

**Archaeological Evaluation Report
Former Wayside Nursing Home
Rusper, West Sussex
RH12 4PX**

**NGR: 520469 137308
(TQ 20469 37308)**

**Planning Application Refs:
DC/13/0657 and DC/15/1799**

**ASE Project No: 7301
Site Code: WNH15**

**ASE Report No: 2015360
OASIS id: archaeol6-226958**



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Abstract

Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Good Architecture to conduct an archaeological evaluation at the Former Wayside Nursing Home, Rusper, West Sussex in advance of the construction of four bungalows on the site.

Localised, recent truncation was detected in Trench 2 in the central-western part of the site. In the rest of the trenches, the site appears to have survived undisturbed. A later 12th or 13th century gully in Trench 4, in the south-central part of the site, has some significance as it concords with the historical evidence that Rusper was founded in the 13th century. No other archaeological remains or finds were recorded in the evaluated areas.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE) was commissioned by Good Architecture to undertake an Archaeological Evaluation at Former Wayside Nursing Home, Rusper, West Sussex, RH12 4PX (centred on NGR TQ 20469 37308; Figure 1).

1.2 Geology and Topography

1.2.1 The British Geological Survey shows the underlying geology of the site comprises bedrock geology of Weald Clay Formation; a sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 125 to 134 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period. Local environment previously dominated by swamps, estuaries and deltas (BGS 2015).

1.2.2 The site is semi-rectangular in shape with access onto the High Street in the form of an east-west orientated driveway. The site is bounded to the north and west by the Church of Saint Mary Magdalene and its cemetery, to the east by housing fronting Rusper High Street, and to the south by open fields. The ground level height is approximately 123m AOD.

1.3 Planning Background

1.3.1 Planning consent for the demolition of existing garages and the erection of four new houses with associated parking and amenity space has been granted (Refs: DC/13/0657 & DC/15/1799). In considering the application Horsham District Council consulted West Sussex County Council's archaeologists regarding the archaeological potential of the site. As a result an archaeological condition was attached. A WSI (ASE 2015) was prepared for the programme of archaeological evaluation trenching, outlining the methodology to be adhered to. All work was carried out in accordance with the WSI.

Condition 8:

No demolition/development shall take place/commence until a written scheme of investigation (WSI) has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. For land that is included within the WSI, no demolition/development shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed WSI, which shall include: the statement of significance and research objectives, and the programme and methodology of site investigation and recording and the nomination of a competent person(s) or organisation to undertake the agreed works the programme for further mitigation, post-investigation assessment and subsequent analysis, publication & dissemination and deposition of resulting material. This part of the condition shall not be discharged until these elements have been fulfilled in accordance with the programme set out in the WSI.

Reason: In order to ensure that archaeological features on the site will be properly recorded and where appropriate during development and that the records will be satisfactorily reported in accordance with the policy HDPF34 of the Horsham District Planning Framework 2015.

1.4 Scope of Report

- 1.4.1 This report details the findings of the archaeological evaluation that took place on the 21st of September 2015. The work was carried out by Gary Webster (Archaeologist) and Lucy May (Assistant – Archaeologist).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 This section is taken from the WSI (ASE 2015). The potential for the early prehistoric periods is generally considered to be low. No Palaeolithic remains have been found within 2km of the site. A Mesolithic flint tool was found 1.60km south-east of the site (MWS5362, TQ 2180 3625). Mesolithic tools, including an unusual shaped arrowhead, have also been recovered 1.60km north-east of the site (MWS666, TQ 220 380). A Mesolithic core was found at Old Park Farm, c.300m south of the site, (MSW 977436, TQ 205 370).

2.1.2 No evidence of later prehistoric periods has been recovered within a 2km radius of the site.

2.2 Roman

2.2.1 No evidence of Roman remains or find spots have been recorded within a 2km radius of the site.

2.3 Medieval

2.3.1 The name Rusper was recorded from c. 1200, when it described the Benedictine priory founded shortly before. The site and modern village lie 1 mile north-east of the original priory. The village may have existed by 1223 when a personal name 'of Rusper' was recorded in connection with estates in Surrey, but the first certain reference to a settlement, apparently on the same site as the modern village, is of 1299.

