

**An Archaeological Watching Brief at
Buckhurst 2 Car Park and Residential, Buckhurst Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 1LX**

**NGR: TQ 553289 154682
Planning Ref: SE/17/02149/FUL
ASE Project No: 171025
Site Code: BUC 17**

**ASE Report No: 2018049
OASIS id: archaeol6-308997**

By Chris Russel

Illustrations by John Cook



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Abstract

Archaeology South-East (ASE), the contracting division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology (CAA), Institute of Archaeology, University College London (UCL) was commissioned by CgMs Consulting to undertake an archaeological watching brief at the site of Buckhurst 2 Car Park and Residential, Buckhurst Road, Sevenoaks, Kent during the construction of a new multi-storey car park and new residential dwellings.

Sand geology was noted at between 0.20-0.40 below ground level overlain in most areas by construction layers for the modern car park. A remnant topsoil was noted in the west of the site, but no archaeological features were seen beneath it. No archaeological finds or features were observed during the watching brief.

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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, University College London (UCL) was commissioned by CgMs Consulting to undertake an archaeological watching brief at the site of Buckhurst 2 Car Park and Residential, Buckhurst Road, Sevenoaks, Kent (NGR TQ 553289 154682; Figure 1).
- 1.1.2 The site is located on the eastern periphery of Sevenoaks and is currently occupied by a car park and an area of wood and scrubland forming part of Knole Environmental Park.
- 1.1.3 The underlying bedrock geology of the site comprises Folkestone Formation Sandstone (BGS 2017).
- 1.1.4 An archaeological desk-based assessment for the site concluded that there was low potential for significant remains of any period to be present (CgMs 2017).

1.2 Planning Background

- 1.2.1 Sevenoaks District Council granted planning permission for the construction of a car park and housing subject to conditions (SE/17/02149/FUL). The archaeological condition was as follows:

14) No development shall be carried out on the land until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a "watching brief". This shall be undertaken by an archaeologist approved in writing by the local planning authority so that the excavation is observed and items of interest and finds are recorded. The watching brief shall be in accordance with a written specification and timetable which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The local planning authority is satisfied that it is fundamental to the development permitted to address this issue before development commences and that without this safeguard planning permission should not be granted.

To investigate and record archaeological features as supported by Policy EN4 of the Sevenoaks Allocations and Development Management Plan.

- 1.2.2 All work was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared for the site, which outlined the methodology to be used in the field, and in reporting and archiving of the results (ASE 2017).

1.3 Aims and Objectives

- 1.3.1 The main aim of the archaeological watching brief was to monitor the groundworks in order to ensure that any deposits and features, artefacts and ecofacts of archaeological interest, were recorded and interpreted to appropriate standards.

1.3.2 The site was considered to have the potential to address the following specific research objectives taken from the South-East Research Framework:

- Study of the regional Mesolithic
- Changes in material culture from the Neolithic to Bronze Age
- Interaction between town and country in the medieval period

1.4 Scope of Report

1.4.1 The scope of this report is to set out the findings of the watching brief at Buckhurst 2 Car Park, Sevenoaks. The monitoring took place intermittently between the 16th and the 30th of January 2018. The work was carried out by Ian Hogg and Chris Russel. The project was managed by Paul Mason (Project Manager) and by Jim Stevenson (Post-Excavation Manager).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The following background information is summarised from the desk-based assessment, with due acknowledgement (CgMs 2017).
- 2.2 Mesolithic artefacts were found immediately north of Knole Park c. 650m north-east from the site and comprised 43 blades, 1 scraper and 2 other implements. The location probably represents a temporary camp of a group of hunter gatherers and it is the earliest evidence of occupation in the immediate Sevenoaks area. An occupation floor deposit that produced finds dating from the Mesolithic to the Bronze Age was observed c.600m north-east from the study site.
- 2.3 The only other evidence for prehistoric activity in the vicinity of the site is the find spot of an Iron Age stater, c.700m south-west from the site.
- 2.4 The Darent valley, north of the Sevenoaks area, was densely populated in the Roman period. The only indication of Romano-British presence in Sevenoaks area is an isolated cremation burial discovered north-west of the town centre, and a Roman coin of Valens (AD 364-376) found in Buckhurst Avenue in the early 20th century, c.80m west from the study site.
- 2.5 The site lies c.200m east from the medieval village core where a series of buildings along the High street and London Road are provisionally dated to the medieval/post-medieval period. The Church of St. Nicholas located c.400m south-west from the study site is dated to the 12th century. A medieval boundary ditch was recorded during archaeological evaluation works behind 63-65 High Street, c.220m south-west from the site. Medieval walls were recorded during archaeological investigations at Knole House c.700m south-east from the site. Knole was a separate manor to Sevenoaks by the 13th or early 14th century and was greatly enlarged in the 15th century.
- 2.6 The site appears to have been used for agriculture/allotments until the later 20th century when the car park was constructed.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 Fieldwork Methodology

