

An Archaeological Evaluation on land at 4 Roedean Crescent, Brighton, East Sussex

**Planning Reference: BH2010/00695
NGR TQ 3425 0355**

**Project No. 4416
Site Code: RCB10
ASE Report No. 2010158
OASIS id: archaeol6-83854**



**By Kathryn Grant, MSc, AIFA
With contributions by
Anna Doherty, Gemma Ayton and Elke Raemen
Illustrations by Justin Russell**

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Abstract

An archaeological evaluation was carried out by Archaeology South East on land at 4 Roedean Crescent, Brighton, East Sussex (NGR: TQ 3425 0355) between 23rd and 24th August 2010 for the client, Nigel McMillan.

One archaeological trial-trench, measuring 3m by 1m, was hand-excavated by archaeologists in the front garden of a private residence in advance of a proposed garage construction. No archaeological features or deposits were encountered during the evaluation but two residual pottery sherds of Late Iron Age/ Roman date were recovered.

The natural geology comprising chalk bedrock was encountered 200-300mm below the ground level of the lawn and 650mm beneath the raised flower bed.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of University College London Field Archaeology Unit (UCLFAU), was commissioned by Nigel McMillan to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at 4 Roedean Crescent, Brighton, East Sussex (NGR: TQ 3425 0355; Figure 1), hereafter referred to as 'the site'.
- 1.1.2 The evaluation was undertaken in a single phase of work in which one hand-excavated trench, measuring 3m by 1m, was investigated (Figure 2).

1.2 Location, Geology and Topography

- 1.2.1 The site is located on the South Downs overlooking Brighton Marina. The evaluation trench was positioned in the front garden of a residential property, over a raised flower bed and lawn, which was gradually sloping to the south.
- 1.2.2 According to the British Geological Survey 1:50,000 map (Sheet 318/333, *Brighton and Worthing*), the natural geology of the Site comprises Upper and Middle Chalk of the Cretaceous period with a narrow band of later Quaternary Head Deposits running approximately north to south over the chalk.

1.3 Planning Background

- 1.3.1 The client aims to build a garage in front of the house but did not have planning permission for this at the time of the field evaluation. Discussions between the client and Greg Chuter led to the suggestion that a pre-determination archaeological trial trench (evaluation) in the proposed location of the garage would be sensible.
- 1.3.2 The archaeological work was stipulated and the following condition placed on the approval of the planning application for the extension:

No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, including a timetable for the investigation, which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the local planning authority and the works shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved details.

(Reason: To enable the recording of any items of historical or archaeological interest, as the development is likely to disturb remains of archaeological interest, in accordance with requirements within PPS 5 'Planning for the Historic Environment'; Policy BE6 of the South East Plan: Regional Spatial Strategy for the South-East and Policy HE12 of the Brighton and Hove Local Plan.)

- 1.3.3 A *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) for the work was prepared (ASE 2010). This document conformed to the relevant *Standards and Guidance* of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 2001) and the ESCC *Standards for Archaeological Fieldwork, Recording, and Post-Excavation Work in East*

Sussex (ESCC 1996).

- 1.3.4 The WSI was duly approved by the County Archaeologist prior to the commencement of archaeological works. All fieldwork undertaken during the evaluation works was carried out in accordance with the WSI (unless otherwise specified below).

1.4 Aims and Objectives

- 1.4.1 The purpose of the archaeological investigation, as set out in the *WSI* (ASE 2010), was to ascertain the character, quality and degree of survival of any archaeological remains on the site and to record any such archaeological features that may be impacted by the scheme. The findings from the archaeological evaluation have been considered within this document with a view to assessing the potential impact of development upon any revealed archaeological remains.

