

Archaeological Evaluation of Land adjacent to Aspinall Close, Bekesbourne, Kent



NGR: TR 18924 55670

Site Code: ASP/EV/19

(Planning Application: CA/16/01975)

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Contents

List of Figures.....	3
List of Plates.....	3
1. Summary.....	4
2. Introduction.....	4
3. Site Description and Topography.....	4
4. Planning Background.....	5
5. Archaeological and Historical Background.....	5
6. Aims and Objectives.....	5
7. Methodology.....	6
8. Monitoring.....	6
9. Results.....	6
10. Discussion.....	8
11. Finds.....	8
12. Conclusion.....	8
13. Acknowledgements.....	8
14. References.....	8
15. CCC Summary Form.....	9

List of Figures:

Figure 1 –Location of site and evaluation trenches

List of Plates:

AP1 - Aerial view of site (Google Earth)

Plates 1-11 – Trenches and sections



AP1. Aerial photograph of site (9/4/2017) Google Earth

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1. Summary

Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land of land adjacent to Aspinall Close in Kent (AP 1). A Planning Application (CA/16/01975) to develop this site for the erection of 15 two-storey dwellings to Canterbury City Council, whereby the Council requested that an Archaeological Evaluation be undertaken in order to determine the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains. The work was carried out in accordance with the requirements set out within an Archaeological Specification (SWAT Specification A and CCC Manual Part B) and in discussion with the Archaeological Heritage Officer, Canterbury City Council. The results of the excavation of seven evaluation trenches revealed that no archaeological features were present within the trenches (Figures 1-3). The natural geology of Clay and Silt was reached at an average depth of between 0.60m and 0.65m below the topsoil. The Archaeological Evaluation has been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the Archaeological Specification.

2. Introduction

Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT) was commissioned by the landowners 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 2018) and in discussion with Rosanne Cummings, Archaeological Heritage Officer, Canterbury City Council. The evaluation was carried out on the 16/17th January 2019.

3. Site Description and Topography

The proposed development area (PDA) is located in the south east of England, in the centre of the county of Kent and the village and civil parish of Bekesbourne, within the district of

Canterbury, in the east of the County of Kent. Bekesbourne is a rural village just north of the village of Patricbourne. The PDA lies outside of the conservation area to the west of the village, west of Station Road, Old Palace Road and the Nail Bourne River and south of the railway line. The plot forms a rectangular parcel of agricultural land of some 1.18 acres (NGR: TR 18924 55670) accessed via Aspinall Close to the east. The plot is bounded to the north and west by agricultural land and to the south and east by a small medium density residential development surrounding Aspinall Close and Birfons Road; sporadic development continues along The Street and Keepers Hill.

3.1 The Geological Survey of Great Britain (1:50,000) shows that the PDA is set on Bedrock Geology of Seaford Chalk Formation- Chalk. Superficial Deposits are Head- Clay and Silt. The geology on site was shown to be topsoil overlaying colluvial layer mid brown clayey silt over Head Deposits of Clay and Silt with occasional areas of disturbed Chalk Formation.

4. Planning Background

On the advice of Rosanne Cummings, Archaeological Heritage Officer (CCC) a programme of archaeological works in the form of an initial archaeological evaluation was attached to the consent. The planning permission has the following Archaeological Condition (3):

No development shall take place until, the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, shall secure the implementation of:

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

(ii) following on from the evaluation, any safeguarding measures to ensure preservation in situ of important archaeological remains and/or further archaeological investigation, post-excavation assessment, analysis, publication or conservation in accordance with a specification and timetable which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: *To ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded in accordance with policies HE11 and HE12 of the Canterbury District Local Plan Publication 2017 and the National Planning Policy Framework.*

The results from this evaluation will be used to inform CCC Archaeology and Heritage and Canterbury City Council of any further archaeological mitigation measures that may be necessary in connection with the development proposals.

5. Archaeological and Historical Background

An Archaeological Desk-based Assessment has been written by SWAT Archaeology (SWAT 2016) and a summary of this work shows that the desk-based assessment has considered the archaeological potential of the site but this potential can only be tested by fieldwork. Research has shown that the PDA may contain archaeological sites and these were summarised as:

- Prehistoric: **Low**
- Iron Age: **Moderate**
- Roman: **Moderate**
- Anglo-Saxon: **Low**
- Medieval: **Moderate**
- Post-Medieval and Modern: **High**

6. Aims and Objectives

According to the SWAT Archaeological Specification, the aims and objectives for the archaeological work were to ensure that:

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.

