

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**226 Greys Road, Henley-on-Thames,
Oxfordshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by Andy Taylor

Site Code: GRH14/70

(SU 7445 8164)

**226 Greys Road, Henley-on-Thames,
Oxfordshire**

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For Ms Hayley White

by Andy Taylor

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code GRH 14/70

May 2014

Summary

Site name: 226 Greys Road, Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire

Grid reference: SU 7445 8164

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 22nd April - 1st May 2014

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Andrew Munding, Andy Taylor

Site code: GRH 14/70

Area of site: c. 80 sq m

Summary of results: Although natural gravels and sand deposits were uncovered in the base of the trenches for the new extensions, no deposits of archaeological finds of interest were uncovered.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museums 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 All TVAS unpublished fieldwork reports are available on our website: www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp.

| |
|---|
| Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 09.05.14 Steve Preston ✓ 09.05.14 |
|---|

226 Greys Road, Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Andy Taylor

Report 14/70

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at 226 Greys Road, Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire, RG9 1QY (SU 7445 8164) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Hayley White, of the same address.

Planning permission (P12/S1542/HH) was sought from South Oxfordshire District Council for the construction of new extensions at the property. Due to the potential disturbance of below ground archaeological features and finds an archaeological watching brief was required to be carried out during groundworks.

This is in accordance with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012) and the District's policies relating to planning in archaeology. The fieldwork was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Richard Oram, Planning Archaeologist for Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services, advisers to the District on matters pertaining to archaeology within the planning process. The fieldwork was undertaken by Andrew MUNDIN and Andy Taylor between 22nd April and 1st May 2014 and the site code is GRH 14/70.

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

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the northern side of Greys Road, on the western edge of Henley-on-Thames (Fig. 1). It is located within a rectangular plot of land with other residences on both sides, of which the western property (228), has recently been redeveloped. The underlying geology consisted of 5th Terrace gravel deposits (BGS 1980) which were observed at the base of all new foundation trenches. The site lies at a height 77m above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location, on an outcrop of gravel known as the Black Park gravel, which comprises deposits from a former channel of the Thames. Some half a million years ago the River Thames flowed north-east past St Albans to Clacton before joining the River Rhine somewhere beneath the

present North Sea. From the effects of glaciation, river downcutting and land uplift in subsequent times the course of the Thames has been deflected southwards to its present course, leaving relict terraces in its wake. Examination of 19th- and early 20th-century gravel workings in the area uncovered numerous flint tools of Lower Palaeolithic date representing some of the earliest ancestral human (hominin) presence in the British Isles, with Highlands Farm to the south-west being especially prolific (Wymer 1968, Morigi *et al.* 2011). A handaxe has also been found at the local school to the south-east of the current site, which may have been towards the edge of the channel. However, no finds were recovered from detailed sampling and excavation prior to the construction of the new house at the neighbouring site at No.228, (Taylor 2013), nor during evaluation off Elizabeth Road to the north (Dawson 2012)

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the works. This was to include examination of all areas of intrusive groundworks and include observation of service trenches, landscaping works, which would be carried out after demolition of modern west and east extensions.

Results

Wall footing trenches were observed on the western side of the existing house and the north-eastern side of the house (Fig. 3).

The observed section in the western footing was recorded (Pl. 1). This consisted 0.45m of turf and subsoil overlying rounded gravel deposits, with minimal sand included. The base of the footing trench reached a depth of 1m. A manhole for an existing drain was located to the north of the new footing in front of the previous addition to the western wall. This pipe trench ran southwards through the new footing, at a depth of 0.8m. The existing house footing reached a depth of 0.7m. No archaeological finds were uncovered from this footing.

