

Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment  
in advance of the proposed development  
of Land off Sittingbourne Road,  
Maidstone, Kent ME14 3EN

NGR: TQ 77576 57279



Report for Persimmon Homes (SE) Ltd

Date of Report: 15/01/2016

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**Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment in Advance of Proposed Development of  
Land at Sittingbourne Road, Maidstone, Kent ME14 3EN  
NGR: TQ 77576 57279**

**1 SUMMARY**

*Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) has been commissioned to carry out an archaeological desk-based assessment in advance of the proposed development of residential dwellings on land adjacent to Sittingbourne Road in Maidstone, Kent as part of the planning application submitted on behalf of Persimmon Homes (SE) Ltd.*

*This Desk Based Assessment examines the wide variety of archaeological data held by Kent County Council and other sources.*

*Based on this data the potential for archaeological sites either on or in the near vicinity of the proposed development can be summarised as:*

- *Prehistoric: Moderate*
- *Iron Age: Low*
- *Romano-British: Low*
- *Anglo-Saxon: High*
- *Medieval: High*
- *Post-medieval: Moderate*
- *Modern: Low*

*The Desk Based Assessment concludes that:*

*The site has **moderate to high** potential for any archaeological discoveries.*

*The PDA is a quadrilateral plot of land comprising of approximately 75,000sqm (7.5 Ha) that lies adjacent to the M20 Motorway at junction 7 and the Sittingbourne road, just north of the town of Maidstone and within the county of Kent. Maidstone is two miles to the south and the neighbouring village of Weaving is 1.5 miles southeast. Detling two miles northeast, and Aylesford three miles to the west (Figure 11).*

## **2 INTRODUCTION**

SWAT Archaeology has been commissioned by Persimmon Homes. to carry out an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment to supplement a planning application for the development of the site situated on Sittingbourne Road in Maidstone, Kent (Figure 11). The report has accessed various sources of information to identify any known heritage assets, which may be located within the vicinity of the Proposed Development Area. The PDA is centered on National Grid Reference TQ 77576 57279.

Archaeological investigations, both recent and historic have been studied and the information from these investigations has been incorporated in the assessment.

This report is a desk-based appraisal from known cartographic, photographic and archaeological sources and is a research led statement on the archaeological potential of the proposed development.

It may be that intrusive investigations such as a Geophysical Survey and/or an Archaeological Evaluation, with machine cut trial trenching may be requested by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) as a Planning Condition.

### **2.1 Geology and Topography**

The Geological Survey of Great Britain (1:50,000) indicates that the site's bedrock geology is formed of Folkestone Formation, comprising of sandstone. The sedimentary bedrock formed 100 to 125 million years ago, during the Cretaceous period, when shallow seas dominated the local area. No superficial deposits are recorded (BGS 1:50,000 digital).

The PDA sits at an average height of 225ft (68.6m) AOD, however the ground undulates between 216ft. and 242ft.

## **2.2 Planning Background**

The National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)

Policy 12 is the relevant policy for the historic environment:

### **2.2.1 Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment**

Local planning authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. In doing so, they should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance. In developing this strategy, local planning authorities should take into account:

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

2.2.2 In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation (NPPF 2012).

## Regional Policies

The South-East Research Framework (SERF) is on-going with groups of researchers producing a Resource Assessment, which will identify research questions and topics in order to form a Research Agenda for the future.

This Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment has been prepared in accordance with the guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework and the Good Practise Advice notes 1, 2 and 3, which now supersede the PPS 5 Practise Guide, which has been withdrawn by the Government. The Good Practise Advice notes emphasises the need for assessments of the significance of any heritage assets, which are likely to be changed, so the assessment can inform the decision process. Significance is defined in the NPPF Guidance in the Glossary as “the value of the heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic, or historical. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also it’s setting”. The setting of the heritage asset is also clarified in the Glossary as “the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve”.

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

### **2.3 The Proposed Development**

The proposed development will comprise of residential housing, with the additional construction of vehicular access, associated car parking and landscaping. The plot is open in character towards the east with small islands of shrubbery to the south, east and west and an electricity pylon to the north. This quickly gives way to Heath Wood an area of ancient woodland and scrub intersected with footpaths. The M20 motorway creates the north boundary and beyond that is Kiln wood coppice and open fields. The east of the site shares its boundary with Sittingbourne Road, a Park



and Ride car park and beyond the Hilton Hotel and an area of small density commercial development. A medium density residential housing estate begins at the south boundary and continues south through to Maidstone. The west joins a small commercial development on the Boxley Road and an area of ground that is bounded by Sandy Lane and Penenden Heath, a designated area of archaeological importance.

## **2.4 Project Constraints**

No project constraints were encountered during the data collection for this assessment.

## **3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

**3.1** The Desk-Based Assessment was commissioned by Persimmon Homes in order to supplement a planning application for the development of the site adjacent to Sittingbourne Road, Maidstone, Kent ME14 3EN.

### **3.2 Desktop Study – Institute for Archaeologists (revised 2011)**

This desktop study has been produced in line with archaeological standards, as defined by the Institute for Archaeologists (2014). A desktop, or desk-based assessment, is defined as being:

*“a programme of study of the historic environment within a specified area or site on land, the inter-tidal zone or underwater that addresses agreed research and/or conservation objectives. It consists of an analysis of existing written, graphic, photographic and electronic information in order to identify the likely heritage assets, their interests and significance and the character of the study area, including appropriate consideration of the settings of heritage assets and, in England, the nature, extent and quality of the known or potential archaeological, historic, architectural and artistic interest. Significance is to be judged in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate”.* (CiFA 2014)

## **4 METHODOLOGY**

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

#### *4.1.1 Archaeological Databases*

The local Historic Environment Record (HER) held at Kent County Council provides an accurate insight into catalogued sites and finds within both the proposed development area (PDA) and the surrounding environs of Maidstone.

The Archaeology Data Service Online Catalogue (ADS) was also used. The search was carried out within a 500m radius of the proposed development site (12/12/15). Relevant HER data is included in the report. The Portable Antiquities Scheme Database (PAS) was also searched as an additional source as the information contained within is not always transferred to the local HER.

#### *4.1.2 Historical Documents*

Historical documents,, such as charters, registers, wills and deeds etc. were considered not relevant to this specific study.

#### *4.1.3 Cartographic and Pictorial Documents*

A cartographic and pictorial document search was undertaken during this assessment. Research was carried out using resources offered by Kent County Council, the Internet and Ordnance Survey Historical mapping (Figs. 1-10).

#### **Map Regression 1646 -1993**

A map regression exercise on maps was carried out on the proposed development area and has shown that the PDA has historically been located adjacent to the main road from Maidstone to Sheerness (Sittingbourne Road) and has consistently remained an area of ancient woodland once known as Biolds Wood and now known as Heath Wood with open ground to the east and adjoining Penenden Heath, a site of archaeological importance to the west.

Maps consulted for this period include the Andrews Dury map of 1769, the Ordnance Survey Surveyors Drawings of 1798 and the first published OS County map of 1801.

The scale on the 1799 Ordnance Survey Surveyors Drawings and OS County map were too small to interpret detail of the site in question.

From the 1840s the Ordnance Survey started work on the Great Britain 'County Series', modelled on the earlier Ireland survey. A start was made on mapping the whole country, county by county, at six inches to the mile (1:10,560). From 1854, to meet requirements for greater detail, including land-parcel numbers in rural areas and accompanying information, cultivated and inhabited areas were mapped at 1:2500 (25.344 inches to the mile), at first parish by parish, with blank space beyond the parish boundary, and later continuously.

In the OS map of 1867 (Figure 1), the PDA forms an area that covers Biells Wood and parts of the open fields 648, 658 and 657 that encircle it. A small structure within an enclosure (657) on the south boundary of the wood is accessed by three footpaths, two from within the wood that lead from fields 648 and 658 and one that creates the south boundary, joining fields 655 and 'Penenden Heath' and leads to the Sittingbourne Road (663). The road creates the east boundary and is an ancient route joining Maidstone to Sheerness and leads west to a crossroads with road 667, the location of 'Gallows Wood' and a small hamlet made up of three properties each with their own well; 'Chiltern Hundred Inn' (656/B.M. 241.6), 670a and 671. To the north is an area of coppice later known as Kiln Wood, which is bounded to its north by 'The Hocker's Shaw'. A sandpit is located to the northwest of the site.

In the OS Map of 1897, the PDA is now known as Heath Wood 56 (15.691) and the open field area is designated as field 627 (6.421) and is now one of several parcels of land that form a Nursery. The structure in the wood has a well and a pump and a small structure has appeared on the northwest boundary adjacent to the Wood. The footpath that formed the south boundary now branches off across Penenden Heath. In the Hamlet property 671 has a letterbox, a new building has appeared to the west of 670a and part of Gallows Wood has been developed into a building known as the 'Lodge'. Chiltern Hundred Inn has undergone some development with the removal of the tree-lined entrance and an outbuilding and the addition of a new outbuilding to

the north corner with access to both main roads. The small building to the west has developed into what will become Chiltern Cottages.

In the OS Map of 1908, the structure in the field area of the PDA, adjacent to Heath Wood, has disappeared and the shared boundary has been straightened so that one of the undulating sections has been absorbed into the wood area and the other has been designated 627a; This has resulted in reduced acreage to field 627 (5.984). The sandpit to the north has doubled in size and the footpath has been removed from Penenden Heath. In the hamlet, property 670a has disappeared and Chiltern Hundred Inn and its surrounding buildings have continued to develop.

