



**Chris Butler MfA  
Archaeological Services Ltd**



**An Archaeological Evaluation  
at  
2 Priory Road, Langley  
Eastbourne, East Sussex**

Project No. CBAS0347

by  
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### ***Summary***

*An archaeological evaluation was carried out in advance of a planning application associated with the construction of new dwellings on the site of 2 Priory Road, Langley, Eastbourne, East Sussex. All excavations were carried out using a 1.7t machine with a 1.2m toothless ditching bucket. Two 5m x 1m evaluation trenches were excavated to a depth of 700mm into the underlying natural with no archaeological features or pre 20<sup>th</sup> century artefacts being noted.*

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## **Contents**

<b>1.0</b>	Introduction	3
<b>2.0</b>	Historical & Archaeological Background	4
<b>3.0</b>	Archaeological Methodology	5
<b>4.0</b>	Results	6
<b>5.0</b>	Finds	7
<b>6.0</b>	Discussion	8
<b>7.0</b>	Recommendations	9
<b>8.0</b>	Acknowledgements	9

## **Figures:**

- Fig. 1 Location of Site and Archaeological Notification Area.
- Fig. 2 Archaeological Notification Areas
- Fig. 3 Location of Site and Monuments on the HER.
- Fig. 4 Existing building and location of evaluation trenches.

## **Appendix**

- Appendix I: HER Summary Form

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1** Chris Butler Archaeological Services Ltd (CBAS) had been commissioned by Andrew Benn (The Client) to carry out an archaeological evaluation in connection with a planning application associated with the construction of new dwellings on the site of 2 Priory Road, Langley, Eastbourne, East Sussex, TQ 6317 0209 (Fig. 1).
- 1.2** The site lies to the north and east of the Langley Levels, south of Langley village and to the west of The Crumbles, and is just on the higher ground at c.8m OD above the Levels. The site is within an Archaeological Notification Area (Fig. 2) defining the site of a medieval priory grange, a medieval watermill and an early 19<sup>th</sup> century battery.
- 1.3** As a result of the site's location, and the archaeological potential of the area, the local planning authority had requested that an appropriate programme of archaeological work be undertaken prior to submission of the planning application, as required by section 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework. The appropriate programme of archaeological work comprised an Archaeological Evaluation Excavation, and the preparation of a Desk-based Assessment Report
- 1.4** The geology, according to the British Geological Survey (Sheet 319/334), is an outcrop of Lower Greensand which may give way to Alluvium on the south part of the site. Further to the north is Weald Clay.
- 1.5** The WSI covered the evaluation excavation, and the aim of the archaeological evaluation excavation was to:
1. Establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the proposed development area.
  2. Determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains present.
  3. Establish the ecofactual/environmental potential of archaeological features.
  4. To assess the possible effect of the development on any surviving archaeology.

## **2.0 Archaeological & Historical background (Fig. 3)**

- 2.1** A full desk based assessment report has been prepared<sup>1</sup>, and will be submitted with the report on the evaluation excavation.
- 2.2** The earliest mention of Langney (Langlie) is in the Domesday Book, which mentions two holdings which were gifted to Lewes Priory. Langney Grange appears to have been built in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, with the chapel, refectory and dormitory surviving within the current house, which was built around 1400, and added to in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. After Lewes Priory was dissolved, the buildings became Langney Farm, and remain today within the 20<sup>th</sup> century housing development, just to the north of the site (MES514).

