

**West Hoathly Brickworks Phase 2 (Part 9)
Sharpthorne
West Sussex**

Archaeological Watching Brief



for
Ibstock Brick Limited


CA Project: 2151
CA Report: 14110

March 2014

West Hoathly Brickworks Phase 2 (Part 9)
Sharpthorne
West Sussex

Archaeological Watching Brief

CA Project: 2151
CA Report: 14110

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SUMMARY

Project Name:	West Hoathly Brickworks Phase 2 (Part 8)
Location:	Sharpthorne, West Sussex
NGR:	TQ 3763 3286
Type:	Watching Brief
Date:	11 & 12 March 2014
Planning Reference:	HO/36/98
Location of Archive:	To be deposited with East Grinstead Museum
Site Code:	WHS 14

A programme of archaeological recording 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 9) Extraction and followed on from archaeological work undertaken during the Phase 2 (Parts 1–8) Extraction.

Forty-eight minepits were identified, similar to those identified previously on the site and likely have been the result of medieval iron ore extraction. An extant clay extraction (marl) pit was identified, and a probable drainage ditch, relating to post-medieval clay extraction on the site.



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In March 2014 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 the watching brief was 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 the *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (IfA 2009), 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).

The site

- 1.3 The current works comprise the Phase 2 (Part 9) Extraction and follow on from the Phase 1 (CA 2001b) and Phase 2 (Parts 1–8) Extraction reported on previously and located immediately to the west of the current works (CA 2004a, 2004b, 2006, 2007a, 2007b, 2010, 2012 and 2013). 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 was exposed during the groundworks.

Archaeological background

Introduction

- 1.5 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 8); Fig. 2) are summarised below.

Prehistoric

- 1.6 Three flint flakes and a scraper were identified during the Phase 1 Extraction (CAT 2001b), a flint fabricator, 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 3 (Part 7) Extraction. 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

- 1.7 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.).
- 1.8 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).

- 1.9 A large number of these pits were exposed during the Phase 2 (Parts 4 to 7) Extraction works, with the northernmost extent of the pits following the 140m contour (CA 2007a, 2007b, 2010, 2012 and 2013; Fig. 3). 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

- 1.10 The evaluation and survey identified substantial post-medieval clay extraction (marl) pits and associated trackways and drainage channels within Mare Pit Wood. These were exposed during the Phase 2 (Parts 1 and 4) Extraction (CA 2004a and CA 2007a; Fig. 3). 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 the 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).
- 1.11 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).
- 1.12 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).

Archaeological objectives

1.13 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.

Methodology

1.14 The 2014 fieldwork followed the methodology set out within the WSI (CA 2003). An archaeologist was present during intrusive groundworks, comprising the removal of the topsoil and subsoil using a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless bucket across an area measuring approximately 140m in length and 56m in width (Fig. 2).

1.15 Where archaeological deposits were encountered written, graphic and photographic records were compiled in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual* (2013).

1.16 The archive and artefacts from the evaluation are currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the artefacts will be deposited with East Grinstead Museum along with the site archive. 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.

2. RESULTS (FIGS 2-5)

2.1 The natural geological substrate, 902, consisting of a light blue-yellow clay was revealed throughout the site at an average depth of 0.3m below present ground level.



Medieval

- 2.2 A total of forty-three minepits, all filled with a blue-grey redeposited natural clay, were revealed during groundworks, measuring between approximately 3m and 13m in diameter (Figs 3 and 5). The minepits were concentrated in the southern end of the extraction area and form a continuation of the pits identified within the Phase 2 (Parts 4 to 8) Extraction groundworks. Although no dateable material was recovered from the features assigned to the medieval period, they have been so dated on the basis of their similarity to medieval features investigated elsewhere nearby (Worssam and Swift 1987). In accordance with the agreed WSI, all remained unexcavated due to their anticipated depth. Due to the similarity between all the minepits and their fills a single context number was issued each to the cuts 1004 and the fills, 1003.

