

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

**Harvey's Depot, Pinwell Road, Lewes,
East Sussex**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Sean Wallis

Site Code: LPL13/115

(TQ 4165 0992)

Harvey's Depot, Pinwell Road, Lewes, East Sussex

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for The Depot - Lewes**

by Sean Wallis

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code
LPL 13/115

September 2015

Summary

Site name: Harvey's Depot, Pinwell Road, Lewes, East Sussex

Grid reference: TQ 4165 0992

Site activity: Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 17th August 2015

Project manager: Sean Wallis

Site supervisor: Sean Wallis

Site code: LPL 13/115

Area of site: c. 0.25 ha

Summary of results: The evaluation at Harvey's Depot, Pinwell Road, Lewes, revealed substantial deposits of made ground in the western part of the site. Historic maps indicate that the site was formerly within a floodplain area associated with the Winterbourne Stream, and it is therefore likely that the ground level was built up in the 19th century to prevent flooding. Once it was established that the new development was unlikely to significantly affect any buried archaeological deposits, which may yet be present beneath the made ground, it was decided that not all the proposed trenches needed to be excavated.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading. The preferred depository for the archive is Lewes Museum. Unfortunately the museum is not accepting new material at the present time, and the archive will therefore be held by Thames Valley Archaeological Services until a suitable depository can be found.

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Harvey's Depot, Pinwell Road, Lewes, East Sussex An Archaeological Evaluation

by Sean Wallis

Report 13/115b

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at the former Harvey's Depot, Pinwell Road, Lewes, East Sussex (TQ 4165 0992) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Robert Senior of The Depot - Lewes.

Planning permission (SDNP/14/01904/FUL) had been gained from the South Downs National Park Authority for the conversion, adaptation and extension of the former Harvey's depot building to house a new cinema and associated facilities. Hard and soft landscaping of the former service yard was also proposed. The consent was subject to a number of conditions (15, 16 and 17) relating to archaeology and the historic environment.

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 National Park Authority'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 during correspondence with the East Sussex County Council Archaeological Officer (Mr Greg Chuter), who acts as adviser to the National Park Authority on archaeological matters.

The field investigation was carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation approved by the East Sussex County Council Archaeological Officer. The fieldwork was undertaken by Teresa Vieira and Sean Wallis on 17th August 2015, and the site code is LPL13/115. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services. The preferred depository for the archive is Lewes Museum, but unfortunately the museum is not accepting new material at present. As a result, the archive will be held by Thames Valley Archaeological Services until a suitable depository can be found.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located to the north of Pinwell Road, Lewes, close to the town centre and railway station, and is centred on TQ 4165 0992 (Fig. 2). It is occupied by various buildings associated with the former Harvey's depot,

along with a public toilet block just inside the western boundary. The central part of the site is covered with Tarmac and concrete hard standing. The main part of the site is relatively flat and lies at a height of approximately 4.50m above Ordnance Datum. The north-west part of the site rises to meet Lansdown Place, at approximately 10m AOD. According to the British Geological Survey the underlying geology in the northern part of the sites consists of the Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation, whilst there may be alluvium in the southern part of the site (BGS 2006). Chalk geology was revealed in a trench in the northern part of the site at a depth of 2.80m below the present ground surface.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site had been highlighted in a desk-based assessment (Wallis 2013). In summary, the site lies within an area of relatively modest archaeological potential, partly due to its position immediately to the south of the town's medieval walls. Historic maps indicate that it was formerly within a floodplain associated with the Winterbourne Stream and, although no buildings are shown in the area until the 19th century, this riverside location would undoubtedly have been attractive for exploitation from the prehistoric period onwards. As far as post-medieval remains are concerned, a building previously occupied the south-western corner of the site, and historic maps suggest that it was built sometime between 1799 and 1873. This building may have been adapted several times before being demolished in the 20th century (Wallis 2013).

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 whether any evidence of medieval activity is present; and
- to determine if any remains of the post-medieval building which once occupied the south-west corner of the site are present.

