

**An Archaeological Evaluation
at 25 Knightrider Street, Maidstone, Kent**

**NGR: 576152 155349
(TQ 76152 55349)**

**ASE Project No: 160100
Site Code: KNI16**

**ASE Report No: 2016099
OASIS id: archaeol6-245234**



**Suzanne Westall MA MSc ACIfA
&
Garrett Sheehan**

**With contributions by
Luke Barber
Illustrations by Lauren Gibson & Justin Russell**

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Abstract

This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation carried out by Archaeology South-East at 25 Knightrider Street, Maidstone between 29th February and 8th March 2016.

The evaluation was carried out on the location of the medieval vicarage of All Saints College, which was established before the 14th century. The northern and eastern limits of the site are defined by two grade II listed boundary walls which would have enclosed the vicarage.

Deposits and features dating from the later 13th century, when the All Saints vicarage is assumed to have been founded, were identified during the evaluation. These medieval features comprised probable cess pits, located outside of, but almost certainly associated with, the vicarage building.

There was no evidence for extant medieval structural remains...

A number of features of post-medieval date, within the footprint of the vicarage itself, were recorded; these comprised a large probable internal cess pit or drain of 16th or 17th century date and the remains of two cellars of probable 18th century construction, with later 19th century modifications.

Upstanding remains of the former vicarage building were also identified, although these were in a very fragmentary condition, and analysis of their construction materials indicated that they were later post-medieval modifications, albeit also incorporating earlier post-medieval architectural elements.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

- 1.1.1 Archaeology South-East was commissioned by CgMs Consulting to undertake an archaeological evaluation at 25 Knightrider St, Maidstone, Kent, ME15 6ND (hereafter 'the site',) in February to March 2016.
- 1.1.2 The site is centred on NGR 576150 155340 (Figure 1) and lies on the southern periphery of Maidstone city centre, 180m east of the River Medway. The property forms a rough square, 0.2 hectares in size, bounded by Knightrider Street (A249) to the north, residential buildings to the south and east, and Priory Road to the west. The site is currently occupied by the premises of the Kent, Surrey and Sussex Community Rehabilitation Company and a car park.

1.2 Geology and Topography

- 1.2.1 The British Geological Survey (online mapping, 1:50,000 scale) shows the site on the border between bedrock deposits of Hythe Formation sandstone and limestone and Atherfield Clay Formation sandstone and mudstone. Both are Cretaceous deposits formed in the region of 112 to 125 million years ago, when the local environment would have been dominated by shallow seas. No superficial deposits are recorded for the area.
- 1.2.2 The site is located on a gently sloping hill down to the River Medway, with the highest point at the south-east corner at c.17m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD), to a low of approximately 12m AOD at the north-east corner. It lies close to the confluence of two rivers, approx. 180m east of the River Medway and 220m-240m south of the River Len.

1.3 Planning Background

- 1.3.1 A desk-based assessment (DBA) was compiled by CgMs Consulting in April 2015, as part of pre-determination works in advance of a planning application for proposed redevelopment of the site. This assessment concluded that the site had a moderate to high potential for survival of archaeological deposits or structural foundations of medieval date.
- 1.3.2 Due to the site's potential, the Kent County Council (KCC) Archaeological Officer recommended on-site archaeological investigations, in the form of a trial trench evaluation. Archaeology South-East was commissioned by CgMs Consulting to carry out this work and a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared accordingly (ASE 2016) prior to the commencement of on-site works.

1.4 Scope of Report

- 1.4.1 Three trenches were opened in the car park at 25 Knightrider Street

between February 29th and March 8th 2016. This report details the results of that investigation.

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The following background is drawn from the Desk-Based Assessment prepared by CgMs Consulting (CgMs 2015) and from the Kent Historic Towns Survey for Maidstone (KCC 2004), with due acknowledgement.
- 2.1.2 Kent Historic Towns' Survey describes Maidstone as 'a market town of pre-Conquest origin, which later became the county town and administrative centre of Kent. [...] situated on the east bank of the river Medway and its tributary the river Len, at a point where the Romano-British road from Rochester to Hastings crossed the Len'. Four scheduled monuments are located within 250m of the site at 25 Knightrider Street. These are: Len Bridge (HER Ref: DKE19195; National Heritage List (NHL) Ref: 1005143), the College of All Saints (DKE19063; 1011029), 'The Gate House' of the Archbishop's Palace/Palace Gardens (DKE 19795), and the Tithe barn on Mill Street (DKE19212; 1005183). The site contains two grade II listed boundary walls associated with the medieval vicarage of All Saints College that previously occupied the study site (NHL Refs. 1387228 & 1387213). The site is thus located in an area of archaeological interest with regard to the late medieval and early post-medieval development of Maidstone.

2.2 Iron Age to Roman

- 2.2.1 Upper and Lower Stone Street, approx. 110m to the east of the site, follow the line of a Roman road which ran from Rochester to Maidstone and there are numerous Roman finds from the town, suggesting that this was an area of significant Roman-British activity.
- 2.2.2 The earliest evidence for settlement within 250m of the site is a gully of possible Iron Age or Romano-British date which was identified during excavations at 15 Knightrider Street in 2015. Romano-British pottery was also recovered and a number of Roman coins have been recorded from the general area.

2.3 Saxon to Post-Medieval

- 2.3.1 The earliest historic records of the town date from the late 10th century, when Maidstone was mentioned in Saxon charters. By the time of the Domesday survey in 1086, the Church of St. Mary the Virgin (located on, or close to, the site of what is now All Saints' Church, to the immediate north-west of Knightrider Street,) was a Minster with 17 dependent churches.
- 2.3.2 St. Mary's was demolished at the end of the 14th century and rebuilt as part of an ecclesiastical college complex, dedicated to All Saints. The adjacent Archbishop's Palace dates to the mid-14th century and the Tithe Barn and nearby Len Bridge are thought to be of a similar date. It seems, therefore, that although the secular focus of the town was to the north of the River Len (by the middle of the 13th century Maidstone had 3 markets and an annual

fair), this area to the south-east of the confluence of the Medway and the Len was central to the religious development of the town.

- 2.3.3 The All Saints Vicarage was an ancillary building to the College of All Saints, located due west of the study site at the end of Knightrider Street. The main part of the All Saints Vicarage, a hall known as 'Digons' was situated within the study site. It was built in the late 13th to 15th century AD. Two boundary walls remain from the vicarage, along the north and east sides of the study site (1387228 & 1387213). A written description of Maidstone in 1650 by Nicholas Wall indicates a large building on the site, but it is not until 1821 that the site was properly mapped (by Brown and Son). On the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1865-8, this building is referred to as 'The Priory' and by 1897, what had (until 1884) been known as College Walk or College Lane (1844), along the west side of the site, had been renamed 'Priory Road'. On the OS of 1908, the building is labelled 'Vicarage' and by 1958 'All Saints' Vicarage'. Photographs of the building taken in the 1920s show features of potential medieval date.
- 2.3.4 The Olde Thirsty Pig public house, at the opposite end of Knightrider Street – where it joins Lower Stone Street – is a 15th century building and excavations at 15 Knightrider Street uncovered refuse pits of 12th-13th and 14th-15th century date (Stevenson 2013).
- 2.3.5 By 1967, all buildings on the site had been demolished and the vicarage is shown as a new building on previously undeveloped land to the south. On the OS map of 1977 the site is still shown as empty, but by 1990 the current Probation Service building is visible on Google Earth. This appears to have been erected to the west and north-west of the old building, in a space which had not previously been built upon, its footprint overlapping only partially with that of the old priory/vicarage.

