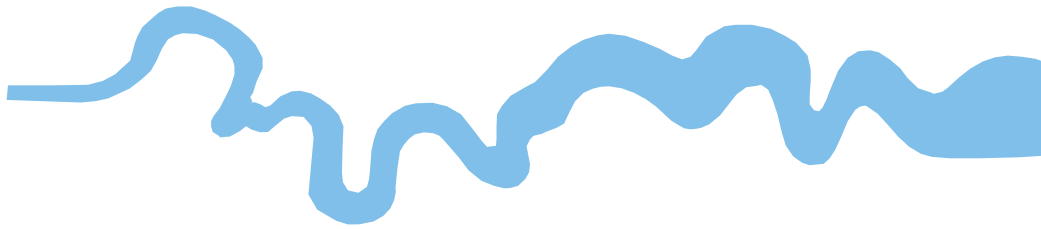


**T V A S**



**SOUTH**

**The Anchorage, Hawkhurst Road,  
Sedlescombe, East Sussex**

**Archaeological Evaluation**

**by Benjamin Matus**

**Site Code: HRS23/50  
(TQ 7765 2000)**

# **The Anchorage, Hawkhurst Road, Sedlescombe, East Sussex**

**An Archaeological Evaluation  
for Pump House Designs Ltd**

Planning Reference: RR/2022/2445/P

by Benjamin Matus

TVAS South

Site Code: HRS 23/50

**March 2023**

## Summary

**Site name:** The Anchorage, Hawkhurst Road, Sedlescombe, East Sussex

**Grid reference:** TQ 7765 2000

**Site activity:** Evaluation

**Date and duration of project:** 27th March 2023

**Project manager:** Odile Rouard

**Site supervisor:** Odile Rouard

**Site code:** HRS 23/50

**Planning Reference:** RR/2022/2445/P

**Area of site:** c. 0.5 ha

**Summary of results:** The archaeological evaluation at The Anchorage, Hawkhurst Road, Sedlescombe, successfully investigated those areas which will be most affected by the development of the site. No archaeological features were identified in any of the trenches. No finds were recovered from the topsoil and subsoil.

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

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford ✓ 31.03.23
	Steve Preston ✓ 31.03.23

# The Anchorage, Hawkhurst Road, Sedlescombe, East Sussex An Archaeological Evaluation

by Benjamin Matus

Report 23/50

## Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried at The Anchorage, Hawkhurst Road, Sedlescombe, East Sussex (TQ7765 2000) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Julie Warden of Pump House Designs Ltd, 38 High Street, Battle, East Sussex, TN33 0EA.

Planning permission (RR/2022/2445/P) has been gained from Rother District Council for the erection of a replacement dwelling and detached garage with external works and landscaping on the site. The consent is subject to a standard planning condition (3) relating to archaeology and the historic environment. As a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits on the site which may be damaged or destroyed by the proposed development, it was proposed to carry out a field evaluation in order to inform a mitigation strategy as appropriate.

This is in accordance with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2021), and the District Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Christopher Greatorex and Mr Neil Griffin, the East Sussex County Council Archaeological Officers who advise the District Council on archaeological matters. The fieldwork was undertaken by Odile Rouard and Benjamin Matus on 27th March 2023, and the site code is HRS23/50. The archive is presently held at TVAS South in Brighton, and will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service in due course.

## Location, topography and geology

Sedlescombe is located north of Battle in the Weald of north-east East Sussex (Fig. 1) The Anchorage is located on Hawkhurst Road, B2244, also known as Beech Farm Road, which runs north from the village of Sedlescombe in the south towards the village of Cripps Corner, and is centred on NGR TQ 7760 2000 (Figs 1 and 2). The site consists of a rectangular-shaped area encompassing the extant bungalow and garage, bordered by the B2244 to the east, similar detached housing to the south, forested land to the north alongside the road, and a steep forested slope down into a valley with a stream to the west of the site. The general topography of the site is steeply

sloping, from the road on the eastern edge at approximately 75m above Ordnance Datum, and over a 50m distance it drops to a height of 50m aOD in the west. According to the British Geological Survey the underlying geology consists of Weald Clay (BGS 1980), and this was confirmed during the evaluation. The geology recorded in the trenches generally consisted of light-yellow grey clay.

