



**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION  
of land at The Green Dragon,  
85 Church Street, Gillingham, Kent ME7 1TR**

Report date: 25/03/2021

Site code: **GSG-EV-21**

NGR: 578239 169097

Planning ref.: (MC/19/1508)  
MC/17/2261

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## **1 INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY**

### **1.1 Project Background**

1.1.1 SWAT Archaeology was commissioned by the Client to carry out an archaeological evaluation in preparations for the development of land at The Green Dragon, 85 Church Street, Gillingham, Kent ME7 1TR.

1.1.2 Archaeological evaluation commenced on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2021 and was completed by 10<sup>th</sup> March 2021. Monitoring visit from Senior Archaeological Officer was not carried out and photographs with video footage were provided.

1.1.3 Works were carried out within Area of PDA where 1 trench was dug. Evaluation exposed natural geology comprising orange-brown clay-sand-silt with infrequent gravel patches. Trench has exposed two walls in perpendicular alignment, brick-built well and a modern cut filled-up with loam mixed with demolition debris.

1.1.4 Western part of the site was originally a slope descending eastwards which was terraced-off within PDA boundaries.

1.1.5 No archaeological cuts or deposits were found during course of evaluation.

### **1.2 Planning background**

A planning application was granted on the 5<sup>th</sup> June 2020 (Application No: MC/19/1508) for the construction of 16 apartments consisting of 11x one bedroom apartments and 5x two bedroom apartments with associated parking. Resubmission of MC/17/2261.

1.2.1 A Condition of archaeological works were attached to Planning Decision Notice and it was:  
*(9) No development shall take place until the implementation of a programme of archaeological work has been secured in accordance with a written specification and timetable which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The archaeological works shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved specification. Reason: Required before commencement of development to avoid any irreversible detrimental impact on any archaeological interest and in accordance with Policy BNE21 of the Local Plan 2003.*

- 1.2.2 On the basis of the present archaeological information, the Senior Archaeological Officer advising Medway Council recommended that the proposed development should be subject to a programme of archaeological works in order to clarify the archaeological elements within the site.
- 1.2.3 The methodology of the archaeological evaluation phase of investigation is identified within this specification which is based on the KCC site specific specification A and in the KCC Evaluation Manual Part B.
- 1.3 Site description, Geology and Topography
- 1.3.1 The application site is situated in Gillingham and fronted to the north by Forge Lane and to the east by Church Street. The site was formally the location of the Green Dragon public house and the surviving footprint of this building is shown on Figure 3.
- 1.3.2 The Geological Survey of Great Britain (1:50,000) shows that the PDA is set on bedrock geology of Thanet Formation- Sand, Silt and Clay. Superficial deposits are recorded as Head- Clay, Silt, Sand and Gravel and the OD height of the site is about 15.50 aOD. The site centre is located at NGR 578239 169097.

## **2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Proposed Development Area (PDA) is located close to a number of archaeological sites.
- 2.1.1 A KCCHER search shows that about 40m to the east a Palaeolithic hand axe was found (TQ 76 NE 14). Just to the north was the site of the National School (TQ 76 NE 1256) and on the north side of the site was located the Parish Poorhouse dating from about 1800AD to 1834AD (TQ 76 NE 1348).
- 2.1.2 On the site was located the now demolished Green Dragon Public House with listing of landlords starting in the late 18th century (Plate 1). The 1863 OS map (MAP 1) shows the development of the site with open ground to the west and this continues to 1938 (MAP 2). Figure 2 shows the surviving footprint of the Green Dragon public house and Figure 3 shows the site as is on Ordnance Survey.

### **3 METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

3.1.1 All fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the methodology set out in the Specification (SWAT 2020) and carried out in compliance with the standards outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standards Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations (CIfA 2014).

#### **3.2 Fieldwork**

3.2.1 A 1 evaluation trench was excavated within the extents of the Site.

3.2.2 Each trench was initially scanned by metal detector 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 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.

3.2.4 All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with LPA and CIfA standards and guidance. A complete photographic record was maintained on site that included 8 working shots; during mechanical excavation, following archaeological investigations and during back filling.

3.2.5 On completion, the trenches were made safe and left open in order to provide the opportunity for a curatorial monitoring visit. Backfilling was carried out once all recording, survey and monitoring had been completed.

