



**Chris Butler MCIfA  
Archaeological Services Ltd**



**Archaeological Watching Brief  
at  
Streat Barn Cottage,  
Streat Lane, Streat,  
East Sussex**

SDNP/12/01435/FUL

Project Number CBAS0448

By  
David Atkin

August 2015

## *Summary*

*An archaeological watching brief was carried out during the groundworks associated with the construction of an extension at Streat Barn Cottage, Streat Lane, Streat, Lewes, East Sussex. Excavation of the footing trenches was carried with a 3 tonne tracked excavator using a 400m toothless ditching bucket. The site was virtually sterile with only modern services and a single brick width garden wall being noted. The only finds of any note being a sherd of stoneware pottery dated c.1690-1750, and brick fragments c.1700-1850, the remainder dating to the 20<sup>th</sup> century.*

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## 1.0 Introduction

1.1 Chris Butler Archaeological Services Ltd was commissioned by Tim Gaynor (The Client) to carry out a programme of archaeological monitoring during the groundworks associated with demolition of an existing garage and the construction of a pitched roof extension on the west side, and glazed link flat roof extension to the rear, of Streat Barn Cottage, Streat Lane, Streat. East Sussex, TQ 3507 1543. (SDNP/12/01435/FUL) (Figs. 1 & 5).

1.2 As a result of the site's location, and the archaeological potential of the area, the local planning authority had put conditions on the planning consent for the development, requiring an appropriate programme of archaeological work to be undertaken:

1. No development shall take place until the developer has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work, in accordance with a Written Scheme of Archaeological Investigation which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing.

Reason: To ensure that the archaeological and historical interest of the site is safeguarded and recorded to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework

2. The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until the archaeological site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition [1] and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition has been secured.

Reason: To ensure that the archaeological and historical interest of the site is safeguarded and recorded to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework

1.3 The development is situated within an Archaeological Notification Area (Fig. 2) defining the Roman road known as the Greensand Way. Prehistoric and medieval finds have also been found during archaeological work in the immediate vicinity of the site, and the site also lies within a designated Conservation Area.

1.4 The geology of the site, according to the British Geological Survey sheet 318/333, is Lower Greensand with Wealden Clay to the north and Head Deposit to the south.

- 1.5** The appropriate programme of archaeological work, in accordance with a brief prepared by ESCC, comprised an archaeological Watching Brief to monitor the groundworks connected with the construction of the extensions. A written scheme of investigation<sup>1</sup> covered the monitoring, and was submitted to and approved by the local planning authority.
- 1.6** The objective of the watching brief was to ensure that any archaeological remains that may be damaged or destroyed by the development are adequately recorded, and to enhance knowledge of the Roman and Medieval use of the landscape at Streat.

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<sup>1</sup> Bradshaw, A. 2014 Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief at Streat Barn Cottage, Streat, East Sussex. CBAS

## 2.0 Archaeological & Historical Background (Fig. 3)

- 2.1 The earliest activity in the vicinity of the site dates from the Mesolithic period. A Mesolithic camp was found at Streat Lane to the west of the site (MES7751), where excavation revealed a number of pits filled with fire-fractured flint and an assemblage of some 3,000 pieces of worked flint. C14 dating showed that the site was being used in the 7<sup>th</sup> Millennium BC<sup>2</sup>. Other Mesolithic flintwork has been found nearby, e.g. MES1331, MES2026, MES2033, MES7754 and MES7757.
- 2.2 Evidence of Neolithic flintwork has also been found nearby (MES7753 & MES7757), and Neolithic and Bronze Age flintwork was found during the excavation of the Mesolithic site at Streat Lane (MES7751). A Bronze Age palstave was discovered to the west of the site near Streat (MES9413). Known Bronze Age sites are largely confined to the South Downs, where settlement and burial mounds are recorded. The field systems on the Downs probably continued in use into the Iron Age.
- 2.3 A Roman villa was discovered to the south-east of the site (MES1886), with geophysical survey and fieldwalking suggesting a small villa complex probably set within a field system. The Roman road the Greensand Way (MES7393) runs east to west immediately adjacent to the site, linking roadside settlements at Hassocks and Barcombe Mills. A section was excavated across the Greensand Way just to the west of the site in 2009<sup>3</sup>, revealing an 8m wide flint cobbled surface (EES14449/EES14450). Other Roman finds are known from the area (e.g. MES7756), and Streat has been identified as the location of a possible Roman settlement (MES7755) at Streat Place<sup>4</sup>.
- 2.4 A section of the Roman road, known as the Greensand Way, was exposed during building work in June & July 2013 at the Old Rectory (MES19804), which directly to the south west of the site. This section of the Greensand Way conformed to Margary's projected line within Streat. The Evaluation work at the Old Rectory recovered a single sherd of East Sussex Ware along with several examples of Medieval pottery sherds, indicating possible Medieval activity close to the site.<sup>5</sup>
- 2.5 Streat Village is a Medieval shrunken village possibly associated with a Roman road, the Greensand Way, which formally ran past Middleton House and thence on to Streat. The Domesday Book records that it was held by Ralph from William (of Warrene). There was land for 9 ploughs, in Lordship 1 Plough. The population was 4 villigers and 12 smallholders with 1 plough. Meadow, 3 acres; woodland at 10 pigs. Value before 1066 £7 and after 100s, now £6.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Butler, C. 2007 'A Mesolithic site at Streat Lane, Streat, East Sussex', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **145**.

