

**Archaeological Watching Brief Report  
7 Beckets Place  
Otford, Kent**

**NGR: TQ 53136 59340**

**Planning Ref: SE/13/00400/HOUSE**

**ASE Project No: 6405  
Site Code: OBP13**

**ASE Report No: 2014009  
OASIS id: archaeol6-167888**



**By Catherine Douglas**

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**January 2014**

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**Abstract**

*Archaeology South-East was commissioned by SC Services to undertake an archaeological watching brief during housing extension works at 7 Becketts Place, Otford, TN14 5QA.*

*Three foundation trenches were monitored during excavation. No archaeological features or finds were encountered.*

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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 SC Services to undertake an archaeological watching brief during development works at 7 Becketts Place, Otford, TN14 5QA, centred on NGR TQ 53136 59340 (Figure 1).

### **1.2 Geology and Topography**

1.2.1 The site is bounded by Becketts Place to the north, the Otford Railway to the east, gardens to the west and green fields to the south.

1.2.4 According to the British Geological Survey 1:50,000 map (BGS 2014) the bedrock geology of the site is West Melbury Marly Chalk Formation and undifferentiated Zig Zag Chalk Formation.

### **1.3 Planning Background**

1.3.1 Planning permission for a housing extension to the south of 7 Becketts Place was granted by Kent County Council (KCC; Ref: SE/13/00400/HOUSE). The Local Planning Authority placed the following condition on the planning consent:

*'No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a watching brief to be undertaken by an archaeologist approved by the Local Planning Authority so that the excavation is observed and items of interest and finds are recorded. The watching brief shall be in accordance with a written programme and specification, which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority'*

*'Reason: To ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded.'*

### **1.4 Aims and Objectives**

1.4.1 The objectives of the archaeological watching brief, as stated in the specification (KCC 2007) for archaeological watching brief, were to:

*'contribute to heritage knowledge of the area through the recording of the archaeological remains exposed as a result of excavations in connection with the groundworks.'*

### **1.5 Scope of Report**

1.5.1 This report presents the findings from the archaeological watching brief carried out on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2013. The fieldwork was undertaken by Catherine Douglas. The project was managed by Jon Sygrave (fieldwork) and by Dan Swift (post-excavation).

## **2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Overview**

2.1.1 The site lies in an area of high potential for archaeological remains of prehistoric, Roman, medieval and post-medieval date. Otford Mount Bronze Age barrow is the only English Heritage Scheduled Monument in the vicinity, located a little over 500 metres to the south-east of the site.

2.1.2 The following summary is based on information taken from the 'Elmwood' Tudor Crescent watching brief report (ASE 2011) a site located 300 metres south-east of 7 Becketts Place.

### **2.2 Prehistoric**

2.2.1 Prehistoric activity close to the site is chiefly concentrated to the north and consists of a variety of worked flint artefacts, a track way, a Neolithic settlement and evidence of Bronze Age funerary activity. Evidence for the prehistoric period is less common to the south of the site. Here a barbed and tanged arrowhead and a Mesolithic pick were discovered close to Otford village centre.

### **2.3 Roman**

2.3.1 The site lies c. 400m to the west of Otford Roman Villa. Further Roman activity is represented by a single coin of Constantine II found in the garden of nearby Longlodge Cottage.

### **2.4 Anglo-Saxon / Medieval**

2.4.1 A single Saxon rubbish pit is recorded to the south east of the site and later medieval activity centres on the Bishop's Palace to the south-west.

### **2.5 Post-Medieval**

2.5.1 Post-medieval activity is recorded in the form of Otford Court to the north-east; houses in Otford village and the nearby railway and railway station. An intaglio of possible post-medieval date was also found close to the Bishop's Palace.

2.5.2 Further but undated features near to the site include possible quarry pits, field systems and other similar landscape features.

2.5.3 An evaluation conducted by Archaeology South East at Well Road to the south of the site failed to identify any cut features although struck flint along with late medieval and post-medieval tile fragments were recovered.

### **3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Fieldwork Methodology**

- 3.1.1 All monitored areas were CAT scanned to detect any live services prior to excavation, and all machining was carried out under the supervision of a qualified archaeologist.
- 3.1.2 A mechanical tracked excavator was used for the removal of material above undisturbed natural subsoil. All excavations undertaken by the ground work contractor were undertaken with due regard for the potential to encounter archaeological remains. All intrusive ground works were monitored by an archaeologist to the level of the natural sand geology.
- 3.1.3 A U-shaped area of building footings were excavated across an area measuring a length of 8.70m by a width of 5.80m. The width of the footings measured 0.70m, and all excavations were taken to a depth of 1.70m below the topsoil surface level.
- 3.1.4 The west footing was not monitored by an archaeologist as it was excavated along the location of the footing for the previous extension.
- 3.1.5 The spoil from the excavations was inspected by archaeologists to recover artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest.
- 3.1.6 All deposits were recorded on standard ASE recording sheets and a full digital photographic record was maintained throughout the watching brief.

