

**Archaeological Watching Brief Report
Meadcroft, Church Lane
Ardingly, West Sussex
RH17 6UW**

**NGR: 533985 129827
(TQ 33985 29827)**

**ASE Project No: 5740
Site Code: CLA12**

**ASE Report No: 2012236
OASIS ID: archaeol6-137675**

By Dan Swift



November 2012

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Abstract

Archaeology South-East was commissioned by UK Power Networks to monitor excavations for the installation of a new power cable in an archaeological watching brief. The trench was monitored in the area outside St Peter's Church cemetery along Church Lane and Balcomnbe Lane, Ardingly.

No archaeological findings were made. Ground level was c. 1m higher inside the wall and hedge of the cemetery in comparison to both roads implying that both the boundary and roads have been in existence for a good deal of time. Additionally, the sandstone church wall appeared fairly ancient. There was no evidence in the WB that the old cemetery extended to the east or north of its current situation.

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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 UK Power Networks to monitor excavations for the installation of a new power cable in an archaeological watching brief. The trench was monitored in the area outside St Peter's Church cemetery along Church Lane and Balcombe Lane, Ardingly (Figure 1; NGR: 533985 129827).

1.2 Geology and Topography

1.2.1 According to the British Geological Survey (BGS 2012) the bedrock geology at the site is Cuckfield Stone Bed - Calcareous Sandstone. Sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 132 to 137 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period. Local environment previously dominated by swamps, estuaries and deltas. Setting: swamps, estuaries and deltas. These rocks were formed in marginal coastal plains with lakes and swamps periodically inundated by the sea; or estuaries and deltas, and shallow seas.

1.3 Planning Background

1.3.1 The site was monitored as best practise, there was no planning requirement.

1.4 Aims and Objectives

1.4.1 Standard aims for an archaeological watching brief apply:

- To establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains
- To determine the survival, extent and minimum depth below modern ground level of any archaeological remains
- To determine the nature and significance of any archaeological remains

1.4.2 Additionally, a specific requirement of the watching brief was to record if any human remains pertaining to the cemetery exist beyond the current boundary.

1.5 Scope of Report

1.5.1 This report details the results of the archaeological watching brief carried out at the site on the 1st October 2012 and the 7th November 2012. The work was carried out by Dan Swift and managed by Neil Griffin (fieldwork) and Jim Stevenson (post-excavation).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Ardingly developed as a settlement during the Saxon era, when a forest clearing (leah in Old English) was created on a piece of high ground near a tributary of the River Ouse, which runs across this part of the Weald. The area cleared for settlement included a hill 398 feet (121 m) high and the Normans founded a church on this site in the 11th century. (It is possible, although not confirmed, that this replaced an earlier church on the same site, which would have been founded by Saxon or pre-Saxon pig-farmers or ironworkers who travelled through the area. William de Warenne, 1st Earl of Surrey has been identified as the likely founder of the 11th-century church. His son, William de Warenne, 2nd Earl of Surrey, granted the advowson of the church to Lewes Priory in about 1100.
- 2.2 Little is known about the history of the Norman church. By the middle of the 14th century, the village had developed a successful wool trade, and the new wealth available led to the construction of a new church on the same site.
- 2.3 A large churchyard surrounds the church, this became full and was extended on to land on the opposite side of Church Lane in 1944.
- 2.4 There are no known archaeological sites in the vicinity of the cable trench route.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 Fieldwork Methodology

(Figure 2)

3.1.1 The excavation of c. 105m of new cable trench on Balcombe Lane and Church Lane immediately adjacent to the churchyard of St Peter's Church was mechanically excavated. The cable trench was 0.30m wide x 0.90m deep and was excavated using a toothless trenching bucket.

3.1.2 This was monitored by an archaeologist in two visits.

3.1.3 All trenches and resultant spoil were investigated for finds and disarticulated bone.

3.1.4 Standard ASE record sheets were used to record the watching brief.

3.1.5 As no findings were made, the location of the areas viewed was marked on the developers plan. No further survey was undertaken.

3.2 Fieldwork Constraints

3.2.1 There were no constraints.

3.3 The Site Archive

3.3.1 ASE informed Lewes Museum 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 be deposited at Lewes museum in due course. Lewes Museum does not give out archive accession numbers until an archive is deposited. The contents of the archive are tabulated below.

