

# Archaeological Evaluation on Land rear of 161 Heath Road, Coxheath, Kent ME17 4PA

Site Code: COX -EV-19

NGR Site Centre 574861 151001

Planning Application Number: 18/592602/FULL



SWAT ARCHAEOLOGY

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## Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>5</b>
1.1	Project Background .....	5
1.2	Site Description and Topography .....	5
<b>2</b>	<b>ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.....</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1	Introduction .....	5
<b>3</b>	<b>AIMS AND OBJECTIVES.....</b>	<b>5</b>
3.1	Specific Aims (SWAT 2018) .....	6
3.2	General Aims .....	6
<b>4</b>	<b>METHODOLOGY.....</b>	<b>7</b>
4.1	Introduction .....	7
4.2	Fieldwork.....	7
4.3	Recording .....	7
<b>5</b>	<b>RESULTS .....</b>	<b>8</b>
5.1	Introduction .....	8
5.2	Stratigraphic Deposit Sequence .....	8
5.3	Overview .....	8
<b>6</b>	<b>FINDS .....</b>	<b>8</b>
6.1	Introduction .....	8
<b>7</b>	<b>DISCUSSION.....</b>	<b>8</b>
7.1	Archaeological Narrative.....	8
7.2	Conclusions .....	8
<b>8</b>	<b>ARCHIVE.....</b>	<b>8</b>
8.1	General.....	8

9      **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS** ..... 9

10     **REFERENCES** ..... 9

11     **APPENDIX 1 – TRENCH TABLES** ..... 10

**Figures**

- Figures 1-2    Site and Trench location map
- Figure 3       Trenches overlaid on proposed development
- Figure 4       Trench plan
- Plates 1- 7    Trench photographs

## **Summary**

*Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) was commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at 161 Heath Road, Coxheath in Kent. The archaeological works were monitored by the Kent County Council Senior Archaeological Officer.*

*The fieldwork was carried out in October 2019 in accordance with an archaeological specification (SWAT Archaeology March 2019) submitted to the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of works.*

*The Archaeological Evaluation consisted of six trenches, which encountered a relatively common stratigraphic sequence comprising topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology with no archaeological features.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Project Background**

1.1.1 Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) was commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land to the rear of 161 Heath Road, Coxheath in Kent (**Figure 2**).

1.1.2 In mitigation of the potential impact that the development may have on the buried archaeological resource Kent County Council Heritage & Conservation (KKCHC), who provide an advisory service to Maidstone Borough Council, requested that a programme of archaeological works be undertaken to satisfy the recommended condition of the planning application 18/502602/FULL.

1.1.3 The archaeological evaluation was carried out in August 2019 in accordance with an archaeological specification prepared by SWAT Archaeology (01/07/2019), prior to commencement of works, and in discussion with Wendy Rogers Senior Archaeological Officer at KCCHC.

#### **1.1 4 Site Description and Topography**

The application site is comprises a parcel of largely undeveloped land to the rear of 161 Heath Road in Cox heath. The land in part forms rear gardens to the properties fronting Heath Road and the rest of the site is a small parcel of agricultural land.

The NGR to the centre of the access road is NGR 574861 151001 (Figure 1).

The Geological Survey of Great Britain (1:50,000) shows that the PDA is set on Bedrock Geology of Hythe Formation. Superficial deposits are of Head- Clay and Gravel. The PDA is set at an average height of 121m AOD.

## **2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Introduction**

Details of previous discoveries and investigations within the immediate and wider area may be found in the Kent County Council Historic Environment Record and have been summarised in the Specification produced by SWAT Archaeology (January 2019) The potential of this area has been assessed in relation to the proximity of known archaeological remains and there has been identified that 100m to the NNE are possible 18th-19th century ditches (TQ 75 SW 301). About 125m to the NNE was found an undated boundary ditch (TQ 75 SW 300) and about 140m to the NNE was found in archaeological investigations an undated ditch containing an iron axe/hatchet head (TQ 75 SW 388).

