

Archaeological Evaluation on Land rear of the Taj of Kent, Church Green, Marden, Kent

EVALUATION REPORT

NGR Site Centre: **574238E 144723N**

Planning Application Number: **22/504747/FLL**



Date: 09/11/2023

Accession number: <pending>

Site code: **MAR-EV-23**

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Abstract

Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) was commissioned by the Client to undertake an archaeological evaluation on Land rear of the Taj of Kent, Church Green, Marden, Kent. The archaeological works were monitored by the Senior Archaeological Officer at Kent County Council. The fieldwork was carried out in October 2023 in accordance with an archaeological specification (SWAT Archaeology 2023) submitted to the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of works.

The Archaeological Evaluation consisted of five trenches, which exposed natural clay geology at depth varied from 0.45m to 0.6m. This was sealed by subsoil (present in trench 3 and 5) and topsoil, both heavily contaminated with mostly modern rubbish.

Additionally remains of building visible on 1872 OS map has been identified within trench 4. Only small fragment of wall together with construction cut was exposed in-situ and was accompanied by up to 0.6m thick demolition layer.

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EVALUATION REPORT

NGR Site Centre: 574238E 144723N

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 SWAT archaeology was commissioned by the client to perform Archaeological evaluation on the Land rear of the Taj of Kent, Church Green, Marden, Kent. This archaeological evaluation clarified the presence of demolished remains of a building present on 1872 OS map within southwestern part of the site and absence of archaeological remains elsewhere.

1.2 Project background

1.2.1 The client is planning to erect 4 No. residential dwellings with associated access, parking and landscaping. Sequence of archaeological works are required prior to commencement of construction.

1.2.2 Archaeological evaluation WSI was previously compiled by SWAT Archaeology for this work to proceed.

1.3 Planning background

1.3.1 A planning application was granted by Maidstone Borough Council for the erection of 4 (no) residential dwellings with associated access, parking and landscaping.

1.3.2 A Condition of archaeological works in the Schedule of Conditions were attached to the Planning Decision Notice (22/504747) and were:

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

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

1.3.3 (iii) programme of post excavation assessment and publication.

1.3.4 On the basis of the present archaeological information. KCCHC advising Maidstone Borough Council recommended that the proposed development should be subject to programme of archaeological works in order to clarify the archaeological elements within the site.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

2.1 The application site is located to the rear of the Taj of Kent and to the rear of buildings fronting Church Green and within the Marden Conservation Area. The site itself is covered in hardstanding to the front and used as car parking whilst the rear is overgrown. There are indications of Medieval activity around the T-junction just west of the application site. In addition, the 1872 OS map suggests there may be a 19th century or earlier building within the application site. This building is at the rear of a courtyard at the back of the Taj and may be the stabling for horses if the Taj was originally a coaching inn. Remains of this building can be seen on the 1908 OS and 1961 OS map and associated activity may survive on site. (MAP 1-2).

2.2 The Geological Survey of Great Britain (1:50,000) shows that the PDA (Proposed Development Area) is set on bedrock geology of Weald Clay Formation-Mudstone. Superficial deposits are not recorded. The NGR to centre of site is 574238 144723 and the OD height is about 21m in the centre of the site.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1.1 The Proposed Development Area (PDA) is located close to a number of archaeological sites which are identified on the KCCHER database. About 80m to the west is Church

Green Cottage a Grade II Listed Building (TQ 74 SW 70) and about 70m to the south mid 12th century pottery and the remains of an iron smelting furnace was also found (TQ 74 SW 20 and TQ 74 SW 21). To the front of the site remains of the coaching inn The Chequers Inn are shown on the 1872 and 1908 OS maps (MAP 1-2).

4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

4.1 General Aims

The general aims of the archaeological fieldwork were therefore 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.

4.2 Project Specific Objectives

- 4.2.1 The primary objective of the archaeological evaluation was to establish or otherwise the presence of any potential archaeological features which may be impacted by the proposed development. The aims of this investigation were to determine the potential for archaeological activity and in particular the earlier Medieval, Post-Medieval and Modern history of the PDA and also any other Prehistoric, Roman and later archaeological activity.
- 4.2.2 The programme of archaeological work is carried out in a phased approach and commenced with evaluation through trial trenching.

