

Archaeological Watching Brief Report Knole Conservation Studios and Restaurant Knole Estate, Sevenoaks, Kent

NGR TQ 539 542

ASE Project: 6114 ASE Report No: 2013210

SITE CODE: KCS 13 OASIS ID: archaeol6-158658



by Antonio Reis

Updated Archaeological Watching Brief Report Knole Conservation Studios and Restaurant Knole Estate, Sevenoaks, Kent

NGR 553900 154200

ASE Project: 6114 ASE Report No: 2013317

SITE CODE: KCS 13
OASIS ID: archaeol6-158658

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December 2013

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WB: Knole Conservation Studios and Restaurant, Kent

ASE Report No: 2013317

Abstract

Archaeology South-East was commissioned by the National Trust to undertake an archaeological watching brief at the proposed new Knole Conservation Studios and Restaurant, Knole Estate, Sevenoaks, Kent (TQ 539 542), between 24th July to 15th November 2013. The works entailed the excavation of thirteen engineer's trial pits required in order to determine ground conditions on the site.

No significant archaeological findings were made during the watching brief. The walls adjacent to the test pits were exposed and generally the excavated deposits are interpreted as disturbance relating to the construction of these walls, or to later activity relating to the construction of the new tarmac surface. In several trenches the c. 18th/19th century brick floor that preceded the tarmac surface was also seen.

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WB: Knole Conservation Studios and Restaurant, Kent

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

- 1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of University College London (UCL) Centre for Applied Archaeology (CAA) was commissioned by the National Trust to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the machine excavation of thirteen test pits at the proposed new Knole Conservation Studios and Restaurant, Knole Estate, Sevenoaks, Kent (Figure 1; TQ 539 542).
- 1.1.2 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the archaeological watching brief was prepared (ASE 2013a) and submitted to Nathalie Cohen (National Trust Archaeologist) for approval prior to the commencement of fieldwork.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

1.2.1 The general aim of the archaeological work was to ensure that any features, artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest that will be affected by the proposed groundworks are recorded and interpreted to appropriate standards.

1.3 Scope of Report

1.3.1 The current report details the findings of the archaeological watching brief which was undertaken by Antonio Reis between 24th to 26th July 2013 (ASE 2013b) and incorporates details of further monitoring carried out by Antonio Reis on 14th and 15th November 2013. The project was managed by Neil Griffin (Fieldwork) and Jim Stevenson (Post-excavation).

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Geology and Topography

- 2.1.1 The site is located on the Knole Park, about 0.8 kilometres south-east of Sevenoaks in Kent.
- 2.1.2 According to current data available from the British Geological Survey, the underlying bedrock is the Hythe Beds Formation of sandstone and limestone. There is no recorded superficial geology (BGS 2013).

2.2 Archaeological and historical background

- 2.2.1 Knole House comprises one of the largest private houses in England. The house as it stands today dates from the 15th century when Thomas Bourchier acquired Knole manor and built a fortress-style building surrounding what is now known as Stone Court, accessed by the turreted gatehouse known as Bourchier's Tower. Bourchier also enclosed the surrounding parkland in a pale. The house was further expanded in the later 15th and early 16th century with the construction of Green Court in front of Bourchier's Tower. The house saw little further alteration until Thomas Sackville acquired the property in 1570 and initiated an extensive programme of refurbishment and expansion of the house, including the construction of further courtyards to the northeast of the main house, including Brewhouse Court and Stable Court. Further alterations were undertaken in the 18th century with the addition of a colonnade in Stone Court and the completion of the Orangery in 1823.
- 2.2.2 Several phases of archaeological fieldwork have been undertaken at Knole House in recent years. A watching brief undertaken during groundworks in 2006 revealed evidence for an extensive water management system of uncertain date in Stone Court, including a large cistern (ASE 2007a), Monitoring of intrusive works associated with additional drainage works in and around Knole House in 2007 and 2009 failed to identify any archaeological deposits (ASE 2007b; ASE 2009), while further monitoring of drainage works to the east of the main house in 2010 revealed garden features and structural remains of 18th-20th century date (ASE 2010a). Most pertinent to the current phase of work was a watching brief undertaken during new sewerage works, also in 2010, which including monitoring of groundworks in Brewhouse Court and around the northern and western perimeter of Knole House. This, however, only identified made ground of 18th-20th century date thought to represent levelling deposits (ASE 2010b).

