



# Chris Butler MIFA Archaeological Services



A Desk-based Assessment  
for the proposed site of  
Frant Primary School,  
Church Lane,  
Frant,  
East Sussex

by  
Chris Butler

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### ***Summary***

*An archaeological Desk-based Assessment has been carried out on Glebe land adjacent to Church Lane, Frant, which has been allocated for a new primary school.*

*The desk-based assessment has established that the field in which the new school is to be built has not been the subject of any development or other land use during the 160 years since the Tithe map. There is significant archaeological activity in the surrounding area dating from the Mesolithic period through to the Post Medieval period, and therefore it is likely that the proposed development will disturb or destroy any buried archaeology.*

# **Chris Butler MIFA**

## **Archaeological Services**

### **Prehistoric Flintwork Specialist**

Rosedale  
Berwick, Polegate  
East Sussex  
BN26 6TB

Tel & fax: 01323 871021

e mail: [chris@reltub.fsbusiness.co.uk](mailto:chris@reltub.fsbusiness.co.uk)

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Front Cover: Frant C of E Primary School, High Street.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Chris Butler Archaeological Services has been commissioned by Hazle McCormack Young LLP for East Sussex County Council to carry out an Archaeological Desk-based Assessment of the proposed site for the new primary school at Frant, East Sussex, in order to establish the likely presence and importance of any archaeological remains that may be affected by the proposed construction, as part of an initial feasibility study.
- 1.2 The site for the proposed new primary school is located on the north side of Church Lane centred on TQ 5885 3568 (Fig. 1), which is situated on the northern edge of Frant village. The site is Glebe Land, and is bounded on the east side by three properties, Frant Grange; The Rectory and The Stables, with St Alban's Church to the east of these. To the north there is a sports ground, and on the west side the site is bounded by Frant Road (A267) to Tunbridge Wells.
- 1.3 The site is located at around 174m OD on its east side and slopes gently down to approximately 166m at its south-west side. The site is approximately 1.4ha in size, and is currently mown grass, surrounded by hedge and fence boundaries. There are long-distance views from the field to the north and west, although the views east and south are blocked by the higher ground and Frant village in these directions.
- 1.4 The site is immediately to the north of the Frant Conservation Area (Fig. 2), which extends along Church Lane and includes the properties to the east of the site. The designated park and gardens of Eridge Park is situated on the west side of Frant. The whole area is within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.5 The existing Frant Church of England Primary School (DES6219) is situated in the High Street (TQ 59005 35584), and was originally built in 1852, although subsequently modified and added to. A new site has been allocated in the Local Plan<sup>2</sup> on the Glebe Land off Church Lane for a replacement primary school to replace the inadequate existing premises.
- 1.6 The parish of Frant was originally partly in Kent and partly in Sussex, but is now wholly in East Sussex, and is in the hundred of Rotherfield and rape of Pevensey. Its name probably derives from 'Fernethe', a fern covered heath or open area within the old forest of Andredsweald; its name has changed over time from Fernthe, Ferthe, Fernet, Farnt to finally Frant<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> ESCC 2004 *The East Sussex County Landscape Assessment*  
(<http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/yourcouncil/consultation/2006/landscapeassessment/download.htm>)

<sup>2</sup> Wealden District Council November 2004 *Revised Draft Wealden Local Plan Review 2004*

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.villagenet.co.uk/highweald/villages/frant/php>

- 1.7** Frant village is situated on a ridge of high ground which falls away on all sides. Frant has remained a small settlement, restricted by its ridgetop location with a central Green formed by a triangle of roads, and with the High Street and church to the north of the Green. Its railway station is situated some 2km east of the village at Bells Yew Green. Frant is classified as a ‘smaller local service centre’, and has not been identified for potential future growth as there are no real development opportunities within or around the village<sup>4</sup>.
- 1.8** The geology of the site, according to the British Geological Survey (sheet 303), comprises Lower Tunbridge Wells Sand. There is a broad band of Ashdown Beds to the north of the site, and on the lower ground to the west and south-east there are outcrops of Wadhurst Clay. The soil is described as a slightly acid loamy and clayey soil with impeded drainage<sup>5</sup>.
- 1.9** The Historic Landscape Characterisation survey for Frant has designated Glebe Land as a ‘Fieldscape’ of early 20<sup>th</sup> Century date (1914-1945). The settlement of Frant village has been designated as early Medieval (410-1065)<sup>6</sup>. The Land Utilisation Survey 1931-1935 shows the site to have been meadowland and permanent grass<sup>7</sup>.
- 1.10** This report initially covers the objectives and scope of the survey, then discusses the methodology used in the Desk-based Assessment, and then reviews the archaeological heritage of the area. Finally a conclusion assesses the potential impact of the development. A full listing of all the known archaeological sites from the HER is contained in Appendix 1 to this report, whilst other sites are listed in Appendix 2.

## **2. Objectives & Scope of Report**

- 2.1** The objective of this report is to gain information about the known or potential archaeological resource of the site and its immediate area. This will include information relating to the presence or absence of any archaeology, its character and extent, date, integrity, state of preservation, and the relative quality of the potential archaeological resource.
- 2.2** This will allow an assessment of the merit of the archaeology in context to be made, leading to the formulation of a strategy for the recording, preservation and management of the resource or, where necessary, the formulation of a strategy for further investigation where the character and value of the resource is not sufficiently defined to permit a mitigation strategy or other response to be defined.

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<sup>4</sup> Wealden District Council July 2007 *Wealden District Council Local Development Framework Core Strategy – Issues and Options Background Paper*

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.landis.org.uk/soilscapes/>

<sup>6</sup> HLC data provided by ESCC

<sup>7</sup> <http://landuse.edina.ac.uk/>

- 2.3** The report will consider the archaeological resource within a radius of 1km around the site, whilst also taking into account sites further afield where these may be considered to have an impact or relevance to the site in its landscape setting.
- 2.4** It should be noted that this report can only take into account the existing known archaeology, and by its nature cannot provide a complete record of the archaeological resource of the site. Its intention is to provide an overview of the known archaeology in the area of the site, from which judgements can be made about the potential archaeological resource of the site itself.

### **3. Methodology**

- 3.1** This Desk-based Assessment has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (PPG16), the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-based Assessment* (Institute of Field Archaeologists 2001), and the *Standards for Archaeological Fieldwork, Recording and Post Excavation Work in East Sussex* (ESCC 2008).
- 3.2** The research for this Desk-based Assessment has included an analysis of the following resources:
- ESCC Historic Environment Record (HER)
  - Historic mapping (including that provided with ESCC HER)
  - NMR records and aerial photographs
  - Portable Antiquities Scheme database
  - East Sussex Record Office (ESRO)
  - Sussex Archaeological Society Library
  - Defence of Britain database
  - WIRG iron site database
  - British Geological Survey
  - Aerial Photograph search (Cambridge & Sussex Universities)
  - Personal & Public library resources
- 3.3** The following maps were used:
- Speed 1610
  - Morden's Sussex 1695
  - Kitchen 1763
  - Cole's Sussex 1808
  - Moule's Sussex 1837
  - Dugdale's Sussex 1840
  - 1846 Frant Tithe map (ESRO – TD/E/63)
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Edition OS Map (1874)
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition OS Map (1898)
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition OS Map (1909)

Information gained from the map regression exercise is contained in the Post Medieval section below.

- 3.4** The Sites and Listed Buildings recorded on the HER and other sources are listed in Appendix 1 to this report and mentioned in the text where relevant. The Monuments and Events are shown on Fig. 3. Historical and other sources are given as footnotes as appropriate. A total of 66 vertical and six oblique photographs were identified in a search of the NMR database, of which copies of 32 were requested for further analysis. Three aerial photographs were provided by ESCC and one by the University of Sussex Geography Resource Centre.
- 3.5** A site visit was undertaken on the 20<sup>th</sup> November 2008. This established that the field is currently mown grass with a few small trees scattered on the western part of the field, and is bounded by hedges or fences on all sides. Church Lane, which runs along the southern edge of the field, is a sunken lane, although the hedge between the two does not appear to be of any great antiquity.
- 3.6** Two terraces were noted running across the field in a north-west to south-east direction with the slope. Although these were quite distinct features, it is not clear whether they are cultivation lynchets or the result of natural land-slip. At the western edge of the field there is a sudden steeper drop in height down to the level of the road, some of which also resembles land-slip, but that closer to the road could be as the result of quarrying in the past.
- 3.7** A number of mole hills, mostly on the western half of the field, were inspected for artefacts, but only three small pieces of Post Medieval ceramic building material were recovered. Photographs taken during the field visit are shown in Figs. 12-16.

#### **4. Archaeological & Historical Background**

- 4.0.1 This section considers each archaeological period in turn, reviewing the known archaeological resource of the area, defining its location and extent, character, date, integrity, state of preservation, and quality.
- 4.0.2 There has been very little archaeological work in Frant, with the only fieldwork being an archaeological watching brief at Frant Church in 2001. No features, deposits or artefacts of archaeological significance were discovered during the project.
- 4.0.3 The review of each period will also bring in evidence for that period from a wider area, especially where there is little known archaeological evidence locally. This will enable a more accurate judgement to be made about the archaeological potential for the site. This evidence will include that taken from similar landscapes and geologies.

#### 4.1 *Palaeolithic Period (750,000BC – 10,000BC)*

- 4.1.1 This period covers a huge period of time, during which early hominid occupation of Southern Britain was intermittent. The period is divided into warm and cold periods, with the evidence suggesting that hominid occupation occurred during some of the warm periods. Apart from a small number of exceptional sites (e.g. Boxgrove), most of the evidence for human activity in this period comes from isolated finds of stone tools, often in secondary deposits.
- 4.1.2 There have been no discoveries of Palaeolithic artefacts in the immediate area of Frant, and there are only a handful of artefacts known to have a provenance in the Weald<sup>8</sup>. Such discoveries are normally linked to specific geological conditions, such as tertiary deposits and gravels, which are not found in this area.
- 4.1.3 The likely impact of in-situ Palaeolithic archaeology being present on the site is considered to be very low.

