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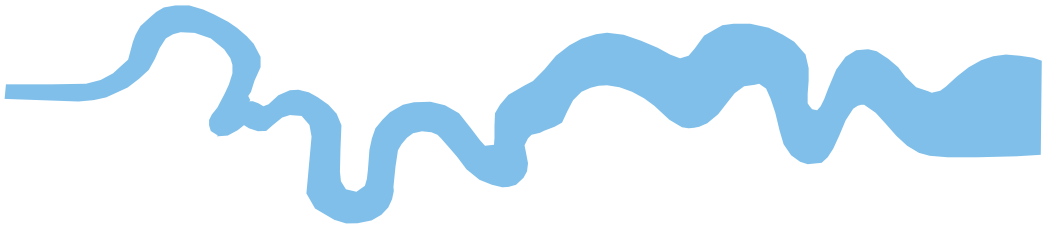

SOUTH

Streat Hill Farmhouse, Streat Bostall, Plumpton, East Sussex

Archaeological Evaluation

by Sean Wallis

Site Code: SFP18/86

(TQ 3510 1262)

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Streat Hill Farmhouse, Streat Bostall, Plumpton, East Sussex

An Archaeological Evaluation

for Steve and Marie Page

by Sean Wallis

TVAS South

Site Code SFP 18/86

December 2021

Summary

Site name: Streat Hill Farmhouse, Streat Bostall, Plumpton, East Sussex

Grid reference: TQ 3510 1262

Site activity: Evaluation

Planning reference: SDNP/20/00833/FULL

Date and duration of project: 19th - 22nd November 2021

Project manager: Sean Wallis

Site supervisor: Sean Wallis

Site code: SFP 18/86

Area of site: *c*. 0.3ha

Summary of results: The archaeological evaluation successfully investigated those parts of the site which will be most affected by the proposed development. It was obvious that certain areas had been affected by previous terracing and by the earlier house on the site. The only part of the site which did not appear to have been significantly affected in the past was the north-west corner. Here the trenches only revealed geological features typical of the chalkland No archaeological features nor artefacts of archaeological interest were revealed. As a result, the site is believed to have low archaeological potential.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at TVAS South, Brighton and will be deposited with a suitable depository in due course.

Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford✓ 08.12.21
	Steve Preston✓ 08.12.21

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Streat Hill Farmhouse, Streat Bostall, Plumpton, East Sussex
An Archaeological Evaluation

by Sean Wallis

Report 18/86b

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Streat Hill Farmhouse, Streat Bostall, Plumpton, East Sussex (TQ 3510 1262) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Rebecca Kinneavy of BBM Sustainable Design Ltd, Cooksbridge Station House, Cooksbridge, East Sussex, BN8 4SW, on behalf of the property's owners, Steve and Marie Page.

Planning permission (SDNP/20/00833/FULL) has been granted by the South Downs National Park Authority to construct a replacement house on the site, along with a new guest house. The consent is subject to a standard planning condition (15) relating to archaeology and the historic environment, which requires the implementation of a programme of archaeological work prior to the commencement of groundworks.

This is in accordance with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* as revised in 2019 (NPPF 2019), and the Authority's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by the Authority following consultation with the East Sussex County Council Archaeological Officer (Mr Neil Griffin) who advises the Authority on archaeological matters for sites in East Sussex. The fieldwork was undertaken by Jake Flower-Bond and Sean Wallis between the 19th and 22nd November 2021, and the site code is SFP 18/86. The archive is presently held at TVAS South, Brighton, and will be deposited with a suitable repository in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the northern edge of the South Downs National Park, to the south-west of the village of Plumpton. It is accessed via a steep track known as Streat Bostall, from Lewes Road (B2116) (TQ 3510 1262) (Fig. 1). The house known as Streat Hill Farmhouse previously stood to the north of Streathill Farm, but it burnt down in November 2017. The remains of the house were demolished shortly before the evaluation took place (Fig. 2). The house had been constructed on a flat area which had been terraced into the natural slope of the hill, and the surrounding garden areas had also been subject to some significant landscaping works (Pls 8 and 9). As a result of this terracing, the site's elevation varied quite dramatically from about 208m above Ordnance Datum

