

**T V A S**



**SOUTH WEST**

**Elmore Back, Lower Rea, Stonecroft, Elmore Lane West,  
Quedgeley, Gloucester**

**Archaeological Recording Action**

**by Andrew Weale**

**Site Code: ELQ18/148**

**(SO 8030 1528)**

# **Elmore Back, Lower Rea, Stonecroft, Elmore Lane West, Quedgeley, Gloucester**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief**

**For Armour Heritage Ltd**

by Andrew Weale

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code ELQ 18/148

**October 2018**

## Summary

**Site name:** Elmore Back, Lower Rea, Stonecroft, Elmore Lane West, Quedgeley, Gloucester

**Grid reference:** SO 8032 1530

**Site activity:** Watching Brief

**Date and duration of project:** 30th August 2018

**Project manager:** Andrew Weale

**Site supervisor:** Andrew Weale

**Site code:** ELQ 18/148

**Area of site:** c.0.4ha monitored within overall site of 3.6 ha

**Summary of results:** A layer of crushed ceramic building material was seen in the north-west corner of the site but no subsoil features relating to the former Rea Brick and Tile works were seen.

**Monuments identified:** None

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, South West Office, Taunton and will be deposited at The Museum of Gloucester in due course.

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[www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp](http://www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp).*

Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 05.10.18 Steve Preston ✓ 05.10.18
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# **Elmore Back, Lower Rea, Stonecroft, Elmore Lane West, Quedgeley, Gloucester An Archaeological Watching Brief**

by Andrew Weale

**Report 18/148**

## **Introduction**

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at Elmore Back, Lower Rea, Stonecroft, Elmore Lane West, Quedgeley, Gloucester (SO 8032 1530) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Sue Farr of Armour Heritage Ltd, Foghamshire Timber Yard, Foghamshire Lane, Trudoxhill, Frome, Somerset BA11 5DG.

Planning consent (17/01429/FUL) has been granted by Gloucester City Council for the formation of a new lake and ancillary services including WCs and cafe and associated car parking, for the creation of a Leisure Fishing business on the site. The permission is subject to a condition (11) relating to archaeology which requires a programme of archaeological work so as to record and advance understanding of any heritage assets which may be lost during the works.

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 Andrew Armstrong, Gloucester City Archaeologist. The fieldwork was undertaken by Andrew Weale on 30th August 2018 and the site code is ELQ 18/148.

The archive is presently held at TVAS, Southwest, Taunton and will be deposited with The Museum of Gloucester, in due course.

## **Location, topography and geology**

The site is located approximately 500m north of the district of Quedgeley in Gloucestershire, between the River Severn to the west and the Gloucester and Sharpness canal to the east (Fig. 1). The centre of the City of Gloucester lies approximately 4km to the north-east up the River Severn. The site is a large field set to pasture, located to the north of Elmore Lane and is bounded by a belt of trees and the River Severn to the west and arable fields to the immediate north and east (Fig. 2). The site generally slopes down from 15m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) in the north-east corner to 11m aOD in the south-west. The underlying geology is mapped (BGS 1972) as

Jurassic and Triassic Blue Lias formation and Charmouth Mudstone formation (undifferentiated) – Mudstone. No superficial geological deposits are recorded. A banded yellow or blue clay was observed across the site.

### **Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential of the site derives from its being located adjacent to the site of the former Rea brick and tile works, which was opened in the mid to late 19th century and closed in the 1880s. The 1839 Quedgeley Parish tithe map and apportionment confirms the industrial site post-dates the map, which illustrates the site as *South Fields Spoil Bank*, owned by William Beach.

By the time of the 1882 Ordnance Survey map, the *Rea Brick and Tile Works* is illustrated and there is a series of ancillary buildings within the site. A circular structure is shown to the west of a long sub-divided rectangular building and south of two further buildings, all positioned in the western half of the plot. A large clay pit is illustrated to the north of the buildings, located across what is now a pond within the site. To the south of the main building complex, a small L-shaped building is shown, albeit obscured by the *Lower Rea* annotation. To the immediate south-west of the site, a large farmhouse is illustrated, with a row of six cottages named *Victoria Cottages* to its immediate south-east. The 1903 Ordnance Survey map indicates that all of the buildings within the site have been demolished and annotates the *Old Clay Pits* within the north-west of the site. The southern half of the site is recorded as *Allotment Gardens*.

