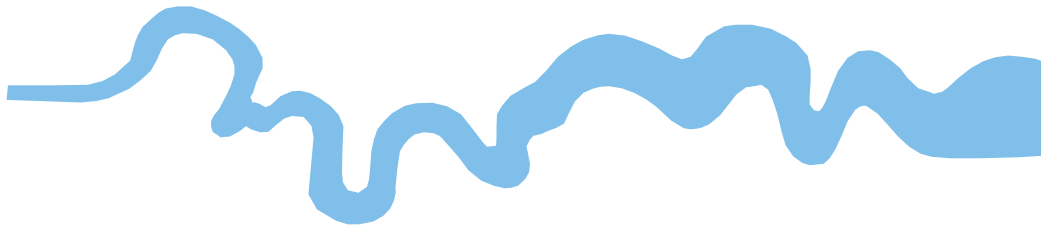


T V A S



SOUTH

**Proposed attenuation pond at The Forge,
Bishops Lane, Ringmer, East Sussex**

An archaeological excavation

By Sean Wallis

**TFR14/208
(TQ 4526 1286)**

Proposed attenuation pond at The Forge, Bishops Lane, Ringmer, East Sussex

An Archaeological Recording Action

For CALA Homes (South Home Counties) Ltd

by Sean Wallis

Thames Valley Archaeological Services

Ltd

Site Code TFR 14/208

September 2017

Summary

Site name: Proposed attenuation pond at The Forge, Bishops Lane, Ringmer, East Sussex

Grid reference: TQ 4526 1286

Planning reference: LW/16/0979

Site activity: Archaeological Recording Action

Date and duration of project: 30th - 31st August 2017

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Sean Wallis

Site code: TFR 14/208

Area of site: c. 0.16 ha

Summary of results: The recording action at The Forge, Ringmer successfully investigated the area to the north of a new housing development where an attenuation pond was to be constructed. Despite the fact that the stripped area had not been significantly disturbed in the past, 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 an approved local museum in due course.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 22.09.17 Steve Preston ✓ 22.09.17

Proposed attenuation pond at The Forge, Bishops Lane, Ringmer, East Sussex An Archaeological Recording Action

by Sean Wallis

Report 14/208e

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological recording action carried out at The Forge, Bishops Lane, Ringmer, East Sussex (TQ 4527 1286) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Stuart Forrester of CALA Homes (South Home Counties) Ltd, Tilford House, Farnham Business Park, Weydon Lane, Farnham, Surrey, GU9 8QT.

Planning permission (LW/16/0979) had been gained from Lewes District Council for the construction of an attenuation pond as part of a residential development. The permission was subject to a standard planning condition (8) relating to archaeology. 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 an archaeological recording action as set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF, 2012) and the District Council's policies on archaeology and the historic environment. The project 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 on archaeological matters. Where appropriate and relevant, the recommendations in *Sussex Archaeological Standards* (ESCC 2015) were to be followed.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Sean Wallis and Jim Webster on the 30th and 31st August 2017, and the site code is TFR 14/208. The preferred depository for the site archive is Lewes Museum, but unfortunately the museum is not accepting new material at the present time. As a result, the archive will be held by Thames Valley Archaeological Services until a suitable depository is found.

Location, topography and geology

The site lies at the northern end of the village of Ringmer, close to the junction of Bishops Lane and Lewes Road (B2132), and about 4km north-east of Lewes, East Sussex (Fig. 1). The attenuation pond was to be constructed in the south-east corner of an arable field, immediately to the north of a new housing development. The field generally slopes up towards the north-west and, as a result, the height of the site above Ordnance Datum varied from between 15m and 17m above Ordnance Datum. According to the British Geological Survey the underlying geology consists of Gault Formation Mudstone, with some overlying Head deposits in the eastern part of the

pond area (BGS 2006). The natural geology revealed during the recording action comprised light yellow brown clay, with patches of the underlying mid bluish grey clay visible in places.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the main residential site to the south was initially considered in a desk-based assessment (Wallis 2014) and geophysical survey (Bray and Dawson 2014). This was subsequently confirmed by an evaluation (McNicoll-Norbury 2015), and follow-up excavation (Wallis 2017) which revealed a number of archaeological features. These included several medieval ditches and gullies, along with a pit packed with pottery wasters dating from the 13th century. The latter suggested the presence of a kiln nearby, which is not surprising as Ringmer is well known for its medieval pottery industry, as is reflected in several place-names in the village, such as Delves, Crockendale and Potters Field. Evidence of pottery production has been found during a number of archaeological fieldwork projects in the village, particularly in the area close to Bishops Lane. Ringmer itself has late Saxon origins and is mentioned in Domesday Book (1086) (Williams and Martin 2002).

