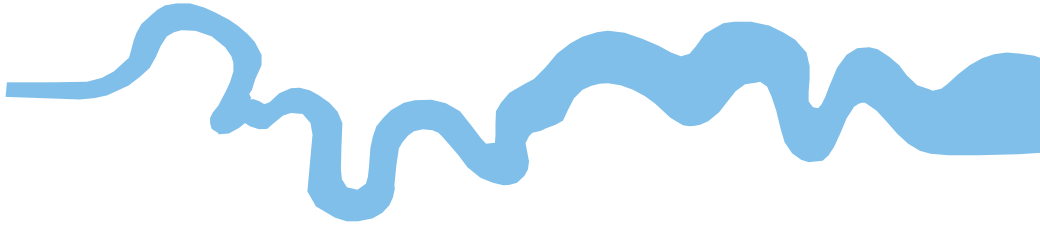


**T V A S**



**SOUTH**

**71-72 High Street (Co-op Supermarket),  
Battle, East Sussex**

**Archaeological Watching Brief**

**by Sean Wallis**

**Site Code: COB17/257**

**(TQ 7479 1591)**

**71-72 High Street (Co-op Supermarket),  
Battle, East Sussex**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief  
For The Co-Operative Group**

by Sean Wallis

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code COB 17/257

**March 2018**

## Summary

**Site name:** 71-72 High Street (Co-op Supermarket), Battle, East Sussex

**Grid reference:** TQ 7479 1591

**Planning reference:** RR/2016/1035/P and RR/2016/1036/L

**Site activity:** Watching Brief

**Date and duration of project:** 12th February 2018

**Project manager:** Sean Wallis

**Site supervisor:** Sean Wallis

**Site code:** COB 17/257

**Area of site:** 45 sq m

**Summary of results:** The watching brief successfully investigated those parts of the site which were to be affected by the improvement works. The excavation of three new pits through the brick basement floor was monitored, but no archaeological remains were recorded. Samples of the brick floor were taken, and these suggest that the present floor was laid down between the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at TVAS, Brighton, and will be deposited with Bexhill Museum in due course.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 15.04.18 Steve Preston ✓ 15.03.18
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# 71-72 High Street (Co-op Supermarket), Battle, East Sussex An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Sean Wallis

Report 17/257

## Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out in the basement of 71-72 High Street, Battle, East Sussex (TQ 7479 1591) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Christopher Jackson of Wellfield Associates, 66 High Road, Hockley, Essex, SS5 4TA, on behalf of The Co-Operative Group.

Planning permission (RR/2016/1035/P) and Listed Building Consent (RR/2016/1036/L) have been gained from Rother District Council for various alterations to the existing property, including improvements to strengthen the ground floor. The Listed Building Consent was subject to a standard condition (3) relating to archaeology and the historic environment requiring a programme of archaeological work. This was in accordance with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF, 2012), and the District's policies on archaeology. It was determined that the archaeological investigation should take the form of a watching brief, to take place during groundworks in the basement of the property.

The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation approved by Mr Chris Greatorex, the East Sussex Archaeological officer who advises the district council on archaeological matters. The fieldwork was undertaken by Sean Wallis on 12th February 2018, and the site code is COB 17/257. The archive is presently held at TVAS, Brighton and will be deposited with Bexhill Museum in due course.

## Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the east side of the High Street, within the historic core of the town, and to the north of remains of Battle Abbey (Figs 1 and 2). The ground floor of the property is currently a supermarket, but the watching brief took place in the basement which is used for storage. Although the High Street slopes up gently towards the north, the area around the site is relatively flat and lies at a height of approximately 80m above Ordnance Datum. According to the British Geological Survey the underlying geology consists of Wadhurst Clay (BGS 1971), and this was confirmed during the watching brief.

## **Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential of the site had been gleaned from a recent search of the East Sussex Historic Environment Record. In summary, the site lies within an Archaeological Notification Area associated with the medieval and post-medieval town of Battle, and its associated battlefield site. The Battle of Hastings took place in October 1066, and the main part of the battlefield is thought to lie to the south of a ridge which probably has prehistoric or Roman remains. Following his victory at the battle, William I established an abbey at the site, and the medieval town developed soon afterwards. The medieval parish church is dedicated to St Mary, and there are numerous historic buildings within the town dating from the 14th century onwards. The abbey was dissolved in the 16th century, during the Reformation, and part of the site is now occupied by a school. Numerous archaeological investigations have been carried out in the town, and finds or features dating from the medieval and post-medieval periods have been recorded. The site itself is a Grade II Listed Building, which is believed to date from the early 19th century.

