ASE

Archaeological Investigations on Land to the Rear of 240-258 Holtye Road and Adjacent to Ashplats House East Grinstead, West Sussex

NGR: TQ 4079 3917

Project No: 5707 Site Code: HEG 12

ASE Report No: 2012193 OASIS ID: archaeol6-134260

By Dan Swift
With contributions from
Anna Doherty and Karine le Hégarat



September 2012

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Archaeology South-East

Eval. And Exc. Holtye Road, East Grinstead ASE Report No: 2012193

Abstract

Archaeology South-East was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of their clients Barratt Southern Counties, to conduct archaeological investigations on Land to the Rear of 240-258 Holtye Road and Adjacent to Ashplats House East Grinstead, West Sussex. Nine evaluation trenches and a c. 25nm x 25m area were investigated.

No signs of truncation to the topsoil, subsoil or underlying natural geology were detected in any of the areas investigated. The excavations revealed elements of a field system.

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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 CgMs Consulting on behalf of their clients Barratt Southern Counties, to conduct archaeological investigations on Land to the Rear of 240-258 Holtye Road and Adjacent to Ashplats House East Grinstead, West Sussex (NGR: TQ 4079 3917; Figure 1).

1.2 Geology and Topography

1.2.1 The British Geological Survey (England and Wales Sheet 303: Tunbridge Wells) indicates that the site overlies Ardingly Sandstone. The site has a considerable change in level from north to south from a high point of 141.29m AOD at the far north of the site to 122.14m AOD in the south of the site. The northern half of the site has a fairly gradual but noticeable gradient which becomes increasingly severe towards the south of the site at which point it is in the order of 1 in 6 to 1 in 8

1.3 Planning Background

- 1.3.1 The site has been granted outline planning permission for residential development (Reference: 10/1317/OUT) subject to the following condition relating to archaeology:
 - 11. The Developer shall arrange for an archaeological organisation or appropriately qualified archaeologists to observe the ground excavations for the grounds maintenance building and record archaeological evidence that may be uncovered as a result of the development in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which a shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development.

1.4 Aims and Objectives

- 1.4.1 In general, the aim of the archaeological work was to record, interpret and report on any archaeological remains exposed (including artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest) in 10 mechanically excavated archaeological evaluation trenches to appropriate archaeological standards.
- 1.4.2 The evaluation would also assess any past impacts on the site and pay particular attention to the character, height/depth below ground level, condition, date and significance of the deposits.

1.5 Scope of Report

1.5.1 This report provides the results of 9 archaeological evaluation trenches excavated between 29/8/12 and 31/8/12 and a further c. 25m x 25m area opened around Trench 7 between 10/9/12 and 12/9/12. The on-site work was undertaken by Ben Sharp, Dan Swift and Rob Cole. The project was managed by Darryl Palmer (Project Manager) and by Jim Stevenson (Post-

Excavation Manager).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 An archaeological background and development history of the site and immediate area was prepared as part of an impact assessment report prepared by CgMs Consulting (CgMs 2012). The background from that report is reproduced here with due acknowledgement.
- 2.2 A search of the records of West Sussex Historic Environment Record (HER) for a 1km radius around a centre point of TQ4079 3917 returned only 2 monument records, both for war memorials. Further to the south-west, the HER records a medieval farm and medieval mining pits. Given the dearth of archaeological evidence in the surrounding area, and the topography of the site making any activity on it challenging, the site was considered to have a low archaeological potential for all past periods.
- 2.3 Early cartographic depictions of the site such as Gardner and Gream's map of 1795 and the 1808 Ordnance Survey Drawings show the site as undeveloped fields.
- 2.4 The 1841 East Grinstead Tithe is the first map to record the site in detail, and it depicts it as lying in parts of two fields called Fourteen Acres and Upper Field. Both are recorded as being in arable cultivation.
- 2.5 The Ordnance Survey of 1873 shows the study area still as undeveloped fields. By 1908 Shovelstrode Beacon house had been built in an enclosed area to the northeast and Ashplats house had been built by 1929, but the study site itself remained undeveloped.
- 2.6 By 1956, Ashplats House had been enclosed and the properties fronting Holtye Road had been constructed. On the site itself some trees had been planted along the western boundary. The Ordnance Survey map of 1980 appears to show an access route from a track to the west of the study site. There has been no further change to the study site.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 Initially, 10, 1.8m x 25m evaluation trenches were planned. In the event only 9 trenches were excavated as the proposed location of Trench 10 lay beneath an enormous dumped pile of earth. Features were identified within Trenches 3, 4 and 7. It was decided to open an additional c. 25nm x 25m area around Trench 7 to investigate the possibility of further archaeological features in that area (Figure 2).
- 3.2 Topsoil was removed by tracked 360 degree excavator fitted with a flatbladed ditching bucket to the surface of clean underlying natural deposits. All machine excavation was undertaken under the guidance of experienced archaeologists and continued to the surface of underlying natural geology.
- 3.3 All areas and archaeological features and interventions were surveyed using a Global Positioning System (DGPS). The survey produced 3D imaging from which the level data and plans in this report were derived.
- 3.4 Archaeological features were hand excavated by half-section or sondage to characterise, and where possible, date them through artefact retrieval.
- 3.5 All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using standard ASE recording sheets with colours recorded according to visual inspection. Sections were drawn at appropriate scales on plastic drafting film.
- 3.6 All interventions were photographically recorded by digital camera.
- 3.7 ASE informed East Grinstead Museum by email prior to the commencement of fieldwork that a site archive would be generated. The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will hopefully be deposited at East Grinstead Museum in due course. The contents of the archive are tabulated below (Table 1).

