



Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Queenborough Castle, Railway Terrace, Queenborough, Kent

November 2017

Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Queenborough Castle, Railway Terrace, Queenborough, Kent



(Planning Application: SW/07/0778)

Erection of a children's playground and play equipment

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NGR: TQ 91191 72137

Site Code: QUE-EV-17

1. Summary

Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at Queenborough Castle, Sheppey in Kent. A Planning Application (SW/07/0778) to develop this site with the erection of a children's playground and play equipment was submitted to Swale Borough Council, whereby Historic England advised that a Desk-Based Assessment (SWAT 2017) be prepared as part of the application for Scheduled Monument Consent. In pre-determination of the potential impact that the development may have on the buried archaeological resource and in accordance with the provisions of National Planning Policy Framework - Section 12 Conservation and Enhancement of the Historic Environment (2012), and Scheduled Monuments, of which the application site is one, as protected by Part I of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 an archaeological evaluation was to be undertaken as provided for in the designated area.

Guidance in Circular 11/95 states in paragraph 80:

80. Scheduled ancient monuments are protected by Part I of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, and investigation for archaeological purposes is provided for in designated areas by Part II of that Act. Where these provisions apply, their effect should not be duplicated by planning conditions (cf paragraphs 21-23 above), although authorities granting planning permission in such circumstances are advised to draw the attention of the applicant to the relevant provisions of the 1979 Act.

81. Where, however, planning permission is being granted for development which might affect a monument which has not been scheduled, or which might affect land in an area which is considered to be of archaeological interest but which has not been formally designated as such under section 33 of the 1979 Act, the local planning authority may wish to impose conditions designed to protect the monument or ensure that reasonable access is given to a nominated archaeologist - either to hold a "watching brief" during the

construction period or specifically to carry out archaeological investigation and recording before or in the course of the permitted operations on the site.

As part of the determination of Scheduled Monument Consent, Historic England has granted the archaeological evaluation scheduled monument consent.

The work was carried out in accordance with the requirements set out within an Archaeological Specification (SWAT Specification 03/10/217) and in discussion with Maria A Buczak, Assistant Inspector of Ancient Monuments for Kent, Sussex and Surrey. The results of the one evaluation trench revealed that archaeological features were present.

The Archaeological Evaluation has therefore been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the Archaeological Specification.

2. Introduction

Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT) was commissioned by Swale Borough Council to carry out an archaeological evaluation at the above site. The work was carried out in accordance with the requirements set out within an Archaeological Specification (SWAT 2017) and in discussion with Maria A Buczak Assistant Inspector of Ancient Monuments for Kent, Sussex and Surrey. The evaluation was carried out from 16th-19th October 2017.

3. Site Description and Topography

The application site lies within the boundary of the Scheduled Monument Queenborough Castle (Scheduled Monument No: SM23030). The Scheduled Monument is in a conservation area that encompasses the north and south bank of Queenborough Creek and is within the site of the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Queenborough Castle.

4. Planning Background

4.1 Swale Borough Council are currently making preparations for the development of land at Queenborough Castle in Kent. The proposed development is to comprise the erection of a children's playground and play equipment which is within the curtilage of a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SM 23039/HA1007465). A planning application for the proposed development (SW/07/0778) has been submitted to Swale Borough Council whereby Historic

England advised that a Desk-Based Assessment (SWAT 30.05.2017) be produced as part of the application for Scheduled Monument Consent.

4.2 In pre-determination of the potential impact that the development may have on the buried archaeological resource and in accordance with the provisions of National Planning Policy Framework - Section 12 Conservation and Enhancement of the Historic Environment (2012), and Scheduled Monuments, of which the application site is one, as protected by Part I of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 an archaeological evaluation comprising one trench was undertaken as provided for in the designated area. The project conformed to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation* (Dec 2017). The archaeological works were monitored by Historic England.

5. Archaeological and Historical Background

5.1 The application site lies within the boundary of the Scheduled Monument Queenborough Castle (Scheduled Monument No: SM23030). The Scheduled Monument is in a conservation area that encompasses the north and south bank of Queenborough Creek and within the site of the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Queenborough Castle.

5.2 In 1991 trial trenching was carried out to the school car park area just north of the PDA, revealing evidence of the C19th and C20th century schools or a structure that pre-dated them. The edge of a large feature was also recorded thought to be the inner edge of the moat, the robbing of the outer wall or an inner moat (EWX6616).

5.3 In 2005 a Geophysical survey (EKE9244) was carried out on Castle Green, followed by an evaluation by Channel 4's Time Team on behalf of Videotext Communications Ltd (NGR 59122 17216). Six trenches were excavated, encountering medieval foundations to five of the six trenches, robber cuts to four of the trenches, the moat in two trenches, medieval features and a possible metalled surface.

