

West Hoathly Brickworks Phase 2 (Part 11) Sharpthorne West Sussex

Archaeological Watching Brief



for Ibstock Brick Limited

CA Project: 2151 CA Report: 16463

October 2016



West Hoathly Brickworks Phase 2 (Part 11) Sharpthorne West Sussex

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Document Control Grid							
Revision	Date	Author	Checked by	Status	Reasons for revision	Approved by	
А	04.10.2016	Jay Wood	DDR	Internal review	Edits	REG	
В	11.10.2016	Jay Wood	DDR	Draft		REG	

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SUMMARY

Project Name: West Hoathly Brickworks Phase 2 (Part 11)

Location: Sharpthorne, West Sussex

NGR: TQ 3763 3286

Type: Watching Brief

Date: 8-16 August 2016

Planning Reference: HO/36/98

Location of Archive: To be deposited with East Grinstead Museum

Site Code: WHS 16

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology as part of the latest phase of works associated with the extension of the clay quarry at West Hoathly Brickworks, Sharpthorne, West Sussex. The work formed part of the Phase 2 (Part 11) Extraction and followed on from archaeological work undertaken during the Phase 2 (Parts 1–10) Extraction.

Five minepits identified during a previous phase of works were investigated and an additional ten minepits were identified. All were similar to those identified previously on the site and are likely to have been the result of medieval iron ore and/or clay extraction. A clay extraction (marl) pit was also identified.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In August 2016 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief for Ibstock Brick Ltd at West Hoathly Brickworks, Sharpthorne, West Sussex (centred on NGR: TQ 3763 3286; Fig. 1). The programme of archaeological recording formed part of ongoing archaeological work required to fulfil a condition attached to planning consent for an extension to the clay quarry attached to the brickworks (planning ref.: HO/36/98). The objective of this phase of the watching brief was to investigate the bases of mine pits identified during previous phases of archaeological recording, attempt to establish the levels to which they were cut and to record all archaeological remains exposed during the development.
- 1.2 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a *brief* for archaeological recording prepared by Mr John Mills, Archaeologist for West Sussex County Council Economic and Environmental Policy Service (WSCCEEPS), the archaeological advisor to the Local Planning Authority (LPA), and with a subsequent detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2003) and approved by the LPA acting on the advice of Mr Mills. The fieldwork also followed *Standard and guidance: Archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014), the *Recommended Standard Conditions for Archaeological Fieldwork, Recording and Post-Excavation Work (Development Control), Version 2b* issued by WSCCEEPS and the *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (English Heritage 1991), the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (EH 2006). It was monitored by John Mills.

The site

1.3 The current works comprise the Phase 2 (Part 11) Extraction areas (approximately 0.44ha in total) and follow on from the Phase 1 (CA 2001b) and Phase 2 (Parts 1–10) Extraction areas reported on previously (CA 2004a, 2004b, 2006, 2007a, 2007b, 2010, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015). Additionally a watching brief was carried out in 2011 by CA during ground reduction for clay extraction of the Phase 2, Part 6 area previously stripped; no further archaeological remains were encountered in this area. The site lies at approximately 140m AOD and comprises an area of former pasture which occupies a gentle north-facing slope and part of the eastern area of Mare Pit Wood (Fig. 2).

1.4 The underlying geology of the area is mapped as Wadhurst Clay Formation Mudstone and Ironstone overlying Ashdown Beds Sandstones (BGS 2010). A yellow clay substrate overlaying interbedded ironstone deposits was exposed during the groundworks.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Introduction

2.1 The general background to the archaeological works at the quarry has been outlined elsewhere (e.g. CAT 1999a) and it is not intended to fully repeat that information here. The results of the previous programmes of archaeological recording (Phase 1 and Phase 2 (Parts 1 to 10); Fig. 2) are summarised below.

Prehistoric

2.2 Three flint flakes and a scraper were identified during the Phase 1 Extraction (CAT 2001b), a flint fabricator and an unutilised flake were identified during the Phase 2 (Part 4) Extraction (CA 2007a) and sixteen fragments of flint blades, cores and debitage during the Phase 2 (Part 7) Extraction (CA 2012). All were unstratified and date to the Late Neolithic to Early Bronze Age. A single flint flake of probable Early Neolithic or Mesolithic date was recovered from the topsoil during Phase 2 (Part 6) Extraction (CA 2010) and sixteen fragments of flint blades, cores and debitage were recovered from the subsoil during the Phase 3 (Part 7) Extraction broadly dated to the prehistoric period.

