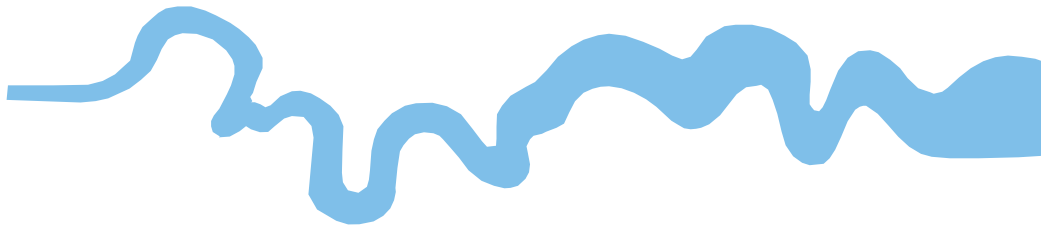


**T V A S**



**SOUTH**

**Browndown Cottage, Cade Street,  
Heathfield, East Sussex**

**Archaeological Watching Brief**

**by Sean Wallis**

**Site Code: BCH17/171**

**(TQ 6027 2016)**

**Browndown Cottage, Cade Street,  
Heathfield, East Sussex**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief**

**For Amanda Nevill**

by Sean Wallis

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code BCH 17/171

**January 2018**

## Summary

**Site name:** Browndown Cottage, Cade Street, Heathfield, East Sussex

**Grid reference:** TQ 6027 2016

**Planning reference:** WD/2016/2730/LB

**Site activity:** Watching Brief

**Date and duration of project:** 11th October 2017

**Project manager:** Sean Wallis

**Site supervisor:** Sean Wallis

**Site code:** BCH 17/171

**Summary of results:** The watching brief at Browndown Cottage, Cade Street, Heathfield, East Sussex successfully investigated those parts of the house which were to be most affected by the construction of a new floor. No archaeological finds or features were recorded.

**Location and reference of archive:** The preferred depository for the site archive is Lewes Museum. Unfortunately the museum is not accepting new material, so the archive will be held at TVAS Brighton until a suitable repository can be found.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 26.12.18 Steve Preston ✓ 26.12.18
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# **Browndown Cottage, Cade Street, Heathfield, East Sussex An Archaeological Watching Brief**

by Sean Wallis

**Report 17/171**

## **Introduction**

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at Browndown Cottage, Cade Street, Heathfield, East Sussex (TQ 6027 2016) (Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by the property's owner, Ms Amanda Nevill.

Planning permission (WD/2016/2730/LB) had been gained from Wealden District Council to carry out a number of internal alterations to the property, including the installation of a new concrete floor in the northern part of the house. The permission was subject to a standard planning condition (5) relating to archaeology, as set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF, 2012) and the District Council's policies on archaeology and the historic environment.

As a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits on site which may be damaged or destroyed by the building work, a watching brief was required to satisfy the condition. 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 Sean Wallis on 11th October 2017, and the site code is BCH 17/171. The archive is currently held at TVAS Brighton and will be transferred to a suitable depository in due course.

## **Location, topography and geology**

Browndown Cottage is situated in an isolated position, about 400m east of the historic core of Old Heathfield, East Sussex and 850m south of Cade Street (TQ 6027 2016) (Figs. 1 and 2). The property and its associated garden areas lies are surrounded by farmland and woodland, and are accessed via a track running south-westwards from Cade Street. The area generally slopes down towards the south-west, but the site itself is relatively flat and lies at a height of about 105m above Ordnance Datum. According to the British Geological Survey the underlying geology consists of the Ashdown Formation (mudstone, siltstone and sandstone) of the Wealden Group (BGS 2006). The natural geology observed beneath the cottage floor consisted of yellow clay.

## **Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential of the site has been considered in a historic building report which was previously prepared for the property (Martin and Martin 2007). The cottage is a long, narrow, rectangular building with a hipped thatched roof, and is thought to have been constructed in the very late 17th or early 18th century. It is unusual in that three of its four original external ground floor walls were constructed in brick from the outset. The other wall was timber framed, as were all other elements of the structure. A number of alterations and additions were made to the property in the 19th century, when it was divided into two unequal-sized cottages for a time. The northern part of the cottage, which is the subject of this report, appears to have been added in the late 18th or early 19th century, originally as a lean-to structure, with the first floor being added in around 1900. Further alterations were made in the 20th century, including the construction of a lean to conservatory.

