

**An Archaeological Watching Brief at Lewes Combined Court,  
182 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex**

**(Planning Ref: LW/08/1338)**

**NGR 541508 110136  
(TQ 41508 10136)**

**Project No: 3943  
Site Code: COM 09**

**ASE Report No. 2010032  
OASIS id: archaeo16-76134**

**Nick Garland MA**

**With contributions by  
Lucy Allott, Luke Barber, Neil Griffin, Karine Le Hegarat,  
Richard James, Sarah Porteus and Elke Raemen,**

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**Abstract**

*Archaeology South-East (ASE) the contracting division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology at University College London was commissioned by EC Harris LLP to undertake a watching brief during groundworks on land to the rear of Lewes Combined Court, Lewes, East Sussex. The work was undertaken between the 29<sup>th</sup> June 2009 and 29<sup>th</sup> March 2010.*

*The work uncovered the possible southern edge of Lewes Castle Ditch as well as the post-medieval remains of a brick floor and three lines of foundations. The area had been truncated by modern services.*

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site Background**

1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), the contracting division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology at University College London, were commissioned by EC Harris LLP on behalf of their client to undertake a watching brief on land to the rear of Lewes Combined Court, 182, High Street, Lewes, East Sussex hereafter referred to as 'the site' (NGR TQ 41508 10136; Fig. 1).

### **1.2 Geology and Topography**

1.2.1 The site lies within the centre of Lewes town centre. It is located to the north of Lewes Combined Court and is bounded by Castel Ditch Lane to the west. Residential and commercial properties are located to the north and east of the site (Fig 2).

1.2.2 The British Geological Survey (Sheet 319 Lewes, Solid and Drift Edition) shows the underlying geology of the site is Upper and Middle Chalk.

### **1.3 Planning Background**

1.3. The proposed works involve the construction of a boundary wall to the rear (north) of the Lewes Combined Court (Figs 2-3). Due to the position of the site within the historic core of Lewes an archaeological condition was attached to the planning application (Planning Ref: LW/08/1338) by Lewes District Council on the advice of Gregory Chuter, Assistant County Archaeologist, East Sussex County Council (ESCC).

1.3.2 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for an archaeological watching brief and desk-based assessment was prepared by ASE and approved by Greg Chuter prior to commencement of works.

### **1.4 Scope of Report**

1.4.1 This report details the findings of the watching brief undertaken by Greg Priestly-Bell, Dan Swift, Sarah Porteus and Nick Garland, between the 29<sup>th</sup> of June 2009 and 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2010. The project was managed by Neil Griffin and Dan Swift.

## 2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A detailed examination of the historical and archaeological background was included in the Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation of the site (ASE 2009) and the reader is referred to this document for full details. The key points are summarised below with due acknowledgement.
- 2.2 Lewes is situated on a prominent chalk spur jutting out into the Ouse valley at the point where the river passes through a narrow gap in the South Downs. The principal focus of historic settlement within the borough proper lay on the flat top of the ridge, in the area now occupied by the High Street and its associated lanes, and extending down the slope towards the area of former quayside that lay along the riverfront in the vicinity of Cliffe Bridge.
- 2.3 Castle Ditch Lane lies just downslope of the crest of the ridge, on its southern margin. The ridge is a prominent landscape feature, and will have formed a promontory of land jutting out into the formerly marshy valley of the Ouse. Significant evidence of prehistoric occupation activity on this ridge has only recently come to light and comprises a number of possible enclosure ditches and pits to the rear of Lewes House on School Hill, some 200m to the east of the site. Romano- British material is sketchy, although a number of findspots of artefacts are known from the town, including a pot containing chicken bones found in a pit cut into the natural chalk beneath the castle mound. Bleach (1997) has reviewed the early history of the town and hinted at a possible Roman or earlier ritual landscape (a barrow cemetery) related to a number of earthen mounds, mostly known from 18th and 19th century sources. He included the castle mound and Brack Mount as possible barrows in origin, subsequently enlarged by the Normans, although this remains speculative.
- 2.4 The earliest evidence for major settlement in Lewes is derived from the foundation of the *burh* in 878-79, one of five fortresses established by Alfred the Great, King of Wessex (871-99) as a protection against Danish raiders. The area of the site lay within the centre of the *burh*, although little is known of the internal plan of the settlement, particularly north of the High Street (Harris 2005). However, it has been suggested that much of the street pattern that still survives dates from this period, with the geometric grid of small back and side lanes that exist south of the High Street (with further examples suggested by property boundaries and alleyways) possibly replicated to the north (Houghton 1998). Construction of the castle by William de Warenne shortly after the Conquest is thought to have destroyed the street pattern north of the High Street, with the exception of the southern part of Fisher Street and possibly a former east-west aligned lane called Middle Lane that extended along the broad alignment of Castle Ditch Lane to join Fisher Street in the vicinity of No. 3a; this lane was mentioned in 15th century records, when it appears to have gone out of use, being granted in 1435 to John Hanmer and subsequently being described as 'waste' in 1565 (*Ibid.*, 1998, 36).
- 2.5 Castle Ditch Lane appears to be a post-medieval development. The ditch, originally excavated as part of the castle defences in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, was still open in 1588, when a number of householders from the north side of the High Street, and whose tenements would have backed on to the ditch, were

finned by the Court Leet for dumping 'sullage and filth' next to it (*Ibid.*, 68). It was described as a sink, an open feature assisting to preserve hygiene. George Randall's town map of 1620 does not mark a lane in this position, and it appears to have been classed as waste, with parts of what is now the northern frontage of the lane granted out between 1614 and 1634 (Farrant 1996, 169), and presumably divided between various tenements. By 1661, the part of the ditch now falling within the site formed part of the gardens to the rear of 181-83 High Street (now part of the Crown Courts). Sir Thomas Nutt, Sheriff from 1660 – 1661, owned the property and bought the south-east part of the castle bailey as a garden (*Ibid.*, 170). By 1687, William Pellatt had built a large house on the High Street frontage, amalgamating several former tenement plots. In 1730, the Rev. John Burton described a visit to the house. He was taken out of the back room of the house and out onto gardens, which amazed him with their layout and height – he may have been referring to the Brack Mount (*Ibid.*, 170), which indicates that the castle ditch and the south-eastern part of the bailey were perceived as facets of one garden. By the late 1750s, the property had become the New Coffee House, leased by the powerful Whig politician and future prime minister, Thomas Pelham-Holles, Duke of Newcastle, as his local power base. Descriptions of this time indicate that it still had extensive gardens on both sides of the ditch. The coffee house closed in 1779, and by 1808 the bailey gardens were leased to a printer, Arthur Lee (*Ibid.*, 174).

