

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**New Swimming Pool, The Grange, High Street,
Long Wittenham, Oxfordshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by Will Attard

Site Code: HSLW21/120

(SU 5474 9383)

**New Swimming Pool, The Grange, High Street,
Long Wittenham, Oxfordshire**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief
for Ms Charlotte Treacy**

by Will Attard

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code HSLW 21/120

August 2021

Summary

Site name: New Swimming Pool, The Grange, High Street, Long Wittenham, Oxfordshire

Grid reference: SU 5474 9383

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 20th-21st July 2021

Project coordinator: Tim Dawson

Site supervisor: Will Attard

Site code: HSLW 21/120

Area of site: c. 45 sq m

Summary of results: No deposits nor finds of any archaeological interest were encountered. A series of truncations were investigated and all produced conclusively modern material.

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

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford ✓ 31.08.21
	Steve Preston ✓ 31.08.21

New Swimming Pool, The Grange, High Street, Long Wittenham, Oxfordshire An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Will Attard

Report 21/120

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken at The Grange, High Street, Long Wittenham, Oxfordshire, OX14 4QN (SU 5474 9383) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Charlotte Treacy, of the above address. Planning consent (P21/SO913/HH) has been sought from South Oxfordshire District Council for the construction of a new swimming pool and pool house at The Grange. The consent is expected to be subject to two conditions relating to archaeology.

This is in accordance with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2021) and District Council's policies on archaeology.

The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Steven Weaver, Planning Archaeologist with Oxfordshire County Archaeological Service, the archaeological adviser to the District. The fieldwork was undertaken by Will Attard and Elspeth St John-Brooks between 20th and 21st July 2021.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Oxfordshire Museum Service in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site lies within the village of Long Wittenham, north of Didcot, and south-east of Abingdon (Figs 1 and 2; Pl. 1). The area of impact for the proposed new pool consists of a small rectangle of land in the north-eastern corner of the garden. The main house stands to the west of the site, with an associated barn south of this. A gentle slope ran from the western to the eastern end of the footprint of the proposed pool. The underlying geology at the site is mapped as 1st (Flood Plain) Terrace Deposits (BGS 1980) which was observed on site and it lies at a height of *c.*50.50m above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological Background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted by a design brief for the project (Weaver 2021). In summary this potential stems from the site's location within the archaeologically rich Upper Thames Valley with numerous sites recorded from the air, gravel extraction and other fieldwork in the area (e.g: Booth *et al.* 2007;

Lambrick *et al.* 2009; Benson and Miles 1974). The Grange itself is an early 19th-century building, with an early 18th-century barn to the rear. Long Wittenham has Saxon origins and is mentioned in Domesday Book (Williams and Martin 2002). The Grange lies just to the north of a Scheduled Monument of an 'Anglo-Saxon great hall complex and Roman settlement features', the latter consisting of a so-called 'ladder settlement' arranged along the edges of a Roman roadway. To the south-west an archaeological excavation revealed late Roman and early Saxon burials with rich grave goods to the west of the scheduled area. The parish church of St Mary with likely medieval origins is located north of the site, on the northern side of the High Street.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by invasive groundworks. This would involve the examination of all areas of intrusive groundworks, expected to consist of the excavation of the pool footprint and any associated service trenches.

Results

The footprint of the new swimming pool was successfully excavated in the intended location under constant archaeological supervision (Fig. 3, Pl. 2). A series of modern truncations were identified, cut from just below the modern turf-line (Pls 4-5). The area was dug to a maximum depth of 1.55m and showed stratigraphy of 0.40m of topsoil overlying made ground (0.65m deep in the north-east, shallowing to 0.35m in the south-west) overlying gravel natural geology (Fig. 4; Pl. 3). The area of the swimming pool was heavily rooted, both due to standing trees and the remains of trees that had been felled prior to the commencement of this watching brief.

To ensure recovery of any residual material contemporary with the late Roman and early Saxon activity to the south, all spoil heaps were carefully monitored for stray finds, although no material was recovered.

