

**An Archaeological and Geoarchaeological Evaluation  
at Seaford Head Community College,  
Seaford, East Sussex**

**Planning Ref: Outline application**

**NGR 548741 098701  
(TV487 987)**

**Project No: 4144  
Site Code: SCC10**

**ASE Report No: 2010001  
OASIS id: archaeol6-70157**



**By  
Sarah Porteus  
Matt Pope and John Whittaker**

**February 2010**

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**Abstract**

*Archaeology South-East were commissioned by NPS South East Ltd to undertake an archaeological and geoarchaeological evaluation prior to proposed works at Seaford Head Community College (lower), Seaford, East Sussex (NGR 548741 098701; Figure 1). No archaeological finds or features were identified.*

*No significant archaeological finds or features were identified.*

*The geoarchaeological assessment of the deeper stratigraphy confirms that the site lies within a former marine inlet which has undergone a process of progressive intertidal silting and eventual isolation from the sea. An incomplete 2.5m deep sequence of alluvial deposits were characterised through micro-fossil analysis. This indicated a clear progression from open inlet to constructed tidal flats and eventual dry land. The site has great potential to develop a detailed account of landscape development relating to timing of formation and subsequent infilling of the marine inlet. This is regionally significant as the inlet currently represents the best candidate as the location of the Cinque Port Harbour at Seaford, the definitive position of which is hitherto unknown.*

*Natural alluvial deposits were encountered at a maximum height of 2.16m AOD.*

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site Background**

- 1.1.1 Archaeology South-East were commissioned by NPS South East Ltd to undertake an archaeological evaluation prior to proposed works at Seaford Head Community College (lower), Seaford, East Sussex (NGR 548741 098701; Figure1).
- 1.1.2 Detailed background to the site is given in a desk based assessment undertaken by ASE in 2009. Additional background information to the wider locality is usefully summarised in Butler 2009 and Harris 2005.

### **1.2 Geology and Topography**

- 1.2.1 The site occupied a relatively central position within the fat bottomed 'flood plain' of a east-west orientated valley. To the east the flood plain grades into a Downland dry valley while 0.5km to the west the valley meets the gravel bar of the modern beach which separates it from the English Channel.
- 1.2.2 The BGS map the site as underlain by solid Upper Chalk. The valley sides appear to preserve a capping of Tertiary deposits of the Lambeth Group. Their valley side position would suggest that tectonic folding is controlling both the survival of Tertiary deposits and the formation of dry valley systems in the local area.
- 1.2.3 The site is flat and lies on reclaimed marshland. The site lies on alluvial deposits relating to the former estuarine harbour. The Seaford Historical Character Assessment Report (Harris, 2005) contains a Drift geology map (Seaford Map 2) which shows alluvium marking the location of the former marshy estuary of the River Ouse. "Geoarchaeological study [it states] has shown that a high energy storm [beach] or barrier beach formed across the [Ouse] estuary, probably in the Middle to Late Holocene, with the removal of beach barrier conditions and the extension of estuarine and floodplain conditions across the valley in the last 2000 years".
- 1.2.4 The alluvium mapped to the south of Steyne Road, to which the tidal inlet proven by the present survey (Trench 2, SCC10) belongs, is separated on Harris' map from alluvium further to the west by a spur of Chalk. Harris (2005) explains. "That the alluvium west of the historic core of the town (i.e. around Dane Close) is truncated by the beach deposits and the sea reveals erosion of the medieval channel of the River Ouse. This channel, or indeed channels, resulted from the development of the shingle spit that progressively moved the river outfall eastwards from under Newhaven Head in Roman times to Seaford by the end of the 12th century".

### **1.3 Planning Background**

- 1.3.1 The proposed development is for a new sports hall in the current playground immediately adjacent to the to the existing college buildings. These works form part of the outline planning application.

### **1.4 Aims and Objectives**

- 1.4.1 The general objective of the evaluation as detailed in the Written Scheme of Investigation (ASE 2009a) is to:-

*-determine the presence or absence of archaeological deposits and the depth of any overburden and extent of truncation.*  
*- characterise alluvial deposits at the site.*

- 1.4.2 The specific aims of the evaluation are to:-  
-look for any evidence of archaeological remains and possible medieval remains relating to the River Ouse.  
-test for underlying alluvial deposits of palaeo-environmental interest relating to the former valley of the Ouse.

### **1.5 Scope of Report**

- 1.5.1 This report represents the findings of the archaeological evaluation and palaeoenvironmental investigations undertaken by Sarah Porteus (Archaeologist), Deon Whittaker (Assistant Archaeologist) and Matt Pope (Geoarchaeologist) on the 5<sup>th</sup> of January 2010. The project was managed by Neil Griffin (fieldwork) and Jim Stevenson and Dan Swift (post-excavation).