## **Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential of the site has been examined in a search of the county's Historic Environment Record, and largely stems from its proximity to the Roman road running north-south between Hastings on the coast and Maidstone to the north (Margary 1955, route 13), which places the site in an Archaeological Notification Area. It was therefore possible that traces of this road, or features associated with it, may have survived on the site. Very little prehistoric activity has been recorded though it is to be noted that very little archaeological work has been carried out in this area, but finds of flintwork suggest the area was utilised by Mesolithic hunter-gatherers, a common observation in the Weald. The Weald is thought to have been heavily wooded until the post-medieval period and largely uninhabited but utilised for iron production during the Iron Age, Roman, Saxon, medieval and post-medieval periods, with numerous features surviving from the industry, with the most obvious being mill ponds used to power the foundries. Approximately 170m to the south-west of the site is the location of an Iron Age and Roman bloomery, where Late Iron Age and Roman pottery finds recovered included samian and Belgic ware, and coins of Vespasian (AD 69-79) and Domitian (AD 80) were also found. Recent fieldwork (e.g. Margetts 2018; Wallis *et al.* 2019), however, is showing that occupation of earlier periods can also be found in the Weald and suggests that the area's 'blank' reputation may, at least in part, reflect a previous scarcity of archaeological investigation.

One listed building is recorded in the vicinity of the site: Beech Farm, approximately 215m south of the site, is a partially extant 17th century farmstead and Grade II Listed Building.

## **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; and

to provide information in order to draw up an appropriate mitigation strategy if required.

The potential and significance of any such deposits located were to be assessed in accordance with the research priorities such as set out in the *Historic England Research Agenda* (HE 2017) or any more local or thematic research priorities as necessary. The work was to be carried out in line with the relevant Chartered Institute of Archaeologists (CIFA 2020) and County (ESCC 2019) *Standards*.

Two trenches measuring 12m in length and 1.60m in width were to be dug, one directly north of the garage next to the road, and the other adjacent to the north of the existing residence. The trenches were positioned to target those parts of the site which would be most affected by the development. The trenches were to be dug using a 360° type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision. 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 exposed would be excavated or sampled by hand to satisfy the aims outlined above, without compromising the integrity of any feature that might warrant preservation *in situ* or be better investigated under the conditions pertaining to full excavation. All spoilheaps were to be monitored for finds.

## **Results**

The two trenches were dug at their intended positions (Fig. 3). Both trenches were 1.60m wide. A complete list of the trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

### Trench 1 (Figs 3 and 4; Pl. 1)

This trench was orientated East–West, and was 12.6m long and up to 0.25m deep. The natural geology, which consisted of a light yellow clay, was observed beneath 0.19m of subsoil, with no topsoil present. The entirety of the trench was affected by moderate rooting. Nothing of archaeological interest was observed in this trench.

### Trench 2 (Figs 3 and 4; Pl. 2)

This trench was orientated approximately North-west to South-east, and was 12m long and up to 0.3m deep. The natural geology at the eastern edge was observed immediately, with no remaining topsoil or subsoil, however as the trench extended westwards a subsoil (51) appeared with a maximum depth of 0.29m by its western extent. A borehole from previous geological work was observed at 8m along from the eastern edge of the trench. There were no archaeological features identified in this trench.

## **Finds**

The fieldwork did not recover any artefacts of archaeological interest from any of the trenches.

## **Conclusion**

The archaeological evaluation at The Anchorage, Hawkhurst Road, Sedlescombe, successfully investigated those areas which will be most affected by the re-development of the site. No archaeological features were identified in any of the trenches. Nor artefacts recovered. On the basis of these results the site is considered to have very low archaeological potential.

