

**T H A M E S      V A L L E Y**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL**

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

**25 Station Road, Cholsey,  
Oxfordshire**

**Archaeological Evaluation**

**by Andy Taylor**

**Site Code: SRC10/119**

**(SU 5872 8641)**

**25 Station Road,  
Cholsey, Oxfordshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation  
for Hicks Developments Ltd**

by Andy Taylor  
ThamesValleyArchaeologicalServices  
Ltd

SiteCodeSRC10/119

**November 2010**

## Summary

**Site name:** 25 Station Road, Cholsey, Oxfordshire

**Grid reference:** SU 5872 8641

**Site activity:** Evaluation

**Date and duration of project:** 22nd-23rd November 2010

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** Andy Taylor

**Site code:** SRC 10/119

**Area of site:** c.2375 sq m

**Summary of results:** Archaeological deposits have been recorded on the site mostly comprising linear features representing field or paddock boundaries. These features are tentatively dated to the Roman period (and one to the later Roman period) but the pottery recovered may be residual in features of Saxon, medieval or later date. A late post-medieval posthole was also identified and a single struck flint of Mesolithic/early neolithic date also recovered.

**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.

*This report may be copied for bona fide research or planning purposes without the explicit permission of the copyright holder. All TVAS unpublished fieldwork reports are available on our website:  
[www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp](http://www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp).*

Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford✓ 29.11.10 Joanna Pine✓ 29.11.10
---------------------------	---

# 25 Station Road, Cholsey, Oxfordshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Andy Taylor

**Report 10/119**

## **Introduction**

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at 25 Station Road, Cholsey, Oxfordshire (SU 5872 8641) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr David Creek, Development manager with Hicks Developments Ltd, 15 Headley Road, Woodley, Reading Berkshire, RG5 4JB.

Planning permission (app no P10/W0630) has been gained for the demolition of the existing house and erection of five new houses on the site with vehicle access. The results of a field evaluation have been requested to determine if the site has archaeological potential and to provide information to mitigate the impact of the proposed development.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's Planning Policy Statement, *Planning for the Historic Environment* (PPS5 2010), and the District Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Richard Oram (Oram 2010), Planning Archaeologist with Oxfordshire County Council, advisers to the District on matters relating to archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Andy Taylor and Steve Crabb between the 22nd and 23rd November 2010 and the site code is SRC 10/119. 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 is located on the south east side of Cholsey and on the east side of Station Road (Fig. 2). The site is currently occupied by the empty No.25 bungalow, its access from Station Road and its garden. The underlying geology consists of Lower Chalk (BGS 1980), which was observed in all trenches. The site lies at a height of c.47.80m above Ordnance Datum.

## **Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential for the site has been highlighted in a detailed brief prepared by Mr Richard Oram (Oram 2010) of Oxfordshire County Archaeological Service. In summary, the site within the developed area of Cholsey but lies at some distance south east of the parish church which is usually considered to be at the

historic focus of a settlement. Various medieval deposits have been recorded close by the church (Coles 2005). Cholsey has late Saxon origins and was an important centre at the time. It is mentioned in Domesday Book of 1086 (Williams and Martin 2002). A Benedictine Abbey was founded in AD986 and which lies at a distance to the south west of the site. Of more relevance to the proposed development is that the site lies 25m to the west of the projected line of the Roman Road from Dorchester to Silchester (Margary 1973). A variety of Roman coins have been recorded from several locations to the south west, west and north east of the proposal site. Medieval deposits have also been recorded to the east and north east. However, a watching brief on site immediately to the east on a previously developed site revealed only modern deposits (Bennett 2007).

## **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 aims of the project were;

To determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present.

To determine if a Roman roadside settlement or landscape features are present on the site.

To determine if any Medieval occupation is present on the site.

Five trenches, 15m long were to be dug targeting the footprints of the proposed buildings (Fig 3). These were to be dug using a JCB type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision. All spoilheaps were monitored for finds.

## **Results**

All five trenches were dug though trench 5 was slightly shortened due to the presence of a possibly live gas pipe. This variation took place in consultation with the archaeological monitor. The trenches measured 1.60m wide, between 12.50m and 16.20m in length and up to 0.8m deep.

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

#### Trench 1 (Figs 4 and 5 and Plate 1)

This trench measured 13.50m in length and was 0.75m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of topsoil overlying subsoil overlying a clayey chalk natural geology. A ditch terminal or pit was identified at the southern end of the trench. A slot (3) was dug into this which revealed it was 0.80m wide and 0.40m deep. It contained two fills (54 and 55). Fill 54 did not contain any finds whereas fill 55 contained eight pieces of animal bone. Nearby was a second ditch (4) was 0.90m wide and 0.25m deep and its single fill (56) contained three small sherds of Roman pottery.