Objectives and methodology

The aims of the recording action 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, particularly the ground reduction in respect of the new attenuation pond. Where archaeological deposits were encountered which did not warrant preservation *in situ*, the features were to be excavated by hand and fully recorded, to ensure their 'preservation by record'.

Results

An irregular shaped area, measuring approximately 0.16 ha, was stripped using a 360° type mechanical excavator, fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, under constant archaeological supervision (Fig. 2). The natural yellow brown clay geology was encountered immediately below the topsoil, which varied in thickness from about 0.20m at the southern end the pond area to just 0.10m at the north. In places, some of the underlying bluish grey clay was visible. No archaeological finds or features were recorded.

The results were rather disappointing given the amount of archaeology found on the main development site to the south. One of the most surprising things was the apparent absence of pottery sherds in the topsoil, in contrast with the northern excavation area in the development site, where an amount of medieval and post-medieval material was recovered during stripping. The stratigraphy to the south had also been different, with the

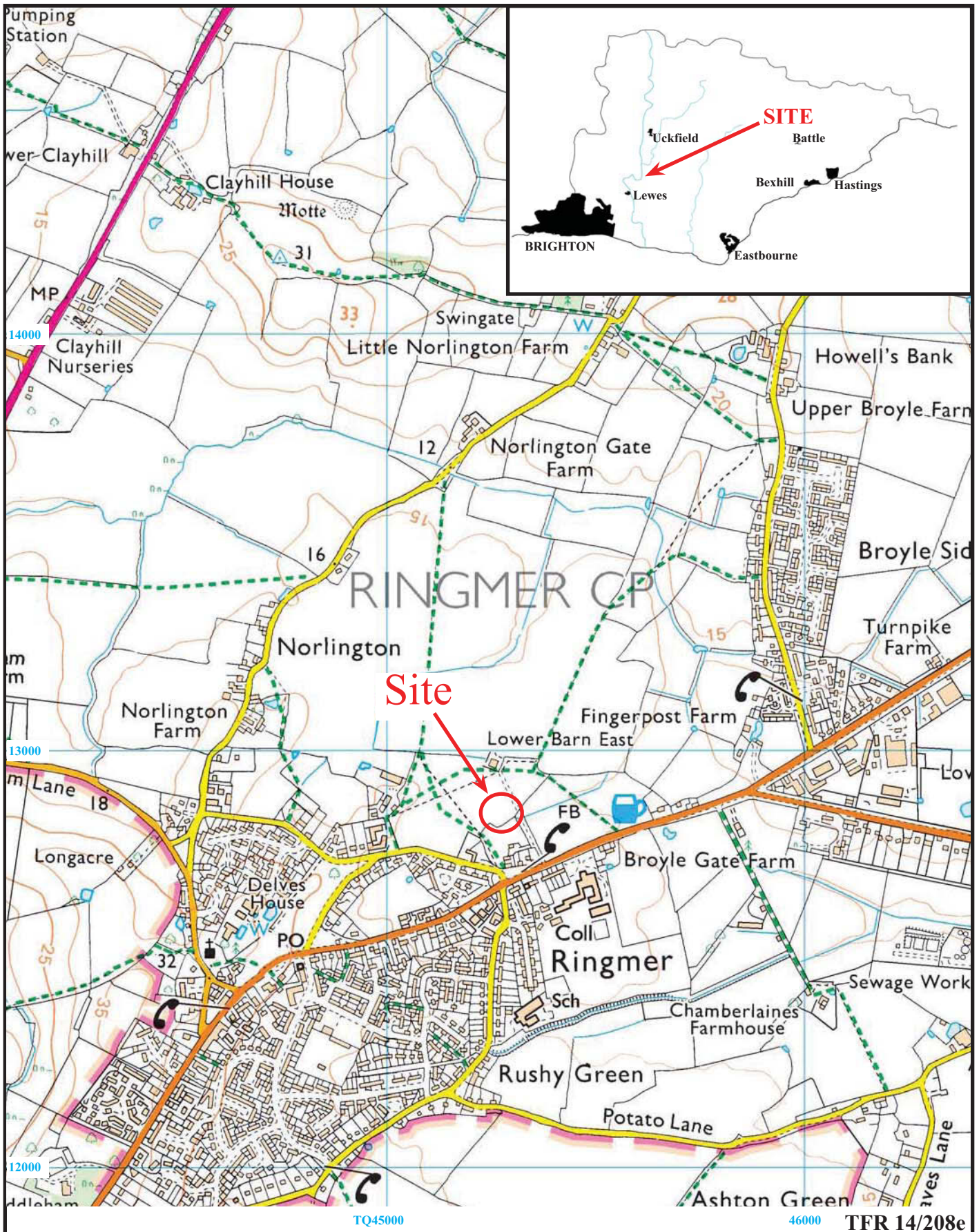
natural geology being recorded beneath up to 0.90m of topsoil and subsoil deposits, whereas the topsoil in the pond area was very thin, and there was no real subsoil present. This may suggest that the field boundary between the two is very old, and that the areas either side of it have been utilised in different ways for many years. The pond area is within an arable field which has been regularly ploughed, whereas the main development site is largely within a small field which had been used as a paddock. Whilst there was no evidence of the present site having been truncated in the past, during a recent archaeological project nearby it was suggested that the entire top of the natural clay may have been removed at some point in the distant past for pottery production (Greg Chuter pers.comm).

