



**ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK-BASED
ASSESSMENT OF THE FORMER POLICE
STATION, HIGHFIELD ROAD,
DARTFORD, KENT**

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Front cover: 2019 aerial photograph of the site (JonathanClarkArchitects)

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In December 2019 Dr Paul Wilkinson of SWAT Archaeology carried out a rapid archaeological desk-based assessment of available data on land at the former police station, Highfield Road, Dartford in Kent.

1.2 Historic mapping, aerial photographs and the HER records were studied and shows that no archaeological activity has been recorded within 100m of the proposed development site (PDA).

1.3 The principal elements of the archaeological survey involved the creation of a record and description of any known archaeological and historical sites within the environs of the PDA together with an analysis and interpretation of the sites origins and historic development.

1.5 A review of Historic OS mapping has been made and the Pevsner Architectural Guide (*Kent, East and East Kent 2012*) was consulted as was the National Heritage Register for England (MAPS 1-4).

1.6 This report consists of a descriptive report accompanied by aerial photographs and annotated plans and maps (AP 1. Photos 1-3).

2.0 HISTORICAL/ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Location

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.

2.5 Historic Background

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 show no further development (AP 1).

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

3.1 The HER records show that known archaeology is sparse in the vicinity of the PDA. 110m to the west an Early Medieval Cemetery site has been identified at the Holy Trinity School (TQ 57 SW 207), and 120m west a Late Bronze Age- Early Iron Age pit has been discovered (TQ 57 SW 250) plus a medieval boundary ditch (TQ 57 SW 252). Geology has been recorded as Chalk.

4.0 DISCUSSION

4.1 A review of the available data shows that no archaeological sites are known within the 100m radius of the PDA.

5.0 PARAMETERS

5.1 The archaeological survey was conducted using on-line data from Historic England and other agencies.

Paul Wilkinson PhD., MCifA., FRSA. Dated 12th December 2019



Figure 1. Proposed Development Area (PDA)