In addition Wendy Rogers Senior Archaeological Officer KCC has noted in her response to Maidstone Council that:

“Thank you for your letter consulting us on the above planning application for erection of 10 dwellings with associated works. The site lies in an area of archaeological potential associated with Late Iron Age activity. Recent archaeological work in the adjacent field located some Iron Age remains including ditch and artefacts. Similar remains may be encountered and I recommend the following condition is placed on any forthcoming consent”:

*Prior to the commencement of development the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, will secure and implement:*

*i archaeological field evaluation works in accordance with a specification and written timetable which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority; and*

*ii further archaeological investigation, recording and reporting, determined by the results of the evaluation, in accordance with a specification and timetable 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.*

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

### **2.2 Specific Aims (SWAT 2019)**

2.2.1 The specific aims of the archaeological fieldwork are set out in the Specification (SWAT 2018) were to:

2.2.2 *6.1 The primary objective of the archaeological evaluation is to establish or otherwise the presence of any potential archaeological features which may be impacted by the proposed development. The aims of this investigation are to determine the potential for archaeological activity and in particular the earlier history of the PDA and also any other Prehistoric and Roman activity.*

### **2.3 General Aims**

2.3.1 The general aims of the archaeological fieldwork were to;

- establish the presence or absence of any elements of the archaeological resource, both artefacts and ecofacts of archaeological interest across the area of the development;
- ascertain the extent, depth below ground surface, depth of deposit if possible, character, date and quality of any such archaeological remains by limited sample excavation;
- determine the state of preservation and importance of the archaeological resource, if present, and to assess the past impacts on the site and pay particular attention to the character, height/depth below ground level, condition, date and significance of any archaeological deposits.

### **3 METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

3.1.1 All fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the methodology set out in the Specification (SWAT 2019 and KCC Manual of Specifications 'B') and carried out in compliance with the standards outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standards Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations (CIfA 2017).

#### **3.2 Fieldwork**

3.2.1 A total of six evaluation trenches were excavated across the Site (Figures 1, 2, 3, 4).

3.2.2 Each trench was initially scanned for surface finds prior to excavation. Excavation was carried out using a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, removing the overburden to the top of the first recognisable natural or archaeological horizon, under the constant supervision of an experienced archaeologist.

3.2.3 Where appropriate, trenches, or specific areas of trenches, were subsequently hand-cleaned to reveal features in plan and carefully selected cross-sections through the features were excavated to enable sufficient information about form, development date and stratigraphic relationships to be recorded without prejudice to more extensive investigations, should these prove to be necessary. All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with KCC and CIfA standards and guidance. A complete photographic record was maintained on site that included working shots; during mechanical excavation, following archaeological investigations and during back filling.

#### **3.3 Recording**

3.3.1 A complete drawn record of the evaluation trenches comprising both plans and sections, drawn to appropriate scales (1:20 for plans, 1:10 for sections) was undertaken. The plans and sections were annotated with coordinates and aOD heights. These are retained in the site project archive.

3.3.2 Photographs were taken as appropriate providing a record of excavated features and deposits, along with images of the overall trench to illustrate their location and context. The record also includes images of the Site overall. The photographic record comprises digital photography. A photographic register of all photographs taken is contained within the site project archive.

3.3.3 A single context recording system was used to record the deposits. A full list is presented in Appendix 1. Layers and fills are identified in this report thus (100), whilst the cut of the feature is shown [100]. Context numbers were assigned to all deposits for recording purposes. Each number has been attributed to a specific trench with the primary number(s) relating to specific trenches (*i.e.* Trench 1, 101+, Trench 2, 201+, Trench 3, 301+ etc.).

## **4 RESULTS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

4.1.1 A total of six evaluation trenches were mechanically excavated under archaeological supervision.

### **4.2 Stratigraphic Deposit Sequence**

4.2.1 A relatively consistent stratigraphic sequence was recorded across the majority of the Site comprising topsoil sealing an intact subsoil of orange sandy clayey (Plates 1-4).

4.2.2 Appendix 1 provides the stratigraphic sequence for all trenches. Figures 1-4 provide a site plan and trench location plan while Plates 1-9 include selected site photographs.

### **4.3 Overview**

4.3.1 The six trenches were located across the site to ensure full coverage of potential archaeological remains.

## **5 FINDS**

6.1 No finds of any archaeological merit were recovered from the archaeological evaluation.

## **6 Discussion**

### **6.1 Archaeological Narrative**

6.1.1 No archaeological features were exposed in any of the six trenches.

### **6.2 Conclusions**

6.2.1 The archaeological evaluation has been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the Specification. Development proposals are not likely to impact on archaeological remains.

6.2.2 This evaluation has, therefore, assessed the archaeological potential of land intended for development. The results from this work show that the proposed development is not likely to impact on any archaeological remains.

