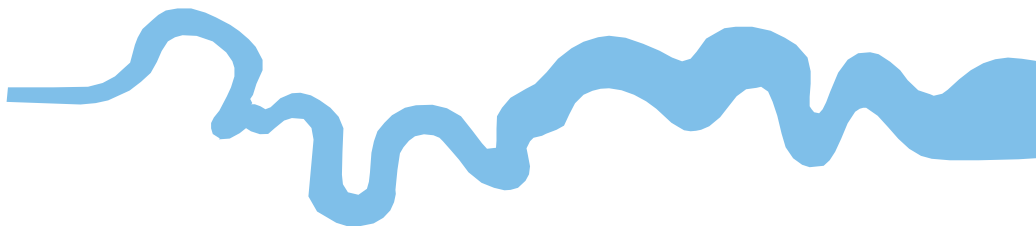


**T V A S**



**SOUTH**

**New Monks Farm,  
Lancing, West Sussex**

**Archaeological Watching Brief**

**Virginia Fuentes and Sean Wallis**

**Site Code: NMF19/173**

**(TQ 1950 0550)**

# **New Monks Farm, Lancing, West Sussex**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief  
For The Community Stadium Ltd**

by Virginia Fuentes and Sean Wallis  
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code NMF 19/173

**May 2021**

## Summary

**Site name:** New Monks Farm, Lancing, West Sussex

**Grid reference:** TQ 1950 0550

**Planning reference:** AWDM/0961/17

**Site activity:** Watching Brief

**Date and duration of project:** 7th November 2019 to 16th April 2021

**Project manager:** Sean Wallis

**Site supervisors:** Virginia Fuentes and Sean Wallis

**Site code:** NMF 19/173

**Summary of results:** The aim of the watching brief was to record any buried archaeological remains which might be exposed by the planned groundworks on the site. The extent of the project was quite limited due to the fact that much of the site had been covered by thick deposits of made ground in the past, and most of the proposed excavations would not impact significantly on the ground beneath these deposits. Groundworks were monitored in several parts of the site where the underlying clay geology would be affected by the new development. Apart from modern drainage features, such as land drains, the only archaeological remains recorded were all close to the former farm complex known as North Barn Farm. The remains of a late 19th century building and well were revealed immediately to the south of the farm complex, and two former farm tracks were also recorded in this part of the site. The footings of another wall, which could date from the 18th century, were also uncovered but it was not possible to closely date the features as it was constructed from flint and beach pebbles.

**Location and reference of archive:** The preferred depository for the site archive is Worthing Museum.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford✓ Steve Preston✓ 17/06/2021
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# **New Monks Farm, Lancing, West Sussex An Archaeological Watching Brief**

by Virginia Fuentes and Sean Wallis

**Report 19/173b**

## **Introduction**

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at New Monks Farm, Lancing. The site is located to the south of the A27, east of the historic core of Lancing (TQ 1950 0550) (Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by Mr Andy Shelley of PCA Heritage on behalf of The Community Stadium Ltd.

Planning permission (AWDM/0961/17) had been gained from Adur and Worthing District Council for a major re-development of the area for residential and commercial purposes. The permission was subject to a standard planning condition (3) 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, 2019) and the Council's policies on archaeology and the historic environment. The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (PCA 2019) approved by West Sussex County Council Archaeological Officer to comply with the requirements for the archaeological fieldworks contained in *Sussex Archaeological Standards* (ESCC 2019) and in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014a).

The fieldwork was undertaken by Virginia Fuentes, Josh Hargreaves, Elspeth St John-Brooks and Sean Wallis between 7th November 2019 and 16th April 2021, and the site code is NMF 19/173. The archive is currently held at TVAS Brighton and will be deposited with a suitable depository in due course.

## **Location, topography and geology**

The site is located to the south of Old Shoreham Road (A27), and east of the historic core of Lancing, West Sussex. (Fig. 1). Much of the area had been massively built up with made ground during the last fifteen years or so in anticipation of the construction of a golf course, and, as a result, was very uneven and criss-crossed by various historic channels which correspond well with those mapped by the Ordnance Survey (Fig. 1). The site is on the floodplain of the River Adur and the original height above Ordnance Datum varies between 2m and 4m. However, as mentioned above, the levels had been raised by deposits of made ground, up to 4-5m thick in places. The only exception to this was the area to the west of Mash Barn Lane, which had not been built up in the

past. According to the British Geological Survey the underlying geology of the site largely consists of Alluvium (BGS 2006) and this was confirmed during the watching brief. The geological maps also suggest that Head Deposits may be present in the extreme western part of the site, along with possible Raised Beach Deposits in the south-west corner.

## **Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential of the site had been considered in a recent Archaeological Mitigation Strategy covering the whole site (PCA Heritage 2018). In summary the site is located on the ancient floodplain of the Rive Adur, at the foot of the South Downs. Although it is likely that much of the area would have consisted of marshland until at least the medieval period, it is possible that any slightly elevated, alluvium free, areas may have attracted human activity. One of the most obvious features relating to activity in the area are the numerous salterns which are shown on historic (and modern) maps. These are relics of salt production, and are largely the result of the waste product of sand-washing being left in mounds. Whilst this method of producing salt appears to have developed in the medieval period, it is likely that the area was exploited from at least Roman times, as salt was a valuable commodity. The far western part of the site appears to have been just beyond the floodplain as late prehistoric and Roman settlement activity has been recorded during recent archaeological fieldwork projects (Wallis 2019; Rouard forthcoming). Further features, including a Late Neolithic pit and a medieval shell midden, have been recorded elsewhere on the site (Hart *et al.* 2013). Medieval salterns were preserved *in situ* during a previous watching brief, which revealed little else: just two medieval pits and a midden, although it was considered that further deposits might lie below alluvium which was not removed at that time (Hart 2011).

Much of the land had been reclaimed by the end of the medieval period, and was then used for farming. A number of farmsteads and barns are recorded on historic maps, and some of these (ie. Daniels's Barn and North Barn Farm) were still standing until very recently. Further heritage assets in the form of Second World War pillboxes and gun emplacements are present on the site, along with a very rare 'dome trainer'. These were built to protect Shoreham Airport (now known as Brighton City Airport), which was used as military airfield during the First and Second World Wars.

