



**STEYNING TO BEEDING**  
**NEW EDF CABLE ROUTE**  
West Sussex

County of West Sussex

An archaeological watching brief report

July 2008

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SECURE COLLECTION



**MUSEUM OF LONDON**

Archaeology Service

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NEW EDF CABLE ROUTE  
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Site Code: WX-SBE07  
National Grid Reference: 518354 111759 to 519558 108896

Project Manager  
Author  
Graphics

Robin Nielson  
Gabby Rapson  
Gabby Rapson

**Museum of London Archaeology Service**

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Mortimer Wheeler House, 46 Eagle Wharf Road, London N1 7ED

tel 020 7410 2200 fax 020 7410 2201

email [molas@molas.org.uk](mailto:molas@molas.org.uk)

web [www.molas.org.uk](http://www.molas.org.uk)

## Summary (non-technical)

*This report, commissioned by EDF Energy, presents the results of a watching brief carried out by the Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS) on a new 132kV electricity cable route between the Steyning Grid Substation (NGR 518354 111759) and the Southern Cross-Worthing 132kV Overhead Line (NGR 519558 108896).*

*Work on the new EDF electric cable trench was monitored between July 2007 and March 2008. The cable followed the route of a disused railway track running along the A283 and through fields previously used for medieval salt production in the Adur valley.*

*The southern (fields A -C) and most northern (D) parts of the route were subject to Enhanced Observation and Recording. Fields A-C were fully monitored. Trial pits excavated in area D showed this part of the route ran across modern made ground and no further monitoring was undertaken. The remaining part of the route (A283) was subject only to call out and the attending archaeologist was not required.*

*An archaeological watching brief, carried out in 1996 by South Eastern Archaeological Services (SEAS) for an adjacent cable trench excavation, recorded evidence of hearths associated with salt production below the ground surface in field A, so this was the main focus of the current watching brief.*

*Although no in-situ evidence of medieval hearths was discovered; in the same area where hearths had been recorded in 1996, the trench revealed part of an ashy spread within the subsoil and a piece of heat-affected clay (?briquetage), which may be associated with the salt production industry, was recovered from the subsoil. In addition, four pieces of prehistoric worked flint and a piece of Roman building material were recovered from topsoil in the northern section of field A, in the area of river terrace gravel. An organic layer, buried 2m below the surface, provided evidence of a fresh-water feature. Ten features were recorded during the excavation.*

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*Front cover: Fragment of rolling stock wheel, recovered from the railway embankment*

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Site background

This archaeological watching brief was carried out on the new 132kV electricity cable route between Steyning Grid Substation (NGR 518354 111759) and the Southern Cross-Worthing 132kV Overhead Line (NGR 519558 108896). Hereafter called 'the site'. The MoL site code is WX-SBE07.

The new cable trench followed the route of a disused railway line and closely followed an existing EDF cable (Fig 1). The majority of the northern section followed the A283 (Steyning by-pass). The southern section of the route ran through pasture, on what was previously the margin of the tidal estuary of the River Adur, an area of known medieval salt production and close to the former Saxon settlement at St Botolphs. This section of the route had been the subject of a watching brief carried out by South Eastern Archaeological Services (SEAS) on excavation of an existing cable trench in 1996. Evidence for hearths associated with Medieval salt production was recorded in the southern section of Field A (James, 1996) (Fig 2). Earlier investigations were reported in Sussex Archaeological Collections 119 (Holden and Hudson, 1981), where the area covered by this watching brief is referred to as Upper Beeding (South). The principal impact of the cable installation works was excavation within the route to a maximum depth of 1.5m potentially removing archaeological deposits and features.

A desk-based archaeological impact assessment report for the new cable route was previously prepared by MoLAS (Knight, 2005). This document informed the design for the watching brief which was eventually carried out and should be referred to for information on the natural geology, full archaeological and historical background of the site, and the initial assessment of its archaeological potential.

## 1.2 The legislative and planning framework

The legislative and planning framework in which the archaeological exercise took place was summarised in the *Archaeological impact assessment report* (Section 2, Knight, 2005). The works were a permitted development under the Town and Country Planning Act, but were regulated by the Electricity Act 1989 and EDF Energy Standard Operation Procedure SHE-310-PR: Protection of Historic Features. In accordance with standard practice in respect of these works, the *Archaeological impact assessment report* established the parameters for and formed the project design for the watching brief.

## 1.3 Origin and scope of the report

This report was commissioned by EDF Energy and produced by MoLAS. The report has been prepared within the terms of the relevant Standard specified by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA, 2001). The purpose of the watching brief was to

