

Archaeological Evaluation on Land at 14 Castle Drive, Kemsing, Kent TN15 6RL

NGR Site Centre 55438 158520

Planning Application Number: 20/00076/FUL



SWAT ARCHAEOLOGY

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Summary

Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) was commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at 14 Castle Drive, Kemsing in Kent. The archaeological works were monitored by Wendy Rogers, Kent County Council Senior Archaeological Officer.

The fieldwork was carried out in June 2020 in accordance with an archaeological specification (SWAT Archaeology 4th June 2020) submitted to the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of works.

The Archaeological Evaluation consisted of one trench which encountered a relatively common stratigraphic sequence comprising made ground deposits overlying natural geology of clay mixed with gravel.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) was commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at 14 Castle Drive, Kemsing in Kent (**Figures 1-3**).
- 1.1.2 In mitigation of the potential impact that the development may have on the buried archaeological resource Kent County Council Heritage & Conservation (KCCHC), who provide an advisory service to Sevenoaks District Council, requested that a programme of archaeological works comprising an archaeological evaluation be undertaken to satisfy one of the planning conditions of the planning permission No. 20/00076/FUL.
- 1.1.3 The archaeological evaluation was carried out in June 2020 in accordance with an archaeological specification prepared by SWAT Archaeology, prior to commencement of works, and in discussion with Wendy Rogers Senior Archaeological Officer at KCCHC.

1.1.4 Site Description and Topography

The application site is situated in Kemsing village just to the east of Otford and west of Hearerham and located south of the Pilgrims Way and north of the M26 motorway in the county of Kent.

The NGR to the centre of the site is NGR 55438 158520 (Figure 2).

The Geological Survey of Great Britain (1:50,000) shows that the application site is set on a Bedrock Geology of Gault Formation- Mudstone. Superficial Deposits are not recorded but found to be on site a mix of demolition and concrete material. The site has planning permission (20/00076/FUL) for:

Subdivision of the plot and construction of new 2 storey dwelling.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

Details of previous discoveries and investigations within the immediate and wider area may be found in the Kent County Council Historic Environment Record and have been summarised in the WSI Specification produced by SWAT Archaeology (June 2020) and these include a KCCHER search that shows that about 60m to the north a Roman coin has been found (TQ 55 NW 54).

At 185 m to the north a Roman building (bathhouse) was found on the banks of the stream at Springhead, Dynes Road, Kemsing and discovered in 1948 and excavated in 1949 by C. H. Brett

and L. Chandler. Three rooms, two with hypocaust heating, were disclosed, and a fourth floor had *pilae* still in situ. The fragmentary pottery sherds indicate a 1st to 4th century occupation, and coins of Tetricus I and Allectus were also found.

A selection of finds from the site is held by Sevenoaks Public Library and Museum but the majority including Brett's excavation plans, photos &c. is in the possession of Col. G.W. Meates. The building was situated in a small steep-sided declivity in which flowed a small stream, but since the first excavations, the stream has been piped, and the entire valley filled with rubble, rubbish and other debris. The site is now a grass field. Test holes were opened and a section of ragstone walling was located at a depth of four feet beneath a consolidated layer of 20th century finds. No stratification was discovered and the hole quickly filled with water. Further excavation was delayed. Excavated in 1978 by CIB unit. The building is thought to be a detached bathhouse. No trace of medieval occupation was found (TQ 55 NW 8).

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.2 Specific Aims (SWAT 2020)

2.2.1 The specific aims of the archaeological fieldwork are set out in the Specification (SWAT 2020) were to:

2.1 *(6.1) The primary objective of the archaeological evaluation is to establish or otherwise the presence of any potential archaeological features which may be impacted by the proposed development. The aims of this investigation are to determine the potential for archaeological activity and in particular the earlier history of the PDA and also any other Prehistoric, Roman and later archaeological activity.*

2.2 General Aims

2.2.1 The general aims of the archaeological fieldwork were to;

- establish the presence or absence of any elements of the archaeological resource, both artefacts and ecofacts of archaeological interest across the area of the development;
- ascertain the extent, depth below ground surface, depth of deposit if possible, character, date and quality of any such archaeological remains by limited sample excavation;
- determine the state of preservation and importance of the archaeological resource, if present, and to assess the past impacts on the site and pay particular attention to the character, height/depth below ground level, condition, date and significance of any archaeological deposits.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 All fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the methodology set out in the Specification (SWAT Dec 2019 and KCC Manual of Specifications 'B') and carried out in compliance with the standards outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standards Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations (CifA 2017).

