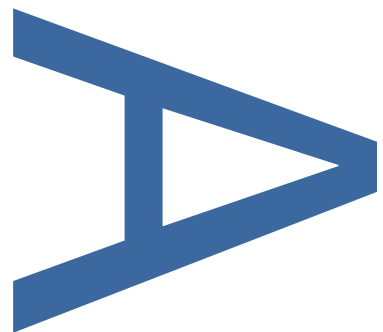
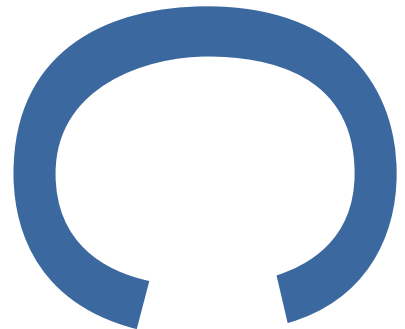


**EASTER COTTAGE,
THE CHASE,
KEMSING,
KENT,
TN15 6TP**

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
WATCHING BRIEF**

SITE CODE: KECK18

FEBRUARY 2019



PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY


DOCUMENT VERIFICATION

EASTER COTTAGE, THE CHASE, KEMSING, KENT, TN15 6TP

Type of project

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

Quality Control

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EASTER COTTAGE, THE CHASE, KEMSING, KENT TN15 6TP
AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

SITE CODE: KECK18

LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY: SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COUNCIL

CENTRAL NGR: TQ 54407 59078

PLANNING REFERENCE: 18/01771/FUL

WRITTEN BY: BRUCE FERGUSON, PCA

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FEBRUARY 2019

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1 ABSTRACT

- 1.1 This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief conducted by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited (PCA) on the site at Easter Cottage, The Chase, Kemsing, Kent, TN15 6 TP. The site is located within Sevenoaks District and is centred at National Grid Reference TQ 54407 59078.
- 1.2 The archaeological watching brief was conducted intermittently between 7th and 31st January 2019 during the groundworks on the site.
- 1.3 The site comprises rectangular plot of land formerly occupied by Easter Cottage, a single dwelling located on the north-eastern side of the junction of Highfield Road and The Chase.
- 1.4 Planning permission was granted for the erection of three detached dwellings with access, associated parking and landscaping.
- 1.5 The watching brief recorded top and sub soils over the underlaying West Melbury Marly Chalk Formation within the south-east area of the site (former garden), whilst a section of the central/north-western area of the site displayed significant modern disturbance down to the natural chalk, undoubtedly caused by the construction, landscaping, occupation and demolition of the former Easter Cottage building that occupied the site.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by PCA at Easter Cottage, The Chase, Kemsing, Kent, TN15 6TP (National Grid Reference TQ 54407 59078). The site is rectangular in plan and comprises the former Easter Cottage, garden and access area bounded northeast and southeast by residential properties, by Highfield Road to the southwest and The Chase to the north-west (Figures 1 & 2).
- 2.1 Planning permission was granted on 24th September 2018 to allow the demolition of Easter Cottage, associated outbuildings and the erection of three detached dwellings with associated access, parking and landscaping (Sevenoaks District Council Planning Ref. 18/01771/FUL).
- 2.2 The watching brief methodology was presented in the Written Scheme of Investigation (PCA 2018) which was approved by Wendy Rogers, the Senior Archaeology Officer for Kent County Council (who advise Sevenoaks District Council on archaeological matters).
- 2.3 The project was commissioned by Portfolio Homes Ltd. The fieldwork was carried out intermittently between 7th and 31st January with attendance as required during excavation of foundation trenches for the new dwellings, excavation of a soakaway pit and associated works. The project was managed by Zbigniew Pozorski (PCA) and supervised by Bruce Ferguson (PCA).
- 2.4 The site is located in close vicinity of recorded archaeological remains dating from prehistoric, Roman, Saxon and Mediaeval periods. A Roman bath house and villa sites are located nearby, and Saxon burials were discovered in close proximity to the site.
- 2.5 The completed archive comprising written, drawn and photographic records will, upon completion be deposited with the relevant local museum under the assigned site code KECK18.

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The planning permission included archaeological condition (6) requiring no excavation to be carried out until the implementation of a program of archaeological work in accordance with an approved written specification and timetable.
- 3.2 Planning permission was granted for the demolition of the existing dwelling (Easter Cottage) it's out buildings and the erection of three dwellings with associated access, parking, cycle and refuse storage and landscaping (Sevenoaks District Council Planning Ref: 18/01771/FUL).
- 3.3 The planning condition (6) attached to the decision issued on the 24th September 2018 reads as follows:

6) No excavation in association with the hereby approved development shall be carried out on the land until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a program of archaeological work in accordance with a written specification and timetable, which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the details so approved.

