Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment in Advance of the Proposed Development of Land at the Aldington Lake, off Station Road, Evegate Kent.

November 2021

Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment in Advance of the Proposed Development of Land at the Aldington Lake, off Station Road, Evegate Kent.

National Grid Reference TR 06714 38002

Report for Brett Aggregates Ltd

Date of Report: 25 November 2021

SWAT ARCHAEOLOGY

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Summary

SWAT Archaeology has been commissioned by Brett Aggregates to prepare an Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment of the Application Site of Land at the Aldington Lake, off Station Road, Evegate Kent. This Desk Based Assessment is intended to explore and disseminate the known and potential heritage resource within the site and the surrounding area, and to assess the likely impacts of the development proposals on this resource. Based on this data the potential for archaeological sites either on or in the near vicinity of the proposed development can be summarized as:

- Prehistoric: **high**
- Iron Age**: high**
- Roman: **high**
- Anglo-Saxon: **low**
- Medieval: **moderate**
- Post-Medieval: **low**
- Modern: **low**

Assessment of the Archaeological findings from the KHER and other resources would suggest that the Application Site is of high archaeological interest and that there is particularly archaeological significance within the assessment area for the Prehistoric period. As the site contains alluvium from the Stour, there is Palaeolithic potential along with possible Palaeoenvironmental evidence and surviving organic matter. The areas to the north and north west contains evidence relating to the Neolithic, Bronze and Iron Age, as well as into the Roman period. Other settlement activity has been seen on the East Stour in the Prehistoric periods usually situated on the slightly higher ground adjoining the flood plains of the Stour and its tributaries. There is moderate potential relating to the possibility of fields systems associated with the Medieval site at Little Stock Farm to the north. The archaeological potential is considered low for all other periods as it is likely that the formed part of the agricultural landscape south of Ashford and part of the floodplain of the East Stour.

The Application Site has had low historical impact on any potential archaeology although there is some uncertainty with possible disturbance caused by the flood defence scheme. Any potential remains within the Application Site should they survive in-situ will be vulnerable to damage during the proposed development through the removal of earth to extend the lake area.

The need for, scale, scope and nature of any further assessment and/or archaeological works should be agreed through consultation with the statutory authorities. Therefore, it is anticipated that there will be a requirement for a programme of archaeological works including the recommendation of a preliminary geoarchaeological borehole survey. This program of evaluation works would represent the first stage of these works, with subsequent stages including excavation and/or watching brief development works, and publication following, depending on the initial findings of the evaluation. Any works can be addressed by an appropriate planning condition.

The Application Site does not contain any designated heritage assets and is not within any conservation area. There are only a limited number of designated heritage assets within the study area. The majority of those have been shown to have no intervisibility or relationship with the Application Site and that the historical and aesthetic significance of these assets will not be impacted. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development will have an impact at the low end of 'less than substantial' in accordance with NPPF paragraph 202. The public benefits from the creation of a lake to assist with flood management will reduce the flood risk within any surrounding fields and residential areas and will outweigh any harm caused

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT) was commissioned by Brett Aggregates (the 'Clients), to carry out an historic environment desk-based assessment of the proposed development area (Application Site) of land at the Aldington Lake, off Station Road, Evegate Kent centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) TR 06714 38002 (Fig 1).

1.2 The Site

1.2.1 The Application Site is located 7km from the centre of Ashford on the south eastern outskirts between Ashford and Hythe, which is 10km further south east. It is located circa 180m to the south of the Channel Tunnel High Speed railway line, which is turn is to the south of the M20 motorway. It is located in the extreme southern part of the parish of Smeeth close to the hamlet of Stonestreet Green circa 700m to the south within the parish of Aldington. The Application Site covers a 'C' shaped area of just over 4.5 hectares. The western boundary includes a flood embankment with the path of the East Stour River passing adjacent to the northern boundary on an east/west axis. Adjacent to the east boundary is that of a modern lake created by quarrying with Backhouse Wood, an ancient woodland immediately adjacent to the lake. The south eastern boundary also consists of a public footpath that follows the western edge of the wood. Across the area a network of drainage channels. The Application Site is currently rough grass. The PDA sits on broadly level ground of 47m aOD (Fig. 1).

Geology

1.2.2 The British Geological Society (BGS 1995) shows that the local geology at the Application Site consists of Wealden Clay Formation - Mudstone. There are superficial deposits of Alluvium - Clay, Silt, Sand and Gravel being the deposits from the East Stour.

Geotechnical Information

1.2.3 There is no geotechnical information. However, an evaluation circa 200m north of the Application Site revealed a stratigraphic sequence of topsoil varying in thickness of 0.25 and 0.35m, below which was colluvium an average of 0.3m thick and increasing in thickness towards the lower eastern portion of the evaluation site. Underlying geology of Cretaceous Lower Greensand/Atherfield Clay was record in all trenches.

1.3 Scope of Document

1.3.1 This assessment was requested by the Client in order to determine, as far as is possible from existing information, the nature, extent and significance of the Historic Environment and to assess the potential impact of development on Heritage Assets. The assessment forms part of the initial stages of the archaeological investigation and is intended to inform and assist with decisions regarding archaeological mitigation for the proposed development and associated planning applications.

2 PLANNING BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 National legislation and guidance relating to the protection of, and proposed development on or near, important archaeological sites or historical buildings within planning regulations is defined under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990). In addition, local authorities are responsible for the protection of the historic environment within the planning system.

2.1.2 The National Planning Policy Framework was updated in July 2018, revised in February 2019 and July 2021 is the principal document which sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It provides a framework in which Local Planning Authorities can produce their own distinctive Local Plans to reflect the needs of their communities.

2.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

2.2.1 The Historic Environment, as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2021): Annex 2, comprises:

> *'All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.'*

2.2.2 NPPF Annex 2 defines a Heritage Asset as:

> *'A building monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing)'.*

2.2.3 NPPF Section 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment sets out the principal national guidance on the importance, management and safeguarding of heritage assets within the planning process. The aim of NPPF Section 16 is to ensure that Local Planning Authorities, developers, and owners of heritage assets adopt a consistent approach to their conservation and to reduce complexity in planning policy relating to proposals that affect them.

2.2.4 Paragraph 190 of the NPPF states that:

> 'Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account:
>
> a) The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
>
> b) The wider social, cultural, economic, and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
>
> c) The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
>
> d) Opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.'

2.2.5 Paragraph 194 of the NPPF states that:

> *'In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.'*

2.2.6 Paragraph 195 of the NPPF states that:

> *'Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account to the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when*

considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.'

2.2.7 The NPPF, Section 16, therefore provides the guidance to which local authorities need to refer when setting out a strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment in their Local Plans. It is noted within this, that heritage assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

2.2.8 The NPPF further provides definitions of terms in the glossary which relate to the historic environment in order to clarify the policy guidance given. For the purposes of this report, the following are important to note:

- ***'Significance (for heritage policy).*** *The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. This interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic, or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site's Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance'.*

- ***'Setting of a heritage asset.*** *The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral'.*

2.2.9 The NPPF advises local authorities to take into account the following points in paragraph 197 when drawing up strategies for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment;

a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and preserving them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and

c) the desirability of new development in making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness'.

2.2.10 Paragraphs 199 and 204 consider the impact of a proposed development upon the significance of a heritage asset.

2.2.11 Paragraph 199 emphasises that when a new development is proposed, 'great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and that the more important the asset, the greater this weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance'.

2.2.12 Paragraph 200 notes that:

> *'Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:*
>
> *a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;*
>
> *b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional'.*

2.2.13 Paragraph 201 states that:

> 'Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:
>
> a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
>
> b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
>
> c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
>
> d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.'

2.2.14 Conversely, paragraph 202 notes that '*where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use'.*

2.2.15 The NPPF comments in paragraph 207, proffers that *'not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 201 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 202, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole'.*

2.2.16 Paragraph 204 states that 'Local Planning Authorities should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred'.

2.2.17 Paragraph 206 encourages Local Planning Authorities to *'look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably'.*

2.2.18 Any LPA based on paragraph 208, *'should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies, but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies.'*

2.3 Designated Heritage Assets

2.3.1 Designated heritage assets are defined in NPPF Annex 2 as:

'A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield and Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.'

2.3.2 Designation is a formal acknowledgement of a building, monument, or site's significance, intended to make sure that the character of the asset in question is protected through the planning system and to enable it to be passed on to future generations.

2.3.3 In addition to the NPPF, statutory protection and guidance documents are also provided to certain classes of designated heritage assets under the following list:

- *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990);*
- *Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979);*
- *Planning Practice Guidance: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment*
- *Protection of Wrecks Act (1973); and*
- *Hedgerow Regulations (statutory Instrument No. 1160) 1997.*

2.4 Planning Policy Guidance and Best Practice

2.4.1 The Government under the NPPF framework provides Planning Policy Guidance in relation to the Historic Environment where it confirms that the core planning principle is the conservation of heritage assets in a manor appropriate to their significance. It states that heritage interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Analysis is required to understanding the heritage asset relative importance to assess and inform the development of proposals to avoid or minimise harm. The guidance comments that it is the decision-maker needs to judge whether a proposal causes substantial harm in view of the NPPF, and that substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases. In addition, the guidance signposts advice to Historic England who have produced best practice and also policy guidance to support the NPPF.

Conservation Principles, Policy and Guidance (Historic England, 2008)

2.4.2 Historic England sets out in this document a logical approach to making decisions and offering guidance about all aspects of England's historic environment. The Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance are primarily intended to help ensure consistency of approach in carrying out the role as the Government's statutory advisor on the historic environment in England. Specifically, they make a contribution to addressing the

challenges of modernising heritage protection by proposing an integrated approach to making decisions, based on a common process.

2.4.3 The document explains its relationship to other policy documents in existence at that time, including Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (2005), and has since been withdrawn and superseded, which included the explicit objective of 'protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment'. Included in this document are references to Historic England's policies providing detailed guidance on sustaining the historic environment within the framework of established government policy.

2.4.4 The policy document provides details about a range of Heritage Values, which enable the significance of assets to be established systematically, with the four main 'heritage values' being:

- *Evidential value. This derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity. Physical remains of past human activity are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them especially in the absence of written records, the material record, particularly archaeological deposits, provides the only source of evidence about the distant past.*

- *Historical Value. This derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. It tends to be illustrative or associative. Illustration depends on visibility in a way that evidential value (for example, of buried remains) does not. Places with illustrative value will normally also have evidential value, but it may be of a different order of importance. Association with a notable family, person, event, or movement gives historical value a particular resonance.*

- *Aesthetic value. This derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place. Aesthetic values can be the result of the conscious design of a place, including artistic endeavour. Equally, they can be the seemingly fortuitous outcome of the way in which a place has evolved and been used over time.*

- *Communal value. This derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory. Communal values are closely bound up with historical (particularly associative) and aesthetic values but tend to have additional and specific aspects. These can be commemorative and symbolic values reflect the meanings of a place for those who draw part of their identity from it or have emotional links to it. Social value is associated with places that people perceive as a source of identity, distinctiveness, social interaction, and coherence. Spiritual value attached to places can emanate from the beliefs and teachings of an organised religion, or reflect past or present-day perceptions of the spirit of place.*

2.4.5 In addition, one has to consider archaeological significance –the evolution of the asset, phases of development over different periods, important features, evidence in building fabric and potential for below ground remains.

Historic Environment Good Practice in Planning Notes

2.4.6 In March 2015, Historic England produced three Good Practice Advice in Planning (GPA) notes. The notes provided information on good practice to assist local authorities, planning and other consultants, owners, applicants, and other interested parties in implementing historic environment policy in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the related guidance given in the National Planning Practice Guide (NPPG). GPA1 covered 'The Historic Environment in Local Plans'. GPA2 provided advice on 'Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment' and GPA3 covered 'The Setting of Heritage Assets'. GPA4 entitled 'Enabling Development and Heritage Assets' sets out advice on enabling development, against the background of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the related guidance given in the Planning Practice Guide.

GPA2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment.

2.4.7 The guidance focuses on understanding the significance of any affected heritage asset and, if relevant, the contribution of its setting to its significance. The significance of a heritage asset is the sum of its archaeological, architectural, historic, and artistic interest. The document sets out a number of stages to follow:

- Understand the significance of the affected assets;

- Avoid, minimise, and mitigate impact in a way that meets the objectives of the NPPF

- Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance;

- Justify any harmful impacts in terms of the sustainable development objective of conserving significance and the need for change; and

- Offset negative impacts on aspects of significance by enhancing others through recording, disseminating, and archiving archaeological and historical interest of the important elements of the heritage assets affected.

2.4.8 Since heritage assets may be affected by direct physical change or by change in their setting it is important to be able to properly assess the nature, extent, and importance of the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting early in the process to assist with any planning decision-making in line with legal requirements.

GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets

2.4.9 This document emphasises that the information required in support of applications for planning permission and listed building consents should be no more than is necessary to reach an informed decision, and that activities to conserve or invest need to be proportionate to the significance of the heritage assets affected along with the impact on the significance of those heritage assets.

2.4.10 The NPPF glossary makes it clear that the setting of a heritage asset is the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

2.4.11 The contribution of setting to the significance of a heritage asset is often expressed by reference to views, a purely visual impression of an asset or place which can be static or dynamic, including a variety of views of, across, or including that asset, and views of the surroundings from or through the asset, and may intersect with, and incorporate the settings of numerous heritage assets. The way in which we experience an asset in

its setting is also experienced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust and vibration and the historic relationship between places.

2.4.12 It covers areas such as cumulative change, where the significance of a heritage asset has been compromised in the past by unsympathetic development affecting its setting. To accord with NPPF policies, consideration still needs to be given to whether additional change will further detract from, or can enhance, the significance of the asset. Change over time and understanding any history of change will help to determine how further development within the asset's setting is likely to affect the contribution made by the setting to the significance of the heritage asset.

2.4.13 The implications of development affecting the setting of heritage assets ought to be considered on a case-by-case basis and since conservation decisions are based on the nature, extent and level of a heritage asset's significance, Historic England recommends the following broad approach to assessment, undertaken as a series of steps:

- Step 1: Identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected.
- Step 2: Assess whether, how and to what degree these settings contribute to the significance of the heritage asset(s).
- Step 3: Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance.
- Step 4: Explore the way to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm.
- Step 5: Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.

2.4.14 The guidance reiterates the NPPF in stating that where developments affecting the setting results in 'substantial' harm to significance, this harm can only be justified if the development(s) deliver(s) substantial public benefit and that there is no other alternative (i.e. redesign or relocation).

Hedgerow Regulations (statutory Instrument No. 1160) 1997

2.4.15 The Regulations apply to most countryside hedgerows. In particular, they affect hedgerows which are 20 meters or more in length; which meet another hedgerow at each end; are on or adjoin land used for: agriculture, forestry, the breeding or keeping of horses, ponies or donkeys, common land, village greens, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) or Local Nature Reserves. The act is to protect important countryside

hedgerows from removal, either in part or whole. Removal not only includes grubbing out, but anything which could result in the destruction of the hedge.

2.5 Local Policies

2.5.1 The Ashford Borough Council Local Plan to 2030 was adopted in February 2019. In addition, Ashford Borough Council also has a Heritage Strategy dated October 2017 relating to the heritage assets of the Borough. There are three policies in the new Local Plan that address the protection and enhancement of the heritage assets of the borough. Policy ENV13 Conservation and Enhancement of Heritage Assets, ENV14 Conservation Areas and ENV15 Archaeology. As the Application Site is not close to a Conservation Area, only ENV13 and ENV15 are expanded upon below. In addition, the Local Plan also has a specific site policy, S7 relating to the Application Site. These are each covered below.

POLICY ENV13: Conservation and Enhancement of Heritage Assets.

2.5.2 Proposals which protect, conserve and enhance the heritage assets of the Borough, sustaining and enhancing their significance and the contribution they make to local character and distinctiveness, will be supported. Proposals that make sensitive use of heritage assets through regeneration, particularly where these bring redundant or under-used buildings and areas into appropriate and viable use consistent with their conservation, will be encouraged. Development will not be permitted where it will cause loss or substantial harm to the significance of heritage assets or their settings unless it can be demonstrated that substantial public benefits will be delivered that outweigh the harm or loss. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, or where a non-designated heritage asset is likely to be impacted, harm will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing the optimum viable use of the heritage asset. All applications which will affect a heritage asset, or its setting should be supported by a description of the asset's historic, architectural or archaeological significance with an appropriate level of detail relating to the asset and the likely impact of the proposals on its significance.

POLICY ENV15: Archaeology

2.5.3 The archaeological and historic integrity of Scheduled Monuments and other important archaeological sites, together with their settings, will be protected and where possible

enhanced. Development which would adversely affect such designated heritage assets will be assessed in line with Policy ENV13.

2.5.4 In addition, where the assessment outlined in Policy ENV13 reveals that important or potentially significant archaeological heritage assets may exist, developers will be required to arrange for field evaluations to be carried out in advance of the determination of planning applications.

2.5.5 Where the case for development affecting a site of archaeological interest is accepted, any archaeological remains should be preserved in situ as the preferred approach. Where this is not possible or justified, appropriate provision for preservation by record may be an acceptable alternative dependent upon their significance. Any archaeological recording should be by an approved archaeological body and take place in accordance with a specification and programme of work to be submitted to and approved by the Borough Council in advance of development commencing.

Local Planning Guidance

2.5.6 The Kent Design Guide, 2008. Prepared by the Kent Design Group, it provides the criteria necessary for assessing planning applications. Helps building designers, engineers, planners and developers achieve high standards of design and construction. It is adopted by the Council as a Supplementary Planning Document.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 This Desk-Based Assessment was commissioned by Brett Aggregates to support a planning application. This assessment has been prepared in accordance with guidelines set out by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (see below) and in the National Planning Policy Framework and the Good Practice Advice notes 1, 2 and 3, which now supersede the PPS 5 Practice Guide, which has been withdrawn by the Government.

3.1.2 This Desk-Based Assessment therefore forms the initial stage of the historic environment investigation and is intended to inform and assist in decisions regarding the historic environment along with mitigations for the proposed development and associated planning applications.

3.2 Desk-Based Assessment – Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2017)

3.2.1 This desktop study has been produced in line with archaeological standards, as defined by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014, revised 2017). A desktop, or desk-based assessment, is defined as being:

'Desk-based assessment will determine, as far as is reasonably possible from existing records, the nature, extent and significance of the historic environment within a specified area. Desk-based assessment will be undertaken using appropriate methods and practices which satisfy the stated aims of the project, and which comply with the Code of conduct and other relevant regulations of CIfA. In a development context desk-based assessment will establish the impact of the proposed development on the significance of the historic environment (or will identify the need for further evaluation to do so) and will enable reasoned proposals and decisions to be made whether to mitigate, offset or accept without further intervention that impact.'

