

T V A S



SOUTH

**Land adjacent to Brickwall Hotel, Brede Lane,
Sedlescombe, East Sussex**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Sean Wallis

Site Code: BHS18/223

(TQ 7816 1806)

**Land adjacent to Brickwall Hotel, Brede Lane,
Sedlescombe, East Sussex**

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Elliott Operations and Investments Ltd**

by Sean Wallis

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code: BHS18/223

January 2019

Summary

Site name: Land adjacent to Brickwall Hotel, Brede Lane, Sedlescombe, East Sussex

Grid reference: TQ 7816 1806

Site activity: Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 17th-18th January 2019

Project manager: Sean Wallis

Site supervisor: Sean Wallis

Site code: BHS 18/223

Area of site: c. 825 sq m

Summary of results: The archaeological evaluation adjacent to the Brickwall Hotel, Sedlescombe, successfully investigated those areas which will be most affected by the construction of new houses on the site. A number of post-medieval features were recorded, including a possible pit or ditch which may be 18th century in date. Three parallel footings were found in the western part of the site, which could potentially date from the early 19th century, although they are more likely to relate to a much later 'garden feature' of some kind.

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

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford ✓28.01.2019 Steve Preston ✓28.01.2019
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Land adjacent to Brickwall Hotel, Brede Lane, Sedlescombe, East Sussex An Archaeological Evaluation

by Sean Wallis

Report 18/223

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out on a small parcel of land adjacent to the Brickwall Hotel, Brede Lane, Sedlescombe, East Sussex (TQ 7816 1806) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr William Bedford of Orion Heritage, 95 Ditchling Road, Brighton, East Sussex, BN1 4ST, on behalf of Elliott Operations and Investments Ltd, Unit 3 Kilnbridge Works, Lower Road, East Farleigh, Maidstone, ME15 0HD, Kent.

Outline planning permission (RR/2017/2288/P) has been gained from Rother District Council to construct two new houses on the site. The consent is subject to standard conditions (11 and 12) relating to archaeology and the historic environment, which require the implementation of the programme of archaeological work, followed by a report on the results of the fieldwork. This was in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2018), and the District Council's policies on archaeology.

A single component of work was therefore proposed at this stage, namely field investigation by means of machine trenching. Dependent on the findings of this evaluation, further archaeological work may be requested, as will be determined through consultation with the East Sussex County Council Archaeological Officer. The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which had been approved by Rother District Council.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Virginia Fuentes-Mateos and Sean Wallis on 17th and 18th January 2019, and the site code is BHS 18/223. The archive is presently held at TVAS South, Brighton, and will be deposited with Bexhill Museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located to the north-west of Brede Lane, immediately east of the Brickwall Hotel, and is bounded to the north and east by residential properties and their gardens. There is also a small electricity sub-station in the east of the site. The site is an irregular shaped parcel of the land, the northern part of which was occupied by the hotel's swimming pool (Pl. 1). The rest of the site contained numerous mature trees, many of which had been cut down shortly before the evaluation took place, along with a shed and the bases of two former sheds or

greenhouses (Pl. 2). The site generally sloped down towards the south-east and, as result, the height above Ordnance Datum varied from 27.70m close to the northern boundary, to 26.22m at the southern end. Beyond the southern boundary the area drops significantly (by about 2m) down to Brede Lane. According to the British Geological Survey the underlying geology consists of Ashdown Sand (BGS 1971), and this was confirmed during the evaluation, with a light yellow brown sandy clay being recorded in all three trenches.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site was gleaned from a search of the East Sussex Historic Environment Record. The site is located within an Archaeological Notification Area associated with the medieval and post-medieval village of Sedlescombe. The village is likely to have Saxon origins, and is first mentioned in Domesday Book (1086) as *Selescome* (Mills 1993). The parish church, dedicated to St John the Baptist, largely dates from the late medieval period, and is situated to the north of the village centre. Numerous archaeological fieldwork projects have been carried out in the village, but these have largely been negative or have recorded post-medieval features. One exception was a site at Park View, to the south of the present site, where prehistoric flintwork and possible medieval features were recorded, along with a post-medieval tannery. Slightly further afield, a Roman bloomery site was recorded at Pestalozzi International Village, to the south-east of the village. The Roman road from Hastings to Ashford is thought to run through the village, along the line of the present B2244, to the west of the present site. The village contains a large number of historic buildings, many of which are Listed. The site is adjacent to the Grade II Listed Brickwall Hotel, which is believed to date from the 17th century, although it was substantially restored and rebuilt following a fire in the 1950s.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological or palaeoenvironmental deposits within the area of proposed development.

