



**Chris Butler MfA  
Archaeological Services Ltd**



**An Archaeological Watching Brief  
at  
Grange Farm, South Highton, East Sussex**

LW/10/1283  
Project No. CBAS0187

by  
Keith Butler PIfA

September 2011

## ***Summary***

*During the excavations of the footings for a new conservatory at Grange Farm, South Heighton, East Sussex, no archaeological features were noted. A small number of artefacts were recovered, mostly dating to between the 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. However, one sherd of Prehistoric pottery was recovered together with two sherds of Medieval pottery dating to the 13<sup>th</sup> century. These artefacts would appear to confirm both Prehistoric and Medieval activity in the vicinity of the site.*

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## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1** Chris Butler Archaeological Services Ltd (CBAS) was commissioned by Chris Lewis (The Client) to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the building works at Grange Farm, South Heighton, East Sussex. BN9 0HL (TQ 4495 0253) (Fig. 1).
- 1.2** An application has been approved for the removal of an existing conservatory and outbuildings and their replacement with a new conservatory and outbuildings and insertion of new bathroom and erection of a new entrance porch (LW/10/1283).
- 1.3** As a result of the sites location, and the archaeological potential of the area, the local planning authority have put a condition on the planning consent for the building requiring an appropriate programme of archaeological work to be undertaken.
- 1.4** Grange Farm House is a Grade II Listed Building (417471), and lies within a designated Archaeological Notification Area at South Heighton (Fig. 1), and is within the South Heighton Conservation Area.
- 1.5** The geology, according to the British Geological Survey sheet 319/334 is Seaford Chalk, with Newhaven Chalk to the east and the Alluvium of the River Ouse valley to the west.
- 1.6** The appropriate programme of archaeological work comprises an archaeological watching brief. A written scheme of investigation<sup>1</sup> covering was prepared and agreed with the archaeological team at East Sussex County Council, and submitted and approved by the local planning authority.
- 1.7** A watching brief was maintained on the groundworks associated with the construction of a replacement conservatory, on the 7<sup>th</sup> July 2011. The fieldwork was carried out by the author, with the project being managed for CBAS by Chris Butler.

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<sup>1</sup> Butler, C. 2011. *A Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief at, Grange Farm, South Heighton, East Sussex.* CBAS.

## 2.0 Historical and Archaeological Background (Fig. 2)

- 2.1 The earliest activity in the area comes from isolated finds of Mesolithic flintwork which have been found on the Downs, especially in areas where Clay-with-flints outcrops occur to the north and east of the site.
- 2.2 Evidence for Early Neolithic activity has been found at Rookery Hill, Bishopstone<sup>2</sup>, where there may have been a settlement, and near Alfriston<sup>3</sup>, where flintwork was recovered around the Early Neolithic *Long Burgh* long barrow. Later Neolithic flintwork was also found at Valley Dip<sup>4</sup>, and near Seaford Head<sup>5</sup>.
- 2.3 The area of Itford Hill, some 2km to the north of the site, is well known for its Prehistoric and later archaeology, including Bronze Age burial mounds and settlement site<sup>6</sup>. In his re-evaluation of the Itford Hill site, Russell proposed a sequence of events commencing in the Neolithic period and concluding in the later Bronze Age<sup>7</sup>. Recent excavations at Itford Farm have produced further evidence for Bronze Age ritual activity<sup>8</sup>.
- 2.4 A possible Bronze Age burial mound (barrow) has been identified from aerial photographs showing multiple ring ditches at Mount Pleasant (MES1797) to the east of the site, whilst another barrow was destroyed during quarrying activity further north (MES1952). An Early Bronze Age pebble mace head (MES1844) was found just to the north of the site.
- 2.5 There is no evidence for Roman activity in the immediate area of the site, although a possible Roman road (MES4816) from Newhaven just to the south of the site, heads northwards across the Downs towards Selmeston.
- 2.6 Evidence for Anglo-Saxon settlement is difficult to find, with the discovery and excavation of larger settlements, such as Bishopstone<sup>9</sup>, being comparatively rare, as is the occasional discovery of isolated Saxon buildings, such as the Sunken Featured Building at Itford Farm to the north of the site<sup>10</sup>. Saxon pottery has however been found just to the east of the site (MES1975).

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<sup>2</sup> Bell, M. 1977 'Excavations at Bishopstone', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **115**.

<sup>3</sup> Butler, C. 2001 'Horned scrapers and other prehistoric flintwork from Alfriston, East Sussex', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **139**, 215-223.

<sup>4</sup> Butler, C. 1996 'Later Prehistoric flintwork from Valley Dip, Seaford, East Sussex', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **134**, 219-224.