Reason

In order to safeguard any remaining archaeological interest on the site in accordance with policies EN25 of the Sevenoaks District Local Plan.

- 3.4 Consultation with Wendy Rogers, the Senior Archaeology Officer for Kent County Council (who advise Sevenoaks District Council on archaeological matters), confirmed the implementation of a programme of archaeological watching brief during the groundworks will be required.

4 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

4.1 Geology

- 4.1.1 According to the British Geological Survey (BGS) of England and Wales, the local geology consists of chalk of the Melbury Marly Chalk Formation and Zig Zag Chalk Formation (undifferentiated).

4.2 Topography

- 4.2.1 The site lies at c. 101m above Ordnance Datum (OD) on gradually inclined land of western slope of River Darent valley with the river present east of Otford c. 1.8km to the west of the site.
- 4.2.2 The site comprises a rectangular plot of land measuring c. 1500m² located on the north-eastern side of the junction of Highfield Road and The Chase, only 100m south-west of the Pilgrim's Way East (Figure 1). The site is accessed from The Chase and is bounded by high hedges around its perimeter and lays on a gentle slope from northeast to southwest.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 5.1 Kent Historic Environmental Record (HER) suggests the site is located within an area of known archaeological activity, with Prehistoric, Roman and Saxon and mediaeval activity is present in close vicinity. Neolithic settlement (HER No. TQ 56 SW 27), Bronze Age finds, and Iron Age features and finds are known locally.
- 5.2 Lower Palaeolithic flint implements (HER TQ 55 NE 11) and hand axe (HER TQ 55 NE 134) were found in Kemsing. A Neolithic flint axe was found at Shorehill Farm 500m northeast of the site (HER TQ 55 NE 16) and near Childsbridge Lane c. 300m south-east (HER TQ 55 NE 17). Sporadic Bronze Age finds, Iron Age features and finds are also known locally.
- 5.3 A Roman bath house (HER TQ 55 NW 8) was found in the 1940s to the south of Dynes Road during the construction of Springhead estate, c. 450m south of the site. The detached structure consisted of four rooms, two with hypocaust heating. Close to the bath house is the site of possible Roman windmill.
- 5.4 Two graves of probably 8th century date was discovered in close vicinity of the site at Highfield Road in 1880 (HER TQ 55 NW 16). The burials were interpreted as pagan and interred shortly before fully adopting Christianity.
- 5.5 Kemsing has its origins in the 10th century and the church of St Mary was originally constructed in the 11th century, altered in 13th and 16th centuries. The church is located 1.2km east of the site and a village nucleus is centred around the church. The natural spring south of the church was supposedly the site of healing miracles and the centre of the village has a stone wall surrounding the spring head (HER TQ 55 NE 10).
- 5.6 Historic OS maps from 1871 – 1910 (maps.nls.uk) do not show any development on the site or in close vicinity of the site and appears to have remained as large open agricultural land until 1938 which shows an early layout of The Chase with detached structures, presumably dwellings appearing to the northeast of the site, by 1961 several more small detached structures appear on The Chase with one small detached structure, likely a house, can be seen occupying the site. Highfield Road shows to have been laid out between 1938 and 1961 with several small detached structures on both the northeast and southwest sides. Later OS maps (1968 – 1989) shows further development of Highfield Road and The Chase, with the structure occupying the site slightly enlarged and defined by the current property boundary.

6 RESEARCH DESIGN

- 6.1 The archaeological investigation was designed to determine the presence or absence of surviving deposits and features at the site and, if present, to investigate and record them.
- 6.2 The investigations would also seek to clarify the nature and extent of existing disturbance and intrusions and hence assess the degree of archaeological survival.
- 6.3 The Written Scheme of Investigation (PCA 2018) identified site-specific research questions pertaining to the watching brief:
- Are there prehistoric remains present on the site, in particular of Palaeolithic origins and do they relate to findings from the wider area identified within the Medway Valley Palaeolithic Project to the east?
 - Is there an evidence of Roman activity within the site and if present, how it relates to the sites known in the area?
 - Is there a further evidence of Saxon burials in the area of Highfield Road?
 - Are there medieval and post-medieval remains present on the site?

7 METHODOLOGY

7.1 All works were undertaken in accordance with the following documents

- Written Scheme of Investigation for this project (PCA 2018)
- Kent County Council's (KCC) Generic Specification for Archaeological Watching Briefs
- *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE Historic England 2016)
- '*Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief*' (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists ClfA 2014).

7.2 The proposed development required the ground reduction/clearance, excavation of foundation trenches for three new buildings, a soakaway pit and associated service trenches.

7.3 All elements of the proposed works were excavated by the contractor on the site under archaeological supervision, using a 360 mechanical excavator fitted with a flat bladed bucket, with the proviso that upon the identification of any significant archaeological horizon, structure or features, archaeological excavation and recording was to be undertaken by hand, with cleaning of relevant surfaces with examination and recording both in plan and in section.

