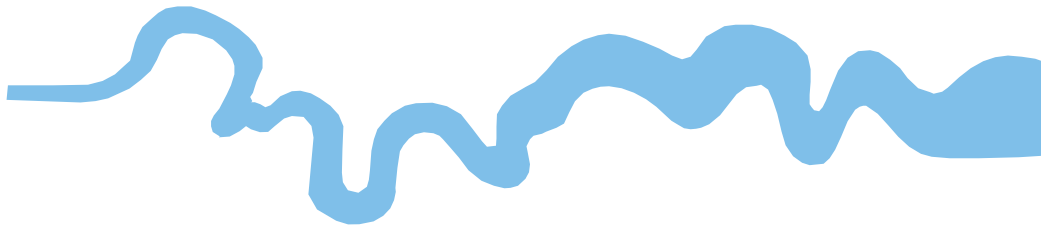


T V A S



SOUTH

**6 Market Lane, Lewes,
East Sussex**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by Sean Wallis

Site Code: MLL22/122

(TQ 4156 1019)

**6 Market Lane, Lewes,
East Sussex**

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For Ms Beth Gascoyne

Planning Reference : SDNP/22/00058/HOUS

by Sean Wallis

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code: MLL 22/122

December 2022

Summary

Site name: 6 Market Lane, Lewes, East Sussex

Grid reference: TQ 4156 1019

Planning reference: SDNP/22/00058/HOUS

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 4th-8th November 2022

Project manager: Sean Wallis

Site supervisor: Sean Wallis

Site code: MLL 22/122

Summary of results: The fieldwork successfully investigated those parts of the site which were to be affected by the construction of a new extension. Due to the relatively shallow nature of the groundworks the material removed consisted of garden soil (50) and an underlying mid reddish brown sandy clay with flint inclusions (51). The natural chalk geology was not exposed anywhere. The remains of a small structure (52) were revealed in the southern part of the footprint of the new extension. This appears to date from sometime in the 19th century, and as it is not shown on any Ordnance Survey maps from between 1873 and 1938, it may either date from earlier in the 19th century, or simply be a garden feature not mapped.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at TVAS South, Brighton, and will be deposited with The Archaeology Data Service in due course.

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford ✓ 06.12.22
	Steve Preston ✓ 06.12.22

6 Market Lane, Lewes, East Sussex An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Sean Wallis

Report 22/122

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out to the rear of 6 Market Lane, Lewes, East Sussex (TQ 4156 1019) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by one of the property's owners, Ms Beth Gascoyne.

Planning permission (SDNP/22/00058/HOUS) has been granted by the South Downs National Park Authority to construct a new extension to the property. The consent is subject to a standard planning condition (6) relating to archaeology and historic environment, which required the implementation of a programme of archaeological work. This is in accordance with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2021), and the Authority's policies on the historic environment. The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation approved by the local planning authority, following consultation with the East Sussex County Council Archaeological Officer.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Sean Wallis between 4th and 8th November 2022, and the site code is MLL 22/122. The archive is currently held at TVAS South, Brighton, and will be deposited with The Archaeology Data Service in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located immediately south of Market Lane, within the historic core of Lewes, East Sussex (Figs 1 and 2). The new extension was to be built in the rear garden of the property, following the demolition of a small outbuilding. The site is fairly flat, and lies at a height of approximately 23m above Ordnance Datum. According to the British Geological Survey the underlying geology consists of Upper and Middle Chalk (BGS 2006). However, due to the relatively shallow groundworks in respect of the new extension, the natural chalk was not observed during the watching brief.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location within the historic core of Lewes, which had developed into a major town by the late Saxon period. There is evidence of earlier activity within the town,

during the prehistoric and Roman periods, although much of this is based on stray finds. The castle was built soon after the Norman Conquest, and its remains stand about 100m west of the present site. Lewes prospered during the medieval and post-medieval periods, and this is reflected in the amount of archaeological material recovered during archaeological work within the town (Harris 2005; Rudling 2003). In addition to the archaeological evidence, a large number of historic buildings survive. Whilst most of these date from the 16th century onwards, some contain elements dating from the late medieval period. The site is situated within an Archaeological Notification Area (ANA) defining the historic core of the medieval and post-medieval town. The site also lies close to one of the projected lines of defence for the Saxon *burh*, which is known to have existed from historical sources, but has remained elusive in archaeological terms.