<sup>3</sup> Millum, D. 2009 Dissertation Report CCE, University of Sussex

<sup>4</sup> Chris Butler. ALSF Desk Based Assessment. 2008. P.36

<sup>5</sup> Evaluation Report on a Section of the Roman Greensand Way at the Old Rectory, Streat Lane, Streat. ASL9/2013. Section 7.3. ASL 2013.

<sup>6</sup> Domesday Book, Sussex. John Morris. Phillimore 1976. P12.40

- 2.6** Ashurst Farm, to the east, has medieval origins, being first recorded in 1485 (MES7441). Some 12<sup>th</sup> century worked stones, probably originating from Lewes Priory, were found in the foundations of a barn at Ashurst Farm (MES1878). Other medieval activity is evidenced by the discovery of Medieval pottery during the excavation of the Roman road west of Ashurst Farm (MES15517), and a 14<sup>th</sup> century coin to the east of the site (MES9837).
- 2.7** There is a suggestion that Plumpton, Streat (MES7416) and East Chiltington (MES7417) are all shrunken medieval settlements, however it is more likely that these should be seen as dispersed settlements, with a church and manor house at the core, and then dispersed farms, such as Ashurst Farm, Rylands Farm (MES7147) and others, across each parish. Other medieval settlement activity includes house platforms at Ducks Bridge (MES2035) and pottery kilns at Marchants Farm, both to the north of Streat (MES2034).
- 2.8** Streat Church (MES2031), which is of unknown dedication, was built soon after the completion of the Domesday Book in 1086, to replace two Saxon Church's, one of which was probably on the same site. The original building composed of the current Nave, c.1200, the north wall and the West Wall. There are two Norman Arches the present entrance to the North Wall and the entrance into the South Aisle.<sup>7</sup> The chancel was added in the 13th Century, but was shorter than the present one and possibly replaced an earlier Apse. The church has a North porch and small shingled bell-turret with spirelet.
- 2.9** There are several listed buildings in Streat Village itself, including Streat Place (MES2030) which is an E-shaped house of two storeys, the main structure of which was probably built soon after 1607. Portions of a probably mid-16th century house can be seen in outbuildings to the West. Streatwick House (MES20243) which is a C17, or earlier, timber framed building, Jockeys (MES20242) is a possibly early C17 timber framed house altered in the late 18-early 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- 2.10** Immediately adjacent to the west of the site is The Old Rectory (MES19804), which is a Grade II listed property which dates from the 18th Century although predominantly an 19th Century building built on the remains of an earlier Post Medieval house. It is Also to the east is Skynners Farm, an 18th century or earlier two storied house (MES7424).
- 2.11** The 1<sup>st</sup> Edition OS map of 1874 shows the site to be an open field or farmyard with pathways (Fig. 4). The 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition OS map of 1899 continues to show the site as an open area. It is not until the modern OS map that a building is shown on the site.

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<sup>7</sup> [www.roughwood.net/Church Album/East Sussex/Streat](http://www.roughwood.net/Church Album/East Sussex/Streat)

### **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).
- 3.2** Excavation for the foundation trenches for the new extension was carried out using a three tonne machine using a 400mm wide toothless ditching bucket in shallow spits under archaeological supervision. The foundation trenches were 600mm wide and 800mm deep. The interior of the extension footprint was then reduced by c200mm under archaeological supervision. The construction of the new porch was not monitored as it was built on the footprint of the existing porch and there was no new excavation required.
- 3.3** 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 used to scan the area of excavation however, apart from a few signals from modern detritus, no material of note was recovered. The metal detector was also used to scan the spoil heap.
- 3.4** 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
- 3.5** 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 SBC14 has been allocated. Due to the closure of Lewes Museum to new accessions, the archive will be retained by CBAS until a suitable repository is found.



#### 4.0 Results (Fig. 6)

- 4.1 Below the turf, the topsoil (Context 1) was a dark grey, clayey-silt with inclusions of modern roots at 1% and rare fragments of ceramic building material (CBM) together with sub-rounded natural flint pieces, both at 1%. Context 1 was 390mm deep at its maximum depth and sat above Context 2.
- 4.2 At the bottom of the topsoil in the easternmost footing trench was a lens of re-deposited natural clay (Context 4), dark yellow-brown in colour, which was between 70mm and 140mm thick, being thicker at its northern end (**Plate 1**). This may be associated with the construction of the current house in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.