- 1.4.2 More specific aims of the archaeological work were:

- To assess with a greater degree of certainty the presence or absence of any archaeological features at the site
- To assess whether archaeological remains extended across the development site
- To assess the character, extent, preservation, significance, date and quality of any such remains and deposits
- To assess how they might be affected by the development of the site
- To assess what options should be considered for mitigation

- 1.4.3 The evaluation set out to determine, as far as was reasonably possible, the location, form, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains, irrespective of period, liable to be threatened by the proposed development. The results of this trial trench were to inform on the scope for planning permission and if extensive archaeology was found an additional trench to assess an alternative location for the proposed garage was to be excavated.

1.5 Scope of the Report

- 1.5.1 This document presents the results of the archaeological evaluation which was carried out between 23rd and 24th August 2010.
- 1.5.2 The fieldwork was undertaken by Kathryn Grant (Archaeologist/Field Officer) with the assistance Chris Crabb. The project was managed by Andy Leonard and Jim Stevenson.

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Overview

2.1.1 The information collated within this section has been reproduced from the WSI (ASE 2010) with all due acknowledgement. The site lies within an Archaeologically Sensitive Area (ASA) encompassing the cliff tops at Black Rock where a number of prehistoric finds and sites have been recorded. This ASA also includes the Brighton-Norton raised beach deposits, which are sealed within the chalk cliff line, itself a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), a Regionally Important Geological Site (RIGS), and a Geological Conservation and Review Site (GCR).

2.1.2 The ASA in the area of the site is defined by an area of prehistoric and Romano-British activity, mostly comprising human burial. A Roman coffin burial was found immediately adjacent to the north boundary of the site, and an undated burial was found in the rear garden of the adjacent property no 6.

2.2 Archaeological Synopsis (by period)

2.2.1 Bronze Age

Bronze Age burials and burial monuments (barrows) are known in the immediate area and a hoard of bronze jewellery and decorative armbands was found nearby.

2.2.2 Iron Age

Hollingbury Camp, Iron Age hillfort lies approximately two miles to the north of the site. An urned cremation and animal bones were found in 1910, embedded in the cliff face near Brighton, and a gold stater of Commius or Tincommius was recovered in 1932.

2.2.3 Romano-British

The only known villa in the area is located at Springfield Road. This in stark contrast to the relatively large number of known villa sites in the surrounding Sussex countryside, such as at Southwick, Barcombe, and Beddingham. In addition to the Roman coffin burial recorded next door to the site, evidence for this period is recorded in three locations. Two of these are stray coin finds, the other, Romano-British artefacts recovered in 1907-8 in a garden at the back of St. Mary's Hall, comprising an Iron Age brooch, along with Roman pottery and coins, and a Roman brooch.

2.2.4 Anglo-Saxon

Much of the archaeological evidence for this period is characterised by cemeteries, and comparatively infrequent settlement sites. Brighton itself almost certainly has Anglo-Saxon antecedents, probably as an Anglo-Saxon farm, as its original name Brighthelmstone is a likely corruption of 'Beorthelm's tun' or the farm of Beorthelm. The first documented overlord of Brighton is Wulnoth, who in 1008 commanded an English fleet intended to repel a Danish invasion. Juxtaposed against the historical data, is a relative

paucity of archaeological evidence, with cemetery sites and stray finds dominating the record.

In 1837 a male inhumation was found in an upstanding barrow in Kemp Town. The burial was accompanied with a spear head, boar's tusks, bone pins, horse bones and a sword.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 Methods Employed

