

**Geoarchaeological Watching Brief
Land East of the A24, West of Horsham,
West Sussex**

Centred NGR 515500 130000

**Project no: 4051
Site Code: LWH 09**

**ASE Report no: 2011047
OASIS No:archaeol6-95428**

Prepared by Matt Pope

March 2011

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Abstract

Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of University College London Field Archaeology Unit (UCLFAU), were commissioned by Berkeley Homes (Southern) Ltd to undertake a geoarchaeological watching brief on land east of the A24, west of Horsham, West Sussex during geotechnical investigations carried out by Geo-Environmental LTD in December 2010. The watching brief and assessment of recorded geotechnical logs has allowed for a reasonably comprehensive assessment of potential at the site. The majority of the development area has no potential whatsoever for the preservation of deeply buried Holocene or Pleistocene archaeology and associated palaeoenvironmental remains. In nearly all cases solid Weald Clay was encountered directly below topsoil. In areas flanking the current watercourse, slope deposits reaching depths of 1.5m were recorded but did not contain either archaeology or contexts suitable for palaeoenvironmental remains.

However, two areas remain of unproven interest and both have moderate potential for preserving Holocene alluvial sequences and possible associated palaeoenvironmental evidence. These comprise the immediate edge of the Arun watercourse and the alluvial sequence noted in the northern half of the site at locations WS6, WS7 and WS8. The absence of surviving terrace deposits on the valley sides flanking the current channel must be testament to the poor survivability of such deposits of Weald Clay substrates. Such deposits lack coarse components likely to preserve as identifiable terrace deposits (lacking sand and gravels) and the impervious nature of the clay may lead to higher rates of sediment recycling and entrainment in the fluvial systems during periods of high water charge. These facts and the current mis-fit nature of the small water course occupying a wide valley landform attest to the high energy processes involved in the formation of central Wealden hydrology during the Pleistocene and Early Holocene.

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OASIS Form

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of University College London Field Archaeology Unit (UCLFAU), were commissioned by Berkeley Homes (Southern) Ltd to undertake a geoarchaeological watching brief on land east of the A24, west of Horsham, West Sussex, (centred at NGR: 515500 130000; Figure 1) during geotechnical investigations carried out by Geo-Environmental LTD in December 2010.
- 1.2** A *Written Scheme of Investigation* (ASE 2010) was developed for the site as a whole including an archaeological watching brief as an overall mitigation strategy following on from earlier archaeological desk-based assessment of the site and evaluation and field-walking of the area immediately south of the Phase 1 area.
- 1.3** Communications with John Mills West Sussex County Council (WSSCC) Senior Archaeologist (via e-mail, 18th August 2009) confirmed his view that the site as a whole has limited archaeological potential and that further archaeological mitigation strategy should comprise of a watching brief to be carried out in all areas where ground reduction will take place and for geoarchaeological monitoring of any boreholes and test pits to be carried out in these areas for geotechnical site investigation purposes.
- 1.4** In the autumn of 2010 a programme of detailed geotechnical investigation comprising boreholes, test pits and window sampling was implemented at the site by Geo-Environmental LTD. ASE was contracted to monitor a portion of these works on the south side of the site in proximity to a minor east-west water course which ran through the site.
- 1.5** This report comprises observation made during the monitoring of these works and an assessment of geoarchaeological potential for the site as a whole based on appraisal and preliminary modelling of geotechnical data.

2.0 GEOARCHAEOLOGICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The following section is compiled from three sources: an archaeological desk based assessment report (DBA) of the greater site conducted by ASE (ASE 2006); a report on the findings of an archaeological evaluation conducted by ASE (ASE 2008) on the west side of the A24 –to the west of the Phase 1 area, and a report on the results of field-walking and evaluation conducted by ASE immediately to the south of the Phase 1 area (ASE 2009). Results are summarised below; the study area for the DBA consisted of an area within a 1.5 km radius of the site boundaries. Further details can be found in the DBA (ASE 2006)

2.2 Period Overview

2.2.1 Geological and Prehistoric

According to the British Geological Survey map of the area (Sheet 302 *Horsham*), the underlying geology at the site consists Weald Clay with Alluvium in the immediate vicinity of the current course of the River Arun. Here the Arun occupies a narrow channel incised into what appears to be a wider terrace of presumably Pleistocene origin. The scale of the valley occupied is incommensurate with the current size of the river, which is a misfit to the hydrological landform.

