

# THE OAST HOUSE, MOAT FARM, FIVE OAK GREEN, KENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

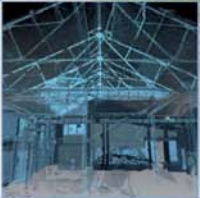
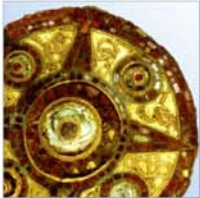
Planning Application Number: TW/01/02274

National Grid Reference Number: TQ 6457 4587

AOC Project no: 7798

Site Code: MFK07

Date: June 2009



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Archaeology  
Group

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## The Oast House, Moat Farm, Five Oak Green, Kent Archaeological Watching Brief Report

**On Behalf of:** Adrian Scripps Ltd  
Moat Farm  
Five Oak Green  
Tonbridge  
Kent  
TN12 6RR

**National Grid Reference (NGR):** TQ 6457 4587

**AOC Project No:** 7798

**Prepared by:** Chris Clarke

**Illustration by:** Jonathan Moller

**Date of Watching Brief:** 25<sup>th</sup> May to 14<sup>th</sup> August 2007

**Date of Report:** June 2009

This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

**Author:** Chris Clarke

**Date:** June 2009

**Approved by:**

**Date:**

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## Contents

	Page
Non-Technical Summary .....	iii
1. Introduction.....	1
2. Planning Background .....	1
3. Geology and Topography .....	1
4. Archaeological and Historical Background .....	2
5. Aims of the Investigation.....	2
6. Methodology .....	3
7. Results .....	4
8. Finds.....	5
9. Conclusions.....	5
10. Publication and Archive Deposition .....	5
11. Bibliography.....	6
Appendix A – Context Register.....	11
Appendix B – Oasis Form.....	12

## List of illustrations

Figure 1 Site Location

Figure 2 Detailed Site / Trench Location Plan

Figure 3 Sample Sections

## Non-Technical Summary

Between the 25<sup>th</sup> May and 24th August 2007 an archaeological Watching Brief, on behalf of Lambert and Foster, and subsequently Adrian Scripps Ltd, was carried out on a programme of ground works at Moat Farm, Five Oak Green, Kent. This involved underpinning works on the existing oast houses, and the excavation of a service trench.

Deposit sequences were recorded in all nine trenches observed. In the trenches excavated adjacent to the oast houses horizontal truncation had occurred, most likely associated with the initial construction of the oast houses. To the west of the oast houses disturbance to the existing soil profile appeared to be minimal, although a 20<sup>th</sup> century layer of made ground had been deposited across the majority of the area inspected. Natural sandy clay was observed across the eastern area of the site. No finds or features of archaeological significance were identified during the course of the watching brief.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The site is located within the Moat Farm complex, 600m north of Five Oak Green, in the Borough of Tunbridge Wells. It is bounded by the farm complex to the northeast and southeast, and by fields to the northwest and southwest (Figures 1 & 2). The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) TQ 6457 4587, is roughly L-shape, and covers a total area of approximately 0.2ha. The area of the watching brief is located immediately to the south of the Moat Farm farmhouse.
- 1.2 The site is currently occupied by several oast houses and the marginal areas of the farm complex associated with them. The development plan is for the construction of offices buildings incorporating the pre-existing oast houses, in addition to the creation of a car park and associated landscaping.

## 2. Planning Background

- 2.1 The local planning authority is Tunbridge Wells Borough Council. Archaeological advice to the council is provided the Heritage Conservation Group at Kent County Council (KCC).
- 2.2 The development of the site involves the conversion of the Oast House into offices with a parking area and landscaping to the rear. The intrusive groundworks consisted of excavation of pits for underpinning, service trench excavations, and general reduction and landscaping.
- 2.3 Planning permission to undertake the development has been granted under the Town & Country Planning Act (1990) (Ref No.:TW/01/02274), subject to conditions. Condition 6 states that:

*“No development shall take place until the applicant, or their successors in title, has secured the implementation of a watching brief to be undertaken by an archaeologist approved by the Local Planning Authority so that the excavation is observed and items of interest and finds are recorded. The watching brief shall be in accordance with a written programme and specification which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.”*

This condition has been required in accordance with *Planning Policy Guidance: Archaeology and Planning* (PPG 16) issued by the Department of the Environment in 1990 (DoE, 1990), and was recommended by Adam Single, of the Heritage Conservation Group.