Finds

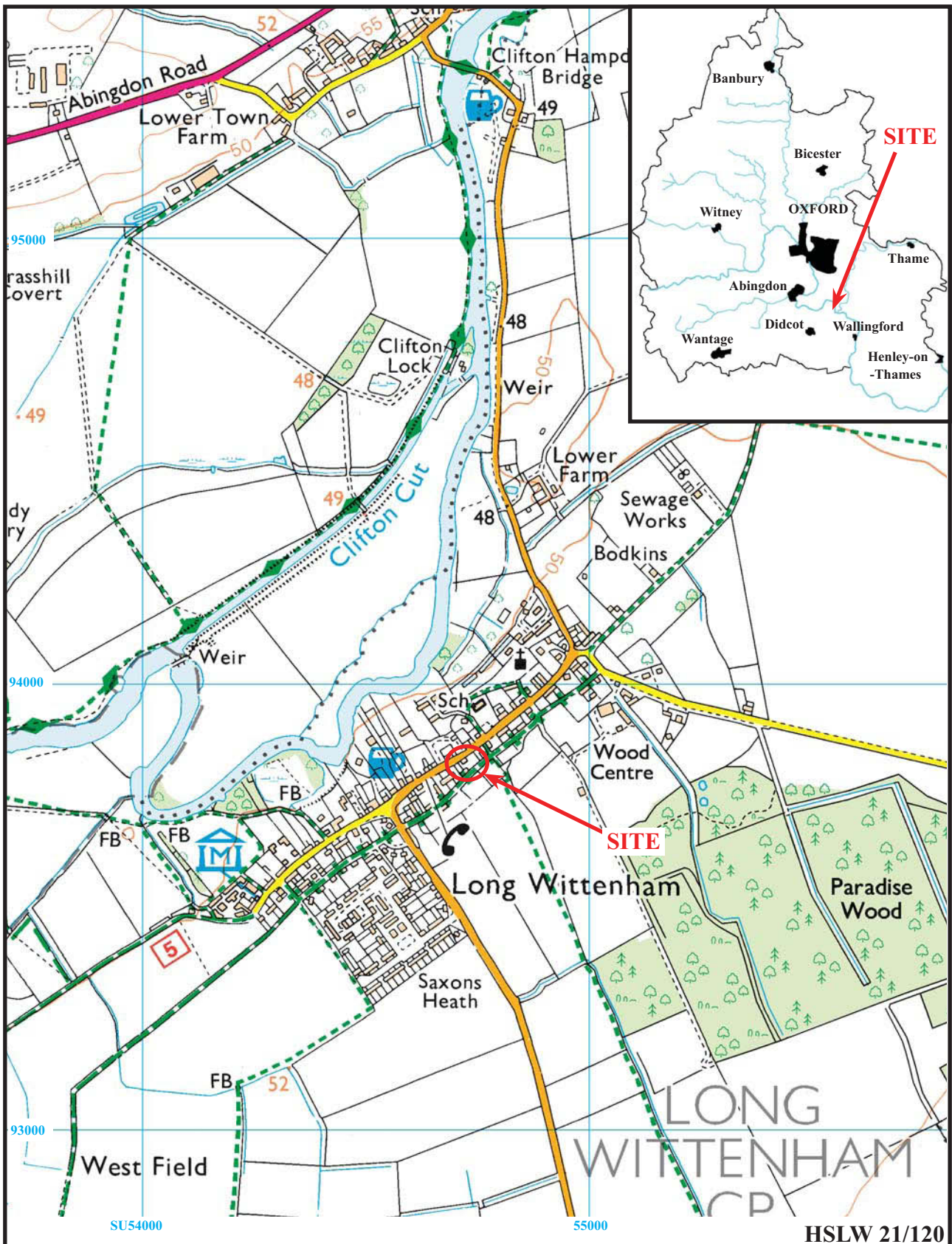
No finds of any archaeological interest were recovered. Modern 'china', brick, concrete, glass, clinker, etc were noted in all the truncations and in the made ground and not retained.

Conclusion

The excavation of the footprint of the new swimming pool at The Grange was undertaken under constant archaeological supervision as intended. A range of modern truncations were observed, cut from just below the turf-line but no medieval or earlier finds nor features were encountered during this watching brief.

