

Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Henwood Car Park, Henwood, Ashford Kent TN24 8YF

Site Code: HRA-EV-23

NGR Site Centre: 601711 142926

Planning Application Number: 22/00249/AS



Report for;
ZED PODS Limited
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SWAT ARCHAEOLOGY

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Summary

Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) were commissioned by ZED PODS Limited to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at the former Henwood car park, Henwood, Ashford, Kent TN24 8YF. The works have been carried out as part of a planning condition which required an archaeological evaluation in order to further characterise the potential archaeological impact from any proposed development.

The archaeological evaluation has been successful in evaluating the proposed development site for the possibility of archaeological remains. Despite the archaeological potential of the surrounding area no archaeological finds or defined archaeological features were present within any of the five trenches excavated.

The archaeological evaluation has therefore been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the Specification and has assessed the archaeological potential of land intended for development. The results from this work will be used to aid and inform the Senior Archaeological Officer of any further archaeological mitigation measures that may be necessary in connection with any future development proposals.

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NGR Site Centre: 601711 142926

Site Code: HRA-EV-23

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) were commissioned by ZED PODS Limited to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at the former Henwood Car Park, Henwood, Ashford, Kent TN24 8YF (Figure 1).

1.1.2 A planning application (PAN: 22/00249/AS) for the erection of 23 No. residential dwellings for short-stay accommodation with associated access, parking, landscaping and amenity space was submitted to Ashford Borough Council (ABC) whereby Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation (KCCHC), on behalf of KCC, requested that an archaeological evaluation be undertaken in order to determine the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains.

1.1.3 The following conditions were attached to the planning consent:

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

- 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; and*
- 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; and a*
- iii. programme of post excavation assessment and publication.*

Reason: To ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined, recorded, reported and disseminated.

(22/00249/AS, Condition 20, 16th December 2022)

1.1.4 The archaeological evaluation comprised the excavation of five trenches measuring approximately 20m in length and up to 2m in width. Site obstructions meant that some trenches required relocation in order to avoid extant services and a high-pressure water main. The location and length of each trench is described below in Section 5.3.

1.1.5 The archaeological works were carried out over the course of two days in May 2023 (see Table 1 below). The evaluation was carried out in accordance with an archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by SWAT Archaeology (2023), prior to commencement of works.

1.2 Timetable

1.2.1 A timetable for the archaeological programme of works, to date, is provided below:

Task	Dates	Personnel/Company
Submission of the Written Scheme of Investigation	28 th March 2023	SWAT Archaeology
Archaeological Evaluation – Fieldwork	22 nd – 23 rd May 2023	SWAT Archaeology David Britchfield BA MCIfA
Archaeological Evaluation Report	This document	SWAT Archaeology David Britchfield BA MCIfA

Table 1 Timetable for the archaeological programme of works

1.3 Site Description and Topography

1.3.1 The site is centred on NGR 601711 142926 within the Henwood Industrial Estate and measured approximately 2,380sq.m in area (Figure 1). The southern and western boundary of the site is bordered by an active fire station with Henwood bordering to the east. Henwood Industrial Estate is approximately 1km northeast of the Ashford Conservation Area (Figure 1).

1.3.2 At the time of the evaluation the site was enclosed by temporary fencing being formally a public car park. A high-pressure water main cable is located within the eastern extent of the site, connecting to an adjacent fire station (Figure 2).

1.3.3 Ground levels are relatively level at a height of approximately 34m Ordnance Datum (OD). The Geological Survey of Great Britain (1:50,000) shows that the site is located on Atherfield Clay Formation underlying Alluvium - Clay, silt, Sand and Gravel, which is a sedimentary superficial deposit formed between 11.8 thousand years ago and the present; during the Quaternary period.

1.4 Scope of Report

- 1.4.1 This report has been produced to provide initial information regarding the results of the archaeological evaluation. The results from this work will be used to aid and inform the Senior Archaeological Officer (KCC) of any further archaeological mitigation measures that may be necessary in connection with any future development proposals.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The proposed development area is located close to several archaeological sites which are identified on the KCCHER database. Approximately 120m SSW is the site of the former East Hill Flour Mill (TR 04 SW 483) and about 210m to the SSE is the site of the former Henwood Pumping Station (TR 04 SW 21).

