

Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment in Advance of the Proposed Development of Land at HM Prison Standford Hill, Church Rd, Eastchurch, Sheerness ME12 4AA

August 2020

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National Grid Reference: TQ 98376 70071



Report for Ministry of Justice

Date of Report: 24th August 2020

SWAT ARCHAEOLOGY

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Sincere thanks are provided to Eastchurch Aviation Museum (EAM) and volunteers for their help and support with much by way of information for this report.

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Summary

SWAT Archaeology has been commissioned by Ministry of Justice to prepare an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment of the proposed development area (PDA) of land at HM Prison Standford Hill, Church Rd, Eastchurch, Sheerness ME12 4AA

This Desk Based Assessment is intended to explore and disseminate the known and potential heritage resource within the site and the surrounding area, and to assess the likely impacts of the development proposals on this resource. Based on this data the potential for archaeological sites either on or in the near vicinity of the proposed development can be summarized as:

- Prehistoric: **low**
- Iron Age: **low**
- Roman: **high**
- Anglo-Saxon: **low**
- Medieval: **low**
- Post-Medieval: **low**
- Modern: **high**

HM Prison Standford Hill is a Category D men's prison located south of the village at Eastchurch, on the Isle of Sheppey just off the north coast in Kent. Standford Hill lies on the western side of Brabazon Road, with the prisons on HMP Elmley and HMP Swaleside on the eastern side of Brabazon Road. The centre of the village of Eastchurch is 1km north. The prison is spread out over 300 acres of farm land with a very large perimeter. It comprises of a number of structures of various ages comprises of the prisoner accommodation, education, gym and swimming pool, workshops as well as office and admin blocks. The site itself used to be an airfield and some of the original hanger sheds dated to 1912 are Grade II listed and other buildings from these early days still remain on the Prison site. The airfield converted to a prison in the 1950s. The PDA itself is only part of the prison area of Standford Hill and incorporates three specific areas of development.

Much Prehistoric activity on Sheppey took place on the higher ground to the north, with the area of the PDA, closer to the marshy ground, being one predominately of agricultural use. However, in the vicinity of the Site, somewhere on land at Stonepits Farm was discovered in 1967 what is believed to be a Roman farmstead. The exact location not known.

Very little else appears to have occurred at the site until McClean converting the land into an airfield for members of the Aero Club of Great Britain having moved from its earlier site at nearby Leysdown. As a consequence, Eastchurch is considered the "home of British aviation" as Eastchurch airfield saw the first controlled flight by a British pilot on British soil. By 1911 the Naval Flying School opened and was incorporated into the Royal Flying Corps when it was created in 1912, later the RAF in 1918. It became a major military base when, the facilities were acquired by the government for War service in 1914 and aircraft production continued. During 1916, significant expansion occurred at the Site. A few buildings remain from the early period, including four large Grade II listed hangers to the west of the PDA. The area of the PDA has predominately been used for sports and recreation, as well as other events and camping. Within the area of the PDA, only a few buildings now survive from this early period. The site as a military base continued to evolve and develop and during World War II, and saw heavy bombing. Following the end of the Second World War, the site was used to house civil servants before becoming an open prison in 1950. The prison originally called HMP Eastchurch and later HMP Standford Hill, made use of existing buildings and facilities are the Site. Over time more facilities have been added and other buildings demolished.

At the northern part of the PDA where the area has been subject to disturbance with an original structure of a guard hut, since demolished. In addition, the line of the railway spur passed through this area. This entire northern area with the exception of three buildings of the married quarters from the 1930s was then replaced in the 1960s by a group of semi-detached houses. Therefore, the historical impact in the northern area is considered high.

The central area appears to have been the least impacted historically except for the area alongside Rolls Way. The area of the current healthcare block has had previous airfield and prison buildings in this area and therefore there is likely to be a high historical disturbance. The remaining section of the central portion appears to have had a low impact historically except for a couple of linear features. On the eastern side the light railway passed through and what appears to be services trenches, possibly sewage related from 1916 passed through the central part of this portion.

For the southern portion of the PDA, the area there does not appear to have been any historical structures other than one building that was at the rear of the sub-station as seen on a 1943 Air Ministry plan and the 1960s aerial photograph. The southern part of that building's footprint, since demolished, potentially clips the southern PDA area of focus. Within the southern development area is also through to have been disturbance from the Second World War of a personnel air raid 'slit' trenches. In addition, the 1916 service trench also passes through this area. The only feature of note is that of a modern field boundary that cuts north west-south east across the area that based on the historical OS map was also labelled as a drain. Therefore, the overall historical impact on any potential archaeology for the

southern area is considered to be high. One also has to consider the historical impact caused during the Second World War by bomb and the possibility that unexploded bombs may remain.

The main expansion within the proposed development that would require below ground activities are two new 60 bed accommodation blocks located at the southern end of the PDA. These will require foundations and services which will likely encounter earlier service trenches and possibly a Second World War air raid trench as well as possibly the corner of a demolished building. The proposed impact is therefore considered to be high. In the central portion of the PDA are locations for the new modular buildings for the offices and library and the new kitchen building. Since these are to be modular buildings, the below ground impact is reduced and likely to sit on pads. Therefore, the proposed impact in this area is considered to be medium. The northern portion of the PDA concerns the car parking extension area, which will have a low impact in an area already heavily disturbed. The need for, scale, scope and nature of any further assessment and/or archaeological works should be agreed through consultation with the statutory authorities. However, care need to be taken in respect of the possibility of unexploded ordnance as well consideration for the intrusive proposals for geotechnical investigation.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT) was commissioned Ministry of Justice (the 'Clients'), to carry out an archaeological desk-based assessment to support a feasibility study of the various proposed development area (PDA) of land at HM Prison Standford Hill, Church Rd, Eastchurch, Sheerness ME12 4AA centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) TQ 98376 70071 (Fig 1).

1.2 The Site

- 1.2.1 The PDA is HM Prison Standford Hill which is a Category D men's prison located south of the village at Eastchurch, on the Isle of Sheppey in Kent. Standford Hill lies on the western side of Brabazon Road, with the prisons on HMP Elmley and HMP Swaleside on the eastern side of Brabazon Road. The centre of the village of Eastchurch is 1km north. The prison is spread out over 300 acres of farm land with a very large perimeter. It comprises of a number of structures of various ages comprises of the prisoner accommodation, education, gym and swimming pool, workshops as well as office and admin blocks. The site itself used to be an airfield and some of the original hanger sheds dated to 1912 are Grade II listed and other buildings from these early days still remain on site. The airfield converted to a prison in the 1950s. The PDA itself is only part of the prison area of Standford Hill and incorporates three specific areas of development. The PDA sits on gently sloping ground for a high 26m aOD in the north to 17m aOD in the south (Fig. 1).

Geology

- 1.2.2 The British Geological Society (BGS 1995) shows that the local geology at the PDA consists of bedrock comprising of London Clay Formation – Clay and Silt. It was formed during the Ypresian period (early Eocene Epoch, c. 56–49 Ma). The London Clay is a stiff bluish clay which becomes brown when weathered. Nodular lumps of pyrite and crystals of selenite (sometimes called "waterstones") frequently exist in the clay, and large septarian concretions are also common. These have been used in the past for making cement. They were once dug for this purpose at Sheppey. There are no superficial deposits.

1.2.3 A 1963 borehole Record located to the south west corner of the PDA records that of a well (BGS – 611049). It records 280 ft (85.3m) of blue clay, with 165ft (50.3m) of hard greensand below and below that 48ft (14.6m) of chalk and flints.

1.2.4 Informed by Eastchurch Aviation Museum, the far southern area adjacent to the PDA is artificial ground, having been raised by a number of feet by spoil from the construction of the nearby prisons of HMP Swaleside and Elmley. It is not clear as to how far this area of spoil was laid or whether it extends into the area of the PDA.

Geotechnical Information

1.2.5 There is no known geotechnical information. However, as part of the development proposals it is planned for there to be intrusive geotechnical investigations.

1.3 The Proposed Development

1.3.1 The proposed development at the prison is related to a number of development activities as part of the expansion programme. These include:

- Two 60 units accommodation blocks
- Kitchen Storage (Dry Goods);
- offices;
- Library
- Records store
- Car Parking extension

1.3.2 Figure 2 refers to the location of the various options. Not all developments involve below ground activities. The main expansion that would require below ground activities are two new 60 bed accommodation blocks located at the southern end of the PDA. In the central portion of the PDA are locations for the new modular buildings for the offices and library and the new kitchen building. The northern portion of the PDA concerns the car parking extension.

1.4 Project Constraints

1.4.1 Due to the impact of Covid-19, there have been restrictions in terms to access to archive offices and information.

1.5 Scope of Document

- 1.5.1 This assessment was requested by the Client in order to determine, as far as is possible from existing information, the nature, extent and significance of the Historic Environment and to assess the potential impact of development on Heritage Assets. The assessment forms part of the initial stages of the archaeological investigation and is intended to inform and assist with decisions regarding archaeological mitigation for the proposed development and associated planning applications.

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 historical buildings 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 and ensure that a Heritage Asset is protected to enable it to be passed on to future generations.

2.1.2 Statutory protection is also 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
- Hedgerow Regulations (statutory Instrument No. 1160) 1997
- Treasures Act 1996
- Burial Act 1857.

2.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

2.2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's core principles in relation to planning and the historic environment and is covered in section 16, paragraphs 185-202. These principles are designed to underpin the planning and decision-making process to ensure that Local Planning Authorities (LPA), developers and owners of heritage assets adopt a consistent approach to the conservation of the Historic Environment.

2.2.2 The Historic Environment, as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2019): 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.'

2.2.3 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).'

2.2.4 Paragraph 189 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.'

2.2.5 Paragraph 190 of the NPPF states that:

'The LPA 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.'

2.2.6 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:

- **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.
- **Setting.** 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.

2.2.7 The NPPF is supported by the Planning Policy Guidance, which includes Conservation Principles, Policy and Guidance (2008) as well as Good Practice Advice in Planning Notes 1 to 3, all issued by Historic England.

Hedgerow Regulations (statutory Instrument No. 1160) 1997

2.2.8 The Regulations apply to most countryside hedgerows. In particular, they affect hedgerows which are 20 meters or more in length; which meet another hedgerow at each end; are on or adjoin land used for: agriculture, forestry, the breeding or keeping of horses, ponies or donkeys, common land, village greens, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) or Local Nature Reserves. The act is to protect important countryside hedgerows from removal, either in part or whole. Removal not only includes grubbing out, but anything which could result in the destruction of the hedge.

2.3 Local Policies

2.3.1 The Local Planning Authority for the study is Swale Borough Council

2.3.2 The Swale Borough Local Plan 'Bearing Fruits 2031' was formally adopted July 2017. The Local Plan sets out the Council's spatial vision, strategic objectives, development strategy and a series of core policy themes. It also contains allocations of land for development; a framework of development management policies to guide determination of planning applications and a framework for implementation and monitoring of the Local Plan

2.3.3 The Local Plan also sets out a number of development policies. The relevant ones are detailed below:

2.3.4 DM 32 Development Involving Listed Buildings – Development proposals, including any change of use, affecting a listed building, and/or its setting, will be permitted provided that: 1. The building's special architectural or historic interest, and its setting and any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses, are preserved, paying special attention to the: a. design, including scale, materials, situation and detailing; b. appropriateness of the proposed use of the building; and c. desirability of removing unsightly or negative features or restoring or reinstating historic features.

2.3.5 DM 33 Development affecting a conservation area. Development affecting the setting of, or views into and out of a conservation area, will preserve or enhance all features that contribute positively to the area's special character or appearance.

2.3.6 DM 34 Scheduled Monuments and Archaeological Sites. Development will not be permitted which would adversely affect a Scheduled Monument, and/or its setting, or subsequently designated, or any other monument or archaeological site demonstrated as being of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 This Desk-Based Assessment was commissioned by Ministry of Justice to support a planning application. This assessment has been prepared in accordance with guidelines set out by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (see below) and in the National Planning Policy Framework and the Good Practice Advice notes 1, 2 and 3, which now supersede the PPS 5 Practice Guide, which has been withdrawn by the Government.

3.1.2 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.

3.2 Desk-Based Assessment – Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2017)

3.2.1 This desktop study has been produced in line with archaeological standards, as defined by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014, revised 2017). 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 desk-based assessment 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.*

CIFA (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 Sources

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

Archaeological databases

- 4.2.2 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 (KHER) contains sufficient data to provide an accurate insight into catalogued sites and finds within both the proposed development area and the surrounding landscape.
- 4.2.3 The National Heritage List for England (NHLE), which is the only official and up to date database of all nationally designated heritage assets and is the preferred archive for a comprehensive HER search.
- 4.2.4 The Archaeology Data Service Online Catalogue (ADS) was also used. The search was carried out within a 1000m radius of the proposed development site and 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.

Cartographic and Pictorial Documents

- 4.2.5 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. A full listing of bibliographic and cartographic documents used in this study is provided in Section 10.

Aerial photographs

4.2.6 The study of the collection of aerial photographs held by Google Earth was undertaken (Plates 5-8). In addition, a number of aerial photographs were provided by the Eastchurch Aviation Museum.

Secondary and Statutory Resources

4.2.7 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.

Walkover Survey

- The Site is was not visited for a walkover survey given the current restrictions surrounding Covid-19 and the prison being closed to visitors.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 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 (1000m radius centred on each site of the PDA), followed by a full record of archaeological sites, monuments and records within the site's immediate vicinity. There were no Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens, or NMP cropmarks within the search area.

5.1.2 Time scales for archaeological periods represented in the report are listed in Table 1.

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	c. 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		

5.1.3 The Kent HER records are dominated by records reflecting the agricultural use of the area with scattered farmsteads before site was in use as an early pioneer of aviation at the beginning of the 20th century, followed by military use of the site through the two world wars before subsequently becoming a prison. Full details and placement of the HER records are provided in Figures 15 and 16.

5.2 Designated Heritage Assets

5.2.1 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).

5.2.2 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).

5.2.3 There are three designated assets. To the north of the PDA is the Grade II listed Parsonage Farmhouse (TQ 97 SE 1050) and garden walls (TQ 96 NE 1080). To the west of the PDA are four Grade II listed hangers from 1912 (TQ 96 NE 1080) associated with the early days of the airfield. The PDA historical was land that belonged to Parsonage Farm before being carved out to become part of Stonepits Farm around the middle of the 19th century. The setting to Parsonage Farm was then significantly altered as a result of the use of Stonepits Farm to become an airfield and then a military base. The setting was further altered with the conversion of the site to that of an open prison in the 1950s with a number of new buildings and accommodation blocks added. In the 1980s and 1990s, the area around was more intensively developed with that of HMP Swaleside and Elmley. The primary significance of Parsonage Farmhouse and garden walls lies in its historical and aesthetic interest despite the changes to its setting. The proposed development in light of the will have a negligible impact on its setting in light of the existing development that has taken place and does not alter its primary significance.

5.2.4 The hangers to the south west of the PDA have national significance in being the earliest hangers associated in the UK with aviation and the site in use as an airfield. The relationship of the site as an airfield and associated structures altered when it converted to use as a prison. However, the site essentially retains the layout and structure from these early days which allows an historical understanding of the Site. The addition of new buildings within the boundary of the prison site as part of the overall existing development will have a negligible impact on the setting and significance of these assets, which will retain their primary historical and aesthetic significance.

5.3 Previous Archaeological Works

5.3.1 There is little by way of events within the assessment area (Fig.20). The archaeological record for this area suffers from a limited amount of development activity hence the low event count. Whilst there has been development in the second half of the 20th century with the prisons, there has been little by way development opportunity for modern archaeological investigation.

- 5.3.2 Within Standford Hill during farming work in 1967, what is thought to be a Roman farmstead was revealed that included pottery, animal bones and briquetage allowing it to be dated to the 1st century AD (EKE4058/ EKE4563). Little else is known about the excavation, which was briefly reported in the *Archaeologia Cantiana* that year and the exact location of the excavation is not known although it was reported that it was found whilst farming, which suggests that it was located away from the central core of the prison.
- 5.3.3 A watching brief in 2012 ahead of the constriction of an access road for wind turbines to the south did not reveal any finds or features (EKE12675). In 2007, at the nearby Swaleside Prison, evaluation trenches there did not reveal any finds or features (EKE10555). Just outside of the assessment area to the east at Old Rides Farm, a watching brief there did not reveal and finds or features. One has to go circa 2km north of the PDA at Kingsborough Manor and nearby Leysdown to find extensive archaeology, which relates to the Prehistoric period, which lies on the higher ridge of Sheppey and would have been the more attractive area for activity and settlement. The number of Portable Antiquities Scheme finds indicate that metal detecting has occurred on the lands in and around Eastchurch revealing the presence of earlier people. However, it must be noted that these are finds reported under the PAS scheme whereby the exact location is not revealed and usually applied to a general grid square. In addition, most finds reported tend to have a bias towards being be metal related given that they tend to be found by metal detectorists.

