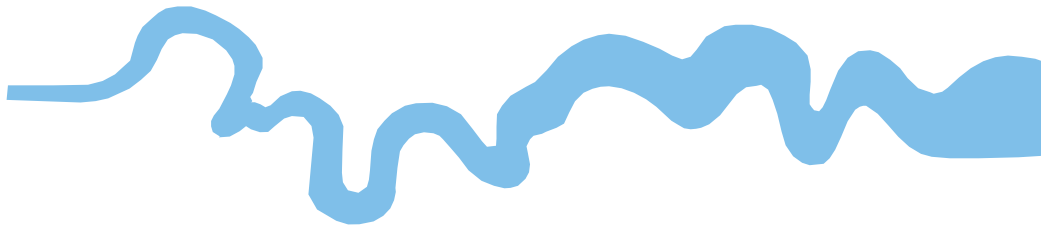


T V A S



SOUTH

**Land at Barnetts, 68 Frant Road,
Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by Sean Wallis

Site Code: BFR19/189

(TQ 5814 3750)

**Land at Barnetts, 68 Frant Road,
Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent**

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For Beechcroft Developments Ltd

Planning Reference : 17/01608/FULL

by Sean Wallis

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code BFR 19/189

July 2020

Summary

Site name: Land at Barnetts, 68 Frant Road, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent

Grid reference: TQ 5814 3750

Planning reference: 17/01608/FULL

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 5th December 2019 - 29th June 2020

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Sean Wallis

Site code: BFR 19/189

Summary of results: The watching brief investigated those parts of the site which were to be most affected by the new development. The site had clearly been significantly disturbed by the construction of the former care home and its subsequent demolition. Ground reduction was monitored in four areas of the site (A-D), and varying levels of modern truncation were noted. However, no archaeological features were recorded, even in those parts least affected by the previous development. Further, no artefacts of archaeological interest were recovered during the project.

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

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 10.07.20

Land at Barnetts, 68 Frant Road, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Sean Wallis

Report 19/189

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at 68 Frant Road, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent (TQ 5814 3750) (Figs. 1 and 2). The work was commissioned by Mr Kevin Feeney of Beechcroft Developments Ltd, 1 Church Lane, Wallingford, Oxfordshire, OX10 0DX.

Planning permission (17/01608/FULL) had been gained from Tunbridge Wells Borough Council to demolish the former care home and construct a number of residential units on the site. The consent was subject to a planning condition relating to archaeology and historic environment, which required the implementation of a programme of archaeological work.

This is in accordance with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2019), and the Borough Council's policies on the historic environment. The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation approved by the local planning authority, following consultation with the Kent County Council Archaeological Officer who advises Tunbridge Wells Borough Council on archaeological matters (Ms Wendy Rogers).

The fieldwork was undertaken by Odile Rouard and Sean Wallis between 5th December 2019 and 29th June 2020, and the site code is BFR 19/189. The archive is currently held at TVAS South, Brighton, and will be deposited with a suitable museum or Archaeology Data Service in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the west side of Frant Road, approximately 2km south of the historic core of Royal Tunbridge Wells (Figs. 1 and 2). It was previously occupied by a large care home and its associated access, car parking and garden areas. The care home had been demolished by the time the watching brief commenced. The site is generally flat, and lies at a height of approximately 144m above Ordnance Datum. According to the British Geological Survey the underlying geology consists of Ashdown Beds Deposits (BGS 1971), and this was confirmed during the watching brief, with a light yellow brown sandy clay being recorded in all the areas monitored.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site had been considered in a recent desk-based assessment (Price 2017). In summary, the site is located within an area where very few archaeological finds or features had been identified in the past. Most of the entries within the study area around the site are of post-medieval date. The only notable exception is a medieval moat to the west of the site, which is now almost surrounded by modern housing. There was a possibility that associated medieval settlement could have lain within the proposal site.

Objectives and methodology

The primary aim of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the proposed groundworks. Where archaeological deposits which may warrant preservation *in-situ* were encountered, their treatment was to be discussed in consultation with the client and the Kent 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.

All significant ground reduction was to be carried out by hand, or by using a machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, under constant archaeological supervision.

Results

It was quite clear from the outset of the project that much of the site had been significantly disturbed when the care home complex had been built. The subsequent demolition of the various buildings had resulted in further disturbance. It was therefore decided to restrict the watching brief to those parts of the site which did not appear to have been so badly affected by past activity, and ground reduction was therefore monitored in four areas of the site (A-D) (Figs 3 and 4; Pls 1-4).

