

**Archaeological Evaluation Report
Northeast Manor School
Rodmell, Lewes
East Sussex**

**NGR: 541258 106454
(TQ 41258 06454)**

Planning Ref: (SDNP/12/02782/FUL)

**ASE Project No: 6090
Site Code: RNM14**

**ASE Report No: 2014269
OASIS id: 186190
Eastbourne Museum Service, Accession No: 2011001**



By Philippa Stephenson

**Archaeological Evaluation Report
Northeast Manor School
Rodmell, Lewes
East Sussex**

**NGR: 541258 106454
(TQ 41258 06454)**

Planning Ref: (SDNP/12/02782/FUL)

**ASE Project No: 6090
Site Code: RNM14**

**ASE Report No: 2014269
OASIS id: 186190
Eastbourne Museum Service, Accession No: 2011001**

By Philippa Stephenson

July 2014

**Archaeology South-East
Units 1 & 2
2 Chapel Place
Portslade
East Sussex
BN41 1DR**

**Tel: 01273 426830
Fax: 01273 420866
Email: fau@ucl.ac.uk**

Abstract

Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Miller Bourne Architects on behalf of their clients, Northease Manor School, to undertake an archaeological evaluation of part of the school grounds at Rodmell, Lewes, East Sussex. Two trenches were excavated.

No archaeological deposits, features or finds were encountered and only natural deposits were recorded. There were no existing impacts to the identified natural profile.

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction**
- 2.0 Archaeological Background**
- 3.0 Archaeological Methodology**
- 4.0 Results**
- 5.0 Discussion and Conclusions**

Bibliography
Acknowledgements

HER Summary
OASIS Form

TABLES

Table 1: Quantification of site archive
Table 2: Trenches 1 and 2 list of recorded contexts

FIGURES

Front Cover Image: General view of site during excavation

Figure 1: Site location
Figure 2: Trench location

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 Miller Bourne Architects on behalf of their clients, Northease Manor School, to undertake an archaeological evaluation in part of the school grounds at Rodmell, Lewes, East Sussex (NGR TQ 5412 1064; Figure 1).

1.1.2 A Desk-Based Assessment (ASE 2013) detailing the archaeological potential of the site has been produced by Archaeology South-East.

1.2 Geology and Topography

1.2.1 The site, which measures c. 700 sq m in area, is located on the eastern side of the Northease Manor School site. Northease lies roughly 0.8km equidistant between the historic cores of the village of Iford to the north-west, and Rodmell to the south-east. The site lies on the southern side of the main road between the two villages, within the parish of Rodmell.

1.2.2 The development site lies on a gentle south-east facing slope, with ground falling from c. 15.8mOD to 13mOD. The majority of the school buildings lie on an area of higher land to the west.

1.2.3 According to the online British Geological Survey (BGS) 1:50,000 mapping the geology of the site is predominantly chalk of the Zig Zag Chalk Formation, with chalk of the West Melbury Marley Chalk Formation to the north. The bedrock geology is capped at the higher levels by superficial head deposits which have been proven by recent geotechnical investigation to extend into the site.

1.3 Planning Background

1.3.1 Planning permission was granted for the erection of a replacement middle school building, subject to conditions (SDNP/12/02782/FUL). The archaeological conditions are as follows:

1. No development shall take place until the developer has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work, in accordance with a Written Scheme of Archaeological Investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the South Downs National Park Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the archaeological and historical interest of the site is safeguarded and recorded to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework.

2. The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until the archaeological site investigation and post investigation assessment (including provision for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition) has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in

the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition 3 to the satisfaction of the South Downs National Park Authority, in consultation with the County Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the archaeological and historical interest of the site safeguarded and recorded to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework.

1.3.2 Accordingly, a Written Scheme of Investigation (ASE 2014) for archaeological evaluation was prepared and approved by ESCC.

