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**An Archaeological Evaluation at  
Middown Stables,  
Standean,  
Brighton, East Sussex**

SDNP/14/04113

Project No: CBAS0563

by  
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March 2015

***Summary***

*An archaeological evaluation excavation was carried out at Middown Stables, Standean, Brighton, East Sussex.*

*Two Evaluation trenches of 10m by 1.8m dimensions revealed no archaeological features or artefacts within the footprint of the new barn.*

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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.2 Chris Butler Archaeological Services Ltd was commissioned by Mrs Carnaghan (the Client) to carry out an archaeological evaluation excavation at Middown House, Standean, Brighton, East Sussex, centred at TQ 31243 11037 (Fig. 1). As a result of the site's location in an Archaeological Notification Area covering prehistoric and Romano-British activity, the Local Planning Authority placed two archaeological conditions on the planning consent for the construction of five stables, including a haystore and tack room (SDNP/14/04113/FUL), which required an appropriate programme of archaeological work to be undertaken.
- 1.2 The site lies between two tracks in the northeast corner of the grounds of Middown House, on the South Downs north of Brighton, west of Ditchling Road (Fig. 1). The site lies between 130m and 128m a OD on the east side of Donkey Bottom, overlooking Tegdown Hill to the south. The geology of the site, according to the British Geological Survey, comprises Seaford Chalk Formation<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.3 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI)<sup>2</sup> for the archaeological evaluation excavation was prepared in accordance with a brief issued by the Archaeology Team at ESCC, and submitted to the local planning authority for approval.
- 1.4 The purpose of the evaluation excavation was to determine whether there were any potential archaeological remains surviving on site, which may be damaged or destroyed by the proposed development, which included terracing of the hill slope.
- 1.5 The evaluation excavation was carried out on the 2nd of March 2015 by Dr Caroline Russell.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>; viewed 13.02.2015

<sup>2</sup> Russell, C. 2015. Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation Excavation at Middown Stables, Standean, Brighton, East Sussex. CBAS0563

## **2.0 Archaeological and Historical Background (Fig. 2)**

- 2.1** There is no evidence for Palaeolithic, Mesolithic or Neolithic activity in the wider area of the site. The earliest archaeological remains date to the Bronze Age and indicate the presence of settlement. A Bronze Age barrow cemetery (MES140; Scheduled Monument) was established on Tegdown Hill, *c.*0.83km south of Middown House. It may be contemporary with a field system (MES141) to its east on Tegdown Hill. Other prehistoric or Romano-British field systems are seen east of Middown House and include that which runs almost up to the grounds of the house (this is possibly part of the Wonderhill field system, MES16328) and the field system east of Lower Standean (MES16335). Field systems are visible on aerial photographs as earthworks and cropmarks.
- 2.2** Prehistoric finds are scarce, comprising the four flint flakes and two small pieces of fire-cracked flint (MES23120) which were recovered from The Chattri on Holt Hill during a watching brief (EES15560) in 2010. These finds may further represent Bronze Age activity.
- 2.3** There is a possible Iron Age and Romano-British settlement site (MES138) *c.*0.86km south of Middown House and another possible Iron Age settlement site (MES137) *c.*0.94km southwest of the house. The former is represented by a series of large circular depressions and Romano-British pottery and the latter by a scatter of Iron Age pottery
- 2.4.** Farming of the landscape presumably continued into the Saxon period, although there is no archaeological record of this. Evidence of farming in later periods is represented by a probable medieval or later stock enclosure (MES139) and Post Medieval pound (MES16338) at Ewe Bottom, *c.*1.09km southwest of Middown House, and a number of dew ponds (MES16329, MES16330, MES16332 and MES22993), the latter two of which are still extant. Lower Standean House (MES474), *c.*0.65km to the northeast of Middown House, is the site of a 16<sup>th</sup> century farmhouse demolished in 1951, whilst a 19<sup>th</sup> century outfarm (MES16331) is still extant at New Barn, *c.*0.6km east of the house.
- 2.5** The only Listed Building in the wider area is the Chattri Indian War Memorial (MES163333; Grade II), which was erected in 1921 on the site where the bodies of Hindu and Sikh soldiers who had died in Brighton during the First World War were cremated.
- 2.6** The Ordnance Survey (OS) maps reveal that Middown House was built sometime between 1911 and 1930. Middown House is now part of Standean Farm. The site has never been built upon.

