

**An Archaeological Watching Brief at
Hammonds Ridge, Burgess Hill**

NGR TQ 303 184

**Project No: 4545
Site Code: HBH10**

**ASE Report No: 2011042
OASIS id: archaeol6-94625**

**Chris Killeen
With contributions by
Andy Margetts, Chris Russel**

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**Archaeology South-East
Units 1 & 2
2 Chapel Place
Portslade
East Sussex
BN41 1DR**

**Tel: 01273 426830
Fax: 01273 420866
Email: fau@ucl.ac.uk**

Abstract

An archaeological watching brief was carried out during groundworks ahead of the redevelopment of land to the west of Hammonds Ridge and to the east of the Tesco supermarket in Burgess Hill, West Sussex. The proposed development includes the construction of 12 residential houses.

No archaeological features, artefacts or ecofacts of note were found and the watching brief revealed that widespread modern truncation of the site has occurred. In one area buried 17th – 19th century topsoil and subsoil were recorded.

CONTENTS

| | |
|------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1.0 | Introduction |
| 2.0 | Archaeological Background |
| 3.0 | Archaeological Methodology |
| 4.0 | Results |
| 5.0 | The Finds |
| 6.0 | Discussion and Conclusions |

Bibliography
Acknowledgements

SMR Summary Sheet
OASIS Form

FIGURES

| | |
|-----------|---------------|
| Figure 1: | Site location |
| Figure 2: | Site plan |
| Figure 3: | Photographs |

TABLES

| | |
|----------|----------------------|
| Table 1: | Site quantification |
| Table 2: | Recorded contexts |
| Table 3: | Finds quantification |

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.0.1 A watching brief was carried out on land at Hammonds Ridge, Burgess Hill, West Sussex, by archaeologists working for Archaeology South East, a division of the Institute for Applied Archaeology at University College London. The work was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd. on behalf of Wates Development Ltd.
- 1.0.2 The watching brief was carried out between the 29th of November 2010 and the 18th of January 2011.
- 1.0.3 The project was managed by Neil Griffin, and archaeological monitoring was carried out by Andy Margetts, Chris Killeen and Chris Russel.

1.1 Geology and Topography

- 1.1.1 The solid geology of the site is Weald Clay, according to the British Geological Survey (England and Wales 1:63,600 series, sheet 318/333 – Brighton and Worthing, 1984)
- 1.1.2 The site slopes gently down towards the south at c.36m OD.
- 1.1.3 A tributary to the River Adur flows c. 1km to the south-west of the study site, with a smaller watercourse flowing c.50m to the east of the site which is a secondary tributary to the Adur.

1.2 Planning Background

- 1.2.1 The proposed development of the site is for residential housing.
- 1.2.2 According to the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (CgMs, 2010) the site has remained undeveloped through documented history
- 1.2.3 The initial *Desk Based Assessment* (CgMs, 2009) suggests the study site has low to moderate archaeological potential for the early prehistoric period due to evidence for early prehistoric activity in the study area. The study site is considered to have low archaeological potential for all remaining periods.

1.3 Aims and Objectives

- 1.3.1 The objectives of the watching brief, as laid down in the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI; CgMs, 2010) were laid out thus:

The principle objective of the archaeological monitoring will be to record any archaeological artefacts and ecofacts and their context. In addition, the archaeological monitoring will have the following objectives:

To determine if possible the date of the earliest human activity in this area and the subsequent sequence of occupation

- *To help further inform our understanding of past activity in this area of West Sussex*
- *To record any significant archaeological deposits which may be exposed during construction work*

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1** The *Desk Based Assessment* (CgMs, 2009) lists several finds in the immediate vicinity of the study area.