3.2 Fieldwork

3.2.1 A total of one evaluation trench was excavated across the Site (Figures 3-4).

3.2.2 The trench was initially scanned for surface finds prior to excavation. Excavation was carried out using a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, removing the overburden to the top of the first recognisable natural or archaeological horizon, under the constant supervision of an experienced archaeologist.

3.2.3 Where appropriate the trench, or specific areas of the trench were subsequently hand-cleaned to reveal features in plan and carefully selected cross-sections through the features were excavated to enable sufficient information about form, development date and stratigraphic relationships to be recorded without prejudice to more extensive investigations, should these prove to be necessary. All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with KCC and CifA standards and guidance. A complete photographic record was maintained on site that included working shots; during mechanical excavation, following archaeological investigations and during back filling.

3.3 Recording

3.3.1 A complete drawn record of the evaluation trenches comprising both plans and sections, drawn to appropriate scales (1:20 for plans, 1:10 for sections) was undertaken. The plans and sections were annotated with coordinates and aOD heights. These are retained in the site project archive.

3.3.2 Photographs were taken as appropriate providing a record of excavated features and deposits, along with images of the overall trench to illustrate their location and context. The record also includes images of the Site overall. The photographic record comprises digital photography. A photographic register of all photographs taken is contained within the site project archive.

3.3.3 A single context recording system was used to record the deposits. A full list is presented in Appendix 1. Layers and fills are identified in this report thus (100), whilst the cut of the feature is shown [100]. Context numbers were assigned to all deposits for recording purposes. Each number has been attributed to a specific trench with the primary number(s) relating to specific trenches (*i.e.* Trench 1, 101+, Trench 2, 201+, Trench 3, 301+ etc.).

4 RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

Prior to trench excavation a two layers of concrete floor and underlying deposits were removed. The combined floor deposit thickness was 0.3m and consisted of a thin layer of aggregate overlain by a course of brick positioned with stretcher side facing downwards. The bricks were covered with plastic sheeting followed by two cast concrete layers being accordingly 0.1 and 0.05m thick. The evaluation trench was mechanically excavated under archaeological supervision. The trench was NNE-SSW aligned, measured 12m by 1.2m and was excavated to the depth of 0.65m at north end and 0.45m at south end. The levels at the top of the trench at north and south end were respectively 81.23m OD and 81.42m OD. Trench revealed a sequence of made ground deposits overlying natural gravel.

Natural (106) exposed at the base of the trench at depth of 0.5-0.6m below ground level was of mid compaction, yellow mottled, light grey clayey fine gravel with moderate iron stains. The gravel (average size 5mm; max size 20mm).

4.2 Stratigraphic Deposit Sequence

A relatively consistent stratigraphic sequence was recorded comprising an intact subsoil of mid brown clay silt overlaying the natural chalk bedrock. Natural was overlain by a series of made ground deposits: (104, 103 and 102)

Context (105) exposed at depth between 0.5m and 0.6m was mid compaction, mid grey silty clay with freq. chalk (<5mm) and occ. flint nodules (<150mm). Context (104) exposed at depth between 0.3m and 0.5m was mid compaction, greyish brown mottled, pale grey silty clay with occ. chalk (<5mm) occ. broken flints (<20mm) and occ. flint nodules (<150mm). Context (103) exposed at depth between 0.18m and 0.3m was mid compaction, mid greyish brown silty clay with occ. chalk (<5mm), occ. flint (mixed, all sorts; <150mm), occ. brick fragments and snail shells. Context (102) exposed at depth between 0.0m and 0.18m was mid compaction, dark greyish brown with moderate flint and occ. chalk, mortar flecks, occ. brick fragments and snail shells

4.3 Overview

4.3.1 The single trench was located across the footprint of the proposed buildings to ensure full coverage of potential archaeological remains.

5 FINDS

6.1 No finds of any archaeological merit were recovered from the archaeological evaluation.

6 Discussion

6.1 Archaeological Narrative

The primary objective of the archaeological evaluation was to establish presence of any potential archaeological features. The archaeological investigation failed to expose any meaningful archaeology and the trench exposed material from modern deposits. The evaluation revealed absence of archaeological features, deposits and artefacts.

Trench location was designated to give a good coverage of an area to be impacted on by the proposed development.