#### Trench 2

This trench measured 16.20m in length and was 0.8m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of topsoil overlying subsoil overlying a clayey chalk natural geology. No archaeological finds nor deposits were revealed.

#### Trench 3 (Fig 4 and 5; Plates 2 and 3)

This trench measured 16.20m in length and was 0.65m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of topsoil overlying subsoil overlying clayey chalk natural geology. A gully was located near the southern end of the trench. A slot (1) was dug across it and revealed it to be 0.52m wide and 0.13m deep. It contained a single fill (52) from which was recovered a single sherd of 3rd-4th Century Roman pottery and two pieces of animal bone. A possible gully terminal (2) was located to the north-west. A slot (2) was dug across it and revealed it was 0.51m wide but only 0.05m deep. It did not contain any finds and may in fact represent root disturbance in the natural geology.

#### Trench 4 (Figs 4 and 5 and Plate 4)

This trench measured 15.00m in length and was 0.68m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of topsoil overlying subsoil overlying clayey chalk natural geology. Two ditches were located at the eastern end of the trench. A slot (6) was dug through easternmost ditch and revealed it to be 1.10m wide and 0.25m deep. The single fill (58) contained three very small pieces of Roman pottery and 11 pieces of animal bone. Slot 7 was dug through the second ditch and revealed it to be 1.02m wide and 0.30m deep. Its single fill (59) contained 10 pieces of animal bone and a single flint flake but no pottery dating evidence.

### Trench 5 (Figs 4 and 5)

This trench measured 12.50m in length and was 0.65m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of topsoil overlying subsoil overlying clayey chalk natural geology. A pit/posthole (5) was located at the eastern end of the trench. This was half sectioned (5) and measured 0.53m in diameter and 0.12m deep. Its single fill (57) contained a single sherd of post-medieval pottery.

## **Finds**

### *Pottery by Jane Timby*

#### Introduction

The archaeological evaluation resulted in the recovery of eight sherds of pottery weighing 17g.

Most of the pottery appears to be Roman with a single sherd of post-medieval date. Pottery was recovered from four defined features; thus the incidence of material per cut was extremely low and insufficient to confirm clear dating. The pieces, all bodysherds, are very small and in abraded condition.

The assemblage was briefly scanned and sorted into fabric groups based on the main tempering agents in the clay and firing colour. The sorted sherds were quantified by sherd count and weight (see catalogue below).

No ancillary research has been carried out at this stage to place the assemblage in its local or regional context.

#### *Roman*

Most of the assemblage appears to date to the Roman period but some of the pieces are extremely small and the range limited so the level of confidence is low.

The only diagnostic piece present is a small sherd from gully [1]. This is a piece of Oxfordshire colour-coated ware from a beaker with applied barbotine scale decoration. The vessel is thus likely to date to the later 3rd or 4th century.

Ditch [4] produced two small sherds of white sandy ware, and a tiny piece of oxidised sandy ware, all probably Roman.

Ditch [6] produced three small crumbs of the same vessel, a black surfaced brown sandy ware presumed Roman but further material would need to be recovered to confirm this.

### *Post-medieval*

Pit/posthole [5] produced a single rimsherd from a red earthenware jug with an internal glaze extending over the lip.

### *Animal Bone* by Ceri Falys

A small assemblage of animal bone was recovered from four separate contexts within the evaluated area. A total of 32 very poorly preserved pieces of bone were present for analysis, weighing 241 g (Appendix 4). All elements were highly fragmented with poor surface preservation and frequent cortical exfoliation, making identification problematic. Each fragment was assessed and separated into one of three size categories: “large”, “medium”, and “small”. Horse and cow are represented by the large size category, sheep/goat and pigs are represented in the medium size category, and any smaller animal (e.g. dog, cat etc.) were designated to the “small” category. It was not possible to give a more specific identification (i.e. species or side of origin). All fragments were from a “large” animal. No further information could be derived from these poorly preserved animal remains.

### *Struck Flint* by Steve Ford

A single struck flint was recovered from ditch 7 (59). It was heavily patinated with modern breaks but is possibly a narrow flake (with a blade scar on the dorsal surface) and of Mesolithic/earlier neolithic date.

## **Conclusion**

The evaluation identified a moderate number of archaeological deposits across the site. The majority of the linear features were tentatively dated to the Roman period, with gully 1 having a datable sherd of late 3rd-4th Century date. However, the paucity, small size and abraded nature of these sherds does make secure dating of these features problematic and they could be residual finds in features of medieval date. The date of these features may indicate the presence of landscape features close to the projected line of the Roman road between Dorchester and Silchester. A single pit/posthole at the western end of the site was post medieval in date.

