

**An Archaeological Watching Brief at
The Moat, Headcorn, Kent.**

**NGR 583070 144368
NGR TQ 83070 44368**

**ASE Project No. 3681
ASE Report No: 2009117
Site Code: TMH 09**

Oasis No: archaeol6-62739

**Prepared by
Dylan Hopkinson MA**

August 2009

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Abstract

Archaeology South-East was commissioned to undertake an archaeological watching brief by A. T. Palmer (Builders & Contractors) Ltd. The evaluation was partially on the site of a demolished barn building associated with some of the old farm buildings of Moat Farm, Moat Road, Headcorn, Kent henceforth referred to as 'The site'. The work was carried out from 7th July to 13th July 2009.

The site is situated on the edge of the southern bank of a tributary to the River Beult which was canalised at this point to create a moat. Work involved the reduction of the ground level to a maximum of 300 millimetres from the original ground surface to create a level surface from which to build, and the excavation of foundation trenches into the natural strata.

A total of 52.25 m² of ground reduction and 13 metres of foundation trenching were monitored.

The interventions were largely devoid of archaeology, no cut features were observed other than post-medieval pitting from the disposal of farm waste. A ceramic fragment from the subsoil gave a date of 15th- to mid 16th-century, while the topsoil contained a sherd from 16th to 17th century, all other artefacts date to between the 19th and early 20th century.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 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 A. T. Palmer (Builders & Contractors) Ltd. to undertake an Archaeological Watching Brief at 'The Moat', Headcorn in Kent (Figure 1).
- 1.2 Intrusive groundworks were undertaken associated with the construction of a garage, workshop and log-store on the site of a demolished barn and land directly to the east (Figure 2).
- 1.3 An area 52.25m² was stripped of its topsoil and subsoil to a maximum depth of 300 millimetres in order to level the site which was located on a sloping bank on the south side of a stream leading to the River Beult (Figure 3).
- 1.4 Further work took place to excavate the foundation trenches for the new structure, and these were observed wherever the natural strata had not been exposed during the levelling (Figure 3).
- 1.5 According to the British Geological Survey (Sheet 288) the underlying geology at the site is Weald Clay overlain by Alluvium, with deposits of First River Terrace Gravels also in the immediate environment.
- 1.6 The site has planning permission for development under the Local Planning Authority's planning reference MA/08/0543.
- 1.7 The Local Planning Authority placed the following condition on the planning consent for an archaeological watching brief to be conducted to ensure that any features of archaeological interest were properly examined and recorded prior to destruction.

"No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a watching brief to be undertaken by an archaeologist approved 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 programme and specification, which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority."

- 1.8 A Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief outlining the requirements of the watching brief was prepared by Adam Single of the Kent County Council – Heritage Conservation Group (KCC 2009).
- 1.9 The fieldwork was conducted by Dylan Hopkinson from 7th July to 13th July 2009 with project management by Neil Griffin.

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief (KCC 2009) assessed the nature of the existing known archaeological remains and historic buildings related to the site. These findings are laid out below with due acknowledgement.
- 2.2 The site is thought to be the location of a moated settlement of probable medieval origin, which was later replaced by the eighteenth century Moat Farm buildings. The ditches of a square moat are clearly visible on early maps, but were partially in filled by the modern construction of Moat Road, which passes to the south of the site.
- 2.3 A tributary stream of the River Beult crosses the grounds of the property from east to west, and appears to have been the source of the moat's waters. The northern section of the moat survives as a canalised section of the tributary and a sub-rectangular pond to the north of the stream. The eastern arm of the moat appears to have survived until the late nineteenth century when it was infilled.
- 2.4 Headcorn Manor lies roughly 175 metres to the south of the site and dates to the sixteenth century. Also in this area is the fourteenth to fifteenth century parish church.
- 2.5 An isolated find of a polished flint axe is recorded as having been recovered from a stream bed in Headcorn, however its specific location and date are unknown.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 The specifications document required that the excavation of all ground intrusions associated with the development should be monitored by a qualified archaeologist and inspected for archaeological features and artefacts.
- 3.2 Once any potential archaeological remains were identified digging work on the trench stopped while investigation by hand excavation and recording took place.
- 3.3 The sections of the trenches were selectively cleaned to observe and record their stratigraphy. The removed spoil was scanned for the presence of any stray, unstratified artefacts.
- 3.4 All encountered archaeological deposits, features and finds were recorded according to accepted professional standards in accordance with the approved specifications using pro-forma context record sheets. Archaeological features and deposits were planned at a scale of 1:50 and a general site plan was kept at 1:250. Deposit colours were verified by visual inspection and not by reference to a Munsell Colour chart.
- 3.5 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 offices at Portslade, and will in due course be offered to a suitable local museum.

