

**An Archaeological Evaluation and Watching Brief at
Ditton's Road, Polegate, East Sussex**

**NGR 560050 104720 to 560290 104779
(TQ 60050 04720 to TQ 60290 04779)**

Site Code: DRP08

**Project No. 3329
ASE Report No. 2009012**

OASIS id: archaeol6-54652

Prepared by Dylan Hopkinson

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Abstract

Archaeology South East (ASE), a division of the University College London Centre for Applied Archaeology (UCLCAA) were commissioned by 4Delivery Ltd on behalf of Southern Water Ltd to undertake an archaeological evaluation and subsequent watching brief at Ditton's Road, Polegate, East Sussex (NGR TQ 60050 04720 to TQ 60290 04779) during the improvement and upgrading of existing sewers and pumping works. A total of 26 site visits were made intermittently between July and December 2008.

A total of c.6 metres of trench c.1.60m wide were dug during the evaluation phase, and subsequently a series of different groundworks were monitored for archaeological remains. No archaeological finds or features were discovered. Any archaeological remains that may have formerly existed had probably been destroyed by modern service trenches and landscaping during the construction of the A22/A27 Polegate Bypass road.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London, was commissioned by 4Delivery Ltd. on behalf of Southern Water Ltd. to undertake an archaeological evaluation and subsequent watching brief of engineering works on land on Ditton's Road, Polegate hitherto referred to as 'the site' (NGR TQ 60050 04720 to TQ 60290 04779; Fig.1).

1.1.2 The proposed development involved the construction of 400m of new sewer within the existing carriageway of Ditton's Road, the B2247 and the construction of two small pumping stations an emergency outfall and a new rising main.

1.2 Geology and Topography

1.2.1 The site is situated on the eastern limit of the town of Polegate close to the junction of the A27 Polegate Bypass and A22 Golden Jubilee Way. The surrounding landscape is gently undulating within a mixed residential and industrial development (Fig 1), at heights of between 9.00m and 11.00m AOD.

1.2.2 According to the British Geological Survey (Sheet 319, Solid and Drift Edition, 1:50,000 scale) the site lies on an area of higher ground of Weald Clay Deposits which forms a ridge between the Willingdon and Glynleigh Levels. The ridge connects the Pevensey peninsular with the Downs and Low Weald hinterland. Ditton's Road runs along the top of this ridge, with lower ground directly to the south.

1.2.3 The site lies on the northern side of Ditton's Road where there are existing water utilities and sewer system and is known to have been disturbed by these utility trenches.

1.3 Planning Background

1.3.1 Planning permission was not required, but as part of 4 Delivery's commitment to the local heritage and environment, Greg Chuter, East Sussex County Council Archaeologist was consulted. It was suggested due to the proximity of the site to an area of archaeological sensitivity relating to a prehistoric trackway and occupation platform, that an archaeological watching brief be undertaken.

1.3.2 The work was carried out in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979; Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning (PPG 16); Regional planning guidance – The South East Plan and East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Structure Plan 1991 – 2011, Wealden District Council Plan.

1.4 Aims and Objectives

- 1.4.1 The general aim of the archaeological work was to ensure that any features, artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest exposed and affected by the excavations were recorded and interpreted to appropriate standards.
- 1.4.2 A research agenda for this development and any subsequent works in the area should address the extent to which the Weald Clay ridge has been used since prehistoric times, and seek to find evidence that may shed new light on our understanding of the routes of the Roman road network in the area. The presence or absence of evidence for activity since the medieval period should also be addressed including attempting to understand the route of the coach road at this point which may have followed the Romano-British road alignment.