## **7 ARCHIVE**

### **7.1 General**

7.1.1 The Site Archive, which will include; paper records, photographic records, graphics and digital data, will be prepared following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; ClfA 2014; Brown 2011; ADS 2013).



- 7.1.2 All archive elements will be marked with the site/accession code, and a full index will be prepared. The physical archive comprises 1 file/document case of paper records & A4 graphics and will be retained by SWAT Archaeology until a Kent museum archive procedure is in place.

## **8 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

- 8.1.1 SWAT would like to thank the developer for commissioning the project. Thanks are also extended to Wendy Rogers Senior Archaeological Officer, Kent County Council, for her advice and assistance.
- 8.1.2 Bartek Cichy supervised the archaeological evaluation and survey and illustrations were produced by Bartek Cichy. Paul Wilkinson MCIfA produced the text for this report.

## **9 REFERENCES**

ADS 2013. Caring for Digital Data in Archaeology: a guide to good practice, Archaeology Data Service & Digital Antiquity Guides to Good Practice

Brown, D.H., 2011. Archaeological archives; a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation, Archaeological Archives Forum (revised edition)

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014, Standard and Guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives, Institute for Archaeologists

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014, *Standard and guidance: for field evaluation*.

SMA 1993. Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections, Society of Museum Archaeologists

SMA 1995. Towards an Accessible Archaeological Archive, Society of Museum Archaeologists

SWAT Archaeology, 2019. Site Specific Requirements: Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation of Land rear of 161 Heath Road, Coxheath, Kent

Compiled by: SWAT Archaeology (PW) and dated 24<sup>th</sup> October 2019

## Appendix 1. Trench Tables

<b>Trench 1</b>	Dimensions: 17.6m x 1.8m Depth: 0.55m Trench alignment: WNW-ESE Ground level at WNW end: 118.97m OD Ground level at ESE end: 118.71m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
101	Top soil	Mid compaction, dark greyish-brown, silty-loam including a moderate amount of bricks, mortar and modern rubbish.	0-0.3
102	Sub soil	Mid compaction, medium brown, silty-loam including a moderate amount of sub-angular sandstone (average 100mm).	0.3-0.45
103	Natural/Head	Firm compaction, pale brown, sandy-silt including frequent sandstone (average 100mm). Outcrops of medium reddish-brown clay including a moderate amount of sandstone (average size 100mm).	0.45+

<b>Trench 2</b>	Dimensions: 24.3m x 1.8m Depth: 0.4m Trench alignment: NE-SW Ground level at SW end: 118.96m OD Ground level at NE end: 117.8m OD 1 test pit excavated on N end. Depth: 0.72m		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
201	Top soil	Mid compaction, dark greyish-brown, silty-loam including a moderate amount of bricks, mortar and modern rubbish.	0-0.25
202	Sub soil	Mid compaction, medium brown, silty-loam including a moderate amount of sub-angular sandstone (average 100mm).	0.25-0.35
203	Natural/Head	Firm compaction, pale brown, sandy-silt including frequent sandstone (average 100mm). Outcrops of medium reddish-brown clay including a moderate amount of sandstone (average 100mm).	0.35+
204	Cut of modern ditch	N-S aligned, 0.4m wide linear ditch with vertical sides. Feature exposed in trench 3 and 6	0.25-0.72+
205	Fill of modern ditch [204]	Re deposited (202) and (203) - backfill	0.25-0.72+
206	Cut of modern feature	Triangular shape in plan exposed, measuring 1m by 3m	0.25-0.4+
207	Fill of modern feature [206]	Mid compaction, medium brown, silty-loam including a frequent amount of concrete fragments, aluminium pipe and occ. tiles	0.25-0.4+
208	Cut of modern pit	Quarter of oval shape in plan measuring 1.9m by 0.91m	0.25-0.4+
209	Fill of modern pit [208]	Mid compaction, black, silty-loam including a occasional amount of modern pottery, steel rods, concrete and some wire	0.25-0.4+

