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

**50 Chazey Road, Caversham,  
Reading, Berkshire**

**Archaeological Watching Brief**

**by Will Attard**

**Site Code: CRC19/10**

**(SU6984 7546)**

**50 Chazey Road, Caversham  
Reading, Berkshire**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief**

**For Ms Deirdre Smith**

by Will Attard

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code CRC19/10

**August 2019**

## Summary

**Site name:** 50 Chazey Road, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire

**Grid reference:** SU6984 7546

**Site activity:** Watching Brief

**Date and duration of project:** 18th June- 8th July 2019

**Project coordinator:** Danielle Milbank

**Site supervisor:** Tom Stewart; Cosmo Bacon; Will Attard

**Site code:** CRC19/10

**Summary of results:** Trenching for foundations and a drainage splay ahead of construction of a new dwelling took place under archaeological supervision. No archaeological deposits were revealed but a small collection of prehistoric struck flint was recovered.

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Reading Museum 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 ✓ 30.08.19
	Steve Preston ✓ 02.09.19

# 50 Chazey Road, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Will Attard

Report 19/10

## Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at 50 Chazey Road, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire (SU6984 7546); (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Deirdre Smith of 50 Chazey Road, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 7DU.

Planning permission (180311) has been gained from Reading Borough Council for the construction of a new dwelling at the site, following demolition of the existing house. The consent is subject to a condition (9) requiring an archaeological watching brief to be undertaken during groundworks.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2018) and Reading Borough Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Roland Smith, Archaeology Office for Berkshire Archaeology, the archaeological advisers to the Borough. The fieldwork was undertaken by Will Attard, Cosmo Bacon and Tom Stewart between 18th June and 8th July 2019 and the site code is CRC19/10.

The archive is presently held at TVAS, Reading and will be deposited with Reading Museum in due course.

## Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the northern edge of Chazey Road, just east of the turning for Hewett Avenue, 2km west of the centre of Caversham. It lies on a plateau overlooking the river Thames which lies runs just over 0.4km to the south. The site lies at a height of *c.* 70m above Ordnance Datum on the Boyn Hill gravel terrace, which in turn overlies the Seaford chalk formation (BGS 2000).

## Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location within the archaeologically rich Thames Valley (Booth *et al.* 2007; Lambrick *et al.* 2009) with a wide range of sites and finds recorded in the Berkshire Archaeology Historic Environment Record. Of particular note is a collection of prehistoric struck flints and a fragment of a Bronze Age bronze sword recorded as being recovered from the garden of 50 Chazey Road. The relatively large number of finds recovered from such a small area has been suggested to indicate the presence of

a prehistoric site somewhere in the immediate vicinity. The flint assemblage is considered Neolithic or Bronze Age in date, and includes a mixture of struck flakes and implements such as scrapers. Two hammer stones were also recovered (Mycombe 2006). The environs of the site in general include various findspots of Neolithic and Bronze Age flintwork, Iron Age, Roman and Medieval pottery, undated human burials and Roman coins. Bronze Age occupation has been recorded on St Peter's Hill to the south-east (Ford and Raymond 2013). Medieval occupation and extensive prehistoric occupation have also been recorded on the Mapledurham Golf Courses to the north (Ford 1991; Hull 1998). The environs of the site are also noteworthy for the presence of Palaeolithic flint handaxes and other tools, with the site lying on Boyn Hill Gravel (Wymer 1968).

### **Objectives and methodology**

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the groundworks for the new development. This included monitoring the excavation of foundation trenching, ground level reduction and excavation of drainage trenches. All trenching and ground level reduction was undertaken with a small 360° type excavator fitted with a 0.3m wide toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision. Spoil heaps were monitored frequently for archaeological material.

### **Results**

The previous structures on the site were demolished down to ground level to expose subsoil with demolition debris remaining. The groundworks were dug from this level (Pl. 1).

Foundation trenches and footings were excavated under archaeological supervision (Fig. 3), and varied in depth from 0.90m to 1.10m (Pl. 2). Trenches for services (drainage) were excavated with a maximum depth of 0.75m, rising to 0.25m at the southern end of the site. Natural geology was observed at a consistent depth of 0.70m-0.75m in all trenches where it was exposed, and consisted of a light red-brown silty sand with frequent small flint gravel inclusions (Fig. 4). Occasional areas of convoluted chalk were also exposed

A number of areas of modern disturbance were observed, presumably relating to the previous building on the site, but no deposits of archaeological interest were noted. A small collection of struck flints was recovered from the spoilheaps.

## **Finds**

### *Struck Flint* by Will Attard

Six pieces of struck flint were recovered, all from the subsoil. Overall condition of the pieces ranges from fresh to lightly abraded, with all pieces displaying minor to moderate edge damage. In colour, five of the six pieces are light to mid grey, and cortex (where present) is thin but chalky. One piece is burnt, and displays the associated white colouring and crazing pattern of thermal fractures over its surface. A single scraper was present, with abrupt retouch along the right lateral edge (viewed dorsally). No other pieces were retouched.

