

Archaeological Strip, Map and Sample Excavation of Land at Little Owl Barn, Pedlinge, Hythe, Kent CT21 4JJ

INTERIM REPORT

NGR Site Centre: 614161 135118

Site Code: LOB-EX-23



SWAT ARCHAEOLOGY

Swale and Thames Archaeological Survey Company

The Office, School Farm Oast, Graveney Road

Faversham, Kent ME13 8UP

Tel: 01795 532548 or 07885 700 112

info@swatarchaeology.co.uk www.swatarchaeology.co.uk

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Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	5
1.1	Site Description and Topography.....	6
1.2	Scope of report	6
2	ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.....	6
2.1	Introduction	6
3	AIMS AND OBJECTIVES.....	7
3.1	General Aims.....	7
3.2	Project Objectives (SWAT 2019a)	8
4	METHODOLOGY.....	9
4.1	Introduction	9
4.2	Fieldwork - Archaeological Strip, map and Sample Excavation	9
4.3	Monitoring	10
5	ARCHAEOLOGICAL STRATIGRAPHIC ASSESSMENT	11
5.1	Introduction	11
5.2	Phasing.....	11
5.3	Stratigraphic Sequence	11
5.4	Archaeological Features Area 1	11
	5.4.1 <i>Linear features</i>	11
	5.4.2 <i>Discrete Features</i>	11
	5.4.3 <i>Burial</i>	12
	5.4.4 <i>Shallow deposits</i>	12
	5.4.5 <i>Sunken floor structures</i>	12

6	FINDS AND SOIL SAMPLES	13
6.1	Introduction	13
3.2	Ceramic Assemblage	13
6.1	The Small finds	13
6.2	Lithic Assemblage.....	13
6.3	The Bones.....	13
6.4	Shells	13
6.5	Other	13
6.6	Soil samples.....	13
7	ARCHAEOLOGICAL NARRATIVE.....	13
7.1	Period Specific Review	13
8	STATEMENT OF POTENTIAL AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	14
8.1	Statement of Potential.....	14
8.2	Timetable and Task List.....	14
9	ARCHIVE	17
9.1	General.....	17
10	ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	17
11	REFERENCES	17

Plates:

Plate 1: Site overview, looking southwest.

Plate 2: Burial 306 in plan, 2 metres and one-metre scales.

Plate 3: Coin found in grave 304 (top) compared to Iron Age “ABC132” type coin (bottom).

Plate 4: Sunken floor structure S1 – fully excavated.

Figures:

Figure 1: Site location

Figure 2: Site plan

Abstract

SWAT Archaeology has been commissioned by John Parker International to carry out an archaeological evaluation and subsequent strip, map and sample excavation prior to the commencement of construction works.

Evaluation has confirmed the presence of a single burial accompanied by very shallow archaeological deposits. Immediate area around the inhumation was exposed in order to clarify the presence or otherwise of any further funerary activity.

Following site meeting with the Senior Archaeological Officer at Kent County Council a provision was made to continue strip within entire area of proposed development in order to minimize construction delays.

Subsequent strip, map and sample phase of archaeological investigation revealed massive pit in the northern extent of the site. Feature was thought to be a pond or a quarry and was provisionally dated to the Late Medieval Period whilst adjacent small pits and a gully were dated to general Iron Age alongside four sub-rectangular sunken floor components of potential dwellings exposed in the eastern part of the site.

No further burials were revealed during the course of archaeological investigation.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) have been commissioned by the Client to undertake an archaeological excavation on land at Little Owl Barn, Pedlinge, Hythe in Kent (Figure 1). A planning application (23/1152/FH) was approved by Folkestone & Hythe District Council for the development of the site with the erection of new stable buildings (36 boxes) with associated service areas and facilities including a muck out ramp and underground water storage tank to service the equestrian business.

Planning Condition 6 requires:

6) No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of:

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

ii). following on from the evaluation, any safeguarding measures to ensure preservation in situ of important archaeological remains and/or further archaeological investigation and recording in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation and timetable which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

To ensure appropriate assessment of the archaeological implications any development proposals and the subsequent mitigation of adverse impacts through preservation in situ or by record.

In accordance with the requirements of KCC, the archaeological programme of works has, to date, consisted of a trial trench evaluation which has identified the presence of archaeological remains followed by Strip, Map and Sample phase, which covered entire site of development and exposed valuable archaeological assets. These remains have been investigated and records gathered will be used for further post excavation analysis.

