

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

S O U T H

**Cavendish Primary School, Eldon Road,
Eastbourne, East Sussex**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Sean Wallis

Site Code: CSE14/111

(TQ 5948 0037)

**Cavendish Primary School, Eldon Road,
Eastbourne, East Sussex**

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for East Sussex County Council Property and Capital Investment**

by Sean Wallis

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code
CSE14/111

November 2014

Summary

Site name: Cavendish Primary School, Eldon Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex

Grid reference: TQ 5948 0037

Site activity: Evaluation

Planning reference : EB/3238/CC

Date and duration of project: 27th – 30th October 2014

Project manager: Sean Wallis

Site supervisor: Sean Wallis

Site code: CSE 14/111

Area of site: c. 4.4ha

Summary of results: The evaluation at Cavendish School successfully investigated those parts of the site which would be most affected by the proposed new primary school building and associated works. As expected, the site had been heavily disturbed in the past, probably when the existing school was built in the late 1930s. The eastern part of the site had clearly been terraced to create flat playing fields, and the result of this “cut and fill” exercise was evident in a number of the evaluation trenches. The trenches at the extreme north and south of the site appeared to suggest that these areas had not been significantly altered. Despite the fact that buried soil horizons and undisturbed natural chalk deposits were recorded in most of the trenches, no features nor artefacts of archaeological interest were observed..

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Eastbourne Museum in due course, with accession number 2014.63.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford✓ 21.11.14 Steve Preston✓ 18.11.14

Cavendish Primary School, Eldon Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex An Archaeological Evaluation

by Sean Wallis

Report 14/111b

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Cavendish School, Eldon Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex (Fig. 1). The school and its grounds are centred on TQ 5948 0037 (Fig. 2), although the project concentrated on the eastern part of the site (Fig. 3) (TQ 5955 0032). The work was commissioned by Mr Lee Morgan of Sunninghill Construction Co Ltd, Cornelius House, 33 Boltro Road, Haywards Heath, RH16 1BP on behalf of East Sussex County Council Property and Capital Investment.

Planning permission (EB/3238/CC) has been sought from East Sussex County Council for the construction of a new primary school building on the site, along with associated car parking areas, playgrounds, access roads and landscaping. Any consent is likely to be subject to a condition relating to archaeology, which will require the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in advance of groundworks. In view of the possibility of archaeological deposits being present on the site, which may be damaged or destroyed by the proposed development, a field evaluation by means of machine trenching is required to better inform the planning process.

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 Gregory Chuter, Assistant County Archaeologist at East Sussex County Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Theresa Vieira and Sean Wallis between 27th and 30th October 2014, and the site code is CSE14/111. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Eastbourne Museum in due course, with accession number 2014.63.

Location, topography and geology

The site lies to the north of the historic core of Eastbourne, East Sussex, and is centred on TQ 5948 0037. It is currently occupied by Cavendish school and its associated car parks, access roads, play areas and playing fields, along with a sports centre. The site is bounded to the north by housing and Cobbold Avenue, to the south by Eldon Road, and to the east and west by further housing. It sits on the southern slope of a hill and, as a result, the

northern part of the site lies at a height of approximately 55m above Ordnance Datum, dropping to about 42m in the southern part. The eastern part of the site had clearly been terraced to provide flat playing fields when the school was built in the late 1930s (Pl. 6). There is also a clear drop from the southern edge of the school down onto Eldon Road. According to the British Geological Survey the underlying geology consists of Zig Zag Chalk, with Holywell Nodular Chalk being present in the north-east corner of the site (BGS 2006), and this was confirmed in all of the evaluation trenches.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site was considered in a recent desk based assessment (Wallis 2014). In summary, there have been a number of archaeological discoveries in the area around the site, dating from the prehistoric period onwards. Recent archaeological work has revealed deep colluvial (hillwash) deposits of prehistoric date close to the south-western corner of the school site, whilst a Roman midden and pits were found to the south-east in the 19th century. The northern part of the site lies within an Archaeological Notification Zone associated with a Saxon cemetery which was found slightly further to the north on Ocklynge Hill. Although no Saxon finds have been recorded in the area close to the site, some medieval pits were found to the north-east in 1976. Although the site was clearly landscaped when the existing school was built in the late 1930s, the impact of this episode of groundworks on any archaeological remains which may have been present on the site is not known.

