

**An Archaeological Watching Brief
On Land at Knole Estate, Sevenoaks, Kent**

(NGR TQ 54167 54099)

**Project No. 4105
Site Code: KEK09**

ASE Report No. 2009186

OASIS id: archaeol6-67953



Alice Thorne

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Abstract

An archaeological watching brief was maintained during the excavation of new drainage trenches within the area of the 'wilderness', Knole Estate, Sevenoaks, Kent, NGR TQ 54167 54099. 52.5m of trenching and an area of ground reduction measuring 125m² was monitored. No archaeological finds or features were observed during the course of the watching brief.

CONTENTS

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

SMR Summary Sheet OASIS Form

- Fig. 1: Site Location
- Fig. 2: Site Plan (showing monitored groundwork)
- Fig. 3: Knole Walled Garden Historic Features

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of University College London Centre for Applied Archaeology (UCLCAA), were commissioned by the Strutt and Parker LLP to undertake an archaeological watching brief at the Knole Estate, Sevenoaks, Kent (NGR TQ 54167 54099), henceforth called the site (Fig.1).
- 1.2** The Knole Estate is located in Sevenoaks town centre, accessed from the eastern side of the A225 Tonbridge Road. Knole house and garden walls are listed Grade I (Ref: 172227). The park and gardens are also registered Grade I (Ref: 1088) and comprise 10.5ha of walled ornamental gardens, surrounded by a further 378ha of deer park, woodland, and golf course.
- 1.3** The ground work included improvements to the drainage of the ponds in the area of 'the wilderness' within the walled gardens to the east of Knole house. The groundwork comprised the excavation of pipe trenches to accommodate a new drainage system. A pond also required cleaning and remedial works.
- 1.4** An outline brief was prepared by Caroline Thackray, Territory Archaeologist of the National Trust (Thackray 2009). A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) outlining the requirements of the fieldwork was then prepared by Archaeology South-East in consultation with Caroline Thackray (ASE 2009).
- 1.5** The site is situated on a slight north-west facing hill slope, within the 'wilderness' to the east of Knole house. The British Geological Survey map Sheet 287 (Area Sevenoaks) Solid and Drift Edition (1:50,000 scale) indicates that the site lies on the Folkestone beds of the Cretaceous Lower Greensand.
- 1.6** The fieldwork was undertaken by Dan Swift and Alice Thorne from the 10/11/2009 to the 17/11/2009. The project was managed by Neil Griffin (Project Manager) and Louise Rayner (Post-excavation Manager).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 The site lies in an area of aesthetic, historical and archaeological importance (part of a registered garden and within the grounds of a Grade 1 listed building). An assessment of the historic walled garden is included within the Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for Knole house, and archaeological monitoring and recording during excavation or alterations within the envelope and environment of the historic house is a recommendation of this CMP (Thackrey, 2009, paragraph 2.4).

2.2 The following background information has been reproduced from the outline brief provided by Caroline Thackrey (2009) with due acknowledgement.

2.3 Knole park and garden are located in the ancient parish of Sevenoaks. The first formal account of the gardens at Knole is made in 1534 and they are known to have been modified and extended by Henry VIII in 1543. The current garden boundaries were built by John Lennard in 1574 and rebuilt c. 1740. The garden today is spilt into a formal area with lawns and borders and an informal area known as the Wilderness, mentioned by Lady Anne Clifford in the early 17th century. The current arrangement of paths is recorded in an early 18th century drawing by Leonard Knyff. Further paths and built additions were made during the 18th-and 19th-centuries.

2.4 To date there have been no known archaeological interventions or recording within the registered walled garden. However, several post-medieval features known to exist within the area of the proposed works are listed below and shown on Figure 3. This plan has been reproduced from the Oxford Archaeology Conservation Management Plan for the park and gardens (2006) with due acknowledgement.

- G16 Building Site Pigeon House, shown in 1709 Kip/Knyff engraving
- G17 Fountain. Fountain placed in Great Green Bottom pond, shown on 1st edition – 1960's Maps
- G18 Pond Pond located in Great Green Bottom area, shown on 1st edition - 1960's OS map
- G19 Potential archaeological site. Great Green Bottom, location of former orchard, pond, possible canal, fountain and swimming pool. Shown in 1719 Badeslade engraving and 1st edition - 1960's OS maps
- G20 Pond, shown in 1709 Kip engraving
- G21 Stopcock shown in 1st edition OS map
- G22 Stew Pond, shown in 1709 Kip/Knyff engraving
- G23 Stream shown in 1st edition OS map
- G24 Basson (or Round) Pond, shown in 1719 Badeslade engraving and 1st edition OS map
- G25 Fountain, located in Basson Pond, likely seen in 1st edition OS map
- G26 Stew pond, shown in 1709 Kip/Knyff engraving
- G27 Herb garden
- G28 site of Ice House, Water House and spring location, shown in 1st and 2nd edition OS maps
- G29 site of Ice House, Water House and spring location, shown in 1st and 2nd edition OS maps