#### **3.2 The Site Archive**

- 3.2.1 The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will be deposited at a suitable museum in due course. The contents of the archive are tabulated below (Table 1).

Number of Contexts	6
No. of files/paper record	1
Plan and sections sheets	1
Photographs	8

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

## 4.0 RESULTS

(Figures 2 and 3)

4.0.1 A U-shaped area of building footings measuring 8.70m by 5.80m was excavated. The footings were 0.70m wide and all were 1.70m deep below ground level. All contexts are summarised in Table 2 below.

<b>Context</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Max. Length m</b>	<b>Max. Width m</b>	<b>Deposit Thickness m</b>
01	Layer	Topsoil	>8.70	>3.00	0.20
02	Layer	Paving stone overburden	>3.00	>0.70	0.20
03	Layer	Made Ground	>3.00	>0.70	0.10
04	Layer	Made Ground	>8.70	>5.80	0.35
05	Layer	Made Ground	>8.70	>5.80	0.40 - 0.60
06	Layer	Chalk geology	>8.70	>5.80	0.50

Table 2: List of recorded contexts

4.0.2 Marly Chalk Formation [06] was encountered at a depth of 1.20m below ground level.

4.0.3 Overlying the chalk a layer of made ground [05] containing frequent chalk nodules was recorded. This measured 0.40-0.60m thick and did not contain any archaeological artefacts.

4.0.4 A layer of made ground [04] overlay the clay. This comprised chalky clay containing large quantities of brick and concrete rubble, probably resulting from the initial ground reduction and make up for the previous house extension.

4.0.5 A dark brown silty clay layer [03] overlay the made ground in the eastern part of the excavation area.

4.0.6 The silty clay layer [03] was immediately overlain by paving slabs [02] set in sand, measuring a thickness of 0.20m.

4.0.7 In the southern part of the excavation area the made ground [04] was immediately overlain by a silt topsoil [01] measuring a thickness of 0.20m which formed the garden lawn.

4.0.8 No archaeological features or finds were encountered.



## **5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 5.0.1 No archaeological features were observed during the watching brief and no finds were recovered.
- 5.0.2 Recent made ground resulting from the construction of the house overlay the natural chalk.
- 5.0.3 A previous extension had stood to the south of the house and the westernmost footings of this were reused for the new extension.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

ASE, 2011 *Archaeological Watching Brief Report: Elmwood, Tudor Crescent, Otford, Kent*

Kent County Council 2007. *Standard Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief/evaluation/excavation*

## **Websites**

[www.bgs.ac.uk](http://www.bgs.ac.uk) - accessed on 07/01/13

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

ASE would like to thank SC Services for commissioning the work and for their assistance throughout the project, and Kent County Archaeologist for their guidance and monitoring. The excavation was directed by Catherine Douglas. The author would like to thank Justin Russell who produced the figures for this report; Jon Sygrave who managed the excavations and Dan Swift who managed the post-excavation process.

**HER Summary Form**

Site Code	OBP13					
Identification Name and Address	7 Becketts Place, Otford, Kent, TN14 5QA					
County, District &/or Borough	Kent					
OS Grid Refs.	TQ 53136 59340					
Geology	West Melbury Marly Chalk Formation and undifferentiated Zig Zag Chalk Formation.					
Arch. South-East Project Number	6405					
Type of Fieldwork			<b>Watching Brief</b>			
Type of Site		<b>Shallow Urban</b>				
Dates of Fieldwork			<b>WB.</b> 12/11/13			
Sponsor/Client	SC Services					
Project Manager	Jon Sygrave					
Project Supervisor	Catherine Douglas					
Period Summary						
				<b>Modern</b>		
<p>Summary</p> <p>Archaeology South-East was commissioned by SC Services to undertake an archaeological watching brief during housing extension works at 7 Becketts Place, Otford, TN14 5QA.</p> <p>Three foundation trenches were monitored during excavation. No archaeological features or finds were encountered.</p>						

## OASIS Form

### OASIS ID: archaeol6-167888

#### Project details

Project name	An Archaeological Watching Brief at 7 Becketts Place, Otford, Kent
Short description of the project	Archaeology South-East was commissioned by SC Services to undertake an archaeological watching brief during housing extension works at 7 Becketts Place, Otford, TN14 5QA. Three foundation trenches were monitored during excavation. No archaeological features or finds were encountered.
Project dates	Start: 12-11-2013 End: 12-11-2013
Previous/future work	No / No
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	BARROW Bronze Age
Significant Finds	COIN Roman
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Planning condition

