

Brook Farm, Cuckfield, West Sussex

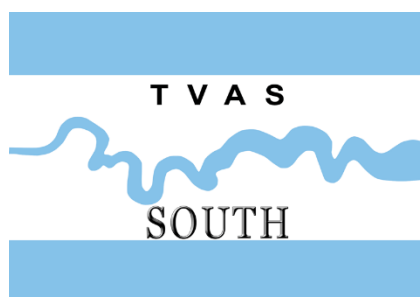
Project specification for an archaeological watching brief

Planning reference: DM/22/2141

Grid reference: TQ 30528 26572

Mark Learey

4th July 2025



Ref: 24s79wb

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Brook Farm, Cuckfield, West Sussex

Project specification for archaeological watching brief

1.1 Introduction

- 1.2 The development site is located on the west side of Brook Street, a small rural hamlet c.1.5km north of Cuckfield and north-west of Haywards Heath, West Sussex (TQ 30528 26572) (Fig. 1). It sits within a parcel of land containing two Grade II listed buildings: the main house and an agricultural barn to the north (Fig.2). The barn is the subject of this watching brief and it sits within a red line area of c.650m sq.
- 1.3 The surrounding landscape is mostly agricultural land, with tributaries of the River Ouze crossing in close proximity. The site lies at approximately 70m above Ordnance Datum and the underlying bedrock geology is Wadhurst Clay Formation – Mudstone (BGS 1972).
- 1.4 The site does not lie within a Conservation Area, Archaeological Notification Area, Registered Battlefield or Registered Park/Garden, however it is within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 1.5 TVAS South has been commissioned by Ms Rebecca Kinneavy of BakerBrown, Cooksbridge Station House, Cooksbridge, East Sussex, BN8 4SW, on behalf of the clients, Mr and Mrs Candler, to carry out the necessary archaeological work in respect of the site.

2.0 Planning Background

- 2.1 Planning permission (DM/22/2141) has been gained from Mid-Sussex District Council to convert the Grade II listed outbuilding into residential accommodation as a single two-bedroom dwelling, with new openings, upgraded insulation and new weatherboarding, and to amend the landscape to form a sunken private terrace (see Figs. 3 and 4).
- 2.2 The consent is subject to a planning condition (14) which states:

14) 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 to be submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the local planning authority.
- 2.3 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 watching brief in accordance with guidance set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2023), the *Sussex Archaeological Standards* (ESCC 2019), the Council's policies on archaeology and the historic environment, and other relevant guidelines issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2022, 2023a; 2023b).
- 2.4 Fieldwork is to take place according to a Written Scheme of Investigation ("WSI", this document) approved by the District Council, following consultation with the Essex County Council Archaeological Officer, advisor to Mid-Sussex District Council ("the Archaeological Advisor").

3.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 3.1 The archaeological potential of the site has been considered in a desk-based Heritage Statement (ASL 2022a) and a Historic Building Record (ASL 2022b). In summary, Brook Street is believed to have Saxon origins. It contains some sixty dwellings, many of which are listed timber-framed structures dating back to the 16th century. The development site contains an early-mid 18th century timber-framed

stable with a later timber-framed “granary.” An open-fronted animal shelter was added to the west side of the stable in the late 18th-early 19th century. Parts of it are currently used as storage while other parts are empty. The surrounding farmyard shows signs of landscaping and foundations for the structures may have truncated the earlier archaeological horizon.

- 3.2 The nearby village of Cuckfield is not mentioned in the Domesday Book (Williams and Martin 2002). There is nevertheless a Norman church present although its origins may be earlier. Cuckfield was central to local iron industry during Tudor times. Archaeological investigation of the pre-urban historic town remains somewhat lacking, with only a few minor grey literature assessments recorded. Prehistory is represented by a single Neolithic leaf-shaped arrowhead found at Wealdacre, Courtmead Road in 1924, and worked flint findspots are recorded within a kilometre of the town, to the south and southwest (Harris 2005).