- G30 Gate from park to garden, shown on ? Engravings and 1st edition – 1960's OS Maps
- G31 Structure Seat, shown 1719 Badeslade engraving
- G33 Building Site Waterhouse and Spring, shown 1709 Kip/Knyff engraving
- G37 Gate Eastern central gate from park into garden, shown on 18th c. engravings and 1st edition - 1960's OS maps

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 3.1** The general aim of the archaeological work was to ensure that any features, artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest that were affected by the proposed groundwork were recorded and interpreted to appropriate standards.
- 3.2** All encountered archaeological deposits, features and finds were recorded according to accepted professional standards in accordance with the Specification using standard Archaeology South-East context record sheets. Deposit colours were verified by visual inspection and not by reference to a Munsell Colour chart.
- 3.3** The groundwork comprised the machine excavation (utilising a flat blade bucket) of new piped drain trenches around the area of the paths to collect water and drain the site (Fig. 2). The trenches measured 200mm wide and were excavated to a maximum depth of 750mm. In addition, an area of ground reduction to create a storage area for the sludge generated following dredging of the pond was monitored.
- 3.4** The spoil from the excavations was inspected to recover any artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest.
- 3.5** A full photographic record of the work was kept (black and white prints and colour slides and digital images) and will form part of the site archive. The archive is presently held at the Archaeology South-East offices at Portslade.

4.0 RESULTS (Fig. 2)

4.1 Pipe trenches

52.5m of pipe trenching was monitored during the course of this watching brief.

Approximately 350 to 400mm of a loose mid brown sandy loam garden soil [Context **001**] contained occasional ragstone chips and occasional fragments of CBM]. This deposit directly overlay the mid reddish brown sandy silt natural geology [Context **002**].

The excavations largely took place through areas of undisturbed natural geology. However, sections of the pipe trenches cut through earlier drainage trenches and frequent areas of rooting disturbance were noted along the length of the trenches.

No archaeological finds or features were observed within the trenches.

4.2 Ground reduction

An area of ground reduction approximately 125m² was also monitored during the course of this watching brief.

Within this area 400mm of the garden soil [Context **001**] was found to directly overlie the natural geology [Context **002**]. Very occasional blocks and small chips of roughly hewn rag stone were observed within the topsoil in this area. These may represent debris from the construction of the garden wall.

No archaeological finds or features were observed within this area.

5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 No archaeological finds or features were observed during the course of the watching brief. Six days were spent on site monitoring the groundwork, and following discussion between Neil Griffin (Project Manager, Archaeology South- East) and Caroline Thackray (Territory Archaeologist of the National Trust) it was decided that sufficient work had been undertaken at the site. The watching brief was therefore concluded.

References

ASE., 2009. *Knole Estate, Sevenoaks, Kent; Archaeological Watching Brief Written Scheme of Investigation*. Unpublished ASE document.

Oxford Archaeology., 2006. *Knole, Kent Conservation Management Plan, Supplementary Study; The park and gardens*. Unpublished Oxford Archaeology document, 3341.

Thackray, C., 2009. *Outline brief Knole, Sevenoaks, Kent; Archaeological Watching Brief on proposed works to install improved drainage within garden*. Unpublished NT document.

SMR Summary Form

Site Code	KEK09					
Identification Name and Address	Knole Estate, Sevenoaks, Kent					
County, District &/or Borough	Kent					
OS Grid Refs.	TQ 54167 54099					
Geology	Folkestone beds					
Arch. South-East Project Number	4105					
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. 10/11/09 – 17/11/09	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Strutt and Parker LLP					
Project Manager	Neil Griffin					
Project Supervisor	Dan Swift, Alice Thorne					
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 maintained during the excavation of new drainage trenches within the area of the 'wilderness', Knole Estate, Sevenoaks, Kent, NGRTQ 54167 54099. 52.5m of trenching and an area of ground reduction measuring 125m² was monitored. No archaeological finds or features were observed during the course of the watching brief.</i></p>						