## **2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

2.1 A full desk based assessment was undertaken in advance of the archaeological evaluation (ASE 2009b), information from the assessment is reproduced below with due acknowledgement.

### **2.2 Palaeolithic (c.750 000BC – c.10 000BC)**

2.2.1 An ovate hand axe is the only find of Palaeolithic date from the area and is of uncertain provenance.

### **2.3 Mesolithic (c.10 000BC – c.5000BC)**

2.3.1 Mesolithic activity in the area is represented by two collections of flint, one from Hawks Brow to the south east and a second collection of unprovenanced flint.

### **2.4 Neolithic (c. 5000BC- c.2300BC)**

2.4.1 Three Neolithic sites represented by flint artefact finds are known within the 1km radius from site.

### **2.5 Bronze Age (c.2300BC – c. 600BC)**

2.5.1 A barrow excavated on the Gore in 1868 is believed to be of Bronze Age date. An additional five records of Bronze Age finds in the area relate to pottery and flint finds of Neolithic date.

### **2.6 Iron Age (c.600BC – AD43)**

2.6.1 A midden containing Iron Age pottery was identified on Hawks Brow. Other Iron Age finds from the 1km radius of site include pottery and coins.

### **2.7 Roman (AD43-AD410)**

2.7.1 Based upon finds recovered from Hawks Brow it is suggested as a likely location for some kind of Roman settlement. A Roman cemetery and cremation burials are also known within the 1km radius. The area has also produced gold coins and a bronze figurine of Roman date.

### **2.8 Anglo-Saxon (AD410 –AD1066)**

2.8.1 A single reference to the Anglo-Saxon period within the 1km radius of site relates to a settlement in Seaford town.

**2.9 Medieval (AD1066-AD1540)**

2.9.1 The town of Seaford is of Medieval date with numerous Medieval buildings and a hospital of the same date of unknown location. Significant Medieval deposits have been identified within the town during archaeological excavations.

**2.10 Post-medieval and Modern (AD1540-present)**

2.10.1 A number of post-medieval structures including a Martello Tower, Corsica Hall, and pillboxes are all recorded within the area.



### **3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY**

- 3.1 The complete adopted methodology for the site is detailed within the WSI (ASE 2009a) what follows here is a précis of that detail. Two trenches (Figure 2) of 10m length were excavated using a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.8m wide toothless ditching bucket. Where necessary a mechanical breaker was used to break concrete and tarmac deposits. Machine excavation was undertaken under constant archaeological supervision.
- 3.2 Excavation by machine was taken down to the top of any archaeological layer or deposit or the top of 'natural' substrate where no archaeological deposits were found at a higher level.
- 3.3 The surface of the excavated area was cleared of loose spoil by hand following machine excavation and inspected at regular intervals to check for weathered out features.
- 3.4 All contexts were recorded on trench record form and pro forma context recording forms.
- 3.5 A digital photographic record was maintained of the excavations.
- 3.9 Following signing off by the ESCC archaeology officer, the trenches were backfilled and compacted to be reinstated by another contractor.

Number of Contexts	6
No. of files/paper record	1
Plan and sections sheets	0
Bulk Samples	0
Photographs	1 digital CD
Bulk finds	0
Registered finds	0
Environmental flots/residue	0

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

#### 4.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS (Figure 3)

4.1 The stratigraphy of both trenches was the same. The 'natural' greenish grey alluvial silty sand, [1/002] [2/002], was encountered at between 1.99 and 2.16m AOD. This was overlain by 0.30m thick blackish brown silty clay made ground deposit [1/003] [2/003] which contained occasional fragments of C17th to C19th peg tile and moderate gravel and chalk inclusions. A 0.51 to 0.55m thick series of modern surface deposits, [1/001/ [2/001], overlaid the made ground. The sequence of modern surface deposits was a 0.05m thick deposit of compacted chalk overlain by 0.17m of brick hardcore rubble followed by 0.19m of concrete topped by a 0.10m thick layer of tarmac. No significant archaeological finds or features were identified.

##### Trench 1: List of recorded contexts

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Depth	Height m.AOD
1/001	Dep	Modern Surface	Tr.	Tr.	0.51	2.80
1/002	Dep	Natural	Tr.	Tr.	N/A	1.99
1/003	Dep	Made Ground	Tr.	Tr.	0.30	2.29

##### Trench 2: List of recorded contexts

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Depth	Height m.AOD
2/001	Dep	Modern Surface	Tr.	Tr.	0.55	3.01
2/002	Dep	Natural	Tr.	Tr.	N/A	2.16
2/003	Dep	Made Ground	Tr.	Tr.	0.30	2.46

**5.0 THE FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLES**

**5.1** No finds were recovered; a small quantity of fragments of C17th to C19th peg tile from deposit [2/003] was assessed on site by the author and discarded.