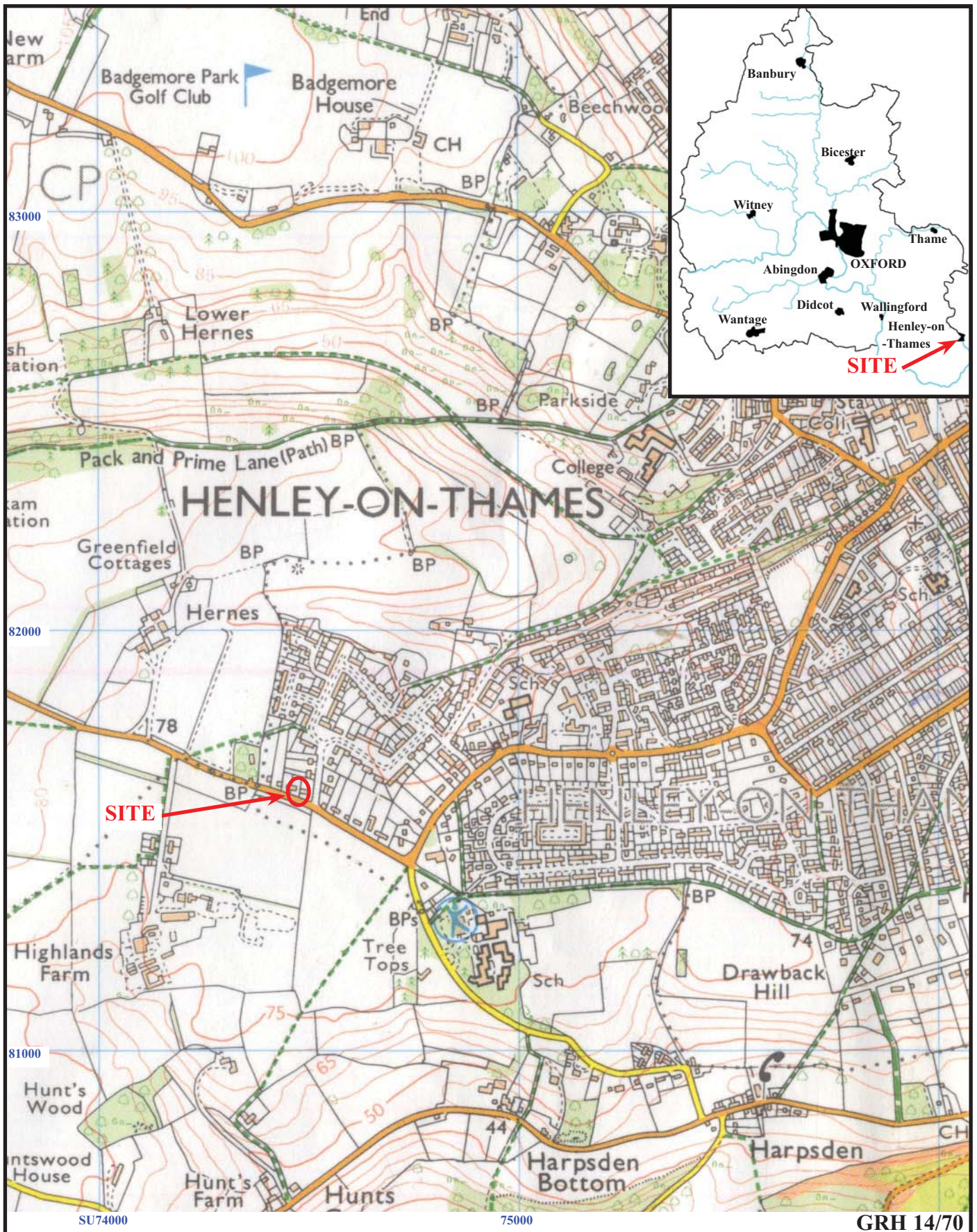
The footings for the new extension behind the garage to the east of the house were observed (Pl. 2). This trench was 1.05m deep and 0.6m wide (Fig. 4). It revealed the same stratigraphy as previously seen; 0.45m of subsoil overlying natural gravel. Sand was uncovered within the base of this footing, however, no archaeological finds were recovered from these works.

Conclusion

No finds nor deposits of archaeological interest were uncovered during the groundworks at this site. Despite the potential of Palaeolithic activity on the site, no worked flints were observed within the sand on the eastern side of the site or anywhere else.

References

- BGS, 1980, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50 000, Sheet 254, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- Dawson, T, 2012, 'Land to the north of Windyridge, Elizabeth Road, Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire: an archaeological evaluation', Thames Valley Archaeological Services unpubl rep **12/110**, Reading
- Morigi, A, Schreve, D and White, M, 2011, 'Introduction and pre-Anglian geological, palaeoenvironmental and archaeological records', in Morigi, D Schreve, M White, G Hey, M Robinson, A Barclay, and P Bradley, *The Thames Through Time: The Archaeology of the Gravel Terraces of the Upper and Middle Thames: Early Prehistory to 1500BC*, Oxford Archaeol Thames Valley Landscapes Monogr **32**, Oxford, 1–40
- NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London
- Taylor, A, 2013, 'Longacre, 228 Greys Road, Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire; an archaeological watching brief', Thames Valley Archaeological Service unpubl rep **12/185**, Reading
- Wymer, J, 1968, *Lower Palaeolithic Archaeology in Britain*, London