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 levels have survived on this site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present;
- to determine if there is any evidence of prehistoric activity on the site;
- to determine whether there is the potential for archaeological deposits to have survived beneath colluvium;
- to determine whether there is any evidence for Roman occupation on the site; and
- to determine whether there is any evidence for Saxon or medieval occupation on the site.

Eight trenches were to be dug, each measuring 25m in length and 1.60m in width. These were to be dug using a 360° type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, under constant archaeological supervision. All spoilheaps are to be monitored for finds. The trenches had been positioned to target those parts of the site which would be most affected by the proposed new school building and new car parking and access areas.

Where archaeological features were certainly or probably present, the stripped areas were to be cleaned using appropriate hand tools, and sufficient of the archaeological features and deposits exposed were to be excavated or sampled by hand to satisfy the aims of the project, without compromising the integrity of any features that may warrant preservation in-situ, all features and deposits revealed in the trenches were to be fully recorded in line with an agreed sampling fraction. All of this work was to be undertaken in compliance with *Standards for archaeological fieldwork, recording and post-excavation work in East Sussex* (ESCC 2007).

Results

The eight trenches were dug close to their original planned positions (Fig. 3). All the trenches were 1.60m wide, and measured between 3m and 26.70m in length, and between 0.57m and 2.50m in depth. A complete list of the trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1 (Pl. 1)

This trench was orientated approximately N-S, and was 25.60m long and up to 0.90m deep. It was shifted slightly from its original intended position as it was necessary to keep the area to the west clear for emergency access. A layer of chalky made ground (52), about 0.08m thick, was observed between the turf and topsoil (50) and a buried soil horizon (53), indicating that the area had been built up slightly in the past, probably when the existing school was built (Fig. 4). Natural chalk was seen along the entire length of the trench, beneath a surviving subsoil layer (51). No archaeological finds or features were recorded.

Trench 2 (Pl. 2)

This trench was orientated approximately NW-SE, and was 25.00m long and up to 1.70m deep. A compact layer of re-deposited chalk (54) was recorded immediately beneath the turf and topsoil (50) along the entire length of the trench. Beneath the compact chalk was a thick deposit of loose chalk rubble (55), which lay above the surviving buried soil horizons (51 and 53). The area had clearly been built up in the past, probably when the existing school was built. Although the stratigraphy was uniform along the trench, it was possible to detect a slight slope in the natural chalk down towards the south-east. No archaeological features or finds were recorded.

Trench 3 (Pl. 3)

This trench was orientated approximately N-S, and was 25.00m long. The effects of landscaping were clearly evident in the trench and, as a result, it varied in depth from 0.60m at the north end to 1.05m at the south. At the north end the natural chalk geology was encountered beneath 0.45m of topsoil (50) and subsoil (51). At the southern end of the trench it appears that the original topsoil had been stripped off in the past, and the area built up with loose chalk rubble (55), which was subsequently covered with fresh topsoil (50). The layer of chalk rubble was first observed about 14m from the southern end of the trench, becoming progressively thicker towards the south. No archaeological features or finds were recorded.

Trench 4

This trench was orientated approximately NE-SW, and was 26.70m long and up to 0.57m deep. The area had clearly been truncated in the past as natural chalk was encountered immediately beneath the turf and topsoil (50) along the length of the entire trench (Fig. 4). The topsoil was thicker towards the south-west end of the trench, where the chalk was overcut to check whether it was re-deposited or not. No archaeological features or finds were recorded.

