

Archaeological Strip, Map and Record of Land at 1-7 Cowgate Hill, Dover, Kent



NGR: 631820 141345

Site Code: COW/SM/16

(Planning Application: DOV/12/00684)

SWAT Archaeology

The Office, School Farm Oast

Graveney Road Faversham, Kent, ME13 8UP

Email: info@swatarchaeology.co.uk

Tel.: 01795 532548 and 07885 700112

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Archaeological Evaluation of Land at 1-7 Cowgate Hill, Dover, Kent

NGR: 631820 141345

Site Code: COW-SM-16

1. Summary

The Municipal Charities of Dover are currently making preparations for the development of land at 1-7 Cowgate Hill, Dover in Kent. A planning application for the proposed development has been approved (DOV/12/00684) with planning permission to demolish the existing terraced houses (completed) and construct a building containing flats.

The current archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the requirements set out within an Archaeological Specification (SWAT Archaeology 2016) and in discussion with the Principal Archaeological Heritage Officer, Kent County Council.

The results of the strip and map show that nationally important archaeological features were present within the area stripped. The natural geology was not exposed.

Dating evidence from pottery sherds from secure contexts show Early Roman and Medieval activity on the site.

2. Introduction

Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT) was commissioned by the Municipal Charities of Dover to carry out an archaeological investigation at the above site. The work was carried out in accordance with the requirements set out within an Archaeological Specification (SWAT 2016) and in discussion with the Principal Archaeological Heritage Officer, Kent County Council. The investigation was carried out from the 5th- 15th April 2016.

3. Site Description and Topography

The proposed development site is located on the curtilage of Nos 1, 3, 5 & 7 Cowgate Hill. The Saxon shore fort of 4th century date and the Roman 'painted house' are located to the north-east. The site lies just outside the circuit of the medieval town wall and part of the PDA, the site of No. 9 Cowgate Hill is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (No. 12610) as being part of the 2nd century Roman naval fort. The investigated site is a sub-rectangular plot measuring about 12mx13m giving an area investigated of about 156 sq m. with an OD height of about 14.45m.

4. Planning Background

Dover District Council Council gave planning permission (DOV/12/00684) for development of land at Cowgate Hill in Kent.

On the advice of Ben Found, Senior Archaeological Officer (KCC) a programme of archaeological investigation had been requested.

5. Archaeological and Historical Background

The Archaeological record, both in and around the Proposed Development Area (PDA) is diverse. The application site lies within an area with known archaeology which has been highlighted in a Desk-based assessment by Chris Sparey-Green (2006).

The Kent HER records various entries of Roman finds and structures within 100m of the site including a wall to the west of the site thought to be related to the fort and a Roman aqueduct and altar to the north.

To the south-west of the site Neolithic pottery and lithics have been found, as well as four inhumation burials which are probably part of a medieval cemetery.

The *Classis Britannica* Saxon Shore Fort is located to the north-east.

The CAT evaluation confirmed the presence of Roman deposits including floors/yards and masonry beneath varying depths of more recent made ground.

The site lies beyond the core of the medieval town and post-Roman deposits on the site appear to have formed naturally (hillwash) in medieval or later times. The medieval town wall and Cow Gate lie just to the east of the site.

6. Aims and Objectives

The principle objective of the additional archaeological work was to remove the concrete slab covering the east end of the site without causing damage to any underlying archaeological features and by archaeological trowel strip by hand, map and record any exposed areas of archaeological interest across the area of the proposed development.

To determine the state of preservation and importance of the archaeological resource if present and to assess the past impacts on the site and pay particular attention to the character, height/depth below ground level, condition, date and significance of any archaeological deposits.

Following on from the previous archaeological investigations the Municipal Charities of Dover were advised by Ben Found Archaeological Officer KCC that:

3. Existing concrete slab at lower end of site (No 1) to be removed along with any overburden deposits to formation level under archaeological control.

4. Site to be carefully cleaned to a professional archaeological standard and a detailed plan produced of any exposed archaeological remains. This accurate plan should attempt to relate the exposed remains to the existing plan of the Classis Britannia Fort.