A simple stratigraphic sequence was exposed across all trenches. Top layer a mix of demolition material, gravel, chalk nodules (01). The subsoil mid brown clay silt (02) overlaying the natural chalk (03).

6.2 Conclusions

6.2.1 The archaeological evaluation has been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the Specification.

6.2.2 This evaluation has, therefore, assessed the archaeological potential of land intended for development. The results from this work show that the proposed development is not likely to impact on any archaeological remains.

7 ARCHIVE

7.1 General

7.1.1 The Site archive, which will include; paper records, photographic records, graphics and digital data, will be prepared following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; ClfA 2014; Brown 2011; ADS 2013).

7.1.2 All archive elements will be marked with the site/accession code, and a full index will be prepared. The physical archive comprises 1 file/document case of paper records & A4 graphics and will be retained by SWAT Archaeology until a Kent museum archive procedure is in place.

8 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

8.1.1 SWAT would like to thank the developer for commissioning the project. Thanks are also extended to Wendy Rogers Senior Archaeological Officer, Kent County Council, for her advice and assistance.

8.1.2 Bartek Cichy supervised the archaeological evaluation and survey and illustrations were produced by B. Cichy. Paul Wilkinson MCIfA edited the text for this report.

9 REFERENCES

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Brown, D.H., 2011. Archaeological archives; a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation, Archaeological Archives Forum (revised edition)

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Compiled by: SWAT Archaeology (PW). The Office, School Farm Oast, Faversham, Kent

Dated 30th June 2020.

Kent County Council HER Summary Form

Site Name: Land at 14 Castle Drive, Kemsing, Kent

SWAT Site Code: CAS/EV/2020

Site Address: As above

Summary:

Swale and Thames Survey Company (SWAT) carried out Archaeological Evaluation on the development site above. The site has a planning permission (20/00076/FUL) whereby Sevenoaks District Council requested that Archaeological works be undertaken to determine the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains.

The Archaeological Monitoring consisted of an Archaeological Evaluation which revealed no meaningful archaeology.

District/Unitary: Sevenoaks District Council

Period(s):

NGR (centre of site to eight figures) NGR 55438 158520

Type of Archaeological work: Archaeological Evaluation

Date of recording: June 2020

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

Geology: Underlying geology is Bedrock Geology of Chalk

Title and author of accompanying report: Wilkinson P. (2020) Archaeological Evaluation of Land at 14 Castle Drive, Kemsing, Kent

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

No meaningful archaeology found

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

Contact at Unit: Paul Wilkinson

Plates



Plate 1: Looking north west at the site prior to trench excavation. Concrete floor and bedding was removed to the depth of 0.35m



Plate 2: Looking north at the trench



Plate 3: Looking west at representative section through made ground deposits exposed throughout the trench.



Plate 4: Looking north-west at stream located alongside east boundary of the site and pipe going into the site.

