

Archaeological Evaluation of Land at The Ship, Green Street, Green Road, Darenth, Kent DA2 8DP

Site Code: SGS-EV-24

NGR Site Centre: 558722 170694

Planning Application Number: DA/22/01444



Report for;

Mrs Susan Smith

18/06/2024

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SWAT ARCHAEOLOGY

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1	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	Project Background	1
1.2	Timetable	2
1.3	Site Description and Topography	2
1.4	Scope of Report	3
2	ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.....	3
2.1	Introduction	3
3	AIMS AND OBJECTIVES.....	3
3.1	Introduction	3
3.2	General Aims	4
3.3	Specific Aims	4
3.4	General Objectives	4
4	METHODOLOGY.....	5
4.1	Introduction	5
4.2	Fieldwork.....	5
4.3	Recording	5
5	RESULTS	6
5.1	Introduction	6
5.2	Stratigraphic Deposit Sequence	6
5.3	Archaeological Narrative.....	7
	<i>Trench 1 (Figure 3, Plates 4-6)</i>	<i>7</i>
	<i>Trench 2 (Figure 4, Plates 7-9)</i>	<i>7</i>
	<i>Trench 3 (Figure 5, Plates 10-12)</i>	<i>7</i>

6	FINDS	7
6.1	Overview	7
7	DISCUSSION	8
7.1	Introduction	8
7.2	Archaeological Narrative.....	8
7.3	Conclusions	8
8	ARCHIVE	8
8.1	General.....	8
9	ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	9
10	REFERENCES	9
11	APPENDIX 1 – TRENCH TABLES	11
12	APPENDIX 2 – HER FORM	12

PLATES 13

FIGURES 20

Tables

Table 1 Timetable for the archaeological programme of works	2
-------------------------------------------------------------------	---

Plates

Plate 1 Aerial view of the site following the excavation of three archaeological trenches	14
Plate 2 Oblique aerial view of the site following the excavation of three archaeological trenches, viewed from the north	14
Plate 3 Excavation of Trench 2, showing the removal of topsoil (201) to expose the subsoil (202) and underlying natural (203)	15
Plate 4 Trench 1, viewed from the southwest	15
Plate 5 Trench 1, viewed from the northeast.....	16
Plate 6 Trench 1, aerial photograph	16
Plate 7 Trench 2, viewed from the southwest	17
Plate 8 Trench 2, viewed from the north	17
Plate 9 Trench 2, aerial photograph	18

Plate 10 Trench 3, viewed from the northwest..... 18

Plate 11 Trench 3, viewed from the east..... 19

Plate 12 Trench 3, aerial photograph 19

Figures

Figure 1 Site Location Plan

Figure 2 Site Plan

Figure 3 Trench 1 Details

Figure 4 Trench 2 Details

Figure 5 Trench 3 Details

Summary

Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) were commissioned by Mrs Susan Smith to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at The Ship, Green Street Green, Green Road, Darenth, Kent. The works have been carried out as part of a planning condition which required an archaeological evaluation in order to further characterise the potential archaeological impact from any proposed development. The archaeological programme was monitored by the Senior Archaeological Officer at Kent County Council.

The archaeological evaluation has been successful in evaluating the proposed development site for the possibility of archaeological remains. Despite the archaeological potential of the surrounding area no archaeological finds or features were present within any of the three trenches excavated.

The archaeological evaluation has therefore fulfilled 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 Senior Archaeological Officer of any further archaeological mitigation measures that may be necessary in connection with any future development proposals.

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NGR Site Centre: 558722 170694

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) were commissioned by Mrs Susan Smith to undertake an archaeological evaluation of land at The Ship, a former public house, on Green Road, Darenth in Kent (Figure 1).

1.1.2 A planning application (PAN: DA/22/01444) for the partial redevelopment of the site to include partial demolition of extensions, proposed single storey side extension, sub-division of first floor and rooms in the roof to form 2 No. 1-bed dwellings and erection of 2 No. 5-bed detached dwellings with basements (Use Class C3a) has been submitted to Dartford District Council (DDC). The application also included enlarged residential curtilage to rear of No. 1 Ship Cottages, plus associated access, parking, amenity space, landscaping and provision of a meadow. Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation (KCCHC), who provide an advisory service to DDC, requested that an archaeological evaluation be undertaken in order to determine the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains.

