

**An Archaeological Watching Brief
On Land at 155-166 Kings Road Arches, Brighton, East Sussex
(KRA05)**

(TQ NGR 53081 10394)

By

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Project No. 2289

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Archaeology South-East

Archaeology South-East is a division of the University College London Field Archaeology Unit. The Institute of Archaeology at UCL is one of the largest groupings of academic archaeologists in the country. Consequently, Archaeology South-East has access to the conservation, computing and environmental backup of the college, as well as a range of other archaeological services.

The Field Archaeology Unit and South Eastern Archaeological Services (which became Archaeology South-East in 1996) were established in 1974 and 1991 respectively. Although field projects have been conducted worldwide, Archaeology South-East retains a special interest in south-east England with the majority of our contract and consultancy work concentrated in Sussex, Kent, Greater London and Essex.

Drawing on experience of the countryside and towns of the south east of England Archaeology South-East can give advice and carry out surveys at an early stage in the planning process. By working closely with developers and planning authorities it is possible to incorporate archaeological work into developments with little inconvenience.

Archaeology South-East, as part of the Field Archaeology Unit, is a registered organisation with the Institute of Field Archaeologists and, as such, is required to meet IFA standards.

Abstract

An archaeological watching brief was maintained during groundwork relating to a flood alleviation scheme on the promenade at Brighton seafront between West Street and Middle Street. In the area of the promenade no archaeological finds or features were noted. The storm gravel beach deposits were encountered at a depth of 200mm below the modern ground surface. However, a structure possibly associated with the Victorian sewers in this area was partially revealed during excavation within 155 Kings Road Arches.

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SMR Summary Sheet

Fig. 1: Site Location

Fig. 2: Location of works

Fig. 3: Plan and Sections

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of University College London Field Archaeology Unit, was commissioned by 4Delivery Limited, to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks relating to a flood alleviation scheme on the promenade at Brighton seafront between West Street and Middle Street (centred NGR 53081 10394) (Fig. 1).
- 1.2** The proposed groundworks included the machine excavation of a 60m long sewer trench between and parallel with the frontages of 155 to 166 Kings Road Arches, a test pit outside 139 Kings Road arches, and some trenching within the arches themselves.
- 1.3** Due to the archaeological potential of the site, Geoff Bennett of Brighton and Hove Council advised 4Delivery Ltd that an intermittent archaeological watching brief be maintained during any groundwork associated with the improvement scheme. The county archaeologist at East Sussex County Council has also been informed of these works and concurs with the advice offered by Brighton and Hove Council.
- 1.4** A Written Scheme of Investigation was prepared in response to this recommendation by Archaeology South- East and fully complies with the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Fieldwork, Recording, and Post Excavation* (Development Control) in East Sussex Version 3 (dated 17-09-03) including Annex B, otherwise known as the "Standard Conditions".
- 1.5** The fieldwork was undertaken by Alice Thorne on the 25/11/05 and the 27/02/06 and Sam Worral on the 15/02/06. The project was managed by Neil Griffin (Project Manager) and Louise Rayner (Post-Excavation Manager).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1** The site is located on the seafront promenade at Kings Road Arches, Brighton. Some trenching also took place within no 155 Kings Road Arches (Fig. 2).
- 2.2** The development site is located on the edge of an archaeologically sensitive area, designated as such because it lies within the former lower medieval town of Brighton, which had been totally lost to coastal erosion by the early 18th century.
- 2.3** The British Geological Survey map Sheet 318/333 (Area Brighton and

Worthing) Solid and Drift Edition (1:50,000 scale) indicates that the site lies on Storm Gravel Beach Deposits.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 3.1** The objective of the archaeological work was to monitor the excavation of new groundwork in order to ensure that any features, artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest exposed and affected by the groundwork were recorded and interpreted to appropriate standards. Particular attention was made to the character, height below ground level, condition, date and significance of the deposits.
- 3.2** The groundwork, (monitored intermittently by a suitably qualified archaeologist), comprised the excavation of a 'T' Shaped trench within 155 Kings Road Arches, the excavation of a service trench along the promenade, and the excavation of a test pit to locate services outside 139 Kings Road Arches (Fig. 2).
- 3.3** All encountered archaeological deposits, features and finds were recorded according to accepted professional standards in accordance with the Specification using standard Archaeology South-East context record sheets. Deposit colours were verified by visual inspection and not by reference to a Munsell Colour chart.
- 3.4** The spoil from the excavations was also inspected to recover any artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest.
- 3.5** A full photographic record of the work was kept (black and white prints and colour slides) and will form part of the site archive. The archive is presently held at the Archaeology South-East offices at Ditchling and will be offered to a suitable local museum.