## **References**

- Bennett, N, 2007, Land adjacent to Goswells, Honey Lane, Cholsey, an archaeological watching brief, Thames Valley Archaeological Services report 06/146, Reading  
BGS, 1980, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 254, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth  
Coles, S, 2005, The Hazels, Church Road, Cholsey, Oxfordshire, an archaeological watching brief, Thames Valley Archaeological Services report 05/36, Reading  
Margary, I D, 1973, *Roman Roads in Britain* (3rd Edition), London  
Oram, R, 2010, 25 Station Road, Cholsey, Design Brief for Archaeological Field Evaluation, Oxford  
PPS5, 2010, *Planning for the Historic Environment*, The Stationery Office, Norwich  
Williams, A and Martin, G H, 2002, *Domesday Book, a complete translation*, London



## APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at S or W end

Trench	Length (m)	Breadth (m)	Depth (m)	Comment
1	13.50	1.60	0.75	0.00m-0.30m topsoil; 0.30m-0.70m subsoil; 0.70m-0.75m+ clayey chalk natural geology. Features 3 and 4 <b>[Plate 1]</b>
2	16.20	1.6	0.80	0.00m-0.25m topsoil; 0.25m-0.80m subsoil; 0.80m-0.85m+ clayey chalk natural geology.
3	16.20	1.60	0.65	0.00m-0.25m topsoil; 0.25m-0.62m subsoil; 0.62m-0.65m+ clayey chalk natural geology. Features 1 and 2 <b>[Plates 2 and 3]</b>
4	15.00	1.60	0.68	0.00m-0.30m topsoil; 0.30m-0.65m subsoil; 0.65m-0.68m+ clayey chalk natural geology. Features 6 and 7 <b>[Plate 4]</b>
5	12.50	1.60	0.65	0.00m-0.30m topsoil; 0.30m-0.60m subsoil; 0.60m-0.65m+ clayey chalk natural geology. Feature 5

## APPENDIX 2: Feature details

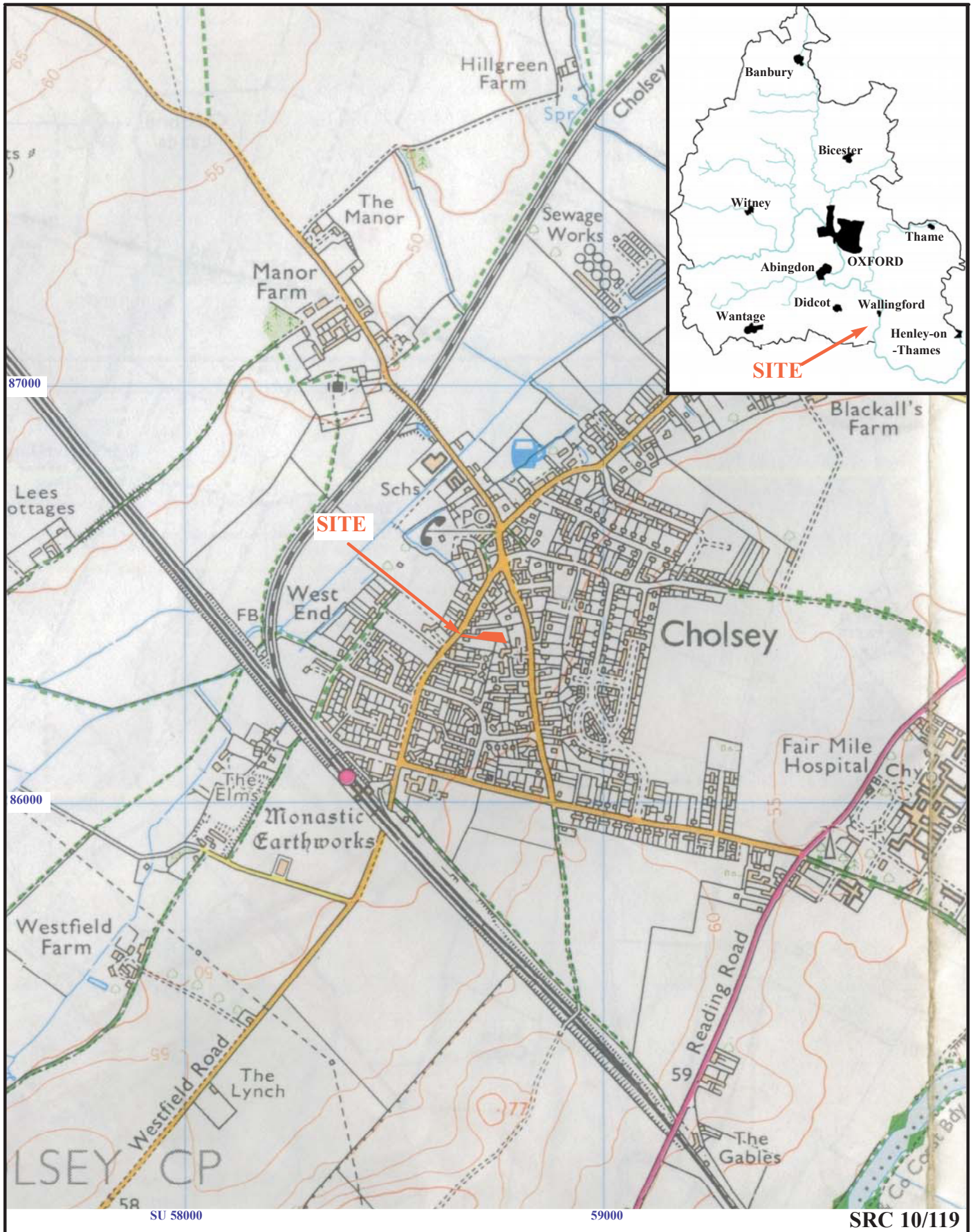
Trench	Cut	Fill (s)	Type	Date	Dating evidence
1	3	54, 55	Ditch Terminus/Pit	-	-
1	4	56	Ditch	Roman?	Pottery
3	1	52	Gully	Late Roman?	Pottery
3	2	53	Gully Terminus	-	-
4	6	58	Ditch	Roman?	Pottery
4	7	59	Ditch		-
5	5	57	Pit/Posthole	Post-medieval	Pottery