- 2.1.2 In a consultation with the Senior Archaeological Officer at Kent County Council the following response was provided:

The site of proposed works lies within the Stour River valley and as such there is potential for Palaeolithic and palaeo-environmental remains within the deposits. Although the site has been subject to superficial development in the past there is potential for some prehistoric and later archaeology.

(Wendy Rogers, Senior Archaeological Officer, Ref: 22/00249/AS, dated 22nd of April 2022)

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 General Aims

- 3.1.1 The specific aims of the archaeological fieldwork were set out in a Written Scheme of Investigation (SWAT Archaeology 2023; 6.1-6.3) which stated that;

- *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 prehistoric, Roman, early medieval and later archaeological activity.*
- *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.

- *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.*

3.1.2 The general aims (or purpose) of the evaluation, in compliance with the *CIfA Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (CIfA 2014a), are therefore to:

- provide information about the archaeological potential of the site; and
- inform either the scope and nature of any further archaeological work that may be required; or the formation of a mitigation strategy (to offset the impact of the development on the archaeological resource); or a management strategy.

3.2 General Objectives

3.2.1 In order to achieve the above aims, the general objectives of the evaluation are to:

- determine the presence or absence of archaeological features, deposits, structures, artefacts or ecofacts within the specified area;
- establish, within the constraints of the evaluation, the extent, character, date, condition and quality of any surviving archaeological remains;
- place any identified archaeological remains within a wider historical and archaeological context in order to assess their significance; and
- make available information about the archaeological resource within the site by reporting on the results of the evaluation.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 All fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the methodology set out in the Specification (SWAT Archaeology 2023) and carried out in compliance with the standards outlined in the

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standards Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations (CIfA 2014).

4.2 Fieldwork

4.2.1 A total of five trenches were excavated (Figure 2). Excavation was carried out using a 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.

4.2.2 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.

4.2.3 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.

4.3 Recording

4.3.1 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 OD heights.

4.3.2 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 and drone photography. A photographic register of all photographs taken is contained within the project archive.

4.3.3 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 (101), whilst the cut of the feature is shown as [101]. 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

5.1.1 All trenches were mechanically excavated under archaeological supervision. Trenches were positioned in order to cover as many areas of the site as possible as set out in the WSI. Relocation and re-orientation of the trenches was required when on site obstacles were present (details presented in individual trench description below).

5.1.2 The site, as shown on Figure 2, provides the trench layout with Figures 3 and 4 illustrating the results for each individual archaeological evaluation trench. Plates 1-14 consist of photographs of features and selected trenches that have been provided to supplement the text. Appendix 1 provides the stratigraphic sequence and contextual information for all trenches.

5.2 Stratigraphic Deposit Sequence

5.2.1 A relatively consistent stratigraphic sequence was recorded across most of the site comprising tarmac sealing compact Type 1 hardcore, which overlay the natural alluvium. Variation occurred within Trench 3 where the natural geology comprised a more mottled orange brown and blue grey clay sealed by a subsoil which was overlain by imported made ground. Further details for individual trenches are provided below.

5.2.2 Removal of the tarmac and compact hardcore was carried out using a concrete breaker and toothed bucket, with a ditching bucket for the final clean and removal of lower stone (Plate 3 and Plate 4).

5.3 Archaeological Narrative

Trench 1 (Figure 3, Plates 5 and 6)

5.3.1 Trench 1 was located within the eastern extent of the site, directly west of the eastern boundary of the site (Figure 2) and was excavated on a broadly N-S alignment. The trench was relocated further towards the centre of the site in order to maintain a safe working distance from a high-pressure water main. The trench was also divided into two sections (1A and 1B) so that a live gully/drain could be maintained (Figure 2).

5.3.2 This trench measured 22.36m (17.07m (1A) + 5.29m (1B)) in length, 1.8m in width and a maximum depth of 0.61m (Figure 3). Natural geological deposits were recorded at a level of approximately 34.16m OD.

5.3.3 No archaeological finds or features were present in Trench 1.

Trench 2 (Figure 3, Plates 7 and 8)

5.3.4 Within the south-western corner of the site (Figure 2), Trench 2 was excavated on a NE-SW alignment and measured approximately 18.4m in length, 1.8m in width with a maximum depth of 0.51m (Figure 3). Natural geological deposits were recorded at a level ranging between 34.00m OD and 34.26m OD.

