

**Archaeological Watching Brief Report  
124 Upper Stone Street  
Maidstone, Kent**

**NGR: TQ 576371 154981**

**Planning Ref: MA/06/2140**

**ASE Project No: 7194  
Site Code: USS10**

**ASE Report No: 2014410  
OASIS id: archaeol6-197815**



**By Steve Price**

**Archaeological Watching Brief Report  
124 Upper Stone Street  
Maidstone, Kent**

**NGR: TQ 576371 154981**

**Planning Ref: MA/06/2140**

**ASE Project No: 7194  
Site Code: USS10**

**ASE Report No: 2014410  
OASIS id: archaeol6-197815**

**By Steve Price**

**December 2014**

**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 (ASE) was commissioned by Designscape Consultancy to conduct an archaeological watching brief prior to the redevelopment of land behind 124 Upper Stone Street, to make way for the proposed construction of eight residential apartments. This phase of monitoring was a condition of the planning permission after consultation with The Heritage Conservation Group at Kent County Council and Maidstone Borough Council.*

*The monitored ground works consisted of the excavation of foundation trenching. No archaeological finds or features were uncovered.*

## **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction**
- 2.0 Archaeological Background**
- 3.0 Archaeological Methodology**
- 4.0 Results**
- 5.0 Discussion and Conclusions**

**Bibliography**  
**Acknowledgements**

**HER Summary Sheet**  
**OASIS Form**

## **FIGURES**

Figure 1: Site location  
Figure 2: Site plan

## **TABLES**

Table 1: Quantification of site archive  
Table 2: List of recorded contexts

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site Background**

- 1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), the contracting division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology (CAA), Institute of Archaeology (IoA), University College London (UCL) was commissioned by Designscape Consultancy to undertake an archaeological watching brief on behalf of their client during investigative ground works associated with the construction of a new build residential apartment block at Upper Stone Street, Maidstone, hereafter referred to as 'the site'.

### **1.2 Geology and Topography**

- 1.2.1 According to current data from the British Geological Survey, the underlying bedrock at the site consists of sandstone and mudstone of the Lower Greensand Group; the overlying superficial deposits are not mapped (BGS 2014).

### **1.3 Planning Background**

- 1.3.1 Planning permission to convert the land to the rear of 124 Upper Stone Street into two blocks of residential apartments was granted with the following archaeological conditions (Reference MA/06/2140).

*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 The archaeological potential of the site has been gauged in relation to known archaeological sites and the location of chance archaeological finds in the surrounding area (HER data). Based on this information and the scope of the redevelopment works it was deemed appropriate that an archaeological watching brief should be undertaken during intrusive ground works, which consisted of foundation trenching.

### **1.4 Aims and Objectives**

- 1.4.1 The purpose of the archaeological watching brief was to ascertain the character, quality and degree of surviving archaeological remains on site, and to record them appropriately.
- 1.4.2 The objectives of the archaeological watching brief were to contribute to the heritage knowledge of the area through the recording of any archaeological

remains exposed as a result of excavations in connection with the groundworks. Particular attention would be made to the character, height below ground level, condition, date and significance of the deposits.

## **1.5 Scope of Report**

- 1.5.1 The current report provides results of the archaeological watching brief carried out at 124 Upper Stone Street, Maidstone, Kent. The work was undertaken on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> December 2014. The fieldwork was conducted by Steve Price. The project was managed by Paul Mason.

## **2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The site lies in alignment with a Roman Road which is considered to have been a major route between Rochester and central and east Kent and the coast. Barton Roman villa lies 250m to the south east.
- 2.2 The HER data lists over 223 records of finds spots, monuments and listed buildings within a 1km radius of the site. The majority of these are listed buildings, making up for 164 of the records. There are 40 records for monuments ranging from standing masonry which is thought to be Roman (TQ75 NE139), Roman cremations and burials to World War 2 defensive features. There are 19 registered finds spots recorded from Lower Stone Street (TQ75 NE122), with artefacts ranging from struck flint, to a gold and silver coin hoard dating from Henry V – Henry VII (13th – 14th century).