5. Review of initial pile layout and modify if required, plus agreement of the location of service runs etc.

6. Close archaeological monitoring of construction activities to ensure that no further erosion of the archaeological resource occurs and that the construction works are carried out in

accordance with the agreed methods.....As per previous email you will need to confirm with English Heritage that they are happy with such an approach for the Scheduled part of the site (Found. B: Email 11/03/2015)

7. Methodology

An archaeological strip, map and recording was undertaken by the removal under archaeological control of the concrete slab which was cut into manageable blocks by a diamond saw (**Plates 1, 2**) The follow on methodology was to clean the exposed surfaces by hand trowelling of the footprint of the area covered by concrete.

Following the mechanical clearance of the concrete slab, excavation in all instances was undertaken by hand. The area was hand cleaned using a trowel and hoe and all archaeological features exposed were mapped, recorded and photographed.

On completion of the archaeological investigation the area was covered with plastic sheeting and enclosed with appropriate barriers to appropriate safety standards and maintenance. Appropriate hazard signs were also displayed.

All exposed areas were swept by an archaeologist using a Fisher CZ3D metal detector. No metal finds were retrieved. All features were accurately located to the national grid and the OD levels calculated using a differential GPS.

A single context recording system was used to record the deposits, and context recording numbers were assigned to all deposits for recording purposes. These are used in the report and shown in **bold**. All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with KCC, HE, SWAT and ClfA standards and guidance. In addition and fulfilling the requirements of the KCC specification human remains, environmental and pottery specialists were on stand-by in case significant remains were exposed.

8. Monitoring

Curatorial monitoring was available during the course of the evaluation and Simon Mason Principal Archaeological Officer KCC visited the site and discussed in detail the archaeology exposed.

9. Results

The archaeological investigation at Cowgate Hill, Dover covered a total area of c.156m². Both archaeological and modern features were exposed at varying depths after machine clearance of the overlying demolition debris and the removal of the concrete slab floor of properties; Nos. 1, 3 and 5 (Figure 1).

On the removal of the overburden the site was divided into three distinctive parts. The first part was located along the NW-SE side of the excavation. It measured c.3m x 12m and was 'excavated' to a maximum average depth of 0.20m (14.39mOD) to reveal the archaeological horizon.

The second part comprised of the area at the rear of the proposed development (and included two modern extensions at the rear of Nos. 1 and 3 Cowgate Hill). This area measured 8.50m x 6m and was also cleared of the overburden to an average depth of 0.20m (14.40mOD).

The third area consisted of the main footprint of properties 1 and 3 Cowgate Hill, which measured 8m x 6m. This area was cleared of debris to an average depth of 0.15m (14.45mOD).

Area 1 was situated along the NW-SE side of the investigation area, the archaeological features exposed after the clearance of the demolition overburden comprised of a sequence of several phases of activity (Figure 1).

9.1 Roman (Area 1)

A Roman chalk block wall [032] (CAT context [315]), aligned NW-SE was observed for a length of +5m. It had a width of +1m and survived to a height of +0.35m. Overlying the

upper surface of the wall was a 0.25m thick layer of crushed and rammed chalk (**Plate 1**) (034) (CAT context (309)). Situated at the SE end of the area was a layer of crushed chalk and mortar (024) that measured 2m x 1.30m. This had been laid in preparation for a polished Roman Mortar Floor (023). The mortar surface in this area had however been removed, exposing three Beam Slots [025], [026] and [027] which were aligned NE-SW and thus at 090° to the Roman wall [032]. **Plate 2.**

9.2 Medieval (Area 1 Fig. 2)

Situated at the NW end of the area was a large segment of Wall [017], that was aligned E-W and was constructed from roughly hewn chalk blocks (**Plate 3. Fig.2**). It measured 1.80m x 1.40m and survived to a height of +0.50m (14.72m OD). The western end of this wall butted up to, but, not against Roman wall [032] as there was a 0.07m gap between the two walls.

9.3 Post-Medieval (Area 1)

The Roman preparatory surface and the beam slots were truncated to the east by a Pit or 'Robber Cut' [021]. This measured 2m x 0.60m (max) and was filled with a grey-white mix of crushed chalk 'rubble' (020). Overlying (or perhaps within) the eastern edge of the pit/robber cut was Wall [016]. This wall (**Plate 4**) was a crushed chalk, flint and brick construct that measured 1.20m x 0.80m and survived to a height of 0.40m (15.05m OD).

9.4 Modern (Area 1)

The rear brick Wall [010] of No. 5 Cowgate Hill truncated the southern face of the Medieval Wall [017] and cut through the upper surface of Roman Wall [032], creating a Construction Cut [033] that measured +0.80m x 0.60m and had a depth of 0.08m.