2.2 Prehistoric (450,000BC to 43AD)

- 2.2.1** A fragment of a Neolithic polished stone axe was found at St. Johns Common, c.650m to the North West of the study area. (HER 4127 MWS736; Grid Ref TQ30001900)
- 2.2.3** Multiple sites have shown evidence of Mesolithic and late Neolithic/early Bronze Age on the western outskirts of Burgess Hill, such as Malting Farm, c.300m to the west of the study site. (HER 5771 MWS4452; grid ref TQ2990018400)
- 2.2.4** Prehistoric flint scatters comprising of scrapers, cores and flakes, as well as a possible fragment of prehistoric pottery were found during a watching brief at the Edwards High Vacuum development site c.750m north west of the study site. (HER 5947 MWS5778; grid ref TQ2960018800)
- 2.2.5** Recent archaeological investigations at Folders Farm c. 2km east of the study site have shown evidence of late Bronze Age/early Iron Age occupation (R. Meager pers comm.)
- 2.2.6** A fragment of a Bronze Age flat axe was recovered from St Johns Common, c.750m north west of the study site. (HER 4117 MWS729 ; grid ref TQ30001900)
- 2.2.7** A Bronze Age palstave axe was discovered in Burgess Hill, 800m north east of the study site (HER 4130 MWS738; grid ref TQ30001900)
- 2.2.8** During the Iron Age, the natural ironstone deposits of the High Weald were first exploited for metal working. The combination of ironstone, woodland and water sources made the Weald ideal for the early iron industries. However, these sites are usually found along water courses. Due to the topographical location of the site and the lack of ironstone in the immediate vicinity makes the site an unlikely centre for settlement or industrial activity.

2.3 Roman (43AD to 410AD)

- 2.3.1** Roman industrial activity has been identified in the area of Burgess Hill. This was shown at the archaeological excavation at the site of Edwards high Vacuum factory. This site revealed a possible corn drier to the north east of the site, six hearths with iron forging slag and a fragment of forge lining indicating smithing activity on the site. Large assemblages of East Sussex ware were recovered, as was large quantities of 3rd and 4th century pottery and a roman coin of 2nd to 3rd century date. (HER 5948 MWS5559; grid ref TQ29600188000)
- 2.3.2** An archaeological watching brief at 113 Church Road c.1.25km north east of the study area recorded the agger of the Roman Road for London to Brighton HER 6585 MWS5368; grid ref TQ3085618078)

- 2.3.3 c.500m east of the study area at 262 Chanctonbury Road showed no evidence of the Roman Road, despite supposedly being directly on the course of the road. (HER5772 MWS4453; grid ref TQ3085618078)
- 2.3.4 The site lay within the heavily wooded weald during the roman period and is not considered to be the focus for roman activity. The course of the Roman Road probably passes to the east of the study site.

2.4 Anglo-Saxon and early medieval (410AD to 1066AD)

- 2.4.1 Saxon pottery and a bone antler comb were recovered from Malting Farm, suggesting limited activity in the study area during this period. (HER 5772 MWS4453; grid ref TQ29901840)
- 2.4.2 A Saxon shield boss was found at Hammonds Place, St Johns Common, before 1824. (HER 4121 MWS6339; grid ref TQ3000018000)
- 2.4.3 Two sherds of Saxon pottery, one early Saxon and one middle Saxon, were uncovered at the Edwards vacuum factory site. (HER6653 MWS6339; grid ref TQ2960018800)
- 2.4.4 During this period it is believed that the study area would have been sparsely populated with the most common settlement type being dispersed farmsteads. Throughout this period the study area probably consisted of woodland to the south west of an area of common land at St Johns Common.

2.5 Late medieval to Modern (1066AD to 2008)

- 2.5.1 Hammonds Farm (Now Hammonds Place) incorporated a rectangular timber framed building of c. 1500AD with a staircase wing on the south side where a great hall may have stood. (HER4122 MWS732; grid ref TQ30700185600)
- 2.5.2 Several brickworks are recorded in the HER surrounding the study site. One of the earliest of these brickworks was the Meeds Brickworks established in c. 1580 c. 500m to the southwest of the study site. Several fields were taken for brickmaking between 1660 and 1828 in the surrounding area. Illegal clay digging took place on the common in the post medieval period. (HER5348 MWS4019; grid ref TQ30000180000)
- 2.5.3 Historic maps show the study site within fields to the south west of Hammonds Place and to the west of the London to Brighton Road.
- 2.5.4 Ordinance Survey maps of 1874-8 show the study site within fields with a hedgerow boundary between two fields in the extreme south of the study site.
- 2.5.5 A historic parkscape is recorded on the HER immediately south east of the study site extending southwards towards Clayton Priory, and is recorded in the 1874 ordinance survey map. (HER2819 MWS119; grid ref TQ3032017900)

- 2.5.6 By 1994 the ordinance survey map shows the line of Hammonds Ridge laid out along the south eastern boundary of the study site.
- 2.5.7 Between 1994 and 2008 houses were constructed on the east of Hammonds Ridge, opposite the study site.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with the guidelines laid out in the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (CgMs, 2010) which was approved by West Sussex County Council (WSCC).
- 3.2 The following ground works shown on Fig 2 were monitored by archaeologists:
- mechanical levelling of the entire site
 - mechanical ground reduction along the route of the access road
 - mechanical excavations for wall foundation trenches
 - mechanical ground reduction within building plots
- 3.3. The archaeologists were afforded ample time by the contractors to investigate all intrusions and areas of ground reduction in order to identify and record and potential features.

