

**Archaeological Watching Brief Report
River Adur Tidal Walls
Shoreham-on-Sea
West Sussex**

NGR: TQ 2080 0620

**ASE Project No: 6283
Site Code: ATW13**

**ASE Report No: 2014192
OASIS id: archaeol6-180990**



By Greg Priestley-Bell

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June 2014

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Abstract

Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Halcrow Group Ltd to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of two geotechnical, machine-dug trial pits (TP1 and TP2) on the east bank of the River Adur near Shoreham historic village.

The trial pits were part of a ground investigation associated with the Environment Agency's proposed Shoreham Adur Tidal Walls scheme. Modern dump deposits were identified in both pits, probably associated with the construction of Steyning Road and a livery yard. No alluvium was encountered and no archaeological remains were identified.

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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 Halcrow Group Limited, on behalf of their client the Environment Agency, to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the mechanical excavation of two trial pits, as part of geotechnical ground investigation across the Shoreham Adur Tidal Walls scheme, on the east bank of the River Adur close to the historic village of Shoreham, West Sussex (NGR TQ 208 062 and TQ 207060; Figure 1).
- 1.1.2 Halcrow Group Ltd was commissioned by the Environment Agency to provide environmental consultancy with respect to the Shoreham Adur Tidal Walls scheme. This consultancy advice includes archaeological and broader heritage issues.
- 1.1.3 *'The Arun to Adur Coastal Defence Strategy 2009 recommended that the River Adur East and West Bank through Shoreham by Sea be raised to improve the standard of protection. The defences currently protect residential and commercial properties as well as Shoreham airport and recreational ground. The aim of the ground investigation is to provide additional geotechnical and contamination data/information to aid in the detailed design of the proposed realignment of the tidal defences. The outline design of these tidal defences includes a combination of embankment raising and widening, sheet pile walls and lesser sections of concrete gravity walls.'* (Halcrow Group Ltd 2013)
- 1.1.4 Cultural heritage appraisals (Halcrow Group Ltd 2010 and 2011) were prepared for the wider Project Appraisal Report (PAR) which informed the scheme options assessment. This report identified the heritage assets within the project zone and the various constraints and issues presented by them.
- 1.1.5 The scheme required a phase of geotechnical ground investigation across the affected area. A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for an archaeological watching brief was produced to cover the excavation of two machine-dug trial pits on the east bank of the Adur (Halcrow Group Ltd, 2013). The two trial pits lay near to the historic village of Shoreham. Both areas have a potential for previously unidentified archaeological features. The WSI provided background information which is summarised in this report.
- 1.1.6 The aim of the ground investigation was to provide additional geotechnical and contamination data/information to aid in the detailed design of the proposed realignment of the tidal defences.

1.2 Geology and Topography

- 1.2.1 The trial pits (TP1 and TP2) were located on the east bank of the River Adur, just to the west of Steyning Road. TP1 lay in a pasture currently used for the grazing of horses, while TP2 lay within an enclosed yard associated with horse livery and schooling.
- 1.2.2 British Geological Survey (BGS) mapping indicates that the site is underlain by chalk with floodplain alluvium overlying chalk just to the west.

1.3 Planning Background

1.3.1 *Local Historic Environment Policies (Archaeology)*

West Sussex Structure Plan 2001 – 2016 (adopted 2004)

Policy CH7 Archaeology

'Development should not be permitted unless the archaeological heritage of West Sussex is protected and preserved and, where possible, opportunities are taken to promote the educational and amenity value of sites and areas (historic landscapes).'

'Local plans will include policies to ensure:

- i) The physical preservation in situ of nationally important archaeological areas, sites or monuments, scheduled or not, and their settings;*
- ii) The protection of other important archaeological areas and sites including, where appropriate, the preservation of remains in situ;*
- iii) Where necessary, the site evaluation is undertaken to define the character and significance of the archaeological or historic interest of proposed development sites;*
- iv) The excavation and recording of archaeological remains, the preservation of any finds and the subsequent publication of any results.*

The Adur District Local Plan (adopted 1996)

Policy AB1 Archaeology

'In considering proposals for development, the District Planning Authority will ensure, wherever possible, the preservation of archaeological features. In particular, it will safeguard the fabric and the setting of archaeological features against damaging or discordant development and agree to the removal of such features only in compelling circumstances where there is no practical alternative and subject to adequate provision being made for their recording.'

