

**Geoarchaeological Watching Brief Report  
Ground Investigations on the Teville Stream Floodplain  
East Worthing, West Sussex**

**NGR 516062 104197  
(TQ 16062 04197)**

**ASE Project No: 5406  
Site Code: BBL 12**

**ASE Report No: 2012093  
OASIS id: archaeol6-123635**

**By Kathryn Grant BA MSc AIFA and Dr Matt Pope BSc Phd FSA  
Illustrations by Justin Russell**



**August 2012**

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## **Abstract**

*Archaeology South-East was commissioned by the Environment Agency to undertake an archaeological watching brief during ground investigations on the Teville Stream floodplain in Worthing. The watching brief on three test pits took place from 28th February to 1st March 2012.*

*No archaeological deposits, features or artefacts were encountered during the monitoring of three trial pits. The test pits revealed varied a complex stratigraphy relating to multiagency processes including Pleistocene marine, Holocene alluvium and Holocene marine contexts.*

*TE1 revealed a raised beach deposit between two alluvial layers overlying chalk. TE2 revealed probable head deposits but did not go deep enough to reach bedrock. TE3 revealed probable drift geology over alluvium but did not go deep enough to reach bedrock.*

*Review of additional borehole logs, which were undertaken without geoarchaeological supervision, indicates a sedimentary sequence across the site relating to the incision and alluvial/marine sedimentation of a major coastal plain inlet (rife). The indicated survival of organic material at depth indicates that important palaeoenvironmental sequences of direct archaeological relevance and possibly with associated archaeology are preserved at the site. These could be at threat if significant changes to drainage patterns are undertaken.*

*While within the small footprint of TE1-3 there was no direct evidence for human occupation, this does not preclude the possibility that archaeology may exist elsewhere across this extensive site. Indeed it is highly likely, given the sheltered estuarine context of the sedimentary sequence that prehistoric and historic human activity will exist on the margins of the Teville Stream channel. The site also holds important potential for the preservation of palaeoenvironmental remains of regional geoarchaeological significance within the floodplain of the Teville Stream. These deposits are considered likely to contain important palaeoenvironmental material and possibly to preserve prehistoric archaeology.*

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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 (CAA), Institute of Archaeology (IoA), University College London (UCL) was commissioned by the Environment Agency to undertake archaeological monitoring during ground investigations on the Teville Stream floodplain, East Worthing, West Sussex (NGR 516062 104197; Fig. 1 and 2) hereafter referred to as 'the site'.

### **1.2 Planning Background**

1.2.1 Although the works was not subject to any planning conditions, The Environment Agency stipulated that an archaeological watching brief was to be maintained during the investigation of Trial Pits 1-3 (TE1-3; Fig. 2) in order to record any archaeological remains which might be impacted. A programme of bore-holing and surface water sampling was also undertaken at the site but there was no requirement for archaeological monitoring of these groundworks.

1.2.2 A *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) for the archaeological watching brief was prepared (ASE 2012) with reference to the standards of archaeological fieldwork as employed by West Sussex County Council and the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) and was submitted to the Environment Agency for approval prior to the commencement of fieldwork.

### **1.3 Aims and Objectives**

1.3.1 The general aim of the archaeological watching brief as outlined in the WSI (ASE 2012) was to monitor the excavation of the three trial pits in order to ensure that any exposed features, artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest were recorded and interpreted to appropriate standards.

### **1.4 Scope of Report**

1.4.1 This report details the findings of the watching brief which was undertaken by Kathryn Grant between 28<sup>th</sup> February and 1<sup>st</sup> March 2012. The project was managed by Neil Griffin (Fieldwork) and Dan Swift (Post-excavation).

