

## **Archaeological evaluation of a site at Victoria House, Canterbury Road, Westgate, Kent.**

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**Site at Victoria House,  
Canterbury Road, Westgate, Kent**

**Archaeological Evaluation**

**NGR: 633728 120077**

**Site Code: VHW/EV/08**

(Planning Application Number: TH/07/0005)

**Report for  
Jenner (Contractors) Ltd**

**May 2008**

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## **Archaeological Investigations on Land in the grounds of Victoria House, Canterbury Road, Westgate, Kent**

**NGR: 633728 120077**

**Site Code: VHW/EV/08**

### **SUMMARY**

*Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) carried out an archaeological evaluation on land in the grounds of Victoria House, Canterbury Road, Westgate, Kent, in February 2008. A planning application (PAN:THA/07/0005) for the construction of a new residential development, along with associated access, car parking and services at the above site was submitted to Thanet District Council (TDC) whereby Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation (KCCHC), on behalf of Thanet District Council requested that an Archaeological Evaluation be undertaken in order to determine the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains. The work was carried out in accordance with the requirements set out within an Archaeological Specification (KCC 2008) and in discussion with the Archaeological Officer, Kent County Council.*

*The archaeological evaluation has been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the Specification. Despite the archaeological potential of the surrounding area, coupled with good preservation of natural chalk and brickearth surviving on site, no buried archaeological remains were present within the excavated trenches.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) was commissioned by Jenner (Contractors) Ltd to carry out an archaeological evaluation at the above site. The work was carried out in accordance with the requirements set out within an Archaeological Specification (KCC 2008) and in discussion with the Archaeological Officer, Kent County Council. Initial phases of the evaluation were carried out on 10<sup>th</sup> Feb 2008.

### **SITE DESCRIPTION AND TOPOGRAPHY**

The application site is located on the north side of Canterbury Road West, where it is joined by George V Avenue and Maynard Avenue. Langham Close bounds the site to the east and the railway line runs along its northern edge. The National Grid Reference for the centre of the site is NGR 633728 120077. The underlying geology of the site consists of Upper Chalk.

### **PLANNING BACKGROUND**

A planning application (PAN:THA/07/0005) for the construction of a new residential development along with associated access, car parking and services at the above site was

submitted to Thanet District Council (TDC). Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation (KCCHC), on behalf of Thanet District Council, requested that an *Archaeological Evaluation* be undertaken in order to determine the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains. The following condition was attached to the planning consent:

**AR1** *No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written specification and timetable which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.*

Requirements for the archaeological evaluation comprised trial trenching targeting a minimum of 5% of the impact area, with trenches designed to establish whether there are any archaeological deposits at the site that may be affected by the proposed development. The results from this evaluation will be used to inform KCCHC and TDC of any further archaeological mitigation measures that may be necessary in connection with the development proposals.

#### **ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

The area surrounding Victoria House is rich in cropmarks showing the [possible] presence of archaeological remains probably of Prehistoric and/or Roman date. Evidence of this has been identified 360m south-east of the Development Site and includes rectangular enclosures and the possible foundations of a building (KCC SMR Refs.: TR 36 NW 207). Numerous Prehistoric and Roman remains are known to the north, towards the coastline.

Archaeological trial trenching carried out by Thanet Archaeological Trust in 2002 connected with the construction of the neighbouring 60 bed social care centre (TH/02/0033) found two likely Prehistoric ditches. A subsequent watching brief confirmed this.

In addition to cropmark evidence the Kent County Council Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) and the Thanet SMR held by the Trust SMR hold additional information of sites in the vicinity of the Development Site.

#### **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The purpose of the evaluation, as set out with the Archaeological Specification (KCCHC 2008) was to:

- i) establish whether there are any archaeological deposits at the site that may be affected by the proposed development. The excavation is thus to ascertain the extent,

- depth below ground surface, depth of deposit, character, significance and condition of any archaeological remains on site (2008:3.1).
- ii) establish the extent to which previous development on the site has affected archaeological deposits (2008:3.2).

