

**Geoarchaeological Evaluation Report
Former Highways Depot, London Road
Hassocks, West Sussex**

**NGR 530236 116282
(TQ 30236 16282)**

**ASE Project No: 5157
Site Code: HDH11**

ASE Report No: 2011263

OASIS ID: archaeol6-113128

By Dr Matt Pope

November 2011

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Abstract

ASE was commissioned by Matthew Homes Ltd to conduct a programme of geoarchaeological evaluation on the Former Highways Depot, London Road, Hassocks, West Sussex, in advance of proposed redevelopment. It was considered important to determine the limits of the alluvial sequence at this site given the documented presence of deep alluvial sequences with good organic preservation in the immediate locale.

The work was undertaken on the 3rd October 2011. Four geoarchaeological test pits measuring 1x3m were excavated to a maximum of 3.1m depth to characterise the sub-surface sedimentary profile and assess sediments for palaeoenvironmental potential and deeply buried archaeology. The surface of the natural substrate varied in height from 34.53m OD in the north of the site to 36.02 OD in the south-east of the site.

The test pits revealed an alluvial sequence across the site comprising high energy fluvial gravels at the base of a channel cut into the solid Weald Clay. The gravels were overlain by up to 2.4m of alluvium. No well-preserved organics were encountered and due to a diesel-like odour, which raised the possibility of contamination, it was considered prudent not to assess the deposits found in test pits 1, 2 and 3 which did contain flecks of redeposited organic plant material.

The work has demonstrated that stream side locales flanking the Weald can sit on substantial floodplains with far deeper and more extensive alluvial stratigraphy than would be supposed by the scale of the current drainage.

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OASIS Form

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

- 1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), the contracting division of The Centre for Applied Archaeology at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London, were commissioned by Matthew Homes Ltd, to undertake a geoarchaeological evaluation in advance of development on land at the Former Highways Depot, London Road, Hassocks, West Sussex, hence referred to as the 'site' (Figure 1; NGR 530236 116282). This followed on from an archaeological evaluation carried out by ASE in September 2011 (ASE 2011b).

1.2 Geology and Topography

- 1.2.1 The site is located on the northern edge of Hassocks in West Sussex, along the A273 running north to Burgess Hill. It is bounded by a small wooded area to the north and west, beyond which lies the Hassocks Golf Club. Residential housing bounds the site to the south and east along Belmonth Close and Pavillion Close.
- 1.2.2 According to the British Geological Survey (BGS 2011) the site lies within the junction of the Weald Clay formation and Lower Greensand, over which lies river terrace deposits and alluvium.

1.3 Planning Background

- 1.3.1 Planning permission for the construction of 20 dwellings, parking and access roads was granted (Reference HA/08/02181/OUT). Due the potential for archaeological remains on the site the WSCC Senior Archaeologist, John Mills, as archaeology advisor to Arun District Council, recommended that a condition be placed on the planning permission. Condition 10 states:

No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Reason: To ensure that archaeological features on the site are properly investigated and recorded.

- 1.3.2 Consultation between the client and John Mills, Senior Archaeologist WSCC, established the need for an initial phase (Stage 1) of archaeological evaluation be undertaken at the site to determine the presence of archaeological remains. This investigation, carried out in October 2011, revealed the presence of deeper alluvial stratigraphy including a grey silty-clay preserving flecks of apparent organic material (small fragments of plant remains) on the northern margins of the site. Given the established local presence of organic alluvial sequences preserving substantial timbers (Butler 2000), it was considered prudent to undertake a limited phase of follow-up purposive geoarchaeological work to establish the extent of alluvial sedimentation across the site and determine the presence of more substantial organic deposits likely to preserve palaeoenvironmental evidence.

- 1.3.3 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for this was produced by ASE in September 2011 (ASE 2011c), and was submitted to West Sussex County Council for approval prior to the commencement of the work. This document detailed the aims and objectives of the project and a proposed methodology. Four 1x3m geoarchaeological test pits were to be excavated to 3m depth.

1.4 Aims and objectives

- 1.4.1 The general aims of this work were outlined in the WSI (*ibid*) and are summarised below:
- Define the limits of the alluvial sequence laterally across the site
 - Recovery of pollen sequence and bulk samples for datable material
 - Determination of the presence of deeper archaeological horizons or occupation layers
 - To clarify the nature and extent of existing disturbance and intrusions and hence assess the degree of archaeological survival of buried deposits and any surviving structures of archaeological significance

1.5 Scope of report

- 1.5.1 This report details the findings of the geoarchaeological evaluation undertaken by Matt Pope, Liz Chambers and Rob Cole (Surveyor) on the 3rd October 2011. The project was managed by Neil Griffin (Project Manager) and Jim Stevenson (Project Manager, Post-Excavation).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 The West Sussex County Council Historic Environment Record (WSSC HER) holds a number of references to archaeology within a 1km radius of the site. These are listed in Appendix 1 and shown on Figure 1. A summary is provided below.

