

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Marnel Park, Popley,
Basingstoke, Hampshire**

An Archaeological Fieldwalking Survey

by Steve Ford

Site Code: MPB11/125

(SU6350 5500)

Marnel Park, Popley, Basingstoke, Hampshire

An Archaeological Fieldwalking Survey

For CgMs Consulting

by Steve Ford

Thames Valley Archaeological Services

Ltd

Site Code MPB11/125

December 2011

Summary

Site name: Marnel Park, Popley, Basingstoke, Hampshire

Grid reference: SU6350 5500

Site activity: Fieldwalking

Date and duration of project: 8th December 2011

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Steve Ford

Site code: MPB11/125

Area of site: c. 6.8 ha

Summary of results: A small amount of struck flint, largely or wholly of later Neolithic or Bronze Age date was recovered from the proposal site, well dispersed across the area fieldwalked, without any clustering. It is not considered that this material is indicative of an occupied area but demonstrates no more than widespread use and discard of flint tools across the landscape. The few sherds of late post-medieval pottery recovered along with brick/tile fragments are thought to be indicative of the manuring of farmland at this time.

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

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Preston✓ 13.12.11

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Report 11/125

Introduction

This fieldwalking study was commissioned by Mr Paul Chadwick of CgMs Consulting, Morley House, 26 Holborn Viaduct, London, EC1A 2AT as a preliminary part of an assessment of the archaeological potential of a plot of land at Marnel Park, Popley, Basingstoke, Hampshire. This report constitutes a non-invasive stage of a process to determine the presence/absence, extent, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains that may be affected by development within the area.

The site

The whole proposal site comprises a sub-rectangular parcel of arable land centred at NGR SU6350 5500 covering about 6ha, on the northern margins of Basingstoke. The site comprises a single field on land that slopes very gently from north to south. The site lies at a height of 80m above Ordnance Datum. The underlying geology is Reading Beds with upper chalk just to the south (BGS 1981).

Planning background and development proposals

The site is to be promoted for housing development.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location close to the rich chalklands of north Basingstoke with a wealth of earlier prehistoric, Iron Age and Roman sites recorded in the area, many during the expansion of the suburbs of the town, and others recorded by aerial photography. Recent excavations on earlier phases of Marnel Park to the south located prehistoric and Roman settlement and landscape (Wright *et al.* 2009) and a Roman enclosure was present to the south-west (Coles *et al.* 2011).

Objectives and methodology

The fieldwalking took place along north-south lines spaced at 10m intervals and based on the National Grid. Material was collected from units of 10m intervals along these lines with an average search width of 1m. This approximates to a 10% sample of the surface area of the site. The methodology is comparable with that practised

in other regions of central southern England (Richards 1990; Ford 1987a, appendix 1) though the sample fraction here is higher. All pre-19th century artefacts (primarily struck flint and pottery) were to be collected and retained. Dense scatters of brick/tile or burnt flint were to be recorded in the field but only a sample of material collected from these for dating purposes.

A record was made of conditions which may have influenced recovery rates, such as stoniness of ground, vegetation cover, bright sunlight and which individual walked which line. The topography was also recorded to assist in interpretation of the finds.

Results

A total area of c. 6.8ha was fieldwalked by 3 individuals.

Collection conditions

All of the fieldwalked areas had been planted with a wheat/barley crop which was of very low growth. In effect the whole ground surface was observable. The weather was overcast all of the time of the survey and the ground damp. The presence of a low to moderate amount of flint cobbles and pebbles was noted for the site.

Finds

Pottery

Just three sherds of late post-medieval pottery were recovered as detailed Appendix 3 and shown on Figure 2.

Struck flint

In all, just 7 struck pieces were recovered as detailed in Appendices 1 and 2. The collection comprised 5 flakes, 1 core, 1 and a spall (piece less than 20x20mm). The distribution is shown in Figure 2. The flint collection is dominated by broad flakes and contains no closely datable items. It is considered that the collection is largely or wholly of later Neolithic or Bronze Age date (Ford 1987b).

There is a modest presence of struck flint across the area with no marked clustering. The density of material recovered is very low when compared to data produced by large scale surveys (e.g. Ford 1987a). The density of struck flint here is lower than the threshold for designation as a 'site' from these surveys which included geological outcrops both rich and poor in the presence of natural flint raw material. The presence of struck flint here as a background scatter, presumably represents off-site, landscape scale activity such as casual loss or discard, or dispersal by manuring practice (Foley 1981).

