

**T H A M E S      V A L L E Y**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL**

**S E R V I C E S**

**Cleveland Farm Works,  
Ashton Keynes, Wiltshire**

**An archaeological watching brief**

**By Luis Esteves**

**CFAK04/26  
(SU 0617 9433)**

# **Cleveland Farm Works, Ashton Keynes, Wiltshire**

## **An Archaeological Watching Brief For Aggregate Industries**

by Luis Esteves

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code CFAK 04/26

**March 2017**

## Summary

**Site name:** Cleveland Farm Works, Ashton Keynes, Wiltshire

**Grid reference:** SU 0617 9433

**Site activity:** Watching brief

**Date and duration of project:** 26th June to 18th July 2006, 2nd April to 2nd May 2007 and 1st to 20th June 2008

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** Natasha Bennett, Jennifer Lowe, Danielle Milbank and David Platt

**Site code:** CFAK 04/26

**Area of site:** 12ha

**Summary of results:** No finds or deposits of archaeological relevance were discovered during the course of the fieldwork.

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

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 10.03.17 Steve Preston ✓ 10.03.17
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# Cleveland Farm Works, Ashton Keynes, Wiltshire An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Luis Esteves

**Report 04/26**

## **Introduction**

This report documents the results of an archaeological recording action carried out at Cleveland Farm Works, Ashton Keynes, Wiltshire (SU 0617 9433) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Rob Westell of Aggregate Industries UK Ltd, Callow Rock Quarry, Shipham Gorge, Cheddar Somerset BS27 3DQ.

Planning permission had been gained (N.04/1124) from Wiltshire County Council to extract sand and gravel from the former processing site at Cleveland Farm Works, Ashton Keynes. The consent has been gained with a condition (9) relating to archaeology which requires a programme of archaeological works to excavate and record archaeological deposits prior to extraction.

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 Roy Canham, formerly County Archaeologist Officer for Wiltshire Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Natasha Bennett, Jennifer Lowe, Danielle Milbank and David Platt between 26th June 2006 and 20 June 2008, and the site code is CFAK 04/26. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Devizes Museum in due course.

## **Location, topography and geology**

Ashton Keynes lies in south-western Gloucestershire, close to the boundary with Wiltshire, in an area known as the Cotswold Water Park, which is a landscape profoundly altered by mineral extraction (Fig. 1). The site consists of c. 12ha of land and was occupied by facilities used for processing and manufacturing products from the surrounding quarry operations (Fig. 2). These facilities comprise factories, offices, laboratory, weighbridge and road. Parts of the margins of the site are bounded by soil bunds with planting. To the north and west the site is bounded by minor roads and by the buildings of Wheatley's Barn Farm and Cleveland Farm House. Beyond, these features, the site is surrounded by worked out and working gravel pits. The site lies on the first terrace of the River Thames (gravels) (BGS 1974) and this was observed on site. The site lies at a height of about 84m above Ordnance Datum.

## **Archaeological background**

The county of Wiltshire, and adjoining areas of Gloucestershire, are generally regarded as archaeologically rich and the site lies within a topographic zone (the valley floor of the Thames) which is regarded as of great archaeological interest in both prehistoric and historic times. A great density of archaeological deposits have been recorded which provide a widespread view of settlement and land-use, especially in Iron Age and Roman times (Benson and Miles 1974; Fulford 1992; Hingley and Miles 1984). There is widespread evidence for occupation in the Neolithic (flint axeheads), Bronze Age (ring ditches), Iron Age and Roman periods (earthwork site with a complex of smaller and larger enclosures and trackways with occupation within) (Coe 1991), and a Medieval settlement site associated with Ralph Kent documented in AD1327 located on the margins of the contemporary village of Ashton Keynes. The area of the Cotswold Water Park has seen some of the most extensive archaeological investigations in Britain, since the 1970s and still ongoing (Miles *et al.* 2007; Morrison *et al.* 2012; Powell *et al.* 2010; Pine *et al.* 2016).

## **Objectives and methodology**

The purpose of the recording action was to excavate and record all archaeological deposits and features within the areas threatened by the development in order to produce relative and absolute dating and phasing for those deposits in attempt to define functional areas on the site such as industrial, domestic, etc. This consisted of the observation of stripping topsoil/overburden for all phases of work under continuous archaeological supervision by a 360 machine digger fitted with a toothless bucket.