The Modern Extension of No. 3 Cowgate Hill truncated an undated deposit of crushed chalk material (022) that lay within the centre of the area. Elements of this deposit sealed the southern face of Medieval Wall [017], suggesting either a Post Medieval or Modern deposition. The SE end of the Modern Extension severely truncated Pit/'Robber Cut' [021] and the Post Medieval Wall [016]. A waste water service pipe trench (CAT context [305]) running SW from the end of the Modern Extension, and Pit (CAT context [307]) severely

truncated Roman Wall [032], Roman mortar floor Preparatory Surface (024) and the Beam Slots [025], [026] and [027].

Area 2 was situated at the rear of the investigation area, the archaeological features exposed after the clearance of the demolition overburden also comprised of a sequence of several phases of activity.

This area also comprised of numerous service trenches, manholes and the footings of the two modern extensions projecting from the rear of Nos. 1 and 3 Cowgate Hill. The disturbed nature of the surface area in-between the two extensions suggested that a considerable amount of truncation of the underlying archaeology may have taken place. CAT Evaluation Trench 5 (alongside the Modern Extension for No. 1 Cowgate Hill) suggests that the area immediately west of the evaluation trench has been truncated by modern activity to a depth of at least 0.20m (14.41mOD). If metalled surface (CAT context (508)) is modern or Post Medieval, truncation of the archaeological horizon could be as much as 0.50m.

9.5 Roman (Area 2)

Elements of a Roman chalk block wall [031] roughly aligned N-S was observed projecting away from the rear L.O.E for a length of +2.40m (**Plate 5**). It had a width of 0.64m and stood proud of the surface to a height of 0.23m (14.68m OD). This wall was also observed in CAT Evaluation Trench 5 (CAT context [512]) at a depth of c.14.12mOD. It may also be the same wall seen in CAT Evaluation Trench 4 (CAT context [413]). Though severely truncated the layer of crushed chalk and mortar (024) that had been laid in preparation for polished Roman mortar floor (023), continued across the extreme southern edge of the excavation, from Area One until it met Wall (**Plate 6**)[031]. The surviving layer measured a further 3.80m x 1.20m (max) with polished Mortar Floor Surface (023) on top, covering an area of 1.80m x 1.00m (**Plate 7**). Within the exposed preparatory layer (024) were three Post Holes. Post Hole [028] was roughly rectangular in shape and Post Holes [029] and [030] were square (**Plate 8**). A Samian sherd recovered from layer (024) has been dated to Early Roman Gaulish samian ware Claudio-Neronian c.43-68 AD (DR 15/31 bowl).

9.6 Medieval (Area 2)

Located within centre of Area Two was Pit [019]. This feature measured 3.50m x 1.90m and it truncated elements of Roman Wall [031] and Mortar Floor Preparation layer (**Plate 8**) (024). This pit contained mid grey silt and finely crushed chalk (018) that included occasional small rounded pebbles and flecks of crushed CBM. Four pottery sherds recovered from this context are medieval Canterbury Tyler Hill shell-dusted sandy ware, all body sherds and conjoining and dating c.1200/1225-1250AD.

9.7 Post-medieval (Area 2)

An isolated chalk and flint nodule construct [015] was situated with NE corner of Medieval Pit [019]. This possible 'Wall' measured 0.80m x 0.60m and it stood proud of the surface for a height of 0.08m (14.53m OD).

9.8 Modern (Area 2)

The construction of the modern extension for No. 1 Cowgate Hill and the installation of two manholes and their corresponding pipe-trenches truncated the chalk and flint nodule 'Wall' [015] and Medieval 'Pit' [019]. The construction of the Modern Extension for No. 3 Cowgate Hill truncated Roman polished Mortar Floor (023) and Mortar Floor Preparatory layer (024). The severity of the surface truncation between the two extensions exposed elements of the metalling observed in CAT Evaluation Trench 5 (CAT context (508)). A possible continuation of crushed chalk deposit (022) was observed within the footprint of the Modern Extension for No. 1 Cowgate hill.

9.9 Modern (Area Three)

Comprised of the main footprint for Nos. 1 and 3 Cowgate Hill. Clearance of the overlying demolition debris and concrete slab floor only exposed internal features and the main walls for the terraced building.