<b>Trench 3</b>	Dimensions: 22.7m x 1.8m Depth: 0.4m Trench alignment: WNW-ESE Ground level at WNW end: 118.03m OD Ground level at ESE end: 117.26m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
301	Top soil	Moderate compaction, dark greyish-brown silty-loam including a moderate amount of bricks, mortar and modern rubbish.	0-0.2
302	Sub soil	Moderate compaction, medium brown, silty-loam including a moderate amount of sub-angular sandstone (average 100mm).	0.2-0.3
303	Natural/Head	Firm compaction, pale brown, sandy-silt including frequent sandstone (average 100mm). Outcrops of medium reddish-brown clay including a moderate amount of sandstone (average 100mm).	0.3+
304	Cut of modern ditch	N-S aligned, 0.4m wide linear ditch with vertical sides. Feature exposed in trench 2 and 6	0.25-0.4+
305	Fill of modern ditch [304]	Re deposited (202) and (203) - backfill	0.25-0.4+
306	Modern pipe	water pipe running in a narrow trench	0-0.2

<b>Trench 4</b>	Dimensions: 17.6m x 1.8m Depth: 0.5m Trench alignment: N-S Ground level at N end: 117.75m OD Ground level at S end: 118.64m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
401	Top soil	Moderate compaction, dark greyish-brown, silty-loam including a moderate amount of bricks, mortar and modern rubbish.	0-0.3
402	Sub soil	Moderate compaction, medium brown, silty-loam including a moderate amount of sub-angular sandstone (average 100mm).	0.3-0.4
403	Natural/Head	Firm compaction, pale brown, sandy-silt including frequent sandstone (average 100mm). Outcrops of medium reddish-brown clay including a moderate amount of sandstone (average 100mm).	0.4+

<b>Trench 5</b>	Dimensions: 25.2m x 1.8m Depth: 0.4m Trench alignment: WNW-ESE Ground level at WNW end: 117.95m OD Ground level at ESE end: 117.04m OD		
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Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
501	Top soil	Moderate compaction, dark greyish-brown, silty-loam including a moderate amount of bricks, mortar and modern rubbish.	0-0.25
102	Sub soil	Moderate compaction, medium brown, silty-loam including a moderate amount of sub-angular sandstone (average 100mm).	0.25-0.35
503	Natural/Head	Firm compaction, pale brown, sandy-silt including frequent sandstone (average 100mm). Outcrops of medium reddish-brown clay including a moderate amount of sandstone (average 100mm).	0.35+

<b>Trench 6</b>	Dimensions: 18.3m x 1.8m Depth: 0.56m Trench alignment: NNE-SSW Ground level at NNE end: 116.66m OD Ground level at SSW end: 117.3m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
601	Top soil	Moderate compaction, dark greyish-brown, silty-loam including a moderate amount of bricks, mortar and modern rubbish.	0-0.2
602	Sub soil	Moderate compaction, medium brown, silty-loam including a moderate amount of sub-angular sandstone (average 100mm).	0.2-0.43
603	Natural/Head	Firm compaction, pale brown, sandy-silt including frequent sandstone (average 100mm). Outcrops of medium reddish-brown clay including a moderate amount of sandstone (average 100mm).	0.43+
604	Cut of modern ditch	N-S aligned, 0.4m wide linear ditch with vertical sides. Feature exposed in trench 2 and 3	0.2-0.56+
605	Fill of modern ditch [304]	Re deposited (601), (602) with freq concrete fragments, nut shells and occ. tile - backfill	0.2-0.56+

### Kent County Council HER Summary Form

**Site Name:** Land to the rear of 161 Heath Road, Coxheath, Kent

**SWAT Site Code:** COX/EV/19

**Site Address:** As above

#### Summary:

Swale and Thames Survey Company (SWAT) carried out Archaeological Evaluation on the proposed development site above. The site has a planning application for residential housing with associated access, parking and landscaping whereby Maidstone Borough Council requested that archaeological works be undertaken to determine the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains. The Archaeological Monitoring consisted of an Archaeological Evaluation which revealed no meaningful archaeology.

