

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

**Priors Byne Farm, Bines Road,
Partridge Green, West Sussex**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by Naomi Humphreys

Site Code: PBS15/221

(TQ 1670 1760)

**Priors Byne Farm, Bines Road, Partridge Green,
West Sussex**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief
For Hunttec Energy Solutions Limited**

By Naomi Humphreys
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code PBS15/221

December 2015

Summary

Site name: Priors Byne Farm, Bines Road, Partridge Green, West Sussex

Grid reference: TQ 1670 1760

Planning reference: DC/2831/13

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 18th September to 6th November 2015

Project manager: Sean Wallis

Site supervisor: Teresa Vieira

Site code: PBS 15/221

Area of Site: *c.* 17.5ha

Summary of results: The watching brief successfully investigated the groundworks for the construction of a solar-photovoltaic farm. Excavation of cabling trenches and the foundations of two substations were monitored. Despite a preserved subsoil horizon, indicating that the area had not been disturbed in the past, no archaeological features were observed nor artefacts recovered.

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

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	Steve Preston✓ 24.12.15

Priors Byne Farm, Bines Road, Partridge Green, Horsham, West Sussex An Archaeological Watching Brief

By Naomi Humphreys

Report 15/221

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at Priors Byne Solar Farm, Partridge Green, West Sussex (TQ 16701760) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Christina López of Hunttec Energy Solutions Ltd, 9-10 Staple Inn, London, WC1V 7QH.

Planning permission (DC/2831/13) has been gained from Horsham District Council to construct a solar photovoltaic farm on former agricultural land at Priors Byne Farm, Bines Road, Partridge Green. The area of Priors Byne Farm affected by the new development is located to the north of Honeybridge Lane. The permission was subject to a standard condition (7) relating to archaeology and the historic environment.

As a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits being present on this site which may be damaged or destroyed by the planned solar farm construction, it was proposed to carry out an archaeological watching brief as set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF, 2012) and the District Council's policies on archaeology and the historic environment. This approach had been recommended by Mr Martin Brown, the archaeological adviser for Horsham District Council.

The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation approved by the archaeological adviser for Horsham District Council (Mr Martin Brown). Where appropriate and relevant, the recommendations in *Sussex Archaeological Standards* (ESCC 2015) were to be followed. The fieldwork was undertaken by Teresa Vieira and Naomi Humphreys between 18th September and 6th November 2015, and the site code is PBS 15/221.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Horsham Museum, in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located to the north of Honeybridge Lane, on former agricultural land at Priors Byne Farm, approximately 3km south-west of Partridge Green, West Sussex (Figs 1 and 2). According to the British Geological Survey the underlying geology in this area mainly consists of Wealden Clay (BGS 2006), and this

was confirmed during the watching brief. The area generally slopes down towards the east and south-east towards a brook, and, as a result, lies at a height of between 25m and 7m above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological background

The archaeological background of the site has been presented in a desk based assessment (Salvatore 2013) which was carried out in advance of the project. In summary, with the exception of a farmstead dating back to at least the 17th century, the local area contains no known heritage assets. However, the local area has not been significantly investigated before to definitively rule out the presence of archaeological features. The site has not been extensively disturbed in the past which allows for a potential of archaeological survival.

Objectives and methodology

The aims of the watching brief were to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the groundworks. This was to involve the monitoring of cable trenches in five areas (A-E), along with ground reduction in respect of two substations in the southern part of Area B (Fig. 3). Where it was not possible or practicable to preserve archaeological remains *in-situ* the features were to be excavated by hand and fully recorded, to ensure their preservation by record. The watching brief was to be carried out in accordance with the relevant sections of Sussex Archaeological Standards (ESCC 2015) and the guidelines issued by the Chartered Institute *for* Archaeologists.