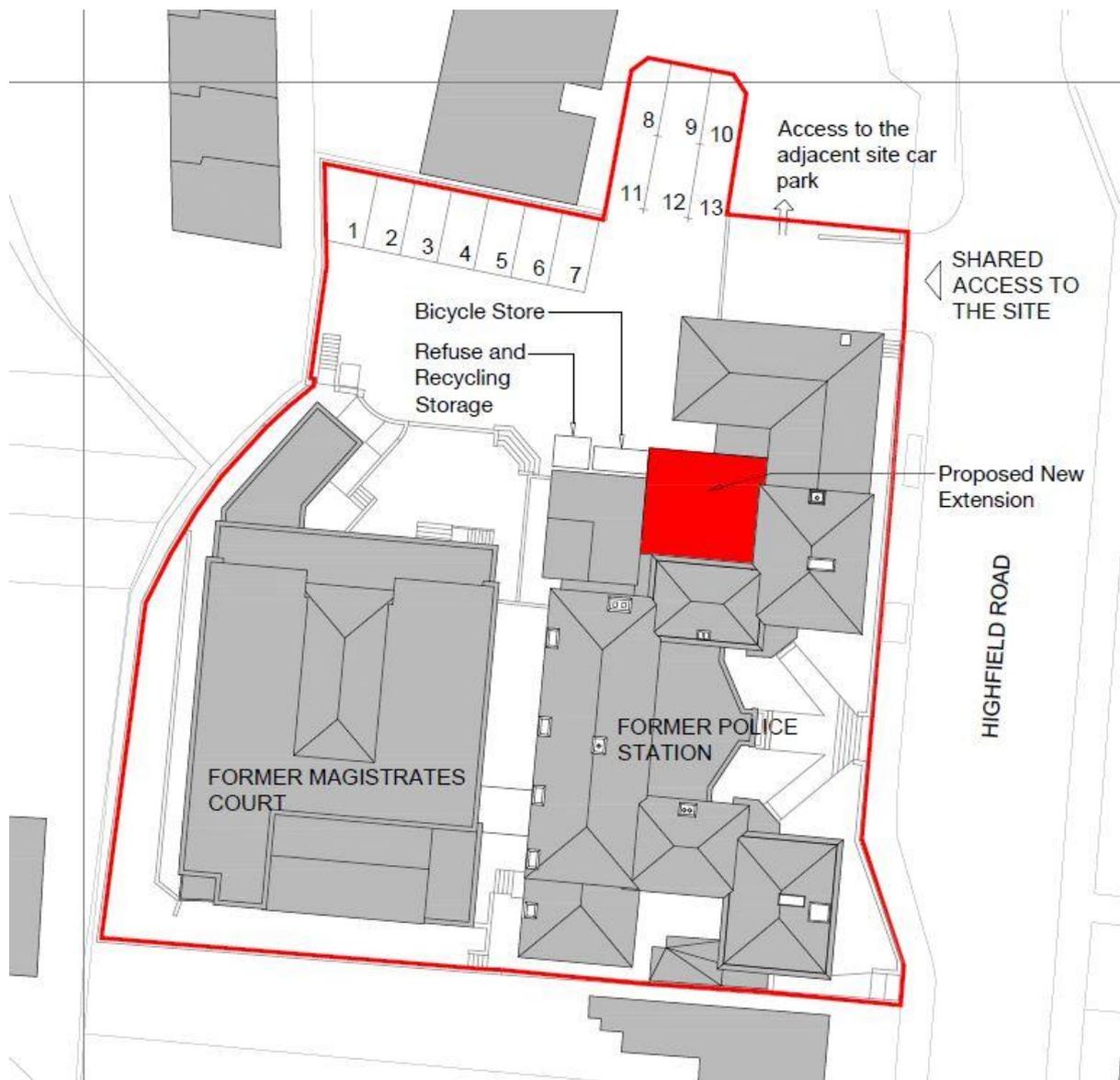


Figure 2. Proposed new extension

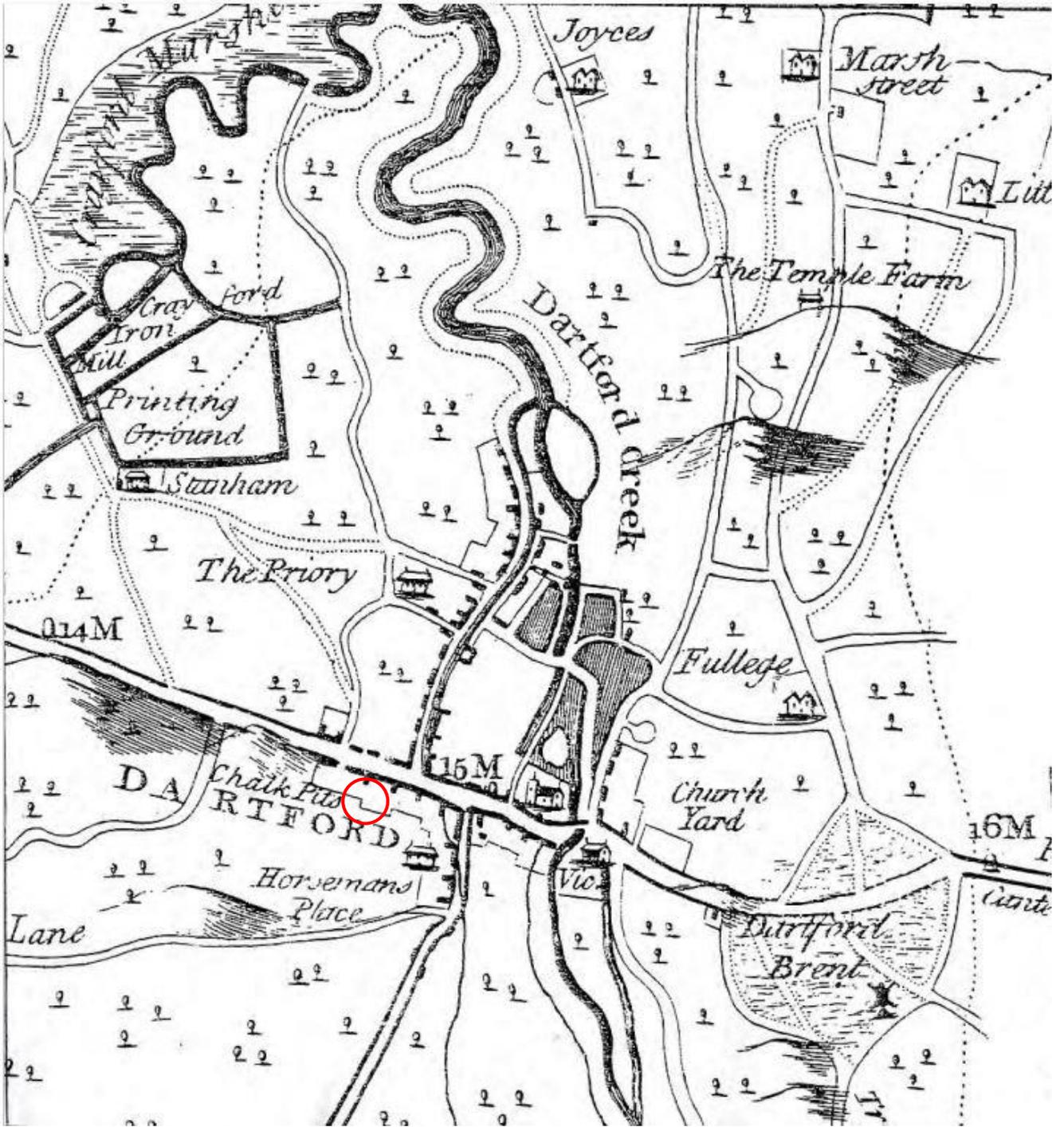
