

**An Archaeological Watching Brief at
138-140 Seal Road, Sevenoaks, Kent.**

NGR 553613 156736

Project No. 2862

**By
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August 2007

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Abstract

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the demolition of existing properties and the construction of 6 one-bed and 9 two-bed apartments for affordable housing at 138-140 Seal Road, Sevenoaks, Kent. The work comprised the archaeological monitoring of groundworks including landscaping and trenching for services and foundations. Monitoring took place at intermittent periods from the 5th of March to the 10th of May 2007. No archaeological features, deposits or finds were noted during the course of watching brief and it seems likely that modern disturbance may have served to destroy any archaeological remains had they been present. No archaeological features or artefacts were noted, and the general stratigraphy comprised, top soil, over made-ground, with the underlying solid geology formed by sands of the Folkestone Beds.

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SMR Summary Sheet

Fig. 1: Site Location

Fig. 2: Site Plan Showing Monitored Areas

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Archaeology South East (ASE), a division of University College London Field Archaeology Unit (UCLFAU), was commissioned by Baker Construction to undertake a watching brief during the demolition of existing properties and the construction of 6 one-bed and 9 two-bed apartments for affordable housing at 138-140 Seal Road, Sevenoaks, Kent. (site centred NGR 553613 156736, Fig. 1).
- 1.2 Sevenoaks District Council's planning reference for the proposal is SE/07/02752.
- 1.3 The KCC Heritage Conservation Group advised Sevenoaks District Council that the following condition, for a programme of archaeological work should be placed on the planning consent for the development:
- No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written specification and timetable which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.*
- Reason: To ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded.
- 1.4 As development work had already commenced before KCC was notified the first stage of the necessary programme of works was to be a watching brief on the remaining groundworks. If significant remains were encountered then there may have been a need for further work. A separate specification was to be issued for any subsequent requirements.
- 1.5 Monitoring of the groundworks was undertaken to ensure that any features, artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest exposed and affected by the excavations were recorded and interpreted to appropriate standards. The groundworks examined included landscaping and trenching for services and foundations.
- 1.6 The archaeological contractor had close liaison with the County Archaeologist with regard to the frequency of visits and appropriate action to be taken.
- 1.7 A specification for these works was prepared by the Heritage Conservation Group at KCC. The fieldwork was undertaken by Alice Thorne (Archaeologist), Michelle Collings (Archaeologist), Andrew Margetts (Archaeologist) and Paul Riccoboni (Senior Archaeologist) at intermittent periods from the 5th of March to the 10th of May 2007. The project was managed by Neil Griffin (Project Manager) and Louise Rayner (Post-excavation Manager).

2 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The British Geological Survey sheet 287 shows that the site is situated on Folkestone Beds.
- 2.2 The application site lies 190m north west of the Scheduled Ancient Monument of a bronze age barrow in Millpond Wood. Earlier prehistoric flint tools have also been found in the vicinity
- 2.3 An early post-medieval mill stands just to the north west of the site.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 The objectives of the archaeological watching brief were to contribute to knowledge of Seal and Sevenoaks' development through the recording of any archaeological remains exposed as a result of excavations in connection with the groundworks. Particular attention was paid to the character, height below ground level, condition, date and significance of the deposits.
- 3.2 The groundworks involved the excavation of foundation trenches to a maximum depth of c.2m and width of c.600mm and service trenches of a depth of up to c.1.5m and a width of 1.3m. The works also involved excavations for landscaping and access (Fig. 2).
- 3.3 Groundworks were monitored at all times by an archaeologist until/unless it becomes clear beyond reasonable doubt that no archaeological remains were present (e.g. once excavation reached undisturbed natural subsoils, below which there will be no archaeological remains present). Where possible excavation was undertaken using a flat bladed bucket in a single direction to enable archaeological remains to be recorded prior to disturbance from being driven over. If possible archaeological remains were encountered, machine excavation ceased to allow the remains to be investigated further.
- 3.4 The archaeologist inspected the surfaces revealed. The main contractor allowed the archaeological contractor reasonable time and resources to undertake any inspection or recording required.
- 3.5 All archaeological features and deposits encountered were recorded according to accepted professional standards. A full photographic record was kept of the work as appropriate. The spoil from the excavations was inspected to recover any artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

