THAMES VALLEY

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

SERVICES

SOUTH

Bartons Primary School, North Bersted, West Sussex

Archaeological Evaluation

by Sean Wallis

Site Code: BSWS13/165

(SU 9230 0140)

Bartons Primary School, North Bersted, West Sussex

An Archaeological Evaluation

for West Sussex County Council

by Sean Wallis

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code
BSWS 13/165

October 2013

Summary

Site name: Bartons Primary School, North Bersted, West Sussex

Grid reference: SU 9230 0140

Site activity: Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 9th to 11th September 2013

Project manager: Sean Wallis

Site supervisors: Sean Wallis

Site code: BSWS 13/165

Area of site: *c*. 1.32 ha

Summary of results: The evaluation successfully investigated the area which is to be most affected by the new Bartons Primary School building, at North Bersted. Whilst it is clear that the site has not been truncated in the past, nor significantly affected by its use as a storage area for material derived from nearby groundworks, no archaeological features were recorded in the evaluation trench.

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

Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford✓ 29.10.13

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Bartons Primary School, North Bersted, West Sussex
An Archaeological Evaluation

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Report 13/165

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out on a parcel of land at North Bersted, West Sussex (SU 9230 0140) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Tom Hetherington of Hampshire County Council, on behalf of West Sussex County Council.

Planning permission (WSCC/020/13/BE) has been gained from West Sussex County Council to build a new primary school on the site, along with associated car parking, playgrounds, fencing an landscaping. As a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits on the site which may be damaged or destroyed by the proposed development, a field evaluation was carried out to better inform the planning process and to help formulate a mitigation strategy as necessary.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012), and the County Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Mark Taylor, County Archaeologist with West Sussex County Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Sean Wallis between 9th and 11th September 2013, and the site code is BSWS 13/165. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Chichester Museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The new school site consists of a rectangular parcel of land, to the west of Berry Lane and to the north of North Bersted Street, approximately 2 km north-west of the historic core of Bognor Regis, West Sussex (Fig. 2). Until recently it was situated within an area of farmland on the outskirts of North Bersted, but several large housing developments have now dramatically altered the surrounding landscape. The site has been built up in recent years with material excavated from the nearby housing developments, but it is still relatively flat, and lies at a height of approximately 5.50m above Ordnance Datum. According to the British Geological Survey the underlying geology consists of Aeolian Deposits (Brickearth), and this was confirmed during the evaluation, with mid orange brown clayey silt being recorded along the length of the trench (BGS 1996).

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the surrounding area has been highlighted by a field evaluation (Worrell 2005), and subsequent excavation (Taylor and Weale 2009). In summary, the site lies on the Sussex coastal plain, which is considered to be archaeologically rich for most periods (Rudling 2003). This archaeological potential has been demonstrated in adjacent areas with the excavation and recording of an extensive prehistoric and Roman landscape with occupation areas and small enclosures set amongst field systems. The most notable discovery was that of a princely burial, equipped with a rich array of grave furniture, including a sword, shield and helmet (Taylor and Weale 2009).

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 proposed development.

Specific aims of the project were;

To determine if archaeologically relevant have survived on this site.

To determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present.

To determine if archaeological deposits dating from the Bronze Age period are present.

To determine whether any evidence of late Iron Age and Roman occupation and land-use is present.

One 75m long trench was to be dug within the footprint of the new school building, targeting a line of dense footings. This was to be dug using a 360° type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision. All spoilheaps were monitored for finds.

Results

The trench was excavated as planned. Due to the presence of made ground deposits and the resulting health and safety issues, the trench was approximately 6m wide at the original ground level with battered back sides. A 2.1m wide trench was then dug down to the natural geology (Figs. 3 and 4; Pls 1 and 2). The trench varied in depth from between 1.45m to 1.60m, reflecting the undulating nature of the natural geology and variations in the depth of made ground deposits encountered. In general the site was covered with a thin layer of turf and topsoil, 0.1m thick, which lay above a deposit of made ground containing rubble. This deposit was about 0.4m thick, and lay above another made ground layer of re-deposited subsoil, which varied in thickness between 0.25m and 0.35m. A buried soil horizon was encountered beneath this made ground, which represents the ground surface

prior to recent groundworks. The buried soil was between 0.2m and 0.3m thick, and lay above a deposit of mid orange brown clayey silt subsoil. This subsoil horizon was between 0.25 and 0.35m thick, and lay directly above the natural Brickearth geology, which consisted of mid orange brown silty clay with varying amounts of flint inclusions.

No archaeological features were observed in the trench, and the only finds were two small sherds of middle Iron Age pottery, which were recovered from the subsoil layer in the central part of the trench. One of the 2005 evaluation trenches was noted towards the northern end of the trench.