5.4 Re-deposited material from the demolition of the castle in the 1650s and the demolition of the Victorian pump-house overlaid the medieval features.

5.5 Finds comprise of 21 sherds of pottery from the medieval and post medieval period of Shelley and Sandy/Shelley wares C11th-13th and London-type ware C12-13th, coarse

redwares and modern stonewares, CBM of brick and roof tile, fired clay, clay pipe stem and bowl heel with makers mark (?/R), post-medieval window glass, worked stone and moulding, a silver cufflink, copper alloy coins, tokens, buttons, buckles and a cutlery handle, one iron and one lead musket ball, iron nails and lead window case fragments, animal bone with butchery marks and marine shell of oyster, mussel, cockle and whelk were recovered. Two fragments of stone ball were found, 170mm diameter and a weight of 10kg that may relate to ammunition for cannon, catapults or trebuchets.

5.6 The geophysical survey and the evaluation established a plan of the castle that suggests that the playground and the proposed extension are sited on the moat, the outer ringwall and the inner rotunda and the remains of a modern air raid shelter (Wessex Archaeology, Re: 59470.01, January 2006/EKE9245).

5.7 Little is known of the earthworks noted on the OS maps of 1866 and 1898; a 'Camp (Remains of)' is noted as a small oval earthwork feature (TQ914721) to the north east of the castle, a large rectangular earthwork feature (TQ914719) to the southeast (*W.M. Flinders Petrie, 1880*) and a long linear feature 'The Old Counter Wall' is to the northeast of the town (SWAT DBA 30.05.2017).

6. Aims and Objectives

The archaeological evaluation was undertaken to investigate the presence or absence of any archaeological features, and assess the potential impact of development on the postulated archaeological resource.

7. Methodology

The Archaeological Specification (WSI) called for an evaluation by trial trenching comprising one trench within the footprint of the proposed development. All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the approved specification. A single context recording system was used to record the deposits, and context recording numbers were assigned to all deposits for recording purposes. These are used in the report and shown in **bold**. All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with KCC (Manual B), SWAT and ClfA standards and guidance.

8. Monitoring

Curatorial monitoring was available during the course of the evaluation.

9. Results

The evaluation has identified 12 archaeological features within the trench (Figure 6).

Trench 1

The plan and sections are recorded in Figure 6 (see also Plates 3-6). The trench lay on an NNE alignment and measured 13.30m in length and 1.10m in width. Average depth was 1.01m BGL.

Backfill of the moat/or ringwall robber trench **(106)** was identified across the trench as firm to moderate Mid Brown Grey Clay Silt, at a depth of approximately 1.01m (4.88m aOD) below the present ground surface at 5.89m aOD at the NNW and 5.40m aOD at the SSE ends of the trench. Cultural and natural inclusions into the backfill included chalk fragments, lime mortar fragments, nodules of Kent Ragstone, occasional oysters and three sherds of Kentish red earthenware pottery dating from c.1675-1700-1750 and eight fragments of Late Medieval roof tile (weight 41gms) a coarse sandy fabric, hard fired. A different lens of backfill material **(111)** slighter darker but of the same material as **(106)**. The backfill overlaid on both the NNW and SSE end of the trench the upturn of the castle moat/or robber trench **(108, 109)** a re-deposited natural clay used to build up the castle platform which was a firm Brown Silty Clay with occasional inclusions of chalk pieces and well rounded pebbles. Two soil samples were taken for off-site analysis. Overlaying **(106)** was a layer of Pale Grey Clay Silt **(102)** about 0.12m thick with no cultural inclusions. Cutting through both **(102 and 106)** was a linear cut with vertical sides at about 0.62m wide **[103]** infilled **(107)** with a firm Mid Brown Silty Clay with occasional chalk and Kentish Ragstone fragments and three sherds of pottery- one LPM Pearl Ware (blue transfer printing c. 1780-1825 AD), and two sherds LPM Later Creamware (tankard, black and blue colour banding c. 1775-1825 AD). Overlaying **(102)** was a dip in the slope which had been backfilled with a firm Dark Grey Clay Silt **(105)** capped with another layer of backfill of loose Reddish-Grey gravelly shingle **(112)** both layers had no cultural

inclusions. The final strata was a loose Dark Grey Clay Silty Topsoil with moderate organic content **(101)**.

10. Discussion

The archaeological evaluation at Queenborough Castle revealed either the moat of the castle or a robber trench of the ringwall infilled in about 1675-1750 AD and it seems a later wall cut through both **(106 & 102)** which was robbed of its stone or brick at about 1775-1825 AD. The infill of the moat or robber trench slumped over time and was levelled in the modern period with a gravel layer **(112)** which presumably was a path.

