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## A Desk-based Assessment at Chyngton School, Seaford, East Sussex

by  
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### ***Summary***

*An archaeological Desk-based Assessment has been carried out at Chyngton Primary School, Seaford, East Sussex, where it has been proposed to build a new extension.*

*The desk-based assessment has established that the school site was a field prior to the school being built, and there is no evidence for previous buildings on the site, or any known archaeology. However, as well as surviving field boundaries within the site, there are numerous sites and finds from the Palaeolithic period to the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the surrounding landscape, which may indicate the likely presence of buried archaeological remains at the site.*

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## Contents

	Page
1.0 Introduction	1
2.0 Objectives & Scope of Report	2
3.0 Methodology	3
4.0 Archaeological & Historical Background	5
5.0 Impact of Development	14
6.0 Conclusions	14
7.0 Acknowledgements	15

### Figures:

- Fig. 1 Site Location map and Monuments on HER
- Fig. 2 Site Plan
- Fig. 3 Map showing the Domesday and Medieval Settlements
- Fig. 4 Seaford Tithe Map
- Fig. 5 1st Edition OS Map
- Fig. 6 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition OS Map
- Fig. 7 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition OS Map
- Fig. 8 4<sup>th</sup> Edition OS Map
- Fig. 9 1947 Aerial Photograph
- Fig. 10 1949 Map
- Fig. 11 Site Plan showing archaeological features
- Fig. 12 Photograph of rear of school
- Fig. 13 Photograph of front of school
- Fig. 14 Photograph of boundary bank
- Fig. 15 Photograph of possible round barrow

### Appendices:

- Appendix 1 Archaeological Sites Recorded on HER
- Appendix 2 Archaeological Sites from other sources
- Appendix 3 Archaeological Events

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1** Chris Butler Archaeological Services has been commissioned by NPS Property Consultants Ltd for East Sussex County Council to carry out an Archaeological Desk-based Assessment of the proposed site for a new extension at Chyngton Primary School, Seaford, East Sussex, in order to establish the likely presence and importance of any archaeological remains that may be affected by the proposed construction, as part of an initial feasibility study.
- 1.2** The site for the proposed new primary school extension is located on the north side of Millberg Road centred on TV 49950 99950 (Fig. 1), which is situated on the north-east side of Seaford, south of the Alfriston Road. The site is currently the existing Chyngton Primary School, and is bounded by Millberg Road on its south side, and housing developments and their associated gardens on the remaining three sides.
- 1.3** The site is located at around 44m OD on its south side and slopes gently up to approximately 46m on its north-east side. The school site is situated on a gently sloping hill which rises gradually to the north-east towards Cradle Hill and High-and-Over. The site is not within a designated Conservation Area or Archaeologically Sensitive Area.
- 1.4** The site is approximately 1.9ha in size, and currently comprises the original school building opened in 1958, and a large extension which was added in 1998<sup>1</sup>. The school also has four portacabin classrooms and a swimming pool (Fig. 2), with a large area of playground and playing field on its north side.
- 1.5** The current Chyngton Primary School was originally built in 1958<sup>2</sup> to cater for the increasing population resulting from the new housing developments that were being built around it on the Downland to the north-east of Seaford. It originally had 160 children, but now caters for some 445 children. It has therefore been proposed that new accommodation be built on the site to cater for the increase in numbers and to provide new facilities.
- 1.6** Seaford is situated on the south coast, at the east end of a bay created by the mouth of the River Ouse, which now flows into the English Channel at Newhaven a few km to the west. Seaford has the chalk South Downs to its north onto which the town has expanded during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The River Cuckmere lies a short distance to the east of the town. Seaford is not mentioned in the Domesday Book<sup>3</sup>, and is in the Hundred of Flexborough, which is part of the Rape of Pevensey.

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<sup>1</sup> '50 Years of Chyngton School', *Haven Life*, March 2008, Issue 17.

<sup>2</sup> ESRO (C/A/4/278)

<sup>3</sup> Morris, J. (Ed) 1976 *Domesday Book*, Chichester, Phillimore

- 1.7 The geology of the site, according to the British Geological Survey (sheet 319/334), comprises Newhaven Chalk, with a large outcrop of Clay-with-flints to its north-east. The soil at the site is described as a shallow lime-rich freely-draining soil over chalk<sup>4</sup>.
- 1.8 The Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) survey for Seaford has designated the site as being settlement, whilst the HLC dating gives the school site a late 20<sup>th</sup> century date<sup>5</sup>. The Land Utilisation Survey 1931-1935 shows the site to be meadowland and permanent grassland, with arable land to the east, although there are patches of new housing already appearing in the surrounding area<sup>6</sup>.
- 1.9 This report initially covers the objectives and scope of the survey, then discusses the methodology used in the Desk-based Assessment, and then reviews the archaeological heritage of the area. Finally a conclusion assesses the potential impact of the development. A full listing of all the known archaeological sites from the HER is contained in Appendix 1 to this report, whilst other sites are listed in Appendix 2, and archaeological events in Appendix 3.

## 2. Objectives & Scope of Report

- 2.1 The objective of this report is to gain information about the known or potential archaeological resource of the site and its immediate area. This will include information relating to the presence or absence of any archaeology, its character and extent, date, integrity, state of preservation, and the relative quality of the potential archaeological resource.
- 2.2 This will allow an assessment of the merits of the archaeology in context to be made, leading to the formulation of a strategy for the recording, preservation and management of the resource or, where necessary, the formulation of a strategy for further investigation where the character and value of the resource is not sufficiently defined to permit a mitigation strategy or other response to be defined.
- 2.3 The report will consider the archaeological resource within a radius of 1km around the site, whilst also taking into account sites further afield where these may be considered to have an impact or relevance to the site in its landscape setting.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.landis.org.uk/soilscapes/>

<sup>5</sup> HLC data provided by ESCC

<sup>6</sup> <http://landuse.edina.ac.uk/>

- 2.4 It should be noted that this report can only take into account the existing known archaeology, and by its nature cannot provide a complete record of the archaeological resource of the site. Its intention is to provide an overview of the known archaeology in the area of the site, from which judgements can be made about the potential archaeological resource of the site itself.

### 3. Methodology

- 3.1 This Desk-based Assessment has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (PPG16), the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-based Assessment* (Institute of Field Archaeologists 2001), and the *Standards for Archaeological Fieldwork, Recording and Post Excavation Work in East Sussex* (ESCC 2008). A brief for this Desk-based Assessment was prepared by the Archaeology Team at East Sussex County Council.
- 3.2 The research for this Desk-based Assessment has included an analysis of the following resources:
- ESCC Historic Environment Record (HER)
  - Historic mapping (including that provided with ESCC HER)
  - NMR records and aerial photographs
  - Portable Antiquities Scheme database
  - East Sussex Record Office (ESRO)
  - Sussex Archaeological Society Library
  - Defence of Britain database
  - British Geological Survey
  - Aerial Photograph search (Cambridge & Sussex Universities)
  - Personal & Public library resources

- 3.3 The following maps were used:

- Speed 1610
- Morden's Sussex 1695
- Kitchen 1763
- Cole's Sussex 1808
- Moule's Sussex 1837
- 1839 Seaford Tithe map (ESRO – TD/E37)
- 1<sup>st</sup> Edition OS Map (1875)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition OS Map (1899)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition OS Map (1910)
- 4<sup>th</sup> Edition OS Map (1927)

Information gained from the map regression exercise is contained in the Post Medieval section below.

- 3.4** The Sites and Listed Buildings recorded on the HER and other sources are listed in Appendices 1 and 2 to this report and mentioned in the text where relevant. The Monuments are shown on Fig. 1. Historical and other sources are given as footnotes as appropriate. Three aerial photographs were provided by ESCC. Other aerial photographs were not reviewed, as due to the built up nature of the sites and its surrounding area only immediate post war aerial photographs were likely to be of any use.
- 3.5** A site visit was undertaken on the 17<sup>th</sup> December 2008. This confirmed that the site comprises the original 1958 school building on the road frontage with the later addition situated to the rear. To the east side the buildings are a number of portacabin classrooms positioned on a raised area of ground, probably created due to the terracing into the slope on this side of the main school site. At the rear of the buildings is a tarmac playground.
- 3.6** On the north side of the site is the school playing field, which slopes slightly downhill to the north. The boundary on all sides is fenced, with trees on the outside, and a small clump of trees in the north-east corner. Along the northern boundary there is a slight boundary bank, which becomes more prominent at the north-west end. Here the bank is 1m wide and 0.25m high and topped with established trees, and has a further parallel bank some 2m on its north side.
- 3.7** The bank turns into the school grounds at the north-west corner and continues along the west side some 2-3m inside the boundary fence. The bank has regular spaced establish trees along its top, and has flint eroding out of it. A single flint end-scraper and two pieces of fire-fractured flint were recovered from the surface of the bank, whilst some ceramic building material was also noted eroding from the bank.
- 3.8** Approximately half way along this bank (at TV 49876 99994) was a circular mound approximately 8m in diameter and 0.5m high, with a few trees growing on it. Flint was also eroding from this, but no worked or fire-fractured flint was noted. Although this may be a Bronze Age round barrow, it could also be a feature of the boundary bank.
- 3.9** No other features were noted. A number of areas of bare earth were inspected for artefacts, and another piece of fire-fractured flint was recovered from the eastern side of the site.