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| Number of Contexts | 5 |
| No. of files/paper record | 1 file |
| Plan and sections sheets | 0 |
| Bulk Samples | 0 |
| Photographs | 62 digital photographs |
| Bulk finds | 0 |
| Registered finds | 0 |
| Environmental flots/residue | 0 |

Table 1: Site Quantification

4.0 RESULTS

(Figs 2 and 3)

- 4.1 The watching brief uncovered little of archaeological interest, revealed no archaeological features and showed that much of the site has been previously truncated and infilled with modern made ground and redeposited natural clay to depths up to c. 400mm BGL.
- 4.2 Mechanical levelling of the entire site mostly exposed only modern made ground deposits, rarely going deep enough to expose any 'virgin' or 'natural' deposits into which any archaeological features may be found.
- 4.3 Mechanical ground reduction along the route of the access road mostly exposed only modern made ground deposits, rarely going deep enough to expose any 'virgin' or 'natural' deposits into which any archaeological features may be found.
- 4.4 Mechanical excavations for wall foundation trenches were c. 400mm deep and wide and exposed modern made ground sealing natural yellowy-brown clay. Occasional modern field drains were observed within this clay.
- 4.5 Mechanical ground reduction monitored within several of the building plots mostly revealed only modern made ground, however, in building plots 4 and 5 a buried topsoil and subsoil were recorded. These deposits, [2] and [3], contained fragments of ceramic building material (CBM) which was recovered and returned to the Archaeology South East office and identified as 17th to 19th century.
- 4.6 Throughout the site, occasional Terram sheeting and laid crush was found in the modern made ground and a modern power cable cut across the site from the north east to the south west.

| Context | Type | Description | Max. height [m OD] |
|---------|---------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Deposit | Redeposited Natural | 35.75 |
| 2 | Deposit | Sealed topsoil | 35.40 |
| 3 | Deposit | Sealed subsoil | 35.15 |
| 4 | Deposit | Natural | 35.00 |
| 5 | Deposit | Made Ground | 36.04 |

Table 2: Recorded contexts

5.0 THE FINDS

| Context | CBM | Wt (g) |
|---------|-----|--------|
| 3 | 6 | 416 |

Table 3: Quantification of finds

- 5.1 Only 6 fragments of ceramic building material were recovered from the sealed subsoil [3] recorded in building plots 4 and 5.

5.2 The Ceramic Building Material by Sarah Porteus

- 5.2.1 A total of six fragments of ceramic building material (CBM) with a combined weight of 416g were recovered from context [3]. The assemblage consists of four fragments of post-medieval peg tile in a fine sandy fabric with moderate fine calcareous inclusions and sparse black iron rich inclusions, and two highly abraded post-medieval brick fragments in an orange fabric with moderate very coarse black iron rich inclusions and sparse coarse quartz. The assemblage is broadly 17th to 19th century in date.

6.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The site has been heavily disturbed in the modern period. The encountered Terram and the made ground suggest that the site was used as part of a compound for the construction of the supermarket to the west of the site or for the houses to the east of the site..
- 6.2 The earliest evidence of human activity on the site was found within the sealed topsoil [2] and subsoil [3] deposits which contained some 17th – 19th century CBM. This is supported by the map regression data produced in the DBA (CgMs 2009) which shows the site as fields situated away from occupation areas.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

CgMs Ltd 2009, *Archaeological Desk Based Assessment, Hammonds Ridge, Burgess Hill, West Sussex*

CgMs Ltd 2010, *Specification for an Archaeological Monitoring Exercise, Hammonds Ridge, Burgess Hill, West Sussex*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeology South-East would like to thanks CgMs Consulting for commissioning the work and John Mills (WSCC) for his continued guidance throughout the project.

