

**An Archaeological Watching Brief at  
Anstiebury Camp, Coldharbour, Surrey**

**Scheduled Monument No. 20186**

**NGR: TQ 515336 144042**

**Project No: 5301  
Site Code: ACC 12**

**Report No: 2012067  
OASIS ID: archaeol6-120549**

**Kathryn Grant MSc AIFA  
With illustrations by Justin Russell**

**March 2012**

**Archaeological Watching Brief Report  
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**Abstract**

*Archaeology South-East (ASE) was commissioned by Sutton and East Surrey Water to undertake a programme of archaeological monitoring during the widening of an existing gateway to a covered reservoir at Anstiebury Camp, Coldharbour, Surrey (NGR centred 515336 144042). The watching brief monitoring was carried out in one site visit on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2012.*

*Natural sandy geology was encountered 300mm below ground level and was overlain by subsoil and topsoil. No archaeological finds were recovered during the watching brief.*

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Figure 1: Site location

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## **1.0 Project Background**

- 1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), the contracting division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London, was commissioned by Sutton and East Surrey Water to maintain an archaeological watching brief during the widening of an existing gateway to a covered reservoir at Anstiebury Camp, Coldharbour, Surrey (NGR centred 515336 144042; Figure 1), hereafter referred to as 'the site'.
- 1.2 The site lies within a Scheduled Monument (National Monument Number 20186) defining a large multivallate hillfort south-east of Crockers Farm. Due to the site's archaeological significance, English Heritage require an archaeologist to be in attendance during ground works associated with the widening of the existing gateway so that any archaeological artefacts, features or deposits encountered can be properly investigated, recorded and reported on as appropriate.
- 1.3 In light of the very limited scope of the proposed works English Heritage agreed that a full Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was not necessary for this project. A Method Statement was prepared by ASE (2012) in advance of the watching brief and was approved by English Heritage prior to the commencement of site work. The fieldwork was carried out in accordance with the Method Statement and relevant standards set out in the *Institute for Archaeologists Code of Practice and Standard and Guidance* documents (IFA 2008; 2010).
- 1.4 This report presents the findings of the watching brief monitoring undertaken on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2012 by Kathryn Grant (Field Archaeologist). The project was managed by Neil Griffin (Fieldwork Manager) and Dan Swift (Post-excavation Manager).

## **2.0 Aims and Objectives**

- 2.1 In general, the aim of the watching brief was to record, interpret and report on any archaeological and palaeoenvironmental remains exposed during the groundwork (including artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest) to appropriate archaeological standards.
- 2.2 The watching brief also assessed the past impacts on the site and paid particular attention to the character, height/depth below ground level, condition, date and significance of the deposits.
- 2.3 The specific aims were to investigate and record any archaeological remains associated with the multivallate hillfort within the limitations of the proposed ground works and to provide English Heritage with a report of the findings to the standards set out in this document.

### **3.0 Archaeological Background**

3.1 The following information is reproduced from the English Heritage Record of Scheduled Monuments relating to Monument Number 20186 with due acknowledgement.

#### *3.2 Description of the Monument*

3.2.1 The monument includes a large multivallate hillfort constructed in the second and first centuries BC and situated on the crest of a hill in the Greensand overlooking the lower ground of the Weald to the south. Roughly circular, the hillfort encloses an area of level ground approximately 5ha in extent.

3.2.2 Defining this area are defences which comprise a triple rampart to the north and south-east where the ground is fairly level, a double terrace on the west and south where the ground is much steeper, and a single line of defences to the north-east. The entrance is mid-way along the eastern side, defined by a wide break in the main rampart. The main inner rampart is up to 4m high and 15m wide with the associated external ditch being up to 6m wide and 1m deep. There is a broad berm or level platform of up to 11m wide between the inner and outer ramparts to the north and east. The second rampart is much lower, standing to a height of 2m and an overall width of up to 15m, with the associated external ditch 5m wide and up to 0.5m deep. The counterscarp bank is 8m wide and 1m high.