## 4. Archaeological & Historical Background

- 4.0.1 This section considers each archaeological period in turn, reviewing the known archaeological resource of the area, defining its location and extent, character, date, integrity, state of preservation, and quality.
- 4.0.2 There has been very little archaeological work in the immediate vicinity of the Chyngton School site, apart from the recording of burials and the remains of Sutton Church during the 1940's re-developments (EES9326).
- 4.0.3 The review of each period will also bring in evidence for that period from a wider area, especially where there is little known archaeological evidence locally. This will enable a more accurate judgement to be made about the archaeological potential for the site. This evidence will include that taken from similar landscapes and geologies.

### 4.1 *Palaeolithic Period (750,000BC – 10,000BC)*

- 4.1.1 This period covers a huge period of time, during which early hominid occupation of Southern Britain was intermittent. The period is divided into warm and cold periods, with the evidence suggesting that hominid occupation occurred during some of the warm periods. Apart from a small number of exceptional sites (e.g. Boxgrove), most of the evidence for human activity in this period comes from isolated finds of stone tools, often in secondary deposits.
- 4.1.2 A number of Palaeolithic handaxes have been found to the north of Seaford<sup>7</sup> whilst others have come from East Blatchington and the Cuckmere Valley. It has been suggested that this material may derive from the Clay-with-flints deposits<sup>8</sup>.
- 4.1.4 There is a large area of Clay-with-flints deposit to the north-east of the site, and further similar deposits nearby. As these do not appear to extend onto the site the likely impact of in-situ Palaeolithic archaeology being present on the site is considered to be low, but artefacts may have been moved downslope onto the site by erosion and agricultural activity.

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<sup>7</sup> Woodcock, A 1981 *The Lower and Middle Palaeolithic Periods in Sussex*, Oxford, BAR 94.

<sup>8</sup> Wymer, J. 1999 *The Lower Palaeolithic Occupation of Britain*, Vol. 1, Wessex Archaeology & English Heritage, p171.

## 4.2 *Mesolithic Period (10,000BC – 4,000BC)*

- 4.2.1 The start of the Mesolithic period sees Britain largely covered by pine and birch woodland, which was gradually replaced by a mixed deciduous woodland that provided an ideal environment for the bands of hunter-gatherers who were exploiting the resources on a seasonal basis<sup>9</sup>. There is some evidence for Mesolithic hunter-gatherer groups exploiting the resources of the South Downs, either for hunting and gathering or to obtain flint with which to make their tools, especially during the Later Mesolithic.
- 4.2.2 There is no evidence for Mesolithic activity at or near the site. However, the majority of the evidence for Mesolithic activity on the South Downs is found on outcrops of Clay-with-Flints, which tend to be found capping some of the highest points of the South Downs, such as at Cradle Hill and High-and-Over, to the north-east of the site.
- 4.2.3 A small assemblage of Mesolithic flintwork was found on the west side of Seaford at Valley Dip on a Clay-with-flints deposit, and included debitage and three picks<sup>10</sup>, whilst other pieces have been collected between Seaford Head and Cuckmere Haven<sup>11</sup>.
- 4.2.5 The evidence for this period suggests that there is little likelihood of any significant Mesolithic activity being present on the site, as the nearby Clay-with-flints deposit does not appear to extend onto the site, although it is possible that isolated artefacts and features may be found.

## 4.3 *Neolithic Period (4,000BC to 2,500BC)*

- 4.3.1 A number of changes occur during the Neolithic, some of which may have had an impact on the local area. Some of the woodland was being cleared and small scale agricultural activities are likely to have started. However, environmental evidence suggests that although the Downs may have been largely cleared of woodland by the end of the Neolithic, leaving an open landscape, there is little evidence for ploughing taking place<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> Holgate, R. 2003 'Late Glacial and Post-glacial Hunter-gatherers in Sussex', in Rudling, D. (Ed) *The Archaeology of Sussex to AD2000*, Kings Lynn, Heritage Marketing & Publications Ltd, 29-38.

<sup>10</sup> Butler, C. 1996 'Later Prehistoric flintwork from Valley Dip, Seaford, East Sussex', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **134**, 219-224.

<sup>11</sup> Holden, E.W. 1979 'Flint artefacts from Seaford', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **117**, 224-7

<sup>12</sup> Wilkinson et al. 2002 'The Excavation of Six Dry Valleys in the Brighton Area: The Changing Environment', in Rudling, D. (ed) *Downland Settlement and Land-Use*, London, Archetype Publications Ltd.

- 4.3.2 Other changes in the earlier part of the Neolithic period include the construction of large-scale monuments and the first industrial activity. The site is midway between the causewayed enclosures of Combe Hill and Offham; two of eight such sites in Sussex<sup>13</sup>. Although both sites occupy high positions, their location on the north side of the Downs suggests they had little influence over the Seaford area<sup>14</sup>, although it has been suggested that the Whitehawk causewayed enclosure at Brighton may have exerted some influence along the coastal area<sup>15</sup>.
- 4.3.3 The flint mines of the Early Neolithic provide the first evidence for industrial activity in Britain. Although there are a number of flint mines situated on the South Downs further west in the Worthing area, there is no evidence for any mines in this area<sup>16</sup>. There is however evidence for the continued use of Clay-with-flint outcrops during the Neolithic to procure flint and manufacture axes<sup>17</sup>.
- 4.3.4 Evidence for Early Neolithic activity has also been found close to the site (MES1718) and at other sites nearby. At Rookery Hill, Bishopstone<sup>18</sup> there may have been a settlement, and near Alfriston<sup>19</sup> flintwork was recovered around the Early Neolithic *Long Burgh* long barrow. Later Neolithic flintwork was also found at Valley Dip<sup>20</sup>, and in the area of Seaford Head<sup>21</sup>, and between South Hill and Cuckmere Haven<sup>22</sup>.
- 4.3.5 It is likely that Neolithic artefacts could be present and if so may indicate the presence of underlying Neolithic features, although evidence for Neolithic settlement is very rare.

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<sup>13</sup> Drewett, P. 2003 'Taming the Wild: The first farming Communities in Sussex, in Rudling, D. (Ed) *The Archaeology of Sussex to AD2000*, Kings Lynn, Heritage Marketing & Publications Ltd, 39-46.

<sup>14</sup> Oswald et al. 2001 *The Creation of Monuments*, Swindon, English Heritage.

<sup>15</sup> Drewett, P. 1994 'Dr V. Seton Williams' excavations at Combe Hill, 1962, and the role of Neolithic causewayed enclosures in Sussex', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **132**, 7-24.

<sup>16</sup> Barber, et al. 1999 *The Neolithic Flint Mines of England*, Swindon, English Heritage.

<sup>17</sup> Butler, C. 2001 'A Mesolithic and later prehistoric flintworking site at East and West Hills, Pyecombe, West Sussex', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **139**, 7-26.

<sup>18</sup> Bell, M. 1977 'Excavations at Bishopstone', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **115**.

<sup>19</sup> Butler, C. 2001 'Horned scrapers and other prehistoric flintwork from Alfriston, East Sussex', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **139**, 215-223.

<sup>20</sup> Butler, C. 1996 'Later Prehistoric flintwork from Valley Dip, Seaford, East Sussex', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **134**, 219-224.

<sup>21</sup> *Sussex Notes & Queries* 1950-3 Vol. **13**, 193-7

<sup>22</sup> Holden, E.W. 1979 'Flint artefacts from Seaford', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **117**, 224-7.

#### 4.4 *The Bronze Age (2500BC to 800BC)*

- 4.4.1 The Bronze Age saw the final clearance of the last woodland on the South Downs, and environmental evidence suggests that the Downland was given over to an open grazed landscape with limited arable agriculture until the end of the period when arable land appears to increase<sup>23</sup>.
- 4.4.2 The evidence suggests that the surrounding downland landscape may have been quite densely populated by small farming settlements, surrounded by fields during the Middle and Later Bronze Age. Examples have been found on the Downs to the north of Seaford, with an example fully excavated at Black Patch<sup>24</sup>.
- 4.4.3 Field systems have often been found associated with these settlements and others have been recorded from aerial photographs elsewhere on the South Downs. The absence of similar earthworks in the area of the site is due to the area already being covered in houses and the effect of modern agriculture.
- 4.4.4 Bronze Age flintwork has been found in the immediate vicinity of the site (MES1706 & MES1718). The presence of these finds would suggest that a Bronze Age settlement may be located nearby. Other finds of Bronze Age date have been made to the north of Seaford at Rathfinney Farm where flintwork was recovered<sup>25</sup>, whilst flintwork was also found at Valley Dip and around Seaford Head.
- 4.4.5 Another feature of the Bronze Age landscape are the burial mounds (Barrows). None are recorded at the site, although at least one is noted on Seaford Head, with others on the Downs to the north of the site<sup>26</sup>. The discovery of a circular mound on the site may indicate the presence of a barrow incorporated into a later field boundary.
- 4.4.6 Given the evidence for substantial activity nearby on the South Downs during the Bronze Age, and the discoveries of Bronze Age material close to the site, there is a high probability that significant remains from this period may be found during work at the site.