### **APPENDIX 3: Catalogue of Pottery**

1. One bodysherd Oxfordshire colour-coated ware with worn slip and traces of applied barbotine scales. Beaker. Weight 2 g. Date: late 3rd-4th century. Gully [1] (52).
2. One small bodysherd oxidised sandy ware. Weight: 0.5 g. Date: Roman. Ditch [4] (56).
3. Two bodysherds white medium-fine sandy ware. Weight: 2g. Date: Roman. Ditch [4] (56).
4. Three small crumbs of pottery, brown sandy ware with a black surface. Weight: 0.5g. Date: probably Roman. Ditch [6] (58).
5. Rimsherd from a jug. Fine red earthenware with a clear internal glaze. Date: post-medieval. Pit/posthole [5] (57).

#### APPENDIX 4: Catalogue of Animal Bone

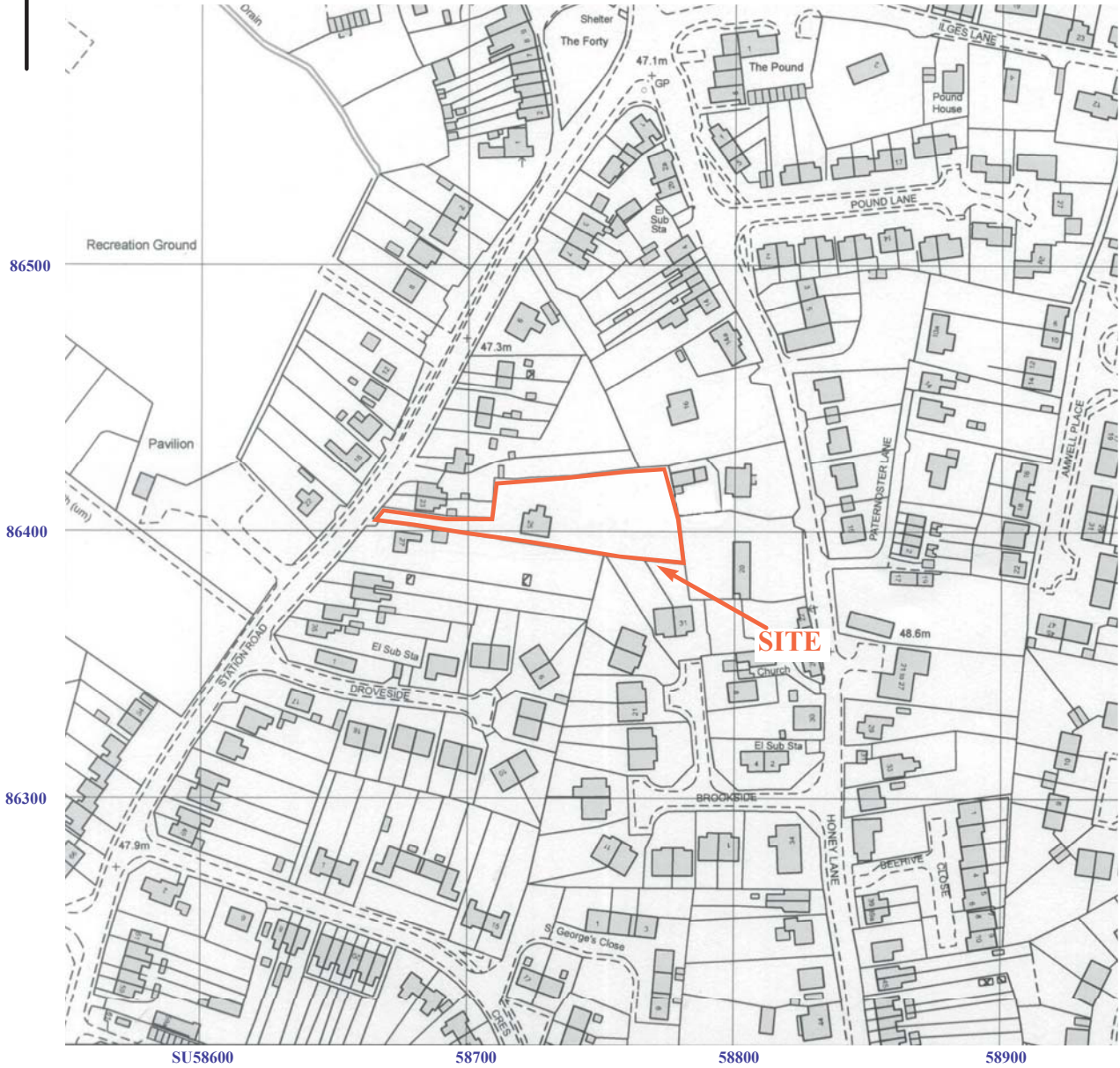
Context		Number of Fragments	Weight (g)	Identified fragments– by animal size			Unidentified
Cut	Deposit			Large	Medium	Small	
1	52	2	15	2	-	-	-
3	55	8	89	8	-	-	-
6	58	12	44	6	-	-	6
7	59	10	93	10	-	-	-
Total		32	241	26	0	0	6