**District/Unitary:** Maidstone Council

**Period(s):**

**NGR (centre of site to eight figures)** NGR 574861 151001

**Type of Archaeological work:** Archaeological Evaluation

**Date of recording:** August 2019

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

**Geology:** Underlying geology is Bedrock Geology of Sandstone/Limestone Formation

**Title and author of accompanying report:** Wilkinson P. (2019) Archaeological Evaluation of Land at 161 Heath Road, Coxheath, Kent

**Summary of fieldwork results (begin with earliest period first, add NGRs where appropriate)**

No archaeology found

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

**Contact at Unit:** Paul Wilkinson



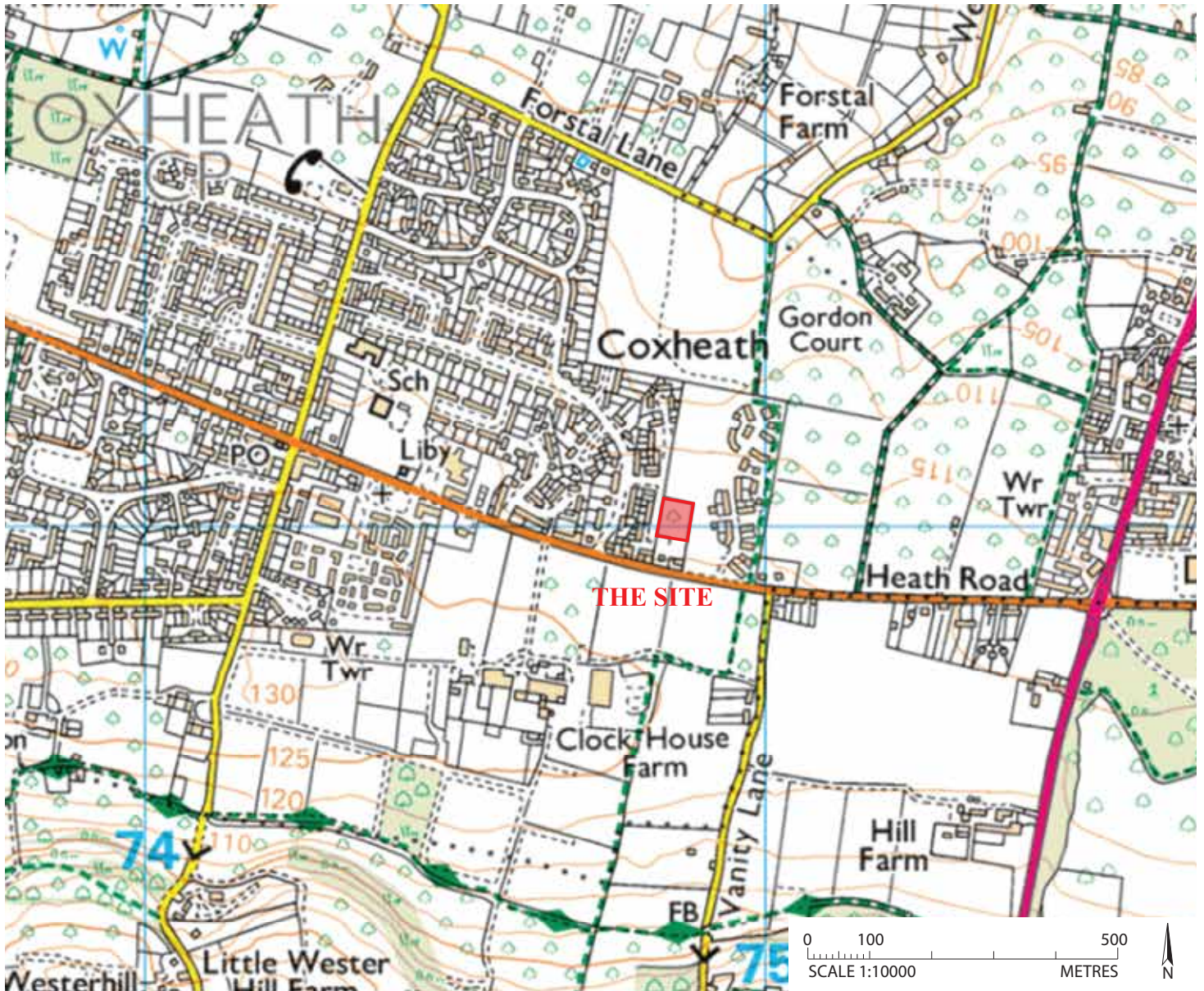
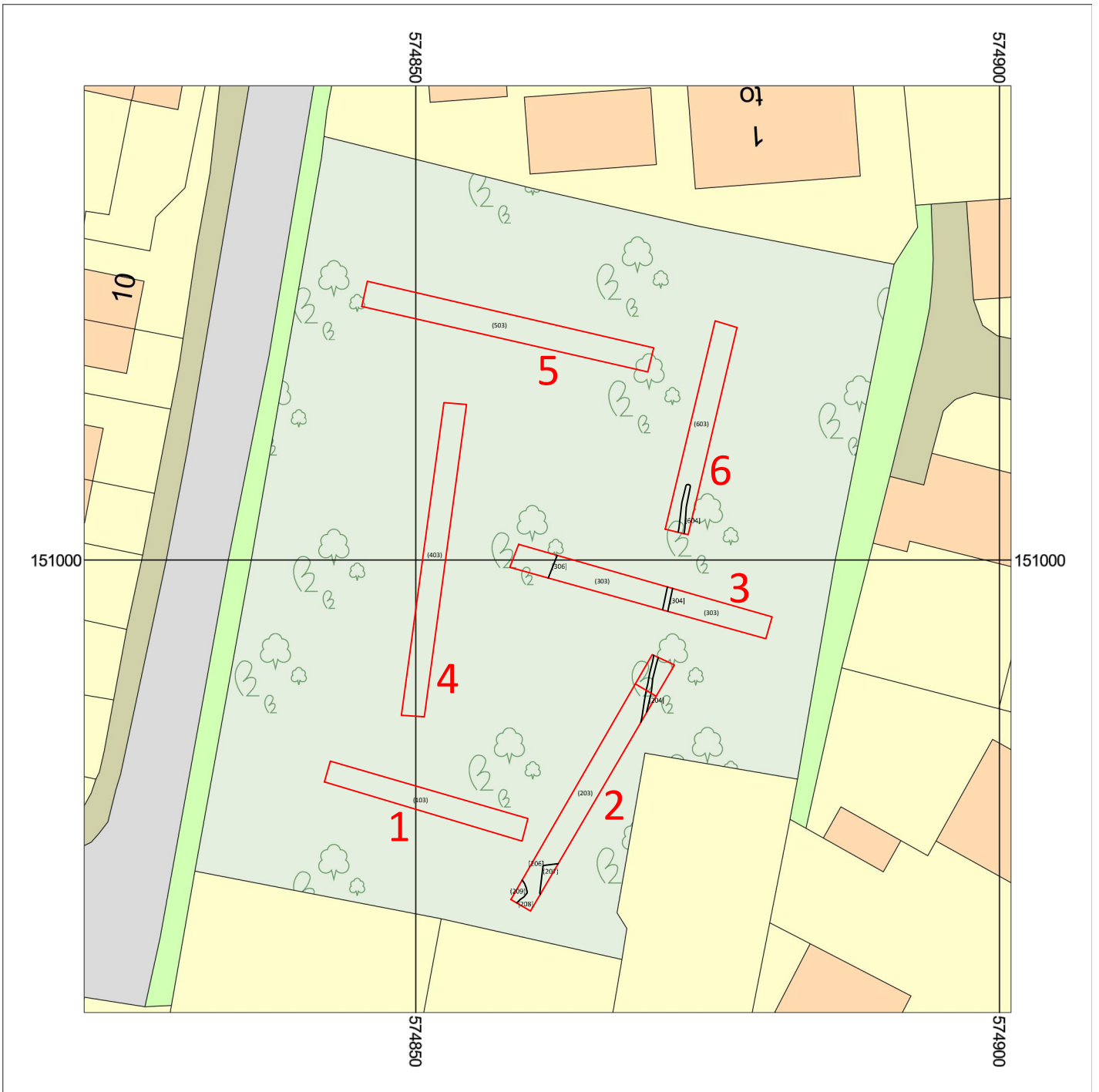