(2017:4)

3.2.2 The purpose of the desk-based assessment is, therefore, an assessment that provides a contextual archaeological record, in order to provide:

- *an assessment of the potential for heritage assets to survive within the area of study*

- *an assessment of the significance of the known or predicted heritage assets considering, in England, their archaeological, historic, architectural and artistic interests*

- *strategies for further evaluation whether or not intrusive, where the nature, extent or significance of the resource is not sufficiently well defined*

- *an assessment of the impact of proposed development or other land use changes on the significance of the heritage assets and their settings*

- *strategies to conserve the significance of heritage assets, and their settings*

- *design strategies to ensure new development makes a positive contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of the historic environment and local place-shaping*

- *proposals for further archaeological investigation within a programme of research, whether undertaken in response to a threat or not.*

CIFA (2017:4)

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The methodology employed during this assessment has been based upon relevant professional guidance including the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standard and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment (CIfA, 2017).

4.2 Sources

4.2.1 A number of publicly accessible sources were consulted prior to the preparation of this document.

Archaeological databases

4.2.2 Although it is recognised that national databases are an appropriate resource for this particular type of assessment, the local Historic Environmental Record held at Kent County Council (KHER) contains sufficient data to provide an accurate insight into catalogued sites and finds within both the proposed development area and the surrounding landscape.

4.2.3 The National Heritage List for England (NHLE), which is the only official and up to date database of all nationally designated heritage assets and is the preferred archive for a comprehensive HER search.

4.2.4 The Archaeology Data Service Online Catalogue (ADS) was also used. The search was carried out within a 500m radius of the proposed development site and relevant HER data is included in the report. The Portable Antiquities Scheme Database (PAS) was also searched as an additional source as the information contained within is not always transferred to the local HER.

Cartographic and Pictorial Documents

4.2.5 A full map regression exercise has been incorporated within this assessment. Research was carried out using resources offered by the Kent County Council, the internet, Ordnance Survey and the Kent Archaeological Society. A full listing of bibliographic and cartographic documents used in this study is provided in Section 11.

Aerial photographs

4.2.6 The study of the collection of aerial photographs held by Google Earth was undertaken (Plates 1-5).

Secondary and Statutory Resources

4.2.7 Secondary and statutory sources, such as regional and periodic archaeological studies, archaeological reports associated with development control, landscape studies, dissertations and research frameworks are considered appropriate to this type of study and have been included within this assessment.

Walkover Survey

4.2.8 The Site is visited for a walkover survey. This is for the purpose of:

- Identifying any historic landscape features not shown on maps.
- Conducting a rapid survey for archaeological features and Heritage Assets.
- Making a note of any surface scatters of archaeological material.
- Identifying constraints or areas of disturbance that may affect archaeological investigation.
- Understand the setting of known Heritage Assets and the wider landscape.

4.2.9 The results of the walkover survey are detailed in Section 5.6 of this document.

Constraints

4.2.10 The baseline assessment has been based on information readily available at the time of undertaking the assessment. The nature of buried archaeological assets, there is still the potential for hitherto unknown remains to be discovered. In respect to the data set retrieved, where there is data relating to the Portable Antiquities Scheme, the full extent, date and nature of these sites is often uncertain and a number of HER records in relation to older antiquarian finds, the data is not always accurate and detailed to that of modern archaeological standards.

5 ARCHAOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 This section of the assessment will focus on the archaeological and historical development of this area, placing it within a local context. Each period classification will provide a brief introduction to the wider landscape (1km radius centred on the Application Site), followed by a full record of archaeological sites, monuments and records within the site's immediate vicinity. There were no Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens, Historic Parks and Gardens or NMP cropmarks within the search area. Time scales for archaeological periods represented in the report are listed in Table 1.

Prehistoric	Palaeolithic	*c*. 500,000 BC – *c*.10,000 BC
	Mesolithic	*c*.10,000 BC – *c*. 4,300 BC
	Neolithic	*c*. 4.300 BC – *c*. 2,300 BC
	Bronze Age	*c*. 2,300 BC – *c*. 600 BC
	Iron Age	*c*. 600 BC – *c*. AD 43
Romano-British		*c*. AD 43 – *c*. AD 410
Anglo-Saxon		AD 410 – AD 1066
Medieval		AD 1066 – AD 1485
Post-medieval		AD 1485 – AD 1900
Modern		AD 1901 – present day

Table 1: Classification of Archaeological periods

5.1.2 The Kent HER records within the 1km assessment area have a large number of findspot records reported under the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS), nearly half. The below ground archaeology records are primarily as a result of archaeological works associated with the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL). In addition, attesting to the rural nature of the area, there are 11 farmstead records. Aside from the CTRL, there has been little other opportunity by way of archaeological investigations in the area.

5.2 Previous Archaeological Works

Intrusive Excavations

5.2.1 There have been a large number of intrusive events in the assessment area particularly in relation to the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL), which have yield importance amounts

of archaeology and land use across the area relating to the Prehistoric and Roman period. The results of which are included within the HER database and shown in Figure 15. Key excavations are discussed in greater detail below.

Park Wood Cottage

5.2.2 Circa 200m north of the Application Site was a CTRL evaluation at Park Wood Cottage in 1999. The evaluation has revealed a total of 17 archaeological features, including ditches and pits, distributed throughout the evaluation area. Dating evidence suggests that the features in this area represent Late Iron Age/ Early Romano-British, medieval and modern remains, with the pre-modern remains considered indicative of field systems as opposed to settlement remains. Dating suggested that the colluvium is of Medieval or later date. It was interpreted that the remains suggested associated field systems extended down the hillside on an east to west and north to south alignment from the settlement enclosure recorded at Little Stock Farm to the west and that the site was away from any occupation areas. In addition, it was thought that the Medieval field systems within the landscape extended from the Medieval settlement centre at or near Park Wood Cottage farm buildings to the east of the investigation site.

Little Stock Farm

5.2.3 Circa 500m north west of the Application Site there was in 1999 evaluation of eight 30m trenches followed by a strip, map and sample at Little Stock Farm. The earliest activity was represented by isolated pits of middle Neolithic date and two pits of late Bronze Age-early Iron Age date were also found, one containing several pots in a placed deposit. The majority of evidence was for the Iron Age period being enclosures, droveways and a possible roundhouse as well as two burials. The enclosures area, including those as nearby Park Wood have also bee re-worked suggesting continuous occupation. A single probable Sunken Featured Building of Anglo-Saxon date was found, as was a medieval quarry and ditches. This area of the CTRL investigations with its Prehistoric remains were considered to have regional importance.

Bower Road

5.2.4 On the outer reaches of the assessment area to the north west of the Application Site, CTRL excavations at Bower Road, to the west of the Little Stock Farm site. recorded were principally of Roman date. However, a small assemblage of redeposited worked flint, ranging in date from the Mesolithic to early Bronze Age, was also recovered, suggesting some prehistoric activity in the area. An early Roman field system was

observed with a 2nd century rural agricultural settlement established along with ditched enclosures, water hole and several pits. It was not clear if this was a settlement representing a shift away from the earlier settlement at Little Stock Farm. A cremation burial was identified just outside the enclosure. This agricultural complex seems to have been in use until the late 3rd century and may have continued into the 4th century. Post Roman activity was represented by ragstone wall footings and field boundaries.

Westhawk Farm

5.2.5 This site is circa 6km to the west, north west of the Application Site. Whilst outside of the Study Area its size and importance especially in relation to the Roman period and adds context to the wider landscape associated with the application Site. Covering 18 hectares by geophysical survey with the excavation concentrated in the south western section. Sited on slightly higher plateaus of Wealden clay of a south eastern facing valley. The site was excavated in numerous phases in the late 1990s. Preservation due to waterlogging in parts was considered good with finds of leather, wood and rope. The site also has a small outcrop of 3rd deposits of River Terrace Gravel. Some Palaeolithic artefacts were revealed and carry importance given the paucity of finds seen in the area of the Upper Stour.29 Mesolithic flints were recovered from a gully and ditch but there is the possibility that some of these could also be attributed to the Neolithic. 145 Neolithic and Bronze Age flints were found evenly across the area and mist recovered from Roman contexts.

5.2.6 A Bronze Age field system on a north east / south west alignment was found and this continued in a north westerly direction beyond the site and the same alignment was seen as the Bisley Farm site, just to the west of Westhawk Farm. It was considered to be associated with animal husbandry as opposed to arable farming. An Iron Age cremation with grave goods placed in a wooden casket and considered of high status that appeared to be a stand-alone feature and suggestive of a pre-Roman settlement in the area.

5.2.7 Significant finds and features related to the Roman period that extended beyond the edges of the site. The site was interpreted as a roadside settlement of moderate prosperity over a number of different phases located at the junction of two Roman Road of some 15 hectares in extent as suggested by the geophysical survey. Environmental analysis suggested that the landscape was one that was open. There were enclosures fronting the road with timber buildings both circular and rectangular. There was also a

shrine/temple on the south eastern side of the Canterbury Road and close to a waterhole. A possible ford across Whitewater Dyke and a Cemetery outside of the north western settlement boundary were also revealed as well as localised iron working workshop. Occupation at the settlement appeared to cease by the mid-3rd century and similar in date seen in other Wealden iron working sites of which Westhawk Farm is on the north eastern edge of The Weald.

5.2.8 For the Post Medieval period, further field boundaries were revealed showing a pattern of more than one phase and sometimes in alignment with that of the Roman road and with some similar to those seen on the tithe map when fields were smaller. Part of the unbuilt area has since been scheduled.

Land at South Willesborough

5.2.9 Again, this lies 5km north west outside of the Study Area but is located is a similar area type of the Application Site being the East Stour Floodplain and showcases the type of archaeology and activity occurring alongside the East Stour River. An evaluation followed by an excavation was undertaken in 2001 (EKE5601). The 55 evaluation trenches across the site found in the extreme south west part of the site, circa 40m east of the railway, cooking pits in which Late Neolithic/Early Bronze age burst and struck flint were found. It was found that there was little disturbance from ploughing of other agricultural activity. The pottery was of the Early Iron age period. This area of the site also found Late Iron/Age/Romano-British features of circular pits and linears interpreted as filed systems. Across the site generally residual Prehistoric and Romano British material was recorded. The excavation following the evaluation was focused on the south west corner of the site (EKE5858) close to the railway and the East Stour. This revealed many more pits of the same period and a number of hearths, although these had no dating evidence. An Iron Age cremation of an infant was located. The site was considered to possibly be associated as a temporary riverside camp close to running water and due to its low-lying area possibly only in seasonal use.

Cheeseman's Green

5.2.10 A 55Ha site had a geophysical survey in 2004 that identified a number of anomalies and having archaeological potential of several linear, rectilinear, curvilinear anomalies as well as magnetic debris areas. The area is located south of the East Stour around Bilham Farm circa 1km south east of the Application Site. In 2010 an evaluation was undertaken

consisting of 150 trail trenches. By 2012/2013 there were areas subject to strip, map and sample excavations and further evaluation areas also opened and watching Briefs.

5.2.11 Surface finds of Mesolithic flints were found. Romano-British pottery associated with curvilinear and linear features seen in the geophysical survey. Suggesting settlement enclosures and field systems of Bronze Age, Iron Age and Romano-British date across the area on the ridge slope away from the East Stour alongside trackways and field systems. Many roundhouse structures of Middle to Late Iron Age were found along with four post structures of granary type features suggesting a dispersed rural open settlement. In all there were five urned cremation burials were recorded of Late Iron Age date.

5.2.12 The landscape appeared to be reorganised in the Romano-British period comprising of boundary ditches, trackways, field and enclosures and a possible shrine. Whilst no structures were found, this suggested settlement nearby.

5.2.13 The work also identified Medieval and Post Medieval pits, enclosures dated by pottery and finds in the western part of the site of possible settlement activity and one of the enclosures possibly a Medieval moated site.

Others

5.2.14 Circa 3km to the east at Sellindge, recent excavations have also found Romano-British field systems as well as Medieval and Post Medieval drainage ditches. Bronze Age activity in the form of a single inverted bucket urn was observed as well as residual Mesolithic and Neolithic flints.

Stour Palaeolithic Classification Area

5.2.15 The Application Site sits predominately within an area classified under the survey as No. 36. Essentially Area 36 follows the river itself and is part of the Stour floodplain and associated alluvium. This area follows as far north as Wye. It was these floodplain gravels that were exploited at Conningbrook Lakes to the north. It is of the Holocene period in date and can at its edges be underlain by Pleistocene slopewash deposits. Finds from this area are rare, although north of Ashford at Conningbrook Manor Quarry, evidence of the early Upper Palaeolithic has been found and is of national importance. The gravels yielded many fauna, such as woolly rhinoceros and mammoth, spotted hyena, lion, bear, bison, and giant Irish elk as well as numerous specimens of small

mammals with the arctic lemming being especially abundant although these were no identified in-situ.

5.2.16 Given the Palaeolithic Potential associated with the Stour a specialist Geoarchaeological & Palaeoenvironmental desk-based assessment was commissioned which findings are summarised below and forms an appendix to this report.

Geoarchaeological & Palaeoenvironmental Assessment

5.2.17 Judging by nearby floodplain deposits it is probably underlain by fine-grained alluvium with some evidence of gravel deposition in the lower part of the alluvial sequence. Most if not all the alluvium can be assumed to be of Holocene age, probably initially incorporating sparse remains of earlier gravel deposits. Organic units are not common in the nearby floodplain deposits but their presence beneath the present site is certainly possible. Any such deposits preserved on the Aldington Wide site would therefore clearly be of geoarchaeological and paleoenvironmental importance.

5.2.18 Consequently, in order to increase knowledge and understanding of the environmental history of the site, a preliminary geoarchaeological borehole survey is recommended to establish the distribution, thickness and nature of the superficial deposits. This evaluation exercise would also help establish the extent to which any natural deposits may have been affected by the development of the Aldington flood storage reservoir.

5.3 Archaeological and Historical Narrative

5.3.1 The East Stour is one of the tributaries of the Great Stour. The East Stour rises at Postling, north of Hythe, moving on a north-westward trajectory, through Ashford where it joins the Great Stour and heads towards Canterbury. There is little by way of Palaeolithic finds in the immediate area. North of Ashford at Conningbrook Lakes there has been unstratified finds in the form of y in the form of faunal and mammal remains as well as lithics.

5.3.2 According to hasted. A late 18th century historian, historically Smeeth was called ‘Smede’ meaning an open smooth plain. In 791 there is documentation referring to pasture for 50 hogs within Smede to the church of Canterbury. However, other definitions of the name suggest it was associated with a smithy, forge. There is no entry in the Domesday for Smeeth, although the church has Norman origins.

5.3.3 Evegate meaning Thieve's Gate is recorded in a charter in 993 AD. Evegate Manor is recorded in Domesday Book as having one villager with ploughland for one team and 8 acres of meadow. At the time of the invasion the lands belonged to Kind Edward and by the time of the Domesday survey, the lands belonged to Hugh de Monfort and later became a sub-manor of the Archbishop of Canterbury's manor of Aldington. From at least 1307 to 1452/3 it was held by the Passele or Pashley family. The stone open hall may have been built for Sir Edmund Pashley, who inherited in 1341 and died in 1361. After the mid C15 it passed first to the Pimpes of Nettlestead Place and then to the Scotts of Scott Hall. The will of Sir Thomas Scott dated 17 Dec 1594 has this codicil "That my executors shall finish the buildings which I have begonne at Thevegate for Dame Dorothie, my wife". (pers. Comm. D. Skeer, Smeeth. This may refer to the late C16 and early C17 refurbishment of Evegate Manor. The Scotts of Scotts Hall held the manor until the late C18. In 1965 the building was sold off separately from the adjoining farm. It was likely during this period the area consisted of small hamlets and villages of farming communities.

5.3.4 The village is linked with the Scott family who had a manor house between Smeeth and Sellindge which was lost some time after 1600. The family was started by John Balliol, who founded Balliol College, and had many famous members including Sir William Scott who was Knight Marshal of England in 1350.

5.3.5 Stone Street Green is a small hamlet in the parish of Aldington to the south of the Application Site. The Domesday Book records there are seven villagers and seven smallholders. Lands includes 2.5 men's plough teams. The lands at the time of the invasion and the survey belonged to the Canons of Dover (St Martin).

5.3.6 In the Medieval period, Smeeth would have been a small settlement as a collection of hamlets close to a key route between Hythe, Ashford and on to London.

5.3.7 By 1762 the road was turnpiked being one part of the Faversham, Ashford, Hythe and Canterbury Trust and altered and broadly reflects the current route of the A20 which runs just south of Smeeth whereas the old road was to the north. Since the main route out of Canterbury at the time being Stone Street was not turnpiked and considered not to be in good condition as a result being rough and dangerous, travellers were advised to travel the route to Hythe via Ashford instead.

5.3.8 The London to Dover railway was built in the 1840s. The railway passes to the south of the A20 and is also the route of the Chanel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL). By the 1990s, the section of the M20 from junction 11 to junction 13 for Folkestone passing to the south of Smeeth was constructed.

5.3.9 In 1989-91 the Ashford Flood alleviation scheme was constructed in order to reduce flooding in the Ashford area. Two onstream storage areas were created, one in the area of Aldington and another at Hothfield, which the area comprised of an earth filling water retaining embankment with a clay core and flow control device. Flooding in 2000 meant that the Aldington storage area was impounded and overtopped the spillway which caused limited flooding in the area. The lake is currently used for fishing.

Landscape Character Areas

5.3.10 The KHER historic landscape classification shows the Application Site as part of 'Miscellaneous valley bottom paddocks and pastures', which tend to usually be small enclosures with rectangular and irregular in shape and applicable to the majority of the East Stour flood plain.

5.3.11 The area of the Application Site falls within area designated under the Ashford Landscape Character Upper Stour Valley. The report considered in an extensive open valley floor landscape of predominately arable farming. That is intensively farmed with loss of hedgerows and detractors included the railway and CTRL. The re is a low sense of place but it is critical for flood defences and green infrastructure.

5.3.12 Immediately adjacent to the east is East Stour landscape characteristics with Back house Wood as the high point. The landscape is undulating with the land rising to the north and south. There are mosaic like field patterns with river shapes dictated by the non-linear route of water courses on mainly pastoral land use. Across the landscape are blocks of woodland along with scattered farms. The rising valley side offering high visibility.

5.4 Cartographic Sources and Map Regression

Andrews, Dury and Herbert map of 1769

5.4.1 Andrews, Dury and Herbert published their atlas some thirty years before the Ordnance Survey, immediately becoming the best large-scale maps of the county. This shows the Application Site south of the East Stour River and east of the road from Smeeth towards

the hamlet of Stone Stead Green and Aldington Corner. At the junction of this road and the East Stour is 'Havegate Mill'. There is no evidence of the woodland east of the PDA (Fig. 3).

Ordnance Surveyors Drawing, 1798

5.4.2 This map shows far greater details of buildings, and land use. The routes of the Stour and tributaries are different to that of the previous map and appears to have been straightening with managed channelling in a number of places as a result of Evegate Mill. The Application Site itself falling within the East Stour to the north and that of a tributary that commences north east of Aldington. The land uses of green suggests that the area of the Application Site is one of pasture, being part of a larger field, of which pasture use applies to the majority of fields adjacent to the river channels. Adjacent to the Application Site is the area of woodland (Fig.4).