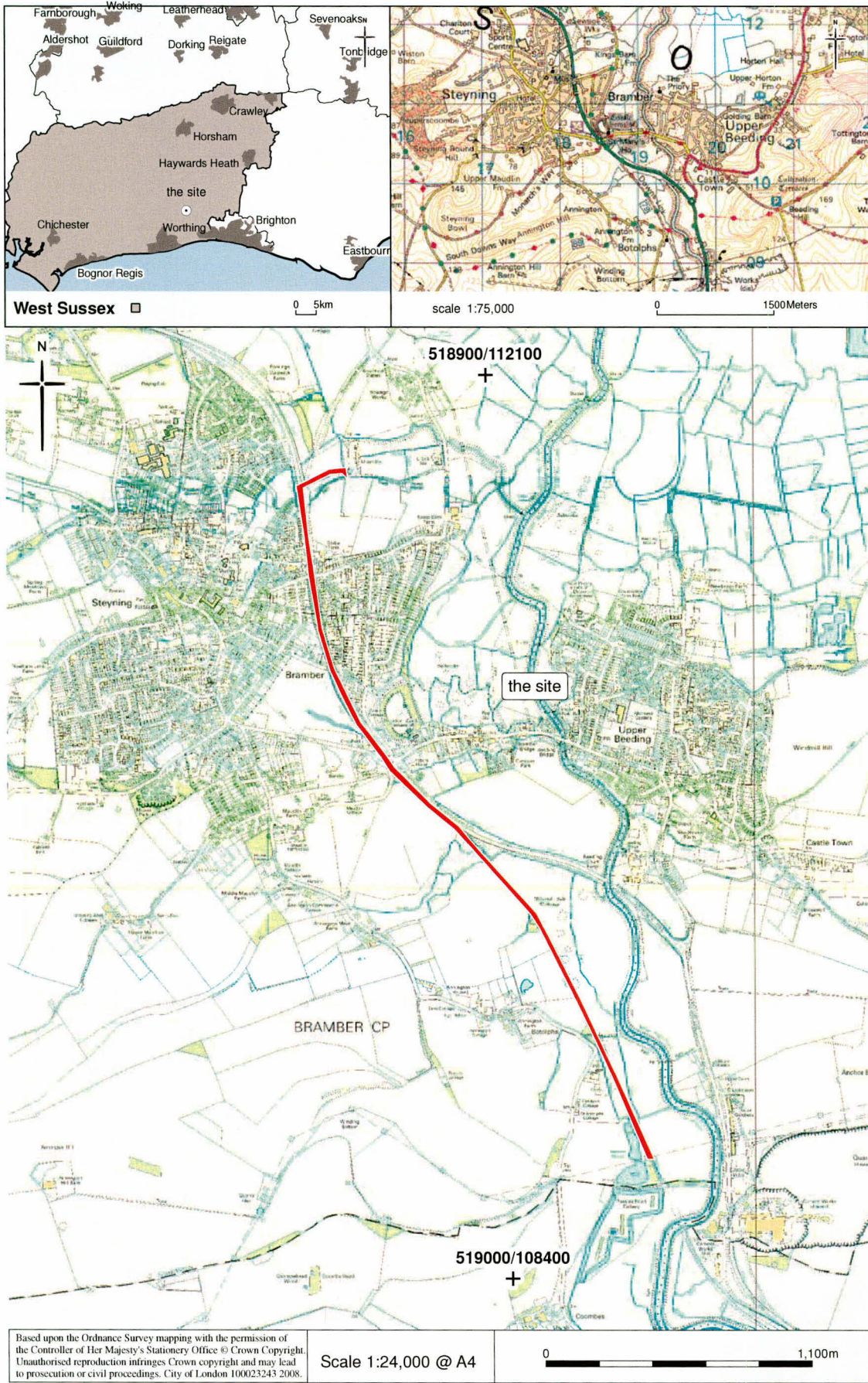


Fig 1 Location map

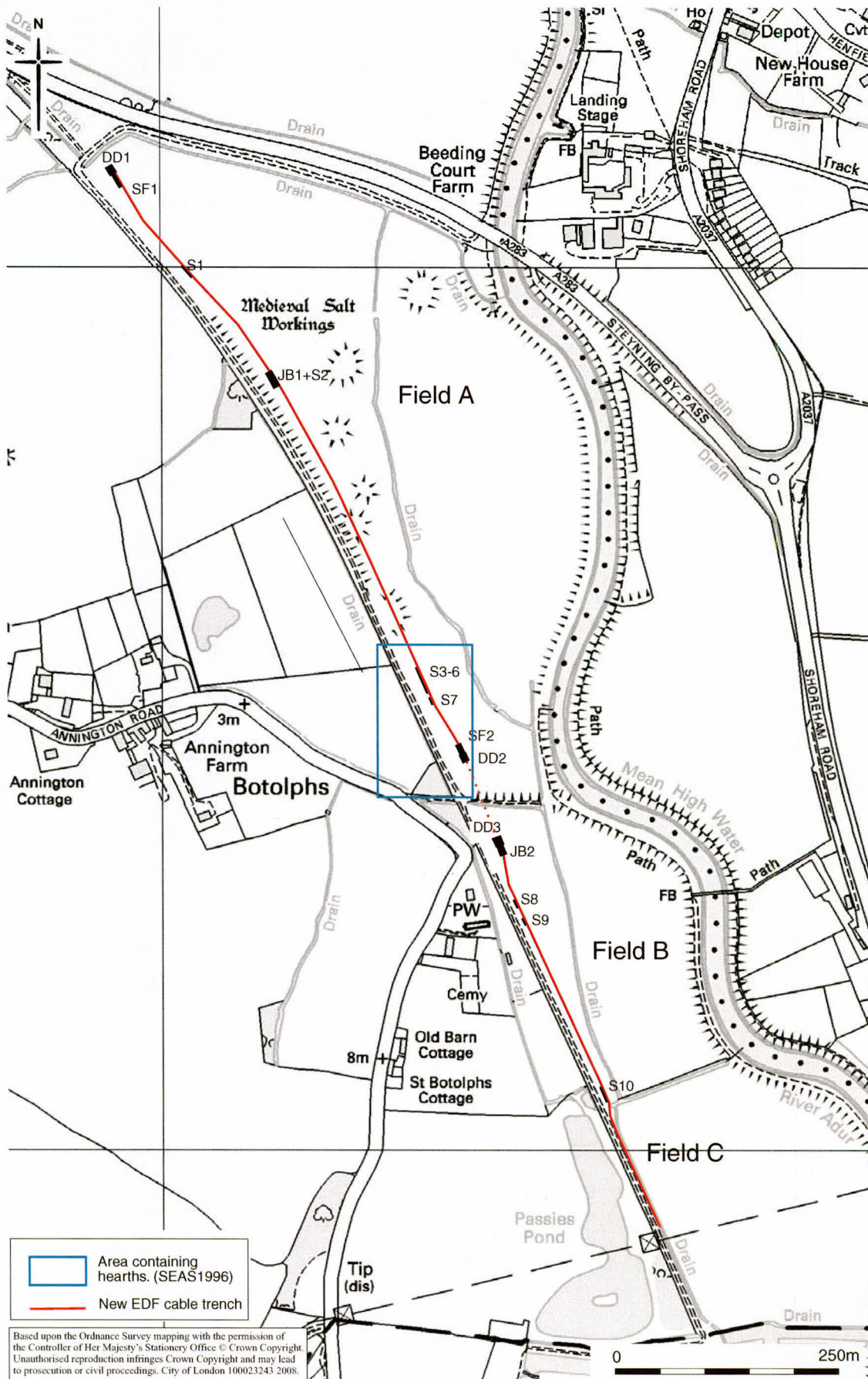


Fig 2 Figure showing section locations and area where hearths recorded in 1996.



establishing where, if at all, archaeological deposits survived on the route and to ensure that significant remains were not destroyed without investigation and record.

## 2 Topographical and historical background

The *Archaeological impact assessment report* (Knight, 2005) should be referred to for information on the natural geology, full archaeological and historical background of the site and the initial assessment of its archaeological potential. Fig 3 shows the local geology in some detail. A brief summary of the archaeological and historical background is provided here.

### 2.1 Prehistoric

Within the route corridor, occasional Palaeolithic finds have been made. Two hand axes have been recovered, one each at Botolphs and Bramber, both close to the edge of the river gravel terrace. Occasional Mesolithic finds have also been made including a pebble hammer and pebble mace head from Bramber, again close to the river terraces. Bronze Age finds from around the scheduled Ancient monument on Steyning Round Hill and close to Bramber Castle attest to occupation in this period. Iron age finds and Late Iron age material has been discovered in Steyning.

### 2.2 Roman

In 1926, Roman graves, cremations, coins and a style were discovered on the down overlooking Steyning, when a barrow was removed for flints. During the construction of an electricity substation along King's Barn in the 1960s, a large quantity of Roman material was noted. This site is located 300m to the east of the substation at the northern end of the route. Additional evidence of Roman occupation closer to the cable route is in the form of Roman finds from excavations and Steyning, Steyning Churchyard and Highfield Barn, and Botolphs Down. Roman pottery has been found in both Beeding and Upper Beeding.

### 2.3 Saxon

The original settlement at Steyning is, from place name evidence, early Saxon in origin. During the Saxon period, Steyning was a thriving port and had acquired some importance by the 9th century. St. Cuthman's remains, buried in the church, are said to have made Steyning a centre for pilgrims.

Trial excavations in a field south of St.Botolph's Church, which is adjacent to the cable route, found two sunken floored buildings dating from the 5th or 6th century AD and associated occupation debris including bone, pottery and carbonised wood. An archaeological evaluation at Steyning Museum also revealed Saxon features.

Records show that 100 urns, which appear to date from the early Saxon period, were found at Steyning at The Heathen Burial Place, located 350m to the west of the route. Other local evidence from the Saxon period include the remains of an adult male skeleton found on the western slopes of Beeding Hill, an inhumation burial from a chalkpit on Steyning Round Hill, Saxon spearheads and a knife recovered from

