
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD**PLOT 2, THE BRACKENS, BLACKHALL LANE,
SEVENOAKS, KENT, TN15 0HU****ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING**

Author: Antony Mustchin (Fieldwork and report) Kate Higgs MA (Oxon.) (Background research)	
NGR: TQ 54120 55487	Report No: 5615
District: Sevenoaks	Site Code: AS1952
Approved: Claire Halpin MCI fA	Project No: 7336
	Date: 19 August 2019

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Project details			
Project name	Plot 2, The Brackens, Blackhall Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN15 0HU		
<p>In June and December 2018, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording on land at The Brackens, Blackhall Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN15 0HU (NGR TQ 54120 55487; Figs. 1 - 2). The monitoring was commissioned by IQ Consultants on behalf of the clients and undertaken in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning approval for the construction of a dwelling within Plot 2 (Sevenoaks Planning Refs. SE/15/02195/FUL & SE/15/02207/FUL), based on the advice of the Heritage Conservation Group, Kent County Council.</p> <p>In the immediate vicinity of the site is the registered park and garden of Knole Park, which lies only 400m to the south-west. The lies within an Area of Archaeological Potential (HER AAP/TQ55NW/27), and the historic landscape characterisation (HLC) describes the site as post-1810 settlement.</p> <p>The monitoring of the excavation of the groundworks revealed layers of modern made ground, but no archaeological features or finds.</p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	June and December 2018		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	N	Future work	N
P. number	7336	Site code	AS 1952
Type of project	Archaeological monitoring & recording		
Site status	Area of Archaeological Potential		
Current land use	Garden		
Planned development	Residential development		
Main features (+dates)	None		
1 Significant finds (+dates)	None		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	Kent	Sevenoaks	Sevenoaks
HER for area	Kent Historic Environment Record (HER)		
Post code (if known)	-		
Area of site	-		
NGR	TQ 54120 55487		
Height AOD (max/ min)	c. 140m AOD		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	n/a		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	Archaeological Solutions Ltd		
Funded by	Mr & Mrs Bailey		
Full title	Plot 2, The Brackens, Blackhall Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN15 0HU. Archaeological Monitoring & Recording		
Authors	Higgs, K. & Mustchin, A.		
Report no.	5615		
Date (of report)	August 2019		

PLOT 2, THE BRACKENS, BLACKHALL LANE, SEVENOAKS, KENT, TN15 0HU ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING

SUMMARY

In June and December 2018, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording on land at The Brackens, Blackhall Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN15 0HU (NGR TQ 54120 55487; Figs. 1 - 2). The monitoring was commissioned by IQ Consultants on behalf of their clients and undertaken in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning approval for the construction of a dwelling within Plot 2 (Sevenoaks Planning Refs. SE/15/02195/FUL & SE/15/02207/FUL), based on the advice of the Heritage Conservation Group, Kent County Council.

In the immediate vicinity of the site is the registered park and garden of Knole Park, which lies only 400m to the south-west. The site lies within an Area of Archaeological Potential (HER AAP/TQ55NW/27), and the historic landscape characterisation (HLC) describes the site as post-1810 settlement.

The monitoring of the excavation of the groundworks revealed layers of modern made ground, but no archaeological features or finds.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In June and December 2018, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording on land at The Brackens, Blackhall Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN15 0HU (NGR TQ 54120 55487; Figs. 1 - 2). The monitoring was commissioned by IQ Consultants on behalf of their clients Mr & Mrs Bailey and undertaken in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning approval for the construction of a dwelling within Plot 2 (Sevenoaks Planning Refs. SE/15/02195/FUL & SE/15/02207/FUL), based on the advice of the Heritage Conservation Group, Kent County Council.

1.2 The programme of archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out in accordance with the requirements of a specification (Heritage Conservation Group, Kent County Council, dated February 2016), and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (2014).