Tithe Maps

5.4.3 The Application Site lies at the edge of the parish of Smeeth (Fig.5). Still part of a large field, it is designated 139. This is owned by Sir Edward Knatchbull Baronet and occupied by Wyborn William Tilt. The Knatchbull family had their seat in nearby Mersham and was a major land owner in the area. The field in which the Application Site is part id called Great Meadow and is pasture. The field has a number of drainage channels surrounding it feeding into the East Stour at the northern end of the Application Site, which shows a crossing point at the northern end of the Application Site. Evegate Mill and stables can clearly be seen to the west. To the north is shown the line of the new railway.

Historic OS Map 1871

5.4.4 This is the first properly scaled OS map. The parish boundary line is shown adjacent to the Application Site and the southern part. Across the Application Site is a footpath, which runs from the area of Water Farm to the north east towards a confluence of footpaths converging just north of Stonestreet Green. Within the PDA is shown a small water course that flows in a north east to south west direction (Fig.6).

Historic OS map 1898-1939

5.4.5 There is very little change across the Application Site The small water course is no longer showing and by 1939, electricity pylons cross the northern part of the Application Site with an electricity sub station in the field to the west (Figs.7 -9).

Historic OS map 1970-71

5.4.6 There is little change at the Application Site. The footpath across the Application Site is not depicted. To the south of the Application Site is now Woodleas Farm and buildings. (Fig.10).

Historic OS map 1993

5.4.7 By 1993, there has been significant changes. Adjacent to the Application Site on the eastern site is now a lake with two islands. There have been extensive earthworks created on the western boundary and new channels created altering the course of the East Stour (Fig.11)

5.5 Aerial Photographs

1940s

5.5.1 The aerial photos do not align correctly. They show the Application Sit as pasture. A few cropmarks to the north east of the Application Site appear to show possible earlier water courses associated with the East Stour (Plate 1).

1960s

5.5.2 The Application Site is shown under arable use. The woodland immediately east of the PDA has been cleared of trees except for around the boundaries (Plate 2).

1990

5.5.3 This shows significant changes at the Application Site with the Aldington Flood Storage Area embankment having just been newly constructed and a lake created. At this time there is still a central area of land in the lake. To the east the area of woodland has grown back. There is a small alteration to the course of the East Stour as it passes under the embankment. In addition, the area of the embankment removes the line of the water course seen in that area on the historical mapping (Plate 3).

2003 - Present

5.5.4 There is little change other than the CTRL has been built to the north of the existing railway line (Plates 4 & 5)

LIDAR

5.5.5 The LIDAR shows the line of the embankment on the western side with the lake area and islands to the east. The northern area is rougher ground, and this is reflected in the lidar (Fig. 16)

5.6 Walkover Survey

5.6.1 The walkover survey is not intended as a detailed survey but the rapid identification of archaeological features and any evidence for buried archaeology in the form of surface scatters of lithic or pottery artefacts as well as assessing heritage assets and setting. A walkover survey was undertaken on the 18th of November 2021. No archaeological finds or features were observed (Plates 6-16).

5.6.2 The site was accessed from the northern entry point off Station Road. Following a trackway downwards along the edge of an arable field to the north of the Application Site there is a small bridge that crosses the East Stour at the northern end of the Application Site. The area of the Application Site is rough grass with a few trees around the edge of the lake. On the western boundary is a vertical sided drainage channel that follows the shape of the raised flood embankment that is adjacent to the Application Site. The flood embankment is circa 3m above the ground level of the Application Site with a steep side that curves broadly on a north-south axis. To the north western part, the River Stour passes through a culvert under the embankment. Halfway along the western boundary is a sluice gate. To northern part of the eastern boundary is a straight drainage channel with an arable field to the east. The south eastern boundary is that of Backhouse Wood with the lake forming the remaining eastern boundary. As public footpaths cross the site, the embankment has either side of its slope pairs of steps in three separate places to allow for footpath access.

6 ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE ASSETS

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 Step 1 of the methodology recommended by the Historic England guidance The Setting of Heritage Assets (see Methodology above) is 'to identify which designated heritage assets might be affected by a proposed development and this was one of the tasks of the site visit. Development proposals may adversely impact heritage assets where they remove a feature which contributes to the significance of a designated heritage asset or where they interfere with an element of a heritage asset's setting which contributes to its significance, such as interrupting a key relationship or a designed view'. As setting is not limited by distance a review of designated assets outside of the study area has been undertaken.

Designated Assets

6.1.2 The Application Site is located away from any core historical areas primarily due to the location being part of the flood plain. There are no designated assets within the Application Site. There are no Conservation Areas within the assessment area. The walkover survey confirms that there are long views along the valley and across to each side in part limited by woodland areas and boundary vegetation and narrow tree lines roads. The rural nature of the area means there are only 12 heritage assets within the assessment area with the vast majority located on the outer reaches of the assessment area and due to the natural topography and distance do not have any intervisibility with the area of the Application Site. However, closest to the Application Site are Evegate Mill House and Evegate Mill and associated stable and barn, which are circa 350m west of the Application Site and will be considered further.

6.1.3 The other designated assets within the area is that of Grade II listed Evegate Manor, circa 750m to the north on the higher ground of the valley sides. However, with the vegetation between the Application Site and that of the property boundaries there is no intervisibility. To the south along Calleywell Lane are The Old Cottage and Symnells Cottage circa 535m and 650m respectively from the Application Site. To the south these are on the southern valley side on slightly higher ground. Surrounding these buildings are mature vegetation and trees as part of the property boundaries as well a narrow hedge lined roads as well as the view towards the Application Site being limited by the existing flood embankment which also applies to those Grade II listed building located along Goldwell lane being Symnells and Goldwell Manor whose view is even further

limited of the Application Site by the buildings within Woodleas Farm. Hogben, circa 1175m to the south west of the Application Site has no visibility with the Application Site being located with the south western edges of Backhouse Wood between themselves and the Application Site. Consequently, given the lack of intervisibility and interrelationship with the Application Site, these designated heritage assets will not be considered further.

6.1.4 Due to the possibility of long views, designated heritage assets outside of the study area have been reviewed. Circa 1.7km to the south east, tis the village of Aldington, located upon the southern ridgeline However, the topography and existing built-up area within the village, means there are limited views into the valley bottom with view only across to the other ridgeline on the northern side of the valley. along with the built-up areas, Therefore, there are no other designated heritage assets outside of the assessment area that need to be considered.

Non-Designated Assets

6.1.5 Non-designated heritage assets are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas, or landscapes identified by the KHER or by a walkover survey as having a degree of heritage significance, but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets. No non-designated assets have been identified.

Evegate Mill and Mill House, along with accompanying stable/outbuildings

6.1.6 There are three designated assets individually listed associated with Evegate Mill and is it appropriate to consider these as a group. The original Mill House which is considered to be early 18th century with possible framed hall house origin. This building is two storeys, and the listing descriptions shows a number of architectural features remain especially the end left bay of the main range which has an arched opening to rear (now blocked), through which the water ran, this being the wheelhouse before construction of the new mill in 1862, and diversion of the river. Its architectural and historical interest is its primary significance.

6.1.7 At right angles to Mill House, Evegate Mill. This is taller being some three storeys in height. Again, from the outside, it appears little changed, and the listing description confirms internally historical features remain such as the three-wheel machinery in working order. Its architectural and historical interest is its primary significance.

6.1.8 Located on the opposite side of Station Road on the western side is the stable/outbuilding associated with the mill and believed to be 18th century. It is single storey with a timber frame on ragstone base to prevent erosion by the Stour, with plain tiled roof. Its architectural and historical interest is its primary significance and combined as a group they are aesthetically pleasing.

6.1.9 Their setting aside the East Stour is obviously importance and the path of the East Stour in the area has been managed for the benefit of the mill with even an improved mill with the building of a new mill in 1862. Many water mills were fairly isolated as they were sited on the most suitable watercourse on an estate or manor, although they needed good communications for the transportation of grain and flour with roads, bridges and fords. This is the case at Evegate where it forms its own little isolated group. Due to the floodplain defence embankment, there are limited views from the Application Site towards the group of heritage assets at Evegate Mill. In certain places it is possible to glimpse the top of Evegate Mill itself which is three storeys. It was no possible to view the other two buildings. As designated Grade II heritage assets, these carry medium significance.

Historic Landscape

6.1.10 The East Stour east of Ashford forms part of an important historic landscape with the Application Site forming part of the rural area consisting of the floodplain associated with the East Stour and its tributaries with a network of drainage channels. Across the area are likely to be the remains of earlier watercourses and channels. It is believed that the main channel of the East Stour was re-cut and straightened in the Post Medieval period as it approached Evegate Mill. It is likely that these channels have been regularly cleared to aid drainage during the 19th and 20th centuries. There has been little other historical change to the landscape until the arrival of the nearby motorway and widening of the railway line for the Channel Tunnel Rail Link. Significant change occurred at the application Site in when the lake was created as part of the Ashford Flood Alleviation scheme which overall had minimal impact to an historic landscape that already has a number of other lakes in the vicinity and along the Stour.

6.2 Archaeological Potential

6.2.1 This section pulls together by period the historical documentation, mapping, aerial imagery and KHER data, and the known historic landscape to provide an overview by period

Palaeolithic

6.2.2 The Palaeolithic period represents the earliest phases of human activity in the British Isles, up to the end of the last Ice Age. The Kent HER has no entries for this period within the assessment area. The Stour Palaeolithic Survey assigned the Application Site to area designated SP_36 being the Stour Alluvium, within Wealden Basin. In the wider area to the north of Ashford at the Conningbrook Manor gravel pit, in the Stour alluvium and also SP_36, Palaeolithic evidence have been found. Discovered at the pit were tools as well as datable Pleistocene fauna and paleoenvironmental evidence, possibly suggesting some form of hunting may be occurring in the area in that period with Great Stour River making the area attractive. The survey considers the likelihood of Palaeolithic remains as being moderate with possible Upper Palaeolithic material under alluvium at the edge of the alluvial floodplain a.

6.2.3 A separate Palaeolithic DBA based Most if not all the alluvium can be assumed to be of Holocene age, probably initially incorporating sparse remains of earlier gravel deposits. Organic units are not common in the nearby floodplain deposits but their presence beneath the present site is certainly possible. Therefore, the Palaeolithic potential is considered **high**. Any such deposits preserved on the Aldington Wide site would therefore clearly be of geoarchaeological and paleoenvironmental importance

Mesolithic

6.2.4 The Mesolithic period reflects a society of hunter-gatherers active after the last Ice Age. The Kent HER has one record directly from this period where at Evegate Farm, circa 795m east, north east, 129 unretouched blades, 32 scrapers, a graver and an axe were found (TR 03 NE 27). Little else is known about the findings or how accurate the location of these are to their find location. There is also a Prehistoric period record (TR 03 NE 242) where residual lithic material was recovered circa 940m north east of the PDA as part of an excavation under a possible windmill mound. The East Stour colluvium material is likely to contain residual lithic material possibly Mesolithic and or Neolithic as seen during the Park Wood Cottage, Little Stock Farm excavation and always eastwards near Sellindge where the lithics are likely to be from a local gravel source. It is considered that the potential for finding remains that date to this period is **moderate**.

Neolithic

6.2.5 The Neolithic period was the beginning of a sedentary lifestyle based on agriculture and animal husbandry. The Kent HER has no direct records from this period. However, the CTRL evaluations and others to the east at Sellindge have identified possible residual Mesolithic and or Neolithic worked flints as mentioned above most likely from a local gravel source. We know that the Great Stour Valley was attractive in the Neolithic period with Neolithic earthen long barrows downstream from Ashford at Wye and Chilham with Julieberrie's grave as well as Neolithic evidence located north east of Ashford from the Great Stour as dredged material. Therefore, the potential for finding remains that date to this period within the confines of the development site is considered **moderate**.

Bronze Age

6.2.6 The Bronze Age was a period of large migrations from the continent and more complex social developments on a domestic, industrial and ceremonial level. The Kent HER has two records from this period within the assessment area where at the Little Stock Farm excavations circa 700m north, north west of the Application Site Bronze Age pits were identified. In the wider Ashford area, to the south east of Ashford, recent excavations at Cheeseman's Green found evidence of occupation and cremation burials (TR 03 NW 120) for this period and south of Ashford at the East Stour riverside may also fall into the Bronze Age period (TR 04 SW 123). In the wider area, Bronze Age field systems have also been found to the north east of Ashford in the Hinxhill/Wye area and ring ditches to the east at Sevington. All confirming that this area in and around the Stour was attractive during this period. Therefore, the potential for finding remains that date to this period within the confines of the development site is considered **high**.

Iron Age

6.2.7 The Iron Age is, by definition a period of established rural farming communities with extensive field systems and large 'urban' centres (the Iron Age 'Tribal capital' or civitas of the Cantiaci). The Kent HER has seven records from this period within the assessment area referencing finds and features from evaluations at Park Wood Cottage (TR 03 NE 62) and Little Stock Farm (TR 03 NE 66) associated with the CTRL. In the wider area south of Ashford on the East Stour, a seasonal occupation site on the banks of the East Stour was found including features such as hearth/oven features along with dateable pottery (TR 04 SW 124). Not just at Park Wood Cottage have Iron Age field systems been

identified as well as further to the east on the outer reaches of the study area (TR 03 NE 205). Further west along the East Stour area, south and south east of Ashford, field systems have been identified (TR 04 SW 370; TR 04 SW 83) and at Waterbrook Farm, close to the river, enclosures and settlement structures (TR 04 SW 400) as well as identifying a palaeochannel of the East Stour (TR 03 NW 108). In the wider area to the east at Cheeseman's Green, circa 3.5km from the Application Site, the evidence there suggests a small rural settlement containing an extensive number of roundhouses, trackways and field boundaries and numerous occupational finds (TR 03 NW 121) and further west, the Westhawk Farm area t has also identified Iron Age occupation, burials and structures, and possible industrial activity nearby (TR 04 SW 119; TQ 94 SE 44; TR 04 SW 139; TR 04 SW 380; TR 04 SW 381). There have also been occasional PAS findspots of three copper alloy coins and a brooch where the exact location of the finds are not disclosed. This informs us the area along side the East Stour and other tributaries in the wider Ashford area was one of settlement, industry and also farming. It is likely that the Application Site is away from the Little Stock Farm settlement area and like Parkwood Cottage, there is the possibility of finding field systems. Therefore, the potential for finding remains that date to this period within the confines of the development site is considered **high**.

Romano-British

6.2.8 The Romano-British period is the term given to the Romanised culture of Britain under the rule of the Roman Empire, following the Claudian invasion in AD 43, Britain then formed part of the Roman Empire for nearly 400 years. The Kent HER has 3 records from this period within the assessment area all being PAS findspots of a copper alloy mount (MKE55807), a brooch (MKE109111) and a copper alloy ear ring (MKE109218), where the exact location of the find is not disclosed. To the south just outside of the study area is the One being that of the line of the Roman road running from the Westhawk area of Ashford towards Dover on a north west to south east direction (TR 04 SE 120). Many Iron Age sites show occupation into the Roman periods, and this also applies to Bower Road (TR 03 NE 203) amongst others in the area. Westhawk Farm is at the junction of the Roman Roads and an extensive Roman settlement has been found there (TR 04 SW 117; TR 04 SW 435; TR 04 SW 383), along with a cemetery and industrial activity, and some of the finds suggestive of the site being one of high status. As a result, that area is now scheduled. Circa 5km north west of the Application Site near Boys Hall, a Roman farmstead, along with a small cemetery has been found (TR 04 SW 72) and it is likely

that surrounding the settlement at Westhawk would have been a number of farmsteads along the East Stour River to supply the settlement. It is also known that the Roman exploited the waterways along the Stour with mills. The potential for finding remains that date to this period within the confines of the development site is considered **high**.

Anglo-Saxon

6.2.9 The Kent HER has two records from this period both PAS finds of a silver dress and personal accessories (MKE5588) and a gemstone (MKE55589). We know from documentation that the area was settled in this period, most likely as small settlements and a farming community, with some places recorded at the time of the Domesday Book. The Application Site appears away from the settlement areas in this period. Therefore, the potential for finding remains that date to this period within the confines of the development site is considered **low**.

Medieval

6.2.10 The Kent HER has 26 records from this period within the assessment area reflecting the crystallisation of the settlement pattern across the Study area where six of the records are listed buildings of various manors, mills and farmhouses. Some of these farming sites no longer exist in the landscape such being the Medieval site at Little Stock Farm where an enclosure and filed system were found (TR 03 NE 67) and also at Park Wood where a Medieval field system was identified during the CTRL excavations. In addition, a possible sheep fold at Bower Road was excavated (TR 03 NE 204). To the north east of the Application Site on the outer reaches of the assessment area is a mill pond and dam (TR 03 NE 21) and a possible windmill mound (TR 03 NE 21). Across the area there have been 16 PAS findspots with the majority as silver coins along with pins, buckle, strap end, lead weight, seal matrix and a silver finger ring reflecting domestic and personal rubbish lost.

6.2.11 Within Kent there are areas where moated sites are clustered. There are a group in South Ashford; The Moat; Chilmington Green; Singleton; Boys Hall and Sevington. Moated sites south of Ashford all appear located around the flood plain on slightly higher ground. Moated sites have little by way of documentary evidence. Getting a moat, it seems at the time was not of significant importance to be recorded except for a number of high-status sites. As a consequence, it can be difficult to determine why moats were built. Various reasons range from defence, status, to providing freshwater fish or assisting with drainage in the area. Many moated sites were situated on clay

lowland area that aided the retention of water within the moat, otherwise clay would have to have been imported in. The reason for these moats had no one overriding factor with complexity of a number of reasons of defence, status, isolated locations. There appears to be no correlation in size, shape and social status. There is no evidence of any moat or earthworks associated with the Application Site but would have formed part of the pasture and meadowland in this area east of Ashford.

6.2.12 Map regression shows this area of the Application Site as pasture in the Post Medieval period, and it was likely that the Application Site was also meadows and pasture in this period being on the flood plain of the East Stour. The route of the East Stour through the Application Site would have been different to that of todays route and there is evidence that the River Stour was used in the Medieval period for the transportation of goods and services. The potential for finding remains that date to this period is considered **moderate**.

Post Medieval

6.2.13 The Kent HER has 21 records from this period within the study area. 11 of the records are associated with farmsteads attesting to the rural and agricultural nature of the area in this period, many of which still survive as farms, or the farmhouse only remains. There are also six listed building records. The closest of which is Evegate Mill House (TR 03 NE 15) and mill (TR 03 NE 132) and outbuilding (TR 03 NE 168). Map regression confirms that the Application Site was pasture in this period. The map regressions shows that the course of the East Stour is likely to have altered within this period with the river being recut for the mill plus the arrival of the railway. There are also three PAS findspot records of silver coins. The potential for finding remains that date to this period is considered **low**.