In the OS Map of 1931-1936, the area has received electricity to facilitate the low residential housing that has sprung up within the hamlet and Gallows Wood replacing the 'Lodge'. Electricity pylons have been installed to the east and west of the PDA and in Heath Wood. The north has been developed into woodland and footpaths (55b) and a rectangular enclosure (55a) has appeared in field 55. Chiltern Hundred Inn has a tank installed in the field and a new Benchmark has been sited on the main road (B.M.246.60)

In the OS Map of 1931-38 there have been few changes, except that the electricity cables are shown running northeast to southwest across the open area of the PDA and north-south and northwest – southeast across the wooded area. There is an undefined parish or town boundary that runs southeast to northwest across the PDA, Kent County Council have installed a septic tank in Heath Wood and a Bus Stop is on the Sittingbourne Road providing public transport for the village.

By 1966, the M20 Motorway has arrived to the north boundary of the PDA swallowing up the sandpit and the Sittingbourne Road has been substantially widened causing a small section in the southeast corner of the PDA to be absorbed into the new road to provide drainage. The structure in Heath Wood is named as Rose Cottage and an area to the north of the wood has been cleared, presumably to facilitate the construction of the motorway. A council yard has been created to the

east of Sittingbourne Road, a Police Telephone Box and a Telephone Box are now in situ at the crossroads. The undefined boundary now shows that to the north is the Rochester District and to the south is the Maidstone Borough. Chiltern Cottages are named and Penenden Heath had the addition of a playground and a small building.

By 1989, there have been very few changes to the area with the exception that the Council Yard has been removed and the boundary has changed to an Electrical Division and Ward Boundary.

Between 1989-1993, large swaths of Heath Wood have been cleared and the area has been separated into sections of coppice, scrub, non coniferous and coniferous, as has Kiln Wood to the north. Penenden Heath now has a car park and a large development has appeared to the southeast, probably the Hilton Hotel.

#### *4.1.4 Aerial Photographs*

The study of the collection of aerial photographs held by Google Earth was undertaken. In 1940 the area remained undeveloped and continued as open ground, woodland and scrubland (Plate 1). The electricity pylon is clearly visible to the North and the housing development is well established to the south. By 1960 the construction of the motorway has impacted the east and west of the site and areas of aggregate overspill and scarred land are clearly visible from the groundworks (Plate 2). By 1990, the motorway is complete and the PDA has returned to an open field and woodland with a triangular section of shrubbery and footpaths to the south (Plate 3). By 2003, the field area shows evidence of paths or small tracks, which may relate to the construction of further housing to the southwest or the park and ride to the northeast. The wood has reclaimed the triangular open area (Plate 4). By 2007, the PDA has returned to grassland with areas of scrub and a footpath leading from the park and ride and into Heath Wood. An access road to the Wood was added by 2015 and presently, it remains open grass with islands of vegetation and cleared woodland (Plate 6).

#### 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 within the area around Penenden Heath is diverse and comprises possible activity dating from the prehistoric period through to the modern period. The geographic and topographic location of the site is within a landscape that has been the focus of trade, travel and communication accelerated by the Sittingbourne Road that leads from Maidstone to Sheerness and close proximity to the River Medway. Penenden Heath has been an important site of political administration since at least the Anglo-Saxon period.

## 5.2 History of the site

The setting of the PDA is in the North Downs, at the foot of the chalk hills that formed 100 million years ago at the bottom of a tropical sea in the Mesozoic era, now designated an area of outstanding natural beauty.

'Heath' Wood, refers to an area of open uncultivated land, previously known as 'Biels Wood' meaning '*shelter or refuge*' or '*boldness*' in old English. The first may relate to a structure that was established on the site from at least the 1800's and the second to the character of the neighbouring Penenden Heath. Heath wood is a piece of ancient woodland that was harvested every 10-15 years to provide material for fencing and charcoal making and is now a chestnut coppice with anemones and bluebells.

Penenden derives from the Saxon word 'pinian' meaning '*to punish*'. Penenden is first recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086 as 'Pinnedenna' and later as Pinnenden, Pickenden, Pinenden and Pennenden.

Penenden Heath is centrally placed in the County of Kent and was the ancient Saxon centre of legal administration, continuing as a venue for Shire Moots or Courts, an early form of representative democracy. Twice a year both lay and spiritual magnates – Bishops, Earls, Abbots or Lords – met to allocate the gold, which had been collected by the Shire-reeve, the King's representative. The Shires were divided into Hundreds, an administrative division, from where the nearby *Chiltern Hundred Inn*, sited at the crossroads, probably derived its name.

The Heath continued as an important place of courts and executions, gatherings and assemblies as well as a cattle market.

Shortly after the Norman Conquest of 1066 an assembly, lasting three days, was held involving a dispute between Odo Bishop of Bayeux, half brother of William the Conqueror, previously the Earl of Kent and primary landowner of the region and Lafranc, Archbishop of Canterbury. Odo was suspected of defrauding the church and the crown during his tenure as Earl of Kent and Lafranc requested an inquiry into Odo's activities. William I ordered that the assembly be formed at Penenden Heath and the nobles of the country were called, whereby the trial ended in the partial recovery of property from Odo.

In 1381, Wat Tyler gathered a mob at Penenden as a direct revolt against wage freezes and the poll tax, he led the protestors from Penenden heath down union street and into Maidstone before marching on London to confront Richard II. George Goring, Earl of Norwich and leader of the Kent Royalists during the civil war, gathered 7000 men at Penenden in May 1648 to defend Maidstone from the Roundhead Army of Lord Fairfax; he was unsuccessful.

In 1798 Edward Hasted in his *History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent*, described Penenden Heath as “a place made famous in early times” that was “time out of mind used for all county meetings, and for the general business of it”. He describes a county house or a ‘poor low shed’ located on the north side of it, where the sheriff held his monthly county court.

In 1828 a large gathering was held to debate the issue of Protestant Ascendancy before the passing of the Catholic relief Act of 1829. A report on the assembly by Richard Lalor Sheil described the heath as a “gently sloping amphitheatrical declivity”.

Alfred Tennyson, Poet Laureate of Great Britain and Ireland, referred to Penenden Heath in his 1875 drama ‘Queen Mary’ about the 1554 rebellion.

Gallows Hill, Gallows Wood and Hangman’s Lane testify to the Heaths history of executions that had taken place from Anglo Saxon times. Witches were tried and burnt at the stake from the 12th to 17<sup>th</sup> century and in a map of 1804 the heath lies to the north and south of Penenden Heath Road and the gallows are clearly marked to the south of the crossroads. The accused were tried and convicted on the Heath and then marched up the hill to the gallows, three trees of which one still remains. Before 1820 prisoners were transported there by cart from which they were “turned off” but in the 1820’s a “new drop” style gallows with a trapdoor was introduced. The bodies were then taken to the wood for burial; when the clock was built at the crossroads some 300 skeletons were uncovered. From 1862 executions applied only to those convicted of murder. The last public execution at Penenden heath, was carried out by William Calcraft on Christmas Eve 1830 when John Dyke from the nearby village of Bearsted, William Packman (20 yrs.) and Henry Packman (18 yrs.) were hanged for burning a ‘rick’ belonging to William Wraight of Blean, they were



later found to be innocent of the crime. In 1831 a new gallows was built outside Maidstone prison and executions were carried out there.

The Heath has also been the site of recreation and in 1795 and 1807 was the venue for a cricket match between a team from Kent and the England team. England were the victors in 1795 but Kent prevailed in 1807. In 1882 The Earl of Romney following landscaping, the Earl of Romney presented the Heath to the people of Maidstone for use as a recreation ground.

Some remnants of the heathland and its environment remain. Mature lime trees line the boundaries to the recreation ground along with large oak, chestnut, hawthorn, sycamore and ash. To the east is Fullingpits wood where 'fullers earth' was quarried to supply the wool processing and paper making industries that once thrived here.

**5.3** 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 (500m radius centered on each site of the PDA), followed by a full record of archaeological sites, monuments and records within the site's immediate vicinity. Time scales for archaeological periods represented in the report are listed on page 13 in **Table 1**.

A preliminary review of the cultural heritage data shows that the site has archaeological potential.

#### **5.4 Scheduled Monuments; Listed Buildings; Historic Parks & Gardens and Conservation Areas**

No monuments, events, listed buildings; historic parks & gardens or conservation areas are recorded within the confines of the proposed development area (PDA) or are visible from the PDA.

The report has accessed various sources of information to identify any known heritage assets, which may be located within the vicinity of the Proposed Development Area. Archaeological investigations, both recent and historic have been studied and the information from these investigations has been incorporated in the assessment.

In 1915, within 100m of the south boundary of the PDA, which at one time would have been the adjacent field, an early Bronze Age flint dagger was uncovered in the nursery grounds of G Bunyard & Son (TQ 75 NE 8). The dagger is now on display in the Maidstone Museum. Approximately 200ms southwest of the PDA is Chiltern Cottage; a Grade II listed building dating between 1767-1832 (TQ 75 NE 750). The cottage was once a pair of cottages that lay within the grounds of the Chiltern Hundred Inn. 300ms west of the PDA is an undated milestone located on Heath Road (TQ 75 NE 291) and Penenden Heath, the site of an ancient Saxon centre of legal administration and of the mustering of Kentish radicals by Wat Tyler in 1381, developed in 1882 into a recreation ground by the Earl of Romney (TQ 75 NE 873). Approximately 500ms northwest of the PDA are two farmsteads; Harbourland Farm (MKE 847 36) is a loose courtyard with working agricultural buildings to three sides and a detached grade II listed farmhouse (TQ 75 NE 786) side-on to the yard, set within a hamlet; Out Farm (MKE 847 71), is a surviving field barn from a demolished farmstead, located southwest of the Stonehouse, in an isolated position.