2.2 Palaeolithic/Mesolithic/Neolithic (520,000 BP - 2,000 BC)

Evidence of Paleolithic to Neolithic activity has been noted in the area surrounding the site and is largely represented by fragments of flint tools, such as Paleolithic hand axes and Mesolithic and Neolithic flint implements. During the construction of Hassocks Golf Course, immediately to the north of the sites, wood dating to the Mesolithic (6020 +/- 100 BP) and Neolithic (4370 +/- 60 BP) were recovered from alluvial deposits. (Butler 2000).

2.3 Bronze Age (2,000 - 700 BC)

Bronze Age activity was prolific in this area and a large amount of evidence is located within the study area. A series of pits, postholes anditches excavated at Land West of Mackie Avenue, to the east of the site, revealed evidence of Middle Bronze Age habitation and associated agricultural activities, illustrated by field enclosures. Six large cinerary urns and several cups were uncovered during excavation to the south-east. Finally peat deposits were sampled during works as Hassocks Golf club, as described above, and dated to the Bronze Age.

2.4 Iron Age/Roman (700 BC to AD 410)

While there is sparse evidence for the Iron age in this area, limited to the find of a chariot linch pin and a possible trackway, the Roman period is well represented and the study area contains, potentially, three lines of Roman roads. One of these roads lies to the south and runs east to west, while the remaining two, run either side of the site, although they may represent just one line, of which multiple positions have been postulated. The proximity of the road is linked to the high levels of Roman occupation in the area, including structural remains and a substantial Roman cemetery at Stonepound sandpit, to the south-east, and evidence of field systems, rectangular structure and a possible shrine or religious enclosure at Mackie Avenue to the east.

2.5 Anglo-Saxon/Medieval (AD 410 – 1550)

Anglo-Saxon settlement has been uncovered during the works at Hassocks Golf club including the discovery of sunken feature buildings, associated pits, posthole and ditches (Butler 2000). Square buildings were also uncovered on this site including burnt planks preserved in the alluvium. Later medieval occupation in the surrounding area includes an iron working site adjacent to the site to the south-east and evidence of ridge and furrow to the north.

2.6 Post-Medieval (AD 1550 – to date)

Evidence for Post-Medieval archaeology in the Study Area includes several buildings, some demolished, as well as Grade II listed building at Friars Oak House. Further evidence include a ice house, a brickworks and a lime kiln to the south of the site.

3.0 METHODOLOGY (Figure 2)

- 3.1** Four geoarchaeological test pits (TP1, 2, 3 and 5) were excavated across the area of the proposed development under archaeological supervision. A proposed fifth test pit (TP4) was not excavated due to the fact that its proposed position was located in an inaccessible part of the site. The test pits were excavated to a maximum depth of c. 3m.
- 3.2** The location of the trenches was established a survey grade Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS).
- 3.3** The trial trenches were scanned prior to excavation using a Cable Avoidance Tool (CAT). All of the trenches were excavated under constant archaeological supervision, using a 15 tonne 360° tracked excavator, fitted with a toothless ditching bucket.
- 3.4** Beneath modern horizons, the pits were dug down in 0.25m spits. Each test pit attempted to prove the solid geology to obtain the fluvial terrace platform heights.
- 3.5** All trenches were recorded according to standard ASE practice. All remains were levelled with respect to Ordnance Survey datum. A photographic record was kept.
- 3.6** Detailed sediment logs were made and all units and unit boundaries were fully described following the methodology of Jones *et al.* (1999), Tucker (1996). When depth precluded entry to the pit further recording was made from the trench side. The arisings were placed in stratigraphical order to enable description and recording. Fine-grained deposits were sampled and kept for vertebrate and invertebrate microfauna and palynological analysis. Where waterlogged sediments were encountered, bulk samples were undertaken for plant macros and coleopteran analyses in addition to the column samples.
- 3.7** Upon completion the test pits were backfilled and compacted by the mechanical excavator but in accordance with the WSI (ASE 2011c), no formal re-instatement was undertaken. No test pits were left open overnight.
- 3.8** The site archive is currently held at ASE offices in Portslade, East Sussex and has been accepted by Lewes Castle and Museum who do not issue accession numbers until an archive is physically deposited.