Finds

Prehistoric Pottery by Malcolm Lyne

These sherds are from a single c.400-100BC dated saucepan-pot of Middle Iron Age type. Fabrics of this type with mixed fine calcined flint, silt-sized quartz sand and ferrous oxide inclusions were common in West Sussex and South-East Hampshire during the Middle Iron Age.

Fabrics.

IA.1. Micaceous silty grey-black fabric with moderate subangular <1.50 mm. red iron oxide inclusions and sparse-to-moderate <1.00 mm. crushed calcined-flint filler, fired polished black with thick pink margins.

Catalogue

Context	Fabric	Form	Date-range	No of sherds	Wt in gm	Comments
51	IA.1	-	c.400-100BC	2	3g	Fresh

Conclusion

The evaluation investigated the part of the site which will be most affected by the footings of the new school building. The area had been significantly built up in recent years, being used as a storage area for material derived from building work nearby. The original land surface was revealed beneath the made ground deposits but, despite the area not being significantly disturbed in the past, no archaeological features were observed in the evaluation trench.

References

BGS, 1996, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000 Sheet 317/332, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth.

NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Department of Communities and Local Government, London (TSO).

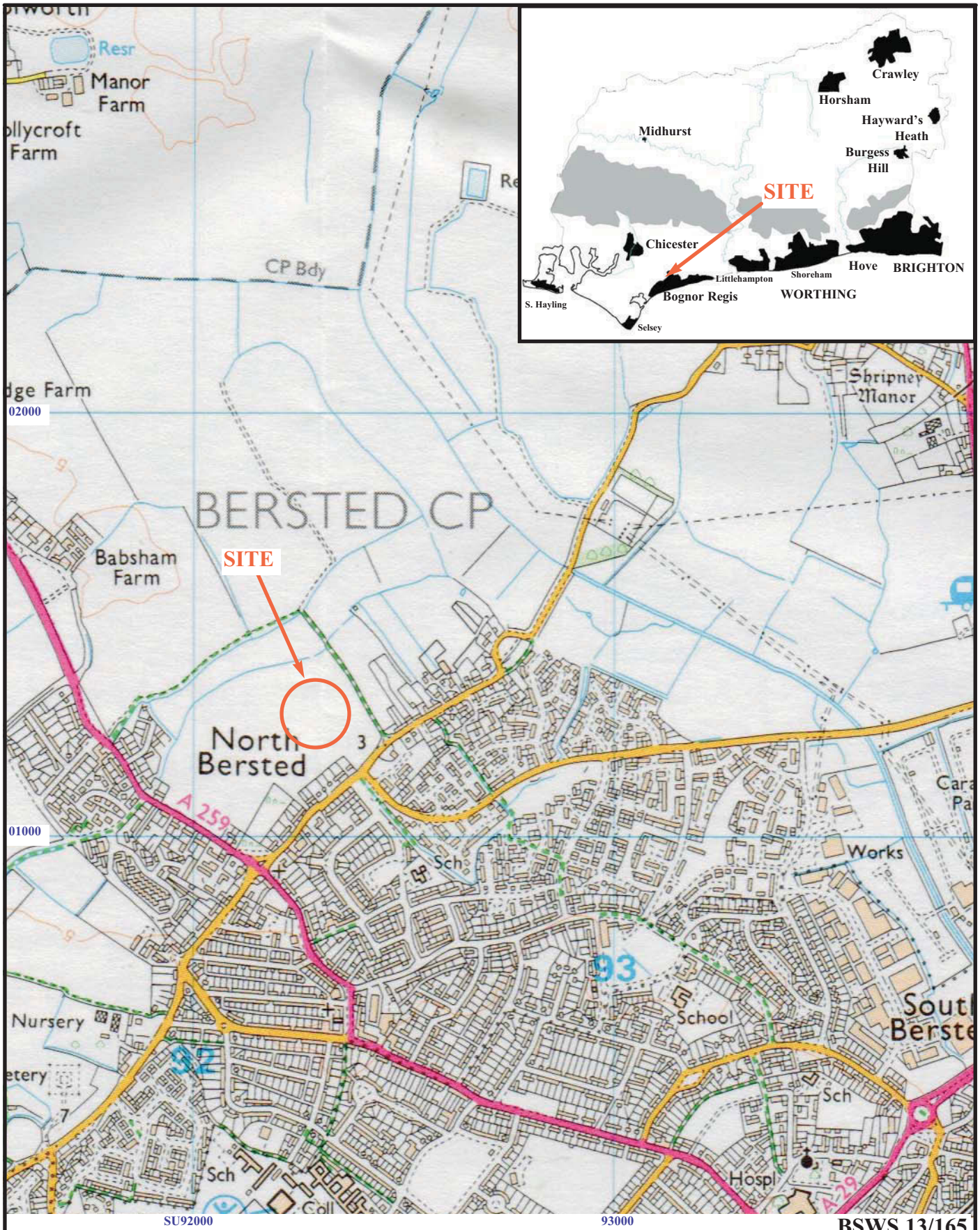
Rudling, D, (ed) 2003, The archaeology of Sussex to AD2000, Centre for Continuing Education, University of Sussex, Brighton.

