

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

**Chitcombe Road, Broad Oak,
Brede, East Sussex**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Teresa Vieira and Sean Wallis

Site Code: CRB15/52

(TQ 8243 1979)

**Chitcombe Road, Broad Oak, Brede,
East Sussex**

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Westridge Construction Ltd**

by Teresa Vieira and Sean Wallis
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code CRB15/52

May 2015

Summary

Site name: Chitcombe Road, Broad Oak, Brede, East Sussex

Grid reference: TQ 8243 1979

Site activity: Evaluation

Planning reference : RR/2014/2005/P

Date and duration of project: 8th - 9th April 2015

Project manager: Sean Wallis

Site supervisor: Sean Wallis

Site code: CRB 15/52

Area of site: c. 0.45 ha

Summary of results: The evaluation of land at Chitcombe Road, Broad Oak, Brede, successfully investigated those parts of the site which will be most affected by the new housing development. Despite the fact that much of the site had not been significantly disturbed in the past, little of archaeological significance was uncovered, with just one post-medieval linear feature being recorded in the southern part of the site. The northern part of the site, close to Chitcombe Road, had previously been disturbed, possibly during road improvements or activities associated with cleaning out the roadside ditch.

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.

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Chitcombe Road, Broad Oak, Brede, East Sussex An Archaeological Evaluation

by Teresa Vieira and Sean Wallis

Report 13/181b

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Chitcombe Road, Broad Oak, Brede, East Sussex (TQ 8243 1979) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Helen Ottley of Westridge Construction Ltd, Ruskin House, Bodiam Business Park, Junction Road, Bodiam, East Sussex, TN32 5UP.

Planning permission (RR/2014/2005/P) has been gained from Rother District Council to redevelop the site for housing. The consent is subject to two conditions (5 and 15) relating to archaeology and the historic environment.

Condition 5 states : *No development shall take place until the developer has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work, in accordance with a Written Scheme of Archaeological Investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.*

Reason: To ensure that the archaeological and historical interest of the site is safeguarded and recorded, in accordance with Policy EN2 (vi) of the Rother District Local Plan- Core Strategy .

Condition 15 states: *The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until the archaeological site investigation assessment (including provision for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition) has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition 5 to the satisfaction of the local planning authority, in consultation with the County Planning Authority.*

Reason: To ensure that the archaeological and historical interest of the site is safeguarded and recorded, in accordance with Policy EN2 (vi) of the Rother District Local Plan- Core Strategy.

As a consequence of the possibility 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. This approach was recommended in a recent Historic Environment Record Consultation (ref :251/14).

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 Clara Schonfeld, Teresa Vieira and Sean Wallis between 8th and 9th February 2015, and the site code is CRB 15/52. 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 west of the historic core of Broad Oak, East Sussex (TQ 8243 1979) (Fig. 1). Chitcombe Road is positioned on a ridge and, as a result, the site generally slopes down towards the south. The ground lies at a height of approximately 89m above Ordnance Datum close to the road, dropping to about 85.50m in the south-east corner. According to the British Geological Survey the underlying geology in the northern part of the site should consist of clay from the Tunbridge Wells Formation, with Wadhurst Clay in the central area, and possibly clay from the Ashdown Beds Formation along the southern edge (BGS 1980). During the evaluation clay natural was encountered in all trenches.

Archaeological background

A search of the East Sussex Historic Environment Record (ESHER ref: 018/15) was carried out in January 2015 to provide archaeological and historical background information. The site lies to the west of the core of Broad Oak, which was historically a hamlet within Brede parish. The eastern edge of the site lies within an Archaeological Notification Area associated with the settlement of Broad Oak, which is thought to have medieval origins. Chitcombe Road and the settlement at Broad Oak are positioned on a ridge which runs from Uckfield to Rye. This ridge is likely to have been used as a trackway route from the prehistoric period onwards. Although no medieval finds are recorded within the settlement of Broad Oak, a number of buildings in the area contain elements dating from that period. Features relating to medieval pottery production have been found to the south-east of the present site, and there is cartographic evidence of a post-medieval brick and tile kiln nearby.

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; and
- to determine whether any evidence of medieval activity is present.

