

# Built Heritage Statement in advance of development of the former Police Station, Highfield Road, Dartford

NGR: 553833 174075



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## **SWAT ARCHAEOLOGY**

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## **Built Heritage Statement in Advance of Development of the former Police Station, Highfield Road, Dartford, Kent**

### **Summary**

*SWAT Archaeology has been commissioned to prepare a Built Heritage Statement relating to the proposed refurbishment and development of the former Police Station, Dartford in Kent.*

*There is a requirement under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) for the client to explain the significance of any particular designated heritage assets that have been identified in the vicinity of the study site and demonstrate any potential impacts that a proposal will have upon their significance.*

*This report has demonstrated that the PDA lies close to a number of Grade II listed Almshouses.*

*This statement demonstrates that the significance of the former Police Station resides in their historical and aesthetic interest. Continuing development within the PDA area for both Heritage Assets, has eroded the setting of the Heritage Asset.*

*This assessment concludes that the developments elsewhere within the PDA is such that any impact caused to the setting of the heritage assets of the former police station would be considered as less than substantial and therefore no overriding constraints are likely to prohibit development.*

*This assessment concludes that the changes to the former police station are mostly internal and will not have an impact to the setting and therefore the impact would be less than substantial. However, internally, the refurbishment may impact upon the architectural interest of the former Police station and therefore potentially impact on its significance, although the public benefits outweigh any potential harm done. This can be mitigated by undertaken a rapid assessment and internal building survey of the original police station.*

*In addition the planning proposals are for the build of a new glazed extension/entrance hall to the rear of the premises and a new lightweight single storey glazed structure to the front of the building on Highfield Road. This may impact on the unknown archaeological resource and this risk can be managed by a planning condition requiring some archaeological work.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Project Background**

1.1.1 Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT) was commissioned by the client to carry out a Built Heritage Statement relating to the refurbishment and additional build, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 553833 174075 (Fig. 1). As such this building will henceforth be known as the 'proposed development area' (PDA).

1.1.2 This document will be used in support of planning applications associated with the proposed development.

#### **1.1.3 The Site**

The proposed site sits at an average height of circa 12m. The former Dartford Police Station is adjacent to the former Dartford Magistrates Court and located on the west side of Highfield Road and to the north-east of Trinity Gardens within the environs of Dartford (Figure 1). Adjacent to the PDA (Proposed Development Area) are a number of Grade II listed Alms houses whilst to the north and adjacent to the PDA is a residential conversion of a former church renamed Church Court and also adjacent a Grade II listed Alms house (List entry 1086038). The PDA is located within the Dartford Town Centre Conservation Area (Figure 1) and in an area of archaeological potential. NGR to centre of site is 553833 174075.

1.1.4 It has been identified that within the proximity of the PDA is a designated heritage asset; the Grade II listed Almshouse building (List entry 1086038).

### **1.2 Project Constraints**

1.2.1 No constraints were associated with this project.

### **1.3 Scope of Document**

1.3.1 This assessment was requested by the Client in order to determine, as far as is possible, the nature, extent and significance of the development affecting the settings of designated heritage assets. The assessment forms part of the NPPF requirement and is intended to inform and assist with decisions regarding heritage assets and is to be used

in the support of planning applications associated with the proposed development for proposed development.

## **2 PLANNING BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Introduction**

2.1.1 National legislation and guidance relating to the protection of, and proposed development on or near, important archaeological sites or Heritage Assets within planning regulations is defined under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. In addition, local authorities are responsible for the protection of the historic environment within the planning system.

2.1.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), was published in March 2012 and is the principal document which sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It provides a framework in which Local Planning Authorities can produce their own distinctive Local Plans to reflect the needs own their communities.

### **2.2 Heritage Assets**

2.2.1 Designated heritage assets are defined in NPPF Annex 2 as:

*'World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Protected Wreck Sites, Registered Park and Gardens, Registered Battlefields and Conservation Areas designated under the relevant legislation.'*

2.2.2 Designation is a formal acknowledgement of a building, monument or site's significance, intended to make sure that the character of the asset in question is protected through the planning system and to enable it to be passed on to future generations.

2.2.3 Statutory protection is provided to certain classes of designated heritage assets under the following legislation:

- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990;
- Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979; and
- Protection of Wrecks Act 1973

## **2.3 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

2.3.1 The Historic Environment, as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012): Annex 2, comprises:

*‘all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.’*

2.3.2 NPPF Annex 2 defines a Heritage Asset as:

*‘a building monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage assets include designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing)’.*

2.3.3 NPPF Section 12: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment sets out the principal national guidance on the importance, management and safeguarding of heritage assets within the planning process. The aim of NPPF Section 12 is to ensure that Local Planning Authorities, developers and owners of heritage assets adopt a consistent approach to their conservation and to reduce complexity in planning policy relating to proposals that affect them.

2.3.4 Paragraph 126 of the NPPF states that:

*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.*

2.3.5 Paragraph 128 of the NPPF states that:

*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.*

2.3.6 Paragraph 129 of the NPPF states that:

*Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including, by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.*

2.3.7 The NPPF, Section 12, therefore provides the guidance to which local authorities need to refer when setting out a strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment in their Local Plans. It is noted within this, that heritage assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

2.3.8 The NPPF further provides definitions of terms which relate to the historic environment in order to clarify the policy guidance given. For the purposes of this report, the following are important to note:

- **Heritage Asset.** This is ‘a building, monument, Site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions’. These include designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority.
- **Significance.** The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. This interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.