1.3 Aims and Objectives

1.3.1 The general aims of the archaeological investigation were to:

- Identify archaeological features exposed by the groundworks
- Preserve any exposed archaeological deposits by record
- Provide a report on the results, utilising the data from the Principal Contractor's ground investigation report

1.3.2 The specific objectives of the investigation were to :

- Identify and record evidence of post-medieval development
- Identify any archaeological features from earlier periods
- Recover any artefactual material from the arisings
- Locate the presence of peaty/ organic deposits in the trenches
- Identify areas of modern disturbance
- Extrapolate information regarding local site / land formation processes

1.5 Scope of Report

1.5.1 This report details the findings of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by Greg Priestley-Bell (Senior Archaeologist) on 30th October 2013. The project was managed by Jon Sygrave, Dan Swift and Jim Stevenson.

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

This section is summarised from the Cultural Heritage Appraisals (Halcrow Group Ltd 2010 and 2011).

Prehistoric

Palaeolithic 450,000 - 10,000 BC – minimal potential other than for residual finds

Mesolithic 10,000 - 5,000 BC – very low potential

Neolithic 5,000 - 2,300 BC - minimal potential other than for residual finds

Bronze Age 2,300 - 600 BC – very low potential

Iron Age 600 - AD 42 – very low potential

Historic

Roman AD 42 – 410 – moderate potential

Anglo Saxon/Early Medieval AD 410 – 1065 – low potential

Medieval AD 1066 – 1485 – moderate to high potential

Post-Medieval AD 1486 – high potential

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 Fieldwork Methodology

3.1.1 An archaeological watching brief was conducted during geotechnical ground investigation. This consisted solely of the monitoring of the machine-dug trial pits on the East Bank.

3.1.2 The two machine-excavated trial pits, measuring c. 3m x 0.60m and 2.8m deep, were located on the East Bank of the scheme in Reach E3:

- TP1 – NGR TQ 208062
- TP2 – NGR TQ 207060

3.1.3 The machine-excavated trial pits were under the direction of Halcrow Group Ltd being the Principal Contractor. The ASE archaeologist inspected the sections of the trial pits from the edges of the excavation; the spoil from the excavations was also inspected to recover any artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest.

3.1.4 All encountered deposits were recorded according to accepted professional standards in accordance with the approved ASE Written Scheme of Investigation using *pro-forma* context record sheets.

3.1.5 A full digital photographic record of the work was kept, and will form part of the site archive which is presently held at the Archaeology South-East offices at Portslade, East Sussex, and will be offered to a suitable local museum in due course.

3.1.6 Where deposits suitable for environmental sampling were encountered (such as dated excavated contexts of buried soils, well-sealed slowly silting features, sealed hearths, sealed features containing evident carbonised remains, peats, water-logged or cess deposits), bulk soil samples (40 litres or 100% of smaller features) were taken for environmental analysis. Provision was made for the sampling of sediments suitable for pollen, coleopteran or micropalaeontological analysis, and for palaeosoils; no such sediments were encountered.

3.2 Fieldwork Constraints and Site Conditions

3.2.1 There were no significant fieldwork constraints.

3.2.2 At the time of the investigation, retaining walls of varying length and construction lined both banks from the mouth of the river to the footbridge crossing on the western bank, and the railway crossing on the eastern bank.

3.2.3 Upstream of these crossings, the defences are comprised mainly of earth embankments with public footpaths following their crests (Fugro 2014).

3.2.4 The watching brief took place during fair dry weather.

3.3 The Site Archive

3.3.1 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 file
Photographs	26 Digital

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Trial pit TP1

4.1.1 Trial pit 1 was located in an area of good, dry and firm grassland.

4.1.2 The topsoil and turf [1/001] was 0.40m thick and consisted of dark yellowish brown slightly clay, sandy silt. Topsoil [1/001] overlay a 0.40m thick dump deposit [1/002] of light/mid whitish grey sandy silty clay with 60% chalk fragments and occasional flint nodules, with frequent fragments of concrete, brick and glass (not recovered). Deposit [1/002] overlay the weathered top of chalk bedrock [1/003]. No significant finds or features were identified.

4.2 Trial pit TP2

4.2.1 Trial pit 2 was also located in an area of good, dry and firm grassland.

4.2.2 No turf or topsoil was present. Wood chippings [2/001] to a depth of 0.10m overlay 0.60m of made ground [2/002] consisting of light brownish grey clay, sandy gravel with 80% chalk fragments and occasional concrete paving slab fragments, mortar, brick (not recovered). Deposit [2/002] overlay the weathered top of the chalk bedrock [2/003]. No significant finds or features were identified.