### **3.0 Methodology**

- 3.1** The archaeological work was carried out in accordance with ESCC's *Standards for Archaeological Fieldwork, Recording and Post-Excavation in East Sussex* (Recommended Standards) (April 2008) and *CifA Standards and Guidance for Archaeological field evaluation* (December 2014).
- 3.2** The evaluation excavation involved the excavation of the two trenches proposed in the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI)<sup>3</sup>.
- 3.3** The trenches were opened as close as possible to their pre-determined locations (Fig. 4). However, Trench 2 was repositioned, and connected to Trench 1, forming an L shaped excavation. This was to avoid disturbing a boundary fence.
- 3.4** The WSI proposed that the trenches should be 10m long by 1.8m wide, as shown in Fig. 3.
- 3.5** Prior to excavation, each trench was CAT scanned by a groundworker to ensure that no services were present. The machine employed to excavate the Trenches was a 3.5 tonne 360° excavator (Takauchi), fitted with a 1.2m wide toothless bucket. All spoil was piled next to each trench for backfilling. During excavation, the spoil was visually searched for finds on a frequent basis. A Garrett ACE150 metal detector was also used to search the spoil and excavated ground for metal artefacts.
- 3.6** A Temporary Bench Mark (TBM) was established on site; at the south east corner of a collapsed iron shed. This TBM was tied into the nearest Ordnance Survey (OS) bench mark (29.73m OD), and has a level of 128.31m - coll. 130.48m. The levels register is included as Appendix 1 to this report.
- 3.7** No archaeological deposits, features or finds were encountered in either Trench. Deposit colours were recorded by visual inspection and not with reference to a Munsell Colour chart.
- 3.8** A full digital photographic record of the fieldwork 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 CBAS0563 was allocated. The site archive will be deposited in Brighton Museum or an alternative repository as agreed with the County Archaeologist.

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<sup>3</sup> Russell, C. 2015. Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation Excavation at Middown Stables, Standean, Brighton, East Sussex. CBAS0563

## 4.0 Results

**4.0.1** Each trench is discussed under a separate sub-heading below. Neither of the Trenches contained archaeological remains, however, Trench Two contained a modern disturbance.

### 4.1 Trench 1 (Table 1 and Plate 1)

**4.1.1** Trench 1 was aligned east to west within the footprint of the stables (Fig. 3). It contained three contexts, described as Topsoil, Subsoil and Natural (Contexts **1/001** - **1/003**). The Natural Context (**1/003**) was encountered at a depth of 0.5m. The dimensions of Trench 1 are: 10.9m long E/W, 1.8m wide N/S and 0.5m deep.

**4.1.2** The topsoil, Context **1/001** was encountered across Trench 1, with a thickness of 60mm at the west end of the trench, 100mm in the centre of the trench and 90mm in the east end of the trench. Context **1/001** was friable, dark brown clay with no inclusions, other than abundant fine grass roots of 1mm diameter. It was excavated by machine.

**4.1.3** The subsoil, Context **1/002** was encountered below Context **1/001** across Trench 1, with a thickness of 210mm at the west end of the trench, 80mm in the centre of the trench and 140mm in the east end of the trench. Context **1/002** was a friable, mid to orange brown, silty clay with abundant flint inclusions of 90mm by 70mm by 50mm dimensions. It was excavated by machine, and was observed to become chalkier towards the shallower, eastern portion of the Trench.

**4.1.4** The Natural, Context **1/003** was encountered below Context **1/002** across Trench 1, with a thickness of 230mm at the west end of the trench, 280mm in the centre of the trench and 140mm in the east end of the trench. A layer of degraded natural, recorded as part of Context **1/003** was observed on the boundary of Contexts **1/002** and **1/003**, this had a thickness of 190mm at the west end of the trench, 150mm in the centre of the trench and 110mm in the east end of the trench. Context **1/003** was a friable, dark to medium off white to whitish brown chalk with degraded chalky clay. Context **1/003** contained chalk inclusions measuring 60mm by 60mm by 25mm. It was excavated by machine.

