

**An Archaeological Watching Brief at the Southern Water  
Sewage Treatment Works,  
Sweechbridge Road, (near Herne Bay), Kent**

**NGR 620910 167418**

**Project No. 3144  
Site Code: SWE 07**

**ASE Report No. 2008039  
OASIS id: archaeol6-41080**

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**Abstract**

*An archaeological watching brief was carried out at the Southern Water Sewage Treatment Works, Sweechbridge Road, near Herne Bay, Kent (NGR 620910 167418) on behalf of 4Delivery Ltd and their client, Southern Water. The site lies near to known Roman and Neolithic sites along May Street to the south and west. The groundworks for a new access road were monitored for the presence of any archaeological features or artefacts. No archaeological such remains were identified.*

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site Background**

1.1.1 An archaeological watching brief was carried out at the Southern Water Sewage Treatment Works, Sweechbridge Road, near Herne Bay, Kent (NGR 620910 167418) on behalf of 4Delivery Ltd and their client, Southern Water. This watching brief required the monitoring of groundworks associated with the updating of the Sewage Treatment Works.

### **1.2 Geology and Topography**

1.2.1 The site is located on the east side of Sweechbridge Road and between the railway line and Thanet Way, South of Hillborough. The underlying geology at the site according to the British Geological Survey is London Clay, with a capping of Head brickearth in the south (Sheet 273).

### **1.3 Planning Background**

1.3.1 4Delivery Ltd adhere to a code of Best Practice whereby the potential impact of their activities on archaeological remains is considered and mitigation strategies implicated. In line with this, and as part of Southern Water's normal consultation process, advice was sought from the Heritage Conservation Group at Kent County Council (HCG KCC). Given the nature of the groundworks involved and the proximity to known archaeological sites, the Heritage Conservation Group recommended that an archaeological watching brief would be the appropriate mitigation response (in the first instance). If significant remains were encountered, then further measures may have become necessary.

1.3.2 It was anticipated that the following groundworks would require archaeological monitoring:

- Excavations for a new Pumping Station
- Excavations for new services
- Excavations for a new roadway

### **1.4 Aims and Objectives**

1.4.1 The objectives of the archaeological watching brief, as outlined in the Specification, (KCC 2007), were to contribute to knowledge of the Herne Bay area through the recording of any archaeological remains exposed as a result of the excavations in connection with the groundworks.

### **1.5 Scope of Report**

1.5.1 The current report represents the findings of the watching brief undertaken on 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> October 2007 by Paul Riccoboni (Senior Archaeologist).

## 2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Saxon finds have been recorded at Hillborough and medieval and prehistoric remains are known south of the dual carriageway. A Southern Water pipeline excavated nearby found Roman and Neolithic sites alongside May Street to the immediate south and west (Richard Cross pers comm.). The most significant remains in the vicinity are probably those found at Highstead Farm, to the south (No.2 on Fig. 1). Here, archaeological evaluation has revealed evidence of occupation from the Late Bronze Age through to the Roman periods.
- 2.2 Below is a summarised, tabulated list of the HER records within a 500m radius of the site.

No. on Fig.1	HER No.	NGR	Description
1	TR26NW27-MKE6509	TR 2120 6806	Find spot: Saxon pot sherds from Hillborough Churchyard
2	TR26NW81 – MKE85869	TR 210 668	Highstead Farm: Five phase of Archaeological evaluation revealed medieval pits, LBA-EIA pits, a Romano-British settlement and late IA / early RB ditches and an undated enclosure.
3	TR26NW89	TR 2132 6682	Crop Marks: right angled feature
4	TR 26 NW 90 – MKE16139	TR 2111 6665	Monument: parallel linear features and a sub circular feature.
5	MKE23867	TQ 210 6798	Forge House: Post medieval listed building
6	MKE23913	TQ 2113 6723	Hawthorn Cottages: Listed building
7	MKE25051	TQ 210 6798	Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin
8	MKE25334	TQ 2105 6798	St Mary's Cottage: Listed building

Table 1: HER records within a 500m radius of the site

### **3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY**

- 3.1 Due to an oversight, Archaeology South-East were not informed of the groundworks associated with the new pumping station. This aspects of the redevelopment, were not, therefore, subject to archaeological monitoring. The access road groundworks and excavation of a sewer heading took place with an archaeologist in attendance.
- 3.2 The excavation in advance of the new access road was completed with a 360° tracked excavator fitted with a 1.8m wide ditching bucket. This excavation was taken down to the depth of the formation level for the new road. This involved a ground reduction of c. 300mm from the existing ground level. The removed spoil was scanned for the presence of artefacts.
- 3.3 All encountered archaeological deposits, features and finds were recorded according to accepted professional standards, using context record sheets based upon the Central Excavation Unit recording system as modified for use by Archaeology South-East.
- 3.4 A full photographic record of the work was kept and will form part of the site archive. The archive (including the finds) is presently held at the Archaeology South-East office in Portslade and will be offered to a suitable local museum in due course.

