



# **Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment at St Andrews Close, Whitstable, Kent *October 2009***

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**St Andrew's Close, Whitstable, Kent**

**Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment**

**NGR: TR 1115 6525**

Report for  
**Orbit Housing Group Ltd**

**October 2009**

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## **Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment in Advance of Development at St Andrew's Close, Whitstable, Kent**

**NGR: TR**

### **1 SUMMARY**

*Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT) have been commissioned to carry out an archaeological desk-based assessment of a proposed development at St Andrew's Close, Whitstable, Kent, in advance of a planning application for a new housing development.*

*The site is located on the southern periphery of the coastal town of Whitstable (figure 1). Situated on the east edge of Duncan Down (a village green comprising of woodland, scrubland, grassland and a stream), St Andrew's Close lies 280 metres north-west of the Thanet Way. The archaeological archive for this area has been reviewed and it is recommended in this case that further archaeological assessment will be required and that an archaeological Watching Brief 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 and immediate vicinity of the site to be developed and used to inform further mitigation if 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 decisions regarding archaeological mitigation for proposed development and associated planning applications.

## **2.2 The Proposed Development**

The proposed development will comprise of the construction of 5 domestic dwellings including access, services and parking facilities. At the time of preparing this report the site layout had been proposed (Figure 2).

## **2.3 Projects Constraints**

There were no known constraints associated with this project.

## **2.4 Geology and Topography**

The British Geological Society shows that the geology of Whitstable consists mainly of London Clay (which covers most of North Kent), though the western area of the town is built on the low-lying marshland resulting from The Swale outflow. The proposed development site however, is situated on the eastern slope of a hill known as Duncan Down and is 25m above sea level.

There has been alteration to the local topography in the form of landscaping associated with a local housing to the north and west of the site. The landscape to the south and east, remains farmland (plate 1). The topography of the proposed development site (an area measuring over 0.08 hectares) has been altered for the construction of the present car parking area (plates 2 and 3). However, study of the site during a site visit (5 Oct) suggests that the topographic disturbance would seem to be negligible.

## **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 Orbit Housing Group Ltd in order to supplement a planning application for the construction of domestic housing.



### **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 Archaeologists (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)

## **4 METHODOLOGY**

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

#### *4.1.1 Archaeological databases*

The Urban Archaeological Database (UAD) for the Canterbury district, held by Heritage Gateway provides an accurate insight into catalogued sites and finds within both the proposed development area and the surrounding environs of Whitstable. The Archaeology Data Service Online Catalogue (ADS) and the local Historic Environment Record (HER) held at Kent County Council were also used. The search was carried out within a 1km radius of the proposed development site (25 Sept 2009). A full listing of the relevant UAD and HER data is included in Appendix 1. The Portable Antiquities Scheme Database (PAS) was to be used as an additional source as the information contained within is not always transferred to the local HER. However, the PAS database was offline during the writing of this report.

#### *4.1.2 Historical documents*

Historical documents, 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 was not available due to the closure of the Beane Institute, Canterbury (for redevelopment).

#### *4.1.4 Aerial photographs*

Access to the collection of aerial photographs held by the Beane Institute, Canterbury was not available as the institution is closed for redevelopment.

#### 4.1.5 Geotechnical information

To date, no known 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, research frameworks and Websites are considered appropriate to this type of study and have been included within this assessment where necessary.

## 5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

### 5.1 Introduction

|                |                       |                             |
|----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 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 | 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*

The Archaeological record for Whitstable and it's environs suggests that this area of coastline contains evidence of human activity from the earliest archaeological period, the Palaeolithic. The later prehistoric periods, primarily the Bronze Age and the Iron Age are also present and occupation within in the area becomes a permanent feature from the Romano-British period onwards. Charters indicate that salt production and coastal trade existed during the Anglo-Saxon period and Whitstable is first recorded in the Domesday Book (AD 1086) under the name Witenestaple. The area contained three medieval manors: at Seasalter, Northwood and Swalecliffe. Seasalter and Swalecliffe manors were owned by the church whilst the manor at Northwood was run by noblemen on behalf of the king. The name of the area evolved into Whitstaple by 1226, finally evolving to Whitstable by 1610.

The presence of the archaeological record (figure 3) within the area surrounding St Andrew's Close reflects the latter archaeological and historical periods in the form of standing buildings or the site of. However, it would not be surprising to discover hitherto unknown archaeology within the confines of the proposed development site. This section of the assessment will focus on the archaeological and historical development of this area, placing it within a local 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.