4.0 RESULTS

- 4.1** An initial phase of monitoring during excavation within 155 Kings Road Arches partially revealed a possible flint, chalk and cement structure located below the current floor level (Fig 3, Plan and Section 2). This structure, Context 1, appears to be orientated on a SW- NE alignment, and has a minimum depth of 1m. It consisted of large rough, irregular flint nodules and chalk blocks. No coursing or pointing was discernable, and they were contained within a hard Portland cement containing flint gravel aggregate. A fragment of red brick was noted incorporated into the building material. A small area exposed to the south indicated that there may be a rough flint cobble facing to the structure, but too small a section was visible to state with

certainty.

- 4.2** To the south of the structure a mid greyish-brown friable sandy-silt contained frequent chalk fragments, flint nodules and gravels, fragments of concrete and welsh slate (Context **2**). This deposit appeared to be a rubble backfill deposit, abutting Context **1** (Fig 3).
- 4.3** To the north of the structure an edge or possible cut through Context **1** was noted. This measured 2.10m in width (Context **6**) (Fig 3). This underlay modern backfilled rubble deposits. At a depth of 0.72m below the ground surface and forming a fill of Context **6**, a creamy white chalk and flint rubble contained within a hard Portland cement was noted (Context **3**). This had a maximum depth of 200mm. Below Context **3** was a mid grey- brown compact silty- clay containing flint nodules and gravels, chalk fragments and occasional brick fragments (Context **4**) (Fig 3 Section 1).
- 4.4** A test pit measuring 1.9m x 2.0m x 1.25m deep was monitored immediately outside 139 Kings Road Arches (Fig 2). The stratigraphic sequence noted here was as follows: A brick surface overly a yellowish brown bedding deposit to a depth of 130mm. Below this was a 70mm thick dark brown silty sandy gravel deposit. Below this the Storm Gravel Beach Deposits were encountered to a minimum depth of 1.25m (Context **5**). No archaeological features were observed. There was significant evidence for modern disturbance, with several ceramic, plastic and metal service pipes noted cutting Context **5**.
- 4.5** A visit was made to observe the sewer trench located outside the premises (Fig 2). A small length of this trench was observed, which revealed the Storm Gravel Beach Deposits (Context **5**), lying at a depth of 200mm below modern overburden deposits.

5.0 SUMMARY

- 5.1** No archaeological finds or features were noted from the groundwork on the Brighton seafront promenade. Storm gravel beach deposits were encountered at a depth of 200mm below the modern ground surface. However, a structure possibly associated with the Victorian sewers (Context **1**) was partially revealed during excavation within 155 Kings Road Arches.

6.0 APPENDIX

6.1 Oasis Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-21388

Project details

Project name	Kings Road Arches, Brighton
Short description of the project	negative watching brief on brighton seafront
Project dates	Start: 25-11-2005 End: 15-02-2006
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	2289 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	KRA05 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Coastland 6 - Other
Monument type	VICOTRIAN SEWER Post Medieval
Methods & techniques	'Visual Inspection'
Development type	Shoreline development
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - Direction 4
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	EAST SUSSEX BRIGHTON AND HOVE BRIGHTON Kings Road Arches
Postcode	BN1
Study area	1000.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 53081 10394 50.8721647334 0.175929575984 50 52 19 N 000 10 33 E Point
Height OD	Min: 6.00m Max: 6.01m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East
Project director/manager	Darryl Palmer

Project supervisor Alice Thorne
Type of sponsor/funding body Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body 4D