- 3.1.1 All fieldwork was carried out in accordance with the WSI and standards and guidance of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014a, b, c)
- 3.1.2 The work on site involved the monitoring or six machine dug exploration pits (TP1-TP6) one hand dug exploration pit and mechanical ground reduction. The location of monitored areas are shown on Figure 2. All mechanical excavation was carried out by a tracked excavator fitted with a toothless bucket.
- 3.1.3 Deposits were recorded using the standard context record sheets used by Archaeology South-East. A digital photographic record was maintained throughout the work.

3.2 The Site Archive

- 3.2.1 The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will be deposited at the local museum in due course. The contents of the archive are tabulated below (Table 1).

Context sheets	6
Section sheets	0
Plans sheets	0
Colour photographs	0
B&W photos	0
Digital photos	50
Context register	1
Drawing register	0
Watching brief forms	5
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)	0
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

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

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Exploratory pits monitored on 16/01/2018

- 4.1.1 A total of six machine excavated exploratory pits (TP1-TP6) were excavated measuring 0.50m wide by 2.0m long. The pits were dug to approximately 0.70m below ground level.
- 4.1.2 The pits revealed yellow sand geology at approximately 0.20 to 0.40m below ground level, overlain by tarmac and crush. No archaeological finds or features were observed

Context	Type	Interpretation	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Deposit Thickness m
01	Layer	Tarmac and crush	Trench	Trench	0.20-0.40
02	Layer	Natural geology	Trench	Trench	-

Table 3: List of recorded contexts recorded 16/01/2018

4.2 Exploratory pit monitored on 18/01/2018

- 4.2.1 A single, hand dug exploratory pit TP7, measuring 0.50m wide 4.0m long and 1.2m deep was excavated in the southwest corner of the site.
- 4.2.2 The pit revealed sand geology at around 0.40m below ground level. This was overlain by 0.25m of buried/remnant topsoil (dark grey brown sandy silt) which was overlain by 0.15m of tarmac and crush. No archaeological finds or features were observed

Context	Type	Interpretation	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Deposit Thickness m
01	Layer	Tarmac and crush	Trench	Trench	0.20-0.40
03	Layer	Buried soil	Trench	Trench	0.25
02	Layer	Natural geology	Trench	Trench	-

Table 4: List of recorded contexts recorded 18/01/2018

4.3 Mechanical ground reduction monitored on 22 & 23/01/2018

- 4.3.1 Ground reduction to accommodate a piling mat was carried out in a strip 10m wide and approximately 100m long, located along the southern boundary of the site. This was excavated to a depth of approximately 0.50m below ground level.
- 4.3.2 The ground reduction revealed sand geology directly beneath approximately 0.25m of tarmac and crush. The eastern end of the strip only revealed the crush base of the tarmac surface. No archaeological finds or features were observed.

Context	Type	Interpretation	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Deposit Thickness m
01	Layer	Tarmac and crush	Trench	Trench	0.20-0.30
02	Layer	Natural geology	Trench	Trench	-

Table 5: List of recorded contexts recorded 22 & 23/01/2018

4.4 Mechanical ground reduction monitored on 30/01/2018

4.4.1 A strip 10m wide and approximately 60m long was mechanically reduced along the western boundary of the site to accommodate a piling mat. This was excavated to around 0.50m below ground level.

4.4.2 The ground reduction revealed approximately 0.25m of tarmac and crush directly overlaying sand geology. No archaeological finds or features were observed.