3.0 Research Aims and Objectives

3.1 Aims

3.1.1 The broad aims of the evaluation, in keeping with previous similar projects were:

- To assess the character, extent, preservation, significance, date and quality of any archaeological or historical remains and deposits
- To assess how these might be affected by development of the site
- To establish the extent to which previous groundworks and/or other processes have affected archaeological deposits on the site
- To assess what options should be considered for mitigation

3.1.2 The project also sought to inform on the following areas of research from the South-Eastern Research Framework (SERF):

- The importance of Knightrider Street as a route to Maidstone during the medieval period.
- Better understanding of land use around the periphery of post-medieval towns.

4.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

4.1 Fieldwork Methodology

- 4.1.1 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for archaeological evaluation of the site was prepared following consultation between ASE and CgMs Consulting. All work was carried out in accordance with the Kent County Council Manual of Specifications for Evaluation and the relevant Standards and Guidance of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014).
- 4.1.2 The trial trench evaluation comprised the excavation of three trenches, positioned across the footprint of the former priory building, two measuring 5.0m x 3.6m and the third 10m by 1.5m (Figure 2).
- 4.1.3 Trenches were excavated using a mechanical excavator (initially a JCB (for trenches 1 and 2) and then an 8 tonne tracked excavator for Trench 3). The tarmac was broken out over each trench using a concrete breaker. Trenches were then excavated through modern made ground in spits of no more than 0.2m until archaeological deposits were encountered or the top of the underlying geological substrate was reached. The excavator was fitted with a smooth grading bucket and care was taken to avoid damaging archaeological deposits or over-machining.
- 4.1.4 All archaeological features were recorded according to standard ASE practice.
- 4.1.5 Due to a parked car blocking access on the day of excavation, Trench 3 was repositioned slightly to the west of its original planned location as depicted in the WSI.

4.2 Archive

- 4.2.1 ASE informed Maidstone Museum prior to the commencement of fieldwork that a site archive would be generated but the museum is not currently able to accept archive material. The site archive will therefore be held at the offices of ASE until space becomes available at Maidstone or another local museum. The contents of the archive are tabulated below (Table 1).

Context sheets	44
Section sheets	1
Plans sheets	0
Colour photographs	0
B&W photos	0
Digital photos	105
Context register	3
Drawing register	1
Watching brief forms	0
Trench Record forms	3

Table 1: Quantification of site paper archive

Bulk finds (quantity e.g. 1 bag, 1 box, 0.5 box 0.5 of a box)	1 box & 4 masonry fragments
Registered finds (number of)	0
Flots and environmental remains from bulk samples	0
Palaeoenvironmental specialists sample samples (e.g. columns, prepared slides)	0
Waterlogged wood	0
Wet sieved environmental remains from bulk samples	0

Table 2: Quantification of artefact and environmental samples

5.0 RESULTS

5.1 Introduction to Results

- 5.1.1 Two trenches measuring 5m by 3.6m were excavated at what was surmised, based on cartographic evidence, to be the northern and south-eastern ends of the former vicarage building.
- 5.1.2 A third trench, 10m by 1.5m, was subsequently added, at the request of Wendy Rogers, County Archaeological Officer with KCCKCC, to give greater perspective on the potential for archaeological remains within the site.
- 5.1.3 All three trenches were opened in the car park associated with Chaucer House and required a layer of tarmac to be broken out.
- 5.1.4 The uppermost layer in all three trenches was a layer of tarmac resting on a bedding deposit of sand and stone, with a combined thickness of 0.2-0.53m. For the most part, the sand bedding layer lay directly on top of a mixed deposit of sandy clay and flint containing modern refuse and building rubble.

5.2 Trench 1 (Figure 3)

- 5.2.1 Trench 1 was north-west to south-east aligned, measured 5m long by 3.60m wide and was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.86m below ground surface level, at 10.67m AOD. All contexts recorded in Trench 1 have been summarised in Table 3, below.

Context	Type	Interpretation	Length m	Width m	Thickness/Depth m	Height m AOD
1/001	Surface	Modern tarmac surface and underlying bedding layer	Trench	Trench	0.3-0.53	12.47
1/002	Deposit	Redeposited clay mixed with modern rubble	Trench	Trench	0.1	12.17
1/003	Masonry	Cellar wall	>2.2	0.23	1	11.95
1/004	Deposit	Loose rubble infill of cellar	>5	>1.45	1	11.95
1/005	Layer	Geological substrate: orange-brown sandy clay	Trench	Trench	>1	12
1/006	Masonry	Limestone and sandstone block wall with occasional red brick	>1.86	0.4	2	12.28
1/007	Masonry	Cellar wall	1.1	1	1	11.45
1/008	Masonry	Red brick floor surface (cellar)	>5	>1.45	-	10.8
1/009	Masonry	Limestone block wall	>0.5	0.6	0.3	12.2
1/010	Cut	Construction cut for cellar (presumably C19th)	>4.5	>1.7	>1	12
1/011	Cut	Construction cut for wall 1/009	>0.5	0.7	0.3	11.9
1/012	Cut	Construction cut for wall 1/006	>1.86	>0.6	1.9	12

Table 3: Trench 1 list of recorded contexts

- 5.2.2 The surface of the geological substrate [1/005] was encountered at a height of between 11.80m and 12m AOD and comprised pale orange brown sand/sandy clay containing occasional amounts of green stone fragment inclusions, which increased with depth. Pieces of modern building debris and refuse had become embedded into the upper part of this sand and a sondage was therefore excavated at the north-eastern corner of the trench in order to confirm that it was a 'natural' geological deposit; the sondage showed it to be at least a metre deep with no anthropogenic inclusions beyond the upper few centimetres.
- 5.2.3 The geological substrate was truncated by the cut for a brick-built cellar [1/010], which dominated the western side of the trench. Housed within the cut were two walls [1/003] and [1/007], which respectively formed the eastern and south-eastern corners of the cellar, as well as a brick floor [1/008].
- 5.2.4 The faces of wall [1/007] were covered in a buff sandy mortar render obscuring the coursing style of the brick, which was of likely 18th to early 19th century date. This brick was constructed on a base of rough-cut, undressed ragstone. Wall [1/003] was 14 courses in height with what was similar to an English Garden Wall coursing, but with a double row of headers at its top, and likely dates to the 18th century.
- 5.2.5 Wall [1/007] formed an L-shape and was inset slightly from wall [1/003]. It was also much thicker than [1/003]; in addition while the interior corner of wall [1/007] formed a neat right-angle, the exterior corner and the adjacent section of the foundation cut were more irregular and uneven. The reason for this discrepancy in alignment and thickness between the two walls is unclear. Wall [1/003] may have been set back slightly from [1/007] in order to create a niche or recess for storage, or wall [1/007] may have been inset due to the presence of a structural feature such as a chimney stack, stairwell or some other structural feature of obscure purpose.
- 5.2.6 The cellar had been backfilled with loose rubble [1/004] containing large amounts of brick and stone rubble. This presumably occurred c.1960 when the vicarage building was demolished.
- 5.2.7 Two later walls were recorded, which post-dated the construction of the cellars; the first of these, wall [1/006], appeared to have been constructed over the cellar's southern wall [1/007], from which it extended southwards beyond the southern limit of the trench. This wall was constructed for the most part of rough, undressed ragstone blocks of varying size with some red brick, set in a yellow sandy mortar. The brick sampled from this wall was apparently of mixed 18th to 19th century date and some had adhesions of an off-white fine sandy mortar, confirming that this wall was constructed of reused masonry of varying date.
- 5.2.8 The second wall [1/009] was north-west to south-east aligned and its western side sat directly on top of the eastern wall of the cellar [1/003], however a bedding trench [1/011] was recorded on its eastern side, which extended

beyond the cellars eastern edge. This wall was also primarily of ragstone construction, with some brick, and as exposed in the trench, was in a very fragmentary condition, extending only a short distance from the northern limit of the trench. However it had clearly originally been quite substantial, with a width of 0.60m. Both of these later walls survived to a level just below the tarmac surface (12.2m AOD), indicating that they were presumably still extant until the buildings demolition in the 1960s.