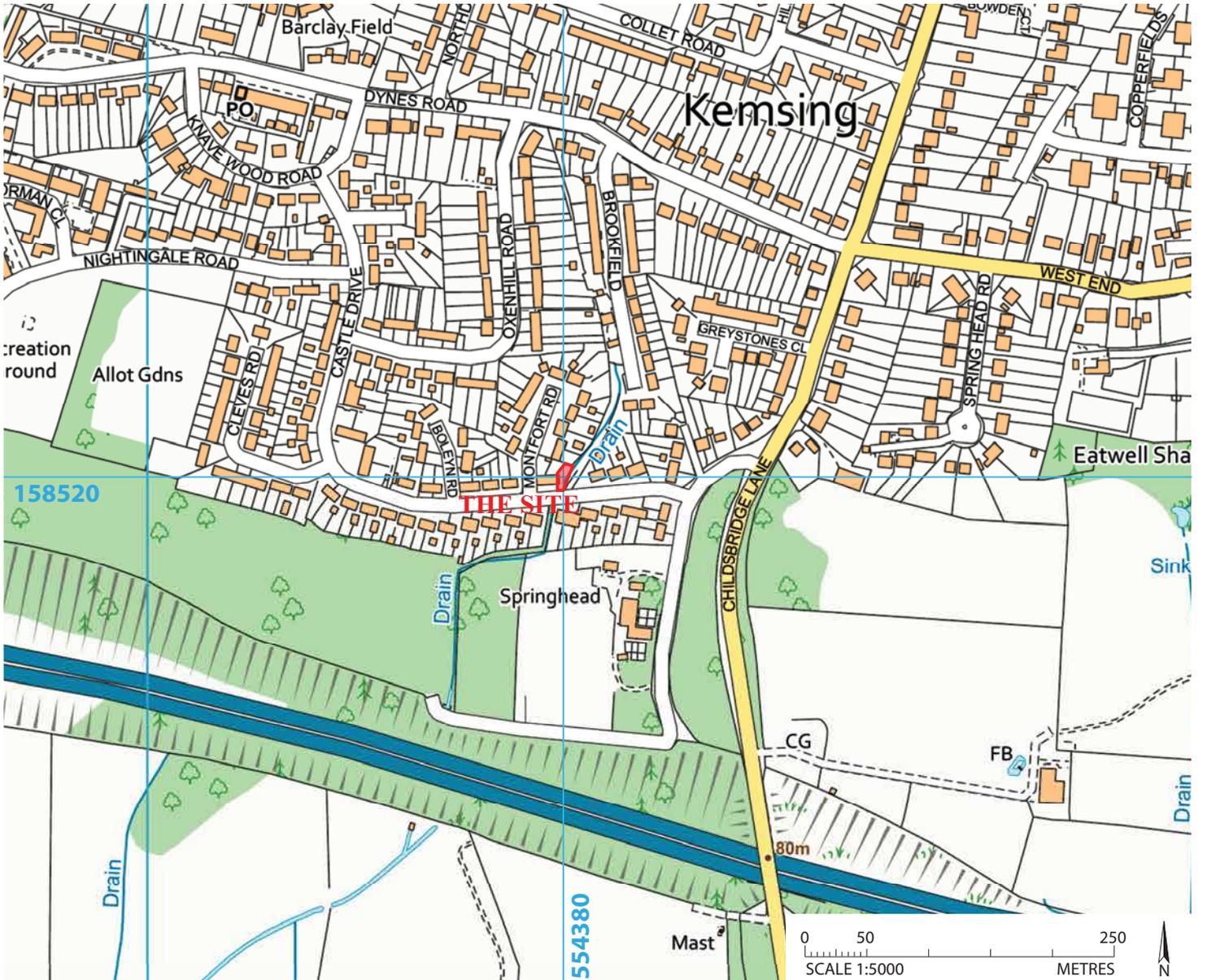