Medieval

An evaluation prior to the Phase 1 Extraction identified several undated features including a stone-filled ditch, a posthole and a pit containing burnt material (CAT 1999b). The ditch was fully exposed during a subsequent programme of archaeological recording, along with a number of pits and postholes to its east (CAT 2001b). Medieval pottery, dateable to the 11th to 14th centuries, was recovered from these features. They also contained iron slag, burnt sandstone and fired clay likely to have derived from the walls of a charcoal-fired furnace, although no *in situ* furnace structures were identified (ibid.).

- 2.4 Within the Phase 2 Extraction area, visible earthworks within Mare Pit Wood were archaeologically surveyed (CAT 2000 and CAT 2001a) and an archaeological evaluation was undertaken within the northern part of the wood (CAT 2000). This work showed that the earthworks are likely to have been the remains of infilled iron minepits and associated spoil heaps. These are presumed to be medieval on the basis of evidence obtained during the excavation of similar minepits within the quarry in the 1980s (Worssam and Swift 1987).
- 2.5 A large number of these pits were exposed during the Phase 2 (Parts 4 to 10) Extraction works, with the northernmost extent of the pits along and above the 140m contour (CA 2007a, 2007b, 2010, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015; Fig. 3). A northwest/south-east aligned ditch which was tentatively dated to the medieval period due to the similarity in its fill to that of the medieval minepits, was identified within the north-western part of the Phase 2 (Part 10) extraction area. Beyond the wood, the foundations of a timber building were present, along with several pits (CA 2007a). These features were associated with a small amount of medieval pottery and had been backfilled with iron-processing waste likely to have derived from iron furnaces. At least one iron-smelting furnace pit, apparently partially protected by a shelter or windbreak, was exposed within the Phase 2 (Part 5) Extraction area (CA 2007b). Other slag-filled pits and postholes were present close to the furnace pit. A single hearth pit was revealed during Phase 2 (Part 6) Extraction groundworks (CA 2010) and two further possible hearth pits were identified during Phase 2 (Part 7) Extraction groundworks (CA 2012) all containing charcoal rich fills. It remains to be seen if these features represent an outlier of iron ore processing activity associated with the timber building or to as yet unexposed activity to the east.

Post-medieval

- 2.6 The evaluation and survey identified substantial post-medieval clay extraction (marl) pits and associated trackways and drainage channels within Mare Pit Wood. These, as well as additional marl pits, were exposed during the Phase 2 (Parts 1, 4, 8, 9 and 10) Extraction (CA 2004a, CA 2007a, 2013, 2014 and 2015; Fig. 3).
- 2.7 During Phase 2 (Part 6) Extraction groundworks (CA 2010) a north-east/south-west aligned ditch thought to be a post-medieval/modern field boundary was revealed which extended into the Phase 2 (Part 7) Extraction area and, along with a shallow parallel ditch only observed within the Phase 2 (Part 7) Extraction area, formed a north-east/south-west aligned trackway thought to have been used in the

transportation of extracted clay away from the marl pits (CA 2012). Additional partially extant ditches were also revealed within the Phase 2 (Parts 8 and 9) Extraction areas, again, most likely relating to post-medieval/modern field boundaries (CA 2013 and 2014).

- A pit containing charcoal and iron smelting slag was also identified during the Phase 2 (Part 1) Extraction. Although the pit remained undated, the slag was dated on typological grounds to the early post-medieval period (CA 2004a).
- 2.9 A dumping deposit along the edge of the marl pit to the south was observed. The deposit appeared to be extending eastward beyond the limit of excavation for Phase 2 (Part 6) (CA 2010; Fig. 3).