1.1.3 A Condition of archaeological works in the Schedule of Conditions was attached to the Planning Decision Notice (DA/22/01444/FUL), as follows:

(06) No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of:

i. archaeological field evaluation works in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation and timetable which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority; and

ii. following on from the evaluation, any safeguarding measures to ensure preservation in situ of important archaeological remains and/or further archaeological investigation and recording in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation and timetable which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

- 1.1.4 The archaeological evaluation, which comprised the excavation of three trenches measuring up to 25m in length and 1.8m in width, was carried out over the course of two days in June 2024 (see Table 1 below). The evaluation was carried out in accordance with an archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by SWAT Archaeology (2024), prior to commencement of works.

1.2 Timetable

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

Task	Dates	Personnel/Company
Submission of the Written Scheme of Investigation	May 2024	SWAT Archaeology
Archaeological Evaluation – Fieldwork	11 th June 2024 to 12 th June 2024	SWAT Archaeology
Archaeological Evaluation Report	This document	SWAT Archaeology

Table 1 *Timetable for the archaeological programme of works*

1.3 Site Description and Topography

- 1.3.1 The site is centred on NGR 558722 170694 on the southern side of Elwick Road, within the centre of Ashford, approximately 300m northwest of Ashford International railway station (Figure 1).
- 1.3.2 The site is situated at Green Street with Green Village adjacent to the west. Malt House Farm is located to the south and beyond to the south is Grubb Street. Lane End Village is to the west and Lords Wood to the north. The site lies entirely within the Green Belt and is also covered by an Area of Special Character. Public Right of Way (PROW) DR28 lies 126 metres to the southeast of the site and PROW DR47 lies 74 metres to the south on the opposite side of Green St Green Road. Ground Source Protection Zone 1 (inner zone) extends to include the application site and surrounding land.
- 1.3.3 The proposed site is broadly L-shaped in plan, with the full boundary extending to include access routes to and from Sandbanks Hill to the north and Green Road to the south, encompassing an area of approximately 2,785sq.m with ground levels relatively horizontal at heights ranging from approximately 33.80m Ordnance Datum (OD) to 33.10m OD. The area available for evaluation trenching was to the side (north) of the former public house (Plate 1), within former gardens and open space measuring approximately 2,004sq.m in area.
- 1.3.4 The Geological Survey of Great Britain (BGS) shows that the site is located on Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation, Seaford Chalk Formation and Newhaven Chalk Formation – Chalk, sedimentary bedrock formed between 93.9 and 72.1 million years ago during the Cretaceous period.

Superficial deposits are recorded as Taplow Gravel Member - Sand and gravel, sedimentary superficial deposit formed between 362 and 126 thousand years ago during the Quaternary period (BGS, accessed 12/06/2024).

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 Senior 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 is located close to a number of archaeological sites which are identified on the KCCHER database. The archaeological WSI prepared by SWAT Archaeology (2024) provides a summary of the historical and archaeological background, provided herewith;
- 2.1.2 There are several archaeological sites located in the vicinity of the site and include the site of St. Lukes Church (TQ 57 SE 1120) approximately 90m to the south, 200m northeast prehistoric and Roman features have been identified along with a probable Bronze Age barrow (TQ 57 SE 253) while 120m west is Forge Cottage dating to the late Tudor period (TQ 57 SE 90). The remains of mounds lie 200m to the west (TQ 57 SE 36).
- 2.1.3 The KCC Archaeological Officer notes that the site lies within an area of multi-period archaeological potential and The Ship itself is recorded as being of 16th century date but rebuilt following a fire. The site has archaeological interest with later prehistoric, Romano-British and post-medieval features and finds recorded c.125m to the northeast of the site.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The specific objectives of the archaeological fieldwork were set out in a Written Scheme of Investigation (SWAT Archaeology 2024: 6.1) as stated below.

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, Roman, Early Medieval and later archaeological activity.

3.2 General Aims

3.2.1 The general aims (or purpose) of the evaluation, in compliance with the ClfA *Universal Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (ClfA 2023), were:

- To determine the presence or absence of archaeological deposits or remains;
- To record the character, date, location, and preservation of any archaeological remains on Site; and
- To record the nature and extent of any previous damage to archaeological deposits or remain on site.