**5.2** No features suitable for archaeological sampling were identified.

## **6.0 GEOARCHAEOLOGY** by Dr Matt Pope

- 6.1** Two geoarchaeological test pits (Figure 2) were sited within the footprint of previously assessed and recorded evaluation trenches. The location of these trenches was agreed in advance with ESCC to provide the maximum coverage across the site by placing one at each extremity of the investigated area covered in the evaluation
- 6.2** The test pits were each approximately 3m x 2m in maximum dimension and excavated to the maximum reach of the machine. For the excavation, a mechanical excavator with a toothless bucket was used which provided up to 2.75-3m reach.
- 6.3** The pits were recorded on the basis of 0.25m spits and all units and unit boundaries will be fully described following the methodology of Jones *et al.* (1999). Given the depth of the test pits, the arisings were placed in stratigraphic order to enable description and recording. Each test pit was undertaken either to prove the solid or to a maximum depth of 3m. During excavation dry sieving of c.75kg of each sand and gravel unit took place to look for lithic artefacts. In conjunction with the sieving, the spoil was constantly checked for artefacts as the trench was dug. It was intended that should *in situ* Palaeolithic archaeology be encountered, work at the test pit would cease until an appropriate mitigation strategy has been developed.
- 6.4** Sediments were recorded in the following manner. Beneath the modern horizons, the running section was recorded to allow the development of a series of detailed sediment logs. These comprised detailed sediment descriptions at 0.25m intervals or at the junction of major stratigraphic or lithological boundaries. The descriptions comprised matrix lithology, coarse components, sediment cohesion as well as characterisation of superficial structures and likelihood of decalcification. Given the presence of depositional contexts likely to preserve either artefactual or macrofaunal material at depths which are below the possibility of direct in-situ inspection, the arisings were placed in stratigraphical order to enable sieving, description and recording. During excavation dry sieving of such contexts, where possible, took place to look for lithic artefacts. In conjunction with the sieving, the spoil was constantly checked for artefacts as excavations continued.
- 6.5** In neither test pit was the natural Cretaceous or Tertiary bedrock reached. Thus each sequence is currently incomplete. The base of each hole (c.2.5m) appeared to show low energy estuarine silts. These were overlain by high-energy sands which in turn gave way to further alluvial deposits. The top of the sequence consisted of c.0.4m of plough soil type deposits (contexts 1/003 and 2/003 discussed in section 4 as made ground) derived from alluvium. The following detailed observations were made within the test pits.

SHCC Seaford GTP1 (TV 48733 98708)

Depth	Stratigraphy	Lithology	Colour	Clast Component	Sample	Notes
0	Tarmac		2.5Y 5/3 light olive brown			
0.3	Made Ground		2.5Y 5/3 light olive brown			
0.5	Chalk Raft (MG)		5Y 4/2 olive grey clay silt	None		Made Ground
0.65	Alluvial Soil	Clay Silt	2.5Y 7/4 pale yellow	80% rounded flint	x	CBM flecks noted.
0.95	Estuarine Alluvium	Clay silt with sand	Gley 1 4/5G dark greenish grey	60% rounded flint gravel 20-40mm	x	fe mottling
1.5	Alluvium with Chalk Rubble	Clay silt	2.5Y 5/3 Light olive brown	10% rounded chalk rubble. 60 -750mm	x	fe mottling
1.75	Estuarine Alluvium	Clay silt with sand	Gley 1 4/5G dark greenish grey		x	fe mottling
2.25	Marine Sand	Medium Sand	2.5Y 5/6 light olive brown		x	<i>Cerastoderma edule</i> shell noted.
2.5	Marine Sand	Medium Sand	2.5Y 5/6 light olive brown		x	
2.6	Lower Alluvium	Silty Clay	5Y 4/3 olive		x	Base of Hole

SHCC Seaford GTP2 (TV 48732 98728)

Depth	Stratigraphy	Lithology	Colour	Clast Component	Sample	Notes
0	Tarmac		2.5Y 5/3 light olive brown			
0.4	Made Ground		2.5Y 5/3 light olive brown			
0.6	Chalk Raft		5Y 4/2 olive grey clay silt	None		Natural
0.8	Alluvial Soil	Clay Silt	2.5Y 7/4 pale yellow	80% rounded flint	x	CBM flecks noted.
1.0	Estuarine Alluvium	Clay silt with sand	Gley 1 4/5G dark greenish grey	60% rounded flint gravel 20-40mm	x	fe mottling
1.75	Estuarine Alluvium	Clay silt with sand	Gley 1 4/5G dark greenish grey		x	fe mottling
2.3	Marine Sand	Medium Sand	2.5Y 5/6 light olive brown		x	
2.5	Marine Sand	Medium Sand	2.5Y 5/6 light olive brown		x	Base of hole

## 7.0 Palaeoenvironmental Assessment by Dr John Whittaker

7.1 Eight geoarchaeological samples were submitted from deposits in Trench 2 for microfaunal analysis. Microfossil studies have proved in recent years to provide the detailed evidentiary path for the characterisation of marine, estuarine and alluvial sedimentation. Given the short, incomplete sequence and lack of direct dating evidence at the site, it was considered imperative that rapid assessment of the recovered 2.75m of alluvial and marine deposits was undertaken; that this work might elucidate the environment of deposition of these superficial deposits.