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<sup>23</sup> Wilkinson et al. 2002 'The Excavation of Six Dry Valleys in the Brighton Area: The Changing Environment', in Rudling, D. (ed) *Downland Settlement and Land-Use*, London, Archetype Publications Ltd.

<sup>24</sup> Drewett, P. 1982 'Later Bronze Age downland economy and excavations at Black Patch, East Sussex', *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* **48**, 321-400.

<sup>25</sup> Butler, C. 2001 'Horned scrapers and other prehistoric flintwork from Alfriston, East Sussex', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **139**, 215-223.

<sup>26</sup> Grinsell, L.V. 1931 'Sussex in the Bronze Age', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **72**, 66.

#### 4.5 *The Iron Age (800BC to 43AD)*

- 4.5.1 During the Early Iron Age it seems likely that the pattern of settlement and agriculture seen in the Later Bronze Age continues, although house structures dating to this period are rare. The field systems continued in use throughout the Iron Age, whilst some of the settlements originating in the Late Bronze Age also appear to continue in use into the Early Iron Age.
- 4.5.2 Later Iron Age settlements on the South Downs are relatively rare, although many are now known from the Coastal Plain between Hove and Chichester. A discrete scatter of possible Late Iron Age or Roman pottery was recovered at Walls Brow (TV507985) during a 1982-3 fieldwalking survey<sup>27</sup>.
- 4.5.3 One major feature of the Iron Age is the hillfort, of which some 20 are known from Sussex. Many of these also appear to have originated in the Later Bronze Age, but become important centres of control and redistribution in the Middle and Later Iron Age.
- 4.5.4 Seaford Head hillfort may have originated in the late Bronze Age<sup>28</sup>, although it seems to have continued in use throughout the Early Iron Age, but had been abandoned by the time of the Roman invasion<sup>29</sup>. This site is almost certainly a central place and would have dominated the local area from its prominent hilltop location. Investigation of the environmental evidence showed that the land on which the hillfort was built had been used for agriculture right up to the time of its construction.
- 4.5.5 There are no finds or features from the site or its immediate vicinity that date from the Iron Age. However, there is a possibility that artefacts or evidence for settlement or field systems could be present at the site, especially given its location close to the hillfort on Seaford Head.

#### 4.6 *The Roman Period (43AD to 410AD)*

- 4.6.1 The Roman invasion of Britain in 43AD resulted in dramatic alterations to this island's social and economic environments<sup>30</sup>. On the South Downs many of the rural farmsteads and associated field systems that were in existence in the Later Iron Age continued throughout the Roman period. Where they have been excavated they provide evidence for a mixed farming economy of crops and animal husbandry.

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<sup>27</sup> Garwood, P. 1985 'The Cuckmere Valley Project Fieldwalking Programme 1982-3', *Institute of Archaeology Bulletin* **22**, 62.

<sup>28</sup> Hamilton, S. et al. 1997 'Prominent Enclosures in 1st millennium BC Sussex', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **135**, 93-112.

<sup>29</sup> Bedwin, O. 1986 'Excavations at Seaford Head Camp, East Sussex, 1983' *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **124**, 25-33.

<sup>30</sup> Rudling, D. 2003 'Roman Rural Settlement in Sussex: Continuity and Change', in Rudling, D. (Ed) *The Archaeology of Sussex to AD2000*, Kings Lynn, Heritage Marketing & Publications Ltd.

- 4.6.2 Villa's are rare on Downland landscapes, and there is little evidence for Roman settlement or activity in the local area. Some pottery sherds of 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> century date, possibly representing domestic debris, was found in the upper ditch fill of Seaford Head hillfort and a discrete scatter of possible Late Iron Age or Roman pottery was recovered at Walls Brow (TV507985) during the 1982-3 fieldwalking survey<sup>31</sup>.
- 4.6.3 This limited evidence and the possibility of a Roman road connecting Seaford with Firle and Glynde (MES2667) may suggest the presence of farmsteads in the area<sup>32</sup>. However, the possibility of encountering Roman remains at the site is considered to be small.

#### 4.7 *The Saxon Period (410AD to 1066AD)*

- 4.7.1 In the early Post-Roman period there was a change in the economy and land-usage on the South Downs. Arable cultivation was replaced by a pastoral regime, and some regeneration of woodland and scrub<sup>33</sup>. Evidence for Anglo-Saxon settlement is difficult to find, with the discovery and excavation of larger settlements, such as Bishopstone<sup>34</sup>, being comparatively rare, as is the occasional discovery of isolated Saxon buildings, such as the Sunken Featured Building at Itford Farm to the north of Newhaven<sup>35</sup>.
- 4.7.2 Saxon cemeteries and individual graves are often found. Burials are probably the most common form of evidence for Saxon settlement and provide us with good evidence for the social structure and nature of Saxon society.
- 4.7.3 There is no evidence for Saxon activity at the site, although it is possible that the Medieval settlement at Sutton may have had earlier origins. However, it is considered unlikely that any evidence for Saxon activity will be encountered.

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<sup>31</sup> Garwood, P. 1985 'The Cuckmere Valley Project Fieldwalking Programme 1982-3', *Institute of Archaeology Bulletin* **22**, 62.

<sup>32</sup> Bedwin, O. 1986 'Excavations at Seaford Head Camp, East Sussex, 1983' *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **124**, 25-33.

<sup>33</sup> Gardiner, M. 2003 'Economy and Landscape Change in Post-Roman and Early Medieval Sussex, 450-1175', in Rudling, D. (Ed) *The Archaeology of Sussex to AD2000*, Kings Lynn, Heritage Marketing & Publications Ltd,

<sup>34</sup> Bell, M. 1977 'Excavations at Bishopstone', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **115**.

<sup>35</sup> James, R. 2002 'The excavation of a Saxon *grubenhause* at Itford Farm, Beddingham, East Sussex', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **140**, 41-7.

#### 4.8 *The Medieval Period (1066AD to 1500AD)*

- 4.8.1 Seaford is located in Flexborough Hundred, but was not mentioned in the Domesday Book. It may well have been connected to the settlement and Minster Church at Bishopstone, or the manor at Sutton (Fig. 3)<sup>36</sup>. Seaford was located at an important strategic position at the mouth of the River Ouse, controlling access up river to Lewes, and seems to have been a settlement prior to 1058<sup>37</sup>.
- 4.8.2 Sutton also has Medieval origins, possibly being a village or hamlet in its own right situated a little further north of Seaford (MES7). Its existence is confirmed by various documents dating from the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries<sup>38</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> century<sup>39</sup>.
- 4.8.3 In 1408, the parson of the church of Sutton received the tithes of 110 acres in the Hamme near Sefford, Boggedene, Crockkerisdyke, Myddelwalton, Seffordesdene, Flogisdale, at the Wyssch next the church of Sutton, Selverlond, Longforlonde, Mennelond, atte Gore; also of 15 acres in Holtesgore, Wyntlond, Chalkedene, Selverlonde, Berdeshele and Holtesdene, being land of the Holte<sup>40</sup>.
- 4.8.4 In 1347 the Poynings family took possession of Seaford and its adjacent lands. As Seaford had been ravaged by pestilence and French raids, Lord Poynings decided to build a new town to the west of Seaford on high ground overlooking Cuckmere Haven. It is likely that the new settlement of Poynings Town would have been located adjacent to the current Chyngton Farm, and may itself have succumbed fairly quickly to French raids, with the town then being re-established on its original site at Seaford<sup>41</sup>.
- 4.8.5 The Medieval settlement at Sutton is likely to have been located to the south-west of the site, where Sutton Place (the manor house), church and Farm were located, and the area of the site was almost certainly farmland. The likelihood of finding Medieval remains at the site is therefore considered to be low.

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<sup>36</sup> Combes, P. 2002 'Bishopstone', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **140**, 49-56.

<sup>37</sup> Drewett, P. & Freke, D. 1982 'The Medieval Farm on Bullock Down c.1250-1550' in Drewett, P. *The Archaeology of Bullock Down, Eastbourne, East Sussex*, Sussex Archaeological Society.

<sup>38</sup> ESRO (SAS-M/1/331)

<sup>39</sup> Combes, P. 2002 'Bishopstone', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **140**, 49-56.

<sup>40</sup> ESRO (SAS-M/1/352)

<sup>41</sup> Burleigh, G.R. 1973 'An Introduction to Deserted Medieval Villages in East Sussex', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **111**, 45-83.