## **2.0 BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Geology and Topography**

- 2.1.1 According to the British Geological Survey (BGS) Sheet 318 (1984) the underlying geology varies across the site from Head and alluvium to chalk bedrock and Lambeth Group bedrock.
- 2.1.2 The BGS data indicates that the location of TE1 is close to the boundary between Head and Alluvium, overlying Chalk bedrock, TE2 lies close to the boundary between Head and Raised Beach deposits, overlying the boundary between Chalk and Lambeth Group bedrock (clay, silt and sand) and TE3 lies close to the boundary between Raised Beach and Alluvium, overlying Lambeth Group bedrock, with made ground lying immediately to the west. The bedrock is overlain by alluvial deposits and Raised Beach deposits although some Quaternary sedimentation is shown as also being present. The latter can be readily seen in the Black Rock raised beach section, 10.5 km to the east, and forms a series of bedded colluvial deposits comprising red to pinkish silts supporting consolidated beds of sub-angular chalk and flint gravel. Some of these beds are orientated in relation to the remnant chalk cliff of the Brighton Raised Beach and will have bedding angles of up to 45 degrees orientated on a NE-SW axis. Others are of dry valley origin; these generally have horizontal bedding angles and form the fill of north-south oriented valley profiles (Young and Lake 1998; Gallois 1965).
- 2.1.3 The local topography forms part of the Sussex Coastal Plain, which is some 4km wide at this point and is bound to the north by the South Downs and to the south by the modern coastline. The site is situated some 2km to the south of the inferred cliff line of the Brighton-Norton Raised Beach. Given the altitude of the site, it is considered possible that deposits forming part of the terrestrial and marine facies of the Norton Formation (Bates et al 1998) could be present at the site. Additionally, late prehistoric archaeology including Neolithic axes were found within the alluvium of the Teville Stream at Homefield Park, Worthing.
- 2.1.4 The site was considered to have a high potential for the preservation of palaeoenvironmental remains of regional geoarchaeological significance within the floodplain of the Teville Stream. Inspection of geotechnical logs from an adjacent site (Willowbrook Road; see below), demonstrated that potential exists for palaeoenvironmental remains to be preserved at depth at that location. These logs appeared to indicate that alluvial and marine deposits might be preserved beneath the made ground (landfill) and superficial Head Gravels. These deposits were considered likely to contain important palaeoenvironmental material and possibly to preserve prehistoric archaeology. Basal marine sequences and the associated wave-cut platforms were also thought to be present.

## **2.2 Archaeological Background**

- 2.2.1 While the environmental history of the major Sussex Rivers has been studied to an effective degree during the past 50 years (Thorley 1971; Kirkaldy and Bull 1940; Burrin 1988), the study of the in-filled rifes of the Sussex Coastal plain is very much in its infancy, although their full potential to deliver long sequences has been recognised recently. Through both research and commercial projects being undertaken currently by Martin Bates (Lampeter) and Mark Roberts (UCL), the formation of rifes and their relationship to the drowned harbours of the coastal plain is starting to be understood as a process controlled in part by variation in sub-surface solid geology (Calcareous Chalk or Tertiary) and relating to the drowning and subsequent infilling of melt water channels. These melt water channels can be traced directly back across the Coastal Plain to both minor Downland river valleys (Ems, Lavant) and major dry valleys (e.g. Slindon, Findon, Avisford Dell)
- 2.2.2 It was thought possible that the work could help to determine the possibility that the Broadwater inlet could have served as a Harbour for Worthing during the medieval period. Two medieval accounts suggest a harbour present on the Teville Stream in 1324 and 1493, which was considered a member of Shoreham Port (Hudson *et al.* 1980). With the gradual silting up of the inland harbour at Steyning and Bramber by this time, estuarine harbours on the coast at Shoreham and Worthing may have become more important as anchorages for shipping and for trade. Originally the inlet of the Teville Stream separated the hamlet of Broadwater from Worthing, the former presumably taking its name from the flooded estuary.
- 2.2.3 Accounts are given in the 16th Century for off-shore bars forming along the Worthing coast leading to the formation of lagoons both east and west of Worthing (*ibid*). One of these lagoons is likely to be the Broadwater inlet. Eventually, large areas of dry land began to form behind these gravel bars, including the salt common at Worthing, until some of these areas again became subject to removal through marine erosion in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Undoubtedly the main controlling factor in the development of the coast line around Worthing is the distribution and changing morphology of off-shore gravel bars and beach gravel. Fluctuating fluvial and tidal regimes affecting the Teville inlet may also have been a feature of its early past.
- 2.2.4 Recent investigations by ASE at Viridor's Willowbrook Road site immediately west of the current site (Fig. 1) recorded a sequence of undisturbed alluvium preserving micropalaeontological evidence, suggesting phased periods of estuarine conditions perhaps controlled by the formation of gravel bars across the mouth of the estuary (Pope & Peyre 2009). The sequence shows the formation of an intertidal inlet, with rising sea levels (possibly in the Bronze Age). Evidence for associated development of saltmarsh persists through much of the sequence while terrestrial pollen indicates deforestation in the Middle Bronze Age. A single radiocarbon date (Cal BP 3690 to 3470) was obtained for this phase.