5 METHODOLOGY

- 5.1 The initial evaluation plan consisted of 6 trenches (c.15m x 1.8m) in a layout agreed with the County Archaeologist. Due to obstacles on site only 5 trenches have been dug. All excavations were performed using a tracked excavator equipped with toothless bucket. The area of investigation was the proposed development area. Each trench was machine excavated under constant archaeological supervision to the first recognizable archaeological horizon or natural geology.
- 5.2 A soil sampling programme was not implemented at this stage as no suitable deposits were identified.
- 5.3 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.
- 5.4 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.

6 RECORDING

- 6.1 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. Additionally large sections that would not fit on single A3 page were drawn digitally in 1:10.
- 6.2 Photographs were taken providing a record of excavated trenches 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.
- 6.3 A single context recording system was used to record the deposits. 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.).
- 6.4 A site plan to indicate the location of the boundaries of the proposed development site and the position of evaluation trenches drawn at a scale of 1:250 is shown on Figures 3. Plans to indicate the locations of archaeological features are drawn to a scale of 1:50. Detailed plans were drawn at a scale of 1:20 and sections at a scale of 1:10. All detailed plans and sections are related to the site plans.
- 6.5 All plans and sections were drawn on polyester based drawing film, and each plan and/or section was clearly labelled. A GPS site grid was established where necessary

across the areas subjected to evaluation. All field surveying were preceded by a site visit to clarify the site specific surveying methodology, determine lines of sight and locate appropriate survey points. All recording points were accurately surveyed with a GPS/GNSS RTK survey kit in 1cm/1ppm accuracy and located to the National Grid.

7 RESULTS

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 Archaeological evaluation at Church Green, Marden comprised 5 trenches of which just one revealed Post Medieval archaeological remains. Absence of archaeological cuts, deposits or artefacts was confirmed in trenches 1, 2, 3 and 5.

7.1.2 All trenches exposed natural clay geology at the depth of 0.45m to 0.6m sealed by subsoil (present in trenches 3 and 5) and topsoil, both heavily contaminated with mostly modern rubbish. Number of modern cuts were observed within every trench.

7.1.3 Trench 4 exposed fragment of construction cut comprising steep edge to the east with gently NE sloping base. Remains of 0.55m tall and 0.17m thick brick wall were exposed closely to that construction cut edge and space between the wall and the cut was filled by (405) a firm light grey brown silty clay mixed with large fragments of bricks. The inside of the wall was filled by demolition layer (406) consisted of very dark grey silty clay mixed with CBM and some modern rubbish which merged with topsoil making the limit invisible in places.

7.1.4 Detailed Results trench by trench are provided in table below.

Trench Table

Trench 1	Dimensions: 14.5m x 1.8m Depth: 0.6m Trench alignment: E-W Ground level at E end: 21.5 m OD Ground level at W end:21.58 m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)(bgl)
101	Top soil	Very dark grey silty-clay with frequent roots, modern CBM, glass, metal and other modern rubbish.	0-0.5
102	Natural	Very firm light orange brown clay.	> 0.5

Trench 2	Dimensions: 14.8m x 1.8m Depth: 0.5m Trench alignment: ENE-WSW
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	Ground level at ENE end: 21.55 m OD Ground level at WSW end: 21.61 m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)(bgl)
201	Top soil	Very dark grey silty-clay with frequent roots, modern CBM, glass, metal and other modern rubbish.	0-0.45
202	Natural	Very firm light orange brown clay.	> 0.45

Trench 3	Dimensions: 16.5m x 1.8m Depth: 0.55m Trench alignment: NNW-SSE Ground level at NNW end: 21.61 m OD Ground level at SSE end: 22.02 m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)(bgl)
301	Top soil	Very dark grey silty clay with frequent roots, modern CBM, modern glass and other modern rubbish	0-0.2
302	Sub soil	Very firm mid brown grey silty clay with frequent modern CBM and small lumps of chalk	0.2-0.45
303	Natural	Very firm light orange brown clay.	> 0.33

