

# Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Blackberry Mead Farm, Pilgrims Way, Westwell, Kent TN25 4NQ

Site Code: BMF-EV-24

NGR Site Centre: 598706 148118

Planning Application Number: AS/2023/0273



Report for;

Mr and Mrs Andrews

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SWAT ARCHAEOLOGY

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# Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Blackberry Mead Farm, Pilgrims Way, Westwell, Kent TN25 4NQ

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## **Summary**

*Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) were commissioned by Mr and Mrs Andrews to undertake an archaeological evaluation of land at Blackberry Mead Farm, Pilgrims Way, Westwell in 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 assessed the proposed development site for the possibility of archaeological remains using two trenches. The natural geology was encountered within both trenches at an average depth of approximately 0.27m below the existing ground surface, directly underlying subsoil and topsoil. Modern disturbance was encountered within one trench which consisted of a trench for a live water pipe. Despite the archaeological potential of the site no archaeological finds or features were recorded within either of the trenches. The recording of an intact subsoil across the majority of the site combined with an historic farming land use would suggest that preservation conditions are reasonably favourable should archaeological finds and/or features be present beyond the extent of the trenches. That said, localised quarrying has clearly taken place across the overall site.*

*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.*

# Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Blackberry Mead Farm, Pilgrims Way, Westwell, Kent TN25 4NQ

NGR Site Centre: 598706 148118

Site Code: BMF-EV-24

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) were commissioned by Mr and Mrs Andrews to undertake an archaeological evaluation of land at Blackberry Mead Farm, Pilgrims Way, Westwell in Kent (Figure 1).

1.1.2 A planning application (PAN: AS/2023/0273) for the erection of detached replacement dwelling and outbuilding/stable with a solar array, together with associated landscaping, drainage, and a reconfigured parking area was submitted to Ashford Borough Council (ABC) whereby Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation (KCCHC), on behalf of ABC, requested that an archaeological evaluation be undertaken in order to determine the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains.

1.1.3 The following conditions were attached to the planning consent:

*Prior to commencement of development the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, will secure the implementation of:*

*i) archaeological field evaluation works in accordance with a specification and written timetable which has been submitted to and approved 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 specification and timetable which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority*

*iii) a programme of post excavation and publication*

*Reason: To ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded, and that due regard is had to the preservation in situ of important archaeological remains.*

(AS/2023/0273, Condition 3, 21 September 2023)

- 1.1.4 The archaeological evaluation, which comprised the excavation of two trenches measuring up to 25m in length and 1.8m in width, was carried out over the course of a single day in May 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;

<b>Task</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Personnel/Company</b>
Submission of the Written Scheme of Investigation	8 <sup>th</sup> April 2023	SWAT Archaeology
Archaeological Evaluation – Fieldwork	8 <sup>th</sup> May 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 598706 148118, situated just to the north of the Pilgrims Way and to the west of Dunn Street Farm (Figure 1). The village of Westwell is located to the south of the site and east of Westwell Downs. Charing is to the northwest and Challock to the northeast.
- 1.3.2 The proposed site is roughly rectangular in plan, with an irregular western boundary, encompassing an area of approximately 8,085sq.m with ground levels varying in heights ranging from approximately 143m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) to 147m aOD (Figure 2). The Geological Survey of Great Britain shows that the site is located on New Pit Chalk Formation – Chalk, sedimentary bedrock formed between 93.9 and 89.8 million years ago during the Cretaceous period. No superficial geological deposits are recorded.

