



**Chris Butler MCIfA
Archaeological Services Ltd**



**Archaeological Watching Brief
at
Grain Cottage,
Hempstead Lane,
Hailsham, East Sussex**

Planning Ref. WD/2015/2239/F

Project No. CBAS0705

by

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July 2017

Summary

A watching brief was carried out Grain Cottage, Hailsham, East Sussex, in connection with the construction of a new domestic property. The monitoring of ground reduction and the excavation of footings revealed no archaeological features, and only a shallow topsoil, which had been very disturbed by the demolition of the 20th century barn that had previously occupied the site.

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Chris Butler Archaeological Services Ltd (CBAS) was commissioned by Mike Hill Architectural Services Ltd (The Client) to carry out an archaeological watching brief at Grain Cottage, Hailsham, East Sussex (Fig. 1) in order to identify and record any archaeological remains that may be affected by the proposed development in connection with a planning permission (WD/2015/2239/F) for the change of use of land and construction of a single dwelling (Fig. 2).
- 1.2 The site is located on the north side of Hempstead Lane just to the west of the A22 on the west side of Hailsham (TQ 57471 10180). There is scattered housing along both sides of Hempstead Lane, and the site is situated adjacent to Hempstead Farm. The River Cuckmere is located c500m to the north-west of the site.
- 1.3 The site lies within an Archaeological Notification Area (DES9604) covering the medieval & post-medieval farm complex of Hempstead Farm, and a Second World War crash site (Fig. 3). There are other Archaeological Notification Areas to the north and east of the site.
- 1.4 The site lies on an area of gently sloping ground at approximately 29m OD which rises slightly to the east and slopes gently down to the north and west towards the River Cuckmere c500m to the north-west. The underlying geology of the site comprises Weald Clay with 2nd River Terrace Deposits to the north and west of the site¹.
- 1.5 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) covering the archaeological watching brief to monitor the groundworks connected with the construction of the new bungalow and associated services was prepared in response to an archaeological brief issued by East Sussex County Council² and was submitted to and subsequently approved by the Local Planning Authority.

¹ British Geological Survey Sheet 319/334

² Email (dated 10/5/2016) from Greg Chuter, Assistant County Archaeologist ESCC.

2.0 Aims and Objectives

2.1 The aims and objectives of the watching brief were to:

1. Establish whether there are any archaeological features present within the footprint of the groundworks; and
2. Ensure that any archaeological remains which may be affected by the proposed groundworks are excavated and recorded.

2.2 The specific research aims are:

1. To establish any evidence for the development of the medieval and Post medieval Hempstead Farm.
2. To record any evidence for earlier buildings on the site, and to establish their dating and function.

3.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 3.1** The East Sussex Historic Environment Record (HER) was consulted for a 1km area (The Study Area) around the site centre (HER Ref. 277/16; Fig. 4).
- 3.2** Evidence of a Mesolithic settlement in the form of worked flint scatters have been found south of the Site, beside the Cuckmere at Arlington. The nearest find to the site is a single tranchet adze found to the west of Hailsham (MES5175).
- 3.3** The only archaeological evidence for Neolithic and Bronze Age activity within the Study Area is the discovery of a few worked flints of possible Neolithic or Bronze Age date to the east of the A22 during the evaluation excavation at Welbury Farm (MES25614).
- 3.4** A field system dating to the late Iron Age - Roman period was also identified during the evaluation excavation at Woodholm Farm (MES25613). Pottery of Late Iron Age or early Roman period was recovered from some of the ditches forming the field system. Possible Roman field ditches were also found at Woodholm Farm (MES15544).
- 3.5** Before the Norman invasion, Hailsham was held by Alnoth as a freehold³. Hailsham appeared in the Domesday Book as *Hamelsham*, which means ‘Haegel’s homestead’⁴. Hailsham was under the control of the Count of Mortain and was in the administrative area of the Hundred of Pevensey. The entry mentions that the Count had control over 11 salt-houses worth 24s 6d⁵. Hailsham was an early medieval market town (MES21455).
- 3.6** Evidence for medieval activity in the immediate area of the site is limited to the field ditches noted at Woodholm Farm (MES15544), and a number of moated sites, which may originate in the medieval period (MES4307, MES4386 and MES15543). Michelham Priory is situated 2km to the south west of the site, and medieval pottery kilns were found in Abbot’s Wood, also to the south west.
- 3.7** A number of local farms probably originated in the medieval period, and included Hempstead Farm c1202 (MES7811), Grovelands Farm c1279 (MES21456) and Knock Hatch Farm c1267 (MES21433). In the Post medieval period the surrounding landscape contained numerous farmsteads, some developing from the medieval forms and other which were probably new. Hempstead Farmhouse (DES6407) is an 18th century Listed Building). Post medieval ditches, probably from a field system were found in 2010 to the east of the site south of Hempstead Lane (MES20224).

³ Morris, J. (Ed) 1976 *Domesday Book: Sussex*, Chichester, Phillimore.

⁴ Mills, A.D. 1991 *A Dictionary of English place-names*, Oxford.

⁵ Morris, J. (Ed) 1976 *Domesday Book: Sussex*, Chichester, Phillimore.