Results

Substation bases

Ground reduction in respect of two substations (DPV and Customer) was monitored in the southern part of Area B (Figs 3 and 4, Pls 3 and 4). The footprint of the DPV substation measured approximately 6.25m x 4.25m, whilst the Customer substation measured 5.50m x 5.50m. Both areas were excavated to a depth of approximately 1.60m. Generally the stratigraphy consisted of 0.35m of topsoil and 0.15m of subsoil above the natural Wealden Clay. These soil deposits were removed by a machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, under constant archaeological supervision. No archaeological finds or features were recorded.

Cable trenches

The excavation of cable trenches with an approximate combined length of 922m was monitored within four areas of the site (B-E) (Figs 3 and 4, Pls 1 and 2). These trenches were 0.60m wide and generally varied between

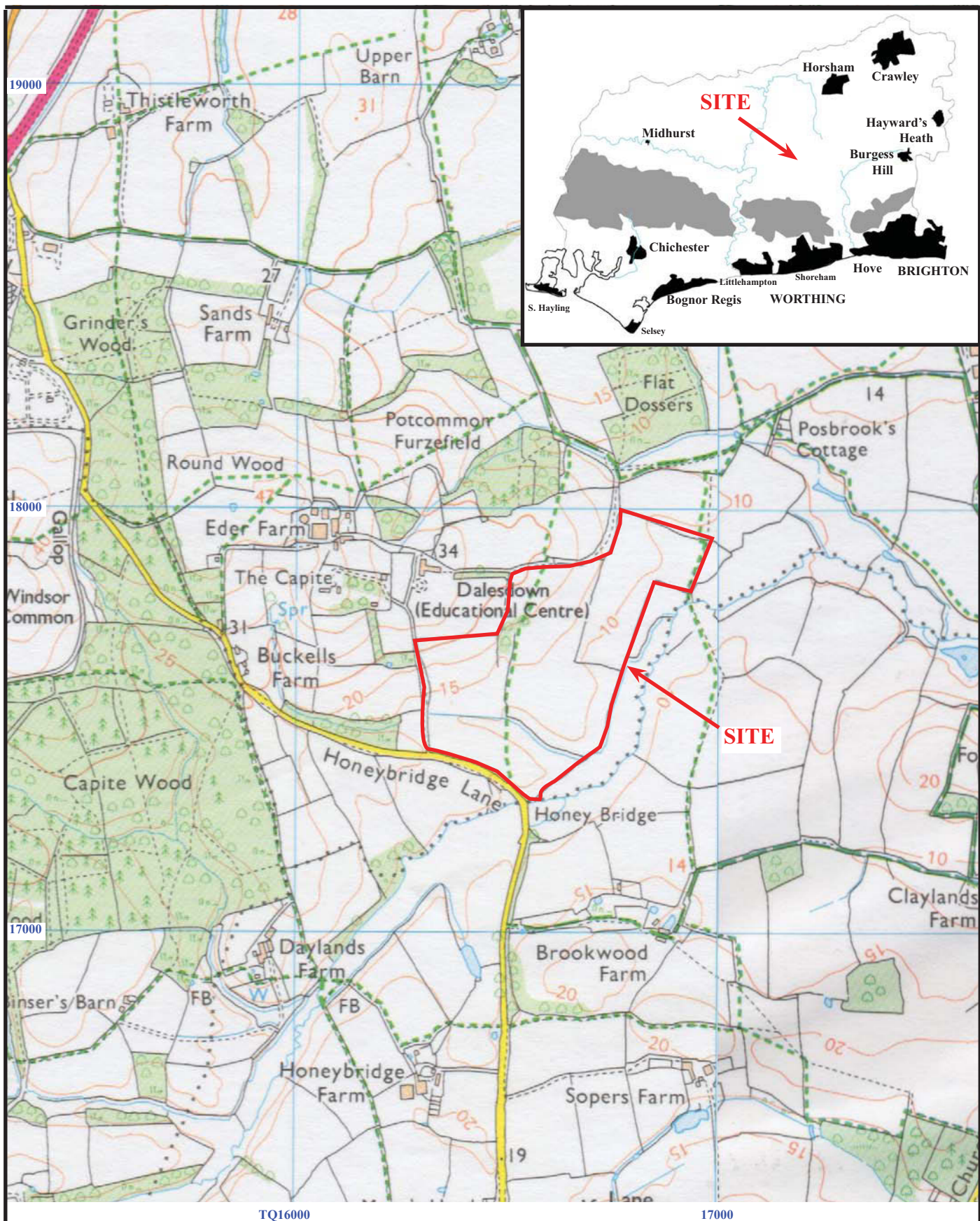
0.50m and 1.00m in depth. The topsoil and subsoil deposits above the Wealden Clay were similar to those recorded in the substations. A total of 922m of cable trench was monitored, but no archaeological finds or features were revealed. Due to the negative results, and the fact that much of the remaining cable trenches would be relatively shallow, it was agreed with the archaeological adviser to Horsham District Council that it was not necessary to monitor the remaining trenching.