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<sup>1</sup> Russell, C. 2012 *A Desk-based Assessment at 2 Priory Road, Langley, Eastbourne East Sussex*. CBAS Report

### **3.0 Method Statement**

- 3.1** The archaeological work was carried out in accordance with ESCC's *Standards for Archaeological Fieldwork, Recording and Post-Excavation in East Sussex* dated April 2008 (Recommended Standards), and in accordance with a specification issued by the Archaeology Team at ESCC.
- 3.2** The area to be excavated was initially scanned for services using a CAT scanner. No services were located.
- 3.3** Two evaluation trenches were excavated in an L-shaped plan measuring 5m x 5m and 1.5m wide to the rear (south) of the existing building (Fig. 4). Trench 1 was orientated north-east – south-west. Trench 2 was positioned north-west – south-east. The trenches were excavated by a 1.7 tonne machine using a 1.5 toothless ditching bucket in accordance with the Recommended Standards. Both trenches were excavated onto the top of the natural Wealden Clay, cleaned and inspected for any features, and then excavated an additional 300mm to ensure that this was indeed the natural.
- 3.4** All exposed sections and surfaces were inspected for archaeological features, structures or finds. The spoil from the excavations was inspected on a regular basis to recover any artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest. A Garrett Ace 150 metal detector was initially used to scan the location of the trenches however, no signals were noted. The metal detector was also used to scan the spoil heap during the evaluation and watching brief.
- 3.5** All deposits were recorded according to accepted professional standards and to the ESCC Recommended Conditions. Deposit colours were recorded by visual inspection and not by reference to a Munsell Colour chart.
- 3.6** Both trenches were levelled in relation to the top of pavement outside the new build that will form the vehicular entrance to the new property. This TBM was not tied in to the Ordnance Survey, but was given a Site Datum of 50m.
- 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 Ltd. A site reference of PRL12 has been allocated and after any further analysis, will be deposited at Eastbourne Museum who have allocated an accession number of 2012.48.

#### 4.0 Result (Plates 1 – 3 & Fig. 5)

- 4.1 The topsoil from Trenches 1 and 2 (Context 1) was very dark grey-black, silty loam, 200mm deep, with some bioturbation in the form of roots at <1% and had occasional rounded flint inclusions at <30mm in size at <1% and sat above Context 2. Some modern 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century detritus was noted within Context 1 but was not retained.



Plate 1: Trench A looking north-east

- 4.2 Context 2 was a soft to firm, mottled grey-brown deposit. It was a clayey-silt composition with inclusions that comprised angular flint <30mm at 1%. It was 300mm at its maximum depth and was interpreted as a subsoil or possibly a truncated colluvium deposit. Apart from a single abraded piece of 20<sup>th</sup> century ceramic building material, this context was sterile of finds.
- 4.3 Below Context 2 sat the natural mottled light yellow and grey silty clay - Context 3. This was excavated to a depth of 300mm, at which point excavation ceased.



Plate 2: Trench B looking south-east

- 4.4** No archaeological features were encountered during the watching brief, and there were no other deposits or layers noted



Plate 3: general view of evaluation excavation trenches

## **5.0 Finds**

- 5.1** No finds were recovered during the evaluation excavation with the site being sterile apart from modern late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> century material.



## **6.0 Discussion**

- 6.1** Small scale excavations such as this can be informative, however on this occasion no archaeology was noted. There was no cultural material recovered during the evaluation and no archaeological features were noted.
- 6.2** The site sits just on the 5m contour line, close to the Willingdon Levels which are associated with Bronze Age activity and close to the nearby Medieval Grange so there was the potential for prehistoric and medieval remains.
- 6.3** Given this archaeological background and the potential for archaeological material it is disappointing that no archaeology of any period was noted and the lack of archaeological material from a secure stratigraphic context or as unstratified topsoil finds suggests that human activity in the immediate area in the past has been limited.
- 6.4** The excavation ceased as the natural Wealden clay (Context **3**) was reached but no features, or peat deposits as had been noted at sites nearby, were present.
- 6.5** It therefore seems likely that there was no prehistoric activity in the immediate vicinity of the site, and once the Medieval Grange was established the site was situated within fields, probably used as pasture throughout this and subsequent periods. All the cultural material appears to have been introduced since the construction of the bungalow on the site.

