

**T H A M E S      V A L L E Y**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL**

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

**99 King Street,  
Maidenhead, Berkshire**

**Archaeological Watching Brief**

**by Tim Dawson and James McNicoll-Norbury**

**Site Code: KSM09/110**

**(SU 8881 8084)**

**99 King Street, Maidenhead,  
Berkshire**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief  
for Salmon Harvester Properties Ltd**

by Tim Dawson and  
James McNicoll-Norbury  
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

SiteCodeKSM09/110

**March 2010**

## Summary

**Site name:** 99 King Street, Maidenhead, Berkshire

**Grid reference:** SU 8881 8084

**Site activity:** Watching Brief

**Date and duration of project:** 4th February to 23rd March 2010

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** Tim Dawson

**Site code:** KSM 09/110

**Area of site:** c.600 sq m

**Summary of results:** A significant proportion of the site was occupied by a Victorian basement which had removed the archaeologically relevant level in that location. Elsewhere on the site, groundworks were mostly not of sufficient depth to reveal the natural geology. No deposits were identified nor artefacts recovered of archaeological interest.

**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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| Report edited/checked by: | Steve Ford✓ 26.03.10<br>Steve Preston✓ 26.03.10 |
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# **99 King Street, Maidenhead, Berkshire An Archaeological Watching Brief**

by Tim Dawson and James McNicoll-Norbury

**Report 09/110**

## **Introduction**

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at 99 King Street, Maidenhead, Berkshire (SU 8878 8083) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Steve Kuntze of Salmon Harvester Properties Ltd, 46 Mount Street, London, W1K 2HH.

Planning consent (09/01504/Ful) has been granted by Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead to develop a new ground floor commercial unit with a hotel above, on the site. The planning consent gained is subject to a condition (9) relating to archaeology, requiring a watching brief during groundworks.

This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Planning Policy Guidance, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990), and the Royal Borough's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Fiona MacDonald, Principal Archaeologist for Berkshire Archaeology, archaeological advisers to the Royal Borough. The fieldwork was undertaken by Tim Dawson and Arak Gnas between 4th February and 23rd March 2010 and the site code is KSM 09/110.

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

## **Location, topography and geology**

The site is located in the town centre of Maidenhead (Fig. 1) on the east side of King Street with Bell Street to the south and the railway station to the south west (Fig. 2). The site was previously occupied by buildings which contained basements. The underlying geology of the site area is mapped as on the junction of the Taplow gravels and the Seaford and Newhaven chalk (BGS 2004). Gravel was observed on the site, though this was mixed with modern rubble and may reflect the levelling of the site in the past. Additionally, mid-brown sandy clay geology was observed in the northern part of the site. The site lies at a height of 27.2m above Ordnance Datum.

## **Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential stems from its location a little distance to the south of what is thought to be the historic (medieval) core of the town. Maidenhead was a modest-sized village in late Saxon times, with its

elevation to urban status coming after the building of the bridge across the Thames to the east (Astill 1977). The topography of the medieval and early post-medieval town, though, is not well understood. At a more general level of analysis, the site lies with the archaeologically rich Thames Valley. Much of the site on the King Street frontage is basemented, which is expected to have removed the archaeologically relevant levels. However, it is possible that archaeological deposits exist elsewhere on the site and may be exposed and damaged by the new groundworks.

## **Objectives and methodology**

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the groundworks. This involved the examination of all areas of intrusive groundworks, in particular the ground reduction and the digging of any other deeply invasive ground works such as the crane base.

## **Results**

There were three components to the archaeological fieldwork carried out on the site:

### *Demolition including removal of basement wall*

During the demolition of the building that previously occupied the site, the remains of several Victorian basement rooms were uncovered (Fig. 3). They were identified and recorded prior to the reduction of the surrounding ground. The three substantial sections of brick wall were located along the western edge, in the south-western corner and in the centre of the site. There appeared to be at least two distinct rooms represented, though the section of wall in the centre of the site is some distance from the others and it is not possible to deduce how it related to the others. All of the walls are aligned to the King Street (western) side of the site and the lower openings of two coal chutes were observed in the wall running along Bell Street to the south of the site. The basement roofs were observed in section 0.30m below the ground level and the rooms themselves extended to a depth of 2.5m below ground level. The basements had been filled with rubble including modern bricks and glass.

