

T H A M E S V A L L E Y

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Chiddinglye Solar Farm, Selsfield Road,
West Hoathly, West Sussex**

Archaeological Evaluation

by James McNicoll-Norbury

Site Code: CFS15/261

(TQ 3557 3306)

Chiddinglye Solar Farm, Selsfield Road, West Hoathly, West Sussex

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Chiddinglye Solar Park Limited**

by James McNicoll-Norbury
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code CFS 15/261

November 2015

Summary

Site name: Chiddinglye Solar Farm, Selsfield Road, West Hoathly, West Sussex

Grid reference: TQ 3557 3306

Site activity: Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 11th November 2015

Project manager: Sean Wallis

Site supervisor: James McNicoll-Norbury

Planning reference: DM/15/2460

Site code: CFS 15/261

Area of site: c. 2850 sq m

Summary of results: No archaeological finds or deposits were identified in the area targeted by the trenches.

Location and reference of archive: The preferred repository for the site archive is Lewes Museum, which is not currently accepting new archives, so the archive will be held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading until a suitable repository becomes available.

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www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp.*

Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 26.11.15 Steve Preston ✓ 26.11.15

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by James McNicoll-Norbury

Report 15/261

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Chiddinglye Farm, Selsfield Road, West Hoathly, West Sussex (TQ 3575 3293) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Dale Mayhew of Dowsett Mayhew Partnership, Second Floor, Stanford Gate, South Road, Brighton, BN1 6SB on behalf of Chiddinglye Solar Park Limited, c/o The Accounts Team, Low Carbon, 2nd Floor, 13 Berkley Street, London, W1J 8DU.

Planning permission (DM/15/2460) has been gained from Mid Sussex District Council to construct a new solar farm on the site, with storage areas and a compound for the construction works. The permission is subject to a condition (12) relating to archaeology and the historic environment, requiring a programme of archaeological investigation. As a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits on the site which may be damaged or destroyed by the development, it was proposed to carry out a field evaluation on part of the site to determine the archaeological potential of the site and to help formulate a mitigation strategy as necessary. Should significant archaeological remains be encountered, further works would be required.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012), and the District Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Alexandra Egginton, Archaeological Officer for Surrey County Council, the adviser to Mid Sussex District Council on archaeological matters. The fieldwork was undertaken by James McNicoll-Norbury and Jesse Coxey on 11th November 2015 and the site code is CFS 15/261.

The preferred repository for the site archive is Lewes Museum, which is not currently accepting new archives, so the archive will be held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading until a suitable repository becomes available.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located to the North of Chiddinglye Farm and to the south of Selsfield Road which lies to the west of West Hoathly (Figs 1 and 2). At the time of the work, the site comprised of an area of hard standing in use for storage and wood chipping, which would become the contractor's compound for the development. The area is

generally flat at 173m above Ordnance Datum, and the underlying geology is described as Upper Grinstead Clay (BGS 1972) which was observed in the trenches as yellow clay.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the solar farm site has been considered in a recent desk-based assessment (Birmingham 2015). In summary, the site lies within a topographical and geological zone (The Weald) which is not generally noted for its rich archaeological background, apart from sites associated with iron production from the Iron Age to early post-medieval period. However, recent archaeological fieldwork has begun to redress the balance, and a number of sites from various periods have been found in small numbers across the Weald. As far as the present site is concerned, there is an Iron Age promontory fort nearby (a Scheduled Monument), and the Roman road from London to the south passed around 1km to the west of West Hoathly. The site is also relatively close to the village of West Hoathly, which is first recorded in the medieval period.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits within the area of development.

The specific research aims of this project are:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on this site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present;
- to determine if archaeological deposits relating to Iron Age activity are present; and
- to determine whether any evidence of medieval activity is present.