Landscape Characterisation

- 5.3.4 The landscape classification refers to the site as a prison. Surrounding it are fields classed as medium regular with straight boundaries (parliamentary type enclosure)'. Prior to the creation of the airfield, the PDA was part of a larger field and this classification would have also applied historically to that field. These types of fields were usually created in the 19th and 20th centuries in low lying areas (Fig. 17).

Stour Palaeolithic Area

- 5.3.5 The PDA is within a Palaeolithic area designated PCA 44 that relates to the central higher ground on the Isle of Sheppey that is on London clay without mapped Pleistocene deposits, possible thin veneers of unmapped slopewash deposits. The likely age of deposits in this area are likely be of Late Devensian or Holocene age. The Devensian Age is during the last glacial period from circa 115k – 11.7k years ago. There are no known

finds in this area and therefore the likelihood of future finds from this area is classed as very low (Fig. 16).

5.4 Archaeological and Historical Narrative

- 5.4.1 Prehistoric activity in the area has been found at Kingsborough Farm, north west of the PDA near Minster, prior to the construction of a new housing estate revealed a causewayed enclosure; one of only two found in Kent. These earthworks date from the Neolithic Period about 3,000 BC. It is believed they were religious or ceremonial structures and a place for people to meet. A Bronze Age 'barrow' was also discovered nearby the causewayed enclosure as well as Bronze Age cemeteries, along with Iron Age enclosures and four post structures. Bronze Age enclosure and cemetery sites is also to the north west of the PDA at Shrubsholes Hill which also found Mesolithic and Neolithic flakes. Immediately around the PDA there is little by way of prehistoric activity. The northern coastline of Sheppey suffers from erosion and in prehistoric times it is likely that Eastchurch was further away from the sea on the northern side.
- 5.4.2 In Minster, there is a late Bronze Age, Early Iron Age enclosures under the Abbey which was founded in 664 and a Benedictine nunnery and later refounded as an Augustian nunnery in 1130. At the junction of Leysdown Road and Warden Bay Road circa 5km from the PDA, the excavation ahead of a new school revealed remains from the Bronze age, A Late Iron Age or early Roman funeral pit with ceramic vessels containing cremations and other artefacts from the period. The Kingsborough excavation also found Romano-British field systems and droveways.
- 5.4.3 Shurland Hall, north east of Eastchurch is thought to be on the site of an earlier Roman Fort although this does not appear to be substantiated archaeologically although Roman tiles have been found embedded in the masonry at Shurland Hall. A Roman Coin Hoard was found in 1969 at Leysdown, east of Eastchurch as well as 2500 radiate coins at Minster, north east of the PDA. A possible farmstead site is located somewhere at Standford Hill and the Kingsborough excavations identified Iron Age field systems that continued into the Romano-British period.

- 5.4.4 Known from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles, there were Viking invasion on the island in 798 and also 832 AD. In 850 AD it is reported that the Vikings wintered on the island, although no evidence of their camps have been found. The Vikings under King Hoestan of Denmark arrived at Sheppey with 350 ships in 892 and in 893. In the 9th and 10th centuries, it is believed that Shurland Castle was the birthplace and residence of the early English kings.
- 5.4.5 Sheppey is derived from the Anglo-Saxon word *sceapige*, which means 'Isle of Sheep' derived from when sheep farming was extensive on the island. Eastchurch itself is considered of Saxon origin and is mentioned in the Domesday Book as 'Eastcyrce'. The original site and the hamlet of 'Eastcyrce' was situated approximately 1/4 mile south of its present position. Eastchurch is self-explanatory in that it lies on the eastern side of the Isle of Sheppey. Being 'east cirice' in old English, by 1610 it had become Eastchurch. Eastchurch is located in the central area of the eastern part of the island and is situated on higher ground, although the parish extends southwards towards Elmley and the marshes.
- 5.4.6 In 1192, Richard the Lionheart was shipwrecked whilst on his way home from the crusades and was taken prisoner by Duke Leopold of Austria who handed him over to Henry VI of Germany. After protracted negotiations by his mother, the Dowager Queen Eleanor, the Cistercian Abbots of Boxley and a ransom, he was released. As a reward, Richard granted "to the Monastery of the Dunes, in perpetuity, the church called Eastchurch and papal confirmation of the grant was made by Pope Celestine III in 1196. In 1313 the Abbey of the Dunes transferred these rights to the monks of Boxley. In 1391 in the registers of Pope Boniface IX is the entry of a grant to William Kypping for "Provision of the perpetual vicarage of Estcherche value 30 marks."
- 5.4.7 Around 1400 the original 'east' Church, built c1279, became unsafe due to weakness in the grounds and the site could not be used for re-building. William Cheyne of Shurland offered three roods of ground in the South West corner of his state and as King Henry VI was only ten years old, the required licence was granted by Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester. The foundations were laid on deep solid blocks of chalk imported from the mainland and diagonal buttresses were put at every angle and corner for strength and much of the material used was salvaged from the old church and re-used. The windows in the west porch and the two windows in the western aisle seem to have originated from the original church.

- 5.4.8 North east of the village is Shurland Manor, which was subordinate of the manor of Milton, on the mainland. The Baronetcy of Shurland was created during the reign of James I. Hasted, an historian in 1798, reports that the first individual of note is Sir Jeffry de Shurland, who resided here in the reign of king Henry III. He was also constable of Dover castle. His son was Sir Robert de Shurland, who was a man of eminent authority in the reign of king Edward I. under whom he was lord warden and obtained the grant of wreck of the sea, which the privilege is always esteemed to reach as far into the water, as upon the lowest ebb, He was buried in Minster Church.
- 5.4.9 The daughter of Sir Jeffrey married into the Chaney family, which had a number of descendants that were knights of the shire and sheriffs of the county. One individual, Sir Thomas Chaney during the reign of Henry VIII was a parliament member, constable of Queenborough Castle, Governor of Rochester, warden of the Cinque Ports and Treasurer of the Household, which continued under Elizabeth I.
- 5.4.10 It was Sir Thomas that built a new manor house at Shurland with material from Chilham Castle. Sir Thomas' son was eventually made Lord Chaney of Tuddington and subsequently moved to Tuddington, where he had built a house. He exchanged the manor and seat of Shurland, with other estates in the neighbourhood of it, with Elizabeth I, who in 1593 granted a lease of Shurland, with other lands in Sheppey, to Sir Edward Hoby, then of Queenborough Castle, and lady Margaret his wife.
- 5.4.11 During the Civil War, Sir Michael Livesey of nearby Parsonage Farm served under Cromwell as commander of the Kentish Horse. He was one of the regicides who signed the death warrant of Charles I. Following the Restoration in 1660, he fled to Holland but was recognised by some Kentish men and killed. In 1650s under the Protectorship of Oliver Cromwell following the Civil War the greater part of Shurland Hall was demolished. The gatehouse is now all that remains of Shurland Hall.
- 5.4.12 Hasted an historian writing in 1797 comments that water is scarce in the parish, relying on water collected from the roof of the church, suggesting that there is no natural supply of springs in the area. In 1800 the population of the parish was less than 400 people of which about half lived in the 30 or 40 houses which comprised the village itself. The remaining 200 being spread through the local agricultural

community. In 1841 the population had risen to over 1000. This rapid growth resulted from the reconstruction of Sheerness Dockyard causing a boost to the local economy. The surrounding hinterland being one of scattered farms.

- 5.4.13 Eastchurch is considered the "home of British aviation" as Eastchurch airfield saw the first controlled flight by a British pilot on British soil. Eastchurch airfield played a significant role in the history of British aviation from 1909 when Frank McClean acquired Stonepits Farm, converting the land into an airfield for members of the Aero Club of Great Britain having moved from its earlier site at nearby Leysdown. He laid out a 400-acre site. By 1912 several sheds had been built including those used by the Short Brothers. Four sheds from 1912 still exist and are listed.
- 5.4.14 The Short Brothers, Horace, Eustace and Oswald, built aircraft at Battersea to be tested at the site; later Moore-Brabazon, A. K. Huntington, Charles S. Rolls and Cecil Grace all visited and used the flying club's services. Wilbur Wright and his brother Orville came to the Isle of Sheppey to visit the new flying grounds of the Aero Club. In 1909, Moore-Brabazon made the first live cargo flight by fixed-wing aircraft, tying a waste-paper basket to a wing strut of his Shorts-built Wright aircraft. Then, using it as a "cargo hold", he airlifted one small pig.
- 5.4.15 By 1911 the Naval Flying School opened and was incorporated into the Royal Flying Corps when it was created in 1912, later the RAF in 1918 and became a major base when Horace Short died in 1917, the facilities were acquired by the government and aircraft production continued. From 1914 the site had become an operational station as well as a training station. There was a grass runway on an east west axis to the south of the Short Bros area. Eventually this was extended eastwards where the ground was flatter and a north-south runway placed on the eastern side of the hangers on Brabazon Road, creating a 'L' shape for the runways. Sport played an important part in military life and the camaraderie. As such the central area of the PDA was one regularly used as a recreation ground for football and other outdoor pursuits.
- 5.4.16 Used by the military in the First World War, its location meant that it played a significant role in defending the dockyards along the Thames estuary. Sheppey became a restricted military zone. All residents were issued with a 'passport' which they had to produce to get on and off the Island. The Army and Royal Artillery

defended the coast and Sheppey was nicknamed 'Barbed Wire Island'. The aerodrome continued to develop and provide employment, becoming the Armament and Gunnery School in 1922 as well as continuing to have a number of operational squadrons. By 1918, there were 29 hangers in all at the airfield.

- 5.4.17 The Sheppey Light Railway (SLR), ran between Queenborough and Leysdown and was opened in 1901. Due to the hill on which Eastchurch sits, the railway could not be brought into the village itself, so the station was built half a mile to the south together with a siding for agricultural use. Much of the 9-mile route of the railway line can still be traced.
- 5.4.18 The railway brought pressure for development and land companies started selling building plots all over the Island. This steadily increased both the permanent population and number of holidaymakers passing through on their way to Leysdown and Warden. The railway was also important to the Short Brothers who moved their aircraft factory from Leysdown to a new site near Eastchurch station in 1910. An aerial photograph from 1917 confirms that the spur line to the airfield was in place by then. The Sheppey Light Railway finally closed in 1950.
- 5.4.19 During the Battle of Britain in the Second World War, the airfield was one of the bases for the Polish Air Force. Spitfire and light bomber squadrons were based here in July and August 1940. The Luftwaffe Intelligence Service decreed the airfield a fighter base and attacked it. The raid came on the 13th August 1940, when eighty-four bombers set out to bomb Eastchurch aerodrome. Fifty of the aircraft got through and did considerable damage. Five Blenheims and all six Spitfires of 266 Squadron were destroyed. Twelve people were killed with a further 26 badly injured. The airfield was rendered unserviceable. Similar attacks occurred during the rest of August and into early September. Although made serviceable after each attack, the airfield was virtually abandoned after 2nd September and very little use made of its facilities. From mid-1942 the base was used as a forward operating airfield and several squadrons were based here for short periods. From late 1943 until the end of the war the base was used for various training purposes. However, it must be recognised that given its location, the site suffered heavily from bombing throughout the war. For a short period after the end of the war the aerodrome was used as a camp for displaced persons then reduced to an inactive site in 1947 where

most of the site reverted to agriculture. The whole airfield was given to the Home Office in 1950 for the establishment of an 'open' prison.

- 5.4.20 Post-the Second World War the prison population rose rapidly. Between the wars the daily average population was between 10,000 and 13,000, reaching low of 9,377 in 1940. After 1940, it reached 20,000 by 1950 and 30,000 by 1962. At the end of the war the Prison Commission took immediate action. Due to the weak post-war economy, new purpose-built prisons could not be afforded and therefore alternative sites were sought and many military sites were now redundant and were requisitioned.
- 5.4.21 The prison originally called HMP Eastchurch, made use of existing buildings and facilities at the Site. Over time more facilities have been added. In 1986, two new three storey wing opened that included open landings with central facilities and offices. In 1975, the prison was renamed Standford Hill.
- 5.4.22 Eastchurch is now home to three prisons, HMP Elmley, HMP Standford Hill and HMP Swaleside. Swaleside opened in 1988 with a new block added in 1997 whilst Elmley opened in 1992. Both built near to the open prison on the site of the old airfield east of Brabazon Road.

5.5 Cartographic Sources and Map Regression

Symonson Map, 1596

- 5.5.1 This early map of the Isle of Sheppey shows the main settlements on the island at the time and also shows the Isle of Elmley and Harty on the southern side of the island. To the north of the PDA is Eastchurch, with the manor of Shurland nearby. The PDA is located in an area of higher ground which would be Standford Hill and also that of Pump Hill north east between the PDA and Eastchurch. South of the PDA are a number of creeks that flow into the River Swale and this area is lower lying and marshy. One immediately below is labelled 'Ryde'. The main one below that is currently known as Windmill Creek no doubt as a result of the windmill that was located further upstream and west of the PDA (Fig.3).

Andrews, Dury and Herbert map of 1769

5.5.2 Andrews, Dury and Herbert published their atlas some thirty years before the Ordnance Survey, immediately becoming the best large-scale maps of the county. Parsonage to the north is referred to here as Sur-land Parsonage with the village further north and the manor of Shor-land beside the village. The PDA is located on the eastern side of Standford Hill although it is not named in this map. To the south, along the edge of the marsh area are scattered farms (Fig.4).

Hasted, 1797

5.5.3 This also shows Parsonage to the north but here refers to an alternative name of Little Shurland confirming the importance of the house along with that of the main manor house to the east of the village itself. This map also refers to the farms of The Rides, Jenkins and just of the map to the east New House, all on the edge of the marsh and creek (Fig.5).

Eastchurch Tithe Map of 1842

5.5.4 This shows greater details including field boundaries and individual buildings. The PDA is part of a much larger field designated 84. This field is owned by Matthew Bell and occupied by Stephen Pym. The field is one of a number that are part of Parsonage Farm and is called 'Stamford Hill' and is arable. To the east of the northern part of the PDA, is seen for the first time, a new house and farm called White House Farm. To the south of the PDA is now another farm called Stonepits Farm. Stonepit Farm so called due to the quarrying that was undertaken there with the quarry thought to be in the area to the south of the present-day Mill building (Peter West, EAM, pers. comm.). However, the location of New Rides Farm and Old Rides Farm are shown to the east and north east of the PDA. It is not clear exactly as to what has become of Jenkins Farm and whether this may now be Little Bells Farm (Fig.6).

Historic OS Map 1867

5.5.5 This is the first properly scaled OS map and there appears little change. The PDA is still part a large field (Fig 7).

Historic OS map 1897

5.5.6 There appears to be no change (Fig.8).

Historic OS map 1907-1908

- 5.5.7 There appears to be little change at the PDA except for immediately north of the PDA is now labelled Eastchurch Station showing that the light railway has been built. This is just before the coming of the airfield in 1909 (Fig.9).

Historic OS map 1939

- 5.5.8 Much of the area of the map is redacted. The only features showing are the officers houses at the northern end of the PDA and the access road around the hill (Fig. 10).

Air Ministry Plan, 1943

- 5.5.9 The Eastchurch Aviation Museum hold a plan drawn up by the Air Ministry dated to 1943, that shows all the structures in place at the airfield and also provides a numbered key labelling each building (Fig. 14).

- 5.5.10 Of the buildings located within the area of the PDA are No. 211 at the far northern end, which is the guard hut. West of this hut are the three buildings (No. 12) that have various uses but at this time are WAAF houses and are currently still in existence. Building 220 are the swimming baths and gym and also in existence. Building 221 is the power house and store and is also still in existence. Building 231 being the bore hut has been demolished, as has building 50 of an unknown purpose.

Historic OS Map 1964

- 5.5.11 The site is now a prison. The access road around the hill is called Rolls Avenue and the straight road to the south that forms the eastern boundary is Brabazon Road. At the northern end of the PDA aside the married quarters are a number of semi-detached houses located around a new road called Longmore Drive. Within the PDA but to the east of these new houses are two buildings sub-divided into small blocks. Immediately south is the sports ground. Along the length of the eastern side of Rolls Avenue are a number of buildings. The remains of the track for what was a branch line of the light railway can only be seen in the south eastern part of the PDA. The line of the track being followed by a drain along its edge. In addition, there is also a drain the crossed the southern part of the PDA. To the east of Brabazon Road, are the remains of a hanger and the site of one. The others having no trace on the map. To the east of Brabazon Road at the northern end are the range of buildings that was the Gunnery School and alongside that the range. A number of other semi-detached houses have been built north and south of these buildings. To the west of the PDA at the northern end, there

are still remaining a number of original accommodation huts located on the slopes of the hill (Fig.11).