### *Ground reduction prior to the laying of a pile mat*

Groundworks were observed in two areas of the site (Fig. 3). Following demolition works the ground level on the site was reduced by 1.00m and then levelled using demolition rubble. The stratigraphy comprised 0.15m of

disturbed rubble mixed with earth, above a 0.10m band of sand, over 0.27m yellow/brown sandy gravel which overlay a cleaner gravel layer (Fig. 4). Both of the gravel layers contained modern inclusions such as brick and glass though it was unclear whether this was as a result of the current demolition and groundworks, or previous construction on the site. On the eastern side of the site a modern brick-lined soakaway covered by a concrete slab was identified. The shaft had a diameter of 2.80m and was c.10.50m deep and iron pipes were visible feeding into it from various directions at different depths.

#### *Preparation of ground for the piles and crane base*

The digging of one pile cap pit on was observed on the southern edge of this site. It was dug through demolition rubble which contained modern plastic and refuse and was not deep enough to disturb archaeologically sensitive layers. None of the remaining pile cap pits were examined as they too would only be dug to a depth still within the made ground.

The pit containing the foundation piles for the crane was observed being dug on the northern edge of the site, abutting the existing brick wall that forms the northern site boundary. The square pit measured 5.15m × 5.15m and was dug to a depth of 2.8m. The stratigraphy observed in the northern section consisted of the brick wall foundations to a depth of 0.53m, this overlay 0.75m of small, rounded stones, and then 1.47m of the mid-brown sandy clay which makes up the local natural geology (Fig. 4).

## **Finds**

No finds of archaeological interest were recovered from the site.

