

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Land adjacent to The Weirs,
Chilton Foliat, Wiltshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Steve Ford

Site Code: WCF10/103

(SU 3223 7034)

**Land adjacent to The Weirs,
Chilton Foliat, Wiltshire**

An Archaeological Evaluation

for Mr Stewart Little

by Steve Ford

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code WCF10/103

November 2010

Summary

Site name: Land adjacent to The Weirs, Chilton Foliat, Wiltshire

Grid reference: SU 3223 7034

Site activity: Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 27th October 2010

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Steve Ford

Site code: WCF10/103

Area of site: c. 600 sq m

Summary of results: The evaluation did not reveal any deposits of archaeological interest. A few sherds of medieval and early post-medieval pottery were recovered from made ground deposits. The natural geology in the southern portion of the site was deeply buried by late post-medieval and modern made ground, with one area having also been truncated. On the basis of these results therefore it is considered that the site has no archaeological potential.

Monuments Identified: none

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

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Preston ✓ 11.11.10
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Land adjacent to The Weirs, Chilton Foliat, Wiltshire An Archaeological Evaluation

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Report 10/103

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out on land adjacent to The Weirs, Chilton Foliat, Wiltshire (SU 3223 7034) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Janine Gosling, of Fowler Architecture and Planning 19 High Street, Pewsey, Wiltshire, SN9 5AF on behalf of Mr Stewart Little, The Weirs, Chilton Foliat, Wiltshire, RG17 0TG. Planning permission is being sought (App no E/10/1151/FUL) from Wiltshire Council to construct a new house and garage on the site. As a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits being present, which may be damaged or destroyed by groundworks, the results of a field evaluation have been requested to support the planning application, in accordance with the Council's policies and *Planning for the Historic Environment* (PPS5, 2010).

The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr David Vaughan of Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service. The fieldwork was undertaken by Steve Ford and Kyle Beaverstock on 27th October 2010 and the site code is WCF10/103. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Devizes Museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the south side of the B4192 within the village. The southern boundary is formed by a mill leat with the river Kennet beyond. The site occupies an area of c. 600 sq m, of which less than 350 sq m is proposed to be developed. The ground slopes gently down towards the south from a height of c. 102m above Ordnance Datum at the north falling to 99m at the south. (Fig. 2). The underlying geology is depicted on the geology map as valley gravel with alluvium to the south (BGS 1947).

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site stems from the position of the site within the archaeologically rich Kennet Valley. The site lies within the historic (medieval) core of the settlement adjacent to a mill race. Chilton Foliat is mentioned in Domesday Book and has late Saxon origins (Williams and Martin 2002). The Kennet

Valley is also noteworthy for its rich concentration of Mesolithic occupation sites and stray finds to the east (Froom 1971) and Neolithic ceremonial monuments to the west in the Avebury region. Extensive excavations at Charnham Lane on the outskirts of Hungerford to the east revealed a range of sites and finds including Mesolithic occupation, a Bronze Age pit circle, Saxon house and medieval farm (Ford 2002). Recent evaluation at Charnham Lane has now revealed a prehistoric palisade (Ford 2010). A range of Roman finds have also been found by metal detecting recently near the village.

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 archaeologically relevant levels have survived on this site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present; and
- to determine if there are later prehistoric, Roman, Saxon or medieval deposits present on the site;

A total of three trenches were to be dug, two at 5m and one at 3m long, and all 1.6m wide. The trenches were located to target the footprints of the new buildings. These would all be dug using a JCB-type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision.

Results

All three trenches were dug as intended, though some trench positions had to be altered due to logistical constraints (trees). The trenches all measured 1.60m wide and were between 3.2m and 4.8m in length (Fig. 3). A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1 (Figs 3 and 4, Pl. 1)

This trench measured 4.8m in length and was dug to a depth of 1.9m. The stratigraphy revealed comprised 0.2m of topsoil/turf/roots over 0.18m of brown subsoil. This overlay 0.88m of modern made ground in three layers in a sandy clayey matrix. The made ground contained modern items such as brick, slate and electrical fittings along with residual sherds of medieval and post-medieval pottery. This overlay grey/brown silty clay with gravel

which was possibly root disturbed but which was considered to be the natural geology. The trench was deepened by 0.4m to confirm this interpretation and revealed sandy gravel with calcareous patches. No archaeological deposits were observed.

Trench 2 (Fig 3; Pl. 2)

This trench measured 3.7m in length and was dug to a depth of 1.5m. The stratigraphy comprised 0.2m of turf/topsoil above 0.08m of subsoil. Beneath this was further dumping of late post medieval/modern made ground overlying natural geology. However, an additional episode of activity was present which comprised a very large pit occupying most of the trench and which also truncated the natural geology. The large truncation was infilled with chalky demolition rubble and other modern material. No archaeological deposits were observed in the small area of intact natural geology at the northern end of the trench.

