



**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION OF
Land rear of 3 Prospect
Place, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 4SG**

Report date: 20/01/2021

Site code: **PRT-EV-20**

NGR: 559083E 139326N

Planning ref.: **20/00873/FULL**

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1 INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 SWAT Archaeology was commissioned by SJM PROJECTS to carry out archaeological evaluation in preparations for the development of land rear of 3 Prospect Place, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 4SG.

1.1.2 Archaeological evaluation commenced on 10 December 2020 and was completed by 14th December 2020. Works were carried out within Area of PDA where 3 evaluation trenches were dug.

1.2 Planning background

1.2.1 A planning application was granted on the 9th October 2020 (Application No: 20/00873/FULL for the: for the demolition of the existing garages and lean-to; Renovation and extension to existing Coach House to provide 3 No. 2 x bedroom flats with an additional flat being retained and altered; Erection of 5 x 4 bedroom mews houses with associated hard and soft landscaping.

1.2.2 A Condition of archaeological works were attached to Planning Decision Notice and it was:
(10) Prior to the commencement of development the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, will secure and implementation of a phased programme of archaeological work in accordance with a specification and written timetable which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Reason: To ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded in accordance with NPPF.

1.3 Site description, Geology and Topography

1.3.1 The site is located in the eastern part of Royal Tunbridge Wells and is denoted at the north by A264 and to the east by Prospect Road B2023. To the west and southwest the site is surrounded by gardens.

1.3.2 The Geological Survey of Great Britain (1:50,000) shows that the site is set on bedrock geology of Tunbridge Wells Sand Formation- Sandstone. Superficial deposits are not recorded and the OD height of the site is about 125.0m 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 advice to TWBC (dated 12th May 2020) from Wendy Rogers Senior

Archaeological Officer KCC: *Thank you for your letter consulting us on the above planning application for demolition, conversion of coach house, erection of 5 dwellings and associated works. The site of the application lies within the historic core of Tunbridge Wells and close to Calverley Park. Royal Tunbridge Wells is considered to have been a Post Medieval town developing from spa resources. Remains associated with Post Medieval activity may survive on site and I recommend the following condition is placed on any forthcoming consent: Prior to the commencement of development the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, will secure and implementation of a phased programme of archaeological work in accordance with a specification and written timetable which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Reason: To ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded in accordance with NPPF.*

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 All fieldwork was carried out in accordance with the methodology set out in the Specification (SWAT 2020) and carried out in compliance with the standards outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standards Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations (CIfA 2014).

3.2 Fieldwork

3.2.1 A total of 3 evaluation trenches were proposed within the extents of the Site (SWAT 2020).

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. All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with LPA and CIfA standards and guidance. A complete photographic record was maintained on site that included 8 working shots; during mechanical excavation, following archaeological investigations and during back filling.

3.2.4 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 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.

4.2 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.

4.3 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.

- 4.4 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 on land rear of 3 Prospect Place, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 4SG has exposed natural geology comprising yellow clay-sand-silt with infrequent sandstone flecks overlain by modern levelling deposit. One evaluation trench in southern extent of the site has exposed potential construction cut or service channel belonging to recently demolished building. Its backfill consisted of modern bricks, iron rods and ceramic pipe fragments.

5.1.2 No archaeological cuts, deposits or artefacts were revealed during the course of evaluation.

5.1.3 Evaluation Trench 2 was excavated through levelling deposit to the maximum depth of 1.2 metre and also exposed natural geology comprising yellow-grey clay-sand-silt with sandstone flecks. Mentioned levelling deposit was contained from the north by retaining wall.

5.2 Trench Narratives

5.2.1 Trench 1 (Figure 3) was placed in eastern part of the site in north-south alignment and measured 1.8metre wide by 19.55metres in length and 0.58metre in maximum depth. It exposed natural geology context (102) comprising yellow-orange clay-sand-silt with sandstone flecks. No archaeological cuts or deposits were exposed here.