## **Objectives and methodology**

The primary aim of the watching brief was to monitor any groundworks which may impact upon the natural geology on the site, and to record any archaeological features which may be cut into it. As a large proportion of

the site had been significantly built up in the past with dumps of made ground, and most of the foundations for the new structures are to be piled, it was clear that the vast majority of the planned groundworks would not be deep enough to disturb the buried natural geology. The watching brief was therefore restricted to certain parts of the site, as detailed below (Figs. 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6). Previous watching briefs for the site covered the series of test pits which had been dug to locate known saltern mounds (Wilson 2018; Fuentes 2019).

Where archaeological deposits which may warrant preservation *in-situ* were encountered, their treatment was to be discussed in consultation with the client, consultant, and West 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.

## **Results**

### New Haul Road (Figs. 2, 4 and 7, Pls. 1 and 2)

A number of new roads were to be constructed on the site but, due to their design, these would mostly affect the made ground deposits. However, it was agreed to monitor the groundworks in the western part of the site (Fig. 2), where there was little or no made ground, along with two areas where the new road was to cross over existing watercourses (Fig. 4).

The far western part of New Monks Farm was to be developed for housing by Cala Homes Ltd, but it was necessary to construct a new haul road through the area to provide contractor access to the football training centre to the south. The area where the haul road was to be constructed to the west of Mash Barn Lane had previously been covered by an archaeological evaluation (Wallis 2019). Although evidence of later prehistoric and Roman activity had been revealed during the evaluation, very little was found in the area where the new haul road was to be built. The length of the haul road to the west of Mash Barn Lane was approximately 330m, and stripping was monitored throughout November and December 2019. All the farm buildings and cottages in the area had recently been demolished. The width of the haul road varied slightly, but was generally about 6.50m wide, with three wider (c. 10m) vehicle passing points along its length (Fig. 2). The depth of ground reduction also varied along the new road, from just 0.21m in the area close to where the old barns had once stood, up to 0.75m in places. However, on average the ground reduction was about 0.60m, with 0.30m of topsoil and 0.15m of subsoil being removed to expose the natural clay geology. Unsurprisingly, varying amounts of made ground were recorded in the areas closest to the former buildings and Mash Barn Lane itself. No archaeological finds or features were recorded.

To the east of Mash Barn Lane, just under 50m of the new haul road was monitored (Fig. 2). In this area, between 0.50 and 0.73 of made ground was removed down to formation level, and the natural clay geology was only revealed in small patches. Once again, no archaeological finds or features were recorded.

Two areas were monitored further east of Mash Barn Lane, where the new haul road would cross over existing watercourses (Fig. 4). It was necessary to clean up the sides of the watercourses, so that new culvert pipes could be inserted, over which the new road would be built. The sides of the watercourses were obscured with overgrown vegetation, and most of the ground reduction merely consisted of removing this. However, in places the ground reduction did penetrate slightly into the underlying subsoil, although the natural clay geology was not exposed anywhere. As a result, no archaeological finds or features were recorded.

#### New Attenuation Pond (Figs. 3 and 7)

A new school was to be constructed in the north-west corner of the site closest to Old Shoreham Road (A27). Prior to its construction, it was necessary to create a new attenuation tank in the area, and an area measuring about 1640 sq m was stripped under archaeological supervision in March 2020 (Fig. 3). A significant amount of made ground was recorded in the northern part of the area, which may be associated with widening and improvement works to the nearby main road. Elsewhere, the natural clay geology was generally revealed beneath about 0.20m of topsoil and 0.55m of subsoil. Quite a few chalk filled land drains were observed in the stripped area, along with a former haul road which was approximately 3.5m wide and filled with modern material. No archaeological finds or features were recorded in the area, and further ground reduction was subsequently carried out without an archaeologist being present.

#### New Culvert (Fig. 4 and 7; Pl. 3)

As part of the improvement works to the watercourses within the site it was necessary to install a new concrete covered culvert in the northern part of the site (Fig. 4). Excavation of the trench for the new culvert commenced in January 2020 immediately to the west of the existing site entrance, initially under archaeological supervision. Due to its depth, the trench had to be stepped on either side for health and safety reasons, and was up to 4.2m wide along its base. The trench very quickly flooded, due to the high water table. The area had clearly been truncated in the past as modern made ground was generally recorded immediately above the natural clay geology. At the eastern end of the trench there was a thin layer which looked quite peaty, but this was interpreted as representing rotting vegetation which had been sealed beneath the made ground. It seems likely that the area had been significantly disturbed in the past, probably when the adjacent A27 lay-by to the north was constructed. No archaeological features were observed. Just over 50m of the new culvert trench was monitored, and based on

the results, the West Sussex County Council Archaeological Officer agreed that it was not necessary to monitor the entire length.

#### New Reed Bed (Figs. 4 and 7; Pl. 4)

An area measuring approximately 1840 sq m in size was stripped to the east of the existing site entrance for a new reed bed. This part of the site had previously been covered by up to 4m of modern made ground, and most of this was removed before the stripping was monitored in April 2021. As a result, it was only necessary to remove a further 0.10m - 0.15m of made ground to expose the natural clay geology. The area had clearly been stripped in the past as the made ground lay directly above the natural clay. No archaeological features were recorded, although three modern drainage features were observed running across the area, aligned approximately east -west.

#### Shoreham Airfield Watercourses (Figs. 5 and 7; Pls. 5 and 6)

TVAS were also instructed to carry out a watching brief in respect of the watercourse, which runs from west to east, at the far northern end of Shoreham Airfield (Fig. 5). Monitoring took place in September and October 2020 along most of the section which ran from close to one of the airfield gates in the west to Almond Avenue in the east. Much of the existing watercourse was to be backfilled, and a new wider and deeper channel cut to replace it. In general, most ground reduction down to the top of the natural clay geology was carried out under archaeological supervision, after which the new channel was excavated without an archaeologist being present. It was agreed with the West Sussex County Council Archaeological Officer that the length of the channel just beyond the airfield runway did not have to be monitored (Area 2 on Fig. 5). This was due to the fact that this section was to be culverted, and was dug in short sections at night, whilst the airport was closed.

