

13 Beacon Road, Seaford, East Sussex, BN25 2NA

(NGR: 547697 99710)

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Planning Ref: LW/13/0217

PAS Ref: 13/33

Prepared by

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June 2013

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REPORT FOR	Craig McMahon 13 Beacon Road Seaford East Sussex BN25 2NA
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CONTENTS

	Pg
Abstract	1
1.0 Introduction	1
2.0 Site Location and Description	1
3.0 Planning Background	3
4.0 Aims and Objectives	3
5.0 Archaeological Background	4
6.0 Methodology	4
7.0 Results	5
8.0 The Finds	7
9.0 Discussion and Conclusions	7
10.0 Acknowledgements	7
11.0 Bibliography	7

FIGURES

Figure 1: Site Location	2
Figure 2: Plan and Sections	6

TABLES

Table 1: Quantification of the site archive	4
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PLATES

Plate 1: Section showing pit 104 looking northwest	8
Plate 2: Excavation in progress looking north	8
Plate 3: New extension trench looking west	8

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Context List	9
APPENDIX 2: OASIS SUMMARY	9
APPENDIX 3: HER Summary Sheet	10

Abstract

An archaeological watching brief was conducted by PRO Archaeology Services in advance of the erection of a single storey rear extension, new tiled roof over an existing bay window on the front elevation and the erection of a single storey summer house at the bottom of the garden (Planning Ref: LW/12/0217). The site is located at 13 Beacon Rd, Seaford, East Sussex, BN25 2NA.

The watching brief involved two site visits during early June 2013. The wall footing trenches of the new summerhouse revealed a feature thought to be a pit with one struck flint in its fill. The pit had shallow concave sides and a flattish base. No other archaeological features or finds were recovered from the investigations. The new extension revealed a simple stratigraphic sequence of subsoil and topsoil overlying the natural deposits. A confidence rating is high that the best results were achieved.

1. Introduction

PRO Archaeology Services were commissioned by Mr Craig McMahon to undertake an archaeological watching brief at 13 Beacon Rd, Seaford, East Sussex, BN25 2NA (Planning Ref: LW/12/0217) prior to the construction of a single storey extension to the rear and the erection of a single storey summer house at the bottom of the garden.

PRO Archaeology Services produced a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) for an archaeological watching brief (PAS 2013). This document set out a method of works, which was approved by Greg Chuter (Assistant County Archaeologist) before groundworks commenced on the new extension.