References

- BGS, 1980, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 254, Drift Edition, Keyworth
- Booth, P, Dodd, A, Robinson, M and Smith, A, 2007, *The Thames through Time: The Archaeology of the Gravel Terraces of the Upper and Middle Thames: The early historical period AD1–1000*, Oxford Archaeology Thames Valley Landscapes Monogr **27**, Oxford
- Benson, D and Miles, D, 1974, *The Upper Thames Valley: an archaeological survey of the river gravels*, Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit Survey **2**, Oxford
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- NPPF, 2019, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Government, London
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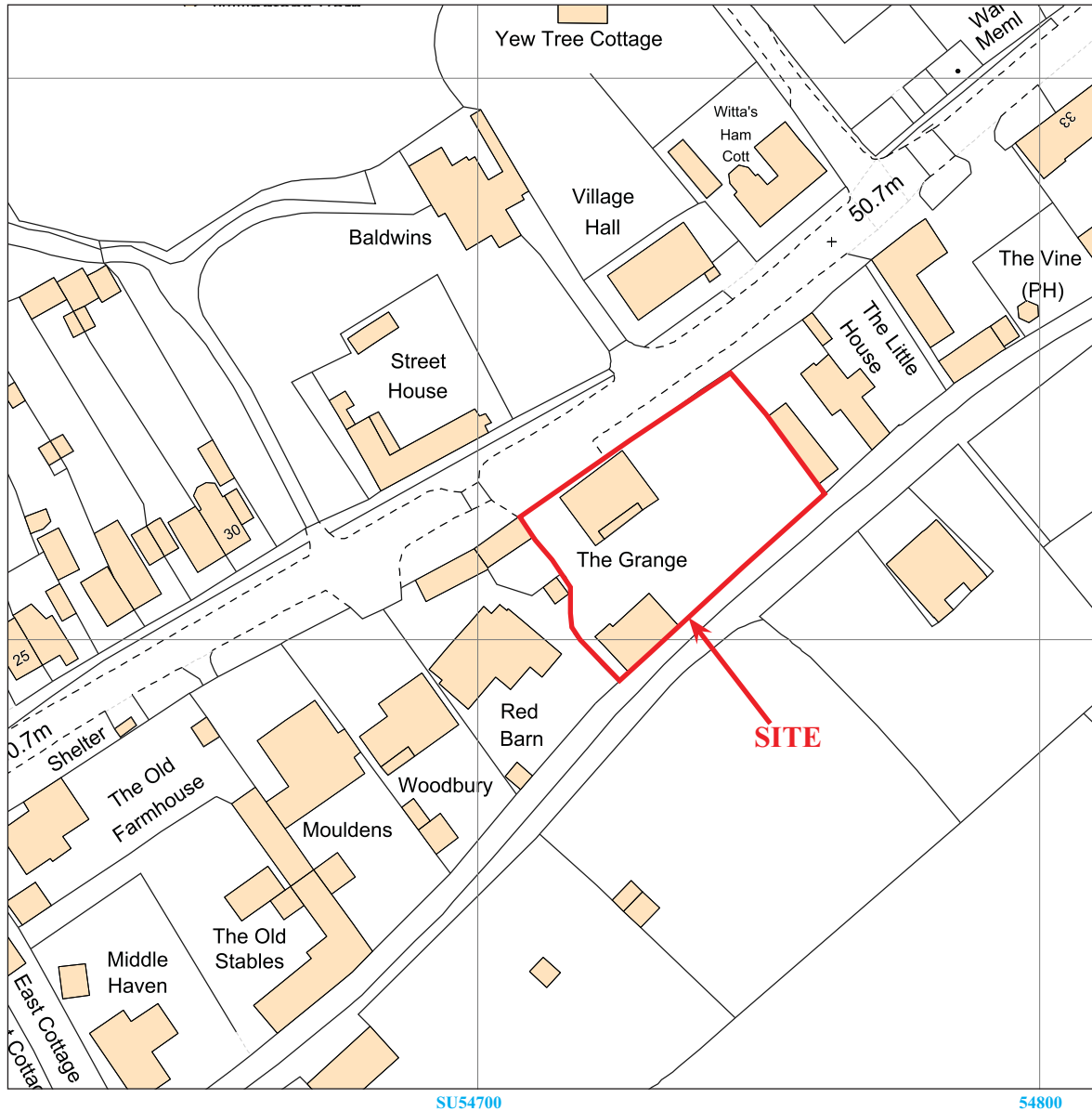


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Figure 1. Location of site within Long Wittenham and
Oxfordshire.