Trench 4	Dimensions: 10m x 1.8m Depth: 0.9m Trench alignment: NE-SW Ground level at NE end: 22.67 m OD Ground level at SW end: 22.6 m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)(bgl)
401	Top soil	Very dark grey silty clay with frequent roots, modern CBM, modern glass and other modern rubbish	0-0.32
402	Natural	Very firm light orange brown clay.	> 0.7-09
403	Construction cut	Steep edge to the east and gently NE sloping base	0.25-0.9
404	Brick wall	0.17m thick N-S aligned brick wall	0.25-0.85
405	Construction cut backfill	Firm light grey brown silty clay mixed with large fragments of bricks	0.25-0.9

406	Demolition layer	Mid to very dark grey silty clay mixed with CBM and some modern rubbish. In places there is no visible differences between top soil and this layer.	0.25-0.9
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Trench 5	Dimensions: 12m x 1.8m Depth: 0.5 m Trench alignment: NNW-SSE Ground level at NNW end: 22.04 m OD Ground level at SSE end: 22.48 m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)(bgl)
501	Top soil	Very dark grey silty clay with frequent roots, modern CBM, modern glass and other modern rubbish	0-0.1
502	Sub soil	Very firm mid brown grey silty clay with frequent modern CBM and small lumps of chalk.	0.1-0.45
503	Natural	Very firm light orange brown clay.	> 0.45

8 FINDS

8.1 Introduction

No find were recovered during the evaluation works.

9 ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

9.1 Introduction

No soil sample has been acquired.

10 DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 Archaeological evaluation at Church Green, Marden has successively fulfilled aims and objectives of the specification, revealed simple deposits sequence comprising topsoil and subsoil concealing natural clay geology within 4 trenches and exposed remains of building shown on 1872 OS map.
- 10.2 Modern contamination of building remains exposed in trench 4 and its poor state of preservation suggests low potential for possibility to obtain any historical evidences other than these already known and unveiled from evaluation works.
- 10.3 Development proposals are likely to impact on Late Post Medieval archaeological remains exposed in trench 4 but these were poorly preserved and heavily contaminated by modern activity.

11 ARCHIVE

- 11.1 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).
- 11.2 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. The Site Archive will be retained at SWAT Archaeology offices until such time it can be transferred to a designated Kent Museum.

12 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 12.1 SWAT Archaeology would like to thank to the Developer for commissioning the project. Thanks are extended to Wendy Rogers from KCC for their help and advice during the course of investigation.

12.2 The report was written by: SWAT Archaeology (Pawel Cichy) The Office, School Farm Oast, Faversham, Kent, ME13 8UP Date: 09/11/2023.

13 REFERENCES

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SWAT Archaeology 2023 Archaeological Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation of Land rear of the Taj of Kent, Church Green, Marden, Kent

APPENDIX 1

Core Personnel Structure

Project Management - Fieldwork	Role
Dr Paul Wilkinson, MCIFA, FSA	Director
Peter Cichy	Project Manager
Pawel Cichy	Project Officer / Site Supervisor
Malgorzata Cichy	Surveyor
Finds	Specialist
Flint	Paul Hart
Early Prehistoric Pottery	Paul Hart
Later prehistoric and Roman pottery	Dr Malcolm Lyne
Saxon, Medieval and Post Medieval pottery	Luke Barber
Small finds (Coins and metalwork)	Dana Goodburn-Brown, MSc
Conservation support and x-ray photography	Dana Goodburn-Brown, MSc
Samples and human remains	Specialist
Environmental soil processing	QUEST
Faunal, floral micro and macro remains	Dr Mike Allen
Animal Remains (Bones)	Carol White
Palaeomagnetism	Peter Cichy
Human Remains	Dr Chris Dieter
Micro-excavation (cremation burials)	Dana Goodburn-Brown
Post-Excavation and publication	Role
Malgorzata Cichy	illustrator
Pawel Cichy	author

APPENDIX 2 – HER FORM

Site Name: Archaeological Evaluation on Land rear of the Taj of Kent, Church Green, Marden, Kent

SWAT Site Code: MAR-EV-23

Site Address: As above

Summary: *Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) was commissioned by the Client to undertake an archaeological evaluation on Land rear of the Taj of Kent, Church Green, Marden, Kent. The archaeological works were monitored by the Senior Archaeological Officer at Kent County Council.*

The fieldwork was carried out in October 2023 in accordance with an archaeological specification (SWAT Archaeology 2023) submitted to the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of works.

