



## Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment of land at Senacre Technical College, Sutton Road, Maidstone, Kent

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**Senacre Technical College, Sutton Road,  
Maidstone, Kent**

**Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment**

**NGR: 577993 152646**

**Report for  
Senacre Technical College**

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April 2007**

**On behalf of;**

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## **Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment in Advance of Development at Senacre Technical College, Sutton Road, Maidstone, Kent**

**NGR: 577993 152646**

### **1 SUMMARY**

*Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT) have been commissioned to carry out an archaeological desk-based assessment of a proposed development at Senacre Technical College, Sutton Road, Maidstone, Kent. The assessment was undertaken in accordance with a specification provided by Heritage & Conservation (Kent County Council) in advance of a planning application for demolition of the existing college and construction of a new housing development.*

*The site is located within an area of high archaeological potential associated with the prehistoric and Romano-British periods, in particular potential Iron Age settlements with strong economic, political and religious functions together with a Roman funerary monument, villas and a Roman road. This evidence is reviewed and it is recommended in this case that further archaeological assessment will be required and that an archaeological field evaluation comprising trial trenching should be carried out. This will provide an additional assessment of the nature, depth and level of survival of any archaeological deposits present within the extents of the site and used to inform further mitigation as necessary.*

### **2 INTRODUCTION**

#### **2.1 Planning Background**

Planning Policy Guidance 16: Archaeology and Planning (2001) states:

*'Positive planning and management can help to bring about sensible solutions to the treatment of sites with archaeological remains and reduce the areas of potential conflict between development and preservation. Both central government and English Heritage have important roles to play (see Annex 1). But the key to the future of the great majority of archaeological sites and historic landscapes lies with local authorities, acting within the framework set by central government, in their various capacities as planning, education and recreational authorities, as well as with the owners of sites themselves. Appropriate planning policies in development plans and their implementation through development control will be especially important'*

(2001:14)

*'The needs of archaeology and development can be reconciled, and potential conflict very much reduced, if developers discuss their preliminary plans for development with the planning authority at an early stage. Once detailed designs have been prepared and finance lined up, flexibility becomes much more difficult and expensive to achieve. In their own interests therefore, prospective developers should, in all cases, include as part of their research into the development potential of a site, which they undertake before making a planning application, an initial assessment of whether the site is known or likely to contain archaeological remains. The first step will be to contact the County Archaeological Officer or equivalent who holds the SMR, or English Heritage in London. The SMR provides information about the locations where archaeological remains are known or thought likely to exist. Where*

*important remains are known to exist or where the indications are that the remains are likely to prove important, English Heritage are also ready to join in early discussions and provide expert advice.*

(2001:19)

*'These consultations will help to provide prospective developers with advance warning of the archaeological sensitivity of a site. As a result they may wish to commission their own archaeological assessment by a professionally qualified archaeological organisation or consultant. This need not involve fieldwork. Assessment normally involves desk-based evaluation of existing information: it can make effective use of records of previous discoveries, including any historic maps held by the County archive and local museums and record offices, or of geophysical survey techniques'*

(2001:20)

The Desk-Based Assessment therefore forms the initial stage of the archaeological investigation and is intended to inform and assist and decisions regarding archaeological mitigation for proposed development and associated planning applications.

## **2.2 The Proposed Development**

The proposed developed will comprise the demolition of the existing college, followed by the construction of approximately 300 domestic units including access, services and parking facilities. At the time of preparing this report the precise site layout was still in the design phase and therefore unknown.

## **2.3 Projects Constraints**

There were no constraints associated with this project.

## **2.4 Geology and Topography**

The British Geological Society (BGS 1995) shows that the local geology consists of sandy limestones and calcareous sands of Hythe Beds. Archaeological and Geotechnical investigation within the surrounding landscape has shown that clay and silty subsoils are present at a depth between 0.5m and 1.0m below the existing ground level.

The sites measures 7.82 hectares and is currently occupied by a secondary education technical college (Fig 2). The majority of the site has been landscaped to form level playing fields, tennis courts and sand pits. The college is situated within the northern most half of the site, covering approximately 30% of the total area. Mature trees grow around the perimeter of the site.

# **3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

## **3.1 Introduction**

The Desk-Based Assessment was commissioned by Dr Paul Wilkinson of Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT) on behalf of Senacre Technology College in order to supplement a planning application for demolition of the school and construction of domestic housing. This assessment has been prepared in accordance with a specification provided by Kent County Council's Heritage and Conservation Group (Appendix 2) and follows guidelines set out by the Institute of Field Archaeologist (see below) and English Heritage.

### 3.2 Desktop Study – Institute of Field Archaeologists (1999)

This desktop study has been produced in line with archaeological standards, as defined by the Institute of Field Archaeologist (1999). A desktop, or desk-based assessment, is defined as being:

- *'...a programme of assessment of the known or potential archaeological resource within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater. It consists of a collation of existing written, graphic, photographic and electronic information in order to identify the likely character, extent, quality and worth of the known or potential archaeological resource in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate' (1999:2)*

The purpose of the desk-based assessment is, therefore, an assessment that provides a contextual archaeological record, in order to determine:

- *the formulation of a strategy to ensure the recording, preservation or management of the resource*
- *the formulation of a strategy for further investigation, whether or not intrusive, where the character and value of the resource is not sufficiently defined to permit a mitigation strategy or other response to be devised*
- *the formulation of a proposal for further archaeological work within a programme of research.*

IFA (1999:2)

### 3.3 Kent County Council Objectives

- *The overall objectives of the archaeological desk based assessment and walkover survey are to identify and assess the archaeological potential of the site by collating and analysing known information along with recording archaeological remains and historic landscape features in the field. Importance is to be placed on producing an account of the historic development of the site and in assessing the archaeological impact of future development (KCC 2007: 4.1).*
- *The desk-based assessment itself will comprise a collection and analysis of known historical and archaeological information regarding the site and its environs (KCC 2007: 4.2).*
- *The comprehensive site walkover has the objective of mapping, photographing and describing visible archaeological and heritage features encountered across the site as well as informing the assessment of past and possible future development impacts (KCC 2007: 4.3).*
- *This information will be used to produce a gazetteer of archaeological and heritage features on site and to augment and inform the desk based study and later management decisions (KCC 2007: 4.4).*
- *The project is then to assess the results of the desktop study and the site inspection to provide information on the nature of archaeology and heritage on site. This assessment would also aim to identify any buried archaeological potential (KCC 2007: 4.5).*

- *The study will also provide an assessment of the likely impacts on heritage remains that would be caused by any future intensive development (KCC 2007: 4.6).*

## **4 METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 Desk-Based Assessment**

#### *4.1.1 Archaeological databases*

Although it is recognised that national databases are an appropriate resource for this particular type of assessment, the local Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) held at Kent County Council contains sufficient data to provide an accurate insight into catalogued sites and finds within both the proposed development area and the surrounding landscape. The search was carried out within a 1km radius of the proposed development site (20<sup>th</sup> April 2007). A full listing of the relevant SMR data is included in Appendix 1.

#### *4.1.2 Historical documents*

A historical document, such as charters, registers, wills and deeds etc were not relevant to this specific study.

#### *4.1.3 Cartographic and pictorial documents*

A full map regression exercise has been incorporated within this assessment. Research was carried out using resources offered by the Centre for Kentish Studies, Maidstone Kent (26<sup>th</sup> April 2007). A full listing of cartographic and pictorial documents used in this study is provided in Section 9.3.

#### *4.1.4 Aerial photographs*

Assessment of the collection of aerial photographs held by Heritage & Conservation, Kent County Council was made and compared to the cropmarks plotted during the National Mapping Programme of the Royal Commission for Historical Monuments. A full listing of aerial photographs used for this study is provided in Section 9.4.

#### *4.1.5 Geotechnical information*

To date, no geotechnical investigations have been carried out at the site.

#### *4.1.6 Secondary and statutory resources*

Secondary and statutory sources, such as regional and periodic archaeological studies, landscape studies, dissertations and research frameworks are considered appropriate to this type of study and have been included within this assessment.

### **4.2 Walkover survey**

The walkover survey was carried out on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2007 by David Britchfield, in respect of the Archaeological Specification (2007:3-4). However, on initial inspection it was clear that the site had been landscaped in order to provide playing fields so it was agreed with the Archaeological Officer at Kent County Council that a Level III survey was not relevant to this specific study. As a result a complete photographic record was made of the site, a selection of which has been included in Appendix 7.

## 5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

### 5.1 Introduction

The Archaeological record, both in and around Maidstone is extensive, comprising occupation evidence dating from the Mesolithic through to the industrial post-medieval period. Situated on the confluence of the rivers Medway and Len, Maidstone is located on low lying ground directly south of the Kent Downs almost midway between Dover to the east and London to the west. It is exactly this geographic and topographic location that has formed the focus of trade, travel and communication for nearly 2000 years and therefore comes as no surprise that that this market town now serves as the administrative centre of the county.

The proposed development site is located approximately 3km to the south-east of the centre of Maidstone, beyond the periphery of the historical core of the town and outside of the extent of the KCC Urban Archaeological Zone (KCC 2005). That said, the historical and archaeological record is equally as 'busy' within the area immediately adjacent to the proposed development site as is within the town proper. This section of the assessment will focus on the archaeological and historical development of this area of the town, placing it within its local and regional context. Each period classification will provide a brief introduction to the wider landscape, followed by a full record of archaeological sites, monuments and records within the site's immediate vicinity. Timescales for archaeological periods represented in the report are listed in Table 1 and locations of monuments and spot finds are presented in Figure 3.

