

Land at Steyning Grammar School, West Sussex

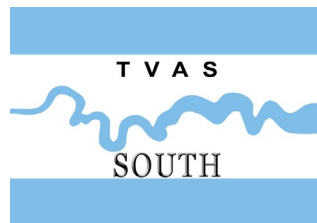
Project specification for an archaeological evaluation

Planning Reference: DC/26/0322

NGR: TQ 1752 1177

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Ref: 26s10ev

Land at Steyning School, West Sussex

Project specification for archaeological evaluation

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Planning permission (DC/26/0322) is being sought from Horsham District Council for the part-demolition of existing teaching buildings, MUGAs and all-weather pitch. Construction of replacement 2-storey and 3-storey teaching buildings, flood-lit all-weather pitch and hard surfaced sports courts, with associated access, parking, landscaping and infrastructure at Steyning Grammar Upper School School, West Sussex (TQ 1752 1177) (Fig. 1). Due to the potential for the disturbance or destruction of any surviving below ground archaeology a field evaluation has been requested, which shall take place in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) approved by the archaeological advisor to the council. This is in accordance with the *National Planning Policy* (NPPF 2025).
- 1.2 The archaeological potential of the site has been addressed in a desk-based assessment (Brindle and Green 2025), so in summary some prehistoric remains have been found within the vicinity of the site, though they are limited. 0.6km to the east Prehistoric worked flints were recovered, and just a bit closer to the sites boundary at 0.54km to the east a Bronze Age and Iron Age settlement has been recorded. The only evidence of Roman activity within the sites environs, is the recovery of a ballista bolt found at the Bronze Age to Iron settlement site.
- 1.3 For the Saxon period, there have been a number of both finds and sites recorded, to the east a site featuring rectangular features, pits, ditches and other evidence for built structures was found, and a Saxon farmstead comprising of two buildings and an enclosed boundary ditch was found 0.31km to the south east. Steyning is recorded within the Domesday Book, where it appears to be a substantial settlement, with two churches, four mills and 78 inhabitants. An additional settlement was also possibly present 0.58km to the southwest with a record of a deserted medieval village of Charlton Court. An assemblage of 12th-14th pottery has been identified in this area. The site lies in an area between the areas where built medieval remains have been found to the south and the area where agricultural activity is evidence to the north
- 1.4 A watching brief in the school ground (EWS1007) for new astro pitches recovered a small volume of medieval finds from topsoil but no features were identified.
- 1.5 The sites underlying geology is mapped as Gault Formation-Mudstone with overlying River Terrace Deposits, 2 (Adur)-Sand and gravel superficial deposits (BGS 1976). The site lies at a height of c. 13.6m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).

2.0 Requirement for work

- 2.1 As a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits on the site which may be damaged or destroyed by proposed re-development of the site, a field evaluation, has been requested. The request for fieldwork is as detailed in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2025), and the District Council's policies on archaeology, to determine the archaeological potential of the site and to help formulate a mitigation strategy as necessary
- 2.2 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, as will be determined through consultation with the archaeological advisors to the district. 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.

- 2.3 This is to take place according to a written scheme of investigation approved by the archaeological advisors to the District Council.

3.0 Aims and Objectives

The principal aims of the project are:

- 3.1.1 To determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological or palaeo-environmental deposits within the proposed area of development. 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 be better studied under conditions pertaining to full excavation;
- 3.1.2 To assess the potential and significance of any such deposits located according to research priorities set out in the *Historic England Research Agenda* (HE 2017) and the *South-East Research Framework Resources Assessment and Research Agenda* (SERF 2019);
- 3.3.1 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;
- 3.3.2 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 example, prove suitable for display in a local exhibition or presentation to a local history/heritage group.

Specific research aims of this project include:

- a) To determine if archaeologically relevant levels and deposits of any period have survived;
- b) To consider how we might improve our understanding of local identities, the economy and environment within both the regional and national research corpus;
- c) To assess how the evidence can contribute to regional research topics set out in the South-East Research Framework, such as:

Dynamics of the Iron Age/Romano-British transition; characterisation of rural settlement; evolution of craft, industry and domestic consumption (SERF: Roman)

Romano-British/Anglo-Saxon transition; rural settlement/village formation; technology, craft and rural production (SERF: Anglo-Saxon)

Landscape development of villages and other rural settlements; industry and trade (SERF: Medieval)

Further investigation of rural landscape and settlement; agriculture; economy; industry; leisure (SERF: Post-medieval, Modern and Industrial).

