

**Archaeological Watching Brief Report  
1 Dove Cottages, Fletching Street  
Mayfield  
East Sussex, TN20 6TL**

**NGR: TQ 59025 27045**

**Planning Ref: WD/2013/0671/F and WD/2013/0672/LB**

**ASE Project No: 6180  
Site Code: DCM13**

**ASE Report No: 2014274  
OASIS id: archaeol6-185271**



**By Steve Price**

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**July 2014**

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**Abstract**

*Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Shaun Raubenheimer to undertake an archaeological watching brief at 1 Dove Cottages, Fletching Street, Mayfield, East Sussex in relation to proposed extension works at the property. The works involving levelling the ground surface in preparation for digging the foundations of the proposed building extension, and excavations for the foundations were monitored.*

*The site lies within an Archaeological Notification Area defining the medieval and post-medieval market town of Mayfield and Mayfield Conservation Area. No archaeological features or finds were identified. Topsoil, subsoil and natural deposits were recorded with no apparent truncation within the area monitored.*

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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 Shaun Raubenheimer to undertake an Archaeological Watching Brief at 1 Dove Cottages, Fletching Street, Mayfield, East Sussex, TN20 6TL (TQ 59025 27045; Figure 1) in relation to proposed works at the property. The works will consist of complete refurbishment and alteration of the property with a single-storey extension to the rear, reinstatement of loft room and external landscaping. The archaeological watching brief took place on July 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> 2014.

### **1.2 Geology and Topography**

1.2.1 According to the British Geological Survey 1:50,000 mapping, the underlying geology of the site comprises Tunbridge Wells Sand Formation, sandstone and siltstone (BGS 2014).

1.2.2 The site lies within an Archaeological Notification Area defining the medieval and post-medieval market town of Mayfield and Mayfield Conservation Area. Mayfield is situated within the High Weald, on a minor spur towards the eastern end of the east-west Forest Ridge. The land slopes away most steeply and immediately on the south side of the historic town towards the upper reaches of the River Rother, which flows to the sea near Rye, 37km to the east-southeast. The eastern end of Fletching Street is the lowest part of the historic core of the town at c.112m OD (ASE 2013).

### **1.3 Planning Background**

1.3.1 The work is to be carried out to satisfy conditions placed on planning permission by Wealden District Council (planning reference WD/2013/0671/F and WD/2013/0672/LB). In the light of the archaeological potential of the site, the following conditions have been attached to the planning and listed building consents:

Condition 2 of WD/2013/0671/F reads:

*No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Local Planning Authority. A written record of any archaeological works undertaken shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority within 3 months of the completion of any archaeological investigation unless an alternative timescale for submission of the report is first agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. AR01*

*REASON: To enable the recording of any items of historical or archaeological interest, in accordance with the requirements of paragraphs 129, 131, 132 and 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.*

Condition 3 of WD/2013/0671/F reads:

*The archaeological site investigation and post investigation assessment (including provision for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition) shall be completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition (2) to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the County Planning Authority.*

*REASON: To enable the recording of any items of historical or archaeological interest, in accordance with the requirements of paragraphs 129, 131, 132 and 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.*

Condition 18 of WD/2013/0672/LB reads:

*Before the works are undertaken in accordance with the plans hereby approved, a comprehensive photographic record shall be taken of the interior and exterior parts of the building to be altered/extended and photographs shall also be taken of significant features exposed during these works. The photographic records shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, with a copy to be provided to the County Record Office and County Heritage Record (SMR).*

*REASON: To record the appearance of this Grade II listed building prior to works being undertaken and to note and record any significant features exposed to advance the understanding of the building and its development having regard to Policy SPO2 of the Wealden District Council (Incorporating Part of the South Downs National Park) Core Strategy Local Plan 2013 coupled with the requirements of paragraph 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.*

- 1.3.2 Accordingly, a Written Scheme of Investigation for an archaeological and historic building watching brief was prepared (ASE 2013) and was submitted for approval to Wealden District Council and Greg Chuter, County Archaeologist, East Sussex County Council. The document outlined the research aims and objectives of the current project and the methodology to be followed but it should be noted that a final decision on site as to how to proceed in the event that *significant* remains were revealed by the work would be determined in agreement with the County Archaeologist and the Local Planning Authority.

