

Archaeological Evaluation on Land at Beaver Road, Ashford, Kent

NGR Site Centre 601094 142068

Planning Application Number: 20/00512/AS



SWAT ARCHAEOLOGY

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Summary

Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) was commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at Home Plus, Beaver Road, Ashford in Kent. The archaeological works were monitored by Wendy Rogers, Kent County Council Senior Archaeological Officer.

The fieldwork was carried out in August 2020 in accordance with an archaeological specification (SWAT Archaeology 22/07/2020) submitted to the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of works.

The Archaeological Evaluation consisted of seven trenches which encountered a relatively common stratigraphic sequence comprising demolition material and topsoil overlying natural geology with no archaeological features.

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 Beaver Road, Ashford 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 (KKCHC), who provide an advisory service to Ashford Borough Council, requested that a programme of archaeological works comprising an archaeological evaluation be undertaken to satisfy one of the planning conditions of the planning application 20/00512/AS.

1.1.3 The archaeological evaluation was carried out in August 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 opposite the Ashford International Train Station and bounded to the north by the A2042 and to the south by the River Stour, The site was formally occupied by a closed car wash facility and a retail unit now demolished.

The NGR to the centre of the site is NGR 601094 142068 (Figure 2).

The Geological Survey of Great Britain (1:50,000) shows that the application site is set on a Bedrock Geology of Weald Clay Formation- Clay and Silt. Superficial Deposits are recorded as Alluvium- Clay, Sand and Silt.

The site has a planning condition:

Prior to the commencement of development the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, will secure and implement:

(i) archaeological field evaluation works in accordance with a specification and written timetable which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

(ii) further archaeological investigation, recording and reporting, determined by the results of the evaluation, in accordance with a specification and timetable which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority

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 (July 2020) and these include a KCCHER search.

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.*

(6.2) The programme of archaeological work should be carried out in a phased approach and will commence with evaluation through trial trenching. This initial phase should determine whether any significant archaeological remains would be affected by the development and if so what mitigation measures are appropriate. Such measures may include further detailed archaeological excavation, or an archaeological watching brief during construction work or an engineering solution to any preservation in situ requirements.

(6.3) This specification sets out the requirements for trial trenching on the site and any further archaeological work, such as detailed excavation work or a watching brief, would need to be subject to further specifications.

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 July 2020 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 seven evaluation trench was excavated across the site (Figures 2-3).

3.2.2 The trenches 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, trenches, or specific areas of trenches, 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

4.1.1 A total of seven evaluation trench was mechanically excavated under archaeological supervision.

4.2 Stratigraphic Deposit Sequence

4.2.1 A relatively consistent stratigraphic sequence was recorded comprising a mix of demolition material sealing an intact natural of yellow to orange silty clay with occasional angular flints and patches of flint gravel.

4.2.2 Appendix 1 provides the stratigraphic sequence for all trenches. Figures 1-3 provide a site plan, trench location plan and sections and plans whilst Plates 1-10 include selected site photographs.

4.3 Overview

4.3.1 The trenches were 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 layers of modern deposits overlaying the natural geology with the absence of archaeological features, deposits and artefacts.

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

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 unlikely 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 Peter 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

ADS 2013. Caring for Digital Data in Archaeology: a guide to good practice, Archaeology Data Service & Digital Antiquity Guides to Good Practice

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

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014, *Standard and guidance: for field evaluation*.

SMA 1993. Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections, Society of Museum Archaeologists

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

Dated 18th September 2020.

Appendix 1: Trench Tables

Trench 1 (Figure 3)	Dimensions 16.50m x 1.8m Depth: 0.5m Trench alignment: NE-SW Ground level at SW end: 36.88 m OD Ground level at NE end: 37.53m OD Modern service trench was exposed here.		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)(bgl)
101	Overburden/ Hardcore	Firm dark grey loam with modern building debris and stone aggregates.	0-0.4m
102	Natural	Soft, orange-brown, silty-sand and reddish-brown sandy-clay with infrequent angular flints.	0.4m+
103	Service trench	Modern cut with vertical sides backfilled with loam.	0.4m+

