

An Archaeological Watching Brief at 25 Priory Road, Tonbridge, Kent

Planning Ref: TM/09/01075/FL

**NGR TQ 58941 45919
Project No. 4160
Site Code: PRT10**

**ASE Report No. 2010073
OASIS id: 77148**

**Robert Cole BA (Hons)
May 2010**

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Abstract

Archaeology South-East was commissioned by construction company, Goldstar Contracts Ltd to carry out an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the construction of nine residential units at 25 Priory Road, Tonbridge, Kent. The archaeological watching brief took place on 9th February 2010.

The groundworks revealed deposits consisting of modern made ground associated with the demolition of the Railway Bell public house, which was previously on the site. Archaeological deposit survival appears to have been greatly reduced during levelling activity. This appears to have removed or displaced any historic deposits that may have once overlain the natural stratum.

No archaeological deposits, features or artefacts were encountered during the watching brief.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of University College London Centre for Applied Archaeology (UCLCAA), was commissioned by construction company, Goldstar Contracts Ltd. to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the excavation and ground works associated with the construction of nine residential units at 25 Priory Road, Tonbridge, Kent (NGR TQ 58941 45919; Figure 1), hereafter referred to as 'the site'.

1.1.2 The proposed development consists of:

- The demolition of existing buildings and grubbing out of the foundations
- The excavation of foundation trenches for the new building
- The landscaping and access work within the grounds
- Construction of nine residential units

1.2 Geology and Topography

1.2.1 According to the British Geological Survey (Sheet 287), the site lies on interbedded sandstone and siltstone of the Tunbridge Wells Sand Formation, with overlying clay and silt River Terrace deposits.

1.2.2 The site is located on the corner of Priory Road and Priory Street on the southern side of Tonbridge town centre, c. 300 meters east of Tonbridge station and c. 1 kilometre south of the River Medway. The site was formerly occupied by the Railway Bell public house

1.3 Planning Background

1.3.1 A specification for the archaeological watching brief was provided by Kent County Council Heritage Conservation Group (KCC 2009) and approved by the Local Planning Authority of Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council.

1.3.2 Planning permission for the construction of the new residential units was granted by Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council (Planning Ref.: TM/09/01075/FL). Owing to the site being within an archaeologically sensitive area, Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council imposed the following condition for an archaeological watching brief to be carried out during the ground works:

'No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a watching brief to be undertaken by an archaeologist approved by the Local Planning Authority so that the excavation is observed and items of interest and finds are recorded. The watching brief shall be in accordance with a written programme and specification which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority' (KCC 2009).

1.4 Aims and Objectives

- 1.4.1 The specific aim of the watching brief was to 'contribute to the heritage knowledge of the area' (KCC 2009) through the recording of any archaeological remains.
- 1.4.2 The key objective of the archaeological watching brief was to ensure that any archaeological features, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts exposed and affected as a result of the groundworks were recorded and interpreted to appropriate standards.

1.5 Scope of Report

- 1.5.1 This report details the findings of the watching brief which was undertaken by Robert Cole (Archaeological Field Officer) on 9th February 2010. The project was managed by Jon Sygrave (Fieldwork) and Louise Rayner and Jim Stevenson (Post-excavation).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The Historic Environment Record (HER) maintained by Kent County Council (KCC), and held at County Hall, Maidstone, was consulted and the results are summarised below. Details were taken of all archaeological sites and listed buildings in the vicinity of the site. The identified sites are tabulated in Appendix 1.
- 2.1.2 The town of Tonbridge, first mentioned in 1241, was a medieval town with a castle on the northern bank of the River Medway. Tonbridge Castle was built in 1088 and captured by William II. The large masonry defences, which can be seen today, were probably built by the 13th Century. There are many listed buildings near the site such as the 15th Century timber framed buildings on the High Street and the 19th Century workshops. The site of the St Mary Magdalen Priory, an Augustinian monastery, lies c. 80m north of the development and archaeological finds have been made nearby, including an Iron Age gold stater c. 95m north-east of the site, and a possible Palaeolithic hand axe c. 315m to the south-west.
- 2.1.3 Archaeology South East have conducted a number of projects within the immediate vicinity of Priory Road which have revealed a variety of medieval and post medieval deposits, features and finds.
- 2.1.4 The location of the site is very close to the River Medway which means there is potential for finding isolated prehistoric artefacts, riverside wooden structures and palaeo-environmental deposits within any alluvium that may be present. The study area is on flat land and this may be the result of medieval and post medieval land reclamation. Similar land reclamation deposits were discovered elsewhere on the south side of the River Medway (ASE, 2005)

