

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

**5 Findon Close, Seaford,  
East Sussex**

**Archaeological Watching Brief**

**by Sean Wallis**

**Site Code: FCS14/204**

**(TV 5029 9910)**

**5 Findon Close, Seaford,  
East Sussex**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief**

**For Mr and Mrs J Cogavin**

by Sean Wallis

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code FCS  
14/204

**December 2014**

## Summary

**Site name:** 5 Findon Close, Seaford, East Sussex

**Grid reference:** TV 5029 9910

**Planning reference:** LW/14/0441

**Site activity:** Watching Brief

**Date and duration of project:** 8th – 9th December 2014

**Project manager:** Sean Wallis

**Site supervisor:** Sean Wallis

**Site code:** FCS 14/208

**Area of site:** c. 800 sq m

**Summary of results:** The foundations for the new garage were monitored during the watching brief, along with the trench for a soakaway. Garden soil deposits were recorded directly above the natural geology, which consisted of clayey sand, with chalk being encountered lower down. Despite the fact that the site does not appear to have been significantly disturbed or truncated in the past, no features which could be related to the First World War army camp were observed.

**Location and reference of archive:** The preferred repository is Lewes Museum, but unfortunately they are not accepting material at the present time. As a result, title will be assumed by Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd, 47-49 De Beauvoir Road, Reading, RG1 5NR, until such time as a suitable repository can be found.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford✓ 19.12.14 Steve Preston✓ 19.12.14
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# 5 Findon Close, Seaford, East Sussex An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Sean Wallis

**Report 14/204**

## **Introduction**

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at 5 Findon Close, Seaford, East Sussex (TV 5029 9910) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by the property's owners, Mr and Mrs J Cogavin.

Planning permission (LW/14/0441) has been gained from Lewes District Council for alterations and extensions to an existing garage on the site. The consent was subject to standard conditions (2 and 3) relating to archaeology. Condition 2 required the implementation of a programme of archaeological work, in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) which had been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Condition 3 stated that the development should not be brought into use until the archaeological site investigation and post-investigation assessment has been completed. The East Sussex County Archaeological Officer (Mr Greg Chuter), as adviser to the District Council on archaeological matters, had stipulated that this should consist of a watching brief to be carried out during groundworks.

This is in accordance with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF, 2012), and the District Council's policies on archaeology. The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation approved by the East Sussex Archaeological Officer, Mr Greg Chuter. Where appropriate and relevant, the recommendations in the 'Standards for archaeological fieldwork, recording, and post-excavation work in East Sussex (2007)' were followed.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Sean Wallis between 8th and 9th December 2014, and the site code is FCS 14/204. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited when a suitable repository can be found.

## **Location, topography and geology**

The site is located at the northern end of Findon Close, Seaford, East Sussex (TV 5029 9910) (Fig. 2), around 1.5km from the coast. According to the British Geological Survey, the underlying geology consists of the

Newhaven Chalk Formation (BGS 2006). However, the natural geology observed during the watching brief consisted of mid orange brown clayey sand, which was seen to overlie the chalk.

The site is currently occupied by a house and its associated gardens in a residential area. The previous garage had recently been demolished. The area generally slopes up towards the north, and the back garden of the property lies at a height of approximately 35m above Ordnance Datum.

## **Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location within the South Downs, which is known to be archaeologically rich for most periods (Rudling 2003). A search of the East Sussex Historic Environment Record (ESHER ref. 290/14) was carried out in October 2014 to provide further information on the archaeological background of the site. In summary, the site lies within an Archaeological Notification Area associated with a First World War army camp which once occupied the area. Although Seaford Camp was treated as a single entity for administrative purposes, it was actually split between two sites, known as North Camp and South Camp, whilst the surrounding downland was used for training exercises, such as the digging of trenches. The present site is in the area formerly covered by South Camp, which was also known locally as Chyngton Camp (Skinner 2011). There is also the possibility of earlier archaeological remains to have survived on the site. Neolithic and Bronze Age flintwork has been found to the west of the site, and it is thought that a medieval settlement once stood to the south, in the area now occupied by Chyngton Farm.