- 2.4 The site does not lie within an Archaeological Priority Zone and no Scheduled Ancient Monuments lie within the development area. The Moat Farm farmhouse is a Grade II Listed Building.
- 2.5 AOC Archaeology Group Ltd were commissioned by Lambert and Foster to carry out the Archaeological Watching Brief in accordance with the specification issued by Heritage Conservation Group, Kent County Council (KCC 2007). This document detailed how the Watching Brief would be undertaken.

## 3. Geology and Topography

- 3.1 According to the British Geological Survey the site lies on the Brickearth overlying Tunbridge Wells Sand (KCC 2007).
- 3.2 The site is located approximately 1.4km south of the River Medway, at the boundary of the Medway floodplain and higher ground to the south. The site is on moderately level ground, at an approximate height of 18m Ordnance Datum (OD).

## 4. Archaeological and Historical Background

- 4.1 The following information is drawn from the Written Scheme of Investigation (AOC 2007).
- 4.2 The River Medway is known to be a potential focus for activity during the prehistoric period. Finds from the nearby town of Tonbridge have been dated to the Mesolithic, while other prehistoric flints have also been found to the north of the site in close proximity to the River Medway. The Iron Age hill fort at Castle Hill lies approximately 4km to the southwest of the site. Evidence for later Roman activity has also been identified in Tonbridge.
- 4.3 The construction of Tonbridge Castle shortly after 1066 marked a rise in the area's importance in the medieval period, although the Domesday survey does not mention the settlement by name.
- 4.4 In the 14<sup>th</sup> century it is suspected that a bridge was built across the River Medway at Tonbridge, in order to replace the earlier ford. It is during this same period that Tonbridge was granted a market charter. By the 16<sup>th</sup> century sandstone extraction, brick manufacture, weaving and ironwork were all established industries in the area, supported by to the increase in river trade.
- 4.5 'Tunbridge Ware' started being produced in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, made with wooden inlay. The factory manufacturing this style of pottery was known to be located to the northwest of the site, adjacent to the Medway.
- 4.6 Located immediately to the north of the development area is a medieval moated site, within which the current Moat Farm is located. The majority of the moat has now disappeared and is originally thought to have been approximately 45m by 45m in size. The island created by the moat is still visible, as well as the causeway across the moat to the north. The extant farmhouse on the site dates to the 17<sup>th</sup> century and is a Grade II Listed Building.

## 5. Aims of the Investigation

- 5.1 The aims of the Watching Brief were defined as being:
- To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the site.
  - To record and sample excavate any archaeological remains encountered.
- 5.2 The specific objectives of the Watching Brief were defined as being:
- Determine the presence of any remains of Prehistoric or Roman activity on the site
  - Determine the presence of any medieval or early post-medieval remains on the site, particularly relating to any structures associated with the moat.
  - Characterise the later post-medieval agricultural use of the site.
  - Contribute to the environmental history of the area.
- 5.3 The final aim was to make public the results of the investigation, subject to any confidentiality restrictions.

