

**Archaeological Watching Brief Report  
Eckington House, Deanland Road, Ripe  
East Sussex, BN8 6AR**

**NGR: 551100,110140  
(TQ 5110 1014)**

**Planning Consent Ref: WD/2014/0323/F**

**ASE Project No: 6851  
Site Code: EHR13**

**ASE Report No: 2014375  
OASIS ID: archaeol6-195172**



**By Ian Hogg**

**November 2014**

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**Abstract**

*Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Geoff White to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Eckington House, Deanland Road, Ripe, East Sussex.*

*The work comprised the monitoring of the foundation trenches associated with new extensions and a new porch to the property. Natural deposits were recorded in all areas, in the south-west of the site the natural was overlain by topsoil. Elsewhere horizontal truncation associated with the previous extension and the current driveway had removed any previous overburden. A modern construction cut associated with the previous extension was recorded.*

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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 Geoff White to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with alterations to the property at Eckington House, Deanland Road, Ripe, BN8 6AR (NGR TQ 5110 1014; Figures 1 and 2).

1.1.2 Eckington House is listed at Grade II\* and lies within an Archaeological Notification Area.

### **1.2 Geology and Topography**

1.2.1 The solid geology of the site is shown by the British Geological Survey (BGS 2014) to be Lower Greensand. This is overlain by drift geology of Head deposits.

1.2.2 The site lies in the centre of Ripe on land sloping generally from south to north.

### **1.3 Planning Background**

1.3.1 Planning consent has been granted by Wealden District Council (ref. WD/2014/0323/F) for the demolition of a timber conservatory on the side of property, to be replaced with larger brick-built library with roof light, the partial demolition of a late 19th century brick-built lean-to at rear of property, to be rebuilt and extended to form a utility room and the construction of a brick-built porch to kitchen, in likeness of the porch historically in this location. Minor internal alterations include alterations to later stud partitions, removal and reconstruction of one section of wall and infilling of a doorway along with installation of sanitary ware to form a new bathroom.

1.3.2 In light of the heritage significance of the property, Greg Chuter, Assistant County Archaeologist at East Sussex County Council (ESCC), acting as advisor to Wealden District Council, recommended that the following condition be placed upon planning consent.

*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.*

1.3.3 Subsequently ASE conducted a programme of historic building recording on Eckington House (ASE 2013).

1.3.4 A *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) was prepared (ASE 2014), which detailed the methodology for the works. It was approved by the Greg Chuter on behalf of the local planning authority. All work was undertaken in accordance with this document and with the relevant standard and guidance documents of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 2008a; IfA 2008b), the East Sussex County Council Standards for Archaeological Fieldwork, Recording, and Post-Excavation Work in East Sussex (ESCC 2008) and English Heritage (English Heritage 2008).

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

1.4.1 The general aims of the archaeological investigation, as set out in the WSI, were to ascertain as far as possible:

- Whether archaeological remains are present on the site and if so assess the date, survival and condition of said remains.
- The character date and quality of ancient remains and deposits.
- How they might be affected by the development of the site
- What options should be considered for mitigation
- 

1.4.2 In addition, the following research aims specific to this site were identified:

- Are there any archaeological features or finds pre-dating the construction of the house in the 17<sup>th</sup> century?
- Are there any archaeological finds or features relating to the use of the house, in particular, the brewhouse?

1.4.3 The final aim was to make public the results of the archaeological evaluation, subject to any confidentiality restrictions.

#### **1.5 Scope of Report**

1.5.1 This report details the results of the archaeological watching brief, carried out on the site between 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> November 2014, and has been prepared in accordance with the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (ASE 2014). The work was carried out by Ian Hogg (Archaeologist).

## **2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 A detailed account of the development of the building is contained within a recent ASE report (ASE 2013).
- 2.2 In summary, the building is of mid 17th century date, with later 17th century and 19th century additions and alterations. It is an early example of one of the classic plan forms – the symmetrically-fronted, central-entry, end chimney house. It had its principal rooms – hall and parlour – flanking a central front door, with the principal service areas located to the rear within what was initially a single-storeyed range and a rear lean-to outshut. The staircase removed under HBR watching brief was located within what was the single-storeyed range. This originally served as a brewhouse, but now forms the present kitchen. In the late-17th century the brewhouse was converted to two storeys with a spacious first floor chamber and a garret space above.

