Archaeological Evaluation of Land at the Proposed Western Link Road including the Chestnut Street Roundabout to the west of Wises Lane, South-West Sittingbourne, Kent

Phase 2B

Site Code: WLS2-EV-22

NGR Site Centre: 588303 163919

Planning Application Number: 17/505711/HYBRID



Report date: 12 June 2023

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Phase 2B

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Abstract

Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) were commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation on Land at the Proposed Western Link Road including the Chestnut Street Roundabout to the west of Wises Lane, South-West Sittingbourne, Kent (Phase 2B). The archaeological programme was monitored remotely by the Principal Archaeological Officer at Kent County Council.

The archaeological works have investigated the extents of the proposed development area using 20 trenches measuring 13m-25m in length.

There are still outstanding evaluations to be carried out within eastern and western parts of PDA (Phases 3 and 4). Phase 2A and 2C was also completed and will be reported separately.

Archaeological evaluation (Phase 2B) has confirmed the absence of archaeological remains in this part of the site. No archaeological cuts or deposits were exposed in any of evaluation Trenches.

The archaeological evaluation has been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the Specification and has assessed the archaeological potential of land intended for development. The results from this work will be used to aid and inform the Principal Archaeological Officer of any further archaeological mitigation measures that may be necessary in connection with any future development proposals.

Archaeological Evaluation of land to the west of Wises Lane, South-West Sittingbourne, Kent

Phase 2B

NGR Site Centre: 588303 163919 Site Code: WLS2-EV-22

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) were commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land to the west of Wises Lane, South-West Sittingbourne, Kent. (Phase 2B) (Figure).
- 1.1.2 The land has The land has planning consent (Swale Borough Council (Ref. 17/505711/HYBRID) for the following. outline planning permission for up to 595 dwellings including affordable housing; a 2- form entry primary school with associated outdoor space and vehicle parking; local facilities comprising a Class A1 retail store of up to 480 sq. m GIA and up to 560 sq. m GIA of "flexible use" floor space that can be used for one or more of the following uses A1 (retail), A2 (financial and professional services), A3 (restaurants and cafes), D1 (non-residential institutions); a rugby clubhouse/community building up to 375 sq. m GIA, 3 standard RFU sports pitches and associated vehicle parking; a link road between Borden Lane and Chestnut Street/A249; allotments: and formal and informal open space incorporating SUDS, new planting/landscaping and ecological enhancement works; and full planning permission for the erection of 80 dwellings including affordable housing, open space, associated SUDS.
- 1.1.3 A Condition 66 of the hybrid consent states the following:

Before the submission of reserved matters for any phase (excluding Phase 1A), the applicant (or their agents or successors in title) shall secure and have reported a programme of archaeological field evaluation works for that phase, in accordance with a specification and written timetable which has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority.

- 1.1.4 On the basis of the present archaeological information. KCCHC advising Swale Borough 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.
- 1.1.5 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with an archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by SWAT Archaeology (2022), prior to the commencement of works.
- 1.1.6 The evaluation is the first stage of the programme of archaeological works and addresses part i) of the planning condition only. Its main aim is to clarify the presence/absence of archaeology and its significance. On the basis of the results of the evaluation, further archaeological works may be needed and could include excavation and/or watching brief and post excavation and publication.

1.2 Timetable

1.2.1 A timetable for the archaeological programme of works, to date, is provided below;

Task	Dates	Personnel/Company
Geophysical Survey	2022	Magnitude Surveys
Submission of the Written Scheme of Investigation	June 2022	SWAT Archaeology
Strip Map and Sample Programme (Phase 1A)	October 2022 –March 2023	SWAT Archaeology
Archaeological Evaluation: Fieldwork (Phase 1B)	December 2022	SWAT Archaeology
Archaeological Evaluation Report (Phase 1B)	December 2022	SWAT Archaeology
Archaeological Evaluation: Fieldwork (Phase 2B)	May 2023	SWAT Archaeology
Archaeological Evaluation: Fieldwork (Phase 2C)	May/ June 2023	SWAT Archaeology
Archaeological Evaluation: Fieldwork (Phase 2A)	June 2023	SWAT Archaeology
Archaeological Evaluation Report (Phase 2B)	This document	SWAT Archaeology