Three of the main walls were brick built: the dividing wall [007] between Nos. 3 and 5 Cowgate Hill, the east 'Gable-end' [008] of No. 1 Cowgate Hill and the street frontage [009]

(which extended to include No. 5). All three walls had an average width of 0.26m and they survived in height up to the present ground surface. Wall [007], situated further up the terrace survived to a height of 14.92m OD whereas, Wall [008] situated at the bottom of the terrace survived to a height of 14.78mOD.

The footing dividing Nos. 1 and 3 Cowgate Hill was built from a variety of materials (inc. flint nodules and roughly shaped rag stone blocks, bonded with a dark grey mortar containing charcoal and ash) that formed a T-Shaped construct (**Plate 9**). The rear Wall [011] was roughly aligned NE-SW and it spanned both properties. It had a total length of 4.80m and an average width of 0.45m. Each end of this wall had c.2m removed to facilitate the construction of the Modern Extensions.

The main dividing wall between the properties (aligned NW-SE) comprised of three elements: a rear section [012] which measured 2.30m x 0.60m (**Plates 10, 11**); a frontal section [014] which measured 2.70m x 0.44m and a short 'Cross Beam' [013] (separating [012] and [014]) that extended into each property. The extension within No. 1 Cowgate Hill measured 0.60m x 0.30m whereas the extension within No. 3 (constructed from brick **Plate 11**) measured 0.90m x 0.40m.

The interior of both properties had been severely damaged and truncated during several phases of alteration and the installation of the modern concrete slab floor. The interior surface (006) within No. 1 Cowgate Hill comprised of a mix of charcoal, soot and building debris (CAT context (407)). The same material was observed in the front room (004) and the rear room (005) within No. 3 Cowgate Hill. Partial remains of a brick built construct to house a Range [003] survived within the rear portion of No. 1 Cowgate Hill; the remains of a possible brick built fireplace [002] survived in the front room at No. 3 Cowgate Hill and a brick floor (**Plate 12**) [001] survived within the rear room of the same property.

10. Discussion

The archaeological investigation at Cowgate Hill has demonstrated that extensive truncation has taken place on site. However, due to the nature of the incline of the terrace on which

Nos. 1-7 Cowgate Hill sits, considerable archaeology remains in situ and very close to the modern surface.

The majority of the archaeological features observed are from the Roman period and are most likely structures within the Classis Britannica (CLBR) naval fort. The combination of the Mortar Floor Preparation layer (024) containing beam slots [025], [026], [027] and Post holes [028], [029] and [030] sealed by a polished mortar floor surface (023) between Walls [031] and [034] suggests that at least one building (and its' interior) survives.

There is, as to be expected in an urban environment, later phases of archaeological activity. However, from what has been observed during the investigation, these later activities would seem to be limited. The observations made of the surviving archaeology by SWAT, CAT and TVAS demonstrates that there is considerable Roman archaeology, relating to the Naval Fort surviving on site.

11. Finds

The pottery was appraised by Simon Holmes and Nigel MacPherson-Grant and a Samian sherd recovered from layer (024) has been dated to Early Roman Gaulish samian ware Claudio-Neronian c.43-68 AD (DR 15/31 bowl).

Pottery recovered from context [109] were four medieval Canterbury Tyler Hill shell-dusted sandy wares, all body sherds and conjoining dating c.1200/1225-1250AD.

12. Conclusion

The projected development plan is to construct the proposed building on a reinforced concrete ring beam secured to the ground by piling. Current archaeological methodology is to excavate the impact zone of piling until the natural geology is reached. Given the National Importance of the Roman structures obviously surviving in good condition from the 2nd Century Roman naval fort and that even after three archaeological investigations the exact whereabouts of connecting walls and floors is still unknown calls into question the

methodology so far used. The present proposal of piling without further archaeological investigation is fraught with danger to the Nationally Important Archaeological Remains. The suggestion from SWAT Archaeology for the way forward is three stages of investigation:

1. A programme of Ground Penetration Radar (GPR)
2. Archaeological excavation of 1m test pits in the proposed location of piling unless needle piling is used in conjunction with the results from GPR
3. Archaeological Watching Brief on the ground works construction stage with excavation of any proposed service pipe runs.