- 3.8** Yeakell & Gardiner's map (1778-83)⁶ shows Hempstead Farm on the north side of Hempstead lane, with Knock Hatch Farm to the south. Michelham Priory is shown the west and Hailsham to the east (Fig. 5). The 1806 Ordnance Survey draft shows a similar situation.
- 3.9** The Tithe map of 1842 shows the site to be in a sub-rectangular field on the south-east side of Hempstead Farm, with Hempstead Lane running along its southern boundary (Fig. 6). No buildings are shown within the site.
- 3.10** The 1st Edition OS map of 1875 shows that the site to still be an open field with no buildings (Fig. 7) and this situation is unchanged on the 1899 2nd Edition OS map (Fig. 8) and also on the 1910-11 OS Map. The 1947 aerial photograph appears to show the site as not having a building present, but by 1952 a building is shown on the OS mapping, and is confirmed on the 1972-4 OS map (Fig. 8).
- 3.11** There are numerous quarries (MES7815 to MES7825) in the vicinity of the site, some exploiting the river gravel deposits alongside the River Cuckmere, but others possibly connected with the pottery and brickworks. Pottery workshops were situated on the Dicker (MES4387) and at Boship (MES6967), possibly trading from as early as 1774 before closing in the 1950's⁷. Brickyards were also operating in and around Hailsham in the 19th century, for example Knock Hatch (MES8253) & Tile Hurst (MES20225) to the south of the site.
- 3.12** During the Second World War defence works were constructed to cover the new A22 road bridge over the River Cuckmere. These comprised two machine gun emplacements, one located each side of the road. The eastern emplacement (MES7872) is still present, but the western emplacement (MES7873) has been removed. The surrounding fields were covered with anti-glider posts and wires to prevent an airborne landing⁸.
- 3.13** Since the Second World War Hailsham has expanded, with housing developments encroaching onto the farmland between the town centre and the A22. Over the 20th century the woodland to the south of Hempstead lane has reduced and a number of houses have been built along the lane, but otherwise the landscape to the west of the A22 has remained largely unchanged.

⁶ <http://www.envf.port.ac.uk/geo/research/historical/webmap/sussexmap/Yeakelllarge36.htm>

⁷ Manwaring Baines, J. 1980 *Sussex Pottery*, Fisher Publications

⁸ Butler, C. 2007 *East Sussex under Attack*, Tempus Publishing Ltd

4.0 Methodology

4.1 The archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (December 2014) and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief* (2014), East Sussex County Council's *Sussex Archaeological Standards* (2015); and the *Treasure Act* (1996).

4.2 Work had begun with the demolition and removal of the 20th century barn and associated hard standings and was not subject to archaeological monitoring. General ground reduction was monitored, which was predominantly through the demolition rubble and remaining topsoil to a depth of c200mm (Plate 1). This left a thin deposit of mixed modern demolition material (c40mm to 100mm deep) in places over the footprint of the new build which in turn overlaid the natural.



Plate 1: General site reduction

4.3 Excavation then began on the footings trench using a 6 tonne machine with a 600mm wide toothless bucket and these excavations reached a maximum depth of 1m from the reduced ground surface. After initial monitoring of most of the foundations demonstrated that they would only impact into the natural, further supervised monitoring ceased, and a final visit was made to the site to inspect and record the fully excavated foundations which confirmed all excavation had been into the natural, and no features were observed.

4.4 The spoil from the excavations was inspected to recover any artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest. A metal detector was not used due to the modern contamination.

- 4.5** All exposed sections and surfaces were inspected for archaeological features, structures or finds and the site was levelled in to a TBM situated by the entrance pillar situated on the south-west of the driveway. The TBM was tied into the OS datum using an adjacent spot height which was checked with hand held GPS at 29.7m OD. The site ground level after reduction varied from 29.42m to 29.58m OD. Levels are held in the site archive.
- 4.6** A full digital 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 but will subsequently be deposited with Eastbourne Museum (Eastbourne Museum Accession Number 2016.28). The East Sussex Historic Environment Record will be supplied with a CD containing the report in PDF (archive) format and a selection of site photographs. A site reference of GCH15 has been allocated.
- 4.7** The monitoring work was carried out by Jessica Butt and David Atkin, supervised by Chris Butler.

5.0 Results

- 5.1** Context 1 was a loose, modern deposit derived from the demolition of the barn and removal of the hardstanding which lay across the footprint of the new build, mixed with the topsoil/subsoil overlying the natural. As a result of this, it was a mix of greys, blacks and browns in colour and a mix of various silts with a small amount of clay within the matrix. There was ceramic building material (hereafter CBM) throughout and the deposit was up to 300mm thick.
- 5.2** During the ground reduction a filled-in 20th century slurry pit was located and removed (Plate 2). A pitch fibre drainage pipe dating to the 1950-60's running east-west in the southern corner of the site, and just cut into the top of the natural, was noted.



Plate 2: Excavated 20th century slurry pit

- 5.3** Context 2 was assigned to the natural clay that lay directly below the demolition deposit of Context 1 (Plate 3). There were no inclusions and it was a mix of mid-yellow and light grey in colour and was 950mm deep to the limit of excavation (LOE).



Plate 3: Excavating foundation trenches and section of foundation trench

- 5.4** Context **3** was a straight sided cut 0.75m wide and 1m deep, with a flat base, that was part of the demolished 20th century barn and was filled with modern debris (CBM & Concrete) from the barn.
- 5.5** Context **4** was assigned to a natural loose, dark brown, iron rich stone horizon, c1.5m wide and 200mm deep, present in the south-west section of the footings (Plate 4), within the clay natural (Context **2**).



Plate 4: Natural stone deposit (Context **4**)

- 5.6** Context **5** was the topsoil that lay just outside the footprint of the modern barn on the south-east side of the site. It was a relatively clean topsoil with only 20th century detritus, but the CBM and concrete elsewhere on site was absent from this deposit. It was a loose, dark brown silty-clay some 300-400mm thick and lay immediately above the natural (Context **2**). A single ceramic drainage pipe was noted, which ran to a brick soakaway adjacent to the site boundary.
- 5.7** No other archaeological deposits or features were noted during the watching brief.