SMR Summary Form

| | | | | | | |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------|--------------------|--------|-------|
| Site Code | HBH10 | | | | | |
| Identification Name and Address | Hammonds Ridge, Burgess Hill | | | | | |
| County, District &/or Borough | West Sussex | | | | | |
| OS Grid Refs. | TQ303 184 | | | | | |
| Geology | Weald Clay | | | | | |
| Arch. South-East Project Number | 4545 | | | | | |
| 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. 1/12/10 – 18/01/11 | Other | | |
| Sponsor/Client | CgMs | | | | | |
| Project Manager | Neil Griffin | | | | | |
| Project Supervisor | Chris Killeen | | | | | |
| Period Summary | Palaeo. | Meso. | Neo. | BA | IA | RB |
| | AS | MED | PM ✓ | Other Modern | | |
| <p>100 Word Summary.</p> <p>An archaeological watching brief was carried out during groundworks ahead of the redevelopment of land to the west of Hammonds Ridge and to the east of the Tesco supermarket in Burgess Hill, West Sussex. The proposed development includes the construction of 12 residential houses.</p> <p>No archaeological features, artefacts or ecofacts of note were found and the watching brief revealed that widespread modern truncation of the site has occurred. In one area 17th – 19th century buried topsoil and subsoil were recorded.</p> | | | | | | |

OASIS ID: archaeol6-94625

Project details

| | |
|--|---|
| Project name | Watching brief at Hammonds Ridge, Burgess Hill |
| Short description of the project | <p>An archaeological watching brief was carried out during groundworks ahead of the redevelopment of land to the west of Hammonds Ridge and to the east of the Tesco supermarket in Burgess Hill, West Sussex. The proposed development includes the construction of 12 residential houses.</p> <p>No archaeological features, artefacts or ecofacts of note were found and the watching brief revealed that widespread modern truncation of the site has occurred. In one area 17th – 19th century buried topsoil and subsoil were recorded.</p> |
| Project dates | Start: 01-12-2010 End: 18-01-2011 |
| Previous/future work | No / No |
| Any associated project reference codes | archaeol6-94625 - OASIS form ID |
| Type of project | Field evaluation |
| Site status | None |
| Current Land use | Grassland Heathland 3 - Disturbed |
| Monument type | SEALED TOPSOIL Post Medieval |
| Significant Finds | CBM Post Medieval |
| Development type | Housing estate |
| Prompt | Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16 |
| Position in the planning process | After full determination (eg. As a condition) |
| Project location | |
| Country | England |
| Site location | WEST SUSSEX MID SUSSEX BURGESS HILL Hammonds Ridge, Burgess Hill, West Sussex |
| Postcode | RH15 |
| Study area | 3286.00 Square metres |
| Site coordinates | TQ 303 184 50.9497267851 -0.144828790843 50 56 59 N 000 08 41 W Point |
| Lat/Long Datum | Unknown |
| Height OD / Depth | Min: 35.15m Max: 36.04m |
| Project creators | |
| Name of Organisation | Archaeology South East |
| Project brief originator | CgMs Consulting |
| Project design originator | CgMs Consulting |
| Project director/manager | Neil Griffin |
| Project supervisor | Chris Killeen |

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Type of sponsor/funding body | Client |
| Name of sponsor/funding body | Wates Development Ltd |
| Project archives | |
| Physical Archive recipient | local museum |
| Physical Contents | 'other' |
| Digital Archive recipient | local museum |
| Digital Contents | 'none' |
| Paper Archive recipient | local museum |
| Paper Contents | 'none' |
| Paper Media available | 'Context sheet','Photograph' |
| Project bibliography 1 | |
| Publication type | Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript) |
| Title | Written Scheme of Investigation |
| Author(s)/Editor(s) | CgMs |
| Date | 2010 |
| Issuer or publisher | CgMs |
| Place of issue or publication | CgMs |
| Entered by | Chris Killeen (chris__killeen@hotmail.co.uk) |
| Entered on | 28 February 2011 |