(aOD) in the western part of the site, down to about 203m aOD in the east. According to the British Geological Survey, the underlying geology consists of Upper Chalk (BGS 2006), and this was confirmed in all the evaluation trenches.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site had been considered in a desk-based assessment (Baljkas 2018). In summary, the site is located on the South Downs, which is an area known to be archaeologically rich for most periods. Although the site itself is not within an Archaeological Notification Area (ANA), there are eleven ANAs within a 1 km radius, along with fourteen Scheduled Ancient Monuments. A large proportion of these relate to prehistoric burial mounds (barrows), although one is in respect of a medieval enclosure which lies about 50m to the east of the site (Fig. 1). Whilst the archaeological potential of the area may be regarded as being high, it was believed that any potential features may have been damaged by previous activity on the site, particularly the construction of the previous house and surrounding garden areas.

Objectives and methodology

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

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 prehistoric period are present; and

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

Five trenches were to be dug, each measuring 12m in length. The trenches were positioned to target those parts of the site which would be most affected by the new development. 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.

Results

The trenches were dug close to their original planned positions (Fig. 3). The excavated trenches were all 1.60m wide, and measured between 11.4m and 13.0m in length, and between 0.39m and 0.71m in depth. The natural

chalk geology was observed in all of the trenches. A complete list of the trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1 (Fig. 5; Pl. 1)

This trench was orientated SW-NE, and was 11.40m long and up to 0.47m deep. The natural chalk geology was generally encountered beneath 0.20m of topsoil (50) and 0.17m of subsoil (51). There was an area of Tarmac overlying the soil deposits at the far north-western end of the trench, and a modern service was also noted. The natural chalk geology was frost cracked, indicating that the area had not been significantly truncated in the past. No archaeological finds or features were recorded in the trench.

Trench 2 (Fig. 5; Pl. 2)

This trench was orientated approximately WSW-ENE, and was 12.70m long and up to 0.40m deep. The natural chalk geology was encountered directly below 0.31m of topsoil (50). The natural chalk geology was solid, indicating that the area had been significantly truncated in the past. This trench was located in a flat area of the site which had presumably been terraced to create a level garden area. Unsurprisingly, no archaeological finds or features were recorded in the trench.

Trench 3 (Fig. 5; Pl. 3)

This trench was orientated approximately SSW-NNE, and was 13.00m long and up to 0.39m deep. The natural chalk geology was encountered immediately below up to 0.32m of made ground (52). The trench was located in the area which had been occupied by the previous house on the site. As a result, it is likely that the area had been stripped and / or disturbed when that house was built, and during its recent demolition. Despite the obvious disturbance, the natural chalk geology was frost cracked, indicating that the previous truncation need not have been particularly deep. No archaeological finds or features were recorded in the trench.

Trench 4 (Figs. 4 and 5; Pls. 4 and 6)

This trench was orientated SW-NE, and was 12.60m long and up to 0.43m deep. The natural chalk geology was recorded beneath 0.23m of topsoil (50) and 0.12m of subsoil (51). A potential feature (1) was investigated in the northern half of the trench, although the mid orange brown clayey silt fill (54) suggested that it might be geological in origin. Hand excavation revealed that the feature was up to 0.62m deep and 0.80m wide. Although it could possibly be a ditch terminus, its irregular shape and the sterile nature of its fill backed up the original theory that it was geological. No finds were recovered from feature 1.

Trench 5 (Figs. 4 and 5; Pls. 5 and 7)

This trench was orientated SW-NE, and was 12.50m long and up to 0.71m deep. The natural chalk geology was recorded beneath 0.25m of topsoil (50) and 0.28m of chalk rubble made ground (53). It is likely that this part of the site had been stripped of its original soil horizons prior to the area immediately to the south-east being

terraced. The chalk rubble recorded in the trench probably relates to this episode of terracing. A number of potential features were visible within the trench, although their mid orange brown clayey silt fills aggain suggested that it might be geological in origin. One feature (2) was excavated by hand and recorded, whilst the others were tested and subsequently written off as being natural. Although feature 2 looked as if it could represent a ditch, up to 1m wide and 0.26m deep, it was quite irregular in nature. This, along with the sterile nature of its fill (55), led to the conclusion that it was geological. No finds were recovered from feature 2 or from the trench in general.

Finds

No finds were recovered during the evaluation.

