



**Chris Butler MCIfA
Archaeological Services Ltd**



**An Archaeological Watching Brief
at
Lower Yard, Langsett,
Westham,
East Sussex**

TQ 62367 04440

Planning Ref. WD/2016/2106/F

Project No. CBAS0802

by

Emily Walsh

December 2018

Summary

An archaeological watching brief was carried out at Lower Yard, Langsett, Westham, East Sussex to monitor ground reductions within the footprint of the proposed development. No archaeological features were recorded, and only a small finds assemblage was recovered from an open context.

**Chris Butler MCIFA
Archaeological Services Ltd**

**Unit 12, Mays Farm
Selmeston
Polegate
East Sussex
BN26 6TS**

Tel: 01323 811785

e mail: chris.butler@cbasltd.co.uk

Contents

1.0	Introduction	3
2.0	Aims and Objectives	5
3.0	Archaeological and Historical Background	6
4.0	Archaeological Methodology	9
5.0	Results	10
6.0	Finds	12
7.0	Discussion	14
8.0	Acknowledgements	15

Figures

Fig.1	Site Location Map
Fig. 2	Existing Site Plan
Fig. 3	Proposed Site Plan
Fig. 4	Archaeological Notification Areas
Fig. 5	Historic Environment Record
Fig. 6	Yeakell and Gardiner's Map of Sussex
Fig. 7	Ordnance surveyor's Drawing 1789
Fig. 8	Tithe Map (1839)
Fig. 9	1 st Edition OS Map (1874)
Fig. 10	3 rd Edition OS Map (1910)
Fig. 11	1955-1956 OS Map
Fig. 12	1964-1977 OS Map
Fig. 14	Plan of Excavations

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Levels
- Appendix 2: Context Register
- Appendix 2: HER summary form

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Chris Butler Archaeological Services Ltd (CBAS) was commissioned by Mr K. Bridges (The Client) to carry out an archaeological watching brief at Lower Yard, Langsett, Rattle Road, Westham, East Sussex (Fig. 1 & 2) in order to establish the likely presence and importance of any archaeological remains, in connection with a planning application for the redevelopment of three industrial units and a store, and associated external works (WD/2016/2106/F; Fig. 3). The following archaeological condition was placed on the approval:

3. No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, including a timetable for the investigation, which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved details. A written record of any archaeological works undertaken shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority within 3 months of the completion of any archaeological investigation unless an alternative timescale for submission of the report is first agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To enable the recording of any items of historical or archaeological interest, in accordance with the requirements of SPO2, SPO13 and WCS14 to the Wealden Core Strategy Local Plan 2013 and paragraphs 129, 131, 135 and 141 to the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.

1.2 The Site is located on the north side of Rattle Road, to the west of the village of Westham, and is centred at TQ 62367 04440 and lies at c. 16m aOD. The Site lies immediately to the rear of Langsett House, and is accessed by a driveway running northwest from Rattle Road. A large timber industrial building and a storage building stand in the northern part of the Site, and the southern part is occupied by a car parking area. More commercial buildings stand immediately north of the Site, while a new housing development lies to the west and north. Open fields lie to the east of the Site. The south and east sides of the Site are bounded by trees, while the north and west sides are bounded by fences. The geology of the Site is Mudstone of the Weald Clay Formation¹.

1.3 The Site is located in an Archaeological Notification Area (ANA) defining prehistoric, Roman, Saxon and Medieval activity; including the Roman fortress and Medieval castle at Pevensey and the Medieval and Post Medieval village of Westham (Fig. 4).

1.4 At a site meeting held on 18th January 2017, it was agreed with the County Archaeologist that the Client could initially demolish the standing buildings and remove the existing concrete surface. A watching brief was then to be carried out during ground reduction below the concrete, and a report would be provided to the County Archaeologist at the end of the first day, at which point a decision will be made as to whether further monitoring would be required.

¹ <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>

- 1.5** The Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) covered an archaeological watching brief to monitor ground reduction after the demolition of the existing buildings and removal of a concrete surface (Condition 3) in response to a brief issued by East Sussex County Council². The WSI was submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval.

² Chuter, G. 2016. Letter to K. Williams dated 09/11/2016

2.0 Aims and Objectives

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

1. Establish whether there are any archaeological remains present within the footprint of the proposed 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 were:

1. To establish whether any archaeological remains relating to nearby prehistoric and Roman settlements survive within the footprint of the proposed groundworks; and
2. To establish whether any remains from other periods survive within the footprint of the proposed groundworks, which will add to our archaeological and historical knowledge of the development of Westham and the surrounding area.

3.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 3.1 The East Sussex Historic Environment Record (HER) was consulted for a search of a 1km Study Area around the Site centre (HER Ref: 035/17; Fig. 5). The results are discussed below where relevant.
- 3.2 A number of recent archaeological investigations have taken place in the Study Area. Full strip excavations took place at the Bellways site and the Persimmons site, both located immediately to the west of the Site on the south and north sides of Rattle Road respectively. At the Bellways site evidence of Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman settlements were found along with a Saxon cremation cemetery and Medieval field boundaries. The Persimmons site also contained evidence of Bronze Age, Iron Age, Roman and Medieval settlement as well as a Roman Road. A geophysical survey at Peelings Lane to the north of the Site found evidence of a possible Bronze Age-Iron Age settlement³. A number of linear features were found during a geophysical survey at Uplands Farm to the south of the Site⁴.
- 3.3 Mesolithic flintwork has been found around the edges of the low lying environment of the Levels, which was partly submerged during the Mesolithic period. Mesolithic flakes and cores (MES5051) were found near Hankham c. 960m northeast of the Site. A Mesolithic flint pick (MES19849) was also found c. 740m northwest of the Site.
- 3.4 Bronze Age activity in the area of the Levels is indicated by a timber platform and associated trackways (MES7375) found at Shinewater c. 1.5km southwest of the Site. A group of 9 or 10 Bronze Age cremations (MES36567) in pottery vessels were found near Friday Street c. 850m southwest of the Site in 1995. A number of late prehistoric pottery sherds, including some more firmly dated to the Mid-Late Bronze Age (MES26567) were found during an evaluation excavation at The Wells c. 200m northwest of the Site (EES17217).
- 3.5 A number of Roman sites are located in the surrounding area of the Site. The Arlington to Ouse Valley Roman Road (MES4753) has been identified to the north of the Site. A possible Roman road (MES5037), along with two Roman coins, was found c. 1km east of the Site. A geophysical survey at The Wells c. 200m northwest of the Site (EES15450) identified features including a Roman road, while an evaluation at the same site (EES17217) found a number of linear features containing Roman pottery. A single sherd of Saxon pottery (MES26568) was also found at this site.

³ Comm. from Greg Chuter, ESCC County Archaeologist, via email (dated 07/02/2017) from Daniel Phelps, HER Assistant, to Sarah Vine, Assistant Field Officer, CBAS Ltd.