Trench 3 (Figs 3 and 4; Pl. 3)

This trench measured 3.2m in length and was dug to a depth of 0.5m. The stratigraphy comprised 0.1m of turf/topsoil; above 0.1m of dark brown sandy subsoil. This overlay 0.25m of made ground which overlay brown/orange sandy gravel (natural geology). A modern pit was cut through the made ground and into the gravel at the east end of the trench. The charcoal- and coal-rich fill contained modern brick and metalwork. A brick wall, apparently a single brick thick, aligned almost north-south formed the western end of the trench. The bricks were of modern dimensions. No archaeological deposits were revealed.

FINDS

Pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised four sherds with a total weight of 137g. It all occurred in Trench 1, in the upper made ground, with the following fabric types noted:

Newbury-type A/B wares. late 11th – early 15th century (Mephram 1997, 51-2). Flint, sand and shell tempered wares, probably manufactured in the Savernake Forest (Mephram 1997, 65). It has a wide distribution throughout Berkshire, northern Hampshire and Oxfordshire (Mephram 1997, fig. 29). 1 sherd, 13g.

Red Earthenware, 16th – 19th century. Fine sandy earthenware, usually with a brown or green glaze, occurring in a range of utilitarian forms. Such 'country pottery' was first made in the 16th century, and in some areas continued in use until the 19th century. There is a known Wiltshire source at Crockerton (McCarthy and Brooks 1988, 459). 3 sherds, 124g.

The fabrics are typical finds at sites in the region, and the sherds generally large and in good condition, with little sign of abrasion.

Conclusion

This small evaluation has not revealed any deposits of archaeological interest though a few sherds of medieval and post-medieval pottery were recovered. The levels of the natural gravel geology varied markedly across the site, reflecting the latter's position on the edge of the river floodplain. The gravel in the southern two trenches was deeply buried by late post-medieval and modern made ground, perhaps a deliberate design to raise this ground above flood levels. One of the trenches showed the presence of a large modern cut that penetrated the natural gravel geology, thus removing any archaeological potential in its vicinity.

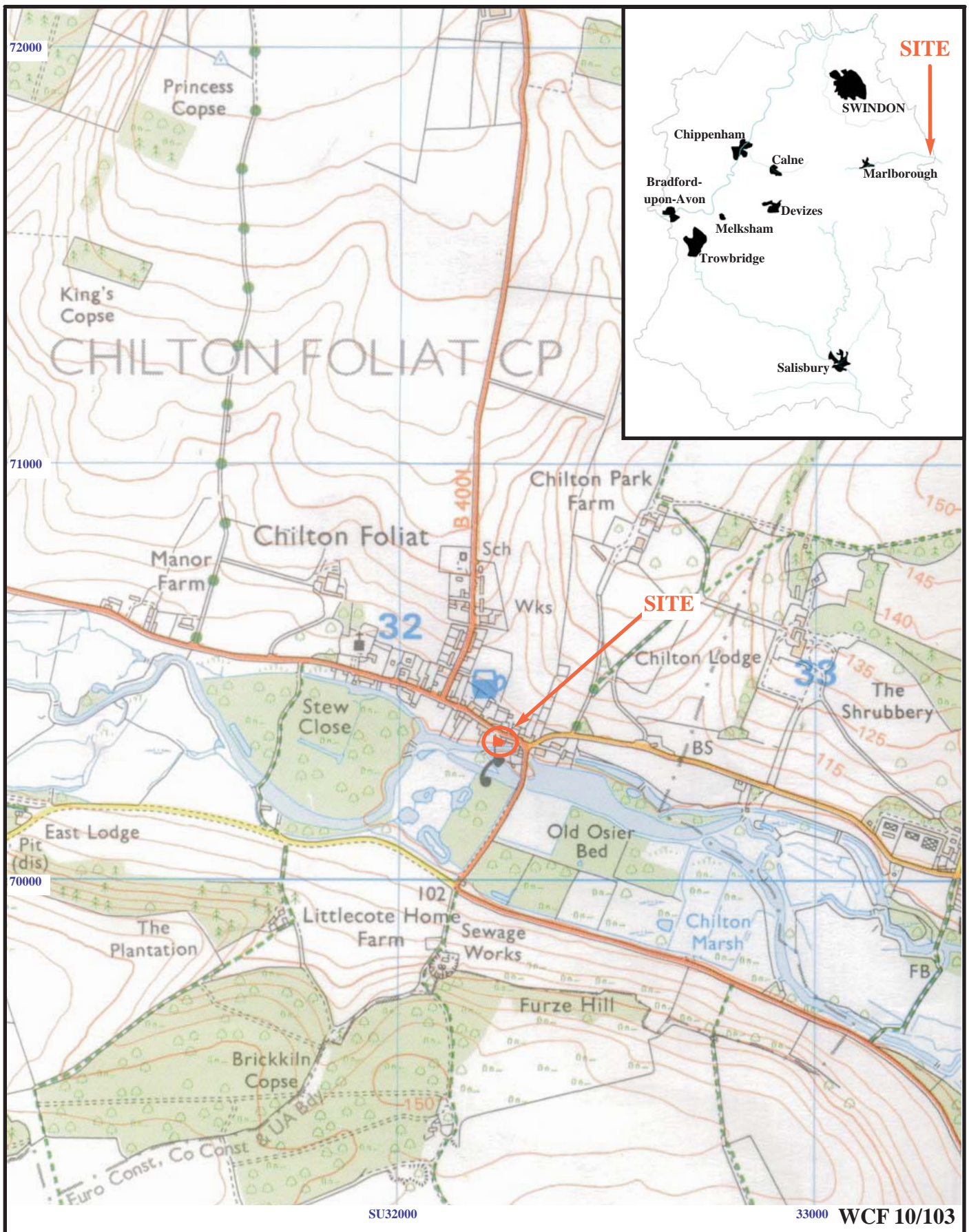
On the basis of these results therefore it is considered that the site has no archaeological potential.