## **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 primarily involve monitoring the removal of an existing concrete floor in the utility room. Where archaeological deposits which may warrant preservation *in-situ* were encountered, their treatment was to be discussed in consultation with the client and the East Sussex County Council Archaeological Officer. 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).

## **Results**

Prior to the watching brief commencing, two internal partition walls were demolished, which created an open space formed of rooms A and B, and corridor C (Fig. 3). The existing floor surfaces were broken up and removed. In all four areas (A, B, C and D) the relatively shallow depth of ground reduction required for the new concrete floor meant that only made ground was exposed. A small test pit was excavated in the corner of room B, which revealed natural clay at a depth of about 0.25m. However, this test pit was actually deeper than the required level for the new floor. The stratigraphy varied from room to room, as detailed below:

Room A: 0-0.10m Concrete slab, onto grey silty clay with brick fragments. No further reduction.

Room B: 0-0.10m Concrete slab, 0.10-0.19m of grey silty clay with brick fragments. No further reduction.

Room C: 0-0.01m Vinyl tiles, 0.01-0.13m concrete slab, onto grey silty clay. No further reduction.

Room D: 0-0.02m Modern tiles, 0.02-0.08m red bricks, 0.08-0.20m grey silty clay. No further reduction.

Apart from the brick floor recorded in room D, no earlier surfaces were revealed beneath the existing floors. A sample brick was taken from room D, which seems to confirm that this part of the cottage was built in the late 18th or early 19th century.

## **Finds**

A single partial brick sample was taken from the brick floor in the toilet (room D) that was revealed after the removal of the modern floor (1/2604g: 90% of the whole brick). The brick measured 203mm+ x 115mm x 55mm and was well formed and fired. The fabric contained moderate 'marl' streaks, swirls and pellets to 5mm along with sparse red and black iron oxides to 2mm. The brick is most likely to date to between the mid 18th to 19th centuries. The upper face showed some signs of wear below the adhering later grey mortar derived from the base of the modern floor bedding.

The brick is not considered to hold any potential for further analysis beyond that done for this report. As such the brick has been discarded.