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 The Ground-works

3.1.1 The monitored groundworks consisted of the excavation of foundation trenches along the proposed lines of the walls of the new residential units (Figure 2).

3.2 Excavation Methodology

3.2.1 Machining was undertaken by a 360-degree mechanical excavator equipped with a flat-bladed ditching bucket. All of the intrusive ground works were carried out under archaeological supervision to ensure that any exposed archaeological remains were identified and recorded as per the KCC specification document (KCC 2009).

3.2.2 During the monitored excavations all revealed deposits were examined for the presence of archaeological features and artefacts. The removed spoil was scanned for the presence of any stray, unstratified artefacts. The uncovered deposits were recorded according to accepted professional standards (IFA 2000 and 2001, EH 1991) using pro-forma context record sheets and measured section drawings.

3.3 The Archive

3.3.1 The site archive is presently held at the Archaeology South-East offices in Portslade, East Sussex pending submission to a suitable local museum. The contents of the site archive are summarised in Table 1.

Number of Contexts	3 contexts
Number of files/paper record	1 file
Photographs	4 digital images

Table 1: Quantification of the Site Archive

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Foundation Trench Excavation

- 4.1.1 A series of interconnecting foundation trenches were excavated in preparation for the laying of floor beams beneath the walls of the new residential units (Figure 2). The excavation was taken down to the level of the natural deposits [003] under archaeological supervision using a 360-degree mechanical excavator equipped with a flat-bladed ditching bucket. The total depth of the excavation was 1.75m. The natural clays [003] were encountered at a maximum depth of 0.50m below ground surface.
- 4.1.2 Above the natural [003] a single deposit of modern made ground levelling [002] was present across the whole of the site.
- 4.1.3 A small strip of topsoil [001] of mid-dark grey-brown silty-clay with a maximum thickness of 0.15m overlay the natural in the south east corner of the site.

Number	Type	Description	Interpretation	Max. Thickness
[001]	Deposit	Friable, grey brown silty clay with occasional modern rubble.	Topsoil	0.15 m
[002]	Deposit	Grey brown clay silt with 45% modern rubble.	Made ground	0.5 m
[003]	Deposit	Brownish orange clay silt	Natural	N/A

Table 2: List of Recorded Contexts

5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 No archaeological deposits or features were recorded during the archaeological watching brief at 25 Priory Road, Tonbridge, Kent.
- 5.2 The area monitored contained a substantial deposit of made ground with an abundance of modern concrete and brick throughout. This deposit represents dumps and levelling in association with the demolition of the Railway Bell public house.
- 5.3 The archaeological potential of the site, in terms of deposit survival, appears to have been greatly reduced during the demolition of the Railway Bell public house. This appears to have removed or displaced any historic deposits that may have once overlain the natural stratum.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The co-operation and assistance of Darren Probets and William Sergeant of Goldstar Contracts Ltd is gratefully acknowledged as is the assistance of the Kent County Council Heritage Conservation Group. Thank you also to the Goldstar Contracts for commissioning the work carried out at 25 Priory Road.