## 6. ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

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

The close proximity to the river and woodland would have provided an area full of natural resources for ancient peoples to exploit. The field adjacent to the PDA was the location of the discovery of an early Bronze Age flint dagger in 1915 that is now on display in the Maidstone museum. Therefore the potential for finding remains dating to the Prehistoric within the confines of the PDA is considered **Moderate**.

### 6.2 Iron Age

There are no known settlements within 1km of the PDA and no Iron Age remains have been recorded within the vicinity of the PDA, therefore the potential for finding remains dating to the Iron Age within the confines of the PDA is considered **Low**.

### **6.3 Romano-British**

The Romano-British activity appears to centre around Maidstone and there are no records that reflect Romano-British activity within the search area, therefore, the potential for finding remains dating to Romano-British archaeology in the research area is considered to be **Low**.

### **6.4 Anglo-Saxon**

Penenden Heath just west of the PDA was the site of an ancient Saxon centre of legal administration and would therefore have been a highly important site within the local area bringing with it all types of historical occupation and activity. Therefore it is reasonable to conclude that the potential for finding remains dating to the Anglo-Saxon period in the PDA is considered as **High**.

### **6.5 Medieval**

The area around Penenden Heath has been subject to continuous human occupation since at least the Bronze Age and Penenden Heath itself was the site of the meeting for the landowners of Kent to give details concerning their lands and possessions for the Domesday Survey in 1086 and the place where Wat Tyler gathered the Kentish Rebels in 1381 before marching on the Archbishop's prison in Maidstone. A footpath leading to Heath Wood and Penenden Heath to the south boundary of the PDA has been in situ since at least 1867 and is probably older in use. The Heath was the location of criminal trials and the gallows were sited just south of the PDA. Records show that the deceased were buried in woods nearby and although there are no KHER records relating to the medieval period the potential for finding remains on the development site is considered as **High**.

### **6.6 Post-Medieval and Modern**

Chiltern Cottage just south of the PDA was originally two cottages, within the grounds of Chiltern Hundred Inn, dating from 1767 to 1832 but is now one house (TQ 75 NE 750). The construction is red brick with half hipped tiled roof and two hipped dormers, three chimneys and a hipped weather porch. Penenden Heath was developed into a recreation ground of tennis courts, bowling and putting greens, set

in formal gardens by the Earl of Romney in 1882 (TQ 75 NE 873). Therefore the potential for finding remains dating to the post-medieval period is considered as **moderate**.

## 6.7 Summary of Potential

The desk-based assessment has considered the archaeological potential of the site but this potential can only be tested by fieldwork. Research has shown that the PDA may contain archaeological sites and these can be summarised as:

- Prehistoric: **Moderate**
- Iron Age: **Low**
- Roman: **Low**
- Anglo-Saxon: **High**
- Medieval: **High**
- Post-Medieval: **Moderate**
- Modern: **Low**

## 7. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### 7.1 Introduction

Cartographic Regression, Topographical Analysis, and Historic Research have provided evidence for the historic use of the site. By collating this information we have assessed the impact on previous archaeological remains through the following method of categorisation:

- **Total Impact** - Where the area has undergone a destructive process to a depth that would in all probability have destroyed any archaeological remains e.g. construction, mining, quarrying, archaeological evaluations etc.
- **High Impact** – Where the ground level has been reduced to below natural geographical levels that would leave archaeological remains partly in situ

either in plan or section e.g. the construction of roads, railways, buildings, strip foundations etc.

- **Medium Impact** – Where there has been low level or random disturbance of the ground that would result in the survival of archaeological remains in areas undisturbed e.g. the installation of services, pad-stone or piled foundations, temporary structures etc.
- **Low Impact** – Where the ground has been penetrated to a very low level e.g. farming, landscaping, slab foundation etc.

## 7.2 Existing Impacts

7.2.1 Cartographic regression (4.1.3), Topographic analysis (4.1.4) and Historical research (5.2) indicate that PDA has remained ancient woodland and open fields. In recent times, the construction of the motorway had a serious impact on the northeast and northwest of the site. This will have significantly affected any buried archaeological deposits, however, there is the potential for survival in the southeast of the field and to some degree in the centre of the woodland around the area of the ancient footpaths that once traversed it. Therefore, previous impacts through construction and excavation are considered **medium**.

7.2.2 Agriculture became gradually more intense over time and by the modern era it was mechanised. Although the farming process rarely penetrates below the upper layers of the ground, plough truncation can have a significant impact on preserved shallow deposits. The site has remained ancient woodland and open fields. In the modern period the field formed part of a nursery and so presumably was subject to some form of agriculture and the wood was harvested every fifteen years. Agricultural processes and the cultivation of trees would have disturbed the upper ground levels, therefore, the impact of farming and root damage on shallow deposits is considered to be **Medium**.

### 7.3 Proposed Impacts

#### 7.3.1 The general development of the site

At the time of preparing this archaeological assessment, the extent of the proposed development was for the construction of residential housing, with the additional construction of vehicular access, associated car parking and landscaping.

7.3.2 The very nature of construction can have a negative impact on below ground deposits through the movement of plant, general ground disturbance and contamination and excavation. Therefore, extensive impact can be expected within the development area once construction begins.

7.3.3 With due consideration to the impacts sited above the following is an assessment of the specific impacts and their relation to this development:

- Ground contamination from the storage and use of materials may have an adverse effect on soil sampling and recording of shallow deposits – **Medium impact**
- Ground vibration, weight displacement and surface disturbance from the movement and use of plant and machinery may cause disruption of shallow features and deposits – **Medium impact**
- Ground penetration from the erection of access equipment, barriers etc. could result in isolated damage to shallow features and deposits – **Medium impact**
- Landscaping may result in the displacement of shallow features and deposits – **Medium impact**
- Ground stripping and levelling could remove shallow deposits and features and leave the archaeological horizon open to damage or destruction from the foot, plant or vehicle traffic – **High impact**
- Trenching for the installation of services may involve the removal of shallow deposits or features and further damage the archaeological horizon sited immediately below or neighbouring archaeology – **High impact**

- The excavation of the foundations may result in the entire removal of the archaeological feature or deposit from a localised area, subsequently intruding on related neighbouring archaeology – **High impact**
- The long-term effect of the development will be in the new use of the site and changes resulting therein. In this case the contamination, destruction and removal of archaeological deposits through the construction process, the severing of the historical link between the surrounding Penenden Heath and Gallows Wood as an area of social and political importance – **High impact**

#### **7.4 Proposed mitigation for the impact of the construction process**

In addition to the adherence to the general requirements required by HSE to increase safety, reduce risk and lessen the impact of the construction process, the following mitigation proposals are suggested:

An archaeological evaluation on the site would determine the survival of buried archaeology and if discovered, the significance of those features and deposits and mitigation strategies for their protection.

The sympathetic naming of roads or buildings within the development could provide a connection with the site history (Biels & Heath) and the surrounding historical elements that bind them (Penenden, Gallows, Chiltern Hundred) or the historical figures that have been associated with them (Bishop Odo, Wat Tyler).

Beyond this, there are the impacts of localised home improvements and landscaping and higher foot traffic to and use of nearby Scheduled Ancient Monuments to consider.

### **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 has generally shown that the area to be developed is within an area of **Medium to High** archaeological potential.

## **9. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Setting of Listed Buildings**

One of the tasks of the site visit was aimed to identify any designated heritage assets within the wider context of the PDA in accordance with *The Setting of Heritage Assets – English Heritage Guidance* (English Heritage 2011). This guidance states that:

*“setting embraces all of the surroundings (land, sea, structures, features and skyline) from which the heritage asset can be experienced or that can be experienced from or with the asset”* (The Setting of Heritage Assets, English Heritage 2011).

The PDA is screened by the residential development to the south and the commercial buildings to the east and west. The M20 creates a linear visual barrier between the PDA and Kiln Wood to the north. Chiltern cottages are screened by the housing development but Penenden Heath shares intervisibility with the west of the site.

### **9.1 Archive**

Subject to any contractual requirements on confidentiality, two copies of this desk-based assessment will be submitted to Kent County Council (Heritage) 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 reliable.



### **9.3 Copyright**

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Paul Wilkinson PhD., MCifA., FRSA.

6<sup>th</sup> January 2015

## **10 REFERENCES & BIBLIOGRAPHY**

IFA (2014) STANDARD AND GUIDANCE for historic environment desk-based assessment.

National Planning Policy Framework 2012.