7.2 The following samples were assessed.

Depth in Trench 2	Lithology	Weight
1.00m	silt	165g
1.25m	silt	125g
1.50m	silt	120g
1.75m	silt	135g
2.00m	silt	135g
2.25m	sandy silt	160g
2.50m	sand	155g
2.75m	silt	165g

Each sample, having been weighed, was broken up by hand into small pieces, put into a ceramic bowl and thoroughly dried in an oven. A spoonful of sodium carbonate was added (to help removal of the clay fraction), boiling water was added and the sample was left to soak. After soaking it was washed through a 75 micron sieve with hot water, the residue being decanted back into the bowl to be dried again in the oven. After final drying, the samples were stored in small labelled plastic bags and later picked of their microfaunal content under a binocular microscope. A selection of foraminifera and ostracods were picked out into faunal slides for archive purposes and the abundance of each species recorded on an Excel chart (Table 2; lower charts) semi-quantitatively (present, common, abundant/superabundant) by eye and by experience. Other useful "organic remains" of potential in environmental analysis, were recorded and included on Table 2; uppermost chart

7.3 The results of the microfaunal analysis are given in Table 2, together with a synopsis of the environment of deposition as inferred by the contained foraminifera, ostracods and other "organic remains". The lowest sample taken from Trench 2 (2.75m) was a dark grey mud and contained an *in situ* fauna of brackish estuarine ostracods, foraminifera and molluscs. These ostracods (colour-coded lime green on Table 2) were represented by mainly whole carapaces and by adults as well as juveniles; they were a real population, had not been transported and thus can be considered indigenous. The foraminifera (colour-coded grey) were represented by a low diversity but abundant assemblage of species typical of tidal flats and low saltmarsh. Added to this were a number of species of foraminifera but (mainly) ostracods (colour-coded blue) which are essentially marine but which can penetrate the outer part of estuaries, in this case probably

brought in on floating seaweed or washed in on Spring tides.

- 7.5** The next sample (2.50m) was a coarse sand which contained only reworked Tertiary mollusc fragments and would appear to represent a storm event where the inlet might have been blocked off for a time. Up-sequence, this is then followed by three samples of silty sand (interval 1.75-2.25m). The sample from 2.25m contains only two species of estuarine foraminifera, but a large number of specimens of the reworked Tertiary ostracod, *Vetustocytheridea lignitarum*, were also noted. This is a marker for the Lambeth Group (see Lord *et al.*, 2009) and probably represents the “fines” from the event that brought in the coarse sand with Tertiary molluscs of the preceding sample (2.50m). That the tidal inlet had reformed, albeit in a more restricted manner and now with a sand substrate, is further evidenced by the samples from 1.75-2.00m. The same three species of indigenous brackish estuarine foraminifera that occurred at 2.75m together with, this time, some marine/outer estuarine foraminifera, indicates tidal sandflats; the occurrence of only one specimen of ostracod (and that a thick-shelled marine/outer estuarine species) may indicate that the flats suffered weathering through subaerial erosion. The “plate-like” ostracod shell is far more susceptible to this than foraminifera, whose shell is heavily buttressed within. The final top three samples (interval 1.00-1.50m) contain a few brackish foraminifera in a poor state of preservation and these may be reworked. The co-occurrence of earthworm granules, slug plates and (probable) terrestrial molluscs, plus evidence of slag, coal, brick/tile would seem to indicate that this had now become an essentially terrestrial environment (with pollution!), the tidal inlet having become completely cut off from the sea. The possibility, however remote, of actual land reclamation/improvement must not be ruled out as evidence for this undertaking has been established in other parts of the lower Ouse valley (Jarzembowski 2003).