3.2.3 Limited excavations were carried out in 1972-3 when a trench was cut through the defences to the south-east, the entrance through the main rampart was investigated and a few other small excavations carried out elsewhere across the monument. The front of the main rampart had been set into the inner edge of the associated ditch and revetted with massive, irregular blocks of sandstone. The excavator concluded that the multivallate defences were related to sling warfare due to their form and width, with rounded pebbles, foreign to the Greensand, being a constant feature in the areas he excavated. Also, he considered that the entrance and the defences to the north of it were never completed, a fact which may link with the deliberate demolition of the main rampart revetment, possibly coinciding with Caesar's landings of 55 BC and 54 BC. The site was re-occupied in the Roman period, probably at least a century after it was originally abandoned.

3.2.4 Excluded from the scheduling are all fences and fence posts, the reservoir and associated water pipes although the ground beneath these features is included except for that beneath the reservoir.

#### *3.3 Assessment of Importance*

3.3.1 Small multivallate hillforts are defined as fortified enclosures of varying shape, generally between 1 and 5ha in size and located on hilltops. They are defined by boundaries consisting of two or more lines of closely set earthworks spaced at intervals of up to 15m. These entirely surround the interior except on sites located on promontories, where cliffs may form one or more sides of the monument. They date to the Iron Age period, most having been constructed and occupied between the sixth century BC and the mid-first century AD. Small multivallate hillforts are generally regarded as settlements of high status, occupied on a permanent basis. Recent interpretations suggest that the construction of multiple earthworks may have had as much to do with display as with defence. Earthworks may consist of a rampart alone or of a rampart and ditch which, on many sites, are associated with

counterscarp banks and internal quarry scoops.

- 3.3.2 Access to the interior is generally provided by one or two entrances, which either appear as simple gaps in the earthwork or inturned passages, sometimes with guardrooms. The interior generally consists of settlement evidence including round houses, four and six post structures interpreted as raised granaries, roads, pits, gullies, hearths and a variety of scattered post and stake holes. Evidence from the exterior of small multivallate hillforts suggests that extra-mural settlement was of a similar nature.
- 3.3.3 Small multivallate hillforts are rare with around 100 examples recorded nationally. Most are located in the Welsh Marches and the south-west with a concentration of small monuments in the north-east. In view of the rarity of small multivallate hillforts and their importance in understanding the nature of settlement and social organisation within the Iron Age period, all examples with surviving archaeological potential are believed to be of national importance. Anstiebury Camp hillfort survives well and, as partial excavation of the monument has demonstrated, contains archaeological remains and environmental evidence relating to the monument, its inhabitants, their economy and the landscape in which they lived.
- 3.3.4 Anstiebury Camp was the subject of a programme of archaeological field investigation in 1972 and 1973 as part of a wider programme of research (Thompson 1979).

#### **4.0 Methodology**

- 4.1 The construction of the existing covered 60,000 gallon reservoir resulted in a hole measuring approximately 33-feet x 33-feet (c. 100m<sup>2</sup>) being excavated to a depth of approximately 9-feet (c. 2.75m) below existing ground level (Fig. 2). The reservoir was constructed to a height of approximately 7-feet 3-inches (c. 2.2m) above existing ground level and subsequently buried beneath a sloped embankment. The current works took place adjacent to the northern edge of this embankment.
- 4.2 The contractors used hand-tools and a pneumatic drill to remove the existing gateway, adjacent fence panels and the concrete post pads. A new posthole, measuring 300mm<sup>2</sup> and 850mm in depth, was excavated to hold the new gatepost.
- 4.3 All intrusive groundwork associated with the development was monitored by an archaeologist. Hand excavation was undertaken by the fencing contractors (Wesson Fencing) with due regard for the potential to encounter archaeological remains.



## **5.0 Results and Conclusions**

- 5.1 Only three contexts were recorded during the watching brief monitoring. According to The British Geological Survey (BGS 20012) bedrock geology on site consists of sandstone of the Hythe Formation, no superficial deposits having been recorded. During the monitoring, natural geology was recorded as consisting of light yellowish sand with sandstone fragments, [003]; this was encountered 300mm below ground level and this was overlain by light greyish brown clayey silt subsoil [002] (150mm thick) and mid brownish grey clayey silt topsoil [001] (also 150mm thick). No archaeological deposits or finds were encountered during the excavations.
- 5.2 The watching brief monitoring concluded that no archaeological remains were disturbed during the groundwork and the archaeological resource was not impacted as a result of the work at the site.