Table 1: Summary of contexts in Trench 1

Context	Type	Relationship	Max. Thickness
<b>1/001</b>	Deposit	Topsoil	100mm
<b>1/002</b>	Deposit	Subsoil	90mm
<b>1/003</b>	Deposit	Natural	280mm



Plate 1: Trench 1, looking east

#### 4.2 Trench 2 (Fig. 5, Table 2 and Plate 2)

**4.2.1** Trench 2 was aligned north to south within the footprint of the stables. It was moved from its proposed position in the WSI in order to avoid disturbing a boundary fence (Fig. 4). It contained two contexts, described as Topsoil and Natural (Contexts **2/001** - **2/002**). The Natural Context **2/003** was encountered at a depth of 0.5m. The dimensions of Trench 1 are: 9.9m long N/S, 1.8m wide E/W and 0.5m deep.

**4.2.2** The topsoil, Context **2/001** was encountered across Trench 2, with a thickness of 100mm at the north end of the trench, 40mm in the centre of the trench and 120mm in the south end of the trench. Context **2/001** was a friable, dark brown clay with no inclusions, however it becomes chalkier with depth towards the interface with the natural (Context **2/002**). It was excavated by machine.

**4.2.3** The Natural, Context **2/002** was encountered below Context **2/001** across Trench 2, with a thickness of 330mm at the north end of the trench, 360mm in the centre of the trench and 380mm in the south end of the trench. A layer of degraded natural, recorded as part of Context **2/002** was observed on the boundary of Contexts **2/001** and **2/002**, this had a thickness of 190mm at the north end of the trench, 280mm in the centre of the trench and 250mm in the south end of the trench. Context **2/002** was a friable, dark to medium off white to whitish brown chalk with degraded chalky clay. Context **2/002** contained chalk inclusions measuring 60mm by 60mm by 25mm. It was excavated by machine.



**4.2.4** Context **2/006** had disappeared at the north-northeast end of the trench, leaving Context **2/005** to overlie a mixed deposit of Contexts **2/004** and **2/005**, disturbed by a cut for an old lead pipe. The natural flint gravel (Context **2/007**) made an appearance in the south-southwest half of the trench.

Table 2: Summary of contexts in Trench 2

Context	Type	Relationship	Max. Thickness
2/001	Deposit	Topsoil	120mm
2/002	Deposit	Natural	380mm



Plate 2: Trench 2, looking south-south

**4.2.5** An area of modern disturbance, consisting of a cut formed of clinker-like material was observed 3.4m from the north end of Trench 2. This cut divided the subsoil (same as **1/002**) from the Natural (**2/002**). This feature sloped downwards in a southerly direction to a point 5.7m from the north end of Trench 2, however no return for the cut was observed.

**4.3** No other archaeological features or deposits were noted during the evaluation excavation.

## **5.0 The Finds**

**5.1** No archaeological finds were recovered from either trench.

## **6.0 Discussion & Recommendations**

**6.1** Two trenches were opened up on site. No archaeological materials were encountered in either trench, and the natural chalk was recorded at a consistent depth of 0.5m in both trenches. The stratigraphy across the site is broadly similar; the topsoil and natural in both tranches may well be considered the same material.

**6.2** The evaluation excavation achieved its aims, in that it has determined that there are no archaeological features or deposits which are likely to be damaged or destroyed by the development.

**6.3** It is recommended that no further archaeological works be undertaken at the site.

## **7.0 Acknowledgements**

**7.1** We would like to thank Mrs Carnaghan for appointing us to undertake this project

**7.2** The project was managed by Chris Butler. Caroline Russell carried out the evaluation excavation and this report was prepared by the author.