### **3.0 METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Fieldwork Methodology**

- 3.1.1 The complete adopted methodology may be found in the WSI (ASE 2012). This section is a brief précis of the detail within the WSI.
- 3.1.2 Three trial pits were hand-excavated by ground workers to a depth of 1.2m under the constant supervision of Opus staff and an archaeologist (TE1-3; Fig. 2). Following the careful removal of turf onto plastic sheeting, subsequent deposits were removed in spits. Machine excavation was undertaken from 1.2m to 3m by a JCB fitted with a flat-bladed bucket
- 3.1.3 During the monitored excavations, all revealed deposits were examined for archaeological features, deposits and artefacts. The removed spoil was scanned for any stray, unstratified artefacts. The uncovered deposits were recorded according to accepted professional standards (IFA 2008).
- 3.1.4 A digital photographic record of each of the trial pits was kept forms part of the site archive.
- 3.1.5 The trial pit locations and deposit heights were supplied by Opus International.
- 3.1.6 A review of additional borehole logs, which were undertaken without geoarchaeological supervision has also been undertaken for this report.

#### **3.2 The Archive**

- 3.2.1 The site archive is presently held at the Archaeology South-East offices in Portslade, East Sussex pending submission to Worthing Museum. The contents of the site archive are summarised below in Table 1.

Number of Contexts	15 contexts
Number of files/paper record	1 file
Plan and sections sheets	None
Photographs	20 digital images

Table 1: Quantification of the site archive



## 4.0 RESULTS (Fig. 2-3)

### 4.1 Trial Pit (TE) 1

4.1.1 TE 1 measured 2.0m long and 0.45m wide with a maximum depth of 3.1m and was the northernmost of the trial pits. No archaeological features, deposits or finds were exposed. Six contexts were revealed within this trial pit and have been summarised in 4.1.2.

Context Number	Context Type	Context Description	Deposit Thickness	Approximate Height m AOD
1/001	Deposit	Topsoil	0.35m	1.63
1/002	Deposit	Orange brown clay with grey mottling and manganese inclusions	0.95m	1.28
1/003	Deposit	Blue-grey alluvium with 10% rounded flint gravel	0.15m	0.33
1/004	Deposit	Fine grey sandy clay - fluvial/raised beach	0.25m	0.18
1/005	Deposit	Organic blue grey alluvium	0.65m	-0.07
1/006	Deposit	Chalk Marl – whitish grey sandy silt	0.35m	-0.72-
1/007	Deposit	Light yellowish white slightly sand silt with frequent chalk	@2.7m BGL	-1.07-

Table 2: Contexts revealed in TE 1

#### 4.1.2 Summary of Contexts

Solid chalk bedrock [1/007] was encountered 2.7m below ground level (BGL) at approximately -1.07m AOD. This was overlain by a series of probable alluvial deposits including a possible raised beach deposit [1/004] at a height of approximately 0.18m AOD. No archaeological remains were encountered during the excavation of this trial pit.

## 4.2 Trial Pit (TE) 2

4.2.1 TE 2 measured 2.0m long and 0.45m wide with a maximum depth of 3.2m and was located between TE's 1 and 3. No archaeological features, deposits or finds were exposed. Three contexts were revealed within this trial pit and these have been described in 4.2.2.