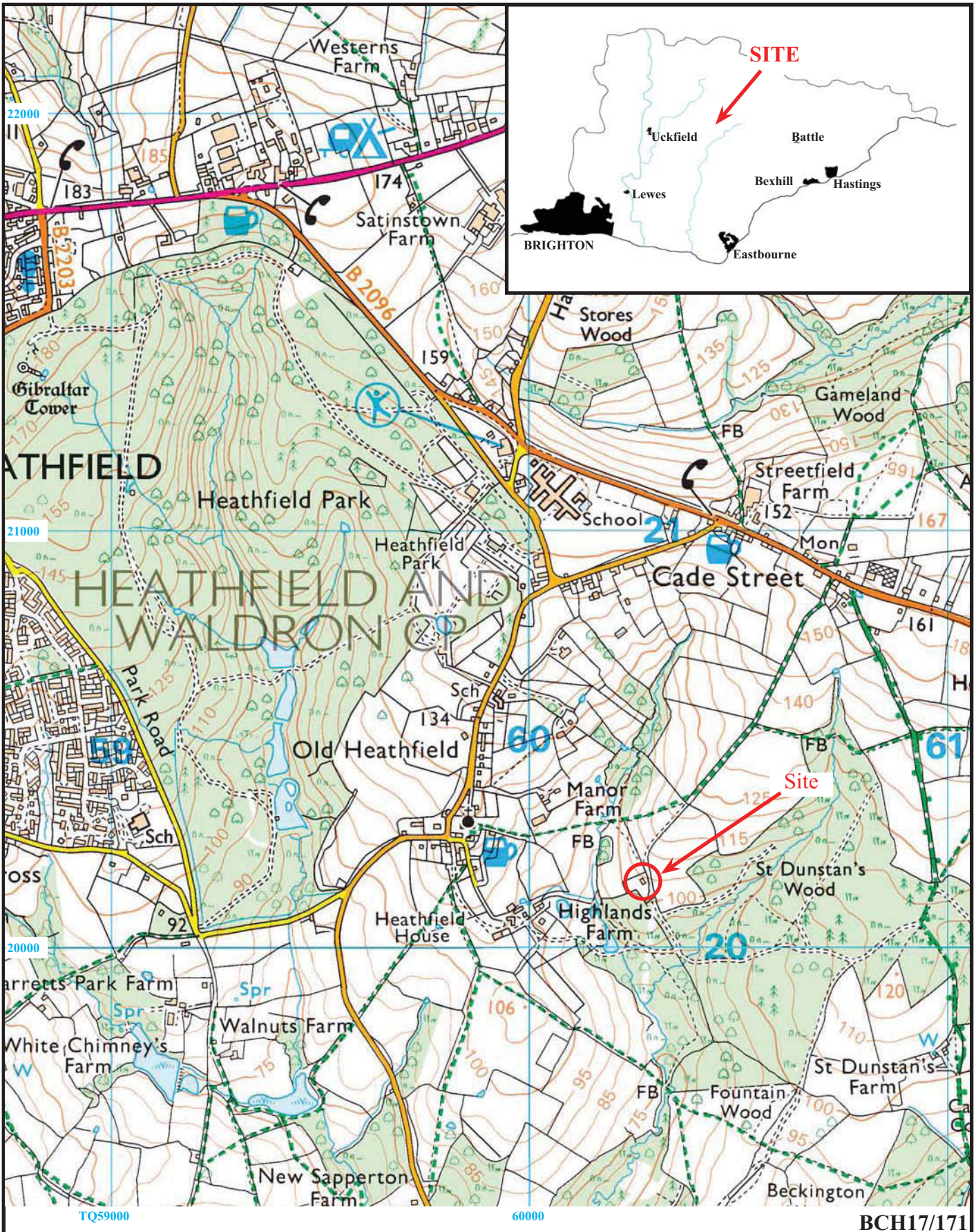
## **Conclusion**

The watching brief successfully investigated those parts of the site which were to be most affected by the installation of a new concrete floor. Although an earlier brick floor, dating from the late 18th or early 19th century, was recorded in the former toilet, in general the relatively shallow depth of ground reduction meant that only the made ground beneath the existing floors was observed.

## **References**

- BGS, 2006, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet **319/334**, Bedrock and Superficial Deposits Edition, Keyworth.
- ESCC, 2015, *Sussex Archaeological Standards*, East Sussex County Council, Lewes.
- Martin, D and Martin, B, 2007, 'Browdown Cottage, Heathfield, East Sussex: an interpretative historic building survey' Archaeology South-east unpublished report, Ditchling.
- NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Government, London