Prehistoric activity in the Weald is sparse at best, and much derives from hunter-gatherer activity dating to the Mesolithic period. Evidence of Bronze Age burial mounds and Iron Age exploitation of iron ore resources have also been recovered.

Two sites of prehistoric date have been found within the study area of the site. A Neolithic plano-convex flint knife of an unknown source and a sherd of possible Iron Age pottery found during an evaluation at Christ's Hospital in 2002.

2.2.2 Romano-British

Romano-British activity in this area is mainly associated with iron working and transport links between such sites and settlements on the edges of the Weald. Very few settlements of this date have been located in the Weald itself, although this may reflect the paucity of fieldwork in the area rather than reflecting a true distribution.

Five sites of Romano-British date are known within the study area of the site. These include a single quernstone and a large 2nd century rubbish pit at Hill Place found during excavation in 2000, a 2nd century tile kiln located at Baystone Farm, and a single sherd of pottery found at Christ's Hospital in 2002.

2.2.3 Anglo-Saxon

No Anglo-Saxon sites have been recorded within the study area. This is to be expected given the heavily forested nature of much of the Weald during the Anglo-Saxon period (forest of *Andredeswald*) is thought to have limited the development of settlements.

2.2.4 Medieval

The town of Horsham developed as a market town during the medieval period, expanding greatly in the 13th century. A number of small-scale excavations have been undertaken in the historic core of the settlement, revealing a range of medieval features.

Two medieval sites have been recorded within the study area with one occupying at least part of the area of proposed development. These include a deer park, associated with a manorial centre that was established in the 13th century at Broadbridge Farm to the south. This manor included a water mill also constructed in the 13th century. A Grade II listed building, Parthings Farm, constructed in the 15th Century is located immediately to the south of the site.

2.2.5 Post-medieval

The town of Horsham continued its development as a market town during the post-medieval period, with the town achieving the highest average wealth in West Sussex by 1524. The area to the west of the town continued to be used as farmland during this period.

2.2.6 Three post-medieval sites are found within the study area; a possible fulling mill, shown on the 1844 Tithe Map that may still survive as earthworks, a Second World War Pillbox and the site of Parthings Cottage. A further sixteen sites and twenty-two listed buildings are recorded in the wider vicinity of the site.

2.3 Cartographic Overview

2.3.1 Cartographic analysis of the site and surrounding areas has confirmed the agricultural character of the area since at least the mid 19th century. From the maps consulted, very little change has been noted, with the exception of the erection of a small number of buildings along the western edge of Wickhurst Lane. The maps give the impression of a fairly static landscape.

2.3.2 The buildings of the Parthings Cottage complex are shown on the 1844 Tithe Map but not named in the Apportionment. They are also not named on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map of the 1870s but the buildings and a well to the north-west are clearly marked on maps of the 1890s through to the 1960s, which show the buildings as *Parthings Cottage* with the nearby well and associated buildings also included. The map of 1993 appears to show that the cottage and well buildings had been demolished by that time (ASE 2006, Figs. 3 to 15)

2.4 Aerial Photographs

- 2.4.1 A range of aerial photographs (AP's) were examined, covering the period from 1948 to 1994. From these it is evident that in terms of land-use of this area, there is limited change as reflected in the cartographic data (discussed above). Agricultural fields with some periphery development were noted surrounding the site. AP's showing Parthings Cottage in the 1940s and 1960s were included in the DBA (ASE 2006, Plates 1 and 2).