<sup>5</sup> *Sussex Notes & Queries* 1950-3 Vol. **13**, 193-7

<sup>6</sup> Russell, M. 1996 *A reassessment of the Bronze Age cemetery-barrow on Itford Hill, East Sussex*, School of Conservation Sciences, Bournemouth University, Research Report 2.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>8</sup> Butler, C. 2009 *An Archaeological Excavation at Itford Farm, Beddingham, East Sussex*, CBAS Report.

<sup>9</sup> Bell, M. 1977 'Excavations at Bishopstone', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **115**.

- 2.7** There are two Medieval settlements close to the site, the first is centred around St. Martin's Church (which was destroyed *c.* 1764) at South Heighton, just to the east of the site, (MES1954). An evaluation excavation (EES14309) in 2000 located the west end wall of the church.
- 2.8** The second (MES1809/10) is the shrunken Medieval village of Denton, centred on the 11<sup>th</sup> century St. Leonard's Church (MES1812), and is situated a short distance to the south-east of the site. Medieval pottery and a quern stone were discovered in Heighton Road (MES1813), and in 1976 a Medieval pit containing pottery and animal bones was discovered during the building of the Church Hall at Denton (EES9053) adjacent to the ruins of the 13<sup>th</sup> century Priest House.
- 2.9** Yeakell & Gardiner's map of Sussex 1778-83 shows individual houses in the village of South Heighton, one of which may be Grange Farmhouse. The listing description for Grange Farmhouse dates it to the 18<sup>th</sup> century and describes it as having two storeys, faced with flints, now painted, a half-hipped slate roof, and casement windows. Manor Farmhouse and barn (MES1951), situated to the east of Grange Farm, also both date to the 18<sup>th</sup> century.
- 2.10** The 1<sup>st</sup> Edition OS map of 1874 (Fig. 3) shows Grange Farmhouse, and Manor Farm to its east, although neither are named. The National School is located immediately to the south. By the 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition OS map (1910) Grange Farm and Manor Farm are both named, and the situation is largely unchanged through to the 4<sup>th</sup> Edition OS map of 1930.
- 2.11** The original building at Grange Farm was changed from two cottages with a single storey extension added, to a single dwelling in the 1870's. The two storey extension to the south-west side was added in 1989, and it is thought that the existing conservatory was added before that date<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> James, R. 2002 'The excavation of a Saxon *grubenhaus* at Itford Farm, Beddingham, East Sussex', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **140**, 41-7.

<sup>11</sup> Crowther & Associates 2010 *Grange Farm House: Design and Access Statement*.

### **3.0 Archaeological Methodology**

- 3.1** On arrival at the site on the 7<sup>th</sup> July 2011, the original conservatory with a small brick built structure at the north western end of the building had been partially demolished. The resulting rubble from this had been piled up, and had to be removed from the area of the footing trenches. A number of small shrubs were removed at the same time as the rubble was cleared.
- 3.2** The area where the footings were to be excavated was first inspected for artefacts, and a Precision Gold metal detector was also used. The metal detector was also used to scan the spoil heaps and at various times during the excavation.
- 3.3** All the excavations were carried out using a 1.5 ton 360° tracked digger using a 300mm wide toothed bucket. A toothless bucket could not be used due to a concrete floor and associated steps in the south-eastern corner of the site. Under this concrete floor, deep concrete foundations were discovered which had to be broken up using an electric breaker.
- 3.4** All the trenches had a width of 700mm, and were excavated to a depth of 1m, and were excavated in shallow spits under archaeological supervision. The Client confirmed that the entrance porch was no longer going to be built as part of this project.
- 3.5** 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
- 3.6** 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 Ltd, and will be deposited in Lewes Museum in due course. A site reference of GFN 11 has been allocated, and an accession number has been requested from Lewes Museum.

