Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Middle Park, Green Lane, Lyminge, Kent, CT18 8DN

Centred on NGR: 613906 142548

Site Code: MPL-EV-24
Planning Policy Ref: (21/1429/FH)
20/11/2024

V1

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Summary

Swale and Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at Middle Park, Green Lane, Lyminge, Kent. A planning application was granted by Folkestone & Hythe District Council for the demolition of the existing property on site and the erection of a replacement dwelling (21/1429/FH). On the basis of the present archaeological information Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation (KCCHC), who provide an advisory service to the Local Planning Authority, placed a Condition (3) of archaeological works upon the decision notice in order to establish the presence/ absence of surviving archaeological remains within the proposed development area (PDA).

The work was carried out by SWAT Archaeology on the 11th of November 2024, in accordance with the requirements set out within a Written Specification (WSI) produced by SWAT Archaeology (Wilkinson, 2024) and in discussion with the Senior Archaeological Officer at KCCHC.

The evaluation comprising of 1 trench identified limited archaeological remains within the PDA, comprising a single undated pit containing in-situ burning.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) were commissioned by James Clague Architects to undertake an archaeological evaluation of land at Middle Park, Green Lane, Lyminge, Kent, following an archaeological Condition (3) being placed on the decision notice (21/1429/FH) due to the known archaeological landscape surrounding the proposed development area (PDA).

1.2. The evaluation, though originally designed to be two trenches targeting the creation of a parking area and the footprint of the new residential dwelling within the PDA, comprised a single 17m by 1.8m trench due to the parking area already having been constructed at the time of the evaluation.

1.3. The work was carried out in accordance with the requirements set out within a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) previously produced by SWAT Archaeology (Wilkinson, 2024), and in discussion with the Senior Archaeological Officer at KCCHC. The evaluation was undertaken on the 11th November 2024.

1.4. This report summarizes the results of the archaeological evaluation and considers the potential impact to the archaeological resource resulting from the proposed development to aid and inform KCCHC decision on what further archaeological mitigation will be required.

2. Site Description, Topography and Geology

2.1. The proposed development area is situated approximately 2.3km northeast of the village of Lyminge and 1.2km south west of the village of Rhodes Minnis, within the Civil Parish of Lyminge and Elham. The northern and western boundary of the site is formed Green Lane with the eastern and southern boundary defined by open agricultural fields at the time of the development. The Site is centred on NGR: 613903, 142548.

2.2. The British Geological Survey (BGS) of Great Britain (1:50,000) shows that the bedrock geology of the PDA consists of New Pit Chalk Formation – Chalk. Superficial deposits are recorded as Clay and Flint Formation – Clay, Silt, Sand and Gravel.

2.3. Topographically the site is on sloping ground with a plateau in the north-western corner of the PDA, where the current and proposed residential dwellings are situated, at 175m aOD with the site dropping off by 5m towards the south-eastern corner of the site at 170.5m aOD.

3. Planning Background

3.1. A planning application was granted by Folkestone and Hythe District Council for the demolition of the existing residential building and erction of a replacement dwelling (21/1429/FH) as well as change of use of the existing building to 2no. self-contained holiday lets with associated external alterations, parking and landscaping (21/2490/FH).

3.2. Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation, who provide an advisory service to the LPA, recommended (20th July 2021) the site be subject to a programme of archaeological evaluation due to the PDA's location within an area of known multi-period archaeological potential, and proximity to two scheduled Bronze Age barrows.

3.3. In response to this Folkestone and Hythe District Council placed planning Condition 3 to the decision notice:

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

1) archaeological field evaluation works in accordance with a specification and written timetable which has been submitted to and approved in writing and the Local Planning Authority; and

2) 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 in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure appropriate assessment of the archaeological implications of any development proposals and the subsequent mitigation of adverse impacts through preservation in situ or by record.

(Notification of Decision, 4th April 2022)

3.4. This report details the results of the archaeological evaluation of land at Middle Park, Lyminge carried out by SWAT Archaeology. The evaluation, which comprised of one evaluation trench

measuring 17m in length and 1.8m in width, was conducted on the 11th of November 2024 according to the agreed written specification (Wilkinson, 2024).