- 5.2.9 These structural features, and the cellar in-fill layer were overlain by a mixed deposit of sand and modern rubble/debris [1/002], which was in turn sealed by the modern tarmac surface and its sand and stone bedding layer [1/001].

5.3 Trench 2 (Figure 4)

- 5.3.1 Trench 2 was north-west to south-east aligned, measured 5m long by 3.60m wide and was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.30m below ground surface level, at 11.80m AOD. All contexts recorded in Trench 2 have been summarised in Table 4, below.

Context	Type	Interpretation	Length m	Width m	Thickness/Depth m	Height m AOD
2/001	Surface	Modern tarmac surface and underlying bedding layer	Trench	Trench	0.2-0.3	13.4
2/002	Deposit	Clay and modern rubble layer	Trench	Trench	0.12-0.3	13.2
2/003	Cut	Construction cut for brick-lined pit/ tank	>2.05	>1.9	unknown	12.9
2/004	Masonry	Red brick east wall of brick-lined pit/ tank	>2.05	0.24	>0.25	12.9
2/005	Masonry	Red brick north wall of brick-lined pit/ tank	>1.48	0.32	>0.1	12.95
2/006	Fill	Rubble infill of disused brick-lined pit/ tank	>1.6	>1.6	>0.25	12.95
2/007	Cut	Pit/ Ditch	>2.3	>0.95	0.55-0.9	12.9
2/008	Fill	Fill of large pit [2/007]	>2.3	>0.95	0.55-0.9	12.7
2/009	Masonry	Red brick wall in west baulk of Trench 2	0.5	unknown	0.3	13
2/010	Masonry	Red brick wall in north-east corner of Trench 2	>1.8	unknown	0.2	12.96
2/011	Surface	Cobbled surface	>3	>0.5	0.13	13
2/012	Drains	Drainage system comprising ceramic drains set into cement, to south of wall [2/010]				12.87
2/013	Deposit	Re-deposited sandy Clay layer over [2/008]	>2.3	>0.95	0.20	12.9
2/014	Layer	Geological substrate: orange-brown sandy clay	>3	>3.5	-	13
2/015	Deposit	Layer below wall [2/009]				12.7

Table 4: Trench 2 list of recorded contexts

- 5.3.2 The surface of the geological substrate [2/014] was encountered at a height of 12.90m AOD and comprised orange brown sand/ sandy clay.
- 5.3.3 The geological substrate had been truncated at the trenches northern end by a large steep-side cut feature [2/007], likely a large pit or broadly east to west aligned linear feature, which extended across the northern limit of the trench. This cut was filled for most of its depth by a primary deposit of gritty sandy silt [2/008], containing frequent amounts of mortar flecking and occasional clinker, and from which a number of peg tile fragments of likely 17th century date were recovered. This primary deposit was overlain by a layer of firm redeposited clay [2/013], with a maximum thickness of 0.20m, which appeared to have been intentionally deposited to seal [2/007].
- 5.3.4 A low red brick structure [2/009], surviving to a height of two courses, was exposed in the western face of the trench adjacent to the southern edge of cut [2/007]. It was difficult to ascertain a likely function for this structural feature, as only a small section was exposed, however its face did appear to curve somewhat towards the west suggesting that it may represent the outer edge of a brick-lined pit or well.
- 5.3.6 The remains of a low red brick footing, three courses in height, [2/010] were identified at the north-eastern side of the trench, projecting a short distance from the trench's eastern limit. This footing incorporated what appeared to be a low arch covering two parallel drain-like features, one constructed of tile, the other a cast-iron pipe, which had clearly originally extended further to the west. This footing appeared to have been constructed on the surface of the layer [2/013] sealing cut [2/007] and the parallel drain-like features had a similar alignment to this likely earlier 17th century feature.
- 5.3.7 A ceramic drain pipe set into cement [2/012], was situated c.1m south of the footing [2/010] and this was sealed by the remains of a clearly late, stone cobble-lock surface [2/011], which survived along the eastern edge of the trench. These cobbles were of cut, squared stone and were set into a layer of dark grey clay and flints [2/002].
- 5.3.8 At the south-west corner of the trench the geological substrate was truncated by the cut for a cellar [2/003], the walls of which [2/004] and [2/005] were of red brick construction. A brick sample from the eastern cellar wall [2/004] was dated to the 19th or early 20th century, whilst the northern wall [2/005] contained frogged brick. This suggests that the construction of this cellar may be later than that in Trench 1. As in Trench 1, the cellar had been loosely backfilled with a mixture of demolition rubble containing post-medieval CBM and clay silt [2/006].
- 5.3.9 These deposits and structural remains were sealed by the bedding layer for the extant tarmac surface [2/001].

5.4 Trench 3 (Figures 5 and 6)

5.4.1 The current building at 25 Knightrider Street is set into a depression. The part of the car park enclosed by the two wings of the building slopes downwards from south to north, with a hump suggesting potential remains beneath the service. Trench 3 was positioned to ascertain whether this 'hump' indicated the sub-surface survival of structural features relating to the former vicarage building.

5.4.2 This trench was north-west to south-east aligned, measured 10m long by 1.5m wide and was excavated to a maximum depth of 2m below ground surface level, at 10.70m AOD. All contexts recorded in Trench 3 have been summarised in Table 5, below.

Context	Type	Interpretation	Length m	Width m	Thickness/ Depth m	Height m AOD
3/001	Surface	Modern tarmac surface and underlying bedding layer	Trench	Trench	0.4-0.74	13.38
3/002	Deposit	Subsoil	Trench	Trench	0.36	12.37
3/003	Deposit	Geological substrate: orange sandy clay	-	-	-	12.6
3/004	Cut	Large shallow pit	1.9	>1.2	0.3	12.52
3/005	Deposit	Fill of pit [3/004]	1.9	>1.2	0.3	12.52
3/006	Cut + Fill	Ceramic drainage or sewage pipe and associated cut and trench fill	>1.8	1.1	>0.35	12.6
3/007	Deposit	Rubble infill of cellar	>3.78	>1.86	1.8	12.57
3/008	Masonry	Sandstone and limestone cellar wall	>1.65	0.42	>1.5	12.54
3/009	Masonry	Brick floor of cellar	>3.78	>1.86	-	10.73
3/010	Cut	Construction cut for cellar	>3.78	>1.86	>1.8	12.5
3/011	Cut	Pit	>2.2	>0.55	>0.5	12.6
3/012	Fill	Fill of pit [3/011]	>2.2	>0.55	>0.5	12.6
3/013	Fill	Fill of pit [3/016]	1.4	>0.9	0.26	12.57
3/014	Cut	Pit	>0.38	>0.14	>0.25	12.3
3/015	Fill	Fill of pit [3/014]	>0.38	>0.14	>0.25	12.3
3/016	Cut	Roughly oval pit	1.4	>0.9	0.26	12.57
3/017	Masonry	Stone and mortar wall with occasional red brick. set parallel to wall [3/008]	>0.3	0.40	0.28	12.54

Table 5: Trench 3 list of recorded contexts

5.4.3 The surface of the geological substrate [3/003] was encountered at a height of 12.60m AOD and comprised orange brown sand/ sandy clay. This surface

was truncated, at the trench's southern end, by a series of intercutting sub-circular and sub-rectangular pits [3/011], [3/014], [3/004] and [3/016].