References

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APPENDIX 1: Trench details
 0m at S or W end

Trench	Length (m)	Breadth (m)	Depth (m)	Comment
1	4.8	1.60	1.9	0–0.2m Topsoil; 0.20–0.38m subsoil; 0.38–1.3m made ground (in layers); 1.3–1.5m grey/brown silty clay with gravel (root disturbed, natural geology?); 1.5m+ sandy gravel with calcareous patches (natural geology). [Pl. 1]
2	3.7	1.60	1.5	0–0.2m Topsoil/tree roots; 0.2m–0.28m subsoil; 0.28–1.5m made ground; 1.5m+ gravel (natural geology) (north end only). Large modern truncation occupies most of trench. [Pl. 2]
3	3.2	1.60	0.5	0–0.1m Turf/Topsoil; 0.1–0.2m dark brown sandy subsoil; 0.2–0.45m made ground; 0.45m+ brown/orange sandy gravel (natural geology). Modern pit at 3m; modern wall at 0m. [Pl. 3]



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Figure 1. Location of site within Chilton Foliat and Wiltshire.

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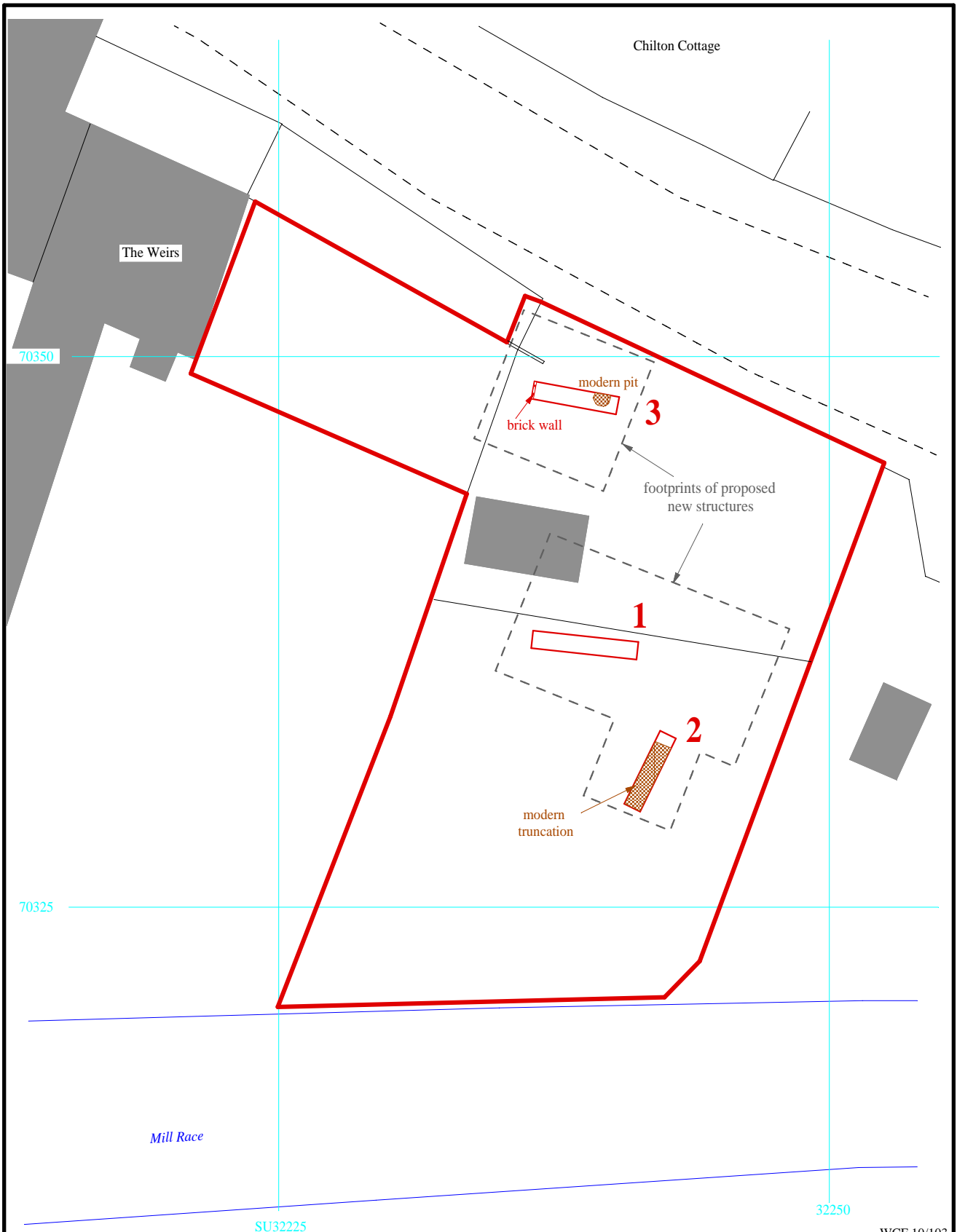