#### Project location

Country	England
Site location	KENT SEVENOAKS OTFORD 7 Becketts Place, Otford
Postcode	TN14 5QA
Study area	8.70 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 53136 59340 51 0 51 18 43 N 000 11 50 E Point

#### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	Archaeology South-East
Project design originator	Kent County Council
Project director/manager	Jon Sygrave
Project supervisor	Catherine Douglas
Name of sponsor/funding body	SC Services

#### Project archives

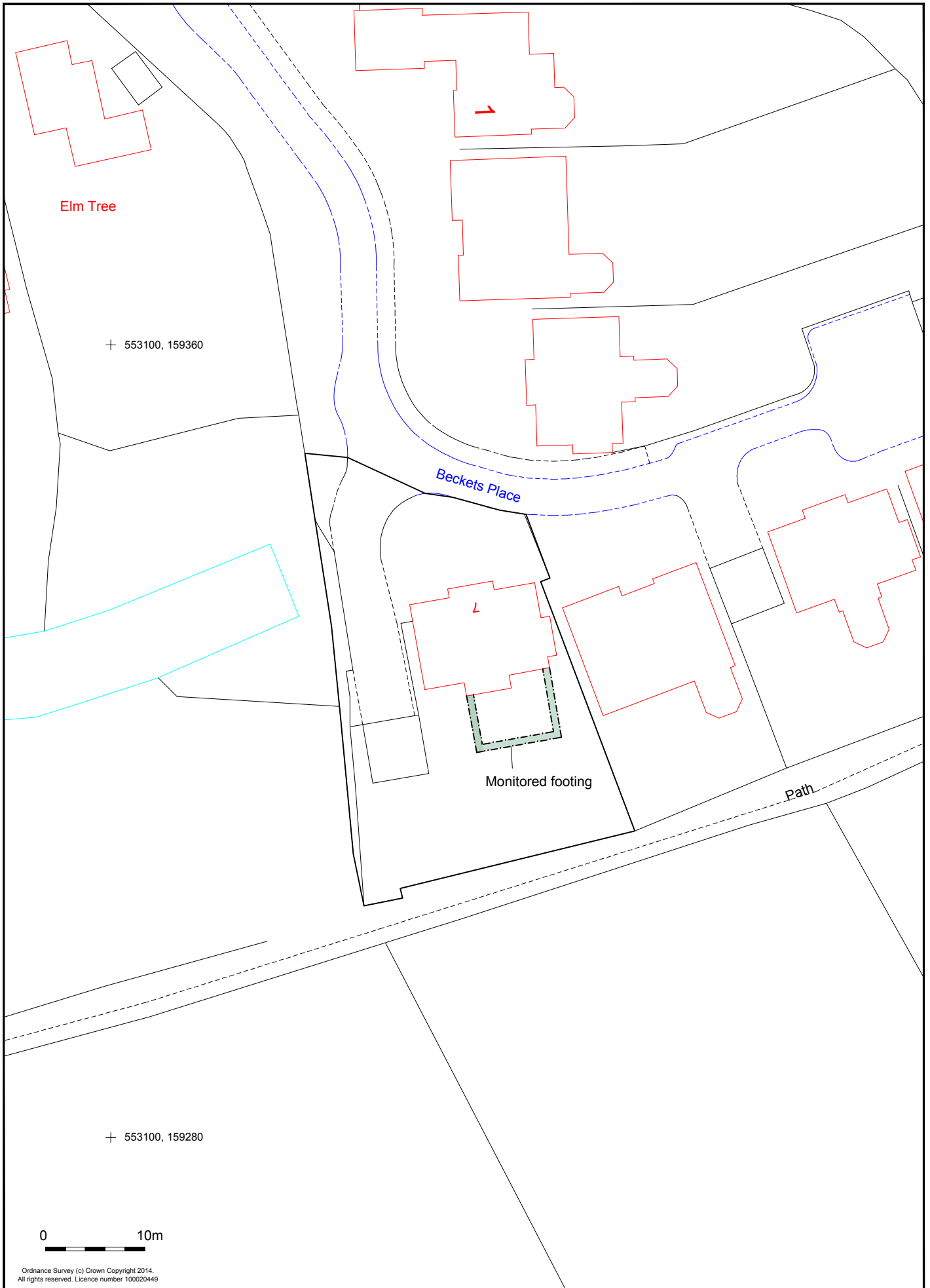
Digital Archive recipient	Kent HER
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography"
Paper Archive recipient	Unknown
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Photograph", "Report", "Section"