Eight trenches were to be dug, each measuring 14m in length and 1.60m in width (*c.* 4% of development area). The trenches were to be positioned to target the footprints of the new buildings and roads. These 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. Where archaeological features were present these were to be excavated or sampled by hand sufficiently to meet the objectives set out above.

Results

All the trenches were 1.60m wide and measured between 13.70m and 14.70m in length (Fig. 3), and between 0.45m and 0.82 in depth. The three trenches which contained archaeological features are 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. The excavated features are summarized in Appendix 2.

Trench 1 (Fig. 4; Pls 1 and 2)

This trench was aligned approximately SSE-NNW, and was 14.40m long and 0.50m deep. Natural clay geology was revealed beneath 0.17m of topsoil (50) and 0.23m of subsoil (51). A possible ditch was recorded between 4.60m and 6.0m from the south end of the trench. The feature was up to 0.98m wide and 0.10m deep (Fig. 5) and contained one fragment of late post-medieval glass in its fill (53). It was cut by a land drain which followed the same alignment.

Trench 4 (Fig. 4; Pl. 4)

This trench was aligned approximately S-N, and was 14.70m long and 0.60m deep. Natural clay geology was revealed beneath 0.25m of topsoil (50) and 0.22m of subsoil (51). A possible pit (1) was recorded at the northern end of the trench. A slot through the feature revealed that it was not very deep (Fig. 5). Its upper fill consisted of re-deposited natural clay (54), whilst its lower fill comprised mid greyish brown sandy clay (52) which contained fragments of late post-medieval or modern brick and tile, flower pot, and iron nails. The large feature could be a quarry pit, although the close proximity of Chitcombe Road and its associated roadside ditch suggest that the disturbed area may be the result of work being carried out on the road or cleaning of the ditch. A similar feature (3) was recorded in Trench 5.

Trench 5 (Fig. 4; Pl. 5)

This trench was aligned approximately SSE-NNW, and was 14.50m long and 0.46m deep. Natural clay geology was revealed beneath 0.20m topsoil (50) and 0.12m of subsoil (51). A large feature (3) was recorded at the northern end of the trench. This was not excavated, but was considered to be the same feature as that recorded in Trench 4 (1). Fragments of tile and brick were recovered from the surface of its fill (55).

Finds

The assemblage of finds recovered from the site is small and consists of late material of well-known county-wide types. It is not recommended for long-term curation and has been discarded.

Pottery by Luke Barber

A single unabraded 12g sherd from an unglazed earthenware flower pot of 19th- to early 20th-century type was found in the lower fill of feature 1 (52).

Ceramic Building Material by Luke Barber

A small assemblage of brick and tile was recovered from two contexts.

The lower fill of feature 1 (52) produced a single piece (44g) of well formed and low/medium fired brick tempered with sparse/common fine sand with common iron oxide and siltstone inclusions to 4mm. Both peg tile fragments (54g, 11mm thick) from this deposit are well formed and fired, being tempered with sparse fine sand, common iron oxides to 1mm and rare marl pellets to 1mm. All of this material can be placed within a mid 18th- to early 20th-century date range.

The other context to produce ceramic building material was feature 3(55), where finds were recovered from the unexcavated surface. This contained a 16g brick fragment of similar general type to that in 1 (52), but with no siltstone inclusions, and the iron oxide inclusions ranging up to 2mm. The 10mm thick peg tile (34g) is well formed and hard fired and tempered with sparse fine sand and common iron oxides to 1mm. It is of similar date to the material in 1 (52).

Glass by Luke Barber

A 4g shard of uncorroded dark green glass, from a cylindrical wine bottle, was recovered from the fill of ditch 2(53). Although the vessel could be placed anywhere between c. 1800 and 1925, a date after the mid 19th century is suspected.

The Ironwork by Luke Barber

The lower fill of feature 1 (52) produced two complete but quite heavily corroded nails (10g). The larger (11mm long) has a rectangular-sectioned shank with low domed circular head, while the other (40mm long) has a simple right angle head and is probably for floorboards. Both nails would be in keeping with a 19th century date.

Conclusion

The evaluation at Chitcombe Road, Broad Oak, Brede, successfully investigated those parts of the site which will be most affected by the new housing development. Despite the fact that much of the site had not been

significantly disturbed in the past, little of archaeological significance was uncovered, with just one post-medieval linear feature being recorded in the southern part of the site. The northern part of the site, close to Chitcombe Road, had previously been disturbed, possibly during road improvements or activities associated with cleaning out the roadside ditch.