4.0 RESULTS

LOCATION	TP1 HLR	OSNGR	1x3m			
DEPTH	STRATIGRAPHY	LITHOLOGY	COLOUR	CLAST	SAMPLE	NOTES
0	Made Ground	-	-	CBM		
0.3	Alluvium	Silty Clay	Grey-Green	None	None	Possible hydrocarbon contamination
0.5	Alluvium	Silty Clay	Reddish Grey	10% SA flint 10-30mm As lenses	Bulk	Oxidised Fine Bedding Possible hydrocarbon contamination
1.8	Alluvium	Silty Clay	Dark-Grey	None	Bulk	Anaerobic, organic flecks noted. Possible hydrocarbon contamination
2.6	Fluvial Gravel	Silty Clay	Light Grey	90% SA Greensand 10-40mm 5% SA flint 10-30mm		
3.1	Weald Clay: Base of Hole					

4.1 TP1 Summary

Below made ground, an alluvial sequence 2.3m in thickness was encountered. Below this was fluvial gravel, 0.5m in thickness filled the base of the channel incised into the solid Cretaceous Weald Clay and extended beyond the limit of the 3m brief.

Bulk samples were taken from the alluvium however, hydrocarbon contamination was suspected on the basis of smell and so processing was not conducted.

LOCATION	TP2 HLR	OSNGR	1x3.5m			
DEPTH	STRATIGRAPHY	LITHOLOGY	COLOUR	CLAST	SAMPLE	NOTES
0	Made Ground	-	-	CBM		
0.3	Alluvium	Silty Clay	Grey	None	None	
0.5	Alluvium	Silty Clay	Orange Brown	5% SA flint 10-30mm	Bulk	Oxidised Fine Bedding Possible hydrocarbon contamination
1.1	Alluvium	Silty Clay	Mid-Grey	None	Bulk Pollen C14	Anaerobic, organic flecks noted. Possible hydrocarbon contamination
2.5	Fluvial Gravel	Silty Clay		90% SA Greensand 10-40mm 5% SA flint 10-30mm		
3	Weald Clay: Base of Hole					

4.2 TP2 Summary

Below made ground an alluvial sequence 2.2m in thickness was encountered. Below this was fluvial gravel, 0.5m in thickness filled the base of the channel incised into the solid Cretaceous Weald Clay and extended to the limit of the 3m brief.

The gravel appeared to rise to the south of the test pit and it is therefore considered likely that this test pit was close to the southern channel margin.

Bulk samples were taken from the alluvium however, hydrocarbon contamination was suspected on the basis of smell and so processing was not conducted.

LOCATION	TP3 HLR	OSNGR	1x3m			
DEPTH	STRATIGRAPHY	LITHOLOGY	COLOUR	CLAST	SAMPLE	NOTES
0	Made Ground	-	-	CBM		
0.2	Alluvium	Silty Clay	Grey	None	None	
0.5	Alluvium	Silty Clay	Reddish Grey	30% SR Chalk 10-30mm As lenses	None	Oxidised Fine Bedding Possible hydrocarbon contamination
1.8	Alluvium	Silty Clay	Dark-Grey	None	Bulk	Anaerobic, organics flecks noted. Possible hydrocarbon contamination
2.6	Fluvial Gravel	Silty Clay	Light Grey	80% SA Greensand 10-40mm 5% SA flint 10-30mm		
3.0	Base of Hole					

4.3 TP3 Summary

Below made ground an alluvial sequence 2.4m in thickness was encountered. The presence of chalk gravel within this deposit was notable. The chalk might be derived from solifluction lobes further upstream but it appears out of place. No archaeology was associated with the chalk but an anthropogenic origin for the material cannot be discounted.

Below this fluvial gravel, 0.40m in thickness filled the base of the channel incised into the solid Cretaceous Weald Clay and extended to the limit of the 3m brief. The gravel appeared to rise to the south and it is therefore considered likely that this test pit was close to the southern channel margin.

Bulk samples were taken from the alluvium however, hydrocarbon contamination was suspected on the basis of smell and so processing was not conducted.

