



Chris Butler MIFA Archaeological Services



**An Archaeological Evaluation Excavation
at land adjacent to
Blatchington House, Seaford,
East Sussex.**

Project No. CBAS0088

LW/09/0873
TV 4836 9986

by
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Summary

Three evaluation trenches were excavated on land adjacent to Blatchington House, East Blatchington, Seaford, East Sussex in October 2009. Although residual Medieval pottery dating from the 13th to 14th centuries was found during the excavation, there were no Medieval features located.

The excavation revealed the footings of an east-west orientated wall of 17th to early/mid 18th century date, and a pit of late 18th to mid/late 19th century date, in addition to other features of late 19th to early 20th century date, possibly associated with the landscaping of the site at this later date.

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Contents

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Historical & Archaeological Background
- 3.0 Archaeological Methodology
- 4.0 Results
- 5.0 Finds
- 6.0 Discussion
- 7.0 Acknowledgements

Figures

- Fig. 1 Site location map
- Fig. 2 Site location and sites on the HER
- Fig. 3 Site plan showing location of trenches.
- Fig. 4 Trench A: Section & Plan
- Fig. 5 Trench B: Section & Plan
- Fig. 6 Trench C: Section
- Fig. 7 3rd Edition OS map showing landscaped gardens
- Figs. 8 & 9 Photographs

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1** Chris Butler Archaeological Services (CBAS) was commissioned by Simon Wiley of Simon Homes to carry out an Archaeological Evaluation Excavation of the proposed site for the construction of two new houses (LW/09/0873) on land adjacent to Blatchington House, East Blatchington, Seaford, East Sussex, in order to establish the likely presence and importance of any archaeological remains that may be affected by the proposed construction.
- 1.2** The site for the proposed houses is located on the north-west corner of Firle Road and Belgrave Road and is centred on TV 4836 9986, in the centre of East Blatchington, opposite St Peter's Church (Fig. 1). The site is approximately 75m x 55m in size, and is currently covered with grass and trees; it is edged by a flint wall on the south and east sides, and is bounded by Blatchington House on its north side, and Field Cottage to the west.
- 1.3** The site is situated between 31m OD at its south end and 33m OD at its north end, and is on a gently sloping south facing slope of the South Downs. The site is within an Archaeological Sensitive Area as it lies in the centre of the historic Medieval and Post Medieval settlement of East Blatchington.
- 1.4** The geology of the site, according to the British Geological Survey (sheet 319/334), comprises Newhaven Chalk, with a large outcrop of Clay-with-flints immediately on east side, which may encroach slightly onto the eastern part of the site.
- 1.5** A desk-based assessment report on the site, incorporating a written scheme of investigation (WSI) for the evaluation excavation was prepared¹, and approved by the Archaeology Team at East Sussex County Council.
- 1.6** The archaeological evaluation excavation took place on the 15th and 16th October 2009. The fieldwork was carried out by the author and Clive Meaton, with the project being managed by Chris Butler.

¹ Butler, C. 2009 *A Desk-based Assessment at land adjacent to Blatchington House, Seaford, East Sussex*, CBAS Report.

2.0 Historical and Archaeological Background

- 2.1** East Blatchington is now a suburb of the town of Seaford, which is situated on the south coast, at the east end of a bay created by the mouth of the River Ouse, which now flows into the English Channel at Newhaven a few kilometres to the west. Seaford has the chalk South Downs to its north onto which the town has expanded during the 20th century, enveloping the originally separate village of East Blatchington. The River Cuckmere lies a short distance to the east of the town. Neither East Blatchington nor Seaford are mentioned in the Domesday Book².
- 2.2** There has been very little archaeological work carried out in the immediate vicinity of the site. The sites and listed building recorded on the Historic Environment Records (HER) were consulted and produced a small number of results (Fig. 2).
- 2.3** A number of Palaeolithic handaxes have been found to the north of Seaford (MES8 & MES58)³ whilst others have come from East Blatchington and the Cuckmere Valley. It has been suggested that this material derives from the Clay-with-flints deposits⁴. There is a large area of Clay-with-flints deposit immediately to the east of the site, and further similar deposits nearby.
- 2.4** A small assemblage of Mesolithic flintwork was found on the west side of Seaford at Valley Dip on a Clay-with-flints deposit, and included debitage and three picks⁵, whilst other pieces have been collected between Seaford Head and Cuckmere Haven⁶.
- 2.5** Evidence for Early Neolithic activity has been found close to the site (MES60) and at other sites nearby. At Rookery Hill, Bishopstone⁷ there may have been a settlement, and near Alfriston⁸ flintwork was recovered around the Early Neolithic *Long Burgh* long barrow. Later Neolithic flintwork was also found at Valley Dip⁹, and near Seaford Head¹⁰.

² Morris, J. (Ed) 1976. *Domesday Book*, Chichester, Phillimore.

³ Woodcock, A. 1981. *The Lower and Middle Palaeolithic Periods in Sussex*. Oxford, BAR 94

⁴ Wymer, J. 1999. *The Lower Palaeolithic Occupation of Britain*, Vol 1. Wessex Archaeology & English Heritage. p.171.

⁵ Butler, C. 1996. 'Later Prehistoric Flintwork from Valley Dip, Seaford, East Sussex', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*. Vol 134.p.219-224.

⁶ Holden, E.W. 1979. 'Flint Artefacts from Seaford'. *Sussex Archaeological Collections*. Vol 117. p.224-227.

⁷ Bell, M. 1977. 'Excavations at Bishopstone'. *Sussex Archaeological Collections*. Vol 115.

⁸ Butler, C. 2001. 'Horned Scrappers and other Prehistoric Flintwork from Alfriston, East Sussex'. *Sussex Archaeological Collections* Vol. 139. p 215-223.

⁹ Butler, C. 1996. 'Later Prehistoric Flintwork from Valley Dip, Seaford, East Sussex', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*. Vol 134.p.219-224.

¹⁰ *Sussex Notes & Queries*. 1950-3. Vol 13. p. 193-197.

- 2.6** Bronze Age flintwork has been found in the immediate vicinity of the site (MES59 & MES60). The presence of these finds would suggest that a Bronze Age settlement may be located nearby. Other finds of Bronze Age date have been made to the north of Seaford at Rathfinney Farm where flintwork was recovered¹¹, whilst flintwork was also found at Valley Dip and around Seaford Head.
- 2.7** There is some evidence for Roman settlement and activity in the local area. Some pottery sherds of 2nd to 4th century date, possibly representing domestic debris, were found in the upper ditch fill of Seaford Head hillfort and a discrete scatter of possible Late Iron Age or Roman pottery was recovered at Walls Brow (TV507985) during the 1982-3 fieldwalking survey¹². Other concentrations of Roman pottery, and evidence of field systems have been found on south-facing spurs in this area of the South Downs¹³.
- 2.8** In December 1860, two urns of coarse pottery were dug up in the tower of East Blatchington Church (MES1687) opposite the site. The larger of the two was upright and perfect, but the other was broken. They were said to contain charred bones, which were re-buried. These are likely to have been cremation burials from the Romano-British period.
- 2.9** There is no evidence for Saxon activity at the site, although it is possible that the Medieval settlement at East Blatchington may have had earlier Saxon origins.
- 2.10** Seaford is located in Flexborough Hundred, but was not mentioned in the Domesday Book. It may well have been connected to the settlement and Minster Church at Bishopstone, or the manor at Sutton¹⁴. Seaford was located at an important strategic position at the mouth of the River Ouse, controlling access up river to Lewes, and seems to have been a settlement prior 1058¹⁵.
- 2.11** East Blatchington has Medieval origins, possibly being a village or hamlet in its own right situated a little further north of Seaford (MES7), although it too is not mentioned in the Domesday Book. The existence of nearby Sutton is confirmed by various documents dating from the 12th and 13th centuries¹⁶ to the 15th century¹⁷.