2.3.2 The Church of St. Mary Magdalene, immediately to the north of the site and a Grade I listed building, was originally built in the c. 14th century. Although it was predominantly rebuilt in 1855, the tower still has c.15th century elements.

2.3.3 Evidence of medieval settlement within the area includes farmsteads, such as Dialpost Farm, 873m south-west of the site; Mount Farmhouse, and Quinceford House, 300m south of the site.

2.3.4 No medieval find spots have been recovered within a 2km radius of the site.

2.4 Post-Medieval

2.4.1 There are several buildings in the village dating to the 16th or 17th centuries, including the Grade II listed L-shaped Avery's, and timber framed Michealmas Cottage, both of which are c.80m south of the site. The Plough Inn, c. 50m north-east of the site and the Grade II listed Star Inn in the angle of the Horsham and Faygate roads are timber framed, and both date to the c.17th century. The large Ghyll Manor Cottage c.50m north-east of the site comprises a 16th century timber framed building at its centre, a separate 19th century building to the north, and a relocated timber-framed building, possibly originally a barn, to the south.

2.4.2 There are also several houses and cottages of the late 19th century, including the Grade II listed Norman Cottages, c. 60m south-east from the site.

2.4.3 Historic mapping shows that the majority of the site has existed as open fields, with the northern portion laid out as formal gardens, since the 1870's (1871 OS map, not reproduced).

2.5 Aims and Objectives

2.5.1 The evaluation aimed to determine, as far as is reasonably possible, the location, form, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains, irrespective of period, liable to be threatened by the proposed development.

2.5.2 The evaluation also sought to clarify the nature and extent of existing disturbance and intrusions and hence assess the degree of archaeological survival of buried deposits and any surviving structures of archaeological significance.

2.5.3 Within these parameters, the evaluation of this site presents an opportunity to address the following objectives:

- To establish the presence or absence of archaeological deposits
- Evaluate the likely impact of past land use and development
- To enable the Archaeological Advisor to Horsham District Council to make an informed decision as to the requirement for any further mitigation work

2.5.4 Specific research aims for the investigation sought to establish:

- Is there any evidence for medieval settlement or activity this close to the 14th century church of St. Mary Magdalene?

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 Fieldwork Methodology

- 3.1.1 Four trenches were mechanically excavated under archaeological supervision using a 3.5 tonne machine excavator fitted with a flat-bladed 1.2m wide bucket. 3 were 5m in length, and one was 10m in length. The trench layout can be seen on Figure 2.
- 3.1.2 The trenches were laid out using digital GPS survey equipment and linked to Ordnance Survey.
- 3.1.3 All trenches were scanned with a Cable Avoidance Tool (CAT) before excavation commenced, to ensure that live services were not encountered.
- 3.1.4 Trenches were excavated to the top of archaeological deposits or to the surface of the natural geology, whichever was uppermost. The trenches were stepped in at the edge where appropriate to ensure they were safe for entry.
- 3.1.5 All deposits were recorded on standard ASE recording sheets.
- 3.1.6 Natural clay was identified in all trenches. Where exposed, this was carefully checked for worked flint and/or other artefacts.

3.2 Site Constraints

- 3.2.1 Trench 4 was repositioned from the location prescribed in the WSI (ASE 2015) to avoid concrete foundations and a standing wall. A plan of the trenches as excavated can be seen in Figure 2.

3.3 Archive

- 3.3.1 The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will be deposited at a local museum in due course.

Number of Contexts	15
No. of files/paper record	1
Plan and sections sheets	1
Digital photos	7
Permatrace sheets	1
Trench Record Forms	4

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Trench 1

Context	Type	Interpretation	Length m	Width m	Depth m
1/001	Layer	Topsoil	Trench	Trench	0.20-0.22
1/002	Layer	Subsoil	Trench	Trench	0.16-0.30
1/003	Layer	Natural	Trench	Trench	-

Table 2: Trench 1 list of recorded contexts

4.1.1 The natural geology [1/003] was overlain with a subsoil [1/002] from which a fragment of 18th or 19th century pottery was recovered. The sequence was capped with topsoil [1/001]. The natural geology was identified at a height of 122.01m AOD.

