



# **Archaeological Evaluation of land at the Dunster House site, Staple Street, Faversham Kent**

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## **SWAT ARCHAEOLOGY**

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## 1 INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

### 1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 SWAT Archaeology was commissioned by the Client to carry out archaeological evaluation in preparations for the development of land at the Dunster House site, Staple Street, Faversham Kent.

1.1.2 Archaeological evaluation commenced on 15th June 2021 and was completed by 17<sup>th</sup> June 2021. Monitoring visit from Senior Archaeological Officer was carried out on 16th June 2021. Works were carried out within Area of PDA where 6 trenches were dug. Evaluation exposed common stratigraphic sequence comprising top-soil, sub-soil and colluvium with made-up ground in some parts of the site concealing natural geology.

1.1.3 A modern ditch cutting through sub-soil was exposed in Trench 8 and it can be still observed on the ground as a drain connected to a pond.

1.1.4 No earlier archaeological cuts, structures or deposits were found in any of the trenches.

### 1.2 Planning background

1.2.1 A planning consent (SW/10/0493) for the erection of two blocks of industrial buildings with associated access and parking was approved by Swale Borough Council (SBC). Swale Borough Council requested that an archaeological evaluation and assessment be undertaken in order to determine the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains. The Local Planning Authority (SBC) placed the following condition on the planning consent:

*No development shall take place until the applicant, or the developer, or successor(s) in title has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with written specification and timetable which has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority."*

1.2.2 On the basis of the present archaeological information, the Senior Archaeological Officer advising Swale Borough Council Council recommended that the proposed development should be subject to a programme of archaeological works in order to clarify the archaeological elements within the site.

1.2.3 The methodology of the archaeological evaluation phase of investigation is identified within specification which is based on KCC site specific specifications and in the KCC Evaluation Manual Part B.

- 1.2.4 Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT) in 2011 carried out an archaeological evaluation and assessment of land formally the Duke of Kent public house on the of corner of Thanet Way and Staplestreet in Hernhill Parish near Faversham in Kent. A planning application (SW/11/0982) for the construction of Industrial units A1 and A2 with associated parking was submitted to Swale Borough Council whereby the Council requested that an Archaeological Evaluation and Assessment be undertaken in order to determine the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains. The work was carried out in accordance with the requirements set out within an Archaeological Specification (KCC 2011) and in discussion with the Archaeological Heritage Officer, Kent County Council.
- 1.2.5 The 2011 evaluation was focused on Phase 1 of the construction works which was the build of Unit A1. The Archaeological Evaluation consisted of six trenches which encountered no archaeological features. The Archaeological Evaluation had therefore been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the original specification.
- 1.2.6 The methodology of the second archaeological evaluation phase of investigation is identified within this specification which is based on KCC site specific specifications and in the KCC Evaluation Manual Part B (attached). Requirements for the present archaeological evaluation comprise trial trenching targeting a representative 4% sample of the impact area (Figure 2) with six trenches designed to establish whether there were any archaeological deposits at the site of that may be affected by the proposed development (Figure 1). The results from this evaluation will be used to inform KCC of any further archaeological mitigation measures that may be necessary in connection with the development proposals.

### 1.3 Site description, Geology and Topography

1.3.1 The application site is situated on the site of a demolished public house, the Duke of Kent. Formally a 1930's brick-built building, it was demolished in 2009 to prevent vandalism (AP 1). The site itself, some 1.3ha in area sits on the corner of the Thanet Way, the dual carriageway that traditionally conveyed day-trippers from London to Margate and the golden sands of Thanet. To the north-east the site is bordered by Staplestreet, an ancient track that leads west to Faversham and the village of Hernhill to the east.

1.3.2 The Geological Survey of Great Britain (1:50,000) shows that the site is set on bedrock geology of Woolwich Beds and the Thanet Beds/Bullhead Beds, although capping's of Head Brickearth are recorded close by. The site averages 25.50 aOD.

## 2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 The Proposed Development Area (PDA) is located close to a number of archaeological sites which have been highlighted in the 2011 WSI.

2.2 The KCCHER records show that lies within an area of archaeological potential, mainly from the Roman period. The closest to the site is a 1930 find spot of Roman pottery (TR 06 SW 10) c.170m to the north-east during road construction. To the south-west at Brenley Corner, about 600m from the development site where Jenkins in 1960 excavated at least three Romano-British temples and associated structures.