#### 4.9 *The Post Medieval Period (1500AD to the Present Day)*

- 4.9.1 The area of the site was also open farm land throughout the Post Medieval period, as is evidence by various documents. A warranty of 1592 by Sir Thomas Sherley stated that “the demesnes of the manor of Sutton Sandore contained 420 acres over and beside the sheepdowns and such ground as Thomas Elphegge and Hugh Elphegge farmers of the demesnes had converted into arable”<sup>42</sup>.
- 4.9.2 A lease of 1750 to “William Fletcher of Sutton in Seaford, yeoman, of the capital messuage and farm called Sutton Farm in Sutton and Seaford and the moiety of the feedings on the Tenant down being a pasture for 500 sheep”<sup>43</sup>. Both documents provide evidence for the surrounding landscape being sheep pasture and occasionally arable land.
- 4.9.3 Yeakell and Gardner's map of Sussex 1778-1783<sup>44</sup> shows the small settlement at Sutton, comprising Sutton Place, a farm and cottages, with the surrounding area enclosed with fields, and open Downland further north.
- 4.9.4 The Seaford Tithe map (Fig. 4) shows the site to be located in a field called ‘Stone Hip Field’ which was arable. This field and others around it was owned by Charles Harison, and occupied by Benjamin Waters. The field boundary and its associated trees running along the north and west sides of the field are almost certainly those identified on the site visit as the surviving boundary bank. The Alfriston Road runs along the north side of the map, with a pond marked on the corner, and a long quarry adjacent to the road.
- 4.9.5 The 1<sup>st</sup> Edition OS map (1875) shows the field still with the prominent boundaries to the north and west. The pond and quarry (chalk pit) are still present, with another ‘old chalk pit’ shown in the field to the north-west (Fig. 5). The boundary for the new cemetery is shown adjacent to the Alfriston Road.
- 4.9.6 By the time of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition OS map (1899) there is little change, although the cemetery is now in use (Fig. 6). The pond on the corner is no longer shown and has presumably been filled in. The prominent field boundary on the north and west sides of the site is once again shown lined with trees.
- 4.9.7 The 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition OS map (1910) again shows that little change has taken place over the preceding decade, although the field now appears to be totally enclosed (Fig. 7). The field to the south-west has been divided into strips, possibly in preparation to its sale in smaller plots for building. A small nursery has appeared in the field to the north-west.

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<sup>42</sup> ESRO (SAS-M/1/368)

<sup>43</sup> ESRO (SAS-M/1/391)

<sup>44</sup> [http://www.envf.port.ac.uk/geo/research/historical/webmap/sussexmap/Yeakell\\_36.htm](http://www.envf.port.ac.uk/geo/research/historical/webmap/sussexmap/Yeakell_36.htm)

- 4.9.8 By the 4<sup>th</sup> Edition OS map (1927), a nursery and a number of houses, together with a road called ‘Chyngton Gardens’ have appeared in the strips to the south-west, the first indications of Seaford town expanding into this area (Fig. 8). The nursery in the field to the north-west has expanded. Further maps held in Seaford Museum include one dating to 1932 relating to the sale by Knight Frank & Rutley of ‘Chyngton Estate’ for housing development.
- 4.9.9 During the First World War two large army camps were established at Seaford<sup>45</sup>. Although these camps do not appear to have extended as far as the site, it is likely that the surrounding area was used for training. In the Second World War the area was once again used for training.
- 4.9.10 During the Second World War there were a number of German air raids on the Seaford area, in which bombs were dropped<sup>46</sup>. On a number of occasions bombs were dropped near to Sunnyrise and Sutton nurseries in the Alfriston Road, and houses were damaged in Chyngton Gardens<sup>47</sup>.
- 4.9.11 An aerial photograph taken in 1947 shows housing to the north and south-west of the site, although there are no crop marks or other indications of past land use shown apart from the prominent tree-lined boundaries on the north and west sides of the site (Fig. 9).
- 4.9.12 A map c1949 (Fig. 10), shows proposals for the housing development to the south of the site and new roads, some of which did not go ahead, whilst a map c.1960 shows the newly built school and a new housing development on its east side, with the west side still being a field. The tree lined boundary bank is still shown on the north-west and west sides of the site, approximating to its survival today.
- 4.9.13 Chyngton Primary School was originally built in 1958<sup>48</sup> to cater for the increasing population resulting from the new housing developments that were being built around it on the Downland to the north-east of Seaford. It originally had 160 children, but now, with a large extension which was added in 1998<sup>49</sup>, caters for some 445 children.
- 4.9.14 Aerial photographs of 1999 and 2006 show the site broadly as it is today, and do not reveal any additional information. The tree-lined boundary can be clearly seen along the west and north sides of the site and extending north to the Alfriston Road.

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<sup>45</sup> Butler, C. 2007 *East Sussex under Attack*, Stroud, Tempus Publishing Ltd

<sup>46</sup> Rowland, D. 2001 *Coastal Blitz*, Seaford, SB Publications

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> ESRO (C/A/4/278)

<sup>49</sup> ‘50 Years of Chyngton School’, *Haven Life*, March 2008, Issue 17.

## 5 Impact of the Development

- 5.1 The proposed extensions at Chyngton school are within an area that appears to have been used as a field throughout the Post Medieval period, and probably throughout the Medieval period as well. It is therefore possible that there will be any remains or features from these periods encountered. The boundary bank noted above is outside the area of the proposed extensions, although there may be implications associated with any landscaping, which should take this feature into account.
- 5.2 Given the possible Bronze Age barrow, and the evidence for prehistoric activity both in the immediate area and collected from the site during the site visit, it is likely that evidence for prehistoric activity may be encountered during any work on the site.
- 5.3 Given the evidence accumulated during this desk-based assessment, the probability of finding remains from each of the different archaeological periods is shown in Table 1 below:

**Table 1**

<b>Period</b>	<b>Probability</b>
Palaeolithic	Low
Mesolithic	Possible
Neolithic	Possible
Bronze Age	High
Iron Age	Low
Roman	Low
Saxon	Low
Medieval	Possible
Post Medieval	Possible

- 5.4 It is considered that there will be limited potential for palaeo-environmental remains or geo-archaeological investigations at this site.

## 6 Conclusions

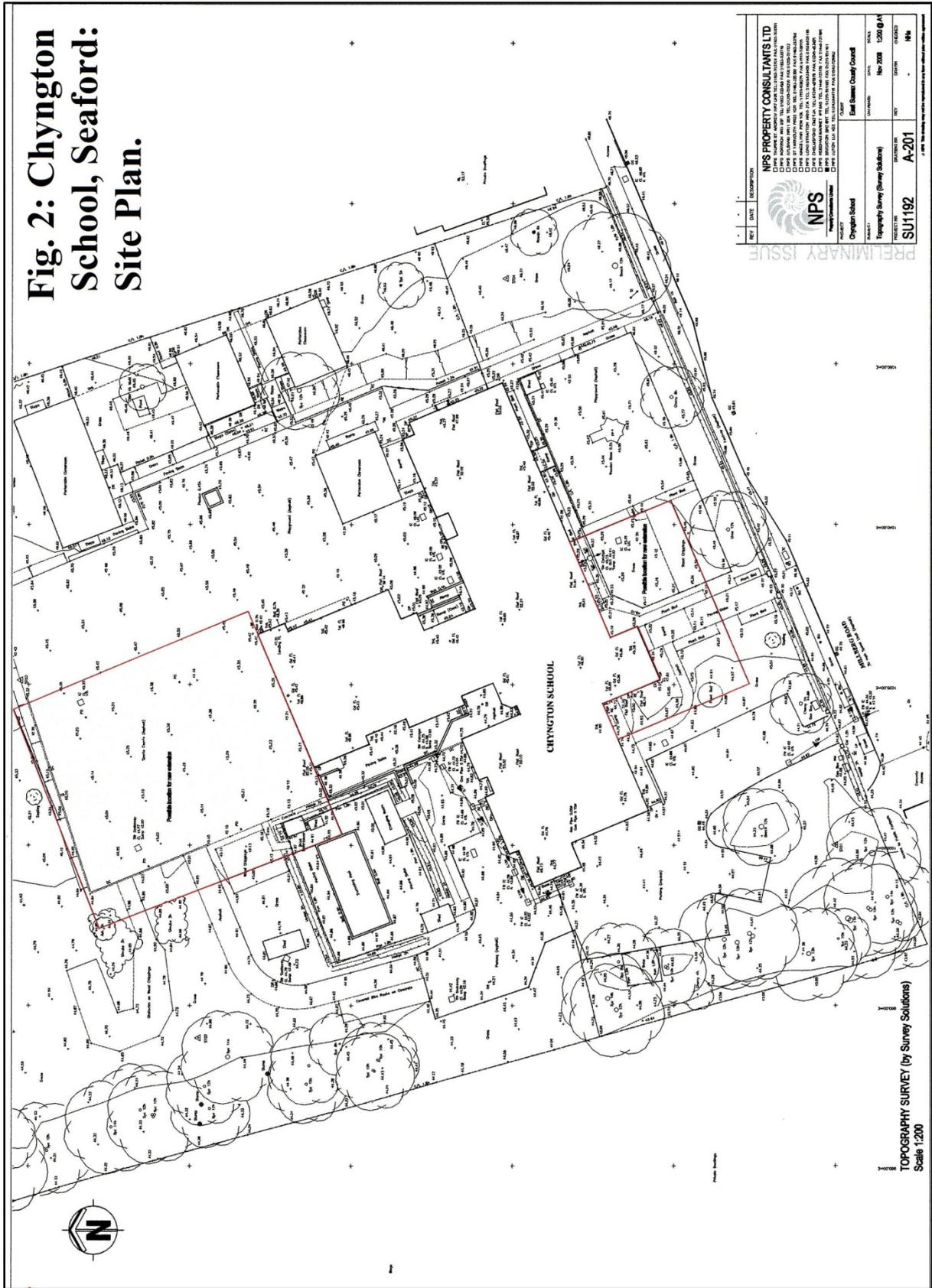
- 6.1 This desk-based assessment has established that there is evidence for activity from the Palaeolithic period through to the Post Medieval period in the wider surrounding area of the site. The presence of the field boundary and map evidence provides an indication of the more recent agricultural landscape in the immediate surroundings, which does not appear to have altered to any great extent over the last 300-400 years, until the housing developments of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- 6.2 It has not been possible to establish whether there is below-ground archaeology present on the site, due to the non-intrusive nature of this desk based assessment, although the recovery of the flint scraper and fire-fractured flints hints at possible prehistoric activity. Any development at the site is likely to disturb and destroy any buried archaeology.