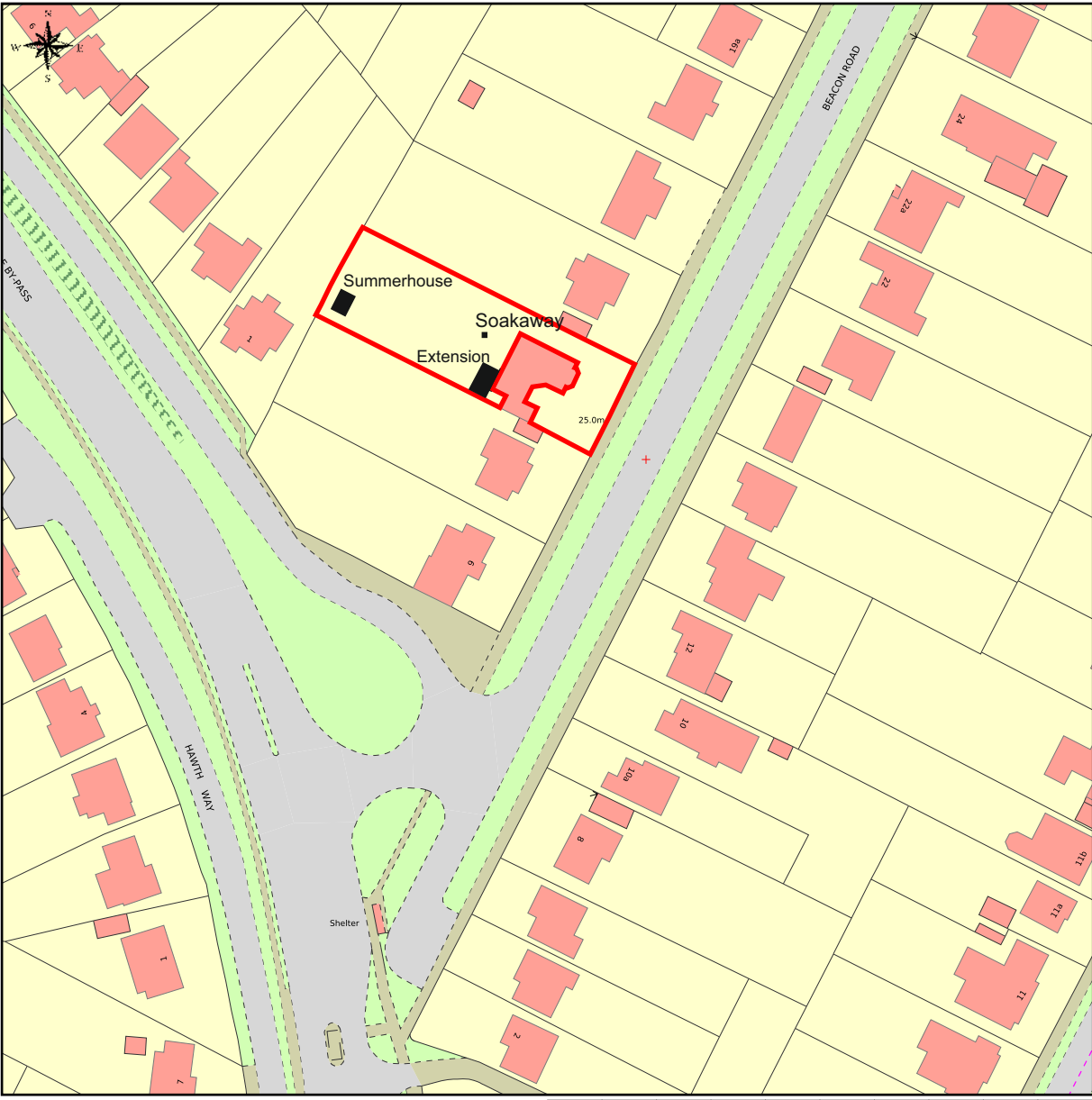
The site was visited on the 8th June 2013 by Paul Riccoboni (Senior archaeologist) to inspect some limited work which had been undertaken on the new summerhouse. A report was made to Greg Chuter regarding the amount of ground disturbance, which was minimal. The main ground works took place on Thursday 13th June 2013 where the footings were inspected in accordance with the approved WSI.

2. Site Location and Description

The site is located at 13 Beacon Road, Seaford, East Sussex, BN25 2NA, on a gently sloping escarpment rising to the north in a residential setting. The site is bounded by detached residential properties to the north and south. To the far south the site overlooks the cliffs with good sea views.

The site lies within an Archaeological Notification Area due to the number of Roman finds noted within the area during building works in the 1950's.

Figure 1; 13 Beacon Road, Seaford, East Sussex



This Plan includes the following Licensed Data: OS MasterMap Colour PDF Site Plan by the Ordnance Survey National Geographic Database and incorporating surveyed revision available at the date of production. Reproduction in whole or in part is prohibited without the prior permission of Ordnance Survey. The representation of a road, track or path is no evidence of a right of way. The representation of features as lines is no evidence of a property boundary. © Crown copyright, All rights reserved 2013. Licence number 0100031673

10m 20m 30m 40m 50m 60m 70m 80m 90m

Scale: 1:1250, paper size: A4

13/33

Site Location

According to the maps of the British Geological Survey the site lies on middle Chalk with no superficial deposits recorded.

3. Planning Background

The Local Planning Authority has placed the following condition on the planning consent:

2. No development shall take place until the developer has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work, in accordance with a Written Scheme of Archaeological Investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the archaeological and historical interest of the site is safeguarded and recorded to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.

3. The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until the archaeological site investigation assessment (including provision for analysis, publication and dissemination) has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition (2) to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the County Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the archaeological and historical interest of the site is safeguarded and recorded to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.

4. Aims and Objectives

The objectives of the archaeological investigation were to contribute to heritage knowledge of the area through the recording of the archaeological remains destroyed or damaged as a result of excavations in connection with the groundworks for this development.

Specific aims were:

- To clarify the nature of deposits and assess the potential for prehistoric remains from the Palaeolithic to the end of the prehistoric period; and
- To clarify the presence of any further Roman activity associated with the probable Road and settlement identified within the vicinity of the site.