7.4 The foundation trenches were mechanically excavated to depths of between 0.85m and 1.50m Below Ground Level (BGL). Machine excavation was undertaken in spits to allow observation by the attending archaeologist.

7.5 The recording systems adopted during the investigations were fully compatible with those developed by the Department of Urban Archaeology Site Manual and presented in PCA's Operations Manual (Taylor 2009/2018). Representative trench sections were drawn by hand at a scale of 1:10 in order to illustrate geological sequences, modern disturbance and current ground level. In addition to a series of digital photographs recording the encountered deposits a written record of each deposit was also produced. Location of the section drawings and an isolated excavated trench (soakaway) were located within a plan of the site boundaries using off set measurements from known baselines and plotted onto OS mapping data by CAD.

7.6 All trenches are referenced against local site ground level and recorded as Below Ground Level (BGL). The complete archive produced during the evaluation, comprising written, drawn, photographic records will be deposited at the appropriate local repository, identified by the site code KECK 18.

8 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

8.1 The investigation recorded natural chalk across the monitored area, with evidence of its significant horizontal truncation and disturbance to the central north-eastern area of the site, undoubtedly by the construction, landscaping and demolition of the former Easter Cottage built in the mid-20th century (pre-1961). Further evidence of limited clay soil deposits was recorded to the south-east of the site (former garden) in the form of top- and subsoils. A small deposit of orange clay was observed below the subsoil around the south-western quarter of Plot 2 at the point where the chalk was present at lower level. Below is a description of the sequence and deposits encountered.

8.2 Phase 1: Natural Geological Deposits

8.2.1 Chalk of the West Melbury Marly Chalk Formation [03] & [06] (Figures 4-7) formed the underlaying natural (Plates 1 & 2), extending across the site and consisting of consolidated and loose fragments of white chalk (Plate 4). The chalk was truncated by modern instructions in the north-eastern part of the site (Plate 5). Showing evidence of being subjected to extensive bioturbation in the form of large and deep extant rooting (Plate 6) the chalk was encountered at 0.27m (BGL) in the north-east, 0.60m (BGL) in the north-west and dipping to approximately 1.00m (BGL) to the south-west (Plate 7).

8.2.3 Where the chalk dipped it was overlain by a firm brown clay with frequent flecks of chalk [05] (Plate 7). It was c. 0.30m thick, present at c. 0.70m (BGL) and the deposit was only observed in the south-western quarter of Plot 2. It was interpreted as a superficial clay head deposit infilling an undefined depression within the Melbury Marly Chalk.

8.3 **Phase 2: Undated**

- 8.3.1 Within the south-eastern area of the site the West Melbury Marly Chalk Formation was partially sealed by a 0.12m thick firm pale brown clay with flecks of frequent chalk (Plate 8). In the north-east a deposit interpreted as a subsoil [02] was present and it extended south-west but petered out after approximately 7.00m. The subsoil was also recorded as context [04] in the foundation trench of Plot 2 (Figure 4), and in the soakaway pit where it was 0.47-0.70m thick.

8.4 **Phase 3: Post-Medieval & Modern**

- 8.3.2 The subsoil seen in the foundation trenches of Plot 1 (Plate 5 & Figure 6) was heavily disturbed by the construction of the former Easter Cottage during the mid to late 20th century.
- 8.3.3 Directly above the subsoil and extending from the south-eastern end to the north-west of the site was a firm grey clay topsoil [01] (Plate 8 & Figure 4), which formed the current ground level and former grassed area to the now demolished Easter Cottage.
- 8.3.4 With an average thickness of 0.15m, recorded at a height of approximately c. 102.00m OD in the north-eastern corner of the site, the topsoil contained frequent flecks of chalk and very occasional fragments of brick rubble.



Plate 1: The reduced ground within the south-eastern end of site, looking west.



Plate 2: Foundation trench showing the natural chalk, Plot 3, Looking north-east.



Plate 3: Foundation trench showing consolidated and loose chalk fragments, Plot 3. Looking east.



Plate 4: Consolidated chalk seen in the soakaway, north-western end of site. Looking south-east.



Plate 5: Foundation trench showing truncated chalk and disturbed sub-soil, Plot 1. Looking north-east.



Plate 6: Foundation trench showing root action in the south-west corner, Plot 3. Looking west.



Plate 7: Foundation trench showing superficial head clay, Plot 2. Looking south-east.



Plate 8: Soil Sequence at the south-east corner of site. Looking north-east.