## References

ASE 2012. Anstiebury Camp, Coldharbour, Surrey – Method Statement for an Archaeological Watching Brief

BGS 2012, British Geological Survey: Geology of Britain Viewer, [http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer\\_google/googleviewer.html](http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer_google/googleviewer.html)

IFA 2008. Institute of Field Archaeologists: Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief. Published online at <http://www.archaeologists.net/>

IFA 2010. Institute of Field Archaeologists: Code of Conduct. Published online at <http://www.archaeologists.net/>

Thompson, F.H. 1979. Three Surrey Hillforts: Excavations at Anstiebury, Holmbury and Hascombe, 1972-1977, *Antiq. J.* 59, Part 2, 245-318

## Acknowledgement

ASE would like to thank Sutton and East Surrey Water for commissioning the work and Richard Massey, English Heritage for his advice and guidance and throughout the project.

**HER Summary Form**

Site Code	ACC12					
Identification Name and Address	Anstiebury Camp, Coldharbour, Surrey					
County, District &/or Borough	Surrey, Mole Valley, Holmwood					
OS Grid Refs.	515336 144042					
Geology	Sandstone, Hythe Formation					
Arch. South-East Project Number	5301					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	Watching Brief ✓	Standing Structure	MDS	SMS
Type of Site	Green Field ✓	Shallow Urban	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	WB. 24 <sup>th</sup> Feb. 2012	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Sutton and East Surrey Water					
Project Manager	Neil Griffin					
Project Supervisor	Kathryn Grant					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM	Other		
<p>100 Word Summary.</p> <p><i>Archaeology South-East (ASE) was commissioned by Sutton and East Surrey Water to undertake a programme of archaeological monitoring during the widening of an existing gateway to a covered reservoir at Anstiebury Camp, Coldharbour, Surrey (NGR centred 515336 144042). The watching brief monitoring was carried out in one site visit on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2012.</i></p> <p><i>Natural sandy geology was encountered 300mm below ground level and was overlain by subsoil and topsoil. No archaeological finds were recovered during the watching brief.</i></p>						

**OASIS Form**

**OASIS ID: archaeol6-120549**

**Project details**

Project name           Anstiebury Camp, Coldharbour, Surrey

Short description of the project   Archaeology South-East (ASE) was commissioned by Sutton and East Surrey Water to undertake a programme of archaeological monitoring during the widening of an existing gateway to a covered reservoir at Anstiebury Camp, Coldharbour, Surrey (NGR centred 515336 144042). The watching brief monitoring was carried out in one site visit on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2012.

Natural sandy geology was encountered 300mm below ground level and was overlain by subsoil and topsoil. No archaeological finds were recovered during the watching brief.

Project dates           Start: 24-02-2012 End: 24-02-2012

Previous/future work       Not known / Not known

Any associated project reference codes   ACC12 - Sitecode

Any associated project reference codes   20186 - SM No.

Type of project         Recording project

Site status             Scheduled Monument (SM)

Current Land use       Other 15 - Other

Monument type         NONE None

Significant Finds       NONE None

Investigation type     'Watching Brief'

Prompt                      Scheduled Monument Consent

**Project location**

Country                      England

Site location                SURREY MOLE VALLEY HOLMWOOD Anstiebury Camp,  
Coldharbour

Site coordinates            TQ 515336 144042 50.9086134930 0.1556147393 50 54 31 N 000 09  
20 E Point

