

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Land at Watersplash Lane, Newell Green,
Warfield, Berkshire**

Archaeological Excavation

by Luis Esteves

Site Code: WLW17/105

(SU 8714 7108)

Land at Watersplash Lane, Newell Green, Warfield, Berkshire

**An Archaeological Excavation
for Millgate Developments Ltd**

by Luís Esteves

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code WLW 17/105

February 2018

Summary

Site name: Land at Watersplash Lane, Newell Green, Warfield, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 8714 7108

Site activity: Excavation

Date and duration of project: 19th to 23rd February 2018

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Luís Esteves

Site code: WLW 17/105

Area of site: c. 1800 sq m

Summary of results: The excavation revealed four linear features and a possible pit. Only one ditch was dated (Roman) in the previous evaluation trenches.

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

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www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp.*

Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford✓ 28.02.2018
Steve Preston✓ 28.02.2018

Land at Watersplash Lane, Newell Green, Warfield, Berkshire An Archaeological Excavation

by Luís Esteves

Report 17/105c

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological excavation carried out on land at Watersplash Lane, Newell Green, Warfield, Berkshire (SU 8714 7108) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Conor Roberts of Millgate Developments Ltd, Berkshire RG10 9JT.

Planning consent (app 16/01274/FUL) has been sought from Bracknell Forest Borough Council for the construction of new houses on the site. The consent was anticipated to be subject to a condition relating to archaeology. As a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits on the site which may be damaged or destroyed by groundworks, a programme of archaeological work has been requested in order to inform the planning process. This is as set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012) and the Council's policies on archaeology. A field evaluation carried out on the site (Galleano 2017a and b) comprised the first and second stages of this process. Based on the results of the evaluation, an open area excavation was required on the part of the site shown to have some archaeological potential. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Roland Smith, Archaeology Officer with Berkshire Archaeology, who advise the Council on matters relating to archaeology.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Luís Esteves and Aidan Colyer between 19th and 23rd February 2018 and the site code is WLW 17/105. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and it is anticipated that it will be deposited at a local approved depository in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The overall development site is located on an irregular parcel of land located in Warfield, to the north of Bracknell (Fig. 1). It is bounded by Watersplash Lane to the south, houses to the east and north and open field to the west. The land is fairly flat overall at 60m above Ordnance Datum, and comprises garden areas and some concrete foundations from an old building. The underlying geology is mapped as London Clay (BGS 1981), which was encountered on site as a light reddish grey clay. The excavation area was intended to cover 1600 sq

m in the south-west corner of the overall site, although around 400 sq m of this was occupied by the foundations of a previous building and another 200 sq m was occupied by an oil spread.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a desk-based assessment (CgMs 2016). In summary, the site lies within an area of East Berkshire previously not noted for its rich archaeological heritage (Ford 1987). To the south of Bracknell lies the Iron Age hillfort of Caesar's Camp and there are a number of upstanding round barrows also to the south. However, fieldwork carried out in more recent times within greater Bracknell has recorded more archaeology with Bronze Age, Iron Age and post-medieval remains at the former Staff College to the south-east (Lowe 2013) and Fairclough Farm to the south (Torrance and Durden 2003). Further to the west at Park Farm, Binfield, Mesolithic occupation and Iron Age and Roman enclosure have been excavated (Roberts 1995). Medieval enclosure has recently been recorded at West End, Warfield (Taylor 2015). Other finds in the area include possible cropmark enclosures to the south, an Iron Age coin hoard recorded from Jealots Hill to the north, an Iron Age pit at Buckle Lane Farm and various stray finds of Bronze Age, Roman and medieval pottery from the wider area.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the excavation was to record and excavate all archaeological deposits and features within the area proposed in the consent.

Specific 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.

The area intended for excavation was constrained by concrete foundations from an old building in the centre of the site, however, it was possible to strip the most relevant areas that corresponded with the features found in the prior evaluation (Fig. 2; Pl. 1). The area was stripped of topsoil and overburden using a 360° type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision. Where archaeological features were present, the area was hand cleaned and all archaeological features were planned and sectioned as a minimum

objective, with additional excavation or sampling to an agreed level depending on the nature and significance of the deposit.

Results (Figs 2 and 3)

The area finally stripped for the excavation was smaller than intended, being constrained by the presence of modern disturbance in the centre of the area (concrete foundations from an old building) (Fig. 2; Pl 2) while in the south-east of the intended area a substantial dark greyish spread (modern truncation, possible oil spread) was also avoided.