Number of Contexts	45
No. of files/paper record	1
Plan and sections sheets	1
Bulk Samples	2
Photographs	21

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

4.0 RESULTS

(Figure 2)

The area of the site under investigation was undeveloped and covered with grasses and low level vegetation. Until recently the site was wooded. The site is bordered by trees.

4.1 Trenches 1, 2, 5, 6, 8 and 9

4.1.1 No archaeological features or finds were recorded in any of these trenches.

Trench				Deposit
Number	Context	Type	Description	Thickness m
1, 2, 5, 6, 8 and 9	1	Layer	Topsoil	0.14m – 0.22m
1, 2, 5, 6, 8 and 9	2	Layer	Subsoil	0.20m – 0.40m
1, 2, 5, 6, 8 and 9	3	Layer	Natural	n/a

- 4.1.2 Topsoil [1] consisted of a soft friable light/mid-greyish brown sandy silt.
- 4.1.3 Subsoil [2] consisted of a friable light greyish brown silty sand with very, very occasional charcoal flecks.
- 4.1.4 Natural geology, Ardingly Sandstone, [3] varied between a light/midorangey brown to yellow cream and grey fine sand with frequent clasts of sandstone.

4.2 Trench 3

(Figure 3)

4.2.1 One natural feature was recorded. Topsoil, subsoil and natural deposits were as described above.

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Deposit Thickness m
Context	Type	•			IIIICKIIESS III
1	Layer	Topsoil	Trench	Trench	0.2
2	Layer	Subsoil	Trench	Trench	0.3
3	Layer	Natural	Trench	Trench	n/a
3/004	Cut	Tree hole	3.5	0.86	n/a
3/005	Fill	Tree hole	3.5	0.86	0.44

4.2.2 A tree hole [3/004] was recorded near to the centre of the trench. The fill [3/005] a mid-grey silty sand contained very occasional charcoal and burnt or discoloured sandstone. A large burnt-out root was found *in situ*. No finds were discovered.

4.3 Trench 4

(Figure 4)

4.3.1 One feature was recorded. Topsoil, subsoil and natural deposits were as described above.

			Max.	Max.	Deposit
Context	Type	Description	Length m	Width m	Thickness m
1	Layer	Topsoil	Trench	Trench	0.1
2	Layer	Subsoil	Trench	Trench	0.25
3	Layer	Natural	Trench	Trench	n/a
4/004	Cut	Linear	1.8	1.5	n/a
4/005	Fill	Linear	1.8	1.5	0.6

- 4.3.2 A linear feature [4/004] was recorded in the western central part of the trench. The fill [4/005] a friable, light grey silty sand contained some charcoal at the base of the investigated sondage.
- 4.3.3 A single small sherd of Iron Age pottery was recovered within [4/005].