<b>Context Number</b>	<b>Context Type</b>	<b>Context Description</b>	<b>Deposit Thickness</b>	<b>Approximate Height m AOD</b>
2/001	Deposit	Topsoil	0.3m	3.5
2/002	Deposit	Light orange brown clayey silt Head	1.0m	3.2
2/003	Deposit	Light orange clayey silt granular Head	@1.7m BGL	2.2-

Table 3: Contexts revealed in TE 2

### 4.2.2 Summary of Contexts

A natural clayey silt probable Head deposit [2/002] was encountered directly beneath topsoil (0.3m BGL) at approximately 3.2m AOD. A very similar deposit with a slightly more granular texture was encountered at around 2.2m AOD. No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were encountered during the excavation of this trial pit.

### 4.3 Trial Pit (TE) 3

4.3.1 TE 3 measured 1.5m long and 0.6m wide with a maximum depth of 3.3m; it revealed five deposits, summarised in 4.3.2.

Context Number	Context Type	Context Description	Deposit Thickness	Approximate Height m AOD
3/001	Deposit	Topsoil	0.20m	1.82
3/002	Deposit	Light mottled grey-orange sandy clay Drift with occasional sub-angular flint gravels	0.50m	1.62
3/003	Deposit	Mid orange sandy Drift with rare grey mottling	1.30m	1.12
3/004	Deposit	Light grey sterile clay	0.2m	-0.18
3/005	Deposit	Grey-blue clay/estuary alluvium	@2.2m BGL	-0.38

Table 4: Contexts revealed in TE 3

#### 4.3.2 Summary of Contexts

No solid bedrock was encountered within this trial pit. A grey-blue possibly alluvial clay/estuary deposit was revealed 2.2m BGL (approximately -0.38m AOD) until the limit of excavation at 3.0m. This deposit was overlain by a thin sterile layer of light grey clay [3/004] (0.2m thick) and probable drift geology [3/002-3]. No archaeological features deposits or artefacts were encountered during the excavation of this trial pit.

#### **4.4 Review of Borehole Logs (BH1-6)**

- 4.4.1 Six geotechnical boreholes were undertaken across the site. These were not undertaken with geoarchaeological supervision, nor were palaeoenvironmental samples taken for assessment. The logs from these boreholes revealed the following summary which has been developed on the basis of the recorded observations at each location.
- 4.4.2 In general the boreholes appear to confirm the observations made during the excavation of the test pits, that the site preserves a vertically and horizontally extensive sequence of marine and fluvial sedimentation relating to the incision and infilling of a coastal plain inlet (rife).
- 4.4.3 The boreholes reveal that outside of areas where landfill has been undertaken (made ground was revealed at BH2, BH3 and BH6). Complete intact sedimentary sequences from the chalk bedrock upwards are preserved. These appear to include:
1. High energy fluvial deposits resting on solid geology (ice age channel incision)
  2. Low energy Holocene alluvium with organic preservation (BH1, BH2, BH3, BH6)
  3. Marine/Intertidal sedimentation with mollusc preservation (BH2 and BH3)
- 4.4.4 Taken together the evidence shows that the site occupies an infilled coastal plain inlet (rife) with high potential for palaeoenvironmental remains of regional significance and potential for human occupation on the margins of this productive natural harbour environment.

## **5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 5.1 No archaeological features, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts were recorded in the footprint of the test pit during the watching brief.
- 5.2 The test pits and boreholes revealed a complex and dynamic sedimentary sequence relating to the incision and infilling of a coastal plain channel (rife).
- 5.3 TE1 revealed marine deposits between two probable alluvial layers overlying chalk. TE2 and TE 3 revealed head deposits and alluvial deposits.
- 5.4 Interpretation of the borehole logs suggests that a complete sequence of infill covering Pleistocene, early and mid-Holocene sedimentation is preserved at the site.
- 5.6 The site therefore offers excellent potential for palaeoenvironmental remains and associated human activity. Rifes such as the Teville Stream are natural harbours which were navigable until the 13<sup>th</sup> century (Pope and Peyre 2009).
- 5.7 It is recommended that prior to work at the site, a suitable programme of purposive geoarchaeological and archaeological fieldwork should be undertaken to ensure that archaeology is not impacted upon without assessment and that a full archive of the palaeoenvironmental record is recovered and characterised.

