

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

**Land at The Paddock, Northiam,  
East Sussex**

**Archaeological Evaluation**

**by Felicity Thompson and Sean Wallis**

**Site Code: PNS13/18**

**(TQ 8271 2511)**

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**An Archaeological Evaluation  
for Bouygues Ltd**

by Felicity Thompson and Sean Wallis  
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code:  
PNS13/181

**March 2015**

## Summary

**Site name:** Land at The Paddock, Northiam, East Sussex

**Grid reference:** TQ 8271 2511

**Site activity:** Evaluation

**Planning reference:** RR/2013/1490/P

**Date and duration of project:** 25th–27th February 2015

**Project manager:** Sean Wallis

**Site supervisor:** Sean Wallis

**Site code:** PNS 13/181

**Area of site:** c. 1.1 ha

**Summary of results:** The evaluation of land at The Paddock, Northiam successfully investigated those parts of the site which will be most affected by future development. Despite the fact that the site had not been significantly disturbed in the past, little of archaeological significance was uncovered, with just one post-medieval linear feature (field boundary) being recorded.

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Bexhill Museum in due course. The late post-medieval artefacts will not be retained.

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[www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp](http://www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp).*

Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 06.03.15 Steve Preston ✓ 06.03.15
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# Land at The Paddock, Northiam, East Sussex An Archaeological Evaluation

by Felicity Thompson and Sean Wallis

**Report 13/181b**

## **Introduction**

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at land at The Paddock, Northiam, East Sussex (TQ 8271 2511) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Mark Saunders of Bouygues Ltd, Denne Court, Hengist Field, Borden, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME9 8FH.

Planning permission (RR/2013/1490/P) has been gained from Rother District Council to redevelop the site for a new housing development, comprising 58 units, with associated car parking and landscaping. The consent is subject to two conditions (14 and 15) relating to archaeology, requiring a programme of archaeological site investigation.

As a consequence of the possibility of the presence of archaeological deposits which may be damaged or destroyed by the development, it was proposed to carry out a field evaluation on the site as detailed in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012), and the District Council's policies on archaeology, to determine the archaeological potential of the site and to help formulate a mitigation strategy as necessary. The evaluation was to comprise two elements: a geophysical survey and trial trenching. The geophysical survey has already been reported on (Dawson 2013) and this report details the trenching element.

The field investigation was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation approved by Mr Gregory Chuter, Assistant County Archaeologist at East Sussex County Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Teresa Vieira and Sean Wallis between 25th and 27th February 2015, and the site code is PNS13/181. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Bexhill Museum in due course.

## **Location, topography and geology**

The site lies to the south of The Paddock and east of Main Street, Northiam, in the north-east of East Sussex, centred at NGR TQ 8271 2511 (Fig. 1). The area under investigation is an irregular parcel of land, currently used as pasture for grazing animals. It is surrounded by housing and the village hall to the north and west, with farmland and woodland to the south and east (Fig. 2). The ground lies at a height of approximately 45m above

Ordnance Datum and slopes down gently towards an unnamed tributary of the River Rother, which borders the south-east margins of the site; beyond this the land rises again to the south-east. According to the British Geological Survey the underlying geology is Wadhurst Clay Formation sandstone and mudstone (BGS 1981). During the evaluation clay natural was encountered in all the trenches.

## **Archaeological background**

A search of the East Sussex Historic Environment Record (ESHER ref: 046/15) was carried out in February 2015 to provide archaeological and historical background information. In summary, the site is located on the margins of the historic core of Northiam, although there is little recorded in the HER for the immediate vicinity. Houses of likely 15th-century date are located about 250m to the south-west of the site, with 17th century buildings to the south. There are several Listed Buildings within Northiam itself, although little in the way of below-ground archaeology within the area. The settlement is thought to have medieval origins and is not mentioned in Domesday Book of AD1086 (Williams and Martin 2002). A study of historic maps in the area reveals that the field layout has remained unchanged since the late 19th century, the only changes being the development of the surrounding land to the north and west for housing (Umana 2007).

Recent geophysical survey (Dawson 2013) identified just a single possible linear archaeological feature within the site, which could represent a field boundary. However, the survey was unable to cover the full site area.

## **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 investigate the linear feature identified through geophysical survey; and
- to determine whether any evidence of medieval activity is present.