¹¹ Butler, C. 2001. 'Horned Scrappers and other Prehistoric Flintwork from Alfriston, East Sussex'. *Sussex Archaeological Collections* Vol. **139**. p 215-223.

¹² Garwood, P. 1985. 'The Cuckmere Valley Project Fieldwalking Programme 1982-3. *Institute of Archaeology Bulletin* **22**. p62.

¹³ Greg Chuter *pers. com.*

¹⁴ Combe, P. 2002. 'Bishopstone'. *Sussex Archaeological Collections*. Vol. **140**. p.49-56.

¹⁵ Drewett, P. & Freke, D. 1982. 'The Medieval Farm on Bullock Down c 1250-1550' in Drewett, P. *The Archaeology of Bullock Down, Eastbourne, East Sussex*. Sussex Archaeological Society.

¹⁶ ESRO (SAS-M/1/331)

¹⁷ Combes, P. 2002. 'Bishopstone', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*. Vol **140**. p.49-56.

- 2.12** St Peter's church at East Blatchington (DES1475), which is directly opposite the site, has 12th century origins, with parts of the nave being of this date, although the tower was replaced in the 13th century¹⁸. The Hospital of St James of Sutton by Seaford was founded sometime before 1260 (MES1691) and was situated a short distance to the south of the site.
- 2.13** Field Cottage, which is situated immediately to the west of the site, is a Grade II Listed 17th century house (DES1495). Constructed of knapped flint walls, it has a tiled roof with three tall chimney stacks and two buttresses. The knapped garden wall of Field Cottage is also Grade II Listed, although undated.
- 2.14** There are no records for the early Post Medieval period, however a draft release of 1717¹⁹ refers to "the Manor of Blatchington and lands (153 acres), the advowson of the Manor House called Blatchington" and may be referring to Blatchington House which stands immediately to the north of the site. A lease of 1793²⁰ also refers to the manor house of the Manor of Blatchington called 'Blatchington'.
- 2.15** Yeakell and Gardener's map of Sussex 1778-1783²¹ shows the south-east corner of the site (at the corner of Firle Road and Belgrave Road) to be occupied by a building, whilst there is another building on the street frontage of Firle Road between this and the building that is almost certainly Blatchington House.
- 2.16** The East Blatchington Tithe map shows the site to be mostly open ground, although there is a building on the Belgrave Road frontage. The field in which the site is located (No.38) is called 'Hog Plot' so perhaps the building shown is a barn or pigsties as it has not been allocated its own number. This plot, and all adjacent plots, are owned by John King, and occupied by William King Sampson.
- 2.17** The 1st Edition OS map (1875) shows the site to still be open ground, but the buildings shown on the tithe map does not appear to be present any more. A well is shown on the west side of the site, and the buildings to the north are a part of East Balchington Farm.
- 2.18** By the time of the 2nd Edition OS map (1899) the well is no longer shown, and there may be a small building once again on Belgrave Road frontage. Blatchington House is now shown to the north of the site on the same footprint as a building on the 1st Edition OS map.

¹⁸ Whiteman K & J. 1994. *Ancient Churches of Sussex*, Seaford. S B Publications.

¹⁹ ERSO GIL/4/2/12/18

²⁰ ERSO SAS-DD/312

²¹ http://www.envf.port.ac.uk/geo/research/historical/webmap/sussexmap/Yeakell_36.htm

- 2.19** The 3rd Edition OS map (1911) shows no buildings within the boundary of the site which is now shown to be mostly covered with trees and paths, perhaps as a garden. The group of buildings to the west of the site are shown as Blatchington Court.
- 2.20** By the 4th Edition OS map (1929), there has been little change to the site and its immediate surroundings, although there are many new buildings shown to the housing estates of Seaford can be seen encroaching into the southern part of East Blatchington.
- 2.21** During the First World War two large army camps were established at Seaford²². The North Camp was situated near the current North Way and North Camp Lane (TQ 486 001), just to the east of the site. Initially comprising bell tents, these were replaced by wooden huts²³, and although the camp does not appear to have extended as far as the site, it is likely that the surrounding Downland was used for training.
- 2.22** During the Second World War the area was once again used for training. Houses in the surrounding area were damaged in German bombing raids²⁴, and a Heavy Anti-aircraft (HAA) battery was established just to the west of the site and manned by B troop 583 HAA Battery, with many local houses being requisitioned by the unit²⁵.
- 2.23** An aerial photograph taken in 1947 shows most of the site to be covered with trees. It appears to have remained an open area with some trees until the present day.

²² Butler, C. 2007. *East Sussex under Attack*. Stroud. Tempus Publishing Ltd.

²³ Longstaff-Tyrrell, P. 2000. *Front-Line Sussex*. Stroud. Sutton Publishing Ltd.

²⁴ Rowland, D. 2001. *Coastal Blitz*. Seaford. S.B. Publications.

²⁵ Seaford Museum. (MFN1278).

3.0 Archaeological Methodology

- 3.1** Three evaluation trenches were excavated on the 15th and 16th October. Trenches A and B measured 15m x 1.8m and Trench C was 8m x 1.8m. Trench A and Trench B were positioned over the footprint of the new houses, with the smaller Trench C being situated over the entrance driveway from Firle Road to the new properties (Fig. 3).
- 3.2** The trenches were first measured and marked out, before being subjected to a CAT scan to detect any services, of which none were detected. A Precision Gold metal detector was used to scan the area of each trench prior to excavation commencing, and further scans with the metal detector were also conducted at various times on the machined surfaces and also on the spoilheaps.
- 3.3** Trench A was positioned in accordance with the WSI, however the position of Trench B, which was situated in the wooded area on the western side of the site, had to be adjusted to avoid a number of large trees which could not be removed at this time, whilst Trench C was adjusted slightly to avoid a large bush.
- 3.4** All the excavations of the trenches were carried out using a wheeled JCB with a 1.8 toothless bucket under archaeological supervision. The site was fenced off with orange plastic fencing on the night of the 15/16th for health and safety reasons due to Trench A being left open overnight.
- 3.5** A bench mark was located on the south-west corner of St Peter's Church (31.66m OD) and was transferred to establish a temporary bench mark (TBM) at the site on the inside of the southern gate post at its junction with the boundary wall (TBM: 33.54m OD).
- 3.6** All archaeological deposits, features and finds were excavated and recorded according to accepted professional standards. Deposit colours were recorded by visual inspection and not by reference to a Munsell Colour chart.
- 3.7** A full photographic record of the work was kept as appropriate and will form part of the site archive. The archive is presently held by Chris Butler Archaeological Services, and after any further analysis, will be offered to Seaford Museum. A site reference BHS 09 of has been allocated.

