

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**43 Levylsdene, Merrow,
Guildford, Surrey**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Andy Taylor and Beth Tucker

Site Code: LGS25/30

(TQ 0268 5006)

43 Levylsdene, Merrow, Guildford, Surrey

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Mattwell Homes**

by Andy Taylor and Beth Tucker
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code LGS 25/30

March 2025

Summary

Site name: 43 Levylsdene, Merrow, Guildford, Surrey

Grid reference: TQ 0268 5006

Site activity: Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 10th March 2025

Project coordinator: David Sanchez

Site supervisor: Andy Taylor

Site code: LGS 25/30

Area of site: c.1400 sq m

Summary of results: Two trenches were successfully excavated, revealing only a late Post-Medieval pit. No other finds or features of archaeological origin were recorded and the site is considered to have low archaeological potential.

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

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

Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford✓ 12.03.25 Steve Preston✓ 11.03.25
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43 Levylsdene, Merrow, Guildford, Surrey

An Archaeological Evaluation

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Report 25/30

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at 43 Levylsdene, Merrow, Guildford, Surrey (TQ 0268 5006) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Mark Helliwell, of Mattwell Homes, 135 High Street, Godalming, Surrey, GU7 1AF.

Planning permission is to be sought from Guildford Borough Council for the erection of two new residential properties. Due to the potential for the disturbance of surviving below ground archaeology, trial trenching prior to the commencement of any works on site is to take place and with the potential for a further programme of archaeological work depending on these initial findings.

This is in accordance with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2024), and the Borough Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Nick Truckle, Archaeological Officer with Surrey County Council, advisers to the Borough on matters relating to archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Beth Tucker and Jack Dumbleton on 10th March 2025 and the site code is LGS 25/30.

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

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the eastern margins of Guildford and on the southern side of Levylsdene. It is bounded by residential properties to the north, east and west with a golf course to the south, and currently consists of the garden to the rear of the property (Fig. 2). The underlying geology is mapped as Seaford Chalk Formation - Chalk. (BGS 2001) and the site lies at a height of c.98m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) on the western slope of Merrow Downs which rise to around 150m aOD not far to the south-east.

Archaeological background

The site lies within an Area of High Archaeological Potential, in which three scheduled monuments are located. This includes a series of 'earth circles' on St Martha's Hill, a bowl barrow 90m west of Tyting Farm and a bowl barrow at Newlands Corner. In addition, two designated historic parks and a garden, Clandon Park to the north-east and Merrow Grange to the north-west, are also present within the site's environs.

Mesolithic flintwork has been found to the south at Martha's Hill, and a flint axe was recovered at Tyting Sand Pit. A series of flint artefacts were also uncovered on Merrow Down, approximately 150m to the south of the site. Approximately 100m to the north-west of the site at Levylsdene House, a Neolithic scraper was uncovered in the garden, and excavations at Guildford Golf Course, revealed a series of Neolithic intercutting features interpreted as evidence of open cast flint mining of the underlying chalk geology.

The Bronze Age is well represented within the area, predominantly by a series of barrows clustered around Martha's Hill (Bird 2006). Closer to the site a single barrow is located *c.* 200m to the south, which was excavated in 1873 by General Pitt Rivers (Saunders 1980). Archaeological investigation at the golf course also revealed evidence of Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age activity (Howe *et al.* 2008). To the south of the site, an Iron Age oven was excavated. The excavations revealed a large oven and associated flue, as well as triangular loom weights used for cloth weaving.

To the south-west of the site, an apparently Roman 'urnfield' was uncovered, consisting of 12 vessels (and possibly an additional broken 12) (Lasham 1896). Recent excavations have revealed domestic and industrial activities from this period, to the north-east a 1st century AD domestic occupation site was revealed, while an evaluation at Clandon reservoir to the east uncovered possible chalk quarries (Bird *et al.* 1991).