Nineteen trenches were to be dug, each measuring 20m in length and 1.60m in width (c. 5% of development area). The trenches were to be located partly to target geophysical results and the footprints of

proposed buildings and were to be dug using a 360° type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision. All spoilheaps were to be monitored for finds.

## **Results**

Due to various logistical constraints, most notably the presence of a mains sewer pipe, some trenches had to be shifted from their original planned positions, and either shortened or extended (Fig. 3). These changes were all discussed with the Assistant County Archaeologist during a site visit. All the trenches were 1.60m wide, and measured between 13.80m and 26.50m in length, and between 0.40m and 0.64m in depth (Pls 1–4). The one trench which contained an archaeological feature is detailed below, and a complete list of the trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

### Trench 9 (Figs 4 and 5 and Pl. 2)

This trench was aligned SW-NE, and was 20.20m long and 0.56m deep. Natural clay geology was revealed beneath 0.12m subsoil (51) and 0.30m of topsoil (50). A possible linear feature, aligned almost due north-south, was recorded between 7.40m and 11.60m from the south-west end of the trench. The feature was up to 0.90m wide and 0.20m deep and contained fragments of pottery, ceramic building material and metalwork. All of these finds broadly suggest an 18th- to 19th-century date.

## **Finds**

### *Pottery* by Luke Barber

The evaluation recovered just two conjoining sherds (8g) of pottery from ditch 1. These are from an 18th-century fine sand tempered local red earthenware mug with white trailed slip decoration.

### *Ceramic Building Material* by Luke Barber

Ditch 1 produced single fragments from a brick and peg tile (164g and 60g respectively). The brick, which is well formed and medium fired, is tempered with sparse fine sand and common iron oxide inclusions to 3mm. Although no dimensions are present an 18th- to mid-19th-century date is probable. The peg tile fragment is 11mm thick and is well formed and fired. These traits, combined with the sparse fine sand tempered fabric with occasional iron oxides to 1mm and marl pellets to 2mm, would be in keeping with an 18th- to 19th-century date.

## *Metalwork and Metallurgical Remains* by Luke Barber

A single fragment of iron was recovered from ditch 1. This consists of part of the shank of a heavy-duty structural nail (32g). Although not datable in its own right, it would not be out of place with the 18th-century date suggested by the ceramics. The context also produced a 240g worn lump of olive to dark green blast furnace slag of post-medieval date. Such material was commonly taken from the ironworking sites and pressed into service as metalling on tracks and roads in and around the Weald. As such its presence here is not unexpected.

## **Conclusion**

The evaluation successfully investigated those parts of the site which will be most affected by the development. One possible linear feature was revealed in Trench 9, which contained finds suggesting an 18th- to 19th-century date. This feature did not extend into any of the other trenches. The potential features outlined by the geophysical survey proved to be geological rather than archaeological. The results are perhaps surprising given the size of the area and the lack of previous disturbance. The site is considered to have no archaeological potential.

## **References**

- BGS 1981, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000, Sheet 304, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth  
Dawson, T, 2013, 'Land at The Paddock, Northiam, East Sussex, Geophysical Survey (magnetic)', Thames Valley Archaeological Services unpubl rep **13/181**, Reading  
ESCC 2015, *Sussex Archaeological Standards*, East Sussex County Council, Lewes  
NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Government, London  
Rudling, D (ed), 2003, *The Archaeology of Sussex to AD2000*, Brighton  
Umana, U, 2007, 'Site Investigation Report for Northiam, Sussex', STATS unpubl rep **35496/01**, St Albans  
Williams, A and Martin, G H, 2002, *Domesday Book, a complete translation*, London