4.0 Aims and Objectives

The aims of the project are:

- 4.1 To monitor **all groundworks below existing ground level associated with the development** in order to ensure that any deposits and features, artefacts and ecofacts of archaeological interest are recorded, sampled and interpreted to appropriate standards, thus ensuring preservation by record;
- 4.2 To assess the potential and significance of any such deposits located according to the research priorities such as set out in *Historic England Research Agenda* (HE 2017). Research priorities set out in the *South-East Research Framework Resources Assessment and Research Agenda* (SERFA 2019) also suggest topics ripe for further study. For example, does the land-use pattern of the site mask evidence of earlier settlement? Can we deepen our understanding of the Tudor period iron industry in the region? Is it possible to refine typological series for locally-produced artefacts? Do rural development patterns significantly differentiate identity within the Weald from without?;
- 4.3 To maintain an archive of the site and to disseminate the results of the work, via grey literature reporting and full publication if appropriate, with a view to assessing its implications and potential to inform archaeological research frameworks in the future;
- 4.4 To capitalise any opportunities for community engagement that may arise from the project. Although it would be impractical to allow public access to the site during the works, the outputs of the project may for instance prove suitable for display in a local exhibition or for presentation in a relevant lecture.

Accordingly, the site-specific research objectives are:

- 4.5 To determine if archaeologically relevant levels and deposits of any period have survived;
- 4.6 To determine if archaeological remains relating to the development of medieval Brook Street are present and to assess their potential for further research, including how they might increase our understanding of local and national conditions during the medieval to early modern transition;
- 4.7 To identify any prehistoric and post-medieval remains and to consider their regional and national significance within the wider research corpus.

5.0 Methodology

- 5.1 The works are intended to restore and preserve the historic original elements whilst bringing the building back into formal use. In summary, they comprise: converting the Grade II listed outbuilding into residential accommodation as a single two-bedroom, three-person dwelling; rebuilding the stable's lean-to element as a like for like massing replacement, with new openings, upgraded insulation and new weatherboarding; amending the landscape to form a sunken private terrace (Figs. 3 and 4). The scheme strategy is to retain as much of the existing/ original timber structure as possible, preserving the most significant historic fabric (BakerBrown 2022).

