

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF AT  
LAND AT ECCLESTONE ROAD, TOVIL, MAIDSTONE  
KENT.**

**NGR 575479 154782  
(TQ 754 547)**

**Project No.4604  
Site Code: ACS09**

**ASE Report No. 2011063  
OASIS ID: archaeol6-97048**

**by  
Greg Priestley-Bell  
With contributions from Karine le Hégarat,  
Sarah Porteus, Elke Raemen and Lucy Sibun**

**March 2011**

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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](mailto:fau@ucl.ac.uk)**

**Abstract**

*Archaeology South East was commissioned by Diocesan Architectural Services to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the construction of a new school at Ecclestone Road, Tovil, Maidstone, Kent (centred on NGR 575479 154782).*

*The monitored groundworks included ground reduction and the grubbing out of tree stumps. Although a small quantity of unstratified, predominantly later post-medieval finds was recovered, no significant archaeological features or deposits were observed during the course of the monitored works.*

*The absence of significant archaeological remains and the paucity of residual finds suggests that the monitored area did not form the focus of any appreciable archaeological activity*

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

- 1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), the contracting division of the UCL Institute of Archaeology Centre for Applied Archaeology, was commissioned by the Diocesan Architectural Services to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the construction of a new school at Ecclestone Road, Tovil, Maidstone, Kent (hereafter 'the site'). The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 575479 154782 and its location is shown in Figure 1.

### **1.2 Geology and Topography**

- 1.2.1 The underlying Atherfield Clay has been exposed over the northern part of the site by modern terracing. However, the more intact southern fringe of the site still has a covering of topsoil over Hythe Beds.
- 1.2.2 The site occupies a steep slope, dipping from south to north towards the River Medway.

### **1.3 Planning Background**

- 1.3.1 Planning permission has been granted by the Planning Applications Group at Kent County Council. The Planning Authority's planning reference for the proposal is MA/09/TEMP/0041 following on from an earlier application ref. MA/04/0048.
- 1.3.2 Following an archaeological evaluation (ASE 2010) undertaken as part of the earlier application, the KCC Heritage Conservation Group has recommended that the following condition be placed on the final planning consent:

*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 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 Planning Authority.*

*Reason: To ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded.*

- 1.3.3 A *Specification* outlining the requirements for the work was subsequently produced by KCC (KCC 2010). All work was carried out in accordance with this document and with the relevant standards and guidance of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 2008).

### **1.4 Scope of Report**

- 1.4.1 This report details the results of the archaeological watching brief undertaken during groundworks on the site. The work was undertaken on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2010 and between 20<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2010 by Andy Margetts and Greg Priestley-Bell (Senior Archaeologists). The fieldwork was managed by Neil Griffin (Project Manager) and the post-excavation analysis was managed by Jim Stevenson (Project Manager).

**2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

**2.1** A summary of known archaeological sites and find spots within a 500km radius of the site is presented in Table 1 below. The locations are shown on Figure 1.

SMR number	NGR TQ	Site type	Description	Date	Period
TQ75SE14 MKE2133	7554 5479	Find spot	beaker	BC2350-709	Bronze Age
TQ75NE37 MKE1912	7552 5531	Monument	Cremation Cemetery	43-409AD	Roman
TQ75NE576 MKE29278	7526 5518	Listed building and associated landscape	Hever Lodge	1851AD	Post-med
TQ75SE336 MKE29287	7544 5458	Listed building	Drinking fountain	1910AD	Post-med
TQ75SE143 MKE40088	75114 54926	monument	Anti-tank pillbox	1940-1945AD	Post-med
TQ75SE281 MKE28719	7544 5464	Listed building	House	1833-1866AD	Post-med
TQ75SE316 MKE29277	7519 5499	Listed building	Bower Lodge	1600-1999AD	Post-med
TQ75SE253 MKE28604	7505 5463	Listed building	Old cottages	1700-1799AD	Post-med
TQ75SE282 MKE28718	7532 5466	Listed building	Church of St Stephen	1820-1860AD	Post-med
TQ75NE392 MKE17884	7579 5514	Find spot	Struck flint	Undated	
TQ75NE417 MKE21181	75210 55021	Monument	Roman Villa	43-409AD	Roman
TQ75SE114 MKE16049	7515 5484	Monument	Boat Yard	1540-1900AD	Post-med
TQ75SE115 MKE16050	7502 5478	Monument	Old Mill	1540-1900AD	Post-med
TQ75SE111 MKE16046	7519 5461	Monument	Printing works	1540-1900AD	Post-med
TQ75SE112 MKE16047	7509 5485	Monument	Medway footbridge	1540-1900AD	Post-med
TQ75SE109 MKE16032	7536 5446	Monument	Upper Tovil Mill	1540-1900AD	Post-med
TQ75SE110 MKE16044	7526 5445	Monument	Substation for paper mill	1895-1900AD	Post-med
TQ75SE106 MKE16030	7510 5462	monument	Lower Tovil Mill (Site)	1540-1900AD	Post-med
TQ75SE107 MKE16031	7507 5478	Monument	Bridge Mill	1895-1900AD	Post-med
TQ75SE105 MKE16029	7520 5469	monument	Tovil Branch Line	1540-1900AD	Post-med