5.3.5 The upper surface of the natural clay (204) was lightly truncated with modern material pressed in causing regular track-like patterns. No archaeological finds or features were present in Trench 2.

Trench 3 (Figure 4, Plates 9 and 10)

5.3.6 Within the northern extent of the site (Figure 2), Trench 3 was excavated on a N-S alignment and measured approximately 17.07m in length, 1.8m in width with a maximum depth of 1.01m.

5.3.7 The stratigraphic sequence in this trench varied from the other due to the fact that it was located outside of the car park; topsoil (301) sealed modern redeposited made ground (302) which had been placed on a surviving subsoil (303). Natural geological deposits (304) were recorded at a level of approximately 34.19m OD and were more mottled than other areas on site. The natural was sealed by a modern electricity cable and water pipe, both of which were left intact and undisturbed.

5.3.8 No archaeological finds or features were present in Trench 3.

Trench 4 (Figure 4, Plates 11 and 12)

5.3.9 Within the western extent of the site (Figure 2), Trench 4 was excavated on an N-S alignment and measured approximately 18.02m in length, 1.8m in width with a maximum depth of 0.59m. Natural geological deposits were recorded at a level ranging between 34.19m OD and 34.25m OD.

5.3.10 Once again, the upper natural alluvium (403) had been lightly truncated, and no archaeological finds or features were present in Trench 4.

Trench 5 (Figure 4, Plates 13 and 14)

5.3.11 Trench 5 was excavated within the southern extent of the site and measured 16.01m in length with a maximum depth of 0.64m. Natural alluvium was recorded at levels between 34.14m OD

and 34.22m OD. A modern drain capped with concrete was present within the centre of this trench.

5.3.12 No archaeological finds or features were present in Trench 5.

6 FINDS

6.1 Overview

6.1.1 No archaeological finds were retrieved during this evaluation.

7 DISCUSSION

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 The archaeological investigation on land formally known as Henwood Car Park in Ashford, Kent has investigated the extents of the proposed development area using five trenches, measuring between 16.01m and 22.36m in length and up to 1.8m in width. The natural geology was encountered within all trenches at an average depth of approximately 0.62m below the existing ground surface, directly underlying tarmac and hardcore. Truncation of the upper geological surface was investigated and recorded within Trench 3, Trench 4, and Trench 5.

7.2 Archaeological Narrative

7.2.1 A total area of the site measured approximately 2,380sq.m. With the five trenches excavated this covered an area of approximately 165.38 sq.m giving an evaluation sample size of 6.9%.

7.2.2 Despite the archaeological potential of the site no archaeological finds or features were recorded within any of the trenches. The recording of an intact subsoil within Trench 3, outside of the existing car park, suggests that preservation conditions may be favourable within the northern area of the site, although truncation was clear within the southern areas of the site where made ground was laid directly over natural clay. Rutting marks and modern services were clearly visible with the upper clay surface likely to have been reduced, if only partially, during the construction of the existing car park.

7.3 Conclusions

7.3.1 The archaeological evaluation has been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the Specification and has assessed the archaeological potential of land intended for development. The results from this work will be used to aid and inform the Senior Archaeological Officer of any further archaeological mitigation measures that may be necessary in connection with any future development proposals.

8 ARCHIVE

8.1 General

8.1.1 The Site archive, which will include paper records, photographic records, graphics, and digital data, will be prepared following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; ClfA 2009; Brown 2011; ADS 2013).

8.1.2 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 and A4 graphics. The Site Archive will be retained at SWAT Archaeology offices until such time it can be transferred to a Kent Museum.

9 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

9.1.1 SWAT Archaeology would like to thank ZED PODS Limited for commissioning the project. Thanks are also extended to Wendy Rogers, Senior Archaeological Officer at Kent County Council, for her advice and assistance.

9.1.2 David Britchfield BA (Hons) MCIfA carried out the archaeological fieldwork; illustrations were produced by Ravelin Archaeological Services. David Britchfield produced the draft text for this report. The Project Manager for the project was Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA, FRSA of SWAT Archaeology.