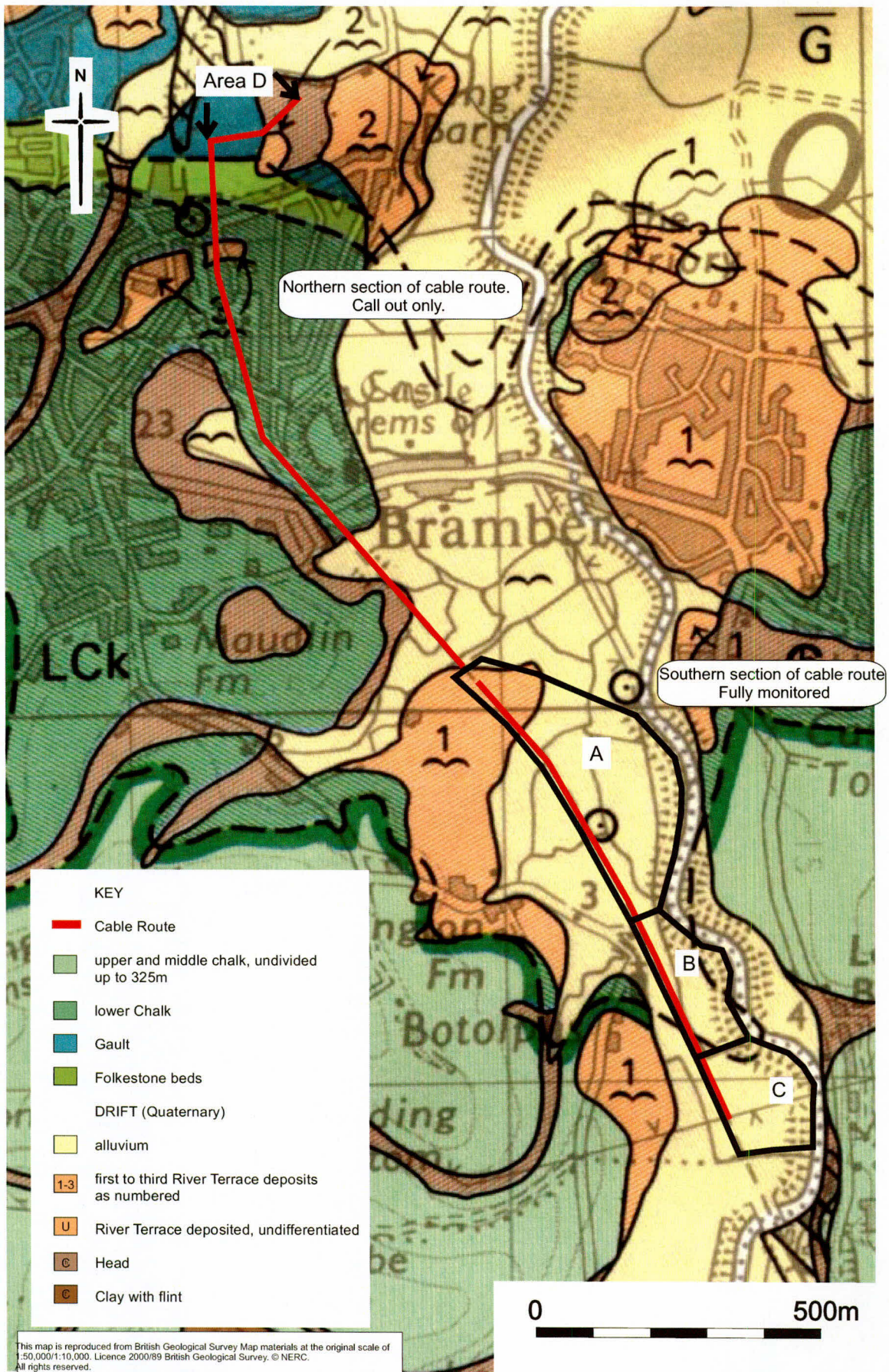


Fig 3 Geology and extent of monitoring

Coombe Head and Saxon pottery recovered from Bramber Castle 140m to the east of the route.

## 2.4 Medieval

Local archaeological evidence from the medieval period is described in detail in Archaeological impact assessment report (Knight, 2005). Of particular interest is evidence for settlement in Steyning village, focused near the church and the Norman motte and bailey castle at Bramber (SAM 12859), built to protect the port of old Shoreham; the medieval coastline being further inland than at present.

The hospital of St. Mary Magdalene, Bidlington by Bramber was founded before 1216 for male lepers. By 1366, it had become an alms house. The Church at St Botolphs, close to the excavation, still has a 'leper's window', built to allow lepers to join in the service from outside the church.

Particularly relevant to the watching brief is the evidence for salting mounds in the area, dating from the 11th to the 14th century, created during the process of extracting salt from the estuary silt. Several mounds are located adjacent to the proposed cable trench. Similar areas have been excavated locally and features revealed include post holes, pottery, hearths, pans, kilns, pits, wells and ditches.

## 2.5 Post-medieval

The growing importance of Brighton in the early 1800s resulted in the creation of a railway link with London. The line, owned by the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway (LB&SCR) was opened in 1841 and in 1861 a further line was opened to run down the Adur Valley, with stations at both Bramber and Steyning. The entire line, except for the section serving a cement works, was closed in 1966 under the Beeching plan. The Bramber to Steyning section of the A283 Steyning bypass was constructed on the disused railway line. The proposed cable trench runs along this disused railway track for the majority of its length.

### 3 The watching brief

#### 3.1 Methodology

All archaeological excavation and recording during the watching brief was done in accordance with the *archaeological impact assessment* (MoLAS, 2005) and the MoLAS Archaeological Site Manual (MoLAS, 1994). Where relevant, sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20. Numbered contexts were allocated where appropriate. Ground surface levels were taken every 5m along the cable trench route by the on-site surveyor and kindly made available to MoLAS. (Where ground surface heights are shown in illustrations, the level taken closest to the feature has been used).

The three fields monitored in the southern section of the watching brief, have been labelled A, B, C from north to south. The most northerly section, the area between the by-pass and the substation has been labelled D (Fig 2, Fig 3). The work in the southern section was carried out in two main phases, both fully monitored by MoLAS staff.

The trenches in both fields A and B were excavated continuously, without topsoil stripping, using a Masten-Broek trenching machine. This is in effect a giant chainsaw, usually employed for removing tarmac, which removed a narrow 0.40m trench to a depth of not more than 1.30m, breaking the heavy clay sub-soil to a fine crumb.

Although destructive by nature, only a narrow cut was made by the trenching machine and it could be stopped as necessary. Access to the trench was limited due to the width. Changes in the colour and texture of the spoil being ejected from the machine were often the only indication that a feature had been encountered.

The trench in field C was 0.50m wide and excavated with a conventional machine with toothless bucket to a maximum depth of 1.10m. No features were observed in this section.

#### Phase 1

The cable trench was dug from north to south. Ducts were laid continuously and the trench was backfilled immediately, allowing limited access to sections. Directional drilling was undertaken to join the pasture section of the cable trench to the bypass section and to feed the cable below watercourses between fields A and B. Pits (4m x 2m x 1.5m deep) were machine dug at each end of these directional drilling sections. (DD 1, 2 and 3)

#### Phase 2

Four 6m sections of trench, 2 joint bays (JB1, JB2) and 2 soft fill excavations (SF1 SF2,) joining ducts to drill pits, were widened by machine to 2.5m and excavation monitored to a depth of at least 0.6m, allowing some further investigation.

The site has produced: 1 trench location plan; 18 context records; 10 section drawings. The site records can be found under the site code WX-SBE07, presently in the MoLAS archive.

## 3.2 Results of the watching brief

### 3.2.1 Local geology and subsoil (Fig 3)

The initial section of the excavation revealed varied deposits. (Highest point 4mOD) From N-S at 60m from the north ditch in field A: 15m of chalk with pale flint nodules, 5m of chalk marl in silty clay, 25m of stiff orange brown clay with dark flint nodules, 5m of chalky clay with pale flint nodules, 20m of stiff orange-brown alluvial clay with occasional flint nodules, before gradually changing to a homogenous alluvial clay (2), by 260m, for the duration of the trench with a surface level averaging 2.5mOD.

The alluvium darkened with depth to a blue grey, gleyed clay (10) where the ground level naturally dipped. The water table was encountered on each occasion shortly after revealing the darker clay. This was most evident where a greater depth of section could be observed such as in the two directional drilling pits between fields B and C. Here grey blue clay was observed 0.8m below ground surface. A bed of clam shells with occasional mussel shell in a dark blue to orange black, silty clay was observed at 1.4m and 1.55m below the surface (Fig 9).

These are likely to correspond to alluvial silts described at Bramber by Ridgeway (Ridgeway 2000) and Holden, who refers to these alluvial deposits as marsh-clay and whose investigations showed the deposits to be formed of freshwater flood loams. (Holden 1975)

### 3.2.2 Features

(See Fig 2 for section locations)

Ten features were recorded in section from fields A and B, but no firm dating evidence was recovered from any of these. The trench often followed the course of a ceramic land drain at 0.6m below the surface. The features were located by their distance from the north ditch in Field A.

#### 3.2.2.1 Field A

##### Feature 1 (Fig 4)

130m.

A 3m wide, shallow, flat-bottomed ditch with fine chalk-crumb fill (4) and a thin layer of mineralization at the base, 0.65m below the surface, was recorded running approximately NE-SW whilst within the chalk/flint section of natural deposits, No dating evidence was recovered from this ditch, but this is probably a drainage ditch as seen in this vicinity on an aerial photo dating from 1948 (Holden and Hudson, 1981 p. 135, plate 1.)