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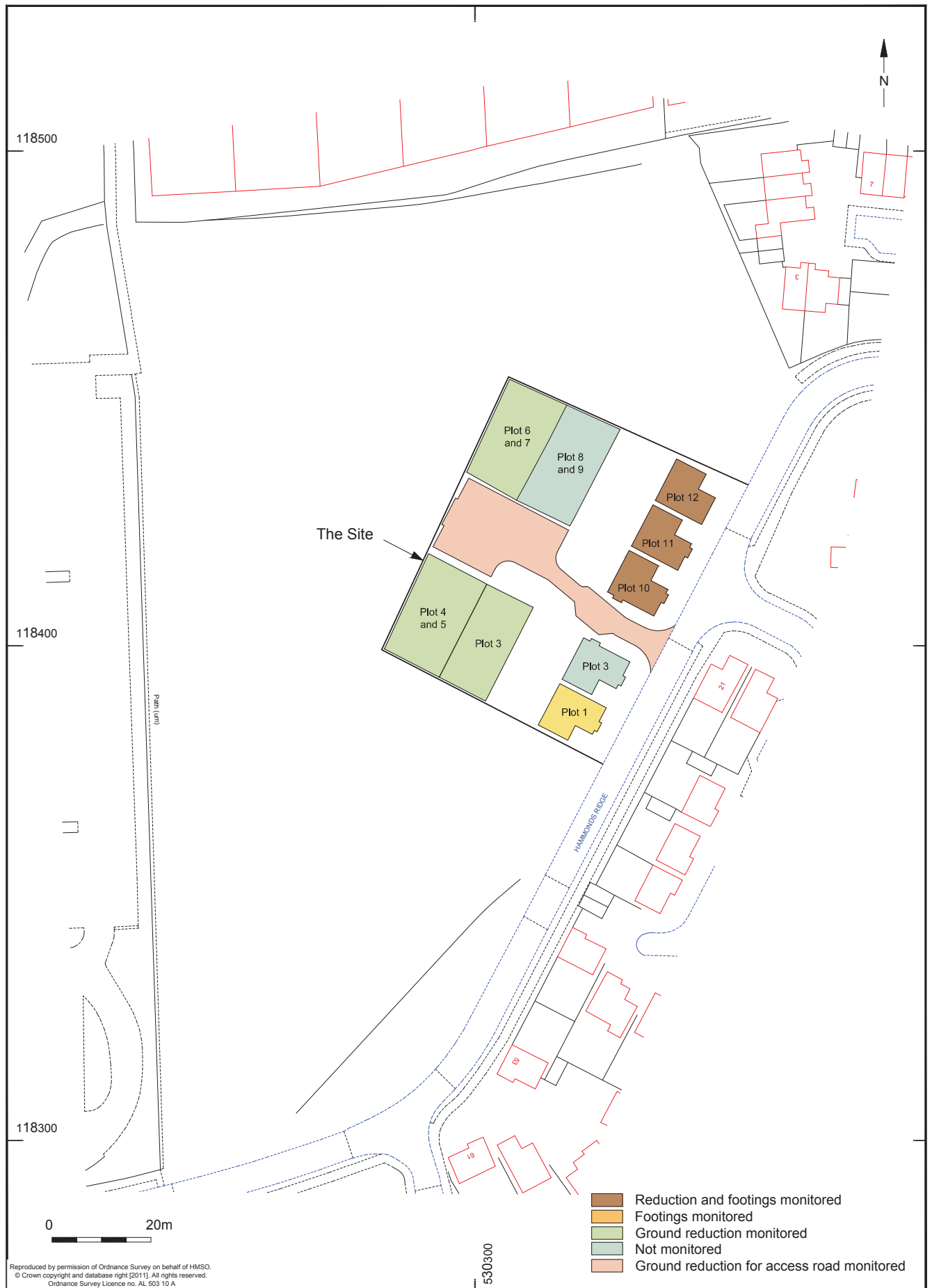
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Hammonds Ridge, Burgess Hill

Site location

Fig. 1



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Hammonds Ridge, Burgess Hill

Site plan showing monitored groundworks

Fig. 2



Trench section in Plot 12, looking south-west



Sealed topsoil

| | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------|------------------------------|--------|
| © Archaeology South-East | | Hammonds Ridge, Burgess Hill | Fig. 3 |
| Project Ref: 4545 | March 2011 | Photographs | |
| Report Ref: 2011042 | Drawn by: JLR | | |

Head Office
Units 1 & 2
2 Chapel Place
Portslade
East Sussex BN41 1DR
Tel: +44(0)1273 426830 Fax: +44(0)1273 420866
email: fau@ucl.ac.uk
Web: www.archaeologyse.co.uk



London Office
Centre for Applied Archaeology
Institute of Archaeology
University College London
31-34 Gordon Square, London, WC1 0PY
Tel: +44(0)20 7679 4778
Fax: +44(0)20 7383 2572
Web: www.ucl.ac.uk/caa

The contracts division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology, University College London 

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