Prehistoric period, and if so, how does this change over time?

The limited evidence sheds little light on this question. The paucity of features suggests a very short-lived occupation.

What is the evidence for medieval activity on the site and at what date did it commence and how does it develop? Is medieval use of the site entirely agricultural in character or is there evidence for domestic/industrial activity, and if so, what is its form and function and when does it fall out of use? How does this evidence relate to the foci of contemporary medieval settlement recorded within Mitton to the south-east?

The majority of the features are medieval, and possibly an outlying part of a larger site. The most significant feature was a square enclosure with pottery suggesting a most likely date for its filling in the late 13th century, or perhaps a little later. The limited finds again make little contribution to the interpretation of the function of this, or its relationship to any nearby medieval settlement, but a role in stock management is

probable. The quantity of pottery might imply that occupation is not far away, but no structural features were identified on the site itself. There is nothing to suggest any connection with the possible site of Mitton Chapel.

What is the evidence for post-medieval activity within the site? Does this reflect any continuity with the pattern of use established in the Medieval period? How does it develop and was it purely agricultural in character or is there evidence of other activity?

The pond is the only securely dated post-medieval feature, and had already been identified from cartographic evidence. Continuing agricultural use is probable, but the evidence is minimal.

Conclusion

The excavation has revealed a moderate number of linear features, pits and a square enclosure, much of which was not identified by geophysical survey, but was revealed in some of the earlier evaluation trenches.

The earliest phase dated to the middle Iron Age and consisted of a ditch at the north of the site and a human burial from a pit/grave radiocarbon dated to (most probably) 316–208 cal BC. The practices of disposal of human remains in the Iron Age are notoriously diverse (Harding 2015) and the presence of only partial remains in a pit which does not obviously appear to have been deliberately designed as a grave is by no means uncommon, although it is possible this individual was complete or nearly so when originally deposited. This radio-carbon dated example is a significant addition to the hitherto very sparse evidence for Iron Age occupation in this area. A small group of pits nearby is plausibly related, although one of these had produced probable middle Bronze Age pottery in the evaluation. It seems at least possible that this pottery has been mis-attributed: the difficulty in distinguishing between Bronze Age and Iron Age fabrics in the region (and elsewhere), in the absence of distinctive forms or decoration, has long been remarked (eg Timby and Harrison 2004, 59). Not far to the north-west was a ditch which contained middle Iron Age pottery and this too could be related.

The presence of a small amount of Roman pottery (unstratified or in medieval features) suggests little more than the manuring of fields in this period, but again makes a contribution to the surprisingly limited evidence for this period in the immediate vicinity.

The majority of the deposits appear to reflect the presence of medieval activity, but much of the adjacent area was truncated by a post-medieval pond known from documentary and cartographic sources, so the deposits revealed may only represent a small part of one wider medieval activity on the site. The most significant feature observed was a square enclosure with pottery suggesting a most likely date for its filling in the late 13th century, or perhaps a little later. The limited finds make little contribution to the interpretation of the function of this, or

its relationship to any nearby medieval settlement, but a role in stock management is probable. The quantity of pottery might imply that occupation is not far away, but no structural features were identified on the site itself. There is nothing to suggest any connection with the possible site of Mitton Chapel, although the dating for the enclosure here does tally with the origins of the chapel and presumably therefore the associated settlement. The features revealed here may reflect agricultural use of the land close to the settlement. If the filling of the enclosure ditches represents abandonment, a contraction of the area exploited in the 14th century would match nation-wide evidence for the economic and demographic consequences of the Black Death, but of course the land could still be in use without leaving any sub-surface archaeological traces.

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Appendix 1: Catalogue of Excavated Features