## 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 HER records show very little archaeology in the immediate vicinity of the site and in fact most of which is noted in the HER records can be found in greater detail on the Ordnance Survey Historic Mapping detailed in the SWAT Archaeology WSI (2024). The WSI includes the following:

*There are a number of archaeological sites located in the vicinity of the PDA (Proposed Development Area) and include in the SW corner of Eastwell Park and about 400m to the NNE of the [site] a site of Romano-British burials and including pottery, animal remains and burnt material and found in c.1721 (TQ 94 NE 6). About 200m to the NNW Lime Kilns have been found in Stubyers Wood and on investigation the two kilns had brick chambers, draw arches and flint retaining walls and were dated to the late 19th century. It was noted that the area had extensive areas of chalk working quarries (TQ 94 NE 36). About 200m E is a historic farmstead adjacent to the more modern Dunn Street Farm (MKE 7306).*

*Historic mapping shows that in 1897 there were extensive quarries adjacent to the PDA (2024, MAP 1).*

## **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), are to:

- *Determine, record and report on the nature, extent, preservation, and significance of archaeological remains within a defined area. The scope of work will be described in a project design that is fit for purpose and will be carried out by suitably qualified persons in accordance with that design and the ClfA code of conduct and give due regard to the guidance for archaeological field evaluation. All archaeological field evaluations will result in a report, published accounts where appropriate, and a stable, ordered, accessible archive.*

### **3.3 General Objectives**

3.3.1 In order to achieve the above aims, the general objectives of the evaluation are to:

- Determine the presence or absence of archaeological features, deposits, structures, artefacts or ecofacts within the specified area;
- Establish, within the constraints of the evaluation, the extent, character, date, condition, and quality of any surviving archaeological remains;
- Place any identified archaeological remains within a wider historical and archaeological context in order to assess their significance; and
- 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 Archaeology 2024) and carried out in compliance with the standards outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standards Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations (ClfA 2023).

### **4.2 Fieldwork**

4.2.1 A total of two evaluation trenches were excavated (Figure 2, Plates 1 and 2). 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 ClfA 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+).

## **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.

5.1.2 The site, as shown on Figure 2 provides the trench layout with Figure 3 illustrating the results for each individual archaeological evaluation trench; Figure 4 provides the trench locations

superimposed on the proposed development plan. Plates 1-6 consist of photographs of the trenches to supplement the text.

- 5.1.3 Appendix 1 provides the stratigraphic sequence and contextual information for all trenches, with the location of Representative Sections provided on each Trench plan (Figure 3).

## **5.2 Stratigraphic Deposit Sequence**

- 5.2.1 A relatively consistent stratigraphic sequence was recorded across the majority of the site comprising topsoil sealing an intact subsoil, which overlay the natural geological drift deposits. The topsoil generally consisted of mid grey, brown silt clay, moderate roots and occasional rounded stones topped with grass/scrub, overlying the subsoil which consisted of did red brown sand clay with occasional small, rounded stones. The natural geology largely comprised compact grey, white chalk.

## **5.3 Archaeological Narrative**

### *Trench 1 (Figure 3, Plates 3-4)*

- 5.3.1 Within the southwestern area of the site (Figure 2), Trench 1 was excavated on a SW-NE alignment and measured approximately 25m in length, 1.8m in width with a maximum depth of 0.38m (Figure 3). Natural geological deposits were recorded at levels ranging from 145.06m aOD and 147.03m aOD.
- 5.3.2 Within the centre of the site modern disturbance was recognised as a narrow curving trench which is understood to be for an animal trough water pipe.
- 5.3.3 No archaeological finds or features were present in Trench 1.

### *Trench 2 (Figure 3, Plates 5-6)*

- 5.3.4 Trench 2 was located within the northeastern area of the site (Figure 2) and was excavated on a NW-SE alignment. This trench was relocated and realigned in order to avoid a live electricity cable and live water pipe, and measured 15.35m in length, 1.8m in width and a maximum depth of 0.23m (Figure 3). Natural geological deposits were recorded at a level ranging between 143.88m aOD and 144.80m aOD.
- 5.3.5 No archaeological finds or features were present in Trench 2.

## **6 FINDS**

### **6.1 Overview**

- 6.1.1 No archaeological finds were recorded during the evaluation.