- 6.3** It is therefore recommended that a programme of archaeological work be undertaken prior to and during the development. A geophysical survey could initially be undertaken on the grassed part of the site, which may provide evidence for features running into the area of development. A watching brief would then seem to be the most appropriate way of mitigating the possibility of remains surviving in the area of the development, although an evaluation excavation prior to development may provide an insight to the survival of any buried archaeology.

## **7 Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank Neil Henderson of NPS Property Consultants Ltd for commissioning this survey on behalf of ESCC. Greg Chuter, Assistant County Archaeologist at ESCC provided copies of the East Sussex HER. I would also like to thank John Annis (Head Teacher) of Chyngton School for arranging for me to make a site visit. The staff at the East Sussex Record Office provided help in obtaining the tithe map and other documents, and Rachel Butler recorded the tithe map information. I would also like to thank the staff at the NMR, Swindon and at the Sussex Archaeological Society Library for their help in locating aerial photographs and other sources in their possession, and Sue Sutton of Seaford Museum for her help in locating the sources in their possession.





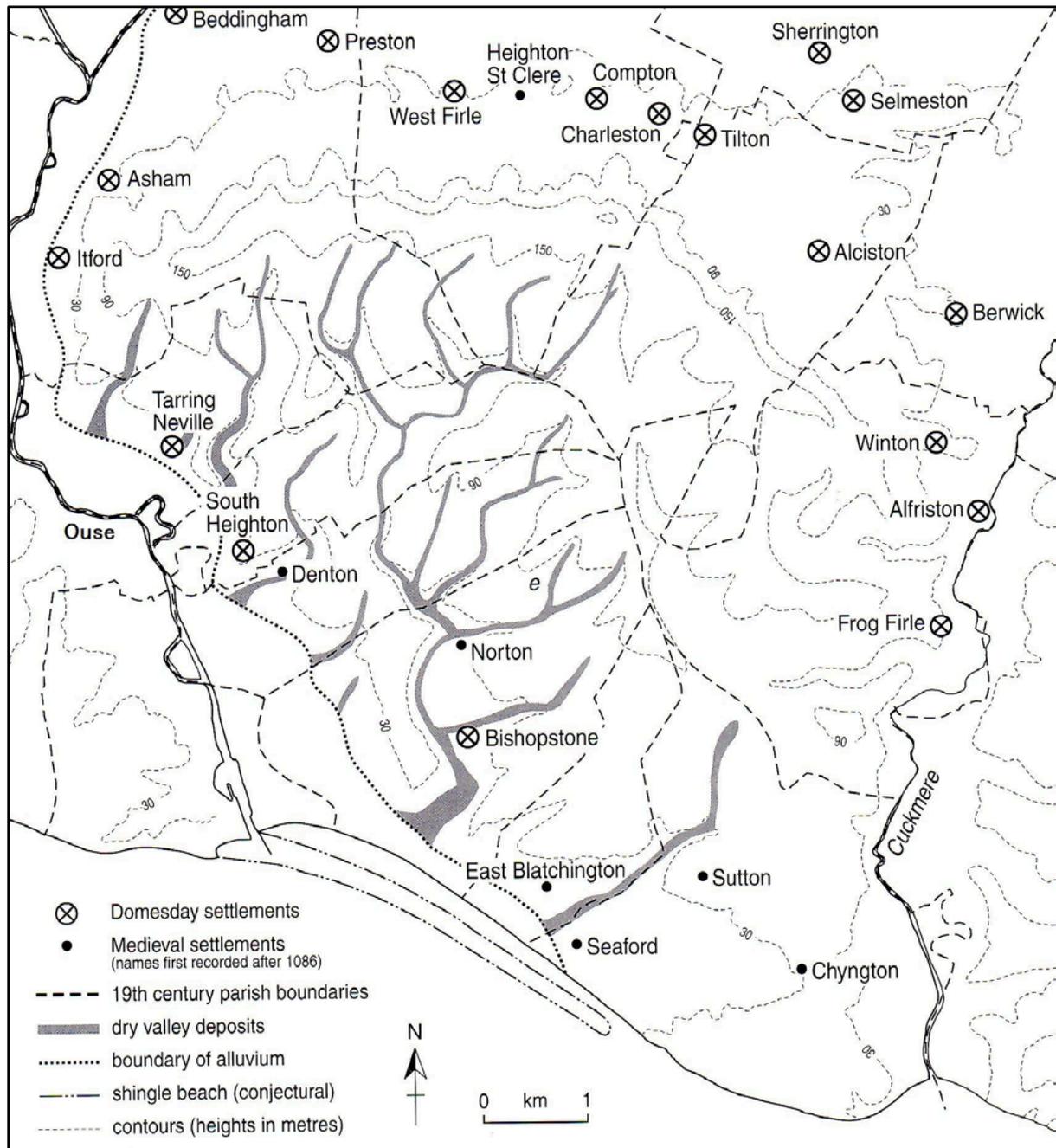


Fig. 3: Chyngton School, Seaford: Map showing the Domesday and Medieval Settlements between the Rivers Ouse and Cuckmere

Adapted from Combes, P. 2002 'Bishopstone'