**25 Station Road, Cholsey, Oxfordshire, 2010  
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 1. Location of site within Cholsey and Oxfordshire.

Reproduced from Ordnance Survey Pathfinder 1155 (SU48/58) at 1:12500  
Ordnance Survey Licence 100025880

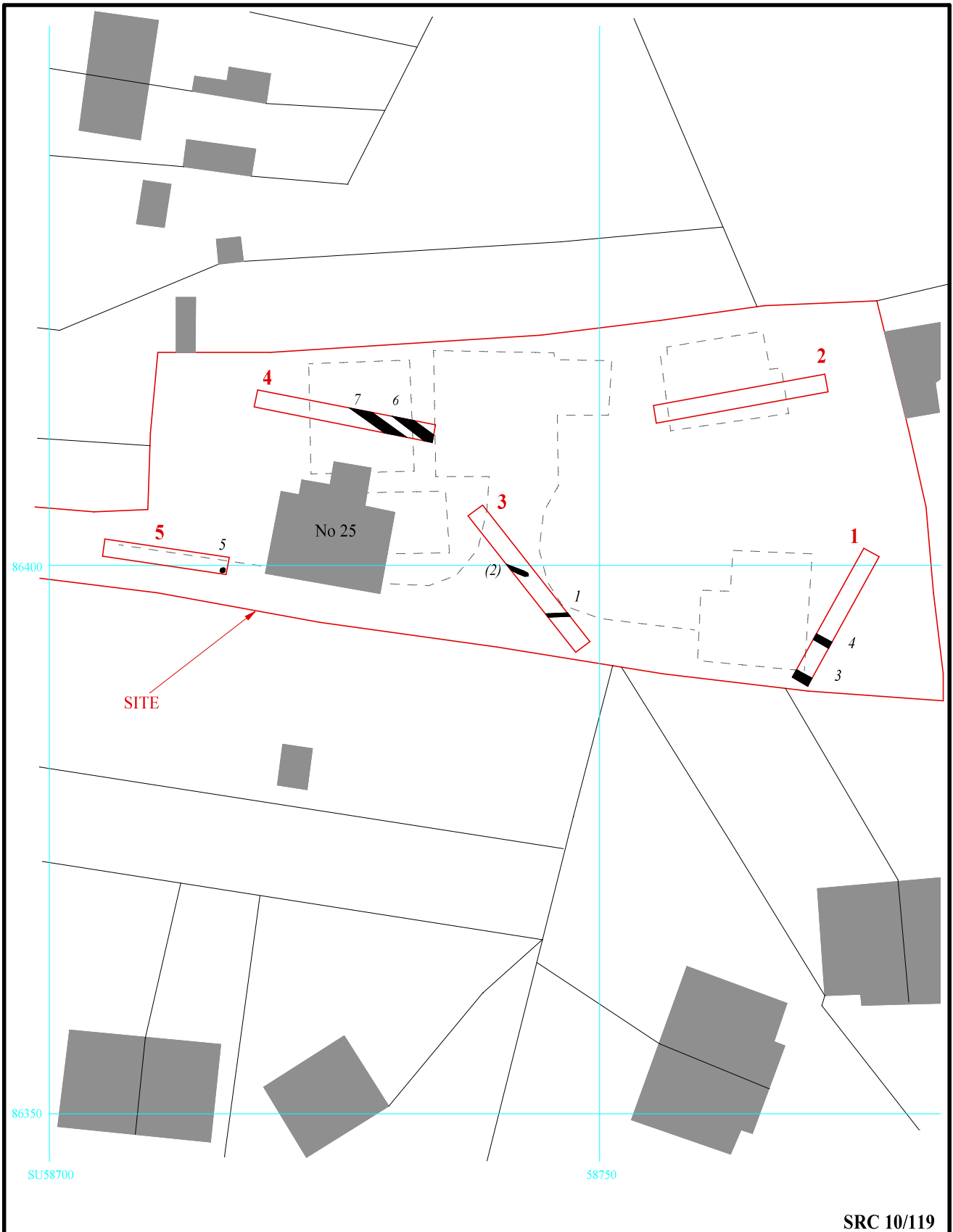


SRC 10/119

**25 Station Road, Cholsey, Oxfordshire, 2010  
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 2. Detailed location of site in Cholsey.

Reproduced from Ordnance Survey digital mapping under licence.  
Crown copyright reserved. Scale: 1:2500



SRC 10/119

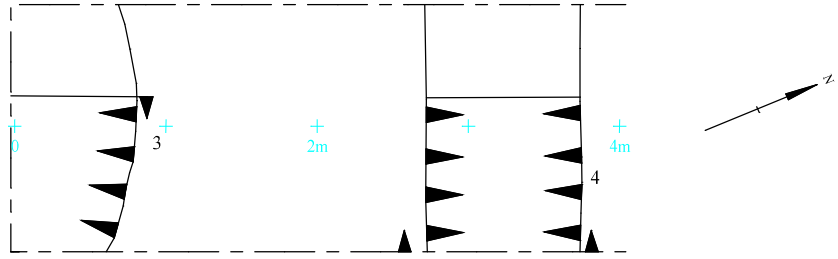
**25 Station Road, Cholsey, Oxfordshire, 2010  
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 3. Trench Locations