⁴ Cook, J. 2016. *Detailed Magnetometer Survey Report: Land at Uplands Farm, Rattle Road, Stone Cross, East Sussex*. Archaeology South East. Project No: 7993

- 3.6** Westham (MES18966) was first recorded in 1222, its name referring to its status as a hamlet west of Pevensey⁵. A Deserted Medieval Village named Cudnow (MES5053), which had been recorded in the Domesday Book in 1086, is thought to have been located *c.* 340m northeast of the Site. A hamlet named Peelings was also recorded in the Domesday Book (MES22532). A small number of Medieval pottery sherds were found at The Wells site (MES26569).
- 3.7** A small amount of Post Medieval pottery was found during the evaluation at The Wells (MES26570). This pottery was dated to the late 16th-17th century and the mid-18th-19th century.
- 3.8** Stone Cross Windmill (MES5040), built in 1866-1967, stands *c.* 400m southwest of the Site. Another windmill (MES7412) stood near Peelings Lane *c.* 800m northeast of the Site from *c.* 1724-1881. The 19th century building of The Red Lion (MES25793) stands *c.* 700m west of the Site.
- 3.9** Rattle Road can be seen running between Stone Cross and Westham on Yeakell and Gardner's 1778-1783 Map of Sussex (Fig. 6). The Site is located on the north side of this road, and its immediate surrounding area is shown as large open fields. The Site has a similar appearance on the 1789 Ordnance Surveyor's Drawing (Fig. 7), while barracks (MES7974) can be seen near Westham to the northeast of the Site.
- 3.10** On the Westham Tithing Map (1839; Fig. 8) the Site is located in Plot 407, named in the apportionment as Upper Standard. This field is recorded as being owned by George Henry Robinson and occupied by Robert Breton. Plots 408-413 are also under the same ownership and are described as a mix of arable and pasture.
- 3.11** Plot 407 has the same boundaries on the 1st Edition OS Map (1875; Fig. 9). A farm named Sharnfold is shown to the southeast of the Site. A railway line had been constructed to the south of the Site, while a brickworks (MES29585) is shown to the west of the Site.
- 3.12** Two small buildings are shown opposite the Site on the south side of Rattle Road on the 2nd Edition OS Map (1899; Fig. 10), while Sharnfold Farm had been renamed as Uplands. Stone Cross Windmill is clearly shown to the southwest of the Site.
- 3.13** No change is shown to the Site on the 3rd Edition OS Map (1909-1910). On the 4th Edition OS Map (1927; Fig. 11) two buildings had been constructed on the north side of Rattle Road to the west of the Site.

⁵ http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MES18966&resourceID=1026

- 3.14** A network of pillboxes and other defences was built in the area around Westham during the Second World War. An extant pillbox stands near Rattle Road c. 200m southwest of the Site.
- 3.15** By the time of the 1968 OS Map (Fig. 12) two buildings had been built in the eastern part of the Site, as well as a building immediately to the north of the Site. Langsett House is shown to the south of the Site, while houses had been built along the north side of Rattle Road. On the 1980 OS Map (Fig. 13), the Site is labelled as part of Langsett Poultry Farm. A large building had been constructed in the northern part of the Site; this is still standing along with a building immediately to its east.

4.0 Archaeological 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* (2017); and the *Treasure Act* (1996).
- 4.2 Prior to the commencement of monitoring works the existing buildings were demolished, leaving a large amount of building debris across the surface of the Site. A surface deposit of concrete measuring 50mm deep removed from the area of ground reductions was noted.
- 4.3 Archaeological monitoring consisted of watching the reduction of an area measuring 7.60m by 6.20 (Fig. 14) using a Wacker Neuson 8003 Excavator fitted with a 1m wide flat-bladed bucket. Ground was reduced by c. 350mm across the area, to the depth of impact, with the exception of a small 1m by 1m area which was reduced by a further 50mm in an attempt to locate the depth of the natural. Careful examination of machined surfaces revealed no archaeological features or deposits.
- 4.4 As agreed prior to the commencement of works a report was submitted to the County Archaeologist following the first day of ground reduction. Based on this information the County Archaeologist made the decision to halt any further monitoring.
- 4.5 A Garrett Ace 150 metal detector was used to scan the exposed surface and spoilheap. Modern metal contamination limited the use of the detector, and no metallic artefacts were recovered.
- 4.6 All deposits were recorded according to accepted professional standards and to the *Sussex Archaeological Standards*. Deposit colours were recorded by visual inspection and not with reference to a Munsell colour chart.
- 4.7 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 (Accession No. 2019.3), as agreed with the ESCC County Archaeologist. 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 LYL17 has been allocated.
- 4.9 The Site was levelled from a Temporary Benchmark (TBM) established at the northern gatepost of the Site entrance. As benchmarks which had existed in the area could not be located, the TBM was tied in to a spot height of 20.40m aOD located on Rattle Road. The levels are shown in Appendix 1.

5.0 Results

- 5.1** Context **001** consisted of a soft, mid-brown with orange tones, silty sand with rare inclusions of small rounded flint nodules. This deposit of made ground measured 100mm in depth and covered the extent of ground reductions (Plate 1). No finds were recovered from this context.



Plate 1: The Site after ground reduction, looking west

- 5.2** Context **002** was recorded directly below **001** across the extent of ground reductions. This deposit of subsoil measured 70mm deep and consisted of a soft, mid-brown silt with no inclusions. No finds were recovered from this context.
- 5.3** Context **003** was recorded below **002** across the area of ground reductions and represents a deposit of disturbed or redeposited natural (Plate 2). The deposit measured 130mm deep and consisted of a soft, mid-greenish brown sandy silt with orange tones and patches of orange. Rare inclusions of sub-rounded to angular flint were noted. Prehistoric struck flint, 19th century clay pipe and CBM dated to the 18th to 19th centuries were recovered from this context.
- 5.4** Context **004** describes a soft, mid-yellowish brown sandy silt containing rare angular flint nodules. This probable natural deposit was exposed beneath Context **003** in the deepest area of ground reduction. No finds were recovered from this context.



Plate 2: North-facing section showing stratigraphy of concrete
over contexts **001**, **002** and **003**

6.0 Finds

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

6.1 The Ceramic Building Material by Luke Barber

6.1.1 A single 12g fragment of peg tile was recovered from Context **003**. This is in a pale orange red fabric tempered with moderate 'marl' pellets/mottling and moderate/common brown/black iron oxides to 1mm (TJ3). The piece has no measurable dimensions but is of a type typical of the 18th to 19th centuries.

6.1.2 The tile has no potential for further analysis and has been discarded.

6.2 The Clay Tobacco Pipe by Luke Barber

6.2.1 The archaeological work recovered a 2g fragment of clay pipe stem from Context **003**. The piece measures 22mm long, has a bore diameter of 1.9mm and is in quite fresh condition. A partially surviving impressed stamp reads 'W. SO... // BRO...' – almost certainly W. Southern & Co of Broseley, Shropshire. The type is best placed between c. 1850 and 1900.

6.2.2 The clay pipe is an isolated piece and although not of local origin, derives from one of the most widely distributed Shropshire makers. The current piece is not considered to hold any potential for further analysis beyond that undertaken for this report. The piece has been discarded.