2.3.9 The NPPF advises local authorities to take into account the following points when drawing up strategies for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment;

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

2.3.10 In order to determine applications for development, Paragraph 128 (2.3.5 above) of the NPPF states that LPAs should require applicants to describe the significance of the heritage assets affected and the contribution made by their setting. Adding that the level of detail provided should be proportionate to the significance of the asset and sufficient to understand the impact of the proposal on this significance.

2.3.11 According to Paragraph 129, the LPA should also identify and assess the significance of a heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal and should take this assessment into account when considering the impact upon the heritage asset

2.3.12 Paragraphs 132 and 136 consider the impact of a proposed development upon the significance of a heritage asset.

2.3.13 Paragraph 132 emphasises that when a new development is proposed, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation and that the more important the asset, the greater this weight should be. It is noted within this paragraph that significance can be harmed or lost through the alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or by development within its setting. Adding, as heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a Grade II Listed Building or Registered Park or Garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably Scheduled Monuments, Protected Wreck Sites, Battlefields, Grade I and II\* Listed Buildings, Grade I and II\* Registered Parks and Gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.

2.3.14 Paragraph 133 states that where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- The nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the Site; and
- No viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
- Conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- The harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the Site back into use.

2.3.15 Conversely, paragraph 133 notes that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

2.3.16 Paragraph 136 states that LPAs should not permit loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred.

2.3.17 Paragraph 137 encourages LPAs to look for new development opportunities within Conservation Areas, and states that developments which better reveal or enhance the significance of a designated heritage asset and its setting, will be looked upon favourably.

#### *Curtilage*

2.3.18 Historic England defines curtilage for the purposes of the listed building legislation, as an area of land around a listed building within which other buildings pre-dating July 1948 may potentially be considered listed. Not all buildings will have a curtilage. With those that do there will be cases where the extent of the curtilage will be clear (such as a garden boundary) but in others it may not be as clear each case will always be a question of fact and degree. A decision taker may take the following factors into account in assessing the matter: i) the physical layout of the listed building and the building; ii) their ownership past and present; and their use or function past and present specifically whether the building was ancillary (i.e. subordinate to and dependent on) the purposes of the listed building at the date of listing.

## **2.4 Planning Policy Guidance**

### *Conservation Principles, Policy and Guidance (Historic England, 2008)*

2.4.1 Historic England sets out in this document a logical approach to making decisions and offering guidance about all aspects of England's historic environment. The Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance are primarily intended to help us to ensure consistency of approach in carrying out our role as the Government's statutory advisor on the historic environment in England. Specifically, they make a contribution to addressing the challenges of modernising heritage protection by proposing an integrated approach to making decisions, based on a common process.

2.4.2 The document explains its relationship to other policy documents in existence at that time, including Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (2005), which includes the explicit objective of 'protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment' In this document, Heritage England provide detailed guidance on sustaining the historic environment within the framework of established government policy. In particular, the document distils from Planning Policy Guidance note (PPG) 15 Planning and the Historic Environment (1994) and PPG16 Archaeology

and Planning (1990) those general principles which are applicable to the historic environment as a whole. PPG15 and PPG16 was replaced by the NPPF in November 2012.

2.4.3 The policy document provides details about a range of Heritage Values, which enable the significance of assets to be established systematically, with the four main 'heritage values' being:

- **Evidential value.** This derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity. Physical remains of past human activity are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them especially in the absence of written records, the material record, particularly archaeological deposits, provides the only source of evidence about the distant past.
- **Historical Value.** This derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. It tends to be illustrative or associative. Illustration depends on visibility in a way that evidential value (for example, of buried remains) does not. Places with illustrative value will normally also have evidential value, but it may be of a different order of importance. Association with a notable family, person, event, or movement gives historical value a particular resonance.
- **Aesthetic value.** This derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place. Aesthetic values can be the result of the conscious design of a place, including artistic endeavour. Equally, they can be the seemingly fortuitous outcome of the way in which a place has evolved and been used over time.
- **Communal value.** This derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory. Communal values are closely bound up with historical (particularly associative) and aesthetic values but tend to have additional and specific aspects. These can be commemorative and symbolic values reflect the meanings of a place for those who draw part of their identity from it or have emotional links to it. Social value is associated with places that people

perceive as a source of identity, distinctiveness, social interaction and coherence. Spiritual value attached to places can emanate from the beliefs and teachings of an organised religion, or reflect past or present-day perceptions of the spirit of place.

*Historic Environment Good Practice in Planning Notes*

2.4.4 In March 2015, Heritage England produced three Good Practice Advice in Planning (GPA) notes. The notes provided information on good practice to assist local authorities, planning and other consultants, owners, applicants and other interested parties in implementing historic environment policy in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the related guidance given in the National Planning Practice Guide (PPG). GPA1 covered 'The Historic Environment in Local Plans'. GPA2 provided advice on 'Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment' and GPA3 covered 'The Setting of Heritage Assets'. As at March 2017, GPA4 entitled 'Enabling Development and Heritage Assets' was still in draft.