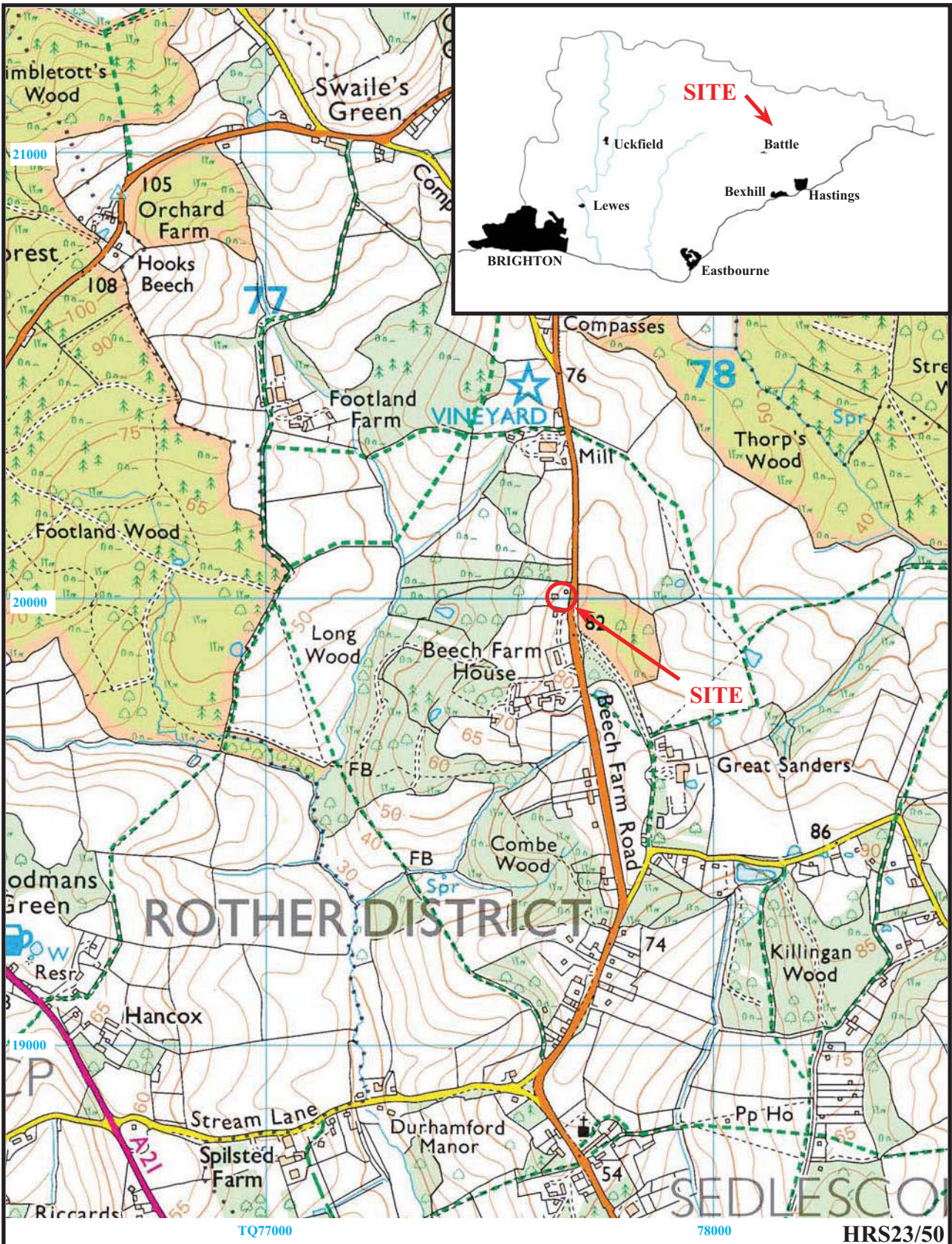
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**APPENDIX 1: Trench details**

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	12.6	1.60	0.25	0-0.19m subsoil; 0.19m+ natural geology (Weald Clay). <b>PI. 1</b>
2	12.0	1.60	0.30	0-0.29m subsoil; 0.29m+ natural geology (Weald Clay). <b>PI. 2</b>