This work was to be carried out in a manner which would not compromise the integrity of archaeological features or deposits which warrant preservation *in situ*. The work was to be carried out to comply with the East Sussex Archaeological Standards requirements for archaeological fieldwork (ESCC 2017).

Specific aims of the project were;

to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on this site;

to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present;

to determine if archaeological deposits from the Saxon period are present;

to determine if archaeological deposits from the medieval activity are present.

It was proposed to dig three trenches in the southern part of the site (2 x 10m and 1 x 7.5m), as this area had not been clearly affected by the construction of the hotel's swimming pool. The trenches were to be dug using a 360° type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision. All spoilheaps were to be monitored for finds. Where archaeological features were certainly or probably present, the stripped areas were to be cleaned using appropriate hand tools and sufficient of the archaeological features and deposits excavated or sampled by hand to satisfy the aims outlined above.

Results

The three trenches were excavated as planned (Fig. 3), although they had to be shifted slightly to avoid large tree stumps. The trenches were all 1.50m wide, and varied between 6.60m and 12.10m in length, and between 0.45m and 0.58m in depth. A complete list of the trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1. The excavated features are summarized as Appendix 2.

Trench 1 (Figs 4 and 5; Pls 3, 7, 8 and 9)

This trench was orientated approximately NNW-SSE, and was 11.80m long and up to 0.50m deep. At the northern end of the trench the natural Ashdown Sand geology was observed immediately below 0.38m of topsoil (50). The end of a large modern truncation was recorded at the northern end of the trench, and three apparent wall footings (57, 58 and 59) were noted, parallel to one another, in the central part of the trench. All the footings consisted of tightly packed sandstone and lime mortar, and contained varying amounts of brick and tile fragments. Some of the brick fragments had a hard grey sandy cement mortar attached, suggesting a 19th century date. However, no buildings or structures are shown in this area on the detailed maps of the village, dating back to 1843 (Fig. 6). It is therefore possible that the footings represent a structure which was built and demolished in the first half of the 19th century, although it is more likely that they relate to a much later 'garden feature' of some kind, which was not deemed important enough to be included on the historic maps.

Two possible pits (1 and 2) were investigated at the southern end of the trench, where they had both been partially exposed. Pit 1 measured at least 1.65m by 1.05m, and appeared to be possibly sub-rectangular in plan. It was up to 0.33m deep, and fragments of late post-medieval pottery, brick and tile were recovered from its fill of mid brownish grey clayey silt (52), along with an oyster shell. It had been partially truncated to the north by sub-circular pit 2, which measured at least 0.75m by 0.35m. Pit 2 had a primary fill of mid brown grey clayey

silt (53), which yielded late post-medieval pottery and tile. An upper fill of re-deposited natural (60) indicates that the pit had been deliberately backfilled shortly after it had been dug. The complete absence of any subsoil horizon in this trench clearly indicates that this part of the site has been truncated in the past.

Trench 2 (Figs 4 and 5; Pls 4, 6 and 10)

Trench 2 was orientated approximately W–E, and was 12.10m long and up to 0.45m deep. The natural Ashdown Sand geology was revealed beneath 0.21m of topsoil (50) and 0.19m of subsoil (51). A possible pit or ditch (3) was partially exposed at the western end of the trench, along with a post-hole (4). Feature 3 measured at least 2.10m by 1.20m, and the pottery and tile fragments recovered from its fill of mid brownish grey silty clay (54) suggest an early post-medieval date. Post-hole 4 measured 0.38m by 0.35m, and was up to 0.07m deep. No finds were found within its fill of mid greyish brown silty clay (55). Gully 5 was investigated in the central part of the trench. The feature was up to 0.65m wide and 0.20m deep, and filled with a deposit of mid brownish grey silty clay (56), which produced no archaeological finds.