Particular issues that should be addressed by the evaluation include:

- Assessing the likely impact of the proposed development on the archaeological remains using the results of the fieldwork
- Assessing the potential of the site to contain nationally important remains
- Establishing whether the ditches encountered to the east continue into the site and better determining their date, form and function
- Establishing the degree of Roman and medieval activity on the site
- Establishing the degree of prehistoric activity on the site
- Assessing the nature, date and condition of the features marked as bunkers on the architect's plan and contributing to the environmental and landscape history of the area (2008:3.2).

Additional aims were to:

- iii) gather sufficient information to enable an assessment of the potential and significance of any archaeological remains to be made and the impact development will have upon them.
- iv) enable an informed decision to be made regarding the future treatment of any archaeological remains and consider any appropriate mitigatory measures either in advance of and/or during development.

## METHODOLOGY

Trial trenching was carried out on 10<sup>th</sup> Feb 2008, with the excavation of three trenches each measuring 1.5m in width and between 15m/18m in length (see below). Trench locations were agreed prior to the excavation between KCCHC and SWAT. Each trench was initially scanned for surface finds prior to excavation. Excavation was carried out using a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, removing the overburden to the top of the first recognisable archaeological horizon, or if not revealing the natural geology. The work was carried out under the constant supervision of an experienced archaeologist. Trenches were subsequently hand-cleaned which failed to reveal any archaeological features. All investigative work was carried out in accordance with the specification.

A single context recording system was used to record the natural deposits. A full list is presented in Appendix 1. Layers and fills are recorded (**100**). Context numbers were assigned to all deposits for recoding purposes; these are used in the report (in **bold**). Each number has

been attributed to a specific trench with the primary number(s) relating to specific trenches (i.e. Trench 1, 100+, Trench 2, 200+ etc.)

## MONITORING

Curatorial monitoring was carried out during the course of the evaluation.

## RESULTS

A common stratigraphic sequence was recognised across the site comprising topsoil/turf overburden (101) (201) overlying subsoil (102) (202), beneath which the natural geology comprised Upper Chalk or Brickearth(103) (203). The topsoil/overburden consisted of friable dark grey brown silty clay with occasional to moderate inclusions of sub-rounded – angular flints. A clear line of horizon gave way to subsoil comprising mid orange brown slightly sandy clay brickearth overlying Brickearth and/or natural chalk where mechanical excavation ceased and careful examination and investigation for truncating features was carried out. The depth of the overlying layer varied, with the depth of the natural geology being located c.0.31-0.43m below the existing ground level. Appendix 2 provides a stratigraphic sequence for all trenches.

### Trench 1

(15 x 1.5m)

Trench 1 was located within the southern extent of the site (Pl.2). Aligned approximately northwest-southeast, this trench was positioned to identify and confirm the impact caused during development of the southern most extent of the proposed development.

No archaeological features or finds were present within this trench.

### Trench 2

(15 x 1.5m)

Trench 2 was located in the centre of the site (Pl.2). It was aligned approximately northeast-southwest, this trench was positioned to identify any buried World War II air-raid shelters and confirm the impact caused during development of the central area of the proposed development.

No World War II remains or archaeological features or finds were present within this trench.

### **Trench 3**

(18 x 1.5m)

Trench 3 was located within the northern extent of the site (Pl.2). Aligned approximately northeast-southwest, this trench was positioned to identify and confirm the impact caused during development of the northern most extent of the proposed development.

No archaeological features or finds were present within this trench.

### **FINDS**

No archaeological finds were recovered during the course of the evaluation.

### **DISCUSSION**

The evaluation carried out on land at the site of Victoria House did not encounter any archaeological remains, suggesting that none survive within the immediate vicinity of the site.

### **CONCLUSION**

The archaeological evaluation has been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the Specification. Despite the archaeological potential of the surrounding area, coupled with good preservation of natural chalk surviving on site, no buried archaeological remains were present within the excavated trenches suggesting that the proposed development presents little or no impact upon the local archaeological resource.

**This evaluation has therefore assessed the archaeological potential of land intended for development. The results from this work will be used to aid and inform the Archaeological Officer (KCCHC) of any further archaeological mitigations measures that may be necessary in connection with the development proposals.**

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

SWAT would like to thank Jenner (Contractors) Ltd for commissioning the project. Thanks are also extended to Heritage and Conservation (Kent County Council) for their advice and assistance. Paul Wilkinson carried out the archaeological fieldwork, illustrations were produced by James Madden. This report was edited and collated by Paul Wilkinson.