- 2.6** By the time of Andrew Dury's map of 1764 and, in more detail, the 1799 surveys of the town and borough by, respectively, James Edwards and William Figg, the ditch had been infilled and the course utilised by a lane, identified by Figg as Castle Lane. Two small buildings are shown to front Castle Ditch Lane at the approximate location of the proposed wall on Figg's more detailed town plan. These structures are still present on Marchant's map of 1824, although William Figg's town plan of the same date shows alterations to their layout. A building is shown at this location from the Ordnance Survey 1st edition (c. 1871) through to the Ordnance Survey 1949 revision. Subsequent to this date the Crown Court was extended to the north resulting in the demolition of this structure.
- 2.7** Excavations undertaken by ASE on the opposite side of Castle Ditch Lane in 2003, although very limited in scope, produced some very interesting results, and increased the sum of knowledge relating to the historic urban landscape of Lewes (James in prep.). The discovery of the castle ditch, although not unexpected, was the first time that this feature has been examined under archaeological conditions. Only a very small sample of the ditch could be examined within the confines of the site, and the dimensions remain unknown. In terms of date, the small amount of dating evidence that was recovered was derived from the latest backfilled deposits of 15th-16th century date. The excavation did not sample the earlier fills of the ditch, and thus was unable to cast any light on the date and origin of the feature. A number of other archaeological features spanning the 12th-19th centuries were also revealed within during these works.
- 2.8** The present site occupies the southern side of Castle Ditch Lane, directly beneath the south-eastern defences of the castle bailey, c. 20m from the boundary of the Scheduled Monument (SM 12872).

### **3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Aims and Objectives**

3.1.1 The Aims and Objectives of the evaluation were laid out in the Written Scheme of Investigation (ASE 2009) and are reproduced below with due acknowledgement.

**3.2** The general objective of the archaeological work is to monitor the ground works specified below in order to ensure that any deposits and features, artefacts and ecofacts of archaeological interest, are recorded and interpreted to appropriate standards.

**3.3** Research questions (RQ) relevant to the site have been set out in the Extensive Urban Survey for Lewes (Harris 2005) and are listed below:

#### **Pre-urban activity**

RQ1: What was the nature of the palaeo-environment (ancient environment), and the prehistoric, Roman, and Early Anglo-Saxon human activity in the area?

#### **Origins**

RQ4: What evidence is there for the location of the defences of the Alfredian burh?

RQ5: What evidence is there for Anglo-Saxon secular settlement (and its economy), both within and without the burh?

RQ6: What was the road layout, how did this evolve, and how did it relate to east-west routes, river crossings, a transhumant Downland-Wealden economy, and the burh?

#### **Late Anglo-Saxon and Norman town**

RQ7: What was the extent of the town and its suburbs in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries, and to what degree did it change over this period?

RQ8: What evidence is there for the evolution of the street plan during this period, especially in relation to the expanding settlement and the development of suburbs?

RQ9: What evidence is there for early burgage plots, and when and where did built-up street frontages first occur?

RQ10: What different zones (especially with reference to the suburbs) were there during this period, and how did they change (assessing the value of the Domesday Book evidence for late 11<sup>th</sup> century change)?

RQ12: What evidence is there for the origins and early development of the castle (especially with reference to the Brack Mount)?



RQ15: What evidence is there for the economy of the town, especially with regard to its Downland and Wealden hinterland?

#### **Later medieval town**

RQ16: How have tenements/burgage plots developed from the first built-up street frontages to the plots that survive today?

RQ17: What different zones (e.g. social differentiation, or types of activity: especially consider industry) were there during this period, and how did they change?

RQ18: What evidence is there for the development and of institutions, such as the castle, priory, friary, hospitals, chantries, and grammar school?

RQ19: What documentary and archaeological evidence is there for late medieval decline?

RQ21: How and when did the town walls, gates and associated ditches develop?

#### **Post-medieval town**

RQ22: What different zones (e.g. social differentiation, or types of activity: especially consider the brewing and tanning industries) were there during this period, and how did they change?

RQ23: How were the medieval and early post-medieval buildings adapted for new functions and changing status (e.g. creation of carriageways, or subdivision of hall houses)?

### **3.4 Methodology**

- 3.4.1 Work monitored on site included the excavation of 4 test pits, the excavation of a new trench to relocate the electricity cable and excavations for the foundations of the new wall.
- 3.4.2 Where excavations carried out by contractors revealed archaeological features, hand excavation ceased at the monitoring archaeologists discretion. The features were then hand cleaned and recorded to archaeological standards by the archaeologist(s) in attendance. Exposures were hand cleaned by archaeologists as necessary to clarify the presence/absence and nature of any features. Adequate time was made available for appropriate archaeological excavation by hand to identify and record the remains as far as possible within the limits of the works in order to extract archaeological and environmental information.
- 3.4.3 The County Archaeologist was notified in the event that any significant archaeological remains were encountered during the excavation. Any decision regarding the best way to proceed in this instance remained with the County Archaeologist.

- 3.4.4 All encountered archaeological deposits, features and finds were recorded according to accepted professional standards in accordance with the approved ASE Written Scheme of Investigation using pro-forma context record sheets. Archaeological features and deposits were planned at a scale of 1:20 and sections generally drawn at a scale of 1:10. Deposit colours were verified by visual inspection and not by reference to a Munsell Colour chart. All spoil from the excavations was inspected by archaeologists visually and with a metal detector to recover any artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest.
- 3.4.5 A photographic record of the trenches and associated deposits and features was kept and will form part of the site archive which is presently held at Archaeology South-East offices at Portslade, East Sussex, and will in due course be offered to a suitable local museum.
- 3.4.6 The spoil from the excavations was inspected by archaeologists to recover any artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest. Spoil deposits were also scanned with a metal detector.

Number of Contexts	38 contexts
No. of files/paper record	1 folder
Plan and sections sheets	3 sheet
Photographs	5 Colour slide, 5 B+W, 81 Digital
Bulk finds	5 bags

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

## 4.0 RESULTS (Figs 3 – 6)

**4.1** The wall foundation trench was excavated for the placement of the new footing for the proposed wall. Test pits 1 and 2 were excavated to determine the depth of archaeological remains along the line of the proposed wall foundation trench. The electricity cable trench was excavated parallel to the line of the proposed wall with the purpose of locating existing electricity cables. Electricity test pits 3 and 4 were excavated to further determine the line of the existing electricity cables and to move any cables within the wall foundation trench away from the line of the proposed wall.