<i>Group</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Deposit</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Samples</i>	<i>Comment</i>
104	1	52	Gully Terminus	Medieval	1	Association
104	2	53	Gully	Medieval	2	Pottery
104	3	54	Gully Terminus	Medieval	3	Pottery
	4	55	Pit		4	
	5	56	Pit		5	
	6	57	Pit or treehole			
	7	58	Pit		6	
104	8	59	Gully Terminus	Medieval	7	Pottery
104	9	60	Gully	Medieval	8	Pottery
104	10	61	Gully Terminus	Medieval	9	Pottery
	11	62	Pit		10	
	12	63	Pit		11	
	13	64	Pit		12	
	14	65, 86	Pit or possible grave	Iron Age	13	C14 (human bone)
	15	66	Pit		14	
	16	67	Pit		15	
104	17	68	Gully Terminus	Medieval		Pottery
	18	69	Pit		16	
200	19	70	Square Enclosure	Medieval	18	Association
200	20	71	Square Enclosure	Medieval	19	Pottery
200	21	72	Square Enclosure	Medieval	20	Pottery
200	22	73	Square Enclosure	Medieval	21	Pottery
200	23	74	Square Enclosure	Medieval	22	Pottery
200	24	75	Square Enclosure	Medieval		Pottery
200	25	76	Square Enclosure	Medieval		Pottery
200	26	77	Square Enclosure	Medieval		Pottery
	27	78	Post hole		17	
105	28	79	Gully	Medieval	23	Pottery
	29	80	Pit		24	
	30	81	Spread or irregular and shallow pit	Medieval	25	Pottery
105	31	82	Gully	Medieval		Pottery
105	32	83	Gully	Medieval		Pottery
105	33	84	Gully	Medieval		Association
	34	85	Ditch	Medieval		Pottery
	35	87	Pit		26	
101	36	88	Gully			
101	37	89	Gully			
101	38	90	Gully			
	39	91	Pit		27	
	40	92	Modern Posthole			
103	41	93	Gully			
103	42	94	Gully			
103	43	95	Gully			
	44	96	Pit		28	
	45	97	Pit			
	46	98	Pit		29	
	47	99	Pit or treehole			
	48	150	Gully			
102	49	151	Ditch	Iron Age	30	Association
102	100	152	Ditch	Iron Age	31	Pottery

Appendix 2: Pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type

Group	Cut	Deposit	B1		TF5		TF11B		TF19		OXY		TF44		TF40		TF90		TF52		
			No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	
		u/s			1																
104	2	53													2	4				1	9
104	3	54						1	1						1	3					
104	8	59													1	9					
104	9	60													12	70	2	11			
104	10	61													10	36			1	14	
200	19	70													1	5					
200	20	71													2	7					
200	21	72													1	1					
200	22	73																	1	12	
200	23	74													11	19	1	5	1	3	
200	24	75													2	6			4	37	
200	25	76				1	2						1	16	11	59			1	2	
200	26	77											1	4	3	6			4	29	
105	28	79													4	74			2	19	
105	30	81																			
105	31	82													31	112			32	1085	
105	32	83																			
	34	85									4	86								4	19
102	100	152																			
		Total	12	23	1	2	1	27	1	1	4	86	2	20	93	420	3	16	51		1229

Appendix 3: Catalogue of metal objects.

<i>Cut</i>	<i>Deposit</i>	<i>Feature</i>	<i>Material</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt (g)</i>	<i>Comments</i>
23	74	Square Enclosure	Fe	1	6	Square section shaft 35mm in length and 7mm in width and depth
25	76	Square Enclosure	Fe (nail)	1	8	head and partial shaft, head is amorphous with the widest point measuring 22mm and the length being 17mm. The partial shaft is 6mm in width with a length of 21mm a
25	76	Square Enclosure	Fe	1	33	Complete, 35mm long shaft is sub-square with a width of 5mm. The head has the same width as the shaft on one axis and a width of 10mm on the other. The size and shape of this nail suggests that it may have been a horseshoe nail although this cannot be fully confirmed.
28	79	Gully	Fe	1	5	rough plate 47mm x 25mm. The core uncorroded part is 2mm in thickness although corrosion increases the thickness of the piece to 30mm overall. Unidentified.
48	150	Gully	Cu	1	1	

Appendix 4: Animal bone

<i>Group</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Deposit</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Sample</i>	<i>No Frags</i>	<i>Wt (g)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
104	2	53	Gully		6	20	
104	3	54	Gully	3	1	1	
104	3	54	Gully	3	1	1	Burnt
104	9	60	Gully	8	2	2	Burnt
200	25	76	Ditch		1	13	Medium mammal long bone
	30	81	Pit/midden	25	2	1	Burnt
105	32	83	Gully		1	1	burnt

Appendix 5: Radiocarbon date

<i>Lab ID and context</i>	<i>Material</i>	<i>Radiocarbon Age</i>	<i>Calibrated Age (cal BC)</i>	<i>Area under curve at 2-sigma (%)</i>
UBA-33467	Human tooth, collagen	BP2255 ± 31	395–348	36.4
Pit 14 skeleton 86			316–208	63.6

