

**Archaeological Watching Brief Report  
Edenbridge Primary School, High Street,  
Edenbridge, Kent**

**NGR: 544480 146375  
(TQ 44480 46375)**

**Planning Ref: KCC/SE/0273/2016**

**ASE Project No: 170310  
Site Code: EDN 17**

**ASE Report No: 2017210  
OASIS ID: archaeol6-284379**

**By Simon Stevens BA MCIfA**

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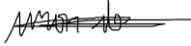
**ASE Project No: 170310  
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**With contributions by**

**Anna Doherty, Luke Barber and Isa Benedetti-Whitton**

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<b>Date of Issue:</b>	May 2017		
<b>Revision:</b>			

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## **Abstract**

*Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Bailey Partnership to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Edenbridge Primary School, Edenbridge, Kent, (centred on NGR 544480 146375).*

*A cluster of archaeological features was identified, excavated and recorded in the north-western corner of the site, in the area of an extension to the existing car park. Pottery recovered from the features suggest Middle/Late Iron Age, Early Romano-British and medieval activity at the site.*

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site Background**

- 1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), the contracting division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology (CAA) at the Institute of Archaeology (IoA), University College London (UCL) was commissioned by Bailey Partnership to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Edenbridge Primary School, Edenbridge, Kent (NGR 544480 146375; Figure 1).

### **1.2 Geology and Topography**

- 1.2.1 The site is located to the west of Edenbridge High Street at a height of c.50mAOD, in the grounds of the primary school. The area is broadly level, and no obvious earthworks were visible prior to the commencement of the groundworks.
- 1.2.2 According to current data from the British Geological Survey, the underlying geology consists of Weald Clay, with no recorded superficial deposits (BGS 2017).

### **1.3 Planning Background**

- 1.3.1 Planning permission was granted by Kent County Council for the construction of a new teaching block, minor works to the school reception building and the extension of the car park at the site. Planning consent has been granted subject to conditions (planning ref. KCC/SE/0273/2016). Following consultation with the council's own Heritage Conservation Group it was recommended that an archaeological condition was added to the permission requiring that a trial trench evaluation should be carried out prior to development. It has subsequently been agreed, through consultation with the KCC Archaeological Officer, that the condition can be met by undertaking an archaeological watching brief, with subsequent reporting.
- 1.3.2 Subsequently a Specification for the archaeological work was prepared by ASE and approved by the Heritage Conservation Group of Kent County Council before the commencement of groundworks at the site. The document outlined the methodologies to be used on site (in this case an archaeological watching brief), and in the preparation of a report and archive of the results (ASE 2017).

### **1.4 Research Aims and Objectives**

- 1.4.1 The site specific aim of the archaeological watching brief given in the *Specification (ibid.)* was to:

*'establish whether Roman or medieval remains associated with Watling Street are present'*

- 1.4.2 Also in more general terms (*ibid.*) the archaeological work aimed:

*'to observe, excavate and record archaeological remains revealed  
by the groundworks, to contribute to heritage knowledge of the area  
and ensure suitable specialist observation'*

## **1.5 Scope of Report**

- 1.5.1 This report details the results of the archaeological monitoring of groundworks at the site undertaken in April 2017 by a team comprising Simon Stevens (Senior Archaeologist), Steve Price and Gary Webster (Archaeologists), and John Cook (Archaeological Surveyor). The project was managed by Paul Mason (Project Manager) and by Jim Stevenson and Andy Margetts (Post-excavation Managers).

## **2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Introduction**

- 2.1.1 The following information is taken from the DBA prepared by CgMs (CgMs 2016), itself based on information held by the Kent County Council Historic Environment Record (HER), with all due acknowledgement, and from other available sources.

### **2.2 Prehistoric**

- 2.2.1 The HER records a single findspot of Mesolithic flints and blades found at Harmans Orchard, 700m to the south-west of the site.
- 2.2.2 The Edenbridge Archaeological Assessment (KCC 2004) records two other prehistoric finds for the Edenbridge area both comprising Mesolithic flintwork of a pick-type object and a transept axe.

### **2.3 Roman**

- 2.3.1 The Roman Road from London to Lewes is defined by the route of the current High Street situated within 100m to the west of the site.
- 2.3.2 Recorded findspots include a copper alloy miniature object of a hearth shovel found 50m to the north of the site, Roman coins found within gardens 250m west of the site, Roman pottery found 250m south of the site at St Peters and St Pauls Church and Roman tiles recorded as a general find on the HER.
- 2.3.3 A watching brief undertaken by ASE in 2016 immediately to the north of the school resulted in the identification and recording of a short stretch of an Early Roman ditch (ASE 2016)

### **2.4 Anglo-Saxon and Medieval**

- 2.4.1 The Edenbridge Archaeological Assessment (*ibid.*) suggests the town probably formed part of the royal estate of Westerham and that a nucleus of a village may have existed from the 10th century with a church/chapel dependant on Westerham mentioned in documentation from the 11th century (KCC 2004, 3).
- 2.4.2 Medieval archaeological features have been found throughout the town mainly to the south and west of the study site. Works focussed along the High Street have found soil horizons dating to pre-thirteenth century along with later post-holes, cess pits; two ditches located to the rear of 124-128 the High Street; and a further ditch and post-holes behind 25 the High Street.
- 2.4.3 Further to the south medieval features have been discovered at St Lawrence Church which may indicate metal working activity; a medieval watercourse and possible smithy evidence near the moat of Edenbridge manor house; and 13/14th century tile fragments, amongst other features to the west of the site during works for the Western Relief Road.