- 4.1. To the east of the site was a high banked area (see Fig. 2) the deposits encountered during its excavation comprised firstly of c.150mm of topsoil (Context **001**). This consisted of dark brown black sandy silt with frequent inclusions of modern building materials (<60mm). Directly beneath Context **001** was encountered c.350mm of mid brownish orange sandy silt subsoil (Context **002**), which contained occasional inclusions of building materials (<30mm) and was heavily rooted. Contexts **001** and **002** were restricted to this area of the site the remainder comprised Context **004**. This consisted of c.1m of dark brown grey silty sand with frequent inclusions of gravel (<20mm), modern building materials (<60mm) and a moderate frequency of 19th/20th century finds. Context **004** was interpreted as a demolition/construction deposit. Beneath Contexts **002** and **004** was encountered the mid yellow orange Folkestone Beds natural sand (Context **003**).

5 DISCUSSION

- 5.1 The underlying geology encountered during the course of the groundworks comprised Folkestone Beds.
- 5.2 No archaeological features, deposits or finds were noted during the course of watching brief. The site had received a great deal of disturbance during the construction and demolition of the previous dwelling, to which Context **004** relates. This would have served to destroy any archaeological remains had they been present for it seemed likely that the natural ground had been truncated to some depth by this disturbance. The only area that retained virgin ground was that of the bank underlying Context **002** however, no features or finds were encountered and the results are thus classed as negative evidence.

SMR Summary Form

Site Code	SRS07					
Identification Name and Address	138-140 Seal Road, Sevenoaks, Kent.					
County, District &/or Borough	Sevenoaks District Council					
OS Grid Refs.	NGR 553613 156736					
Geology	Folkestone Beds					
Arch. South-East Project Number	2862					
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. 5 th March – 10 th May 2007	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Baker Construction					
Project Manager	Jon Sygrave and Louise Rayner					
Project Supervisor	Andrew Margetts					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM	Other Modern ✓		
<p>100 Word Summary.</p> <p><i>An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the demolition of existing properties and the construction of 6 one-bed and 9 two-bed apartments for affordable housing at 138-140 Seal Road, Sevenoaks, Kent. The work comprised the archaeological monitoring of groundworks including landscaping and trenching for services and foundations. Monitoring took place at intermittent periods from the 5th of March to the 10th of May 2007. No archaeological features, deposits or finds were noted during the course of watching brief and it seems likely that modern disturbance may have served to destroy any archaeological remains had they been present. No archaeological features or artefacts were noted, and the general stratigraphy comprised, top soil, over made-ground, with the underlying solid geology formed by sands of the Folkestone Beds.</i></p>						

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OASIS ID: archaeol6-29512

Project details

Project name	138-140 Seal Road, Sevenoaks WB
Short description of the project	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the demolition of existing properties and the construction of 6 one-bed and 9 two-bed apartments for affordable housing at 138-140 Seal Road, Sevenoaks, Kent. The work comprised the archaeological monitoring of groundworks including landscaping and trenching for services and foundations. Monitoring took place at intermittent periods from the 5th of March to the 10th of May 2007. No archaeological features, deposits or finds were noted during the course of watching brief and it seems likely that modern disturbance may have served to destroy any archaeological remains had they been present. No archaeological features or artefacts were noted, and the general stratigraphy comprised, top soil, over made-ground, with the underlying solid geology formed by sands of the Folkestone Beds.
Project dates	Start: 05-03-2007 End: 10-05-2007
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	SRS07 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Current Land use	Residential 1 - General Residential
Monument type	DWELLING Modern
Significant Finds	BUILDING MATERIALS Modern
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	KENT SEVENOAKS SEVENOAKS 138-140 Seal Road, Sevenoaks
Postcode	TN13 2XX
Study area	50.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 536 567 51.2881570575 0.202985059514 51 17 17 N 000 12 10 E Polygon
Height OD	Min: 90.00m Max: 100.00m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South East
Project brief originator	Heritage Conservation Kent County Council
Project design originator	The Heritage Conservation Group Kent County Council
Project director/manager	JON SYGRAVE
Project supervisor	Andrew Margetts
Type of sponsor/funding body	Client
Name of sponsor/funding body	Baker Construction Ltd