Number of Contexts	2
No. of files/paper record	1
Plan and sections sheets	0
Bulk Samples	0
Photographs	Digital
Bulk finds	0
Registered finds	0
Environmental flots/residue	0

Table 2: Quantification of site archive

## 4. RESULTS

### 4.1 Roadway Excavation

The following contexts were recorded during the monitoring of the road excavation:

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Depth	Height m.AOD
100	Deposit	Topsoil	20m as exposed	3m as exposed	0.10m	26.70m
101	Deposit	Made ground	20m as exposed	3m as exposed	0.20m(min)	26.50m

Table 3: List of recorded contexts in the sewer heading

The road excavation was c. 20m in length and 3m in width. It reached a maximum depth of c. 300mm beneath the present ground surface. The excavations were entirely within either topsoil [100] or made ground [101]. The topsoil was c. 100mm thick and was a mid-dark greyish brown silty clay of a friable consistency. Directly beneath the topsoil was context [101], a mixed deposit of clays, tarmac chippings, crushed building materials, rounded stones. The underlying natural substrate was not exposed during any of the groundworks.

No archaeological features or finds were encountered.

### 4.2 Sewer Heading

The following contexts were recorded during the monitoring of the sewer heading:

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Depth	Height m.AOD
102	Deposit	Made ground	-	-	<2.00m	26.52m
103	Deposit	Natural clay	-	-	-	c.24.52m

The sewer head excavation measured 2.5m x 1.8m and reached a maximum depth of 2.00m beneath the present ground surface. This excavation exposed 2.00m of mixed made ground (including modern concrete and brick and a railway sleeper), [102], overlying the natural orange clay.

No archaeological features or finds were identified.

**5.0 THE FINDS**

5.1 No artefacts were recovered during the works.



## **6. DISCUSSION**

- 6.1 The archaeological watching brief suggests that modern made ground deposits exist across much of the development site. In all probability this made ground occurred during the initial construction of the existing tanks, pumping stations and roads.
- 6.2 The depth of the ground reduction was not sufficient to reach the undisturbed natural geology in the road excavation. The natural brickearth was reached in the sewer head excavation where it was directly overlain by made ground with no surviving subsoils / topsoils present. This may suggest that these layers were removed during the initial construction of the Waste Water Treatment Works, potentially along with any archaeological remains which may have been present.
- 6.3 The natural substrate was only exposed in one location. This sequence exposed in the sewer heading may not be representative of the entire site. It is possible, therefore, that the archaeological horizon may survive in undisturbed areas beneath the made ground deposits.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

HCC KCC 2007 Specification for an archaeological watching brief at Sweechbridge Rd, Near Herne Bay, Kent. Unpub. KCC doc.