**Plate 1:** West facing section, Contexts 1 to 4.

- 4.3 Context 2 was a soft, silty-clay, dark grey-black deposit. Inclusions comprised CBM, chalk flecks and coal or clinker all at 1%. It was 320mm thick at its maximum depth and forms a subsoil that had probably accumulated prior to the construction of Streat Barn Cottage. Pottery, CBM and glass were recovered from Context 2.
- 4.4 Context 3 was the underlying natural. It was a dark yellowish-brown, silty-clay. There were no inclusions and it had a depth of 220mm to the LOE.



**Plate 2:** Section of footing trench showing Contexts 2 & 3 after reduction.

- 4.5** A section of brick wall (Context 5) was encountered in the southern trench. This wall was orientated north-south, and comprised a single width of brick laid in stretcher bond, in a light grey cement, and laid onto a broad concrete base c.0.5m wide which sat on the top of the natural. The bricks were 20<sup>th</sup> century, and were associated with a concrete base and probably relates to the garage (demolished prior to monitoring commencing).



**Plate 3:** Modern wall (Context 5).

- 4.6** A number of ceramic pipes were encountered during the watching brief, all of which are 20<sup>th</sup> century drains, and adjacent to the north-west corner of the existing house a linear concrete feature was noted, possibly covering another service. These are noted on Fig. 6, but were not allocated context numbers.
- 4.7** No other archaeological features or deposits were noted during the watching brief.

## **5.0 Finds**

**5.0.1** A small assemblage of artefacts were recovered during the watching brief, and are detailed below. The finds from the site are not considered to hold any potential for further analysis and have been discarded.

### **5.1 The Pottery** by Luke Barber

**5.1.1** Pottery was only recovered from Context 2. This produced a 32g sherd from a London stoneware tavern pot of c.1690 to 1750 and a 10g sherd from an unglazed earthenware flower pot of c.1800 to 1925.

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

**5.2.1** Context 2 produced three brick fragments (200g) from a quite well formed hand-made frogless brick tempered with sparse fine sand and moderate iron oxides and marl pellets to 3mm. The brick, which has some self-glazing, can be placed between c. 1700 and 1850.

### **5.3 The Glass** by Jan Oldham

**5.3.1** Glass was recovered from Context 2, and comprised a complete clear moulded glass potted meat paste type jar and a base fragment of a phial type vessel, 300mm across, weight 4g. All of the glass dates to the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**5.3.2** The jar is hexagonal with five sides being vertically ridged, one plain, which would have held a paper label. The base is rounded and embossed with 'Rd No 68405'. It has an applied lip and would have held a non-screw type lid. The dimensions of the jar are: height 75mm, circumference 130mm and weight 104g.

## 6.0 Discussion

- 6.1** Given the relatively small area of the extension, the combination of ground reduction and the excavation of the footing trenches, means that a relatively large proportion of the site has been investigated.
- 6.2** While there has no doubt been some landscaping and disturbance when the bungalow was built, it seems that the subsoil (Context **2**) largely represents the soil level at the time the current bungalow was built, with Contexts **1** and **4** being the result of construction disturbance and subsequent landscaping.
- 6.3** The lack of any archaeological features and artefacts confirms that the 1874 map accurately reflects the lack of activity on the footprint of the new build from earlier periods, with no indications of the Roman Greensand Way or subsequent development in the medieval period. This may support the idea that Streat is not a nucleated settlement but a dispersed collection of farms and homesteads along Streat Lane.
- 6.4** The limited dating evidence of the tavern pot c.1690-1750 and the brick fragments c.1700-1850 may come from The Old Rectory, an 18<sup>th</sup> century building to the south-west of the site. The 1<sup>st</sup> Edition OS map, suggests that the site was part of a formal garden to The Rectory, laid out with paths in a formal style.
- 6.5** The methodology adopted for this watching brief proved to be satisfactory, and the confidence rating should be considered to be reliable.

## **7.0 Acknowledgements**

- 7.1** I would like to thank the client, Tim Gaynor, for commissioning the archaeological watching brief. The project was managed for CBAS by Chris Butler and was monitored on behalf of SDNP and ESCC by Greg Chuter. Luke Barber & Jan Oldham reported on the finds.