Table 1: Gazetteer of Known Cultural Heritage Sites

**2.2** The Kent SMR records the finding of a burial beaker (SMR No. MKE2133) at the eastern edge of the site. This was recovered in 1892 during road cutting work and is believed to be in Maidstone Museum. Records of the precise location of the find spot are contradictory and the beaker may have been found where 39 Beaconsfield Road now stands, at the SE corner of the site.

**2.3** Roman remains including a possible villa are known to the north of the site, across the river and also 500m to the south. Tovil developed rapidly in the post-medieval period and industrial remains connected with its milling and manufacturing heritage may also be encountered.

**2.5 Previous archaeological work**

2.5.1 Archaeology South-East was previously commissioned by Diocesan Architectural Services to carry out an archaeological evaluation of the site. The work was carried out between 14<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> December 2009 (Porteus 2010).

2.5.2 Fifteen trenches with a combined length of 320m were excavated (Figure 2). The work revealed two later post-medieval boundary or drainage ditches in the south east of site and a deposit of similar date in the south west of site. The north and central parts of the site were found to be heavily truncated by modern development, greatly reducing the archaeological potential. The archaeological potential for the southern boundary of the site and the south eastern edge was found to have low to moderate potential for later post-medieval remains.

### **3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Methodology**

- 3.1.1 All ground reduction, including preliminary test-pitting, was carried out under archaeological supervision. Machine excavation was undertaken using a tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. Provision was made that where archaeological features or deposits were revealed, machining would be stopped and excavation continued by hand. No such features or deposits were found. The spoil from the machine excavations was scanned for the presence of any artefacts, both visually and using a metal detector.
- 3.1.2 Provision was made that all encountered archaeological deposits, features and finds were excavated and recorded in accordance with the Specification and with the relevant Standards and Guidance of the Institute of Archaeologists (KCC 2010; IfA 2008), using pro-forma context record sheets. Archaeological features and deposits would be planned at a scale of 1:50, with selected detail drawn at a scale of 1:20 or 1:10. No such deposits, features or *in situ* finds were found.
- 3.1.3 A photographic record of the work was kept and forms part of the site archive. The archive (quantified in Table 2), including the finds, is presently held at the Archaeology South-East offices at Portslade, and will in due course be offered to a suitable local museum.

#### **3.2 Aims and Objectives**

- 3.1 The objectives of the archaeological watching brief were to contribute to heritage knowledge of the area through the recording of the archaeological remains exposed as a result of excavations in connection with the groundworks.
- 3.2 Specifically, the work was to aim to investigate the presence of any further prehistoric activity relating to the 1892 beaker find.

## 4.0 RESULTS

Number of Contexts	6
No. of files/paper record	1 file
Plan and sections sheets	1
Bulk Samples	none
Photographs	14 Digital
Bulk finds	none
Registered finds	none
Environmental flots/residue	none

Table 2: Site Archive Quantification

### 4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The area subject to archaeological monitoring is shown on Figure 2. Almost the full extent of the monitored area was stripped of topsoil [001], subsoil [002] and modern deposits, including tarmac [004], down to the underlying natural [003] (Atherfield Clay). The remaining unstripped areas contained perimeter fence support posts.
- 4.1.2 With the exception of known modern services, no linear features were revealed. With the exception of localised areas of tree disturbance [005], no non linear features were identified. At least six large tree stumps and root systems were grubbed out under archaeological supervision.