4.3 Trench 7

(Figure 5)

4.3.1 Two features were recorded. Topsoil, subsoil and natural deposits were as described above.

Context	Туре	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Deposit Thickness m
1	Layer	Topsoil	Trench	Trench	0.1
2	Layer	Subsoil	Trench	Trench	0.25
3	Layer	Natural	Trench	Trench	n/a
7/004	Cut	Linear	4	1.2	n/a
7/005	Fill	Linear	4	1.2	0.41
7/006	Cut	Linear	2m	1.04	n/a
7/007	Fill	Linear	2m	1.04	0.43

- 4.3.2 A linear feature [7/004] was recorded crossing the trench along a NNW-SSE alignment. The ditch was filled by [7/005] a friable mid- greyish brown silty sand.
- 4.3.3 Finds from the ditch included some iron slag and a small amount of Iron Age pottery.
- A second linear feature [7/006] was recorded crossing the trench along a 4.3.4 WSW-ENE alignment. The ditch was filled by [7/007] a friable light/midbrown silty sand.
- No finds were recovered in this ditch. 4.3.5

4.4 **Excavation Area**

(Figure 5)

	_		Max.	Max.	Deposit Thickness
Context	Type	Description	Length m	Width m	m
10	Cut	Linear	Trench	1.60	n/a
11	Fill	Linear	n/a	1.60	0.55
12	Cut	Posthole	n/a	n/a	n/a
13	Fill	Posthole	n/a	n/a	0.26
14	Cut	Linear	c. 10	1.15	n/a
15	Fill	Linear	n/a	1.15	0.46
16	Cut	Linear terminus	c. 10	1.0	n/a
17	Fill	Linear terminus	n/a	1.0	0.22
18	Cut	Linear	Trench	0.97	n/a
19	Fill	Linear	n/a	0.97	0.37

- 4.4.1 A c. 25m x 25m area was opened up around evaluation Trenches 7 (and 8) in order to see whether the two ditches [7/004] and [7/006] met at right angles to form an enclosed area to the NW and to see whether features existed within this area. Topsoil, subsoil and natural deposits were consistent with that recorded across the site and described above in 4.1.
- 4.4.2 The two ditches did not meet, but instead formed a c. 2.4m wide opening. A posthole was recorded within the opening and 2 further sondages were excavated through the each ditch to retrieve finds.
- 4.4.3 Sondages [10] and [18] were hand excavated through the ditch [7/004] in order to obtain any further dating evidence. The profile of the ditch and the fills were similar in all 3 sondages.
- 4.4.4 A single undiagnostic worked flint of probable Mesolithic/Neolithic date was recovered from fill [19] within sondage [18]. Iron Age pottery was recovered from a different sondage [7/004] through the same ditch.
- 4.4.5 No further finds were found within the other sondage [10].
- 4.4.6 Sondages [14] and [16] were hand excavated through the ditch [7/006] in order to obtain dating evidence. The profile of the ditch and the fills were similar in all 3 sondages.
- 4.4.7 Sondage [16] was excavated at the terminus of the ditch and revealed a shallow bowl-like end to the feature.
- 4.4.8 No finds were recovered in any of the sondages through the ditch. Some charcoal was recorded in sondage [14].
- 4.4.9 A posthole [12] was recorded at the would-be intersection of the 2 ditches. The fill [13] contained numerous small sandstone packing stones were recorded. The fill showed no signs of a post-pipe and consisted of a firm mid-grey brown fine sandy-silt.

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4.4.10 The profile of the feature was quite pointed and together with the packing stones, this made the interpretation as a posthole very convincing. The feature was half-sectioned initially and then fully excavated for finds retrieval. No other finds were found.

4.4.11 No further archaeological features were recorded in the *c*. 25m x 25m area.

5.0 THE FINDS

Context	Pottery	Wt (g)	Flint	Wt (g)	Slag	Wt (g)
4/005	1	<2				
7/006	3	8			2	2
19			1	13		

Table 2: Quantification of finds

5.1 Worked Flint by Karine Le Hégarat

- 5.1.1 A single struck flint weighing 13g was recovered from ditch fill [19].
- 5.1.2 The artefact consists of a blade-like flake, manufactured on a grey flint with light grey mottled patches and infrequent inclusions. It exhibits very light edge modification, indicating that it had undergone minimal post depositional disturbance.
- 5.1.3 The piece of flint débitage was struck with a soft hammer percussor and it displays a hinged termination. It is not diagnostic, though technologically, it is consistent with a Mesolithic/Neolithic date.