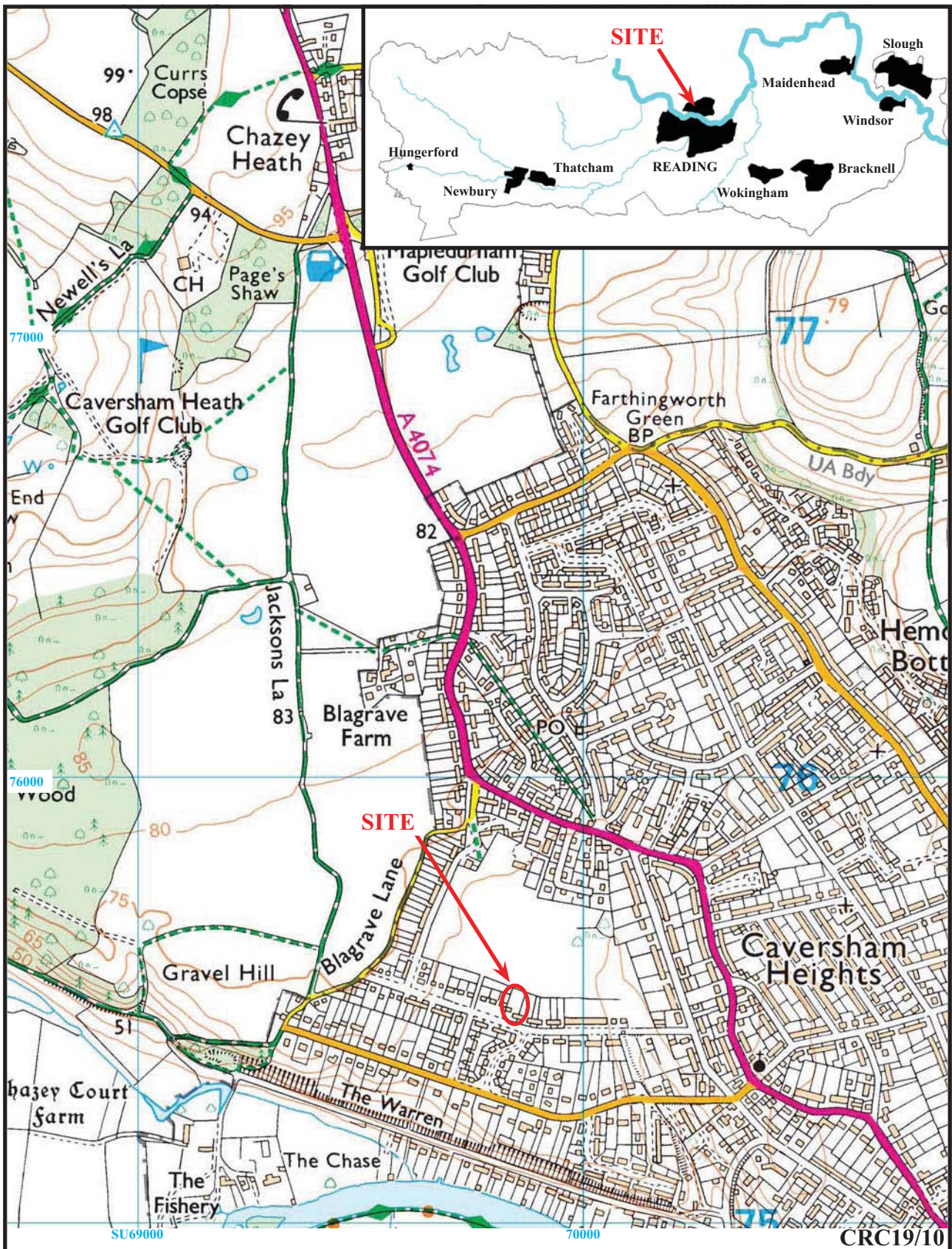
The struck flint found during this watching brief is not datable to a particular time period. With reference to the assemblage previously recovered from the site (Mycombe 2006), the struck flint reported here is also consistent with both Neolithic and Bronze Age flint working.

## **Conclusion**

Foundation trenches and drainage trenches were excavated in the intended location. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed but six struck flints were recovered from the subsoil. Although these flints add to the collection already recorded for the vicinity, there was no evidence that a dense prehistoric site comprising either cut features and/or a large scatter of struck flints was present on the parts of the site observed, and the focus of the previous observations must be sited elsewhere.