Data provided by Kent HER

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

HER Ref.	Location	Period	Summary
TQ 75 NE 8	SW of the site	Early Bronze Age (2350 BC to 701 BC)	Flint dagger found in adjacent field.
TQ 75 NE 750	SW of the site	Post Medieval (1767 AD to 1832 AD)	Chiltern Cottage (listed building)
TQ 75 NE 786	SE of the site	Post Medieval to Modern	Harbourland Farm House (listed building)
TQ75 NE 873	W of the site	Post Medieval to Modern	Ancient Saxon centre of legal administration.
MKE 84736	NW of the site	Post Medieval	Courtyard plan farmstead. Harbourland Farm
MKE 84771	NW of the site	Post Medieval	Farmstead. Outfarm southwest of the Stonehouse
TQ 75 NE 291	W of the site	Unknown date	Milestone on Heath Road

## Plates



Plate 1. 1940 Google Earth



Plate 2. 1960 Google Earth



Plate 3. 1990 Google Earth



Plate 4. 2003 Google Earth



Plate 5. 2006 Google Earth



Plate 6. 2015 Google Earth



Plate 7. View of Site (looking NNW)



Plate 8. View of Site (looking NNE)

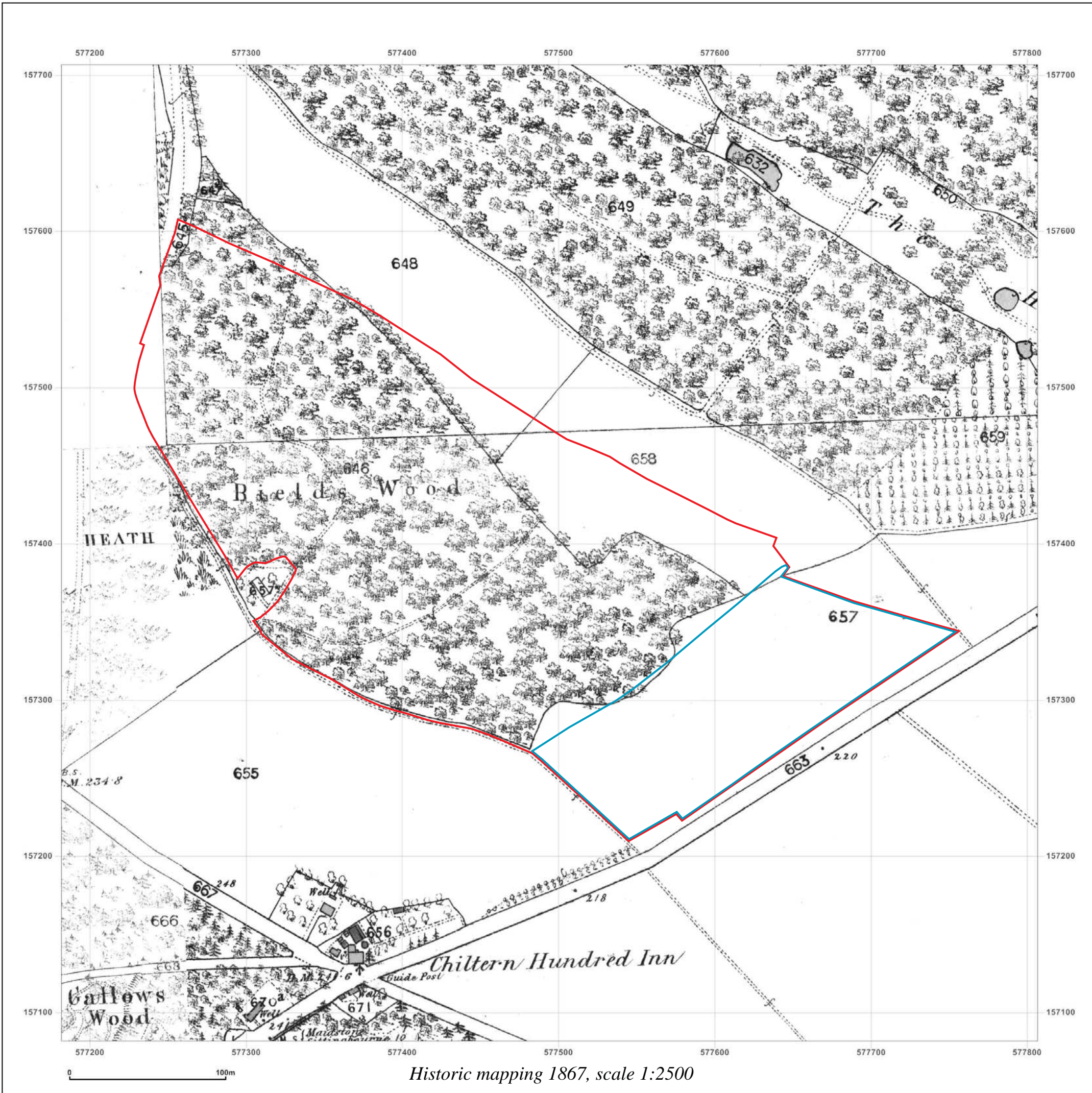


Plate 9. View of Site (looking SW)

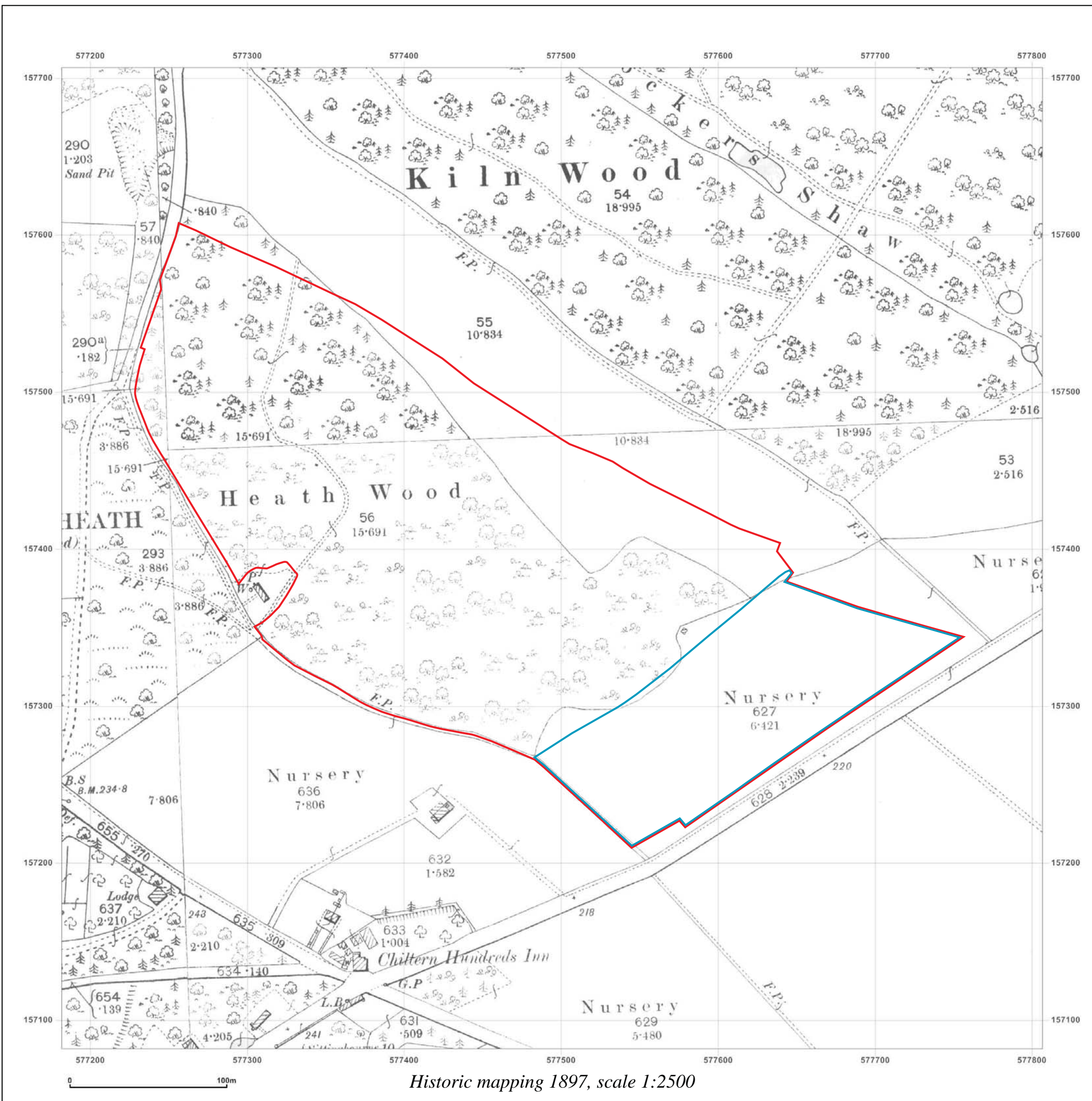


Plate 10. View of access road (looking SW)