Context	Type	Interpretation	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Deposit Thickness m
01	Layer	Tarmac and crush	Trench	Trench	0.20-0.25
03	Layer	Buried soil	Trench	Trench	0.10-0.15
02	Layer	Natural geology	Trench	Trench	-

Table 6: List of recorded contexts recorded 22 & 23/01/2018

5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Overview of stratigraphic sequence

5.1.1 The geological substrate at the site consisted of sand across all monitored areas. This was noted between approximately 0.20-0.40m below ground level and in most areas was directly overlain by the sub-base and tarmac of the extant car park surface. A shallow remnant topsoil was noted above the geological horizon in the west of the site in TP7 and the area of mechanical ground reduction.

5.2 Deposit survival and existing impacts

5.2.1 The majority of the monitored areas appeared to have been affected by the construction of the late 20th century car park. With the exception of a shallow topsoil in the west of the site the sand geology was overlain but tarmac and crush, demonstrating truncation.

5.3 Consideration of research aims

5.3.1 Unfortunately, no archaeological evidence was gathered during the watching brief that could be used to address the research questions set out above.

5.4 Conclusions

5.4.1 It would appear that the construction of a car park at the site in the late 20th century involved significant truncation, removing any potential for the survival of archaeological remains, had they been present. A shallow topsoil was observed in the west of the site, but this appeared to be truncated and no archaeological features or deposits were sealed beneath it.

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HER Summary

HER enquiry no.						
Site code	BUC 17					
Project code	171025					
Planning reference	SE/17/02149/FUL					
Site address	Buckhurst 2 Car Park, Buckhurst Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 1LX					
District/Borough	Sevenoaks					
NGR (12 figures)	TQ 553289 154682					
Geology	Folkestone Formation Sandstone					
Fieldwork type	Eval	Excav	WB	HBR	Survey	Other
Date of fieldwork	16/01/2018-30/01/2018					
Sponsor/client	CgMs					
Project manager	Paul Mason					
Project supervisor	Ian Hogg, Chris Russel					
Period summary	Palaeolithic	Mesolithic	Neolithic	Bronze Age	Iron Age	
	Roman	Anglo-Saxon	Medieval	Post-Medieval	Other	
Project summary (100 word max)	An archaeological watching brief was conducted at Buckhurst 2 car park, Sevenoaks, Kent NGR TQ 553289 154682 , between the 16 th and the 30 th of January 2018. Seven exploratory pits and two areas of ground reduction were monitored. A shallow remnant topsoil was noted in the west of the site but it appears that much of it has been heavily truncated by the construction of the late 20 th					
Museum/Accession No.						

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-308997

Project details

Project name	Buckhurst 2 Car Park Sevenoaks
Short description of the project	Archaeology South-East (ASE), the contracting division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology (CAA), Institute of Archaeology, University College London (UCL) was commissioned by CgMs Consulting to undertake an archaeological watching brief at the site of Buckhurst 2 Car Park and Residential, Buckhurst Road, Sevenoaks, Kent during the construction of a new multi-storey car park and new residential dwellings. Sand geology was noted at between 0.20-0.40 below ground level overlain in most areas by construction layers for the modern car park. A remnant topsoil was noted in the west of the site but no archaeological features were seen to be sealed by this. No significant archaeological finds or features were observed during the watching brief.
Project dates	Start: 16-01-2018 End: 30-01-2018
Any associated project reference codes	BUC 17 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	171025 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	KENT SEVENOAKS SEVENOAKS Buckhurst 2 Car Park
Postcode	TN 13 1 LX
Study area	3 Hectares
Site coordinates	TQ 553289 154682 50.917163772421