3.6 Table 1: Quantification of Site Archive

Number of Contexts	8
No. of files/paper record	1 file
Plan and sections sheets	1 sheet (1: 10)
Photographs	17 Digital

4.0 RESULTS

- 4.1 The earliest deposit encountered was a very firm mid orange clay deposit (1/003) that constituted the natural Weald Clay geological deposits in the area, this deposit sloped slightly across the site from 19.27 mAOD in the south down to 18.97 mAOD in the north as the topography approached the canalised northern section of the stream (Figure 4). This deposit was exposed across the eastern extent of the site during the levelling phase of the works. The western part of the site was not reduced to the same extent and remained largely unexposed.
- 4.2 The sealing deposit overlying the natural clay was a firm mid orangey brown silty clay containing occasional pieces of local Bethersden marble up to 0.10 metres in diameter (1/002) (Figure 4). This layer was observed across the whole of the site either by stripping or foundation trench excavations, and had a maximum thickness of 0.15 metres; it was interpreted as a subsoil layer. A single sherd of pottery was recovered from this deposit and consisted of a 15th to mid 16th century oxidised fine earthenware base fragment, seven fragments of ceramic peg tile were also recovered with an overall date range of 16th to 19th century.
- 4.3 The subsoil was in turn sealed by a deposit of friable mid grey brown clayey silt up to 0.15 metres deep (1/001) containing common fragments of sub angular Bethersden marble between 0.05 to 0.15m in diameter; occasional charcoal flecks and pieces of coal were also observed (Figure 4). This was interpreted as the topsoil layer which had been formed and modified by a large quantity of post medieval pitting activity for the disposal of refuse, presumably associated with the farm kitchen; finds of pottery glass, metalwork, bone and shell were recovered.
- 4.4 A single sherd of 16th to 17th century hard fired fine earthenware was identified within this assemblage. Ceramic building material recovered also indicated a post medieval origin from 17th to 19th century peg tile and a fragment of tentative 15th to 17th century floor tile. The remaining finds were all of 19th to 20th century date.
- 4.5 Eight pieces of Bethersden marble were recovered from this layer measuring up to 0.30 metres in length with a thickness of 0.08 to 0.15 metres. These stones were neither bedded or in association with each other as a feature, and are likely to have been derived from modifications to the canalised stream bank. The stream has revetment walls built of marble slabs of similar dimensions.
- 4.6 A sample of 25 fragments of animal bone was recovered from 1/001 and indicated typical farmyard species; cattle, sheep, pig, goose. Signs of butchery were also identified within the bone assemblage.
- 4.7 The topsoil was cut by an area of terracing (1/007) to the south, where a 0.36 metre thick deposit of gravels had been deposited to form a path (1/006) (Figure 4).
- 4.8 The topsoil layer was also cut by the construction cuts (1/005) for the foundations of the demolished barn (1/004), and demolition rubble from the barn covered the footings and the western half of the site (1/008) (Figure 4).

