

**Archaeological Watching Brief Report  
Excavation of a New Badger Sett  
A29 realignment works at Eastergate Lane  
Fontwell, West Sussex, PO20 3SJ**

**NGR: 494927 105900**

**ASE Project No: 200551  
Site Code: ARS18**

**ASE Report No: 2020222  
OASIS id: archaeol6-406468**

**By Naomi Humphreys and Teresa Vieira**

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|                                      |  |   |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|--|
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| <b>Reviewed and<br/>approved by:</b> | <b>Dan Swift</b>                               | <b>Project Manager</b>                              |  |
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**Abstract**

*This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out by West Sussex County Council (WSSCC) and Archaeology South-East (ASE) on Land to the south of Eastergate Lane, Fontwell, West Sussex from the 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> October 2020. The fieldwork was commissioned by WSSCC for the monitoring of the excavation of a new badger sett as part of the A29 realignment project.*

*The watching brief consisted of the monitoring of ground reduction which involved the removal of topsoil, subsoil and superficial geological deposits over a c.26m x 7m area. No archaeological finds or features were encountered during the watching brief.*

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site Background**

- 1.1.1 Archaeology South-East were contracted by West Sussex County Council (WSSCC) to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the excavations for the construction of a new badger sett as part of the A29 realignment scheme at Eastergate, West Sussex (centred on SU 94927 05900, Figure 1), hereafter referred to as 'the site'.
- 1.1.2 The watching brief comprised of the monitoring of ground reduction of an area measuring c. 26m x 7m and covering a total area of c.175m<sup>2</sup> (Figures 2-3).
- 1.1.3 WSSCC Archaeologist John Mills advised the WSSCC A29 Realignment Project Team and the work was undertaken with his approval and in line with the relevant ClfA (2014) and Sussex Archaeological Standards (2019).

### **1.2 Geology and Topography**

- 1.2.1 The site is situated on the relatively flat and low-lying topography of West Sussex Coastal Plain at around 15.4m AOD. The new badger sett was sited within a clearing of a wooded area.
- 1.2.2 According to the British Geological Survey 1:50 000 map of the area (BGS 2020), the underlying geology of the site comprises of superficial deposits of Head: gravel, sand, silt and clay. These overlie the bedrock geology of London Clay Formation - an Eocene deposit comprising stiff grey-blue to brown clay, sometimes with a little sand. Superficial head deposits of sandy-silt and clay were noted as present during the works.

### **1.3 Aims and Objectives**

- 1.3.1 The broad aims of the watching brief were to enable any archaeological deposits and features disturbed during the groundworks, to be adequately recorded, interpreted and reported on.

### **1.4 Scope of Report**

- 1.4.1 This report details the results of an archaeological watching brief comprising of the monitoring of ground reduction for the construction of a new badger sett. The work was monitored by John Mills, Archaeologist, WSSCC on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> of October and Teresa Vieira (ASE Archaeologist) on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> October.

## **2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The following background has been drawn from documentation deriving from project work in the vicinity of the site (ASE 2013, 2018a, 2018b).
- 2.2 Monitoring of SI works ahead of the proposed A29 realignment to the south and southeast of the site revealed a series of quaternary deposits, with the potential to contain palaeoenvironmental, paleoclimate and paleogeographic evidence (ASE 2018b).
- 2.3 Excavations at Nyton Road, some c.500m to the southwest of the site, revealed Early Neolithic activity in the form of pits with significant assemblages of finds, both pottery and lithic industry. Similarly dated evidence has been found at other sites in the area, for example a polished stone axe at Hales Barn Farm and flint tools and flint-working debris found near Nyton (Ramboll 2013).
- 2.3 Earlier Bronze Age activity at Nyton Road was limited to a single deposition of two Beaker vessels. Late Bronze Age – Early Iron Age activity was recorded on site in the form of field systems and a pit oven structure. The discovery of a Bronze Age urn is recorded on the HER within c.100m of the site on Eastergate Lane.
- 2.4 There are several Roman sites and findspots on the HER within the vicinity of the site, including cremation burials. The only Roman find at Nyton Road was a residual tile.
- 2.5 A number of ditches at Nyton Road corresponded with field boundaries depicted on the 1778-1783 Yeakell and Gardner map.
- 2.6 Early editions of OS mapping indicate that the site was occupied by agricultural fields in the later 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century and later became woodland.
- 2.7 A geophysical survey was carried out by Wessex Archaeology in July 2020 (WA 2020) along the proposed route of the A29 realignment. A number of anomalies were identified which were considered to be the result of probable underlying archaeological remains. A parallel alignment of linear anomalies which have been interpreted as a possible trackway potentially dating to the Romano-British period were noted c.360m to the southeast of the site. Further similar parallel anomalies were noted c.90m to the south-east of the site, however, they are considered less conclusive and have been less confidently interpreted as archaeological in origin.

