

**Archaeological Report
Watching Brief at Battle Abbey
Battle, East Sussex**

NGR 574900 115700

**Scheduled Monument Consent References
SMCC6: S00050960 and SMCC6: S00056391**

**ASE Project No: 5699
Site Code: BWG 12**

**ASE Report No: 2013073
OASIS ID: archaeol6-146108**

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Abstract

Archaeology South-East was commissioned by English Heritage to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the restoration of Battle's Abbey's Walled Garden and improvements to signage in other parts of the site.

Although little of archaeological significance was encountered during tree planting in the Walled Garden or during the excavation of holes for new signage elsewhere, stonework masonry encountered below the brickwork of the northern wall of the Walled Garden could be of some antiquity. Similarly, masonry encountered immediately to the north-west of the Walled Garden remains undated but is probably medieval in origin and may form part of the Abbey's infirmary. Material recovered in the vicinity suggests demolition at the time of the Dissolution with limited evidence of previous investigation known to have been undertaken in the 1870s.

A subsequent Ground Penetrating Radar Survey provided clear evidence of the presence of various elements of a complex of buildings in the vicinity, associated with the infirmary, which appears to lie to the west of the encountered remains. Although the recorded masonry forms part of one of the buildings associated with the Abbey's infirmary, the function(s) of the building remains unclear.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology (CAA), Institute of Archaeology (IoA), University College London (UCL) was commissioned by English Heritage to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks involved in the restoration of the walled garden and limited other works at Battle Abbey, Battle, East Sussex (Figure 1). The site is centred on NGR 574900 115700.

1.2 Topography and Geology

1.2.1 Battle Abbey was built on the hilltop site of the Battle of Hastings (the position of the High Altar is thought to mark the exact site of King Harold's death). Although the topography has been much altered by the construction of the Abbey complex, in essence the site occupies a lofty position with extensive views to the south. The Walled Garden is located to the east of the upstanding remains of the monastic buildings and slopes from a height of c.79m AOD against the north wall to c.73m AOD at the south wall.

1.2.2 According to current data from the British Geological Survey, the underlying bedrock is the Wadhurst Clay Formation (BGS 2013).

1.3 Planning Background

1.3.1 English Heritage gained Scheduled Monument consent for the restoration of the walled garden at the Abbey in December 2012 (ref. SMCC6: S00050960). A condition of that consent was that

'no ground works shall take place until the applicant has confirmed in writing the commissioning of a programme of archaeological work during the development in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved by the NPC (National Planning and Conservation) team'

1.3.2 In accordance with this condition, ASE prepared a *Written Scheme of Investigation* which was approved by Paul Roberts, Inspector of Ancient Monuments, English Heritage before the commencement of work at the site (ASE 2012b). This document outlined the techniques to be used in the field, in this case a watching brief on all intrusive groundworks, and in the production of a report and an archive.

1.3.3 Following the grant of a further Scheduled Monument Consent in March 2013 (ref. SMCC6: S00056391) for the installation of new and replacement signage, it was agreed by Paul Roberts and with ASE that results of monitoring of the associated groundworks would be included in the current report.

1.4 Aims and Objectives

1.4.1 The aims stated in the *Written Scheme of Investigation (ibid.)* were to:

'monitor the groundworks in order to ensure that any deposits and features, artefacts and ecofacts of archaeological interest, are recorded and interpreted to appropriate standards.

The specific objectives of the watching brief are:

to record any evidence of former garden features (planting holes/beds, pathways, internal structures etc.

to identify any earlier archaeological remains associated with the monastic and early modern use of the site

to pay particular attention to any deposits that may be associated with the battlefield. Such remains are likely to be small and/or fragile and difficult to distinguish but will be hugely significant to the internationally recognized historical significance of the site.'

1.5 Scope of Report

1.5.1 The current report provides the results of the archaeological evaluation of the two areas, carried out between December 2012 and March 2013. The on-site monitoring was undertaken by Simon Stevens (Senior Archaeologist), with digital recording by Rob Cole (Archaeological Surveyor). The project was managed by Andy Leonard (Project Manager) and by Jim Stevenson and Dan Swift (Post-Excavation Managers).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The known history and recorded archaeology of the site of Battle Abbey have been given full coverage elsewhere (e.g. Hare 1985; Coad 1994). In summary the Abbey was founded in 1070 on the site of the Battle of Hastings as an act of penance for the bloodshed during the battle and the subsequent Norman Conquest of England. The Abbey was consecrated in 1094 and became one of the richest Benedictine houses in the country. It was dissolved on the orders of Henry VIII in 1538 and the buildings passed into the ownership of the King's Master of Horse, Sir Anthony Browne. The church and other buildings were demolished and the west range was converted into a country house. This building was leased to Battle Abbey School in the 1920s.

2.1.2 Owing to the historical and archaeological significance of Battle Abbey and the town that grew up at its gate, numerous archaeological projects have been undertaken within the Abbey precinct and within the town as a whole (a list is provided in Harris (2009)). Of most significance to the current project were the 'excavations' undertaken near the Walled Garden by the Duchess of Cleveland in the 1870s, in essence a 'wall-chasing' exercise aimed at establishing the plans of buildings away from the main complex (described in Hare 1985).

2.2 The Walled Garden (taken from ASE 2012b with additions)

2.2.1 The Walled Garden encloses an area of 0.6 acres and is located at the east end of the abbey precinct. An archaeological evaluation undertaken by ASE (ASE 1998) established that the current east and south masonry walls of the walled garden are a post-dissolution rebuilds, but stand directly on the medieval precinct wall. Cartographic sources cited in a later English Heritage Brief (English Heritage 2012) provided further evidence that the walled garden's western boundary is on the line of the southern half of the cross-precinct wall (view drawn by Budgen in c.1700, known from a copy made by S.H. Grimm in 1773).

2.2.2 A later estate map dated 1724 depicts a parcel of land that closely resembles the extent of the walled garden on all but the northern boundary. This arrangement is replicated on a survey plan of 1811 but by 1859 the northern boundary had shifted onto its present alignment. It is clearly discernible on the ground that the north wall is later than the west wall, dating from some time before 1859; the west wall is almost certainly that shown on the 1811 plan. Cartographic sources from 1811 through to at least the early 20th century show the changing internal arrangement of planting and pathways within of the walled garden and includes glasshouses against the inside of the northern wall.

2.2.3 A geophysical survey was undertaken in by Stratascan in the Walled Garden in 1998, employing magnetometry and resistivity. Due to ground conditions at that time it was not possible to survey the whole garden. Given the use of the site as a works compound prior to the survey the results were unsurprisingly inconclusive. The magnetic data was very 'noisy' and the

surveyor concluded that the many large magnetic anomalies encountered were more likely to be caused by modern debris than by buried metal objects of archaeological interest.

- 2.2.4 Several linear resistance anomalies were encountered, interpreted by the surveyor as most probably being trenches for either drainage or services. The survey report concluded *'relatively little can be gleaned from the surveys. The magnetic survey confirms that the site contains metal debris which is to be expected. The resistance survey showed no deeper set features but indicates that services and possibly drainage exist within the site'* (Barker 1998, 6-7).
- 2.2.5 A recent evaluation established the presence of post-medieval garden features and a possible medieval or early post-medieval pond within the Walled Garden, but could not provide a date for stonework recorded under the western wall of the enclosed area (ASE 2012).

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

(Figure 2)

- 3.1 A watching brief was maintained during all intrusive groundworks associated with the restoration, namely the excavations for new paths both within and on the northern and eastern exteriors of the Walled Garden, the installation of a French drain against the external side of the north wall, and the holes excavated for the planting of trees inside the Walled Garden, and all associated landscaping. In addition the excavation of holes for new signage both within the Walled Garden and elsewhere within the Abbey complex was monitored.
- 3.2 All encountered archaeological deposits, features and finds were recorded to accepted professional standards using standard Archaeology South-East context record forms. Deposit colours were recorded by visual inspection and not by reference to a Munsell Colour chart.
- 3.3 A photographic record of the work was kept and forms part of the site archive which is currently held by Archaeology South-East at the offices in Portslade, and will be deposited at the English Heritage store at Dover Castle in due course. The archive consists of the following material:

Number of Contexts	38
No. of files/paper record	1
Plan and sections sheets	2
Photographs	230 digital images
Bulk finds	1 box

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Pathway within the Walled Garden

(Figures 2 and 4)

Context	Type	Description	Max. Deposit Thickness
100	Deposit	Topsoil	>200mm
101	Masonry	Brickwork	-
102	Masonry	Stonework	-
103	Masonry	Brickwork	-
104	Masonry	Brickwork	-
105	Masonry	Brickwork	-
106	Masonry	Brickwork	-
200	Deposit	Path Surface	>400mm