## REFERENCES

IFA (1999) *Standards and Guidance for Field Archaeological Evaluations*

Kent County Council (KCCHC) (2008) *Specification for an Archaeological and Underground Bunker Evaluation at Victoria House, Canterbury Road, in Westgate in Kent*. Kent County Council Heritage & Conservation

## CONTENTS OF SITE ARCHIVE

Correspondence

Photographs: 12 Digital photographs SWAT Film nos. 07/214-20.  
6 colour prints. 6 colour 35mm transparencies.

Photocopies of Ordnance Survey and other maps two photocopies.

Drawings: One A3 permatrace site drawing, comprising trench plans and associated sections.

Finds: None

Context Register including: Context Register (1), Drawings Register (1), Photographic Register (1), Levels Sheets (1), Environmental Samples Register (x) and Context Sheets (6)

Location of the archive: Temporarily held by SWAT Archaeology until provision is made by Kent County Council for an adequate storage facility.

## APPENDIX 1 - Context Summary

Site at Victoria House, Canterbury Road, Westgate, Kent

Site Code: VHW/EV/08

	Context No.	Stratigraphic Extents	Description
Trench 1	(101)	0.00-0.12m	<b>Turf/topsoil.</b> Friable dark grey brown silty clay with occasional to moderate inclusions of sub-rounded – angular flints.
	(102)	0.12-0.51m	<b>Subsoil.</b> Mid orange brown slightly sandy clay (Brickearth)
	(103)	0.51m+	<b>Natural.</b> Upper Chalk
Trench 2	(201)	0.00-0.12m	<b>Turf/topsoil.</b> Friable dark grey brown silty clay with occasional to moderate inclusions of sub-rounded – angular flints.
	(202)	0.12-0.43m	<b>Subsoil.</b> Mid orange brown slightly sandy clay (Brickearth)
	(203)	0.43m+	<b>Natural.</b> Upper Chalk

## APPENDIX 1 - Context Summary/cont.

Site at Victoria House, Canterbury Road, Westgate, Kent

Site Code: VHW/EV/08

	Context No.	Stratigraphic Extents	Description
Trench 3	(301)	0.00-0.13m	<b>Turf/topsoil.</b> Friable dark grey brown silty clay with occasional to moderate inclusions of sub-rounded – angular flints.
	(302)	0.12-0.50m	<b>Subsoil.</b> Mid orange brown slightly sandy clay (Brickearth)
	(303)	0.50m+	<b>Natural.</b> Upper Chalk

## APPENDIX 2 – Kent County Council SMR Summary Form

<b>Site Name:</b> Site at Victoria House, <b>SWAT Site Code:</b> VHW/EV/08	
<b>Site Address:</b> Canterbury Road, Westgate, Kent	
<b>Summary:</b>	
<p>Swale &amp; Thames Survey Company (SWAT) carried out an archaeological evaluation on land at Victoria House, Canterbury Road, Westgate, Kent, in Feb. 2008. A planning application (PAN: TH/07/0005) for the construction of a new residential development, along with associated access, car parking and services at the above site was submitted to Thanet District Council (TDC) whereby Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation (KCCHC), on behalf of Thanet District Council requested that an Archaeological Evaluation be undertaken in order to determine the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains. The work was carried out in accordance with the requirements set out within an Archaeological Specification (KCC 2008) and in discussion with the Archaeological Officer, Kent County Council.</p>	
<p>The archaeological evaluation did not encounter any archaeological remains, suggesting that none survive within the immediate vicinity of the site. The archaeological evaluation has been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the Specification. Despite the archaeological potential of the surrounding area, coupled with good preservation of natural chalk surviving on site, no buried archaeological remains were present within the excavated trenches.</p>	
District/Unitary: Thanet	Parish: Westgate
<b>Period(s):</b> <b>Tentative:</b> NA	
<b>NGR (centre of site : 8 figures):</b> (NB if large or linear site give multiple NGRs): 633728 120077	
<b>Type of archaeological work (delete)</b> <i>Evaluation</i>	
<b>Date of Recording:</b> 10 <sup>th</sup> Feb. 2008	
<b>Unit undertaking recording:</b> Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT)	
<b>Geology:</b> Head Brickearth/Upper Chalk	
<b>Title and author of accompanying report:</b>	
Wilkinson. P. (2008) Land at Victoria House, Canterbury Road, Westgate, Kent: Archaeological Evaluation	
<b>Summary of fieldwork results (begin with earliest period first, add NGRs where appropriate)</b>	
As above (cont. on attached sheet)	
<b>Location of archive/finds:</b> SWAT	
Contact at Unit: Paul Wilkinson	Date: 10 <sup>th</sup> May 2008

