

**Archaeological Evaluation Report  
Land at Ashford Designer Outlet  
Ashford, Kent**

**NGR: 601337 141054  
TR 01207 41044**

**Planning Ref: 14/01402/AS**

**ASE Project No: 160304  
Site Code: ADO16**

**ASE Report No: 2016217  
OASIS id: archaeol6-253077**



**By Jake Wilson**

**Archaeological Evaluation Report  
Land at Ashford Designer Outlet  
Ashford, Kent**

**NGR: 601337 141054  
TR 01207 41044**

**Planning Ref: 14/01402/AS**

**ASE Project No: 160304  
Site Code: ADO16**

**ASE Report No: 2016217  
OASIS id: archaeol6-253077**

<b>Prepared by:</b>	<b>Jake Wilson</b>	<b>Archaeologist</b>	
<b>Reviewed and approved by:</b>	<b>Dan Swift</b>	<b>Project Manager</b>	
<b>Date of Issue:</b>	<b>June 2016</b>		
<b>Revision:</b>			

**Archaeology South-East  
Units 1 & 2  
2 Chapel Place  
Portslade  
East Sussex  
BN41 1DR**

**Tel: 01273 426830  
Fax: 01273 420866  
Email: [fau@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:fau@ucl.ac.uk)**

## **Abstract**

*Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Orion heritage to undertake an 18 trench archaeological evaluation on land at Ashford designer outlet, Kent.*

*The site has been levelled during previous heavy groundworks that have truncated the natural topsoil, subsoil and underlying geology. The subsoil horizon has been completely removed during this groundwork with the exception of Trenches 1 and 18 (and partially in Trenches 3 and 17) where intact subsoil was recorded.*

*No archaeological features, deposits or finds were recovered in any of the trenches.*

## **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction**
- 2.0 Archaeological Background**
- 3.0 Archaeological Methodology**
- 4.0 Results**
- 5.0 Discussion and Conclusions**

**Bibliography**  
**Acknowledgements**

**HER Summary**  
**OASIS Form**

**Appendix 1: Archaeologically negative trenches: list of recorded contexts**

## **TABLES**

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

Table 2: Trench 1 and 18 list of recorded contexts

Table 3: Archaeologically negative trenches: list of recorded contexts

## **FIGURES**

Figure 1: Site location

Figure 2: Trench plan

Figure 3: Trench photographs 1-18

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site Background**

- 1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE) has been commissioned by Orion Heritage to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at Ashford Designer Outlet, Ashford, Kent, TN24 0DS, hereafter 'the site' (centred on NGR 601337 141054; Figure 1).

### **1.2 Geology and Topography**

- 1.2.1 The British Geological Survey map shows the underlying geology of the site as Weald Clay Formation Mudstone overlain with alluvium (BGS 2016).
- 1.2.2 The site lies to the south of Ashford town centre, to the immediate south of the existing outlet centre. It is bounded to the north by the Aylesford Stream, which separates the site from the Asda Superstore and its carpark, to the south and east by agricultural fields and to the west by the A2042. It is currently given over to pasture

### **1.3 Planning Background**

- 1.3.1 A draft planning decision notice was issued by Ashford Borough Council for the development of the site as a car park (14/01402/AS). The recommended archaeological condition is as follows:

*No development involving preparation for or the creation of the new southern car park shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written specification and timetable which has previously been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing.*

### **1.4 Scope of Report**

- 1.4.1 This report details the findings of the archaeological evaluation carried out between the 9<sup>th</sup> and the 13<sup>th</sup> of May 2016. The archaeological work was undertaken by Jake Wilson (Archaeologist) and Lucy May (Archaeologist) with survey done by Vasilis Tsamis. The project was managed by Paul Mason (fieldwork) and by Jim Stevenson and Dan Swift (Post-excavation).

## **2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Introduction**

- 2.1.1 An Environmental Statement prepared for the wider outlet development states that the archaeological potential for the site is considered to be moderate for remains of local significance (Peter Brett Associates 2014).
- 2.1.2 The potential of the site derives largely from its proximity to areas of identified prehistoric activity; including an Iron Age cremation located to c. 500m to the south-east at White Willow Close and an Iron Age field system to the east at Cudworth Road. A series of linear cropmarks located to the south of the site, on the opposite bank of the East Stour River, may also be remnants of a prehistoric field system.