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

No scheduled monuments or listed buildings are recorded within the confines of the proposed development site at St Andrew's Close.

## **5.3 Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age**

The Palaeolithic represents the earliest phases of human activity in the British Isles, up to the end of the last Ice Age. Palaeolithic material found near Whitstable comprises of findspots at Studd Hill, Hampton and Herne Bay. Further along the coast at Reculver is a larger deposit of materials from this period (Wymer J. 1999). However, there is no record of material from this period being found within the assessment area.

The Mesolithic period reflects a society of hunter-gatherers active after the last ice age. Archaeological evidence from this period within the Whitstable area is sparse and comprises of a scatter of flint artefacts east of Convict's Wood, several flint 'Thames picks' from the beach at Tankerton and a log boat found within the mudflats at Seasalter in 1970. Again however, there is no record of material from this period within the assessment area.

The Neolithic period, the beginning of a sedentary lifestyle based on agriculture and animal husbandry is represented within the area by two possible occupation sites, the first c. 1km south of Chestfield, though this could also be Bronze Age in date, the second, south-east of Radfall Corner (Rady 1992). Despite the scattered presence of Neolithic archaeology within the environs of Whitstable, there is no evidence for Neolithic activity within the assessment area or the proposed development site.

The Bronze Age, a period of large migrations from the continent and more complex social developments on a domestic, industrial and ceremonial level is represented within the Whitstable area by a possible burial mound c. 1km south of Chestfield (Rady 1992). A further site that yielded a 'founders' hoard' of bronze metal work and associated features was also recorded at Bogshole Lane, Broomfield (Allen T. 1999). Again, despite the scattered presence of Bronze Age archaeology within the environs of Whitstable, there is no evidence for activities from this period within the assessment area.

## **5.4 Iron Age**

Kent, is by definition a county with a strong Iron Age presence with Canterbury being the site of the capital of the local tribe, the Cantiaci. The late Iron Age settlement of the Whitstable area is reflected by dispersed settlement and artefact findspots. The most extensive and concentrated of which was found at the former Sunset Caravan Park located on the west slope of Borstal Hill, overlooking Seasalter. This large occupation site was established in the late Bronze Age and had a continuous occupation throughout the Iron Age and into the early Roman period. Archaeological features comprised of dwellings, hearths, pits and other features associated with occupation and industry (Allen T and Willson J. 1999). Records also indicate further Iron Age sites c.4.2km west of St Andrew's Close, immediately adjacent to Owl's Hatch Road, south of Greenhill (Rady 1992) and 1.1km to the south-west on Wraike Hill, c.1km west on Borstal Hill (Allen T. 1999). The Kent HER also records a gold coin (*stater*) found on the 'Long Rock' beach at Swalecliffe (TR16NW1009). There is however, no record of Iron Age archaeology within the assessment area or within the proposed development site, though it is possible that archaeology from this period could exist.

## 5.5 Romano-British

The Romano-British period (R-B) is the term given to the Romanised culture of Britain under the rule of the Roman Empire, following the Claudian invasion in AD 43, Britain then formed part of the Roman Empire for nearly 400 years.

The predominant feature of the Roman infrastructure within Kent is arguably the extensive network of Roman roads connecting administrative centres, towns and military posts, increasing the flow of trade, goods, communications and troops. Canterbury or *Durovernum Cantiacorum*, a major town of the Roman province, with a multitude of roads radiating from it, was the economic focus of the area and would have influenced the industrial and settlement pattern of the Whitstable area. Some 11 km to the east is the Roman fort at Reculver (*Regulbium*), one of a number of forts established along the Kentish coast. This military establishment would also have had some influence in the Whitstable area.

South of Herne Bay are two possible R-B settlements, the first at Greenhill, the second at Strode Farm (Rady 1992). Recent road works within the town centre near the Cumberland Hotel have yielded Roman building material from a potentially substantial building (Cross, pers comm). The Kent HER records a ceramic oil lamp found on the seafront 300m west of Lower Island (TR16NW1) and a scatter of pottery off the coast in Tankerton Bay. The Kent HER also has one record (TR16NW22) for the R-B period in the assessment area, that of a 'cellar' or sunken featured building of unknown use 550m south-east of Mill Strood Farm.