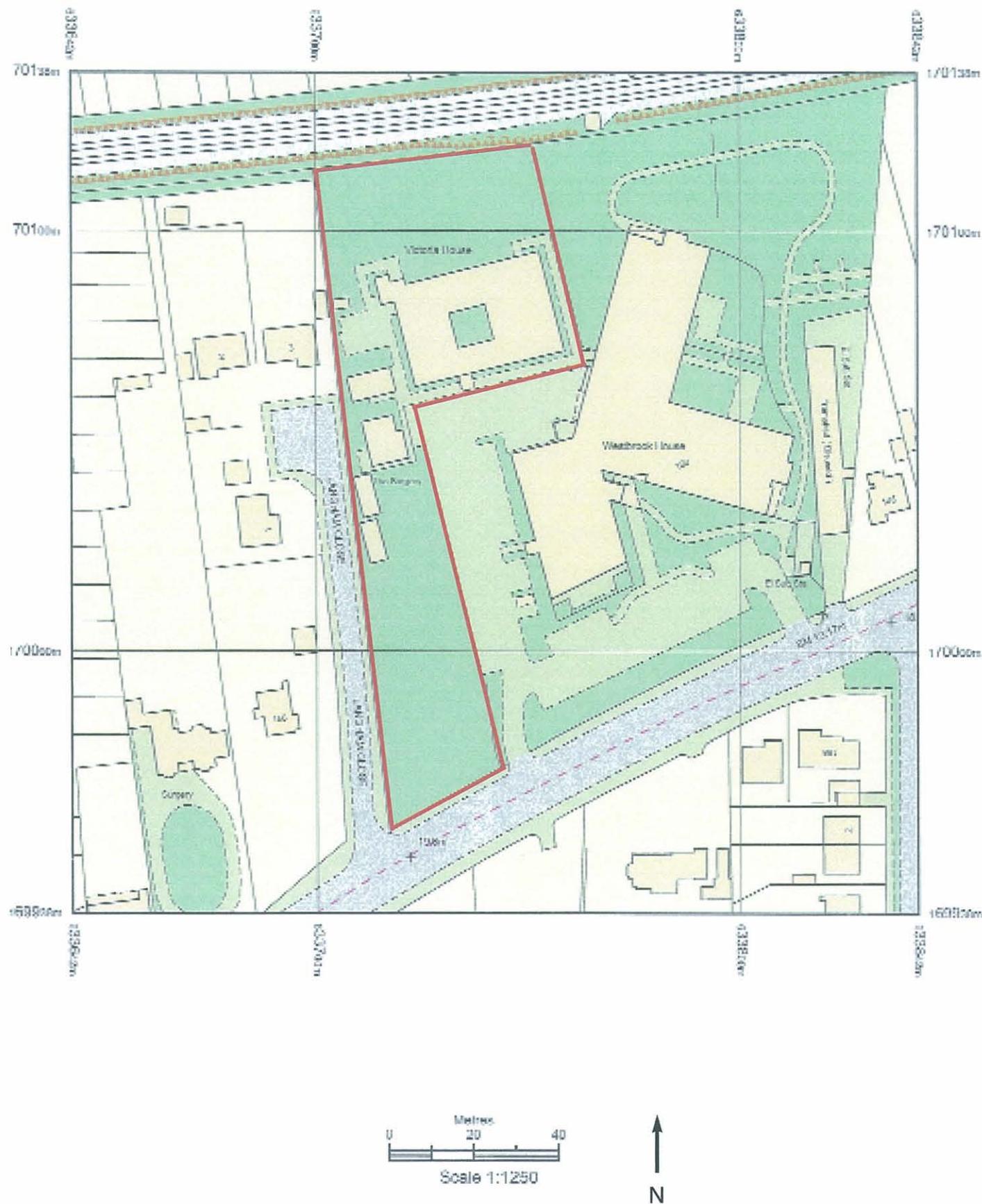


Figure 1. Location of site of proposed development at Victoria House, Canterbury Road, Westgate, Kent. (NGR 633728 120077).

