

T H A M E S V A L L E Y

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

S O U T H

**Land at Chatfield Road, Cuckfield,
West Sussex**

An archaeological watching brief

by Felicity Howell

Site Code CLC10/105

(TQ3100 2483)

Land at Chatfield Road, Cuckfield, West Sussex

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For Bellway Homes

by Felicity Howell

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

SiteCodeCRC10/105

February 2011

Summary

Site name: Land at Chatfield Road, Cuckfield, West Sussex

Grid reference: TQ 3100 2483

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 6th October 2010 to 28th January 2011

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Sean Wallis

Site code: CRC 10/105

Area of Site: c. 1.3 ha

Summary of results: No finds or features of archaeological interest were discovered.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Cuckfield Museum in due course.

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|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Report edited/checked by: | Steve Ford ✓ 10.02.11 |
| | Steve Preston ✓ 08.02.11 |

Land at Chatfield Road, Cuckfield, West Sussex An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Felicity Howell

Report 10/105

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out on land at Chatfield Road Cuckfield, West Sussex (TQ 3100 2483) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Matthew Smith of CgMs Consulting, Morley House, 25 Holborn Viaduct, London, EC1A 2AT on behalf of Bellway Homes, Bellway House, London Road North, Merstham, Surrey, RH1 3YU.

Planning consent (10/00516/ful) has been granted by Mid Sussex District Council for the redevelopment of the site for residential purposes. The consent is subject to a condition (11) relating to archaeology which requires a watching brief to be carried out during groundworks. This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's Planning Policy Statement, *Planning for the Historic Environment* (PPS5 2010), and the District's policies on archaeology. The archaeological potential of the site had been highlighted in a desk-based study prepared by CgMs Consulting (2008). The field investigation was carried out to a written scheme of investigation (Smith 2010) approved by Mr John Mills, Senior Archaeologist for West Sussex County Council, the archaeological adviser to the District. The fieldwork was undertaken by Sean Wallis and Felicity Howell between 6th October 2010 and 28th January 2011. The site code is CRC 10/105.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Cuckfield Museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located in the village of Cuckfield, to the north-east of London Lane and north of Chatfield Road (Fig. 2), on an incline descending from the west from 100m above Ordnance Datum to around 80m AOD. The site comprises overgrown open ground and the Scrase Stream forms its northern boundary. The site is mapped as being located on Cuckfield Stone (Grinstead Clay group) in the south with Ardingly Sandstone in the north (BGS 1972). A silty clay above either clay or sandstone, or a mix of both, was observed during the investigation.

Archaeological background

The site has previously been the focus of an archaeological desk-based assessment (CgMs 2008) that highlighted the low potential for archaeology in the area. Only one piece of prehistoric evidence has been identified within a

1km radius of the study area. This is a Neolithic leaf shaped arrowhead recovered in 1924, during the construction of a house in Court Mead, located approximately 0.4km to the south west of the site. Archaeological and documentary evidence show that nucleated settlement existed at Cuckfield by the 13th century, which appears to be centred on the present day High Street, approximately 0.5km to the west of the current site.

Despite the study indicating a low archaeological potential for all periods an archaeological watching brief was required to mitigate the potential damage from development to any archaeological remains that might be present. The site's ridge location may have been favoured by past peoples as occupation sites in the Weald.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the development. This involved the monitoring and examination of all areas cut by access roads, the positioning of which have provided a sufficient cross section of the site (Fig. 3) to identify any areas that would merit further monitoring. All spoil heaps were monitored by an archaeologist to recover any artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest and a metal detector was used at regular intervals to scan spoil derived from excavations.

Results

The Northern Access Road aligned NE–SW

The northern access road initially involved a strip of overburden from north-east to south-west over a distance of 78m (Fig. 3; Pl. 1). The roadway was stripped to its full width of *c.* 5m and this took place using a 360⁰-type machine fitted with a 2m wide toothless bucket. An off-shoot of this access road heading north-west, for a distance of 10.6m, was also observed. The stratigraphy revealed comprised 0.20m of topsoil above 0.46m of light grey brown silty clay subsoil above a variable natural geology, comprising sandstone and light blue and yellow clay (Fig. 4; Pl. 2). The natural geology contained occasional ironstone and manganese inclusions. Between 53.10m to 54.60m from the north-east end of the strip some modern disturbance was observed, a sub-oval feature filled with dark grey brown mulch, which contained glass and a paint brush handle. No archaeological finds or deposits were recorded.