## **2.3 Recent Archaeological Investigation**

- 2.3.1 An archaeological watching brief on the site was undertaken by ASE on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2010. The monitored ground works consisted of the excavation of an investigation trench measuring 3.0m long, 0.6m wide and 1m in depth. Modern made ground deposits directly overlying the natural geology were recorded. No archaeological finds or features were uncovered.

### **3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Fieldwork Methodology**

- 3.1.1 Ground works consisting of foundation trenching measuring a total of 35.6m long, 0.6m wide and 1.5m deep were excavated. These ground works were monitored by an archaeologist until archaeological features or deposits, the undisturbed natural substrate or the development formation level were reached.
- 3.1.2 Where new excavations revealed significant archaeological remains, an opportunity would be made for careful hand excavation and the collection of samples by the archaeologist in attendance, taking site health and safety into account. Adequate time would be made for appropriate archaeological excavation by hand to identify and record the remains as far as possible within the limits of the works in order to extract archaeological and environmental information, should this prove necessary.
- 3.1.3 The spoil from the excavations was inspected by the archaeologist to recover any artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest.
- 3.1.4 A digital photographic record was kept throughout the works.
- 3.1.5 All contexts were recorded on standard pro forma recording sheets.

#### **3.2 The Site Archive**

- 3.2.1 The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will be deposited at a suitable local museum in due course. The contents of the archive are tabulated below (Table 1).

Number of Contexts	4
No. of files/paper record	1
Photographs	33

Table 1: Quantification of site archive



## 4.0 RESULTS

### 4.1 Foundation Trenching

- 4.1.1 The total amount of foundation trenching monitored measured 35.6m long by 0.6m wide by 1.50m deep. The same stratigraphic sequence was observed throughout.

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length (m)	Max. Width (m)	Deposit Thickness (m)
1001	Deposit	Made ground	Trench	Trench	0.26-0.59
1002	Deposit	Made ground	Trench	Trench	0.31-0.37
1003	Layer	Head deposit	Trench	Trench	0.46-0.55
1004	Layer	Natural	Trench	Trench	-

Table 2: List of recorded contexts

- 4.1.2 The natural [1004] consisted of softly compacted light greenish-yellow sand with occasional large angular sandstone. This was overlain by a head deposit [1003] of softly compacted mid orange-brown sand. Overlying this was a modern made ground deposit [1002] comprising dark greyish-brown silt with moderate brick rubble and CBM fragments, and occasional bricks. Overlying this was a further modern made ground deposit [1001], consisting of a mixture of dark greyish-brown clayey silt, mid reddish-brown and mid greyish-green fine sand, bricks/ brick rubble, tarmac fragments, pieces of concrete and fragments of plastic. No archaeological features or finds were uncovered.

## **5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 5.1 No finds and no archaeological features were identified in the watching brief.
- 5.2 The same sequence of natural overlain by a head deposit and modern made ground deposits was observed throughout the foundation trenching. It was thus clear that the site had been heavily truncated by these overlying made ground deposits.
- 5.3 Due to the lack of archaeological features and finds on site, none of the research aims set out in section 1.4 can be addressed.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

ASE 2010. *Archaeological Watching Brief at 124 Upper Stone Street, Maidstone, Kent*

English Heritage 2002. *Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation and Geoarchaeology: Using earth sciences to understand the archaeological record*

Kent County Council 2007. *Standard Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

MoLAS 1994. *Site Manual for Archaeological Fieldwork*

Watkinson, D E & Neal V, 2001, *First Aid for Finds*, RESCUE/UKIC Archaeology Section

### Websites:

British Geological Survey <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>  
(accessed 11/12/14)

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

ASE would like to thank Designscape Consultancy for commissioning the work and for their assistance throughout the project, and Wendy Rogers, County Archaeologist Kent County Council for her guidance and monitoring. The excavation was directed by Steve Price. The author would like to thank Justin Russell who produced the figures for this report; Paul Mason who project managed the excavations and Jim Stevenson and Dan Swift who project managed the post-excavation process.