Conclusion

The watching brief at Priors Byne Farm successfully investigated a large percentage of the groundworks in respect of the new photovoltaic solar farm including two substations and over 900m of cable trench. Despite the fact that a preserved subsoil horizon was recorded across the site, no archaeological finds or features were recorded.

References

- BGS, 2006, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000, Sheet 318/333, Bedrock and Superficial Deposits Edition, Keyworth.
- ESCC, 2015, *Sussex Archaeological Standards*, East Sussex County Council, Lewes.
- NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Government, London
- Salvatore, J, 2013, 'Archaeological Assessment of Land at Priors Byne, Ashurst, West Sussex', unpublished



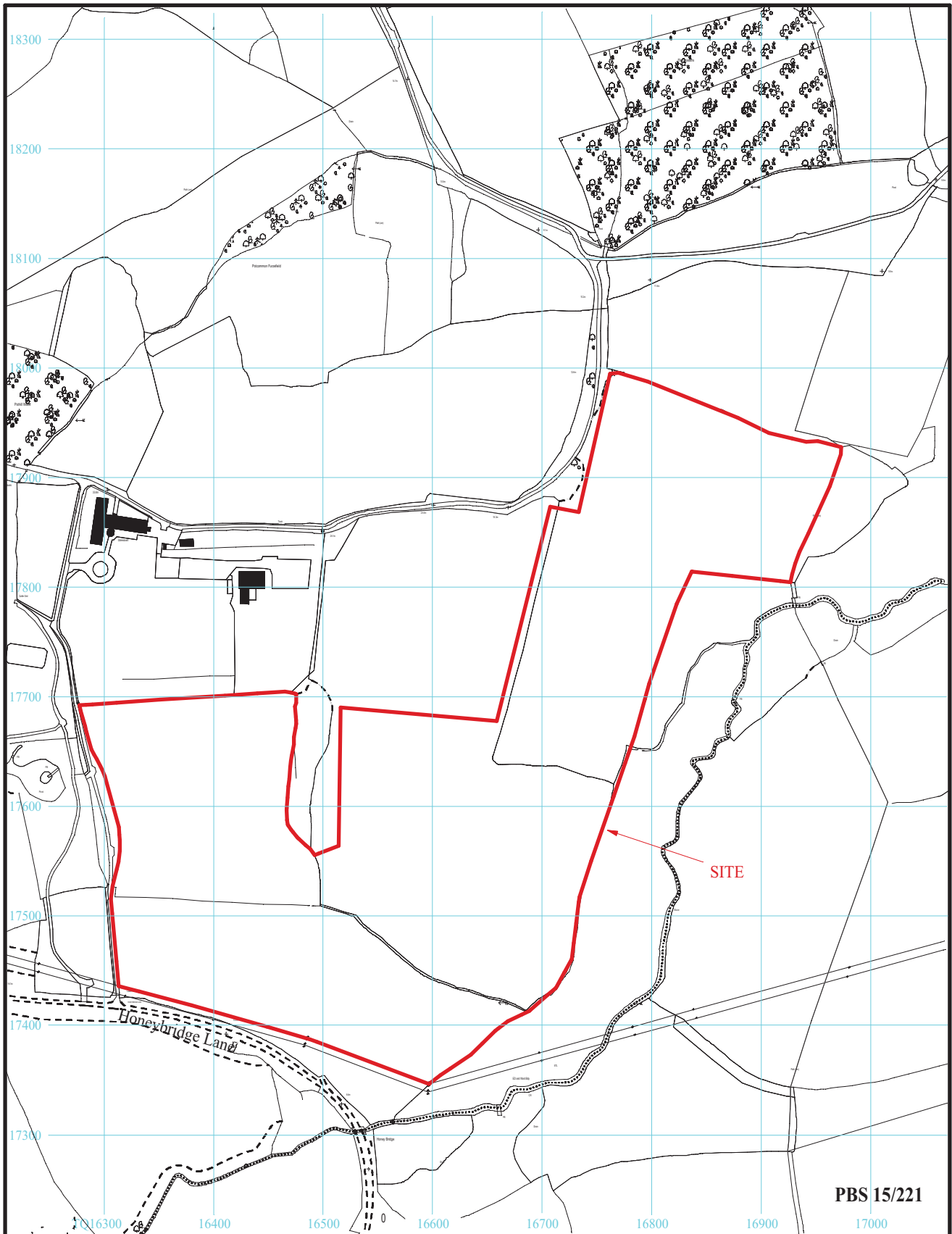
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Figure 1. Location of site.