Trench 2 (Figure 3)	Dimensions 23.50m x 1.8m Depth: 0.5m Trench alignment: WNW-ESE Ground level at SW end: 37.42 m OD Ground level at NE end: 37.55m OD Modern service trench was exposed here.		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)(bgl)
201	Overburden/ Hardcore	Firm dark grey loam with modern building debris and stone aggregates.	0-0.42m
202	Natural	Soft, orange-brown, silty-sand and reddish-brown sandy-clay with infrequent angular flints.	0.42m+
203	Service trench	Modern cut with vertical sides backfilled with loam.	0.42m+

Trench 3 (Figure 3)	Dimensions 20.50m x 1.8m Depth: 0.65m Trench alignment: NE-SW Ground level at SW end: 37.05 m OD Ground level at NE end: 37.01m OD Modern service trench was exposed here.		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)(bgl)
301	Overburden/ Hardcore	Firm dark grey loam with modern building debris and stone aggregates.	0-0.47m
302	Natural	Soft, orange-brown, silty-sand and reddish-brown sandy-clay with infrequent angular flints.	0.47m+
303	Service trench	Modern cut with vertical sides backfilled with loam.	0.47m+

Trench 4 (Figure 3)	Dimensions 13.50m x 1.8m Depth: 1.05m Trench alignment: WNW-ESE Ground level at WNW end: 38.09 m OD Ground level at ESE end: 37.45m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)(bgl)
401	Overburden/ Hardcore	Firm dark grey loam with modern building debris and stone aggregates. Tarmac, concrete and underlying shingle.	0-0.82m
402	Natural	Soft, orange-brown, silty-sand and reddish-brown sandy-clay with infrequent angular flints. Gleying observed on exposed surface.	0.82m+

Trench 5 (Figure 3)	Dimensions 19.50m x 1.8m Depth: 0.72m Trench alignment: SSW-NNE Ground level at SW end: 37.39 m OD Ground level at NE end: 37.04m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)(bgl)
501	Overburden/ Hardcore	Firm dark grey loam with modern building debris and stone aggregates.	0-0.63m
502	Natural	Soft, orange-brown, silty-sand and reddish-brown sandy-clay with infrequent angular flints.	0.63m+

Trench 6 (Figure 3)	Dimensions 19.0m x 1.8m Depth: 0.68m Trench alignment: WNW-ESE Ground level at ESE end: 37.13 m OD Ground level at WNW end: 37.08m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)(bgl)
601	Overburden/ Hardcore	Firm dark grey loam with modern building debris and stone aggregates.	0-0.59m
602	Natural	Soft, orange-brown, silty-sand and reddish-brown sandy-clay with infrequent angular flints.	0.59m+

Trench 7 (Figure 3)	Dimensions 16.52m x 1.8m Depth: 0.58m Trench alignment: N-S Ground level at S end: 38.63 m OD Ground level at N end: 39.74m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)(bgl)
701	Overburden/ Hardcore	Firm dark grey loam with modern building debris and stone aggregates.	0-0.49m
702	Natural	Soft, orange-brown, silty-sand and reddish-brown sandy-clay with infrequent angular flints. Geological outcrops of natural flint gravel were noted here.	0.49m+

Kent County Council HER Summary Form

Site Name: Land at Beaver Road, Ashford, Kent

SWAT Site Code: BRA/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 (20/00512/AS) whereby Ashford Borough 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: Ashford Borough Council

Period(s):

NGR (centre of site to eight figures) NGR 60194 142068

Type of Archaeological work: Archaeological Evaluation

Date of recording: August 2020

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

Geology: Underlying geology is Bedrock Geology of Weald Clay Formation

Title and author of accompanying report: Wilkinson P. (2020) Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Beaver Road, Ashford, 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

Plates



Plate 1: The site looking northeast.



Plate 2: Showing north-western part of the site, looking northwest.



Plate 3: Showing northern extent of the site. Looking northwest.



Plate 4: Evaluation Trench 1, looking southwest, two-metre scale.



Plate 5: Evaluation Trench 2, looking west, two-metre scale.



Plate 6: Evaluation Trench 3, looking southwest, two-metre scale.



Plate 7: Evaluation Trench 4, looking east, two-metre scale.