4.1.2 No archaeological finds, features or deposits were identified.

4.2 Trench 2

Context	Type	Interpretation	Length m	Width m	Depth m
2/001	Layer	Topsoil	Trench	Trench	0.16-0.18
2/002	Layer	Sand	Trench	Trench	0.21-0.22
2/003	Layer	Made Ground	Trench	Trench	0.2-0.3
2/004	Layer	Natural	Trench	Trench	0.05-0.18

Table 3: Trench 2 list of recorded contexts

4.2.1 The natural geology [2/004] was immediately overlain with recent made ground (a dark brown grey silty clay) [2/003], containing a few sherds of 20th century pottery that was not retained. A loose brown orangey sand [2/002] lay above this. The sequence was capped with a topsoil [2/001]. The natural geology was identified at a height of 122.03m AOD.

4.2.2 There was a small amount of modern truncation into the natural at the west end of the trench.

4.2.3 No archaeological finds, features or deposits were identified.

4.3 Trench 3

4.3.1 The natural geology [3/003] was overlain with a subsoil [3/002]. The sequence was capped with topsoil [3/001]. The natural geology was identified at a height of 122.46m AOD. No archaeological finds, features or deposits were identified.

Context	Type	Interpretation	Length m	Width m	Depth m
3/001	Layer	Topsoil	Trench	Trench	0.21-0.24
3/002	Layer	Subsoil	Trench	Trench	0.10-0.24
3/003	Layer	Natural	Trench	Trench	-

Table 4: Trench 3 list of recorded contexts

4.4 Trench 4

Context	Type	Interpretation	Length m	Width m	Depth m
4/001	Layer	Topsoil	Trench	Trench	0.33-0.42
4/002	Layer	Subsoil	Trench	Trench	0.16-0.17
4/003	Layer	Natural	Trench	Trench	-
4/004	Cut	Gully	Trench	0.41	0.2
4/005	Fill	Gully	Trench	0.41	0.2

Table 5: Trench 4 list of recorded contexts

- 4.4.1 The natural geology [4/003] was overlain with subsoil [4/002] and capped with topsoil [4/001]. The natural geology was identified at a height of 122.46m AOD.
- 4.4.2 There was a north-south gully [4/004] at the west end of the trench. It was cut sharply into the natural, with concave sides and a rounded base and was filled with a pale orangey grey clay [4/005]. Which contained occasional charcoal fragments, 10 sherds of later 12th or 13th century pottery and an un-dateable brick fragment.

5.0 THE FINDS

5.1 Summary

- 5.1.1 A small assemblage of finds was recovered from the excavation. They are quantified in Table 6.

Context	Pottery	Wt(g)	CBM	Wt(g)
1/002	1	209		
4/005	11	26	1	28
Total	12	235	1	28

Table 6: Quantification of finds

5.2 The Post-Roman Pottery by Luke Barber

- 5.2.1 The evaluation recovered just 11 sherds of pottery from two individually numbered contexts. The earliest material was recovered from context [4/005] and consists of 10 small (24g) very worn bodysherds from at least two medium/coarse quartz tempered cooking pots. Only a general date between c. 1150 and 1300 can be ascribed to these vessels.
- 5.2.2 The other sherd consists of a large (208g) fragment from a local glazed red earthenware shallow bowl with club rim (context [1/002]). Although large the sherd is slightly abraded. A date between c. 1750 and 1850 is probable.
- 5.2.3 The post-Roman pottery from the evaluation does not hold any potential for further analysis and is recommended for discard.

5.3 Ceramic Building Material (CBM) by Isa Benedetti-Whitton

- 5.3.1 A single brick fragment weighing 26g was retrieved from context (4/005). The fabric was vitrified and partially reduced, with some remnants of sandy lime mortar. No datable characteristics were noted and the fragment has been discarded.

6.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Overview of stratigraphic sequence

- 6.1.1 The stratigraphic sequence across much of the site was natural geology (Weald Clay), overlain by subsoil capped with topsoil. The exception to this was in Trench 2 where Weald Clay was overlain by recent made ground. The natural geology was encountered at between 122.01m and 122.64m AOD.
- 6.1.2 Over the four trenches excavated only one archaeological feature was identified; a gully in Trench 4. The gully contained pottery dated to between AD1150 and AD1300 and is considered to be of some antiquity as it was cut into the natural clay and apparently sealed beneath the subsoil.