2.5 Archaeological Evaluation on a site to the west of the Phase 1 Area

- 2.5.1 A targeted archaeological evaluation of the site to the immediate west was undertaken in June 2008. Four trenches were mechanically excavated on the western side of the A24 in an attempt to clarify the character/significance of a curving field boundary possibly representing the boundary of the medieval deer park (see Paragraph 2.2.4 above). The results were not conclusive (ASE 2008).

2.6 Archaeological Field-walking on a site to the south of the Phase 1 Area

- 2.6.1 An archaeological evaluation was undertaken on and around the ruins of Parthings Cottage, a building visible on aerial photographs and named on cartographic sources. The material culture recovered suggested that the building was no older than early 19th century in origin.
- 2.6.2 A programme of surface artefact collection was also undertaken over a wider area and showed no particular concentrations of artefacts except for the expected spread of late post-medieval material around Parthings Cottage. Mesolithic flintwork was recovered across the site, but appears to be associated with activity on higher ground to the south.

3.0 AIMS

3.1 The primary aim of the Geoarchaeological watching brief was to determine the presence at the site of the following:

1. Fluvial deposits relating to Pleistocene terraces likely to preserve human artefacts and palaeoenvironmental remains
2. Deeply buried land surfaces, below colluvial sediments relating to Holocene of late Pleistocene occupation horizons with associated archaeology
3. Deeply buried Holocene sequences associated with the alluvium of the water course which preserve palaeoenvironmental remains

3.2 The Geoarchaeological watching brief was also implemented to better assess the past impacts on the site and pay particular attention to the character, height/depth below ground level, condition, date and significance of the deposits.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

4.1 The monitored test pits were excavated under the direction of Geo-Environmental LTD using a wheel JCB. The test pits were each approximately 3m x 2m in maximum dimension and excavated to the maximum reach of the machine (c.3-4m). For the excavation, a mechanical excavator with toothless bucket was used which provided up to 2.75-3m reach.

4.2 The pits were recorded on the basis of 0.25m spits and all units and unit boundaries will be fully described following the methodology of Jones *et al.* (1999; see also Roberts and Pope 2001, Green et al. 2006). Given the depth of the test pits, the arisings were placed in stratigraphic order to enable description and recording. Each test pit was undertaken either to prove the solid or to a maximum depth of 3m. During excavation dry sieving of c.75kg of each sand and gravel unit took place to look for lithic artefacts. In conjunction with the sieving, the spoil was constantly checked for artefacts as the trench was dug. It was intended that should *in situ* Palaeolithic archaeology be encountered, work at the test pit would cease until an appropriate mitigation strategy has been developed.

4.3 Sediments were recorded in the following manner. Beneath the modern horizons, the running section was recorded to allow the development of a series of detailed sediment logs. These comprised detailed sediment descriptions at 0.25m intervals or at the junction of major stratigraphic or lithological boundaries. The descriptions comprised matrix lithology, coarse components, sediment cohesion as well as characterisation of superficial structures and likelihood of decalcification. Given the presence of depositional contexts likely to preserve either artefactual or macrofaunal material at depths which are below the possibility of direct in-situ inspection, the arisings were placed in stratigraphical order to enable sieving, description and recording. During excavation dry sieving of such contexts, where possible, took place to look for lithic artefacts. In conjunction with the

sieving, the spoil was constantly checked for artefacts as excavations continued.

- 4.4** This approach enabled any archaeological and/or geoarchaeological deposits, disturbed during the works, to be adequately recorded in line with the advice given in PPG16 (the Government's advice on *Archaeology and Planning*) and in *The West Sussex Recommended Standard Archaeological Conditions* (WSCC 2007).
- 4.5** The spoil from the excavations was also inspected to recover artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest and routinely scanned with a metal detector. A logbook was to be kept of the metal-detector used, the locations scanned and any finds retrieved. Where possible these were to be located on a site plan.
- 4.6** Where deposits suitable for environmental sampling were to be encountered (such as dated excavated contexts of buried soils, well-sealed slowly silting features, sealed hearths, sealed features containing evident carbonised remains, peats, water-logged or cess deposits), bulk soil samples (40 litres or 100% of smaller features) were to be taken for environmental analysis. Bulk samples will target recovery of plant remains (charcoal and macrobotanicals), fish, bird, small mammal and amphibian bone, and small artefacts.

