

**An Archaeological Evaluation at
Land at 24-32 Cudworth Road, South Willesborough,
Ashford, Kent**

Planning Reference: 05/02030/AS

NGR: 602173 140812

**Project No. 3718
Site Code: CRA 09**

**ASE Report No. 20090070
OASIS id: archaeol6-58708**

Giles Dawkes MIFA

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Abstract

An archaeological evaluation of 4 trenches was undertaken by Archaeology South-East at land at 24-32 Cudworth Road, Ashford, Kent, on 7th and 8th April 2009. The work was commissioned by Lakehurst Developments Ltd.

Evaluation trenches 1, 2 and 3 in the northern part of the site revealed five Middle/Late Iron Age ditches. These features probably represent field boundary ditches and are typical of the archaeology of the surrounding area. One piece of worked Mesolithic flint was also recovered. No archaeology was identified in trench 4 located on the proposed route of the access road.

The underlying natural of clay was encountered between the heights of 37.30m OD in the north of the site (trench 1) and 36.90m OD in the south (trench 4). The topography was of wasteland gently sloping from north to south.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), the contracting division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology at the UCL Institute of Archaeology, were commissioned by Lakehurst Developments Ltd, to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at Cudworth Road, South Willesborough, Ashford, Kent (centred NGR 602173 140812; Figure 1).
- 1.2 The planning proposals are to develop 11 residential properties on the site (planning application 05/02030/AS) and the Archaeological Officer for the Borough Council recommended that the site be subject to a programme of archaeological work to clarify the archaeological elements within the site.
- 1.3 The Heritage Conversation Group at Kent County Council (HCGKCC 2008) produced a manual of specification for the archaeological work and the subsequent evaluation was undertaken in line with this document.
- 1.4 The site is situated on slightly sloping wasteland. The land is bounded by residential properties fronting Cudworth Road to the east and north, open land to the west and by Canterbury Road to the south.
- 1.5 According to the British and Geological Survey the site lies on Weald Clay. The north of the site is located at approximately 38m OD sloping to approximately 37.20m OD in the south.
- 1.6 The aims of the project were to:
 - Determine whether any significant archaeological remains would be affected by the development and if so what mitigation measures are appropriate.
- 1.7 This report aims to disclose the results of the field evaluation and to discuss any forthcoming recommendations. The evaluation was conducted by Giles Dawkes, Rob Cole and David Honness, and project managed by Neil Griffin (fieldwork) and Dan Swift (post-excavation).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The site lies in an area particularly rich in Iron Age and Roman archaeology. To the east, on-going excavations at Ashford Orbital Park have produced significant evidence of Iron Age and Roman settlement and burials.
- 2.2 A 500m SMR search centred on the site (Figure 1) identified eleven sites on the Historic Environment Register (HER). Two finds spots of a Neolithic arrowhead (7) and a Mesolithic flint knife and Neolithic axe (10) represent the earliest activity. The majority of the known sites in the area are of Iron Age and Roman date (1, 3, 4, 5 and 8). The remaining four sites are post-medieval buildings and undated features (2, 6, 9 and 11).

Map No.	HER No.	Site
1	TR 04 SW 83	Iron Age field systems
2	TR 04 SW 35	Linear feature/soilmark
3	Mke 20973	Late Iron Age gullies, Orbital Business Park
4	TR 04 SW 72	Romano-British farmstead/cremations near Boys Hall
5	TR 04 SW 137	Two Iron Age gullies found at the Courtyard, Orbital Park
6	TR 04 SW 81	Brickworks, Sevington
7	TR 04 SW 18	Neolithic arrowhead, South Willesborough
8	TR 04 SW 124	Late Iron Age/early Roman occupation site, South Willesborough, Ashford
9	Mke 22426	Grade II listed building (1700-1799)
10	TR 04 SW 20	Mesolithic flint knife and Neolithic axe, Willesborough
11	Mke 23071	The Albion Inn