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The objectives of the archaeological works were:
 - to monitor groundworks, and to identify, investigate and record all significant buried archaeological deposits revealed on the site during the course of the development groundworks;
 - at the conclusion of the project, to produce an integrated archive for the project work and a report setting out the results of the project and the archaeological conclusions that can be drawn from the recorded data.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 The 2016 fieldwork followed the methodology set out within the WSI and subsequent amendments (CA 2003 and 2006). An archaeologist was present during intrusive groundworks, comprising two areas, Area 1 and Area 3, in which the topsoil and subsoil were removed, and a further area, Area 2, in which the extraction face and an area of ground at its base were cleaned back to investigate the depth of minepits identified in Phases 2(9) and 2 (10) of archaeological recording (Figs. 2-4). Due to the 6m plus height of the extraction face in Areas 1 and 2, health and safety considerations prevented full access to the features identified within it and it was

only possible to investigate and record those parts of the features which could be safely accessed from ground level. All groundworks were carried out using a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless bucket.

- 4.2 Area 1 was located at the western end of the Phase 2 (Part 10) Extraction area and was approximately 0.15ha in size, measuring 70m in length and a maximum of 32m in width (Figs. 2-4). Area 2 was approximately 0.03ha in size, located along the north face of the Phase 2 (Part 10) Extraction area and measured 22m in length and 15m in width (Figs. 2-4). Area 3 was located at the north-eastern end of the Phase 2 (Part 10) Extraction area and was approximately 0.26ha in size, measuring a maximum of 116m in length and 35m in width (Figs. 2-4).
- 4.3 Where archaeological deposits were encountered written, graphic and photographic records were compiled in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual*.
- The archive and artefacts from the evaluation are currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble and will be deposited with East Grinstead Museum. A summary of information from this project set out within Appendix B will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

5. RESULTS (FIGS 2-8)

Area 1

- 5.1 The natural geological substrate 1202 consisting of yellow clay was revealed at an average depth of 0.3m below present ground level (bpgl). This was overlain by patchy brown silty clay subsoil 1201 averaging 0.12m in thickness, which was in turn sealed by topsoil 1200 consisting of grey brown silty clay averaging 0.24m in thickness.
- 5.2 A total of twelve minepits were recorded during the groundworks, all measuring between approximately 2m and 9m in diameter and filled with redeposited blue grey clay from which no finds were recovered (Figs 4, 5 and 8). They formed a continuation of the pits identified within the Phase 2 (Parts 4 to 10) Extraction groundworks (Figs. 2-4). In accordance with the agreed WSI, the identified minepits remained unexcavated due to their anticipated depth. Two minepits which could be

seen in the south facing section of the extraction face, 1208 and 1210 (Figs. 4 and 8), were given individual context numbers as it was possible to examine them in section but due to the similarity between the remaining unexcavated minepits and their fills a single context number was issued to the cuts, 1203, and to the fills, 1204. No datable material was recovered.

- 5.3 The access constraints previously mentioned prevented a robust investigation of pits 1208 and 1210 although it was possible to ascertain their approximate dimensions and, in the case of 1210, undertake limited investigation at its base. Pit 1208 was filled by redeposited blue grey clay 1209 and had concave sides and a broadly flat base. It measured 2.1m in depth and was at least 5.36m in width and 4.25m in length. It was not sufficiently deep to have reached the ironstone deposits observed within the extraction face and is likely to have been a pit for the extraction of clay.
- Pit 1210 was somewhat irregular in form; it measured approximately 6.4m in depth, was at least 2.71m in width and in section appeared to comprise a somewhat irregular but broadly straight sided shaft approximately 4m in height which terminated in a slightly irregular bell-shape approximately 2.4m high (Fig. 8). It contained fills, 1211 and 1212, both of which consisted of redeposited blue grey clay containing substantial inclusions of fragmented ironstone. Although no dateable material was recovered from 1210 it has been provisionally dated to the medieval period on the basis of its similarity to medieval features investigated elsewhere nearby (Worssam and Swift 1987).

Area 2

- 5.5 In Area 2, which lay within the zone stripped during the Phase 2 (Part 9) groundworks, natural substrate 1300, comprising yellow clay averaging 1.1m in thickness, sealed clay deposits 1301 and 1302 which measured approximately 1.2m and 0.27m in thickness respectively. These clay deposits overlay ironstone deposits 1303, 1304, 1305 and 1312 which were identified lying between 2.6m and 6.8m bpgl. Deposit 1312, a solid band consisting of substantial ironstone, was observed at approximately 6.8m bpgl and formed the limit of excavation within the cleaned back area. No features were observed within this deposit.
- 5.6 Three minepits were identified within the extraction face section, 1306, 1308 and 1310 (Fig. 4, 6 and 7). The access constraints previously mentioned prevented a robust investigation of these features which were in excess of two metres above the

ground level at the bottom of the section, although it was possible to ascertain their approximate dimensions and, in the case of 1308, undertake a limited investigation at its base. All three pits cut natural substrate 1300 and were filled with redeposited blue grey clay from which no finds were recovered. Pit 1306 was notably smaller in size than the other two pits, bell-shaped in section and measured approximately 2m in width and depth. It did not impact upon any deposits containing ironstone and it appeared likely that it represented a clay extraction pit.