0.210014775988 50 55 01 N 000 12 36 E Point

Project creators	
Name of Organisation	Archaeology South East
Project brief originator	CgMs Consulting
Project design originator	ASE
Project director/manager	Paul Mason
Project supervisor	Chris Russel
Type of sponsor/funding body	CgMs Consulting
Project archives	
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Physical Archive recipient	Local Museum
Digital Archive recipient	Local Museum
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography"
Paper Archive recipient	Local Museum
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Report"
Project bibliography	
1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	An Archaeological Watching Brief at Buckhurst 2 Car Park and Residential, Buckhurst Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 1LX
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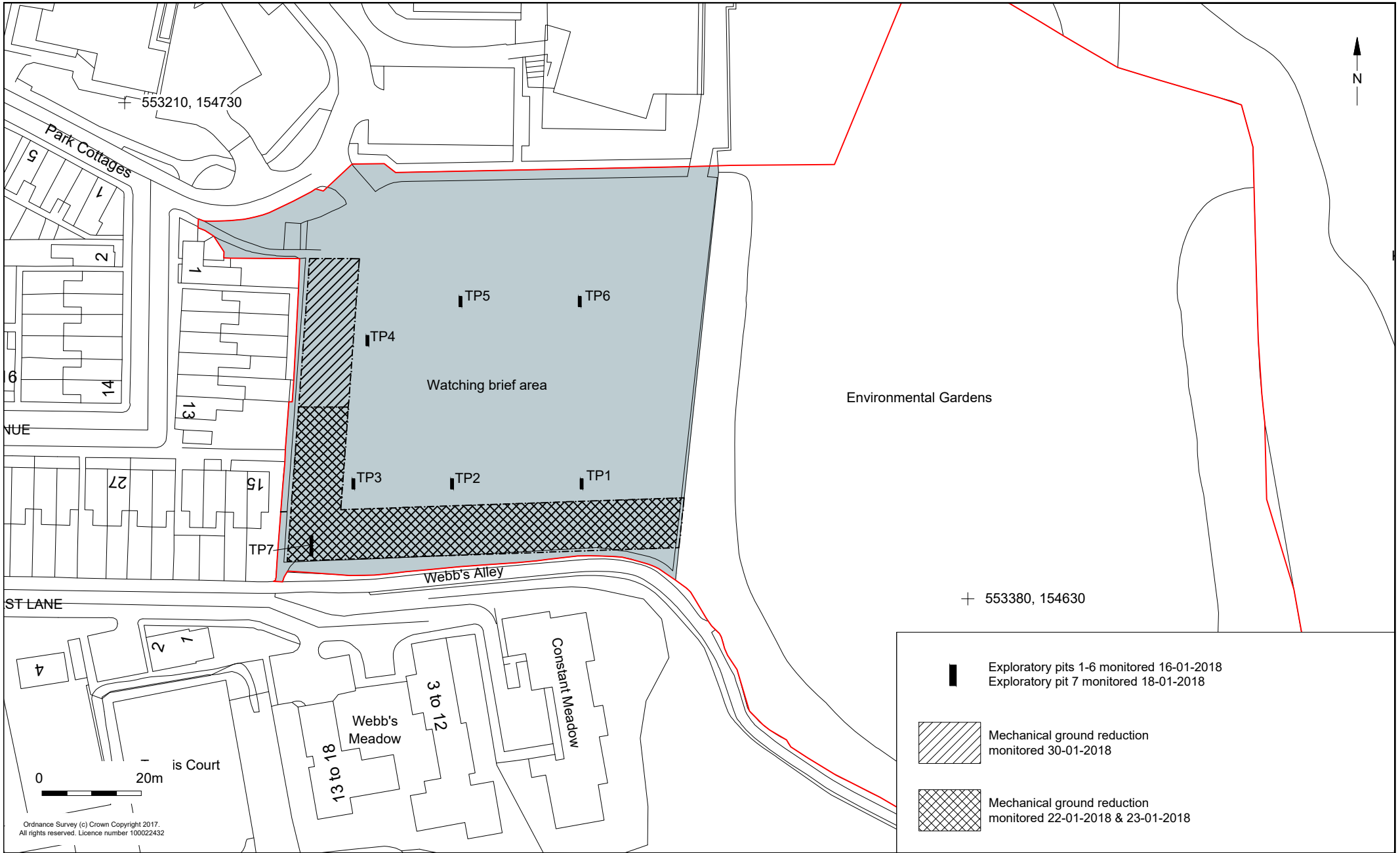
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© Archaeology South-East		Brockhurst Lane Car Park, Sevenoaks		Fig. 1
Project Ref: 171025	February 2018	Site location		
Report Ref: 2018049	Drawn by: JC			



© Archaeology South-East		Buckhurst Lane Car Park	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 171025	February 2018	Location of monitored areas	
Report Ref: 2018049	Drawn by: JC		



Exploratory pit 1



Exploratory pit 2



Exploratory pit 3



Exploratory pit 4



Exploratory pit 5



Exploratory pit 6



Exploratory pit 7



Mechanical ground reduction looking west



Mechanical ground reduction looking south west

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