The new channel was generally about 8m wide at the top, with sides which sloped down to a V-shaped base. Parts of the area had clearly been disturbed or occupied in the past, as various deposits of made ground were observed in places, and some of the ground had previously been covered by a concrete hardstanding. In those areas which did not appear to have been affected by past activity, the natural clay geology was generally revealed beneath 0.20m of topsoil and 0.25m of subsoil. No archaeological features were recorded, although a few chalk filled land drains were noted.

#### New Training Pitches (Fig. 6; Pls. 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11)

An area in the southern part of the site was stripped in June 2020 in advance of some new training pitches being constructed. The area lay to the south and east of the site of North Barn Farm, which had been subject to a building recording prior to its demolition (Chandler 2018), and an archaeological excavation shortly afterwards



(Wallis 2019). The farm complex probably originated in the post-medieval period, and is first depicted on an anonymous survey of the manors of North and South Lancing from 1770 (Wallis 2019, fig. 8).

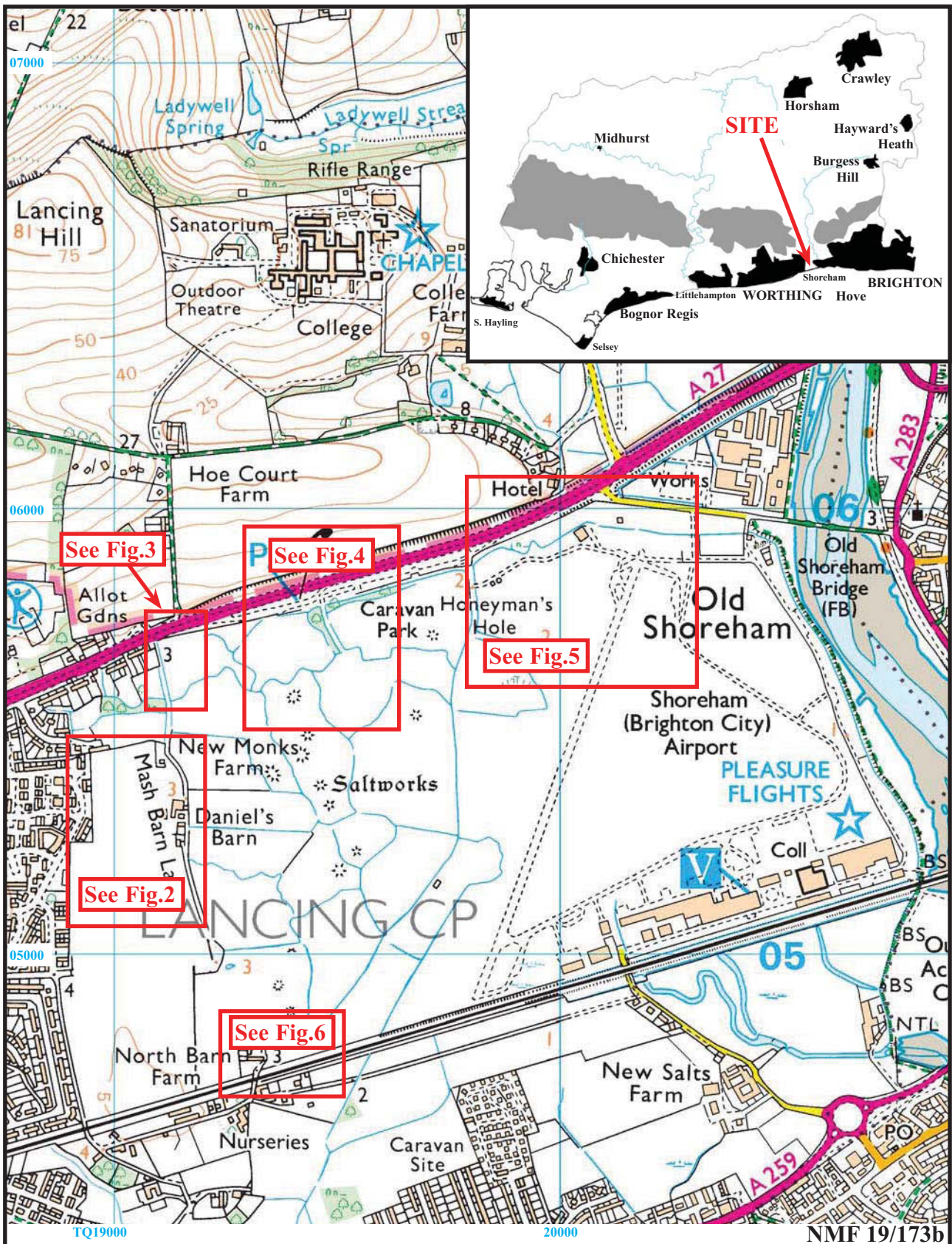
The ground reduction in respect of the new training pitches was relatively shallow, with just 0.10m - 0.20m of turf and topsoil (50) being removed across the area. As a result, only the top of the underlying subsoil (51) was revealed in this area. In the eastern part of the site the line of an old channel or drainage ditch (1) could be ascertained. This had been visible in the field as a slight depression before the stripping commenced, and it appeared to have been largely backfilled with chalk rubble (57). The old farm track leading to North Barn Farm was also recorded (52), along with a gravel track which may have been an earlier access route (53), predating the adjacent railway line to the south. Another section of the largely chalk rubble farm track (52) was uncovered to the south of the former farm complex. This feature is shown on the historic Ordnance Survey maps from between 1873 and 1932 (Figs 8 and 9), although it appears that the eastern section went out of use during the second half of the 20th century. The flint footings of a wall (54), aligned roughly north-south were observed to the west of the southern part of the farm track. This wall was just about visible prior to the area being stripped, and appears on numerous historic maps. These maps suggest that it could date as far back as the 18th century, although the footings contained no dating evidence to support this. The brick footings of a small building (55) were recorded to the west of this wall, along with a brick built well (56). The historic Ordnance Survey maps (Figs. 8 and 9) indicate that the building and well were constructed at some time between 1873 and 1898.