## 4.0 Results

- 4.1** Context 1 was a concrete base at the south-eastern corner of the site (Fig. 0). The base was constructed of a mid grey concrete and had a width of 2.8m with a length of 3.2m. The depth of the concrete base was up to 300mm; except for the south-west edge of the base, where there was an area of much thicker concrete which had a depth of approximately 1m. In the south-western corner of the concrete base there was a rectangular metal manhole cover. This concrete base formed the floor of an earlier demolished extension, with steps up to the house.
- 4.2** During the excavation of the footing trenches there were two deposits apparent. Context 2 was a very disturbed layer of topsoil, which was up to 700mm thick, and comprised a mid greyish-brown silty clay loam, with a loose consistence. The inclusions in this deposit comprised concrete pieces (3%), ceramic building material (2%), sub-angular flint pieces up to 60mm, pieces of chalk up to 40mm (<1%) and roots (1%). Except for the artefacts recovered from the surface collection, all the artefacts recovered from the site were found in Context 2, and comprised pottery, bone, flint and ceramic building material (CBM).
- 4.3** Below Context 2 was Context 3, which was a deposit of off-white loosely packed chalk with pockets of orange-brown silty clay (5%). The only inclusions in this deposit were pieces of sub-angular flint up to 80mm (<1%). This deposit was not fully excavated because the limit of the excavation of the footing trenches was reached. No artefacts were recovered from this deposit, which was interpreted as a colluvium mixed with weathered chalk natural.
- 4.4** Within Context 2 was Context 4 which was only apparent in the south-west facing section of the south-western trench. It was initially thought to be structural but on further investigation it was discovered to be a dump of five bricks with no bonding material. Four of the bricks were yellow with the remaining one being red; these were possibly in association with Context 5.
- 4.4** Context 5 was a red ceramic drain with an external diameter of 150mm, running on a north-west to south-east alignment adjacent to the south-western facing section of the south-western trench from the manhole in Context 1. The ceramic pipe was laid on a mixture of red and yellow bricks of the same types as Context 4, and was laid just above the natural chalk.
- 4.5** No other archaeological features or deposits were noted during the watching brief.



## 5.0 The Finds.

**5.0.1** The archaeological work recovered a small assemblage of artefacts from the site. A number of different periods are represented; these are summarized in Table 1. The assemblage does not hold any potential for further analysis. All but the medieval and possible prehistoric pot is recommended for discard.

**Table 1 The Finds**  
Quantification of finds assemblage (Number/weight in grams)

<b>Context</b>	<b>Pottery (by chronological period)</b>	<b>Ceramic Building Material</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<b>Surface</b>	?prehistoric: 1/5g 1225-1350: 1/9g 1750-1900+: 4/153g	-	Metal 4/14g Plaster 1/5g Bone 1/59g Shell 2/5g Slate 4/73g Glass 3/23g Bakelite 1/557g	Mixed: ?LBA to C19th
<b>NW Tr (2)</b>	-	-	Clay pipe 2/8g Bone 3/8g Flint 1/16g	Early/mid C18th
<b>SW Tr (2)</b>	1225-1350: 1/9g 1750-1900+: 4/97g	Ridge tile 1/17g	Plaster 2/170g Plastic 1/1g Shell 1/4g Flint 3/56g Slate 3/91g Glass 2/6g Metal 3/99g	Mixed: early C13th – 20 <sup>th</sup>
<b>SE Tr (2)</b>	1750-1900+: 3/160g	Brick 1/2025g Chimney pot 2/400g Drain 1/68g	Bone 2/4g Shell 2/14g Flint 1/44g Slate 4/52g Metal 1/380g	Mixed: C18th – early 20th

## 5.1 The Pottery by Luke Barber

**5.1.1** The earliest sherd was recovered from general surface collection. This consists of a small and somewhat abraded bodysherd tempered with sparse fine sand with rare/sparse chalk and calcined flint inclusions to 0.5mm. The sherd is reduced apart from an oxidised outer vessel face on which there are some grass/organic impressions. The sherd has more characteristics of a prehistoric fineware rather than a Saxon vessel and a Late Bronze Age to Iron Age date is suggested.

**5.1.2** Two medieval sherds were recovered from the site. Both are from oxidised brown cooking pots tempered with moderate medium sand and rare/sparse flint and shell inclusions to 1mm. The sherd from the surface collection consists of a slightly abraded hollowed rim, that from the SW trench a bodysherd. Both belong to the first half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

**5.1.3** The remaining pottery is all of late post-medieval date. The earliest of these consist of a fragment from a creamware dish (SE trench) and two sherds from transfer-printed pearlware plates (SW trench) together suggesting some activity in the later 18<sup>th</sup> to early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The latter context also produced a sherd from a transfer-printed plate of mid 19<sup>th</sup> century type. Coarsewares include a fragment of unglazed earthenware flower pot with partial stamp surviving (...IWELL..) from the surface and a glazed redware bodysherd from the SE trench. In addition a number of ironstone sanitary ware fragments from water closets (possibly only one) was recovered from the surface (2/153g), SW trench (1/85g) and the SE trench (1/111g). These are likely to be from a 20<sup>th</sup> century closet.

## **5.2 Clay Tobacco Pipe** by Luke Barber

**5.2.1** Only two stem fragments were recovered from the site. Both consist of quite fresh pieces of early/middle 18<sup>th</sup> century types (NW trench).

## **5.3 The Ceramic Building Material** by Luke Barber

**5.3.1** A single near complete brick was recovered from the SE trench. This consists of a yellow unfrosted example tempered with fine sand and rare iron oxides to 3mm (225 x 105 x 64mm). The piece is quite well made and medium fired and is probably of 18<sup>th</sup> to early 19<sup>th</sup> century date. It has traces of an off-white lime mortar with abundant coarse sand on both its upper and lower surfaces.

