

Archaeological Monitoring at Orchard Heights, Mill Lane, Harbledown, Kent CT2 8NQ

Planning Application Number: CA/23/00665

Site Code OHH/WB/24



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1 Summary

In March 2024 SWAT Archaeology carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording at Orchard Heights, Mill Lane, Harbledown, Kent. The works were commissioned by the landowner and carried out during the excavation of ground works associated with the new development of a swimming pool.

The Watching Brief was conducted in accordance with an archaeological Watching Brief Written Scheme of Investigation provided by KCC Heritage.

Despite the potential for the presence and survival of archaeological remains, no features or finds dating to before the modern period were recorded during the archaeological monitoring works.

2 Introduction

2.1.1 The proposed development area (PDA) is situated Orchard Heights, Mill Lane, Harbledown, Kent CT2 8NQ. The NGR to the centre of the site is 613221 157958 (Figures 1, 2, 3).

2.2 Planning Background

2.2.1 The land has a planning permission (CA/23/00665) from Canterbury City Council for the installation of an outdoor swimming pool in the rear garden.

2.2.2 The following Condition (3) requiring a programme of archaeological monitoring was attached to the planning consent:

Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, the applicant, or heir agents or successors in title, shall secure the implementation of a watching brief to be undertaken by an archaeologist approved by the Local Planning Authority so that the excavation is observed, and items of interest and finds are recorded. The watching brief shall be in accordance with a written programme and specification, which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: *To ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded in accordance with policies HE11 and HE12 of the Canterbury District Local Plan 2017 and the National Planning Policy Framework.*

3 Schedule of Visits

3.1.1 An archaeologist suitably experienced attended the site (Alistair McKeever BSc Hons) and closely monitored the excavation works on Monday the 4th of March 2024.

4 Aims and Objectives

4.1.1 The specific aims of the archaeological work were:

- To contribute to heritage knowledge of the area through the recording of any archaeological remains exposed as a result of excavations in connection with the groundworks.

4.1.2 The objectives of the monitoring were therefore:

- To ensure the archaeological excavation and monitoring of all aspects of the development programme likely to affect buried archaeological remains;
- To secure the adequate recording of any archaeological remains revealed by the development programme;
- To secure the full analysis and interpretation of the site archive and the appropriate publication of the project results, if required;
- To secure the analysis, long term conservation and storage of the project archive.

4.1.3 The specific archaeological requirements of the watching brief are summarised below;

- Monitoring of all ground works;
- Mitigation by a programme of archaeological excavation and recording in the event that additional archaeological remains are encountered;
- Post-excavation and publication, where required.

4.2 Proposed Groundworks

4.2.1 The ground works were to excavate the ground for the build of a small outdoor swimming pool (Figure 3).

4.2.2 A full programme of proposed works by the contractor were made available to SWAT Archaeology before the on-site monitoring took place.

4.3 Confidence Rating

- 4.3.1 No factors hindered the recognition of archaeological and deposits during the monitoring and recording exercise.

5 Archaeological and Geological Background

5.1 Site Geology

- 5.1.1 The geology of the site according to the British Geological Survey is Lamberth Group-Sand. Superficial Deposits are recorded as River Terrace Deposits Silt, Sand and Gravel. On-site observation confirmed this. The OD height of the PDA is about 49m aOD (BGS geology viewer, accessed 11/03/24).

5.2 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 5.2.1 The proposed development area (PDA) is within an Area of Archaeological Potential due to its proximity to Canterbury, despite the relative lack of archaeological excavations and finds in the immediate surrounding area. The site of Canterbury's medieval city walls lie 1.3km east of site. An important regional town developed at Canterbury during the late Iron Age and into the early Romano-British period as a river crossing positioned east of Bigbury Hillfort, itself only 1.7km west of site.
- 5.2.2 Harbledown gained importance during the medieval period as the last step of pilgrims on their way to Canterbury. The Old Leper Church of St Nicholas (TR 15 NW 1400) was founded in the village c1084 by Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury 1070-89 as a leper hospital that was active until the end of the 14th century c.250m northwest of site. The hospital was visited by Henry II in 1174 on his penitential pilgrimage to Canterbury. From the 13th century the hospital became an almshouse for the poor (Historic England website, accessed 11/03/24). The later 13th-14th century St Michael and All Angels Church was constructed c.200m north of site (TR 15 NW 20) (Kent HER maps, accessed 11/03/24). To the south is the route of the North Downs Way.
- 5.2.3 A search of the immediate 500m radius of site on the KCCHER highlights only three archaeological find spots and a single earthwork, in addition to the the previously

described medieval churches and multiple post-medieval listed buildings and farmsteads.