Table 2: List of recorded contexts

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Max. Depth	mAOD
1/001	Deposit	Topsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.15m	19.61
1/002	Deposit	Subsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.15m	19.45
1/003	Deposit	Natural	Tr.	Tr.	-	19.27
1/004	Masonry	Foundations	9.00m	4.5m	0.44m	19.33
1/005	Cut	Foundations	9.00m	4.5m	0.44m	19.33
1/006	Deposit	Levelling	5.70m +	-	0.36m	19.60
1/007	Cut	Terracing	5.70m +	-	0.36m	19.20
1/008	Deposit	Demolition	6.00m	4.5m	< 0.20m	19.33

5.0 THE FINDS

5.1 A small assemblage of finds was recovered during the archaeological work. A summary can be found in Table 3.

Table 3. Quantification of the finds from the excavations at Moat Road, Headcorn, Kent.

Context	Pot	Wt (g)	CBM	Wt (g)	Bone	Wt (g)	Shell	Wt (g)	Fe	Wt (g)	Glass	Wt (g)
1/001	17	892	5	826	25	968	1	16	6	424	12	734
1/002	1	34	9	444	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

5.2 The Pottery by Elke Raemen

A total of 18 pottery sherds was recovered from contexts [1/001] and [1/002]. The earliest piece, contained by [1/002], consists of a 15th- to mid 16th-century, oxidised, hard fired fine earthenware base fragment. A hard fired, fine earthenware piece was also recovered from [1/001], where it dates to the later 16th to 17th century. All other fragments were recovered from [1/001] and date between the 19th and early 20th century. Included are pearlware plate fragments, refined white earthenwares, transfer printed ware with green or blue decoration, including a chamber pot fragment and an English porcelain jar fragment with overglaze polychrome floral transfer print. A commemorative English porcelain plate fragment, depicting King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra in polychrome transfer print, was recovered as well. Stonewares include a brown-glazed stoneware fragment as well as fragments of a salt-glazed English stoneware blacking bottle, a ginger beer bottle, and a Bristol-glazed bottle. A glazed red earthenware jar rim fragment of 19th-century date was recovered, as well as an unglazed red earthenware flowerpot fragment of 20th-century date.

5.3 The Ceramic Building Material by Sarah Porteus

Ceramic building material (CBM) was recovered from two contexts. Context [1/002] contained two fragments of calcareous peg tile (Canterbury Archaeological Trust fabric CAT32) of 18th to 19th century date. Also identified were four fragments of orange peg tile with moderate coarse angular iron rich inclusions and fine to coarse calcareous inclusions of probable 17th to 19th century date and a fragment of fine orange peg tile with moderate fine iron rich speckling and sparse fine quartz of probable 16th to 18th century date.

Abraded brick fragments in an orange fabric with sparse fine quartz and sparse fine to very coarse red iron rich inclusions and sparse chalk were also recovered from context 1/002, these are also of probable post-medieval date. Context [1/001] contained three fragments of peg tile with poorly formed diamond shaped peg holes in the same 17th to 19th century iron rich fabric as that from context [1/002]. A single fragment of possible floor tile, 32mm in thickness with an abraded and blackened upper surface was recovered from context [1/001]. The fabric contained moderate coarse quartz and red iron rich inclusions. The floor tile is of tentative 15th to 17th century date.

5.4 The Glass by Elke Raemen

All glass, consisting of a total of 12 fragments, was recovered from topsoil [1/001]. The earliest piece consists of a clear glass bottle neck fragment (i.e. medicine, household, ...) dating to the 19th century. All other pieces are of 20th-century date. Included are medicine bottles (i.e. Parment by International Laboratories) and toiletries including an Amami wave set bottle and a bottle probably containing a bath product with J&E ATKINSONS LONDON embossed on the shoulder. At least one ink bottle was also recovered.

5.5 The Metalwork by Elke Raemen

A total of six pieces of ironwork was recovered from [1/001]. Included are a possible punch, a chain link, an iron bolt with circular rove and strip fragments. All are of 19th- to 20th-century date.