3.3 Specific Aims

3.3.1 The specific aims of the investigation were:

- To excavate three trenches within the site to expose the surface of any underlying archaeological horizon or the natural ground;
- To clean the base and representative sections of the trench and record it in both plan and representative section;
- To partially excavate any identified archaeological features so as to ascertain their extent, form, function and, where possible, date;
- To inform the need (or otherwise) for any future archaeological works on the site by means of an illustrated report.

3.4 General Objectives

3.4.1 The objectives of the investigation were:

- To undertake the archaeological evaluation to provide further information prior to the construction of the proposed development;
- To undertake work in accordance with national and local best practices and guidelines;
- To archaeologically record any deposits, features or structures of significance);
- To analyse any remains with reference to the existing documentary evidence for historical development and land use;

- To produce a written account to include summary, site description, deposit descriptions, deposit levels (relative to Ordnance Datum) and conclusions;
- To disseminate the findings of the work in an illustrated report, integrating the findings of the archaeological evaluation to produce as comprehensive a record as possible; and
- Provide an ordered archive.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 All fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the methodology set out in the Specification (SWAT Archaeology 2024) and carried out in compliance with the standards outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standards Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations (CIfA 2023).

4.2 Fieldwork

4.2.1 A total of three evaluation trenches were excavated, as shown on Figure 2, Plate 1 and Plate 2. 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 (Plate 3), 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, survey, 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 and drone 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 (101), whilst the cut of the feature is shown as [101]. 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 All trenches were mechanically excavated under archaeological supervision. Trenches were positioned in order to cover as many areas of the site as possible as set out in the WSI (Plate 2).
- 5.1.2 The relatively limited area of available space, the necessity to maintain access and the presence of a mature yew tree (TPO) meant that slight adjustments to the locations and lengths of the trenches needed to be implemented. This change in the methodology was agreed with KCC during the fieldwork stage of operations.
- 5.1.3 The site, as shown on Figure 2 provides the trench layout with Figures 3-5 illustrating the results for each individual archaeological evaluation trench; Plates 1-12 consist of photographs of features and selected trenches that have been provided to supplement the text.
- 5.1.4 Appendix 1 provides the stratigraphic sequence and contextual information for all trenches, with the location of Representative Sections provided on each Trench plan (Figures 3-5).

5.2 Stratigraphic Deposit Sequence

- 5.2.1 A consistent stratigraphic sequence was recorded across the site comprising topsoil sealing an intact subsoil, which overlay the natural geological drift deposits. The topsoil comprised fine brown, grey sandy silt with occasional angular stone and fragments of brick and tile, the subsoil consisted of mid red brown sandy silt with moderate rooting, both present within all three trenches with the underlying natural geology largely comprising mid orange, brown sandy silt, with occasional rooting (Taplow Gravel Member - Sand and gravel).

5.3 Archaeological Narrative

Trench 1 (Figure 3, Plates 4-6)

- 5.3.1 Within the western extent of the site (Figure 2), Trench 1 was excavated on a SW-NE alignment and measured approximately 15m in length, 1.8m in width with a maximum depth of 0.54m (Figure 3). Natural geological deposits (103) were recorded at levels ranging from 33.05m OD and 33.39m OD, below subsoil (102) and topsoil (101).
- 5.3.2 This trench was relocated in order to avoid impact on an adjacent yew tree.
- 5.3.3 Within the northeastern extent of the trench a natural pocket of geological gravel (104) was present while at the southwestern extent of the trench natural rooting was investigated (105). No archaeological finds or features were present in Trench 1.

Trench 2 (Figure 4, Plates 7-9)

- 5.3.4 Trench 2 was located within the centre of the site adjacent directly north of the former public house. This trench was excavated on a NE-SW alignment and measured 21m in length with an average depth of 0.86m. Natural geological horizons (203) were recorded at a level of approximately 32.94m OD, sealed below the subsoil (202) and topsoil (201).
- 5.3.5 Two areas of modern disturbance included a pit filled with hardcore and plastic sheeting (204) and a brick filled soakaway drain (205). No archaeological finds or features were recorded within Trench 2.