5.2 Pottery by Anna Doherty

- 5.2.1 The evaluation phase produced a small assemblage of pottery from the fills of linear features [4/004] and [7/006], amounting to a total of 4 sherds, weighing 8 grams.
- 5.2.2 Three of the sherds originate from ditch [7/006]. Although all small undiagnostic bodysherds, the combination of fabric types (including one quartz-rich sherd, one quartz rich fabric with rare flint inclusions and one sparsely grog-tempered sherd) point to a Middle or Late Iron Age date.
- 5.2.3 Fill [4/005] produced a small quartz-rich sherd also of probable Iron Age date.
- 5.2.4 The sherds in [7/006] are fairly unabraded and perhaps unlikely to have been kicking around in ploughsoil for a long time; however they are small and few in number so more likely to have been accidently incorporated in the fill than deliberately deposited as rubbish/midden material etc. The one sherd from [4/005] is tiny and quite heavily abraded so could well be residual in a much later feature.

5.3 The Slag by Trista Clifford

- 5.3.1 Context [7/006] produced two tiny fragments of slag weighing less than 2g.
- 5.3.2 These fragments are undiagnostic of process and are not intrinsically dateable.

6.0 **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

(Figures 2 and 5)

- 6.1 The field in which all investigated areas were situated was wooded until very recently when it was cleared ahead of development. Several tree holes were noted and investigated. Only tree hole [3/004] in Trench 3 is discussed in this report as initially this was thought to be a linear feature on site, so was fully recorded.
- 6.2 No signs of truncation to the topsoil, subsoil or underlying natural geology were detected in any of the areas investigated.
- 6.3 The excavations have revealed elements of a field system in the form of fieldboundaries and/or drainage ditches.
- 6.4 One linear feature (sondages [7/007] and [18]) produced Iron Age pottery, iron slag and a single worked flint of probable Mesolithic/Neolithic date. A second parallel ditch in Trench 4 [4/005] also contained a single small sherd of Iron Age pottery.
- 6.5 No other datable material whatsoever was found on the site despite intensive searches through the resultant spoil heaps of topsoil and subsoil.
- The earliest cartographic source viewed, the Tithe map of 1841 (CqMs 2012, 6.6 Figure 6), does not show any internal divisions within the field (field 2585).
- 6.7 Given the right-angled arrangement of a third ditch ([14], [16], [7/006]) it is likely that at least three fields or paddocks existed. A posthole [12] situated within an opening between two fields or paddocks most probably suggests that a gate was located here, perhaps to allow stock animals to pass from lowland to upland pasture.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ASE would like to thank CgMs Consulting for commissioning the work on behalf of their client Barratt Southern Counties and John Mills County Archaeologist, West Sussex County Council for his guidance and monitoring. The excavation was directed by Ben Sharp and Dan Swift with Rob Cole as surveyor/archaeologist. Justin Russell produced the figures for this report. Darryl Palmer and Andy Leonard project managed the excavations and Dan Swift project managed the post-excavation process.

HER Summary Form

Site Code	HEG 12	HEG 12				
Identification Name	Land to the					
and Address		240-258 Holtye Road and Adjacent to Ashplats House				
	East Grinst					
County, District &/or	West Suss	ex				
Borough						
OS Grid Refs.	TQ 4079 3	917				
Geology	Ardingly Sa	andstone				
Arch. South-East	5705					
Project Number						
Type of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	Watching	Standing	Survey	Other
			Brief	Structure		
Type of Site	Green	Shallow	Deep	Other		
	Field	Urban	Urban			
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	WB.	Other		
	29/8/12-	10/9/12-				
	31/8/12	12				
		/9/				
(2)		12				
Sponsor/Client	CgMs					
Project Manager	Darryl Palmer					
Project Supervisor	Ben Sharp/Dan Swift					
Period Summary						

Summary

Archaeology South-East was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of their clients Barratt Southern Counties, to conduct archaeological investigations on Land to the Rear of 240-258 Holtye Road and Adjacent to Ashplats House East Grinstead, West Sussex. Nine evaluation trenches and a c. 25nm x 25m area were investigated.

No signs of truncation to the topsoil, subsoil or underlying natural geology were detected in any of the areas investigated. The excavations have revealed elements of a field system.