Trench 3 (Pl. 5)

This trench was orientated approximately NNW-SSE, and was 6.60m long and up to 0.58m deep. The natural Ashdown Sand geology was observed beneath 0.32m of topsoil (50) and 0.17m of subsoil (51). No archaeological finds or features were recorded in the trench.

Finds

The Pottery by Luke Barber

The archaeological work recovered 11 sherds of pottery, weighing 178g, from three contexts (Appendix 3). Overall the pottery consists of small to medium-sized sherds with limited to moderate signs of abrasion. Much of the material appears to have seen some reworking. This would explain the presence of a few residual pieces.

The earliest pottery from the site is of the early Post-medieval period. Just two sherds are involved, though ironically, they are the freshest in the assemblage. The High-Fired Earthenware from pit 1 (52) is clearly residual, but the Wealden buff sandy earthenware from pit / ditch 3 (54) appears to be contemporary with the feature. Both sherds are of types that have quite a wide usage, however, both are most likely to fall between c. 1625 and 1750. The remainder of the pottery represents a general domestic scatter that spans the later 18th century and early to mid 19th century. Too little is present to comment on meaningfully, but there is nothing that need post-date c. 1875.

Ceramic Building Material by Luke Barber

A relatively small assemblage of brick and tile was recovered during the archaeological work (Appendix 4). The material was generally in quite good condition with a generally high average fragment size. Due to the mixed nature of many of the deposits and late date of most/all of the ceramic building material the assemblage has been recorded by form and date rather than by fabric. Although fabric samples have previously been collected for this area a careful watch was made to identify any new potential types not previously recorded. In the event no new types were noted. All fabrics present are typical Wealden types tempered with differing proportions of black iron oxides and/or white 'marl' streaks and pellets.

All of the ceramic building material is of post-medieval date. One group stands out as being the earliest: pit / ditch 3 (54) produced a group of 14 quite fresh fragments of peg tile that are perhaps best placed in a mid 17th to mid/late 18th century date range. The remainder of the ceramic building material consists of fairly typically well formed and well/hard-fired pieces of mid 18th to 19th century type. There are no pieces that need post-date c. 1850/75. Several of the pieces show signs of having been re-used – most notably in the probable footings in trench 1 (57, 58 and 59). The mortar used would certainly suggest a 19th century date for these features.

The ceramic building material assemblage is small, lacking in many diagnostic pieces, late in date and of types well known of in this part of the Weald. It is not considered to hold any potential for further analysis and has been discarded.

Conclusion

The archaeological evaluation successfully investigated those areas which will be most affected by the construction of new houses on the site. A number of post-medieval features were recorded, including a possible pit or ditch which may be 18th century in date. Three parallel footings in the western part of the site could potentially date from the early 19th century, although they are more likely to relate to a much later 'garden feature' of some kind.

References

- BGS, 1971, *British Geological Survey*, 1:63,360, Sheet 320, Drift Deposits Edition, Keyworth
ESCC, 2017, *Sussex Archaeological Standards*, East Sussex County Council, Lewes
Mills, A D, 1993, *English Place-names*, Oxford
NPPF, 2018, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, London

APPENDIX 1: Trench details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	11.80	1.50	0.50	0-0.38m topsoil (50); 0.38-0.50m+ natural geology (light yellow brown sandy clay). Pits 1 and 2, wall footings 57, 58 and 59. [Pls 3, 7, 8 and 9]
2	12.10	1.50	0.45	0-0.21m topsoil (50); 0.21-0.40m subsoil (51); 0.40-0.45m+ natural geology (light yellow brown sandy clay). Pit/ditch 3, post-hole 4, gully 5. [Pls 4, 6 and 10]
3	6.60	1.50	0.58	0-0.32m topsoil (50); 0.32-0.49m subsoil (51); 0.49-0.58m+ natural geology (light yellow brown sandy clay). [Pl. 5]