**5.3.2** The same deposit produced two fragments of well thrown and fired red earthenware 19<sup>th</sup> century chimney pot. They are tempered with moderate medium sand and contain moderate white quartz and grog inclusions to 1mm. Both pieces are heavily sooted internally. The SE trench also produced a fragment of buff salt-glazed stoneware drain of mid 19<sup>th</sup> to mid 20<sup>th</sup> century date. The only tile recovered consists of a small piece of ridge tile from the SW trench. This is tempered with sparse fine sand and rare iron oxides to 3mm and is well made/fired. A 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> century date is likely.

#### **5.4 Metalwork** by Luke Barber and Chris Butler

- 5.4.1** A small assemblage of metalwork was recovered. The oldest appears to be a heavily corroded general purpose iron nail (2g) of probable 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century date, together with two possible roofing iron nails of similar date. Other iron finds include a fragment from a broken chisel and a bar, possibly from a door or gate.
- 5.4.2** There is also an aluminium tack and a chromed ferrule of 20<sup>th</sup> century date. The other piece consists of a fired copper alloy 20<sup>th</sup> century 12-bore shotgun case (9g: stamped: NOBEL'S BALLISTITE with E.B.L. in a shield below.

#### **5.5 Animal Bone & Shell** by Chris Butler

- 5.5.1** A total of six animal bone fragments were recovered from four species, identified by Pat Stevens. They comprised a cattle tooth and calcaneum, a sheep phalange and leg bone fragment, a pig tooth and a leg bone fragment from a chicken.
- 5.5.2** Marine molluscs comprised two limpet shells, two fragments of scallop, and a single fragment of mussel.

#### **5.6 Flintwork** by Chris Butler

- 5.6.1** A total of five pieces of worked flint were recovered. Two pieces from Context 2 (SW Trench) were patinated white, and were hard hammer-struck with no evidence for platform preparation. These are likely to be later prehistoric in date, dating from the Later Neolithic through into the Bronze Age.
- 5.6.2** The remaining pieces were all very fresh-looking, and probably derived from wall-knapped flint of Post medieval date.

#### **5.7 Other Material** by Luke Barber and Chris Butler

- 5.7.1** Five pieces of clear window glass were found, probably all of 20<sup>th</sup> century date. 10 pieces of Welsh slate were found, probably resulting from roofing material in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A single larger piece of possible West Country slate was also found, and may hint at slate roofing of an earlier date.

- 5.7.2** A Bakelite pot-head insulator<sup>12</sup>, probably deriving from a GPO telegraph pole, was amongst the surface finds. It is a screw top insulator, used at the end of a run of wire<sup>13</sup>, and has a makers mark in a circle on its end (L.R / G.P.O / 1942). The LR probably stands for the manufacturer Thomas de la Rue<sup>14</sup>, and 1942 being the year of manufacture.
- 5.7.3** Other surface finds included a 4mm thick fragment of pale pink sandy render. Two similar pieces were recovered from the SW trench, however, one of the latter was painted white on one surface while the other had green paint over white and was 22mm thick. All pieces are likely to be of 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century date. The only other find was a fragment from a white circular plastic top of late 20<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> century date (SW trench).

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.teleramics.com/type/telegraph/pothead.html>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.myinsulators.com/ukinsulators/insold.htm>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.britishtelephones.com/manucode.htm>

## 6.0 Discussion

- 6.1 No archaeological features were discovered during the course of the watching brief. It seems most likely that if any archaeological features were present, they would have been destroyed by the construction of the original conservatory, and the construction of the concrete base at the south-eastern end of the site, with its associated pipe run across the site parallel to the south-western trench. This is also suggested by the very disturbed nature of Context 2.
- 6.2 The watching produced a small quantity of artefacts most of which date from between the 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. However, among these there were three sherds of pottery of an earlier date. The earliest was a single sherd of Late Bronze Age or Iron Age pottery, which together with the two pieces of worked flint hint at prehistoric activity in the vicinity of the site.
- 6.3 Also recovered were a body sherd and a piece of a rim of Medieval pottery dating to the first half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, which would appear to confirm that there was also Medieval activity close to the site. There are known sites dating from both periods close to the site. The sites on Itford Hill and a barrow at Mount Pleasant date to the Bronze Age, whilst there are two Medieval settlements close to the site at Denton or more likely South Heighton which is located a small distance to the east of Grange Farm.
- 6.4 The presence of the Bakelite GPO insulator dating to 1942, may hint at repairs or improvements to the GPO communications at South Heighton. It is possible that this may have been connected with the construction of HMS Forward a short distance to the south of the site<sup>15</sup>.

