



Chris Butler MIFA Archaeological Services



An Archaeological Evaluation at 59, High Street, Hastings, East Sussex.

Project Number CBAS0173

(HS/FA/10/00588)

by
Keith Butler PIfA

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Summary

Three evaluation trenches were excavated on the site of 59, High Street, Hastings, East Sussex. This site is thought to have the remains of Hastings Town Wall running diagonally across it, which had been discovered by HAARG in 1984. In the course of these excavations the original HAARG trench was re-located, but the remains of the town wall were not seen.

Post-Medieval activity is suggested by the recovery of sherds of pottery and clay tobacco pipe in deposits preserved below the existing concrete floor, whilst a deposit, possibly the fill of the town ditch or a pit, was also found.

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

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Appendix 1: HER Summary Form

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Chris Butler Archaeological Services Ltd (CBAS) was commissioned by RDP Architects on behalf of Mr Patel (The Client) to conduct an archaeological evaluation excavation on land at 59, High Street, Hastings, East Sussex in advance of the construction of a new shop and maisonette.
- 1.2 The site for the proposed development is located at the south end of the High Street, and on its east side, just to the north of the junction with George Street and East Street, and is situated with Hastings Old Town. The site is situated at around 8m OD.
- 1.3 The Extensive Urban Survey of Hastings¹ defines the site as being adjacent to an area formed in the 11th to 12th centuries as regular burgage plots. The town wall was located on the south side of these plots, and survives immediately to the east of the site. The site is located either on the town gate or the town ditch that ran in front of the wall. The site, according to the British Geological Survey (sheet 320/321), appears to be on the boundary of the Ashdown Beds and the Storm Beach Gravel.
- 1.4 The planning policy for the site and area is contained in the Hastings Local Plan 2004². The site is within a Conservation Area and appropriate policies apply concerning archaeological sites³. The site lies within a designated Archaeologically Sensitive Area (Fig. 1), which covers the historic core of the Medieval and Post-Medieval town and port of Hastings.
- 1.5 As a result of the site's location adjacent to the town wall, and the high archaeological potential of the area, the local planning authority have required a programme of archaeological work to be undertaken before the planning application (HS/FA/10/00588) is decided, so that the archaeological issues can be fully considered when the planning decision is made. A Written Scheme of Investigation⁴ for an evaluation was approved by the Archaeology team at ESCC.
- 1.6 The archaeological evaluation took place on the 13th & 14th December 2010, with an earlier visit to the site on the 7th December to dismantle the scaffolding ramp that had covered the east part of the site. The fieldwork was carried out by the author assisted by David Atkin, with the project being managed by Chris Butler MifA.

¹ Harris, R. 2010 *Hastings Historic Character Assessment Report*, Sussex Extensive Urban Survey.

² http://www.hastings.gov.uk/local_plan/#local_plan

³ Chapter 9b Historic Environment from page 167 including Policy C6 (page 176)

⁴ Butler, C. 2010 *Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation at 59 High Street, Hastings, East Sussex*, CBAS

2.0 Historical and Archaeological Background (Fig. 2)

- 2.1 There is no evidence for Mesolithic activity at the site, however the cliffs below the castle have produced numerous pieces of Mesolithic flintwork (MES872) from fissures in the rock, although the claim for these being middens⁵ is almost certainly incorrect as the Mesolithic flintwork was intermixed with a broad range of material from different periods. Further Mesolithic flintwork has subsequently been found eroding from the same cliff face (MES7389). The evidence for this period suggests that there is a possibility of Mesolithic activity being present, although more likely as a secondary residual deposit.
- 2.2 Examples of Neolithic flintwork and pottery have been recovered from the fissures on Castle Hill and on East Hill, and hint at Neolithic activity in the area. Evidence for a prehistoric submerged forest dating to the later Neolithic period has been found on the beach at Bulverhythe to the west of Hastings, and at Pett to the east of Hastings⁵.
- 2.3 Amongst the Bronze Age flintwork recovered from Hastings was a barbed-and-tanged arrowhead from East Hill (MES881), whilst flintwork and pottery were recovered from the fissures below the castle. A single Bronze Age burial mound (Barrow) was recorded as existing at the south-west corner of East Hill (MES661), but has subsequently slipped over the cliff edge.
- 2.4 An Iron Age promontory hillfort (MES856) is located on East Hill, although both this and the enclosure on Castle Hill are currently undated⁶. Both of these hillforts/enclosures would have originally been located a little way inland from the coast, but from their hill top locations would have dominated both the coastal area, and some way inland. Iron Age pottery was found amongst the material coming from the fissures on Castle Hill, and a gold stater coin was also found nearby in 1946 (MES866).
- 2.5 The extensive iron working site and baths at Beauport Park situated just to the north of Hastings was operating between the late 1st century and mid 3rd century AD, and appears to have had connections with the *Classis Britannica* due to the presence of numerous tiles stamped CL BR⁷. It has been suggested that due to the connections with the British Fleet, the iron from Beauport Park and other production centres was being shipped out through Hastings⁸. Roman pottery and the numerous discoveries of Roman coins at Hastings would seem to confirm that there may have been a settlement, trading centre, and perhaps a port located nearby.

⁵ Marsden, P. 1987 *The Historic Shipwrecks of South-East England*. Nautical Museums Trust & Jarrold Colour Publications.

⁶ Hamilton, S & Manley, J. 1997 Points of View: Prominent Enclosures in 1st Millennium BC Sussex. *Sussex Archaeological Collections* 135, 93-112.

⁷ Brodribb, G & Cleere, H. 1988. 'The Classis Britannica Bath-house at Beauport Park'. *Britannia*, XIX, 217-274

⁸ Hodgkinson, J. 2008. *The Wealden Iron Industry*, Stroud, Tempus Publishing.

- 2.6** There is virtually no archaeological evidence for Saxon activity at Hastings, although King Offa conquered the Hæstingas in 771, and Hastingecentre appears in the Burghal Hidage in the 10th century, assessed at 500 hides⁹.
- 2.7** After 1066 Hastings was granted to the Count of Eu who was considered to be a safe pair of hands to control this important port of passage to Normandy¹⁰. The town was granted a charter as one of the Cinque Ports in 1154 by Henry II. The Rape of Hastings remained in the Eu family until the mid 13th century, and later passed to the Earl of Richmond, before being granted to Sir John Pelham in 1412, although the castle, lordship and barony were granted to Sir Thomas Hoo. Finally in 1591 these too were conveyed to the Pelham family¹¹.
- 2.8** There has been some debate as to the location of the first motte, as portrayed in the Bayeux Tapestry, and it is not clear whether it was sited on Castle Hill or on lower ground now submerged, where it might have been better suited to protect the fleet¹². A castle appears to have existed from the late 11th century on Castle Hill, and was added to and modified in the latter half of the 12th century, but by the 14th century it was suffering from coastal erosion¹³.
- 2.9** During the 13th century Hastings suffered severely from inundations, with much of the town being washed away and many parishes being depopulated. In 1339, and again in 1377, the town was attacked and burnt by the French; the ashes relating to these two events possibly being discovered during excavations in the High Street in 1952¹⁴. It is not clear exactly when the town wall was built, but a date at the end of the 14th century seems the most likely. It had three gates onto the seafront; the Sea Gate, the Water Gate and Pulpitt Gate. The Sea Gate is likely to have been located on the line of the High Street, perhaps on or adjacent to the site.
- 2.10** A harbour existed at Hastings until the eastward drift of shingle began to block its entrance at the end of the 12th century, when much of its trade passed to Rye and Winchelsea. This reduction in its importance is demonstrated by the reduction in ships Hastings was able to provide to the fleet of the Cinque Ports, which reduced from 21 ships during the 13th century to only three ships 100 years later¹⁵. It is not certain where the Medieval harbour was situated, but it is possible that the remains of this harbour, perhaps evidenced by wooden posts, have emerged in the past after storms below the shingle beach at the Stade. The houses of the Medieval town are likely to have extended further towards the shore than the later town wall.