Two known Saxon burials have been recorded within 100m of the application site. A spearhead and human remains were uncovered at 45 Levylsdene in 1957, while the skeleton of a child was uncovered during excavations of The Fairway to the north-east. Further, some Saxon beads were uncovered within a garden on Levylsdene to the north of the application site. Approximately 120m to the south-west, six small Saxon barrows were excavated and a knife dating to between the 7th-9thC AD was recovered (Saunders). Most of the evidence for the medieval period is represented by boundaries and agricultural features. Two medieval boundaries are thought to be located to the south of the site, this includes a hedgerow dating to the 12th century.

Evaluation trenching on the adjacent site of 41 Levylsdene revealed nothing of archaeological interest.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits within the area of development.

Specific research aims of the evaluation were:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on this site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present;
- to determine if any Saxon occupation or activities associated with burials practices is present;
- to allow the preparation of a mitigation strategy if necessary.

It was proposed to dig two trenches, each 10m long and 1.6m wide. These were dug using a small 360° type machine fitted with a toothless grading bucket under constant archaeological supervision. All spoilheaps were monitored for finds. Where archaeological features were certainly or probably present, the stripped areas were to be cleaned using appropriate hand tools, and sufficient of the archaeological features and deposits exposed would be excavated or sampled by hand to satisfy the aims outlined above, without compromising the integrity of any features or deposits which might warrant preservation *in situ*, or might better be excavated under conditions pertaining to full excavation.

The potential and significance of any such deposits located were to be assessed according to research priorities such as set out in *Historic England Research Agenda* (HE 2017) or any more local or thematic research priorities as necessary eg Cotton et al (2004) or the *Surrey Archaeological Research Framework* (Bird 2006). The evaluation was carried out in accordance with standards as set out by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2023a and b) and ‘*General Standards for Archaeological Projects in Surrey*’ (SCC 2023).

Results

Two trenches were excavated with the positions slightly altered due to the presence of an area of paving slabs. The trenches measured 9.7m and 10.0m long, 1.6m wide and were 0.39m to 0.5m deep.

A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1. The excavated feature is summarized in Appendix 2.

Trench 1 (Figs 3 and 4; Pls 1 and 2)

This trench was aligned SE-NW and measured 10.0m long and 0.5m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.36m of topsoil, over 0.12m of subsoil overlying the light brownish-white chalk with light reddish-brown patches natural geology. Modern ceramic building material (CBM) was identified in the topsoil, but was not retained.

Trench 2 (Figs 3 and 4; Pls 3 and 4)

This trench was aligned close to N-S and measured 9.7m long and 0.4m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.3m of topsoil, above 0.06m of subsoil overlying the light brownish-white chalk with light reddish-brown patches natural geology. A single Post-Medieval pit (1) which cut the subsoil was identified at 2.9m from the south end of the trench. The pit was square in plan with vertical sides and a flat base, it measured at least 0.48m in length, 0.45m in width and 0.37m in depth, though the full size was not visible as it continued under the baulk. A single dark greyish-brown deposit (52) was recorded containing animal bone, CBM, coal, clay tobacco pipe stems and Post-Medieval redware pottery dating this feature to the Post-Medieval period or later.

Finds

The only finds collected originated from pit 1, they include animal bone, CBM, coal, clay pipes and Post-Medieval redware pottery. The redware pottery is securely dated to the Post-Medieval period as are the clay pipes. The finds were retained on site.

Conclusion

The two intended trenches were successfully excavated. The only feature observed was a pit. This feature cut the subsoil and the artefacts it contained dated to the late Post-Medieval period. No other finds nor features of archaeological origin were recorded and therefore the site is considered to have low archaeological potential.