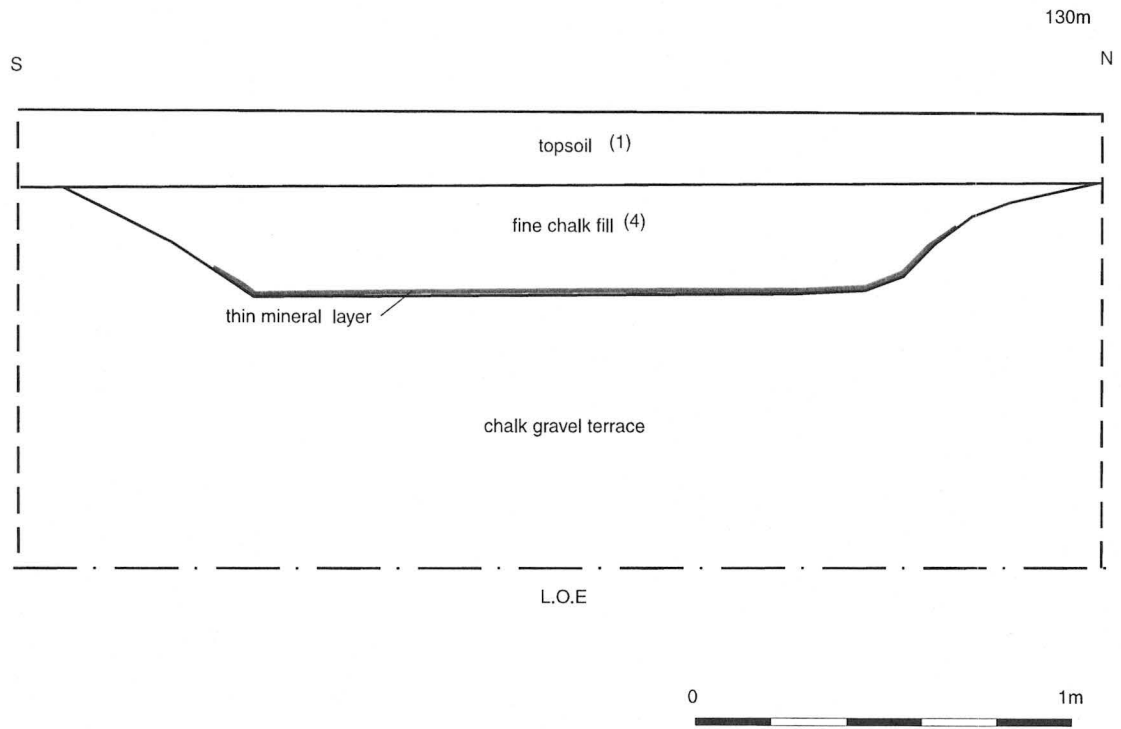


Fig 4 Section of feature 1

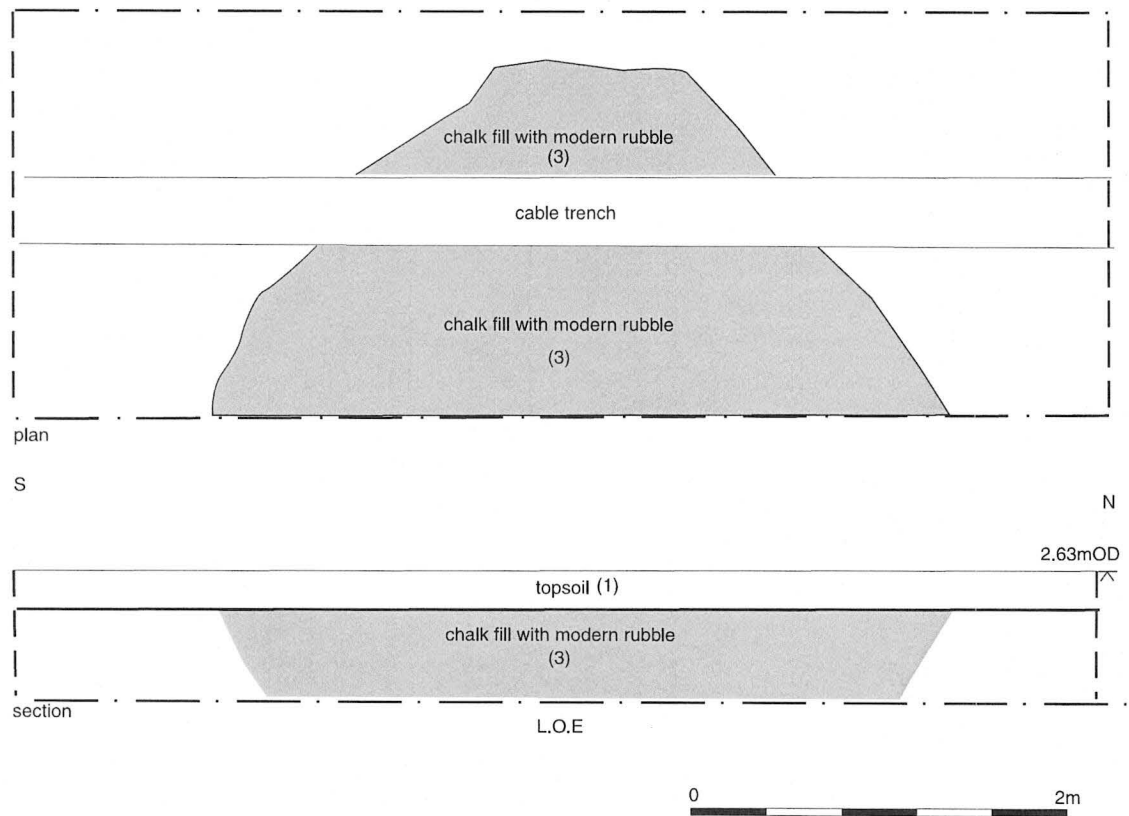


Fig 5 Plan and section of feature 2, Joint bay 1

*Feature 2 (Fig 5)*

240m.

Recorded initially as a 5m long, chalk and rubble filled, shallow feature (3), with very gently sloping sides. During Phase 2, this section was widened for Joint Bay 1 when it could be seen to be an irregular oval spread of chalk and large marl lumps with inclusions of modern debris including what appeared to be part of a railway sleeper, brick rubble, nylon rope, wooden stakes and pieces of corroded iron. No earlier dating evidence was recovered and it was concluded that this spread was be associated with the demolition/decommissioning of the railway.

*Features 3-5 (Fig 6, Fig 7)*

A series of three undated features all containing chalk in a silty matrix, were observed between 710-731m. Features 3, 4 and 5 were apparently all overlain by a 0.2m layer of fine, chalky fill below the expected 0.2m of topsoil (Fig 7). A thin layer of light orange pink sand lay immediately below the topsoil. This may relate to excavated features from the 1996 SEAS excavation, as Features 3-5 and the excavations for Hearth 1 (James, 1996) were recorded to the north of a collapsed brick structure, recorded in this excavation as Feature 6, a collapsed brick culvert.

Feature 3: 714m. A U-shaped feature 1.5m wide, with base 0.8m below ground surface containing a large chalk lump fill with occasional brick (3). This may be a field ditch as one is present in this vicinity on the aerial photos (Holden and Hudson, 1981) previously referred to. In this instance, interpretation was hindered by the narrow trench and lack of topsoil stripping.

Feature 4: 728m. A shallow U-shaped feature, 2m wide, base 0.65m below ground surface. This contained a pale, chalky silt fill (4) similar to the layer overlying the features.

Feature 5: 731m. A flat-bottomed feature containing a fill of large chalk fragments, 4m wide, base 0.9m below ground surface, running EW.

*Feature 6: 742m.*

A 1.5m wide, collapsed, brick culvert (7), base 1m below ground surface. A larger collapsed brick structure was observed in thick undergrowth in the ditch on the western edge of the railway embankment, 5m to the south of this culvert. The bricks and construction used in both structures appeared to be similar and both were probably associated with the railway.

*Feature 7 (Fig 9)*

750m.