Conclusion

The archaeological evaluation at Streat Hill Farmhouse, Plumpton, successfully investigated those areas which will be most affected by the proposed development of the site. It was obvious that certain areas had been affected by previous terracing and by the earlier house on the site, and this was confirmed during the evaluation. The only part of the site which did not appear to have been significantly affected in the past was the north-west corner. The two trenches in this area (4 and 5) both contained the type of geological features which are quite common on the chalk geology. No convincing archaeological features were recorded on the site, and there were no archaeological finds. As a result, the site is believed to have low archaeological potential.

References

Baljkas, G, 2018, 'Streat Hill Farmhouse, Streat Bostall, Plumpton, East Sussex - an archaeological desk-based assessment', TVAS South unpublished report **18/86**, Brighton.

BGS, 2006, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000, Sheet **318/333**, Bedrock and Superficial Deposits Edition, Keyworth.

NPPF, 2019, *National Planning Policy Framework* (revised), Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, London.

APPENDIX 1: Trench details

Trench	*Length (m)*	*Breadth (m)*	*Depth (m)*	*Comment*
1	11.40	1.60	0.47	0-0.20m topsoil (50); 0.20-0.37m subsoil (51); 0.37-0.47m+ natural geology (Upper Chalk). **Pl. 1**
2	12.70	1.60	0.40	0-0.31m topsoil (50); 0.31-0.40m+ natural geology (Upper Chalk). **Pl. 2**
3	13.00	1.60	0.39	0-0.32m made ground (52); 0.32-0.39m+ natural geology (Upper Chalk). **Pl. 3**
4	12.60	1.60	0.43	0-0.23m topsoil (50); 0.23-0.35m subsoil (51); 0.35-0.43m+ natural geology (Upper Chalk). Geological feature 1. **Pls. 4 and 6**
5	12.50	1.60	0.71	0-0.25m topsoil (50); 0.25-0.63m chalk rubble made ground (53); 0.63-0.71m+ natural geology (Upper Chalk). Geological feature 2. **Pls. 5 and 7**

APPENDIX 2: Feature details

Trench	*Cut*	*Fill (s)*	*Type*	*Date*	*Dating evidence / comments*
4	1	54	Geological feature	-	None
5	2	55	Geological feature	-	None