Modern

6.2.14 There are just two KHER records from this period, both as World War II crash sites on the outer reaches of the Study area to the north and south west. It was during the late 20th century that the embankment and lake was created as a water storage area. The potential for finding remains that date to this period is considered **low**.

Unknown

6.2.15 There are three HER records of unknown date. Two of these relate to cropmarks. Both on the outer reaches of the assessment area, One to the west of a square enclosure TR

03 NE 201) and one to the north west of a possible rectangular enclosure (TR 03 NE 236). The third item is a PAS find of a copper alloy toggle of unknown date (MKE56439).

Overview

6.2.16 This desk-based assessment has considered the archaeological potential of the site, but this potential can only be tested by fieldwork.

6.2.17 The desk-based assessment has considered the archaeological potential of the site. Archaeological investigations in the vicinity, map research, the historical environment record results and recent archaeological investigations have shown that the Application Site may contain archaeological sites, and these can be summarised as:

- Prehistoric: **high**
- Iron Age: **high**
- Roman: **high**
- Anglo-Saxon: **low**
- Medieval: **moderate**
- Post-Medieval: **low**
- Modern: **low**

7 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS AND ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

7.1 Development Proposals

7.1.1 The development proposal is for the creation of two new wetland cells. The existing dyke channel would be widened with the exaction of the eastern bank. The existing dyke outlet would be blocked off with new wall and fitted with penstock to allow draining for maintenance (Fig. 2).

7.2 Assessment of the Physical Impact on the Archaeological Resource

7.2.1 Assessment of the findings from the KHER and other resources would suggest that there is archaeological significance within the assessment area for the Prehistoric period. As the site contains alluvium from the Stour, there is Palaeolithic potential. The areas to the south west, south and east contains evidence relating to the Neolithic, Bronze and Iron Age, as well as into the Roman period. The Site is in close proximity of other settlement activity seen on the East Stour in the Prehistoric periods usually situated on the slightly higher ground adjoining the flood plains of the Stour and its tributaries. The archaeological potential is considered low for all other periods as it is likely that the formed part of the agricultural landscape east of Ashford and south of Smeeth and part of the floodplain of the East Stour. The site located in an areas where there is likely to be evidence of earlier ancient watercourses and deposits and being waterlogged, there is a good change of organic material surviving.

7.2.2 Information concerning the Palaeolithic is rare and the site has potential to contain buried paleoenvironmental deposits within the alluvial clays. It is likely that palaeochannels of the River East Stour will also be present and evidence from this period would be considered of national importance. Information concerning the Bronze, Iron Age and Roman period especially if associated with the river would have been considered to have local significance and could potentially further our understanding of exploitation of the area in this period.

7.2.3 Cartographic Regression, Topographical Analysis, and Historic Research have provided evidence for the historic use of the site. By collating this information, we have assessed the impact on previous archaeological remains through the following method of categorisation:

- **Total Impact** - Where the area has undergone a destructive process to a depth that would in all probability have destroyed any archaeological remains e.g. construction, mining, quarrying, archaeological evaluations etc.

- **High Impact** – Where the ground level has been reduced to below natural geographical levels that would leave archaeological remains partly in situ either in plan or section e.g. the construction of roads, railways, buildings, strip foundations etc.

- **Medium Impact** – Where there has been low level or random disturbance of the ground that would result in the survival of archaeological remains in areas undisturbed e.g. the installation of services, pad-stone or piled foundations, temporary structures etc.

- **Low Impact** – Where the ground has been penetrated to a very low level e.g. farming, landscaping, slab foundation etc.

7.2.4 Cartographic regression, topographic analysis and historical research indicate that the Application Site appears not to have been built on with the farmer confirming that the western side of the lake is not made ground, although there may be some historical disturbance during the construction of the flood defence embankment and gates. Any dredging of the watercourse is also likely to have left the possibility of archaeological finds on the bankside of the river and dykes. Overall, the historical impact on the archaeology in the Application Site is considered to be low.

7.2.5 Any potential remains within the Application Site in the area of the proposed development, should they survive in-situ will be vulnerable to damage during the proposed development, due to the requirement the creation of new lake areas. The creation of a lake will require earth removal and it is believed that the soil will be removed off site.

7.2.6 The need for, scale, scope and nature of any further assessment and/or archaeological works should be agreed through consultation with the statutory authorities. Therefore, it is anticipated that there will be a requirement for a comprehensive programme of archaeological works of which the scale, scope and nature of any further assessment and/or archaeological works should be agreed through consultation with the statutory authorities.

7.2.7 The specialist Palaeolithic report a preliminary geoarchaeological borehole survey is recommended to establish the distribution, thickness and nature of the superficial deposits. This evaluation exercise would also help establish the extent to which any natural deposits may have been affected by the development of the Aldington flood storage reservoir. A minimum of 6 boreholes are recommended, arranged in an approximate transect across the site. This program of evaluation works would represent the first stage of these works, with subsequent stages including excavation and/or watching brief development works, and publication following, depending on the initial findings of the evaluation. For each stage, a separate Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) will need to be prepared. Any works can be addressed by an appropriate planning condition.

7.3 Assessment of Physical Impact on Built Heritage and Setting

7.3.1 Consideration was made as to whether any of the designated heritage assets present within or beyond the 1km study area include the Application Site as part of their setting or contributes to their significance and therefore may potentially be affected by the Proposed Development.

7.3.2 There are no built designated heritage assets located within the Application Site. Of the heritage assets assessed, there is for the majority no intervisibility or relationship between the Application Site except for occasional glimpses of the top of Evegate Mill. The primary significance of those heritage assets is that of their aesthetic and historical qualities which will not be impacted by the proposed development. The proposed development is to be an extension of an existing land use with the creation of larger lake and will not impact upon the route of the East Stour itself. As a consequence, the Proposed Development at the Application Site will have a ‘no impact’ on the designated heritage assets in accordance with NPPF Paragraph 202.

7.3.3 The public benefits from the creation of a lake to assist with flood management will reduce the flood risk within any surrounding fields and residential areas and will outweigh any harm caused.

8 CONCLUSION

8.1 Text

8.1.1 The purpose of this Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment was to assist the Local Authority to understand the impact of the proposed development as required by the NPPF on the significance of any Heritage Assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. This report has been prepared by SWAT Archaeology for Brett Aggregates relating to a Planning at the Application Site of Land at Aldington Lake, off Station Road, Evegate, Kent.

8.1.2 The Application Site does not contain any designated heritage assets and is not within any conservation area. There are only a limited number of designated heritage assets within the study area. Those have been shown to have no intervisibility or relationship with the Application Site and that the historical and aesthetic significance of these assets will not be impacted. The Application Site does not contribute to the setting or how these heritage assets are experienced. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development will have an impact at the low end of 'less than substantial' in accordance with NPPF paragraph 202 with the public benefits from the creation of a lake to assist with flood management will reduce the flood risk within any surrounding fields and residential areas and will outweigh any harm caused.

8.1.3 Assessment of the Archaeological findings from the KHER and other resources would suggest that the Application Site is of high archaeological interest. And that there is particularly archaeological significance within the assessment area for the Prehistoric period as the site contains alluvium from the Stour, there is Palaeolithic potential along with possible Palaeoenvironmental evidence and surviving organic matter. The areas to the north and north west contains evidence relating to the Neolithic, Bronze and Iron Age, as well as into the Roman period. Other settlement activity has been seen on the East Stour in the Prehistoric periods usually situated on the slightly higher ground adjoining the flood plains of the Stour and its tributaries. There is moderate potential relating to the possibility of fields systems associated with the Medieval site at Little Stock Farm to the north. The archaeological potential is considered low for all other periods as it is likely that the formed part of the agricultural landscape south of Ashford and part of the floodplain of the East Stour.

8.1.4 The Application Site has had low historical impact on any potential archaeology although there is some uncertainty with possible disturbance caused by the flood

defence scheme. Any potential remains within the Application Site should they survive in-situ will be vulnerable to damage during the proposed development through the removal of earth to extend the lake area.

The need for, scale, scope and nature of any further assessment and/or archaeological works should be agreed through consultation with the statutory authorities. Therefore, it is anticipated that there will be a requirement for a programme of archaeological works including the recommendation of a preliminary geoarchaeological borehole survey. This program of evaluation works would represent the first stage of these works, with subsequent stages including excavation and/or watching brief development works, and publication following, depending on the initial findings of the evaluation. Any works can be addressed by an appropriate planning condition.

9 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

9.1 Reliability/Limitations of Sources

9.1.1 The sources that were used in this assessment were, in general, of high quality. The majority of the information provided herewith has been gained from either published texts or archaeological 'grey' literature held at Kent County Council, and therefore considered as being reliable.

9.2 Copyright

9.2.1 Swale & Thames Survey Company and the author shall retain full copyright on the commissioned report under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. All rights are reserved, excepting that it hereby provides exclusive licence to Brett Aggregates (and representatives) for the use of this document in all matters directly relating to the project.

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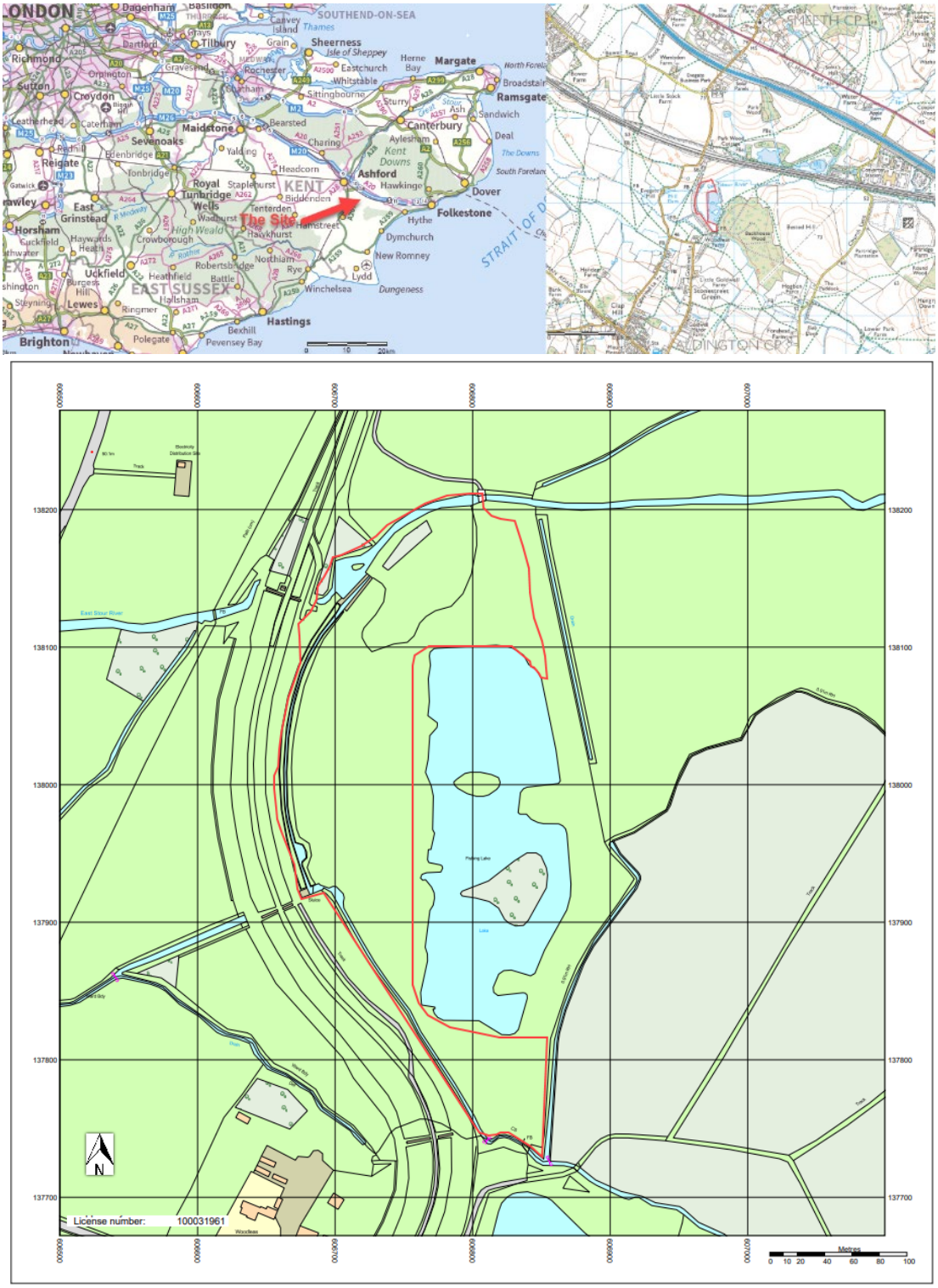