Plate 8: Evaluation Trench 5, looking south, two-metre scale.



Plate 9: Evaluation Trench 6, looking east, two-metre scale.



Plate 10: Evaluation Trench 7, looking south, two-metre scales.

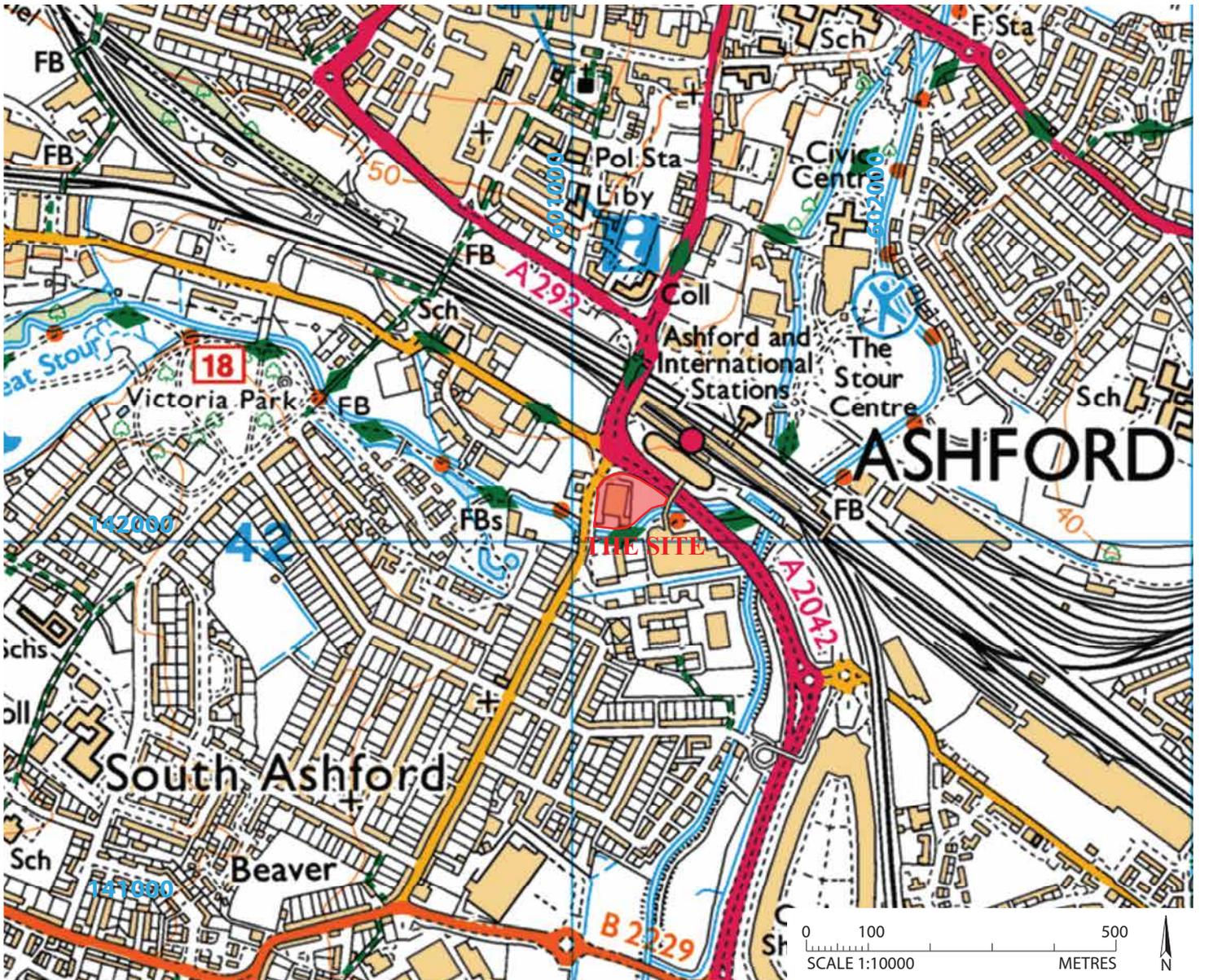
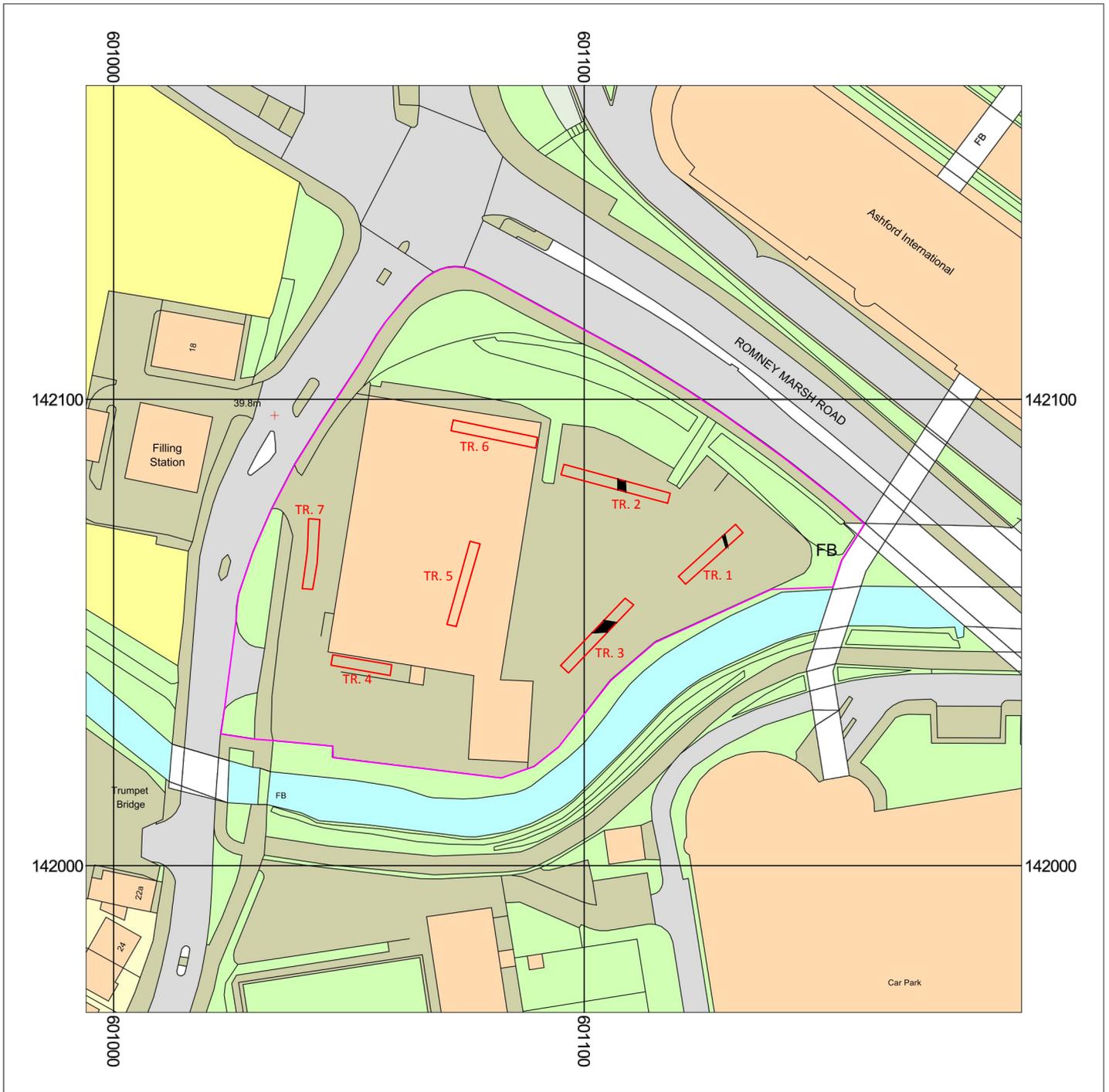
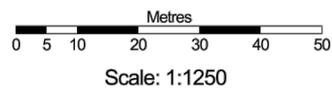


Figure 1: Site location map, scale 1:10000.