## **Objectives and methodology**

The primary aims of the watching brief were to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the groundworks. This was to involve the monitoring of pits dug for the new columns in the basement. Where appropriate and relevant, the recommendations in *Sussex Archaeological Standards* (ESCC 2015) were to be followed.

## **Results**

The work to strengthen the shop floor required the erection of three new columns in the basement. The areas of the basement floor which would be affected were photographed prior to the intrusive works commencing (Pls 1–3). A small pit, measuring approximately 0.45m by 0.45m, was excavated through the basement floor for each new column pad (Fig. 3; Pl. 4). Pads B and C partially filled with water following excavation (Pls 5–6). The stratigraphy recorded was the same in each pit, with the natural geology being encountered beneath the existing brick floor (50) and between 0.12m and 0.16 of gravelly made ground (51). Both the existing floor and the underlying made ground probably date from the late 19th century to early 20th century. No earlier floor surfaces were revealed in the pits.

## Finds

### *The Ceramic Building Material* by Luke Barber

A relatively small assemblage of brick and tile was recovered during the archaeological work. The material consists of complete brick samples from an *in situ* floor as well as fragmentary pieces from soil deposits beneath.

The assemblage is summarized in the table below (fabrics) and Appendix 1 (quantification).

<i>Fabric</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Suggested date</i>
B1a	Brick red. Sparse to moderate black iron oxides to 3mm	Quite well formed, well fired	C18th – 19th
B2a	Orange red. Slightly granular matrix with notable grog/siltstone pellets	Well formed, well to hard fired	Mid C19th – mid 20th
W1a	Refined white earthenware	Mould formed, well fired	Mid C19th – 20th

The brick sample from the basement floor (50) consists of two different types. The earlier B1a sample has the same mortar on all faces and has clearly therefore been reused in the floor. The B2a brick is more closely datable – the High Brooms Co being a major producer of brick in the High Brooms area of Tunbridge Wells between 1885 and 1968. The style of the current brick would be in keeping with a late 19th to early 20th century date. The made ground layer (51) below contains some late wall time fragments as well as another fragment of B1a brick, clearly dislodged from its original setting in a floor. Taken together this material may be make up associated with the overlying floor.

The ceramic building material assemblage is small and late in date. As such the material is not considered to hold any potential for further analysis beyond that undertaken for this report. This material has been discarded though some fabric samples have been retained for a county series.

## Conclusion

The watching brief successfully investigated those parts of the site which were to be affected by the improvement works. The excavation of three new pits through the brick basement floor was monitored, but no archaeological remains were recorded. Samples of the brick floor were taken, and these suggest that the present floor was laid down between the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