6.2 Deposit survival and existing impacts

- 6.2.1 As discussed above, the truncation identified in Trench 2 is probably recent, possibly modern and associated with previous construction in this part of the site.
- 6.2.2 Apart from this, the archaeological horizon seemed to be intact in the other areas evaluated, with the natural geology being sealed by 0.4m – 0.5m of subsoil and topsoil overburden.

6.3 Discussion of archaeological remains by period

Medieval Period

- 6.3.1 A gully of probable later 12th or 13th century date was recorded in Trench 4. This may have been a drainage or boundary feature. The retrieved pottery derives from two cooking pots. Charcoal and a brick fragment might suggest that domestic activity was occurring not too far from the feature.

6.4 Consideration of Research Aims

- 6.4.1 *The evaluation sought to clarify the nature and extent of existing disturbance and intrusions and hence assess the degree of archaeological survival of buried deposits and any surviving structures of archaeological significance.*

Recent disturbance to the natural / archaeological stratum was identified only in Trench 2. In the other 3 trenches, the stratum appear undisturbed. However, only a single medieval gully was recorded, in Trench 4.

- 6.4.2 *Is there any evidence for medieval settlement or activity this close to the 14th century church of St. Mary Magdalene?*

Evidence for medieval activity was discovered on site in the form of a small gully, however, this appears to pre-date the construction date of the 14th century church. The recovered later 12th or 13th century pottery, charcoal and a brick fragment might suggest that domestic activity of this date was occurring not too far from the feature.

6.5 Conclusions

- 6.5.1 Localised, recent truncation was detected in Trench 2 in the central-western part of the site. In the rest of the trenches, the site appears to have survived undisturbed. A later 12th or 13th century gully in Trench 4, in the south-central part of the site, has some significance as it concords with the historical evidence that Rusper was founded in the 13th century. No other archaeological remains or finds were recorded in the evaluated areas.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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HER Summary

HER enquiry no.	-				
Site code	WNH15				
Project code	7301				
Planning reference	DC/13/0657				
Site address	Former Wayside Nursing Home, Rusper, West Sussex, RH12 4PX				
District/Borough	Horsham				
NGR (12 figures)	520469 137308				
Geology	Weald Clay Formation				
Fieldwork type	Eval				
Date of fieldwork	21 st September 2015				
Sponsor/client	Good Architecture				
Project manager	Paul Mason				
Project supervisor	Jim Stevenson				
Period summary					
			Medieval		
Project summary	<p><i>Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Good Architecture to conduct an archaeological evaluation at the Former Wayside Nursing Home, Rusper, West Sussex in advance of the construction of four bungalows on the site.</i></p> <p><i>Localised, recent truncation was detected in Trench 2 in the central-western part of the site. In the rest of the trenches, the site appears to have survived undisturbed. A later 12th or 13th century gully in Trench 4, in the south-central part of the site, has some significance as it concords with the historical evidence that Rusper was founded in the 13th century. No other archaeological remains or finds were recorded in the evaluated areas.</i></p>				
Museum/Accession No.					

OASIS Form

OASIS id: archaeol6-226958

Project details

Project name	An Archaeological Evaluation at the Former Wayside Nursing Home, Rusper, West Sussex
Short description of the project	Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Good Architecture to conduct an archaeological evaluation at the Former Wayside Nursing Home, Rusper, West Sussex in advance of the construction of four bungalows on the site. Localised, recent truncation was detected in Trench 2 in the central-western part of the site. In the rest of the trenches, the site appears to have survived undisturbed. A later 12th or 13th century gully in Trench 4, in the south-central part of the site, has some significance as it concords with the historical evidence that Rusper was founded in the 13th century. No other archaeological remains or finds were recorded in the evaluated areas.
Project dates	Start: 21-09-2015 End: 21-09-2015
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	WNH15 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches"
Development type	Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)