6.0 Finds

6.0.1 A small assemblage of artefacts was recovered during the monitoring work and are discussed below.

6.1 The Clay Tobacco Pipe by Luke Barber

6.1.1 The archaeological work recovered a single stem fragment from unstratified deposits (4g). The piece is quite fresh, measures 51mm long (bore diameter 2.9mm) and is best placed between c. 1650 and 1700.

6.1.2 The clay pipe is not considered to hold any potential for further analysis and has been discarded.

6.2 The Ceramic Building Material by Luke Barber

6.2.1 A relatively small assemblage of brick and tile was recovered during the archaeological work. The material was mainly in fresh condition and included a number of large brick fragments. The assemblage is summarised in Tables 1 (fabrics) and 2 (quantification).

Fabric	Description	Comments	Suggested date
B1a	Sparse fine quartz, abundant iron oxides to 5mm, abundant marl patches (poorly mixed)	Crudely formed, medium fired	Mid C16th – 17th
B2a	Sparse fine/medium quartz, common iron oxides to 3mm, moderate marl/pale sandstone to 3mm (many voids)	Well formed, medium fired Frogged	Mid C19th – mid 20th
B2b	Sparse fine quartz, moderate iron oxides (black) to 3mm, sparse marl pellets to 3mm, some voids	Well formed, well fired Frogged Better formed/fired variant of B2a	Mid C19th – mid 20th
T1a	Common fine/medium white quartz, rare iron oxides to 1mm	Well formed and fired	Mid C19th – mid 20th
T2a	Sparse fine quartz, sparse/moderate iron oxides to 2mm	Well formed and fired	C19th – mid 20th
T3a	Fine granular fabric with common white inclusions and clay pellets to 2mm	Well formed and fired	Late C19th – mid 20th
M1a	Off-white sandy concrete with 40% sub-angular/sub-rounded flint to 26mm	-	Late C19th – 20th

Table 1: Ceramic Building Material fabrics

Context	Form	Fabric	No	Weight	Comments
U/S rubble	Brick	B1a	1	1686g	95% complete. 210 x 98 x 52mm. Re-used. There are traces of off-white mortar bedding on the base but x1 stretcher is notably worn from being set on edge in a floor
U/S rubble	Brick	B2a	1	1502g	170+ x 103 x 64mm. Red with well-formed flat-bottomed frog stamped (in relief) ??SH ...DOWN P. Wire cut
U/S rubble	Brick	B2b	1	1374g	135+ x 100 x 64mm. As B2a brick with frog stamped ??HDOWN and dimpled effect on base
U/S rubble	Peg/nib tile	T1a	1	126g	15mm thick. Neatly formed inverted splayed U-profile nib (40mm long by 15mm high by 13mm thick) with 7mm diameter (tapering to 5mm) peg hole
U/S rubble	Ridge tile	T2a	1	200g	15-17mm thick
U/S rubble	Concrete	M1a	1	140g	Amorphous
1	Brick	B2a	1	2168g	95%. 220 x 103 x 63mm. A little worn. As other B2a brick – stamped ..?DOWN P
1	Peg/nib tile	T3a	1	178g	15mm thick. Slightly crudely formed inverted splayed U-profile nib (30mm long by 14mm tall) which sits slightly proud of the top edge of the tile. 7mm diameter peg hole (not fully perforated)

Table 2: Ceramic Building Material assemblage

6.3.2 With a single notable exception the ceramic building material assemblage can all be placed in a mid/late 19th- to mid 20th- century date bracket. A number of types are represented but the presence of just peg/nib tiles is of note (plain peg tiles being the most common type in Sussex well into the 20th century). The mid 16th- to 17th- century B1a brick is by far the earliest piece and is out of place in the assemblage. The fact it is essentially complete suggests it may have been brought to the site specifically to be re-used though why it is an isolated example is uncertain.

6.3.3 The ceramic building material assemblage is from open contexts and is mainly of late post-medieval/modern date. The earlier piece is isolated and clearly residual/re-used. As such the assemblage is not considered to hold any potential for further analysis beyond that undertaken for this report. This material has been discarded though some fabric samples have been retained for a county series.

6.4 The Geological Material by Luke Barber

6.4.1 Context 1 contained a 118g 7mm thick fragment of 19th- to early 20th- century Welsh roofing slate.

6.4.2 The stone is not considered to hold any potential for further analysis and has been discarded.

6.5 Glass by Emily Walsh

6.5.1 A fragment of brown glass, the base of a beer bottle or similar, weighing 6g was recovered from Context **1**. The presence of a fine parison mold line and the morphology of the base perimeter stippling indicate this is a fragment of modern machine-made bottle (post 1940s).

6.5.2 No further analysis is required and discard is recommended.

7.0 Discussion

- 7.1** The watching brief established there were no archaeological features or deposits of note present within the footprint of the groundworks.
- 7.2** The site had clearly been reduced at some stage in the past, probably when the original barn was constructed, and this together with the demolition of the barn meant that there was little undisturbed topsoil or subsoil remaining above the natural.
- 7.3** The only features found all related to the 20th century use of the site consistent with the recently demolished barn having been built after the Second World War, and no earlier building shown on the site on the available map evidence. Given the adjacent Hempstead Farm which originated at least as early as the 18th century, the presence of residual finds of this date is not surprising.

8.0 Acknowledgments

- 8.1** I would like to thank Mike Hill Architectural Services Ltd for commissioning this archaeological watching brief, and his on-site contractors for their assistance and co-operation. I would also like to thank Luke Barber & Emily Walsh for reporting on the artefacts. The project was managed by Chris Butler.