As the impact of development within the main solar farm areas was considered to be negligible, the evaluation was to be concentrated in the storage and compound areas, with a watching brief (if appropriate, depending on the evaluation results) anticipated over the larger area. Four trenches were to be dug, each measuring 15m long and 1.6m wide located in areas that will be affected by the construction of the compound. The trenches were to be dug using a 360° type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket and to be supervised by an archaeologist at all times. Where certain or probable archaeological deposits were present, the stripped areas were to be cleaned by hand, and sufficient of the features revealed excavated or sampled to fulfil the aims outlined above.

Results

Following changes made to the compound location and the areas to be affected by the development, just two trenches were dug located in the area which was going to be used as a compound, which measured 15m long, 1.8m wide and up to 0.34m deep. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1 (Figs 3 and 4; Pl. 1)

Trench 1 was aligned S - N and was 15m long and 0.30m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.03m of silt and 0.20m brick rubble overlying yellow clay (natural geology). Modern field drains were noted but no archaeological deposits were identified.

Trench 2 (Fig. 3; Pl. 1)

Trench 2 was aligned SW - NE and was 15m long and 0.34m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.04m of silt and 0.22m brick rubble overlying yellow clay (natural geology). Modern field drains were noted but no archaeological deposits were identified.

Finds

No finds were recovered.

Conclusion

The evaluation has revealed that no archaeological deposits were present on the site of the proposed compound and also that the area had been previously reduced down to the natural geology due to the absence of topsoil and subsoil in the two trenches.

