

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT
THE FORMER VEGLIOS HOTEL SITE
SANDLING LANE, JUNCTION 6 M20, BOXLEY
MAIDSTONE, KENT**

**NGR 575334 158396
(TQ 75334 58396)**

**Project No: 4366
Site Code: VHM 06**

**ASE Report No: 2011211
OASIS ID: archaeol6-111193**

**By Chris Russel
With Contributions from Gemma Ayton
Luke Barber, Anna Doherty
Karine Le Hégarat and Elke Raemen**

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Abstract

Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Volkswagen group United Kingdom Ltd Developments Ltd to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the redevelopment of the former Veglios Hote site, Sandling Lane, Boxley, Maidstone, Kent.

Natural geology, consisting of a mix of head deposits and sand was recorded at between 72.23m and 68.75m OD across the monitored area.

Truncation of the geological horizon was noted in the north-east of the site and evidence of previous landscaping was seen in the west. Monitoring of works in the south of the site failed to encounter the geological horizon noting only made ground.

A single ditch of possible Late Iron Age/Early Roman date was recorded. This had been disturbed in the east by a recent service pipe and truncated by a deep shutter pile trench.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), the contracting division of the University College London (UCL) Institute of Archaeology (IoA) Centre for Applied Archaeology (CAA), was commissioned by Volkswagen Group United Kingdom Ltd to undertake a programme of archaeological works during groundworks associated with the redevelopment of the former Veglios Hotel site, Sandling Lane, Boxley, Maidstone, Kent (hereafter referred to as 'the site'). The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 575334 158396 and its location is shown in Figure 1.

1.2 Geology and Topography

- 1.2.1 According to current data from the British Geological Survey, the site lies on Head deposits consisting of Gravel, Sand, Silt and Clay (BGS 2011).
- 1.2.2 The site sloped from north to south from c. 72.5m OD to c. 64.14m OD.

1.3 Planning Background

- 1.3.1 The proposed redevelopment of the site entails the construction of a motor vehicle dealership including showroom, workshop, parts storage and other associated buildings (planning reference: MA/03/0491). Due to the archaeological potential of the site, the Heritage Conservation Group at Kent County Council (HCGKCC) recommended that a programme of archaeological works be undertaken as a condition of permission. Condition 2 of the decision notice therefore states that:

'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'.

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

- 1.3.2 A specification outlining the requirements for the archaeological work was subsequently produced by KCC (KCC 2011). 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 between the 20th of July and the 10th of August 2011 by Chris Russel (Archaeologist) who was assisted by Liz Chambers (Assistant Archaeologist) and John Cook (Surveyor), Kathy Grant (Archaeologist) and Giles Dawkes (Senior Archaeologist). The fieldwork was managed by Andy Leonard & Jon Sygrave (Project Managers) and the post-excavation analysis was managed by Jim Stevenson (Project Manager).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND (Figures 1 and 2)

- 2.1 The archaeological background for the site is outlined in the specification for the watching brief (KCC.2011) and is summarised here.
- 2.2 The earliest evidence of activity close to the site is a Mesolithic Thames pick which was discovered 40m southeast of the site.
- 2.3 The alignment of the Rochester to Maidstone Roman road is thought to run to the east of the site approximately on the alignment of the Old Chatham Road. Romano–British burials were discovered east of the site in the 1920's and rubbish pits containing Roman pottery were found 140m to the south.
- 2.4 The medieval Abbey of Boxley is situated 600m to the east.
- 2.5 Early Ordnance Survey data shows that the site was the location for a farmstead known as 'Brooklyn' which was demolished in the 1960's to make way for the Veglios Hotel which was demolished in its turn, although the foundations were still visible in 2000. The construction of the nearby M20 caused considerable disturbance to the site.
- 2.6 An archaeological evaluation undertaken by ASE in 2006 revealed a Roman-British linear feature in the north of the site and discrete cut feature of medieval and post-medieval date in the south (ASE .2006)

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 Prior to ASE visiting the site various groundworks had already been completed:

- extensive terracing and ground reduction in the central and southern part of the site
- construction of a site compound in the south part of the site
- ground reduction in the northern part of the site
- a 3-5m deep trench had been dug in the northern and central part of the site

3.2 It was therefore not possible to monitor groundworks in those areas of the site.

3.3 Methodology

3.3.1 Groundworks (Figure 2) monitored during the watching brief were:

- Area 1: ground reduction to the geological horizon c. 136m²
- Area 2: ground reduction to the geological horizon c. 783m²
- Area 3: small scale excavation for a camera base c. 1.3m square and excavated to a depth of 0.75m below ground level (BGL)

3.3.2 All monitored ground reduction and trenching was carried out under the supervision of an experienced archaeologist where possible.