- 3.1.1 The evaluation work comprised a single hand-excavated trench measuring 3m by 1m. It was excavated by archaeologists from ASE using hand tools. The trench was positioned across the proposed location of the garage so as to ensure that an optimum sample of the area was uncovered (Figure 2).
- 3.1.2 A Risk Assessment of the fieldwork to be carried out was produced prior to any work on site.
- 3.1.3 The excavations were taken down to the top of the underlying geology or to the surface of any significant archaeological deposit; whichever was higher. When removed, topsoil, subsoil and made ground deposits were kept separate to ensure that they could be redeposited stratigraphically during the backfilling process for optimum reinstatement. Revealed surfaces were manually cleaned in an attempt to identify individual archaeological features. The trench sections were cleaned to observe and record their stratigraphy. The removed spoil was scanned for the presence of any stray, unstratified artefacts which were recovered and bagged for dating and analysis.
- 3.1.4 The trench was fully recorded on trial trench record sheets and ASE context sheets. The trench was planned, levelled and trench sections were drawn. A digital photographic record was maintained throughout the evaluation. Each deposit uncovered during the archaeological trial-trenching was assigned its own unique context number system prefixed with the trench number. No environmental samples were collected during the evaluation as the deposits were not suitable and held little environmental potential. A series of levels were taken in relation to a manhole/drain-cover located in the road directly north of the driveway.
- 3.1.5 On completion of all excavation and recording, the County Archaeologist, Greg Chuter (ESCC) was informed. Permission was obtained for the contractors to backfill and reinstate.

3.2 The Project Archive

- 3.2.1 The project archive is currently held at offices of ASE and will be deposited at the local museum in due course. The contents of the archive are tabulated below for reference in this report (Table 1).

3.2.2

Number of Trenches	1
Number of Contexts	8
No. of files/paper record	1 file
Plan and sections sheets	1 sheet permatrace
Bulk Samples	None
Photographs	c.15 photographs
Bulk finds	1 small box
Registered finds	None

Table 1: Quantification of the site archive

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Trench 1 (Figures 2 and 3), measuring 3m north-south and 1m east-west, was positioned centrally across the area proposed for the erection of a garage in the front garden of the property.

4.2 Eight contexts were revealed within this trench. These have been tabulated below (Table 2) and summarised in 4.5.

4.3 No archaeological features were encountered during the archaeological evaluation. A few finds were recovered from the deposits within the trench (see Section 5.0).

4.4

Context Number	Context Type	Context Description	Deposit Thickness (mm)
1/001	Deposit	Topsoil/Turf	200 – 300
1/002	Deposit	Subsoil	50 - 100
1/003	Deposit	Planting soil	300
1/004	Cut	Cut for E-W planting wall	-
1/005	Masonry	Stone wall in-fill	c.550
1/006	Deposit	Make up for raised flower bed	c.400
1/007	Layer	Natural chalk bedrock	-
1/008	Deposit	Flower bed soil/topsoil	150 - 300

Table 2: List of recorded contexts

4.5 Summary of contexts

Natural chalk geology [1/007] was encountered at a depth of 200-300mm below the ground level of the lawn and at a depth of 650mm beneath the raised flower bed. No archaeological features were observed cutting into the natural horizon. Some stripes, probably plough scars, were evident within the chalk. Directly overlying natural chalk bedrock was a thin layer of lightly compacted mid greyish brown silty clay subsoil [1/002] which was revealed across the base of the entire trench. A very firm, rich dark reddish brown silty clay soil [1/003] was revealed in the north-eastern corner of the trench. This deposit was closely associated with a piece of modern sheet metal which was probably deposited during the process of building up the flower bed. Although this deposit was generally sterile with few inclusions, two small fragments of pottery were recovered. Considering the known prehistoric activity within the environs of the site such residually occurring finds are not unexpected.

The northern extent of the trench (c.1.25m) was positioned within a raised flower bed which was bordered by a small retaining wall [1/004-5] comprising sandstone blocks and some concrete. The flower bed was raised with a loose light grey friable silt deposit [1/006] containing abundant chalk fragments and flecks. This was overlain by a mid brown silty deposit [1/008] with occasional chalk fleck inclusions which covered the flower bed. A layer of friable mid reddish brown silty topsoil/turf [1/001] was covering the lawn.

5.0 THE FINDS

5.1 Overview

5.1.1 A small assemblage of finds was recovered during the archaeological work. These were washed and dried, after which they were counted, weighed and bagged according to IFA guidelines. An overview of the finds can be found in Table 3.