- 5.2.4 About 80m to the west of site a Bronze Age Axe was found (TR 15 NW 17), a collection of five Palaeolithic handaxes and debitage in Plymouth museum are suggested to come from an unknown cemetery somewhere in the area (TR 15 NW 1625), and a Neolithic to Broze Age flint scatter was found along with a Roman coin c.150m northeast of site (TR 15 NW 32). An undated earthwork is noted c.500m south of site.
- 5.2.5 The increased settlement of Harbledown in the Post-Medieval period is shown by the large number of listed buildings surviving within 500m of site, including: the 17th century Hopebourne (TR 15 NW 1466); eight 18th century listed buildings including the site of the Old Black Mill (TR 15 NW 2398) c.150m south of site that gives Mill Lane its name; twelve 19th century listed buildings including the Former National School c.300m north of site. In addition, there are two 19th century farmsteads nearby, an unnamed farmstead c.350m east of site (MKE86236) and Harbledown Court Farm c.350m northwest of site (MKE86207).

6 Methodology

- 6.1.1 The Archaeological Investigations were conducted in accordance with the Archaeological Specification provided by KCC Heritage.
- 6.1.2 The works comprised the close monitoring and supervision of all ground works, including the inspection of subsoil and natural deposits for archaeological features and finds. All fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the methodology set out in the WSI (KCC Heritage) and carried out in compliance with the standards outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standards Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief (CIfA 2017).
- 6.1.3 All excavation was carried out under the constant supervision of an experienced archaeologist (Alistair McKeever BSc Hons).

- 6.1.4 Where possible some areas of excavation were subsequently closely examined with the intention of revealing any observed features in plan and section, but no features were revealed.
- 6.1.5 If found, archaeological features under threat were to be excavated to enable sufficient information about form, development date and stratigraphic relationships to be recorded without prejudice to more extensive investigations, should these have proven to be necessary.
- 6.1.6 Excavation of the area for the proposed outdoor swimming pool was carried out by building contractors using a 9t 360° machine equipped with a 1.5m bladed ditching bucket (Plate 2). The entirety of the c.12m by c.5m rectangular excavation was carried out under the constant supervision of an experienced archaeologist in attendance (See Table 1, below).

6.2 Timetable

Archaeological monitoring was carried out on the following days:

<i>Task</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Staff</i>
Archaeological monitoring	4 th March 2024	Alistair McKeever BSc (Hons)

Table 1, Attendance Schedule

6.3 Recording

- 6.3.1 A complete drawn record comprising both plans and sections, drawn to appropriate scales (1:20 for plans, 1:10 for sections) was undertaken. Where appropriate, the plans and sections were annotated with coordinates and aOD heights and form part of the site archive.
- 6.3.2 Photographs were to be taken as appropriate providing a record of excavated features and deposits, but no features or archaeological deposits were revealed. 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.

6.3.3 A single context recording system was used to record the deposits. A full list is presented in Table 2 below. Layers and fills are identified in this report thus (1000), whilst the cut of any features is shown [1001]. Context numbers were assigned to all deposits for recording purposes.

6.3.4 The Site Archive, which will include paper records, photographic records, graphics and digital data, will be prepared following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; ClfA 2017. 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 and CD for photo archive.

7 Results

7.1 Stratigraphic Sequence

7.1.1 The stratigraphic sequence recorded during the archaeological works remained relatively consistent across site, comprising areas of topsoil overlaying a thin subsoil overlaying the natural geology of superficial silt sand and gravel deposits. Table 2 (below) provides a detailed description of each stratigraphic context.

Context Number	Description	Interpretation	Vertical Span (m)
(1000)	Dark brown humic sandy loam with frequent flint inclusions and modern service intrusions	Topsoil (Plate 3)	0.18-0.20
(1001)	Grey-brown silty sand with frequent gravels and modern service intrusions	Subsoil (Plate 3)	0.08-0.00
(1002)	Orange-yellow silty sand with gravels	Natural (Plates 3-5)	-

Table 2, Stratigraphic Sequence and Register of Contexts

7.1.2 The site produced no archaeological features or deposits or finds, and no environmental potential was recognised on site.

