

Archaeological Evaluation of Land between Beechwood Farm and London Beach Golf Club, Ashford Road, St Michaels, Tenterden, Kent

Site Code: BEECH -EV-19

NGR Site Centre 588369 135701

Planning Application Number: 18/00465/AS



SWAT ARCHAEOLOGY

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Summary

Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) was commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land between Beechwood Farm and London Beach Golf Club, Ashford Road, St Michaels, Tenterden in Kent. The archaeological works were monitored by the Kent County Council Senior Archaeological Officer.

The fieldwork was carried out in March 2020 in accordance with an archaeological specification (Canterbury Archaeological Trust Ltd. October 2019) submitted to the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of works.

The Archaeological Evaluation consisted of eleven trenches, which encountered a relatively common stratigraphic sequence comprising topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology with one feature of low archaeological potential.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) was commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land between Beechwood Farm and London Beach Golf Club, Ashford Road, Tenterden in Kent (**Figure 1**).

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 the planning condition 27 of the planning permission 18/00465/AS/FUL.

1.1.3 The archaeological evaluation was carried out in March 2020 in accordance with an archaeological specification prepared by Canterbury Archaeological Trust (October 2019), 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 located within the Weald of Kent and lies just outside the boundaries of the High Weald Area of Natural Beauty. The application site is on the west side of the A28 and bounded by the London Beach Golf Club and residential development to the east and south.

The NGR to the centre of the site is NGR 588369 135701 (Figure 1).

The Geological Survey of Great Britain (1:50,000) shows that the PDA is set on Bedrock Geology of Weald Clay Formation (Mudstone). Superficial deposits are not recorded. The geology revealed on site was a Hard Grey Mottled Orange Brown Silty Clay at an average height of 62.00m AOD to the east and 49.00mAOD to the west (Figure 1).

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 Specification produced by Canterbury Archaeological Trust (October 2019) and these include the proposed route of a Roman road (TQ 83 SW 48), possible remains of the Wealden Iron Industry dating from the Late Iron Age through the Roman period and into the medieval.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.2 Specific Aims (CAT 2019)

2.2.1 The specific aims of the archaeological fieldwork are set out in the Specification (CAT 2019: 4.4) were to:

- Understand the nature, character, date and extent of any prehistoric, Roman, Anglo-Saxon, medieval and post-medieval activities present on site;
- Assess whether there is any Roman activity associated with the Roman road located to the south of the PDA;
- Assess whether there is any medieval or post-medieval activity relating to agricultural and quarrying activities;
- Assess whether there is any associated evidence for the former railway line that bisects the PDA (the railway embankment itself will be unaffected by the proposed development);
- Place and assess any archaeological remains revealed within context of other recent investigations in the immediate area and within the setting of the local landscape and topography.

2.3 General Aims

2.3.1 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 (CAT 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 eleven evaluation trenches were excavated across the Site (Figures 1, 2).
- 3.2.2 The trenches were 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 ClfA 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 eleven evaluation trenches were mechanically excavated under archaeological supervision.

4.2 Stratigraphic Deposit Sequence

- 4.2.1 A relatively consistent stratigraphic sequence was recorded comprising a mix of topsoil sealing an intact bedrock of Weald Clay Formation: Hard, yellow brown clay.
- 4.2.2 Appendix 1 provides the stratigraphic sequence for all trenches. Figures 1-2 provide a site plan and trench location plan while Plates 1-2 include selected site photographs.

4.3 Overview

- 4.3.1 The trench was located across the footprint of the proposed buildings to ensure full coverage of potential archaeological remains. No remains were found associated with the nearby Roman road, the Iron working installations or the adjacent railway track and bank.

5 FINDS

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

6 Discussion

6.1 Archaeological Narrative

- 6.1.1 The archaeological investigation failed to exposed any meaningful archaeology but a modern paved trackway was identified in the Test Pits A, B, C, D.

6.2 Conclusions

- 6.2.1 The archaeological evaluation has been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the Specification. Development proposals are not likely to impact on archaeological remains.
- 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 Digitise This. Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA produced the text for this report.

9 REFERENCES

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

Dated 16th March 2020.