LOCATION	TP5 HLR	OSNGR	1x3m			
DEPTH	STRATIGRAPHY	LITHOLOGY	COLOUR	CLAST	SAMPLE	NOTES
0	Made ground	-	-	CBM		
0.65	Colluvium? Made ground?	Silty Clay	Mid-Brown	5-10% SA flint 10-30mm		Flint is frost shattered
1.1	Alluvium	Silty Clay	Orange Brown	None	Bulk	Oxidised Fine Bedding
2.5	Alluvium	Silty Clay	Mid-Grey	None	Bulk	Anaerobic,
3	Base of Hole					

4.4 TP5 Summary

Below made ground a deposit 0.45m thick containing derived flint material was recorded. These deposits must be relatively recent in date as they are emplaced after the main alluvial sequence and the possibility that they are either modern made ground, or perhaps from local deposits of soliflucted head or immature fluvial gravel flanking the valley sides cannot be concluded.

The alluvial sequence below this was at least 1.9m in thickness and extended beyond the limit of the 3m brief. As this test pit was at a point closest to the modern stream deep channel development at this location might expected. No organic remains were encountered.

5.0 DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 No archaeological remains were recorded in any of the test pits.
- 5.2 All test pits revealed an alluvial sequence of 3m or more in depth.
- 5.3 The sequence reveals that the line of modern drainage extends back into the last glacial period and originally carried periglacial meltwater as part of the drainage of the north face of the South Downs and the Southern Weald. The drainage forms part of the River Adur System.
- 5.4 Drainage of the South Downs is indicated by the presence of fluvial flint gravel, however, the clast population is dominated by lower Greensand fragments from the local escarpment just to the south. It is likely that in both cases the gravels have been reworked fluvially from primary solifluction deposits flanking the parent rock head.
- 5.5 The overlaying fine-grained alluvium comprised anaerobic, grey silty clays at the base, grading upwards toward more oxidised and occasionally gravelly clay towards the top of each trench. The lower alluvium contains flecks of organic matter and visible particles of possible *phragmites* were noted. However these deposits were not rich in organics and the fragmentary nature of the plant remains and the lack of fine bedding structures associated with them suggested they had possibly been reworked. On the basis of low potential, and the possibility of contamination indicated by a diesel-oil smell, it was considered sensible not to send the material for processing. Should it have been considered that the deposits were of greater potential scientific value, or associated with clear evidence of human activity, consideration could have been given to establishing formal contamination assessment and handling guidelines for the material.
- 5.6 The alluvial deposits were almost certainly a continuation of those found in the course of investigation to the north of the site by Butler (2000) where substantial elements of timber were preserved. The present site, on the basis of the recorded basal fluvial gravels and fine grained alluvial sequence devoid of in-situ, substantial organic deposits, appears to entirely occupy a mid flood plain location. The potential for the preservation of substantial organics sediments and preserved timbers is consequently low as these are more likely to be found immediately deposits of the channel margin zone, these were not encountered on the site.
- 5.7 Most importantly, the investigation has highlighted the scale of alluvial sedimentary sequences and floodplain width associated with streams which, in their current landscape context, appear relatively minor. Such misfits, which extend to streams that have effectively ceased to flow, or have been culverted, often occupy the route of a former substantial periglacial channel and therefore have potential to have been more significant stream courses in the early- to mid-Holocene.

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ASE would like to thank Peter Cawrey of Matthew Homes Ltd for commissioning the work and John Mills of West Sussex County Council for his continued guidance throughout the project. Illustrations were by Dylan Hopkinson.

Appendix 1: Summary of WSCC HER Data within 1km radius of the site

No.	WSCC HER ref	NGR (TQ)	Site Description	Period
1.	4140-MWS745	30010 15800	Fragment of handaxe found in garden of 2 London Road	Palaeolithic
2.	5064-MWS3807	30050 15420	10 flint implements found in garden of 'Sandbanks' in 1978	Mesolithic
3.	5075-MWS3821	29970 16190	Wood C14 dated to 6020 +/- 100 BP (4230-4720 cal. BC) recovered from alluvial deposits during rescue excavations during construction at Hassocks Golf Course	Mesolithic
4.	3780-MWS4561	29600 15400	A large number of flint implements recovered from Stonepound sandpit	Mesolithic
5.	5949-MWS5198	29660 15270	Approx. 40 pieces of worked flint (various forms) found during a watching brief at Kings Garden Centre	Mesolithic
6.	7855-MWS7948	30500 15200	Collection of mostly Mesolithic flintwork with some later material found mostly between A273 London Road and Downlands School	Early Mesolithic and later
7.	4120-MWS731	30510 15460	Microliths and fossils found during building works in 1975	Mesolithic
8.	7255-MWS7317	29388 15609	Worked flint sealed by a Roman occupation layer in Talbot Field	Mesolithic & Roman
9.	5076-MWS3822	29970 16190	Wood C14 dated to 4370 +/- 60 BP (3310-2890 cal. BC) recovered from alluvial deposits during rescue excavations during construction at Hassocks Golf Course	Neolithic
10.	5822-MWS4540	30600 16100	A scatter of worked flints collected from Hassocks Lake (Crossways Farm)	Neolithic
11.	3781-MWS4560	29600 15400	Flint axe found in Stonepound sandpit	Neolithic/Early Bronze Age
12.	3799-MWS891	29670 15540	Six large prehistoric cinerary urns and roughly the same number of cup found during excavation of Roman cemetery site	Bronze Age
13.	3782-MWS5556	29600 15400	3 flint implements and abraded quartz pebble found in Stonepound sandpit	Bronze Age
14.	7219-MWS7279	29970 16190	Environmental sample taken from layer of peat during landscaping works during creation of Hassocks Golf Course	Bronze Age
15.	8107-MWS8232	30919 16181	Fieldwork carried out in	Bronze Age,