## 7.0 Acknowledgements

- 7.1 I would like to thank Mr C Lewis for commissioning the watching brief and his on-site contractors for their assistance and co-operation during this project. I would also like to thank Luke Barber and Chris Butler for reporting on the artefacts. The project was managed for CBAS by Chris Butler, and Greg Chuter monitored the project for ESCC.

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<sup>15</sup> Ellis, G. 1996 *The Secret Tunnels of South Heighton*, S.B. Publications

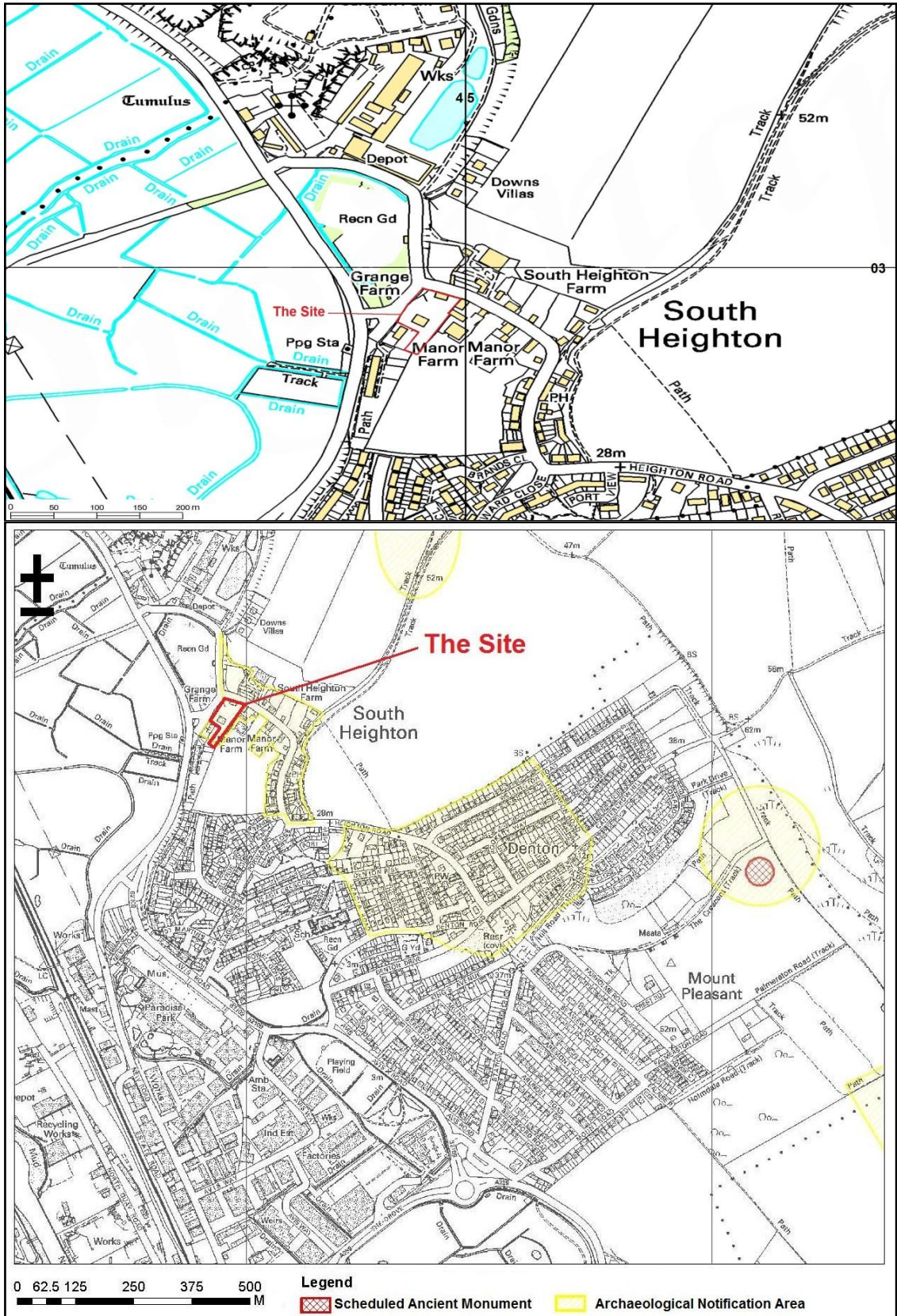


Fig. 1: Grange Farm, South Heighton: Site location Map and Archaeological Notification Areas/Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