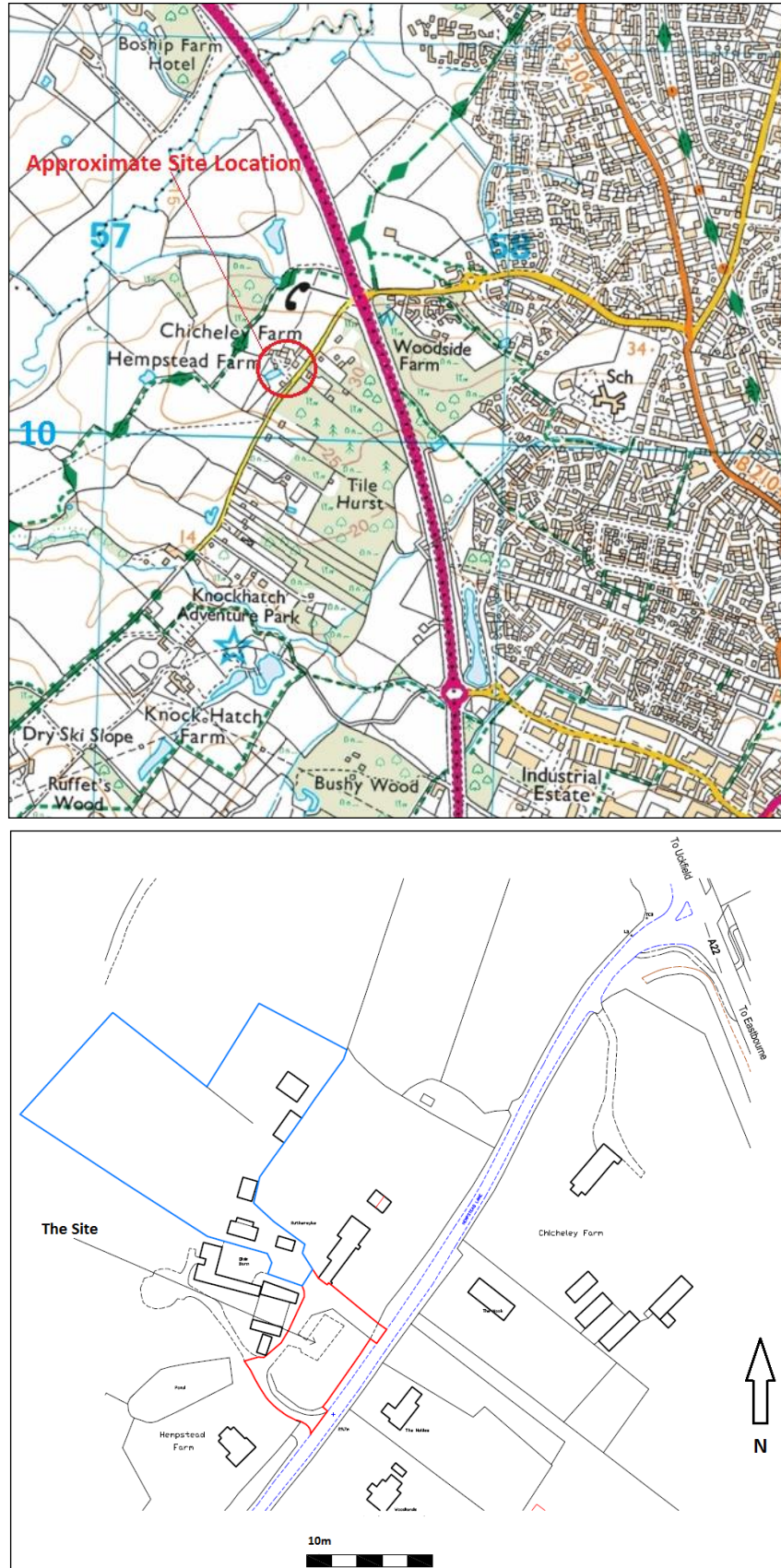


Fig. 1: Grain Cottage: Site Location Map
(Ordnance Survey © Crown copyright All rights reserved. Licence number 100037471)