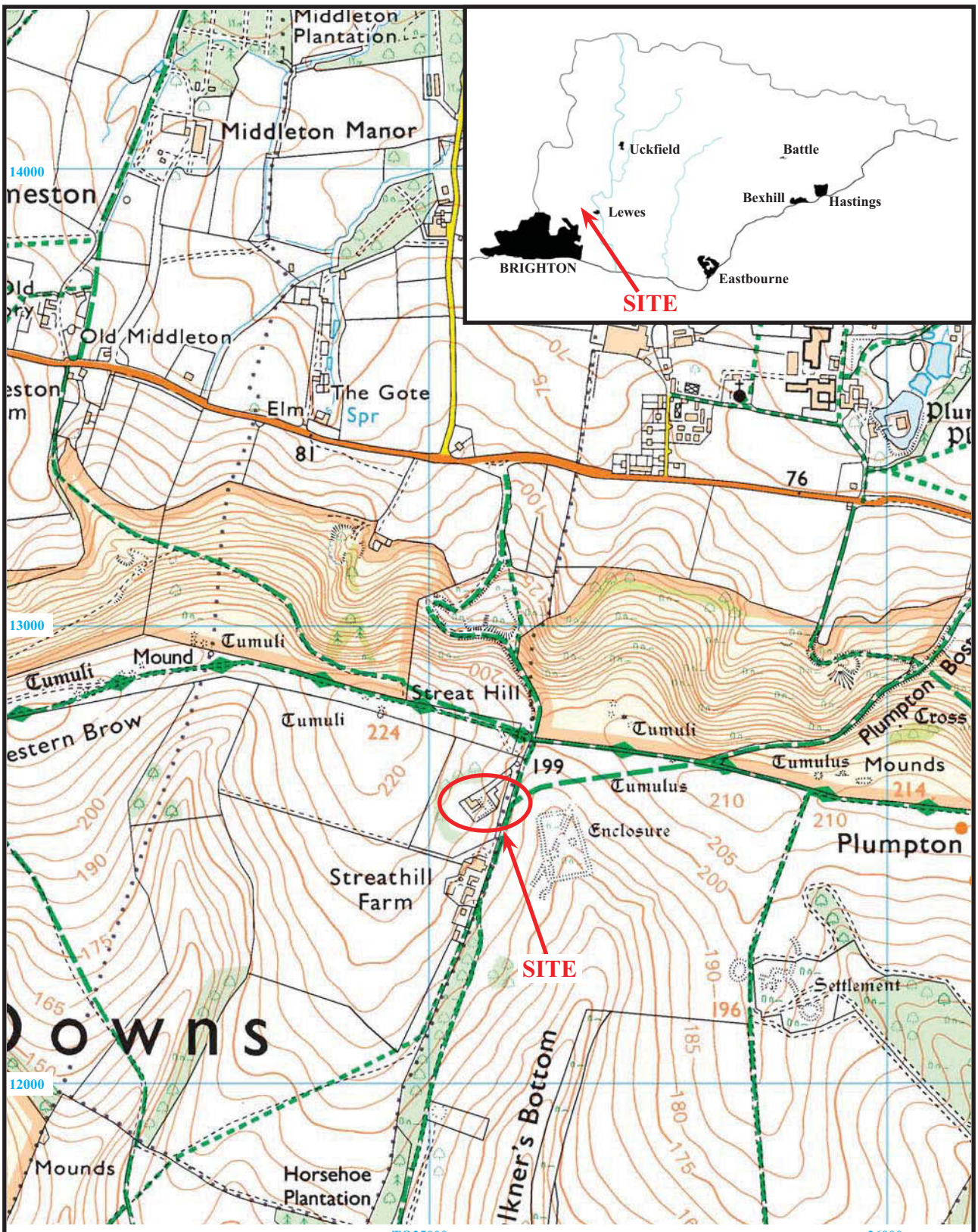

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Figure 1. Location of site within Plumpton and East Sussex.

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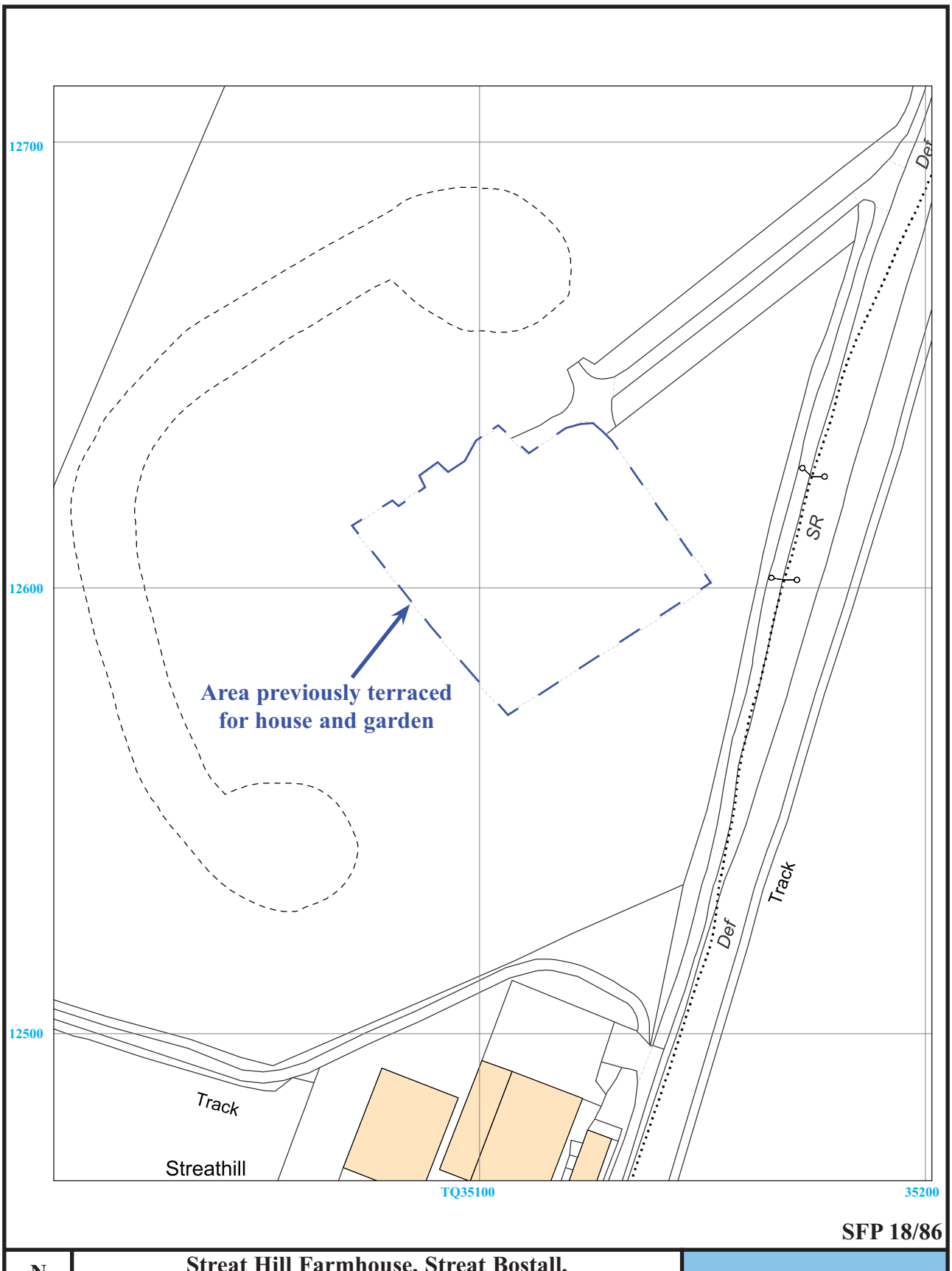