References

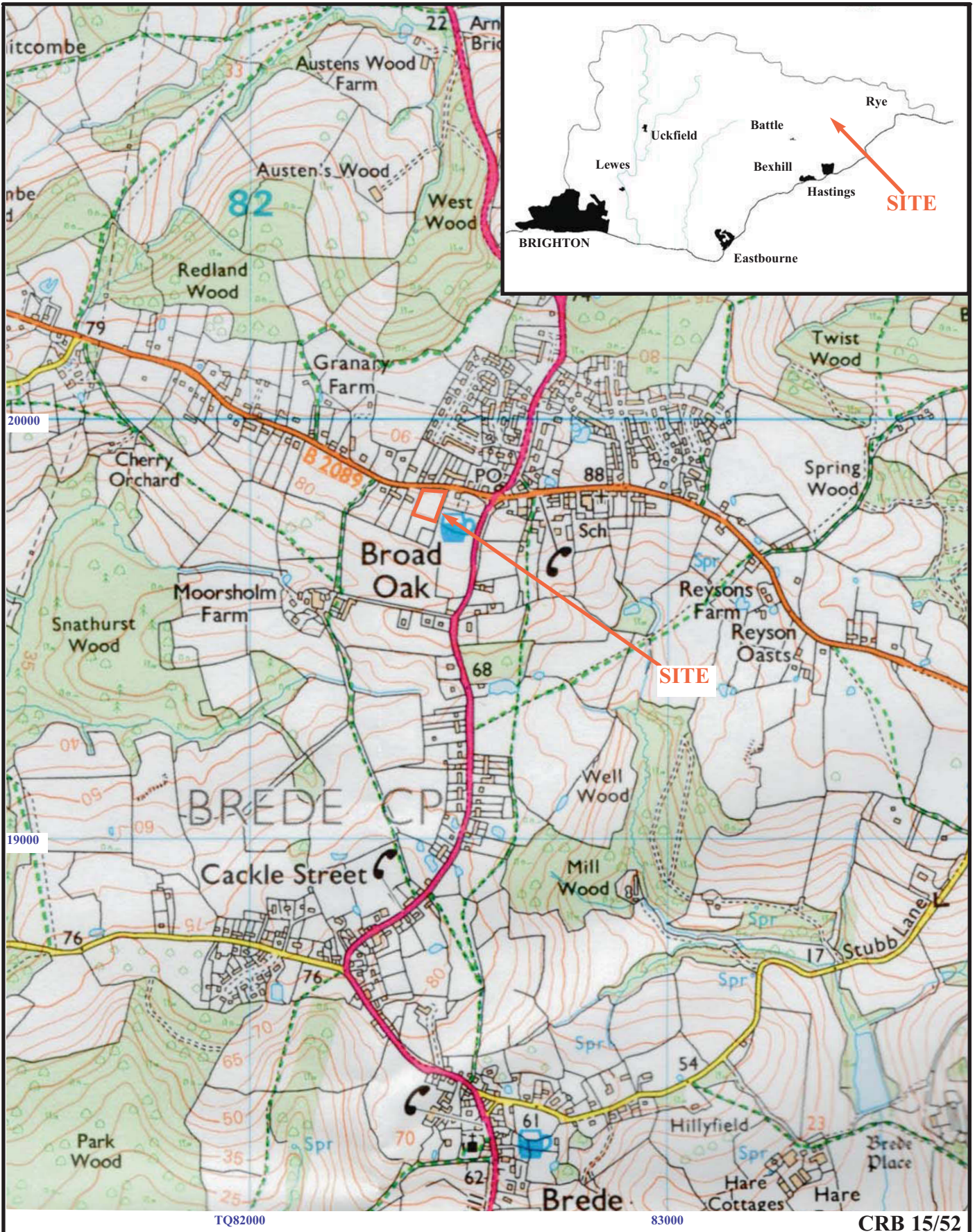
BGS, 1980, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 320/321, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Government, London
Rudling, D, (ed) 2003, *The Archaeology of Sussex to AD2000*, Centre for Continuing Education, Univ Sussex, Brighton