Table 1: Sites on the Historic Environment Register

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 Four trenches were excavated in the proposed development area (Figure 2).
- 3.2 The trenches and features were located using a Global Positioning System (DGPS) and DGPS Total Station (Leica 1205 R100 Total Station, Leica System 1200 GPS).
- 3.3 The trial trenches were excavated under archaeological supervision by JCB 3CX fitted with a toothless ditching bucket.
- 3.4 The excavations were taken down to the top of the underlying geology or to the surface of any significant archaeological deposit, whichever was higher. Revealed surfaces were manually cleaned in an attempt to identify individual archaeological features. The sections of the trenches were selectively cleaned to observe and record any stratigraphy. The removed spoil was scanned for the presence of any stray, unstratified artefacts. Subtle differences in the natural were drawn as they may represent possible prehistoric features which are difficult to identify in trial trenching.
- 3.5 All encountered archaeological deposits, features and finds were recorded according to accepted professional standards in accordance with the agreed specification of the works using pro-forma context record sheets. Deposit colours were verified by visual inspection and not by reference to a Munsell Colour chart. The spoil, from site clearance prior to development, was inspected by the archaeologist to recover any artefacts of archaeological interest.
- 3.6 A full photographic record of the work was kept (monochrome prints, colour slides and digital), and will form part of the site archive. The archive (including the finds) is presently held at the Archaeology South-East offices at Portslade, and will in due course be offered to a suitable local museum.
- 3.7 Environmental samples were taken where appropriate and in the amount and regularity specified in the agreed specification of the works.

4.0 RESULTS

(Figures 2, 3 and 4)

4.1 Trench 1

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Max. Depth
1/001	Layer	Topsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.30m
1/002	Layer	Subsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.41m
1/003	Deposit	Natural	Tr.	Tr.	N/A
1/004	Cut	Ditch fill	Tr.	0.8m	0.2m
1/005	Fill	Ditch cut	Tr.	0.8m	0.2m

Table 2: Trench 1

Natural geology of yellow brown clay (1/003) was encountered at 37.17m OD.

Above was light brown silt clay subsoil (1/002) and dark brown silt topsoil (1/001).

Aligned east to west was ditch [1/004] with concave sides and a flat base. The fill was blue grey clay [1/005] with a find of a flintwork flake.

4.2 Trench 2

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Max. Depth
2/001	Layer	Topsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.30m
2/002	Layer	Subsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.27m
2/003	Deposit	Natural	Tr.	Tr.	N/A
2/004	Cut	Ditch Cut	Tr.	1.9m	0.9m
2/005	Fill	Ditch Fill	Tr.	1.9m	0.9m
2/006	Fill	Ditch Fill	Tr.	1m	0.75m
2/007	Cut	Ditch Cut	Tr.	1m	0.75m

Table 3: Trench 2

Natural geology yellow brown clay sand (2/003) was encountered at 37.08m OD.

Two ditches, aligned north to south, were identified. Ditch [2/004] had a concave and convex sides and a flat base. Ditch fill [2/005] was blue grey clay with finds of two pottery sherds of Middle to Late Iron Age date.

To the east was smaller parallel ditch [2/007] with concave sides and a flat base. Fill [2/006] was blue grey clay with no finds.

Above was light brown silt clay subsoil (2/002) and dark brown silt topsoil (2/001).

4.3 Trench 3

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Max. Depth
3/001	Layer	Topsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.30m
3/002	Layer	Subsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.26m
3/003	Deposit	Natural	Tr.	Tr.	N/A
3/004	Cut	Ditch Cut	Tr.	1.2m	0.7m
3/005	Fill	Ditch Fill	Tr.	1.2m	0.7m
3/006	Cut	Ditch Cut	Tr.	0.9m	0.4m
3/007	Fill	Ditch Fill	Tr.	0.9m	0.4m

Table 4: Trench 3

Natural geology of yellow brown clay (3/003) was encountered at 37.30m OD in the north and 36.69m OD in the south of the trench.

Two ditches, aligned north-west to south-east, were identified. Ditch [3/004] had steep sides and a concave base. Ditch fill [3/005] was blue grey clay with finds of a flintwork flake.

To the west, parallel ditch [3/006] had similar steep sides and a concave base and was filled with [3/007] blue grey clay.

Above was light brown silt clay subsoil (3/002) and dark brown silt topsoil (3/001).

4.4 Trench 4

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Max. Depth
4/001	Layer	Topsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.30m
4/002	Layer	Redeposited Natural	Tr.	Tr.	0.2m
4/003	Layer	Buried Topsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.25m
4/004	Layer	Buried Subsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.28m
4/005	Deposit	Natural	Tr.	Tr.	N/A

Table 5: Trench 4

Natural geology of stiff orange brown clay (4/005) was encountered at 36.90m OD.