Prehistoric	Palaeolithic	c. 500,000 BC – c.10,000 BC
	Mesolithic	c.10,000 BC – c. 4,300 BC
	Neolithic	c. 4,300 BC – c. 2,300 BC
	Bronze Age	c. 2,300 BC – c. 600 BC
	Iron Age	c. 600 BC – c. AD 43
Romano-British		c. AD 43 – c. AD 410
Anglo-Saxon		AD 410 – AD 1066
Medieval		AD 1066 – AD 1485
Post-medieval		AD 1485 – AD 1900
Modern		AD 1901 – present day

*Table 1 Classification of Archaeological Periods*

### 5.2 Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings Historic Parks & Gardens and Conservation Areas

No scheduled monuments or listed buildings are recorded within a 1km radius of the proposed development site. The Historic Park and Garden at Otham, however, is situated just under 1km to the east of the site (Fig 3). The site of a medieval building and its parkland is now arable and used as a private golf course.

### 5.3 Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age

The prehistoric period within the Medway valley follows traditional patterns observed elsewhere within the county until the Iron Age where evidence becomes a little more complex. The Mesolithic<sup>1</sup> period is represented by the presence of lithic scatters, with tools such as flint

<sup>1</sup> There is some debate as to whether the 'Mesolithic' is a valid term as there are no defined Mesolithic characteristics. For this study it is assumed the Mesolithic culture is represented by hunter-gatherer societies that immediately predate the Neolithic period.

axes, picks, blades and flakes providing an insight into the earliest phase of human activity within the Maidstone area.

By the Neolithic period, the adoption of a sedentary lifestyle based on agriculture and animal husbandry is illustrated by both 'ceremonial' and 'domestic' settlement patterns. Spot finds such as polished flint axes, tools, early pottery and structures such as the A229 (White Horse) longhouse recorded during the CTRL (Channel Tunnel Rail Link) excavations provide the domestic focus while the presence of megalithic monuments are believed to represent a complex prehistoric ritual landscape<sup>2</sup>. Neolithic finds are recorded within the assessment area; a polished axe (SMR Ref.: TQ 75 SE 3) was found 300m south of the development site in 1963, in addition to a partially polished flint axe (SMR Ref.: TQ 75 SE 26) found 5 years later on an allotment a further 200m to the south-west. Excavations at Queen Elizabeth Square by Oxford Archaeology in 2001, recorded evidence for Neolithic activity (SMR Ref.: TQ 75 SE 133) c. 400m to the west of the assessment area. Although artefacts were not within secure contexts and thus considered residual, the assemblage of retouched flakes, hammerstones and scrappers do suggest a Neolithic presence within the surrounding landscape.

The Bronze Age is represented by larger migrations from the continent and more complex social developments on a domestic, industrial and ceremonial level. Occupation of Maidstone is believed to have continued throughout the Bronze Age (KCC 2005: 4.1.1), albeit on a rather less 'visible' scale. A bronze palstave (SMR Ref.: TQ 75 SE 7) is recorded c. 400m to the east of Senacre College although the date, circumstances and exact provenance is somewhat unclear. This find, which is now displayed in Maidstone Museum, has been provisionally dated between the Early Bronze Age and Late Bronze Age (2350BC to 701BC). Excavations carried out directly west of the assessment area within the grounds occupied by Kent Police Headquarters (SMR Ref.: TQ 75 SE 132), revealed the presence of a large stone lined feature suggestive of an agricultural pond (Archaeology South-East, 2001). Pottery and flint found within the shallow fill suggested a date between the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age (1000BC - 401BC).

#### 5.4 Iron Age

It is by the Iron Age that settlement patterns become more visible, both within the archaeological record and the physical landscape. Earthworks to south of the site (although outside of the assessment area) are believed to represent the remains of the Boughton Monchelsea *oppidum*<sup>3</sup> in addition to several similar undated earthworks (see below) that would have had a physical and visual impact on the surrounding landscape.

The Iron Age presence is also reflected within the archaeological record. In the early summer of 1999 the Oxford Archaeological Unit had the opportunity to revisit a site at Queen Elizabeth Square excavated in the late 80's by Kent Archaeological rescue Unit, c. 200m west of the proposed development area. Investigations in 1988 had revealed the presence of the possible terminal end of an enclosure ditch containing 'discarded domestic rubbish broadly (dating) about 50BC – AD50' (KARU 1988: 19), suggesting the presence of a 'farmstead of limited extent' (1988:19). Further investigations by Oxford Archaeological Unit in 1999 uncovered

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<sup>2</sup> The 'Medway Megaliths' are the only group of megaliths in eastern England and are thought to represent a ritual landscape similar to the Salisbury Plains. They are constructed from the same sarsen stone as Stonehenge and the Avebury circle. The majority of the Medway Megaliths are thought to represent Neolithic chambered long barrows.

<sup>3</sup> *Oppidum* – believed to comprise permanent settlements with a strong economic, political and religious functions

further evidence of Middle Iron Age activity (2001), as well as a continuing presence through and in to the Romano-British period (see below).

Excavations directly south of the proposed development carried out by Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS) in 2000 have shown that occupation continues through to the Late Iron Age with the presence of ditches, pits and post holes (2001:4.2)

## 5.5 Romano-British

The term Romano-British describes the Romanised culture of Britain under the rule of the Roman Empire, following the Claudian 'invasion' in AD43. For nearly 400 years Britain formed part of the Roman Empire, the civilisation of Roman Britain being the synthesis of the Roman and native cultures, although it is evident that trade links and communication between Rome and Britain existed prior to the 'Roman' period. The Roman political system '*clientela*' served as the model between Rome and her allies and negotiations that took place meant that alliances were forged, trade started to expand and the spread of cultural ideals occurred. These ideals are no more evident than within the infrastructure that started to develop all over Britain and Europe during the Roman period.

The predominant feature of infrastructure within Kent is arguably the extensive network of Roman roads. The Roman administration needed an established network of roads to connect administrative centres, towns and military posts to speed up the flow of trade, goods, communications and troops. Approximately 1km to the west of the proposed development area is the Roman road known as '*Stone Street*' that links Maidstone with Hastings and Lympne (KKC 2007:3.1), forming a junction with *Watling Street* further to the north at Rochester. Romano-British sites are located directly adjacent to *Stone Street* and within the assessment area. Locations for these sites are recorded on the Kent Sites and Monuments Record and provided in Figure 3.

Approximately 300m to the south west and directly adjacent to Stone Street (now known as Pested Bars Road) the former location for a Romano-British walled cemetery (SMR NO.: TQ 75 SE 2), now replaced by modern development, is recorded. The site was first excavated in 1842 by Taylor Smythe where he revealed a number of cremation burials including two stone tombs, one circular the other square. In 1996 an archaeological evaluation by Archaeology South East (1996) revealed two trenches of Roman date thought to be part of a field system, later identified as part of the previously recorded walled cemetery. In October 1998, prior to the existing development being constructed, the site was completely excavated (MoLAS 1998), whereby it was found that with the exception of a circular tomb, the remaining stone features had been robbed out after the 1842 excavation. A further four cremation burials were found to the north west of the walled cemetery, in association with fragments of glass vessels and pottery. Fragments of red and white painted wall plaster were also found. The date of finds associated with the cemetery range from the early 1st century AD to the mid 3rd century AD (SMR NO.: TQ 75 SE 89).

Further excavations in 1840 by Taylor Smyth in Eight Acres Field revealed the presence of Roman building foundations (SMR NO.: TQ 75 SE 19), although no further evidence of any occupation within this area survives as it now forms a sports ground and housing estate. That said, continued occupation to the east at Queen Elizabeth Square (see Iron Age above) was recorded by the Kent Archaeological Rescue Unit in 1998. A single ditch measuring 1.10-1.40m across and approx 0.70m deep was dug at the end of the first century or during the second centuries and that it formed part of either a boundary or small enclosure (SMR NO.:

TQ 75 SE 127). Excavations at Queen Elizabeth square have therefore revealed relatively continuous settlement from the Early Iron Age through the mid 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.

Within the wider landscape, two Roman villas are recorded near Boughton Monchelsea to the south with a further two in close proximity to Stone Street, before entering Maidstone (Pimp's Court and Barton Road).

### **5.6 Anglo-Saxon**

The place name of Maidstone can be traced to the Saxon charters of c.975 AD where we have records for *de maeides stana* and *maegdan stane*. The etymology for the name would appear to derive from 'the maidens' stone' (*Maegoastan*) or 'the people's' stone' (*Maegoastan*) suggested as representing a focal 'meeting' point marked by a megalithic monument (KCC 2005: 3.2).

Anglo-Saxon remains within the assessment area are limited to a single pit or post-hole found during an evaluation in advance of development (Archaeology South-East 1996). The feature contained pottery dating to c.450-700AD. In 1998 further evaluation and excavation work close to this pit uncovered further ditches containing pottery of possible Early Medieval or Late Iron Age date (MoLAS 1998).

### **5.7 Medieval**

Despite a rather extensive Medieval focus within Maidstone itself, the assessment area is relatively limited as far as this period is concerned. The early town of Maidstone appears to have grown up on the existing Roman road adjacent to the Len. By the middle of the 13<sup>th</sup> century the town had developed into the centre of trade and commerce within the area boasting at least three markets, and by the mid 14<sup>th</sup> century space was cleared for the construction of the Archbishops Palace and the College of All Saints.

A single 13<sup>th</sup> century lead seal-die (SMR NO.: TQ 75 SE 91) being recorded on the periphery of the historic garden associated with Gore Court.

### **5.8 Post-Medieval**

Continued expansion of Maidstone by the middle of the sixteenth century, further reinforced the town's position as the administrative centre of the county. As a result, the surrounding landscape which predominantly comprised a series of manorial estates was given over to agriculture and farming. Cartographic regression of the assessment area suggests that the assessment site was used as such and heavily wooded until the construction of the existing technical college.

### **5.9 Modern**

Modern development on the site is limited to the development of the school grounds. Constructed in the early 1960's the original development comprised the main building blocks within the northern area of the site and landscaped playing fields to the south. Over the course of the past 40 years small additions have been made including extended tarmac playing areas, temporary/mobile classrooms and extended parking areas.

### **5.10 Undated**

An undated former earthwork is recorded approximately 400m to the northwest of the proposed development area (SMR Ref.: TQ 75 SE 21). Forming a 'kite' shape enclosing approximately seven hectares the monument is believed to have possessed two simple

entrances along its south-western edge which was aligned perfectly parallel to and abutted the adjacent Roman road. The earthwork was excavated in 1927 prior to extensive housing being constructed, but no dating evidence is available. The monument is recorded on early Ordnance Survey maps detailed below.