1.4 Aims and Objectives

1.4.1 The broad aims of the evaluation, in keeping with previous similar projects are:

- To assess the character, extent, preservation, significance, date and quality of any archaeological remains and deposits, including the geophysical anomalies with archaeological potential and any features associated with the areas of artefact scatters
- To assess how they might be affected by the development of the site
- To establish the extent to which previous groundworks and/or other processes have affected archaeological deposits at the site
- To assess what options should be considered for mitigation

1.4.2 Investigation of the site also has the potential to address the following research priorities identified in the draft South East Research Framework:

- To better understand the colonisation and occupation of the region in the Upper Palaeolithic and Mesolithic period, including the influence of geology on patterns of occupation
- To further the study of prehistoric lithics, including contributing to the regional lithic typology
- To better understand the evolution of settlement in the later prehistoric period
- To address shortcomings in methodological approaches to the study of medieval archaeology
- To contribute to the study of agricultural practices in the post-medieval period

1.5 Scope of Report

1.5.1 The current report provides results of the archaeological work carried out at the site on 24/07/2014. The fieldwork was directed by Simon Stevens. The project was managed by Paul Mason (Project Manager), Jim Stevenson and Dan Swift (Post-Excavation Managers).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (ASE 2013) was produced. The following information is summarised from the assessment.
- 2.2 The development site lies on a gentle south-east facing slope, with ground falling from c. 15.8mOD to 13mOD. The majority of the school buildings lie on an area of higher land to the west.
- 2.3 According to the online British Geological Survey (BGS) 1:50,000 mapping the geology of the site is predominantly chalk of the Zig Zag Chalk Formation, with chalk of the West Melbury Marley Chalk Formation to the north. The bedrock geology is capped at the higher levels by superficial Head deposits which have been proven by recent geotechnical investigation to extend into the site.

Prehistoric

- 2.4 Two Lower Palaeolithic handaxes have been found at Northease Farm. One was discovered c. 0.6-1m below ground level, during excavations for a farm building; the other was found on a ploughed surface within fifty paces of the first. Significantly, neither of the finds appears to have been water-rolled.
- 2.5 The Historic Environment Record (HER) records further evidence for prehistoric activity in the vicinity of the site including an ovate handaxe found at Rodmell, a Mesolithic axe found in Rodmell/Northease, a nearby Neolithic flint scatter, a Neolithic reworked polished axe found in garden of Denholme, a Mid/Late Bronze Age bronze palstave found at Sutton Farm, two Bronze Age bowl barrows and vestiges of a 'Celtic' field system.

Romano-British

- 2.6 No Romano-British settlement sites have been recorded in close vicinity of the site.
- 2.7 The HER records examples of Roman metalwork, including coins, found during metal-detecting in fields near to the site, in particular a large field to the east, between Northease and Rodmell, and others to the west between Northease and Iford.
- 2.8 Further HER records report that Romano-British pottery has been found scattered thinly in a field c. 500m to the south of Northease and a Romano-British fibula was found at Sutton Farm.

Anglo-Saxon

- 2.9 There is scant physical evidence in the area for Anglo-Saxon settlement, despite the existence of numerous early cemeteries on the surrounding downland. Nevertheless, the potential for hitherto undiscovered settlement sites has been highlighted by the recent discovery of an early site at Iford Farm across the valley to the east (at a similar altitude to the site).

- 2.10 Both Rodmell and Iford are mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086.
- 2.11 Northease is not recorded in the Domesday Survey, yet this is not to say that there was not a settlement or sub-manor there by this time. It was certainly in existence by 1091-8 when according to the Lewes Chartulary the tithes of Northease were confirmed to Lewes Priory by William II. This implies that there was a settlement, or at least farmed land, there by this date. The Conservation Area Appraisals for both Rodmell and Iford (Lewes District Council) suggest that Northease might have been one of a series of farms created at intervals along the Ouse valley during the Anglo-Saxon period.

Medieval

- 2.12 During the medieval period, Rodmell, Iford and Northease developed as part of a string of small farming settlements along both sides of the Ouse valley, which operated an open field agricultural regime based on sheep-corn husbandry. Each would have benefitted from areas of high downland pasture, arable lands (now enclosed) along the drier valley sides, and meadowland in the floodplain.
- 2.13 In 1940 the remains of a small medieval chapel, converted to agricultural use, were recorded at Northease by Salzman. The structure has subsequently been demolished but its location was described as, '*In the present dairy, at the north-east end of the barn nearest the main road*'.
- 2.14 In addition to medieval finds recovered through metal-detecting and field walking in the surrounding fields, the HER records the medieval and post-medieval farm complex at Northease Farm.