### 4.2 Test Pit 1 (Fig 4.1)

#### 4.2.1

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Thickness	Height m.AOD
1001	Layer	Tarmac	As TP	As TP	0.1 m	28.92 m
1002	Layer	Type 1	As TP	As TP	0.2 m	28.82 m
1003	Layer	Made Ground	As TP	As TP	0.2 m	28.62 m
1004	Masonry	Foundations	As TP	0.4 m	0.2 m	28.42 m
1005	Layer	Made Ground / Ditch Fill?	As TP	As TP	0.3 m	28.28 m
1006	Layer	Natural	As TP	As TP	N/A	27.98 m

Table 2: Test Pit 1 - List of recorded contexts

#### 4.2.2 Summary

Modern overburden consisted of tarmac and Type 1, [1001] and [1002], and extended to a depth of 0.4 m below the existing ground surface. A layer of made ground, [1003], containing occasional CBM inclusions, lay underneath the overburden and over a masonry wall stub [1004], orientated in NW-SE direction. The wall stub consisted of two courses; the upper course consisted of truncated stone and tile and the lower course consisted of a single dressed stone block. Below wall [1/004] lay a deposit of mid/dark greyish brown slightly sandy clay silt, [1005]. This deposit may be town ditch fill and extended to approx. 1m below ground surface, before reaching what appeared to be the weathered top of the natural chalk [1006]. Finds from fill [1005] included early and mid post-medieval pottery, post-medieval Ceramic building material (CBM), glass, nails and pin fragments. The natural chalk appeared to slope down towards the west, also suggesting the location of the town ditch.

### 4.3 Test Pit 2 (Fig 4.2)

#### 4.3.1

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Thickness	Height m.AOD
2001	Layer	Tarmac	As TP	As TP	0.1 m	28.81 m
2002	Layer	Concrete	As TP	As TP	0.15 m	28.71 m
2003	Layer	Type 1	As TP	As TP	0.1 m	28.56 m
2004	Layer	Made Ground	As TP	As TP	0.1	28.46 m
2005	Masonry	Brick paving	As TP	As TP	0.06 m	28.36 m
2006	Layer	Made Ground	As TP	As TP	0.39 m	28.30 m
2007	Layer	Made Ground	As TP	As TP	N/A	27.91 m

Table 3: Test Pit 2 - List of recorded contexts

#### 4.3.2 Summary

Modern overburden consisted of tarmac, concrete and Type 1, [2001], [2002] and [2003], and extended to a depth of 0.35m below the existing ground surface. A layer of made ground [2004] lay underneath the overburden and over an area of brick paving [2005]. The paving was laid on a thick deposit of made ground [2006], which in turn overlay a sandy clay made ground [2007]. Bricks in the paving date from 17<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### 4.4 Electricity Test Pit 3 (Fig 4.3, 4.5)

#### 4.4.1

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Thickness	Height m.AOD
3001	Layer	Tarmac	As TP	As TP	0.1 m	28.78 m
3002	Layer	Type 1	As TP	As TP	0.15 m	28.68 m
3003	Layer	Made Ground	As TP	As TP	0.14 m	28.53 m
3004	Masonry	Brick foundations	0.3 m	0.3 m	0.32 m	28.39 m
3005	Cut	Foundation cut	0.3 m	0.32 m	0.32 m	28.39 m
3006	Layer	Made Ground	As TP	As TP	0.18 m	28.29 m
3007	Layer	Made Ground	As TP	As TP	0.31 m	28.39 m

Table 4: Electricity Test Pit 3 - List of recorded contexts

#### 4.4.2 Summary

Modern overburden consisted of tarmac and Type 1, [3001] and [3002], and extended to a depth of 0.25 m below the existing ground surface. A layer of made ground, [3003], containing occasional CBM inclusions, lay underneath the overburden and over brick foundations [3004], and its associated foundation cut [3005]. The wall was constructed using brick and cement and was relatively modern in date. The foundation cut [3005] truncated two layers of made ground, a mid greyish yellow sand silt [3006] and a mid yellowish grey sandy/stony silt [3007]. The natural horizon was not encountered within this test pit.

#### 4.5 Electricity Test Pit 4 (Fig 4.4)

##### 4.5.1

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Thickness	Height m.AOD
4001	Layer	Tarmac	Tr.	Tr.	0.13 m	28.79 m
4002	Layer	Concrete	Tr.	Tr.	0.1 m	28.66 m
4003	Layer	Type 1	Tr.	Tr.	0.2 m	28.56 m
4004	Layer	Sand	Tr.	Tr.	N/A	28.36 m

Table 5: Electricity Test Pit 4 - List of recorded contexts

##### 4.5.2 Summary

Modern overburden consisted of tarmac, concrete and Type 1, [4001], [4002] and [4003], and extended to a depth of 0.43m below the existing ground surface. A layer of sand [4004] lay underneath the modern overburden and was laid for the modern electricity cables. The natural horizon was not encountered within this test pit.

#### 4.6 Electricity Cable Trench (Fig 5)

##### 4.6.1 Summary

Modern overburden consisted of tarmac, concrete and Type 1, [5001], [5002] and [5003], and extended to a depth of 0.30m below the existing ground surface. A layer of made ground [5004] lay under the overburden and covered all of the archaeological remains within the trench. A thin layer of modern backfill [5009], was observed within the centre of the trench, overlying the made ground.

A small area of brick paving [5005] had been truncated by modern electricity cables. It consisted of 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century red brick and mortar, one course in thickness and laying on top of a thin layer of dark greyish brown silty sand [5006], a foundation material for the floor. The location of this material in comparison to Test Pit 2 (see above) strongly suggests that they represent the same material.

Two small wall foundations were also uncovered during the excavation of this

trench. Both Foundations [5007] were constructed of a combination of brick, flint and mortar and had been heavily truncated by the modern electricity cables. While wall foundations [5007] did not appear to survive on the other side of the trench, foundations [5008] were orientated across the trench in a north-west to south-east orientation. Both sets of foundations have been dated to from the 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century through brick samples.