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Scope of the Groundwork

3.1.1 Thirteen test pits were machine-excavated to a maximum depth of *c*.1.56m under the constant supervision of an archaeologist from ASE, (TPs 1-13; Figure 2).

3.2 Archaeological Fieldwork Methodology

- 3.2.1 The adopted methodology was as detailed in the WSI (ASE 2013).
- 3.2.2 In short, all machine excavation was undertaken by a mini digger fitted with a flat-bladed bucket to minimise damage to deposits. Some trial pit were also hand excavated. All revealed deposits were examined for archaeological features, deposits and artefacts. The removed spoil was scanned for any stray, unstratified artefacts. The uncovered deposits were recorded according to accepted professional standards (IFA 2008).
- 3.2.3 A digital photographic record of each of the test pits was kept in addition to a day-to-day digital record of site work. These photographs form part of the site archive. Monitored areas were marked on existing site plans and were then tied into the Ordnance Survey 1:1250 scale map of the area.

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 The National Trust. The contents of the site archive are summarised below in Table 1.

Number of Contexts	44 contexts
Number of files/paper record	1 file
Plan and sections sheets	1 sheet
Photographs	44 digital images

Table 1: Quantification of the site archive

4.0 RESULTS (Figures 2-3)

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 Archaeological watching brief monitoring was maintained from 24Th to 26th June 2013 over a course of three site visits. Two further visits were made on 14th and 15th November 2013.
- 4.1.2 A total of thirty-three contexts were recorded during the groundwork and these have been summarised and tabulated below in TP order. These are prefixed with the test pit number or without if they are remains that were identified in several different locations. The majority of contexts relate to different phases of building work at Knole House.

4.2 Trial Pits (TP's)

4.2.1 A total of eleven trial pits were hand and machine-excavated across the restaurant area, brew house storage, and outside external wall north entrance to the restaurant area.

4.2.2 TP 1

4.2.3 Trial Pit 1 measured 0.45m long and 0.55m wide with a maximum depth of 1.56m. No archaeological features, or finds were exposed. Two contexts were revealed within this test pit. Topsoil [1/001] overlay mid grey sandy clay [1/002].

Context Number	Context Type	Context Description	Deposit Thickness	Approx. Height m AOD
1/001	Deposit	Topsoil	250mm	146.22
1/002	Deposit	Mid grey sandy clay	350mm	-

Table 2: List of recorded contexts in TP 1

4.2.4 TP 2

4.2.5 Trial Pit 2 measured 0.45m long and 0.45m wide with a maximum depth of 1.40m. No archaeological features or finds were exposed. Very similar to TP 1, two contexts were revealed. A mid grey sandy clay deposit [2/002] was overlain by topsoil [2/001]. Context [2/002] is likely to be a fill of the construction trench for wall [009]. It contained some 16th-17th century tile.

Context Number	Context Type	Context Description	Deposit Thickness	Approx. Height m AOD
2/001	Deposit	Topsoil	250mm	-
2/002	Deposit	Mid grey sandy clay	450mm	-

Table 3: List of recorded contexts in TP 2

4.2.6 TP 3

4.2.7 Trial Pit 3 measured 0.80m long and 0.60m wide with a maximum depth of 1.1m. The trial pit was located in the south-east corner of the restaurant access gate next to wall [007] on north-east side, and wall [008] at south-east

side. This pit had a maximum depth of 1.68m. Brick wall [3/002], brick floor [3/004], modern brick wall [3/001] and concrete floor [3/003] were overlain by a gravel made ground deposit [003], that was immediately below tarmac floor [002].