 Table 1 Timetable for the archaeological programme of works

1.3 Site Description, Topography and Geology

- 1.3.1 The PDA (Proposed Development Area) is centered on NGR 588303 163919 (Figure 1) and is situated on open ground of approximately 47.47 ha in area, located on the open fields adjoining the built-up edge of south-west Sittingbourne, in Kent. The south boundary is bounded by Cryalls Lane, Dental Close to the north and Wises Lane. Ground levels are relatively level and a height of approximately 30-40m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).
- 1.3.2 The Geological Survey of Great Britain (http:// www.bgs.ac.uk) shows that the site is set on Head deposits Clay and Silt overlaying the bedrock geology of Seaford Chalk Formation and Thanet Formation of Sand, Silt and Clay.

1.4 Scope of Report

1.4.1 This report has been produced to provide initial information regarding the results of the archaeological evaluation. The results from this work will be used to aid and inform the Principal Archaeological Officer (KCC) of any further archaeological mitigation measures that may be necessary in connection with any future development proposals.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The Proposed Development Area (PDA) is located close to a number of archaeological sites which are identified on the KCCHER database.

2.2 HER Records

- 2.2.1 Archaeological investigation and the initial work on site was an Geophysical Survey by Magnitude Surveys Ltd has been carried out and the results showed that the area was potentially low on archaeological features although a parcel of land to the south of Phase 1A did show a high density of archaeological features.
- 2.2.2 Follow on archaeological work by Wessex Archaeology was to investigate the archaeological and non-archaeological features identified in the geophysical survey and 28 trenches measuring 30m by 1.8m were set out using GPS and 11 of the trenches were found to contain archaeological features and deposits with two concentrations in the central and southern areas of the Site.
- 2.2.3 Artefacts recovered from the Wessex archaeological work include 32 sherds of Prehistoric pottery recovered from features in Trenches 3, 8, 13, 20 and 13 Middle Bronze Age sherds from a natural/palaeochannel 2004. Roman pottery was retrieved from Trenches 23, 27, 28 with most from Trench 28. Ceramic building material, Flint, Animal bone and Other Finds were

also recovered and can be accessed in the Wessex Archaeology Report (Land at Southwest Sittingbourne, Kent Phase 1A (Archaeological Evaluation) dated October 2018).

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 General Aims

- 3.1.1 The specific aims of the archaeological fieldwork were set out in a Written Scheme of Investigation (SWAT Archaeology 2022) as stated below;
 - 6.1 The primary objective of the archaeological evaluation is to establish or otherwise the presence of any potential archaeological features which may be impacted by the proposed development. The aims of this investigation are to determine the potential for archaeological activity and in particular the earlier prehistoric period and also any Roman, medieval and later archaeological activity.
 - 6.2 The programme of archaeological work should be carried out in a phased approach and will commence with evaluation through trial trenching. This initial phase should determine whether any significant archaeological remains would be affected by the development and if so, what mitigation measures are appropriate. Such measures may include further detailed archaeological excavation, or an archaeological watching brief during construction work or an engineering solution to any preservation in situ requirements.

(SWAT Archaeology 2022: Section 6)

3.2 General Objectives

- 3.2.1 The general objectives of the archaeological fieldwork were therefore:
 - To determine the presence or absence of archaeological features, deposits, structures, artefacts, or ecofacts within the specified area;
 - To establish, within the constraints of the evaluation, the extent, character, date, condition, and quality of any surviving archaeological remains;
 - To place any identified archaeological remains within a wider historical and archaeological context in order to assess their significance; and
 - To make available information about the archaeological resource within the site by reporting on the results of the evaluation.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 All fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the methodology set out in the Specification (SWAT 2022) and carried out in compliance with the standards outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standards Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations (CIFA 2014).
- 4.1.2 It was agreed with KCC Principal Archaeological Officer that no trenching is required in Chestnut Street Roundabout area.
- 4.1.3 The landscaping area immediately to the north of the scheme labelled '2C' has been added to this phase of work. See Figure 3.