## HER Summary Form

Site Code	USS10					
Identification Name and Address	124 Upper Stone Street, Maidstone, Kent					
County, District &/or Borough	Kent					
OS Grid Refs.	TQ 576371 154981					
Geology	Lower Greensand Group					
Arch. South-East Project Number	7194					
Type of Fieldwork	Watching Brief					
Type of Site	Shallow Urban					
Dates of Fieldwork	5th & 8 <sup>th</sup> December 2014					
Sponsor/Client	Designscape Consultancy					
Project Manager	Paul Mason					
Project Supervisor	Steve Price					
Period Summary						
<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>Archaeology South-East (ASE) was commissioned by Designscape Consultancy to conduct an archaeological watching brief prior to the redevelopment of land behind 124 Upper Stone Street, to make way for the proposed construction of eight residential apartments. This phase of monitoring was a condition of the planning permission after consultation with The Heritage Conservation Group at Kent County Council and Maidstone Borough Council.</p> <p>The monitored ground works consisted of the excavation of foundation trenching. No archaeological finds or features were uncovered.</p>						

**OASIS Form**

**OASIS ID: archaeol6-197815**

**Project details**

Project name      An Archaeological Watching Brief at 124 Upper Stone Street, Maidstone, Kent

Short description of the project      Archaeology South-East (ASE) was commissioned by Designscape Consultancy to conduct an archaeological watching brief prior to the redevelopment of land behind 124 Upper Stone Street, to make way for the proposed construction of eight residential apartments. This phase of monitoring was a condition of the planning permission after consultation with The Heritage Conservation Group at Kent County Council and Maidstone Borough Council. The monitored ground works consisted of the excavation of foundation trenching. No archaeological finds or features were uncovered.

Project dates      Start: 05-12-2014 End: 08-12-2014

Previous/future work      Yes / Not known

Type of project      Field evaluation

Current Land use      Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed

**Project location**

Country      England

Site location      KENT MAIDSTONE MAIDSTONE 124 Upper Stone Street, Maidstone, Kent

Postcode      ME15 6HJ

Study area      90.00 Square metres

Site coordinates      TQ 576371 154981 50.9168047722 0.24284202328 50 55 00 N  
000 14 34 E Point