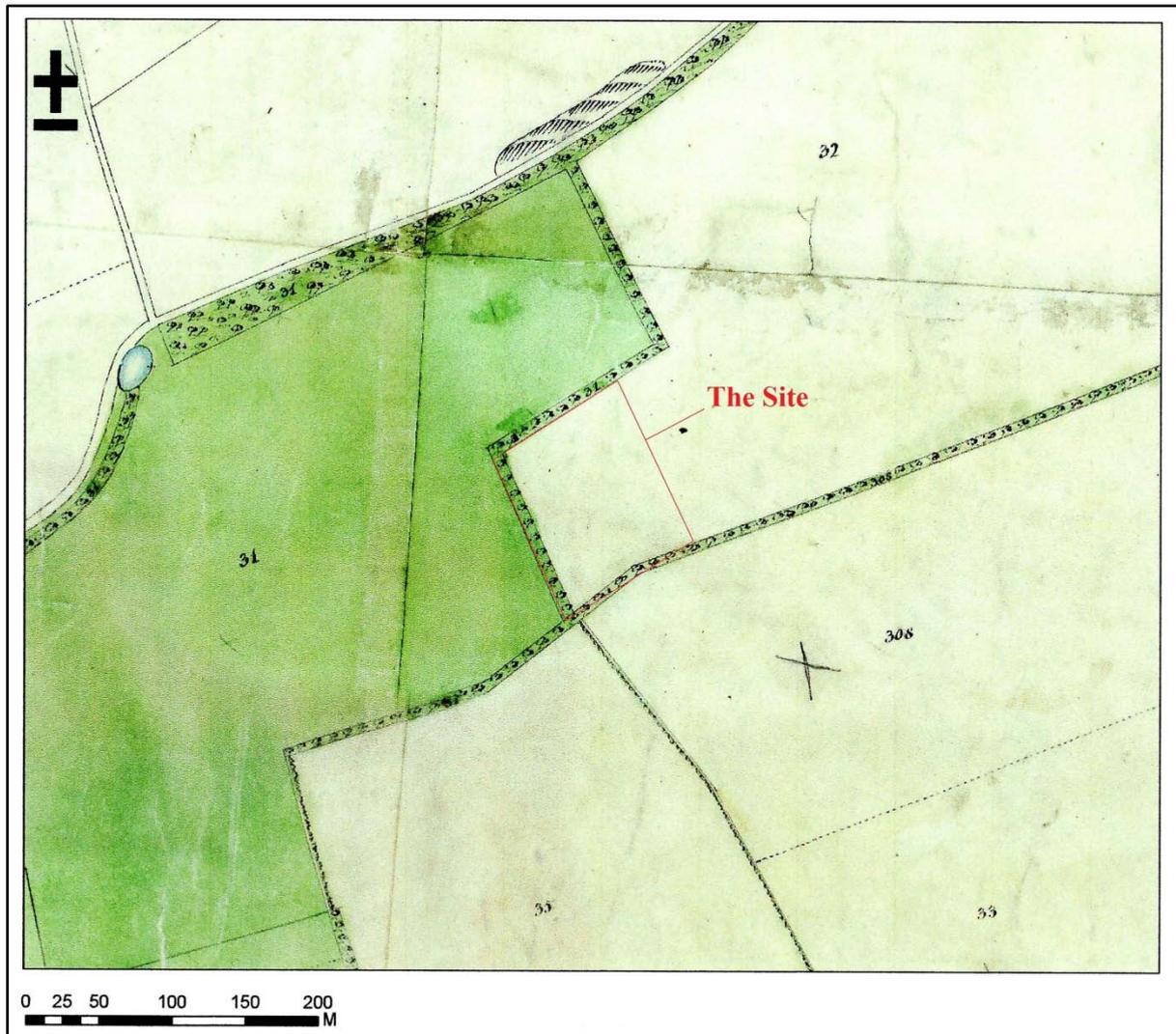
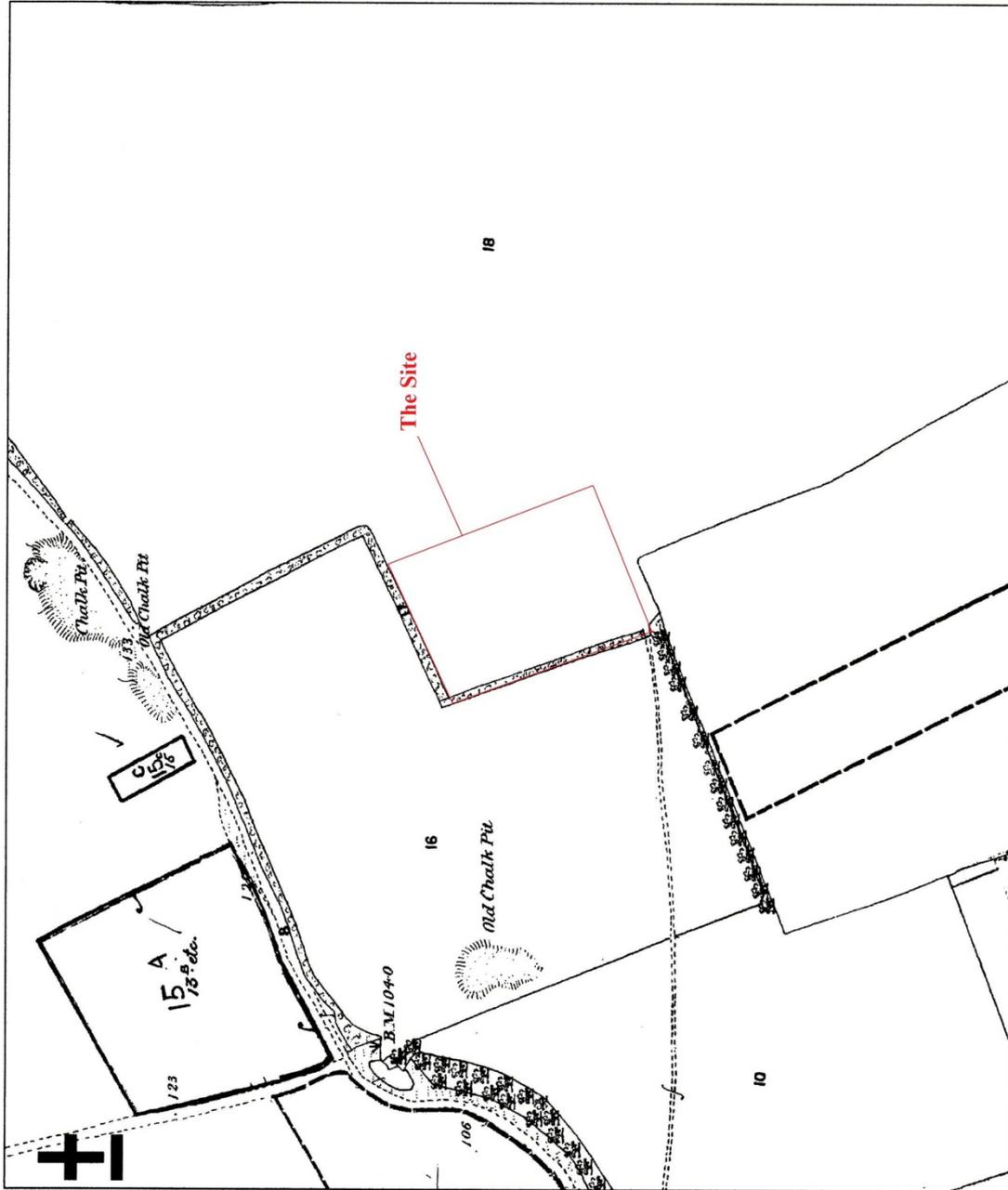


Fig. 4: Seaford Tithe Map

**Apportionment**

No.	Owner	Occupier	Field name	Use
31	C. Harison	B. Waters	Chalk Pit Field	Meadow
32	C. Harison	B. Waters	Stone Hip Field	Arable
33	C. Harison	B. Waters	Great Rails (part)	Arable
35	Tilstone	B. Waters	Sutton Field (part)	Arable
308	C. Harison	B. Waters	Great Rails (part)	Pasture

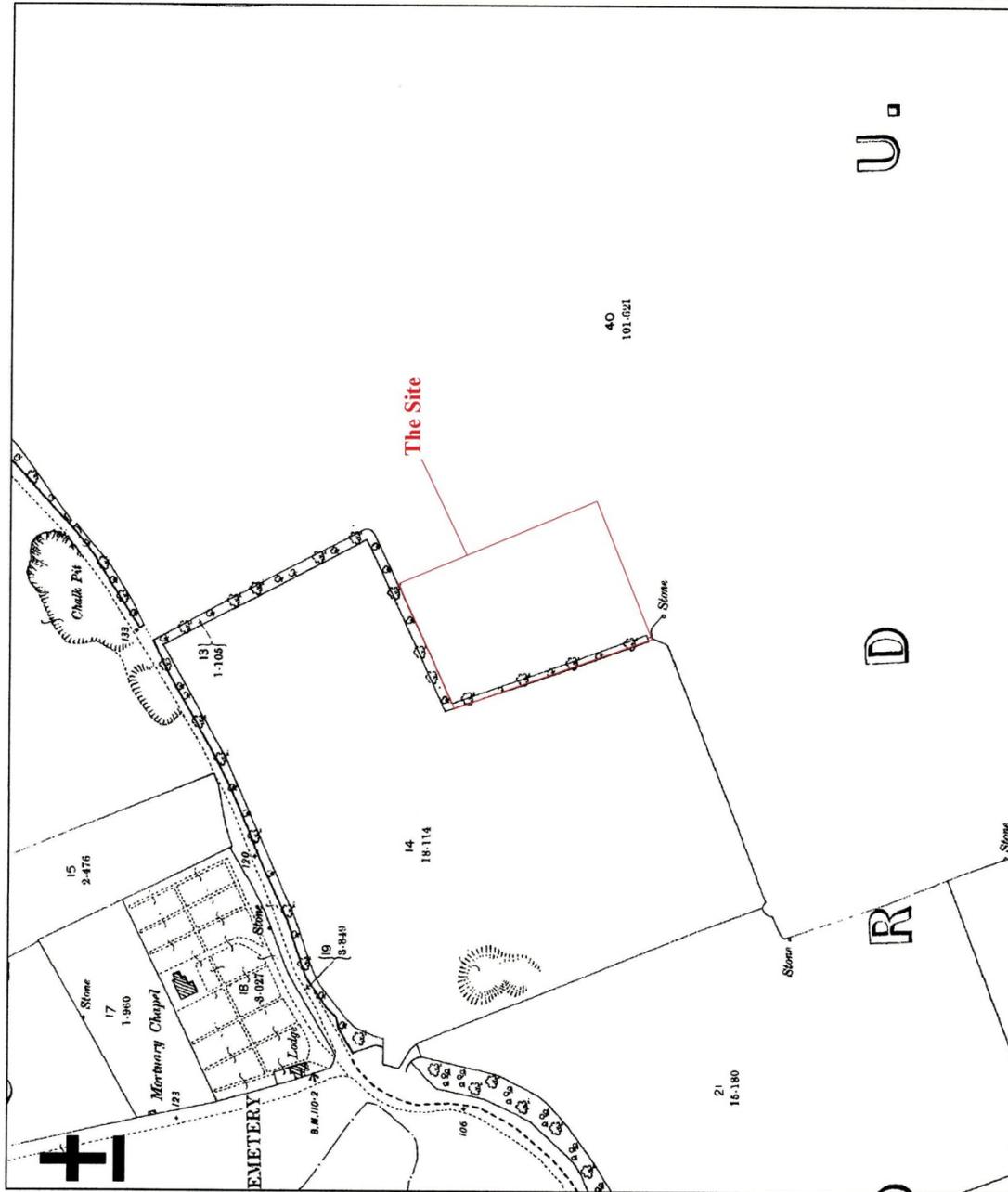
**Fig. 5: Chyngton School, Seaford: 1st Edition OS Map (1875).**