5.6 The Animal Bone by Gemma Driver

Context [1/001] contains 25 fragments of animal bone and teeth. The assemblage is in good condition with the bone showing no signs of surface erosion. The species represented and their relative proportions are shown in Table 1

SPECIES	NISP	NISP %
CATTLE	10	40
SHEEP	9	37
PIG	3	12
GOOSE	3	12
TOTAL	25	

Table 4: NISP count for context [1/001].

Cattle and sheep dominate the assemblage followed by pig and goose. Both meat-bearing and non-meat bearing bones are present. Six cattle bones, including rib, scapulae and femur fragments display signs of butchery. Three sheep tibia fragments have been sawn through the proximal shaft. There are no signs of burning or pathology.

5.7 The Shell by Elke Raemen

A lower valve fragment from an oyster shell was recovered from [1/001].

5.8 Potential for Further Analysis

The assemblage is small and mainly unstratified. It is therefore not considered to be of any potential for further analysis. No further work is required.

6.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 No archaeological deposits or features were recorded during the archaeological watching brief at The Moat, Headcorn, Kent.
- 6.2 The area monitored contained a sequence of topsoil overlying subsoil and natural clay. The subsoil contained the earliest dating evidence from a potsherd dating to the 15th to 16th century while the topsoil contained a single sherd dating to the 16th to 17th century. All the remaining artefacts dated to the 19th to 20th centuries.
- 6.3 The topsoil layer showed extensive evidence of post-medieval pit deposition entirely consistent with the use of the area for the disposal of waste from the farm kitchens, and included ceramics, metals and butchered bones.
- 6.4 The observed natural geology was a mid orange clay and was recorded at a height of c. 19.27m AOD in the south of the site dropping away to c. 18.97m AOD in the north of the site; where it approached the canalised route of the stream that formed the northern side of the moat which gives the site its name.
- 6.5 The methodology employed to assess the site was successful in assessing the preservation and nature of any archaeological deposits on the site, and revealed no significant remains.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

KCC 2009, *Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief at 'The Moat', Moat Road in Headcorn, Kent* KCC – Heritage Conservation Group.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The co-operation and assistance of Adam Single (Kent County Council – Heritage Conservation Group) is acknowledged.

The author would also like to thank Elke Raemen and Gemma Driver (ASE) for the finds processing and identification and Jim Stevenson (ASE) for his post-excavation management and editing.

HER Summary Form

Site Code	TMH 09					
Identification Name and Address	The Moat, Moat Road, Headcorn, Kent, TN27					
County, District &/or Borough	Kent					
OS Grid Refs.	583070 144368					
Geology	Weald Clay					
Arch. South-East Project Number	3681					
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. 07-07-2009 – 13-07-2009	Other		
Sponsor/Client	A. T. Palmer (Builders and Contractors) Ltd.					
Project Manager	Neil Griffin					
Project Supervisor	Dylan Hopkinson					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM	Other -Modern		
<p>100 Word Summary.</p> <p><i>The site is situated on the edge of the southern bank of a tributary to the River Beult which had been canalised at this point to create a moat. Work involved the reduction of the ground level to a maximum of 300 millimetres from the original ground surface to create a level surface from which to build, and the excavation of foundation trenches into the natural strata. A total of 52.25 m² of ground reduction and 13 metres of foundation trenching were monitored. The interventions were largely devoid of archaeology, no cut features were observed other than post-medieval pitting from the disposal of farm waste. A ceramic fragment from the subsoil gave a date of 15th- to mid 16th-century, while the topsoil contained a sherd from 16th to 17th century, all other artefacts date to between the 19th and early 20th century.</i></p>						

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-62739

Project details

Project name The Moat, Headcorn, Kent

Short description of the project Archaeology South-East was commissioned to undertake an archaeological watching brief by A. T. Palmer (Builders and Contractors) Ltd. The evaluation was partially on the site of a demolished barn building associated with some of the old farm buildings of Moat Farm, Moat Road, Headcorn, Kent. The work was carried out from 7th July to 13th July 2009. The site is situated on the edge of the southern bank of a tributary to the River Beult which had been canalised at this point to create a moat. Work involved the reduction of the ground level to a maximum of 300 millimetres from the original ground surface to create a level surface from which to build, and the excavation of foundation trenches into the natural strata. A total of 52.25 m² of ground reduction and 13 metres of foundation trenching were monitored. The interventions were largely devoid of archaeology, no cut features were observed other than post-medieval pitting from the disposal of farm waste. A ceramic fragment from the subsoil gave a date of 15th- to mid 16th-century, while the topsoil contained a sherd from 16th to 17th century, all other artefacts date to between the 19th and early 20th century.