The evaluation trench can be seen overlaid the postulated ground plan of the castle (Figure 2) and the ringwall which seems a massive structure is shown clearly of a size which is much larger than the robbed out wall **[103]** revealed in the present excavation. The moat can still be seen for some of its circumference in the OS map of 1865 (Figure 3) and the OS map of 1898 (Figure 4), whilst the drawing of 1675 (Figure 8) again shows the ringwall as a major structure and the old print of 1845 shows what seems the robbed out ringwall trench plus the moat.

11. Finds

Context 106	Three sherds of Kentish red earthenware pottery dating from c.1675-1700-1750
Context 106	Eight fragments of Late Medieval roof tile (weight 41gms) a coarse sandy fabric, hard fired.
Context 107	Three sherds of pottery- one LPM Pearl Ware (blue transfer printing c. 1780-1825 AD)
Context 107	Two sherds LPM Later Creamware (tankard, black and blue colour banding c. 1775-1825 AD).

12. Conclusion

The evaluation trench at the proposed development site has revealed archaeological features associated with the demolition and infilling of features associated with Queenborough Castle.

The archaeological evaluation has been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the Specification. A common stratigraphic sequence was recognised across the site comprised of topsoil **(101)**, a layer of Dark Grey Loam **(102)** sealing the backfill **(106)** which overlay the postulated castle mound **(108)**. Therefore, this evaluation has been successful in fulfilling the aims and objectives as set out in the Archaeological Specification.

13. Acknowledgements

SWAT Archaeology would like to thank the client for commissioning the project. Thanks are also extended to Maria A Buczak, Assistant Inspector of Ancient Monuments for Kent, Sussex and Surrey. Illustrations were produced by Bartek Cichy. The fieldwork was undertaken by Paul Wilkinson and Peter Cichy and the project was managed and report written by Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA.

14. References

Institute for Field Archaeologists (CIfA), Rev (2017). *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*

SWAT Archaeology (December 2015) *Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation of land at 3 Falcon Gardens, Minster, Kent*

SWAT Archaeology (2017) Archaeological Desk based Assessment in Advance of the proposed development at the site of Queenborough Castle, Isle of Sheppey, Kent

KCC Specification Manual Part B

KCC HER data 2017

Appendix 1

Trench 1	Dimensions: 13.30m x 1.10m Ground Level: 5.89m aOD NNW end) 5.40m aOD (SSE end)		
Context	Description	Interpretation	Depth BGL(m)
101	Loose dark grey silty soil	Topsoil	0.22
102	Firm pale grey clay silt	Subsoil	0.12
103	Trench cut filled by 107		0.76
104	Cut (or deposit) of hollow		0.28
105	Dark grey clay silt	Backfill of 104- modern topsoil	0.24
106	Brown grey clay silt	Broad band of backfill	1.01
107	Firm brown silty clay	Backfill of [103]	0.76
108	Firm brown silty clay	Re-deposited natural clay	0.50
109	Firm brown silty clay	Possible natural clay	0.32
110	Very compact white mortar with chalk inclusions	Post pit? (unexcavated)	
111	Firm brown silty clay	Lens of similar but darker material to (106) (unexcavated)	
112	Loose reddish grey shingle gravel	Modern pathway or dump	0.08

Kent County Council HER Summary Form

Site Name: Queenborough Castle, Sheppey, Kent

SWAT Site Code: QUE/EV/17

Site Address: As above

Summary:

Swale and Thames Survey Company (SWAT) carried out Archaeological Evaluation on the proposed development site above.

The Archaeological Monitoring consisted of an Archaeological Evaluation trench which revealed backfill deposits associated with features of Queenborough Castle

District/Unitary: Swale Borough Council

Period(s):

NGR (centre of site to eight figures) TQ 91191 72137

Type of Archaeological work: Archaeological Evaluation

Date of recording: October 2017

Unit undertaking recording: Swale and Thames Survey Company (SWAT. Archaeology)

Geology: Underlying geology is London Clay

Title and author of accompanying report: Wilkinson P. (2017) Archaeological Evaluation of land at Queenborough Castle, Sheppey, Kent

Summary of fieldwork results (begin with earliest period first, add NGRs where appropriate) Backfill features dating from 1675-1825 AD

Location of archive/finds: SWAT. Archaeology. Graveney Rd, Faversham, Kent. ME13 8UP

Contact at Unit: Paul Wilkinson

Date: 13/11/2017



Figure 1: Site location map.