As the trench was diverted SE towards Directional Drill Pit 2, a thin lens (10-20mm depth) of homogenous grey/pink, ashy silt (5) containing occasional small charcoal flecks was observed in both sides of the trench, at 0.4m depth below the surface. The change in texture of the spoil from the trench excavator was the only real indicator that there was any change in the subsoil. The lens could be observed for



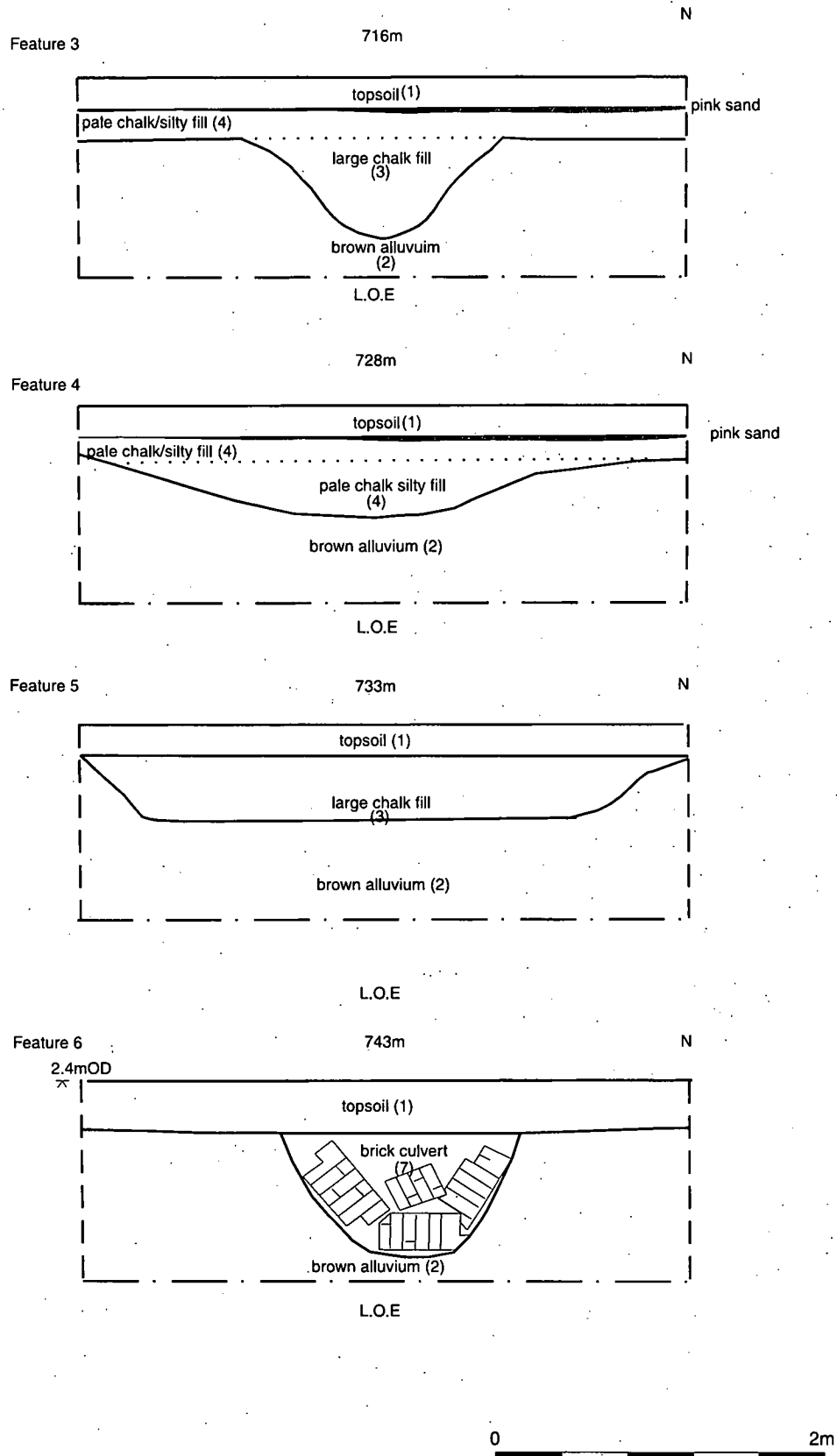


Fig 6 Sections of features 3-6. Field A

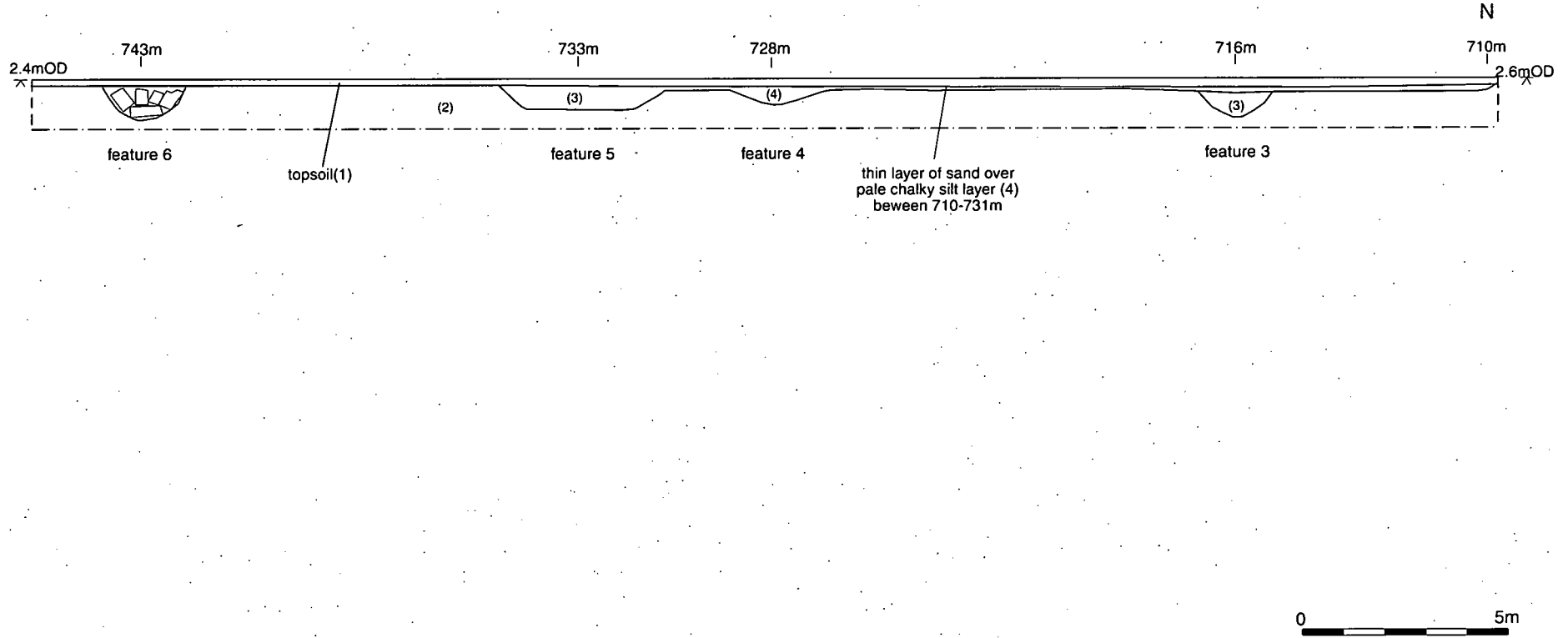


Fig 7 Detail showing of position of features 3-6 Field A

approximately 1.5m in length and appeared as an indistinct layer overlain by 0.2m topsoil and approximately 0.2m alluvial clay (9).

One further area where similar changes in texture were observed, but nothing seen in the section was towards the end of the raised embankment, where the OS map shows a mound, cut by the embankment.

### 3.2.2.2 *Field B*

#### *Features 8 and 9 (Fig 8)*

Two probable field ditches, set 12m apart, and aligned E-W, were observed opposite St Botolph's Church.

#### Feature 8: 128m

Ditch aligned with the northern boundary of the church yard. A shallow, U-shaped ditch with sterile chalky silt fill (4) 1m wide, base 0.6m below ground surface.