4. Archaeological and Historical Background

4.1. Wider Archaeological Landscape (1km radius of the PDA)

4.1.1. Prehistoric

The earliest evidence for archaeological activity within the study area is from an evaluation of the proposed Oasis holiday village at Westwood, approximately 534m north north-east of the PDA, undertaken by Canterbury Archaeological Trust in 1994. The evaluation recorded evidence for Neolithic occupation comprising a scatter of flintwork and pottery. Additionally, the evaluation recorded some later Prehistoric activity including five 1m in diameter charcoal production pits assumed to be of a Prehistoric date as well as an isolated late Iron Age pot found within a test pit (SGS Environment, 1994).

There are also a number of Bronze Age Barrows recorded on the KHER within the Study Area. Situated approximately 450/500m to the northwest of the PDA, within Westwood are a grouping of 6 Barrows: KHER TR 14 SW 134, KHER TR 14 SW 7, KHER TR 14 SW 138, KHER TR 14 SW 135, KHER TR 14 SW 136, KHER TR 14 SW 137. Additionally, 500m west of the PDA are the remains of a probable barrow (KHER TR 14 SW 18).

4.1.2. Romano-British

Canterbury Archaeological Trust's 1994 evaluation also identified evidence for early Romano-British occupation activity comprising a pottery scatter with a date of C.50-150 AD (KHER TR 14 SW 55).

To the West of the PDA is Stone Street (B2068), a Roman Road still in use today. The following are a number of recorded features on the HER associated with the road.

500m southwest of the PDA is the location of a Roman Barrow (KHER TR 14 SW 2), scheduled as an ancient monument, it is situated on the western side of Stone Street.

Approximately 600m southwest of the Site a simple bowl quern (KHER TR 14 SW 24) was recovered in 1963 when a bank west of Stone Street was bulldozed.

Approximately 700m southwest is the remains of an earthwork thought to be a probable Roman field system.

4.1.3. Medieval

Canterbury Archaeological Trust's evaluation of the proposed holiday park also recorded evidence for Medieval occupation activity (KHER TR 14 SW 56) comprising pottery scatter dating between 1150-1350 AD and a possible flint footing of a structure or a trackway.

Within Westwood, 650m northwest of the Site, there are a number of assumed Medieval Iron stone extraction pits (KHER TR 14 SW 19) which fit in with the historical documentation of the period for Iron working in the surrounding area.

4.1.4. Post-Medieval

There are 6 Post-Medieval farms and associated buildings recorded on the Historic Environment Record, reflecting the longstanding agricultural history of the area, detailed below in Table 1.

Hemstead	KHER TR 14 SW 106	Grade II Listed Farmhouse
Hemstead Farm	MKE87606	Regular Courtyard Farmstead
Rhodes Farm	MKE87652	Loose Courtyard plan Farmstead
Farmstead SW of Hemstead	MKE87608	Loose Courtyard plan Farmstead
Little Rhodes Farm	MKE87651	Dispersed plan Farmstead
Outfarm west of Hemstead	MKE87607	Field barn no associated yard
Outfarm SW of Rhodes Minnis	MKE87657	Field barn no associated yard

Table 1, Post-Medieval Farmsteads

5. Aims and Objectives

5.1. The project adhered to the aims and objectives laid out in the KCCHC approved WSI (Wilkinson, 2024).

5.2. The primary objective of the archaeological evaluation was to establish the presence/ absence of any potential archaeological features which may be impacted by the proposed development and to disseminate the results of the evaluation through an evaluation report, which, if possible, will contextualise any recorded archaeological remains within the wider known archaeological landscape.

5.3. The aims of the investigation were to determine the potential for archaeological activity and in particular the earlier Prehistoric, Roman, Early Medieval and later archaeological activity.

6. Methodology

6.1. Introduction

6.1.1. All fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the methodology set out in the KCCHC approved WSI (Wilkinson, 2024) and carried out in compliance with the standards outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standard Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations (CifA, 2014).

6.1.2. Though the original WSI was designed for two targeted trenches (one investigating the position of an additional parking area and the other targeting the location of the new residential dwelling), only one trench could be excavated as the parking area had already been constructed by the date the evaluation was undertaken.