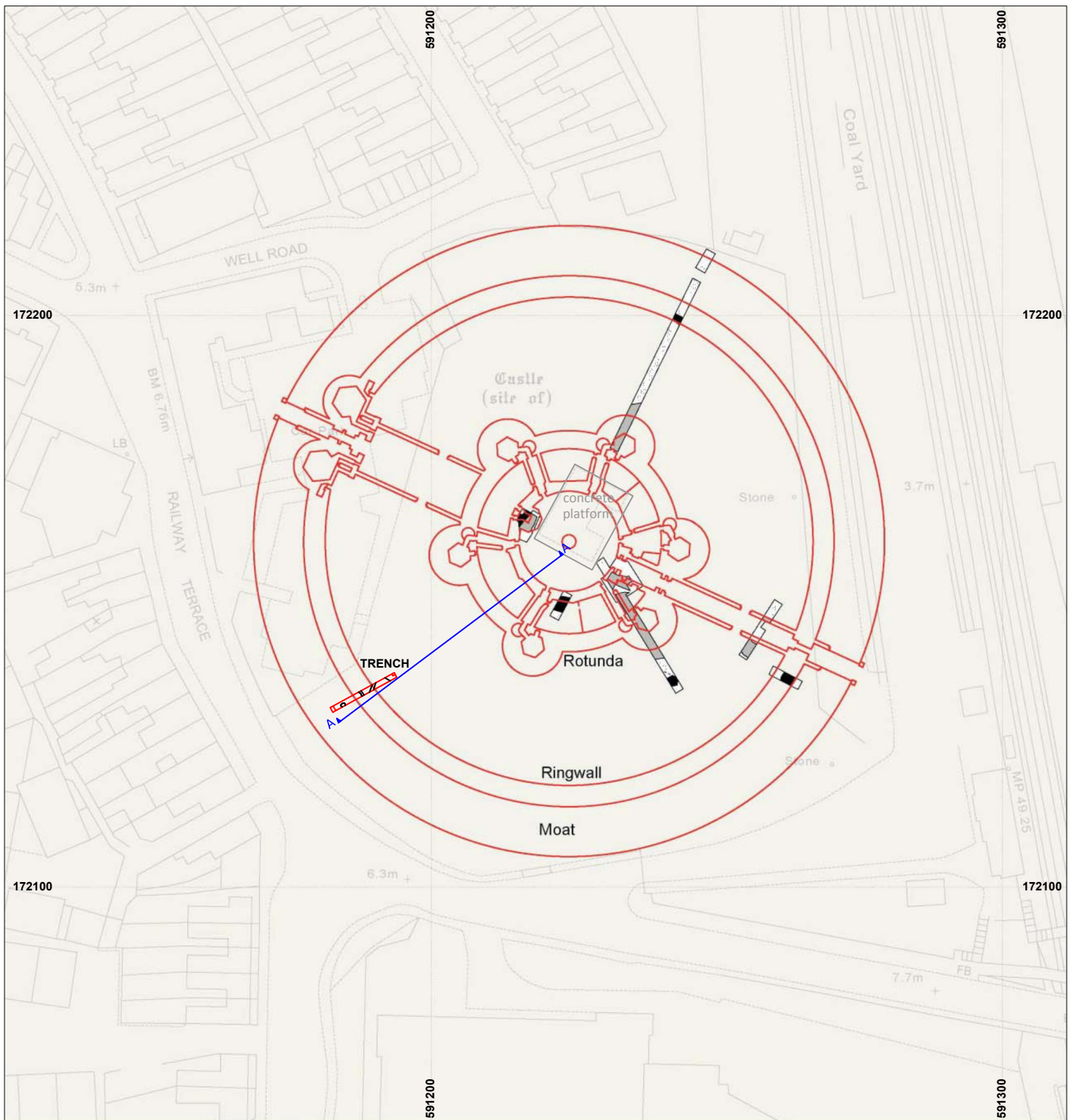