3.3.3 Wherever possible, machine excavation was undertaken using a tracked mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket. Where archaeological features or deposits were revealed, machining was stopped and excavation was continued by hand. The spoil from the machine excavations was scanned for the presence of any artefacts, both visually and using a metal detector.

3.3.4 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 2011; IfA 2008), using pro-forma context record sheets. Archaeological features and deposits were planned at a scale of 1:50, with selected detail drawn at a scale of 1:20 or 1:10.

3.1.4 A photographic record of the work was kept and forms part of the site archive.

3.2 Aims and Objectives

3.2.1 The objectives of the archaeological watching brief, as set out in the specification (KCC 2011) 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.

3.2.2 The sole site specific aim of the watching brief detailed in the specification was to identify the presence or absence of medieval and post medieval occupation and land use (KCC.2011).

3.3 Quantification of Archive

- 3.3.1 ASE informed Maidstone Museum prior to the commencement of fieldwork that a site archive would be generated. The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will be deposited at Maidstone museum in due course under the accession number: MNEMG 2010.166.

Number of Contexts	9
No. of files/paper record	1 file
Plan and sections sheets	1
Bulk Samples	none
Photographs	33 Digital
Bulk finds	1 box
Registered finds	none
Environmental flots/residue	none

Table 1: Site archive quantification

4.0 RESULTS (Figures 3 and 4)

4.1 Introduction

Context Number	Type	Description	Max. length	Max. width	Max. depth	Max. height (m OD)
001	Layer	Topsoil	-	-	0.34m	72.49m
002	Layer	Flinty Subsoil/Levelling Deposit	-	-	0.34m	69.84m
003	Layer	Subsoil	-	-	0.19m	69.48m
004	Layer	Natural Geology	-	-	-	72.23m
005	Cut	Cut of linear	22.5m	1.34m	0.70m	71.84m
006	Fill of 005	Fill of linear	22.5m	1.34m	0.70m	71.84m
007	Cut	Cut of linear	22.5m	2.1m	0.41m	72.05m
008	Fill of 007	Fill of linear	22.5m	2.1m	0.41m	72.05m
009	Layer	Made ground	-	-	0.75m	64.14m

Table 2: List of recorded contexts

4.1 Natural Geology and Overburden

4.1.1 The natural geology [004] observed during the monitored groundworks consisted of yellow variegated sand overlain by flinty clay head deposit. This was observed between 72.23mAOD and 68.75m AOD with the sand more prevalent in Area 1.

4.1.2 Overburden Area 1

Three overburden contexts were observed overlying natural sand geology [004] in Area 1 (Figure 3). The deposit [003] appeared to be remnant subsoil comprised of friable light to mid orange brown medium silty sand with a maximum depth of 0.19m. Above this was a layer [002] made up of a friable mid grey brown clay silt with very frequent sub angular flint inclusions which was recorded to a maximum depth of 0.34m. This possibly represents levelling or similar activities associated with modern landscaping on site. This sequence was sealed by a friable, mid grey brown, sandy silt, topsoil [001].

4.1.3 Overburden Area 2

Area 2 contained a flinty clay head deposit geology [004] overlain by topsoil [001] to a maximum depth of 0.34m. A limited strip had taken place in this area prior to the commencement of monitoring works.

4.1.4 Overburden Area 3

Natural geology [004] was directly overlain by modern made ground [009], a mixture of brown silt and 'type-one' crush and ceramic building material (CBM) fragments. No other contexts were noted during this monitoring phase.