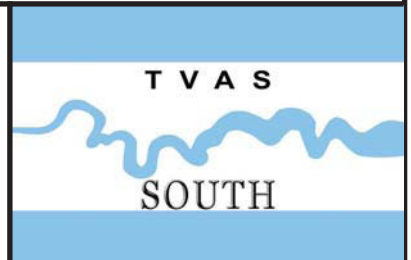




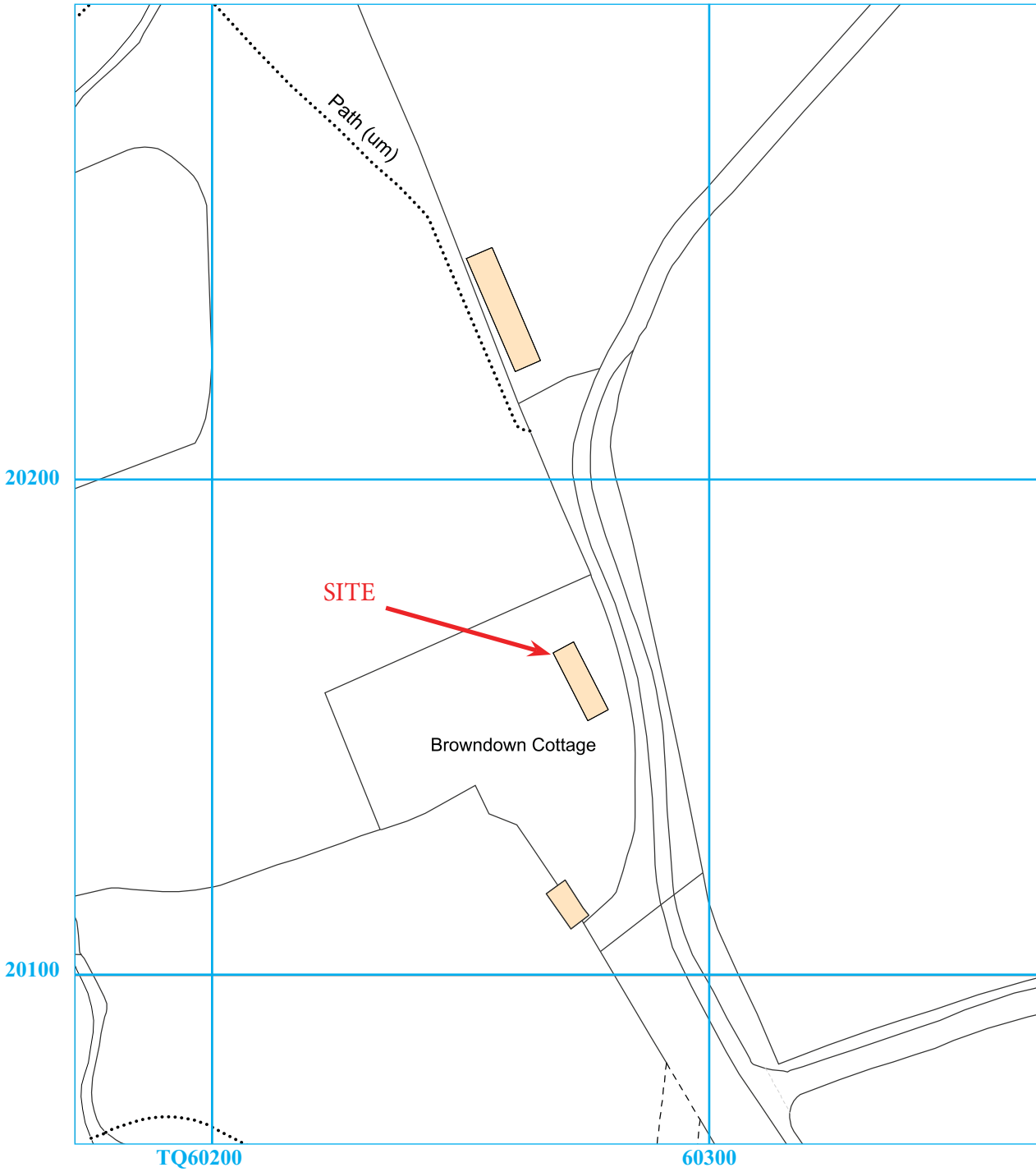
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Archaeological Watching Brief**

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

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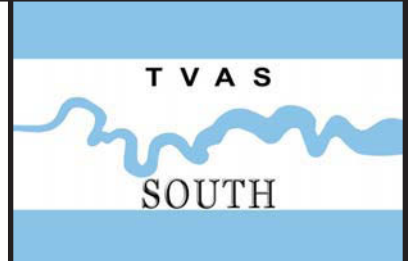