Conclusion

The recording action at The Forge, Ringmer successfully investigated the area to the north of a new housing development where an attenuation pond was to be constructed. Despite the fact that the stripped area had not been significantly disturbed in the past, no archaeological finds or features were recorded.

References

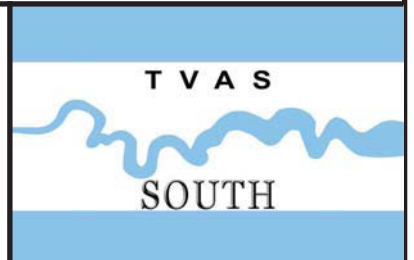
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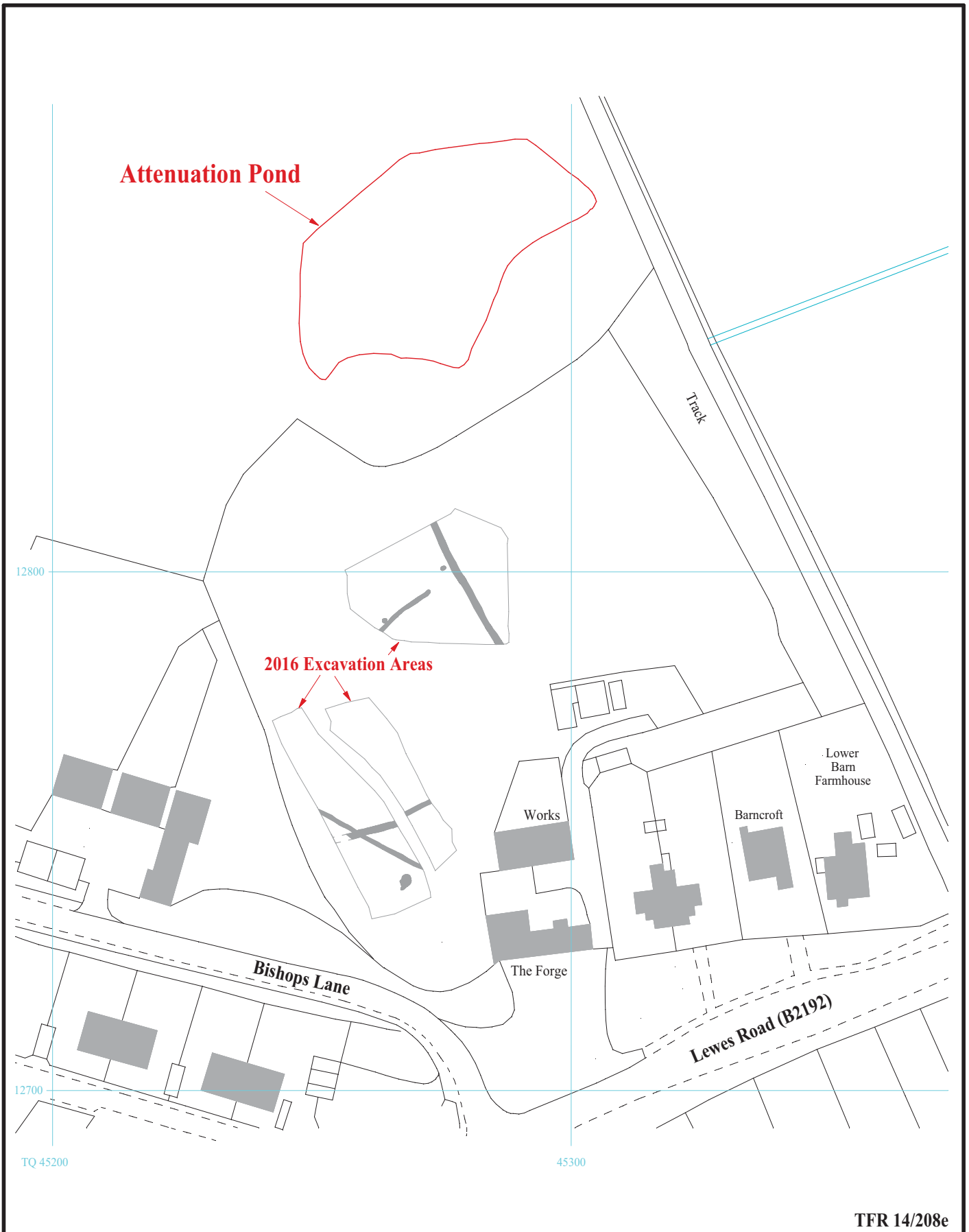