## **Objectives and methodology**

The aims of the watching brief were to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the groundworks. This was to include the monitoring of the footing trenches for the new garage and any associated service runs. Sufficient time was to be allowed within the developer's and groundworkers' schedules to record any archaeological features revealed.

## **Results**

### *The footing trenches*

The excavation of footings for the new garage was monitored. All the footing trenches were 0.45m wide and varied between 1.60 and 1.70m in depth (Fig. 3, Pls 1 and 2). The stratigraphy in the footing trenches consisted

of 0.45m of garden soil, the top 0.25m of which was heavily rooted in the western trench (Fig. 4). The soil was removed to reveal a deposit of mid orange brown clayey sand, which was interpreted as representing a natural deposit, as it lay above the solid chalk geology. The chalk was recorded between 1.60m and 1.70m below the present ground level. There was no evidence of the ground having been significantly disturbed or truncated in the past, and there were no features which could possibly have related to the former army camp or any earlier activity on the site. The eastern footing revealed the ceramic pipe for the existing property's soakaway. One small sherd of modern pottery was recovered from the topsoil.

#### *The soakaway*

The trench for a new soakaway, and its associated pipe, were also monitored (Fig. 3; Pl. 4). The soakaway measured 1.1m square whilst the pipe trench was 0.30m wide and 0.50m deep. The stratigraphy was similar to that seen in the footing trenches, although the underlying chalk geology was recorded 1.30m below the existing ground level (Fig. 4).

## **Finds**

### *Pottery* by Luke Barber

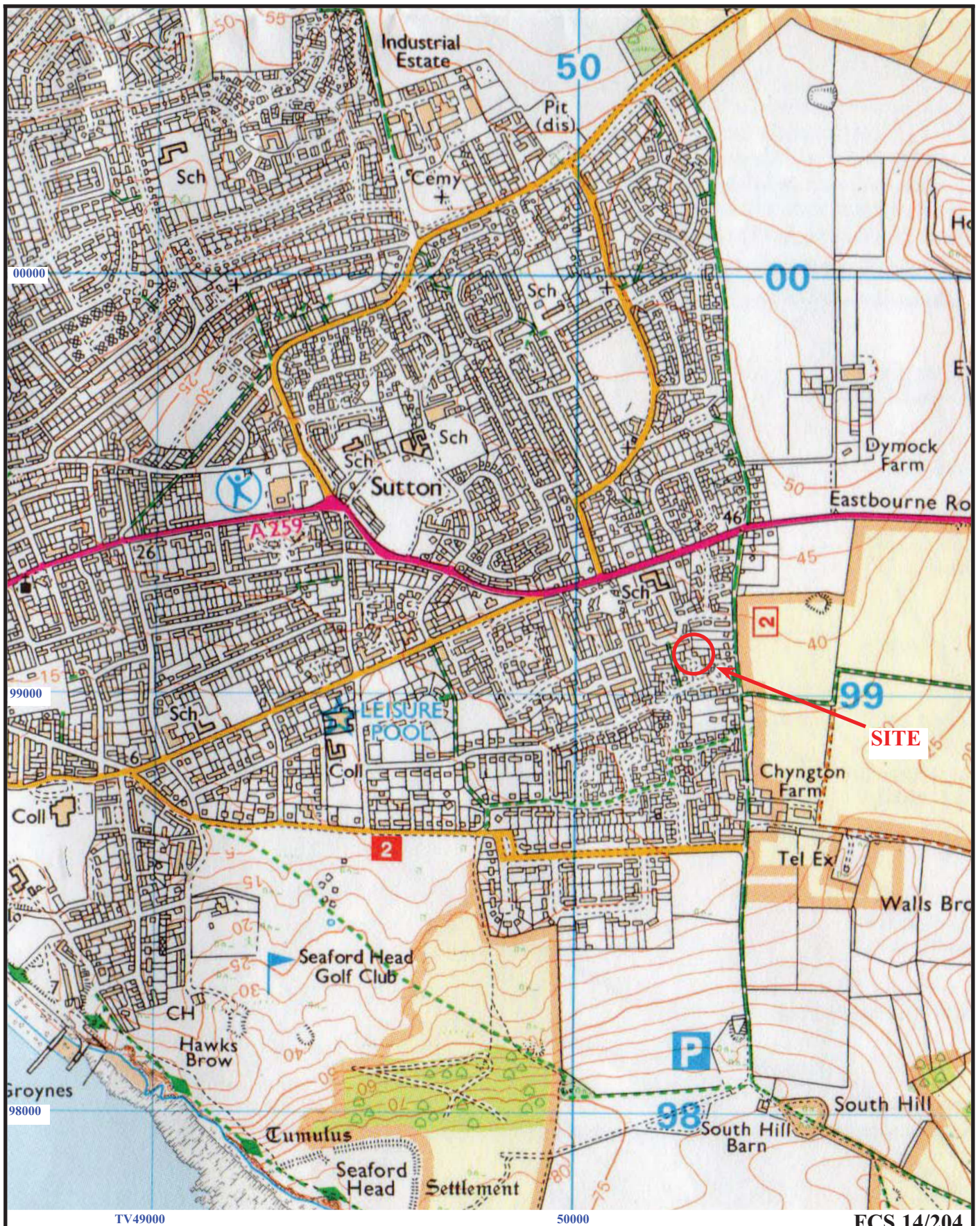
A single sherd of plain refined whiteware was recovered from the topsoil (8g). The piece is slightly worn and appears to be from the rim of a serving dish or tureen. Although not of one of the typical Great War camp ceramic forms, such vessels are known of from camp refuse deposits and it is likely this is the source of the recovered sherd.