No archaeological features were identified.

The former topsoil and subsoil had been buried redeposited natural (4/002) and imported topsoil (4/001) no doubt relating to the 1980s housing redevelopment immediately to the north of trench 4.

The buried subsoil was light brown silt clay (4/004) with buried dark brown topsoil (4/003). Redeposited natural (4/002) was mixed yellow brown clay and dark brown silt. Imported topsoil was dark brown sand silt (4/001).

5.0 THE FINDS

Context	Pot	wt (g)	Flint	wt (g)	FC F	wt (g)
1/005			1	<2		
2/005	2	10				
3/005			1	4		
3/007					2	20

Table 6: Quantification of the finds

5.1 Prehistoric and Roman Pottery by Anna Doherty

The only pottery recovered from the evaluation consists of two bodysherds of the same vessel, weighing 10 grams, from context [2/005]. The fabric contains sparse to moderate coarse quartz grains and rare to sparse fine shell inclusions of around 0.5-1.5mm. Although the sherds are undiagnostic of form, fabrics of this type are fairly typical of the Middle and Late Iron Age. In the Ashford area, grog-tempering seems to have been adopted almost to the exclusion of other fabric types by the early 1st century AD, and it is therefore more likely that they pre-date this period. However, very small quantities of native tradition shell-tempered wares may have been used into the early Roman period.

5.2 Prehistoric Flintwork by Chris Butler

Two pieces of worked flint were recovered during the fieldwork (Table 2).

1/005	Flake fragment (2gms)
3/005	Soft hammer-struck flake (3gms)

Table 7: The flintwork

The soft hammer-struck flake is a black coloured flint and exhibits evidence for platform preparation, and is therefore likely to be Mesolithic in date. The fragment is a dark grey flint but otherwise undiagnostic, and could even be a natural fragment.

6.0 THE ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLES by Dr Lucy Allott

A bulk soil sample was taken from (3/005) the fill of ditch [3/004] during the evaluation to establish the presence of environmental remains. The sample was processed in a flotation tank and the flot and residue retained on 250µm and 500µm meshes respectively. The residue was sorted for environmental and artefact remains and the flot was scanned under a stereozoom microscope at x7-45 magnification. Table 8 documents the contents of this sample.

The flot is dominated by uncharred vegetation including some weed seeds which suggests some post-depositional disturbances within the deposit. Both the flot and the residue produced a small quantity of wood charcoal however no other environmental or archaeological remains were present.

Due to the limited quantity of charcoal present the sample holds no potential to provide further information about the past vegetation or fuel use at this site and therefore no further work is recommended.

Sample Number	Context	Context / deposit type	Sample Volume litres	Sub-Sample Volume litres	Residue			Flot							Potential	
					Charcoal >4mm	Weight (g)	Charcoal <4mm	Weight (g)	Flot weight g	Flot volume ml	Uncharred % (flot)	Uncharred seeds presence/absence	Charcoal >4mm	Charcoal <4mm		Charcoal <2mm
1	3/005	fill of ditch cut 3/004	40	40	*	2	**	<1	<2	5	95	Y	-	-	**	Nil

Table 8 Sample quantification (* = 1-10, ** = 11-50) weight and volume

7.0 DISCUSSION

7.1 Overview

- 7.1.1 The programme of trenching has demonstrated the presence of archaeological ditches in the northern portion of the site. Nothing of archaeological significance was found in area of the access road to the south.

7.2 Mesolithic

This period is represented by a single flintwork flake from ditch fill (3/005). However, the flintwork is likely to be residual.