- 5.7 Pits 1308 and 1310 were, in section, bell-shaped and measured approximately 3m in width and 4m in depth. The bases of both pits were located at approximately 4m bpgl and lay within deposit 1303, a thick band comprised of thin layers of fragmented ironstone. Further cleaning and test excavation of 1308 confirmed that the base was at approximately 4m bpgl (Fig. 7).
- 5.8 No features were identified following cleaning back of the area at the base of the extraction face.

Area 3

- 5.6 Within Area 3 natural substrate 1401, comprising yellow clay, was revealed at an average depth of 0.35m b.p.g.l. This was overlain by subsoil 1401 comprising brown silty clay averaging 0.11m in thickness which was in turn sealed by topsoil 1200 consisting of grey brown silty clay averaging 0.24m in thickness.
- 5.8 No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks within this area. Three pieces of flint were recovered from subsoil 1401.

6. THE FINDS

6.1 Artefactual material was hand-recovered from one subsoil deposit. The recovered material dates to the prehistoric period. Quantities of the artefact types recorded are given in Appendix B.

Lithics

Two residual worked flints (a blade and a core) were retrieved from subsoil 1401.

The core was a dual-platform type which had been used to produce a few small

flakes. A recorticated flake scar indicated that this item had been reused, after having been worked earlier in the prehistoric period. The blade was thin, regular and missing its distal end. Blade technology is most typical of the Mesolithic and Early Neolithic periods.

7. DISCUSSION

- 7.1 The infilled minepits identified and investigated during the current phase of groundworks show a continuation of the extraction activity recorded along and above the 140m contour line throughout the Phase 2 Extraction areas (see section 2.5 above).
- 7.2 The results of the fieldwork suggest that the infilled minepits are likely to represent a mixture of both clay extraction and the probable medieval iron ore extraction activity identified in previous phases of archaeological recording. This interpretation is supported by the observation that two of the five minepits which could be investigated in section were not of sufficient depth to have reached deposits containing iron ore. The others were considerably deeper, between 4m and 6m in depth, and seem likely to represent probable medieval iron ore extraction on the basis of evidence obtained during the excavation of similar minepits within the quarry in the 1980s (Worssam and Swift 1987).
- 7.3 Within Area 2 the lack of features within the cleaned back area at the base of the extraction face indicated that, within this area at least, many minepits were excavated to a depth of less than 6.8m. This, together with the depths of the pits seen in the extraction face, suggests that the majority of the minepits identified within this area during earlier phases of archaeological recording have been entirely truncated by later clay extraction works.
- 7.4 The extant clay extraction (marl) pit 1205 is further evidence of the later use of the landscape for clay extraction originally identified by the earthwork survey (CAT 2000). However, this pit, and those encountered within Phase 2 parts 8-10 (CA 2013, CA 2014 and CA 2015), are significantly smaller than those identified within the earthwork survey and may represent less intensive clay extraction within the area, either due to the distance from the main area of clay extraction activity to the west or are the result of later opportunistic clay extraction.

7.5 In Area 3 the absence of archaeological features or deposits, the undisturbed nature of the natural substrate and the presence of an in-situ subsoil further support the results of previous phases of archaeological recording, which indicate that the clay and iron ore extraction activities identified throughout the Phase 2 Extraction areas (see section 2.5 above) were largely concentrated in the southern part of the site, along and above the 140m contour line.

8. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Jay Wood. The report was written by Jay Wood. The finds report was written by Jacky Sommerville. The illustrations were prepared by Aleksandra Osinska. The archive has been compiled and prepared for deposition by Jess Cook. The project was managed for CA by Damian DeRosa.