### **2.2 Project Aims and Objectives**

- 2.2.1 The broad aims of the evaluation, in keeping with previous similar projects are:
- To assess the character, extent, preservation, significance, date and quality of any such remains and deposits
  - To assess how they might be affected by the development of the site
  - To establish the extent to which previous groundworks and/or other processes have affected archaeological deposits at the site
  - To assess what options should be considered for mitigation
- 2.2.2 The project will seek to inform on the following areas of research in line with the South-Eastern Research Framework (SERF):
- Determine the presence or absence of prehistoric activity on the site. If present the work should seek to clarify the form, character and extent where possible.

### 3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Fieldwork Methodology

- 3.1.1 The trial trench evaluation comprised of the excavation of eighteen trenches, each measuring 30m x 1.8m. Trenches were excavated as specified in the WSI. No adjustments were necessary. (Figure 2)
- 3.1.2 The trench locations were scanned prior to excavation using a Cable Avoidance Tool (CAT) operated by accredited ASE personnel.
- 3.1.3 Trenches were excavated by a tracked machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under archaeological supervision, grading in spits of no more than 0.10m at a time until natural geology was reached.
- 3.1.4 In Trench 1 a sondage was placed at the beginning of the trench to confirm geological deposits.
- 3.1.5 All deposits were recorded using standard ASE context sheets with colours recorded by visual inspection only. A digital photographic record was made of the trenches.
- 3.1.6 No environmental samples were taken as no suitable deposits were encountered. No finds were recovered.
- 3.1.7 Trenches were located and levelled using a GPS and tied into the Ordnance Survey.
- 3.1.8 Spoil heaps and trench bases were scanned by eye, for unstratified artefacts.

#### 3.2 Archive

- 3.3.1 The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will be deposited at a local museum in due course. The contents of the Archive are tabulated below.

Number of Contexts	5
No. of files/paper record	18
Plan and sections sheets	0
Colour photographs	0
B&W photos	0
Digital photos	60
Permatrace sheets	0
Trench Record Forms	18

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

## **4.0 RESULTS (Figure 2)**

4.0.1 No archaeological features, deposits or finds were recorded in any of the trenches.

### **4.1 Trenches 1 and 18**

<b>Context</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Max. Length m</b>	<b>Max. Width m</b>	<b>Deposit Thickness m</b>
/001	Layer	Topsoil			0.10m-0.20m
/002	Layer	Subsoil			0.12m-0.24m
/003	Layer	Natural			0.02m+
18/004	Layer	Modern/Made ground	0.60m+	1.8m+	0.66m

Table 2: Trench 1 and 18 list of recorded contexts

4.1.1 The sequence in Trench 1 appeared undisturbed and consisted of a natural orange-grey clay [/003] with no inclusions, overlain by clay silt subsoil [/002] and soft brown silt clay topsoil [/001].

4.1.2 The sequence in Trench 18 consisted of a natural orange-grey clay [/003] with no inclusions, overlain by clay silt subsoil [/002] and soft brown silt clay topsoil [/001]. A layer of modern made ground [18/004] at the northern end of the trench was consistent with the made ground recorded in the rest of the site (see below).

### **4.2 Trenches 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17**

4.2.1 The natural geology was variously truncated by concrete footings and was directly overlain by a layer of made ground consisting of varying degrees of hardcore, concrete and asphalt. The thickness of the made ground was between 0.13m to 0.92m.

4.2.2 A partially surviving subsoil horizon was recorded in Trenches 3 and 17.

4.2.3 The made ground layer was overlain by (imported) topsoil which varied in thickness between 0.8m and 0.64m.

4.2.4 A summary of contexts in these trenches is tabulated as Appendix 1.

## **5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 5.1 No archaeological features, deposits or finds were recovered in any of the trenches.
- 5.2 The site has been levelled during previous heavy groundworks that have truncated the natural topsoil, subsoil and underlying geology. Evidence of an access road was present in multiple trenches with long stretches of asphalt uncovered.
- 5.3 The subsoil horizon has been completely removed during this groundwork with the exception of Trenches 1 and 18 (and partially in Trenches 3 and 17) where intact subsoil was recorded.
- 5.4 The evaluation has been successful in establishing the nature of the site and determining truncation levels.
- 5.5 There was no potential to address the research aims South-Eastern Research Framework (SERF).
- 5.6 The development of the site is not considered to have any archaeological impact.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

ASE 2016 Written Scheme of Investigation for Land at Ashford Designer Outlet, Ashford, Kent, TN24 0DS Archaeological Evaluation.

