

**An Archaeological Watching Brief at
East Farleigh Lock, East Farleigh, Kent**

NGR: 573510 153584

**ASE Project No: 160908
Site Code: EFL 16**

**ASE Report No: 2017036
OASIS ID: archaeol6- 274672**

By Simon Stevens

February 2017

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NGR: 573510 153584

Permitted Development

ASE Project No: 160908

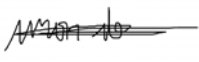

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**Illustrations by
Justin Russell**

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Abstract

Archaeology South-East was commissioned to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the refurbishment of East Farleigh lock, East Farleigh, Kent.

The mechanical reduction of a bank close to the lock was monitored. The bank itself proved recent in origin, but an underlying deposit of brick and clinker rubble may have formed part of the towpath associated with the lock, although this remains unproven.

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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) at the Institute of Archaeology (IoA), University College London (UCL) was commissioned by Mackley Civil Engineering to undertake an archaeological watching brief during limited groundworks associated refurbishment work at East Farleigh lock, East Farleigh, Kent hereafter referred to as 'the site'. The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 573510 153584 (Figure 1)

1.2 Geology and Topography

1.2.1 The village of East Farleigh is located in the valley of the River Medway, approximately 2 miles upstream of the town of Maidstone. The lock lies immediately downstream of the village's famous medieval bridge.

1.2.2 According to current data from the British Geological Survey, the underlying geology consists of the sandstones and mudstones of the Atherfield Clay formation, with the sandstones and limestones of the Hythe formation on the higher ground to the north and south (BGS 2017).

1.3 Planning Background

1.3.1 Although the refurbishment scheme is '*Permitted Development*' and therefore falls outside of the usual planning framework, following consultation between the Environment Agency and Heritage Conservation Group, Kent County Council (KCC), it was agreed that an archaeological watching brief should be maintained during one element of the refurbishment work.

1.3.2 Subsequently a Brief for the archaeological work was prepared (ASE 2016) and approved by Heritage Conservation Group, KCC before the commencement of work at the site. The document outlined the methodologies to be used on site (in this case an archaeological watching brief), and in the preparation of a report and archive of the results (ASE 2016).

1.4 Research Aims and Objectives

1.4.1 The overarching research aim of the archaeological watching brief given in the Brief (*ibid.*) was to:

'Establish whether Roman, medieval or remains of any other period are present'

1.5 Scope of Report

1.5.1 This report details the results of the archaeological monitoring of groundworks at the site undertaken on 27th January 2017 by Simon Stevens (Senior Archaeologist). The project was managed by Paul Mason (Fieldwork Manager) and by Jim Stevenson (Post-excavation Manager).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 East Farleigh Bridge is a Grade I listed structure and a Scheduled Ancient Monument dating from the 14th century and has been described by Jervoise (1930, 36-7) as:

‘certainly the finest bridge in the South of England, is a perfect example of medieval design and workmanship’

- 2.2 East Farleigh lock forms part of the *Medway Navigation*, a 19m long stretch of the River Medway reaching from Tonbridge to Maidstone. Begun in 1746, the improved channel is served by eleven locks built in the late 18th and 19th centuries (National Rivers Authority 1991).

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 Fieldwork Methodology

3.1.1 The mechanical removal of part of a riverside bank was monitored by a suitably qualified archaeologist (Figure 2). All sections were examined for archaeological deposits and all spoil was scanned for the presence of archaeological artefacts.

3.1.2 All encountered deposits were recorded according to accepted professional standards using standard Archaeology South-East context record forms. Deposit colours were recorded by visual inspection and not by reference to a Munsell Colour chart. A full photographic record of the monitoring was kept.

3.2 Fieldwork Constraints

3.2.1 There were no physical constraints to the archaeological monitoring of the groundworks; all machining was closely observed, all sections were examined and all spoil was scanned for the presence of archaeological artefacts.

3.3 The Site Archive

3.3.1 The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will be offered to Maidstone Museum in due course. The contents of the archive are tabulated below (Tables 1 & 2).

Context sheets	2
Section sheets	0
Plans sheets	0
Colour photographs	0
B&W photos	0
Digital photos	12
Context register	1
Drawing register	0
Watching brief forms	1
Trench Record forms	0

Table 1: Quantification of site paper archive

Bulk finds (quantity e.g. 1 bag, 1 box, 0.5 box 0.5 of a box)	0
Registered finds (number of)	
Flots and environmental remains from bulk samples	0
Palaeoenvironmental specialists sample samples (e.g. columns, prepared slides)	0
Waterlogged wood	0
Wet sieved environmental remains from bulk samples	0

Table 2: Quantification of artefact and environmental samples

3.3.2 The finds and environmental samples ultimately deposited as part of the archive are dependent on specialist recommendations and regional archive requirements.