Planning policy context

1.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2019) states that those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest are heritage assets. The NPPF aims to deliver sustainable development by ensuring that policies and decisions that concern the historic environment recognise that heritage

assets are a non-renewable resource, take account of the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits of heritage conservation, and recognise that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term. The NPPF requires applications to describe the significance of any heritage asset, including its setting that may be affected in proportion to the asset's importance and the potential impact of the proposal.

1.4 The NPPF aims to conserve England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, with substantial harm to designated heritage assets (i.e. listed buildings, scheduled monuments) only permitted in exceptional circumstances when the public benefit of a proposal outweighs the conservation of the asset. The effect of proposals on non-designated heritage assets must be balanced against the scale of loss and significance of the asset, but non-designated heritage assets of demonstrably equivalent significance may be considered subject to the same policies as those that are designated. The NPPF states that opportunities to capture evidence from the historic environment, to record and advance the understanding of heritage assets and to make this publicly available is a requirement of development management. This opportunity should be taken in a manner proportionate to the significance of a heritage asset and to impact of the proposal, particularly where a heritage asset is to be lost.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

2.1 The site of land at The Brackens is located to the east of the town of Sevenoaks, and lies within the parish and district of Sevenoaks, and the county of Kent. The modern town centre of Sevenoaks is situated 2.5km to the west-south-west, while the immediate vicinity of the site is dominated by the registered park and garden of Knole Park, which lies only 400m to the south-west. The site lies within an Area of Archaeological Potential (HER AAP/TQ55NW/27), and the historic landscape characterisation (HLC) describes the site as post-1810 settlement.

2.2 The site comprises an irregular plot of land located to the south-west of The Brackens, which is an existing, detached residential dwelling located off the southern frontage of Blackhall Lane (Fig. 2). The site lies to the immediate west of The Brackens, with Blackhall Lane forming its northern boundary, and agricultural land to the immediate west and south of the site. The site is currently occupied by existing gardens associated with The Brackens and known as Plot 2.

3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

3.1 Sevenoaks is located at the southern end of the Darent valley, at the point where the River Darent cuts through the North Downs, and is set in a broad vale at the foot of the slope of the Downs. The River Darent flows on a south to north alignment 3.5km to the west-north-west, while former gravel

extraction pits are situated at the northern extent of Sevenoaks. The area surrounding the site has a variable relief, with Knole Park situated on a plateau of higher ground to the south-west. The site itself is located at 140m AOD, with the surrounding relief sloping down to the north.

3.2 Sevenoaks and the surrounding area are located upon a solid geology of Folkestone Formation Beds, which dominate the North Downs (BGS 2015; DBC 2004). The site is also located upon Hamble 2 Association soils, which are described as deep stoneless well drained silty soils and similar soils affected by groundwater (SSEW 1983).

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Prehistoric

4.1 Although Sevenoaks is located in a relatively prominent location at the southern end of the Darent valley and at the foot of the slope of the North Downs, evidence for early exploitation of the area is sparse (Ashbee 2005; Williams 2007). Early occupation was likely concentrated along the course of the River Darent to the north-west, although there is evidence for a Mesolithic to Bronze Age occupation floor located to the south-west within Knole Park (HER TQ 55 NW 33). The discovery of polished flint axes, tanged arrowheads and other implements found from 1926 onwards immediately below the modern turf in Knole Park indicate the early occupation site.

Romano-British

4.2 In the Romano-British period, the River Darent may have been the focus for trade and settlement, with a significant Roman villa at Lullingstone and further villas and farmsteads known along the valley (Williams & Brown 1999). The site, however, lies some distance from the course of the river and no Romano-British remains are known in the vicinity of the site.

Saxon and medieval

4.3 Very little is known about the Saxon occupation in the area surrounding Sevenoaks and no Anglo-Saxon remains are recorded in the vicinity, although the Church of St Nicholas may have Saxon origins (KCC 2004). Place-name evidence reveals that Sevenoaks derives from the Old English words *seofon* and *ac*, meaning the 'place by seven oak trees' (Glover 1976), whilst there is no mention of Sevenoaks in Domesday (Morris 1983). The manor and settlement of Sevenoaks is first recorded as *Seouenaca* in a document dating to the 1120s (Mills 1993).