4.2 Archaeological Features (Figures 2 and 4)

- 4.2.1 A single ditch was observed in Area 2. This was c. 15m long east to west and extended beyond the eastern limits of Area 2 and c. 3m north to south and extended beyond the northern limits of Area 2.
- 4.2.2 Two sections were dug through the ditch which was found to have a variable profile ranging from rounded to V-shaped and was between c. 1.6m and c. 2m wide and between c. 0.4m and c. 0.7m deep.
- 4.2.3 Section 1 in the east was of a V-shaped cut [005] with straight sides and filled with a single compact fill [006] consisting of sandy clay-silt with frequent sub-angular flint fragments. This had been truncated along its northern edge by a modern pipe trench.
- 4.2.4 Section 2, dug through the turn of the ditch, revealed a 'U' shaped cut [007] with moderate, concave sides and a slightly flattened base. This was filled by a single fill [008] which consisted of a light grey brown, sandy clay silt with frequent sub angular flint inclusions.
- 4.2.5 The ditch contained Late Iron Age/Romano-British pottery, (probable) 18th or 19th century CBM, animal bone, (probable) 18th- to early 20th- century slag, a piece of Mesolithic or Neolithic worked flint and late 19th- to early 20th-century bottle glass.

5.0 THE FINDS

Context	Pottery	Wt (g)	CBM	Wt (g)	Bone	Wt (g)	Flint	Wt (g)	FCF	Wt (g)	Slag	Wt (g)	Glass	Wt (g)
005			5	76										
006	8	64			9	6			1	14	2	16	1	6
008	11	98					1	8						
u/s							1	14						

Table 3: Finds Quantification

5.1 The Pottery by Anna Doherty

- 5.1.1 An assemblage of 19 sherds of Late Iron Age/ early Roman pottery, weighing 162g, was found in two different contexts: [006] and [008]. Both contain a mixture of grog-tempered and glauconitic fabric types, whilst context [008] also contains two finely flint-tempered sherds. Only one partial rimsherd is present, from a handmade plain to slightly beaded rim jar.
- 5.1.2 The presence of grog-tempered wares in this assemblage probably places it after c. 50BC and more likely in the 1st century AD. Along the route of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link, both flint-tempered and glauconitic wares were shown to have declined in use rapidly after c.AD70 (Booth 2009, 7). Coupled with the absence of any 'Romanised' wares, this suggests that the assemblage does not post-date the early Roman period.

5.2 The Ceramic Building Material by Sarah Porteus and Luke Barber

- 5.2.1 A total of three fragments of peg tile were recovered from context [006] in an orange fabric with fine micaceous speckling, one fragment was over-fired and contained a square peg hole. The peg tile is of probable 18th or 19th century date. Two fragments (21g), probably from the same peg tile, were recovered from [006]. They are in a very hard-fired, almost vitrified, fabric tempered with sparse fine sand and sparse calcareous inclusions to 1mm. The pieces are well formed and quite thin. Although this calcareous fabric is quite typical of some 16th to 17th- century Wealden tiles it appears to have continued (or reappeared) into the 19th century in some areas. The over fired nature of the current examples make close dating impossible without further pieces.

5.3 The Animal Bone by Gemma Ayton

- 5.3.1 The animal bone assemblage comprises of ten fragments of cattle tooth enamel recovered from context [006]. It is likely that the fragments derive from the same molar which has been crushed.
- 5.3.2 Due to the size and condition of the assemblage, it holds no potential for further analysis.

5.4 The Flint by Karine Le Hégarat

- 5.4.1 Two struck flints weighing 22g and a single burnt unworked flint weighing 14g were recovered. A flake fragment found unstratified, was manufactured from fine-grained dark grey flint. The artefact displays some incipient white bluish surface cortication. The broken piece of flint debitage exhibits some platform-edge abrasion as well as some flake scar removals on the dorsal side. Context [008] produced a secondary flake made on a light brown flint with thin abraded cortex. The piece exhibits moderate edge damage. None of these struck flints are chronologically diagnostic, but are likely to be of Mesolithic or Neolithic date.

5.5 The Slag by Luke Barber

- 5.5.1 Context [006] produced one piece of black aerated clinker of probable 18th- to early 20th- century date and a piece of black glassy slag with flow structure. The latter could be iron blast furnace slag but other post-medieval domestic/industrial activities cannot be ruled out.