APPENDIX 2: Feature details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence / comments</i>
1	1	52	Pit	19th century	Pottery and CBM.
1	2	53, 60	Pit	19th century	Pottery and CBM.
1		57	Wall footing	19th century ?	CBM.
1		58	Wall footing	19th century ?	CBM.
1		59	Wall footing	19th century ?	CBM.
2	3	54	Pit / ditch	18th century	Pottery and CBM.
2	4	55	Post-hole	Undated	
2	5	56	Gully	Undated	

APPENDIX 3: Catalogue of Pottery

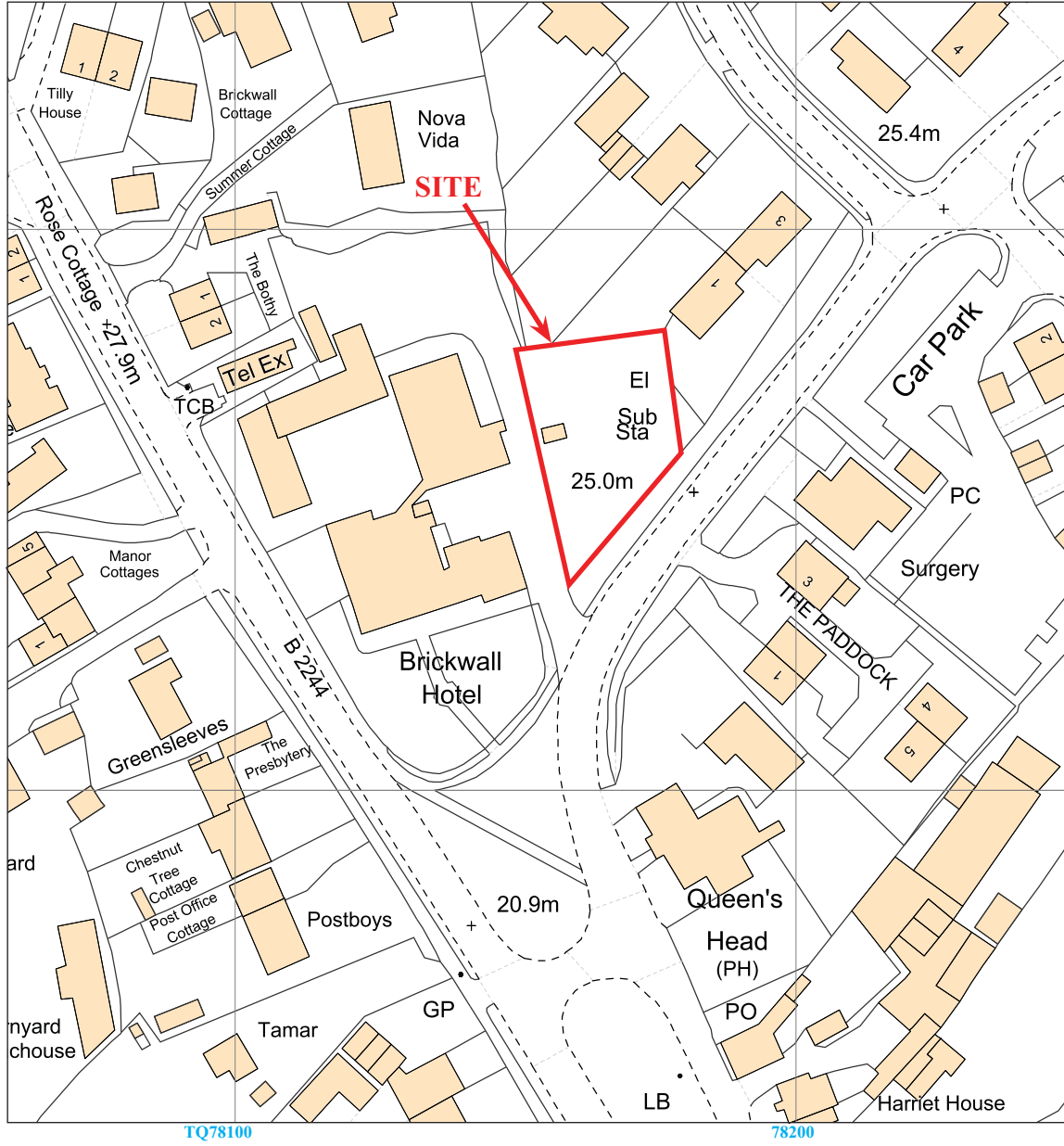
<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Deposit</i>	<i>Fabric</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt (g)</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1	1	52	Hard-fired earthenware (rare calcareous peppering)	EPM	1	6	Undiagnostic of form (hereafter ?) x1 (reduced faces)
1	1	52	Glazed red earthenware (late)	LPM	2	47	Jar x1 (moulded rounded club rim, clear glaze internally); ?x1 (clear glaze internally)
1	1	52	Sunderland-type slipware	LPM	1	64	Bowl x1 (white slip and clear glaze internally - worn)
1	1	52	Yellow ware	LPM	1	5	Jug x1
1	1	52	Blue transfer-printed whiteware	LPM	1	4	Plate x1 (flow blue geometric border design)
1	1	52	Pearlware	LPM	1	7	?Bowl x1
1	2	53	Glazed red earthenware (late)	LPM	2	29	Cream bowl x1 (rounded club rim, traces of white slip on interior); ?x1 (clear glaze internally)
1	2	53	Creamware	LPM	1	4	Plate x1
2	3	54	Wealden buff sandy earthenware	EPM	1	12	Hollow vessel x1 (clear/green glaze internally, fresh)