Several undated field boundaries, probable remains of several tree boles and evidence for a small fire were found at Senacre College during an evaluation in April 2000 by Museum of London Archaeology Service. The site of this evaluation lies directly adjacent to the southern boundary of the proposed development area (SMR Ref.: TQ 75 SE 129).

### 5.11 Cartographic Sources and Map Regression

A map regression exercise carried out on the proposed development area has shown that the site was undeveloped up until the early 1960's when Senacre School was first constructed. Ordnance Survey and Tithe maps prior to this date show that the site was heavily wooded and known locally as Wrangleden Wood (Figs 5-8).

Early edition Ordnance Survey maps clearly show the presence of the undated earthwork mentioned above (Section 5.10), along with the marked location of the 'Burial Ground' or Roman walled cemetery (Figs 5-70

### 5.12 Aerial Photographs

A search was made of aerial photographs held by Kent County Council and the National Monuments Record. The earliest photograph dating to 1946 (Plate 1) shows the proposed development area as being heavily wooded. Known archaeological sites that would have been present at this time are not visible on this series of aerial photographs. The next series of photographs date to 1961 (Plate 2) and show that by this time, the construction of the school was almost complete. Machine marks visible within the surrounding playing fields suggest a certain degree of landscaping, most likely carried out to create level playing fields. Later aerial photographs show the school in use and little evidence to suggest the presence/survival of any possible archaeological deposits. A faint rectangular shadow can be seen adjacent to the southern boundary of the site on the 1990 edition (Plate 3), although it is more likely that this represents an existing football field.

## 6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

### 6.1 Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age

The potential for finding remains that date prior to the Iron Age is considered **moderate**. Recorded activity within the area immediately surrounding the proposed development site shows a good degree of preservation coupled with relatively good settlement patterns tested and recorded during the investigation of adjacent archaeological sites.

### 6.2 Iron Age

The potential for finding remains dating to the Iron Age is considered as **moderate**. As with the predating evidence the surrounding landscape offers the potential for surviving archaeological deposits dating to this period as is evident for investigations and finds within the surrounding area. In addition to this, the presence of undated earthworks and the Boughton Monchelsea *oppidum* within the assessment area provides the possibility that the surrounding landscape had important agricultural, social, economic and religious significance. The potential for associated field systems and/or further settlement sites within the vicinity should be expected.

### 6.3 Romano-British

Extensive settlement directly adjacent to the assessment site and within the surrounding area would tend to suggest that further archaeological remains associated with this period would be extant within undeveloped parcels of the landscape. The presence of villas and funerary monuments along with the location of an established Roman road with the immediate vicinity of the site, suggests that the potential for finding remains dating to the Romano-British period is considered as **high**.

### 6.4 Anglo-Saxon

Anglo-Saxon remains within the assessment area are limited to isolated pits, post-holes and ditches. Furthermore the preservation of earlier archaeological deposits on adjacent sites suggest that surrounding area was not extensively settled within the Anglo-Saxon period. The potential for finding remains dating to the Anglo-Saxon period is considered as **low-moderate**.

### 6.5 Medieval

Medieval settlement within the assessment area is limited to a single spot find. The presence of manorial estates and associated agricultural activity and woodland management, including track ways, field boundaries etc should not be ruled out. The potential for finding remains dating to the medieval period is therefore considered as **low-moderate**.

### 6.6 Post-Medieval

Evidence for post-medieval occupation in the area is likely to be similar to the medieval evidence noted above, with the possible increase in activity. The potential for finding remains dating to the post-medieval period is therefore considered as **low-moderate**.

## 7 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### 7.1 Existing Impacts

The search area has been largely arable fields, orchards and woodlands up until the late 1950's and early 1960 at which time extensive urban development was carried out, including the construction of the present day Senacre Technical College. Up until this point the impact on buried archaeological deposits would have been due to agricultural activities such as ploughing. That said, archaeological deposits on adjacent sites are known to survive at depths greater than 0.5m, and thus beyond the impact of deep ploughing techniques. The proposed development was heavily wooded until the tree clearance prior to the construction of the school. As playing fields were intended, it is unlikely that felling was adopted and that uprooting the trees was considered a necessity in order to provide level playing surfaces and prevent re-growth. Confirmation of such techniques can be seen on the 1961 aerial photograph where landscaping seems to have taken place. The impact of landscaping associated with the playing fields is therefore considered as **low**.

Extensive impact is expected within the northern area of the site surrounding the existing school. With the exception of a few mobile classrooms the majority of the building will most likely possess deep foundations. In addition to this a degree of land cutting has been carried out in order to provide horizontal construction levels (Plate 7). Drainage towards the southern extent of the building on site is known to be at least 4m below the existing ground level. No basements or below ground structures are known to exist within the school ground although small courtyard areas were incorporated into the initial footprint of the development and may provide isolated areas of survival (Plate 6). Similarly, concrete raft foundations and/or

suspended floors are considered a likely construction technique for such a building. The impact caused during the construction of the existing building is therefore considered as **low-moderate** and that undisturbed isolated pockets of the site may survive beneath the existing development.

## **7.2 Proposed Impacts**

At the time of preparing this archaeological assessment, the full extent of the proposed development was not known. However, it has been made clear that any future planning application will most likely comprise the demolition of all existing buildings followed by the construction of three hundred (+) domestic units along with associated access, parking and utilities. Areas of open green space are also considered, although the location of these has not been confirmed.

## **8 MITIGATION**

The purpose of this archaeological desk-based assessment was to provide an assessment of the contextual archaeological record, in order to determine the potential survival of archaeological deposits that may be impacted upon during any proposed construction works.

The assessment site has generally been shown to be within an area of **high** archaeological potential with **low-moderate** truncation (previous impact).

It is therefore recommended in this case that further archaeological assessment will be required and that an archaeological field evaluation comprising trial trenching should be carried out. This will provide an additional assessment of the nature, depth and level of survival of any archaeological deposits present within the extents of the site and used to further inform further mitigation if necessary.

## **9 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

### **9.1 Archive**

Subject to any contractual requirements on confidentiality, two copies of this desk-based assessment will be submitted to Kent County Council within 6 months of completion.

### **9.2 Reliability/limitations of sources**

The sources that were used in this assessment were, in general, of high quality. The majority of the information provided herewith has been gained from either published texts or archaeological 'grey' literature held at Kent County Council, and therefore considered as being extremely reliable.

### **9.3 Copyright**

Swale & Thames Survey Company and the author shall retain full copyright on the commissioned report, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, with all rights reserved, excepting that it hereby provides exclusive licence to Senacre School (and representatives) for the use of this document in all matters directly relating to the project.

## **10 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The author would like to thank Dr Paul Willkinson of Swale & Thames Survey Company for commissioning this report on behalf of Senacre Technical College. Special thanks are also offered to Adam Single, Archaeological Officer of Kent County Council and Andrew Mayfield,

Sites and Monuments Record Officer; Mr David Keenan (Head) and his staff at Senacre Technical College and the staff of Centre for Kentish Studies, Maidstone.

David Britchfield  
April 2007

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Centre for Kentish Studies, Kent County Council, Maidstone

Tithe Maps on CD-ROM, apportionments on microfilm:

Otham Tithe and Appointments 1839

Langley Tithe and Appointments 1839

Loose Tithe and Appointments 1839

Maidstone Tithe and Appointments 1839

Ordnance Survey

1<sup>st</sup> (1898) Edition 6" Kent Sheet TQ 42 SE

2<sup>nd</sup> (1909) Edition 6" Kent Sheet TQ 42 SE

3<sup>rd</sup> (1933) Edition 6" Kent Sheet TQ 42 SE

4<sup>th</sup> (1946) Edition 6" Kent Sheet TQ 42 SE

## APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Gazetteer of Archaeological Sites

Period	SMR Reference	Type	National Grid Reference	Description
Romano-British	TQ 75 SE 2	Monument	TQ 7765 5220	Site of walled <b>Romano-British cemetery</b> first excavated in 1842 by Taylor Smythe which he recorded as containing a number of cremation burials including two stone tombs, one circular the other square. In October 1998, prior to development, the site was completely excavated. It was found that apart from the circular tomb the remaining stone features had been robbed out after the 1842 excavation. A further four cremation burials were found to the NW of the walled cemetery. In association with the remains of the stone features were fragments of glass vessels and pottery. Fragments of red and white painted wall plaster were also found. The date of finds associated with the cemetery range from the early 1st century AD to the mid 3rd century AD.
Prehistoric	TQ 75 SE 3	Find Spot	TQ 7798 5218	Neolithic polished flint <b>axe</b>
Prehistoric(?)	TQ 75 SE 7	Find Spot	TQ 7844 5259	A bronze <b>palstave</b> decorated with 3 ribs below the stop-ridge, was found at an unknown date in a wood on the Sutton Road near the 'Blue Door' P.H. No further information on the date, circumstances or exact provenance of the find was gained locally. It is on display in Maidstone Museum
Romano-British	TQ 75 SE 19	Monument	TQ 7772 5262	Roman <b>foundations</b> and tiles found in 1840 by Taylor-Smythe in Eight Acres Field. Eight Acres, is now part sports ground, part housing estate (all property of Kent County Constabulary) and there is nothing to be seen.