APPENDIX 1: Trench details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	14.40	1.60	0.50	0-0.17m topsoil (50); 0.17-0.30m subsoil (51); 0.30-0.50m+ natural geology (clay).Base of trench at 86.38m AOD (NW). Possible ditch between 4m and 6m.Land drain cutting the ditch. [Pls 1 and 2]
2	15.10	1.60	0.60	0-0.17m topsoil (50); 0.17-0.28m subsoil (51); 0.28-0.60m+ natural geology (clay). Base of trench at 88.88m AOD (NE). [Pl. 3]
3	13.70	1.60	0.53	0-0.17m topsoil (50); 0.17-0.30m subsoil (51); 0.30-0.53m+ natural geology (clay).Base of trench at 89.47m AOD (N).
4	14.70	1.60	0.60	N end: 0-0.25m topsoil (50); 0.25-0.43m subsoil (51); 0.43-0.60m+ natural geology (clay). S end: 0-0.14m topsoil (50); 0.14-0.28m subsoil (51); 0.28-0.39m+ natural geology (clay). Base of trench at 89.70m AOD (N); base of trench at 89.14m AOD (S).Possible pit between 11 and 14.70m. [Pl. 4]
5	14.50	1.60	0.46	0-0.20m topsoil (50); 0.20-0.32m subsoil (51); 0.32-0.46m+ natural geology (clay). Base of trench at 89.68m AOD (NW). Possible pit between 9m and 14.50m. [Pl. 5]
6	14.70	1.60	0.45	0-0.20m topsoil (50); 0.20-0.30m subsoil (51); 0.30-0.45m+ natural geology (clay).Base of trench at 88.84m AOD (NE). [Pl. 6]
7	14.40	1.60	0.60	0-0.20m topsoil (50); 0.20-0.40m subsoil (51); 0.40-0.60m+ natural geology (clay). Base of trench at 89.31m AOD (W). [Pl. 7]
8	13.80	1.60	0.82	N end: 0-0.20m topsoil (50); 0.20-0.32m subsoil (51); 0.32-0.52m+ natural geology (clay). S end: 0-0.30m topsoil (50); 0.30-0.53m subsoil (51); 0.53-0.82m+ natural geology (clay). Base of trench at 86.46m AOD (N) and 85.07m AOD (S). [Pl. 8]

APPENDIX 2: Feature details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
1	2	53	Ditch	Post-medieval / modern	Glass
4	1	52, 54	Possible pit	Post-medieval / modern	Pottery, CBM
5	3	55	Possible pit	Post-medieval / modern	CBM