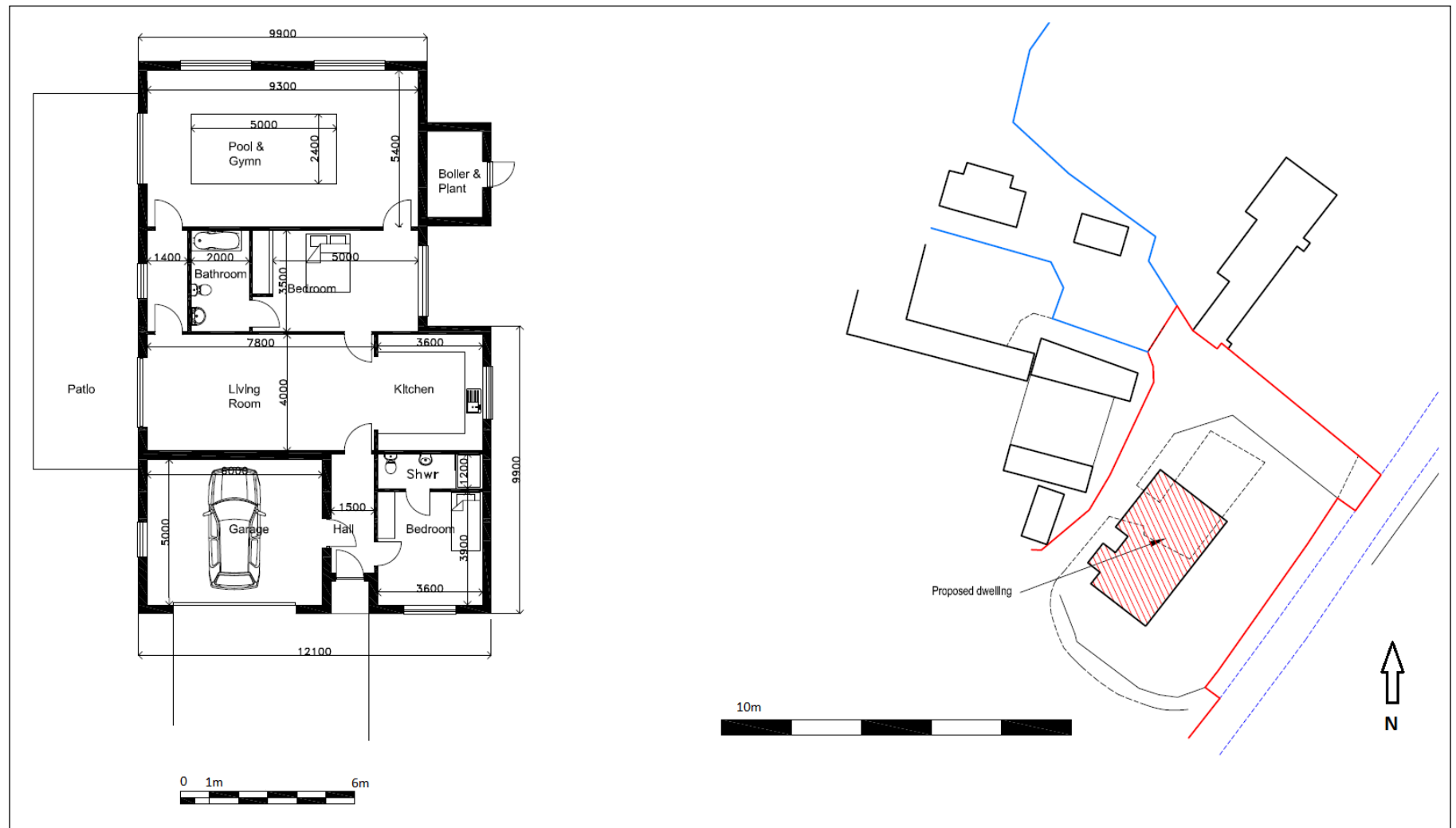


Fig. 2: Grain Cottage: Site Development Plan and area monitored
(adapted from architects drawing)