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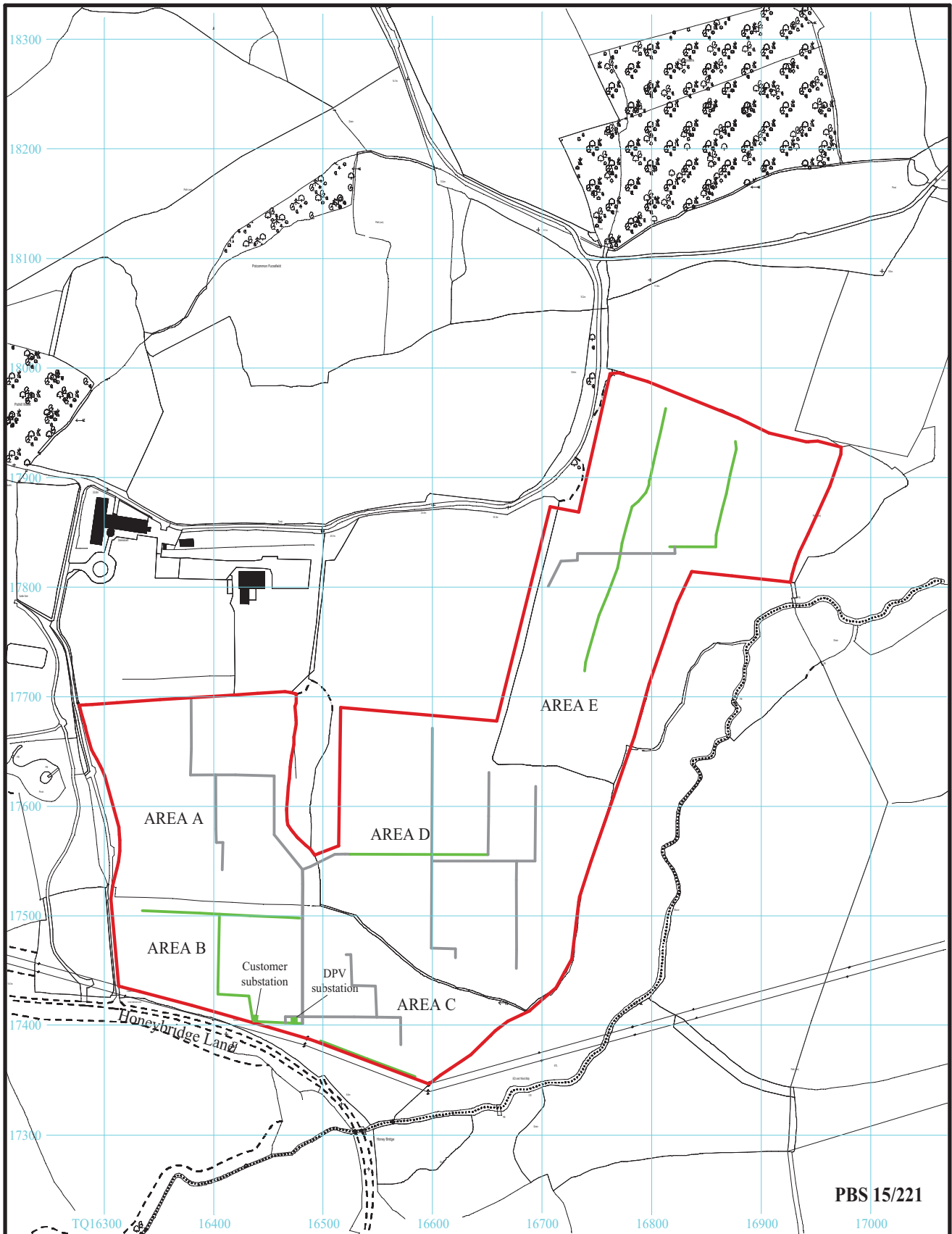
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site.