4.2 Fieldwork

- 4.2.1 20 evaluation trenches were excavated (Figures). Each trench was initially scanned by a metal detector for surface finds prior to excavation. Excavation was carried out using a 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.
- 4.2.2 Where appropriate, trenches, or specific areas of trenches, were subsequently hand-cleaned to reveal features in plan and carefully selected cross-sections through the features were excavated to enable sufficient information about form, development, date, and stratigraphic relationships to be recorded without prejudice to more extensive investigations, should these prove to be necessary. All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with KCC and CIfA standards and guidance. A complete photographic record was maintained on site that included working shots; during mechanical excavation, following archaeological investigations, and during back filling.
- 4.2.3 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, surveying, and monitoring had been completed.

4.3 Recording

4.3.1 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 OD heights.

- 4.3.2 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.
- 4.3.3 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.).

5 RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 The Trenches were mechanically excavated under archaeological supervision. Trenches were positioned to cover the entire proposed development area.
- 5.1.2 The site, as shown on Figure 2, provides the trench layout while further Figures illustrates the results for each individual archaeological evaluation trench along with representative soil sequence sections. Plates consist of photographs of features and selected trenches that have been provided to supplement the text.
- 5.1.3 Individual trench results are discussed below.

5.2 Stratigraphic Deposit Sequence

5.2.1 A relatively consistent stratigraphic sequence was recorded across the majority of the Site comprising topsoil and colluvium sealing intact subsoil, which overlay the natural geological deposits. The topsoil generally consisted of dark organic brown clay sand silt with frequent roots and occasional building material (bricks, tiles, etc), overlying the subsoil/ colluvium which consisted of light to mid brown-orange clay sand silt with moderate small rounded stones and occasional chalk flecks. Natural geology comprised bedrock geology of Chalk sealed by superficial clay and silts. In most of the areas the natural geology (xx03) was sealed-off by subsoil/ colluvium (xx02).

5.3 Archaeological Narrative – Evaluation Trenches

Trench 1 (Figures 2, 3 Plates)

5.3.1 Trench 1 was placed in north-western part of the site in E-W alignment and measured 25metres in length by 1.8metres in width and 0.45metres in depth. It exposed natural geology context (103) comprising firmly compacted yellow to orange-grey clay-silt with frequent pebbles and flint gravel. No archaeological cuts, artefacts or deposits were exposed here.

Trench 2 (Figures 2, 3 Plates)

5.3.2 Trench 2 was placed in north-western part of the site in NW-SE alignment and measured 25metres in length by 1.8metres in width and 0.46metres in depth. It exposed natural geology context (203) comprising firmly compacted yellow to orange-grey clay-silt with frequent pebbles and flint gravel. No archaeological cuts, artefacts or deposits were exposed here.

Trench 3 (Figures 2, 3 Plates)

5.3.3 Trench 3 was placed in north-western part of the site in E-W alignment and measured 25metres in length by 1.8metres in width and 0.44metres in depth. It exposed natural geology context (303) comprising firmly compacted yellow to orange-grey clay-silt with occasional pebbles and flint gravel. No archaeological cuts, artefacts or deposits were exposed here.

Trench 4 (Figures 2, 3 Plates)

5.3.4 Trench 4 was placed in north-western part of the site in NW-SE alignment and measured 25metres in length by 1.8metres in width and 0.58metres in depth. It exposed natural geology context (403) comprising firmly compacted yellow to orange-grey clay-silt with occasional pebbles and flint gravel and chalk bedrock outcrops. No archaeological cuts, artefacts or deposits were exposed here.

Trench 5 (Figures 2, 3 Plates)

5.3.5 Trench 5 was placed in north-western part of the site in E-W alignment and measured 15metres in length by 1.8metres in width and 0.54metres in depth. It exposed natural geology context (503) comprising firmly compacted yellow to orange-grey clay-silt with occasional pebbles and chalk bedrock outcrops. No archaeological cuts, artefacts or deposits were exposed here.

Trench 6 (Figures 2, 3 Plates)

5.3.6 Trench 6 was placed in north-western part of the site in NW-SE alignment and measured 13metres in length by 1.8metres in width and 0.54metres in depth. It exposed natural geology

context (603) comprising eroded chalk bedrock with periglacial scarring. No archaeological cuts, artefacts or deposits were exposed here.

Trench 7 (Figures 2, 3 Plates)

5.3.7 Trench 7 was placed in north-western part of the site in NW-SE alignment and measured 25metres in length by 1.8metres in width and 1.1metres in depth. It exposed natural geology context (703) comprising firmly compacted yellow to orange-grey clay-silt with frequent pebbles and flint gravel. No archaeological cuts, artefacts or deposits were exposed here.