1.1 Site Description and Topography

The Proposed Development Area (PDA) is located at Little Owl Barn Pedlinge and includes an area south of the existing stables which is currently in use as part of an arable field. Pedlinge lies north east of Hythe close to the coast and is a small hamlet. The northern part of the site consists of the present entrance to Little Owl Barn and the majority of the site with the exception of the far north entrance area appears to have been in arable use since at least Medieval times. Little Owl Barn forms the area south of the Medieval Pedlinge Court to the north.

The Geological Survey of Great Britain (1:50,000) shows that the PDA is situated on bedrock geology of Hythe Formation -Sandstone & Limestone interbedded. Superficial deposits are not recorded. The centre of the Proposed Development Area has an Ordnance Datum height of 75.50m aOD (above Ordnance Datum).

1.2 Scope of report

In accordance with the Specification (SWAT Archaeology 2019), this report comprises a summary of the project background, site description and geological background (Section 1), archaeological background (Section 2) and the project aims (Section 3). Generic and specific methodologies are detailed in Section 4. Section 5 provides a Stratigraphic Assessment of archaeological features recorded and is followed by an assessment of all archaeological finds in Section 6. A period-specific Archaeological Narrative, Statement of Potential, and recommendations for further analysis, reporting, publication and archiving constitute Sections 7-9.

This report includes results from both evaluation and SMS stages of archaeological work. Site plan has been provided (Figure 2).

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

There are five Kent HER records from the Roman period within the assessment area. The closest record is that of the Roman Road (TR 04 SE 120) circa 250m to the south at the end of the lane by the PDA which was the road between Dover and Maidstone that ran by the Roman settlement and Saxon

Shore fort of Lympe which is circa 2km to the west, south, west. Unsurprisingly. Roman finds have been found elsewhere within the study area. Circa 570m to the east, north east is a Roman building that is possibly a villa found in the 19th century (TR 13 NW 8). A Roman cremation burial accompanied by pottery was discovered in 1867, close to nearby Newington (TR 13 NE 272) circa 810m to the east of the PDA.

There is one Kent HER record from the Anglo-Saxon period within the assessment area being a Portable Antiquities Scheme find of a copper alloy brooch (MKE6872). The exact location of the find is not reported, and it has been assigned to a grid square circa 405m north east of the PDA.

There are eight Kent HER records from the medieval period within the assessment area. The closest being that of Pedlinge Court circa 75m north of the PDA. Originally a farmhouse, now a house, it is Grade II listed of the 18th century with a possible earlier core (TR 13 NW 107). There is no intervisibility between the PDA and Pedlinge Court given the existing modern yard buildings. It is likely that the original small hamlet and manor of Pedlinge was formed in the Medieval period. Circa 260m to the north east is what is believed to be the boundary of the landscape of Brockhill Country Park that was possibly a deer park and is considered to have its origins in the Medieval period (TR 13 NW 202). Circa 600m to the north is Sandling Park, which again is considered to have Medieval origins (TR 13 NW 33). Circa 650m and 840m to the north east are stretches of holloways through Brockhill Country Park (TR 13 NW 154 and TR 13 NW 155) and is believed to be one of the routes out of Hythe towards Pedlinge prior to the Post Medieval turnpiked road.

There are 12 records held at the Kent HER from the post-medieval period within the assessment area. These include the farmstead record for Pedlinge Court (MKE88449), with the yard located to the south of the farmhouse. The western range resides under the current ownership of Pedlinge Court with the adjoining southern range now a three-storey residence associated with Little Owl Court. The hamlet in this period grew slightly bigger with that of Pedlinge Court Cottage circa 110m to the north west thought to be late 16th century (TR 13 NW 122). The other heritage assets are some distance from the PDA and include scattered farmsteads and other listed buildings to the north in the larger centre of Pedlinge as well as the Royal Military Canal to the far south. Historical mapping shows the PDA as agricultural land in this period.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 General Aims

The Strip, map and sample excavation aimed to ascertain the range of past activities, and specifically whether the evidence suggests transient human activity, domestic/settled occupation, burial,

industry, agriculture and/or combinations of these. Linked to this, the excavations also sought to recover stratified assemblages of artefacts and ecofacts which are capable of analysis and research to assist in determining the date and function of the site during different periods.

In accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' guidance (CIfA 2014a), the general aims of the programme of archaeological works were to:

- *to examine the archaeological resource within the site;*
- *within a framework of defined research objectives, to seek a better understanding of and compile a lasting record of that resource;*
- *to analyse and interpret the results; and disseminate them.*

All excavation and post-excavation procedures were conducted in compliance with the standards outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance Archaeological Excavation* (2014a).

3.2 Project Objectives (SWAT 2019a)

The objective of the archaeological mitigation is to identify, excavate, record and analyse any significant archaeological remains that will be disturbed by the proposed development. The physical archaeological remains will be replaced by a detailed record and a better understanding of the past activities that have taken place on the site, thereby contributing to an increased knowledge of Kent's past and providing a resource for future research and education (KCC Part B 4.1)

The objective of the Strip, Map and Sample is to understand the broad pattern of settlement dynamics and how key elements of the archaeological landscape (sites, activities, deposits and finds) relate to each other spatial, functionally and chronologically (KCC Part B 4.2)

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. And to 1). Establish a broad phased plan of the archaeology revealed following the stripping of the site; 2). Provide a refined chronology of the archaeological phasing; 3). Investigate the function of structural remains and activities taking place within and close to the site.

The opportunity also be taken during the course of the evaluation/SMS 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. Specific research questions that may be answered are to include the origins of the adjacent medieval ditches and is there any evidence for pre-farmstead activity on the site? In general the work is to ensure compliance with the archaeological planning condition and to publish the results either on line, or through OASIS and/or in a local journal.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

The archaeological excavation was undertaken in accordance with a Specification (SWAT Archaeology 2019b), and in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIFA 2014a) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation*.

4.2 Fieldwork - Archaeological Strip, map and Sample Excavation

The site comprised a single L-shaped area measuring 95m x 110m (6900m²).

A 21 ton 360° tracked mechanical excavator, fitted with a flat bladed ditching bucket was used to remove overlying topsoil and subsoil deposits to expose the underlying natural geology. Overlying deposits were removed in spits of c.100mm thickness under constant archaeological supervision. Machined deposits were examined, and any artefacts were bagged by context.

A site grid was established using an EDM and tied to the National Grid. On completion of hand-cleaning, a site plan was produced at a scale of 1:100. Spray paint line marker was used to mark the edges of unexcavated features prior to mapping. Levels were taken across the site prior to excavation of archaeological features and added to the site plan.

The broad sampling strategy implemented across the site, in agreement with KCC Archaeological Officer can be summarised as follows:

- All targeted archaeological features were hand-cleaned prior to excavation in order to more clearly define edges and relationships in plan.
- Sections were excavated at all intersections between mapped archaeological features to clarify stratigraphic relationships and inform the overall phasing of the site.

- Slots were excavated across linear ditch features at appropriate intervals measuring no less than 1m in length. All terminal ends of features were investigated through appropriate sized interventions.
- All discrete features including pits and post-holes were half-sectioned at a minimum. Where necessary, features were fully excavated to facilitate retrieval of datable artefacts and/or environmental samples. Sunken floor structures were 100% excavated.
- Charred and cremated deposits or potential 'placed deposits' were 100% excavated.

All artefacts recovered during the excavations were bagged, marked by context and catalogued. Bulk finds were bagged together by context and small-finds were individually bagged by context and their locations recorded in three-dimensions using an EDM.

All features, deposits and finds were recorded in accordance with accepted professional standards. The following broad recording strategy was followed:

- All archaeological contexts were recorded individually on SWAT Archaeology digital context record sheets.
- All excavated sections were drawn on polyester drawing film at a scale of 1:10 and fully labelled with context numbers and other appropriate recording numbers and levelled with respect to m. OD.
- Features were planned at a scale of 1:20, labelled and levelled with respect to m. OD. All archaeological interventions including linear slots, intercutting relationship slots and half-sections were also marked on the overall site plan.
- Registers of contexts, small finds, environmental samples, site drawings and photographs were maintained and monitored by the site supervisor.
- A full photographic record including digital photographs was maintained; all excavated sections and features were photographed pre and post-excavation, and a selection of working and site photos were also taken.
- In general, multi-context recording was adopted across the site, however single-context recording was completed for deposits/features considered to be possible placed deposits or cremations.