### **2.5 Post-Medieval and Modern**

- 2.5.1 The 1799 Ordnance Survey Drawing provides further detail showing the study site as situated across 5 different fields at this time. The 1844 Edenbridge Tithe Map shows the same layout but the Tithe Map Apportionment describes the fields as arable or meadow at this time.
- 2.5.2 By 1936 the majority of the site is devoted to the school and associated playing field. The school appears to comprise two large buildings with the northern area being labelled as a playing field. The plots to both the west and east do not appear connected to the school. An aerial photograph from 1940 identifies the east of the site as possibly greenhouses at this time.



### 3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Fieldwork Methodology

- 3.1.1 Mechanical ground reduction was monitored by a suitably qualified archaeologist. All sections were examined for archaeological deposits and all spoil was scanned for the presence of archaeological artefacts, both visually and with a metal detector.
- 3.1.2 All encountered deposits were recorded according to accepted professional standards using standard Archaeology South-East context record forms. Deposit colours were recorded by visual inspection and not by reference to a Munsell Colour chart. A full photographic record of the monitoring was maintained.
- 3.1.3 The fieldwork was undertaken according to the preceding *Specification* (ASE 2017) as well as the Kent County Council *Specification for Archaeological Watching Brief at a school in Kent* (KCC 2017). It was completed in accordance with the ClfA *Code of Conduct* (ClfA 2014a) and *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief* (ClfA 2014b).

#### 3.2 Fieldwork Constraints

- 3.2.1 There were no physical constraints to the archaeological monitoring of the groundworks; all machining was closely observed, all sections were examined and all spoil was scanned for the presence of archaeological artefacts.

#### 3.3 The Site Archive

- 3.3.1 The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will be offered to Sevenoaks Museum in due course. However, Sevenoaks Museum are not currently in a position to accept archaeological archives. The contents of the archive are tabulated below (Table 1).

Context sheets	24
Section sheets	1
Plans sheets	0
Colour photographs	0
B&W photos	0
Digital photos	12
Context register	1
Drawing register	1
Watching brief forms	7
Trench Record forms	0

Table 1: Quantification of site paper archive

Bulk finds (quantity e.g. 1 bag, 1 box, 0.5 box 0.5 of a box )	1 bag
Registered finds (number of)	
Flots and environmental remains from bulk samples	0
Palaeoenvironmental specialists sample samples (e.g. columns, prepared slides)	0

Waterlogged wood	0
Wet sieved environmental remains from bulk samples	0

Table 2: Quantification of artefact and environmental samples

- 3.3.2 The finds and environmental samples ultimately deposited as part of the archive are dependent on specialist recommendations and regional archive requirements.

## 4.0 RESULTS

### 4.1 Introduction (Figures 2 and 3)

- 4.1.1 Mechanical ground reduction at the site was monitored during April 2017. A cluster of archaeological features was identified, excavated and recorded in the north-western corner of the site, in the area of an extension to the existing car park. No archaeological deposits or features were identified in the other monitored areas.

Context	Type	Description	Max. Deposit Thickness m
001	Layer	Topsoil	0.25
002	Layer	Subsoil	0.14
003	Layer	'Natural'	-
004	Layer	Made Ground	0.47
005	Cut	Pit	-
006	Fill	Pit	0.08
007	Fill	Pit	0.09
008	Cut	Gully	-
009	Fill	Gully	0.09
010	Cut	Pit	-
011	Fill	Pit	0.19
012	Fill	Pit	0.16
013	Fill	Pit	0.12
014	Cut	Pit	-
015	Fill	Pit	0.17
016	Cut	Gully	-
017	Fill	Gully	0.18
018	Cut	Gully	-
019	Fill	Gully	0.13
020	Cut	Gully	-
021	Fill	Gully	0.04
022	Layer	Deposit	0.05
023	Cut	Gully	-
024	Fill	Gully	0.33

Table 3: List of recorded contexts

### 4.2 The Stratigraphic Sequence

- 4.2.1 In all of the monitored areas of the site the overburden and 'natural' were mostly consistent in character. They consisted of a dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil, context [001], which overlay a greyish brown silty clay subsoil, context [002], which directly overlay the greyish yellow slightly silty clay 'natural' Weald Clay, context [003]. There were also isolated areas of a deposit of highly mixed made ground containing modern debris, context [004], which replaced the subsoil in the sequence close to the access road.
- 4.2.2 Pit [005] was almost a metre in diameter but only 130mm in depth, suggesting truncation. The primary fill was orangey yellow clay, context [006], evidence of silting of an open feature. The upper fill was greenish grey silty clay, context [007]. No datable material was recovered from either of the fills.