9 CONCLUSIONS

- 9.1 The deposits observed during the monitoring were predominantly natural in nature and consistent with the known geological profile of the area. The natural geology comprising of a Melbury Marly Chalk Bed slopes from the north-east to the south-west across the extent of the site. This in turn was partially overlain by naturally forming head clay, possibly filling a natural depression, and then overlain by weathered clay (subsoil) and cultivated soil deposits.
- 9.2 The results of the watching brief showed the site to contain no archaeological deposits or features to suggest other forms of land exploitation or settlement below modern horizon. Modern disturbance in the form of the foundations, landscaping and occupation of the former Easter Cottage clearly have impacted on these geological levels, but it is also possible that the area investigated had been subject to levelling works in the later post-medieval period which may have eliminated earlier archaeological remains.
- 9.3 Supporting cartographic evidence (Ordnance Survey 1871 – 1910) suggests the site had been utilised solely as agricultural land until later mid 20th century (Ordnance Survey 1938 – 1961) when it was developed as a single residential dwelling.

9.4 Research Objectives

Were there prehistoric remains present on the site, in particular of Palaeolithic origins and do they relate to findings from the wider area identified within the Medway Valley Palaeolithic Project to the east?

- 9.4.1 No evidence for prehistoric activity was identified.

Was there an evidence of Roman activity within the site and if present, how it relates to the sites known in the area?

- 9.4.2 There were no Roman deposits or finds discovered nor residual finds of the period in later contexts.

Was there a further evidence of Saxon burials in the area of Highfield Road?

- 9.4.3 There no archaeological evidence dating to the Saxon period.

Were there medieval and post-medieval remains present on the site?

- 9.4.4 There were no medieval deposits or finds discovered nor residual finds of the period in later contexts.

10 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 10.4 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank Mr Stephen Mitchell of Portfolio Homes Ltd for commissioning the project. We would also like to thank Wendy Rogers, the Senior Archaeology Officer for Kent County Council for her advice and overseeing the project on behalf of the Local Planning Authority.
- 10.5 The project was managed for Pre-Construct Archaeology by Zbigniew Pozorski. The archaeological watching brief was supervised and written-up by Bruce Ferguson. The illustrations were prepared by Anna Tonelli.