Burnt flint and brick/tile

A small volume of burnt flint and brick/tile fragments was observed on the site without any clustering. This material was not collected.

Conclusion

The fieldwalking has resulted in the recovery of very little lithic material despite the nearby outcropping of chalk which could have provided abundant raw material. These fieldwalked finds indicate some prehistoric activity in the wider area, but the few finds recovered do not appear to be indicative of the presence of occupation sites. It may have no more relevance than demonstrating the widespread use and discard of flint tools across the landscape. The few sherds of late post-medieval pottery, along with the presence of brick/tile fragments, are unlikely to be indicative of anything other than the manuring of farmland at this time.

References

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- Ford, S, 1987b, 'Chronological and functional aspects of flint assemblages', in A G Brown and M R Edmonds, (eds), *Lithic Analysis and Later British Prehistory: Some Problems and Approaches*, Brit Archaeol Rep **162**, Oxford, 67–85
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APPENDIX 1: Struck flint Summary

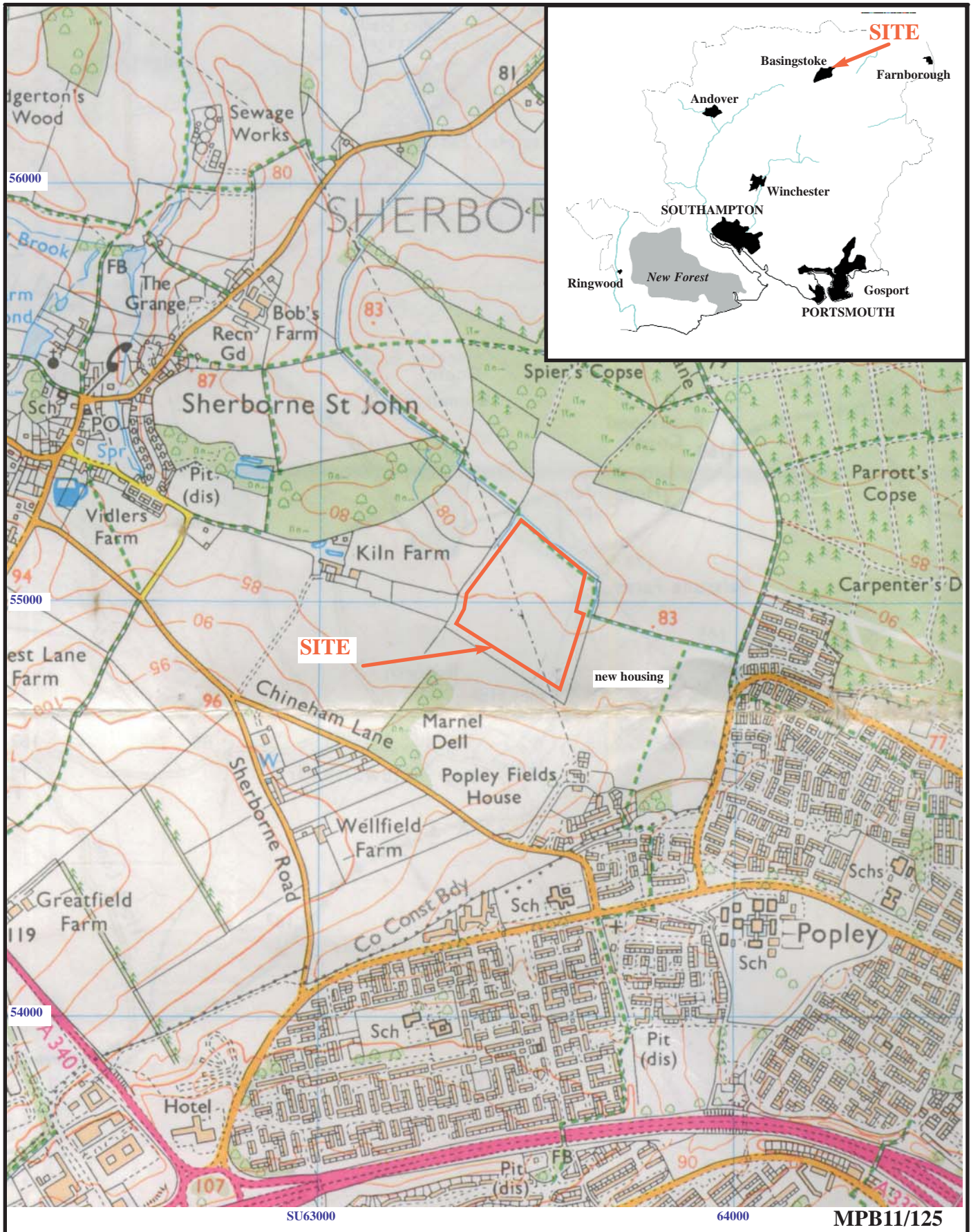
Flakes	5
Cores	1
Spalls	1

APPENDIX 2: Struck flint detailed locations

<i>NGR East (SU)</i>	<i>NGR North</i>	<i>Intact flake</i>	<i>Broken flake</i>	<i>Spall</i>	<i>Core</i>
63440	54970	1(burnt)			
63520	54910	1			
63570	55050		1		
63580	54890				1
63600	54890	1	1		
63610	55040			1	

APPENDIX 3: Pottery detailed locations

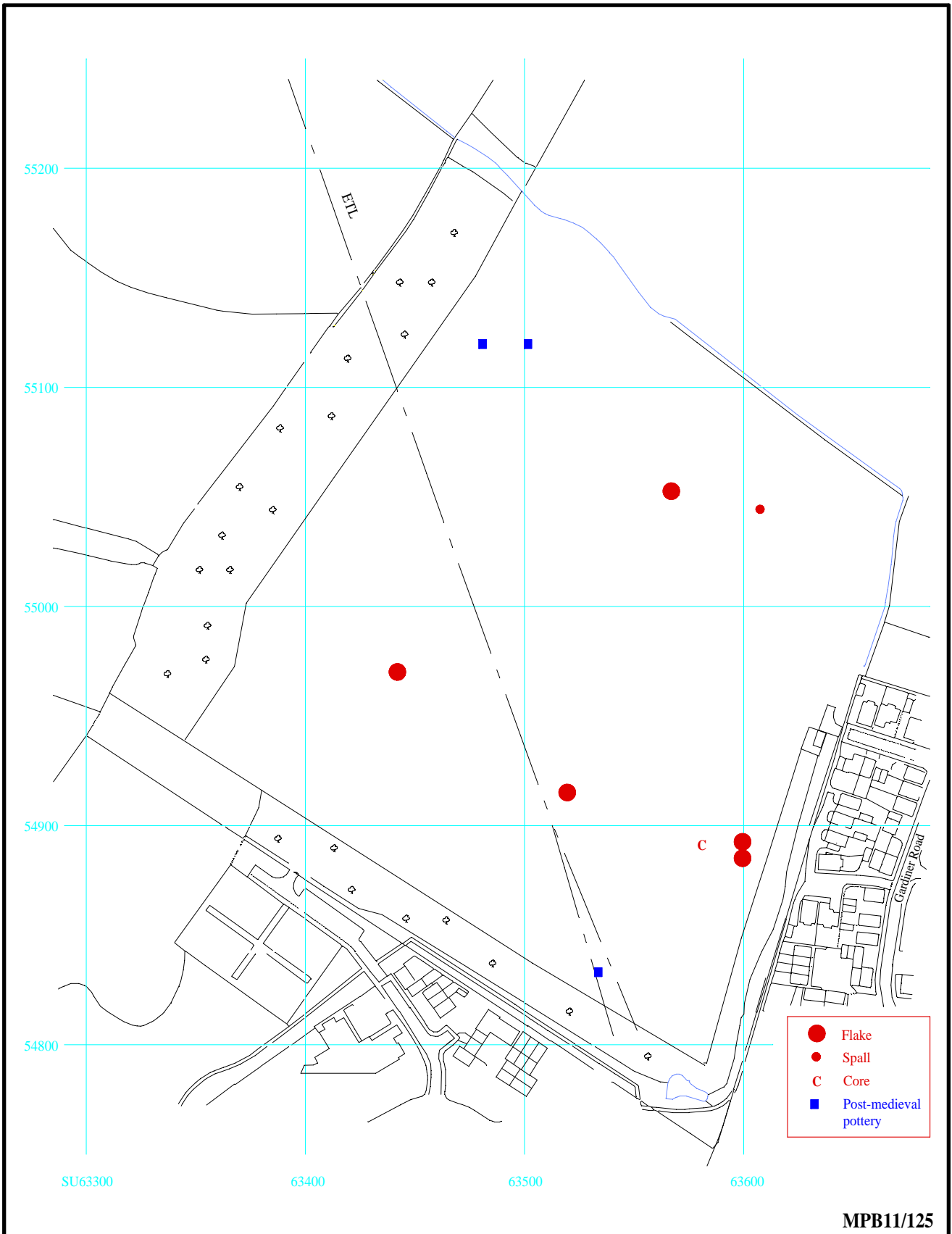
<i>NGR East (SU)</i>	<i>NGR North</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>
63480	55120	Post-medieval glazed red earthenware	Post-medieval
63500	55120	Transfer printed earthenware 'china'	Post-medieval
63530	54830	Stoneware	Post-medieval



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Figure 1. Location of site within Basingstoke and Hampshire.