## **Conclusion**

The watching brief at 5 Findon Close successfully examined those parts of the site which were to be most affected by the construction of a new garage. No archaeological features were recorded despite the fact that the area does not appear to have been significantly disturbed in the past when the First World War army camp was built and subsequently dismantled. However, the extremely sterile nature of the garden soil at the property could indicate that the area was stripped after the camp went out of use, and fresh topsoil imported.

## References

- BGS, 2006, *British Geological Survey*, Sheet 318/333, Solid and Drift Edition, 1:50000, Keyworth.
- ESCC, 2007, 'Standards for archaeological fieldwork, recording and post-excavation work in East Sussex', East Sussex County Council guidance document, Lewes.
- ESHER, 2014, East Sussex Historic Environment Record search, reference 290/14, Lewes.
- NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Government, London
- Rudling, D, (ed) 2003, *The Archaeology of Sussex to AD2000*, King's Lynn.
- Skinner, R, 2011, *Kitchener's Camps at Seaford – A First World War Landscape on Aerial Photographs*, English Heritage Research Department Report Series 27-2011, Portsmouth



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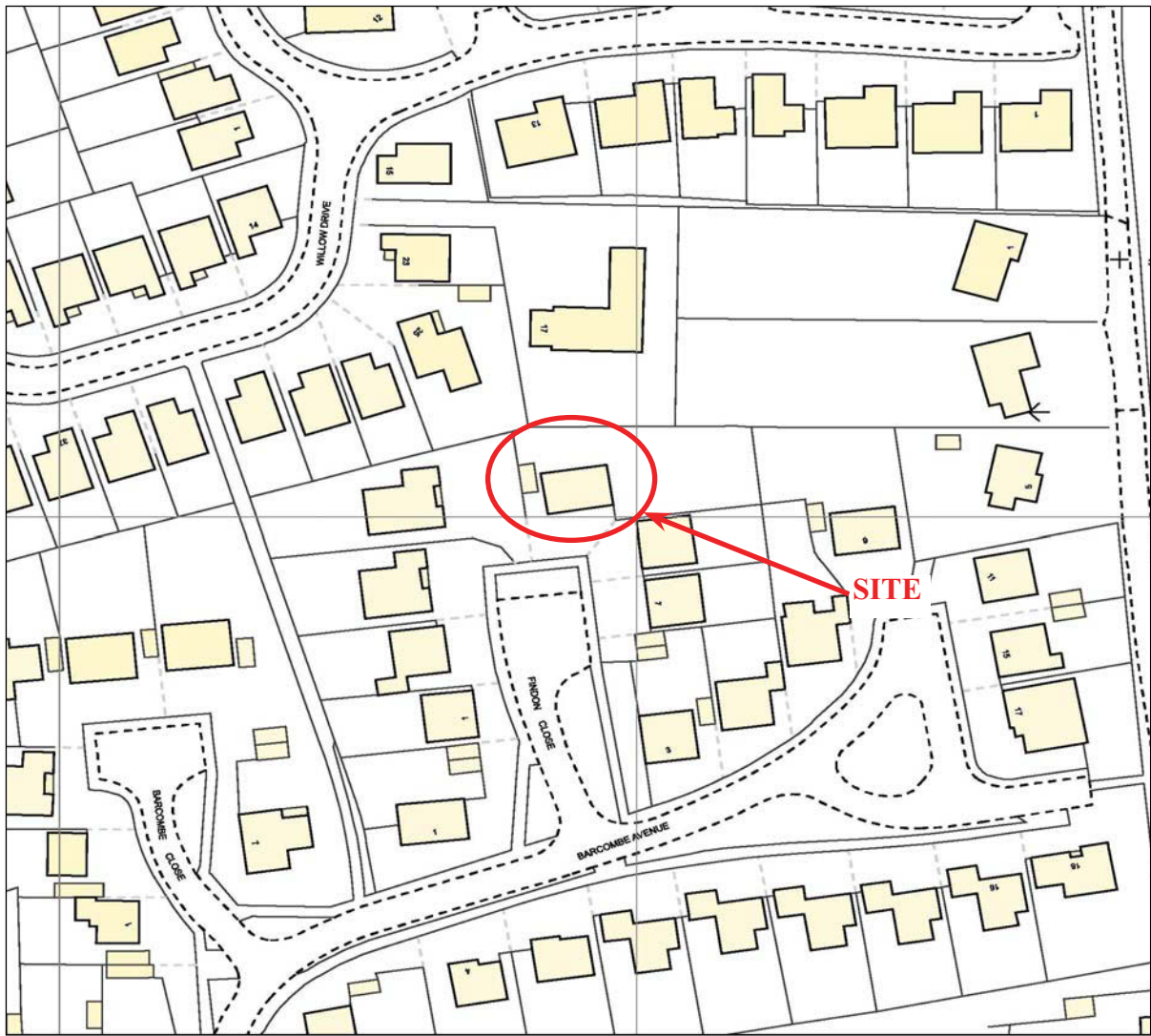
Figure 1. Location of site within Seaford and East Sussex.