4.3 Monitoring

Curatorial monitoring was made available to Casper Johnson, Archaeological Officer, Kent County Council throughout the archaeological investigation. Site visits were undertaken and where not

possible, updates through email were maintained. Any variations to the methodology set out in the Specifications were agreed between parties during monitoring meetings.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL STRATIGRAPHIC ASSESSMENT

5.1 Introduction

This section of the report will include a descriptive stratigraphic assessment of the archaeological records, detailing physical relationships between all contexts recorded during the excavation. All features with multiple interventions (excavated slots) have been grouped to form a single Group Number (i.e. L11), as have groups of features with specific form, i.e. pit and post holes representing a structure(s) etc.

5.2 Phasing

The assessment of artefacts retrieved from archaeological features will take place in near future and this will enhance the results by providing data so these features can be chronologically phased.

5.3 Stratigraphic Sequence

A relatively consistent soil sequence was recorded across the Site. The underlying natural chalk geology was covered in places by head deposit consisted of mid orange-brown silty-clay. Sub-soil comprising up to 0.12m thick firm mid brownish grey silty clay with moderate amount of small chalk lumps and occasional stones was present only within central part of the site. The overlying topsoil consisted of moderately compacted dark brownish grey silty clay with occasional small chalk lumps and stones. (0.2–0.3 m deep).

5.4 Archaeological Features Area 1

5.4.1 *Linear features*

Two small gullies were exposed within the area. N-S aligned one produced LPM+ peg tile fragment found at the bottom. Other gully was roughly E-W oriented and produced moderate amount of Iron Age pottery, animal bones, flints and possible fragment of quern stone.

5.4.2 *Discrete Features*

Seven pits were recorded within the area. Massive pit partially exposed at northern edge was interpreted as a pond or a quarry pit. Feature produced small amount of ferrous objects and pottery provisionally dated to the Late Medieval.

Remaining six pits scattered across the site were of different shapes and sizes but all produced finds representing domestic waste including bone, shells, pot sherds and were provisionally dated to the Iron Age.

5.4.3 *Burial*

A Late Iron Age inhumation in crouched position was exposed and fully sampled. Skeletal remains were found in shallow grave, poorly carved into underlying chalk bedrock. Grave was found in NE-SW alignment and its backfill produced Late Iron Age, copper alloy coin.

Human remains were found in fairly good condition although small bones and ribs were gone, probably due to slightly increased acidity in overlaying modern agricultural ploughsoil. The other potential destructive factors that were in play were fertilization and mechanical breakage of the soil. As buried deposits are disrupted by tillage practices the material is subjected to mechanical abrasion and breakage. Fresh bone breaks differently than the old one, dry bone and as it dries out it will be more subject to fracture. (Plate 3)

The analysis of skeletal remains is ongoing and will be included in final version of post-excavation assessment report.

5.4.4 *Shallow deposits*

Three shallow archaeological deposits were recorded around the burial. One was relatively extensive yet very shallow (up to 0.1m deep). All could represent basal remains of very shallow pits, trample deposits or deposits spread through ploughing. All were very clearly sealed by subsoil and produced flintwork, pottery and bones. It was considered these deposits could be remains of other burials damaged by ploughing although bones recovered were likely animal. Further analysis of retrieved bones may help to understand origin of these deposits.

5.4.5 *Sunken floor structures*

Four Semi-rectangular in plan pits were exposed within eastern part of the site. They stretched over an area oriented from north to south. All structures comprised main pit cut in to the natural chalk geology measured on average 3.5m x 2.5m accompanied by post-holes which number and location differed across all of them. This type of feature as well as bone comb found within top fill of one of them are more typical for Saxon period although vast pottery assemblage recovered seemed to be Iron Age. Again further finds analysis should improve the understanding of origin of these features. It is also considered to extract C14 samples from retrieved soil samples to confirm the date.

6 FINDS AND SOIL SAMPLES

6.1 Introduction

A moderate ceramic assemblage was recovered from the site along with 3 small finds, moderate amount of lithic, bones and shells. Also several metal objects have been retrieved. The finds were found within almost every feature excavated. Listed below are quantities of different types of finds.