10 REFERENCES

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11 APPENDIX 1 – TRENCH TABLES

Trench 1 Dimensions: 17.07m (A) + 5.29m (B) x 1.8m Depth: 0.61m Ground Level: 34.76m OD – 34.88m OD			
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
(101)	Surface	Tarmac	0.00-0.19
(102)	Formation	Compact Type 1 hardcore	0.19-0.31
(103)	Formation	Very compact Type 1 hardcore	0.31-0.52
(104)	Natural	Stiff blue grey clay - Alluvium	0.52-0.61+

Trench 2 Dimensions: 18.42m x 1.8m Depth: 0.51m Ground Level: 34.50m OD – 34.88m OD			
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
(201)	Surface	Tarmac	0.00-0.17
(202)	Formation	Compact Type 1 hardcore	0.17-0.26
(203)	Formation	Very compact Type 1 hardcore	0.26-0.49
(204)	Natural	Stiff blue grey clay - Alluvium	0.49-0.51+

Trench 3 Dimensions: 17.07m x 1.8m Depth: 1.01m Ground Level: 34.73m OD – 35.28m OD			
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
(301)	Surface	Dark brown silt clay, frequent roots, topped with scrub	0.00-0.29
(302)	Made ground	Redeposited silt clay with moderate building debris	0.29-0.78
(303)	Subsoil	Mid grey brown silt clay, occasional modern debris	0.78-0.96
(304)	Natural	Mottled orange brown and stiff blue grey clay - Alluvium	0.96-1.01+

Trench 4 Dimensions: 18.02m x 1.8m Depth: 0.59m Ground Level: 34.88m OD – 35.80m OD			
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
(401)	Surface	Tarmac	0.00-0.17
(402)	Formation	Compact Type 1 hardcore	0.17-0.56
(403)	Natural	Stiff blue grey clay - Alluvium	0.56-0.59+

Trench 5 Dimensions: 16.01m 1.8m Depth: 0.64m Ground Level: 34.60m OD – 35.77m OD			
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
(501)	Surface	Tarmac	0.00-0.11
(502)	Formation	Compact Type 1 hardcore	0.11-0.58
(503)	Natural	Stiff blue grey clay - Alluvium	0.58-0.64+

12 APPENDIX 2 – HER FORM

Site Name: Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Henwood Car Park, Henwood, Ashford Kent TN24 8YF

SWAT Site Code: HRA-EV-23

Site Address: As above

Summary. *Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) were commissioned by ZED PODS Limited to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at the former Henwood car park, Henwood, Ashford, Kent TN24 8YF. The works have been carried out as part of a planning condition which required an archaeological evaluation in order to further characterise the potential archaeological impact from any proposed development.*

The archaeological evaluation has been successful in evaluating the proposed development site for the possibility of archaeological remains. Despite the archaeological potential of the surrounding area no archaeological finds or defined archaeological features were present within any of the five trenches excavated. The results from this work will be used to aid and inform the Senior Archaeological Officer of any further archaeological mitigation measures that may be necessary in connection with any future development proposals.

District/Unitary: Ashford Borough Council & Kent County Council

Period(s): NA

NGR (centre of site to eight figures) NGR 601711 142926

Type of Archaeological work: Archaeological Evaluation

Date of recording: May 2023

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

Geology: Alluvium

Title and author of accompanying report: D Britchfield (2023) Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Henwood Car Park, Ashford, Kent. SWAT Archaeology Ref. HRA-EV-2023

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

Contact at Unit: Paul Wilkinson

Date: 27/05/2023

PLATES



Plate 1 Aerial view of the site following excavation of the five trenches



Plate 2 Panoramic view of the site, viewed from the north-eastern corner



Plate 3 Excavation of the tarmac surface, Trench 1, viewed from the northeast



Plate 4 Removal of the overburden exposing natural clay alluvium, Trench 1, viewed from the northeast