⁹ Salzman, L.F. 1973. *Victoria County History: Sussex* Vol.9. Folkstone, Dawsons.

¹⁰ Morris, J. (Ed) 1976 *Domesday Book: Sussex*, Chichester, Phillimore.

¹¹ Salzman, L.F. 1973. *Victoria County History: Sussex* Vol.9. Folkstone, Dawsons.

¹² Salzman, L.F. 1973. *Victoria County History: Sussex* Vol.9. Folkstone, Dawsons.

¹³ *Ibid*

¹⁴ Baines, J.M. 1986 *Historic Hastings*. St. Leonards-on-Sea. Cinque Ports Press Ltd.

¹⁵ *Ibid*

- 2.11** The town wall was definitely built by the 16th century, as it is mentioned in a number of documents of this date. Many small buildings were erected outside the wall, some of which abutted on to the wall itself, although these have now been replaced by the buildings of the various streets south of the town wall. The beach to the south of the town wall was used for ship building and by rope makers, with members of the Thirgle family leasing land at the bottom of the High Street outside the town wall from 1624 until 1684 for their rope making business.
- 2.12** The earliest map evidence comes from Samuel Cant's map of Hastings dated to 1746/8¹⁶ which shows buildings along the High Street, although the site location appears to be an open space, and this may have been the case since at least 1650¹⁷. A map apparently of 1769¹⁸, shows a building situated on the site, however the source of this map is unclear, and although credited to Hastings Museum, the Archivist was not aware of it.
- 2.13** Two plans exist which show the town wall and its relationship with 59, High Street (Fig. 3)¹⁹. The first dates from 1808²⁰ and shows the properties to the south of the site of 59, High Street, whilst the second was drawn 1828²¹, but based on a conveyance plan of 1801, and shows the properties to the north of the wall. In both cases the town wall is shown changing direction and running diagonally across the site of 59, High Street. The 1808 map shows the site of 59, High Street to be occupied by a privy on the High Street frontage, with a yard and washroom to its rear. The houses to the south appear to have been built between 1791 and 1802²².
- 2.14** William Gant's 'Survey of Hastings' of 1852 provides the next map evidence (Fig. 4). The buildings are shown in great detail, with a building fronting onto the High Street, an addition to its rear, and a small area of garden at the east end of the site.
- 2.15** In the 1870's a number of huge storms removed most of the accumulated shingle beach on the Stade, right back as far as the roads, and flooded the streets and houses around the town centre. Buildings were wrecked, and in one storm a number of net shops were knocked down and washed out to sea²³. Further storms in the 1880's undermined the parade in front of the High Street, wrecked groynes and washed away more net shops.

¹⁶ Hastings Museum & Art Gallery (2003.53.208)

¹⁷ Martin, D. & Martin, B. 1995 *An Archaeological Interpretative Survey of the Old Town Wall, Hastings, East Sussex*. FAU UCL Project 243.

¹⁸ Peak, S. 1985. *Fishermen of Hasting*. St Leonards-on-Sea. Newsbooks Page 8.

¹⁹ Martin, D. & Martin, B. 1995 *An Archaeological Interpretative Survey of the Old Town Wall, Hastings, East Sussex*. FAU UCL Project 243.

²⁰ HMAG MA164

²¹ MHAG ASB B.48

²² Martin, D. & Martin, B. 1995 *An Archaeological Interpretative Survey of the Old Town Wall, Hastings, East Sussex*. FAU UCL Project 243

²³ Peak, S. 1985. *Fishermen of Hasting*. St Leonards-on-Sea. Newsbooks Page 8.

- 2.16** The 1st Edition OS map (1873-5) shows the layout of the site to be unchanged from Gants map and this continues to be the case through to the 4th Edition OS map (1928-38) when the site layout is the same, but John Street to the south of the site has gone and there is now an open space between the town wall and buildings fronting onto East Street to the east of the site (Fig. 5).
- 2.17** Later OS maps of 1956 and 1971 see the situation unchanged. The building that occupied the site was formerly a chemist's, and it burnt down at some stage in the early 1970's, and was demolished in 1983²⁴. Since that date the site has remained unoccupied.
- 2.18** A small trench was excavated by HAARG²⁵ in 1984 at 59a High Street, which located the partial remains of the wall that were interpreted as the curving bastion of a substantial gate (the Seagate?)²⁶. Re-analysis of this excavation suggests that this was not the gate bastion, but a change in direction of the wall to run diagonally across the site matching the documentary evidence in 2.14 above²⁷.
- 2.19** An archaeological evaluation excavation was undertaken in the adjacent 57 High Street in 1992, which found the footing of the still extant town wall as well as a large stone-lined cellar of Medieval/early Post-Medieval date²⁸.
- 2.20** An archaeological watching brief in 2007 during the groundworks associated with the construction of a new dwelling on land at 4, Winding Street just to the west of the site (MES8443). These revealed the north facing section of the Town Wall and the remains of an adjoining wall which butted up against the Town Wall which was thought to be remains of a post medieval dwelling.

²⁴ Harris, R. 2010 *Hastings Historic Character Assessment Report*, Sussex Extensive Urban Survey

²⁵ Hastings Area Archaeological Research Group Newsletter

²⁶ Harris, R. 2010 *Hastings Historic Character Assessment Report*, Sussex Extensive Urban Survey

²⁷ Martin, D. & Martin, B. 1995 *An Archaeological Interpretative Survey of the Old Town Wall, Hastings, East Sussex*. FAU UCL Project
243

²⁸ Barber, L. *pers. com.*

3.0 Archaeological Methodology

- 3.1** On the first visit to the site on the 7th December 2010 the ramp at the eastern end of the site, constructed of scaffolding poles and planks, was dismantled. Originally two evaluation trenches, as specified in the Written Scheme of Investigation, measuring 2m by 1m were excavated adjacent to the south facing wall of 58, High Street.
- 3.2** The trenches were initially marked out and CAT scanned before excavation to establish whether any services were present. The trenches were also scanned with a Precision Gold metal detector prior to their excavation, and further scans with the metal detector were conducted on excavated surfaces and the spoil heaps at various times during the excavations. All the excavations were carried out using hand tools.
- 3.3** Trench A was positioned 2.5m from the eastern boundary fence, and was excavated first. At a depth of 250mm a concrete floor was discovered, which could only be removed using a 14lbs lump hammer and a spike. As this work proceeded a visit was paid to the site by the occupier of 59, High Street, who informed us that she had been in contact with her architect who had told her that the concrete should not be removed as it was the underpinning for her property. There was some doubt if this was indeed the fact as the concrete had the remains of red linoleum tiles on its surface. As requested the excavations in this trench were halted, after a small area of concrete had been removed.
- 3.4** Trench B was positioned 3m from the western boundary (the frontage of High Street). The same concrete floor was discovered at the south end of the trench but this appeared to have been broken up at its northern end up to the wall of the neighbouring property. The northern end of the trench had been backfilled with what appeared to be recent demolition rubble. As this was removed a void appeared under the foundations of the southern wall of 59, High Street.
- 3.5** As work was halted on both trenches it was decided to excavate a 1m square test pit (Trench C) positioned between the two original trenches, located at 5m in from the eastern boundary fence. This revealed the same concrete floor. This trench was recorded and then back filled.
- 3.6** After a visit to the site from Chris Butler and his subsequent telephone conversation with the County Archaeologist, Casper Johnson, it was decided to continue the excavation of the small area in Trench A from which the concrete had already been removed. After a depth of 500mm the small area in Trench A became impossible to excavate further due to lack of space. This was then augered to a further depth of 700mm. It was also decided that excavation in Trench B would continue, but keeping well away from the boundary wall itself, to prevent this being undermined.