Figure 1: Site location map, scale 1:10000.





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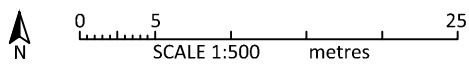


Figure 2: Trench location in relation to OS map



Figure 3: Trench location in relation to the proposed development

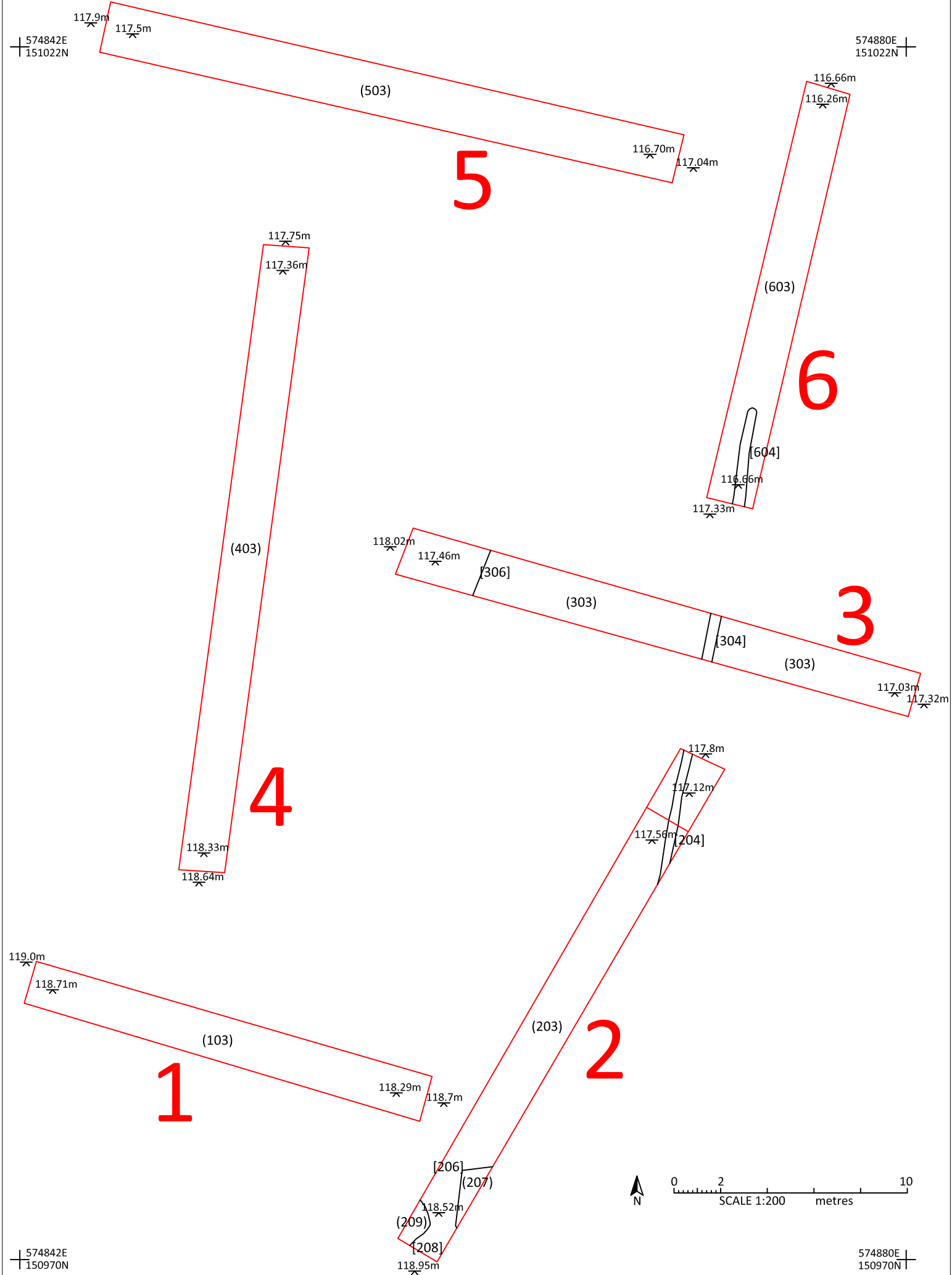


Figure 4: Trench plan



## Plates



Plate 1: Looking south-east at the site from its north-west corner



Plate 2: Looking east-south-east at Trench 1. At the bottom of the trench natural was exposed with outcrops of under laying deposit. The scale rods are 5m and 1m long.





Plate 3: Looking north-north-east at Trench 2. The scale rods are 5m and 1m long. Features visible in photograph are: modern pit [208] located below 1m scale and modern trench [206] located above 1m scale to the right.



Plate 4: Looking east-south-east at modern trench [206] exposed in trench 2. Feature's infill (207) contained concrete fragments and aluminium pipe





Plate 5: Looking east-south-east at trench 3



Plate 6: Looking north-east-north at trench 4





Plate 7: Looking east-south-east at trench 5.





Plate 8: Looking north-north-east at trench 6 with modern trench [604] that was also exposed in trench 2 and 3



Plate 9: Looking at infill (605) of modern trench [604] that contained concrete fragments, tiles and nut shells