Six trenches were proposed to be dug, each measuring 10m in length and 1.60m in width. These were to target those parts of the site which would be most affected by the new development, and one trench was specifically to target the post-medieval building which once stood in the south-west corner of the site. The

trenches 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

It became apparent early on during the evaluation that, due to the presence of substantial made ground deposits, the excavation of six 10m long trenches would result in far more ground disturbance than the construction work itself, because the new building was to be constructed on piles, which would be linked by relatively shallow ground beams. Much of the existing ground surface was to be preserved under the floor of the new building, or merely resurfaced. Although the hard standing was to be removed in some small areas to facilitate new planting, the actual amount of ground disturbance was to be small and would only affect these made ground deposits. As a result, just two trenches were excavated, in the north-west and south-west parts of the site (Fig. 3). A complete list of the trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1. This change to the initial written scheme of investigation was agreed following consultation with the East Sussex County Council Archaeologist.

Trench 1 (Figs 3 and 4, Pl. 2)

This trench was aligned approximately N-S and measured 4m in length at its base, and was 2.80m deep. Up to 0.40m of concrete and its associated bedding layer was removed to reveal a probable buried soil horizon (50). The buried soil was up to 0.45m thick, and contained a few finds dating from the 19th century. It is likely that the soil horizon dates from the period when the site was largely occupied by an orchard which is shown on the 1873 Ordnance Survey. Several distinct layers of made ground (51, 52 and 53) were recorded beneath the buried soil, and probably represent dump layers used to build up the ground level above the former floodplain. A fragment of brick, probably dating from the 19th century, was recovered from deposit 54, which was recorded between the made ground deposits and the natural chalk geology. This deposit (54) consisted of mid brownish grey clayey silt, up to 0.60m thick, and may be an earlier buried soil. A dump layer of chalk (56) was noted between deposits 53 and 54 in the northern end of the trench. No archaeological features were recorded in the trench.

Trench 2 (Figs 3 and 4, Pl. 2)

Trench 2 was excavated in the south-west corner of the site, and was positioned to target the post-medieval building which is first shown on the 1873 Ordnance Survey. The trench was excavated to a depth of 2.80m, but was only 1m long at its base. Up to 0.35m of concrete and its associated bedding layer was removed to reveal a compact deposit of chalk, brick and tile (57), which is likely to be a demolition layer related to the building

which once stood in this part of the site. The finds from this deposit suggest that the building may have been demolished in the early 20th century. Various made ground deposits (58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63 and 64) were observed beneath the demolition layer, but natural geology was not encountered in this trench. Several fragments of brick and tile from deposit 64 appear to be post-medieval in date, but close dating was not possible due to the small size of the pieces recovered.

Finds by Luke Barber

Due to the small and mixed nature of the recovered finds assemblage, and the fact that all the deposits were made ground, the material has been considered by context rather than material category.

Context 50 produced a single sherd of pottery (6g) from a blue transfer-printed cup with floral pattern of c. 1830-1900 date. The fresh 2g clay pipe stem fragment can only be broadly dated c. 1750-1900. The final item is a 36g fragment of 12mm thick grey sandy render (consisting of a 5 and 7mm skim) of 19th century type.

Context 54 produced a single 94g brick fragment though no dimensions are present. It is tempered with abundant fine/medium quartz and iron oxide/slag pieces to 6mm in a purple clay matrix. An 18th to 19th century date is likely.

Context 57 produced two pieces of pottery, both consistent with a c. 1830-1900 date range. One consists of an 8g fragment from a blue transfer-printed bowl with flow blue floral design, the other the out-turned rim from a green transfer-printed chamber pot with sheet pattern around the rim's upper surface. A further fresh 2g clay pipe stem of similar type to that in 50 was also recovered. The only other find from this deposit consists of a complete 82mm diameter base from a green wine/beer bottle of later 19th to early 20th century type.