5. Archaeological Background

The archaeological potential is based on the proximity of archaeological remains presently recorded on the East Sussex Historical Environment Record (HER). No previous archaeological work has been recorded at the site.

A number of find spots are present within the wider study area. A scatter of Mesolithic flints including a Tranchet Axehead and five blades were identified at 14 Surrey Close (MES5), approximately 160m west of the site, while a single probable Mesolithic flint blade and a scatter of burnt flint were identified at 34 Surrey Road approximately 140m west of the site.

Two parallel Roman ditches (MES1707) were identified within 200m of the site to the north-west, with what has been interpreted as a metalled road surface in between. The ditches contained two Fibulae brooches, a pair of tweezers and a fragment of glass bowl, all of which were firmly dated to the Roman period. Further Roman material comprising of tile and other 'debris' has been identified slightly north of this area close to Tudor Road, it is likely that this indicates the presence of Roman settlement in the vicinity, possibly a small farmstead.

6. Methodology

The investigation comprised continuous monitoring of all ground works throughout the programme of ground reduction of all footing trenches and soakaway.

The trenches were excavated using a mini digger fitted with a 0.50m wide toothed bucket.

Where appropriate surfaces were inspected, hand cleaned, examined and recorded. Deposits were recorded on standard pro-forma context recording sheets. A plan (Figure 2) was drawn at 1:100. A digital photographic record of the work was taken and will form part of the site archive.

All recording points were accurately tied into the National Grid and located on the 1:1250 map of the area (Figure 1).

The site archive will include all project records and will be prepared in accordance with Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage (UKIC 1990). On completion of the project PRO Archaeology Services will arrange for the archive to be deposited with Lewes Museum in conjunction with the general standards for archive preparation within a reasonable timeframe (usually six months of completion of the project).

Number of Contexts	5
No. of files/paper record	7
Plan and sections sheets	1
Bulk Samples	0

Photographs	8
Bulk finds	0
Registered finds	0
Environmental flots/residue	0

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

7. Results

All deposits and features were assigned individual context numbers. Context numbers in [] indicate features i.e. pit cuts; while numbers in () show feature fills or deposits of material.

General overburden

Sealing natural drift deposits consisting of clay and chalk (102) was c. 0.40m thick mid brownish grey silty clay subsoil (101), with relatively little inclusions except some gravels. Overlying this was c. 0.20-0.30m thick dark greyish brown topsoil (105).

The New Summerhouse

The excavations for the new summerhouse were 6.2m x 5.5m and c. 0.90m deep. The width of the trenches were 0.50m. The overburden consisted of the following (earliest to latest). The natural bright orange 'Head' clay with chalk (102) was seen at the base of the trench. This was overlain by 0.40m thick mid orange brown silty clay subsoil (101). The latest deposit was the 0.15m thick concrete slab (100).

One pit 104 (Fig. 2; Section 1) was recorded cut into natural (102) in the southern trench, 1.9m wide and 0.40m deep with gradually sloping concave sides and a gently curving base. It was filled by light-mid orange brown silty clay (103) with rare chalk flecks throughout and one struck flint. The pit was sealed by subsoil (101).