Period	SMR Reference	Type	National Grid Reference	Description
Undated	TQ 75 SE 21	Monument	TQ 7729 5279	<b>Earthwork</b>
Prehistoric	TQ 75 SE 26	Find Spot	TQ 7820 5180	Polished Neolithic flint <b>axe</b>
Romano-British	TQ 75 SE 89	Monument	TQ 7780 5215	Excavation in 1998 identified <b>field drainage ditches</b> and a large LIA ditch and pottery
Medieval	TQ 75 SE 91	Find Spot	TQ 7900 5290	Circular lead <b>seal-die</b>
Romano-British	TQ 75 SE 127	Monument	TQ 77802 52563	Enclosure (?) <b>ditch</b> . Late 1st-E2ndC Roman ditch found during evaluation in 1998 prior to development.
Prehistoric	TQ 75 SE 128	Monument	TQ 7771 5267	Mid Iron Age to Early Roman (not later than 2nd century AD) <b>settlement</b> . The principle finds from the settlement were postholes, pits and a group of ditches. The postholes included two four-post structures. Finds recovered consisted of pottery, animal bone, possible metalworking slag and charred plant remains.
Romano-British				
Undated	TQ 75 SE 129	Monument	TQ 7787 5240	An archaeological field evaluation of five trenches at Senacre College found several undated <b>field boundaries</b> , the probable remains of several tree boles and evidence for a small fire

Period	SMR Reference	Type	National Grid Reference	Description
Anglo-Saxon	TQ 75 SE 130	Monument	TQ 7779 5216	Early Saxon <b>pit or post-hole</b> found during 1996 evaluation containing 32 sherds of pottery c.450-700AD. In 1998 evaluation and excavation work close to this pit uncovered further <b>ditches</b> containing pottery of possible early medieval or late iron age date.
Prehistoric	TQ 75 SE 132	Monument	TQ 776 524	A spread of grey-brown silty clay-sand found during an evaluation at Kent Police Headquarters in 2001. The stone-rich fill of this feature contained one non-descript flint core and a quantity of pottery sherds, provisionally given a Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age date. The feature was labeled as a late prehistoric <b>agricultural pond</b> , the stone "lining" of which was to prevent piercing of the waterproof base by domestic
Prehistoric	TQ 75 SE 133	Find Spot	TQ 7759 5271	During 1999 excavation evidence of Neolithic <b>activity</b> was found. A small quantity of flints, flakes (some retouched), hammerstones and end scrapers were recovered. No features were found.

## **Appendix 2 – Archaeological Specification (KCC 2007)**

### **SPECIFICATION FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT AT THE SENACRE TECHNOLOGY COLLEGE SITE, MAIDSTONE IN KENT**

#### **1. Summary**

- 1.1 This specification sets out the requirements for an archaeological assessment of the site of the Senacre Technology College site, Sutton Road in Maidstone.
- 1.2 The assessment will comprise three elements:
  - A desktop study of the site together with an examination of the area in its wider context
  - A walkover of the site to identify and record heritage and landscape features within the area of the proposed work
  - An assessment of the archaeological potential revealed and the likely impact of any future development at the site.
- 1.3 The site measures in total around 8ha and is occupied by a secondary education college which, it is proposed, may be merged with the nearby Oldborough School. One of the sites would become that of the combined school with the other being sold for redevelopment.
- 1.4 The site stands on the southern edge of Maidstone between Park Wood and Shepway on the west side of Sutton Road at NGR 577993 152646.
- 1.5 Development details have not been made available but the contractor will need to study the proposed development plans as part of the assessment.

#### **2 Geological and topographical background**

- 2.1 According to the maps of the British Geological Survey, the site lies on a geology of Hythe Beds on a north facing slope overlooking Maidstone and the Medway Valley.

#### **3 Historical and Archaeological background**

- 3.1 A number of neolithic finds have been made in the wider landscape suggesting a degree of activity at that time. Later, the area appears to have been the site of an iron age farming settlement with evidence for contemporary structures coming from investigations immediately west of the Senacre School site. This occupation appears to have been continuous into the Roman period with building foundations found in the early nineteenth century close to the school. This and other Roman sites nearby are clustered around the route of the Roman road that linked Maidstone with Hastings and Lympne. The contemporary Scheduled Ancient Monument of the Boughton Monchelsea oppidum is around a kilometre to the south and an undated earthwork to the west may be connected with this. In later times, there is Saxon activity

recorded just to the south of the Senacre site and medieval and post- medieval buildings are recorded further south, focused on the Loose Stream.

- 3.2 From a brief examination of superseded Ordnance Survey maps, it appears that the Senacre site was undeveloped woodland prior to the construction of the school. It is unclear as to the past development damage on the buried archaeological potential caused by the construction of the schools themselves although there is likely to have been localised impact from existing foundations and there is a possibility that wider landscaping work will have had a degree of impact too
- 3.3 Further information is available from the Kent SMR.

#### **4. Objectives**

- 4.1 The overall objectives of the archaeological desk based assessment and walkover survey are to identify and assess the archaeological potential of the site by collating and analysing known information along with recording archaeological remains and historic landscape features in the field. Importance is to be placed on producing an account of the historic development of the site and in assessing the archaeological impact of future development.
- 4.2 The desk based assessment itself will comprise a collection and analysis of known historical and archaeological information regarding the site and its environs.
- 4.3 The comprehensive site walkover has the objective of mapping, photographing and describing visible archaeological and heritage features encountered across the site as well as informing the assessment of past and possible future development impacts.
- 4.4 This information will be used to produce a gazetteer of archaeological and heritage features on site and to augment and inform the desk based study and later management decisions.
- 4.5 The project is then to assess the results of the desktop study and the site inspection to provide information on the nature of archaeology and heritage on site. This assessment would also aim to identify any buried archaeological potential.
- 4.6 The study will also provide an assessment of the likely impacts on heritage remains that would be caused by any future intensive development.

#### **5. Method: Desk based study**

- 5.1 In undertaking the assessment the following sources should be studied:
  - a) entries in the Kent Sites and Monuments Records (SMRs) within a 1km radius of the centre of the site.

- b) the schedules of Ancient Monuments. Listed Buildings and Historic Parks and Gardens
  - c) all Ordnance Survey maps (19th and 20th century) at 1:10000, 1:10560, 1:2500 and 1:1250 scales
  - a) tithe maps (and apportionments), Ordnance Surveyors' sketches, estate maps and any other relevant historical maps within the County Record Offices, or readily available elsewhere
  - b) aerial photographs held by the Kent County Council Heritage Group in Maidstone.
  - c) estate and other records the Kent County archives at Maidstone.
  - d) information held by the Public Record Office and the NMR
    - i) authoritative works covering place names and field names in and around the study area
    - j) geological and topographical maps of the study area
    - l) previous archaeological evaluation and excavation records relating to sites in and immediately adjacent to the study area. Geotechnical reports from the site itself.
    - m) such other published works, reports, theses and other information relevant to the desk based study including information from the comprehensive site inspection and the Kent Historic Towns Survey for Maidstone.
- 5.2 As part of the desktop study, a brief evaluation of available documentary records relating to the owners of the site should be undertaken and a list of potentially relevant material (including its location) should be prepared. Where this information relates to historic landuse in the area then it should be fully assessed and incorporated into the report.
- 5.3 The report should follow the general specification for reports set out in section 9 below but the following requirements should be noted specifically:
- a) all information is to be summarised on maps contained within the report at an appropriate and consistent scale.
  - b) previous disturbance to the ground within the study area identified on OS and other maps should be plotted on an overlay at an appropriate scale and clearly annotated in respect of source.
  - c) all information is to be clearly referenced to source.

- d) all sources which have been studied are to be fully listed, whether or not useful information was obtained.

## 6. Method: Comprehensive site inspection

- 6.1 The inspection will primarily involve a systematic archaeological examination of the entire site. The inspection will comprise a survey to at least RCHME Level 3 Field Survey standard, as is appropriate for proposed development schemes.
- 6.4 The survey team (expected to be appropriately qualified or experienced in examining the range of features likely to be encountered) will:
  - a) locate, photograph, describe and map archaeological features known from information in this specification,
  - b) attempt to locate and, if successful, photograph, describe and map other archaeological features suggested by the findings of the desktop assessment,
  - c) systematically walk and inspect the site to identify, photograph, describe and map any previously unknown archaeological features **and the extents of modern landscaping and other disturbance.**
- 6.5 Earthwork or masonry remains are to be plotted at an appropriate scale to be agreed with the County Archaeologist. Normally 1:2500 would be considered an appropriate scale.
- 6.6 Concentrations of building material, pottery, slag and any other significant archaeological indicators are to be noted and plotted as well as any features exposed in stream sections.
- 6.7 Note should be made of the current state of preservation of archaeological features.
- 6.8 Features and/or areas likely to be of high environmental archaeology potential should be indicated.
- 6.9 A photographic record should be made of the context of any significant features.
- 6.10 The report should follow the general specification for reports set out in section 9 below but the following requirements should be noted specifically:
  - a) all information is to be summarised on maps contained within the report at an appropriate and consistent scale to be agreed with the County Archaeologist.
  - b) all information is to be clearly referenced to source.

- c) each feature is to be entered into a gazetteer of the site. Entries will contain a basic description, photograph or sketch, location information, an assessment of value and future management proposals (see below).

## **7. Impact Assessment**

- 7.1 Using the results of the desktop assessment and walkover survey, the contractor will assess the likely impact of future development on the site through examination of the development plans and any engineering and geotechnical information available.
- 7.2 Assessment should include an overlay plan of the proposed development incorporating known heritage features as well as discussion of foundation schemes, landscaping impacts, services and the impact on the settings of any nearby designated historic sites.

## **8. Recording, Synthesis and Archive**

- 8.1 Recording methodology is dealt with under the individual sections above but it is emphasised that all sources studied are to be recorded.
- 8.2 All archaeological features identified by way of the different methodologies indicated above should be plotted on to master copies of the base plans at a consistent and appropriate scale. The origin of the evidence should be clearly indicated, *eg* from SMR, from site inspection.
- 8.3 All artefacts recovered during any survey work are the property of the Landowner unless otherwise specifically assigned.
- 8.4 Information from the four elements of the assessment should be combined in to a single structured document concluding with heritage management proposals based on the results of the three other elements.
- 8.5 Finds should be suitably bagged, boxed and marked in accordance with *UKIC Conservation Guidelines No.2*, and deposited in a suitable repository after discussion with the County Archaeologist.
- 8.6 Original site drawings, the photographic record and other written records should be regarded as part of the site archive. On completion of the project the archaeological contractor will agree with the County Archaeologist where they might be most suitably deposited.