English Heritage 2002. Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation and Geoarchaeology: Using earth sciences to understand the archaeological record

English Heritage 2008. Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE), Project Planning Notes 3 (PPN3): Archaeological Excavation

ESCC. 2008. Recommended Standard Conditions for Archaeological Fieldwork, Recording, and Post-Excavation Work (Development Control) in East Sussex

Kent County Council 2007. Standard Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief/evaluation/excavation

MoLAS 1994. Site Manual for Archaeological Fieldwork

Peter Brett Associates 2014. Environmental Statement for the Ashford Designer Outlet, Ashford, Kent

Watkinson, D E & Neal V, 2001, First Aid for Finds, RESCUE/UKIC Archaeology Section

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

ASE would like to thank Orion Heritage for commissioning the work and for their assistance throughout the project, and Kent County Archaeologist Wendy Rogers for her guidance and monitoring. The evaluation was directed by Jake Wilson with Lucy May providing secondary supervisory cover. Lauren Gison produced the figures for this report; Paul Mason managed the excavations, Jim Stevenson and Dan Swift the post-excavation process.

## HER Summary

Site Code	ADO16					
Identification Name and Address	Land at Ashford designer Outlet, Ashford, Kent, TN24 0DS					
County, District &/or Borough	Kent					
OS Grid Refs.	TR 01249 41086					
Geology	Weald Clay					
Arch. South-East Project Number	160304					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval.					
Type of Site	Green Field					
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval. 06/05/16-10/05/16					
Sponsor/Client	Orion Hertiage					
Project Manager	Paul Mason					
Project Supervisor	Jake Wilson					
Period Summary						
				Other Modern		
<p>Summary</p> <p>The site has been levelled during previous heavy groundworks that have truncated the natural topsoil, subsoil and underlying geology. The subsoil horizon has been completely removed during this groundwork with the exception of Trenches 1 and 18 (and partially in Trenches 3 and 17) where intact subsoil was recorded.</p> <p>No archaeological features, deposits or finds were recovered in any of the trenches.</p>						

## OASIS Form

**OASIS ID: archaeol6-253077**

### Project details

Project name	Land at Ashford designer outlet, Ashford,Kent
Short description of the project	The site has been levelled during previous heavy groundworks that have truncated the natural topsoil, subsoil and underlying geology. The subsoil horizon has been completely removed during this groundwork with the exception of Trenches 1 and 18 (and partially in Trenches 3 and 17) where intact subsoil was recorded. No archaeological features, deposits or finds were recovered in any of the trenches.
Project dates	Start: 09-05-2016 End: 13-05-2016
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	14/01402/AS - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	ADO16 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Grassland Heathland 3 - Disturbed
Monument type	- None
Monument type	- None
Significant Finds	- None
Significant Finds	- None
Methods & techniques	""Sample Trenches""
Development type	Car park (flat)

Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	Not known / Not recorded

**Project location**

Country	England
Site location	KENT ASHFORD ASHFORD Land at Ashford designer outlet, Ashford, Kent
Postcode	TN24 0DS
Study area	87865.54 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 601337 141054 50.903600195742 0.277722399119 50 54 12 N 000 16 39 E Point
Site coordinates	50.867011398102 1.697456511657 50 52 01 N 001 41 50 E Point
Lat/Long Datum	Unknown
Height OD / Depth	Min: 10m Max: 10m

**Project creators**

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South East
Project brief originator	Archaeology South-East
Project design originator	ACS Archaeology Ltd
Project director/manager	Paul Mason
Project supervisor	Jake Wilson
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer

Name of  
sponsor/funding  
body

Orion heritage

**Project archives**

Physical Archive  
Exists?

No

Physical Archive  
recipient

local museum

Digital Archive  
recipient

ASE

Digital Contents

"none"

Digital Media  
available

"GIS","Images raster / digital photography","Survey"

Paper Archive  
recipient

ASE

Paper Contents

"none"

Paper Media  
available

"Context sheet","Plan"

Entered by

Jake Wilson (Jakeman0@live.co.uk)

