

Archaeological Evaluation on Land at Scocles Farm, Scocles Road, Minster on Sea, Kent

Site Code: SCOC -EV-19

NGR Site Centre NGR 595000 171190

Planning Application Number: 17/506294/FULL



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SWAT ARCHAEOLOGY

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Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	5
1.1	Project Background	5
1.2	Site Description and Topography	5
2	ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.....	5
2.1	Introduction	5
3	AIMS AND OBJECTIVES.....	6
3.1	Specific Aims (SWAT 2019)	6
3.2	General Aims	6
4	METHODOLOGY.....	6
4.1	Introduction	6
4.2	Fieldwork.....	7
4.3	Recording	7
5	RESULTS	8
5.1	Introduction	8
5.2	Stratigraphic Deposit Sequence	8
5.3	Overview	8
6	FINDS	8
6.1	Introduction	8
7	DISCUSSION.....	8
7.1	Archaeological Narrative.....	8
7.2	Conclusions	8
8	ARCHIVE.....	13
8.1	General.....	13

9 **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS** 13

10 **REFERENCES** 13

11 **APPENDIX 1 – TRENCH TABLES** 10

Figures

- Figures 1-2 Site and Trench location map
- Figures 3-4 Trenches and overlaid on proposed development of Phase 1 and Phase 2

- Plates 1- 11 The site with trenches

Summary

Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) was commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at Scocles Farm, Minster on Sea in Kent. The archaeological works were monitored by the Kent County Council Principal Archaeological Officer.

The fieldwork was carried out in November 2019 in accordance with an archaeological specification (SWAT Archaeology September 2019) submitted to the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of works.

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

The work was split into two phases with Phase 1 evaluating the area of the present planning application and Phase 2 an area of future development proposals.

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 Scocles Farm, Scocles Road, Minster on Sea in Kent (**Figure 2**).

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 Swale Borough Council, requested that a programme of archaeological works be undertaken to satisfy the recommended condition (5) of the planning permission 17/506294.

1.1.3 The archaeological evaluation was carried out in November 2019 in accordance with an archaeological specification prepared by SWAT Archaeology (23/09/2019), prior to commencement of works, and in discussion with Simon Mason Principal Archaeological Officer at KCCHC.

1.2 Site Description and Topography

The application site is located north of the A2500 and to the east of Thistle Hill and to the south of the small town of Minster with its archaeological remains of the Abbey (Figure 1).

The Geological Survey of Great Britain (1:50,000) shows that the PDA is set on Bedrock Geology of London Clay Formation. Superficial deposits are not recorded.

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 Evaluation Specification produced by SWAT Archaeology.

The Kent Historic Environment Record (HER) provides an accurate insight into catalogued sites and finds within both the proposed development area (PDA) and the surrounding environs of Minster. The Archaeology Data Service Online Catalogue (ADS) was also used. The search was carried out within a 500m radius of the proposed development site and relevant HER data is included in the report. A KCCHER search shows that about 100m to the west First World War trenches were

revealed in an archaeological investigation (TQ 97 SW 138) and were seen to be a zig zag pattern. At about 150m to the west a medieval farmstead dating from the 12th- 13th century was exposed along with associated medieval pits (TQ 97 SW 134).

Adjacent to the PDA are the remains of Scocles Court and recognised in a recent survey as a post-medieval regular courtyard farmstead.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Specific Aims (SWAT 2019)

- i. The specific aims of the archaeological fieldwork are set out in the Specification (SWAT 2019) were to:
- ii. *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 and Roman activity.*

3.2 General Aims

- iii. 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.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

- i. All fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the methodology set out in the Specification (SWAT 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).

4.2 Fieldwork

- ii. A total of nine evaluation trenches were excavated across the Site (Figures 3, 4).
- iii. Each 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.
- iv. 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.

4.3 Recording

- v. 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.
- vi. 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.
- vii. 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.).

5. RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

- i. A total of nine evaluation trenches were mechanically excavated under archaeological supervision.