7.3 Middle/Late Iron Age

The five ditches identified in trenches 1, 2 and 3 are somewhat poorly dated, containing only two sherds of Middle/Late Iron Age and two flakes of probably residual flintwork. However, it is more likely than not, that these ditches are contemporary to one another and of Middle/Late Iron Age date. These ditches probably represent field boundary ditches and are a typical archaeological feature of the surrounding environs of the site. It is also possible given the proximity of Iron Age cremations c. 300m to the east of the site (HER site 4; Figure 1) that the ditches may represent evidence of some other form of activity. The sample from ditch [3/005] did not produce any significant environmental remains.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

The evaluation identified two phases of archaeological features, Mesolithic and Middle/Late Iron Age. The Mesolithic was represented by a single, probably residual, flintwork flake. Five ditches, all probably contemporary and of Middle/Late Iron Age date, were identified. The function of these features remains obscure, though they are typical of the archaeology of the surrounding area.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Heritage Conservation Group Kent County Council *Specification for land off Cudworth Road, South Willesborough, Ashford, Part A*. 2008

Heritage Conservation Group Kent County Council, *Evaluation – Trial Trenching Requirements, Part B*. 2008

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeology South-East would like to thank John Mills of Lakehurst Developments Ltd and Wendy Rogers of HCGKCC for their involvement in the project.

SMR Summary Form

Site Code	CRA 09					
Identification Name and Address	Land off 24-32 Cudworth Road, South Willesborough, Ashford					
County, District &/or Borough	South Willesborough, Ashford, Kent					
OS Grid Refs.	TR 02173 40812					
Geology	Clay					
Arch. South-East Project Number	3718					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval. ✓	Excav.	Watching Brief	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field	Shallow✓ Urban	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval. April 09	Excav.	WB.	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Lakehurst Developments Ltd					
Project Manager	Nail Griffin					
Project Supervisor	Giles Dawkes					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso. ✓	Neo.	BA	IA✓	RB
	AS	MED	PM	Other Modern		
<p>100 Word Summary</p> <p><i>An archaeological evaluation of 4 trenches was undertaken by Archaeology South-East at land off 24-32 Cudworth Road, Ashford, Kent, on 7th and 8th April 2009, and was commissioned by Lakehurst Developments Ltd.</i></p> <p><i>The underlying natural of clay was encountered between the heights of 37.30m OD in the north of the site (trench 1) and 36.90m OD in the south (trench 4). The topography was of wasteland gently sloping from north to south.</i></p> <p><i>The evaluation identified two phases of archaeological features, Mesolithic and Middle/Late Iron Age. The Mesolithic was represented by a single, probably residual, flintwork flake. Five ditches, all probably contemporary and of Middle/Late Iron Age date, were identified. These features are likely to have been field boundary ditches and are typical of the archaeology of the surrounding environs. The archaeological features were identified in the north of the site in trenches 1, 2 and 3. No archaeology was identified in trench located in the proposed route of the access road.</i></p>						

OASIS ID: archaeol6-58708

Project details

Project name Land off 24-32 Cudworth Road Ashford

Short description of the project

An archaeological evaluation of 4 trenches was undertaken by Archaeology South-East at land off 24-32 Cudworth Road, Ashford, Kent, on 7th and 8th April 2009, and was commissioned by Lakehurst Developments Ltd. The underlying natural of clay was encountered between the heights of 37.30m OD in the north of the site (trench 1) and 36.90m OD in the south (trench 4). The topography was of wasteland gently sloping from north to south. The evaluation identified two phases of archaeological features, Mesolithic and Middle/Late Iron Age. The Mesolithic was represented by a single, probably residual, flintwork flake. Five ditches, all probably contemporary and of Middle/Late Iron Age date, were identified. These features are likely to have been field boundary ditches and are typical of the archaeology of the surrounding environs. The archaeological features were identified in the north of the site in trenches 1, 2 and 3. No archaeology was identified in trench located in the proposed route of the access road.

Project dates Start: 07-04-2009 End: 08-04-2009

Previous/future work No / Yes

Any associated project reference codes 3718 - Contracting Unit No.

Any associated project reference codes CRA 09 - Sitecode

Any associated project reference codes 05/02030/AS - Planning Application No.