2.3 Unfortunately no report was written. Likewise there is no report from Brian Philps who watched the 1970 re-build of the Thanet Way. Potential Roman buildings were identified by field walking as part of the Swale Survey at Nash Court some 300msouth-east of the development site (TR 05 NW 017). In addition 300m to the North are a series of cropmarks (TR 06 SW 1054). About 400m NW are some historic Hop Pickers Huts (TR 06 SW 315) and 380m to the NNE a undated ring ditch (TR 06 SW 76) whilst medieval activity is likely at Fairbrook Farm about 350m to the East (MKE 85 960).

## 3 METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 All fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the methodology set out in the Specification (SWAT 2021) and carried out in compliance with the standards outlined in the

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standards Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations (ClfA 2014).

### 3.2 Fieldwork

3.2.1 A total of 5 evaluation trenches were excavated within the extents of the Site. Trench 11 was not excavated as it wasn't possible due to storage yard being present in trench proposed location.

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

3.2.3 Where appropriate, trenches, or specific areas of trenches, were subsequently hand-cleaned to reveal features in plan and carefully selected cross-sections through the features were excavated to enable sufficient information about form, development date and stratigraphic relationships to be recorded without prejudice to more extensive investigations, should these prove to be necessary.

3.2.4 All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with LPA and ClfA standards and guidance. A complete photographic record was maintained on site that included 12 working shots; during mechanical excavation, following archaeological investigations and during back filling.

3.2.5 On completion, the trenches were made safe and left open in order to provide the opportunity for a curatorial monitoring visit. Backfilling was carried out once all recording, survey and monitoring had been completed.

### 3.3 Recording

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

3.3.2 Photographs were taken as appropriate providing a record of excavated features and deposits, along with images of the overall trench to illustrate their location and context. The record also includes images of the Site overall. The photographic record comprises

digital photography. A photographic register of all photographs taken is contained within the project archive.

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

## **4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

- 4.1.1 The principle objective of the archaeological evaluation is to establish the presence or absence of any elements of the archaeological resource, both artefacts and ecofacts of archaeological interest across the area of the development.
- 4.1.2 To ascertain the extent, depth below ground surface, depth of deposit if possible, character, date and quality of any such archaeological remains by limited sample excavation.
- 4.1.3 To determine the state of preservation and importance of the archaeological resource if present and to assess the past impacts on the site and pay particular attention to the character, height/depth below ground level, condition, date and significance of any archaeological deposits.
- 4.1.4 The opportunity will also be taken during the course of the evaluation to place and assess any archaeology revealed within the context of other recent archaeological investigations in the immediate area and within the setting of the local landscape and topography. In general the work is to ensure compliance with the archaeological requirements from the Senior Archaeologist at Kent County Council that an archaeological evaluation to take place as a post-planning requirement, and to publish the results either on line, or through OASIS and/or in a local journal.

## **5 RESULTS**

- 5.1 Introduction and Summary Results
  - 5.1.1 Archaeological evaluation of land at the Dunster House site, Staple Street, Faversham, Kent has exposed natural geology comprising orange-brown clay-sand-silt (Brickearth) with infrequent black pebbles capped by most recent overburden and spoils derived from Phase 1 construction.
  - 5.1.2 An early modern linear ditch (field boundary) was exposed in Trench 8. Feature is still visible as it joins with nearby attenuation pond.
  - 5.1.3 No earlier archaeological cuts, deposits or artefacts were revealed during the course of evaluation.



## 5.2 Trench Narratives

5.2.1 Trench 7 (Figure 3) was placed in north-eastern part of the site in NE-SW alignment and measured 28.4 metre in length by 1.2metre in width and 0.6 metres in depth. It exposed natural geology context (703) comprising grey mottled mid orangey brown silty loam with infrequent flint (round pebbles, subangular and angular) and occasional small roots. The exposed surface was relatively patchy (bioturbated) and truncated by three modern service trenches. These were left undisturbed as they are potentially an active drain and electric cable. Small test pit was excavated to the depth of 0.4m within NE extent of the trench. It revealed more clean natural sediment of orangey brown silty loam at its base and confirmed that the patches are of natural origin. Context (703) was overlaid by subsoil (702) consisted of soft mid greyish brown silty loam with occasional small flint and sealed with 0.15 metres thick topsoil layer (701) of soft, dark greyish brown silty loam with occasional small flint. Boundaries between soil layers were gradual. No archaeological cuts or deposits were exposed in this trench.