Appendix 6: Environmental Remains

Table A6.1: Plant Macrofossils

Medieval

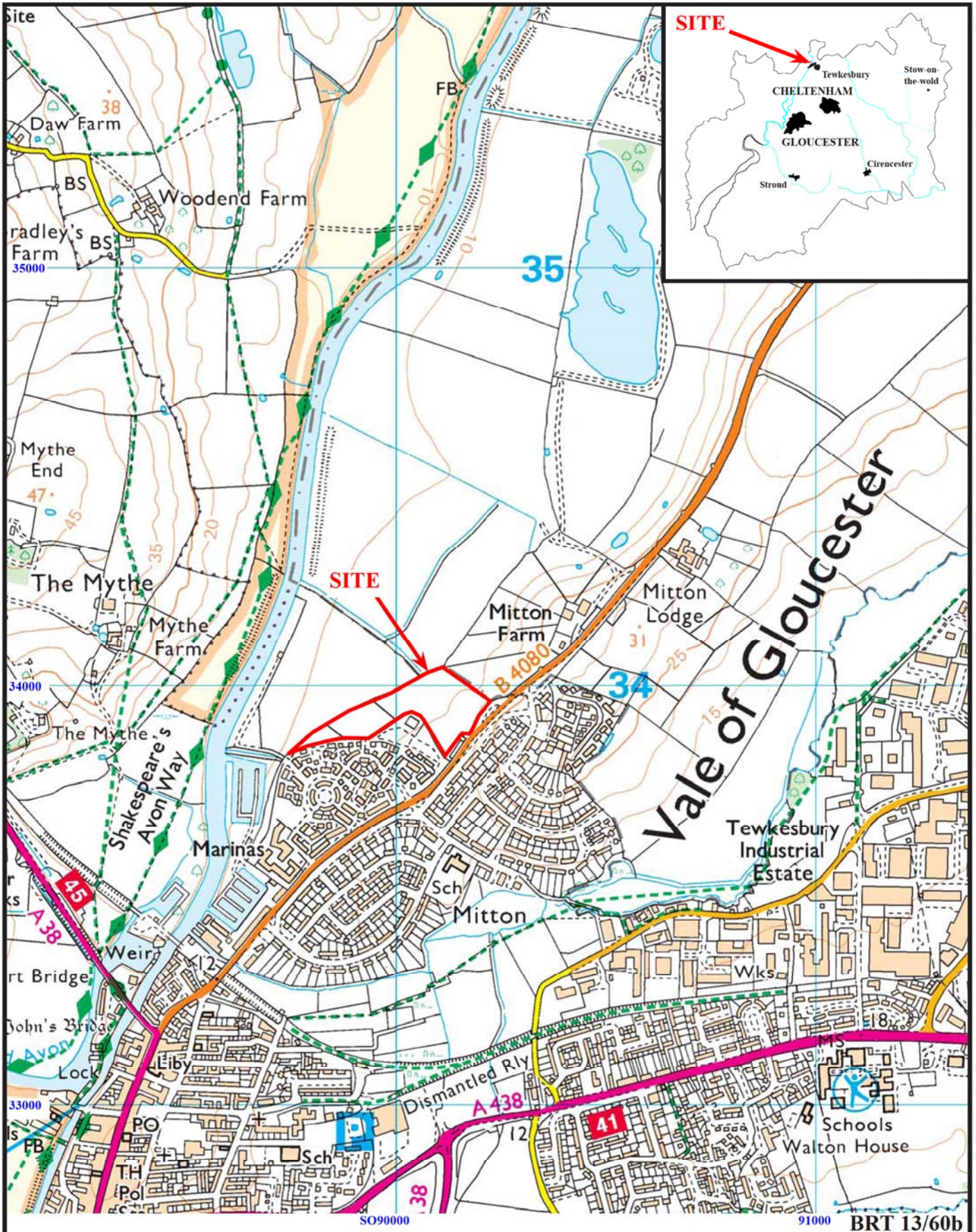
<i>Sample</i>	3	7	8	9	18	19	22	23
<i>Feature</i>	3	8	9	10	19	20	23	28
<i>Context</i>	54	59	60	61	70	71	74	79
<i>Feature Type</i>	Gully	Gully	Gully	Gully	Gully	Gully	Gully	Gully
<i>Rumex L. spp.</i>								1
POACEAE				1	1		1	2
Indeterminate Cereal	1	1	3	11		1	5	4
Unidentified				2				1

