

**An Archaeological Watching Brief at  
39 Fitzgerald Avenue, Seaford  
East Sussex, BN25 1AZ**

**(Planning Ref: LW/10/0695)**

**NGR 548959 098654  
(TV 48959 98654)**



**Project No: 4524  
Site Code: FAS 10**

**ASE Report No: 2010133  
OASIS id: archaeol6-83613**

**By Nick Garland MA  
With a Contribution by Richard James  
Illustrations by Justin Russell**

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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 Ms. Sara Wells to undertake a watching brief during groundworks at 39 Fitzgerald Avenue, Seaford, East Sussex. The work was undertaken on the 10<sup>th</sup> August 2010.*

*Work monitored in the watching brief included the excavations of a number of trenches around the north and east of the existing house, measuring approximately 20 metres in length and to a depth of approximately 1 metre. A levelling deposit was uncovered that was recent in origin. No archaeological finds, deposits or features were uncovered during these works.*

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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 Sara Wells to undertake a watching brief at 39 Fitzgerald Avenue, Seaford, East Sussex hereafter referred to as 'the site' (NGR TV 48959 98654; Fig. 1).

### **1.2 Geology and Topography**

- 1.2.1 The site lies within a residential area in the town of Seaford and is bounded by Lions Place and Fitzgerald Avenue to the north and west respectively. While the immediate vicinity of the site is surrounded by residential housing, areas of open green space to both the east and west and the coastline lies approximately 350 to the south-west.
- 1.2.2 The British Geological Survey (Sheet 319 Lewes and Eastbourne) shows the underlying geology of the site is Upper Chalk. The valley sides appear to preserve a capping of Tertiary deposits of the Lambeth Group. Their valley side position would suggest that tectonic folding is controlling both the survival of Tertiary deposits and the formation of dry valley systems in the local area.

### **1.3 Planning Background**

- 1.3. The proposed works involved the construction of an extension to the north of the existing property. Due to the position of the site within an area of archaeological interest, an archaeological condition (8) was attached to the planning application (Planning Ref: LW/10/0695) 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 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 John Cook on the 10<sup>th</sup> August 2010. The project was managed by Andy Leonard (fieldwork) and Jim Stevenson (post-excavation).

## **2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND** by Richard James

- 2.1** An archaeological background of the site was prepared using data from the East Sussex Historic Environment Record. The sites are summarised below, displayed on figure 1 and summarised in Appendix 1.

### **Archaeological Periods Represented**

Palaeolithic (c. 750,000 BC - c. 10,000 BC)  
Mesolithic (c. 10,000 BC - c.5,000 BC)  
Neolithic (c. 5,000 BC - c.2,300 BC)  
Bronze Age (c. 2,300 BC - c. 600 BC)  
Iron Age (c. 600 BC - AD 43)  
Romano-British (AD 43 - c. AD 410)  
Anglo-Saxon (c. AD 410 - AD 1066)  
Medieval (AD 1066 - AD 1540)  
Post-medieval (AD 1540 to date)

## **2.2 Palaeolithic**

The East Sussex HER records one find of Palaeolithic date within the one kilometre radius of the Site. This refers to an unprovenanced ovate handaxe found locally in 1910 (Site 1).

## **2.3 Mesolithic**

Many Mesolithic sites in Sussex are represented by concentrations of flintwork rather than by settlement sites. The East Sussex HER records two Mesolithic sites within the one kilometre radius of the Appraisal Site. These refer to a series of microliths found at Hawks Brow, immediately south-east, in 1929 (Site 2) and a collection of unprovenanced flints found locally in 1910 (Site 1).

## **2.4 Neolithic**

The East Sussex HER records three Neolithic sites within the one kilometre radius of the Appraisal Site. All three relate to finds of flint artefacts (Sites 1, 2 & 3). The first and last are poorly provenanced).

## **2.5 Bronze Age**

Six Bronze Age sites are located within the one kilometre radius of the Appraisal Site. One entry refers to a possible barrow excavated on the Gore in 1868 (Site 5). The other five relate to a flint arrowhead found on the golf course (Site 6), and poorly provenanced finds of a flint dagger (Site 4), flint artefacts (Sites 1 & 3) and pottery (Site 2).