5.0 RESULTS

5.1 The following observations were made during the course of the Geotechnical works (Figure 2). These covered a transect from the edge of the channel of the current east-west water course across an apparent terrace to the edge of the site.

Depth (m)	Stratigraphy	Lithology	Colour	Coarse component	Sample	Notes
0	Topsoil	Clay Silt	10YR 6/1 GY	None	N	[1]
0.2	Alluvium	Silty Clay	10YR 6/4 Light Yellow Brown	None	Y	[2]
0.5	Alluvium	Silty Clay	10YR 6/4 Light Yellow Brown	None	Y	[3]
0.7	Alluvium	Silty Clay	10YR 6/4 Light Yellow Brown	None	Y	[4]
0.75	Alluvium	Silty Clay	10YR 6/4 Light Yellow Brown	10% Fe concretions 5-10mm	Y	[5]
1	Alluvium	Silty Clay	10YR 6/4 Light Yellow Brown	10% Fe concretions 5-10mm	Y	[6]
1.1	Weald Clay (Cretaceous Solid)	Clay with Sand				[7]
2.1	Weald Clay (Cretaceous Solid)	Clay with Sand				[7]

Sediment sequence within Geological Test Pit 84 (Floodplain Edge)

Depth (m)	Stratigraphy	Lithology	Colour	Coarse component	Sample	Notes
0	Topsoil	Clay Silt	10YR 6/1 GY	None	N	[1]
0.3	Weathered Weald Clay	Silty Clay	10YR 6/4 Light Yellow Brown	None	N	[2]
0.5	Weathered Weald Clay	Silty Clay	10YR 6/4 Light Yellow Brown	None	N	[3]
0.7	Weathered Weald Clay	Silty Clay	10YR 6/4 Light Yellow Brown	None	N	[4]
0.9	Weald Clay (Cretaceous Solid)	Clay with Sand				[5]
3	Weald Clay (Cretaceous Solid)	Clay with Sand				[6]

Sediment sequence within Geological Test Pit 79 (On Apparent First Terrace)

Depth (m)	Stratigraphy	Lithology	Colour	Coarse component	Sample	Notes
0	Topsoil	Clay Silt	10YR 6/1 GY	None	N	[1]
0.4	Weathered Weald Clay	Silty Clay	10YR 6/4 Light Yellow Brown	None	N	[2]
0.5	Weathered Weald Clay	Silty Clay	10YR 6/4 Light Yellow Brown	None	N	[3]
0.8	Weald Clay (Cretaceous Solid)	Clay with Sand				[4]
3	Weald Clay (Cretaceous Solid)	Clay with Sand				[5]

Sediment sequence within Geological Test Pit 61 (On Apparent First Terrace)

Depth (m)	Stratigraphy	Lithology	Colour	Coarse component	Sample	Notes
0	Topsoil	Clay Silt	7.5YR 6/6 Reddish yellow	None	N	[1]
0.2	Alluvium	Silty Clay	10YR 6/6 Brownish Yellow Brown	None	Y	[2]
0.3	Alluvium	Silty Clay	10YR 6/4 Light Yellow Brown	None	Y	[3]
0.4	Weald Clay (Cretaceous Solid)	Clay with Sand				[7]
2.4	Weald Clay (Cretaceous Solid)	Clay with Sand				[7]

Sediment sequence within Geological Test Pit 81 (Floodplain Edge)