Appendix 1: Trench Tables

Trench 1	Dimensions: 20m x 1.8m Depth: 0.15m Trench alignment: W-E Ground level at W end: 62.15m OD Ground level at E end: 62.20m OD Trench located on the track way after entry gate on E end of the site. Area was flooded and cleared of the sludge prior to trench excavation.		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
101	topsoil	Mid compaction, dark brownish grey silty clay 70% with occ. fragments of peg tile and bricks.	0-0.15
102	Bedrock-Weald clay formation	Hard, grey mottled mid orangey brown silty clay 90% with freq. manganese and iron panning (<1mm), moderate small tree roots.	0.15+

Trench 2	Dimensions: 20m x 1.8m Depth: 0.3m Trench alignment: W-E Ground level at W end: 62.43m OD Ground level at E end: 62.75m OD Trench located within south extent of the middle field. Turf was removed some time ago and stocked on piles forming embankments across the site.		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
201	topsoil	Mid compaction, dark brownish grey silty clay 70% with occ. fragments of peg tile and bricks.	0-0.15
202	Bedrock-Weald clay formation	Hard, grey mottled mid orangey brown silty clay 90% with freq. manganese and iron panning (<1mm), occ. small roots.	0.15+
[203]	Cut of Track way – 18 th /19 th C	Linear in plan, NNW-SSE aligned cut had vertical sides and flat base. Feature was 3.2m wide and 0.15m deep, however in places crush material was embedded deeper into natural. Filled by 203a. This cut was intended to accommodate ragstone paving that continues for 20m to the NNW where the cut ends but muddy track way continues further on.	0.05-0.3
203a	Fill of track way [203]	At the bottom spreads of crushed red stock bricks. Major part was made of fairly rectangular blocks of Ragstone with rounded corners measuring on average 0.1m by 0.1m by 0.2m. Top of track way covered with crushed stock bricks and occ. peg tile fragments and concrete. Ragstone deposit continues for 20 m to the NNW. Further in that direction sandstone crush was used and random materials here and there like flint pebbles or crushed bricks. The use of the stock bricks would indicate the construction of track way within 18 th C – 19 th C. The occurrence of concrete inclusions indicate late 19 th C deposition, however these were present on the top of the track way. Most likely date is Late 18 th /Early 19 th C.	0.05-0.3
[204]	Construction cut - modern	Polygonal shape in plan with steep sides. Filled with 204a – cast coarse concrete. Foundation for the post – for horse to walk around? Feature was 1m long, 1m wide and 0.8m deep.	0.15-0.95
204a	Fill of [204]	Concrete with crushed bricks block measuring 1m by 0.5m by 0.6m. The concrete was cast in situ into a mould-cut [204]	0.15-0.95
[205]	Land drain	Earthen ware pipe in narrow 0.2m wide trench	0.15-0.3+

[206]	Cut of modern pit	Irregular in plan, shallow cut 0.3m deep. Located on the west side of the track way	
206a	Fill of [206]	Backfilled with re deposited topsoil sealing concrete and brick fragments	

Trench 3	Dimensions: 20m x 1.8m Depth: 0.3m Trench alignment: NNE-SSW Ground level at NNE end: 62.44m OD Ground level at SSW end: 63.33m OD Trench located within west extent of the middle field. Turf was removed some time ago and stocked on piles forming embankments across the site.		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
301	topsoil	Mid compaction, dark brownish grey silty clay 70% with occ. fragments of peg tile and bricks.	0-0.15
302	Bedrock-Weald clay formation	Hard, yellowish brown clay with occ. small tree roots.	0.15+
[303]	Cut of natural - roots	Oval in plan with steep sides and uneven base. Feature was 0.36m by 0.31m and 0.2m deep. 100% excavated	0.05-0.3
303a	Fill of [303]	Mid compaction, mid grey clayey silt. Context formed irregular channels expanding into feature walls and base.	0.05-0.3

Trench 4	Dimensions: 20m x 1.8m Depth: 0.1m Trench alignment: NNE-SSW Ground level at NNE end: 62.22m OD Ground level at SSW end: 62.64m OD Trench located within north east extent of the middle field. Turf was removed some time ago and stocked on piles forming embankments across the site. Area was flooded and cleared off of the sludge prior to trench excavation.		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
401	topsoil	Mid compaction, dark brownish grey silty clay 70% with occ. fragments of peg tile and bricks.	0-0.05
402	Bedrock-Weald clay formation	Hard, yellowish brown clay with occ. small tree roots.	0.05+