4.0 RESULTS (Figure 2)

4.1 Monitoring of Ground Reduction on 27th January 2017

Context	Type	Interpretation	Max. Deposit Thickness m
001	Layer	Made Ground	1.25
002	Layer	Made Ground	>0.05

Table 3: List of recorded contexts

- 4.1.1 The monitored groundworks consisted on the mechanical reduction of part of a bank immediately to the north-east of the lock. An area measuring c.20m by c.2.5m was reduced by a maximum of 1.25m.
- 4.1.2 The area was found to have been extensively truncated by concrete bases associated with a former fence-line and by roots from a line of bushes. Two distinct layers were identified. The uppermost, [001] was a deposit of highly mixed mid brown to orangey brown silty clay containing substantial quantities of modern debris including cans and bottles, as well as brick and concrete rubble.
- 4.1.3 There was intermittent exposure of an earlier deposit, [002], which consisted of brick and clinker rubble, presumably part of the surface of the former towpath running alongside the lock. Too little of this deposit was exposed to allow any further analysis.

5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1** Only limited groundworks were undertaken outside of the area of the lock itself. Clearly the material forming the majority of bank that was removed during this work was of recent origin, with extensive, even more recent disturbance from the erection of a fence and from roots.
- 5.2** It is possible that the earlier brick and clinker rubble seen intermittently formed the remains of a towpath associated with the lock, but this remains unproven, and hence the research aims could not be addressed to any meaningful extent.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ASE would like to thank Mackley Civil Engineers for commissioning the archaeological work and Wendy Rogers, Archaeological Officer, Heritage Conservation Group, Kent County Council for her input at all stages of the project.

HER Summary

Site code	EFL16					
Project code	160908					
Planning reference	Permitted Development					
Site address	East Farleigh Lock					
District/Borough	Maidstone, Kent					
NGR (12 figures)	573510 153584					
Geology	Atherfield Clay					
Fieldwork type	Eval	Excav	WB ✓	HBR	Survey	Other
Date of fieldwork	27.01.2017 only					
Sponsor/client	Mackley Civil Engineering					
Project manager	Paul Mason					
Project supervisor	Simon Stevens					
Period summary						
						None
Project summary (100 word max)	<p><i>Archaeology South-East was commissioned to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the refurbishment of East Farleigh lock, East Farleigh, Kent.</i></p> <p><i>The mechanical reduction of a bank close to the lock was monitored. The bank itself proved recent in origin, but an underlying deposit of brick and clinker rubble may have formed part of the towpath associated with the lock, although this remains unproven.</i></p>					

OASIS Form (for editing)

OASIS ID: archaeol6-274672

Project details

Project name: An Archaeological Watching Brief at East Farleigh Lock, East Farleigh, Kent

Short description of the project: Archaeology South-East was commissioned to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the refurbishment of East Farleigh lock, East Farleigh, Kent. The mechanical reduction of a bank close to the lock was monitored. The bank itself proved recent in origin, but an underlying deposit of brick and clinker rubble may have formed part of the towpath associated with the lock, although this remains unproven.

Project dates Start: 27-01-2017 End: 27-01-2017

Previous/future work No / Not known

Any associated project reference codes 160908 - Contracting Unit No.

Any associated project reference codes EFL 16 - Sitecode

Type of project Recording project

Site status None

Current Land useOther 13 - Waste ground

Monument type NONE None

Significant Finds NONE None

Investigation type "Watching Brief"

Prompt Water Act 1989 and subsequent code of practice

Project location

Country England

Site location KENT MAIDSTONE EAST FARLEIGH East Farleigh lock

Study area 50 Square metres

Site coordinates TQ 73510 53584 51.254426479859 0.486756751124 51 15 15 N
000 29 12 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation Archaeology South-East

Project brief originator Heritage Conservation Group at Kent County Council

Project design originator Archaeology South-East

Project director/manager Paul Mason

Project supervisor Simon Stevens

Type of sponsor/funding body Client

Name of sponsor/funding body Environment Agency

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient MAIDSTONE MUSEUM

Physical Contents "other"

Digital Archive recipient MAIDSTONE MUSEUM

Digital Contents "other"