Figure 1: Location Maps, Scale: 1:20,000, 1:2,500

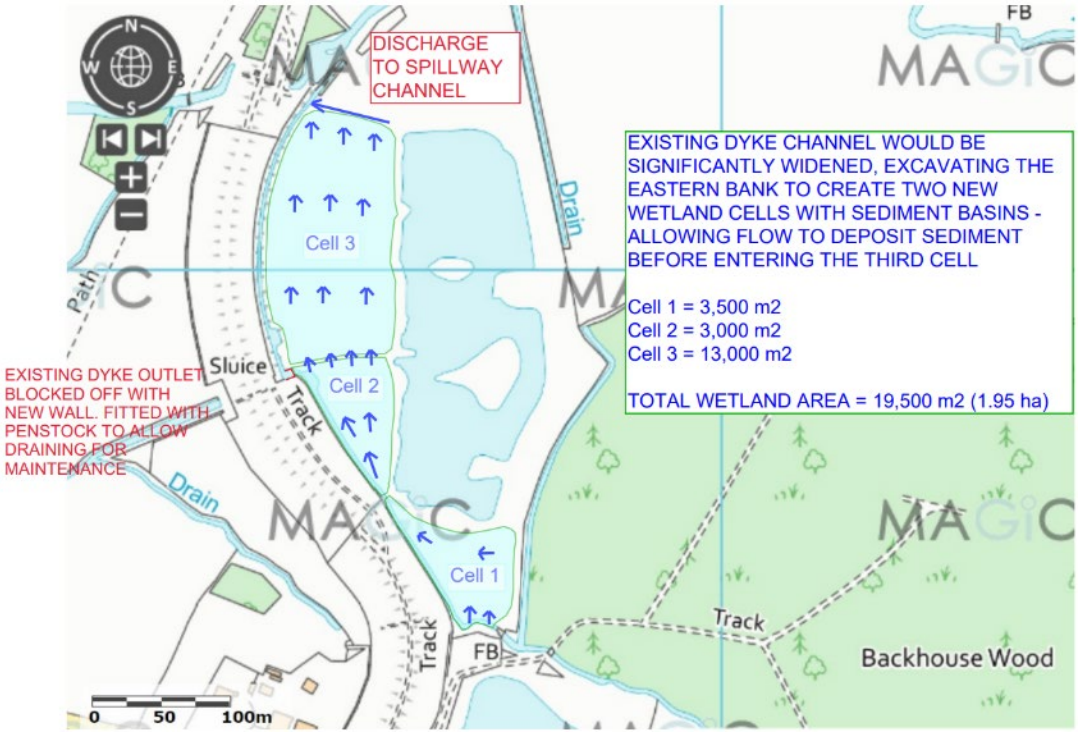

Figure 2: Proposed Development

Figure 3: Andrew, Dury and Herbert Map from 1769

Figure 4: Ordnance Surveyors Drawing 1798

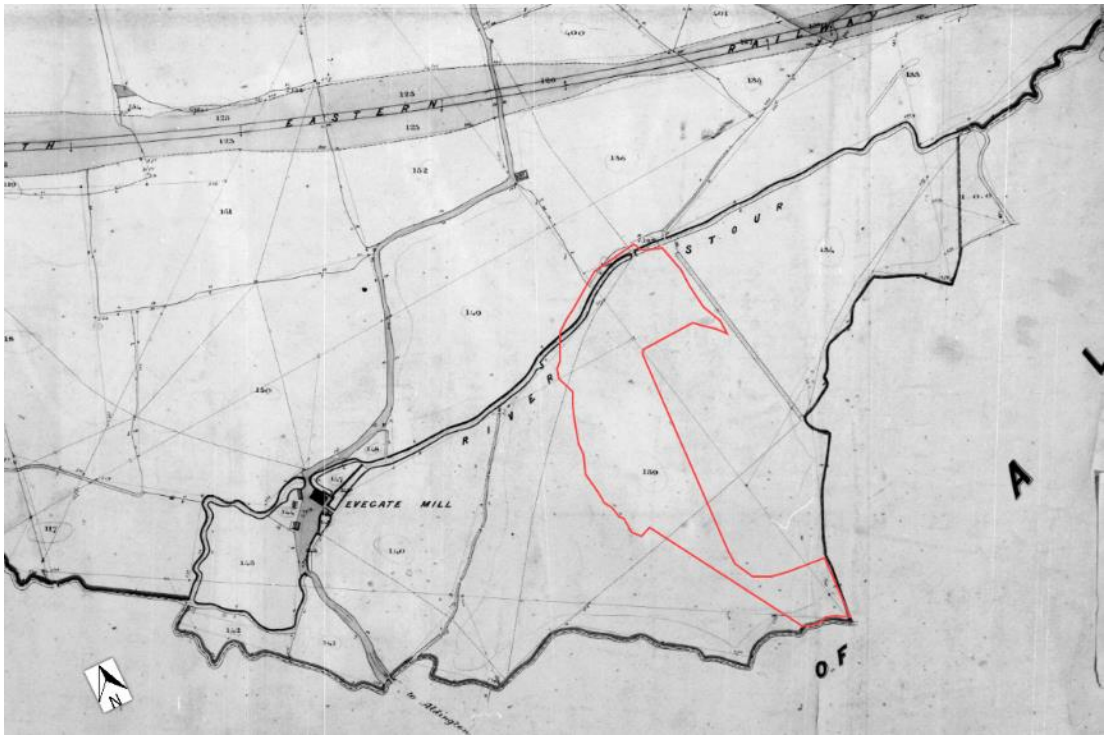

Figure 5: Tithe Maps Smeeth, 1840

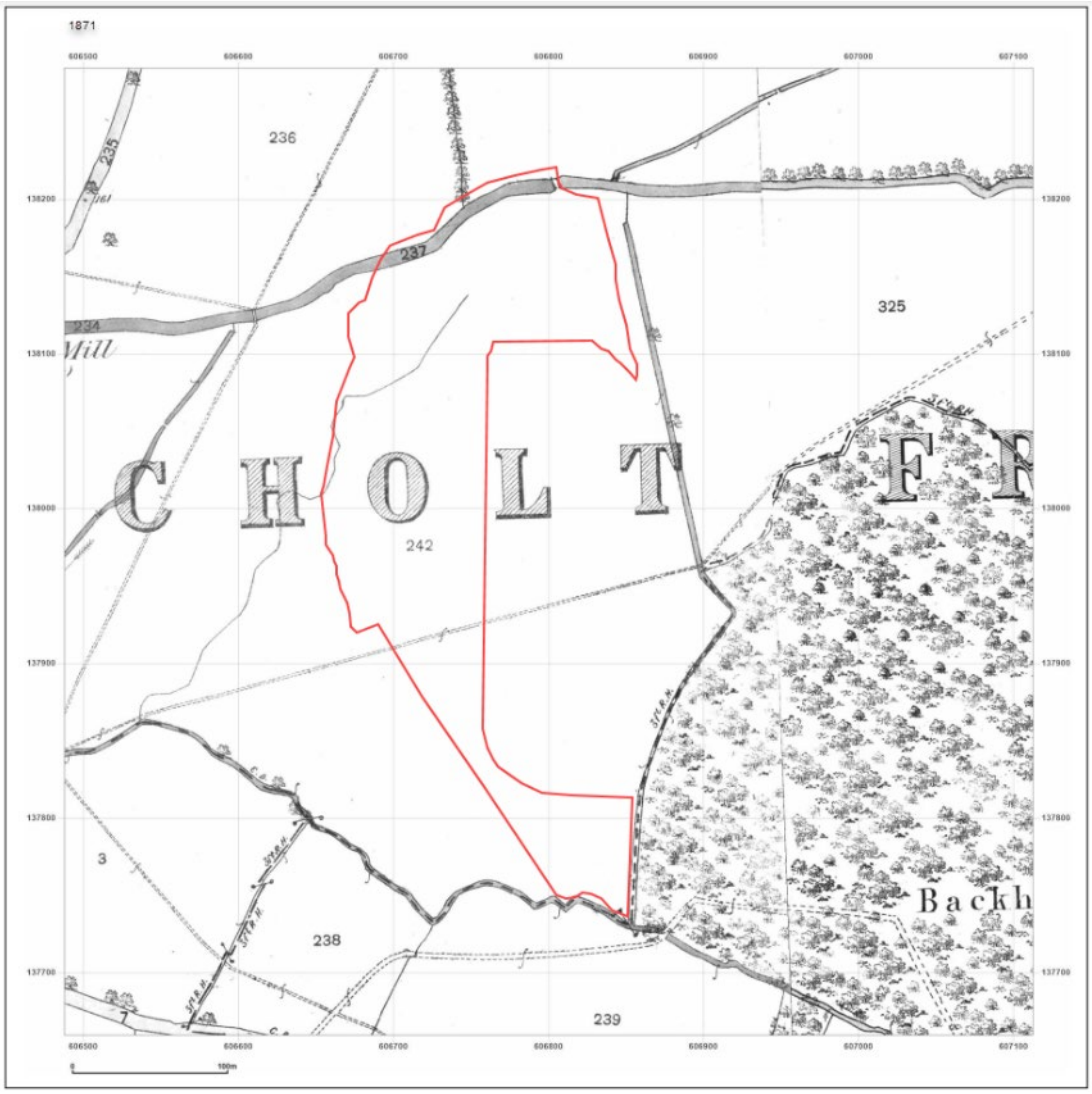

Figure 6: Historic OS Map 1871

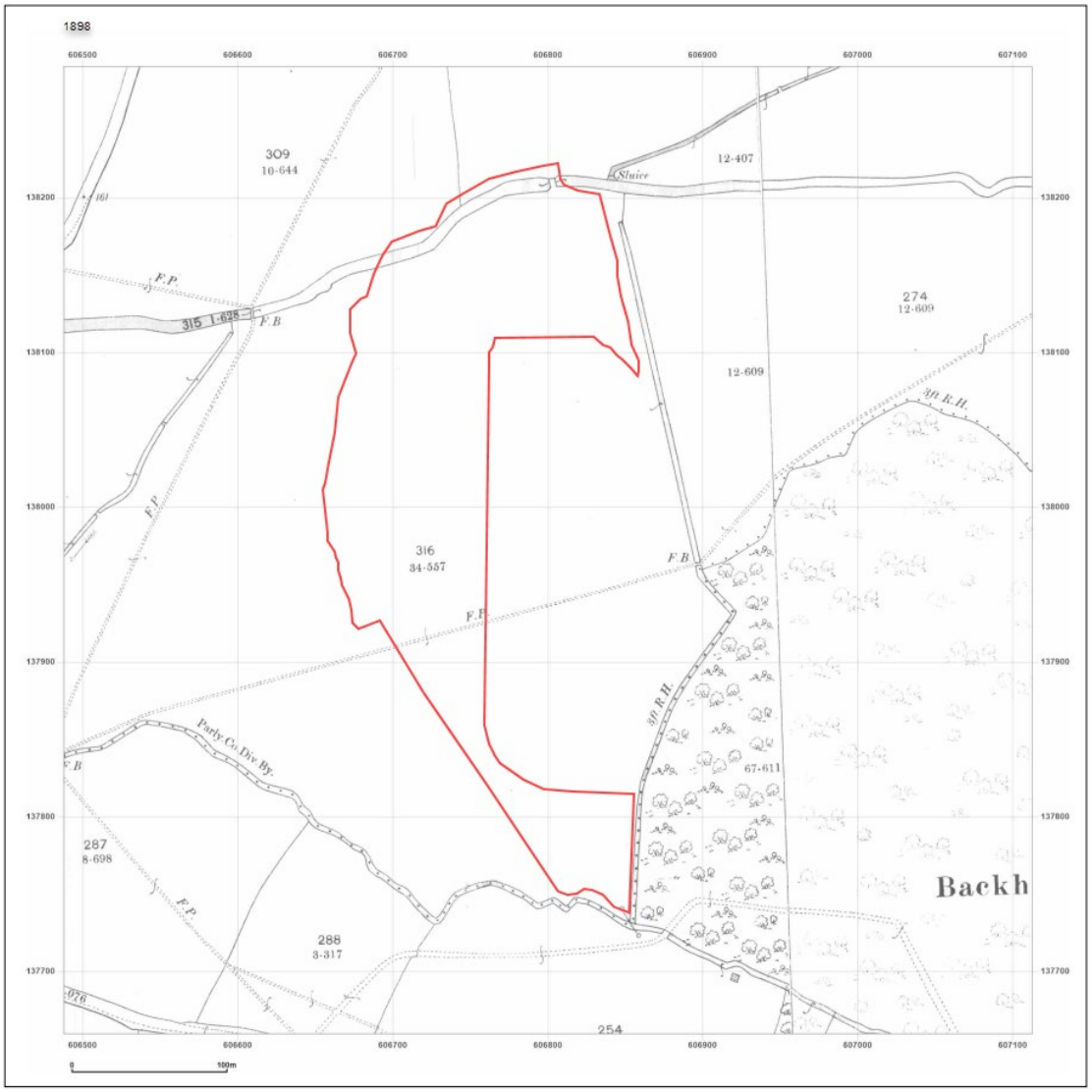

Figure 7: Historic OS Map from 1898

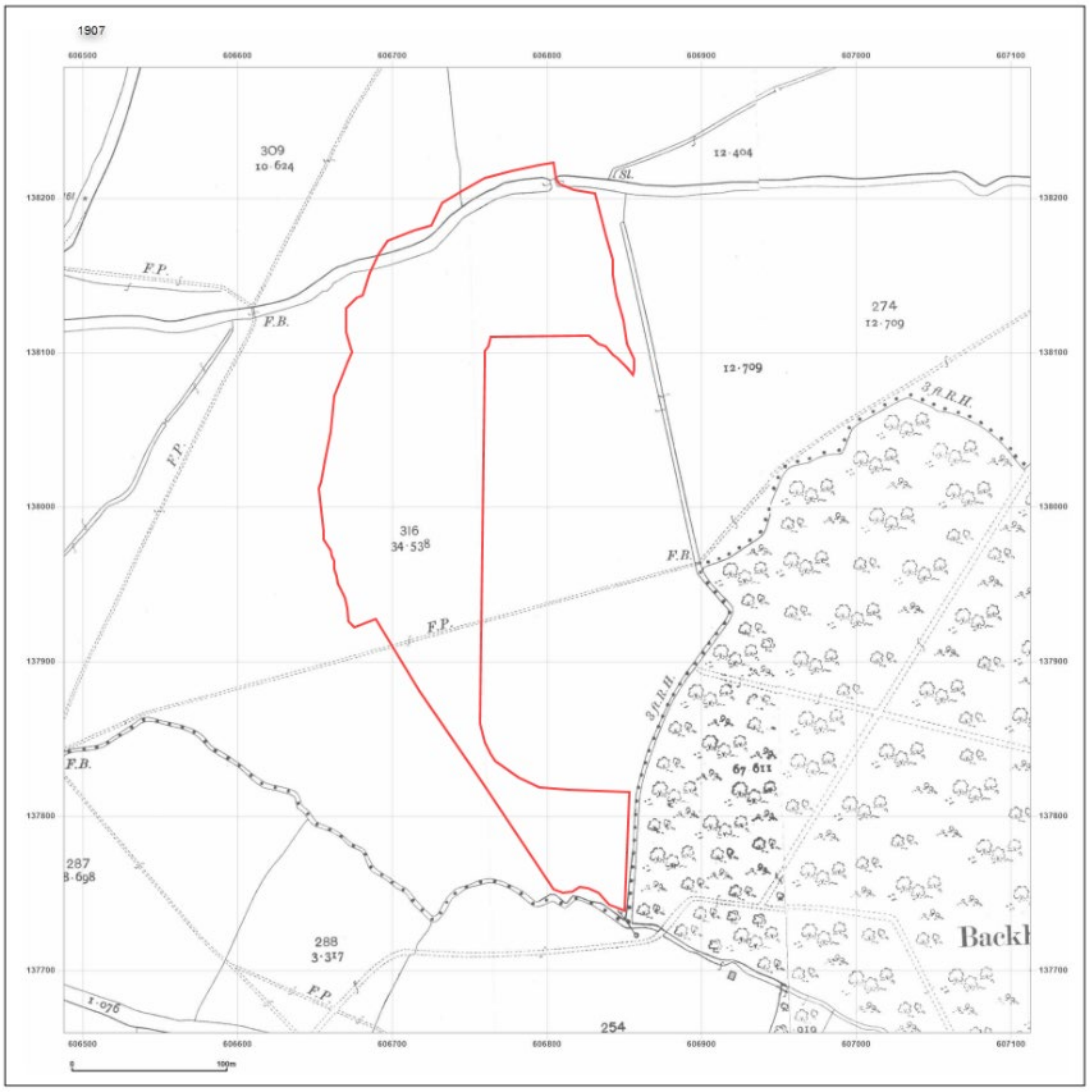

Figure 8: Historic OS Map 1907

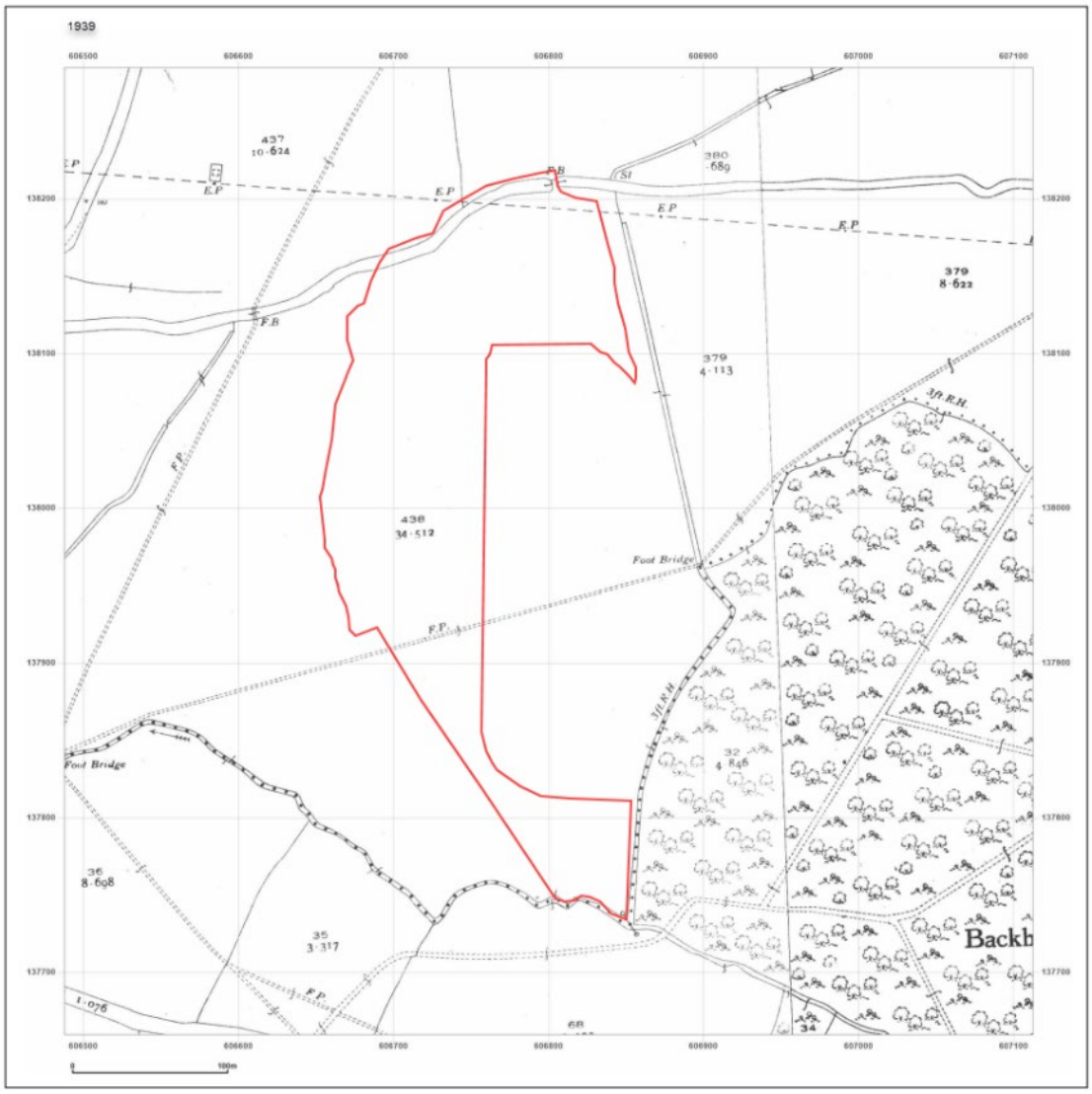

Figure 9: Historic OS Map 1939

Figure 10: Historic OS Map 1970-71

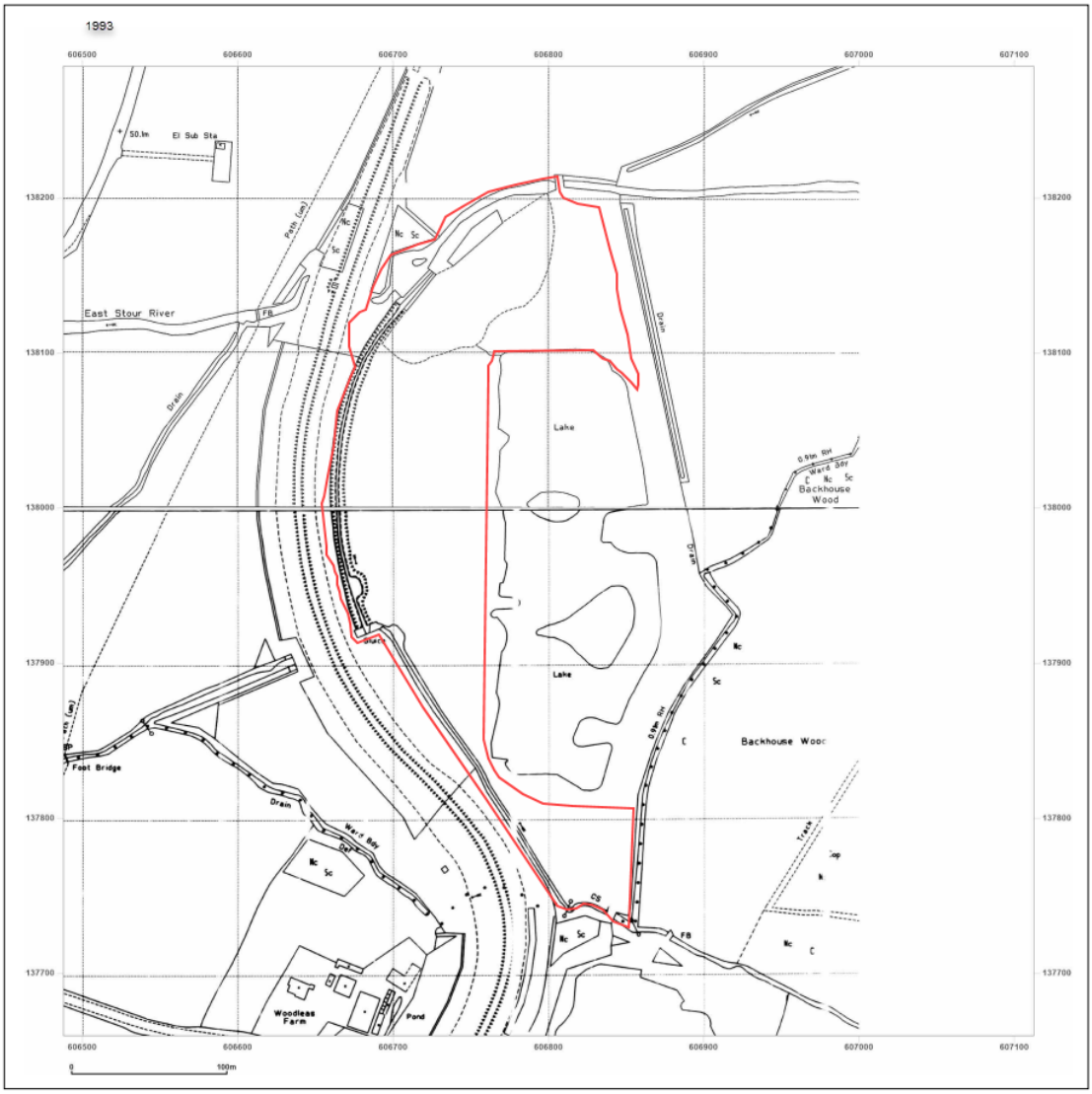

Figure 11: Historic OS Map 1993

11 APPENDICES

11.1 APPENDIX 1 – KCC HER Data (see Figures 10-15). All distances taken from the centre point within the Application site.