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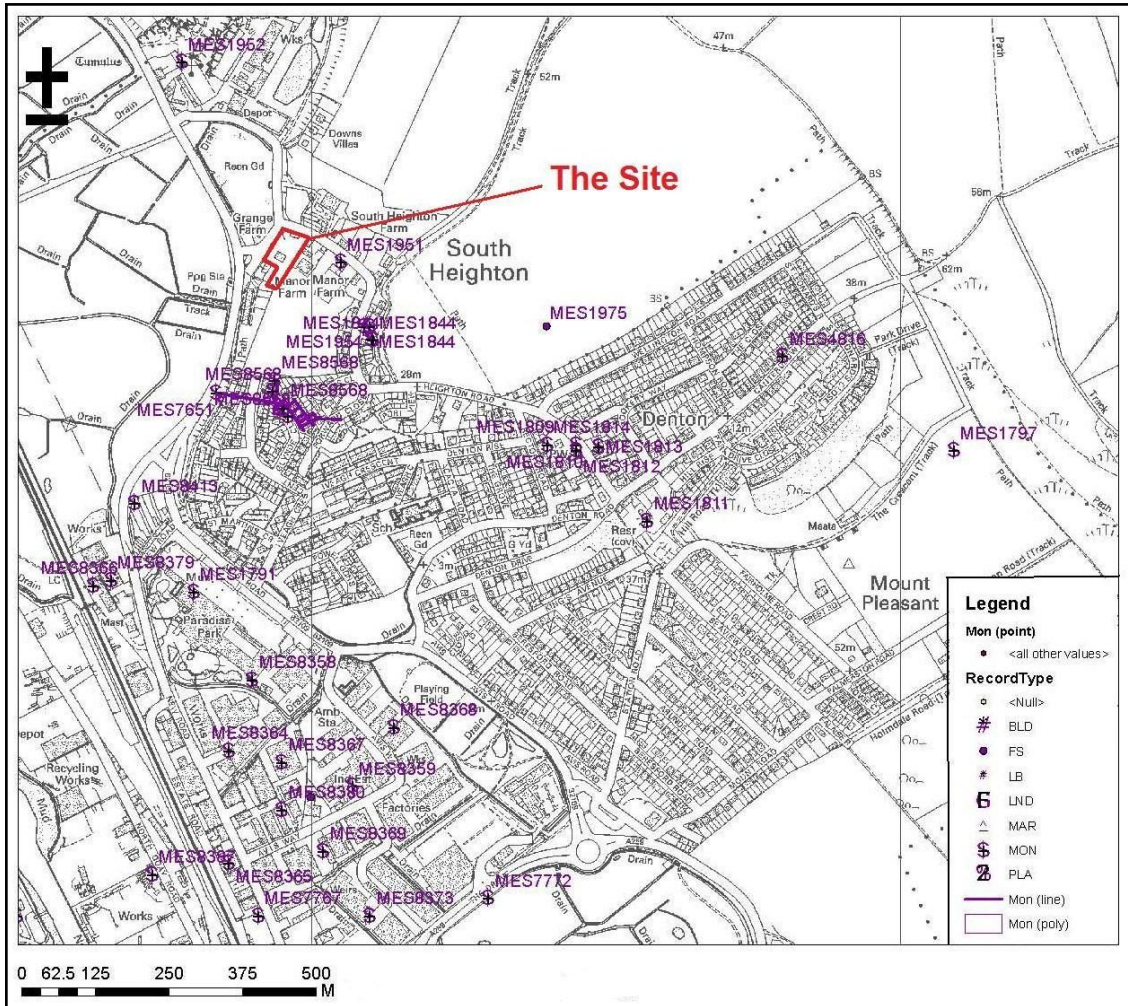