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-134260

Project details

Project name Archaeological Investigations on land to the rear of 240-258 Holtye

Road and Adjacent to Ashplats House, East Grinstead

Short description

of the project

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Road and Adjacent to Ashplats House East Grinstead, West Sussex. Nine evaluation trenches and a c. 25nm x 25m area were investigated. No signs of truncation to the topsoil, subsoil or underlying natural geology were detected in any of the areas investigated. The excavations have revealed elements of a field

system.

Project dates Start: 28-08-2012 End: 12-09-2012

Previous/future

work

No / Not known

Any associated project reference

codes

HEG 12 - Sitecode

Type of project Field evaluation

Current Land use Woodland 5 - Undetermined

Monument type **DITCH Uncertain**

Monument type **DITCH Uncertain**

Monument type **DITCH Uncertain**

POSTHOLE Uncertain Monument type

Significant Finds POTTERY Iron Age

Significant Finds **SLAG Uncertain**

WORKED FLINT Late Prehistoric Significant Finds

Methods &

techniques

"Sample Trenches", "Targeted Trenches"

Development type Rural residential

Prompt National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

Position in the

planning process

After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country England

Site location WEST SUSSEX MID SUSSEX EAST GRINSTEAD Land to the

Rear of 240-258 Holtye Road and Adjacent to Ashplats House,

East Grinstead, West Sussex

Postcode RH19 3EZ

Study area 641.00 Square metres

Site coordinates TQ 4079 3917 51 0 51 08 02 N 000 00 45 E Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 134.80m Max: 141.00m

Project creators

Name of Organisation

Archaeology South-East

Project brief originator

CgMs Consulting

Project design originator

CgMs Consulting

Project

Darryl Palmer

director/manager

Project supervisor Ben Sharp

Project supervisor Dan Swift

Type of

sponsor/funding

body

Client

Name of

sponsor/funding

body

Barratt Southern Counties

Project archives

Physical Archive ID HEG 12

Physical Contents "Ceramics", "Industrial", "Worked stone/lithics"

Digital Archive ID HEG 12

Digital Contents "Ceramics", "Industrial", "Stratigraphic", "Survey", "Worked

stone/lithics"

Digital Media

available

"Survey","Text"

Paper Archive ID HEG 12

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ASE Report No: 2012193

"Ceramics", "Industrial", "Stratigraphic", "Survey", "Worked **Paper Contents**

stone/lithics"

Paper Media available

"Context sheet","Correspondence","Miscellaneous

Material", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Section", "Survey "

