



A Site-Specific Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation

**Walnut Marches, Crawley Down Road,
Felbridge, East Grinstead,
RH19 2PS**

**Planning Ref: DM/23/0990
Mid Sussex District Council**

**National Grid Reference:
536096, 139220**

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1. Introduction and planning background

In December 2024 Aldington & Romney Archaeology was instructed by Duaris Building Contractors to prepare this document and undertake the evaluation. This WSI has been prepared prior to the demolition of the existing dwelling and erection of six 4-bedroom dwellings with associated access, landscaping, garaging and parking (Planning Reference DM/23/0990).

Condition 12 of the planning consent states:

(i) No development or preliminary groundworks of any kind shall take place until a programme of archaeological investigation has been secured in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

(ii) No development or preliminary groundworks of any kind shall take place until the completion of the programme of archaeological investigation identified in the Written Scheme of Investigation defined in (i) above.

(iii) The applicant will submit to the local planning authority a post excavation assessment (to be completed within six months of the fieldwork, unless otherwise agreed with the Planning Authority). This will result in the completion of post excavation analysis, preparation of a full site archive and report ready for deposition at the local museum, and submission of a publication report.

Reason: In the interest of archaeology and to accord with Policy DP34 of the District Plan and the NPPF.

The proposed programme of archaeological work will take the form of the mechanical excavation of six evaluation trenches (see indicative trench plan).

2. Site location and description

The development site (Figures 1 & 2) has an area of approximately 6000 square metres (0.60 hectares), centred on National Grid Reference TQ360392. The site is a roughly rectangular plot of land, lying immediately south of Crawley Down Road, and approximately 1.48 miles west of East Grinstead town centre. The site does not lie within a Conservation Area. However, the site lies approximately 186 metres north of Scheduled Monument 20006 (Figure 3 & Section 4.1)

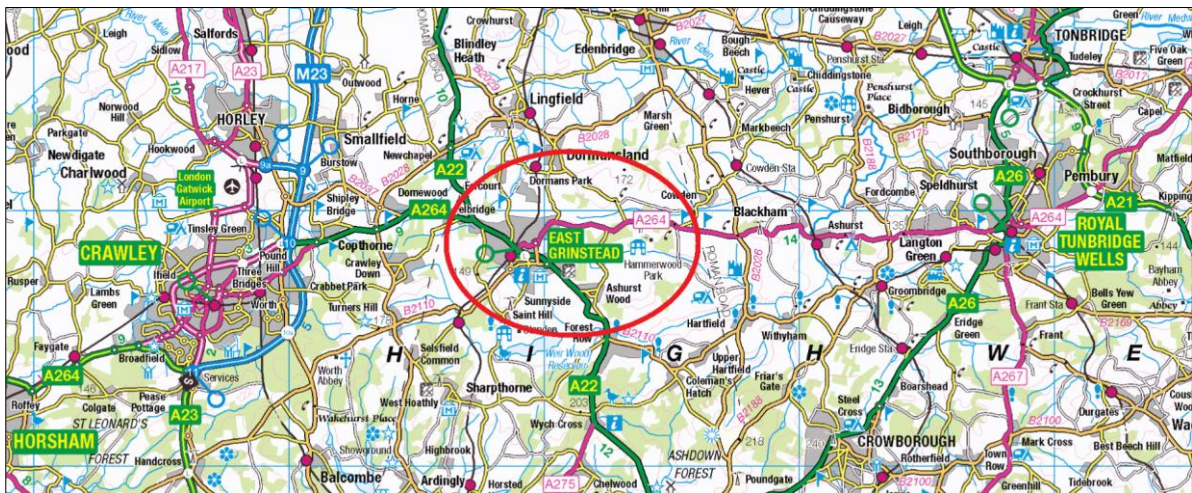


Figure 1. Site location.