Trench 8 (Figures 2, 3 Plates)

5.3.8 Trench 8 was placed in north-western part of the site in E-W alignment and measured 25metres in length by 1.8metres in width and 0.5metres in depth. It exposed natural geology context (803) comprising firmly compacted yellow to orange-grey clay-silt with frequent pebbles and flint gravel. No archaeological cuts, artefacts or deposits were exposed here.

Trench 9 (Figures 2, 3 Plates)

5.3.9 Trench 9 was placed in north-western part of the site in NW-SE alignment and measured 25metres in length by 1.8metres in width and 0.5metres in depth. It exposed natural geology context (903) comprising firmly compacted yellow to orange-grey clay-silt with infrequent pebbles and flint gravel. No archaeological cuts, artefacts or deposits were exposed here.

Trench 10 (Figures 2, 3 Plates)

5.3.10 Trench 10 was placed in north-western part of the site in NE-SW alignment and measured 25metres in length by 1.8metres in width and 0.5metres in depth. It exposed natural geology context (1003) comprising chalk bedrock affected by periglacial environment. No archaeological cuts, artefacts or deposits were exposed here.

Trench 11 (Figures 2, 3 Plates)

5.3.11 Trench 11 was placed in north-western part of the site in NW-SE alignment and measured 25metres in length by 1.8metres in width and 0.6metres in depth. It exposed natural geology context (1103) comprising firmly compacted yellow to orange-grey clay-silt with infrequent pebbles, flint gravel and outcrops of underlying chalk. No archaeological cuts, artefacts or deposits were exposed here.

Trench 12 (Figures 2, 3 Plates)

5.3.12 Trench 12 was placed in central part of the site in NW-SE alignment but was not excavated due to protected hedge exclusion zone.

Trench 13 (Figures 2, 3 Plates)

5.3.13 Trench 13 was placed in central part of the site in E-W alignment and measured 25metres in length by 1.8metres in width and 0.47metres in depth. It exposed natural geology context (1303) comprising firmly compacted yellow to orange-grey clay-silt with frequent pebbles and flint gravel. No archaeological cuts, artefacts or deposits were exposed here.

Trench 14 (Figures 2, 3 Plates)

5.3.14 Trench 14 was placed in central part of the site in NW-SE alignment and measured 25metres in length by 1.8metres in width and 0.48metres in depth. It exposed natural geology context (1403) comprising firmly compacted yellow to orange-grey clay-silt with frequent pebbles and flint gravel. No archaeological cuts, artefacts or deposits were exposed here.

Trench 15 (Figures 2, 3 Plates)

5.3.15 Trench 15 was placed in central part of the site in NE-SW alignment and measured 25metres in length by 1.8metres in width and 0.5metres in depth. It exposed natural geology context (1503) comprising firmly compacted yellow to orange-grey clay-silt with infrequent pebbles and flint gravel. No archaeological cuts, artefacts or deposits were exposed here.

Trench 16 (Figures 2, 3 Plates)

5.3.16 Trench 16 was placed in central part of the site in NW-SE alignment and measured 25metres in length by 1.8metres in width and 0.5metres in depth. It exposed natural geology context (1603) comprising firmly compacted yellow to orange-grey clay-silt with infrequent pebbles and flint gravel. No archaeological cuts, artefacts or deposits were exposed here.

Trench 17 (Figures 2, 3 Plates)

5.3.17 Trench 17 was placed in central part of the site in NE-SW alignment and measured 25metres in length by 1.8metres in width and 0.53metres in depth. It exposed natural geology context (1703) comprising firmly compacted yellow to orange-grey clay-silt with infrequent pebbles and flint gravel. No archaeological cuts, artefacts or deposits were exposed here.

Trench 18 (Figures 2, 3 Plates)

5.3.18 Trench 18 was placed in central part of the site in N-S alignment and measured 13.5metres in length by 1.8metres in width and 0.51metres in depth. It exposed natural geology context (1803) comprising firmly compacted yellow to orange-grey clay-silt with infrequent pebbles and flint gravel. No archaeological cuts, artefacts or deposits were exposed here.