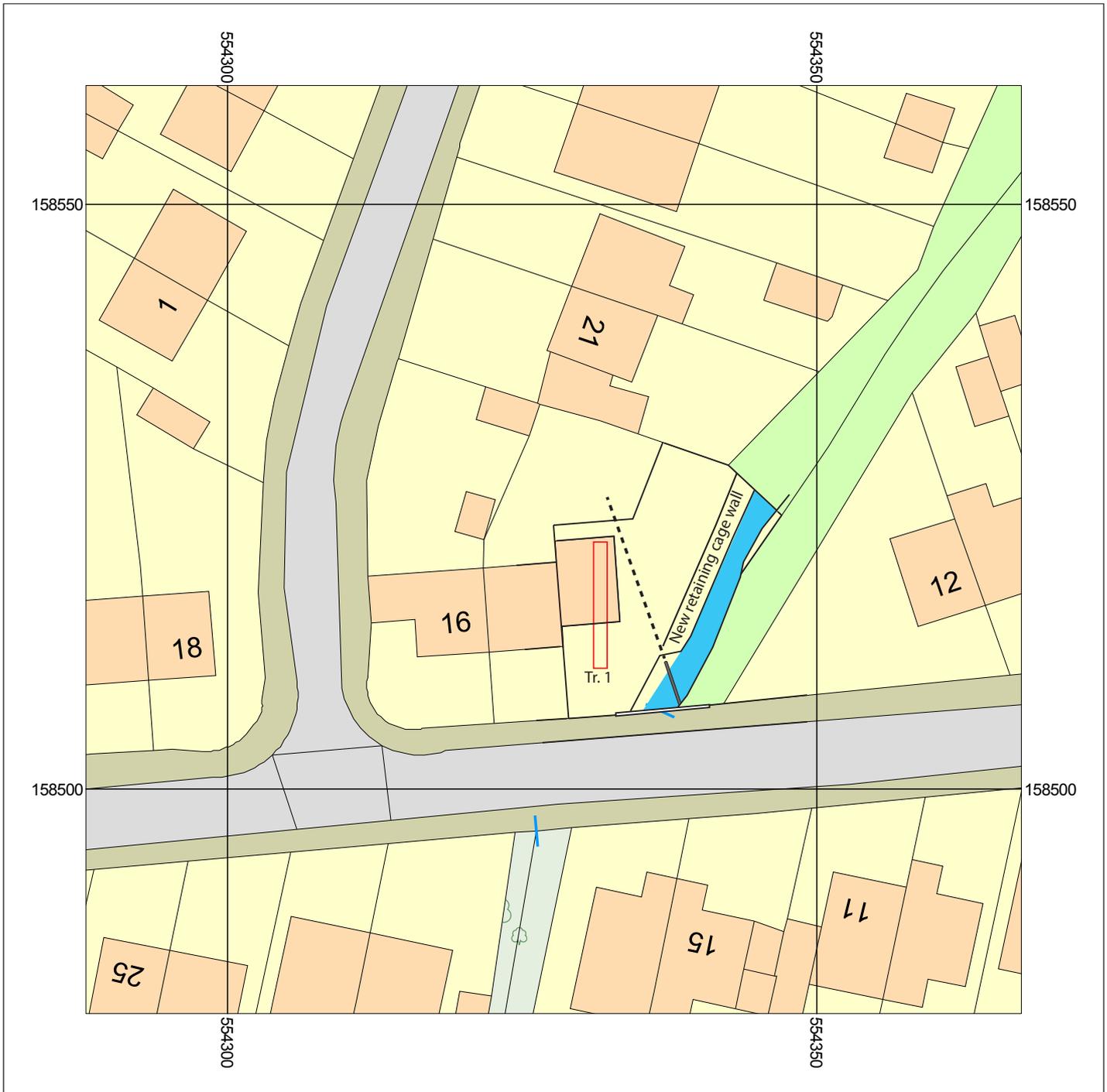