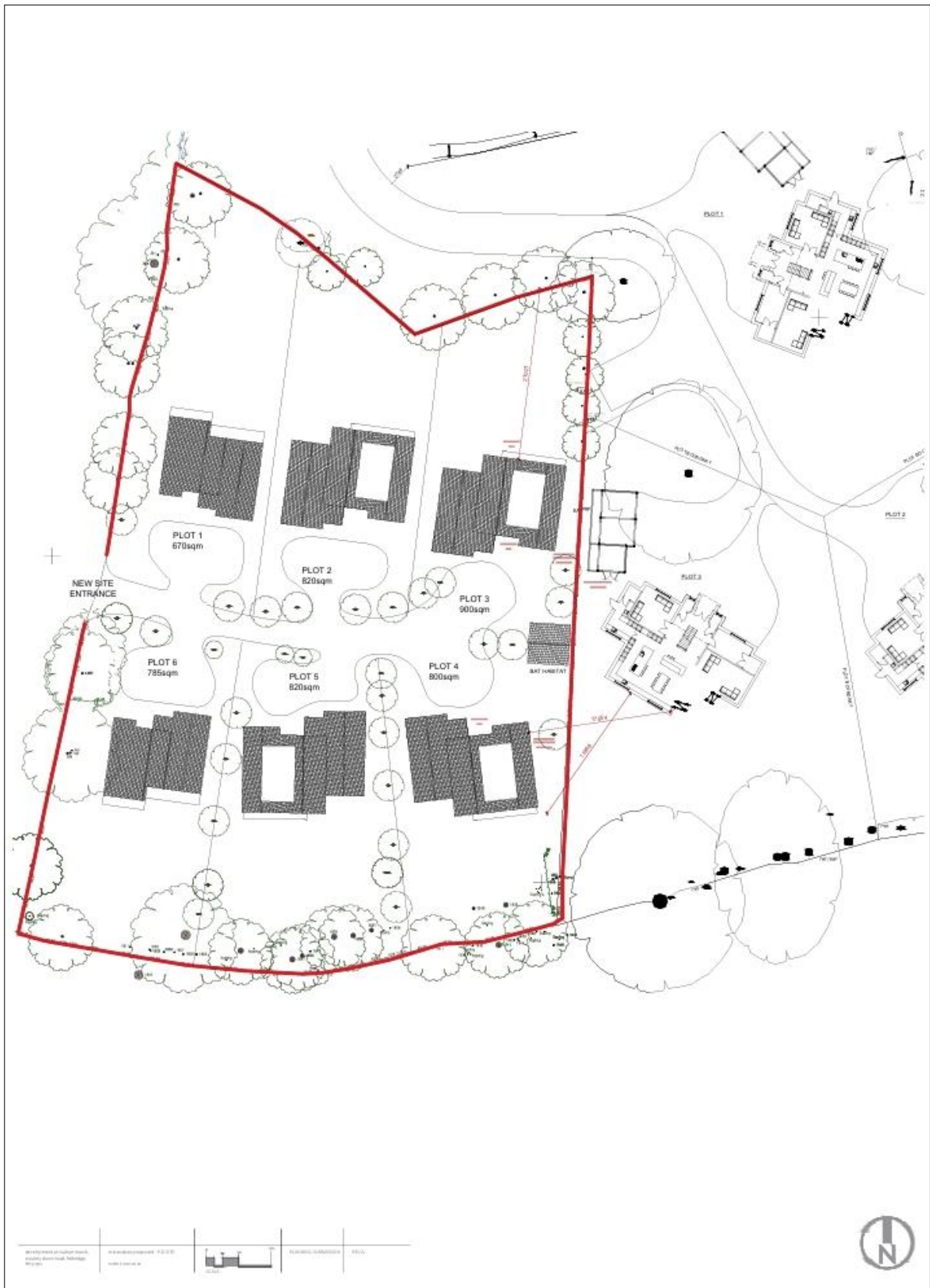


Figure 2. The site boundary.

3. Geology and topography

The British Geological Survey shows underlying bedrock geology throughout the site to be Upper Tunbridge Wells Sand - Sandstone and siltstone, formed between 139.4 and 133.9 million years ago during the Cretaceous period. (BGS 2024)

4. Archaeological and Historical Background

East Grinstead began life as a Saxon village. Its name means green place. The Hundred of East Grinstead is mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086, comprised of 12 individual villages.

During the 13th century, East Grinstead became a town. In 1247 the town was given a charter which confirmed the right to hold weekly markets. It also granted East Grinstead an annual fair, and from 1516 two annual fairs were held in the town. The High Street contains one of the longest continuous runs of 14th-century timber-framed buildings in England.

In 1556, during the reign of Queen Mary, three Protestants were martyred in East Grinstead.

The Greenwich Meridian runs through the grounds of the historic 1769 East Court mansion.

The town's subsequent prosperity was built on a thriving coaching business, utilising the town's location halfway between the capital and the coast. However, the Victorian period saw a dramatic decline in the town's fortunes, when the railway to the South Coast was routed through Three Bridges.

During the Second World War, the Queen Victoria Hospital developed a specialist burns unit led by Sir Archibald McIndoe. It became world-famous for pioneering treatment of RAF and allied aircrew who were badly burned or crushed, and required reconstructive plastic surgery. In 1941, patients of McIndoe who had undergone experimental reconstructive plastic surgery formed the Guinea Pig Club, which then became a support network for the aircrew and their family members.