#### 4.2 *Mesolithic Period (10,000BC – 4,000BC)*

- 4.2.1 The start of the Mesolithic period sees Britain largely covered by pine and birch woodland, which was gradually replaced by a mixed deciduous woodland that provided an ideal environment for the bands of hunter-gatherers who were exploiting the resources on a seasonal basis<sup>9</sup>.
- 4.2.2 There is no evidence for Mesolithic activity at or near the site. However there is a great deal of evidence for Mesolithic hunter-gatherer groups exploiting the resources of the High Weald woodland for hunting and gathering throughout the Mesolithic period.
- 4.2.3 A number of rockshelter sites are known from the area around Frant. At High Rocks (TQ560383) to the north-west of Frant there is evidence for Mesolithic activity<sup>10</sup>, whilst at Eridge (TQ554358) excavations also established that the site had been used during the Mesolithic<sup>11</sup>. These sites are thought to have been short-stay hunting camps, and are mainly associated with the Later Mesolithic<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> Pope, M. 2003 'The Earliest Occupation of Sussex: Recent Research and Future Objectives', in Rudling, D. (Ed) *The Archaeology of Sussex to AD2000*, Kings Lynn, Heritage Marketing & Publications Ltd, 17-28, Fig. 2.8.

<sup>9</sup> Holgate, R. 2003 'Late Glacial and Post-glacial Hunter-gatherers in Sussex', in Rudling, D. (Ed) *The Archaeology of Sussex to AD2000*, Kings Lynn, Heritage Marketing & Publications Ltd, 29-38.

<sup>10</sup> Wymer, J.J. 1977 *Gazetteer of Mesolithic sites in England and Wales*, CBA Research Report No. 22.

<sup>11</sup> Greatorex, C. & Seager-Thomas, M. 2000 'Rock Shelter Stratigraphy' *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **138**, 49-56.

<sup>12</sup> Jacobi, R.M. & Tebbutt, C. F. 1981 'A late Mesolithic Rock-shelter site at High Hurstwood, Sussex', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **119**, 1-36.



- 4.2.4 Many other Mesolithic sites have been found, especially in open sandy ridgetop locations across the High Weald not associated with rock outcrops, for example at Pococksgate Farm to the south of Frant (TQ587335)<sup>13</sup>, and at Broadwater Warren (TQ559367-TQ565365)<sup>14</sup>.
- 4.2.5 Such sites, comprising scatters of flint debitage and tools, are sometimes extensive, suggesting either longer-stay camps or short-stay camps which were being visited repeatedly over a period of time<sup>15</sup>. The evidence for this period suggests that there is some likelihood of significant Mesolithic activity being present on the site, given its location and outlook.

### 4.3 *Neolithic Period (4,000BC to 2,500BC)*

- 4.3.1 A number of changes occur during the Neolithic, some of which may have had an impact on the local area. Environmental evidence suggests that some of the woodland was being cleared and small scale agricultural activities are likely to have started. However, it is likely that hunting and gathering will have continued in the High Weald where the woodland probably remained dominant<sup>16</sup>, with the continued use of rockshelter sites<sup>17</sup>.
- 4.3.2 Other changes in the earlier part of the Neolithic period include the construction of large-scale monuments and the first industrial activity. However all of these sites are located on the South Downs which suggests that they had little influence over this area<sup>18</sup>.
- 4.3.3 A number of scatters of later Neolithic/Bronze Age flintwork have been identified in the High Weald. These are mostly localised discrete concentrations; it is unlikely that these sites represent settlements or agriculture, but are more likely to be occasional exploitation of the natural resources available in this area. There are no local finds of Neolithic flintwork, although both flintwork and a polished greenstone axe have been found in Eridge Park to the west of Frant.
- 4.3.4 It is possible that Neolithic artefacts could be present and if so may indicate the presence of underlying Neolithic features, although evidence for Neolithic settlement is very rare, and the likelihood of finding Neolithic artefacts is considered to be low.

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<sup>13</sup> Wymer, J.J. 1977 *Gazetteer of Mesolithic sites in England and Wales*, CBA Research Report No. 22.

<sup>14</sup> Butler, C. 2008 *An Archaeological Survey of Broadwater Warren, East Sussex*, CBAS Report for the RSPB.

<sup>15</sup> Holgate, R. 2003 'Late Glacial and Post-glacial Hunter-gatherers in Sussex', in Rudling, D. (Ed) *The Archaeology of Sussex to AD2000*, Kings Lynn, Heritage Marketing & Publications Ltd, 29-38.

<sup>16</sup> Drewett, P. 2003 'Taming the Wild: The first farming Communities in Sussex, in Rudling, D. (Ed) *The Archaeology of Sussex to AD2000*, Kings Lynn, Heritage Marketing & Publications Ltd, 39-46.

<sup>17</sup> Gardiner, M. 1990 'The Archaeology of the Weald – A Survey and a Review', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* 128, 33-53.

<sup>18</sup> Oswald et al. 2001 *The Creation of Monuments*, Swindon, English Heritage.

#### **4.4 *The Bronze Age (2500BC to 800BC)***

- 4.4.1 The Bronze Age saw continued clearance of the woodland in the High Weald, although there is little evidence for complete clearance or widespread agriculture. Elsewhere in Sussex, such as the South Downs and Coastal Plain, there is extensive evidence for the landscape being densely populated by small farming settlements in the Middle and Later Bronze Age.
- 4.4.2 There is growing evidence for agriculture in the Weald during the Bronze Age, with hunting presumably being continued in parallel with farming<sup>19</sup>. The period of greatest exploitation appears to have been in the Later Neolithic and early Bronze Age, which may suggest that the soils became exhausted and settlement retreated subsequently<sup>20</sup>.
- 4.4.3 No Bronze Age sites or artefacts are known from Frant, although Bronze Age flintwork was found near Pockocksgate Farm (TQ588334)<sup>21</sup>.
- 4.4.4 Another feature of the Bronze Age landscape are the burial mounds (Barrows). None are recorded at Frant, although others are known from the High Weald, including a number on Ashdown Forest<sup>22</sup>.
- 4.4.5 Given the lack of evidence for Bronze Age activity in the area, there is a low probability that remains from this period will be found during work at the site.

#### **4.5 *The Iron Age (800BC to 43AD)***

- 4.5.1 During the Early Iron Age it seems likely that the pattern of settlement and agriculture seen in the Later Bronze Age continues. A number of field systems, some of which may have originated in the Late Bronze Age, are known from the Iron Age, such as at Kings Standing on Ashdown Forest<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>19</sup> Gardiner, M. 1990 'The Archaeology of the Weald – A Survey and a Review', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **128**, 33-53.

<sup>20</sup> Needham, S. 1987 'The Bronze Age' in *The Archaeology of Surrey to 1540*, 97-137 Guildford, Surrey Archaeological Society.

<sup>21</sup> *Sussex Notes and Queries* **7**, 93.

<sup>22</sup> Butler, C 2008 *An archaeological Survey of Ashdown Forest*, CBAS Report.

<sup>23</sup> Margary, I.D. 1946 'War Damage to Antiquities on Ashdown Forest', *Sussex Notes & Queries* **11**, 1-3.

- 4.5.2 Also on Ashdown Forest are a number of small enclosures including Chelwood Gate which is enclosed by a bank and ditch and produced Late Iron Age pottery<sup>24</sup>. Taken together with the associated field systems these suggest that the area was being used for agriculture (perhaps grazing rather than growing crops) with the enclosures being farms. Although there are no similar enclosures or field systems currently known from the Frant area it is likely that this pattern extended into this area.
- 4.5.3 One major feature of the Iron Age is the hillfort, of which 25 are known from Sussex. Many of these also appear to have originated in the Later Bronze Age, but become important centres of control and redistribution in the Middle and Later Iron Age.
- 4.5.4 There are two hillforts close to Frant; firstly High Rocks, which is a promontory hillfort to the north-west of Frant, and secondly Saxonbury, a contour hillfort located a short distance to the south of Frant. Both may have originated in the Middle Iron Age, but primarily date to the Later Iron Age<sup>25</sup>. Either or both of these could have dominated the immediate landscape around them, which would have included the Frant area.
- 4.5.5 There are two ridgeway tracks that run through Frant, and which may have originated in prehistory, and were likely to have been in use during the Iron Age. The first (MES4875) runs east-west from Newenden in Kent to Wadhurst, whilst the second (MES4876) runs north-south from Oldham (Ightham) in Kent to Cross-in-hand<sup>26</sup>.
- 4.5.6 It was during the Iron Age that the Weald began to be exploited for iron production, with a relatively small number of sites known<sup>27</sup>. Although no iron working sites are known from Frant itself, a possible bloomery site was found at Colegrove Wood (TQ 5867 3316)<sup>28</sup> to the south of Frant, and evidence of iron working was also found at Saxonbury hillfort, suggesting a connection between the hillfort and the iron industry in the surrounding landscape<sup>29</sup>.
- 4.5.7 There are no finds or features from the site or its immediate vicinity that date from the Iron Age. However, there is a possibility that artefacts or evidence for settlement or field systems could be present at the site, especially given its location close to the two hillforts.

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<sup>24</sup> Wickenden, N. 1988 'Excavations at Chelwood Gate: final interim report', *Sussex Archaeological Society Newsletter* **54**, 11.

<sup>25</sup> Hamilton, S & Manley, J. 1997 'Prominent Enclosures in 1<sup>st</sup> Millennium BC Sussex', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **135**, 93-112.

<sup>26</sup> Wilson, A.E. 1955 'Sussex on the eve of the Roman Conquest', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **93**, 59-77.

<sup>27</sup> Hodgkinson, J. 2008 *The Wealden Iron Industry*, Stroud, Tempus Publishing.

<sup>28</sup> Salzman, L. F. 1973 *Victoria County History of Sussex* Vol. **3**, 31.

<sup>29</sup> Curwen, E.C. 1954 *The Archaeology of Sussex*, London, Methuen & Co Ltd.