## **Results**

Between the years of 2006 and 2008 five phases of ground reduction prior to extraction were monitored and recorded in Cleveland Farm Works for the project (Fig. 3). Generally the entire site area was topsoil/overburden stripped and the stratigraphy observed was generally 0.30m of topsoil/overburden overlying a 0.60m of dirty gravel layer overlying white/orange limestone gravels (natural geology) (Fig. 4).

Significant disturbance and truncations were observed in many areas of the site, such as backfill areas, plastic sheeting, broken concrete (associated with the concrete processing plant), old drains and services. Some test pits in phase 1 and 2 were dug and the stratigraphy observed was mainly the same in the rest of the site (Fig. 4; Pl 2 and 3), showing that the archaeological level was very disturbed. In the stripped areas free of modern truncation and contamination, no archaeological features or finds were encountered.

## **Finds**

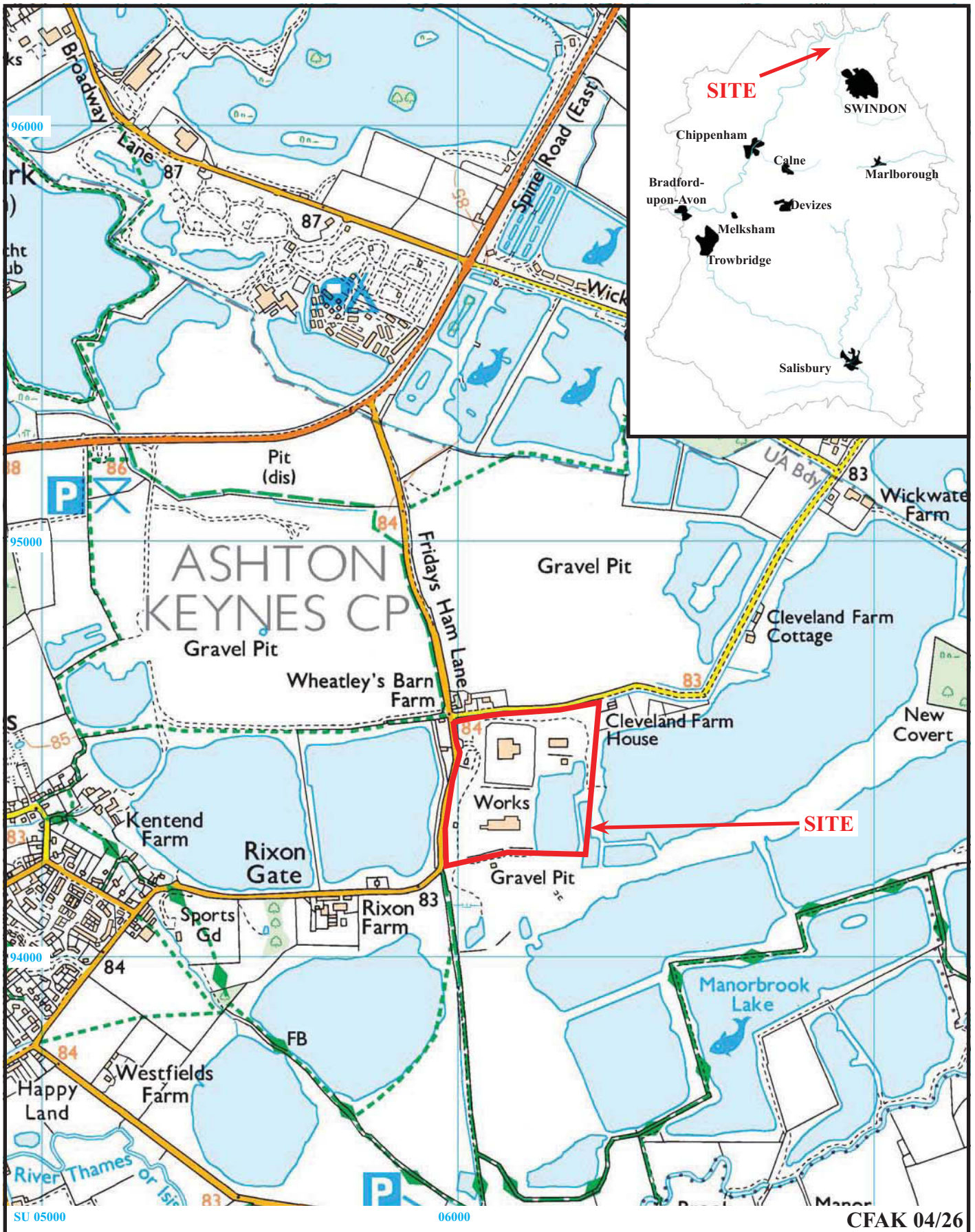
No finds of archaeological interest were recovered during the groundworks.