Context 62 produced only ceramic building material. There were two fragments (694g) of brick. These are quite crudely finished but medium fired, tempered with common/moderate fine/medium quartz, common iron oxide and marl pellets to 3mm. One piece measures 50mm thick and has traces of an off-white coarse flint sand lime mortar adhering. A later 16th to early 18th century date is suspected. There are also two peg tile fragments from this deposit. The 22g fragment is well formed, 12mm thick, well fired and tempered with sparse fine quartz and moderate/abundant marl streaks. A 17th to mid 18th century date is likely. The other piece is somewhat small to be diagnostic (10g) but is tempered with sparse fine quartz and moderate/abundant iron oxides to 1mm. Such types are typical of the 18th to 19th centuries but a larger fragment would be needed to be sure of this date.

The finds assemblage is not considered to hold any potential for further analysis and have been retained on site.

Conclusion

Despite the fact that the evaluation at the former Harvey's Depot was not as extensive as originally planned, the two trenches which were excavated provided important information about the site's development through time, which appears to be supported by evidence gleaned from historic maps. These maps indicate that the site originally lay within a floodplain, which would probably have been used for little other than pasture. It appears that significant efforts were made in the post-medieval period to raise the ground level to prevent it flooding. This would have involved the transportation of tonnes of made ground deposits to the site. Finds from these layers, even if of any intrinsic interest, would therefore be largely irrelevant to this site in itself.

It is possible that the demolition layer found in the south-west corner of the site may relate to a building which was built on the site between 1799 and 1873 (based on map evidence), although other buildings are shown in this area on 20th century Ordnance Surveys. A buried soil horizon recorded in the north-west part of the site may be a remnant of the orchard which is depicted on the 1873 Ordnance Survey.

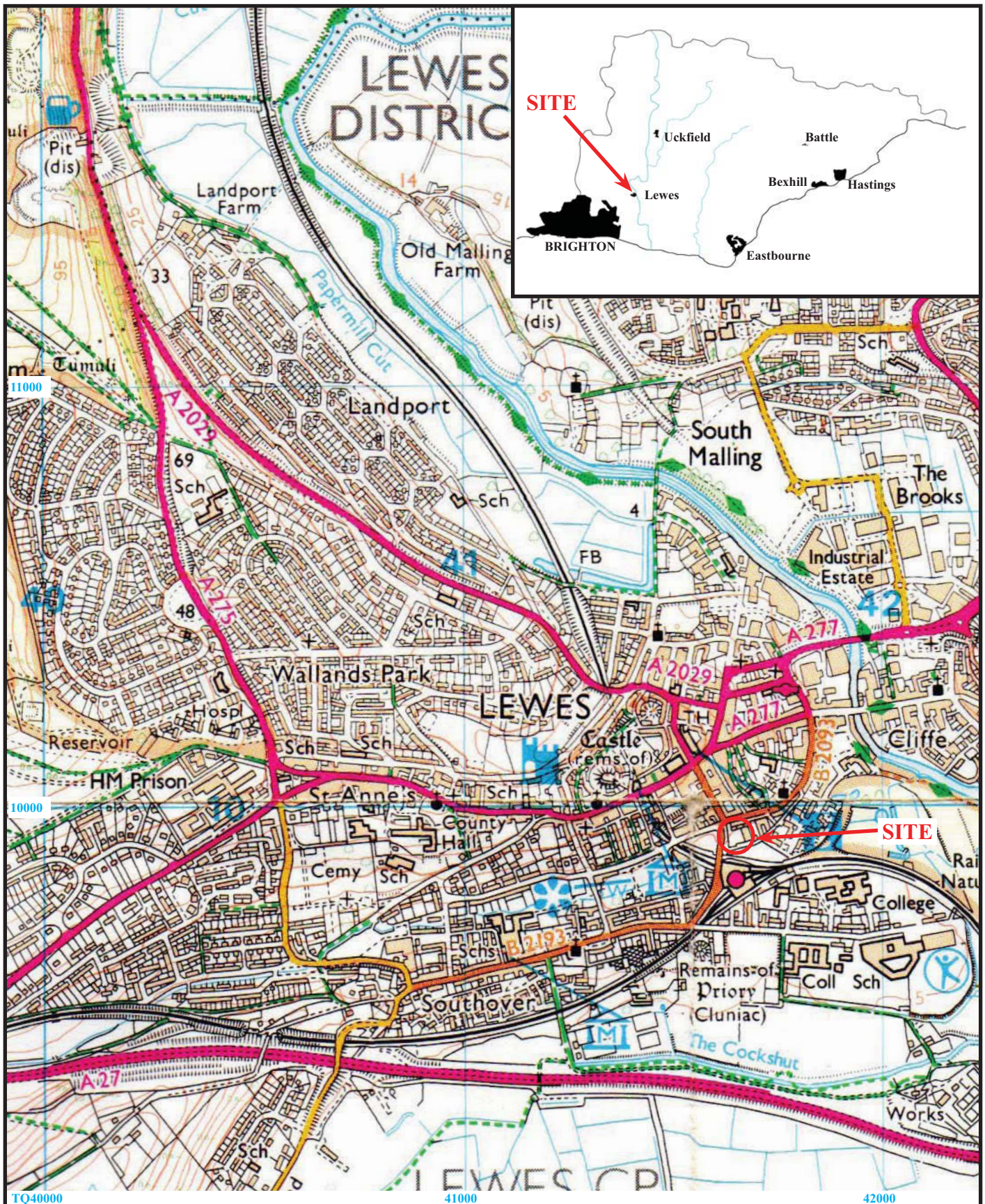
As the trenches did not penetrate below these relatively recent layers, it remains possible that archaeological features dating from the medieval period or earlier may be present beneath the thick deposits of made ground, but the design of the new development will have minimal effect on them, apart from possible minor damage from piling.