5.2.2 Trench 2 (Figure 3) was placed in central part of the site in east-west alignment and measured 1.8metre wide by 20.85metres in length and 1.2 metres in maximum depth at its western end. It exposed vast modern levelling deposit comprising layers (203) and (204) measuring 0.8-0.9 metre thick capping buried top-soil and sub-soil recorded as one context (205) which overlain natural geology (202) comprising yellow clay-sand-silt with infrequent sandstone flecks. No archaeological cuts, deposits or artefacts were exposed here.

5.2.3 Trench 3 (Figure 3) was placed in southern part of the site in northwest-southeast alignment and measured 1.8metre wide by 18.02metres in length and 0.92metre in maximum depth. It exposed natural geology context (302) comprising yellow-orange clay-sand-silt with infrequent sandstone flecks. A construction cut [303] or collapsed manhole/ service trench belonging to recently

demolished building was exposed roughly in the middle of this trench. It was assumed initially that these remains could be foundations although an absence of solid build structure within an investigated cut has dismissed this preliminary explanation. Backfill (301c) of revealed cut [303] comprised a series of modern-dump events (301a), (301b) and (301c) comprising soil and loam with demolition debris. Several bricks fragments were matching the ones used to erect recently demolished garages. It was also noted that groundwater was quickly percolating through backfill of exposed cut suggesting a potential service trench for drainage or sewage. No archaeological cuts or deposits were exposed here.

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The archaeological evaluation has been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the Specification and exposed natural geology comprising yellow-orange clay-sand-silt with infrequent sandstone flecks overlain by modern levelling deposits comprising soil with demolition debris.
- 6.2 Trench 3 has exposed modern construction cut or manhole although all its structural parts were ripped-off and possibly returned back into the hollow as a backfill.
- 6.3 This evaluation has, therefore, assessed the archaeological potential of land intended for development. The results of this work show that the proposed development won't be having any impact on buried archaeological resource.

7 FINDS

- 7.1 No archaeological finds were revealed during the course of evaluation.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS AND FURTHER WORK

- 8.1 There is no requirement for further work.

9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 9.1 SWAT Archaeology would like to thank to the client for commissioning the project and thanks are extended to Wendy Rogers, Senior Archaeological Officer from Kent County Council for her support and assistance during the fieldwork.
- 9.2 On behalf of the client project was directed by Dr Paul Wilkinson, MCIFA and fieldwork was carried out by Peter Cichy who also prepared text and illustrations for this report.

10 ARCHIVE

- 10.1 General
- 10.2 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).
- 10.3 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 I Trench tables

Trench 1	Dimensions:1.8m x 19.55m Depth:0.58m Trench alignment: N-S Ground level: 124.71mOD No archaeology was exposed in this trench.		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
101	Top soil/overburden	Potential top-soil mixed with demolition debris	0-0.52m
102	Natural	Firm, yellow clay-sand-silt with infrequent sandstone flecking.	0.52m+

Trench 2	Dimensions:1.8m x20.85m Depth:1.2m Trench alignment: E-W Ground level: 125.15mOD No archaeology was exposed in this trench.		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
201	Top-soil/overburden	Very dark grey top-soil with frequent modern inclusions.	0-0.2m
202	Natural	Yellow-grey clay-sand-silt	1.22m+
203	deposit	Modern levelling deposit contained from the north by retention wall.	0.2-0.8
204	Deposit	Modern levelling deposit comprising soil mixed with demolition debris.	0.8-1m
205	Buried top-soil	Very dark grey buried top-soil	1-1.22m