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Streat Hill Farmhouse, Streat Bostall, Plumpton, East Sussex, 2021
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Figure 2. Detailed site location.

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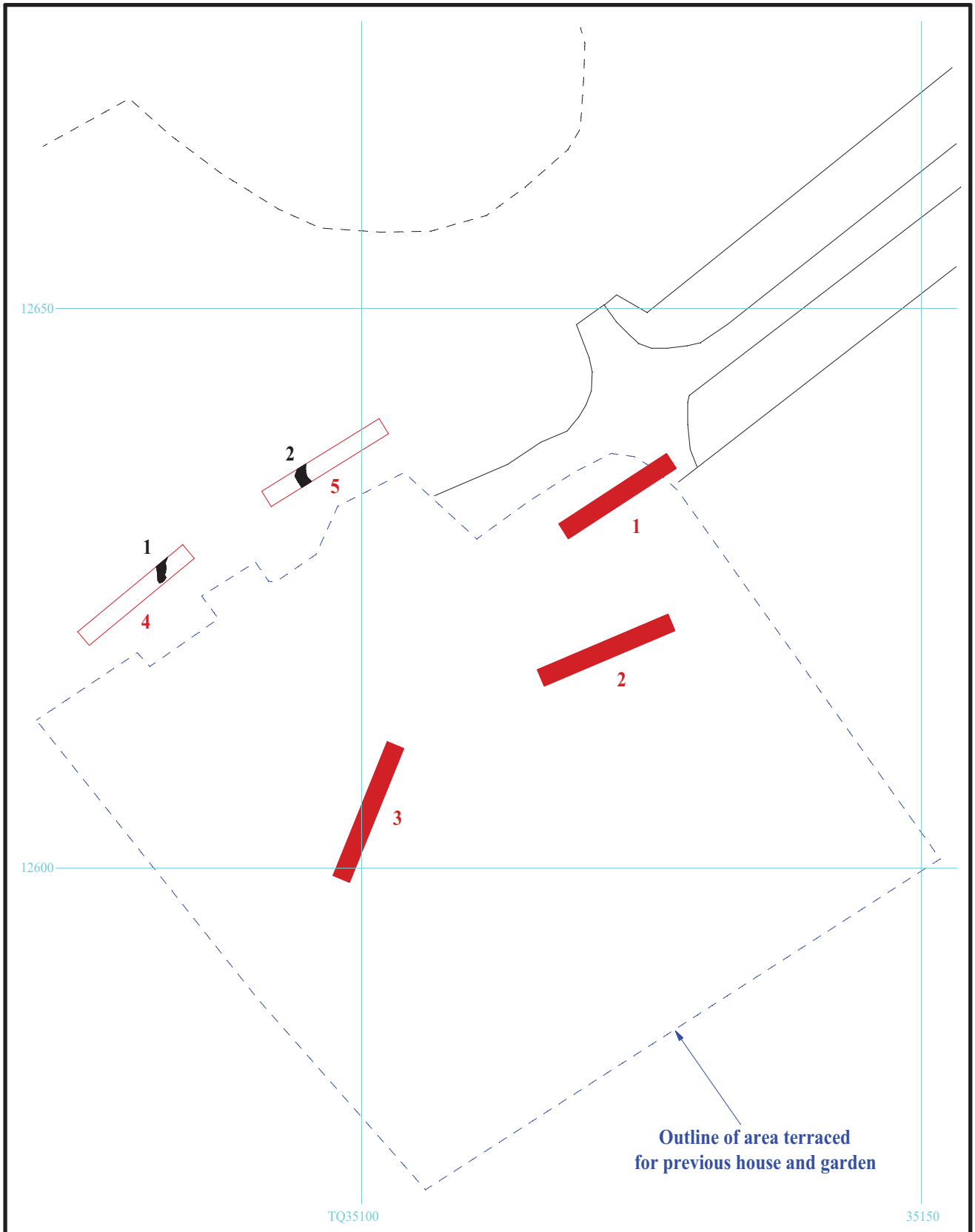