Archaeological fieldwork immediately to the south of the present site produced evidence for possible activity in the medieval and earlier post-medieval periods (Butler and Butler 2010). It has been suggested that parts of the existing building may date from the 18th century. A watching brief was carried out in 2012 in respect of a previous extension and soakaway. This suggested that the back garden was covered with a thick layer of soil, from which finds dating from the late medieval and post-medieval periods were recovered. The only feature recorded during that watching brief was the remains of a possible post-medieval culvert (Howell 2012).

Objectives and methodology

The primary aim of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the groundworks. Where archaeological deposits which may warrant preservation *in-situ* were encountered, their treatment was to be discussed in consultation with the client and the East Sussex County Council Archaeological Officer. Where it was not possible or practicable to preserve archaeological remains *in-situ* the features were to be excavated by hand and fully recorded, to ensure their preservation by record.

All significant ground reduction was to be carried out by hand, or by using a machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, under constant archaeological supervision.

Results

The small outbuilding in the north-west corner of the rear garden had been demolished before the watching brief commenced. The entire footprint of the new extension was then reduced by approximately 0.45m, under constant archaeological supervision (Fig. 3; Pls 1–2 and 4). The ground reduction in the area which had not been affected by the former outbuilding was slightly deeper (*c.* 0.58m). In general, the material removed from within the

footprint of the new building consisted of homogenous garden soil (50). Some former garden paths were observed close to the main house, but were not recorded in detail. Following the initial ground reduction, much of the area was still covered in garden soil (50), although traces of an underlying mid reddish brown sandy clay with flint inclusions was observed close to the western boundary wall (51) (Fig. 4).

The remains of a small rectangular structure (52), measuring 2.05m by 1.75m, was almost fully revealed in the southern part of the stripped area (Fig. 3; Pl. 3). The initial ground reduction stopped at the top of the surviving brickwork, and the feature was cleaned up and photographed. The walls of the building were constructed from brick, although there were a small number of rounded flint pebbles noted. It was two bricks wide (0.24m), and subsequent excavation of the footing trench revealed that it had survived up to 3 courses high. No construction cut for the building was visible, and the feature appears to have been largely demolished before being buried beneath garden soil (50). A sample brick was retained and it appears that the structure was built with re-used bricks, probably in the 19th century. However, no structure is shown in this location on the 1873, 1899, 1910 and 1938 Ordnance Survey maps.

Following the initial ground reduction, a 0.60m wide footing trench was dug around the edge of the stripped area (Pls 5 and 6). This trench varied in depth from about 0.40m close to the house to approximately 0.50m at the southern end. In the north-west corner, the footing trench cut through 0.19m of garden soil (50) and 0.23m of the underlying mid reddish brown sandy clay with flint inclusions (51). This underlying deposit was observed throughout the entire footing trench, and appears to be a surviving subsoil layer. It contained no archaeological finds. Part of the trench was dug through the south-east corner of structure 52, but no trace of an internal floor surface was seen during the removal of the walls.

Finds

A small amount of modern material noted within the garden soil (50), was retained on site. A sample brick was collected from structure 52.

Ceramic Building Material by Luke Barber

A single brick sample was recovered during the archaeological work. The brick is nearly complete but is somewhat battered and worn (Appendix 1). The brick sample is in a typical Wealden fabric for the late post-medieval period. Although the brick could be as early as the 18th century it has clearly been re-used, probably at some point in the 19th century. Originally the brick was bedded in a cream coloured sandy mortar but this was

extensively overlain by a mid grey sandy mortar (including the broken header face) with moderate coal flecks mixed in.