Also to find out the depths of features below the surface, how much overburden and the extent of the depth of deposits themselves. In addition the dates and quality of any

archaeological remains which will be achieved through a limited sample excavation of features. Human remains will not be excavated (see also CCC Evaluation Specification Part B: 4. Objectives).

7. Methodology

The Archaeological Specification called for an evaluation by trial trenching comprising a first phase of seven trenches 15-25m long and 1.8m wide within the footprint of the proposed housing development. All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the specification. A single context recording system was used to record the deposits, and context recording numbers were assigned to all deposits for recording purposes. All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with CCC, SWAT and ClfA standards and guidance.

8. Monitoring

Curatorial monitoring was available during the course of the evaluation.

9. Results

The evaluation has identified no archaeological features within the seven trenches (Figures 1-3 & Plates 1-11).

Trench 1

Trench 1 was NE-SW aligned and located in western part of the site at altitude of 24.81m O.D. and 25.15m O.D. respectively at SW and NE end of the trench. It measured 1.8m by 25m and was excavated to the depth of 0.65m exposing natural Head deposit (103) at its base (Plates 1 & 2).

Head deposit was overlaid by 0.45m colluvial layer (102). At the top of context (102) E-W aligned linear deposit of chalk (104) was present. Feature was overlaid by 0.2m thick top soil (101).

Head deposit (103) was mid brown in colour and composed of clayey silt.

Colluvial layer (102) was firmly compacted, mid brown clayey silt with occ. sub angular flints.

Top soil (101) was moderately compacted, dark brown clayey silt.

Context (104), possibly a track way was 1.6m wide, 0.2m deep and composed of re-deposited chalk with flint nodules. Feature is associated with barn structures and track ways visible on aerial photograph from 1940.

Trench 2

Trench 2 was NW-SE aligned and located in southern part of the site at altitude of 25.00m O.D. and 24.25m O.D. respectively at NW and SE end of the trench. It measured 1.8m by 25m and was excavated to the depth of 0.7m exposing natural Head deposit (203) at its base.

Head deposit was overlaid successively by 0.45m colluvial layer (202) and by 0.2m thick top soil layer (201) Plates 3-4.

Head deposit (203) was mid orange-brown in colour and composed of clayey silt.

Colluvial layer (202) was firmly compacted, mid brown clayey silt with occ. sub angular flints and heavy root disturbances.

Top soil (201) was moderately compacted, dark brown clayey silt with occ. sub angular flints.

Trench 3

Trench 3 was NE-SW aligned and located in central part of the site at altitude of 24.3m O.D. It measured 1.8m by 25m and was excavated to the depth of 0.65m exposing natural Head deposit (303) at its base (Plate 5).

Head deposit was successively overlaid by 0.45m colluvial layer (302) and 0.2m thick top soil layer (301).

Head deposit (303) was mid orange-brown in colour and composed of clayey silt.

Colluvial layer (302) was firmly compacted, mid brown clayey silt with occ. sub angular flints.

Top soil (301) was moderately compacted, dark brown clayey silt wit occ. sub angular flints.

Trench 4

Trench 4 was NW-SE aligned and located in central part of the site at altitude of 24.6m O.D. and 25.01m O.D. respectively at SE and NW end of the trench. It measured 1.8m by 25m and was excavated to the depth of 0.4m exposing natural Head deposit (203) at its base. Head deposit was overlaid by 0.15m colluvial layer (202).

At the top of context (202), NE-SW aligned linear deposit of chalk (204), interpreted as track way was present. Feature was overlaid by 0.2m thick top soil (201) and located in NE part of the trench.

Head deposit (403) was mid brown in colour and composed of clayey silt.

Colluvial layer (402) was firmly compacted, mid brown clayey silt with occ. sub angular flints.

Top soil (401) was moderately compacted, dark brown clayey silt with occ. sub angular flints.

Track way (404) was 1.6m wide, 0.2m deep and composed of re-deposited chalk with flint nodules

Feature is associated with barn structures and track ways visible on aerial photograph from 1940 (Plates 6-7).

Trench 5

Trench 1 was NE-SW aligned and located in northern part of the site at altitude of 25.00m O.D. It measured 1.8m by 25m and was excavated to the depth of 0.4m exposing natural Head deposit (503) at its base.