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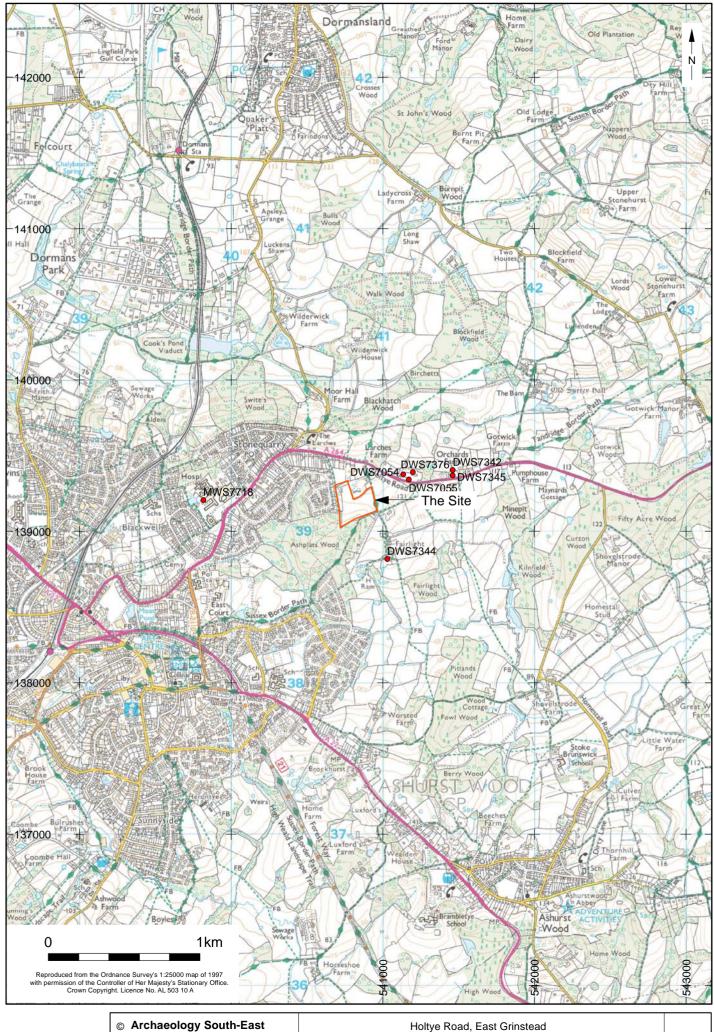
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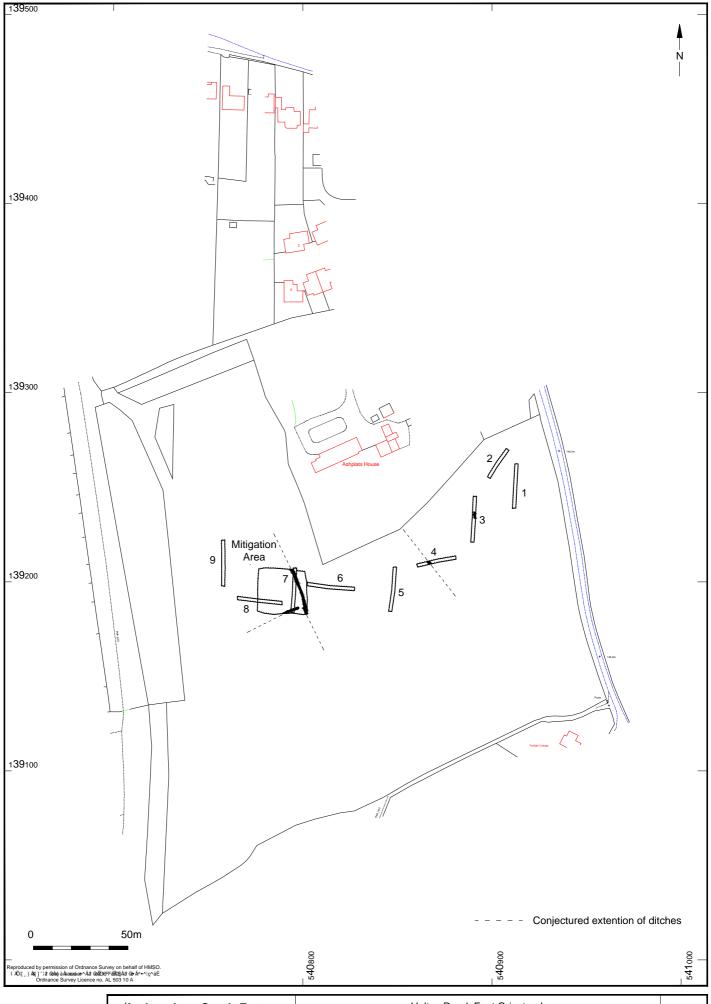
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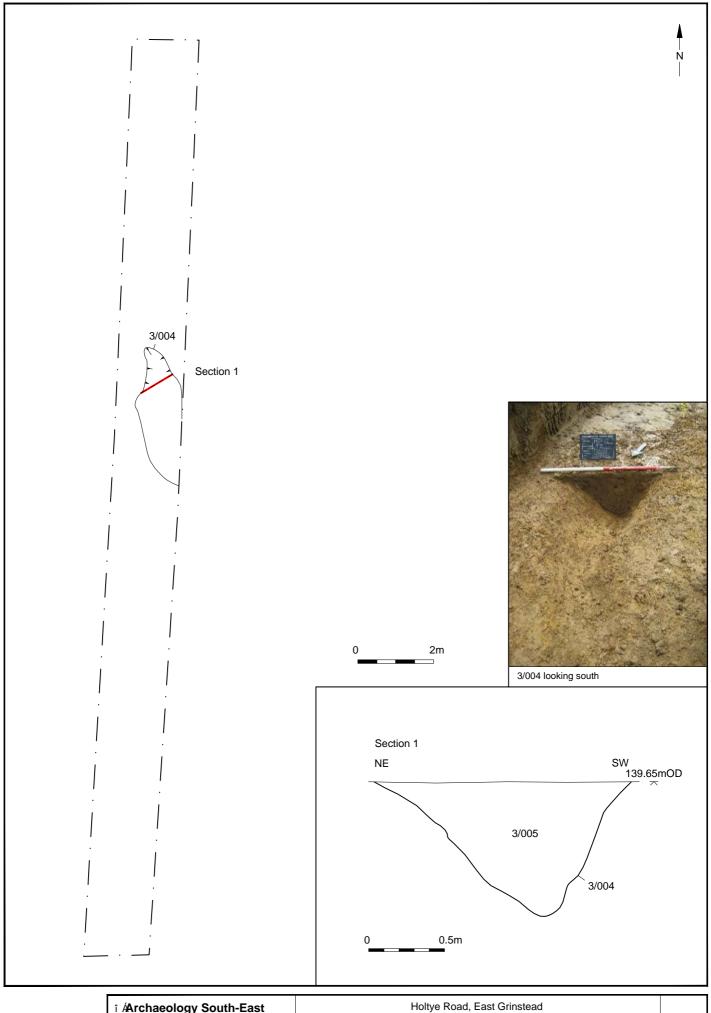