Unphased

<i>Sample</i>	6	11	12	16
<i>Feature</i>	7	12	13	18
<i>Context</i>	58	63	64	69
<i>Feature Type</i>	Pit	Pit	Pit	Pit
<i>Rumex L. spp.</i>				
POACEAE				
Indeterminate Cereal	1	1	1	2
Unidentified				

Table A6.2: Charcoal

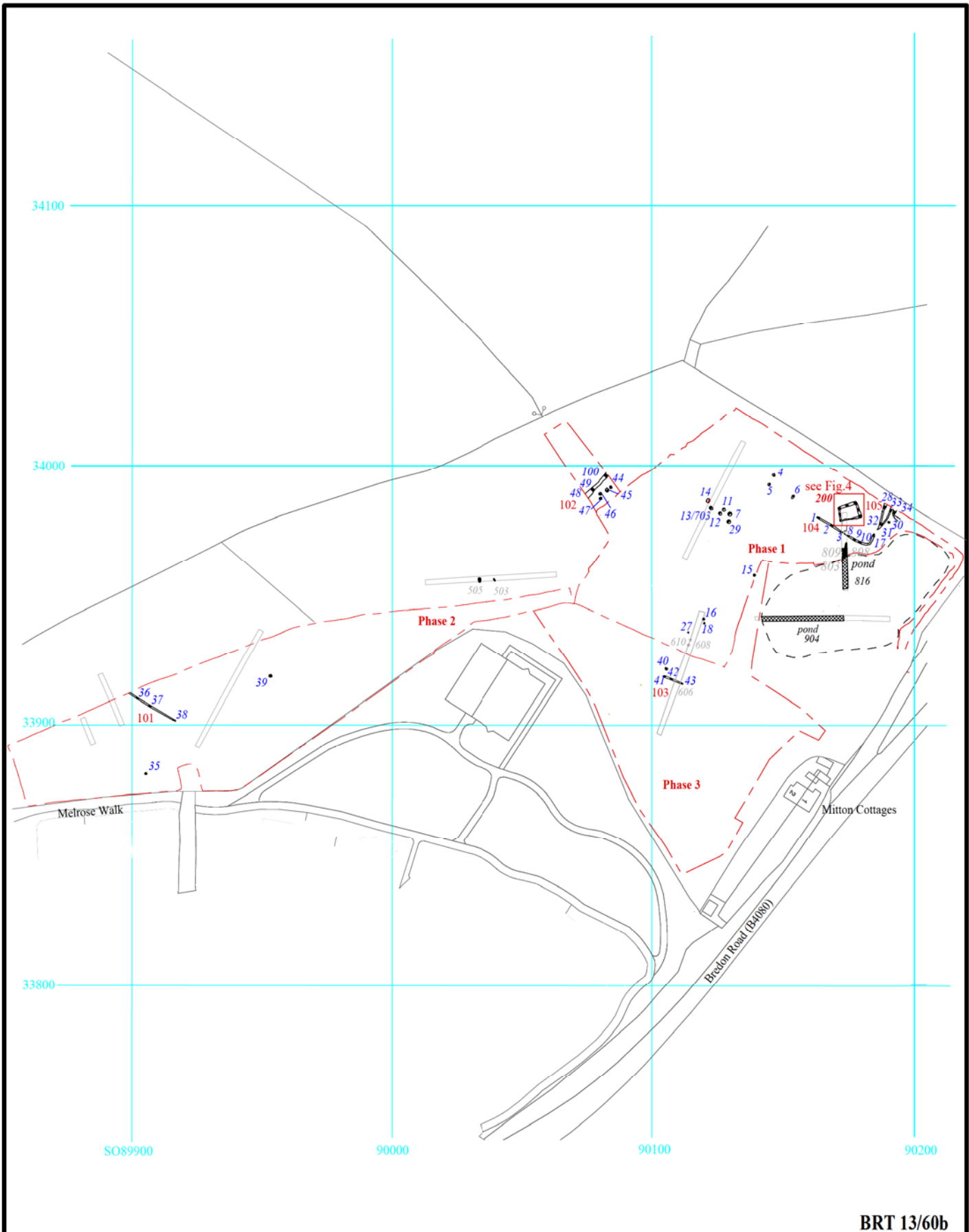
	<i>Sample</i>	1	3	5	19	20	22	23	25
	<i>Feature</i>	1	3	5	20	21	23	28	30
	<i>Context</i>	52	54	56	71	72	74	79	81
	<i>Feature Type</i>	Gully	Gully	Pit	Gully	Gully	Gully	Gully	?Spread
	<i>Phase</i>	Med	Med	-	Med	Med	Med	Med	Med
	<i>No. frags.</i>	8	2	33	8	5	19	23	10
	<i>Max. size (mm)</i>	11	10	13	5	10	10	6	
<i>Corylus avellana</i>	Hazel		1	3			1		
<i>Salix / Populus</i>	Willow / Poplar	3			2			1	1
<i>Quercus</i>	Oak			9		1	3	1	2
Indeterminate	Indeterminate	5	1	21	6	4	15	21	7