**Project creators**

Name      of  
Organisation      Archaeology South East

Project      brief Archaeology South East

originator

Project design  
originator Kent County Council

Project  
director/manager Paul Mason

Project supervisor Steve Price

Type of  
sponsor/funding Client  
body

Name of  
sponsor/funding Designscape Consultancy  
body

Project archives

Physical Archive  
Exists? No

Physical Archive  
recipient Local Museum

Digital Archive  
recipient Local Museum

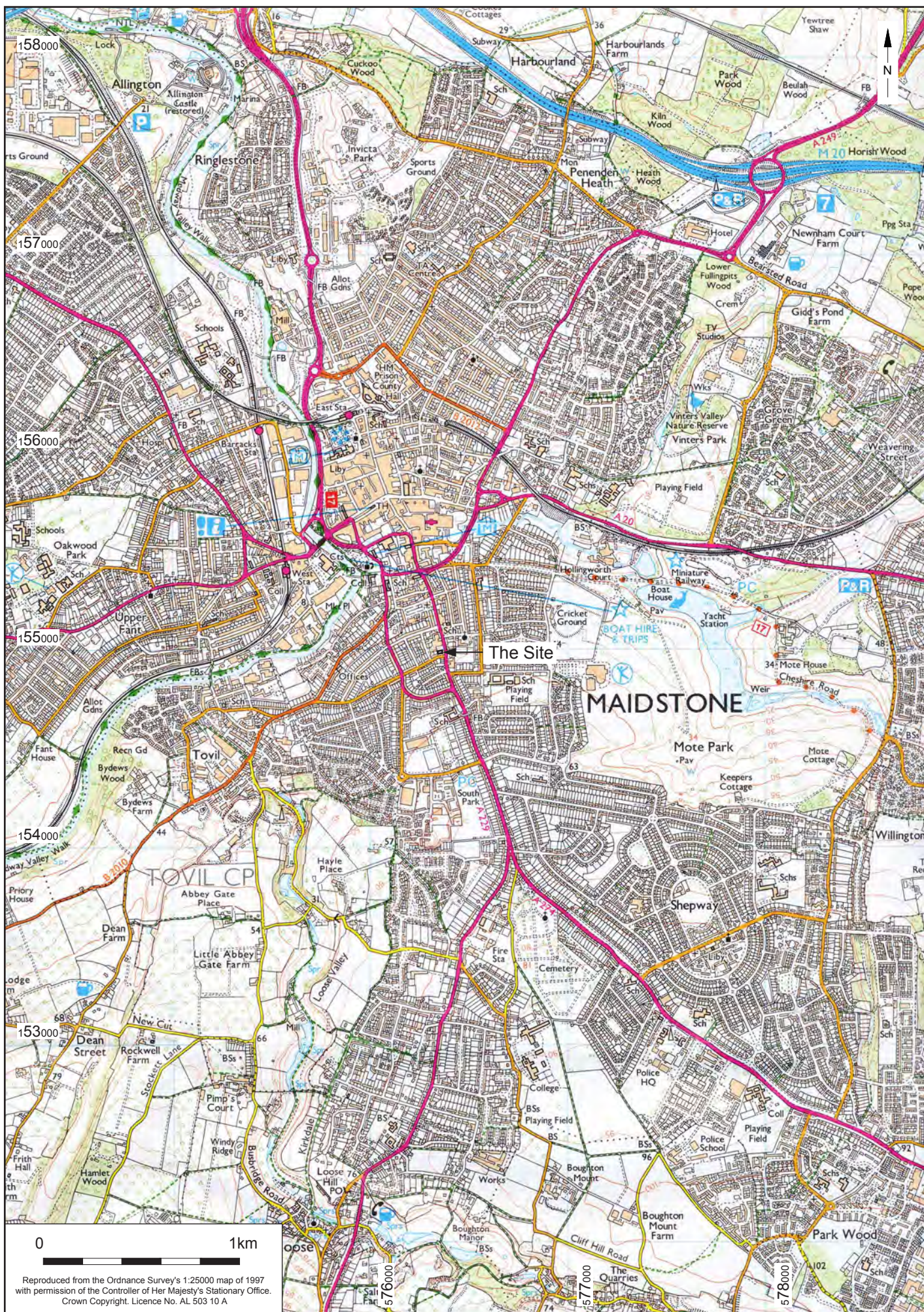
Digital Media  
available "Images raster / digital photography"

Paper Archive  
recipient Local Museum

Paper Media  
available "Context sheet", "Photograph", "Report"