Post-Medieval

- 2.15 The earliest map to show the site in useful detail is the estate map of Northease dated 1633 which shows several buildings at Northease, arranged around three sides of yard. These include the manor house (south-east) and two barns (south-west and north-west), which correspond with the locations of the present manor house and barn ranges. To the north-east of the north-west barn is a further building, shown on an approximate west-south-west to east-north-east axis, which presumably represents the chapel (described above). Within the yard is another, small building, possibly a dovecot. The site lies within a field outside the building complex. According to the legend on the map the field was named 'The Lain nixt to Hows', and was put to arable use.
- 2.16 In the 18th century, significant changes took place at Northease, as indicated by the surviving buildings on the site, which from the exterior appear to be mainly of this period but retain elements of earlier phases of construction. An archaeological watching-brief carried out at Northease Manor by ASE in 2009 concluded that visible fabric within the entrance of the 'Tudor Hall' or converted barn immediately to the west of the house indicated a possible late-16th or early-17th century date.

- 2.17 The tithe map of 1839 depicts a number of buildings, including the manor house, barn ranges and a scattering of smaller buildings, but none within the boundaries of the development area itself which is shaded green to denote pasture.
- 2.18 Ordnance Survey mapping spanning the period 1874-1977 depicts the site lying in a field adjacent to the farm/school buildings.
- 2.19 Northease Manor School was founded on the site in 1963.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 The trial trench evaluation comprised the excavation of two trenches each measuring 20m x 1.8m (Figure 2). The trenching scheme was devised to target the areas of development impact to establish their significance and inform the planning process.
- 3.2 Both trenches were relocated slightly from the prescribed locations detailed in the WSI (ASE 2014) in order to avoid tree-sumps and services. This alteration to the trench pattern was agreed in advance between ASE, the client and ESCC.
- 3.3 The locations of all the trenches were checked with a CAT scanner prior to the commencement of excavation.
- 3.4 The trenches were excavated using a suitable mechanical excavator. The trenches were excavated through undifferentiated topsoil and modern made ground in spits of no more than 0.20m until the top of the underlying natural sediments were reached. The excavator was fitted with a smooth grading bucket and care was taken that archaeological deposits were not damaged due to over machining.
- 3.5 All recording and analysis was undertaken in accordance with the WSI (*ibid.*).
- 3.6 All spoil from the excavations was inspected by the archaeologist to recover any potential artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest. A metal detector was used at regular intervals to scan spoil derived from the excavations and at regular intervals during the excavation.
- 3.7 The ESCC Archaeological Officer was kept informed of progress and given the opportunity to attend site once all the trenches were opened.
- 3.8 All deposits were recorded according to standard ASE practice on standard pro-forma recording sheets used by ASE and levelled with respect to Ordnance Survey datum. A photographic record was made in digital format.

The Archive

- 3.9 ASE informed Lewes Museum prior to the commencement of fieldwork that a site archive would be generated. The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will be deposited at Lewes Museum in due course. Lewes Museum does not give out archive accession numbers. The contents of the archive are tabulated below (Table 1).

Number of Contexts	6
No. of files/paper record	1
Photographs	11

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Trenches 1 and 2

4.1.1 Trench 1 (20m x 1.8m) was excavated to a depth of 1.04m, Trench 2 (20m x 1.8m) to a depth of 1.11m. Current ground level for Trench 1 was 15.13m AOD and for Trench 2, 14.10m. Identical stratigraphy was encountered in both trenches: a natural brownish-orange clay head deposit with occasional small flint gravel inclusions overlain by a sterile mid orangey-brown clay subsoil and a layer of undifferentiated topsoil.

4.1.2 No archaeological deposits, features or finds were encountered. At the request of the County Archaeologist, the head deposit was further excavated to a depth of c. 0.10m at the extremity of each trench to test for Palaeolithic material, but none was encountered.