References

- BGS, 2006, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000, Sheet 319/334, Bedrock and Superficial Deposits Edition, Keyworth.
- ESCC, 2015, 'Sussex Archaeological Standards', East Sussex County Council unpublished guidance document, Lewes.
- NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Department of Communities and Local Government, London (TSO).
- Wallis, S, 2013, 'Harvey's Depot, Pinwell Road, Lewes, East Sussex: an archaeological desk-based assessment', Thames Valley Archaeological Services report **13/115**, Brighton

APPENDIX 1: Trench details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	4.00 (at base)	1.60	2.80	0-0.20m concrete; 0.20-0.40m made ground (bedding layer); 0.40-0.85 buried soil (50); 0.85-1.60m dark brown grey clayey silt with frequent chalk inclusions (51); 1.60-1.95m dark brown grey clayey silt with no inclusions (52); 1.95-2.20m mid greenish grey silty clay with occasional gravel inclusions (53); 2.20-2.80m mid brown grey clayey silt (54); 2.80m+ chalk natural geology (55). [Pl. 2] A dump of chalk (56) was observed between deposits (53) and (54) at the northern end of the trench. Base of north end of trench at 1.66m aOD.
2	1.00 (at base)	1.60	2.80	0-0.15m concrete; 0.15-0.35m made ground (bedding layer); 0.35-0.85m compact made ground with chalk and ceramic building material (possible demolition rubble) (57); 0.85-1.05m light grey brown sand (58); 1.05-1.15m mid brown grey clayey silt with no inclusions (59); 1.15-1.30m chalk and brown clay made ground (60); 1.30-1.45m mid brown grey clayey silt with no inclusions (61); 1.45-1.70m mid grey brown sandy silt with occasional gravel (62); 1.70-2.40m mid grey brown clayey silt with moderate chalk inclusions (63); 2.40-2.80m mid brown grey silty clay with moderate chalk inclusions (64). [Pl. 3] Base of trench at 1.93m aOD.