4.4 The site is judged to have lain within Blackhall Manor, which belonged to the Tottisherst family from c.1360 (Killingray & Purves 2012). To the south-west, lies Knole and its 400 hectare park, which was first enclosed in 1456 by Thomas Bouchier to indulge a passion for hunting (HER TQ 55 SW 229). Knole is also one of the largest private houses in England and dates from the

15th century, but was extensively remodelled by Sir Thomas Sackville between 1605 - 08.

Post-medieval and later

4.5 Sevenoaks owed its prosperity to its location at the junction of two important routes, namely the London to Hastings coastal route, and the road leading to the Thames estuary at Dartford. However, the post-medieval and later history of the site and its vicinity was dominated by its proximity to Knole and its historic park and garden to the south, rather than Sevenoaks itself. The northern boundary of Knole Park is defined by a Grade II listed boundary wall constructed 1800 – 32 (HER TQ 55 NW 177). Further Grade II listed buildings in the surrounding area comprise Little Blackhall, which is a restored 16th or 17th century framed cottage (HER TQ 55 NW 193) and Seal Hollow House, which was built in 1908 by the architect M. H. Baillie Scott (HER TQ 55 NW 293).

4.6 The site is judged to have lain within Blackhall Manor, which was dominated by a post-medieval regular multiyard farmstead of Blackhall located 300m to the west of the site (HER MKE83830), with the site of Holly Cottage (formerly Blackhall Cottage) to its north (HER MKE100198). To the north-west stands Blackhall Wood, which is a post-medieval outfarm with a regular courtyard plan and buildings to three sides of the yard (HER MKE83831). Local history sources suggest that Blackhall Manor may predate both Knole and Wildernesse (Killingray & Purves 2012). In the late 18th century, part of the then Blackhall estate were bought by the Dorsets of Knole and added to their estate. By 1826, the Earl of Plymouth, who resided at Knole, divided the old Blackhall estate with the Camdens of Wildernesse, thus establishing Blackhall Lane as the boundary between them (*ibid.*).

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 The ground reduction and excavation for the house plot and garage were undertaken using a mechanical excavator (Figs. 2 - 3).

5.2 The archaeological investigation comprised the observation of the groundworks likely to affect archaeological remains, the inspection of the subsoil and natural deposits for archaeological features, the examination of spoil heaps and the recording of soil profiles. Encountered features and deposits were cleaned by hand and recorded using *pro-forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed as appropriate. Excavated spoil was checked for finds.

6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

6.1 The encountered stratigraphy was recorded in sample sections presented below:

<i>Sample section 1</i> <i>0.00 = 139.80m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.29m	L1000	Mixture of natural sand and Made Ground. Friable, dark grey yellow brown sand.
0.29 – 0.82m	L1001	Subsoil. Friable, dark grey green, silty sand with occasional medium sub-rounded and sub angular flint.
0.82 – 1.22m+	L1002	Natural deposits. Friable, mid yellow brown sand.

<i>Sample section 2</i> <i>0.00 = 140.84m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.24m	L1003	Topsoil. Friable, dark brown slightly silty sand
0.24 – 0.53m	L1000	Made Ground. As above
0.92 – 1.48m+	L1002	Natural deposits. As above

<i>Sample section 3</i> <i>0.00 = 139.59m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.24m	L1005	Made Ground
0.24 – 0.53m	L1003	Topsoil. As above
	L1001	Subsoil. As above
0.92 – 1.48m+	L1002	Natural deposits. As above

<i>Sample section 4</i> <i>0.00 = 139.36m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.24m	L1003	Topsoil. As above
0.24 – 0.53m	L1001	Subsoil. As above
0.92 – 1.48m+	L1002	Natural deposits. As above

Description: No archaeological finds or features were present.

7 DISCUSSION

7.1 In the immediate vicinity of the site is the registered park and garden of Knole Park, which lies only 400m to the south-west. The lies within an Area of Archaeological Potential (HER AAP/TQ55NW/27), and the historic landscape characterisation (HLC) describes the site as post-1810 settlement.