Historic OS Map 1977-78

- 5.5.12 There have been further changes within the area of the PDA. At the southern end of the sports ground is a new road connecting Rolls Avenue with Brabazon Road. At the eastern end of this connecting road is a new building and car parking area opposite (Fig.12).

Historic OS Map 1985-1988

- 5.5.13 At the northern end of the PDA, the houses around Longmore Drive have been demolished. To the west of the PDA on the opposite side of Rolls Avenue are two new large accommodation blocks (Fig.13).

5.6 Aerial Photographs

1917

- 5.6.1 This early photograph shows the airfield in 1917 following the extensive works undertaken in 1916. The railway spur had been put into place the year before. In addition to the spur that travelled south through the PDA, the photograph also shows an addition spur at the top of the picture which travels around the north of the accommodation huts. Within the PDA, a security hut can be seen at the far northern end. Other buildings have already been added around the edge of the PDA along Rolls Avenue. The central part of the PDA has a football pitch. There are also a number of lines running across the PDA which are thought to be service trenches. At the south western corner of the PDA where the sub-station is, are two earlier buildings. The main part of the aviation school is located within the group of buildings and aeroplane sheds which are located to the south and south west of the PDA at the southern end of the airfield. To the west of the PDA located on the slopes of the hill are extensive blocks for living accommodation. Seen elsewhere in a Desk Based Assessment relating to the planning for the wind turbines, but not shown for copyright reasons as the museum id furloughed is an aerial photograph from 1916 held at the Fleet Air Arm Archive. This shows the presence of newly dug services crossing down and curving around the PDA from the accommodation blocks on the western side of Rolls Avenue head down towards the area of the sewage works. The photograph appears to show the freshly dug trench

and man hole covers placed at various points along its length when it changes direction (Plate 1).

End of World War I

- 5.6.2 This photograph shows the use of the PDA for camping with a number of bell tents in place adjacent to the southern boundary of the PDA. Outside of the PDA in the south eastern corner, the land is being used as allotments. Aside from showing the buildings in the south western corner of the PDA mentioned in Plate 1, it appears new buildings have also been added to the north of which there appears to be a feature running across the PDA from these new buildings towards Brabazon Road and the hangers on the far side (Plate 2).

Photograph showing the light railway circa 1935

- 5.6.3 In the background can be seen the line of the light railway. This shows how it was raised up on a small embankment (Plate 3).

Post-World War II

- 5.6.4 On the northern part of the PDA, this shows for the first time the three buildings alongside the roads along the western boundary of the PDA, which were originally the married quarters for the airmen but had various uses over the years (Plate 4). In addition, curving within the northern part of the PDA is the railway branch line with what appears to be ditches either side of the embankment. The line then lies alongside the eastern boundary of the PDA. Along the length of the western side of the PDA facing the roadway are a number of other blocks, one that used to be the education section and another the gym and swimming pool and immediately next to that a substation. At the rear of the sub-station is a now another building. Just east to the rear of this building can be made out the faint outline of the personnel air raid 'slit' trenches, which was seen marked on the 1943 Air Ministry plan. Slit trenches were usually 2 feet wide, circa 3 feet deep with spoil piled up evenly both sides to about 18 inches. There were usually positioned a minimum of 15 feet from buildings and were sometimes lined with timber (Peter West, EAM, pers. comm.).
- 5.6.5 In the central part of the PDA is a football pitch. The remaining area of the PDA is grass. The majority of the airfield buildings remain outside of the PDA. Immediately east of the PDA are the remains of large hangers, a number of which have been destroyed showing the effects from the Second World War. The photograph also shows a number of bomb

scars across the landscape, some of which are within the area of the PDA. To the north of the destroyed hangers are buildings for the armament and gunnery school. Within the central area of the hill, are pillboxes, with the battle headquarters being largely underground and cannot be seen.

1960s

- 5.6.6 There have been changes within the very northern section of the PDA. To the rear of the married quarters are now a number of houses either side on a new road. The railway has been removed although the earthworks associated with the railway can be seen remaining in places. It appears that the middle section of the PDA is grass and appears to potential be a cricket pitch. The southern part of the PDA is also grass with a footpath crossing the field and a field boundary crossing the southern section of the PDA (Plate 5).

1990

- 5.6.7 There have been further changes at the northern end of the PDA. The new houses seen in the 1960s aerial photograph have been demolished and replaced with a single new building with a tarmacked car park on the northern side. The field to the south of this still appears to be a cricket pitch. Surrounding the boundary of this area are now trees (Plate 6). To the west of this area many of the original accommodation blocks have been demolished and replaced by new purpose-built buildings. The southern part of the cricket pitch area now includes an east-west an access road with a car parking area alongside and at the eastern end of this area a Visitors building. The southern part of the PDA is grass and includes a number of newer buildings alongside the western road to the north east of the gym and pool building being the farm area. The east-west field boundary is still in place at the southern end of the PDA. The curve of the historical railway line can be seen as a cropmark. To the east of this area can be seen is a new high secure prison of HMP Swaleside and south of Swaleside under construction is HMP Elmley.

2003

- 5.6.8 There is little change to the northern part of the PDA. The central section of the PDA has seen changes with the building of 2 'H' accommodation buildings on what was the western portion of the cricket pitch to the rear of what was the educational building and is now in use as a chapel having been rebuilt after the Second World War. The southern

portion of the PDA is still grass but has been subdivided into paddock areas for animals (Plate 7).

2019

5.6.9 There is little change to the northern and central areas of the PDA. The farm buildings to the north east of the gym and pool have been demolished and replaced by the Healthcare building. The area is still sub-divided into paddock with the far southern area shown as allotments and polytunnels with a football pitch alongside (Plate 8).

Other

5.6.10 The Airfields of Britain Conservation Trust have a number of plates whereby they have overlaid the known layout and buildings of the early airfield with that of the present day. This shows that the area of the PDA pre 1916 and does not appear to have been built on (Plate 9)

5.6.11 The later airfield overlay by the Airfields of Britain Conservation Trust shows the line of the railway and that of the original building locations. A number of which fall into the area of the PDA. Of those remaining, in the northern section include the three buildings of the married quarters. The educational building. The gym and pool and south west of that building, the electrical sub-station (Plate 10).

5.7 Summary of Potential

Palaeolithic

5.7.1 The Palaeolithic period represents the earliest phases of human activity in the British Isles, up to the end of the last Ice Age. The KHER has no records from this period within the assessment area. The Stour Palaeolithic project considers that the likelihood of finds in the area from this period is very low. Therefore, the Palaeolithic potential in this area is considered **low**.

Mesolithic

5.7.2 The Mesolithic period reflects a society of hunter-gatherers active after the last Ice Age. The KHER has no records from this period. Therefore, it is considered that the potential for finding remains that date to this period is **low**.

Neolithic

- 5.7.3 The Neolithic period was the beginning of a sedentary lifestyle based on agriculture and animal husbandry. The KHER has no records from this period. On the higher ground to the north at Kingsborough is evidence of Neolithic activity as is to the east at Leysdown. The potential for finding remains that date to this period within the confines of the development site is considered **low**.

Bronze Age

- 5.7.4 The Bronze Age was a period of large migrations from the continent and more complex social developments on a domestic, industrial and ceremonial level. KHER has one record from this period being a Portable Antiquities Scheme find of a copper alloy ingot, which as well as being attributed to the Bronze Age, could apply for any period up to the Post Medieval (MKE106166). These finds are usually located to a corner of a grid square rather than their exact location. Therefore, it is quite possible that the location is somewhere closer towards the north area of Kingsborough where many Bronze Age finds have been found. The potential for finding remains that date to this period within the confines of the development site is considered **low**.

Iron Age

- 5.7.5 The Iron Age is, by definition a period of established rural farming communities with extensive field systems and large 'urban' centres (the Iron Age 'Tribal capital' or civitas of the Cantiaci). The KHER has no records from this period within the assessment area, where evidence for this period is again located on the higher ground to the north. That said, south of Kingsborough, closer to the village of Eastchurch Iron Age gold Stater coins have been found and reported under the PAS. Given the distance from the PDA, the potential for finding remains that date to this period within the confines of the development site is considered **low**.

Romano-British

- 5.7.6 The Romano-British period is the term given to the Romanised culture of Britain under the rule of the Roman Empire, following the Claudian invasion in AD 43, Britain then formed part of the Roman Empire for nearly 400 years. The KHER has three records from this period. Within the assessment area being that of a Roman site, most likely a farmstead within the area of the PDA (TQ 97 SE 18). Whether this is the exact location

within Standford Hill is not known as the excavation was undertaken in 1967 before modern recording methods but given the individual was farming at the time, it is likely to have been away from the core prison area. Consequently, the details regarding the site are not known or how much of it was revealed. Like the earlier archaeological periods, Roman activity has been found along the area to the north, again on the higher ground, at Minster, Leysdown and Kingsborough as well as Roman evidence at Shurland Hall and it is possible that any Roman activity would have been closer to the higher ground of Standford Hill itself. There are two PAS finds located to grid squares to the outer reaches of the assessment area to the north east of Roman copper alloy bust (MKE73345) and a copper alloy mount (MKE3346). Roman were known to exploit marsh area and have saltworks in these areas close to the water's edge as evidence on the Isle of Grain and on the mainland at Rushenden, Seasalter and Halstow Creek. Whilst there is currently no evidence, the area south of the PDA could potentially been suitable for such activity. Due to the presence of a farmstead in the area, the potential for finding remains that date to this period within the confines of the development site is considered **high**.

Anglo-Saxon

- 5.7.7 KHER has one record from this period within the assessment area being a copper alloy hanging bowl located to a grid square circa 740m to the north east and reported under PAS (MKE96980). Eastchurch is considered to be of Saxon origin and therefore the find may be associated with the settlement. The potential for finding remains that date to this period within the confines of the development site is considered **low**.

Medieval

- 5.7.8 KHER has 13 records from this period within the assessment area. Obviously Eastchurch continued as a village through this period and nearby Parsonage Farm also known as Little Shurland and possible the site of the original church although this is not certain (TQ 97 SE 13). Being a moated site, across Kent in 2014 there were 146 known moated sites of which approximately 20 had been dated at that point. Moated sites before 1200 AD nationally are rare, the beginning of their popularity starts in the 13th century with the peak in the late 13th century/early 14th century and Kent appears to follow this trend.
- 5.7.9 In association with the village a large number of finds have been reported under the PAS an assigned to grid squares to the north and north east of the PDA, of items lost or

discarded. In addition, the marshy area south, east and south east are known to have a number of mounds identified as Medieval saltworks (TQ 96 NE 3). Given that the PDA is located southwards of the possible settlement area, the potential for finding remains that date to this period is considered **low**.

Post Medieval

5.7.10 There are eight KHER records from this period within the assessment area. There are the listed building records for Parsonage Farm and garden wall (TQ 97 SE 1050; TQ 97 SE 1059). The 18th century map regression shows that the area south of Eastchurch Village was one of scattered farmsteads of which there are five farmstead records. Stonepit Farm is a more modern farmstead and not included in this HER list. Originally based at the time of the tithes, the land belonged to Parsonage Farm, although as seen in the tithe map, it was in existence at the time of the tithes. The name Stonepits Farm first appears on the 1871 census with John Hinkley, a farm bailiff with his wife and two other adults listed as farm servants. By 1881, the farm bailiff was then James Ralph with family and farm servants. Given that the PDA was part of a larger field, the potential for finding remains that date to this period is considered **low**.

Modern

5.7.11 KHER has 13 records dating to this period. Many of these are associated with the former Airfield and glider testing site that opened in 1909, including four Grade II listed hangers that remain from 1912. As expected for an area of Kent that saw wartime action, the records also record three WWII crash sites as well as a number of castellated WWI practice trenches. There are no records in the area of the PDA although there was a spur of the light railway that passed through the PDA (TQ 97 SE 1071) and this should be reflected in the HER records. The site later became a prison in the 1950s, and made use initially of some of these structures although over the years many have been replaced and only a few remain of which there are three in the area of the PDA, being the married quarters, the gym and pool and the electricity sub-station. The aerial photographs (Plate 12) show a number of historical structures, since demolished that fall within the area of the PDA and more importantly into the specific areas of proposed developments. The potential for finding remains dating to this period in the PDA is considered **high**.

Unknown

5.7.12 There are five records that have not been attributed to any specific period. The majority of these are for cropmarks outside of the area of the PDA that are for earthworks (TQ 96

NE 1030), enclosures (TQ 96 NE 1081) and some are rectangular (TQ 97 SE 93; TQ 96 NE 1036). One record is for copper alloy slag (MKE106165).

Overview

5.7.13 This desk-based assessment has considered the archaeological potential of the site but this potential can only be tested by fieldwork. The desk-based assessment has considered the archaeological potential of the site. Archaeological investigations in the vicinity, map research, the historical environment record results and recent archaeological investigations have shown that the PDA may contain archaeological sites and these can be summarised as:

- Prehistoric: **low**
- Iron Age: **low**
- Roman: **high**
- Anglo-Saxon: **low**
- Medieval: **low**
- Post-Medieval: **low**
- Modern: **high**

6 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 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.

6.2 Historic Impacts

6.2.1 Cartographic regression (5.5), Topographic analysis (1.2) and Historical research (5.4) indicate that until the opening of the airfield the PDA appears not to have been built on. Following extensive work at the site, a number of buildings and services were added within the area of the PDA. Plate 1 takes the aerial photographs from 1917 and at the end of the Second World War, along with the 1943 air ministry plan (Fig.14) to identify features and structures that occur within the 3 development areas of the PDA. At the northern part of the PDA where the area has been subject to disturbance with an original structure of a security hut located in the far northern part, since demolished. In addition, the 1917 aerial photograph shows the line of the railway spur passing through this area. This entire northern area with the exception of three buildings of the married quarters from the 1930s was then replaced in the 1960s by a group of semi-detached houses. Therefore, the historical impact in the northern area is considered **high**.

- 6.2.2 The central area appears to have been the least impacted historically except for the area alongside Rolls Way. The area of the current healthcare block has had previous airfield and prison buildings in this area and therefore there is likely to be a **high** historical disturbance. Remaining section of the central portion appears to have had a **low** impact historically except for a couple of linear features. On the eastern side the light railway passed through and what appears to be services trenches, possibly sewage related from 1916 passed through the centre part of this portion.
- 6.2.3 For the southern portion of the PDA the area there does not appear to have been any historical structures other than one building that was at the rear of the sub-station as seen on the 1943 Air Ministry plan and the 1960s aerial photograph where the southern part of that building, since demolished, potentially clips the southern PDA area of focus. Within the southern development area is also thought to have been disturbance from the Second World War of a personnel air raid 'slit' trenches. In addition, the 1916 possible service trench also passes through this area. The only feature of note is that of a modern field boundary that cuts north west-south east across the area that based on the historical OS map was also labelled as a drain. Therefore, the overall historical impact on any potential archaeology for the southern area is considered to be **high**.
- 6.2.4 Across the area as a whole, as seen on Plate 4, it would have been subjected to bombing during the Second World War. Due to the London Clay any bombs when hitting the ground usually sank well below ground level before detonating. This resulted in many blasts being absorbed by the ground and the effect being of mud thrown up (Peter West, EAM, pers. comms.). As a consequence, any areas hit by exploding bombs would have had a total historical impact. Also, it cannot be completely certain that all of them exploded and there is the possibility that unexploded bombs may remain. The exact location of all bomb strikes are not known and therefore there is an element of uncertainty of historical impact across the whole area as a result.

Proposed Impact

- 6.2.5 The main expansion that would require below ground activities are two new 60 bed accommodation blocks located at the southern end of the PDA. These will require foundations and services which will likely encounter earlier service trenches and possibly a Second World War air raid trench. The proposed impact is therefore considered to be **high**

- 6.2.6 In the central portion of the PDA are locations for the new modular buildings for the offices and library and the new kitchen building. Since these are to be modular buildings, the below ground impact is reduced and likely to sit on pads. Therefore, the proposed impact in this area is considered to be medium.
- 6.2.7 The northern portion of the PDA concerns the car parking extension which will have a low/medium impact in an area already heavily disturbed.

7 SIGNIFICANCE

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 Archaeological Significance is assessed under a number of criteria, which includes, Period, Group Value, Survival/Condition, Fragility/Vulnerability, Diversity and Potential. These criteria are the same as used by the Government in the scheduling of ancient monuments and provide a useful framework in assessing significance and also pulls together and summarises the findings in the report.

7.2 Significance Criteria

Period

7.2.1 There is archaeological significance within the assessment area of high potential for the Roman, and modern period. There is low potential for all other periods. This has been evidenced by the 1967 small excavation revealing a potential Roman farmstead, although the exact location is unknown. The site also having evidence pertaining to the earlier buildings and light railway relating to the use of the site as an airfield post 1909.