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The cooperation and assistance of all those involved in the project is much appreciated. Particular thanks go to the Environment Agency for commissioning the work and Lydia Parry (Opus International) for coordinating the fieldwork.

**HER Summary Form**

Site Code	BBL 12					
Identification Name and Address	Teville Stream Floodplain					
County, District and/or Borough	East Worthing, West Sussex					
OS Grid Refs.	NGR 516062 104197					
Geology	Head, Alluvium, Chalk Bedrock and Lambeth Group Bedrock					
Arch. South-East Project Number	5406					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	<b>Watching Brief</b>	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	<b>Green Field</b>	Shallow Urban	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	<b>WB. 28-02-12 – 1-03-12</b>	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Environment Agency					
Project Manager	Neil Griffin					
Project Supervisor	Kathryn Grant					
Period Summary	Palaeo. None	Meso. None	Neo. None	BA None	IA None	RB None
	AS None	MED None	PM None	Other		



## Summary

Archaeology South-East was commissioned by the Environment Agency to undertake an archaeological watching brief during ground investigations on the Teville Stream floodplain in Worthing. The watching brief on three test pits took place from 28th February to 1st March 2012.

No archaeological deposits, features or artefacts were encountered during the monitoring of three trial pits. The test pits revealed varied a complex stratigraphy relating to multiagency processes including Pleistocene marine, Holocene alluvium and Holocene marine contexts.

TE1 revealed a raised beach deposit between two alluvial layers overlying chalk. TE2 revealed probable head deposits but did not go deep enough to reach bedrock. TE3 revealed probable drift geology over alluvium but did not go deep enough to reach bedrock.

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While within the small footprint of TE1-3 there was no direct evidence for human occupation, this does not preclude the possibility that archaeology may exist elsewhere across this extensive site. Indeed it is highly likely, given the sheltered estuarine context of the sedimentary sequence that prehistoric and historic human activity will exist on the margins of the Teville Stream channel. The site also holds important potential for the preservation of palaeoenvironmental remains of regional geoarchaeological significance within the floodplain of the Teville Stream. These deposits are considered likely to contain important palaeoenvironmental material and possibly to preserve prehistoric archaeology.

It is recommended that prior to work at the site, a suitable programme of purposive geoarchaeological and archaeological fieldwork should be undertaken to ensure that archaeology is not impacted upon without assessment and that a full archive of the palaeoenvironmental record is recovered and characterised.

## OASIS Form

**OASIS ID: archaeol6-123635**

### Project details

Project name            Teville Stream Floodplain

Short description of the project    Archaeology South-East was commissioned by the Environment Agency to undertake an archaeological watching brief during ground investigations on the Teville Stream floodplain in Worthing. The watching brief on three test pits took place from 28th February to 1st March 2012.

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Project dates            Start: 28-02-2012 End: 01-03-2012

Previous/future work    Not known / Not known

Any associated            BBL 12 - Sitecode

project reference  
codes

Type of project      Recording project

Current Land use      Other 15 - Other

Monument type      NONE None

Significant Finds      NONE None

Investigation type      'Watching Brief'

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**Project location**

Country              England

Site location        WEST SUSSEX WORTHING WORTHING Teville Stream,  
East Worthing

Site coordinates    TQ 16062 04197 50.8250947127 -0.351962144555 50 49 30 N  
000 21 07 W Point