12.1 Publication and Archive Deposition

A PDF copy of the report will be issued to KCC Heritage who advises Dover District Council on archaeological matters and the Dover Local Studies Centre on the understanding that the report will become a public document after an appropriate period of time. A digital copy of the accepted report will be submitted to the Kent HER and deposited on the SWAT Archaeology website. A PDF copy will also be deposited OASIS and ADS.

13. Acknowledgements

SWAT Archaeology would like to thank the client, for commissioning the project. Thanks are also extended to Simon Mason, Principal Heritage Officer, Kent County Council.

Dr Brian Philp gave invaluable advice and attended site on a number of occasions and donated groundsheets from the store of the Roman 'Painted House' which is close to the site. Site survey and illustrations were produced by Jonny Madden. The fieldwork was undertaken by Paul Wilkinson, Simon Holmes and Scott Skinner and the project was managed and report written by Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA.

Paul Wilkinson

25/05/2016

14. References

SWAT Archaeology (2016) *Specification for Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Cowgate Hill, Dover, Kent*

KCC Specification Manual Part B

KCC HER data 2016

Appendix 1: Kent County Council HER Summary Form

Site Name: Land at Cowgate Hill, Dover, Kent

SWAT Site Code: COW/ESM/16

Site Address: As above

Summary:

Swale and Thames Survey Company (SWAT) carried out Archaeological Evaluation on the development site above. The site has planning permission for residential housing whereby Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation (KCCHC) requested that Archaeological Investigation take place which revealed walls and floors of the 2nd century Roman fort

District/Unitary: Dover District Council

NGR (centre of site to eight figures) 631820 141345

Type of Archaeological work: Archaeological Strip and Map

Date of recording: April 2016

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

Geology: Underlying geology is Upper Chalk

Title and author of accompanying report: Wilkinson P. (2016) Archaeological Investigation at Cowgate Hill, Dover, Kent

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

Investigation exposed elements of the 2nd century Roman fort

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

Contact at Unit: Paul Wilkinson **Date:** 25/05/2016

PLATES



Plate 1. Roman wall [032] looking E



Plate 2. Roman floor (023)



Plate 3. Medieval wall [017] looking N



Plate 4. Post medieval wall [016]



Plate 5. Roman chalk block wall [031]



Plate 6. Roman chalk block wall [031]



Plate 7. Roman polished floor surface (023)



Plate 8. Roman post holes [028, 029]



Plate 9. Modern footings [007] looking west



Plate 10. Modern dividing walls [012] looking SW



Plate 11. Modern footings of No 1 Cowgate Hill



Plate 12. Fireplace [002] of No 3 Cowgate Hill



Plate 13. Diamond sawing concrete slab (looking south)



Plate 14. Diamond sawing concrete slab (looking north-west)



Plate 15. Diamond sawing concrete slab (looking west)