5.2 Stratigraphic Deposit Sequence

- ii. A relatively consistent stratigraphic sequence was recorded across the majority of the Site comprising topsoil sealing an intact subsoil of London Clay of mid brown clay (Plates 1-11).
- iii. Appendix 1 provides the stratigraphic sequence for all trenches. Figures 1-4 provide a site plan and trench location plan while Plates 1-11 include selected site photographs.

5.3 Overview

- iv. The nine trenches were located across the site to ensure full coverage of potential archaeological remains.

6. FINDS

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

7. Discussion

7.1 Archaeological Narrative

7.1.1 Archaeological evaluation took place over the course of 2 days that started on Monday 4/11/2019. The project consists of two phases located on two bordering areas occupied by farm estate (Fig.2). The site is located on mid slope on NE side of the small hill (Fig. 1). Phase 1 area is trapezoidal and near square in plan. Area of Phase two is rectangular in plan and it is adjacent to NE side of phase1. Nine evaluation trenches have been excavated: four in phase one and five in phase two. Phase 1 and 2 trenches have been labelled accordingly 1 to 4 and 1a to 5a.

7.1.2 In the past the site has been terraced for the purpose of accommodating farm buildings. Within central area of phase 1 (Fig 3, Plate 1) two barn structures were demolished prior to evaluation leaving chalky hard standing behind and few concrete posts. Between those tarmac surface was present. On the SE and SW side off the buildings the natural hill slope was vegetated by grass with few

trees planted. On the NE side there was a driveway made of compacted hardcore and leading to the site entrance.

7.1.3 Area of Phase 2 (Fig 3, Plate 6) was occupied by derelict farm buildings located alongside the boundaries forming internal courtyard divided by SE-NW aligned row of buildings. The evaluation trenches were set out in passages between those buildings. Evaluation has revealed fairly simple stratigraphy, overburden comprising hardcore and soil, elsewhere topsoil was capping parent material (London clay) comprising mid brown clay.

7.1.4 Within Phase 1 of evaluation 4 modern features have been exposed: post hole [204] and service trenches [104, 304 and 404].

Within Phase 2 of evaluation 3 modern features have been exposed: service trench [203a], landscaping feature [303a] and 19th century pond [503a].

Phase 1 trenches

Trench 1 (Fig. 4, Plate 2)

7.1.5 Trench 1 was located alongside NE boundary of the site in NE-SW alignment and measured 22.5m in length with a maximum depth of 0.4m. The trench was located on the edge of terraced ground and it was cutting across moderate slope of the “scarp”.

It revealed natural geology (103) of light orangey brown London clay overlaid by up to 0.2m thick, topsoil and in NE part modern overburden layer (102) comprising sand, gravel and hardcore. In the NE half of the trench, NE-SW aligned linear service trench (context 104) was exposed. The modern trench was easily distinguishable from surrounding parent material. Its infill consisted re deposited natural clay (103), brick and flint pebble. Feature was sealed by layer (102)

No Archaeological structures or deposits were found in this trench. Exposed features were: modern service trench and overlying dump deposit.

Trench 2 (Fig. 4, Plate 3)

7.1.6 Trench 2 was located ten metres to the south west of previously discussed Trench 1 in southern quarter of the site. It was placed in E-W alignment and measured 23.5 metres long by 1.8metre wide and 0.3 metre in depth. It revealed natural geology London clay formation (203) of firm compaction clay with occ. flint. At the top the parent material was disturbed by small roots. Within E end of the trench it was overlaid by approx. 2m long, 0.27 metre-thick modern overburden (context 202) comprising soil and hardcore debris. Context (202) was overlaid by 0.05m thick topsoil layer of firm

compaction, dark greyish brown silty clay with occ. flint and modern inclusions. Beyond the extent of overburden layer the topsoil thickness was rising to 0.2m. In the E end of the trench, modern post hole was exposed. The Feature had lozenge shape in plan with sides 0.8m long. Feature was easily distinguishable from surrounding parent material. Its infill consisted re deposited natural clay (203) flint pebble and modern pottery fragment. Feature was sealed by layer (202)

Neither archaeological structures nor deposits were exposed in this trench. Exposed features were: modern posthole and overlying dump deposit.