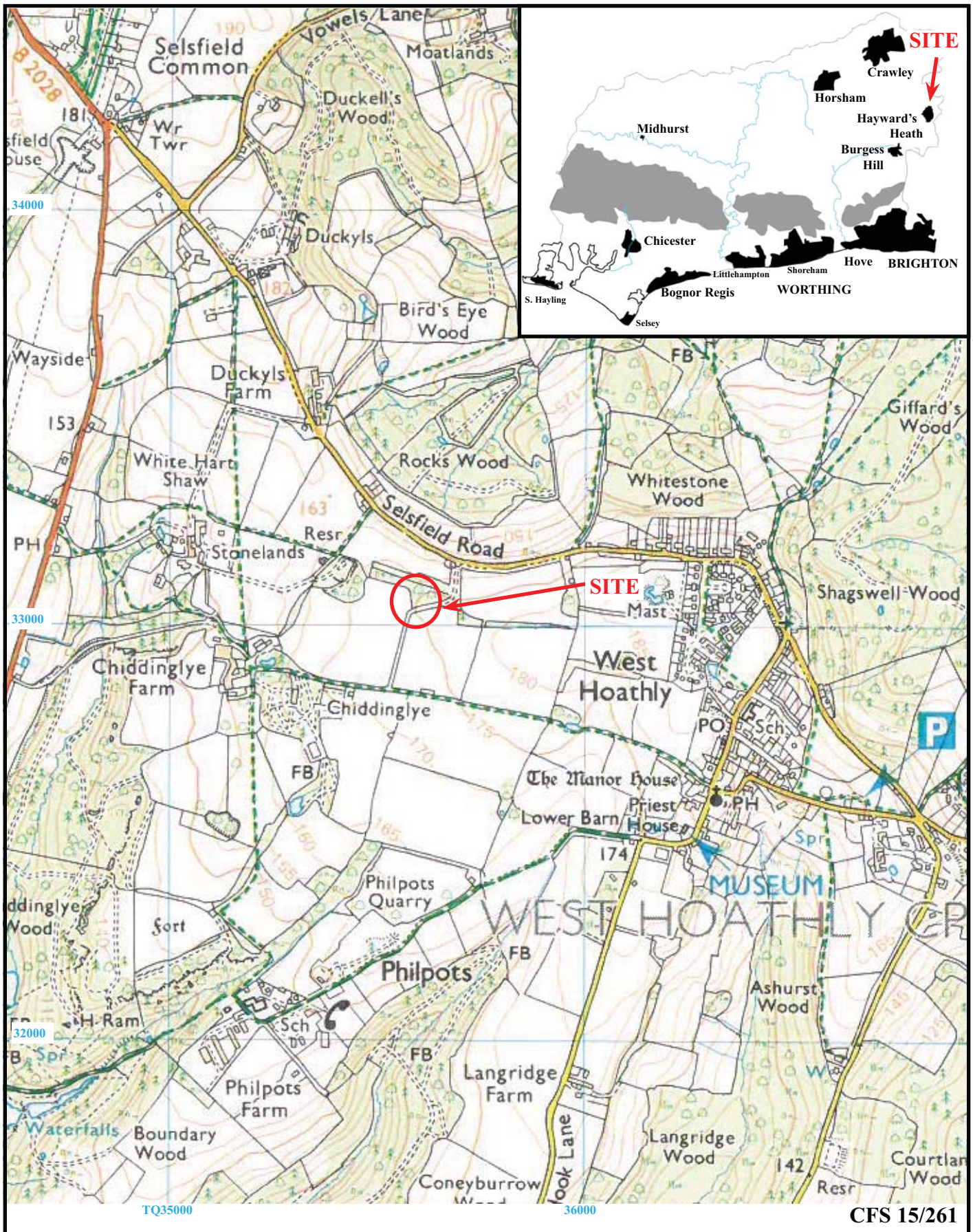
References

Birmingham, N, 2015, 'Land at Chiddinglye Farm, Selsfield Road, West Hoathly, West Sussex: an archaeological desk-based assessment', Thames Valley Archaeological Services unpubl rep **15/109**, Brighton
BGS, 1972, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000, Sheet 302, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London

APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at S or SW end

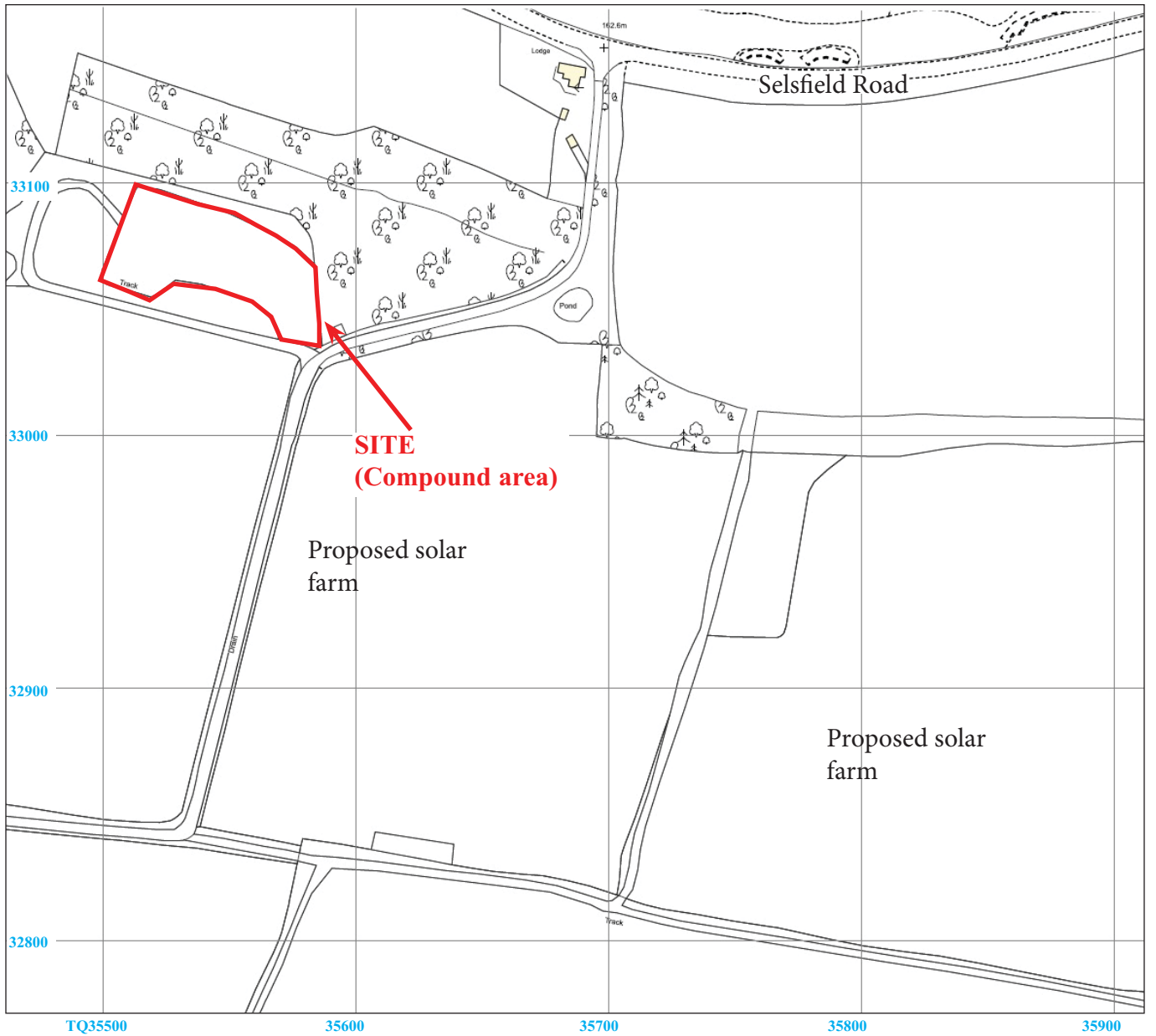
<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	15	1.8	0.30	0–0.03m silt, 0.03–0.23m brick rubble, 0.23m+ yellow clays (natural geology). [Pl. 1]
2	15	1.8	0.34	0–0.04m silt, 0.04–0.26m brick rubble, 0.26m+ yellow clays (natural geology). [Pl. 2]