## **7 Recommendations**

**7.1** The evaluation excavation undertaken at 2 Priory Road was successfully completed and achieved its objectives. The depth of the deposits across the site was established and, moreover, the potential for surviving archaeology was also ascertained.

**7.3** The lack of any archaeological features or artefacts in Trench A or B means that, given the small scale of the site, it is unlikely that any archaeological deposits will be disturbed during the development. It is therefore recommended that no further archaeological works are required in respect of this development.

## **8.0 Acknowledgements**

**8.1** I would like to thank the client, Mr. Andrew Benn for commissioning the archaeological watching brief. The project was managed for CBAS by Chris Butler and monitored for ESCC by Greg Chuter.



Fig. 1: 2 Priory Road, Langley: Site Location  
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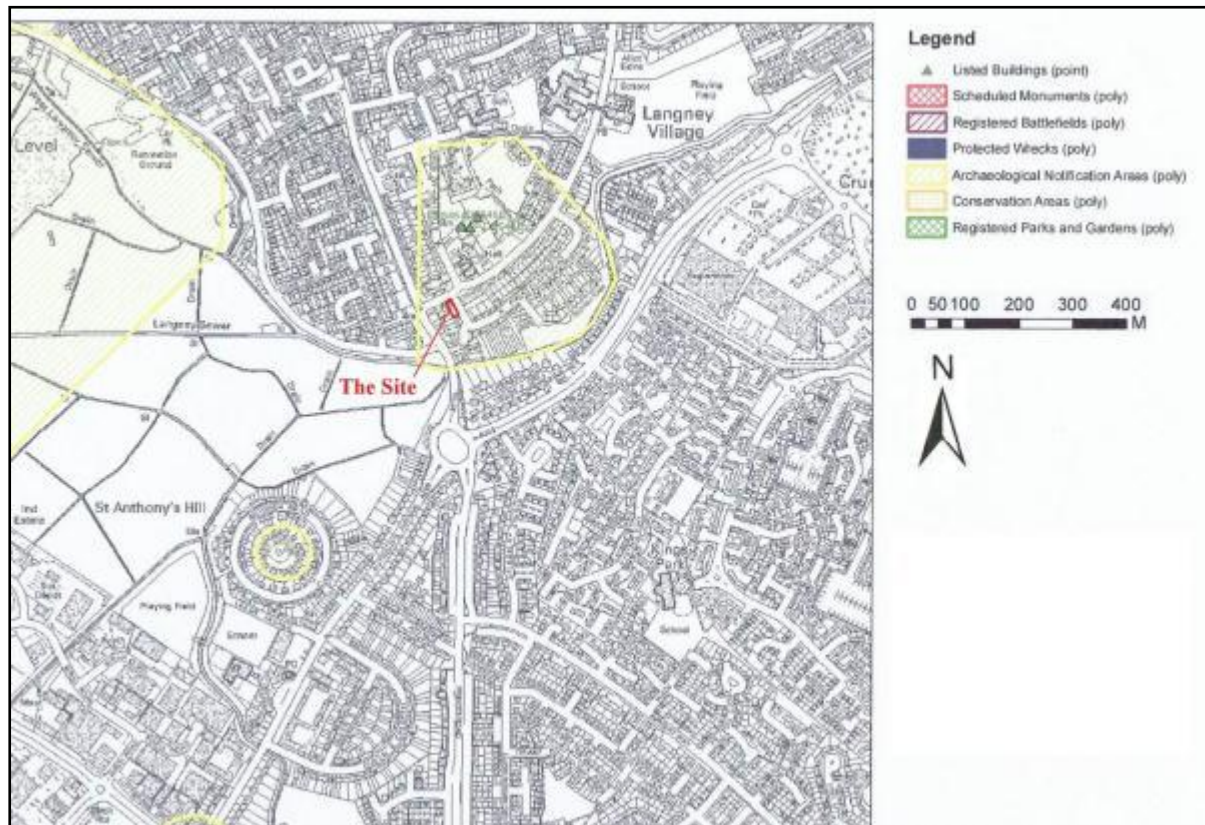