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Archaeological Excavation**

Figure 1. Location of site within Tewkesbury and Gloucestershire.

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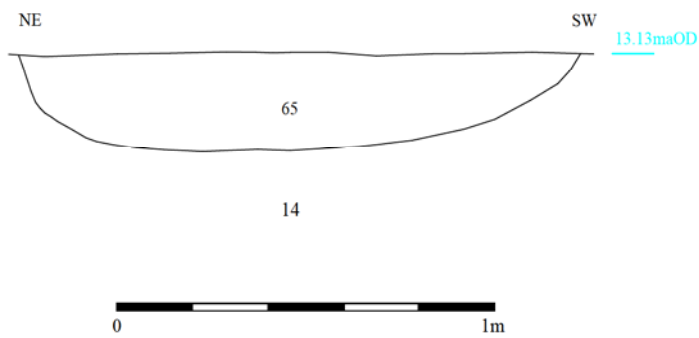
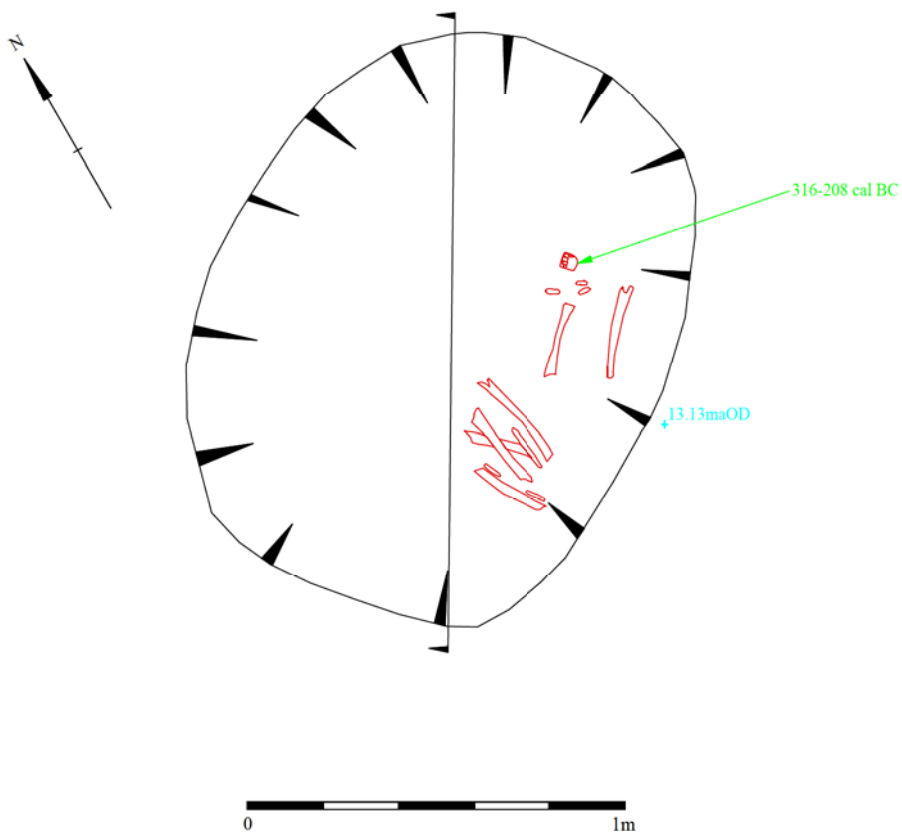
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Gloucestershire, 2016
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Figure 2. Plan of all features excavated, also showing evaluation trenches.