Trench 5 (Pl. 4)

This trench was orientated approximately NE-SW, and was 25.00m long. An episode of “cut and fill” landscaping was clearly evident in the trench and, as a result, the north-east end was only 0.25m deep whilst the south-west was nearly a metre. At the north-east end the natural chalk was observed beneath 0.10m of turf and topsoil (50), indicating that the area had been severely truncated. The south-west end had been built up by a layer of chalk rubble (56) and fresh topsoil (50), possibly after the original topsoil had been removed. The midpoint between the “cut” and the “fill” occurred about 10m from the south-western end of the trench.

Trench 6

This trench was orientated approximately E-W, and was 22.00m long. Although it was clear that the whole area had been built up in the past with a layer of chalk rubble (56), this was much thicker towards the western end of the trench, reflecting the original natural slope of the hill down towards the west. Once again it is possible that the original topsoil may have been removed before the made ground was laid down. No archaeological features or finds were recorded.

Trench 7

Following the excavation of Trenches 2 and 6 it was obvious that the area where Trench 7 was originally positioned had been built up in the past, probably when the existing school was built. This was supported by the fact that the ground sloped dramatically to the west and south. An attempt was made to dig the trench, but was abandoned when the loose chalk rubble (55) started to collapse in the trench sides, thus undermining the ground nearby. As a result, the 3m long trench was effectively a test pit. Nevertheless, it was possible to ascertain that the original ground surface had survived beneath about 1.60m of chalk made ground (54 and 55) and fresh topsoil (50). No archaeological features or finds were recorded.

Trench 8 (Pl. 5)

This trench was orientated approximately E-W, and was 25.00m long and up to 0.75m deep. It was shifted slightly from its original intended position due to the fact that the ground sloped quite steeply close to the school's perimeter wall. The natural chalk geology was encountered beneath 0.18m of turf and topsoil (50) and 0.42m of subsoil (51), indicating that the area had not been significantly affected by the landscaping works associated with the construction of the existing school in the. The depth of the subsoil also suggests that it may partly be colluvial in nature. No archaeological features or finds were recorded.

Finds

No archaeological finds were recovered during the evaluation. Whilst this may be expected on a site where no archaeological features were identified, the sterile nature of the topsoil, buried soil and subsoil horizons was quite surprising.

Conclusion

The evaluation at Cavendish School successfully investigated those parts of the site which would be most affected by the proposed new primary school building and associated works. As expected, the site had been heavily disturbed in the past, probably when the existing school was built in the late 1930s. The eastern part of the site had been terraced to create flat playing fields, and the result of this "cut and fill" exercise was evident in a number of the evaluation trenches. Interestingly, the trenches at the extreme north and south of the site appeared to suggest that these areas had not been significantly altered. Despite the fact that buried soil horizons