4.0 Results

- 4.1** Trench A was on an east-west alignment about halfway down the site on the eastern side (Fig. 3). Context **1** was a layer of dark brown silty clay loam topsoil up to 200mm deep, with a loose consistence. The coarse components were made up of chalk flecking and pieces up to 20mm (1%), flint pieces up to 200mm (1%), charcoal flecks (<1%) and roots (1%). The artefacts recovered from this layer were of pottery, oyster shell, glass and ceramic building material (CBM).
- 4.2** Context **2** was only apparent at the eastern end of Trench A and was below Context **1**. This was a layer of light grey brown silty clay loam made ground, with a loose consistence and a depth of up to 200mm. The coarse components were of chalk flecking and pieces up to 20mm (1%) and flint pieces up to 50mm (1%). No artefacts were recovered from this layer.
- 4.3** Context **3** was below Context **2** at the eastern end of Trench A, and Context **1** along the rest of the trench (Fig. 4). It was a layer of mid brown silty clay loam with a firm consistence, and had a depth of up to 350mm with coarse components of chalk flecking (<1%), flint pieces up to 150mm (1%) and charcoal flecks (<1%). The only artefacts recovered from this context were CBM and a single piece of worked flint.
- 4.4** Below Context **3** was Context **4**, which was a layer of orange-brown sandy clay containing patches of silty clay and chalk pieces, with coarse components of flint nodules up to 300mm (10%). This layer was a matrix of clay-with-flints and chalk patches, and was the natural on this part of the site.
- 4.5** A sondage at the western end of Trench A was excavated to a depth of 1.7m. In the sondage it revealed that below Context **4** was a layer of yellow-orange coarse sand with a loose consistence (Context **5**). The coarse components in this layer were of flint nodules up to 200mm (1%). This Context is almost certainly a solution hollow of Clay-with-flints.
- 4.6** A cut feature (Cut **6**) was partially revealed in the north-eastern corner of Trench A (Fig. 8). The cut was steep sided with a flat bottom, the excavated dimensions measuring 700mm along its east-west side and 500mm on the north-south side, and it had a depth of up to 550mm.
- 4.7** The fill of Cut **6** was a mid grey silty sand clay with a firm consistence (Fill **7**), and had been compacted down on the west side of the cut by the overlying Context **3**. The coarse components of the fill were chalk pieces up to 100mm but most were smaller and flint pieces up to 50mm, artefacts recovered were of mid 18th to 19th century CBM and pottery.

- 4.8** A roughly circular depression (Feature 8), which cut Context 4 and was below Context 3, had a gently sloping eastern edge into a flat but irregular bottom, with a much steeper slope on its west side (Fig. 4). The fill was a mid grey-brown sandy clay with a depth of up to 350mm, and having coarse components of flint pieces up to 50mm (1%) and chalk pieces up to 40mm (1%), and no artefacts were recovered from it. No other features were found in Trench A.
- 4.9** Trench B was situated in the wooded area on the west side of the site and was on north-south alignment, this trench also took in the break of slope at the southern end of the site (Fig. 2). Context 9 was a layer of dark brown silty clay loam topsoil with a depth of up to 300mm, and containing numerous roots throughout (Fig. 5). The coarse components were made up of flint pieces up to 100mm (1%), chalk flecking (1%) and charcoal (<1%). Artefacts recovered from this layer were of CBM, pottery, glass and plastic, and apart from a residual flint flake and Medieval pottery sherd, are all of late 19th and early 20th century date.
- 4.10** Below Context 9 was a made ground layer up to 400mm deep of a mid brown sandy clay with a friable consistence (Context 10) and having coarse components of chalk flecking (<1%), flint nodules up to 100mm (1%) and charcoal (<1%). Artefacts recovered from this layer comprised CBM (including 20th century bricks stamped on the frogged side with 'LBC' (London Brick Company) and 'Flettons Limited' – not retained), glass and pottery.
- 4.11** Within Context 10, was an oval 'dump' of burnt or industrial waste material (Fig. 5) measuring 600mm x 800mm, with a depth of up to 200mm (Context 11), although there was no evidence to suggest *in-situ* burning. The material in this deposit was a dark grey ash with a loose consistence, and having coarse components of pieces of slag up to 120mm (60%), pieces of flint up to 100mm (<5%) and pebbles up to 50mm (1%). The artefacts recovered from this deposit were of late 19th to early 20th century glass, pottery and CB M.
- 4.12** Below Context 10 was a layer of mid orange-brown sandy clay with a compact consistence (Context 12), having coarse components of flint nodules up to 250mm (5-10%). No artefacts were recovered from this layer of natural.
- 4.13** A linear feature, possibly a wall footing, crossed the trench on an east-west alignment at approximately 6m from the southern end of Trench B (Fig. 5). The wall structure (Context 14) comprised sub-angular flints up to 100mm in size, bonded with a creamy-buff lime mortar with very fine flint aggregate. A fragment of brick from this feature is probably of 17th to early/mid 18th century date.

- 4.14** The cut (Cut **13**) for the wall footing was within Context **10**, and had gently sloping sides with a maximum width of 1m at the top, decreasing to 800mm at the bottom at the west end, but was narrower at the east end. The cut was 200mm deep, but the feature appeared to have been heavily truncated (Fig. 9). No further features were found in Trench B.
- 4.15** Trench C was located at the northern end of the site and very close to the eastern boundary of the site, and was on an east-west alignment (Fig. 2). There were only three contexts apparent in this trench (Fig. 6). The upper layer was Context **15** was a 200mm to 300mm deep layer of a mid brown topsoil sandy clay with a friable consistence. The coarse components were made up of sub angular flints up to 100mm (1%), charcoal flecking (<1%) and chalk flecking (<1%) with roots throughout. No artefacts were recovered from this layer.
- 4.16** Below Context **15** was a layer of mixed mid orange-brown sandy clay with areas silty clay and areas of sub circular and linear patches of chalk (Context **16**). This layer had a firm consistence and had coarse components of flint nodules up to 200mm (20%). No artefacts were recovered from this layer, which was the natural.
- 4.17** At the eastern end of Trench C and below Context **15** was a heavily bioturbated layer of brownish- orange sand with a friable consistence (Context **17**) containing flint nodules up to 200mm (<1%) and sandstone pieces (<1%). This layer became paler and contained fewer coarse components further down. No artefacts were found here and this layer appears to be natural, although heavily disturbed by the shrubbery growing here.
- 4.18** The ground level falls by some 500mm to the current road level on the east side of the boundary wall which is immediately to the east of Trench C. It therefore seems that any remnant of a Medieval street frontage here will have been truncated away by later landscaping of the gardens. There were no archaeological features noted in Trench C.

5.0 The Finds.

5.0.1 The archaeological work recovered a small assemblage of finds from the site. These are summarized in Tables 1 and 2. The assemblage is not considered to hold any potential for further analysis. This is due to the assemblage's small size and lack of good sealed context groups. The assemblage does not warrant retention in a museum.