Trench 5	Dimensions: 20m x 1.8m Depth: 0.3m Trench alignment: WSW-ENE Ground level at WSW end: 62.22m OD Ground level at SSW end: 62.64m OD Trench located on the track way off abutted to the northern boundary of the middle field. Area was slightly flooded and cleared off of the sludge prior to trench excavation. Severe biourbations – roots of nearby trees and hedge row.		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
501	Muddy track way	Mid compaction, dark brownish grey silty clay 70% with moderate stones, occ. fragments of peg tile and bricks.	0-0.2
502	Bedrock-Weald clay formation	Hard, grey mottled mid orangey brown clay with freq. roots	0.2+
503	Hedgerow root turbation	Linear N-S aligned spread of Mid compaction, dark brownish grey silty clay 70% with freq small roots and occ. small fragments of bricks at the top. Feature was 1.3m wide.	0.2-0.25
504	Water trench	Linear N-S aligned trench with water hoe leading to nearby tap. Backfilled with re deposited 501 and 502	0.2+
505	Track way	SW edge of NW –SE aligned trackway. Firm compaction, yellow crushed sandstone, sand.	0.1-0.3

Trench 6	Dimensions: 20m x 1.8m Depth: 0.5m Trench alignment: NNE-SSW Ground level at NNE end: 61.54m OD Ground level at SSW end: 60.55m OD Trench located within north east corner extent of the west field. Trench was slightly repositioned because of the concrete pyre. The field is descending to the west and south west		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
601	topsoil	Mid compaction, dark brownish grey silty clay 70% with occ. fragments of peg tile and bricks.	0-0.1
602	Bedrock-Weald clay formation	Hard, yellowish brown clay with occ. small tree roots.	0.3-0.5+
603	Colluvium	Mid compaction, mid brownish grey silty clay 70% with occ. Iron panning	0.1-0.3

Trench 7	Dimensions: 20m x 1.8m Depth: 0.45m Trench alignment: WSW-ENE Ground level at WSW end: 62.22m OD Ground level at SSW end: 62.64m OD Trench located within north east corner extent of the west field, 6.8m off to the west from trench 6. The field is descending to the west and south west		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
701	topsoil	Mid compaction, dark brownish grey silty clay 70% with occ. fragments of peg tile and bricks.	0-0.1
702	Bedrock-Weald clay formation	Hard, grey mottled mid orangey brown clay	0.23-0.45+
703	Colluvium	Mid compaction, mid brownish grey silty clay 70% with moderate iron panning	0.1-0.23

Trench 8	Dimensions: 20m x 1.8m Depth: 0.3m Trench alignment: NNE-SSW Ground level at NNE end: 61.54m OD Ground level at SSW end: 60.55m OD Trench located alongside the middle of east boundary of the west field. The field is descending to the west and south west		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
801	topsoil	Mid compaction, dark brownish grey silty clay 70% with occ. fragments of peg tile and bricks.	0-0.15
802	Bedrock-Weald clay formation	Hard, grey mottled mid orangey brown clay with moderate small and medium roots changing the colour of surrounding soil to grayish brown.	0.15+

Trench 9	Dimensions: 20m x 1.8m Depth: 0.4m Trench alignment: WNW-ESE Ground level at WNW end: 57.03m OD Ground level at ESE end: 58.66m OD Trench located within the middle east extent of the west field. The field is descending to the west and south west		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
901	topsoil	Mid compaction, dark brownish grey silty clay 70% with occ. fragments of peg tile and bricks.	0-0.15
902	Bedrock-Weald clay formation	Hard, grey mottled mid orangey brown clay with moderate small and medium roots changing the colour of surrounding soil to grayish brown.	0.15+