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Additionally remains of building visible on 1872 OS map has been identified within trench 4. Only small fragment of wall together with construction cut was exposed in-situ and was accompanied by up to 0.6m thick demolition layer.

Further mitigation is not required

District/Unitary: Maidstone Borough Council & Kent County Council

Period(s): Post Medieval, modern

NGR (centre of site to eight figures) NGR 574238 144723

Type of Archaeological work: Archaeological Evaluation

Date of recording: October 2023

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

Geology: Bedrock geology of Weald Clay Formation-Mudstone

Title and author of accompanying report: SWAT Archaeology (P Cichy 2023) Archaeological Evaluation on Land at Archers Court, Whitfield, Kent

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

Contact at Unit: Paul Wilkinson

Plates:



Plate 1: Site prior to commencement of trenching. Looking south.



Plate 2: Site after trenching. Looking south.



Plate 3: Trench 1, looking west.



Plate 4: Trench 2, looking southeast



Plate 5: Trench 3, looking southeast.



Plate 6: Trench 4, looking southwest.



Plate 7: Trench 5, looking north.

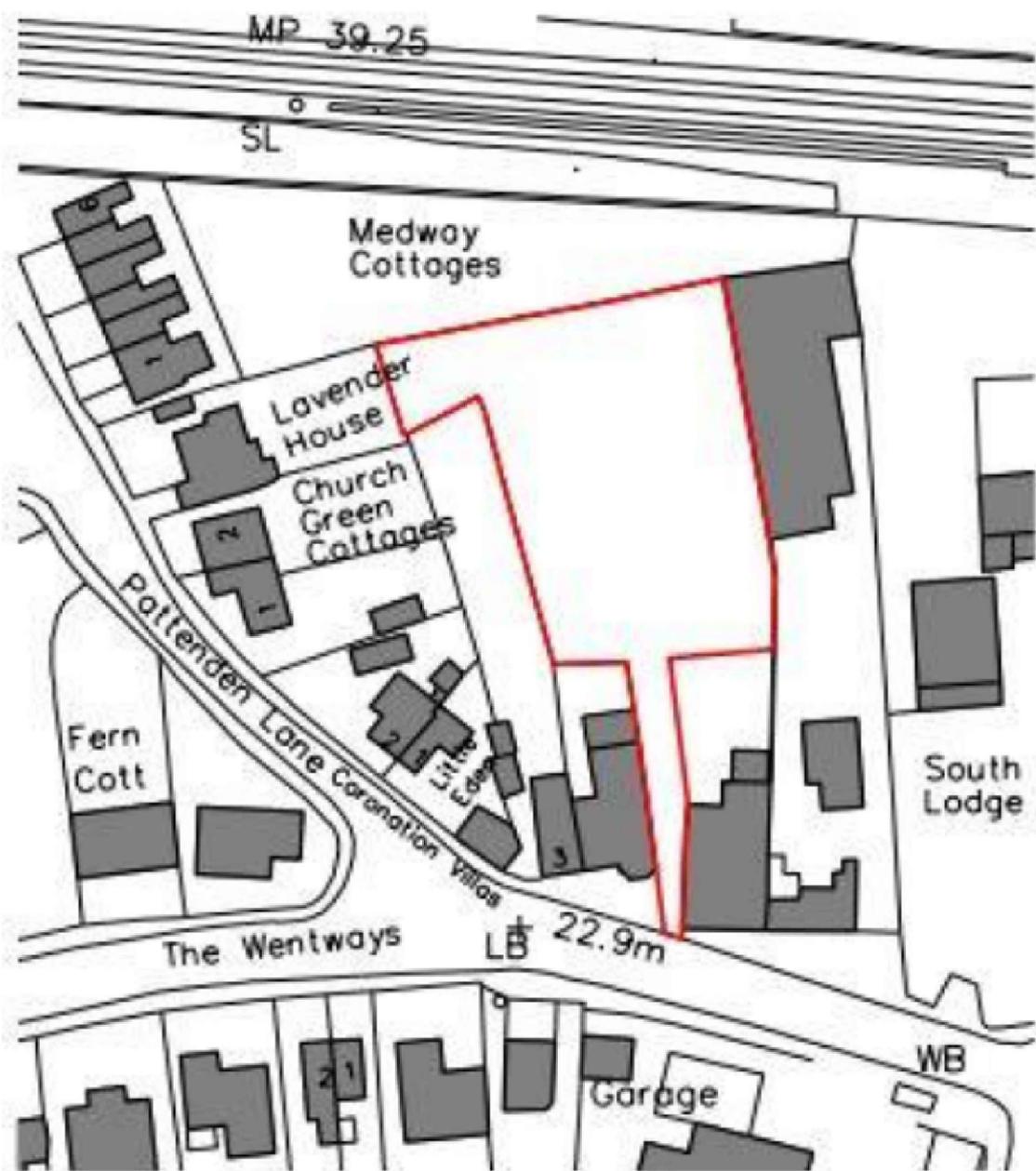


Figure 1: Location of Site (Red line Area). Centre of the site is NGR 574238 144723