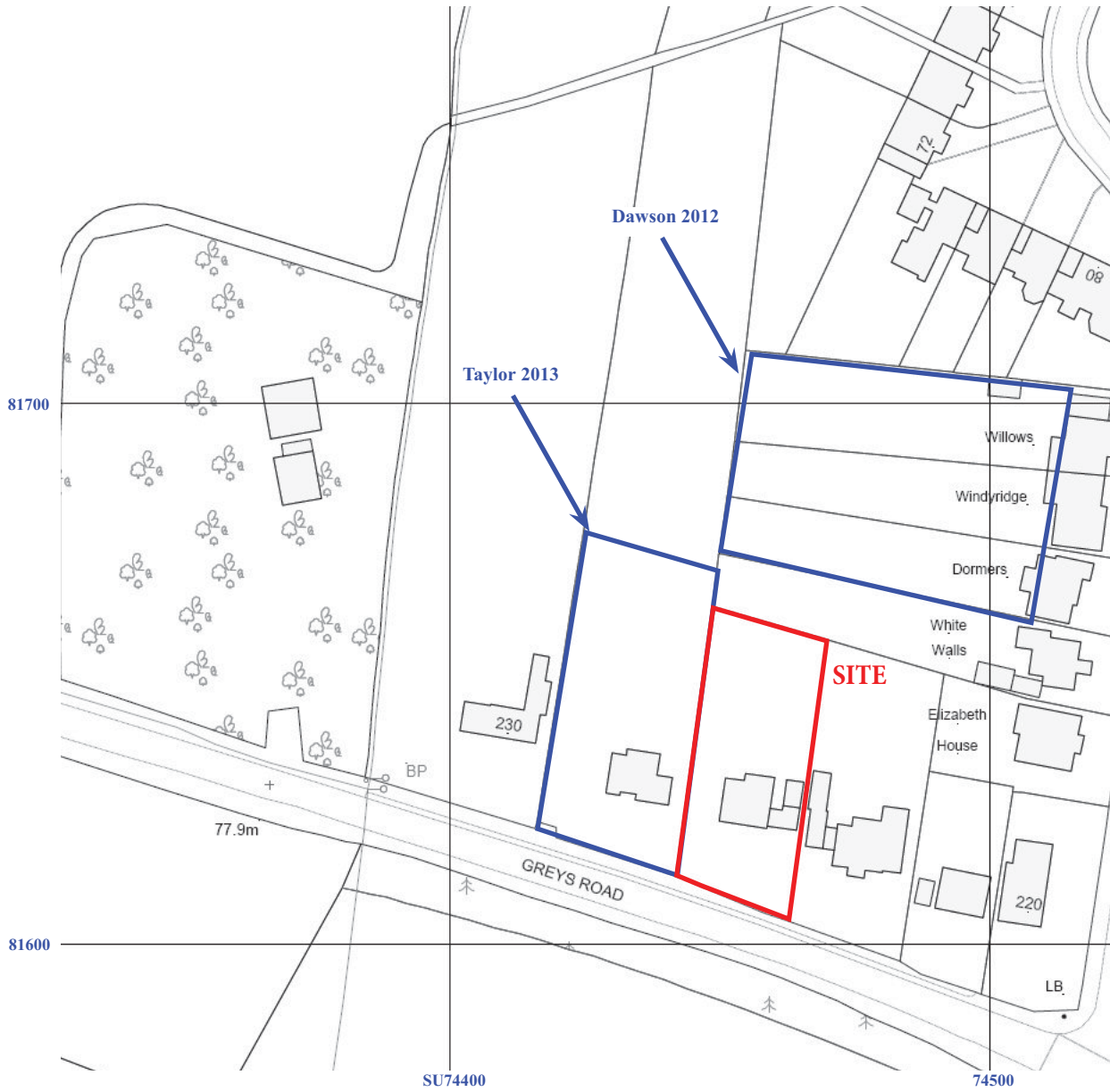
226 Greys Road, Henley-on-Thames,
Oxfordshire, 2014

Archaeological watching brief

Figure 1. Location of site within Henley and Oxfordshire.

Reproduced from Ordnance Survey Explorer 171 at 1:12500
Ordnance Survey Licence 100025880