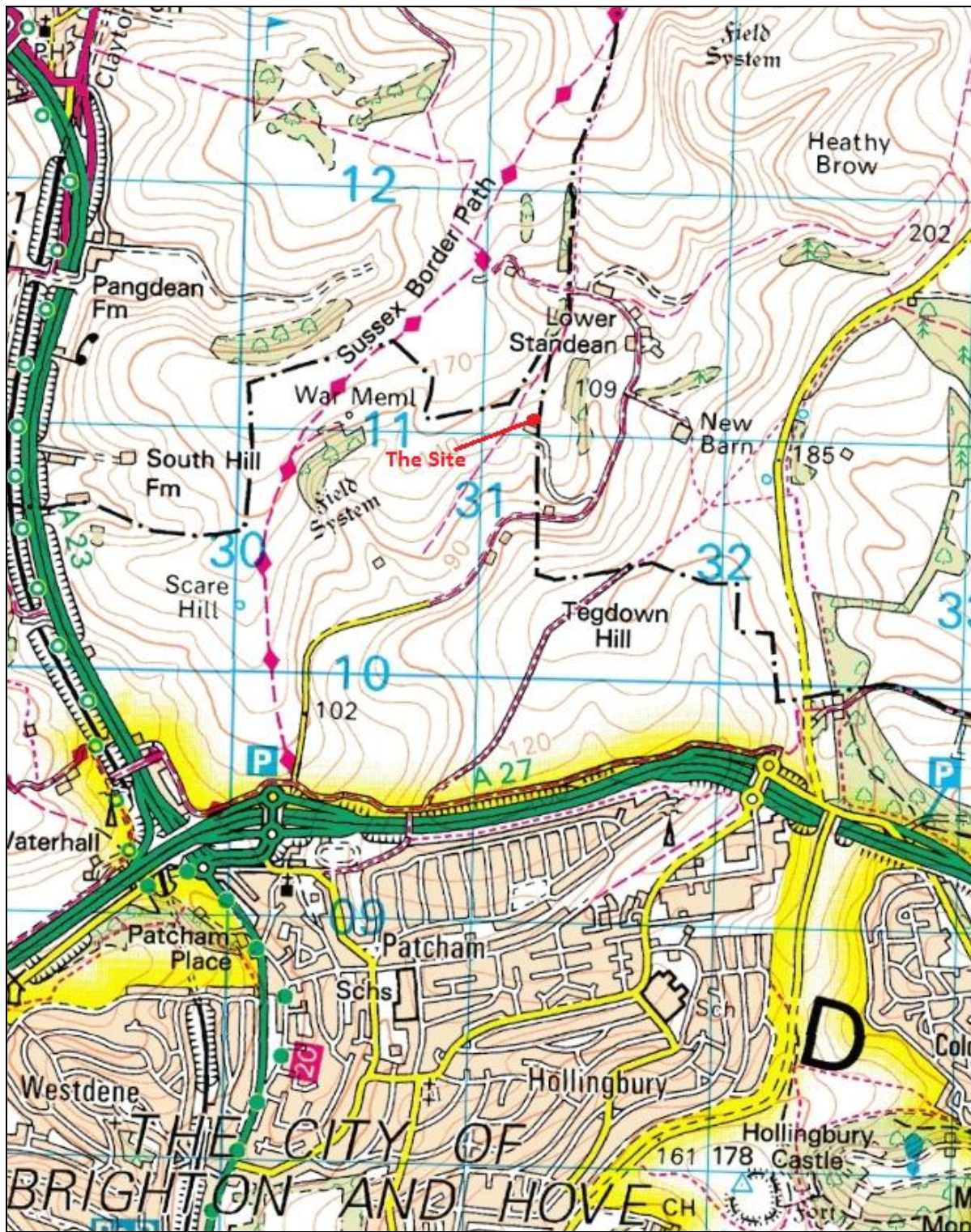
