

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

**Vesta, Peelings Lane, Westham,
East Sussex**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by Sean Wallis

Site Code: VPL16/233

(TQ 6395 0460)

**Vesta, Peelings Lane,
Westham, East Sussex**

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For Mr Cliff Miles

by Sean Wallis

Thames Valley Archaeological Services

Ltd

Site Code VPL 16/233

February 2017

Summary

Site name: Vesta, Peelings Lane, Westham, East Sussex

Grid reference: TQ 6395 0460

Planning reference: WD/2016/2072/F

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 15th February

Project manager: Sean Wallis

Site supervisor: Jim Webster

Site code: VPL 16/233

Area of site: c. 350 sq m

Summary of results: The watching brief successfully investigated those parts of the site which were to be most affected by the construction of a new extension. It appears that the area had been truncated in the recent past, as modern made ground was recorded immediately above the natural clay geology. No archaeological finds or features were recorded.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Eastbourne Museum, with accession code 2017.2, in due course.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 21.02.17 Steve Preston ✓ 21.02.17

Vesta, Peelings Lane, Westham, East Sussex An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Sean Wallis

Report 16/233

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at Vesta, Peelings Lane, Westham, East Sussex (TQ 6395 0460) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by the property's owner, Mr Cliff Miles.

Planning permission (WD/2016/2072/F) had been gained from Wealden District Council to construct a new front extension to the existing building. The permission was subject to a standard planning condition (3) condition relating to archaeology and historic environment. As a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits on site which may be damaged or destroyed by the planned building work, it was proposed to carry out a 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. The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation approved by the East Sussex County Council Archaeological Officer (Mr Greg Chuter), who advises the District Council on archaeological matters. Where appropriate and relevant, the recommendations in *Sussex Archaeological Standards* (ESCC 2015) were to be followed.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Jim Webster on 15th February 2017, and the site code is VPL 16/233. The archive is currently held by Thames Valley Archaeological Services, but will be deposited with Eastbourne Museum in due course, with accession code 2017.2.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located within the historic core of Westham village, which is approximately 7 km north-east of Eastbourne town centre. The house is part of a small row of properties situated to the south of the village pond (Fig. 2). The area is relatively flat, and the site lies at a height of approximately 5m above Ordnance Datum. According to the British Geological Survey the underlying geology consists of Tunbridge Wells Sand Formation (BGS 2006), and this was confirmed during the watching brief, with a light greyish yellow sandy clay being recorded in the footing trenches.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site was gleaned from an East Sussex Historic Environment Record Consultation Report. In summary, the site lies within Archaeological Notification Areas associated with the medieval and post-medieval village of Westham, the route of a major Roman road, and the site of a post-medieval farm complex. The Roman road from the fort at Pevensey Castle to Arlington has recently been identified, and it is possible that it runs through the present site. It is also possible that the area of Westham was once the site of a Roman harbour, and that the pond immediately north of the site is the last vestiges of the former water channel. Historic maps indicate that the area to the south of the pond was occupied by Street Farm, and one of the farm buildings was situated close to where the present house now stands.

Objectives and methodology

The aims of the watching brief were to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the proposed groundworks. This was to involve the examination of all areas of intrusive groundworks, including any significant ground reduction and the digging of foundation trenches for the new front extension. Where archaeological deposits which may warrant preservation *in situ* the features will be excavated by hand and fully recorded, to ensure their 'preservation by record'.