EPM – Early Post-Medieval c. 1525/50-1750;

LPM - Late Post-Medieval c. 1750-1900+

APPENDIX 4: Catalogue of Ceramic Building Material and Fired Clay

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Deposit</i>	<i>Form</i>	<i>Date (century AD)</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt (g)</i>	<i>Dimensions (mm)</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1	1	52	Brick	mid 18th - 19th	1	842	?x106x58	Top quite worn
1	1	52	Peg tile	mid 18th - 19th	4	443	10-11 thick	Hard-fired
1	2	53	Peg tile	mid 18th - 19th	2	147	11 thick	Hard-fired
2	3	54	Peg tile	mid 17th - 18th	14	751	11-13 thick	Crude but well fired. x1 diamond peg hole set 25mm down from top and 52mm in from side (measurements to centre of peg hole)
1		57	Brick	mid 18th - 19th	1	647	?x107x59	As in [52] [1]
1		57	Peg tile	mid 18th - 19th	2	459	10-11 thick	x1 diamond peg hole (8x8mm tapering down to 6x6mm) set 23mm down from top and 44mm in from edge. Re-used in a grey coal-flecked fine mortar
1		58	Brick	18th - 19th	1	474	65 thick	Re-used: set in a hard grey sandy cement
1		58	Peg tile	mid 18th - 19th	1	63	11 thick	
1		59	Peg tile	18th - 19th	2	218	11 thick	Re-used: covered in fine lime mortar, including breaks