## **Conclusion**

The aim of the watching brief was to record any buried archaeological remains which might be exposed by the planned groundworks on the site. The extent of the project was quite limited due to the fact that much of the site had been covered by thick deposits of made ground in the past, and most of the proposed excavations would not impact significantly on the ground beneath these deposits. Groundworks were monitored in several parts of the site where the underlying clay geology would be affected by the new development. Apart from modern drainage features, such as land drains, the only archaeological remains recorded were all close to the former farm complex known as North Barn Farm. The remains of a late 19th century building and well were revealed immediately to the south of the farm complex, and two former farm tracks were also recorded in this part of the site. The footings of another wall, which could date from the 18th century, were also uncovered but it was not possible to closely date the features as it was constructed from flint and beach pebbles.

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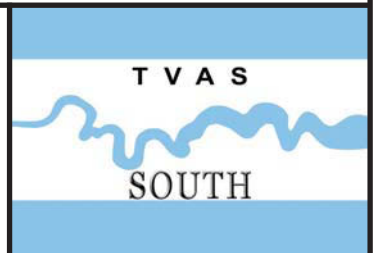
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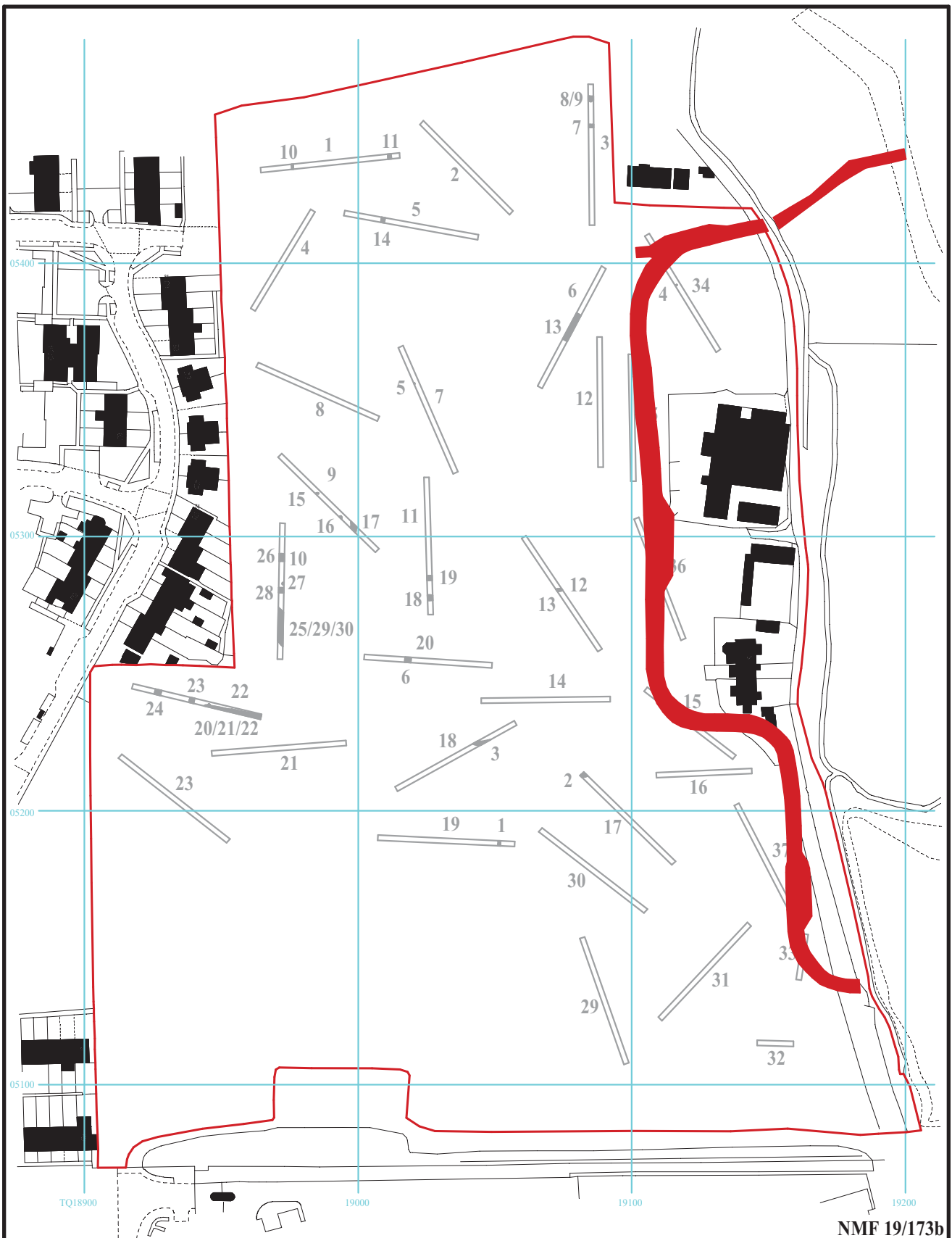


**New Monks Farm, Lancing, West Sussex, 2021  
Archaeological Watching Brief**

Figure 1. Location of site within Lancing and West Sussex, showing the various areas monitored during the project.

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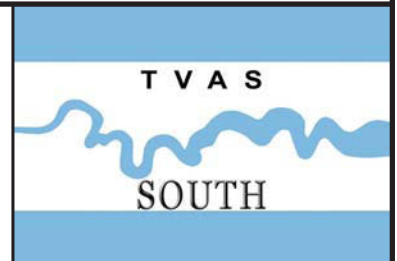