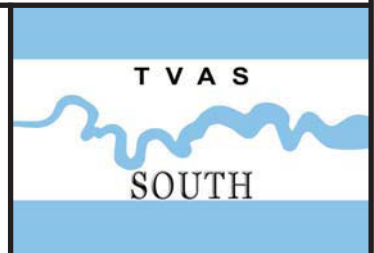


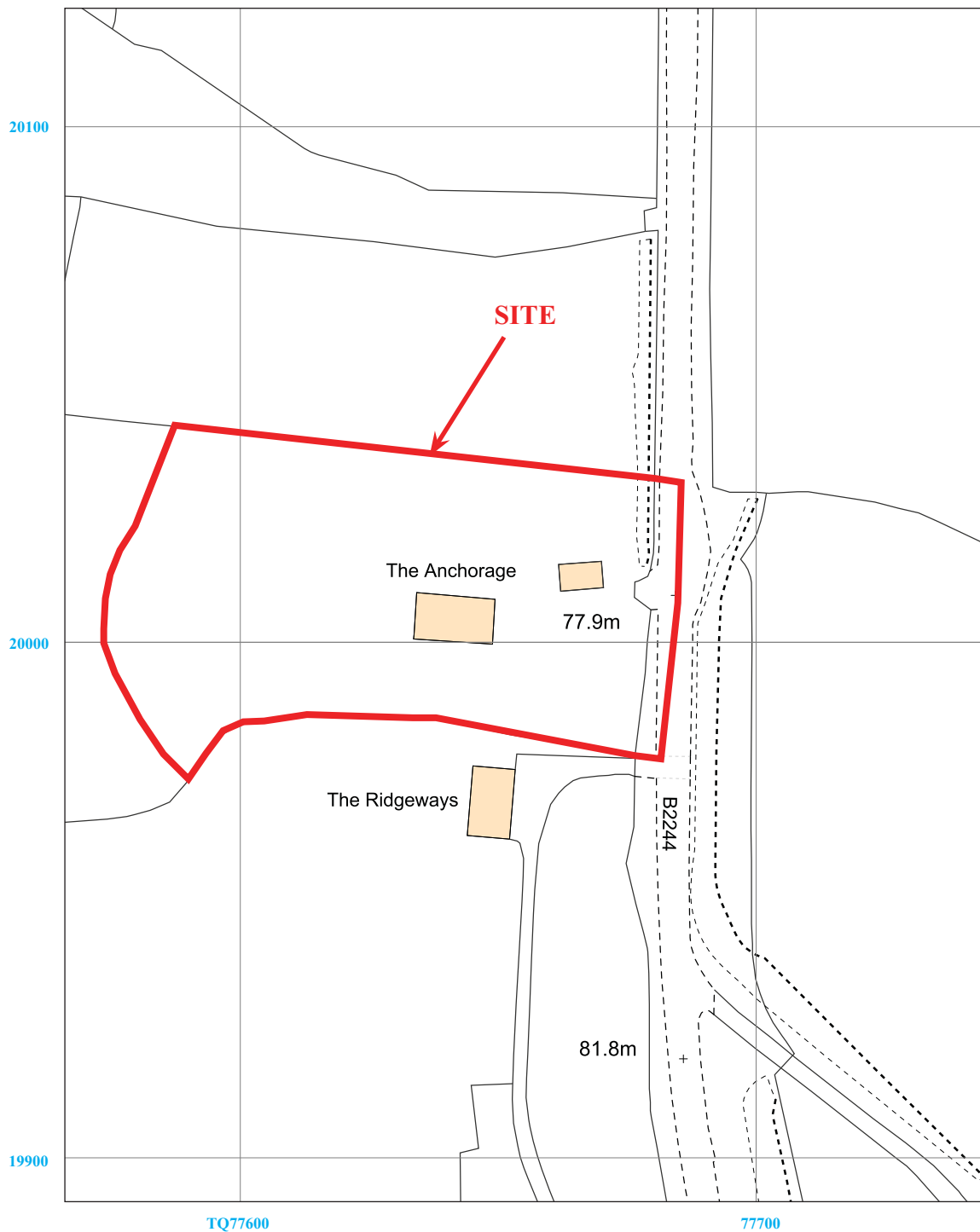


**The Anchorage, Hawkhurst Road,  
Sedlescombe, East Sussex, 2023  
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 1. Location of site within East Sussex.