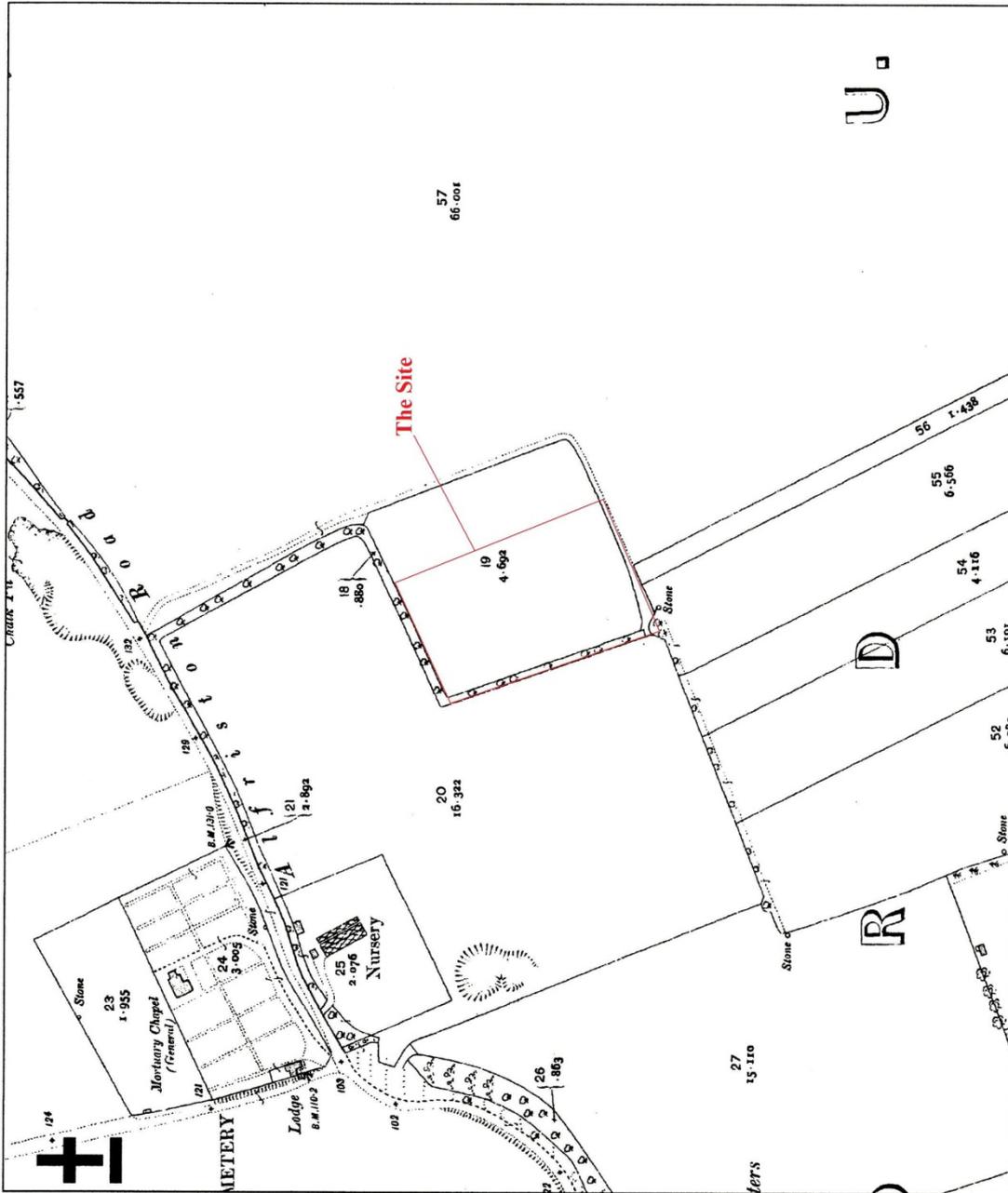
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**Fig. 6: Chyngton  
School, Seaford:  
2nd Edition OS  
Map (1899)**

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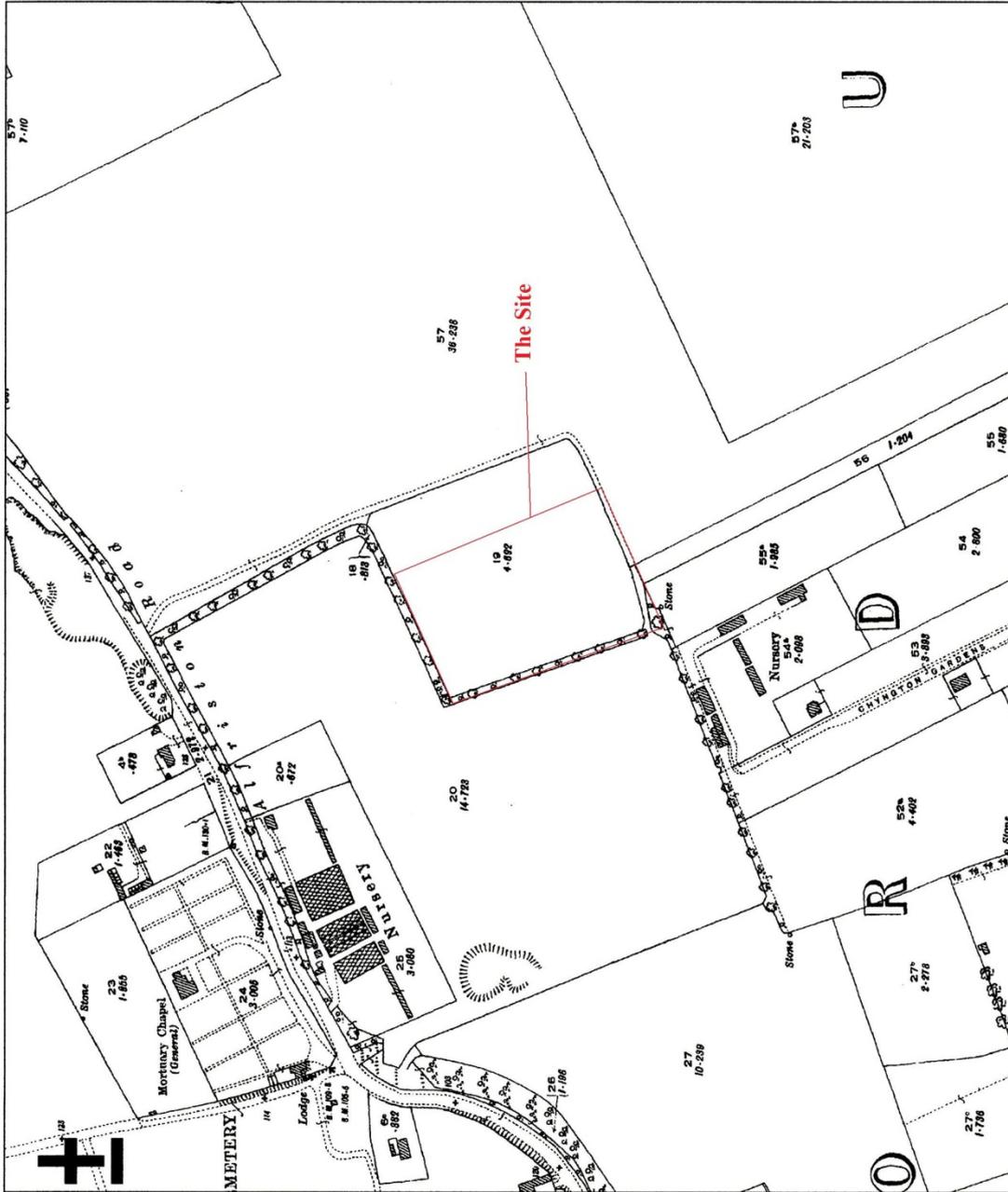


**Fig. 7: Chyngton School, Seaford: 3rd Edition OS Map (1910).**



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**Fig. 8: Chyngton School, Seaford: 4th Edition OS Map (1927).**



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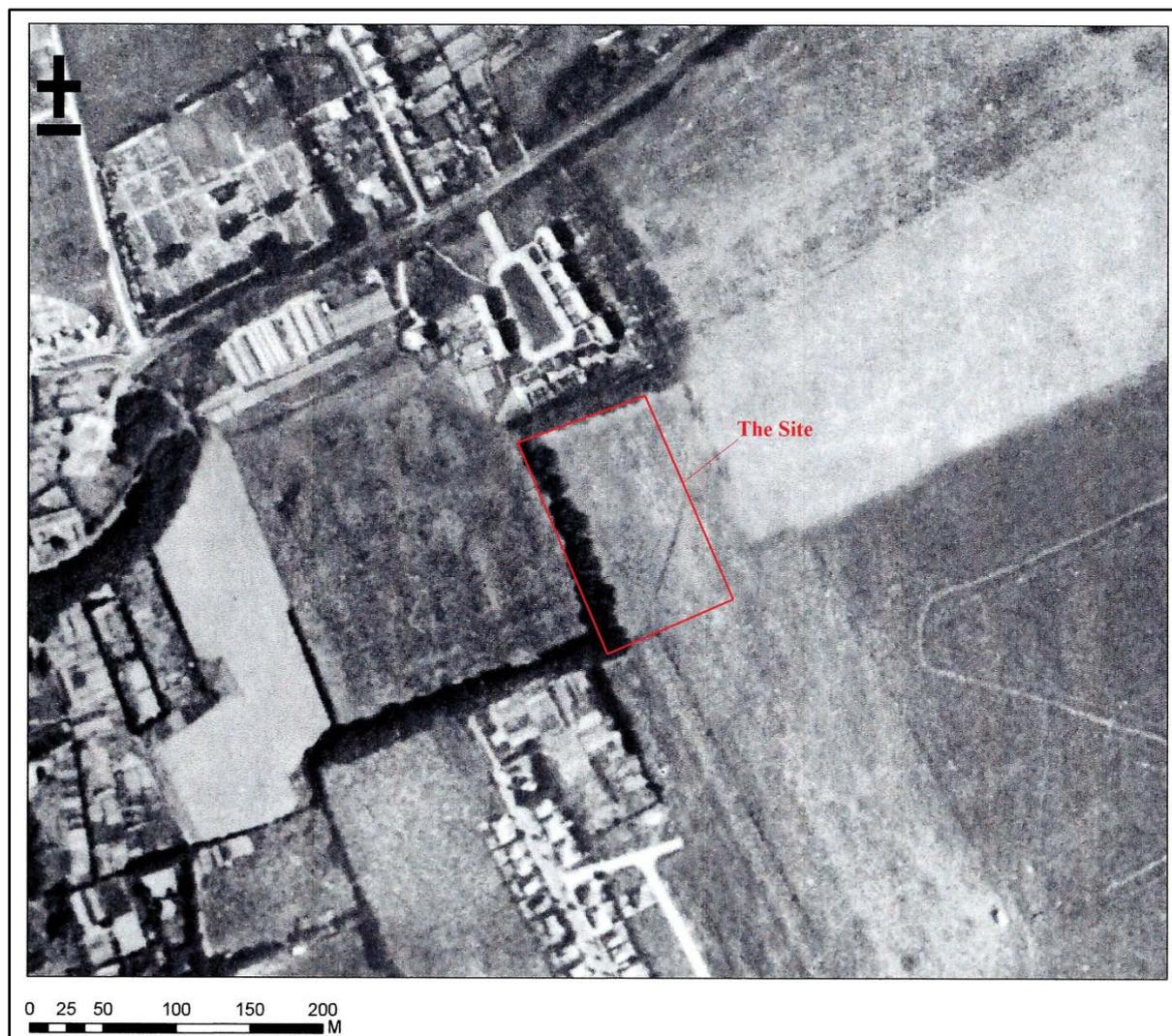