#### **1.4 Aims and Objectives**

- 1.4.1 The broad aims of the archaeological watching brief were to ensure that any features, artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest that would be affected by the proposed groundworks were recorded and interpreted to appropriate standards, to assess the past impacts on the site and pay particular attention to the character, height/depth below ground level, condition, date and significance of the deposits.
- 1.4.2 As detailed in the WSI (ASE 2013), The Extensive Urban Survey report for Mayfield outlines the historic environment research framework for Mayfield.

The research questions of particular relevance to the archaeological and historic building watching brief are:

RQ1: What was the nature of the palaeoenvironment (ancient environment), and the prehistoric, Roman, and Anglo-Saxon human activity in the area?

RQ6: What was the extent and development of the medieval focal or market place and did this have a defined boundary or not?

RQ8: What evidence is there for the extent, population, and economic basis of the late 13th-century and 14th-century town?

RQ9: How have tenements developed in the later medieval period (considering in particular, whether permanent settlement was substantially later than suggested here)?

RQ12: Are any of the supposedly post-medieval houses actually earlier than suspected, and what evidence can the standing buildings provide for their function and date (i.e. through dendrochronology), especially those on the main commercial street?

RQ13: What different zones (e.g. social differentiation, or types of activity), were there during the post-medieval period, and how did they change?

RQ14: How were the medieval and early post-medieval buildings adapted for new functions and changing status?

RQ15: Is there any evidence for late 16th-century decline prior to revival in the 17th century?

RQ16: What was the socio-economic impact of coaching and trans-Wealden road transport on the town?

## **1.5 Scope of Report**

- 1.5.1 This report details the results of the archaeological watching brief undertaken during groundworks for the proposed building extension at 1 Dove Cottages, Fletching Street, Mayfield, East Sussex, TN20 6TL. The work was undertaken by Steve Price on 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> July 2014. The field work was managed by Diccon Hart, and the post excavation work was managed by Jim Stevenson and Dan Swift.

## **2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Overview**

2.1.1 The following archaeological background is taken from the Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological and Historic Building Watching Brief (ASE 2013), which put together a summary derived from an account of the archaeological and historical background of Mayfield included within the Sussex Extensive Urban Survey (EUS) for the town (Harris, 2008), and from the East Sussex HER.

### **2.2 Prehistoric**

2.2.1 There have been no significant archaeological excavations or evaluations within Mayfield, but several prehistoric findspots are known:

- East of King George's Field – Neolithic (4000 to 2351 BC) polished flint axe found in 2003 during construction of a new garage belonging to the Old Rectory/Heron's Folly [HER reference: ES6992 – MES6992]
- Near the River Rother at Mayfield – partly polished Neolithic axe was found [HER reference: TQ 52 NE5 – MES4639].
- Mayfield (unspecific location) – Neolithic ground celt axe was found [HER reference: TQ 52 NE6 – MES4640].

### **2.3 Roman**

2.3.1 Although no Romano-British finds or features have been found through controlled excavation in the town, there have been numerous discoveries of Roman iron workings in the area. There are 11 known ironworking sites within 5km of Mayfield. There has also been one Romano-British findspot just outside the EUS study area:

- East of King George's Field – probable Samian dog figurine of the Roman period (43 AD to 409 AD), found in the grounds of The Old Rectory/Heron's Folly [HER reference: TQ 52 NE–MES6994].

### **2.4 Medieval**

2.4.1 A watching brief was maintained during the excavations for the groundworks associated with the construction of an extension at North Lodge, Mayfield, East Sussex, which is 0.48 km from 1 Dove Cottages. Some metal working slag of a possible medieval date along with one sherd of medieval pottery was recovered from the subsoil. A single sherd of a medieval jug handle was recovered from the topsoil [HER reference: TQ 58538 27029-MES19489].