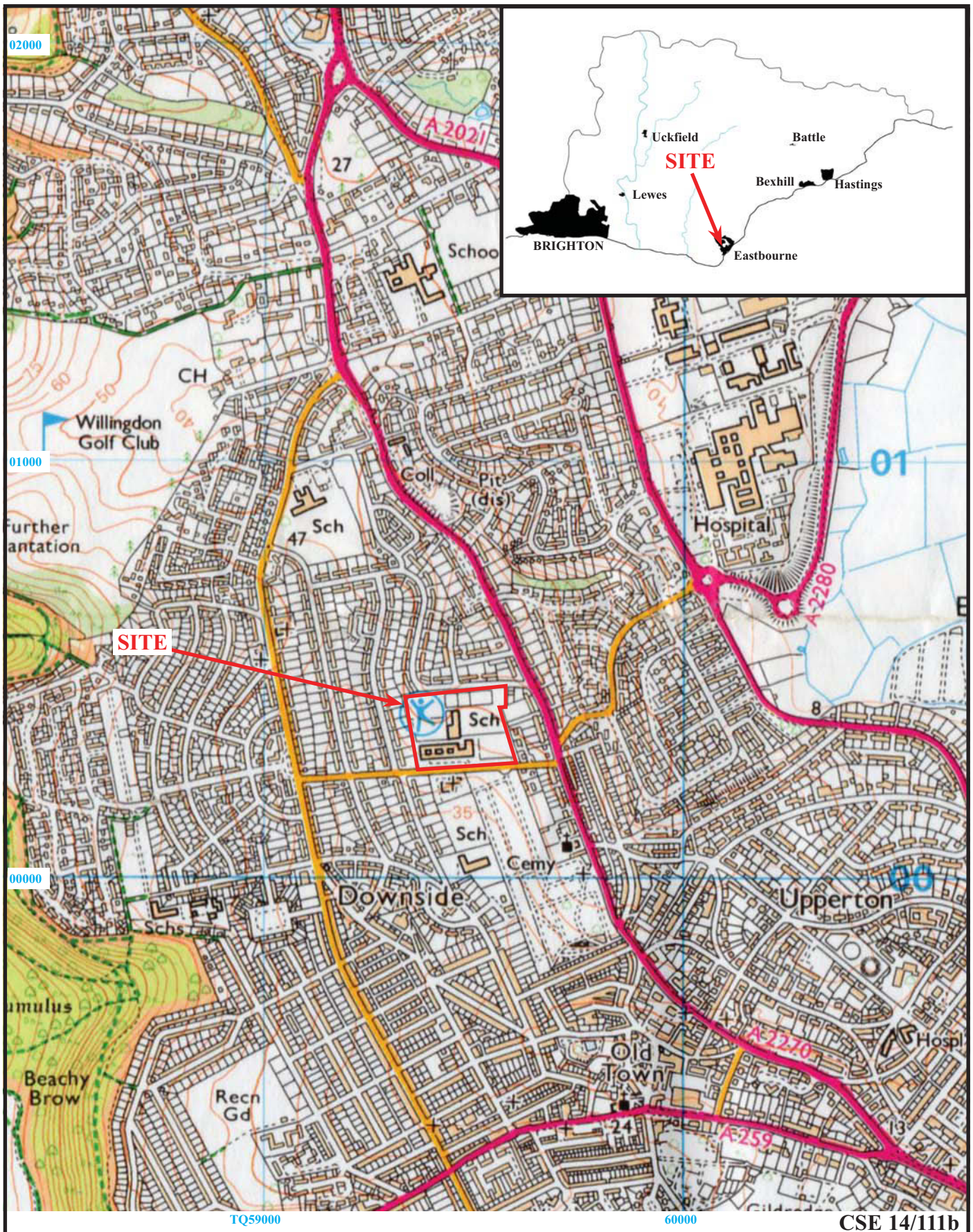
and un-disturbed natural chalk deposits were recorded in most of the trenches, no deposits nor artefacts of archaeological interest were observed.

References

- BGS 2006, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000, Sheet 319/334, Bedrock and Superficial Deposits Edition, Keyworth
- ESCC, 2007, *Standards for archaeological fieldwork, recording and post-excavation work in East Sussex*, East Sussex County council, 2007v1, Lewes
- NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Government, London
- Wallis, S, 2014, 'Cavendish Primary School, Eastbourne, East Sussex: an archaeological desk-based assessment', Thames Valley Archaeological Services unpubl rep **14/111**, Brighton