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Figure 3. Plan showing the evaluation trenches and features recorded.

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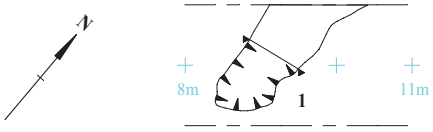
Trench 4



Trench 5

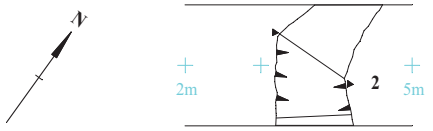


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Figure 4. Plan of trenches 4 and 5.

0 5m

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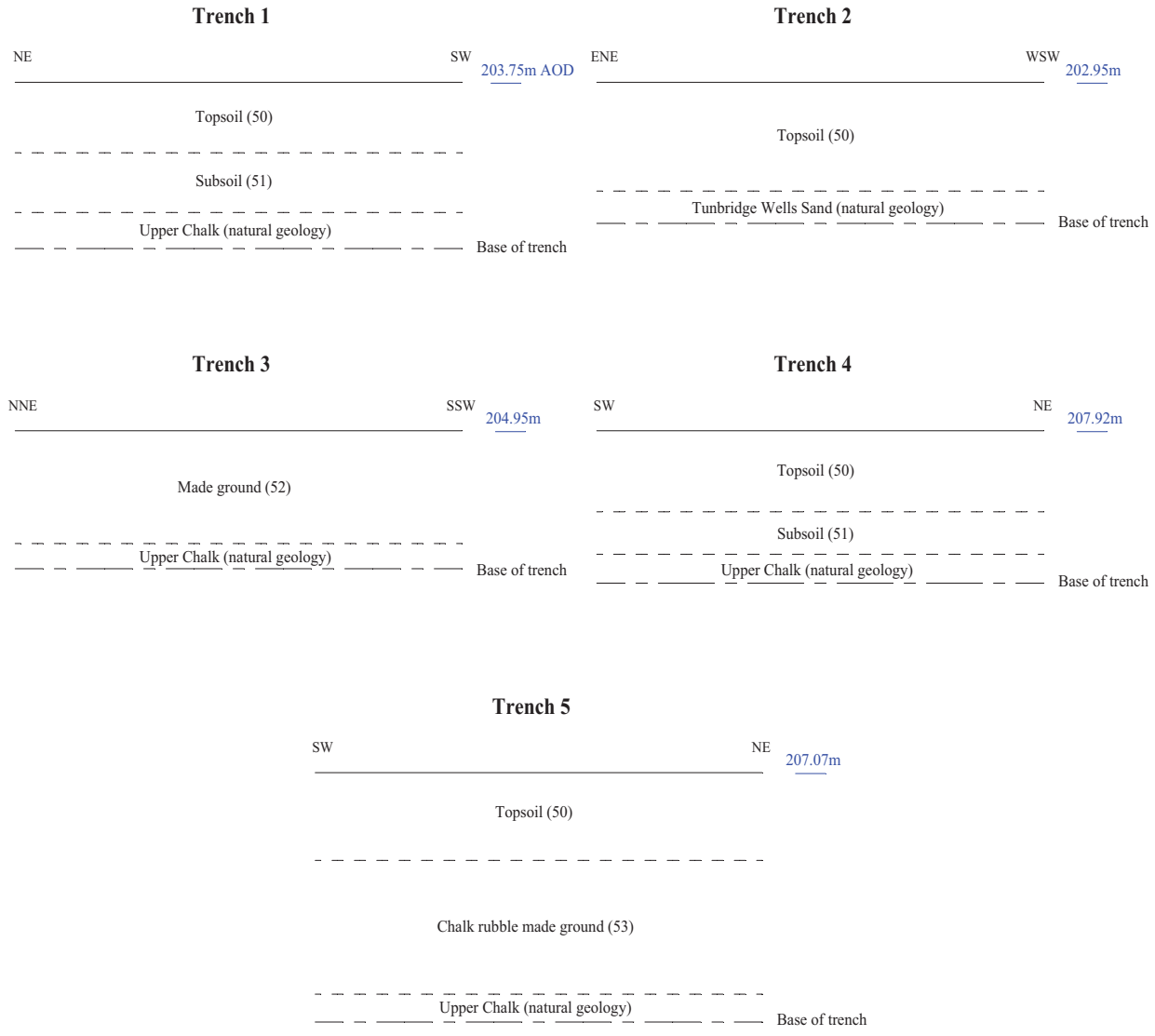