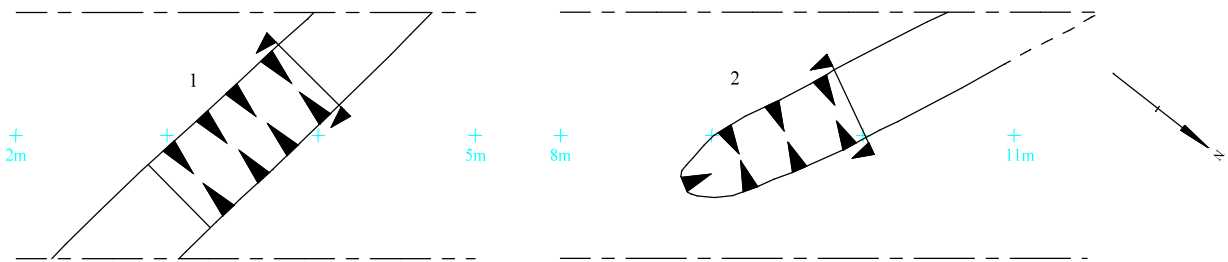


THAMES VALLEY  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
SERVICES

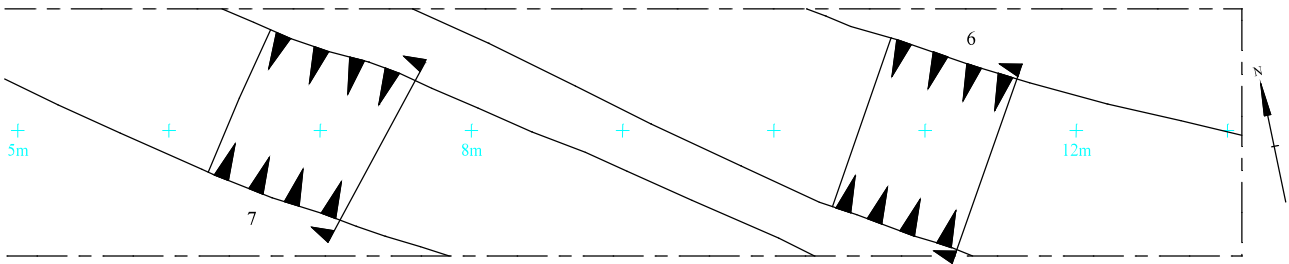
Trench 1



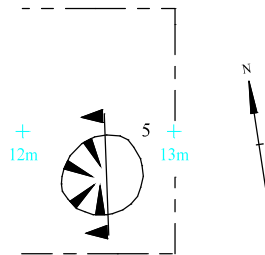
Trench 3



Trench 4



Trench 5



SRC 10/119

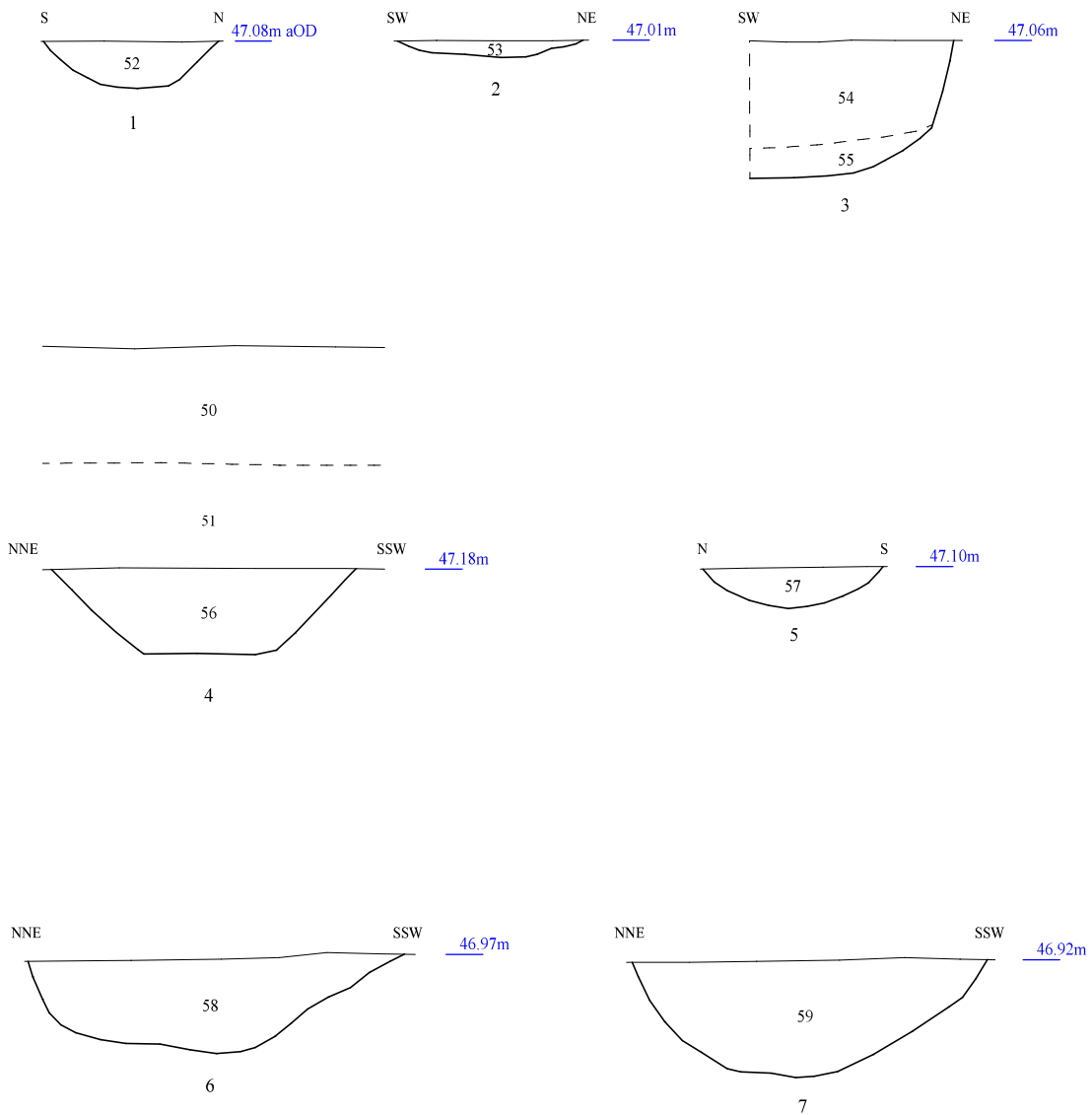
**25 Station Road, Cholsey, Oxfordshire, 2010  
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 4. Detailed plans of features in trenches



THAMES VALLEY  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
SERVICES





SRC 10/119

25 Station Road, Cholsey, Oxfordshire, 2010  
Archaeological Evaluation

Figure 5. Sections



THAMES VALLEY  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
SERVICES



Plate 1. Trench 1, looking north, scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m.



Plate 2. Trench 3, looking north west, scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m.