### **Objectives and methodology**

The aims of the project were to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the works. This involved the archaeological monitoring of all areas of intrusive groundworks, in particular the digging of the lake.

The specific research aims of this project were to:

- determine the presence or absence of archaeological remains, and should any remains be present, to ensure their preservation by record to the highest possible standard;
- confirm the approximate date or date range of the remains, by means of artefactual or other evidence;
- determine or confirm the approximate extent of any remains;
- determine the condition and state of preservation of the remains;
- determine the degree of complexity of the horizontal and/or vertical stratigraphy present;
- prepare a report on the results of the archaeological mitigation; and to

prepare and deposit a site archive with the local museum.

Overburden stripping and all groundworks across the site were undertaken by a mechanical excavator. Archaeological deposits which were threatened by groundworks were to be excavated and recorded. Sufficient time was to be allowed to carry this out within the groundworker's schedules. A programme of environmental sampling was to take place where sufficient well stratified subsoil deposits were located.

## **Results**

The area monitored is shown in Figure 2. Machine excavation was monitored down to the level of the natural geology (Pls 1 and 2). Across the majority of the site the stratigraphy consisted of topsoil up to 0.22m thick which contained occasional undiagnostic small ceramic building material (CBM) fragments. Beneath the subsoil was up to 0.14m of firm brown grey silty clay subsoil which contained no artefacts. The subsoil overlay banded yellow and blue clays that contain fragments of limestone and the occasional fossil (*Gryphaea*), the natural geology.

In the north-west corner of the site there were layers of crushed CBM debris under the topsoil and above the subsoil. This was recorded in two sections, Section 1 and Section 2. The only feature cut into the underlying natural was a modern service that contained a metal water pipe.

### Section 1 (Figs 2 and 3; Pl. 3)

Section 1 lay on the western edge of the northern of the two islands retained within the lake complex. It was orientated North to South and was 1.24m long. The topsoil was up to 0.22m deep. Beneath the topsoil was a light brown grey silty clay (53) with up to 50% crushed CBM. Beneath deposit 53 was subsoil, up to 0.14m thick. Underneath the subsoil was banded yellow clay that contain fragments of limestone and the occasional fossil (*Gryphaea*), natural geology.

### Section 2 (Figs 2 and 3; Pl. 4)

Section 2 lay on the south-facing section on the north extent of the lake complex. It was orientated West to East and was 1.90m long. Topsoil up to 0.20m deep overlay deposit 54, very similar to 53, a light brown grey silty clay with up to 50% crushed CBM up to 0.07m thick. Deposit 54 only continues 1.05m from the western edge of the section and past this point there is no further evidence of deposit 54. Beneath deposit 54 was subsoil up to

0.13m thick. Underneath the subsoil was banded yellow clay that contain fragments of limestone and the occasional fossil (Gryphaea), natural geology.

## **Finds**

### *Ceramic Building Material*

A small assemblage of ceramic building material was retained from both Sections 1 and 2 where the elements could be identified (Appendix 1).

From deposit 53. came 7 fragments, with a total weight of 460g: three fragments of brick, three fragments of pipe or pan tile and one piece of fired clay that may have been from a kiln.

From deposit 54 came 11 fragments with a total weight of 487g: two fragments of brick, three fragments of pipe or pan tile, three fragments of fired clay that may have been from a kiln, and three fragments of roof tile.

None of the pieces is particularly diagnostic and there is nothing to link them specifically to the brick and tile works.

### *Slag*

A single piece of undiagnostic iron slag weighing 16g was recovered from deposit 54 in section 2.

## **Conclusion**

No subsoil features were encountered during the watching brief relating to the former Rea brick and tile works, nor to any earlier period.