## 6. Methodology

- 6.1 Fieldwork procedures followed the Museum of London Archaeological Site Manual (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition) (MoL 1994).
- 6.2 The excavation, recording and reporting conformed to current best archaeological practice and local and national standards and guidelines:
- English Heritage – Management of Archaeological Projects (EH 1991).
  - English Heritage – Archaeological Guidance Paper 3: Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork (EH 1998).
  - English Heritage – Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation (EH 2002).
  - Institute for Archaeologists – Standards and Guidance and Guidelines for Finds Work (IFA 1992).
  - Institute for Archaeologists – Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (IFA 2001).
  - Institute of Field Archaeologists – Code of Conduct (IFA 1997).
  - United Kingdom Institute for Conservation – Conservation Guidelines No.2 (UKIC 1983).
  - United Kingdom Institute for Conservation – Guidance for Archaeological Conservation Practice (UKIC 1990).
  - Council for British Archaeology – First Aid for Finds (Second Edition) (CBA 1987).
- 6.3 The Watching Brief was carried out during the excavation of underpinning trenches adjacent to the oast houses and the excavation of service trenches in the eastern and northern areas of the site. In agreement with KCC, the work to construct the car park was not watched as it was deemed that the disturbance created by its construction would not be deep enough to disturb any possible archaeological horizons.
- 6.4 A unique accession code for the project was created **MFK07**.
- 6.5 The Watching Brief was undertaken by the Dan Eddisford, Paolo Guarino and the author, under the overall direction of Andy Leonard, Fieldwork Manager at AOC Archaeology Group.

## 7. Results

### 7.1 Trenches 1 to 8

Trench No.	Length	Width	Depth
1	1.5m	1.4m	1.2m
2	1.5m	1.5m	1.4m
3	2.5m	1m	1m
4	1.5m	1m	1.05m
5	1.5m	1m	1.05m
6	1.5m	1.3m	1.1m
7	1m	1.3m	0.8m
8	12m	1.3m	1.1m

7.1.1 Eight trenches were observed being excavated adjacent to the foundations of the oast houses on site (Figure 2). The trenches varied in size (as above) and the sequence of deposits recorded in each trench was similar.

7.1.2 The earliest deposit observed in all eight trenches was a naturally deposited firm, yellowish brown, clayey sand (1/002), (2/002), (3/002), (4/002), (5/002), (6/002), (7/002) and (8/002), identified as being between 0.15m and 0.30m below existing ground level. Sealing the natural deposit was a moderately compacted, dark grey, topsoil deposit (1/001), (2/001), (3/001), (4/001), (5/001), (6/001), (7/001) and (8/001).

7.1.3 No finds or features of archaeological interest were identified in Trenches 1 to 8.

### 7.2 Trench 9

7.2.1 Trench 9 was located in the eastern and northern areas of the site (Figures 2 & 3) and was 35m long, 0.40m wide, and up to 0.90m deep.

7.2.2 The earliest deposit observed was a naturally deposited firm, yellowish brown, clayey sand (9/004), recorded at a depth of 0.75m below ground level. Above the natural deposit was a firm, mid yellowish brown, sandy clay (9/003) subsoil deposit, between 0.30m and 0.40m thick. In the western extent of the trench subsoil (9/003) was overlain by a layer of soft, dark greyish brown, clayey silt (9/002), up to 0.10m thick, a buried topsoil horizon. Context (9/002) was not observed extending into the eastern section of Trench 9. Sealing the sequence of deposits was a 0.35m thick layer of made ground (9/001), a soft mid greyish brown, clayey silt, containing occasional fragments of ceramic building material.

7.2.3 No finds or features of archaeological interest were identified in Trench 9.



## **8. Finds**

- 8.1 No finds were collected during the course of the Watching Brief.

## **9. Conclusions**

- 9.1 Natural deposits were identified as being present across the eastern area of site, at a depth of between 0.3m and 0.75m below ground level.
- 9.2 Trenches 1 to 8, adjacent to the oast houses, identified an identical sequence of deposits consisting of the natural deposit directly overlain by topsoil. In the area to the north and west of the oast houses, represented by Trench 9, a more complete sequence of deposits was observed consisting of subsoil and topsoil horizons overlying the natural deposit, which had been later sealed by a layer of made ground. It was noted though that the buried topsoil horizon did not extent into the eastern area of Trench 9.
- 9.3 The deposits recorded in Trenches 1 to 8 appear to identify a previous phase of horizontal truncation occurring in the area immediately surrounding the oast houses, most likely associated with their construction. This truncation was observed to extend to the east part of Trench 9. Although a more complete sequence of deposits was noted at the west end of the trench, no archaeological remains were identified.
- 9.4 No finds or features of archaeological significance were identified during the course of the watching brief.