5.2.2 Trench 8 (Figure 3 and 4) was placed in north-eastern part of the site in E-W alignment and measured 22.7 metre in length by 1.2metre in width and 0.6 metres in depth. It exposed natural geology context (803) comprising grey mottled mid orangey brown silty loam with infrequent flint (round pebbles, subangular and angular) and occasional small roots. The exposed surface was relatively patchy (bioturbated) and truncated by modern drain ditch [804] and large pit. Both cuts were visible at higher level, just below vegetation and these were cutting through subsoil (802). Small test pit was excavated to the depth of 0.4m within West end of the trench. It revealed more clean natural sediment of orangey brown silty loam at its base and confirmed that the patches are of natural origin. Context (803) was overlaid by subsoil (802) consisted of soft mid greyish brown silty loam with occasional small flint and sealed with 0.15 metres thick topsoil layer (801) of soft, dark greyish brown silty loam with occasional small flint. Boundaries between soil layers were gradual. No archaeological cuts or deposits were exposed in this trench.

5.2.3 Trench 9 (Figure 3) was placed in central area of the site in NW-SE alignment and measured 22.5 metre in length by 1.2metre in width and 0.6 metres in depth. It exposed natural geology context (903) comprising grey mottled mid orangey brown silty loam with infrequent flint (round pebbles, subangular and angular) and occasional small roots. The exposed surface was relatively patchy (bioturbated). Context (903) was overlaid by subsoil (902) consisted of soft mid greyish brown silty loam with occasional small flint and sealed

with 0.15 metres thick topsoil layer (901) of soft, dark greyish brown silty loam with occasional small flint. Boundaries between soil layers were gradual. No archaeological cuts or deposits were exposed in this trench.

5.2.4 Trench 10 (Figure 3) was placed in south-central part of the site in NW-SE alignment and measured 16.8 metre in length by 1.2metre in width and 0.6 metres in depth. It exposed natural geology context (1003) comprising grey mottled mid orangey brown silty loam with infrequent flint (round pebbles, subangular and angular) and occasional small roots. The exposed surface was relatively patchy (bioturbated) and truncated by modern drain ditch [1004] with pipe. The cut was visible at higher level, just below vegetation and it was cutting through subsoil (1002). Context (1003) was overlaid by subsoil (1002) consisted of soft mid greyish brown silty loam with occasional small flint and sealed with 0.15 metres thick topsoil layer (1001) of soft, dark greyish brown silty loam with occasional small flint. Boundaries between soil layers were gradual. No archaeological cuts or deposits were exposed in this trench.

5.2.5 Trench 11 hasn't been excavated due to obstructions on site.

5.2.6 Trench 12 (Figure 3) was placed in southern part of the site in E-W alignment and measured 15.8 metre in length by 1.2metre in width and 0.7 metres in depth. It exposed natural geology context (1203) comprising grey mottled mid orangey brown silty loam with infrequent flint (round pebbles, subangular and angular) and moderate small roots. The exposed surface was relatively patchy (bioturbated) and truncated by two modern features exposed within west extent of the trench. Both cuts were visible at higher level, just below vegetation and these were cutting through subsoil (1202). Context (1203) was overlaid by 0.4meters thick subsoil (1202) consisted of soft mid greyish brown silty loam with occasional small flint and sealed with 0.15 metres thick topsoil layer (1201) of soft, dark greyish brown silty loam with occasional small flint. Boundaries between soil layers were gradual. No archaeological cuts or deposits were exposed in this trench.

## **6 CONCLUSIONS**

- 6.1.1 The archaeological evaluation has been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the Specification and exposed common stratigraphic sequence comprising top-soil with made-up ground concealing natural geology.
- 6.1.2 A modern drain ditch was exposed in Trench 7.
- 6.1.3 This evaluation has, therefore, assessed the archaeological potential of land intended for development. The negative results of this work show that the proposed development won't be having any impact on buried archaeological resource.

## **7 FINDS**

7.1.1 No archaeological finds were revealed during the course of evaluation.

## **8 RECOMMENDATIONS AND FURTHER WORK**

8.1.1 There is no requirement for further work.

## **9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

9.1.1 SWAT Archaeology would like to thank to the client for commissioning the project and thanks are extended to Simon Mason, Senior Archaeological Officer at Kent County Council for his support and assistance during the fieldwork.

9.1.2 On behalf of the client project was directed by Dr Paul Wilkinson, MCIFA and fieldwork was carried out by Peter Cichy. Text and illustrations for this report were prepared by Bartek Cichy.