6.2. Fieldwork

6.2.1. A total of 1 trench (17m x 1.8m) was excavated, laid out in accordance to the KCCHC approved trench layout within the WSI (2024). All trench locations were set out using GNSS prior to excavation.

6.2.2. A 5t 360 tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.5m wide toothless ditching bucket was used to remove the overburden, comprising of an intact topsoil sealing subsoil to reveal the natural geology and the archaeological horizon.

6.2.3. Where appropriate trenches or specific areas/ features were subsequently hand-cleaned to reveal features in plan and carefully selected cross sections through the features were excavated to establish the character of the archaeology, relationships between features and to obtain cultural material.

6.2.4. The overburden was reduced in 100mm spits under the constant supervision of a qualified archaeologist, with topsoil and subsoil being stored separately either side of the trench edge. All spoil heaps were visually checked for artefactual material.

6.2.5. A test pit was excavated at the north-eastern end of the trench to investigate and record the superficial geologies encountered on site.

6.3. Recording

6.3.1. A complete photographic record was maintained on site that included working shots, during mechanical excavation and following archaeological investigations. Additionally, the site, trenches and specific features were photographed with a drone to help illustrate location and context.

6.3.2. A complete drawn record of the evaluation trenches and excavated interventions was maintained, comprising of both plans and sections, drawn to the appropriate scales (1:20 for plans and 1:10 for sections). The site was also surveyed using GNSS to record the

position of the trenches, features and interventions and to record coordinates and aOD heights.

6.3.3. 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 2 202+, Trench 3 301+).

7. Monitoring

7.1. Communication with the Principal Archaeological Officer for Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation comprised of emails. Curatorial monitoring was made available on the 11th November 2024, however, the Senior Archaeological Officer at KCCHC signed the works off remotely. KCCHC's permission was obtained before reinstatement works began.

8. Results

8.1. Introduction

8.1.1. A total of 1 evaluation trench (17m in length and 1.8m wide) was mechanically excavated under archaeological supervision. A single archaeological feature was identified and hand excavated to ascertain the character, nature and date of the feature.

8.1.2. Figure list:

- *Figure 1: Site location plan*
- *Figure 2: Trench locations plan*
- *Figure 3: Overlay of Trench Plan and development plan*
- *Figure 4: Plan of Trenches 1 with sections and feature [104]*

8.2. Stratigraphic Deposit Sequence

8.2.1. A consistent stratigraphic sequence was observed across the site of approximately 0.16 of topsoil overlying 0.2m – 0.22m of subsoil, overlaying the geological and archaeological horizon.

8.3. Archaeological Narrative

8.3.1. Trench 1

Trench 1 was excavated on a NE-SW alignment and measured 17m long, 1.8m wide, with underlying geology reached after 0.31 to 0.38m. A single discrete feature [104] was recorded at the southwestern end of the trench. Pit [104] was sub-circular in shape, measuring 0.84m+ wide and 1.1m in length with gentle inwards sloping sides into a flat base.

Pit [104] contained two fills, the upper (102) a friable light brownish yellow slightly clayey silt that infilled a 0.13m central depression within the feature. Beneath this was a dense friable 0.09m thick charcoal deposit (103) that sealed the heat affected natural of the cut, indicating that in situ burning had taken place within the cut of the feature. Though the feature was 100% excavated, no artefactual material was obtained.

Two superficial geologies were encountered during the evaluation. A malleable mid brownish orange Head deposit – Clay, Silt, Sand and Gravel (105), that overlaid a friable mottled reddish brown and light grey Clay with Flint Formation – Sand (106). A test pit was excavated at the north-eastern end of the trench that showed that (106) was sealed by 0.27m of (105). Both geologies are recorded within the immediate area on the British Geological Societies mapping.

9. Finds

9.1. No artefactual material was recovered during the evaluation.

9.2. Though feature (103) [104] was rich in charcoal and sampled, the samples taken have not been processed due to the undated nature of the feature, which means any environmental data obtained from sampling the feature would be out of context unless the samples were used to obtain a radio carbon date.

10. Discussion

10.1. Introduction

10.1.1. The archaeological investigation has been successful in evaluating the development site for the possibility of archaeological remains. Preservation conditions for an archaeological horizon were considered mostly favourable across the Site.