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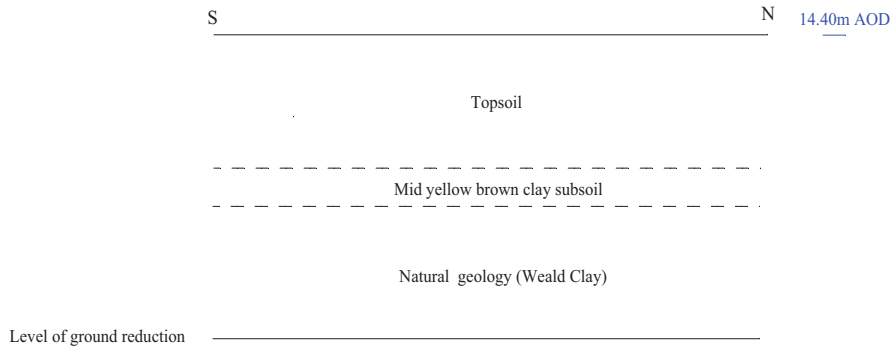


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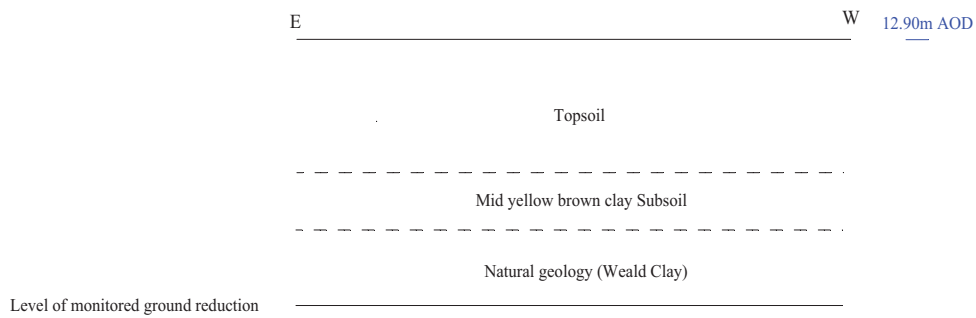
Figure 3. Plan of site showing areas monitored (green).



Area E: Cable trench in north-east of site



Area B: Foundation trench for DPV (Non-Customer) substation.



14.40m AOD

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Figure 4. Representative sections.



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Plate 1. Cable trench in Area B looking east during excavation



Plate 2. Cable trench section Area E looking west, Scale: 1m



Plate 3. DPV substation base during final stages of excavation, looking north west



Plate 4. DPV substation base section looking east, Scales: 2m and 1m.