Head deposit was overlaid by 0.2m colluvial layer (502). At the top of context (502) two linear deposits of chalk (504) and (505) were exposed. Features were overlaid by 0.2m thick top soil (501).

Head deposit (503) was mid brown in colour and composed of clayey silt.

Colluvial layer (502) was firmly compacted, mid brown clayey silt with occ. sub angular flints.

Top soil (501) was moderately compacted, dark brown clayey silt.

NW-SE aligned Track way (504), was 1.5m wide, 0.2m deep and composed of re-deposited chalk with flint nodules.

N-S aligned Track way (505), was 1.2m wide, 0.2m deep and composed of re-deposited chalk with flint nodules.

Features are associated with barn structures and track ways visible on aerial photograph from 1940 (Plate 8).

Trench 6

Trench 4 was NW-SE aligned and located in NE part of the site at altitude of 24.8m O.D. and 24.1m O.D. respectively at NW and SE end of the trench. . It measured 1.8m by 25m and was excavated to the depth of 0.4m exposing natural Head deposit (603) at its base. Head deposit was successively overlaid by 0.15m thick colluvial layer (602) and 0.2m thick top soil layer (601).

Directly underneath top soil two modern features (604) and (605) were exposed. NE-SW aligned linear feature (604) was running across middle part of the trench. Feature (605) covered area of 5m of the trench length at its NW end and consisted modern burnt layer.

Head deposit (603) was mid brown in colour and composed of clayey silt.

Colluvial layer (602) was firmly compacted, mid brown clayey silt with occ. sub angular flints.

Top soil (601) was moderately compacted, dark brown clayey silt with occ. sub angular flints.

Track way (604) was 1.8m wide, 0.2m deep and composed of re-deposited chalk with flint nodules

Feature is associated with barn structures and track ways visible on aerial photograph from 1940 (Plate 9).

Burnt layer (605) was moderately compacted mix of deposits consisting: burnt earth, re deposited natural clayey silt, black charred wood, glass and some wire. Feature is remains of bon fire pyre visible on aerial photograph from 2017

Trench 7

Trench 7 was NE-SW aligned and located in central part of the site at altitude of 24.55m O.D. It measured 1.8m by 17m and was excavated to the depth of 0.5m exposing natural Head deposit (703) at its base (Plate 10).

Head deposit was successively overlaid by 0.2m colluvial layer (702) and 0.2m thick top soil layer (701).

Head deposit (703) was mid orange-brown in colour and composed of clayey silt.

Colluvial layer (702) was firmly compacted, mid brown clayey silt with occ. sub angular flits.

Top soil (701) was moderately compacted, dark brown clayey silt wit occ. sub angular flints.

Summary

Single modern linear chalk features were exposed in trenches: 1, 4, 5 and 6. Features are associated with barn structures and track ways visible on aerial photograph from 1940.

Single modern burnt layer was exposed in trench 6. Feature is remains of bonfire pyre visible on aerial photograph from 2017.

10. Discussion

With a large number of archaeological sites known in the vicinity of the PDA it was expected that the evaluation may produce evidence of archaeological activity. But there was none. The site has been used as a field and market garden. All trenches showed a typical sequence of topsoil and subsoil occasionally touching on Chalk (Plate 11).

11. Finds

No finds were found.

12. Conclusion

The evaluation trenches at the proposed development site revealed no archaeological features or artefacts.

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**) sealing the subsoil (**102**). Therefore, this evaluation has been successful in fulfilling the aims and objectives as set out in the planning condition and the Archaeological Specification.

13. Acknowledgements

SWAT Archaeology would like to thank the client for commissioning the project. Thanks are also extended to Rosanne Cummings Archaeological Heritage Officer, Canterbury City Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Paul Wilkinson MCIfA.

Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA

25/01/2019

14. References

Chartered Institute for Field Archaeologists (CIfA), Rev (2017). *Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation*

SWAT Archaeology (2018) *Site Specific Requirements: Land adjacent to Aspinall Close, Bekesbourne, Kent*

KCC and Historic England HER data 2018

Kent County Council HER Summary Form

Site Name: Land adjacent to Aspinall Close, Bekesbourne, Kent

SWAT Site Code: ASP/EV/18

Site Address: As above

Summary:

Swale and Thames Survey Company (SWAT) carried out Archaeological Evaluation on the development site above. The site has planning permission for the erection of 15 two-storey dwellings whereby Canterbury City Council Heritage and Conservation requested that Archaeological Evaluation 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 archaeology.