### 3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Fieldwork Methodology

- 3.1.1 All archaeological fieldwork was carried out to accepted professional standards in line with ClfA guidelines (ClfA 2014a; ClfA 2014b; ClfA 2014c); West Sussex County Council's Recommended Standard Archaeological Conditions (WSSCC 2019).
- 3.1.2 Ground reduction was monitored by Teresa Vieira (ASE Archaeologist) on the 5<sup>th</sup> October 2020 where an initial small area of ground was broken towards the end of the day. Continued, more extensive ground reduction was monitored by John Mills (WSSCC Archaeologist) on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> October 2020. Teresa Vieira returned for the final day of groundworks on the 8<sup>th</sup> October 2020.
- 3.1.3 All ground reduction was undertaken using a 360 mechanical excavator fitted with a flat-bladed bucket. All deposits were removed under constant archaeological supervision. Any anomalies were investigated.
- 3.1.4 The location of the groundworks was surveyed by the on-site contractor (Jacksons) and the drawings were provided to ASE for the purpose of this report.

#### 3.2 The Site Archive

- 3.2.1 The site archive has been assembled in accordance with the guidelines set out in Historic England's Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (HE 2015) and in accordance with the guidelines published in Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-term Storage (UKIC 1990) and Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections (Museums and Galleries Commission 1994).
- 3.2.2 The archive is currently held at the Archaeology South-East offices in Portslade and will be offered to a suitable museum in due course. The contents of the archive are tabulated below (Table 1).

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| Context sheets       | 3 |
| Section sheets       | 0 |
| Plans sheets         | 0 |
| Colour photographs   | 0 |
| B&W photos           | 0 |
| Digital photos       |   |
| Context register     | 1 |
| Drawing register     | 0 |
| Watching brief forms | 3 |
| Trench Record forms  | 0 |

Table 1: Quantification of site paper archive

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

Table 2: Quantification of artefact and environmental samples

3.2.3 A county wide policy of selection and retention of archaeological finds is currently under review by the Sussex Archaeological Museum Group working party. Once the policy is agreed and in place, it will be implemented by Archaeology South East. The finds archive will be revised in accordance with this policy in the event that it is implemented before deposition of the archive occurs.



## 4.0 RESULTS

4.1.1 A simple stratigraphy of underlying head geology [001] overlain by subsoil [002] and topsoil [001] layers was noted as present during the monitoring of the ground reduction works.

4.1.2 No archaeological finds, deposits or features were identified.

4.1.3 A list of recorded contexts are tabulated below:

| <b>Context</b> | <b>Interpretation</b> | <b>Description</b>  | <b>Thickness</b> |
|----------------|-----------------------|---|------------------|
| 001            | Topsoil               | Mid-brown clayey silt   | 0.20 – 0.30m     |
| 002            | Subsoil               | Mid-orange brown silty clay   | 0.20 – 0.25m     |
| 003            | Natural Geology       | Mid-yellow brown sandy silt and clay, with frequent flints of small and medium size | 0.50m+           |

Table 3: List of recorded contexts

## **5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

### **5.1 Overview of stratigraphic sequence**

- 5.1.1 No archaeological features, deposits or finds were revealed during this watching brief.
- 5.1.2 The natural underlying superficial head geology of a mid-yellow-brown sandy silt and clay with flint gravels [003] was observed at a depth of c.14.70-15.00mAOD.
- 5.1.3 This natural geology was recorded beneath a c. 0.20-0.25m mid orange-brown silty-clay subsoil layer [002] and capped by a c. 0.20-0.30m layer of mid brown clayey-silt topsoil [001].