- 4.2.3 A short stretch of a 230mm wide gully [008] was uncovered which ran from north to south and continued under the retained car park. The single fill was a light grey clay, context [009]. This feature was truncated by pit [010], which contained three discernible fills. The primary fill was a mid-yellow clay, context [011], again evidence of silting of an open feature. It was overlain by a deposit of light brown clay, context [012]. The upper fill was a dark grey sandy clay, context [013]. A single sherd of early Roman pottery dated to the first or second century AD was recovered from context [012].
- 4.2.4 An irregular area of archaeological deposit(s) was encountered close to the northern boundary of the site. A section excavated close the eastern edge of the exposed deposit suggested it consisted of two separate features/episodes of deposition. Feature [014] was recorded in the southern part of the section. The single fill was a mid-grey clay, context [015]. The relationship with feature [016] to the north was uncertain, with an identical fill, context [017].
- 4.2.5 A further section was excavated to the north, and the feature was found to consist of a single deposit of dark grey silty clay, context [022] at that point. Small assemblages of Roman pottery were recovered from contexts [015] and [022], while three sherds of medieval pottery were recovered from context [017], suggesting more than one episode of deposition.
- 4.2.6 Another set of deposits was encountered to the west. Gully [020] ran under the limit of excavation. No dating evidence was recovered from the single greyish orange clay fill, context [021]. It was truncated by a wide feature, gully [018], which was nearly 2m wide but only 130mm deep suggesting truncation. The single fill at this location was a mid-greyish brown silty clay, context [019], from which a sherd of medieval pottery and possible fragments of roof tile were recovered.
- 4.2.7 A further section was excavated through the gully to the east. At this point gully [023] was 840mm wide. The single fill was a greyish brown silty clay, context [024], which produced the earliest pottery from the site, dating from the Middle/Late Iron Age, as well as hearth lining and slag/waste products from an industrial activity, possibly ironworking.

## 5.0 THE FINDS

### 5.1 Summary

- 5.1.1 A small assemblage of finds was recovered during the watching brief at Edenbridge Primary School. All finds were washed and dried or air dried as appropriate. They were subsequently quantified by count and weight and were bagged by material and context (Table 4). All finds have been packed and stored following ClfA guidelines (2014c).

Context	Pottery	Weight (g)	CBM	Weight (g)	Slag	Weight (g)
12	1	2				
15	7	5				
17	3	13			1	2
19	1	6	2	10		
22	7	69				
24	13	52			22	37
Total	32	147	2	10	23	39

Table 4: Finds quantification

### 5.2 The Later Iron Age and Roman Pottery by Anna Doherty

- 5.2.1 A small assemblage of later Iron Age and Roman pottery was recovered from four individual contexts, amounting to a total of 28 sherds, weighing 128g.
- 5.2.2 Potentially the earliest material comes from context [024]. The 13 sherds represented in this group appear to come from three different vessels, two of which are associated with a fine, extremely micaceous, hand-made, sandy fabric. One of these vessels features a single horizontal line of individually tooled, comb-stabbed or rouletted dots between two simple tooled horizontal lines. The horizontal band of decoration appears to occur on the shoulder of a necked jar profile. This group also contains a rimsherd from a bead rim jar in a Late Iron Age grog-tempered fabric.
- 5.2.3 The decorated sherds in [024] are stylistically very typical of the end of the Middle Iron Age 'Saucepan' tradition; however, as in context [024], similar decoration is also commonly found in transitional Middle/Late Iron Age assemblage in the Weald and elsewhere in East Sussex/west Kent. In this area, there appears to be a clear period of overlap between late 'Saucepan' styles – e.g. Cunliffe's (2005) Caburn-Saltdean group – and Late Iron Age grog-tempering traditions (Green 1980, 69-74). A good example of similar a transitional Middle/Late Iron Age assemblage comes from St Anne's Road, Eastbourne (Barber 2016).
- 5.2.4 Another context, [015], contains some very fragmented grog-tempered bodysherds from a single vessel. Unfortunately, these cannot be closely-dated since grog-tempering is widespread in the Weald from the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC until the end of the Roman period. In context [022], three grog-tempered sherds were associated with base sherds from a Roman jar in an unsourced sandy ware, indicating a broad Roman date range.

- 5.2.5 One final Roman sherd was noted in context [012]: a partial rim from a beaker or small jar with necked to slightly everted rim profile. It is associated with an unsourced, partially-oxidised micaceous sandy fabric. Although it cannot be closely dated, the rim profile is suggestive of the earlier part of the Roman period (c.1<sup>st</sup>- 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD).