*GPA2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment.*

2.4.5 The guidance focuses on understanding the significance of any affected heritage asset and, if relevant, the contribution of its setting to its significance. The significance of a heritage asset is the sum of its archaeological, architectural, historic, and artistic interest. The document sets out a number of stages to follow:

- Understand the significance of the affected assets
- Understand the impact of the proposal on that significance
- Avoid, minimise and mitigate impact in a way that meets the objectives of the NPPF
- Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance
- Justify any harmful impacts in terms of the sustainable development objective of conserving significance and the need for change

- Offset negative impacts on aspects of significance by enhancing others through recording, disseminating and archiving archaeological and historical interest of the important elements of the heritage assets affected

2.4.6 Since heritage assets may be affected by direct physical change or by change in their setting. It is important to be able properly assess the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting early in the process to assist with any planning decision-making in line with legal requirements.

*GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets.*

2.4.7 This document emphasises that the information required in support of applications for planning permission and listed building consents should be no more than is necessary to reach an informed decision, and that activities to conserve or invest need to be proportionate to the significance of the heritage assets affected and the impact on the significance of those heritage assets.

2.4.8 The NPPF makes it clear that the setting of a heritage asset is the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

2.4.9 The contribution of setting to the significance of a heritage asset is often expressed by reference to views, a purely visual impression of an asset or place which can be static or dynamic, including a variety of views of, across, or including that asset, and views of the surroundings from or through the asset, and may intersect with, and incorporate the settings of numerous heritage assets.

2.4.10 It covers areas such as cumulative change, where the significance of a heritage asset has been compromised in the past by unsympathetic development affecting its setting, to accord with NPPF policies, consideration still needs to be given to whether additional change will further detract from, or can enhance, the significance of the asset. Change over time and understanding any history of change will help to determine how further development within the asset's setting is likely to affect the contribution made by setting to the significance of the heritage asset.

2.4.11 The implications of development affecting the setting of heritage assets to be considered on a case-by-case basis and since conservation decisions are based on the nature, extent and level of a heritage asset's significance, Historic England recommends the following broad approach to assessment, undertaken as a series of steps:

- Step 1: Identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected.
- Step 2: Assess whether, how and to what degree these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s).
- Step 3: Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance.
- Step 4: Explore the way to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm.
- Step 5: Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.

2.4.12 The guidance reiterates the NPPF in stating that where developments affecting the setting results in 'substantial' harm to significance, this harm can only be justified if the developments delivers substantial public benefit and that there is no other alternative (i.e. redesign or relocation).

2.4.13 Historic England has also published three core Advice Notes, which provide detailed and practical advice on how national policy and guidance is implemented. These documents include; 'Historic England Advice Note 1: Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management' (25th February 2016), 'Historic England Advice Note 2: Making Changes to Heritage Assets' (25th February 2016) and 'Historic England Advice Note 3: The Historic Environment and Site Allocations in Local Plans' (30th October 2015).

## **2.5 Local Policy**

The Dartford Development Policies Plan (2017) and the Core Strategy Local Plan (2011) lists the following policies relevant to archaeology:

Policy DP12: Historic Environment Strategy

Policy CS2: Dartford Town Centre

Policy CS3: Northern gateway Strategic Site

Policy CS4: Ebbsfleet to Stone Priority Area

Policy CS6: Thames Waterfront

### **3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

3.1.1 This Built Heritage Statement was commissioned by the client, which will be submitted with any future planning application. This assessment has been prepared in accordance with guidelines set out by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (see below).

#### **3.2 Heritage Asset Assessment – Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2017)**

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

*‘Desk-based assessment will determine, as far as is reasonably possible from existing records, the nature, extent and significance of the historic environment within a specified area. Desk-based assessment will be undertaken using appropriate methods and practices which satisfy the stated aims of the project, and which comply with the Code of conduct and other relevant regulations of ClfA. In a development context desk-based assessment will establish the impact of the proposed development on the significance of the historic environment (or will identify the need for further evaluation to do so) and will enable reasoned proposals and decisions to be made whether to mitigate, offset or accept without further intervention that impact.’*

(2017:4)

3.2.2 The purpose of the Heritage Asset report is, therefore, an assessment that provides a contextual archaeological record, in order to provide:

- *an assessment of the potential for heritage assets to survive within the area of study*
- *an assessment of the significance of the known or predicted heritage assets considering, in England, their archaeological, historic, architectural and artistic interests*

- *strategies for further evaluation whether or not intrusive, where the nature, extent or significance of the resource is not sufficiently well defined*
- *an assessment of the impact of proposed development or other land use changes on the significance of the heritage assets and their settings*
- *strategies to conserve the significance of heritage assets, and their settings*
- *design strategies to ensure new development makes a positive contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of the historic environment and local place-shaping*
- *proposals for further archaeological investigation within a programme of research, whether undertaken in response to a threat or not.*

IFA (2017:4)

## **4 METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 Introduction**

4.1.1 The methodology employed during this assessment has been based upon relevant professional guidance including the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment* (CIfA, 2017).