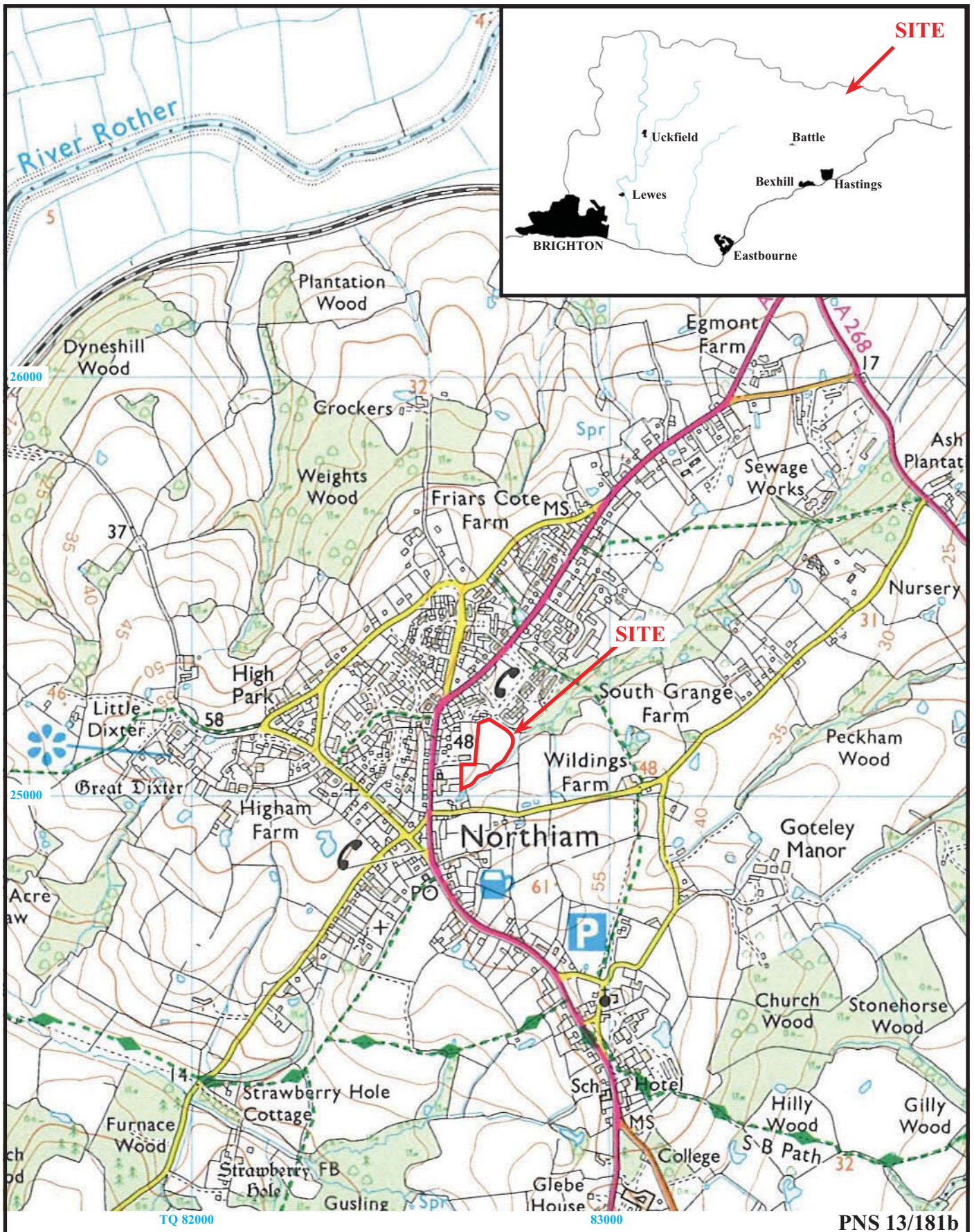


**APPENDIX 1: Trench details**

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	16.50	1.60	0.64	0-0.24m topsoil (50); 0.24-0.44m subsoil (51); 0.44-0.64m+ natural geology (clay).
2	20.40	1.60	0.55	0-0.15m topsoil (50); 0.15-0.35m subsoil (51); 0.35-0.55m+ natural geology (clay). Land drain between 6m and 7.60m.
3	23.20	1.60	0.51	0-0.24m topsoil (50); 0.24-0.44m subsoil (51); 0.44-0.51m+ natural geology (clay). Land drain between 15.80m and 22.30m.
4	21.00	1.60	0.51	0-0.27m topsoil (50); 0.27-0.47m subsoil (51); 0.47-0.51m+ natural geology (clay). <b>[Pl. 1]</b>
5	20.10	1.60	0.53	0-0.25m topsoil (50); 0.25-0.45m subsoil (51); 0.45-0.53m+ natural geology (clay).
6	20.90	1.60	0.50	0-0.27m topsoil (50); 0.27-0.44m subsoil (51); 0.44-0.50m+ natural geology (clay). Root disturbance towards northern end of trench.
7	20.90	1.60	0.46	0-0.24m topsoil (50); 0.24-0.41m subsoil (51); 0.41-0.46m+ natural geology (clay).
8	20.70	1.60	0.55	0-0.20m topsoil (50); 0.20-0.42m subsoil (51); 0.42-0.55m+ natural geology (clay).
9	20.20	1.60	0.56	0-0.30m topsoil (50); 0.30-0.42m subsoil (51); 0.42-0.56m+ natural geology (clay). Feature [1] located between 7.40m and 11.60m. <b>[Pl. 2]</b>
10	13.80	1.60	0.55	0-0.24m topsoil (50); 0.24-0.48m subsoil (51); 0.48-0.55m+ natural geology (clay). <b>[Pl. 3]</b>
11	20.10	1.60	0.40	0-0.17m topsoil (50); 0.17-0.37m subsoil (51); 0.37-0.40m+ natural geology (clay).
12	26.50	1.60	0.54	0-0.25m topsoil (50); 0.25-0.45m subsoil (51); 0.45-0.55m+ natural geology (clay). Land drain between 0m and 5.00m.
13	21.00	1.60	0.54	0-0.25m topsoil (50); 0.25-0.37m layer of re-deposited natural; 0.37-0.50m subsoil (51); 0.50-0.54m+ natural geology (clay). Re-deposited natural seen in this trench is a result of recent excavation for a sewer run in close proximity. Land drain between 0.60m and 2.20m.
14	20.70	1.60	0.55	0-0.24m topsoil (50); 0.24-0.42m subsoil (51); 0.42-0.55m+ natural geology (clay).
15	20.50	1.60	0.50	0-0.22m topsoil (50); 0.22-0.40m subsoil (51); 0.40-0.50m+ natural geology (clay).
16	19.50	1.60	0.50	0-0.24m topsoil (50); 0.24-0.42m subsoil (51); 0.42-0.50m+ natural geology (clay).
17	20.40	1.60	0.50	0-0.20m topsoil (50); 0.20-0.37m subsoil (51); 0.37-0.50m+ natural geology (clay). <b>[Pl. 4]</b>
18	20.00	1.60	0.53	0-0.22m topsoil (50); 0.22-0.41m subsoil (51); 0.41-0.53m+ natural geology (clay).
19	14.30	1.60	0.60	0-0.26m topsoil (50); 0.26-0.43m subsoil (51); 0.43-0.60m+ natural geology (clay).

**APPENDIX 2: Feature details**

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
9	1	52	Possible linear	Post-medieval (C18-19th)	Pottery, brick, tile, slag