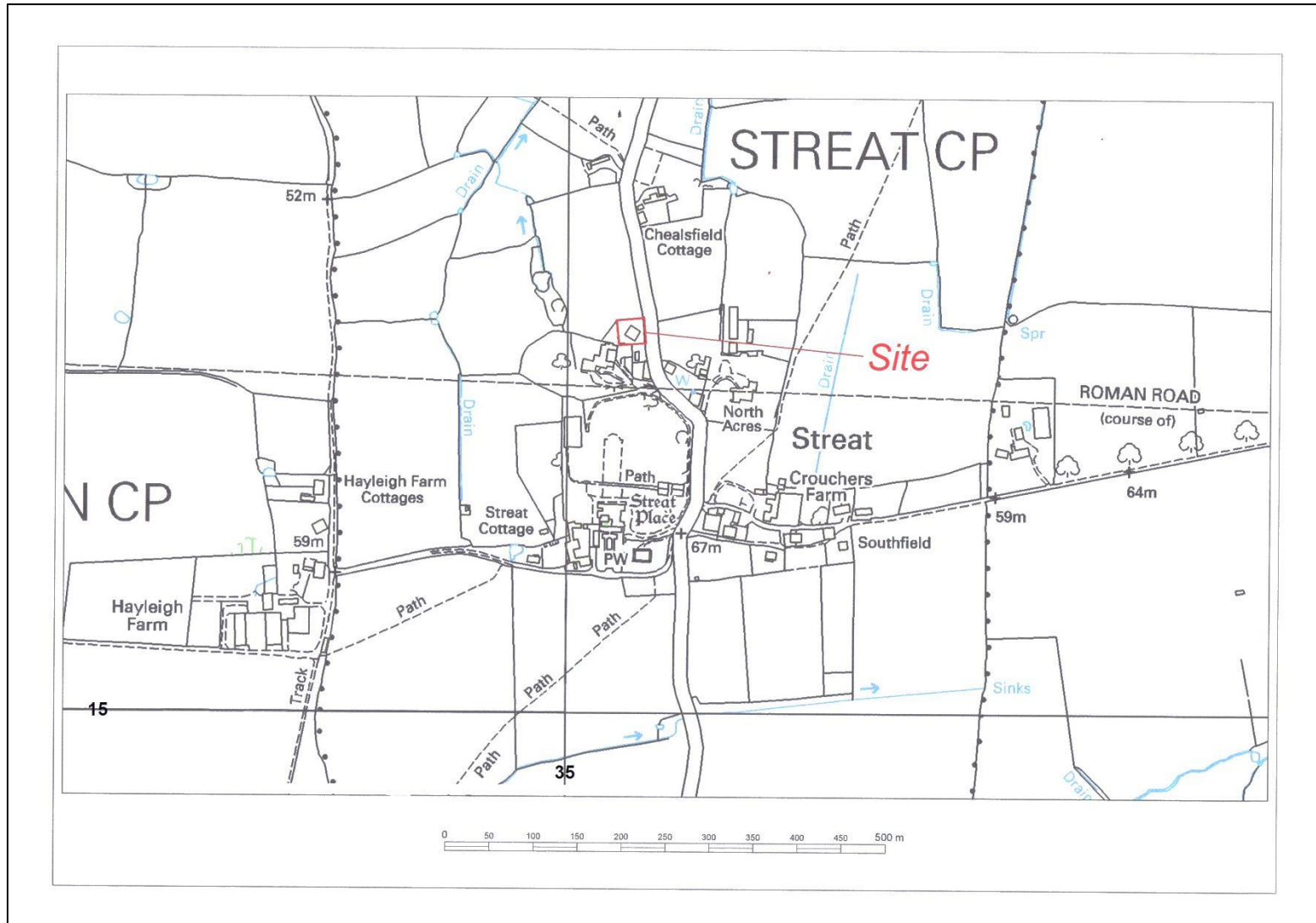


Fig. 1: Streat Barn Cottage, Streat: Site location map  
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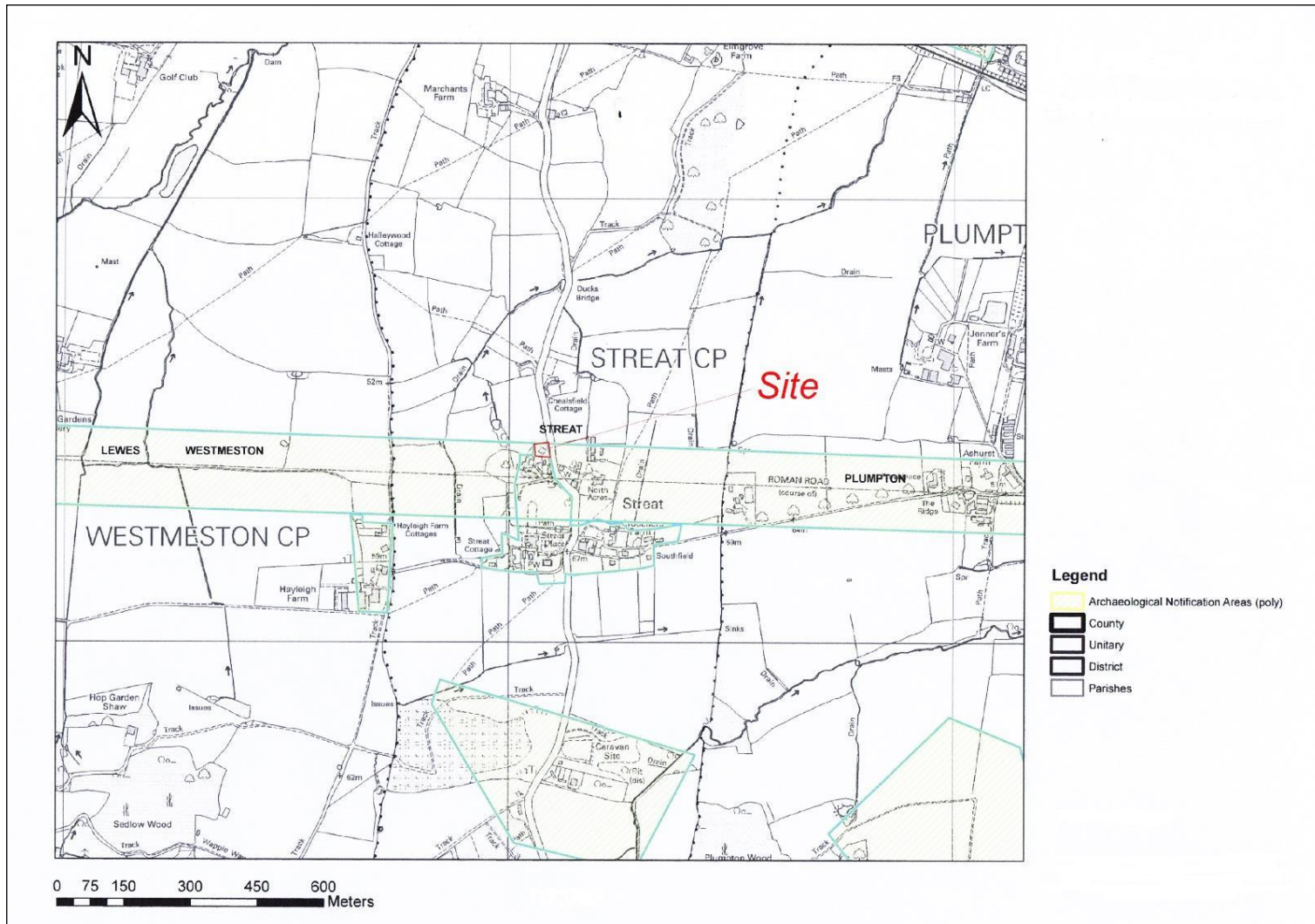