Project dates Start: 07-07-2009 End: 13-07-2009

Previous/future work No / No

Any associated project reference codes TMH 09 - Sitecode

Any associated project reference codes MA/08/0543 - Planning Application No.

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status None

Current Land use Residential 1 - General Residential

Monument type FINDSPOT Post Medieval

Significant Finds NONE None

Methods & techniques	'Measured Survey','Photographic Survey','Sample Trenches','Survey/Recording Of Fabric/Structure','Targeted Trenches','Visual Inspection'
Development type	Small-scale extensions (e.g. garages, porches, etc.)
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - Direction 4
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	KENT MAIDSTONE HEADCORN The Moat, Headcorn, Kent
Postcode	TN27
Study area	52.25 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 83070 44368 51.16863461 0.618917784611 51 10 07 N 000 37 08 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 18.97m Max: 19.27m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	Kent County Council
Project design originator	Kent County Council
Project director/manager	Neil Griffin
Project supervisor	Dylan Hopkinson

Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	A. T. Palmer (Builders & Contractors) Ltd.

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	local museum
Physical Contents	'Animal Bones','Ceramics','Glass','Metal','Worked bone'
Digital Archive recipient	local museum
Digital Contents	'none'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography','Spreadsheets','Text'
Paper Archive recipient	local museum
Paper Contents	'none'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Drawing','Section','Unpublished Text'

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	An Archaeological Watching Brief at The Moat, Headcorn, Kent.
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Hopkinson, D.
Other bibliographic details	ASE Report No: 2009117