Area A

This area was located in the north-west corner of the site, and approximately 810 sq m was stripped under archaeological supervision. The southern part of the area had been partially truncated by the previous care home building, but in the undisturbed areas the natural clay geology was generally revealed beneath 0.22m of made ground, 0.22m of buried topsoil (50), and 0.08m of subsoil (51). Following the initial ground reduction, to a depth of approximately 0.60m, the natural geology was not visible along the northern and eastern sides of the area. In these areas the ground reduction revealed a deposit of dark reddish brown clayey silt. It was originally thought that this dark material may represent the upper fill of a large archaeological feature. However, when the

footings were excavated in this part of the site it became clear that it was just a thin (c. 0.10m) layer of buried soil, and merely reflected the fact that the ground originally sloped down slightly towards the north and east.

Area B

Area B was located in the south-west corner of the site and measured approximately 450 sq m in size. It was reduced by up to 0.55m prior to the new footings being dug. The area had been heavily disturbed by the previous care home building and its subsequent demolition. In the southern part of the area, which had not been too affected by previous activity, the natural geology was recorded below 0.38m of topsoil (50) and 0.10m of subsoil (51). No archaeological finds or features were recorded in the area.

Area C

This small area was located in the north-east corner of the site, and measured approximately 220 sq m in size. The southern part of the area had been heavily disturbed by the access road to the care home. Elsewhere, the natural geology was observed beneath 0.35m of topsoil (50) and 0.13m of subsoil (51). No archaeological finds or features were recorded in this area.

Area D

Area D was located in the south-east corner of the site, and measured approximately 550 sq m in size. The western part of the area had been partially truncated by two small buildings which were part of the care home complex. Further disturbance had taken place when the buildings were demolished. The central part of the area had been also been affected by a large hedge. In those parts of the area which had not been badly affected by previous activity, the natural geology was generally revealed beneath 0.28m of topsoil (50) and 0.22m of subsoil (51). No archaeological finds or features were recorded.

Finds

No archaeological finds were recovered during the watching brief.