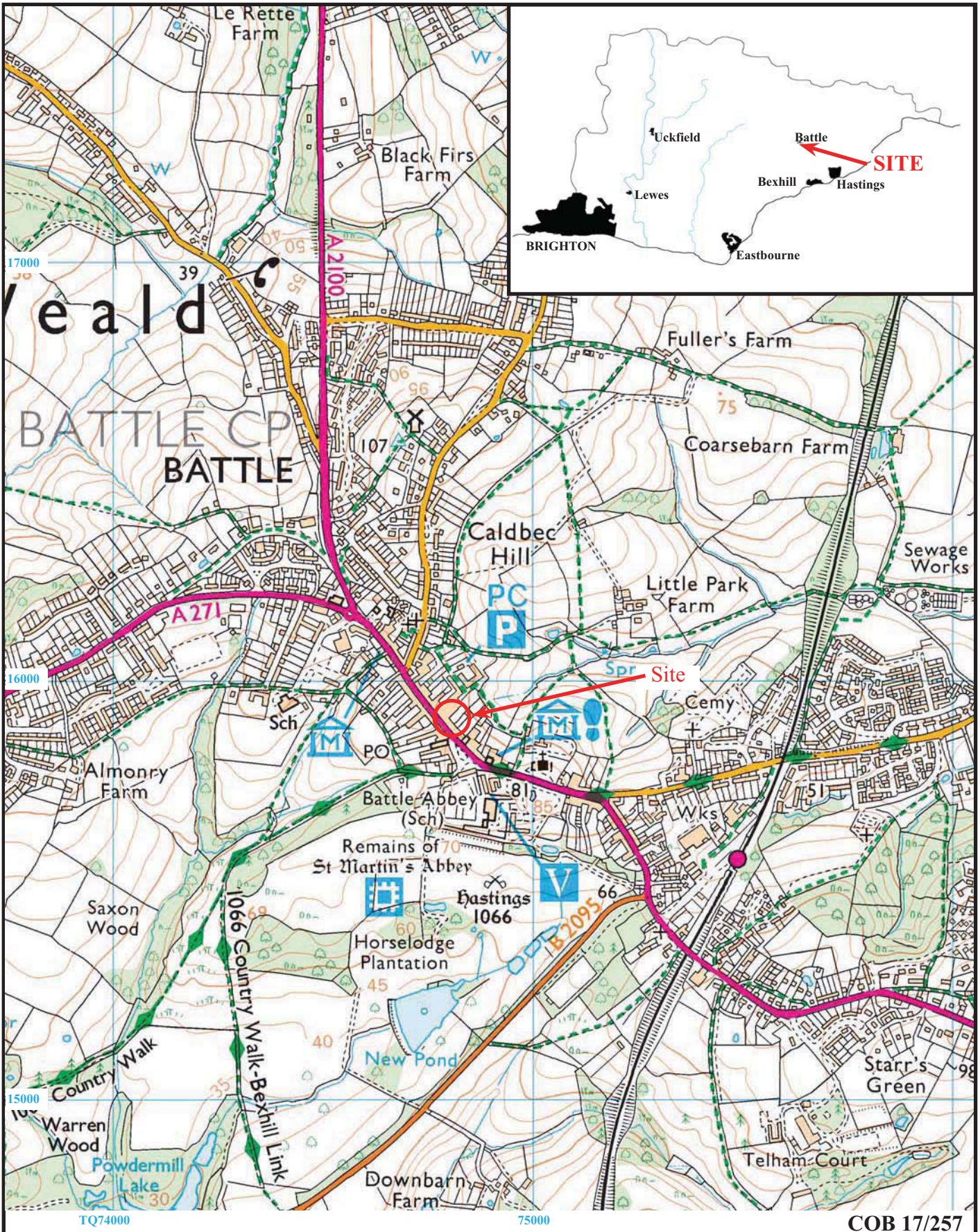
## References

- BGS, 1971, *British Geological Survey*, 1:63360, Sheet 320, Drift Edition, Keyworth.  
ESCC, 2015, *Sussex Archaeological Standards*, East Sussex County Council, Lewes.  
ESHER, 2017, Historic Environment Record full search, reference 503/17, Lewes.  
NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Government, London

## APPENDIX 1: Catalogue of ceramic building material by context

<i>Context</i>	<i>Form</i>	<i>Fabric</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt (g)</i>	<i>Comments</i>
50	Brick	B1a	1	2908	98% complete. Dimensions 237 x 108 x 58mm. Traces of dull yellow mortar on all faces.
50	Brick	B2a	1	3540	98% complete. Dimensions 230 x 110 x 75mm. Neat flat-bottomed frog on upper face stamped 'HIGH BROOMS Co // TUN. WELLS'. Base has neat shallow unstamped frog
51	Brick	B1a	1	488	58mm thick. Worn stretcher face
51	Wall tile	W1a	2	42	10mm thick with moulded back and white glazed front