District/Unitary: Canterbury City Council

Period(s):

NGR (centre of site to eight figures) TR 18924 55670

Type of Archaeological work: Archaeological Evaluation

Date of recording: 16th, 17th January 2019

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

Geology: Underlying geology is Bedrock Geology of Seaford Chalk Formation

Title and author of accompanying report: Wilkinson P. (2019) Archaeological Evaluation of Land adjacent to Aspinall Close, Bekesbourne, 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



Plate 1. Trench 1 (looking SW)



Plate 2. Trench 1 section



Plate 3. Trench 2 (looking SE)



Plate 4. Trench 2 section



Plate 5. Trench 3 (looking NE)



Plate 6. Trench 4 (looking NW)



Plate 7. Trench 4 Chalk track



Plate 8. Trench 5 with chalk tracks (looking SW)



Plate 9. Trench 6 (looking NW)



Plate 10. Trench 7 (looking NE)



Plate 11. View of site (looking north)

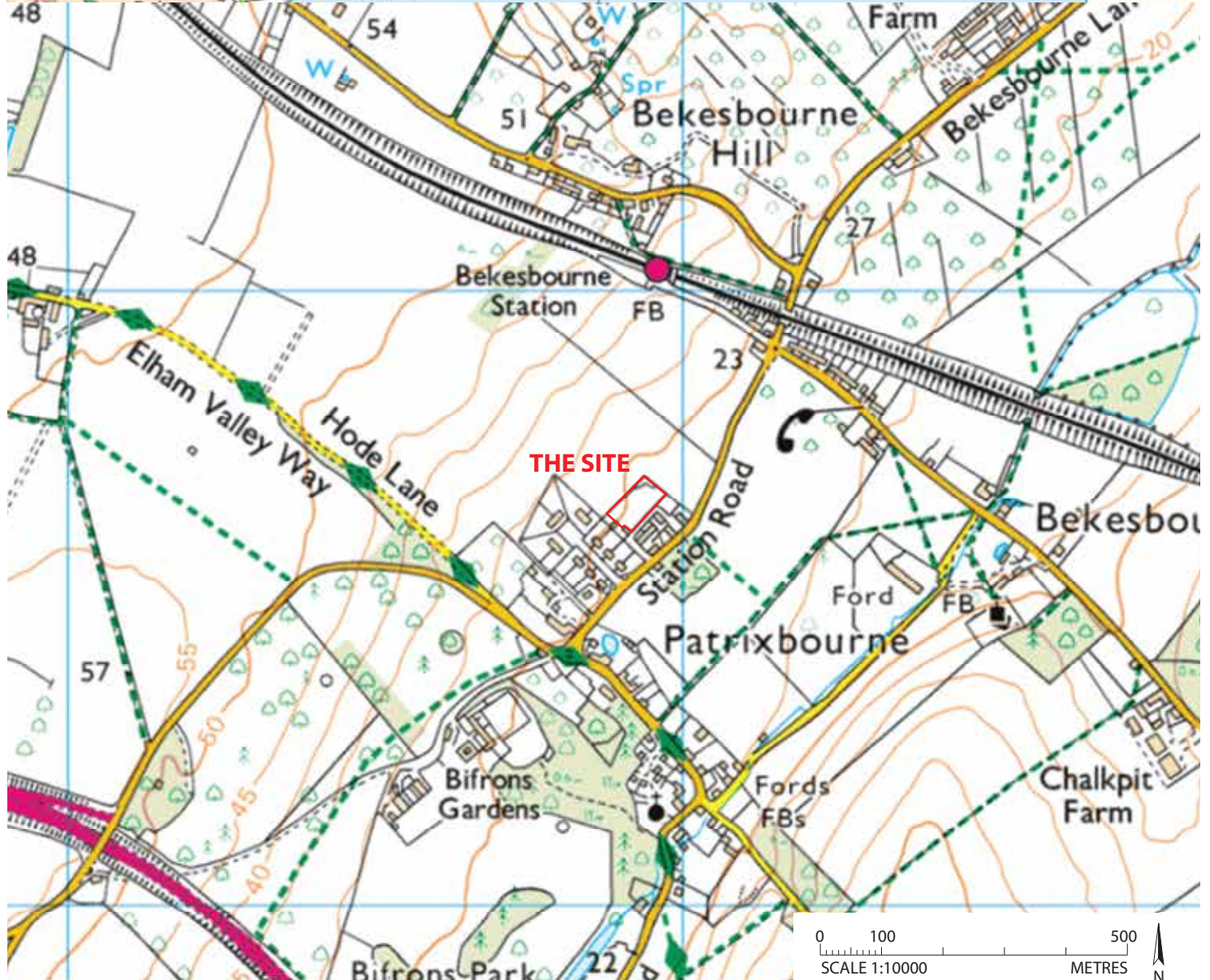


Figure 1: Site location map, scale 1:10000.