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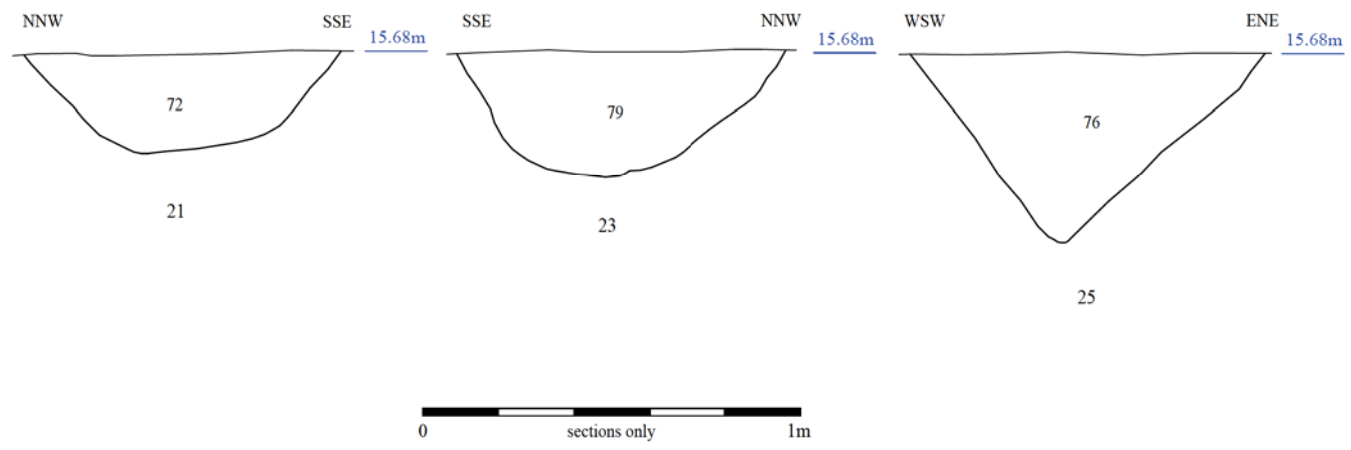
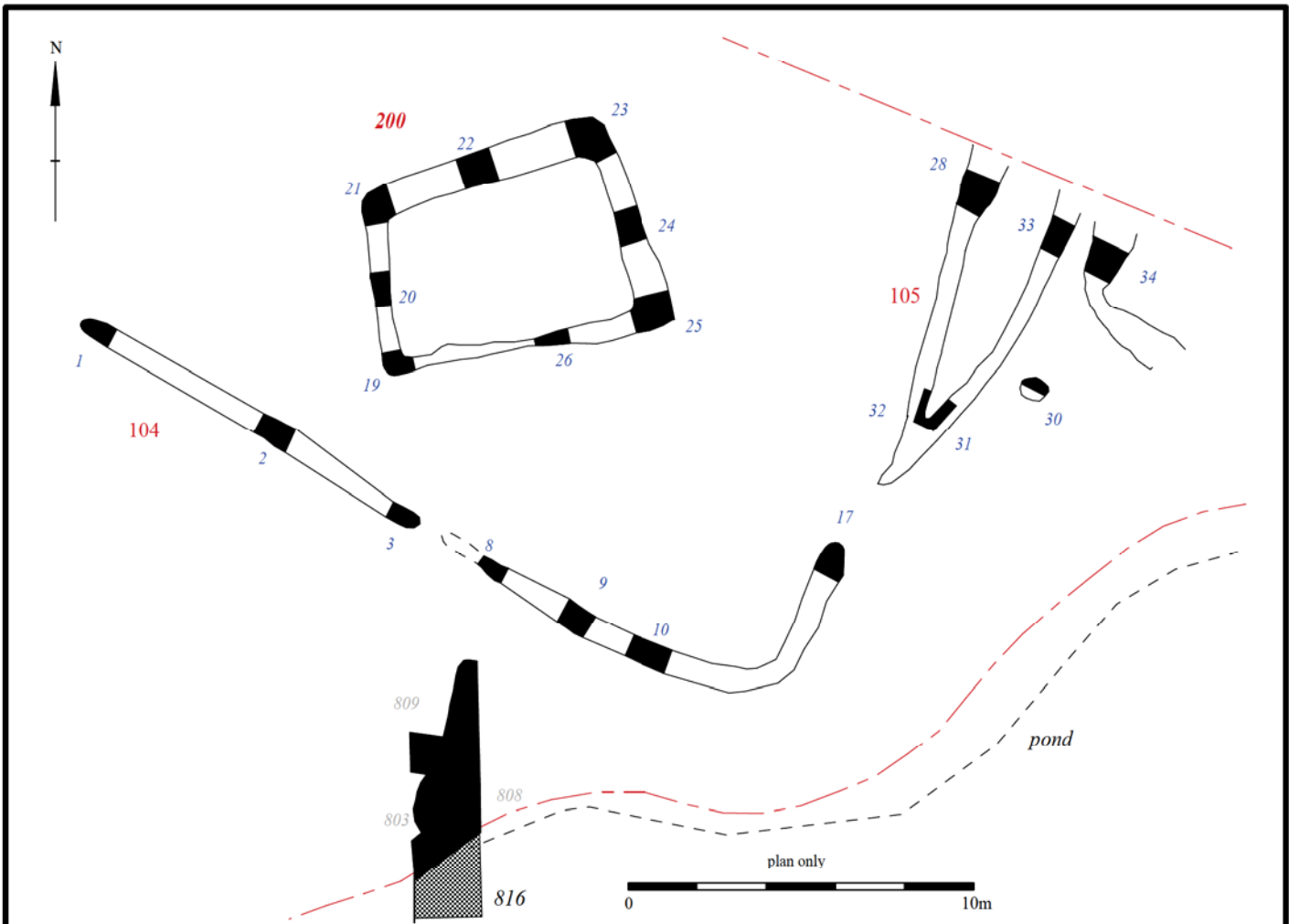
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Figure 3. Detail of Pit 14 burial.