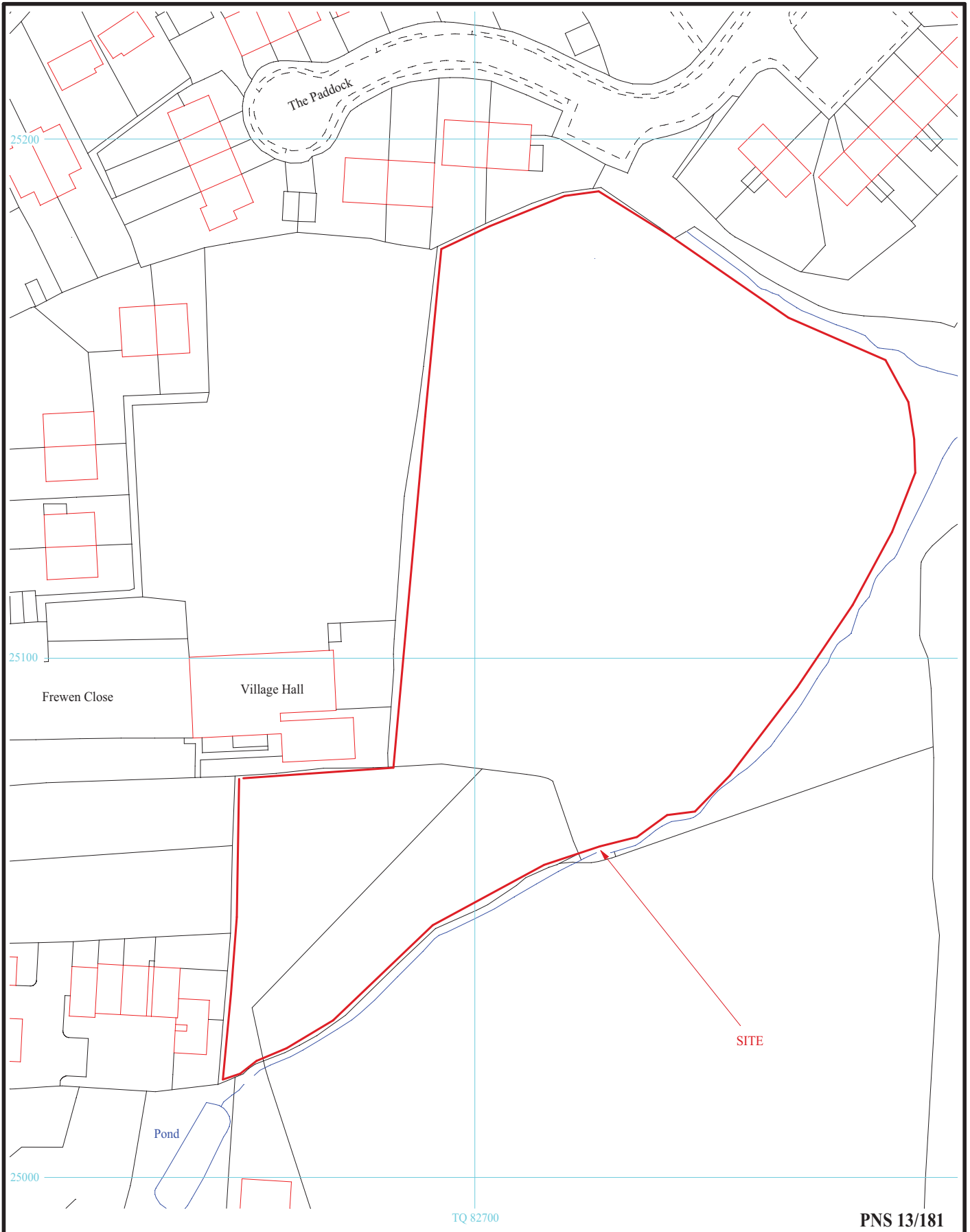
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Figure 1. Location of site within