1.5 Scope of Report

- 1.5.1 This report details the results of the archaeological evaluation phase of work which took place on 3rd July 2008 and the subsequent archaeological watching brief which took place intermittently between 14th June and 2nd December 2008. In total 26 site visits were made by Teresa Hawtin (Archaeologist), Dylan Hopkinson, Liane Peyre, Paul Riccoboni, and Simon Stevens (ASE).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1** A comprehensive Archaeological Desk Based Assessment for the site was produced by Wessex Archaeology (Wessex Archaeology 2008a). This considered the archaeological potential of the area within a 1km diameter of the site, the results of which are summarised below.
- 2.2** No sites of designated importance were found within the 1km study area. This includes Scheduled Monuments, Registered Historic Gardens, Registered Battlefields or listed buildings. Much of the southern half of the study area lies within an Archaeologically Sensitive Area; however the actual development boundaries lie outside this area of sensitivity. The archaeologically sensitive area is due to the presence of nationally important remains at Shinewater Park (approximately 700m to the south of the study area) where Late Bronze Age remains were discovered; and reflects the possibility that further remains may be preserved in the marsh and peat deposits surviving directly to the south of the Weald Clay Ridge on which Ditton's Road is situated.
- 2.3** The Weald Clay Ridge itself was also likely to have been an important route way since prehistoric times, and it is possible that evidence may survive. The assessment found that there was moderate potential for the survival of evidence of prehistoric occupation on the ridge itself
- 2.4** The course of two Roman roads lie very close to the development and moderate potential was identified for the survival of evidence of Romano-British roadside settlement remains. No actual remains of the roads were observed during the construction of the A22/A27 Polegate Bypass, and their perceived alignments are based on hedgerows, pathways and significant sections of roads, metalled surfaces and roadside settlements known in the wider environs.
- 2.5** There is a possibility that these Roman roads continued in use into the Saxon and medieval periods, however it was considered unlikely that the roads would have been well maintained. The assessment therefore concluded that there was a low to moderate potential for finding archaeological remains below the present road and pavement surfaces.
- 2.6** A low to moderate potential was also identified for encountering post-medieval finds relating to the maintenance of the road for coaches.
- 2.7** Previous archaeological studies in the study area were limited to a single watching brief for an extension to a house on Ditton's Road, and a programme of rescue excavations during the construction of the A22/A27 Polegate Bypass during the 1990's. The investigations of the road construction also incorporated a metal detector survey and an archaeological watching brief that was conducted on all groundworks. Neither the watching brief on the extension to the house or the programme of works associated with the road construction revealed any features or artefacts of an archaeological nature.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 3.1** Following the production of the Desk Based Assessment, Wessex Archaeology was commissioned to produce a Written Scheme of Investigation (Wessex Archaeology 2008b). This set out a strategy of excavating a single five metre long evaluation trench across the footprint of the easternmost pumping station, and an intensive archaeological watching brief to be undertaken during the rest of the groundworks associated with the development.
- 3.2** All excavation work was carried out in line with best practice and follows the standards and guidance given in the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (1994, revised 2001) and *Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (1994, revised 2001).
- 3.3** Where machine excavation was required in the evaluation trench a toothless ditching bucket was used to remove all modern overburden under constant archaeological supervision down to the archaeological horizon or the natural geology, while paying attention to health and safety requirements. All the overburden removed was scanned visually for any archaeological artefacts, and the trench sections were cleaned as far as possible commensurate with Health & Safety requirements.
- 3.4** All hand excavation during the evaluation and watching brief was undertaken using shovels, picks and trowel. The locations of the excavations were plotted using the supplied site drawing and off-setting from known points using tapes to correlate with Ordnance Survey cartography. All levels were reduced in relation to the Ordnance Datum.
- 3.5** A palaeoenvironmental sampling strategy was set out in the specification brief prepared by Wessex Archaeology but no deposits suitable for palaeoenvironmental sampling were encountered.
- 3.6** All features were photographed in monochrome, colour transparency and digital format. Features were also recorded using pro forma recording sheets.
- 3.7** The excavation of the evaluation trench was modified to avoid utility services and the initial five metre trench was split in two.

