

Proposed development of visitor facilities at Scheduled Monument of Reculver Roman Fort and Anglo-Saxon Monastery (SM 1018784), Reculver, Kent

Archaeological Impact Assessment

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SUMMARY

This report presents an impact assessment, including rapid archaeological appraisal, of the hinterland of Scheduled Monument of Reculver Roman Fort and Saxon Monastery (SM 1018784) within the Reculver Conservation Area (Designated on 09.12.1997), in view of proposed development of the Reculver Country Park (in an area centred TR 22771 69247). The report was commissioned by Anna Stevens of Canterbury City Council in August 2016.

The proposed scheme has been considered in terms of visitor amenity and, at the same time, maintenance and improvement of the setting of the monument as part of an historic landscape per se. Several options for development of the visitor facilities for the monument, including camping and motorhome parking, have been put forward from the landscape architectural perspective, which have been further tested here in view of potential impacts on the historic environment, in particular the setting of the Scheduled Monument.

It is important to note, first and foremost, that the proposed scheme forms part of the ongoing development of the wider area of the Reculver coast as a financially sustainable Country Park. This is vital, in that it offers new opportunities, in close liaison with Historic England, for:

- upping the publicity profile of the monument and its setting and thereby improving its level of perceived value, leading to better protection;*
- redefining a consistent conservation management plan, policy and implementation in light of current threats, to be implemented through local interested parties;*
- encouragement of local agents, champions and fund raisers for the monument and its setting, such as a “Friends” group;*
- realising further heritage focussed aesthetics through community activities, ranging from tours and open days to perhaps field walking or other community archaeology projects;*
- building a framework within which further research on the monument can be undertaken.*

For this report, baseline geological, topographical, archaeological and historical data have been reviewed, and a site walkover was conducted on 09/08/16 with a particular view to understanding potential impacts of the various design options on the existing setting of the monument.

Having applied a range of standard heritage impact assessment criteria, this report finds that Option 2 is preferred, in that it will capitalise on an existing improvement in the current setting of the monument, and also allow for further improvements on an ongoing basis through continued sensitive development of the Country Park for future generations of visitors to the monument.

A raft of mitigation recommendations for the current scheme is also offered.

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents an impact assessment, including rapid archaeological appraisal, relating to the hinterland of the Scheduled Monument of Reculver Roman Fort and Saxon Monastery (SM 1018784) within the Reculver Conservation Area (Designated on 09.12.1997), in view of proposed development of the Reculver Country Park (in an area centred on TR 22771 69247, see Fig 33). The report was commissioned by Anna Stevens of Canterbury City Council in August 2016.
- 1.2 The proposed scheme has been considered in terms of visitor amenity and, at the same time, maintenance and improvement the setting of the monument as part of an historic landscape *per se*. Several options for development of the visitor facilities for the monument, including camping and motorhome parking, have been put forward from the landscape architectural perspective, which have been further tested here in view of potential impacts on the historic environment, in particular the setting of the Scheduled Monument.
- 1.3 First and foremost, the point should be made that development of the area as an economically sustainable Country Park offers new opportunities, in close liaison with Historic England, for:
 - Upping the publicity profile of the monument and its setting and thereby improving its level of perceived value, leading to better protection
 - Consistent conservation management planning, policy and implementation through local interested parties
 - Encouragement of local agents, champions and fund raisers for the monument and its setting, such as a “Friends” group
 - In light of the above, realising further heritage focussed aesthetics through community activities, ranging from tours and open days to perhaps field walking or other community archaeology projects
 - Perhaps as an adjunct for the above, providing a framework within which further research on the monument can be undertaken.
- 1.4 For the current report, baseline geological, topographical, archaeological and historical data have been reviewed, and a site walkover was conducted on 09/08/16 with a particular view to understanding potential impacts of the various design options on the existing setting of the monument.
- 1.5 This assessment is a consultation document prepared for the client which may be submitted both to Historic England and as part of a planning proposal or supplementing a heritage statement for example.