Fig. 2: 2 Priory Road, Langley: Archaeological Notification Areas  
(adapted from map provided by ESCC)  
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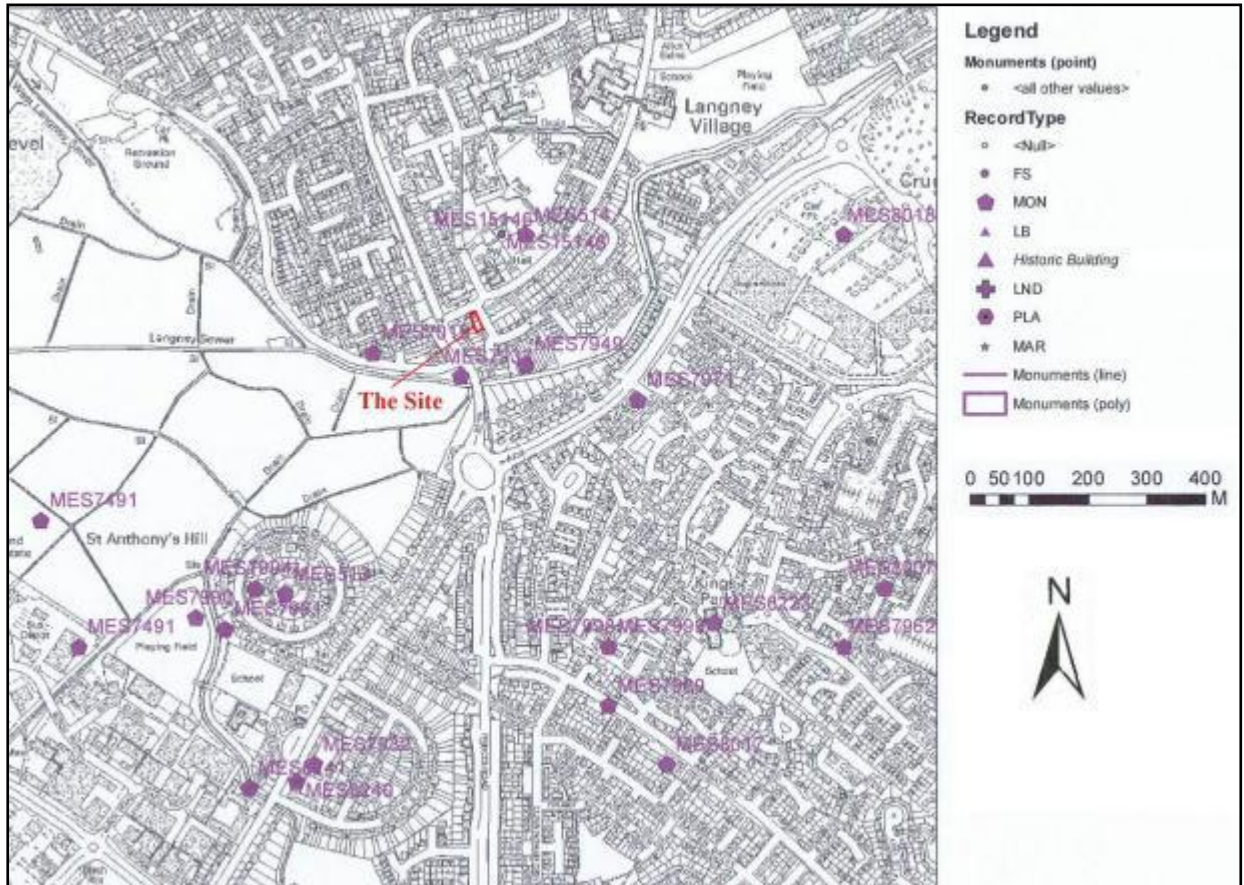