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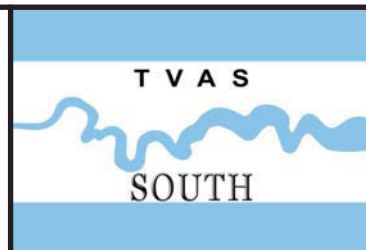
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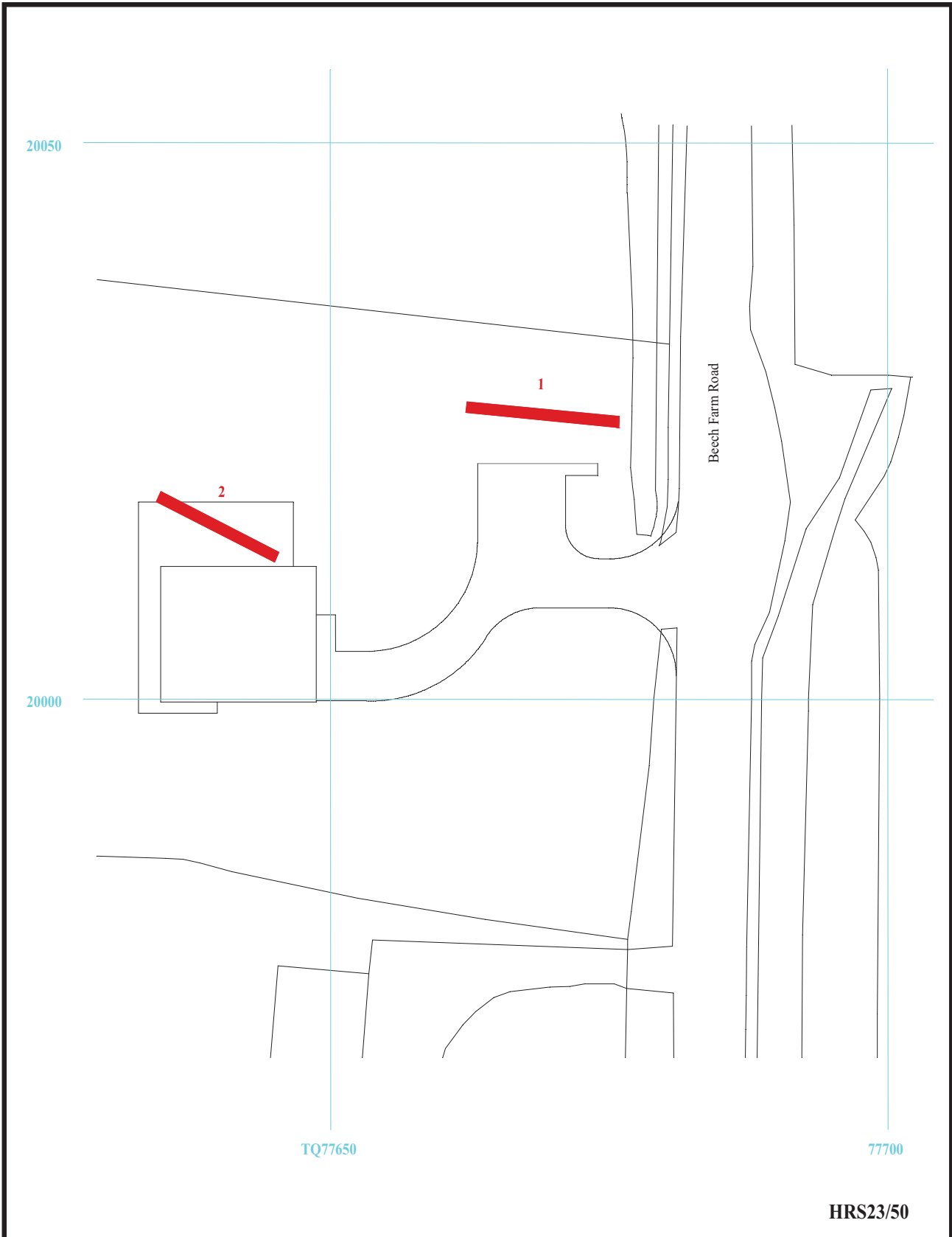