Fig. 9: Chyngton School, Seaford: 1947 Aerial Photograph  
(adapted from copy provided by ESCC)



Fig. 10: Chyngton School, Seaford: c. 1949 Map  
Showing proposed developments  
(Copyright: Seaford Museum)

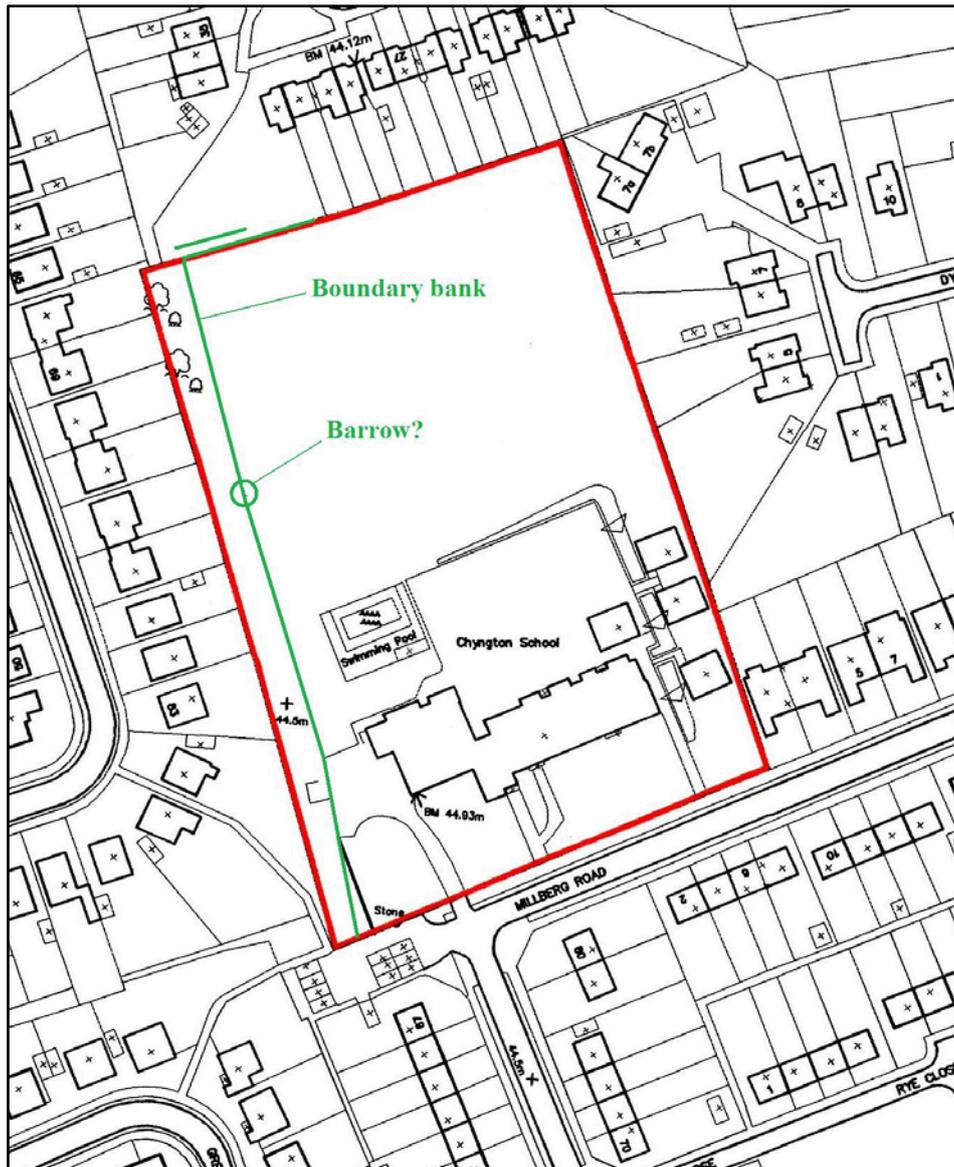


Fig. 11: Chyngton School, Seaford: Site plan showing archaeological features identified during site visit  
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Fig. 12: Chyngton School: View across playing field to rear of school



Fig. 13: Chyngton School: Front of School



Fig. 14: Chyngton School: Boundary bank



Fig. 15: Chyngton School: Possible round barrow

### Appendix 1: Archaeological Sites Recorded on HER

SMR No.	NGR	Period	Type of Site	Notes
MES3	TV 49 99	Post Medieval	Windmill	Exact location unknown
MES7	TV 495 996	Saxon	Settlement	Sutton
MES24	TQ 5016 0074	Post Medieval	Chalk Pit	Filled in
MES25	TQ 5041 0075	Post Medieval	Chalk Pit	Filled in
MES26	TQ 5039 0056	Post Medieval	Chalk Pit	Filled in
MES27	TQ 5060 0065	Post Medieval	Chalk Pit	Filled in
MES1693	TV 4944 9965	Medieval	Church	Sutton
MES1706	TV 48 99	Early Bronze Age	Flint dagger	
MES1718	TV 50 99	Neolithic/Bronze Age	Flint implements	
MES2667	TQ 4894 0282	Roman	Road	Margary RR144
MES7484	TV 5107 9997	Medieval	Ewe Down Chapel	
MES7904	TQ 51000 00100	Second World War	Firing Range	Brock Hole Bottom

### Appendix 2: Archaeological sites from other Sources

Source	NGR	Period	Type of Site	Notes
1 <sup>st</sup> Edition OS Map	TQ 4965 0005	Post Medieval	Old Chalk Pit	
1 <sup>st</sup> Edition OS Map	TQ 4990 0024	Post Medieval	Old Chalk Pit	
1 <sup>st</sup> Edition OS Map	TQ 4983 0025	Post Medieval	Chalk Pit	Also shown on Tithe map
1 <sup>st</sup> Edition OS Map	TQ 4964 0006	Post Medieval	Pond	Also shown on Tithe map
Field visit	TV 49876 99994	Bronze Age?	Possible barrow	
Field visit	TV 49876 99994	Post Medieval	Field boundary bank	Shown on Tithe & OS maps

### Appendix 3: Archaeological Events from the HER

Reference	NGR	Type	Comments
EEES9326	TV 4944 9965	Sutton Medieval Church	Recorded during development in the 1940's

## **Chris Butler Archaeological Services**

Chris Butler has been an archaeologist since 1985, and formed the Mid Sussex Field Archaeological Team in 1987, since when it has carried out numerous fieldwork projects, and was runner up in the Pitt-Rivers Award at the British Archaeological Awards in 1996. Having previously worked as a Pensions Technical Manager and Administration Director in the financial services industry, Chris formed **Chris Butler Archaeological Services** at the beginning of 2002.

Chris is a Member of the Institute of Field Archaeologists, a committee member of the Lithic Studies Society, and is a part time lecturer in Archaeology at the University of Sussex, and teaches A-Level Archaeology at Bexhill 6<sup>th</sup> Form College.

Chris specialises in prehistoric flintwork analysis, but has directed excavations, landscape surveys, watching briefs and evaluations, including the excavation of a Beaker Bowl Barrow, a Saxon cemetery and settlement, Roman pottery kilns, and a Mesolithic hunting camp. Chris is Co-Director of the Barcomvbe Roman Villa excavations. He has also recently undertaken an archaeological survey of Ashdown Forest and Broadwater Warren.

**Chris Butler Archaeological Services** is available for Flintwork Analysis, Project Management, Military Archaeology, Desktop Assessments, Field Evaluations, Excavation work, Watching Briefs, Fieldwalking, Landscape & Woodland surveys, Post Excavation Services and Report Writing.

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