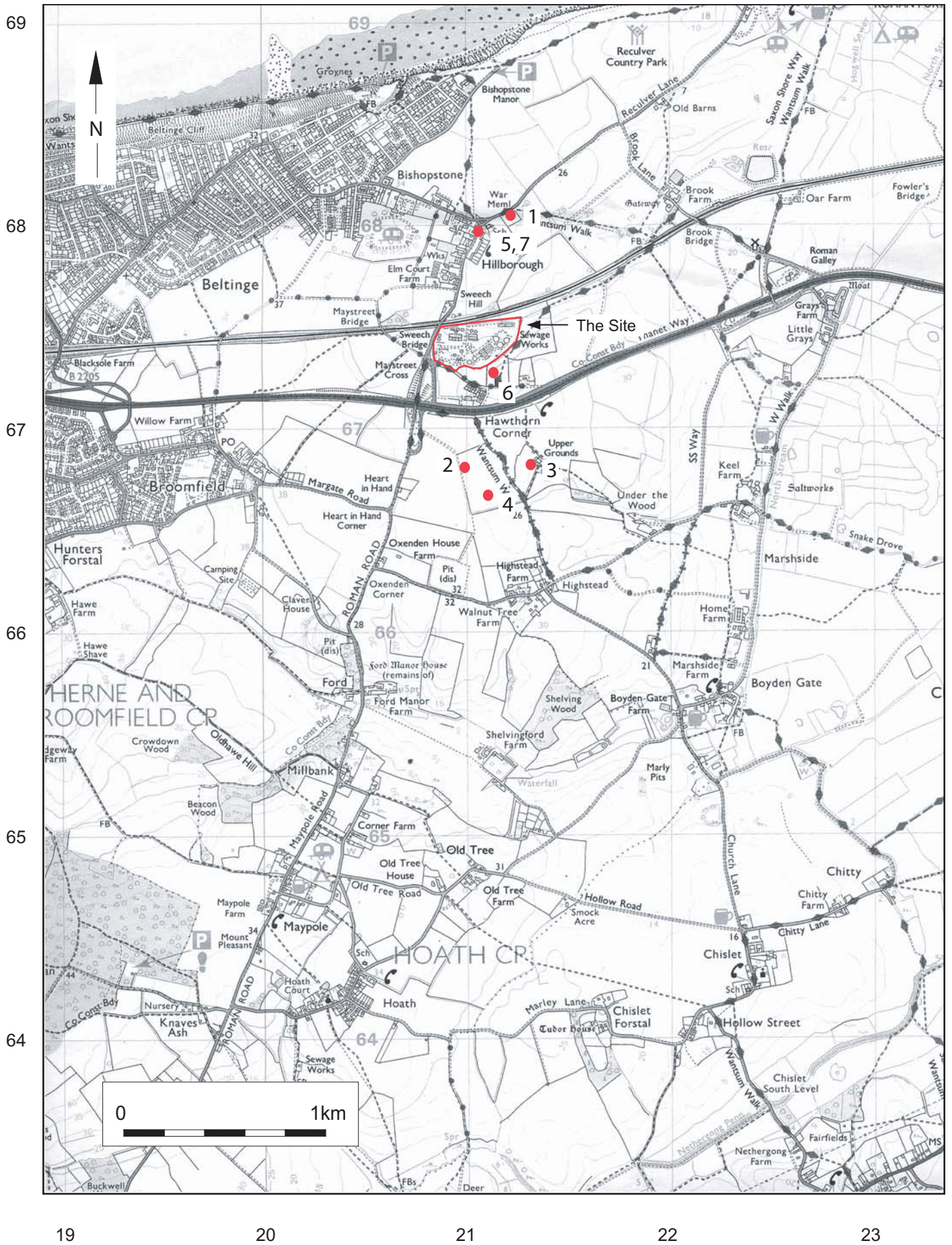
**SMR Summary Form**

Site Code	SWE 07					
Identification Name and Address	Southern Water Sewage Treatment Works, Sweechbridge Road, Near Herne Bay, Kent					
County, District &/or Borough	Kent					
OS Grid Refs.	620910 167418					
Geology	London Clay					
Arch. South-East Project Number	3144					
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. 29 <sup>th</sup> -30 <sup>th</sup> Oct 07	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Southern Water					
Project Manager	Neil Griffin					
Project Supervisor	Paul Riccoboni					
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 carried out at the Southern Water Sewage Treatment Works, Sweechbridge Road, near Herne Bay, Kent (NGR 621444 167418) on behalf of 4Delivery Ltd and their client, Southern Water. The site lies near to known Roman and Neolithic sites along May Street to the south and west. The groundworks for a new access road were monitored for the presence of any archaeological features or artefacts. No archaeological such remains were identified.</i></p>						

OASIS Form

<b>OASIS ID: archaeol6-41080</b>	
<b>Project details</b>	
Project name	An archaeological watching brief at the Southern Water Treatment Works Sweechbridge Road, Near Herne Bay, Kent
Short description of the project	An archaeological watching brief was carried out at the Southern Water Sewage Treatment Works, Sweechbridge Road, near Herne Bay, Kent (NGR 620910 167418) on behalf of 4Delivery Ltd and their client, Southern Water. The site lies near to known Roman and Neolithic sites along May Street to the south and west. The groundworks for a new access road were monitored for the presence of any archaeological features or artefacts. No archaeological such remains were identified.
Project dates	Start: 29-10-2007 End: 30-10-2007
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	SWE07 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Transport and Utilities 3 - Utilities
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Planning condition
<b>Project location</b>	
Country	England
Site location	KENT CANTERBURY HERNE BAY Sweechbridge Road, Near Herne Bay
Postcode	CT6 6TD
Study area	100.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 20910 67418 51.3923949338 -0.261963646384 51 23 32 N 000 15 43 W Point
Height OD	Min: 26.50m Max: 26.70m
<b>Project creators</b>	
Name of Organisation	Archaeology South East