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Entered by	Catherine Douglas (catherine.douglas@ucl.ac.uk)
Entered on	7 January 2014

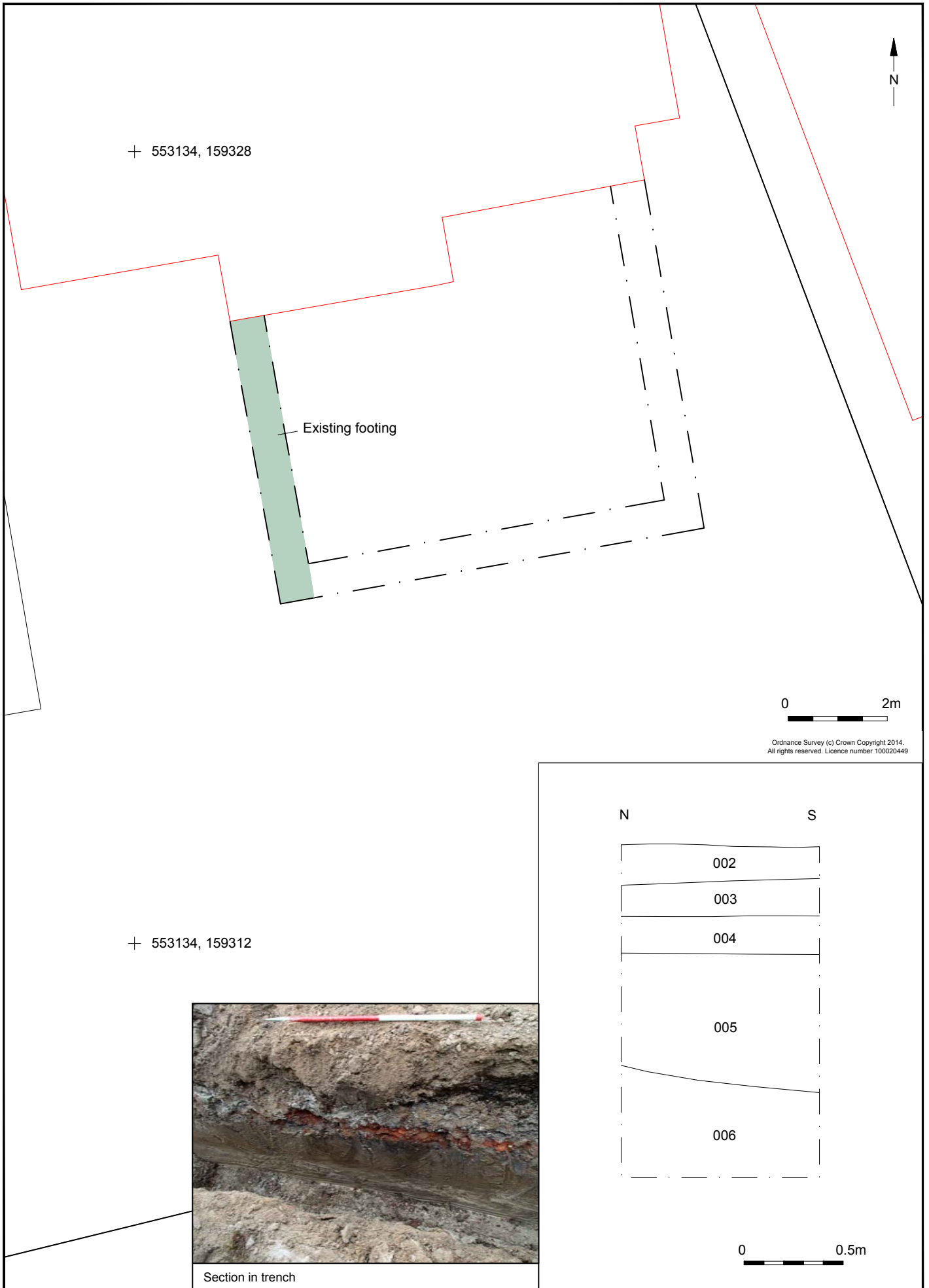


© Archaeology South-East		7 Becketts Place, Otford	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 6405	Jan 2014	Site location	
Report Ref: 2014009	Drawn by: JLR		



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© Archaeology South-East		7 Becketts Place, Otford		Fig. 2
Project Ref: 6405	Jan 2014	Site plan		
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© Archaeology South-East		7 Becketts Place, Otford	Fig. 3
Project Ref: 6405	Jan 2014	Monitored area plan, section and photograph	
Report Ref: 2014009	Drawn by: JLR		



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