Fig. 3: 2 Priory Road, Langley. Sites on the HER  
(adapted from map provided by ESCC)  
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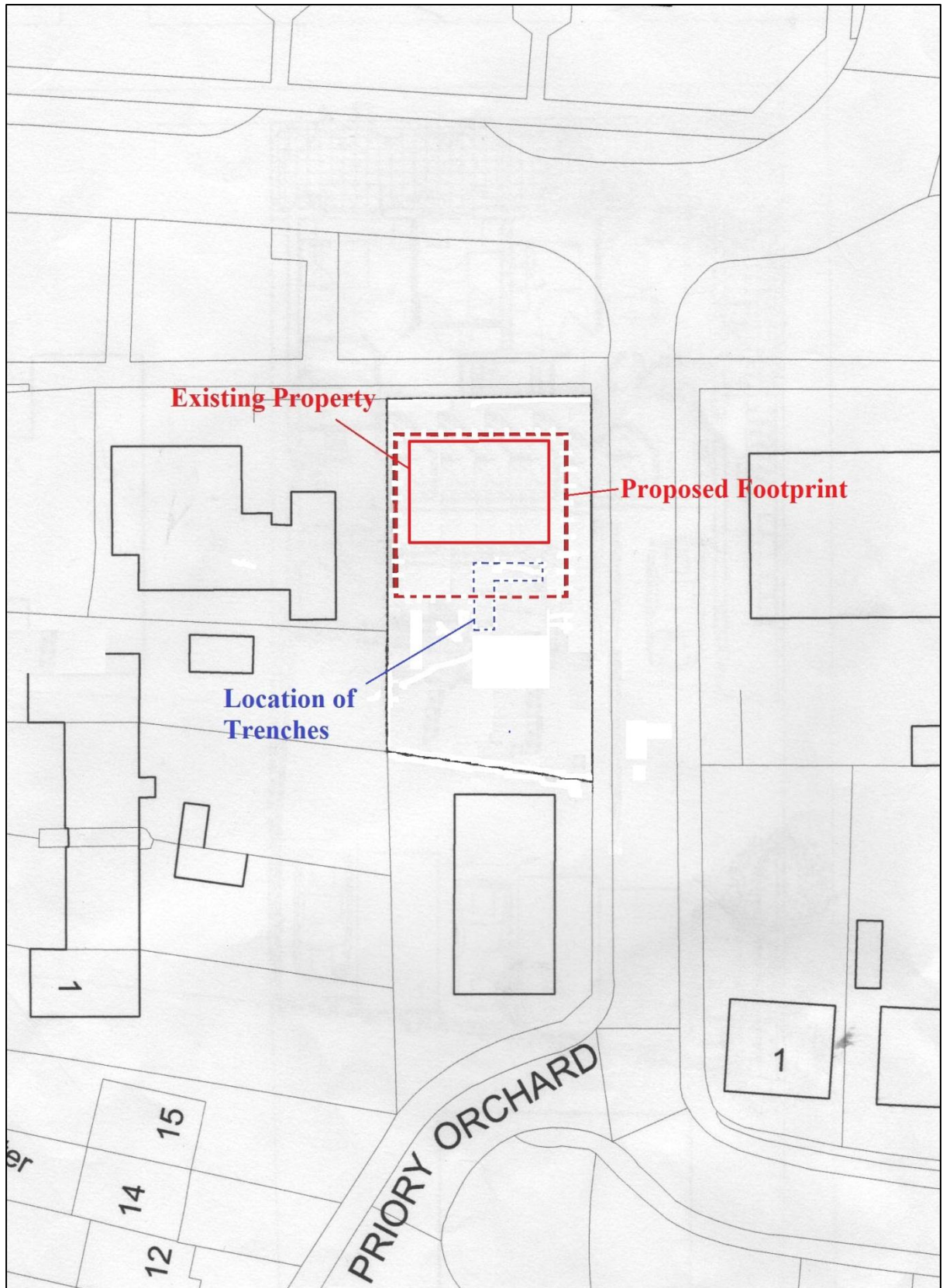