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No
Digital Archive recipient Local Museum
Digital Contents 'other'
Digital Media available 'Text'
Paper Archive recipient Local Museum
Paper Contents 'Stratigraphic','other'
Paper Media available 'Context sheet','Correspondence','Diary','Photograph','Plan'

Entered by jon sygrave (j.sygrave@ucl.ac.uk)
Entered on 15 December 2006

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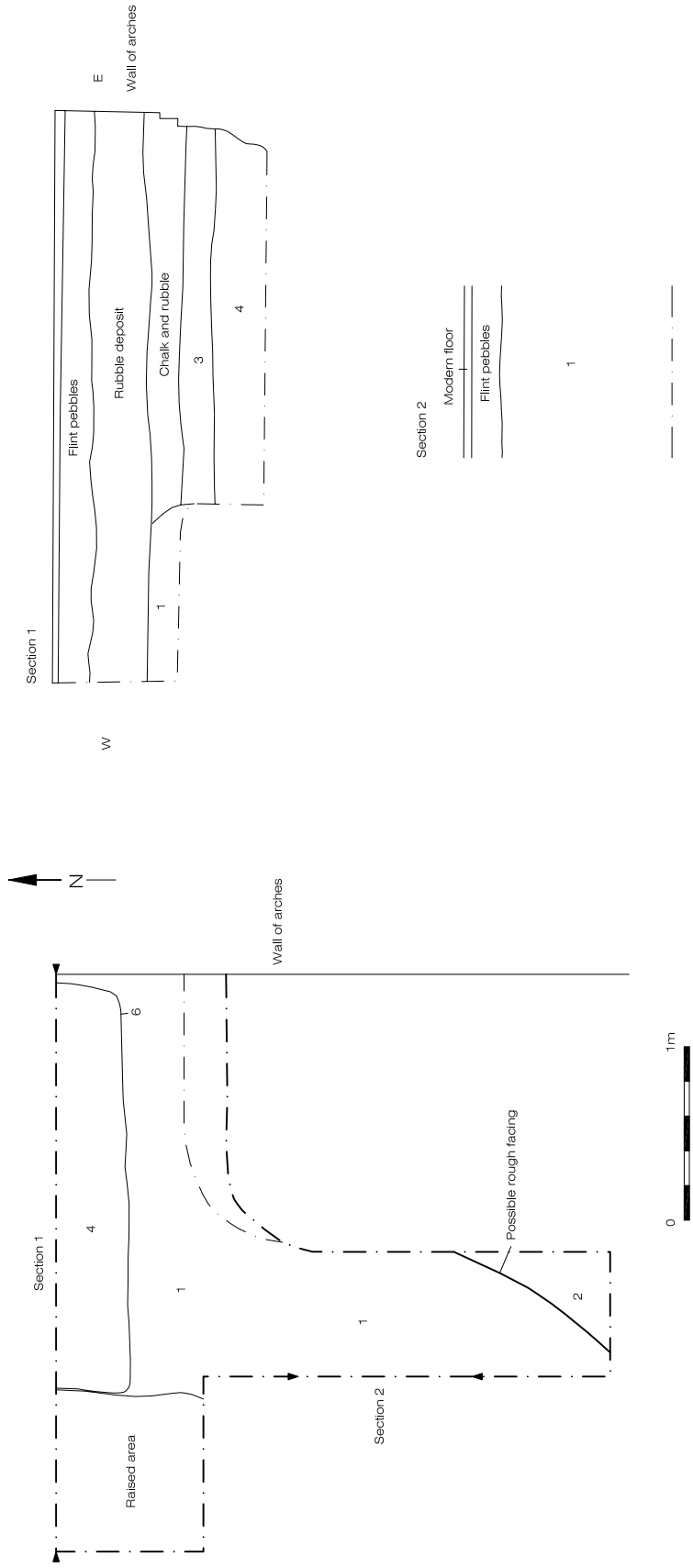
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© ARCHAEOLOGY SOUTH EAST			Kings Road Arches, Brighton	Fig. 1
Ref: 2289	March 2006	Drawn by: JLR	Site Location Plan	

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© ARCHAEOLOGY SOUTH EAST		Kings Road Arches, Brighton	Fig. 3
Ref: 2289	March 2006	Plan and sections	