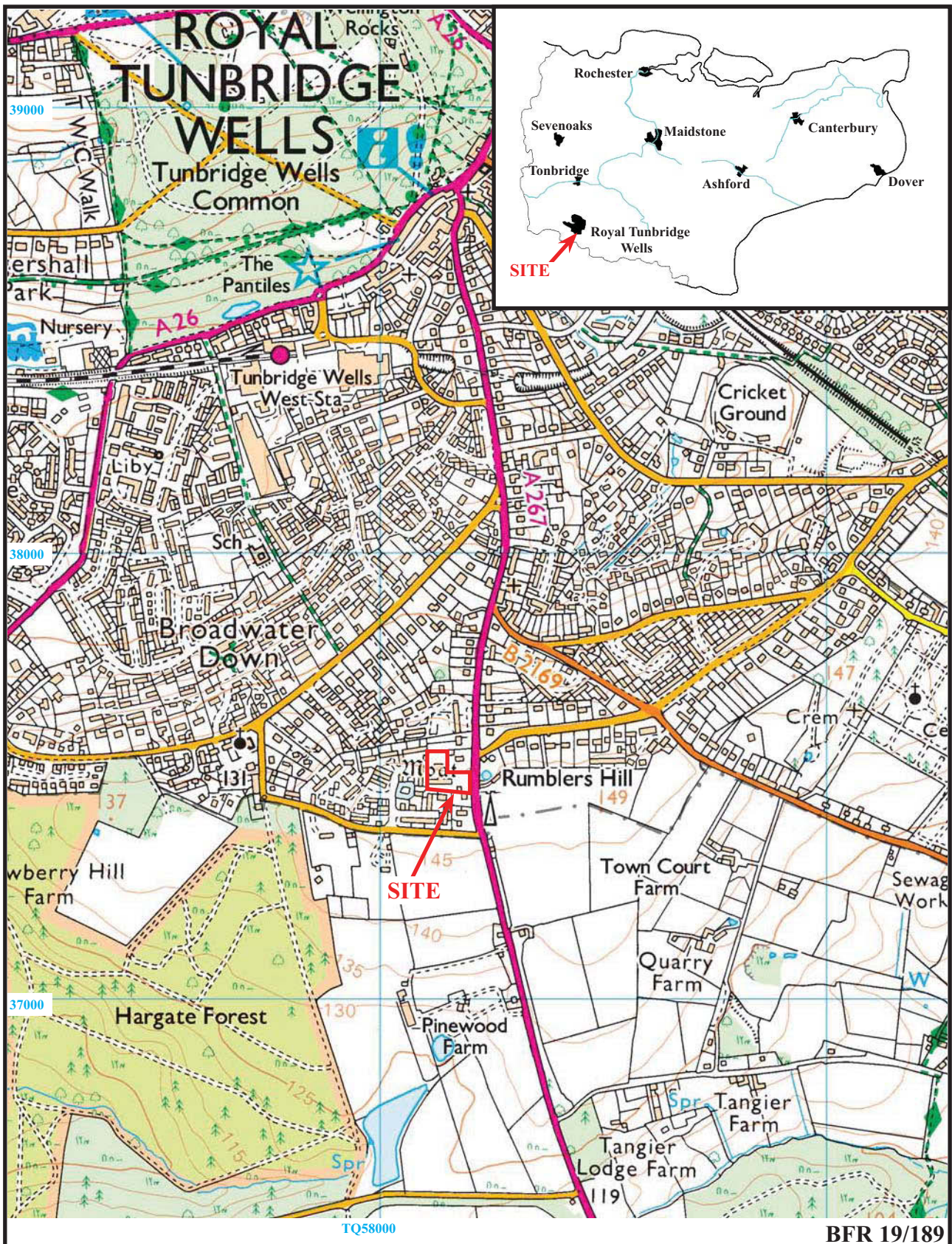
Conclusion

The watching brief at Frant Road, Royal Tunbridge Wells, successfully investigated those parts of the site which were to be most affected by a new housing development. The site had clearly been significantly disturbed by the construction of the former care home and its subsequent demolition. Ground reduction was monitored in four

areas of the site (A-D), and varying levels of modern truncation were noted. However, no archaeological features were recorded in those parts of the site where the natural geology had been only lightly impacted by the previous activity. Similarly, no artefacts of archaeological interest were recovered.

References

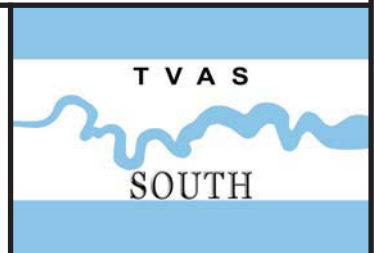
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- NPPF, 2019, *National Planning Policy Framework* (revised), Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, London.
- Price, S, 2017, 'Barnetts, b8 Frant Road, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent - a historic environment desk-based assessment', Archaeology South-east unpublished report **2017124**, Portslade.