Taylor, A and Weale A, 2009 Land at North Bersted, Bognor Regis, West Sussex, 2009, interim report, Thames Valley Archaeological Services project 07/135, Reading.

Worrall, 2005, An archaeological evaluation of land at North Bersted, Bognor Regis, West Sussex, Archaeology South East project 2092, Ditchling.

APPENDIX 1: Trench details

Trench	Length (m)	Breadth (m)	Depth (m)	Comment
1	75.20	2.10	1.60	0-0.1m turf and topsoil; 0.1-0.5m made ground (rubble); 0.5-0.85m made ground (re-deposited subsoil); 0.85-1.05m buried topsoil; 1.05-1.40m subsoil; 1.40-1.60m+ natural Brickearth geology. **[PLs 1 and 2]**



BSWS 13/165

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Archaeological Evaluation

Figure 1. Location of site within North Bersted and West Sussex.

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BSWS 13/165

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Figure 2. Detailed location of site within North Bersted, showing archaeological features previously recorded in the surrounding area.

0 250m

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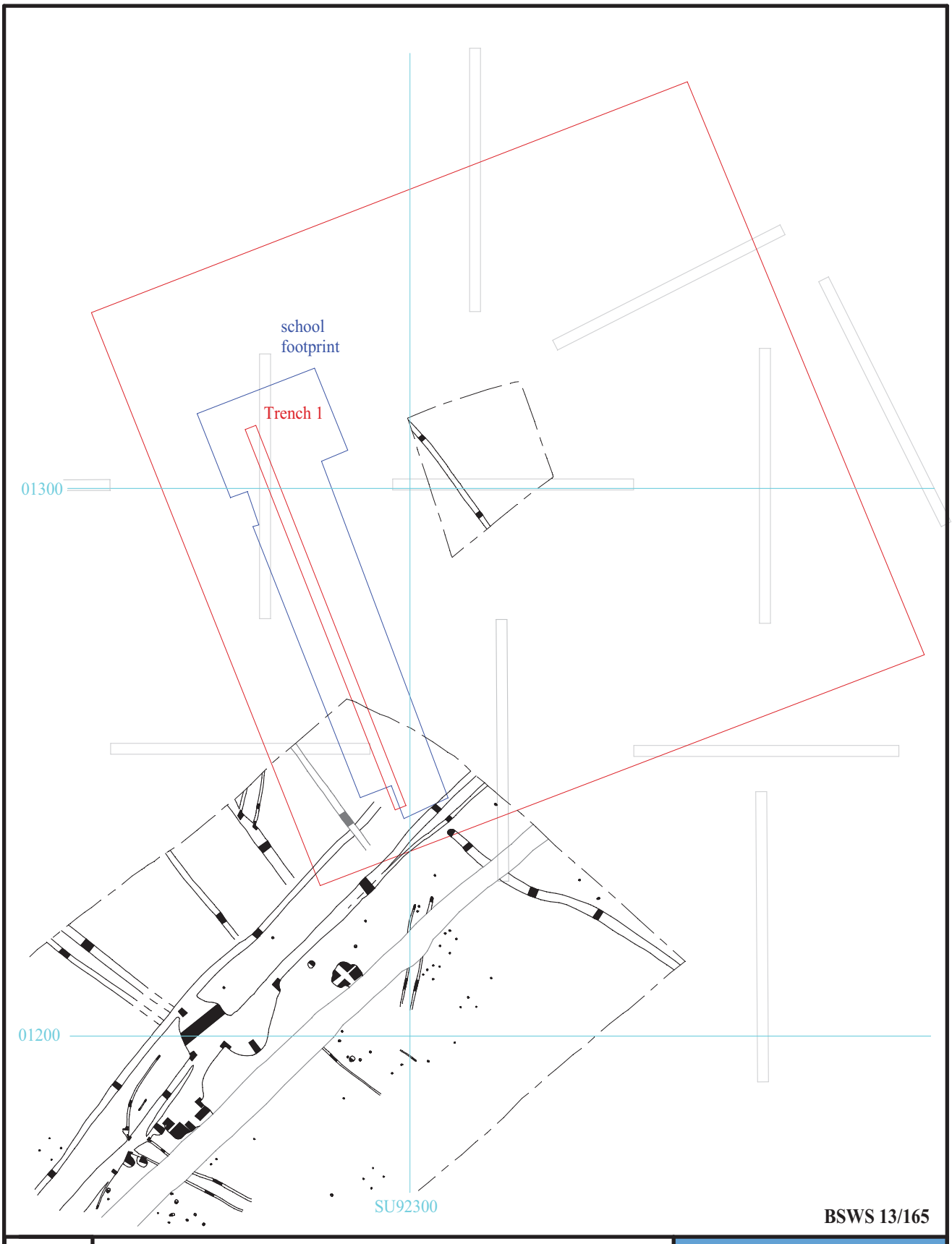