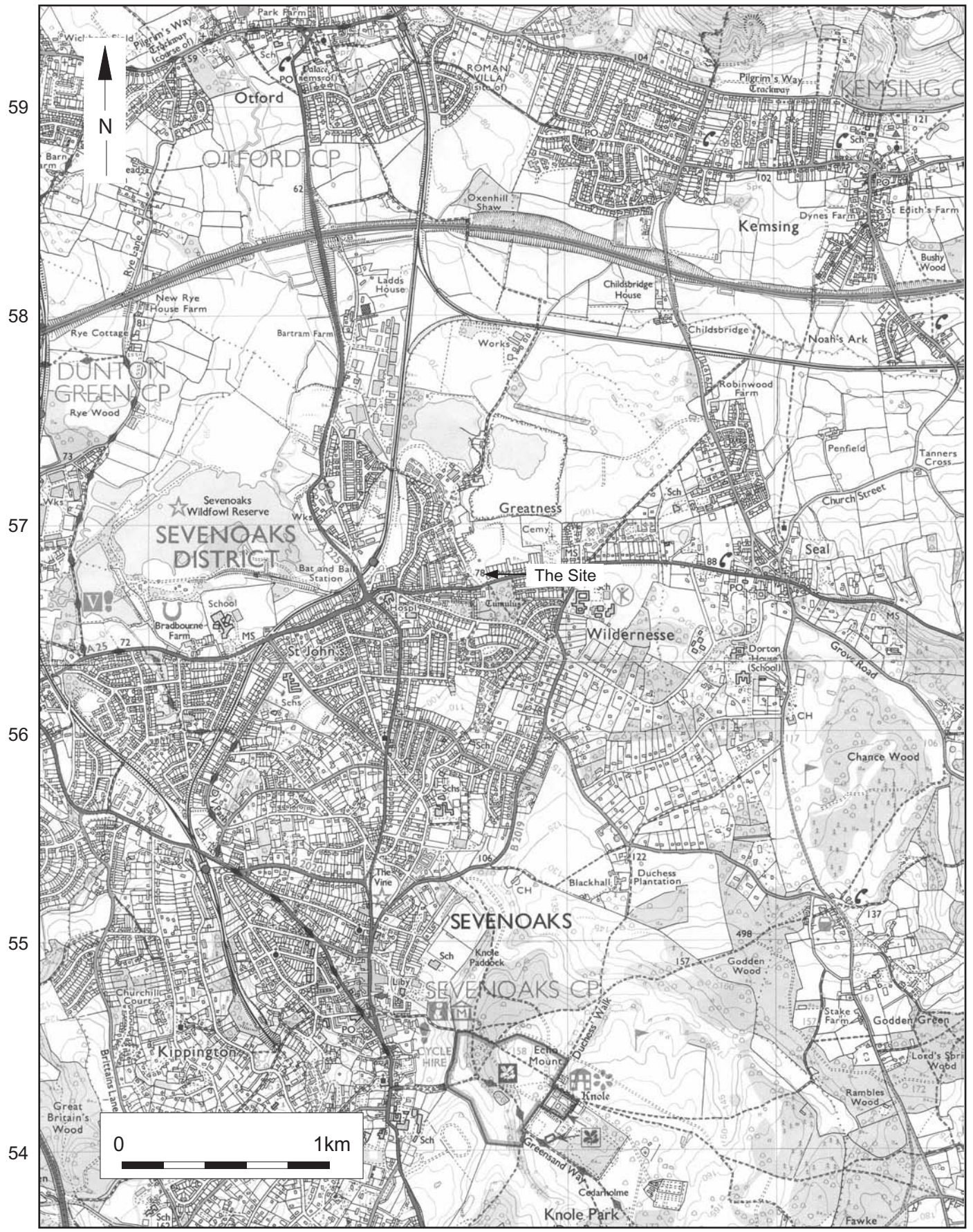
Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Physical Archive recipient	n/a
Digital Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	n/a
Paper Archive Exists?	No
Paper Media available	'Unpublished Text'

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	138-140 Seal Road, Sevenoaks, Kent WB report
Author(s)/Editor (s)	Margetts, A
Other bibliographic details	Project No: 2862
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© Archaeology South-East			Seal Road, Sevenoaks	Fig. 1
Ref: 2862	Aug 2007	Drawn by: JLR	Site Location Plan	

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© Archaeology South-East		Seal Road, Sevenoaks		Fig. 2
Ref: 2862	Aug 2007	Drawn by: JLR	Location of Monitored Works	