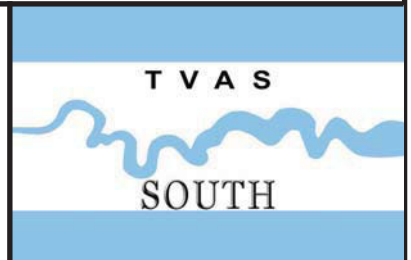




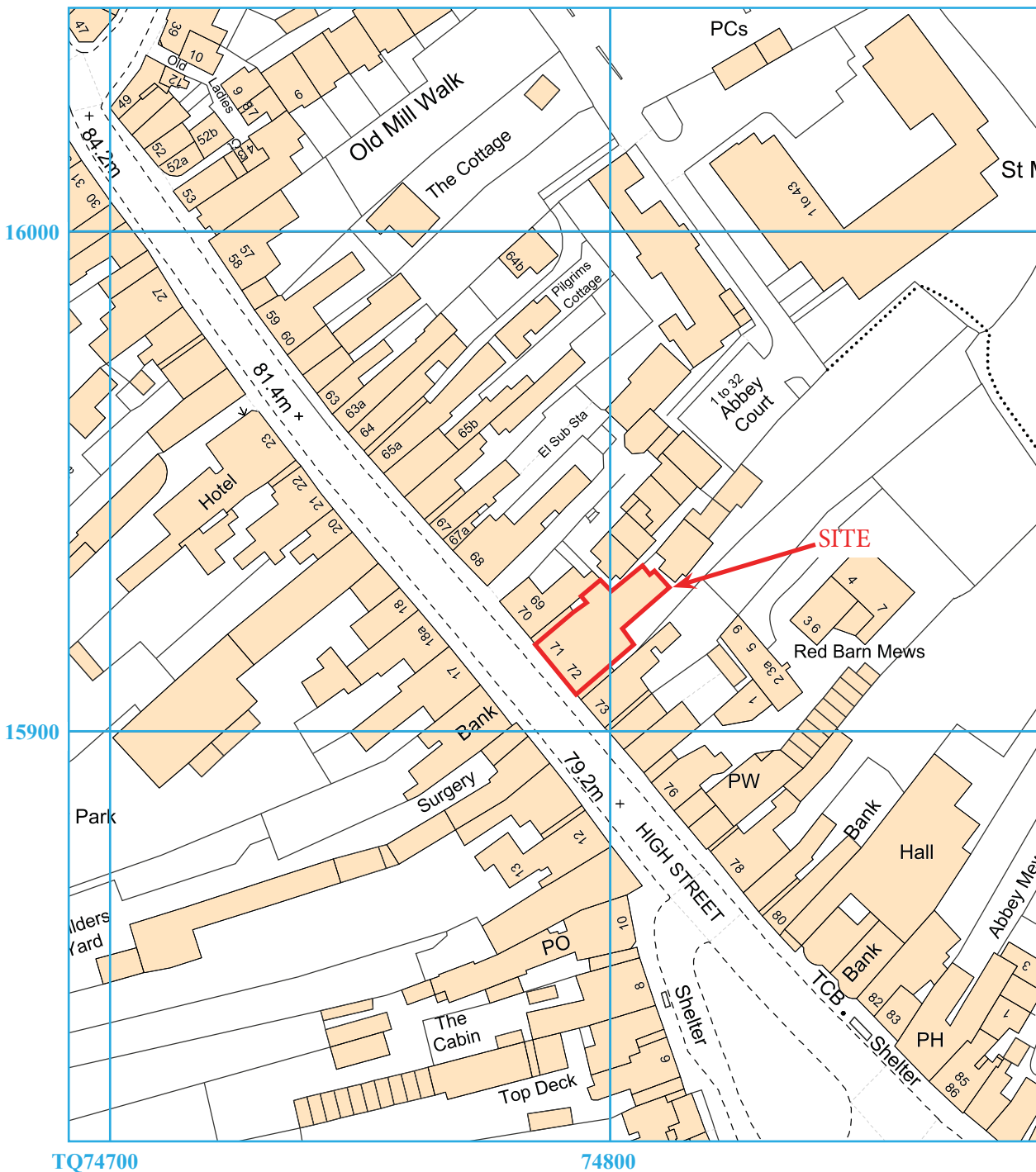
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Figure 1. Location of site within Battle and East Sussex.