6.3 The Struck Flint by Jon Baczkowski MA

6.3.1 A single piece of humanly struck flint was recovered from Context **003** during the fieldwork. The single piece (44mm long x 25mm wide, weighing 8g) is light brown in colour with no cortex present. The piece is almost certainly an implement formed from a blade struck from a core, which has then been re-worked with semi-abrupt retouch along one edge and its distal end. It has had its bulb of percussion removed and there is evidence of platform preparation where its striking platform would have been, prior to its removal.

6.3.2 As no cortex is present it is difficult acutely identify its source, although it is more than likely produced on flint originating from local gravels, such as beach or riverine deposits, due to its colour and general poor quality, as several imperfections are noted. It can be assigned a Late Mesolithic to Early Neolithic date, as platform preparation is typical of

Late Mesolithic to Early Neolithic technologies. Such implements are reasonably common in both periods⁶ and from the general area of the Site.

6.3.3 Overall, a single piece of struck of flint, despite it being an implement, is largely non-diagnostic of any particular activity and difficult to draw any wider interpretation from. It possibly relates to a flint scatter located beyond the area investigated, or may have been a stray find. As it is in fresh condition it does not appear to have been imported to the Site.

6.3.4 Although it has limited value for further archaeological analysis, due it being an identifiable implement it is recommended that it is retained for inclusion into a teaching collection.

⁶ Butler, C. 2005 Prehistoric Flintwork, Tempus Publishing Ltd

7.0 Discussion

- 7.1** A single piece of struck flint provides the earliest evidence of activity recovered from the Site. This adds to the rich record of prehistoric activity in the vicinity of the Site, and may represent activity on or very close to the Site itself. No evidence for Roman activity was found.
- 7.2** The Late Post-medieval is the only other period represented in the small finds assemblage, all finds are from an open and likely disturbed context, and no archaeological features were recorded during the works.
- 7.3** The aims and objectives of the project were achieved, although due to the lack of archaeological features and the limited artefacts, it was not possible to add significantly to our archaeological and historical knowledge of the development of Westham and the surrounding area.

8.0 Acknowledgements

- 8.1** I would like to thank Mr K. Bridges for commissioning this archaeological watching brief. I would also like to thank Luke Barber and Jon Baczkowski for reporting on the artefacts and Paul Connor for the drawings.
- 8.2** The project was managed for CBAS Ltd by Chris Butler MCIfA.

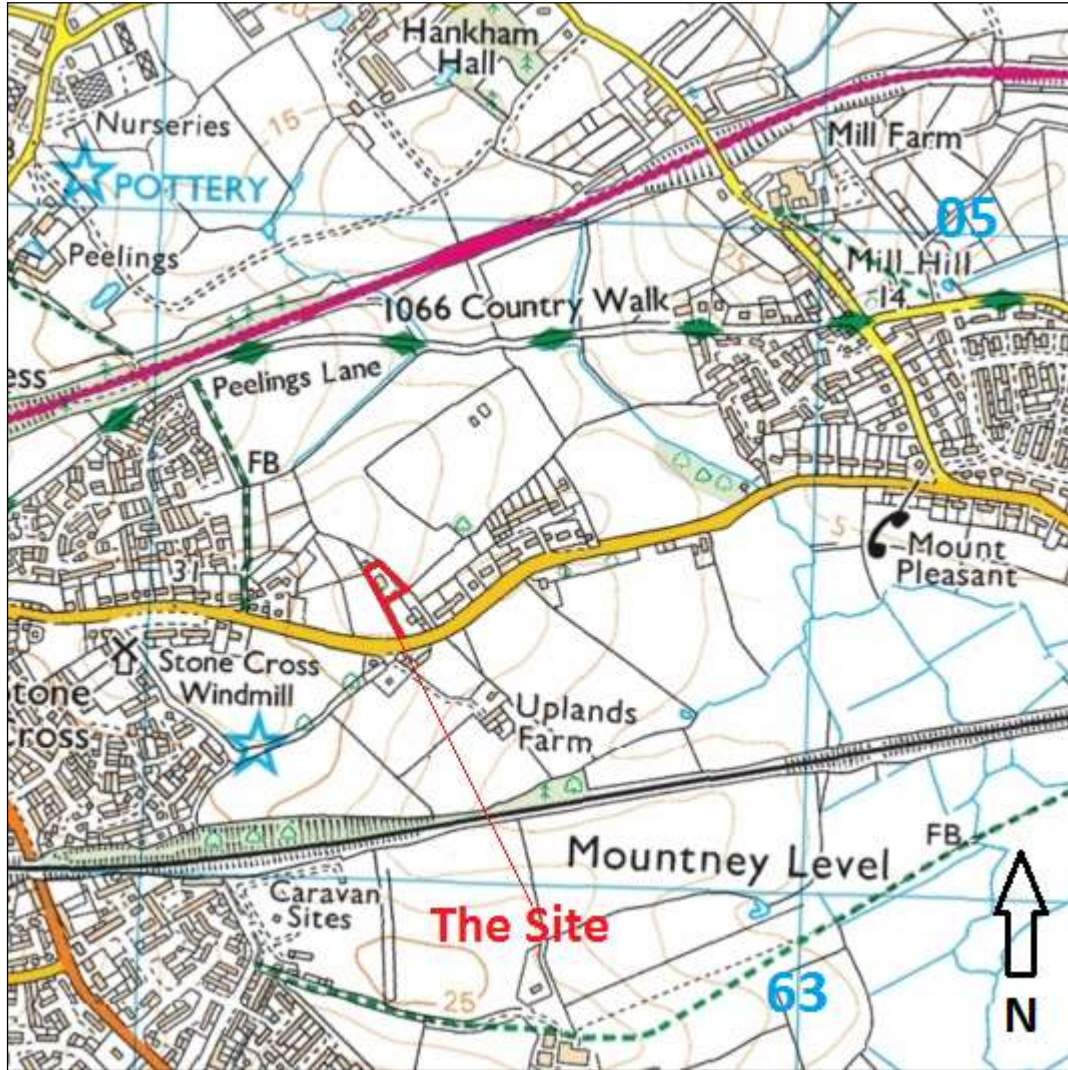


Fig.1: Lower Yard, Langsett, Westham: Site Location Map.
Ordnance Survey © 2017. All rights reserved. Licence number: 100037471