## **10. Publication and Archive Deposition**

- 10.1 Due to the nature of the project, publication is expected to be limited to a summary in the Kent Archaeology Round-up and publication via the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) (Appendix B).
- 10.2 The archive, consisting of paper records, drawings and digital photographs, will be deposited with a suitable local repository at a later date.

## 11. Bibliography

AOC Archaeology Group 2007. *The Oast House, Moat Farm, Five Oak Green, Kent. Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief.*

Association of County Archaeological Officers 1994. *Model Briefs and Specifications for Archaeological Assessments and Field Evaluations*

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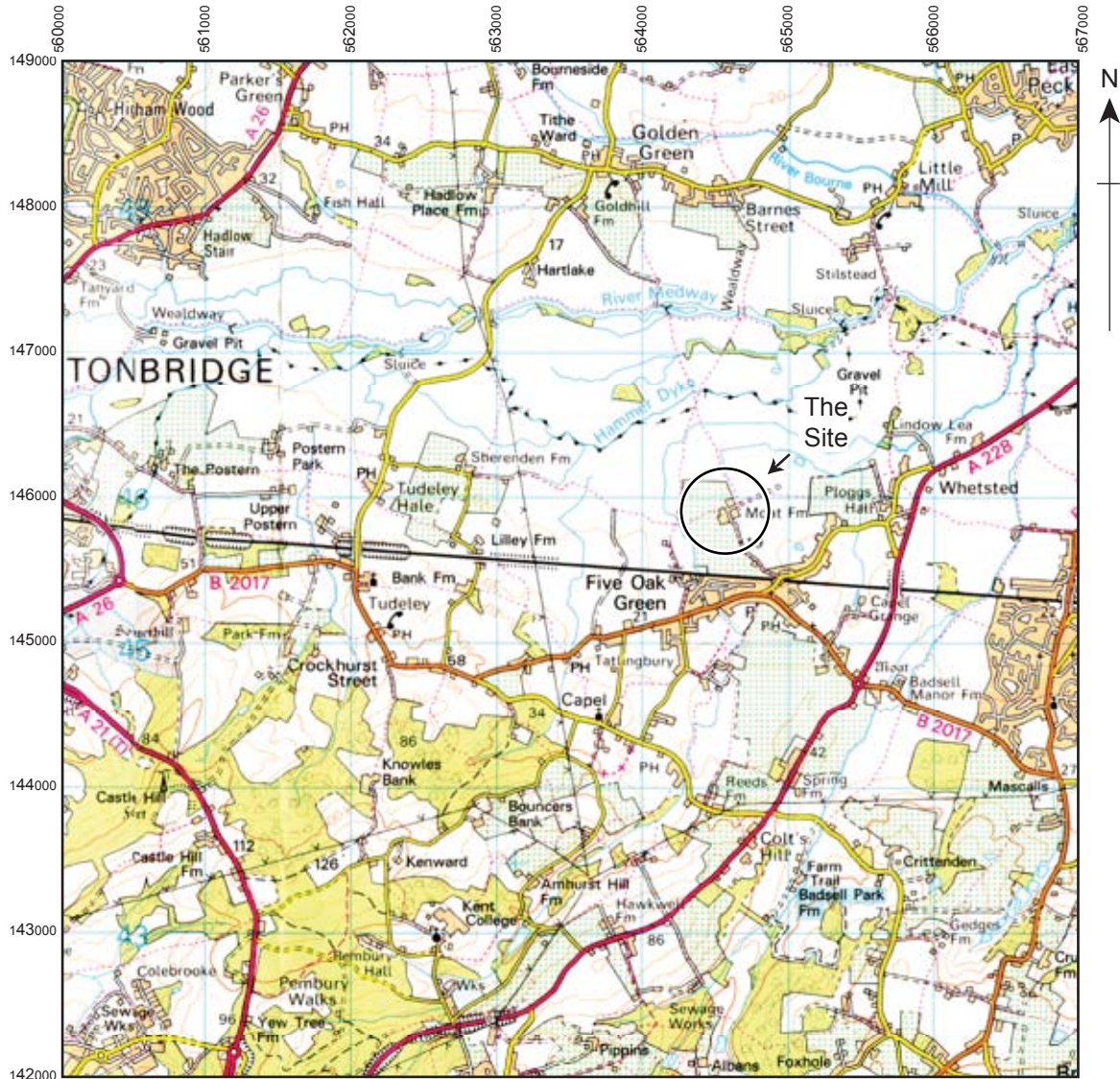
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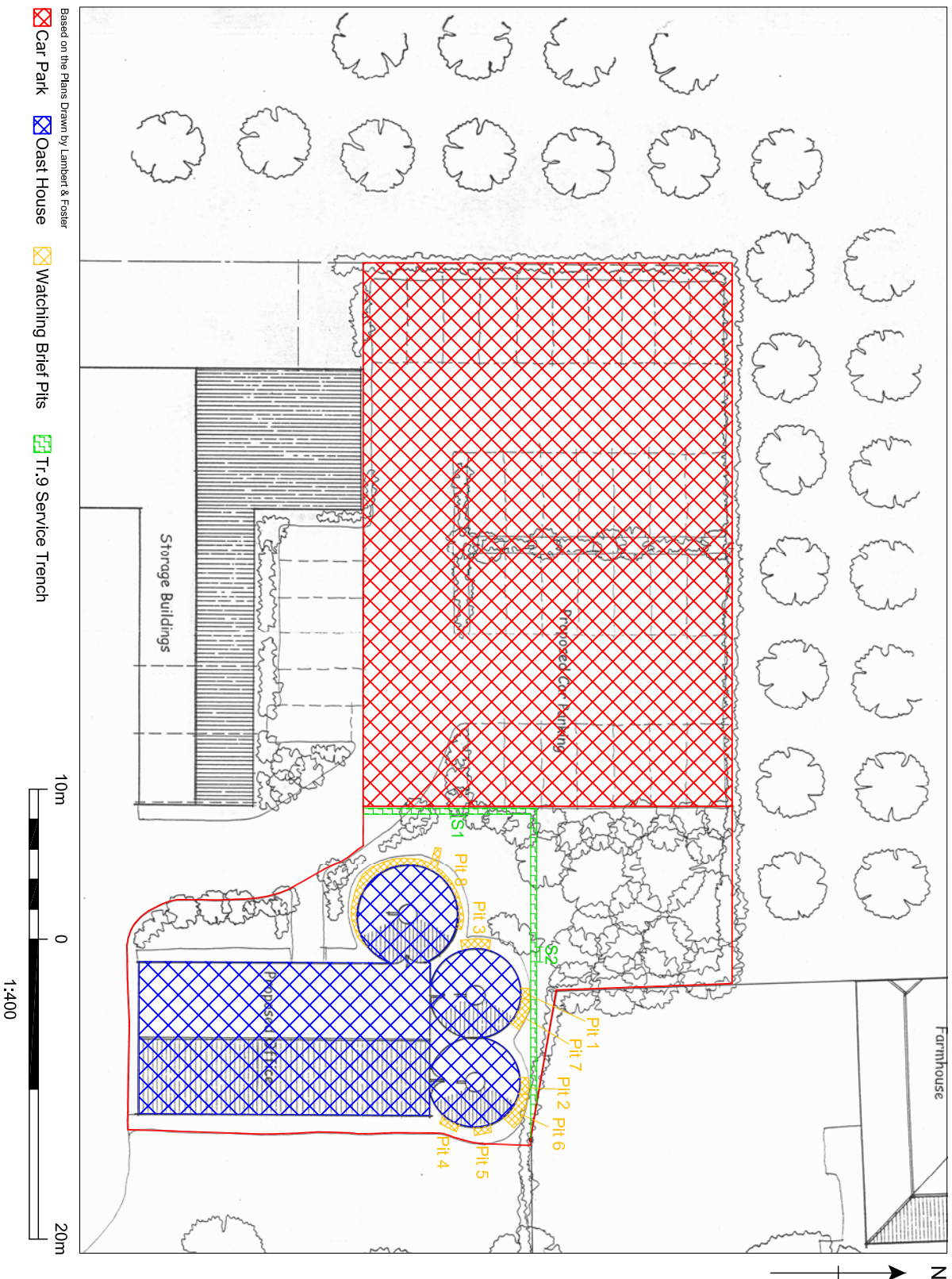
United Kingdom Institute for Conservation 1990. *Guidance for Archaeological Conservation Practice.*