## **Conclusion**

Despite the potential for archaeological deposits being present in the area of Cleveland Farm, no features or finds of archaeological significance were observed. The entire area of the site was reduced to the archaeological level and only modern activity was revealed.

## **References**

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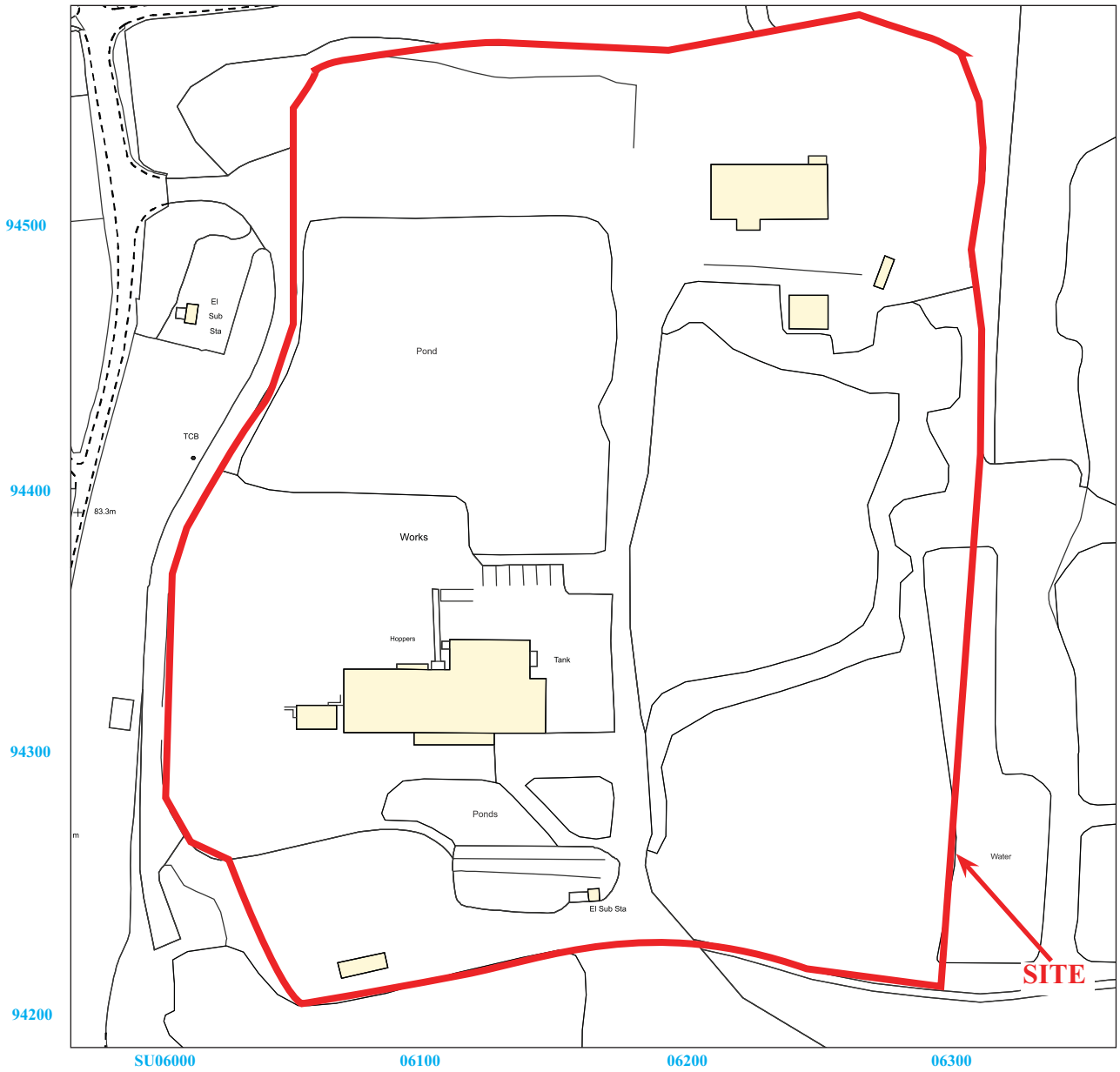
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Figure 1. Location of site within Ashton Keynes and Wiltshire.