Trench 3 (Fig. 4, Plate 4)

7.1.7 Trench 3 was located alongside NW boundary of the site in NE-SW alignment and measured 24m in length with a maximum depth of 0.35m. Trench was located on reduced levelled area previously occupied by barn.

It revealed natural geology London clay formation (303) of firm compaction clay with occ. flint. It was overlaid by 0.05m thick, modern layer (302) comprising chalk – floor of former barn. Within NE extent of the trench, NW-SE aligned modern trench [304] was exposed. Feature was easily distinguishable from surrounding parent material. Its infill consisted re deposited natural clay (303) mixed with hard core. Feature was sealed by layer (302) of Firm compaction, dark brown silty clay with moderate hard core.

No Archaeological structures or deposits were found in this trench. Exposed features were: modern service trench and overlying dump deposit.

Trench 4 (Fig. 4, Plate 5)

7.1.8 Trench 4 was located alongside NE boundary of the Phase 1 area in NW-SE alignment and measured 24.7m in length with a maximum depth of 0.3m. Trench was located on reduced levelled area previously occupied by driveway.

It revealed natural geology London clay formation (403) of firm compaction clay with occ. flint. It was overlaid by 0.2m thick, modern layer (401) comprising compacted hardcore.

Within NW extent of the trench, NW-SE aligned modern trench [404] was exposed. Feature was easily distinguishable from surrounding parent material. Its infill consisted compacted black gravel.

No Archaeological structures or deposits were found in this trench. An exposed feature was a modern service trench.

Phase 2 trenches

Trench 1a (Fig. 4, Plate 6)

7.1.9 Trench 1A was located within W extent of Phase 2 area in NE-SW alignment and measured 9.1m in length with a maximum depth of 0.35m.

It revealed natural geology London clay formation (102a) of firm compaction clay with occ. flint. It was overlaid by 0.2m thick, modern layer (101a) comprising compacted hardcore forming a yard surface.

No Archaeological structures or deposits were found in this trench.

Trench 2a (Fig. 4, Plate 7)

7.1.10 Trench 2A was located within SW extent of Phase 2 area in NW-SE alignment and measured 22m in length with a maximum depth of 0.35m.

It revealed natural geology London clay formation (202a) of firm compaction clay with occ. flint. It was overlaid by 0.26m thick, modern layer (201a) comprising compacted hardcore forming a yard surface. Throughout the trench, NW-SE aligned modern trench [203a] was exposed. Feature was easily distinguishable from surrounding parent material. Its infill consisted compacted black gravelly clay sealing steel pipe.

No Archaeological structures or deposits were found in this trench. An exposed feature was a modern service trench.

Trench 3a (Fig. 4, Plate 8)

7.1.11 Trench 3A was located within S corner of Phase 2 area in NE-SW alignment and measured 8m in length with a maximum depth of 0.2m. The ground was descending to the NE.

It revealed natural geology London clay formation (302a) of firm compaction clay with occ. flint. It was overlaid by 0.05m-0.2m thick, modern layer (301a) comprising compacted black clayey gravel forming a driveway.

Within NE extent of the trench south side of the feature [303a] was exposed. The cut had shallow side and sloping base following the gradient of the hill slope. It cut natural to the depth of 0.3m and was backfilled (304a) with mixed material comprising black gravel, bricks, tiles, concrete and chalk. Similar deposits were also exposed in trench 4a and it was established that they are indicative to landscaping works using plan machinery.

No Archaeological structures or deposits were found in this trench. An exposed feature was a modern landscaping cut.

Trench 4a (Fig. 4, Plate 9)

7.1.12 Trench 4A was located within SE extent of Phase 2 area in NE-SW alignment and measured 8m in length with a maximum depth of 0.65m. The ground was descending to the NE.

It revealed natural geology London clay formation (402a) of firm compaction clay with occ. flint and a NE-SW aligned 1m wide stripe of layer (404a) of buried 19th C top soil comprising mid compaction, black silty clay. The context was sloping to the NW and NE and was removed by machine leaving behind only linear patch of which 1m of length was hand excavated to the depth of 0.25m. It revealed shallow side of the hollow sloping to the NW. No anthropogenic material was recovered from the feature.