Plate 5 Trench 1, viewed from the east



Plate 6 Trench 1, viewed from the west



Plate 7 Trench 2, viewed from the northeast



Plate 8 Trench 2, viewed from the southwest



Plate 9 Trench 3, viewed from the south



Plate 10 Trench 3, viewed from the north



Plate 11 Trench 4, viewed from the north



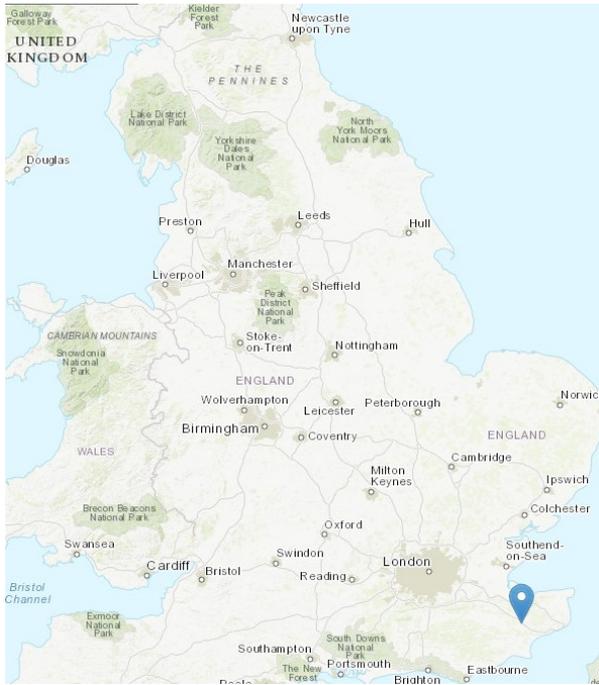
Plate 12 Trench 4, viewed from the south



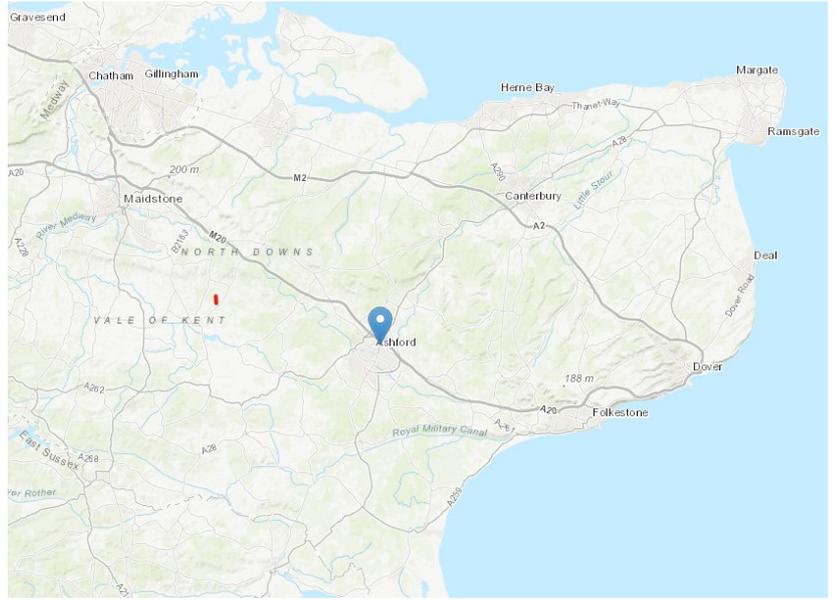
Plate 13 Trench 5, viewed from the south