**Project creators**

Name of Organisation      Archaeology South East

Project brief originator    English Heritage

Project design originator    Archaeology South-East

Project director/manager    Neil Griffin

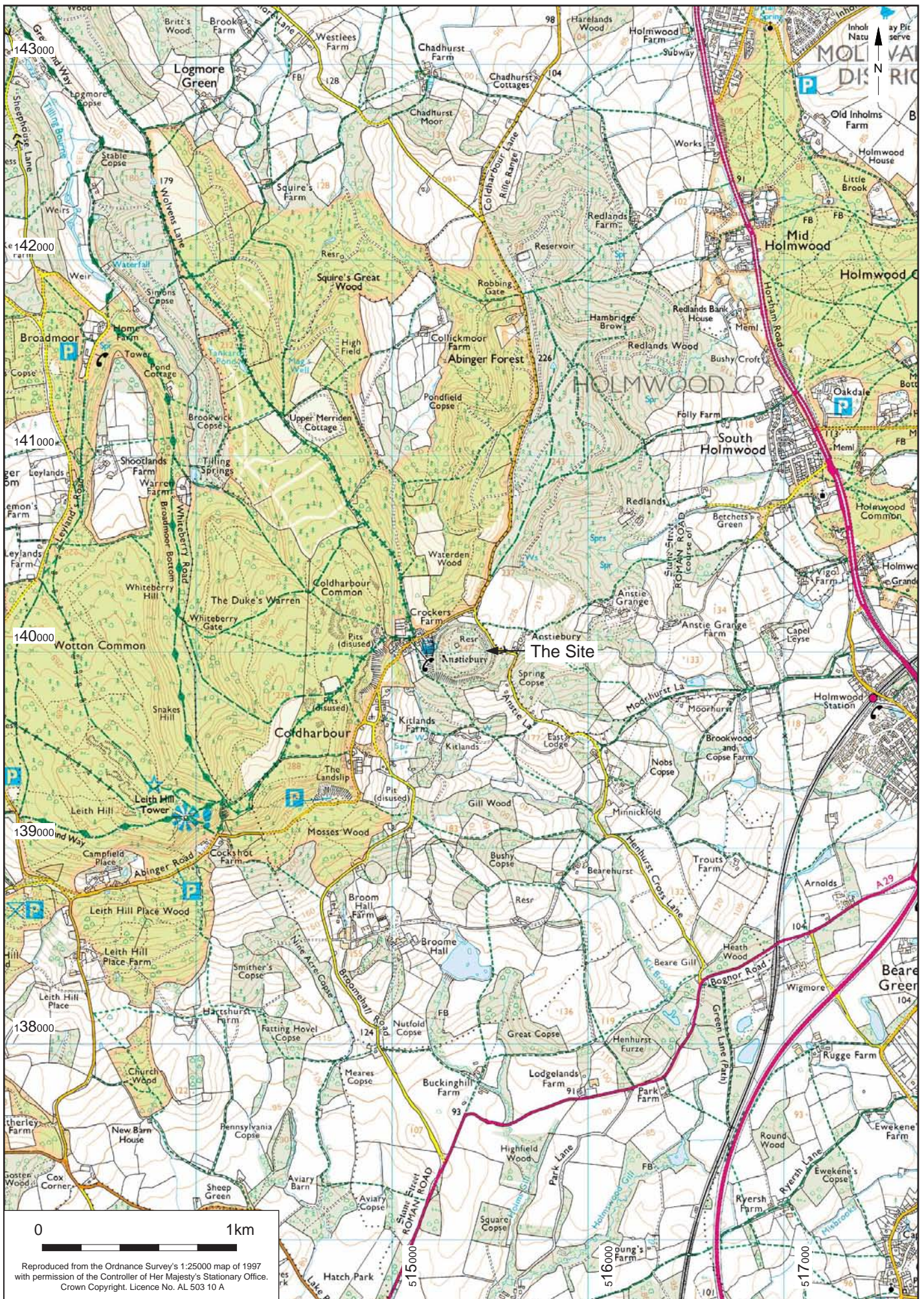
Project supervisor          Kathryn Grant