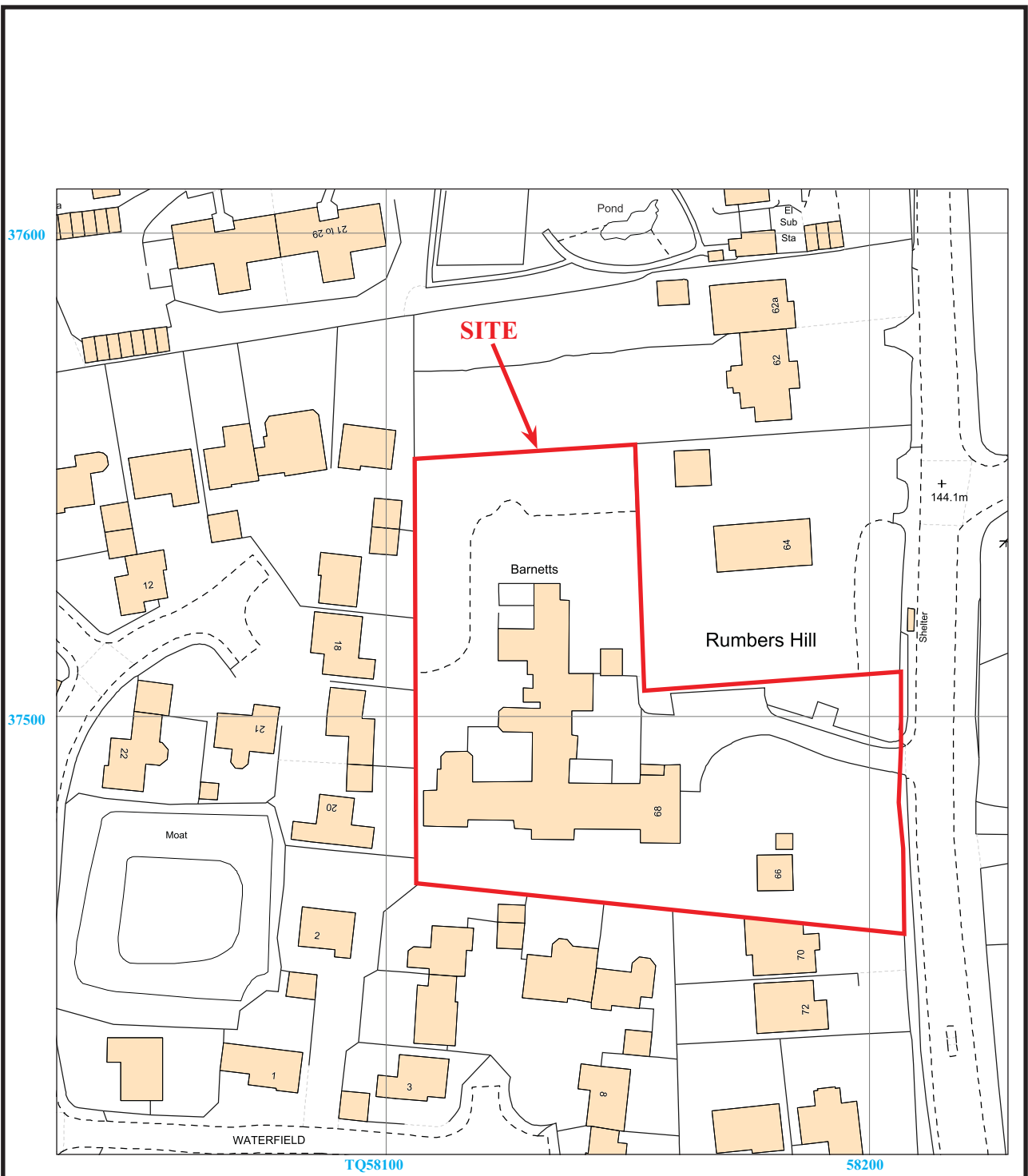


**Land at Barnett's, 68 Frant Road,
Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent, 2020
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Figure 1. Location of site within Royal Tunbridge Wells and Kent.