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**Project creators**

Name of  
Organisation        Archaeology South East

Project  
director/manager    Neil Griffin

Project supervisor   Kathryn Grant

Type of  
sponsor/funding  
body                Environment Agency

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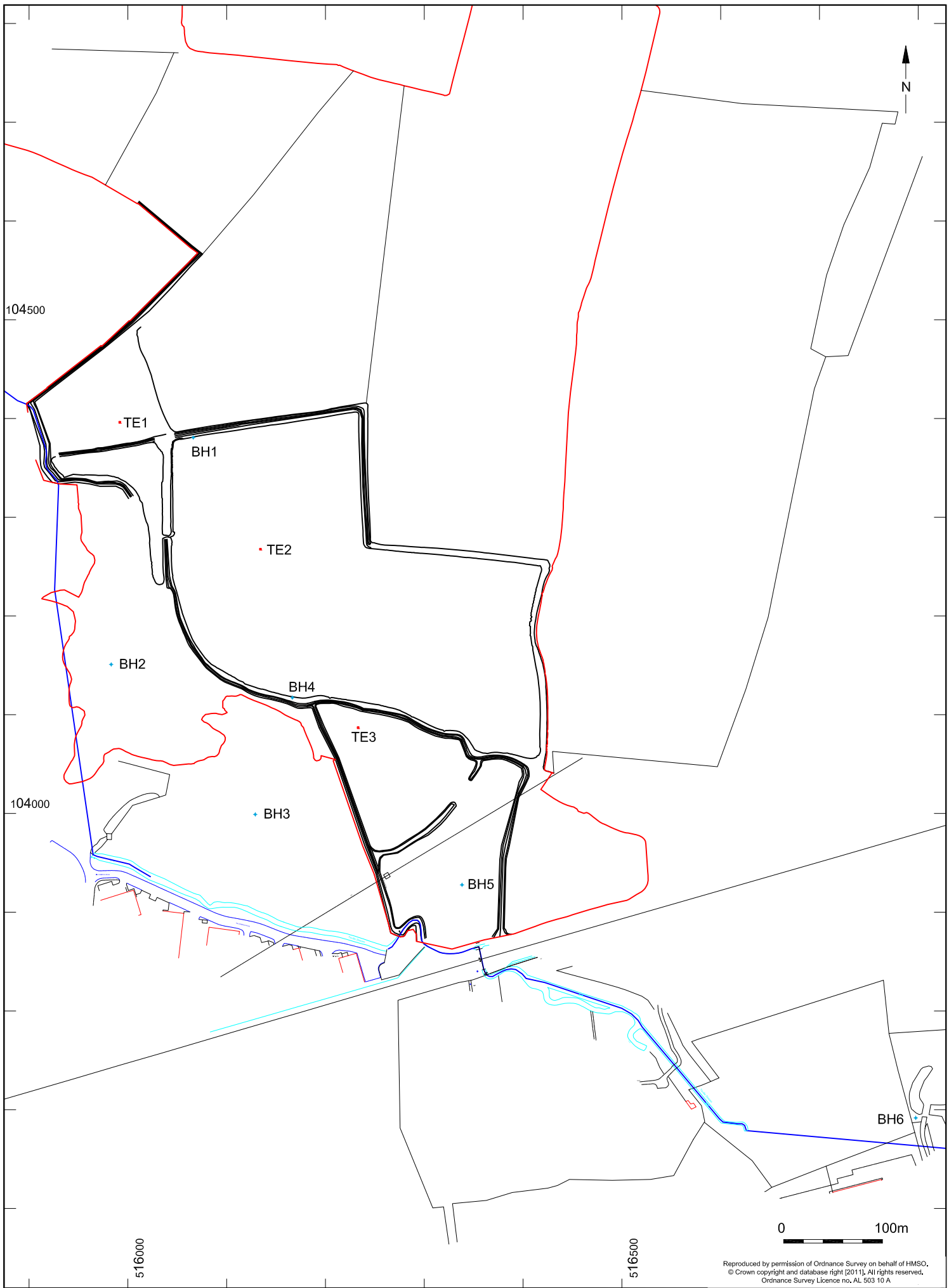
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Project Ref: 5406	Aug 2012	Site Location Plan	
Report Ref: 2012093	Drawn by: JLR		





© Archaeology South-East		Teville Stream, Worthing		Fig. 2
Project Ref: 5406	Aug 2012	Trial pit and borehole locations		
Report Ref: 2012093	Drawn by: JLR			



TE1



TE1



TE2



TE2



TE3



TE3

© Archaeology South-East		Teville Stream, Worthing	Fig. 3
Project Ref: 5406	May 2012	Photographs	
Report Ref: 2012093	Drawn by: JLR		

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