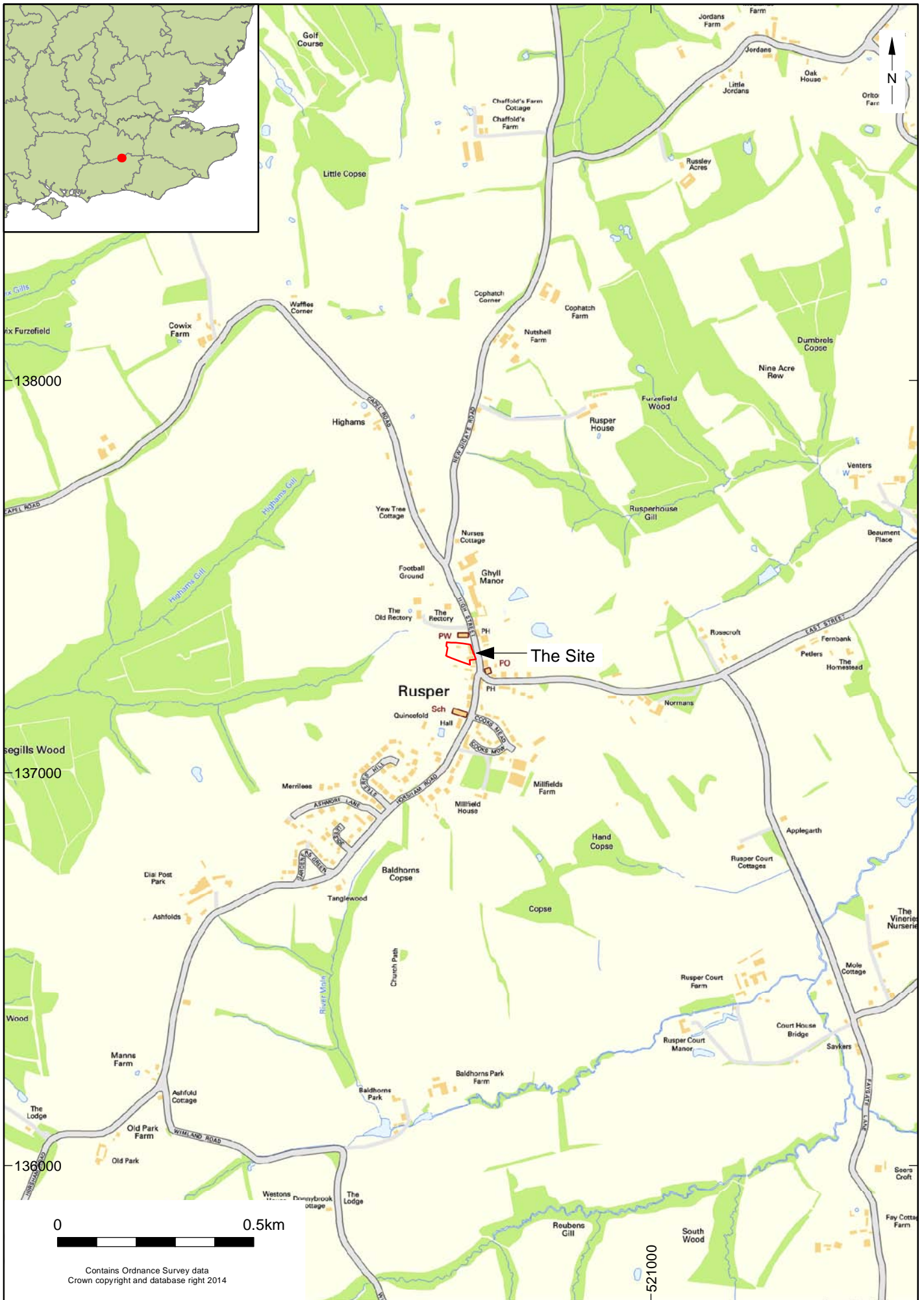
Project location

Country	England
Site location	WEST SUSSEX HORSHAM RUSPER The Former Wayside Nursing Home, Rusper, West Sussex
Postcode	RH12 4PX
Site coordinates	TQ 20469 37308 51.121836650955 -0.278441221575 51 07 18 N 000 16 42 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 122.01m Max: 122.64m