APPENDIX 1: Trench details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	25.60	1.60	0.90	0-0.15m turf and topsoil (50); 0.15-0.23m chalky made ground (52); 0.23-0.40m buried topsoil (53); 0.40-0.70m subsoil (51); 0.70-0.90m+ natural geology (chalk). [Pl. 1]
2	25.00	1.60	1.70	0-0.30m turf and topsoil (50); 0.30-0.53m compact chalk made ground (54); 0.53-1.00m loose chalk made ground (55); 1.00-1.16m buried topsoil (53); 1.16-1.25m subsoil (51); 1.25-1.42m+ natural geology (chalk). [Pl. 2]
3	25.00	1.60	0.60 (N) 1.05 (S)	N end : 0-0.18m turf and topsoil (50); 0.18-0.45m subsoil (51); 0.45-0.60m+ natural geology (chalk). S end : 0-0.20m turf and topsoil (50); 0.20-0.70m loose chalk made ground (55); 0.70-0.81m buried subsoil (51); 0.81-1.05m+ natural geology (chalk). [Pl. 3]
4	26.70	1.60	0.57	0-0.10m turf and topsoil (50); 0.10-0.19m+ natural geology (chalk).
5	25.00	1.60	0.25 (NE) 0.98 (SW)	NE end : 0-0.10 turf and topsoil (50); 0.10-0.25m+ natural geology (chalk). SW end : 0-0.35m turf and topsoil (50); 0.35-0.58m chalk made ground (56); 0.58-0.82m buried subsoil (51); 0.82-0.98m+ natural geology (chalk). [Pl. 4]
6	22.00	1.60	1.00 (E) 2.00 (W)	E end : 0-0.30m turf and topsoil (50); 0.30-0.70m chalk made ground (56); 0.70-0.95m buried subsoil (51); 0.95-1.00m+ natural geology (chalk). W end : 0-0.20m turf and topsoil (50); 0.20-0.1.70m chalk made ground (56); 1.70-1.90m buried subsoil (51); 1.90-2.00m+ natural geology (chalk).
7	3.00	1.60	2.50	0-0.30m turf and topsoil (50); 0.30-0.50m compact chalk made ground (54); 0.50-1.60m loose chalk made ground (55); 1.60-1.90m buried topsoil (53); 1.90-2.45m buried subsoil (51); 2.45-2.50m+ natural geology (chalk).
8	25.00	1.60	0.75	0-0.18m turf and topsoil (50); 0.18-0.60m subsoil (51); 0.60-0.75m+ natural geology (chalk). [Pl. 5]