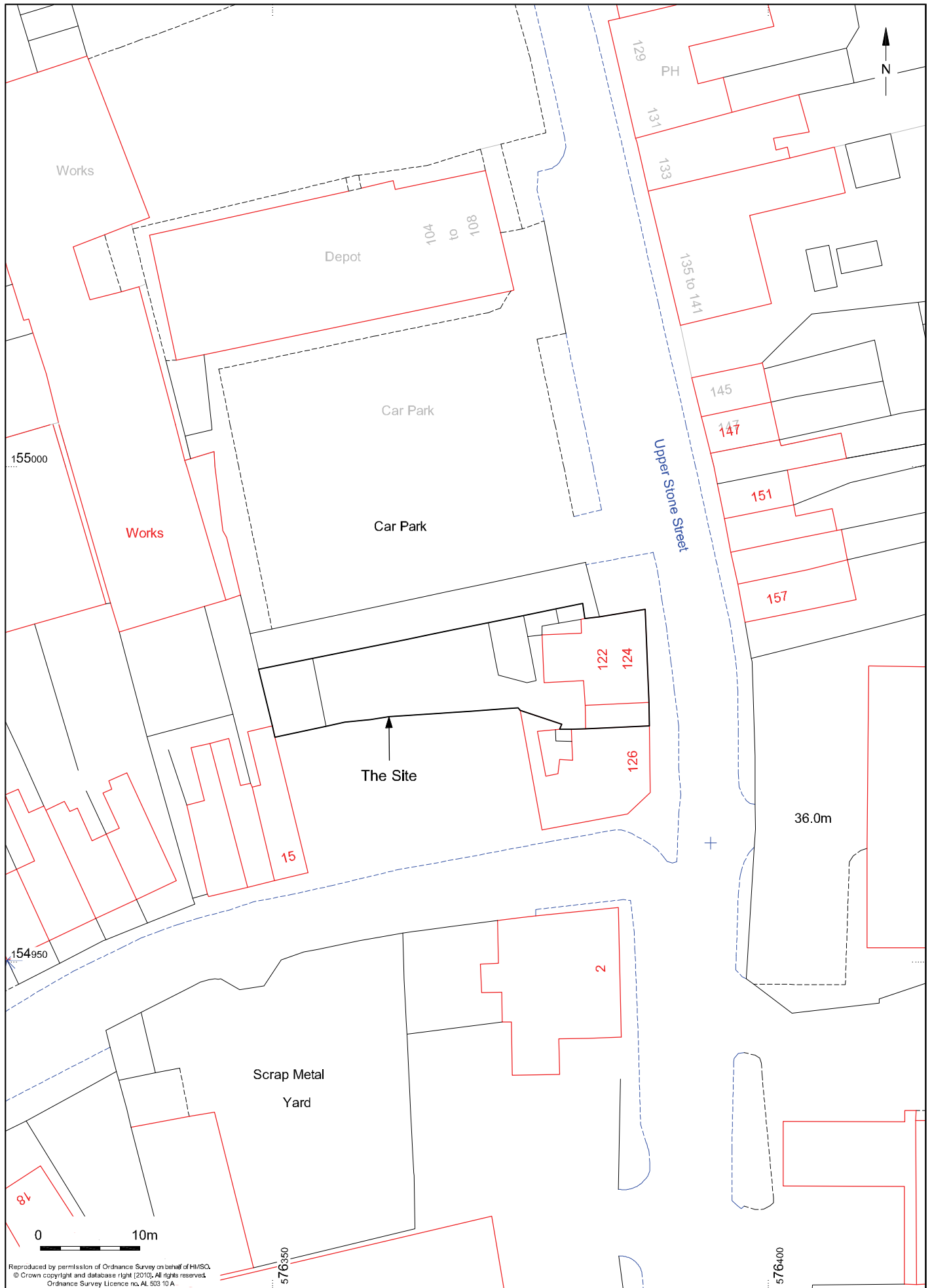
Entered by Steve Price (steven.price@ucl.ac.uk)  
Entered on 11 December 2014





© Archaeology South-East		124 Upper Stone Street, Maidstone	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 7194	December 2014	Site location	
Report Ref: 2014410	Drawn by: JLR		





© Archaeology South-East		124 Upper Stone Street, Maidstone	Fig. 2
Project Ref:		Site plan	
Report Ref:	Drawn by: JLR		



**Sussex Office**

Units 1 & 2  
2 Chapel Place  
Portslade  
East Sussex BN41 1DR  
tel: +44(0)1273 426830  
email: [fau@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:fau@ucl.ac.uk)  
web: [www.archaeologyse.co.uk](http://www.archaeologyse.co.uk)

**Essex Office**

The Old Magistrates Court  
79 South Street  
Braintree  
Essex CM7 3QD  
tel: +44(0)1376 331470  
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  
UCL Institute of Archaeology  
31-34 Gordon Square  
London WC1H 0PY  
tel: +44(0)20 7679 4778  
email: [fau@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:fau@ucl.ac.uk)  
web: [www.ucl.ac.uk/caa](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/caa)