Trench 3	Dimensions:1.8m x 18.02 Depth:0.92m Trench alignment: NW-SE Ground level: 124.32mOD Modern construction or collapsed manhole was exposed in this trench.		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
301a	overburden	Grey-brown clay-sand-silt mixed with demolition debris	0-0.6m
301b	overburden	Dark-brown clay-sand-silt mixed with demolition debris	0-0.5m
301c	Backfill	Brown clay-sand-silt with frequent demolition debris, mainly brickwork crush with infrequent iron bars and ceramic pipe fragments.	0.3-0.92m+
302	Natural	Firm, yellow clay-sand-silt with infrequent sandstone flecking.	0.5-0.62m
[303]	Cut	Modern construction cut or collapsed manhole backfilled with context 301c. Dislodged red bricks and brick fragments were found inside. Rapidly raising groundwater suggests collapsed manhole or sewage/ drainage trench.	0.72m+

APPENDIX 2 – HER FORM

Site Name: Archaeological Evaluation on Land rear of 3 Prospect Place, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 4SG

SWAT Site Code: PRT-EV-20

Site Address: As above

Summary: *Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) was commissioned by SJM Projects to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land rear of 3 Prospect Place, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 4SG in Kent. The archaeological programme was monitored by the Senior Archaeological Officer at Kent County Council. The Archaeological Evaluation consisted of 3 trenches, which recorded a relatively common stratigraphic sequence comprising recent overburden with modern made-up ground overlying natural geology. A collapsed manhole or former sewage/ drainage duct was exposed in southern part of the site.*

No archaeology was found.

Further mitigation is not required.

District/Unitary: Maidstone Borough Council & Kent County Council

Period(s): modern

NGR (centre of site to eight figures) NGR 559083 139326

Type of Archaeological work: Archaeological Evaluation

Date of recording: December 2020

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

Geology: Sandstone capped by Head Deposits

Title and author of accompanying report: SWAT Archaeology (P. Cichy 2021) Archaeological Evaluation on Land rear of 3 Prospect Place, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 4SG.

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

Contact at Unit: Paul Wilkinson

References

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Archaeology South-East, 2016' Land North of the High Street, Newington, Swale Borough, Kent: Heritage Statement. Report ref.: 2015110v2

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SWAT Archaeology, 2020, Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation of land rear of 3 Prospect Place, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 4SG

Figures and Plates



Plate 1: Showing the site, looking northwest.



Plate 2: Showing Evaluation Trench 1. Looking north with one- and two-metre scales.



Plate 3: Showing Evaluation Trench 2. Looking west with two-metre scale.



Plate 4: Showing representative section in Trench 2 revealing the sequence of vast levelling deposit contained by retention wall from the north. Looking north with one-metre scale.



Plate 5: Evaluation Trench 2 looking east with two-metre scale.



Plate 6: Showing western end of Evaluation Trench 2 and retention wall in background. Looking north-west with one- and two-metres scales.



Plate 7: Showing retention wall containing vast levelling deposit exposed in Evaluation Trench 2. Looking south-east with two-metre scale.



Plate 8: Showing Evaluation Trench 3. Looking north-west with one- and two-metres scales. A collapsed manhole or service duct [303] visible in middle-ground.



Plate 9: Showing exposed construction cut or collapsed manhole/ drainage duct [303]. Looking north with one- and two-metre scales.