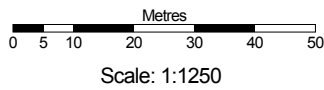
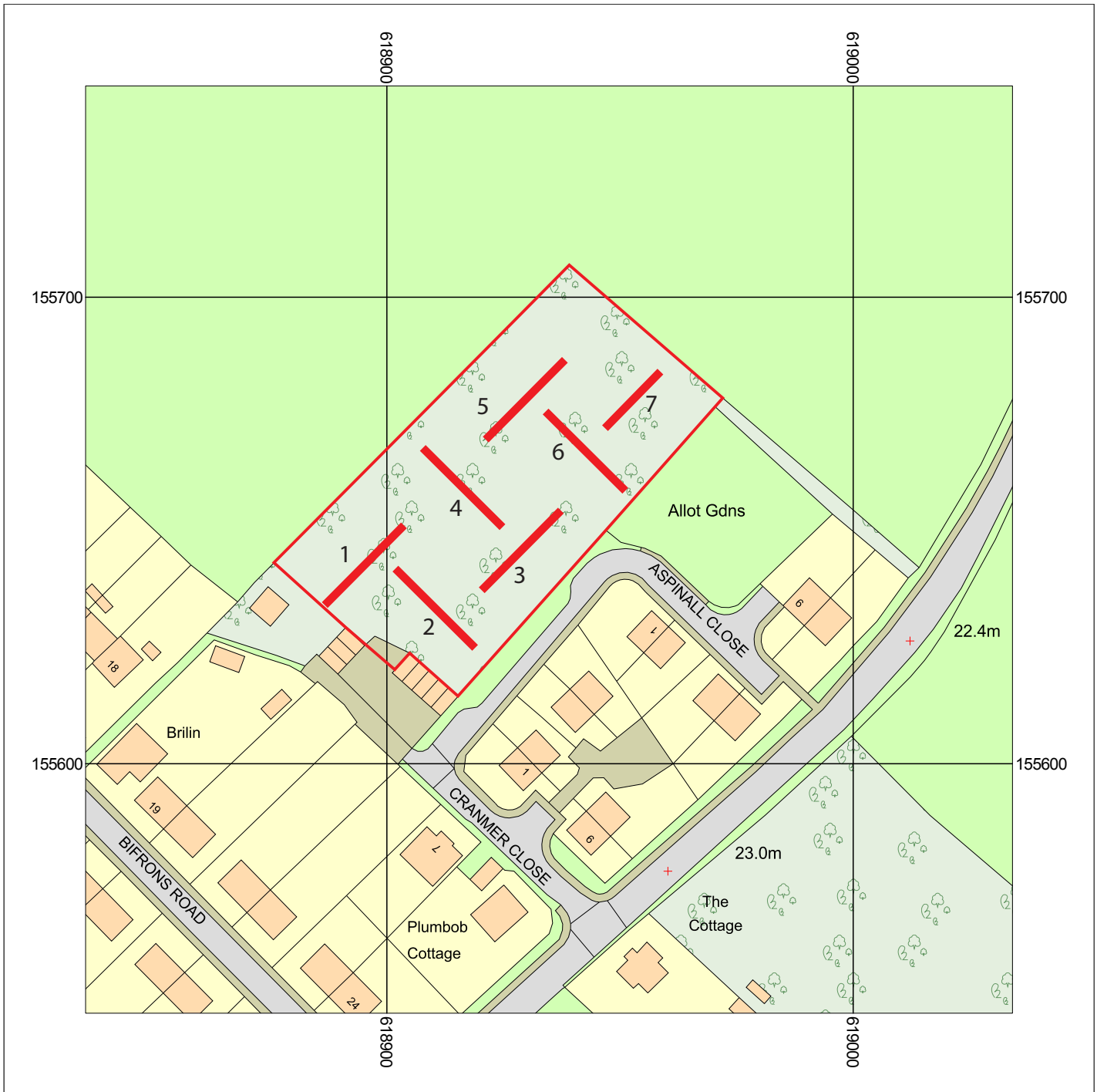


Figure 2: Trench location in relation to OS map, scale 1:1250.