Conclusion

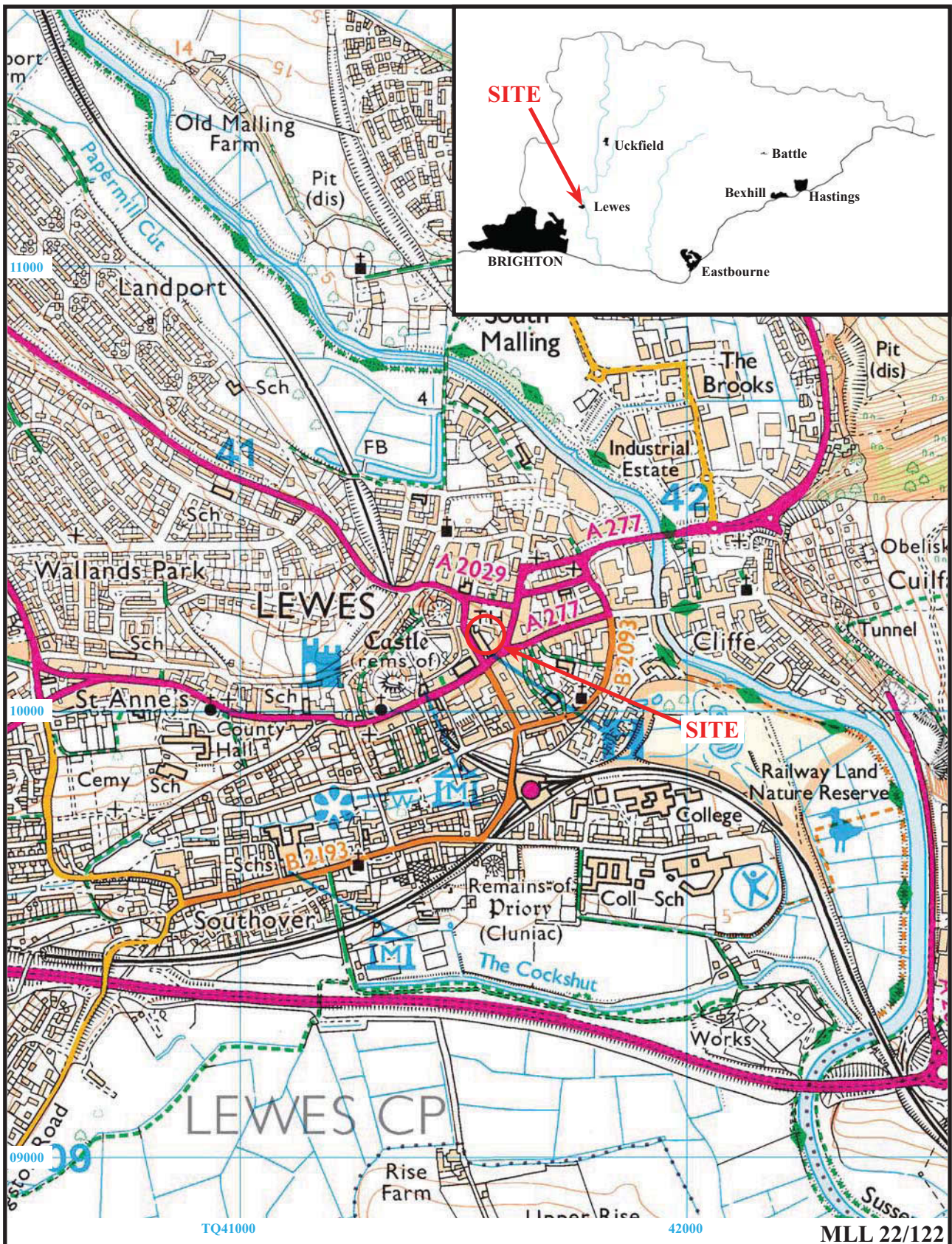
The watching brief at 6 Market Lane, Lewes, successfully investigated those parts of the site which were to be most affected by the construction of a new extension. Due to the relatively shallow nature of the groundworks the material removed consisted of garden soil (50) and an underlying mid reddish brown sandy clay with flint inclusions (51). The natural chalk geology was not exposed anywhere. The remains of a small structure (52) were revealed in the southern part of the footprint of the new extension. This appears to date from sometime in the 19th century, although it is not shown on any of the historic Ordnance Survey maps from between 1873 and 1938.