Fig. 4: 2 Priory Road, Langley. Site plan showing the location of the existing property and the evaluation trenches

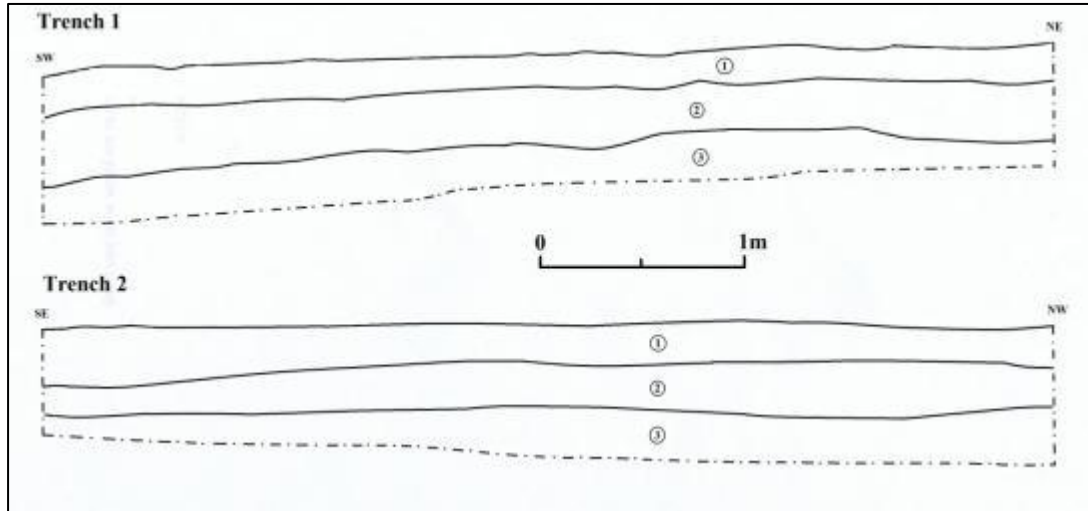


Fig. 5: 2 Priory Road, Langley. Trench sections

## Appendix 1 HER Summary Form

Site Code	DRE11					
Identification Name and Address	2 Priory Road, Langley, Eastbourne, East Sussex.					
County, District &/or Borough	Eastbourne District Council					
OS Grid Refs.	TQ 6317 0209					
Geology	Wealden Clay					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval. <b>X</b>	Excav.	Watching Brief	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field	Shallow Urban <b>X</b>	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	WB. 08/05/12	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Mr. A Benn.					
Project Manager	Chris Butler MIFA					
Project Supervisor	David Atkin					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM <b>X</b>	Other		
<p>100 Word Summary.</p> <p><i>An archaeological evaluation was carried out in connection with a planning application associated with the construction of new dwellings on the site of 2 Priory Road, Langley, Eastbourne, East Sussex. All excavations were carried out using a 1.7t machine with a 1.2m toothless ditching bucket. Two 5m x 1m evaluation trenches were excavated with no archaeological features or material being noted. All material on site dated to the late 20<sup>th</sup> or early 21<sup>st</sup> century. Excavation ceased at approximately 700mm into the underlying Wealden Clay.</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, and a committee member of the Lithic Studies Society. He is a part time lecturer in Archaeology at the University of Sussex, and until recently taught A-Level Archaeology at Bexhill 6<sup>th</sup> Form College having qualified (Cert. Ed.) as a teacher in 2006. 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. He has recently undertaken large landscape surveys of Ashdown Forest and Broadwater Warren and is Co-Director of the Barcombe Roman Villa excavation project.

His publications include *Prehistoric Flintwork*, *East Sussex Under Attack* and *West Sussex Under Attack*, all of which are published by Tempus Publishing Ltd.

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

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