Results

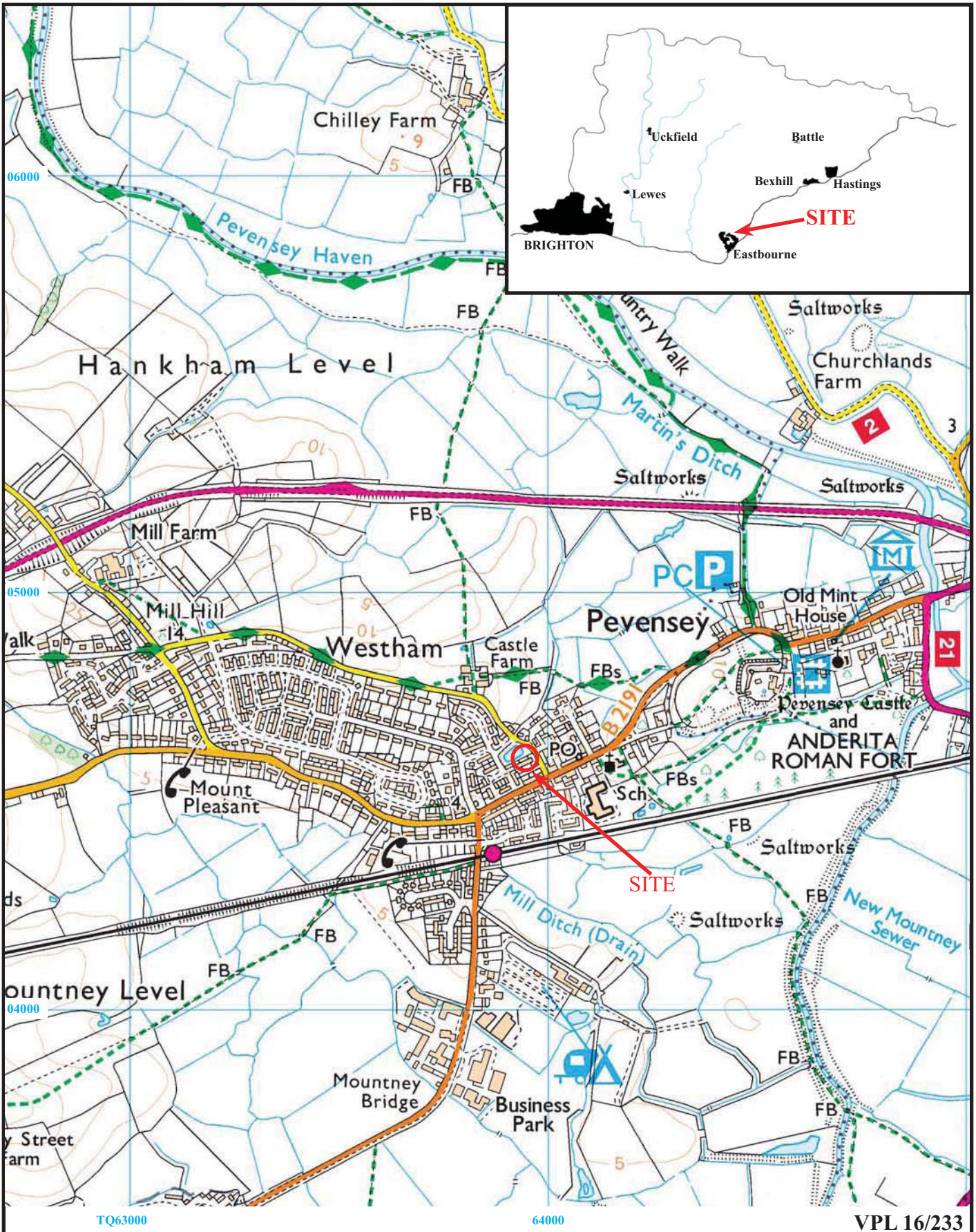
Prior to the footing trenches being excavated, a tree and various garden features were removed, along with the concrete path leading to the front door. All the footing trenches were 0.80m, and up to 1.05m deep (Figs 3 and 4); Pls 1-4). The natural clay geology was generally recorded beneath 0.20m of topsoil and 0.45m of modern made ground (containing concrete and brick fragments). The complete absence of any buried soil horizons indicates that the area has been truncated in the past, with made ground being recorded directly above the natural geology. All the neighbouring gardens are at a similar height, and it is therefore probable that the area was built up when the row of houses were built, possibly to prevent the chance of flooding from the nearby pond. Several services were observed in the footing trenches, but no archaeological finds or features were recorded.