## **9. Reporting**

- 9.1 Notwithstanding special requirements for different categories of work the report should include the following:
  - a) a statement of the objectives and methods of the study

- b) identification of features of archaeological interest, together with brief justification of such identification. The non-statutory criteria listed by English Heritage for the Monuments Protection Programme should be used to assess the archaeological importance of any archaeological remains discovered.
  - c) the anticipated degree of survival of any archaeological site or area so identified
  - d) summary maps at an appropriate scale
  - e) a series of maps of the study area at an appropriate and consistent scale on which are plotted basic data related to the study in question.
  - f) a comprehensive bibliography of sources of information consulted, including those with no useful information
  - g) consideration of the evidence assembled within a wider landscape setting
  - h) a critical review of the effectiveness of the methodology employed
  - i) a 100 word summary for inclusion in the KCC annual report to *Archaeologia Cantiana*
- 9.2 The archaeological contractor is to provide the County Archaeologist with a representative selection of transparencies illustrating the historic environment of the site and the operations of the investigation. These will be deposited with the County SMR and will be used for presentations on aspects of the archaeology of Kent.
- 9.3 Throughout the study programme, the archaeological contractor is to keep the County Archaeologist informed with verbal and where, appropriate written reports as work progresses.
- 9.4 The report will be submitted to the County Archaeologist in digital format as well as hard copy. The digital copy will be supplied in .rtf format or in .pdf format either on a PC-formatted floppy disk, on a PC CD-ROM or by email to [paul.cuming@kent.gov.uk](mailto:paul.cuming@kent.gov.uk). Whichever software is used the digital files must be supplied in a PC readable format.
- 9.7 The archaeological contractor is to include with their report a completed copy of the Kent County Sites and Monuments Report Form (see appendix 1).
- 10. General**
- 10.1 The following statutory provisions and codes of practice are to be adhered to where relevant:
- a) all statutory provisions and by-laws relating to the work in question, especially the Health and Safety at Work *etc* Act 1974 and applicable ordinances relating to work carried out near water.

- b) the Institute of Field Archaeologists Code of Conduct
  - c) the Institute of Field Archaeologists Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology
  - d) the Country Code
- 10.2 The archaeological contractor's staff will be suitably qualified academically and with the necessary relevant experience for the study. This is to include experience of identifying and interpreting heritage features in industrial environments and experience of mitigating development impact on the same.
- 10.3 The archaeological contractor is to allow any project records to be inspected and examined at any reasonable time, during or after the work, by the County Archaeologist or any designated representative of Maidstone Borough Council.

**Kent County Council Heritage Conservation Unit**  
**April 2007**

**Appendix 3 - Kent County Council SMR Summary Form**

<b>Site Name:</b> <i>Senacre Technical College</i>	
<b>Site Address:</b> <i>Sutton Road, Maidstone, Kent</i>	
<b>Summary:</b> <i>Swale &amp; Thames Survey Company (SWAT) have been commissioned to carry out an archaeological desk-based assessment of a proposed development at Senacre Technical College, Sutton Road, Maidstone, Kent. The assessment was undertaken in accordance with a specification provided by Heritage &amp; Conservation (Kent County Council) in advance of a planning application for demolition of the existing college and construction of a new housing development.</i>	
<i>The site is located within an area of high archaeological potential associated with the prehistoric and Romano-British periods, in particular potential Iron Age settlements with strong economic, political and religious functions together with a Roman funerary monument, villas and a Roman road. This evidence is reviewed and it is recommended in this case that further archaeological assessment will be required and that an archaeological field evaluation comprising trial trenching should be carried out. This will provide an additional assessment of the nature, depth and level of survival of any archaeological deposits present within the extents of the site and used to inform further mitigation as necessary.</i>	
<b>District/Unitary:</b> <i>Maidstone</i>	<b>Parish:</b> <i>Maidstone</i>
<b>Nature of Development:</b> <i>Demolition and domestic housing</i>	
<b>Period(s):</b> <i>Prehistoric - Modern</i>	
<b>NGR (centre of site : 8 figures):</b> <i>577993 152646</i> <b>(NB if large or linear site give multiple NGRs)</b>	
<b>Type of archaeological work (delete)</b> <i>Documentary study</i>	
<b>Date of Recording:</b> <i>April 2007</i>	
<b>Unit undertaking recording:</b> <i>SWAT</i>	
<b>Geology:</b> <i>Hythe Beds</i>	
<b>Title and author of accompanying report:</b>  <i>Britchfield D (2007) Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment in Advance of Development at Senacre Technical College, Sutton Road, Maidstone, Kent. SWAT Report</i>	
<b>Summary of fieldwork results (begin with earliest period first, add NGRs where appropriate)</b>  <i>Not applicable at this stage</i>  <p style="text-align: right;"><b>(cont on separate sheet if necessary)</b></p>	
<b>Likelihood of surviving archaeological remains on-site:</b>  <i>Moderate - High</i>	
<b>Location of archive/finds:</b>	
<b>Contact at Unit:</b> <i>Dr P Wilkinson</i>	<b>Date:</b> <i>30<sup>th</sup> April 2007</i>

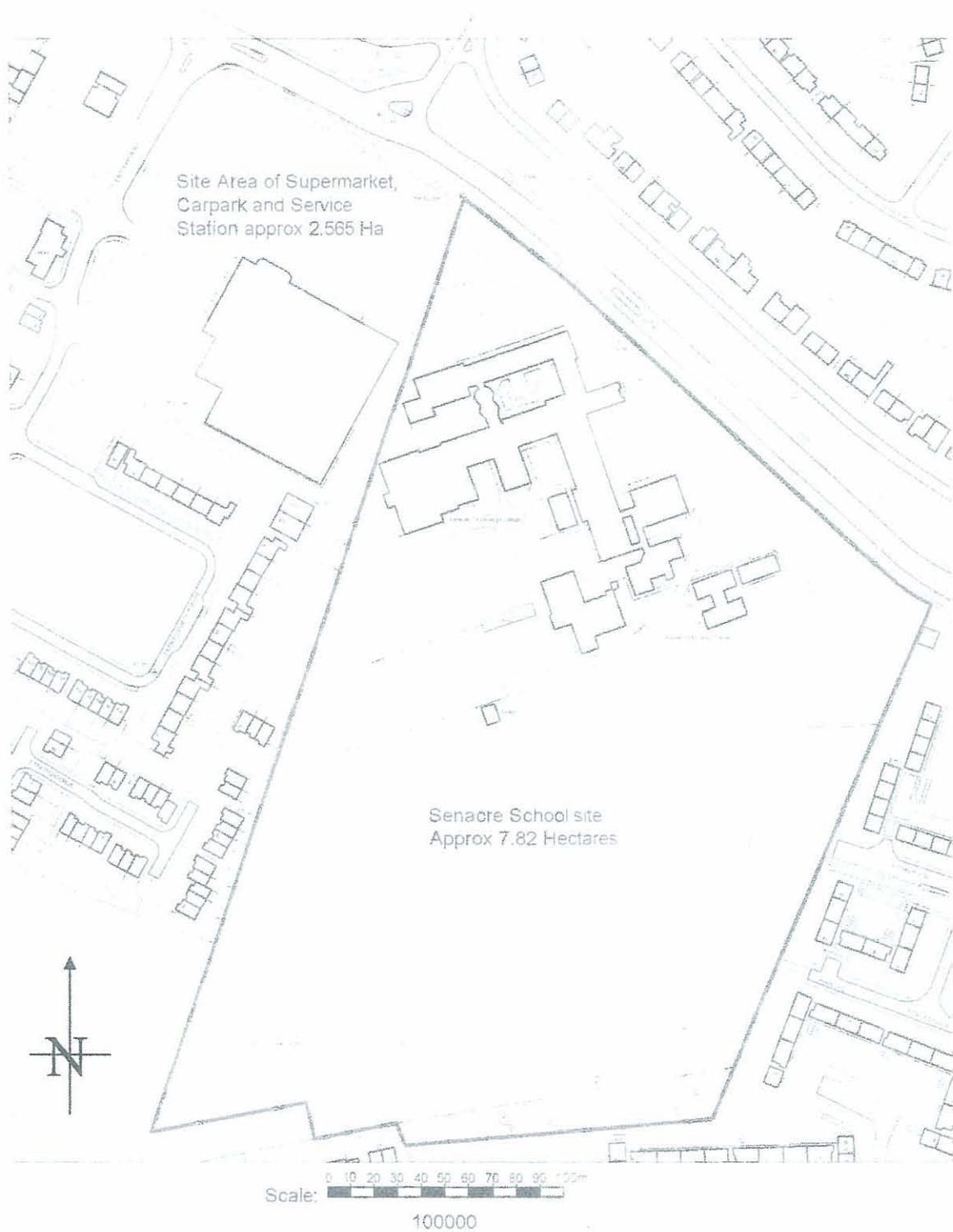
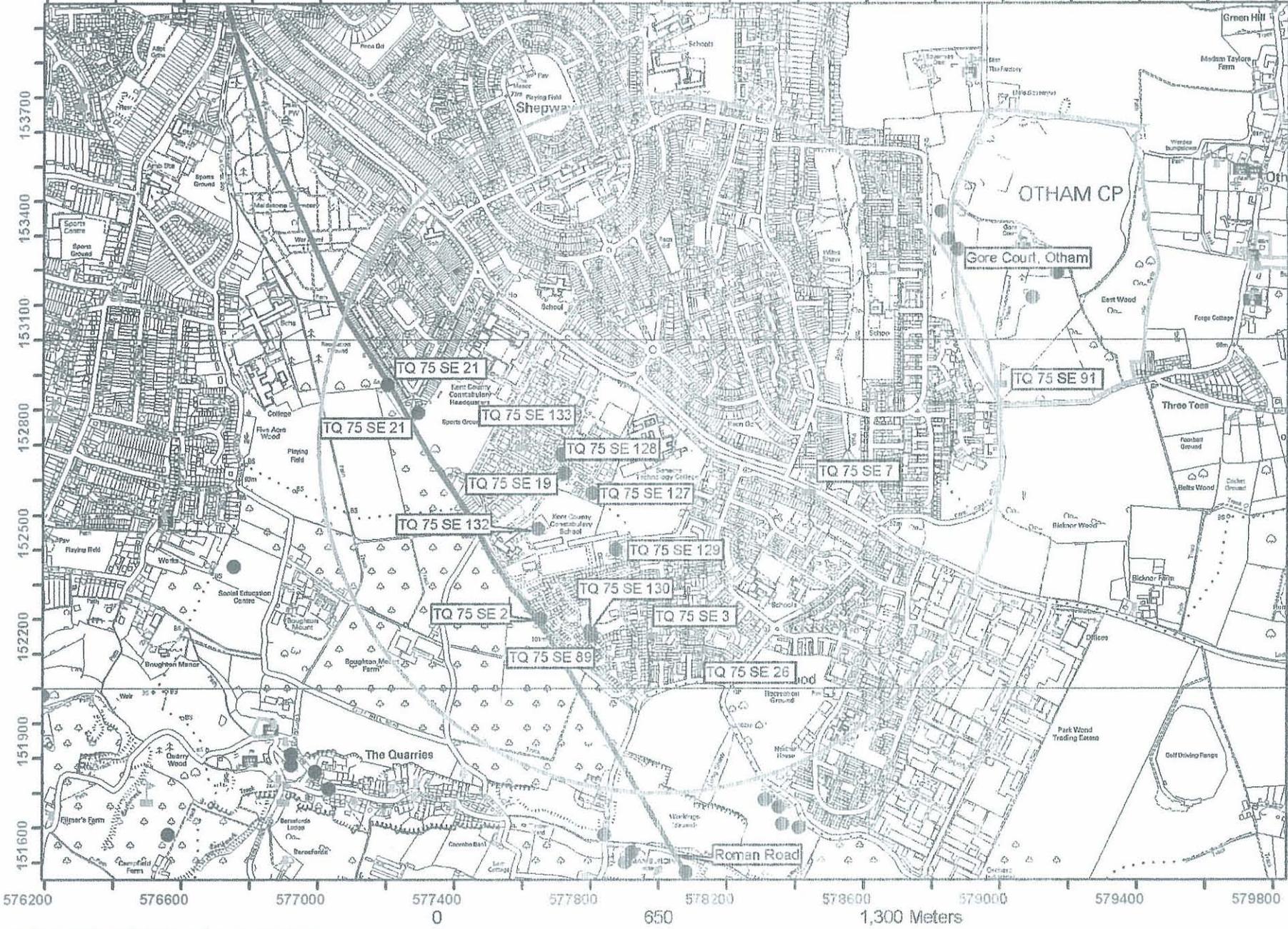