Appendix 1: HER Data summary

No	SMR	NGR	Description
1	TQ54 NE 2-MKE166	TQ58954655	Tonbridge Castle- built on the north bank of the Medway. In existence by 1088 being captured by William II. The masonry defences were likely built by the 13 th Century.
2	TQ 54 NE 3-MKE167	TQ 5900 4659	13 th Century Town Wall (course of)
3	TQ 54 NE 6-MKE170	TQ5917 4674	Church of St Peter and St Paul-enlarged in the 17 th Century and substantially restored in the 19 th Century.
4	TQ 54 NE- 7-MKE 171	TQ5892 4659	Roman coin of Constantine
5	TQ 54 NE- 9-MKE 173	TQ5908 4683	186 High Street- a late 14 th to 15 th Century Hall.
6	TQ 54 NE- 11-MKE 175	TQ5906 4658	122 High Street- 15 th Century timber framed building.
7	TQ 54 NE- 12-MKE 176	TQ5905 4659	124 High Street- 15 th Century timber framed building.
8	TQ 54 NE- 13-MKE 177	TQ 5923 4662	The port Reeve's house- 15 th Century timber framed building.
9	TQ 54 NE- 32-MKE 9245	TQ5885 4676	Early 20 th Century Power Station.
10	TQ 54 NE 21- MKE9452	TQ5907 4662	Town of Tonbridge, first mentioned in 1241-the town was simply part of the outer defences of the castle
11	TQ 54 NE 34- MKE15688	TQ5883 4657	A buried layer of twigs and branches probably of post-medieval date.
12	TQ 54 NE 36- MKE16776	TQ5901 4633	Site of a tannery to the rear of Tonbridge High Street
13	TQ 54 NE 37- MKE16797	TQ5899 4672	Agricultural Hall-brick built market hall of c. 1880.
14	TQ 54 NE 39- MKE16803	TQ5902 4671	19 th Century warehouse
15	TQ 54 NE 40- MKE16804	TQ5901 4672	19 th Century workshop
16	TQ 54 NE 46- MKE17792	TQ5920 4660	Evaluation-Five trenches which revealed medieval and post-medieval features at Lyons on East Street.
17	TQ 54 NE 45- MKE17710	TQ 5932 4653	Lyons Crescent, Tonbridge-a watching brief revealed the presence of an infilled water course (undated).
18	TQ 54 NE 66- MKE17958	TQ 5901 4683	Watching brief discovered some medieval pottery sherds, but limits of excavation prevented any real interpretations.
19	TQ 54 NE 50- MKE18001	TQ 59202 46798	Group of Chest tombs-Church of St Peter and St Paul.