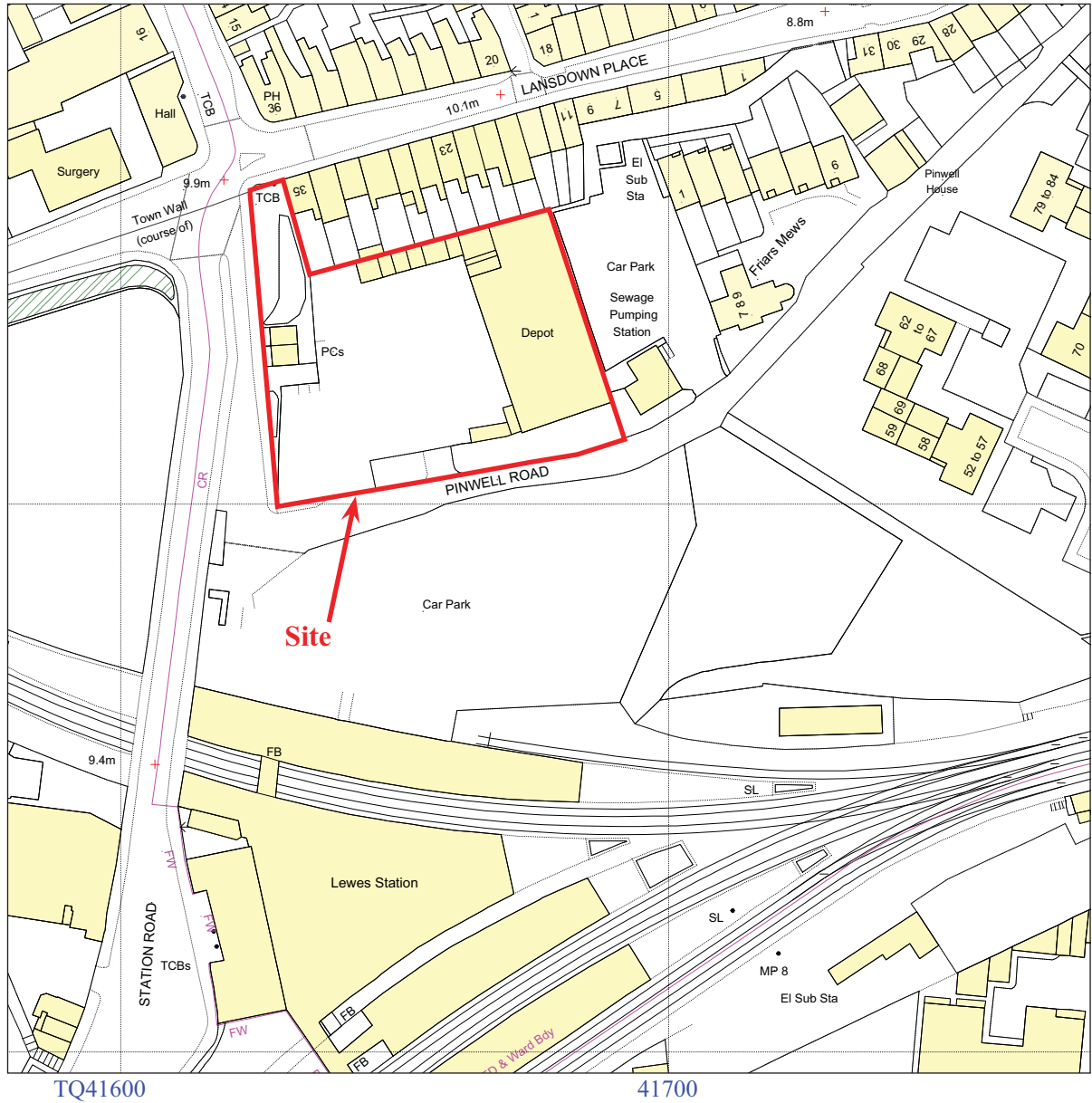
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Figure 1. Location of site within Lewes and East Sussex.