Context Number	Context Type	Context Description	Deposit Thickness	Approx. Height m AOD
002	Floor	Tarmac floor	80mm	
003	Deposit	Gravel deposit	150-20mm	
3/001	Wall	Brick wall modern	300mm	-
3/002	Wall	Brick wall	70mm	-
3/003	Floor	Concrete floor	40mm	-
3/004	Floor	Brick floor	120mm	
3/005	Deposit	Made ground	980mm	

Table 4: List of recorded contexts in TP 3

TP 4 4.2.8

4.2.9 Trial Pit 4 measured 0.50m long and 0.50m wide with a maximum depth of 0.17m and was located at the east corner of the brew-house court. No archaeological features or finds were exposed. Natural deposit [4/001] was revealed immediately bellow tarmac floor [002].

Context Number	Context Type	Context Description	Deposit Thickness	Approx. Height m AOD
002	Floor	Tarmac floor	80mm	
4/001	Deposit	Natural sandy clay	-	146.24

Table 5: List of recorded contexts in TP 4

4.2.10 TP 5

4.2.11 Trial Pit 5 measured 0.45 long and 0.40m wide with a maximum depth of 1.1m and was located in the south-east corner of the brew-house court. Immediately below tarmac [002] lay gravel deposit [003], deposit [5/001] containing post-medieval CBM and deposit [5/002].

Context Number	Context Type	Context Description	Deposit Thickness	Approx. Height m AOD
002 T	Floor	Tarmac floor	80mm	
Q 03	Deposit	Gravel deposit	150-20mm	
፮/001	Deposit	Orange deposit	440mm	
5/002	Deposit	Grey deposit	500mm	

Table 6: List of recorded contexts in TP 5

4.2.12 TP 6

4.2.13 Test Pit 6 measured 0.50m long and 0.70m wide. A post-medieval drainage system that the on-site engineer did not wish to disturb limited the depth of the test pit to 0.60m. Tarmac floor [002] overlay gravel made ground [003]. Immediately below this, made ground deposit [6/002] overlay an 18th/19th century brick floor [6/001] and post-medieval drain [6/003].

Context Number	Context Type	Context Description	Deposit Thickness	Approx. Height m AOD
002	Floor	Tarmac floor	80mm	
003	Deposit	Gravel deposit	150-20mm	
6/001	Floor	Post medieval Brick\tile floor	700mm	
6/002	Deposit	Made ground	20mm	
6/003 _	Drain	Post medieval drain	200mm	

Table 7: List of recorded contexts in TP 6

4.2.14 TP 7

4.2.15 Trial Pit 7 measured 0.45m long and 0.45m wide with a maximum depth of 0.80m and was located in the Brew House storage area. A context that is likely to be the fill of the construction trench for the wall [009] was overlain a compact and dark silt/clay deposit [7/001] and a mid-yellow sandy deposit [7/002].

Context Number	Context Type	Context Description	Deposit Thickness	Approx. Height m AOD
009	Wall	Exterior wall – NW-SE	2000+ mm	
7/001	Deposit	Made ground	100mm	
7/002	Deposit	Made ground	700mm	

Table 8: List of recorded contexts in TP 7

4.2.16 TP 8

4.2.17 Trial Pit 8 measured 0.45m long and 0.45m wide with a maximum depth of 1.10m was located in the Brew House storage area. Similar results to the adjacent TP7 were recorded. A likely fill of the construction trench for the wall [004] was overlain by a compact and dark silt/clay deposit [8/001] and a midyellow sandy deposit [8/002].