## **7 DISCUSSION**

### **7.1 Introduction**

7.1.1 The archaeological investigation on land at Blackberry Mead Farm, Pilgrims Way, Westwell in Kent has investigated the extents of the proposed development area using two trenches, measuring between 15m and 20m in length and 1.8m in width. The natural geology was encountered within both trenches at an average depth of approximately 0.27m below the existing ground surface, directly underlying subsoil and topsoil. Modern disturbance was encountered within one trench which consisted of a trench for a live water pipe.

### **7.2 Archaeological Narrative**

7.2.1 It is clear from historical mapping that areas of the site and areas adjacent to the site has been subject to quarrying activity. This would appear evident in Trench 2 with the absence of an intact subsoil on the western side of the trench where the land drops away to a large sunken platform/plateau (Plate 6). This platform/plateau is clearly marked on historical Ordnance Survey maps included within the WSI (SWAT Archaeology 2024: Figure 3 and MAP 1) and so it is likely that the quarrying encroached into the western edge of evaluation Trench 2.

7.2.2 Despite the archaeological potential of the site no archaeological finds or features were recorded within either of the trenches. The recording of an intact subsoil across the majority of the site combined with an historic farming land use would suggest that preservation conditions are reasonably favourable should archaeological finds and/or features be present beyond the extent of the trenches. That said, localised quarrying has clearly taken place across the site (Plate 5).

### **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 Mr and Mrs Andrews for commissioning the project. Thanks are also extended to Wendy Rogers, Senior Archaeological Officer at Kent County Council, for her 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.

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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)

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SWAT Archaeology (2023) *Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation on Land at Blackberry Mead Farm, Pilgrims Way, Westwell, Kent*

### **Websites**

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

British geological Society: <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**

<b>Trench 1 RS1/1</b>	<b>Dimensions: 25.00m x 1.8m    Average Depth: 0.38m</b> <b>Ground Level: 145.48m OD – 147.28m OD</b>		
<b>Context</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Depth (m)</b>
(101)	Topsoil	Mid grey, brown silt clay, moderate roots and occasional rounded stones topped with grass/scrub.	0.00-0.15
(102)	Subsoil	Mid red brown sand clay with occasional small, rounded stones.	0.15-0.33
(103)	Natural	Compact grey, white chalk.	0.38+

<b>Trench 1 RS1/2</b>	<b>Dimensions: 25.00m x 1.8m    Average Depth: 0.22m</b> <b>Ground Level: 145.48m OD – 147.28m OD</b>		
<b>Context</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Depth (m)</b>
(101)	Topsoil	Mid grey, brown silt clay, moderate roots and occasional rounded stones topped with grass/scrub.	0.00-0.15
(102)	Subsoil	Mid red brown sand clay with occasional small, rounded stones.	0.15-0.22
(103)	Natural	Compact grey, white chalk.	0.22+

<b>Trench 2 RS2/1</b>	<b>Dimensions: 15.35m x 1.80m    Average Depth: 0.16m</b> <b>Ground Level: 143.93m OD – 145.01m OD</b>		
<b>Context</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Depth (m)</b>
(201)	Topsoil	Mid grey, brown silt clay, moderate roots and occasional rounded stones topped with grass/scrub.	0.00-0.14
(202)	Subsoil	Mid red brown sand clay with occasional small, rounded stones.	0.14-0.16
(203)	Natural	Compact grey, white chalk.	0.16+

<b>Trench 2 RS2/2</b>	<b>Dimensions: 15.35m x 1.80m    Average Depth: 0.27m</b> <b>Ground Level: 143.93m OD – 145.01m OD</b>		
<b>Context</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Depth (m)</b>
(201)	Topsoil	Mid grey, brown silt clay, moderate roots and occasional rounded stones topped with grass/scrub.	0.00-0.05
(203)	Natural	Mid orange brown silt clay with moderate angular stone Compact grey, white chalk.	0.05-0.08+