Type of sponsor/funding body    Water Authority/Company

Name of sponsor/funding body    Sutton and East surrey Water

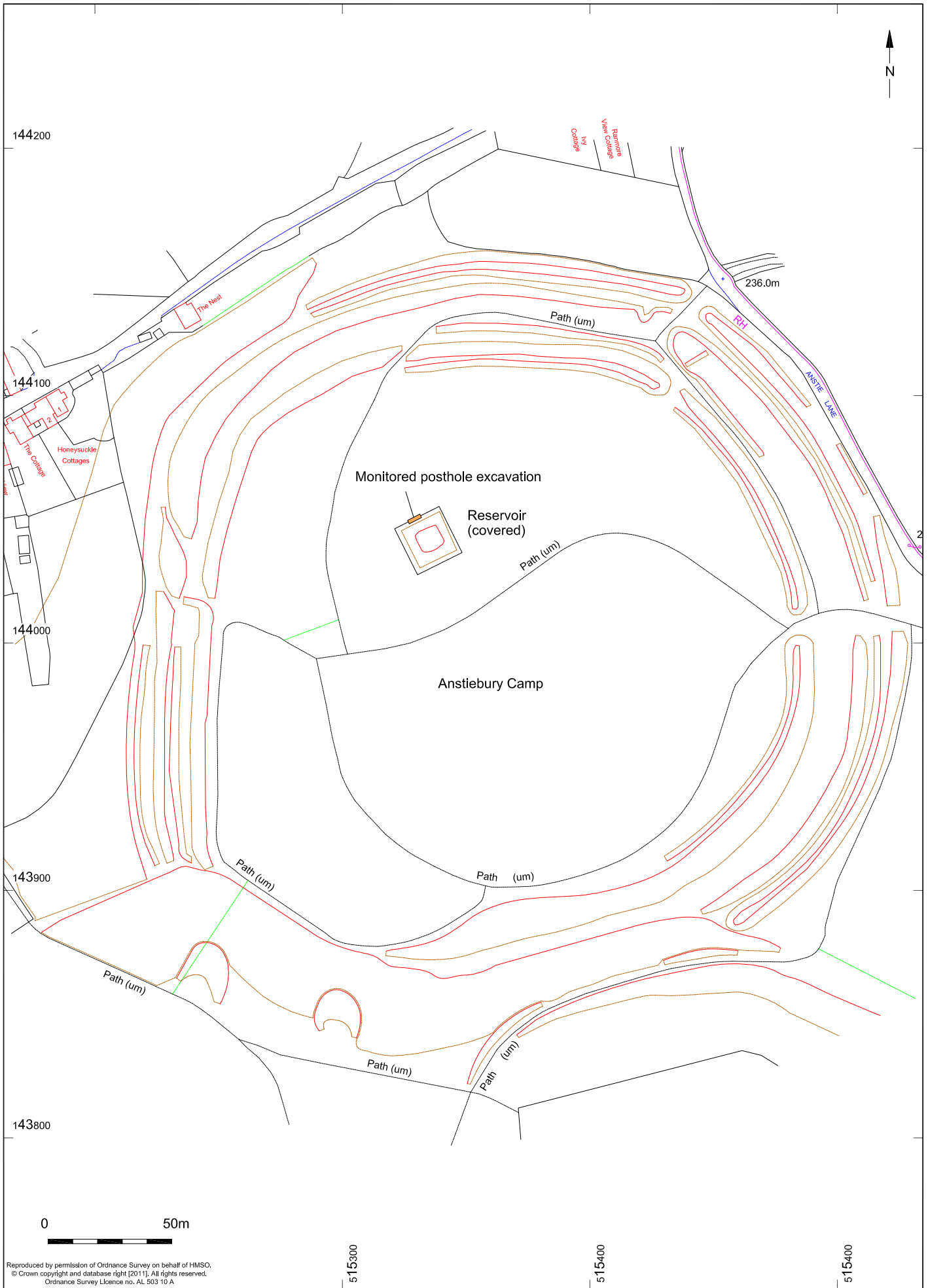
Entered by                      Kathryn Grant (Kathryn.Grant@ucl.ac.uk)

Entered on                      7 March 2012



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Project Ref: 5301	March 2012	Site location	
Report Ref: 2012067	Drawn by: JLR		

Fig. 1



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© Archaeology South-East		Anstiebury Camp, Coldharbour	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 5301	March 2012	Location of monitored work	
Report Ref: 2012067	Drawn by: JLR		

**Photographs of the monitored works**



Photograph showing hand excavated posthole for new fence post





South-east facing view of monitored works

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