Conclusion

The watching brief investigated those parts of the site which were to be most affected by the construction of a new front extension. It appears that the area had been truncated in the recent past, as modern made ground was recorded immediately above the natural clay geology. It is possible that this was done when the row of houses were built, to minimise the possibility of flooding from the nearby village pond. No archaeological finds or features were recorded.

References

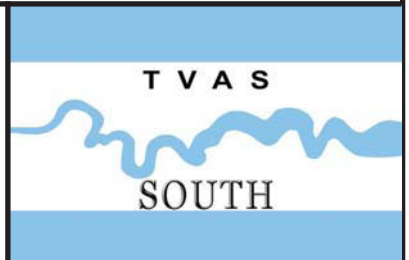
- BGS, 2006, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000, Sheet 319/334, Bedrock and Superficial Deposits Edition, Keyworth.
- English Heritage, 2011, *Environmental Archaeology*. Centre for Archaeology Guidelines 1, English Heritage, Portsmouth (2nd edn).
- ESCC, 2016, *Sussex Archaeological Standards*, East Sussex County Council, Lewes.
- NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Department of Communities and Local Government, London (TSO).

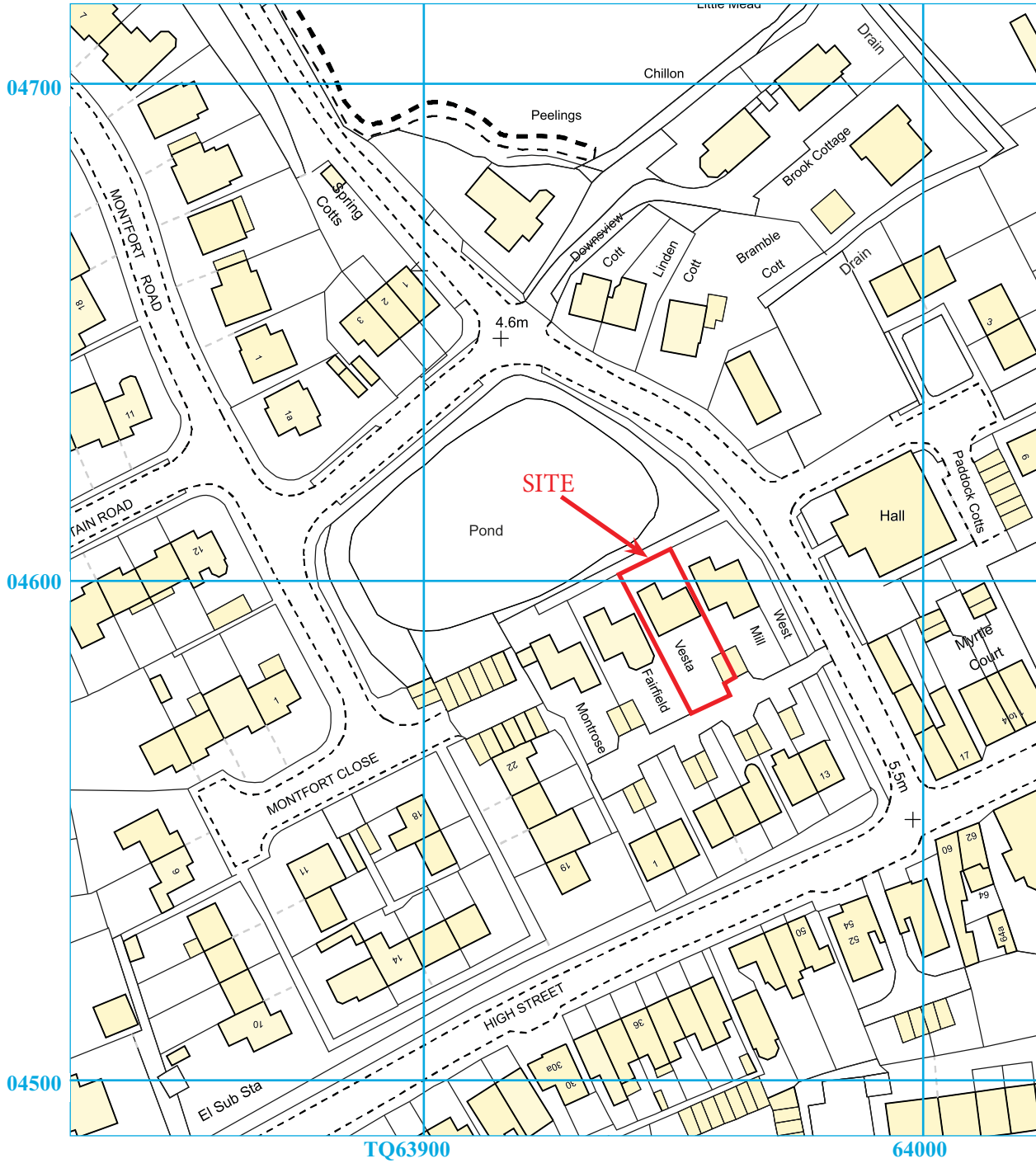


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Figure 1. Location of site within Westham and
 East Sussex.

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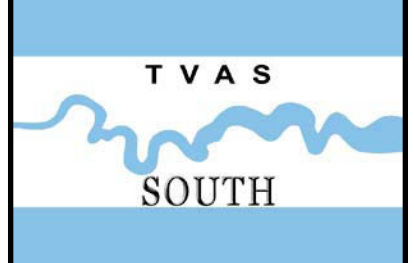


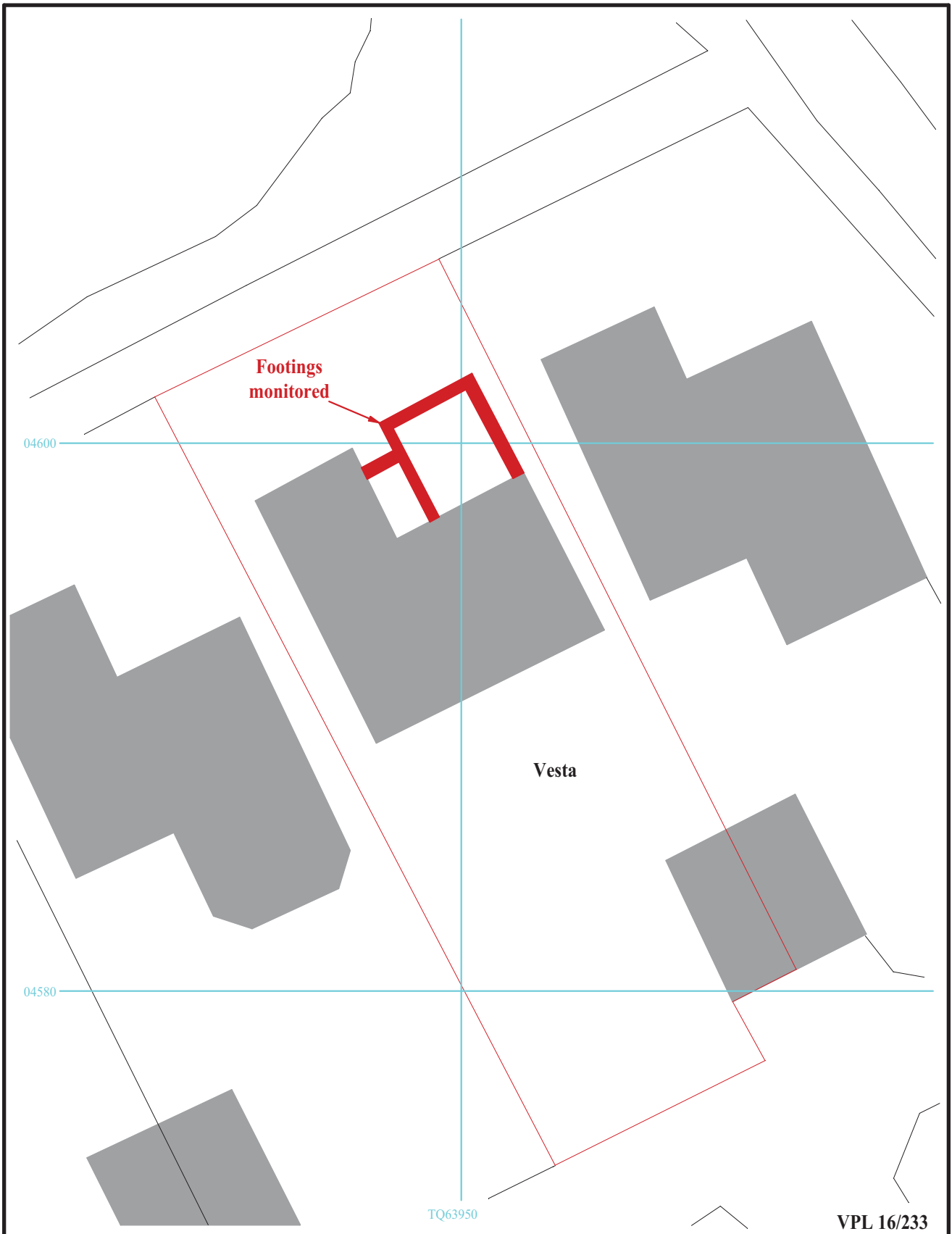
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site**