<b>Trench 2 RS2/3</b>	<b>Dimensions:</b> 15.35m x 1.80m <b>Depth:</b> 0.23m <b>Ground Level:</b> 143.93m OD – 145.01m OD		
<b>Context</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Depth (m)</b>
(201)	Topsoil	Mid grey, brown silt clay, moderate roots and occasional rounded stones topped with grass/scrub.	0.00-0.23
(202)	Subsoil	Mid red brown sand clay with occasional small, rounded stones.	0.21-0.23
(203)	Natural	Compact grey, white chalk.	0.23+

**Site Name:** Land at Blackberry Mead Farm, Pilgrims Way, Westwell in Kent

**SWAT Site Code:** BMF-EV-24

**Site Address:** As above

**Summary.** *Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) were commissioned by Mr and Mrs Andrews to undertake an archaeological evaluation of land at Blackberry Mead Farm, Pilgrims Way, Westwell in 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 natural geology was encountered within both trenches at an average depth of approximately 0.27m below the existing ground surface, directly underlying subsoil and topsoil. Modern disturbance was encountered within one trench which consisted of a trench for a live water pipe. Despite the archaeological potential of the site no archaeological finds or features were recorded within either of the trenches. The recording of an intact subsoil across the majority of the site combined with an historic farming land use would suggest that preservation conditions are reasonably favourable should archaeological finds and/or features be present beyond the extent of the trenches. That said, localised quarrying has clearly taken place across the overall site.*

**District/Unitary:** Ashford Borough Council & Kent County Council

**Period(s):** Modern

**NGR (centre of site to eight figures)** NGR 598706 148118

**Type of Archaeological work:** Archaeological Evaluation

**Date of recording:** May 2024

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

**Geology:** New Pit Chalk Formation – Chalk

**Title and author of accompanying report:** D Britchfield (2024) Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Blackberry Mead Farm, Pilgrims Way, Westwell, Kent. SWAT Archaeology Ref. BMF-EV-2024

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

**Contact at Unit:** Paul Wilkinson

**Date:** 17/05/2024



## PLATES





*Plate 1 Aerial view of the development site following the excavation of trenches*



*Plate 2 Trench 1, viewed from the northeast*





*Plate 3 Trench 1, viewed from the southwest*



*Plate 4 Trench 2, viewed from the northeast*





*Plate 5 Trench 2, viewed from the southwest*



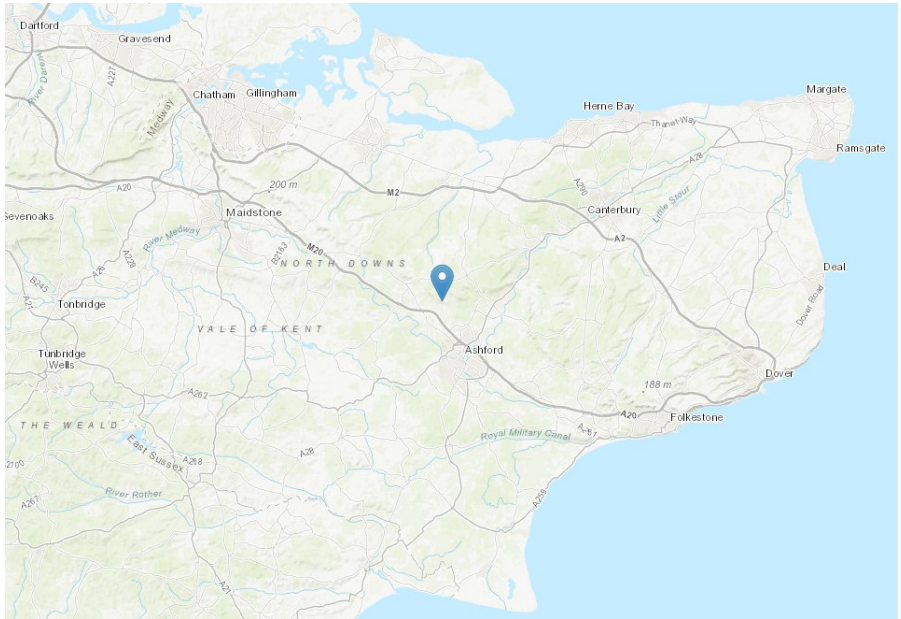
*Plate 6 Aerial view of Trench 2 showing the fall towards the northwest and the level platform/plateau*