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Figure 1. Location of site within West Hoathly and West Sussex.

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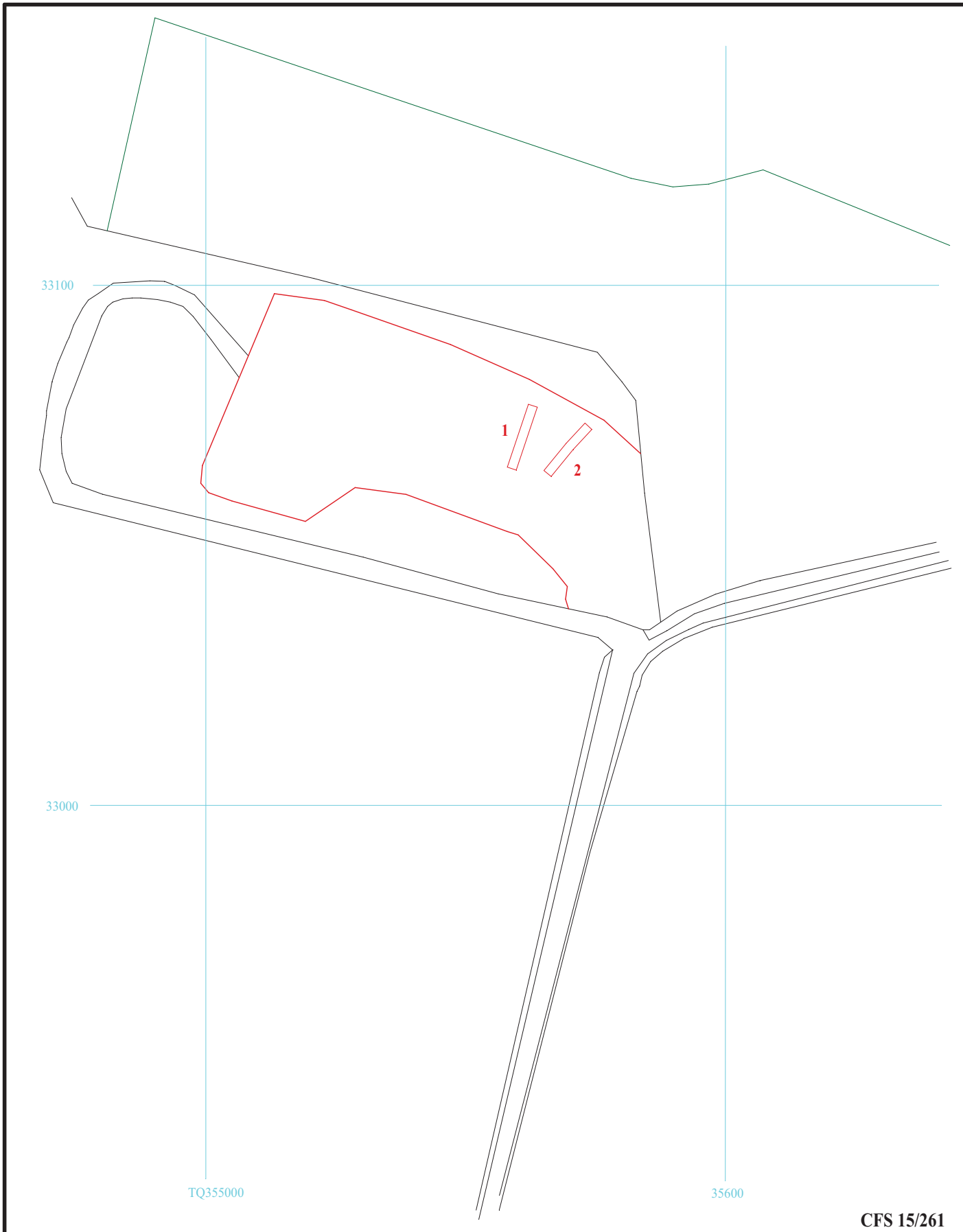
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Selsfield Road.