3.2 Ceramic Assemblage

The assemblage of 33 bags (Evaluation: 8, SMS: 25)

6.1 The Small finds

SF1(EV) – Iron Age coin.

SF1(SMS) Iron object – poss. knife.

SF2(SMS) Iron object – poss. knife or spearhead.

SF3(SMS) Bone comb.

6.2 Lithic Assemblage

The assemblage of 17 bags (Evaluation: 4, SMS: 13)

6.3 The Bones

The assemblage of 26 bags (Evaluation: 6, SMS: 20) – Mostly animal
Apart from above, nearly complete human skeleton was secured.

6.4 Shells

The assemblage of 13 bags, all from SMS phase. Different types.

6.5 Other

Additionally there were 4 metal objects and one poss. quern stone fragment found.

6.6 Soil samples

24 soil samples has been collected during archaeological works and includes 7 samples taken from the grave, one from shallow deposit surrounding the burial and 16 from other pits.

7 ARCHAEOLOGICAL NARRATIVE

7.1 Period Specific Review

Archaeological features were sealed below the topsoil or subsoil where present. Moderate modern ploughing has impacted on the natural and archaeological horizons.

Further finds and soil samples analysis are necessary to confirm time span of activity on site and in particular to answer the question if all of the features on site (apart from much later pond/quarry and one gully) are of the same Iron Age period or perhaps just the burial is that old and Sunken floor structures with associated pits are later? Possibly Roman or Saxon?

8 STATEMENT OF POTENTIAL AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Statement of Potential

The excavation has revealed burial, domestic and agrarian activity on site. These are provisionally dated to Late Iron Age with small later addition of Late Medieval quarry or pond and Late Post Medieval Gully.

Detailed finds and soil samples analysis and perhaps C14 dating maybe required to confirm with full confidence that the Sunken floor structures which are typical for Saxon period were in fact built during Iron Age period on this site.

8.2 Timetable and Task List

The below timetable (Table 2) has been prepared outlined the required time to bring the publication to completion. This following includes the estimated time required for specialist assessment, and work by SWAT Archaeology to collate the resulting data and prepare the final documents. This also includes time spent on preparation of this Interim Report.

The post excavation team consists primarily of self-employed specialist staff (Table 1). The post-excavation project will be directed by Dr Paul Wilkinson of SWAT Archaeology.

Name	Position
Dr Paul Wilkinson, MCIFA	Publication Manager
Peter Cichy	Project Manager
Pawel Cichy	Project Officer
Carol White	Animal bone specialist
Paul Hart	Flint Specialist
Paul Hart	Ceramic Specialist
Malgorzata Cichy	Archaeological illustrator
Malgorzata Cichy	Photography/ Photogrammetry
Simon Holmes	Small Finds

Dana Goodburn-Brown	Conservator
Liss Burrows	Human remains

Table 1: Post Excavation project Staff

Task No.	Description	Days	Staff
Management			
1	Project Director	1	Dr Paul Wilkinson
2	Project Management	1	Pawel Cichy
Main Publication Text			
3	Research	1	Pawel Cichy
4	Preparation of text	5	Pawel Cichy
5	Editing	1	Peter Cichy
6	Submission/liaison with journal editor	1	Peter Cichy
7	Journal Charges	£75 per page	SWAT Archaeology
Finds			
8	Ceramic assessment and illustration	2	Paul Hart
9	Lithic assessment and illustration	1	Paul Hart
10	Small Finds assessment and illustration	1	Simon Holmes
11	Animal Bones analysis	1	Carol White
Human remains			
11	Human remains processing and analysis	2	Liss Burrows
Environmental samples			
11	Soil samples processing and analysis	5	SWAT archaeology
Illustrations and Plates			
11	Plates	1	Malgorzata Cichy
12	Figures	2	Malgorzata Cichy
Archive			
13	Archiving	1	SWAT Archaeology
		Total:	27

Table 2: Project timetable

Following approval of this final Full Report and publication draft, a final site archive will be ordered in accordance with Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage (UKIC 1990). SWAT Archaeology will retain the site archive until suitable provision is made by Kent County Council for deposition in a suitable archive facility.

9 ARCHIVE

9.1 General

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).

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 & A3 graphics.

10 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

SWAT Archaeology would like to thank John Parker International for commissioning the project. Thanks are also extended to Casper Johnson, Kent County Council, for his advice and assistance.