10.1.2. The archaeological evaluation of Land Middle Park, Lyminge has identified limited evidence of archaeological activity within the extent of the proposed development area, comprising a single undated pit.

10.1.3. A consistent stratigraphic sequence was observed across the site of approximately 0.16 of topsoil overlying 0.2m – 0.22m of subsoil, overlaying the geological and archaeological horizon.

10.2. Conclusions

10.2.1. The archaeological investigation has been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the specification.

10.2.2. The single feature recorded during the evaluation, though undated, is likely to be associated with charcoal production. Similar features were recorded by the Canterbury Archaeological Trust during their 1994 evaluation of the proposed Oasis holiday park, 500m north north-east of the Site. The evaluation recorded five 1m in diameter shallow undated pits that were rich in charcoal. These features were assumed to be of a Prehistoric date due to similar features being recorded elsewhere in the County (SGS Environment, 1994).

10.2.3. Similar pits have been used throughout many periods of history for the production of charcoal. Excavations at Nayland Rock, Essex by Oxford Archaeology recorded a total of 24 Early Medieval shallow sub-circular pits whose morphology, lack of finds, occasional scorched cuts, and relatively charcoal rich fills have been associated with charcoal-making in woodlands distinct from other forms of burnt features such as cooking pits found in domestic settings (Clarke and Haskins, 2021). Clarke and Haskins note that nearby excavations north of Colchester have revealed 12 sites of Charcoal-rich pits dating from the Iron Age, Roman and Early Medieval period.

10.2.4. It would seem likely that pit [104] is associated with charcoal production due to its proximity to similar features to the north-northeast and its proximity to woodland. So, though the pit is undated, it is likely that its lack of dating stems from its purpose as a pit for charcoal production which is inherently devoid of cultural material as it has an industrial use.

10.2.5. The results from this work will be used to aid and inform the Senior Archaeological Officer at KCCHC to decide what form further archaeological mitigation measures will be necessary as part of the planning application process, and also to inform the master

planning process for the development in order to potentially incorporate safeguarding measures for sensitive aspects of the buried archaeological resource.

11.Acknowledgements

11.1. SWAT Archaeology would like to thank James Clague Architects for commissioning the project. Thanks are also extended to Casper Johnson, Senior Archaeological Officer at Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation. Site Survey and illustrations were produced by Jonny Madden of Digitise This. The fieldwork was undertaken by Dan Worsley MA. The report was written by Dan Worsley MA. The project was managed by Dr Paul Wilkinson MiFA.

12.References

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Websites:

British Geological Survey, BGS Geology Viewer: https://www.bgs.ac.uk/map-viewers/bgs-geology-viewer/ (accessed 14/11/24)

Plate 1 Working shot

Plate 2 Trench Plan looking southwest (1m scale)

Plate 3 Trench Plan looking northeast (1m scale)

Plate 4 Sample Section 1

Plate 5 Pre-Excavation plan of Pit [104] (1m scale)

Plate 6 Mid - Ex plan of Pit [104] (0.5m scale)

Plate 7 Fully excavated Pit [104] (0.5m scale)

Plate 8 Test pit into geology

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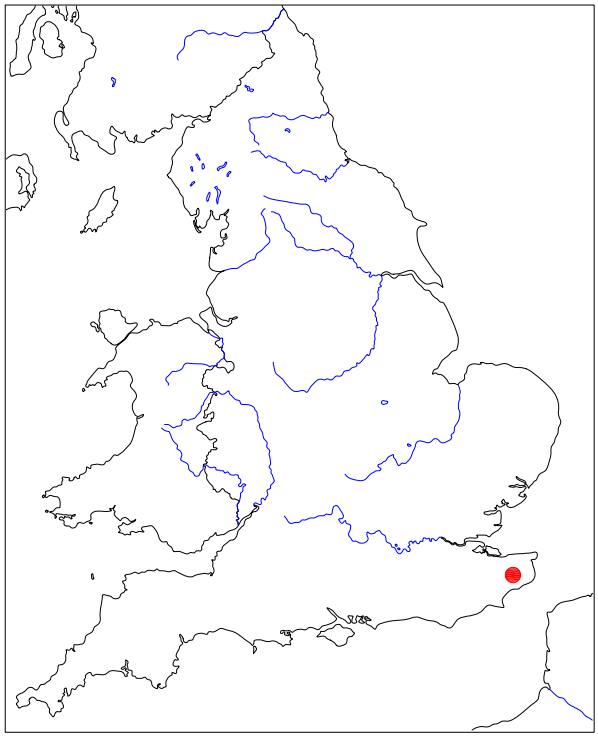