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Deposit Thickness m
1/002	Layer	Topsoil	5.0	1.6	0.22
1/002	Layer	Subsoil	5.0	1.6	0.82
1/002	Layer	Head deposit	5.0	1.6	Excavated to -0.10
2/002	Layer	Topsoil	8.0	1.6	0.17
2/002	Layer	Subsoil	8.0	1.6	0.93
3/002	Layer	Head deposit	8.0	1.6	Excavated to -0.10

Table 2: Trenches 1 and 2 list of recorded contexts

5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 Natural head deposits were encountered at a depth between -1.04 and -1.1m below current ground level, between 12.99 and 14.09m AOD. A sterile subsoil 0.82 – 0.93m thick was sealed by topsoil.
- 5.2 There were no existing impacts to the identified natural profile.
- 5.3 The evaluation identified no archaeological deposits, features or finds.
- 5.4 Given that no archaeology was identified it is not expected that the proposed development will impact on any archaeology.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ASE 2013. Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment, Northease Manor School, Rodmell, Lewes, East Sussex

ASE 2014. Written Scheme of Investigation, Northease Manor School, Rodmell, Lewes, East Sussex

English Heritage 2002. *Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation and Geoarchaeology: Using earth sciences to understand the archaeological record*

English Heritage 2008. *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE), Project Planning Notes 3 (PPN3): Archaeological Excavation*

ESCC. 2008. *Recommended Standard Conditions for Archaeological Fieldwork, Recording, and Post-Excavation Work (Development Control) in East Sussex*

MoLAS 1994. *Site Manual for Archaeological Fieldwork*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ASE would like to thank Miller Bourne Architects for commissioning the work on behalf of their clients, Northease Manor School, and for their assistance throughout the project, and Casper Johnson, County Archaeologist East Sussex County Council for his guidance and monitoring. The excavation was directed by Simon Stevens. The author would like to thank all archaeologists who worked on the excavations. Justin Russell produced the figures for this report; Paul Mason project managed the excavations and Jim Stevenson and Dan Swift project managed the post-excavation process.

HER Summary

Site Code	Northease Manor School, Rodmell					
Identification Name and Address	Northease Manor School, Rodmell, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 3EY					
County, District &/or Borough	East Sussex,					
OS Grid Refs.	541258 106454					
Geology	Chalk of the Zig Zag Chalk Formation, with chalk of the West Melbury Marley Chalk Formation to the north, capped by superficial head deposits					
Arch. South-East Project Number	6090					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval.					
Type of Site	Green Field					
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval.					
Sponsor/Client	Miller Bourne for Northease Manor School					
Project Manager	Paul Mason					
Project Supervisor	Simon Steens					
Period Summary						
<p>Summary</p> <p>Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Miller Bourne Architects on behalf of their clients, Northease Manor School, to undertake an archaeological evaluation of part of the school grounds at Rodmell, Lewes, East Sussex. Two trenches were excavated.</p> <p>No archaeological deposits, features or finds were encountered and only natural deposits were recorded. There were no existing impacts to the identified natural profile.</p>						

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-186190

Project details

Project name	Northease Manor School
Short description of the project	Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Miller Bourne Architects on behalf of their clients, Northease Manor School, to undertake an archaeological evaluation of part of the school grounds at Rodmell, Lewes, East Sussex. Two trenches were excavated. No archaeological deposits, features or finds were encountered and only natural deposits were recorded. There were no existing impacts to the identified natural profile.
Project dates	Start: 24-07-2014 End: 24-07-2014
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	RNM14 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	National Park
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None

Project location

Country	England
Site location	EAST SUSSEX LEWES RODMELL Northease Manor School, Reodmell
Postcode	BN7 3EY
Study area	700.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 41258 06454 50.8397704852 0.00646861938593 50 50 23 N 000 00 23 E Point
Lat/Long Datum	Unknown
Height OD / Depth	Min: 12.99m Max: 14.09m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South East
Project brief	Archaeology South-East