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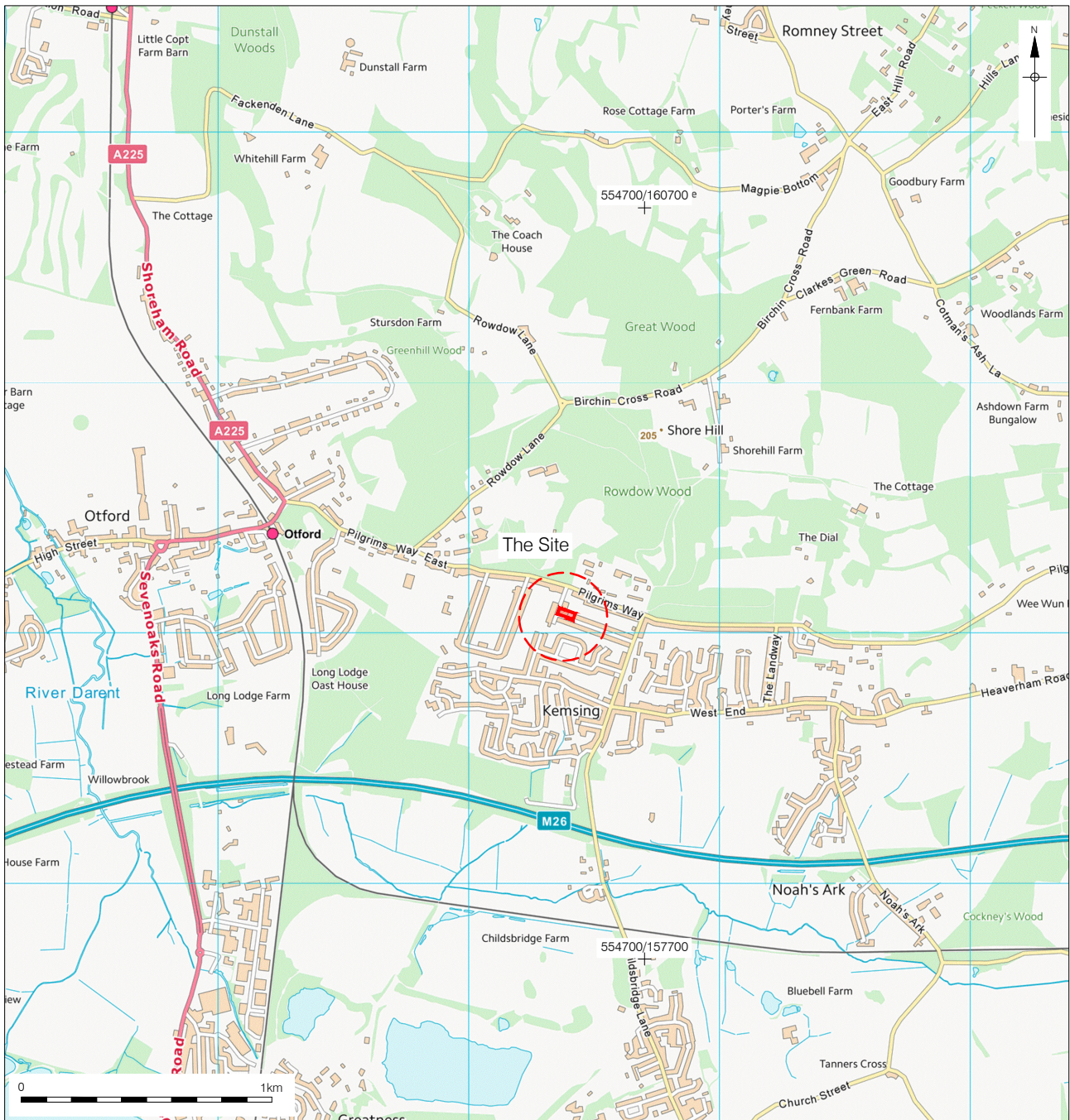
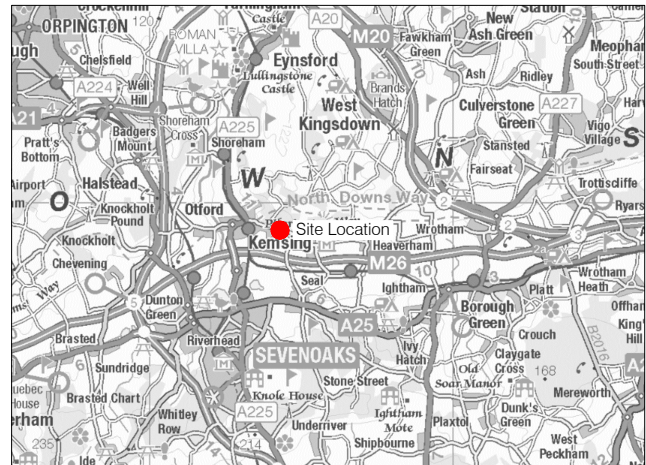
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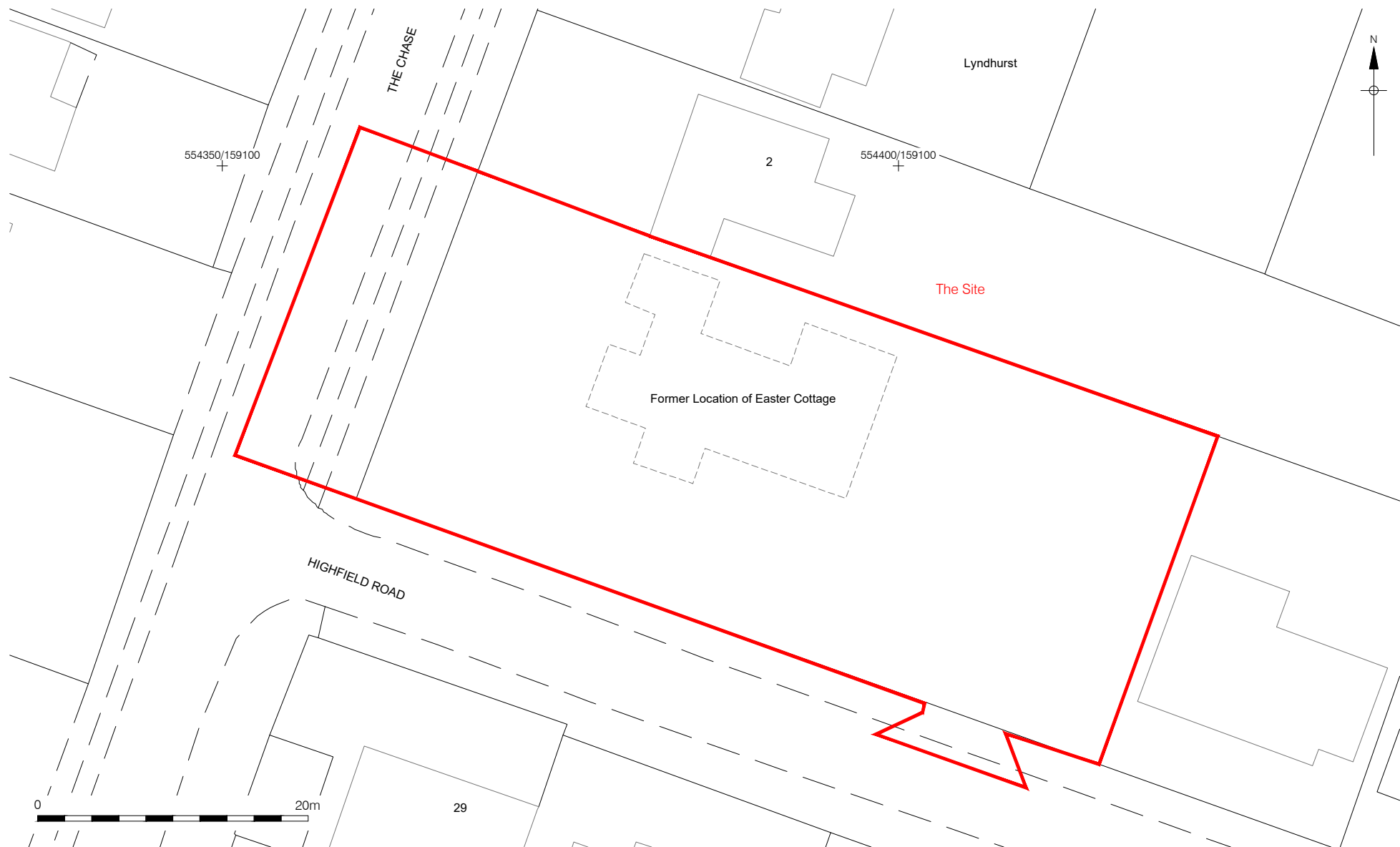
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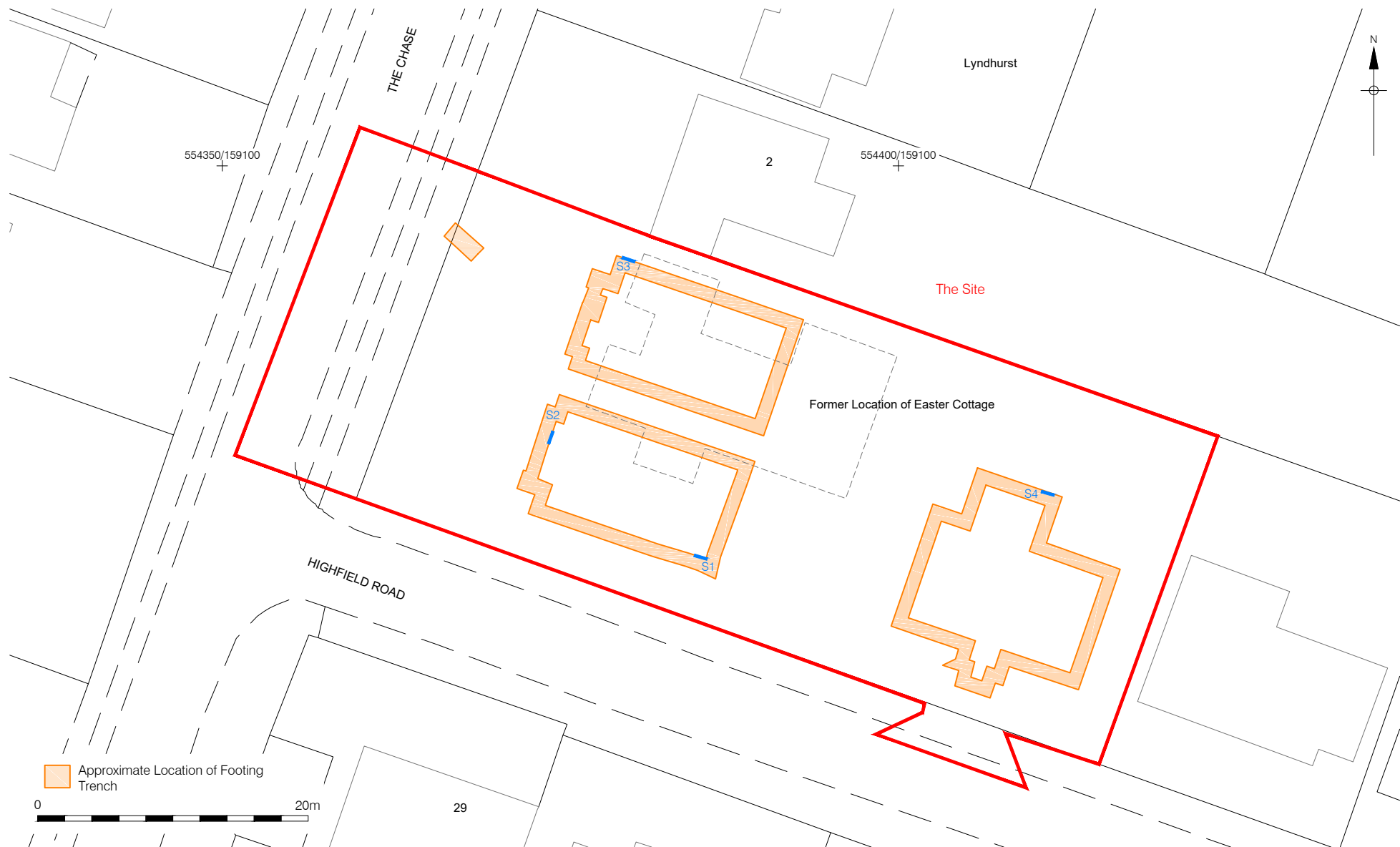
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Kent XXIX.SW (includes: Dunton Green; Kemsing; Otford; Seal; Sevenoaks.)
Revised: 1938, Published: ca. 1946; Kent XXIX.SW (includes: Dunton Green;
Kemsing; Otford; Seal; Sevenoaks.) Revised: 1907, Published: 1910