Documentation

7.2.2 The historical and landscape development of the PDA can be understood reasonably well from the cartographic, archive, photographic and other sources. The documents and photographs held at the Eastchurch Aviation Museum have provided significant evidence of prior structures and land use for the first half of the 20th century. It is possible that further detailed research nationally may uncover more documentary evidence, although it is unlikely to alter the conclusion present in this report.

Group Value

7.2.3 The potential for archaeology at the PDA has group value in potentially providing more information regarding the use of the area as part of the airfield. Any evidence pertaining to the Roman period will potentially have group value in understanding the use of the Roman landscape across Sheppey.

Survival / Condition

7.2.4 The overall survival of any potential archaeology is uncertain given the historical impact from the bombing of the airfield in the Second World War. For those areas of the PDA not hit, the central and southern development areas have seen the least historical

impact from period use of airfield structures, which the exception of the line of the railway spur and service trench that passed through the PDA and in the southern section, the personnel air raid 'slit' trenches. The northern section of the PDA has seen the greatest historical impact with the building and subsequent demolition of the Longmore Drive group of houses.

Fragility / Vulnerability

- 7.2.5 Any potential archaeological remains within the southern area of the PDA, should they survive in-situ will be vulnerable to damage during the proposed development from foundations and services. The central portion will be less vulnerable due to the use of modular structures, whilst the northern section will be least impact due to just surface impact from the car park in an area already heavily historically affected by the 1960s demolished houses.

Diversity

- 7.2.6 There is little by way of diversity and it appears that the majority of past archaeological activity would have occurred on the high ground on Sheppey to the north, although it appears there is the chance of a Roman farmstead in the vicinity. With the PDA located away from settlement areas on the lower ground in an agricultural area, it was only from 1909 was the area intensely used as an airfield.

Potential

- 7.2.7 The impact assessment concludes that the site has a high potential for archaeological remains.

Significance

- 7.2.8 Based on the information gained in this report, it can be concluded that the site is of high archaeological interest. There is the potential to discover more of the use of the area in the Roman period. In addition, the use of the site as an airfield in one of the earliest periods of aviation in the UK means that it is a site of national significance. However, the area of the PDA does not appear to have been used extensively in this very early period. There is less significance attached for the site in use as one of a military airfield. The historical photos, show that people were attracted to the early flights and later sports events going on in the area of the PDA and they possibly would have left behind traces, from their time there. As would have servicemen and pilots for the two World Wars and

therefore as well as known structures, there is the possibility of chance finds from the Modern period.

8 ARCHAEOLOGICAL MITIGATION

8.1 Introduction

- 8.1.1 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.
- 8.1.2 The assessment has generally shown that the area to be developed is within an area of high potential for Roman and Modern periods with low potential for all other periods. Whilst the historical documentation has allowed for the identity of a number of buildings in the area of the PDA, it is possible that other structures have been and gone that we are not aware of, along with the uncertainty caused by the historical impact of the Second World War bombing across the area. Aside from the northern portion, the majority of the area appears not to have been built on with the exception of the creation of personnel air raid 'slit' trenches and linear features of the light railway and service trench. With regards to the Roman farmstead, the exact location and plan of this is not known.
- 8.1.3 The development proposals are likely to cause a high impact upon any potential archaeology at the southern part, medium for the central part and low/medium for the northern part of the proposed development. The need for, scale, scope and nature of any further assessment and/or archaeological works should be agreed through consultation with the statutory authorities. However, care need to be taken in respect of the possibility of unexploded ordnance as well consideration for the intrusive proposals for geotechnical investigation.

9 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

9.1 Archive

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

9.2 Reliability/Limitations of Sources

- 9.2.1 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

- 9.3.1 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 Ministry of Justice (and representatives) for the use of this document in all matters directly relating to the project.

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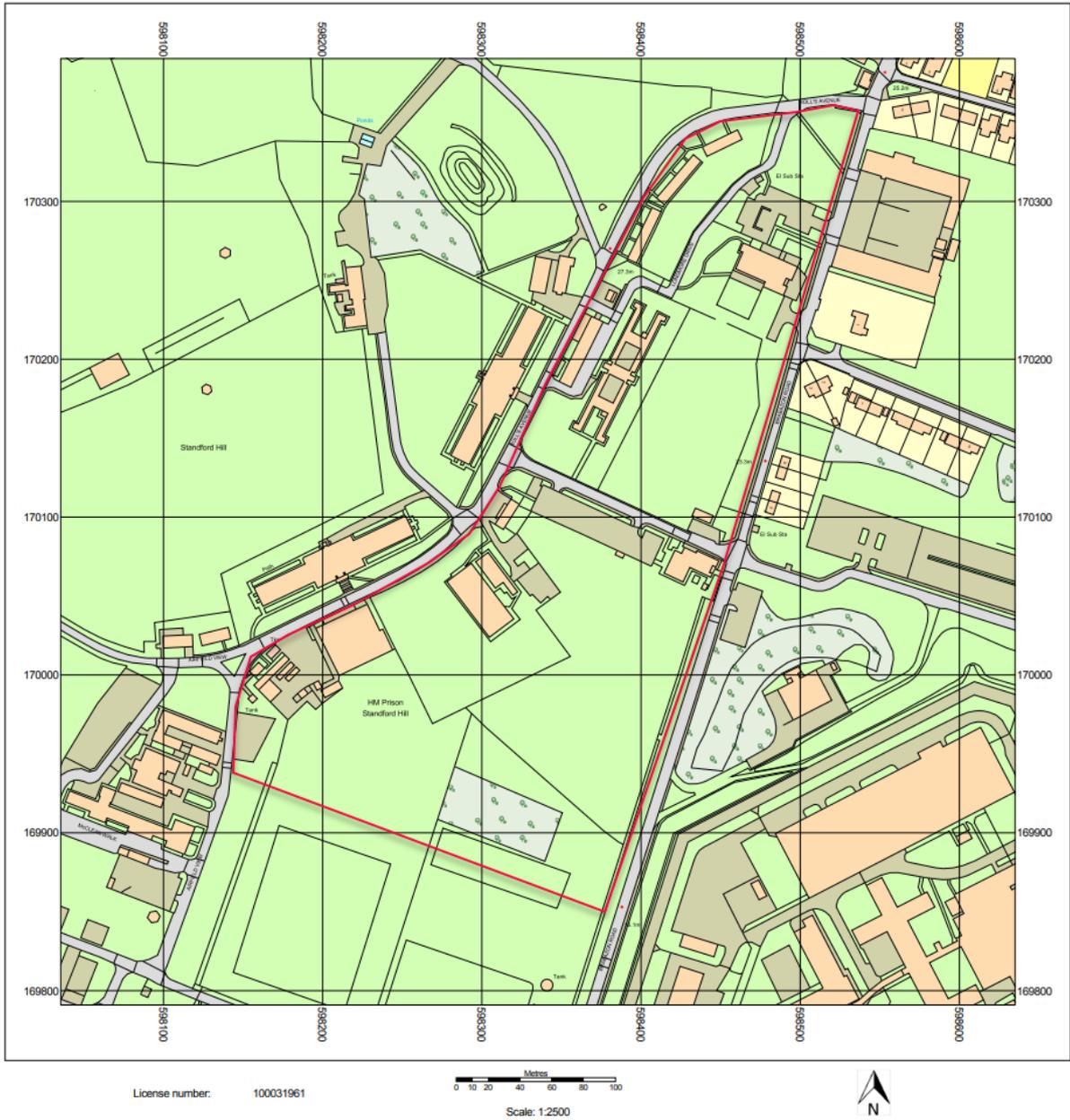
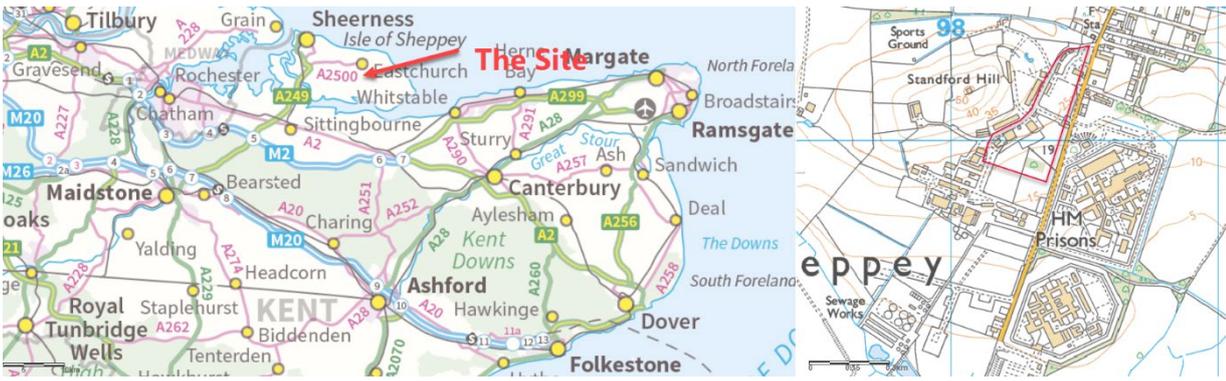


Figure 1: Location Maps.