Archaeological fieldwork was carried-out by Pawel Cichy, Malgorzata Cichy, Peter Cichy, Bartek Cichy and Django Rayner.

The project was managed by Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA.

11 REFERENCES

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KCC Specification Manual Part B

<https://iach.arch.ox.ac.uk/id/abc->

PLATES:



Plate 1: Site overview, looking southwest.



Plate 2: Burial 306 in plan, 2 metres and one-metre scales.



Plate 3: Coin found in grave 306 (top) compared to Iron Age "ABC132" type coin (bottom).



Plate 4: Sunken floor structure S1 – fully excavated.

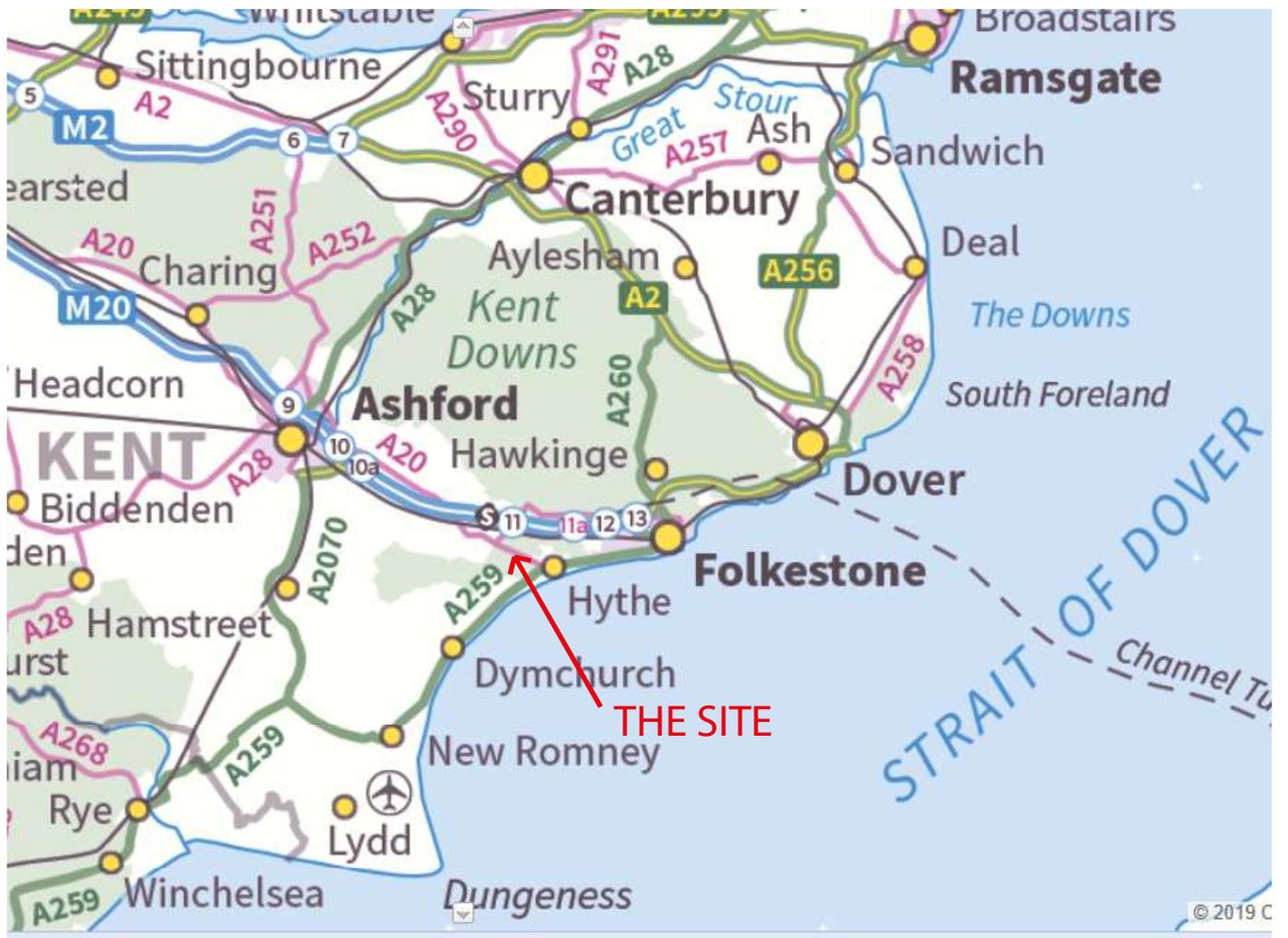
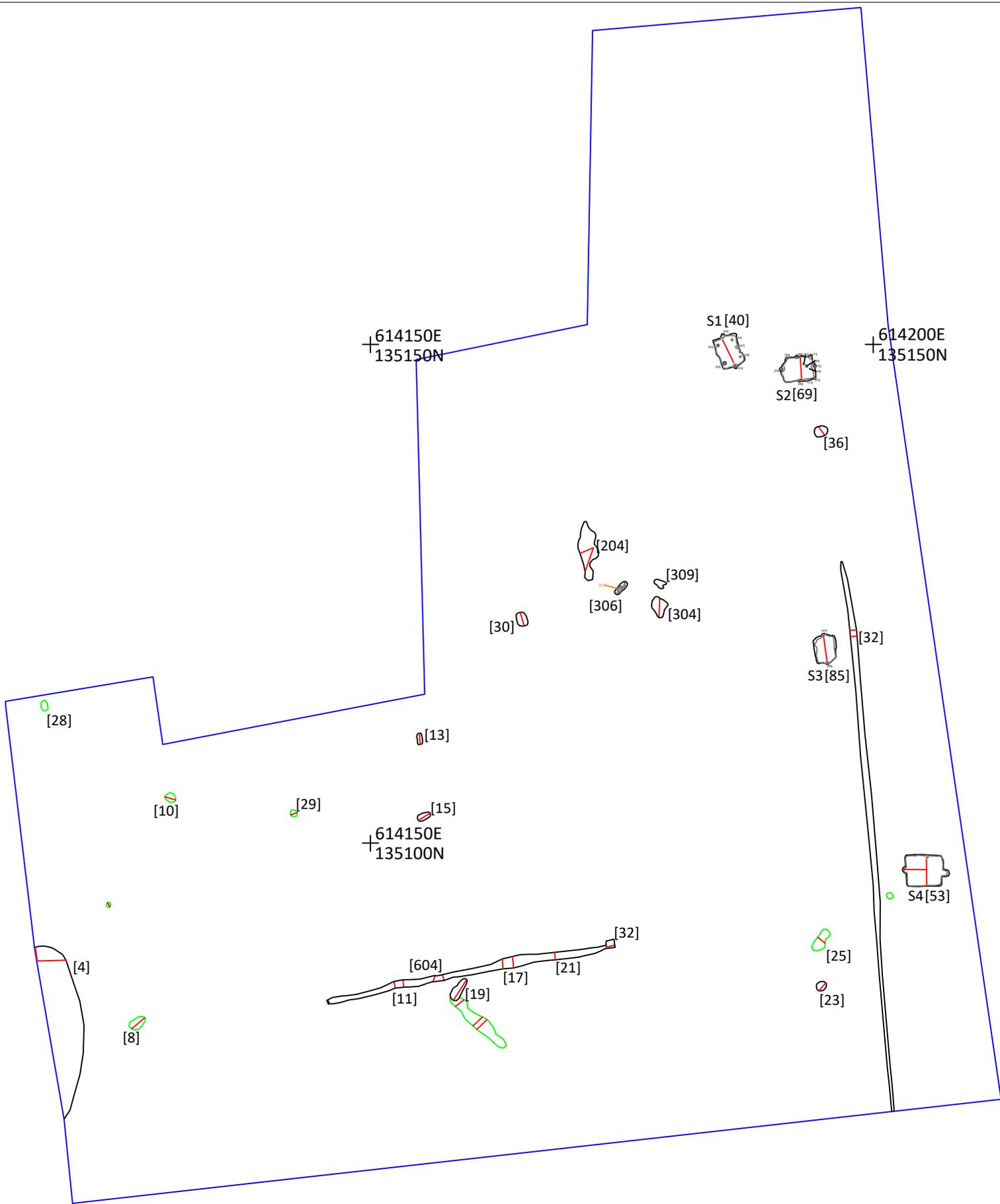


Figure 1: Site location



Green - natural features

Little Owl Barn, Pedlinge, Hythe, SMS plan