#### 4.6 *The Roman Period (43AD to 410AD)*

- 4.6.1 The Roman invasion of Britain in 43AD resulted in dramatic alterations to this island's social and economic environments<sup>30</sup>. It is likely that many of the rural farmsteads and associated field systems that were in existence in the Later Iron Age continued throughout the Roman period. Where they have been excavated elsewhere, they provide evidence for a mixed farming economy of crops and animal husbandry.
- 4.6.2 A probable Roman road heading south from Tonbridge follows the course of the possible prehistoric trackway (MES4876) through Frant, and then on to Cross-in-hand<sup>31</sup>, whilst a second also follows the course of a prehistoric trackway (MES4875) from Newenden in Kent to Wadhurst.
- 4.6.3 Villa's are unknown in the Weald, being almost entirely concentrated on the Coastal Plain and immediately to the north of the South Downs. There is also little evidence for any larger settlements. It has been suggested that the Weald was set aside as an Imperial Estate for iron working, which may explain the lack of villas and larger settlements in the area.
- 4.6.4 Ironworking became a major industry during the Romano-British period, with large numbers of iron working sites across the Weald<sup>32</sup>. There are no Roman ironworking sites at Frant, but two bloomery sites have been found in Eridge Park<sup>33</sup>, and others are known in the surrounding area.
- 4.6.5 There is limited evidence for Roman activity in the immediate area, but the discovery of isolated Roman finds in the area means that the possibility of encountering Roman remains at the site is considered to be small.

#### 4.7 *The Saxon Period (410AD to 1066AD)*

- 4.7.1 In the early Post-Roman period there was a change in the economy and land-usage with any areas that had been previously cultivated reverting to woodland, although the Weald remained an important area of grazing for pigs and other animals<sup>34</sup>. Evidence for Anglo-Saxon settlement is difficult to find, with the discovery and excavation of larger settlements, such as Bishopstone<sup>35</sup>, being comparatively rare and restricted to the coastal part of Sussex<sup>36</sup>.

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<sup>30</sup> Rudling, D. 2003 'Roman Rural Settlement in Sussex: Continuity and Change', in Rudling, D. (Ed) *The Archaeology of Sussex to AD2000*, Kings Lynn, Heritage Marketing & Publications Ltd.

<sup>31</sup> Margary, I.D. *Roman Ways in the Weald*, London, Phoenix House.

<sup>32</sup> Cleere, H. et al. 1995 *The Iron Industry in the Weald*, Cardiff, Merton Priory Press.

<sup>33</sup> Tebbutt, C.F. 1978 'Reports on Fieldwork', *Wealden Iron*, Bulletin of the Wealden Iron Research Group 1<sup>st</sup> Series **13**, 13-14.

<sup>34</sup> Gardiner, M. 1990 'The Archaeology of the Weald – A Survey and a Review', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **128**, 33-53.

<sup>35</sup> Bell, M. 1977 'Excavations at Bishopstone', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **115**.

- 4.7.2 There is little evidence for iron working in the Saxon period, although the site at Millbrook in Ashdown Forest<sup>37</sup> is an exception. The lack of any adjoining settlement suggests that this part of the Weald was perhaps being exploited by people living closer to the coast.
- 4.7.3 Before the Norman invasion, Frant was part of the parish of Rotherfield which belonged to Earl Godwine, however it is likely that few people lived there. It is therefore considered unlikely that any evidence for Saxon activity will be encountered.

#### 4.8 *The Medieval Period (1066AD to 1500AD)*

- 4.8.1 After 1066 the Manor of Rotherfield was given to Odo Bishop of Bayeux<sup>38</sup>. Frant became a separate manor in its own right at some time between 1103 and 1194<sup>39</sup> when a Manor of Frant, linked to the de Bendevill family, is mentioned in a pipe roll<sup>40</sup>.
- 4.8.2 A charter of the Cathedral of Rochester (undated, but from between 1093 and 1103) mentions a Chapel of Frant, and it is mentioned again in another charter of 1103<sup>41</sup>. The Chapel continued in use until the 15<sup>th</sup> century when it was replaced by a church (Fig. 0). The church was originally dedicated to St. Peter, but this was later changed to St Alban.
- 4.8.3 By the early 14<sup>th</sup> century the manor was held by the de Bromfeld's. In 1316 William de Bromfeld was granted the right to hold a market every Tuesday and an annual fair, and was also allowed free warren in his demesne lands at Frant<sup>42</sup>. The de Bromfeld's probably lived at Court Lodge, which is referred to as the manor house in a document of 1656, although the current Court Lodge (Frant Court – DES6164) building is 19<sup>th</sup> century<sup>43</sup>.
- 4.8.4 Between 1375 and the early 1400's the manor changed hands a number of time, until it ended up in the hands of the Waller family. The main settlement in the 14<sup>th</sup> century appears to have been concentrated along the High Street, Catts Lane and Griggs Lane<sup>44</sup> (Fig. 4).
- 4.8.5 Two archery butts were located on The Green at Frant 100yds. apart, each with a circumference of 50yds. The northern of the two (TQ 59063543) was removed in 1946, and the other butt was at the southern end of the green, at TQ 58963529.

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<sup>36</sup> Gardiner, M. 2003 'Economy and Landscape Change in Post-Roman and Early Medieval Sussex, 450-1175', in Rudling, D. (Ed) *The Archaeology of Sussex to AD2000*, Kings Lynn, Heritage Marketing & Publications Ltd,

<sup>37</sup> Tebbutt, C.F. 1982 'A Middle Saxon iron smelting site at Millbrook, Ashdown Forest, Sussex', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **120**, 19-35.

<sup>38</sup> Morris, J. (Ed) 1976 *Domesday Book: Sussex*, Chichester, Phillimore.

<sup>39</sup> Wright, P. 1982 *Frant: The story of a Wealden Parish*.

<sup>40</sup> Eeles, H.S. 1947 *Frant: A Parish History*, Tunbridge Wells, Courier Co Ltd.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>43</sup> Wright, P. 1982 *Frant: The story of a Wealden Parish*.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid*

- 4.8.6 Bayham Abbey was founded as a Premonstratensian Abbey in c.1207, and expanded during the later 13<sup>th</sup> century. It is located on the edge of Frant parish, right on the Kent/Sussex county boundary.
- 4.8.7 Given the location of the site and its relationship with the Medieval chapel and settlement (MES3285), it is highly likely that there are some remains of Medieval activity at the site. The terraces noted on the field visit may well be lynchets associated with Medieval farming.

#### 4.9 *The Post Medieval Period (1500AD to the Present Day)*

- 4.9.1 A roll of 1530 refers to ‘lands lying next to the lords lands’ called Rushlye (i.e. Park Wood; which is the Park of Frant). A document of 1575 refers to the Pale fence between Waterdown Forest and the lands of the Lord of Frant. In 1577 the Manor of Frant was sold by Sir Walter Waller to John Puckering, and in the 17<sup>th</sup> century there were further changes in ownership<sup>45</sup>.
- 4.9.2 The early maps of Speed (1610) and Morden (1695) both show two deer parks to the west of Frant, these being Eridge Park and Waterdowne Forest, the latter subdivided into three parts. The deer parks, and also possibly rabbit warrens, may have been an important part of the local economy at Frant<sup>46</sup>.
- 4.9.3 Although the population density (measured by conception) of parishes in the north-eastern Weald was generally high during the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Frant had a much lower density, possibly due to the poor agricultural land of the area and its association with Waterdown Forest<sup>47</sup>, although there had been complaints in the 1590’s about depreciating pannage rights in Waterdown Forest due to clearance and enclosure<sup>48</sup>.
- 4.9.4 Frant was an important centre for iron production in the later 16<sup>th</sup> century, with ordnance being a major product. Other industries associated with iron production included coppicing<sup>49</sup>. Although there are no ironworking sites at Frant, there are numerous examples within the Parish. These include Breechers Forge (TQ 6266 3844) mentioned in documentary sources of 1557 and 1618; Henley Furnace (TQ 5994 3398) listed in 1574; Bayham Abbey used 1575 – 1714; Sunninglye (TQ 6287 3845) mentioned in documentary sources in 1574, and Camden Wood (TQ 6162 3497) mentioned in 1521<sup>50</sup>.

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<sup>45</sup> Eeles, H.S. 1947 *Frant: A Parish History*, Tunbridge Wells, Courier Co Ltd.

<sup>46</sup> Gardiner, M. 1999 ‘The Medieval Rural Economy and Landscape’, *An Historical Atlas of Sussex*, Phillimore

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>48</sup> Brant, C.E. 1976 ‘Rural Employment and Population in Sussex between 1550 and 1640; Part 1’, *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **114**, 27-48.

<sup>49</sup> Brent, C.E. 1978 ‘Rural Employment and Population in Sussex between 1550 and 1640; Part 2’, *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **116**, 41-55.

<sup>50</sup> Straker, E. 1931 *Wealden Iron*, London, Bell.

- 4.9.5 Budgens map of 1724 shows major routes marked on the map including the Tunbridge Wells to Rye route which passes through Frant, and the Tunbridge Wells to Lewes road, which passes through Eridge<sup>51</sup>. In 1765 the Tunbridge Wells to Wadhurst road was made a turnpike road and a toll was built in Frant village<sup>52</sup>. Other maps of the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries provide no additional information about Frant and its immediate surroundings.
- 4.9.6 As well as iron working, there were other industries in Frant including brick making. A number of brickworks were located around the parish during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, whilst a brickworks was located at Shernfold Park in 1790<sup>53</sup>.
- 4.9.7 Military encampments in Waterdown Forest became a common feature of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century. A camp held in 1780 is pictured by James Lambert from Benhale Mill, some 2km north-east of Frant<sup>54</sup>. Two soldiers from the camp are buried in Frant churchyard, together with another 18 from the next camp held in 1793 at Broadwater Forest (MES3284)<sup>55</sup>. On both occasions soldiers from the camps married Frant girls. Another camp was held in 1803, when there was an epidemic of smallpox.
- 4.9.8 The 15<sup>th</sup> century church was pulled down and rebuilt between 1819 and 1822. The churchyard was surrounded by a post and rail fence until 1862, which it was the responsibility of landowners and householders in the parish to maintain.
- 4.9.9 Frant school was originally founded in 1816, being housed in an extension to an existing house belonging to Adam Jacob in the High Street. A decision was made to replace it after 1830 with a purpose built school, which was finally built in 1852<sup>56</sup>.
- 4.9.10 The 1846 Tithe map (Fig. 5) shows the site to be part of a larger field (594 - Church Field) which is owned by the Earl of Abergavenny and occupied by the Rev. Sir Henry Thompson. To the east are two properties; 594 which has one large building and a smaller building (stables) to its north-east, whilst 593 is the original vicarage.
- 4.9.11 The 1<sup>st</sup> Edition OS map (1874) also shows the large field with a small number of trees in a line across the field, which matches the line of one of the terraces noted during the field visit (Fig. 6). On its east side is a large single property called the Rectory, much different in shape and size to the building shown on the tithe map, and probably represents its rebuilding between these two dates. On its north side are formal laid out gardens, but the stable building

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<sup>51</sup> Margary, I.D. 1971 'Traffic Routes in Sussex, 1724', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **109**, 20-23.