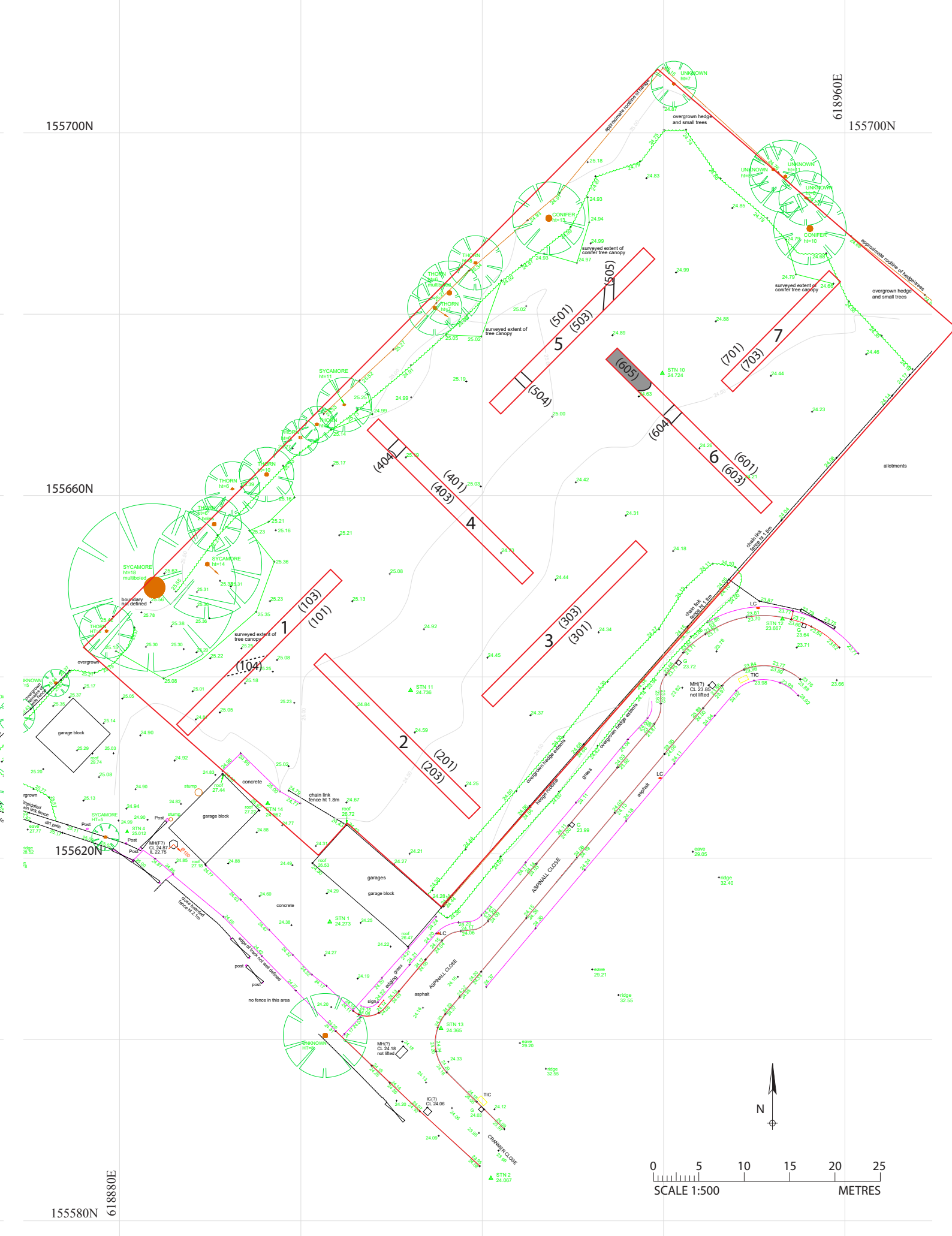


Figure 3: Trench location in relation to site survey plan, scale 1:500.



Figure 4: Trench location in relation to proposed development, scale 1:500.