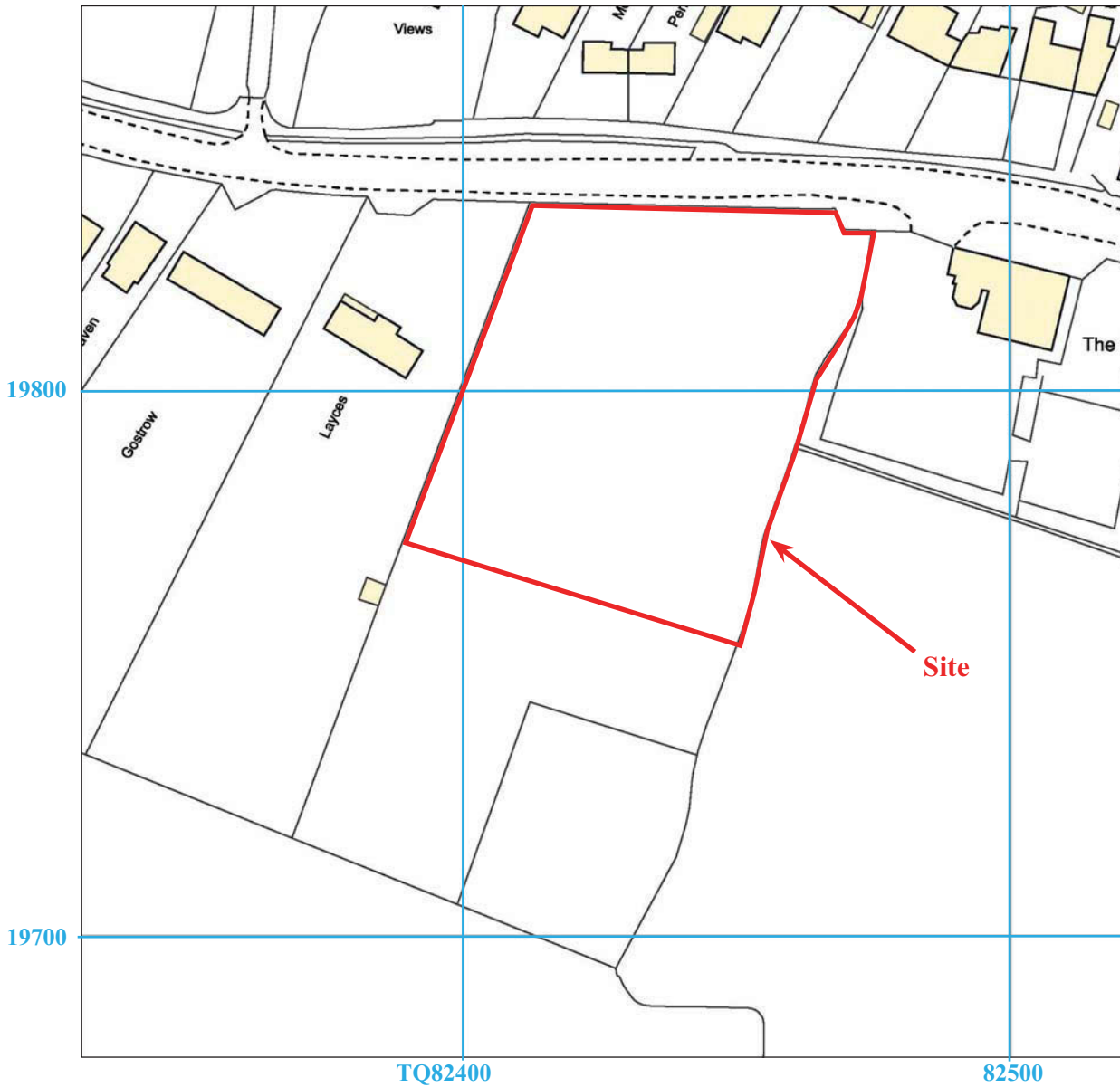


**Chitcombe Road, Broad Oak, Brede,
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Figure 1. Location of site within Broad Oak and East Sussex.

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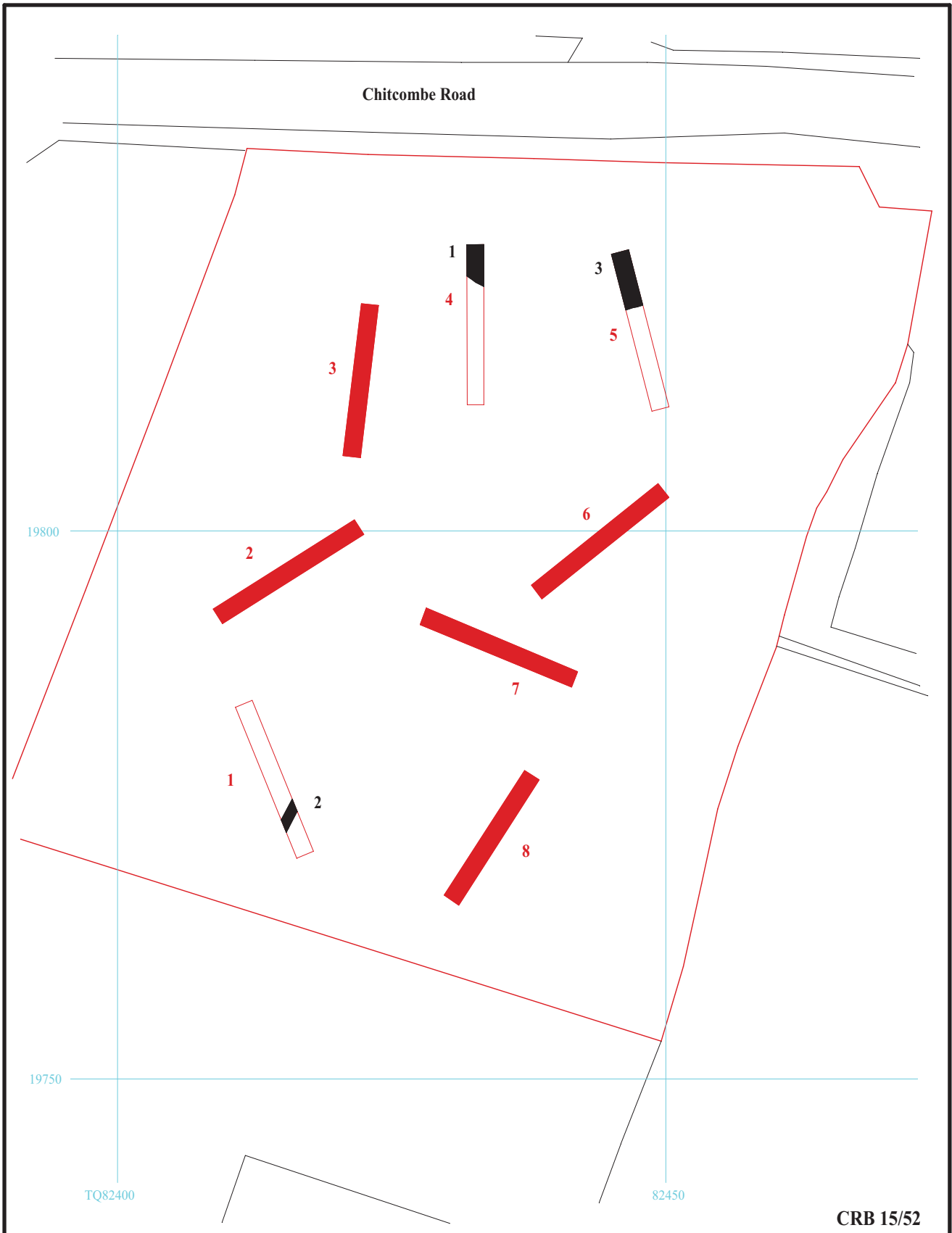