<sup>52</sup> [www.villagenet.co.uk/highweald/villages/frant.php](http://www.villagenet.co.uk/highweald/villages/frant.php)

<sup>53</sup> Beswick, M. 2001 *Brickmaking in Sussex*, Midhurst, Middleton Press.

<sup>54</sup> British Museum - 1870,0514.1

<sup>55</sup> Margary, I. 1965 'Military Field Kitchens of the Eighteenth Century', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **103**, 60-66.

<sup>56</sup> Wright, P. 1982 *Frant: The story of a Wealden Parish*.

is still there. On the south side of Church Lane opposite the site a row of terraced houses has appeared.

- 4.9.12 By the time of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition OS map in 1898 there has been little change, apart from the building of a further house on Church Lane and a much larger house (Whitehill House – DES4822) set back from the lane on its south side (Fig. 7). On the 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition OS map of 1909 the only change has been the addition of a fence dividing the Church Field to form the smaller field which is the subject of this survey (Fig. 8). No 4<sup>th</sup> Edition OS map was available for inspection. The current OS map shows the building that was originally the Rectory on these OS maps to now be Frant Grange.
- 4.9.13 During the Second World War a Home Guard unit was raised in Frant, and defences and roadblocks were positioned to block the roads north into Tunbridge Wells, although there is no evidence to suggest that Frant was a Nodal Point. A Type 24 pillbox was positioned on The Green (MES3280), although there are no other defences within the village.
- 4.9.14 A roadblock of anti-tank buoys on the A267 covered by a pillbox was located at Saxonbury Hill (TQ 5813 3282)<sup>57</sup>. Other pillboxes were positioned at Down Lane and on the road to Wadhurst near Greenman Farm, whilst there was another roadblock between Frant and Tunbridge Wells.
- 4.9.15 The 1947 aerial photograph shows two shadow features; firstly a line across the field matching a terrace noted on the field visit, a possible tree still survives on this; the second is a feature that curves across the field from the south west corner to the northern field boundary, and is the natural landslip noted in the field visit (Fig. 9).
- 4.9.16 A vertical 1946 photograph of a wider area shows the natural feature running across the field, through a rectangular area of allotments to the north of the field, and continuing to curve across the next field to the north. On the west side of the A267 road is what appears to be two sides of a small rectangular enclosure, cut by the road, and possibly extending a little way into Glebe Land (Fig. 10).
- 4.9.17 A 1957 aerial photograph<sup>58</sup> shows no features, but the area immediately to the north is still being used for allotments, some of which are still in use today. Although the terraces do not show up on the 1999 and 2006 aerial photographs, the curving natural feature shows up clearly. No other features were noted on any of the aerial photographs.

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<sup>57</sup> Butler, C. 2007 *East Sussex under Attack*, Stroud, Tempus Publishing Ltd.

<sup>58</sup> University of Sussex Geography Resource Centre (B/48/398)



#### 4.10 *Glebe Land in Frant*<sup>59</sup>

- 4.10.1 In 1675 There were two areas of Glebe land in Frant. Great Henlies, which comprised 168 acres and belonged to the rectory of Rotherfield, was situated between the Frant – Wadhurst road and the stream in Great Wood (centred on approx TQ596341), and Little Henlies of 68 acres also belonging to the rectory of Rotherfield. The remaining Glebe land was the vicarage and glebe lands which formed the dwelling of the vicar of Frant.
- 4.10.2 Great Henlies was sold in 1835, and Little Henlies passed to the vicar of Frant who sold it as Glebe Farm (TQ605342) to the owner of Shernold Park.
- 4.10.3 Church Field, which stood adjacent to Frant Church, appeared in the court rolls for a number of centuries, and over that time had a number of tenants. In 1725 Church Field is described as meadow land of 26 acres<sup>60</sup>. It was purchased by Eridge Estate (Earl of Abergavenny) in 1817 from Francis Dolmon, and became Glebe lands in 1862, finally being given to the church in commutation of tithes in 1866.
- 4.10.4 Most of Church Field was sold to Ely Grange in 1923<sup>61</sup>, with the only Glebe land now remaining in Frant being the field in which it is proposed to build the new school.

## 5 Impact of the Development

- 5.1 The proposed new school development is located within the field known as Glebe Land. Since the tithe map of 1846 the field has been pasture and there has been no development or other land use which will have had a negative impact on any below ground archaeology.
- 5.2 There are physical traces of possible cultivation terraces in the field, one of which may have survived until the early 19<sup>th</sup> century as a remnant boundary within Church Field. The western side of the field may have been subject to land slippage in the past, whilst there is also a possibility that some quarrying has taken place adjacent to the A267 road. An enclosure of unknown date may also extend into the western side of the field.
- 5.3 Although none of the current field boundaries appear to be of any antiquity, Church Lane is a sunken lane, and is likely to date back at least as far as the Medieval period, and may perhaps date back to the first record of the chapel in the 11<sup>th</sup> century.

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<sup>59</sup> Eeles, H.S. 1947 *Frant: A Parish History*, Tunbridge Wells, Courier Co Ltd.

<sup>60</sup> ESRO: ABE/148/3

<sup>61</sup> Malden, M.S. 1928 *Frant Church and Living*, Tunbridge Wells, Courier Printing and Publishing Co Ltd.

**5.4** Given the evidence accumulated during this desk-based assessment, the probability of finding remains from each of the different archaeological periods is shown in Table 1 below:

**Table 1**

<b>Period</b>	<b>Probability</b>
Palaeolithic	Very Low
Mesolithic	Medium
Neolithic	Low
Bronze Age	Low
Iron Age	Low
Roman	Low
Saxon	Low
Medieval	High
Post Medieval	High

## **6 Conclusions**

**6.1** This desk-based assessment has established that there is evidence for activity in the surrounding area of the site from the Mesolithic period through to the Post Medieval period. However, there is little evidence for any archaeology on the site, apart from the possible cultivation terraces, and the possible enclosure extending into the western edge of the field.

**6.2** It has not been possible to establish whether there is below-ground archaeology present on the site, due to the non-intrusive nature of this desk based assessment. Any development at the site is likely to disturb and destroy any buried archaeology.

**6.3** It is therefore recommended that a programme of archaeological work be undertaken prior to the development. A geophysical survey could initially be undertaken, and the possible terraces and enclosure should be investigated by trial trenching to establish whether they are archaeological or natural. Further evaluation trenches could then be excavated using the results of the geophysical survey to guide positioning.

## **7 Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank James Robson of Hazle McCormack Young LLP for commissioning this survey on behalf of ESCC. Greg Chuter, Assistant County Archaeologist at ESCC provided copies of the East Sussex HER. The staff at the East Sussex Record Office provided help in obtaining the tithe map and other documents, and Rachel Butler recorded the tithe map information. I would also like to thank the staff at the NMR, Swindon and at the Sussex Archaeological Society Library for their help in locating aerial photographs and sources in their possession.