Trench 3 (Figure 5, Plates 10-12)

- 5.3.6 Within the eastern area of the site (Figure 2), Trench 3 was excavated on an NW-SE alignment and measured approximately 25m in length, 1.8m in width with a maximum depth of 0.86m (Figure 3). Natural geological deposits (303) were recorded at a level of approximately 32.74m OD, below subsoil (302) and topsoil (301).
- 5.3.7 No archaeological finds or features were present in Trench 3.

6 FINDS

6.1 Overview

- 6.1.1 No archaeological finds were present within the evaluation trenches.

7 DISCUSSION

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 The archaeological investigation on land at The Ship, a former public house, on Green Road, Darenth in Kent has investigated the extents of the proposed development area using three trenches, measuring between 15m and 25m in length and 1.8m in width. The natural geology was encountered within all trenches at an average depth of approximately 0.75m below the existing ground surface, directly underlying subsoil and topsoil. Within one of the three trenches modern disturbance was recorded.

7.2 Archaeological Narrative

7.2.1 Despite the archaeological potential of the site no archaeological finds or features were recorded within any of the trenches. The recording of an intact subsoil across the whole site would suggest that preservation conditions are reasonably favourable should archaeological finds and/or features be present beyond the extent of the trenches.

7.3 Conclusions

7.3.1 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 Senior Archaeological Officer of any further archaeological mitigation measures that may be necessary in connection with any future development proposals.

8 ARCHIVE

8.1 General

8.1.1 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).

8.1.2 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.

9 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

- 9.1.1 SWAT Archaeology would like to thank Mrs Susan Smith for commissioning the project. Thanks are also extended to Casper Johnson, Senior Archaeological Officer at Kent County Council, for his advice and assistance.
- 9.1.2 David Britchfield BA (Hons) MCIfA carried out the archaeological fieldwork; illustrations were produced by Ravelin Archaeological Services. David Britchfield produced the draft text for this report. The Project Manager for the project was Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA, FRSA of SWAT Archaeology.

10 REFERENCES

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SWAT Archaeology (2023) *Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation on Land at The Ship, Green Street, Green Road, Darenth, Kent DA2 8DP*

Websites

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists: <https://www.archaeologists.net/>

British Geological Society (BGS): <https://www.bgs.ac.uk/>

Kent County Council Historic Environment Record:

<https://webapps.kent.gov.uk/KCC.ExploringKentsPast.Web.Sites.Public/SingleResult.aspx?uid=TKE1046>

11 APPENDIX 1 – TRENCH TABLES

Trench 1	Dimensions: 15.00m x 1.5m Average Depth: 0.54m Ground Level: 33.61m OD – 33.80m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
(101)	Topsoil	Fine brown, grey sandy silt with occasional angular stone and fragments of brick and tile	0.00-0.34
(102)	Subsoil	Mid red brown sandy silt with moderate rooting	0.34-0.54
(103)	Natural	Mid orange, brown sandy silt, with occasional rooting	0.54+
(104)	Natural	Compact red brown gravel	0.54+
(105)	Disturbance	Rooting	-

Trench 2	Dimensions: 21.00m x 1.5m Average Depth: 0.86m Ground Level: 33.59m OD – 33.68m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
(201)	Topsoil	Fine brown, grey sandy silt with occasional angular stone and fragments of brick and tile	0.00-0.30
(202)	Subsoil	Mid red brown sandy silt with moderate rooting	0.30-0.86
(203)	Natural	Mid orange, brown sandy silt, with occasional rooting	0.86+
(204)	Disturbance	Modern pit with bricks and plastic	-
(205)	Disturbance	Modern soakaway drain	-

Trench 3	Dimensions: 25.00m x 1.5m Average Depth: 0.86m Ground Level: 33.10m OD – 33.54m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
(301)	Topsoil	Fine brown, grey sandy silt with occasional angular stone	0.00-0.30
(302)	Subsoil	Mid red brown sandy silt with moderate rooting	0.30-0.86
(303)	Natural	Mid orange, brown sandy silt, with occasional rooting	0.86+

12 APPENDIX 2 – HER FORM

Site Name: The Ship, Green Street Green, Green Road, Darenth, Kent

SWAT Site Code: SGS-EV-24

Site Address: As above

Summary. *Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) were commissioned by Mrs Susan Smith to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at The Ship, Green Street Green, Green Road, Darenth, Kent. The works have been carried out as part of a planning condition which required an archaeological evaluation in order to further characterise the potential archaeological impact from any proposed development. The archaeological programme was monitored by the Senior Archaeological Officer at Kent County Council.*

The archaeological evaluation has been successful in evaluating the proposed development site for the possibility of archaeological remains. Despite the archaeological potential of the surrounding area no archaeological finds or features were present within any of the four trenches excavated.