Number	Type	Description	Max. length	Max. width	Max. depth	Max. height (m OD)
001	Deposit	Topsoil	Site	Site	0.20m	20.76
002	Deposit	Subsoil	Site	Site	0.15m	20.41
003	Deposit	Natural (Atherfield Clay)	Site	Site	-	20.26
004	Deposit	Tarmac and hardcore	15.00m	6m	0.35m	20.69
005	Cut	Tree disturbance	2.5m	2.5m	0.35m	19.84
006	Deposit	Fill of tree disturbance	2.5m	2.5m	0.35m	19.84

Table 3: List of Recorded Contexts

- 4.1.3 Topsoil [001] consisted of dark greyish brown clayey silt which overlay a subsoil [002] of greyish brown clayey silt. Subsoil overlay natural [003] consisting of brownish grey, mottled silty clay with occasional sandstone (Atherfield Clay). Areas of tree disturbance [005] contained fills indistinguishable from the subsoil [002]. An area of tarmac and hardcore base [004] was encountered in the south-east corner of the monitored area, where evaluation Trench 11 was located (Fig 2).

**5.0 THE FINDS**

5.1 A small assemblage of finds was recovered from the topsoil/subsoil during the watching brief. A summary can be found in Table 3 below. Finds were all washed and dried or air dried, as appropriate. They were counted, weighed and bagged by context and by material. None of the finds require further conservation.

Pottery	Wt (g)	CBM	Wt (g)	Bone	Wt (g)	Shell	Wt (g)	Flint	Wt (g)	Stone	Wt (g)	CTP	Wt (g)
5	56	2	70	1	6	1	18	4	40	1	22	1	4

Table 3: Quantification of the Finds

**5.2 The Pottery by Elke Raemen**

5.2.1 A small assemblage of five fragments of pottery was recovered from the topsoil. All date to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Included are a chamber pot rim fragment in blue transfer-printed china, a blue-painted porcelain fragment and an unglazed red earthenware flowerpot fragment. Two English, salt-glazed stoneware fragments were recovered as well, including a bottle sherd and a possible jar fragment.

**5.3 The Ceramic Building Material by Sarah Porteus**

5.3.1 A total of two fragments of ceramic building material (CBM) were recovered with a combined weight of 72g. Both fragments are of broad post-medieval date, one fragment is in a pinkish fabric with abundant calcareous inclusions typical of Kentish fabrics with the other in a fine orange fabric with sparse white calcareous inclusions and sparse black iron rich inclusions.

**5.4 The Clay Tobacco Pipe by Elke Raemen**

5.4.1 A clay tobacco pipe (CTP) stem fragment was recovered from the topsoil. The piece is plain, lacking any decoration or marks and dates to between c. 1750-1920.

**5.5 The Flintwork by Karine le Hégarat**

5.5.1 Two struck flints weighing 10g were recovered unstratified during the course of the watching brief at the site. The first piece consists of a small flake which displays edge modification and a heavily abraded dorsal face. The second piece consists of a flake fragment the proximal end of which is absent. The relatively poor condition of the flints is consistent with material from surface collection. None of the struck flints are diagnostic of a particular period.

**5.6 The Animal Bone by Lucy Sibun**

5.6.1 A single unstratified fragment of cattle-sized longbone was recovered during the watching brief. The small fragment displayed no signs of butchery, burning, gnawing or pathology.

**5.7 The Marine Molluscs** by Elke Raemen

5.7.1 The umbo from the left valve of an oyster (*Ostrea edulis*) was recovered from the topsoil. The fragment, distorted and displaying some minor infestation, is from a mature oyster.

**5.8 The Geological Material** by Elke Raemen

5.8.1 A fragment of Welsh slate, probably from a roofing tile, was recovered from the topsoil. No other stone was recovered.

## **6.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 6.1** No archaeological features or deposits were observed during the course of the monitoring. A small quantity of predominantly later post-medieval finds was collected from the topsoil and subsoil, the date of which broadly corresponds with very limited remains recorded during the evaluation (Porteus 2010). The two pieces of residual worked flint recovered may be considered as somewhat less than the expected 'background' level for this class of find in this sort of location.
- 6.2** The absence of significant archaeological remains and the paucity of residual finds suggests that the monitored area did not form the focus of any substantial archaeological activity.