5.1.2

Context	Pot	wt (g)	Bone	wt (g)	Shell	wt (g)	FCF	wt (g)
1/003	2	6						
1/002			1	4	1	6	4	74

Table 3: Quantification of the finds.

5.2 The Pottery by Anna Doherty

Two conjoining sherds of pottery, weighing 6g, were found in [1/003]. The sherds are in a typical East Sussex grog-tempered fabric. Such wares were most common in the Late Iron Age to Early Roman period, although they were much longer lived in East Sussex than elsewhere in the South-East, so the sherds could also potentially be of later Roman date.

5.3 The Animal Bone by Gemma Ayton

5.3.1 One tooth fragment was recovered from context [1/002]. The tooth has been identified as a sheep, lower right first molar and is in wear.

5.4 Marine Shell by Elke Raemen

5.4.1 A scallop (*Pecten maximus*) fragment was recovered from subsoil [1/002]. No other shell was recovered.

6.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

- 6.1** The archaeological trial-trench was found to be negative for archaeological features. No obvious truncation of the geological horizon was present.
- 6.2** The evaluation revealed that natural chalk geology lies at a depth of 200-300mm below the ground level of the lawn and 650mm beneath the raised flower bed.
- 6.3** The results of the archaeological evaluation were successful in informing on the surviving archaeology within the footprint of the proposed garage. The fact that no archaeological features were revealed within the trench suggests it is unlikely that archaeological remains would be uncovered during construction works in the immediate proximity.
- 6.4** The absence of archaeological remains within the trench does not indicate an absence of archaeology on the site as a whole and the presence of residual pottery suggests some possible activity of Late-Iron Age/Roman date in the vicinity.

REFERENCES

ASE 2010. Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation and Watching Brief – 4 Roedean Crescent, Brighton, East Sussex. Unpub. ASE document (prepared by Dan Swift)

BGS (British Geological Surveys) 1996. *Sheet 318/333 Brighton and Worthing - Solid and Drift Edition – 1:50 000 Series.*

ESCC 1996. *Standards for Archaeological Fieldwork, Recording, and Post Excavation Work in East Sussex.*

IFA 2001. Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standards and Guidance* documents.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ASE would like to thank Nigel McMillan for commissioning the work and Greg Chuter of ESCC for his guidance throughout the project.

SMR Summary Form

Site Code	RCB 10					
Identification Name and Address	4 Roedean Crescent, Brighton					
County, District &/or Borough	East Sussex					
OS Grid Refs.	NGR: TQ 3425 0355					
Geology	Chalk					
Arch. South-East Project Number	4416					
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. 23/08/10- 24/08/10	Excav.	WB.	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Nigel McMillan					
Project Manager	Andy Leonard					
Project Supervisor	Kathryn Grant					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB 2 residual sherds
	AS	Med	PM	Modern		
<p>100 Word Summary.</p> <p>An archaeological evaluation was carried out by Archaeology South East on land at 4 Roedean Crescent, Brighton, East Sussex (NGR: TQ 340 041) between 23rd and 24th August 2010 for the client, Nigel McMillan. One archaeological trial-trench, measuring 3m by 1m, was hand-excavated by archaeologists in the front garden of a private residence in advance of a proposed garage construction. No archaeological features or deposits were encountered during the evaluation but two residual pottery sherds of Late Iron Age/Early Roman date were recovered. The natural geology comprising chalk bedrock was encountered 200-300mm below the ground level of the lawn and 650mm beneath the raised flower bed.</p>						