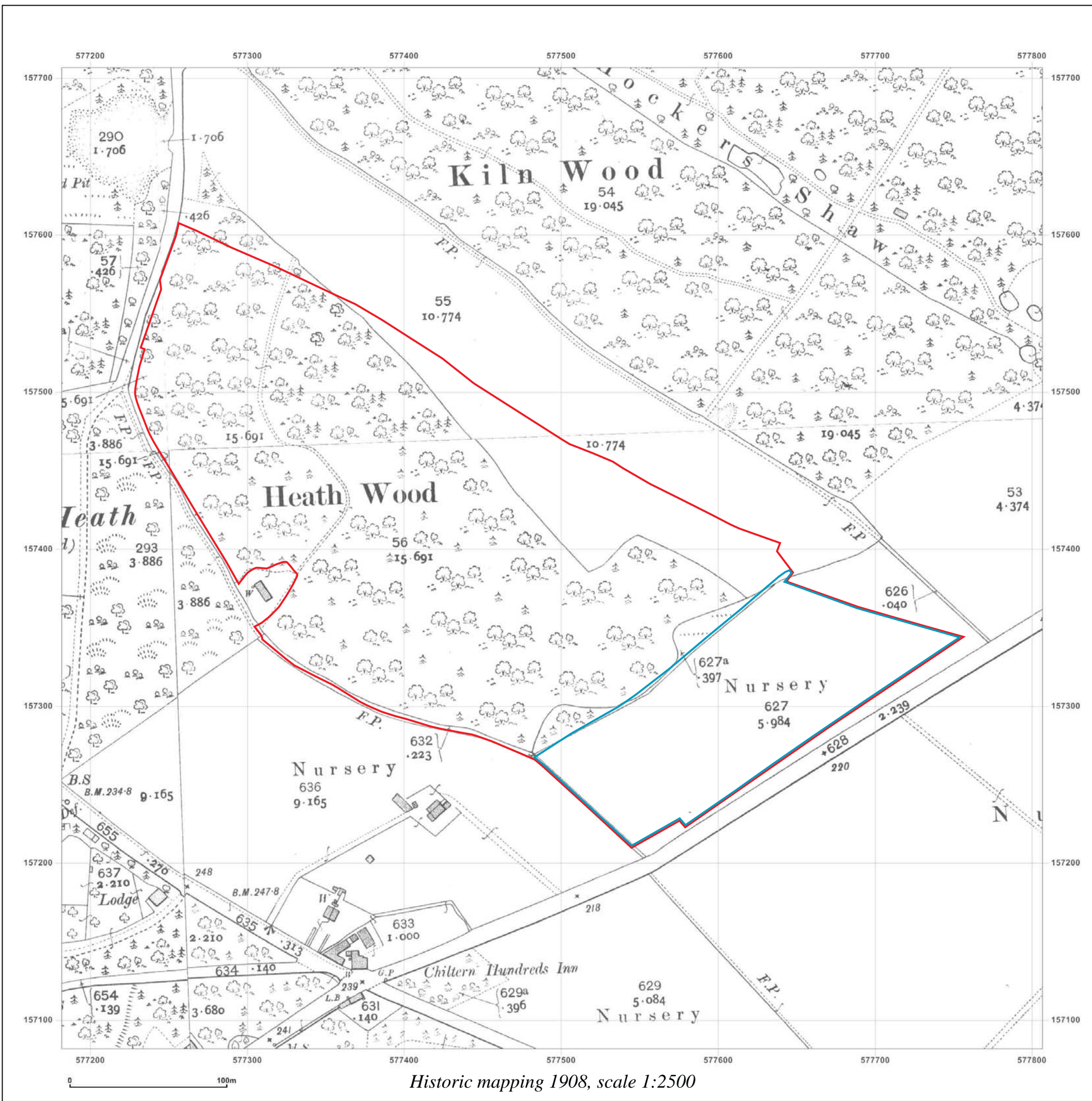
Figures 1-10



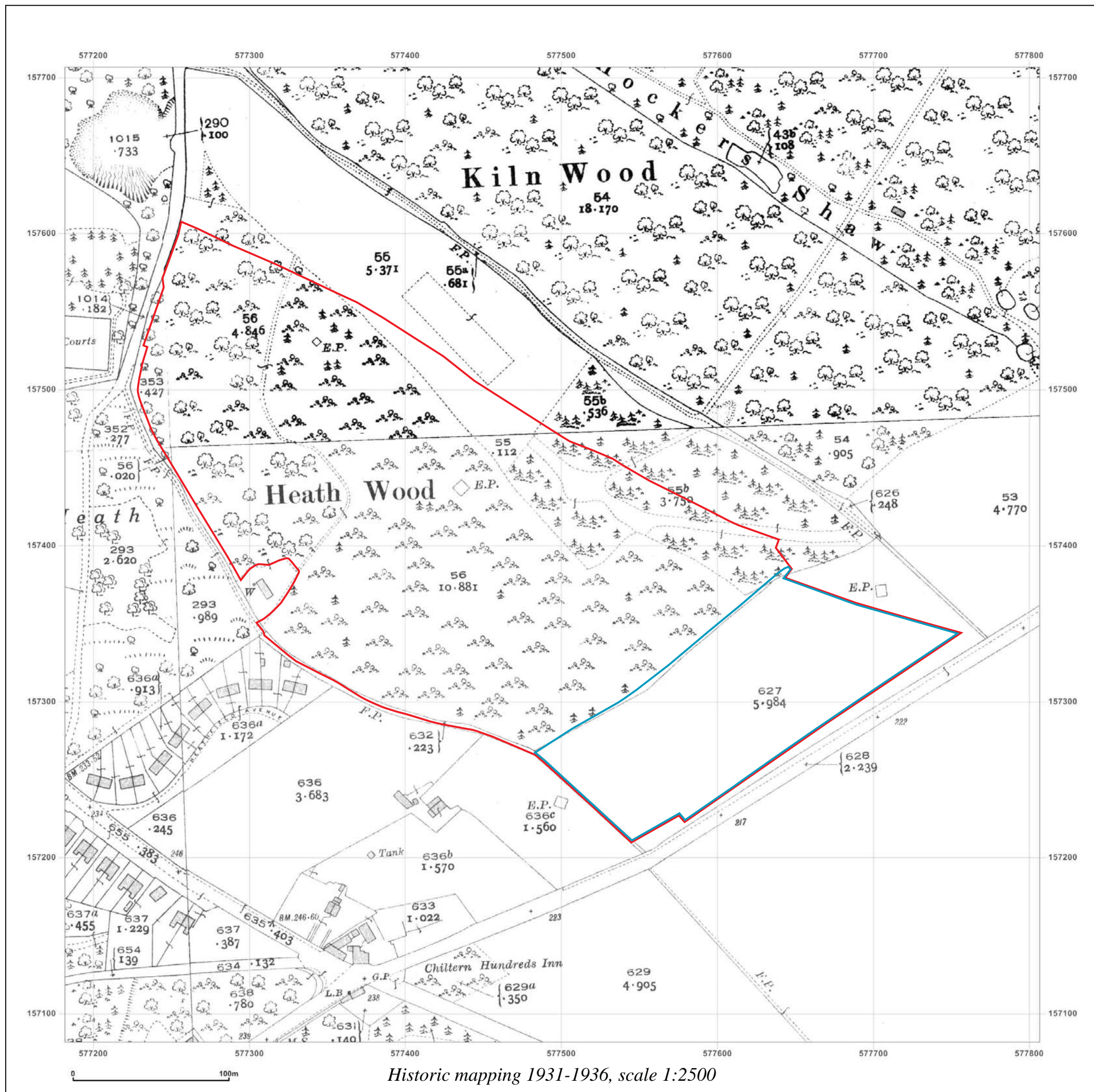




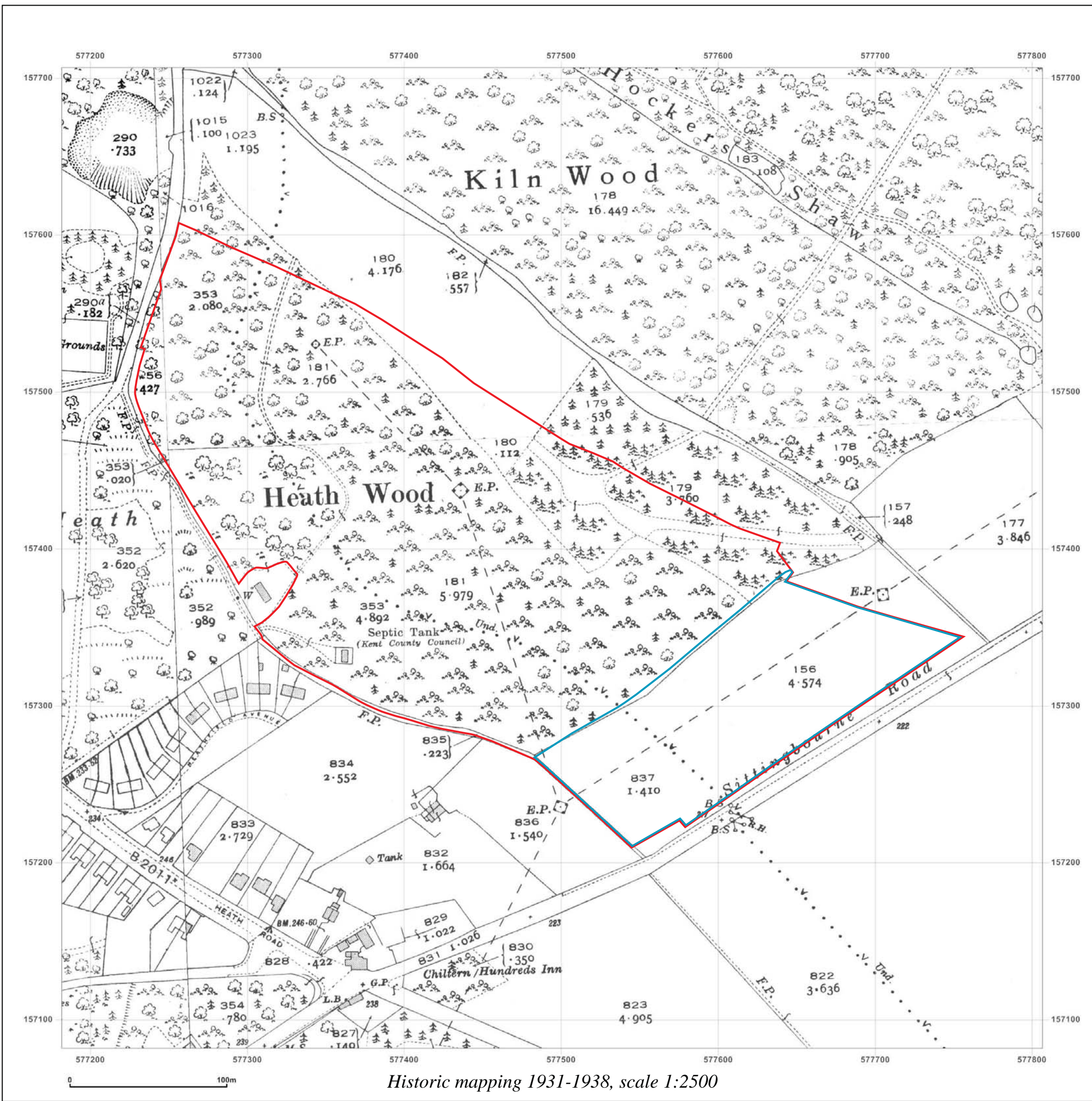
Historic mapping 1897, scale 1:2500



Historic mapping 1908, scale 1:2500

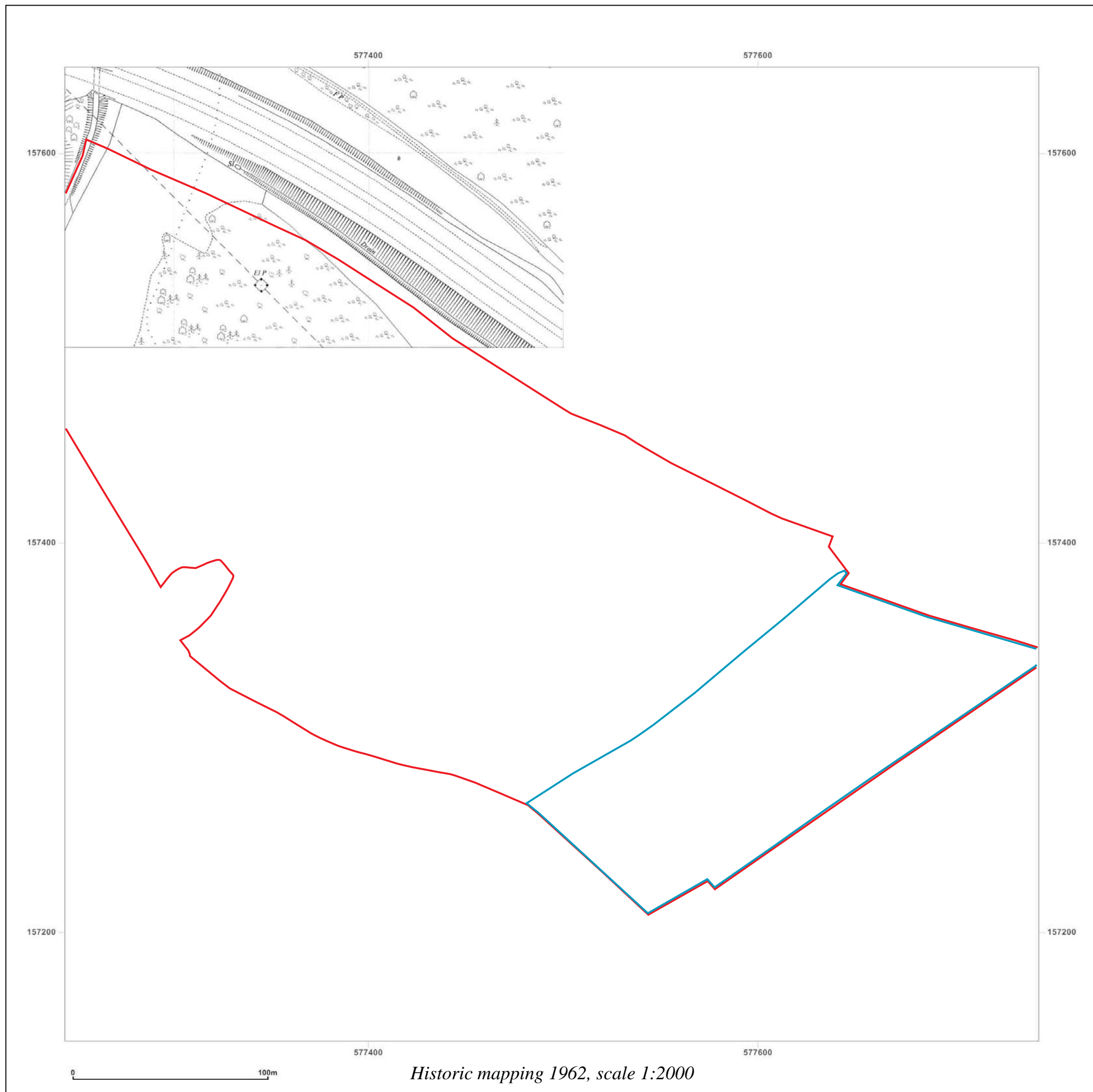


Historic mapping 1931-1936, scale 1:2500

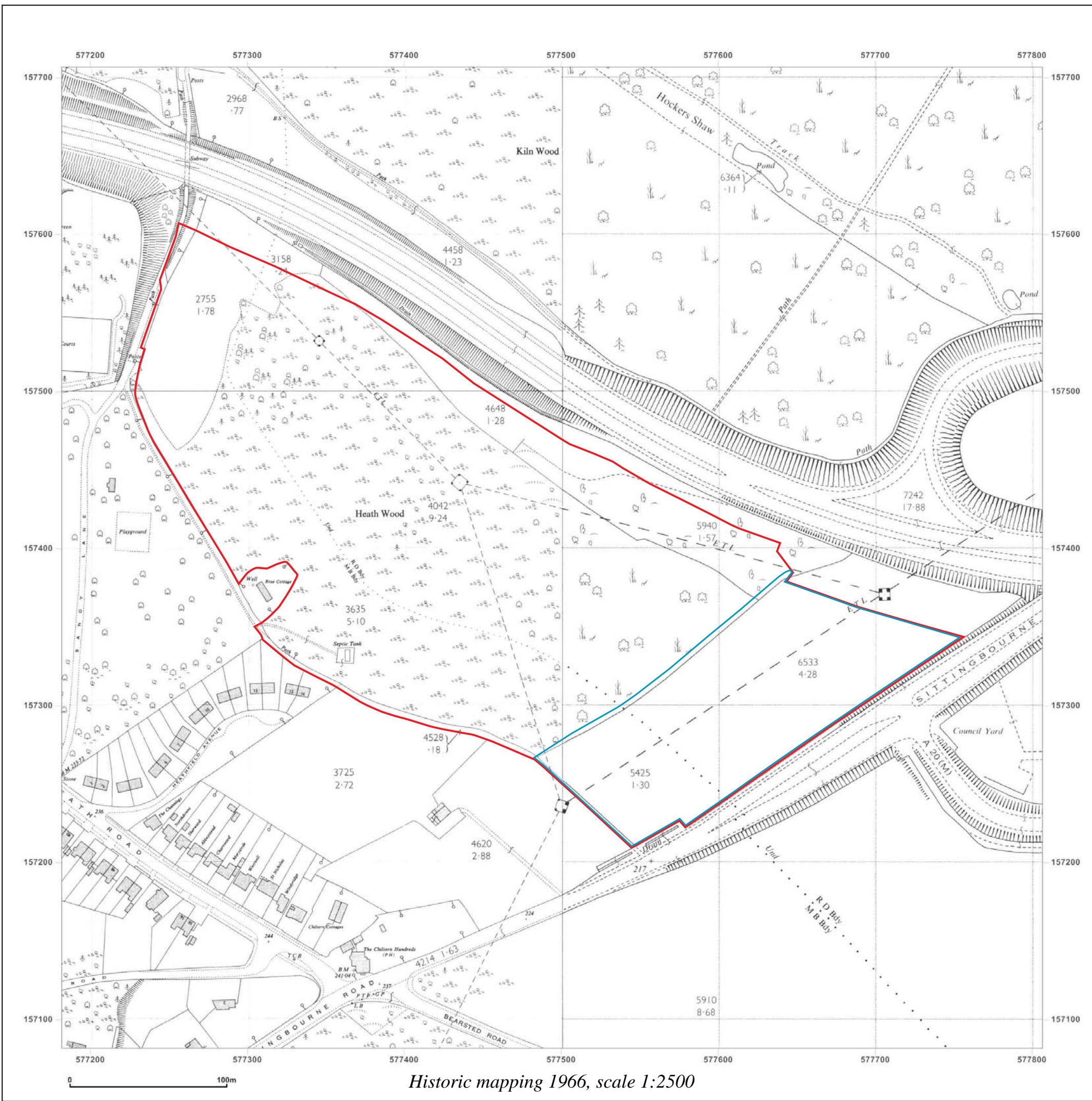