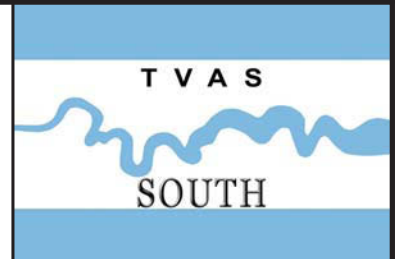
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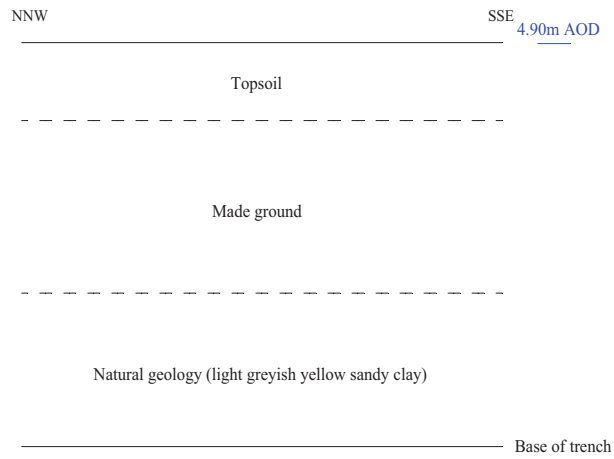


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Figure 3. Site plan showing monitored areas.



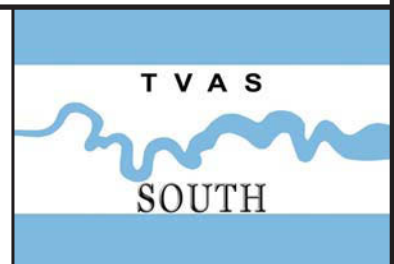
Footing trench



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Figure 4. Representative section.



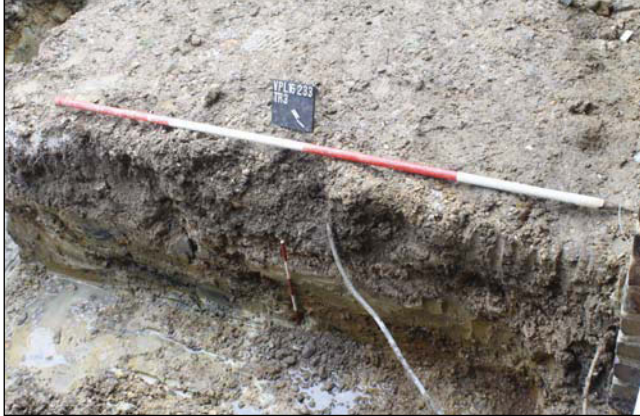


Plate 1. Footing trench, looking North north east.
Scales: 2m and 0.50m.