Fig. 2: Grange Farm, South Heighton: Sites on the HER.  
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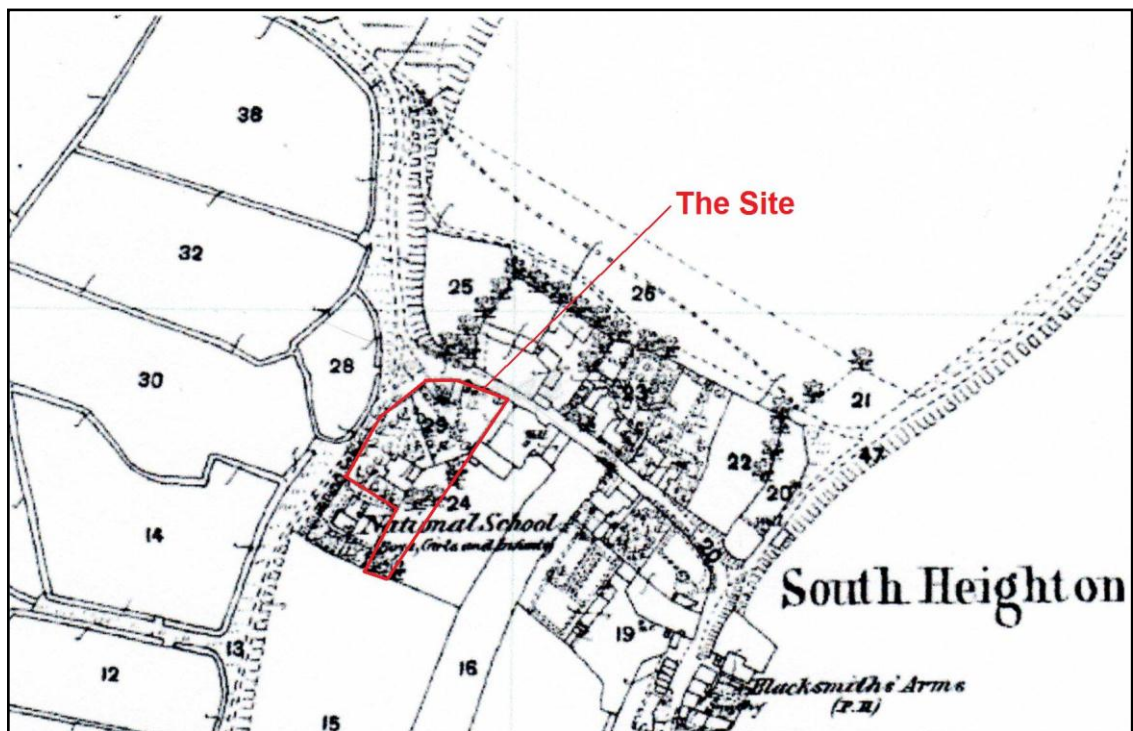


Fig. 3: Grange Farm, South Heighton: 1<sup>st</sup> Edition OS Map (1874)