The archaeological evaluation has therefore 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 Senior Archaeological Officer of any further archaeological mitigation measures that may be necessary in connection with any future development proposals.

District/Unitary: Dartford District Council & Kent County Council

Period(s): Modern

NGR (centre of site to eight figures) NGR 558722 170694

Type of Archaeological work: Archaeological Evaluation

Date of recording: June 2024

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

Geology: Taplow Gravel Member - Sand and gravel

Title and author of accompanying report: D Britchfield (2024) Archaeological Evaluation of Land at The Ship, Green Street Green, Green Road, Darenth, Kent. SWAT Archaeology Ref. SGS-EV-2024

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

Contact at Unit: Paul Wilkinson

Date: 18/06/2024

PLATES



Plate 1 Aerial view of the site following the excavation of three archaeological trenches



Plate 2 Oblique aerial view of the site following the excavation of three archaeological trenches, viewed from the north



Plate 3 Excavation of Trench 2, showing the removal of topsoil (201) to expose the subsoil (202) and underlying natural (203)



Plate 4 Trench 1, viewed from the southwest



Plate 5 Trench 1, viewed from the northeast



Plate 6 Trench 1, aerial photograph



Plate 7 Trench 2, viewed from the southwest



Plate 8 Trench 2, viewed from the north



Plate 9 Trench 2, aerial photograph



Plate 10 Trench 3, viewed from the northwest



Plate 11 Trench 3, viewed from the east



Plate 12 Trench 3, aerial photograph

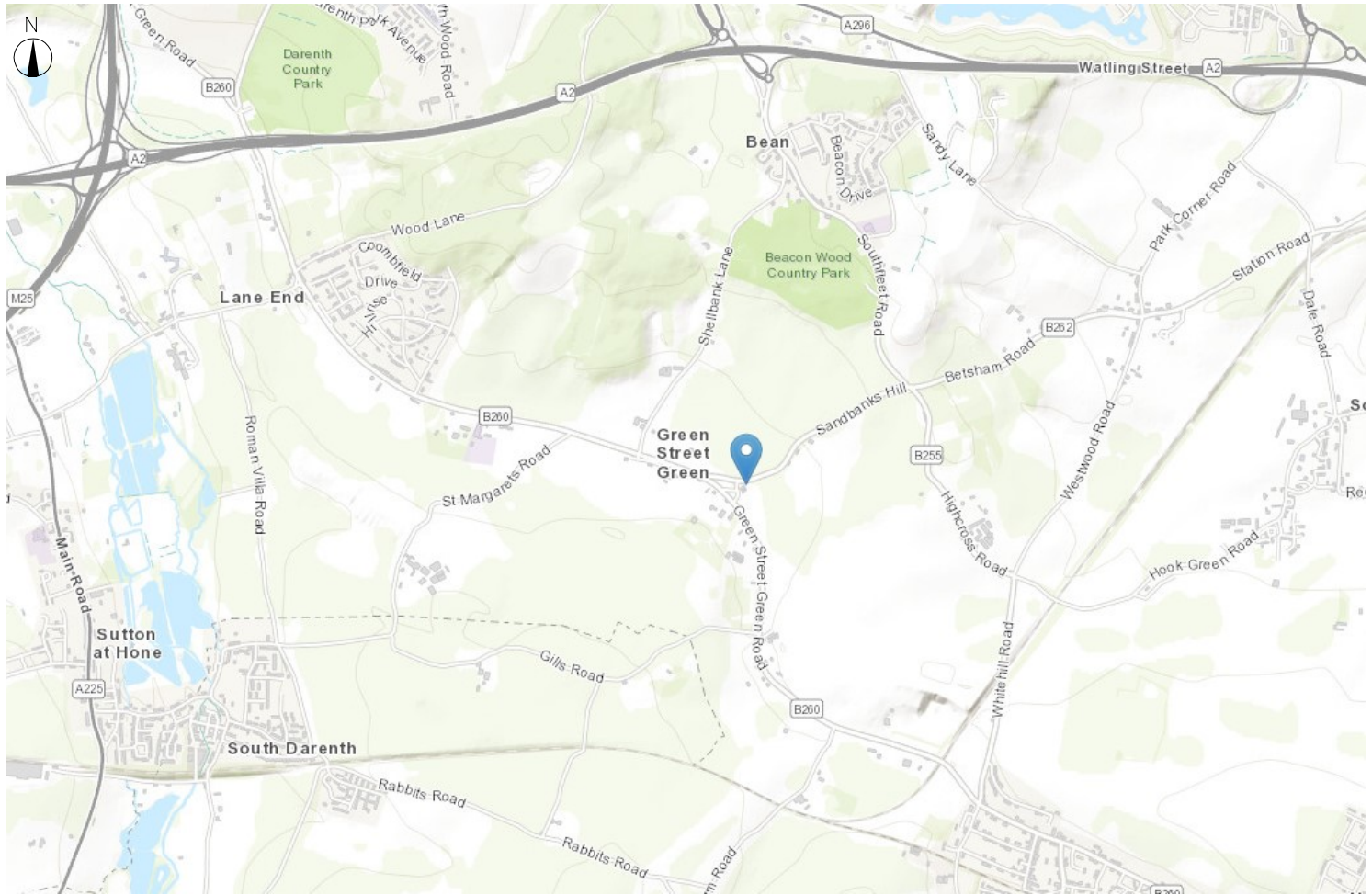
FIGURES



Map of UK (NTS)



Map of North Kent (NTS)



Courtesy of National Library of Scotland (NTS)