2.4.2 The paucity of known pre-urban archaeology at Mayfield is likely to reflect the lack of controlled excavations rather than an actual absence.

2.4.3 The name Mayfield is recorded from the early 12th century and is likely to relate to the area and to predate any nucleated settlement.



- 2.4.4 It is likely that Mayfield was an original part of the grant of the Archbishop of Canterbury's manor of South Malling. A written account from the early 12th century describes the 10th century building of a church and hospitium, which may have provided accommodation for Canterbury officials on the distant rural estate. The earliest fabric of the surviving church dates from the first half of the 13th century.
- 2.4.5 It is possible that a proportion of Domesday Book's recorded 254 tenants (with 73 ploughs and 43 crofts) of the Archbishop of Canterbury's extensive manor of South Malling lived at Wadhurst and Mayfield. The earliest evidence for anything approaching urban activity at Mayfield is the granting, in 1261, of a weekly Thursday market and a three-day fair.
- 2.4.6 The immediate context for the granting of the market at Mayfield is the start of work on the palace of the Archbishop of Canterbury, shortly after 1260. It has been argued that the town probably emerged in the late 13th and early 14th centuries as a permissive (rather than formally planned) trading settlement built around the earlier market place. By 1388-9, the village was evidently well established as a fire is recorded as having damaged 85 shop places (likely more-permanent market stalls). The houses of the village are thought to have gradually developed from the amalgamation and consolidation of market stalls and this area became the centre of the medieval and modern town. Fletching Street lies immediately east of this area but it was shown as built up by the time of a survey of 1498, albeit at a lower density than the High Street.

## **2.5 Post Medieval/ Modern**

- 2.5.1 The decline of the palace in the 16th century saw a minor decline in the population of Mayfield but Wealden iron production had a significant impact on the economy of the town during the later 16<sup>th</sup> and 17th centuries with the development of the blast furnace, expanding markets, and rapid growth in the industry. The first English blast furnace had been established 14km from Mayfield, at Newbridge on Ashdown Forest, in 1496. The industry expanded rapidly in the 16th century, thereafter declining to the point of extinction by the end of the 18th century. There were 35 ironworks of this period within 10km of Mayfield and local families were owners and operators of furnaces and forges. Of diverse trades, the leather industry appears to have been the most important.
- 2.5.2 The arrival of the railway in 1880 initially stemmed the flow of rural depopulation typical in rural eastern Sussex, and then led to growth. Most of the expansion occurred to the east and west of the historic town, due to the steep slope to the south of the High Street and the nature of land ownership on the north. Even in the 20th century development of the centre has been small-scale.
- 2.5.3 The house is shown on maps through the 19th and 20th centuries. The Mayfield tithe map of 1843 shows the plot matching that of the present garden of both cottages and the building is shown indistinctly. The house was then owned by Thomas Walter and occupied by Charles Hooker. The first

edition Ordnance Survey map of 1874 shows an offset still apparent at the west end wall and a wider extension at the rear of the present No. 2. The garden path is shown extending to the road from the present front door position of No. 1. Research by a neighbour has identified the occupier in the 1891 census as the well-known artist William Symons (1845-1911) whose son Robert David Symons was born at the property in 1898 and also found fame as an artist in Canada. He died in 1973. The Ordnance Survey map of 1897 shows the building as a single house. The west end wall is not accurately shown, lacking the offset at the junction of the front and rear ranges. The house was subdivided into two cottages between 1911-1920, this work including the replacement of the rear lean-to by a two storey rear parallel range and by the insertion of a new party wall, chimney and replacement of the windows. An archive photograph in the possession of a neighbour is dated 1911 and shows the building still as a single house having an off-centre brickwork stack apparently of rebated 17th century type. The present doorcase at No. 1 is shown together with the western gable end chimney. Three windows are shown at the first floor level, all of three lights, there being a gap in the window arrangement corresponding with the position of the former chimney. The census of that year records the name Dove Cottage and the occupier as Joseph Groombridge a coachman, his wife, four children and his brother. A later photograph, dated 1920, shows the building in its present form as two cottages, the stack having been moved to the centre of the ridge, all windows replaced and an additional first floor window provided at No. 2. The No. 2 front bay window is visible in the photograph. In 1953 both cottages were sold at auction, No. 1 being recorded as containing three bedrooms and a large landing, two sitting rooms and a kitchen. It was sold to Frank Heasman whose widow Dorothy occupied the property until recently.