- 7.1.3 No archaeological features or finds were revealed or recovered. The natural geology encountered across the site was superficial silty sand and gravels known to overlay the Lambeth Group-Sand. No archaeological features were revealed in the natural geology and no archaeological finds retrieved from the area watched (Figure 3, Plates 3-5).
- 7.1.4 A small number of disused modern service trenches were observed cutting into the natural geology. In the northwest corner of the strip a 0.50m wide modern drainage trench was present, aligned northeast to southwest, with ceramic drainage pipe *in situ* (Plate 4). Additionally, a 0.45m wide modern trench was observed in the southern half of the strip aligned north to south, branching west, that housed a 3/4in plastic water pipe (Plate 5).
- 7.1.5 The site strip was 0.26m deep to the NE and 0.20m deep to the SW before the underlying geology and archaeological horizon was reached. OD height across the PDA was about 49m aOD (Plates 3-5). Overall areas watched were the footprint of the proposed outdoor swimming pool, an area about 12m x 5m (Figure 3).

8 Finds

- 8.1.1 No finds were retrieved.

9 Discussion

- 9.1.1 The development site is in an area of archaeological potential due to Harbledown's proximity to Canterbury and its known Medieval landscape, despite a lack of nearby archaeological excavations or finds. However, no archaeology was revealed on the development site.

10 Conclusion

- 10.1.1 The Archaeological Investigation has fulfilled the primary aims and objectives of the KCC Archaeological Specification. As far as it is known no buried archaeological features have been affected as a result of the development.

11 Acknowledgments

- 11.1.1 SWAT Archaeology would like to thank the landowner/developer for commissioning the project. Fieldwork was undertaken and report written by Alistair McKeever BSc Hons. The project was managed by Dr Paul Winkinson MCIfA and Daniel Worsley MA.

12 REFERENCES

ADS 2013. Caring for Digital Data in Archaeology: a guide to good practice, Archaeology Data Service & Digital Antiquity Guides to Good Practice

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014, updated 1st October 2020 *Standard and guidance: for watching Brief.*

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014, updated 1st October 2020. *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives.*

SMA 1993. *Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections*, Society of Museum Archaeologists.

Websites

Kent HER map viewer

<https://webapps.kent.gov.uk/KCC.HeritageMaps.Web.Sites.Public/Default>
(accessed 11/03/2024)

British Geological Survey, BGS Geology Viewer: <https://www.bgs.ac.uk/map-viewers/bgs-geology-viewer/> (accessed 11/03/24)

Historic England, Official list entry 1085632, *Church of St Nicholas*.

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1085632?section=official-list-entry> (accessed 11/03/2024)

Appendix 1: HER Summary Form

Site Name: Development of land at Orchard Heights, Mill Lane, Harbledown, Kent, CT2 8NQ

SWAT Site Code: OHH/WB/24

Site Address: As above

Summary:

Swale and Thames Survey Company (SWAT) carried out Archaeological Monitoring on the development site above. The site has planning permission for development whereby KCCHC Archaeological Officer requested that Archaeological Watching Brief be undertaken to closely monitor the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains.

The Archaeological Monitoring consisted of site attendance and supervision which encountered no buried archaeological features or artefacts.

District/Unitary: Canterbury City Council

Period(s):

NGR (centre of site to eight figures) 613221 157958

Type of Archaeological work: Archaeological Watching Brief

Date of recording: 4th March 2024

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

Geology: Lamberth Group- Sand. Superficial Deposits are recorded as River Terrace Deposits Silt, Sand and Gravel, overlaid by Subsoil and Topsoil

Title and author of accompanying report: McKeever, A. (2024) Archaeological Watching Brief at Orchard Heights, Mill Lane, Harbledown, Kent

Summary of fieldwork results (begin with earliest period first, add NGRs where appropriate)
See above