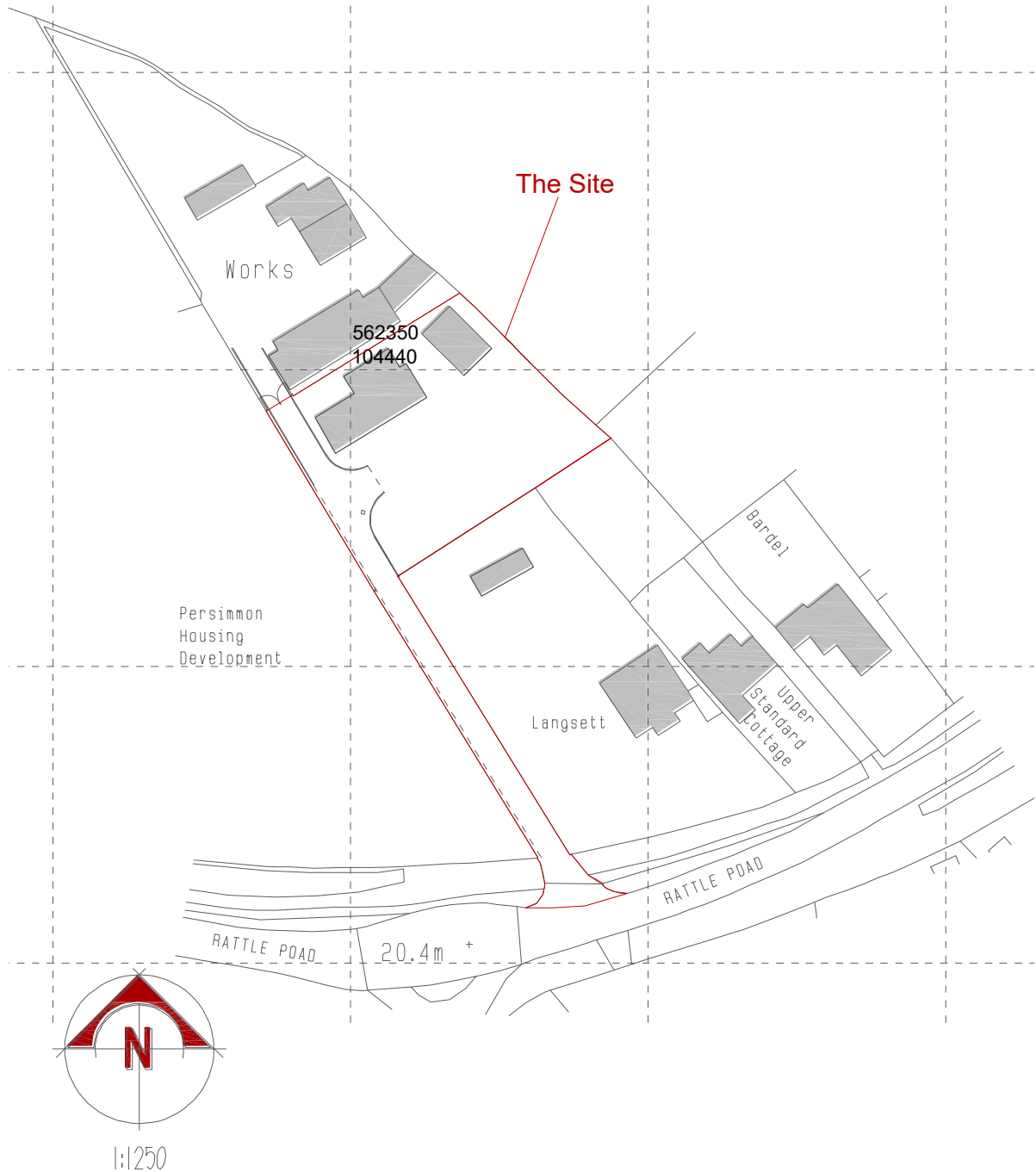


Fig. 2: Lower Yard, Langsett, Westham: Existing Site Plan
1:1250 Adapted from architect's plan