originator

Project design
originator ASE

Project
director/manager Paul Mason

Project supervisor Simon Stevens

Type of
sponsor/funding
body Private

Name of
sponsor/funding
body Miller Bourne, for Northease Manor School

Project archives

Physical Archive
Exists? No

Digital Archive
recipient Lewes Museum

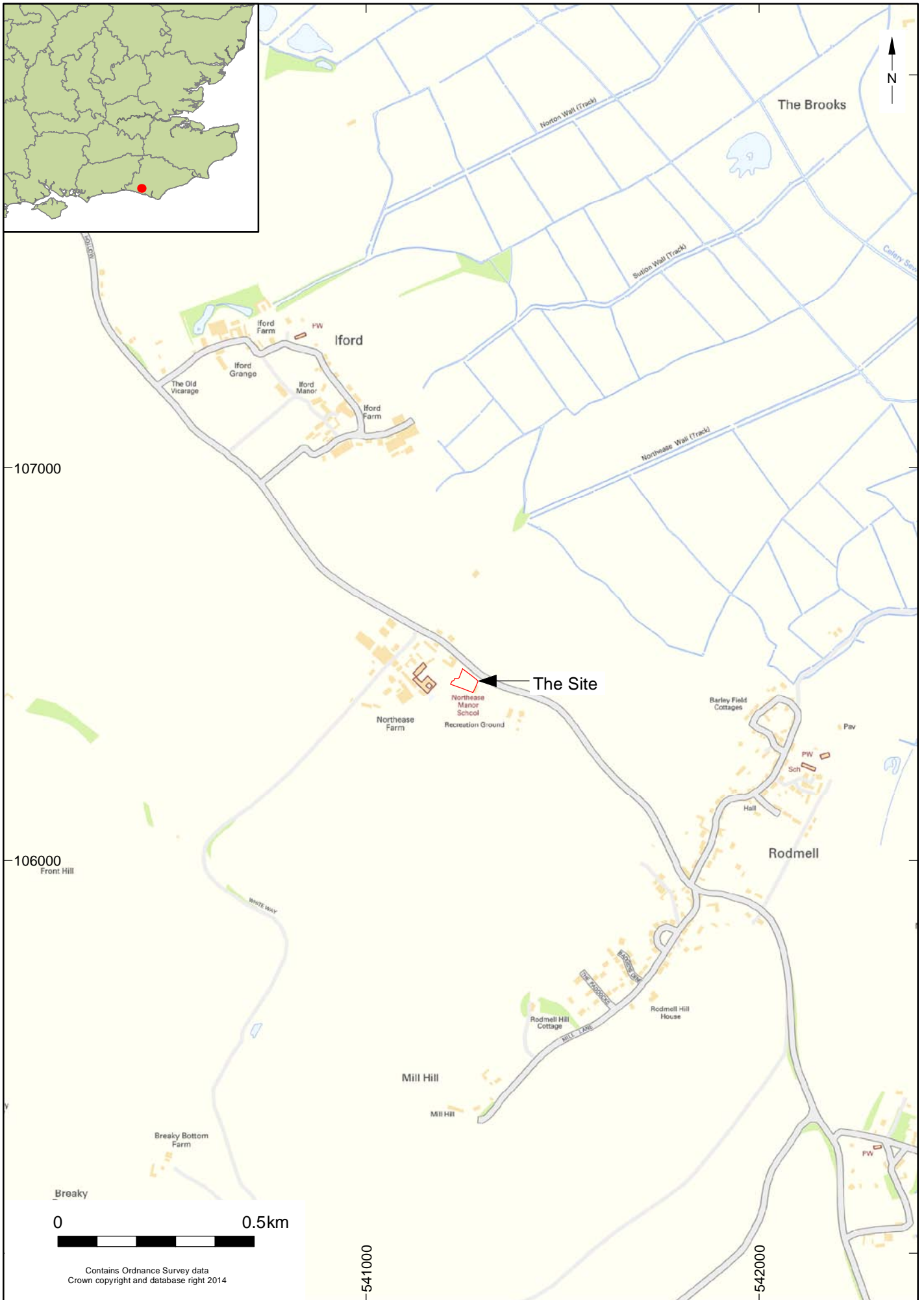
Digital Media
available "Images raster / digital photography","Images vector"

Paper Archive
recipient Lewes Museum

Paper Media
available "Context sheet","Report"