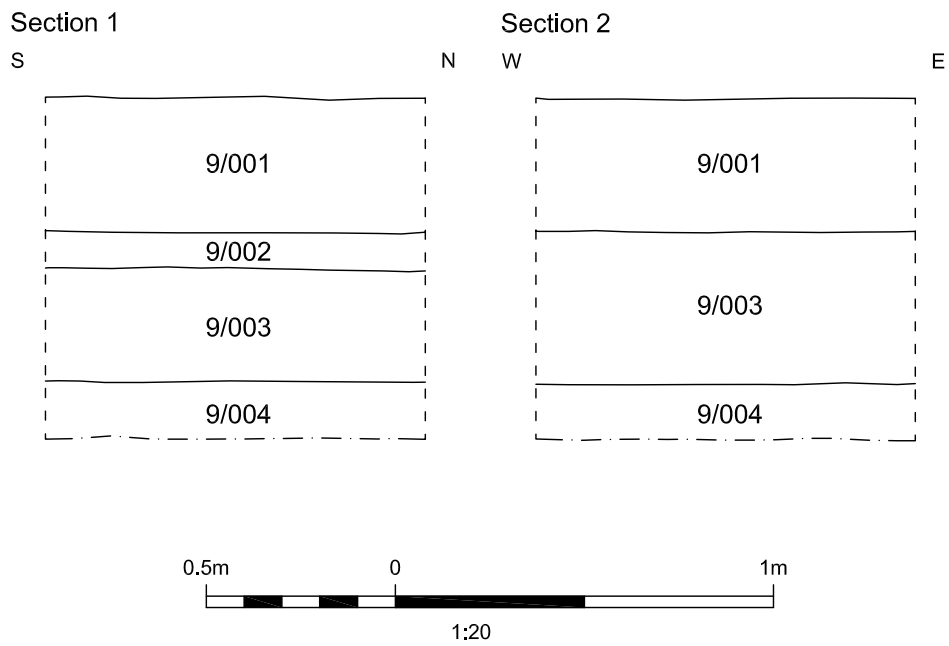
Based on the Ordnance Survey's 1:50 000 Landranger map of 1996 with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright. Licence No. AL 1000 16114



**Figure 1:** Site Location



**Figure 2:** Detailed Site/Trench Location Plan



**Figure 3:** Sample Sections



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## Appendices

## Appendix A – Context Register

Context No.	Context Description	Length	Width	Depth
1/001	Top soil	1.50m	1.40m	0.20m
1/002	Natural yellow-brown clay	1.50m	1.40m	1.20m
2/001	Top soil	1.50m	1.50m	0.20m
2/002	Natural yellow-brown-blue clay	1.50m	1.50m	1.40m
3/001	Top soil	2.50m	1m	0.30m
3/002	Natural yellow-brown-blue clay	2.50m	1m	0.70m
4/001	Top soil	1.50m	1m	0.15m
4/002	Natural yellow-brown-blue clay	1.50m	1m	1.05m
5/001	Top soil	1.50m	1m	0.15m
5/002	Natural yellow-brown-blue clay	1.50m	1m	1.05m
6/001	Top soil	1.50m	1.30m	0.20m
6/002	Natural orange-brown clay	1.50m	1.30m	1.10m
7/001	Top soil	1m	1.30m	0.30m
7/002	Natural orange-brown clay	1m	1.30m	0.80m
8/001	Top soil	10m	1.30m	0.20m
8/002	Natural orange-brown clay	10m	1.30m	1.10m
9/001	Made ground	35m	0.4m	0.35m
9/002	Buried top soil	10m	0.4m	0.1m
9/003	Sub soil	35m	0.4m	0.4m
9/004	Natural yellowish brown sandy clay	35m	0.4m	0.15m+