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

Paper Archive recipient MAIDSTONE MUSEUM

Paper Contents "other"

Paper Media available "Context sheet", "Miscellaneous Material", "Notebook –

Excavation", " Research", " General Notes", "Unpublished Text"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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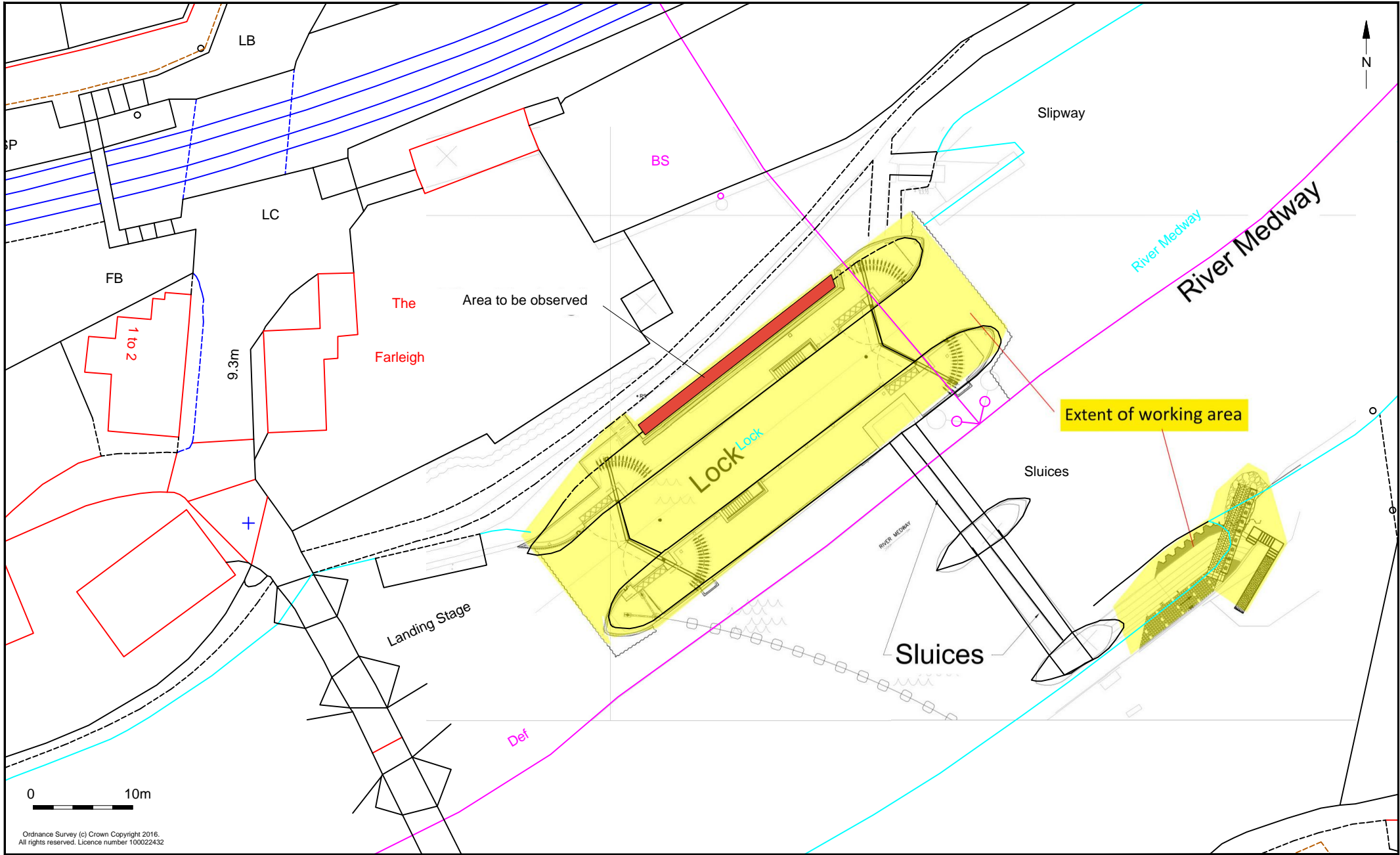
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Entered on 8 February 2017



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© Archaeology South-East		East Farleigh Lock	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 160908	Feb 2017	Site location	
Report Ref: 2017036	Drawn by: AR		



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© Archaeology South-East		East Farleigh Lock	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 160908	Feb 2017	Location of watching brief	
Report Ref: 2017036	Drawn by: AR		

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