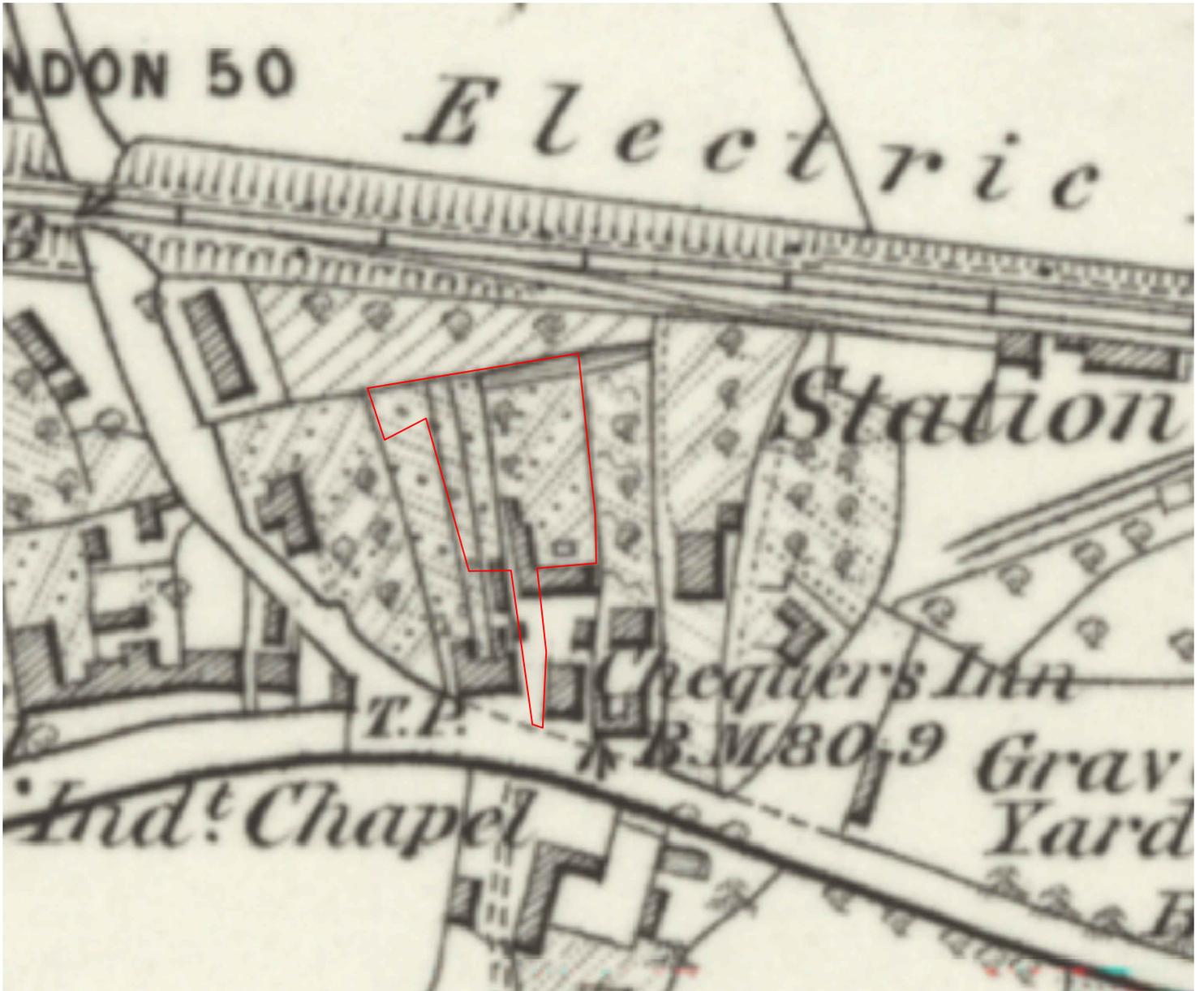


Figure 2: Location of Site in relation to OS map 1872