The Central Access Road aligned NW-SE

For this section of the access road, overburden was stripped from south-west to north-east over a distance of 68.8m (Fig. 3), with an off-shoot heading north-east, over a distance of 21.2m. The stratigraphy revealed

comprised 0.11m of topsoil above 0.43m of light grey brown silty clay subsoil above a variable natural geology comprising sandstone and light blue and yellow clay (Fig. 4). Once again in this area the natural geology contained occasional ironstone and manganese inclusions. A former service run was observed during the main strip of this access road, tracing its continuation into the subsequent off-shoot, but no deposits of archaeological interest were uncovered.

The Western Access Road aligned NE-SW

Initially this access road was stripped to only half the full width, from north-east to south-west over a distance of 36.30m. The roadway was later taken to its full extent by the same machine (Fig. 3). The stratigraphy revealed comprised 0.18m of topsoil above 0.30m of light grey brown silty clay subsoil above light yellow and blue clay natural geology (Fig. 4). Towards the south the clay natural geology remained fairly sterile but seams of ironstone were noted towards the northern end of this strip. The extension revealed some modern disturbance between 13.35–14.25m, a terminating linear feature, filled with a mid grey brown silty clay, that contained modern glass bottles. No archaeological finds or deposits were noted.

The Eastern Access Road aligned NE-SW

This area was not observed as the access road had already been cut and stoned over in order to provide access to the site from the only existing entrance.

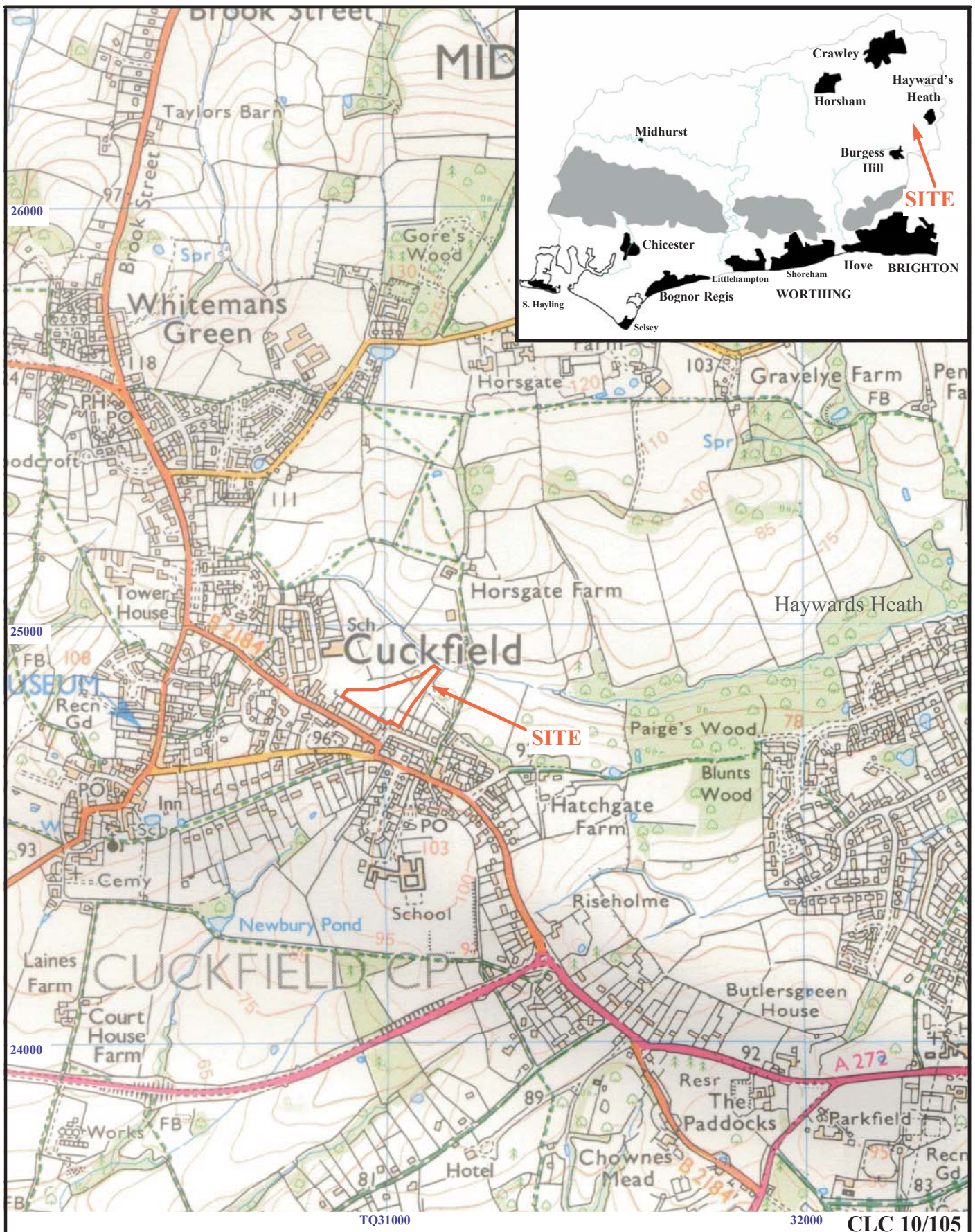
Based on the sample of the site provided by the roads, after consultation with the county's Senior Archaeologist, no archaeological monitoring was undertaken on the house plots.