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

Plates



Plate 1, Location of swimming pool plot with view southwest



Plate 2, Working shot of turf removal by 9t excavator with 1.5m ditching bucket



Plate 3, northeast L.O.E showing topsoil overlaying subsoil. Scale 1m

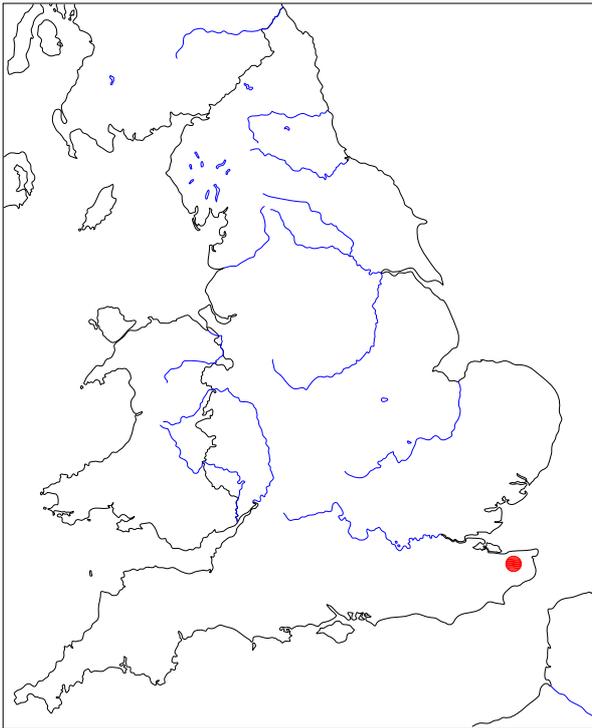


Plate 4, Northern 2/3 of strip showing underlying sand with gravels and modern ceramic waterpipe. Scale 2x 1m

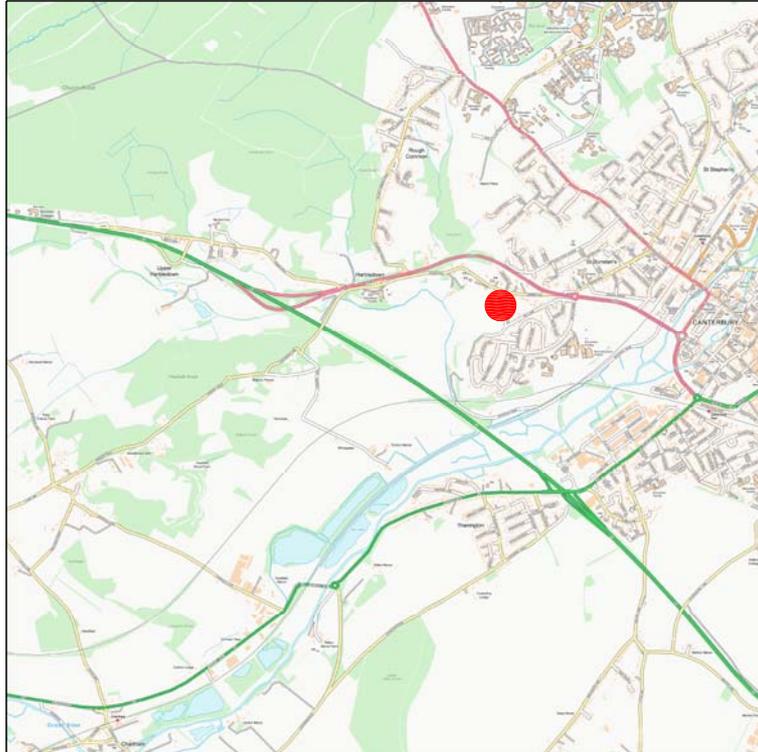
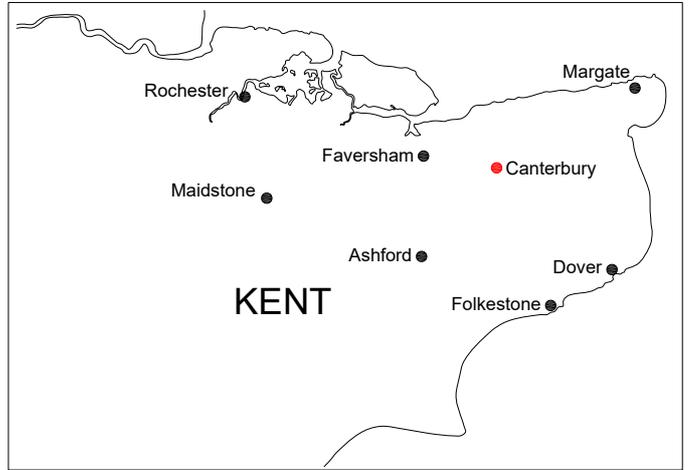