Figure 1 Site Location Plan

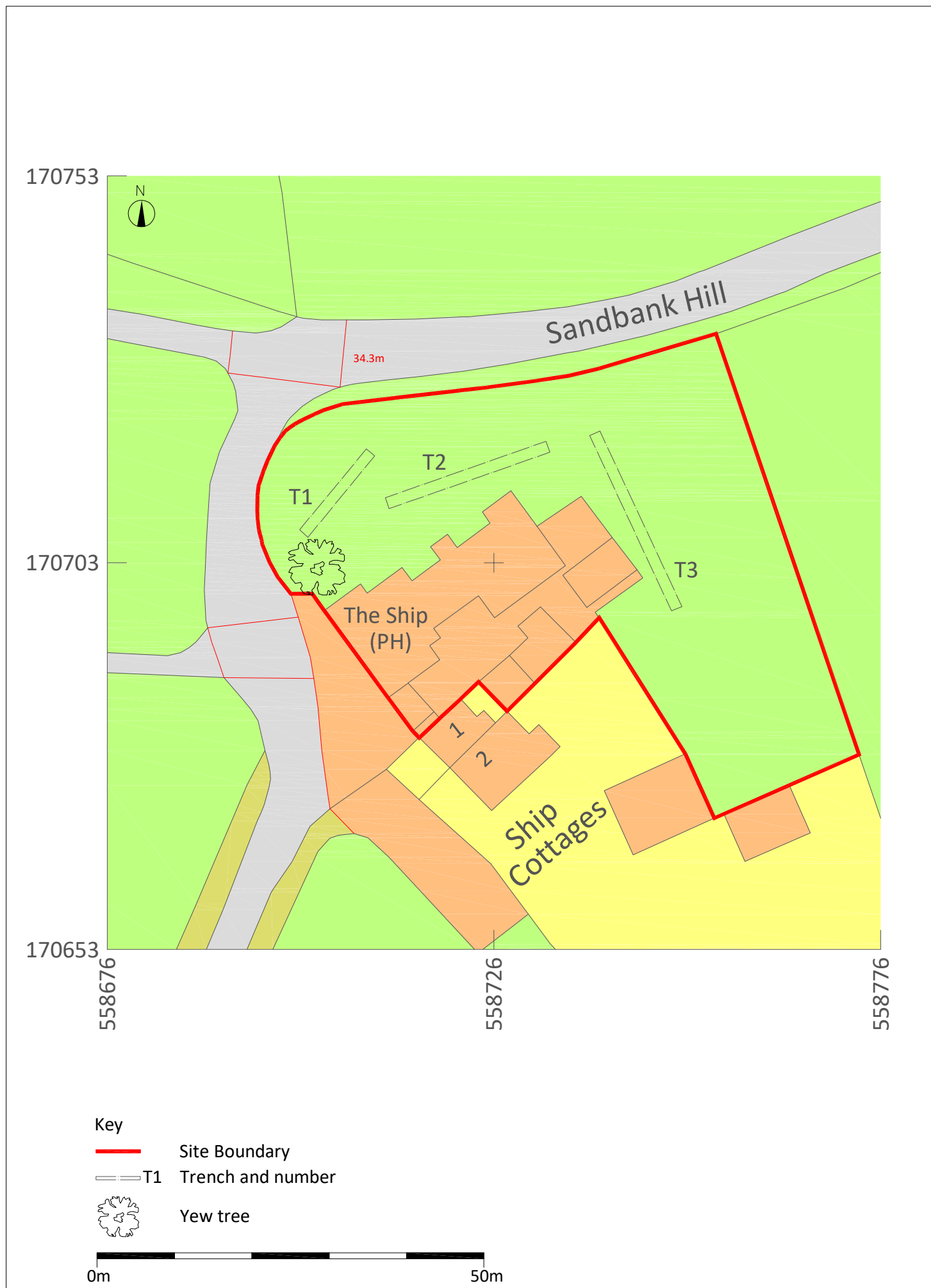