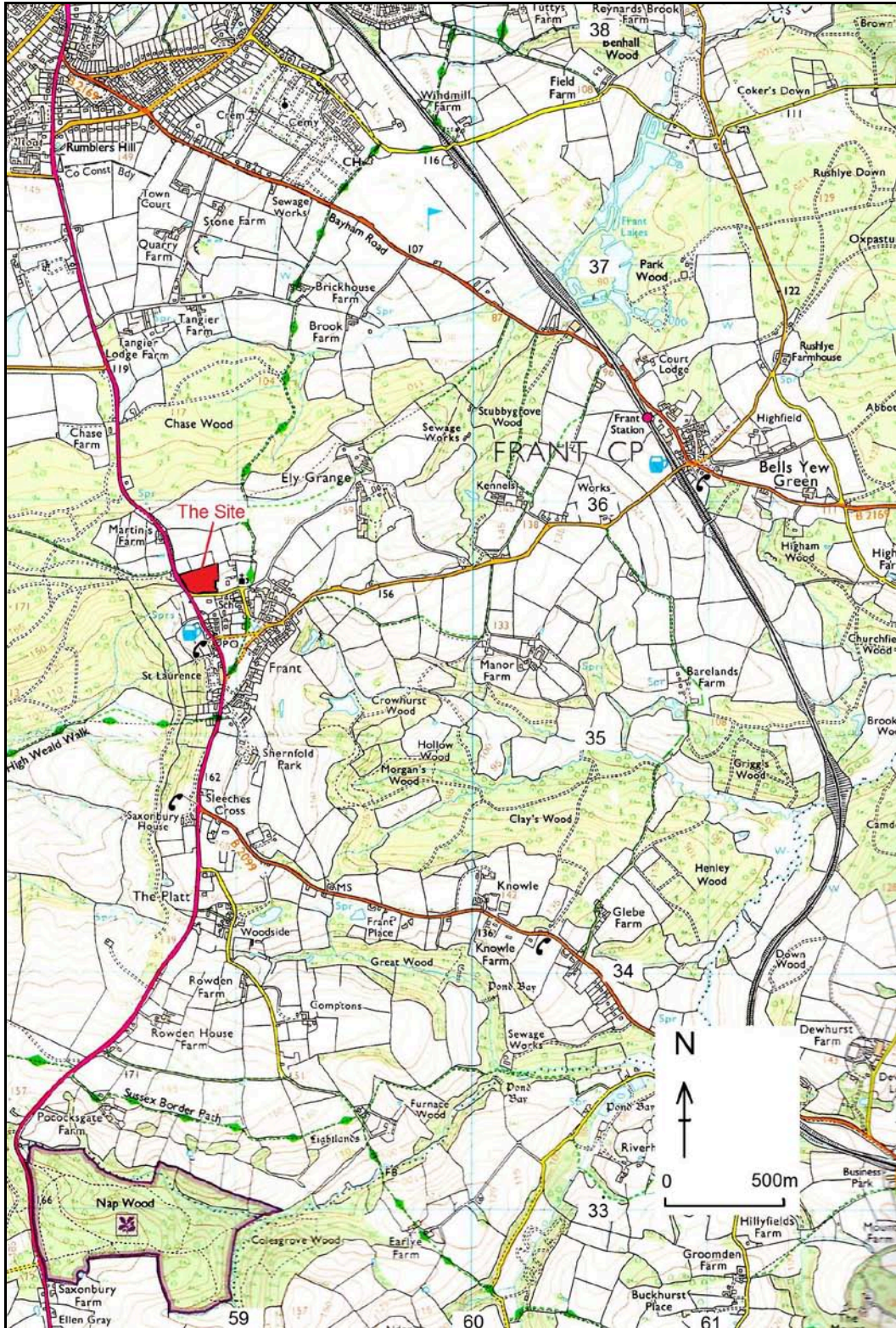
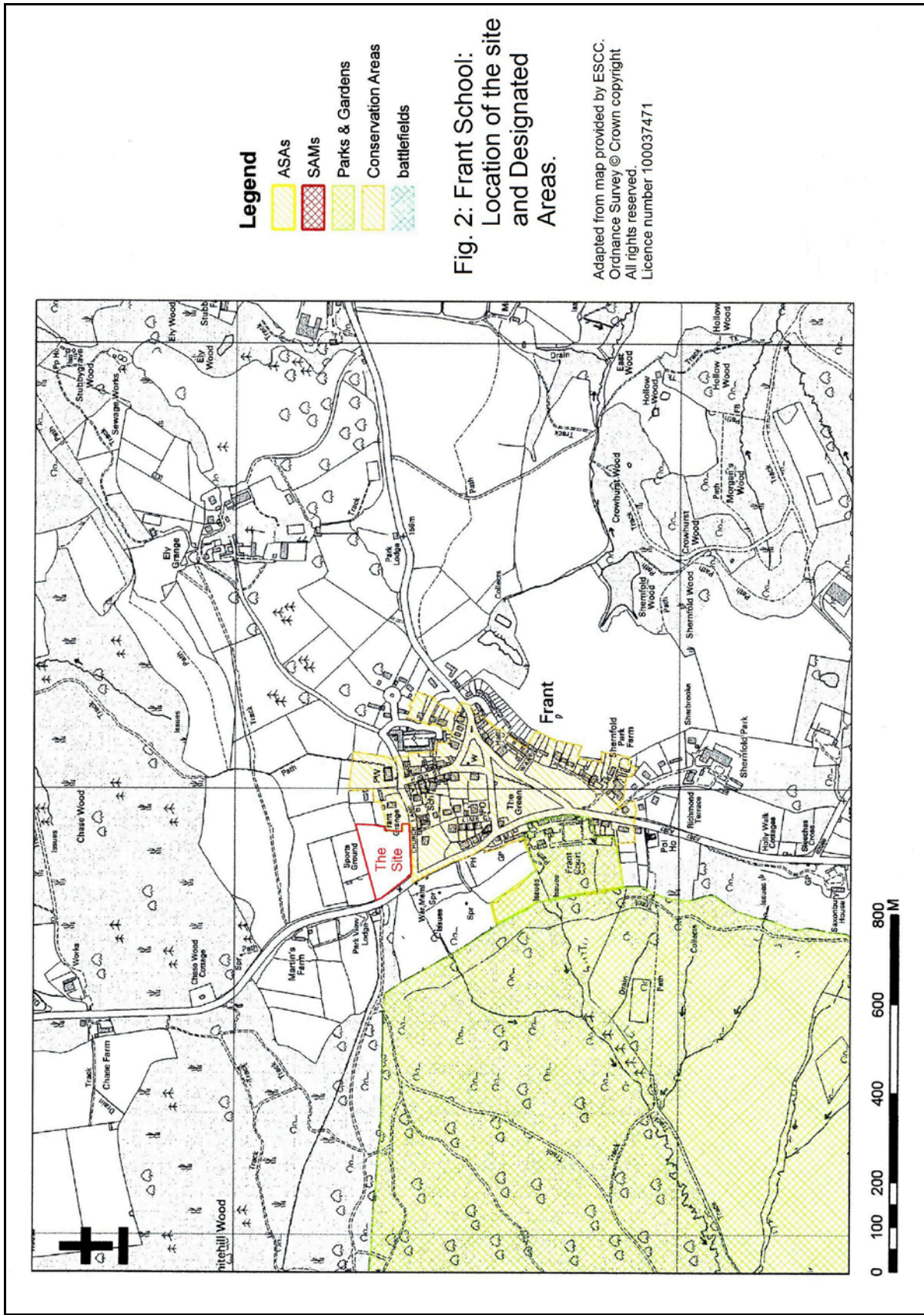
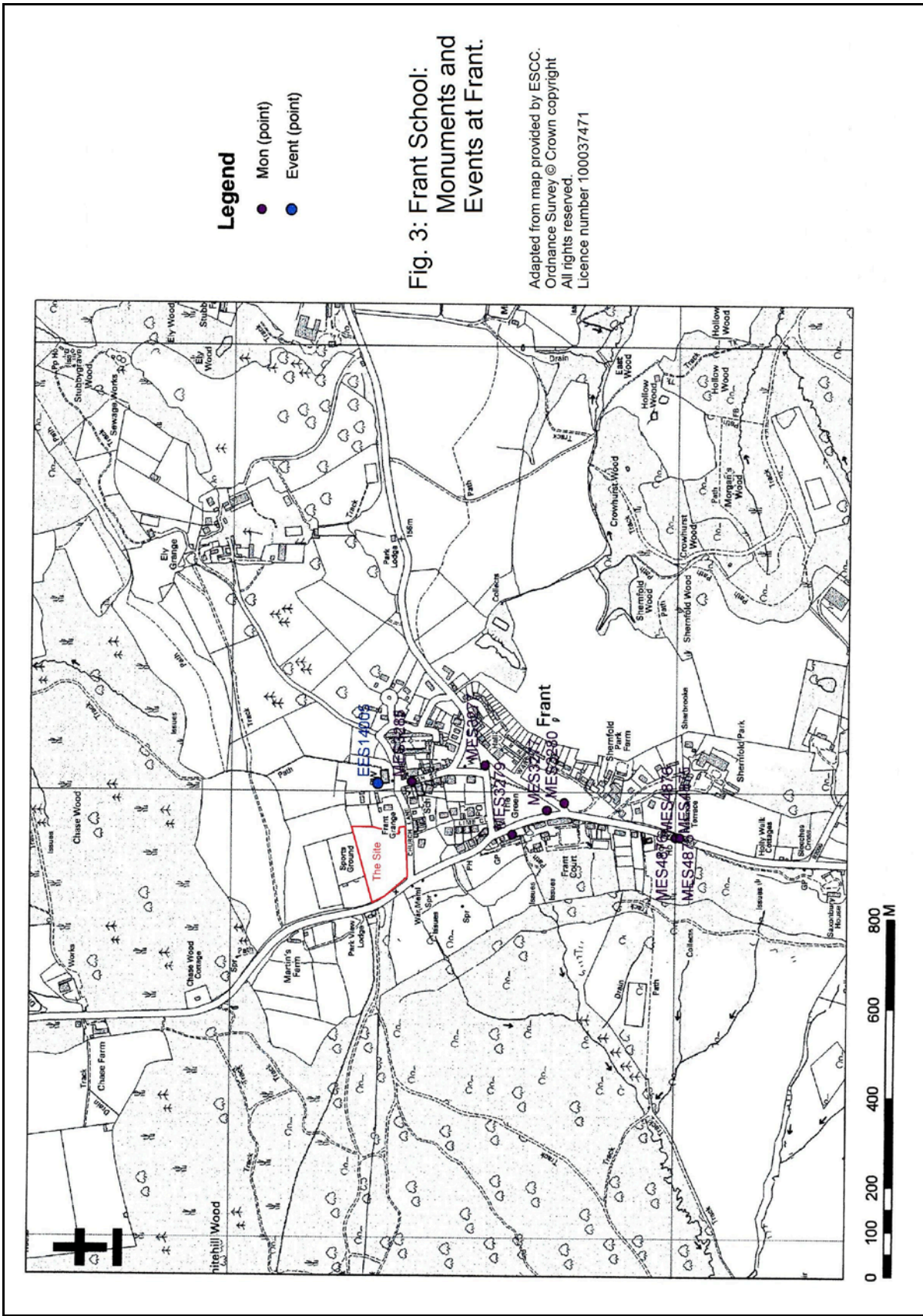