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APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Area	Context No.	Туре	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	Depth/ thickness (m)	Spot- date
1	1200	Layer		topsoil	mid grey brown silty clay, friable	>70	>32	0.24	
1	1201	Layer		subsoil	patchy mid brown silty clay, friable	>70	>32	0.12	
1	1202	Layer		natural substrate	mid yellow clay, firm	>70	>32	>0.4	
1	1203	Cut		mine pit	sub-circular in plan, unexcavated	9.33	2.61		
1	1204	Fill	1203	backfill of mine pit	dark blue grey redeposited clay, unexcavated	9.33	2.61		
1	1205	Cut		marl pit	sub-circular in plan, unexcavated	13.36	10.47		
1	1206	Cut		tree throw	sub-circular in plan, unexcavated	4.28	2.2		
1	1207	Fill	1206	fill of tree throw	mid grey brown silty clay	4.28	2.2		
1	1208	Cut		mine pit	sub-circular in plan, unexcavated	5.36	4.25	2.1	
1	1209	Fill	1208	backfill of mine pit	dark blue grey redeposited clay, unexcavated	5.36	4.25	2.1	
1	1210	Cut		mine pit	sub-circular in plan, unexcavated	>1.25	>2.71	6.4	
1	1211	Fill	1210	backfill of mine pit	dark blue grey redeposited clay, unexcavated	>1.25	>2.71	4.4	
1	1212	Fill	1210	backfill of mine pit	mid blue grey redeposited clay, unexcavated	>1.25	>2.71	2	
2	1300	Layer		natural substrate	mid yellow clay, firm	>21.7	>1.5	1.1	
2	1301	Layer		natural substrate	dark yellow clay, patches of mid blue grey clay	>21.7	>1.5	1.2	
2	1302	Layer		natural substrate	dark orange slightly sandy clay with abundant ironstone fragments	>21.7	>1.5	0.27	
2	1303	Layer		natural substrate	thin layers of fragmented ironstone in brown grey clay matrix	>21.7	>1.5	2.5	
2	1304	Layer		natural substrate	ironstone	>21.7	>1.5	0.3	
2	1305	Layer		natural substrate	ironstone in blue grey clay matrix	>21.7	>1.5	1.2	
2	1306	Cut		cut of mine pit	bell shaped, broadly flat base, not seen in plan, unexcavated		2.08	2.2	
2	1307	Fill	1306	fill of mine pit	dark blue grey redeposited clay, unexcavated		2.08	2.2	
2	1308	Cut		cut of mine pit	bell shaped, broadly flat base, not seen in plan, unexcavated		2.8	3.8	
2	1309	Fill	1308	fill of mine pit	dark blue grey redeposited clay, unexcavated		2.8	3.8	
2	1310	Cut		cut of mine pit	bell shaped, broadly flat base, not seen in plan, unexcavated		3.2	4	
2	1311	Fill	1310	fill of mine pit	dark blue grey redeposited clay, unexcavated	_	3.2	4	
2	1312	Layer		natural substrate	bedded ironstone with occasional patches grey blue clay	>21.7	>1.5	>0.2	
3	1400	Layer		topsoil	mid grey brown silty clay, friable	>116	>35	0.23	
3	1401	Layer		subsoil	mid brown silty clay, friable	>116	>35	0.11	
3	1402	Layer		natural substrate	mid yellow clay, firm	>116	>35	>0.15	
3	1403	Cut		cut of modern pit	Sub-ovoid, not excavated	1.03	1.35	>0.06	Modern
3	1404	Fill	1403	fill of modern pit	Grey black silty clay with abundant brick and occasional plastic	1.03	1.35	>0.06	Modern