References

- BGS 2001, *British Geological Survey* 1:50000, solid and drift edition, sheet **285**, Keyworth
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- Lasham, F, 1896, 'An 'urn' field at Merrow, Guildford', *Surrey Archaeol Collect* **13**, 27
- Merrow Downs, 1991, Merrow Residents Association, Merrow Downs: A Chronological History
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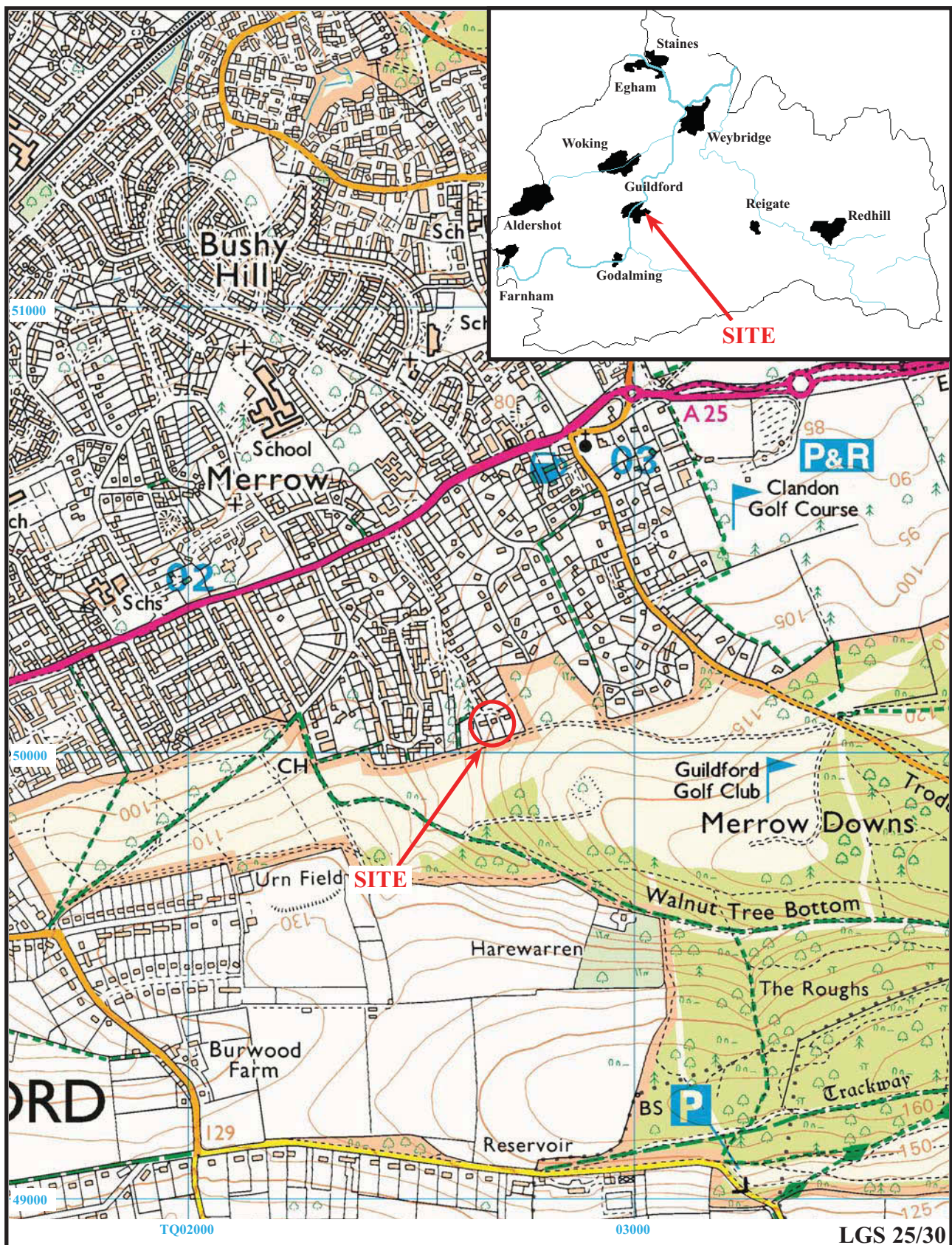
APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at S or SE end

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	10.0	1.6	0.5	0-0.36m topsoil; 0.36-0.48m subsoil; 0.48m+ light brownish-white chalk with light reddish-brown patches natural geology. [Pls 1 and 2]
2	9.7	1.6	0.4	0-0.3m topsoil; 0.3-0.36m subsoil; 0.36m+ light brownish-white chalk with light reddish-brown patches natural geology. Pit 1. [Pls 3 and 4]

APPENDIX 2: Feature details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
2	1	52	Pit	Post-Medieval	CBM, coal, pottery, clay pipe.