Trench 10	Dimensions: 20m x 1.8m Depth: 0.3-0.7m Trench alignment: W-E Ground level at W end: 55.63m OD Ground level at E end: 58.57m OD Trench located within the south east corner of the west field. The field is descending to the west and south west		
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Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
1001	topsoil	Mid compaction, dark brownish grey silty clay 70% with occ. fragments of peg tile and bricks.	0-0.15
1002	Bedrock-Weald clay formation	Hard, grey mottled mid orangey brown clay with freq. small and medium roots changing the colour of surrounding soil to dark grayish brown.	0.15+
1003	Bedrock-Weald clay formation - bioturbated	Irregular blotches of dark brown silty clay with freq. roots were machine excavated to the depth of 0.7m. Discoloration created by roots and underlying land drain [1004]	0.15-0.7
1004	Land drain	Earthenware pipe in narrow 0.2m wide trench backfilled with re deposited natural and topsoil	0.15-0.7+

Trench 11	Dimensions: 20m x 1.8m Depth: 0.4m Trench alignment: N-S Ground level at N end: 51.92m OD Ground level at S end: 50.78m OD Trench located within the west extent of the west field. The field is descending to the west and south west. The lowest part of the field.		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
1101	topsoil	Mid compaction, dark brownish grey silty clay 70% with occ. fragments of peg tile and bricks.	0-0.25
1102	Bedrock-Weald clay formation	Hard, grey mottled mid orangey brown clay with freq. small and medium roots changing the colour of surrounding soil to dark grayish brown.	0.25+
1003	Land drain	Earthenware pipe in narrow 0.2m wide trench backfilled with re deposited natural and topsoil	0.15-0.4+

Test pits A, B, C, D were excavated to expose the course of track way exposed in trench 2.

On average test pits were 0.05m deep and excavated to the top of the track way.

Ragstone paved track way was exposed in test pits A, B, C. Further to the north west in test pit D and trench 5 track way deposits consisted of coarse grained deposits, crushed sandstone, crushed bricks or pebbles

Kent County Council HER Summary Form

Site Name: Land between Beechwood Farm and London Beach Golf Club, Ashford Road, St Michaels, Tenterden, Kent

SWAT Site Code: BEECH/EV/20

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 application for the erection of a residential dwelling 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 588369 135701

Type of Archaeological work: Archaeological Evaluation

Date of recording: March 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 between Beechwood Farm and London Beach Golf Club, Ashford Road, St Michaels, Tenterden, Kent

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

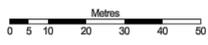
No meaningful archaeology found

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

Contact at Unit: Paul Wilkinson



Figure 1: Site location



2D → Plate number and looking direction

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Figure 2: The Site in relation to OS map and site views