## 5.6 Anglo-Saxon

Historical charters record the Anglo-Saxon period within the Whitstable area as comprising of salt production and other economic activities. In Domesday, Whitstable or *Witenestaple* is one of several well established, late Anglo-Saxon settlements in this area; others being Swalecliffe (*Soaneclive*), Northwood (*Nortone*) and Blean (*Blehem*). Although there is historic documentation to support the existence of the Anglo-Saxon period in the Whitstable area, the archaeological record is almost absent. An evaluation excavation during construction of the Thanet way recorded a mid-late Anglo-Saxon site c. 700 m south-west of Eddington (Rady 1992). There is however, no Anglo-Saxon archaeology recorded within the assessment area.

## 5.7 Medieval

From Domesday and other historical sources the medieval period of Whitstable is represented by several small manors; notably those at Seasalter, Swalecliffe and Northwood. Archaeological evidence for the medieval period in the Whitstable area is however, very sparse, though the settlement is centred around All Saint's Church. The Kent HER lists the Seasalter oysterbeds (TR06NE1000) and the Whitstable oyster fisheries (TR16NW1047) as medieval in origin and a possible medieval occupation site was noted 1 km east Chestfield during archaeological evaluation ahead of the construction of the Thanet Way (Rady 1992).

## 5.8 Post-Medieval

The Post Medieval period within the assessment area is better represented. There are several HER records that list either buildings or other structures to this period (see appendix



1) and they mainly comprise of Windmills, either standing or 'the site of'. None of these however, are within the immediate vicinity of the proposed development site.

### **5.9 Modern**

Modern development within the assessment area has been limited to domestic housing. The south-west boundary of the site is flanked by Duncan Down, an area used as a communal park and is designated a village green (Plate 4).

### **5.10 Undated**

There is just the one HER record (TR16NW96), a windmill, that falls within the assessment area.

### **5.11 Cartographic Sources and Map Regression**

As stated above, a map regression exercise a full map regression exercise was not available due to the closure of the Beane Institute, Canterbury (for redevelopment).

### **5.12 Aerial Photographs**

See above.

## **6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL**

### **6.1 Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age**

The potential for finding remains that date prior to the Iron Age within the confines of the proposed development site is considered **low**.

### **6.2 Iron Age**

The potential for finding remains dating to the Iron Age within the proposed development is considered **moderate** as the archaeological record of the surrounding landscape offers the potential for surviving archaeological deposits dating to this period as is evident from the settlements found on the periphery of Whitstable.

### **6.3 Romano-British**

The presence of a 'structure' within the assessment area and the continued occupation of several late Iron Age sites into the early Roman period suggests that further archaeological remains could extend into the boundary of the proposed development site. The potential is therefore to be considered as **moderate**.

### **6.4 Anglo-Saxon**

Although Anglo-Saxon archaeology within the assessment area has not been recorded there is always the potential for finding remains dating to the Anglo-Saxon period. However, the potential is considered as **low**.

### **6.5 Medieval**

The Medieval archaeology would also seem to be limited as there are very few records for this period on the UAD and the HER. The potential for finding remains dating to the medieval period is therefore considered as **low**.

## **6.6 Post-Medieval**

Evidence for post-medieval occupation and industry in the area is abundant. However, there is no record of post-medieval archaeology within the proposed development site. The potential for finding remains dating to the post-medieval period is therefore considered as **low**.

## **7 IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

### **7.1 Existing Impacts**

The search area is a mix of arable fields, a village green (comprising woodland, grassland and scrubland) and housing. The majority of the housing in the immediate vicinity is pre-war. The impact on buried archaeological deposits up to the construction of the local housing would have been due to agricultural activities such as ploughing. And would have been **low-moderate**. However, the construction of the present parking area and existing services may have had a more damaging effect. The impact is considered as **low-moderate**.

Extensive impact is to be expected within the development area once construction begins. The excavation of footings and the installation of services will be the main cause of this impact and it is therefore considered as **moderate-high**.

### **7.2 Proposed Impacts**

At the time of preparing this archaeological assessment, the extent of the proposed development was for the construction of 5 domestic dwellings along with associated access, parking and utilities.

## **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 maybe impacted upon during any proposed construction works.

The assessment has generally shown that the area to be developed is within an area of **low-moderate** archaeological potential.

It is therefore recommended in this case that further archaeological assessment will be required and that an archaeological evaluation 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 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 Canterbury City 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 Canterbury City Council and Kent County Council, and therefore considered as being 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. All rights are reserved, excepting that it hereby provides exclusive licence to Orbit Housing Group Ltd (and representatives) for the use of this document in all matters directly relating to the project.