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-83854

Project details

Project name	4, Roedean Crescent, Brighton
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation was carried out by Archaeology South East on land at 4 Roedean Crescent, Brighton, East Sussex (NGR: TQ 3425 0355) between 23rd and 24th August 2010 for the client, Nigel McMillan. One archaeological trial-trench, measuring 3m by 1m, was hand-excavated by archaeologists in the front garden of a private residence in advance of a proposed garage construction. No archaeological features or deposits were encountered during the evaluation. Two residual pottery sherds of Late Iron Age/Early Roman date were recovered from a deposit within the flowerbed. The natural geology comprising chalk bedrock was encountered 200-300mm below the ground level of the lawn and 650mm beneath the raised flower bed.
Project dates	Start: 23-08-2010 End: 24-08-2010
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	RCB10 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	POTTERY Roman
Methods & techniques	'Sample Trenches'
Development type	Small-scale extensions (e.g. garages, porches, etc.)
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	EAST SUSSEX BRIGHTON AND HOVE BRIGHTON 4, Roedean Crescent
Postcode	BN2 5
Site coordinates	TQ 3425 0355

Project creators

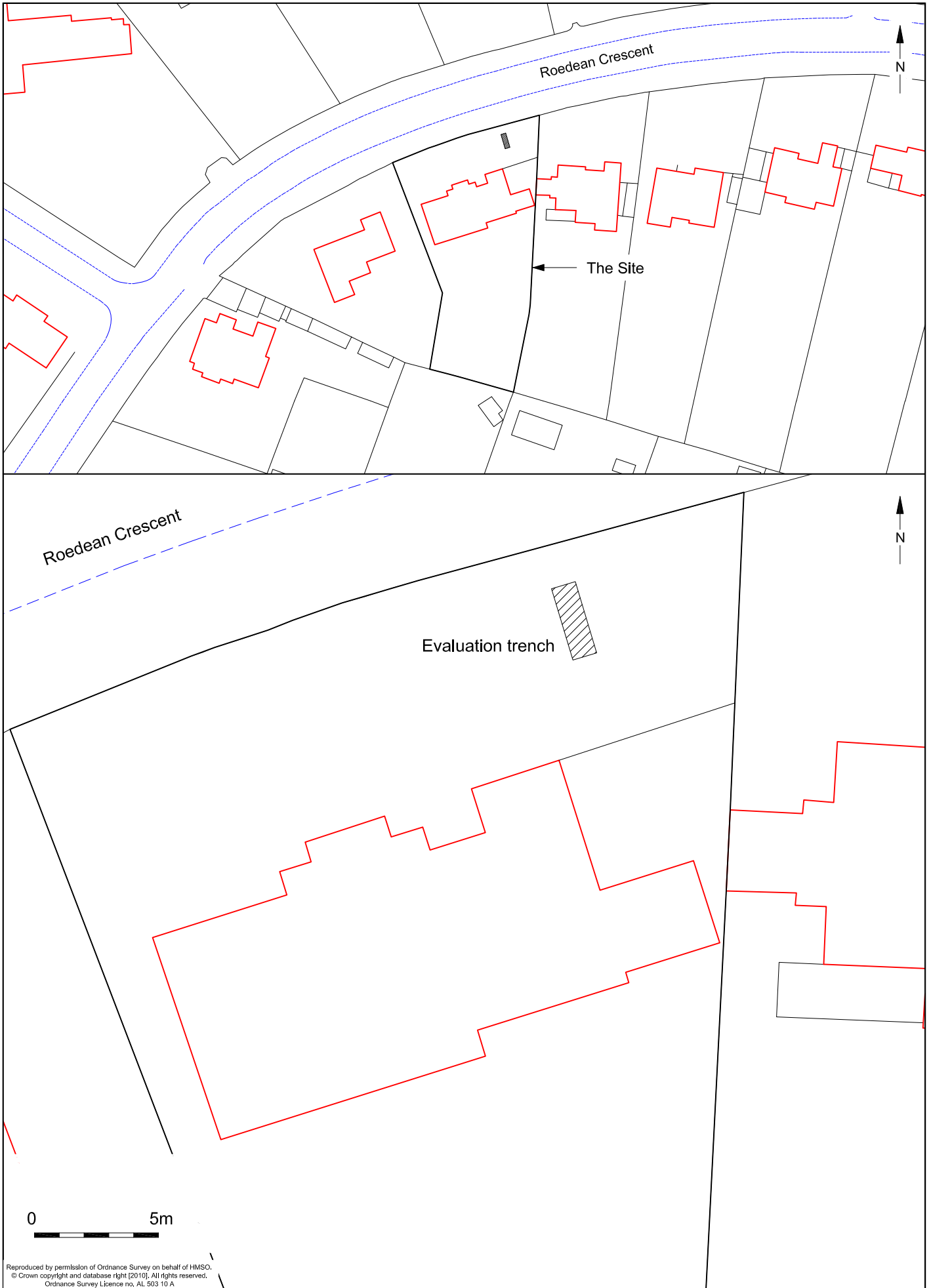
Name of Organisation	Archaeology South East
----------------------	------------------------