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Thickness	Height m.AOD
5001	Layer	Tarmac	Tr.	Tr.	0.1 m	28.81 m
5002	Layer	Concrete	Tr.	Tr.	0.1 m	28.71 m
5003	Layer	Type 1	Tr.	Tr.	0.1 m	28.61 m
5004	Layer	Made Ground	Tr.	Tr.	0.2 m	28.51 m
5005	Masonry	Brick paving	1.55 m	0.3 m	0.1 m	28.30 m
5006	Layer	Foundation material for floor	1.55 m	0.3 m	0.05 m	28.25 m
5007	Masonry	Wall foundations	Tr.	0.7 m	0.18 m	28.39 m
5008	Masonry	Wall foundations	Tr.	1.05 m	0.12 m	28.42 m
5009	Layer	Modern backfill	Tr.	2.8 m	0.07 m	28.48 m

Table 6: Electricity cable trench – List of recorded contexts

#### 4.7 Wall Foundation Trench (Fig 6)

##### 4.7.1 Summary

Modern overburden consisted of tarmac, concrete and Type 1, [5001], [5002] and [5003], and extended to a depth of 0.30m below the existing ground surface. A layer of made ground [5004] lay under the overburden and covered all of the archaeological remains within the trench.

Three sets of wall foundations were observed to the west of the foundation trench. Wall foundations [5011] were constructed from a combination of brick, flint and mortar and crossed the trench in a north-west to south-east direction. These foundations represent the continuation of wall foundations [5008] recorded in the electricity cable trench. A modern drainage pipe [5012] had been concreted in around the remains of the foundations.

Two sets of foundations [5013] and [5014] were located further to the west and possibly represent a continuation of one another; however, not enough of either feature was uncovered during the excavation of this trench. Both foundations were constructed of red brick and a cement mortar and were orientated in a north-west to south-east direction.

A mid brownish grey silty clay deposit with frequent inclusions of CBM, chalk

pieces and small and medium sub-angular stones [5010] lay underneath made ground [5004]. The extent of this deposit was never ascertained, however, its similarity to deposit [1005] in test pit 1 indicates that it may be an earlier layer of made ground.

<b>Number</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Max. Length</b>	<b>Max. Width</b>	<b>Deposit Thickness</b>	<b>Height m.AOD</b>
5001	Layer	Tarmac	Tr.	Tr.	0.1 m	28.96 m
5002	Layer	Concrete	Tr.	Tr.	0.1 m	28.86 m
5003	Layer	Type 1	Tr.	Tr.	0.1 m	28.76 m
5004	Layer	Made Ground	Tr.	Tr.	0.2 m	28.66 m
5010	Deposit	Made ground / ditch fill	Tr.	Tr.	0.65 m	28.46 m
5011	Masonry	Wall foundations	Tr.	1.5 m	0.3 m	28.25 m
5012	Masonry	Modern drain	0.63 m	0.47 m	0.3 m	28.21 m
5013	Masonry	Wall foundations	1.2 m	0.6 m	0.4 m	28.40 m
5014	Masonry	Wall foundations	Tr.	0.5 m	0.45 m	28.64 m

Table 7: Wall foundation trench – list of recorded contexts

## 5.0 THE FINDS

5.1 A small assemblage of finds, mainly consisting of ceramic building material (CBM), was recovered during the archaeological work. A summary overview can be found in Table 8. In addition to the hand-collected finds, the environmental residues contained a small amount of metalwork, a piece of glass and additional shell (Appendix 1). A number of finds were assigned unique Registered Finds numbers (RF <00>). These were again all recovered from the environmental residues. A summary is given in Table 2.

Context	Pot	Wt (g)	CBM	Wt (g)	Shell	Wt (g)	Stone	Wt (g)
1003	1	130	2	482				
1005			3	398				
2005			2	4332				
2006			3	324				
2007							1	24
3004			1	2346				
3005			1	60				
3006					1	20	1	58
5003			1	2788				
5005			1	1499				
5007			3	1626				
5008			1	3058				
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>16913</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>82</b>

Table 8: Quantification of the finds

## 5.2 The Pottery by Luke Barber

5.2.1 The archaeological work recovered a small assemblage of pottery all of which is of post-medieval date. Although sherd sizes tend to range from small to medium (up to 60mm across) the material is not heavily abraded and does not appear to have been extensively reworked. The majority of the pottery is of the early post-medieval period, fitting within a c. 1550 to 1700 date range. Contexts [1/06] & [1/05] combined produced three early post-medieval bodysherds consisting of local glazed redware (6g), a green glazed Border ware (3g) and Frechen German stoneware (5g). Context [1/05] contained an assemblage of essentially the same date but again only bodysherds are present for this early material. Wares represented in [1/09] include high-fired local unglazed earthenware (2/14g), local glazed redware (3/34g), green glazed Border ware (1/2g) and yellow glazed Border ware (1/3g). This context also produced a single sherds from a creamware plate dated to the later 18<sup>th</sup> or very early 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is possible this sherd is intrusive. The latest sherd was recovered from [1/03] and consists of the base of a late local glazed redware of 19<sup>th</sup>- century date.



### **5.3 The Ceramic Building Material** by Sarah Porteus

- 5.3.1 A small quantity of ceramic building material was of possible medieval date from context [1/005] this included fragments of peg tile in sandy orange fabric with moderate medium sized quartz inclusions. One fragment had a solid green glaze and reduced core which suggests a 12<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> century date. However, also within this context were fragments of brick and a possible pan tile fragment of probable 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century date indicating that the medieval fragments are likely to be residual.
- 5.3.2 The majority of CBM is of 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century date. A brick with an abraded upper surface in fabric B1 - a fine sandy orange/red brick with moderate very coarse black iron rich inclusions and sparse coarse quartz and a fragment of peg tile in T1 - orange fabric with coarse orange silt inclusions and sparse fine black iron rich inclusions with occasional cream silt inclusions were recovered from context [1/003]. A brick sample from context [2/005] consisted of two bricks in fabric B3 – an orange silty fabric with moderate coarse red and cream silt chunks with sparse fine black iron rich inclusions. Both bricks had some vitrification of headers suggesting they had been intended for diaper work, possibly dating to the 19<sup>th</sup> century revival of the medieval style. A single peg tile fragment from [2/006] was of fabric T1. Fragments of brick in a fabric near Museum of London fabric 3032 was recovered from contexts [3/004] and [5/007]. Brick in a local brick fabric fine, a sandy orange/red brick with moderate very coarse black iron rich inclusions and sparse coarse quartz were recovered from context [5/008]. A small amount of 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century material recovered from contexts [3/05], [5/007], [5/008].

### **5.4 The Glass** by Elke Raemen

- 5.4.1 A single fragment of a pale green window pane was recovered from environmental sample <2> (contexts [1/05] and [1/06]). The piece retains one straight cut edge and is of 17<sup>th</sup>- to 18<sup>th</sup>-century date.