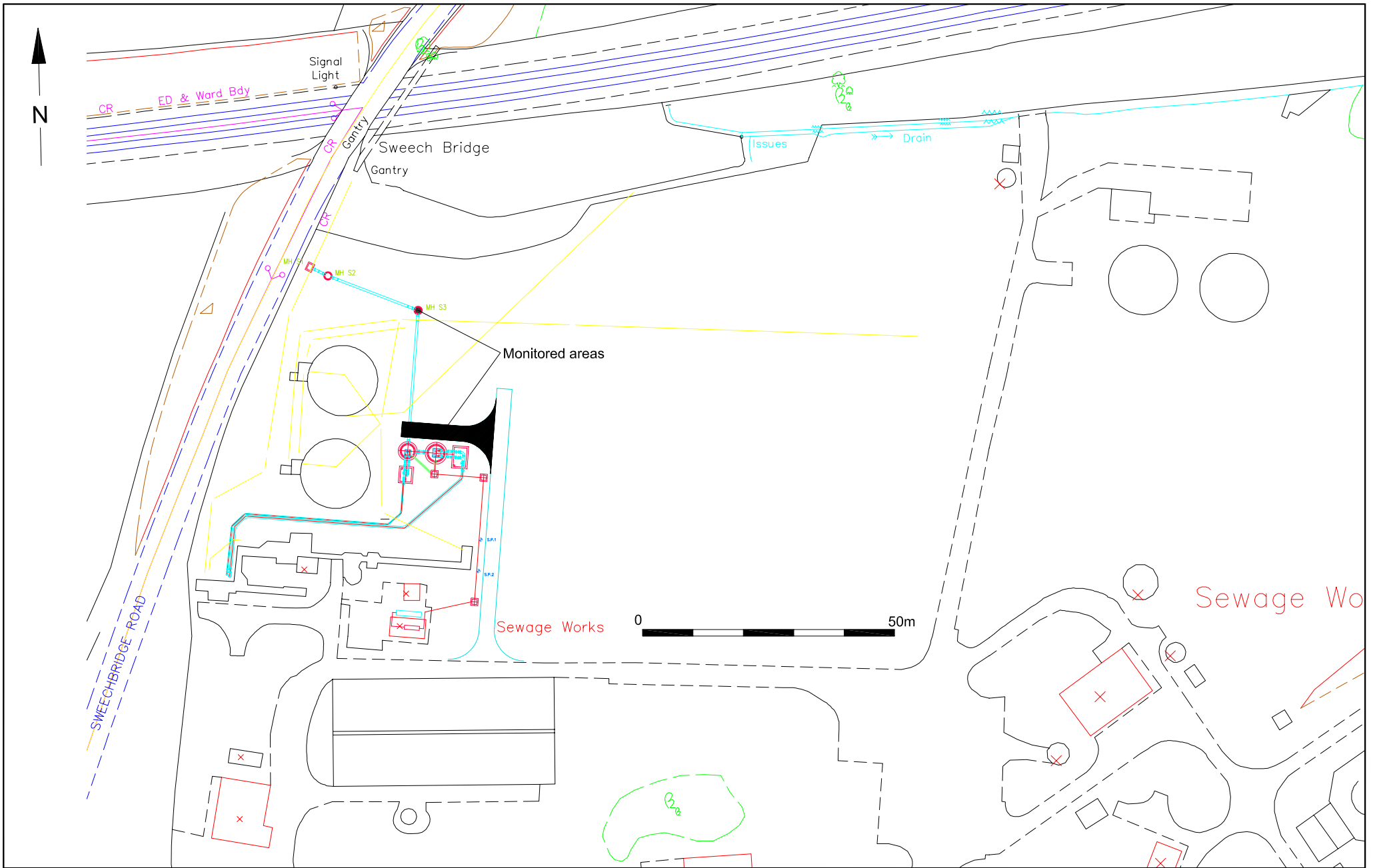
Project brief originator	Heritage Conservation Kent County Council
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East
Project director/manager	Neil Griffin
Project supervisor	Paul Riccoboni
Type of sponsor/funding body	Southern Water
Name of sponsor/funding body	Southern Water
<b>Project bibliography 1</b>	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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Entered on	22 April 2008



© Archaeology South-East		Sweechbridge Road, Near Herne Bay, Kent	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 3144	April 2008	Site Location Plan also showing HER data	
Report Ref: 2008039	Drawn by: HLF		

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Project Ref: 3144	May 2008	Site Location showing monitored areas	
Report Ref: -	Drawn by: SM		