### **5.3 The Post-Roman Pottery** by Luke Barber

- 5.3.1 The evaluation recovered just four somewhat abraded sherds of post-Roman pottery from the site. Though most are not particularly diagnostic they all appear to be of the High Medieval period, probably spanning the 13<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. Context [017] produced three sherds (14g) from a medium oxidised sandy ware vessel with some large quartz grits while context [019] produced a single reduced medium/coarse sandy ware sherd. The latter is likely to be from the Limpsfield industry in Surrey.

### **5.4 The Ceramic Building Material** by Isa Benedetti-Whitton

- 5.4.1 Two fragments of surface spall weighing 10g – most likely from ceramic roof tile although due to the partial nature of the fragments it is difficult to say for certain – were collected from [019]. As the original form of these fragments is not clear, they cannot be dated. The fragments could have splintered from literally any form of ceramic building material with a flat surface, and date to any time between the Roman and post-medieval period. Both fragments have been discarded.

### **5.5 The Metallurgical Remains** by Luke Barber

- 5.5.1 Slag was recovered from two deposits. Context [17] contained a 2g droplet of aerated fuel ash slag. Context [24] contained two quite fresh pieces (36g) of hearth lining: a dull orange/red fine sandy clay with adhering vitrification/fuel ash slag. All the slag is suspected of deriving from iron working, but this cannot be ascertained beyond doubt.

## **6.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

### **6.1 Overview of stratigraphic sequence**

- 6.1.1 A number of archaeological deposits were encountered, excavated and recorded at the site during the watching brief. Although only a small area was examined, and the dating evidence was somewhat confusing, there was clear evidence of activity dating as far back as the Middle Iron Age, with clear indications of Late Iron Age, Roman and medieval deposition at the site.
- 6.1.2 Close monitoring of the groundworks showed that the features were concentrated in one part of the site, where new car-parking was to be sited, with no archaeological deposits encountered in the area of the new teaching block or reception building.

### **6.2 Deposit survival and existing impacts**

- 6.2.1 Although a range of archaeological features did survive at the site, the shallowness of the deposits, and arguably the mixing of deposits resulting in the mixture of dating evidence, strongly suggests truncation. However, the presence of a subsoil layer does imply that this truncation occurred in the distant past, perhaps during ploughing of the area prior to the construction of the school.

### **6.3 Discussion of archaeological remains by period**

- 6.3.1 Unfortunately the character of the deposits, including the paucity of clear stratigraphic relationships, and the wide date range of the pottery recovered from the site proved problematic in interpreting the remains. In essence the excavated features suggest land division at the site, probably beginning as early as the Middle Iron Age.
- 6.3.2 Deposition of pottery and other material is clearly indicative of domestic occupation and/or industrial activity in the immediate vicinity over a long period of time, supported by discoveries of archaeological features on the adjacent Bowling Club site in 2016 (ASE 2016) and from elsewhere in the town, showing that there was widespread Roman and medieval activity in the Edenbridge area (see above).
- 6.3.3 The earliest pottery from the site appears to date from the Middle/Late Iron Age, pushing the activity at the site back before the construction of the Roman road which runs through the centre of Edenbridge. The presence of slag in the same deposit as this pottery (which *could* result from ironworking), suggests that there may be an early bloomery near the site, activity seen across the Weald at this time (Hodgkinson 2008). Pottery of this date and style has been recovered recently with a more substantial assemblage of positively identified ironworking slag near Hartfield in East Sussex (Stevens 2013) and ironworking has been radiocarbon dated to the Middle Iron Age at Raithlin Road, Crawley (Pine 2013) and Birchen Lane, Haywards Heath (Sheehan forthcoming). In addition, a possible Middle Iron Age smiths workshop was encountered within the West Sussex Weald at Wickhurst Green (Margetts in prep).

### **6.4 Consideration of research aims**

- 6.4.1 The identification of archaeological deposits dating from the Roman and medieval periods meet the terms of the site specific research aim identified in the *Specification* (ASE 2017). The Roman period remains may relate to roadside activity associated with the London to Lewes Roman Road whereas the medieval material may be associated with the settlement of Edenbridge.

## **6.5 Updated Research Agenda**

- 6.5.1 The unexpected discovery of the Middle/Late Iron Age pottery and of the associated industrial residue introduces a new agenda for research in the Edenbridge area. Future investigations should seek to identify the presence of pre-Roman ironworking activity in this part of the Weald.

## **6.6 Conclusions**

- 6.6.1 The implementation of an archaeological watching brief during the construction work at Edenbridge Primary School resulted in the identification, excavation, recording of a range of archaeological remains, and the dissemination of the results.