No.	WSSC HER ref	NGR (TQ)	Site Description	Period
			advance of development identified dispersed area of settlement activity spanning a wide period. Finds include Deverel Rimbury cremation urn, possible round houses, boundary/enclosure ditches, pits, postholes, possible shrine, substantial and extensive scatter of burnt and worked flint	Roman, medieval & post-medieval
16.	8108-MWS8233	30955 16213	Undated postholes likely to represent a roundhouse with associated pits and a dated ditch	Middle Bronze Age
17.	3784-MWS885	29400 15500	Chariot linch pin and pottery found in pit	Iron Age & Roman
18.	7220-MWS7280	29970 16190	Earlier trackway located beneath Roman Road (7218-MWS7278), crossing former marshy area	Late Iron Age/Roman
19.	5712-MWS4257	29400 15500	Large quantity of flint and some pottery indicating occupation activity	Prehistoric
20.	5718-MWS4271	29900 15400	Archaeological watching brief located six pieces of worked flint	Prehistoric
21.	3779-MWS883	29510 15560	Structural remains, ditch and well between Roman road and Roman cemetery	Roman
22.	3797-MWS890	29880 15470	Coin of Antoninus Pius found whilst digging foundations of house on SW corner of Stonepound Crossroads	Roman
23.	4375-MWS3204	29670 15540	Substantial Roman cemetery in use between AD70-190 located at Stonepound Sandpit	Roman
24.	5713-MWS4415	39400 15500	Watching brief at Ham Farm identified over 70 features (pits, postholes, ditches and possible remains of flint masonry structure). Likely to be evidence of settlement	Roman
25.	7218-MWS7278	30084 16395	Previously unknown Roman road identified during landscaping works during creation of Hassocks Golf Course	Roman
26.	7254-MWS7216	29388 15609	Large amounts of building material, pits and pottery indicative of settlement found during tree planting in Talbot Field	Roman
27.	7418-MWS7476	31941 15482	'Greensand Way' London-Brighton Roman road	Roman
28.	7419-MWS7477	29894 15570	Possible Roman road (Vines	?Roman

No.	WSSC HER ref	NGR (TQ)	Site Description	Period
			Lane)	
29.	7420-MWS7479	29896 15569	Possible Roman Road alignment postulated by Ivan Margary	Roman
30.	8109-MWS8234	31109 16276	Rectangular structure located on land west of Mackie Avenue within a ditched enclosure and with associated field boundaries. Possible evidence of another structure with hypocaust in close proximity	Roman
31.	8110-MWS8235	31119 16286	Small enclosure c. 6m x 6m may represent a small shrine or religious enclosure to NW of Roman building described above (8109-MWS8234)	Roman
32.	3800-MWS892	29670 15540	Approx. 12 Anglo-Saxon cremation urns found during excavation of Roman cemetery	Anglo Saxon
33.	7223-MWS7283	29970 16190	Pottery, quern stone, etc recovered from a series of features and layers	Anglo-Saxon
34.	7224-MWS7284	29947 16261	Grubenhaus, two associated pits, a number of postholes and ditch identified during landscaping works during creation of Hassocks Golf Course	Anglo-Saxon
35.	7225-MWS7285	29747 16292	Burnt planks and postholes of square building identified during landscaping works during creation of Hassocks Golf Course	Anglo-Saxon
36.	7547-MWS7622	30000 16200	Location of iron working site (bloom forge)	Early medieval
37.	4131-MWS4495	30400 17000	Ridge and furrow earthworks surviving as at 1995 north of Friar's Oak	?medieval
38.	7232-MWS7292	29635 16562	A wide range of artefacts including clothing buckles, belt and buckle fittings, mounts, thimbles, lead weights, coins, medals, buttons, glass, pottery, worked flint, alabaster and gaming piece recovered from fields lying north of Clayton Wickham Farm	Prehistoric, Roman, Anglo-Saxon, medieval, post-medieval
39.	5950-MWS5199	29960 15270	3 sherds of pottery found during a watching brief at Kings Garden Centre	Late medieval
40.	4128-MWS737	30260 16420	Postulated location of former dwelling based on place name	Post-medieval
41.	5266-MWS3966	30532 15642	Ice house in grounds of 'Crown Point House'	Post-medieval
42.	4143-MWS5131	30750 16250	Brickworks shown on 1873-4	Post-medieval