### **5.5 The Ironwork** by Elke Raemen

- 5.5.2 A total of nine general purpose nail fragments was recovered from two different contexts. All are from environmental samples i.e. <1> ([1/05]) and <2> ([1/05] and [1/06]).

### **5.6 The Registered Finds** by Elke Raemen

- 5.6.1 A total of 13 pin fragments and three complete lace chapes were recovered from the environmental residues (Table 9 and Appendix 1).
- 5.6.2 The group of pins contains only one complete example (RF <5>; length 29.9mm). Overall, three different types of head are represented ie spherical wound-wire heads (RF <2>, RF <4>), a flattened wound-wire head (RF <1>) and a solid spherical head (RF <5>). Head diameters range between 1.3 and 2.2mm. Traces of tinning were retained by two examples (RF <2>).

5.6.3 Environmental residue <2> contained three complete lace chapes. Of these, RF <6> has an edge to edge seam, whereas RF <7> and <8> exhibit overlapping seams. All have untrimmed ends apart from RF <8> which appears to have a folded tab at the end. RF <6> retains some traces of lace.

RF No	CONTEXT	OBJECT	MATERIAL	PERIOD	WT (G)	COMMENTS
1	1/05	PIN	COPP	MED/PMED	<2	
2	1/05	PIN	COPP	MED/PMED	<2	X 2 pins
3	1/05	PIN	COPP	MED/PMED	<2	X 7 frags, min 3 pins
4	1/05 and 1/06	PIN	COPP	MED/PMED	<2	X 2 pins
5	1/05 and 1/06	PIN	COPP	MED/PMED	<2	complete
6	1/05 and 1/06	LCHP	COPP	MED/EPMED	<2	complete
7	1/05 and 1/06	LCHP	COPP	MED/EPMED	<2	complete
8	1/05 and 1/06	LCHP	COPP	MED/EPMED	<2	complete

Table 9: Summary of registered finds

### 5.7 The Geological Material by Luke Barber

5.7.1 The small assemblage from the site (contexts [1/05], [2/07] and [3/06]) is exclusively composed of West Country slate fragments. This material is certainly residual medieval roofing material – this stone type being in common use on buildings of some standing in the town mainly between the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries.

### 5.8 The Marine Shell by Elke Raemen

5.8.1 A single piece of oyster shell was recovered from [3/06]. The piece consists of an immature lower valve, containing some evidence of parasitic activity. In addition, five undiagnostic and highly abraded oyster shell fragments, representing minimum one valve, were recovered from [1/05] (environmental sample <1>).

## 6.0 THE ENVIRONMENTAL MATERIAL By Karine Le Hegarat and Lucy Allott

6.1 Two bulk samples were taken from the possible ditch deposits [1/005] and [5/010] to establish evidence for environmental remains such as wood charcoal, charred macrobotanical remains, fauna and mollusca and to assist finds recovery. Samples were taken with the aim of recovering information about the past vegetation and activities in the area contemporary with the ditch infilling.

### 6.2 Methods

6.2.1 The samples were processed in their entirety in a flotation tank, the residues and flots were retained on 500µm and 250µm meshes respectively and were air dried prior to sorting. The residues were passed through 4mm and 2mm geological sieves and each fraction sorted for environmental and artefact remains (Appendix 1). The flots were scanned under a stereozoom microscope at magnifications of x7-45 and an overview of their contents recorded (Appendix 1). Preliminary identifications have been provided for macrobotanical remains present through reference to modern comparative material and reference atlases (Cappers *et al.* 2006, Jacomet 2006, NIAB 2004). Nomenclature used follows Stace (1997).

### 6.3 Results

6.3.1 On the whole the samples produced small flots containing limited amount of environmental remains including wood charcoal fragments, charred macrobotanicals remains consisting of crops, weed seeds, small mammal and fish bones as well as two hammerstone spheroids. Residues produced a large quantity of wood charcoal fragments and contained mammal and fish bones, oyster shell fragments, ceramic and stone materials, glass, pottery, copper and iron artefacts. The bones, mollusca and artefactual remains are included in the finds report.

6.3.2 Both flots contained low to moderate percentage of uncharred materials, predominantly bramble (*Rubus* sp.) seeds. As the deposit was not waterlogged or well enough sealed for anaerobic preservation this could indicate a small degree of modern disturbance and potential contamination of the ditch. New plant growths, such as roots were also noticed during excavation.

6.3.3 Both samples produced some wood charcoal fragments and they were particularly abundant in the residues which contained fragments over 25mm in size. These fragments were generally well preserved. .

6.3.4 The charred macroplants present in both flots were moderately to poorly preserved. They included some cereal crop grains (wheat - *Triticum* sp., bread wheat - *Triticum* cf. *aestivum*, barley - *Hordeum* sp.) and one indeterminate Legume -bean/pea. Sample <1> also produced one seed from the grass (Poaceae ) family

## 6.4 Discussion

- 6.4.1 Sampling has confirmed the presence of environmental and artefactual remains. The assemblage of wood charcoal fragments could provide further information regarding woody taxa targeted for fuel and may present material suitable for radiocarbon dating. However, evidence for some contamination was noted and the fill of the ditch might have accumulated over an extended period which may lessen the value for further analytical or dating work. Additionally dates have already been obtained from some artefacts (Ceramic Building Material from context [1/005], glass from mixed context [1/005 – 1/006] and pins from both contexts) and the environmental remains are unlikely to refine the dating further.
- 6.4.2 The assemblage of crop grains and weed seed provides limited evidence for the use of a range of crops including bread wheat and legumes as well as grasses that may be associated with these crops. The samples provided no evidence for natural vegetation in the immediate vicinity of the ditch that would have been contemporary with its infilling. This is not entirely unexpected as such remains would only preserve if charred. Unfortunately the charred remains that were recovered are too highly fragmented and too few to provide information about the economy of the area or the diet of the population.