4.1 West Sussex Historic Environment Record

A search made on the West Sussex Historic Environment Record (HER) in December 2024, within a radius of 500m around the proposal developed site, revealed 9 entries.

Prehistoric

There are no entries of this date contained within the search results.

Roman

Two possible bloomery sites were discovered in Felbridge in the 1980's by the Wealdon Iron Research Group (MWS997).

An evaluation and watching brief at Land East of Walnut Marches was conducted by Archaeology Southeast in 2019. A section of Roman road running north-northeast, which is presumed to have run between London and Brighton, was discovered in the southeast corner of the site (MWS15239).

Medieval

Possible site of a deserted medieval village at Felbridge (MWS3812).

Scheduled Monument 20006. Moated site at Felbridge. A largely waterfilled homestead moat on low lying wet ground on the south bank of Felbridge Water. It is comprised of two contiguous, roughly square enclosures contained by a bank along the north side (MWS3538).

Post Medieval

Lime kiln - Gibbshaven Farm (MWS7771).

West Kent Metal Detector Club had found 18th-20th century coins (including a 1792 George III gold quarter guinea in extremely good condition), 16th century brass buckle and a sword belt fitment (MWS8273).

Ascott's Farm has been identified as a Historic Farmstead dating to the 19th century (MWS9268).

Site of Farm Building Southwest of Little Gibbshaven identified as a historic farm dating to the 19th century - the farm has been demolished/destroyed (MWS10203).