### **4.2 Designated Heritage Assets**

4.2.1 There are a number of criteria to address and they include the impact of the proposed development on the significance of the Heritage Assets.

#### *Heritage Assets*

4.2.2 Any Heritage Asset which includes a World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Wreck, Registered Park or Garden, Conservation Area or Landscape can be identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions. Heritage Assets are the valued components of the historic environment and will include designated Heritage Assets as well as assets identified by the Local Planning Authority during the process of decision making or through the plan making process.

### *Setting*

4.2.3 The surroundings in which a Heritage Asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset or may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

### *Significance*

4.2.4 The value of a Heritage Asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance may be informed by a number of factors which may include; assessment of the significance of the site, setting and building, where relevant, under a number of headings:

- Historic significance – the age and history of the asset, its development over time, the strength of its tie to a particular architectural period, the layout of a site, the plan form of a building, internal features of special character including chimneystacks and fireplaces,
- Cultural significance – the role a site plays in an historic setting, village, town or landscape context, the use of a building perhaps tied to a local industry or agriculture, social connections of an original architect or owner,
- Aesthetic/architectural significance – the visual qualities and characteristics of the asset (settlement site or building), long views, legibility of building form, character of elevations, roofscape, materials and fabric special features of interest,
- Archaeological significance – evolution of the asset, phases of development over different periods, important features, evidence in building fabric, potential for below ground remains.

## **4.3 Sources**

4.3.1 A number of publicly accessible sources were consulted prior to the preparation of this document.

#### *Archaeological databases*

4.3.2 Although it is recognised that national databases are an appropriate resource for this particular type of assessment, the local Historic Environmental Record held at Kent County Council (KCCHER) contains sufficient data to provide an accurate insight into catalogued sites and finds within both the proposed development area and the surrounding landscape.

4.3.3 The National Heritage List for England (NHLE), which is the only official and up to date database of all nationally designated heritage assets.

#### *Cartographic and Pictorial Documents*

4.3.4 A full map regression exercise has been incorporated within this assessment. Research was carried out using resources offered by the Kent County Council, the internet, Ordnance Survey and the Kent Archaeological Society.

#### *Aerial photographs*

4.3.5 The study of the collection of aerial photographs held by Google Earth was undertaken (Plate 1).

#### *Secondary and Statutory Resources*

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

### **4.4 Walkover Survey**

4.4.1 The walkover survey is for the purpose of:

- Identifying any historic landscape features not shown on maps
- Conducting a rapid survey for archaeological features
- Making a note of any surface scatters of archaeological material
- Constraints or areas of disturbance that may affect archaeological investigation

- Consider the potential impacts of the development on the listed buildings within the area

## 5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORIC APPRAISAL

### 5.1 Archaeological and Historical Narrative

The PDA is located in the urban town of Dartford. A principal town in the county of Kent located 18 miles south east of Central London and 2 miles south of the River Thames, 3 miles downriver from Erith. Bexley is found 2.5 miles west and Gravesend 6 miles east. Dartford lies within a valley known as the London Basin through which the River Darent flows and was established around an ancient river crossing. The site is 450m west of the River Darent and 25m south of Roman Watling Street, the ancient road from Canterbury to London. The PDA falls into the Historic Landscape Characterisation of 'The Town' (Town and City 1810 Extent) and is surrounded by 'Post 1810 Settlement' (general).

- 5.1.1 During the Palaeolithic period the River Thames was a tributary of the River Rhine and was a series of channels separated by gravel and sand banks. Prehistoric hunter-gatherers followed a nomadic lifestyle, camping close to the riverbank and trapping animals at their watering holes. Flint tools found within the Dartford area are of the Acheulian and Clactonian type found at Swanscombe, located 3.5 miles east, the site of Barnfield Pit that has yielded over 100,000 flint implements suggesting industrial scale production. In 1935/6 workmen uncovered skull fragments known as Swanscombe man, that have since been identified as a young Neanderthal woman dating to the Hoxnian Interglacial, 400,000 years ago. Four hand axes were recovered in 1952 during the construction of the Dartford Technology College c.400m west of the PDA (TQ57SW21).
- 5.1.2 Local farming was first established c.5,500 years ago in the Neolithic period. Forests and woods were cleared, making way for crops and creating small fields and domestic animals were reared. Numerous flint arrowheads found within the centre of Dartford is evidence that hunting continued alongside farming. The local clay was exploited for the production of pottery; a Neolithic settlement was located in the valley of Ebsfleet where pottery has been identified as the Peterborough Phase of Neolithic culture.

An excavation in Lowfield Street c.400m north, uncovered a building dating to the late Bronze Age. Further excavation recovered boss-decorated pottery (*Deverel-Rimbury*), comb decorated pottery sherds, a small tub with a skin of basal grits (Thames Valley), a rare deposit of spelt wheat (*Triticum Spelta*) usually found on the continent, two copper-alloy pins from La Tene period 3, some animal and fish bone (TQ57SW216). Bronze Age barrows and hoards of gold brooches and bronze axes have also been found on Dartford Heath.