## FIGURES

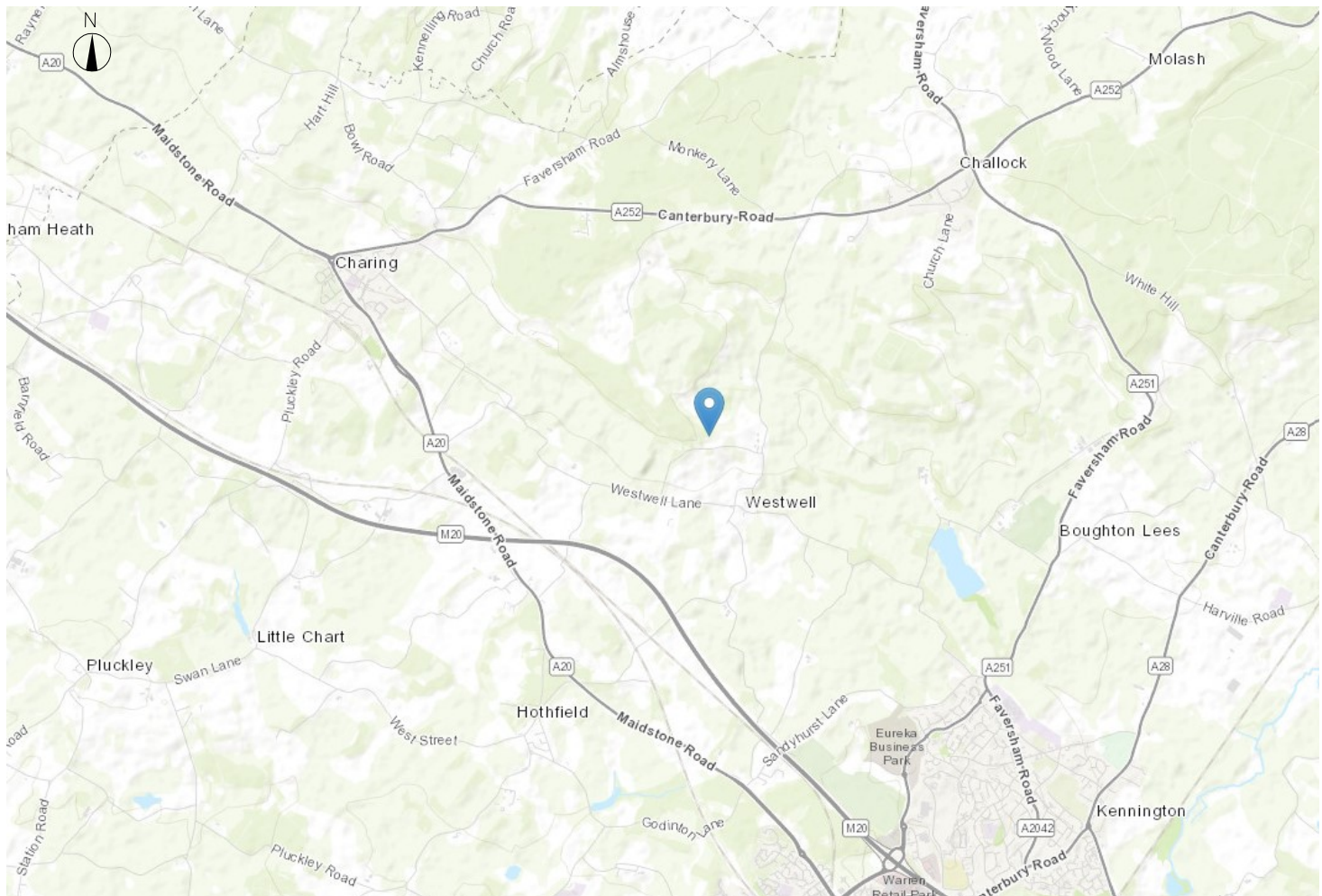




Map of UK (NTS)