- 3.7** A temporary bench mark was established at ground level in the south-eastern corner of the site.
- 3.8** 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
- 3.9** 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 Hastings Museum in due course. A site reference of HSH10 has been allocated.

4.0 Results (Fig. 6)

Trench A (Fig. 11)

- 4.1 In Trench A the top layer (Context 4) was a layer of dark brown silty clay loam with a loose consistence and a depth of 130mm. The inclusions were of ceramic building material (1%), large plastic bags (1%), and rooting (<1%). No artefacts were recovered from this deposit, which was the same layer of made ground as Context 1 in Trench C.
- 4.2 Context 5 was below Context 4, and comprised two courses of red bricks, 140mm deep. The bricks measured 212 to 220mm (stretchers), 100mm to 103mm (headers), with a thickness of 65mm to 70mm. One side of the stretcher face was grooved, with six holes in their flat surfaces. No bonding material was present. The bricks are of a 20th century date.
- 4.3 The bricks were above Context 6, which was a concrete floor, 130mm thick, with a red linoleum tiled surface. Below Context 6 was Context 7, which was a 250mm thick deposit of dark greyish-brown silty clay with a firm consistence. The inclusions were of ceramic building material (2%), charcoal (1%), and rooting (<1%). Finds from this context were 19th century date.
- 4.4 Context 8 was below Context 7, and was a deposit of mid to light greyish-brown silty clay with a firm consistence, having inclusions of small pebbles up to 20mm (2%) and ceramic building material (1%). The deposit had a thickness up to 200mm, and was similar to Context 7 but slightly lighter in colour with the addition of the pebbles. Artefacts recovered from this deposit were of pottery, ceramic building material and pieces of clay pipe of mid to late 17th century date.
- 4.5 Context 9 was below Context 8, and was a deposit of firm mid grey silty clay with patches of dark yellow clay, and inclusions of ceramic building material (<1%). The deposit was only excavated to a depth of approximately 40mm, and then was augered to a total depth of approximately 400mm. The deposit produced artefacts of pottery, ceramic building material, and pieces clay pipe of mid 17th century date.
- 4.6 Below Context 9 was Context 10, which was a deposit of mid to dark greenish grey silty clay with a firm consistence, containing flint pebbles to 20mm. This layer was augered to a depth of 300mm, and its full depth was not reached. No artefacts were recovered from this context.

Trench B (Figs. 7 & 12)

- 4.7** In Trench **B** the top deposit was Context **11** and was the same as Contexts **1** and **4**. It was a dark brown silty clay loam with patches of orange sand with a loose consistence. The deposit had a depth of up to 150mm, with inclusions of ceramic building material (1%) and pebbles up to 40mm (1%).
- 4.8** Context **12** was below Context **11**, and was a light greyish-brown mixed sandy and silty clay, with a loose consistence with many voids. This deposit had a thickness of 360mm at the southern end of trench above the concrete floor (Context **13**), and a depth of up to approximately 960mm at the northern end of the trench. This deposit had inclusions of ceramic building material (40%), mortar (10%) and MOT (5%). This deposit also included lengths of modern scaffolding planks and poles and a hot water heater, and was clearly very recent in date.
- 4.9** Context **13** was below Context **12** in the southern end of Trench B, and was the same concrete floor as was discovered in both of the other trenches. However, in this trench the concrete floor had been broken up and was absent in the northern part of the trench, where the earlier HAARG trench had been excavated.
- 4.10** Context **14** was a deposit below the concrete floor (Context **13**) in the southern end of Trench B. This layer was not excavated as it was sealed by the concrete floor, and only recorded from the north facing section (Fig. 7). This was a deposit of firm mid brown silty clay, with inclusions of ceramic building material (1%) and pebbles (2%). No artefacts were recovered from this deposit.
- 4.11** Once the modern deposit (Context **12**) had been removed, it was possible to determine the edge of the HAARG trench, excavated in 1984, in the base of the trench (Fig. 12). However, due to the obstructions and unstable nature of the ground, it was not possible to expose and record any of the features noted during the HAARG excavation.

Trench C

- 4.12** In the 1m test pit (Trench C) Context **1** was 200mm thick layer of dark brown silty clay loam with patches of orange sand. It had a loose consistence, and inclusions of small pebbles (<1%), ceramic building material and wood (1%). The wood content appeared to be pieces of broken pallets. No artefacts were recovered from this deposit which was a layer of made ground over the entire site, and was the same as Contexts **4** and **11**.

- 4.13** Context 2 was below Context 1, and comprised two courses of red bricks, 140mm deep. The bricks measured 212 to 220mm (stretchers), 100mm to 103mm (headers), with a thickness of 65mm to 70mm. One side of the stretcher face was grooved, with six holes in their flat surfaces. No bonding material was present. The bricks are of a 20th century date.
- 4.14** Below Context 2 was Context 3, a mid grey concrete floor with a thickness of 130mm. On the upper surface were the remnants of a red linoleum tiled floor covering. Excavation ceased at this point.
- 4.15** No other features or deposits were noted during the excavation.

5.0 The Finds.

5.0.1 The archaeological evaluation recovered a moderately small assemblage of finds from the site. These are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: The Finds

Context	Pottery (by date group)	Ceramic Building Material	Other	Deposit Date
5	-	Brick 1/2625g	-	C20th
7	1250-1450: 1/31g 1850-1900: 6/44g	Peg tile 5/170g	Clay pipe 9/39g Stone 1/142g	C19th
8	1550-1750: 2/31g	Peg tile 9/350g	Clay pipe 3/9g Stone 1/22g	M/1 C17th
9	-	-	Clay pipe 5/7g Stone 2/32g Iron 1/6g	M C17th
12	1750-1900+: 2/53g	Wall tile 6/139g	Stone 1/3900g Glass 1/41g Metal 2/11g Plastic 2/22g	C20th
12 clean of base of earlier trench	1350-1550: 1/20g 1750-1900+: 1/39g	-	-	Mixed

Quantification of finds (no./weight in grams)

5.1 The Pottery by Luke Barber & Chris Butler

5.1.1 The earliest pottery from the site consists of a residual fragment of oxidized hard-fired sandy earthenware from the base of a jug or pitcher from Context 7, of probable later 13th to 14th century date, and a residual oxidized hard-fired sandy earthenware lid fragment from the cleaning of the base of Context 12. The piece, which shows some signs of abrasion, is likely to be of mid 15th to mid 16th century date.

5.1.2 Context 8 produced two sherds of early post-medieval date. One consists of a well fired externally glazed redware bodysherd from a jug while the other consist of a German stoneware bodysherd with applied leaf/tendrill decoration. A general Cologne/Frechen source is certain, although the decoration type would suggest the former source to possibly be the more likely. Both sherds belong to the 16th (or possibly the early 17th) century, the German vessel potentially being an old vessel at the time of discard.