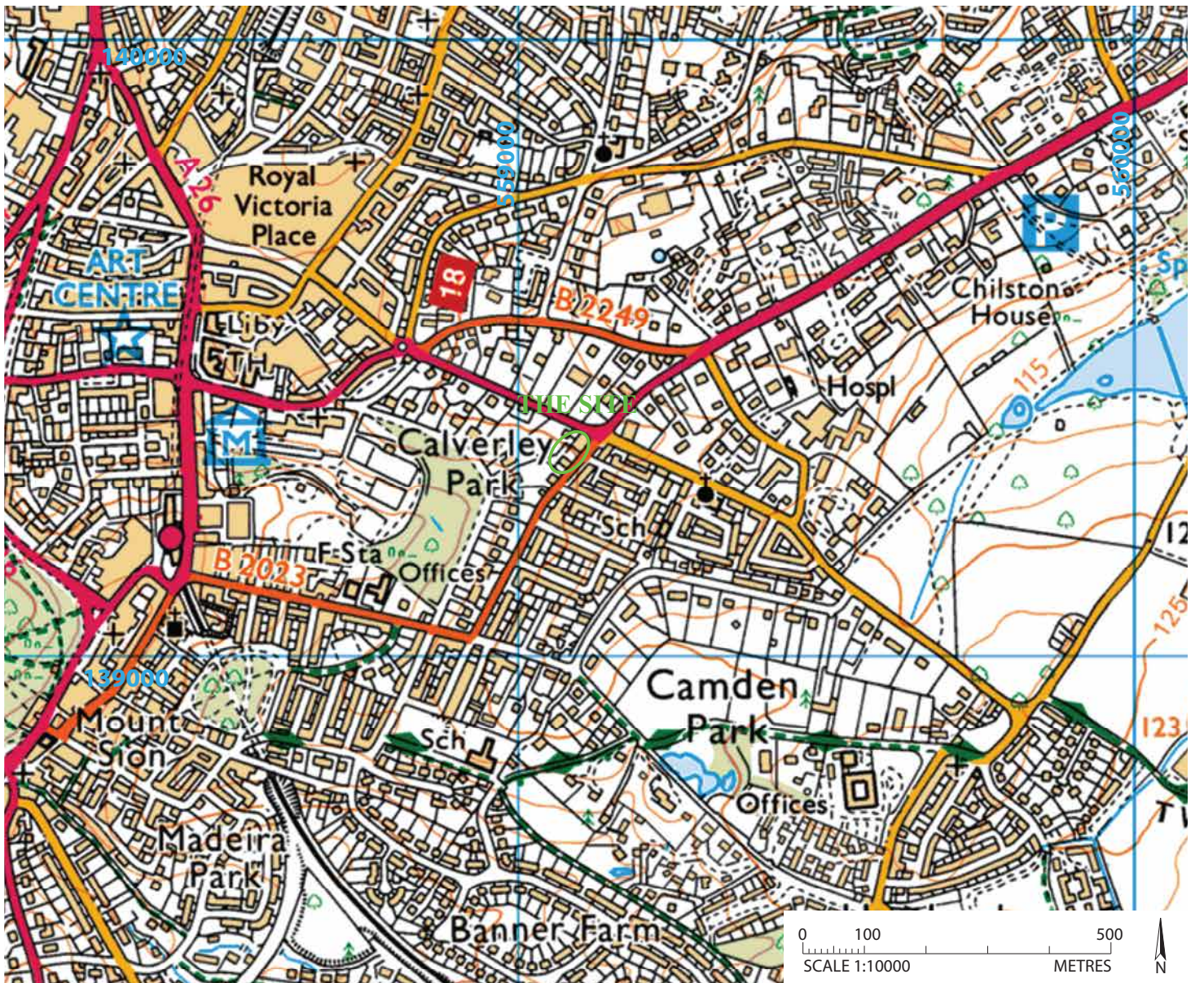