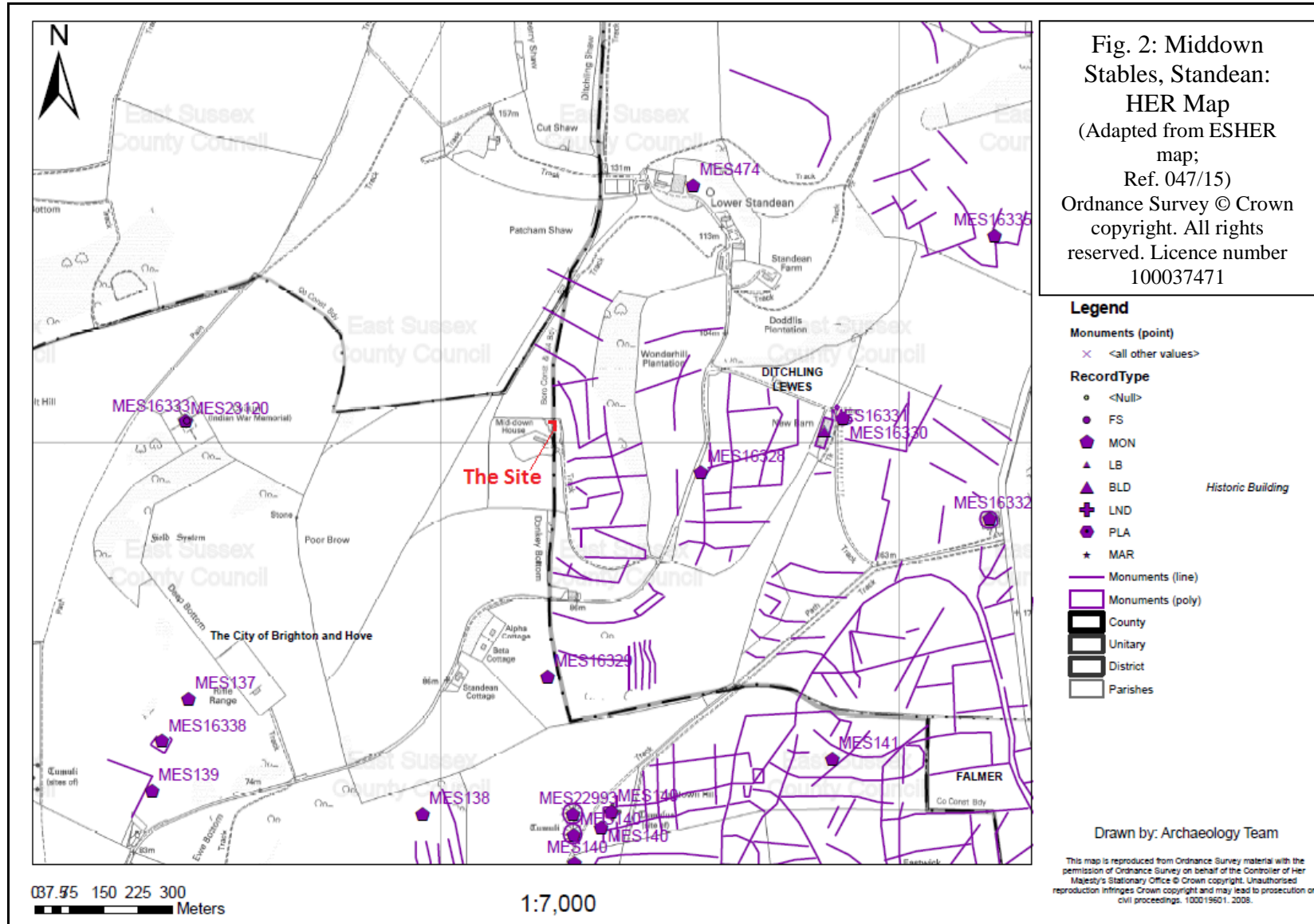


