

**Selsfield Road,
Ardingly, West Sussex**

Project specification for an archaeological evaluation

30th June 2026

Revision 1 (July 2026)



Ref: 26s11ev

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1.0 Background

1.1 The site is located on land west of Selsfield Road, Ardingly, West Sussex (TQ 3453 2990) (Fig. 1). The overall site comprises an area of c. 2.3ha to be developed for housing.

1.2 Outline planning permission (DM/22/1575) has been granted by Mid Sussex District Council for the development of up to 35 dwellings, associated landscaping and infrastructure, with all matters reserved except for means of access.

1.3 The planning permission is subject to a condition (3) relating to archaeology. This document is to assist the process of discharging condition 3.

1.3 The archaeological potential of the site has been addressed in a desk-based assessments (Wallis 2022) so in summary, the site lies within the High Weald, which is known as a historically wooded area, primarily utilised for hunting and iron production. A search of the West Sussex Historic Environment Record for the site and a 1km radius around the site revealed, no finds, features or sites of Palaeolithic date. For the Mesolithic, a dense flintwork scatter to the east of Homcombe was recorded, as were some flint implements found as findspots close to Ardingly and Little London. It is possible that some of the flints found as findspots near Ardingly were also of Neolithic or Bronze Age date. No further finds or features from the Neolithic through to Bronze Age have been recorded within the site or its environs, or any finds or sites dating to the Iron Age.

1.4 A Roman road sometimes known as “London to Portslade Way” runs through the study area, c. 650m to the west of the site. Despite the fact that Ardingly is likely to be Late Saxon in origin, there are no finds, features or sites of this date within the HER. For the Medieval period, the parish church of St Peter, is a Grade I listed building, with elements dating from the 14th-15th century is supposedly built on the site of an earlier 12th century church. Bolney Farm, Hickpotts Farm, Old Knowles Farm and Upperlodge Farm may date back to the medieval period.

1.5 The geology of the site is been mapped as Cuckfield Stone Bed-Calcareous sandstone (BGS 1972) and lies a height of between c. 117m to the south and 121m to the east above Ordnance Datum (aOD).

2.0 Requirement for Work

2.1 As a result of the possibility of damage or destruction of archaeological deposits during development of the site it is proposed to carry out a field evaluation on the site as detailed in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2025) and Mid Sussex District Council’s policies on archaeology. This work will be carried out to comply with the Sussex requirements for archaeological fieldwork (ESCC 2019), and in accordance with the relevant guidelines of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2020a; 2023).

2.2 A number of countrywide policy documents for archaeological research such as Historic England Research Agenda (HE 2017) consider the full range of deposits that might be encountered on the site. More specific aims are presented in the *South-East Research Framework Resources Assessment and Research Agenda* (SERFA 2019).

2.3 A single component of work is proposed at this stage, namely field investigation by means of machine trenching. Dependent on the findings of this evaluation, further archaeological work may be requested and will be determined through consultation with Mark Baister of Place Services, the archaeological adviser to Mid Sussex District Council (the Archaeological Adviser). This document is concerned with the trial trenching phase of archaeological works, and any additional work will be governed by a separate written scheme of investigation (WSI).

3.0 Aims and Objectives

3.1 The aims of the evaluation will be to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological or palaeoenvironmental deposits within the area of development.

3.2 This work will be carried out in a manner which will not compromise the integrity of archaeological features or deposits which warrant preservation *in situ*, or might better be excavated under conditions pertaining to full excavation.

3.3 The specific research aims of this project are;

- a) To determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on this site.
- b) To determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present.
- c) To determine if there are any deposits of Prehistoric date on the site
- d) To determine if there are Iron Age, Roman or Saxon iron production sites are present.
- e) The potential and significance of any such deposits located will be assessed according to the research priorities such as set out in *Historic England Research Agenda* (HE 2017) or any more local or thematic research priorities such as the *South-East Research Framework Resources Assessment and Research Agenda* (SERFA 2019) as necessary.