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Figure 3. Detailed location of new building and Trench 1 location, in relation to 2007 excavation.

0 50m

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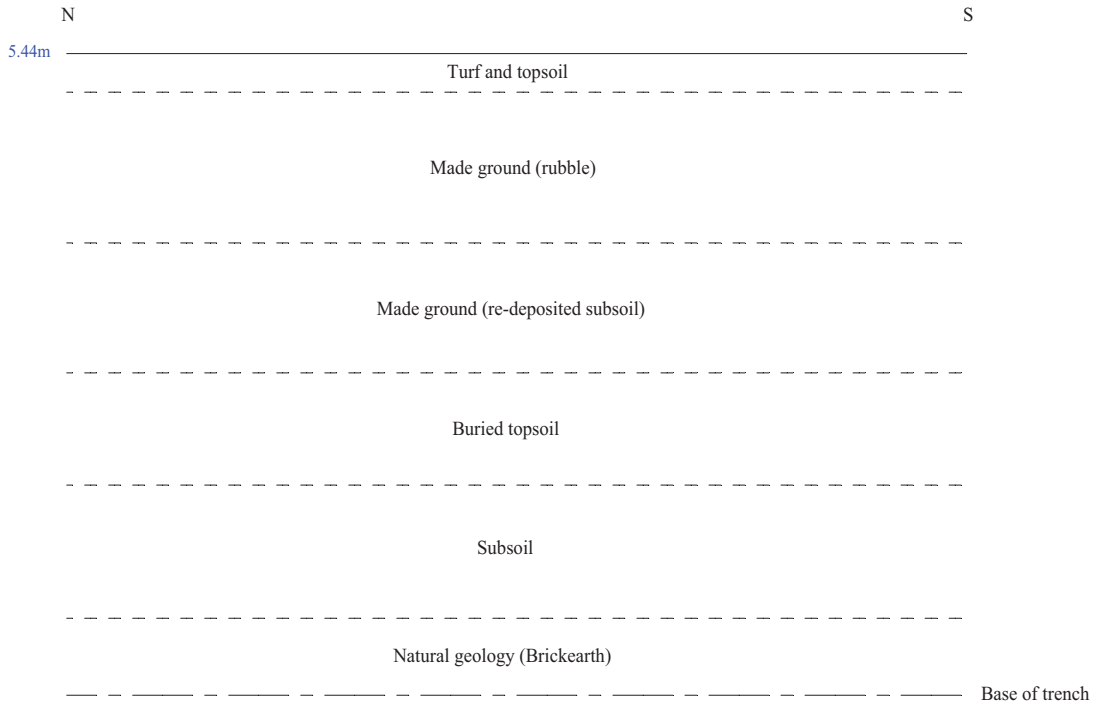

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Figure 4. Representative section.

0 1m

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

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

BSWS 13/165

Bartons Primary School, North Bersted,
West Sussex, 2013
Archaeological Evaluation

Plates 1 - 2.

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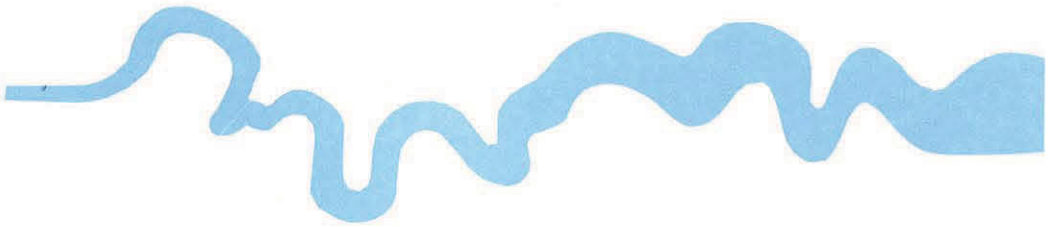
TIME CHART

	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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