Fig. 1: Frant School: Map showing location of Site

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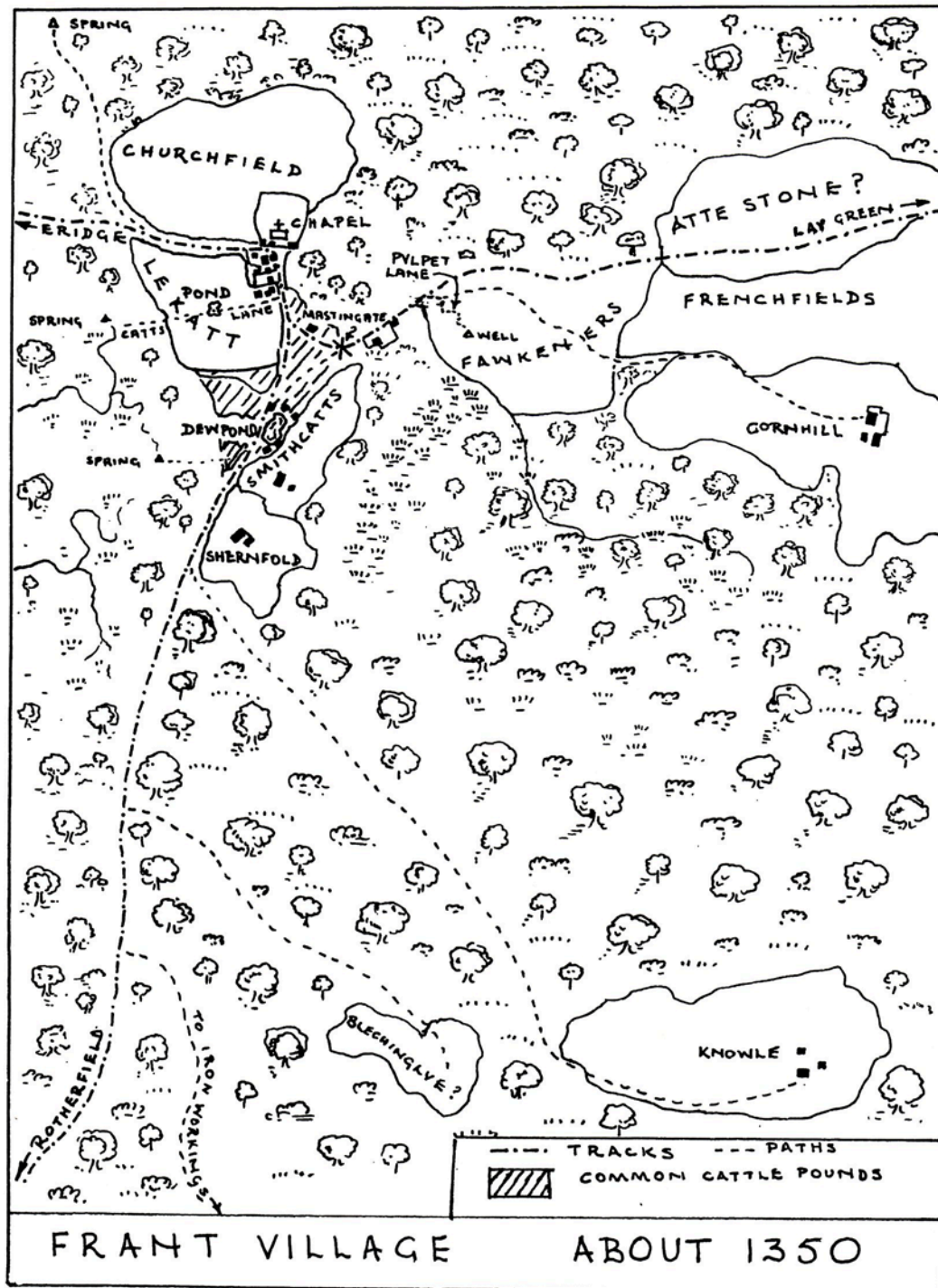


Fig. 4: Frant School: Schematic map showing proposed extent of the Medieval settlement of Frant about 1350AD.

Adapted from Wright (1982)

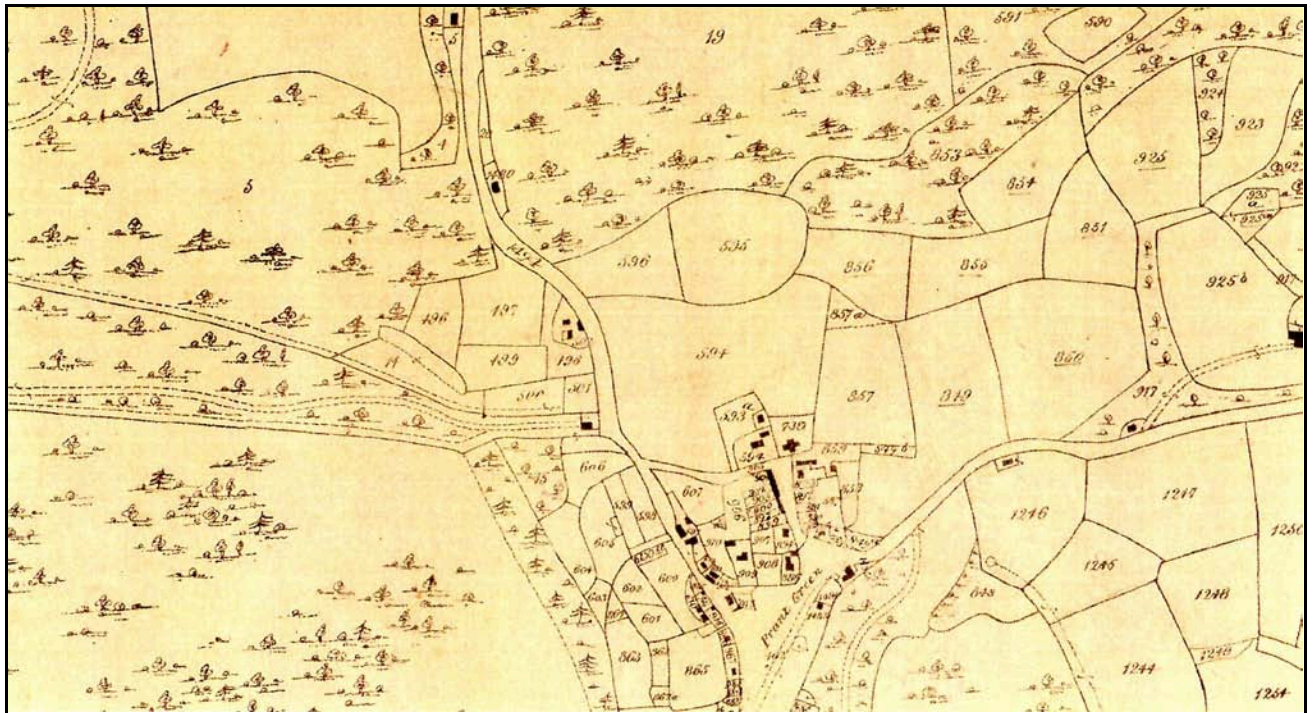
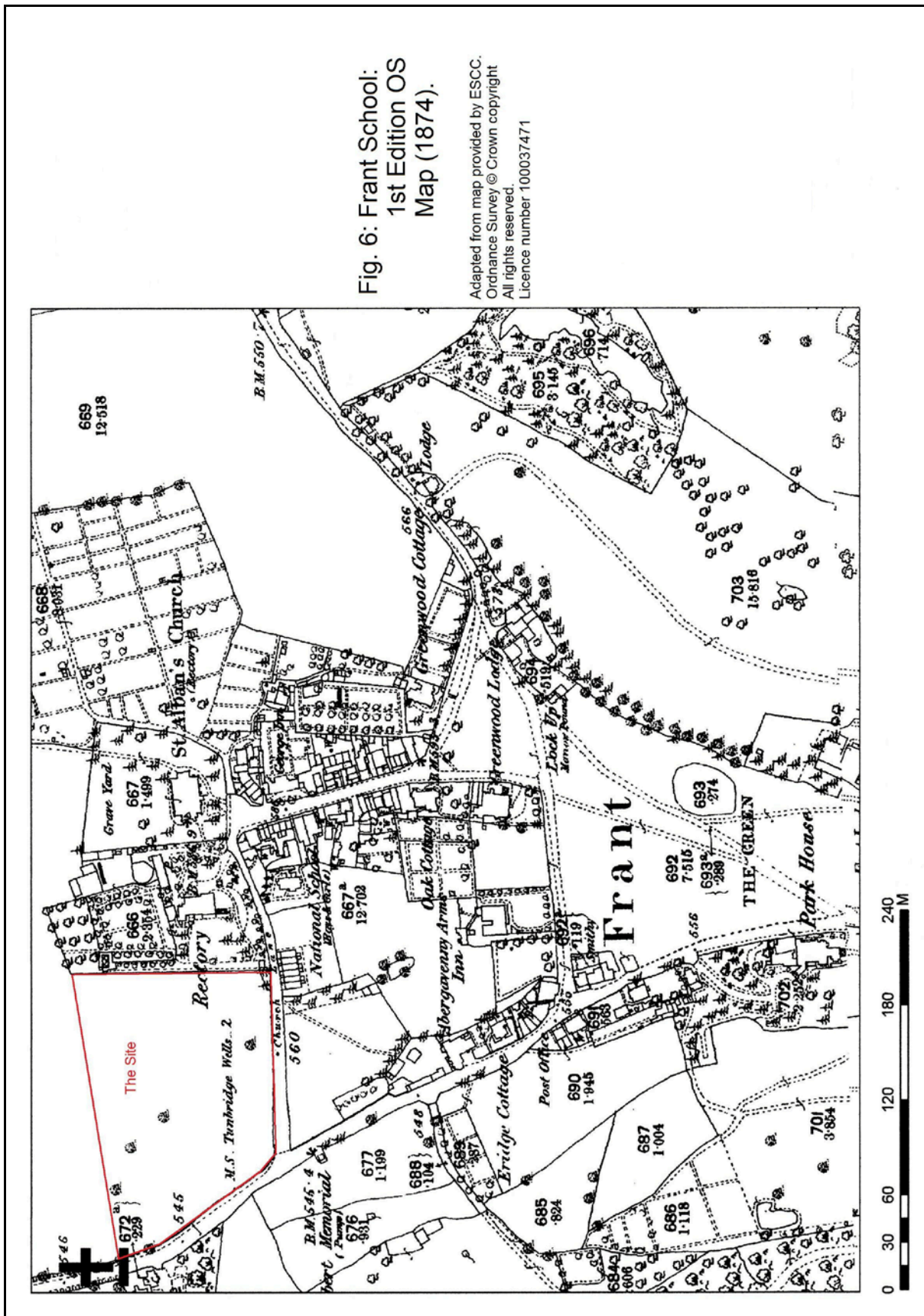


Fig. 5: Frant Tithe Map  
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### Apportionment