### **10 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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Simon P Holmes BA (Hons) MA  
Oct 2009

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## Appendix 1 – Gazetteer of Archaeological Sites

| Period     | HER Reference | Type          | National Grid Reference | Description                                |
|------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------------|--|
| Mesolithic | TR16SW27      | Site          | TR13196460              | Flint scatter.                             |
| Mesolithic | TR16NW1010    | Site/Findspot | TR1267                  | 'Thames' picks and an antler pick.         |
| Mesolithic | TR06NE1001    | Findspot      | TR0865                  | Log boat.                                  |
| Neolithic  | TR16SW31      | Barrow        | TR13166448              | Possible round barrow near Convict's Wood. |
| Bronze Age | TR06SE1031    | Barrow        | TR0841663670            | Possible round barrow near Yorkletts.      |
| Iron Age   | TR16NW1009    | Site/Findspot | TR1368                  | Gold 'Gallo-Belgic Stater.                 |

| Period         | HER Reference | Type          | National Grid Reference | Description                                   |
|----------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------------|---|
| Romano-British | TR16NW22      | Monument      | TR1265                  | 'Cellar' of possible Romano-British building. |
| Romano-British | TR16NW1       | Findspot      | TR1066                  | Ceramic oil lamp.                             |
| Romano-British | TR16NW1013    | Site/Findspot | TR1068                  | Scatter of Roman pottery.                     |
| Medieval       | TR06NE1000    | Site          |                         | Seasalter oyster beds.                        |
| Medieval       | TR16NW1047    | Site          | TR1024266903            | Whitstable oyster fisheries.                  |
| Post-Medieval  | TR16NW86      | Monument      |                         | Windmill.                                     |

---

| Period        | HER Reference | Type     | National Grid Reference | Description               |
|---------------|---------------|----------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Post-Medieval | MKE25354      | Building |                         | Little Mill Strood house. |
| Post-Medieval | MKE23839      | Building |                         | Downs Farmhouse.          |
| Post-Medieval | MKE25323      | Building |                         | The 'Stone House'.        |
| Post-Medieval | MKE23842      | Monument |                         | Borstal Hill Windmill.    |
| Post-Medieval | MKE23845      | Building |                         | Listed building.          |
| Post-Medieval | TR16NW29      | Building |                         | Windmill.                 |

| Period        | HER Reference | Type     | National Grid Reference | Description |
|---------------|---------------|----------|-------------------------|-------------|
| Post-Medieval | TR16NW85      | Monument |                         | Windmill.   |
| Undated       | TR16NW96      | Monument |                         | Windmill.   |