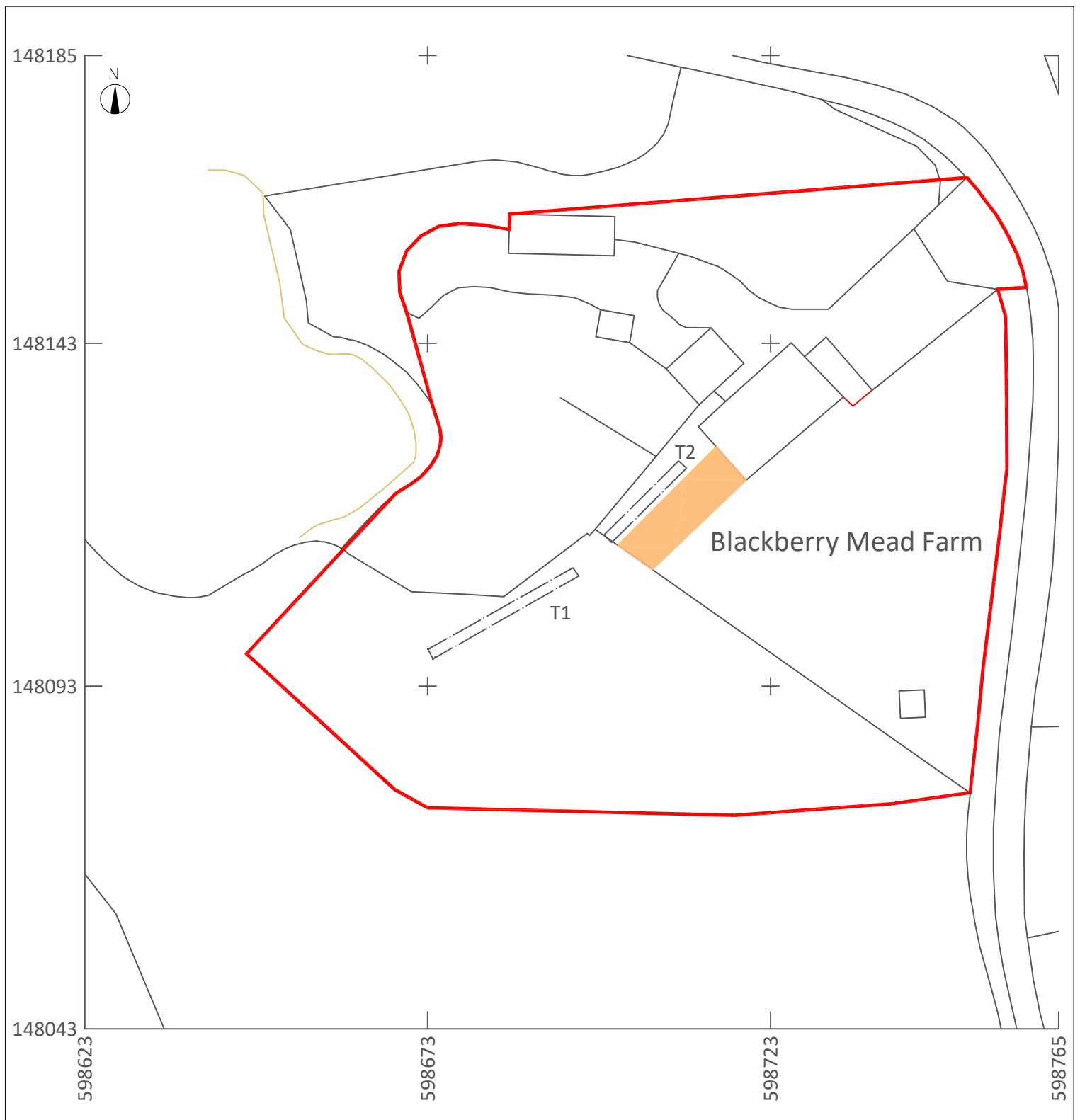


Map of Kent (NTS)