The only artefactual evidence that may relate to the former brick and tile works came in the form of layers of crushed ceramic material building beneath the topsoil. These layers contained fragments of brick, roof tile, some pieces that may be either ceramic pipe or pan tile, and heavily fired clay which may be parts of a kiln, along with a single piece of slag. However it is unclear if these deposits relate to the Rea brick and tile works during its working life in the form of waste material, or post-dated the closure of the works and relate to the demolition of the site buildings (or indeed, they may have been dumped from elsewhere to raise the ground). No reliable dating evidence was recovered from these deposits except that the CBM is clearly post-medieval. As there was no buried topsoil beneath these layers, which lay on subsoil, this does suggest they were laid down during some period of landscaping rather than the during use of the site as a brickworks.

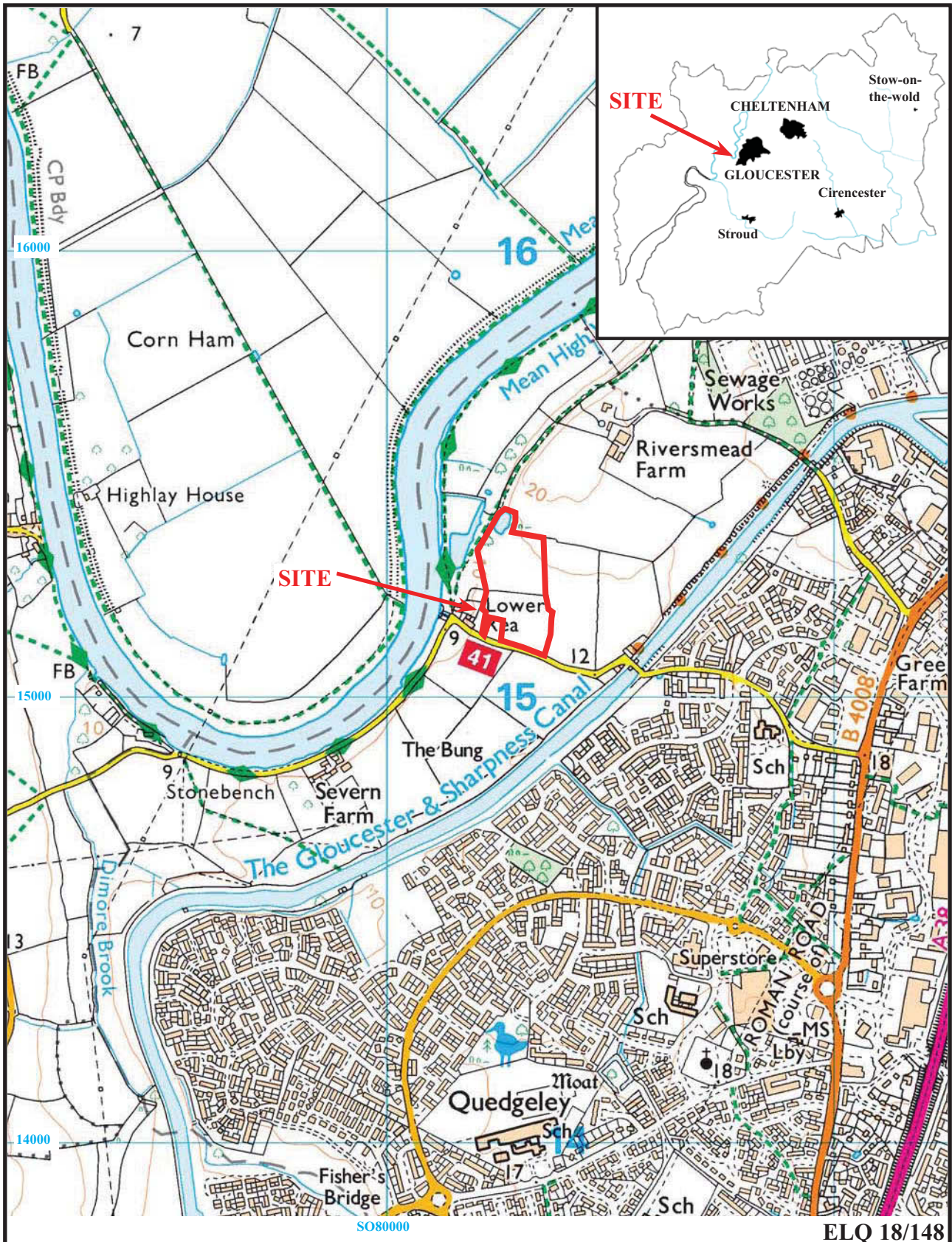
## **References**

BGS, 1972, British Geological Survey, 1:50,000, Sheet 234, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth

**APPENDIX 1: Ceramic building material by weight and context**

<i>Deposit</i>	<i>No. frags</i>	<i>Wt (g)</i>	<i>Comments</i>
53	7	460	Brick x2, Pipe or Pan Tile x3, Kiln Waste x1
54	11	487	Brick x2, Roof Tile x3, Pipe or Pan Tile x3, Kiln Waste x3
Total	18	947	

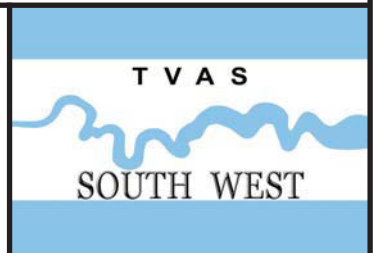


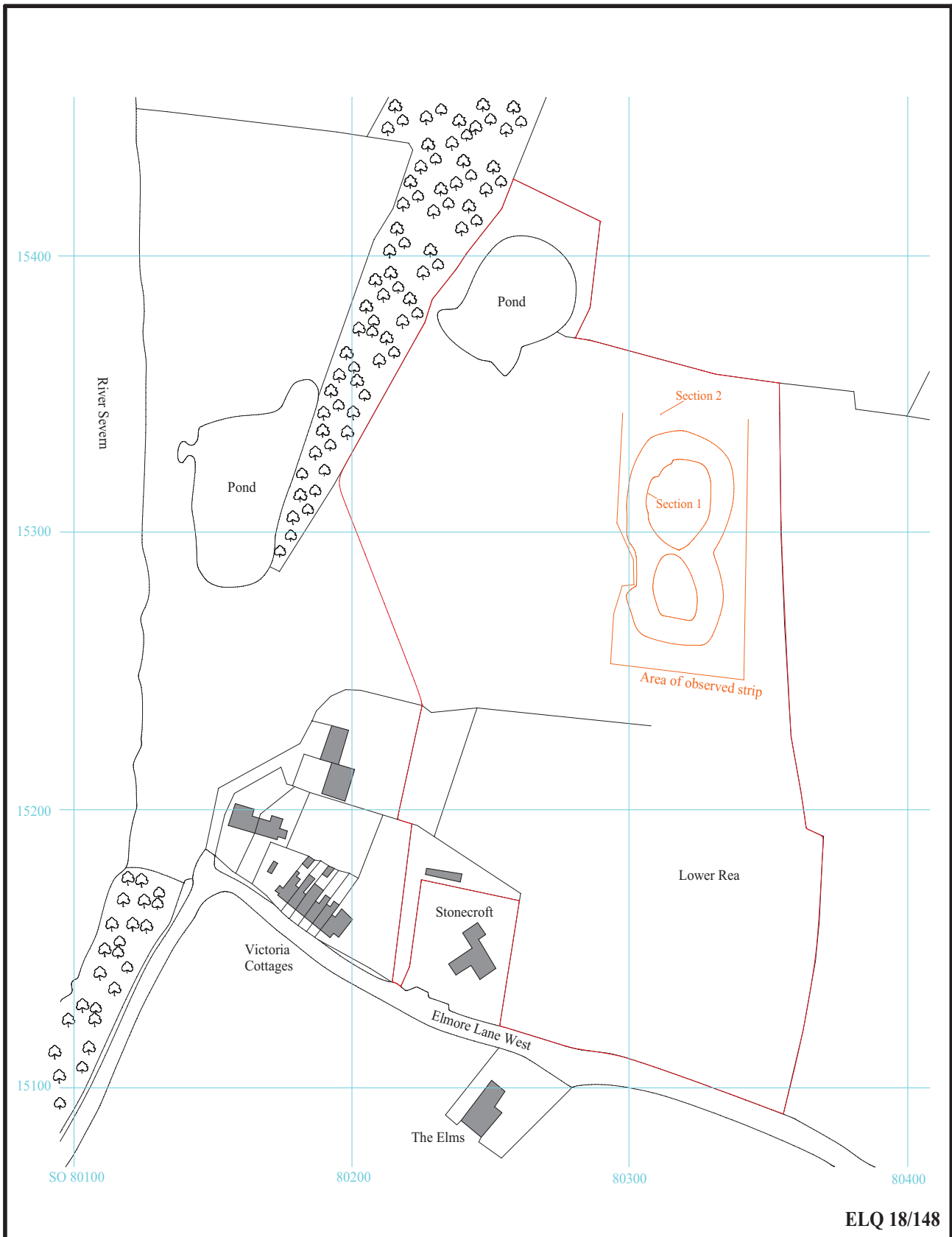


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Figure 1. Location of site within Quedgeley and Gloucestershire.

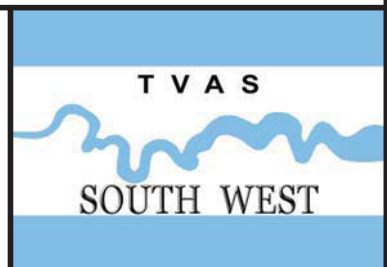
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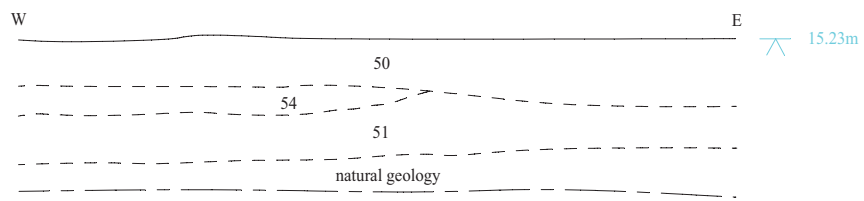
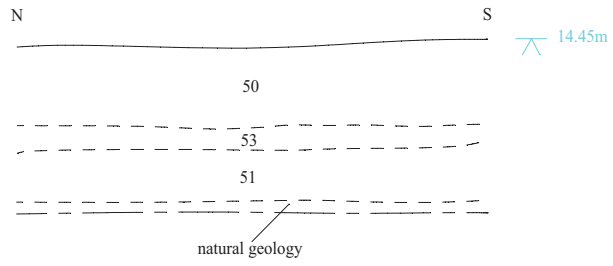




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Figure 2. Site plan.





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Figure 3. Representative sections.