Historic mapping 1931-1938, scale 1:2500





Historic mapping 1962, scale 1:2000

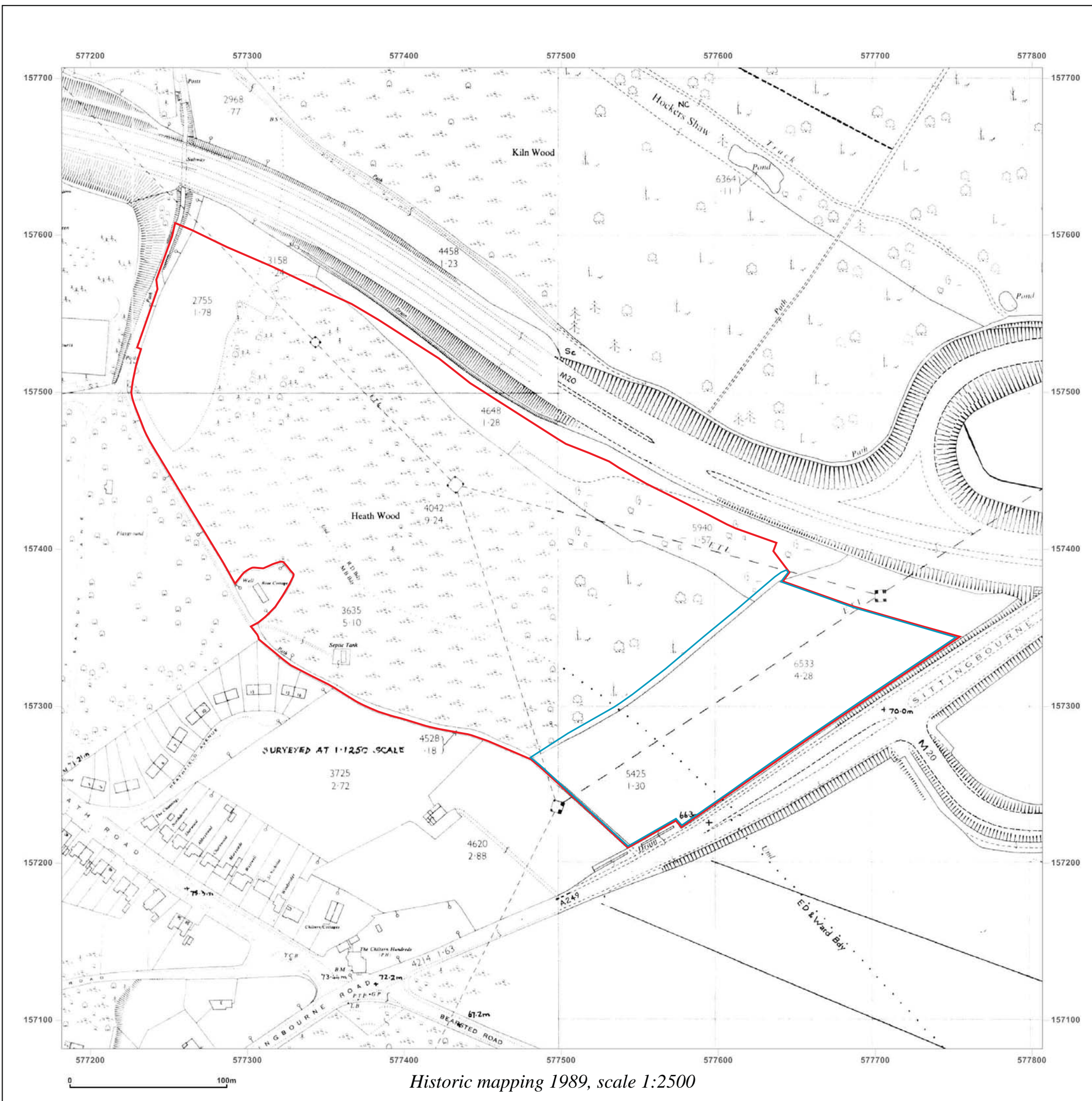


Historic mapping 1966, scale 1:2500



Historic mapping 1971, scale 1:2000

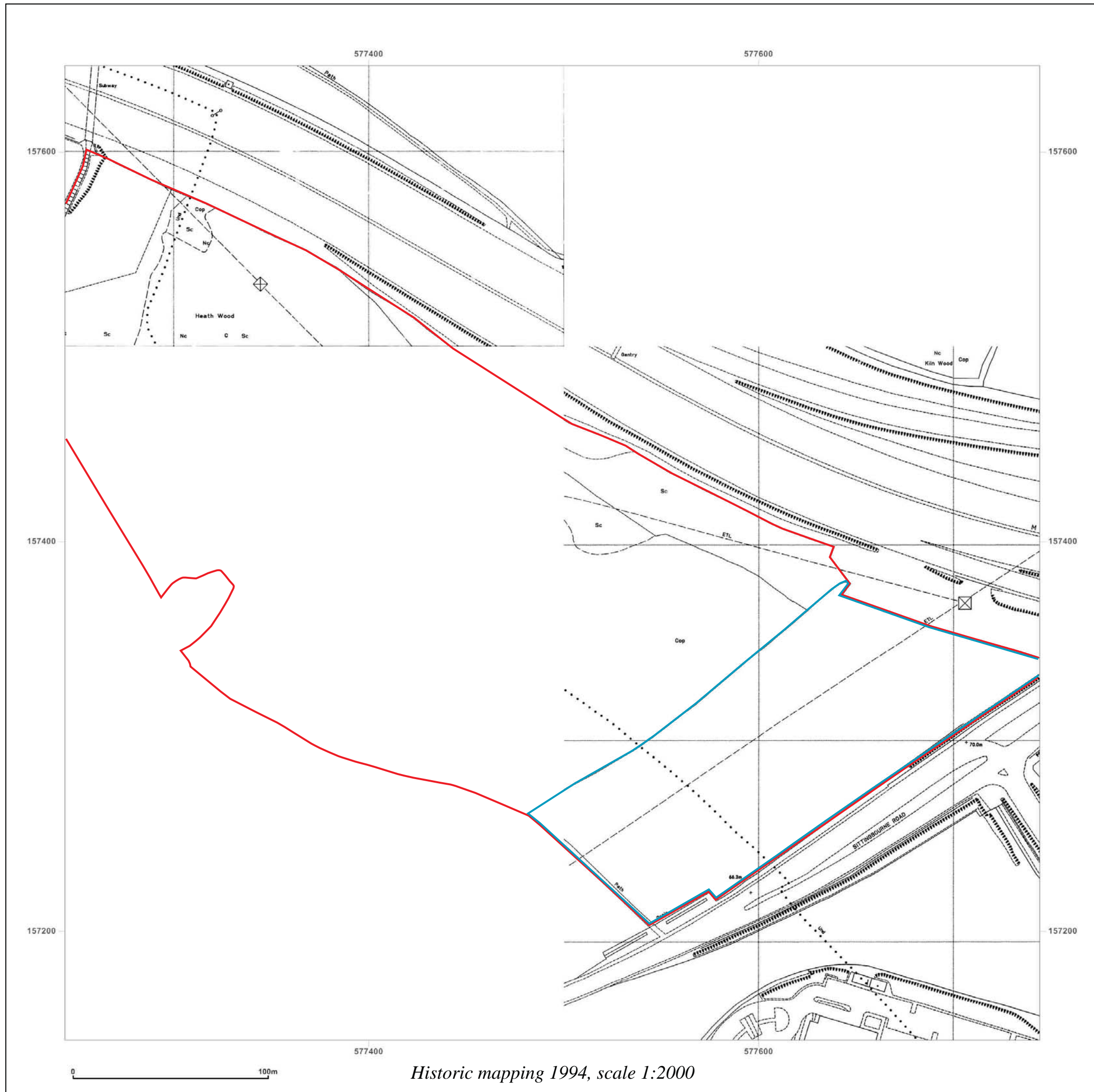




Historic mapping 1989, scale 1:2500

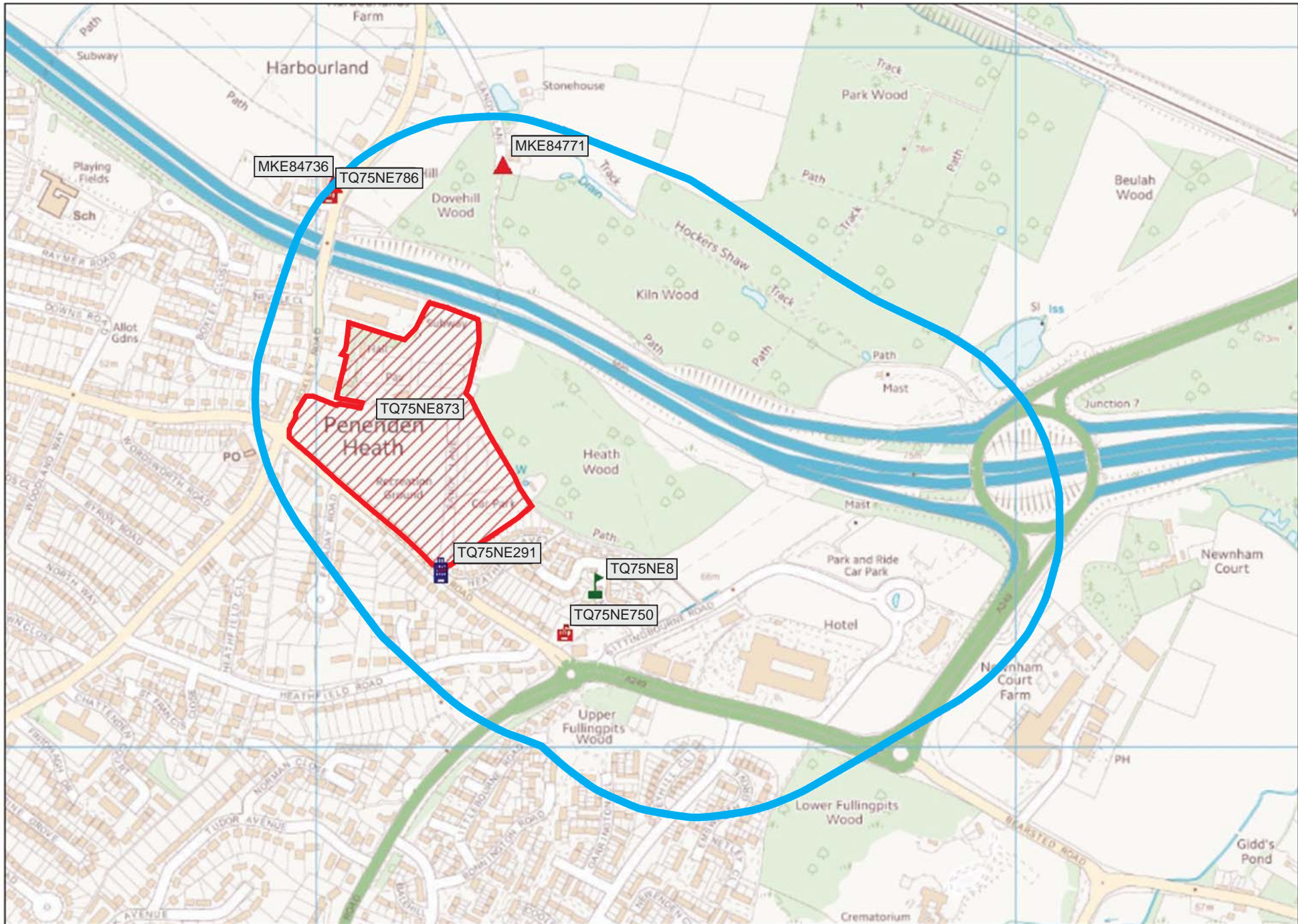