Northiam and East Sussex.

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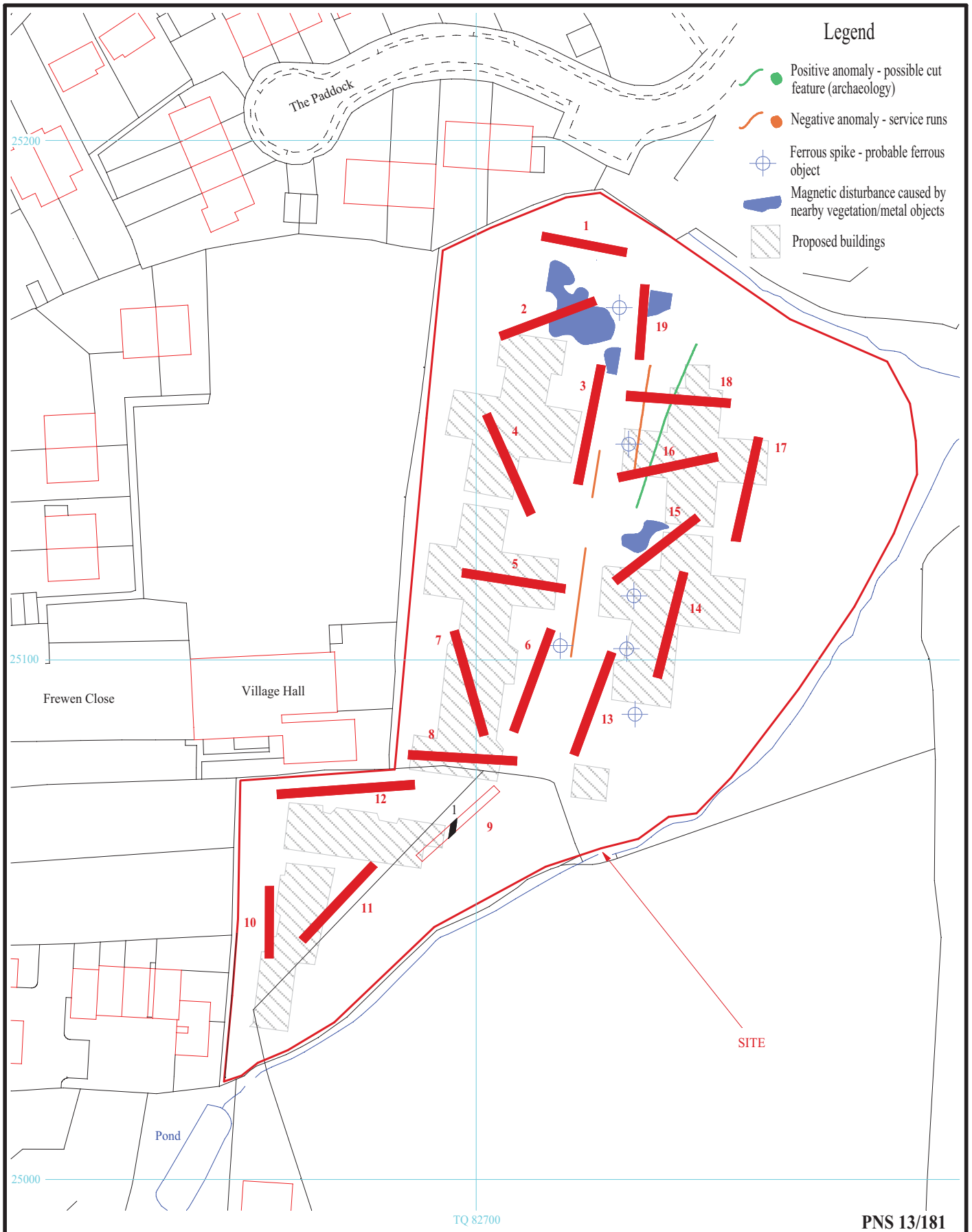