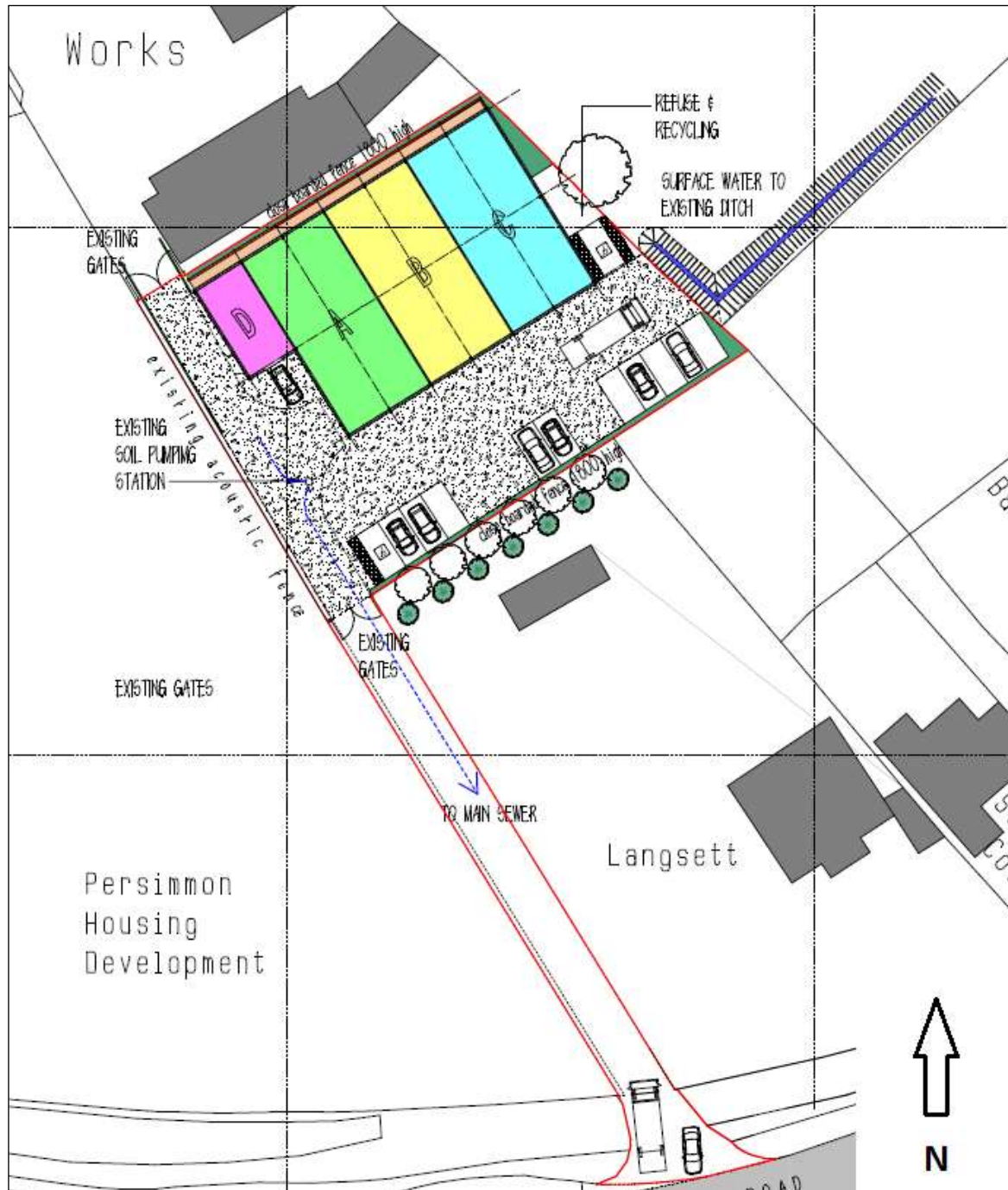
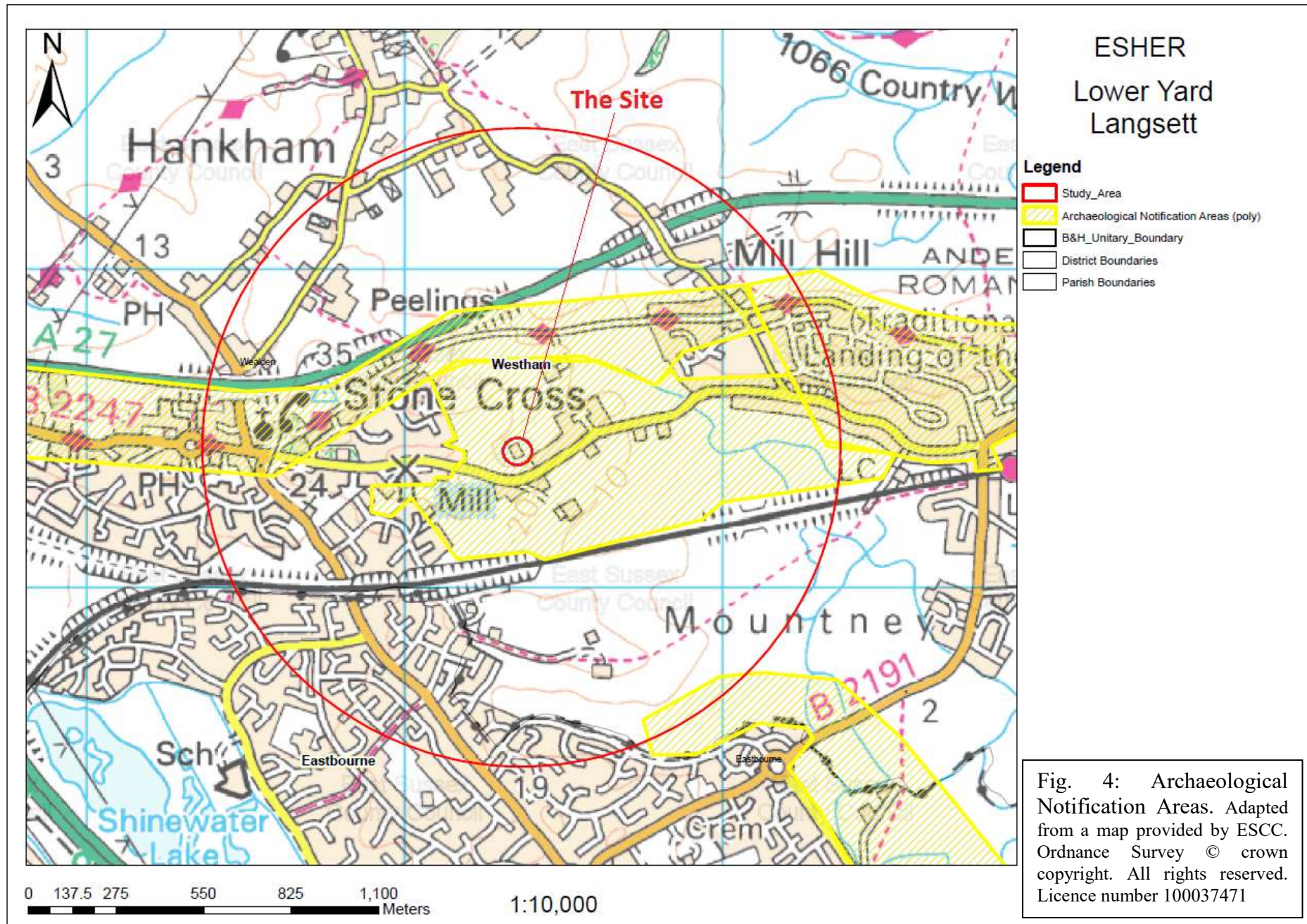


Fig. 3: Lower Yard, Langsett, Westham: Proposed Site Plan.
Adapted from architect's plan



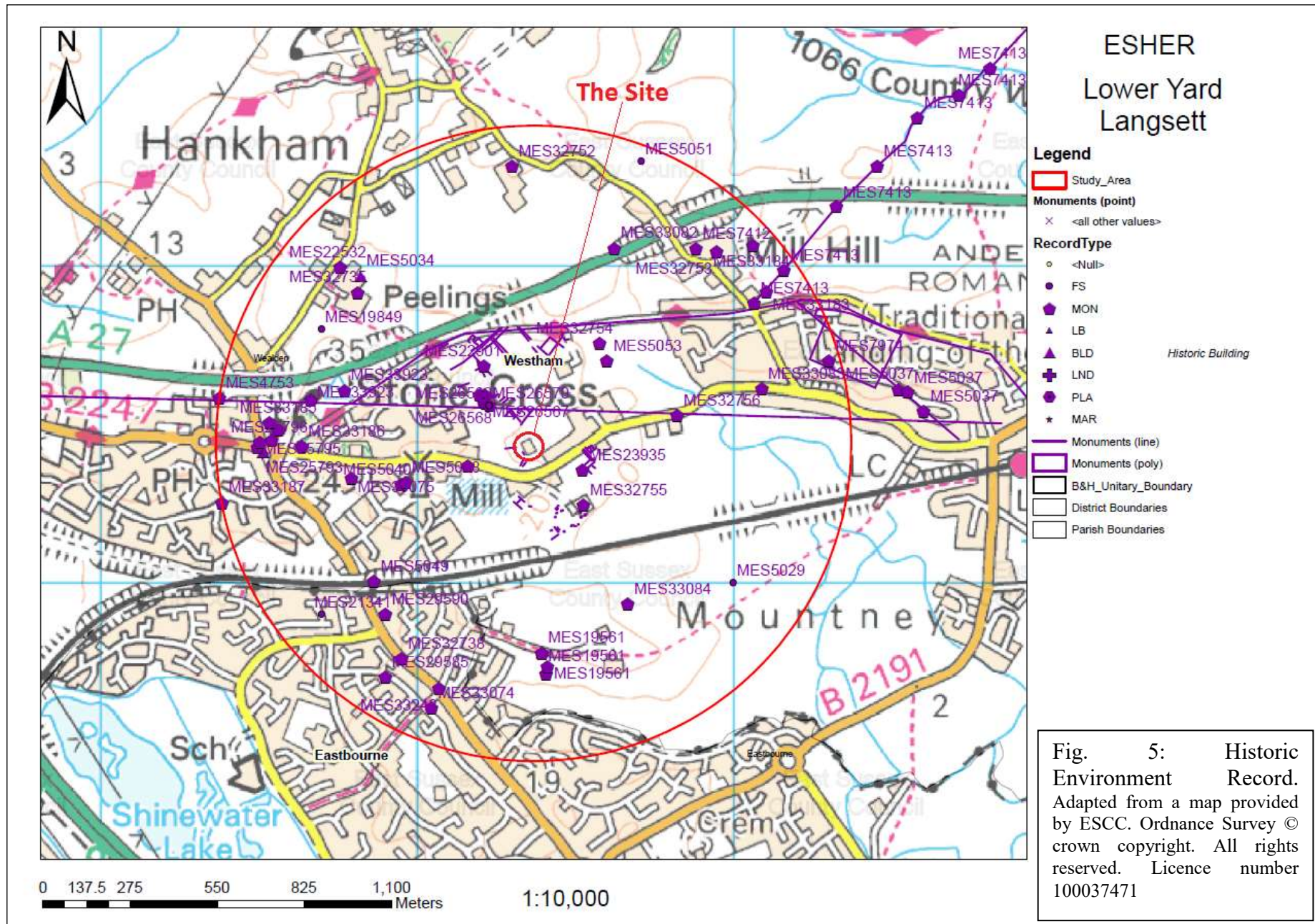




Fig. 6: Yeakell and Gardner's 1778-1783 Map of Sussex.