## **2.6 Iron Age**

Four Iron Age entries are located within the one kilometre radius of the Appraisal Site. One of the entries concerns a midden containing Iron Age pottery found on Hawks Brow (Site 2), while the other three comprise poorly

provenanced finds of presumably Later Iron Age coins, two Gaulish and one Durotrigan (from Dorset), found locally in the 1870s (Sites 7 - 9).

## **2.7 Roman**

The East Sussex HER lists six Roman entries within the one kilometre radius of the Appraisal Site. Hawks Brow, to the east, has produced a number of finds of Roman material that suggest a settlement focus of some kind on the hill (Site 2). Other discoveries in close proximity include a Roman cemetery (Site 10) and a number of cremation burials that might relate to a second cemetery nearer the sea (Site 11). A Roman road (Margary No. 144) is thought to extend from the cemetery area northwards towards the Downs, roughly following the line of Arundel Road and part of Alfriston Road (Site 12). The area has also produced gold coins of Constantius II and a small bronze figurine, both of which are poorly provenanced (Sites 13 & 14). The evidence suggests a significant Roman settlement on the western slopes of Seaford Head, exploiting the sheltered natural harbour.

## **2.8 Anglo- Saxon**

Only one Anglo-Saxon entry exists within the one kilometre radius of the Appraisal Site. This is a general entry relating to Saxon settlement in the town (Site 15).

## **2.9 Medieval**

The Site lies to the east of the medieval town of Seaford. The East Sussex HER lists ten medieval entries within the one kilometre radius of the Appraisal Site. One entry is a general reference to the medieval borough (Site 16), eight others detail individual buildings of medieval date or significant medieval deposits found during archaeological excavations in the town (Sites 17 - 24). The tenth entry relates to the former medieval Hospital of St. Leonard, the exact location of which is unknown (Site 25).

## **2.10 Post-medieval**

The East Sussex HER lists four post-medieval entries within the one kilometre radius of the Appraisal Site. These relate to an unlocated windmill (Site 26), Martello Tower No. 74, built in 1805-6 for coastal defence (Site 27), the Seaside Convalescent Home, a specialist building which succeeded Corsica Hall in 1874 (Site 28), and a Royal Observer Corps monitoring post (Site 29).

### **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 2010) 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.

#### **3.4 Methodology**

3.4.1 The work monitored on site included the excavation of c. 19.4 metres of trenching (Fig 2).

3.4.2 If any excavations by contractors revealed archaeological features then hand excavation was to cease, at the monitoring archaeologists discretion. Any such features were then to be hand cleaned and recorded to archaeological standards by the archaeologist(s) in attendance. Any such exposures made were to be hand cleaned by archaeologists as necessary to clarify the presence/absence and nature of any features. Adequate time was to be made available for the appropriate archaeological excavation by hand and 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 ESCC Assistant County Archaeologist was to be 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 was to be made by the ESCC Assistant County Archaeologist.

3.4.4 Any encountered archaeological deposits, features and finds were to be 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 to be 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 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	5 contexts
No. of files/paper record	1 folder
Photographs	5 Colour slide, 5 B+W, 6 Digital

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

## 4.0 RESULTS

- 4.1 The work monitored on site included the excavation for trenching along the northern and eastern sides of the existing building (Fig 2 and 3). The total length of trenching excavated measured c. 19.4 metres. The trench measured 0.6 metres in width and 1 metre in depth. The stratigraphy recorded in the trenches was uniform.

### 4.1.1

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Thickness
001	Layer	Topsoil	As Tr	As Tr	0.05 m
002	Layer	Redeposited Natural	As Tr	As Tr	0.4 m
003	Layer	Silt layer	As Tr	As Tr	0.2 m
004	Layer	Buried Topsoil	As Tr	As Tr	0.5 m
005	Layer	Natural	As Tr	As Tr	N/A

Table 2: List of recorded contexts

### 4.1.2 Summary

A thin layer of topsoil [001] overlay a layer of redeposited natural, a mottled yellow sand, [002]. Modern remains including plastic and brick were observed within this context. This layer appears to have been excavated from elsewhere and deposited here to level the area prior to the construction of the present house in the 1960's.