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Figure 4. Detail of Medieval Enclosure 200 and associated features.



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Plate 1. General view over site looking north-west towards misty Avon valley, medieval enclosure in foreground.



Plate 2. Burial 14, and associated pits, after excavation, looking north

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Plates 1 - 2.

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Plate 3. Pit 5, looking north-west, Scales: 1m and 0.1m.



Plate 4. Burial 14, looking north-east, Scales: 0.5m and 0.3m.

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Plates 3 - 4.

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Plate 5. Pit 15, looking south-east, Scales: 1m and 0.1m.



Plate 6. Enclosure 200, looking north-west, Scale: 1m.

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Plates 5 - 6.

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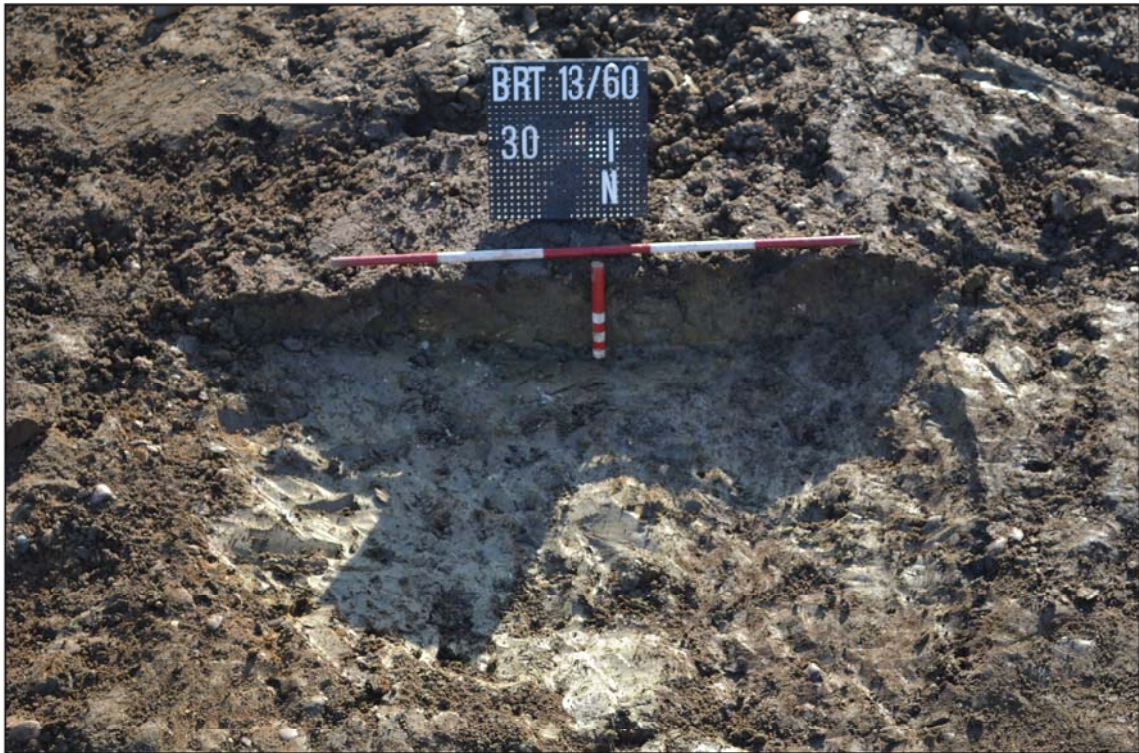