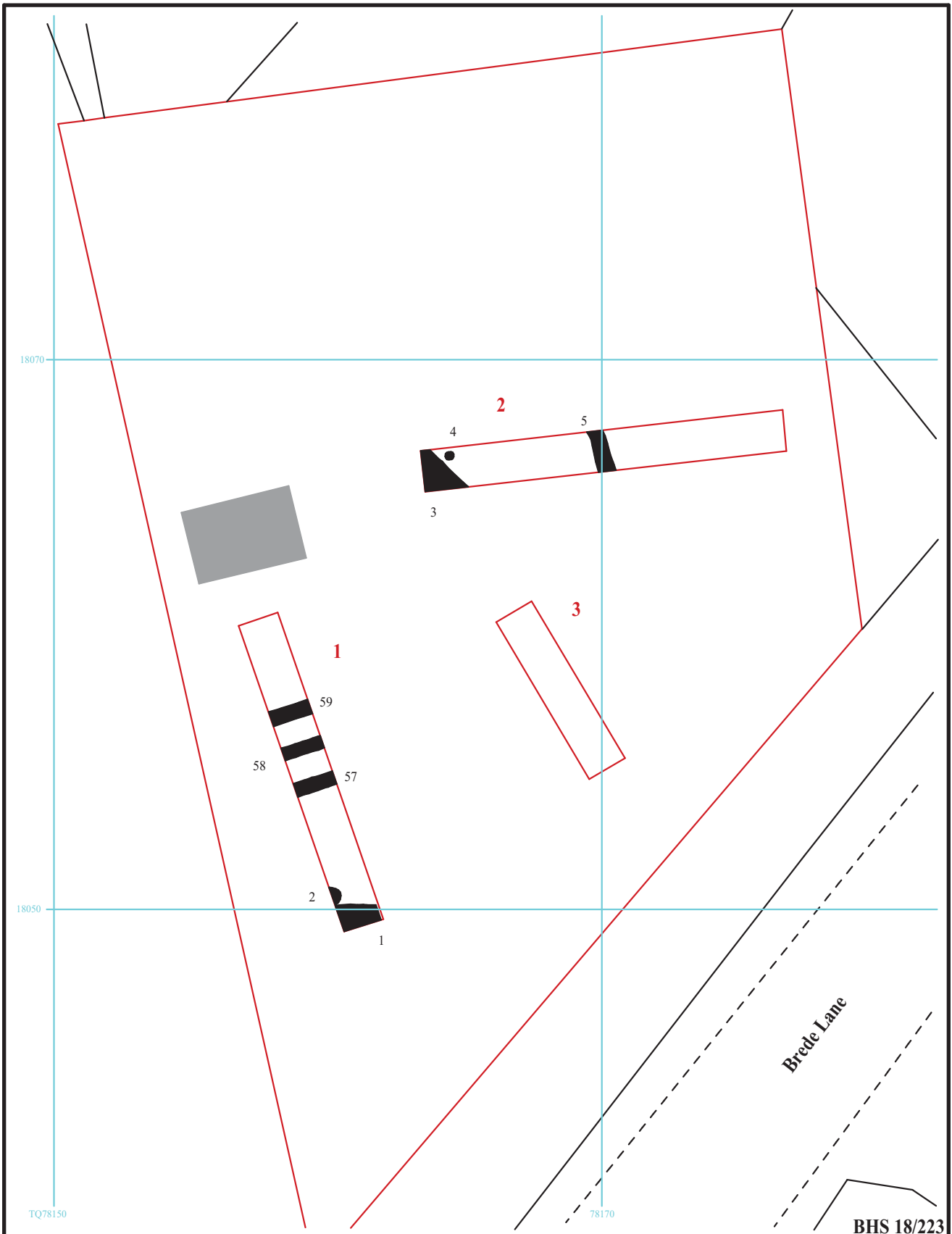
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**Land adjacent to Brickwall Hotel, Brede Lane,
Sedlescombe, East Sussex, 2019
Archaeological Evaluation**
Figure 2. Detailed site location.

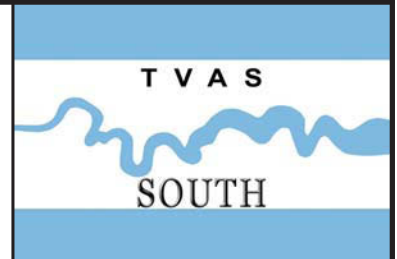
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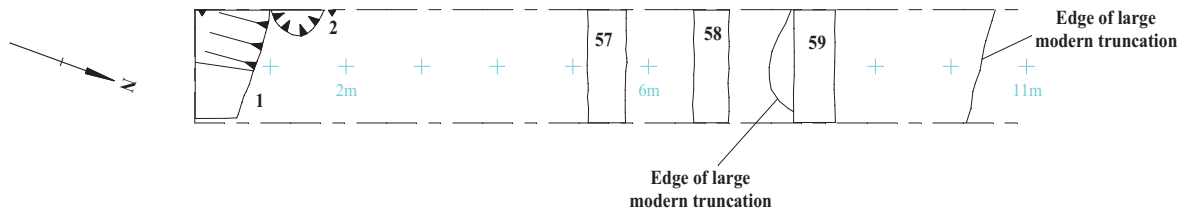
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Figure 3. Detailed location of site showing excavated trenches.