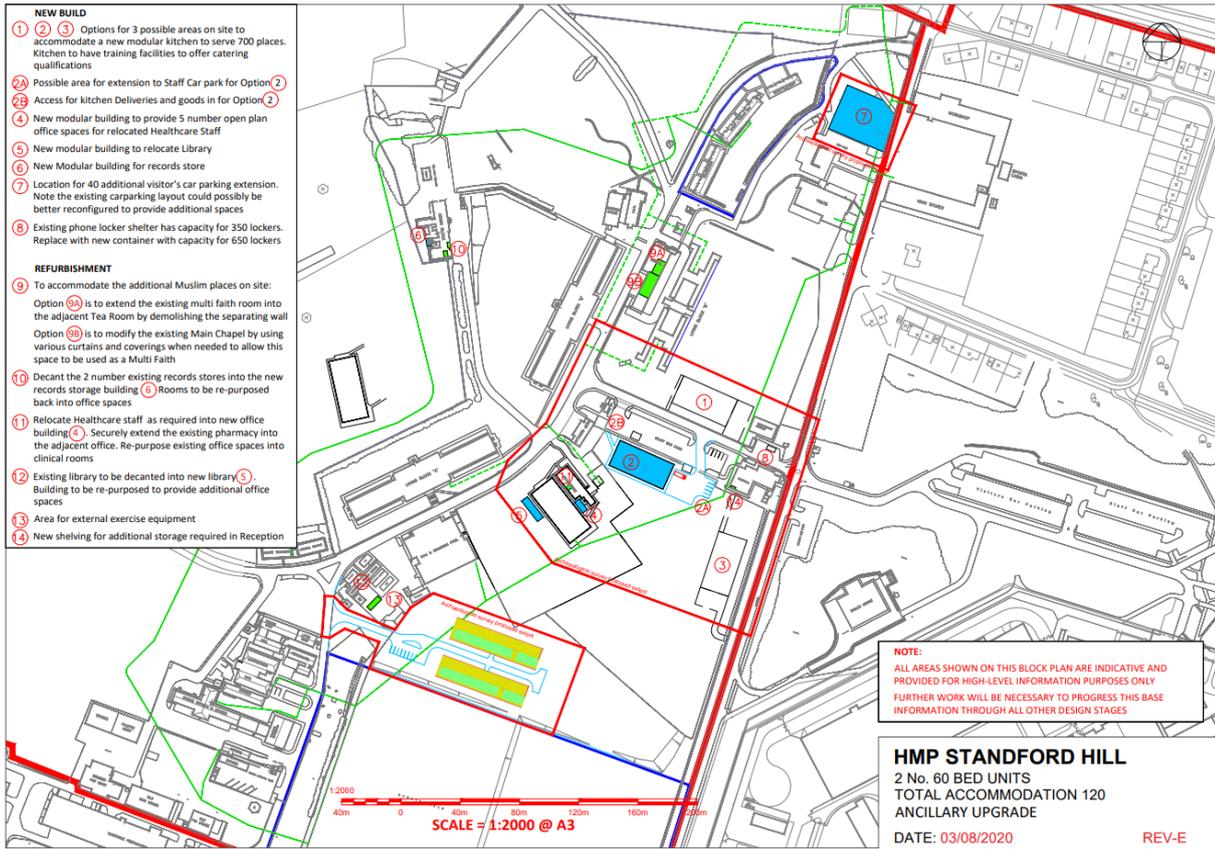


Figure 2: Proposed Development Areas



Figure 3: Symondson Map, 1596

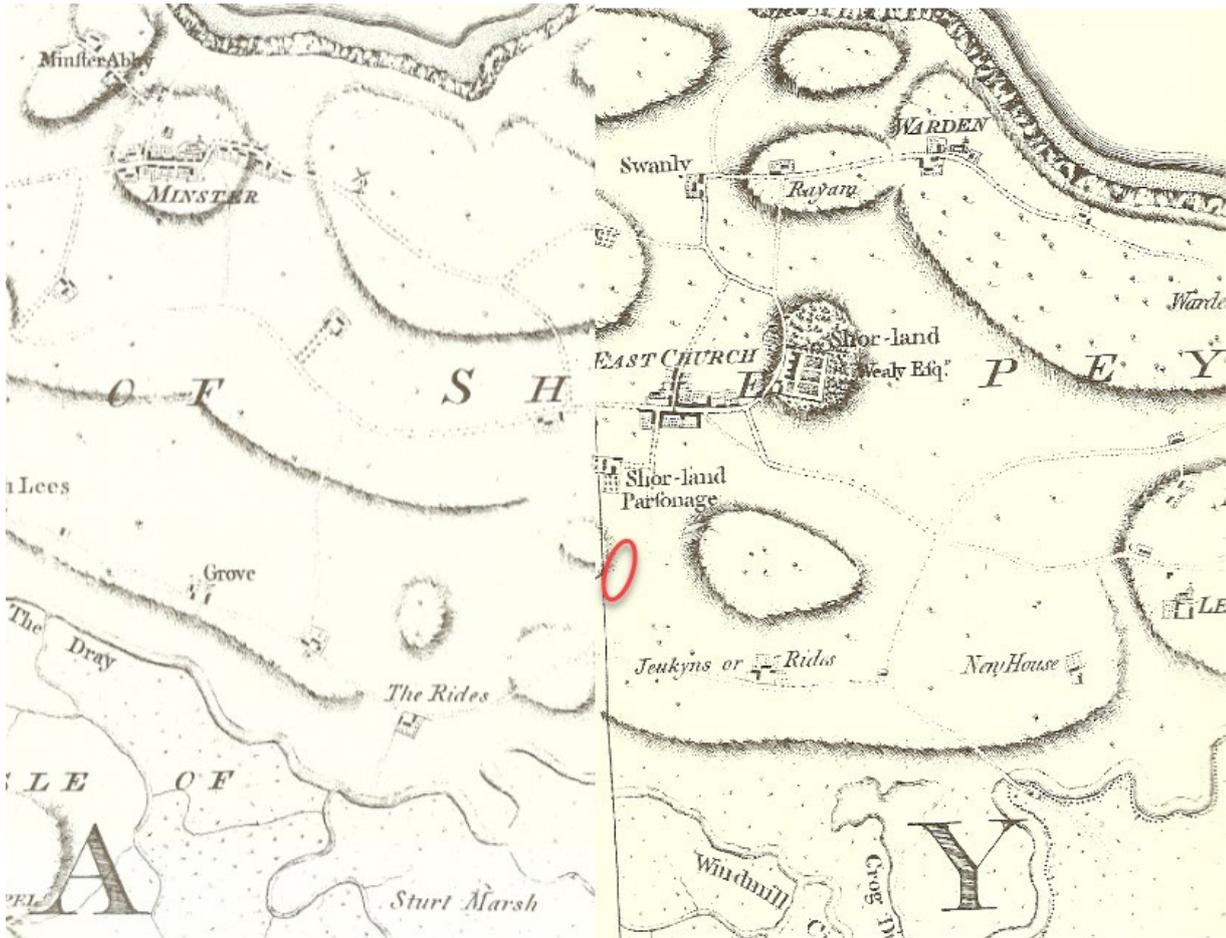


Figure 4: Andrew and Dury's Map, 1769



Figure 5: Hasted, 1797

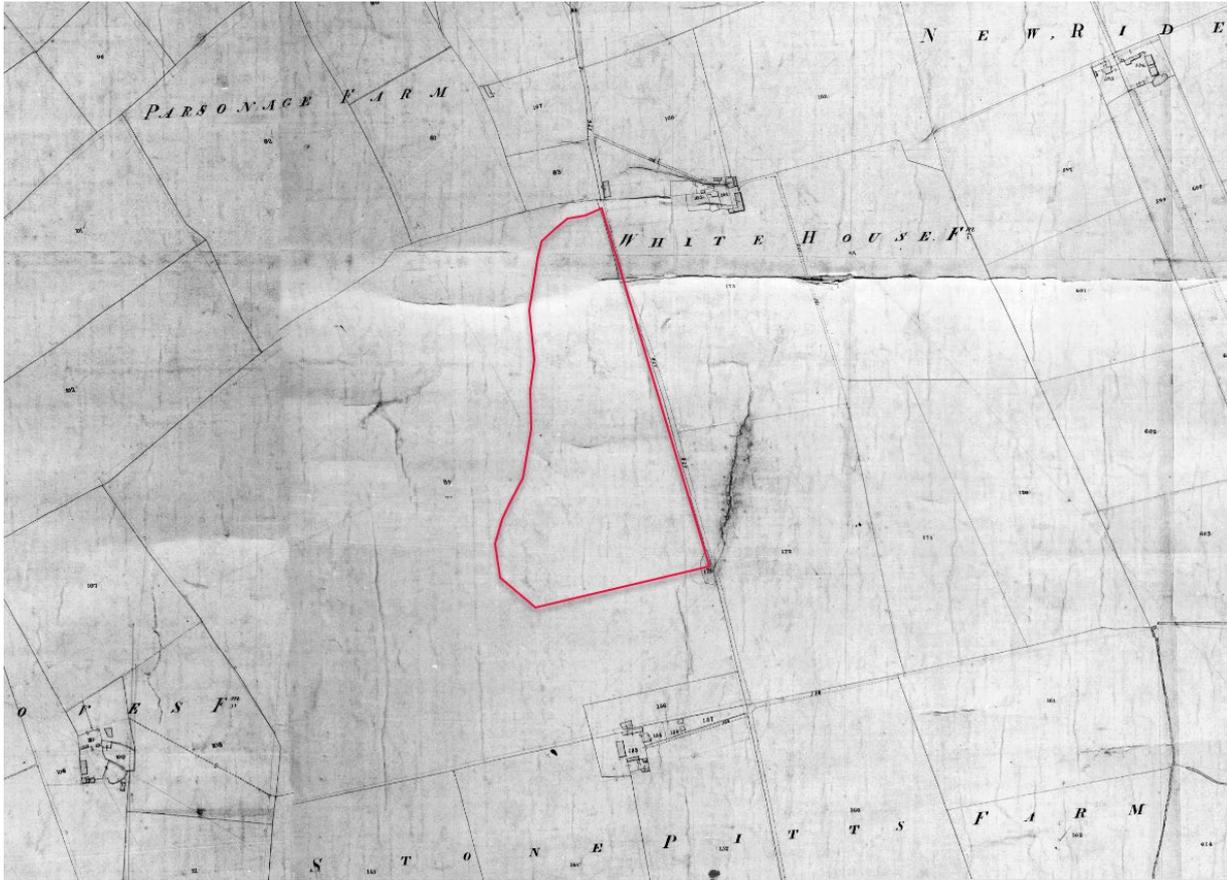


Figure 6: Eastchurch Tithe Map, 1842

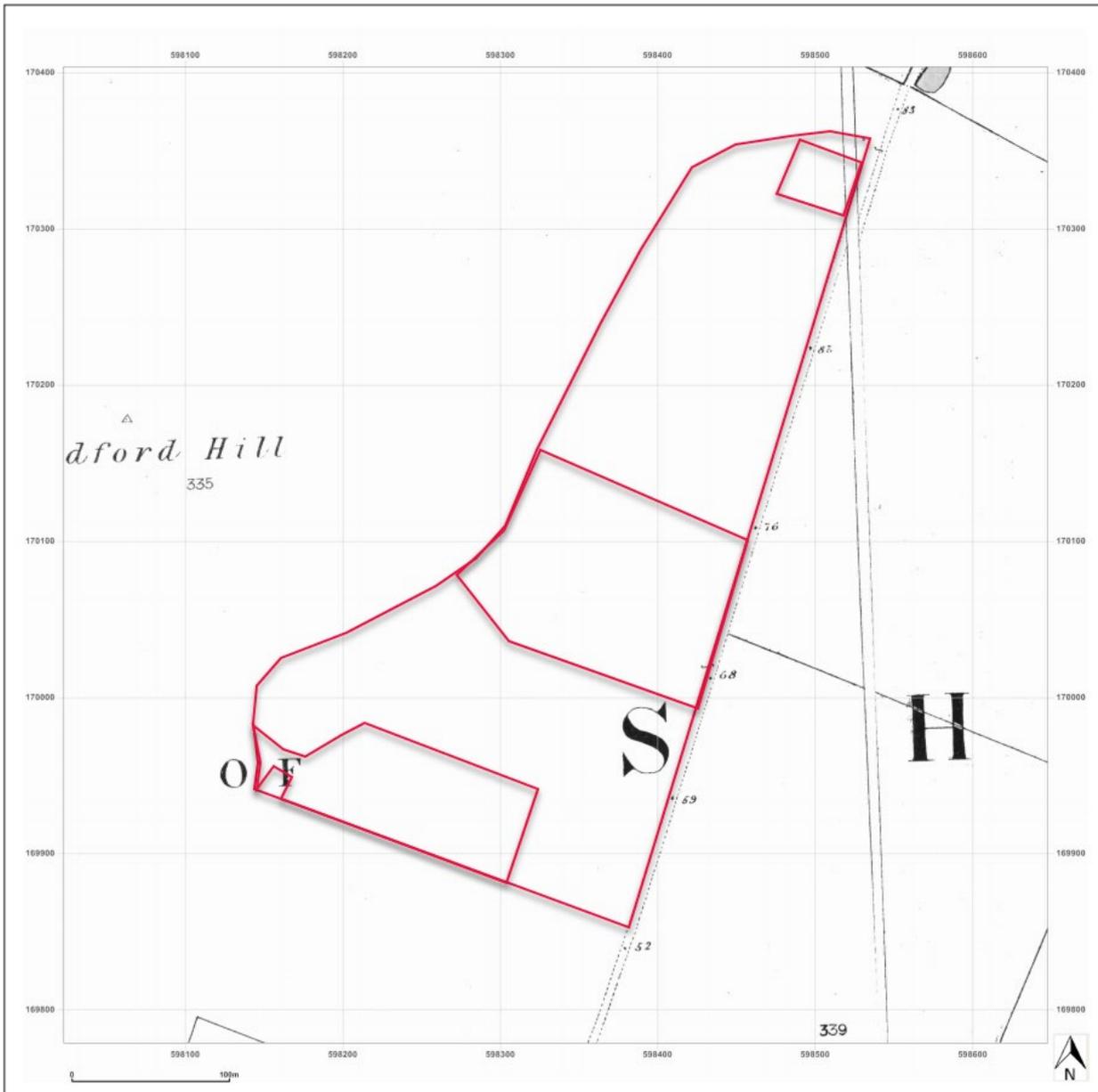


Figure 7: Historic OS Map, 1867

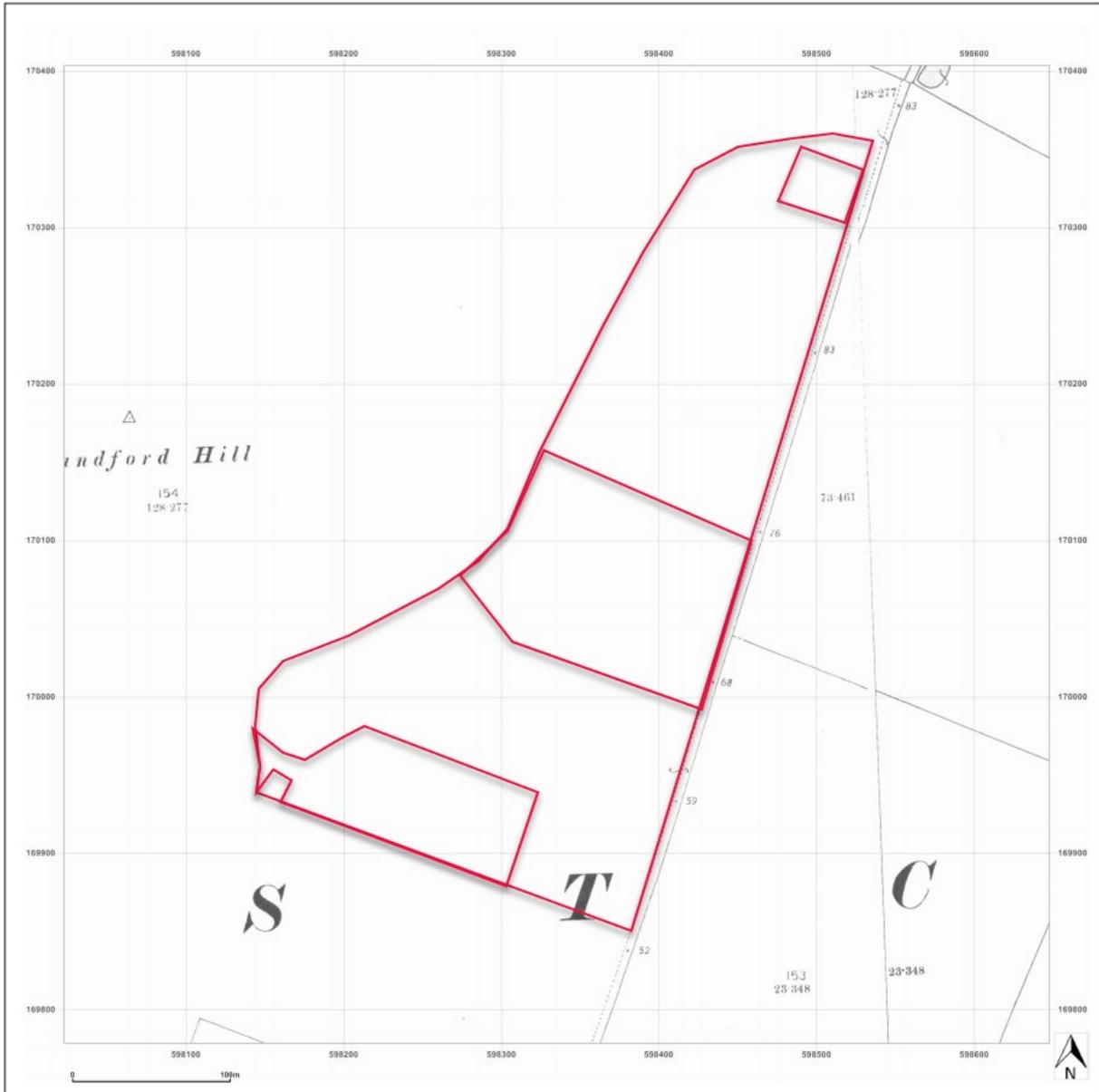