#### Feature 9: 140m

Ditch aligned with the north wall of the church. A more substantial U-shaped ditch, with a sterile chalky silt fill (4), 1m wide, base 0.8m below ground surface. This ditch was similar in size and shape to Features 3 and 10. Several features, including ditches, can be seen on the aerial photos in this area (Holden and Hudson, 1981, p. 135 plate 1 and p. 139 plate 3)

#### Feature 10 (Fig 8)

A further ditch, probably also a field drainage ditch, was located 20m before the bridge over the culvert dividing field B and C. (This area had previously been built up to a distance of 25m each side of the bridge over the culvert with up to 1m of chalk rubble to protect the previous EDF cable). The ditch was 1.5m wide, base 0.9m below surface. This wide U-shaped ditch contained a chalky, silt fill with brick rubble and larger chalk/marl lumps (3) as in feature 2. A large piece of rolling stock wheel was recovered from this area, suggesting it was filled in with material derived from the railway embankment.

### 3.2.3 *Topsoil*

The topsoil (1) a mid-brown, silty, clay loam was typically 0.2m thick and contained frequent inclusions of chalk fragments. The topsoil above the directional drill pits contained less frequent chalk inclusions. The origins of the frequent chalk inclusions within the topsoil was probably the reduction and spreading of the railway embankment in the early 1970s and possibly topsoil replacement from the 1996 excavation.

### 3.2.4 *Directional drill pits, soft fills and joint bays*

For locations see Fig 2, for sections see Fig 9.

#### 3.2.4.1 *Directional Drill Pit 1 (DD1) and widening for duct joint 1 (SF1)*

The pit section revealed 0.3m topsoil (1) over 0.5m of well-drained, brown, loamy alluvium (2). Below this at 1.3m below the surface, river terrace deposits consisted of

flint gravel in a chalk matrix. No features were observed in the 2.5m section joining the ducts to the drill pit (SF1).

#### 3.2.4.2 Joint Bay 1

*Feature 2* (see above).

#### 3.2.4.3 Directional Drill pit 3(DD3), Joint Bay 2 (JB2)

The DD3 pit and adjacent Joint Bay 2 revealed a similar sequence consisting of 0.2m topsoil (1) over 0.6m brown clay alluvium, (2) fading to pale brown clay with depth. Occasional clam shells were recorded at a depth of 1.40m.

Joint Bay 2 (6 x 2.5m) was excavated to a depth of 2.3m. The north and south facing sections were recorded. The pale brown alluvium finished abruptly at 1.5m below the surface throughout the excavation, but the two sections showed slightly differing geology below this. Samples from contexts 21 and 22 were taken for environmental processing (Section 3.3)

##### *South facing section*

The base of the trench contained a very soft silt, (22,) (pale brown with dark blue marbling.) The base of this layer was not observed. This was overlain by a layer of dark brown organic clay (21) the base of which lay approximately 2m below the surface. The organic layer (0.5-0.8m in depth) contained frequent tiny freshwater molluscs throughout. Where the two layers met, a layer of twigs, branches and several pieces of animal bone, (cow,) were observed. There appeared to be irregular and convoluted contact between the two layers, which may have been caused when the firm organic layer was initially laid down on the soft silt below. The surface of the organic layer appeared to slope gradually downwards and toward the river (south east) and was immediately overlain by the pale brown alluvium, (marsh-clay (2)

##### *North facing section*

The soft silt (22) was overlain by the brown organic layer (21) as above, although the wood and bone was not observed in this end of the trench. The sloping brown organic layer (21,) slightly lower at this end of the trench, was overlain by a uniform pale grey silty clay up to the nearly horizontal alluvial layer. The pale brown alluvium contained occasional clam shells towards the base, although no obvious layering in the alluvium could be detected.

#### 3.2.4.4 Directional Drill pit 2(DD2)

The lower deposits in this pit contained shell beds in gleyed clay at 1.40m and 1.55m below the surface. The subsoil deposit, between 0.2m and 0.5m below the surface, (6) contained very occasional small (>3mm) fragments of red (burnt) clay in a brown alluvial silt.

#### 3.2.4.5 Widening for Duct Join 2(SF2)

The trench was widened to 2.5m for 6m between DD2 and the end of the ducts. It was only dug to a depth of 0.65m, due to a high water table. The upper sequence matched