## Appendix B – Oasis Form

**OASIS ID: aocarcha1-60605**

### Project details

Project name            The Oast House, Moat Farm, Five Oak Green

Short description of the project    An archaeological Watching Brief was carried out on a programme of ground works at Moat Farm, Five Oak Green. This involved underpinning works on the existing oast houses, and the excavation of a service trench. Deposit sequences were recorded in all nine trenches observed. In the trenches excavated adjacent to the oast houses horizontal truncation had occurred, most likely associated with the initial construction of the oast houses. To the west of the oast houses disturbance to the existing soil profile appeared to be minimal, although a modern layer of made ground had been deposited across the majority of the area inspected. No finds or features of archaeological significance were identified during the course of the Watching Brief.

Project dates            Start: 25-05-2007 End: 24-08-2007

Previous/future work    No / No

Any project codes    associated reference    7798 - Contracting Unit No.

Any project codes    associated reference    MFK07 - Sitecode

Any project codes    associated reference    TW/01/02274 - Planning Application No.

Type of project        Recording project

Site status            None

Current Land use        Industry and Commerce 4 - Storage and warehousing

Investigation type     'Watching Brief'



Prompt Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

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### Project location

Country England

Site location KENT TUNBRIDGE WELLS PADDOCK WOOD The Oast House, Moat Farm, Five Oak Green

Postcode TN12 6RR

Study area 0.20 Hectares

Site coordinates TQ 6457 4587 51.1877733636 0.355205745849 51 11 15 N 000 21 18 E Point

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### Project creators

Name of AOC Archaeology  
Organisation

Project brief Kent County Council  
originator

Project design AOC Archaeology  
originator

Project Andy Leonard  
director/manager

Project supervisor Chris Clarke

Type of Developer  
sponsor/funding  
body

Name of Foster and Lambert  
sponsor/funding  
body

### Project archives

Physical Archive No  
Exists?

Digital Archive As yet undetermined  
recipient

Digital Archive ID MFK07

Digital Media 'Images raster / digital photography','Images vector'  
available

Digital Archive notes To be held at AOC until a suitable archive repository can be found at a later  
date.

Paper Archive As yet undetermined  
recipient

Paper Archive ID MFK07

Paper Media 'Context sheet','Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General  
available Notes','Plan','Report','Section'

Paper Archive notes To be held at AOC until a suitable archive repository can be found at a later  
date.

### Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title THE OAST HOUSE, MOAT FARM, FIVE OAK GREEN, KENT: WRITEN  
SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING  
BRIEF

Author(s)/Editor(s) Eddisford, D.

Date 2007

Issuer or publisher AOC Archaeology

Place of issue or London  
publication

Description A4 text, two illustrations, 16 pages, thermally bound between plastic covers

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**Project  
bibliography 2**

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title THE OAST HOUSE, MOAT FARM, FIVE OAK GREEN, KENT: AN  
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Author(s)/Editor(s) Clarke, C.

Date 2009

Issuer or publisher AOC Archaeology

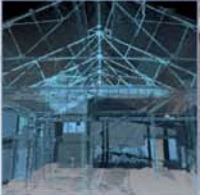
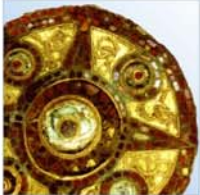
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Entered on 10 June 2009



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