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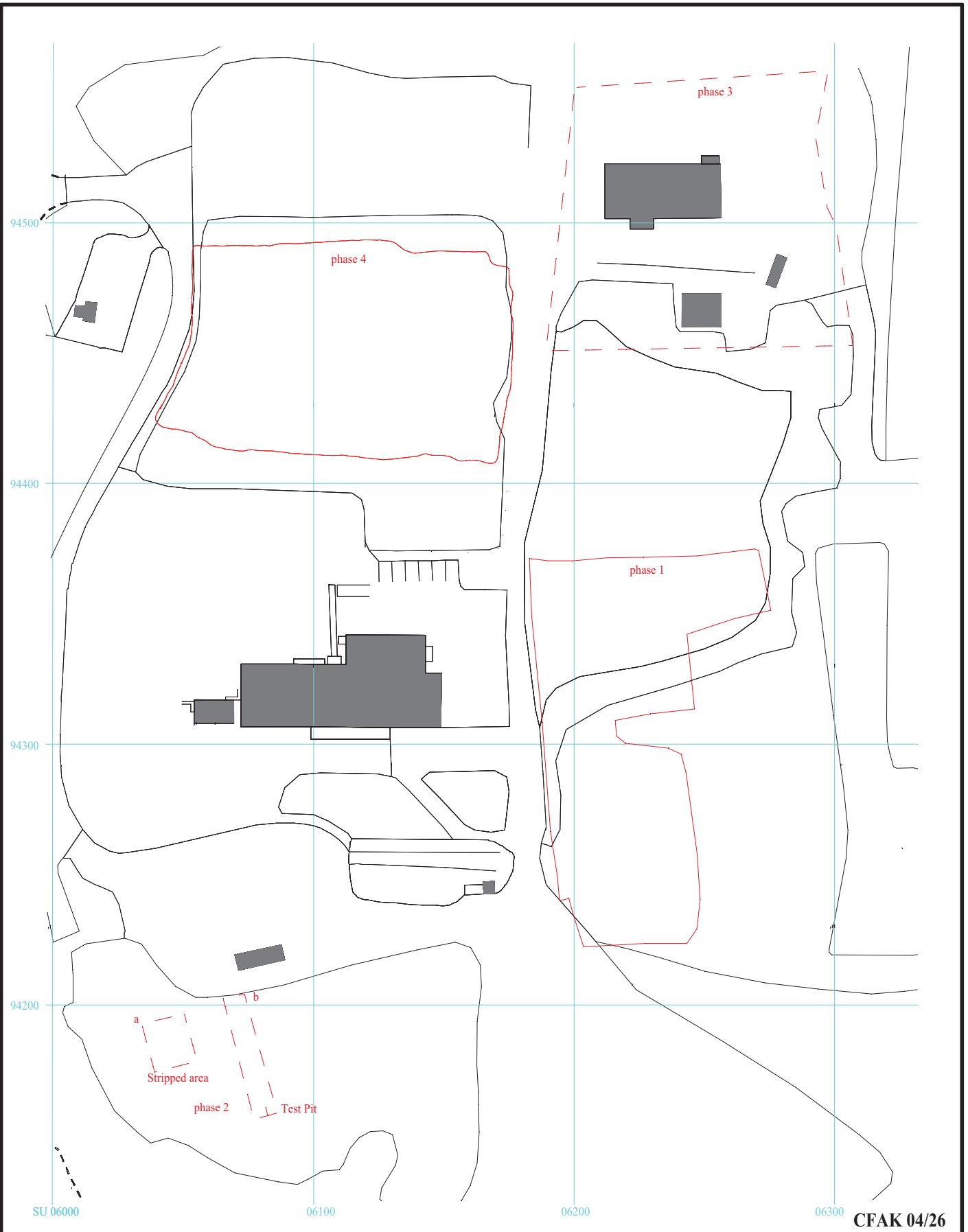


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Figure 2. Detailed location of site.

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Figure 3. Location of observed areas.



**General Stratigraphy**

84.00m

Topsoil/Overburden



Brown Gravel



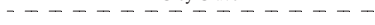
Base of groundworks

Natural Geology (limestone/gravel)

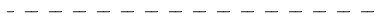
**Test pit/ Contaminated Areas**

84.00m

Grey Gravel



Brown Gravel



Red/Orange Gravel



Base of groundworks

Natural Geology (limestone/gravel)

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Figure 4. Phases sections.