A thin layer of silt, a dark bluish brown silt with occasional flint and chalk nodules [003], lay beneath the redeposited layer of sand [002] and contained modern finds of pot, ceramic building material (CBM) and oyster shell. Due to the proximity of this site to the coastline this may be the result of coastal activity.

A layer of mid orangish brown sandy clay [004] lay underneath the silt and above the natural sand [005]. This layer [004] contained occasional flint and chalk inclusions and modern tile and brick. It may have represented the original topsoil layer prior to coastal deposition.

## **5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 5.1** The monitoring of the foundations trench for the proposed extension at 39 Fitzgerald Avenue, Seaford revealed no archaeological finds, deposits or artefacts.
- 5.2** The stratigraphy observed during the excavations indicates that any potential archaeological remains would have been well preserved due to the dumping of approximate 0.5 metres of levelling deposit across the area of the property.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

ASE. 2010. *Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief at 39 Fitzgerald Avenue, Seaford, East Sussex, BN25 1AZ*. Unpublished ASE report

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

ASE would like to thank Ms. Sara Wells for commissioning the work and Greg Chuter of ESCC for his guidance throughout the project.

**SMR Summary Form**

Site Code	FAS 10					
Identification Name and Address	39 Fitzgerald Avenue, Seaford, East Sussex BN25 1az					
County, District &/or Borough	Seaford, East Sussex					
OS Grid Refs.	548959, 098654					
Geology	Upper Chalk (BGS sheet 319)					
Arch. South-East Project Number	4524					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	Watching Brief <b>X</b>	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field	Shallow Urban <b>X</b>	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	WB. 10/08/10	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Sara Wells					
Project Manager	Andy Leonard					
Project Supervisor	John Cook					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM	Other None		
<p>100 Word Summary.</p> <p><i>Archaeology South-East (ASE) the contracting division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology at University College London was commissioned by Sara Wells to undertake a watching brief during groundworks at 39 Fitzgerald Avenue, Seaford, East Sussex. The work was undertaken on the 10<sup>th</sup> August 2010.</i></p> <p><i>Work included the excavations of a number of trenches around the north and east of the existing house, measuring approximately 20 metres in length and to a depth of approximately 1 metre. A levelling deposit was uncovered that was recent in origin. No archaeological finds, deposits or features were uncovered during these works.</i></p>						

## OASIS Form

### OASIS ID: archaeol6-83613

#### Project details

Project name	39 Fitzgerald Avenue, Seaford
Short description of the project	Archaeology South-East (ASE) the contracting division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology at University College London was commissioned by Sara Wells to undertake a watching brief during groundworks at 39 Fitzgerald Avenue, Seaford, East Sussex. The work was undertaken on the 10th August 2010. Work included the excavations of a number of trenches around the north and east of the existing house, measuring approximately 20 metres in length and to a depth of approximately 1 metre. A levelling deposit was uncovered that was recent in origin. No archaeological finds, deposits or features were uncovered during these works.
Project dates	Start: 10-08-2010 End: 10-08-2010
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	FAS10 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Residential 1 - General Residential
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Planning condition
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	EAST SUSSEX LEWES SEAFORD 39 Fitzgerald Avenue, Seaford
Postcode	BN25 1AZ
Study area	435.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TV 48959 98654 50.7677326042 0.112613339274 50 46 03 N 000 06 45 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 0m Max: 0m
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	Archaeology South East
Project brief originator	East Sussex County Council
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East

Project director/manager	Dan Swift
Project supervisor	John Cook
Type of sponsor/funding body	Landowner
Project archives	
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Local Museum
Digital Contents	'none'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography','Text'
Paper Archive recipient	Local Museum
Paper Contents	'none'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Drawing','Photograph','Plan','Report'
Project bibliography 1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	An Archaeological Watching Brief at 39 Fitzgerald Avenue, Seaford East Sussex, BN25 1AZ
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Garland, N
Other bibliographic details	2010133
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Issuer or publisher	Archaeology South East
Place of issue or publication	Portslade
Entered by	Nick Garland (n.garland@ucl.ac.uk)
Entered on	1 October 2010