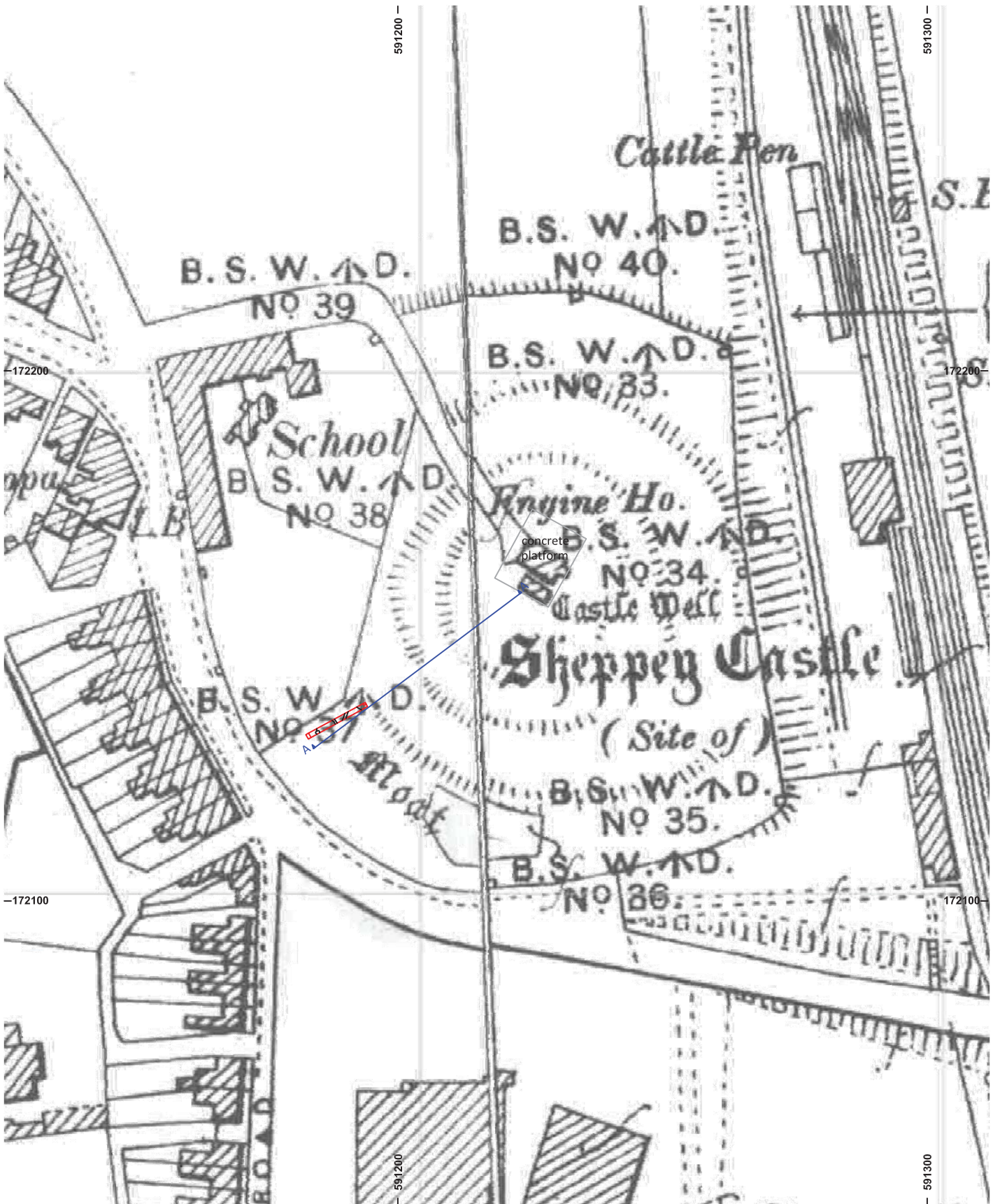