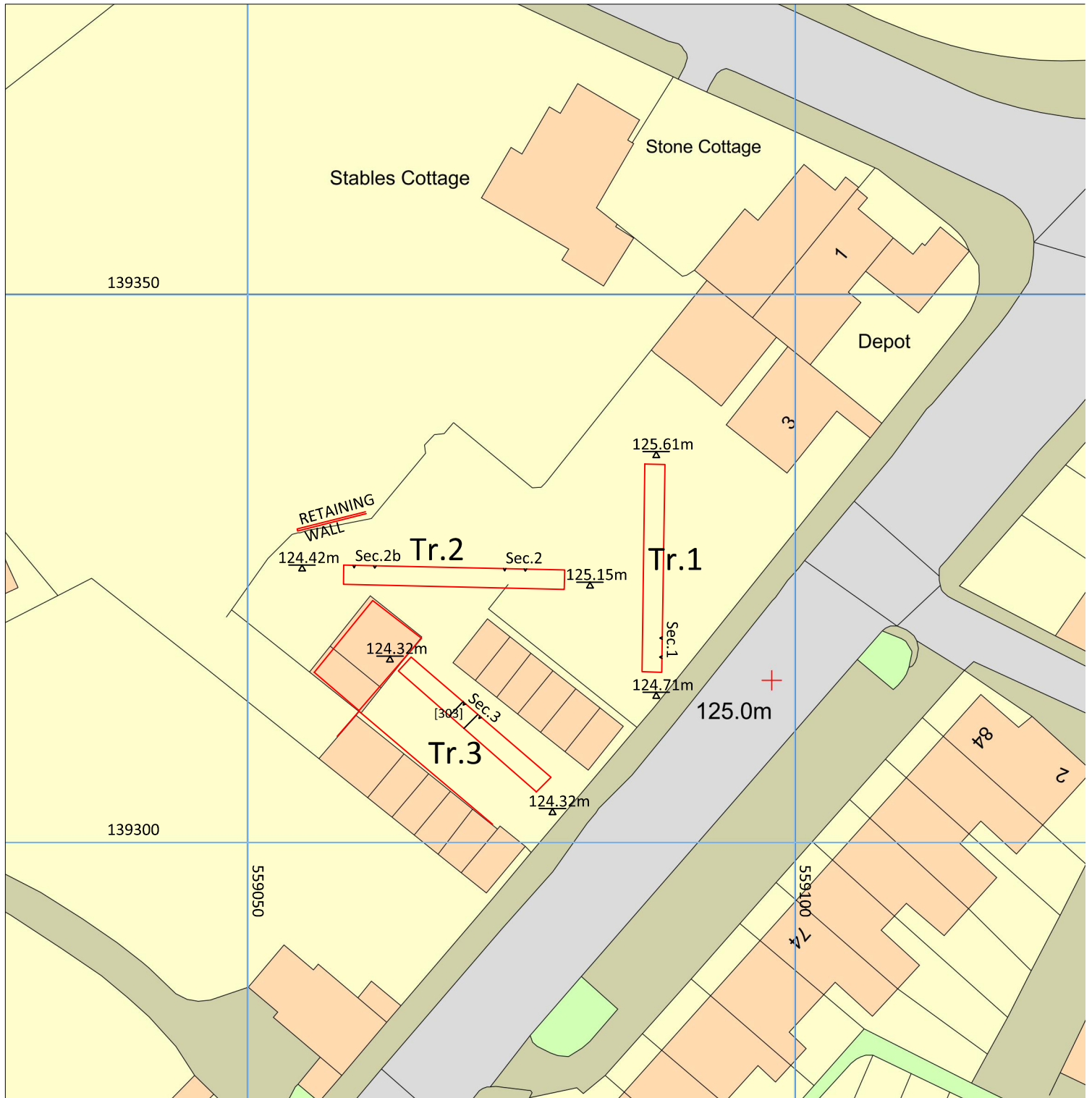