## **2.3 Recent Archaeological Investigation**

- 2.3.1 An archaeological Interpretative Survey of Dove Cottages (Dickinson, 2013) has indicated that the property occupies the site of a medieval house first recorded in in a manorial survey of 1498 when it was owned and occupied by Thomas Fawkley, the previous owner being recorded as Walter Cowper. By 1558 ownership had passed to Richard Fawkley and by 1602 to the heirs of William Sayer. The present building replaced the medieval structure in two phases in the 17th century, the first consisting of the current 1 Dove Cottages and part of No. 2 consisted of a three bay structure containing an open hall with very narrow bay on the east gable end containing some form of chimney and a western service bay. This layout was repeated at first and second floor level, there always having been a garret or attic to the house. The building was extended to the east in the mid-17th century, possibly including replacement of a timber chimney in brick extending into the new bay. The house was modernised in the 18th century, the work including underbuilding the structure up to first floor level in brickwork, adding a chimney at the west gable end, a lean-to at the rear and a door canopy at the present No. 1.

### **3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Fieldwork Methodology**

3.1.1 The levelling of the proposed extension area and excavations for the foundations for the extension were monitored by an archaeologist.

3.1.2 Excavations were carried out with a 1 tonne machine fitted with a 0.75m flat bladed bucket for levelling the area, and a 0.45m toothed bucket for excavating the foundations.

3.1.3 The surfaces revealed were inspected.

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

3.2.1 The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will be deposited at Lewes Castle and Barbican House Museum in due course. The contents of the archive are tabulated below (Table 1).

Number of Contexts	3
No. of files/paper record	1
Photographs	22

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

## 4.0 RESULTS

### 4.1 Ground levelling and foundation trenches for proposed extension – monitored on 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> July 2014

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Deposit Thickness m
001	Layer	Topsoil	>4.78m	>3.6m	0.41-0.43m
002	Layer	Subsoil	>4.78m	>3.6m	0.06-0.22m
003	Layer	Natural	>4.78m	>3.6m	-

Table 2: List of recorded contexts

- 4.1.1 The groundworks within the area of the proposed building extension were monitored (see Figure 2), and no archaeological features or deposits were observed. The ground surface was sloping away from the south-south-east facing rear wall of 1 Dove Cottages, and was therefore initially levelled by removal of some of the topsoil. The foundation trenches were then excavated through the remainder of the topsoil (where still present following levelling of the ground surface), subsoil and into natural.
- 4.1.2 The area of the proposed extension measured 4.78m long x 3.6m wide. The foundation trenches were excavated to a width of 0.52m. The ground was initially levelled to 1m below the existing floor level of the south-south-east facing side of the cottage. Ground levelling proceeded from the existing south-south-east facing wall moving back towards the garden. In doing so, the natural was exposed directly below the topsoil for the first 1.49m. The rest of the area remained in topsoil as the garden was on a slope, and less soil needed to be removed from further back into the garden.
- 4.1.3 Once ground levelling was completed, the foundation trenches were dug to around 1m deep. The natural geology exposed [003] comprised a quite firmly compacted mottled light yellow/ light greyish-white clayey silt with moderate sandstone inclusions. The natural was overlain by mid greyish-brown softly compacted silty clay subsoil [002], with occasional charcoal flecks. This measured a thickness of between 0.06-0.22m. No subsoil was present for the first 1.39m from the south-south-east facing wall of the cottage. Overlying this was the topsoil [001], which consisted of a dark greyish-brown clayey silt that was found to be quite friable, with moderate charcoal flecks and some root disturbance. It measured 0.41-0.43m thick.