#### **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.

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 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 as [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 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

- 4.1 The principle objective of the archaeological evaluation is 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.
- 4.2 To 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.
- 4.3 To 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.
- 4.4 The opportunity was also taken during the course of the evaluation to place and assess any archaeology revealed within the context of other recent archaeological investigations in the immediate area and within the setting of the local landscape and topography. In general the work is to ensure compliance with the archaeological requirements from the Senior Archaeologist at Kent County Council that an archaeological evaluation to take place as a post-planning requirement, and to publish the results either on line, or through OASIS and/or in a local journal.

## **5 RESULTS**

- 5.1 Introduction and Summary Results
  - 5.1.1 Archaeological evaluation of land at The Green Dragon, 85 Church Street, Gillingham, Kent ME7 1TR has exposed natural geology comprising orange-brown clay-sand-silt with infrequent flint gravel patches.
  - 5.1.2 Western part of the site was originally a slope descending eastwards and was subsequently terraced-off within site boundaries. Evaluation trench in there exposed sand that could be a member of the Thanet Formation.
  - 5.1.3 Evaluation trench exposed common stratigraphic sequence comprising top-soil and sub-soil concealing natural geology. Trench has also exposed soil retention walls and a well structure accommodated in construction cut.

5.1.4 No earlier archaeological cuts, deposits or artefacts were revealed during the course of evaluation.

## 5.2 Trench Narratives

5.2.1 Trench 1 (Figure 3) was placed in central part of the site in east-west alignment and measured 2.6 to 1.8metre wide by 30.2metres in length and 1.15metre in maximum depth. It exposed natural geology context (102) (a, b) comprising orange-brown to orange-grey/green-grey clay-sand-silt with infrequent flint gravel. Trench has exposed modern rectangular construction cut [105] in its eastern part. Feature had vertical sides and measured 2.6metre in length by 0.8metre in width (only exposed part) with and unknown depth. Its backfill context (107) comprised dark-grey loam with moderate demolition debris.

5.2.2 Construction cut had a brick-build well structure accommodated in its eastern part. Structure 106 comprised dry-brick built round structure measuring 0.9metre in diameter with its backfill context (108) comprising dark-grey loam with recent rubbish dumped into open well shaft. As there appeared to be a void, sample excavation was not undertaken for health and safety reasons.

5.2.3 Immediately to the north a 15-metres long soil retention wall 104 in NWW-SEE alignment was exposed and investigated. It comprised 6-7 courses of red bricks with fairly soft lime mortar. The average brick size was 22x7x10cm although some bricks were thicker up to 10cm. This structure is evident on OS and historic maps.

5.2.4 A Short perpendicular wall in NNE-SSW alignment was revealed at the eastern end of retention wall. This part of structure appears to be later in date. It comprised yellow bricks with hard concrete-like bonding being used.

5.2.5 The wall rested on re-deposited natural context (103) comprising orange-grey clay-sand-silt without noticeable inclusions. It overlays parent material context (102a) comprising orange-grey clay-sand-silt with infrequent angular stones.

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 The archaeological evaluation has been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the Specification and limited archaeological evidence in forms of 19<sup>th</sup> Century

soil retention wall and a modern well structure was exposed. Mentioned wall is evident on Ordnance Survey maps.

- 6.2 This evaluation has, therefore, assessed the archaeological potential of land intended for development. The negative results within the most of the trench show that the proposed development won't be having any significant impact on buried archaeological resource.

## **7 FINDS**

- 7.1 Only modern objects were revealed in well backfill and in deposit concealing soil retention wall.

## **8 RECOMMENDATIONS AND FURTHER WORK**

- 8.1 There is no requirement for further work.

## **9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

- 9.1 SWAT Archaeology would like to thank to the client for commissioning the project and thanks are extended to Ben Found, Senior Archaeological Officer from Kent County Council for his support and assistance during the fieldwork.
- 9.2 On behalf of the client project was directed by Dr Paul Wilkinson, MCIFA and fieldwork was carried out by Peter Cichy who also prepared text and illustrations for this report.

## **10 ARCHIVE**

- 10.1 General
- 10.2 The Site archive, which will include; paper records, photographic records, graphics and digital data, will be prepared following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; ClfA 2009; Brown 2011; ADS 2013).
- 10.3 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. The Site Archive will be retained at SWAT Archaeology offices until such time it can be transferred to a Kent Museum.