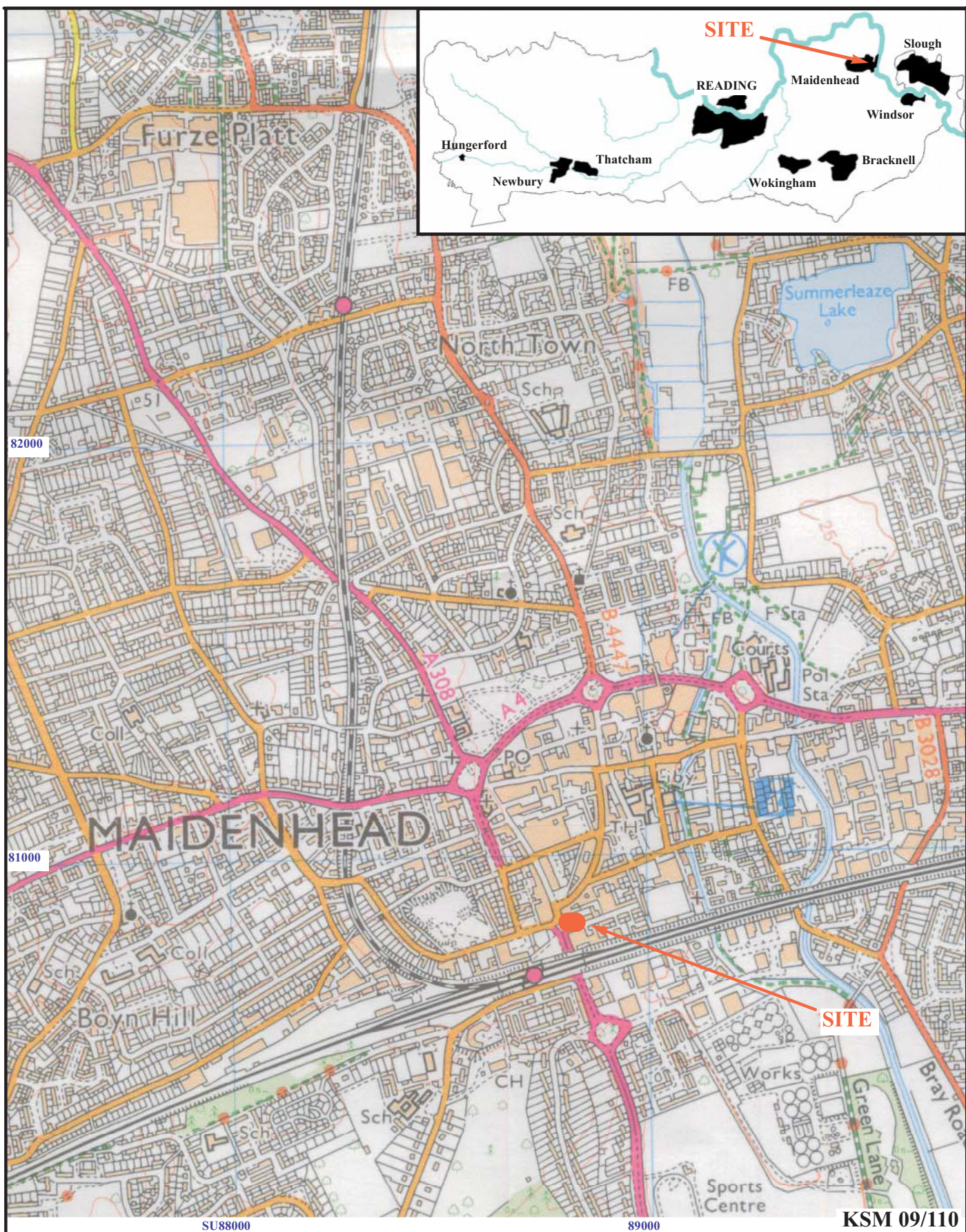
## **Conclusion**

No archaeological deposits were identified during the course of the watching brief. The natural geology, in the few places where it was observed, was seen to have been heavily truncated by previous development.

## **References**

- Astill, G G, 1978, *Historic towns in Berkshire; an archaeological appraisal*, Berkshire Archaeol Comm Publ 2  
Reading  
BGS, 2005, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000, Sheet 255, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth  
PPG 16, 1990, *Archaeology and Planning*, Dept of the Environment Planning Policy Guidance 16, HMSO





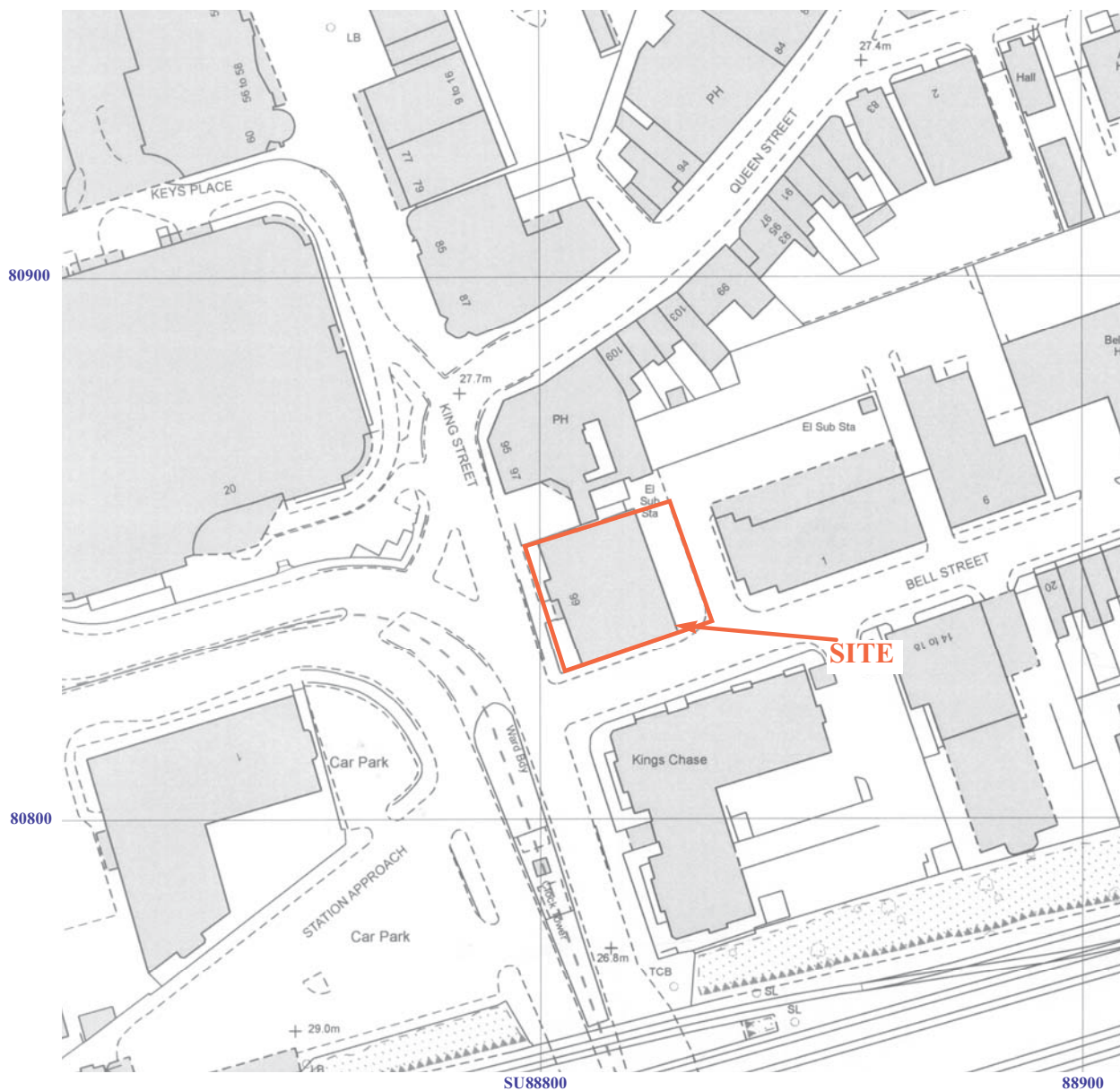
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Figure 1. Location of site within Maidenhead and Berkshire.