Date 2009

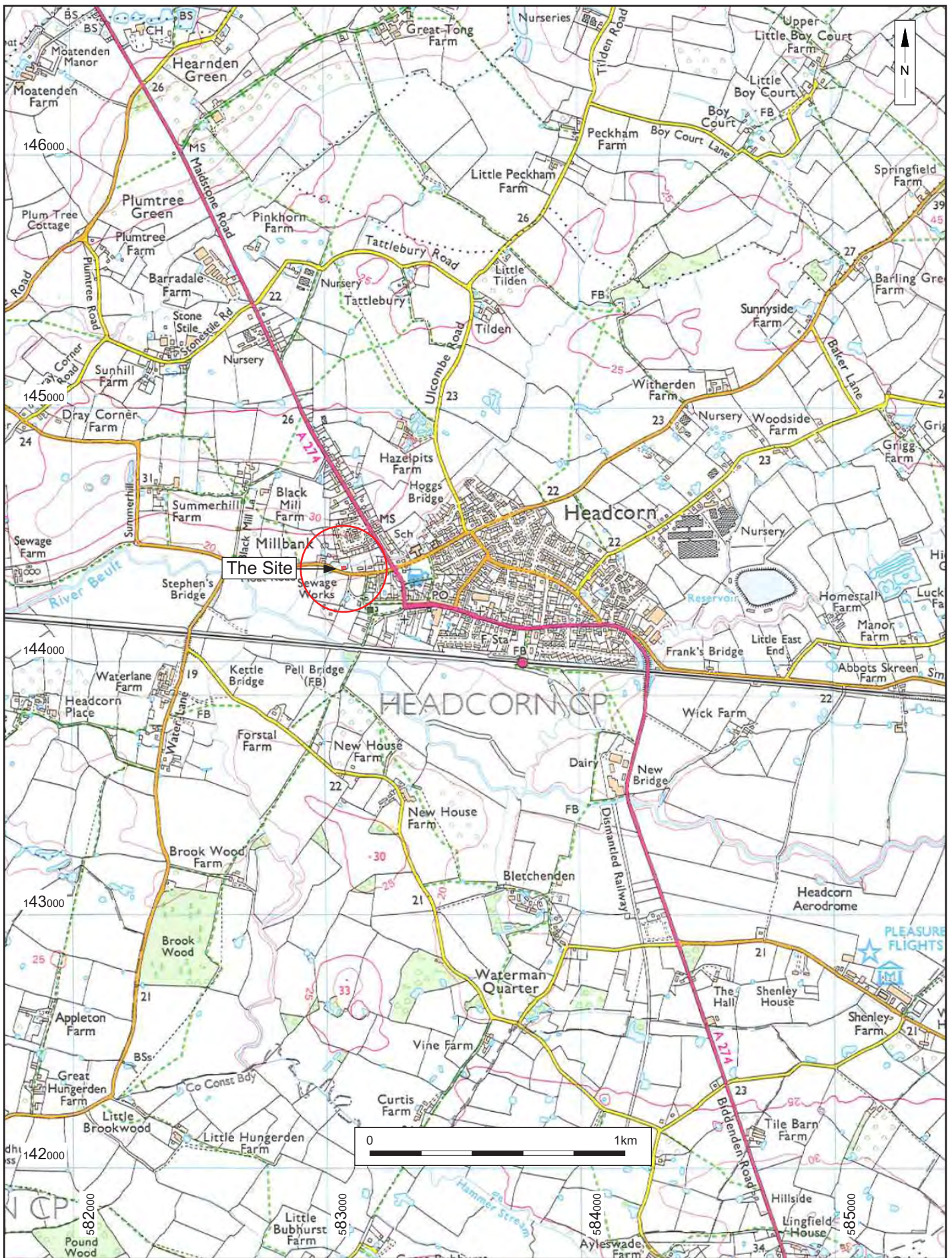
Issuer or publisher Archaeology South-East