The New Extension

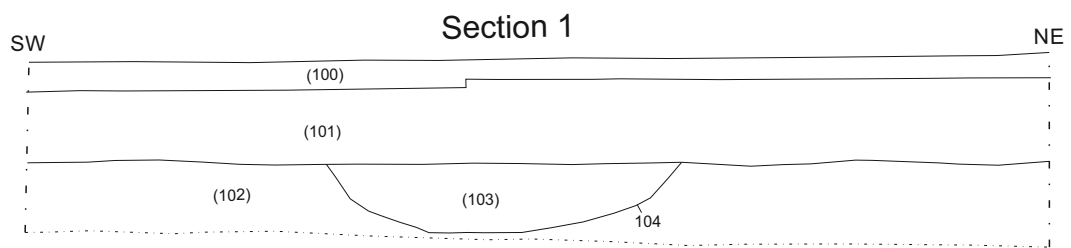
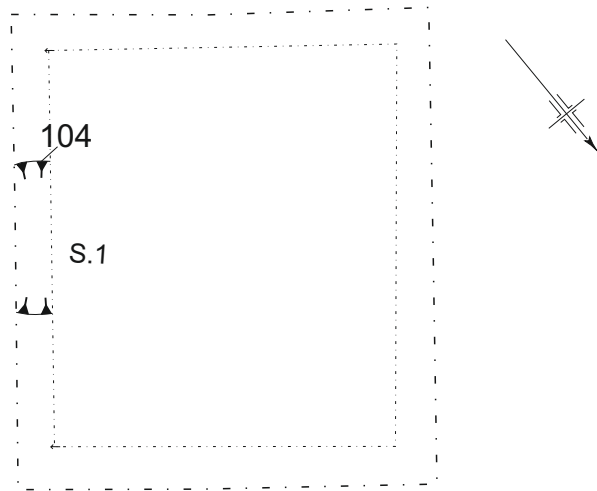
The excavation for the new extension measured 6.5m x 4m with the trench reaching a maximum depth of 1.2m on the western side immediately adjacent to the boundary fence (Fig. 2; Section 2). The trenches were generally c. 1m in depth.

The overburden within the trench consisted of the following deposits (earliest to latest). The natural bright orange clay silt with chalk flecks was seen at the base of the trench (102), overlain by 0.40m thick mid orange brown silty clay subsoil (101) and finally 0.30m thick dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil (105).

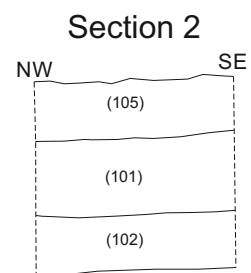
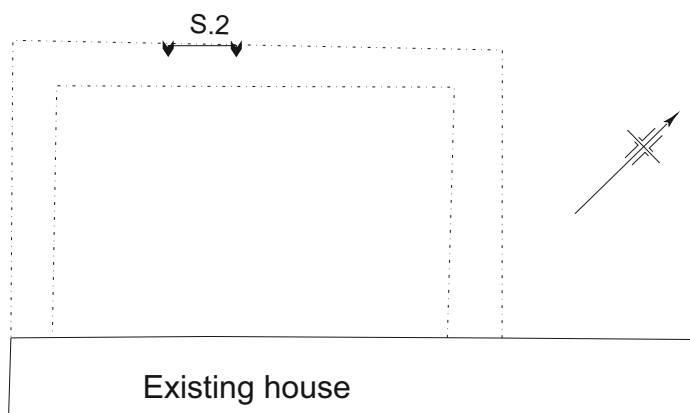
There were no archaeological features or finds within the extension excavations.

The Soakaway (Fig. 1)

Plan of new Summerhouse



Plan of New Extension



0 5 m

Plan Scale 1:100

0 2 m

Section Scale 1:40

Figure 2: Plans and Sections

The excavation for a new soakaway was 1.5m x 1m and 1.5m in depth. The stratigraphic sequence was as described above and no features or finds were apparent.

8. The Finds

One struck flint was recovered from fill (103) of pit [104]. It had a dark grey blue patina. It was probably of late Neolithic or early Bronze Age date. The flint had not been used as a tool.

9. The Discussion and Conclusions

The archaeological watching brief was a successful attempt to determine the aims and objectives set out in the WSI (PAS 2013). However, due to the limited nature of the excavations it was difficult to establish any prehistoric or Roman settlement evidence with any certainty.

One fairly large pit was recorded within the footing trench of the summerhouse. The one struck flint recovered from its fill does not necessarily indicate a prehistoric date for this feature. It is likely that the flint was residual in a later context. As no additional dating evidence was recovered this will remain a hypothesis, but given the number of Roman finds in the area it is perhaps more prudent to consider this pit as perhaps Roman in origin.

A confidence rating is high that the best possible results were achieved.

10. Acknowledgements

PRO Archaeology Services would like to thank Mr Craig McMahon for commissioning PRO Archaeology Services to undertake the watching brief. Many thanks to Greg Chuter for swiftly approving the WSI in order to works to commence on the arranged day at very short notice.