## **Bibliography**

IfA 2008. *Standards and guidance for an archaeological watching brief.*

KCC 2010. *Specification for an archaeological watching brief at the future Archbishop Courtenay Primary School site, Ecclestone Road in Tovil near Maidstone in Kent*

Porteus, S, 2010 *An archaeological evaluation at land at Ecclestone Road, Tovil, Maidstone, Kent.* Unpub ASE rep No 2009206

## **Acknowledgements**

Archaeology South-East would like to thank Diocesan Architectural Services for commissioning the work and Adam Single of HCGKCC for his guidance throughout the project.

**SMR Summary Form**

Site Code	ACS09					
Identification Name and Address	Archbishop Courtney School, Ecclestone Road, Tovil, Maidstone					
County, District &/or Borough	Kent					
OS Grid Refs.	575479 154782					
Geology	Atherfield Clay					
Arch. South-East Project Number	4604					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	Watching Brief X	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field	Shallow Urban X	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	WB. 24/11/10, 20- 22/12/10	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Diocesan Architectural Services Ltd					
Project Manager	Neil Griffin					
Project Supervisor	Greg Priestley-Bell					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM X	Other Modern		
<p>100 Word Summary.</p> <p><i>Archaeology South East was commissioned by Diocesan Architectural Services to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the construction of a new school at Ecclestone Road, Tovil, Maidstone, Kent (centred on NGR 575479 154782). Monitored groundworks included ground reduction and the grubbing out of tree stumps. Although a small quantity of unstratified, predominantly later post-medieval finds was recovered, no significant archaeological features or deposits were observed during the course of the monitored works. The absence of significant archaeological remains and the paucity of residual finds suggests that the monitored area did not form the focus of any appreciable archaeological activity.</i></p>						

**OASIS Form**

**OASIS ID: archaeol6-97048**

**Project details**

Project name An Archaeological Watching Brief on land at Ecclestone Road, Tovil, Maidstone, Kent

Short description of the project Archaeology South East was commissioned by Diocesan Architectural Services to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the construction of a new school at Ecclestone Road, Tovil, Maidstone, Kent (centred on NGR 575479 154782). Monitored groundworks included ground reduction and the grubbing out of tree stumps. Although a small quantity of unstratified, predominantly later post-medieval finds was recovered, no significant archaeological features or deposits were observed during the course of the monitored works. The absence of significant archaeological remains and the paucity of residual finds suggests that the monitored area did not form the focus of any appreciable archaeological activity.

Project dates Start: 24-11-2010 End: 22-12-2010

Previous/future work Yes / No

Any associated project reference codes archaeol6-69760 - OASIS form ID

Type of project Recording project

Site status None

Current Land use Industry and Commerce 1 - Industrial

Monument type NONE None

Significant Finds POT Post Medieval

Investigation type 'Watching Brief'

Prompt Planning condition

**Project location**

Country England

Site location KENT MAIDSTONE TOVIL Archbishop Courtney School, Tovil, Maidstone

Postcode ME15 6

Study area 1000.00 Square metres

Site coordinates TQ 575479 154782 50.9166503711 0.241565338044 50 54 59 N 000 14 29 E Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 13.50m Max: 20.76m

**Project creators**

Name of Organisation Archaeology South East

Project brief originator Kent County Council

Project design originator Kent County Council Heritage Conservation Group

Project director/manager Neil Griffin

Project supervisor Greg Priestley-Bell

Type of sponsor/funding body County Council

**Project archives**

Physical Archive recipient MAIDSTONE MUSEUM

Physical Contents 'Ceramics','Animal Bones'

Digital Archive Exists? No

Digital Archive recipient MAIDSTONE MUSEUM

Digital Media available 'Images raster / digital photography'

Paper Archive Exists? No

Paper Archive recipient MAIDSTONE MUSEUM

Paper Media available 'Context sheet','Plan','Report','Unpublished Text'

**Project bibliography 1**

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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Author(s)/Editor(s) Priestley-Bell, G.