4.0 Methodology

4.1.1 We propose to dig 23 trenches, 25m long and 1.8-2m wide which will be located as shown on Figure 2 (5% of site area). The trench positions are indicative only and may need to be moved or subdivided to avoid obstacles or services.

4.1.2 The trenches have been positioned to avoid known services and tree protection zones. The machine will be kept well away from all trees on site, protected or not, to avoid any damage, and no excavation will take place beneath their crowns.

4.2 A contingency of 58m of trench is included within the proposal should this be required to clarify the results of the initial trenching.

4.3 Excavation Methodology

4.3.1 Topsoil and other overburden for the machine-dug trenches will be removed by a 360° machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. This will take place under constant archaeological supervision.

4.3.2 Trenches will be excavated to the first archaeologically-relevant horizon, or to the level of the natural geology.

4.3.3 Should alluvium (or peat) be encountered overlying gravel, this will be removed in spits of 0.1-0.15m thickness with each phase of surface exposed inspected for deposits and artefacts.

4.3.4 Where archaeological features are certainly or probably present, the stripped areas will be cleaned using appropriate hand tools.

4.3.5 Sufficient of the archaeological features and deposits exposed will be excavated or sampled by hand to satisfy the aims of the brief, without compromising the objective set out in 3.2. In principal, this means we shall endeavour to:

- Sample all linear features, using a minimum 1-metre-long slot;
- Sample 10% of the total length of linear cut features;
- Sufficiently characterise all discrete features by half sectioning and sampling for environmental evidence where appropriate. Small discrete features such as postholes will then be 100% dug.

4.3.6 In general, all finds and artefacts will be retained, though all but a sample of some classes of building material will be discarded after recording.

4.3.7 Conservation on site will follow guidelines in First Aid For Finds with any other specialist conservation work subcontracted to our conservation adviser (see below).

4.3.8 A programme of environmental sampling will take place should sufficient well stratified subsoil deposits be located. Typically this involves samples of up to 40L depending on the size of the feature examined. Bulk waterlogged samples with organic preservation will be of the order of 1L. These will be sampled in consultation with our environmental consultants and the Archaeological Adviser. Sampling will take place according to Historic England guidance (HE 2015b).

4.3.9 Discovery of any human remains will be confirmed by minimal excavation but no further action will be taken as part of the evaluation exercise, unless requested as additional work by the client in consultation with the Archaeological Adviser. Human remains will be treated following the guidelines of the Ministry of Justice and in Mitchell and Brickley (2017).

4.3.10 Spoilheaps will be searched for finds including use of a metal detector.

4.3.11 All gold and silver, prehistoric base metal and any associated objects will be removed to a safe place and reported to the local coroner and county finds liaison officer according to the procedures relating to the Treasure Act (1996) and subsequent amendments. Where removal cannot be effected on the same working day as the discovery suitable security measures will be taken to protect the finds from theft. No title will be assumed by the finder of any items of value.

4.3.12 Following completion of all excavation and recording, each trench shall be efficiently backfilled but not resurfaced. No liability is accepted for damage to any services unless a plan of these is provided by the client. Backfilling of trenches will only take place once they have been signed off, either remotely or in person, by the Archaeological Adviser.

4.4 Recording Methodology

4.4.1 A single context recording system will be used in accordance with the TVAS Field Recording Manual (9th edition 2021). Descriptions of individual deposits and features will be recorded on pro-forma context recording sheets.

4.4.2 All archaeological deposits exposed will be planned at a scale of 1:20 and sections drawn at a scale of 1:10. All site drawings will be by pencil on drafting film.

4.4.3 Heights above OD will be taken and recorded on plans and sections.

4.4.4 Where appropriate, significant finds will be recorded in 3D.

4.4.5 The locations of the trenches, and of all plans and sections will be tied into the National Grid using Korec GPS machines accurate to 0.1m,.