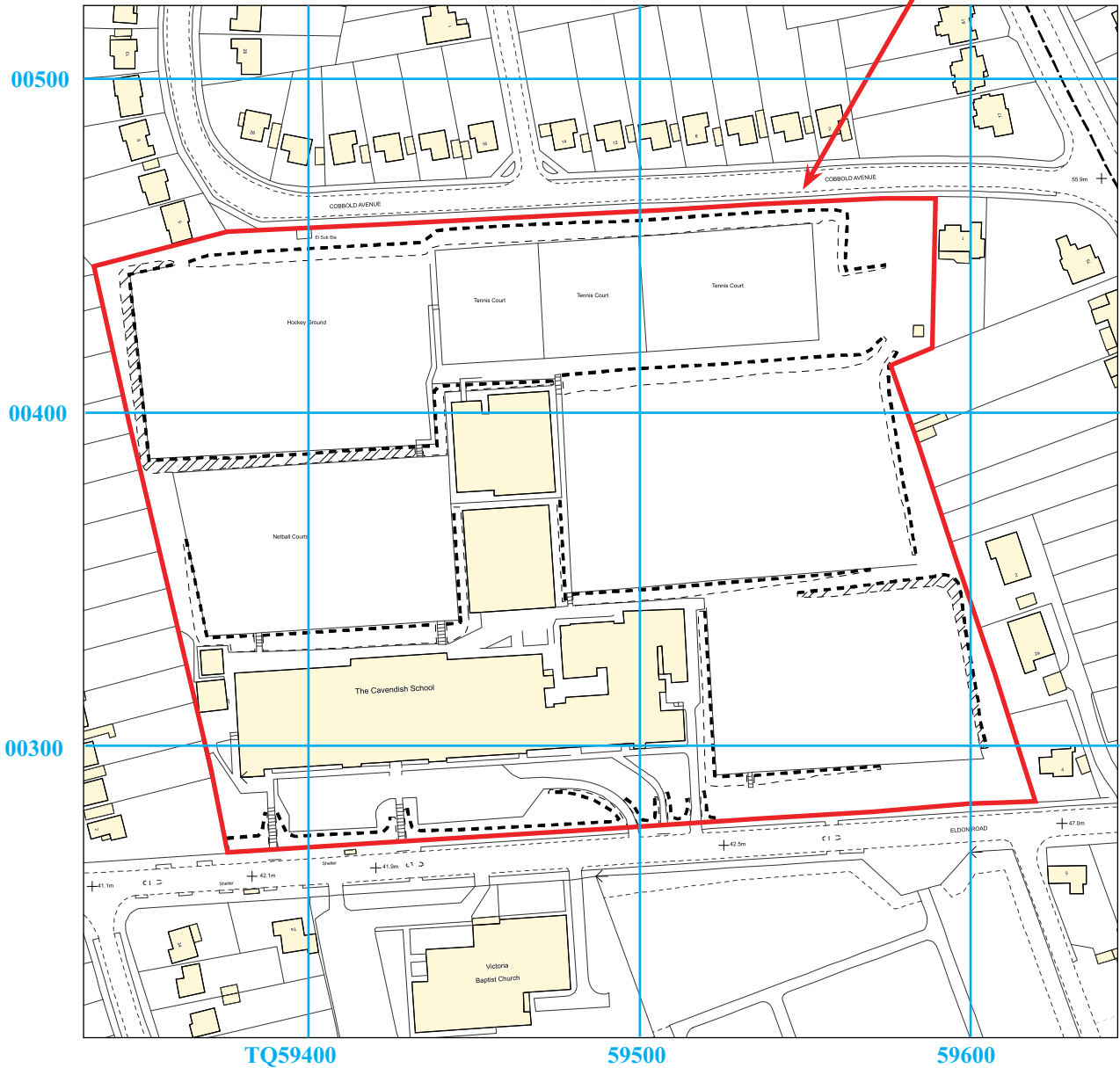
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Figure 1. Location of site within Eastbourne and East Sussex.