**Proposed attenuation pond at The Forge, Bishops Lane,
Ringmer, East Sussex, 2017
Archaeological Recording Action**

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

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TFR 14/208e

**Proposed attenuation pond at The Forge, Bishops Lane,
Ringmer, East Sussex, 2017
Archaeological Recording Action**

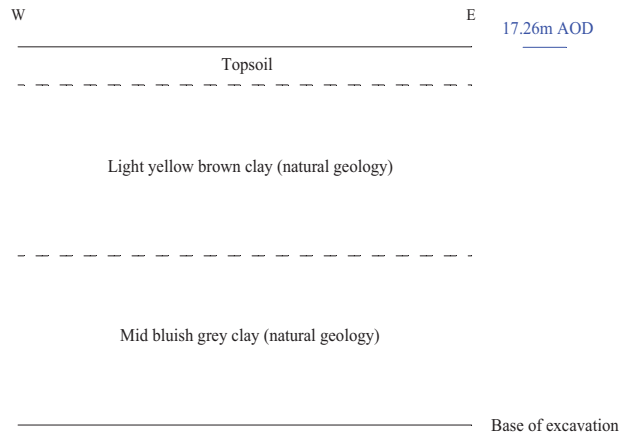
Figure 2. Detailed location of site showing excavation area.



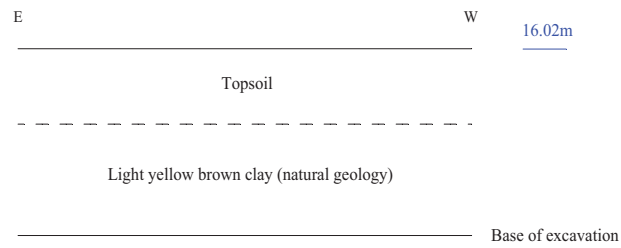
THAMES VALLEY

 ARCHAEOLOGICAL
 SERVICES
 SOUTH

Attenuation Pond (North)



Attenuation Pond (South)



TFR 14/208e

Proposed attenuation pond at The Forge, Bishops Lane, Ringmer, East Sussex, 2017 Archaeological Recording Action

Figure 3. Representative sections.





Plate 1. General view of stripped area, looking South-west.
Scales: 2m and 1m.



Plate 2. General view of stripped area, looking West.
Scales: 2m and 1m.



Plate 3. General view of stripped area, looking East.
Scales: 2m and 1m.



Plate 4. General view of stripped area, looking West.
Scales: 2m and 1m.



Plate 5. Northern end of stripped area, looking West.
Scales: 2m and 1m.



Plate 6. Southern end of stripped area, looking East.
Scales: 2m and 0.50m.

TFR 14/208e

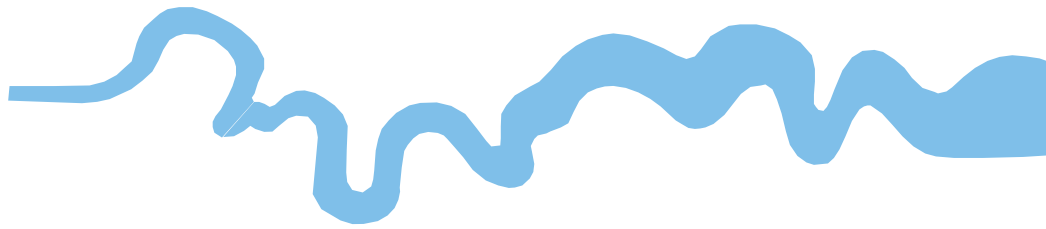
**Proposed attenuation pond at The Forge, Bishops Lane,
Ringmer, East Sussex, 2017
Archaeological Recording Action
Plates 1 - 6.**



TIME CHART

	Calendar Years
Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43 AD 0 BC
Iron Age _____	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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