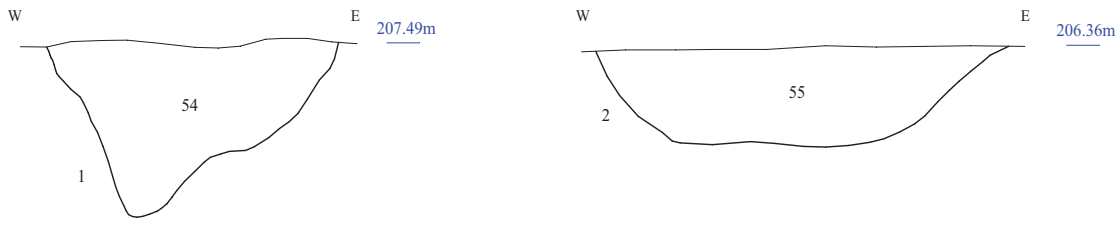

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Figure 5. Sections.

0 1m

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Plate 1. Trench 1, looking South-west.
Scales: 2 x 1m and 0.30m.

Plate 2. Trench 2, looking South-west.
Scales: 2 x 1m and 0.30m.

Plate 3. Trench 3, looking South.
Scales: 2 x 1m and 0.30m.

Plate 4. Trench 4, looking South-west.
Scales: 2 x 1m and 0.30m.

Plate 5. Trench 5, looking South-west.
Scales: 2 x 1m and 0.30m.

Plate 6. Trench 4, feature 1, looking North-east.
Scales: 1m and 0.30m.

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Plates 1 to 6.

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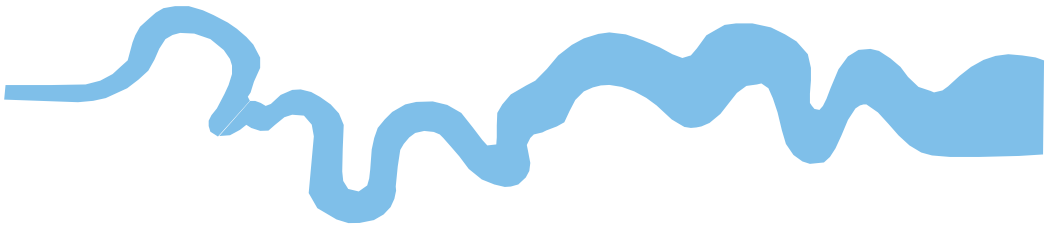
Plate 7. Trench 5, feature 2, looking North.
Scales: 1m and 0.30m.

Plate 8. General view of site, looking South-west from the eastern end of trench 1.

Plate 9. General view of site, looking West from the eastern end of trench 1.

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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