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Figure 2. Detailed location of site

Reproduced from Ordnance Survey digital mapping at 1:1250

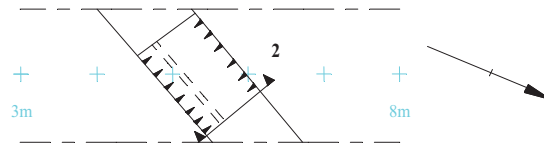


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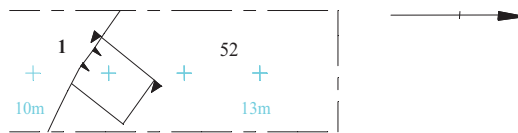
Figure 3. Location of trenches.



Trench 1



2 aeol



Trench 5



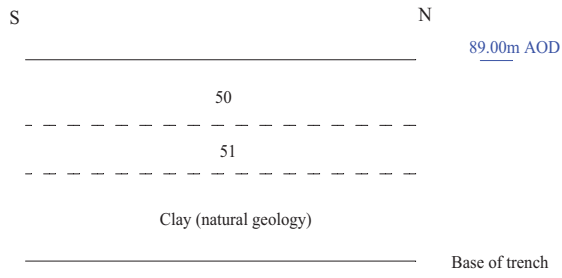
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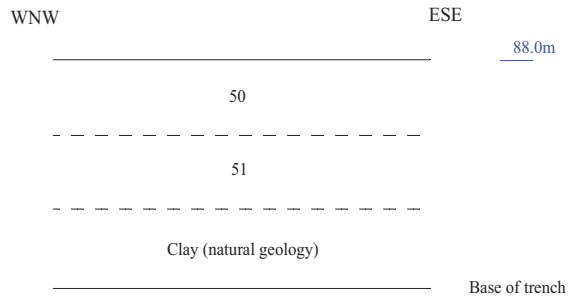
Figure 4. Plan of trenches 1, 4 and 5.



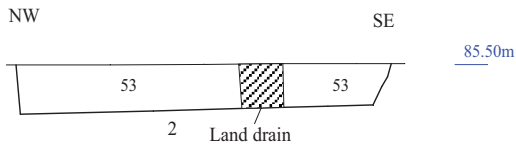
General stratigraphy in Trench 3



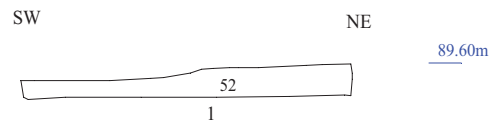
General stratigraphy in Trench 7



Trench 1



Trench 4



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Figure 5. Sections





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



Plate 2. Ditch 2 in Trench 1, looking north-east.
Scales: horizontal 0.5m, vertical 0.1m.