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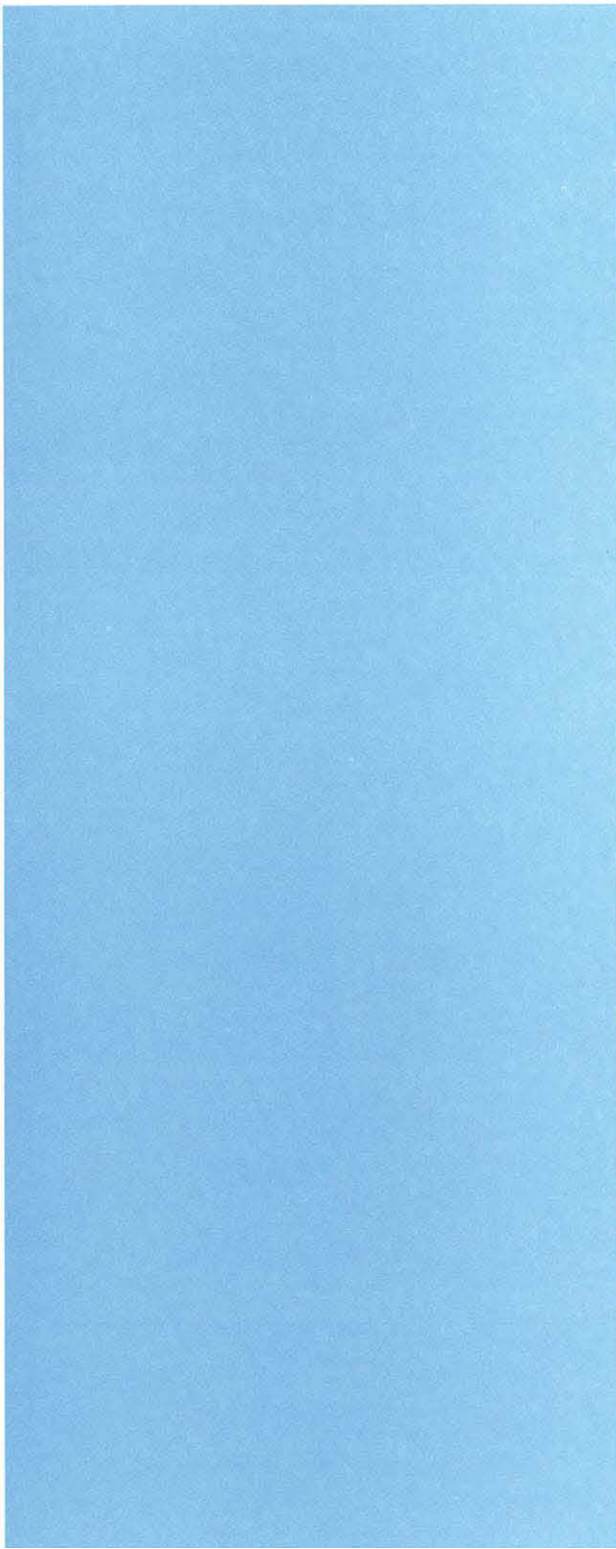
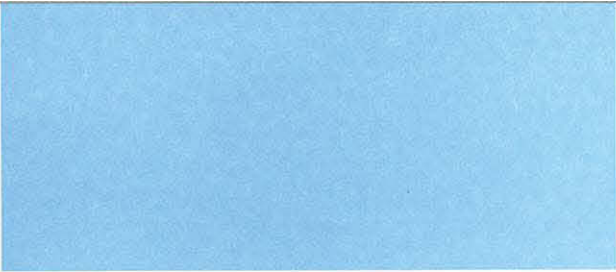
Plates 1-4.

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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





TVAS (South)
77a Hollingdean Terrace, Brighton
Sussex, BN1 7HB

Tel: 01273 554198
Fax: 01273 564043
Email: south@tvas.co.uk
Web: www.tvas.co.uk