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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off King Street.

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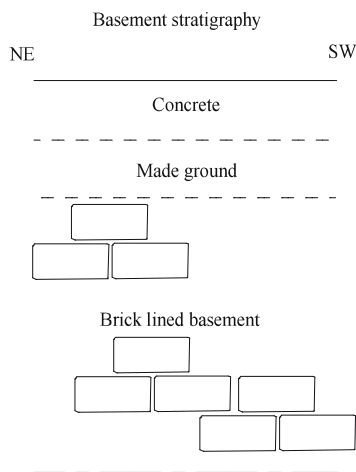
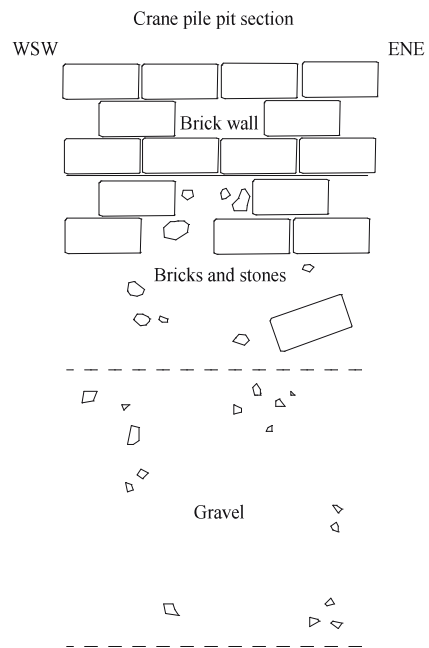
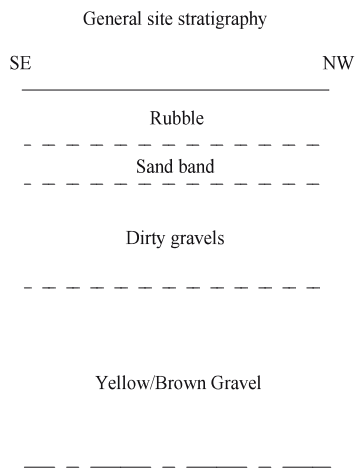




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Figure 3. Location of groundworks observed.