Place of issue or publication Portslade, Brighton, East Sussex

Description 15 page A4 bound report with figures

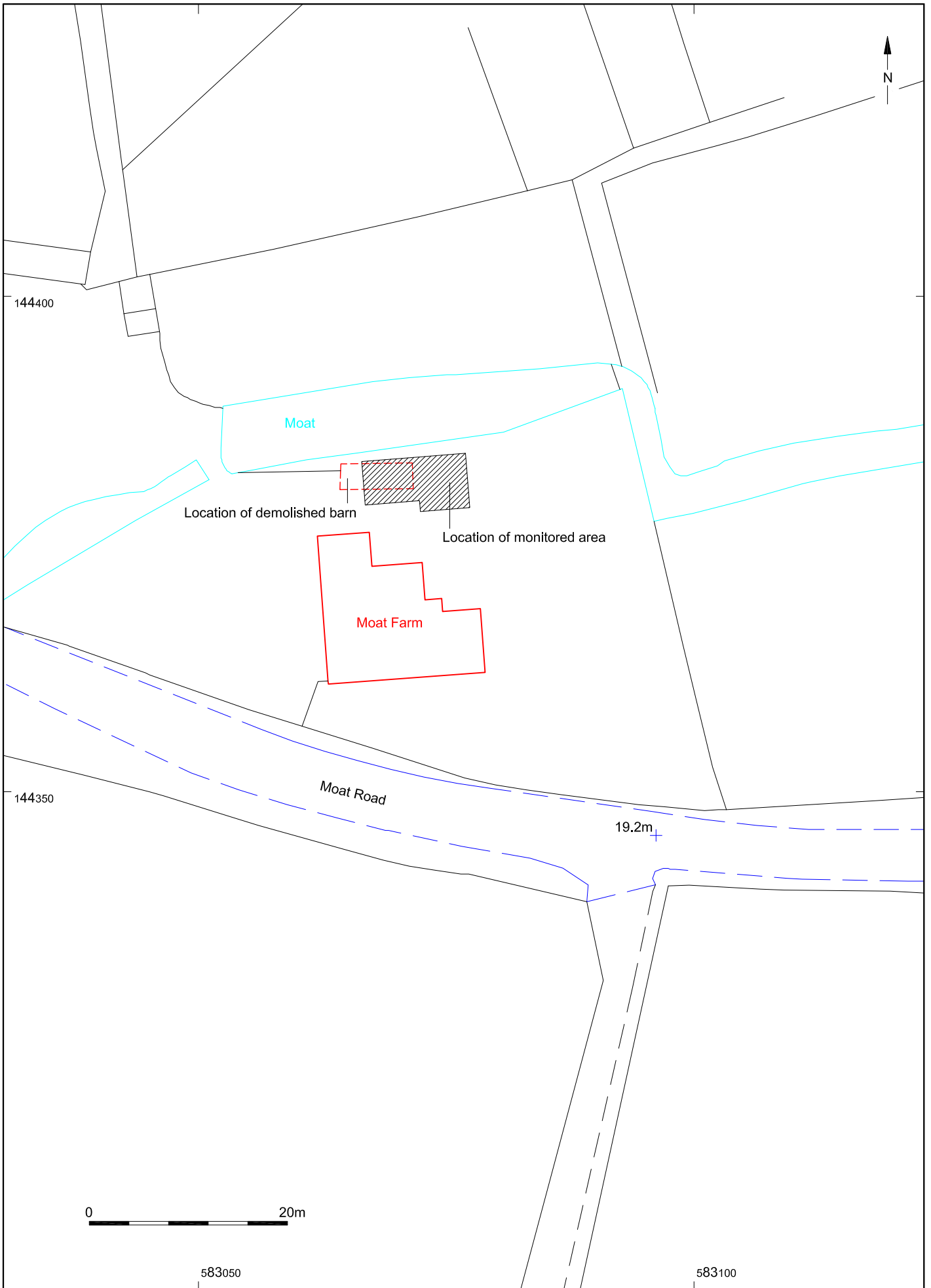
Entered by Dylan Hopkinson (dylan.hopkinson@ucl.ac.uk)