Project creators

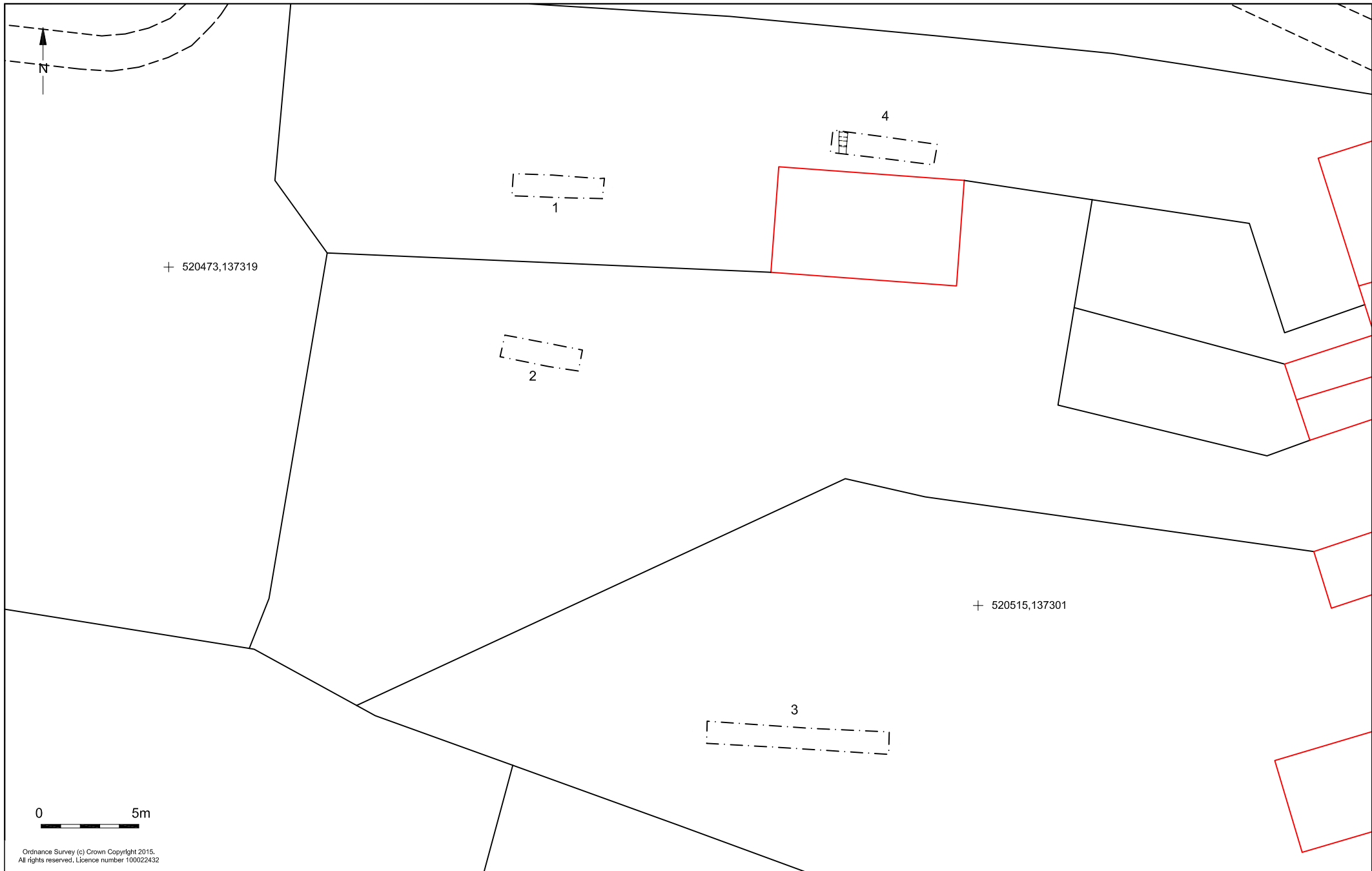
Name of Organisation	Archaeology South East
Project brief originator	Archaeology South East

Project design originator	ASE
Project director/manager	Paul Mason
Project supervisor	Gary Webster
Type of sponsor/funding body	private client
Name of sponsor/funding body	Good Architecture