An excavation in Lowfield Street c.400m north, uncovered a building dating to the late Bronze Age. Further excavation recovered boss-decorated pottery (*Deverel-Rimbury*), comb decorated pottery sherds, a small tub with a skin of basal grits (Thames Valley), a rare deposit of spelt wheat (*Triticum Spelta*) usually found on the continent, two copper-alloy pins from La Tene period 3, some animal and fish bone (TQ57SW216). Bronze Age barrows and hoards of gold brooches and bronze axes have also been found on Dartford Heath.

An Iron Age village settlement is recorded at Farningham 3.8 miles south along Lowfield Street and a second Iron age site of two hut circles is recorded at Stone c.2.5 miles northeast. Pottery has been found in and around the town, particularly at Temple Hill (TQ57SW56) c.500m north and several gold, silver and copper alloy coins have been found within c.350-400m north.

Dartford developed as a small settlement during the Roman period. The Roman Road of Watling Street ran from Dover to London and crossed the River Darent at a ford known as *Derenti Vadum*. The road system meets at a 'T', where the road from the Darent Valley to the south, the route along which the PDA is located, met the road travelling east to west connecting London to the coast and the continent. Several large villa estates were built along this route at Darent, Farningham and Lullingstone, taking advantage of the rich soil of the valley and settlements grew up between Crayford and Welling to the northwest of the town. Despite the ford there is no evidence of substantial Roman settlement within Dartford and no settlement is recorded in the *Antonine Itinerary*, a route map that shows the main settlements along the Roman Roads. East Hill was the site of an important cemetery of c.150 graves possibly set around a small cemetery building. Several stone and lead coffins were recovered from the cemetery site suggesting wealthy members of the population, however only a small villa is recorded just above the town and a second recorded at Wilmington to the southwest. A Romano British settlement has been

recorded within Central Park, c.200m northeast, pits, ditches and foundations have been uncovered c.275m north and Roman pottery has been recovered at various sites within c.300m of the PDA.

There is little evidence of Saxon occupation within Dartford but several cemetery sites have been recorded. An excavation at Temple Hill uncovered 51 graves dating from 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> centuries (TQ67SW220) c.1km north of the town and a second site on West Hill alongside Watling Street revealed at least 25 graves with grave goods dating to the 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> centuries. Grave goods of spearheads, a shield boss, a ring and beads suggest a second cemetery to the south of the town around the area of Powder Mill Lane. On a ridge above the town to the south side of East Hill several Barrows dating to the 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> centuries, that have since been destroyed, once formed part of the landscape (TQ57SW276). Many of the villages around Dartford have names that derive from the Saxon language suggesting that settlement from this period existed prior to the Norman Conquest. The ford crossing was known as *Derentford* meaning the 'passage over the River Derent'.

## 5.2 Historical Map Progression

One of the earliest maps dating from Hasted (1778) show the area to be undeveloped (Figure 3) and a rapid map assessment of OS historic mapping shows that in 1895 (MAP 1) the area of the PDA was developed 'Ch' (Chapel) and 'Pol. Sta.' (Police Station MAP 2) and by 1898 with the OS map showing a larger area no additional development had taken place (MAP 2) or on the OS map for 1921 (MAP 3). By 1938 the Court House to the west and rear of the Police Station had been built (MAP 4) and this is also shown on the OS map of 1951 (MAP 5).

Aerial photographs show that by 1940 the PDA is developed and subsequent APs shows no further development (AP 1).

5.2.1 A walkover survey of the site was undertaken on the 5<sup>th</sup> December.

5.2.2 The former Dartford Police Station is adjacent to the former Dartford Magistrates Court with the police station being vacated since April 2011 and the magistrates' court since May 2016.

5.2.3 The former police station is a two storey brick construction with basement and accessed from a rear courtyard leading to Highfield Road.

5.2.4 There are two Grade II listed buildings within the PDA assessment area. To the north and on the boundary of the PDA is a residential conversion of a former chapel now named Church Court and a Grade II listed alms house –Twistleton’s Alms houses- list entry 1086038.

*Conservation Areas*

5.2.5 A conservation area is defined as an ‘area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance’ Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Conservation Areas are environments which are considered worthy of protection as a result of a combination of factors such as the quality of design and setting of the buildings or their historic significance. The former police station and adjacent car park to the north are located within the Dartford Town Centre Conservation Area.

**5.3 Assessment of Heritage Assets: Listed Buildings**

5.3.1 It has been identified that within the PDA are is a designated heritage asset; the Grade II listed Almshouse- Twistleton’s. As such the following assessment seeks to identify the significance of this heritage asset and to what extent the PDA contributes to this significance.

***Former Police Station***

*Architectural Interest:*

5.3.2 *Historical Interest:*

5.3.3 The building is of historical interest as a social history indicator of police and the community activities. For example the graffiti found scratched on the steel doors of the cells. However, the building itself is of no historical interest and architecturally is a brick built structure in a Late Victorian Style.

*Setting:*

5.3.4 The setting does not impact of the nearby Grade II listed Almshouses.

*Summary of Significance:*

5.3.5 Given the above it is concluded that the extent of the heritage asset’s original setting is not to change, and that the proposed developments make a negligible contribution to

its visual setting. The asset retains much of its late 19<sup>th</sup> century structure, albeit with a few changing aspects, the major one being the addition of the glass entrance halls.