Number of Contexts	24
No. of files/paper record	1
Plan and sections sheets	0
Bulk Samples	0
Photographs	45 Digital / 9 Black and White
Bulk finds	0
Registered finds	0
Environmental flots/residue	0

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

4.0 RESULTS

Evaluation

4.1 Evaluation Trench 1

4.1.1 The evaluation trench was laid out using measurements from an accurate scale plan provided by the developer. Excavation of the five metre trench proceeded with a 1.60m wide toothless bucket. At a depth of c.0.60m beneath the modern made ground, two electrical cables were encountered running along the southern edge of the excavation. As a result the trench was moved. No archaeological material was encountered in this trench. The relocated trench could not be excavated to the required length of five metres due to the constriction of further utilities and service hatches, and was therefore split into two (Trench 2 and Trench 3).

4.2 Evaluation Trench 2

4.2.1 Trench 2 which lay slightly northwest of the original trench was 3.20m long by 1.60m wide (Fig 2).

4.2.2 The earliest deposit encountered was a firm orangey brown clay layer (007) which was observed at an elevation of c.8.00mAOD. The top 100mm of this clay layer was heavily stained black by the overlying deposits.

4.2.3 Sealing this clay was a layer of blackish brown stained sub-rounded gravels less than 10mm in diameter (006) which formed a dump of material 0.40m thick.

4.2.4 Overlying these stained gravels was a 0.30m thick layer of heterogeneous orangey brown clay mixed with brick rubble and lumps of concrete (005). The deposit appeared to consist of excavated natural clays mixed with construction debris and redeposit as a dump or levelling event.

4.2.5 Into the top of this layer a substantial linear cut roughly aligned east to west along the trench (004). This cut which was not fully excavated was 1.00m wide at the top and 0.55m wide at the horizontal limit of excavation, however, it continued north into the trench section beyond the limit of excavation. The cut which had flat steeply inclined sides was investigated to a depth of 0.70m from the top of the cut but was conclusively modern in origin and it was not thought necessary to expose the bottom.

4.2.6 Although the absolute base of cut 004 was not observed it was possible to locate a ceramic pipe within the cut which was surrounded by a grey brown deposit of small clean pebbles or shingles (003). This deposit was 0.55m thick and continued a little way beyond the bottom of the trench extent; it was interpreted as the primary fill of a drainage pipe. A final fill 0.20m in depth sealed the gravels within cut 004, this was a firm deposit of orangey brown clay with frequent brick rubble and broken up tarmac inclusions (002).

- 4.2.7** Overlying this secondary fill and sealing the service pipe cut was a final deposit across the whole trench (001). This was a homogenous layer of pinky brown angular gravels.
- 4.2.8** No ceramic material was recovered from this trench as everything observed was modern.

4.3 Evaluation Trench 3

- 4.3.1** Trench 3 was located slightly to the north-east of the original evaluation trench 1 and was c.2.50 metres long and 1.60m wide (Fig 2). This trench was excavated by machine through a sequence of modern deposition to a depth of c.1.20m. At this level firm orangey brown clay was observed (015) and interpreted as the natural Weald Clay of the ridge at a level of 8.06mAOD.
- 4.3.2** Overlying the natural clay was a c.0.22m thick layer of firm orangey brown clay lumps with frequent inclusions of sub angular brick fragments between c.0.10m and c.0.20m in size (014), which was interpreted as modern dumping.
- 4.3.3** A second very similar layer overlay layer 014, this was a 0.22m thick deposit of firm orangey brown clay lumps with a large amount of rubble mixed through it (013). The rubble was composed of brick and concrete, and the layer was interpreted as modern dumping.
- 4.3.4** Both layers (014 and 013) had been truncated by a large linear cut which extended obliquely across the trench. The cut (012) had a maximum observed width of 0.94m and continued beyond the trench extents to the south. It had flat almost vertical sides; however its full extent was not investigated further as the feature had a similar alignment, dimensions and character to the modern drainage cut containing a ceramic pipe (004) observed in trench 2.
- 4.3.5** The primary fill of this cut was 0.50m thick and consisted of a clean deposit of small grey brown pebbles or shingles (011). Overlying this was a second fill of orangey brown clay with frequent rubble and brick inclusions (010) and was 0.20m thick.
- 4.3.6** Sealing the drainage cut was a 0.30m thick deposit of orangey brown clay mixed with building rubble and refuse (009) which was interpreted as made ground.
- 4.3.7** Overlying this was a further layer 0.30m thick which consisted of orangey brown clay mixed with a large amount of pinky brown angular gravels (008).