4.0 Methodology

- 4.1 We propose to dig 13 trenches, each being 1.6-1.8m wide and 25m long, in order to sample c.4% of the active site area.
- 4.2 The trenches will be located as close as possible to the positions shown on Figure 2-3. They will be positioned to target those parts of the site most affected by the development whilst avoiding known services and tree protection zones. Trenches may need to be slightly repositioned or split should previously unknown services

or obstructions be encountered. To prevent any potential damage, the machine will be kept well away from all trees, protected or not, and no excavation shall take place beneath their crowns.

- 4.3 A contingency of c.33m length of trench (10%), is included within the proposal should this be required to clarify any deposits found during the initial trenching. This would be decided in consultation with the Archaeological Adviser.

5.0 Excavation Methodology

- 5.1 Topsoil and any other overburden will be removed by a JCB-type or 360° machine fitted with a ditching (toothless) bucket under archaeological supervision. Topsoil will be kept separate from subsoil.
- 5.2 Where archaeological features are certainly or probably present, the stripped areas will be cleaned using appropriate hand tools
- 5.3 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.
- 5.4 In general, all finds and artefacts will be retained on-site. At the post-excavation stage (see 4.5 below) the collection policy of the recipient museum will be followed and which may involve the discarding of some classes of building material, such as brick and tile or flint nodules after recording with only a representative sample being retained.
- 5.5 Conservation on site will follow guidelines in First Aid for Finds with any other specialist conservation work subcontracted to the Contractor's conservation advisor (see below).
- 5.6 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. A programme of environmental sampling will take place, if any significant deposits are encountered. These will be sampled in consultation with the West Sussex County Archaeological Officer. Sampling will take place according to Historic England guidance (HE 2015b).
- 5.7 Discovery of any human remains will be reported to the Coroner and West Sussex County Archaeological Officer 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 West Sussex County Archaeological Officer. Any subsequent excavation of human remains will be carried out following receipt of the appropriate Ministry of Justice license and recording methodologies for human remains follow standard procedures identified by Mitchell and Brickley (2017).
- 5.8 Spoil heaps will be searched for finds.
- 5.9 Metal detectors will be used to enhance the recovery of metal finds as the overlying layers are removed. All gold and silver 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 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. Metal detectors will primarily be used to search hand excavated spoil, although site surveys may also be undertaken, with a log kept of any features surveyed and the results
- 5.10 Following completion of all excavation and recording, the trenches will be efficiently backfilled with any turf replaced last

6.0 Recording Methodology

- 6.1 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.
- 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 made by pencil on drafting film.
- 6.3 Heights above Ordnance Datum will be taken and recorded on plans and sections.
- 6.4 Where appropriate, significant finds will be recorded in 3D.
- 6.5 The locations of the trenches, and of all plans and sections, will be tied into the National Grid using a Trimble TDC6 survey unit with a Catalyst DA2 GNSS receiver, providing sub-decimetre accuracy.
- 6.6 The photographic record will be made using Canon EOS 4000D digital cameras with APS-C sensors taking 16-megapixel images. It will document the principal features and finds discovered, both in detail and in their general context, along with 'working shots' and, where applicable, aerial photographs to illustrate the nature of the archaeological fieldwork. All feature shots will include appropriate scales and a photo board containing the context number and site code, the latter positioned so that the writing is clearly legible.

7.0 Post-fieldwork

- 7.1 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 2015), ClfA guidance (ClfA 2020), the TVAS post-excavation procedures (6th edition 2013), TVAS Data Management Plan (2021)
- 7.2 Artefacts and ecofacts will be cleaned, conserved and prepared for long term museum storage.
- 7.3 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.
- 7.4 Specialist analysis and reporting will be carried out by the following specialist staff or consultants as appropriate:

Project Management	Dr. Steve Ford, Andy Taylor or David Sanchez
Fieldwork Supervisor	(from one of) Mr Andy Taylor, Mr. Jamie Williams, Dr Pierre Manisse, Mr Mark Learey, Ms Maisie Foster, Ms Beth Tucker, Ms Emily Gibson, Ms Sophie Peng
Post excavation	Mr Steve Preston
Finds coordination	Dr Cristina Matteos-Leal and Ms Katherine Fleckney
Pottery Specialist	(from) Dr Jane Timby, Ms Sue Anderson, Mr. Luke Barber, Dr Barbara McNee, Mr. Scott Martin (consultants) or Dr Cristina Matteos-Leal (TVAS)
Environment (general)	Professor Mark Robinson (Oxford University)
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) or Dr Ceri Falys (TVAS)
Struck flint	Dr Steve Ford (TVAS)
Human remains	Dr Ceri Falys (TVAS)
Coins	Dr Pierre Manisse (TVAS)
Metalwork	Ms Sophie Peng (TVAS) or Dr Robin Taylor (consultant)
Pollen	Quest, (Reading University)
Wood	Ms Rosalind McKenna or Mr Michael Bamforth (consultants)

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 three-four weeks following completion of the fieldwork.
- 8.2 The reports will follow the established TVAS format, comprising a descriptive text, illustrations and catalogues in appendices.
- 8.3 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.
- 8.4 The report will include a front sheet providing the following information:
- *Site name
 - *Planning application reference (where applicable)
 - *Grid reference
 - *Site activity (eg. evaluation, geophysical survey, fieldwalking, watching brief, excavation etc.)
 - *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:
- *Site location plan
 - *Trench layout plan
 - *Trench plans and sections
 - *Profiles/sections of excavated features
 - *A selection of colour photos of significant findings
- 8.6 Catalogues giving descriptions of trenches, archaeological features, artefacts and the composition of the archive will be contained in a series of appendices.
- 8.7 A completed HER form will be appended as an appendix.
- 8.8 Any findings of academic merit will be published as a note in an appropriate journal such as *Sussex Archaeological Collections*. Non-published report(s) will be made available for inspection or download online from the TVAS website.
- 8.9 Copies of the results will be supplied to the West Sussex HER in both digital (.pdf) and paper copy as necessary. A copy of the report will also be forwarded to the local planning authority in due course. A selection of digital images documenting the project will also be supplied to the HER if requested.
- 8.10 Information will be made available to interested local historical or archaeological societies, along with members of the local community, including the opportunity to visit the fieldwork should this be requested. This is in keeping with the requirements of the recent *National Planning Policy Framework*, although due to health and safety considerations, and the possible issue of commercial confidentiality, any dissemination of information or arranging of site visits will only take place following consultation with the client and the West Sussex County Archaeological Officer

9.0 Archive Selection Strategy and Data Management Plan

- 9.1 The finds and site archive will be prepared in accordance with guidelines in MoRPHE (HE 2015a), TVAS Digital Recording Policy (2021), CIfA guidance (CIfA 2020a) and after consultation with the recipient museum. Guidance produced by the Museum and Galleries Commission's Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections (1992), the Society of Museum Archaeologist's Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections (1993) and the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long term storage (1990) will be followed. The finds and site archive will be prepared in accordance with MoRPHE (HE 2015) and CIfA guidance (CIfA 2020) and after consultation with the identified recipient museum.
- 9.2 The site and finds archive will be deposited at a local museum willing to accept them and/or the Archaeology Data Service.
- 9.3 With the consent of the landowner, the site finds will be deposited with a local museum willing to accept the archive. The digital component of the archive will be managed according to TVAS digital archive and backup recording policies.
- 9.4 A digital version of the report will be provided by OASIS project.