Context Number	Context Type	Context Description	Deposit Thickness	Approx. Height m AOD
004	Wall	Interior Wall- NE-SW (Brew House	2+m	
		storage)		
8/001	Deposit	Made ground	120mm	
8/002	Deposit	Made ground	-	

Table 9: List of recorded contexts in TP 8

4.2.18 TP 9

4.2.19 Trial Pit 9 measured 0.89m long and 0.47m wide with a maximum depth of 730mmm and was located west of TP8 in the Brew House storage. This Pit has revealed similar results to those in TP7 and TP8. No archaeological features, deposits or finds were exposed. Three contexts were revealed within this trial pit and have been summarised and tabulated below (Table 10). This trial pit revealed a simple stratigraphic sequence of contexts that is likely to be the fill of the construction trench for the wall [009], which was overlain in succession by a compact and dark silt/clay deposit [9/001] and then a mid-yellow sandy deposit [9/002]. Wall foundation was encountered at a depth of 460mm.

Context Number	Context Type	Context Description	Deposit Thickness	Approx. Height m AOD
010	Wall	Interior Wall- NW-SE (Brew House	2,10+m	
		storage)		
9/001	Deposit	Made ground	70mm	
9/002	Deposit	Made ground	550+mm	

Table 10: List of recorded contexts in TP 9

4.2.20 TP 10

4.2.21 Trial Pit 10 measured 0.89m long and 0.45m wide with a maximum depth of 1.17m and was located south-east of TP9 in the Brew House storage. This Pit has revealed similar results as TP7, TP8 and TP9. No archaeological features, deposits or finds were exposed. Three contexts were revealed within this trial pit and have been summarised and tabulated below (Table 10). This trial pit revealed a simple stratigraphic sequence of contexts that is likely to be the fill of the construction trench for the wall [009], which was overlain in succession by a compact and dark silt/clay deposit [10/001] and then a mid-yellow sandy deposit [10/002].

Context Number	Context Type	Context Description	Deposit Thickness	Approx. Height m AOD
009	Wall	Interior Wall- NW-SE (Brew House	2,10+m	
		storage)		
10/001	Deposit	Made ground	120mm	
10/002	Deposit	Made ground	-	

Table 11: List of recorded contexts in TP 10

4.2.22 TP 11

- 4.2.23 Trial Pit 11 measured 1m long by 640mm with a maximum depth of 1.1m. The trial pit was located in the north-west corner of the restaurant access gate. The pit revealed a straightforward stratigraphic sequence consisting of different deposits of made ground overlying concrete. Clearly all of the deposits were of recent origin.
- 4.2.24 A total of five contexts were revealed within this test pit and have been summarised and tabulated below (Table 12).

Context Number	Context Type	Context Description	Deposit Thickness	Approx. Height m AOD
002	Deposit	Made ground	110mm	-
003	Deposit	Made ground (brick rubble)	200mm	-
11/001	Deposit	Made ground	520mm	-
11/002	Deposit	Made ground (mortar CBM)	480mm	
11/003	Deposit	Concrete	-	-

Table 12: List of recorded contexts in TP 11

4.2.25 TP 12

4.2.26 Trial Pit 12 measured c.1m by c.1m and a maximum of 1.1m in depth and was located in the Brew House Court. Again the stratigraphic sequence was straightforward and consisted of recently deposited layers of made ground. The contextual information has been summarised and tabulated below (Table 13).

Context Number	Context Type	Context Description	Deposit Thickness	Approx. Height m AOD
11/001	Deposit	Tarmac	200mm	-
11/002	Deposit	Made ground (CBM)	800mm	-
11/003	Deposit	Made ground	-	-

Table 13: List of recorded contexts in TP 12

4.2.27 TP 13

4.2.28 Trial Pit 13, also located in the Brew House Court measured 1m long by 610mm wide by 1.1m deep. Excavation ceased when post-medieval brick masonry, context [12/003] was reached at the base of the test pit. The test-pit was backfilled at this point and therefore detailed recording was impossible. The contextual information has been summarised and tabulated below (Table 14).

Context Number	Context Type	Context Description	Deposit Thickness	Approx. Height m AOD
12/001	Deposit	Tarmac	200mm	-
12/002	Deposit	Made ground (mortar+CBM)	900mm	-
12/003	Wall	Masonry	-	-

Table 14: List of recorded contexts in TP 13

5.0 THE FINDS

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 An extremely limited assemblage of finds was recovered during the watching brief, reflecting the nature of the deposits that were encountered during the monitoring.