## **3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY**

- 3.1 The work comprised the monitoring of excavations associated with two small extensions to the house plus a new side porch (Figure 3). Due to a mechanical breakdown a series of trial pits were monitored instead of the foundation trenches in the eastern portion of the extensions. Spoil from the test pits was visually scanned for finds.
- 3.2 All deposits were recorded using standard ASE recording sheets, with colours recorded by visual inspection only.
- 3.3 A digital photographic record was taken of the work.
- 3.4 ASE informed the Lewes Museum before 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. The contents of the archive are tabulated below (Table 1).

Number of Contexts	7
No. of files/paper record	1
Photographs	16 Digital

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

## 4.0 RESULTS

- 4.1 Natural Lower Greensand [006] was recorded in the south of the site. It was overlain by mid orange yellow clay head deposits [002] between 0.25m and 0.85m in thickness; these deposits were recorded across the site. The head deposits were cut by a construction cut for a previous 20<sup>th</sup> century extension in the south-west of the site [004]. The cut was rectangular, with steeply sloping sides and a flat base. The construction fill [003] comprised dark grey silt with frequent brick and concrete inclusions.
- 4.2 In the footprint of the eastern extension the natural head deposits [002] were overlain by modern made ground [007], this comprised mid grey rubbly clay with inclusions of modern CBM, concrete and plastic.
- 4.3 Along the south-western perimeter of the site, the head deposits were overlain by a dark greyish black topsoil [001].
- 4.4 In the area of the new porch at the northern corner of the building, the natural head deposits [002] were overlain by a levelling deposit for the existing driveway [005], which consisted of soft dark greyish brown clay silt.

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Deposit Thickness m
001	Layer	Topsoil	8.50	1.50	0.44-0.51
002	Layer	Head deposits	16.10	8.50	0.25-0.85
003	Fill	Construction backfill	5.20	2.45	0.55
004	Cut	Construction cut	5.20	2.45	0.55
005	Layer	Levelling deposit	1.50	1.50	0.50
006	Layer	Lower Greensand	16.10	8.50	-
007	Layer	Made ground	4.10	3.05	0.20

Table 2: List of recorded contexts



**5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 5.1 Natural Lower Greensand was overlain by head deposits and was recorded across the site. The natural deposits were overlain by topsoil along the south-western perimeter of the site. Elsewhere horizontal truncation was recorded; this was associated with the construction of the previous extensions and of the current driveway. A construction cut for one of the extensions was also observed.
- 5.2 No archaeological features or finds were observed during the course of the archaeological watching brief. Specifically, no evidence of activity predating Eckington House was recorded and the only activity relating to the current house was associated with the recently demolished extensions on site.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

ASE, 2013 *An Archaeological Historic Building at Eckington House, Ripe*. Unpublished client report

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ASE would like to thank Geoff White for commissioning the work and Greg Chuter of ESCC for his guidance and monitoring. The author would like to thank Justin Russell who produced the figures for this report; Paul Mason who managed the fieldwork and Jim Stevenson who managed the post-excavation process.

**HER Summary**

Site Code	HER 13					
Identification Name and Address	Eckington House, Deanland Road, Ripe					
County, District &/or Borough	Wealden, East Sussex					
OS Grid Refs.	TQ 5110 1014					
Geology	Head deposits, Lower Greensand					
Arch. South-East Project Number	6851					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	Watching Brief✓	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field	Shallow Urban✓	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	WB. 11-11-2014 to 12-11-2014	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Goodwin of Mackellar Schwerdt Architects					
Project Manager	Paul Mason					
Project Supervisor	Ian Hogg					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM	Other None		
<p>Summary</p> <p><i>The work comprised the monitoring of the foundation trenches associated with new extensions and a new porch to the property. Natural deposits were recorded in all areas, in the south-west of the site the natural was overlain by topsoil. Elsewhere horizontal truncation associated with the previous extension and the current driveway had removed any previous overburden. A modern construction cut associated with the previous extension was recorded.</i></p>						

## OASIS Form

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### OASIS ID: archaeol6-195172

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#### Project details

Project name	Eckington House, Deanland Road, Ripe
Short description of the project	The work comprised the monitoring of the foundation trenches associated with new extensions and a new porch to the property. Natural deposits were recorded in all areas, in the south-west of the site the natural was overlain by topsoil. Elsewhere horizontal truncation associated with the previous extension and the current driveway had removed any previous overburden. A modern construction cut associated with the previous extension was recorded.
Project dates	Start: 11-11-2014 End: 12-11-2014
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	HER 13 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	6851 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI)
Site status	Listed Building
Current Land use	Residential 1 - General Residential
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

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#### Project location

Country	England
Site location	EAST SUSSEX WEALDEN CHALVINGTON WITH RIPE Eckington House, Deanland Road, Ripe
Postcode	BN8 6AR
Study area	400.00 Square metres