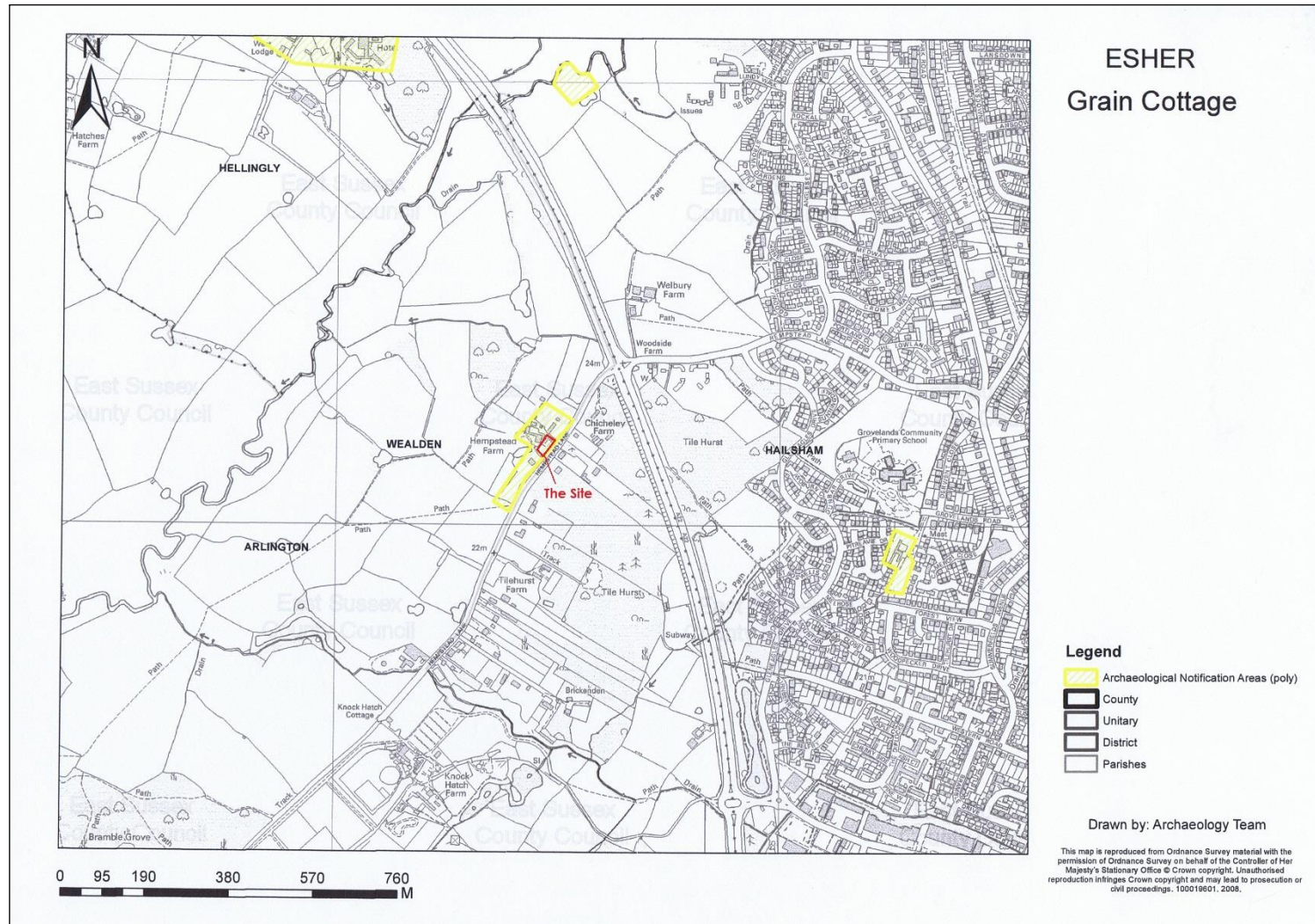


Fig. 3: Grain Cottage: Archaeological Notification Areas
(adapted from map provided by ESCR)
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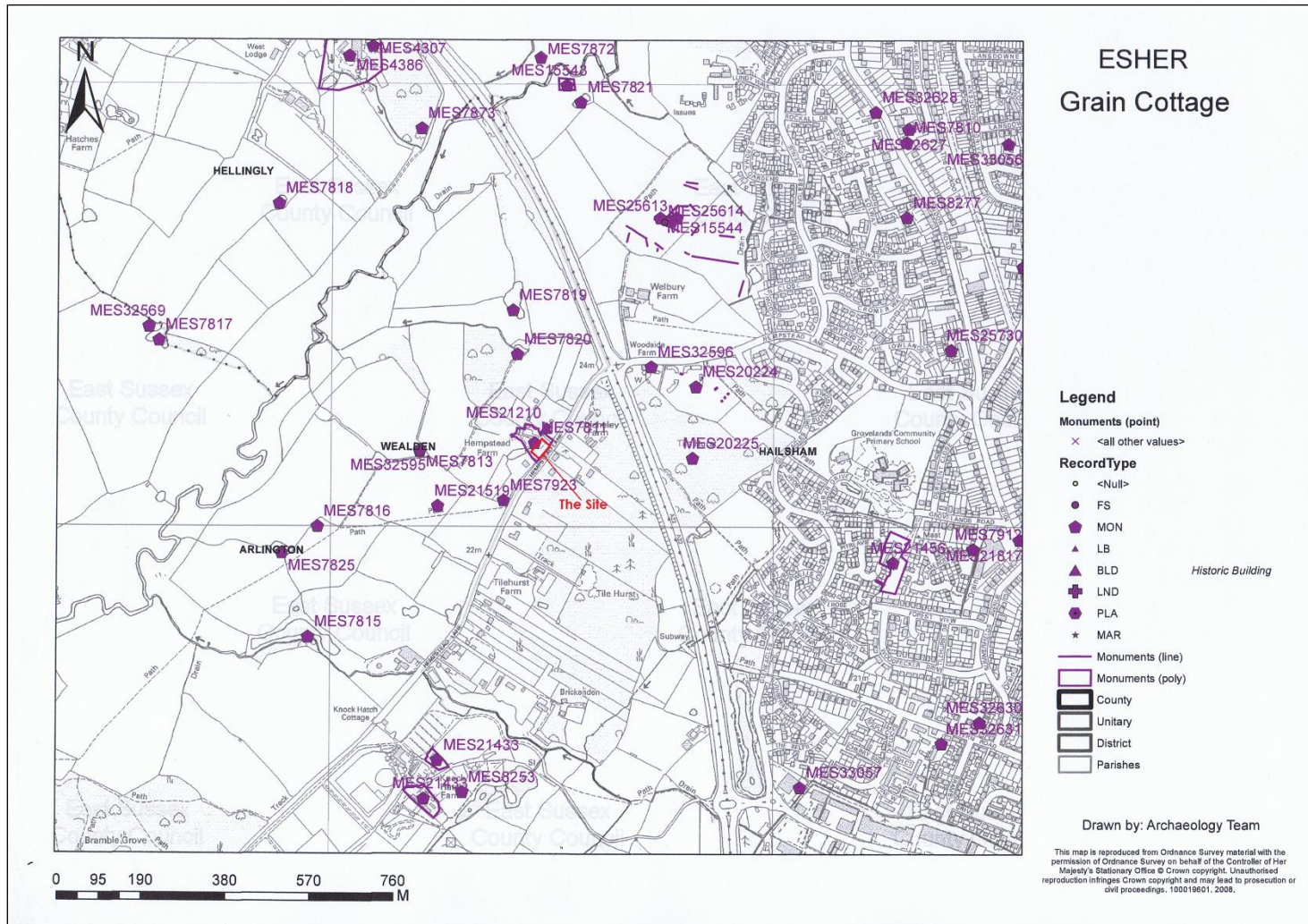


Fig. 4: Grain Cottage: Sites on the HER
(adapted from map provided by ESCC)
Ordnance Survey © Crown copyright All rights reserved. Licence number 100037471



Fig. 5: Grain Cottage: Yeakell & Gardiner Map 1778-83
(<http://www.envf.port.ac.uk/geo/research/historical/webmap/sussexmap/Yeakelllarge36.htm>)