#### *Historical Interest*

5.3.6 The former police station has a historical interest namely in its contribution to Dartford's social history.

#### *Setting*

5.3.7 The building proposed glass additions will not impact on the adjacent Grade II listed assets.

#### *Summary of Significance:*

5.3.8 It is concluded that the extent of the heritage asset's original setting has already been eroded, and that the proposed developments within the PDA make a negligible contribution to its visual setting.

## **6 PROPOSALS AND ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT**

### **6.1 Proposals**

6.1.1 The proposals form part of a development that includes the internal refurbishment of Block C.

6.1.2 This Heritage Statement accompanies a detailed application for the various aspects of the proposed development mentioned above within the PDA as set out in Figure 3.

#### **6.1.3 Assessment of Impact**

The former Police Station

6.1.4 From our findings, the refurbishments of the former police station are mostly internal and will not alter the current setting or significance of the nearby Grade II listed buildings. The external glass additions will not impact on the nearby Grade II listed buildings but may impact on the unknown archaeological assets and it is advised that a planning condition for an archaeological watching brief be considered.

6.1.5 Therefore, the overall effects of the proposed development are limited, such that any impact caused to the setting of the heritage asset would be considered as 'less than substantial' in accordance with NPPF Paragraph 134.

### *Conservation Areas*

- 6.1.6 From our findings the Dartford Town Centre Conservation Area are not impacted by the PDA given the proposed alterations.

## **7 CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 The purpose of this Built Heritage Statement was to assist the Local Authority to fully understand the impact of the proposed development as required by the NPPF on the significance of Heritage Assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. This Built Heritage Statement has been prepared by SWAT Archaeology for the client in support of the application for proposed developments at the former police station, Dartford in Kent.
- 7.2 This Built Heritage Statement has found that the majority of the designated heritage assets will essentially remain unaffected by the various aspects of the proposed development and that the proposed development will produce no harm on the settings or significance of these assets.

## **8 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

### **8.1 Archive**

- 8.1.1 Subject to any contractual requirements on confidentiality, two copies of this Heritage Asset assessment will be submitted to the LPA and Kent County Council (Heritage) within 6 months of completion.

### **8.2 Copyright**

- 8.2.1 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 Bond Bryan Architects Ltd (and representatives) for the use of this document in all matters directly relating to the project.

Paul Wilkinson PhD MCifA.

SWAT Archaeology

13<sup>th</sup> December 2019



Figure 1. Proposed Development Area (PDA)