- 5.4.4 These pits were all filled with sandy clay silts of varying coarseness ([3/012], [3/015], [3/005] and [3/013]). Patches of greenish discolouration, indicative of the presence of cess were observed in most of these deposits. All of these fills produced fragments of peg and ridge tiles; the earliest pit [3/011] produced a peg tile of likely 13th to 14th century date, which accords well with the dating of four pottery sherds also recovered from its fill. However it also contained a peg tile of possible 16th to 18th century date, which would be presumed to be intrusive (but see sections 6 and 7 below). A single peg tile of 14th to 15th century date was recovered from the next earliest pit [3/014], while tile fragments of likely later 16th to early 18th century date were recovered from the pit [3/004] which in turn cut that. The final pit in the series [3/016] produced tile fragments of 14th to 16th century date and a single cooking pot base sherd with a c. 1275 to 1375 date range.
- 5.4.5 This pit cluster was sealed by a layer of largely mid brown sandy clay silt [3/002], containing occasional patches of orange sand. This deposit was thickest (0.36m) to the southern end of the trench and became steadily thinner to the north and its presence accounts for the 'hump' observed in the car park surface in this area.
- 5.4.6 The northern end of the pit cluster was truncated by an east-northeast to west-southwest running ceramic pipe [3/006], which ran parallel to the southern edge of a cellar [3/010]. The southern side of the cellar was defined by wall [3/008] constructed of randomly-coursed stone blocks of varying size bonded with a pink mortar. Most of the northern interior face of this wall was covered in an off-white render or white-wash. This wall survived to a height of at least 1.8m and measured 0.32m in width. A narrow slit trench dug through the cellar in-fill material revealed the brick floor [3/009] of the cellar abutting the interior face of the wall.
- 5.4.7 The remains of a second wall [3/017], comprised largely of ragstone blocks of varying size, with some red brick fragments, set in a yellowish sandy mortar was recorded abutting the south-west side of the cellar. This wall extended from the western limit of the trench for only 0.28m, and while it probably relates to the former vicarage building, its function is unclear. The ceramic pipe [3/006] appeared to respect the southern side of this wall.
- 5.4.8 The cellar in-fill material [3/007] contained a broad range of building-related rubble, including concrete with embedded metal mesh, of clearly later 19th to 20th century date, as well as a large amount of stone, including four large pieces of architectural stone (two of which conjoin) of likely 16th to early 17th century date. All show signs of re-use and in one instance late post-medieval repair (see section 6.0 below).

6.0 THE FINDS

6.1 Summary

- 6.1.1 A small assemblage of finds was recovered during the evaluation at Knightrider Street, Maidstone. All finds were washed and dried or air dried as appropriate. They were subsequently quantified by count and weight and were bagged by material and context (Table 6). All finds have been packed and stored following ClfA guidelines (2014).

Context	Pottery	Wt (g)	CBM	Wt (g)	Bone	Wt (g)	Stone	Wt (g)
1/006			2	2280				
1/007			3	2299				
2/004			2	2074				
2/008			8	374				
3/005			13	259	1	1		
3/007							4	77348
3/012	4	65	4	24				
3/013	1	11	12	514				
3/015			2	140				
Total	5	76	46	7964	1	1	4	77348

Table 6: Finds Quantification

6.2 The Pottery by Luke Barber

- 6.2.1 The archaeological evaluation recovered five sherds of pottery from two individually numbered contexts. All of the material consists of medium sized sherds that are in quite fresh condition and do not appear to have been subjected to any significant reworking. Context [3/012] was dominated by three sherds (60g) of North or West Kent fine sandy greyware (Canterbury Fabric M38A). Two vessels of uncertain form are represented, one of which has wavy combed decoration. The other sherd from [3/012] is from a London-type Ware jug tempered with abundant fine quartz, decorated with white external slip under a green glaze. Context [3/013] produced a single 12g cooking pot base sherd in M38A. Overall all of the pottery can be placed in a c. 1275-1375 date range.

6.3 Ceramic Building Material (CBM) by Luke Barber

- 6.3.1 A relatively large assemblage of brick and tile was recovered during the archaeological work. The material is in mixed condition but the majority, including some of the earlier types, is in fragmented but quite fresh condition. The assemblage is summarised in Tables 7 (fabrics) and 8 (quantification).

Fabric	Description	Comments	Suggested date
B1	Sparse/common fine/medium quartz, common calcareous and iron oxide pellets to 2mm	Well formed, medium fired but with common voids to 4mm within matrix	C18th – 19th
B2	Sparse fine quartz, common red iron oxide pellets to 1mm	Well formed and fired. A pale yellow fabric with shallow frog	C19th
B3	Sparse fine quartz, sparse iron oxides to 2mm	Quite well formed, medium/well fired	C18th – early 19th
B4	Moderate/abundant fine 'sugary' quartz, very occasional iron oxides to 1mm	Well formed, medium fired	Later C17th – early 19th
B5	Sparse/common fine/medium quartz, moderate/abundant slag with common calcareous lumps to 4mm	Quite crudely formed, well/hard fired. Rounded frog profile	C19th – early 20th
T1a	Abundant fine/medium quartz, sparse calcareous pellets to 0.5mm	Quite well made, medium fired	C13th – 14th
T1b	Rare/sparse fine and medium quartz, rare calcareous flecks	Quite crudely formed but well fired. Very thin peg tiles	C14th – 15th
T2a	Sparse/moderate calcareous pellets (usually burnt out) to 1mm	Quite well formed, hard fired	C16th – 17th
T2b	Sparse calcareous pellets (usually burnt out) to 1mm, common marl swirls	Quite well formed, hard fired	C16th – 17th
T3a	Sparse fine quartz, sparse/common clay pellets to 2mm	Quite well formed, medium fired	Later C16th – early 18th
T3b	As T3a but with rare/sparse calcareous flecks to 0.5mm	Quite well formed, medium fired	Later C16th – early 18th
T4	Buff marl-rich matrix with sparse fine and medium quartz and common brown clay pellets to 3mm	Quite well formed, medium fired	C14th – 16th
T5	Rare fine quartz (virtually untempered), occasional medium quartz grains	Quite well finished, well/hard fired	C16th – 18 th ?