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Table 2: Organic remains and foraminifera and ostracods

**ORGANIC REMAINS**

DEPTH IN TRENCH	1.00m	1.25m	1.50m	1.75m	2.00m	2.25m	2.50m	2.75m
coal/slag	x	x	x					
earthworm granules	x	x	x					
molluscs (freshwater/ terrestrial)	x	x	x					
brackish foraminifera	x	x	x	x	x	x		x
slug plates		x						
brick/tile			x					
bone			x					
outer estuarine/marine foraminifera				x	x			
outer estuarine/marine ostracods					x			x
brackish ostracods								x
brackish molluscs								x
freshwater ostracods								x
plant debris								x

	<i>silty sand</i>	<i>sand</i>
<i>Ecology</i>	<i>terrestrial environment; tidal inlet becoming completely cut off from the sea</i>	<i>restricted inlet reformed with tidal sandflats (?weathered)</i>
		<i>storm event</i>
		<i>tidal inlet; marine influence</i>

**BRACKISH INDIGENOUS FORAMINIFERA**

DEPTH IN TRENCH	1.00m	1.25m	1.50m	1.75m	2.00m	2.25m	2.50m	2.75m
<i>Haynesina germanica</i>	x	x	x	xx	xx	x		xx
<i>Elphidium williamsoni</i>	x	x	x	xx	xx	x		xx
<i>Ammonia</i> sp. (brackish)	o	x	x	x	xx			x

**OUTER ESTUARINE & MARINE FORAMINIFERA**

DEPTH IN TRENCH	1.00m	1.25m	1.50m	1.75m	2.00m	2.25m	2.50m	2.75m
<i>Buccella frigida</i>				x	x			
lagenids				x	x			
<i>Elphidium macellum</i>					o			
bolivinids					o			
miliolids								x

**BRACKISH INDIGENOUS OSTRACODS**

DEPTH IN TRENCH	1.00m	1.25m	1.50m	1.75m	2.00m	2.25m	2.50m	2.75m
<i>Leptocythere psammophila</i>								xx
<i>Leptocythere castanea</i>								x
<i>Leptocythere lacertosa</i>								x
<i>Loxoconcha elliptica</i>								x
<i>Leptocythere baltica</i>								x

**OUTER ESTUARINE & MARINE OSTRACODS**

DEPTH IN TRENCH	1.00m	1.25m	1.50m	1.75m	2.00m	2.25m	2.50m	2.75m
<i>Pontocythere elongata</i>					o			o
<i>Heterocythereis albomaculata</i>								x
<i>Loxoconcha rhomboidea</i>								x
<i>Paradoxostoma</i> spp.								x
<i>Hirschmannia viridis</i>								x
<i>Leptocythere tenera</i>								o

**FRESHWATER OSTRACODS**

DEPTH IN TRENCH	1.00m	1.25m	1.50m	1.75m	2.00m	2.25m	2.50m	2.75m
<i>Ilyocypris</i> sp.								o
<i>Pseudocandona</i> sp. (juvenile)								o



## **8.0 DISCUSSION: SIGNIFICANCE AND POTENTIAL FOR FURTHER WORK**

- 8.1** This inlet appears to form a dry valley associated with a minor syncline in the Cretaceous geology of the surrounding anticlinorium landform. This syncline appears to have preserved Tertiary geology and acted as a zone of increased drainage. It is proposed that, during the Pleistocene, successive thaw events exploited this structural weakness to create a deeply incised valley which subsequently became an infilled marine inlet during the on-set of post-glacial marine sea level rise.
- 8.3** It was not possible to observe a complete sequence within the c.2.5m deep test pits. The recorded and assessed sequence described above can however be characterised, if not yet directly dated or contextualised. It shows a progression from a relatively open, brackish inlet which the interruption of a storm event leading to a more restricted area of tidal flats. The latter appear to lose any marine influence and eventually become separated from the sea as an area of low-lying 'dry land'. Geotechnical work previously undertaken by Holley (2009) appears to indicate that the alluvial sequence extend to a maximum depth of 7.5m where it meets Chalk Bedrock. The lower parts of this sequence appear to contain peat deposits and it is tempting to see these organic facies as the equivalent of other documented Late Prehistoric alluvial sequences associated with other coastal marsh and inlet sequences in Sussex.
- 8.4** Historical sources clearly note that Seaford was an important port during the early medieval period until its eventual silting and replacement by Newhaven. It is tempting to equate the sequence recorded at the site as documenting this progression from open marine inlet to choked tidal flats. In the absence of dating evidence and a complete sequence down to the Tertiary bedrock, such considerations remain only speculation. However, recent archaeological assessment of the nearby site of 1 Cricket Field Road, only 300m to the west of the Community College site, appeared to show 17<sup>th</sup> century debris infilling what was interpreted as the old harbour.
- 8.5** Whether the present site at Seaford Head Community College is the furthest east the River Ouse estuary extended is presently unknown. What can be said is that the inlet, whose evidence is proved by current work, would seem to occur in a dry valley that had originally formed in the Pleistocene times between two spurs of the Lambeth Group and Upper Chalk. Holocene sea-level rise could in itself have deepened the inlet by the sea first eroding and then breaking through this outcrop of Tertiaries (essentially clay), especially if there was no offshore bar of storm beach to protect it at the time. That there was a fair degree of erosion of the Lambeth Group at some stage is evidence by the inclusion of both macro- and microfossils in the sediments of Trench 2, especially in the interval 2.25-2.50m. That the tidal inlet was already in place before the storm event at 2.50m, however, would not seem to indicate that this was the initial breaching, rather a later storm event which piled up a great deal of sand within the estuary and changed its subsequent sedimentary environment.
- 8.4** Indeed, were it possible to establish that the inlet was indeed the site of Harbour the suggested relationship with the River Ouse would have to be