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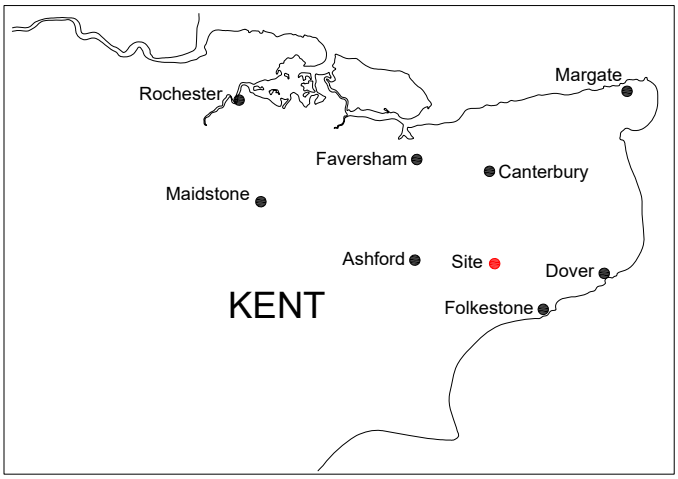

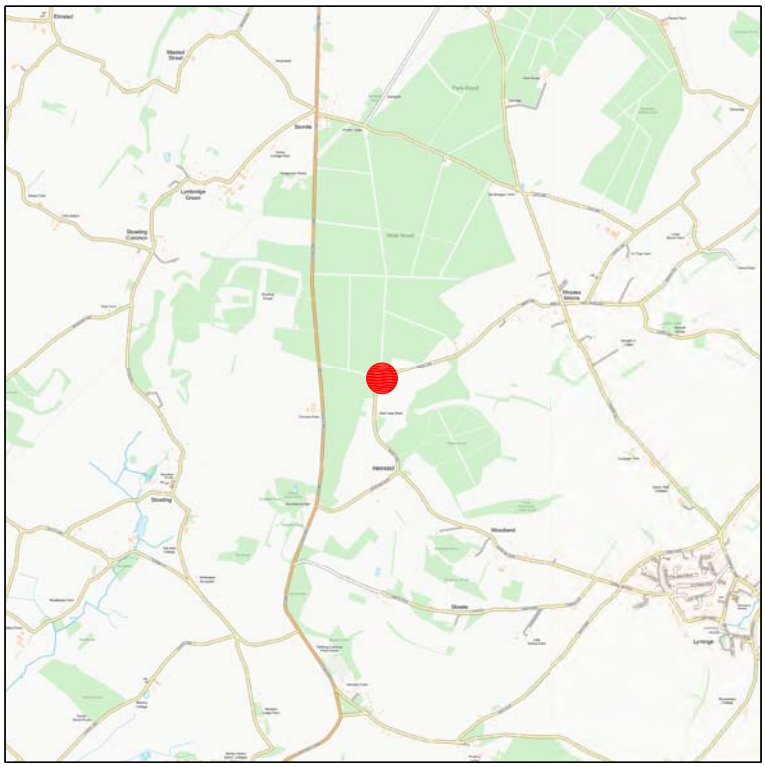