### **5.2 Discussion of archaeological remains by period**

- 5.2.1 No archaeological features, deposits or finds were revealed during this watching brief.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

- 5.4.1 No archaeological finds were identified, and no archaeological deposits or features were impacted during the watching brief. The monitoring works recorded a simple stratigraphy of topsoil and subsoil layers overlying superficial geology deposits.

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**HER Summary**

|                           |   |             |           |               |          |       |
|---------------------------|---|-------------|-----------|---------------|----------|-------|
| <b>Site code</b>          | ARS18   |             |           |               |          |       |
| <b>Project code</b>       | 200551  |             |           |               |          |       |
| <b>Site address</b>       | Land south of Eastergate Lane, Fontwell, West Sussex  |             |           |               |          |       |
| <b>District/Borough</b>   | Arun  |             |           |               |          |       |
| <b>NGR (12 figures)</b>   | 494927 105900   |             |           |               |          |       |
| <b>Geology</b>            | Superficial: Head deposits of gravels, sands and clay. Bedrock: London Clay Formation   |             |           |               |          |       |
| <b>Fieldwork type</b>     | Eval  | Excav       | <b>WB</b> | HBR           | Survey   | Other |
| <b>Date of fieldwork</b>  | 05.10.2020 - 08.10.2020   |             |           |               |          |       |
| <b>Sponsor/client</b>     | West Sussex County Council (WSSC)   |             |           |               |          |       |
| <b>Project manager</b>    | Jon Sygrave   |             |           |               |          |       |
| <b>Project supervisor</b> | John Mills/ (WSSC) and Teresa Vieira (ASE)  |             |           |               |          |       |
| <b>Period summary</b>     | Palaeolithic  | Mesolithic  | Neolithic | Bronze Age    | Iron Age |       |
|                           | Roman   | Anglo-Saxon | Medieval  | Post-Medieval | Other    |       |
| <b>Project summary</b>    | <p>An archaeological watching brief was conducted at land to the south of Eastergate Lane, Fontwell, West Sussex NGR 494927 105900 on the 31<sup>st</sup> May 2018. The watching brief was commissioned by West Sussex County Council (WSSC) for the monitoring of groundworks relating to the construction of a new badger sett.</p> <p>The watching brief consisted of the monitoring of the ground reduction of a c.26 x 7m area. No archaeological finds or features were identified.</p> |             |           |               |          |       |

**OASIS Form****OASIS ID: archaeol6-406468****Project details**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Project name                           | An Archaeological Watching Brief at the excavation of a new badger sett during the A29 realignment works at Eastergate L  |
| Short description of the project       | An archaeological watching brief was conducted at land to the south of Eastergate Lane, Fontwell, West Sussex NGR 494927 105900 on the 31st May 2018. The watching brief was commissioned by West Sussex County Council (WSSCC) for the monitoring of groundworks relating to the construction of a new badger sett. The watching brief consisted of the monitoring of the ground reduction of a c.26 x 7m area. No archaeological finds or features were identified. |
| Project dates                          | Start: 05-10-2020 End: 08-10-2020   |
| Previous/future work                   | Not known / Not known   |
| Any associated project reference codes | ARS18 - Sitecode  |
| Type of project                        | Field evaluation  |
| Current Land use                       | Woodland 2 - Deciduous introduced   |
| Monument type                          | NONE None   |
| Significant Finds                      | NONE None   |
| Methods & techniques                   | "Visual Inspection"   |
| Development type                       | Badger Sett Construction  |
| Prompt                                 | Planning condition  |
| Position in the planning process       | Not known / Not recorded  |

**Project location**

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Country           | England  |
| Site location     | WEST SUSSEX ARUN WALBERTON Land South of Eastergate Lane                       |
| Postcode          | PO20 3SJ   |
| Study area        | 175 Square metres  |
| Site coordinates  | SU 94927 05900 50.844263541373 -0.651531658088 50 50 39 N<br>000 39 05 W Point |
| Height OD / Depth | Min: 14.7m Max: 15m  |

**Project creators**

|                      |                        |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| Name of Organisation | Archaeology South East |
|----------------------|------------------------|

|                              |                            |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Project brief originator     | WSCC                       |
| Project design originator    | West Sussex County Council |
| Project director/manager     | Jon Sygrave                |
| Project supervisor           | Teresa Vieira              |
| Type of sponsor/funding body | council                    |