Table 2: Deposits encountered during monitoring of the new walled garden path

- 4.1.1 The mechanical excavation of the footprint of a new pathway across the northern part of the Walled Garden was monitored in December 2012. The path was a maximum of 3m in width and 200mm in depth and ran parallel to the north wall. Following mechanical deturfing of the designated area of the path, a 3 tonne 360° excavator was used to reduce the ground level to the necessary depth for the laying of a sub-base and surfacing material.
- 4.1.2 Given the shallow depth of the intervention, only one layer of overburden was encountered, context [100], a mid-brown silty clay topsoil, which contained brick and glass, the remnants of green houses known to have occupied the area, and in keeping with the results of the evaluation trenches previously excavated in the vicinity (ASE 1998; 2012a). A small assemblage of post-medieval material was recovered from context [100].
- 4.1.3 Excavations to facilitate access for the disabled via the door on the north wall allowed recording of the masonry, both of the existing gate and underlying stonework (Figure 4). The upstanding masonry of the north wall, contexts [101] and [105] consisted of bricks measuring c.230mm by c.110mm by c.60mm bonded with a hard grey sandy mortar (clearly repointed in a number of places), laid in a the *English Garden Bond* (i.e. three courses of stretchers to one course of headers). The lower six courses on either side of the wall splayed out a total of 90mm over a 450mm drop to lay flush with the face of the underlying stonework.
- 4.1.4 That stonework, context [102] consisted of roughly hewn local yellow sandstone blocks (the largest exposed face measured 700mm by 250mm), bonded with a soft, yellowish grey lime mortar. Arguably the quality and neatness of the build does not suggest that this masonry originated as a footing for the brick wall, but rather that it is of greater antiquity, reused as the foundation for the Walled Garden's north wall. Cartographic evidence suggests that the current upstanding brick wall was constructed by 1859, but gives no clues to the original date of the stonework.
- 4.1.5 The upstanding elements of the brick-built gateway were also recorded. The

piers on either side of the opening ([103] to the west and [104] to the east) were clearly contemporary with the wall, built from the same materials in the same bond style (each protrudes 110mm from the face of the wall). The damaged brick-built step down into the garden, context [106] had been laid in a greyish mortar bed suggesting it was inserted, and therefore later in date than the other elements of the gateway. It had also been repaired/repointed with a sandy yellow mortar.

4.2 Landscaping within the Walled Garden

(Figure 2)

Context	Type	Description	Max. Deposit Thickness
300	Deposit	Topsoil	110mm
301	Deposit	Rubble	>40mm

Table 3: Deposits encountered during landscaping in the walled garden

4.2.1 Limited landscaping work was undertaken adjacent to the south-eastern gateway of the Walled Garden to improve access in February 2013. A mini-excavator was employed to remove a maximum of 150mm of overburden to allow the laying of new turf in the area. Given the limited depth of the intervention, the stratigraphic sequence was simple and consisted of a mid-brown silty clay topsoil, context [300], which directly overlay a deposit of brick, tarmac and roadstone rubble, context [301], probably the result of the use of this part of the Walled Garden as a works compound in recent years (ASE 2012a, 11).

4.3 Tree Planting within the Walled Garden

(Figure 3)

Context	Type	Description	Max. Deposit Thickness
400	Deposit	Topsoil	440mm
401	Deposit	Subsoil	120mm
402	Deposit	'Natural'	-

Table 4: Deposits encountered during tree planting in the walled garden

4.3.1 The planting of new fruit trees in the Walled Garden was undertaken in February 2013 by volunteers under English Heritage supervision. Tree planting pits were manually excavated across much of the unclosed area. Recording of the pits involved assigning a unique letter(s) to each proposed tree location (labelled *A* to *TT*), although in the event not all of the trees were planted; a full list and descriptions is given in Appendix 1 at the end of this report. The stratigraphic sequence in each was remarkably consistent.

4.3.2 All of the tree pits contained a mid-brown humic topsoil, context [400], some only this context. Some of the pits also contained a layer of greyish/yellowish brown subsoil, context [401], and others led to the exposure of the orangey yellow sandstone and clay 'natural', context [402]. No significant archaeological deposits or features were encountered, but a small

assemblage of artefacts was recovered from the overburden in eight of the tree planting pits.

4.3.3 In addition, a limited number of pits were also excavated in clusters along the inside of the northern and western walls of the Walled Garden. Monitoring showed that these locations were mostly heavily disturbed and that only humic topsoil, context [400] was encountered; no significant archaeological deposits or features were encountered, and no artefacts were recovered.

4.3.4 All of the tree planting pits showed that the topsoil was notably deeper in the southern part of the Walled Garden as seen in the results of both evaluations (ASE 1998 and 2012a) also marked on Figure 3. There was no evidence of subsoil or exposures of 'natural' at the depths reached in that part of the site and limited evidence of the presence of the works compound (*ibid.*).

4.4 Path on the outside of the Walled Garden

(Figures 2, 5 and 6)

Context	Type	Description	Max. Deposit Thickness
200	Deposit	Path Surface	>400mm
201	Deposit	Path Surface	>300mm
202	Masonry	?Buttress	-
203	Masonry	?Buttress	-
204	Masonry	Wall	-
205	Masonry	Garderobe	-
206	Cut	Drain	190mm
207	Fill	Drain	190mm
208	Cut	Drain	180mm
209	Fill	Drain	180mm
210	Masonry	Drain	-
211	Deposit	?Backfill	
212	Deposit	Rubble	
213	Deposit	Dump of tile	
214	Deposit	Garden Soil	
215	Deposit	?Cess	
216	Deposit	Path Surface	

Table 5: Deposits encountered in the path on the outside of the walled garden

4.4.1 Initial work undertaken in December 2012 consisted of the removal of undergrowth, mechanical removal of the existing path surface to the north of the Walled Garden and the manual excavation of a French Drain along the outer base of the northern wall. Work was halted by the discovery of a hibernating dormouse, but was able to continue after removal and rehousing by the RSPCA and English Nature.

4.4.2 The existing path surface, context [200] was a mid-greyish brown silty clay which contained a high concentration of gravel, stone and brick rubble. It was removed to a maximum depth of 290mm in the main area of the path and to a maximum of 400mm below the previous ground level for the creation of the French Drains. Although the encountered material contained less gravel and other rubble at depth, no other distinct deposits were encountered during this

work.

- 4.4.3 A separate context number was given to the path surface as the path turned southwards at the north-western corner of the Walled Garden, context [201], although the material was similar in character to context [200]. The mechanical excavation in that area was taken to a maximum of 300mm below the existing path surface. However a substantial area of sandstone masonry, context [202] was encountered during the works, and following liaison between ASE, English Heritage and the groundworks contractors from Willerby Landscapes, mechanical groundworks in the immediate area stopped to allow limited further manual excavation, cleaning and recording of the feature (Figure 5).
- 4.4.4 Manual excavation of the area in late December 2012 and early January 2013 revealed a considerable block of sandstone masonry bonded with a yellow lime mortar, showing signs of recent damage and other truncation, originally interpreted as the buttress of a large building, presumed at first to be the monastic infirmary hall, given its scale and position away from the cloistral buildings (see below).
- 4.4.5 An element of the masonry, arguably evidence of a wall, ran northwards away from the main area of stonework, and was recorded as context [203]. It was 1.06m in width. A sandstone wall, recorded as context [204] visible before the commencement of working, ran from east to west to the north of the Walled Garden and seemed to abut wall [203]; it did not continue to the west in the investigated area.
- 4.4.6 At the request of Paul Roberts of English Heritage, a 400mm wide trench was manually excavated between Masonry [202] and Masonry [204] to attempt to identify evidence of any previous excavation methods such as trenching along the length of walls (as seen as Lewes Priory; ASE 2010). The intervention allowed the recording of limited elevations of both of the walls, and the localised deposits to a depth of 450mm.
- 4.4.7 The earliest of the deposits encountered between the two areas of masonry consisted of a deposit of garden soil encountered at the very base of the trench. Context [214] was a humic mid-brown silty clay, which did not contain any datable material. It was overlain by context [213], a 150mm thick dump of broken roof tiles and topsoil similar to context [214]. Closely datable pottery suggests a date range of 1475-1550 for this deposit. This was overlain by context [212] a 260mm thick deposit of sandstone rubble, which was topped by the aforementioned path surface, context [201].
- 4.4.8 Arguably this sequence of deposits offers evidence of a backfilled 19th century excavation trench, context [212], which overlay a layer of Dissolution era building rubble, context [213], which was deposited on the surface of monastic/dissolution era topsoil, context [214].
- 4.4.9 The evidence for a possible wall running westwards was more enigmatic owing to truncation in the excavation area, leading to a ragged end at the eastern extent of the masonry. There was also obvious truncation from a recent 90mm diameter ceramic drainage pipe, context [209], laid in a 190mm wide, 180mm deep gully, cut [208], which ran southwards from a concrete chamber, context [210]. There was also truncation to the east from a brick-

built drain, context [207], laid in a 510mm wide, 190mm deep gully, cut [206].

- 4.4.10 There was also a feature of note encountered within the block of masonry, recorded as context [205], a stone-lined trough (internal measurements 690mm by 690mm). The feature was constructed from tooled stonework, some blocks measuring 690mm in width and 240mm in height. The upper fill was a 1.02m thick, loose mixed of topsoil and stone rubble, context [211], which contained a limited assemblage of artefacts dating from the second half of the 18th century suggesting the upper part of the feature had been disturbed in the relatively recent past.
- 4.4.11 However, the underlying deposit, a mid-greenish brown sandy clay, context [215] was considerably firmer in texture and appeared to be of greater antiquity (i.e. undisturbed in recent history), and seemed to have some content of cess. Following discussions with representatives of English Heritage, it was decided to cease excavation at the surface of this deposit, but to probe the layer in an attempt to ascertain its depth. A road pin pushed into the deposit struck something hard -either masonry or 'natural' sandstone at a depth of 750mm, showing the feature was a total of 1.77m in depth.
- 4.4.12 Given the form of the stonework and the character of the cessy deposit, it appears likely that the feature was the remains of a garderobe located within the thickness of the wall, probably emptying into a drain, which would then have run southwards downhill towards the location of the known monastic drainage system. Similar arrangements of garderobes discharging from within the thickness of walls are known at Bodiam Castle and elsewhere (David Martin *pers. comm.*). The nature of the upper backfill also suggests the feature had been partly investigated in the past, probably during the Duchess of Cleveland's work in the 1870s. Similarly the nature of the deposits encountered in the trench between masonry [202] and [204] suggests the presence of a backfilled excavation trench (see Section 2.1.2 above).
- 4.4.13 The only other deposit encountered in the works adjacent to the Walled Garden was context [216], the modern brick and flint rubble material forming the path running downhill parallel to the west wall of the enclosure. It was only removed to a depth of 80mm and therefore there was no impact on any archaeological deposits, either adjacent to the newly discovered masonry, or further down the hill towards the south-western entrance to the Walled Garden.