Further above was a 0.35m thick modern machine overburden layer (403a) of compacted chalk that was sealed by 0.3m thick, modern driveway layer (401a) comprising black clayey gravel.

No Archaeological structures or deposits were found in this trench. An exposed was: 19th C buried top soil and deposit related to modern landscaping.

Trench 5a (Fig. 4, Plate 10 and 11)

7.1.13 Trench 5A was located alongside NE boundary of the site in NE-SW alignment and measured 41.8m in length with a maximum depth of 0.35m. It was located on a fairly levelled ground. NW half of the trench covers area where remains of demolished concrete barn were noted.

In SE half it revealed natural geology London clay formation (502a) of firm compaction clay with occ. flint

Throughout the NW half of the trench a 24m long 19th C pond was exposed. Test pit was excavated 5m off western edge of the feature through its backfill deposit (504a) comprising of firm compaction, black moist clay with occ. Hard core, glass bottles, iron, wood, lenses of charred material and gravel. At the base of 1.45m deep test pit natural deposit was exposed comprising pale yellowish grey clay. Test pit started to fill up with water immediately after excavation

The pond feature is evident in 1869 OS map.

It was overlaid by 0.26m thick, modern layer (501a) comprising compacted hard core forming a yard surface.

7.2 Conclusions

- i. 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.

- ii. 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.

8. ARCHIVE

8.1 General

- i. 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).
- ii. 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.

9. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

- i. SWAT would like to thank the developer for commissioning the project. Thanks are also extended to Simon Mason Principal Archaeological Officer, Kent County Council, for his advice and assistance.
- ii. Bartek Cichy supervised the archaeological evaluation and survey and illustrations were produced by Bartek Cichy. Paul Wilkinson MClfA produced the text for this report.

10. REFERENCES

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Trench Table – Phase 1

Trench 1	Dimensions: 22.5m x 1.8m Depth: 0.4m Trench alignment: NE-SW Ground level at NE end: 17.12m OD Ground level at SW end: 17.74m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
101	Top soil	Firm compaction, dark greyish brown silty clay with occ. Flint and modern inclusions	0-0.05
102	Overburden layer	Compacted mixed materials: flint pebbles, hardcore with coarse sand. Context located in N end of the trench	0.05-0.2
103	London clay	Firm compaction, mid brown clay including occ. flint	0.05+
104	Modern trench	NE-SW aligned modern trench backfilled with re deposited 103 with occ. brick and flint pebble. Sealed with layer 102.	0.2+

Trench 2	Dimensions: 23.5m x 1.8m Depth: 0.3m Trench alignment: E-W Ground level at E end: 18.25m OD Ground level at W end: 18.62m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
201	Top soil	Firm compaction, dark greyish brown silty clay with occ. Flint and modern inclusions	0-0.2
202	Overburden layer	Compacted hardcore with dark earth	0.05-0.27
203	London clay	Firm compaction, mid brown clay including freq. small roots and occ. flint	0.2+
204	Modern posthole	0.8m Square shape in plan. Un excavated. Filled with brown clay with flint pebble and modern pottery fragment	0.2+

Trench 3	Dimensions: 24m x 1.8m Depth: 0.35m Trench alignment: NE-SW Ground level at NE end: 16.69m OD Ground level at SW end: 16.93m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
301	Hard standing/former barn floor	Firm compaction, white chalk	0-0.05
302	Overburden layer	Firm compaction, dark brown silty clay with moderate hardcore	0.05-0.2
303	London clay	Firm compaction, mid brown clay including occ. flint	0.05+
304	Modern trench	NW-SE aligned modern trench backfilled with firm compaction, dark brown silty clay with moderate hardcore. Sealed by layer 102	0.2+

Trench 4	Dimensions: 24.7m x 1.8m Depth: 0.3m Trench alignment: NW-SE Ground level at NW end: 16.3m OD Ground level at SE end: 16.55m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
401	DRIVEWAY	Compacted hardcore	0-0.2
402	VOID		
403	London clay	Firm compaction, mid brown clay including occ. flint	0.2+
404	Modern trench	NW-SE aligned modern trench backfilled with black gravel	0.2+