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99100



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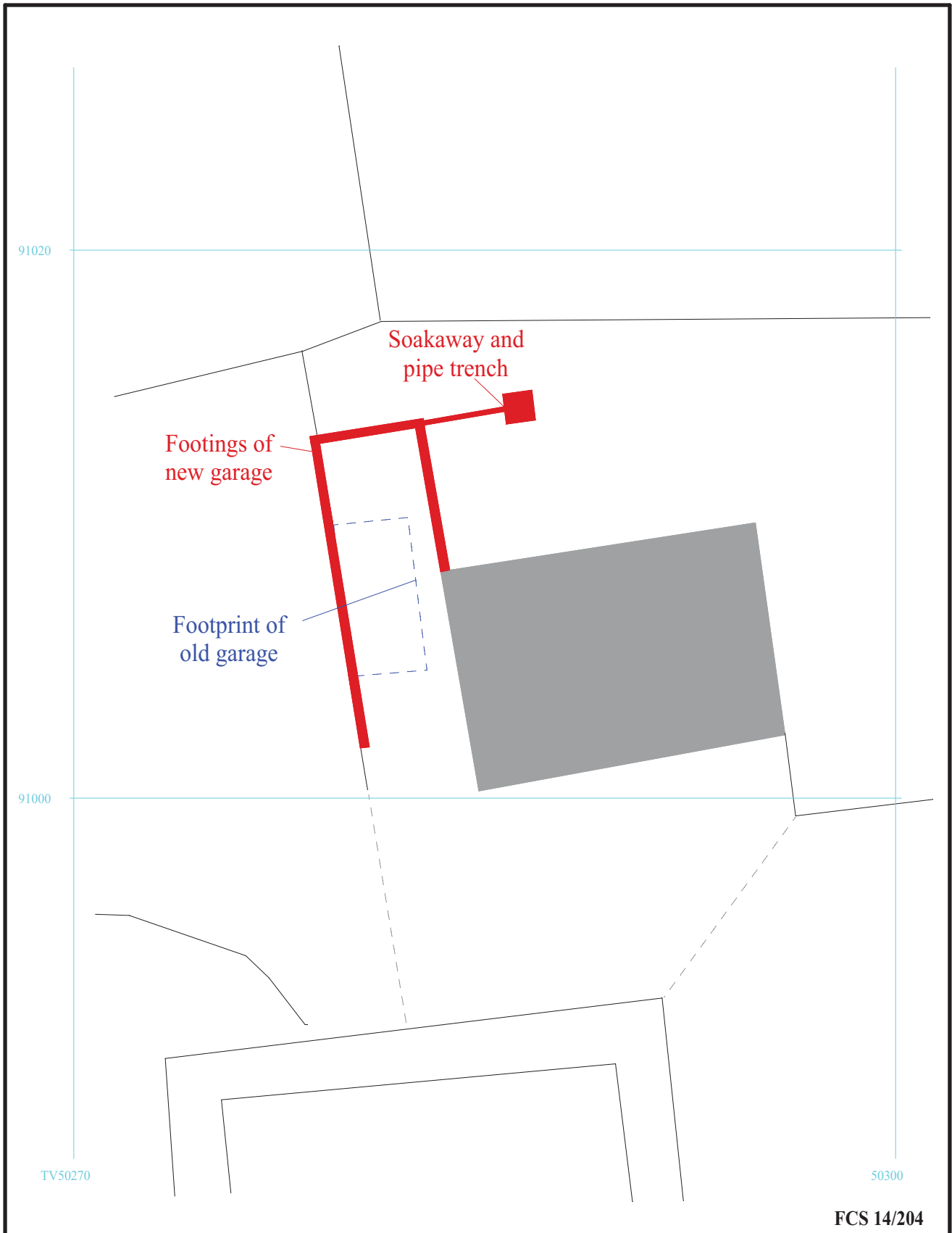
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site on Findon Close

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Figure 3. Location of areas monitored.



**Western footing trench**

S

N

35m AOD

Topsoil (heavily rooted)

Topsoil

Mid orange brown clayey sand (natural geology)

Base of trench

**Soakaway**

W

E

35m AOD

Topsoil

Mid orange brown clayey sand (natural geology)

Base of trench

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Figure 4. Representative sections.