References

- BGS, 2006, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000, Sheet **319/334**, Bedrock and Superficial Deposits Edition, Keyworth.
- Butler, C and Butler, K, 2010, 'A Standing Building Survey and Evaluation Excavation at 190 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex', unpublished CBAS report **CBAS0118**, Berwick.
- Harris, R B, 2005, *Lewes Historic Character and Assessment Report. Sussex Extension Urban Survey (EUS)*, East Sussex County Council, West Sussex county Council, Brighton and Hove City Council.
- Howell, F, 2012, 'The Swifts, 6 Market Lane, Lewes, East Sussex - an archaeological watching brief', unpublished TVAS South report **12/01**, Brighton.
- NPPF, 2021, *National Planning Policy Framework* (revised), Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, London.
- Rudling, D, (ed) 2003, *The Archaeology of Sussex to AD2000*, King's Lynn.

APPENDIX 1: Ceramic Building Material

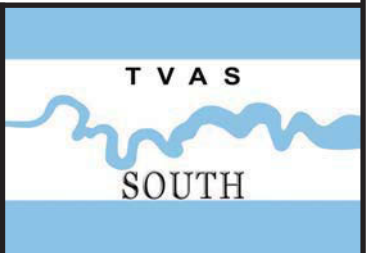
<i>Context</i>	<i>Form</i>	<i>Suggested date</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt (g)</i>	<i>Dimensions (mm)</i>	<i>Comments</i>
52	Brick	Mid C18th-19 th	1	2278g	200+ x 108 x 56	Well formed & fired. Fine with moderate iron oxide/clay pellets (red) & occasional 'marl, pellets/swirls