## **5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 5.1 No archaeological features, finds or deposits were uncovered during the course of the archaeological watching brief.
- 5.2 The paucity of archaeology on site suggests there was a lack of activity at least within the confines of the proposed building extension area.
- 5.3 As a result of the lack of archaeology, none of the research aims as set out in 1.4 can therefore be addressed from the archaeological watching brief.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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### **Websites:**

[www.bgs.ac.uk](http://www.bgs.ac.uk) (accessed on 21/07/14)

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

ASE would like to thank Shaun Raubenheimer for commissioning the work and for his assistance throughout the project, and Greg Chuter, County Archaeologist, East Sussex County Council for his guidance and monitoring. Rob Cole produced the figures for this report; Diccon Hart project managed the excavations and Jim Stevenson and Dan Swift project managed the post-excavation process.

**HER Summary**

Site Code	DCM13					
Identification Name and Address	1 Dove Cottages, Fletching Street, Mayfield, East Sussex, TN20 6TL					
County, District &/or Borough	Wealden District Council					
OS Grid Refs.	TQ 59025 27045					
Geology	Tunbridge Wells Sand Formation, sandstone and siltstone					
Arch. South-East Project Number	6180					
Type of Fieldwork	Watching Brief	.				
Type of Site	Residential					
Dates of Fieldwork	17 & 18/07/14					
Sponsor/Client	Shaun Raubenheimer					
Project Manager	Diccon Hart					
Project Supervisor	Steve Price					
Period Summary						
<p>Summary</p> <p><i>Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Shaun Raubenheimer to undertake an archaeological watching brief at 1 Dove Cottages, Fletching Street, Mayfield, East Sussex in relation to proposed extension works at the property. The works involving levelling the ground surface in preparation for digging the foundations of the proposed building extension, and excavations for the foundations were monitored.</i></p> <p><i>The site lies within an Archaeological Notification Area defining the medieval and post-medieval market town of Mayfield and Mayfield Conservation Area. No archaeological features or finds were identified. Topsoil, subsoil and natural deposits were recorded with no apparent truncation within the area monitored.</i></p>						

**OASIS Form**

**OASIS ID: archaeol6-185271**

Project details

Project name Archaeological Watching Brief at 1 Dove Cottages, Fletching Street, Mayfield, East Sussex, TN20 6TL

Short description of the project Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Shaun Raubenheimer to undertake an archaeological watching brief at 1 Dove Cottages, Fletching Street, Mayfield, East Sussex in relation to proposed extension works at the property. The works involving levelling the ground surface in preparation for digging the foundations of the proposed building extension, and excavations for the foundations were monitored. The site lies within an Archaeological Notification Area defining the medieval and post-medieval market town of Mayfield and Mayfield Conservation Area. No archaeological features or finds were identified. Topsoil, subsoil and natural deposits were recorded with no apparent truncation within the area monitored.

Project dates Start: 17-07-2014 End: 18-07-2014

Previous/future work No / Not known

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status Conservation Area

Current Land use Residential 1 - General Residential

Project location

Country England

Site location EAST SUSSEX WEALDEN MAYFIELD AND FIVE ASHES 1  
Dove Cottages, Fletching Street, Mayfield, East Sussex, TN20 6TL

Postcode TN20 6TL

Study area 17.20 Square metres

Site coordinates TQ 559025 127045 50.8921722379 0.216988937584 50 53 31  
N 000 13 01 E Point