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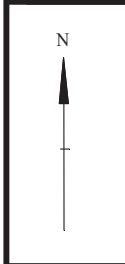
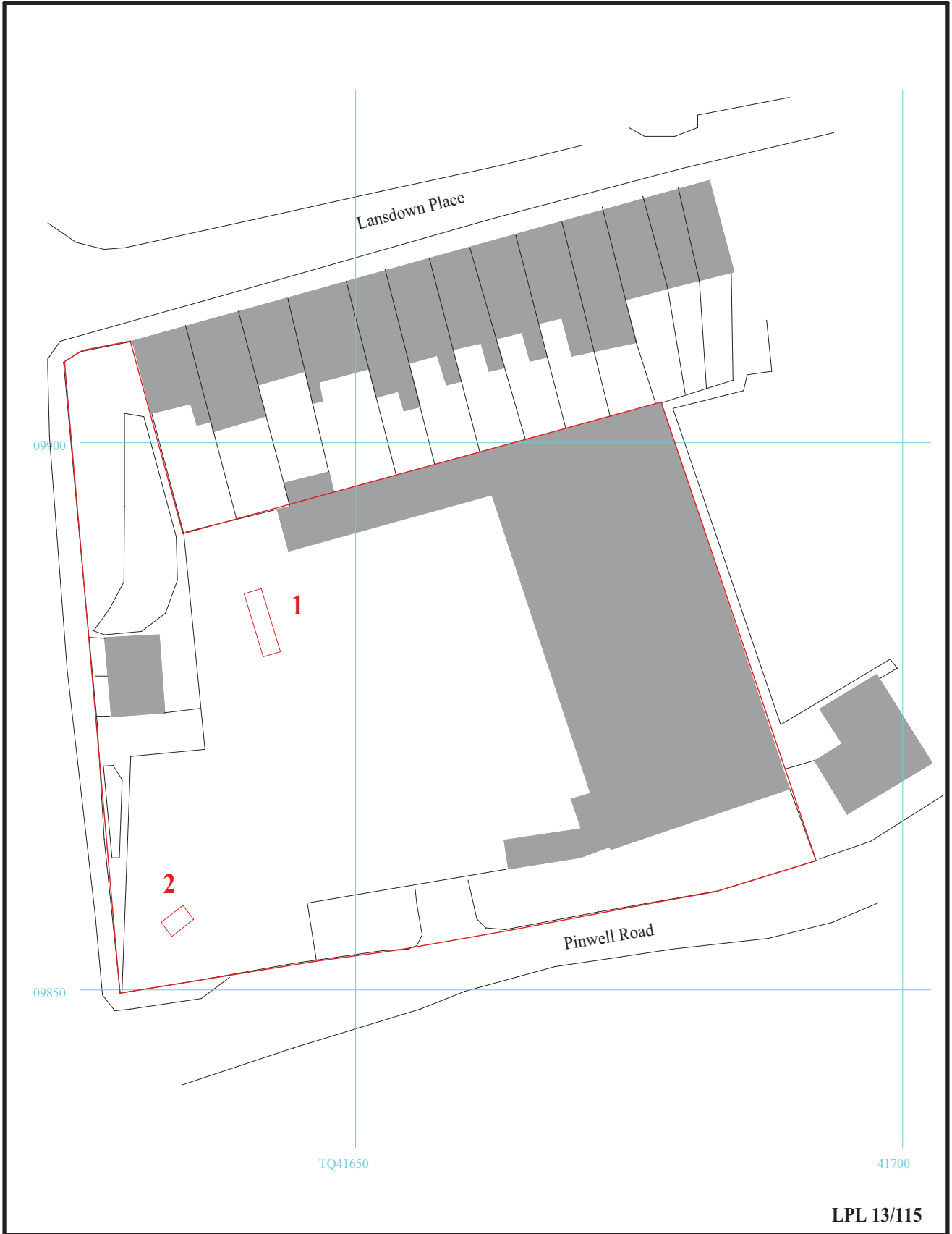
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 Figure 2. Detailed location of site