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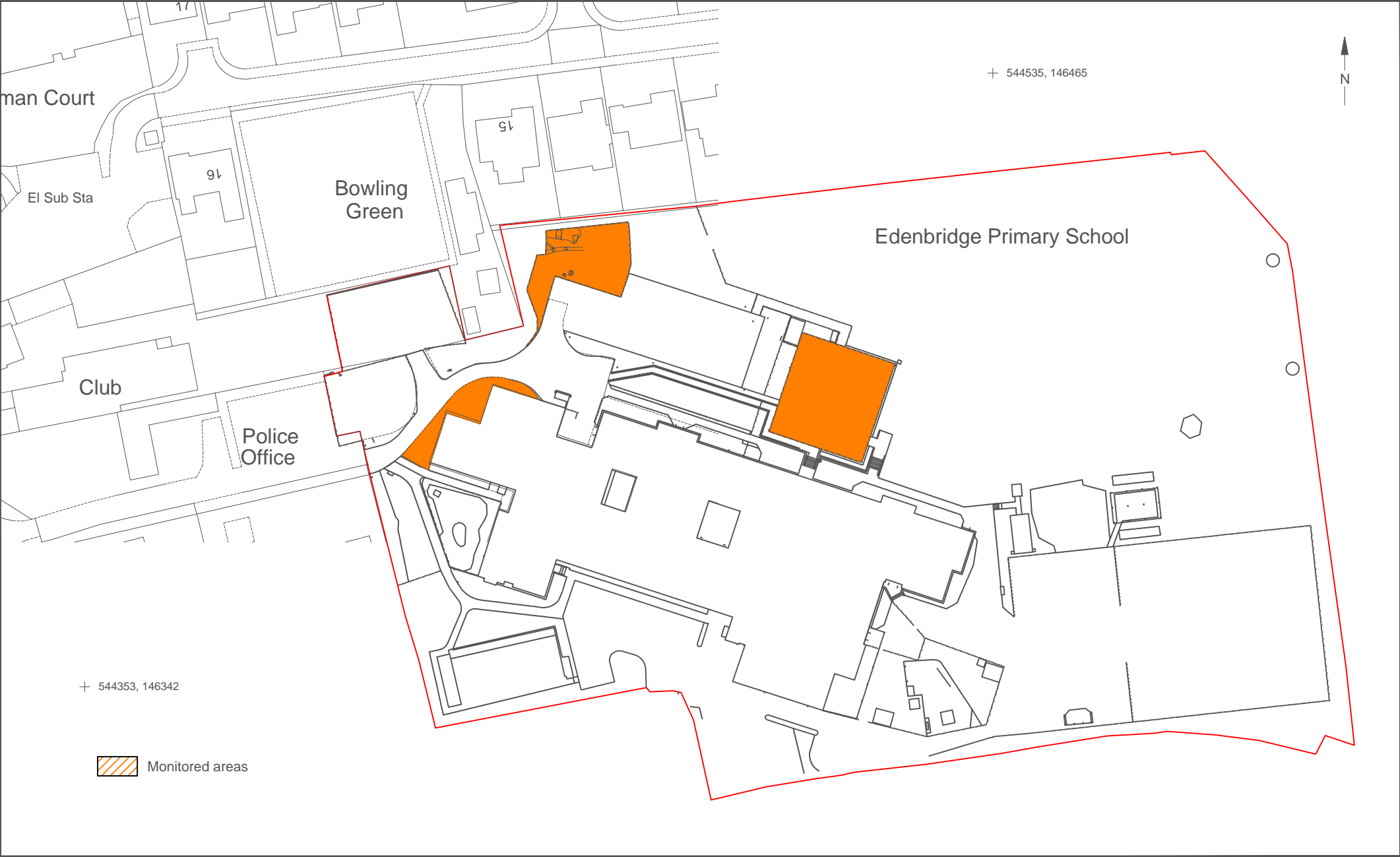
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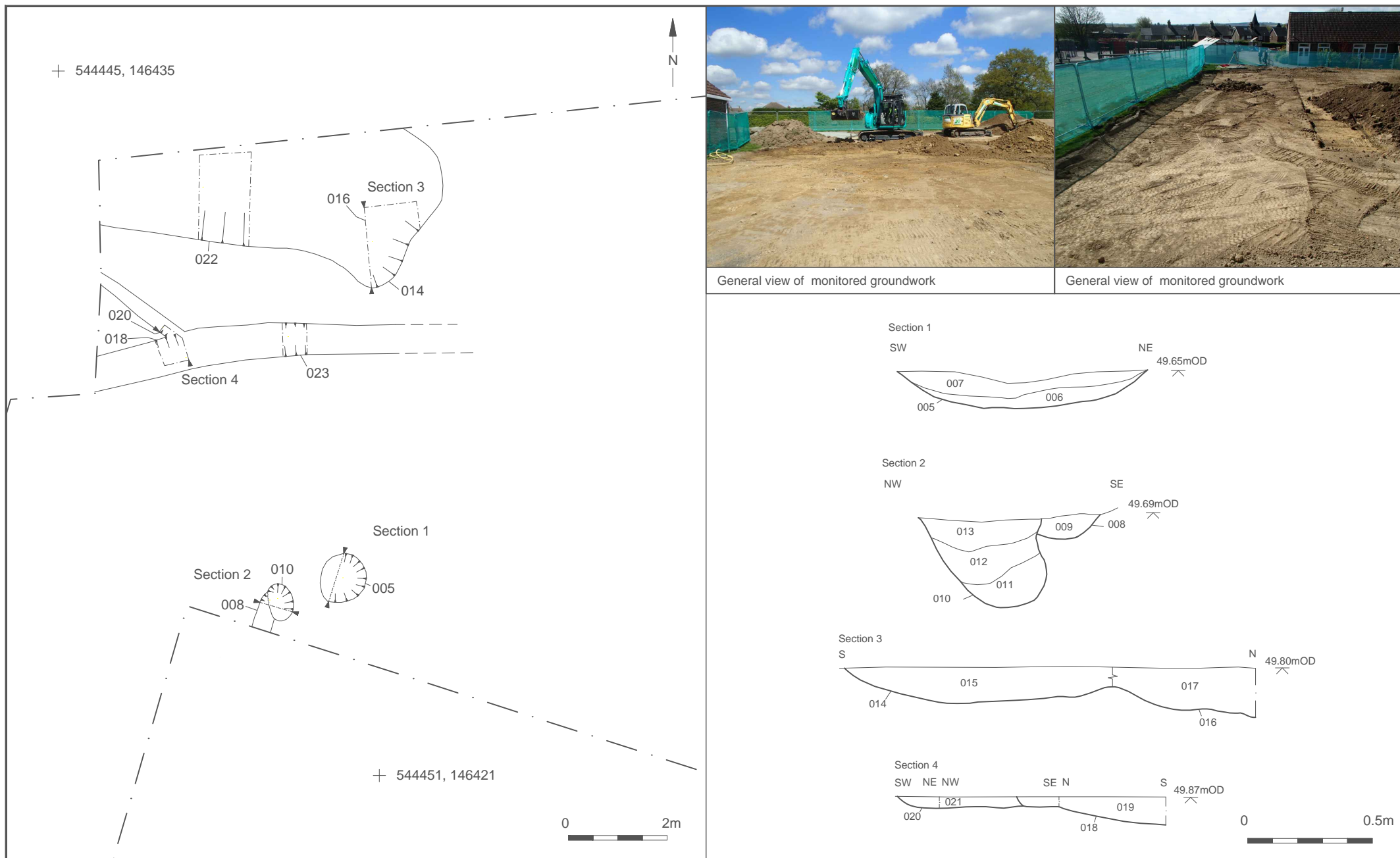
ASE would like to thank Bailey Partnership for commissioning the archaeological work and Wendy Rogers, Senior Archaeological Officer, Heritage Conservation Group, Kent County Council for her input at all stages. Thanks are also due to the groundworkers for their co-operation and hospitality.