Trench Table – Phase 2

Trench 1a	Dimensions: 9.1m x 1.8m Depth: 0.35m Trench alignment: NE-SW Ground level at NE end: 16.69m OD Ground level at SW end: 14.8m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
101	Barn yard layer	Compacted chalk, concrete, gravel and black silty clay	0-0.2
102	London clay	Firm compaction, dark brown silty clay with moderate hardcore	0.05-0.2

Trench 2a	Dimensions: 22m x 1.8m Depth: 0.35m Trench alignment: NW-SE Ground level at NW end: 14.65m OD Ground level at SE end: 15.26m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
201	Barn yard layer	Compacted chalk, concrete, gravel and black silty clay	0-0.26
202	London clay	Firm compaction, dark brown silty clay with moderate hardcore	0.26+

203	Modern trench	NW-SE aligned modern trench backfilled with black gravelly clay sealing steel pipe	0.26+
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Trench 3a	Dimensions: 8m x 1.8m Depth: 0.2m Trench alignment: NE-SW Ground level at NE end: 15.54m OD Ground level at SW end: 16.42m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
301	Barn yard layer	Compacted chalk, concrete, gravel and black silty clay	0-0.2
302	London clay	Firm compaction, dark brown silty clay with moderate hardcore	0.05-0.2
[303]	Modern landscaping cut	S side of large cut exposed shallow slope and flat base. Terracing on the hill slope. Overlying deposits continue to trench 4a	0.2-0.55
304	Fill of [303]	Firm compaction, black clayey gravel (bricks, tiles, concrete) with lens of chalk gravel	0.2-0.55

Trench 4a	Dimensions: 8m x 1.8m Depth: 0.2m Trench alignment: NE-SW Ground level at NE end: 14.2m OD Ground level at SW end: 14.4m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
401	Barn yard layer	Compacted chalk, concrete, gravel and black silty clay	0-0.3
402	London clay	Firm compaction, dark brown silty clay with moderate hardcore	0.65+
403	Overburden Modern layer	White chalk	0.3-0.65
404	Buried 19 th C top soil	Mid compaction, black silty clay	0.65-0.8

Trench 5a	Dimensions: 41.8m x 1.8m Depth: 0.35m Trench alignment: NW-SE Ground level at NW end: 13.44m OD Ground level at SE end: 14.17m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
501	Barn yard layer and demolition layer	Compacted hardcore with black clay and lenses of chalk and gravel	0-0.3
502	London clay	Firm compaction, dark brown silty clay with moderate hardcore	0.3+
503	Cut of 19 th C pond	25m long pond evident in old OS map	0.3-1.45
504	Backfill of 503	Firm compaction, black moist clay with occ. hardcore, glass bottles, iron, wood, lenses of charred material and gravel. At the base light grey clay	0.3-1.45

Kent County Council HER Summary Form

Site Name: Land at Scocles Farm, Scocles Road, Minster on Sea, Kent

SWAT Site Code: SCOC/EV/19

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 eight dwellings whereby Swale Borough Council requested that archaeological works be undertaken to determine the possible impact of the proposed development on any archaeological remains.

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

District/Unitary: Swale Borough Council

Period(s):

NGR (centre of site to eight figures) NGR 595000 171950

Type of Archaeological work: Archaeological Evaluation

Date of recording: 5th November 2019

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

Geology: Underlying geology is Bedrock Geology of London Clay

Title and author of accompanying report: Wilkinson P. (2019) Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Scocles Farm, Scocles Road, Minster on Sea, Kent