Watching Brief

4.4 Drockmill Hill Gut

4.4.1 A pipe trench was laid along the eastern side of the open land drain known as Drockmill Hill Gut. This involved the stripping of topsoil down to a depth of c.0.30m before excavating a trench 0.70m wide trench to a depth of c.1.60m between Manhole 12 and Manhole 13 (Fig 2). The continuation of this trench between Manhole 11 and Manhole 12, where the land drain turns a corner to the west, was 3.00m deep and had to be stepped making the top section c.1m wide stepping to 0.70m at the base. The natural stratigraphy was a mid brown to orange firm clay (022) observed at a depth of c.1.50m below the existing ground level. Overlying the clay was a mid to dark orangey brown silty clay (021) containing occasional stones and pockets of shingle. This layer was between 0.3m and 1.3m thick and was interpreted as subsoil or made ground.

4.4.2 The sequence was sealed by a layer of dark orangey brown clayey silt containing occasional stones (020). This was interpreted as the topsoil layer and measured between 0.1m and 0.3m thick.

4.4.3 During the excavation of the trench between Manhole 11 and Manhole 12 an electric cable was observed and so an exploratory test pit was excavated across the route of the pipe to a depth of 2.00m (Fig 2). The same stratigraphic sequence was observed with the natural clay encountered at c.1.50m below the working ground level.

4.4.4 The excavation of Manhole 11 measured c.2.00m by c.2.00m and was c.2.5m deep. No differentiation in the stratigraphy was observed from that already recorded. A c.2.5m by c.2.5m wide trench was also opened for the construction of Manhole 12. Excavation was stopped at a depth of c.3m, again there was no change in observed stratigraphy and no archaeological contexts were recorded.

4.5 Pumping Station

4.5.1 An area directly west of the proposed pumping station was excavated through made ground to a depth of c.0.70m where an earlier road surface and curb alignment was encountered (Area A; Fig 2). This was thought to be the former road surface of Ditton's Road prior to the construction of the Polegate Bypass. The area excavated was c.8.00m east to west by c.9.00m north to south.

4.6 Pipeline

4.6.1 A further trench was excavated for a pipeline that extended from behind the proposed control kiosk through a break in the hedge line and towards the rear of the property known as 'Wyvern' on Ditton's Road. Work began with the excavation of a pit for a manhole which measured c.2.5m by c.2.5m and reached a depth of c.3.5m (Manhole Pit A, Fig 2). The natural clay

stratigraphy (024) was observed at a depth of between c.0.10m to c.0.35m from the working ground surface and was directly overlain by a single layer of mid orangey brown, silty clay loam topsoil.

4.6.2 The excavation of the pipeline then proceeded by excavating a trench c.1.00m wide and c.2.00m deep (Pipeline A; Fig 2). The same stratigraphy was observed as during the excavation of the manhole (see 4.6.1), with between c.0.10 to c.0.35m of topsoil directly overlying the Weald Clay. No archaeology was observed along the whole length of the trench. Excavation of the trench stopped c.10 metres from the property boundary for 'Wyvern' because the ground was disturbed by a conversion of several earlier modern service trenches. A further service trench was also observed midway along the trench where a concrete pipe crossed in a north-south alignment directly to the east of the hedge line.