Courtesy of National Library of Scotland (NTS)

Figure 1 Site Location Plan

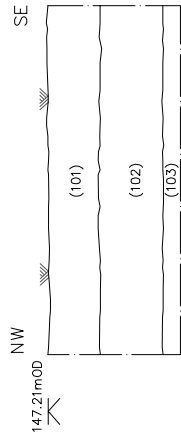


Key

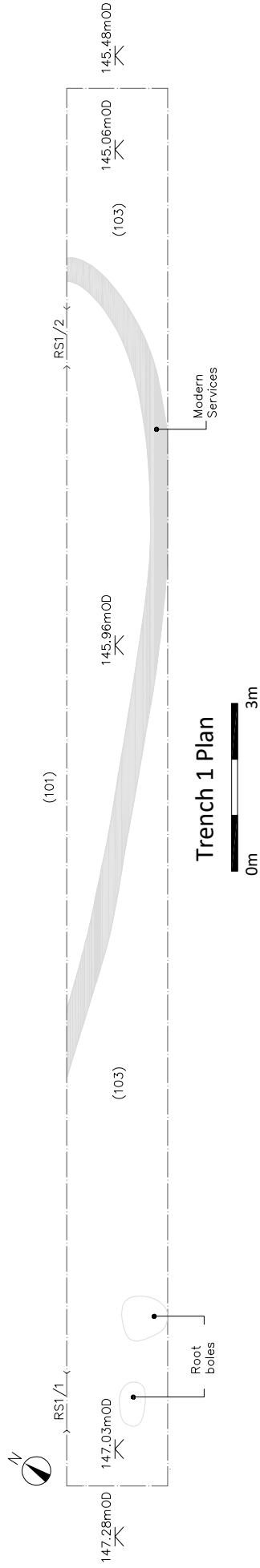
- Site Boundary
- T1 Trench and number
- Area containing live Services