1:100@A4

0m

10m

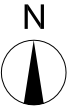
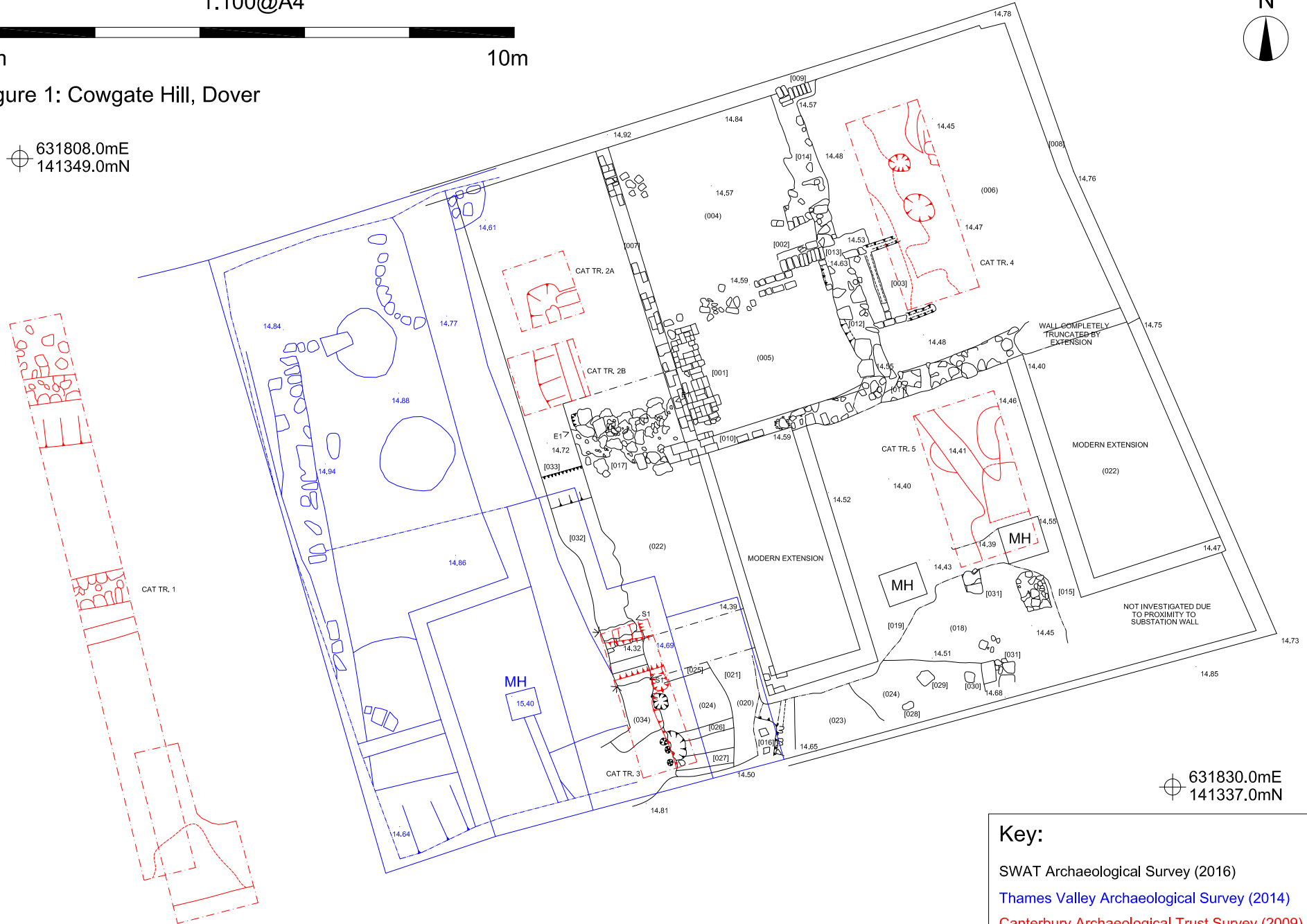


Figure 1: Cowgate Hill, Dover

⊕ 631808.0mE
141349.0mN



⊕ 631830.0mE
141337.0mN

Key:

- SWAT Archaeological Survey (2016)
- Thames Valley Archaeological Survey (2014)
- Canterbury Archaeological Trust Survey (2009)