Table 7: Ceramic Building Material fabrics

Context	Form	Fabric	No.	Weight	Comments
1/006	Brick	B1	1	506g	67mm thick. Originally set in an off-white fine sandy mortar with some chalk but re-used in a dull yellow abundant medium sandy mortar with sparse chalk to 2mm
1/006	Brick	B2	1	1654g	? x 115 x 67mm. Set in a dull yellow sandy mortar (as that noted on the B1 brick)
1/007	Brick	B3	1	1926g	? x 115 x 65mm. Set in a buff abundant sandy mortar with common chalk to 6mm

1/007	Brick	B4	2	278g	63-65mm thick
2/004	Brick	B5	2	1982g	? x 100 x 65-67mm. Set in a buff fine sandy mortar with sparse chalk to 3mm and common coal to 2mm
2/008	Peg tile	T2a	3	114g	11-12mm thick. X1 partial circular peg hole
2/008	Peg tile	T2b	1	34g	11mm thick
2/008	Peg tile	T3a	2	80g	13-14mm thick
2/008	Peg tile	T3b	3	124g	14-15mm thick
3/005	Peg tile	T1a	1	16g	11-12mm thick
3/005	Peg tile	T2a	1	36g	12mm thick
3/005	Peg tile	T2b	1	26g	10mm thick
3/005	Ridge tile	T3a	1	70g	19mm thick
3/005	Peg tile	T4	3	66g	12mm thick
3/005	Peg tile	T5	5	34g	No dimensions survive
3/012	Peg tile	T1a	1	4g	No dimensions survive
3/012	Peg tile	T5	3	20g	9mm thick (possibly intrusive)
3/013	Peg tile	T1a	3	74g	9-10mm thick
3/013	Peg tile	T1b	8	420g	12-14mm thick. X1 with circular peg hole (14mm di tapering to 8mm di)
3/013	Peg tile	T4a	1	18g	12mm thick
3/015	Peg tile	T1b	2	138g	8-9mm thick. X1 with spots of clear glaze

Table 8: Ceramic Building Material assemblage

6.3.2 Although the overall assemblage is quite small it contains a notably diverse range of fabrics. The variety noted within the generally later post-medieval brick assemblage hints at multiple building phases and/or the re-use of brick during the 18th to 19th centuries. The roof tile exhibits a much longer chronological range with a good percentage consisting of fresh pieces of 13th- to 15th- century date (most probably being of the second half of this range). Due to the small assemblage sizes and diversity of fabrics it is uncertain if some of the finer types are intrusive or represent the introduction of very well developed types at an early date.. There is a scatter of post-medieval peg tile as well that appears to mainly relate to the earlier part of the period.

6.4 Geological Material by Luke Barber

6.4.1 Four large pieces of architectural stone (two of which conjoin) were recovered from context [3/007]. All are in Kentish Ragstone and all show signs of re-use and in one instance late post-medieval repair. The latter relates to the largest piece (2/25kg) which consists of a near complete upper corner piece from a window/door frame (overall 250mm wide, 345mm tall and 235mm thick) with decorative triangular recess on its exterior face. The apex of the internal frame curvature has a glazing groove and internally there is a rebate for a shutter. The glazing groove has had repair work done using grey fine cement, probably of the 19th century. The other two pieces (10kg and 17kg) are from externally chamfered window sills, both of which have the bases of small diamond-sectioned window mullions (75 x 95mm) incorporated and an interior 30mm wide, 30mm deep rebate. Overall all pieces would best be placed in a 16th- to early 17th- century date range.

6.5 The Animal Bone by Gemma Ayton

- 6.5.1 A single fragment of bone was recovered from one context, [3/005]. The bone has been identified as the distal end of a pig fibula. There is no evidence of butchery, burning, gnawing or pathology on the bone.

7.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Overview of stratigraphic sequence

7.1.1 Natural Geology

While the British Geological Survey (online mapping, 1:50,000 scale) records no superficial deposits in the vicinity of the site, orange brown sand/ sandy clay was exposed within all three trenches, at a height of between 11.8m and 13m AOD, being deepest to the north and shallowest to the south-east.

7.1.2 Archaeological & Structural features

Five cut features were identified; the earliest of which was the series of four intercutting pits, of likely later medieval or early post-medieval date. These cut the surface geology and were sealed by a mixed silt and sand layer, exposed at a height of 12.6m AOD within Trench 3 in the central part of the site.

The fifth cut feature was the large steep-sided pit or linear feature, of early post-medieval date, which cut the surface geology and was overlain by later post-medieval structural features, exposed at a height of 12.9m AOD in Trench 2, at the south-east corner of the site.

The remains of two cellars, of likely 18th century date, with 19th century modifications, were recorded in Trenches 2 and 3, within the footprint of the former vicarage building. The fragmentary remains of five walls, of later post-medieval to modern date, were recorded in all three trenches. These walls appear to relate to later modification/ repair of the original vicarage building and were exposed at heights of between 12.2m and 13m AOD.

Three drainage or sewage features, of ceramic tile and ceramic and cast-iron pipe construction, were identified at heights of between 12.6m and 12.87m AOD, one of which (in Trench 3) ran parallel to the outer wall of the former vicarage building with the remaining two apparently located in the building's interior. In addition, the remains of an external cobbled surface and a brick-lined pit or tank, both of modern date, were identified on the exterior of the former vicarage at a height of 13m AOD.

7.1.3 Overburden

The cellars in Trenches 1 and 3 and the brick-lined pit/ tank in Trench 2 were in-filled with loose rubble, containing architectural material of mixed late medieval to modern date, clearly derived from the demolition of the vicarage building in the 1960s. This rubble layer extended throughout the area investigated and underlay the extant tarmac surface, at heights of between 12m and 13.2m AOD.

7.2 Deposit survival and existing impacts

- 7.2.1 The construction of Chaucer House, in the western part of the site, will have likely destroyed any archaeological remains which might otherwise have survived in that part of the site.
- 7.2.2 The surface geology in the eastern part of the site (into which all medieval and post-medieval features had been cut,) was encountered at a depth of between 0.4m to 0.5m (11.8m and 13m AOD) below the current ground surface in all three trenches. Sub-surface archaeological deposits of medieval and early post-medieval date were recorded in two of the trenches.
- 7.2.4 Sub-surface structural features, in the form of cellars, drains and brick-lined pits were also recorded in all three trenches. These features were all in-filled with rubble from the 1964 demolition of the upstanding structural elements of the former vicarage building.
- 7.2.5 Only very fragmentary remains of upstanding structural features were recorded in the evaluation trenches, and it is unlikely that more intact remains survive elsewhere in this part of the site.

7.3 Discussion of archaeological remains by period

7.3.1 Medieval pits

The earliest features recorded on-site were the series of inter-cutting pits, exposed in the southern end of Trench 3. The likelihood is, based on the presence of urea-staining within their fills, that these were cess pits, excavated to the rear of the vicarage building. All of the recovered pottery from these fills indicates a date range of c. AD 1275 to 1375 for their use; however the tile fragments from the same fills have been identified as having a broader date range (see section 6, above), with types ranging from 13th to early 18th century seemingly represented.

This seeming disparity between the likely date ranges for the cess pits, as indicated by the pottery and ceramic building material assemblages may be perceived rather than real, as the CBM analysis (section 6.3, above) acknowledges that some of the finer, seemingly later, tile types may in fact represent the introduction of very well developed types at an early date.

The mixed silt and sand layer which sealed these pits may, tenuously, represent an unusual survival of a later medieval or early post-medieval soil horizon in this area. However given the substantial landscaping that must have been carried-out with the construction of Chaucer House and the surrounding car park, it seems more likely that this soil layer was redeposited as part of ground reduction associated with these works.