Figure 1: Site location map, scale 1:10000.



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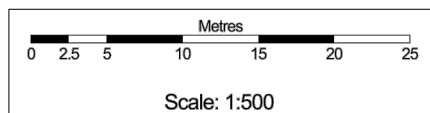


Figure 2: Trench location in relation to OS map



Figure 3: Trench location in relation development

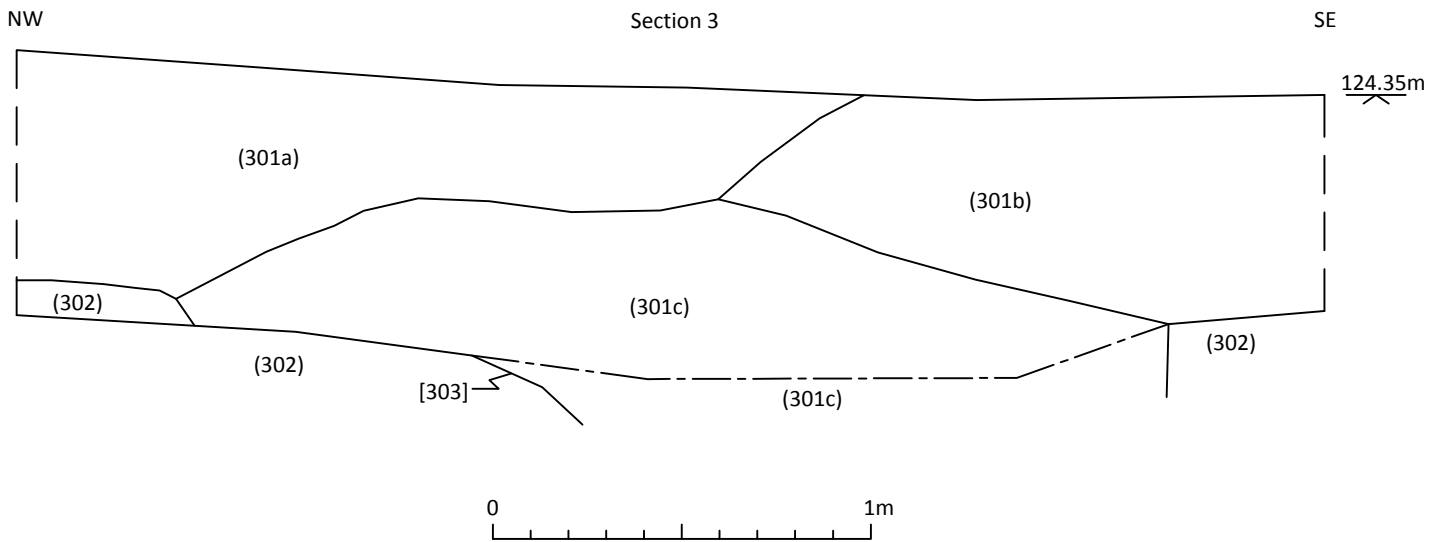
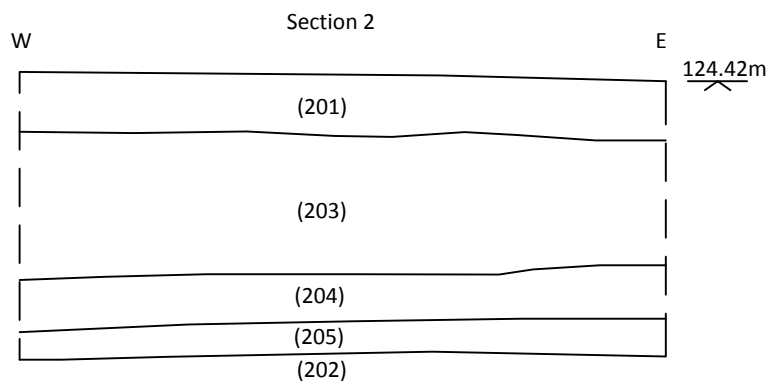
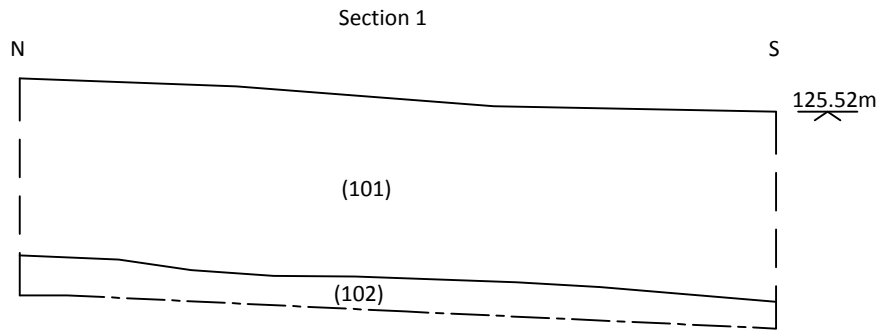


Figure 4: Sections