Figure 1 – Existing Site Plan

# Kent Sites and Monuments Record

# Senacre School



Scale:  
1:15,000

- Legend**
- Desig.LB (point)
  - Building
  - Findspot
  - Listed Building
  - Landscape
  - Maritime
  - Monument
  - Place

Produced by the KCC Heritage Conservation Group

This map is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office (C) Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. 180019238. 2007





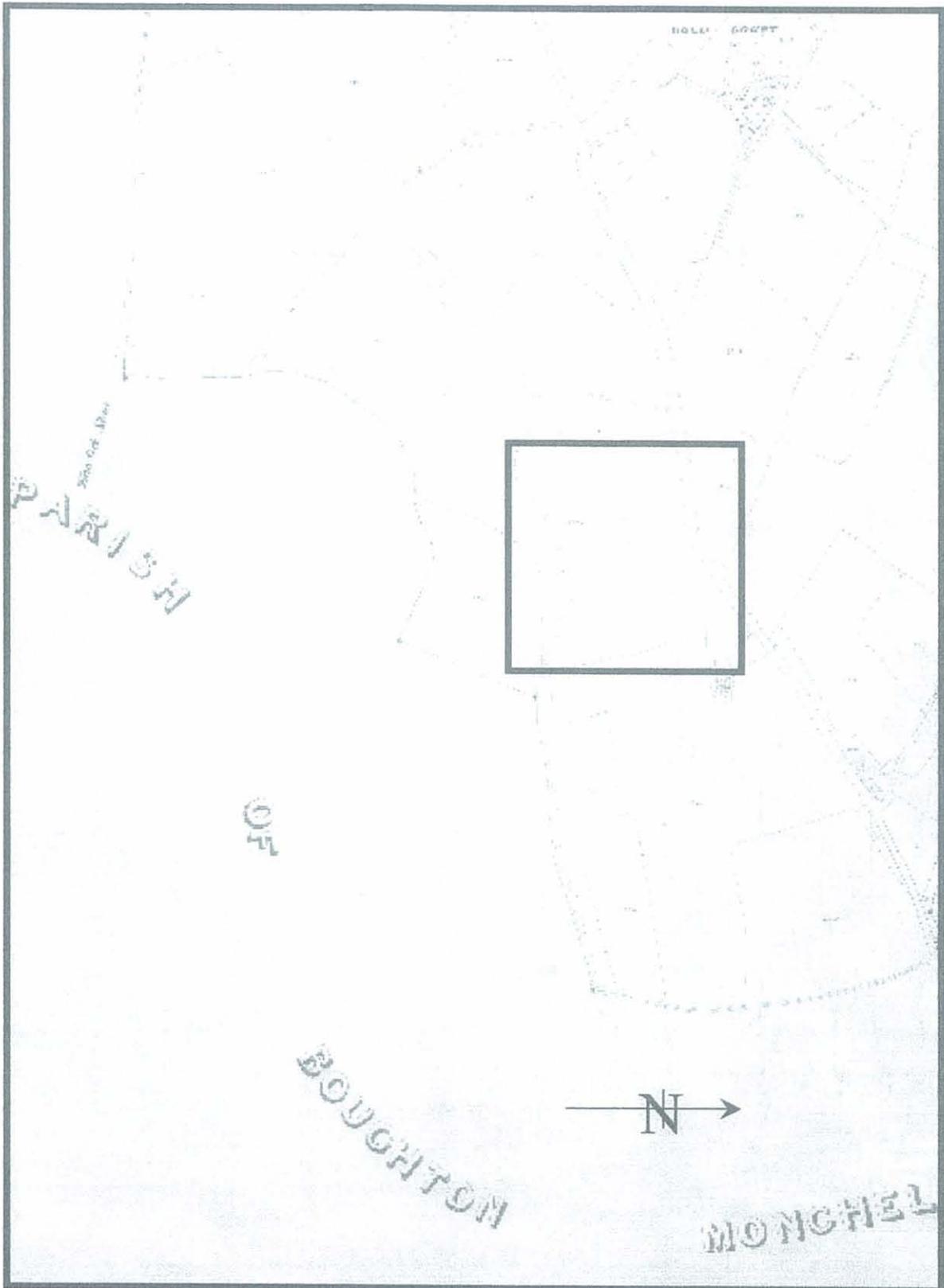


Figure 4 – Maidstone Tithe and Appointments 1839

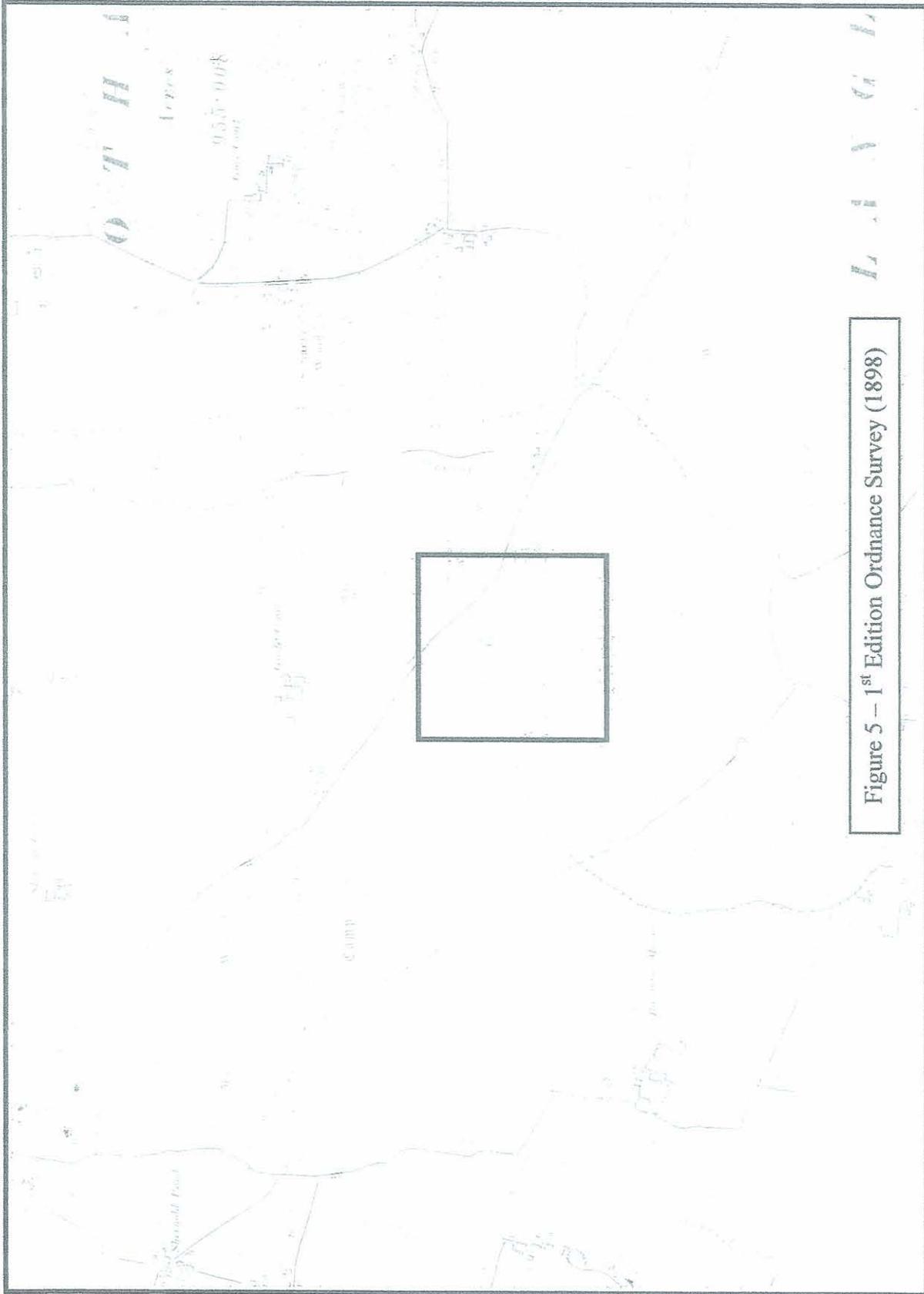


Figure 5 – 1<sup>st</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey (1898)