Only a small number of additional archaeological deposits were observed and investigated: three ditches one gully and a possible pit/treebole. No finds of archaeological interest were recovered from the features during the excavation. Only Ditch 501 (investigated in the excavation as slot 105, but which includes slot 1 and 12 from the evaluation) had Roman pottery recovered from it, during the evaluation (18 sherds of grey sandy ware GYSY) (Galleano 2017). Slot 105 (Pl. 3) was 1.3m long, 0.8m wide and 0.21m deep with two fills: a pale yellow-grey clayey silt basal fill (55) topped by a reddish yellow clayey silt (54). Neither contained any finds. The feature shallowed and petered out as it approached the terminus of gully 500 and it is possible that the two were contemporary.

On the north side of the area, next to the Ditch 501, gully 500 on a SW-NE axis was investigated in two slots (103 and 104). It was 20m long, 0.5m wide and 0.14m deep and filled with a pale yellowish grey clayey silt with no dating evidence recovered. A smaller ditch (slot 102) in this north side of the area was also recorded, but was truncated by the concrete foundations in the centre of the site. It measured 2.5m long, 0.9m wide and 0.19m deep, again producing no finds. Again, as this terminated roughly in line with gully 500, it is possible that all three of these features were related, but this is only conjecture.

In the south part of the site, only two features were observed. A small ditch or drain (slot 101), most likely the same as slot 8 in the evaluation in the southern limit of the excavation, was only revealed for 3m within the excavation area, on a E-W axis. It measured 0.9m wide, 0.2m deep and was filled with a mid grey brown silty clay with no dating evidence. The other feature investigated was a probable tree throw hole (106) with a circular shape, irregular sides, measuring 0.8m in diameter and 0.4m deep (pl. 4). It was filled with mid grey clay overlying a dark grey silty clay with roots. No dating evidence was recovered.

Finds

No finds were recovered during the course of the excavation.

Conclusion

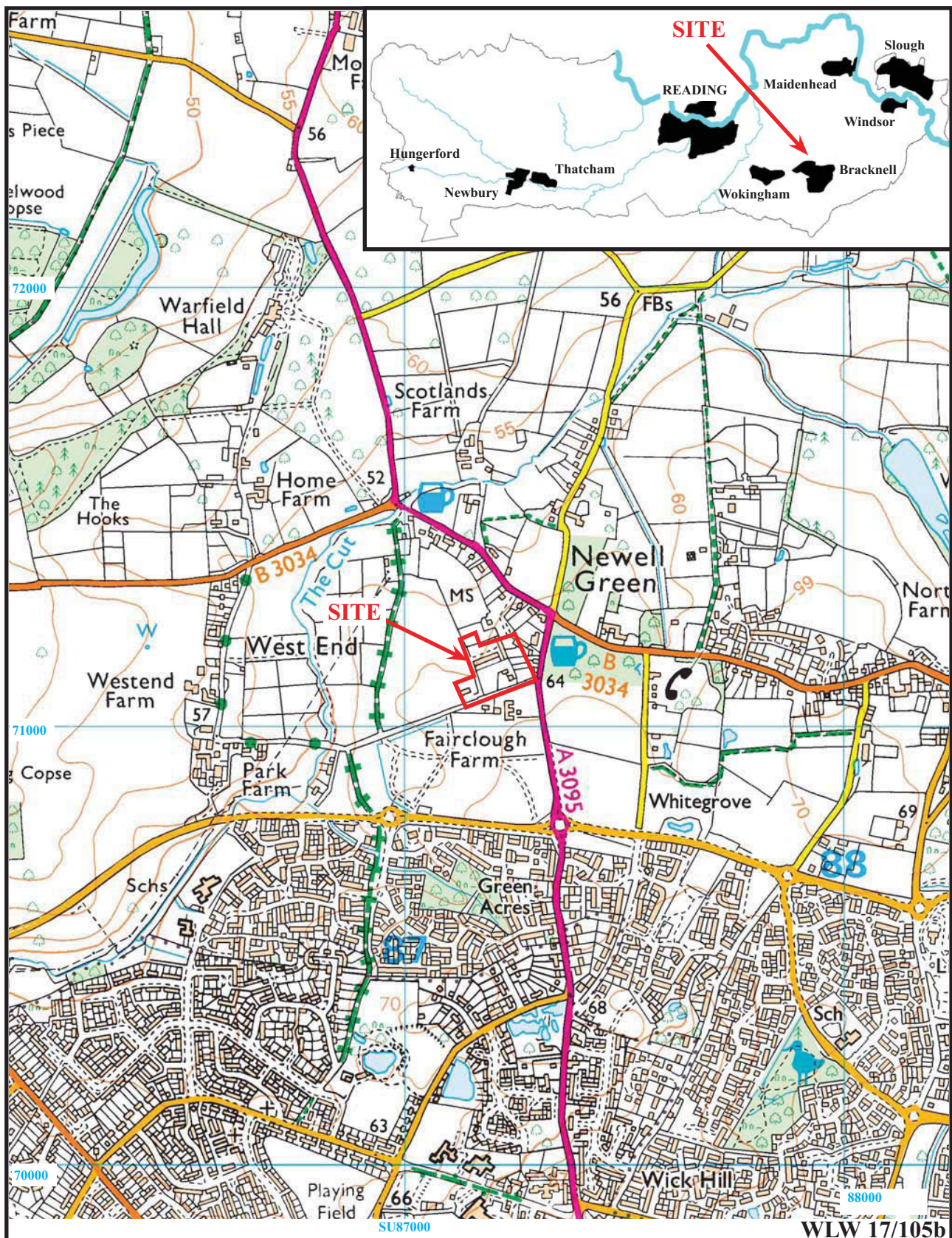
A small area was stripped at Watersplash Lane in order to investigate the prior results of the evaluation trenches. The excavation has revealed a small number of features, three ditches (one already investigated in the evaluation producing Roman pottery) one gully and a possible pit/treebole. No finds of archaeological interest were recovered from the features during the excavation.