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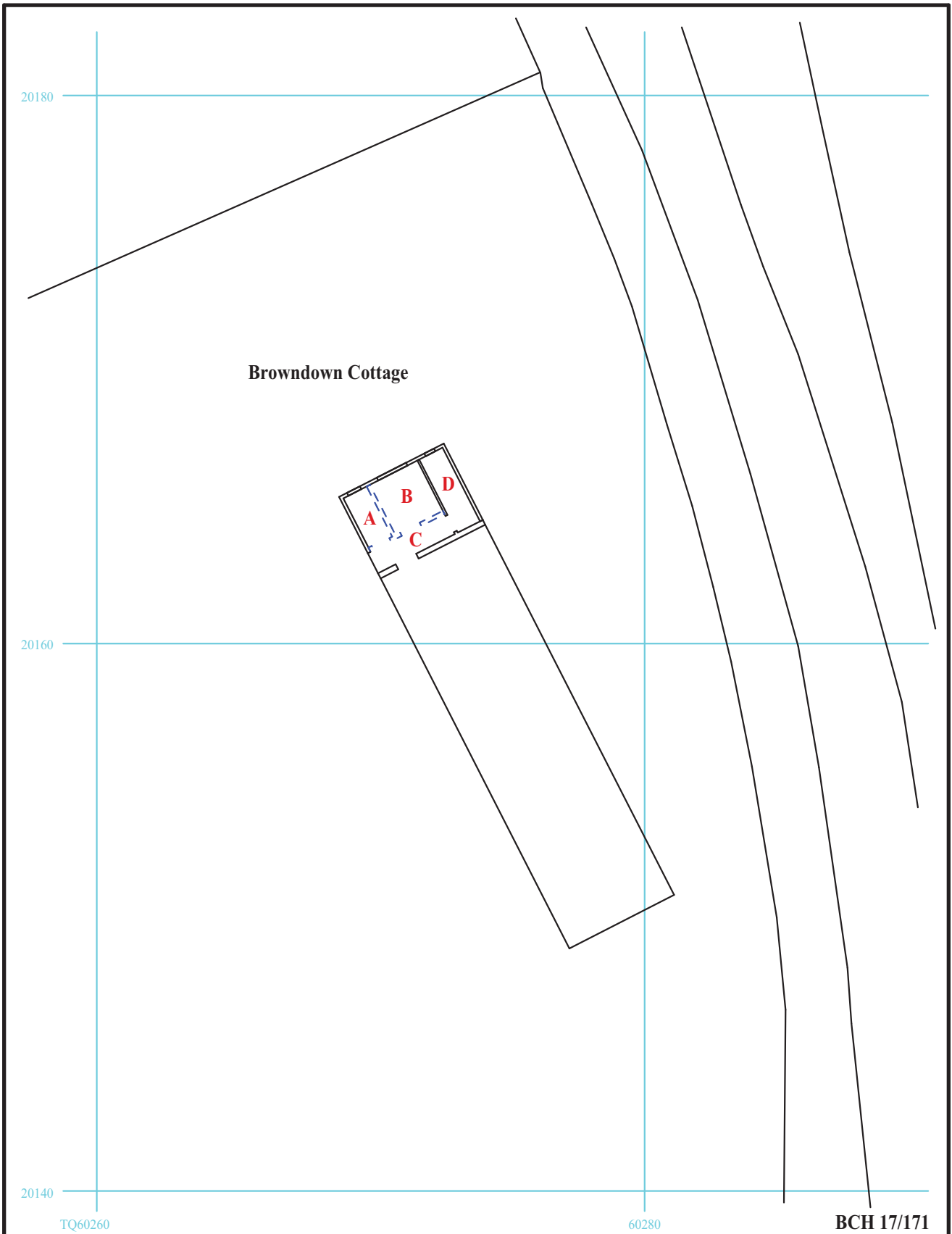


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Figure 2. Detailed location of site

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Figure 3. Site plan showing monitored areas and demolished walls (blue).

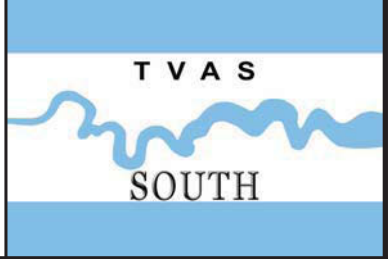




Plate 1. Room D following ground reduction, looking North-west. Scale: 0.50m.



Plate 2. Rooms B, C and D following ground reduction, looking East. Scale: 0.50m.



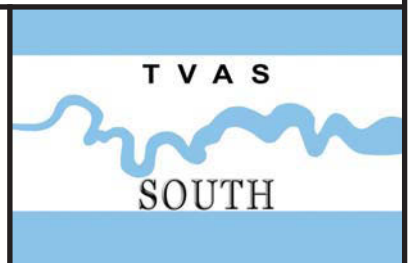
Plate 3. Rooms A and B following ground reduction, looking West. Scale: 0.50m.