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0m 5km

Figure 1: Site Location Plan

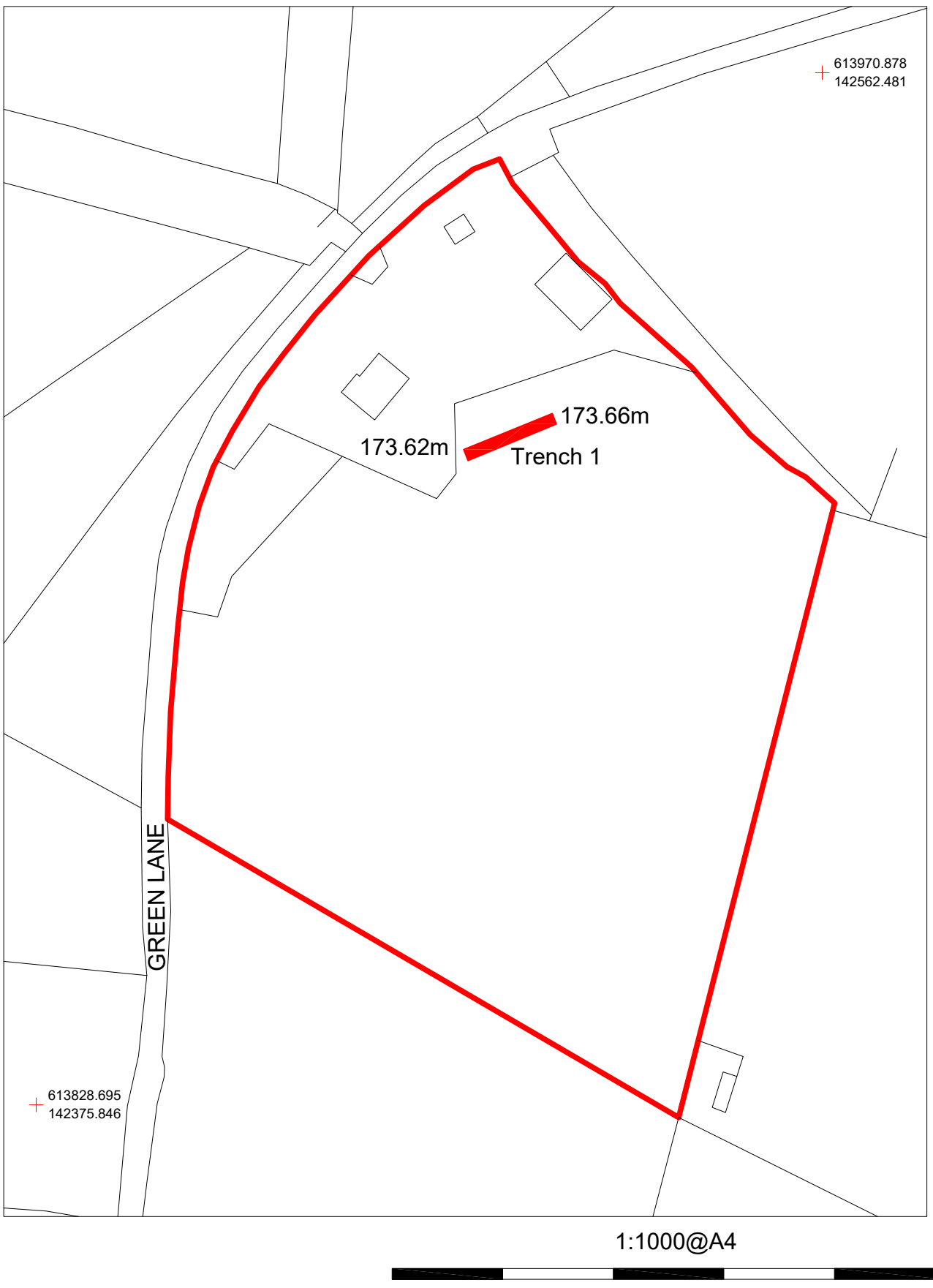

Figure 2: Trench Location Plan