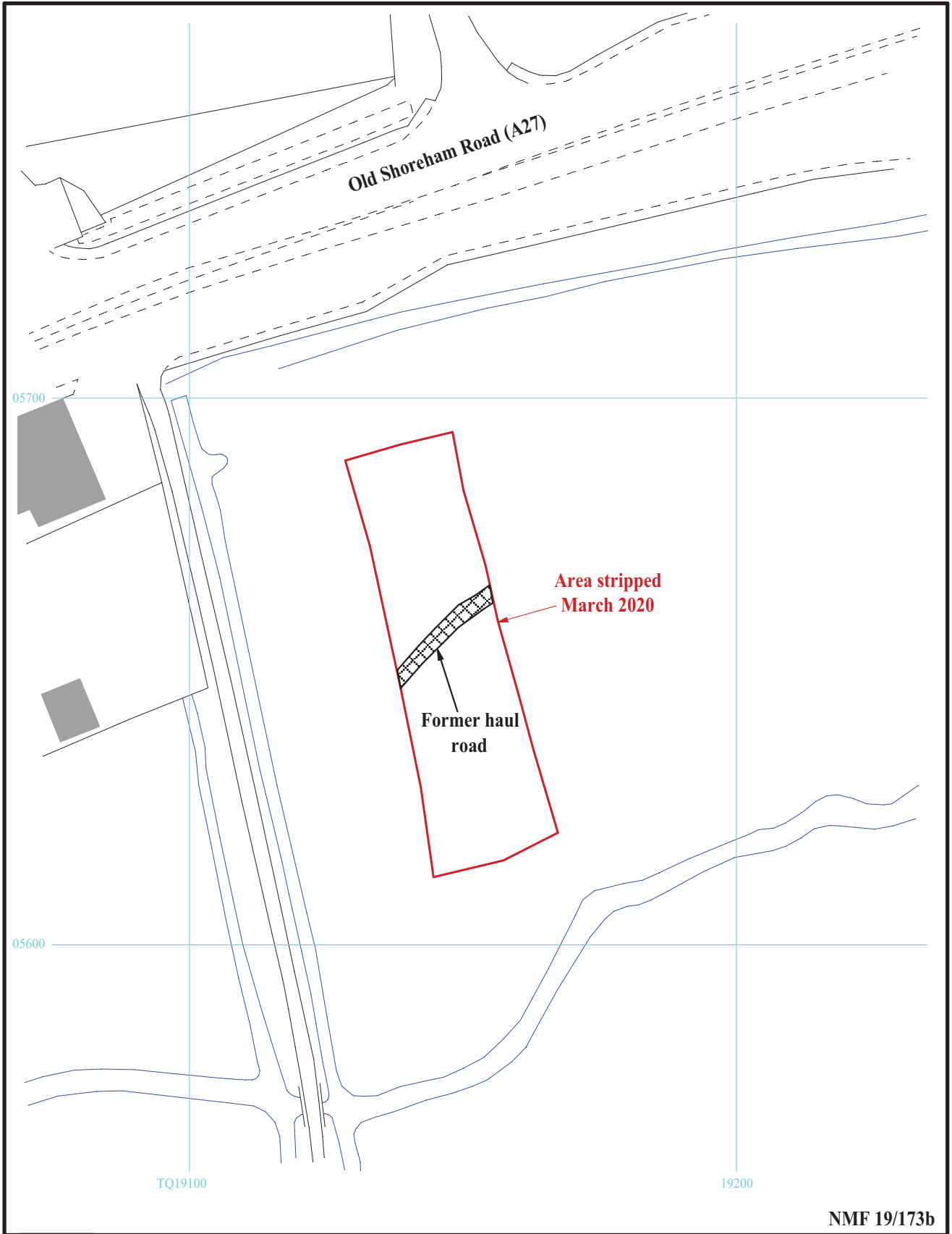


**Land at New Monks Farm, Lancing,  
West Sussex, 2021  
Archaeological Watching Brief**

Figure 2. Plan showing the western part of the haul road monitored during the project, along with 2019 evaluation trenches (in grey).