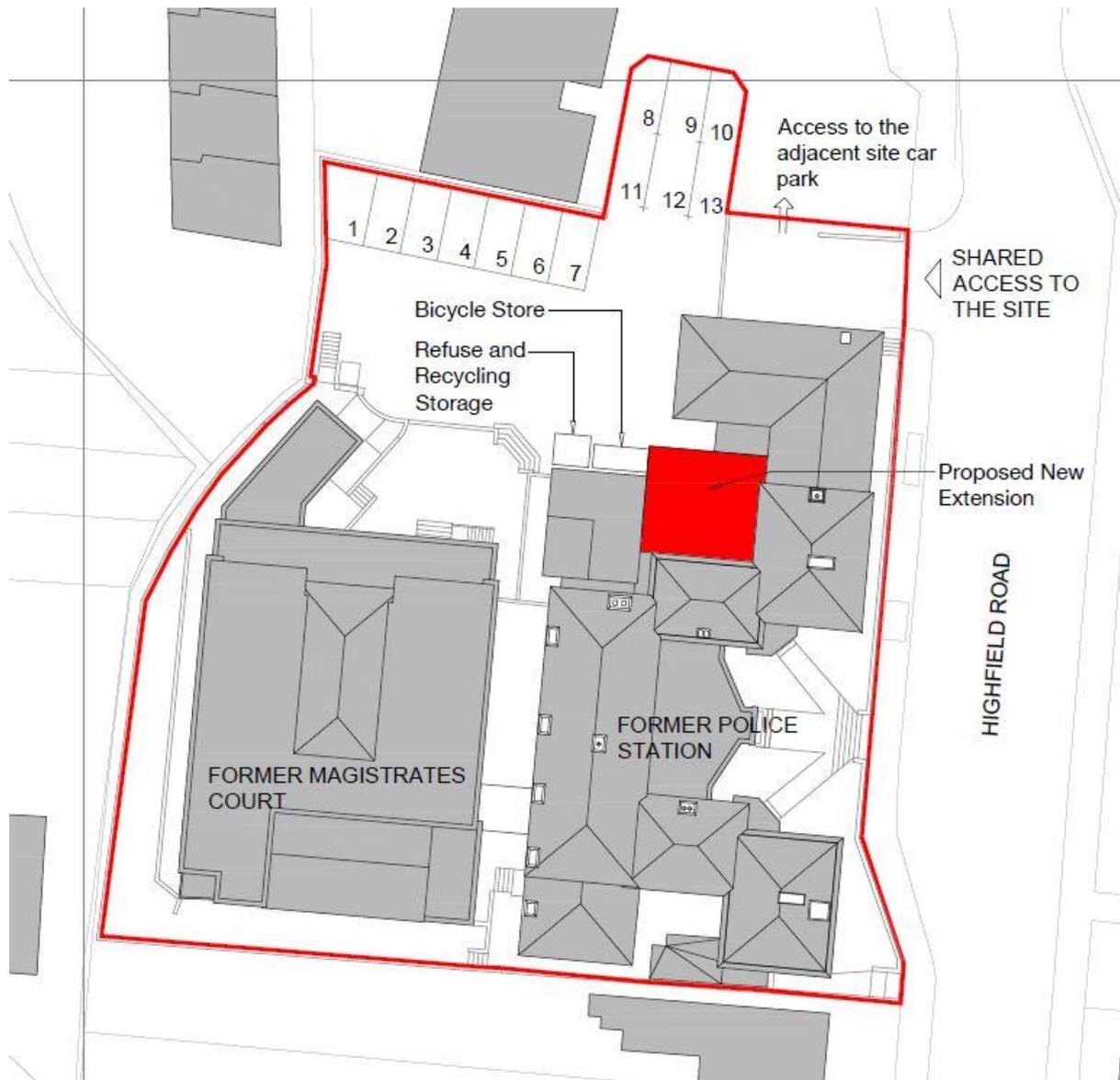


Figure 2. Proposed new extension

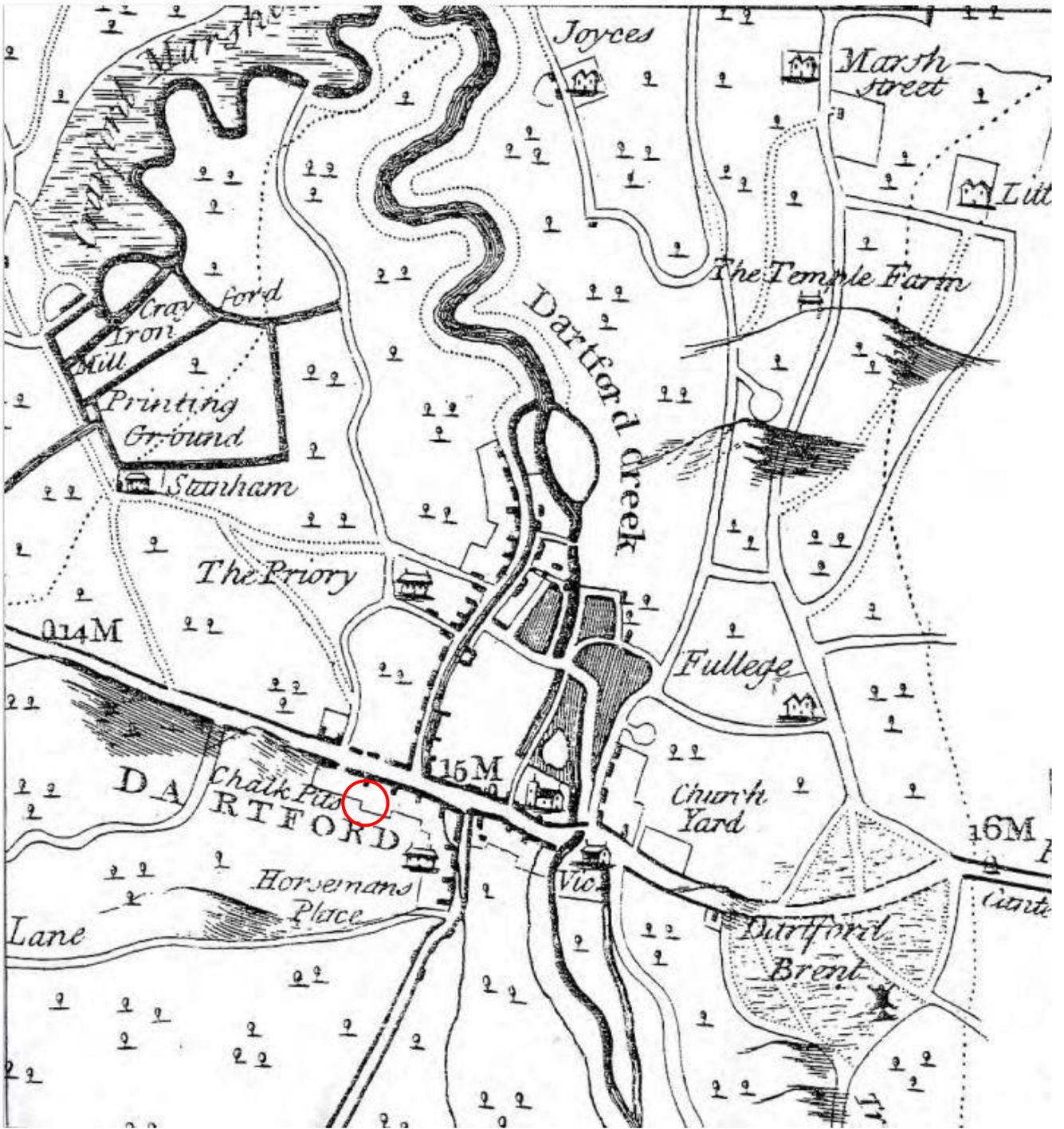
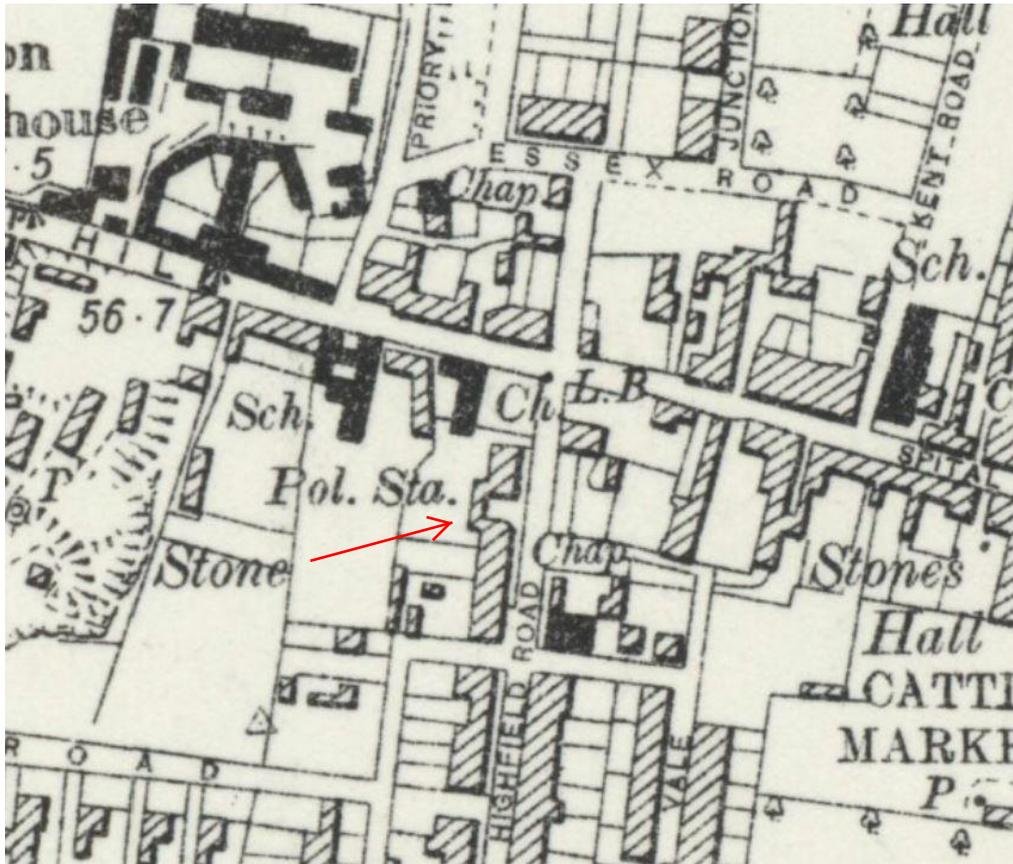