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status None

Current Land use Other 13 - Waste ground

Monument type DITCH Iron Age

Significant Finds POTTERY Iron Age

Significant Finds FLAKE Mesolithic

Methods & techniques 'Sample Trenches'

Development type Housing estate

Prompt Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Position in the planning process After full determination (eg. As a condition)
Project location Country England

Site location KENT ASHFORD SEVINGTON Land off 24-32 Cudworth Road Postcode TN24

Study area 2500.00 Square metres

Site coordinates TR 02173 40812 51.1302361220 0.889844866346 51 07 48 N 000 53 23 E

Point

Height OD / DepthMin: 36.90m Max: 37.89m

Project creators Name of Organisation Archaeology South-East

Project brief originator Heritage Conservation Kent County Council

Project design originator The Heritage Conservation Group Kent County Council

Project director/manager Neil Griffin Project

Supervisor Giles Dawkes

Type of sponsor/funding body Developer

Name of sponsor/funding body Lakehurst Developments Ltd

Project archives Physical Archive recipient Local Museum

Physical Contents 'Ceramics', 'Environmental', 'Worked stone/lithics'

Digital Archive recipient Local Museum

Digital Contents 'Ceramics', 'Environmental', 'Worked stone/lithics'

Digital Media available 'Text'

Paper Archive recipient Local Museum

Paper Contents 'Ceramics', 'Environmental', 'Survey', 'Worked stone/lithics'

Paper Media available 'Context sheet', 'Plan', 'Report', 'Section'

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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Author(s)/Editor(s) Dawkes, G

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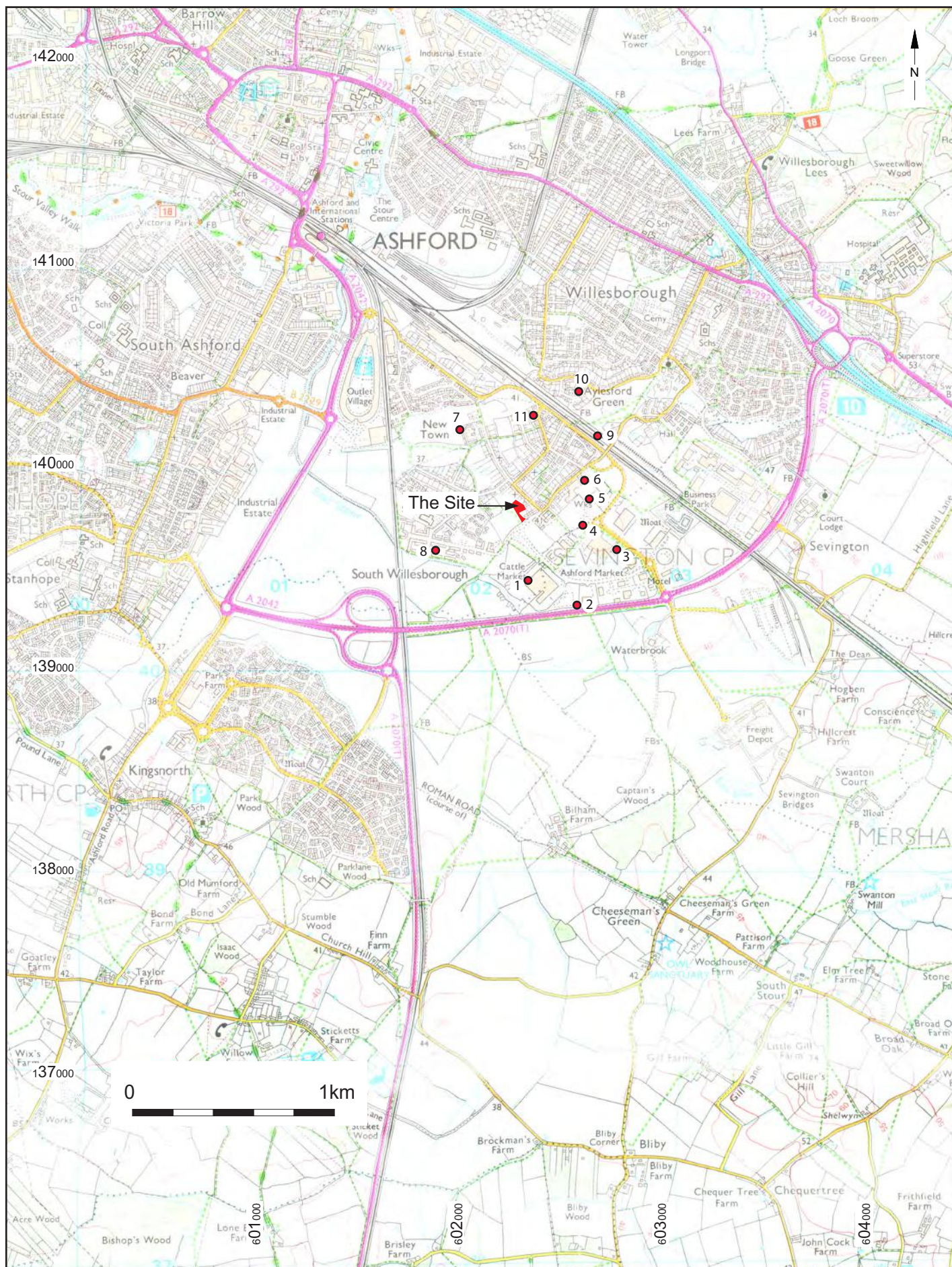
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© Archaeology South-East		Land at 24-32 Cudworth Road, South Willesborough, Kent	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 3718	April 2009	Site Location Plan and HER Sites	
Report Ref: 2009007	Drawn by: HLF		