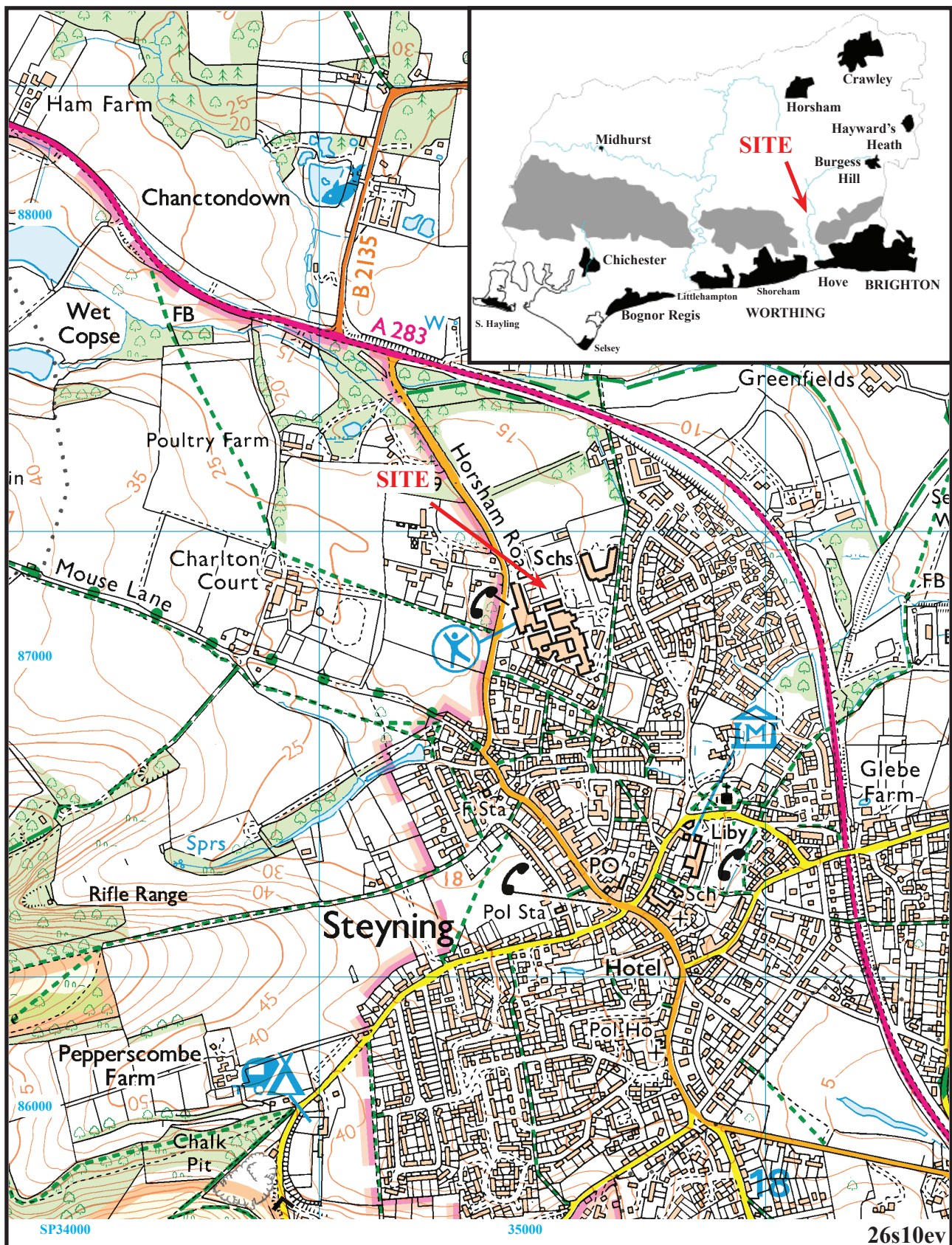
10.0 General Items

- 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.
- 10.2 The project will be carried out in accordance with the CIfA Standard and Guidance for archaeological evaluation (2023a; 2023b) and Code of Conduct (2022) and the quality control mechanisms set out in the Contractor's fieldwork and post-fieldwork manuals.
- 10.3 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.
- 10.4 TVAS will ensure that they have the relevant insurance cover (public liability, employee liability, cover for any hired-in plant, and professional indemnity cover).
- 10.5 The fieldwork and post-fieldwork will be monitored by the West Sussex County Archaeological Officer and all reasonable access will be provided to the works. Any changes in the agreed project design will be discussed and agreed with the West Sussex County Archaeological Officer before implementation.

11.0 References

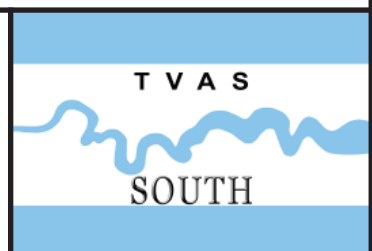
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**Land at Steyning Grammar School,
West Sussex, 2026**
Proposal for an Archaeological Evaluation
 Figure 1. Location of site within Steyning and West Sussex.