Post-medieval/modern

- 2.3 A extant ditch 1006 ran on a north/south alignment for 40m into the southern part of the excavation area before terminating. The ditch cut across the fills of six of the medieval minepits. It was partially backfilled by a single basal fill, 1005, which comprised a dark greyish-brown redeposited topsoil and contained timber from recent tree felling activities in this part of the site.
- 2.4 A partially backfilled clay extraction (marl) pit, 1008, was identified in the south-western of the Phase 2 (Part 9) Extraction area, within Mare Pit Wood. Following the removal of the basal fill 1007 it was apparent that marl pit 1008 was cutting through the fills of eleven of the medieval minepits.

3. DISCUSSION

- 3.2 The forty-three infilled minepits revealed during the groundworks show a continuation of the probable medieval iron ore extraction activity along the 140m contour line recorded throughout the Phase 2 Extraction areas (see paragraph 1.9 above).
- 3.3 The extant clay extraction (marl) pit 1008 is further evidence of the later use of the landscape for clay extraction originally identified by the earthwork survey (CAT 2000). However these pits are significantly smaller than those identified within the earthwork survey and 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 result of later opportunistic clay extraction.

- 3.4 The extant ditch 1006 in the southern part of the Phase 2 (Part 9) Extraction area appears to form a drainage ditch running through Mare Pit Wood and into the former pasture to the north-east. It is likely that the purpose of the ditch is to drain the marl pits within Mare Pit Wood as deliberately cut stream channels were identified during the earthwork survey (CAT 2000; 2001a).

4. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Tom Weavill, who also wrote the report. The illustrations were prepared by Aleksandra Osinska. The archive has been compiled by Tom Weavill, and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Mark Collard

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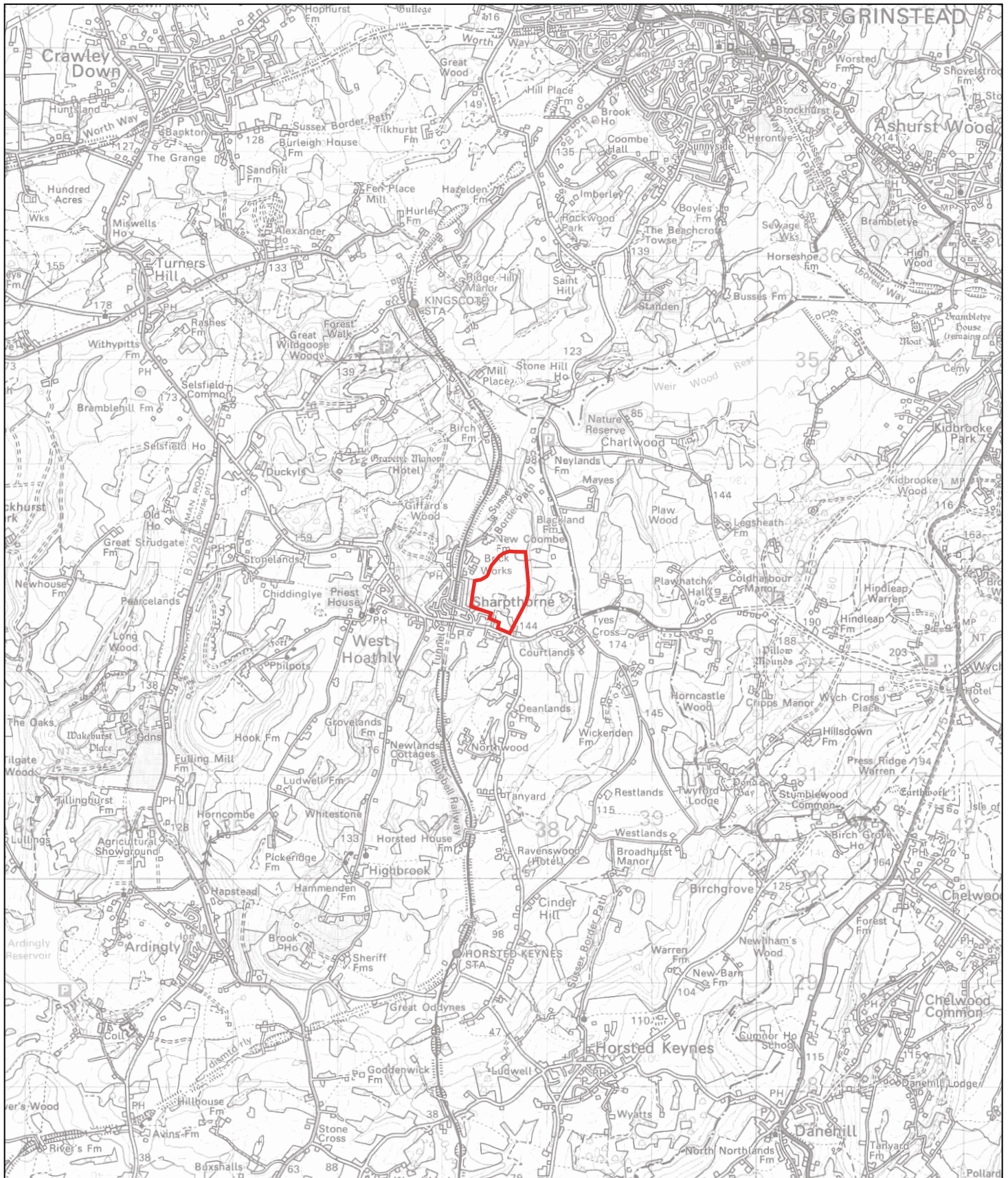


APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Context No.	Type	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	Length (m)	Width/diameter (m)	Depth/thickness (m)
1000	Layer		Topsoil	Light greyish-brown silty clay	>140	>56	0.20
1001	Layer		Subsoil	Mid brown silty clay	>140	>56	0.10
1002	Layer		Natural substrate	Yellow clay			
1003	Fill	1004	Fills of mine pits	Mid blue redeposited clay natural, unexcavated		3 to13	
1004	Cut		Minepits	Sub-circular in plan, unexcavated		3 to13	
1005	Fill	1006	Basal fill of ditch	Dark greyish-brown redeposited topsoil, unexcavated	40	0.6	>0.5
1006	Cut		Ditch	Extant drainage ditch, straight linear.	40	0.6	>0.5
1007	Fill	1008	Basal fill of marl pit	Dark greyish brown redeposited topsoil	30	12	2
1008	Cut		Marl pit	Sub-oval in plan	30	12	2

APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project Name	West Hoathly Brickworks Phase 2 (Part 9), Sharpthorne, West Sussex.	
Short description (250 words maximum)	<p>A programme of archaeological recording 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 9) Extraction and followed on from archaeological work undertaken during the Phase 2 (Parts 1–8) Extraction.</p> <p>Forty-eight minepits were identified, similar to those identified previously on the site and likely have been the result of medieval iron ore extraction. An extant clay extraction (marl) pit was identified, and a probable drainage ditch, relating to post-medieval clay extraction on the site</p>	
Project dates	11 and 12 March 2014	
Project type (e.g. desk-based, field evaluation etc)	Watching brief	
Previous work (reference to organisation or SMR numbers etc)	Ongoing programme of archaeological recording by Cotswold Archaeology	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site Location	West Hoathly Brickworks, Sharpthorne, West Sussex.	
Study area (M ² /ha)		
Site co-ordinates (8 Fig Grid Reference)	TQ 3763 3286	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	West Sussex County Council Economic and Environmental Policy Service	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Mark Collard	
Project Supervisor	Tom Weavill	
MONUMENT TYPE	None	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None	
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
	Intended final location of archive (museum/Accession no.)	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical	N/A	None
Paper	East Grinstead Museum	Digital photo register, trench sheet
Digital	East Grinstead Museum	Digital photos
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2014 <i>West Hoathly Brickworks Phase 2 (Part 9), Sharpthorne, West Sussex: Archaeological Watching Brief</i> . CA typescript report 14110		