5.2 Ceramic Building Material by Luke Barber

Context	СВМ	Wt (g)
2/002	1	362
5/002	2	178
6/001	1	2698
Total	4	3238

Table 15: Overview of the finds assemblage

- 5.2.1 The ceramic building material from the site is all of post-medieval date and is not associated with datable pottery. This, together with the apparent chronological mixing in a number of deposits suggests the assemblage is not considered to hold any potential for further analysis. The assemblage will be discarded.
- 5.2.2 Context [2/002] produced a single 15mm thick peg tile fragment tempered with rare fine sand, common calcareous inclusions and rare iron oxides to 1mm. The tile is quite crudely finished but well fired and is best placed between the 16th and 17th centuries.
- 5.2.3 Context [5/002] produced a mid 18th- to 19th- century peg tile as well as a 22g brick fragment. The brick is quite well formed but low/medium fired, giving it a notably 'friable' texture. It is tempered with moderate fine/medium sand and common iron oxide and chert inclusions to 1mm. The piece can be placed anywhere between the mid 16th and mid 18th centuries.
- 5.2.4 Context [6/001] produced a virtually complete red unfrogged brick (2675g) measuring 232 x 109 x 65mm. The brick is quite well formed and fired and is tempered with sparse fine sand with moderate iron oxides to 1mm. An 18th- to 19th- century date is probable for this piece.

WB: Knole Conservation Studios and Restaurant, Kent

ASE Report No: 2013317

6.0 DISCUSSION

- 6.1.1 No significant archaeological findings were made during the watching brief. The walls adjacent to the test pits were exposed and generally the excavated deposits are interpreted as disturbance relating to the construction of these walls, or to later activity relating to the construction of the new tarmac surface. In several trenches the *c*. 18th/19th century brick floor that preceded the tarmac surface was also seen.
- 6.1.2 Natural geology was only encountered in TP4 in the eastern corner of the site at 146.20m OD.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ASE would like to thank the National Trust for commissioning the work and for their advice and guidance throughout the project.

HER Summary Form

Site Code	KCS 13					
Identification Name and Address	Knole Conservation Studios and Restaurant, Knole House					
County, District &/or Borough	Sevenoaks	Sevenoaks, Kent				
OS Grid Refs.	553900 15	4200				
Geology	Hythe Bed	s (sandston	e and limesto	ne)		
Arch. South-East Project Number	6114					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	Watching Brief ✓	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field	Shallow Urban	Deep Urban	Other Listed Building		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	WB. 24.07.2013 – 15.11.2013	Other		
Sponsor/Client	National Trust					
Project Manager	Neil Griffin/Jim Stevenson					
Project Supervisor	Antonio Reis					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM ✓	Other Modern		

Summary

Archaeology South-East was commissioned by the National Trust to undertake an archaeological watching brief at the proposed new Knole Conservation Studios and Restaurant, Knole Estate, Sevenoaks, Kent (TQ 539 542), between 24th July to 15th November 2013. The works entailed the excavation of thirteen engineer's trial pits required in order to determine ground conditions on the site.

No significant archaeological findings were made during the watching brief. The walls adjacent to the test pits were exposed and generally the excavated deposits are interpreted as disturbance relating to the construction of these walls, or to later activity relating to the construction of the new tarmac surface. In several trenches the c. 18th/19th century brick floor that preceded the tarmac surface was also seen.

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-158658

Project details

Project name Knole Conservation Studios and Restaurant, Knole Estate,

Sevenoaks, Kent

Short description of

the project

Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of University College London Centre for Applied Archaeology (UCLCAA), have been commissioned by the National Trust to undertake an archaeological watching brief at the proposed new Knole Conservation Studios and Restaurant, Knole Estate, Sevenoaks, Kent (TQ 539 542), between 24th to 26th July 2013 henceforth called the site. No significant archaeological findings were made during the watching brief. The walls adjacent to the test pits were exposed and generally the excavated deposits are interpreted as disturbance relating to the construction of these walls, or to later activity relating to the construction of the new tarmac surface. In several trenches the c. 18th/19th century brick floor that preceded

the tarmac surface was also seen.