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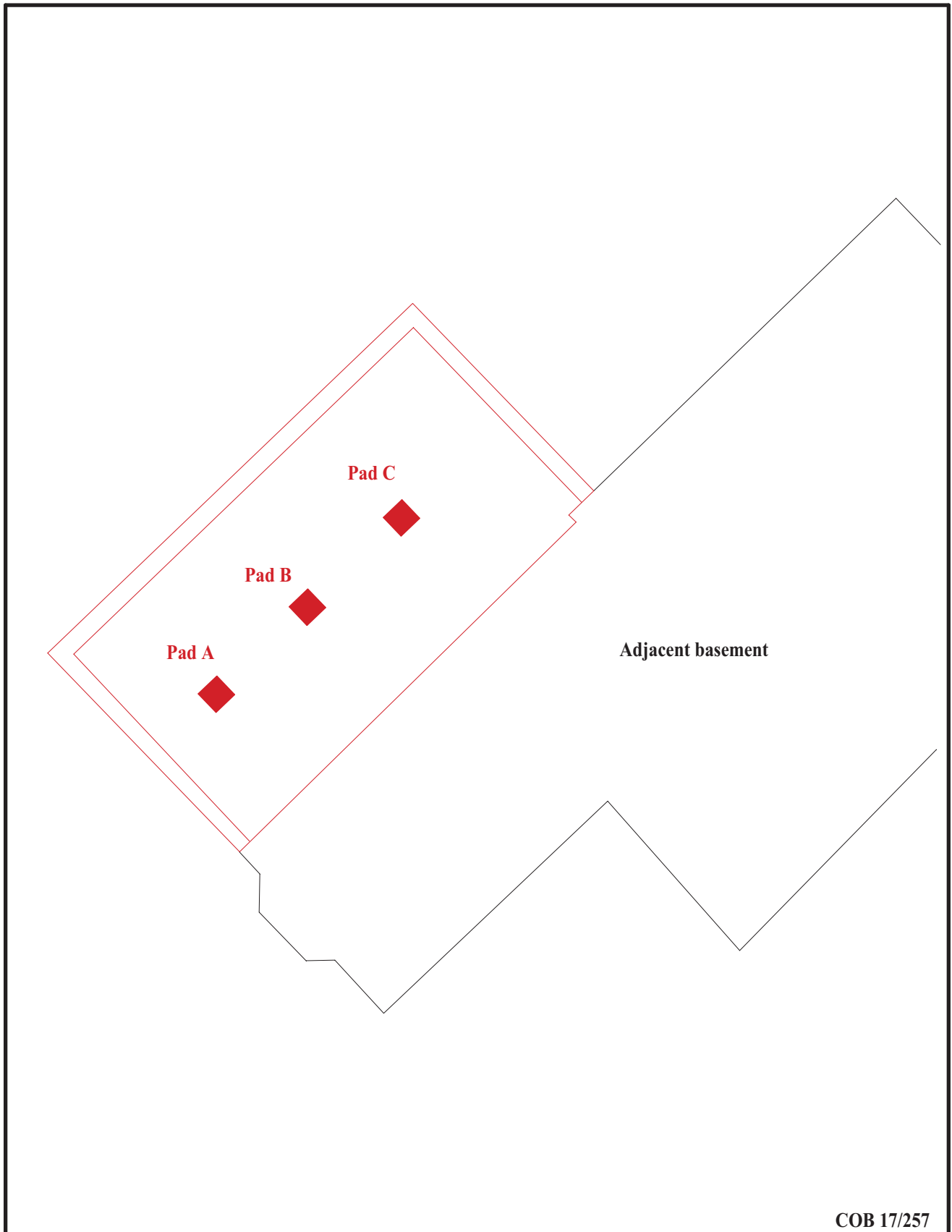
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site**

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Figure 3. Site plan showing monitored areas.

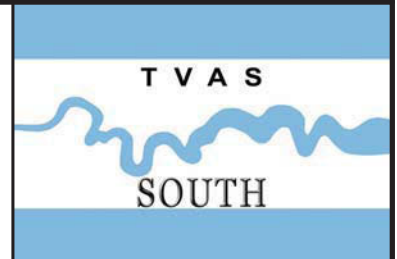




Plate 1. General view of basement, looking North-east.



Plate 2. General view of basement, looking South-west.



Plate 3. Pad C prior to excavation, looking North-west.  
Scale: 0.30m.



Plate 4. Pad A, looking North-west.  
Scale: 0.30m.