- 5.2** In addition to these direct observations the results of all further Boreholes, Test pits and Window Samplers were observed. In every case Weald Clay or Weathered Weald Clay was observed below Topsoil across the majority of the site. Only in the immediate vicinity of the channel edge were apparent fine-grained alluvial deposits observed (eg. TP81 and 84)
- 5.3** The character of this apparent alluvial facies was a weakly bedded fine-grained silty clay with occasional beds of Iron oxide nodules either representing a precipitate or a disturbed and derived iron pan horizon. The deposit was undoubtedly waterlain but appears to be high above the current water course (over 3m) and can be easily explained as an overbank deposit. The source of the parent material is undoubtedly the weathered Weald Clay solid and it is considered that these sediments are in fact a downslope colluvial deposit put in place by sheet wash processes.
- 5.4** The immediate channel edge topography was excluded from the Geotechnical investigation and remains unsampled. Here the possibility exists for true alluvial deposits which may contain Holocene depositional environments conducive to organic preservation. The channel edge zone is very small and unless impacts are anticipated directly within it, is not under direct threat.

6.0 INTERPRETATION

- 6.1** The site contains a simple sedimentary sequence across all areas away from the immediate vicinity of the water course. Under topsoil, weathered Weald Clay is encountered, giving way to solid undisturbed Weald clay within less than a metre. No Holocene or Pleistocene sediments were encountered within this zone.
- 6.2** Flanking the channel up to 2m of fine-grained silty clay overlies the Weald Clay Solid, this is a water-lain deposits either representing overbank deposits during a period of more active fluvial discharge within the water-course or, more likely, a fluvial deposit carried downslope by low energy sheet wash processes. This deposit does not appear to seal any underlying earlier land surfaces.
- 6.3** As part of the work inspection was also made of logs from the northern part of the development site (Figure 2) not included in the watching brief. Here a similar sequence of deposits was observed across the site, largely comprising Weald Clay under topsoil. However, three window sample holes (WS6, 7 and 8) all produced deep sequences of apparent alluvium underlying colluvial Head. The deepest of these was WS6 which produced an alluvial sequence between 1.55 and 8.7m below topsoil. In WS7 organics were noted at the base of the alluvial sequence.
- 6.4** Without characterisation the nature and age of these alluvial deposits cannot be determined, it is considered likely that this represents a deep Holocene alluvial sequence with moderate palaeoenvironmental potential. It was not encountered on the southern half of the site.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1** The watching brief and assessment of recorded geotechnical logs has allowed for a reasonably comprehensive assessment of potential at the site. The majority of the development area has no potential whatsoever for the preservation of deeply buried Holocene or Pleistocene archaeology and associated palaeoenvironmental remains.
- 7.2** Two areas remain of unproven interest and both have moderate potential for preserving Holocene alluvial sequences and possible associated palaeoenvironmental evidence. These comprise the immediate edge of the Arun watercourse and the alluvial sequence noted in the northern half of the site at locations WS6, WS7 and WS8.
- 7.3** The absence of surviving terrace deposits on the valley sides flanking the current channel must be testament to the poor survivability of such deposits of Weald Clay substrates, firstly such deposit lack coarse components likely to preserve as identifiable terrace deposits (lacking sand and gravels) and the impervious nature of the clay may lead to higher rates of sediment recycling and entrainment in the fluvial systems during periods of high water charge. These facts and the current mis-fit nature of the small water course occupying a wide valley landform attest to the high energy processes involved in the formation of central Wealden hydrology during the Pleistocene and Early Holocene.

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OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-95428