Conclusion

Despite a relatively large area excavation no finds nor features of archaeological interest were noted in any of the access roads observed.

References

- BGS, 1972 *British Geological Survey*, One-inch series, Sheet 302, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- CgMs, 2008, 'Archaeological Desk-based assessment: Land at Chatfield Road Cuckfield, West Sussex', CgMs Consulting, London
- PPS5, 2010, *Planning for the Historic Environment*, The Stationery Office, Norwich
- Smith, M, 2010, 'Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Monitoring Exercise. Land at Chatfield Road Cuckfield, West Sussex', CgMs Consulting, London



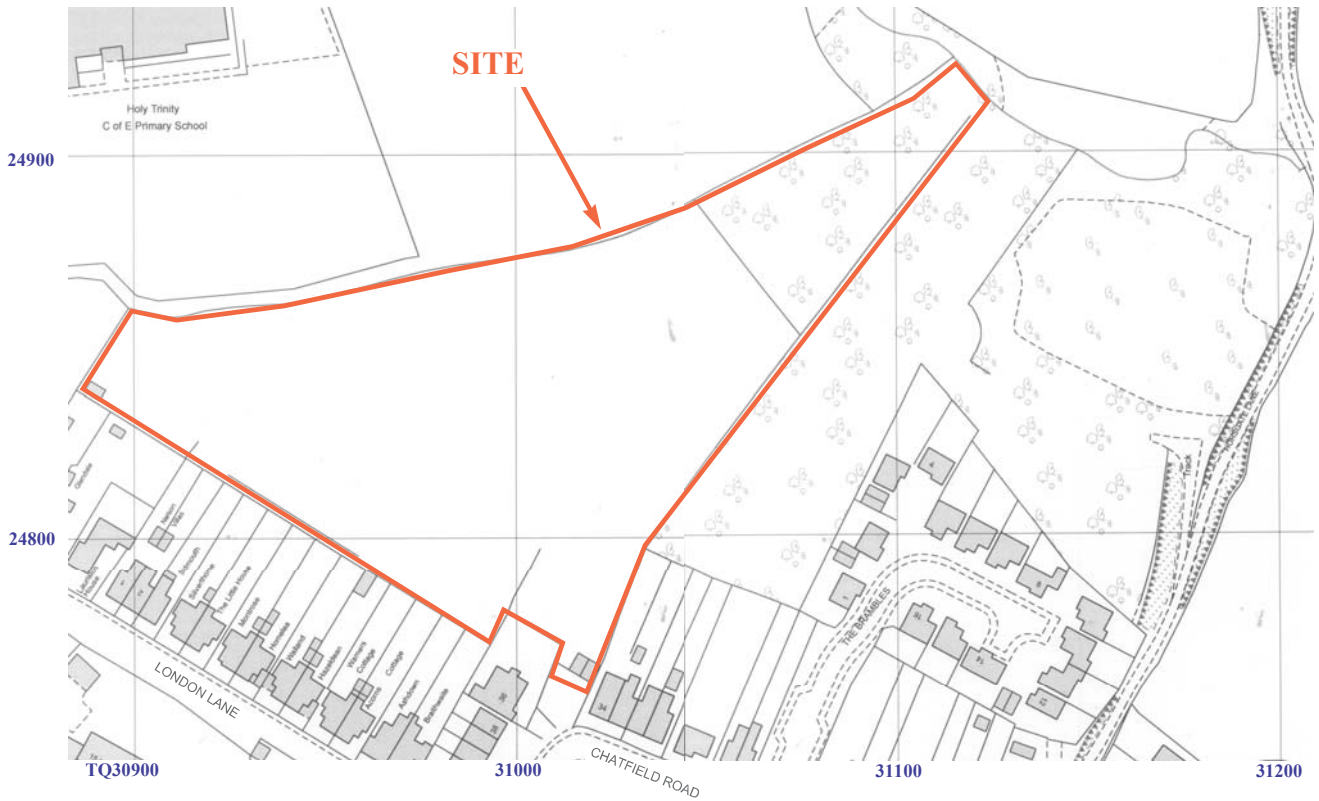
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Figure 1. Location of site within Cuckfield and West Sussex.