No. of files/paper record	1
Digital photographs	15

Table 1: Site archive

4.0 RESULTS

(Figure 3)

- 4.1 On the first visit to the site a c. 40m stretch of cable trench along Church Lane adjacent to the east wall of the cemetery was monitored.
- 4.2 This revealed only natural clay and sandstone immediately below the tarmac. No finds were made whatsoever.
- 4.3 On the second visit a c. 65m stretch along Balcombe Lane was monitored adjacent to the north boundary hedge of the cemetery.
- 4.4 The tarmac sealed c. 0.30 to 0.60m thickness of topsoil over natural clay and sandstone. No finds were made whatsoever.

7.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 No archaeological findings were made.
- 7.2 Ground level was c. 1m higher inside the wall and hedge of the cemetery in comparison to both roads implying that both the boundary and roads have been in existence for a good deal of time. Additionally, the sandstone church wall appeared fairly ancient with old looking graffiti.
- 7.3 There was no evidence in the WB that the old cemetery extended to the east or north of its current situation. A new cemetery was opened on land opposite the old churchyard in 1944.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ADS 2012. <http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archsearch/browser.jsf> accessed 15 11 12

BGS 2012. <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html> accessed 15 11 12

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ASE would like to thank UK Power Networks for commissioning the work and for their assistance throughout the project and John Mills West Sussex County Council Senior Archaeologist for his guidance and monitoring. The watching brief was managed by Neil Griffin, the post-excavation process by Jim Stevenson. Justin Russell produced the figures for this report.

HER Summary Form

Site Code	CLA12					
Identification Name and Address	Archaeological Watching Brief Report Meadcroft, Church Lane Ardingly, RH17 6UW					
County, District &/or Borough	West Sussex					
OS Grid Refs.	NGR: 533985 129827					
Geology	Cuckfield Stone Bed					
Arch. South-East Project Number	5740					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	Watching Brief	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field	Shallow Urban	Deep Urban	Road		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	WB.	Other		
Sponsor/Client	UK Power Networks					
Project Manager	Neil Griffin					
Project Supervisor	Dan Swift					
Period Summary						
<p>Summary</p> <p>Archaeology South-East was commissioned by UK Power Networks to monitor excavations for the installation of a new power cable in an archaeological watching brief. The trench was monitored in the area outside St Peter's Church cemetery along Church Lane and Balcombe Lane, Ardingly.</p> <p>No archaeological findings were made. Ground level was c. 1m higher inside the wall and hedge of the cemetery in comparison to both roads implying that both the boundary and roads have been in existence for a good deal of time. Additionally, the sandstone church wall appeared fairly ancient. There was no evidence in the WB that the old cemetery extended to the east or north of its current situation.</p>						

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-137675

Project details

Project name	Adjacent to St Peter's Churchyard, Ardingly, Cable Trench Watching Brief
Short description of the project	Archaeology South-East was commissioned by UK Power Networks to monitor excavations for the installation of a new power cable in an archaeological watching brief. The trench was monitored in the area outside St Peter's Church cemetery along Church Lane and Balcomnbe Lane, Ardingly. No archaeological findings were made. Ground level was c. 1m higher inside the wall and hedge of the cemetery in comparison to both roads implying that both the boundary and roads have been in existence for a good deal of time. Additionally, the sandstone church wall appeared fairly ancient. There was no evidence in the WB that the old cemetery extended to the east or north of its current situation.
Project dates	Start: 01-10-2012 End: 07-11-2012

Project location

Country	England
Site location	WEST SUSSEX MID SUSSEX ARDINGLY Church Lane
Postcode	RH17 6UW
Study area	0 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 33985 29827 51 0 51 03 05 N 000 05 17 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	Archaeology South-East
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East
Project director/manager	Neil Griffin
Project supervisor	Dan Swift
Type of sponsor/funding	UK Power Networks

body

Project archives

Physical Archive
Exists? No

Digital Archive
Exists? No

Paper Archive
recipient CLA12

Paper Contents "Stratigraphic"