No	SMR	NGR	Description
20	TQ 54 NE 73- MKE20494	TQ 5902 4638	Watching brief to the rear of 67-71 High Street, Tonbridge- a section through intact deposits revealed floor layers dated to the mid 13 th - 14 th Century. Canterbury Archaeological Trust
21	TQ 54 NE 77- MKE21012	TQ58979 46737	Excavation- In 2005 a prehistoric gully and other medieval features and finds were recorded by Pre-Construct Archaeology.
22	TQ 54 NE 78- MKE21037	TQ 59130 46545	Medieval structural remains beneath the present Lyons Crescent, found during the excavation of a series of base pits.
23	MKE34670	TQ5957 4678	Listed building- Mill Cottage-Barracks
24	TQ 54 NE 79- MKE21048	TQ 59036 46937	Victorian landscaping
25	MKE34671	TQ5906 4702	Listed building- The Chapel (1900-1909).
26	MKE35599	TQ 5942 4678	Pair of listed cottages (c. 1830)
27	MKE35600	TQ 5912 4660	Listed building- Methodist Church (completed in 1885).
28	MKE 35601	TQ 5884 4670	Listed building- The Milne Museum, built in 1902.
29	MKE35607		Listed building- The Close
30	MKE35608	TQ5915 4662	Listed building- The Man of Kent Public House
31	MKE35610	TQ 5937 4672	Bordyke End- c. 1840, commemorative monument.
32	MKE35616	TQ5902 4641	Listed building- Small timber framed building at 73 High Street, Tonbridge
33	MKE35617	TQ5911 4663	Listed building- The Rose and Crown Hotel- 18 th century listed building.
34	MKE35619	TQ5909 4676	Listed building- 18 th Century row of listed buildings.
35	MKE35620	TQ5910 4680	Listed building- A range of listed 19 th Century houses built of white brick.
36	MKE35622	TQ5905 4658	Listed building- House-Ye Olde Chequers Inn (late 16 th or early 17 th Century)-timber framed.
37	MKE35621	TQ59167 46933	Listed building- A Garden Wall to the north and east of Ferox Hall
38	MKE35623	TQ5905 4665	Listed building- House- 18th Century- 2 storeys and 4 windows.
39	MKE35624	TQ5905 4667	16 th Century timber framed house.
40	MKE35625	TQ5909 4690	Listed building- 18 th Century
41	MKE35626	TQ 5910 4691	Listed building-c. 1730- Graylings
42	MKE35627	TQ5906 4702	Listed building- c. 1850-North half of the main school buildings.
43	MKE35628	TQ5906 4702	Listed building- Wealden House
44	MKE35629	TQ 5899 4669	Listed building- Pair of 19 th Century cottages
45	MKE35630	TQ 5915 4684	Listed building- Minerva House (mid 18 th Century)
46	MKE35631	TQ 5920 4685	Listed building- The Priory (17 th Century)
47	MKE35632	TQ 5921 4685	Listed building- The Red House (16 th Century).
48	MKE35633	TQ 5923 4682	Church- (11 th Century)
49	MKE35634	TQ 5928 4677	Listed building- House (19 th Century)
50	MKE35635	TQ 5927 4673	Listed building The Cedars (18 th Century)
51	MKE35636	TQ 5913 4675	Listed building- Railway Station (1856).
52	MKE36039	TQ 5911 4663	Railings (undated)
53	MKE36042	TQ 5909 4675	Listed building- Barn (18 th Century).
54	MKE36043	TQ 5910 4678	Listed building- Granary (18 th Century)
55	MKE36044	TQ 59047 46607	Listed building-Continuous Jetty House (16 th Century)
56	MKE36045	TQ 5905 4665	Listed Building- Shop (18 th Century)
57	MKE36049	TQ 5905 4669	Row of houses (16 th Century)

No	SMR	NGR	Description
58	MKE36050	TQ 5905 4671	Packhorse Bridge (16 th Century)
59	MKE36051	TQ 5906 4702	Listed building- south half of main school buildings.
60	MKE36392	TQ 5943 4678	Listed building- Chest tomb (18 th Century)
61	MKE36393	TQ5915 4702	Listed building- Hall House (16 th Century).
62	MKE36396	TQ5907 4681	Donkey Wheel (Mid 19 th Century).
63	MKE36398	TQ5909 4672	Listed building- Courtyard of a house and shop (18 th Century)
64	MKE36402	TQ5941 4677	Listed building- House- later two shops.
65	MKE36413	TQ5909 4688	Listed building- Jettied House (16 th Century to Post-medieval)
66	MKE36414	TQ 5907 4682	Listed building- a late medieval open hall altered in the 19 th century.
67	MKE36589	TQ 5906 4702	Listed building- 18 th Century house on the High Street.
68	MKE36590	TQ 5912 4688	Listed building. L-shaped timber framed building. At 199 High Street
69	MKE36591	TQ5908 4665	Listed building- Possible timber framed building beneath the Rose and Crown Hotel.
70	MKE36799	TQ 5900 4660	Listed building- The property and offices of Tonbridge district council.
71	MKE36801	TQ 5916 4687	Listed building- 18 th Century farmhouse.
72	MKE36800	TQ 5900 4670	Bank Street Schools- Originally an 18 th Century workhouse.
73	MKE36803	TQ5929 4684	Listed building- 2 19 th Century Houses.
74	MKE36804	TQ 5922 4673	Garden Wall at the Cedars.
75	MKE36805	TQ 5949 4678	Listed building c. 1830- Crystalate House
76	MKE36806	TQ 5912 4674	Listed building- 19 th Century timber framed house- TYGER'S HEAD.
77	MKE36809	TQ5945 4678	Listed building- Mid 19 th Century cottage.
78	MKE36810	TQ 5909 4669	Listed building- c. 1860 italianate style former bank, now offices at 139 High Street.
79	MKE36814	TQ5917 4666	Listed building- row of 18 th Century cottages
80	MKE36815	TQ 5912 4662	Listed building- row of 17 th Century cottages.
81	MKE36816	TQ 5928 4667	Listed building- 16 th Century timber framed house.
82	MKE36817	TQ 5939 4673	Listed building- probable 17 th century origin
83	MKE36818	TQ 5917 4666	Listed building- Outbuilding opposite the Rose and Crown.
84	MKE36819	TQ 5909 4677	Listed building- 163 High Street- (18 th century)
85	MKE36820	TQ5913 4694	Listed building- 18 th century mansion- Ferox Hall.
86	MKE36821	TQ 5905 4659	Listed building- Colonnade-restored timber framed house at 124 High Street
87	MKE36822	TQ 5905 4668	Listed building- Possible 17 th century house
88	MKE36823	TQ 5905 4670	Listed building- Building with narrow frontage- possibly 17 th century at 156 High Street.
89	MKE36824	TQ 5906 4702	Listed building- Oldest school buildings- Headmaster's house.
90	MKE36825	TQ 5906 4702	Listed building- School museum.
91	MKE36836	TQ 5920 4660	Listed building- House of probable 16 th Century date, Lions including attached garden wall.