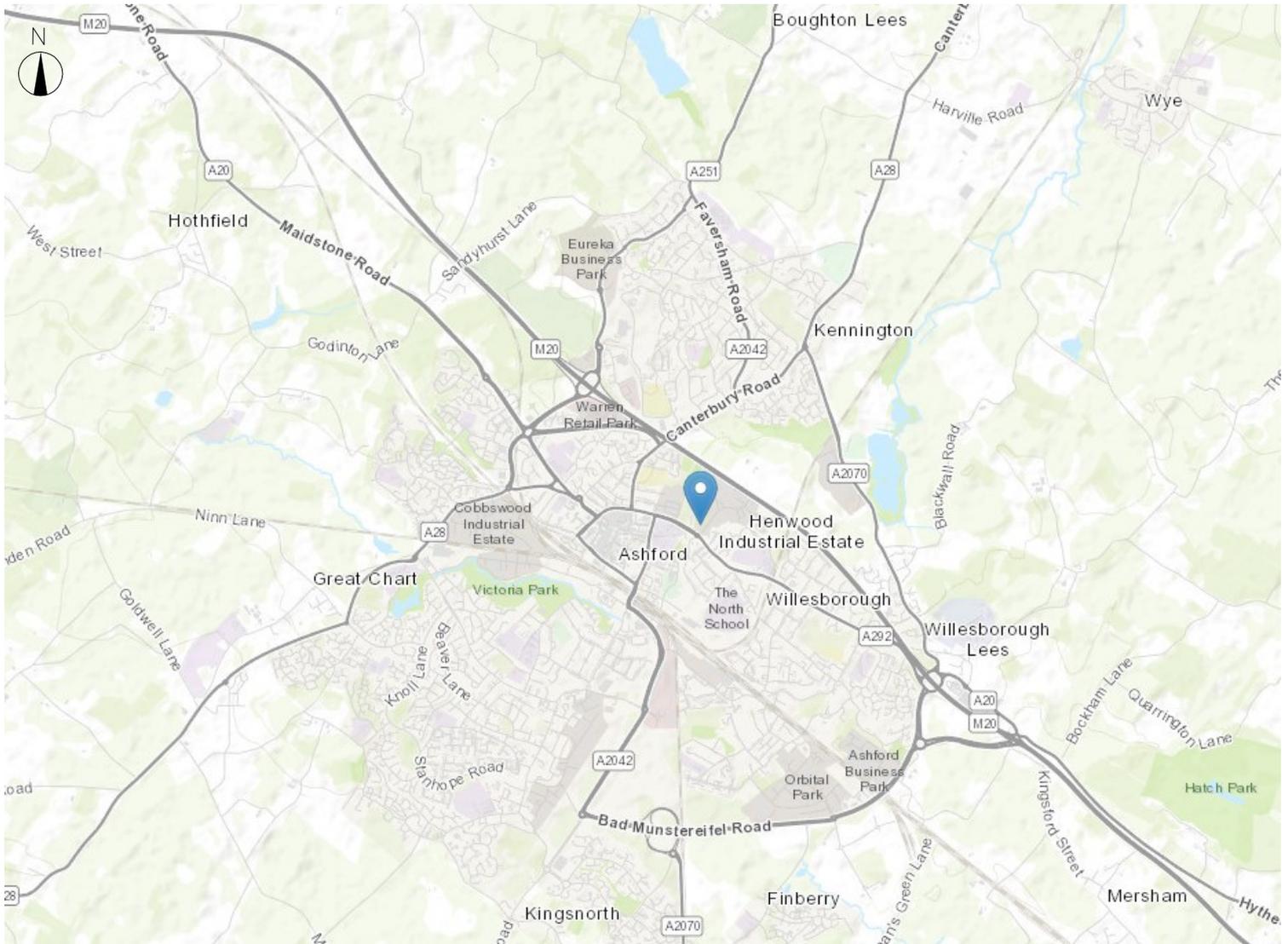
Plate 14 Trench 5, viewed from the north



Map of UK (NTS)



Map of Kent (NTS)