## **10 ARCHIVE**

10.1 General

10.1.1 The Site archive, which will include; paper records, photographic records, graphics and digital data, will be prepared following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; ClfA 2009; Brown 2011; ADS 2013).

10.1.2 All archive elements will be marked with the site/accession code, and a full index will be prepared. The physical archive comprises 1 file/document case of paper records & A4 graphics. The Site Archive will be retained at SWAT Archaeology offices until such time it can be transferred to a Kent Museum.

## **APPENDIX 1 – HER FORM**

**Site Name:** Archaeological Evaluation of land at the Dunster House site, Staple Street, Faversham Kent.

**SWAT Site Code:** DHF-EV-21

**Site Address:** As above

**Summary:** *Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) was commissioned by The Client to undertake an archaeological evaluation of land at the Dunster House site, Staple Street, Faversham Kent. The archaeological programme was monitored by the Senior Archaeological Officer at Kent County Council. The Archaeological Evaluation consisted of 6 trenches, which recorded a relatively common stratigraphic sequence comprising topsoil and recent overburden with modern made-up ground overlying natural geology.*

*No archaeology was found.*

***Further mitigation is not required.***

**District/Unitary:** Swale District Council & Kent County Council

**Period(s):** modern

**NGR (centre of site to eight figures)** NGR 604725 160734

**Type of Archaeological work:** Archaeological Evaluation

**Date of recording:** June 2021

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

**Geology:** Sandstone capped by Head Deposits

**Title and author of accompanying report:** SWAT Archaeology (B. Cichy 2021) Archaeological land at the Dunster House site, Staple Street, Faversham Kent

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

**Contact at Unit:** Paul Wilkinson

## References

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

*Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2009, Standard and Guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives, Institute for Archaeologists*

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*English Heritage, 2006, Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE).*

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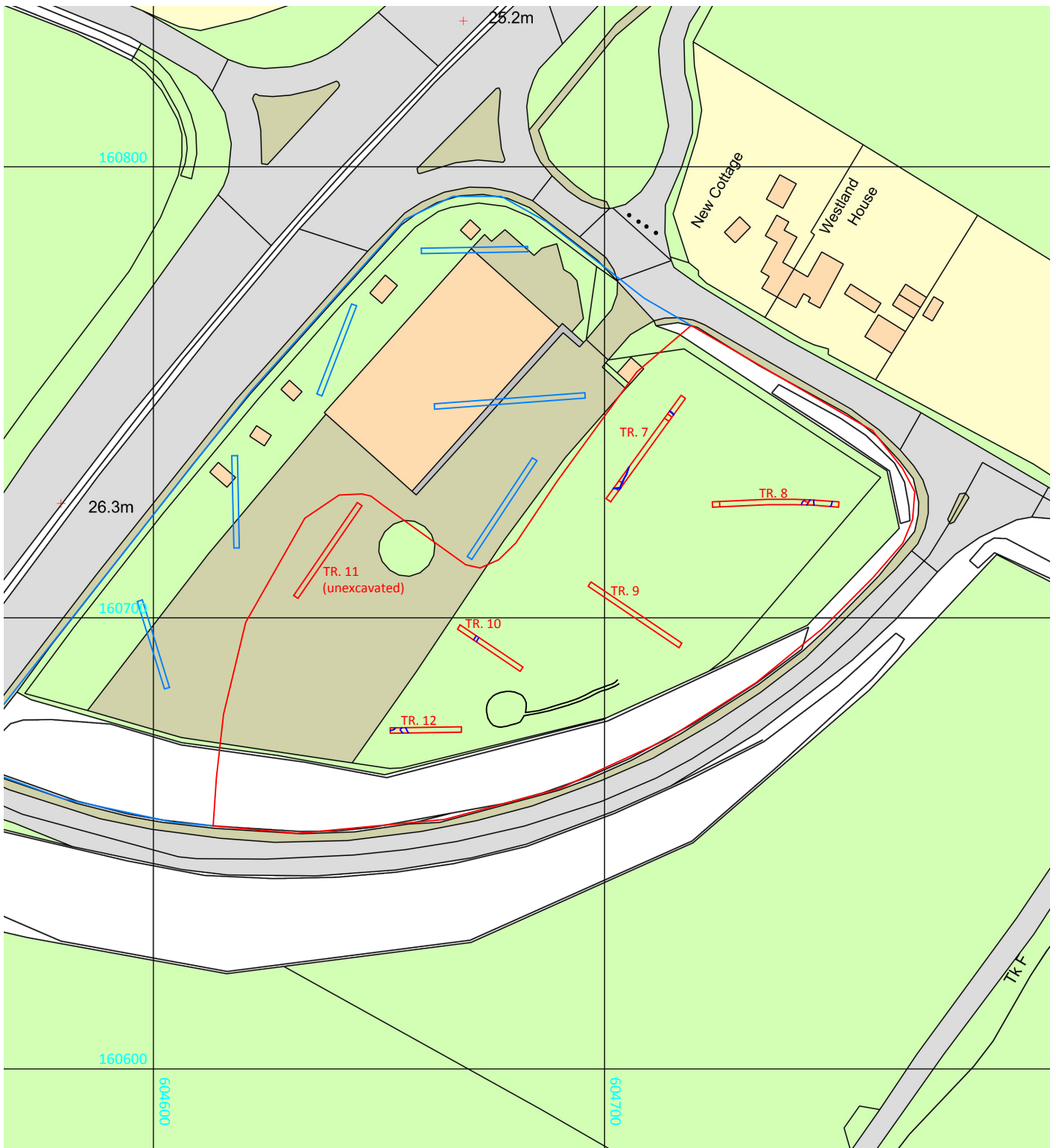
*SWAT Archaeology, 2020, Specification for a Programme of Archaeological Evaluation of land at the Dunster House site, Staple Street, Faversham Kent*