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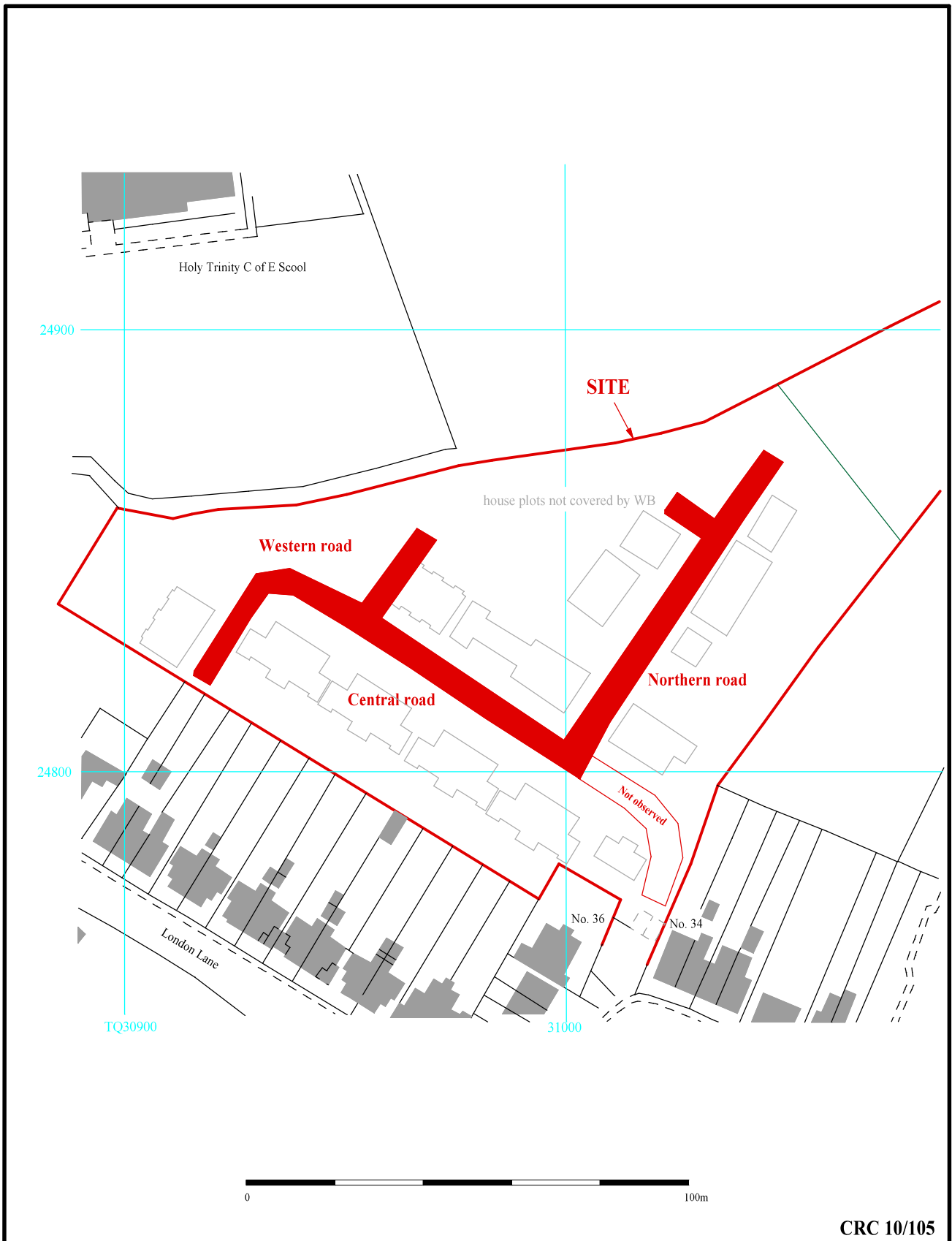
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Chatfield Road.