5.6 The Glass by Elke Raemen

- 5.6.1 A single fragment of glass was recovered from the site, consisting of a green glass wine or beer bottle body shard. The fragment, recovered from [006], is of late 19th- to early 20th-century date.

6.0 DISCUSSION

6.1 Overburden and Deposit Survival

- 6.1.1 The uninterrupted overburden sequence at the site typified by the sequence noted in Area 2 is of geological sand overlain by head deposits and silty topsoil.
- 6.1.2 Area 1 revealed a flinty deposit overlying a sandy subsoil suggesting that the area had been built up probably during landscaping of the site.
- 6.1.3 Possible evidence of truncation of geological deposits was viewed in the shutter pile trench (the excavation of which was not monitored) in Area 2. This was also noted in Trench 2 of the evaluation phase (ASE.2006) and it seems reasonable to assume that the truncation is associated with the construction of the nearby M20.

6.2 The Archaeological Evidence

- 6.2.1 A single linear feature was observed in Area 2 before turning northwards. Taken together the finds evidence from both sections excavated through this feature are inconclusive as they date from the prehistoric to the 20th century and it is difficult to ascertain which is residual and which is intrusive although the majority of the material is Late Iron Age / Romano-British pottery.
- 6.2.2 This may suggest that the feature is a Late Iron Age/ Early Roman enclosure ditch of unknown function. Unfortunately it was not possible to investigate the interior of the enclosure as the presence of the deep shutter pile trench made access impossible. It seems safe to assume, however, that any features in the interior would have been affected by the truncation noted in the shutter pile section and in Trench 2 of the evaluation phase.
- 6.2.3 In relation to the site specific aims outlined in the WSI (ASE 2010), the watching brief failed to find any evidence of medieval activity.

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Acknowledgements

ASE would like to thank Volkswagen Group UK Ltd for commissioning the work and KCC for their guidance throughout the project.

HER Summary Form

Site Code	VHM 06					
Identification Name and Address	Former Veglios Hotel Site, Sandling Lane, Boxley, Maidstone, Kent.					
County, District &/or Borough	Kent, Maidstone					
OS Grid Refs.	575334 158396					
Geology	Head Deposits					
Arch. South-East Project Number	4366					
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.	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Volkswagen Group UK Ltd					
Project Manager	Andy Leonard/Jon Sygrave					
Project Supervisor	Chris Russel					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM	Other	Modern	

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OASIS Summary Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-111193

Project details

Project name	Archaeological Watching Breif at the Former Veglios Hotel Site, Maidstone.
Short description of the project	<p>Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Volkswagen group United Kingdom Ltd Developments Ltd to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the redevelopment of the former Veglios Hote site, Sandling Lane, Boxley, Maidstone, Kent.</p> <p>Natural geology, consisting of a mix of head deposits and sand was recorded at between 72.23m and 68.75m OD across the monitored area.</p> <p>Truncation of the geological horizon was noted in the north-east of the site and evidence of previous landscaping was seen in the west. Monitoring of works in the south of the site failed to encounter the geological horizon noting only made ground.</p> <p>A single ditch of possible Late Iron Age/Early Roman date was recorded. This had been disturbed in the east by a recent service pipe and truncated by a deep shutter pile trench.</p>
Project dates	Start: 20-07-2011 End: 10-08-2011
Previous/future work	Yes / No
Any associated project reference codes	4366 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	VHM 06 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 13 - Waste ground
Monument type	LINEAR FEATURE Late Iron Age
Significant Finds	POTTERY Late Iron Age
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	KENT MAIDSTONE BOXLEY Former Veglios Hotel, Sandling Lane, Maidstone.
Postcode	ME14 3AQ
Study area	2.00 Hectares
Site coordinates	TQ 575334 158396 50.9199020571 0.241515306831 50 55 11 N 000 14 29 E Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 68.75m Max: 72.23m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Archaeology South East

Project brief originator Volkswagen Group UK Ltd

Project design
originator Kent County Council

Project
director/manager Andy Leonard

Project supervisor Chris Russel

Type of
sponsor/funding body Developer

Project archives

Physical Archive
recipient Local Museum

Physical Contents 'Ceramics', 'Glass', 'Industrial', 'Worked stone/lithics'