Plate 1. Site looking North from southern edge



Plate 2. Site looking South from northern edge

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**Elmore back, Lower Rea, Stonecroft, Elmore Lane East,  
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Plates 1 and 2.**

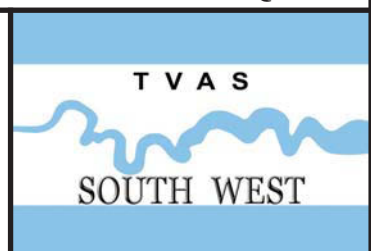




Plate 3. Section 1 looking East. Scales: 1m and 0.3m



Plate 4. Section 2 looking North. Scales: 1m and 0.3m

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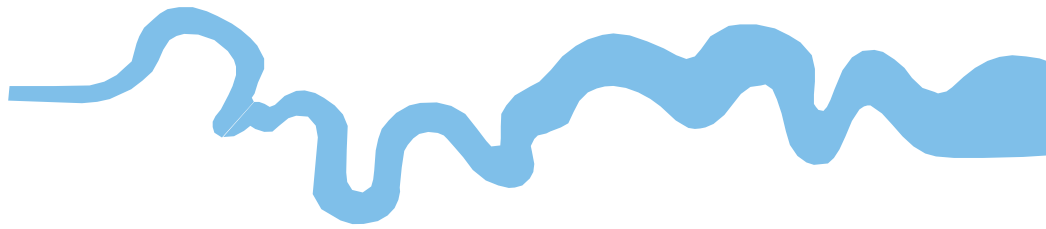
**Elmore Back, Lower Rea, Stonecroft, Elmore Lane West,  
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Plates 3 and 4.**



## 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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