- 5.2 Groundworks associated with the scheme have the potential to expose the earlier archaeological horizon. Conversion of the stable requires excavation to c0.4m to allow the removal and replacement of existing masonry plinth walls and a broken slab. The lean-to will be rebuilt with the existing piers lowered slightly and the existing masonry plinth walls of the cart shed will be removed and rebuilt on new foundations. Accordingly, no below ground excavation, ground reduction or other groundworks shall take place unless the Monitoring Archaeologist is present. Groundworks will utilise a combination of hand tools and a tracked 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket where practicable.
- 5.3 Archaeological deposits that may be compromised by the groundworks will be excavated and recorded to industry standards in line with Section 3 of the Sussex Archaeological Standards (ESCC 2019) and other relevant guidelines issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2022, 2023a; 2023b). In general, and where health and safety considerations allow, this will entail cleaning, hand-digging, recording and planning sufficient of each feature to full depth to obtain a good indication of its date and function and satisfy the project's research aims. The sampling of features exceeding acceptable depths for safety considerations will be discussed further with the Archaeological Advisor. Sufficient time will be allowed to carry this out within the groundworkers' schedule.
- 5.4 All practicable steps will be taken to prevent danger to any person, in line with The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (UK Statutory Instrument 2015), with specific reference to section 22 (Excavation) contained therein, and the site-specific RAMS.
- 5.5 In general, all finds and artefacts will be retained. However, all but a sample of some classes of building material will be discarded after recording. The categories of artefacts to be discarded will be discussed with the Archaeological Advisor and the recipient museum, with reference to CIfA guidelines (CIfA 2020; CIfA 2022).
- 5.6 Conservation on site will follow guidelines in 'First Aid for Finds' (Watkinson 1998) with any other specialist conservation work subcontracted to our conservation advisor (see below).
- 5.7 A programme of environmental sampling will take place should sufficient well stratified subsoil deposits be located. Typically, this involves collecting samples of up to 40 litres, depending on the size of the feature examined. A programme of environmental sampling will take place if any significant deposits are encountered. These will be sampled following the guidance of our environmental consultants, and in consultation with the Archaeological Advisor. Sampling will take place according to Historic England guidance (HE2015b).
- 5.8 Discovery of any human remains will be reported to the coroner and will be excavated following guidelines issued by the Ministry of Justice. Recovery and recording methodologies for human remains follow standard procedures identified by Mitchell and Brickley (2017) and TVAS Field Recording Manual (9th edition 2021). Any human bone recovered of archaeological significance will be deposited with an approved Museum and will not be reinterred.
- 5.9 All gold and silver, prehistoric base metal and associated objects will be removed to a safe place and reported to the local coroner and East Sussex County Finds Liaison Officer according to the procedures relating to the Treasure Act (1996) and its subsequent amendments. Where removal cannot be affected 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.
- 5.10 Where significant finds are made which could not have been reasonably expected and which are beyond the resources of the watching brief to record adequately, all work will cease and the Archaeological Advisor will be consulted to agree what action should be taken. It may be necessary to fully excavate certain features. Any further archaeological work required will be conducted by a suitably qualified and experienced Project Officer.
- 5.11 TVAS shall liaise effectively with the Archaeological Advisor throughout the project to ensure that the programme of archaeological work is implemented and inspected in full in accordance with the planning

conditions and this WSI. Any significant variations to the works set out in the approved WSI will be agreed in writing with the Archaeological Advisor prior to commencement or at the earliest opportunity once any constraints have been identified.

6.0 Recording Methodology

- 6.1 A single context recording system will be used in accordance with the TVAS Field Recording Manual (TVAS 2021). Descriptions of individual deposits and features will be recorded on pro-forma context recording sheets. All recording shall follow established industry standards and be undertaken in line with Section 3, Annexes B, C, D, E, F and G of the Sussex Archaeological Standards 2019 (ESCC 2019).
- 6.2 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.
- 6.3 Heights above Ordnance Datum will be taken and recorded on plans and sections.
- 6.4 The locations of excavations, archaeological features, and of all plans and sections will be tied into the National Grid, using data surveyed with a Trimble GeoExplorer 6000 series GPS.
- 6.5 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.

7.0 Post-fieldwork

- 7.1 The completion of fieldwork shall be confirmed in writing to the Archaeological Advisor within 10 working days (or period as agreed) along with a brief written summary of the findings, together with plans showing the site location, any revealed archaeological features and/or relevant standing structures.
- 7.2 Finds assessment and 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), Annex H of the Sussex Archaeological Standards 2019 and established TVAS post-excavation procedures (TVAS 2013).
- 7.3 Artefacts/ecofacts will be cleaned, conserved, labelled and prepared for long term museum storage in accordance with industry standards and in consultation with the recipient museum. Iron objects will be x-rayed as part of this process where necessary.
- 7.4 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.
- 7.5 Specialist analysis and reporting will be carried out by the following specialist staff or consultants as appropriate:-

Pottery Specialist	(from) Dr Jane Timby, Ms Sue Anderson, Mr. Luke Barber, Dr Barbara McNee, Mr Scott Martin (consultants) or Dr Cristina Mateos-Leal (TVAS)
Environment (general)	Professor Mark Robinson (Oxford University) or Ms Rosalind McKenna (consultant)
Brick and Tile	Ms Danielle Milbank (TVAS)