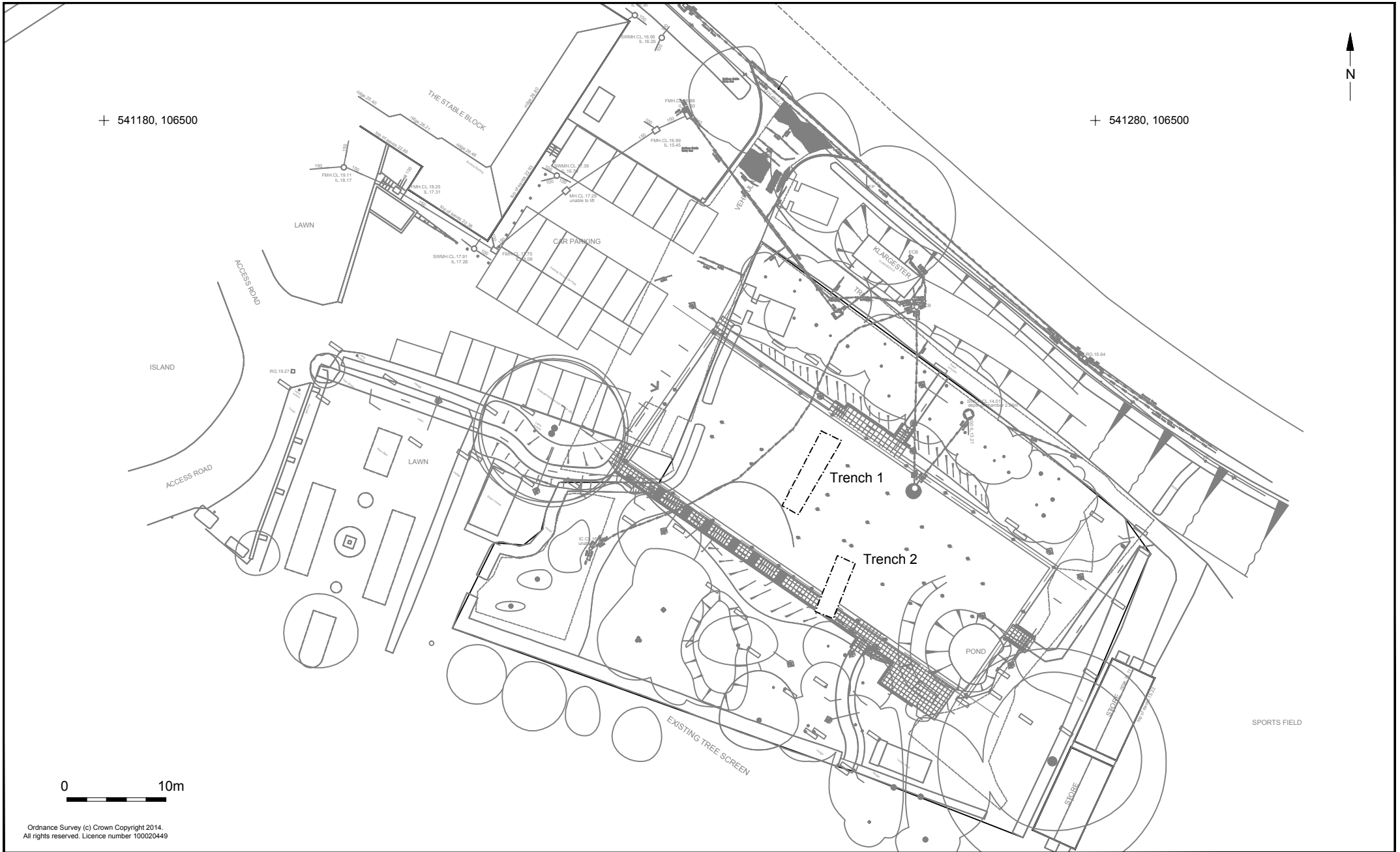
Entered by Pip Stephenson (pip.stehenson@ucl.ac.uk)

Entered on 30 July 2014



Contains Ordnance Survey data
Crown copyright and database right 2014

© Archaeology South-East		Northeast Manor School, Rodmell	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 6090	August 2014	Site location	
Report Ref: 2014269	Drawn by: RHC		



Ordnance Survey (c) Crown Copyright 2014.
All rights reserved. Licence number 100020449

© Archaeology South-East		Northease Manor School, Rodmell		Fig. 2
Project Ref: 6090	August 2014	Trench location		
Report Ref: 2014269	Drawn by: RHC			

Sussex Office

Units 1 & 2
2 Chapel Place
Portslade
East Sussex BN41 1DR
tel: +44(0)1273 426830
email: fau@ucl.ac.uk
web: www.archaeologyse.co.uk

Essex Office

The Old Magistrates Court
79 South Street
Braintree
Essex CM7 3QD
tel: +44(0)1376 331470
email: fau@ucl.ac.uk
web: www.archaeologyse.co.uk

London Office

Centre for Applied Archaeology
UCL Institute of Archaeology
31-34 Gordon Square
London WC1H 0PY
tel: +44(0)20 7679 4778
email: fau@ucl.ac.uk
web: www.ucl.ac.uk/caa