Figure 2: Trench location plan in relation to OS map, Hatfield's plan of Queenborough castle and Wessex's evaluation trenches



Figure 3: Trench location plan in relation to 1865 - OS map (OS six inch, Kent XIII - inset VI)



0 50
SCALE 1:1000 METRES

Figure 4: Trench location plan in relation to 1898 - OS map

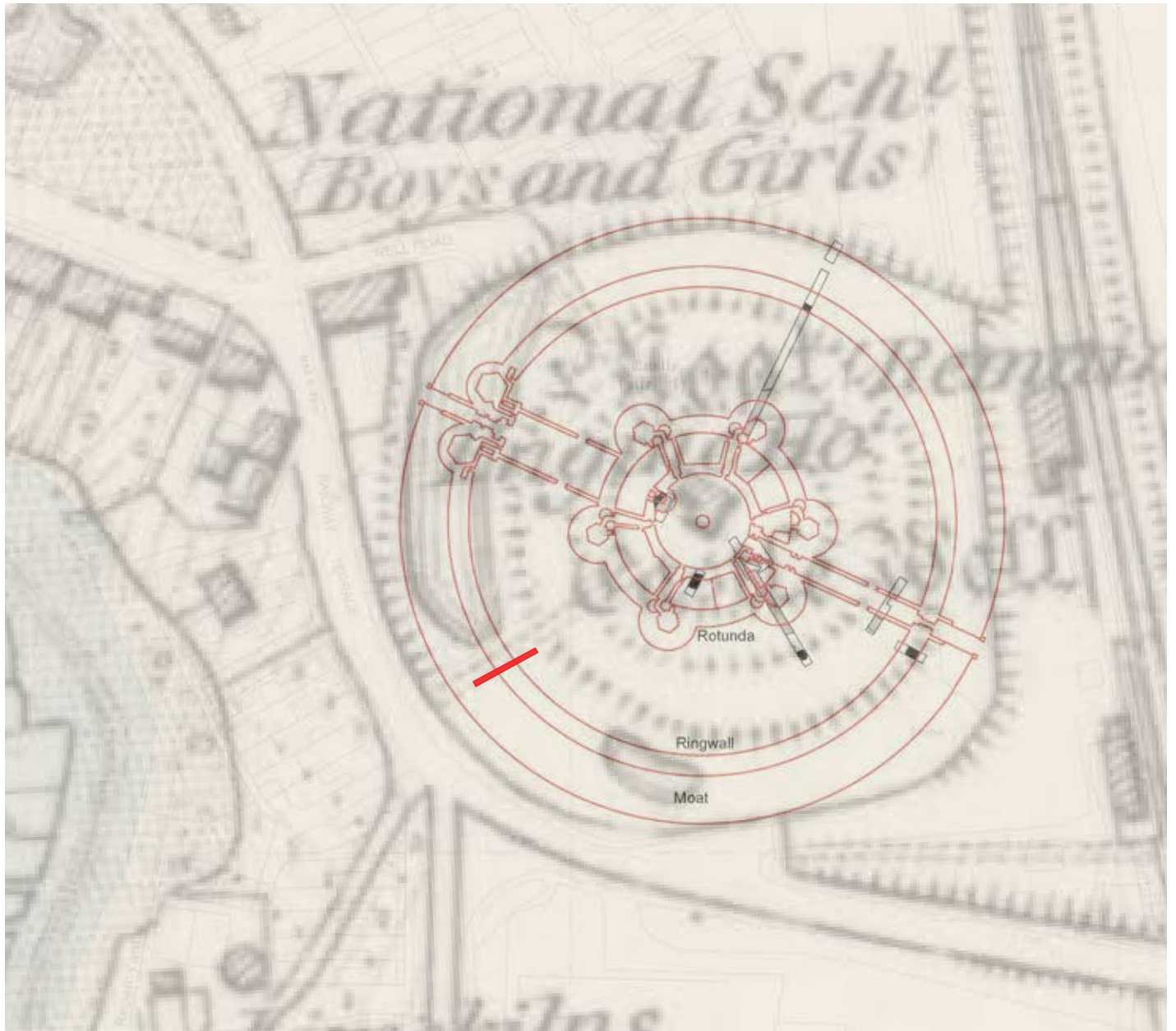


Figure 5: Evaluation trench and Hatfield's plan of Queenborough castle superimposed on OS map from 1865.

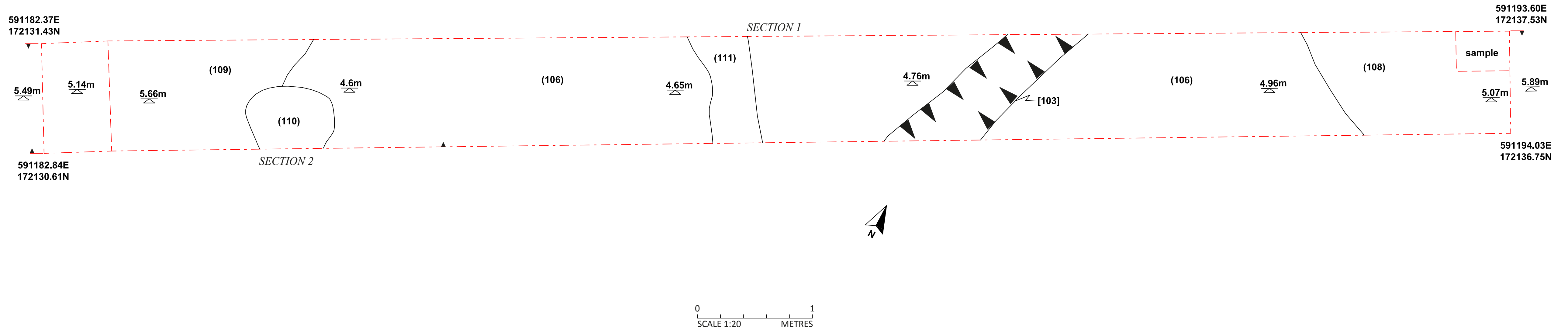


Figure 6: Plan of evaluation trench, scale 1:20 @ (111mm x 740mm)