Carbonised botanical remains	Professor Mark Robinson (Oxford University) or Ms Rosalind McKenna (consultant)
Faunal remains	Dr Matilda Holmes (consultants), Ms. Harriet Wright or Dr Ceri Falys (TVAS)
Struck flint	Dr Steve Ford (TVAS)
Human remains	Dr Ceri Falys (TVAS)
Coins	Dr Pierre Manisse (TVAS)
Metalwork	Dr Robin Taylor (consultant) or Ms Sophie Peng (TVAS)
Pollen	Quest, (Reading University)
Wood	Ms Rosalind McKenna, (consultant) or Mr. Michael Bamforth (consultant)
Slag	Dr David Dungworth or Mr Luke Barber (consultants)
Archaeomagnetism	Bradford University
Radiocarbon dating	Queens University, Belfast
Conservation	Wiltshire County Council Heritage Centre

8.0 Report and Dissemination

- 8.1 A report on the results of the fieldwork should be available within two-three weeks following completion of the fieldwork.
- 8.2 The report will be formatted in line with MoRPHE (Historic England 2015a) and Section 4 and Appendix 1 of Sussex Archaeological Standards 2019. It shall comprise a descriptive text, illustrations and catalogues in appendices as appropriate.
- 8.3 The text will address the aims and objectives of the project, 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.
- 8.4 The report will include a front sheet providing the following information:
 - Site name
 - Grid reference
 - Site activity (watching brief)
 - Date and duration of project
 - Site code
 - Area of site
 - Summary of results
 - Monuments identified (referenced to the RCHME Thesaurus of Monument Types)
 - Location and reference of archive

8.5 The illustrations will include:

- A site location plan
- A plan of archaeological deposits
- Profiles/sections of excavated features

8.6 Any findings of academic merit will be published as a note in an appropriate journal such as *Sussex Archaeological Collections*.

8.7 A hard copy of the final report will be included with the project archive. A hard copy of the report will also be sent to the HER and the West Sussex Record Office. A digital copy of the report in Archive Portable Document Format (PDF/A) and GIS shapefiles will be supplied on CD to the relevant HER. A digital copy of the report will also be provided to the OASIS project.

8.8 Non-published report(s) will be made available for inspection or download on the TVAS web site.

9.0 Archive Selection Strategy and Data Management Plan

9.1 An academic synthesis of the findings of the fieldwork will be presented as a report detailed above in section 8, addressing where appropriate regional research topics such as those presented in the *South-East Research Framework Resources Assessment and Research Agenda* (SERFA 2019). 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 9.2-9.5 (below).

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

9.3 The Barbican House Museum, Lewes is currently not accepting archaeological archives so a suitable alternative repository will be identified as soon as possible. Until a suitable repository is identified, TVAS will store the archive but may charge the client a fee for storage space. Digital archives will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service

9.4 With the consent of the landowner, the site finds will be deposited in The Barbican House Museum, Lewes or other such suitable repository if identified.

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

10.0 General Items

10.1 The project will be managed on a regular basis by a Member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists with an appropriate area of competence (S. Ford, D. Sanchez or A. Taylor). The fieldwork will be supervised and carried out by staff of other categories of membership of the CIFA upon clarification of the groundworks timetable. One component of work is proposed by means of the archaeological watching brief; however, further fieldwork may be required if deposits are encountered which cannot be preserved in situ.

10.2 The fieldwork and post-fieldwork will be monitored by the Archaeological Advisor and all reasonable access will be provided to the works. Any changes in the agreed project design will be discussed and agreed with the Archaeological Advisor before implementation. The Archaeological Advisor will be contacted both prior to work commencing on site, and during the fieldwork itself, to arrange one or more site monitoring visits if required.

- 10.3 The project will be carried out in accordance with the CIfA Standard and Guidance for archaeological monitoring and recording (CIfA 2023a; CIfA 2023b) and Code of Conduct (2022) and the quality control mechanisms set out in the TVAS fieldwork and post-fieldwork manuals.
- 10.4 Safe working practices will be adopted as set out in the TVAS health and safety manual and current health and safety standards will be adhered to.
- 10.5 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.