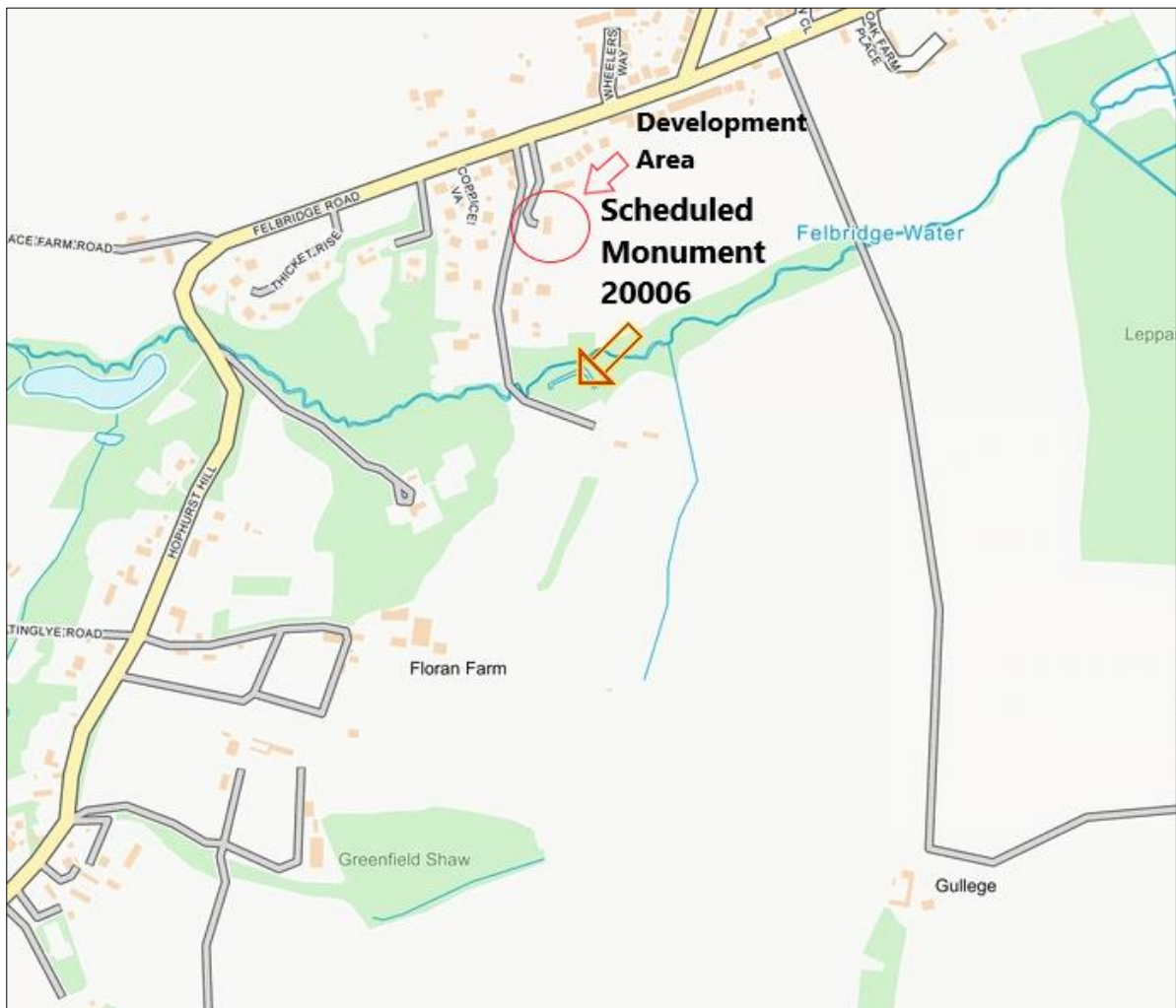


Figure 4. Location of Scheduled Monument 20006 in relation to the development area.

4.2 Previous Investigations

Smythford, Crawley Down. An excavation took place in 1980 to investigate a possible Roman Bloomery.

In 2008 MOLAS produced a DBA related to nearby Felbridge Nurseries.

An evaluation and watching brief took place on land east of Walnut Marches in 2019. This investigation resulted in the discovery of a Roman road which likely ran between London and Brighton.

5. Methodology

5.1. The Evaluation Trenching

In advance of any groundworks taking place associated with this development a series of evaluation trenches will be excavated in order to determine the nature, extent and date of any archaeological remains that may exist on the site. The trenches will cover an area of 4% of the areas to be impacted and will be positioned as indicated on the plan below (Figure 5). They will all be 2m wide and 20m long, with the machine excavation of the evaluation trenches to be carried out under constant archaeological direction by a suitably experienced archaeologist familiar with the ground conditions anticipated on the investigation site.

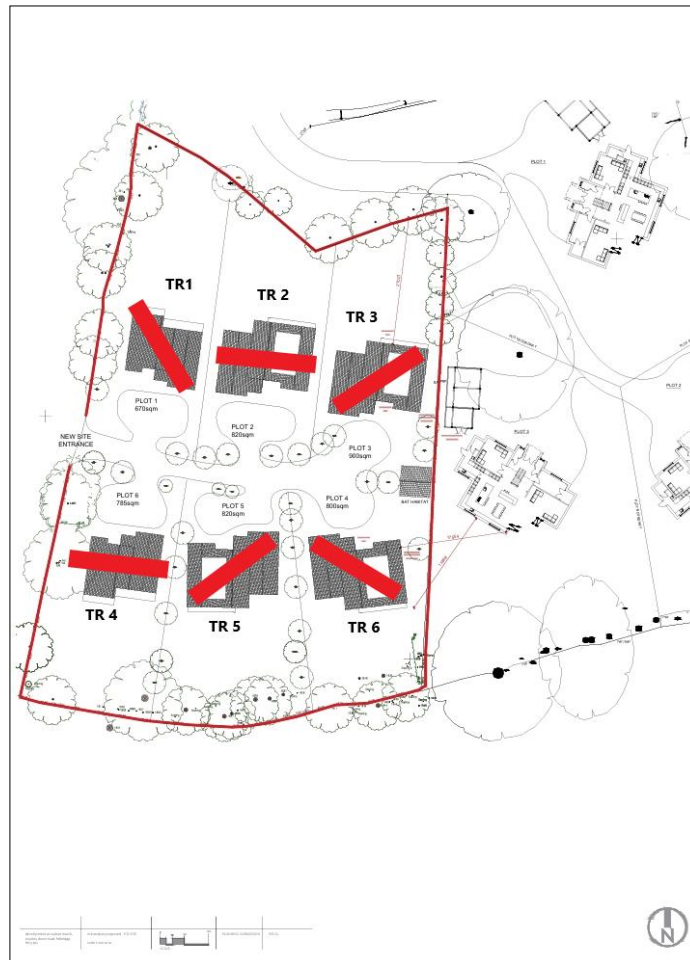


Figure 5. Indicative trench plan (please note that the trench positions may change if ecological conservation areas, deep-set hard-standing or live services are encountered)

5.1.2. All trenches will be excavated, using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket, to a depth equal to the top of the undisturbed geology, or until the surface of any archaeological deposits. Excavation of any archaeological deposits revealed will then be undertaken by hand by staff of Aldington & Romney Archaeology.

5.1.3. All exposed archaeological features within the trenches will be planned and recorded. A proportion of these features will then be partially excavated (a minimum of 50% of the total unless it is agreed in consultation with the WSCC Senior Archaeologist that a lesser percentage would be appropriate). Unless otherwise agreed with the WSCC Senior Archaeologist, "partial" excavation will normally be defined as: excavation of 1m to 2m-wide sections through linear cut features, at 10-metre intervals or totaling 10% of the length of the linear cut feature (whichever is the greater); half-sections of other discrete datable and ancient cut features.