4.4.6 The photographic record will consist of digital image. It will record the principal features and finds discovered, both in detail and in their general context. The photographic record will also include 'working shots' and, where applicable, aerial photographs to illustrate the nature of the archaeological fieldwork programme. All feature shots will include appropriate scales and a photo board, the latter positioned in such a way that the writing is legible and including the context number and site code. Digital images are taken on Canon EOS 4000D cameras with APS-C sensors taking 16-megapixel images.

4.5 Post-fieldwork

4.5.1 Finds processing, sieving of bulk samples (including flotation and the sorting of residues) and analysis will commence immediately following the completion of the fieldwork in accordance with guidelines in MoRPHE (HE 2015a), and TVAS post-excavation procedures (6th edition 2013).

4.5.2 Artefacts will be cleaned, conserved and prepared for long term museum storage.

4.5.3 Specialist reports will be prepared on the artefacts and ecofacts recovered; particular attention will be paid to correlating the pottery recovered with local or regional fabric type sequences.

4.5.4 Specialist analysis and reporting will be carried out by the following specialist staff or consultants as appropriate:-

Project Management	Mr. David Sanchez
Fieldwork Supervisor	(one of) Mr. Mark Learey, Ms Maisie Foster, Dr Pierre -Damian Manisse, Mr Jamie Williams, Ms Beth Tucker, Ms Sophie Peng, Ms Emily Gibson
Post excavation	Mr. Steve Preston
Finds coordination	Dr. Cristina Matteos and Ms Katherine Fleckney
Pottery Specialist (from)	Mr. Luke Barber, Mr. Tom Martin, Dr Barbara McNee (consultants) or Dr. Cristina Mateos-Leal or Mr. Sam Rishman (TVAS)
Brick and Tile	Ms. Danielle Milbank, (TVAS)
Carbonised botanical remains	Professor Mark Robinson (Oxford University) Ms. Rossy McKenna (consultant) or Ms Molly Larkin (TVAS)
Faunal remains	Dr. Matilda Holmes (consultants) or Dr Ceri Falys or Ms Harriet Wright (TVAS)
Human remains	Dr. Ceri Falys (TVAS)
Coins	Dr. Pierre Manisse (TVAS)
Metalwork	Dr. Robin Taylor (consultant) or Ms Sophie Perng (TVAS)
Pollen	Quest (Reading University)
Wood	Ms. Rossy McKenna, (consultant) or Mr. Michael Bamforth (consultant)
Slag	Dr. David Dungworth or Mr. Luke Barber (consultant)
Archaeomagnetism	Bradford University
Radiocarbon dating	Queens University, Belfast
Conservation	Wiltshire County Council Heritage Centre

5.0 Report and Dissemination

5.1 The reports on the results of the evaluation and should be available within 4 weeks of completion of the fieldwork.

5.2 The reports will follow our established format, comprising a descriptive text, illustrations and catalogues in appendices.

5.3 The text will address the aims and objectives of the evaluation, the methodology employed, describe the basic nature of the archaeological deposits discovered, and report on the artefacts recovered. It will then attempt to place the significance of the findings in their local, regional and national setting if appropriate.

5.4 The reports will include a frontsheet providing the following information:

- *Site name
- *Grid reference
- *Site activity (eg. evaluation trenching, geophysical survey, fieldwalking, watching brief, excavation etc.)
- *Date and duration of project
- *Site code
- *Area of site
- *Summary of results
- *A selection of historic maps
- *Monuments identified (referenced to the RCHME Thesaurus of Monument Types)
- *Location and reference of archive

5.5 The illustrations will include:

- a site location plan
- a trench layout plan
- trench plans and sections
- profiles/sections of a selection of excavated features
- a selection of colour photos of significant findings

5.6 Catalogues giving descriptions of trenches, archaeological features, and artefacts will be contained in a series of appendices.

5.7 Any findings of national or special local significance will be published as a dedicated report in an appropriate journal such as *Sussex Archaeological Collections*. Otherwise a summary will be produced for publication in 'round up' sections in publications such as period specific national journals like *Medieval Archaeology*.