Digital Archive
recipient Local Museum

Digital Media
available 'Images raster / digital photography', 'Survey'

Paper Archive
recipient Local Museum

Paper Media
available 'Context sheet', 'Drawing', 'Miscellaneous Material', 'Report'

Project bibliography

1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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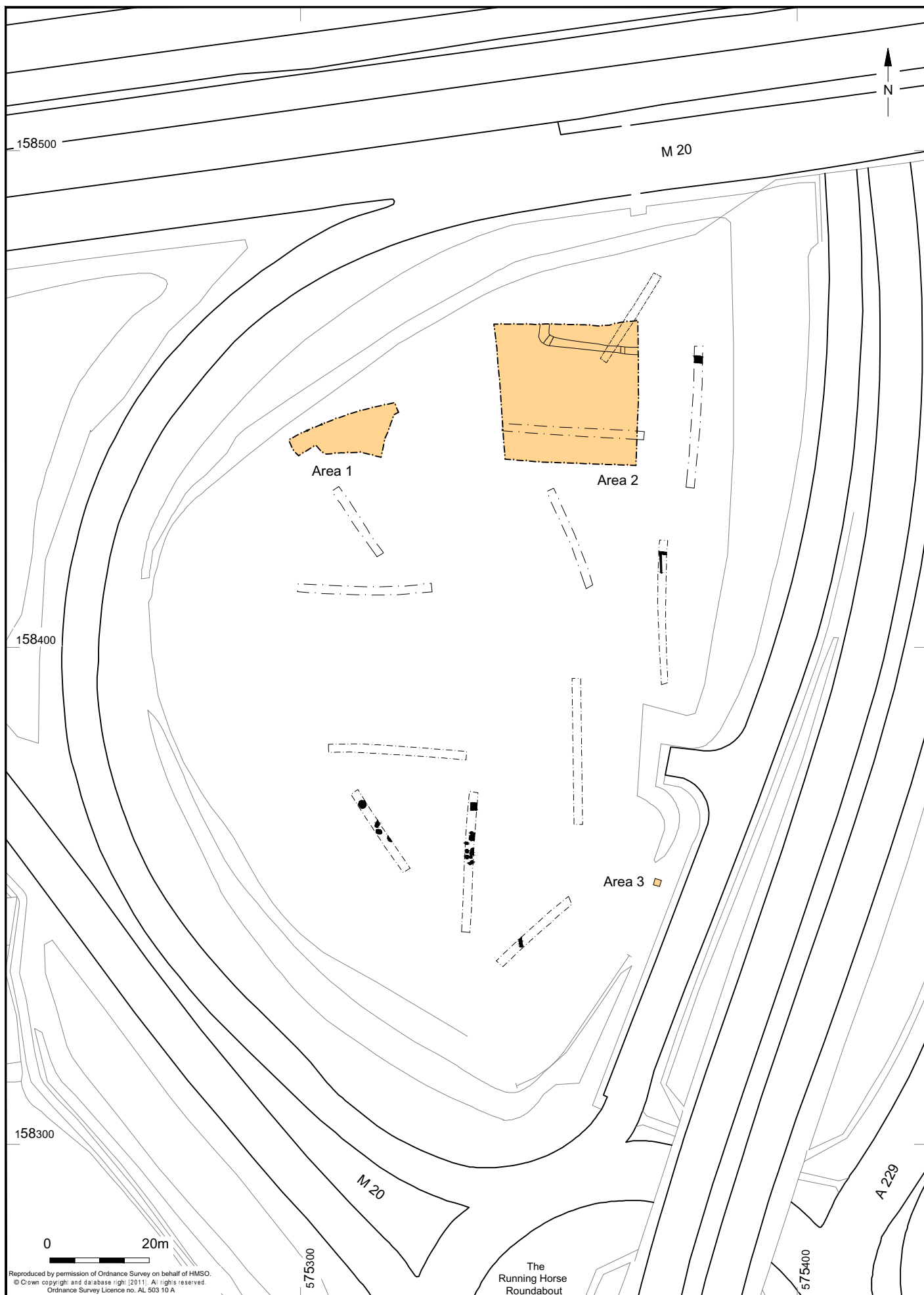
Place of issue or
publication Portslade