4.5 Excavations for Signage in Walled Garden and Elsewhere

(Figure 2)

Context	Post Hole	Type	Description	Max. Deposit Thickness
500		Deposit	Topsoil	590mm
501		Deposit	'Natural'	>70mm
600		Deposit	Topsoil	>660mm
700		Deposit	Topsoil	>800mm
800		Deposit	Topsoil	690mm
801		Deposit	'Natural'	>110mm
900		Deposit	Topsoil	550mm
901		Deposit	Terram	<10mm
902		Deposit	Made Ground	>150mm

Table 6: Deposits encountered during excavations for signage

- 4.5.1 Six post-holes were mechanically excavated in March 2013 for the (re)positioning of signage both in the Walled Garden and elsewhere in the Abbey complex. Two post-holes were excavated in the Walled Garden, as the first had been positioned in the wrong location. Both were close to the new pathway, the first 220mm in diameter, the second 290mm, both 660mm in depth. A simple stratigraphic sequence was revealed in both consisting of mid-brown humic topsoil, context [500], which overlay the orangey yellow clay and sandstone 'natural', context [501].
- 4.5.2 Another of the post-holes was located on the outside of the south-western gate to the Walled Garden. It was 240mm in diameter and 660mm deep. The only deposit encountered was a mid-greyish brown silty clay topsoil which contained a small quantity of brick rubble, context [600].
- 4.5.3 The fourth post-hole was excavated to the south of the Walled Garden. It was 230mm in diameter and 800mm in depth. The only encountered deposit was a mid-greyish brown silty clay topsoil containing brick and stone rubble, context [700]. A fifth was positioned to the south-west of the upstanding monastic buildings. It was 230mm in diameter and 800mm in depth. The simple stratigraphic sequence was revealed in both consisting of dark brown humic mixture of topsoil and leaf mulch, context [800], which overlay the orangey yellow clay and sandstone 'natural', context [801].
- 4.5.4 The last post-hole was excavated close to the monastic gatehouse close to the realignment of a gas pipe monitored by ASE in December 2010 (ASE 2011). It was 230mm in diameter and 700mm in depth. The encountered deposits consisted of a mid-brown silty clay topsoil, context [900], which overlay a *terram* sheet, context [901], which in turn overlay flint gravel laid in a sandy matrix, context [902]. Clearly there had been significant truncation in this area, either during the laying of the original gas pipe or at some other stage.
- 4.5.5 No significant archaeological deposits or features were noted during the monitoring of the works to improve site signage, and no artefacts were recovered from the spoil.

4.6 Fluxgate Gradiometer Survey

(Figure 6)

- 4.6.1 Following the discovery of the masonry during the watching brief, English Heritage commissioned geophysical surveys of the surrounding area in order to help identify the origins of the exposed stonework. Unfortunately the gradiometer survey did not clearly define any magnetic anomalies representing the footprints of buildings. Full results of the survey are presented elsewhere (Preconstruct Geophysics Ltd. 2013).

4.7 Ground Penetrating Radar Survey

(Figure 7)

- 4.7.1 The other geophysical survey took the form of a High Resolution Ground Penetrating Radar Survey (GPR). The results of this survey were more informative and suggest a range of buried masonry (and other) remains at the site. Full results of the survey are presented elsewhere (Arrow Geophysics 2013).
- 4.7.2 In summary, the survey clearly shows masonry from a complex of buildings lying on an east-west axis in the area between the main cloistral structures and the Walled Garden. The masonry exposed during the watching brief is identified as the corner of a rather enigmatic structure, with thick walls running both north-south and east-west with no obvious form, perhaps owing to robbing of adjacent stretches of wall to those detected.
- 4.7.3 Of clear interest is the fact that the encountered masonry does not appear to be the corner of the Abbey's Infirmary Hall, as first thought, as that building is clearly seen to the east in the survey in broadly the same position as an unlabelled building shown on the overall site plan produced by Hare (1984; Figure 2). Hare did not fully excavate the building and its position in his plan is based on a drawing produced by the Duchess of Cleveland in the 19th century, and on extrapolation of walls uncovered in his excavations to the east (*op. cit.*, 35 and Figure 7).
- 4.7.4 Although full interpretation of the recorded buried remains is beyond the scope of this report, the results of the survey do highlight the complexity of the monastic remains at the site, ranging from somewhat irregular medieval masonry to more systematic post-medieval garden features. Interestingly the GPR survey did not pick up the remains of Hare's *Building Z*, which he thought was an earlier Infirmary Hall, but did apparently pick up his *Building Y*, which he interpreted as its 14th century replacement (Hare 1985, 35).

5.0 THE FINDS

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 A range of finds were recovered during the archaeological monitoring of the various groundworks at the site. A full quantification by context is given in Appendix 2 of this report.

5.2 The Pottery by Luke Barber

5.2.1 The archaeological monitoring produced a small assemblage of pottery from the site. By far the earliest material was recovered from context [213], which may represent a Dissolution dump. This produced a slightly abraded residual sherd (32g) from the base of a Winchelsea Black-type shelly ware cooking pot, probably dating from the later 13th to 14th centuries. However, the context also produced a 4g sherd from a reduced hard-fired sandy earthenware pitcher and an 8g sherd from an oxidised vessel in fine hard-fired earthenware. Both are typical of the later 15th to mid 16th centuries.

5.2.2 Context [211] produced a small late post-medieval assemblage from the second half of the 18th century. These sherds, all of which are fresh, consist of three (84g) from a glazed red earthenware bowl/jar and five (32g) creamware fragments from a mug and a plate.

5.2.3 The remaining sherds are from topsoil or disturbed deposits (e.g. Trees B, E and L). Of these there is a bowl sherd from Tree L in glazed red earthenware that could date to anywhere between the mid 16th and mid 18th centuries. The remaining sherds from the site are a mix of 19th- century types, including a notable quantity of unglazed earthenware flower pots (context [100] produced just this type) and English stoneware (a bottle from Tree B).

5.3 The Clay Tobacco Pipes by Luke Barber

5.3.1 Only three somewhat abraded stem fragments were recovered from the site. Context [100] contained two of mid 18th- to 19th-century type, while [211] produced a single stem of more general 18th-century type.

5.4 The Ceramic Building Material by Luke Barber

5.4.1 A relatively large assemblage of brick and tile was recovered during the work, though most of this was from a single deposit. The material has been fully listed on *pro forma* for archive.

5.4.2 Two pieces of brick are present (context [211] and Tree MM). Both are well fired and in the same fabric: tempered with sparse fine sand and moderate to abundant iron oxides to 3mm. Only the example from Tree MM had its full height of 59mm surviving. Both can be placed in a general 18th- to 19th- century date bracket.

5.4.3 There is far more roof tile from the site – the vast majority coming from [213] which would appear, based on the ceramics dating, to be of the later 15th to mid 16th century. The 46 pieces of tile from it are essentially large pieces (9115g combined weight) with little signs of abrasion. Two fabrics are present

in this deposit. The less common (8/566g) is a buff/pink type tempered with fine/medium sand and sparse iron oxides or flint grits to 1mm. These pieces, which are notably more abraded, are only medium fired and probably date to the 13th to 14th centuries.

- 5.4.4 The other fabric is tempered with sparse fine sand and moderate iron oxides to 1mm and rare/sparse marl pellets. The tiles are slightly crudely formed but notably well/hard-fired. Two types are in evidence – peg tiles, with large circular peg holes (10mm-13mm in diameter) and nib tiles, with rectangular hand-finished nibs (varying from 34mm x 17mm to 45mm x 23mm). No definite peg/nib combination tiles are definitely present despite being well known from earlier excavations at the abbey. Some of the present pieces could be from such tiles, however, at least one tile has a complete top edge with two peg holes and a number of the nib tile fragments are large enough to have included a peg hole had they been present. The few full tile widths vary between 153mm and 158mm, with thicknesses being between 13mm and 16mm.
- 5.4.5 Considering the similarity of fabric and finish, it is likely the peg tiles are contemporary with the nibbed examples. Analogy with earlier abbey assemblages suggest that the nib tiles should be of the 13th century, however, the current examples are notably better finished and harder-fired than previous examples from Battle seen by the author. This may simply be the result of products coming from a particularly competent 13th- century workshop rather than being indicative of a slightly later date. Whatever the case, the material is clearly associated with later 15th- to mid 16th- century pottery, suggesting it was stripped off a roof at that time.
- 5.4.6 With the exception of one of these hard-fired early tiles from Tree G, the remaining tile consists of a few abraded pieces of fine sand tempered types more typical of the mid 18th to 19th centuries (contexts [100] and [211]). These typically measure 10mm to 11mm thick.