5.1.3 The hand cleaning of Context **12** recovered a base fragment from a glazed red earthenware vessel of mid 18th to early 19th century date while Context **12** also produced two sherds from a black glazed commemorative mug of the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games.

5.1.4 Context 7 produced two small sherds of blue-and-white transfer printed china, and two sherds of a yellow coloured earthenware with an off-white glaze on both surfaces. A large rim sherd from an English stoneware vessel and a single sherd from a hard-fired earthenware vessel were also recovered from this context. These pieces are all likely to date from the later 19th century.

5.2 Clay Tobacco Pipe by Luke Barber and Chris Butler

5.2.1 Three mid to late 17th century stem fragments were recovered from Context **8** all of which show only slight signs of abrasion. Context **9** produced the remains of a fresh, but shattered, bowl of mid 17th century date.

5.2.2 Context 7 produced a total of nine pieces of clay tobacco pipe stem. Six pieces were of 17th or 18th century date, whilst three fragments were of 19th century date. None had any decoration or makers marks.

5.3 Ceramic Building Material by Luke Barber

5.3.1 The only brick recovered from the site consists of a complete sample from Context **5**. This sample measured 212 x 103 x 65mm, although samples measured on-site were 220 x 100 x 70mm. The brick is a 20th century machine-moulded perforated type with external rustication on three of its sides.

5.3.2 Contexts **7** and **8** produced a small assemblage of peg tile. The pieces are quite crudely made and hard fired. They are tempered with sparse/moderate fine sand with white clay streaks and sparse iron oxide inclusions to 2mm and are of later 16th to early 18th century type. Context **12** produced a number of 20th century glazed wall tiles with blue and beige glazes.

5.4 Geological Material by Luke Barber

5.4.1 Contexts **7**, **8** and **9** produced small weathered pieces of the local Hastings Beds sandstones. Context **12** contained a large water-worn cobble of very hard non-calcareous grey micro-granite. It is quite probable this cobble arrived as ship's ballast but during which period is impossible to ascertain.

5.5 Other Finds by Chris Butler

5.5.1 Apart from obviously modern pieces of metal which were not retained, the only metallic artefacts recovered were a small iron nail found in Context **9**, and two 20th century screws from Context **12**.

5.5.2 A fragment from the base of a clear glass bottle was recovered from Context **12**. It appears to be machine-made, and dates to the end of the 19th or 20th century.

5.5.3 Pieces of plastic were found in a number of contexts. The only retained pieces were from Context **12**, with the only identifiable piece being a head from a small plastic toy of 'Garfield', inscribed GARFIELD © 1976/1981, UNITED FEATURE STUDIO, SYNDICATE, INC. and MADE IN CHINA.

6.0 Discussion

- 6.1** In all three trenches, the excavations were hampered by the discovery of a concrete floor which appeared to cover the site, and had been covered with red linoleum tiles. This would appear to be the *in-situ* floor of the chemist shop (possibly the floor of its cellar) that had occupied the site before it was burnt down during the 1970s and finally demolished in 1983.
- 6.2** Although the town wall was not located during the evaluation, the edge of the trench excavated by HAARG in 1984 was found and the position of this can now be accurately located within the site (Fig. 6). It was not possible to locate the features discovered in 1984 (Fig. 8) due to the obstructions and unstable demolition material on this part of the site.
- 6.3** In both Trenches A & B there is evidence that the concrete floor has preserved earlier deposits below it. In Trench A, situated in the north east corner of the site, a small area below the floor was investigated and deposits here (Contexts **8** & **9**) produced two sherds of early Post-Medieval pottery dating to between 1550 and 1750, and pieces of clay pipe dating to the 17th century. It seems very likely that the concrete floor has preserved evidence of early Post-Medieval activity.
- 6.4** Below these contexts a deposit of greenish-grey colour (Context **10**) appeared to have a cess-like content, which could suggest the presence of a ditch in front of the Town wall, or alternatively a pit/cesspit feature. Although this deposit did not produce any artefacts, the stratigraphic evidence suggests it dates to the 17th century or earlier.
- 6.5** The evidence from Trench B shows that after the HAARG excavation this part of the site was backfilled with demolition material (Context **11**) covering the features they recorded. However in the part of the trench that the concrete floor was still *in-situ* it had preserved a deposit of soil (Fig. 7: Context **14**). Although no artefacts were recovered from this deposit, it is likely that it is also of early Post Medieval date, and may preserve earlier deposits below it.

7.0 Conclusion & Recommendations

- 7.1** The excavation of the three trenches produced evidence of early Post-Medieval activity on the site, preserved by a concrete floor which covers most of the site. The augering in Trench A produced evidence of a possible ditch or other cut features in front of the Town Wall. Although the town wall was not located, the evaluation has relocated the HAARG trench allowing the likely position of the wall to be accurately plotted.
- 7.2** It is clear from the evaluation excavation that any groundworks on the site that will impact below the level of the concrete floor will potentially destroy or damage the underlying early Post Medieval deposits (c. 0.5m depth from current ground level at the west end of the site and c. 0.4m depth at the east end of the site). Furthermore any impact below c. 0.8m across the site (from current ground level) is likely to have an impact on the town wall remains found by HAARG and the potential ditch/pit found in the evaluation.
- 7.3** The building design (Figs. 9 & 10) shows that although the proposed building floor level will be at or above current ground level, the foundations will have a below ground impact around the outside of the building footprint, and at the north-west corner, that is likely to be to a depth of c. 1m. This will therefore have an impact on all of the potential archaeological remains noted above.
- 7.4** It is therefore recommended that, unless a redesign of the development can be made to remove any impact, a further programme of archaeological works should be undertaken to record by excavation the archaeological remains that will be damaged or destroyed by the development.
- 7.5** Prior to this it is recommended that the site be cleared of obstructions and debris, and a structural survey be undertaken of the adjoining wall on the north side of the site. This is due to the large crack running down the wall and the cavity noted in the wall below ground level during the excavation. The concern being that any excavations adjacent to the wall may affect its stability.

8.0 Acknowledgements

- 8.1** We would like to thank Mr P. Patel for commissioning this archaeological evaluation, and Richard Oaten and Ben Vine of RDP Architects for making the arrangements. I would also like to thank Kevin Cornwell of HAARG and Luke Barber for providing information on the earlier excavations.
- 8.2** David Atkin assisted with the excavations, and the project was managed for CBAS Ltd by Chris Butler, and monitored for ESCC by Greg Chuter and Casper Johnson. Luke Barber and Chris Butler reported on the finds.