**Project archives**

|                          |                 |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Physical Archive Exists? | No              |
| Digital Archive Exists?  | No              |
| Paper Archive recipient  | tbc             |
| Paper Archive ID         | ARS18           |
| Paper Media available    | "Context sheet" |

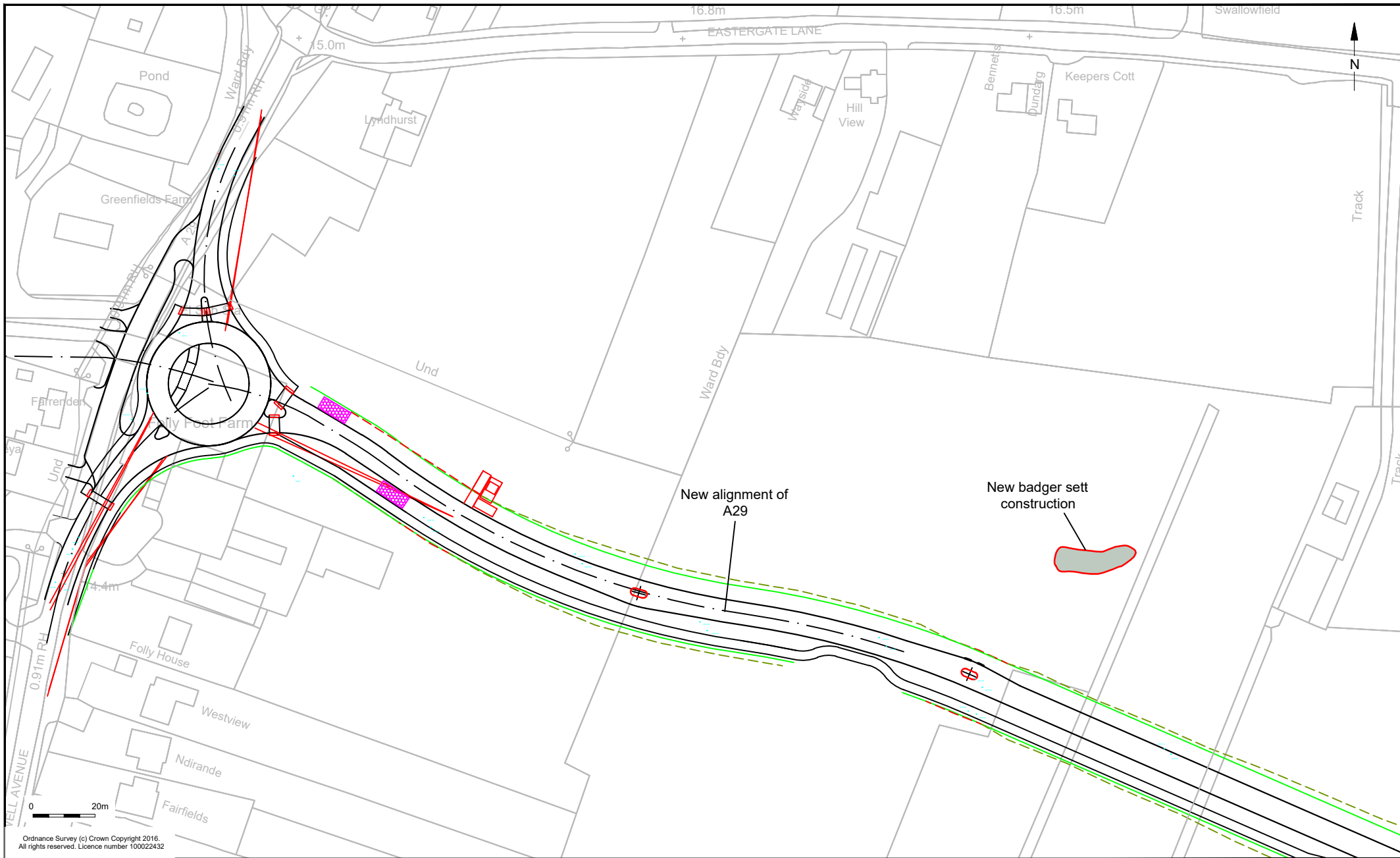
**Project bibliography 1**

|                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Publication type              | Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)  |
| Title                         | An Archaeological Watching Brief at the excavation of a new badger sett during the A29 realignment works at Eastergate Lane, Fontwell, West Sussex |
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| Other bibliographic details   | ASE Report Number 2020222  |
| Date                          | 2020   |
| Issuer or publisher           | ASE  |
| Place of issue or publication | Portslade  |