## Figures and Plates

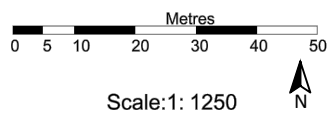








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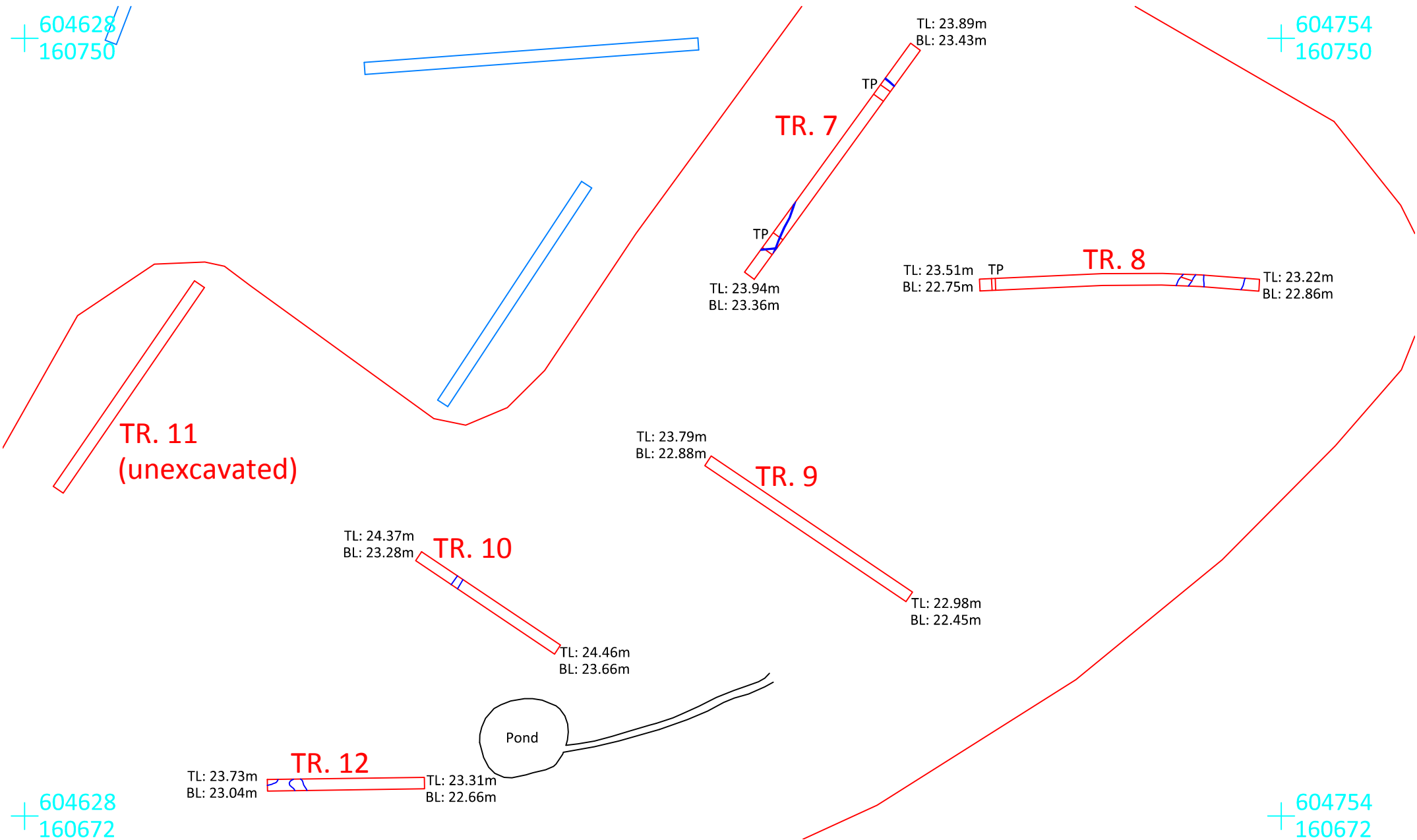
Key:  
 Phase 1 trenches   
 Phase 2 trenches   
 Modern features 