5.1 Pottery by Luke Barber

5.1.1 The earliest pottery from the site is of Medieval date, probably of the mid/late 13th to mid/late 14th centuries. All the sherds present consist of fairly small (to 40mm across) and moderately abraded cooking pot fragments in fine/medium sand tempered ware, probably from the Ringmer industry.

5.1.2 The only feature sherd is an oxidised rectangular club rim from Context **9** of probable late 13th to 14th century date. Considering the relatively small area investigated the presence of Medieval material suggests the site may have been quite intensively manured during this period and as such may not lie far from the associated farmstead.

5.1.3 A single abraded flaring rim from a lid-seated jar in oxidised earthenware was recovered from Context **1**. It is probably of later 15th to 16th century date and potentially represents continued manuring of arable land during this period.

Table 1 The Pottery, CBM and Stone

Context	Pot: medieval	Pot: early post-medieval	Pot: late post-medieval	Ceramic Building Material	Other	Deposit Date
1	-	1/32g	19/444g	Peg tile – 14/463g Brick – 3/119g	Stone 1/129g	Mixed: c. 1775 – 1900 (moderate residual C14 – 16 th)
7	-	-	1/4g	Peg tile – 1/114g	-	c. 1775 – 1900
9	1/15g	-	15/327g	-	-	c. 1890 – 1925 (low resid. medieval)
10	1/4g	-	-	Peg tile – 1/16g Brick – 1/94g	-	c. 1850 – 1925 (low resid. medieval)
11	1/8g	-	2/9g	Peg tile – 1/28g Brick – 1/54g Drain – 1/299g	Stone 1/20g	c. 1850 – 1925 (low resid. medieval)
14	-	-	-	Brick 1/62g	Mortar 3/74g	C17th – 18 th (CBM only)

5.1.4 The majority of the pottery can be placed in the late post-medieval period. Context **1** produced the largest assemblage, consisting entirely of post-medieval glazed redware sherds from jars and a deep dish. A late 18th to mid/late 19th century date range is probable. Similar singular sherds were recovered from Contexts **7**, **9** and **11**.

5.1.5 Context **9** was dominated by nine large unabraded sherds of unglazed earthenware flower pot but also included three sherds from a refined white earthenware plate and bowl with blue borders as well as a cup base in a similar ware but coloured tan brown on its exterior. The base of this piece is stamped 'England' (post 1891) and part of a War Office green printed mark is visible. As such it is probable that this vessel originated from one of the military camps held at Seaford. As the form does not match those known from the Great War camps it is possible the piece relates to the pre-war summer camps held in the area. The same context also produced a Sunderland slipware bowl fragment.

5.2 Ceramic Building Material by Luke Barber

5.2.1 A small quantity of peg tile was recovered. The material shows a surprising chronological range considering the small size of the assemblage. Context **1** not only produced the largest assemblage of tile but one that covered all the periods represented. The earliest pieces consist of two small abraded scraps (7g) tempered with abundant medium/coarse sand. There is no form discernable, but the fabrics would be in keeping with a 13th to 14th century date.

5.2.2 Context **1** also produced three pieces (151g) of 14mm thick, quite crudely finished and medium fired peg tile tempered with moderate medium sand with some flint grits to 1mm. A 14th to 15th century date is quite likely for these. The same deposit also produced two peg tile fragments (71g), both crudely made but well fired, tempered with sparse fine sand with moderate chalk (voids) to 2mm. These pieces are probably of 15th to 16th/17th century date.

5.2.3 Four peg tile fragments (93g) are quite well formed, hard fired and tempered with sparse fine sand with iron oxide pellets to 2mm: a late 16th to mid 18th century date range is probable. The latest tile from Context **1** consists of three well formed and hard-fired pieces tempered with sparse fine sand with white clay streaks. A mid 18th to 19th century date range is suggested for these pieces. Other contexts produced similar examples of tile, namely that tempered with sand/chalk (Context **10**) and the mid 18th to 19th century type (Contexts **7** and **11**).

5.2.4 A few brick fragments were recovered. Potentially the earliest is from Context **14** which produced a medium fired example tempered with moderate fine sand and sparse iron oxides. A 17th to early/mid 18th century date is likely but a larger sample would be needed to be sure. Context **1**, **10** and **11** produced a few pieces tempered with sparse fine sand and likely to be of mid 18th to 19th century date. The only other item of note is part of the collar from a late 19th to early 20th century salt-glazed drain from **11**.

5.3 Stone & Mortar by Luke Barber

5.3.1 Only two pieces of stone were recovered from the site. Context **1** produced a sub-squared section elongated whetstone in a hard grey quartz sandstone. The piece, which has signs of extensive wear, is likely to represent a 19th century example, potentially originating from the Midlands/North. The other piece of stone consists of a piece of Welsh roofing slate from Context **11**.

5.3.2 Context **14** produced three pieces of off-white sandy lime mortar with abundant inclusions of sub-rounded to sub-angular flint grits (black, grey, white, orange, brown) to 5mm. Although mortar cannot be reliably dated this type is more typical of the Post-Medieval period.

Table 2. Other Finds

Context	Glass	Flint	Shell	Other
1	2 (68g)	-	4 (104g)	-
3	-	1 (118g)	-	-
9	2 (62g)	1 (29g)	-	-
10	2 (144g)	-	-	-
11	1 (7g)	-	-	6 Slag (512g) 1 Nail (5g)

5.4 Glass by Chris Butler

5.4.1 One complete bottle and six fragments of glass were recovered during the excavation (Table 2). Two fragments of dark green bottle glass, including part of a base, from Context **1** have originated from 19th century mineral water bottles. A complete bottle (138gms) in a light blue coloured glass from Context **10** resembles a large ink bottle in shape, and has been formed from two moulded halves with an applied lip, and is likely to date from the later 19th century.

5.4.2 The remaining fragments of glass comprise a base from a bright green coloured mineral water bottle, and three pieces of clear bottle glass, one of which has part of a triangular panel and the word 'FIRST' on it. All of these are likely to date from the 20th century.

5.5 Flint by Chris Butler

5.5.1 Two pieces of worked flint were recovered during the excavation. The first is a small nodule from Context **3** which has had a number of flakes removed from one face. The removals are regular, and all in the same direction, but it is not clear whether this is a later prehistoric core, or perhaps the result of the nodule being knapped for wall construction.

5.5.2 The second piece was a hard hammer-struck flake from Context **9** which has been struck from a nodule of Bullhead flint. The core is undiagnostic, but is likely to be later prehistoric in date.

5.6 Other finds by Chris Butler

5.6.1 Four fragments of oyster shell were found in Context **1** (Table 2). These are probably kitchen waste, but could have been deposited in the topsoil as a result of manuring.

5.6.2 A sample of the slag and other burnt material from Context **11** was taken. The majority of the pieces were iron slag of varying sizes, but had not derived from a blast furnace. Other pieces of unidentified burnt material were also included. It is not clear whether these have come from waste from an industrial activity, or are from a bonfire.