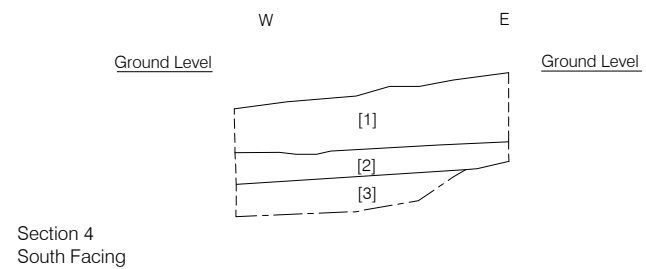
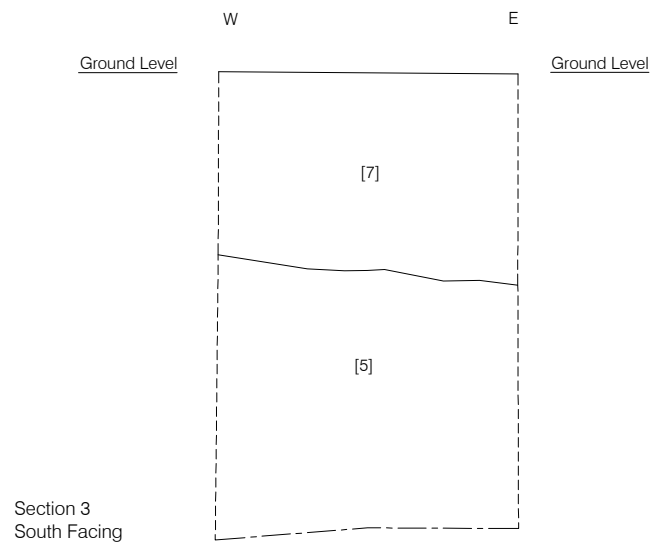
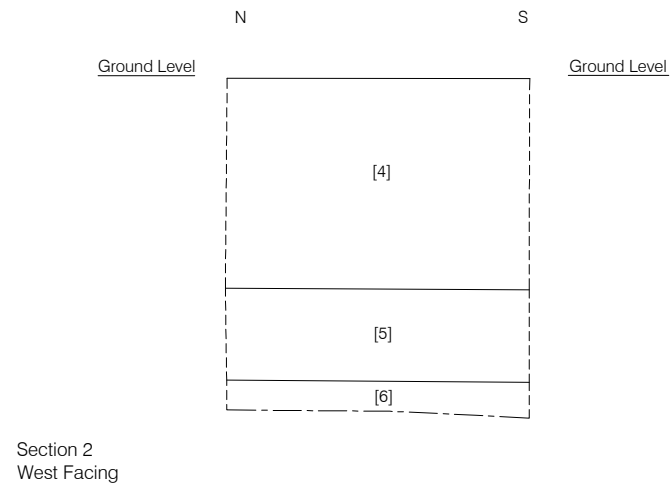
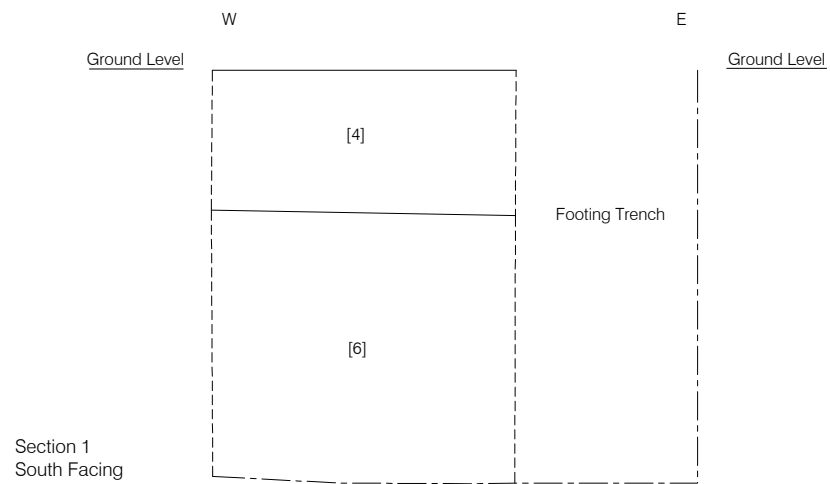
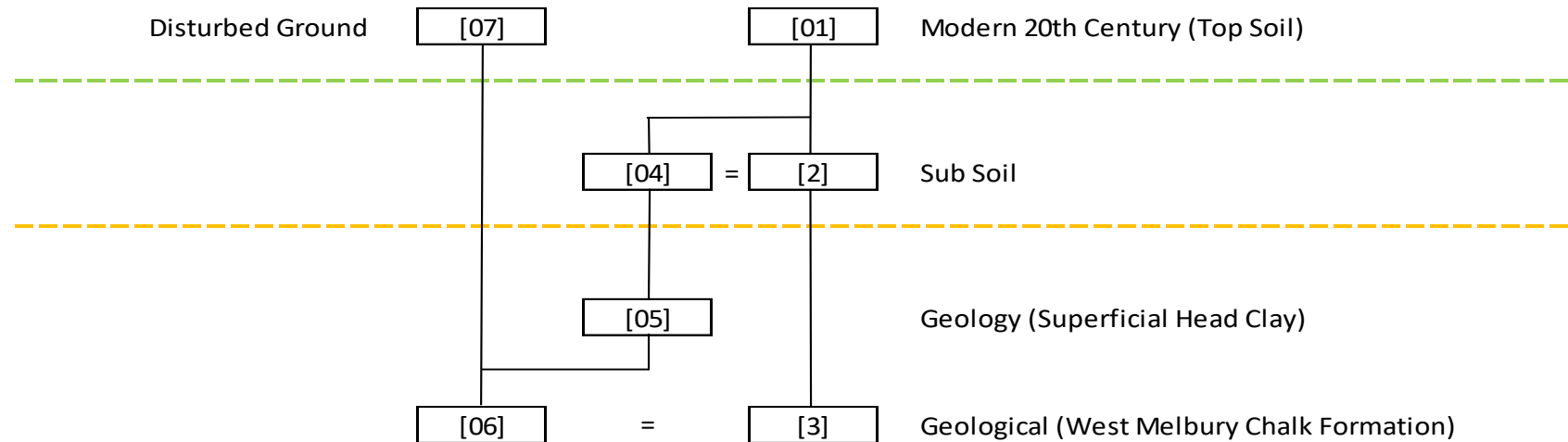