OASIS ID: archaeo16-67953

Project details

Project name An Archaeological Watching Brief

Short description of An archaeological watching brief was maintained during the

the project	excavation of new drainage trenches within the area of the 'wilderness', Knole Estate, Sevenoaks, Kent, NGRTQ 54167 54099. 52.5m of trenching and an area of ground reduction measuring 125m ² was monitored. No archaeological finds or features were observed during the course of the watching brief.
Project dates	Start: 10-11-2009 End: 17-11-2009
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	KEK - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	2009186 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	National Trust land
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Voluntary/self-interest

Project location

Country	England
Site location	KENT SEVENOAKS SEVENOAKS Knole Estate
Postcode	XXXXXX
Study area	400.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 54167 54099 51.2646305090 0.209988450050 51 15 52 N 000 12 35 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 0m Max: 0m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South East
Project brief originator	National Trust
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East

Project director/manager Neil Griffin
Project supervisor Dan Swift
Type of sponsor/funding body National Trust

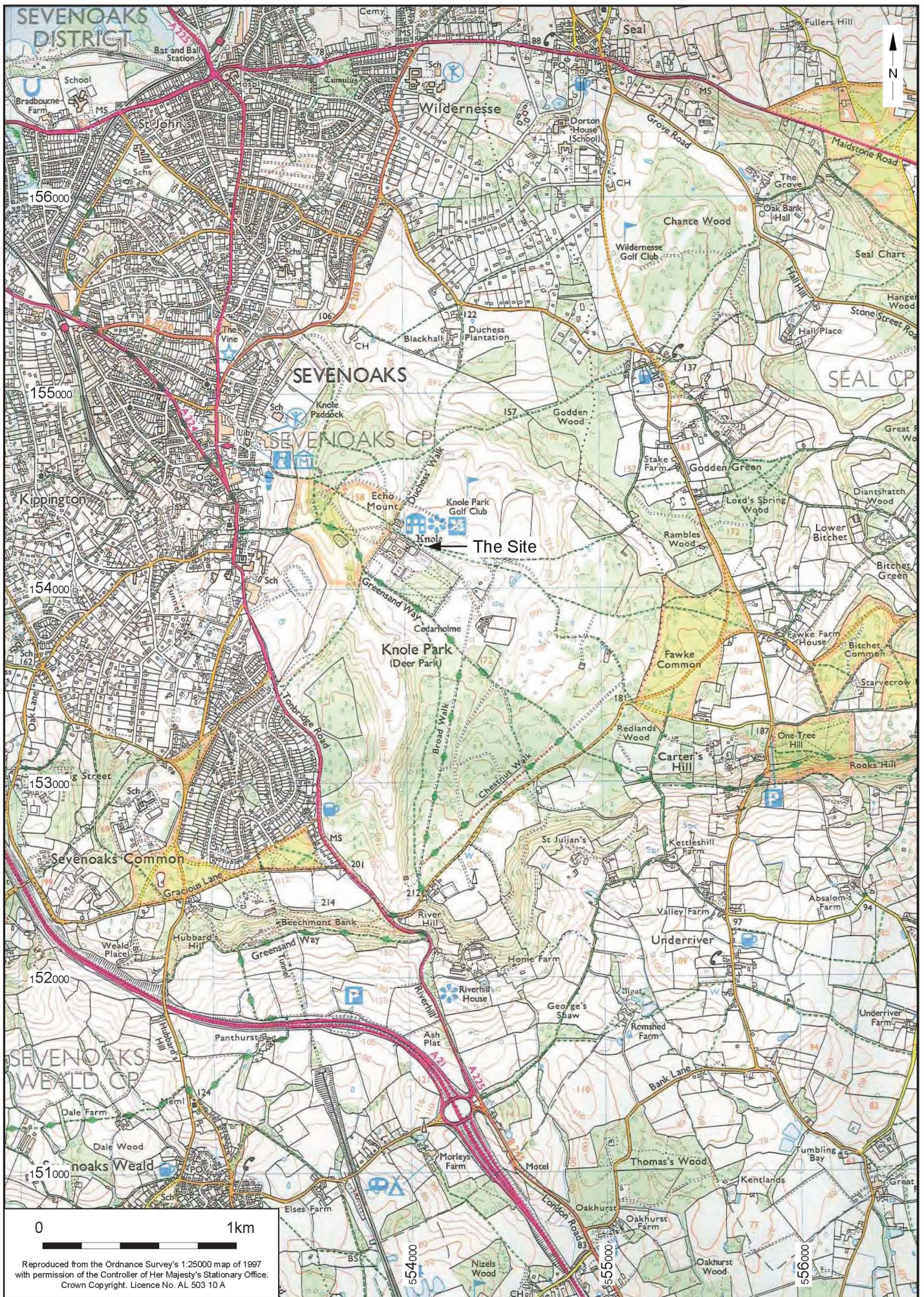
Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No
Digital Archive recipient National Trust
Digital Contents 'other'
Digital Media available 'Images raster / digital photography'
Paper Archive recipient National Trust
Paper Contents 'other'
Paper Media available 'Context sheet','Correspondence','Diary','Map','Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General Notes','Photograph','Plan','Report'