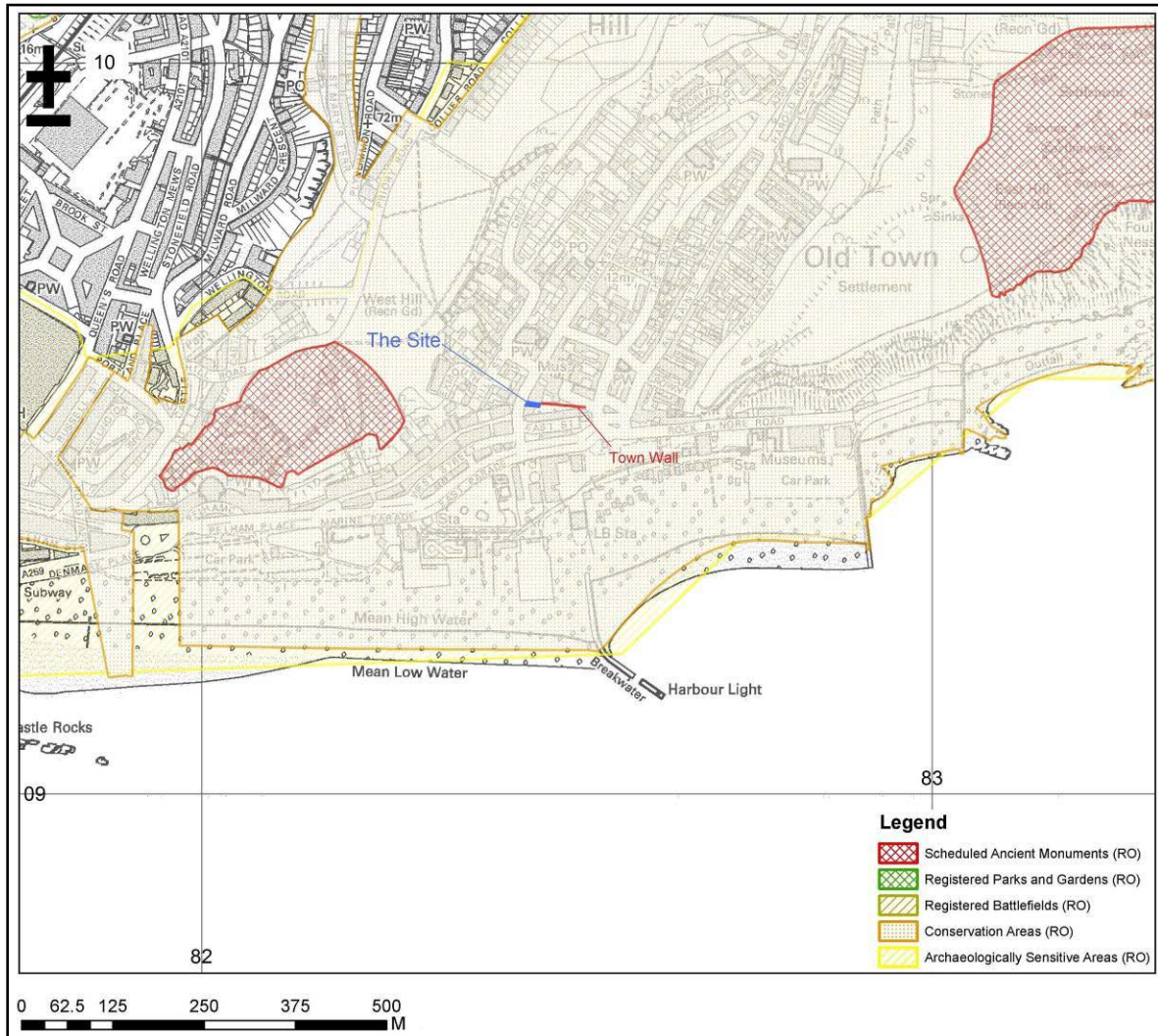


Fig. 1: 59 High Street, Hastings: Site location and Archaeologically Sensitive Areas
(adapted from map provided by ESCC)
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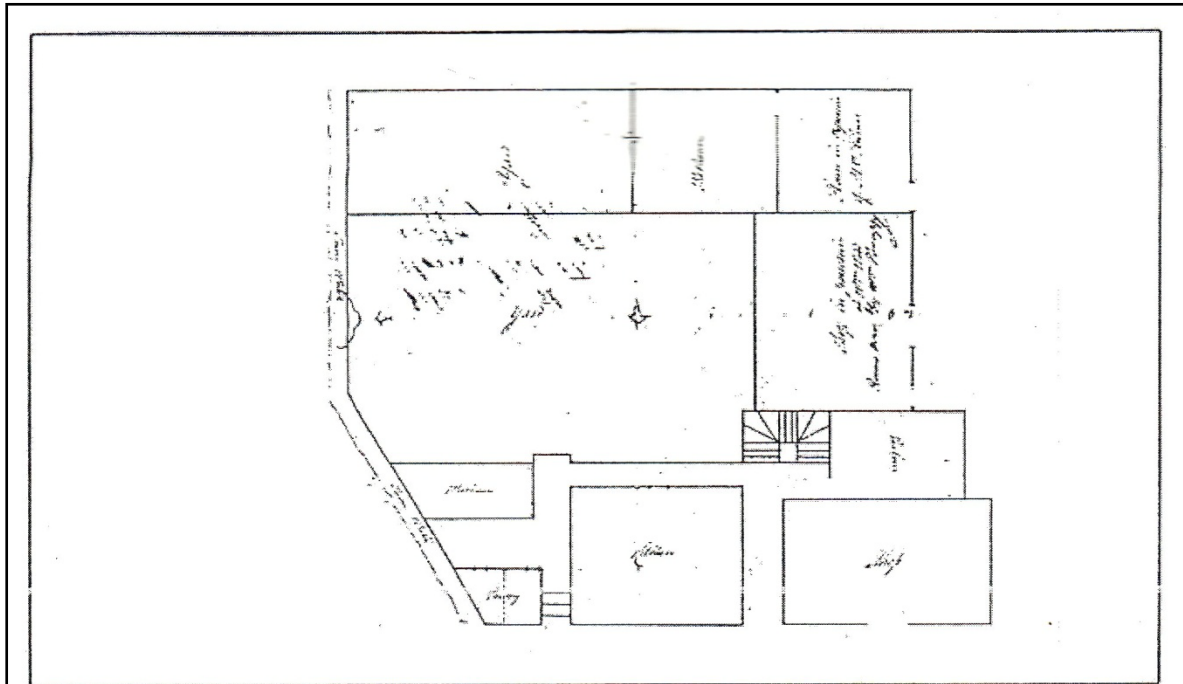


Plate 12. Plan of buildings at the bottom of High Street in 1808 (now 59A, 60, 61 High Street). Note the Town Wall shown on the left. [HMAG MA 164]

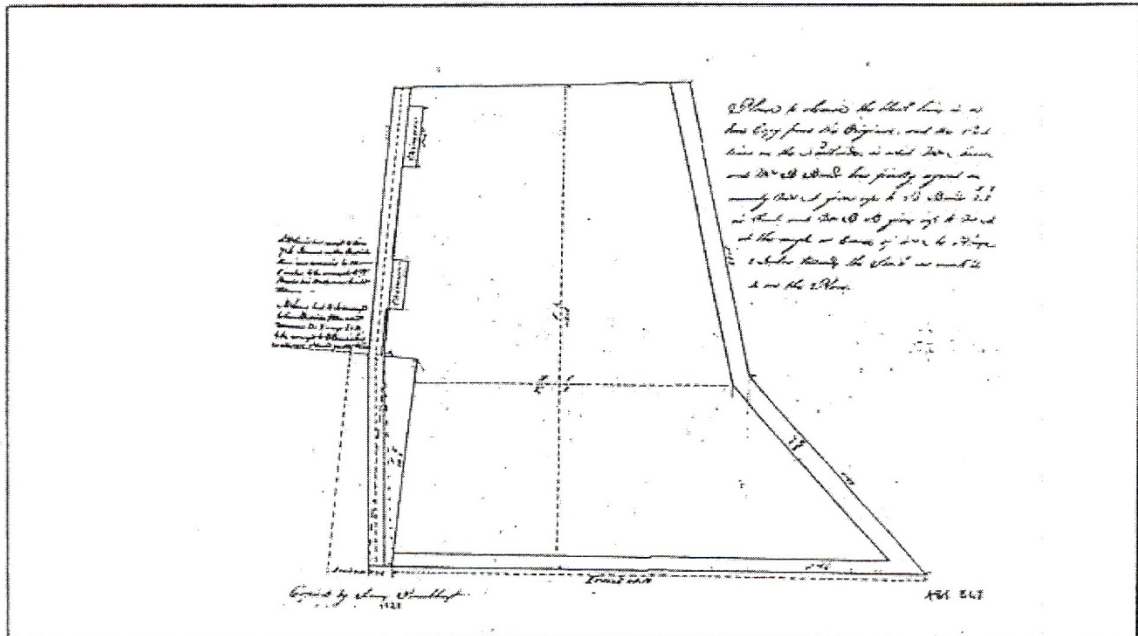


Plate 13. Plan of open ground known as the Town Walk (now 58, 59 High Street) drawn 1828, but based upon conveyance plan of 1801. Note Town Wall on right. [HMAG ABS B.48]