Figure 4
Sections
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APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT REGISTER

SITE CODE	CONTEXT	TYPE	DESCRIPTION
KECK18	1	Layer	Topsoil
KECK18	2	Layer	Subsoil
KECK18	3	Layer	Geological Chalk (West Melbury Marly Chalk)
KECK18	4	Layer	Subsoil (Continuation of Context 2)
KECK18	5	Layer	Geological Clay (Superficial Clay)
KECK18	6	Layer	Geological Chalk (Continuation of Context 3)
KECK18	7	Layer	Disturbed Ground (Modern)

APPENDIX 2: STRATIGRAPHIC MATRIX



APPENDIX 3: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-339058

Project details

Project name	Easter Cottage, The Chase
Short description of the project	Deposits observed during monitoring of groundworks were predominantly geological in nature and consistent with the known geology of the area. Comprised of a Melbury Marly Chalk Bed gently sloping down from the northeast to the southwest across the extent of the site. This in turn was in some areas overlain by naturally weathered clay and cultivated soil deposits. The evaluation recorded natural horizons consistent with the known geology as recorded by the British Geological Survey as chalk. The results of the watching brief showed the site to be archaeologically sterile displaying no archaeological deposits or evidence to suggest other forms of land exploitation or settlement below modern horizons. Modern disturbance in the form of the footings, landscaping and occupation of the former Easter Cottage showed to have impacted on these geological levels, but it is possible that the area investigated had been subject to levelling works in the later post-medieval period which may have eliminated earlier archaeological deposits and/or structures from the site. Supporting cartographic evidence suggests the site had been utilised solely as agricultural land until settlement of the area by residential occupancy between 1938 and 1961 which continue to the present.
Project dates	Start: 07-01-2019 End: 31-01-2019
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	KECK 18 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
Current Land use	Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	KENT SEVENOAKS KEMSING Easter Cottage, Kemsing
Postcode	TN15 6TP
Study area	1288 Square metres

Site coordinates TQ 54407 59078 51.309307073277 0.215579030923 51 18 33 N 000
12 56 E Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 0.27m Max: 0.95m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd.

Project brief originator Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd

Project director/manager Zbigniew Pozorski

Project supervisor Bruce Ferguson

Type of sponsor/funding Client
body

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No

Digital Archive recipient Sevenoaks Museum

Digital Media available "Images raster/digital photography"

Paper Archive recipient Sevenoaks Museum

Paper Media available "Context sheet", "Drawing"

Project bibliography 1

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