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Trench 1



Trench 2

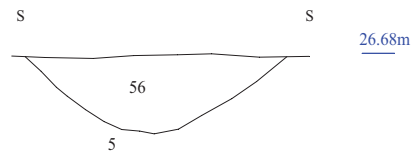
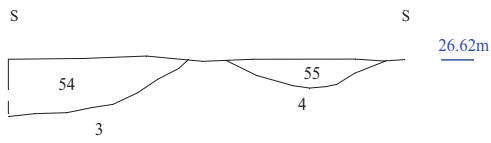
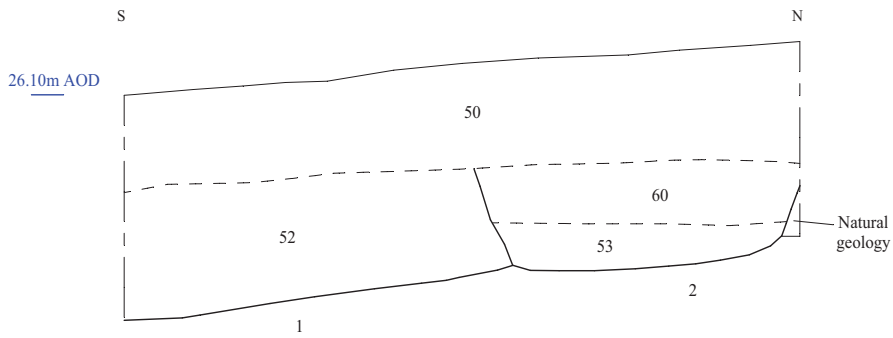


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Figure 4. Plan of trenches 1 and 2.