Fig. 1: Middown Stables, Standean: Site Location  
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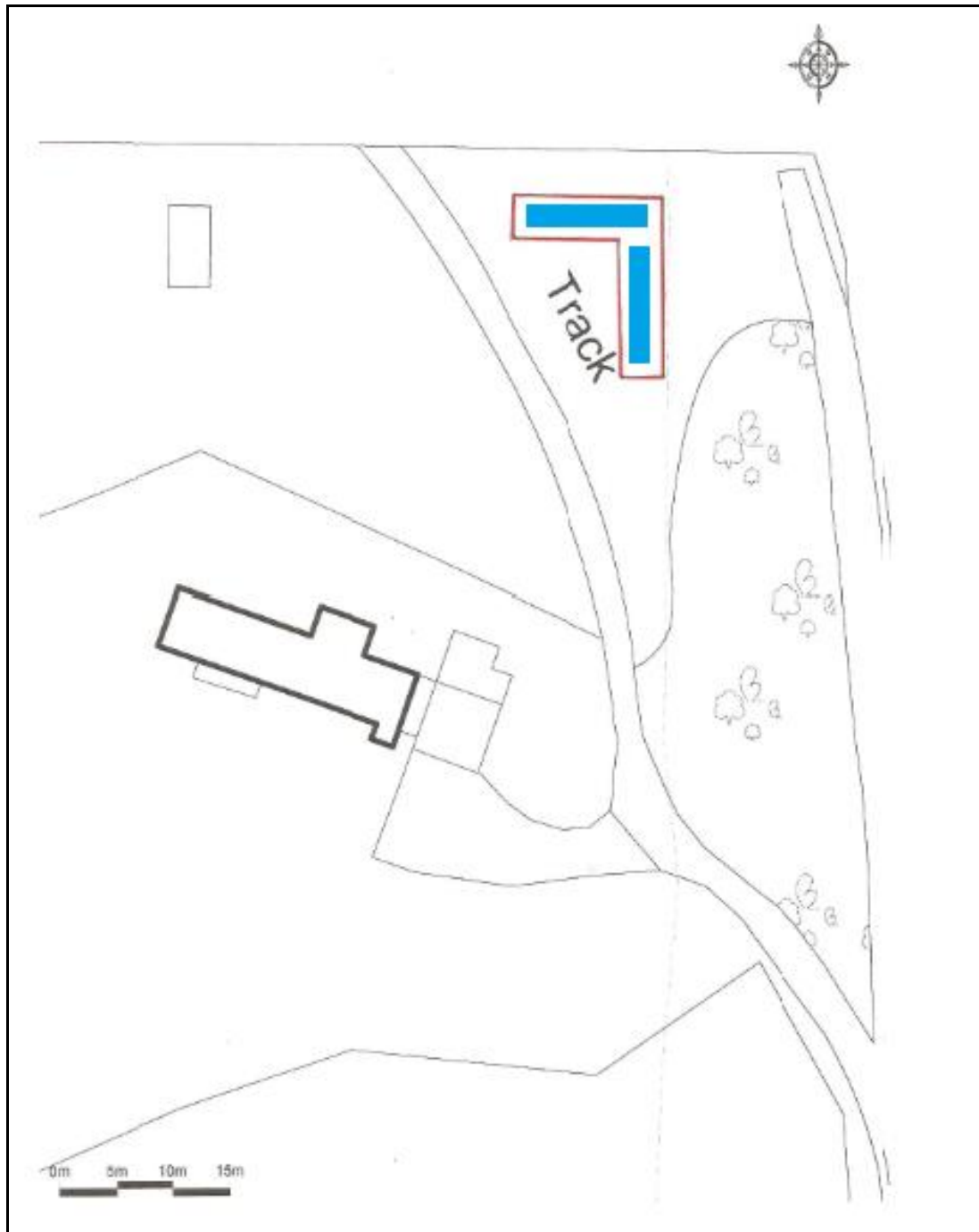