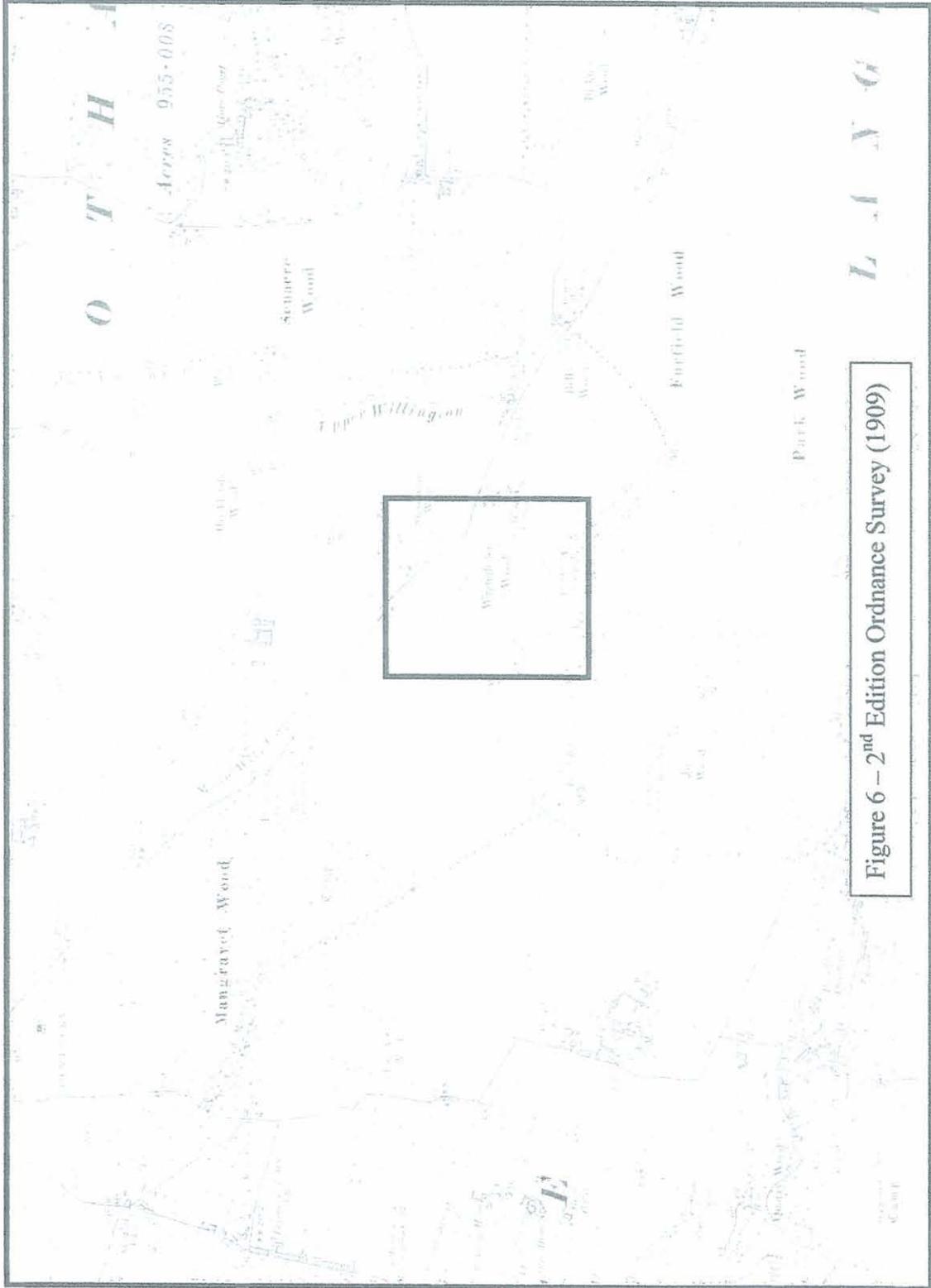


Figure 6 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey (1909)

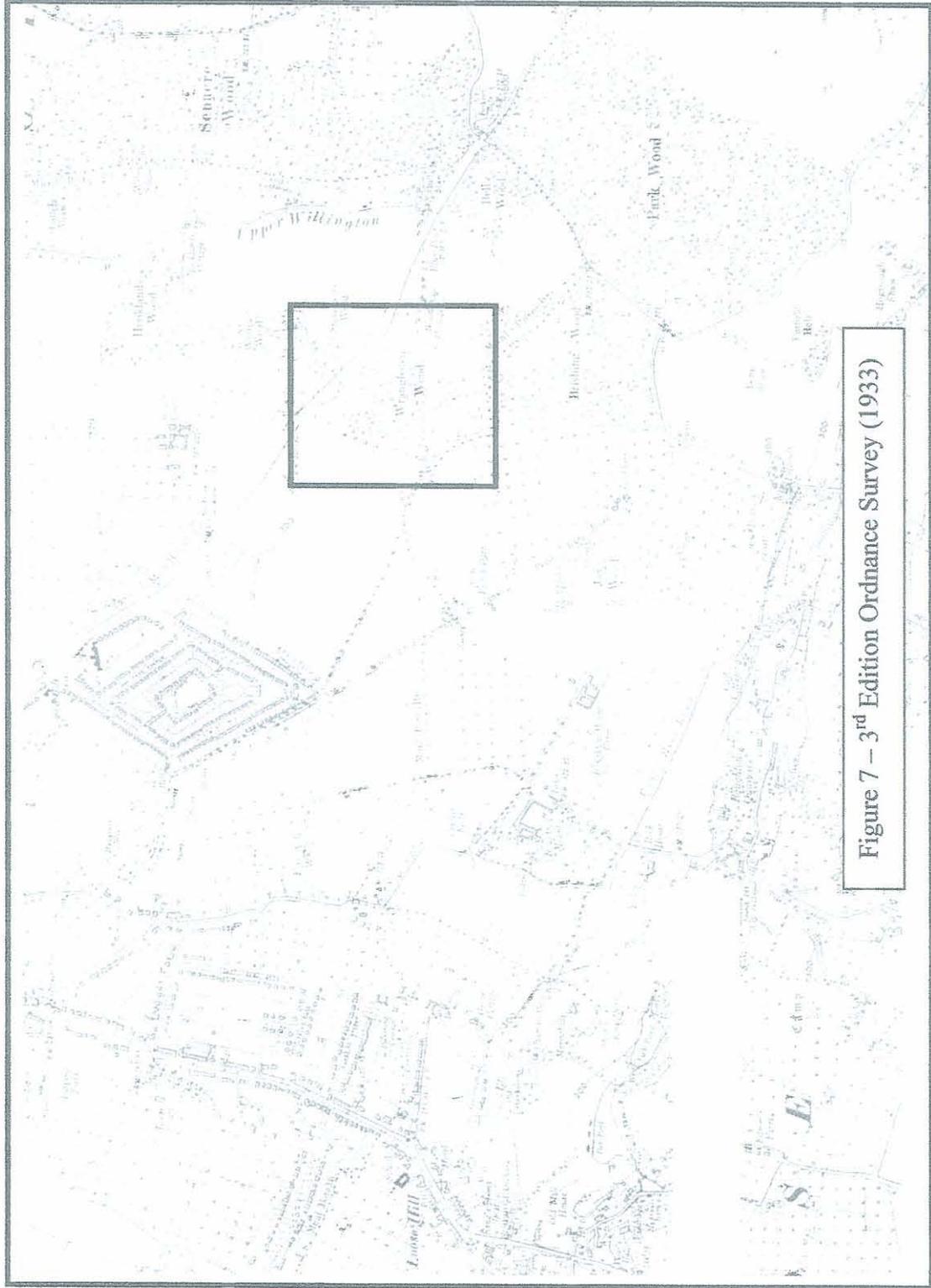


Figure 7 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey (1933)