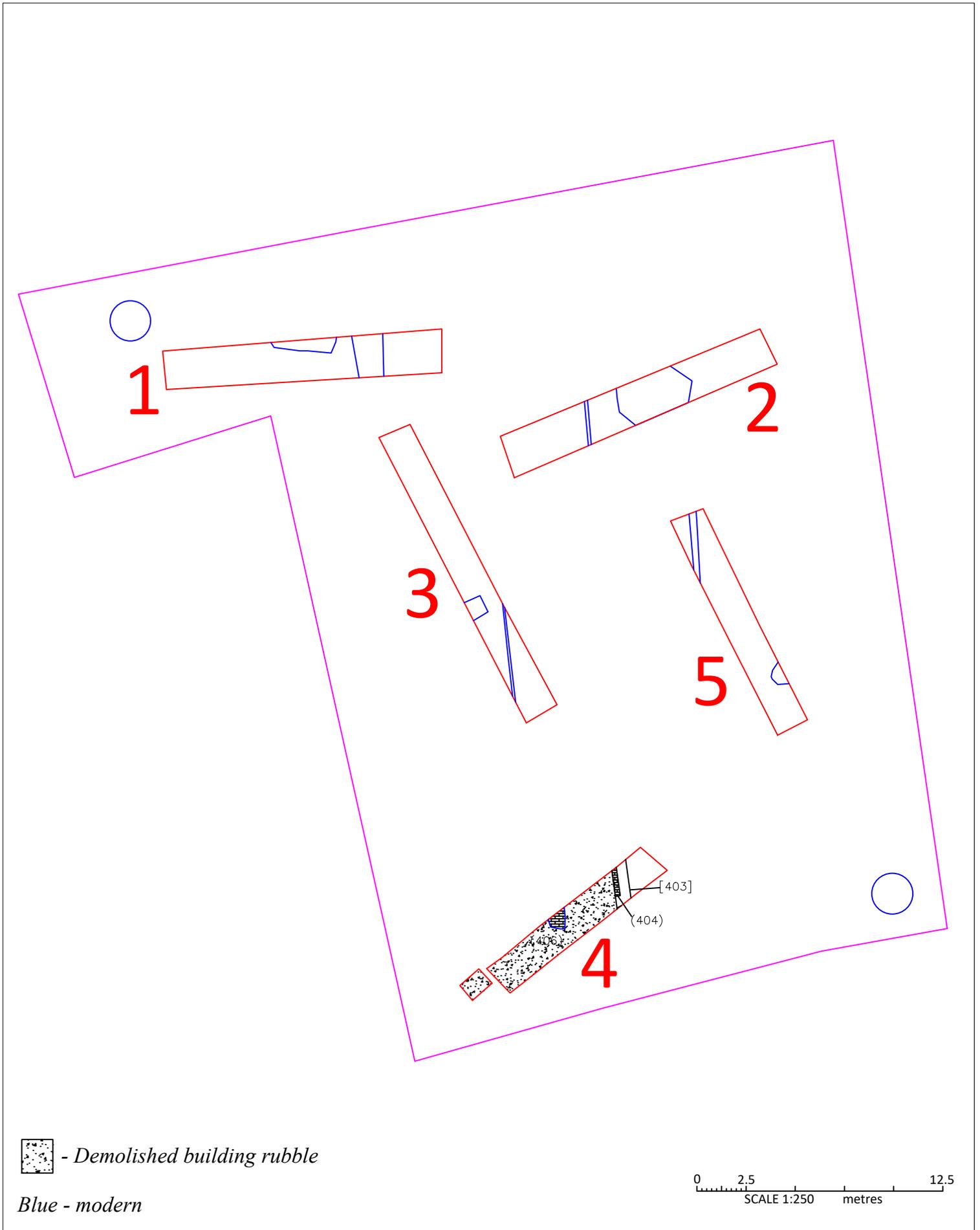


Figure 3: Site plan