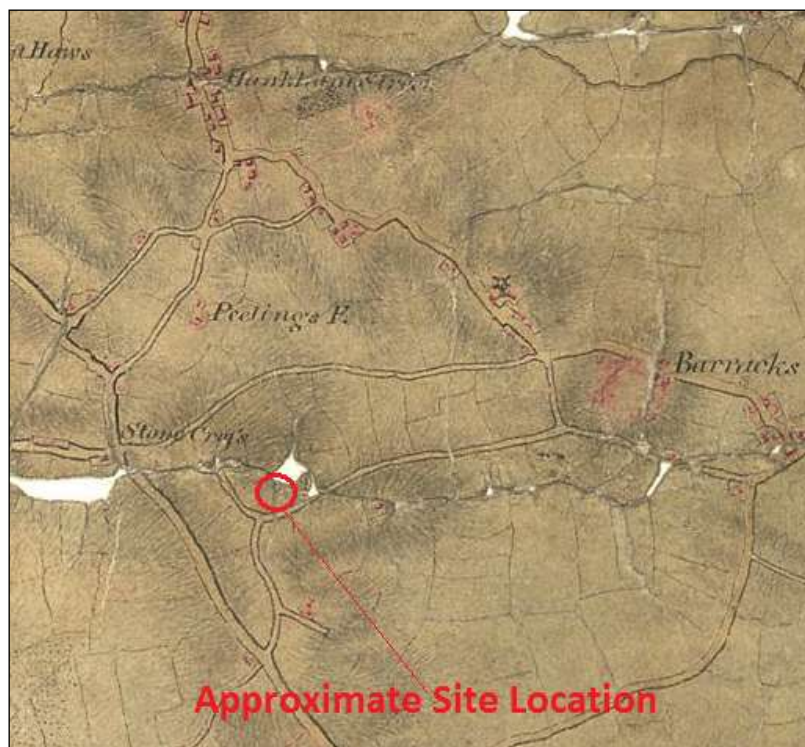


Fig. 7: 1789 Ordnance Surveyor's Drawing



Fig. 8: Westham Tithe Map (1839)
ESRO TD/E84

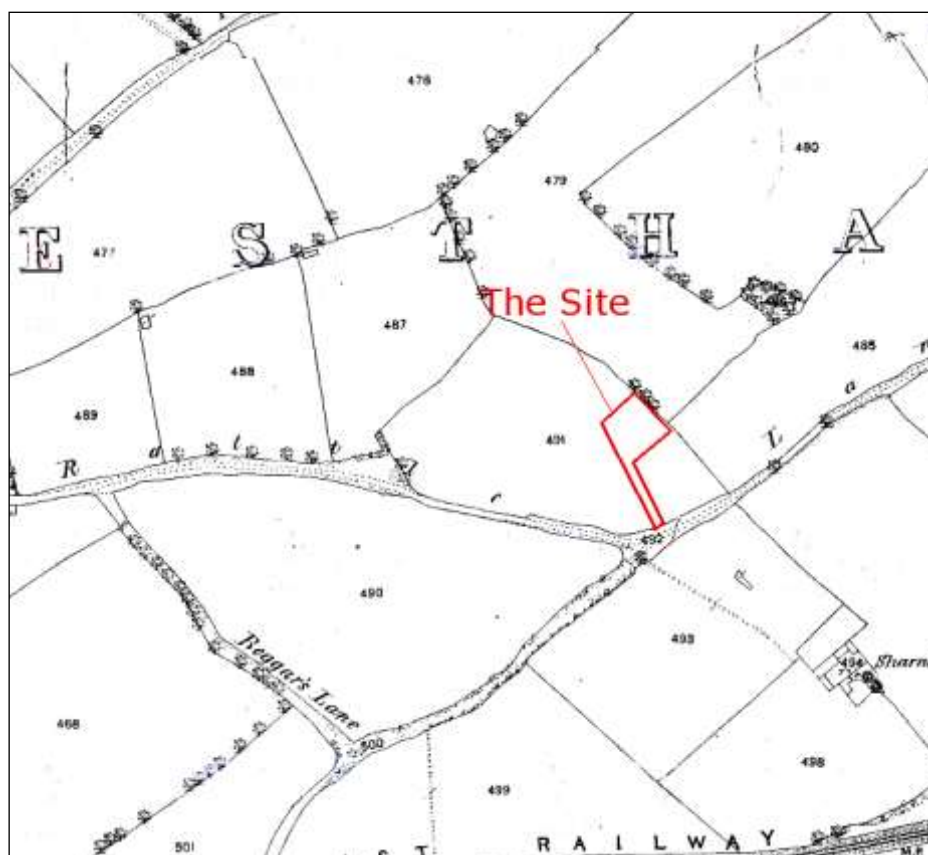


Fig. 9: 1st Edition OS Map (1875)

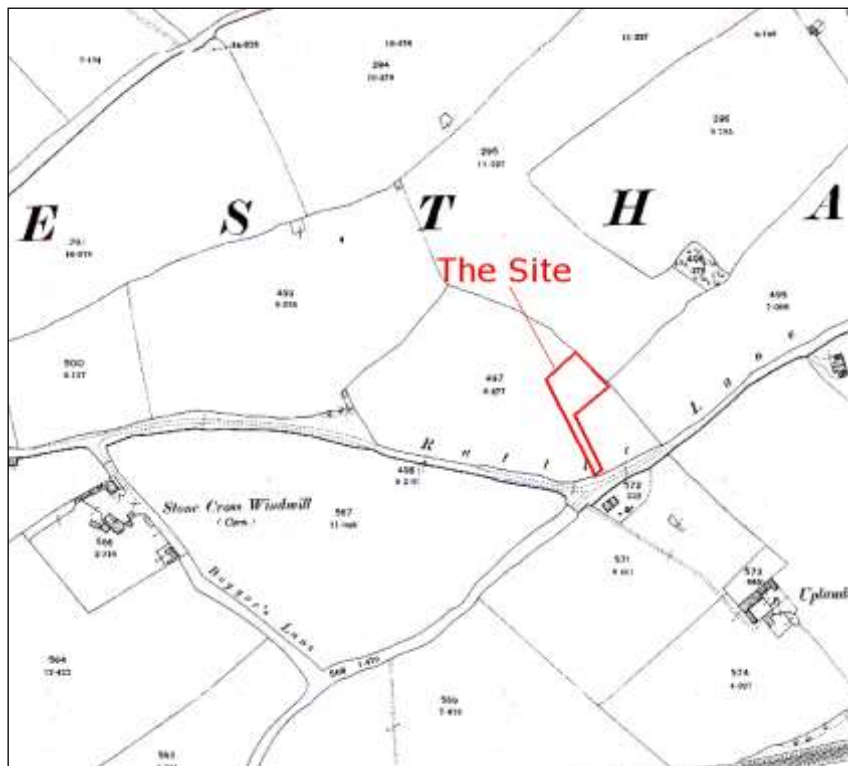


Fig. 10: 2nd Edition OS Map (1899)