11.0 References

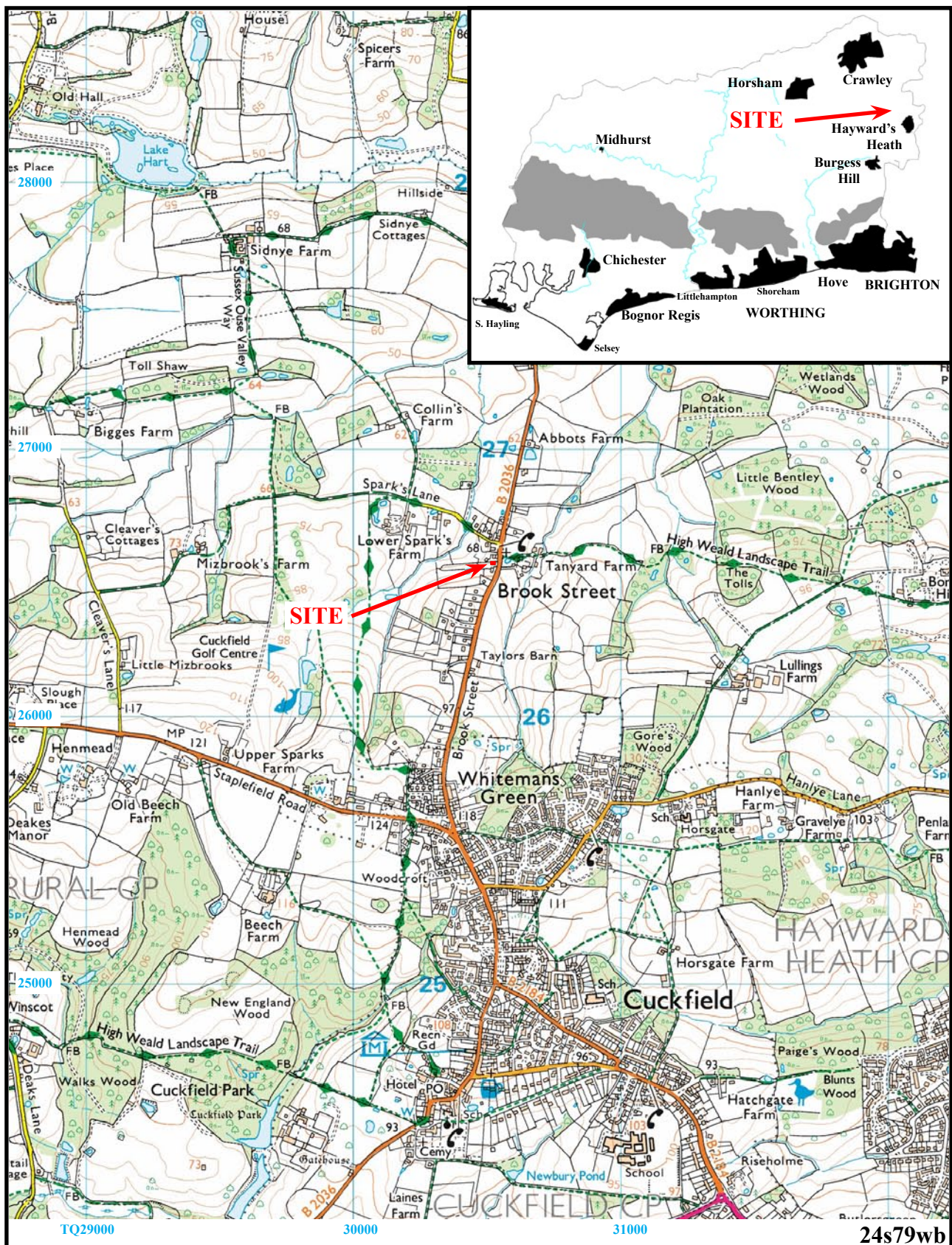
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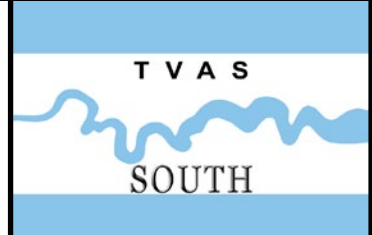