Site coordinates TQ 5110 1014 50.870404697 0.14768747453 50 52 13 N 000 08  
51 E Point

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**Project creators**

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	East Sussex County Council
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East
Project director/manager	Paul Mason
Project supervisor	Ian Hogg
Type of sponsor/funding body	Architects
Name of sponsor/funding body	Andrew Goodwin of Mackellar Schwerdt Architects

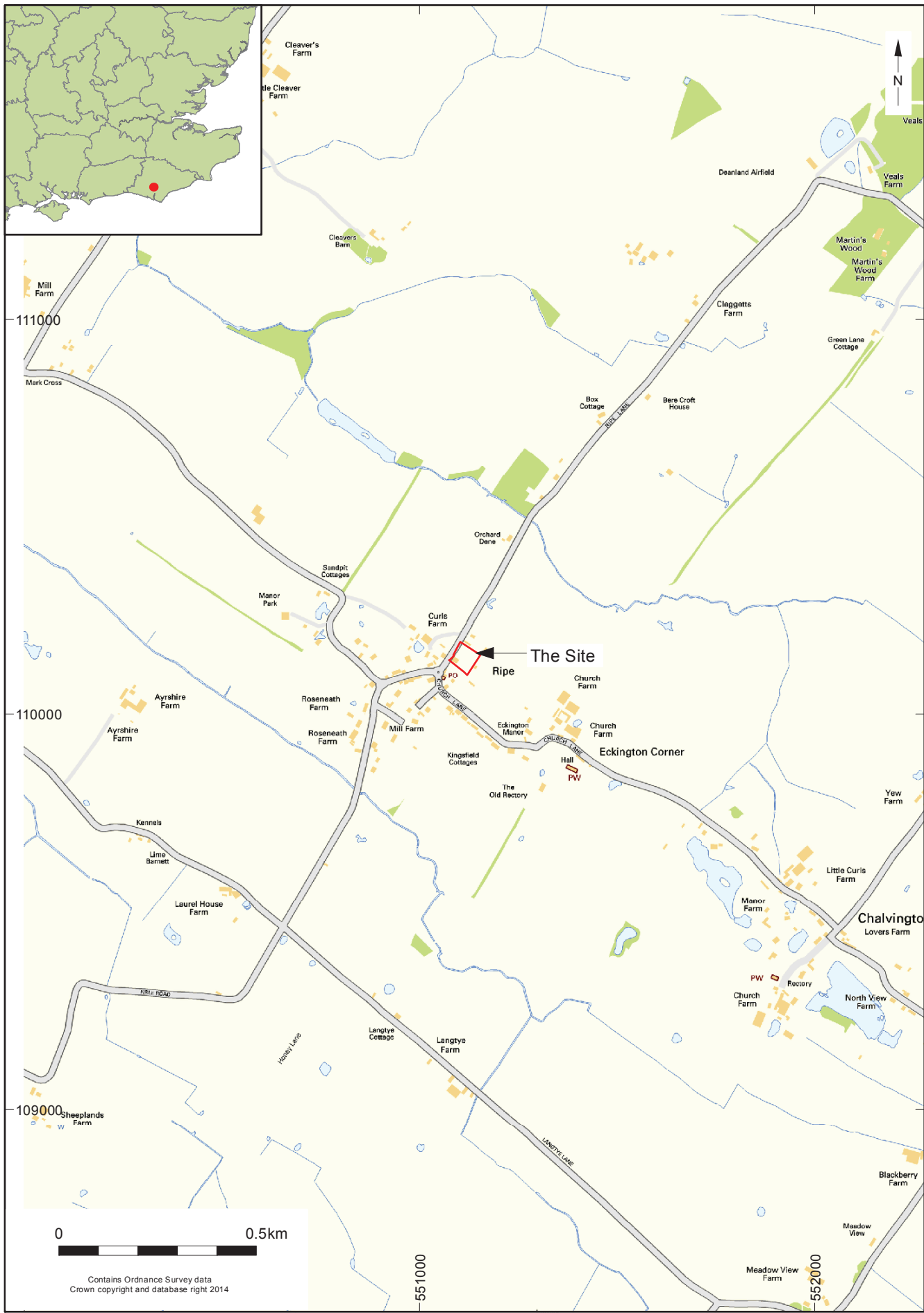
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**Project archives**