1:100@A4

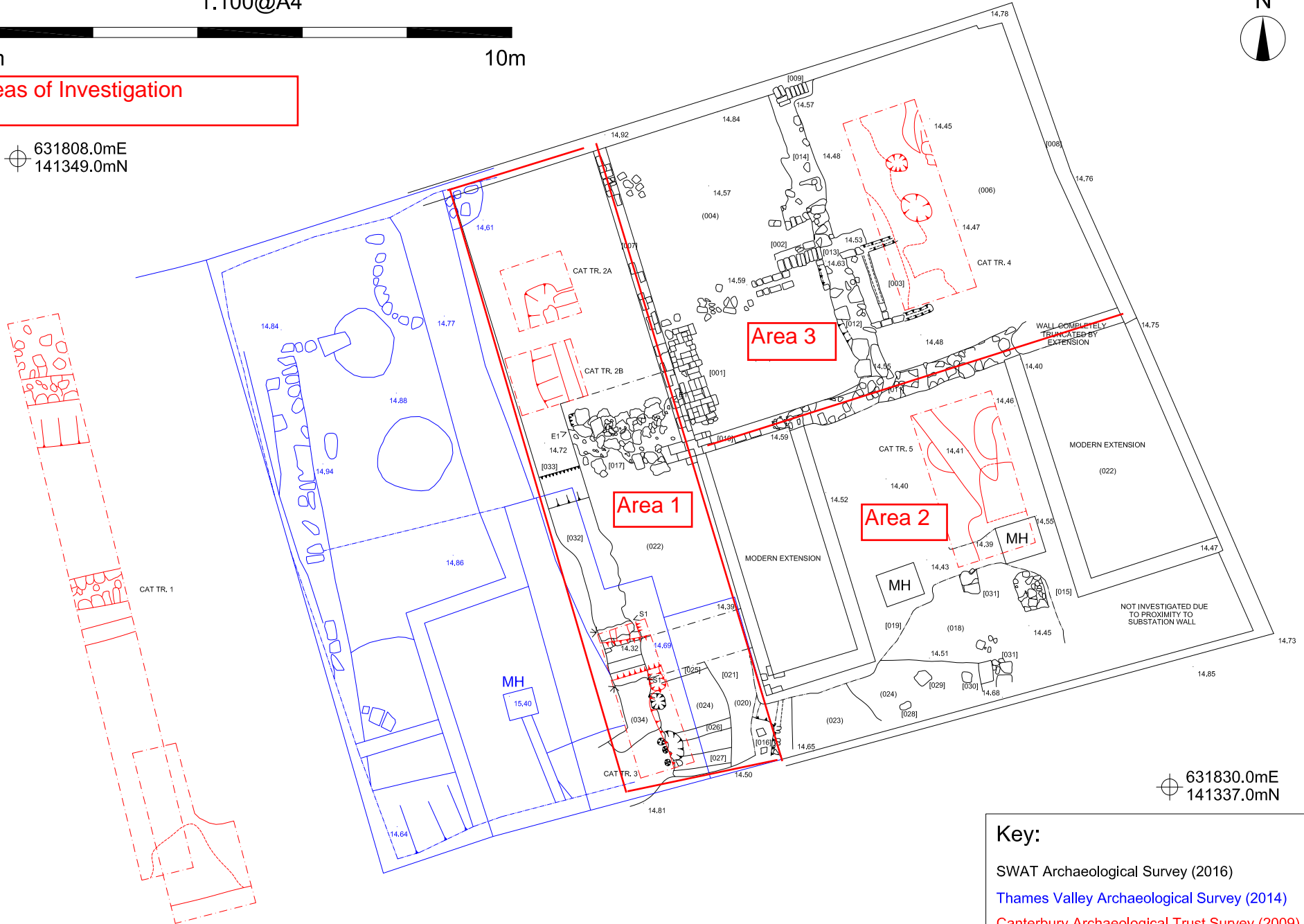


0m

10m

Areas of Investigation

631808.0mE
141349.0mN

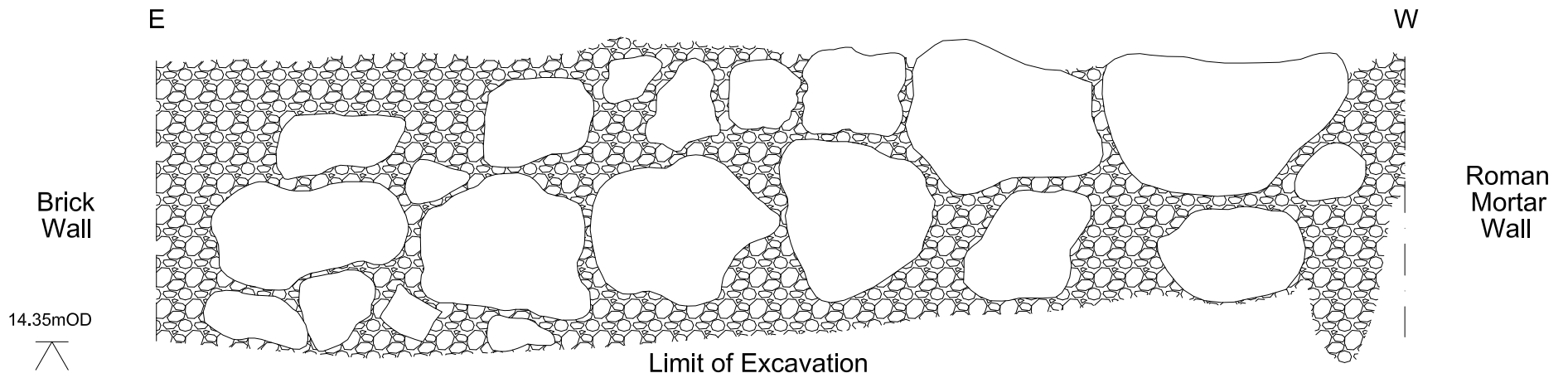


631830.0mE
141337.0mN

Key:

- SWAT Archaeological Survey (2016)
- Thames Valley Archaeological Survey (2014)
- Canterbury Archaeological Trust Survey (2009)

Elevation 1



Section 1

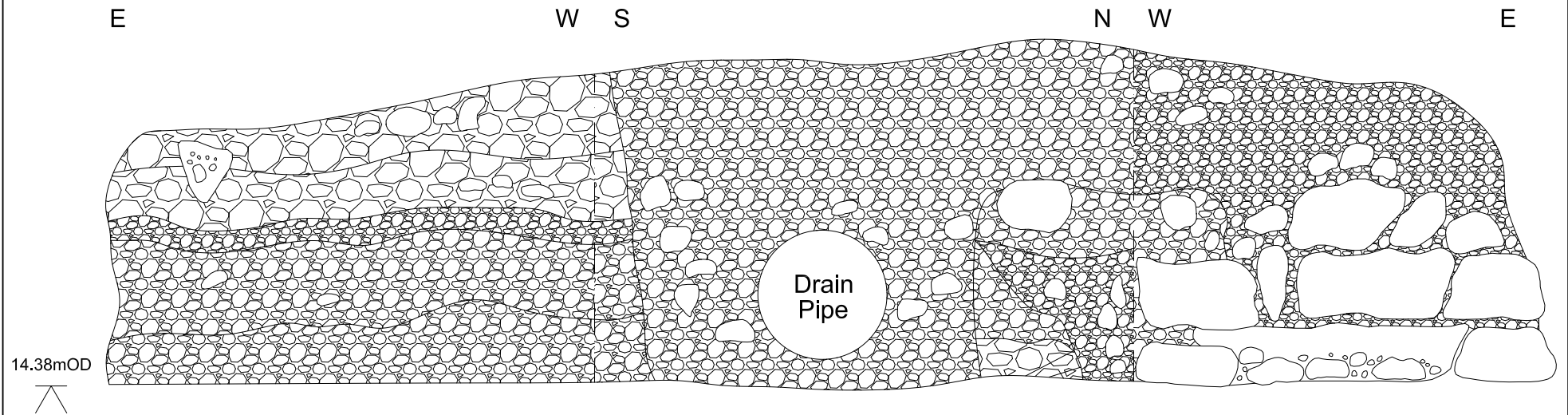


Figure 2: Sections



Context	CAT Context (if applicable)	Type	Description	Date
01		Structure	Brick Floor	Modern
02		Structure	Hearth	Modern
03		Structure	'Range'	Modern
04	407	Deposit	Backfill	Modern
05	407	Deposit	Backfill	Modern
06	407	Deposit	Backfill	Modern
07		Wall	Brick Wall	Modern
08		Wall	Brick Wall	Modern
09		Wall	Brick Wall	Modern
010		Wall	Brick Wall	Modern
011		Wall	Rag stone. Flint. Mortar.	Uncertain
012		Wall	Rag stone. Flint. Mortar.	Uncertain
013		Wall	Rag stone. Flint. Mortar. Brick.	Uncertain
014		Wall	Rag stone. Flint. Mortar.	Uncertain
015		Structure	Wall? Flint and Brick construct	P.Med
016		Wall	Crushed Chalk. Brick. Flint.	P.Med
017		Wall	Rough hewn Chalk Block built	Medieval
018		Deposit	Backfill of Pit [019]	Medieval
019		Cut	Cut of Pit	Medieval
020		Deposit	Backfill of Pit/Robber Trench [021]	Uncertain
021		Cut	Cut of Pit/Robber trench	Uncertain
022		Deposit	Large spread of re- deposited Chalk	Uncertain
023		Structure	Polished Mortar Floor	Roman
024		Deposit	Make up layer for Mortar Floor [023]	Roman
025		Structure	Beam Slot in Make up layer (024)	Roman
026		Structure	Beam Slot in Make up layer (024)	Roman
027		Structure	Beam Slot in Make up layer (024)	Roman
028		Structure	Post Hole in Make up layer (024)	Roman
029		Structure	Post Hole in make up layer (024)	Roman
030		Structure	Post Hole in Make up layer (024)	Roman

031	413 and 512	Wall	Chalk Block Wall	Roman
032	315	Wall	Chalk Block Wall	Roman
033		Cut	Construction Cut for Brick Wall [010]	Modern
034	309	Deposit	Crushed Chalk layer	Roman