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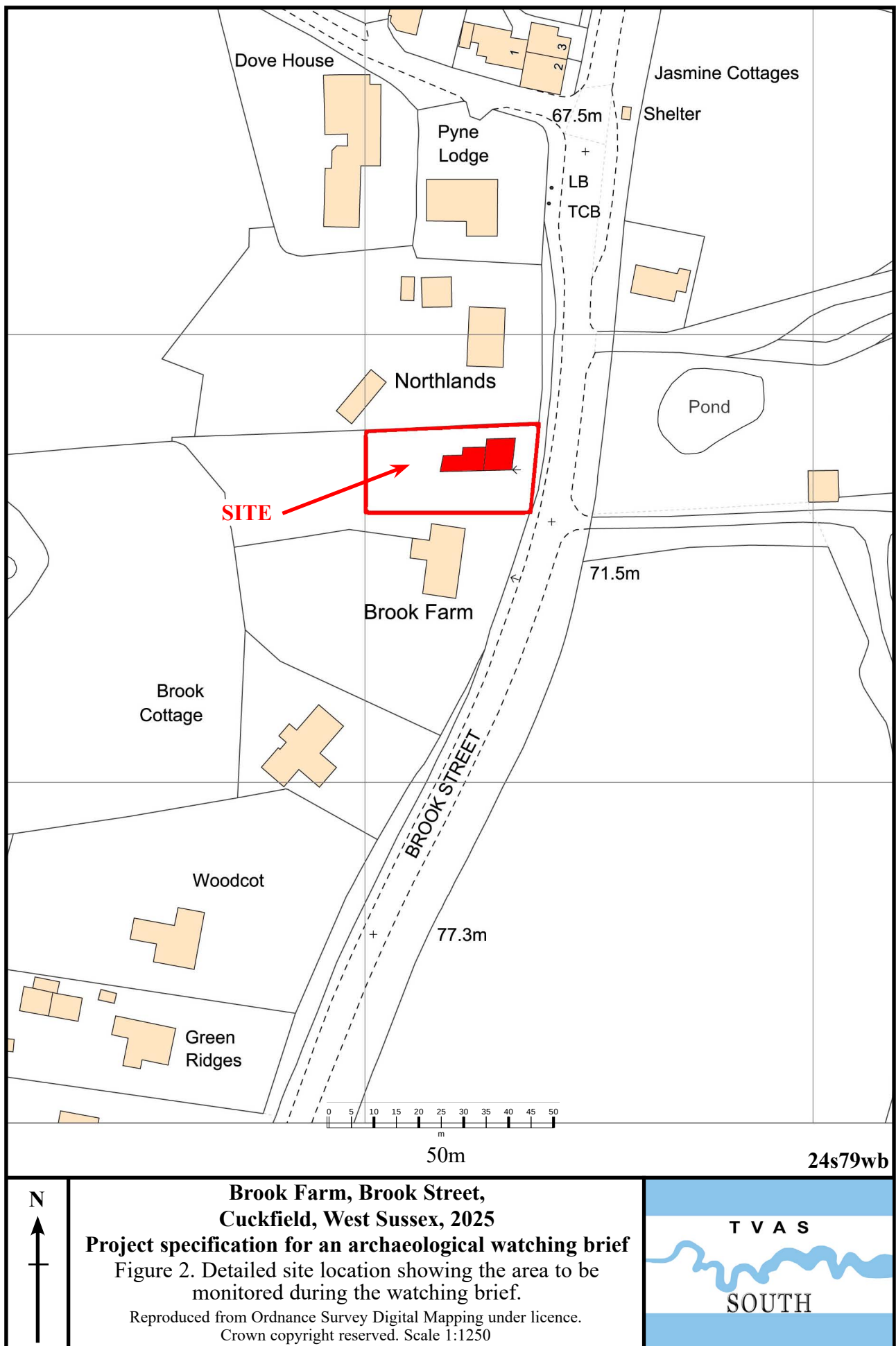
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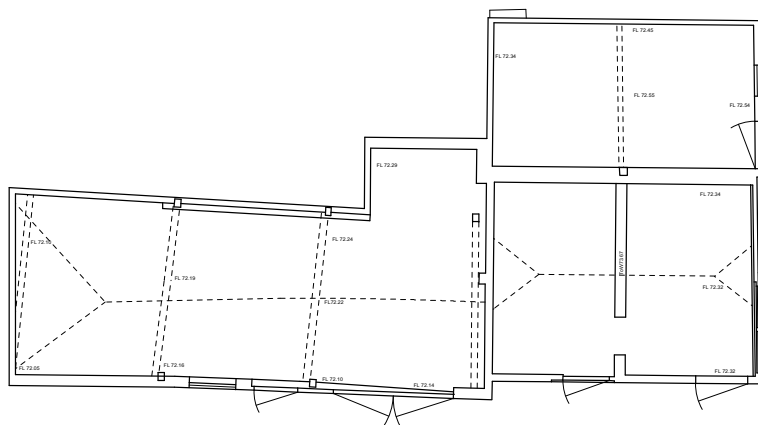


