

**An Archaeological Watching Brief at
Meridian CP School, Roderick Avenue,
Peacehaven, East Sussex**

**East Sussex County Council Planning Application
LW/2834/CC**

**NGR 541431 102365
(TQ 41431 02365)**

**Project No. 4044
Site Code: MER 09**

**ASE Report No. 2009171
OASIS id: archaeol6-66610**

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Abstract

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Archaeology South-East during ground works relating to the construction of a new temporary classroom unit at Meridian CP School, Roderick Avenue, Peacehaven, East Sussex. The work was commissioned by Adams Johns Kennard Ltd (AJK Ltd).

No archaeological finds or features were recovered or recorded during the watching brief as the groundworks took place in an area of made ground associated with the construction of the school in the 1980's.

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction**
- 2.0 Archaeological Background**
- 3.0 Archaeological Methodology**
- 4.0 Results**
- 5.0 Discussion and Conclusions**

Bibliography
Acknowledgements

SMR Summary Sheet
OASIS Form

FIGURES

- Figure 1:** Site location
- Figure 2:** Plan showing monitored groundworks

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of University College London Centre for Applied Archaeology (UCLCAA), were commissioned by Adams Johns Kennard Ltd (AJK Ltd) to undertake a programme of archaeological works at Meridian CP School, Roderick Avenue, Peacehaven, East Sussex during development (NGR 541431 102365), henceforth called the site (Figure 1).
- 1.2 A planning application was submitted to East Sussex County Council (ESCC) under Planning Reference LW/2834/CC for the installation of mobile classrooms at the site (Figure 2). Planning consent for this development has not yet been granted.
- 1.3 Greg Chuter, Assistant County Archaeologist, ESCC recommended that an archaeological planning condition be attached to the planning permission in a memo to Kirsty-Ann Taylor, Planning and Development Control Team, ESCC dated 25th August 2009. Consultation between ASE and Greg Chuter established that the relevant condition relates to the implementation of an archaeological watching brief.
- 1.4 According to the British Geological Survey, Sheet 334 Solid and Drift Edition the site lies on Upper and Middle Chalk.
- 1.5 This document represents a comprehensive report on the results of the watching brief for these works which took place between 2/10/09 and 14/10/09 and has been submitted to the Assistant County Archaeologist, ESCC for approval.
- 1.6 In general, the aim of the watching brief was to record, interpret and report on any archaeological and palaeoenvironmental remains exposed during the ground works (including artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest) to appropriate archaeological standards.
- 1.7 The watching brief also assesses any past impacts on the site with particular attention to the character, height/depth below ground level, condition, date and significance of the deposits.

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Previous archaeological investigations have been undertaken in the immediate area by ASE. An archaeological evaluation in advance of the Brighton & Hove Water Treatment Works comprising 22 trial trenches was carried in Spring 2004, on land at Lower Hoddern Farm to the east of the current Site (ASE 2004). Geophysical survey results highlighted areas of archaeological potential that were subsequently targeted by trial trenches. The hub of archaeological activity was concentrated in the south-western corner of the site, where several pits and a double ditched enclosure were revealed. Pottery recovered from the features dated the enclosure to the Late Bronze Age to Middle Iron Age, although the paucity of artefacts suggests that the enclosure may have been associated with livestock, rather than settlement. Elsewhere across the site, trenches revealed several other small linear features, of a similar period, and the remains of a strip lynchet.
- 2.2 ASE were commissioned by Bovis Homes Ltd to undertake archaeological investigations on land to the north of Keymer Avenue (centred: NGR 541740, 101210) and Seaview Avenue (centred: 542052, 101045). Geophysical survey indicated the presence of a variety of landscape features (ASE 2006a), which were confirmed as archaeological in nature and predominately Iron Age in date during the subsequent archaeological evaluation (ASE 2006b). Further open area excavations enabled detailed investigation of these features and recovered artefacts dating from the Early Mesolithic through to the Mid Iron Age period (ASE 2008). The most substantial remains relate to a series of ditched enclosures with associated pits and postholes dating to the Middle Iron Age. Substantial worked flint assemblages of Mesolithic and Neolithic date were also recovered, along with smaller quantities of Neolithic pottery and a scatter of associated features.
- 2.3 ASE are currently undertaking an extensive programme of archaeological works at the Brighton & Hove Waste Water Treatment Works at Hoyle Road, Peacehaven. The most recent fieldwork undertaken on the site comprised the archaeological investigation of features revealed during soil stripping of an easement around the southern and eastern perimeter of the site in advance of service diversions. This work provided an opportunity to examine elements of one of two enclosures detected by earlier geophysical survey, including the southern enclosure ditch and associated features including large pits. Preliminary spot dating of finds recovered from these features confirms an Iron Age date for the enclosure, though the presence of a small group of early Roman cremation vessels interred in the south-eastern corner of the enclosure suggests some usage of the site during the early Roman period.
- 2.4 Other notable features investigated during this phase of work include a possible Neolithic pit located in the far northeast of the site and a possible Early Bronze Age placed vessel situated to the east one of the enclosures. A small group of Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age pits characterised by fills of burnt material located towards the south-eastern corner of the site is suggestive of industrial activity. The remains of a possible small timber building were located immediately to the west. This is currently undated but charcoal recovered from the fill of one of the possible beam slots has the potential for radiocarbon dating.

2.5 In addition to these more recent investigations a number of Roman cremations were found in the area of Glynn Road to the south in the 1920s and a series of Bronze Age burial mounds are recorded to the north and west of the school (Greg Chuter, *pers. comm.*).