Project dates Start: 24-07-2013 End: 15-11-2013

Previous/future

work

Yes / Not known

Any associated project reference

codes

6114 - Contracting Unit No.

Any associated project reference

codes

KCS 13 - Sitecode

Type of project Recording project

Site status English Heritage List of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic

Interest

Current Land use Community Service 2 - Leisure and recreational buildings

Monument type ESTATE HOUSE Medieval

Significant Finds NONE None

Investigation type "Watching Brief"

Prompt Conservation/ restoration

Project location

Country England

Site location KENT SEVENOAKS SEVENOAKS Knole Estate

Postcode TN13 1HU

Study area 0 Kilometres

WB: Knole Conservation Studios and Restaurant, Kent

ASE Report No: 2013317

Site coordinates TQ 553206 154099 50 0 50 54 59 N 000 12 35 E Point

Lat/Long Datum Unknown

Height OD / Depth Min: 144.65m Max: 146.24m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Archaeology South East

Project brief originator

National Trust

Project design originator

National Trust

D . .

Project director/manager

Neil Griffin

Project supervisor

Antonio Reis

Type of

sponsor/funding

na

National Trust

body

Name of

sponsor/funding

body

National Trust

Project archives

Physical Archive

Exists?

No

Physical Archive

recipient

National Trust

Digital Archive

recipient

National Trust

Digital Contents

"other"

Digital Media available

"Images raster / digital photography","Text"

Paper Archive

recipient

National Trust

Paper Contents

"other"

Paper Media available

"Context sheet","Correspondence","Miscellaneous Material","Notebook - Excavation', 'Research', 'General

Notes", "Report", "Unpublished Text"

Project bibliography 1

Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Publication type

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WB: Knole Conservation Studios and Restaurant, Kent