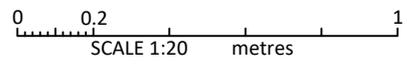
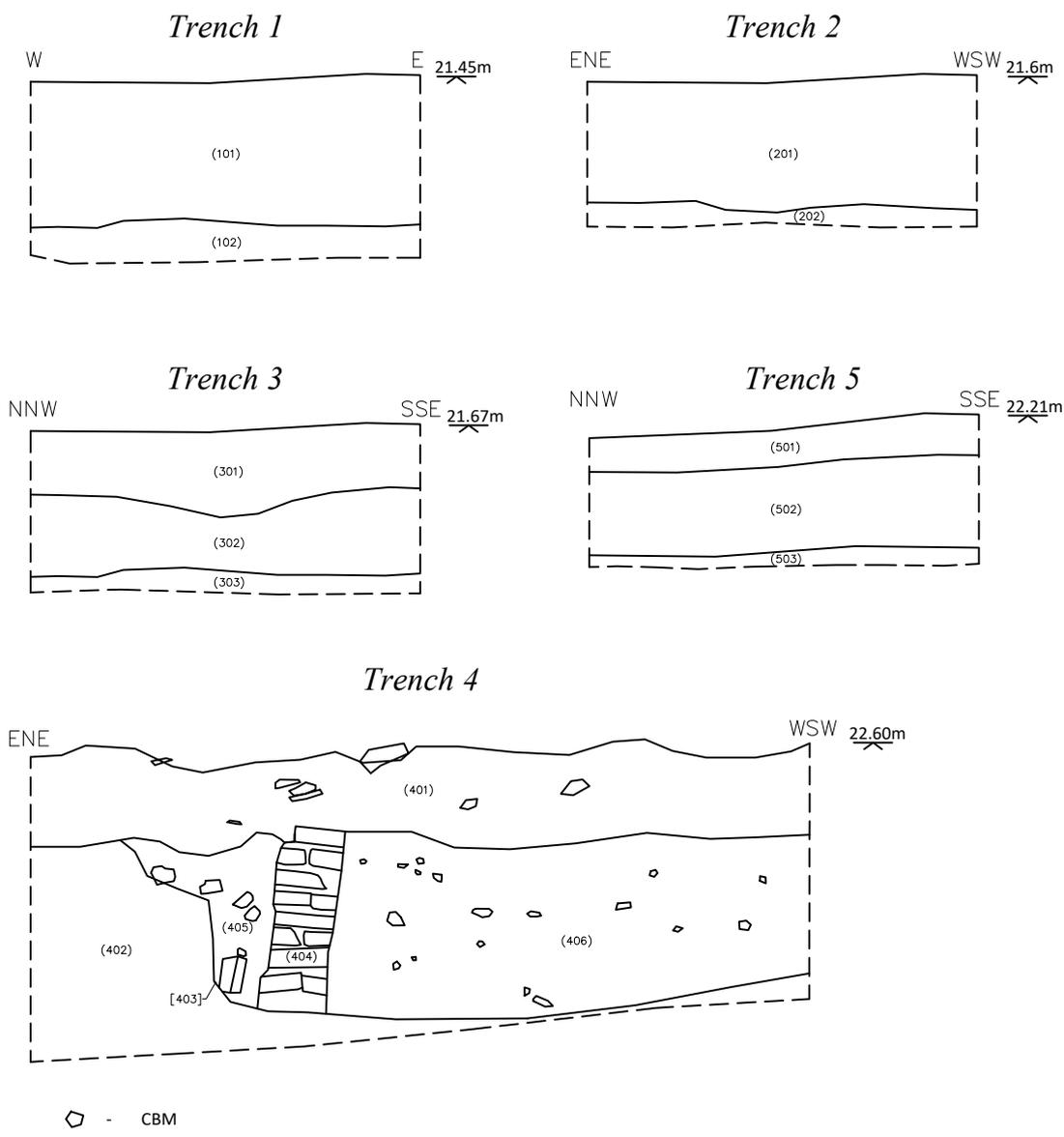


Figure 4: Sections