Figures

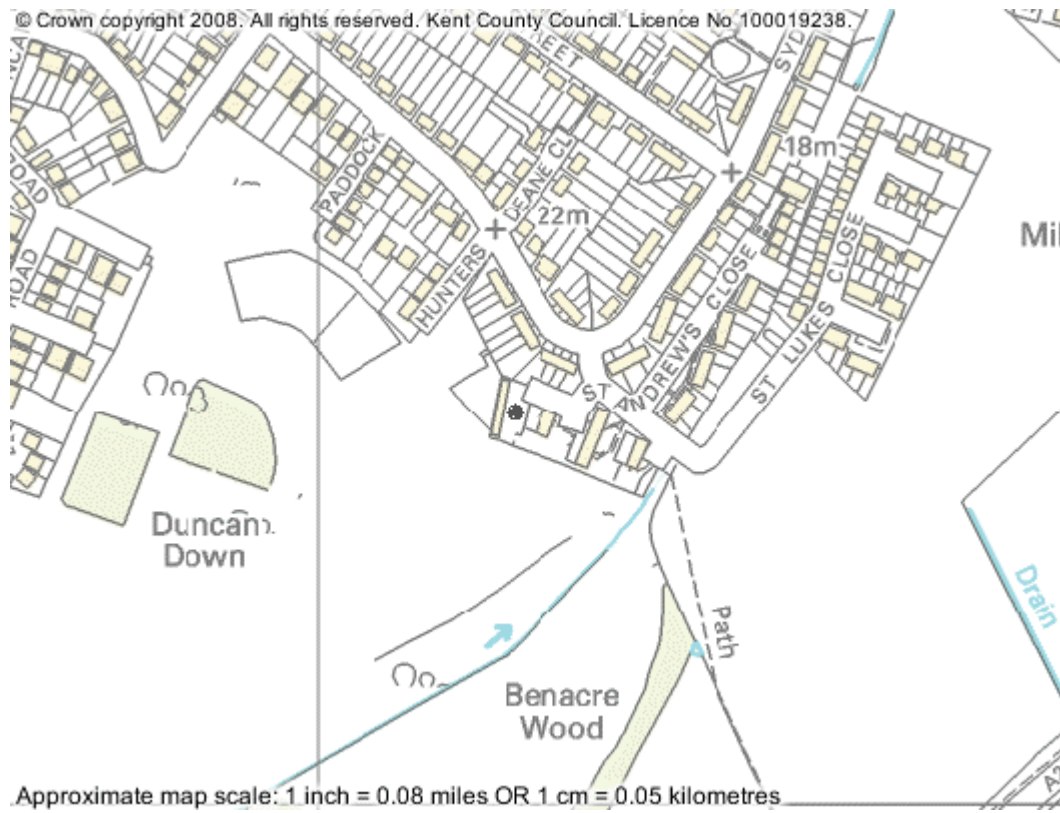


Figure 1. Site Location.



Figure 2. Location of Proposed Development



Figure 2. Location of Proposed Development



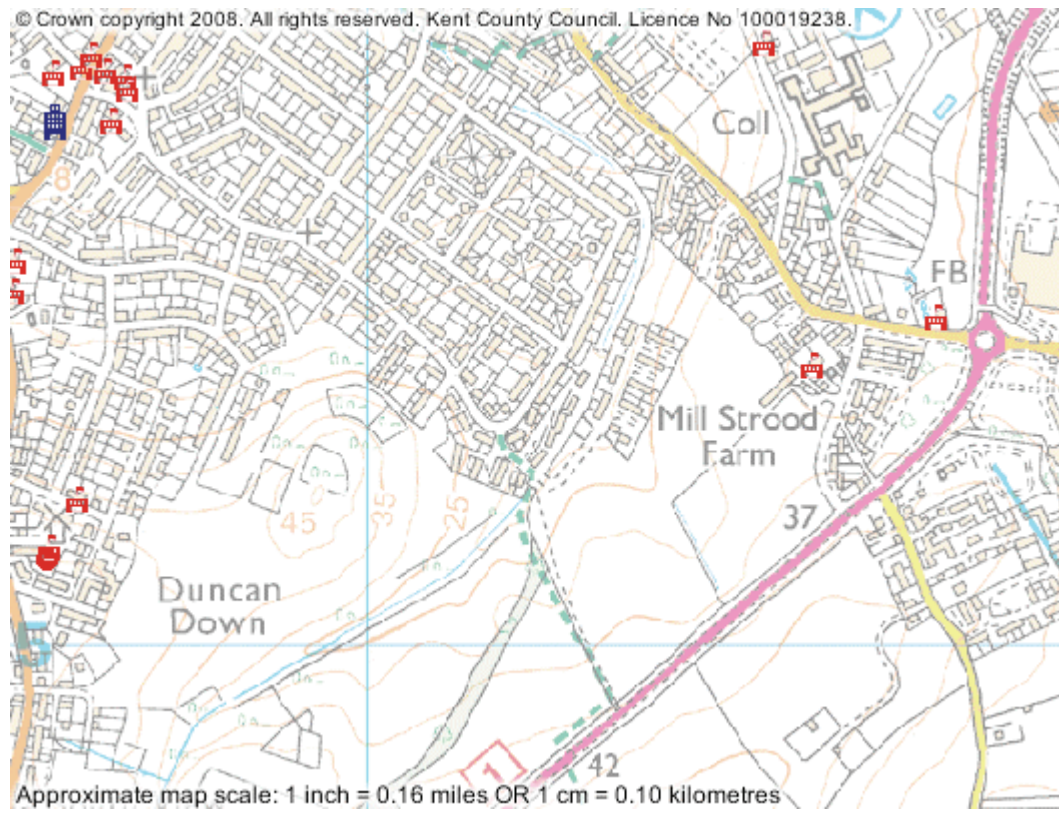


Figure 3. Location of Known Historic Environment Records

## Plates



Plate 1. Topography of surviving farmland to the south and east of the proposed development area (Facing south-east).



Plate 2. General view of the proposed development site (facing north-east).





Plate 3. General view of the proposed development site and its proximity to Duncan Down from the site entrance (facing south-west).





Plate 4. Detail view of the rear of the proposed development site from the boundary with Duncan Down (facing east).