5.8 Copies of the results will be supplied to the West Sussex HER in digital format. Non-published report(s) will be made available for inspection or download on the TVAS web site.

6.0 Archive Selection Strategy and Data Management Plan

6.1 An academic synthesis of the findings of the fieldwork will be presented as a report detailed above in section 5, addressing where appropriate the regional research topics such as presented in the *South-East Research Framework Resources Assessment and Research Agenda*. Selected summary data, such as digital images will be presented to the county Historic Environment. The original record and artefact data will be managed according to the plan set out in paras 6.2-6.7 (above).

6.2 The finds and site archive will be prepared in accordance with guidelines in MoRPHE (HE 2015a), CIfA guidance (CIfA 2020a) and after consultation with the recipient museum.

6.3 The site and finds archive will be deposited in Horsham Museum or Archaeology Data Service

6.4 With the consent of the landowner, the site finds will be deposited with Horsham Museum.

6.5 A digital version of the report will be provided to the OASIS project.

6.6 The digital component of the archive will be managed according to TVAS digital archive and backup recording policies.

7.0 General Items

7.1 The project will be managed on a regular basis by a Member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (D. Sanchez, S. Ford or A. Taylor) with an appropriate area of competence.

7.2 The project will be carried out in accordance with the CIfA Standard and Guidance for archaeological evaluation (2020b) and Code of Conduct (2022) and the quality control mechanisms set out in the TVAS fieldwork and post-fieldwork manuals.

7.3 Safe working practices as set out in TVAS health and safety manual will be adopted and current health and safety regulations will be adhered to. If the site is accessible to the public, the trenches will be fenced with barrier mesh/bunting and road pins or Heras fencing as necessary.

7.4 Our insurance cover comprises £10 million for public liability, £10 million for employee liability, cover for any hired-in plant, and professional indemnity cover of £5m.

7.5 The Archaeological Adviser will be contacted both prior to work commencing on site, and during the evaluation itself, to arrange a site monitoring visit. Any changes in the agreed project design will be discussed and agreed with the project consultant and the Archaeological Adviser before implementation.