Project creators  
Name of Organisation Archaeology South East

Project brief originator Archaeology South East

Project design originator land-owner

Project director/manager Diccon Hart

Project supervisor Steve Price

Type of sponsor/funding body Landowner

Name of sponsor/funding body Shaun Raubenheimer

Project archives  
Physical Archive Exists? No

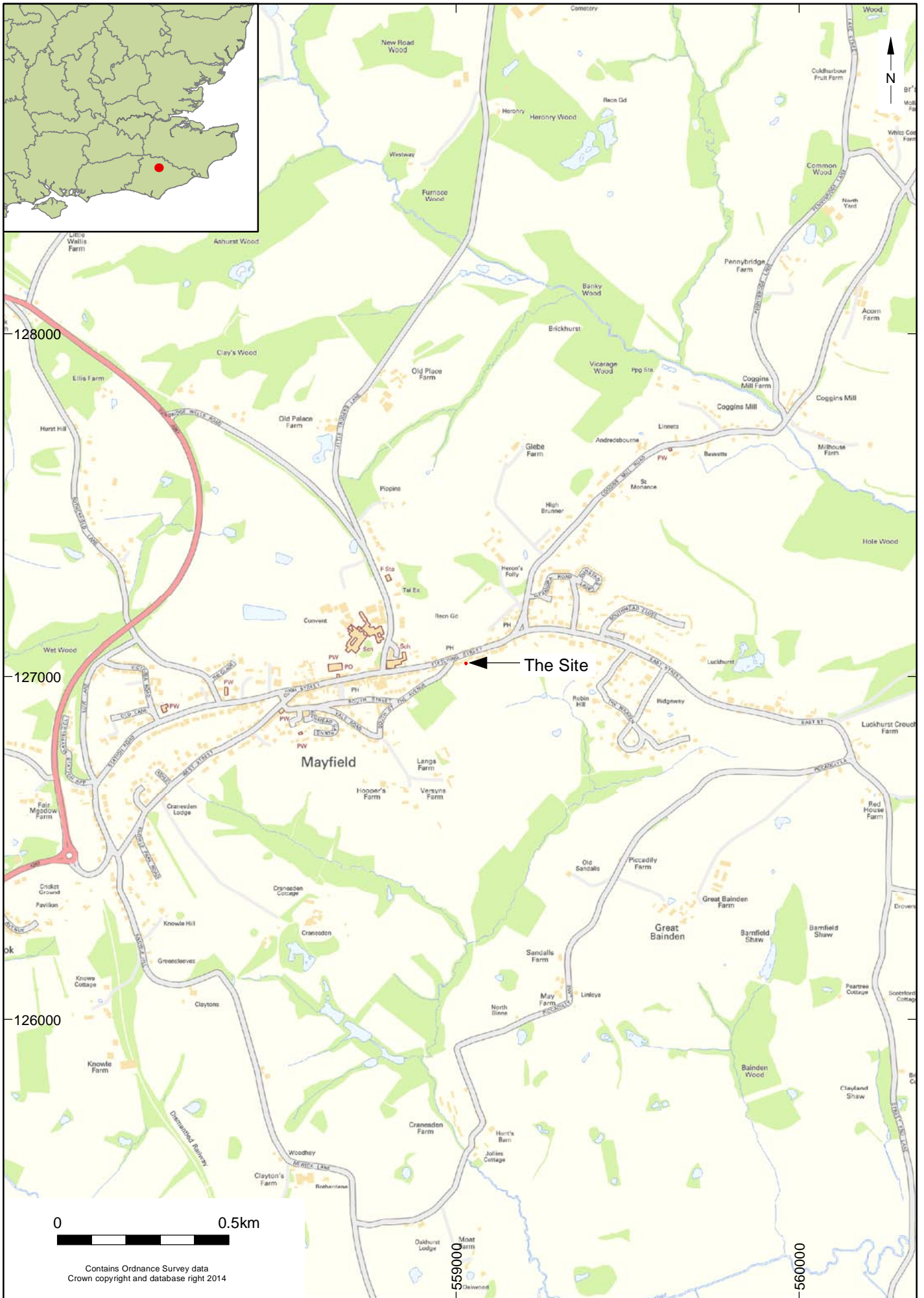
Digital Archive recipient Lewes Museum

Digital Media available "Images raster / digital photography"