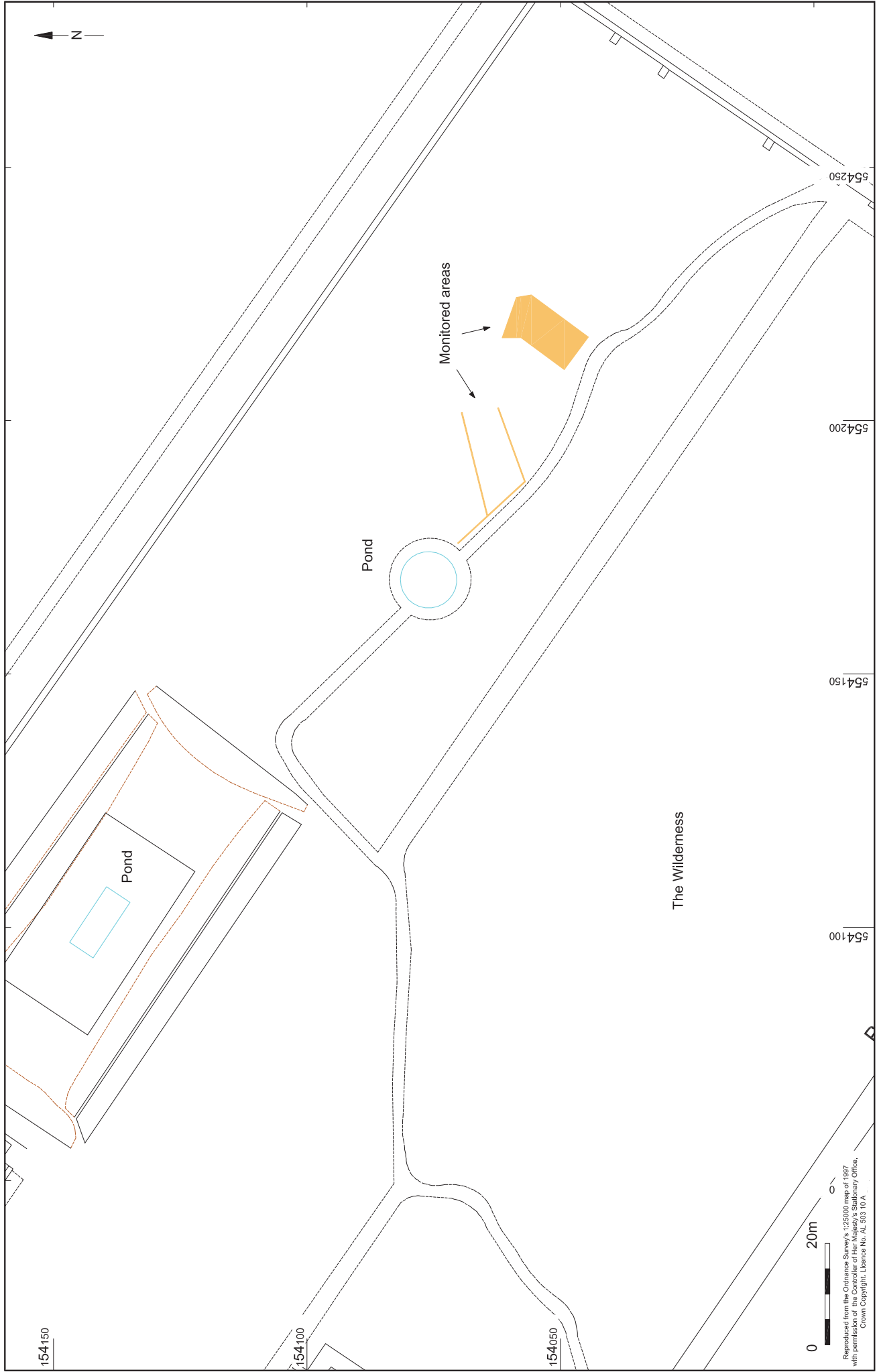
Project bibliography 1

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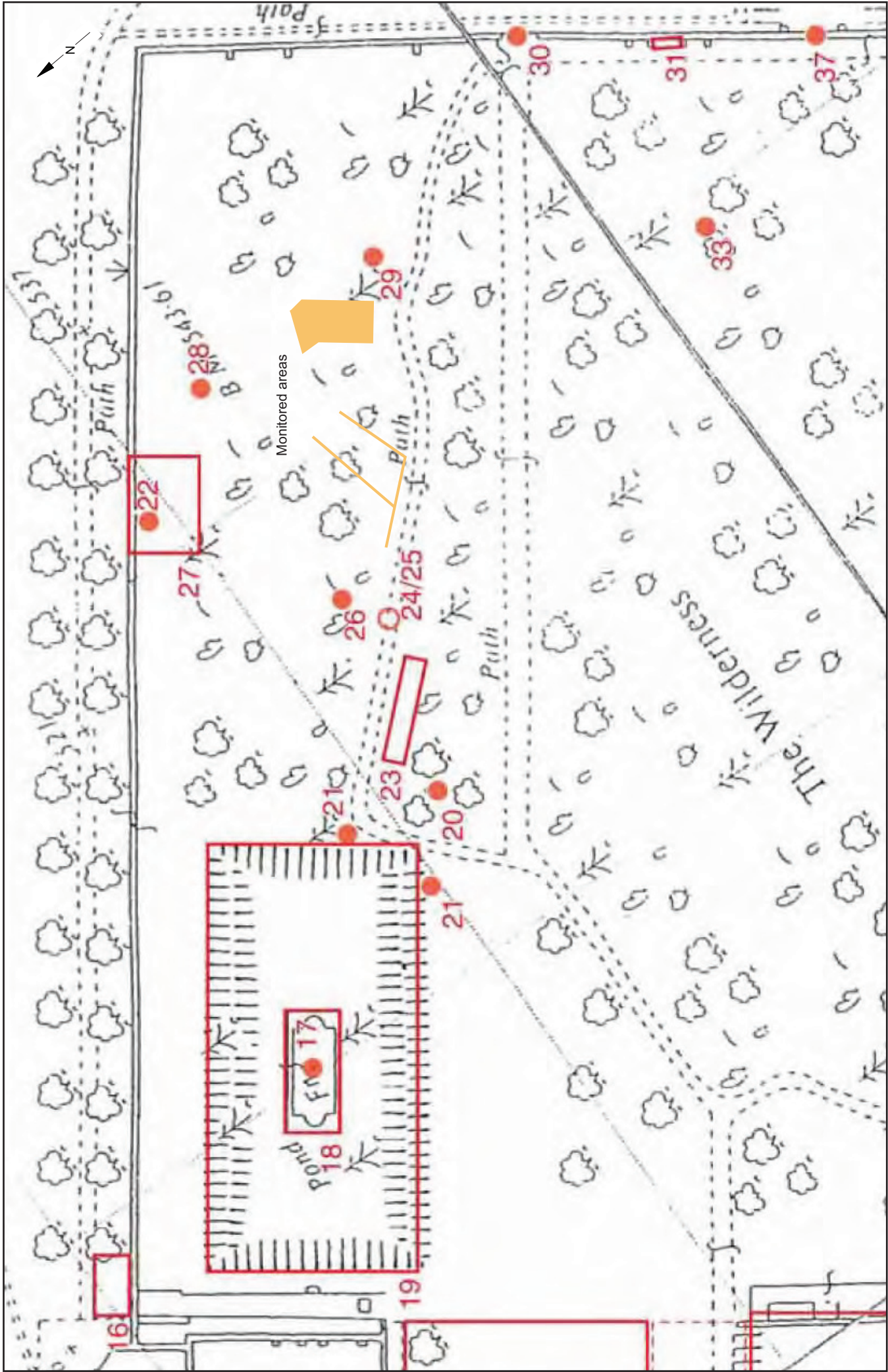


© Archaeology South-East		Knole Estate	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 4105	Nov 2009	Site location	
Report Ref: 2009186	Drawn by: HLF		



© Archaeology South-East		Knole Estate, Sevenoaks	
Project Ref: 4105	Nov 2009	Site plan showing monitored groundworks	
Report Ref: 2009186	Drawn by: JLR		

Fig. 2



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