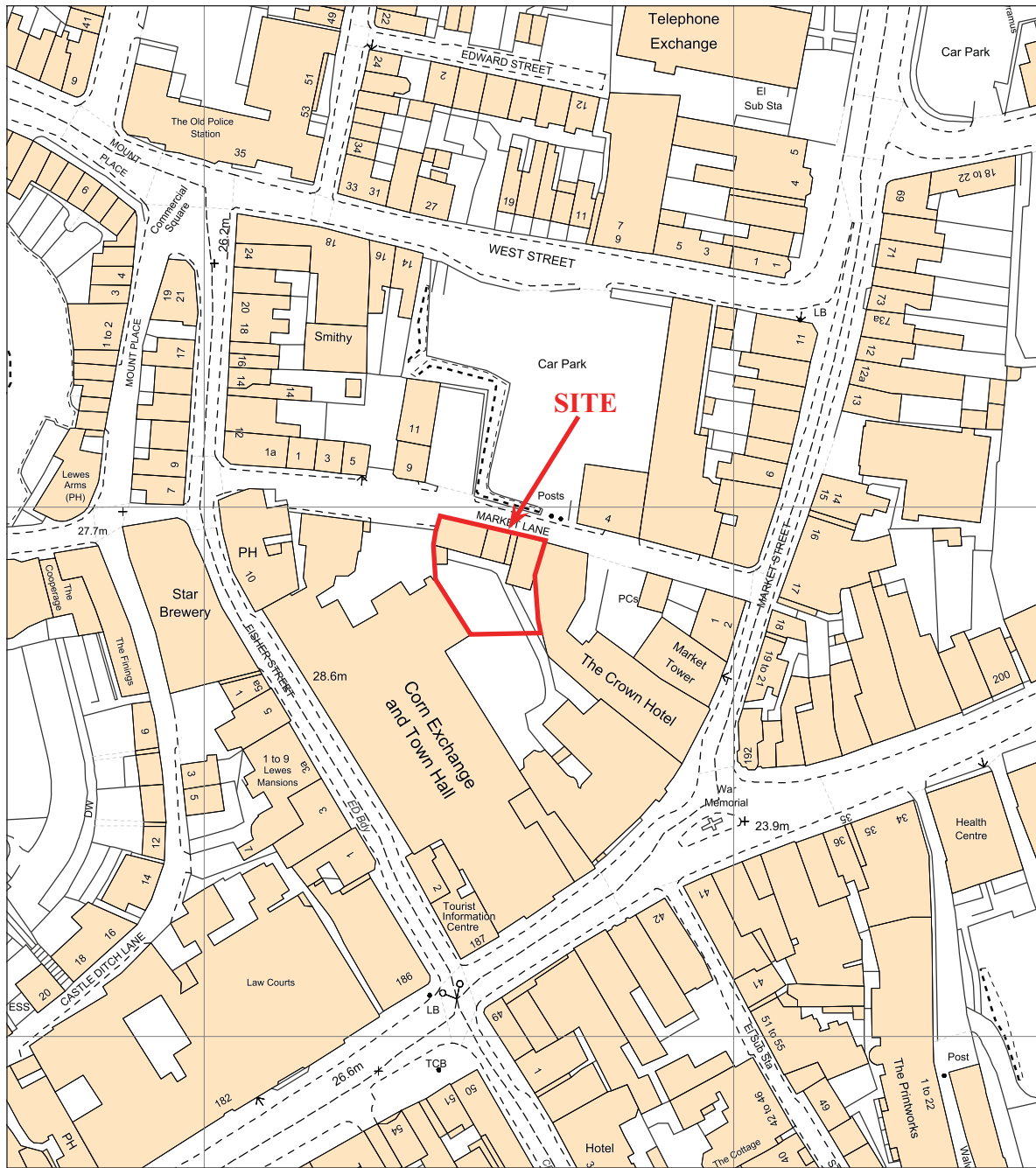


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Figure 1. Location of site within Lewes and East Sussex.

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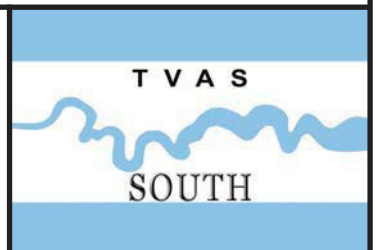