5.5 The Glass by Luke Barber

- 5.5.1 Six pieces of glass are present. The earliest fragments were recovered from context [211]. This produced parts of two green wine bottles, the earliest of which has notable twisting on the neck and heavy flaking corrosion. This is likely to be of the first half of the 18th century.
- 5.5.2 However, the other wine bottle has no corrosion and an applied collared rim that is more likely to be of mid 18th- to mid 19th- century date. Context [100] contained a small fragment of 20th- century window glass and Tree N produced the top of a mould-made green wine/beer bottle with flat collar below the rim. This is most likely to be of the late 19th or 20th century.

5.6 Metalwork by Luke Barber

5.6.1 Context [100] produced an 18th- to 19th- century oval (43mm x 34mm) copper alloy keyhole escutcheon from a door and a 1992 10 pence coin.

5.7 Slag by Luke Barber

5.7.1 Context [211] produced a single large piece of grey/olive green early post-medieval blast furnace slag.

5.8 Geological Material by Luke Barber

5.8.1 With the exception of a piece of coal from [100], all of the stone from the monitoring was recovered from Tree EE. This produced two architectural fragments (from the same block) of a later medieval/early post-medieval Caen stone moulded surround, still retaining traces of red paint on their internal reveal. However, the presence of traces of grey cement clearly indicates they have been re-used in the late post-medieval period. The other stone consists of a complete chamfered plinth block (235mm x 135mm x 91mm) in local Wealden sandstone.

5.9 The Animal Bone by Gemma Ayton

5.9.1 A small assemblage of animal bone consisting of just 10 fragments was recovered from three contexts including [100], [211] and tree planting pit 'E'. The bones are in a mixed state of preservation displaying varying degrees of surface erosion. A range of species have been identified including sheep/goat cattle and greylag/domestic goose, both meat-bearing and non-meat bearing bones are represented. One fragment of long-bone displays cut marks along the shaft, no evidence of gnawing, burning or pathology has been noted.

5.9.2 Owing to the size of the assemblage it holds no potential for further analysis and no further work is required.

5.9 Finds Summary by Luke Barber

5.9.1 The current assemblage is not considered to hold any further potential for analysis at this time.

5.9.2 The Caen stone mouldings are considered to warrant retention as they may be of interest to more detailed studies on the architectural stone from the Abbey in the future.

5.9.3 The pottery from [213] is also worth retaining as it is the only associated dating to go with the roof tile assemblage.

5.9.4 The best examples of the peg and nib tiles from [213] should also be retained in order to allow future research to review these in the light of more securely dated groups.

5.9.5 The remaining finds are recommended for discard.

6.0 DISCUSSION

- 6.1 The watching brief during recent work at the site resulted in the discovery of a previously unrecorded building within the Abbey precinct. Similarly the stonework underlying the current north wall of the Walled Garden may also belong to a previously unrecorded stretch of wall, clearly predating the current layout, although this is more open to question.
- 6.2 In contrast, the monitoring of most of the groundworks within the Walled Garden produced only limited finds and did not result in disturbance to recognisably significant archaeological deposits. This was also true for the holes excavated for the replacement or implementation of signage elsewhere at the site. Arguably the limited dimensions of the interventions needed for erecting of signposts or for the planting of trees minimised the potential for significant damage to underlying deposits.
- 6.3 Moving onto the encountered *in situ* masonry, both that encountered below the northern wall of the Walled Garden and that outside of the Walled Garden are problematic. Only a limited stretch of the former was recorded during the watching brief and it is therefore difficult to draw firm conclusions from it. Clearly the inevitable reuse of medieval stonework at the site of this kind adds an inbuilt uncertainty in terms of dating, but the quality of the stonework does suggest that it is *in situ*, i.e. that the stones were not reused in the footing for the upstanding brick wall but formed a pre-existing wall. This implies that the stonework significantly predates the overlying 19th century brickwork, a conclusion drawn during the first evaluation of the site in regard to the south and east walls (ASE 1998). However, this is far from certain.
- 6.4 There is perhaps more certainty concerning the dating of the masonry encountered outside of the Walled Garden. Although exposed during the Duchess of Cleveland's 'excavations' of the 1870s (evidence of which was recorded during the monitoring), and disturbed more recently during the laying of services, enough of the masonry survived to draw some tentative conclusions heavily supported/enhanced by the results of the Ground Penetrating Radar survey (Arrow 2013).
- 6.5 The quality, and indeed thickness of the masonry clearly suggests that the material is medieval in date. Hare (1984, 35) thought that the remains of buildings he found in an open area excavation adjacent to the Chapter House were 13th or 14th century in date, and belonged to the Abbey's Infirmary, following the usual monastic pattern of placing this building away from the cloistral buildings, usually to the south-east. The monastic infirmary was used for the care of ill or older monks, and for '*periodic bleeding in which monks had their veins opened for supposed medical and religious benefits*' (Greene 1992, 158-9).
- 6.6 Hare's (1984) rubble footings were of a similar build to the masonry encountered during the current project and on a comparable orientation. However the form of the building and its function remain a mystery, but was clearly part of the complex of structures usually associated with the infirmary complex, which often included a separate chapel and kitchen (Greene 1992, 9), and sometimes a substantial group of other ancillary buildings, as at the fully excavated example of the Cistercian foundation of Fountains Abbey in Yorkshire (Platt 1995, 167-8), or more locally at Lewes Priory (ASE 2010).

- 6.7 The Ground Penetrating Radar survey clearly shows the outline of the Infirmary Hall (with substantial buttresses) orientated east-west with other attached buildings to north, south and east (including the masonry encountered during the watching brief; Figure 7). Without full excavation interpretation is difficult; but it would appear that the encountered masonry forms part of one of the buildings associated with the Infirmary.
- 6.8 The presence of a garderobe within the wall thickness might be thought unexpected given the proximity of the main reredorter/*Necessarium* at the site to the south. However, the location does suggest that the building was associated with the infirmary complex, an area which usually had separate sanitary arrangements at medieval abbeys, with its own reredorter opening into the main monastic drain (Greene 1992, 9). The character and position of the masonry at Battle Abbey strongly implies that this was arrangement there too. What remains unclear is the function of the building as a whole, given that the garderobe was carefully concealed in the wall thickness, and not open as in the main *Necessarium*.
- 6.9 Although some infirmary complexes have been excavated and plans published (e.g. at Kirkstall Abbey, West Yorkshire; Green 1992, Figure 3, Fountains and Lewes; see above), there is a distinct paucity of published work on this part of the monastic complex when compared to other elements of the monastery, such as the church or other cloistral buildings. This hampers further interpretation, or comparison with other infirmary buildings with garderobes. For instance excavations at Bayham Abbey have never been targeted at the presumed site of the Infirmary, especially unfortunate as it is thought that the '*hand of the same master can be detected at Battle Abbey*' as in some of the later 13th century masonry at that site (Streeten 1983, 132).
- 6.10 There is also evidence of the arrangement of Benedictine infirmaries from a surviving plan of Canterbury Cathedral Priory produced in the mid-12th century (Aston 2000, 102-3). It clearly shows an '*Infirmary Necessarium*' with a drain leading to the main '*Necessarium*' block, the probable arrangement at Battle.
- 6.11 Monastic infirmaries often also had a separate cloister (Greene 1992, 9; Fig 1, Aston *op. cit.*), and although it is perhaps stretching the evidence somewhat to suggest that the stone masonry found below the walls of the Walled Garden came from such an enclosure, it is imaginable that the current Walled Garden may have fossilised the position of the Abbey's infirmary cloister. It is an intriguing possibility that visitors to the current Walled Garden are following in the footsteps of Battle Abbey's recuperating or aged monks (Greene *op. cit.*).

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 It is clear that the current archaeological work, incorporating both excavation and geophysical survey, has not only fulfilled the terms of the Scheduled Monument Consent, but has also uncovered hitherto unrecorded archaeological remains. The full position and extent of remains partially excavated during previous excavations at the site has been established, and other more enigmatic masonry remains have been exposed and recorded.

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Appendix 1 - Tree Planting Pits

Tree Pit	Diameter	Depth	Topsoil	Subsoil	'Natural'	Notes
A	630mm	440mm	✓			
B	700mm	480mm	✓	✓	✓	
C	690mm	240mm	✓		✓	
D	640mm	380mm	✓	✓		
E	550mm	440mm	✓		✓	
F	610mm	400mm	✓	✓		
G	610mm	410mm	✓		✓	
H	590mm	400mm	✓			
I	590mm	380mm	✓		✓	
J	590mm	420mm	✓	✓	✓	
K	680mm	450mm	✓	✓		
L	580mm	370mm	✓	✓		
M	560mm	370mm	✓	✓		
N	570mm	360mm	✓			Brick rubble in topsoil
O	580mm	380mm	✓	✓		
P	610mm	390mm	✓	✓		
Q	700mm	440mm	✓		✓	
R	580mm	360mm	✓	✓		
S	620mm	380mm	✓			
T	660mm	400mm	✓			Disturbed by plastic pipe
U	600mm	410mm	✓			
V	600mm	400mm	✓			
X	670mm	320mm	✓		✓	
Y	580mm	410mm	✓			
Z	600mm	400mm	✓			
AA	610mm	380mm	✓			
DD	600mm	410mm	✓			
EE	590mm	340mm	✓			
FF	610mm	310mm	✓			
GG	600mm	330mm	✓			
HH	610mm	340mm	✓			Newly laid topsoil over brick rubble
II	610mm	320mm	✓			
NN	610mm	420mm	✓			
PP	430mm	340mm	✓			
RR	610mm	480mm	✓			
SS	610mm	400mm	✓			
TT	590mm	410mm	✓			Topsoil over [301]

Appendix 2 – Finds Quantification

Context	Pottery	Wt (g)	CBM	Wt (g)	Bone	Wt (g)	Glass	Wt (g)	Coal	Wt (g)	CTP	Wt (g)	Stone	Wt (gr)
100	4	40	4	126	1	2	1	<2	1	10	2	4		
211	8	120	3	214	8	194	5	364			1	<2		
213	3	54	47	8868										
Tree B	1	70												
Tree E	1	6			1	10								
Tree EE													3	9520
Tree G			1	178										
Tree L	1	6												
Tree M			2	50										
Tree MM			1	236										
Tree N							1	56						
Total	18	296	58	9672	10	206	7	420	1	10	3	4	3	9520

HER Summary Form

Site Code	BAW12					
Identification Name and Address	Battle Abbey, Battle					
County, District &/or Borough	Rother District, East Sussex					
OS Grid Refs.	574900 115700					
Geology	Wadhurst Clay					
ASE Project Number	5699					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	Watching Brief ✓	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field	Shallow Urban	Deep Urban	Other <i>Scheduled Monument</i>		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval. 12.12.12 - 22.03.13	Excav.	WB.	Other		
Sponsor/Client	English Heritage					
Project Manager	Andy Leonard/Jim Stevenson					
Project Supervisor	Simon Stevens					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED ✓	PM ✓	Other		

Summary

Archaeology South-East was commissioned by English Heritage to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the restoration of Battle's Abbey's Walled Garden and improvements to signage in other parts of the site.