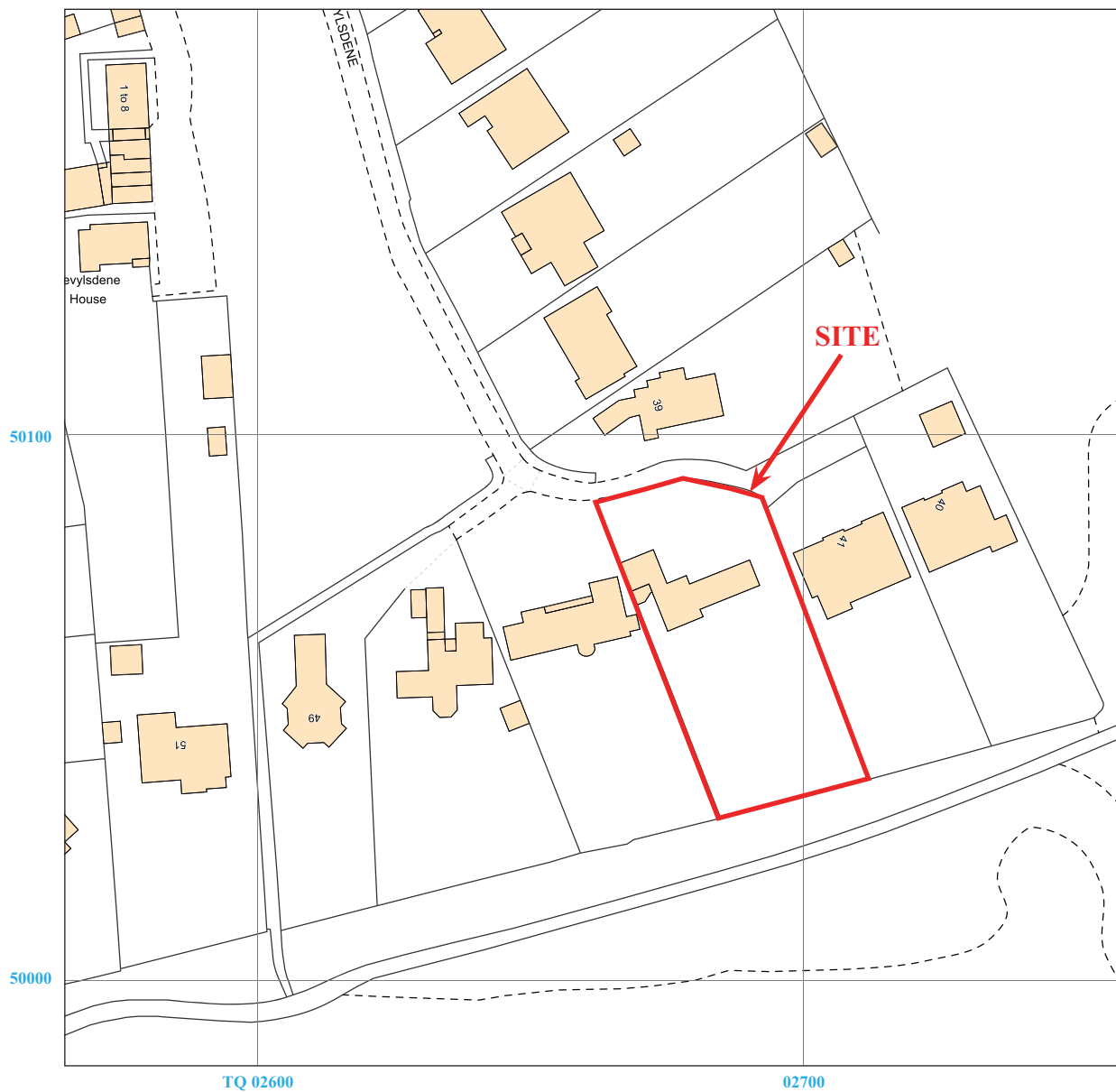


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Figure 1. Location of site within Merrow, Guildford and Surrey.