KHER	Type	Location	Period	Description
TR 03 NE 61	Monument	c. 700m NNW	Late Bronze Age	Late Bronze Age site at Little Stock Farm. A late Bronze Age site was excavated in 1999 near Little Stock Farm prior to Channel Tunnel Rail Link construction works.
TR 03 NE 62	Monument	c. 485m NNE	Late Iron Age to Medieval	Iron Age to medieval field systems, Park Wood Cottage. Field systems dating from the Iron Age to the medieval period were found in 1999 prior to Channel Tunnel Rail Link construction works.
TR 03 NE 66	Monument	c. 695m NNW	Late Iron Age to Roman	Late Iron Age/Roman site at Little Stock Farm. A late Iron Age settlement and Roman field system was found in 1999 prior to Channel Tunnel Rail Link works near Little Stock farm. 67 archaeological deposits and/or features were investigated and recorded, comprising 11 ditches, 16 gullies, 17 pits, 17 post-holes, three hearths, two burials and one quarry.
TR 03 NE 67	Monument	c. 705m NNW	Medieval	Medieval site at Little Stock Farm. A medieval quarry, enclosure and field system were found in 1999 during excavations at Little Stock Farm prior to Channel Tunnel Rail Link construction works. The medieval stone quarry was located within a ditched enclosure possibly also used for some form of domestic and/or industrial activity.
TR 03 NE 141	Listed Building	c. 1005m S	Medieval to Modern	Goldwell. Grade II. (1184459). House. C16 or earlier, extended and clad C17- C20. Timber framed and part exposed with red brick infill, part clad with red brick and tile hanging. Extended with red and blue chequered brick. Plain tiled roofs.
TR 03 NE 175	Listed Building	c. 355m WNW	Post Medieval	Evegate Mill House. Grade II (1185369). Mill House. Early C18 exterior. Possibly framed hall house origin, with parallel rear wing. The end left bay of the main range has an arched

KHER	Type	Location	Period	Description
				opening to rear (now blocked), through which the water ran, this being the wheelhouse before construction of the new mill in 1862, and diversion of the river.
TR 03 NE 145	Listed Building	c. 990m S	Post Medieval	Stable/Outhouse About 10 Metres North of Goldwell. Grade II (1362780). C17 origin, rebuilt C18. Red and blue brick on high ragstone base with plain tiled roof, with timber framed wing with red brick infill.
TR 03 NE 157	Listed Building	c. 980m N	Medieval to Post Medieval	Evegate Manor. Grade II* (1362798). Originally a manor house, later farmhouse, now house. Remains of early C14 open hall and service end with contemporary south western crosswing. Early C16 south western wing first floor and roof and early C16 north eastern wall which is now internal. Northern range extensively refurbished in early C17 and south eastern range added in C18. Circa 1965 refenestration.
TR 03 NE 114	Listed Building	c. 1185m SE	Post Medieval	Former Dairy Building About 25 Metres North West of Hogben Farmhouse. Grade II (1071213). Former dairy building. C18 or earlier. Timber framed and weather boarded with corrugated iron roof. Single storey on ragstone base with hipped roof and central half doors. Full frame survives with clasped purlin roof. Included for group value.
TR 03 NE 134	Listed Building	c. 750m SSW	Medieval to Modern	Symnells And Walled Forecourt. Grade II (1184484). House. C16 or earlier origin, extended C16-C17 and re-fronted c.1800.
TR 03 NE 105	Listed Building	c. 1210m SE	Medieval to Modern	Hogben Farmhouse. Grade II (1362778). House. C16 or earlier, extended 1973.
TR 03 NE 132	Listed Building	c. 350m WNW	Post Medieval	Evegate Mill. Grade II (1071180). Mill with wheel. 1862. Red brick and timber framed and weather boarded with plain tiled roof. Three storeys and garret, with 2 swivel-hung glazing bar casements on each floor, with 1 on each floor to return elevation, with boarded half-doors to centre on 1st and ground floors. Overshot wheel to rear. Interior, 3-wheel machinery in working order, installed 1862.

KHER	Type	Location	Period	Description
TR 03 NE 89	Listed Building	c. 535m SW	Medieval to Modern	The Old Cottage. Grade II (1071249). House. C16 or earlier. Timber framed and exposed with painted brick infill, underbuilt with painted ragstone and clad and extended with painted brick. Plain tiled roof. Four and a half-framed bays.
TR 03 NE 102	Listed Building	c. 650m SSW	Medieval to Modern	Symnel Cottage. Grade II (1362753). House. C15, extended and restored 1920's. Timber framed and exposed with plaster infill and underbuilt with red brick. Tile hung on right return. End jettied hall house plan of 4 bays with rear wing.
TR 03 NE 168	Listed Building	c. 380m WNW	Post Medieval	Stable/Outbuilding About 20 Yards North West of Evegate Mill House. Grade II (1185387). C18. Timber framed on ragstone base, with plain tiled roof. Included for group value.
TR 03 NE 96	Listed Building	c. 1170m SE	Post Medieval to Modern	Barn About 30 Metres North West of Hogben Farmhouse. Grade II (1300208). C17 or earlier. Timber framed and weatherboarded with plain tiled roof.
TR 03 NE 20	Monument	c. 940m NE	Medieval to Post Medieval	Windmill mound (possible). A large mound on the northern edge of Park Wood, has been identified as having the appearance of a round barrow. Trial trenches proved the mound was artificial, and sherds of pottery scattered throughout varied in date from the early Iron Age to the 14th century. Mesolithic and Neolithic artifacts were plentiful immediately above and below the original ground level. The mound 35 metres in diameter and 3 metres high is now assumed to be an early mill mound.
TR 03 NE 21	Monument	c. 1060m NNE	Medieval	Mill pond and dam, Park wood. An earthen bank or dam cuts across a steep wooded valley in the northern part of Park Wood. Sixty metres long, this dam is still over 4 metres high in the middle, through which a small stream runs in a gap obviously intended for a sluice gate, with a similar gap 10 metres east of the first.
TR 03 NE 27	Findspot	c. 795m ENE	Mesolithic	Mesolithic artefacts. Found at Evegate Farm: Amongst the finds were 129 unretouched blades and flakes, 32 scrapers, a

KHER	Type	Location	Period	Description
				graver and an axe. These artefacts remain in the possession of the finder.
TR 03 NE 201	Monument	c. 925m WSW	Unknown	Cropmark of a square enclosure, Aldington
TR 03 NE 204	Monument	c. 985m NW	Medieval to Post Medieval	Possible medieval / post-medieval sheep fold at Bower Road, Ashford. Watching brief and subsequent excavation at Bower Road undertaken by OAU in 1999-2000 as part of CTRL works revealed walls that possibly represent a sheep fold.
TR 03 NE 205	Monument	c. 1115m ENE	Late Iron Age to Roman	Late Iron Age / Early Roman field system, Smeeth. Evaluation and subsequent excavation undertaken by OAU between 1997-99 at the East of Station Road / Church Lane site, as part of CTRL works. Mesolithic to medieval features found. Late Iron Age / Early Roman field system. Environmental evidence suggests that during the life of the field system the environment was open grassland, but after its abandonment in the early 2nd century the area reverted to woodland.
MKE55588	Findspot	c. 885m NNE	Early Medieval or Anglo-Saxon	PAS find, Early Medieval Silver Dress and Personal Accessories
MKE55589	Findspot	c. 885m NNE	Early Medieval or Anglo-Saxon	PAS find, Early Medieval Gem Gemstone
MKE55802	Findspot	c. 595m E	Late Iron Age to Roman	PAS find, Iron Age copper alloy Brooch
MKE55803	Findspot	c. 595m E	Medieval	PAS find, Medieval Copper alloy Pin
MKE55804	Findspot	c. 595m E	Medieval	PAS find, Medieval Copper alloy Buckle
MKE55805	Findspot	c. 595m E	Medieval	PAS find, Medieval Copper alloy Strap end
MKE55806	Findspot	c. 595m E	Medieval	PAS find, Medieval silver Coin

KHER	Type	Location	Period	Description
MKE55807	Findspot	c. 630m E	Roman to Early Medieval or Anglo-Saxon	PAS find, Roman Copper alloy Mount
MKE55808	Findspot	c. 595m E	Medieval	PAS find, Medieval silver Coin
MKE55809	Findspot	c. 595m E	Medieval	PAS find, Medieval silver Coin
MKE55810	Findspot	c. 595m E	Medieval	PAS find, Medieval Iron Horseshoe
MKE55963	Findspot	c. 610m N	Post Medieval to Late Iron Age	PAS find, Post medieval silver Coin
MKE55964	Findspot	c. 610m N	Post Medieval	PAS find, Post medieval silver Coin
MKE55967	Findspot	c. 705m N	Post Medieval	PAS find, Post medieval silver coin
MKE55972	Findspot	c. 705m N	Medieval	PAS find, Medieval silver coin
MKE55973	Findspot	c. 705m N	Medieval	PAS find, Medieval silver coin
MKE55982	Findspot	c. 1195m NE	Medieval	PAS find, Medieval silver coin
MKE56210	Findspot	c. 535m N	Late Iron Age	PAS find, Iron Age copper alloy coin
MKE56211	Findspot	c. 535m N	Late Iron Age	PAS find, Iron Age copper alloy coin
MKE56439	Findspot	c. 850m N	Unknown	PAS find, Copper alloy toggle
TR 03 NE 219	Findspot	c. 665m NNW	Bronze Age	Bronze Age arrowhead, Littlestock Farm found in 1995 during field walking.
MKE87452	Farmstead	c. 1040m N	Post Medieval	Evegate Farm. A regular multiyard farmstead. Farmhouse detached in central position; Position: Isolated position; Survival: Altered - significant loss of original form (more than 50%); New sheds: Large modern sheds built on the site of the

KHER	Type	Location	Period	Description
				historic farmstead, may have destroyed original buildings or obscured them; Notes: Oast.
MKE88354	Farmstead	c. 1055m SW	Post Medieval	Handen Farm. A loose courtyard plan farmstead with buildings to four sides of the yard. Farmhouse: Farmhouse detached gable end-on to yard; Position: Isolated position; Survival: Altered - partial loss of original form (less than 50%).
MKE88358	Farmstead	c. 1090m NNW	Post Medieval	Littlestock Farm (Little Stock Farm). A loose courtyard plan farmstead with buildings to three sides of the yard. Farmhouse: Farmhouse detached side on to yard; Position: Isolated position; Survival: Altered - significant loss of original form (more than 50%); Notes: Uncertain if building at S end is the farmhouse.
MKE88359	Farmstead	c. 575m SSW	Post Medieval	Stone Street Farm. A regular L-plan farmstead. Farmhouse: Farmhouse detached in central position; Position: Hamlet; Survival: Only the farmhouse remains.
MKE88360	Farmstead	c. 785m S	Post Medieval	Symnells. A dispersed multiyard plan farmstead. Farmhouse: Farmhouse detached in central position; Position: Isolated position; Survival: Altered - partial loss of original form (less than 50%).
MKE88361	Farmstead	c. 860m S	Post Medieval	Outfarm south east of Symnells. A field barn with no associated yard. Farmstead completely demolished.
MKE88362	Farmstead	c. 1020m S	Post Medieval	Goldwell Manor Farm. A regular multiyard farmstead. Farmhouse: Farmhouse detached in central position; Position: Isolated position; Survival: Altered - partial loss of original form (less than 50%); New sheds: Large modern sheds built on the site of the historic farmstead, may have destroyed original buildings or obscured them.
MKE88377	Farmstead	c. 1175m SE	Post Medieval	Hogben Farm. A loose courtyard plan farmstead with buildings to four sides of the yard. Farmhouse: Farmhouse detached in central position; Position: Isolated position; Survival: Altered - partial loss of original form (less than 50%).

KHER	Type	Location	Period	Description
MKE88378	Farmstead	c. 670m ESE	Post Medieval	Outfarm adjacent to Backhouse Wood. An outfarm with a loose courtyard plan with a building to one side of the yard. Loose courtyard with working agricultural buildings on one side. Position: Isolated position. Survival: Farmstead completely demolished.
MKE88379	Farmstead	c. 440m NE	Post Medieval	Outfarm north east of Evegate Mill. An outfarm with a regular L-plan range. Farmstead completely demolished.
MKE89065	Farmstead	c. 525m SW	Post Medieval	The Old Cottage. A regular L-plan farmstead. Farmhouse: Farmhouse detached gable end-on to yard; Position: Hamlet; Survival: No apparent alteration.
TR 03 NE 234	Crash Site	c. 965m N	Modern	Crash site of Supermarine Spitfire I. Crashed 11th September 1940 in wood at Evegate Manor Farm, Smeeth. Pilot killed. Aircraft written off. Site excavated October 1974 by Kent Battle of Britain Museum.
TR 03 NE 231	Crash Site	c. 965m SW	Modern	Crash site of Messerschmitt Bf109E-4. Landed 5th September 1940 at Handen Farm, Chapfall (sic) near Aldington. Pilot captured.
TR 03 NE 236	Monument	c. 1065m NW	Unknown	Soil mark of a possible enclosure, Mersham. A rectangular enclosure visible as soil marks on aerial photos of 1961.
TR 03 NE 242	Findspot	c. 940m NE	Prehistoric	Residual prehistoric lithic material from under possible Windmill mound at Park Wood, Smeeth, Ashford. Residual prehistoric lithic material from under possible Windmill mound at Park Wood, Smeeth, Ashford, possibly some of it Palaeolithic.
MKE109071	Findspot	c. 665m NW	Medieval	PAS find, Medieval silver coin
MKE109072	Findspot	c. 745m NW	Medieval	PAS find, Medieval silver coin
MKE109073	Findspot	c. 795m NW	Late Iron Age	PAS find, Roman copper alloy coin
MKE109074	Findspot	c. 810m NW	Middle Iron Age	PAS find, Roman copper alloy coin

KHER	Type	Location	Period	Description
MKE109075	Findspot	c. 960m NNW	Medieval	PAS find, Medieval lead seal matrix
MKE109077	Findspot	c. 795m NW	Medieval to Post Medieval	PAS find, Medieval lead weight
MKE109110	Findspot	c. 790m N	Medieval to Post Medieval	PAS find, Medieval copper alloy buckle
MKE109111	Findspot	c. 790m N	Roman	PAS find, Roman copper alloy brooch
MKE109218	Findspot	c. 1000m NW	Roman to Early Medieval or Anglo-Saxon	PAS find, Medieval copper alloy ear ring
MKE109271	Findspot	c. 1120m NW	Medieval	PAS find, Medieval silver finger ring
TQ 84 SW 1	Monument	c. 190m N	Post Medieval to Modern	London and Dover Railway. The earliest of the London - Dover main lines, built by the South Eastern Company, incorporated in 1836 and completed by 1844.
EVENTS				
Event Id	**Event Type**	**Date**	**Location**	**Title**
EKE11730	DENDROCHRONOLOGICAL SURVEY	Pre 1990	c. 620m SW	Dendrochronology of Symnel Cottage, Aldington (TR 03 NE 102)
EKE15007	AUGER SURVEY	2012	c. 1150m SW	Site Plans and Exploratory Hole Logs, Quarry Wood, Aldington
EKE3720	Excavation	1967	c. 940m NE	Park Wood. Residual prehistoric lithic material from under possible Windmill mound at Park Wood, Smeeth, Ashford, possibly some of it Palaeolithic, recovered during test pits into a large mound, possibly a round barrow or a windmill mound. Excavator holds a fragment of a flint axe. No archive retained (TR 03 NE 20; TR 03 NE 242).

EKE10672	DESK BASED ASSESSMENT	1994	c. 190m N	Desk-based assessment of the impact of the CTRL
EKE14724	GEOTECHNICAL SURVEY	1999	c. 190m N	A Geoarchaeological Evaluation of the Thames/Medway Alluvial Corridor of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link
EKE10757	EXCAVATION	2000	c. 1000m NW	Excavation at Bower Road, Ashford, as part of CTRL works. Late Iron Age to Roman activity was found (TR 03 NE 203; TR 03 NE 204).
EKE10759	EXCAVATION	1993	c. 585m NNW	Fieldwalking at Little Stock Farm. Found a diffuse scatter of worked and burnt flint, and small quantities of prehistoric, Roman, and post-medieval pottery. Original source not available but referred to in subsequent excavation report.
EKE10760		1995	c. 500m NNW	Geophysical Survey at Little Stock Farm. Increased response noted towards the west of the area, but not certain whether this reflects archaeological deposits or pedological variations.
EKE12235	GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY	1995	c. 700m NE	Geophysical survey at Station Road to Church Lane part of the CTRL works.
EKE14946	DESK BASED ASSESSMENT	2012	c. 1120m SW	Heritage Desk Based Assessment: Land at Quarry Wood
EKE5094	EVALUATION	1997	c. 760m NNE	Evaluation at Station Road / Church Lane, Smeeth. 1740m of trenching. Mesolithic flints were found (TR 03 NE 59).
EKE5097	EVALUATION	1999	c. 895m NE	Excavation at Church Lane / East of Station Road, Smeeth. (TR 03 NE 205 ; TR 03 NE 206; TR 03 NE 59 ; TR 03 NE 60).
EKE5100	EXCAVATION	1999	c. 915m NE	Excavation at Little Stock Farm, Mersham. Bronze Age site, Late Iron Age/Roman site, Medieval site (TR 03 NE 61 ; TR 03 NE 66; TR 03 NE 67).
EKE5101	EXCAVATION	1999	c. 630m NW	Excavation at Little Stock Farm, Mersham. Bronze Age site, Late Iron Age/Roman site, Medieval site (TR 03 NE 61 ; TR 03 NE 66; TR 03 NE 67).
EKE5102	EVALUATION	1999	c. 400m N	Evaluation at Park Wood Cottage. Iron Age to Medieval field systems (TR 03 NE 62).