5.1.4. Should no significant archaeological deposits be revealed within the excavated trenches, then no further on-site archaeological work will be undertaken in connection with this planning permission and upgrading works can proceed. However, should significant remains be encountered then additional trenching may be undertaken in those areas where they have been demonstrated to exist, upon agreement with the local planning authority. The area containing such significant archaeological remains will then be securely fenced off from the remainder of the site. Once the limits of such significant remains have been established then a supplementary WSI will be needed to set out further mitigation methods required relating to those remains, including potentially full excavation and recording where essential owing to unavoidable adverse impacts from the main development works. Where the limits of any significant archaeological deposits have been defined, upgrading works may proceed, with the agreement of the planning authority, providing the area of the deposits has been fenced off pending further mitigation measures.

5.2. Recording

5.2.1. Details of the nature, extent and date (where possible) of archaeological contexts will be recorded upon context sheets provided by Aldington & Romney Archaeology.

5.2.2. Measured drawings (plans normally at 1:20, sections normally at 1:10) will be made ensuring that each context recorded is shown in at least one section and/or plan, include at least one section of each individual feature excavated. All drawings will be accurately related to the Ordnance Survey National Grid.

5.2.3. Levels will be taken ensuring that each context recorded can be related to Ordnance Datum.

5.2.4. Digital photographs will be taken, showing a suitable scale, ensuring that each context recorded is shown in at least one image.

5.3. Artefact Sampling

5.3.1. Artefacts will be retained where considered necessary in the light of their context and/or importance. Where artefacts are discarded a record will be kept of their quantity and nature.

5.3.2. All artefacts recovered during the excavation will be processed according to current UKIC/Rescue guidelines as set out in First Aid for Finds, 1998, and to the standards of the museum with which they will be deposited.

5.3.3. All retained artefacts will be quantified by number and where appropriate by weight.

5.3.4. All retained artefacts, except those excluded on the grounds of size/material, will be marked with the site code.

5.3.5. All retained artefacts will be bagged and boxed in containers

approved by the museum and sympathetic to their condition.

5.3.6. In cases where a more detailed analysis and/or conservation of finds is required for the understanding of individual contexts and the site as a whole, this will be carried out by qualified specialist Dr Barbara McNee.

5.3.7. In carrying out post-excavation work and analysis of pottery from the site, the pottery specialist Dr Barbara McNee will liaise with the Research Officer of the Sussex Archaeological Society with a view to ensuring a concordance between fabric type descriptions of ceramics from this site and those employed on other recently excavated sites in the area and those commonly employed elsewhere in Sussex.

5.4. Environmental Sampling

5.4.1. The project archive will be prepared according to the standards set out in the following documents:

- English Heritage's MoRPHE Project Planning Note 3: Archaeological Excavation. Appendix 1.
- Institute of Field Archaeologists' Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation.
- Sussex Archaeological Standards (ESCC 2019)

5.4.2. The project archive, subject to the landowner's permission, shall be deposited with a publicly accessible repository suitable to its nature and size. If relevant an accession number will be obtained from that repository. Should the archive consist solely of paperwork, then it will be deposited with the West Sussex Record Office.

5.5. Reporting

5.5.1. Within six weeks of the completion of the evaluation, a summary report will be produced and submitted to WSCC.

5.5.2. At the conclusion of all the archaeological work associated with this project a full and final report will be written on the excavations detailing what was found, with appropriate illustrations, and analysing the remains in relation to the stated aims of the project, according to the standards set out in the following documents:

- English Heritage's MoRPHE Project Planning Note 3: Archaeological Excavation.
- Institute of Field Archaeologists' Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation.
- Sussex Archaeological Standards (ESCC 2019)

5.5.3. Copies of this report will be given to the client and West Sussex County Council's Historic Environment Record and County Archaeologist. Also, an OASIS entry into the HER will be completed, as well as the digital archive being made available through The Archaeology Data Service.

5.5.4. Should the results merit wider dissemination then contact will be made with local archaeological groups to inform them of any findings of local, regional or national significance, and if feasible to also enable a site visit to view the archaeological deposits within the excavated trenches.

5.5.5. Should any remains discovered as part of this project be of local, regional or national importance then further dissemination may be necessary, with a presumption that the findings will be fully reported and published, the recommended medium being Sussex Archaeological Collections.

5.6. Monitoring

5.6.1. The project will be monitored by the WSCC County Archaeologist, who will ensure that the aims and methodology laid out in this document are met.