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Figure 2. Detailed location of site on Levlysdene.

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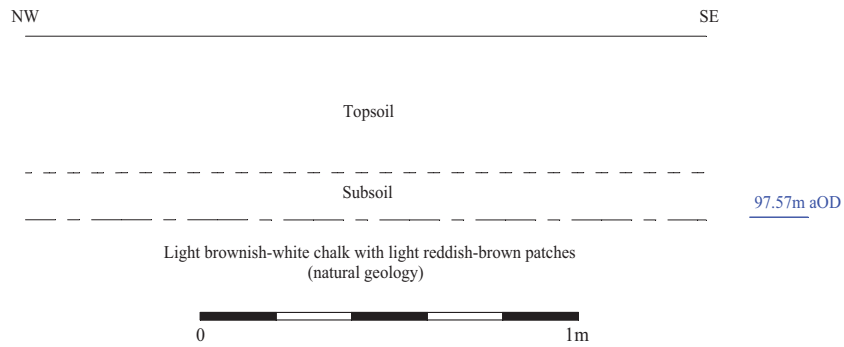
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Figure 3. Location of trenches (red), compared to site of proposed properties (blue).

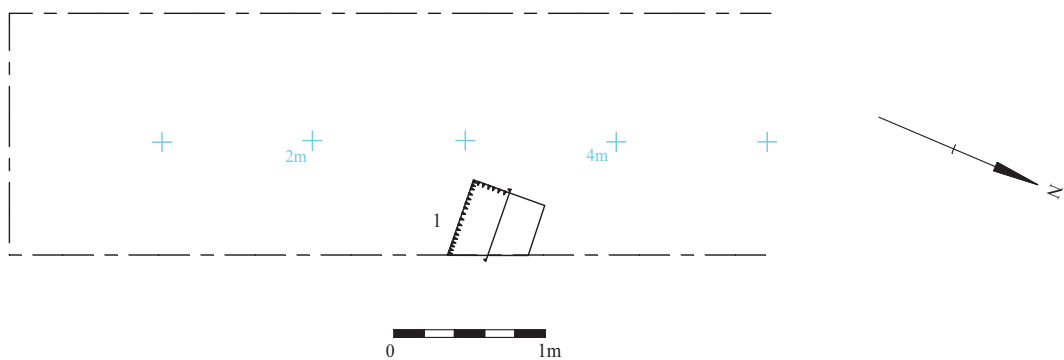
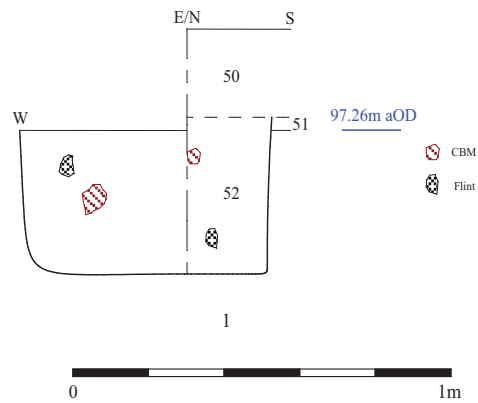
0 50m

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Trench 1



Trench 2



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Figure 4. Representatvie section of Trench 1 and details of Pit 1 in trench 2.

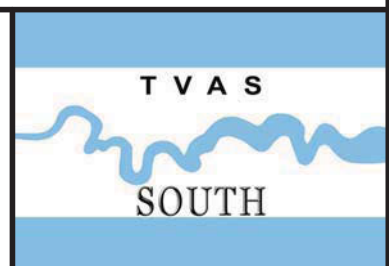




Plate 1. Trench 1, looking West,
Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.3m.



Plate 2. Trench 1 section, looking South West.
Scales: horizontal 0.5m, vertical 0.3m.



Plate 3. Trench 2, looking North.
Scales: horizontal 2m, and 1m, vertical 0.3m.



Plate 4. Trench 2, pit 1, looking East,
Scales: horizontal 0.5m, vertical 0.3m.