HER Summary Form

Site Code	PRT10					
Identification Name and Address	25 Priory Road, Tonbridge, Kent, TN9 2AQ					
County, District &/or Borough	Kent, Tonbridge and Malling Borough					
OS Grid Refs.	TQ 58941 45919					
Geology	Tonbridge Wells Sand					
Arch. South-East Project Number	4160					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	Watching Brief	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site			Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork			9/02/10	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Goldstar Contracts Ltd					
Project Manager	Jon Sygrave					
Project Supervisor	Robert Cole					
Period Summary	Palaeo. None	Meso. None	Neo. None	BA None	IA None	RB None
	AS None	MED None	PM None	Other Modern levelling		
<p>100 Word Summary.</p> <p>Archaeology South-East carried out an archaeological watching brief on the groundworks and services associated with the construction of nine new residential units at 25 Priory Road, Tonbridge, Kent, on 9th February 2010.</p> <p>The WB revealed previous modern levelling activity.</p> <p>No archaeological deposits, features or artefacts were encountered.</p>						

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-77148

Project details

Project name An Archaeological Watching Brief at 25 Priory Road, Tonbridge, Kent

Short description of the project Archaeology South-East carried out an archaeological watching brief on the groundworks associated with the construction of nine new residential units at 25 Priory Road, Tonbridge, Kent on 9th February. The deposits encountered were consistent with dumping levelling and the creation of made ground associated with demolition of the public house formerly on the site. No archaeological deposits, features or artefacts were encountered.

Project dates Start: 09-02-2010 End: 09-02-2010

Previous/future work No / No

Type of project Recording project

Site status None

Current Land use Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed

Monument type NONE None

Significant Finds NONE None

Investigation type 'Watching Brief'

Prompt Planning condition

Project location

Country England

Site location KENT TONBRIDGE AND MALLING TONBRIDGE 25 Priory Road, Tonbridge, Kent

Postcode TN92AQ

Study area 600.00 Square metres

Site coordinates TQ 58941 45919 51.1898117027 0.274738489683 51 11 23 N 000 16 29 E Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 23.30m Max: 24.30m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Archaeology South East