Plate 1. Phase 2, Stripped area, looking north.



Plate 2. Phase 2, Test pit, looking north east.



Plate 3. Phase 2b, Test pit, looking east.

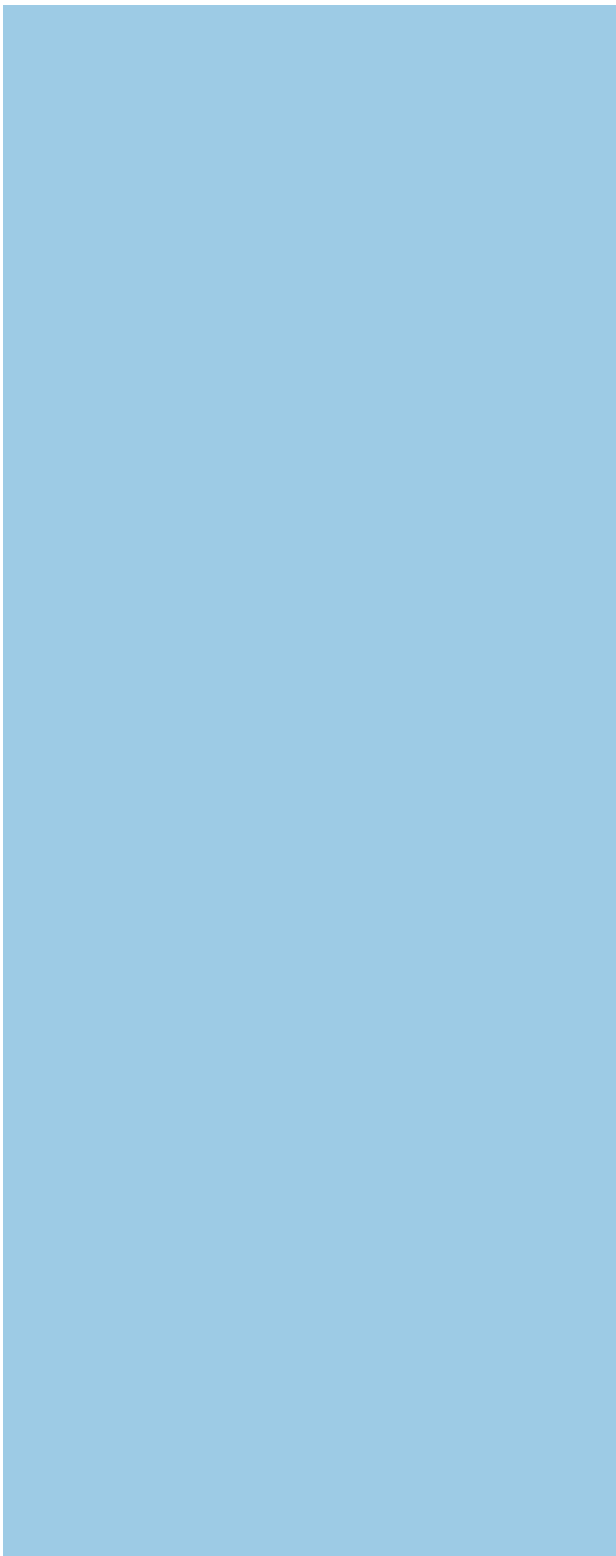
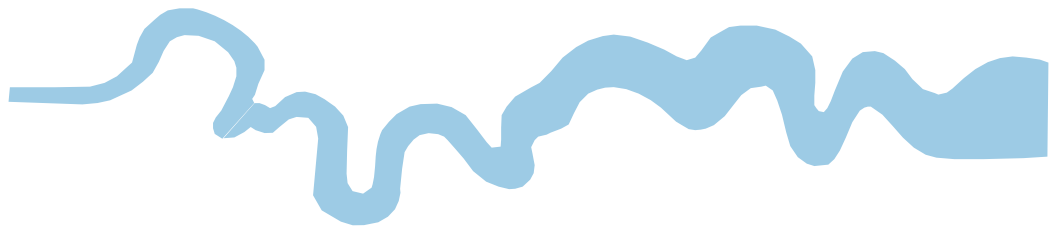
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Plates 1-3.**

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## TIME CHART

	<b>Calendar Years</b>
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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