Figure 1: Site location map, scale 1:10000.



Metres
0 2.5 5 10 15 20 25
Scale: 1:500

14 Castle Drive
Kemsing
Sevenoaks
TN15 6RL

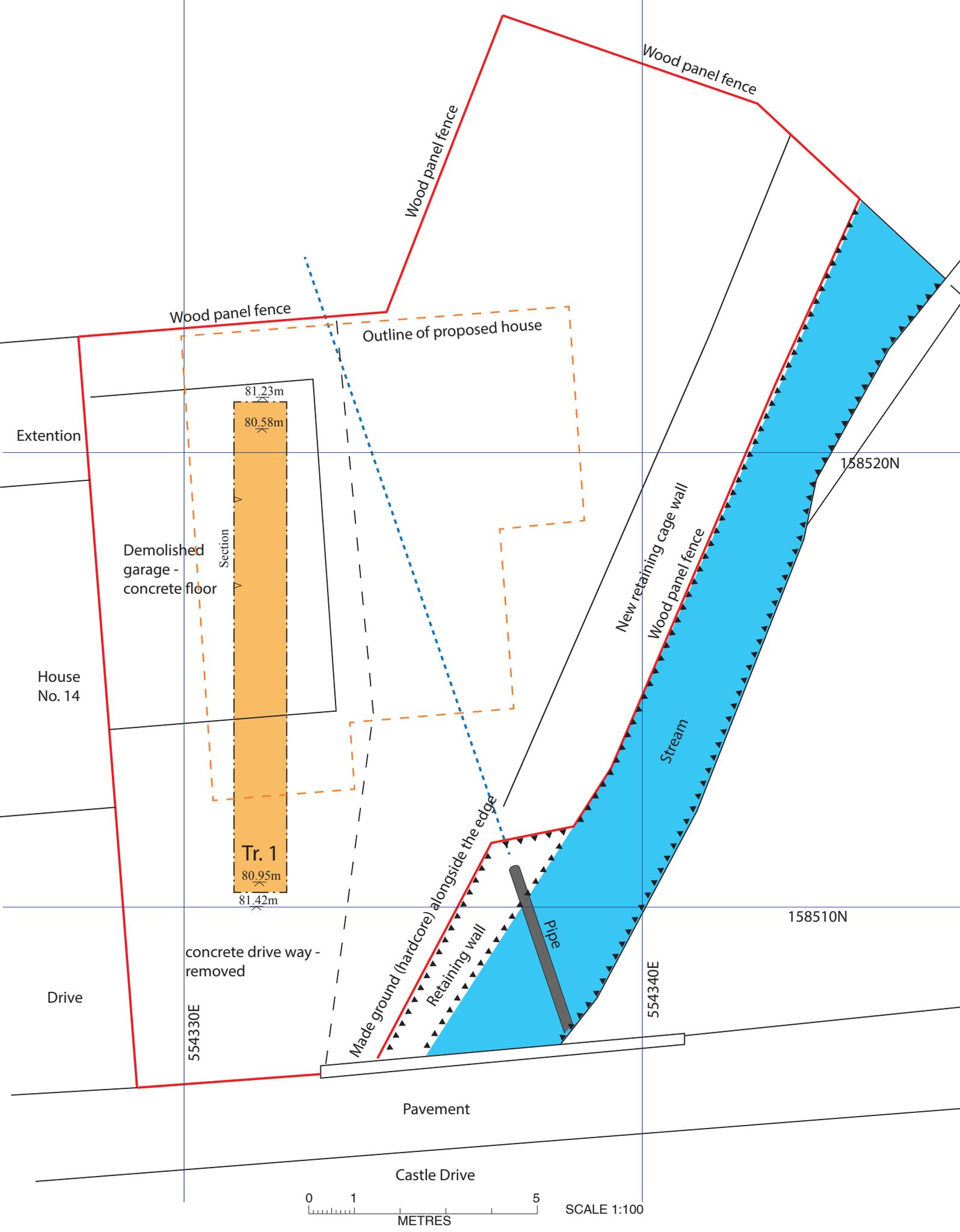


Figure 3: Site plan

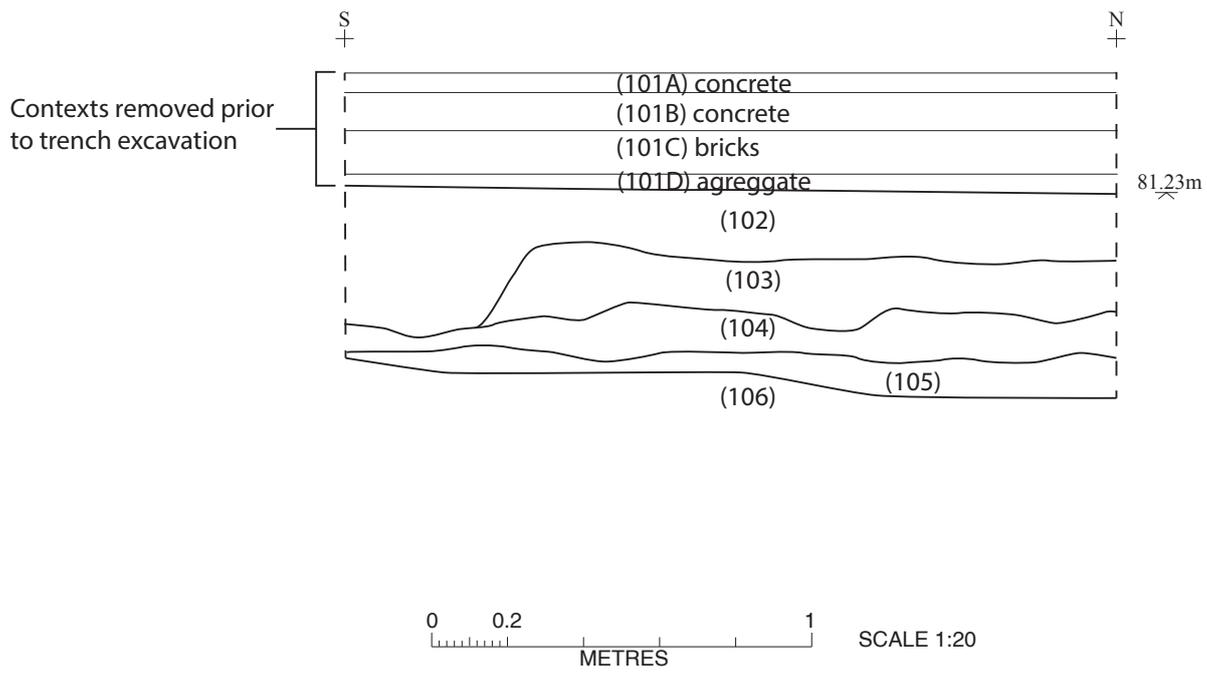


Figure 4: Representative - east facing section through exposed deposits