Courtesy of National Library of Scotland

Key
 Site Location

Figure 1 Site Location Plan



142984

142934

142884

601664

601714

601764



Key

-  Site Boundary
-  Trench and Number

Figure 2 Site Plan

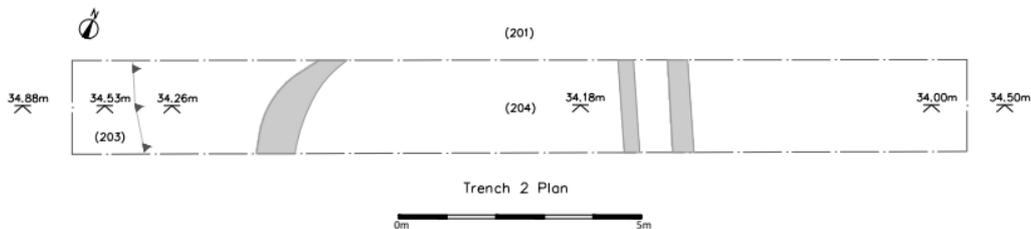
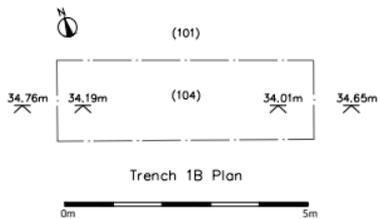
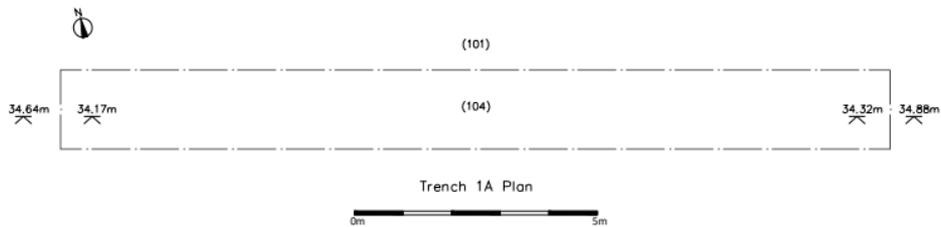
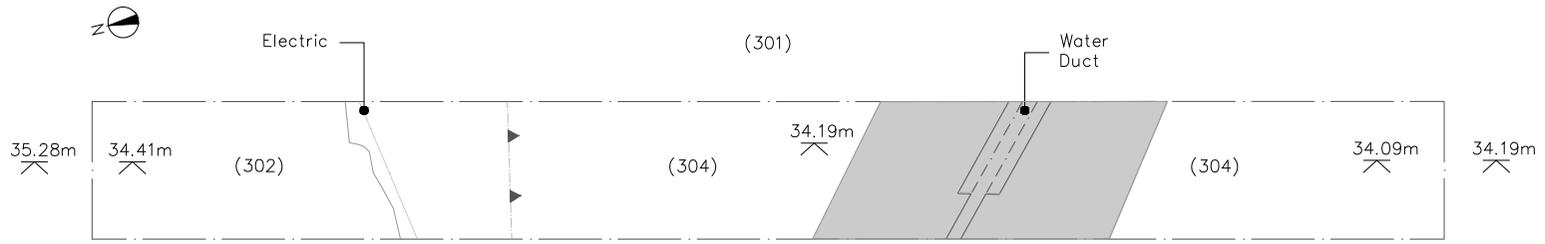
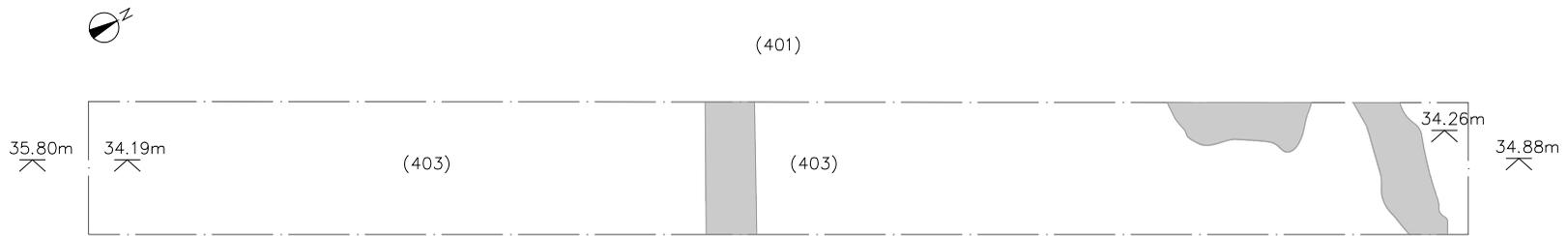


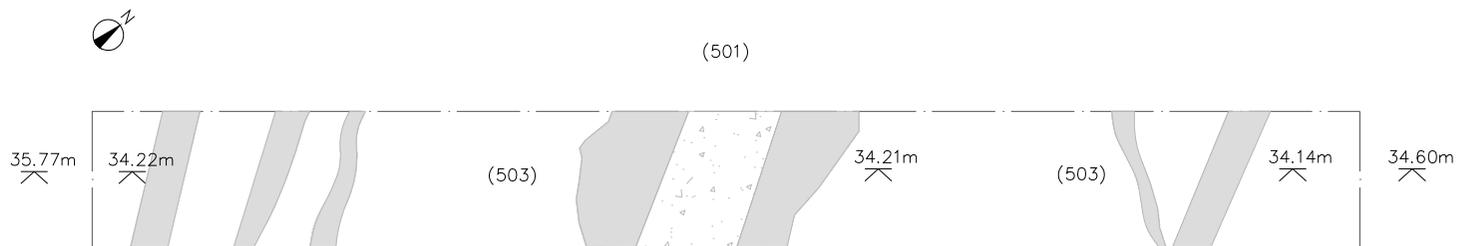
Figure 3 Trenches 1A, 1B, and 2 Details



Trench 3 Plan



Trench 4 Plan



Trench 5 Plan



Key
 Modern truncation

Figure 4 Trenches 3 to 5 Details