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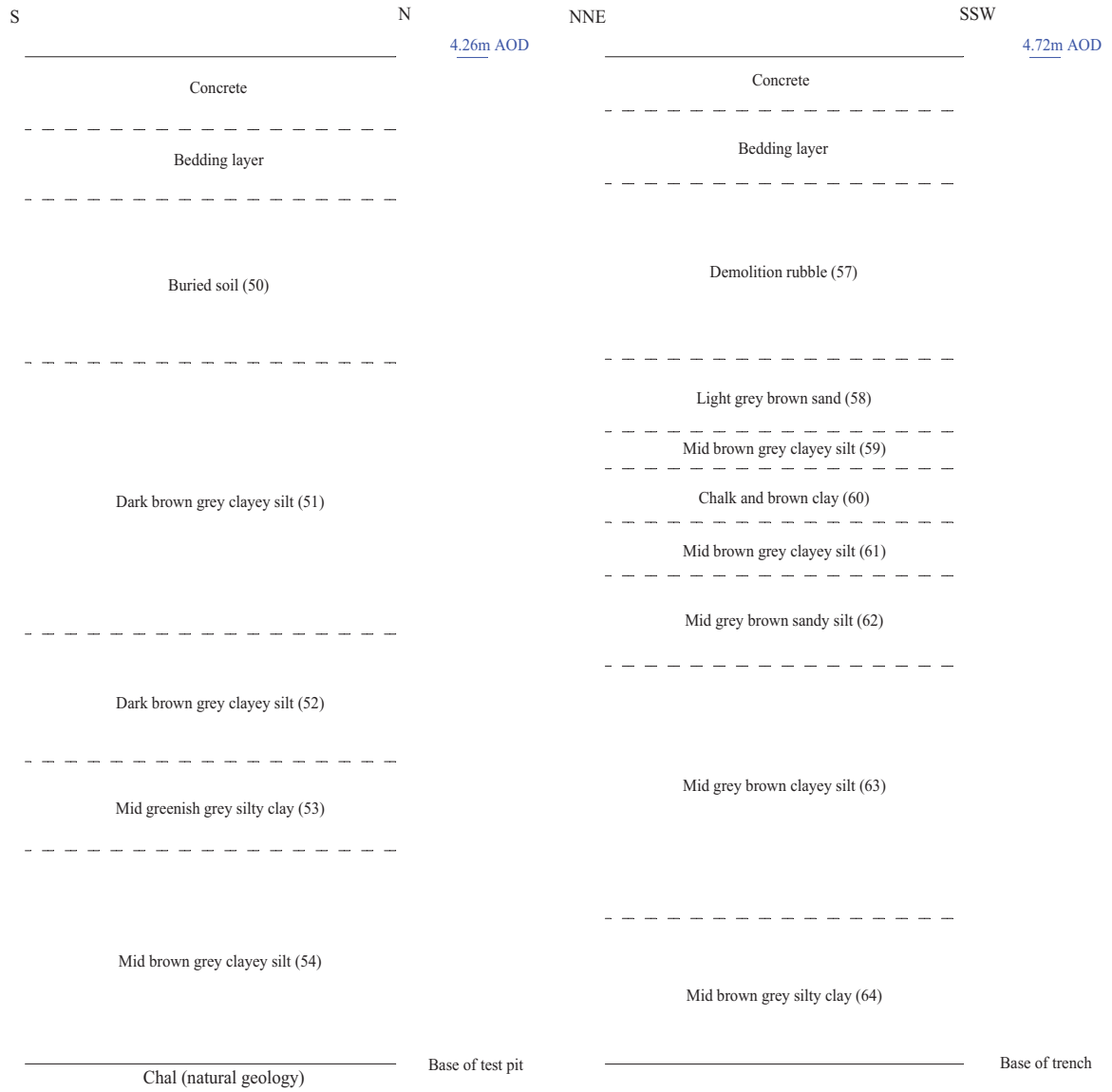
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Figure 3. Location of trenches.