Figure 3. Hasted map c.1778

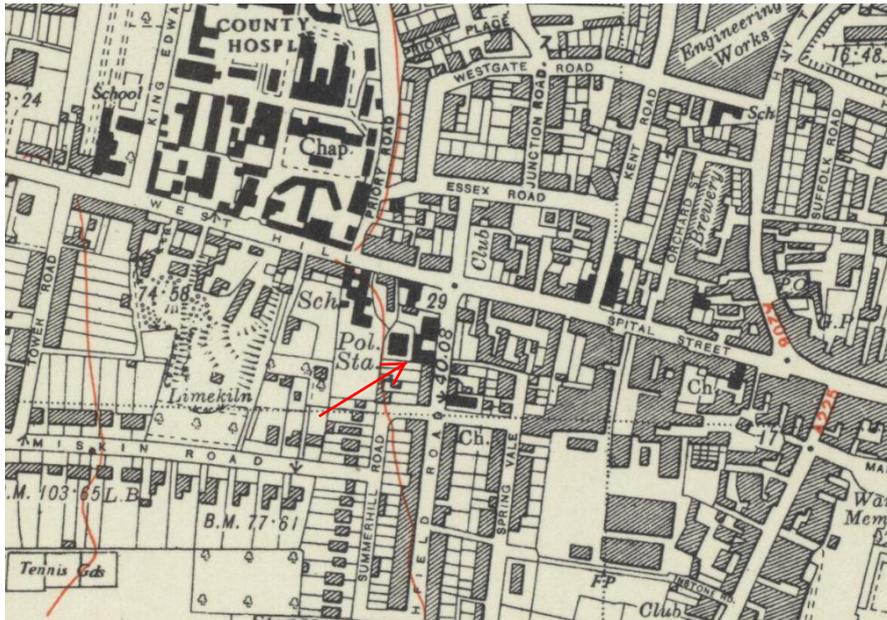


MAP 1. OS map 1895



MAP 2. OS map 1898





MAP 5. OS map 1951



AP 1. Aerial photograph c.2019. Site marked by cross



Photo 1. View of Site (looking SW)



Photo 2. View of site (looking NWW)



Photo 3. View of site (looking NW)



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Scale 1:5 000

**Key**

- |   |               |   |                  |
|---|---------------|---|------------------|
|  | Chalk         |  | Thanet Sand      |
|  | Sand & Gravel |  | Taplow Gravel    |
|  | Alluvium      |  | Boyn Hill Gravel |

Geology map of area of site