Fig. 2: Streat Barn Cottage, Streat: Map showing Archaeological Notification Areas  
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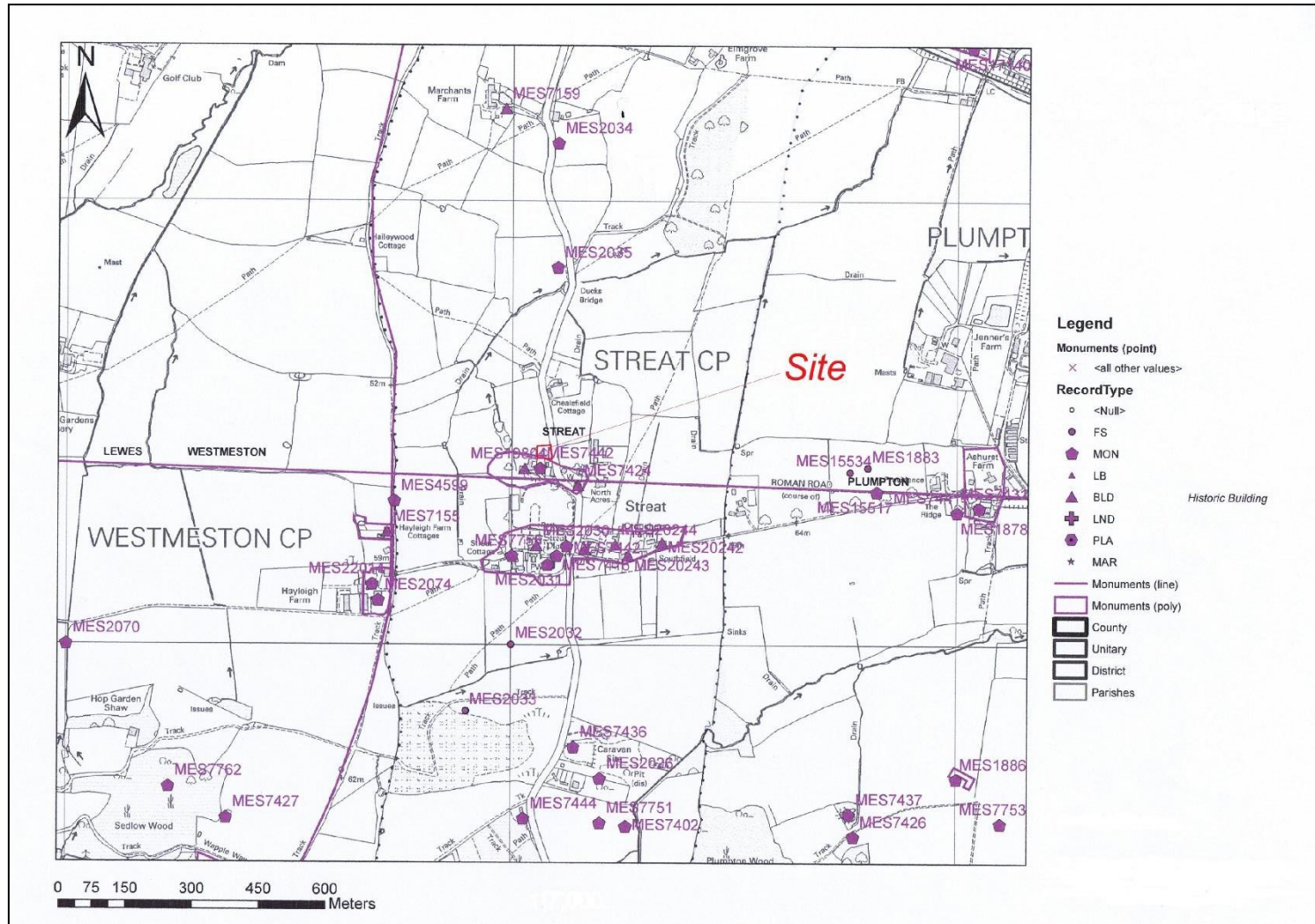