**The Anchorage, Hawkhurst Road,  
Sedlescombe, East Sussex  
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 2. Detailed site location.

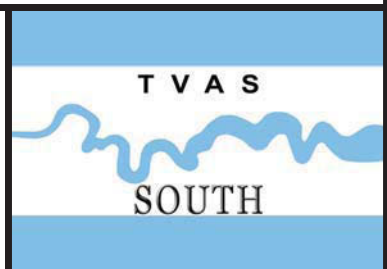
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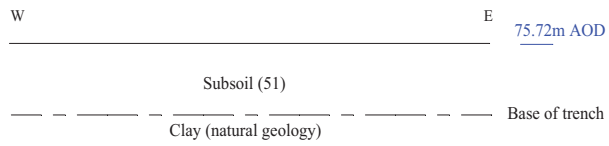


**The Anchorage, Hawkhurst Road,  
Sedlescombe, East Sussex, 2023  
Archaeological Evaluation**

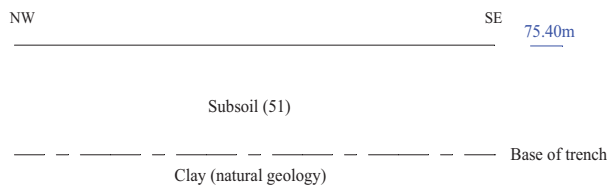
Figure 3. Plan of site showing evaluation trenches



**Trench 1**



**Trench 2**



HRS23/50

**The Anchorage, Hawkhurst Road,  
Sedlescombe, East Sussex, 2023  
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 4. Trench sections

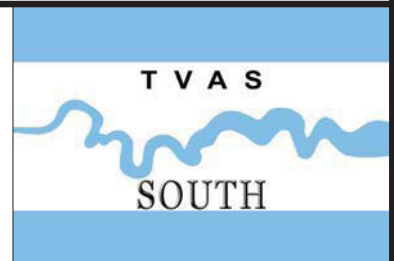




Plate 1. Trench 1, looking West.  
Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.20m.

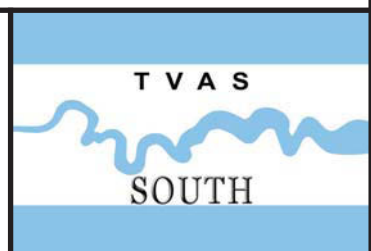


Plate 2. Trench 2, looking North-west.  
Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.20m.

HRS23/50

**The Anchorage, Hawkhurst Road,  
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Archaeological Evaluation**

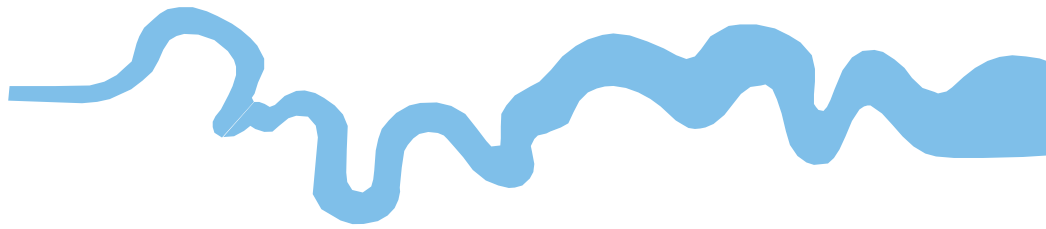
Plates 1 to 2.



## 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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