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Figure 2. Detailed location of site



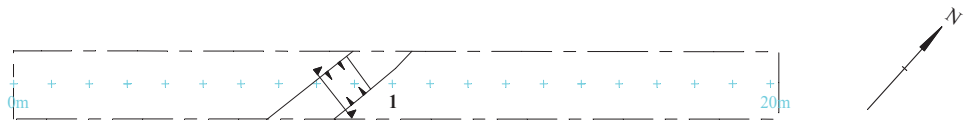


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Figure 3. Location of trenches relative to previous geophysical anomalies and future development.



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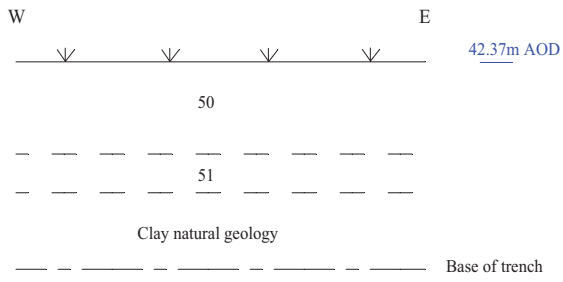
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Figure 4. Plan of trench 9

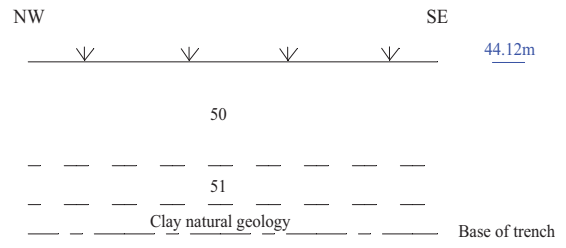


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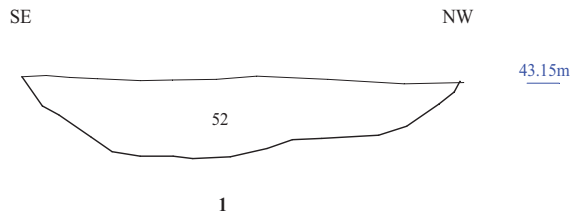
Trench 1



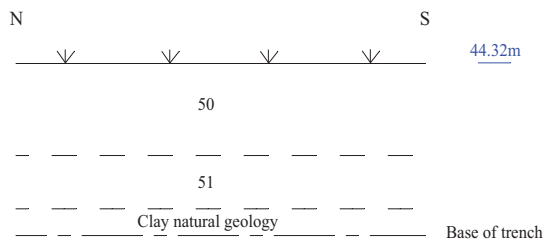
Trench 4



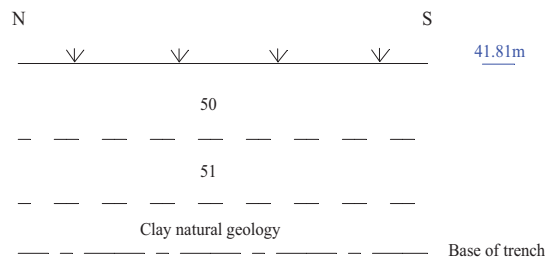
Trench 9



Trench 10



Trench 17



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Figure 5. Sections





Plate 1. Trench 4, looking north-west.  
Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 2. Trench 9, looking north-west.  
Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 3. Trench 10, looking north. Scales: horizontal  
2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 4. Trench 17, looking north. Scales: horizontal  
2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.