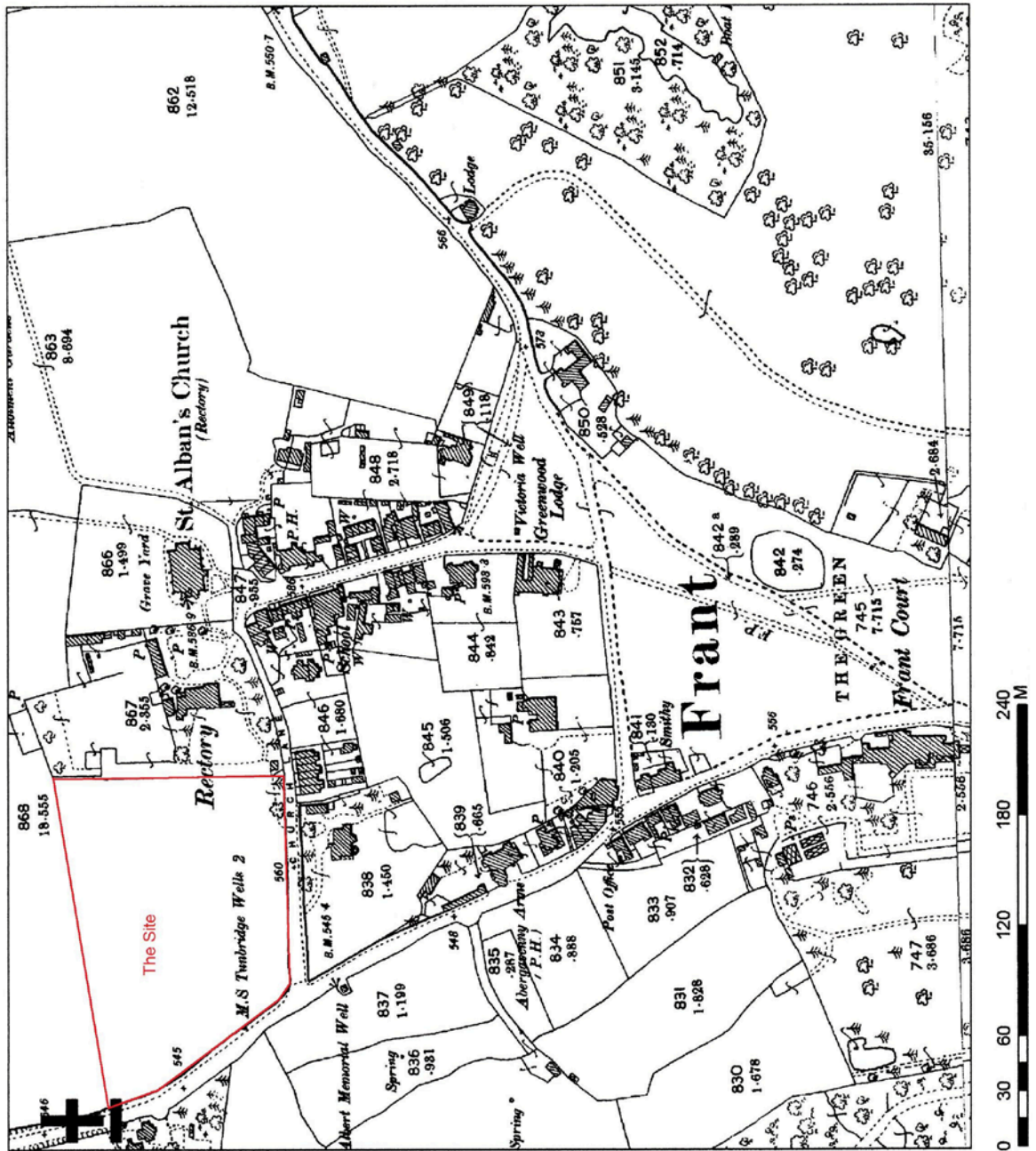
No.	Owner	Occupier	Name	Use
19	Earl of Abergavenny	Himself	Chase Wood	Wood
501	Earl of Abergavenny	A. Vickers	Frant Hill Land	Pasture
502	Earl of Abergavenny	-	-	Buildings/Gardens
593	Rev. Thompson	Himself	(Glebe)	Vicarage House
594	Earl of Abergavenny	Rev. Thompson	Church Field	Pasture
595	Earl of Abergavenny	C. Thwailles	Gate Field	Arable
596	Earl of Abergavenny	C. Thwailles	Gate Field	Arable
606	Earl of Abergavenny	W. Field	Garden	Pasture
607	Earl of Abergavenny	W. Field	Garden	Pasture
739	Rev. Thompson	Himself	(Glebe)	Churchyard
849	Earl of Abergavenny	Himself	Yew Tree Field	Arable
856	Trustees of Col. Bye	Hon. P. Ashburnham	Part of Yew Tree Field	Arable
857	Trustees of Col. Bye	Hon. P. Ashburnham	Part of Yew Tree Field	Arable
859	Trustees of Col. Bye	Joseph ?	Tenement	-





**Fig. 7: Frant School:  
2nd Edition OS  
Map (1898).**

Adapted from map provided by ESCC.  
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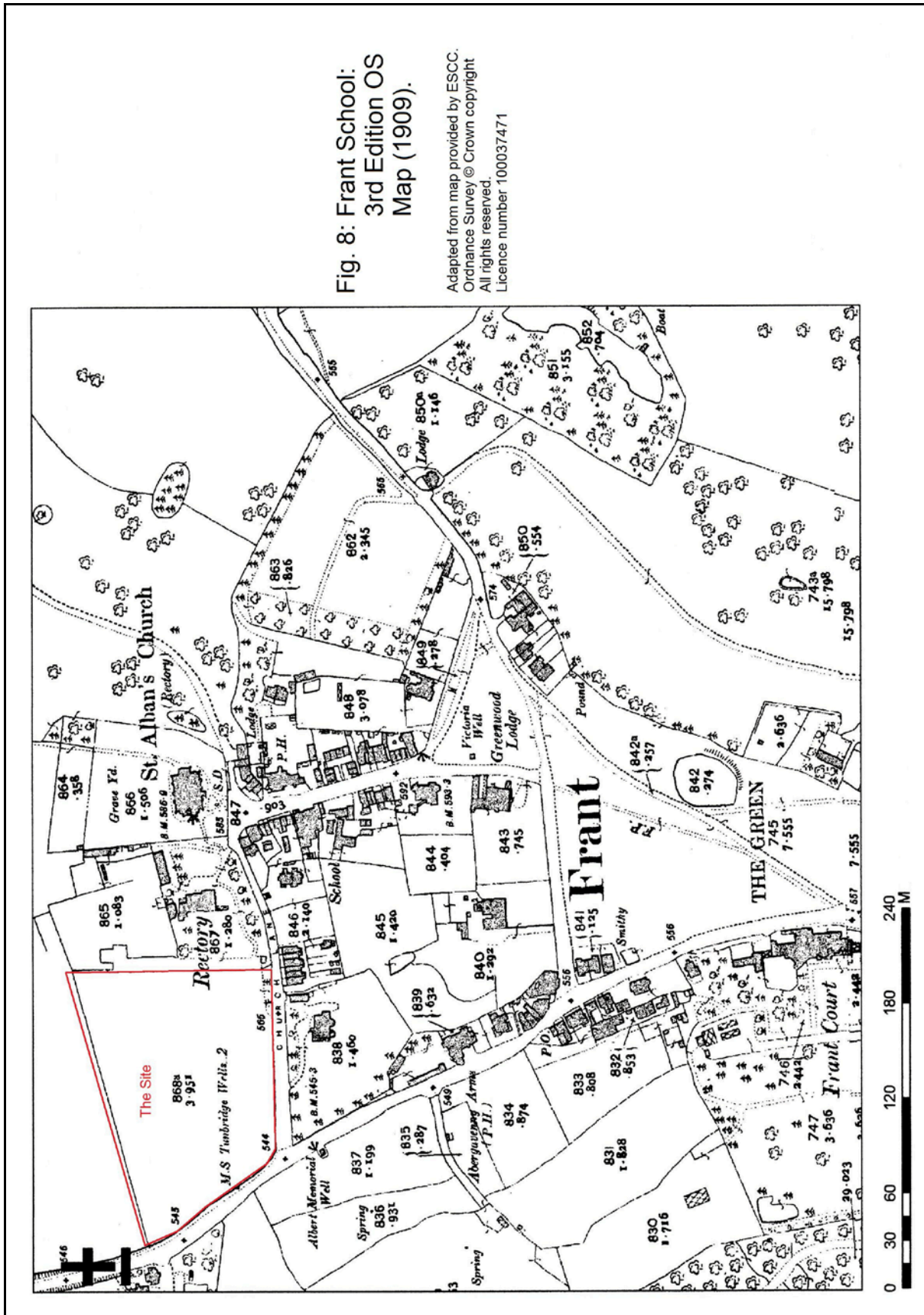


Fig. 8: Frant School:  
3rd Edition OS  
Map (1909).