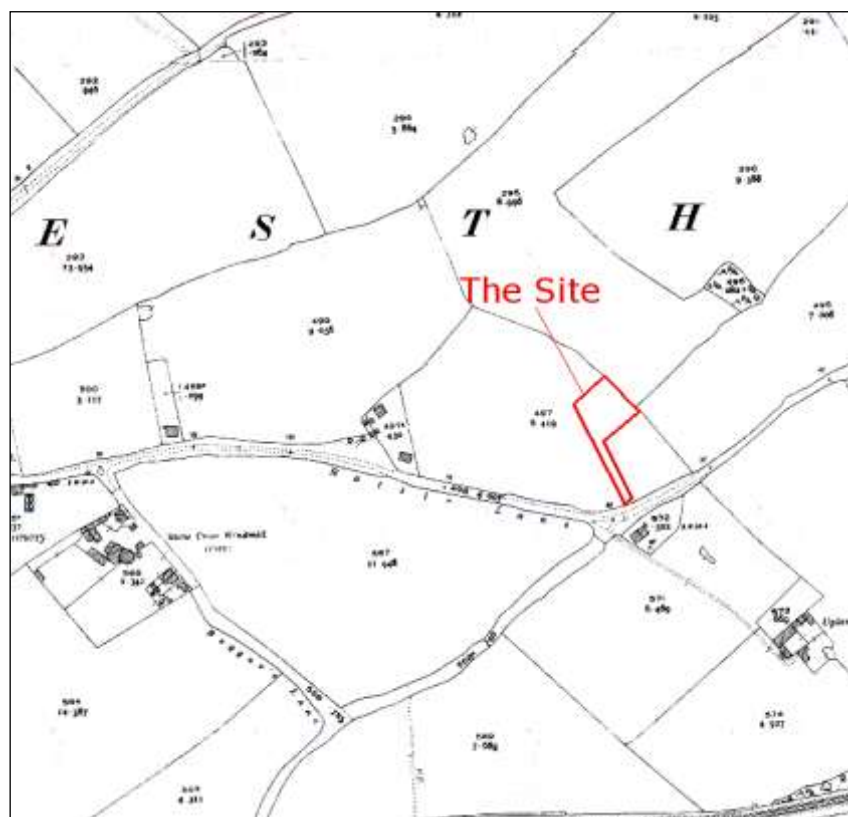


Fig. 11: 4th Edition OS Map (1927)