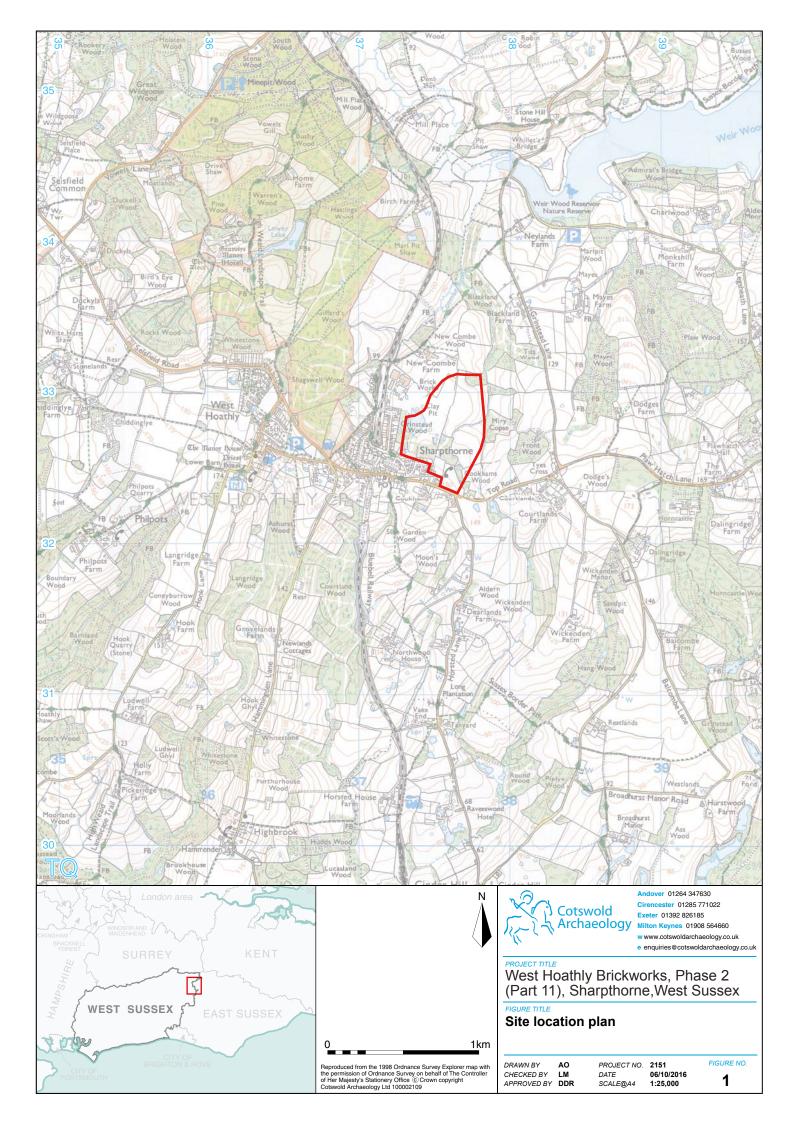
APPENDIX B: THE FINDS

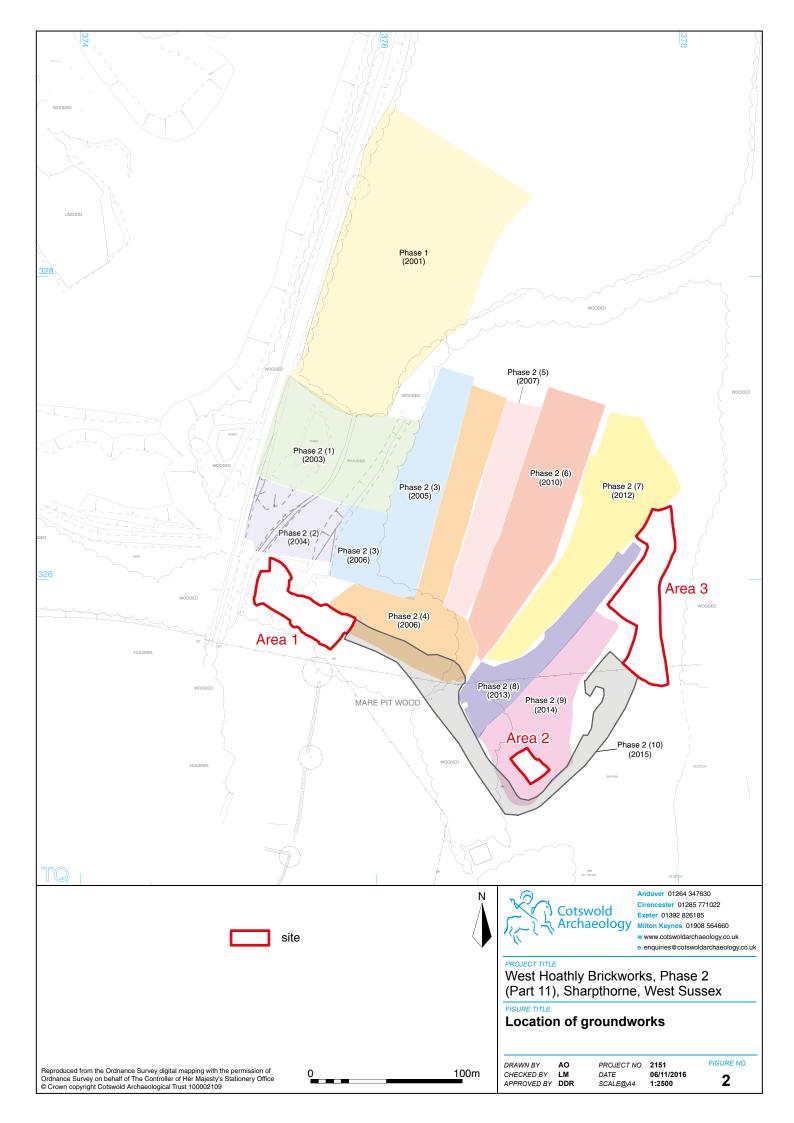
Context	Category	Description	Count	Weight (g)	Spot-date
1401	Worked flint	Blade, core	2	19	-