Figure 2: Site location in relation to OS map



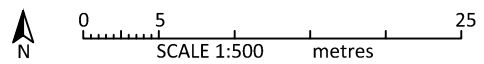
+ 604628 / 160750

+ 604754 / 160750



+ 604628 / 160672

+ 604754 / 160672



**Key:**  
 Phase 1 trenches   
 Phase 2 trenches

Figure 3: Trench plan

# TR. 8

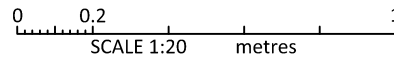
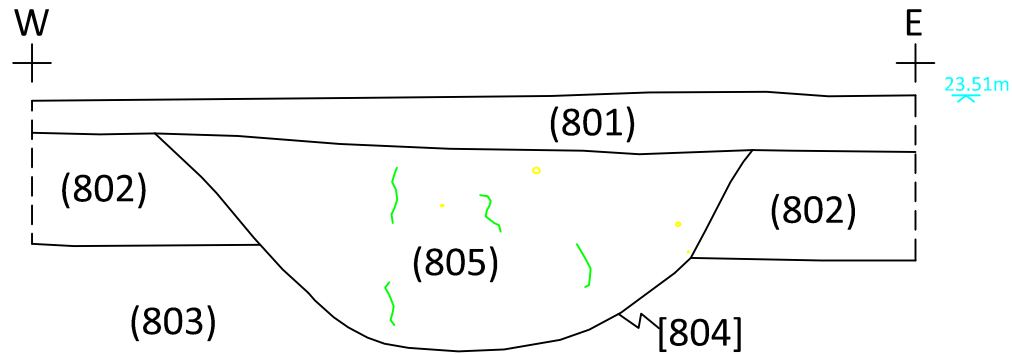
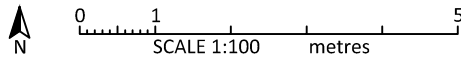
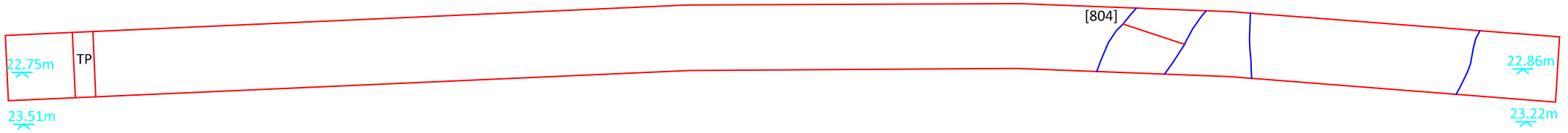


Figure 4: Plan of trench 8 and section of [804]



*Plate 1: Looking west at the site from its eastern end with trench 8 in the foreground*



*Plate 2: Looking south west at trench 7 with one- and two-metre scales.*





Plate 3. Trench 8 viewing from south-east with two-metre scale.



Plate 4: Representative section of natural geology. Looking west at section exposed in test pit in trench 8; 1 metre scale.





*Plate 5: Looking north at section through modern ditch [804] exposed in trench 8; 1 metre scale.*



*Plate 6: Looking north at the pond located within south central area of the site.*





*Plate 7: Trench 9 viewing from south-east with two-metre scale.*



*Plate 8: Trench 10 viewing from west with one- and two-metre scales.*





*Plate 9: Trench 12 viewing from East. One- and two-metre scales.*