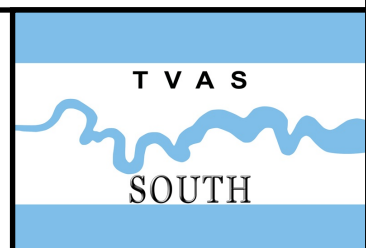
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Figure 2. Proposed development plan

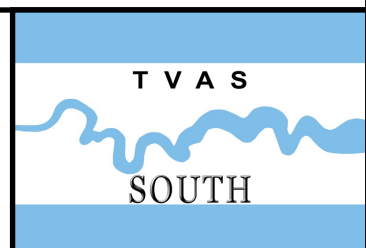


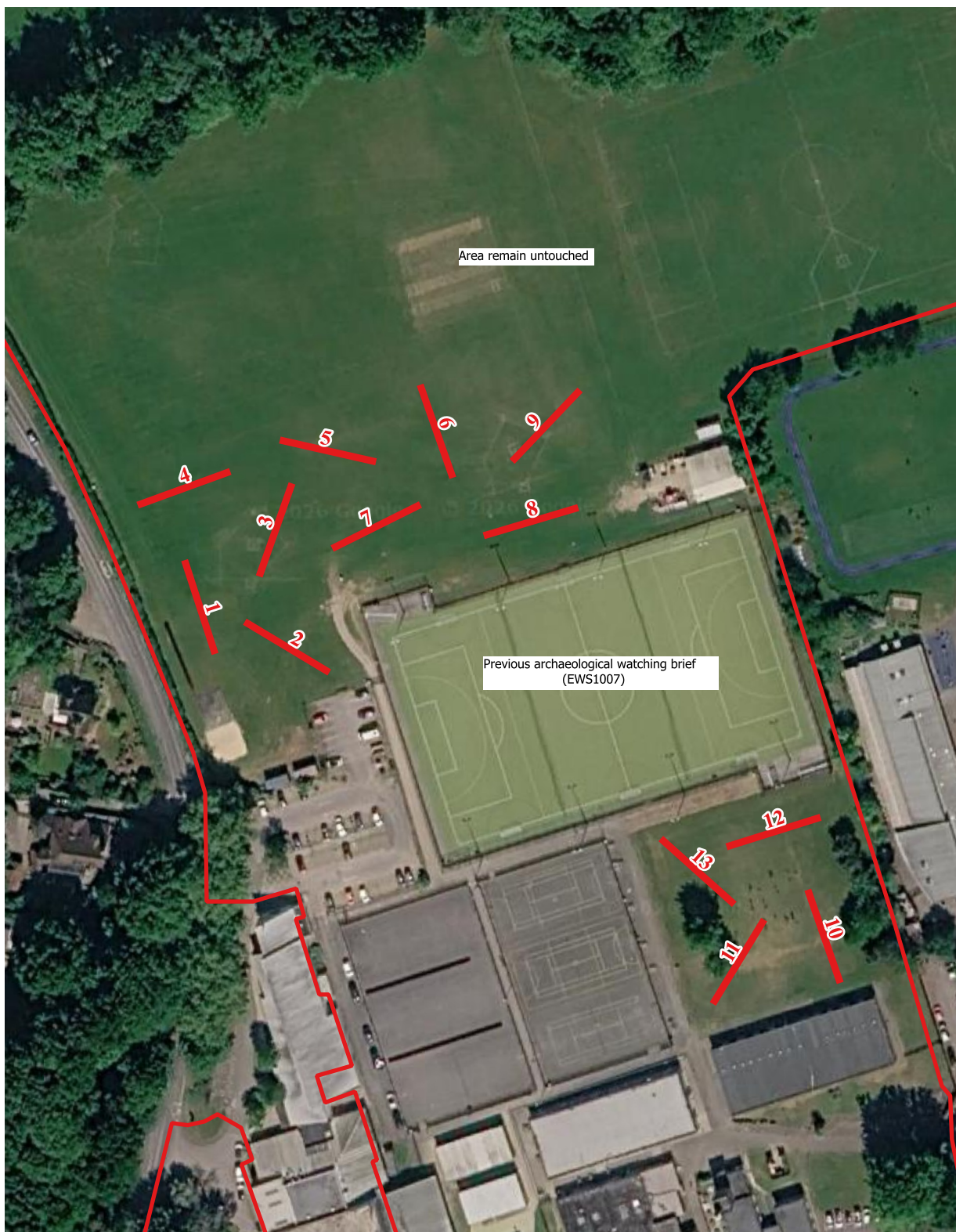


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Figure 3. Proposed trenches showing development plan.





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Figure 4. Proposed trenches showing existing available areas.