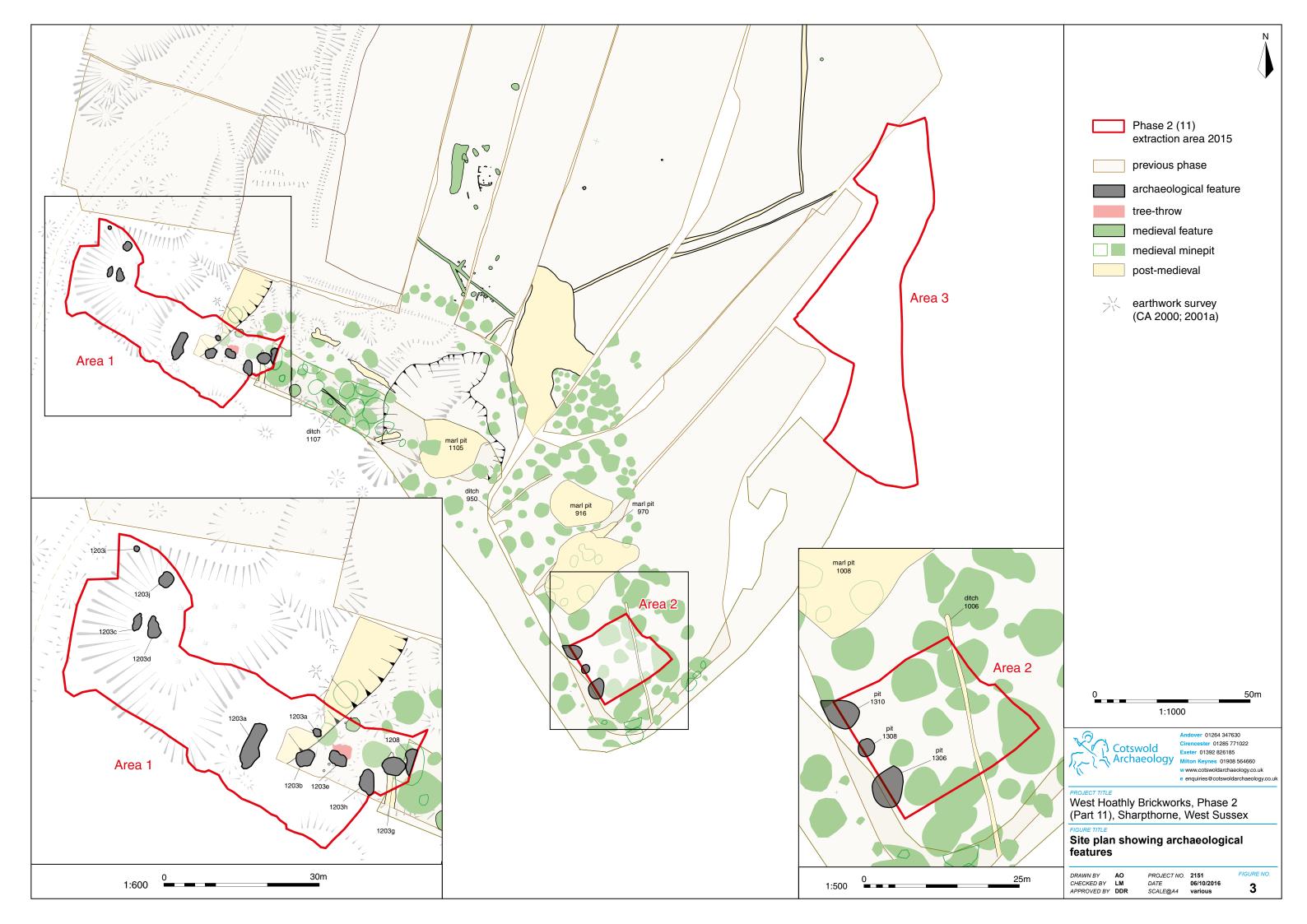
APPENDIX C: OASIS REPORT FORM

Project Name	West Hoathly Brickworks Phase 2 (Part West Sussex	West Hoathly Brickworks Phase 2 (Part 11), Sharpthorne, West Sussex				
Short description	An archaeological watching brief was	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold				
	Archaeology as part of the latest phas	se of works associated with				
	the extension of the clay quarry at	•				
	Sharpthorne, West Sussex. The work	formed part of the Phase 2				
	(Part 11) Extraction and followed on	from archaeological work				
	undertaken during the Phase 2 (Parts 1	–10) Extraction.				
	Five minepits identified during a previous phase of works wer					
	investigated and an additional ten mine	pits were identified. All were				
	similar to those identified previously o					
	have been the result of medieval iron of	•				
	clay extraction (marl) pit was also identi	•				
	olay ola dedon (man) ph mae also taem					
Project dates						
Project type	Watching Brief	Watching Brief				
Previous work	Ongoing programme of archaeologic Archaeology	Ongoing programme of archaeological recording by Cotswold Archaeology				
Future work	Unknown					
PROJECT LOCATION						
Site Location	West Hoathly Brickworks, Sharpthorne,	West Sussex. RH19 4PB				
Study area (M²/ha)						
Site co-ordinates	TQ 3763 3286					
PROJECT CREATORS						
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology					
Project Brief originator	West Sussex County Council Economi Service	c and Environmental Policy				
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology					