**25 Station Road, Chosley, Oxfordshire, 2010**  
**Archaeological Evaluation**

Plates 1 and 2

**SRC 10/119**



Plate 3. Trench 3, ditch 1, looking west, scales: 0.5m and 0.1m.



Plate 4. Trench 4, ditch 7, looking east, scales 1m and 0.1m.

SRC 10/119

25 Station Road, Chosley, Oxfordshire, 2010  
Archaeological Evaluation

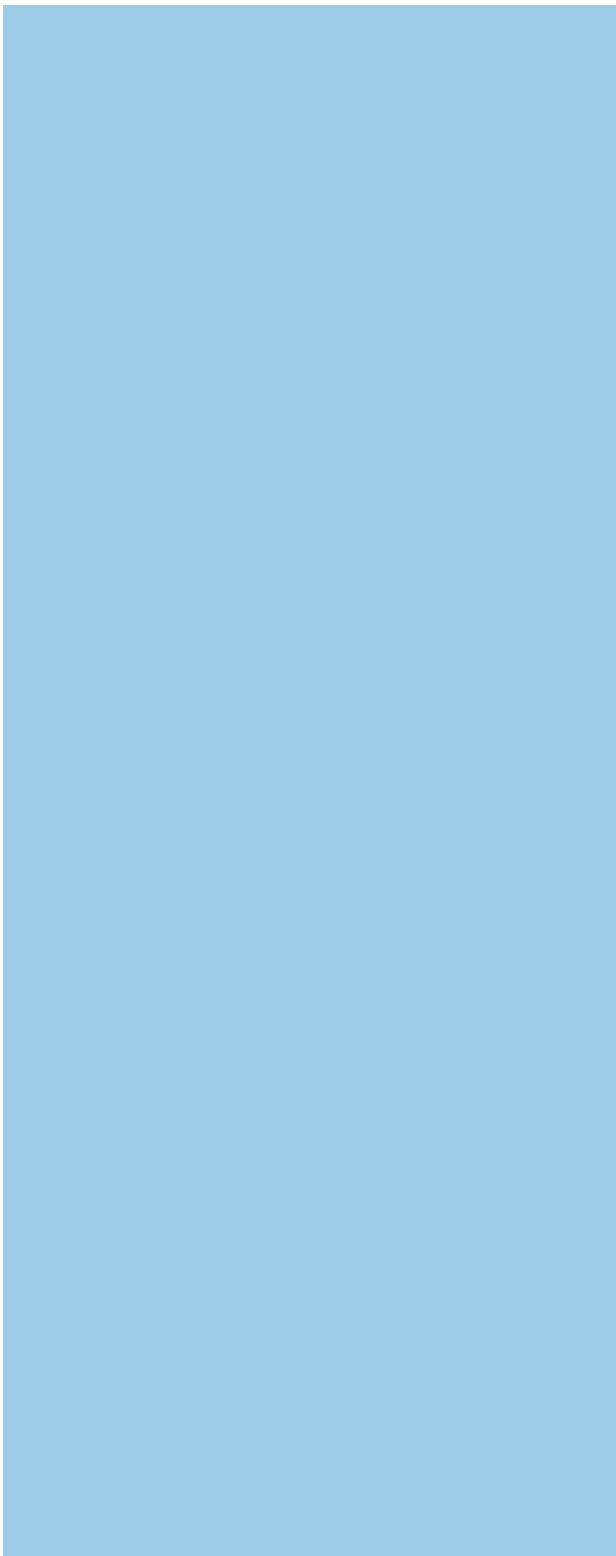
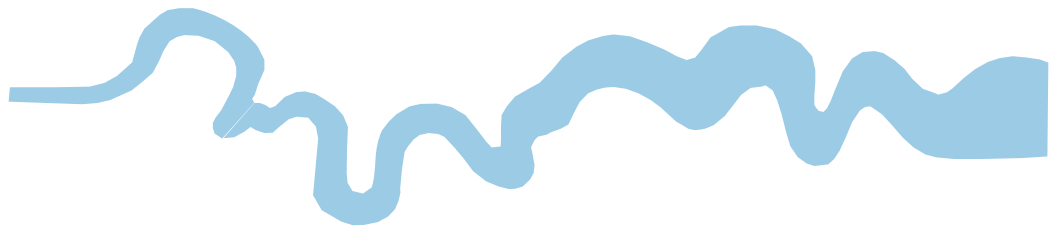
Plates 3 and 4.

THAMES VALLEY  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
SERVICES

## 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 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





**Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd,  
47-49 De Beauvoir Road, Reading,  
Berkshire, RG1 5NR**

**Tel: 0118 9260552  
Fax: 0118 9260553  
Email: [tvas@tvas.co.uk](mailto:tvas@tvas.co.uk)  
Web: [www.tvas.co.uk](http://www.tvas.co.uk)**