## APPENDIX 1 – HER FORM

**Site Name:** Archaeological Evaluation of land at The Green Dragon, 85 Church Street, Gillingham, Kent ME7 1TR.

**SWAT Site Code:** GSG-EV-21

**Site Address:** As above

**Summary:** *Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) was commissioned by The Client to undertake an archaeological evaluation of land at The Green Dragon, 85 Church Street, Gillingham, Kent ME7 1TR. The archaeological programme was monitored by the Senior Archaeological Officer at Kent County Council. The Archaeological Evaluation consisted of 1 trench, which recorded a relatively common stratigraphic sequence comprising topsoil and subsoil with modern levelling deposits concealing natural geology.*

*19<sup>th</sup> Century soil retention wall and modern well accommodated within rectangular construction cut were exposed during the course of evaluation.*

***Further mitigation is not required.***

**District/Unitary:** Medway Council & Kent County Council

**Period(s):** Late Post Medieval, Modern

**NGR (centre of site to eight figures)** NGR 578239 169097

**Type of Archaeological work:** Archaeological Evaluation

**Date of recording:** February 2021

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

**Geology:** Thanet Formation- Sand, Silt and Clay.

**Title and author of accompanying report:** SWAT Archaeology (P. Cichy 2021) Archaeological of land at The Green Dragon, 85 Church Street, Gillingham, Kent ME7 1TR.

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

**Contact at Unit:** Paul Wilkinson

## References

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*SWAT Archaeology, 2020, Specification for a Programme of Archaeological Evaluation of land at The Green Dragon, 85 Church Street, Gillingham, Kent ME7 1TR.*