Area	Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Deposit Thickness m
TP1	1/001	Layer	Topsoil			0.40
	1/002	Deposit	Dump deposit			0.40
	1/003	Deposit	Natural			n/a
TP2	2/001	Layer	Top dressing			0.10
	2/002	Deposit	Dump deposit			0.50
	2/003	Deposit	Natural			n/a

Table 2: List of recorded contexts

5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

TP1

- 5.1 Dump deposit [1/002] was likely to be associated with the construction and/or subsequent widening of Steyning Road, which had apparently been terraced into the lower slope of the rising ground to the east.

TP2

- 5.2 Dump deposit [2/002] was probably either associated with the construction of Steyning Road as described above, or with the levelling of the area prior to its use as a livery yard.
- 5.3 The results show that if floodplain alluvium had originally overlain the chalk in the area of the trial pits, subsequent groundworks have removed any potential buried land surface that may have been present. This is likely to be true for all of the western margin of Steyning Road along the area between the two trial pits.

Bibliography

Fugro Engineering Services 2014 Shoreham Adur Tidal Walls, factual report on ground investigation

Halcrow Group Ltd 2013 Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation: River Adur Tidal Walls, Shoreham August 2013

Halcrow Group Ltd 2010 Shoreham Adur Tidal Walls (West Bank): Cultural Heritage Appraisal. Halcrow, March 2010

Halcrow Group Ltd 2011 Shoreham Adur Tidal Walls (East Bank): Cultural Heritage Appraisal. Halcrow, November 2011

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ASE would like to thank Halcrow Group Ltd for commissioning the work and Ross Fitzgerald for his assistance throughout the project. Russell produced the figures for this report, Jon Sygrave project managed the excavations and Jim Stevenson and Dan Swift project managed the post-excavation process.

HER Summary

Site Code	ATW13					
Identification Name and Address	Adur Tidal Walls, Shoreham, West Sussex					
County, District &/or Borough	West Sussex					
OS Grid Refs.	TQ 208062 and TQ 207060					
Geology	Floodplain alluvium over chalk					
Arch. South-East Project Number	6283					
Type of Fieldwork			Watching Brief			
Type of Site	Green Field			Other Coastal		
Dates of Fieldwork			WB. 30 th Oct 2013			
Sponsor/Client	Halcrow Group Ltd on behalf of the Environment Agency					
Project Manager	Jon Sygrave					
Project Supervisor	Greg Priestley-Bell					
Period Summary						
				Other X Modern		
<p>Summary</p> <p><i>Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Halcrow Group Ltd to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of two geotechnical, machine-dug trial pits (TP1 and TP2) on the east bank of the River Adur near Shoreham historic village.</i></p> <p><i>The trial pits were part of a ground investigation associated with the Environment Agency's proposed Shoreham Adur Tidal Walls scheme. Modern dump deposits were identified in both pits, probably associated with the construction of Steyning Road and a livery yard. No alluvium was encountered and no archaeological remains were identified.</i></p>						

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-180990

Project details

Project name	A watching brief during the excavation of two geotechnical trial pits on the east bank of the River Adur, Shoreham, West
Short description of the project	Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Halcrow Group Ltd to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of two geotechnical, machine-dug trial pits (TP1 and TP2) on the east bank of the River Adur near Shoreham historic village. The trial pits were part of a ground investigation associated with the Environment Agency's proposed Shoreham Adur Tidal Walls scheme. Modern dump deposits were identified in both pits, probably associated with the construction of Steyning Road and a livery yard. No alluvium was encountered and no archaeological remains were identified.
Project dates	Start: 30-10-2013 End: 30-10-2013
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	ATW13 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	6283 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Grassland Heathland 4 - Regularly improved
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS

Project location

Country	England
Site location	WEST SUSSEX ADUR SHOREHAM BY SEA Adur Tidal Walls, east bank Shoreham, W. Sussex
Study area	3.00 Hectares
Site coordinates	TQ 208 062 50.8421297547 -0.284055536116 50 50 31 N 000 17 02 W Point
Site coordinates	TQ 207 060 50.8403527657 -0.285541246061 50 50 25 N 000 17 07 W Point