**Appendix 1: Summary Table of Archaeological Sites (refer to Fig. 1)**

Site No.	HER No.	NGR (TV)	Description	Period
1	MES1703	48 99	Collection of flint tools, ranging from Palaeolithic to Bronze Age, collected by Mr Hurrell c.1910. No detailed provenances known.	Prehistoric
2	MES1702	489 985	Numerous finds from Hawks Brow – Mesolithic flint scatter, Neolithic and Bronze Age artefacts, Iron Age midden and Roman and medieval pottery.	Prehistoric - Medieval
3	MES1694	48 99	Neolithic flint scrapers found since 1923.	Neolithic
4	MES1706	48 99	Early Bronze Age flint dagger found by Mr Hurrell.	Bronze Age
5	MES1700	492 985	Possible barrow excavated in 1868 – prehistoric flint flakes and Roman pottery found.	?Bronze Age & Romano-British
6	MES1689	4963 9837	Barbed and tanged flint arrowhead found on golf course by F Eady c.1903.	Bronze Age
7	MES1695	48 99	Gaulish coin found before 1879 – Evans type A:3, uninscribed AV1/4-stater.	Iron Age
8	MES1696	48 99	Gaulish coin found before 1879 – Evans type B 8, uninscribed AV stater.	Iron Age
9	MES1697	48 99	Durotrigan coin found beneath cliffs – Evans type F:1/3, uninscribed AR stater.	Iron Age
10	MES1701	4944 9855	Roman cemetery, excavated in 1824-5, 1868 and 1876-9. Many cinerary urns, coins and pottery.	Romano-British
11	MES1714	489 981	Roman pottery vessels found during road construction, c.1900. Some contained burnt bones.	Romano-British
12	MES2667	4894 0282	Roman road (Margary 144), Seaford – Firle.	Romano-British
13	MES1708	48 99	Bronze figurine found in gravel deposit near old bed of river before 1926. Identified as Harpocrates, god of Silence.	Romano-British
14	MES1688	48 99	Gold coins of Constantius II (337-361 AD) found during trenching.	Romano-British
15	MES6	48 99	Saxon settlement.	Anglo-Saxon
16	MES1750	486 989	Medieval borough of Seaford.	Medieval
17	MES12	4820 9905	Pottery stag found in 1858.	Medieval
18	MES13	482 990	13 <sup>th</sup> -14 <sup>th</sup> C building remains and pits found during excavations by SAFU in 1976.	Medieval
19	MES14	4823 9887	12 <sup>th</sup> – 15 <sup>th</sup> C settlement features excavated by SAFU in 1979.	Medieval
20	MES1692	4823 9892	13 <sup>th</sup> C undercroft – The Crypt.	Medieval
21	MES1709	4838 9940	Early medieval glazed pottery found during construction of gasholder, c.1929.	Medieval

22	MES7246	4830 9890	15 <sup>th</sup> C building and earlier medieval features found during evaluation by ASE in 2001-2002.	Medieval
23	MES7341	4843 9890	13 <sup>th</sup> – 14 <sup>th</sup> C buildings and rubbish pits found during excavations by DAS in 2006.	Medieval
24	MES8736	48276 98926	Building remains found during watching brief by ASE, 2006-2007.	Medieval & Post-Medieval
25	MES1690	48 99	Hospital of St Leonard – leper hospital founded 1147, dissolved sometime after 1368.	Medieval
26	MES3	48 99	Windmill	Medieval & Post-Medieval
27	MES1710	4847 9849	Martello Tower No. 74, built 1805-6, altered for residential use 1932.	Post-Medieval
28	MES62	486 989	Seaside Convalescent Home, built c.1874.	Post-Medieval
29	MES7920	4968 9834	Royal Observer Corps monitoring post, now demolished.	Post-Medieval









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© Archaeology South-East		Fitzgerald Avenue, Seaford	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 4524	Sept 2010	Site plan showing monitored works	
Report Ref: 2010133	Drawn by: JLR		



Trench excavation facing south-west



Trench stratigraphy facing east

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