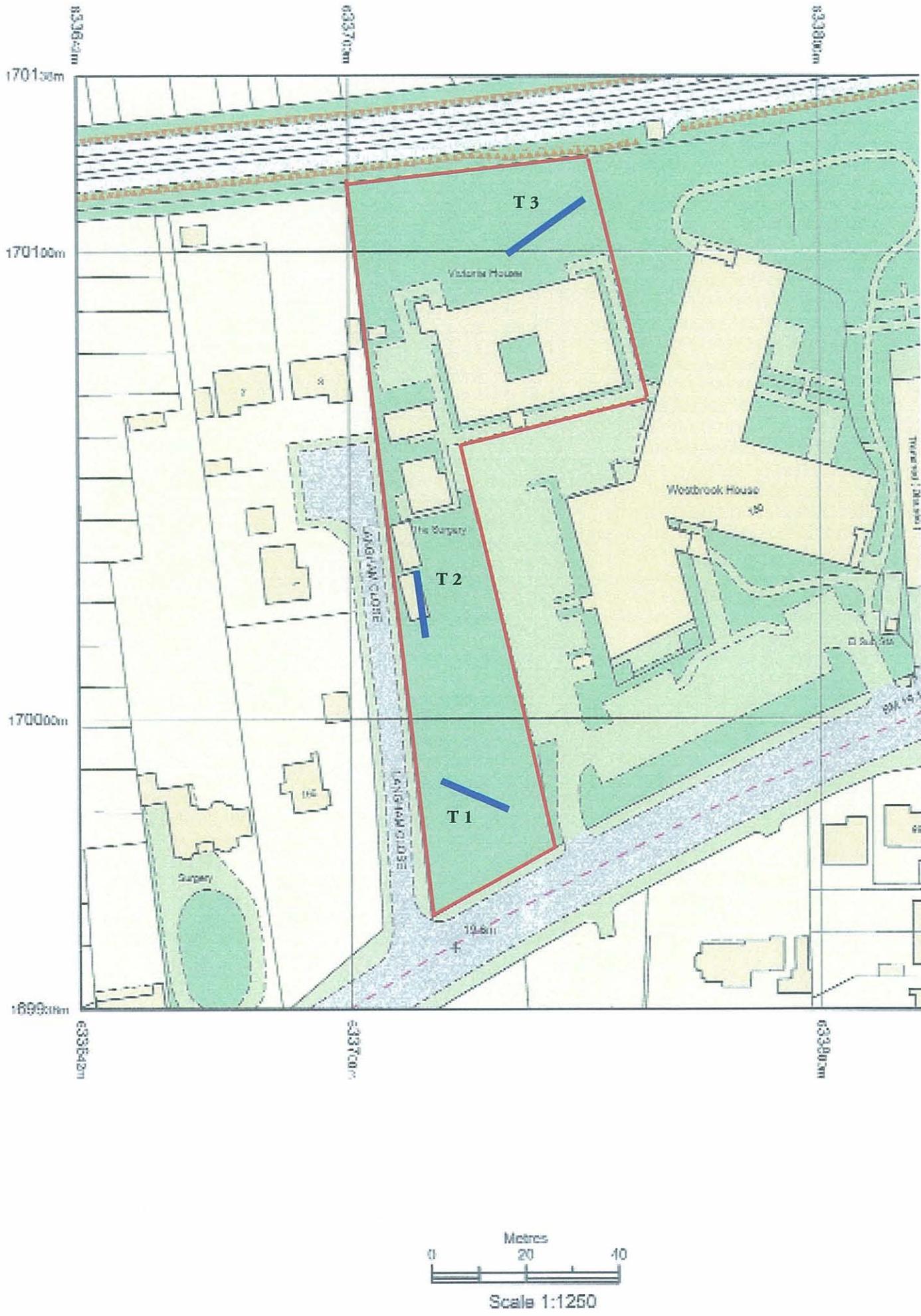


Figure 2. Location of evaluation trenches within the Development Site.