8.0 References

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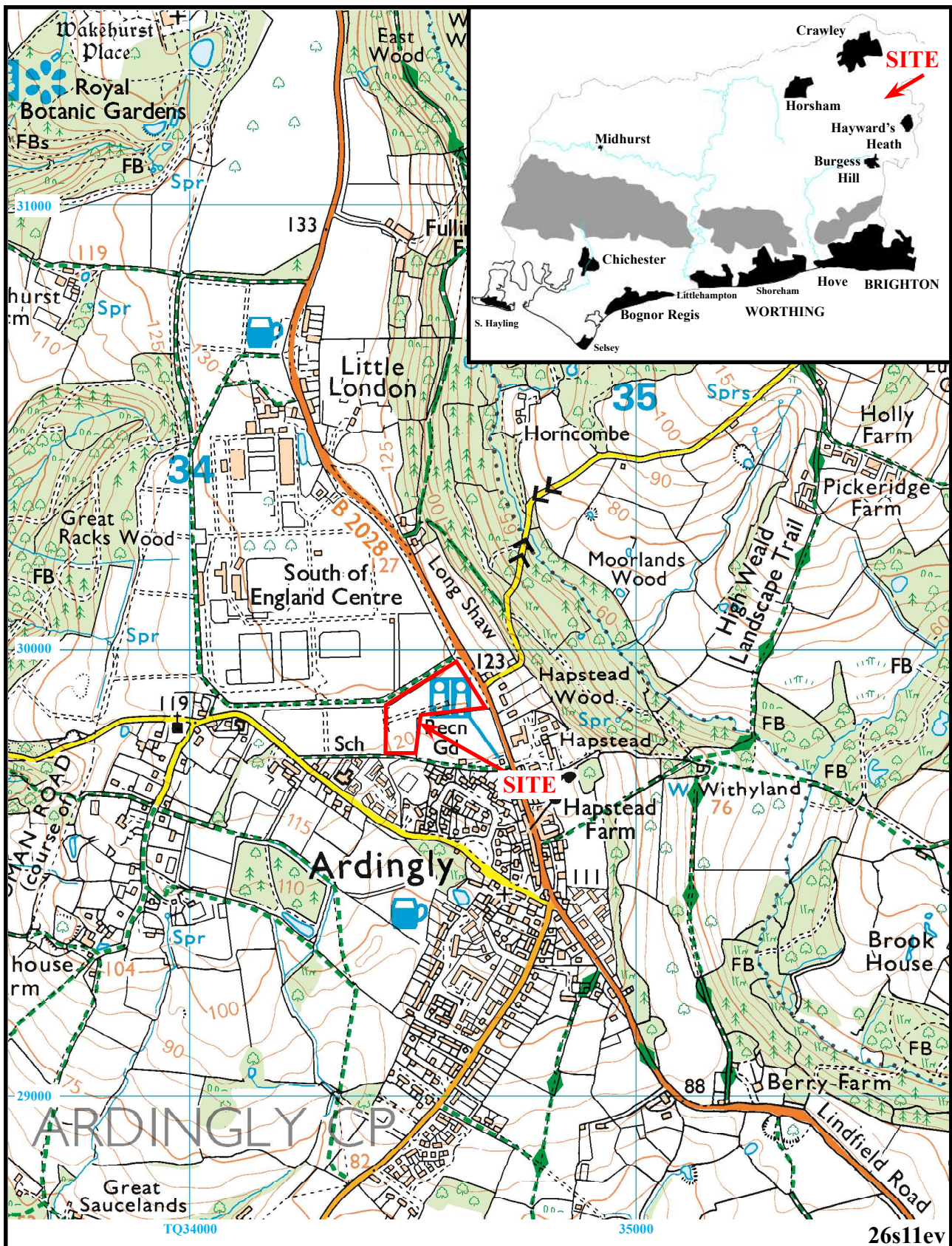
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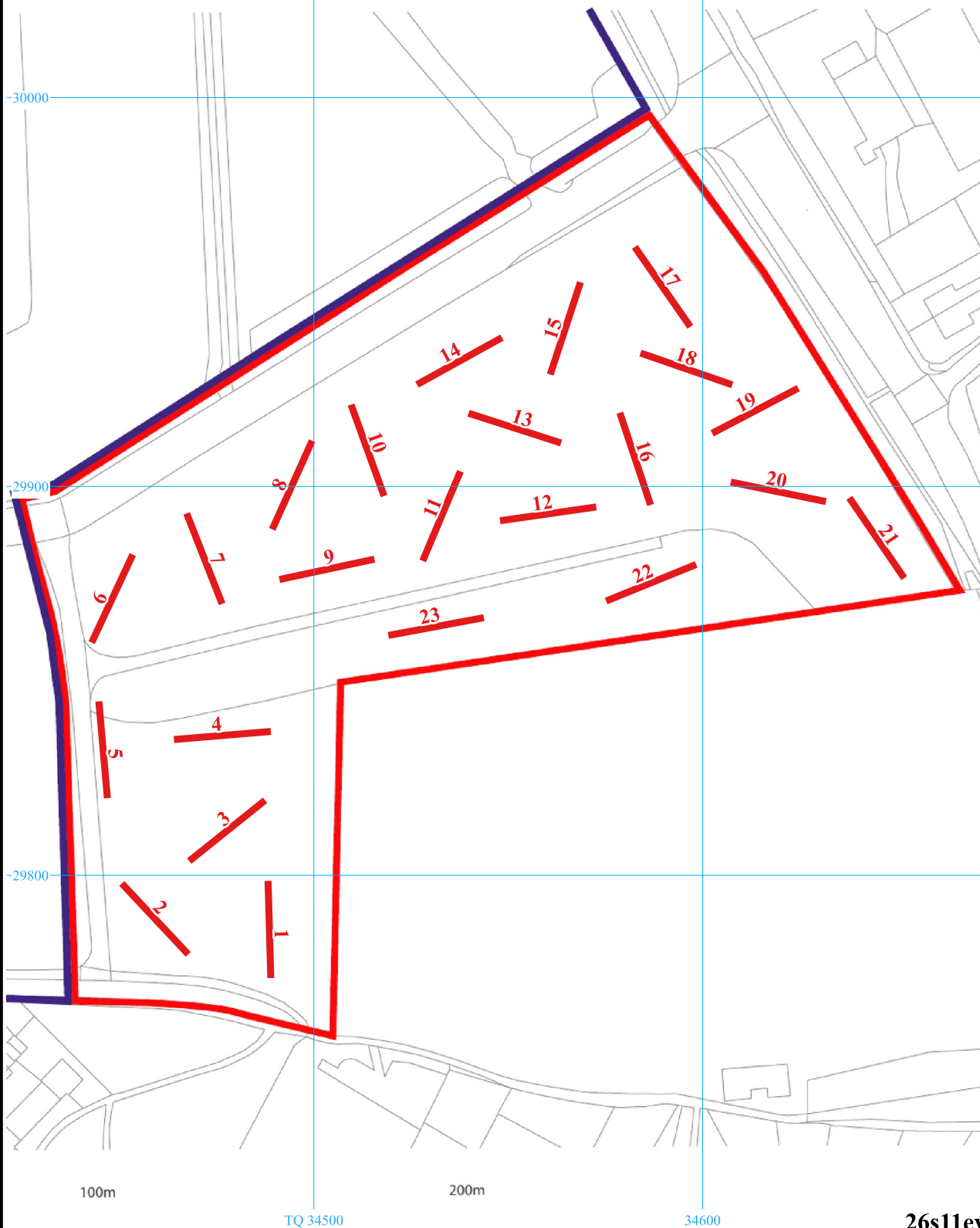
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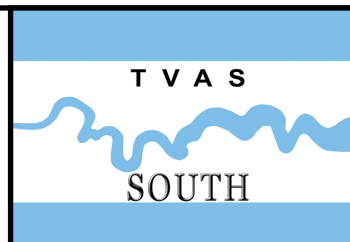
**Selsfield Road,
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Proposal for an Archaeological Evaluation
 Figure 1. Location of site within Ardingly and West Sussex.