0m 50m

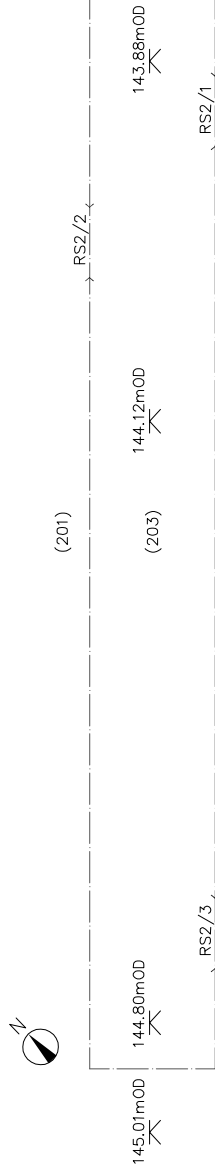
Figure 2 Site Plan



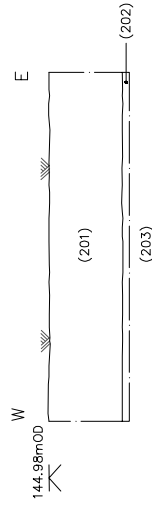
Representative Section RS1/1



Trench 1 Plan



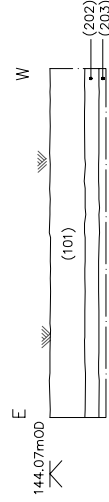
Trench 2 Plan



Representative Section RS2/3



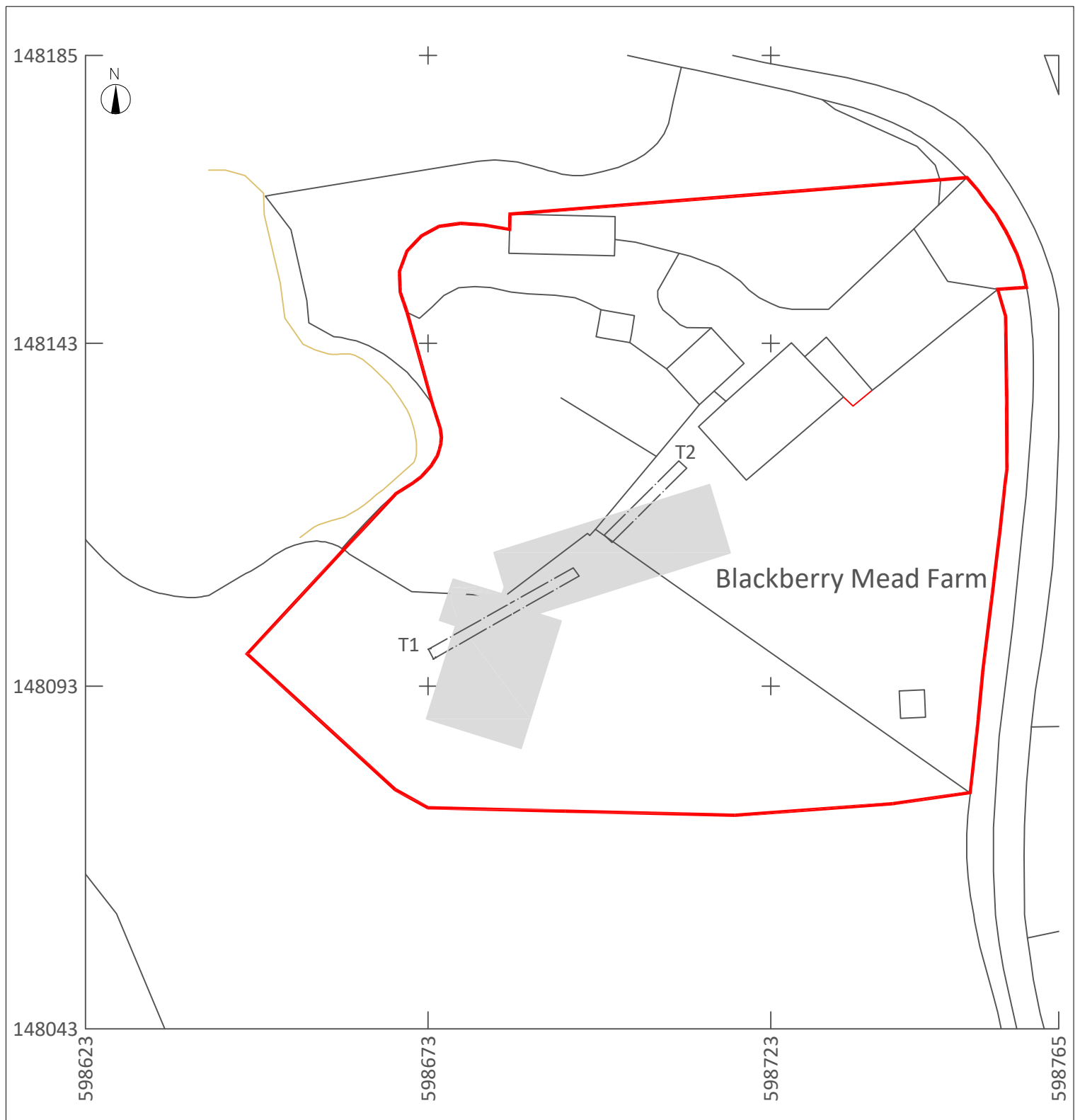
Representative Section RS2/2



Representative Section RS2/1

Figure 3 Trench Details





Key

- Site Boundary
- T1 Trench and number
- Proposed Development

0m 50m

Figure 4 Proposed Development