Fig. 3: 59 High Street, Hastings: Plans showing the town wall and its relationship with the site (Adapted from Martin & Martin 1995)



Fig. 4: 59 High Street, Hastings: William Gant's 'Survey of Hastings' of 1852
(Reproduced with permission of Hastings Museum)

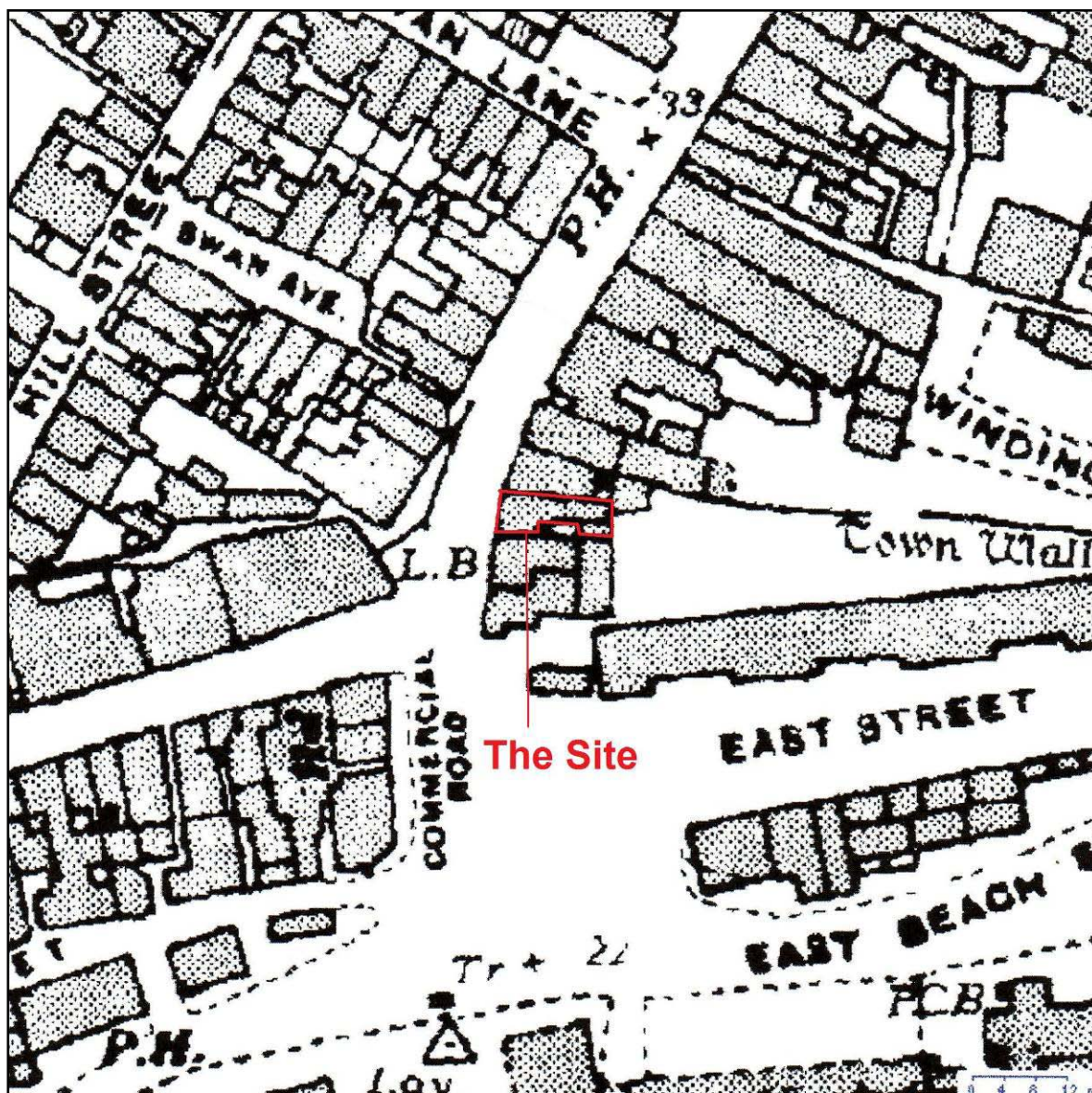


Fig. 5: 59 High Street, Hastings: 4th Edition OS Map (1928-38)