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Archaeological Evaluation
Plates 1 - 4.**

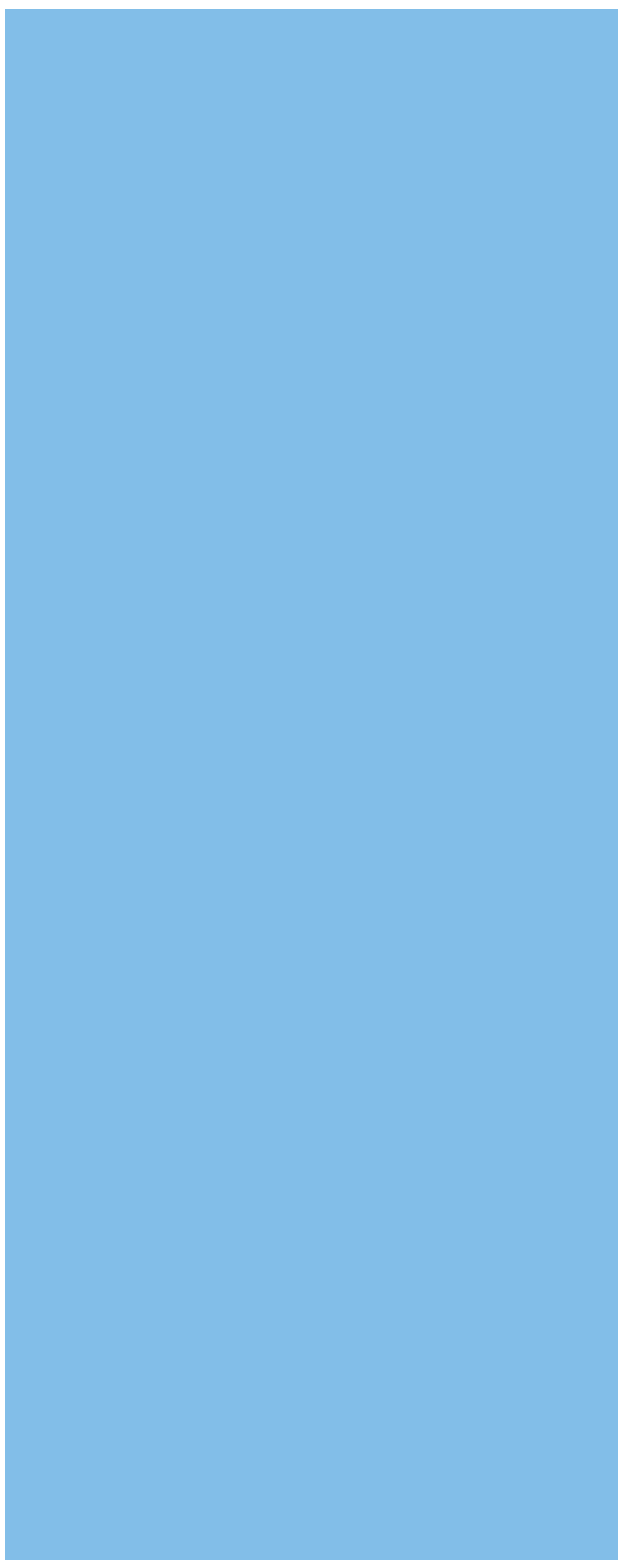
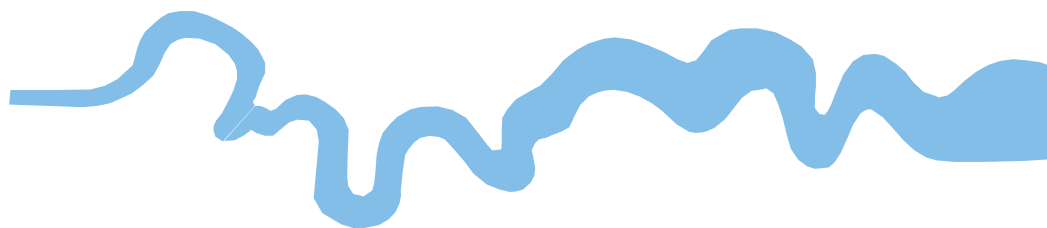
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TIME CHART

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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