4.7 Test pits

4.7.1 A series of five small test pits were observed after excavation along the southern side of Ditton's Road. These were located opposite the proposed new pumping station, outside 'Ditton's Cottages' and 'Kom Binne' and by the entrance of 'Chaucer Industrial Estate' (Fig 3). The test pits ranged from c.0.70m to c.1.00m square and reached a maximum depth of c.1.00m. In all five cases the test pits did not extend beyond the modern made ground horizon and were heavily disturbed by service pipes for electricity and telecommunications. No archaeological evidence was observed.

Trench	Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit thickness	Height m.AOD
Eval. Trench 2	001	Deposit	Gravel dump	3.20m	1.60m	0.40m	9.10
	002	Fill	Drain cut fill	3.20m	1.00m	0.20m	8.70
	003	Fill	Drain cut fill	3.20m	0.55m	0.60m +	8.50
	004	Cut	Drain cut	3.20m	1.00m	0.80m +	8.70
	005	Deposit	Made ground	3.20m	0.60m	0.30m	8.70
	006	Deposit	Gravel dump	3.20m	0.60m	0.40m	8.40
	007	Deposit	Natural clay	3.20m	1.60m	0.45m +	8.00
Eval. Trench 3	008	Deposit	Gravel dump	2.50m	1.60m	0.30m	9.08
	009	Deposit	Made ground	2.50m	1.60m	0.30m	8.78
	010	Fill	Drain cut fill	2.50m	0.94m	0.20m	8.48
	011	Fill	Drain cut fill	2.50m	0.94m	0.50m +	8.28
	012	Cut	Drain cut	2.50m	0.94	0.70m +	8.48
	013	Deposit	Made ground	2.50m	0.74m	0.20m	8.48
	014	Deposit	Made ground	2.50m	0.74m	0.22m	8.28
	015	Deposit	Natural clay	2.50m	1.60m	0.08m +	8.06
W.B	020	Deposit	Topsoil	-	-	0.1 - 0.3m	-
	021	Deposit	Made ground	-	-	0.3 - 1.3m	-
	022	Deposit	Natural clay	-	-	1.20m +	-
	023	Deposit	Topsoil	-	-	0.35m	-
	024	Deposit	Natural clay	-	-	3.5m	-

Table 2: List of recorded contexts

5.0 SUMMARY

- 5.1** No archaeological finds, deposits or features were observed during the archaeological evaluation or watching brief phases of the works.
- 5.2** The area impacted by the development contained substantial deposits of made ground with an abundance of plastics, modern concrete and brick throughout. These deposits are thought to represent dumps and levelling associated with the construction of Ditton's Road, and for the provision of services to the mixed housing and light industrial development in the area.
- 5.3** The observed natural geology was clay which varied in colour from orangey brown to light grey-brown and was recorded at a maximum height of c.8.06m.AOD.
- 5.4** The archaeological potential of the site, in terms of deposit survival, appears to be low. Where the watching brief crossed land away from any prior development, during the laying of a pipeline in the south-western corner of the field immediately behind the pumping station, it was observed that the topsoil immediately overlay the natural Weald Clay formations.
- 5.5** Closer to Ditton's Road all other works and the evaluation trenches recorded substantial dumps of made ground; indeed the earlier course of Ditton's Road prior to the construction of the Polegate Bypass was observed c.0.70m below the current footpath. It is likely that any evidence that may have existed would have been impacted by this original road, and the subsequent landscaping associated with the modifications to Ditton's Road, at the time the Polegate Bypass was built.