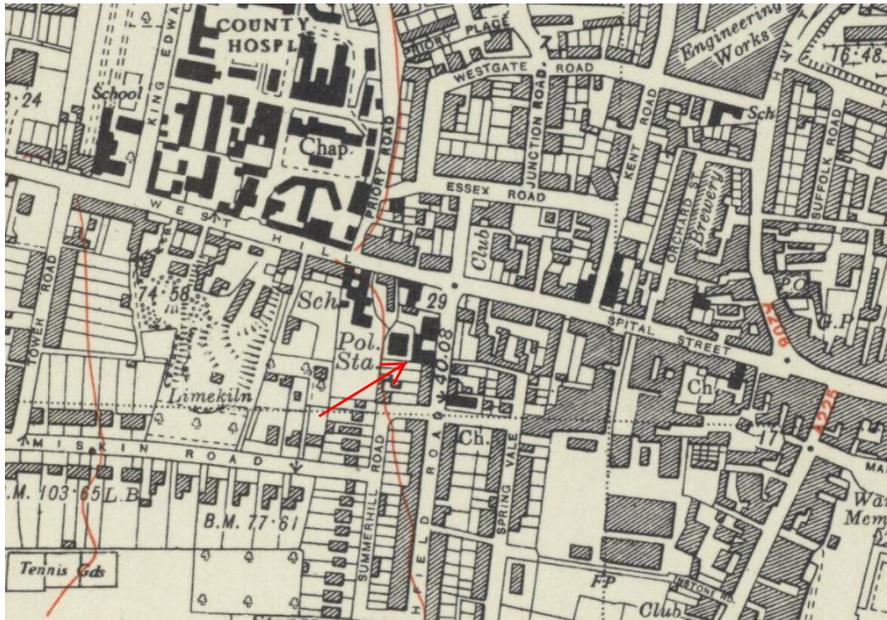


Figure 3. Hasted map c.1778



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