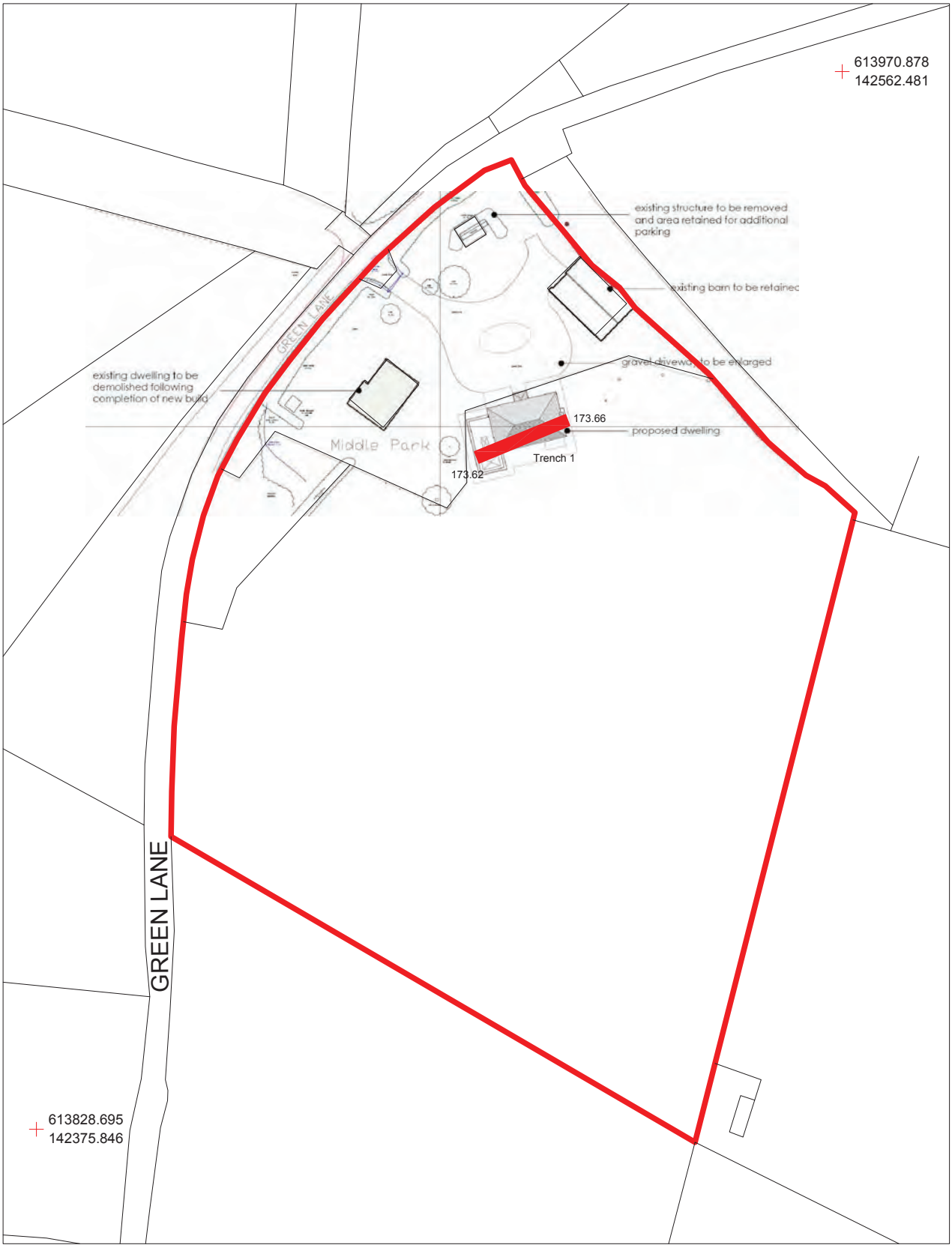

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Figure 3: Overlay of trench location plan and development plan