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

No archaeology found

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

Contact at Unit: Paul Wilkinson

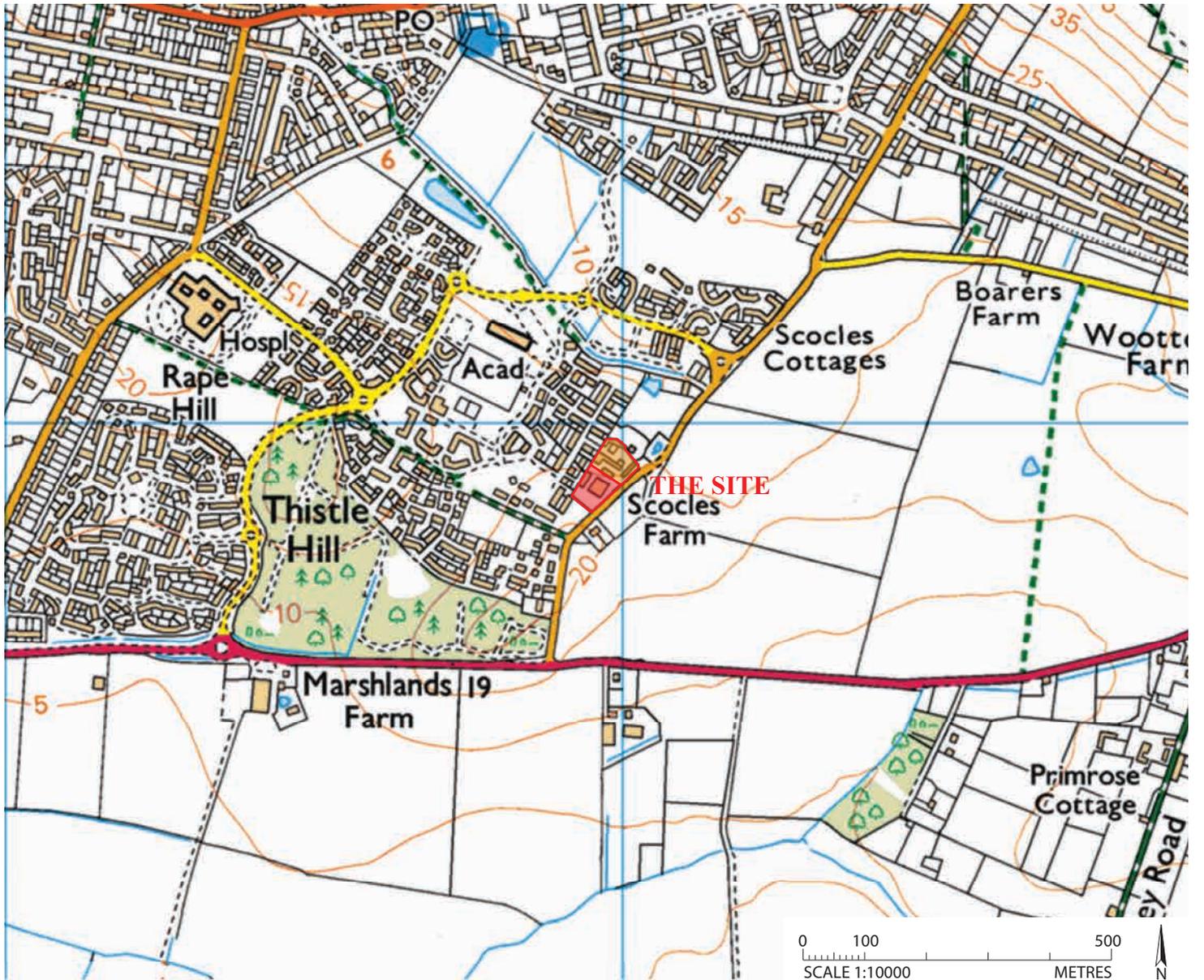


Figure 1: Site location map, scale 1:10000.