5.6.3 A single small square-headed iron nail was found in Context **11**.

6.0 Discussion

- 6.1** The pieces of worked flint hint at some prehistoric activity nearby, probably dating to the Bronze Age, which supports earlier evidence from scatters of prehistoric flintwork in the area of the site. The presence of Clay-with-flints and other tertiary deposits at the site suggest there may be some potential for Mesolithic or Upper Palaeolithic in-situ flintwork in the area, although no evidence for this was found apart from the presence of the Bullhead flint flake. Bullhead flint derives from deposits in north Kent, and can only have arrived at the site through trade/exchange or through re-deposition in a geological deposit.
- 6.2** A small number of residual Medieval pottery sherds were found and due to their abraded nature, suggest they result from manuring activity, perhaps in a field or garden close to a Medieval farm or houses. No evidence for Medieval buildings or associated features, such as pits or property boundary ditches was found, although subsequent landscaping may have removed this evidence.
- 6.3** All of the features found during the evaluation appear to be of Post Medieval date. The earliest feature is the east-west aligned flint wall (Contexts **13/14**) located in Trench B, which may date to the 17th to early/mid 18th century. The 19th century OS maps show a number of east-west orientated features in this part of the site, but it is unclear whether they represent walls or paths.
- 6.4** Pit **6** in Trench A produced pottery and tile, albeit single pieces, of late 18th to mid/late 19th century date range. The function of this pit is unclear, but it predates the made ground and path which both run above it. Pit **8**, may be a tree hollow, and therefore given the late 19th/early 20th century date of the artefacts in its fill, it represents the more recent use of this area as a landscaped garden. The area of burnt material (Context **11**) in Trench B also has a late 19th/early 20th century date.
- 6.5** The terraced nature of the entire site, together with the pathways that currently exist across the site (and also evidenced on the later 19th and early 20th century OS maps (Fig. 7)), and the presence of areas of made ground in the evaluation trenches above the wall and Pit **6**, suggest that the site has been significantly landscaped during the later 19th and early 20th century.
- 6.6** Although this may have removed or truncated earlier archaeological features, the presence of the wall and pit below the made ground suggests that other earlier archaeological features may survive. It seems unlikely that any evidence for Medieval properties fronting onto Firle Road has survived, and indeed the evidence seems to be the site was fields or gardens during the Medieval period, although if this was the case, property boundary ditches may be present.

6.7 Although the evaluation excavation did not provide any conclusive evidence for the presence of Medieval or early Post Medieval activity at the site, the excavation has demonstrated that archaeological features do survive, albeit heavily truncated, at the site. This together with the location of the site adjacent to the church and at the centre of the Medieval and Post Medieval settlement, suggests that it may be prudent to undertake a watching brief during the groundworks associated with the construction of the new houses.

7.0 Acknowledgements

7.1 I would like to thank Mr Simon Wiley of Simon Homes for commissioning this archaeological evaluation excavation. I would also like to thank Clive Meaton for his assistance with the fieldwork on both days of the excavation. Rachel Butler processed the artefacts.

7.2 I would also like to thank Luke Barber for reporting on the pottery, CBM and other finds, and Jane Russell who prepared the sections for the report. The project was managed for CBAS by Chris Butler , and was monitored for ESCC by Greg Chuter.

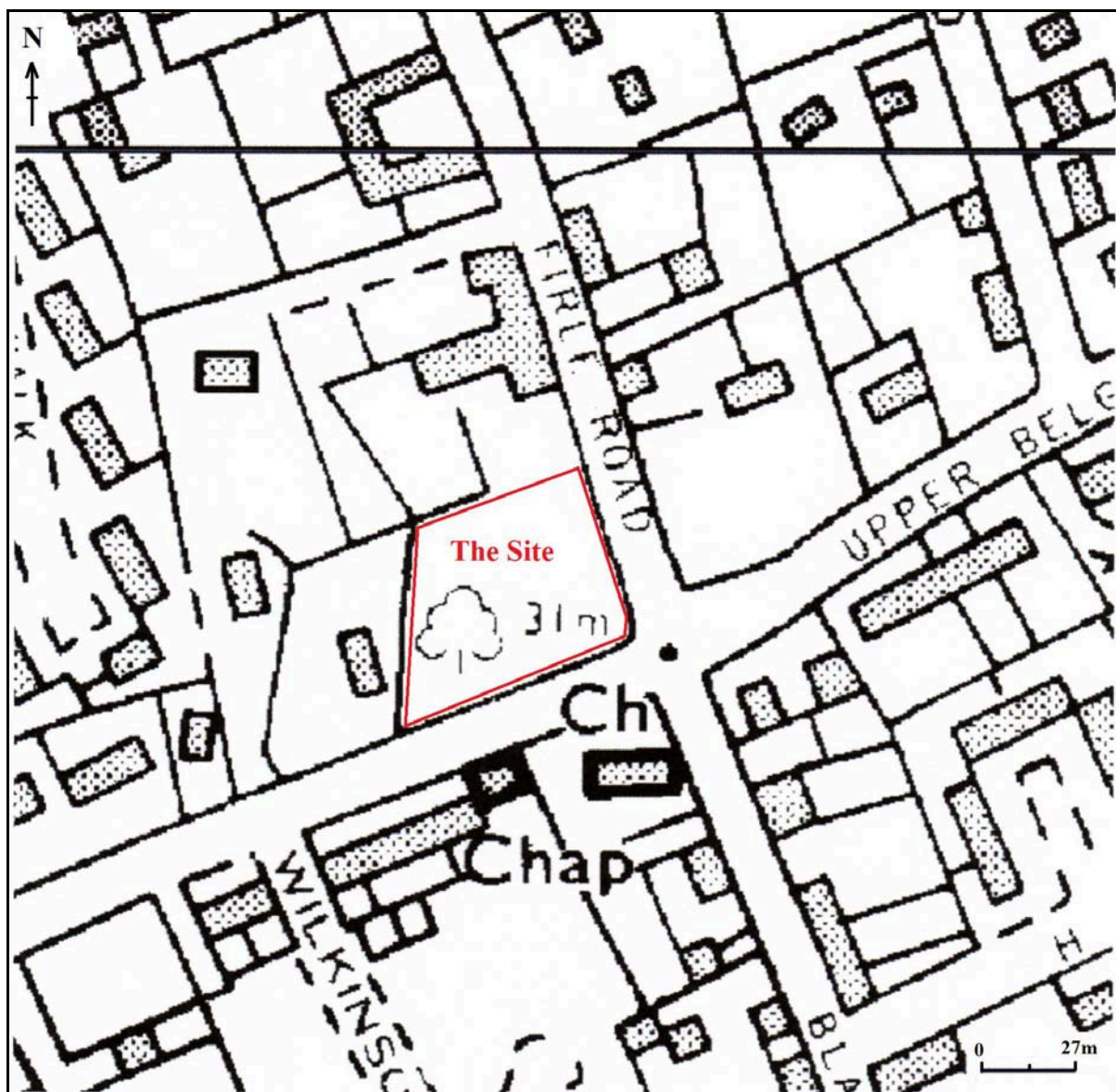
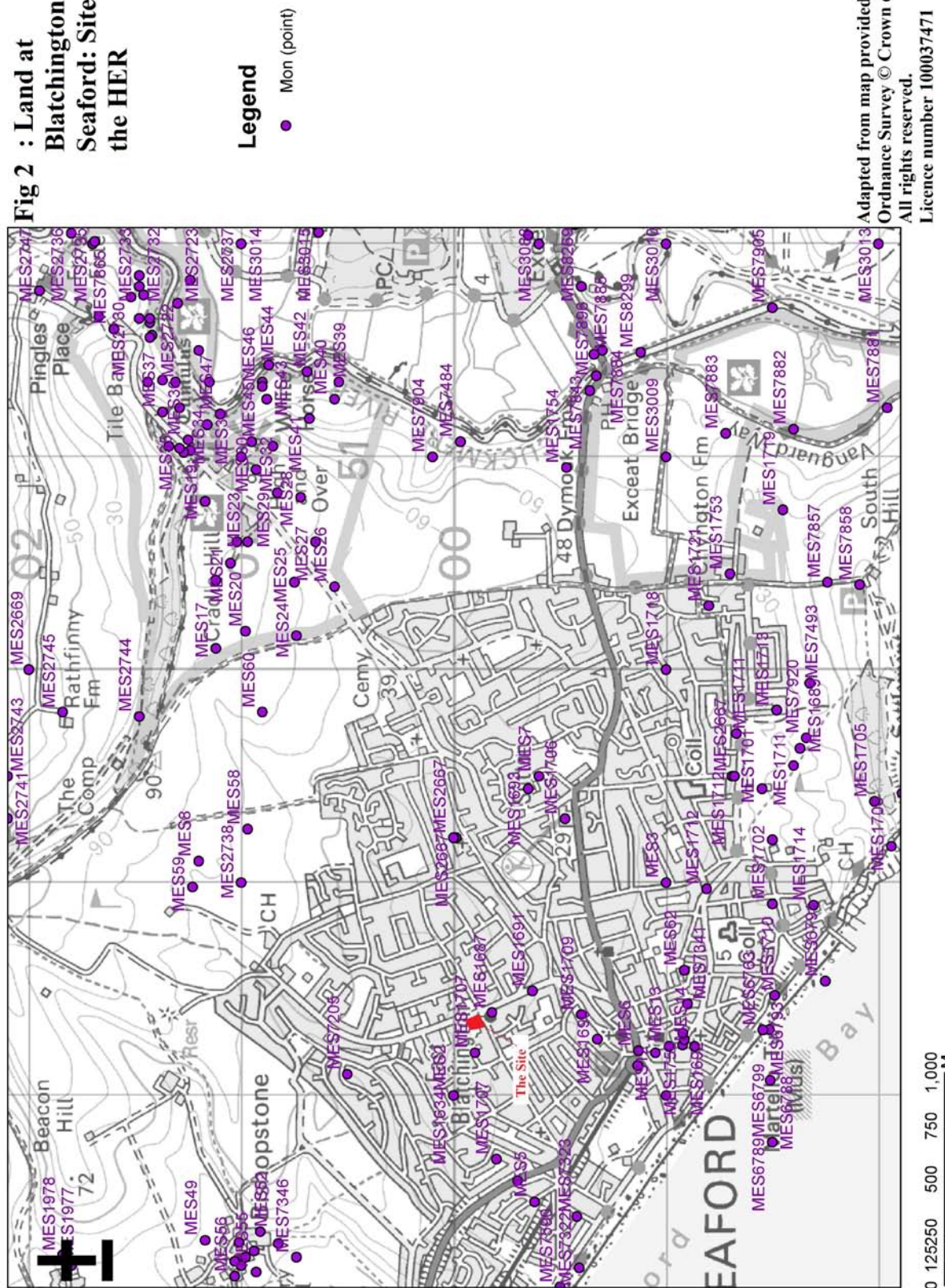