Project brief originator Kent County Council

Project design originator Archaeology South-East

Project director/manager Jon Sygrave

Project supervisor Robert Cole

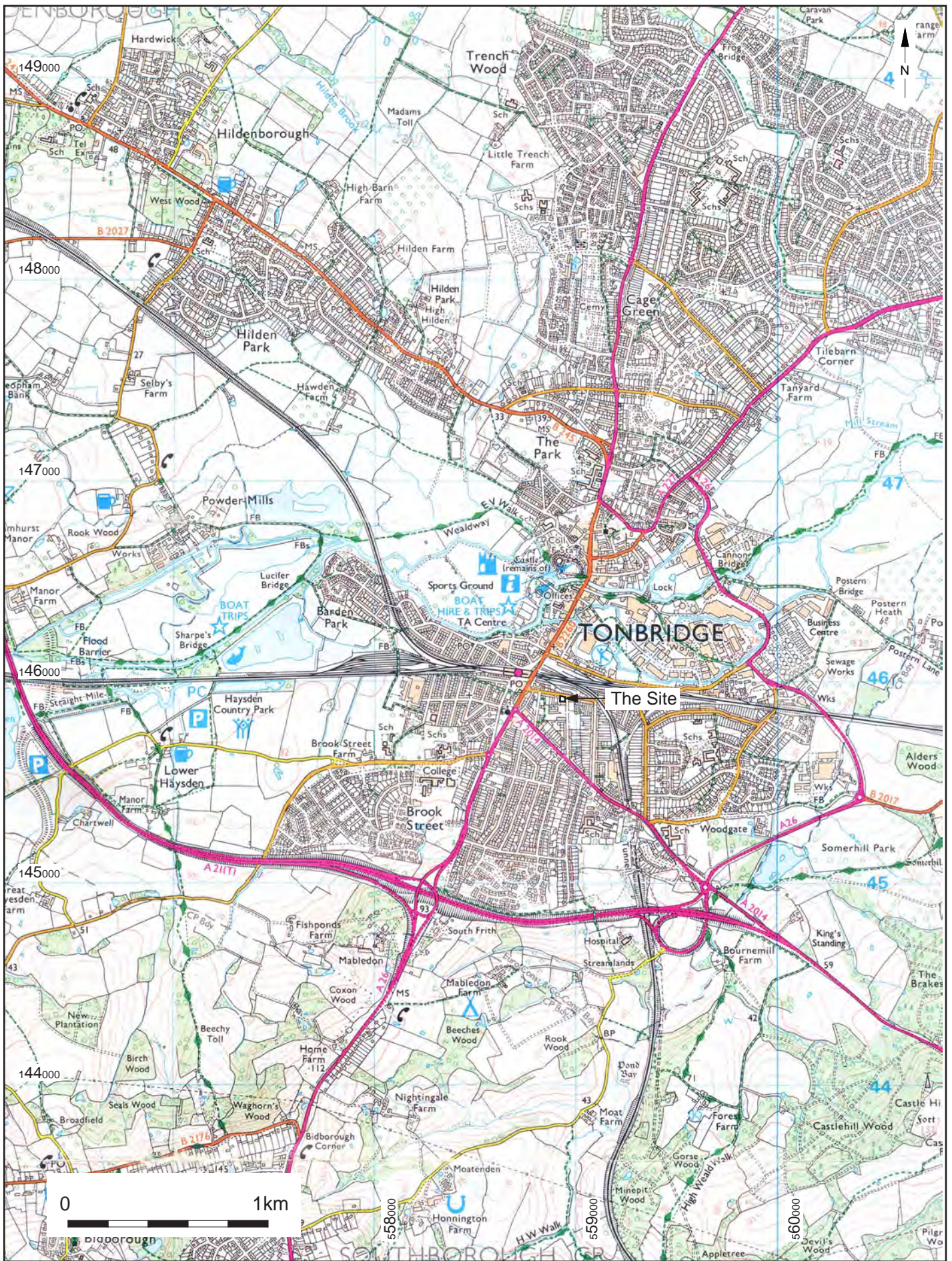
Type of sponsor/funding body Client

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Local Museum
Digital Contents	'other'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography','Text'
Paper Archive recipient	Local Museum
Paper Contents	'other'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Map','Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General Notes','Photograph','Report'