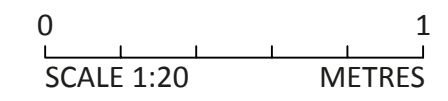
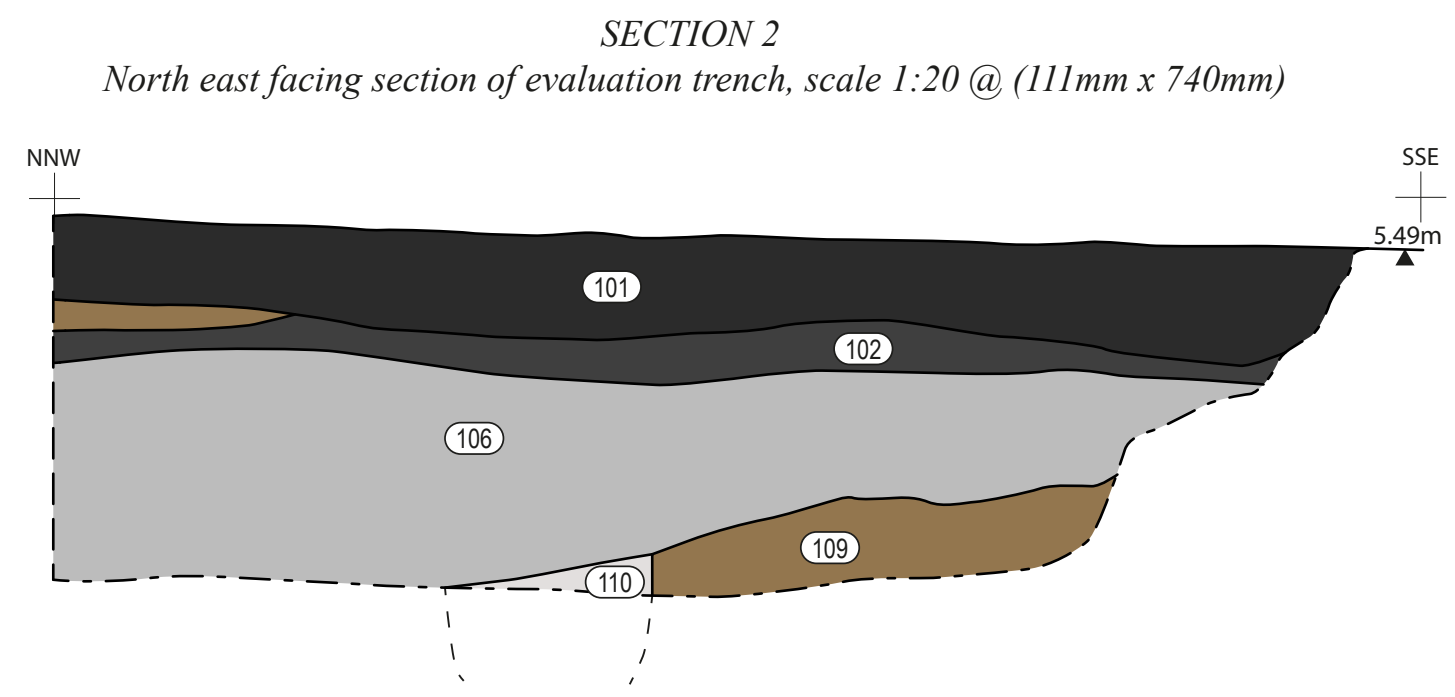
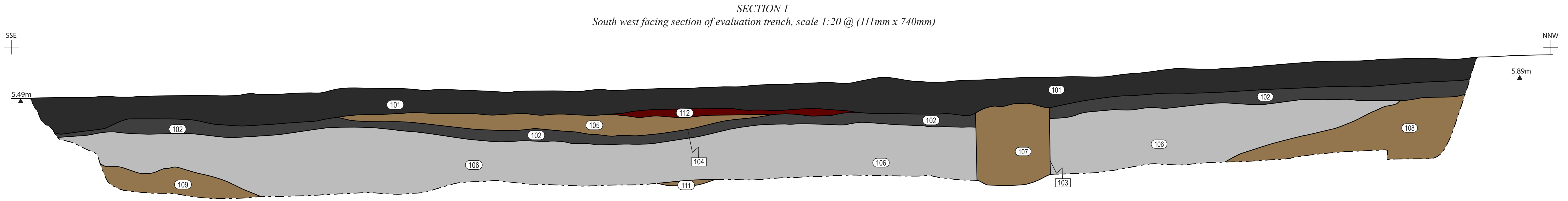


Figure 7: Sections of evaluation trench, scale 1:20 @ (111mm x 740mm)