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**Selsfield Road,
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 Figure 2. Site Location Plan with Proposed Trench Locations



Selsfield Road, Ardingly, West Sussex

Data Management Plan

Project ref: 26s11ev

Author: Tim Dawson

Created 10th September 2025

Last updated: 14th July 2026

1. Introduction

This Data Management Plan has been prepared by the TVAS Management Team including the editor and archive coordinator, and is subject to review every two years or in response to changes in legislation or working procedures. Changes will be communicated to the relevant staff via memo/digital comms, meetings, or via in house training. It has been prepared with reference to the relevant guidance presented by the Archaeological Data Service (ADS), CIfA *DigDigital DMP Checklist*, and *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives* (2014, updated 2020), and Historic England *Digital Image Capture and File Storage*.

2. Data Collection or creation

Type	Format
Text / documents	Excel (.xlsx) To be deposited in preservation format (.csv)
Spreadsheets	Word (.docx) PDF (.pdf/a)
Images	Graphics file (.jpg)
Drawings	CAD (dxf/FC7)
GIS	Shapefiles/geotiff/dxf
GPS	Shapefiles/dxf
Geophysics (geophysics projects only)	xcp/png/xyz

Data Standards / Methods

Standard methods of data collection will be applied throughout the project, working to best practice guidance where applicable/available. In general, data acquisition standards are defined against *ADS Guides to Good Practice*. Specific or additional guidance relevant to this project are listed below, and will be updated as the project progresses.