## Figures and Plates

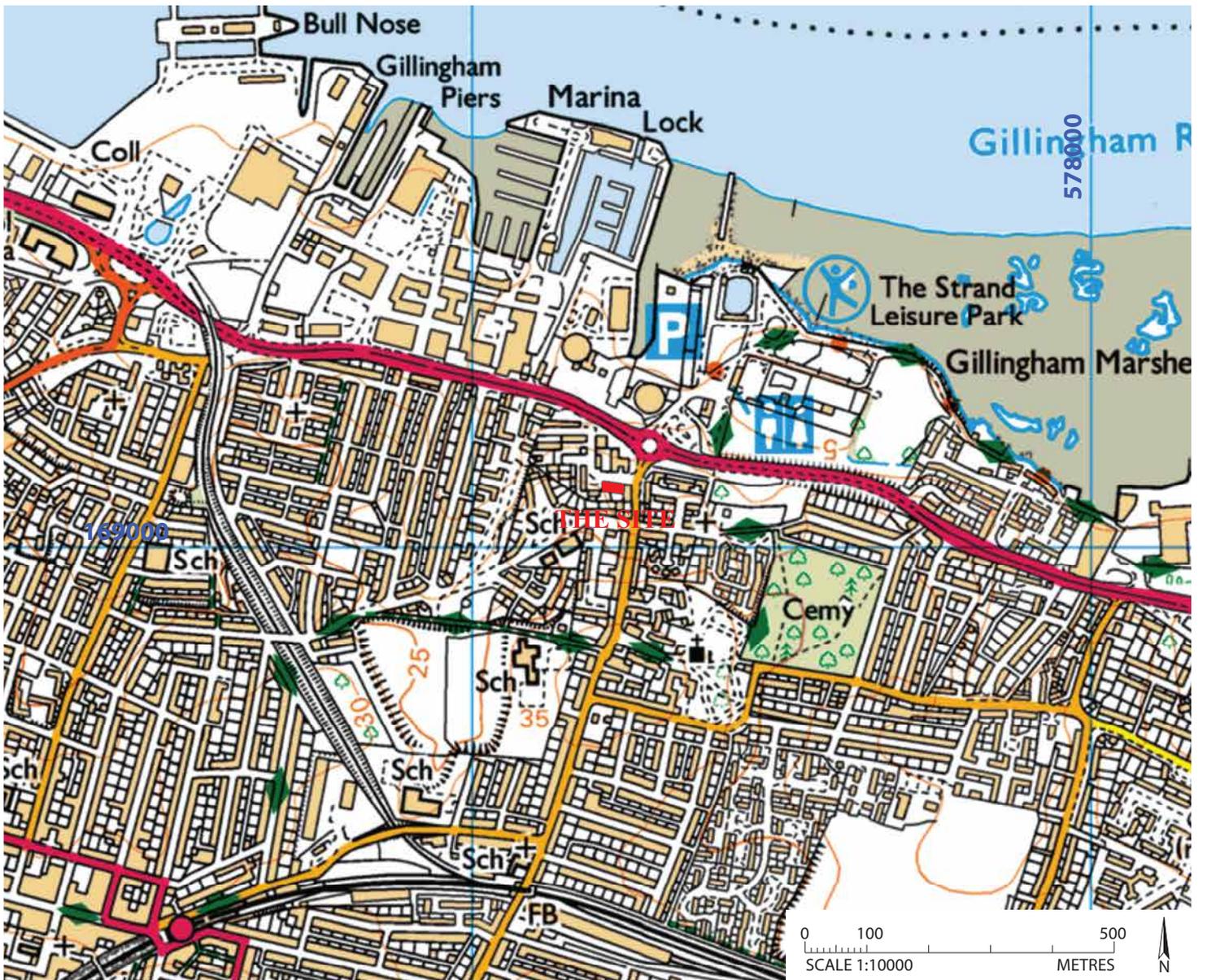
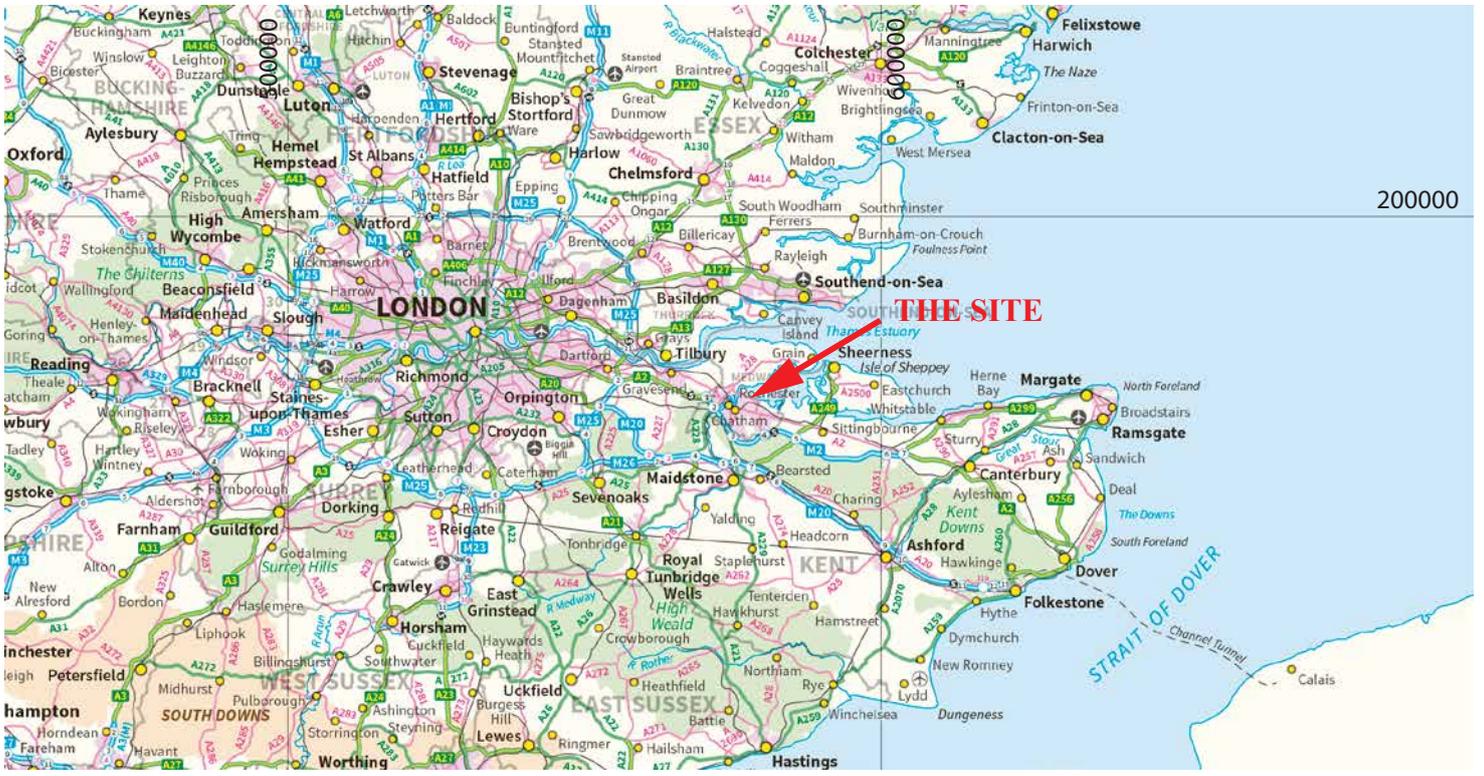


Figure 1: Site location map, scale 1:10000.