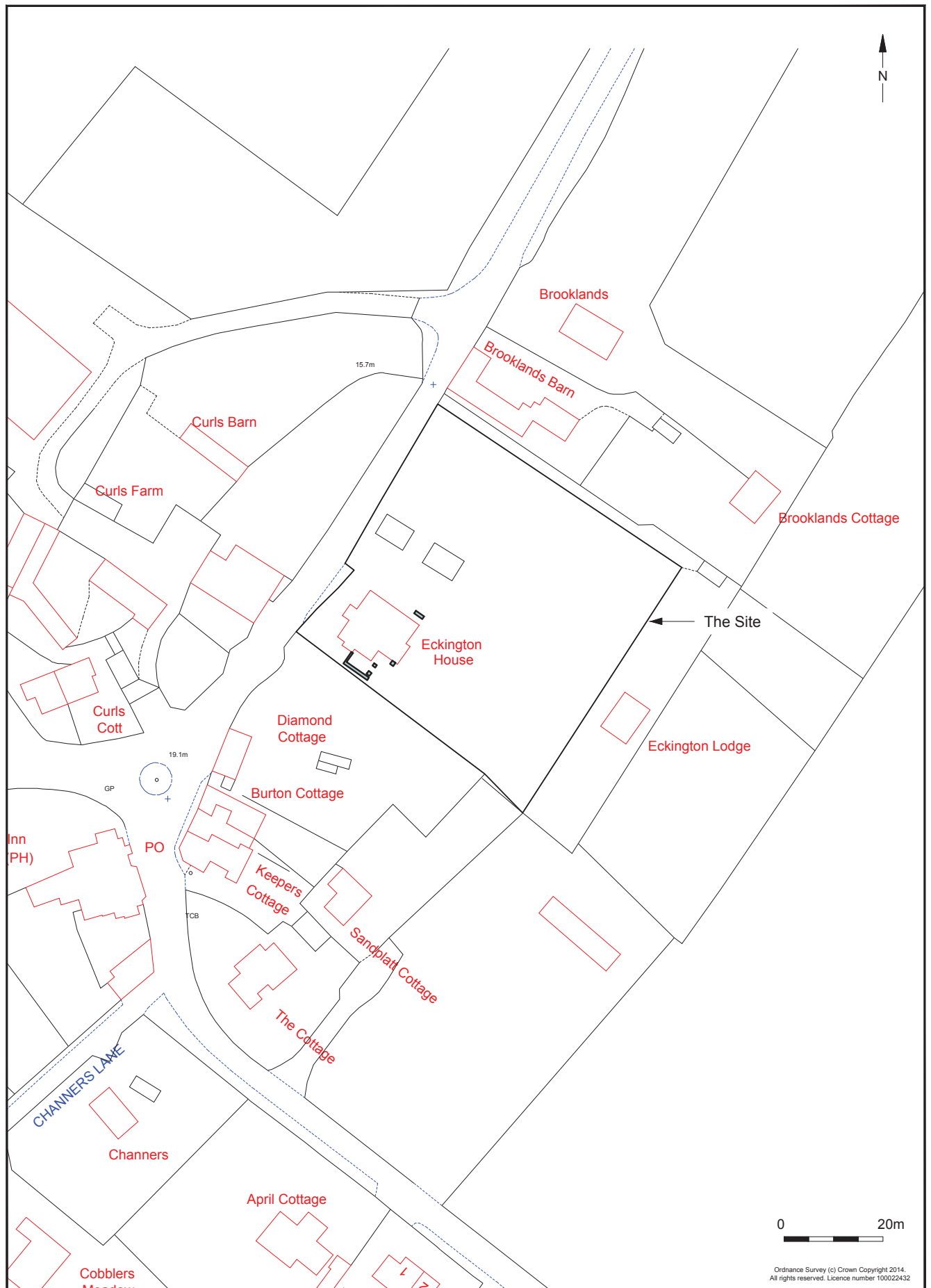
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Lewes Museum
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography"
Paper Archive recipient	Lewes Museum
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Plan", "Report"

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Entered by	Ian Hogg (ian.hogg@ucl.ac.uk)
Entered on	13 November 2014



© Archaeology South-East		Eckington House, Ripe	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 6851	Nov 2014	Site location	
Report Ref: 2014375	Drawn by: JLR		



© Archaeology South-East		Eckington House, Ripe		Fig. 2
Project Ref: 6851	Nov 2014	Site plan		
Report Ref: 2014375	Drawn by: JLR			



© Archaeology South-East		Eckington House, Ripe	Fig. 3
Project Ref: 6851	Nov 2014	Location of monitored areas	
Report Ref: 2014375	Drawn by: JLR		



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