11. Bibliography

English Heritage 1991 *Management of Archaeological Projects*

Institute of Field Archaeologists 2008 *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Evaluation*

Institute of Field Archaeologists 1999 *Code of Conduct*

Institute of Field Archaeologists 1999a *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology*

PAS 2013 13 Beacon Rd, Seaford, East Sussex; Written Scheme of Investigation, Archaeological Watching Brief. PAS, 2012 ref 13/33

United Kingdom Institute of Conservation 1990 Guidelines for the preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-term Storage

Plate 1; Section showing pit 104 looking northwest



Plate 2; Excavation in progress

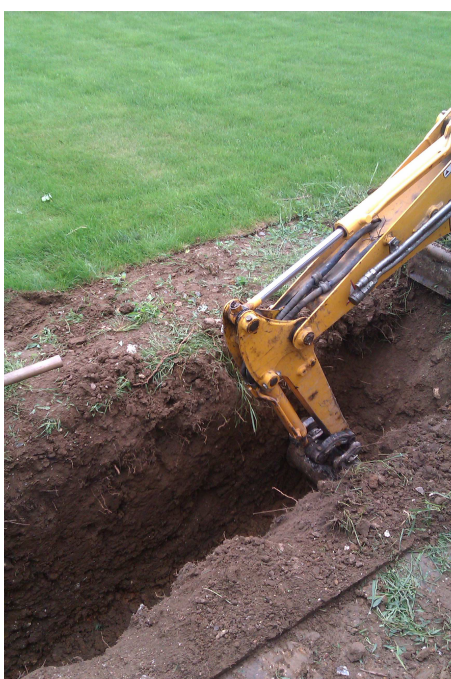


Plate 3; New extension trench



APPENDIX1: Context List

Context No	Trench/Area	Type/deposit/ cut/masonry	Description	Depth (m)	Provisional date
100	WB	Deposit	Concrete	0.2	Modern
101	WB	Deposit	Subsoil	0.3	Post-med?
102	WB	Deposit	Natural	-	KE-KM
103	WB	Deposit	Fill of 105	0.50	Roman
104	WB	Cut	Pit	0.50	Roman
105	WB	Deposit	Topsoil	0.30	Modern

APPENDIX 2; OASIS Summary Sheet

13 Beacon Road, Seaford, East Sussex - PRO Archaeology Services

OASIS ID - proarcha1-152863

Versions

View	Version	Completed by	Email	Date
View 1	1	Paul Riccoboni	info@archaeologypro.com	16 June 2013

Completed sections in current version

Details	Location	Creators	Archive	Publications
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1/1

Validated sections in current version

Details	Location	Creators	Archive	Publications
No	No	No	No	0/1

File submission and form progress

Grey literature report submitted?	No	Grey literature report filename/s	
Report release delay specified?	Yes	Release delay	Release into ADS library once signed off
Boundary file submitted?	No	Boundary filename	
HER signed off?		NMR signed off?	

APPENDIX 3: HER Summary Form

Identification name and address: 13 Beacon Rd, Seaford, East Sussex	
Site code: SFBR13	
<p>Summary:</p> <p><i>An archaeological watching brief was conducted by PRO Archaeology Services in advance of the erection of a single storey rear extension, new tiled roof over an existing bay window on the front elevation and the erection of a single storey summer house at the bottom of the garden (Planning Ref: LW/12/0217). The site is located at 13 Beacon Rd, Seaford, East Sussex, BN25 2NA.</i></p> <p><i>The watching brief involved two site visits during early June 2013. The wall footing trenches of the new summerhouse revealed a feature thought to be a pit with one struck flint in its fill. The pit had shallow concave sides and a flattish base. No other archaeological features or finds were recovered from the investigations. The new extension revealed a simple stratigraphic sequence of subsoil and topsoil overlying the natural deposits. A confidence rating is high that the best results were achieved.</i></p>	
District/ Unitary: Lewes	Parish:
Period(s): Roman?	
NGR:	
Type of archaeological work: Watching Brief	
Date of Recording: 13th June 2013	
Unit undertaking recording: PAS	
Geology: Middle Chalk	
<p>Title and author of accompanying report:</p> <p>An Archaeological Watching Brief at 13 Beacon Road, East Sussex BN25 2NA</p>	
<p>Summary of fieldwork results:</p> <p>One pit of possible Roman date.</p>	
Location of Archive / Finds: Lewes Museum SFBR13	
Contact at Unit: P Riccoboni	Date: 17th June 2013