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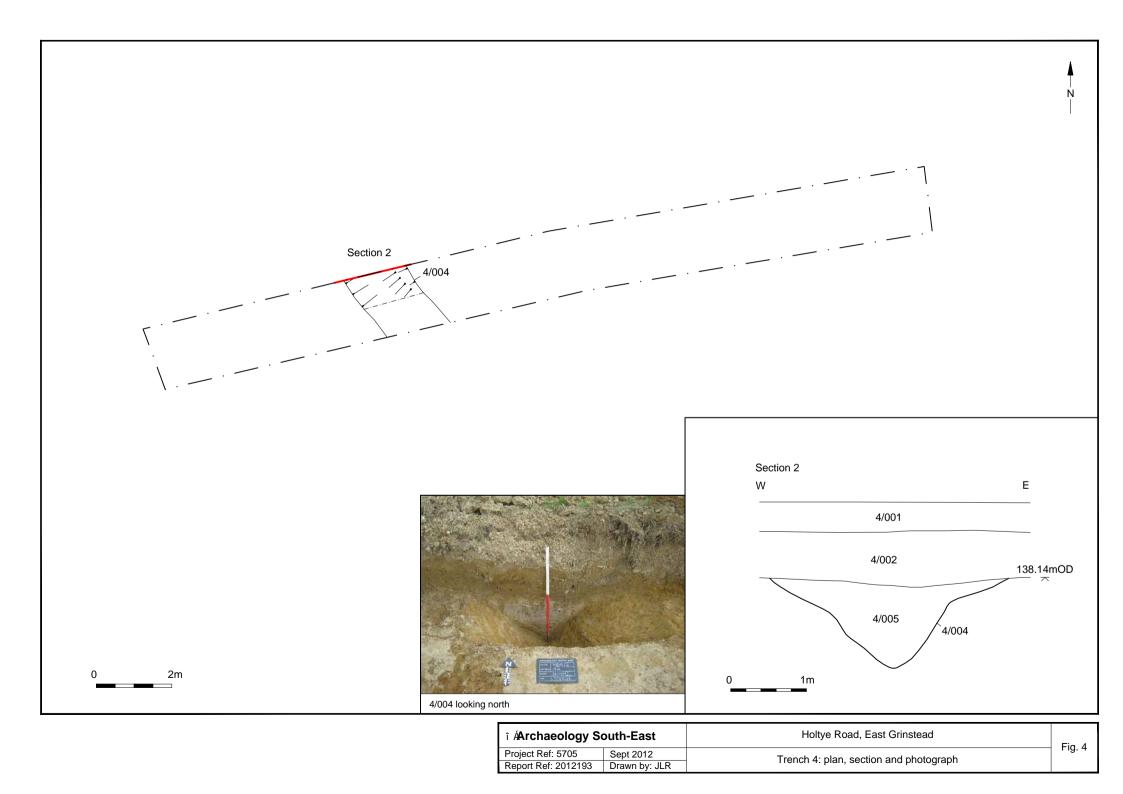
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Project Ref: 5705	Sept 2012	Site location	Fig. 1	l
Report Ref: 2012195	Drawn by: JLR	Site location		I