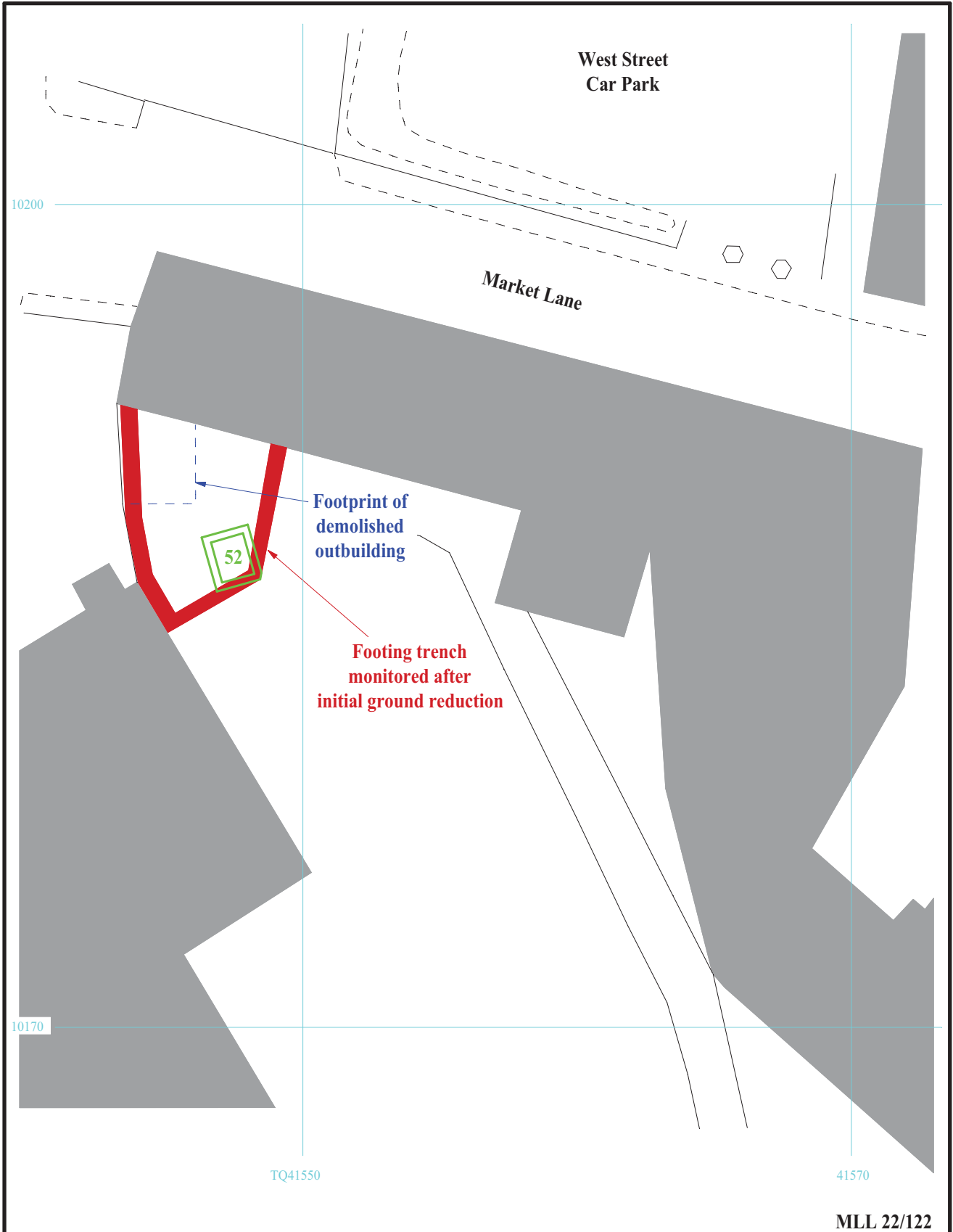


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**6 Market Lane, Lewes,
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 Figure 2. Detailed site location.