Project details

Project name	Geoarchaeology WB on land west of Horsham
Short description of the project	Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of University College London Field Archaeology Unit (UCLFAU), were commissioned by Berkeley Homes (Southern) Ltd to undertake a geoarchaeological watching brief on land east of the A24, west of Horsham, West Sussex during geotechnical investigations carried out by Geo-Environmental LTD in December 2010. The watching brief and assessment of recorded geotechnical logs has allowed for a reasonably comprehensive assessment of potential at the site. The majority of the development area has no potential whatsoever for the preservation of deeply buried Holocene or Pleistocene archaeology and associated palaeoenvironmental remains. In nearly all cases solid Weald Clay was encountered directly below topsoil. In areas flanking the current watercourse, slope deposits reaching depths of 1.5m were recorded but did not contain either archaeology or contexts suitable for palaeoenvironmental remains. However, two areas remain of unproven interest and both have moderate potential for preserving Holocene alluvial sequences and possible associated palaeoenvironmental evidence. These comprise the immediate edge of the Arun watercourse and the alluvial sequence noted in the northern half of the site at locations WS6, WS7 and WS8. The absence of surviving terrace deposits on the valley sides flanking the current channel must be testament to the poor survivability of such deposits of Weald Clay substrates. Such deposits lack coarse components likely to preserve as identifiable terrace deposits (lacking sand and gravels) and the impervious nature of the clay may lead to higher rates of sediment recycling and entrainment in the fluvial systems during periods of high water charge. These facts and the current mis-fit nature of the small water course occupying a wide valley landform attest to the high energy processes involved in the formation of central Wealden hydrology during the Pleistocene and Early Holocene.
Project dates	Start: 01-12-2010 End: 31-12-2010
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	LWH 09 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Vacant Land 2 - Vacant land not previously developed
Methods & techniques	'Augering','Test Pits'
Development type	Rural residential
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 HORSHAM HORSHAM Land West of Horsham
Postcode	RH12 1
Study area	1000000.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 515500 130000 50.8959895849 0.155264885592 50 53 45 N 000 09 18 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 10.00m Max: 15.00m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	West Sussex County Council
Project design originator	west sussex county council
Project director/manager	Neil Griffin
Project supervisor	Matt Pope
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Berkley Homes

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Local Museum
Digital Archive ID	LWH 09
Digital Media available	'Text'
Paper Archive recipient	Local Museum
Paper Archive ID	LWH 09
Paper Media available	'Miscellaneous Material','Report'

Project

bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Geoarchaeological Watching Brief
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Entered on	7 March 2011



© Archaeology South-East		Land west of Horsham	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 4051	March 2011	Site location	
Report Ref:	Drawn by: JLR		



DO NOT SCALE

KEY

- CP1 CABLE PERCUSSION BOREHOLE
- H1 BY WSP, FOR HALCROW, CABLE PERCUSSION BOREHOLE FOR A24 HIGHWAYS STRUCTURES
- WS1 WINDOW SAMPLE
- TP1 TRIAL PITS
- SA1 SOAKAWAY PIT
- SS1 TRIAL PIT TO LOCATE SERVICE, COORDINATES, TOP LEVEL OF PIPE AND PIPE DIAMETER REQUIRED.
- DETENTION BASIN
- CELLULAR STORAGE
- EGL EXISTING GROUND LEVEL
- PBL PROPOSED BED LEVEL
- EXISTING WATER (AS GPR SURVEY)
- EXISTING GAS (AS GPR SURVEY)
- PROPOSED SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE STRATEGY

- NOTES**
- ROAD & DEVELOPMENT LAYOUT INDICATIVE ONLY.
 - ALL LEVELS ARE IN METRES A.O.D

DISCLAIMER NOTE:
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FINAL POSITION OF PIT TO SUIT LOCATION FOR INVESTIGATION OF FORMER TREATMENT WORKS.

18/08/2010 15:31:33

Horsham Heath - CPP\DRAWINGS\AUTOCAD\SK Sketches\2590-SK-009.dwg

REV	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	CHK	APP
D	18/08/10	RU	PIT NUMBERS ADDED	GH	GH
C	20/09/10	RU	WORKS MODEL UPDATED, PROPOSED SERVICE MARKS SHOWN, ROAD, DRAINAGE SERVICES HIGHLIGHTED, TRIAL PITS WORKS	GH	GH
B	15/09/10	RU	ISSUED TO CLIENT FOR COMMENT	GH	GH
A	11/09/10	RU	ISSUED	GH	GH

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CLIENT	COUNTRYSIDE PROPERTIES
PROJECT	SOUTH BROADBRIDGE HEATH, WEST HORSHAM
TITLE	EXPLORATORY HOLE LOCATION PLAN
DRAWN BY	1/1000 GH
CHECKED BY	GH
DATE	August 2010

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