Methods of collection are specified within the WSI and will meet the requirement set out in the Project Brief and TVAS fieldwork manual.

Specific Guidance

- HE *Digital Image Capture and File Storage: Guidelines for Best Practice* 2015
- HES *Applied Digital Documentation in the Historic Environment* 2018
- EAC *Guidelines for the use of geophysics in archaeology* 2016

Data storage / file naming

The working project archive will be stored in a project specific folder or data specific folder on the internal organisational server. The internal organisation server is backed up weekly to maintain an up to date security copy of the organisation wide data.

Data collected will be downloaded as soon as possible after creation and raw data will be stored in the appropriate folder.

Project folders and files are named following established organisational procedures based on ADS file naming guidance and will include version control management.

Final versions of files will include FINAL within the file name.

Quality assurance

Instruments used in the collection of data are calibrated prior to use and checked to ensure they are in full working order.

All site records and data collected will be reviewed on completion of fieldwork to ensure data is accurate and secure.

Data collection and management are reviewed regularly as part of the organisational Quality Assurance policies (Thames Valley Archaeological Services - Procedure Document for Quality Assurance 5th Edition, 2025)

3. Documentation and metadata

Data collected will include standard formats which maximise opportunities for use and reuse in the future.

A Collection Level Metadata Summary will be included in the project and will be finalised when the project is completed. A working copy will be kept on the TVAS server in the Project Folder. It will include a register of data types and number of objects included in the archive, along with all other archive components.

Data documentation will meet the requirement of the Project Brief, Museum Deposition Guidelines, Digital Repository Guidelines and the methodology described in the WSI.

4. Ethics and legal compliance- copyright and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) issues

All legal requirements will be followed and as guided by professional practice advice.

5. Data Security: Storage and Backup

All digital data created will be stored on the TVAS internal archive server which is backed up weekly using SynchBackSE software onto 6TB external hard drive. This is stored off site. Storage capacity is sufficient and regularly monitored.

6. Selection and Preservation

Data selection will be informed by the WSI, defined against the research aims, regional and national research frameworks, specialist advice and the significance of the project results.

Data that has been selected or that is required for the digital archive will be retained when the project is complete.

The archive will be prepared for deposition by the project team and the costs for the time needed for preparation, and the cost of deposition will be included in the project budget.

The digital archive will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service, which is a certified repository with Core Trust Seal.

The recipient Museum will be contacted during project initiation or according to their procedures and confirmed that the digital archive component should be deposited with a trusted digital repository.

It is considered that the digital archive for this project will be suitable for upload via ADS-Easy and therefore prior contact with ADS is not necessary.

Costing estimates will use the ADS Costing Calculator and sufficient resources to cover these costs, and to allow for the preparation of the archive, will be included in the project budget
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7. Data Sharing

A summary of the project will be included on the OASIS Index of Archaeological Investigation and will be updated as the project progresses.

A report is expected to be completed within 1 month of the completion of fieldwork and the final version will be supplied to the East Sussex HER digitally in PDF/A format.

The location(s) of the final Archaeological Archive will be added to OASIS when appropriate.
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The ADS will disseminate the digital elements of the Archaeological Archive online under a creative commons licence and the dataset will receive a unique identifier (DOI).

If restrictions on the sharing of any aspects of the project and its results are necessary, specific details, once agreed, will be included in an updated version of this DMP and documented in the Project collection metadata.
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8. Responsibilities

The project co-ordinator and project officer will be responsible for implementing the DMP.
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Data capture, and data quality is the responsibility of the project team, overseen by the project co-ordinator and relevant post-excavation officer.
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Metadata production is the responsibility of the project team overseen by the project officer and archives officer.

Storage of data in the field is the responsibility of the field team.

Once data is uploaded to the TVAS server, storage and back is managed by the relevant post-excavation officer.
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Data archiving is undertaken by the project team under the guidance of the archives officer, who is responsible for the transfer of the digital project archive to the designated repository.

Details of the project team can be found in the WSI.
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