Figure 2: Site location in relation to OS map

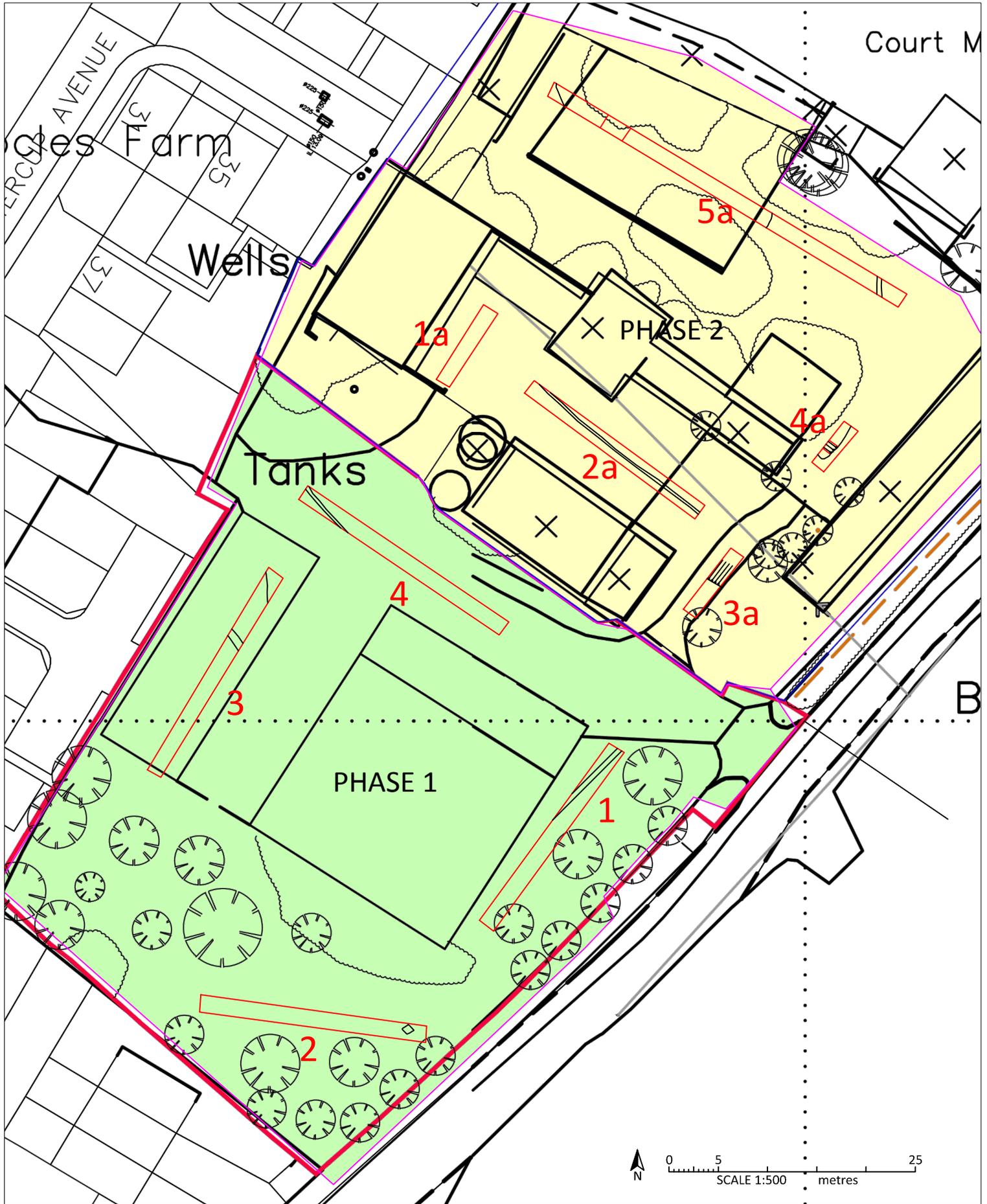


Figure 3: Trench plan in relation to OS map

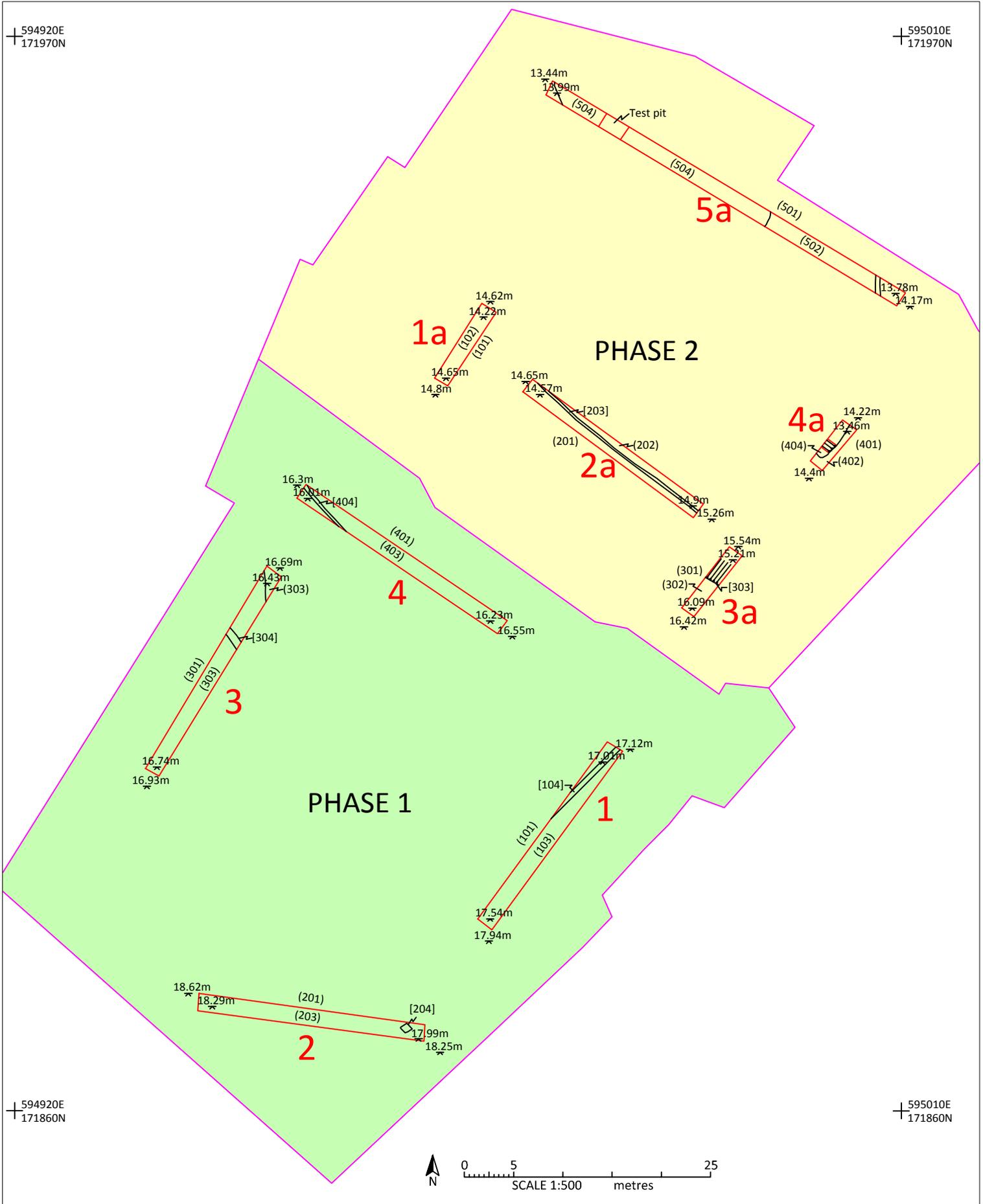


Figure 4: Trench plan

Plates – Phase 1



Plate 1: Looking NE at the site from its SW boundary. Area with farm buildings visible in the background was the subject of phase 2 of evaluation.



Plate 2: Looking NE at Trench 1



Plate 3: Looking north-west at trench 2



Plate 4: Looking south-west at trench 3



Plate 5: Looking south-east at trench 4

Plates – Phase 2



Plate 6: Looking ENE at the site. Trench 1a is visible on the left and trench 2a further in the back on the right.



Plate 7: Looking south east at trench 2a.



Plate 8: Looking north at trench 3a



Plate 9: Looking NNE at trench 4a



Plate 10: Looking north-west at trench 5a



Plate 11: Looking south west at section of backfilled pond exposed in trench 5a