Fig. 3: Streat Barn Cottage, Streat: Map showing sites on the HER  
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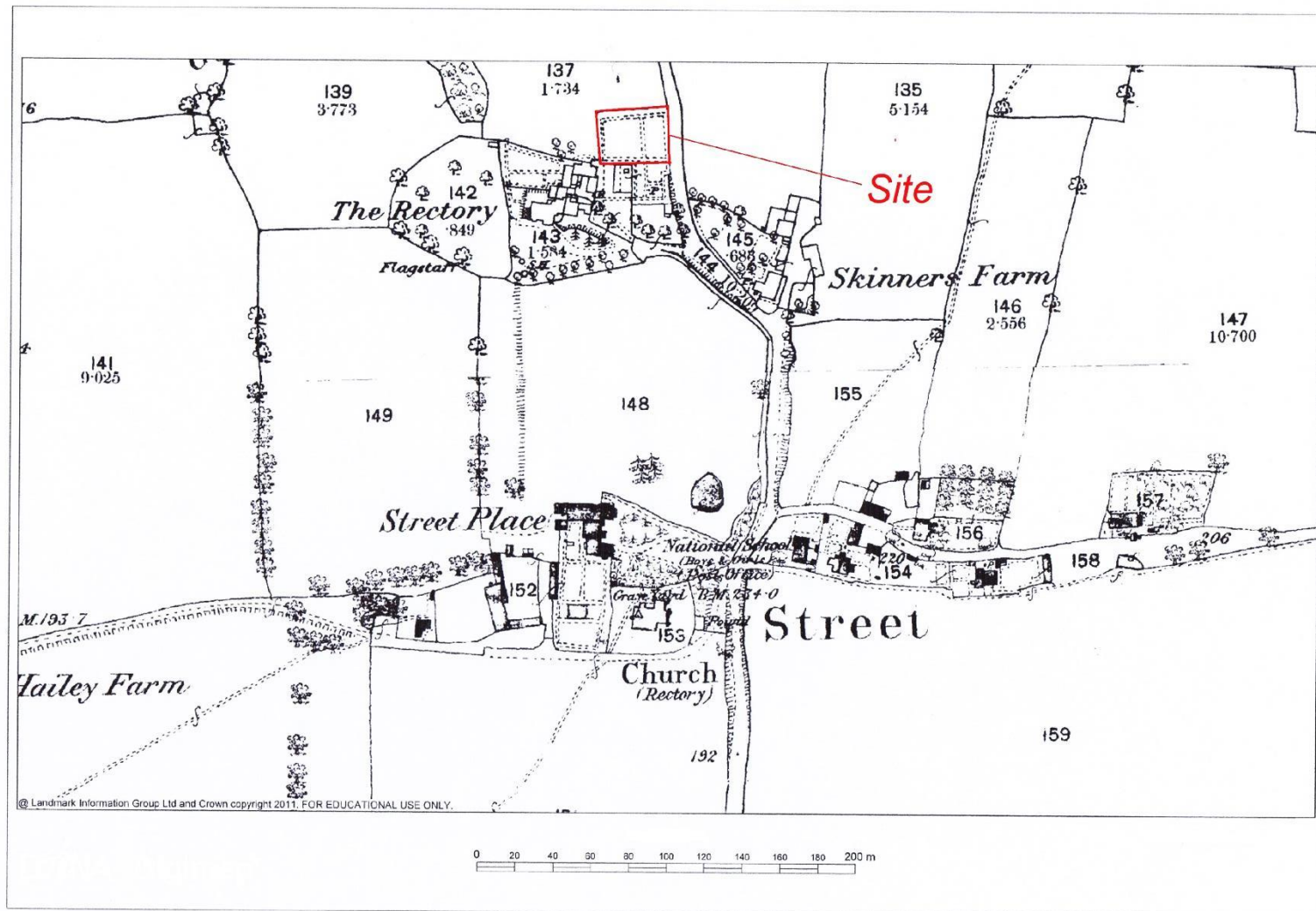