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| Entered on | 21 October 2020                         |



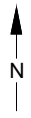
|                          |              |  |  |        |
|--------------------------|--------------|--|--|--------|
| © Archaeology South-East |              | A29 Realignment Scheme: Watching Brief of New Badger Sett Construction |  | Fig. 1 |
| Project Ref: 200551      | October 2020 | Site location  |  |        |
| Report Ref: 2020222      | Drawn by: NH |  |  |        |



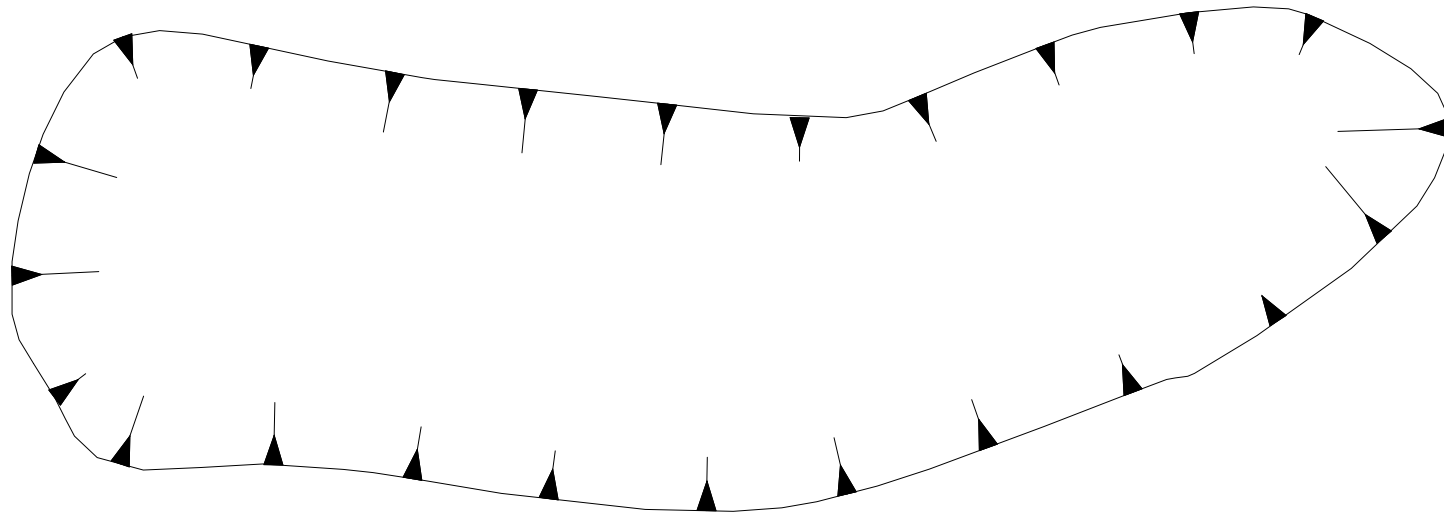
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|                                 |              |  |        |
|---------------------------------|--------------|--|--------|
| © <b>Archaeology South-East</b> |              | A29 Realignment Scheme: Watching Brief of New Badger Sett Construction | Fig. 2 |
| Project Ref: 200551             | October 2020 | Plan showing location of monitored area                                |        |
| Report Ref: 2020222             | Drawn by: NH |  |        |





+ 494920, 105910



+ 494930, 105895

0 2m



Ground reduction of badger sett, looking west



Ground reduction of badger sett, looking west

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Project Ref: 200551

October 2020

Report Ref: 2020222

Drawn by: NH

A29 Realignment Scheme: Watching Brief of New Badger Sett Construction

Plan and photographs of the new badger sett following excavation

Fig. 3

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