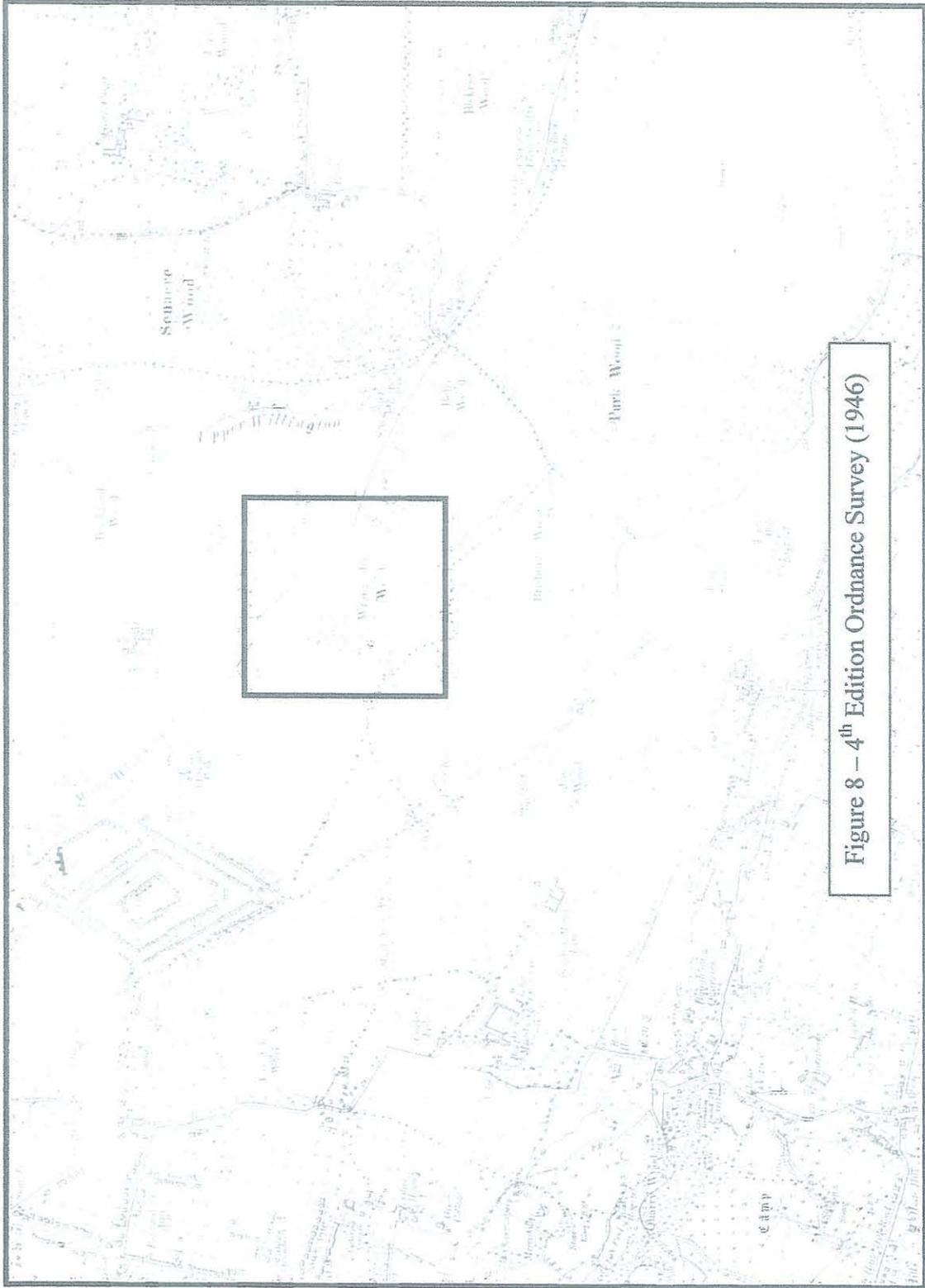


Figure 8 - 4<sup>th</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey (1946)

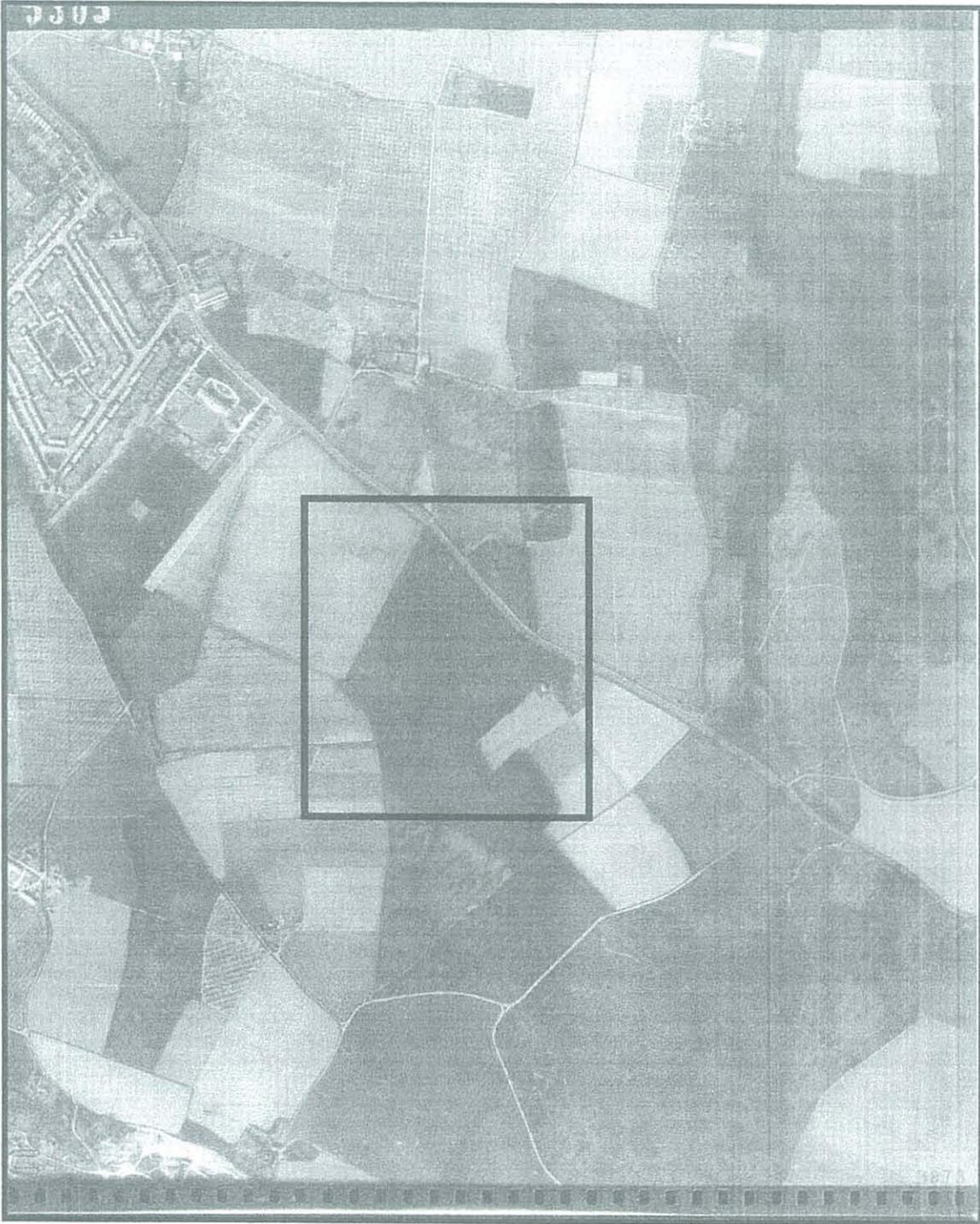


Plate 1 – Aerial Photograph 1946



Plate 2 -- Aerial Photograph 1961



Plate 3 – Aerial Photograph 1990

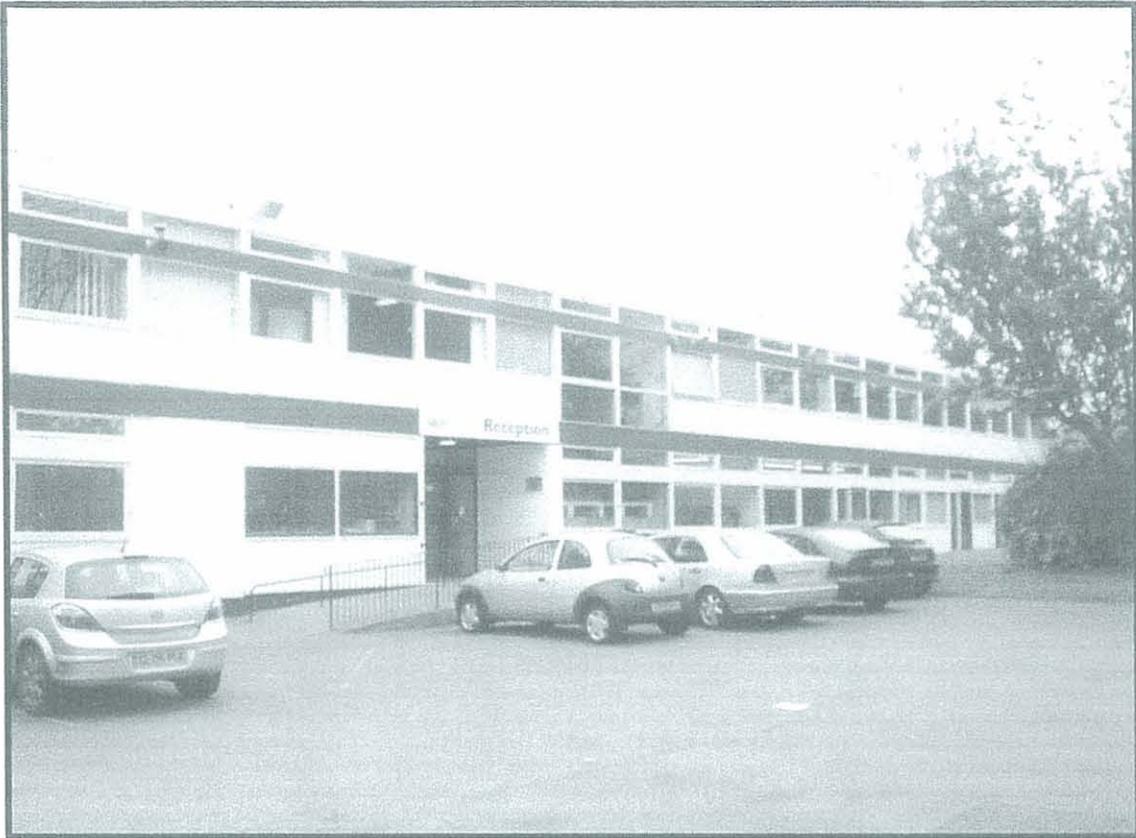


Plate 4 – Entrance to Senacre technical College (facing south)



Plate 5 – View from the southern most extent of the playing fields facing north



Plate 6 – Inner courtyards with the footprint of the existing school



Plate 7 – cuttings created to provide level playing fields and surfaces