Project brief originator	East Sussex County Council
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East
Project director/manager	Andy Leonard
Project supervisor	Kathryn Grant
Type of sponsor/funding body	Architects
Name of sponsor/funding body	Nigel McMillan

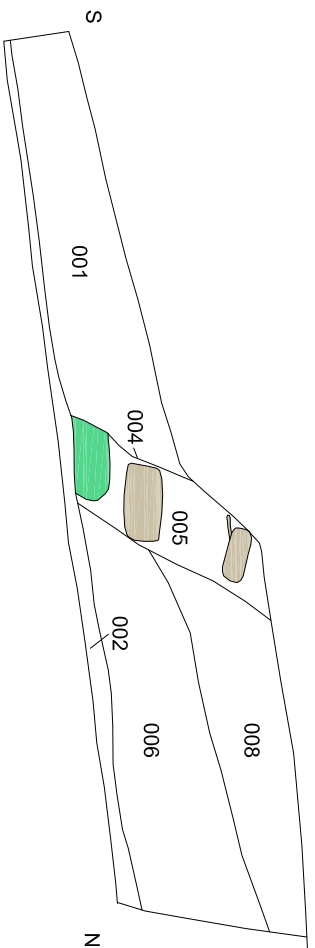
Entered by	Kathryn Grant (Kathryn.Grant@ucl.ac.uk)
Entered on	6 October 2010



© Archaeology South-East		4 Roedeau Crescent, Brighton		Fig. 1
Project Ref: 4416	Sept 2010	Site location		
Report Ref: 2010158	Drawn by: JLR			



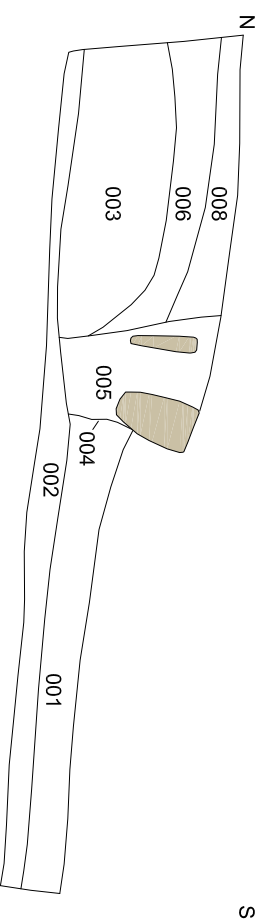
© Archaeology South-East		4 Roedeon Crescent, Brighton	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 4416	Sept 2010	Trench Location	
Report Ref: 2010158	Drawn by: JLR		



Trench pre-excitation



Trench post-excitation



■ Conglomerate concrete
■ Sandstone



Trench looking north



Trench looking south

© Archaeology South-East		4 Roedean Crescent, Brighton	Fig. 3
Project Ref: 4416	Sept 2010	Sections and photographs	
Report Ref: 2010158	Drawn by: FEG		

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