Plate 2. Footing trench, looking North north west,
showing cut for modern service. Scales: 2m and 1m.



Plate 3. Footing trench showing footings of existing
house, looking West south west.
Scales: 1m and 0.5m.



Plate 4. General view of excavated footing trenches,
looking South east.

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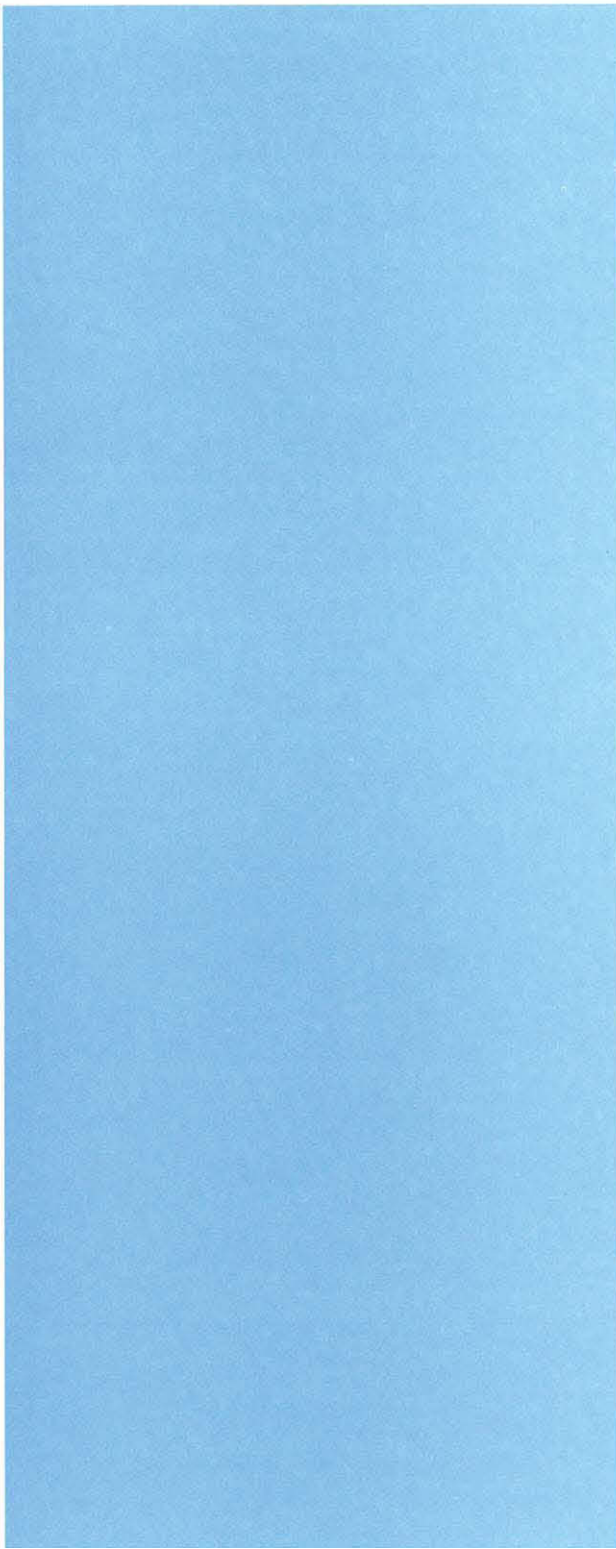
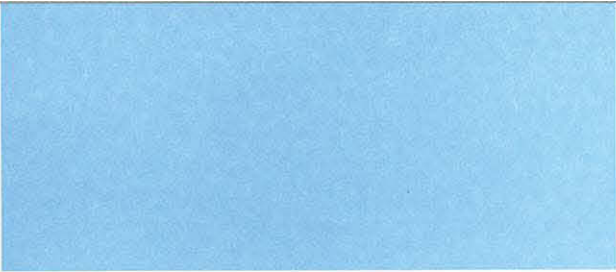
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Plates 1 - 4.**



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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