Historic mapping 1989-1993, scale 1:2000



Historic mapping 1994, scale 1:2000

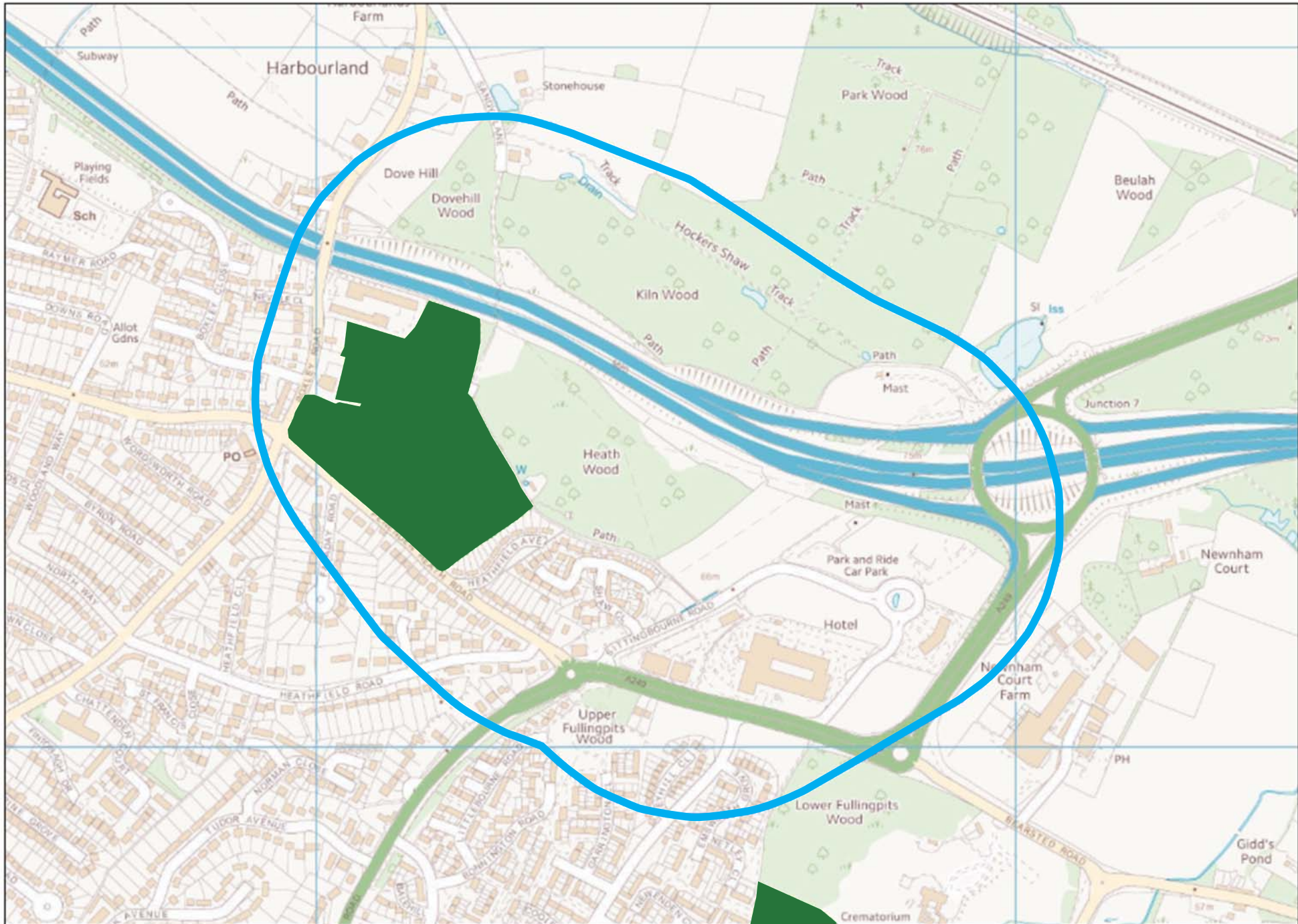
# Kent Historic Environment Record - Monuments



- Legend**
- Mon (poly)
  - HEDGE
  - MON
  - Building
  - Crash Site
  - Farmstead
  - Findspot
  - Listed Building
  - Landscape
  - Maritime