© Archaeology South-East		Edenbridge Primary School, Edenbridge, Kent	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 170310	May 2017	Site location	
Report Ref: 2017210	Drawn by: AR		



© Archaeology South-East		Edenbridge Primary School, Edenbridge, Kent	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 170310	May 2017	Monitored areas	
Report Ref: 2017210	Drawn by: AR		



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Project Ref: 170310

May 2017

Report Ref: 2017210

Drawn by: AR

Edenbridge Primary School, Edenbridge, Kent

Excavated archaeological features, plan and sections

Fig. 3

## HER Summary

<b>Site code</b>	EDN 17					
<b>Project code</b>	170310					
<b>Planning reference</b>	KCC/SE/0273/2016					
<b>Site address</b>	Edenbridge Primary School					
<b>District/Borough</b>	Sevenoaks District					
<b>NGR (12 figures)</b>	544480 146375					
<b>Geology</b>	Weald Clay					
<b>Fieldwork type</b>	Eval	Excav	<b>WB ✓</b>	HBR	Survey	Other
<b>Date of fieldwork</b>	10.04.2017 to 20.04.2017					
<b>Sponsor/client</b>	Bailey Partnership					
<b>Project manager</b>	Paul Mason					
<b>Project supervisor</b>	Simon Stevens					
<b>Period summary</b>	Palaeolithic	Mesolithic	Neolithic	Bronze Age	<b>Iron Age ✓</b>	
	<b>Roman ✓</b>	Anglo-Saxon	<b>Medieval ✓</b>	Post-Medieval	Other	
<b>Project summary (100 word max)</b>	<p><i>Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Bailey Partnership to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Edenbridge Primary School, Edenbridge, Kent, (centred on NGR 544480 146375).</i></p> <p><i>A cluster of archaeological features was identified, excavated and recorded in the north-western corner of the site, in the area of an extension to the existing car park. Pottery recovered from the features suggest Middle/Late Iron Age, Early Romano-British and medieval activity at the site.</i></p>					