Sandy clay (natural geology)

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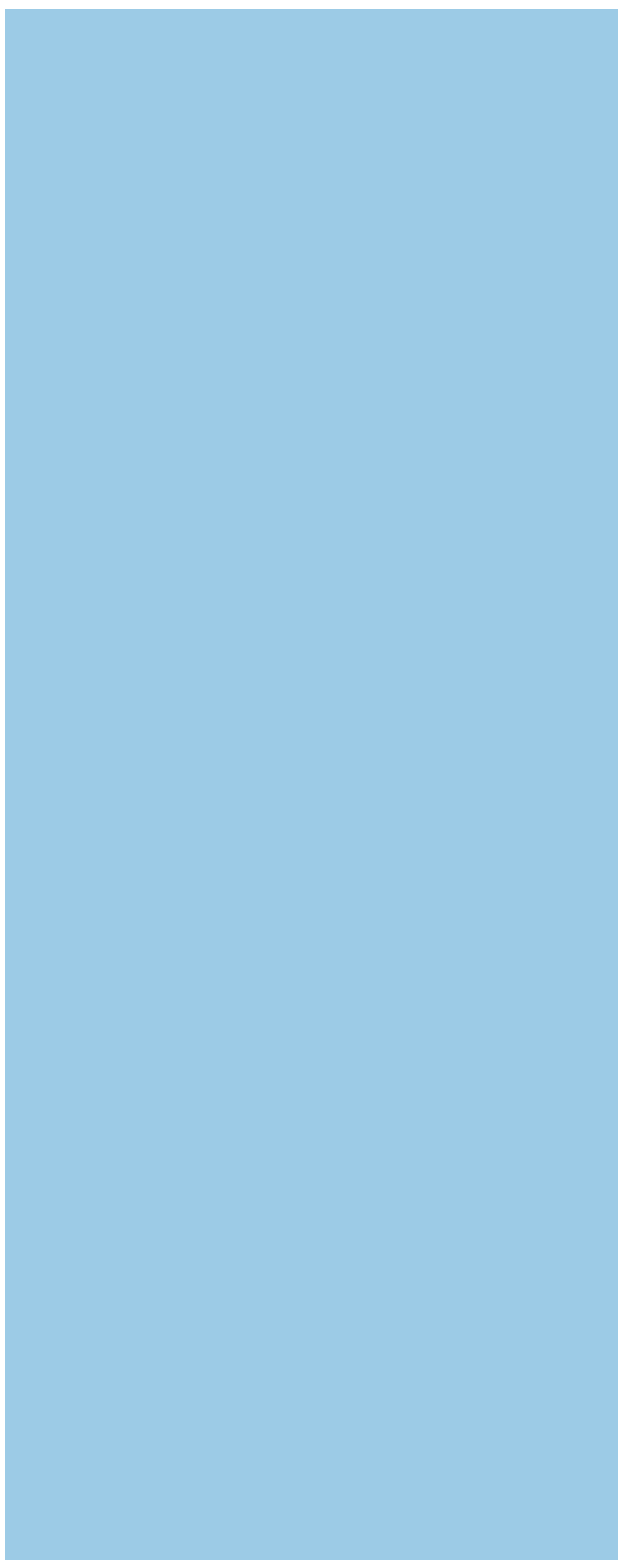
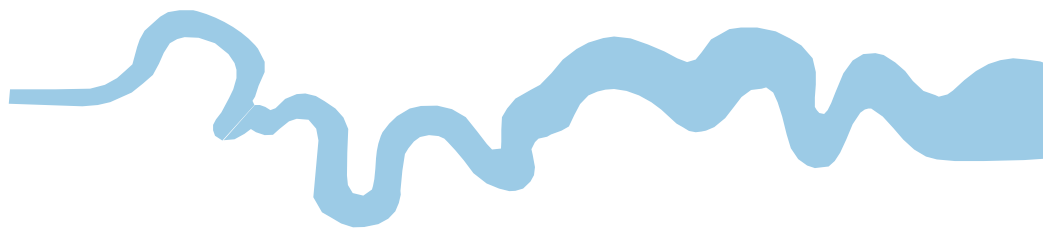
Figure 4. Representative Sections.



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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           |
| Iron Age _____             | BC/AD<br>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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