Figure 8: Historic OS Map 1897

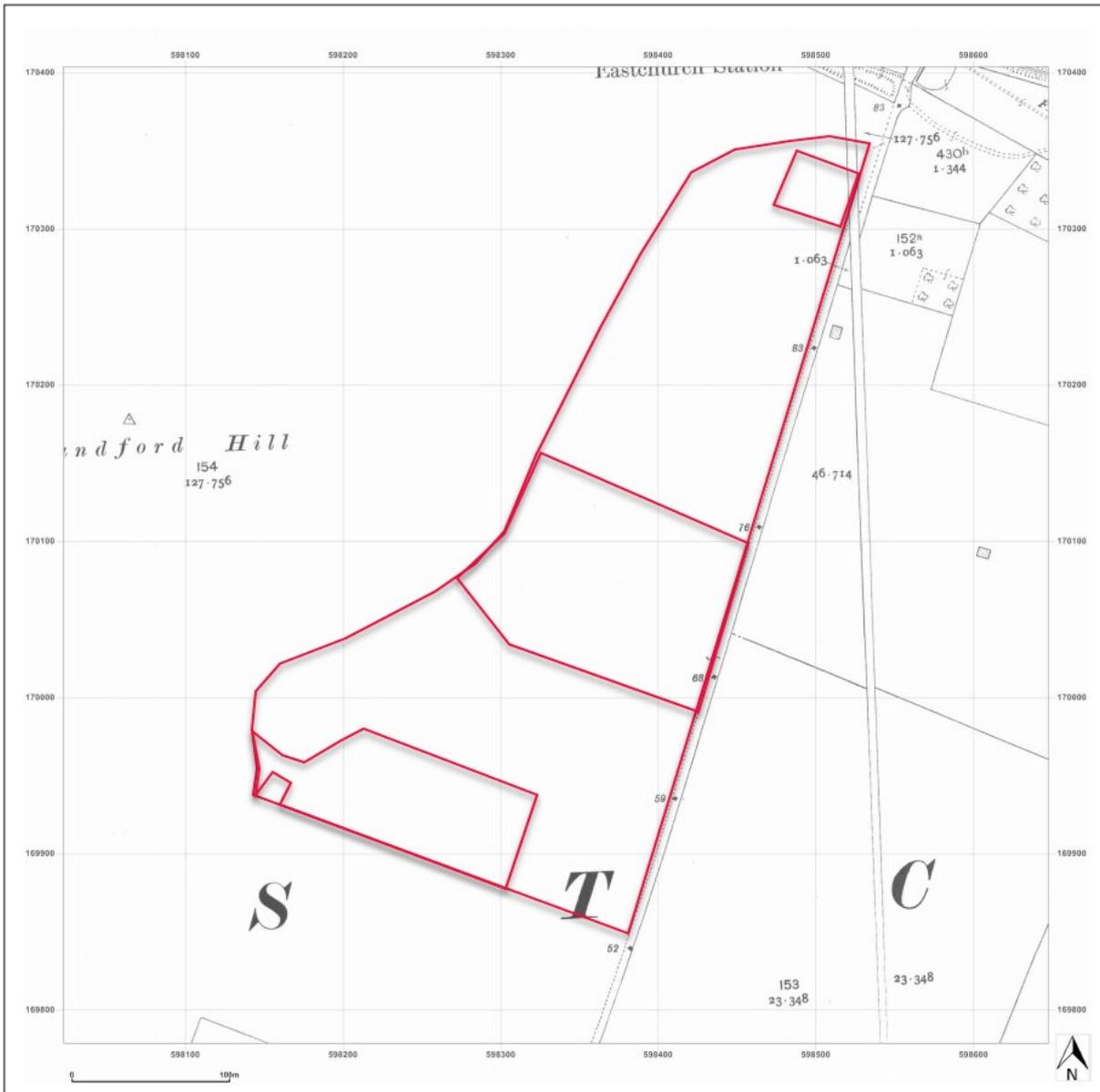


Figure 9: Historic OS Map 1907-1908

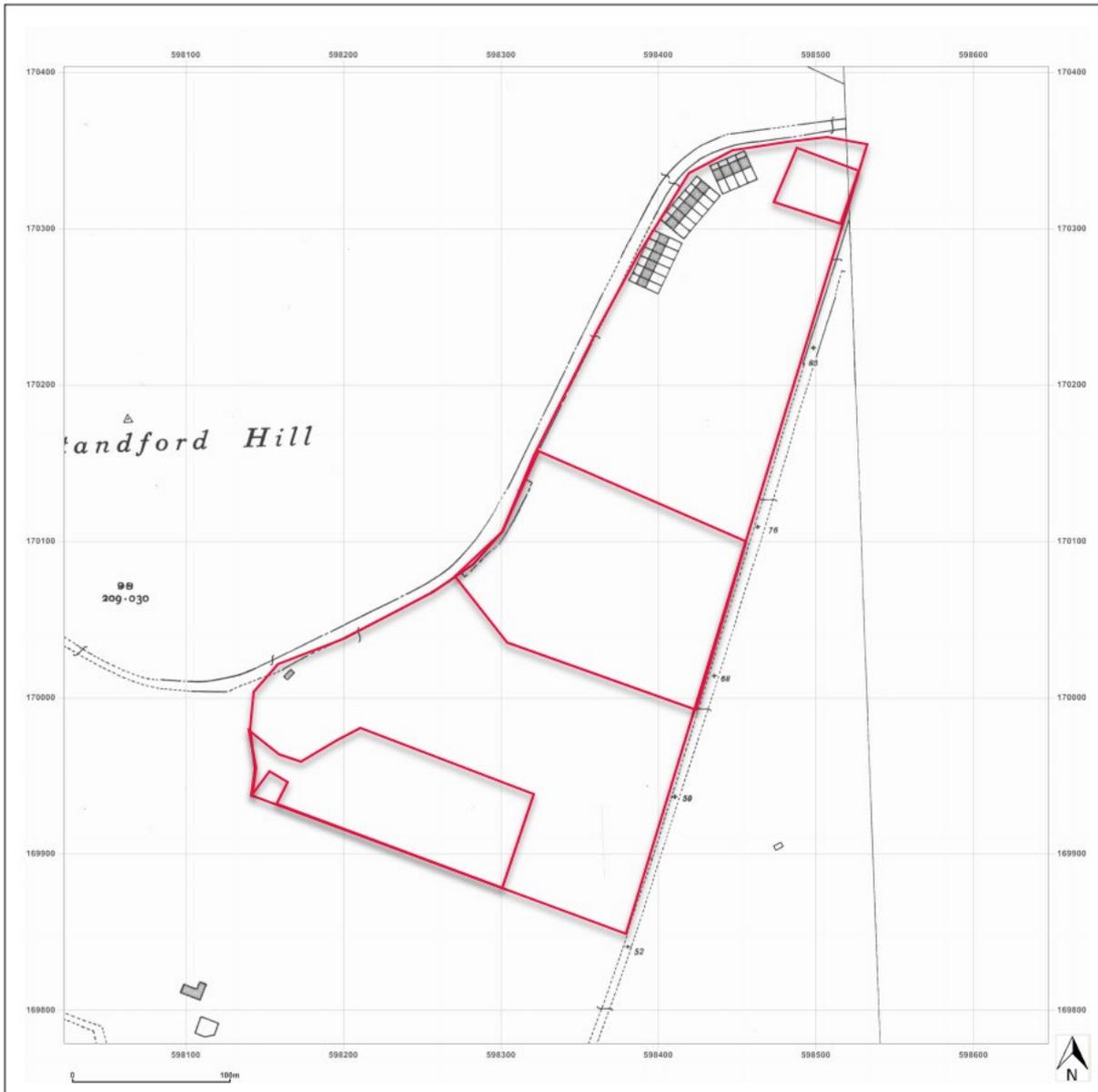


Figure 10: Historic OS Map, 1939

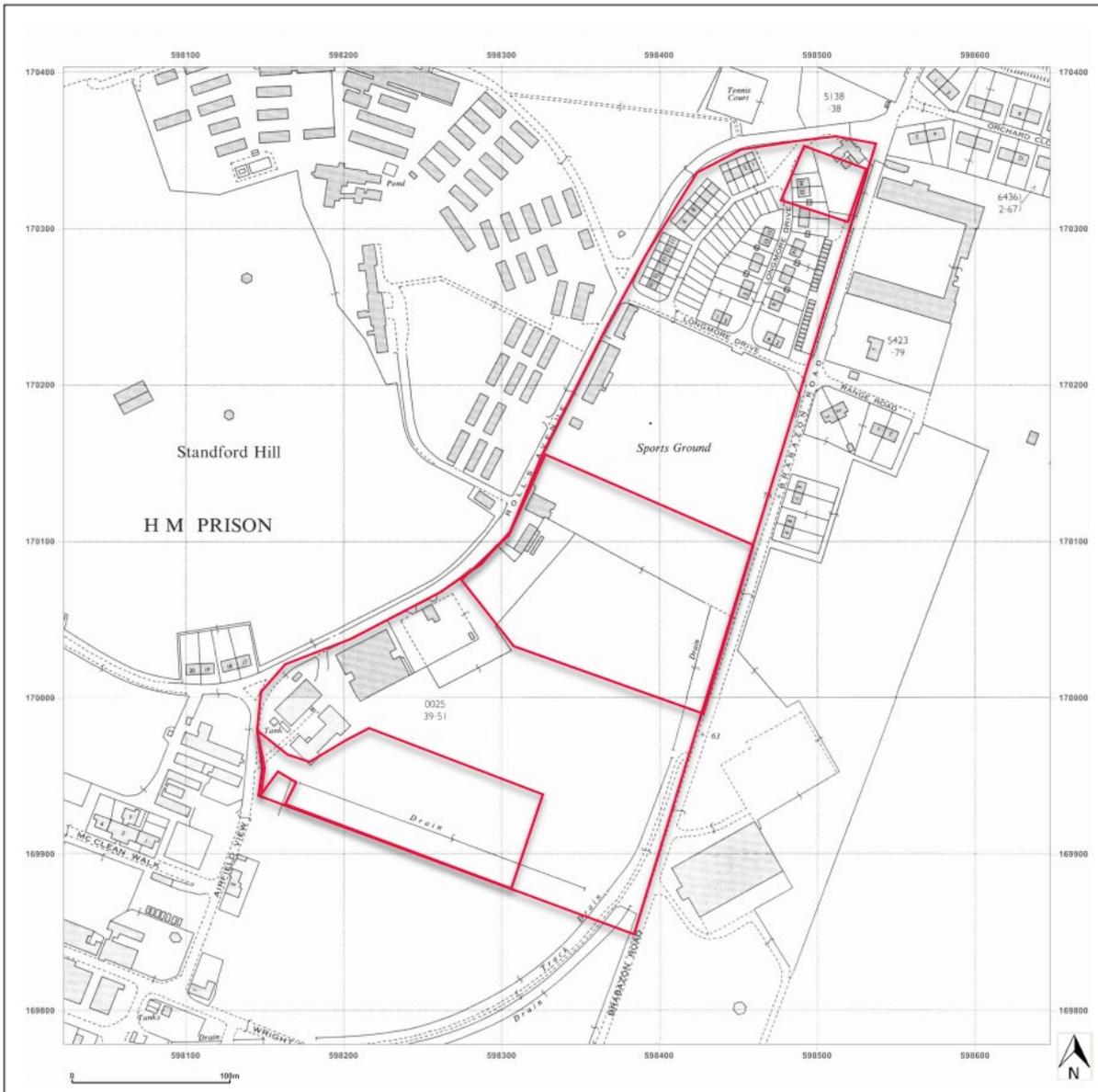


Figure 11: Historic OS Map, 1964

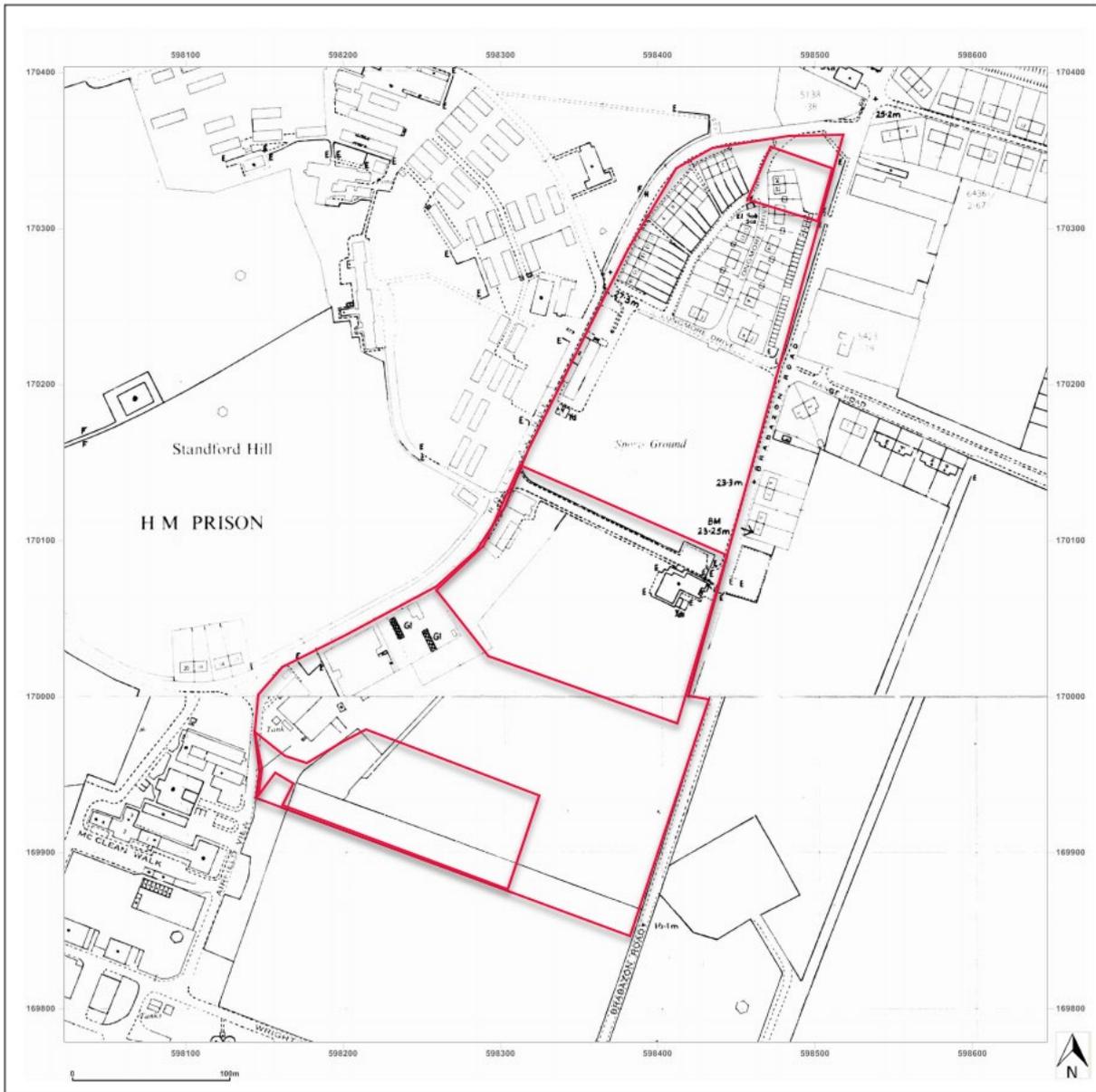


Figure 12: Historic OS Map, 1977-1978

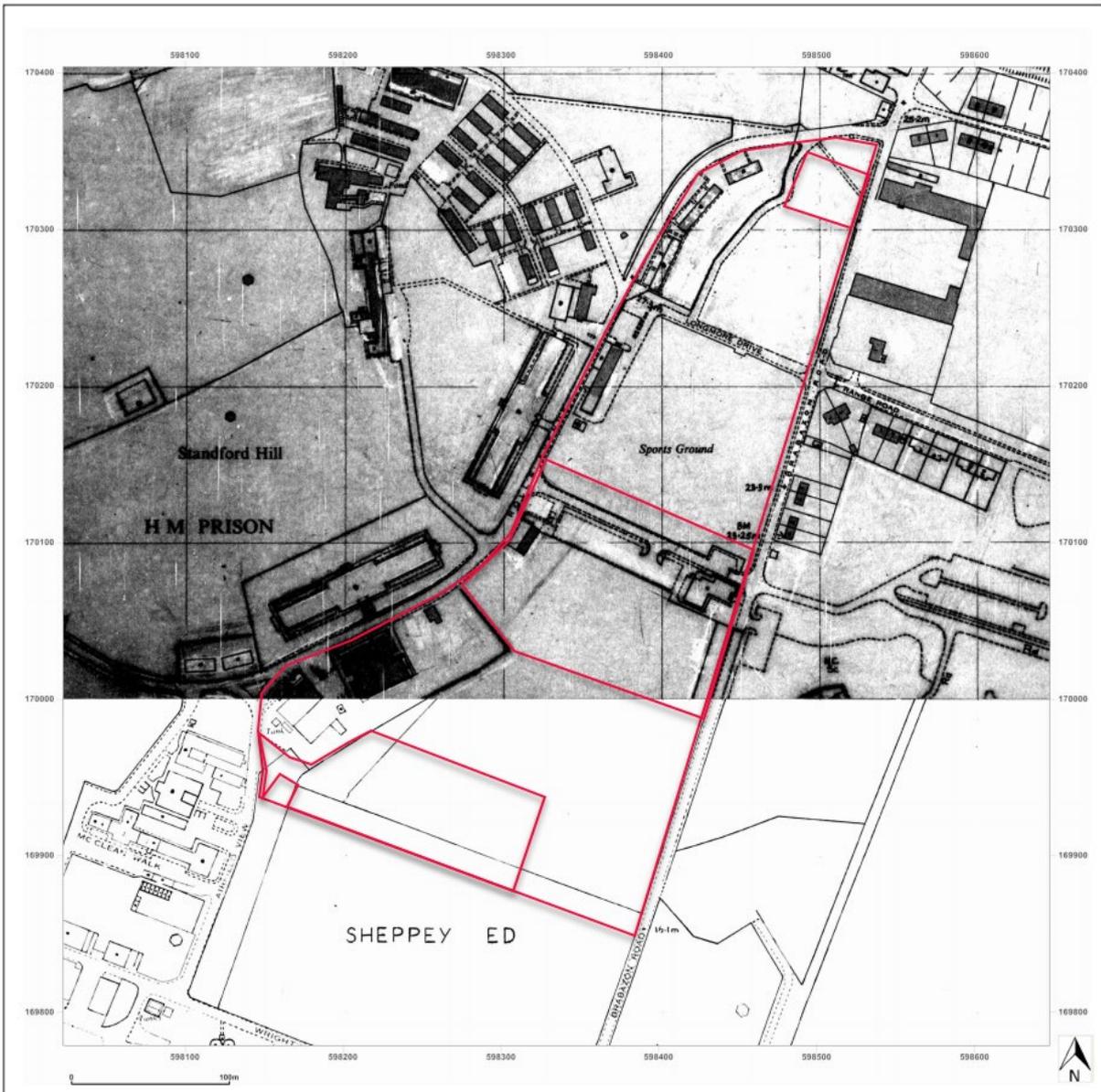
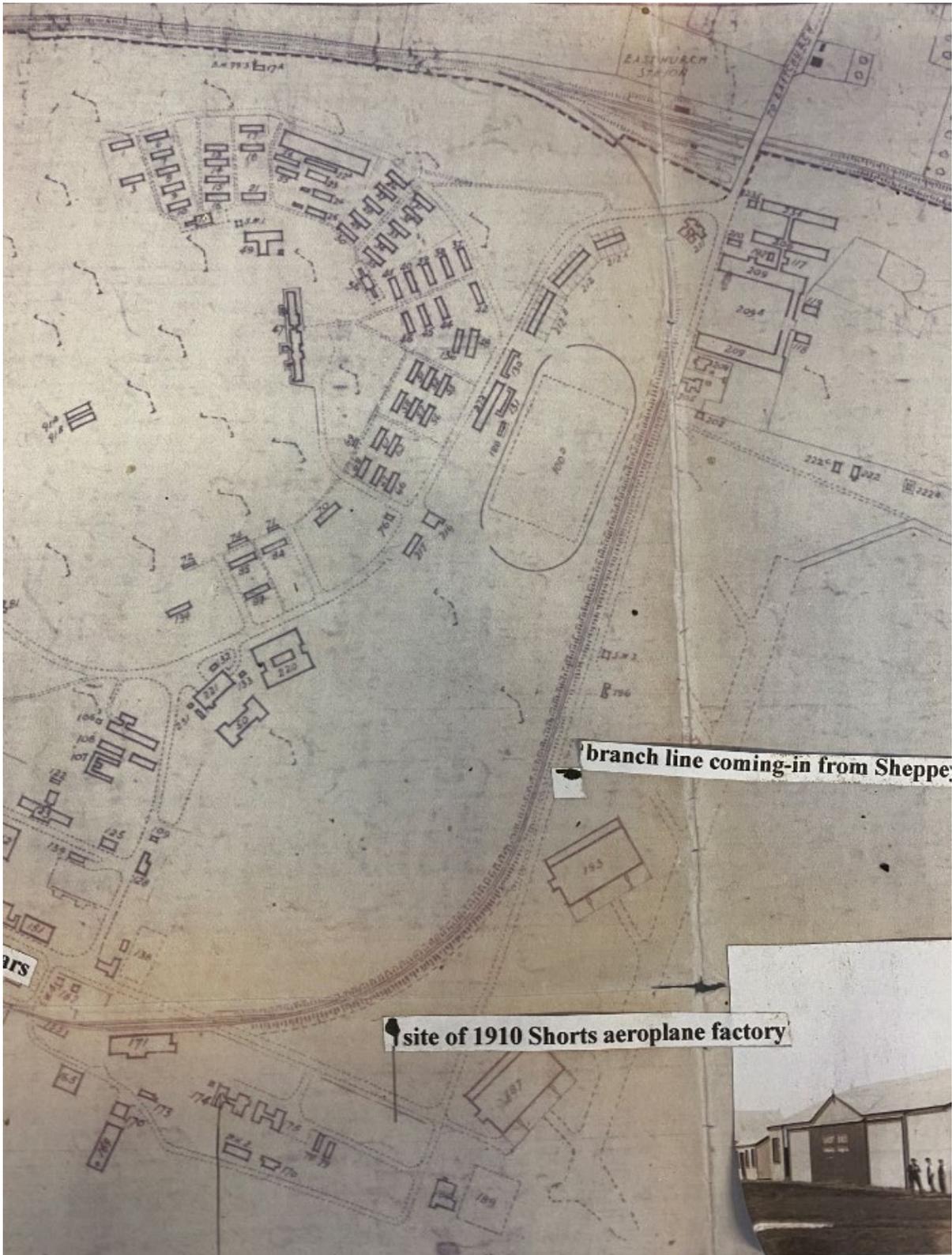