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Wessex Archaeology 2008a, *Ditton's Road, Polegate, East Sussex Sewer Improvement Works – Archaeological Desk Based Assessment*.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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SMR Summary Form

Site Code	DRP 08					
Identification Name and Address	Land west of Drockmill Hill Gut Ditton's Road, Polegate					
County, District &/or Borough	East Sussex					
OS Grid Refs.	TQ 60050 04720					
Geology	Weald Clay Formations					
Arch. South-East Project Number	3329					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	Watching Brief	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Shallow Urban		Shallow Urban			
Dates of Fieldwork	3rd July 2008		Intermittently between 14th June and 2nd December 2008			
Sponsor/Client	4Delivery Ltd. on behalf of Southern Water Ltd.					
Project Manager	Neil Griffin					
Project Supervisors	Teresa Hawtin, Dylan Hopkinson, Liane Peyre, Paul Riccoboni and Simon Stevens					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM	Other : Modern made ground and services		
<p>100 Word Summary.</p> <p>Archaeology South-East carried out an archaeological evaluation and watching brief on the groundworks and services associated with improvements to the existing sewers and pumping works on Ditton's Road, Polegate, close to the junction with the Polegate Bypass. Works were completed between 3rd July and 2nd December 2008.</p> <p>The archaeological observations revealed only modern made ground that had been disturbed by utilities services or an absence of any anthropogenic strata. No archaeological deposits, features or artefacts were encountered.</p>						

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-54652

Project details

Project name	Improvements to the existing sewers and pumping works on Ditton's Road, Polegate.
Short description of the project	Archaeology South-East carried out an archaeological evaluation and watching brief on the groundworks and services associated with improvements to the existing sewers and pumping works on Ditton's Road, Polegate, close to the junction with the Polegate Bypass. Works were completed between 3rd July and 2nd December 2008. The archaeological observations revealed only modern made ground that had been disturbed by utilities services or an absence of any anthropogenic strata. No archaeological deposits, features or artefacts were encountered.
Project dates	Start: 03-07-2008 End: 02-12-2008
Previous/future work	Not known / No
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Site status (other)	Close to Area of Archaeological Sensitivity
Current Land use	Transport and Utilities 3 - Utilities
Monument type	NONE Modern
Significant Finds	NONE Modern
Methods & techniques	'Sample Trenches','Test Pits','Visual Inspection'
Development type	Pipelines/cables (e.g. gas, electric, telephone, TV cable, water, sewage, drainage etc.)
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16
Position in the	Not known / Not recorded

planning process

Project location

Country	England
Site location	EAST SUSSEX WEALDEN POLEGATE Sewage Pumping Station, Ditton's Road, Polegate
Postcode	BN24
Study area	400.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 60050 04720 50.8192828206 0.272427497532 50 49 09 N 000 16 20 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 8.00m Max: 8.06m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South East
Project brief originator	4 Development Ltd
Project design originator	Wessex Archaeology
Project director/manager	Neil Griffin
Project supervisor	Dylan Hopkinson
Project supervisor	Liane Peyre
Project supervisor	Simon Stevens
Project supervisor	Teresa Hawtin
Project supervisor	Paul Riccoboni
Type of	Water Authority/Company

sponsor/funding
body

Name of
sponsor/funding
body Southern Water Ltd.

Project archives

Physical Archive
Exists? No

Digital Archive
recipient East Sussex County Council

Digital Contents 'Survey'

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

Paper Archive
recipient East Sussex County Council

Paper Contents 'Stratigraphic','Survey'

Paper Media
available 'Context sheet','Drawing','Notebook - Excavation',' Research','
General Notes','Photograph','Plan','Report','Survey '

**Project
bibliography 1**

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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Sussex