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Figure 1. Location of site within Cuckfield and West Sussex.

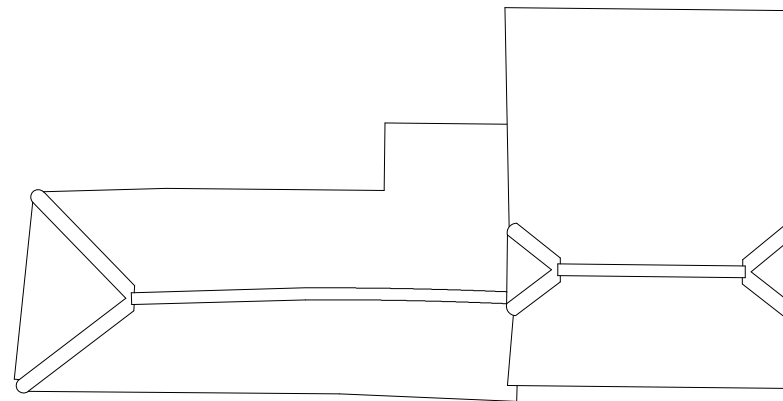
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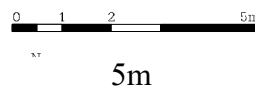




1 - Existing Ground Floor Plan - 1:100



2 - Existing Roof Plan - 1:100

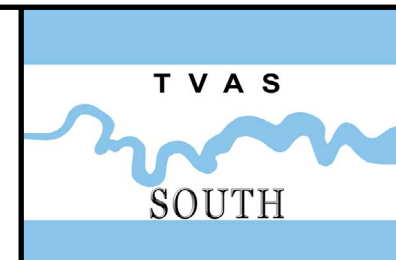


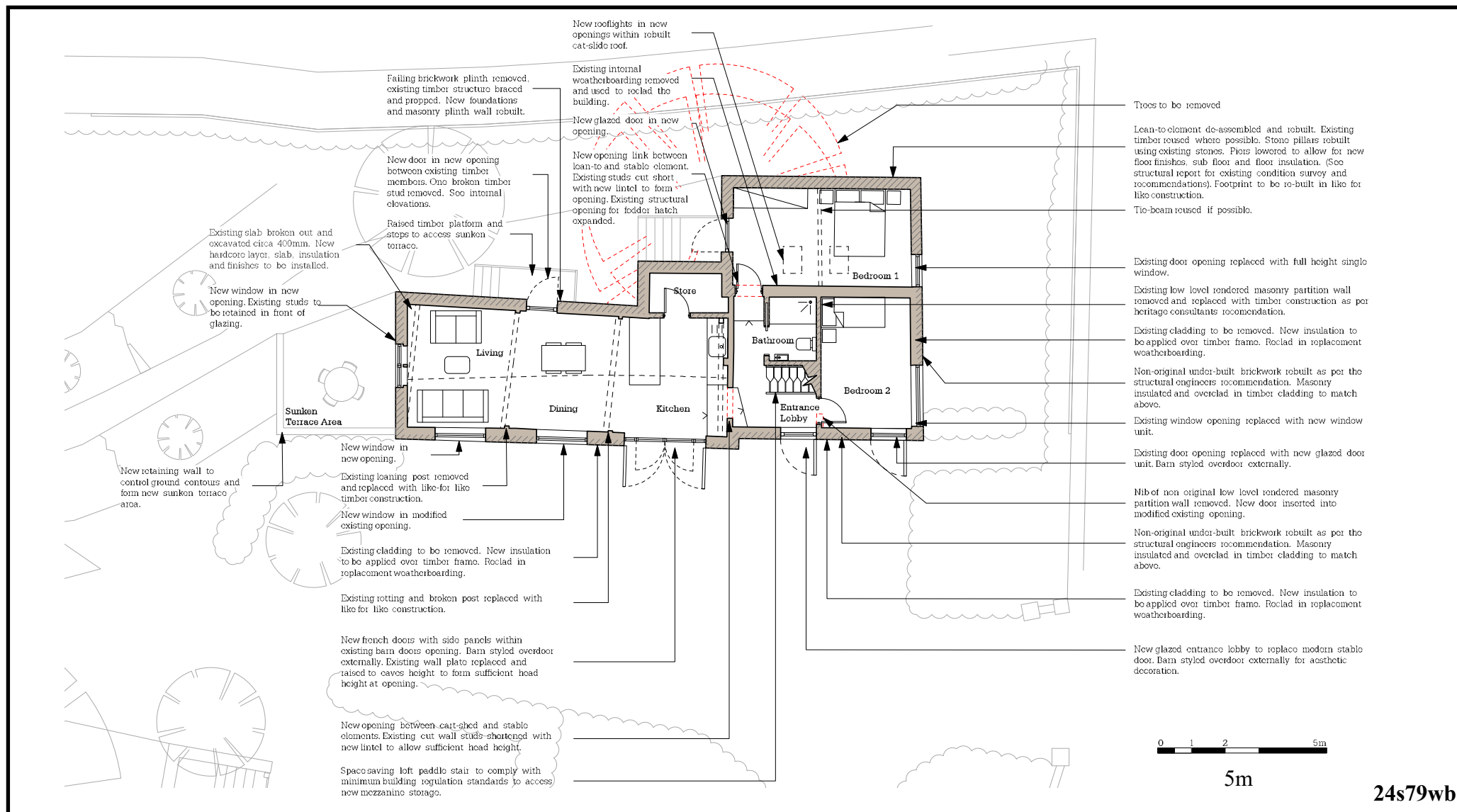
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**Brook Farm, Brook Street,
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Project specification for an archaeological watching brief
Figure 3. Existing Floor Plans

Reproduced from BakerBrown planning document 1490_BB_EX_0011__Existing Floor Plans





**Brook Farm, Brook Street,
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Project specification for an archaeological watching brief
Figure 4. Proposed Ground Floor Plan

Reproduced from BakerBrown planning document 1490_BB_PL_0110_Proposed Plan_Ground

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