General stratigraphy in Trench 1

General stratigraphy in Trench 2



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Figure 4. Sections





Plate 1. General view of site looking north east



Plate 2. Trench 1 looking north east, Scale: 2m



Plate 3. Trench 2, looking north, Scale: 2m

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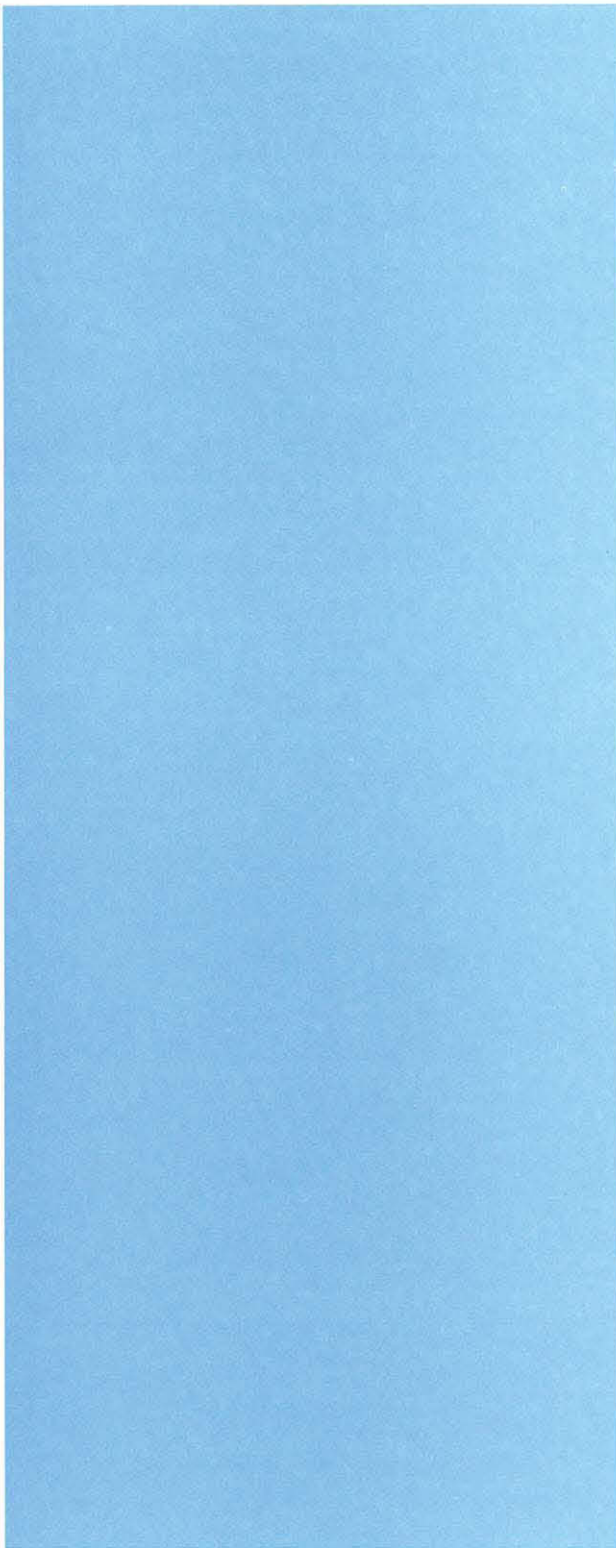
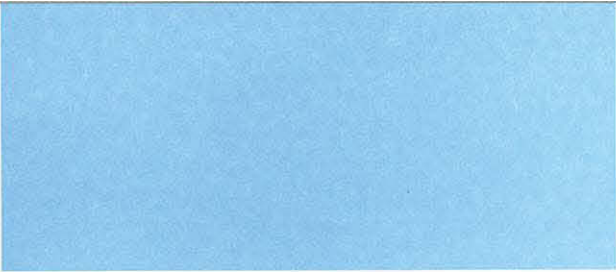
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Plates 1-3

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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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