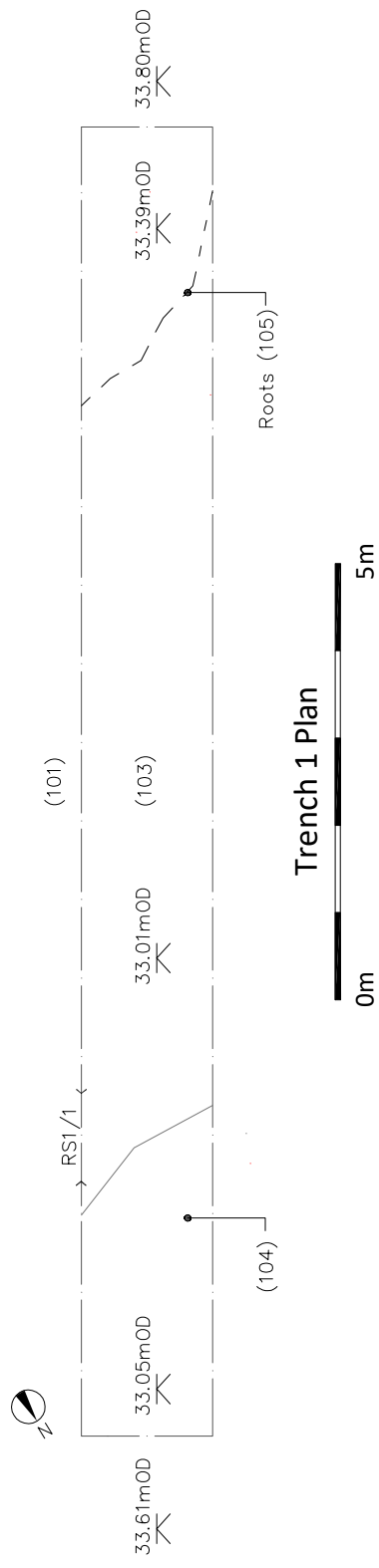
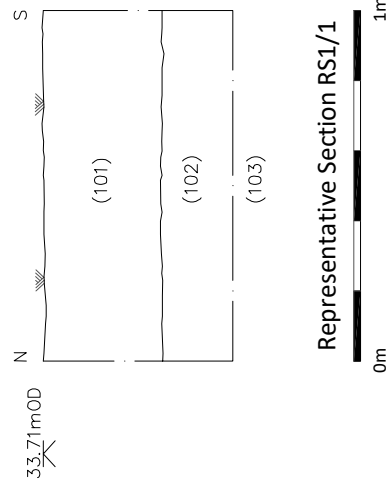