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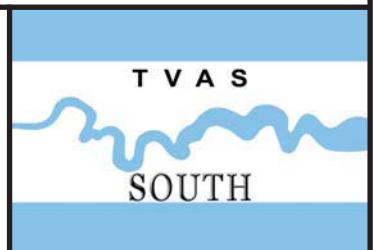
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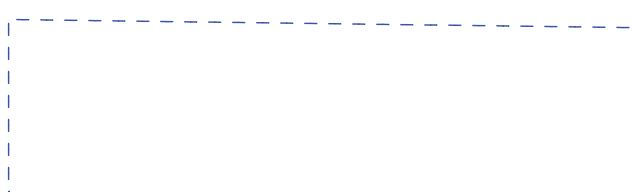
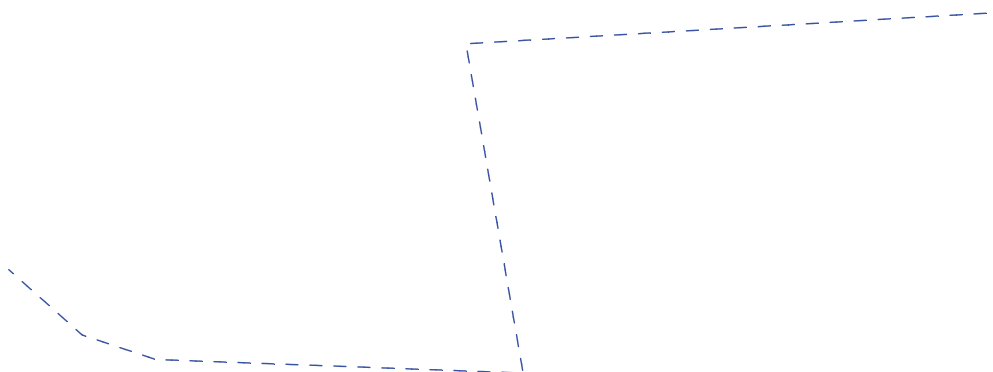
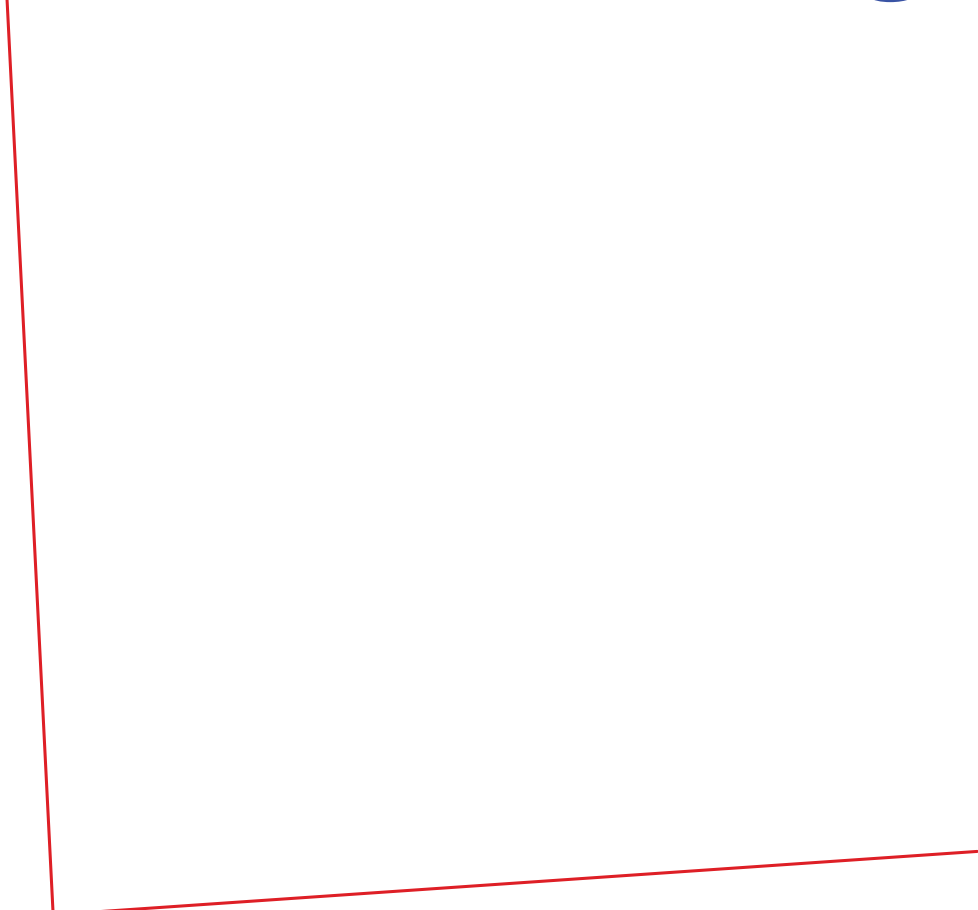
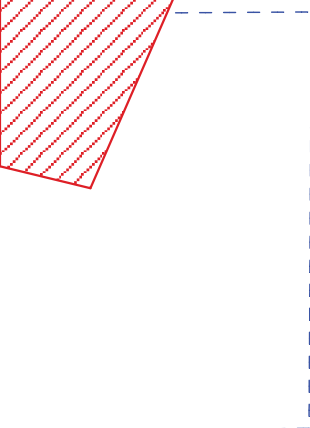
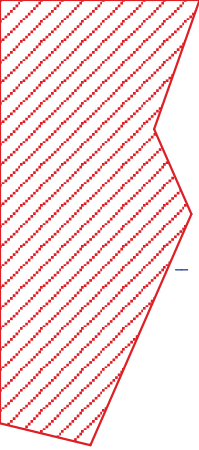


**Land at Barnetts, 68 Frant Road,
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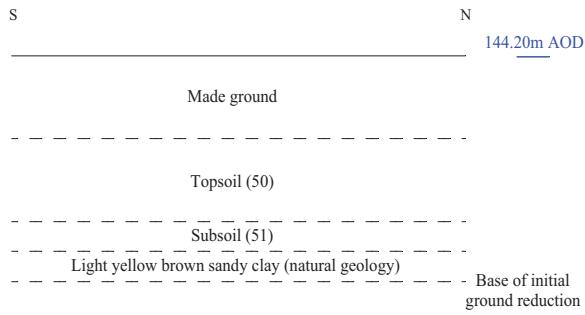
Figure 2. Detailed site location.