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**Beaver Road
Ashford
Kent**

Figure 2: Trench location in relation to OS map

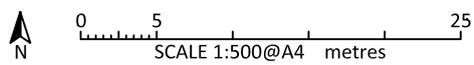
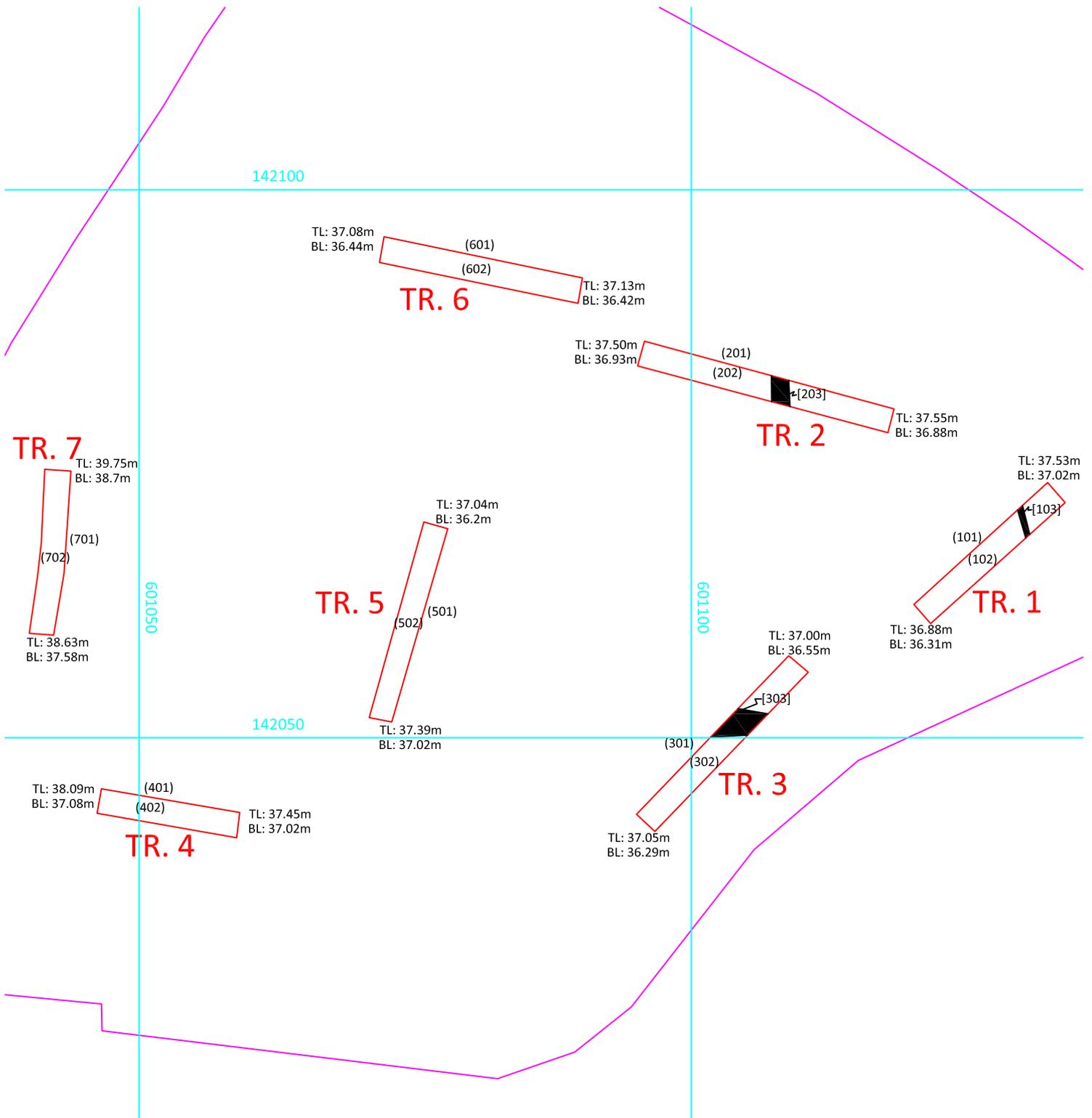


Figure 3: Trench plan