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Archaeological watching brief**

Figure 3. Location of areas observed during archaeological works

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Northern Access Road (NE-SW)

NE SW 85.80m AOD

Topsoil

Grey-brown silty clay (subsoil)

base of access road

A mix of sandstone and light yellow and blue clay natural

Central Access Road (NW-SE)

NW SE 89.30m AOD

Topsoil

Grey-brown silty clay (subsoil)

base of access road

A mix of sandstone and light yellow and blue clay natural

Western Access Road (NE-SW)

SW NE 91.90m AOD

Topsoil

Grey-brown silty clay (subsoil)

base of access road

Light yellow and light blue clay natural

CRC 10/105

**Land at Chatfield Road, Cuckfield, West Sussex, 2011
Archaeological watching brief**

Figure 4. Representative sections.





Plate 1. NE Road strip, looking south west. Scales 2m and 1m.



Plate 2. Representative section, looking south east, scales 1m and 0.5m.

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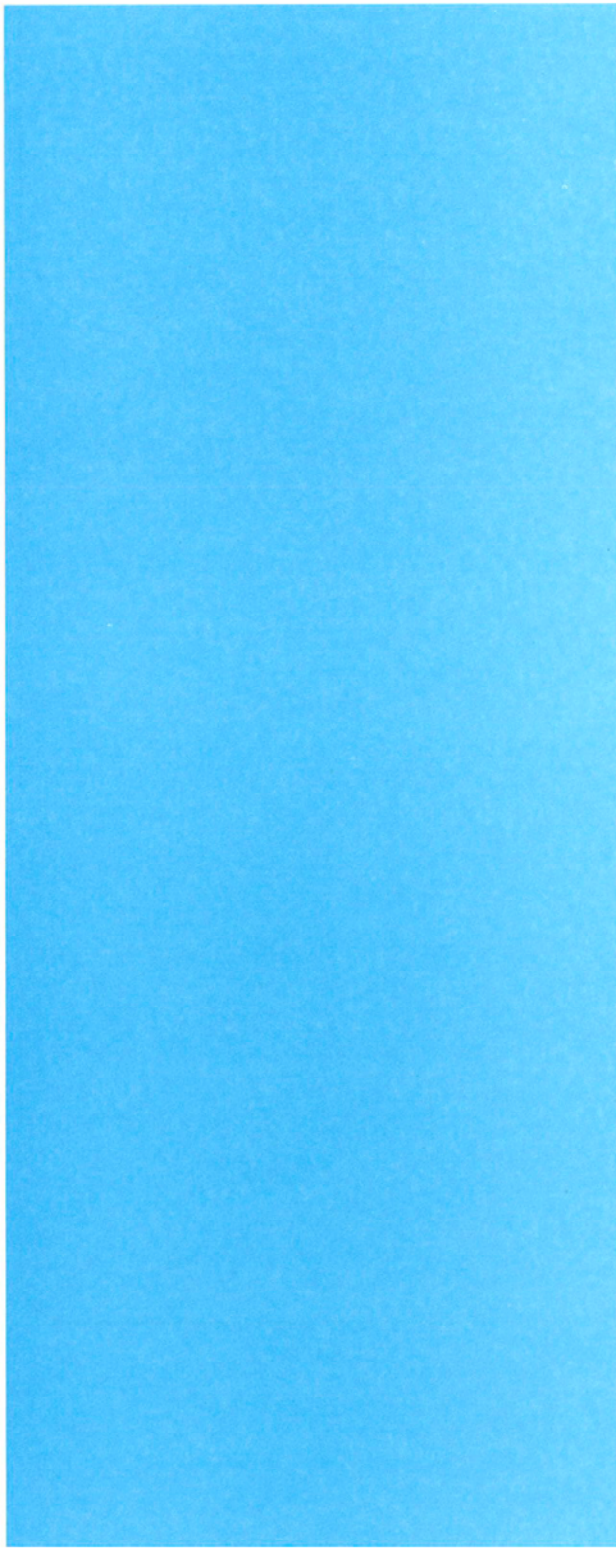
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Plates 1 and 2.

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TIME CHART

| | Calendar Years |
|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Modern _____ | AD 1901 |
| Victorian _____ | AD 1837 |
| Post Medieval _____ | AD 1500 |
| Medieval _____ | AD 1066 |
| Saxon _____ | AD 410 |
| Roman _____ | AD 43 |
| Iron Age _____ | BC/AD 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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