Figure 12: Gazetteer of HER Data

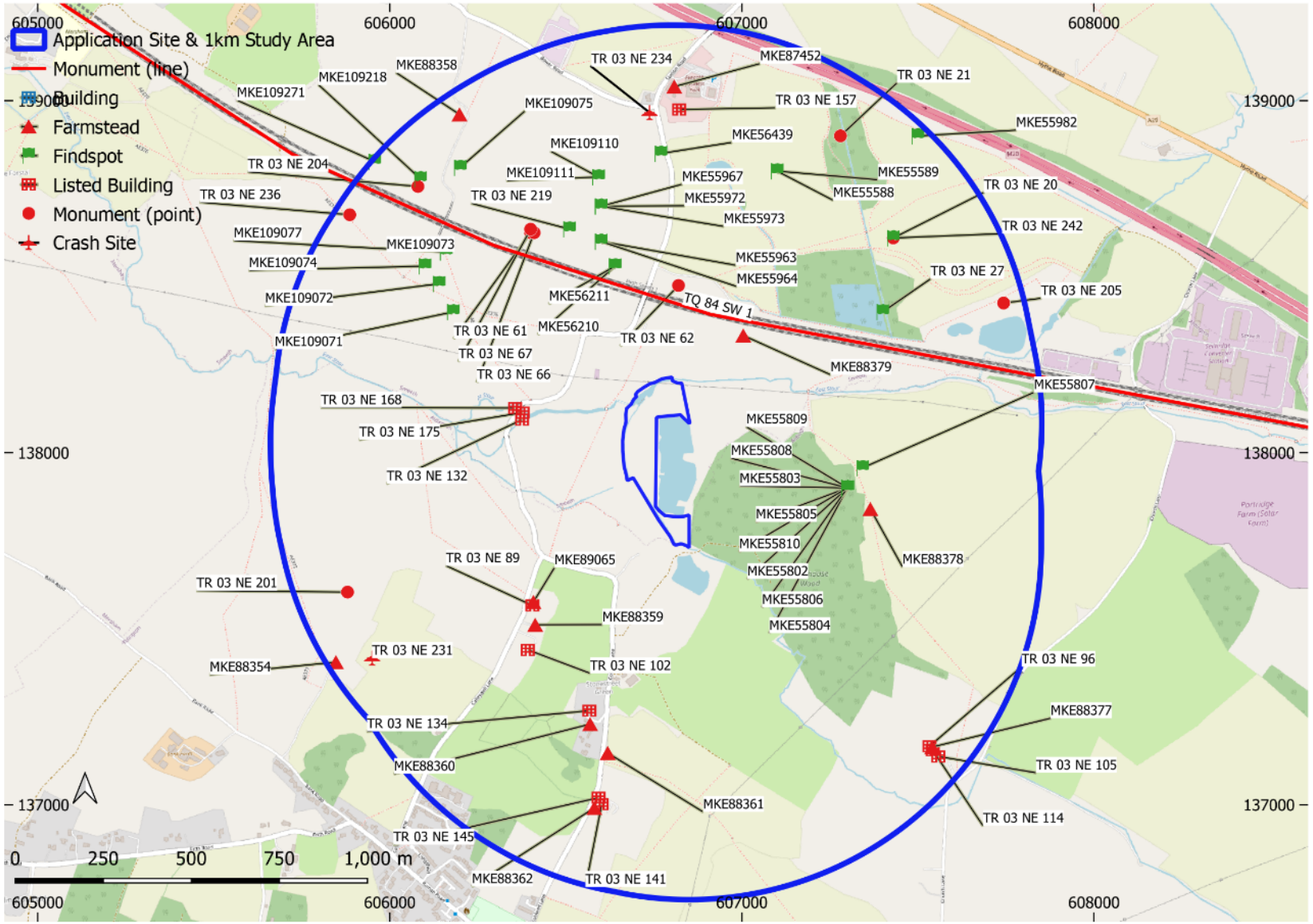

Figure 13: KHER Monument Record

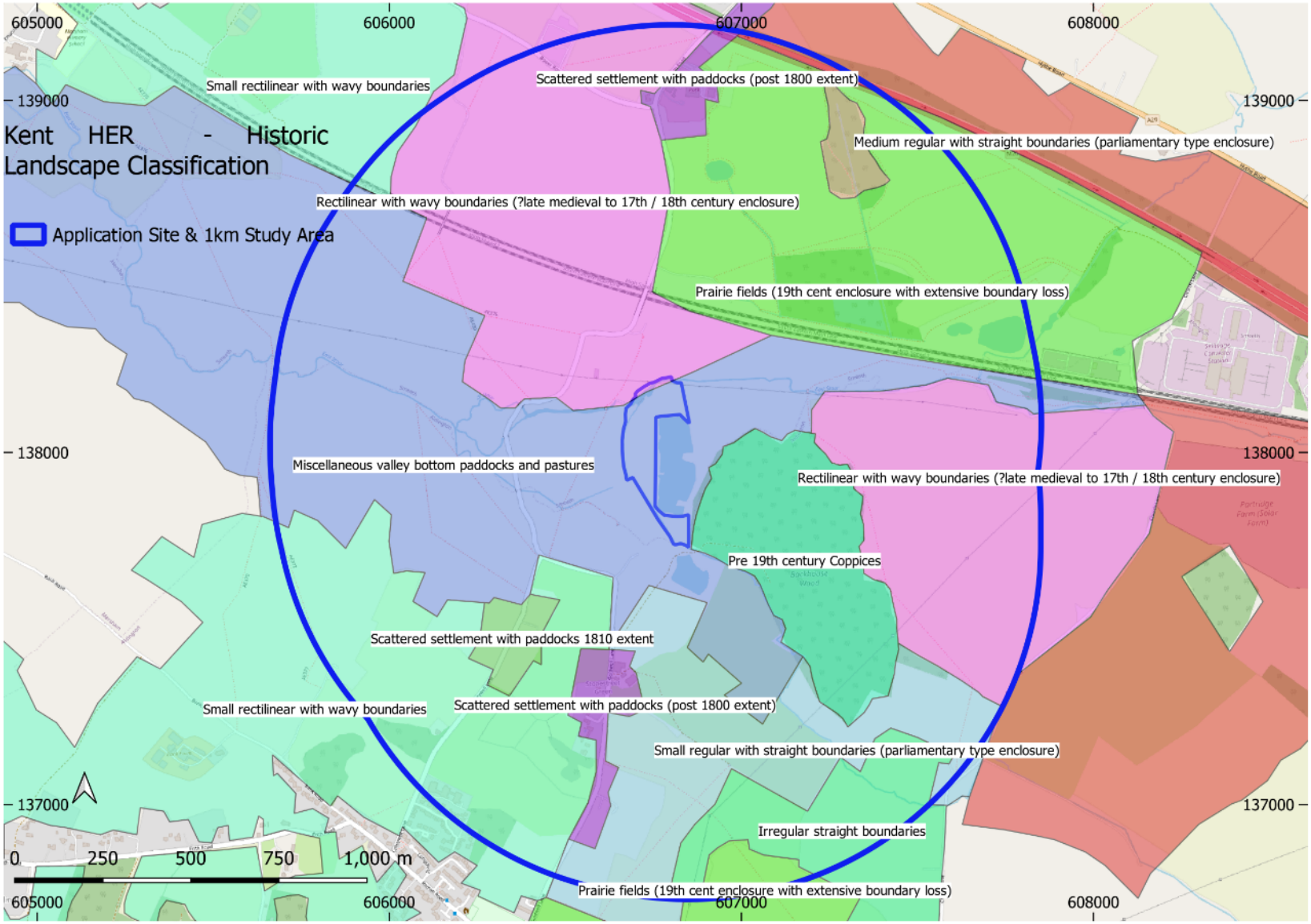

Figure 14: KHER Historic Landscape Classification

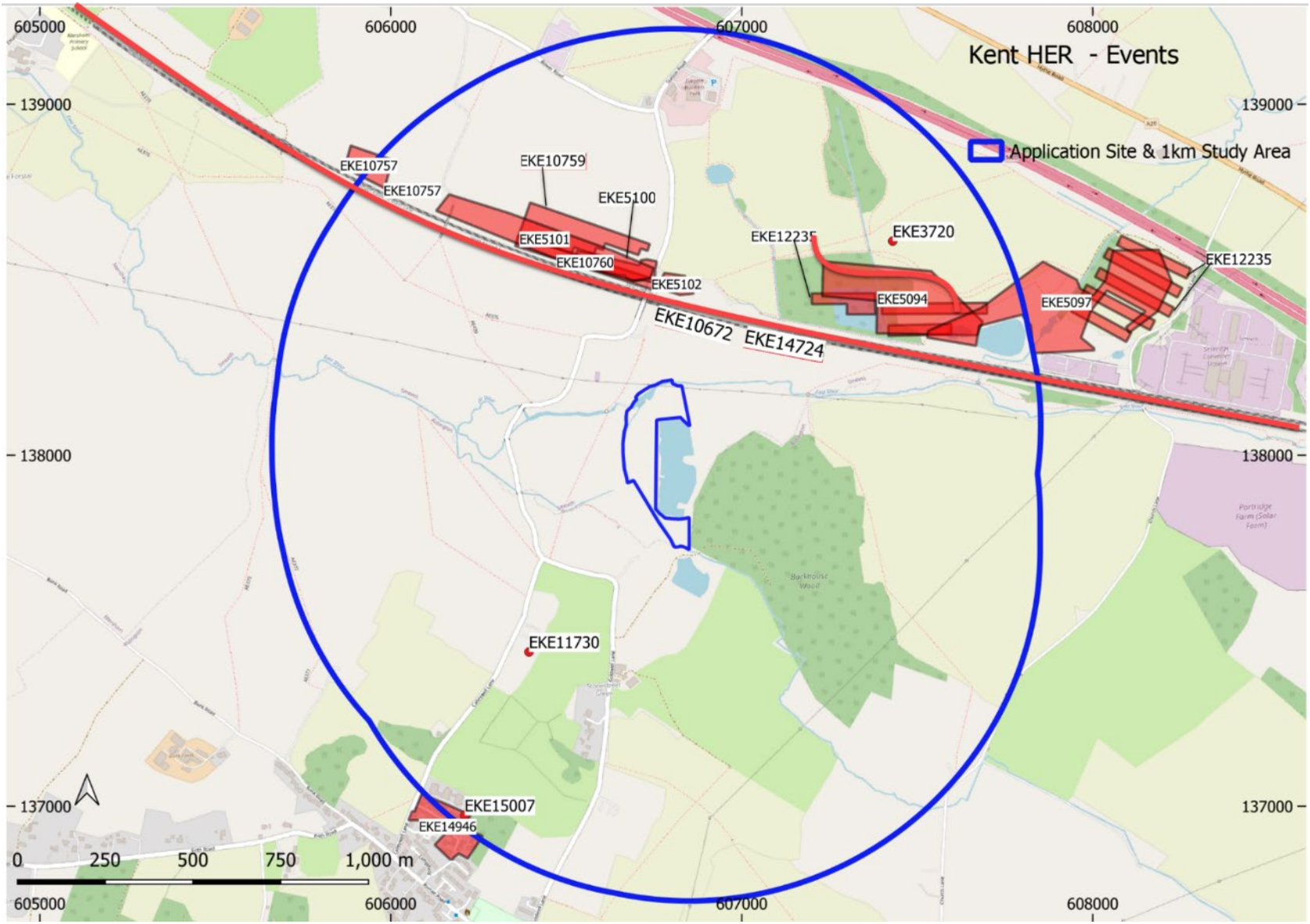

Figure 15: KHER Events

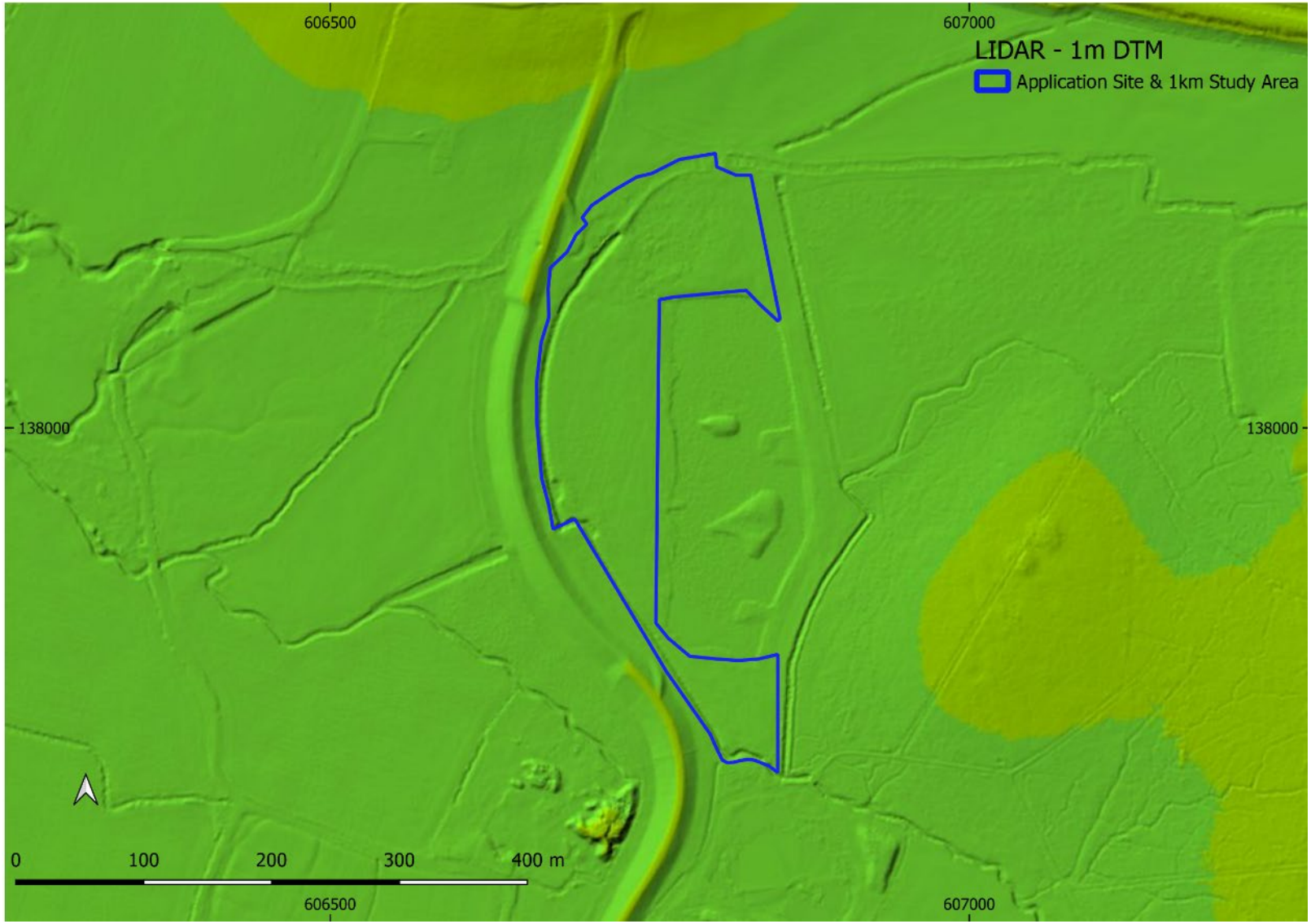

Figure 16: 1m DTM LIDAR (Environment Agency)

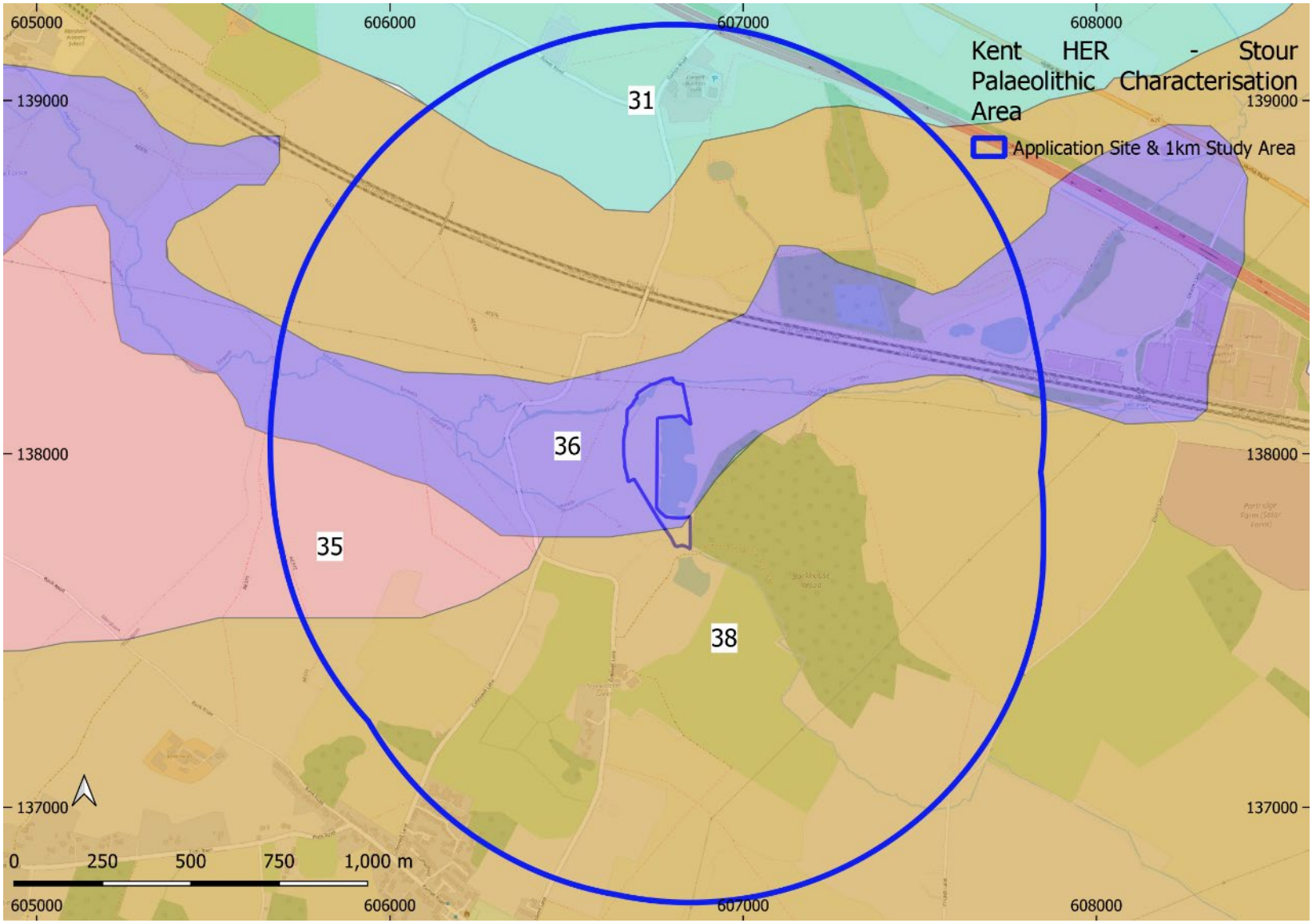

Figure 17: KHER – Stour Palaeolithic Survey

11.2 APPENDIX 2 – Statutory List Description

11.2.1 Evegate Mill

Heritage Environment Record Number: TR 03 NE 132

List Entry Number: 1071180

National Grid Reference: TR 06377 38114

Type of Record: Grade II

Date of Listing: 10- August- 1988

Period: Post Medieval

Summary: Mill with wheel. 1862. Red brick and timber framed, and weather boarded with plain tiled roof. Three storeys and garret, with 2 swivel-hung glazing bar casements on each floor, with 1 on each floor to return elevation, with boarded half-doors to centre on 1st and ground floors. Overshot wheel to rear. Interior, 3-wheel machinery in working order, installed 1862. (Sales Particulars, 1918, "Water corn mill erected 1862").

11.2.2 Evegate Mill House

Heritage Environment Record Number: TR 03 NE 175

List Entry Number: 1185369

National Grid Reference: TR 06377 38114

Type of Record: Grade II

Date of Listing: 10- August- 1988

Period: Post Medieval

Summary: Early C18 exterior. Painted brick on galletted ragstone extended with painted brick, with plain tiled roof. Lobby entry plan, possibly framed hall house origin, with parallel rear wing. Two storeys on plinth with plat band (returned to right) with hipped roof with gablet to right and stacks to centre and to left (end left of original structure). Three wooden casements on 1st floor and 2 on ground floor with central panelled door with semi-circular fanlight in gabled porch. The end left bay is a later (C18) addition, with wooden casement and boarded door in hipped hoist housing on 1st floor, and wooden casement and half-door on ground floor. Hipped 2 storey rear wing of painted brick, with small hipped outshot almost over the river (a privy block?). The end left bay of the main range has an arched opening to rear (now blocked), through which the water ran, this being the wheelhouse before construction of the new mill in 1862, and diversion of the river.