Paper Archive recipient Lewes Museum

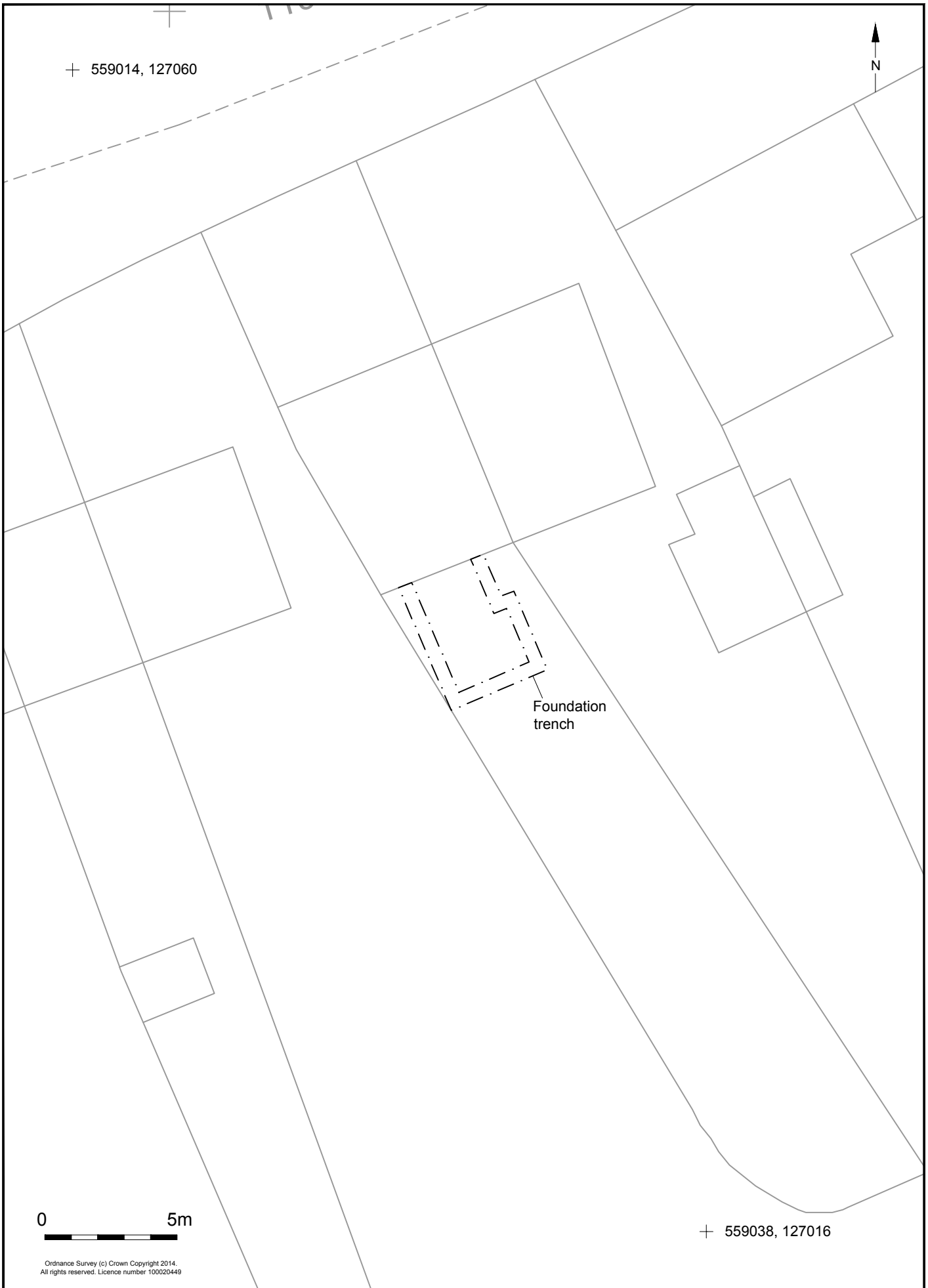
Paper Media available "Photograph", "Report"

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© Archaeology South-East		1 Dove Cottages, Fletching Street, Mayfield	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 6180	July 2014	Site location	
Report Ref: 2014274	Drawn by: RHC		



© Archaeology South-East		1 Dove Cottage, Fletching Street, Mayfield	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 6180	July 2014	Site plan	
Report Ref: 2014274	Drawn by: RHC		

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