7.2 The monitoring of the excavation of the groundworks revealed layers of modern made ground, but no archaeological features or finds.

DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited with Sevenoaks Museum. The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross referenced and checked for internal consistency.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions would like to thank the clients, Mr & Mrs Bailey for funding the programme of archaeological monitoring and recording, and IQ Consultants in particular Ms. Julie Nation/Mr Tony Cheeseman, for commissioning the works and for their assistance.

AS is also pleased to acknowledge the staff of the Kent Historic Environment Record, in particular Dr. Rose Broadley. AS would also like to thank the staff of the Kent History and Library Centre (KHLS), based in Maidstone.

AS would also like to acknowledge the assistance and advice for Ms Wendy Rogers of HCC Heritage Conservation Group.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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OASIS ID: archaeol7-364088

Project details

Project name	Plot 2, The Brackens, Blackhall Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN15 0HU (WB)
Short description of the project	In June and December 2018, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording on land at The Brackens, Blackhall Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN15 0HU (NGR TQ 54120 55487; Figs. 1 - 2). The monitoring was commissioned by IQ Consultants on behalf of the clients and undertaken in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning approval for the construction of a dwelling within Plot 2 (Sevenoaks Planning Refs. SE/15/02195/FUL and SE/15/02207/FUL), based on the advice of the Heritage Conservation Group, Kent County Council. In the immediate vicinity of the site is the registered park and garden of Knole Park, which lies only 400m to the south-west. The lies within an Area of Archaeological Potential (HER AAP/TQ55NW/27), and the historic landscape characterisation (HLC) describes the site as post-1810 settlement. The monitoring of the excavation of the groundworks revealed layers of modern made ground, but no archaeological features or finds.
Project dates	Start: 01-06-2018 End: 30-12-2018
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	P7336 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	AS1952 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	KENT SEVENOAKS SEVENOAKS Plot 2, The Brackens, Blackhall Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN15 0HU
Postcode	TN15 0HU
Study area	0 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 54120 55487 51.277116015972 0.209913745512 51 16 37 N 000 12 35 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 140m Max: 140m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Archaeological Solutions Ltd

Project brief originator N/A

Project design originator Jon Murray

Project director/manager Jon Murray

Project supervisor Archaeological Solutions Ltd

Name of sponsor/funding body Mr & Mrs Bailey

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No

Digital Archive recipient Sevenoaks Museum

Digital Contents "none"

Digital Media available "Database","Images raster / digital photography","Spreadsheets","Text"

Paper Archive recipient Sevenoaks Museum

Paper Contents "none"

Paper Media available "Context sheet","Drawing","Map","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section","Survey "

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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Author(s)/Editor(s) Higgs, K

Other bibliographic details 5615

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PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX (P7336)



1
Area of proposed basement for Plot 2 looking north-east



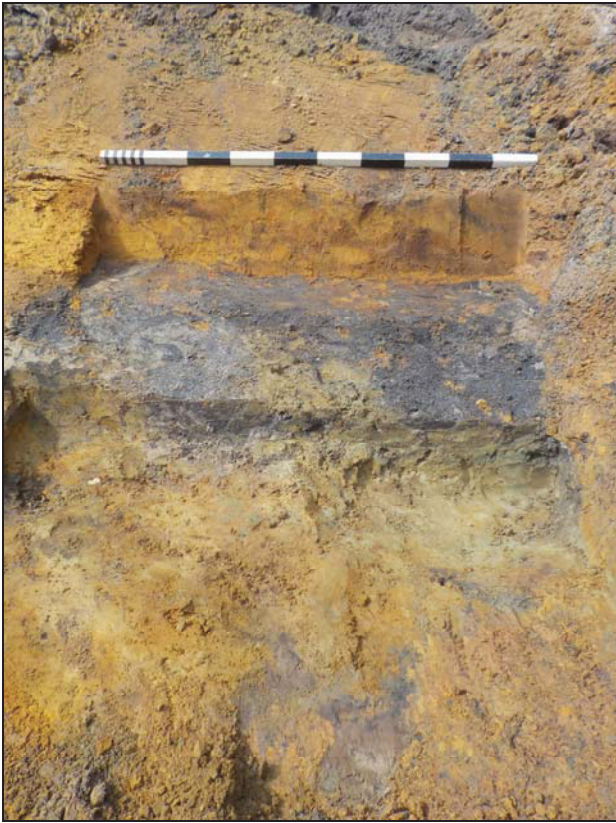
2
Area of proposed basement for Plot 2 looking south-east