Fig. 1: Land at Blatchington House, Seaford: Site location map
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**Fig 2 : Land at
 Blatchington House,
 Seaford: Sites on
 the HER**



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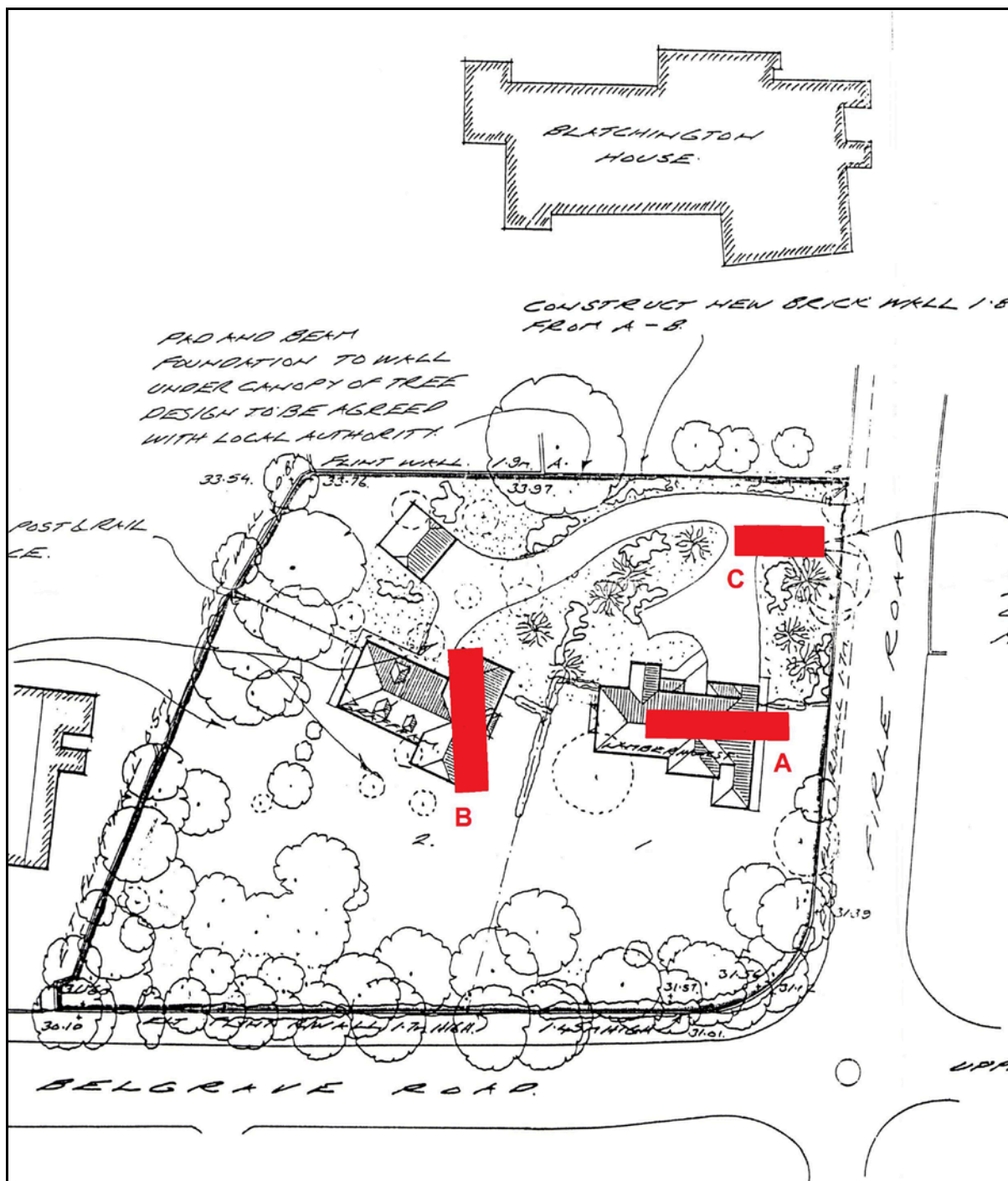


Fig.3: Land at Blatchington House, Seaford: Site development layout showing the actual location of the evaluation trenches.