  - Monument
  - Place



# Kent Historic Environment Record - Designations



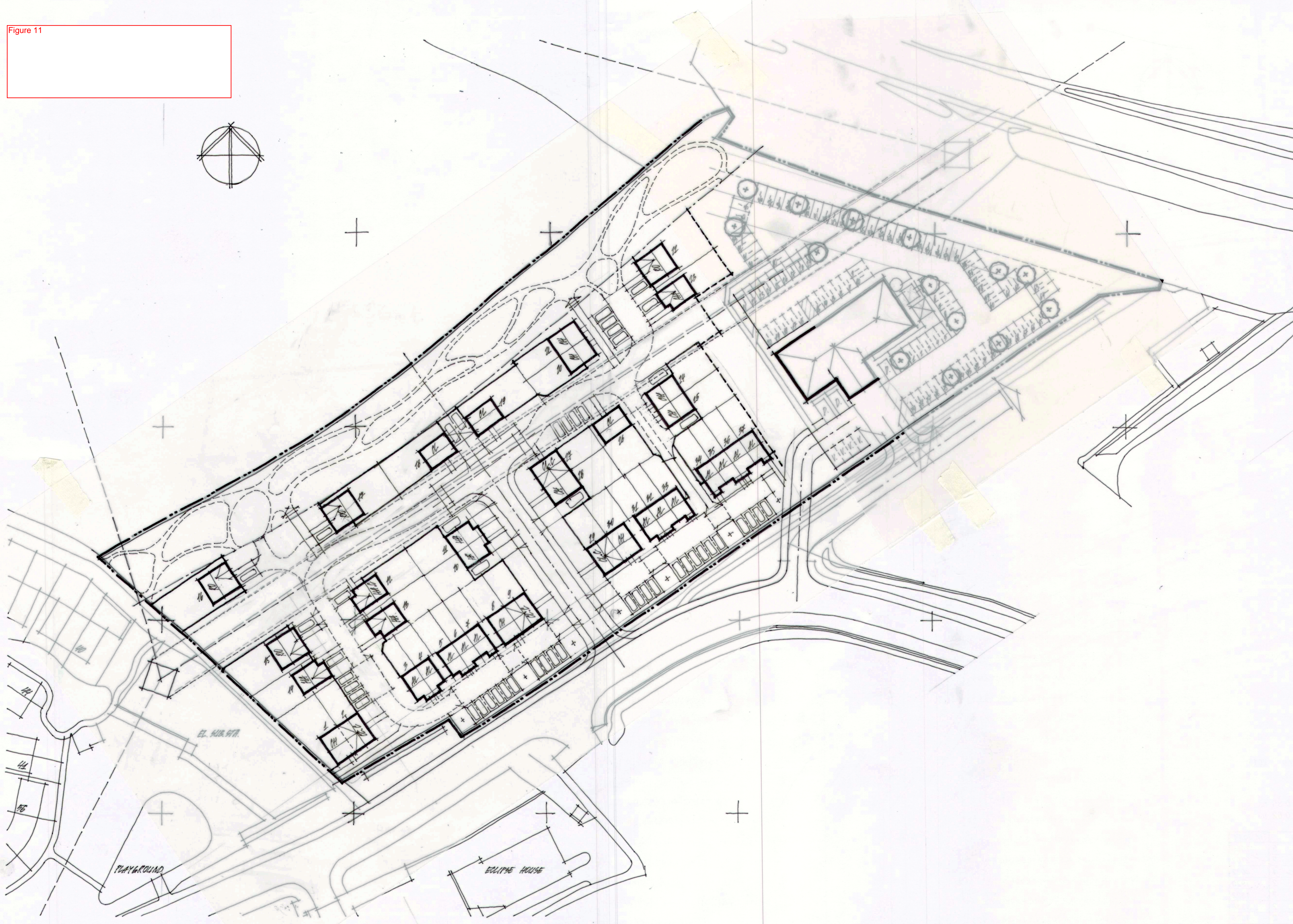
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0 70 140 280 Metres



Figure 11



EL. 110.00

PLAYGROUND

ELLIPTIC HOUSE

MAPSTONE, PENNEDEN HEATH.

PROPOSED SITE LAYOUT

SCALE 1:500 @ A1.

30.04.05