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



Plate 4. Feature 1 in Trench 4, looking north-west. Scales: horizontal 0.5m, vertical 0.1m.

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Plates 1 - 4.**

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Plate 5. Trench 5, looking north-west.
Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 6. Trench 6, looking north-east. Scales: horizontal
2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 7. Trench 7, looking north-west. Scales: horizontal
2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 7. Trench 8, looking north-east. Scales: horizontal
2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.

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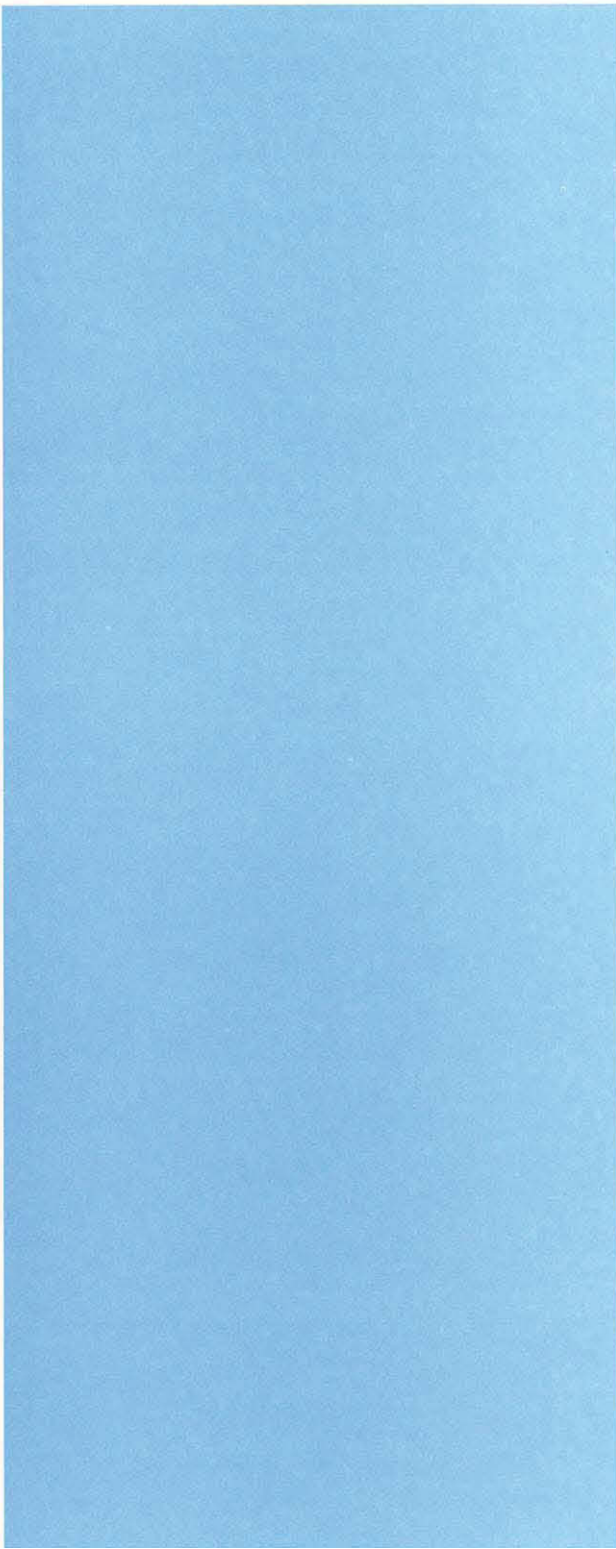
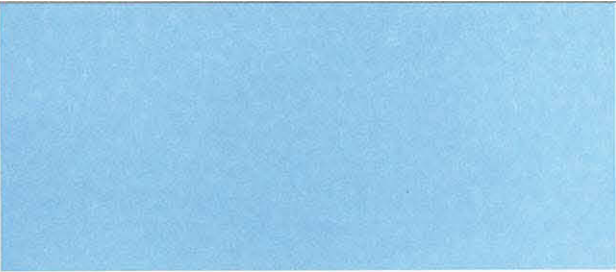
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Plates 5 - 8.**

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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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