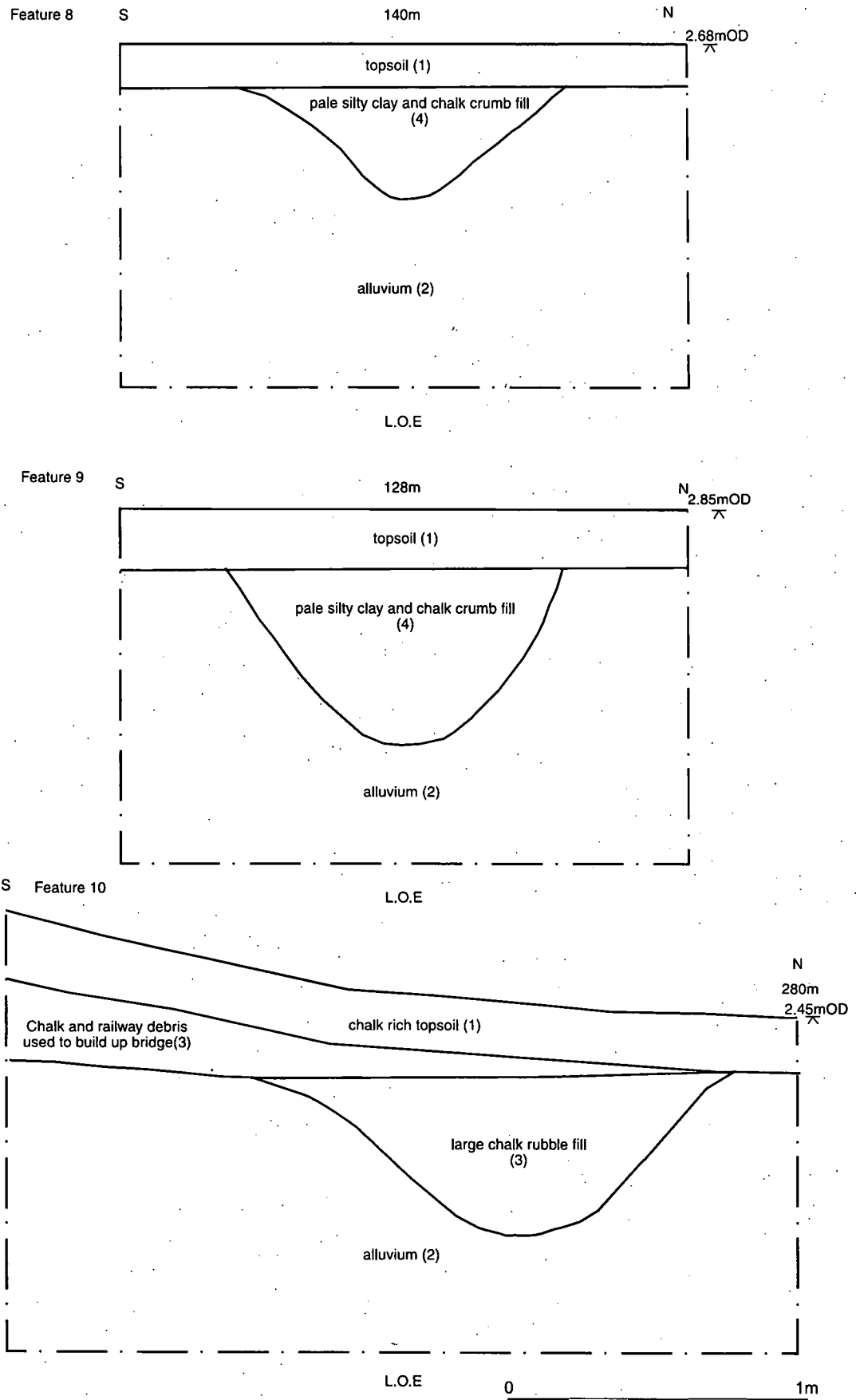


Fig 8 Sections of features 8-10. Field B

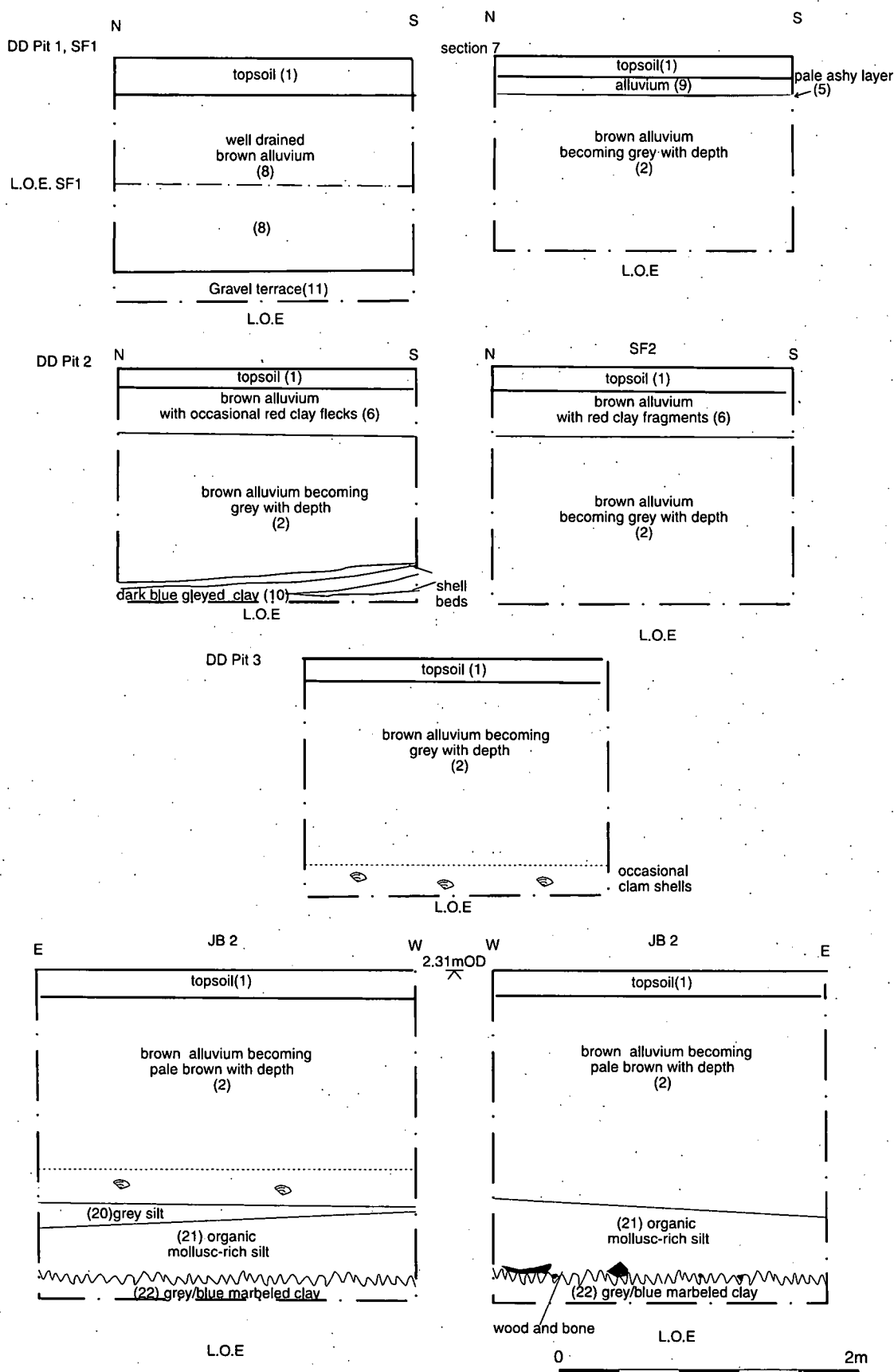


Fig 9 Sections of Directional drill pits, joint bay, soft fills and Feature 7

that of the adjacent DD2. Occasional flecks of charcoal, one large (50mm) and occasional small (3mm) fragments of brick-red sandy clay inclusions were observed in the alluvial clay sub-soil (6), at between 0.2 and 0.5m below the surface. Below this clean alluvial clay (2) was observed.

### 3.2.5 Finds

#### 3.2.5.1 Undated

##### *Fired clay fragment* (Fig 10, no. 5)

The larger fragment of fired clay was recovered from 0.5m below the surface in SF2. This was a 50mm irregular lump of fragile, soft, brick-red sandy clay. On drying, it was seen to have a partially intact slightly curved edge which had become dull grey-pink in response to heating. The clay was very light and contained frequent tiny air holes and occasional harder clay inclusions.

Burnt red silts, some fired hard, were found within the three features interpreted as hearths, by SEAS (James, 1996) so it is possible that this is a fragment of a similar hearth or another clay structure. A lack of any associated features restricts further interpretation. Flooding and natural silting may have redeposited these fragments within the alluvium.

#### 3.2.5.2 Prehistoric

##### *Worked flint* (Fig 10, nos. 1-4)

4 pieces of worked flint were recovered from the spoil heap. 2 flakes (nos. 1 and 2) and a small core (no. 4) with some pecking suggesting possible use as a hammerstone, were found at 260m, close to the edge of the gravel terrace. A few large flint nodules were present in the area where these flints were recovered. A broken scraper, with some evidence for a possible hafting, (no. 3) was found at 325m, where the ground surface naturally dipped and became waterlogged.

Thick platforms with little evidence of platform preparation probably date the pieces to the later prehistoric period rather than the Mesolithic, although as stray finds, unrelated to archaeological features, no further interpretation is possible.

#### 3.2.5.3 Roman

At 120m (10m north of Feature 1), a single piece of weathered Roman tile (*tegula*) was recovered from the spoil.

## 3.3 Environmental report

10-litre samples were taken for environmental processing from contexts 21 and 22. Context 21 provided an organic and mollusc sample, which were analysed for species only.

### 3.3.1 Environmental results

9 plant species and 2 mollusc species were recorded from context 21.

The plant assemblage included 2 true aquatic species;

*Potamogeton* spp, (pond weed)  
*Ranunculus Batrachium* gp (stonewort)

and 7 semi-aquatic species;  
*Alisma* spp, (water plantain)  
*Ranunculus sceleratus*, (celery-leaved crowfoot)  
*Ranunculus Batrachium*, (crowfoot)  
*Elocharis* spp, (spike-rush)  
*Menyanthes trifoliata*, (bogbean)  
*Juncus* spp, (rush)  
*Mentha* spp (mint)

The molluscs included *Bithynia* sp and *Valvata* sp, both freshwater species.

The environmental assemblage broadly suggests this layer was once part of the shallow margins of a slow-moving river. Whether this is part of the former course of the River Adur, a separate tributary or one of the deep streams 'known from historical evidence,' (Holden, 1975, 104,) is unclear. This study shows there is potential for useful environmental data to be collected if further work is undertaken in the area.