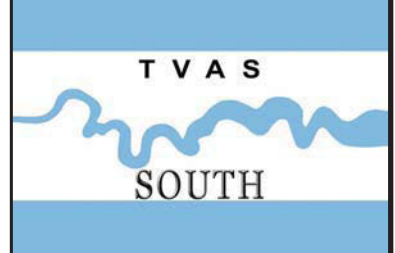
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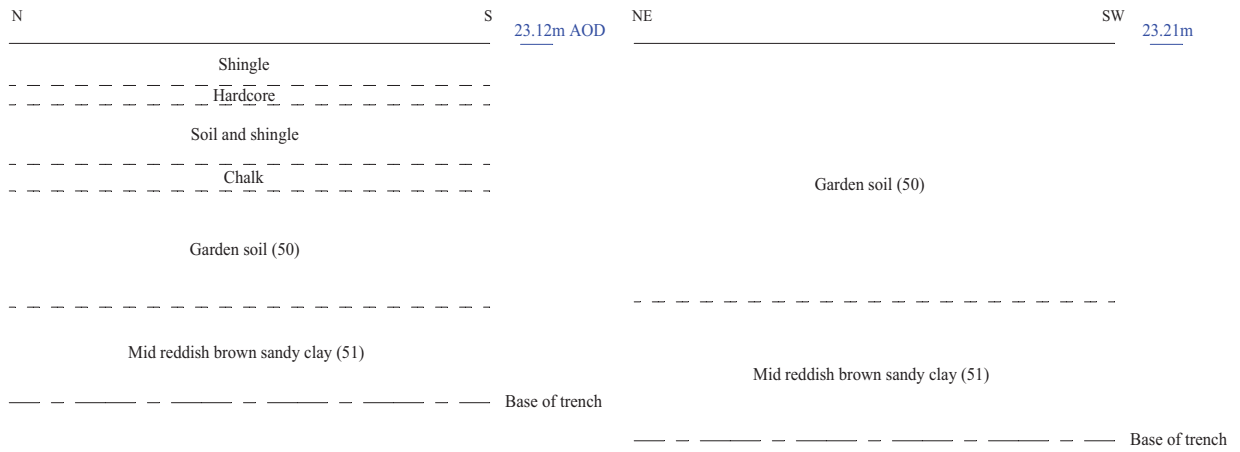
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Figure 3. Plan showing the areas monitored during the watching brief, along with the remains of structure 52 which were observed.



Stratigraphy in North-east part of site

Stratigraphy in South-west part of site



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Figure 4. Representative sections.

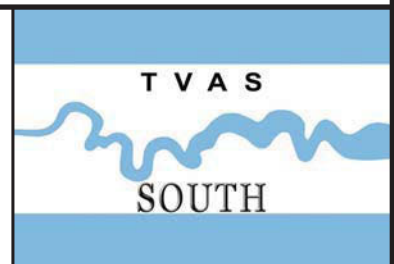




Plate 1. General view of site during initial ground reduction, looking North-west.
Scales: 2m and 1m.



Plate 2. General view of site during initial ground reduction, looking East.
Scales: 1m and 0.20m.



Plate 3. Structure 52, looking South.
Scales: 1m x 2.



Plate 4. General view of site during initial ground reduction, looking South-east.
Scales: 1m and 0.20m.



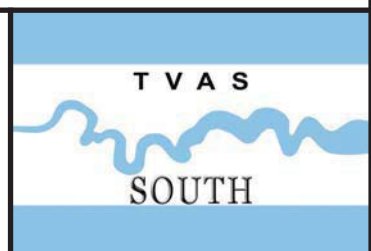
Plate 5. Footing trench in North-west corner of site (following initial ground reduction), looking North-West.
Scales: 1m and 0.20m.



Plate 6. Footing trench in South-west corner of site (following initial ground reduction), looking South-west.
Scale: 0.20m.

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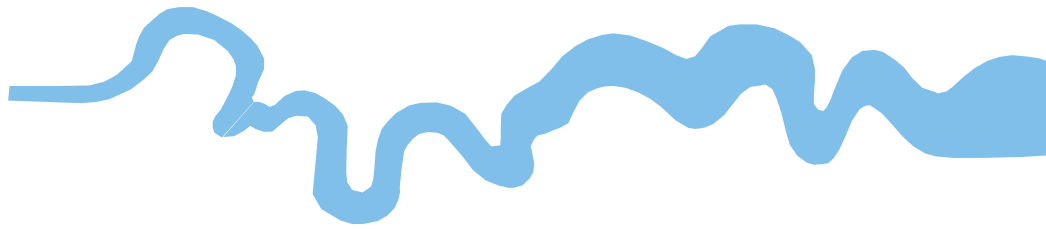
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Plates 1 to 6.



TIME CHART

	Calendar Years
Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43 AD 0 BC
Iron Age _____	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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