Trench 19 (Figures 2, 3 Plates)

5.3.19 Trench 19 was placed in central part of the site in NE-SW alignment and measured 25metres in length by 1.8metres in width and 0.52metres in depth. It exposed natural geology context (1903) comprising firmly compacted yellow to orange-grey clay-silt with infrequent pebbles and flint gravel. No archaeological cuts, artefacts or deposits were exposed here.

Trench 20 (Figures 2, 3 Plates)

5.3.20 Trench 20 was placed in central part of the site in NW-SE alignment and measured 25metres in length by 1.8metres in width and 0.5metres in depth. It exposed natural geology context (2003) comprising firmly compacted yellow to orange-grey clay-silt with infrequent pebbles and flint gravel. No archaeological cuts, artefacts or deposits were exposed here.

6 FINDS

6.1 Overview

6.1.1 No archaeological finds were retrieved during the course of evaluation.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL

7.1 Overview

7.1.1 No bulk soil samples were acquired during the course of evaluation.

8 DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

8.1 Introduction

- 8.1.1 The archaeological evaluation (Phase 2B) on land to the west of Wises Lane, South-West Sittingbourne, Kent, has investigated the extents of the proposed development area using 20 trenches each measuring 13-25m in length.
- 8.1.2 The investigation has confirmed the absence of any archaeological remains in this part of the proposed development area.
- 8.1.3 There is an on-going archaeological Phase 2A evaluation to the north and to the south of this evaluation area and archaeological remains were identified within northern extent. One trackway and ring ditch were extending to the south towards Phase 2B but contingency trenching has established that any of discovered remains are continuing into this phase of work.

8.1.4 The archaeological investigation has been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the Specification and has assessed the archaeological potential of land intended for development. The results from this work will be used to aid and inform the Principal Archaeological Officer of any further archaeological mitigation measures that may be necessary in connection with any future development proposals.

8.2 Recommendation

8.2.1 There is no recommendation for further work within Phase 2B.

9 ARCHIVE

9.1 General

- 9.1.1 The Site archive, which will include paper records, photographic records, graphics and digital data, will be prepared following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; CIFA 2009; Brown 2011; ADS 2013).
- 9.1.2 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 and A4 graphics. The Site Archive will be retained at SWAT Archaeology offices until such time it can be transferred to a Kent Museum.

10 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

- 10.1.1 SWAT would like to thank the Client for commissioning the project. Thanks are also extended to Simon Mason, Principal Archaeological Officer at Kent County Council, for his advice and assistance.
- 10.1.2 Peter Cichy and Bartek Cichy from SWAT Archaeology carried out the archaeological fieldwork; illustrations and drone photography were produced by Bartek Cichy. The report was written by Peter Cichy and on behalf of the client project was directed by Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA, FRSA of SWAT Archaeology.

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Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment in Advance of the Proposed Development of Land at New Haine Road, Ramsgate, Thanet, Kent. SWAT Archaeology December 2020

SWAT Archaeology 2022 Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation of Land at the Proposed Western Link Road including the Chestnut Street Roundabout to the west of Wises Lane, South-West Sittingbourne, Kent

12 APPENDIX 1 – HER FORM

Site Name: Land at the Proposed Western Link Road including the Chestnut Street Roundabout to the west of Wises Lane, South-West Sittingbourne, Kent **Phase 2B**

SWAT Site Code: WLS2-EV-22

Site Address: As above

Summary. Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) were commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation on Land at the Proposed Western Link Road including the Chestnut Street Roundabout to the west of Wises Lane, South-West Sittingbourne, Kent. The archaeological programme was monitored remotely by the Principal Archaeological Officer at Kent County Council.

The archaeological works have investigated the extents of the proposed development area using 20 trenches measuring 13-25m in length.

The archaeological evaluation has been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the Specification and has assessed the archaeological potential of land intended for development. The negative results from this work will be used to aid and inform the Senior Archaeological Officer of any further archaeological mitigation measures that may be necessary in connection with any future development proposals.