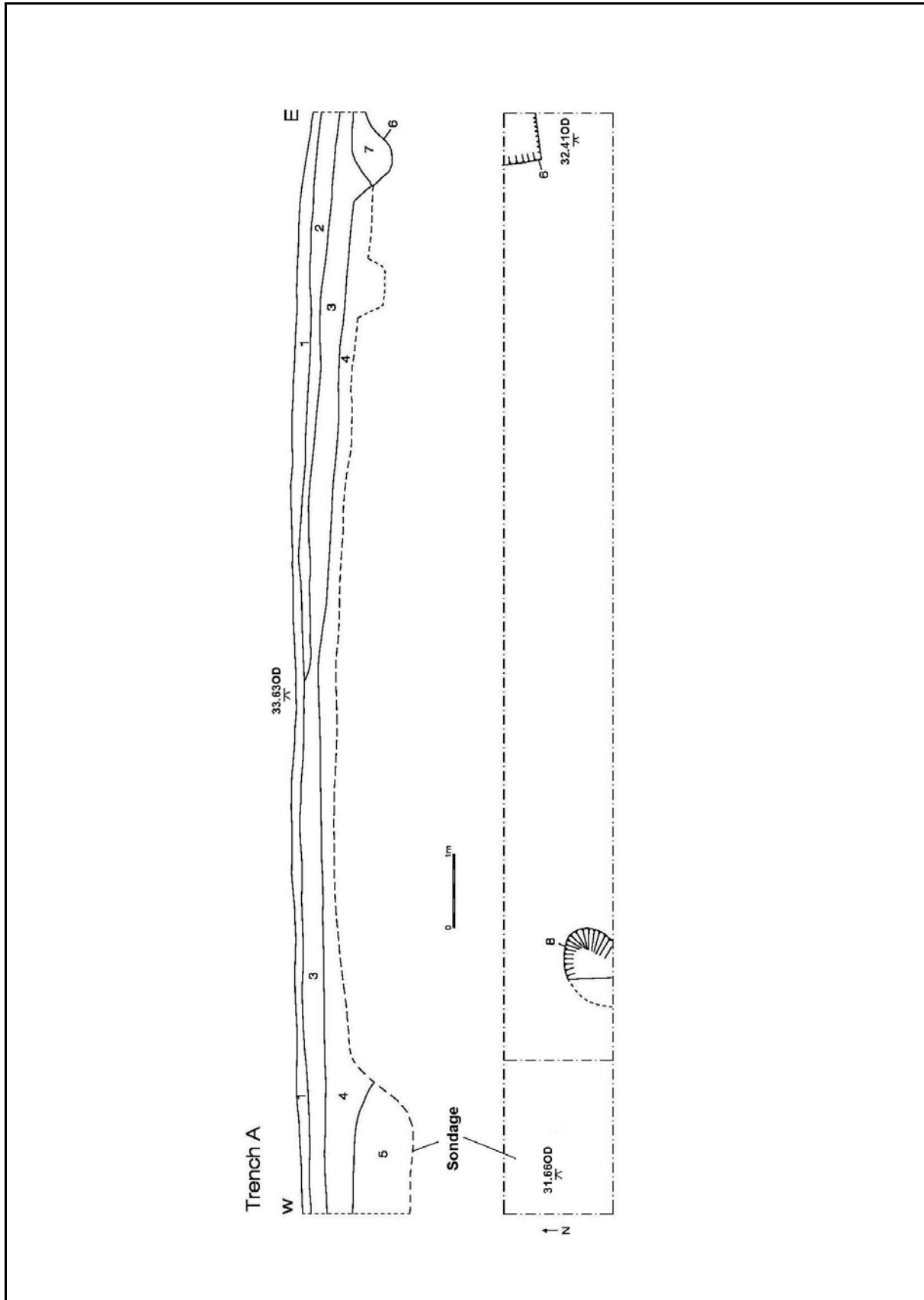


Fig.4: Land at Blatchington House, Seaford: Trench A: Section and Plan.