11.2.3 Stable/outbuilding about 20 yards north west of Evegate Mill House

Heritage Environment Record Number: TR 03 NE 168

List Entry Number: 1185387

National Grid Reference: TR 06356 38127

Type of Record: Grade II

Date of Listing: 10- August- 1988

Period: Post Medieval

Summary: Stable/out- building about 20 yards north- west of Evegate Mill House GV II Stable/outbuilding. C18. Timber framed on ragstone base, with plain tiled roof. One storey and hipped roof, the right return elevation underbuilt with ragstone to prevent erosion from the River Stour. Two half-doors on roadside elevation. Stabling for the mill house on the other side of the road. Included for group value.

11.3 Appendix 3: Photographs

Plate 1: 1940s. (Google Earth).

Plate 2: 1960s (Google Earth)

Plate 3: 1990 (Google Earth)

Plate 4: 2003 (Google Earth)

Plate 5: 2021 (Google Earth)

Plate 6: View across the Application Site from the northern end (facing S)

Plate 7: View across the northern end of the Application Site (facing W)

Plate 8: View across the Application Site from the southern end (facing N)

Plate 9: View across the southern part of the Application Site (facing SW)

Plate 10: View across the Application Site from the southern end (facing N)

Plate 11: View showing the south western drainage channel (facing SSE)

Plate 12: View of the sluice gate half way along the western boundary (facing SW)

Plate 13: View of the north western drainage channel (facing N)

Plate 14: View of the application site from the northern side of the lake (facing SSW)

Plate 15: View of the Application Site from the flood embankment (facing SSE)

Plate 16: View of the Application Site from the flood embankment (facing N)

Figure 21: Evegate Mill (facing NE)

Figure 22: Evegate Mill House (facing WSW)

Figure 23: Stables and outbuildings associate with Evegate Mill (facing SW)

Plate 17: Plate Locations

11.4 APPENDIX 4: Geoarchaeological & Palaeoenvironmental Desk-Based Assessment

QUEST
QUATERNARY SCIENTIFIC

University of Reading

ALDINGTON WIDE, ASHFORD, KENT

Geoarchaeological & Palaeoenvironmental Desk-Based Assessment

NGR: TR 067 380

Date: 23rd November 2021

Written by: Dr C.P. Green

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CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site context

This report summarises the findings arising from a Geoarchaeological and Palaeoenvironmental Desk-Based Assessment undertaken by Quaternary Scientific (University of Reading) in connection with the proposed development of the site at Aldington Wide, near Ashford in Kent (National Grid Reference (NGR): *centred on* TQ 067 380; Figure 1).

This site is in the headwater valley of the Kentish East Stour between the Channel Tunnel Rail link to the north and the hamlet of Stonestreet Green to the south. The site is within the area forming the Aldington flood storage reservoir and is immediately upstream of the earth-fill retaining embankment. The impact on the site of the construction of this embankment in the 1990s remains to be established in any field investigation. The site has probably been in agricultural use throughout the historic period and remains as such to the present day.

Work at the site is planned as a planning offset against development on the nearby Conningbrook Lakes Phase 2 site. The plans are to significantly widen the existing Dyke Channel, excavating the eastern bank to create two new wetland cells, as highlighted in Figure 2.

1.2 Aims and objectives

The aims of the Pleistocene and Palaeolithic Desk-Based Assessment were as follows:

1. To determine the Geoarchaeological & Palaeoenvironmental significance and potential of the site;
2. To determine whether there are justifications for further work on the site based on current knowledge;
3. To outline a preliminary strategy for on-site investigation.

In order to address these aims, the following objectives are proposed:

1. To review relevant existing documents and sources related to the geoarchaeological and palaeoenvironmental history of the site;
2. To propose a strategy for further investigation (if necessary).

The following documents and sources were reviewed in an attempt to determine the significance and potential of the site including but not limited to: (1) historical borehole data held by the British Geological Survey (http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk), (2) relevant geological, Quaternary and archaeological literature relevant to this area of Kent, and (3) a Historic Environment Record (HER) search.

2. RESULTS OF THE DESK BASED ASSESSMENT

2.1 Topographic setting

The site occupies an area of 4.14 hectares, is highly irregular in outline extending c.0.4 km N-S across the valley floor of the East Stour, nowhere more than 0.1km in width and little more than 10m in width at its narrowest point. The ground surface is generally level between 46m and 47m OD. The adjacent retaining embankment with a crest at 50-51m OD abuts the gently rising ground of the lower valley-side slopes to N and S. On its east side the site partially surrounds an artificial fishing lake, presumably the source of the earth-fill forming the adjacent embankment.

2.2 Geological setting

The British Geological Survey (BGS) (mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain) maps Alluvium underlying the whole of the site, resting on Weald Clay bedrock (Figure 1). Indeed the site appears to traverse the entire width of the floodplain alluvium of the East Stour.

There are no recent geotechnical or historical boreholes recorded within the perimeter of the site, and therefore there is no opportunity for geoarchaeological deposit modelling. However, nearby boreholes/test-pits in the alluvium of the East Stour to the north of and slightly upstream from the site (e.g. TR03NE83, TR03NE126, TR03NE131,TR03NE138, TR03NE224) record 2.1m to 3.3m of alluvium (mean: 2.85m, n=4) resting on Weald Clay at levels between 45.42m and 47.05m OD (mean: 46.11m, n=5). The alluvium is described as clay or silt, sometimes with fibrous plant remains, passing down to sandy clay and further down to gravelly clay with clasts of flint. In test pit TR03NE126 a 20cm unit of organic silt was recorded between 46.94m and 46.74m OD incorporating 'moderately decomposed wood and root fragments'.

The ground surface within the site at 46-47m OD is close to the level of the contact between the alluvium and the underlying Weald Clay as recorded in the nearby boreholes/test pits (mean value: 46.11m OD). It seems possible therefore that there has been some truncation of the natural floodplain deposits, possibly in association with the construction of the retaining embankment of the Aldington flood storage reservoir.

2.3 Geoarchaeological, palaeoenvironmental and archaeological potential

Variations in the type and height, type, thickness and potential age of the superficial deposits are thus likely at the site, which could encompass the Pleistocene and almost certainly Holocene periods. Each of these deposits has varying potential to represent an area that might have been utilised or even occupied by prehistoric and historic people, evidence of which may be preserved in the archaeological (e.g. features and structures) and palaeoenvironmental record (e.g. changes in vegetation composition).

The Pleistocene

Pleistocene remains are the geological and biological deposits laid down by various agents – water, wind and ice between 2.6 million and 11,500 years ago. Sediments and their contained faunal and floral remains enable us to reconstruct former landforms and environments that were occupied by

Palaeolithic communities. Palaeolithic remains therefore form part of the Pleistocene record and can include stone tools and the flakes produced when making them, and, much more rarely, tools of wood and bone, bones bearing marks of butchery, rudimentary structures and the remains of early humans (hominins). Such remains are important as they are the evidence that enables us to understand our earliest prehistory – how the landscape of Britain was shaped and where and how our earliest ancestors fit into it.

Even in the absence of artefact remains, the Pleistocene sediments and their contained biological remains can be significant as they enable the reconstruction of landforms, climatic conditions and environments occupied by Palaeolithic communities. In many cases we already have, in museum collections, artefacts from geological units equivalent to those being investigated, but because of the way in which Palaeolithic artefacts were collected in the 19th and early 20th centuries, we often lack the environmental record that modern investigations of the deposits can supply. In addition, it is important to build up an understanding of the way in which the character and preservation of Pleistocene remains varies from place to place, even in the same geological unit. Recent advances in direct dating techniques, including OSL (optically stimulated luminescence), ESR (electron spin resonance), and AAR (amino acid racemization), have added further significance to Pleistocene remains, enabling us to achieve more reliable dating, relevant both to artefacts and to an understanding of landscape evolution.

There are no records in the Kent HER of Palaeolithic archaeology or Pleistocene palaeoenvironmental remains in the upper valley of the Kentish East Stour, upstream of Ashford. However, both Palaeolithic and palaeoenvironmental remains have been recovered from Pleistocene river terrace and Holocene alluvial deposits of the Great Stour at Conningbrook Manor Quarry on the NE outskirts of Ashford, including Lower, Middle and Upper Palaeolithic artefacts and large and small mammal remains (ASE, 2017).

The Holocene

The Holocene encompasses the last 11,500 years and spans all cultural periods from the Mesolithic to the present day. During this period, sediments have been deposited by water and wind to form alluvial and head deposits. Variations in the elevation and thickness of these different deposits can be significant as they represent different environmental conditions that would have existed in a given location during the Holocene. For example: (1) the presence of peat or soil horizons represent former terrestrial or semi-terrestrial land-surfaces, and (2) the various alluvial units represent periods of changing fluvial conditions, possibly driven by hydrological variability (e.g. relative sea-level and/ or anthropogenic activity within the river catchment). Thus, by studying the sub-surface stratigraphy in greater detail, it will be possible to build a more detailed understanding of the former landscapes and environmental changes that took place across space and time.

Fine grained alluvial and organic-rich sediments (in particular peat) also have high potential to provide detailed reconstructions of past environment. They provide an opportunity to increase knowledge and understanding of the interactions between hydrology, human activity, vegetation succession

and climate during the Holocene. Such investigations are carried out through the assessment/analysis of palaeoecological remains (e.g. pollen, plant macrofossils & insects) and radiocarbon dating.

There are no records in the Kent HER of Holocene palaeoenvironmental remains in the upper valley of the Kentish East Stour, upstream of Ashford. Any such deposits preserved on the Aldington Wide site would therefore clearly be of geoarchaeological and palaeoenvironmental importance

3. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The site is on the floodplain of the upper East Stour river. Judging by nearby floodplain deposits it is probably underlain by fine-grained alluvium with some evidence of gravel deposition in the lower part of the alluvial sequence. Most if not all the alluvium can be assumed to be of Holocene age, probably initially incorporating sparse remains of earlier gravel deposits. Organic units are not common in the nearby floodplain deposits but their presence beneath the present site is certainly possible.

In order to increase knowledge and understanding of the environmental history of the site, a preliminary geoarchaeological borehole survey is recommended to establish the distribution, thickness and nature of the superficial deposits. This evaluation exercise would also help establish the extent to which any natural deposits may have been affected by the development of the Aldington flood storage reservoir. A minimum of 6 boreholes are recommended, arranged in an approximate transect across the site.

This program of evaluation works would represent the first stage of these works, with subsequent stages including excavation and/or watching brief development works, and publication following, depending on the initial findings of the evaluation. For each stage, a separate Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) will need to be prepared.

4. REFERENCES

ASE (2017) *Geoarchaeological interpretation of geotechnical investigations at Conningbrook Manor Quarry, Kennington, Kent*. Archaeology South East (ASE). Unpublished Report.

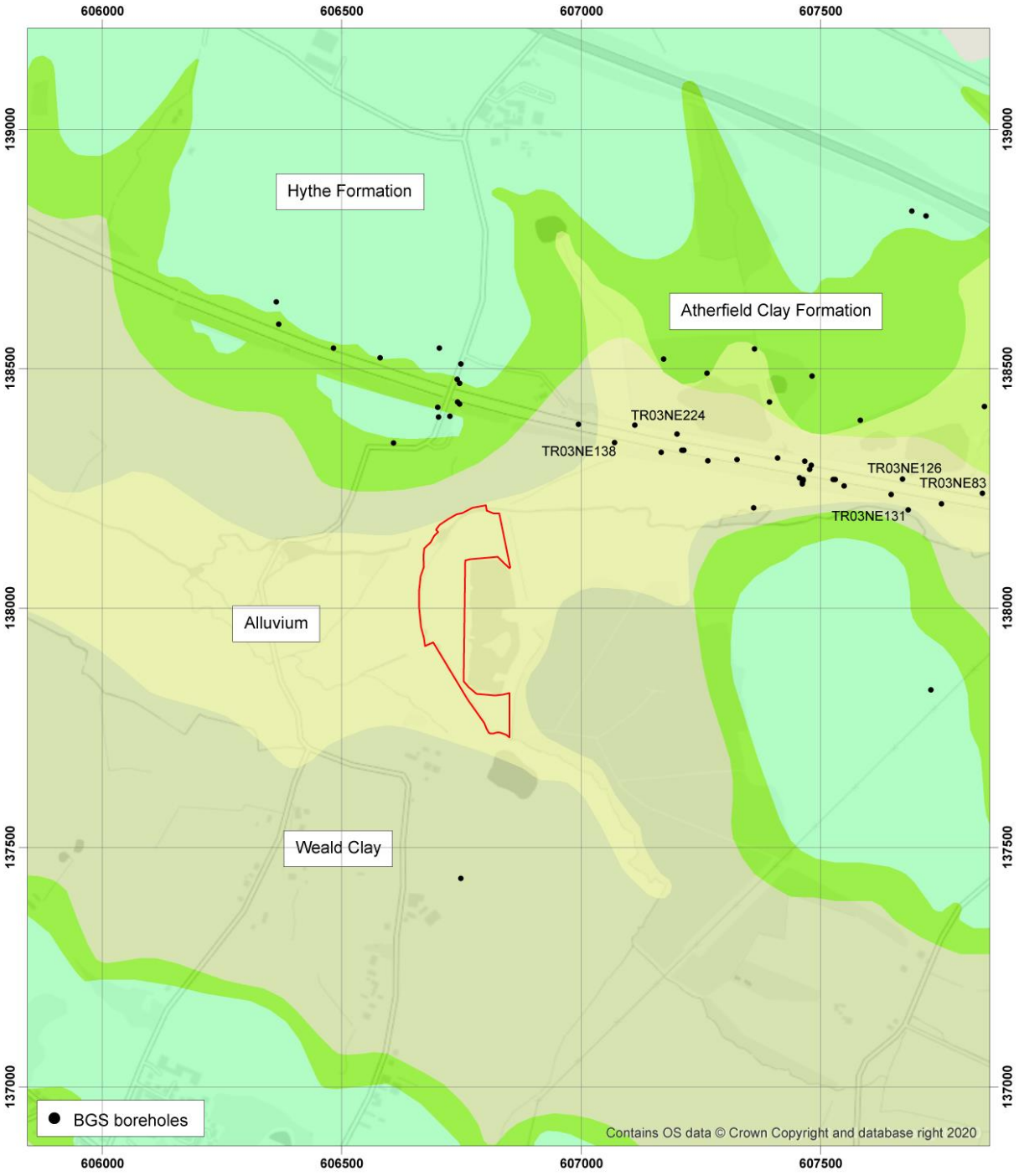

Figure 1: Location of the site at Aldington Wide, near Ashford, Kent. Superimposed on Bedrock (Weald Clay, Hythe Formation & Atherfield Clay Formation) and Superficial (Alluvium) Geology, and showing the location of nearby borehole records held by the British Geological Survey (BGS). Contains British Geological Survey materials copyright NERC (2019).

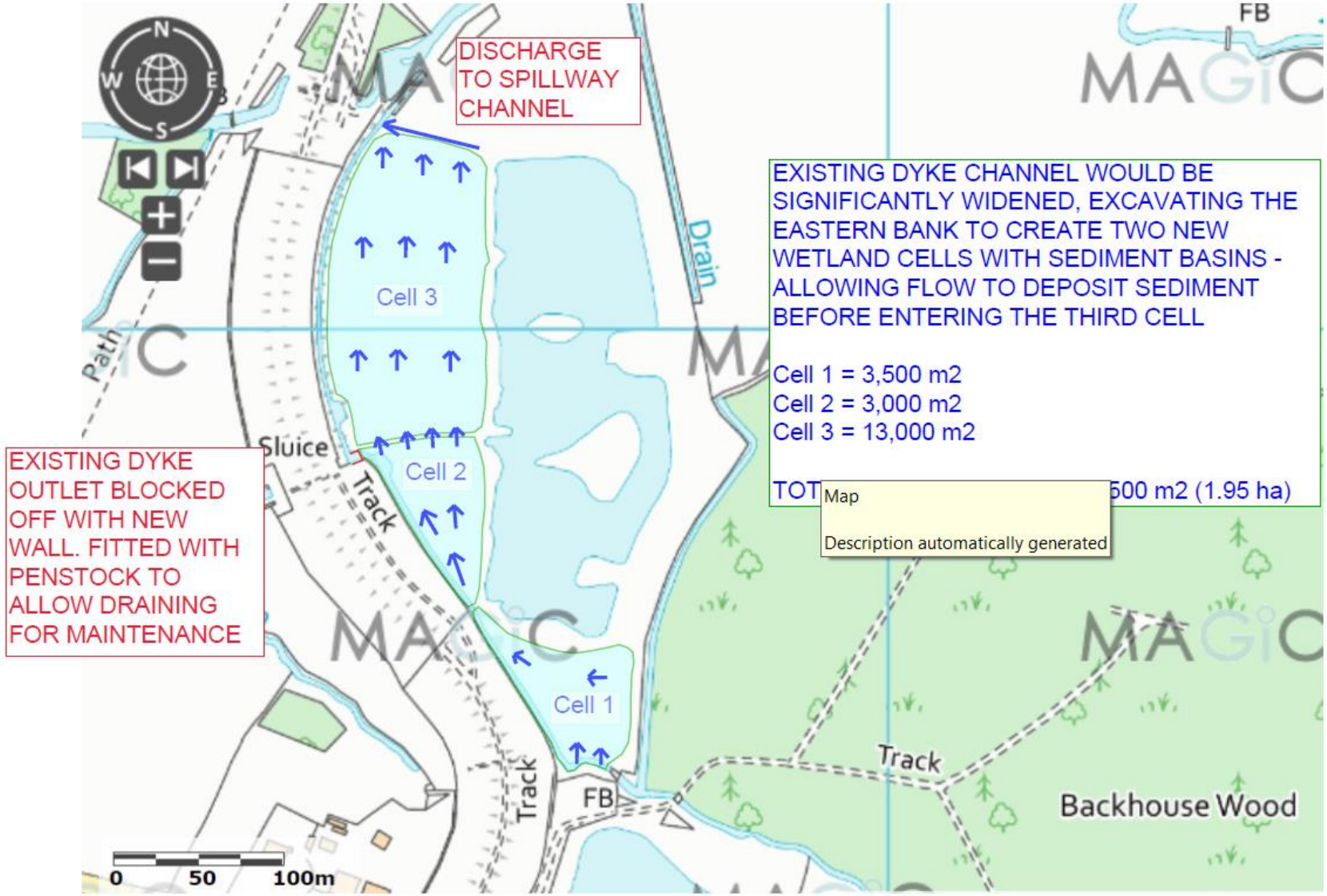

Figure 2: Proposed works at the Aldington Wide site (image provided by client)