## **7.0 DISCUSSION**

- 7.1** The monitoring of excavations at Lewes Combined Court revealed features that were predominantly post-medieval in date. The depths of the excavations only reached natural chalk in one location (test pit 1) at a height of 27.98 m OD. The majority of the area had been truncated by modern services.
- 7.2** Medieval remains were very limited; however, Test Pit 1 did reveal what may possibly be the edge of the Lewes Castle Ditch. The development restriction on the excavated depth meant that this could not be corroborated during the later excavation for the wall foundations. This information, combined with the previous excavations undertaken by ASE north of the Castle Ditch Lane in 2003, give a estimated guess for the location of the castle ditch, however, further work is required to determine a more definite result.
- 7.3** Later post-medieval remains were restricted to a small area of paving and the remains of several lines of foundations. This suggests activity in the centre of the town, however, due to the limited scope of the excavations themselves little further can be stated about the function of these structures.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ASE would like to thank *EC Harris LLP for commissioning the work and Greg Chuter of ESCC for his guidance throughout the project.*

Appendix 1: Environmental tables

Sample Number	Context	Context / deposit type	Sample Volume litres	sub-Sample Volume litres	Charcoal >4mm	Weight (g)	Charcoal <4mm	Weight (g)	Bone and Teeth	Weight (g)	Fishbone and microfauna	Weight (g)	Marine Molluscs	Weight (g)	Other (eg ind, pot, cbm)
1	1005	Ditch Fill	10	10	***	54	***	6	**	122	*	2	*	12	CBM */416g, CU Pin */<2g, Slate */6g, Pot */64g, Metal*/26g
2	1005, 1006	Ditch Fill	20	20			**	4	**	122	**	4			Fe */22g, Pot */18g, Glass */2g, CBM */88g, Cu */2g

Residue quantification (\* = 1-10, \*\* = 11-50, \*\*\* = 51-250, \*\*\*\* = >250)

Sample Number	Context	weight g	Flot volume ml	Uncharred %	sediment %	seeds uncharred	Charcoal >4mm	Charcoal <4mm	Charcoal <2mm	crop seeds charred	Identifications	Preservation	weed seeds charred	Identifications	Preservation	fish, amphibian, small mammal bone	Ind debris hammerscale
1	1005	10	10	8	6	P	*	**	***	**	Cerealia indet., <i>Triticum</i> sp., <i>Triticum</i> cf. <i>aestivum</i> , <i>Hordeum</i> sp.	+++/+	*	Poaceae	++		*
2	1005, 1006	6	8	26	20	P	*	*	***	*	Cerealia indet., <i>Triticum</i> sp., <i>Hordeum</i> sp., Fabaceae indet.	++/+				*	

Flot quantification (\* = 1-10, \*\* = 11-50, \*\*\* = 51-250, \*\*\*\* = >250) and preservation (+ = poor, ++ = moderate, +++ = good)

**SMR Summary Form**

Site Code	COM 09					
Identification Name and Address	Lewes, Combined Court 182 High Street Lewes					
County, District &/or Borough	Lewes, East Sussex					
OS Grid Refs.	541508, 110136					
Geology	Upper and Middle Chalk (BGS sheet 319)					
Arch. South-East Project Number	3943					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	Watching Brief <b>X</b>	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field	Shallow Urban	Deep Urban <b>X</b>	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	WB. 29/6/09 to 29/3/10	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Her Majesty's Court Service					
Project Manager	Neil Griffin					
Project Supervisor	Nick Garland					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM	Other Modern		
<p>100 Word Summary.</p> <p><i>Archaeology South-East (ASE), the contracting division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology at University College London, were commissioned by EC Harris LLP on behalf of their client to undertake a watching brief on land to the rear of Lewes Combined Court, 182, High Street, Lewes, East Sussex (NGR TQ 41508 10136). The work was undertaken between the 29<sup>th</sup> June 2009 and 29<sup>th</sup> March 2010.</i></p> <p><i>The works uncovered the possible southern top edge of the Lewes Castle Ditch as well as the post-medieval remains of a brick floor and three lines of foundations. The area had been truncated by modern services.</i></p>						



OASIS Form

**OASIS ID: archaeol6-76134**

Project details

Project name Lewes Combined Courts

Short description of the project Archaeology South-East (ASE), the contracting division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology at University College London, were commissioned by EC Harris LLP on behalf of their client to undertake a watching brief on land to the rear of Lewes Combined Court, 182, High Street, Lewes, East Sussex (NGR TQ 41508 10136). The work was undertaken between the 29th June 2009 and 29th March 2010. The works uncovered the possible southern top edge of the Lewes Castle Ditch as well as the post-medieval remains of a brick floor and three lines of foundations. The area had been truncated by modern services.

Project dates Start: 29-06-2009 End: 29-03-2010

Previous/future work No / No

Any associated project reference codes COM09 - Sitecode

Type of project Recording project

Site status None

Monument type FOUNDATIONS Post Medieval

Monument type BRICK FLOOR Post Medieval

Monument type DITCH Medieval

Significant Finds NONE None

Investigation type 'Watching Brief'

Prompt Planning condition

Project location

Country England

Site location EAST SUSSEX LEWES LEWES Lewes Combined Court

Postcode BN7 1

Study area 52.00 Square metres

Site coordinates TQ 41508 10136 50.8728028399 0.01144099524330 50 52 22 N  
000 00 41 E Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 27.98m Max: 27.98m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Archaeology South East

Project brief originator Archaeology South East

Project design Archaeology South-East

originator

Project director/manager Neil Griffin

Project supervisor Nick Garland

Type of sponsor/funding body Developer

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient Local Museum

Physical Contents 'Ceramics','Environmental','Glass','Metal','other'

Digital Archive recipient Local Museum

Digital Contents 'Ceramics','Environmental','Glass','Metal','other'

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

Paper Archive recipient Local Museum

Paper Contents 'Ceramics','Environmental','Glass','Metal','Stratigraphic','other'

Paper Media available 'Context sheet','Correspondence','Photograph','Plan','Report','Unpublished Text'

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title An Archaeological Watching Brief at Lewes Combined Court, 182 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex

Author(s)/Editor(s) Garland, N

Other bibliographic details 2010032

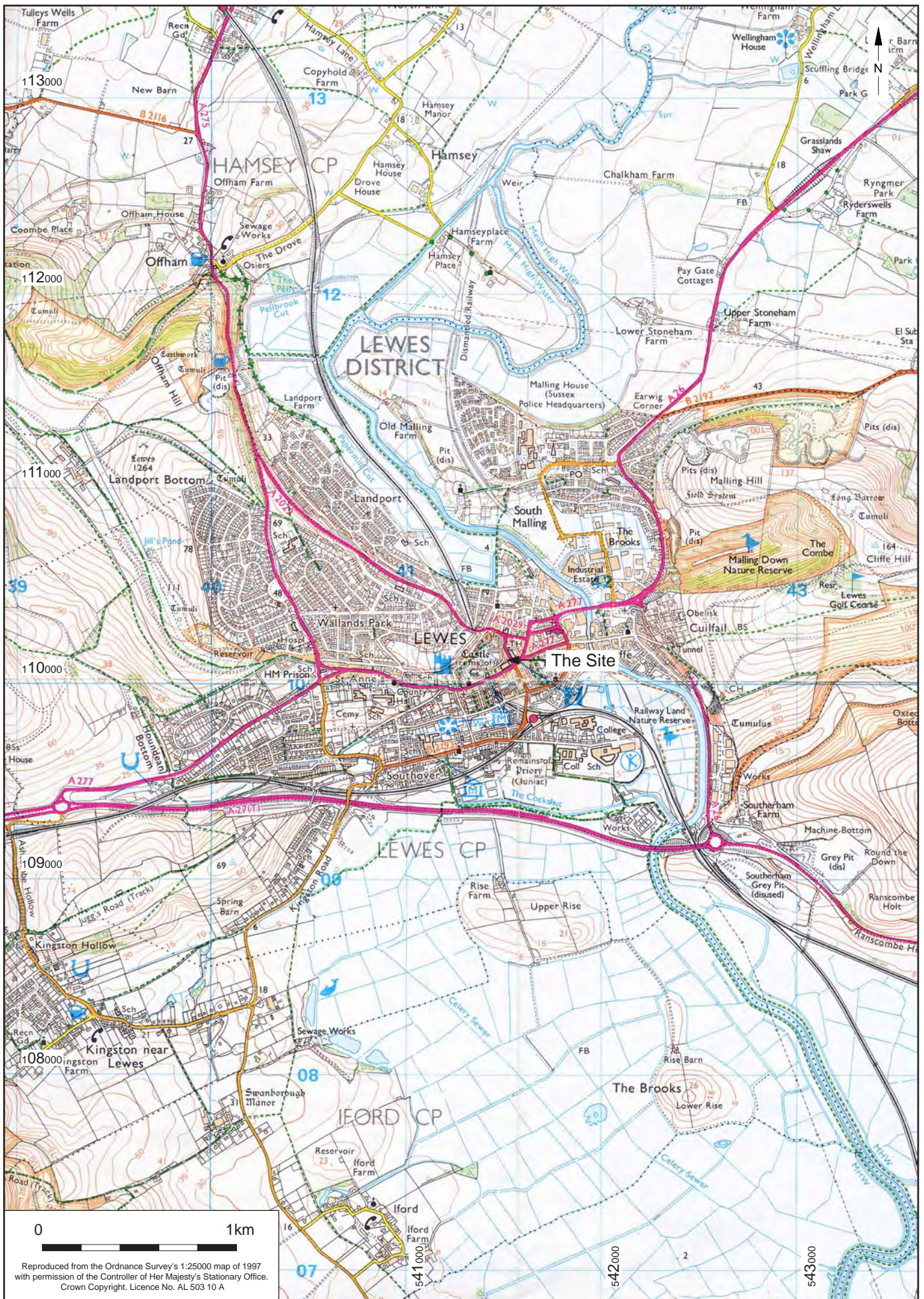
Date 2010

Issuer or publisher Archaeology South East

Place of issue or publication Portslade

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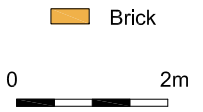
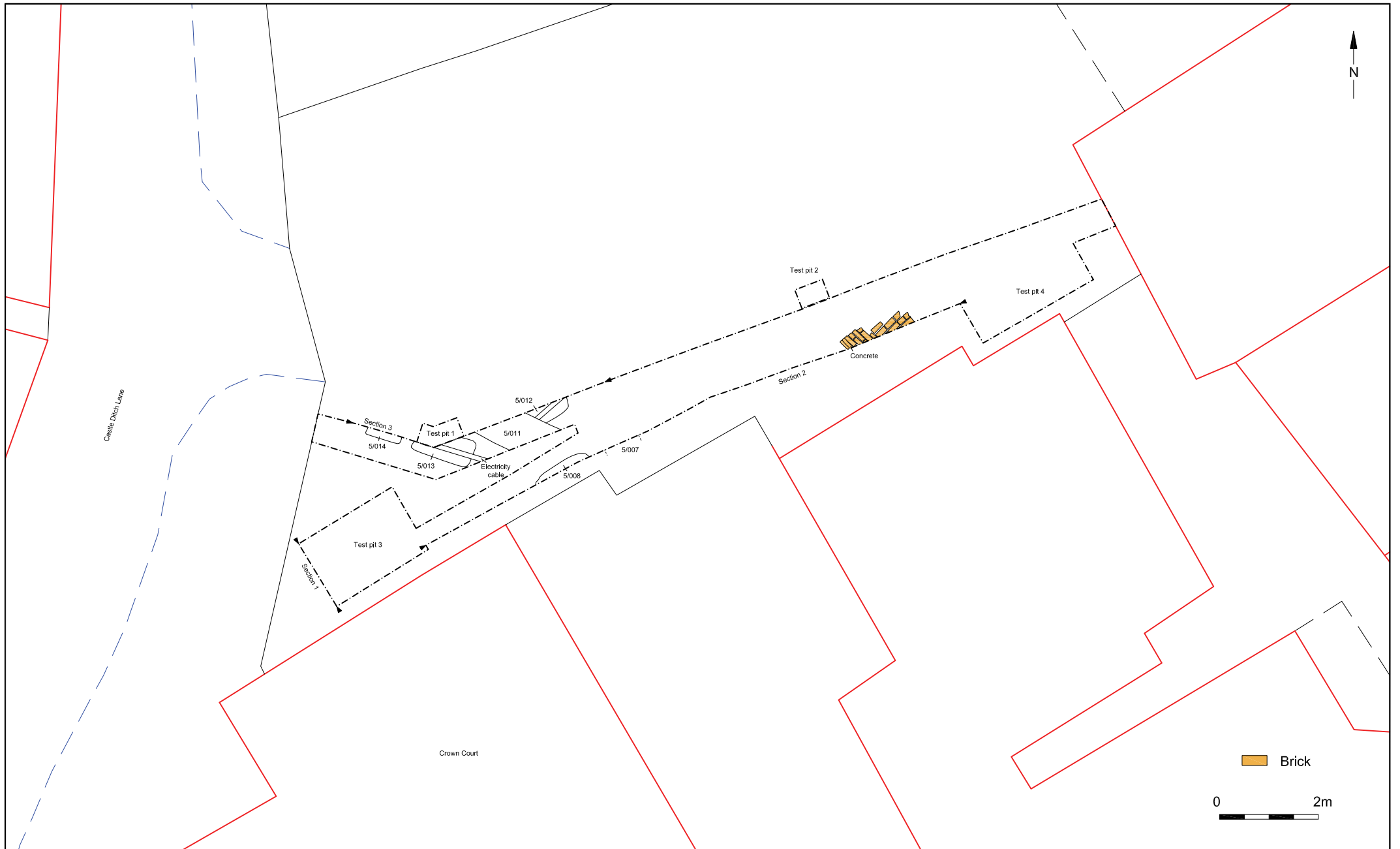