Fig. 4: Streat Barn Cottage: 1<sup>st</sup> Edition OS Map 1874

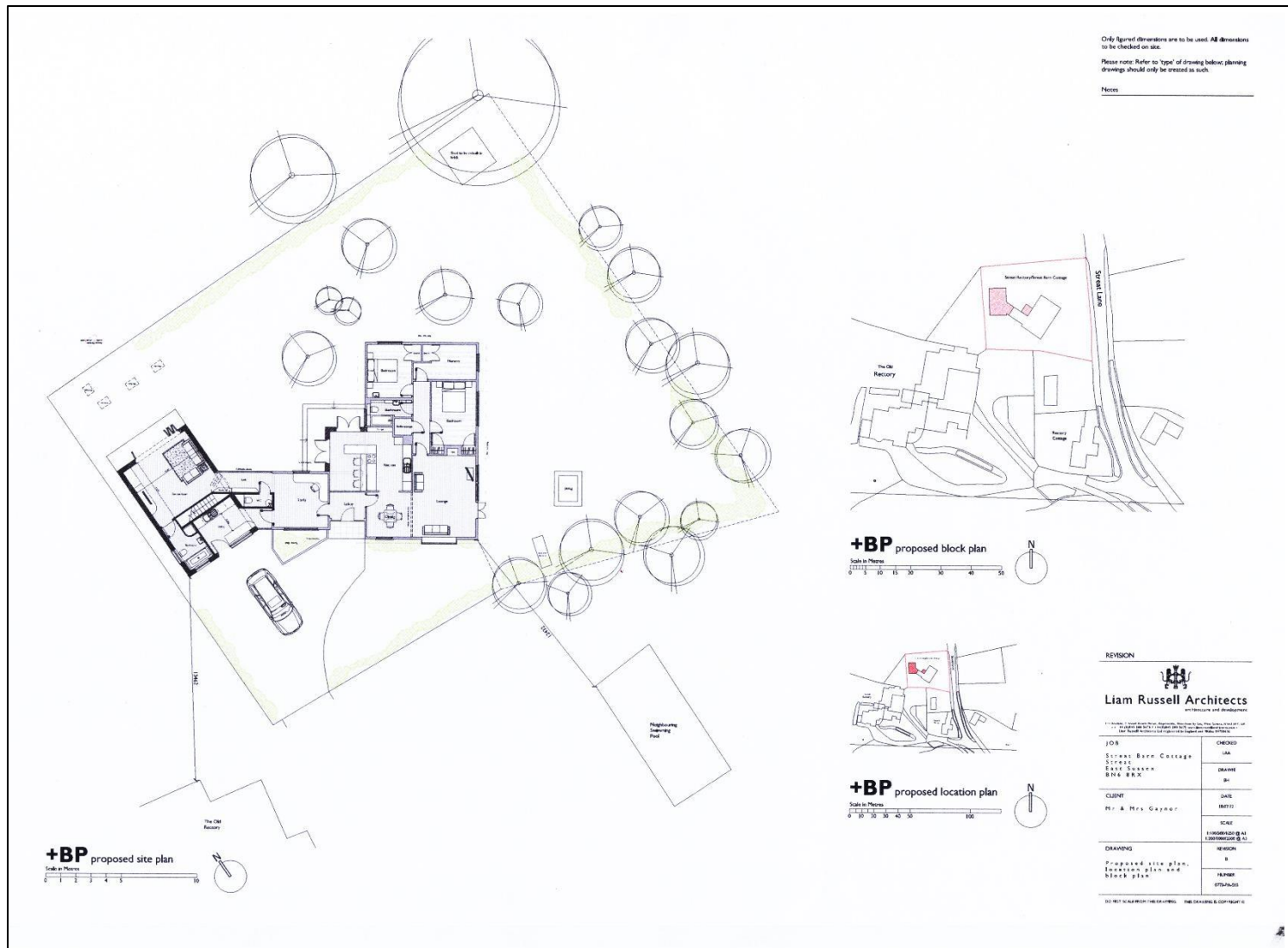


Fig. 5: Street Barn Cottage: Development Plan  
(adapted from architects drawing)