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Site



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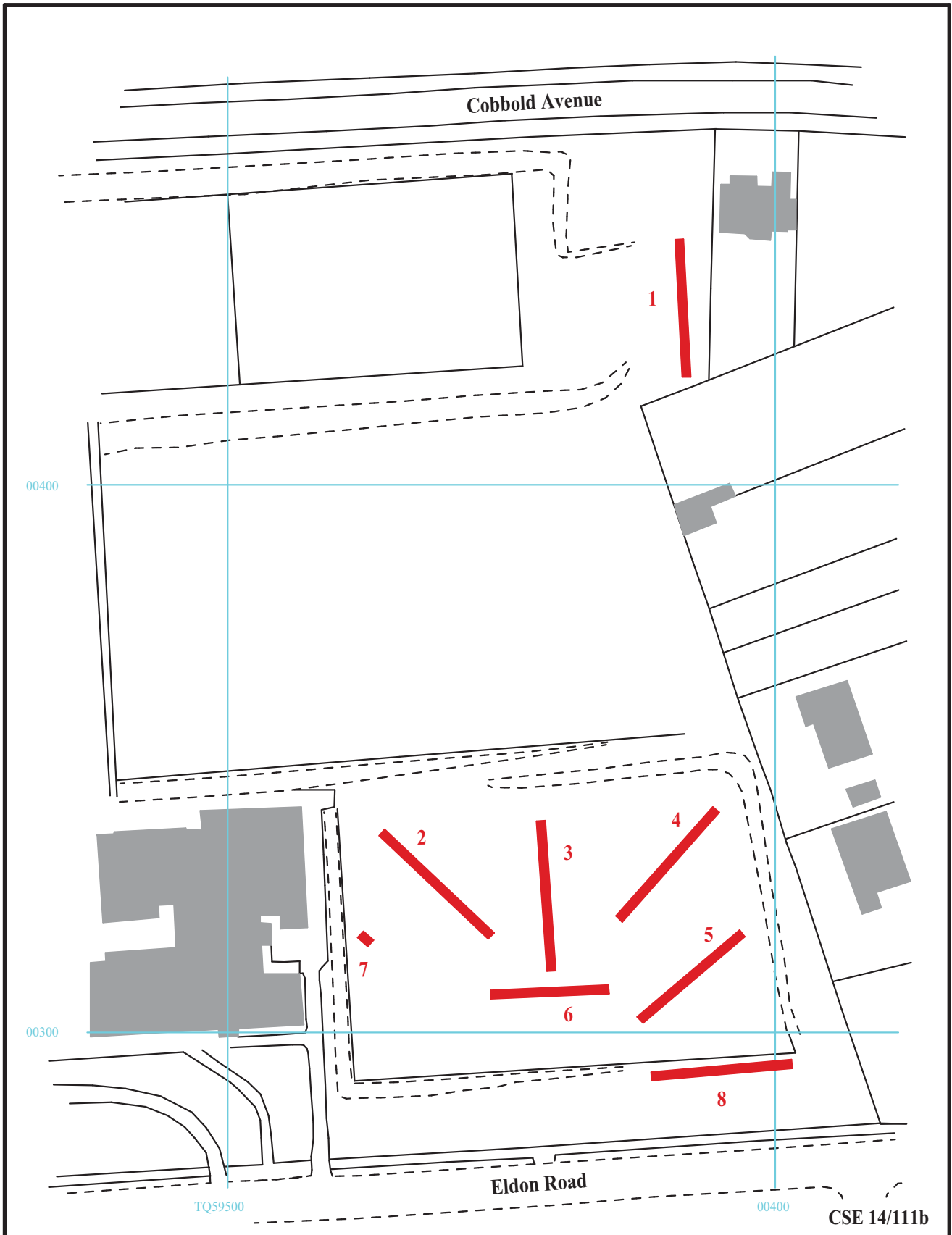


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Figure 2. Detailed location of site

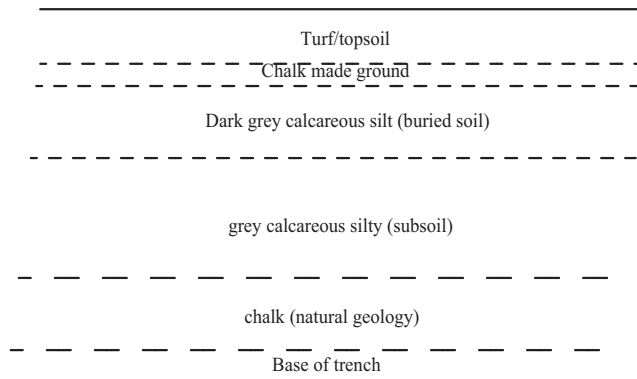
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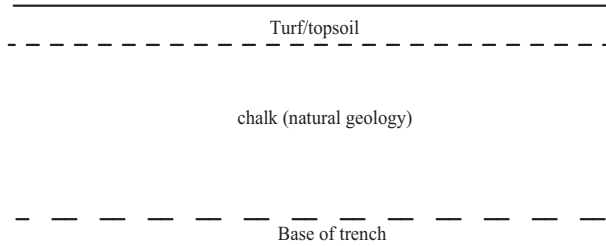


	<p style="text-align: center;">Cavendish Primary School, Eastbourne, East Sussex, 2014 Archaeological Evaluation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Figure 3. Location of trenches.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">0 50m</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">THAMES VALLEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES SOUTH</p>
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Trench 1



Trench 4



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Figure 4. Representative sections.





Plate 1. Trench 1, looking north, Scales: horizontal 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 2. Trench 2, oblique view of east facing section, looking west, Scale: 1m.

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Plates 1 - 2.**

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Plate 3. Trench 3, looking north, Scales: horizontal 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 4. Trench 5, oblique view of south east facing section, looking north, Scales: horizontal 1m, vertical 0.5m.