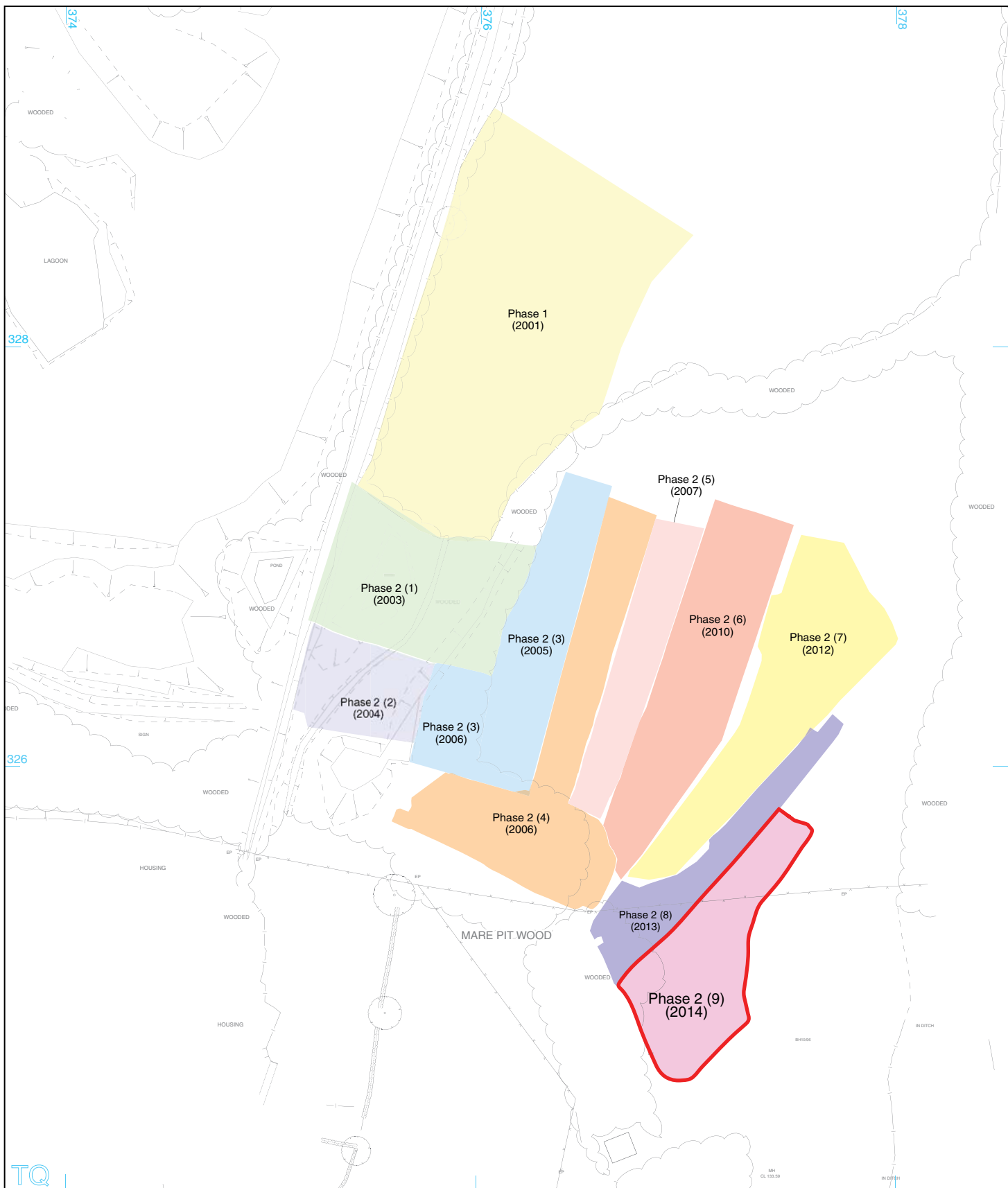
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PROJECT TITLE
 West Hoathly Brickworks, Phase 2
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FIGURE TITLE
 Site location plan