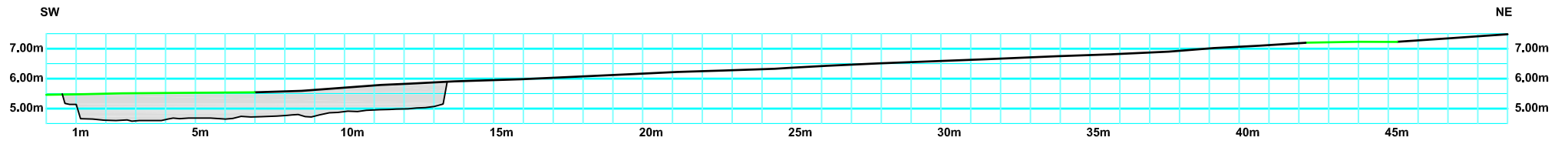


Figure 8: Site profile A-A

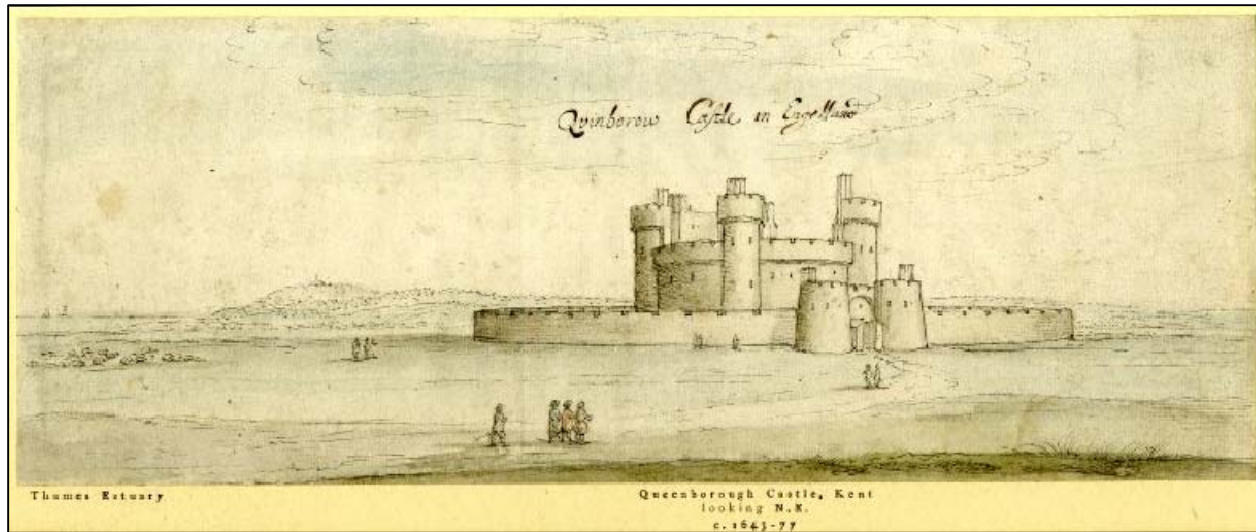


Figure 9: Drawing by Wenceslaus Hollar from 1637 - 43 showing view NE across a stretch of open flat ground known as Queenborough Marsh toward the Castle.

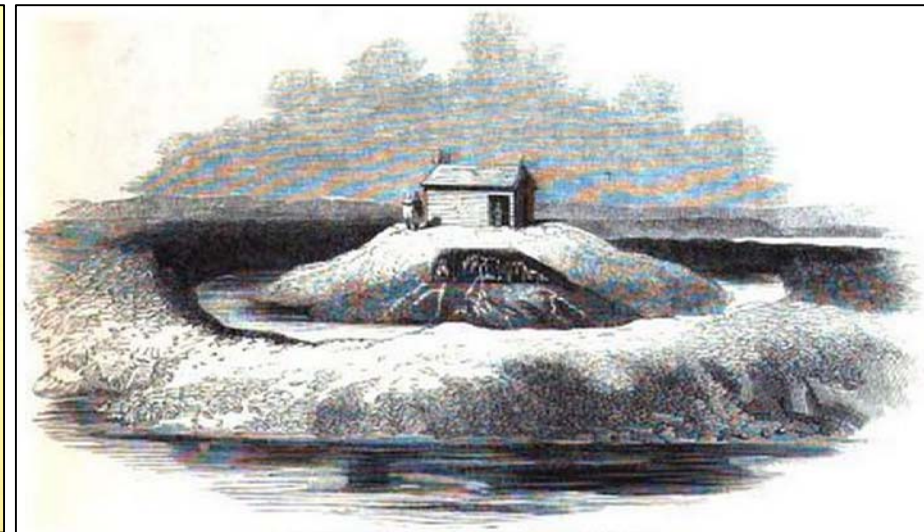


Figure 10: Old print from 1845 showing view NE at the castle site. Visible moat feature is a robbing trench of rotunda walls. Fragment of robbing trench of ringwall and mote are visible in the foreground.