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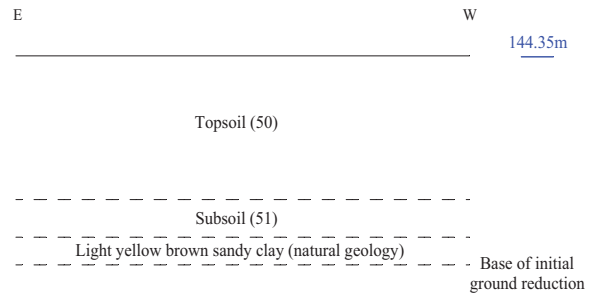




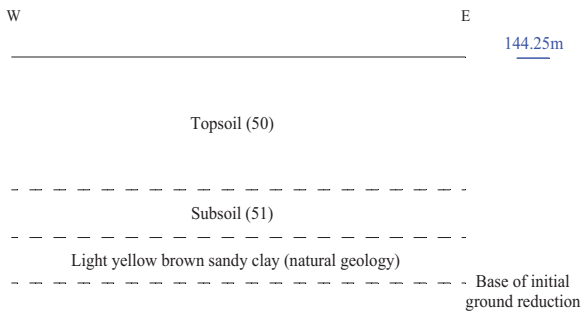
Area A



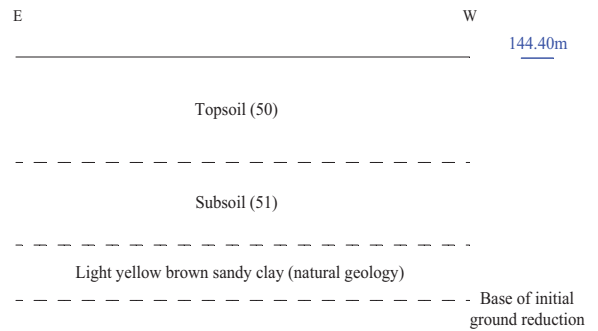
Area B



Area C



Area D



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Figure 4. Representative sections.

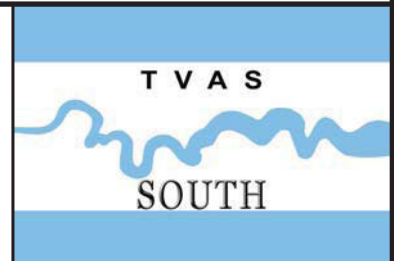




Plate 1. General view of Area A, looking North-east.
Scales: 2m and 1m.



Plate 2. General view of Area C, looking West.
Scales: 2m and 1m.



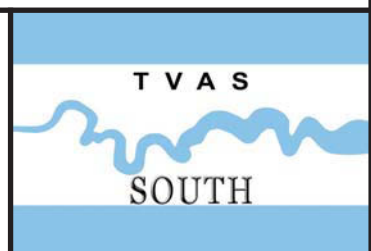
Plate 3. General view of Area D, looking North,
Scales: 2m and 1m.



Plate 4. Stratigraphy in south-west corner of
Area D, looking West.
Scale: 1m.

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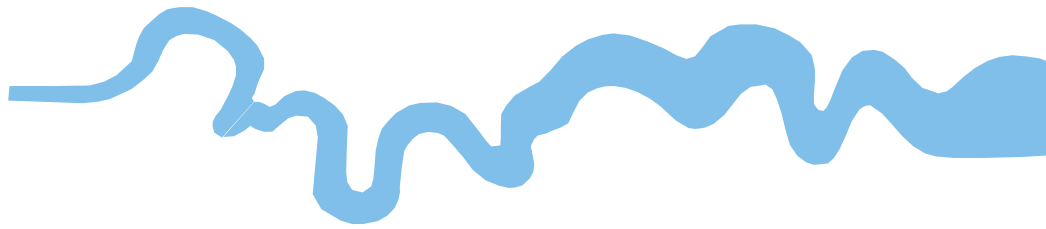
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Plates 1 to 4.**



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





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

**Tel: 01273 554198
Email: south@tvas.co.uk
Web: www.tvas.co.uk/south**

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