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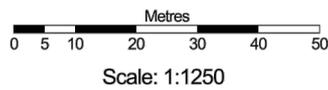


Figure 2: Site location in relation to OS map

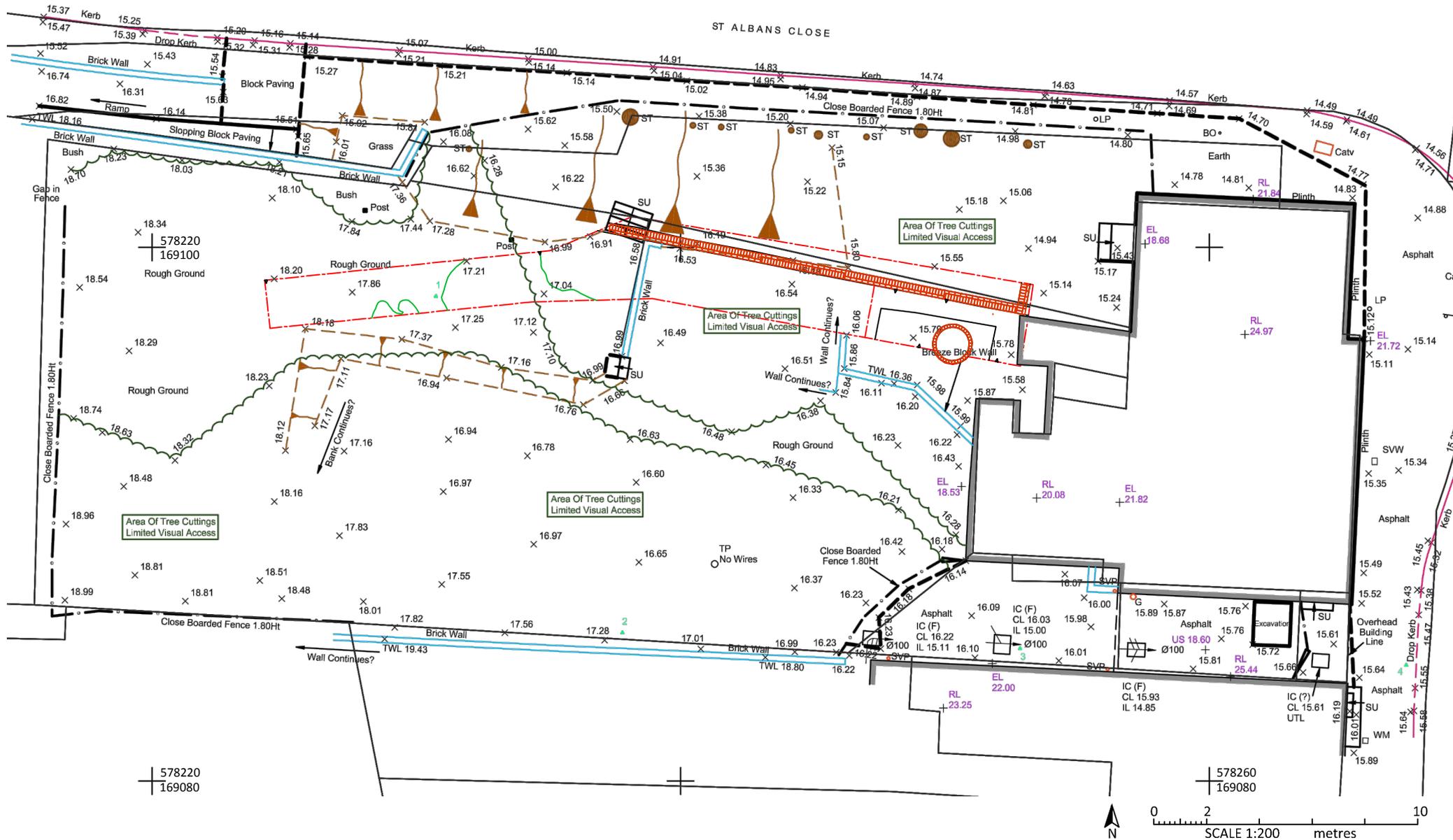


Figure 3: trench location in relation to topographic survey

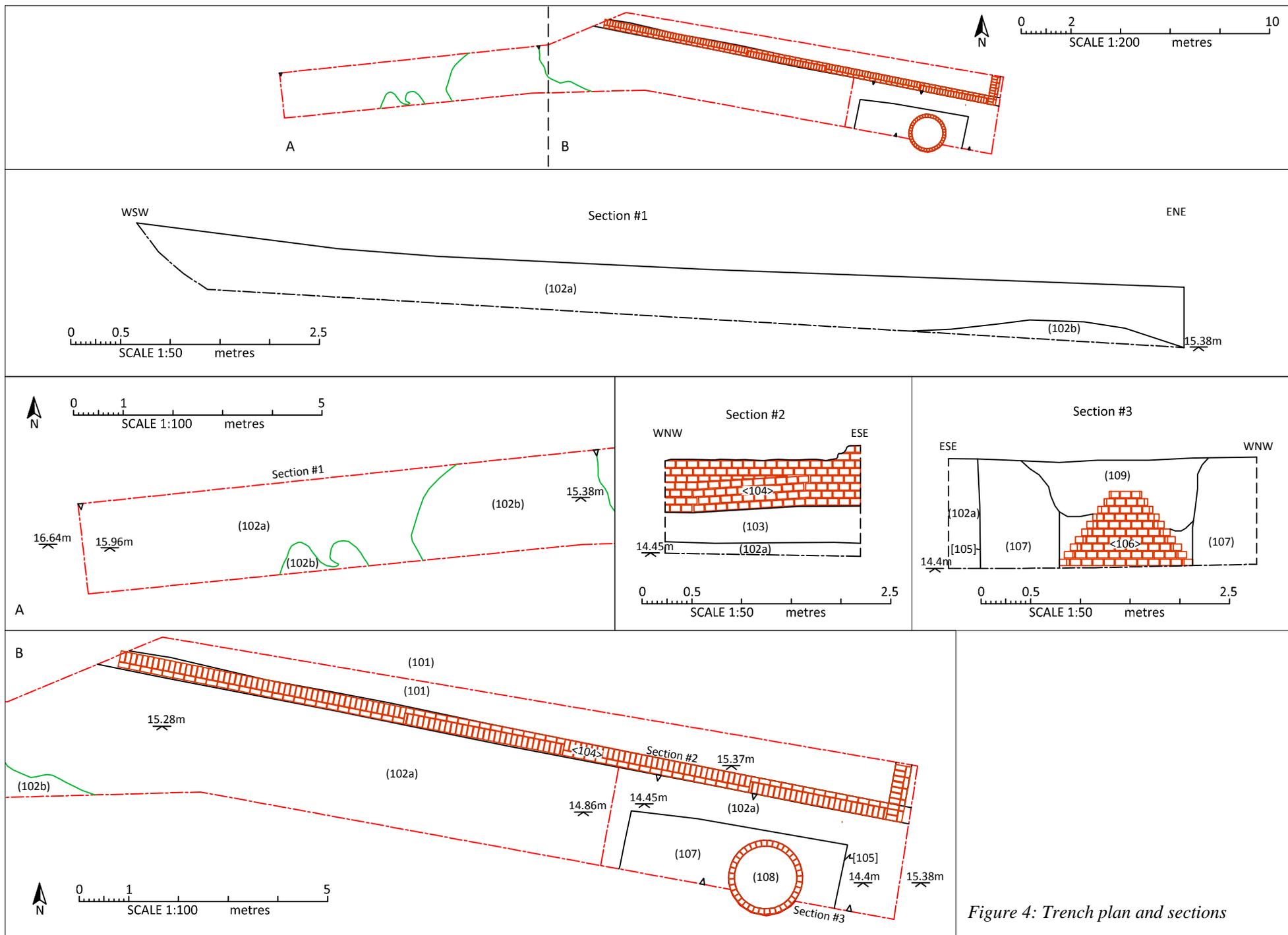


Figure 4: Trench plan and sections



Plate 1: Showing The Site, looking east with two-metre scale.



Plate 2: Showing western part of evaluation Trench 1. Looking east with two-metre scale.



Plate 3: Showing western part of Trench 1. Looking west, two-metre scale.



Plate 4: Showing soil retention wall (104). Looking east, one-metre scale.



Plate 5: Showing soil retention wall (104). Well structure visible in background. Looking east, one and two-metre scales.



Plate 6: Showing soil retention wall (104). Well structure visible in background. Looking east, one and two-metre scales.



Plate 7: Showing soil retention wall (104). Well structure visible in foreground. Looking west, one and two-metre scales.



Plate 8: Showing elevation of wall (104) recorded in section 2. Two one-metre scales.



Plate 9: Showing well structure 106 in construction cut 105. Looking south with two one-metre scales and one point four metre scale.