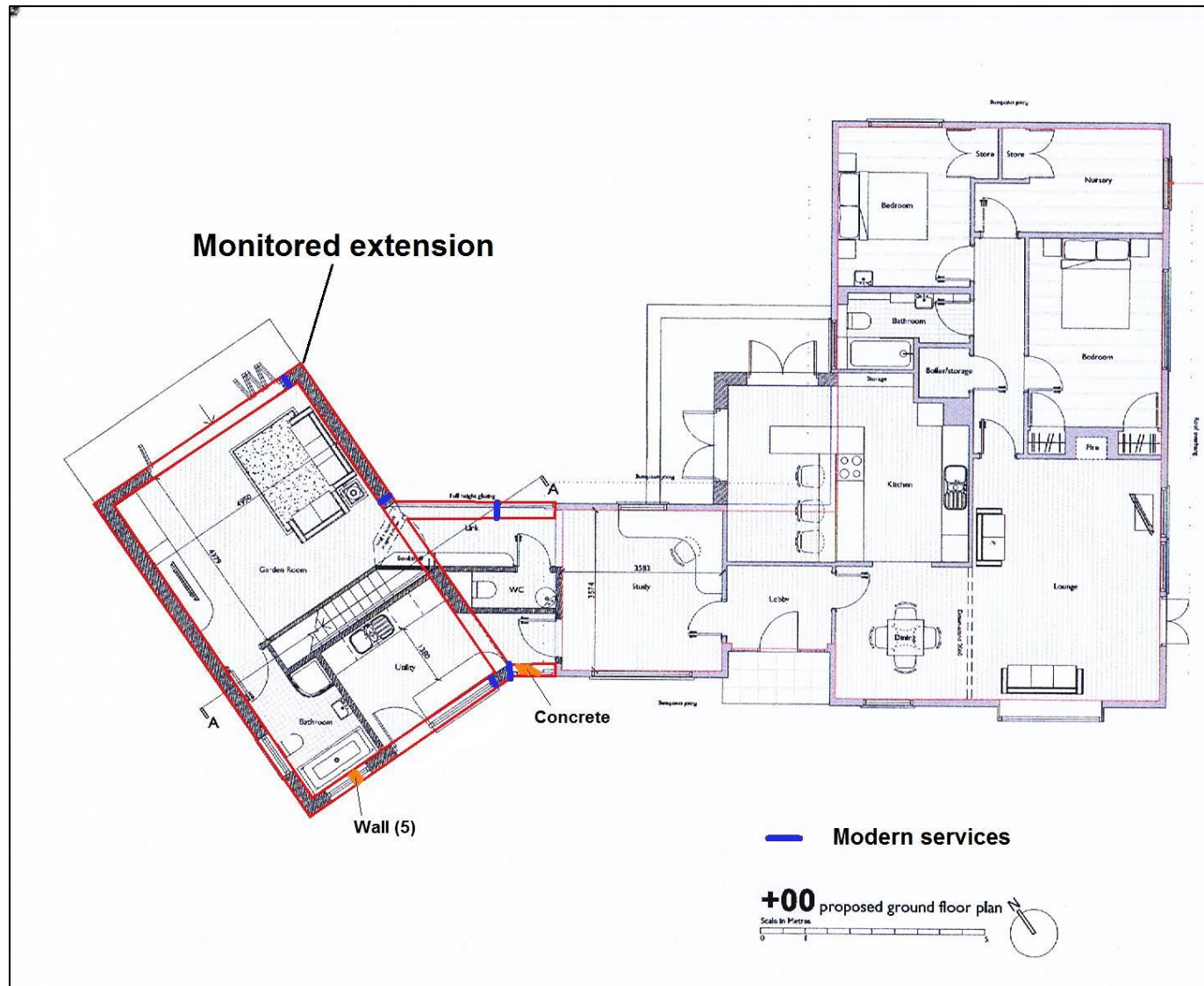


Fig. 6: Streat Barn Cottage, Streat: Site Plan showing areas monitored  
(adapted from architects drawing)

### Appendix 1 HER Summary Form

Site Code	SBC14					
Identification Name and Address	Streat Barn Cottage, Streat Lane, Streat, East Sussex.					
County, District &/or Borough	South Downs National Park					
OS Grid Refs.	TQ 3507 1543					
Geology	Greensand					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	Watching Brief <b>X</b>	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field	Shallow Urban	Deep Urban	Other Shallow rural <b>X</b>		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	WB. 22/05/14- 29/05/14	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Mr. T Gaynor					
Project Manager	Chris Butler MCIfA					
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 watching brief was carried out during the groundworks associated with the construction of an extension at Streat Barn Cottage, Streat Lane, Streat, Lewes, East Sussex. Excavation of the footing trenches was carried with a 3 tonne tracked excavator using a 400m toothless ditching bucket. The site was virtually sterile with only modern services and a single brick width garden wall being noted. The only finds of any note being a sherd of stoneware pottery dated c.1690-1750, and brick fragments c.1700-1850, the remainder dating to the 20<sup>th</sup> century.</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, and a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London. He was 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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