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APPENDIX 1: Summary of excavated features (including evaluation)

<i>Group</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fills</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
501	1	52	ditch	Roman	Pottery
	2	53	gully	Post-medieval	Iron finds
	3	54–5	Drain	Modern	Brick/tile
	4	56	gully	Post-medieval	Brick/tile
	5	57	Gully/drain?	Modern?	Cuts 6
	6	58–60	Gully/drain?	Modern?	Cuts 7
	7	61	Gully	-	
	8	62–3	Drain	Modern	Construction
	9	64	Gully	Post-medieval	Pottery
	10	65	Pit	-	Modern?
	11	66, 69–70	Ditch	Modern	Pottery
501	12	67–8	ditch	Roman	Pottery
	101	50	Ditch		
	102	51	Ditch		
500	103	52	Gully		
500	104	53	Gully		
501	105	54, 55	Ditch	Roman	Pottery from the evaluation trial trench.
	106	56, 57	Pit/treebole		

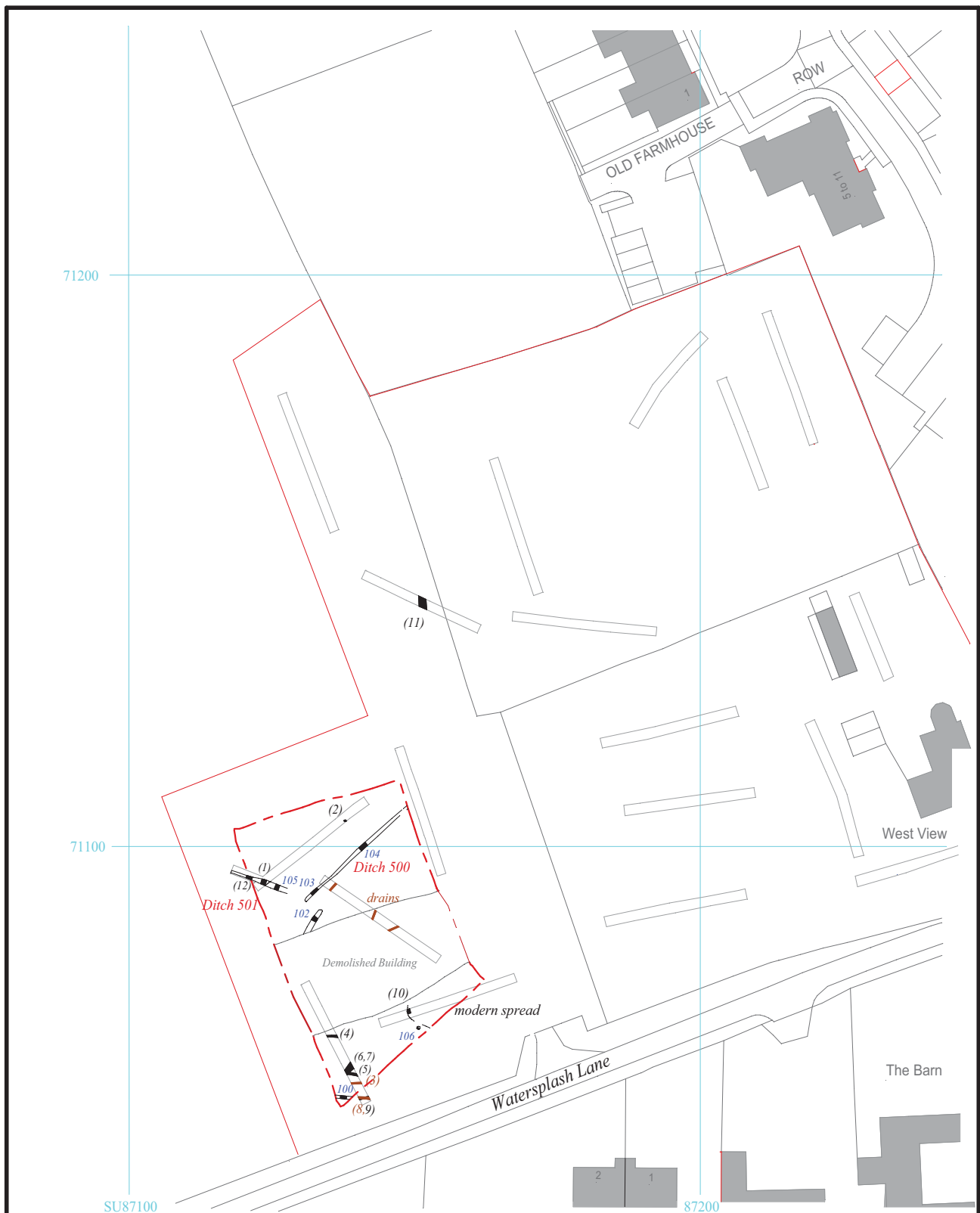


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Figure 1. Location of site within Bracknell and Berkshire.

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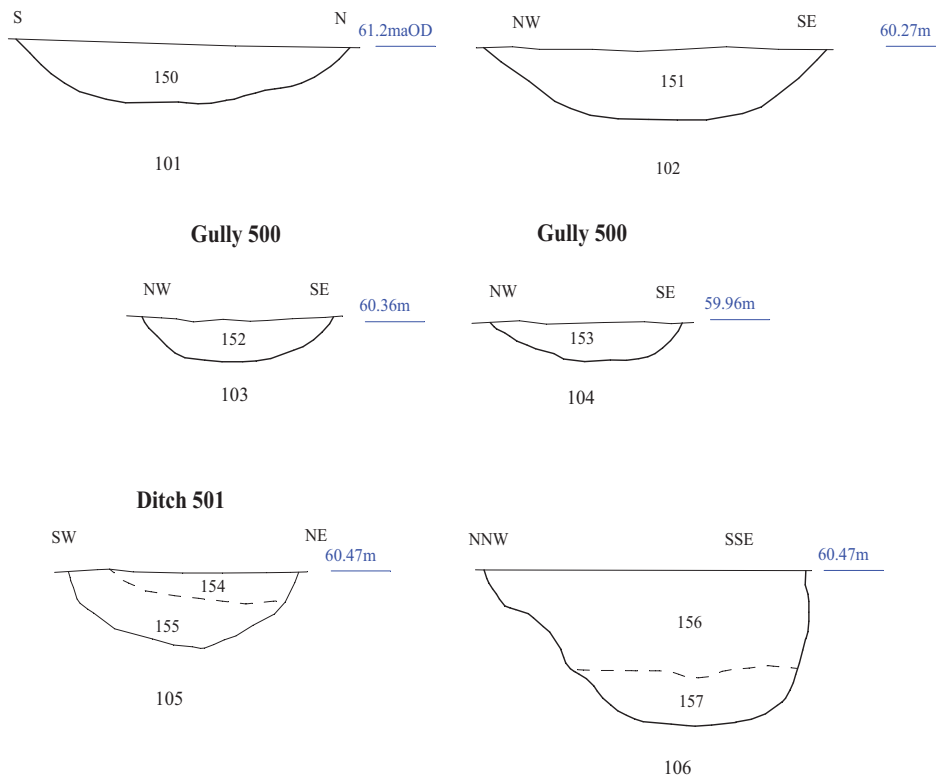
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Figure 2. Location of trenches.

0 50m



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Figure 3. Sections.

0 1m

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Plate 1. Stripped site, looking west.