## **References**

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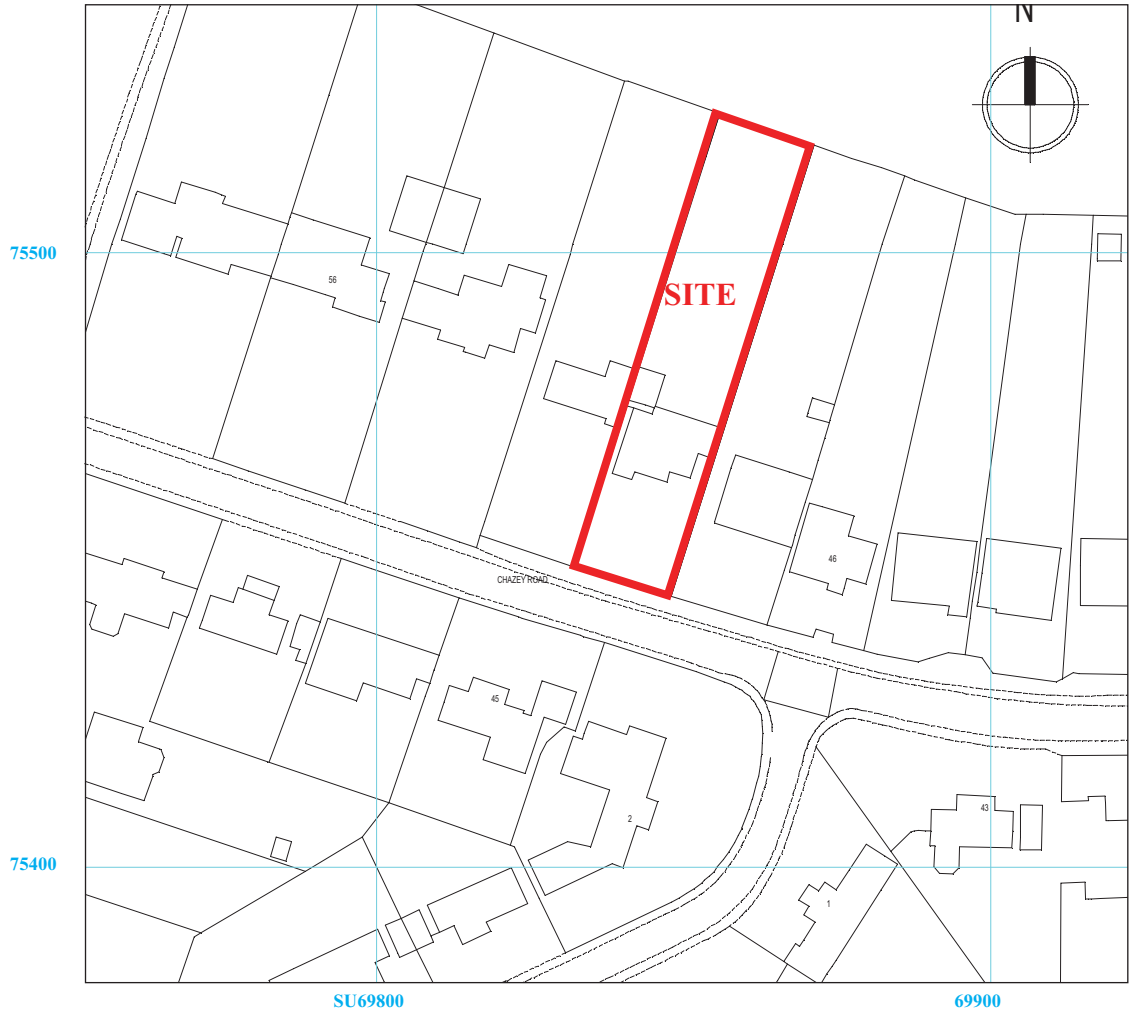
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Figure 1. Location of site within Caversham and Berkshire.