Figure 13: Historic OS Map, 1985-1988



<i>Building Number</i>	<i>Description</i>
<i>50</i>	<i>Unknown?</i>
<i>100d</i>	<i>Football Ground</i>
<i>188</i>	<i>Stores, Match Office (timber)</i>
<i>211</i>	<i>Guard House</i>
<i>212</i>	<i>Quarters, WAAF (Brick)</i>
<i>216</i>	<i>Armoury</i>
<i>217</i>	<i>Office, Flight</i>
<i>220</i>	<i>Swimming Baths and Gym</i>
<i>221</i>	<i>Power House and Store</i>
<i>231</i>	<i>Bore Hut No 1 (corrugated sheets)</i>

Figure 14: Air Ministry Plan of Eastchurch 1943 with key to the buildings within the area of the PDA (Eastchurch Aviation Museum)

11 APPENDIX 1 – KCC HER DATA (SEE FIGURES 15-20).

KHER	Type	Location	Period	Description
TQ 96 NE 41	Monument	Within PDA	Modern	Eastchurch Military Airfield, Isle of Sheppey, Kent
TQ 96 NE 42	Monument	Within PDA	Modern	HM Prison Stanford Hill, Eastchurch, Isle of Sheppey. Formed as an open prison in 1950, using converted buildings from those lying derelict at Eastchurch Military Airfield.
TQ 97 SE 1050	Listed Building	c. 550m N	Post Medieval	Parsonage Farmhouse. Grade II listed (1258070). Built in the early C17
TQ 97 SE 1059	Listed Building	c. 550m M	Post Medieval	Garden Walls to Parsonage Farmhouse. Grade II listed (1259758).
TQ 96 NE 3	Monument	c. 320m E	Medieval to Post Medieval	Medieval salt mound. Salt-working mound situated on the Eastchurch Marshes at TQ 9878 6998: there is the remains of a modern building on the summit.
TQ 97 SE 13	Monument	c. 500m N	Medieval to Post Medieval	Parsonage farm. In the Valor of 1535 the possessions of Boxley Abbey included the parsonage of Eastchurch. Gabriel Livesay, who died in 1622, and whose arms appear upon one of the mantlepieces, probably rebuilt the house. Parsonage Farm is supposed to be the site of the original parish church of Eastchurch. There are Tudor bricks incorporated in the fabric and the foundations appear to be of an older period, though otherwise the house has little appearance of age internally. The old square gatehouse remains, showing its distinct bricks of the period, and also the fine old thatched tithe barn of the parish. Surrounding the house are the remnants of a large rectangular moat. The south arm only, with retaining bank survives, part water-filled, though the east and west arms are faintly traceable as shallow depressions.

TQ 97 SE 18	Monument	c. 200m E	Roman	Roman farmstead. A Roman site, presumably a small farmstead occupied during the third quarter of the 1st cent.A.D., was discovered in 1967 during farming work on Stanford Hill. Mr.F.Oakes carried out a small excavation and collected pottery sherds, animal bones, and some briquetage.
TQ 97 SE 76	Monument	adjacent to PDA	Modern	Stanford Hill glider testing site was the site only Charles Rolls experimental glider flights in 1909.
TQ 96 NE 1080	Listed Building	c. 170m SW	Modern	Four Hangers. Grade II listed (1391502). 1912, built by the engineers Harbrows for the Admiralty. Steel-framed, with stanchions at 10 ft centres; lower sections of party walls separating hangars and the same stratum of their front elevation are of coarse concrete blocks;corrugated iron cladding; all roofs are of felt on timber boarding.
MKE73345	Findspot	c. 880m NE	Roman to Early Medieval or Anglo-Saxon	PAS find. Roman copper alloy bust
MKE73346	Findspot	c. 780m NE	Roman to Early Medieval or Anglo-Saxon	PAS find. Roman copper alloy mount
MKE73509	Findspot	c. 640m NE	Medieval	PAS find. Medieval copper alloy key (locking)
MKE73510	Findspot	c. 700m NE	Medieval	PAS find. Medieval copper alloy seal matrix
MKE73511	Findspot	c. 880m NE	Medieval	PAS find. Medieval lead ampulla
MKE73512	Findspot	c. 880m NE	Medieval	PAS find. Medieval lead ampulla
MKE73513	Findspot	c. 820m NE	Medieval	PAS find. Medieval lead seal
TQ 96 NE 1081	Monument	c. 180m W	Unknown	Cropmark of a rectangular enclosure, to the south of Eastchurch visible as a cropmark in Google Earth image from December 2003.
TQ 97 SE 35	Monument	c. 70m N	Modern	Site of Eastchurch station. Opened 1901, closed 1950. Single timber built corrugated tin clad station building, now demolished and site over grown.

MKE85662	Farmstead	c. 690m W	Post Medieval	Grove. A loose courtyard plan farmstead with buildings to three sides of the yard. Altered - significant loss of original form (more than 50%).
MKE85729	Farmstead	c. 175m E	Post Medieval	White House. A loose courtyard plan farmstead with buildings to two sides of the yard. Farmstead completely demolished.
MKE85730	Farmstead	c. 790m E	Post Medieval	New Rides. A full regular courtyard plan farmstead. Farmstead survives but has been completely altered New sheds: Large modern sheds built on the site of the historic farmstead, may have destroyed original buildings or obscured them.
MKE85731	Farmstead	c. 550m N	Post Medieval	Parsonage Farm. A regular multiyard farmstead. Altered - significant loss of original form (more than 50%).
MKE85732	Farmstead	c. 850m N	Post Medieval	Outfarm north east of Parsonage Farm. A field barn with no associated yard. Farmstead completely demolished.
MKE88675	Farmstead	c. 930m NNW	Post Medieval	Rowetts Farm. A regular L-plan farmstead. Altered - partial loss of original form (less than 50%).
TQ 97 SE 93	Monument	c. 360m W	Unknown	Rectilinear parch mark, to the west of Standford Hill. Visible in the aerial photographs of 1990, 2003 and 2008.
TQ 97 SE 113	Crash Site / Protected Military Remains	c. 780m NE	Modern	Crash site of Hawker Hurricane I. Shot down 12th October 1940 over Eastchurch. Pilot bailed out. Aircraft written off.
TQ 97 SE 110	Crash Site / Protected Military Remains	c. 130m W	Modern	Crash site of Supermarine Spitfire I. crash landed and burned 26th August 1940 on perimeter of RAF Eastchurch. Pilot injured. Aircraft written off.
TQ 96 NE 1085	Crash Site / Protected Military Remains	c. 950m S	Modern	Crash site of Supermarine Spitfire I. Crash landed 30th August 1940 at Eastchurch. Pilot unhurt. Aircraft written off.
MKE96980	Findspot	c. 740m NE	Early Medieval or Anglo-Saxon	PAS find. Copper alloy hanging bowl
TQ 96 NE 1000	Monument	c. 230m S	Modern	The Royal Aero Club flying ground, home of the Short Brothers Factory, Eastchurch
TQ 96 NE 1036	Monument	c. 530m S	Unknown	Possible rectangular cropmark. Identified 1996
TQ 96 NE 1032	Monument	c. 950m ESE	Modern	Castellated trench system, Eastchurch. Thought to be a practice trench system for 20th century world war defence. Identified from aerial photographs

TQ 96 NE 1031	Monument	c. 785m W	Modern	Castellated trench system, Eastchurch. Thought to be a practice trench system for 20th century world war defence. Identified from aerial photographs
TQ 96 NE 1030	Monument	c. 790m SW	Unknown	Earthwork
TQ 96 NE 1018	Monument	c. 915m SE	Medieval	Site of medieval salt workings
MKE106165	Findspot	c. 370m N	Unknown	PAS find. Unknown Copper alloy slag
MKE106166	Findspot	c. 370m N	Early Bronze Age to Post Medieval	PAS find. Bronze Age Copper alloy ingot
MKE106167	Findspot	c. 370m N	Medieval to Post Medieval	Pas find. Medieval Tin or tin alloy ingot
MKE106211	Findspot	c. 635m N	Medieval to Post Medieval	Pas find. Medieval Copper alloy thimble
MKE106214	Findspot	c. 635m N	Medieval to Post Medieval	Pas find. Medieval Copper alloy thimble
MKE106269	Findspot	c. 685m N	Medieval	Pas find. Medieval Lead Alloy ampulla
MKE113933	Findspot	c. 840m NW	Medieval to Post Medieval	PAS find. Medieval silver finger ring
TQ 97 SE 1071	Monument	c. 60m N	Modern	Queenborough and Leysdown Light Railway. Light Railway opened between Queenborough and Leysdown in 1901. Although Leysdown developed as a resort in the 1930's, it was never popular, and with no freight traffic to supplement the meagre income, the line closed in 1950.
TQ 97 SE 77	Landscape	c. 500m N	Modern	Parsonage Farm Garden, Eastchurch. A garden surveyed by the Kent Gardens Trust, description taken from the Kent Gardens Compendium, Parsonage Farm is listed as being modern (post 1960), in the style of informal/ romantic /naturalistic and being of specialist interest only.

EVENTS				
ID	Type	Distance	Year	Name
EKE4058 /EKE4563	Excavation		1967	HM Prison, Eastchurch. Discovered during farming work on Stanford Hill. Mr.F.Oakes carried out a small excavation and collected pottery sherds, animal bones, and some briquetage.
EKE10555	Evaluation		2007	Swaleside Prison, Sheppey. Three evaluation trenches were dug across the former sports field within the walls of the prison. No archaeological finds or features were encountered.
EKE12675	Watching Brief		2012	HMP Stanford Hill wind energy development, Eastchurch. A first phase of monitoring of groundworks on an access road, construction compound and two wind turbines. No archaeological finds or features were observed.