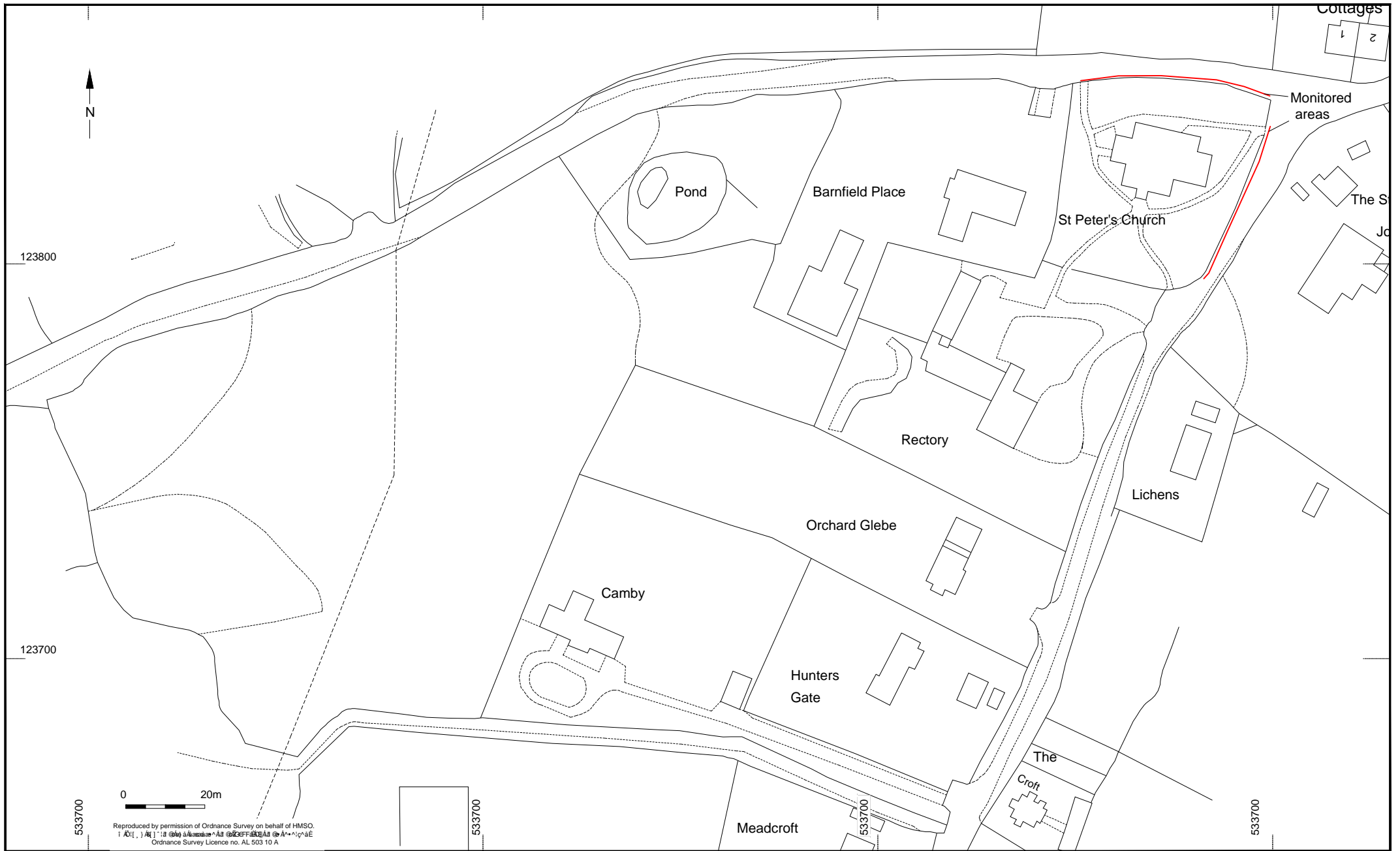
Paper Media
available "Report"

Entered by Dan Swift (d.swift@ucl.ac.uk)

Entered on 15 November 2012



© Archaeology South-East		Meadcroft Church Lane, Ardingly	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 5740	Nov 2012	Site location	
Report Ref: 2012236	Drawn by: AR		



Archaeology South-East Project Ref: 5740 Nov 2012 Report Ref: 2012236 Drawn by: AR		Church Lane, Ardingly Monitored areas	Fig. 2
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Church Lane looking southwest



Church Lane looking south



Balcombe Lane looking west



Balcombe Lane services trench - section detail

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