Author(s)/Editor(s) Hopkinson, D

Date 2009

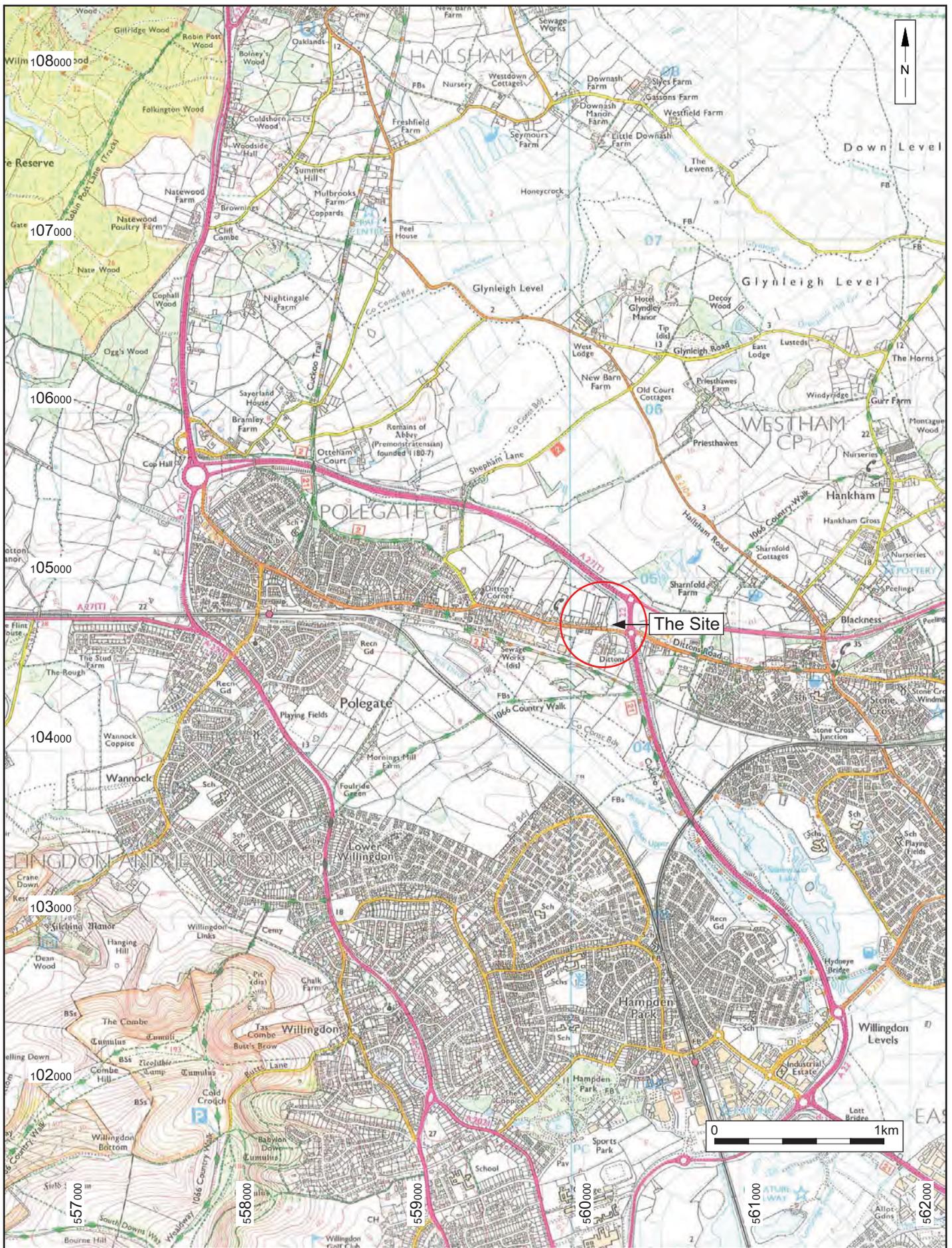
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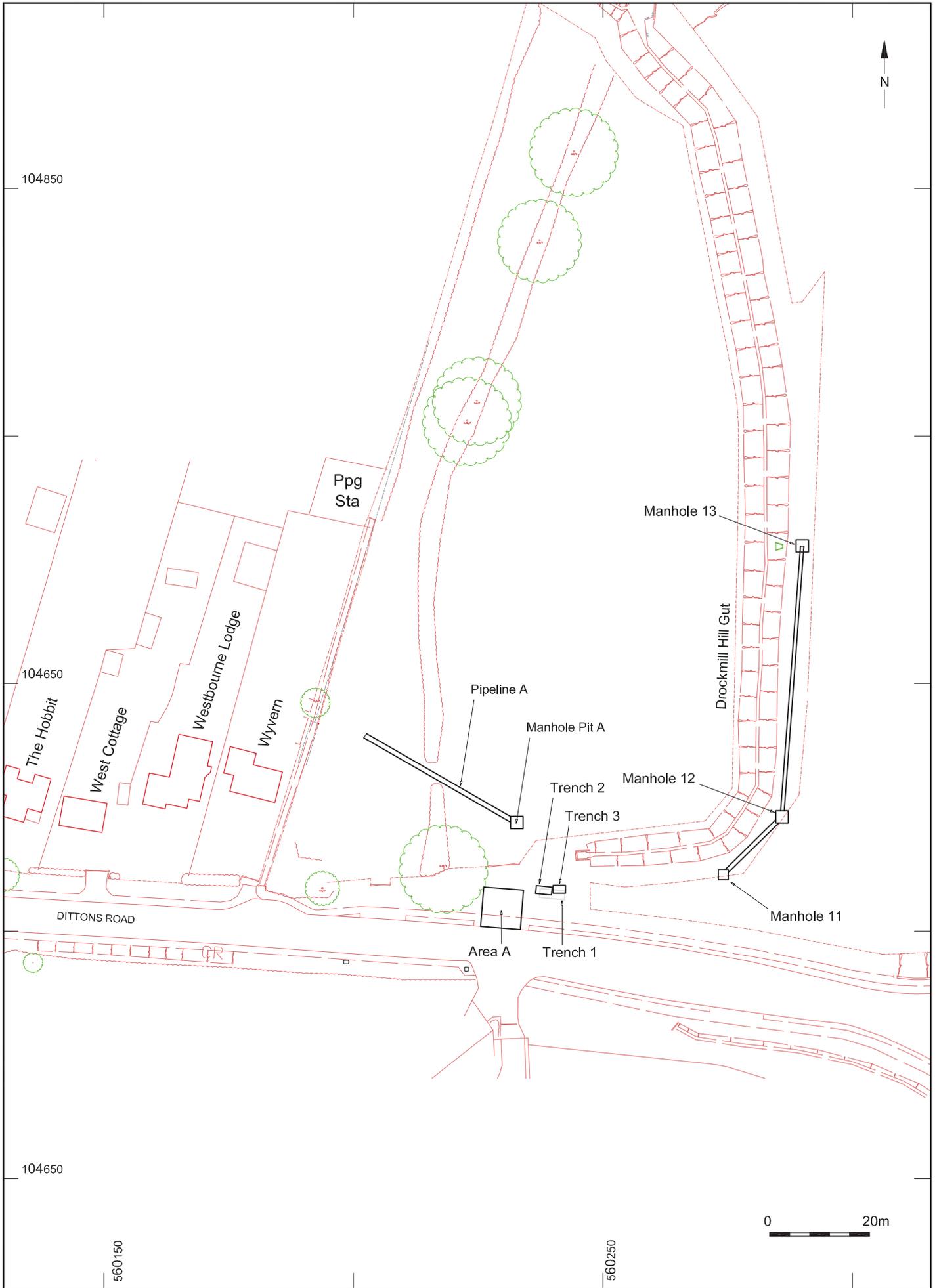
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Entered on 29 January 2009



© Archaeology South-East		Ditton's Road, Polegate, East Sussex - Evaluation and Watching Brief		Fig. 1
Project Ref: 3329	January 2009	Site Location		
Report Ref: 2009012	Drawn by: DJH			

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Project Ref: 3329	January 2009	Site Plan		
Report Ref: 2009012	Drawn by: DJH			



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