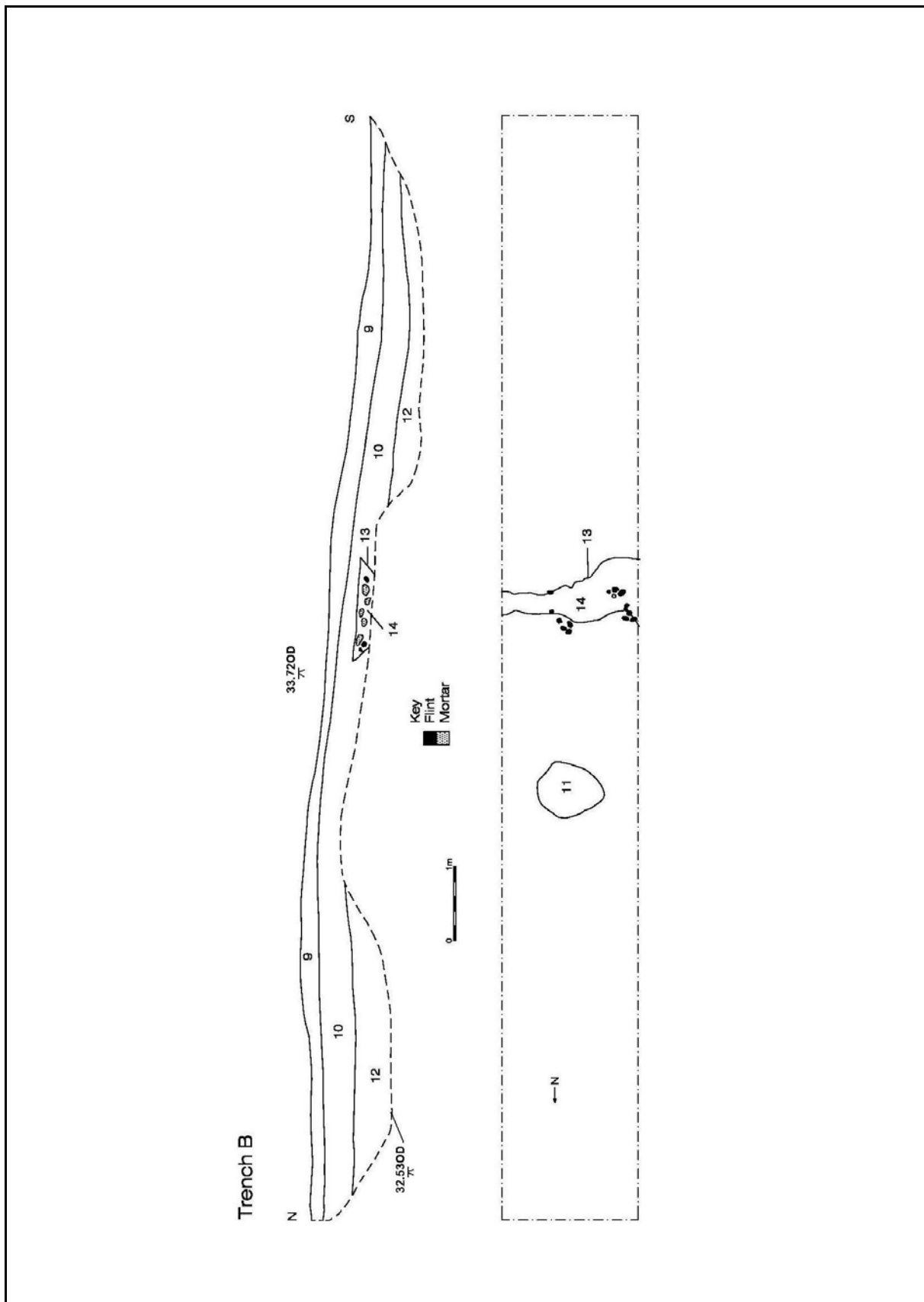


Fig.5: Land at Blatchington House, Seaford: Trench B: Section and Plan.

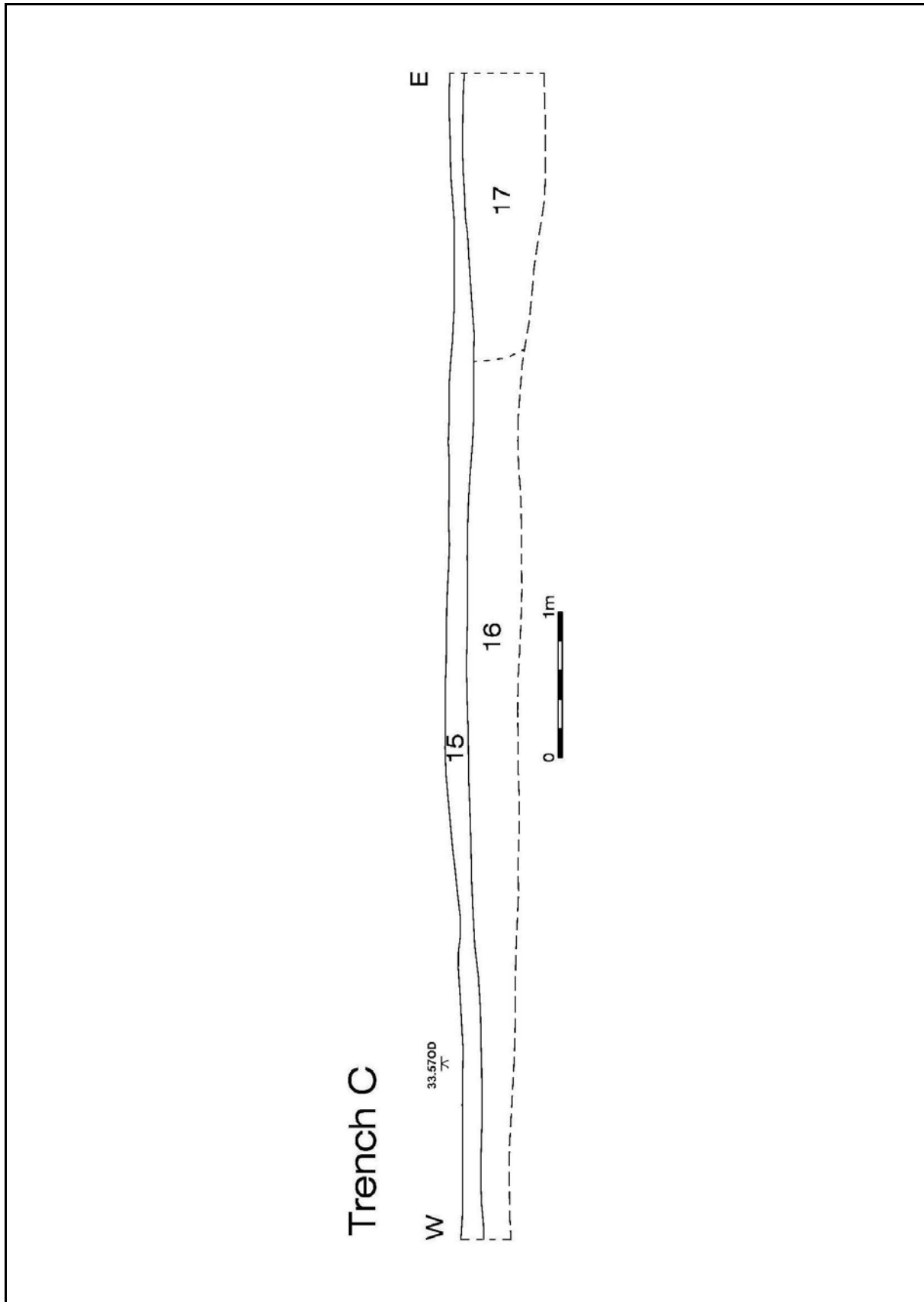


Fig.6: Land at Blatchington House, Seaford: Trench C: Section.



Fig. 7: Land at Blatchington House, Seaford: 3rd Edition OS Map showing the landscaped gardens at the site at this time



Fig. 8: Land at Blatchington House, Seaford: Photograph of Pit 6



Fig. 9: Land at Blatchington House, Seaford: Photograph of Wall 13/14

HER Summary Form

Site Code	BHS 09					
Identification Name and Address	Land adjacent to Blatchington House, Seaford, East Sussex.					
County, District &/or Borough	Lewes District Council					
OS Grid Refs.	TV 4836 9986					
Geology	Newhaven Chalk with Clay-with-flints to the east side which may encroach onto the site.					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval. X	Excav.	Watching Brief	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field	Shallow Urban X	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav. 15&16 th 10-09	WB.	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Simon Wiley of Simon Homes					
Project Manager	Chris Butler MIFA					
Project Supervisor	Keith Butler PIFA					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED X	PM X	Other		
<p>100 Word Summary.</p> <p><i>Three evaluation trenches were excavated on land adjacent to Blatchington House, East Blatchington, Seaford, East Sussex in October 2009. Although residual Medieval pottery dating from the 13th to 14th centuries was found during the excavation, there were no Medieval features located.</i></p> <p><i>The excavation revealed the footings of an east-west orientated wall of 17th to early/mid 18th century date, and a pit of late 18th to mid/late 19th century date, in addition to other features of late 19th to early 20th century date, possibly associated with the landscaping of the site at this later date.</i></p>						

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. He continues to run the Mid Sussex Field Archaeological Team in his spare time.

Chris specialises in prehistoric flintwork analysis, but has directed excavations, landscape surveys and watching briefs, including the excavation of a Beaker Bowl Barrow, a Saxon cemetery and settlement, Roman pottery kilns, and a Mesolithic hunting camp.

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

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