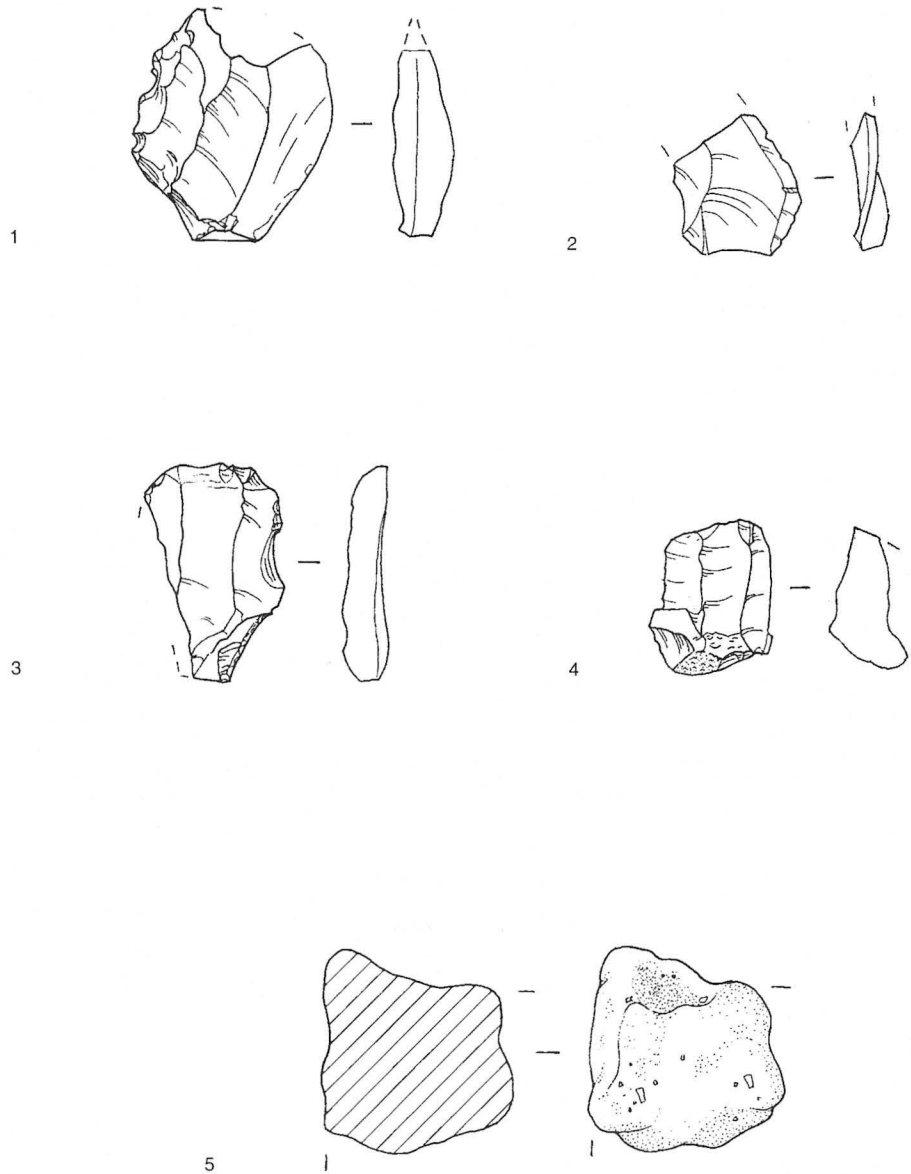


Fig 10 Worked flint and possible hearth fragment illustrated at 1:2

## 4 Potential of archaeology

### 4.1 Significance of the data

#### 4.1.1 Prehistoric

Previous finds on the edge of local gravel terraces have been recorded from the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic periods. Although the evidence for worked flint locally appears sparse this may be a result of a limited number of recorded finds.

Raised gravel terraces remaining clear of the floodplain, despite changes in sea levels and the course of the River Adur, may have provided areas of dry ground, or seasonally dry ground, in the river valley attractive to exploitation by prehistoric populations. In respect of the current investigation, the worked flints recovered suggest (?later) prehistoric activity and are of limited local significance.

#### 4.1.2 Roman

The recovery of a weathered fragment of Roman tile is consistent with evidence of Roman activity in the general area and is of limited local significance.

#### 4.1.3 Medieval

It is clear that the construction and demolition of the railway in the southern part of the cable route has destroyed much of the evidence for the medieval salting industry though there may be better survival in the vicinity of the route. The spread of ashy silt, if medieval, (found closer to the river than the features recorded in 1996) shows that despite the local disturbances, evidence for the medieval salting industry is still potentially present. Previous excavation revealed buried hearths associated with the industry, but little dating evidence was recovered.

The industry is thought to have declined at the end of the fourteenth century due to a combination of rising sea levels and inundation of the estuary and deterioration in the economy, (Holden 1981) although Ridgeway suggests the industry continued or resumed in the later 15th century (Ridgeway 2000.) It is possible that the clay fragments recorded in this watching brief and tentatively identified as relating to the industry (DD2, SF2) were redeposited by riverine action associated with such sea level change. The medieval finds, in this context, can be seen to be of local significance.

#### 4.1.4 Post-medieval

Evidence of post-medieval activity potentially consisted of boundary and/or drainage ditches, land drains and features relating to the railway. These are of limited local significance.

#### **4.1.5 Undated Environmental**

The effects of coastal change over time on the River Adur valley have had a major impact on both local settlement patterns and industry, such as salt production. The recovery of environmental evidence relating to a freshwater feature buried beneath the floodplain adds to the geo-archaeological evidence recovered from previous investigations. The evidence is of local significance.

#### **4.2 Potential for further analysis**

Given the quantity and limited significance of the findings there is no potential for further analysis, however given the good preservation of the environmental material and the potential for buried landscapes beneath the alluvium, any future archaeological investigations in the area may wish to include a geoarchaeological investigation and/or environmental sampling strategy, with an aim to gaining more information about the changes to the local landscape over time.

## 5 Conclusions

This excavation was carried out in close proximity to and, at times probably within the easement of, a previous excavation and within an area where the removal of mounds by, and subsequent destruction and levelling of the railway embankment have also had an impact. Although the methodology used in this excavation resulted in limited damage to archaeological remains, the narrow trench width combined with a lack of topsoil stripping hindered interpretation of features. Excavations located away from the railway embankment proved that, despite only limited evidence for the medieval salting industry within them, the area still has potential for the survival of buried features and useful environmental data. Despite the limitations of the watching brief, it was a worthwhile exercise in establishing the extent of previous disturbance and areas of possible survival.

## 6 Publication and archiving

Information on the results of the excavation will be made publicly available by means of a database in digital form to permit inclusion of the site data in any future academic researches into the development of the area. The site archive containing original records and finds will be stored at the Museum of London prior to deposition with an appropriate recipient archive.

In view of the limited potential of the material (Section 4.2) and the relatively limited significance of the data (Section 4.1) it is suggested that a short note on the results of the watching brief should appear in *Sussex Past and Present*.

## 7 Acknowledgements

MoLAS would like to thank EDF Energy for commission the archaeological investigation and this report and Keith Bartlett of that organisation for his advice and assistance. The author would like to Mr John Veares and the Murphy Construction site team for their assistance during the fieldwork.

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## 9 NMR OASIS archaeological report form

### 9.1 OASIS ID: molas1-41075

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**Project details**

Project name                      Steyning to Beeding - new EDF cable route

Short description of the project      A watching brief was carried out on the route of a new 132Kv cable trench running between Steyning Grid and the Southern Cross to Worthing Overhead Line. The cable followed the route of a disused railway track running along the A283 and through fields previously used for medieval salt reclamation in the River Adur valley. The salt mounds had previously been removed, but an archaeological watching brief carried out in 1996 by South Eastern Archaeology Services for an adjacent cable excavation had recorded evidence of hearths associated with salt production below the ground surface. As work progressed it became clear that some sections of the new cable trench were excavated within the easement of the previous excavation. Despite this, four pieces of prehistoric worked flint and a piece of Roman building material were recovered from topsoil close to the junction with the Steyning Bypass A piece of heat-treated clay, and a thin spread of ashy silt, which may be associated with the medieval salt production industry were recorded close to where in-situ hearths had been recorded in 1996.

Project dates                      Start: 30-07-2007 End: 19-03-2008

Previous/future work      No

Any project codes associated with reference codes      WX-SBE07 - Sitecode

Type of project                      Recording project

Site status                      None

Current Land use                      Cultivated Land 1 - Minimal cultivation

Monument type                      DITCH Uncertain

Monument type                      SALTERN Medieval

Significant Finds TILE Roman

Significant Finds LITHIC IMPLEMENT Late Prehistoric

Significant Finds BRIQUETAGE Medieval

Investigation type 'Watching Brief'

Prompt Voluntary/self-interest

**Project location**

Country England

Site location WEST SUSSEX HORSHAM BRAMBER Steyning to Beeding new EDF cable route

Study area 2.00 Kilometres

Site coordinates TQ 18354 11759 50.8926093132 -0.316985508289 50 53 33 N  
000 19 01 W Line

Site coordinates TQ 19558 08896 50.8666239796 -0.300808970760 50 51 59 N  
000 18 02 W Line

**Project creators**

Name of MoLAS  
Organisation

Project originator brief EDF Energy

Project originator design MoLAS

Project director/manager Robin Nielsen

Project supervisor Gabby Rapson

Type of Electricity Authority/Company  
sponsor/funding body

Name of EDF Energy  
sponsor/funding  
body

**Project archives**

Physical Archive No  
Exists?

Digital Archive To be designated  
recipient

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Paper Archive To be designated  
recipient

Paper Archive ID WX-SBE07

**Project  
bibliography 1**

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