No further work is recommended for Phase 2B

District/Unitary: Swale Borough Council
Period(s): modern
NGR (centre of site to eight figures) NGR 588303 163919
Type of Archaeological work: Archaeological Evaluation
Date of recording: April-May 2023
Unit undertaking recording: Swale and Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology)
Geology: Seaford Chalk Formation and Thanet Formation of Sand, Silt and Clay
Title and author of accompanying report: Peter Cichy (2023) Archaeological Evaluation of Land to the west of Wises Lane, South-West Sittingbourne, Kent (Phase 2B)
Location of archive/finds: SWAT. Archaeology. Graveney Rd, Faversham, Kent ME13 8UP
Contact at Unit: Paul Wilkinson
Date: 12/06/2023

PLATES



Plate 1: Viewing the site and evaluation Trench 1 from the west with two-metre scale.



Plate 2: Evaluation Trench 4. Looking northwest with two metre scale bar.



Plate 3: Evaluation Trench 7. Looking northwest with two metre scale bar.



Plate 4: Evaluation Trench 10. Looking west with two metre scale bar.



Plate 5: Evaluation Trench 13. Looking northeast with two metre scale bar.



Plate 6: Evaluation Trench 17. Looking northeast with two metre scale bar.



Plate 7: Evaluation Trench 20. Looking northwest with two metre scale bar.

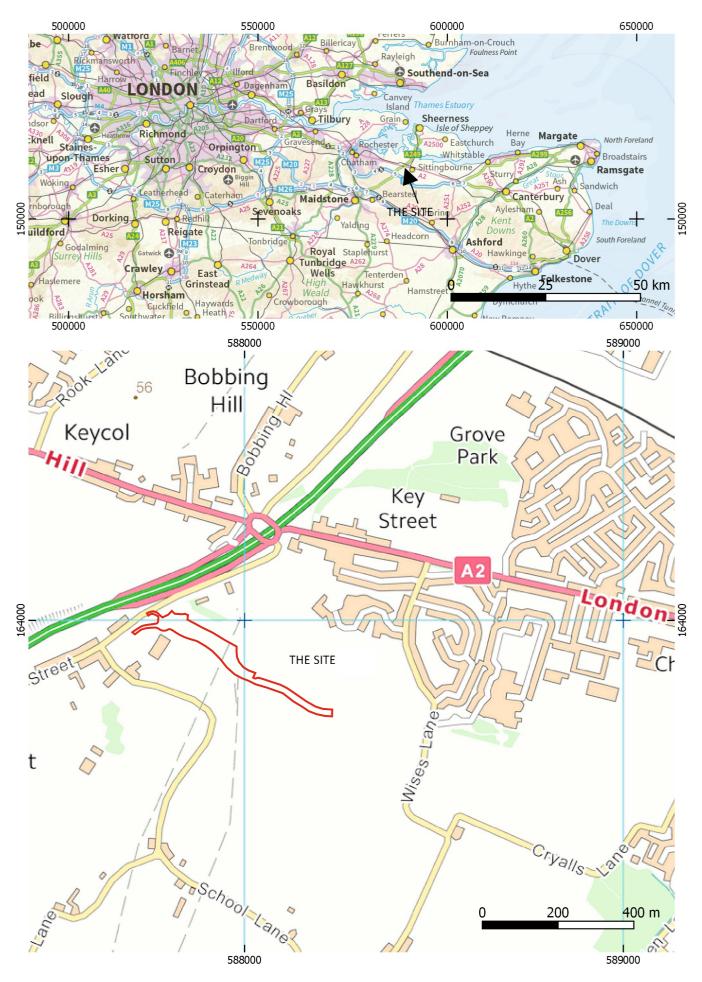
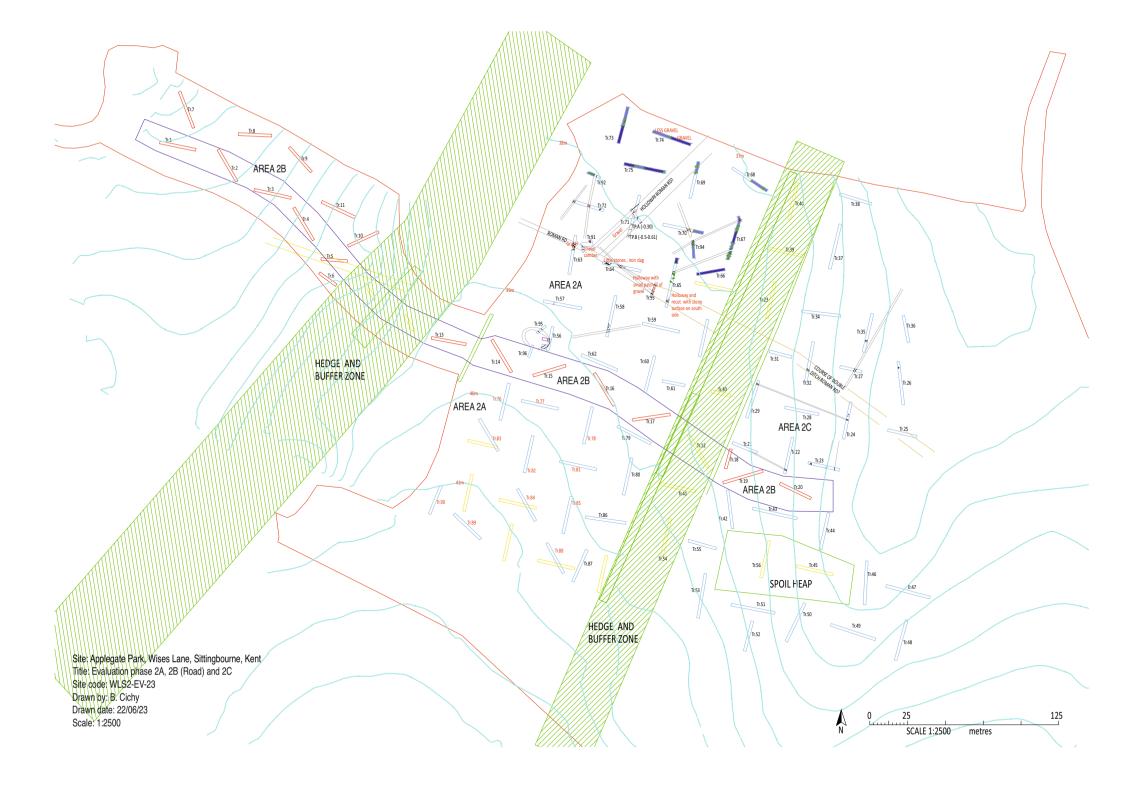
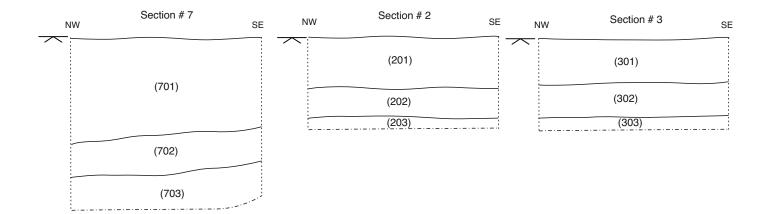
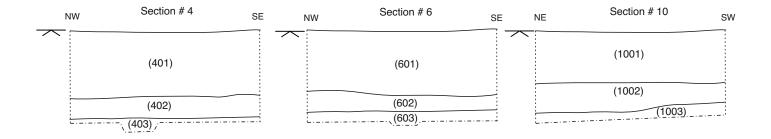


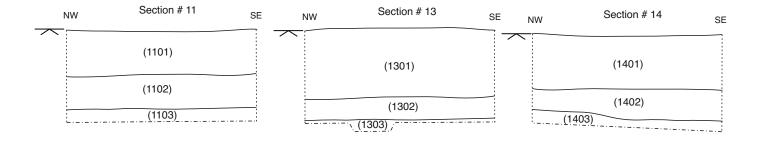
Figure 1: Site location











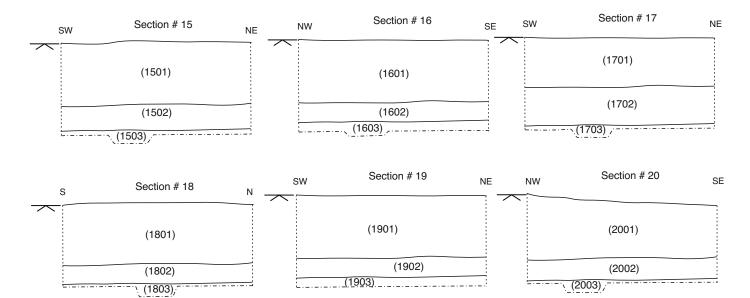




Figure 4: Representative sections