Plate 1. West footing looking north; Scale: 2m



Plate 2. West footing looking west; Scale: 2m

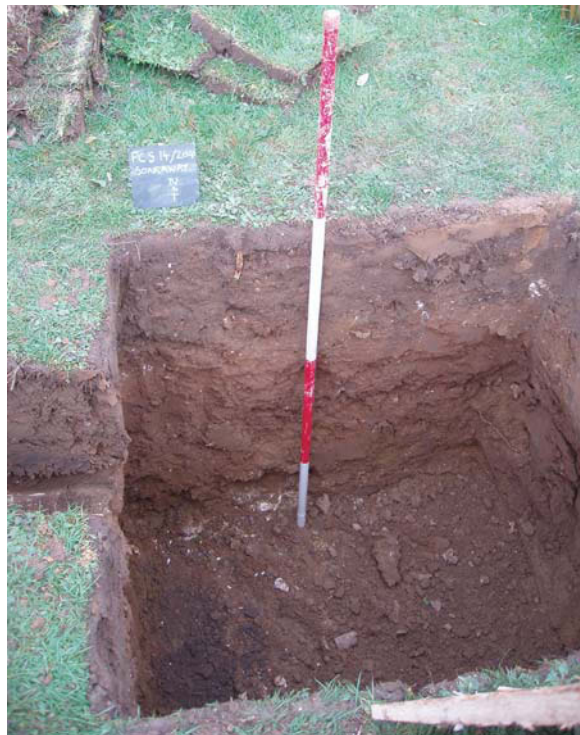


Plate 3. Soakaway looking north; Scale: 2m

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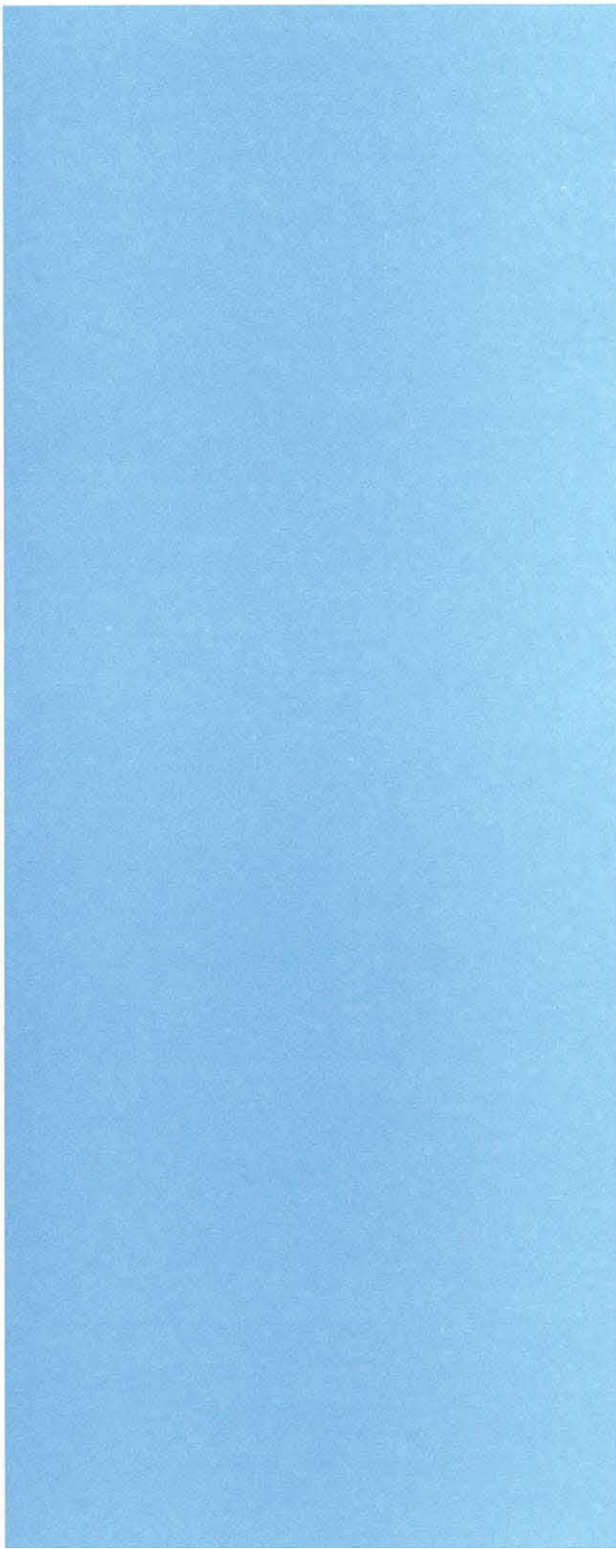
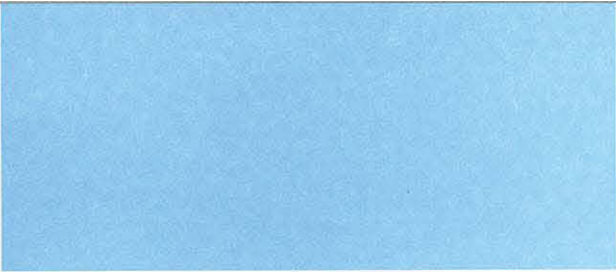
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Plates 1 -3.

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## TIME CHART

	<b>Calendar Years</b>
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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