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Project Ref: 3718

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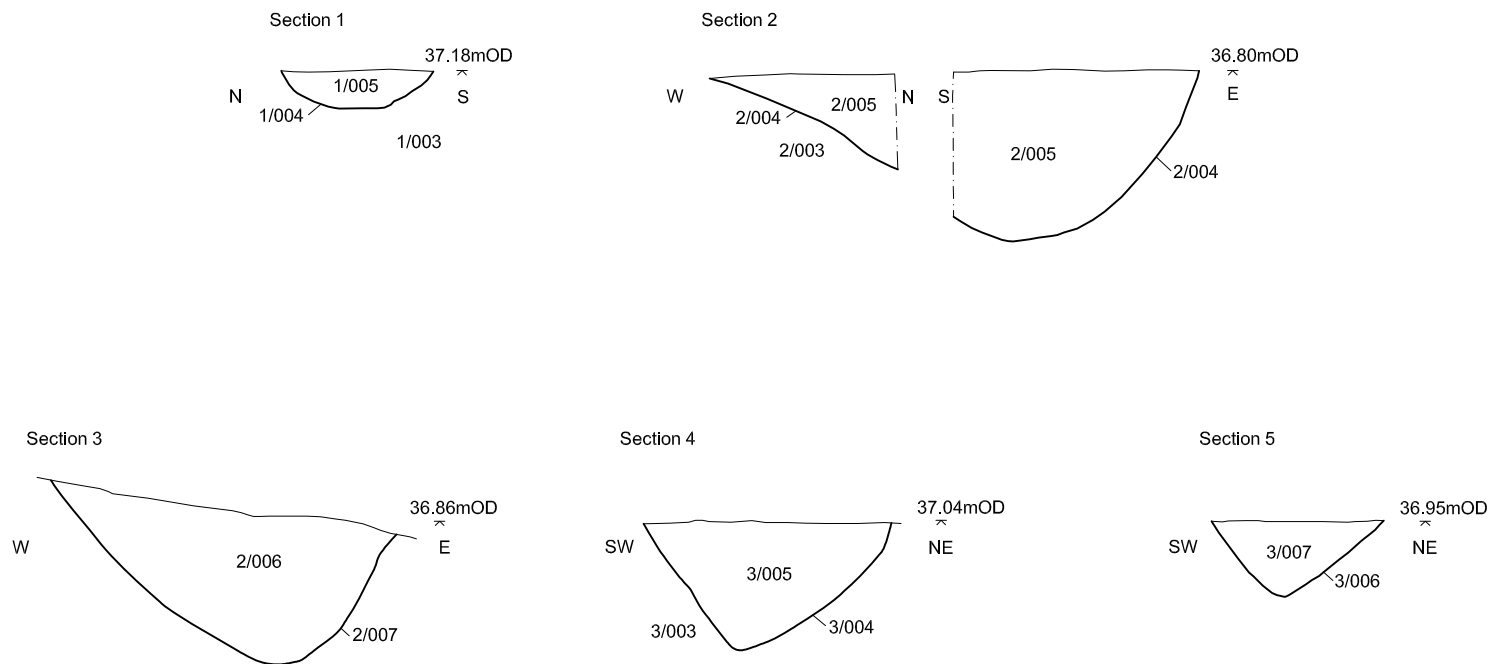
Drawn by: HLF

Land at 24-32 Cudworth Road, South Wilesborough, Kent

Location of Trenches

Fig. 2





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