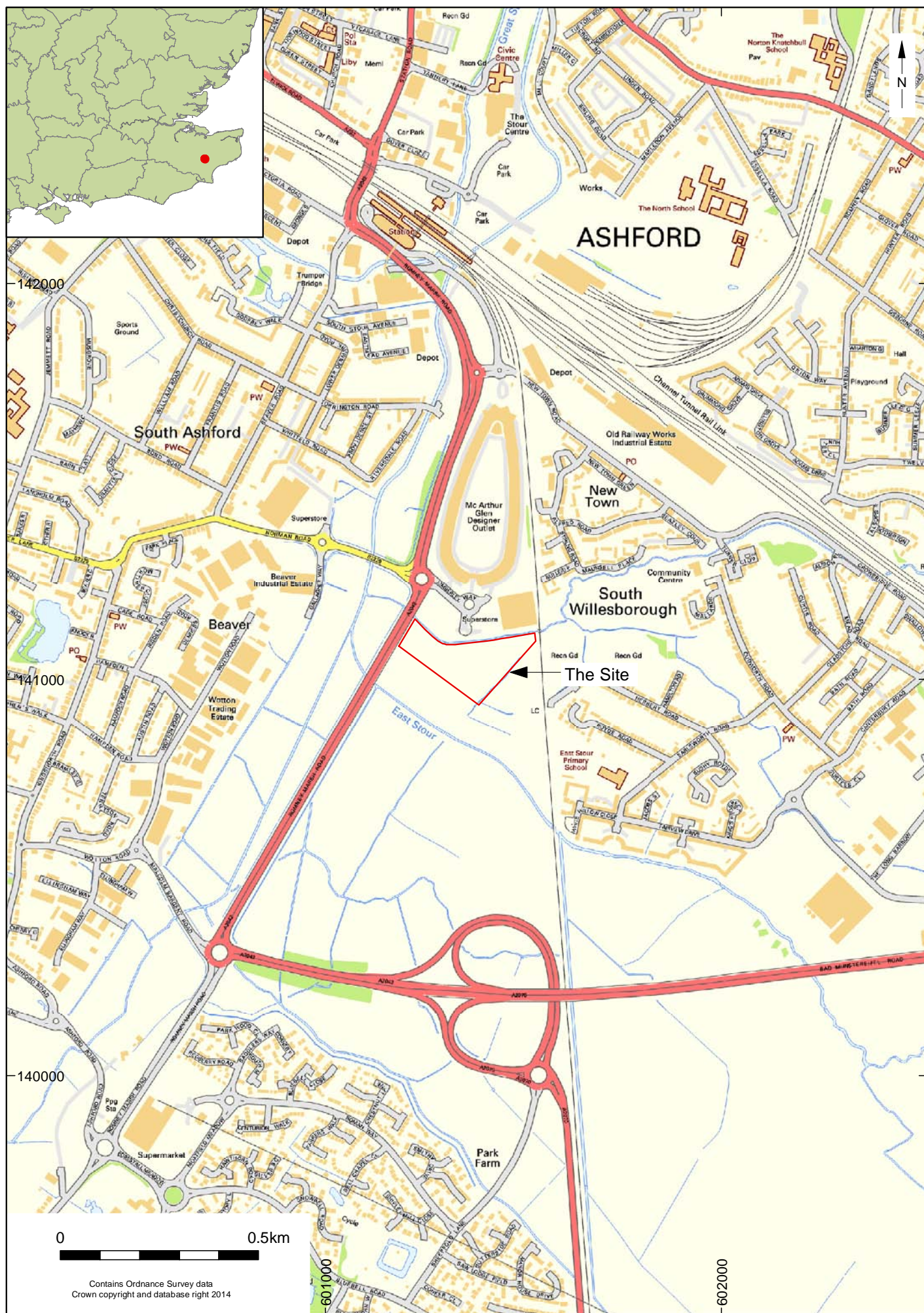
Entered on

26 May 2016

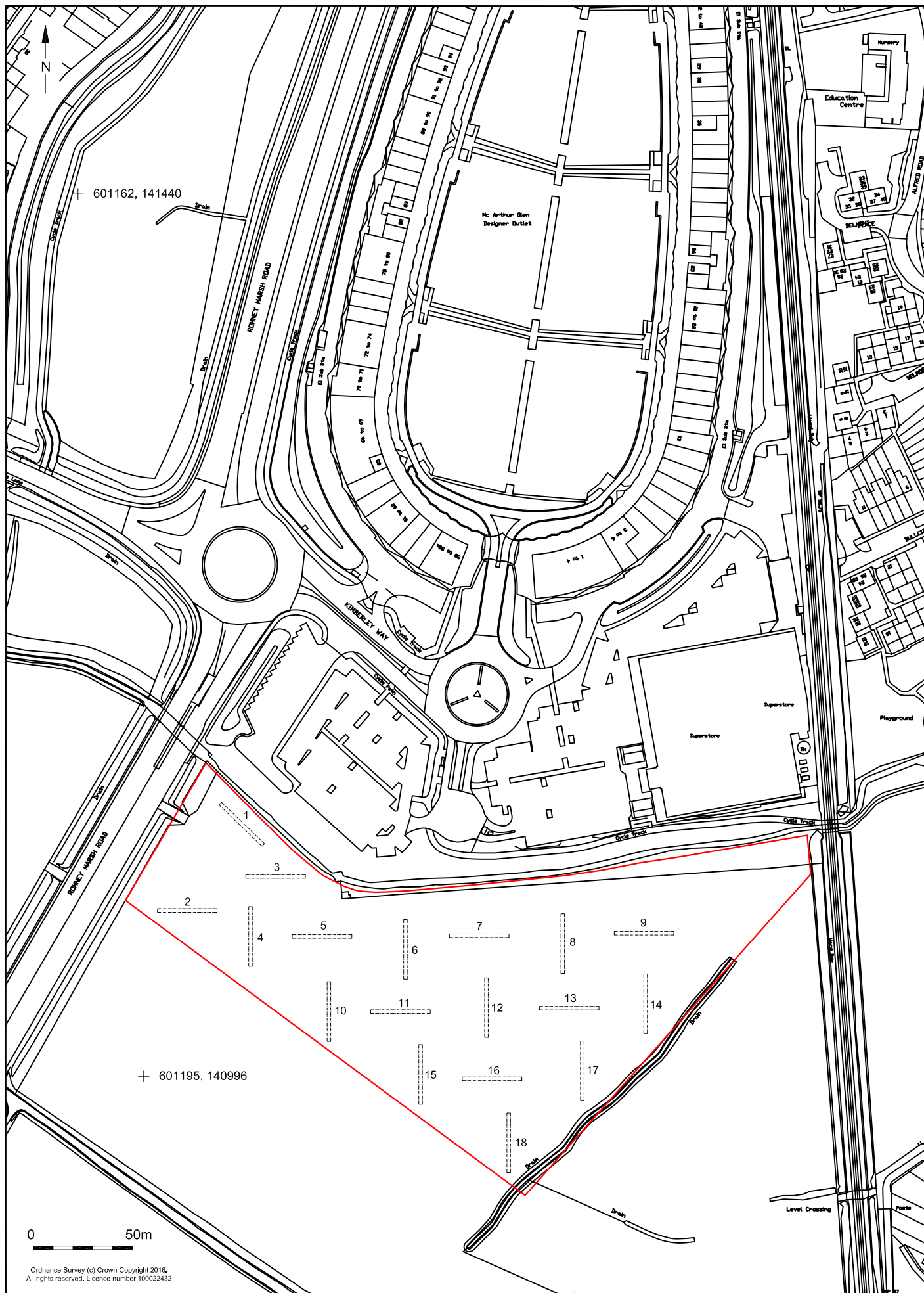
## Appendix 1: Archaeologically negative trenches: list of recorded contexts