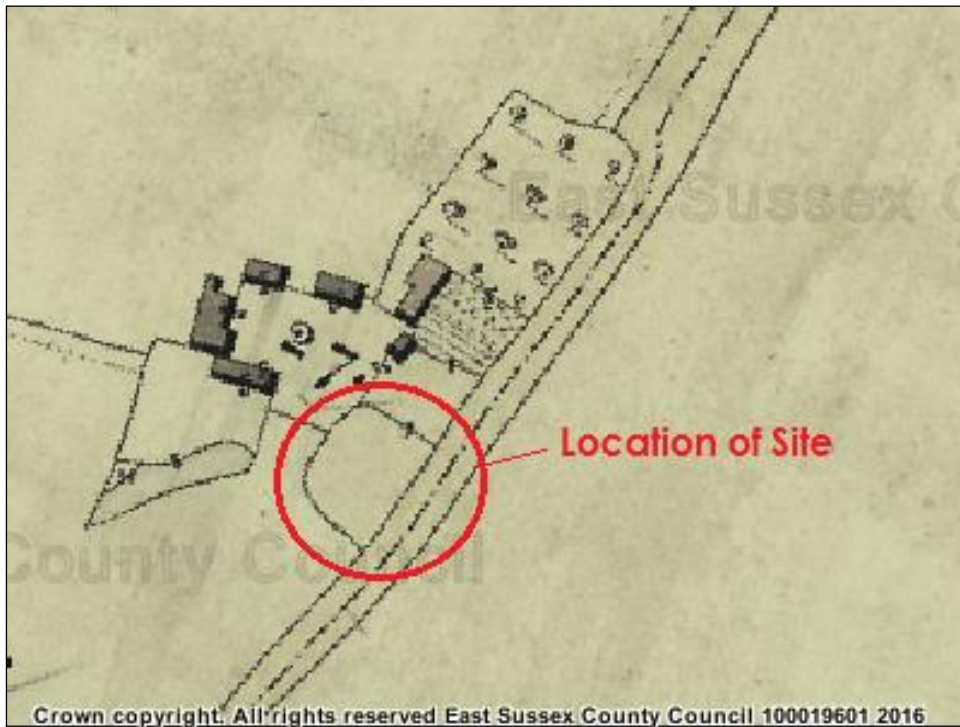


Fig. 6: Grain Cottage: Tithe Map 1842
(copyright ESRO TD/E140)

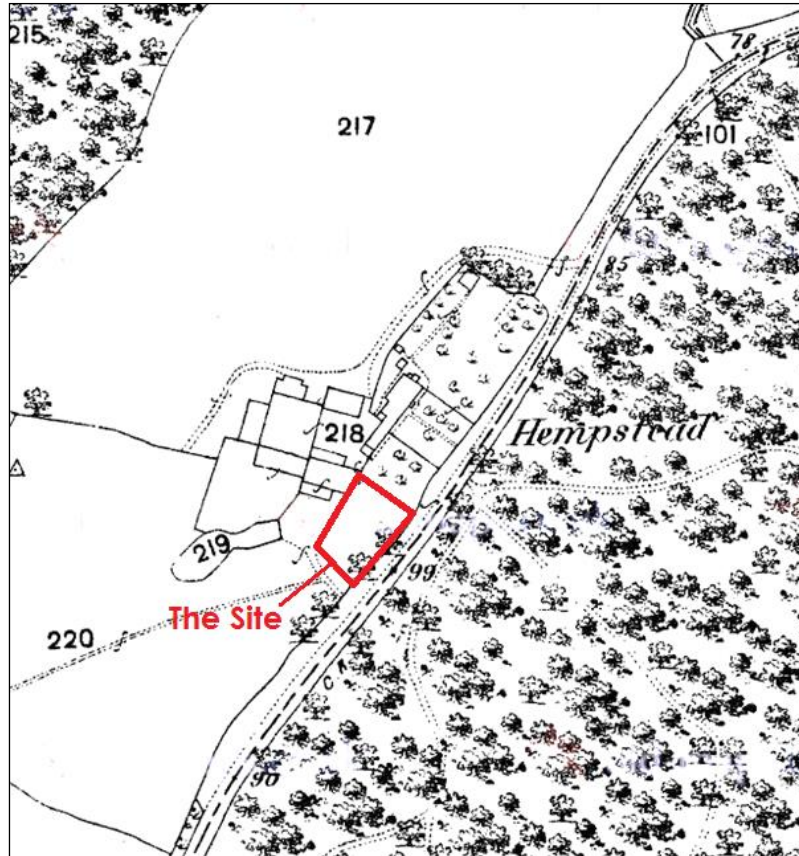


Fig. 7: Grain Cottage: 1st Edition OS Map (1875)

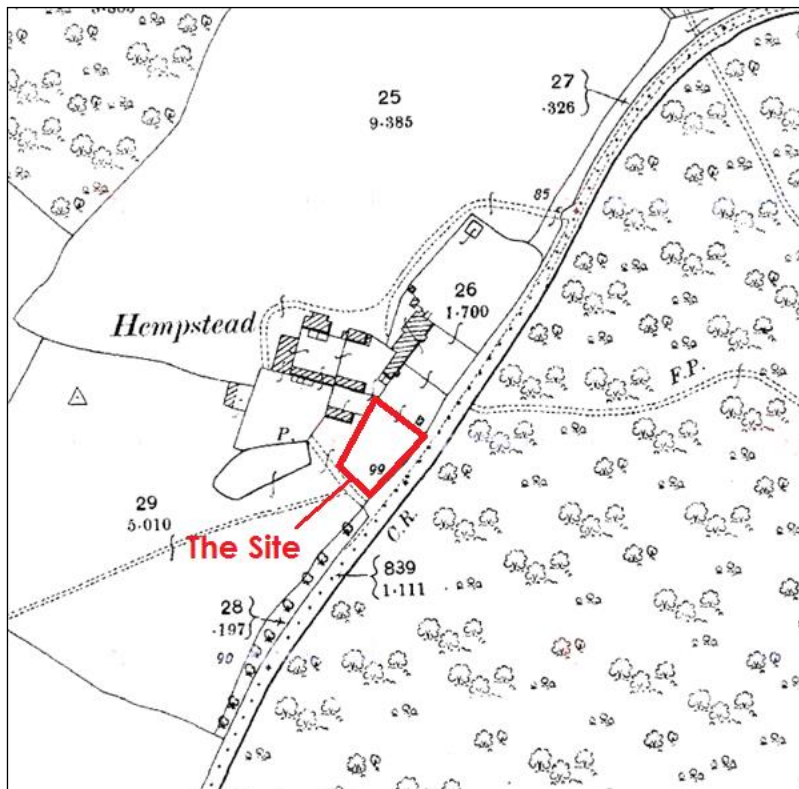


Fig. 8: Grain Cottage: 2nd Edition OS Map (1899)