Project Manager	Damian DeRosa	Damian DeRosa				
Project Supervisor	Jay Wood					
MONUMENT TYPE	None					
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None	0				
PROJECT ARCHIVES	Intended final location of archive (museum/Accession no.)	e Content (e.g. pottery animal bone etc)				
Physical	East Grinstead Museum	Flint				
Paper	East Grinstead Museum	Context sheets, trench sheets, photo register,				
Digital	East Grinstead Museum	Digital photos				
BIBLIOGRAPHY						

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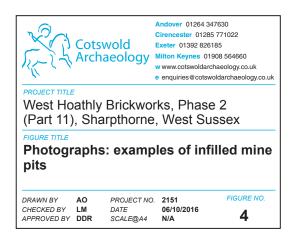




Mine pit 1203j, looking south-east (1m scales)



Mine pit 1203e, looking north (1m scales)

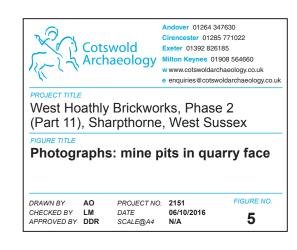




Mine pits 1306, 1308 and 1310, looking west (1m scales)



Mine pits 1306, 1308 and 1310, looking south-west (1m scales)







Andover 01264 347630 Cirencester 01285 771022 Exeter 01392 826185

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West Hoathly Brickworks, Phase 2 (Part 11), Sharpthorne, West Sussex

Photograph: eroded mine pit 1308, looking south-west (0.3 and 1m scales)

DRAWN BY AO
CHECKED BY LM
APPROVED BY DDR

PROJECT NO. 2151

DATE 06/10/2016

SCALE@A4 N/A

FIGURE NO.

6





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PROJECT TITLE

West Hoathly Brickworks, Phase 2 (Part 11), Sharpthorne, West Sussex

FIGURE TITL

Photograph: eroded mine pit 1210, looking north-west (1m scales)

DRAWN BY AO
CHECKED BY LM
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PROJECT NO. 2151

DATE 06/10/2016

SCALE@A4 N/A

FIGURE NO.

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