Figure 2 Site Plan



Trench 1 Plan



Representative Section RS1/1

Figure 3 Trench 1 Details

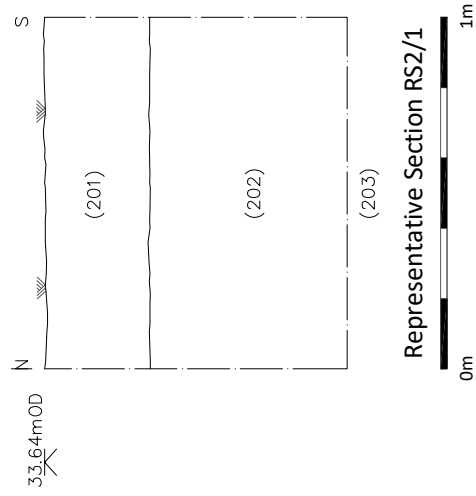
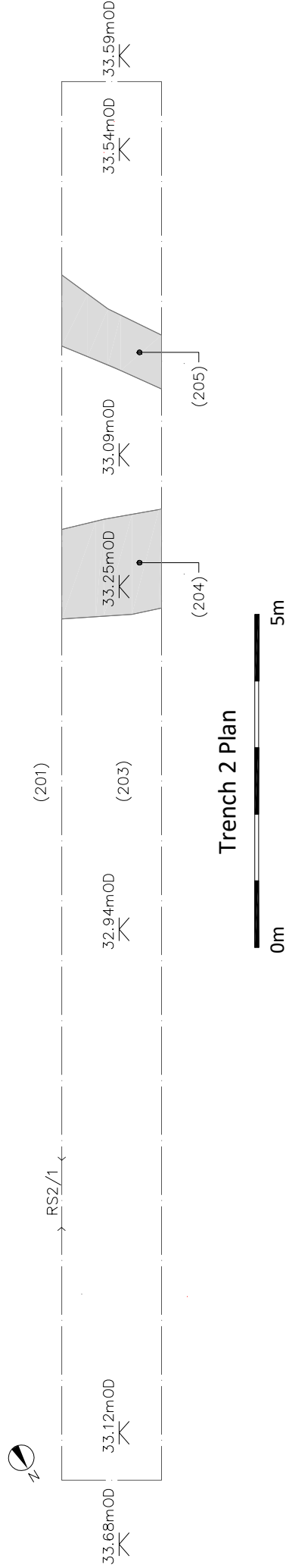
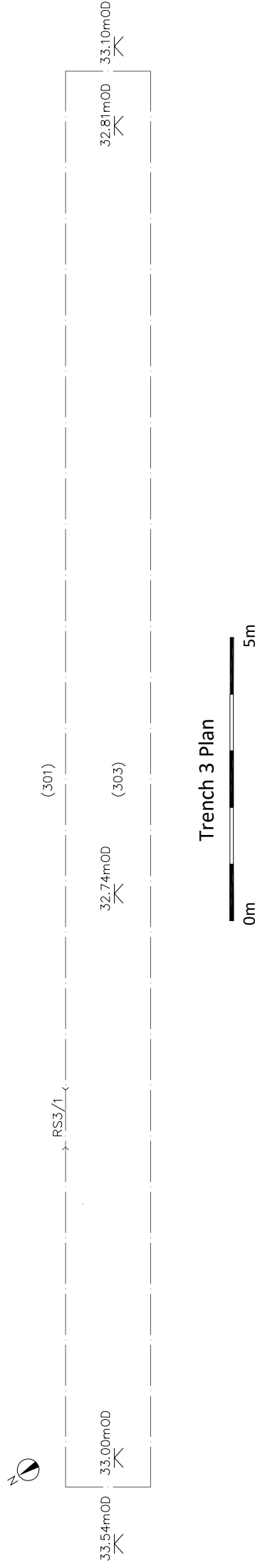
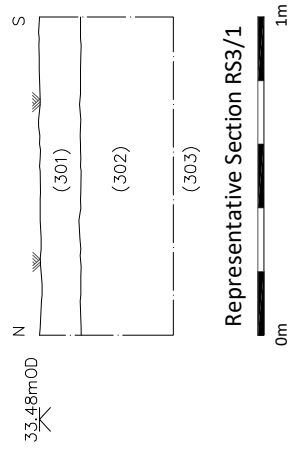


Figure 4 Trench 2 Details



Trench 3 Plan



Representative Section RS3/1

Figure 5 Trench 3 Details