Plate 7. Pit or midden base 30, looking south, Scales: 0.5m and 0.1m.

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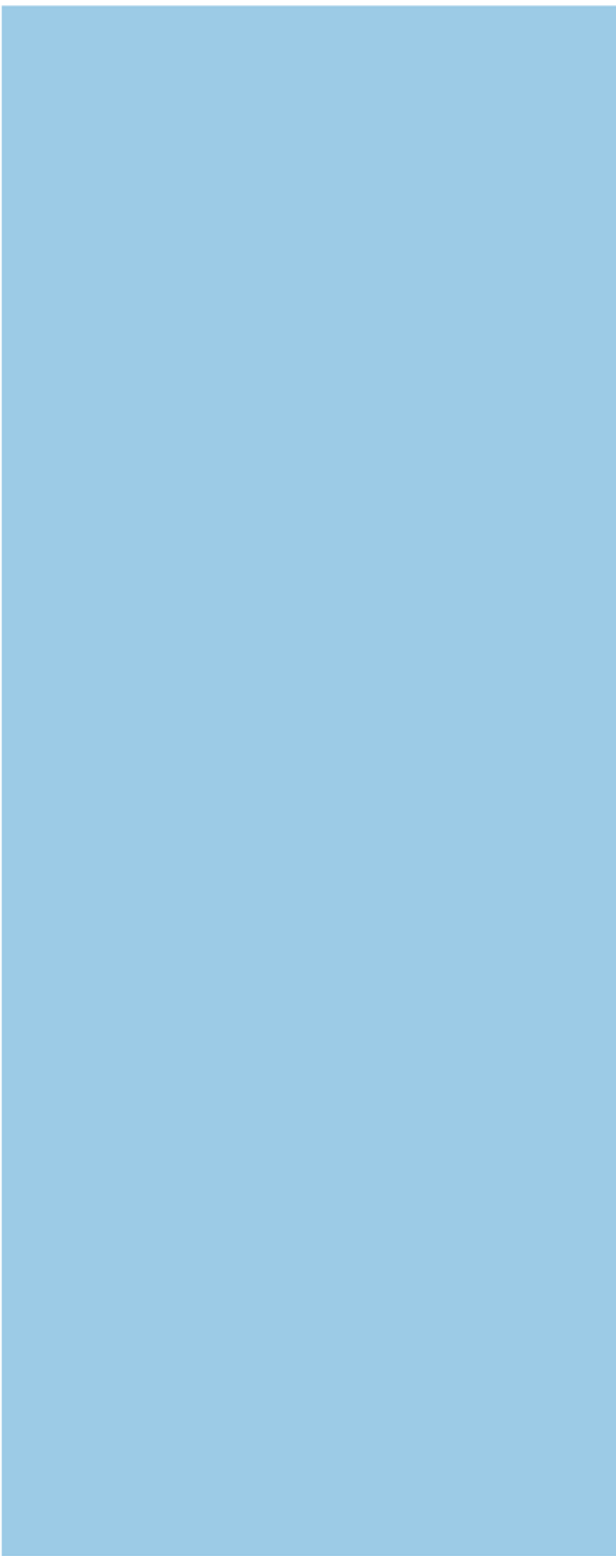
Plate 7

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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





**Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd,
47-49 De Beauvoir Road, Reading,
Berkshire, RG1 5NR**

**Tel: 0118 9260552
Fax: 0118 9260553
Email: tvas@tvas.co.uk
Web: www.tvas.co.uk**