reassessed completely. Seaford Harbour would be seen to occupy a position within the inlet sheltered by Seaford Head and not necessarily rated directly to the channel of the Ouse which could only have flowed further to the west constrained by shingle bars. Whether the present site was ever anything to do with the former estuary of the Ouse, or was a separate marine inlet, must remain unproven until further work is undertaken, including a thorough historical survey, detailed and dating of the sediments. The present results are most significant nonetheless and clearly make the case for a borehole to be put down to bedrock. This is vital, at the very least, to obtain the total picture.

- 8.4** A single percussion rig borehole, aimed at recovering sealed U100 samples would provide datable material through either OSL or radiometric analysis of organic material at depth. This could be combined with rapid coring across the locality to establish the profile of the inlet and its relationship to the valley sides, areas where we would expect to find occupation horizons associated with former 'hards'. Dating of the main percussion rig sequence combined with close interval microfossil, plant macrofossil, mollusc and pollen studied could provide a key type-sequence for the inlet. Through correlation of documentary sources and a close reading of the combined multidisciplinary analysis it may be possible to relate the sequence directly to the development and subsequent decline of the medieval harbour at Seaford. In addition it may be possible to extend our knowledge of the landscape back into earlier stage of prehistory.

## **9.0 CONCLUSIONS**

- 9.1** The excavation of two 10m trial trenches across the area to be affected by development revealed no finds or discrete features of archaeological interest. Below made ground was a truncated soil which by a metre depth had graded into the upper alluvium of the sedimentary sequence described in section. These alluvial deposits were encountered at between 1.99 and 2.16m O.D.
- 9.2** The geoarchaeological assessment of the deeper stratigraphy has determined that the site lies within a former marine inlet which has undergone a process of progressive intertidal silting and eventual isolation from the sea. The site offers great potential to develop a detailed account of landscape development relating to timing of formation and subsequent infilling of a marine inlet. This is regionally significant as the inlet currently represents the best candidate as the location of the Cinque Port Harbour of Seaford, the definitive position of which is currently unknown.

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Archaeology South-East would like to thank NPS South East Ltd for commissioning the work and Greg Chuter of ESCC for his guidance throughout the project.

**SMR Summary Form**

Site Code	SCC10					
Identification Name and Address	Seaford Head Community College (lower), Seaford					
County, District &/or Borough	East Sussex					
OS Grid Refs.	548741 098701					
Geology	Alluvium					
Arch. South-East Project Number	4144					
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. 5.1.10	Excav.	WB.	Other		
Sponsor/Client	NPS South East					
Project Manager	Neil Griffin					
Project Supervisor	Sarah Porteus					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM	Other Modern		

100 Word Summary.

The excavation of two 10m trial trenches across the area to be affected by development revealed no finds or discrete features of archaeological interest. Below made ground was a truncated soil which by a metre depth had graded into the upper alluvium of the sedimentary sequence described in section. These alluvial deposits were encountered at between 1.99 and 2.16m O.D.

The geoarchaeological assessment of the deeper stratigraphy has determined that the site lies within a former marine inlet which has undergone a process of progressive intertidal silting and eventual isolation from the sea. The site offers great potential to develop a detailed account of landscape development relating to timing of formation and subsequent infilling of a marine inlet. This is regionally significant as the inlet currently represents the best candidate as the location of the Cinque Port Harbour of Seaford, the definitive position of which is currently unknown.

## OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-70157

### Project details

Project name	An archaeological and Geoarchaeological evaluation at Seaford Head Community College, Seaford, East Sussex.
Short description of the project	<p>The excavation of two 10m trial trenches across the area to be affected by development revealed no finds or discrete features of archaeological interest. Below made ground was a truncated soil which by a metre depth had graded into the upper alluvium of the sedimentary sequence described in section. These alluvial deposits were encountered at between 1.99 and 2.16m O.D.</p> <p>The geoarchaeological assessment of the deeper stratigraphy has determined that the site lies within a former marine inlet which has undergone a process of progressive intertidal silting and eventual isolation from the sea. The site offers great potential to develop a detailed account of landscape development relating to timing of formation and subsequent infilling of a marine inlet. This is regionally significant as the inlet currently represents the best candidate as the location of the Cinque Port Harbour of Seaford, the definitive position of which is currently unknown.</p>
Project dates	Start: 05-01-2010 End: 13-01-2010
Previous/future work	Not known / Not known
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Community Service 1 - Community Buildings
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	'Targeted Trenches'
Development type	Public building (e.g. school, church, hospital, medical centre, law courts etc.)
Prompt	Voluntary/self-interest
Position in the planning process	Pre-application
<b>Project location</b>	
Country	England
Site location	EAST SUSSEX LEWES SEAFORD Seaford Head Community College
Postcode	BN25 1
Study area	40.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TV 548741 098701 49.9682142315 0.159894522847 49 58 05 N 000 09 35 E Point