7.3.2 Early post-medieval

The primary fill of the large pit or linear feature identified in Trench 2

produced a number of peg tile fragments with a 16th to earlier 18th century date range. This may also have been a large cess pit or a sewage drain and appeared to be positioned parallel to the interior of the vicarage building's southern wall, as depicted on the Ordnance Survey mapping (Figure 7). The firm clay layer, which overlay the soft, primary fill of this cut feature, appeared to have been deposited in order to create a firm surface after the pit/ drain had gone out of use, with perhaps a secondary function of sealing the likely malodorous earlier deposit.

The red brick footing identified in the north-east corner of Trench 2, and seemingly post-dating the large cess pit/ drain matches the postulated position of the south-eastern wall of the vicarage's north range, as described by Nicholas Wall in 1650 (see CgMs 2015). However this wall also matches the location of what appears to be the western side of a covered passageway leading from the garden at the rear to the front of the property, and is depicted on the OS maps from 1865 to 1937. The 1940 aerial photo of the site (CgMs *ibid.*) clearly depicts a pathway running to and from this passageway.

Evidence for the earlier post-medieval phase of the building was also represented by the architectural remains recovered from the material in-filling the later cellars, with the window/door frame and chamfered window sill fragments from Trench 3 being of likely 16th to early 17th century date. This is consistent with photographs from the 1920s (held by Maidstone Museum) which show elegant medieval or early post-medieval architectural features incorporated into the then extant priory/vicarage building (see CgMs 2015).

7.3.2 Later post-medieval/ modern

The cellars identified in Trenches 1 and 3 appear, on the basis of their wall forms and fabrics, to be of 18th century date with modification and reuse of earlier building material, in the 19th century. The fragmentary wall, which abuts the southern side of the cellar in Trench 3, likely represents the remains of the southern wall of the north range of the vicarage, as depicted on the OS mapping (Figure 7). The equally fragmentary stone and brick wall in the north face of Trench 1, matches the position of the eastern wall of the building, although as it appears to post-date the likely 18th century cellar wall it must represent a later repair or modification to the original vicarage.

These outer walls, and the interior stone wall recorded in the south-west corner of Trench 1, likely utilised masonry from the original medieval / early post-medieval structure, a probability reinforced by the evidence for reuse and repair observed on the architectural fragments recovered from the rubble in-fill of the cellar in Trench 3.

The brick-lined feature recorded in the south-west of Trench 2 is of 19th to 20th century date and is not easily identifiable with any of the structures depicted on the available cartographic material and appeared to lie outside the footprint of the vicarage building itself; perhaps this was sub-surface pit or tank of some sort, as opposed to an internal cellar.

The cobbled surface observed in the eastern side of Trench 2 probably abutted the southern wall of the building's south range and probably represents the remains of a yard surface of 19th or early 20th century date.

7.4 Consideration of research aims

7.4.1 The evaluation has largely succeeded in addressing the general aims of the evaluation as outlined in the WSI (ASE 2016):

- The presence of archaeological deposits has been confirmed within the site
- These archaeological deposits likely survive only in the eastern and south-western parts of the site; the northern and eastern parts of the site likely formerly contained archaeological deposits, but these have been removed by the construction of Chaucer House and its associated groundworks.
- The identified archaeological deposits appear to date from the later middle ages and early post-medieval periods and comprise probable cess pits from the earlier periods and cellars associated with later post-medieval modification to the earlier medieval vicarage
- The evaluation has established the presence, extent and date of archaeological deposits

7.4.2 In addition, the evaluation has addressed the specific research aims, based on the findings of the South-East Research Framework (SERF):

- The evaluation has confirmed the on-site presence of medieval deposits and artefactual material, dating from the later 13th century onwards, confirming the site's association with the All Saints ecclesiastical college complex. Further, this indicates that Knightrider Street was likely an important route to and from the religious complex and the town in general, in the later medieval period.
- The evaluation has shown that the medieval vicarage building was likely continually occupied, with frequent modifications and additions, throughout the post-medieval period, and the analysis of available cartographic material carried out as part of the desk-based assessment suggests that this occupation continued to be of an ecclesiastical nature for most of this period.

7.4 Conclusions

7.4.1 Groundworks associated with the construction of the extant late 20th century building known as Chaucer House will likely have truncated any formerly surviving deposits or structural features in the northern, and most of the western, parts of the site.

- 7.4.2 The evaluation has succeeded in establishing the presence of archaeological deposits and features dating from the later 13th century, when the All Saints vicarage is assumed to have been founded. These medieval features comprised probable cess pits, located outside of, but almost certainly associated with, the vicarage building.
- 7.4.2 The evaluation has also established the presence of sub-surface features of post-medieval date, within the footprint of the vicarage itself. These comprised a large probable internal cess pit or drain of 16th or 17th century date and the remains of two cellars of probable 18th century construction, with later 19th century modifications.
- 7.4.3 Upstanding remains of the former vicarage were also identified, although these were in a very fragmentary condition, and analysis of their construction materials indicated that they were late post-medieval modifications, albeit also incorporating earlier post-medieval architectural elements.

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HER Summary

HER enquiry no.	-				
Site code	KNI16				
Project code	160100				
Planning reference	-				
Site address	25 Knightrider Street, Maidstone, Kent				
District/Borough	Maidstone				
NGR (12 figures)	576156 155343				
Geology	Hythe Formation sandstone and limestone / Atherfield Clay Formation sandstone and mudstone				
Fieldwork type	Eval				
Date of fieldwork	29/2/16-8/3/16				
Sponsor/client	CgMs				
Project manager	Paul Mason				
Project supervisor	Suzie Westall				
Period summary					
			Medieval	Post-Medieval	Modern
Project summary (100 word max)	<p><i>The evaluation was carried out on the location of a former vicarage associated with a medieval ecclesiastical college complex. The evaluation identified a group of intercutting cess pits of likely 13th-14th century date, which would have been located outside the vicarage building as well as a large probable internal cess pit or drain of 16th or 17th century date.</i></p> <p><i>No evidence for extant medieval structural remains was found, however a number of later post-medieval structural features were recorded; these comprised the remains of two cellars of probable 18th to 19th century construction, as well as the fragmentary remains of later post-medieval walls, albeit also incorporating earlier post-medieval architectural elements.</i></p>				

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-245234

Project details

The evaluation was carried out on the location of a former vicarage associated with a medieval ecclesiastical college complex. The evaluation identified a group of intercutting cess pits of likely 13th-14th century date, which would have been located outside the vicarage building as well as a large probable internal cess pit or drain of 16th or 17th century date.

No evidence for extant medieval structural remains was found, however a number of later post-medieval structural features were recorded; these comprised the remains of two cellars of probable 18th to 19th century construction, as well as the fragmentary remains of later post-medieval walls, albeit also incorporating earlier post-medieval architectural elements.