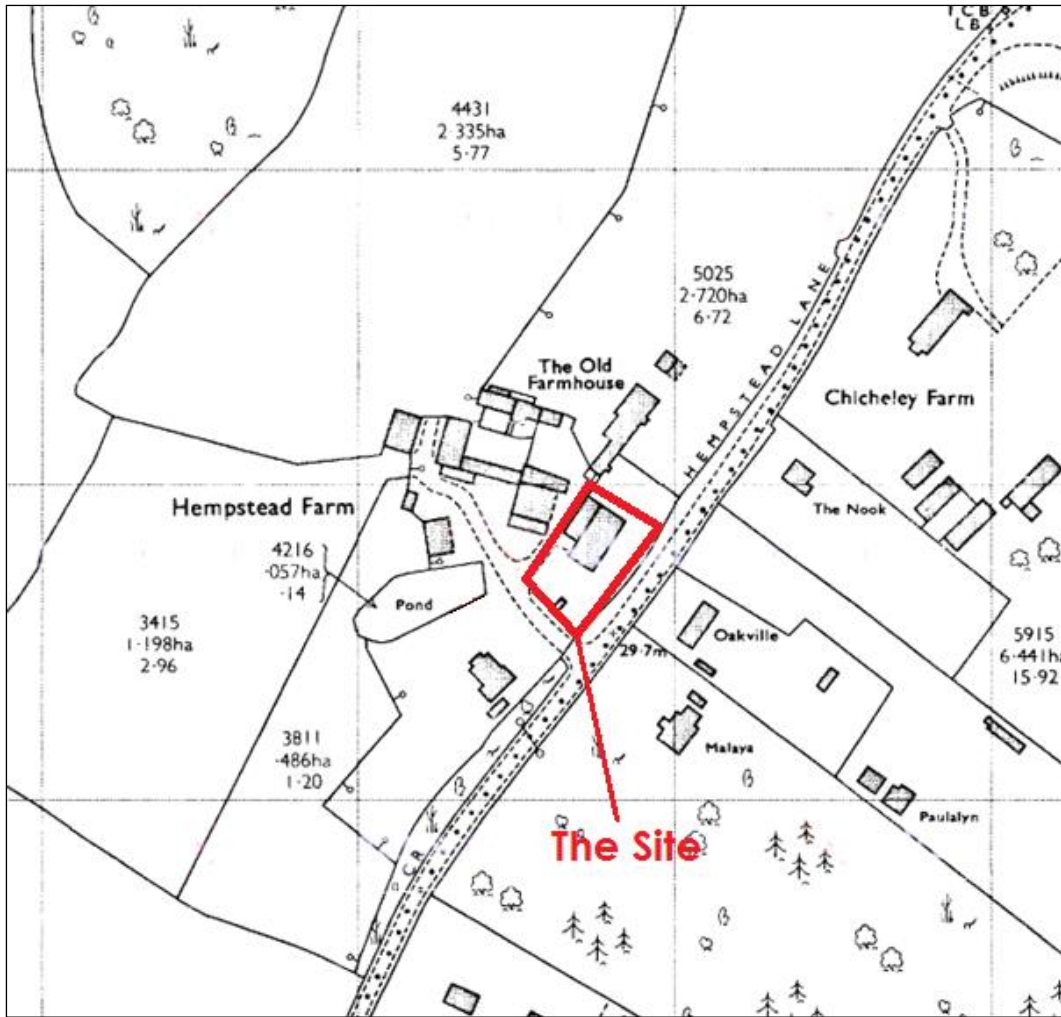


Fig. 9: Grain Cottage: 1972-74 OS Map
(Ordnance Survey © Crown copyright All rights reserved. Licence number 100037471)

Appendix 2: Sussex HER Summary Form

HER enquiry number	277/16					
Site code	GCH16					
Project code	CBAS0705					
Planning reference	WD/2015/2239/F					
Site address	Grain Cottage, Hailsham					
District/Borough	Wealden District Council					
NGR (12 figures)	TQ 57471 10180					
Geology	Weald Clay					
Fieldwork type	Eval	Excav	WB* X	HBR*	Survey	Other
Date of fieldwork	22 nd – 27 th September 2016					
Sponsor/client	Mike Hill Architectural Services Ltd					
Project manager	Chris Butler, MCIfA					
Project supervisor	Chris Butler, MCIfA					
Period summary	Palaeolithic	Mesolithic	Neolithic	Bronze Age	Iron Age	
	Roman	Anglo-Saxon	Medieval	Post-Medieval x	Other	
Project summary (100 word max)	<i>A watching brief was carried out Grain Cottage, Hailsham, East Sussex, in connection with the construction of a new domestic property. The monitoring of ground reduction and the excavation of footings revealed no archaeological features, and only a shallow topsoil, which had been very disturbed by the demolition of the 20th century barn that had previously occupied the site.</i>					
Museum/Accession No.	Eastbourne Museum 2016.28					

*WB – Watching brief; HBR – historic building recording

Finds summary

Find type	Material	Period	Quantity
Tobacco Pipe	Fired clay	Post-medieval	1
Ceramic Building Material	Fired clay	Post-medieval	8
Stone	Slate	Post-medieval	1
Bottle	Glass	Post-medieval	1

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 Chartered 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 taught A-Level Archaeology at Bexhill 6th 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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