Although little of archaeological significance was encountered during tree planting in the Walled Garden or during the excavation of holes for new signage elsewhere, stonework masonry encountered below the brickwork of the northern wall of the Walled Garden could be of some antiquity. Similarly, masonry encountered immediately to the north-west of the Walled Garden remains undated but is probably medieval in origin and may form part of the Abbey's infirmary. Material recovered in the vicinity suggests demolition at the time of the Dissolution with limited evidence of previous investigation known to have been undertaken in the 1870s.

A subsequent Ground Penetrating Radar Survey provided clear evidence of the presence of various elements of a complex of buildings in the vicinity, associated with the infirmary, which appears to lie to the west of the encountered remains. Although the recorded masonry forms part of one of the buildings associated with the Abbey's infirmary, the function(s) of the building remains unclear.

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-146108

Project details

Project name	Archaeological Investigations at Battle Abbey, Battle, East Sussex
Short description of the project	Archaeology South-East was commissioned by English Heritage to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the restoration of Battle's Abbey's Walled Garden and improvements to signage in other parts of the site. Although little of archaeological significance was encountered during tree planting in the Walled Garden or during the excavation of holes for new signage elsewhere, stonework masonry encountered below the brickwork of the northern wall of the Walled Garden could be of some antiquity. Similarly, masonry encountered immediately to the north-west of the Walled Garden remains undated but is probably medieval in origin and may form part of the Abbey's infirmary. Material recovered in the vicinity suggests demolition at the time of the Dissolution with limited evidence of previous investigation known to have been undertaken in the 1870s. A subsequent Ground Penetrating Radar Survey provided clear evidence of the presence of various elements of a complex of buildings in the vicinity, associated with the infirmary, which appears to lie to the west of the encountered remains. Although the recorded masonry forms part of one of the buildings associated with the Abbey's infirmary, the function(s) of the building remains unclear.
Project dates	Start: 12-12-2012 End: 21-03-2013
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	5699 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	BWG 12 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	20105 - SM No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Scheduled Monument (SM)
Current Land use	Other 13 - Waste ground
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	MASONRY Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Post Medieval
Investigation type	""Geophysical Survey"", ""Watching Brief""

Prompt Scheduled Monument Consent

Project location

Country England
Site location EAST SUSSEX ROTHER BATTLE Battle Abbey Walled Garden
Postcode TN33 0AD
Study area 100.00 Square metres
Site coordinates TQ 7490 1570 50 0 50 54 49 N 000 29 17 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator English Heritage
Project design originator Archaeology South-East
Project director/manager Andy Leonard/Jim Stevenson
Project supervisor Simon Stevens
Type of sponsor/funding body Client
Name of sponsor/funding body English Heritage

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient English Heritage
Physical Contents "Ceramics"
Digital Archive recipient English Heritage
Digital Contents "other"
Digital Media available "Images raster / digital photography","Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient English Heritage
Paper Contents "other"
Paper Media "Aerial Photograph","Context"

available sheet", "Correspondence", "Diary", "Miscellaneous Material", "Notebook - Excavation", " Research", " General Notes", "Plan", "Report", "Section", "Unpublished Text"

**Project
bibliography 1**

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title Archaeological Investigations at Battle Abbey, Battle, East Sussex

Author(s)/Editor(s) Stevens, S.

Other bibliographic details ASE Report No. 2013073

Date 2013

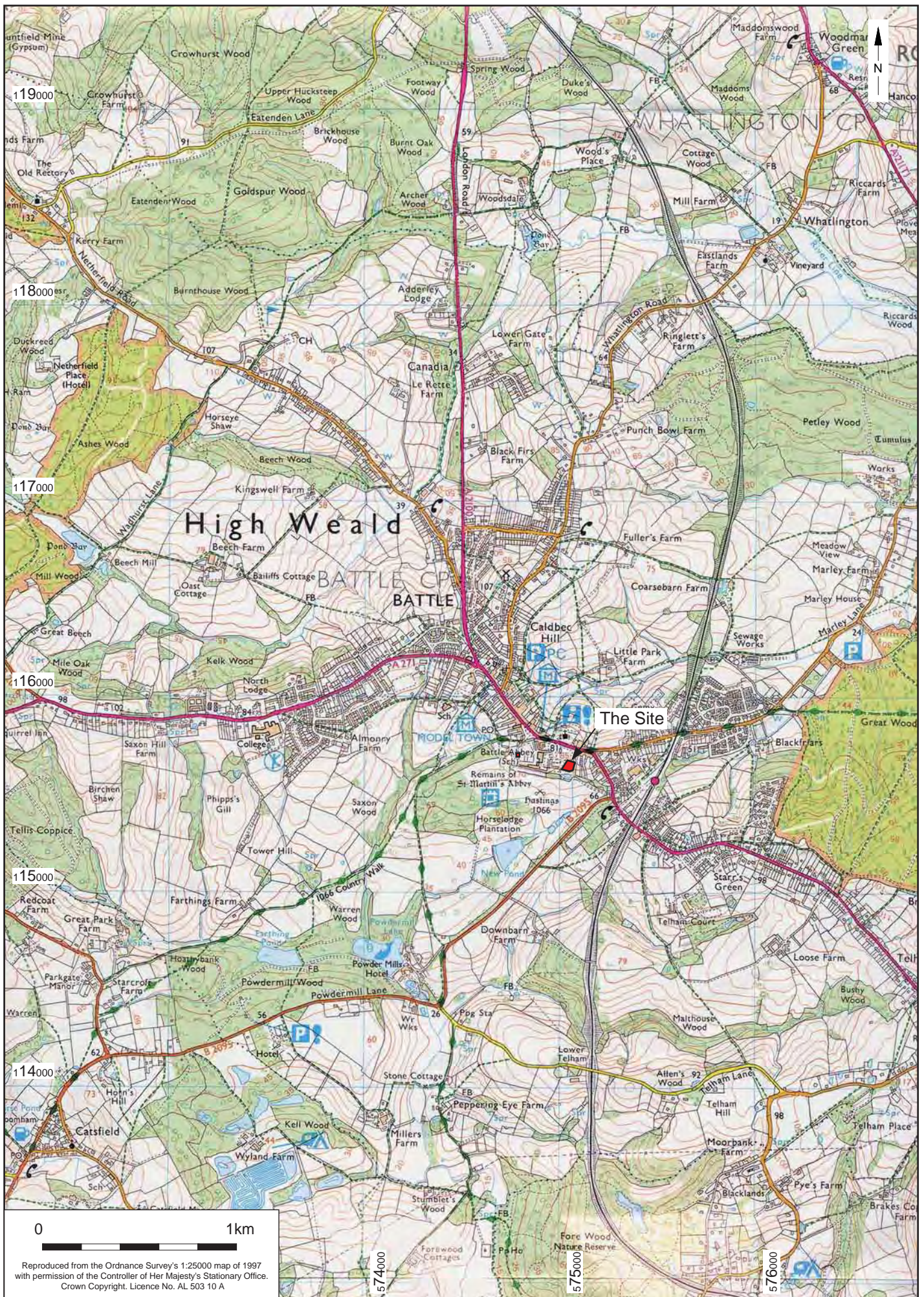
Issuer or publisher Archaeology South-East