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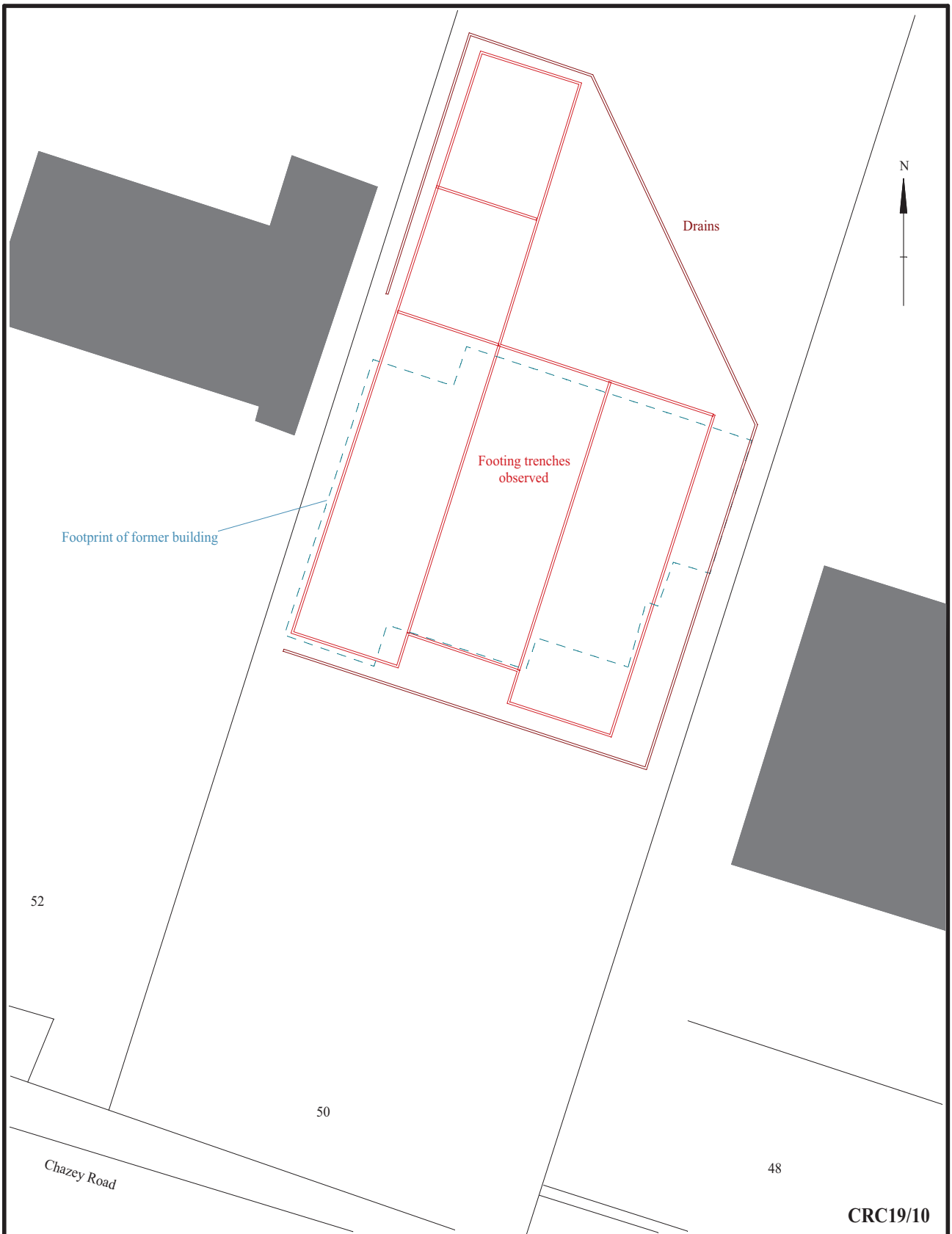
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Chazey Road

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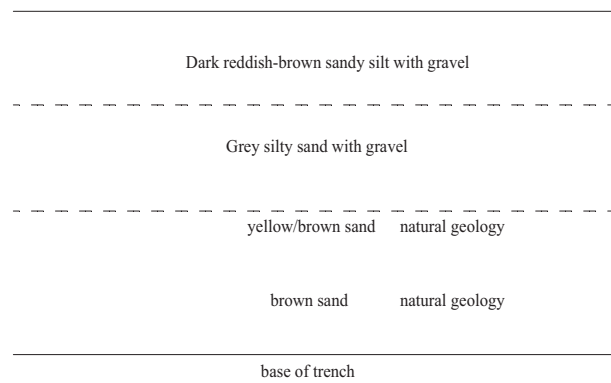




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Figure 3. Plan of site subject to watching brief.





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Figure 4. Representative section.

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Plate 1. General view of site looking north



Plate 2. Typical foundation trench stratigraphy, looking north west,  
Scales: horizontal 0.5m, vertical 0.5m.

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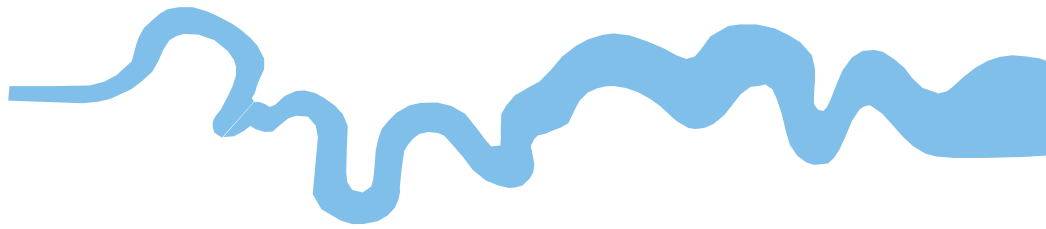
Plates 1 and 2.

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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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