Plate 4. Test pit in corner of Room B, looking North-east. Scale: 0.30m.

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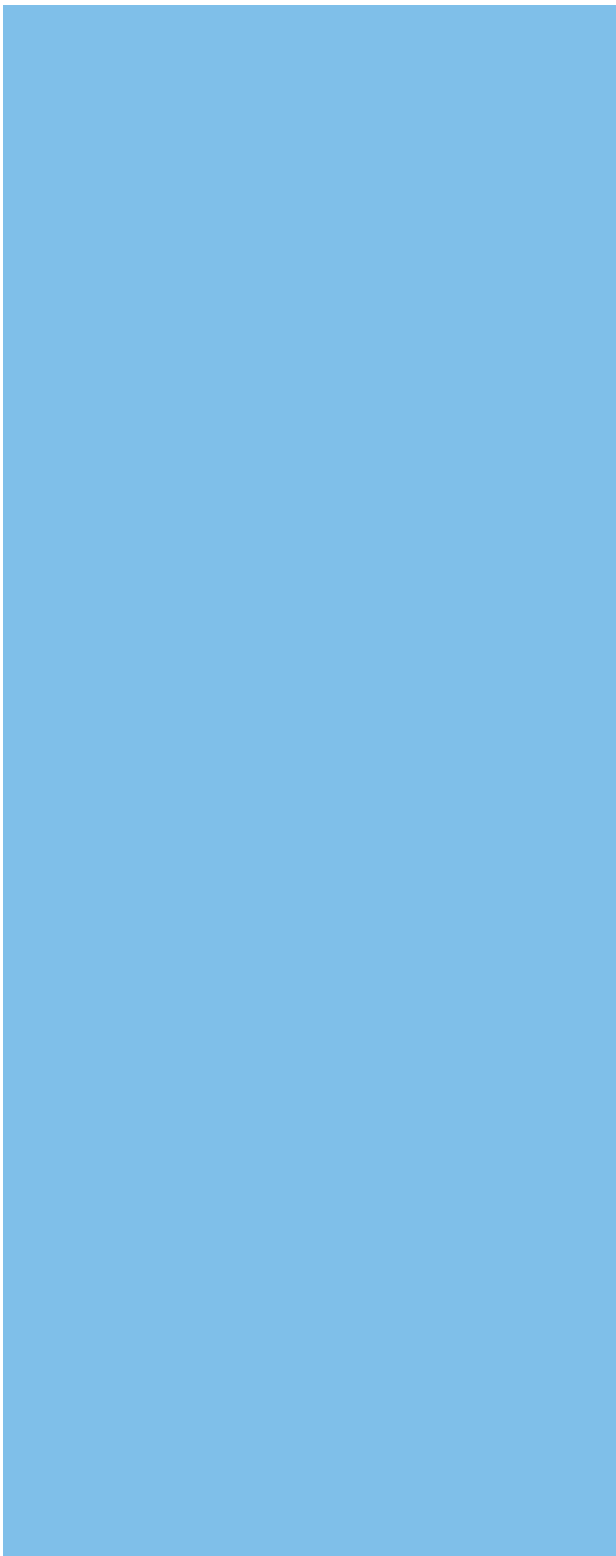
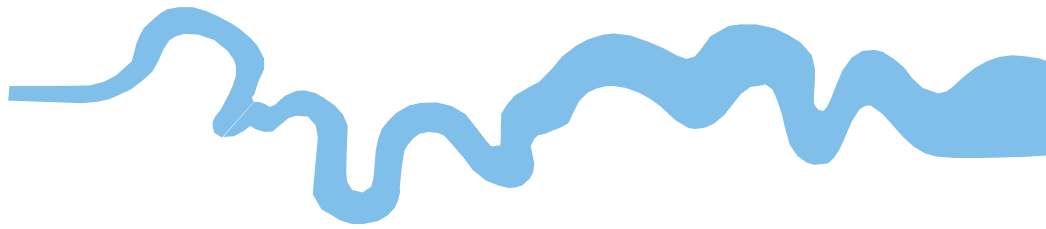
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Plates 1 - 4.**



## TIME CHART

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