Place of issue or publication Portslade, East Sussex

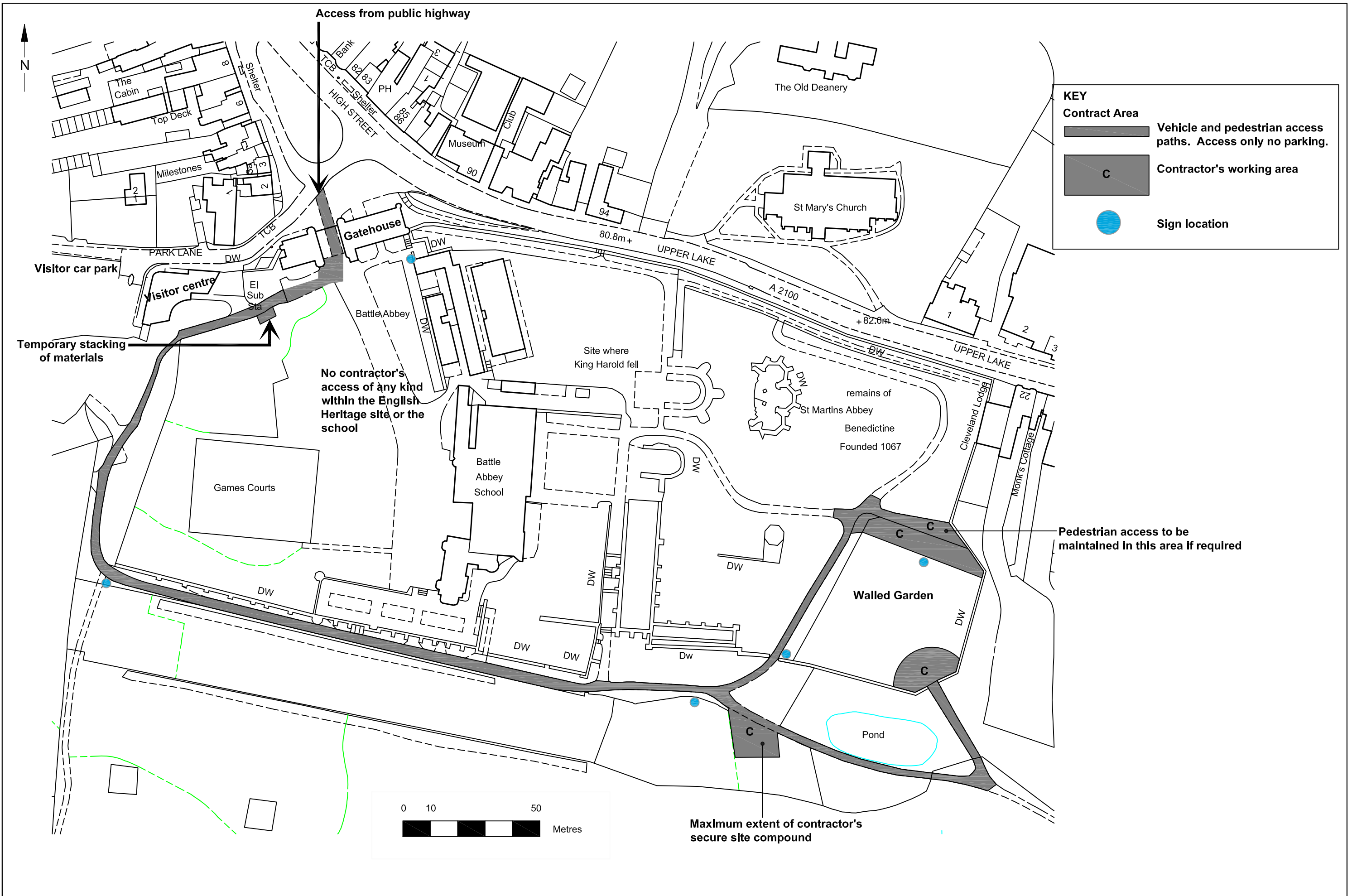
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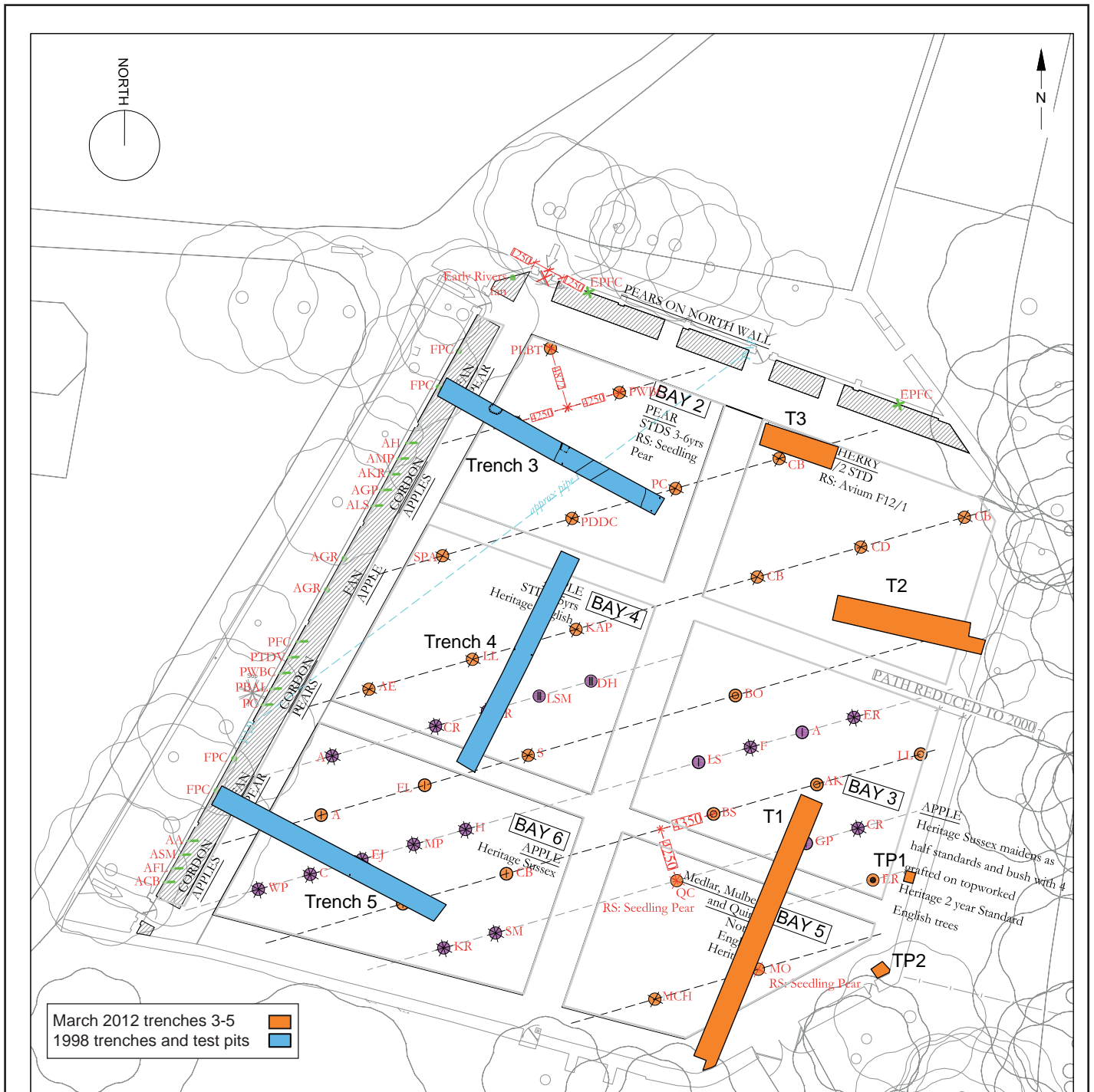
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Entered on 12 September 2013



© Archaeology South-East		Battle Abbey Walled Garden: Tree Planting	
Project Ref: 5699	September 2013	Site location	
Report Ref: 2013073	Drawn by: RHC	Fig. 1	





March 2012 trenches 3-5
1998 trenches and test pits

Rev.	Description	Date / Signed
A	Changes throughout	14 08 2012

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Client
ENGLISH HERITAGE
TIM BALDOCK

Project Name
**WALLED GARDEN/
ORCHARD RESTORATION
BATTLE ABBEY**

Drawing Title
**STOCK LOCATION PLAN FOR
JOHN WATKINS**

Drawing No.	Scale	Revision
HS-110V/015A	1:2000(A2)	A

Drawn	Signed	Date
MP		19/07/12
Designed	JE	19/07/12
Approved	JE	19/07/12

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Principal: Jennifer Exley, Dip LA (Hons), MLI

BAY CONTENTS (VARIETIES)

BAY 1
CB: Cherry Bottler
CD: Cherry Dunn

BAY 2
PC: Pear Catilae
PDDC: Pear Doyenne Du Comice
PJ: Pear Jargonelle
PLBT: Pear Louis Bonne of Jersey
PWBC: Pear William Bon Crestien

BAY 3
M25 for topworking (T), or retain to grow on (R)
AK: Apple Ashmead's keelred (T)
GB: Golden Pippin (1 yr maiden)
A: Alfriston (1 yr maiden)

BAY 4
Confirmation of topworking awaited
SPA: Apple Smarts Prince Arthur (5yr STD)
AE: Anne Elizabeth (3yr STD)
LL: Lord Lambourne (5yr STD)
KAP: King's acre Pippin (5yr STD)
S: Superb (5yr STD)
LSM: Lady Sudeley maiden
EGM: Egremont Russett (2-3yr bush)
CR: Crawley Reineette (2-3 yr bush)
DH: Dr Hogg- maiden

BAY 5:
MO: Medlar Original (STD)
MCH: Mulberry Chelsea (King James) (TBC)
QC: Quince Champion (STD)