PROJECT NO. 2151	DATE 2/04/2014	FIGURE NO.
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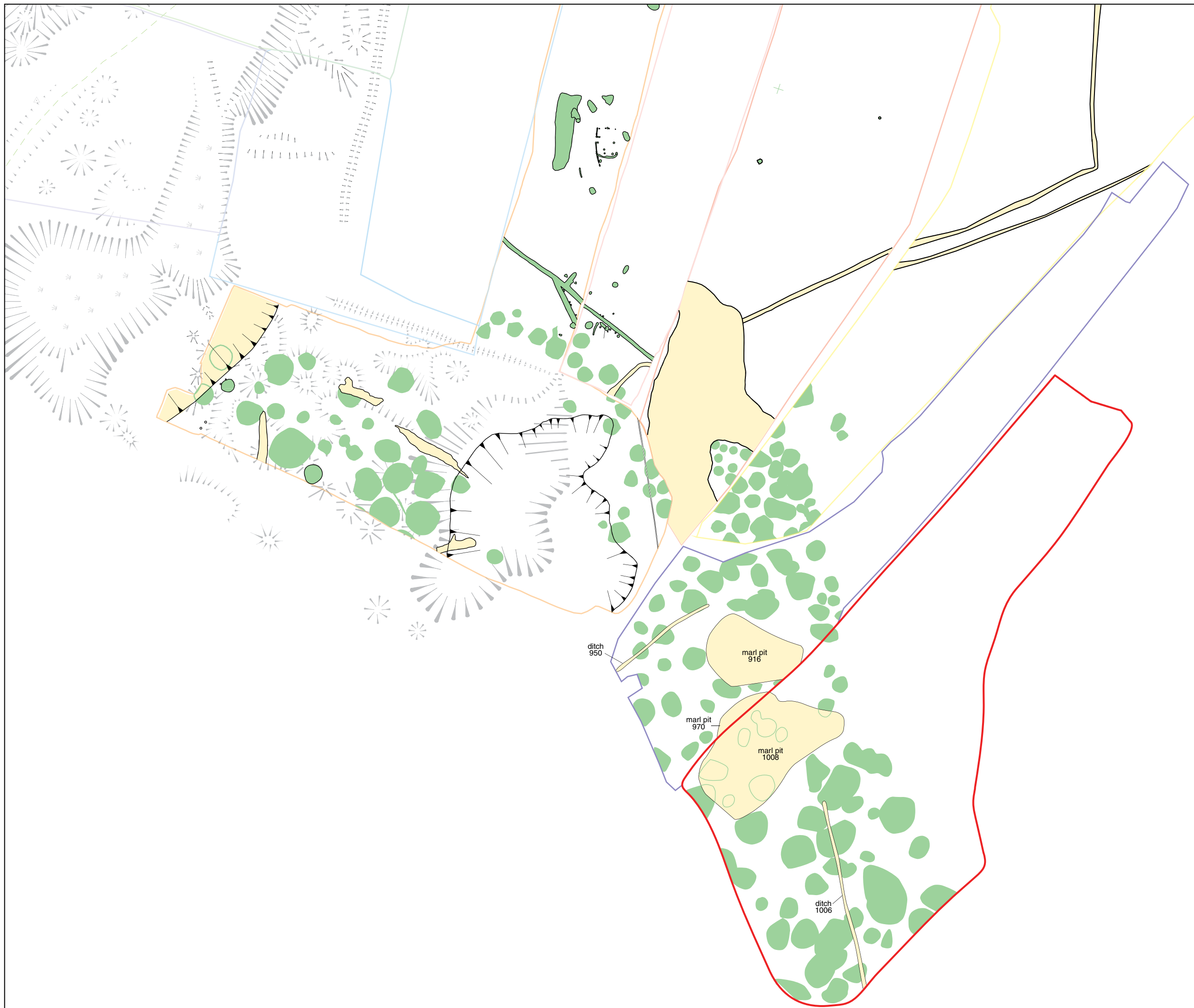
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PROJECT TITLE

West Hoathly Brickworks, Phase 2
 (Part 9), Sharpthorne, West Sussex

FIGURE TITLE

Location of groundworks



- Phase 2 (9) extraction area 2014
- Phase 2 (8) extraction area
- Phase 2 (7) extraction area
- Phase 2 (6) extraction area
- Phase 2 (5) extraction area
- Phase 2 (4) extraction area
- Phase 2 (3) extraction area
- Phase 2 (2) extraction area
- Phase 2 (1) extraction area
- medieval feature
- medieval minepit
- post-medieval
- earthwork survey (CA 2000; 2001 a)



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PROJECT TITLE
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FIGURE TITLE
Site plan



4



5

4 Extent marl pit 1008 looking south-west

5 Example of infilled mine pit looking south (1m scale)



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FIGURE TITLE

Photographs

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FIGURE NO.

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