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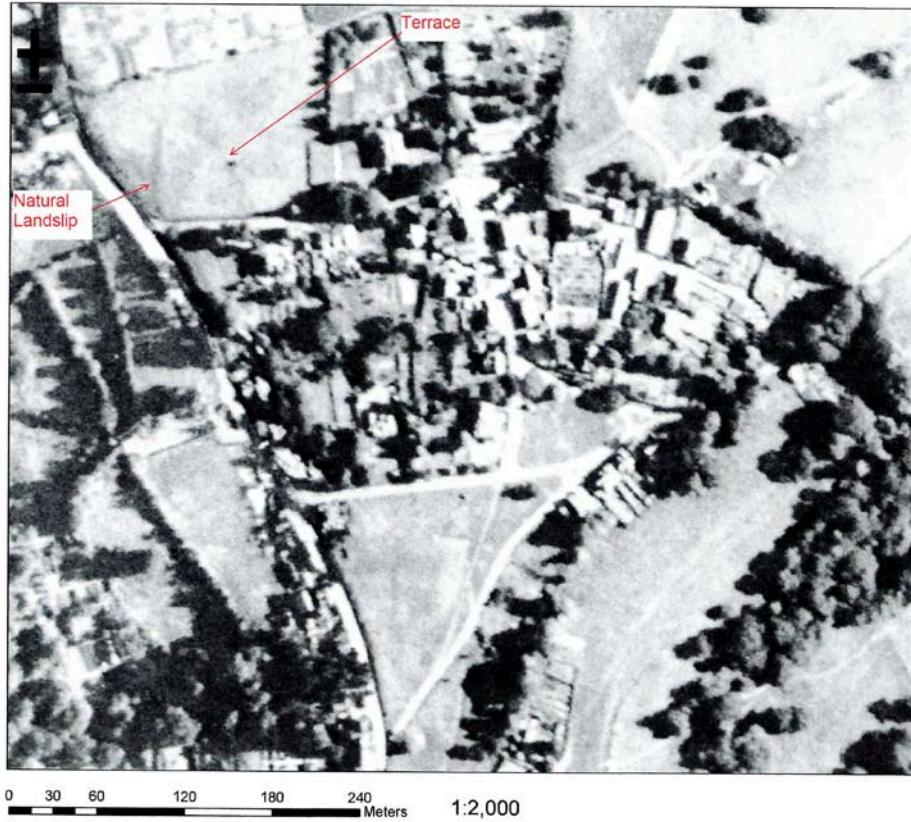


Fig. 9: Frant School: 1947 Aerial Photograph  
(Provided by ESCC)

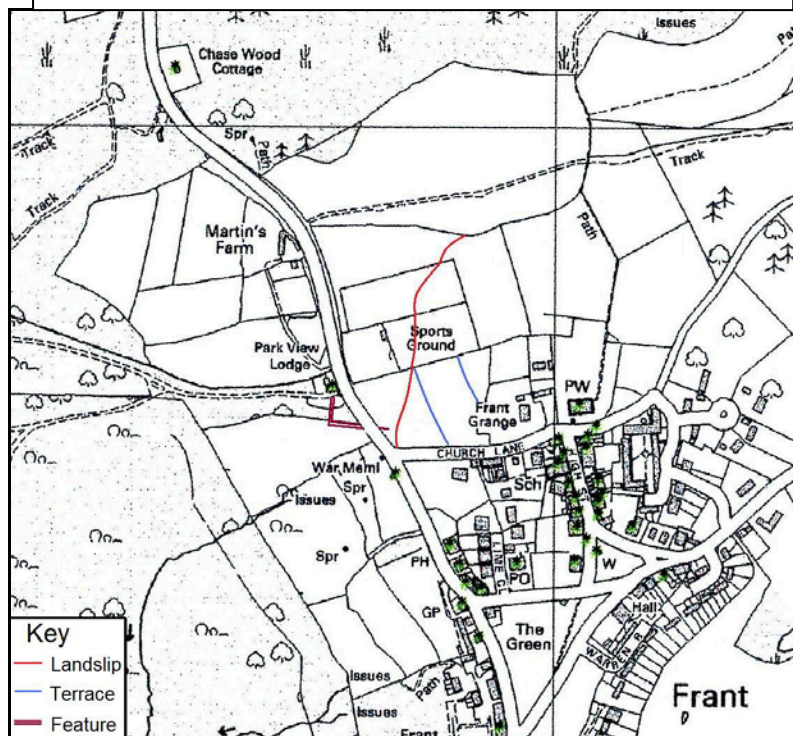


Fig. 10: Frant School: Features shown on aerial photographs  
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Fig. 11: Frant School: Old Frant Church 1797 by an unknown artist: Showing the old Rectory and the house that was later adapted to become the first school.  
(Adapted from Wright 1982)



Fig. 12: Frant School: General view of Glebe Land field



Fig. 13: Frant School: Glebe Land field showing land slip



Fig. 14: Frant School: Western end of Glebe Land showing land slip/quarrying



Fig. 15: Frant School: Glebe Land showing terraces



Fig. 16: Frant School: Church Lane

### Appendix 1: Archaeological Sites Recorded on HER

<b>SMR No.</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Type of Site</b>	<b>Notes</b>
MES3277	TQ 5901 3536	Medieval/Post Medieval	Archery Butts	Now removed
MES3279	TQ 58908 35368	18 <sup>th</sup> Century	One Ash, The Green	Listed Building (DES6601)
MES3280	TQ 5895 3523	World War 2	Type 24 Pillbox	On The Green
MES3285	TQ 59 35	Medieval	Settlement & chapel	Location unknown
MES4875	TQ 6450 3115	Prehistoric/Roman	Trackway	Ridgeway track
MES4876	TQ 5862 4479	Prehistoric/Roman	Trackway	Ridgeway track
DES4800	TQ 59055 35564	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Nos 16-32 High Street	Listed Buildings
DES6006	TQ 59027 35542	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	19 High Street	Listed Building
DES6602	TQ 59018 35560	17 <sup>th</sup> Century	Rose Cottage, High Street	Listed Building
DES6021	TQ 59006 35613	17 <sup>th</sup> Century	33 & 35 High Street	Listed Building
DES5788	TQ 58467 36339	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Chase Farmhouse	Listed Building
DES4823	TQ 58530 36070	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Chasewood Cottage	Listed Building
DES4845	TQ 60055 35373	16 <sup>th</sup> Century	Cornhill Cottages	Listed Building
DES4829	TQ 58924 35187	17/18 <sup>th</sup> Century	Court Cottages	Listed Building
DES6002	TQ 59038 35220	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	East Lodge	Listed Building
DES5307	TQ 58884 35457	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Eridge Cottage	Listed Building
DES6219	TQ 59005 35584	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Frant Church of England School	Listed Building
DES6164	TQ 58934 35256	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Frant Court & attached wall	Listed Building
DES5308	TQ 58911 35428	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Post Office, The Green	Listed Building
DES5309	TQ 59137 35446	17/18 <sup>th</sup> Century	Gable Cottage	Listed Building
DES5827	TQ 59021 35211	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Garden railing, Stone Cottage	Listed Building
DES6520	TQ 59026 35463	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Greenwood Lodge	Listed Building
DES6022	TQ 59055 35537	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Lilac Cottage & Slow Wall	Listed Buildings
DES5313	TQ 59031 35525	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Little Wyndhams & Nesta Cottage	Listed Buildings
DES5312	TQ 59029 35504	17 <sup>th</sup> Century	Manor Cottage	Listed Building
DES4826	TQ 59097 35506	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Mastingate & Tollgate	Listed Building
DES5785	TQ 58910 35127	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Park Hill	Listed Building
DES4825	TQ 58892 35435	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Park View	Listed Building

<b>SMR No.</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Type of Site</b>	<b>Notes</b>
DES4801	TQ 59042 35617	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Priory Cottages	Listed Building
DES5314	TQ 59012 35596	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Rymans Cottages	Listed Buildings
DES5310	TQ 58953 35123	18 <sup>th</sup> Century	Shernfold Lodge	Listed Building
DES4846	TQ 59073 34905	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Shernfold Park	Listed Building
DES6600	TQ 59028 35205	18 <sup>th</sup> Century	Stone Cottage	Listed Building
DES4799	TQ 59060 35546	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Stone House, High Street	Listed Building
DES4828	TQ 59030 35193	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Stone House, The Green	Listed Building
DES4824	TQ 58872 35482	18 <sup>th</sup> Century	The Abergavenny Arms Hotel	Listed Building
DES5786	TQ 58804 35570	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	The Albert Memorial Well	Listed Building
DES4802	TQ 59052 35629	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	The gates and gate piers to Ely Grange	Listed Building
DES6023	TQ 59040 35603	18 <sup>th</sup> Century or earlier	The George Public House	Listed Building
DES4831	TQ 59041 35489	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Railing at Manor Cottage	Listed Building
DES6001	TQ 58955 35460	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	The Limes	Listed Building
DES6005	TQ 59031 35656	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Parish Church of St Alban	Listed Building
DES5787	TQ 59053 35475	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Victoria Well	Listed Building
DES6004	TQ 58887 35410	18 <sup>th</sup> Century	The White House	Listed Building
DES6003	TQ 58958 35131	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Gatepiers and wall, Shernfold Park	Listed Building
DES6215	TQ 59055 35521	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Virginia Cottage	Listed Building
DES4822	TQ 58726 35678	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Whitehill Lodge	Listed Building

### Appendix 2: Archaeological Sites from other sources

<b>Source</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Type of Site</b>	<b>Comments</b>
NMR	TQ 58813527	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Formal gardens	Listed garden
Beswick (2001)	TQ 596 353	18 <sup>th</sup> Century	Brickworks in Shernfold Park	Listed as Brick Field in 1846



## **Chris Butler Archaeological Services**

Chris Butler has been an archaeologist since 1985, and formed the Mid Sussex Field Archaeological Team in 1987, since when it has carried out numerous fieldwork projects, and was runner up in the Pitt-Rivers Award at the British Archaeological Awards in 1996. Having previously worked as a Pensions Technical Manager and Administration Director in the financial services industry, Chris formed **Chris Butler Archaeological Services** at the beginning of 2002.

Chris is a Member of the Institute of Field Archaeologists, a committee member of the Lithic Studies Society, and is a part time lecturer in Archaeology at the University of Sussex, and teaches A-Level Archaeology at Bexhill 6<sup>th</sup> Form College.

Chris specialises in prehistoric flintwork analysis, but has directed excavations, landscape surveys, watching briefs and evaluations, including the excavation of a Beaker Bowl Barrow, a Saxon cemetery and settlement, Roman pottery kilns, and a Mesolithic hunting camp. Chris is Co-Director of the Barcomvbe Roman Villa excavations. He has also recently undertaken an archaeological survey of Ashdown Forest and Broadwater Warren.

**Chris Butler Archaeological Services** is available for Flintwork Analysis, Project Management, Military Archaeology, Desktop Assessments, Field Evaluations, Excavation work, Watching Briefs, Fieldwalking, Landscape & Woodland surveys, Post Excavation Services and Report Writing.

# Chris Butler MIFA Archaeological Services Prehistoric Flintwork Specialist

Rosedale  
Berwick  
Polegate  
East Sussex  
BN26 6TB

Tel & fax: 01323 871021

e mail: [chris@reltub.fsbusiness.co.uk](mailto:chris@reltub.fsbusiness.co.uk)