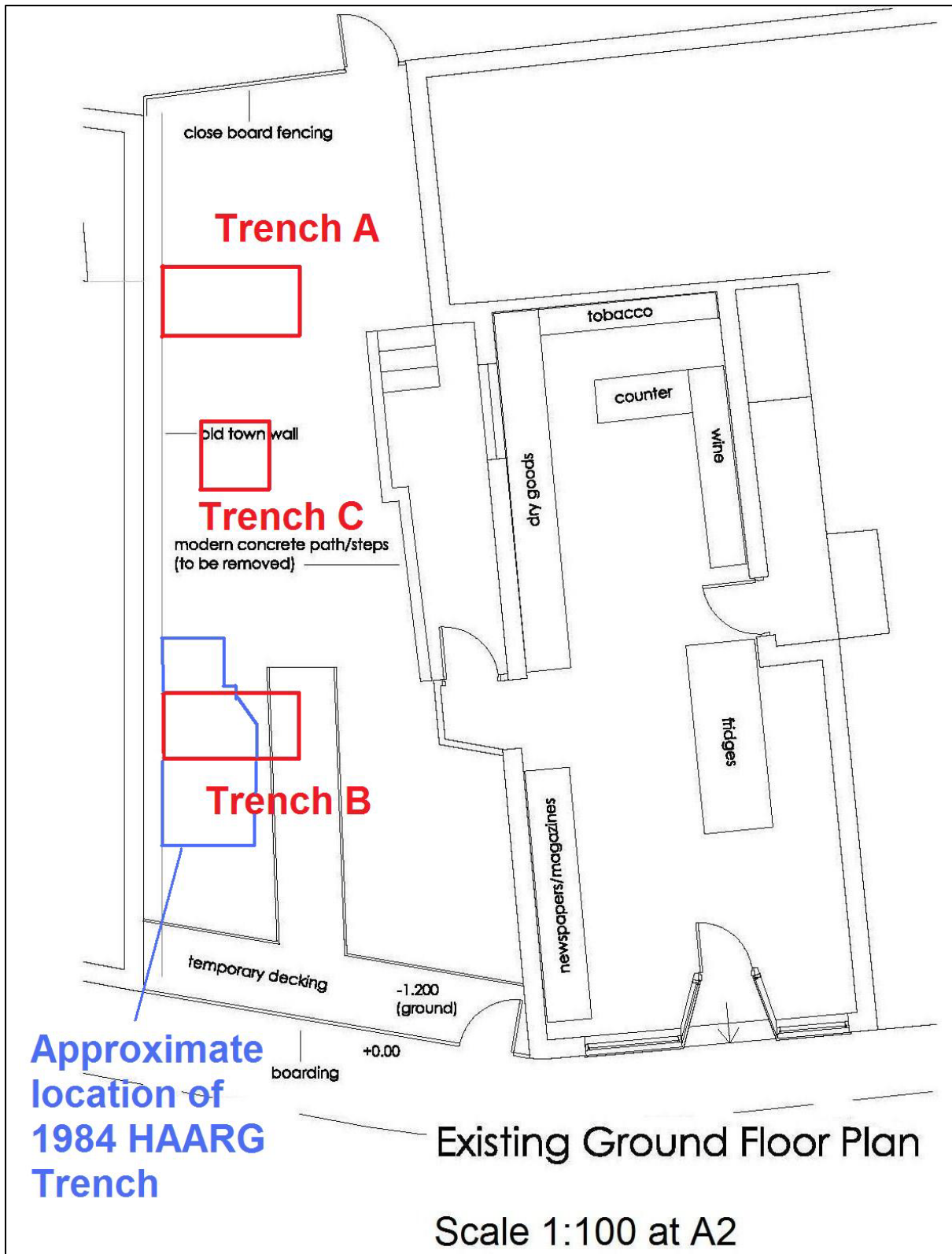


Fig. 6: 59 High Street, Hastings: Site plan showing the location of the evaluation trenches and the location of the 1984 HAARG trench (Adapted from architects drawing)

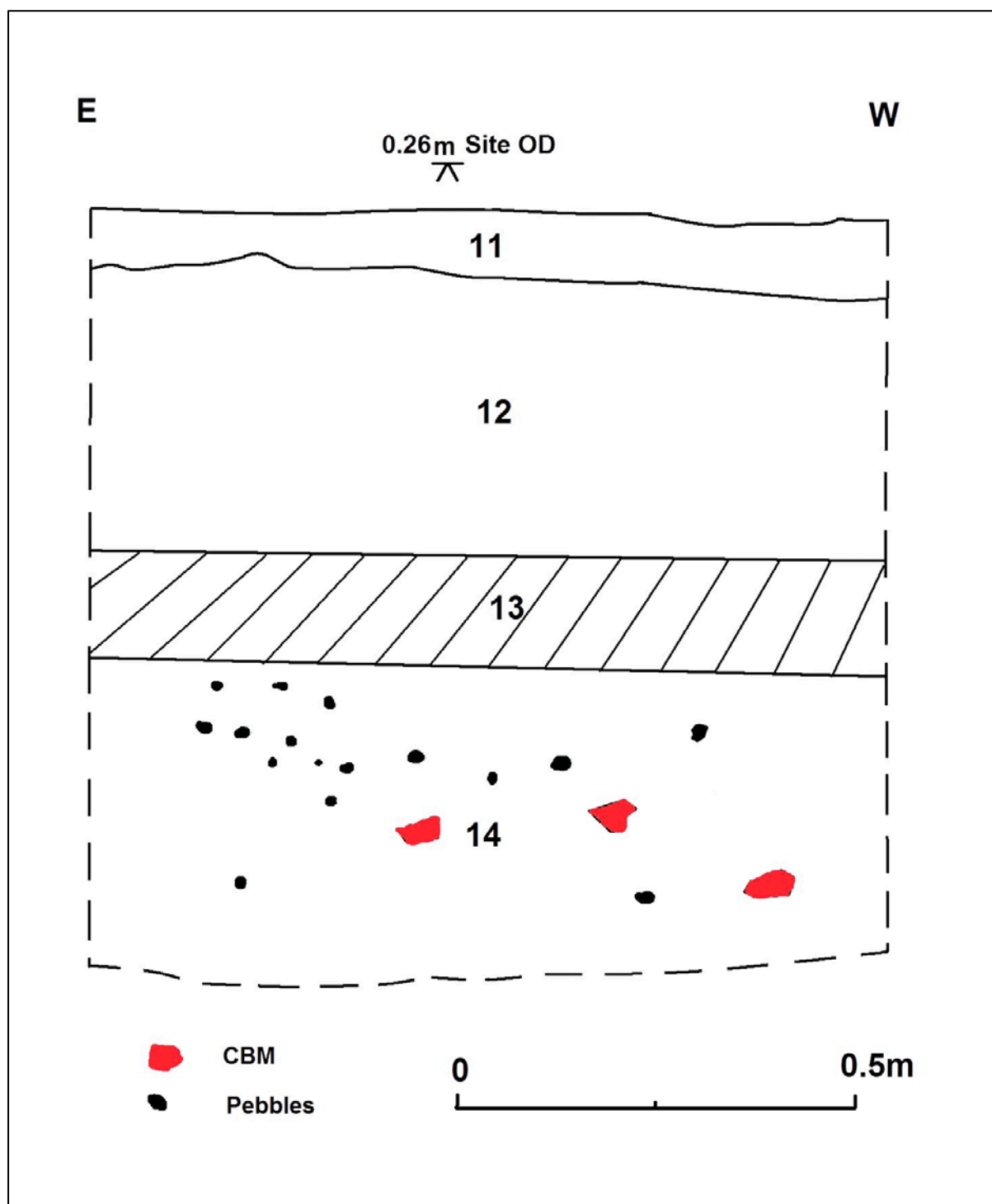


Fig. 7: 59 High Street, Hastings: Representative Section of Trench B showing the modern made ground (12), concrete floor (13) and in-situ deposit (14) preserved below the floor