0 100m



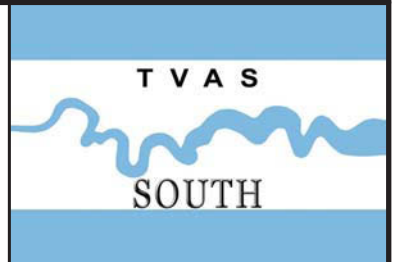


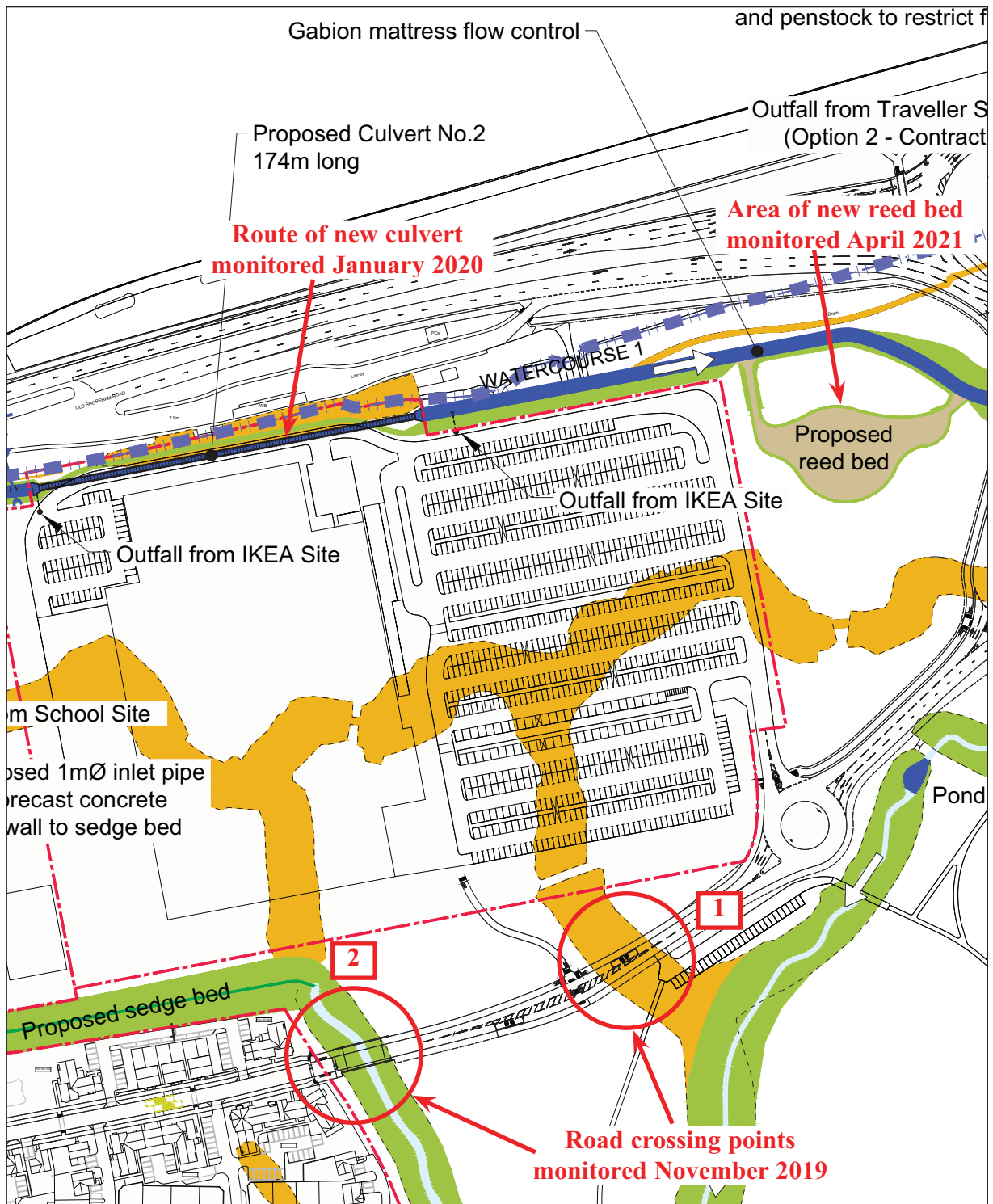
NMF 19/173b



**New Monks Farm, Lancing,  
West Sussex, 2021  
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Figure 3. Plan showing the area stripped close to Old Shoreham Road (A27), in advance of a new attenuation pond.

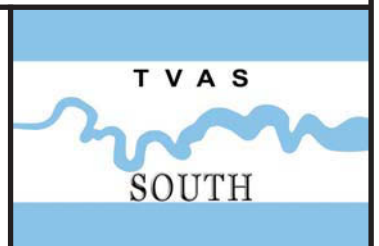




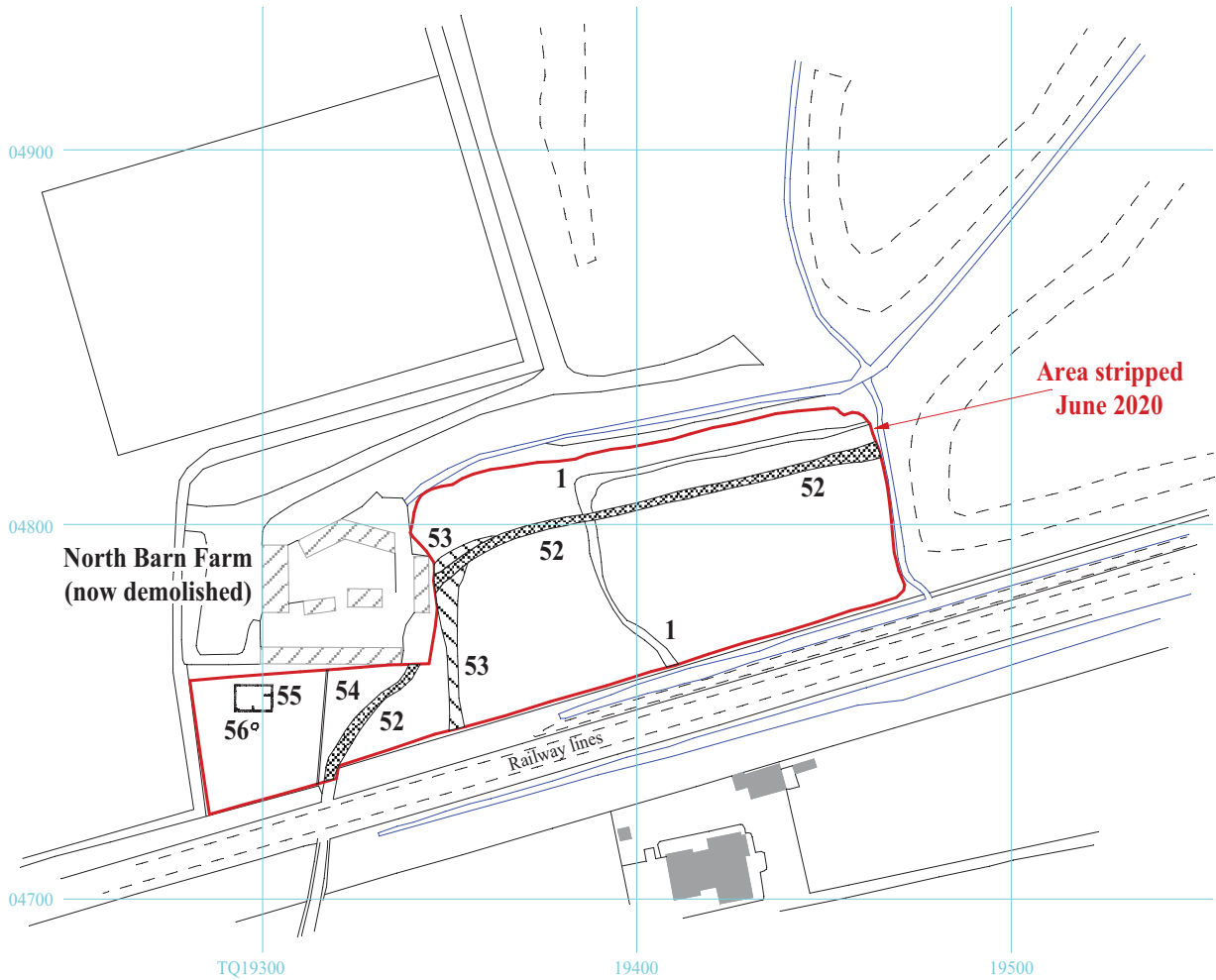
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**New Monks Farm, Lancing,  
West Sussex, 2021  
Archaeological Watching Brief**

Figure 4. Plan showing the new culvert (dark blue), reed bed (brown) and road crossings monitored as part of the archaeological watching brief.





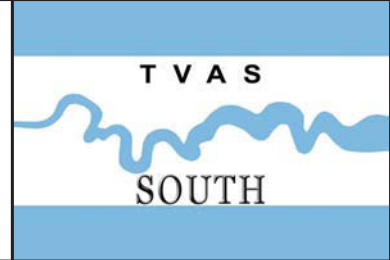


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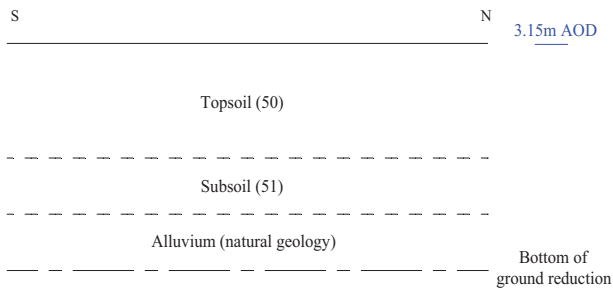
**New Monks Farm, Lancing,  
West Sussex, 2021  
Archaeological Watching Brief**

Figure 6. Plan showing the area stripped close to North Barn Farm, along with the archaeological features recorded.