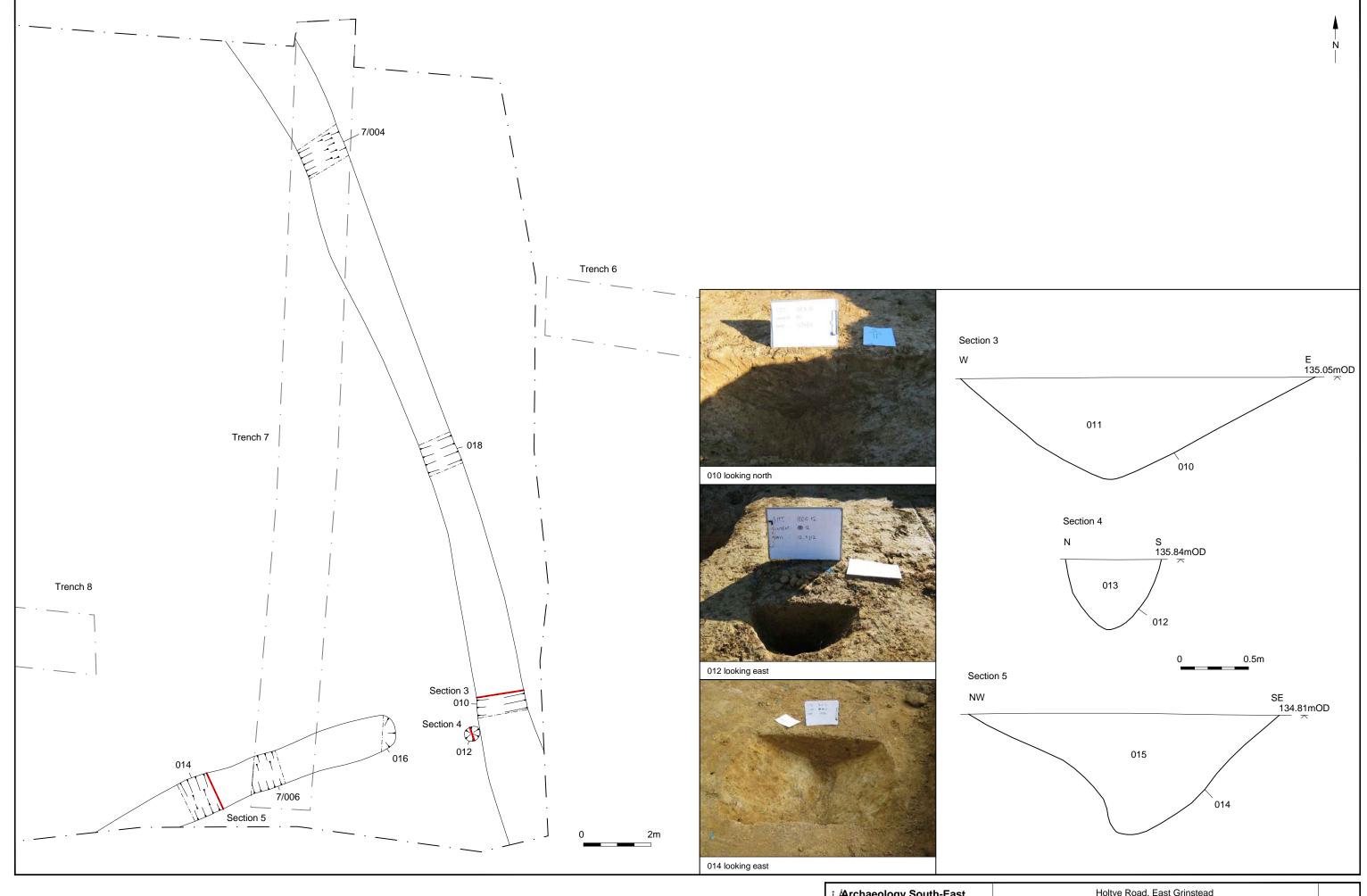


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Project Ref: 5705	Sept 2012	Trench and mitigation area location	
Report Ref: 2012193	Drawn by: JLR		



î Ærchaeology South-East		Holtye Road, East Grinstead		
Project Ref: 5705	Sept 2012		Fig. 3	
Report Ref: 2012193	Drawn by: JLR	Trench 3: plan, section and photograph		





î Ærchaeology South-East		Holtye Road, East Grinstead	Fig. 5
Project Ref: 5705	Sept 2012	Mitigation Area and Trench 7: plan, sections and photographs	1 ig. 5
Report Ref: 2012193	Drawn by: JLR	witigation Area and Trench 7. plan, sections and photographs	

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