**Project creators**

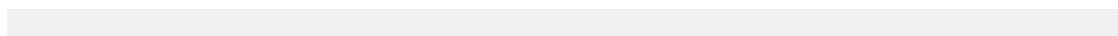
Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	Archaeology South-East
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East
Project director/manager	Neil Griffin
Project supervisor	Sarah Porteus
Type of sponsor/funding body	school

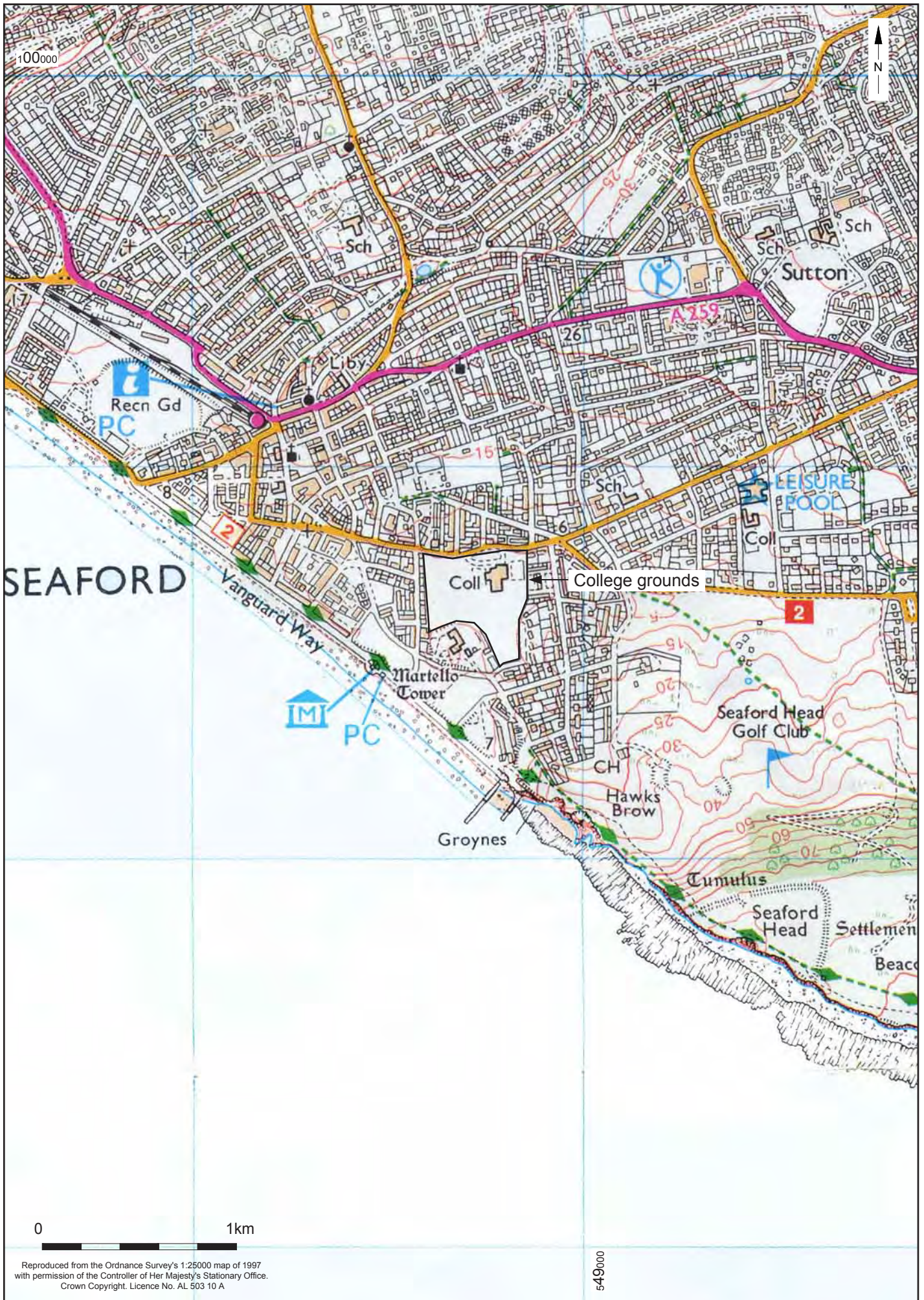
**Project archives**

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Physical Archive recipient	n/a
Digital Archive recipient	local museum
Digital Contents	'none'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography'
Paper Archive recipient	local museum
Paper Contents	'none'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Unpublished Text'