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Plates 1 - 4.

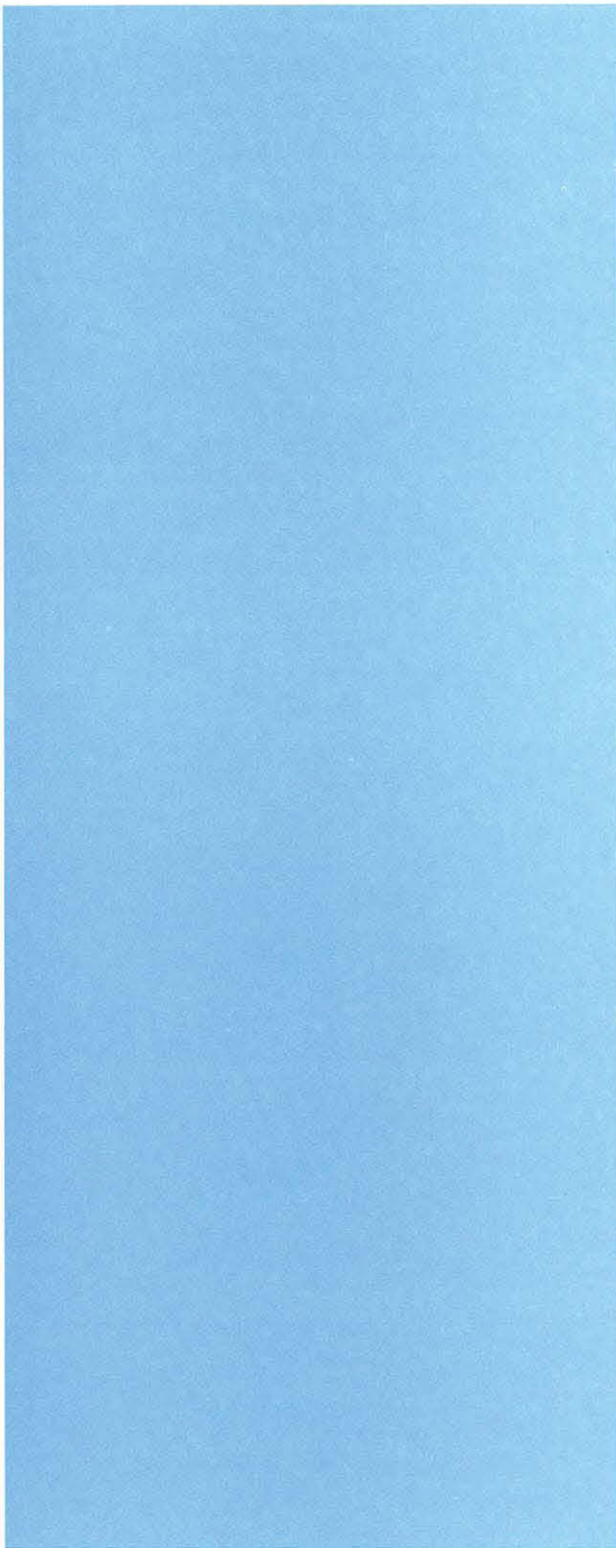
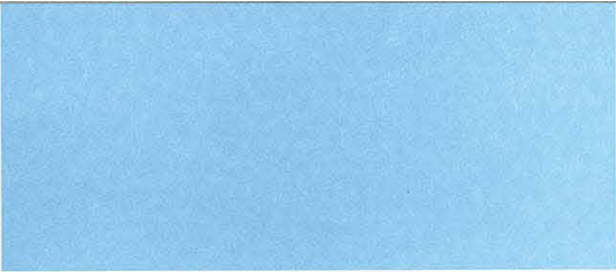
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## TIME CHART

	<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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