Fig. 3: Middown Stables, Standean:  
Proposed Trench Locations within footprint of Proposed Stables  
(Plan provided by Client)

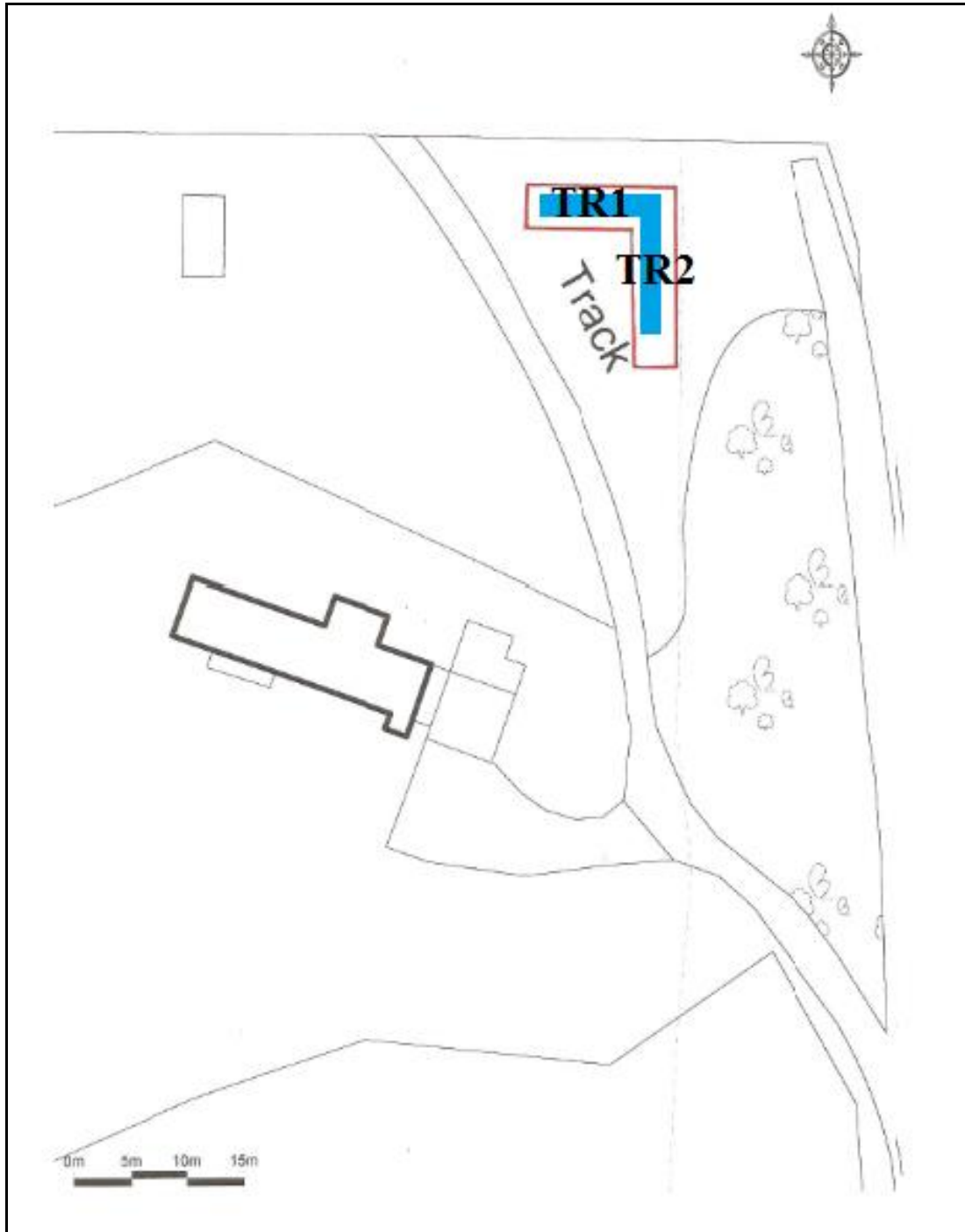


Fig. 4: Middown Stables, Standean:  
Actual Trench Locations within footprint of Proposed Stables  
(Adapted from Plan provided by Client)

## Appendix 1 Levels

<b>Trench</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Level (m aOD)</b>
1	West end TR1	129.61
	East end TR1	130.07
2	South end TR2	128.68

## Appendix 2 HER Summary Form

Site Code	MSS15					
Identification Name and Address	Middown Stables, Standean, Brighton, East Sussex					
County, District &/or Borough	East Sussex					
OS Grid Refs.	TQ 31243 11037					
Geology	Seaford Chalk Formation					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval. <b>X</b>	Excav.	Watching Brief	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field <b>X</b>	Shallow Urban	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval. 02/03/2015	Excav.	WB.	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Mrs Carnaghan					
Project Manager	Chris Butler MCIfA					
Project Supervisor	Dr Caroline Russell					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM	Other		
<p>100 Word Summary</p> <p><i>An archaeological evaluation excavation was carried out at Middown Stables, Standean, Brighton, East Sussex.</i></p> <p><i>Two Evaluation trenches of 10m by 1.8m dimensions revealed no archaeological features or artefacts within the footprint of the new barn.</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 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 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, Historic Building Surveys, Landscape and Woodland Surveys & Fieldwalking, Post Excavation Services and Report Writing.

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