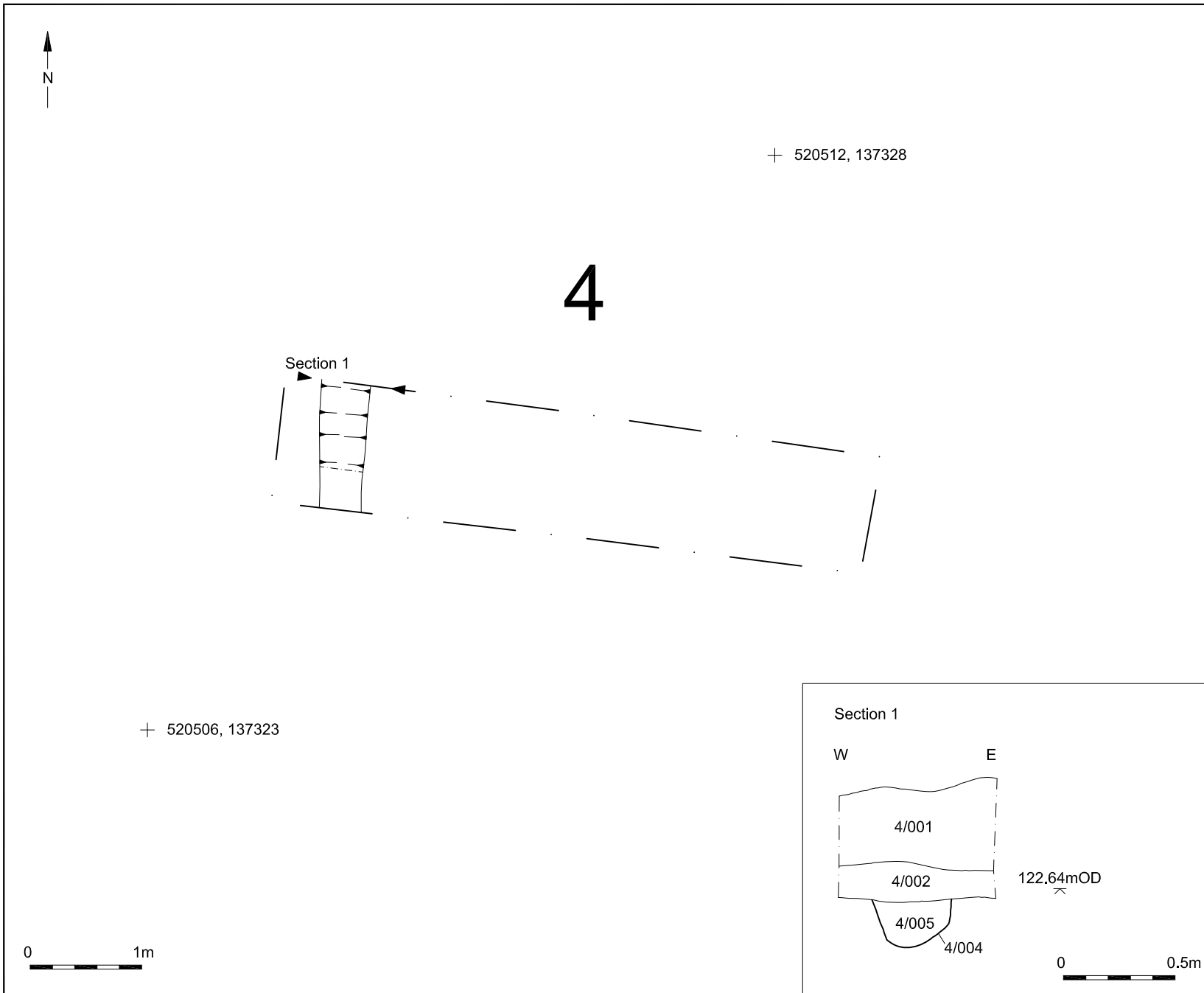
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Project Ref: 7301	Oct 2015	Site location		
Report Ref: 2015360	Drawn by: JLR			



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© Archaeology South-East		Former Wayside Nursing Home, Rusper	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 7301	October 2015	Trench location	
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Trench 4 looking east



4/004 looking north

© Archaeology South-East		Former Wayside Nursing Home, Rusper	Fig. 3
Project Ref: 7301	October 2015	Trench 4 plan, section and photographs	
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Trench 1 looking east



Trench 2 looking east



Trench 3 looking east

© Archaeology South-East		Former Wayside Nursing Home, Rusper	Fig. 4
Project Ref: 7301	October 2015	Photographs of negative trenches	
Report Ref: 2015360	Drawn by: JC		

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