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Figure 2. Detailed location of site in Chilton Foliat

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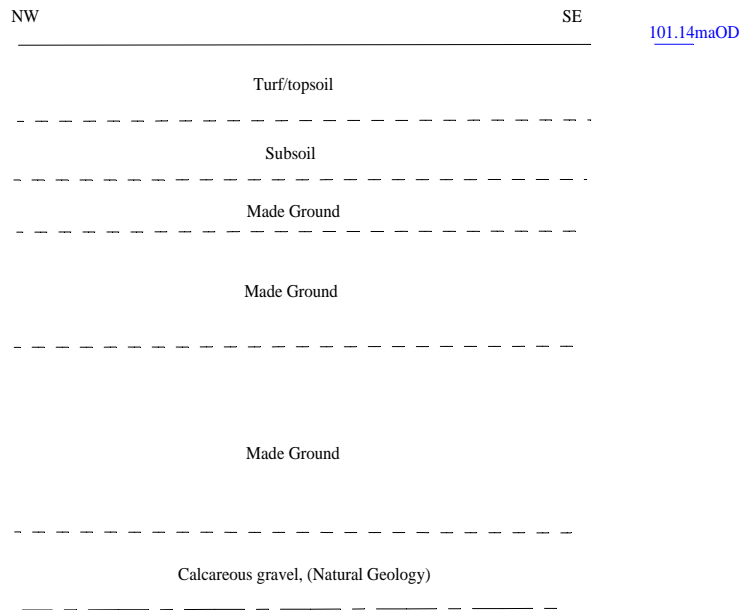
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Figure 3. Location of trenches.

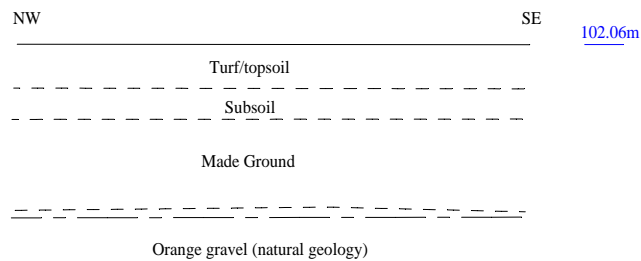


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Trench 1



Trench 3



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Figure 4. Representative sections.





Plate 1. Trench 1, looking north east.
Scale: 2m



Plate 2. Trench 2, looking north.
Scales: 1m and 2m



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

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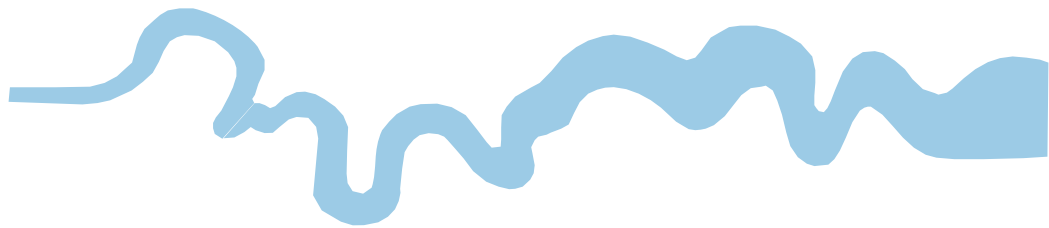
Plates 1 - 3.

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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 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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