Entered on 31 July 2009

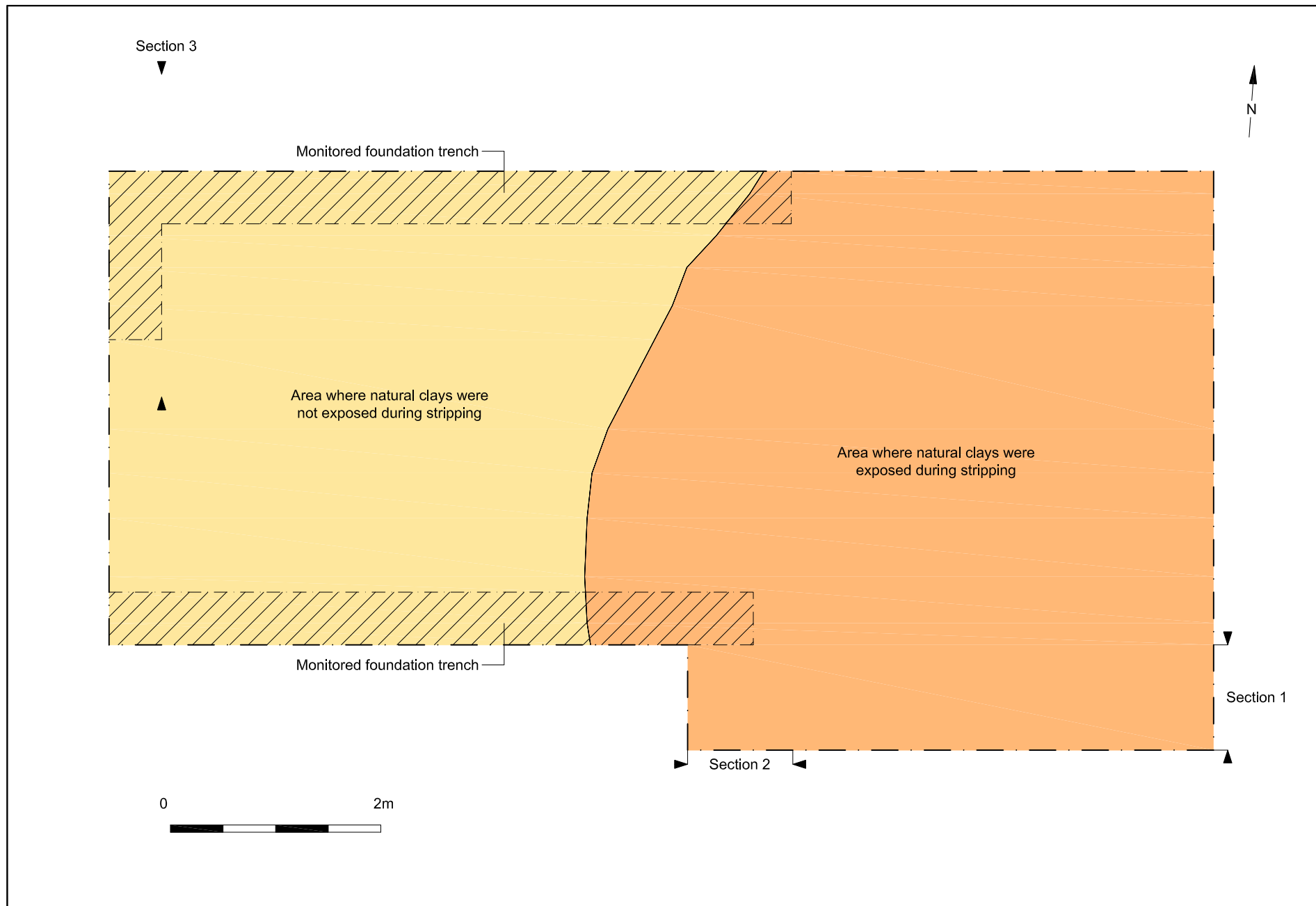


© Archaeology South-East		The Moat, Headcorn, Kent.		Fig. 1
Project Ref: 3681	August 2009	Site Location		
Report Ref: 2009117	Drawn by: DJH			

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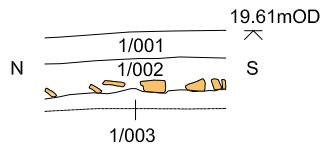


© Archaeology South-East		The Moat, Headcorn, Kent.	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 3681	August 2009	Site location showing monitored area.	
Report Ref: 2009117	Drawn by: DJH		

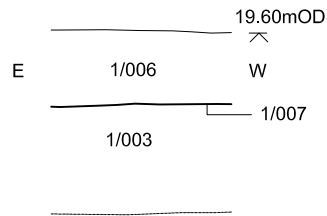


© Archaeology South-East		The Moat, Headcorn, Kent.	Fig. 3
Project Ref: 3681	August 2009	Site plan showing location of interventions.	
Report Ref: 2009117	Drawn by: DJH		

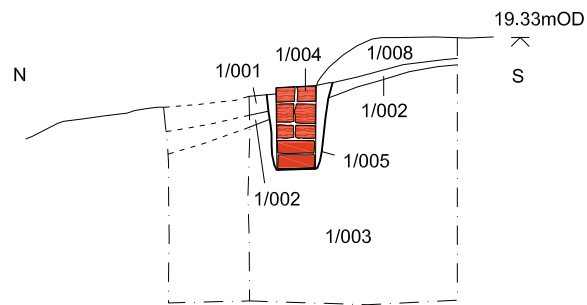
Section 1



Section 2



Section 3



Ceramic building material
 Brick



© Archaeology South-East		The Moat, Headcorn, Kent.	Fig. 4
Project Ref: 3681	August 2009	Sample sections 1, 2, and 3.	
Report Ref: 2009117	Drawn by: DJH		

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