Plate 2, Southern 1/3 of strip showing underlying geology and branching modern water pipe line with plastic pipe. Scale 2x 1m

NOT TO SCALE



NOT TO SCALE



1:50000@A4



Figure 1: Site Location Plan

0m

5km



1:1250@A4



Figure 2: KCCHER Location Plan

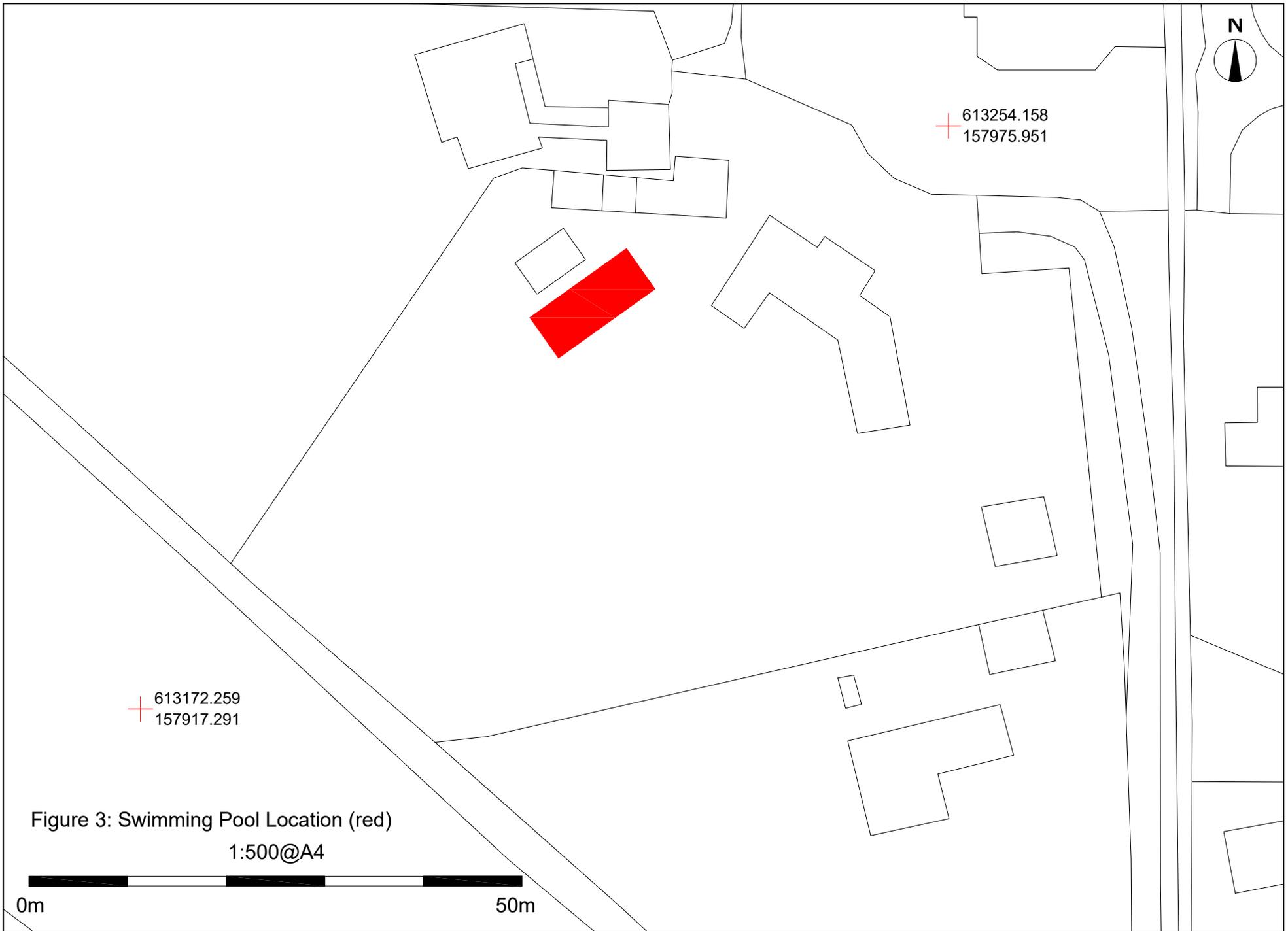


Figure 3: Swimming Pool Location (red)

1:500@A4