## OASIS Form

**OASIS ID: archaeol6-284379**

### Project details

Project name	Archaeological Watching Brief Report - Edenbridge Primary School, Edenbridge, Kent
Short description of the project	Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Bailey Partnership to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Edenbridge Primary School, Edenbridge, Kent, (centred on NGR 544508 146386). A cluster of archaeological features was identified, excavated and recorded in the north-eastern corner of the site, in the area of an extension to the existing car park. Pottery recovered from the features suggest Middle/Late Iron Age, Early Romano-British and medieval activity at the site.
Project dates	Start: 10-04-2017 End: 20-04-2017
Previous/future work	Not known / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	070310 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	EDN 17 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	KCC/SE/0273/2016 - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 14 - Recreational usage
Monument type	PITS Roman
Significant Finds	POTTERY Middle Iron Age
Significant Finds	POTTERY Late Iron Age
Significant Finds	POTTERY Roman
Significant Finds	POTTERY Medieval
Investigation type	""Watching Brief""
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	KENT SEVENOAKS EDENBRIDGE Edenbridge Primary School
Study area	1 Hectares
Site coordinates	TQ 44480 46375 51.19775941787 0.068110072864 51 11 51 N 000 04 05 E Point
Project creators	

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	Heritage Conservation Group at Kent County Council