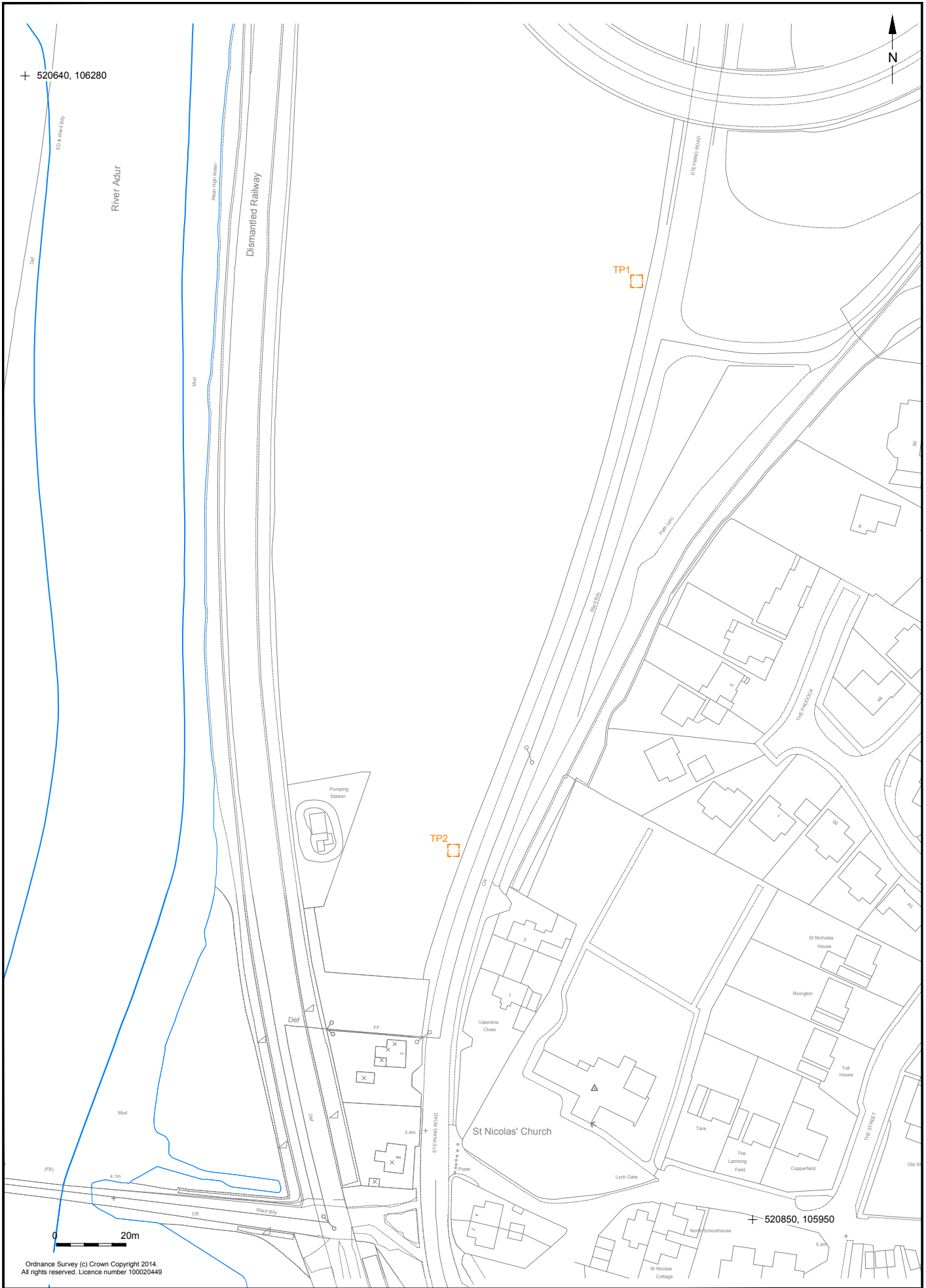
Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South East
Project brief originator	Halcrow Group Limited
Project design originator	Halcrow Group Ltd



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© Archaeology South-East		Adur Tidal Wall, Shoreham	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 6283	June 2014	Site location	
Report Ref: 2014192	Drawn by: RHC		



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© Archaeology South-East		Adur Tidal Wall, Shoreham	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 6283	June 2014	Test pit location	
Report Ref: 2014192	Drawn by: RHC		

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