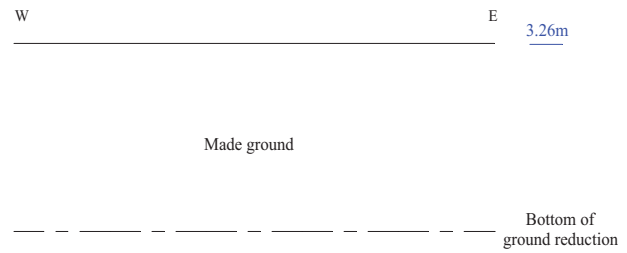




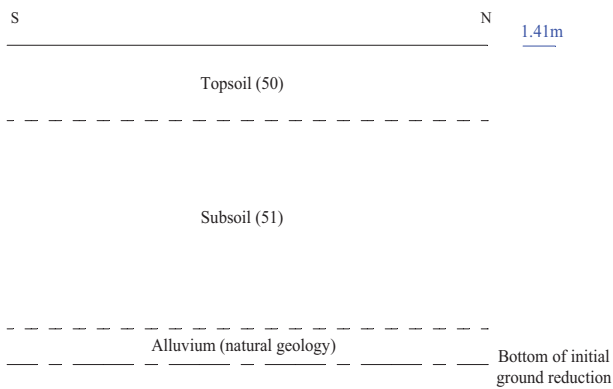
**New Haul Road (West)**



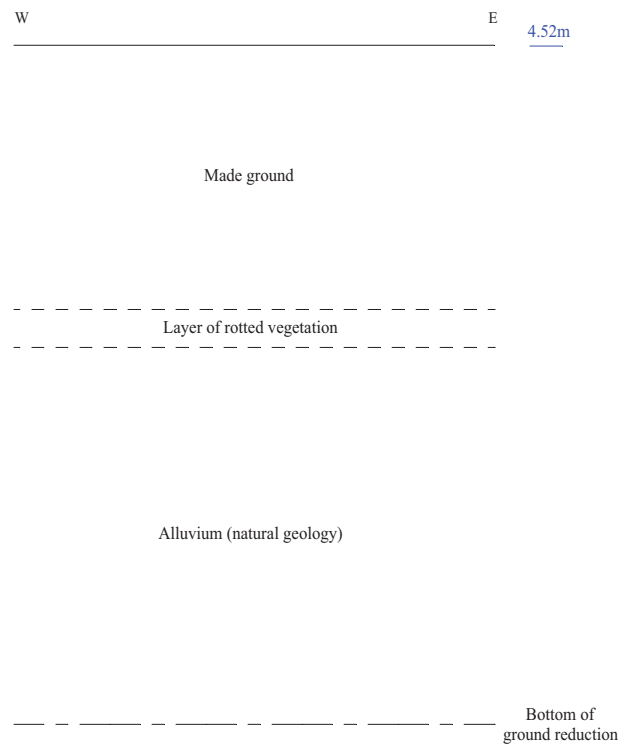
**New Haul Road (East)**



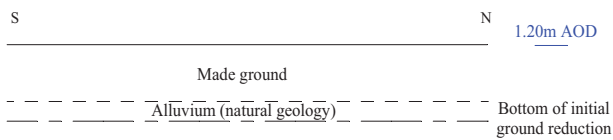
**New Attenuation Pond**



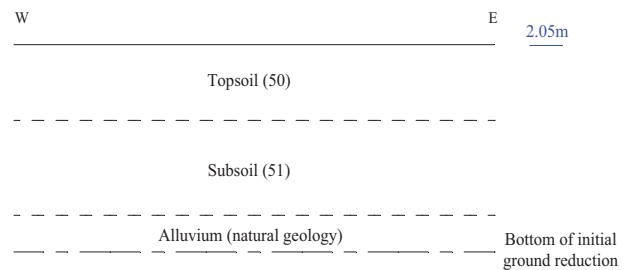
**Northern Culvert**



**New Reed Bed**



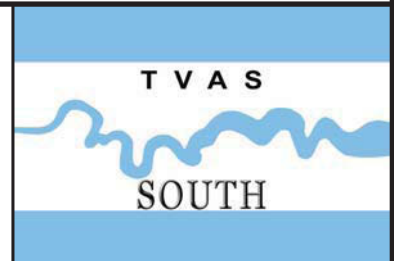
**New Watercourse (Shoreham Airfield)**



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**New Monks Farm, Lancing,  
West Sussex, 2021  
Archaeological Watching Brief**

Figure 7. Representative sections.