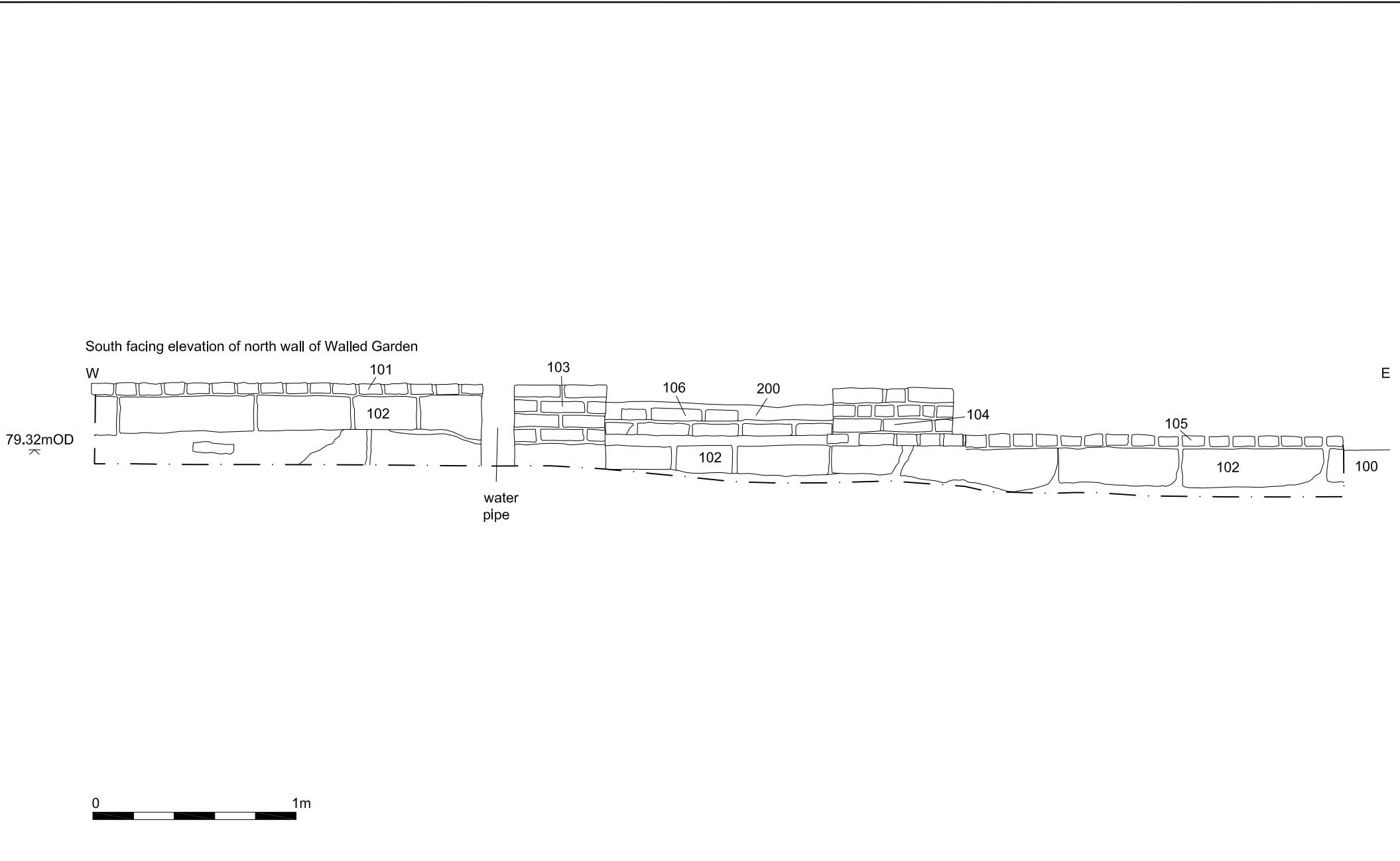
BAY 6:
MM106 1/2 standards or bush to be grown from Sussex maidens and remain in situ
A: Alfriston
TL: First & Last
DH: Dr Hogg
CB: Crawley Beauty
WP: Wallington Pippin
C: Coporation
EJ: Edmund Jupp
MP: Manningtons Pearmain
H: Hawkridge
KR: Knobby Russett
SM: Sussex Mother

NORTH AND WEST WALL:
EPPC: Pear Fondante de Chateau (espalier)
PTDC: Pear Triomphe de Vienne (cordon)
PWBC: Pear Williams Bonne Crestien (cordon)
PRAL: Pear Beurre Alexandre Lucas (cordon)
PC: Pear Conference (cordon)
FPC: Pear Conference 5-7 branches (fan)
TPD: Pear Doyenne du Comice 5-7 branches (fan)

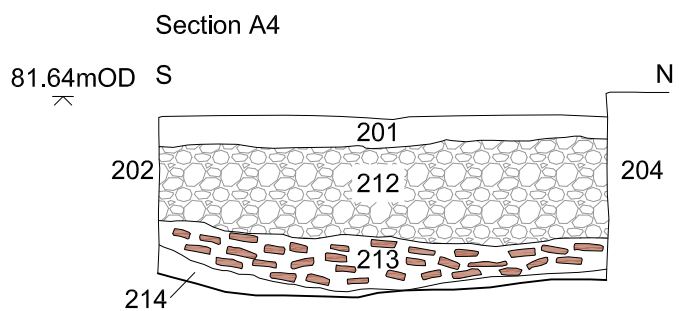
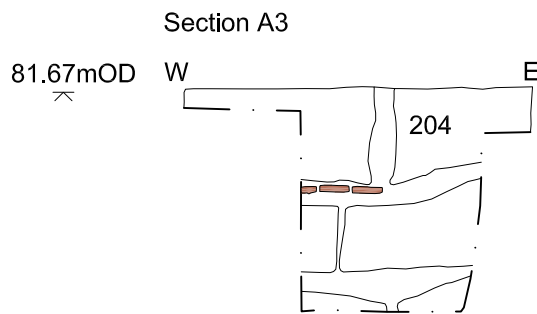
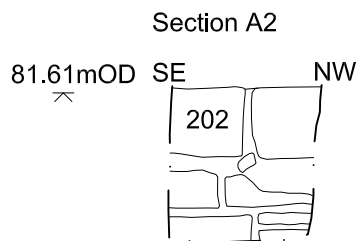
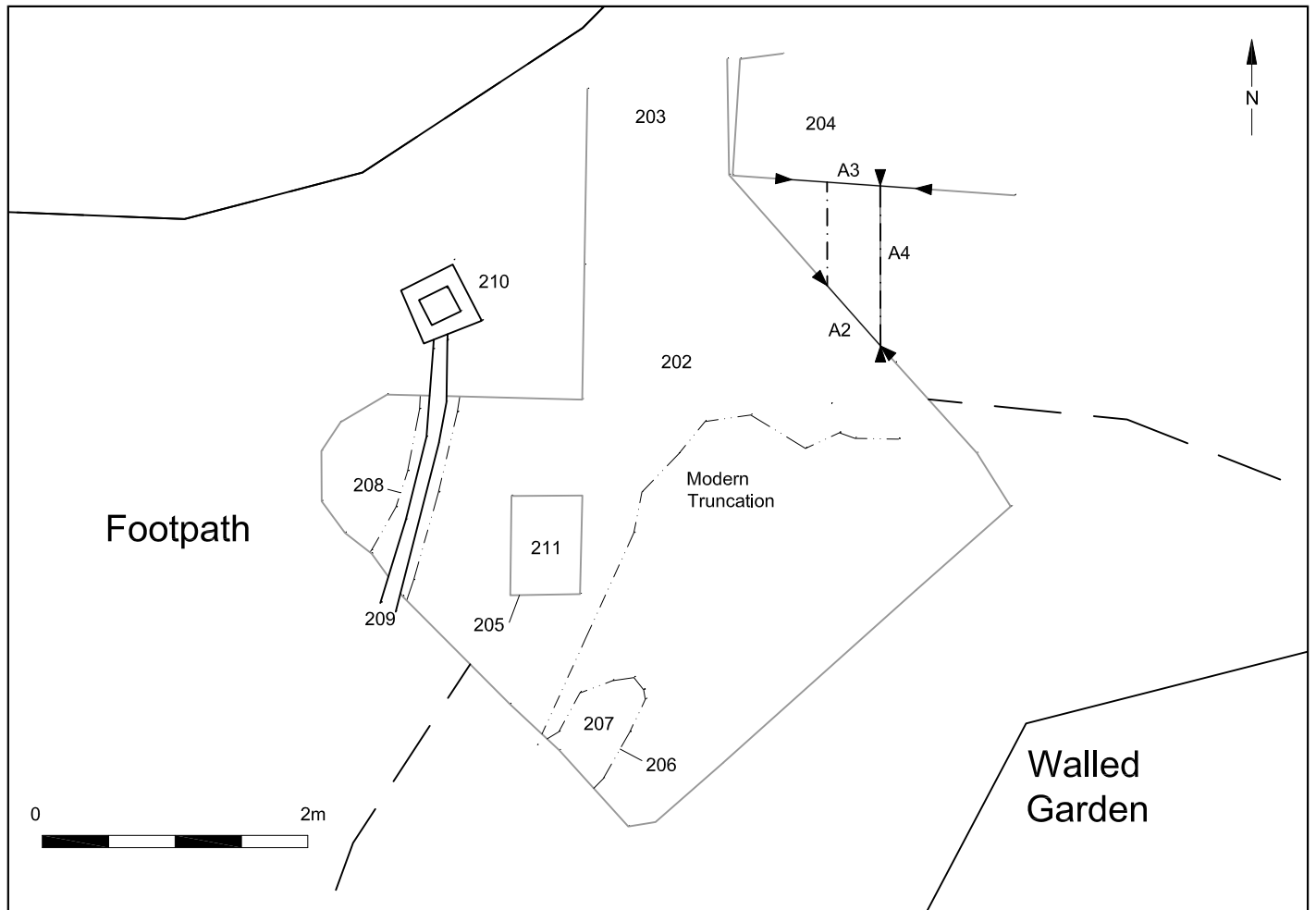
ACB: Apple Crawley Beauty (cordon)
AH: Apple Hawkridge (cordon)
AMP: Apple Manningtons Pearmain (cordon)
AKR: Apple Knobby Russett (cordon)
AGP: Apple Golden Pippin (cordon)
ALS: Apple Lady Sudeley (cordon)
AA: Apple Alfriston (cordon)
ASM: Apple Sussex Mother (cordon)
AFL: Apple Fane and East (cordon)
AGR: Apple Egremont Russett (fan)