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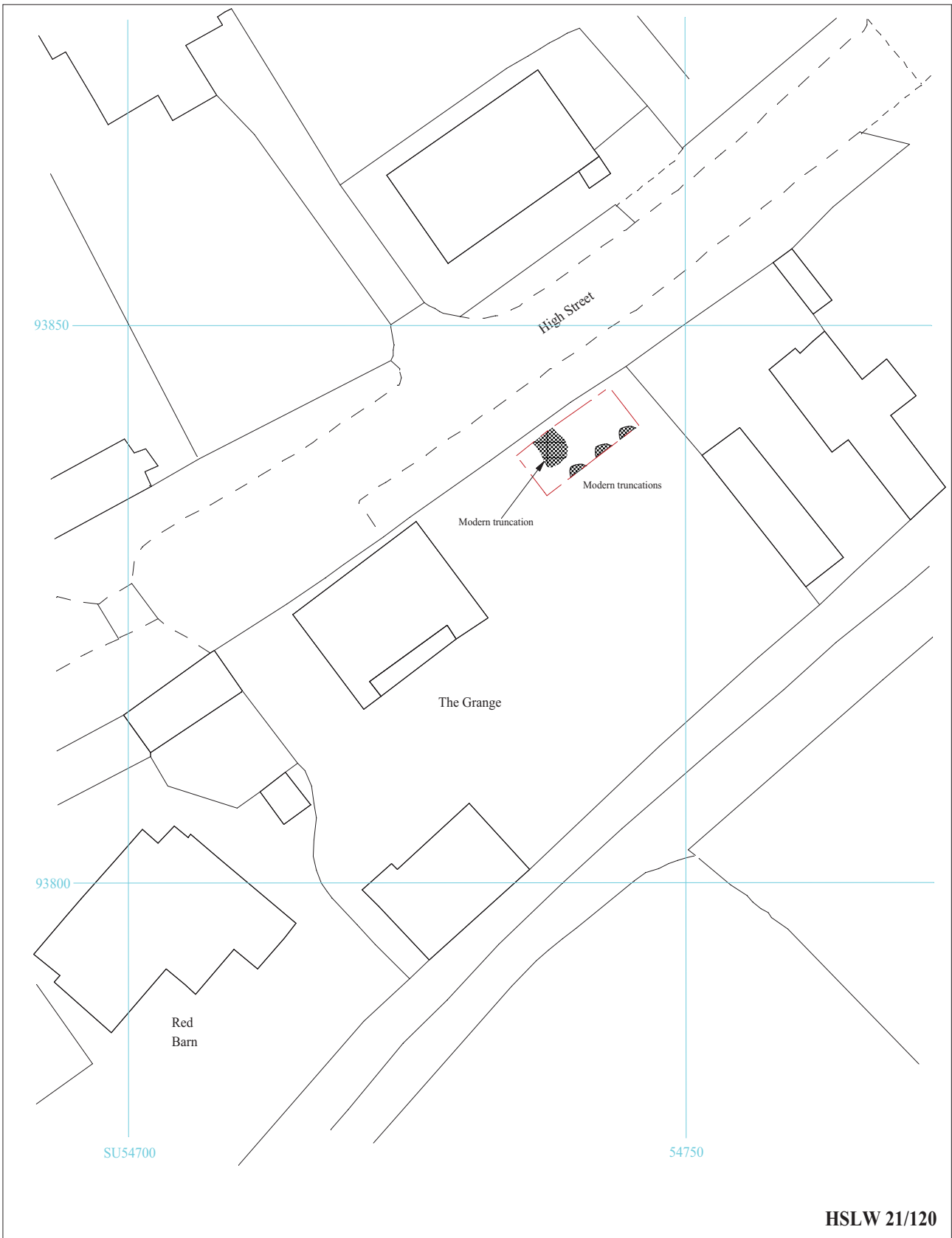
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off the High Street.

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Figure 3. Location of swimming pool excavation.



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Topsoil

Makeup layer

Sandy gravel natural geology

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Figure 4. Representative section.



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Plate 1. Setting of site looking East.



Plate 2. Excavation in progress, looking North West.



Plate 3. Typical section, looking North West,
Scale: 0.5m



Plate 4. Section showing modern features,
looking South, Scale: 0.5m



Plate 5. Section showing modern feature,
looking North West, Scale: 0.5m.

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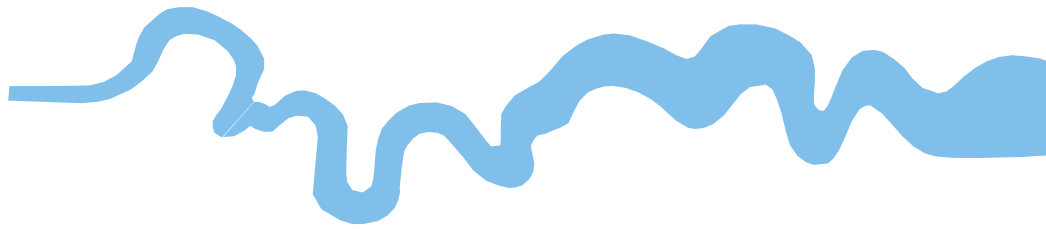
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Plates 1-5.**

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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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