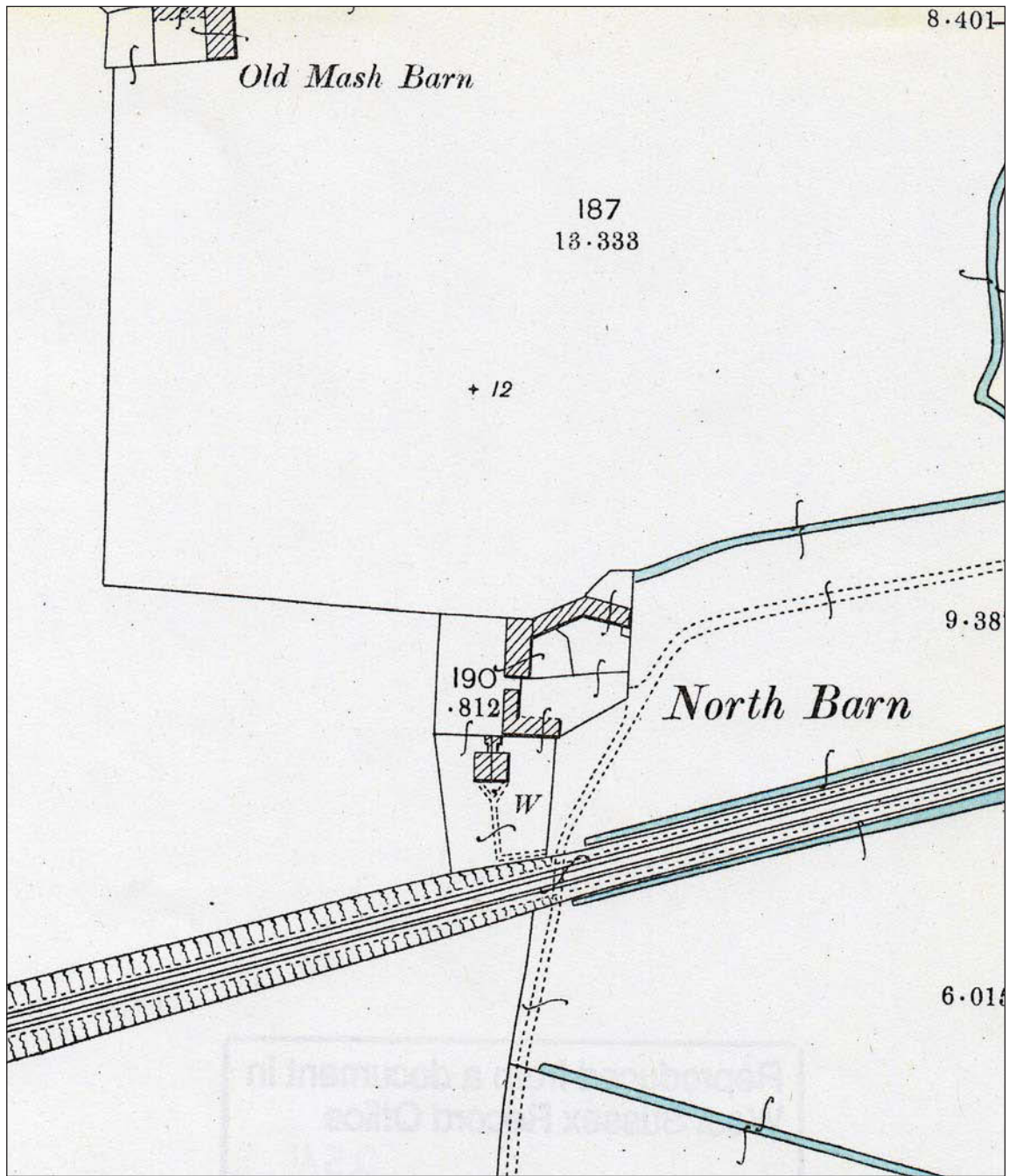
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New Monks Farm, Lancing,  
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Figure 8. North Barn Farm as depicted on the First Edition  
Ordnance Survey, 1873.





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**New Monks Farm, Lancing,  
West Sussex, 2021  
Archaeological Watching Brief**

Figure 9. North Barn Farm as depicted on the Second Edition  
Ordnance Survey, 1898.

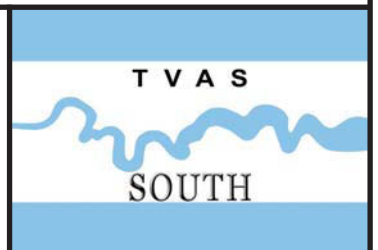




Plate 1. New haul road, looking East towards Mash Barn Lane. Scale: 1m.



Plate 2. Haul road crossing point 2, looking North-west. Scale: 1m.



Plate 3. General view of northern culvert, looking North-east towards site entrance.



Plate 4. General view of area stripped for a new reed bed, looking West.



Plate 5. Excavation of new watercourse at Shoreham Airfield, looking North-west. Scales: 2m and 1m.



Plate 6. Excavation of new watercourse at Shoreham Airfield, looking North-west. Scales: 2m and 1m.

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**New Monks Farm, Lancing,  
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Archaeological Watching Brief  
Plates 1 to 6.**

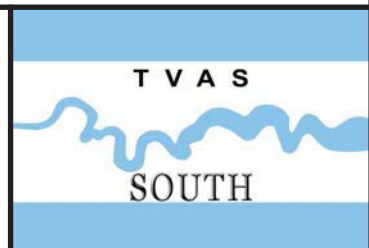




Plate 7. Northern part of new training pitches area, looking East, showing trackways 52 and 53.



Plate 8. Southern part of new training pitches area, looking East, showing trackway 53.



Plate 9. Well 56 (construction cut 2), looking South-east. Scales: 1m and 0.50m.



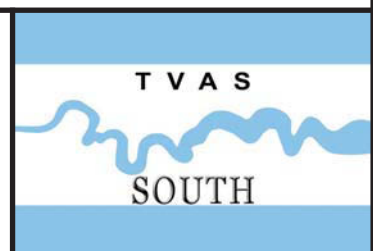
Plate 10. Building 55, looking North-east.



Plate 11. Wall 54 and trackway 52, looking North. Scales: 2m and 1m.

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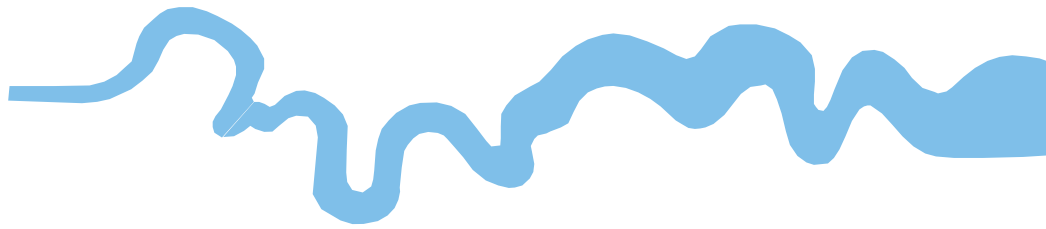
**New Monks Farm, Lancing,  
West Sussex, 2021  
Archaeological Watching Brief  
Plates 7 to 11.**



## 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





**TVAS (South),  
77a Hollingdean Terrace  
Brighton, BN1 7HB**

**Tel: 01273 554198  
Email: [south@tvas.co.uk](mailto:south@tvas.co.uk)  
Web: [www.tvas.co.uk/south](http://www.tvas.co.uk/south)**

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