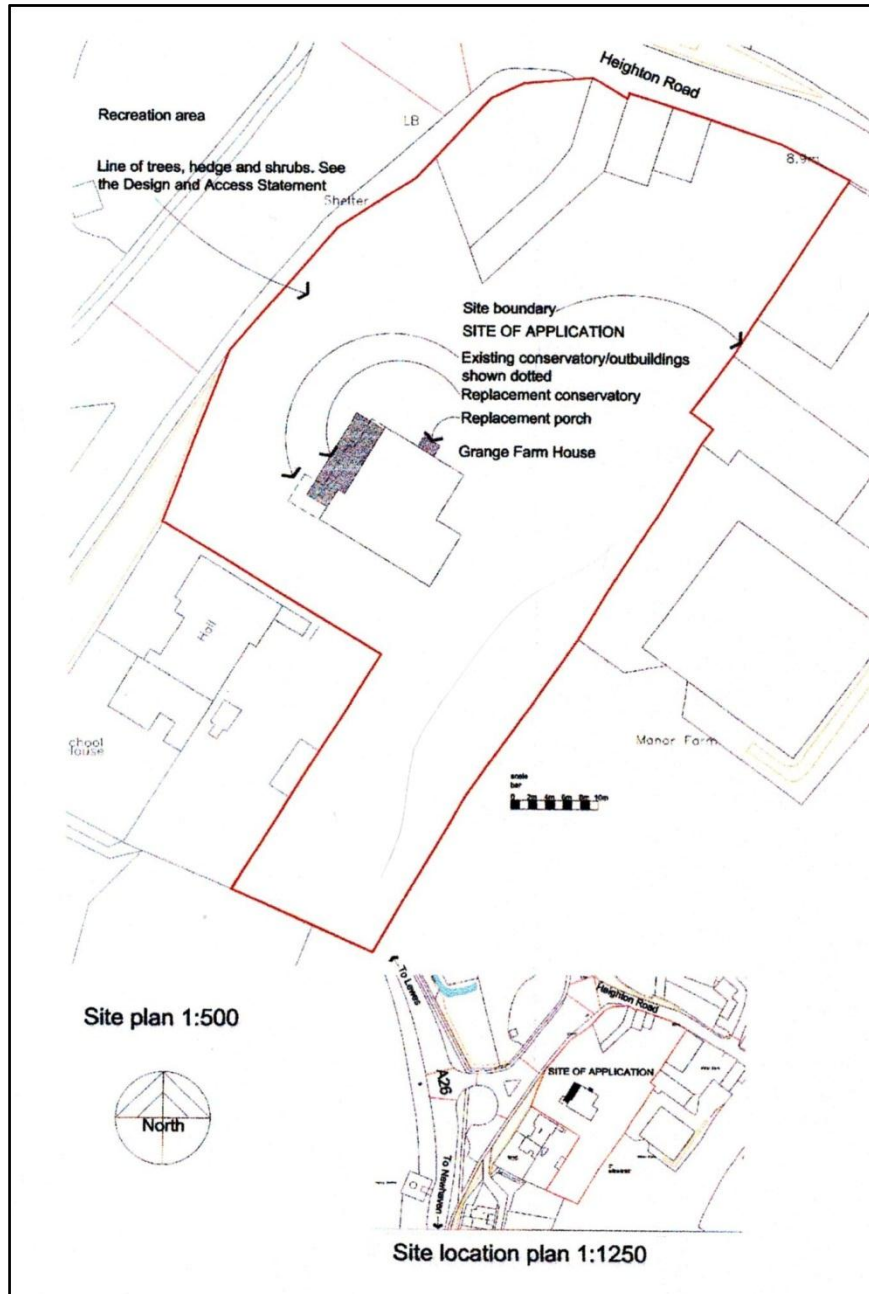


Fig. 4: Grange Farm, South Heighton: Plan of site showing location of extension  
(Adapted from architects drawing)

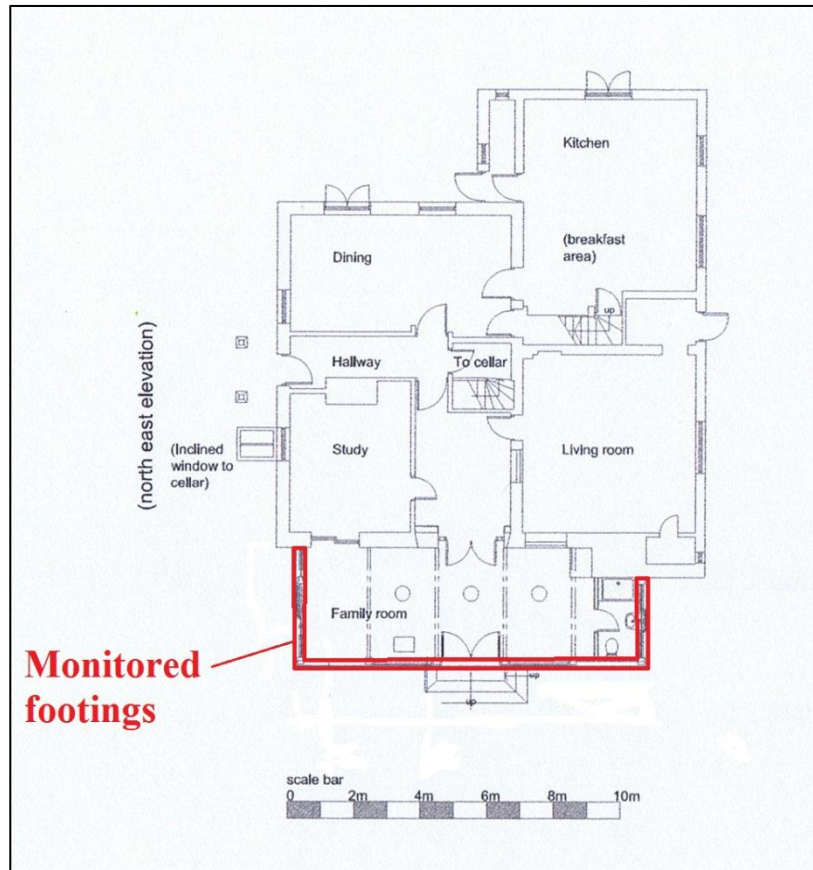


Fig. 5: Grange Farm, South Heighton: Site plan showing area monitored  
(Adapted from architects drawing)





Fig. 6: Grange Farm, South Heighton: Photograph of site



Fig. 7: Grange Farm, South Heighton: Photograph of trench section

### Appendix 1 HER Summary Form

Site Code	GFN 11					
Identification Name and Address	Grange Farm, South Heighton, East Sussex.					
County, District &/or Borough	Lewes District Council					
OS Grid Refs.	TQ 4495 0253					
Geology	Seaford Chalk, with Newhaven Chalk to the east and the Alluvium of the River Ouse valley to the west.					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	Watching Brief <b>X</b>	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field	Shallow Urban <b>X</b>	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	WB. 07-07-11	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Mr C Lewis					
Project Manager	Chris Butler MifA					
Project Supervisor	Keith Butler PifA					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA <b>X</b>	IA	RB
	AS	MED <b>X</b>	PM <b>X</b>	Other		
<p>100 Word Summary.</p> <p><i>During the excavations of the footings for a new conservatory at Grange Farm, South Heighton, East Sussex, no archaeological features were noted. A small number of artefacts were recovered, mostly dating to between the 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. However, one sherd of Prehistoric pottery was recovered together with two sherds of Medieval pottery dating to the 13<sup>th</sup> century. These artefacts would appear to confirm both Prehistoric and Medieval activity in the vicinity of the site.</i></p>						

## **Chris Butler Archaeological Services Ltd**

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 Ltd** 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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