Project name	An Archaeological Evaluation at 25 Knightrider Street, Maidstone, Kent
Project dates	Start: 29-02-2016 End: 08-03-2016
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 3 - Built over
Monument type	WALL Post Medieval
Monument type	PIT Post Medieval
Monument type	PIT Medieval
Methods & techniques	"Targeted Trenches"
Development type	Not recorded
Prompt	Voluntary/self-interest
Position in the planning process	Pre-application
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	KENT MAIDSTONE MAIDSTONE 25 Knightrider Street
Postcode	ME15 6ND
Study area	0 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 76156 55343 51.269470441724 0.52545231969 51 16 10 N 000 31 31 E Point
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	Archaeology South East

Project brief originator	CgMs Consulting
Project design originator	CgMs Consulting
Project director/manager	Paul Mason
Project supervisor	Suzie Westall
Type of sponsor/funding body	CgMs Consulting
Project archives	
Physical Archive recipient	MAIDSTONE MUSEUM
Physical Contents	"Ceramics", "Worked stone/lithics"
Digital Archive recipient	MAIDSTONE MUSEUM
Digital Media available	"Database", "Images raster / digital photography", "Survey"
Paper Archive recipient	MAIDSTONE MUSEUM
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Drawing", "Report", "Section", "Unpublished Text"
Project bibliography 1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	An Archaeological Evaluation at 25 Knightrider Street, Maidstone, Kent.
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Westall, S.
Other bibliographic details	ASE report no. 2016099
Date	2016
Issuer or publisher	Archaeology South East
Place of issue or publication	Portslade, East Sussex
Description	Evaluation Report
Entered by	suzie westall (s.westall@ucl.ac.uk)
Entered on	9 March 2016



© Archaeology South-East		Knightrider St, Maidstone	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 160100	March 2016	Site location	
Report Ref: 2016099	Drawn by: LG		



© Archaeology South-East		Knightrider St, Maidstone	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 160100	Feb 2016	Trench location	
Report Ref: 2016099	Drawn by: LG		