Trench Number	Context	Type	Description	Deposit Thickness m	Height m AOD
2	001	Layer	Topsoil	0.08-0.12m	36.29
2	002	Layer	Natural	0.03m+	35.25
2	003	Layer	Made ground	0.72m-0.92m	36.17
3	001	Layer	Topsoil	0.06m-0.45m	36.33
3	002	Layer	Subsoil	0.11m-0.28m	35.88
3	003	Layer	Natural	0.2m+	35.60
4	001	Layer	Topsoil	0.09m-0.54m	36.51
4	002	Layer	Natural	0.01m+	35.37
4	003	Layer	Made Ground	0.13m-0.60m	35.97
5	001	Layer	Topsoil	0.07m-0.10m	36.79
5	002	Layer	Natural	0.01m+	35.86
5	003	Layer	Made ground	0.40m-0.52m	36.69
5	004	Layer	Asphalt	0.08m	36.17
5	005	Layer	Made ground/gravel	0.23m	36.09
6	001	Layer	Topsoil	0.10m-0.64m	36.63
6	002	Layer	Natural	0.01m+	35.41
6	003	Layer	Made ground	0.10m-0.30m	35.99
6	004	Layer	Asphalt	0.08m	35.69
6	005	Layer	Made ground/ Gravel	0.20m	35.61
7	001	Layer	Topsoil	0.07m-0.12m	36.76
7	002	Layer	Natural	0.01m	35.08
7	003	Layer	Made ground	0.37m-0.50m	35.58
7	004	Layer	Concrete	0.44m-0.62m	36.64
7	005	Layer	Made ground/gravel	0.28m-0.44m	36.02
8	001	Layer	Topsoil	0.06m-0.08m	38.88
8	002	Layer	Natural	0.01m+	37.73
8	003	Layer	Made ground	0.34m-0.74m	38.80
8	004	Layer	Asphalt	0.08m	38.06
8	005	Layer	Made ground/gravel	0.22m-0.25m	37.98
9	001	Layer	Topsoil	0.08-0.13m	36.70
9	002	Layer	Natural	0.01m+	35.87
9	003	Layer	Made Ground	0.50m-0.70m	36.57
10	001	Layer	Topsoil	0.09m-0.17m	36.63
10	002	Layer	Natural	0.01m+	35.34
10	003	Layer	Made Ground	0.20m-0.56m	35.90
10	004	Layer	Concrete	0.35m	36.46
11	001	Layer	Topsoil	0.06m-0.10m	36.84
11	002	Layer	Natural	0.01m+	35.75
11	003	Layer	Made ground	0.54m-0.56m	36.74
11	004	Layer	Asphalt	0.08m	36.19
11	005	Layer	Made ground/Gravel	0.33m-0.36m	36.11
12	001	Layer	Topsoil	0.08m-0.09m	36.99
12	002	Layer	Natural	0.01m+	35.89
12	003	Layer	Made Ground	0.65m-0.85m	36.90
12	004	Layer	Made ground/Gravel	0.14m	36.05
13	001	Layer	Topsoil	0.05m-0.12m	37.03
13	002	Layer	Natural	0.01m+	36.01
13	003	Layer	Made Ground	0.70m-0.90m	36.91

<b>Trench Number</b>	<b>Context</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Deposit Thickness m</b>	<b>Height m AOD</b>
14	001	Layer	Topsoil	0.05m-0.07m	36.71
14	002	Layer	Natural	0.01m+	35.89
14	003	Layer	Made Ground	0.37m-0.75m	36.64
15	001	Layer	Topsoil	0.04m-0.12m	36.59
15	002	Layer	Natural	0.01m+	35.52
15	003	Layer	Made Ground	0.36m-0.95m	36.47
16	001	Layer	Topsoil	0.06m-0.10m	36.85
16	002	Layer	Natural	0.01m+	35.88
16	003	Layer	Made Ground	0.68m-0.87m	36.75
17	001	Layer	Topsoil	0.07m-0.17m	36.70
17	002	Layer	Subsoil	0.24m	36.58
17	003	Layer	Natural	0.01m+	35.68
17	004	Layer	Made Ground	0.24m-0.90m	36.34



© Archaeology South-East		Ashford Designer Outlet	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 160304	May 2016	Site location	
Report Ref: 2016217	Drawn by: LG		



© Archaeology South-East		Ashford Designer Outlet	Fig.2
Project Ref: 160304	May 2016	Trench Location	
Report Ref: 2016217	Drawn by: LG		



Trench 1 looking south-east



Trench 2 looking north-east



Trench 3 looking west



Trench 4 looking south



Trench 5 looking east



Trench 6 looking north



Trench 7 looking east



Trench 8 looking south



Trench 9 looking north



Trench 10 looking north



Trench 11 looking east



Trench 12 looking south



Trench 13 looking east



Trench 14 looking south



Trench 15 looking south



Trench 16 looking east



Trench 17 looking south



Trench 18 looking south

**Sussex Office**

Units 1 & 2  
2 Chapel Place  
Portslade  
East Sussex BN41 1DR  
tel: +44(0)1273 426830  
email: [fau@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:fau@ucl.ac.uk)  
web: [www.archaeologyse.co.uk](http://www.archaeologyse.co.uk)

**Essex Office**

27 Eastways  
Witham  
Essex  
CM8 3YQ  
tel: +44(0)1376 331470  
email: [fau@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:fau@ucl.ac.uk)  
web: [www.archaeologyse.co.uk](http://www.archaeologyse.co.uk)

**London Office**

Centre for Applied Archaeology  
UCL Institute of Archaeology  
31-34 Gordon Square  
London WC1H 0PY  
tel: +44(0)20 7679 4778  
email: [fau@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:fau@ucl.ac.uk)  
web: [www.ucl.ac.uk/caa](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/caa)