Figure 15: Gazetteer of KHER Records

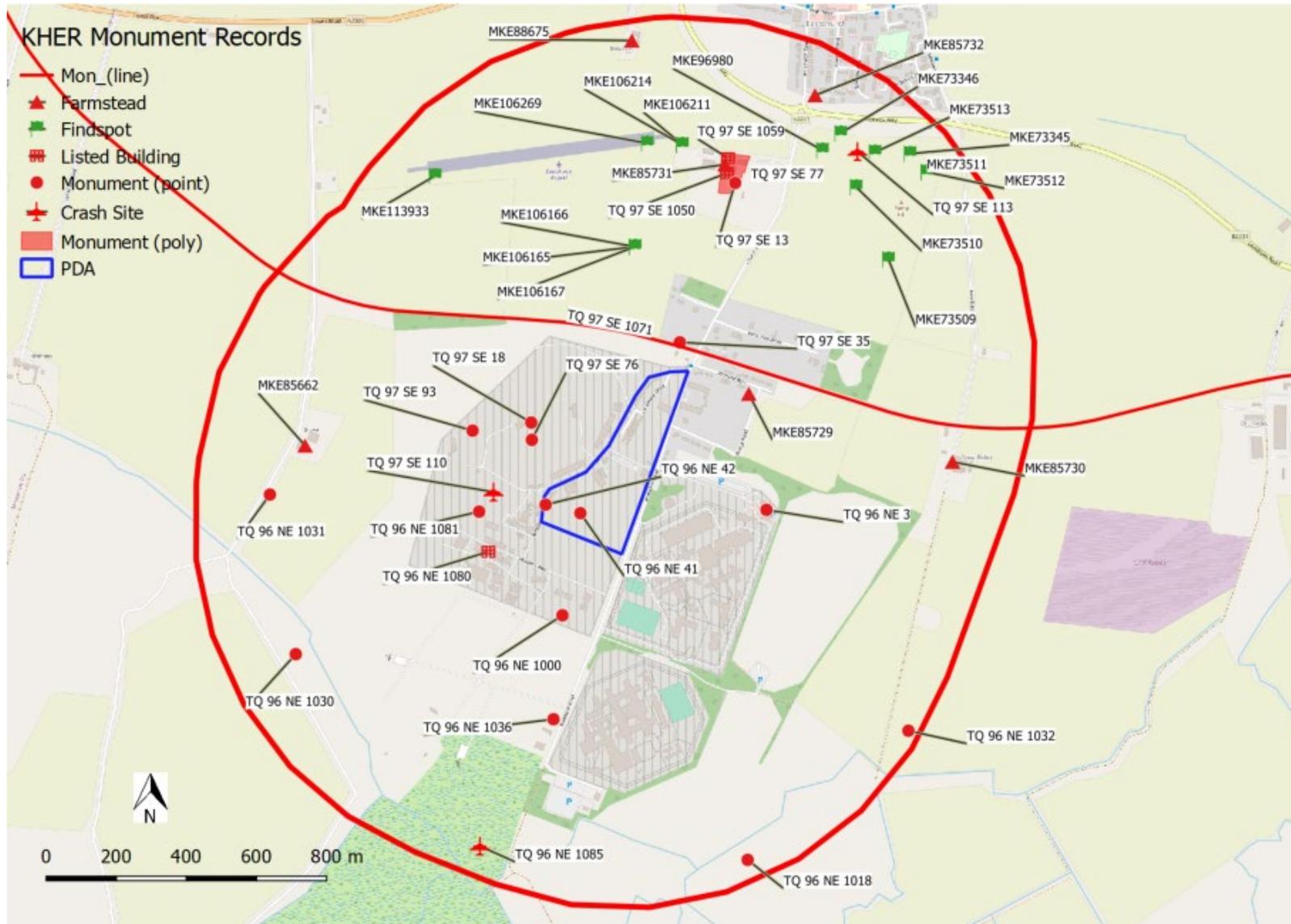


Figure 16: KHER Monument Record – All

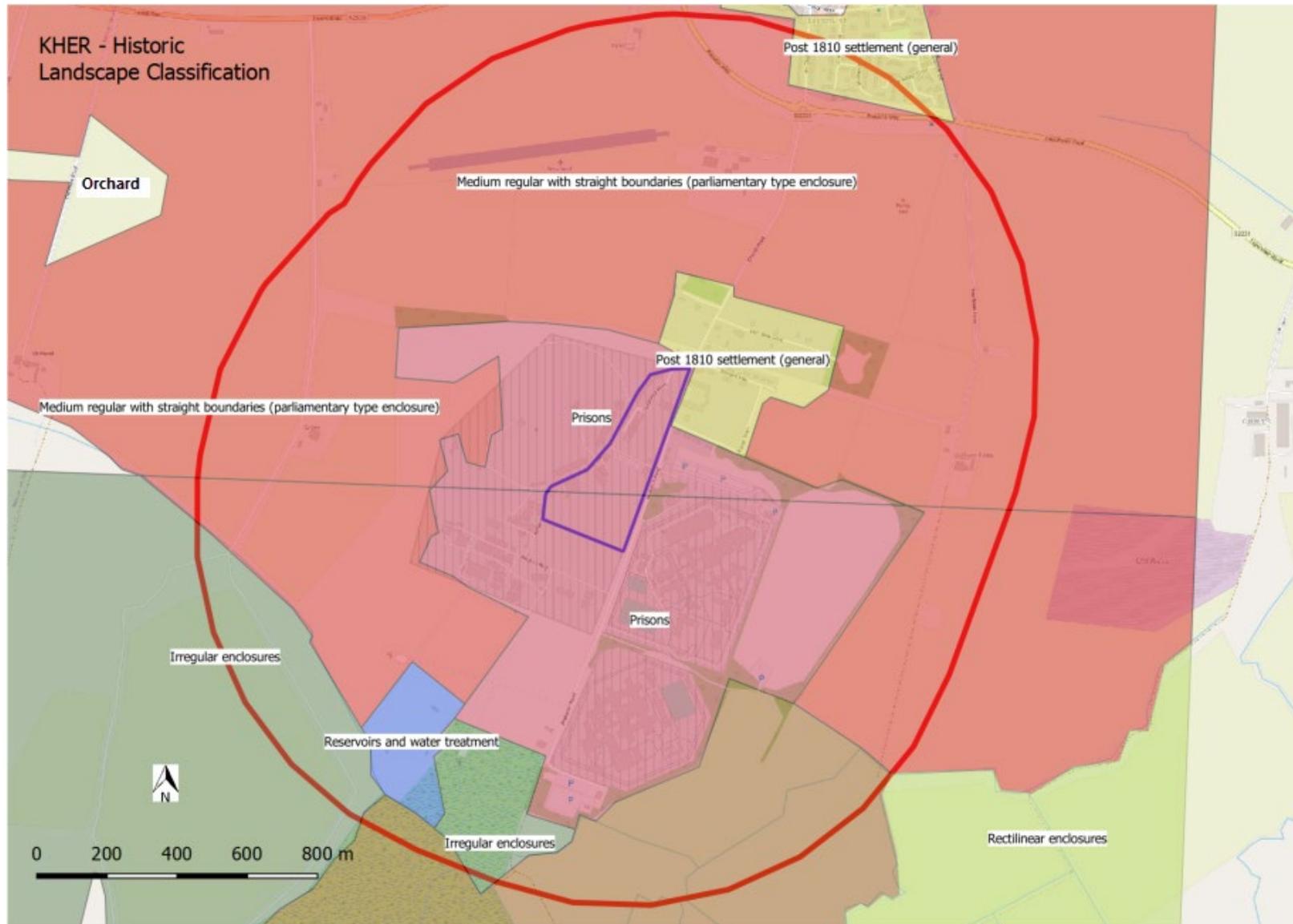


Figure 17: KHER Historic Landscape Characterisation

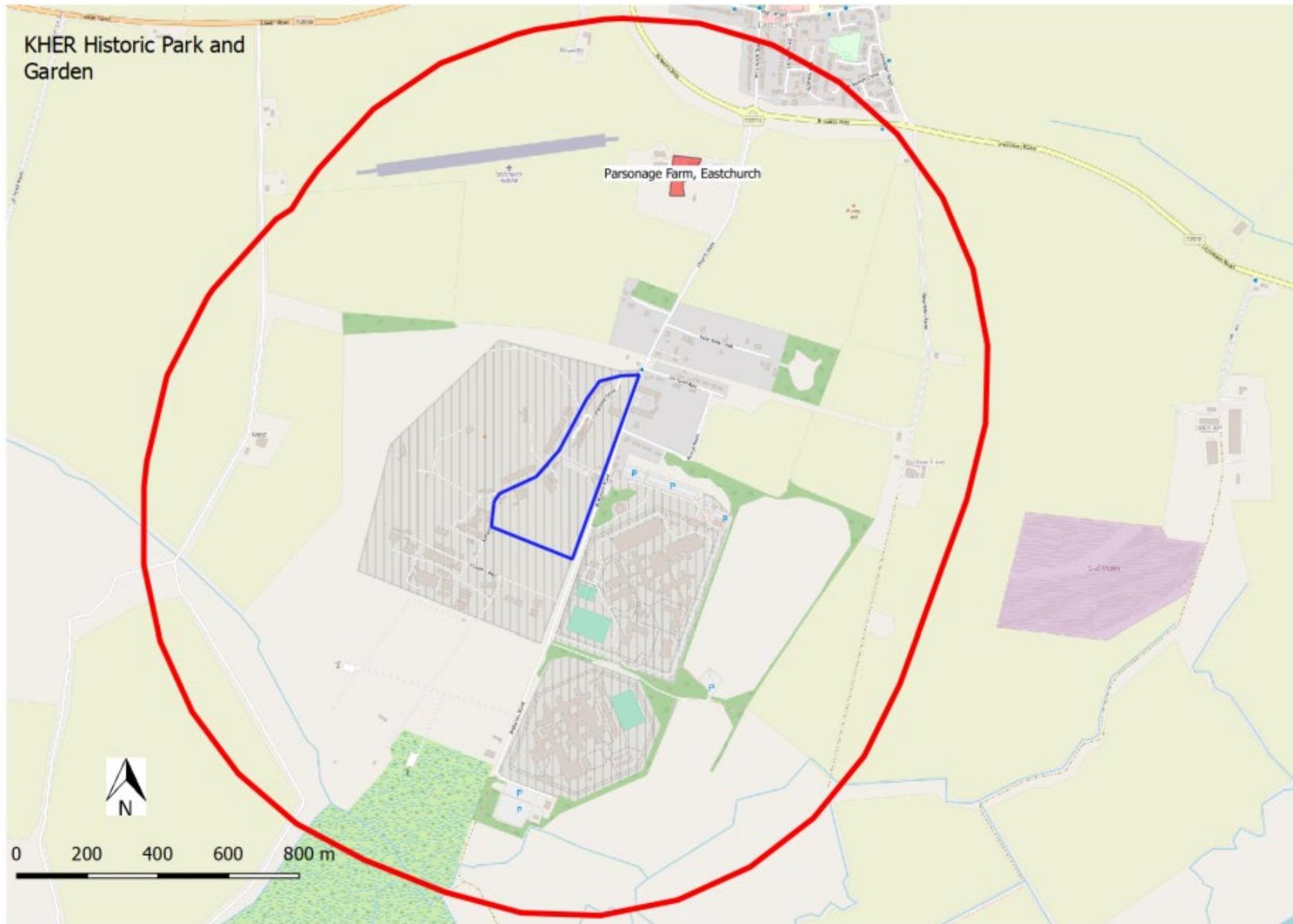


Figure 18: KHER Historic Park and Garden



Figure 19: KHER Stour Palaeolithic Characterisation Area



Figure 20: KHER Events

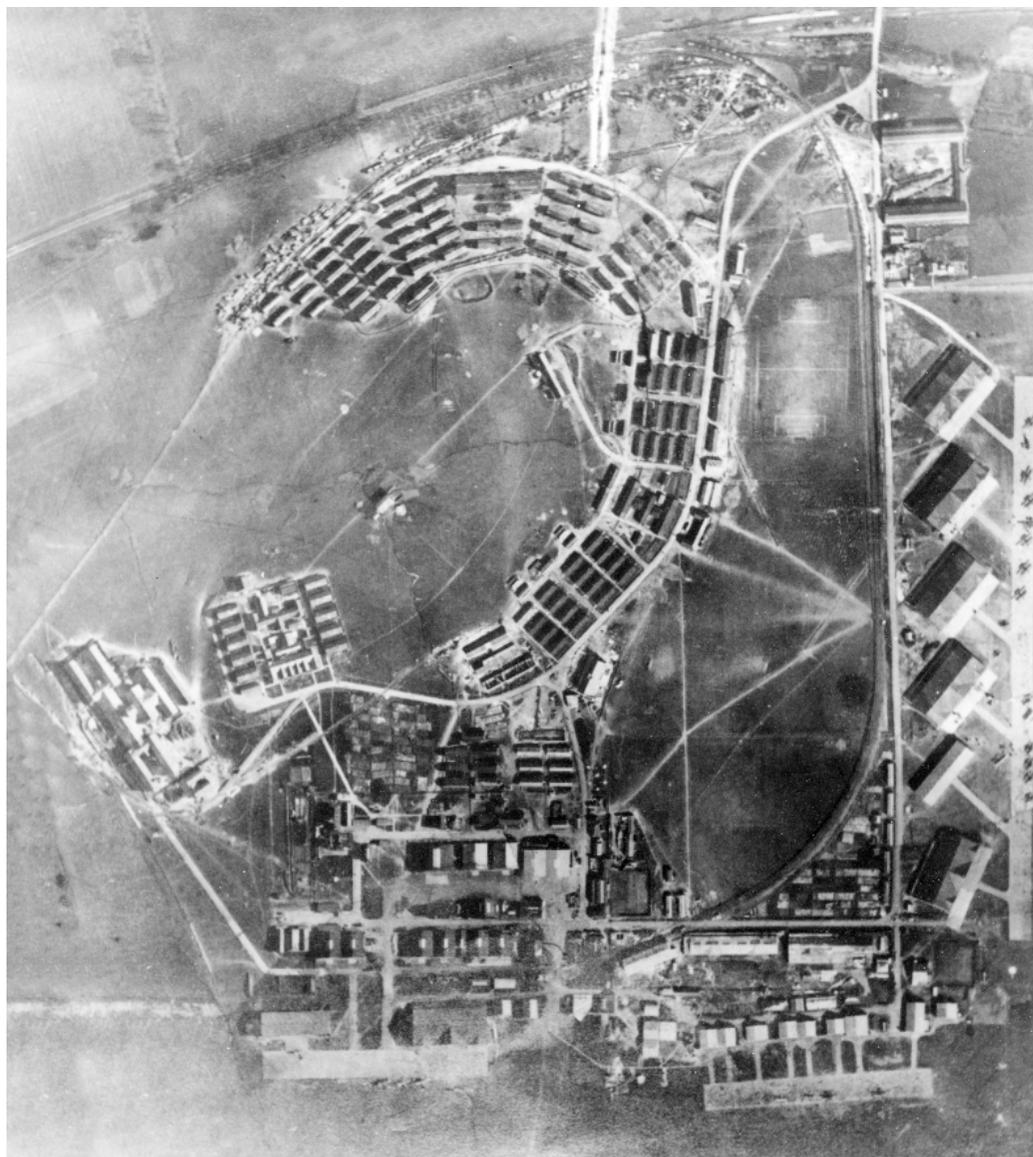


Plate 1: Aerial Photograph 1917 (Eastchurch Aviation Museum)



Plate 2: End of World War I (Eastchurch Aviation Museum)



Plate 3: Photograph showing the light railway circa 1935 (Eastchurch Aviation Museum)



Plate 4: Post World War II (Eastchurch Aviation Museum)



Plate 5: 1960s (Google Earth)

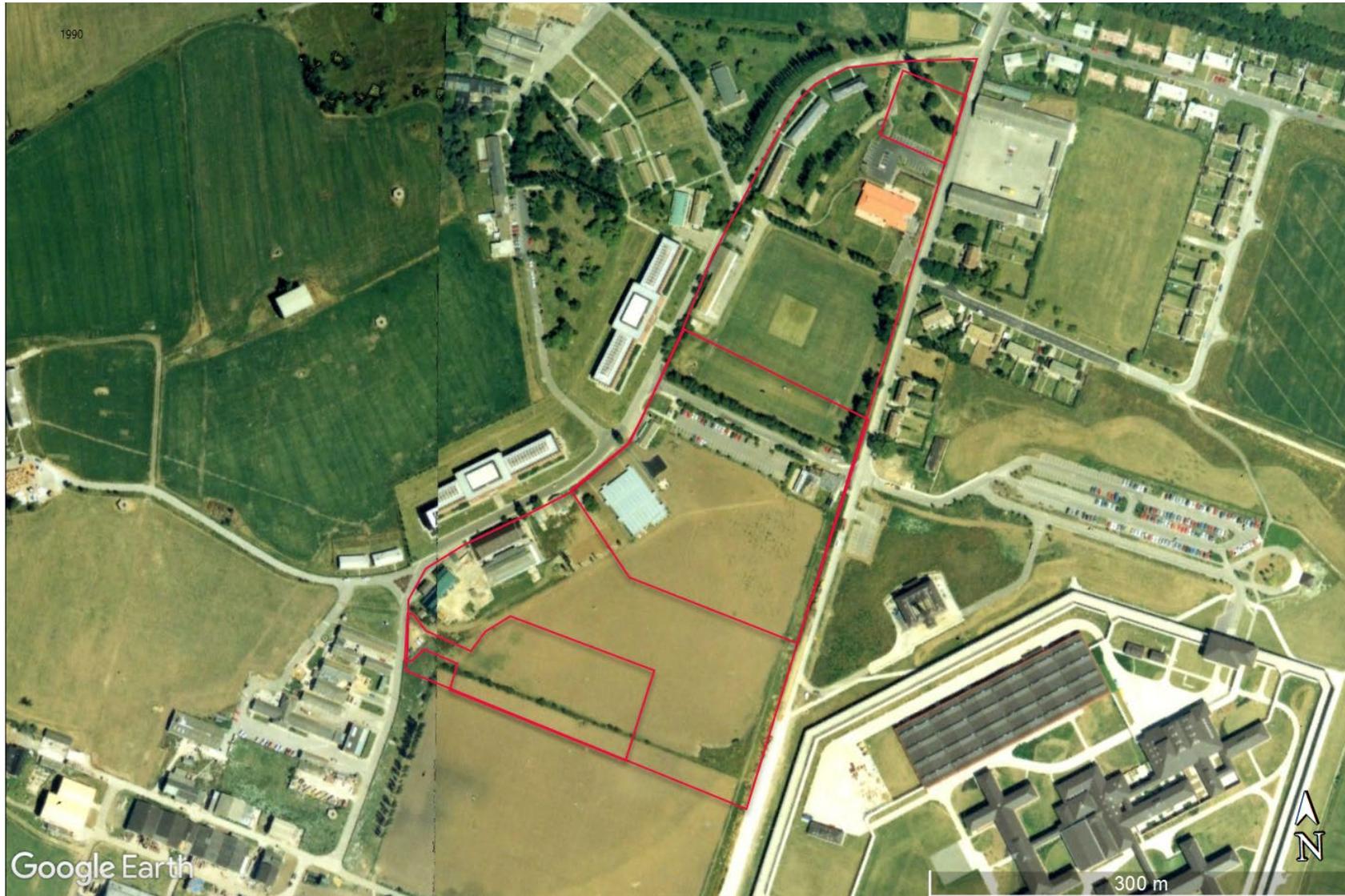


Plate 6: 1990 (Google Earth)



Plate 7: 2003 (Google Earth)



Plate 8: 2019 (Google Earth)



Plate 9: Eastchurch, Pre 1916 (Ed Andrews, Airfields of Britain Conservation Trust)



Plate 10: Plan of Eastchurch Airfield



Plate 11: 1m DTM LIDAR (Environment Agency)

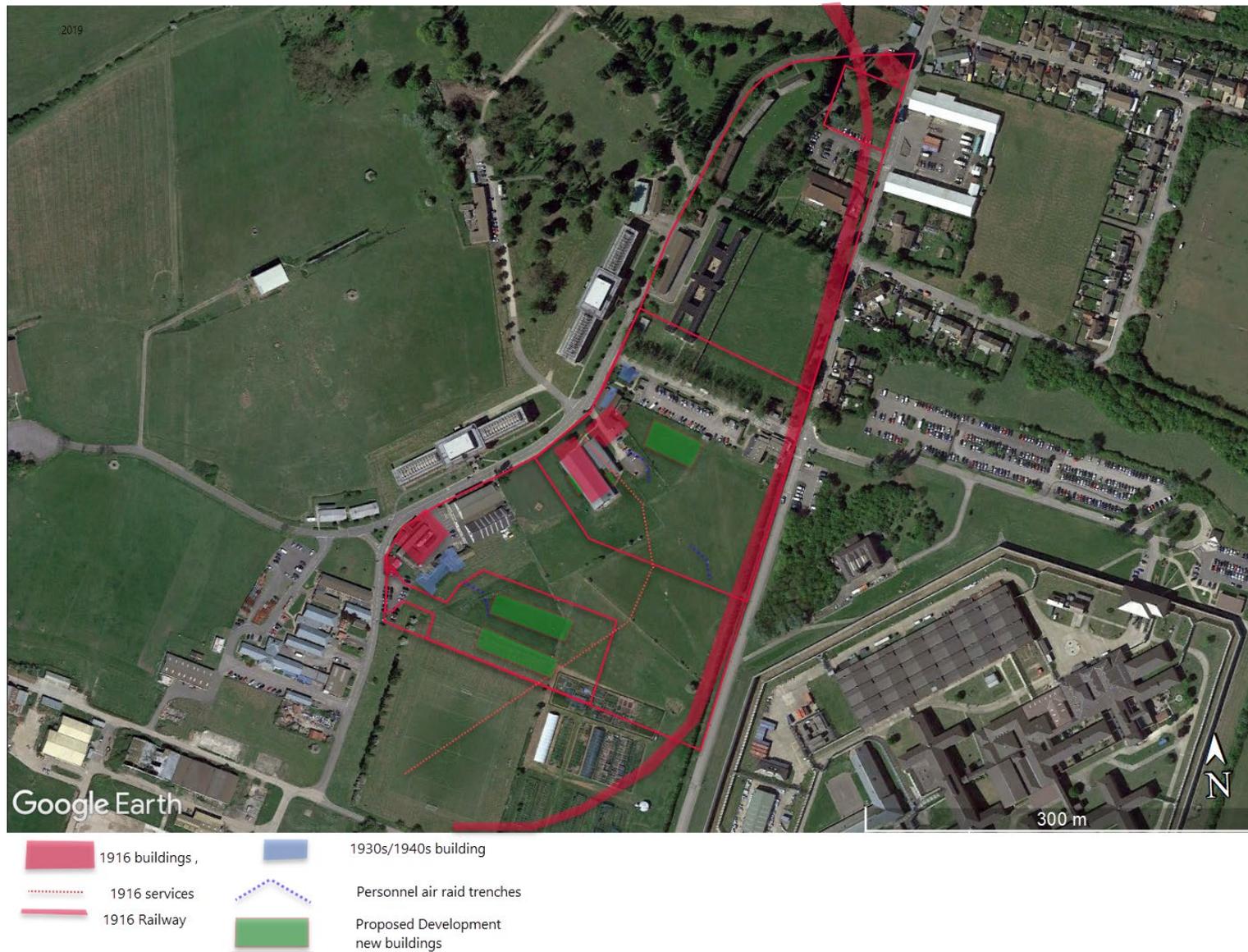


Plate 12: Overlay of known historical features within the developmental areas of the PDA.