© Archaeology South-East		Lewes Combined Court		Fig. 1
Project Ref: 3943	April 2010	Site location		
Report Ref: 2010032	Drawn by: JLR			



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© Archaeology South-East		Lewes Combined Court		Fig. 2
Project Ref: 3943	April 2010	Site plan showing surroundings		
Report Ref: 2010032	Drawn by: JLR			



© Archaeology South-East		Lewes Combined Court	Fig. 3
Project Ref: 3943	April 2010	Detailed site plan	
Report Ref: 2010032	Drawn by: JLR		



Fig. 4.1: Test pit 1, facing north-west



Fig. 4.3: Test pit 3, facing west

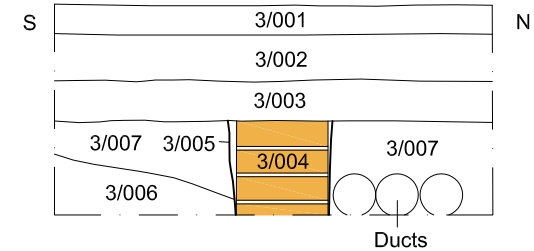


Fig. 4.2: Test pit 2, facing north



Fig. 4.4: Test pit 4, facing south

Section 1 (Test pit 3)



Brick

0 0.5m

Section 2

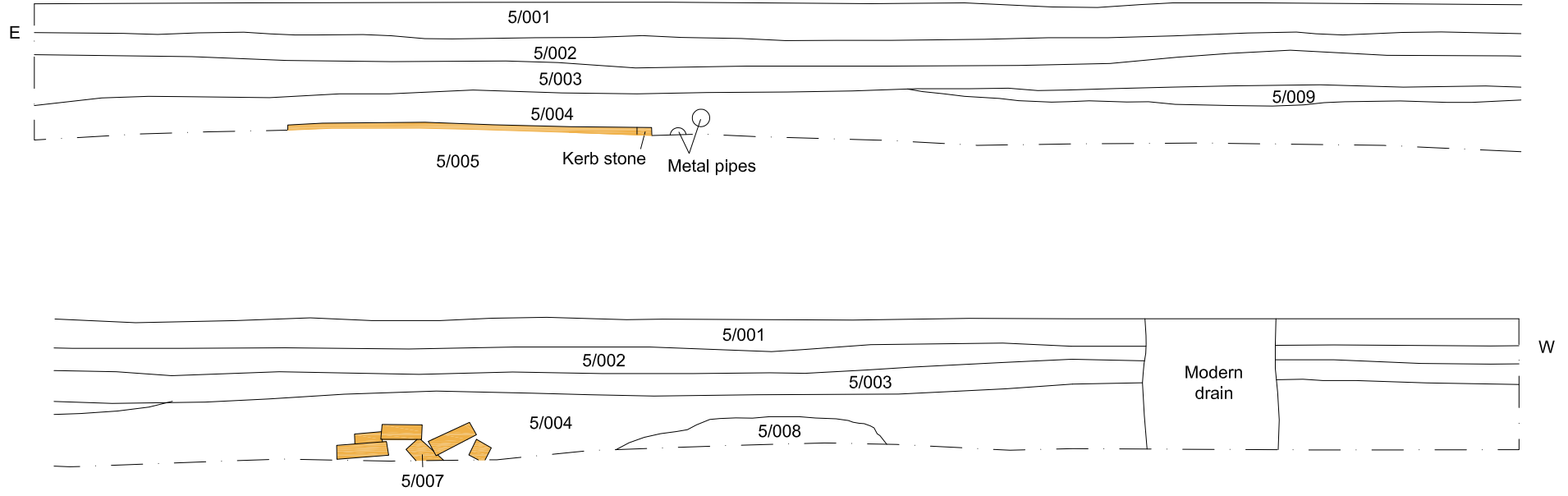


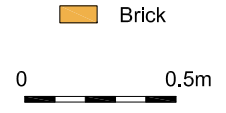
Fig. 5.1: Brick floor 5/005

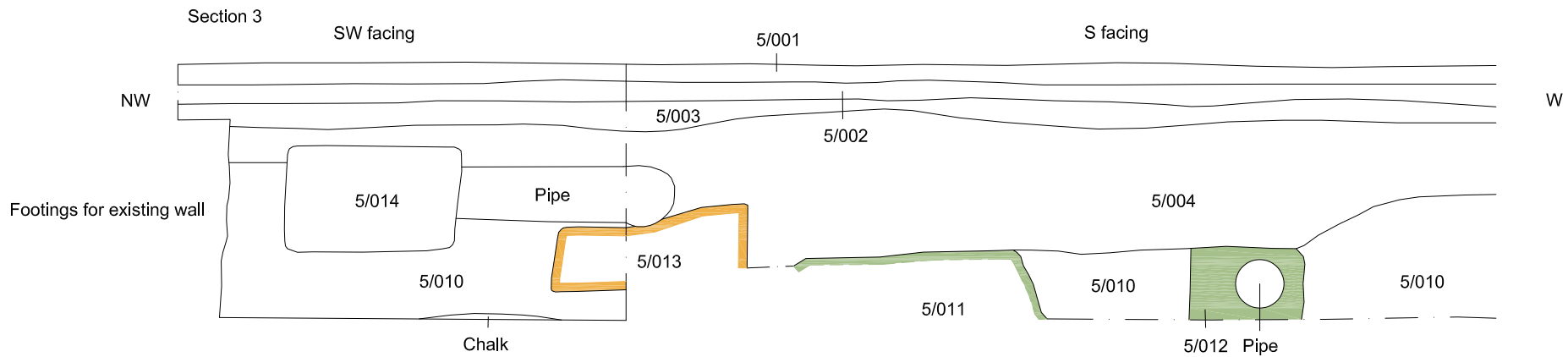


Fig. 5.2: Wall foundations 5/007



Fig. 5.3: Wall foundations 5/008





Brick  
 Concrete

0  0.5m



Fig. 7.1: Wall foundations 5/011



Fig. 7.2: Wall foundations 5/013 and 5/014



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