**Project bibliography 1**

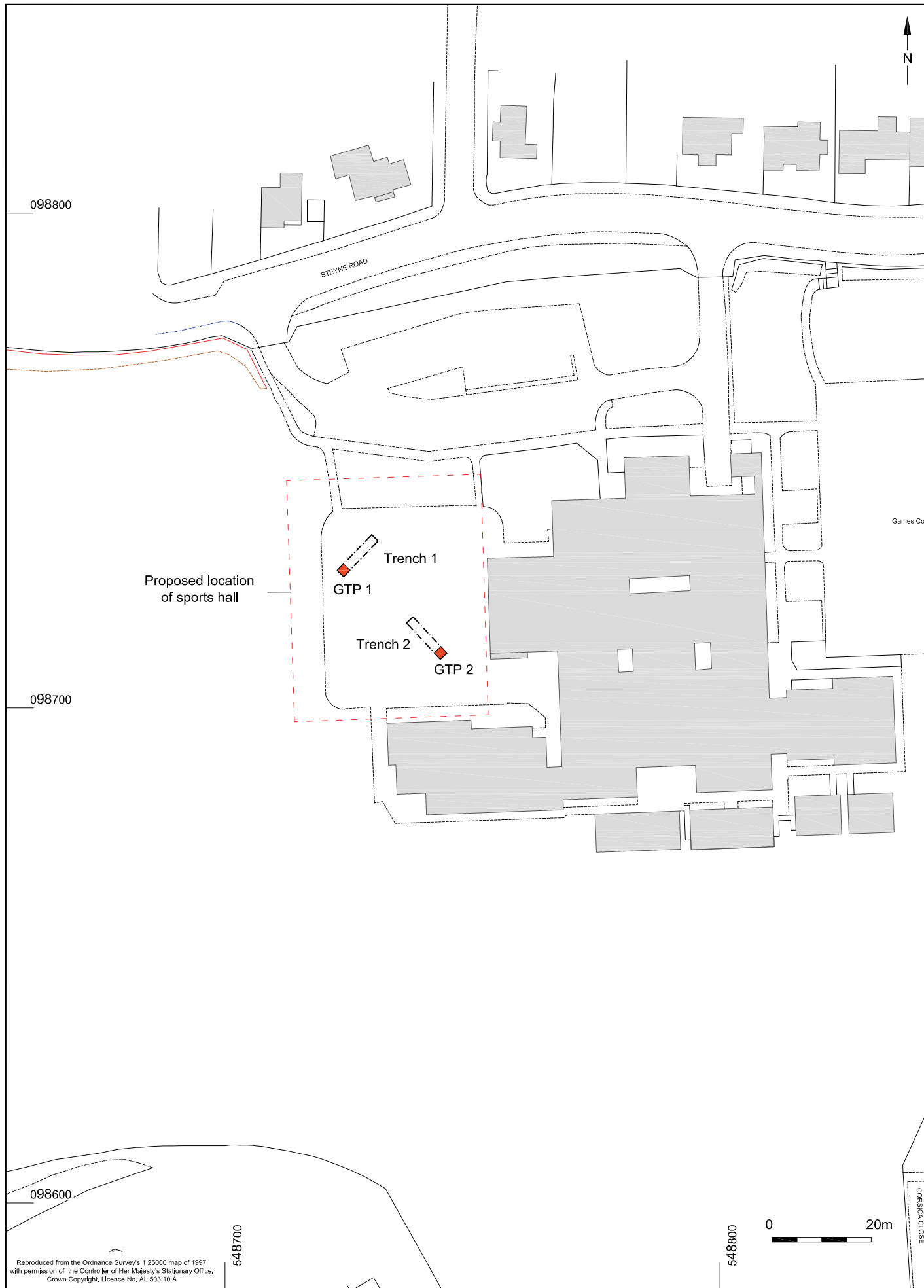
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	An archaeological Evaluation at Seaford Head Community College, East Sussex
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Porteus, S.
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Entered on	7 January 2010





© Archaeology South-East		Seaford Head Community College	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 4144	Feb 2010	Site location	
Report Ref: 2010001	Drawn by: JLR		





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Project Ref: 4144	Feb 2010	Trench location		
Report Ref: 2010001	Drawn by: JLR			



© Archaeology South-East		Seaford Head Community College, Seaford	Fig. 3
Project Ref: 4144	Feb 2010	Sample section of stratigraphy in trenches 1 and 2	
Report Ref: 2010001	Drawn by: HLF		

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