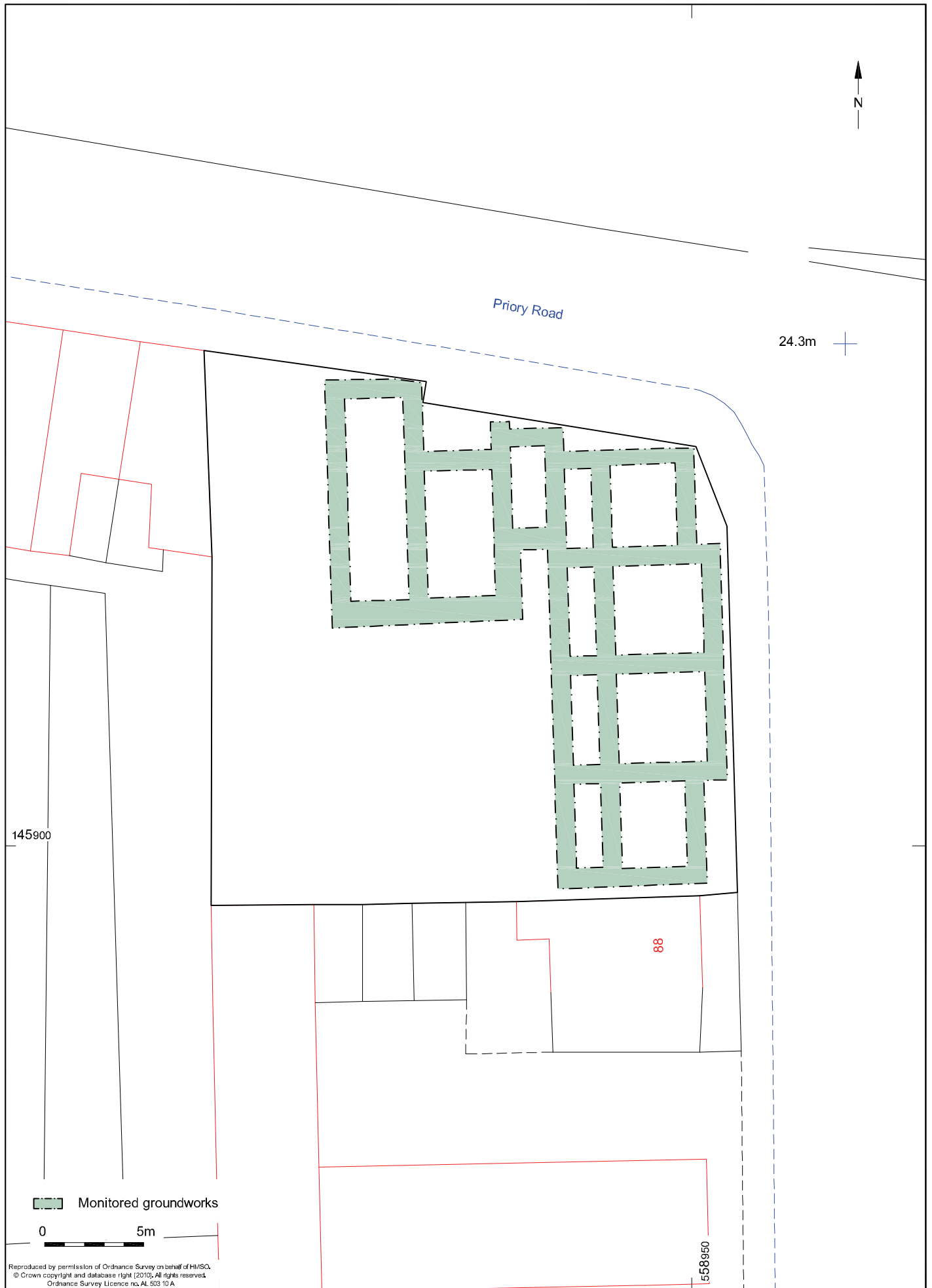
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© Archaeology South-East		25 Priory Road, Tonbridge, Kent	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 4160	May 2010	Site Location Plan	
Report Ref: 2010073	Drawn by: RHC		

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© Archaeology South-East		25 Priory Road, Tonbridge, Kent	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 4160	May 2010	Location of Monitored Groundworks	
Report Ref: 2010073	Drawn by: JLR		

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