THAMES VALLEY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SERVICES



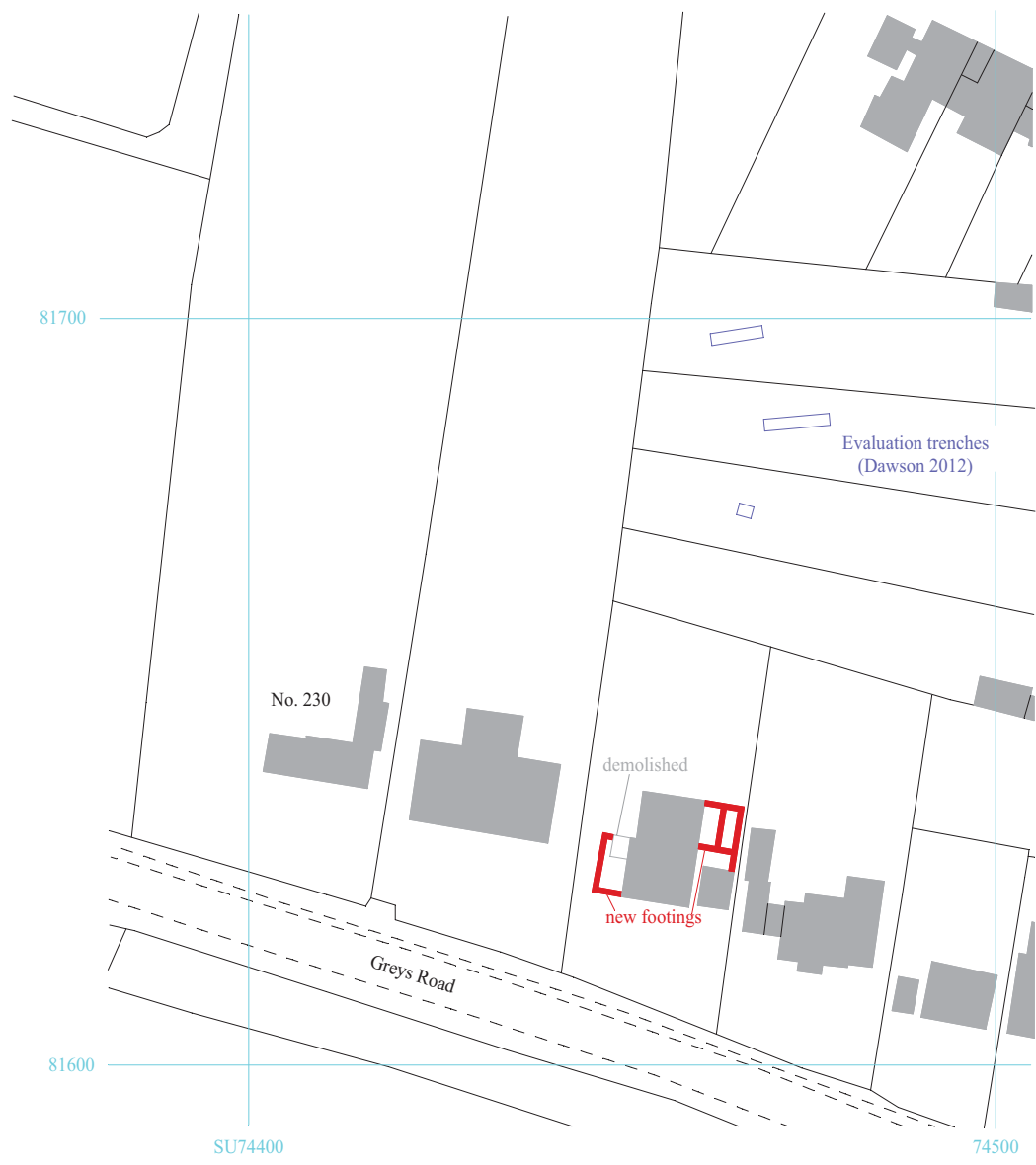
GRH 14/70



**226 Greys Road, Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire, 2014
Archaeological watching brief**

Figure 2. Detailed location of site, prior to 2012/3 modification.

Reproduced from Ordnance Survey digital mapping under licence.
Crown copyright reserved. Scale: 1:1250



new footi

**226 Greys Road, Henley-on-Thames,
Oxfordshire, 2014
Archaeological watching brief**

Figure 3. Location of observed areas.



WNW

ESE

77^{ma}OD

Subsoil (grey/browngravelly sandy silt)



Natural geology (gravel)



GRH 14/70

**226 Greys Road, Henley-on-Thames,
Oxfordshire, 2014
Archaeological watching brief**

Figure 4. Representative section (north-east footing).



THAMES VALLEY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SERVICES



Plate 1. Western extension trench section, looking north, Scales: horizontal 0.5m, vertical 1m.



Plate 2. Eastern extension trenching, looking north, Scales: horizontal 2m, vertical 1m.

GRH 14/70

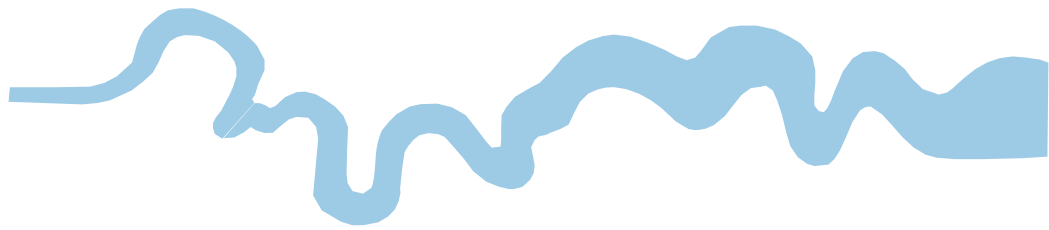
226 Greys Road, Henley-on-Thames,
Oxfordshire, 2014
Archaeological watching brief
Plates 1 - 2.

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
Web: www.tvas.co.uk**