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 All intrusive ground works associated with the development (Figure 2) were monitored by an archaeologist, however, ***no archaeological finds or features were revealed***. The methodology followed was as outlined in the WSI (ASE 2009). Please refer to that document for details of the complete adopted methodology.

3.2 The ground works monitored during the watching brief included:

- Removal of turf and topsoil (ground reduction) in the footprint of the new temporary classroom, measuring approximately 18m by 8m
- The excavation of three parallel foundation trenches each 18m long x 0.60m wide x 0.60m deep
- The excavation of a 20m x 0.60m deep x 0.60m wide long drain-run

Site archive quantification can be tabulated as shown

Number of Contexts	3
No. of files/paper record	1 files
Plan and sections sheets	none
Bulk Samples	none
Photographs	Several digital photographs of the ground works
Bulk finds	none
Registered finds	none
Environmental flots/residue	none

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 GROUND REDUCTION

- 4.1.1 Ground reduction in the footprint of the new classroom revealed the following stratigraphic sequence:

A maximum of 0.20m of loose mid-brown silt topsoil [001] containing occasional flints. This was directly above a layer of modern made ground [003], comprising mid brown silt with modern plastic inclusions, a maximum of 0.35m thick. Beneath this the surface of re-deposited natural was revealed [002], comprising yellow compacted silt with frequent flint nodules.

- 4.1.2 No archaeological features or finds were uncovered.

4.2 FOOTING TRENCHES

- 4.2.1 The three parallel footings trenches were excavated through the area of reduced ground into the re-deposited natural beneath, for a maximum depth of 0.20m.

- 4.2.2 No archaeological features or finds were uncovered.

4.3 DRAIN RUN

- 4.3.1 A single service trench was excavated, extending from the western end of the building footprint. This revealed a similar stratigraphic sequence:

Approximately 0.10m of topsoil [001] above approximately 0.30m of made ground [003], above re-deposited natural [002], which was excavated to a depth of 0.20m.

- 4.3.2 No archaeological features or finds were uncovered

5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 No archaeological finds or features were recovered or recorded during the watching brief.
- 5.2 The whole area had been subject to grading and levelling relating to the construction of the existing school and playing field during the 1980's. Practically this means that material has been mechanically graded-off to the south to level the area of the playing field slightly and dumped up the hill to the north to raise and level the ground in the area of the school and playground.
- 5.3 The area of ground works monitored in the watching brief lies roughly between these two zones in an area where the thickness of this re-deposited material is likely to be at its thickest.
- 5.4 As a result of all these points, one can safely assume that all of the material viewed in the watching brief has been recently and mechanically disturbed/redeposited and that whilst this *may* have resulted in the disturbance of archaeological material, *no* evidence of this was visible in the ground works monitored.
- 5.5 The watching brief is considered to have been an adequate means of archaeological monitoring for this scheme of works.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ASE would like to thank Adams Johns Kennard Ltd (AJK Ltd) for commissioning the work and Greg Chuter of East Sussex County Council for his guidance throughout the project.

SMR Summary Form

Site Code	MER 09					
Identification Name and Address	Meridian CP School Roderick Avenue, Peacehaven, E Sussex					
County, District &/or Borough	ESCC					
OS Grid Refs.	TQ 41431 02365					
Geology	Chalk (Not observed)					
Arch. South-East Project Number	4044					
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. between 2/10/09 and 14/10/09	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Adams Johns Kennard Ltd (AJK Ltd)					
Project Manager	Neil Griffin					
Project Supervisor	Sarah Porteus/Dan Swift					
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 undertaken by Archaeology South-East during ground works relating to the construction of a new temporary classroom unit at Meridian CP School, Roderick Avenue, Peacehaven, East Sussex. The work was commissioned by Adams Johns Kennard Ltd (AJK Ltd).</i></p> <p><i>No archaeological finds or features were recovered or recorded during the watching brief, as the groundworks took place in an area of made ground associated with the construction of the school in the 1980's.</i></p>						

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-66610

Project details

Project name	Meridian CP School, Roderick Avenue, Peacehaven
Short description of the project	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Archaeology South-East during ground works relating to the construction of a new temporary classroom unit at Meridian CP School, Roderick Avenue, Peacehaven, East Sussex. The work was commissioned by Adams Johns Kennard Ltd (AJK Ltd). No archaeological finds or features were recovered or recorded during the watching brief, as the groundworks took place in an area of made ground associated with the construction of the school in the 1980's.
Project dates	Start: 02-10-2009 End: 14-10-2009
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	MER 09 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Woodland 6 - Parkland
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Development type	Small-scale (e.g. single house, etc.)
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16
Position in the planning process	Pre-application

Project location

Country	England
Site location	EAST SUSSEX BRIGHTON AND HOVE ROTTINGDEAN Meridian School
Postcode	BN10 7
Study area	180.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 41431 02365 50.8030118818 0.00736307273552 50 48 10 N 000 00 26 E Point
Lat/Long Datum	Unknown

Height OD / Depth Min: 0m Max: 0m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	Archaeology South-East
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East
Project director/manager	Neil Griffin
Project supervisor	Sarah Porteus
Project supervisor	Dan Swift
Type of sponsor/funding body	Client
Name of sponsor/funding body	Adams Johns Kennard Ltd (AJK Ltd)

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Local Museum
Digital Archive ID	MER 09
Digital Contents	'none'
Digital Media available	'Text'
Paper Archive recipient	Local Museum
Paper Archive ID	MER 09
Paper Contents	'none'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Correspondence','Diary','Map','Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General Notes','Photograph','Report','Unpublished Text'

Entered by	Dan Swift (d.swift@ucl.ac.uk)
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