Plate 2. Exposed building, looking north-west.

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Plates 1 and 2.

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Plate 3. Cut 105, looking south-west, Scales: 0.5m and 0.1m.



Plate 4. Pit 106, looking south-east, Scales: 1m and 0.5m.

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Plates 3 and 4.

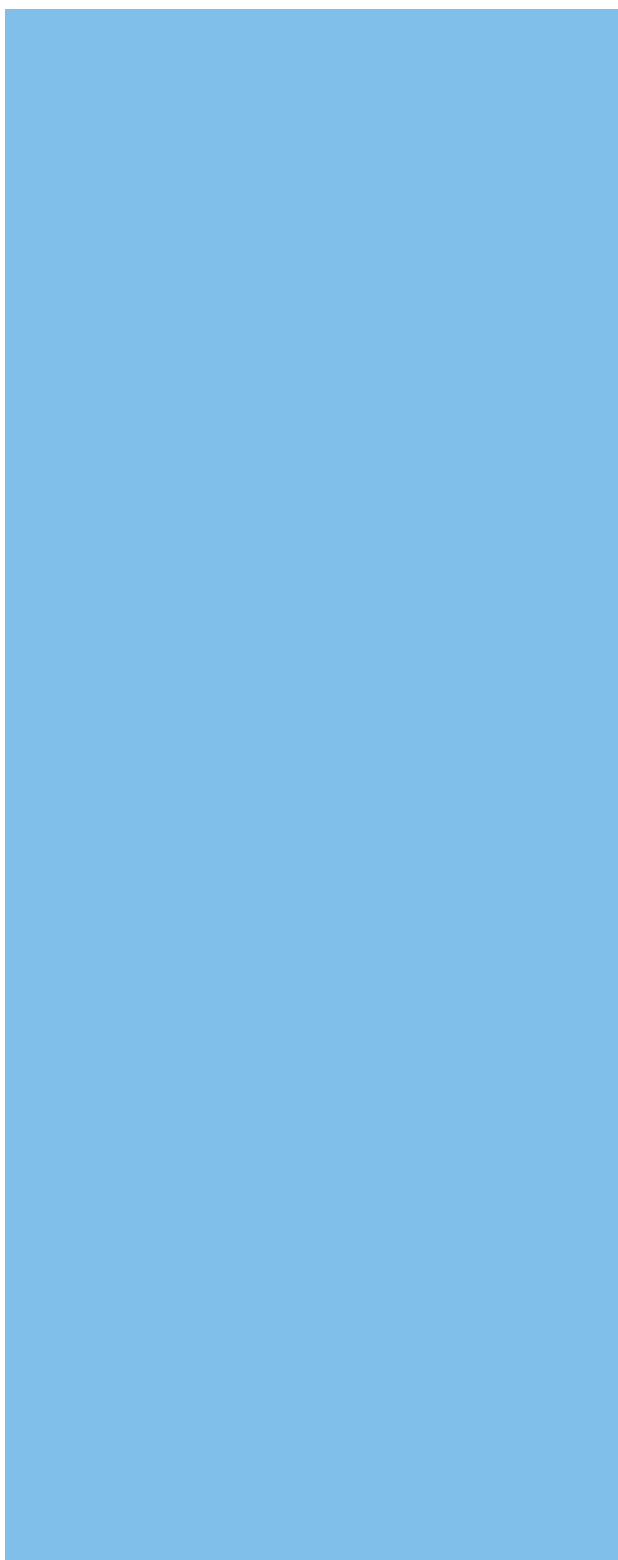
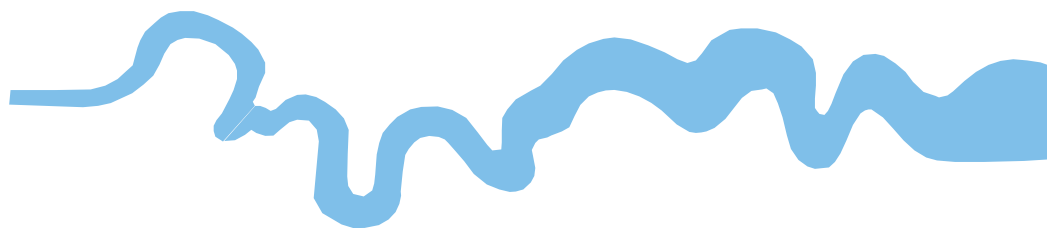
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TIME CHART

Calendar Years

Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43
	AD 0 BC
Iron Age _____	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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