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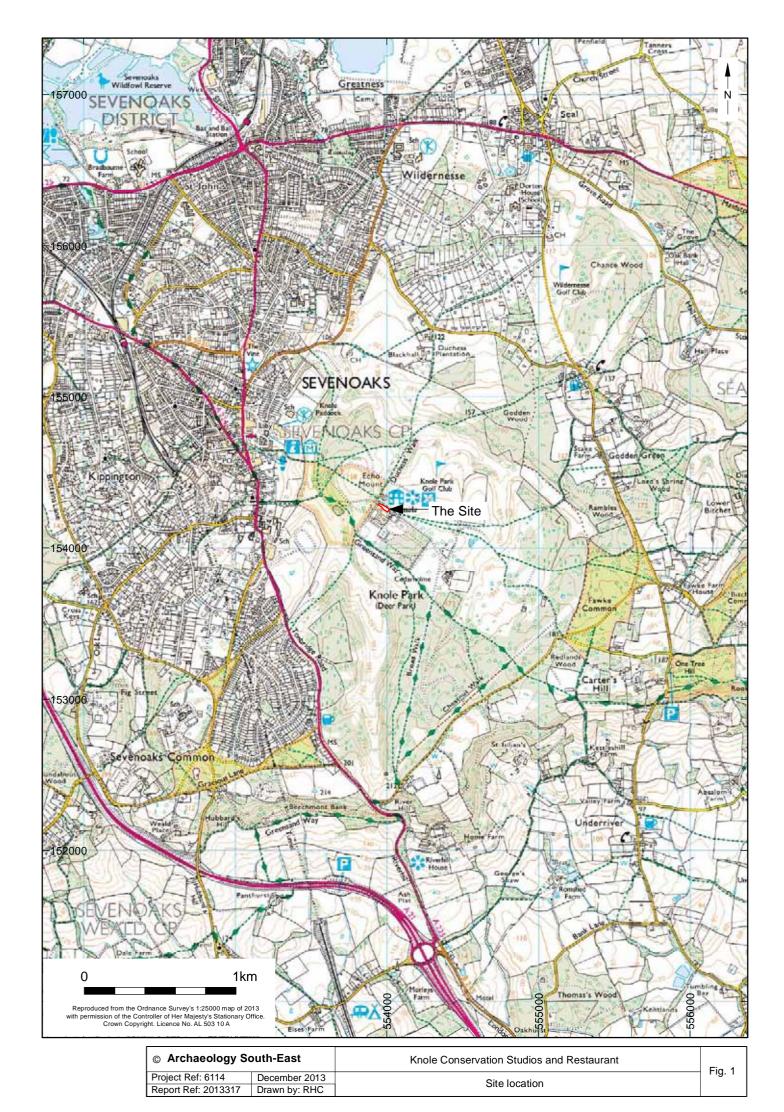
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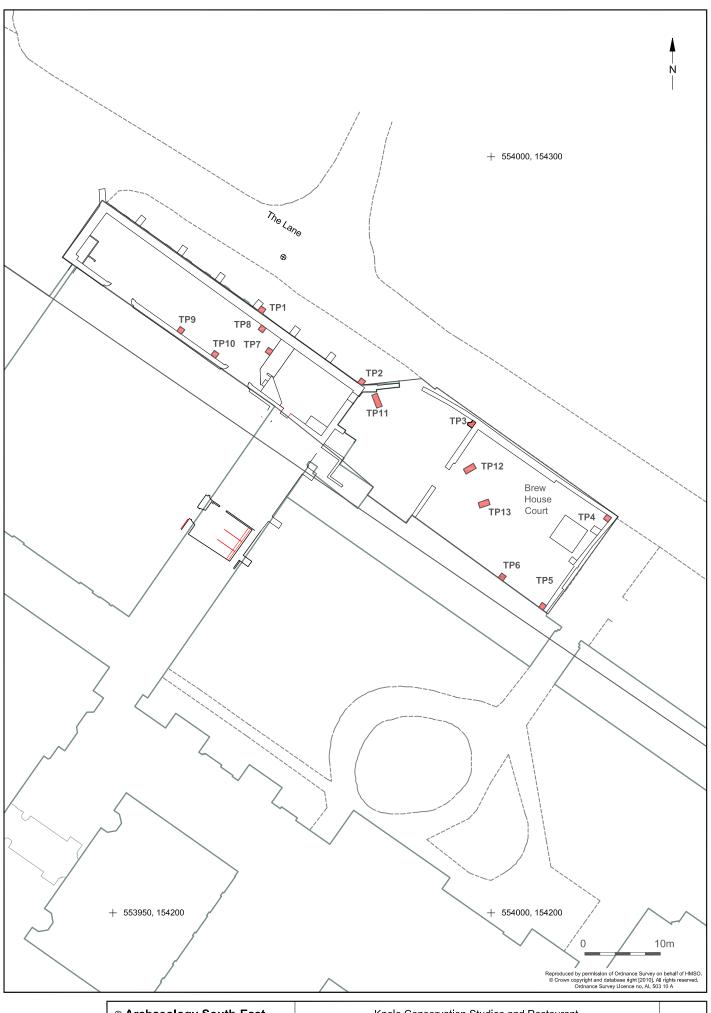
Portslade, East Sussex

Description ASE Client Report. A4-sized with cover logos

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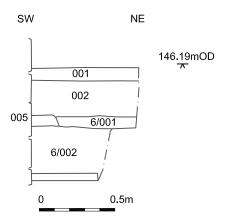
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Project Ref. 6114	Dec 2013	Location of Trial Pits.	Fig. 2	ı
Report Ref: 2013317	Drawn by: RHC	Location of markis.		ı

TP6 section













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Project Ref: 6114	Dec 2013	Section of TP 6, and photographs of TP2, TP3, TP6,TP9 and TP11	1 19. 3
Report Ref. 2013317	Drawn by: RHC		

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