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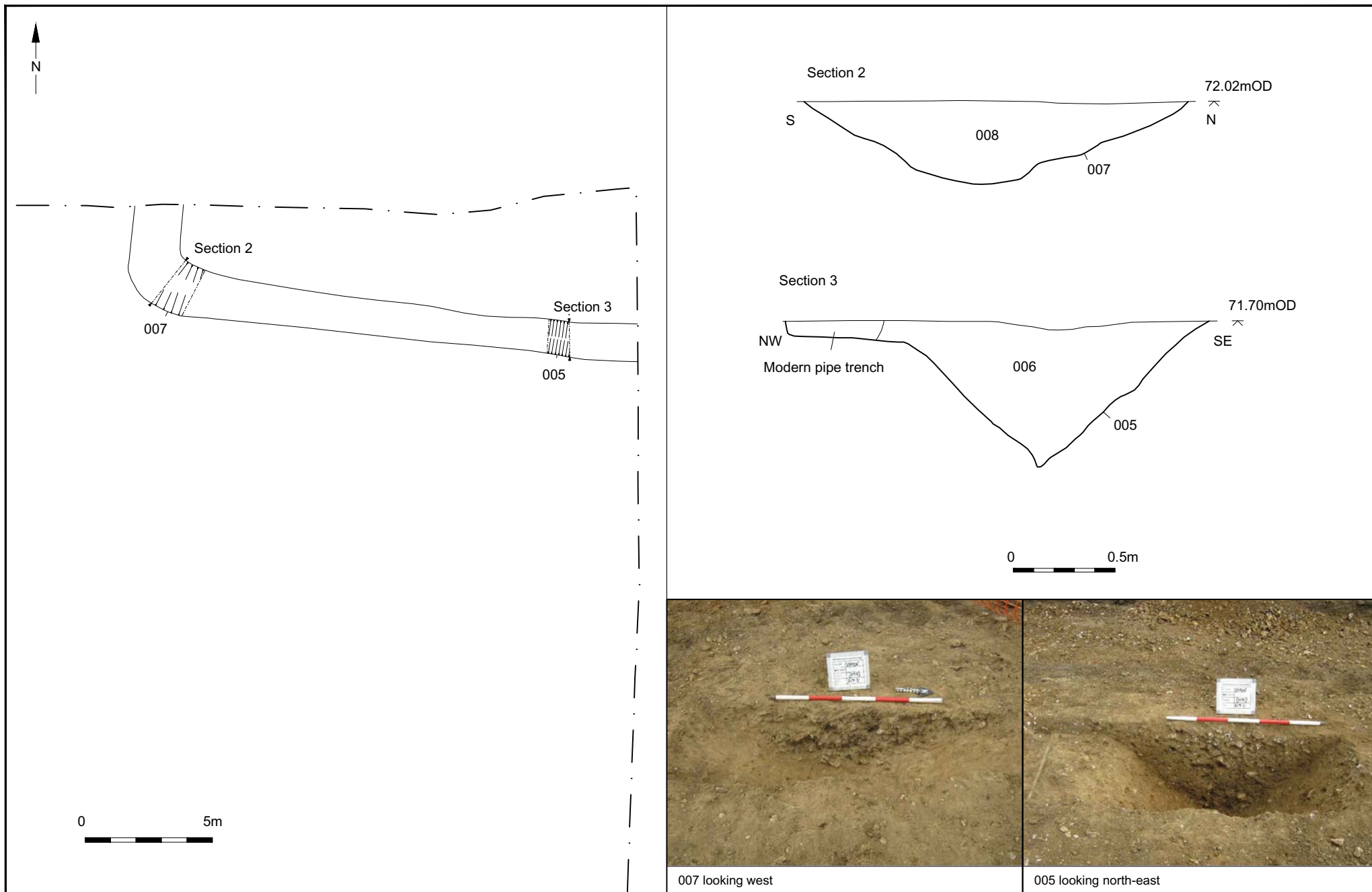
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Project Ref: 4366	Oct 2011	Site location	
Report Ref: 2011204	Drawn by: JLR		



© Archaeology South-East		Former Veglios Hotel, Sandling	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 4366	Oct 2011	Plan of monitored works	
Report Ref: 2011204	Drawn by: JLR		



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