NOTES:
* Spacing for MM106 stock to be 4.25m between rows and trees (unless shown).
* Spacing for M25 stock to be 8.5m between rows and trees (unless shown).
* Only bay 3 has 4 topworked trees, other 1/2 STD or bush remain as Sussex varieties.
* All cherries and apples are English or Sussex specifically. Pears are English and Trench.
* HS-110/174 sheet 2 shows the cordons and fans on North and West Wall.
* Tree locations to English Heritage Staff instructions

KEY:
■ Single stem Maiden 1yr
● Standard Sussex 2yr on M25
⊙ Maiden to grow as 1/2 standard on MM106
⊕ Standard 2yr English
⊗ Standard 3-5yr English
⊛ Tree to be topworked M25
* Bushes Sussex on MM106 rootstock, 2-3 year (or maiden in Spring 2011) pruned to become bush
— Cordon
● Fan
○ Meadow Planting
● Permanent Stock Locations
● Interplanting Stock Locations
× Espalier



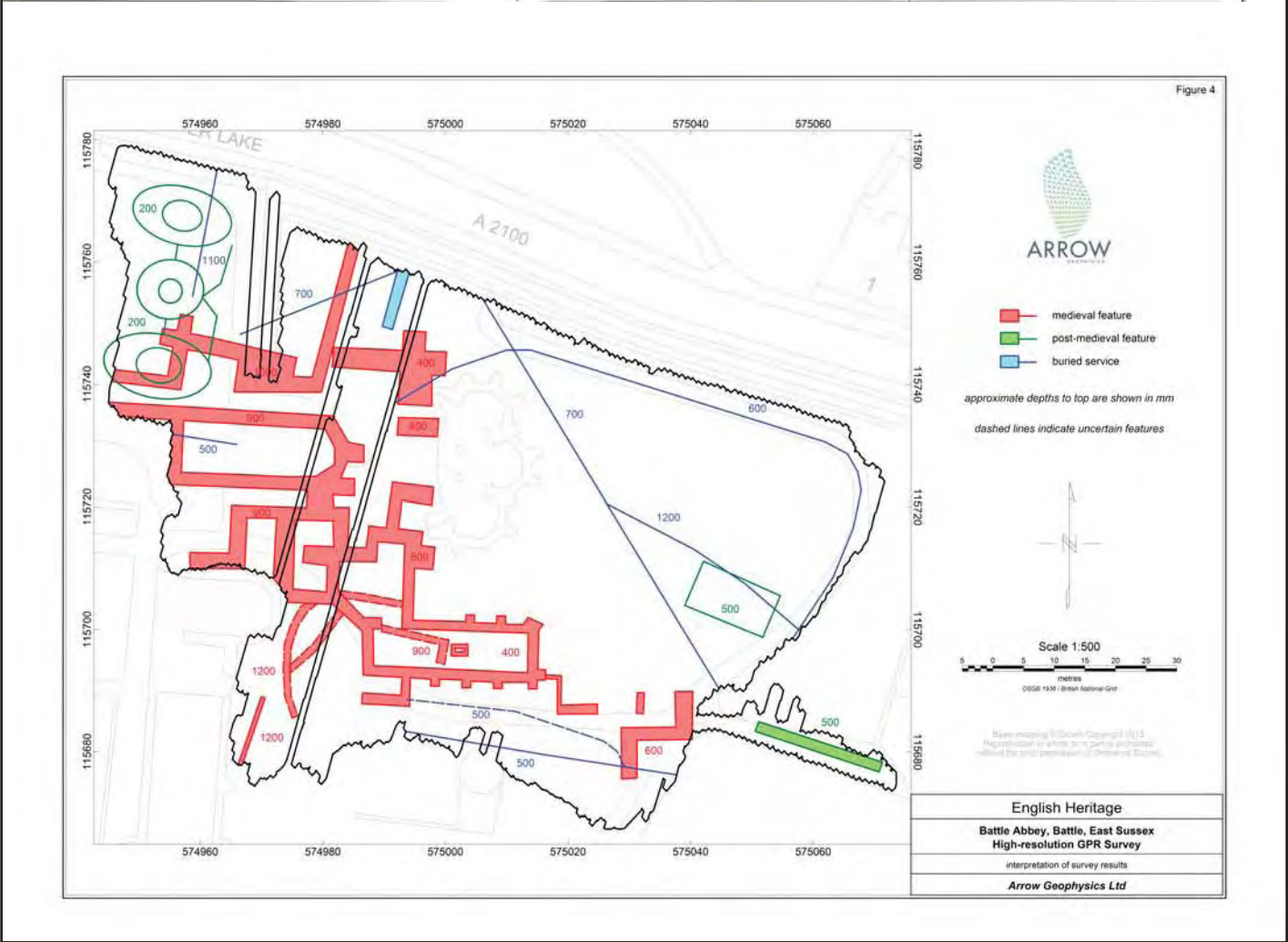
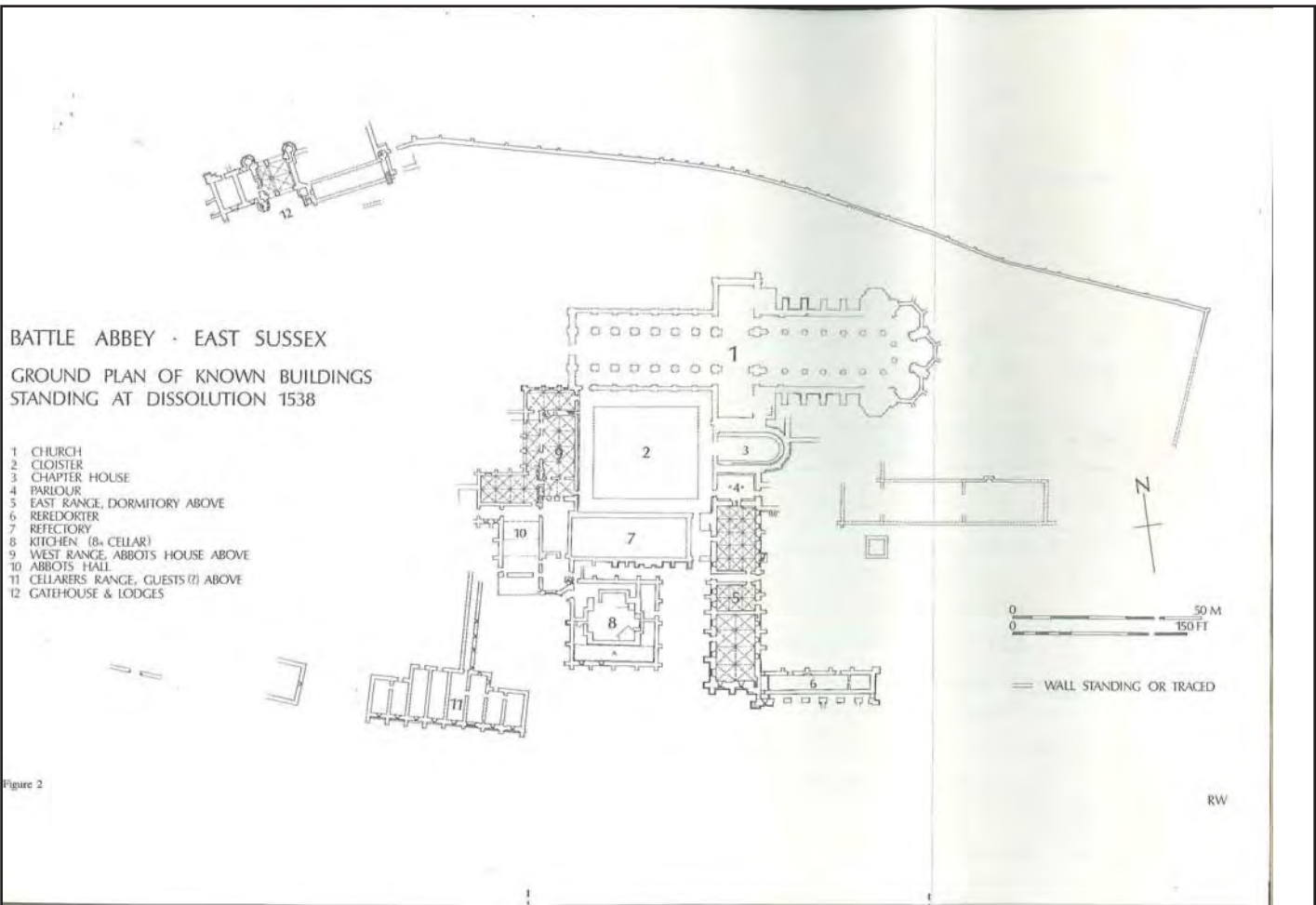
© Archaeology South-East		Archaeological investigations at Battle Abbey	Fig. 4
Project Ref: 5699	September 2013	Elevation drawing of masonry wall under north wall of Walled Garden	
Report Ref: 2013073	Drawn by: RHC		



-  Sandstone Rubble
-  Tile







© Archaeology South-East		Watching Brief at Battle Abbey		Fig. 7
Project Ref: 5699	September 2013	Known remains ground plan and GPR survey interpretation		
Report Ref: 2013073	Drawn by: RHC			

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