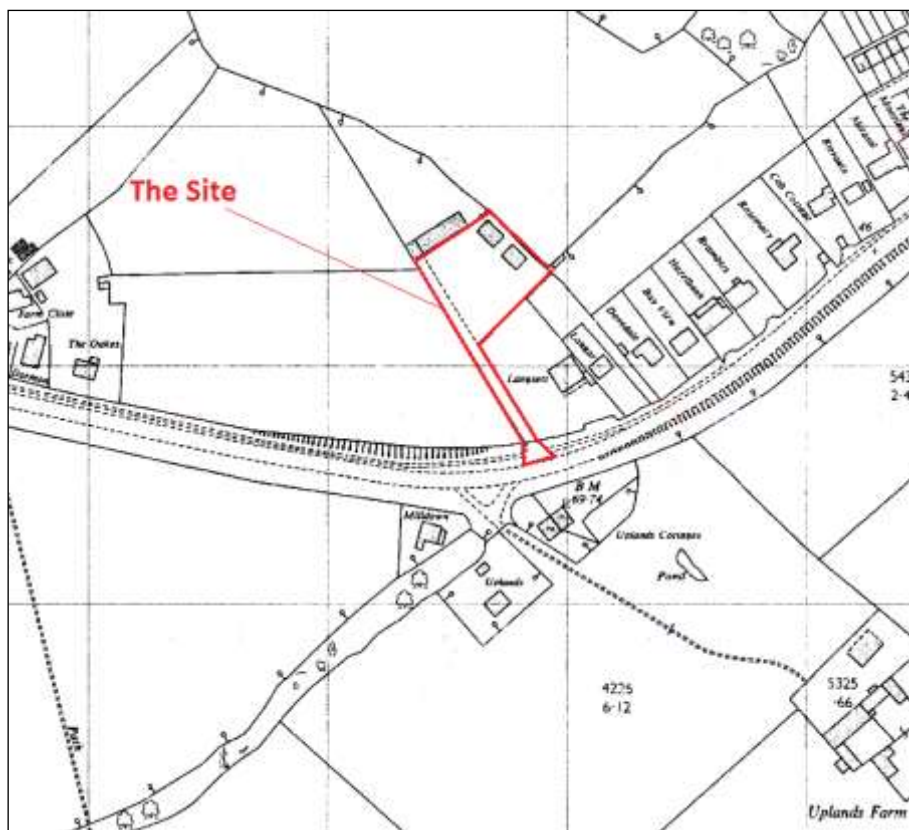


Fig. 12: 1968 OS Map

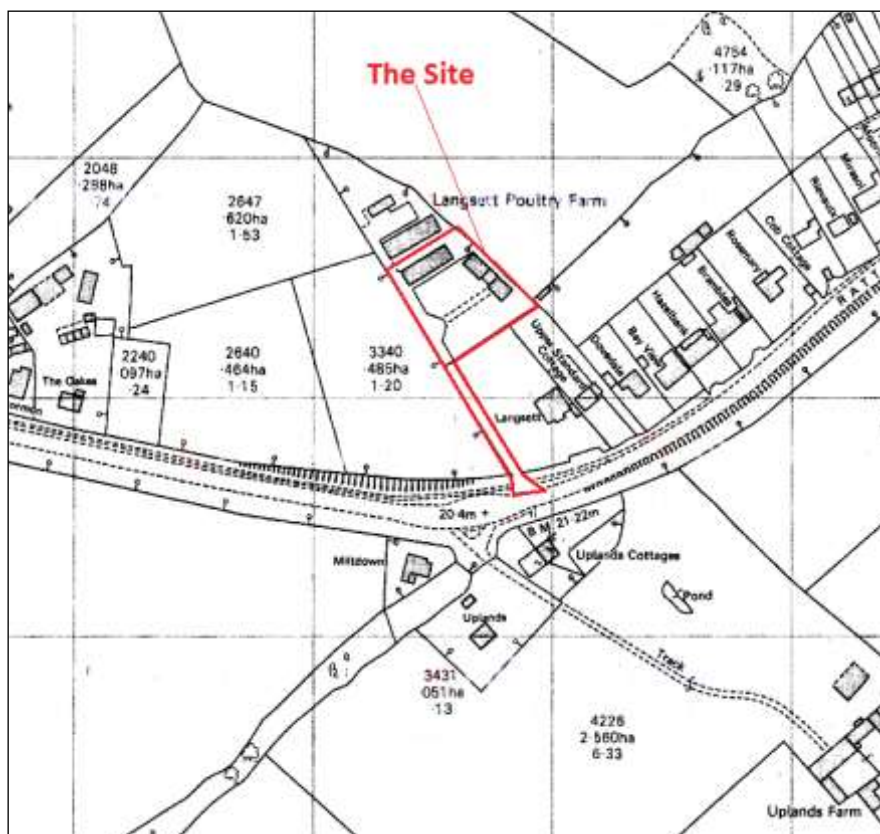


Fig. 13: 1980 OS Map

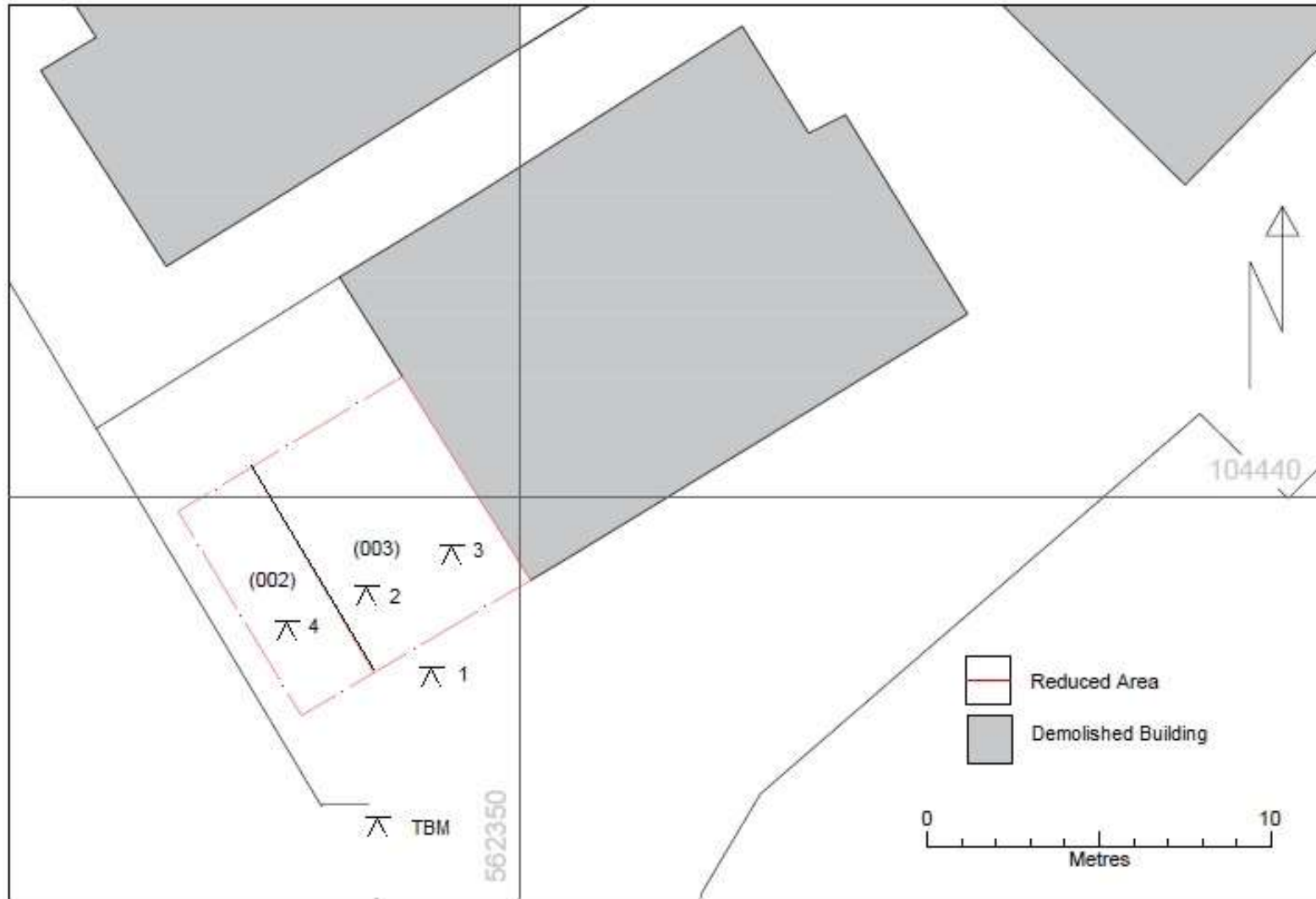


Fig 14: Plan of excavations

Appendix 1: Levels

Level number	Reduced Level (m aOD)	Notes
1	14.36	Level of concrete before reduction
2	14.13	Reduced ground level (middle of reduced area).
3	14.43	Reduced ground level (E of reduced area).
4	14.66	Reduced ground level (W of reduced area).

Appendix 2: Context Register

Context No.	Context Type	Relationships
001	Deposit	Made ground
002	Deposit	Subsoil
003	Deposit	Disturbed Natural
004	Deposit	Natural

Appendix 3: HER Summary Form

HER enquiry number	035/17					
Site code	LYL17					
Project code	CBAS0802					
Planning reference	WD/2016/2106/F					
Site address	Lower Yard, Langsett, Westham, East Sussex					
District/Borough	Wealden					
NGR (12 figures)	TQ 62367 04440					
Geology	Mudstone of the Weald Clay Formation					
Fieldwork type	Eval	Excav	WB* X	HBR*	Survey	Other
Date of fieldwork	08/02/18					
Sponsor/client	Mr K Bridges					
Project manager	Chris Butler MCIFA					
Project supervisor	Emily Walsh					
Period summary	Palaeolithic	Mesolithic X	Neolithic X	Bronze Age	Iron Age	
	Roman	Anglo-Saxon	Medieval	Post-Medieval X	Other	
Project summary (100 word max)	An archaeological watching brief was carried out at Lower Yard, Langsett, Westham, East Sussex to monitor ground reductions within the footprint of the proposed development. No archaeological features were recorded, and only a small finds assemblage was recovered from an open context.					
Museum/Accession No.	2019.3					

*WB – Watching brief; HBR – historic building recording

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, and is a part time lecturer in Archaeology at the University of Sussex.

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 MCIFA Archaeological Services Ltd

Unit 12, Mays Farm
Selmeston
Polegate
East Sussex
BN26 6TB

Tel: 01323 811785

e mail: chris@cbsaltd.co.uk