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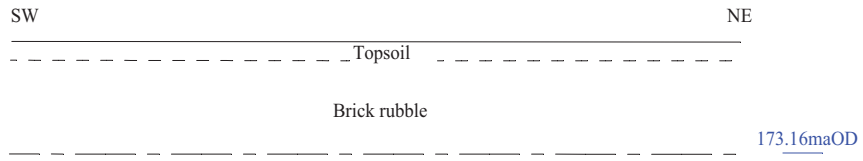
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Figure 3. Location of trenches.



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Trench 1



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Figure 4. Representative section.





Plate 1. Trench 1, looking north, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.1m.



Plate 2. Trench 2, looking north, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.1m.

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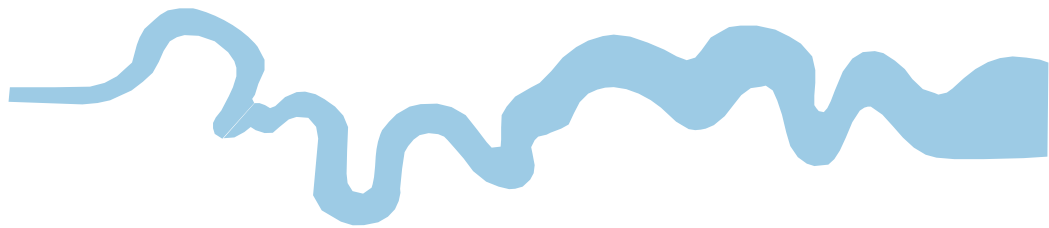
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Plates 1 - 2.**

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TIME CHART

	Calendar Years
Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43
Iron Age _____	BC/AD 750 BC
Bronze Age: Late -----	1300 BC
Bronze Age: Middle -----	1700 BC
Bronze Age: Early -----	2100 BC
Neolithic: Late	3300 BC
Neolithic: Early	4300 BC
Mesolithic: Late	6000 BC
Mesolithic: Early	10000 BC
Palaeolithic: Upper	30000 BC
Palaeolithic: Middle	70000 BC
Palaeolithic: Lower	2,000,000 BC





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