3
Area of ground reduction to south of Plot 2 looking west



4
Area of ground reduction to south of Plot 2 looking east



5
Sample section 1 looking south



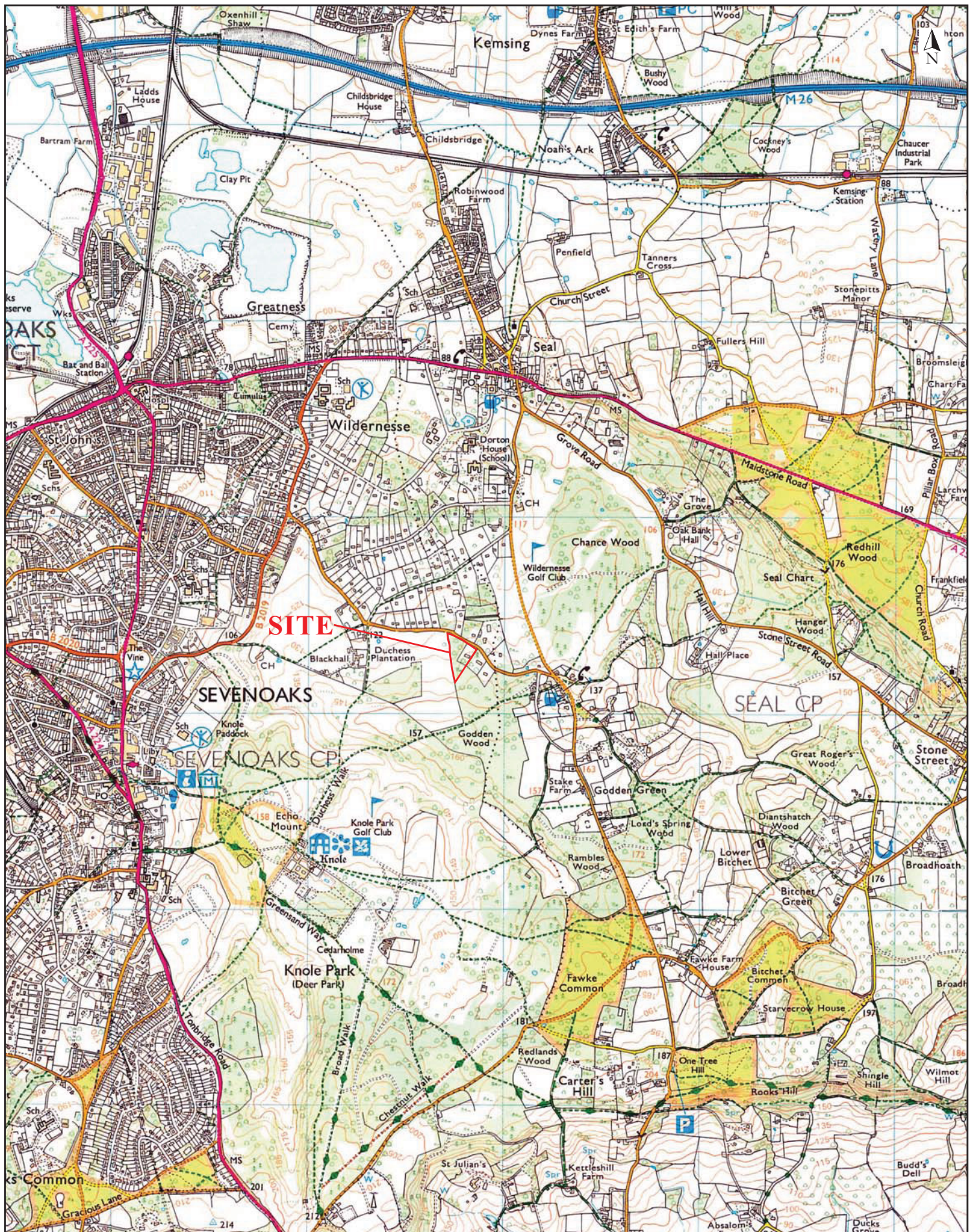
6
Sample section 2 looking south



7
Sample section 3 looking south



8
Sample section 4 looking west



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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4
 The Brackens, Blackhall Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent (P7336)