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Plates 3 - 4.**

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Plate 5. Trench 8, looking east, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 6. General view, looking west.

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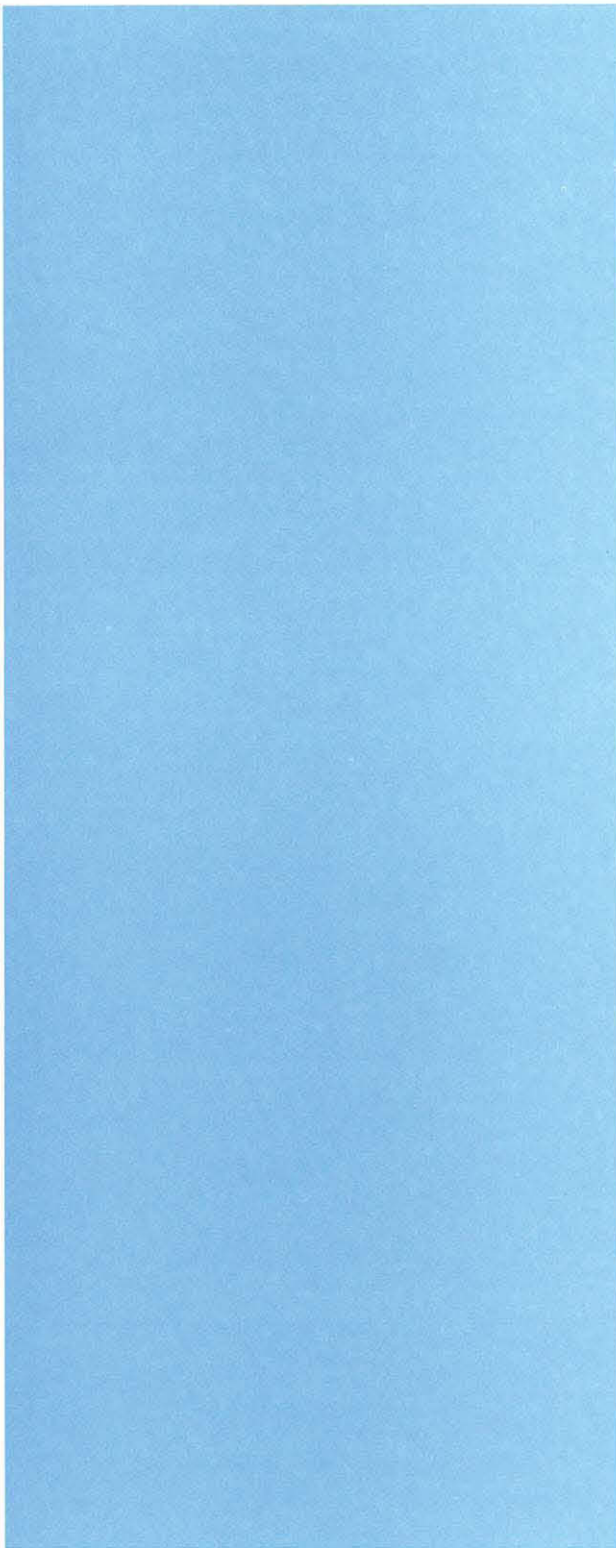
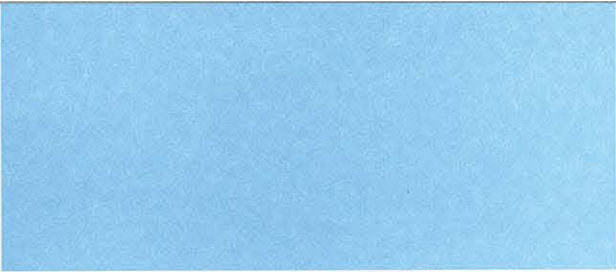
**Cavendish Primary School, Eastbourne,
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Plates 5 - 6.**

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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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