Plate 5. Pad B, looking North-west.  
Scale: 0.30m.



Plate 6. Pad C, looking North-west.  
Scale: 0.30m.

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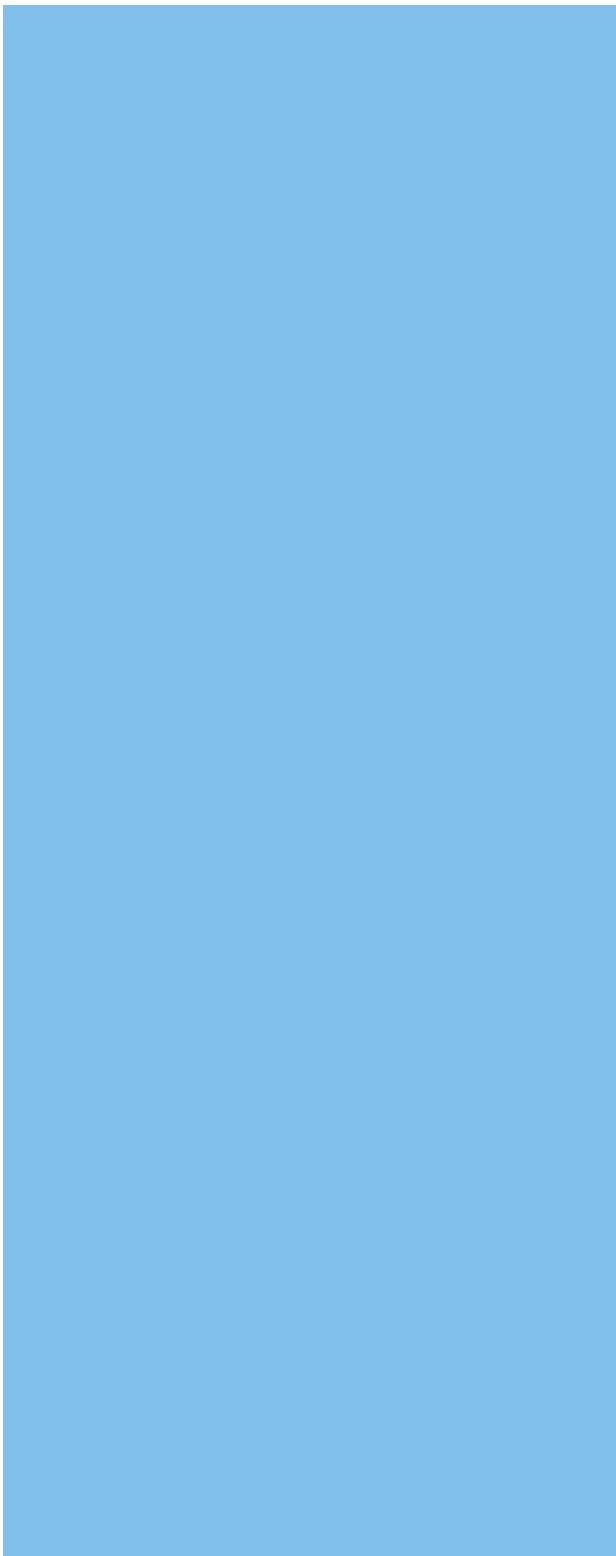
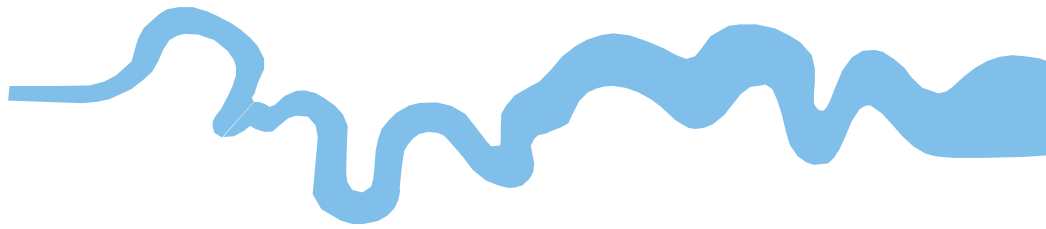
71-72 High Street (Co-op Supermarket),  
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Plates 1 - 6.



## 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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