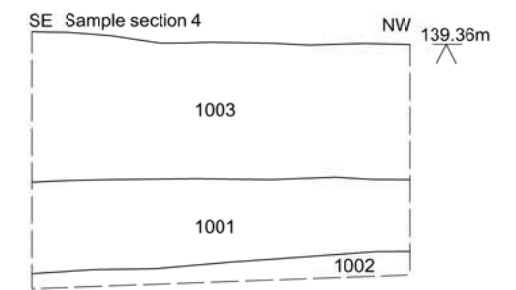
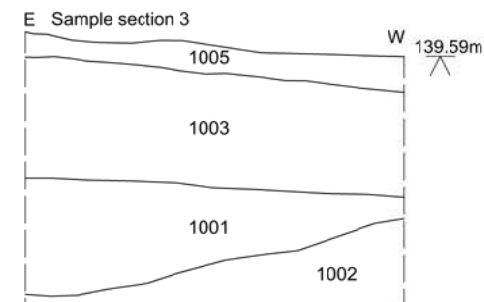
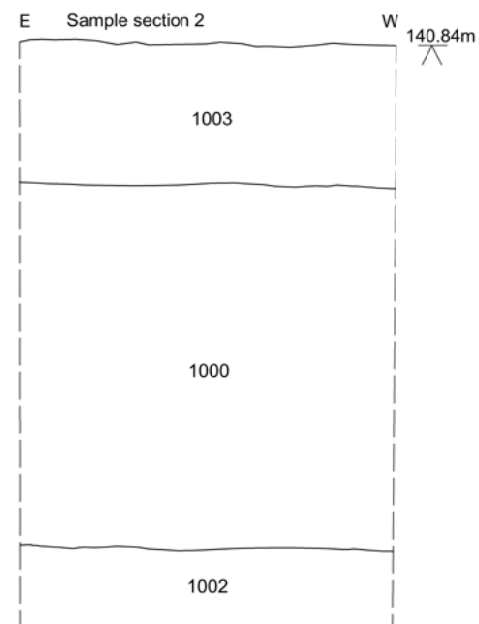
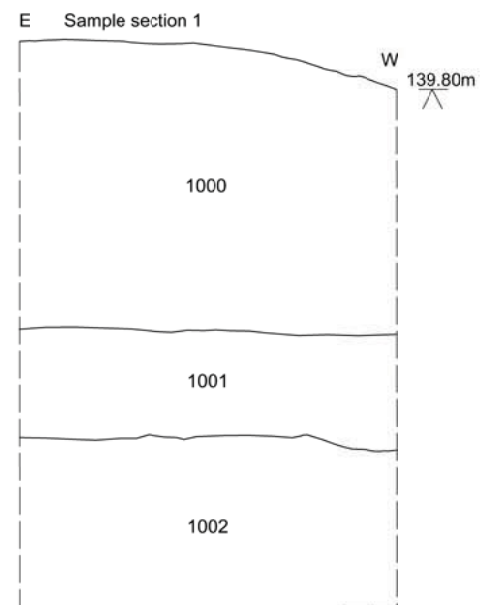
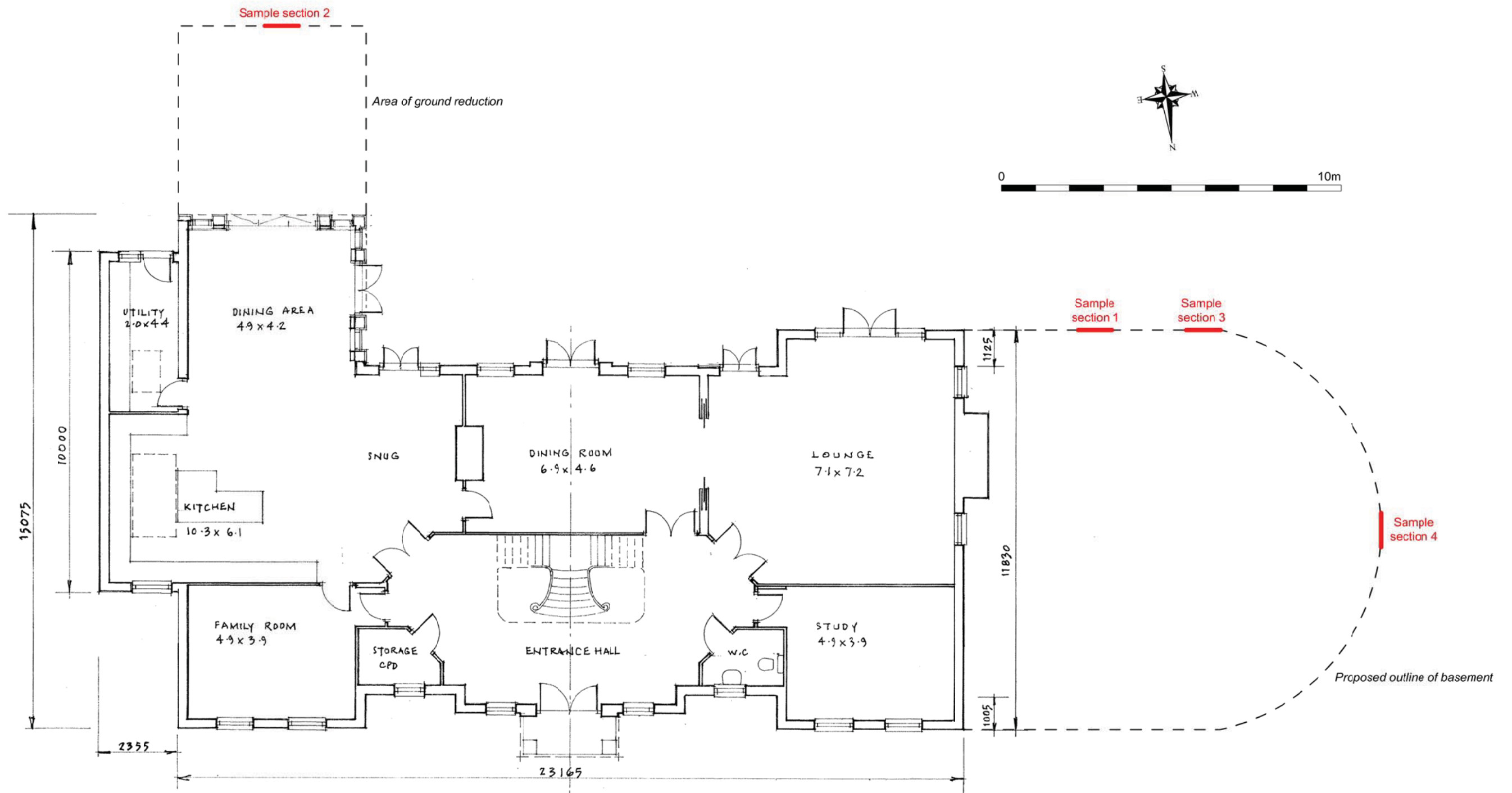


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Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan

Scale 1:1000 at A4

The Brackens, Blackhall Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent (P7336)



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Fig. 3 Sections on proposed development plan
 Scale Plan at 1:125, sections at 1:20 at A3
 The Brackens, Blackhall Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent (P7336)