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East
Project director/manager	Paul Mason
Project supervisor	Simon Stevens
Type of sponsor/funding body	client
Name of sponsor/funding body	Bailey Partnership
Project archives	
Physical Archive recipient	Sevenoaks Museum
Physical Contents	"Ceramics","Industrial"
Digital Archive recipient	Sevenoaks Museum
Digital Contents	"other"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography"
Paper Archive recipient	Sevenoaks Museum
Paper Contents	"other"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Correspondence","Miscellaneous Material","Notebook - Excavation",' Research',' General Notes',"Report","Unpublished Text"
Project bibliography	
1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Archaeological Watching Brief Report - Edenbridge Primary School, Edenbridge, Kent
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Stevens, S.
Other bibliographic details	ASE Report No. 2017210
Date	2017
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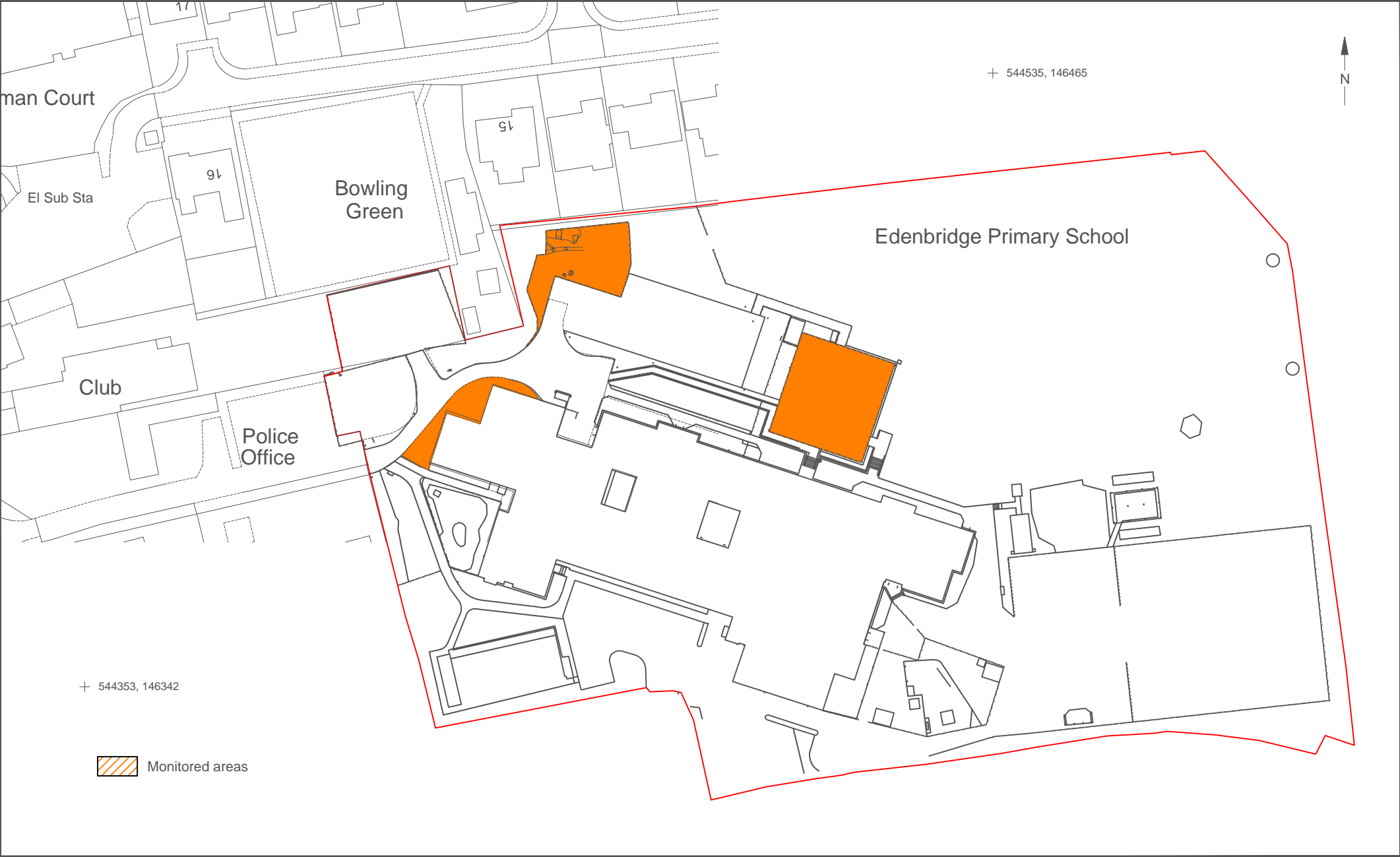
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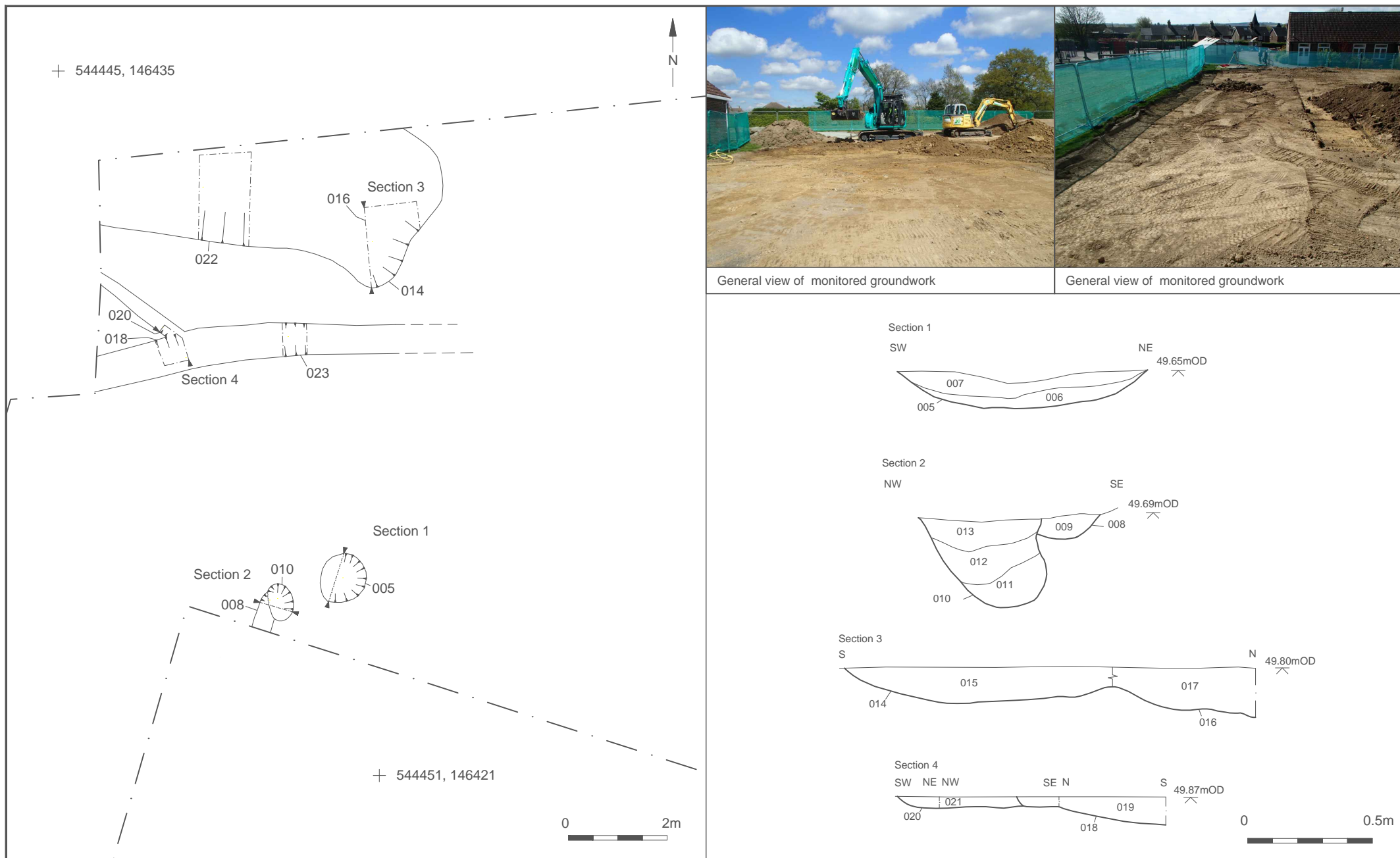




© Archaeology South-East		Edenbridge Primary School, Edenbridge, Kent	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 170310	May 2017	Site location	
Report Ref: 2017210	Drawn by: AR		



© Archaeology South-East		Edenbridge Primary School, Edenbridge, Kent	Fig. 2
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Edenbridge Primary School, Edenbridge, Kent

Excavated archaeological features, plan and sections

Fig. 3

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