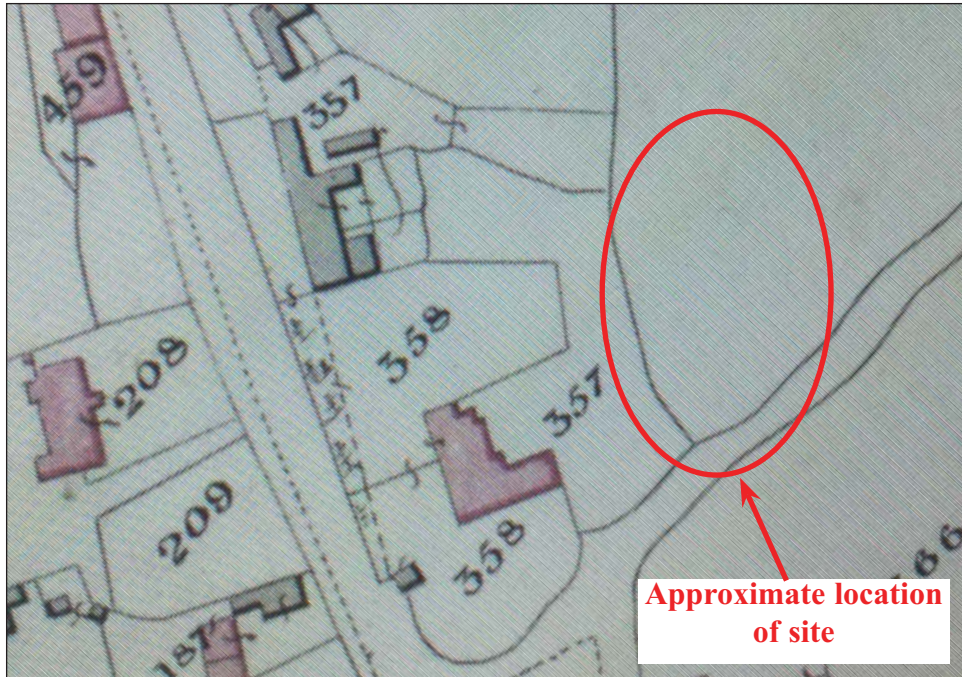


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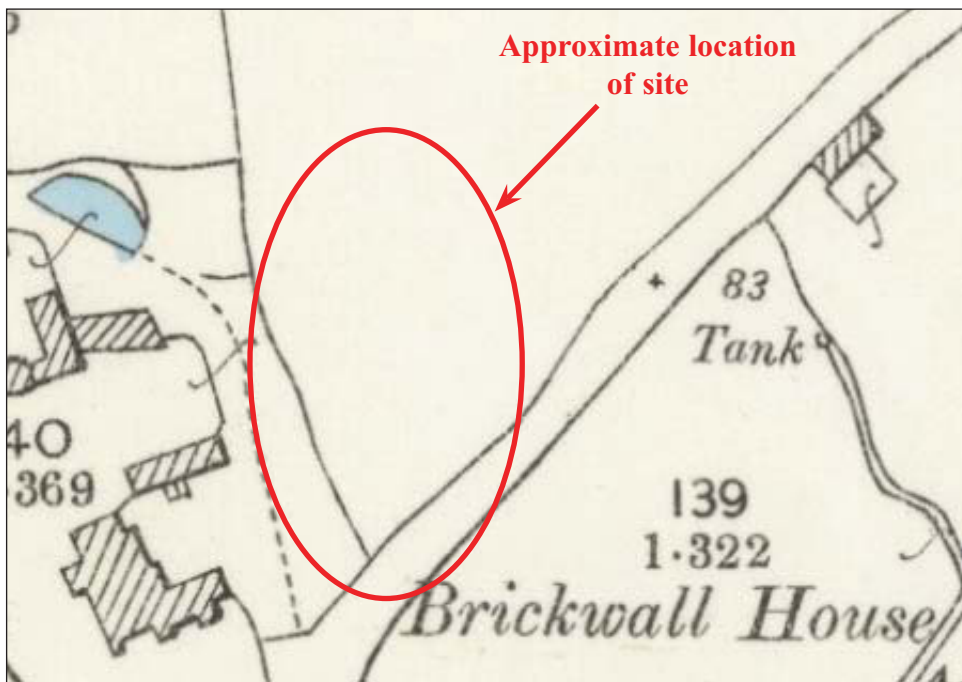
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Figure 5. Sections.





Sedlescombe Parish Tithe Map, 1843.



Second Edition Ordnance Survey, 1899.

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Figure 6. Historic maps.

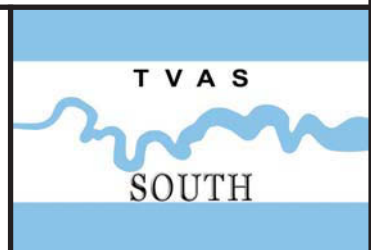




Plate 1. General view of site, looking South-west.



Plate 2. General view of site, looking North-east.



Plate 3. Trench 1, looking South.
Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.50m.



Plate 4. Trench 2, looking West.
Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.50m.



Plate 5. Trench 3, looking North-north-west.
Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.50m.



Plate 6. Trench 2, features 3 and 4, looking West.
Scales: 0.50m, 0.30m and 0.10m.

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Plates 1 to 6.

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Plate 7. Trench 1, pits 1 and 2, looking West.
Scales: 0.50m and 0.30m.



Plate 8. Trench 1, footing 57, looking West.
Scale: 0.50m.



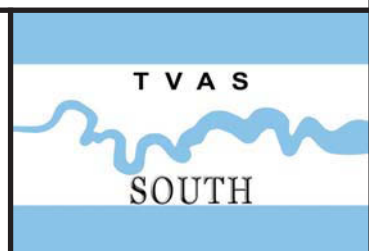
Plate 9. Trench 1, footings 57, 58 and 59,
looking North.
Scales: 0.50m and 0.30m.



Plate 10. Trench 2, gully 5, looking South.
Scales: 0.50m and 0.10m.

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Land adjacent to Brickwall Hotel, Brede Lane,
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Plates 7 to 10.



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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