Other bibliographic details report 2011063

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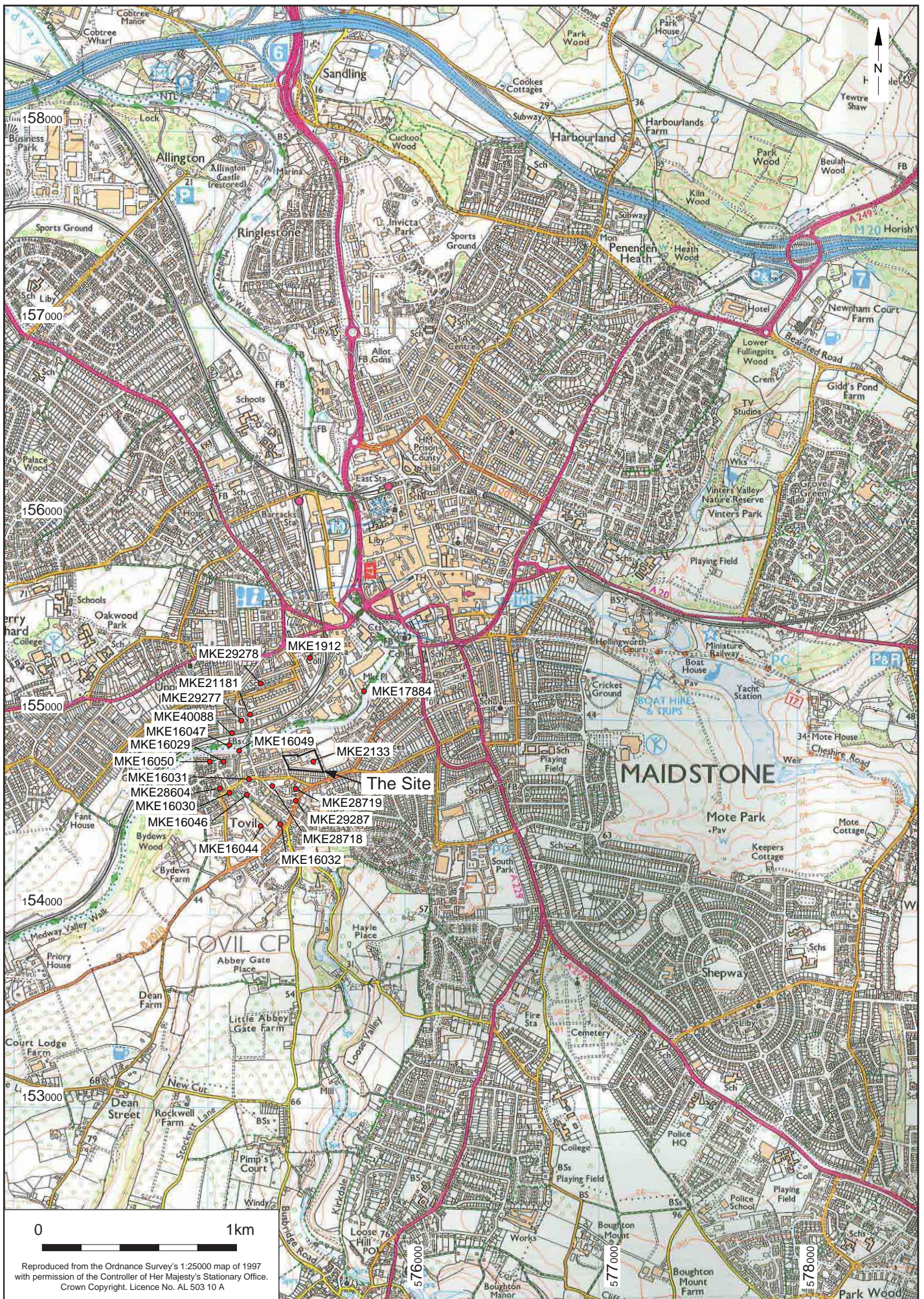
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© Archaeology South-East		Archbishop Courtenay School		Fig. 1
Project Ref: 4604	March 2011	Site location and HER data		
Report Ref:	Drawn by: JLR			



i Archaeology South-East		Archbishop Courtenay CE Primary School	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 4606	March 2011	Trench location	
Report Ref:	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](mailto:fau@ucl.ac.uk)  
Web: [www.archaeologyse.co.uk](http://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](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/caa)

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

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