No.	WSSC HER ref	NGR (TQ)	Site Description	Period
			OS	
43.	5951-MWS5200	29960 15270	3 sherds of pottery and 1 tile found during a watching brief at Kings Garden Centre	Post-medieval
44.	8428-MWS8557	30180 15520	Site of lime kiln	Post-medieval
45.	8429-MWS8558	29900 15480	Stonepound Toll House and gate shown on OS maps and tithe map. Now demolished.	Post-medieval
46.	8430-MWS8559	30200 15500	Site of Hassocks Gate. Now demolished	Post-medieval
47.	302427-DWS7547	30231 16704	Grade II Listed building. Friar's Oak House, early 19 th century (1800-1832)	Post-medieval
48.	3789-MWS887	29630 15710	Urn, pottery and animal bone and teeth found in association with a natural outcrop (mound) of sandstone	Undated
49.	5952-MWS5201	29960 15270	Small sandstone sharpening stone tile found during a watching brief at Kings Garden Centre	Undated

HER Summary Form

Site Code	HDH 11					
Identification Name and Address	Land at Former Highways Depot, London Road, Hassocks, West Sussex					
County, District &/or Borough	Hassocks, West Sussex					
OS Grid Refs.	530236 116282					
Geology	Wealden Clay / Lower Greensand					
Arch. South-East Project Number	5111					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval. X	Excav.	Watching Brief	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field	Shallow Urban X	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval. 7/9/11 to 8/9/11	Excav.	WB.	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Matthew Homes Ltd					
Project Manager	Neil Griffin					
Project Supervisor	Nick Garland					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM	Other X		

ASE was commissioned by Matthew Homes Ltd to conduct a programme of geoarchaeological evaluation on the Former Highways Depot, London Road, Hassocks, West Sussex, in advance of proposed redevelopment. It was considered important to determine the limits of the alluvial sequence at this site given the documented presence of deep alluvial sequences with good organic preservation in the immediate locale. The work was undertaken on the 3rd October 2011. Four geoarchaeological test pits measuring 1x3m were excavated to a maximum of 3.1m depth to characterise the sub-surface sedimentary profile and assess sediments for palaeoenvironmental potential and deeply buried archaeology. The surface of the natural substrate varied in height from 34.53m OD in the north of the site to 36.02 OD in the south-east of the site. The test pits revealed an alluvial sequence across the site comprising high energy fluvial gravels at the base of a channel cut into the solid Weald Clay. The gravels were overlain by up to 2.4m of alluvium. However, no archaeological remains or well-preserved organics were encountered and all 4 test pits had a very bad odour of a diesel type smell. The work has demonstrated that stream side locales flanking the Weald can sit on substantial floodplains with far deeper and more extensive alluvial stratigraphy than would be supposed by the scale of the current drainage.

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-113128

Project details

Project name Geoarchaeological Evaluation Report Former Highways Depot,
London Road Hassocks, West Sussex

Short description of the project

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Project dates Start: 03-10-2011 End: 03-10-2011

Previous/future work Yes / Not known

Any associated project reference codes archaeol6-110706 - OASIS form ID

Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 13 - Waste ground

Project location

Country	England
Site location	WEST SUSSEX MID SUSSEX
Study area	2.00 Hectares
Site coordinates	TQ 30236 16282

Entered by	Matt Pope (m.pope@ucl.ac.uk)
Entered on	3 November 2011



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Project Ref: 5157	Sept 2011	Site location and WSCC HER data	
Report Ref: 2011263	Drawn by: DJH		

Fig. 1

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