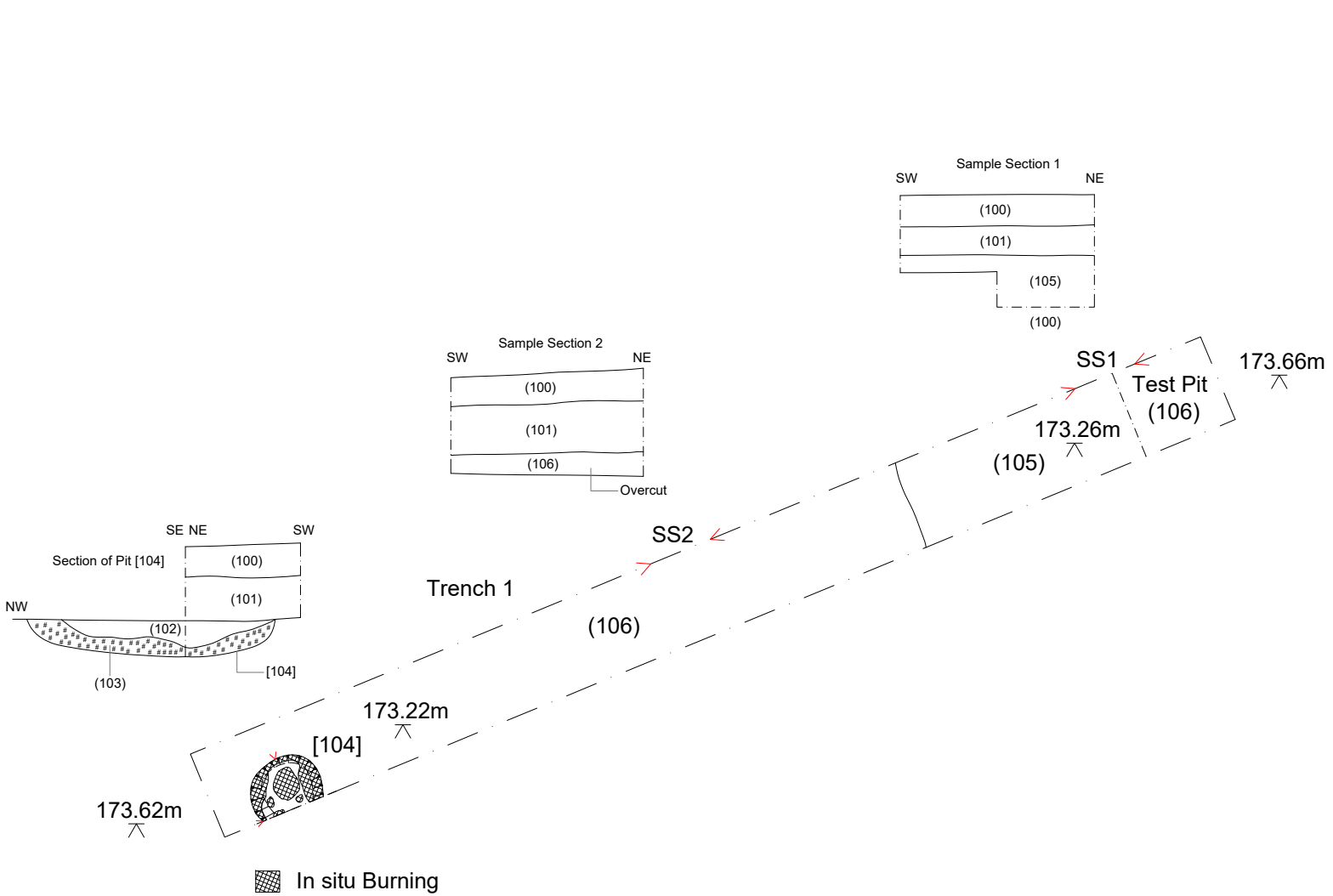

Figure 4: Trench Plan and Sections

Appendix 1: Trench Tables

Trench 1	Dimensions: 17m x 1.8m Trench alignment: NE-SW Ground level at NE end: 173.66m aOD Ground level at SW end: 173.62m aOD				
Context	**Interpretation**	**Description**	**Length (m)**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**
100	Topsoil	Topsoil of Trench 1. Colour: dark brownish grey. Composition: clayey silt. Compaction: moist, friable. Inclusions: 1) moderate flecks to large angular to rounded flint, evenly distributed.			0.16
101	Subsoil	Subsoil of Trench 2. Colour: light brownish grey. Composition: clayey silt. Compaction: moist, malleable. Inclusions: 1) occasional small to medium angular to rounded flint, evenly distributed			0.2-0.22
(102)	Fill of Pit [104]	Fill of pit [104]. Colour: light brownish yellow. Composition: slightly clayey silt. Compaction: Friable. Inclusions: none.	0.88	0.6+	0.13
(103)	Charcoal Deposit within [104]	Primary fill of pit [104]. Colour: black. Composition: dense deposit of charcoal. Compaction Friable. Inclusions: none.	1.02	0.76+	0.09
[104]	Cut of Pit.	Cut of pit. Shape in plan: sub-circuler. Break at top: sharp. Sides: gentle, concave. Break at base: gradual. Base: flat. In-situ burning observed	1.1	0.84+	0.22
(105)	Natural	A malleable mid brownish orange Head deposit – Clay, Silt, Sand and Gravel	-	-	0.27
(106)	Natural	friable mottled reddish brown and light grey Clay with Flint Formation – Sand.	-	-	-