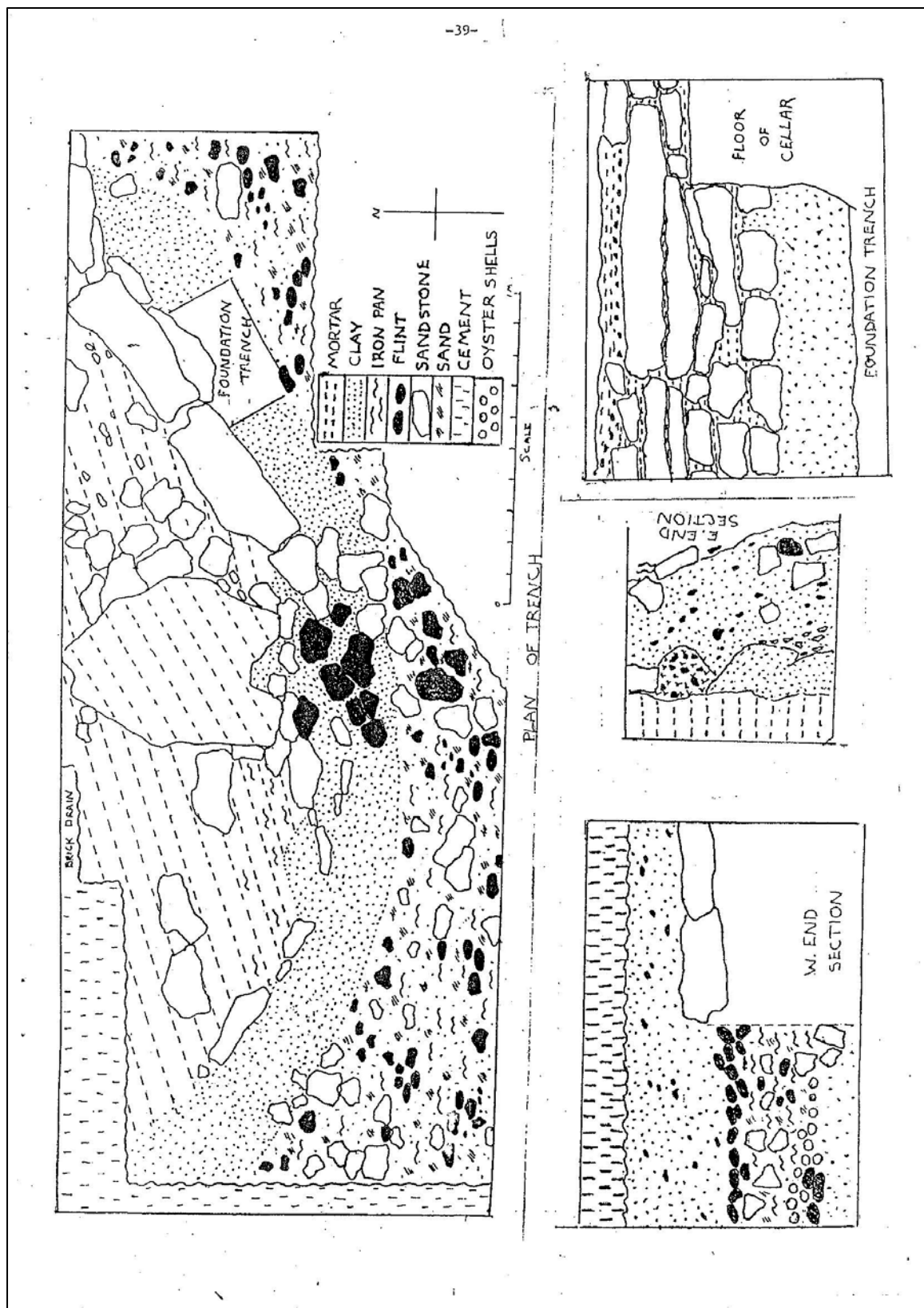


Fig. 8: 59 High Street, Hastings: Plan and sections of the HAARG 1984 excavation
(Adapted from Hastings Area Archaeological Research Group Newsletter)



Fig. 9: 59 High Street, Hastings: Development plans
(Adapted from architects drawing)

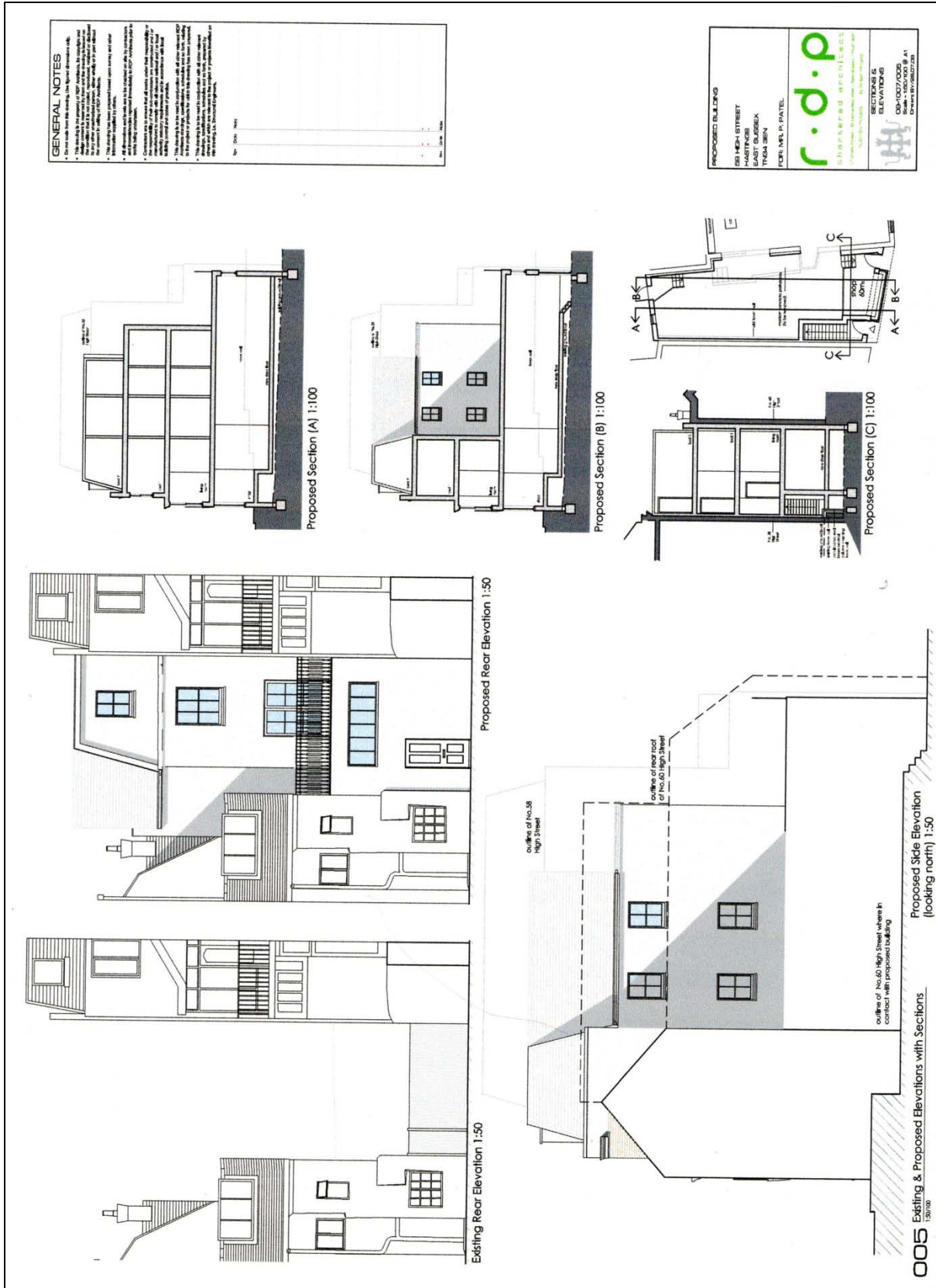


Fig. 10: 59 High Street, Hastings: Development plan Sections
(Adapted from architects drawing)



Fig. 11: 59 High Street, Hastings: Photograph Trench A



Fig. 12: 59 High Street, Hastings: Photograph Trench B

Appendix 1 - HER Summary Form

Site Code	HSH 10					
Identification Name and Address	59, High Street, Hastings, East Sussex.					
County, District &/or Borough	Rother District Council					
OS Grid Refs.						
Geology	Boundary of the Ashdown Beds and the Storm Beach Gravel					
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. 13-14 12-2010	Excav.	WB.	Other		
Sponsor/Client	RDP Architects on behalf of Mr Patel					
Project Manager	Chris Butler MifA					
Project Supervisor	Keith Butler PifA					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED ?	PM X	Other		
<p>100 Word Summary.</p> <p><i>Three evaluation trenches were excavated on the site of 59, High Street, Hastings, East Sussex. This site is thought to have the remains of Hastings Town Wall running diagonally across it, which had been discovered by HAARG in 1984. In the course of these excavations the original HAARG trench was re-located, but the remains of the town wall were not seen.</i></p> <p><i>Post-Medieval activity is suggested by the recovery of sherds of pottery and clay tobacco pipe in deposits preserved below the existing concrete floor, whilst a deposit, possibly the fill of the town ditch or a pit, was also found.</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 for 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.

Chris Butler MfA Archaeological Services

Prehistoric Flintwork Specialist

Rosedale
Berwick
Polegate
East Sussex
BN26 6TB

Tel & fax: 01323 871021

e mail: chris@reltub.fsbusiness.co.uk