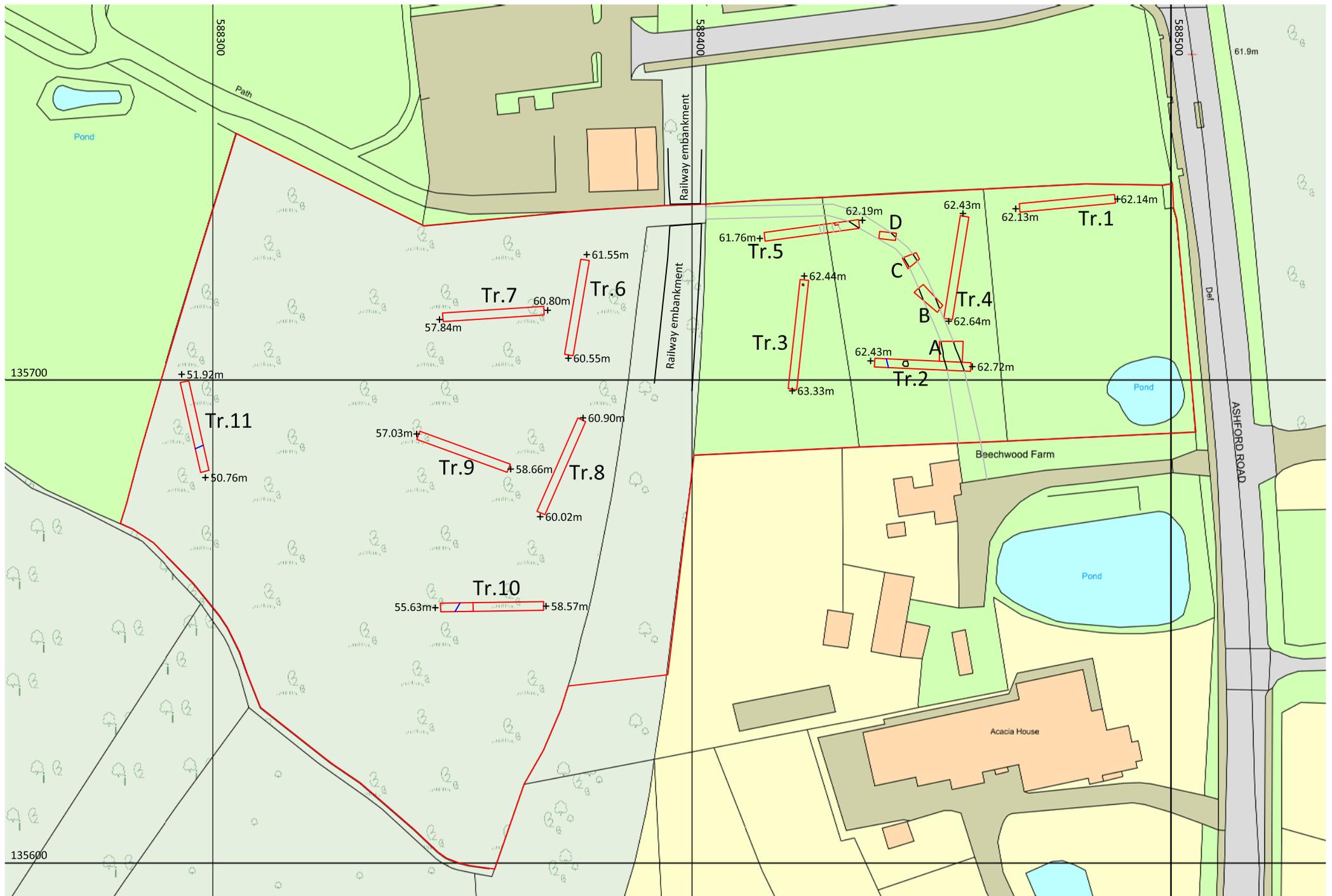


Figure 3: Trench location in relation to OS map

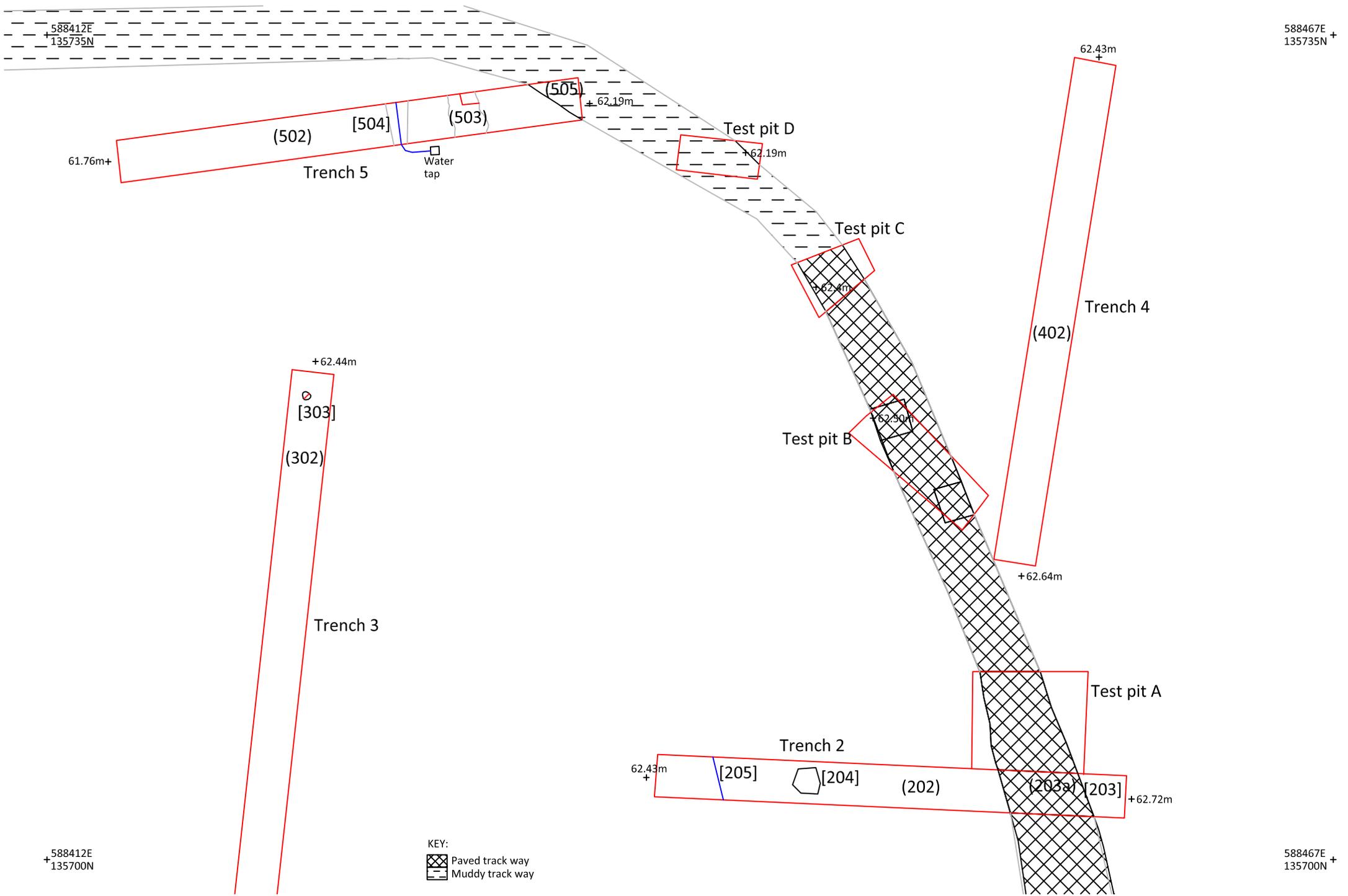


Figure 4: Plan of trench 2, 3, 4, 5 and track way located in the middle field

Section 1

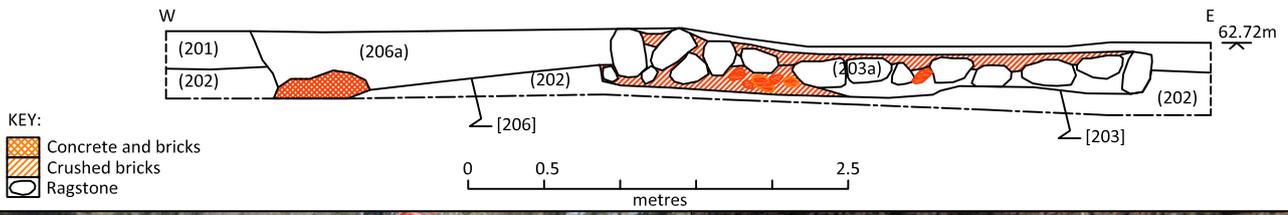


Plate 5A - Looking west at trench 2

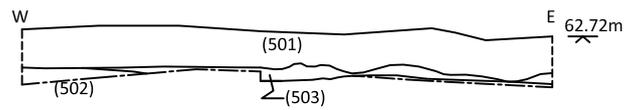


Plate 5B - Looking north at track way (203a)



Plate 5C - Looking north at muddy track way exposed in test pit D

Section 2



Section 3

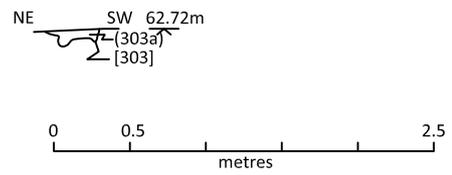


Plate 5D - Looking south west at section through root patch [303]



Plate 5E - Looking north at section through bioturbations (503)

Figure 5: Features exposed in Trench 2, 3 and 5



Plate 1: Looking north at section through top soil sealing Weald clay bedrock – common stratigraphy exposed across the site



Plate 2: Looking west at modern pit [204]



Plate 3: Concrete block pulled out of pit [204]



Plate 4: Looking north at the middle field



Plate 5: Looking north at rail embankment truncated by the crossing trackway