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Figure 2. Detailed location of site and artefacts recovered.

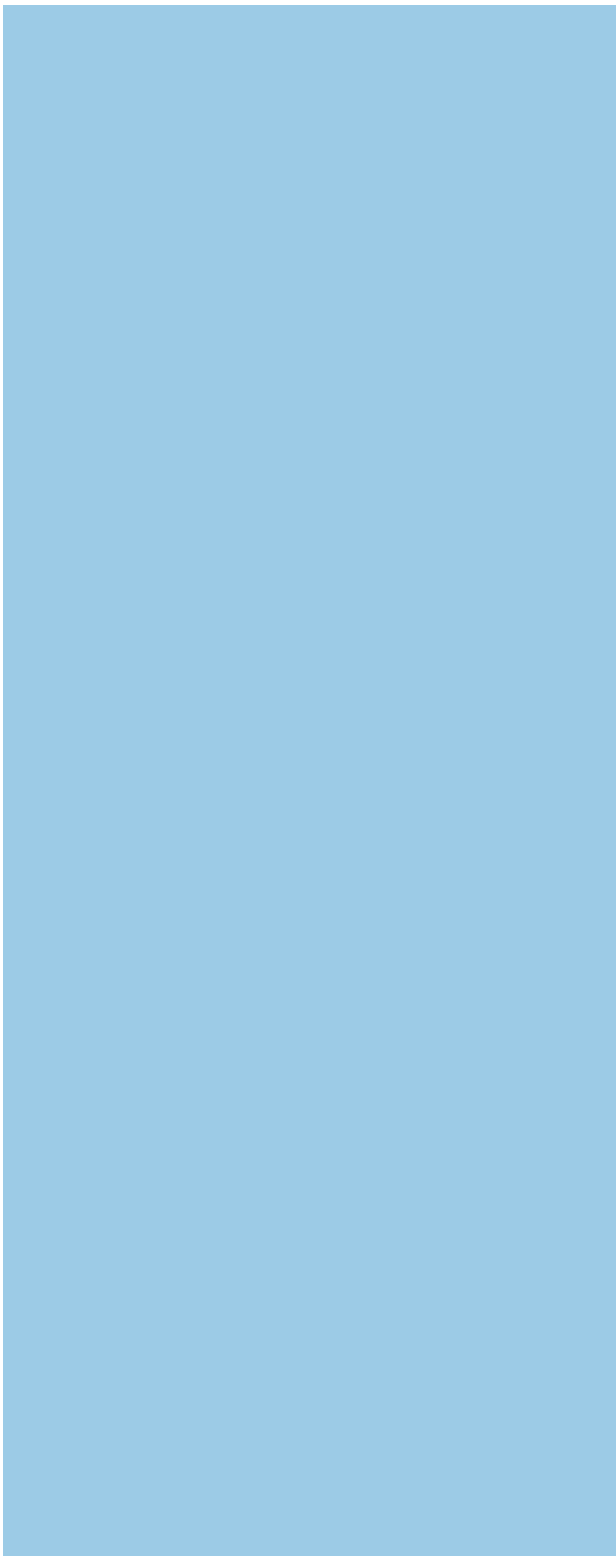
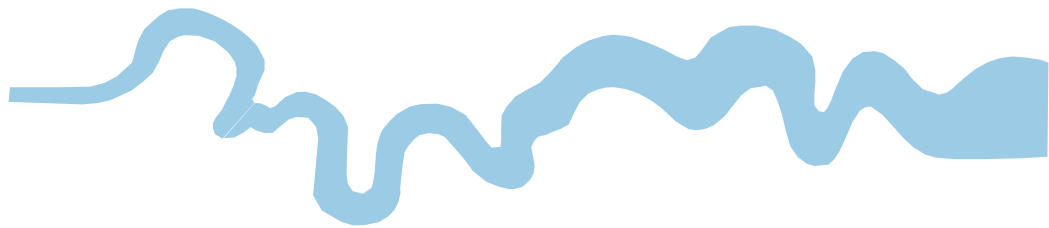


THAMES VALLEY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SERVICES

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**