Trench 1 looking north



1/003 and 1/009 looking east



1/003 fully excavated to cellar floor 1/008

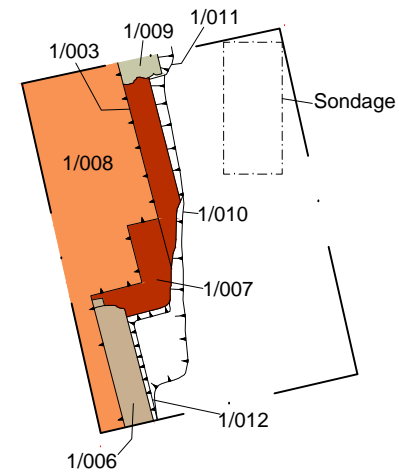


1/006 and 1/007 looking north-west



1/006 and 1/007 looking south-west

+ 576143, 155361



- Brick wall
- Brick floor
- Sandstone and Limestone
- Limestone

+ 576150, 155348

0 2m



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Project Ref: 160100

March 2016

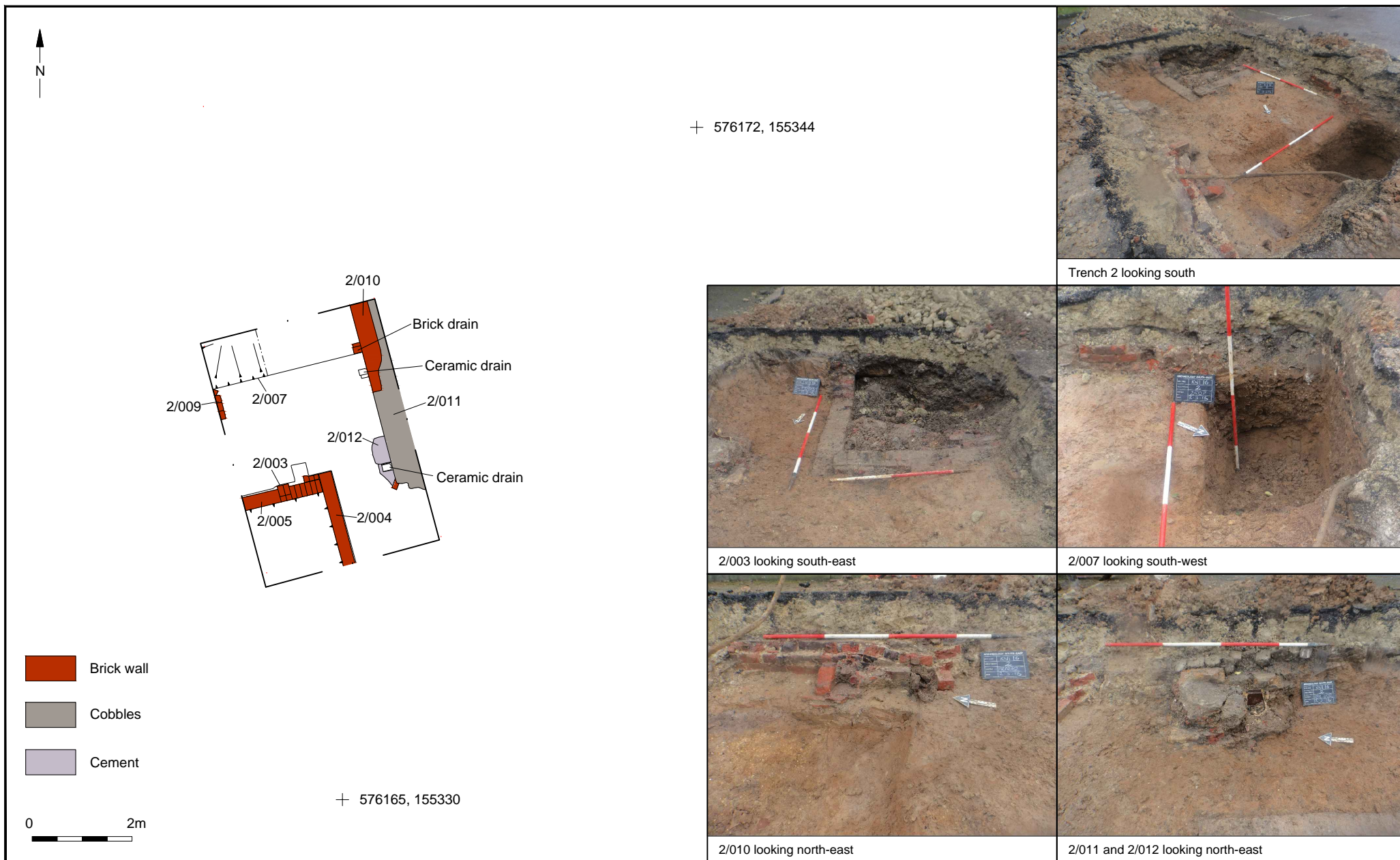
Report Ref: 2016099

Drawn by: LG

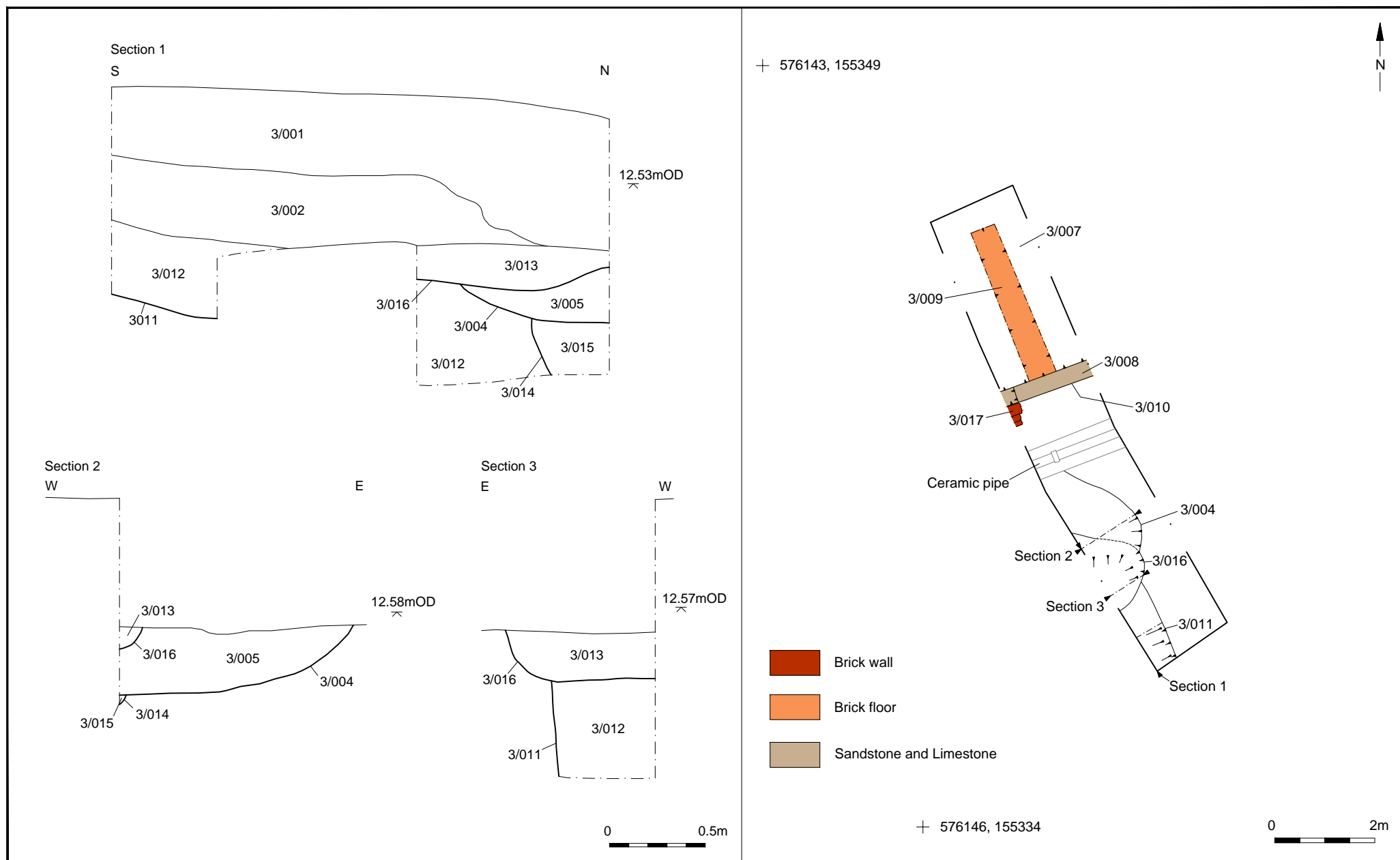
Knightrider Street, Maidstone

Trench 1 plan and photographs

Fig.3



© Archaeology South-East		Knightrider Street, Maidstone	Fig.4
Project Ref: 160100	March 2016	Trench 2 plan and photographs	
Report Ref: 2016099	Drawn by: LG		



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March 2016

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Knightrider Street, Maidstone

Trench 3 plan and sections

Fig.5



Trench 3 looking north-west



Tr. 3 looking south-east with view of 3/007



3/008 and 3/017 looking south-west



3/004, 3/011, 3/014 and 3/016 looking south-west

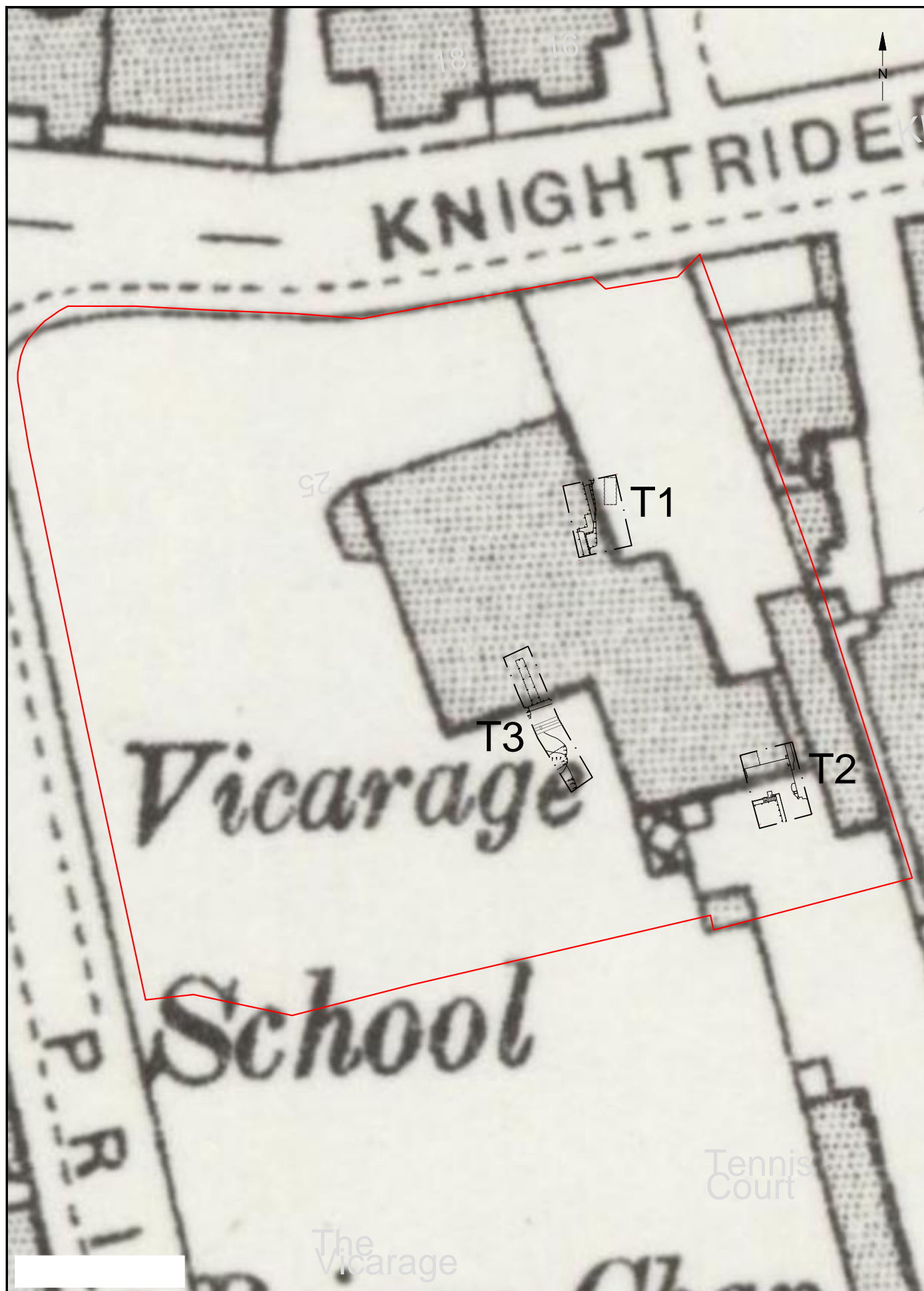


3/004, 3/014 and 3/016 looking north-west



3/011 and 3/016 looking south-east

© Archaeology South-East		Knightrider Street, Maidstone	Fig.6
Project Ref: 160100	March 2016	Trench 3 photographs	
Report Ref: 2016099	Drawn by: LG		



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