2. POLICY AND RESEARCH FRAMEWORKS

- 2.1 This report has been prepared in accordance with national and local policy regarding heritage assets and with reference to research frameworks.

National policy

Historic England

- 2.2 Historic England, who are responsible for the protection of the Scheduled Monument and its setting, have requested an options appraisal in this case; the following assessment has been undertaken in view of the principles set out in the relevant Historic England Guidance (English Heritage 2008; Historic England 2015).

National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG March 2012) sets out a series of core planning principles designed to underpin plan-making and decision-taking within the planning system. In terms of development proposals affecting known heritage assets, the following principle states that planning should:

Conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations.

- 2.4 By definition the historic environment includes all surviving physical remains of past human activity. Heritage assets include extant structures and features, sites, places and landscapes. The European Landscape Convention definition of a historic landscape describes: ‘an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors’ (Council of Europe 2000: which came into force in the UK in March 2007; see research frameworks, below). Furthermore, the historic landscape encompasses visible, buried or submerged remains, which includes the buried archaeological resource.

- 2.5 Policy 126 states that:

Local planning authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. In doing so, they should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance. In developing this strategy, local planning authorities should take into account:

- *The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- *The wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;*
- *The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and*
- *Opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of the place.*

- 2.6 When determining planning applications, the following policies are especially pertinent:

128. *Local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.*

129. *Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of the heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.*

132. *When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a Grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.*

139. *Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest that are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets.*

- 2.7 The existence of the latter within a proposed development area can be partially investigated and to an extent predicted via desk-based assessment, but field evaluation and/or archaeological monitoring of groundworks are likely to be a planning requirement and should be expected.

Local policy

- 2.8 Planning policy in the Reculver area is governed by Canterbury City Council regional policy; the most relevant policy in this instance being R13:

Proposals to further enhance the attraction of Reculver [...] as a destination for visitors, in particular leisure and open air recreational proposals, will be permitted by the City Council subject to design, visual and environmental impacts, and suitable access arrangements.¹

¹ http://www.cartogold.co.uk/canterbury/text/05_r_countryside.htm

- 2.9 With particular reference to the Proposed Development Area, the Adopted Local Plan for Reculver (Canterbury City Council 2009) states that:

3.2.3 The Roman Fort, (including the Towers and an area within the Camping and Caravan Club), is given statutory protection by English Heritage as a designated Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) and this is enforced through Policy BE14 in the Local Plan. This policy restricts development that might affect the monument or its setting and in the event that development is permitted will require archaeological investigation prior to works taking place.

Research frameworks

- 2.10 The national and local policy outlined above should be considered in light of the non-statutory heritage frameworks that inform them. While the regional South East Research Framework for the historic environment (SERF)² is still in preparation, initial outputs are available on-line and have been considered in preparing this report, in order to take current research agendas into account.
- 2.11 It has only recently been more fully acknowledged, for example, that entire historic landscapes also need to be protected. A key feature of 'landscape' is that it is conceptual, subjective and relative rather than absolute. A succinct Highways Agency (2007) definition states that 'Historic Landscape is defined both by people's perceptions of the evidence of past human activities in the present landscape and the places where those activities can be understood in the landscape today. This definition highlights the role of perception and emphasises the rich cultural dimension implanted in landscape character by several millennia of human actions.'

3. BASELINE INFORMATION

- 3.1 A search of the Canterbury Urban Archaeological Database (UAD, as well as a list of reports of archaeological investigations not yet included in the HER, was conducted at the Canterbury Archaeological Trust offices (Fig 3). Grey literature reports relating to recent work in the area local to the proposed development have been consulted, along with CAT annual reports and historical and archaeological data published in Archaeologia Cantiana and the Kent Archaeological Review. Excavation lists and reports have been checked in the CAT archive and on the National Monuments Record database. The UAD and reports search covers a radius of 250m around the PDA (centred on NGR 622862/169234). These records have been assessed in terms of their particular relevance to the PDA and only significant evidence is cited in this report. Further (on-line) historic environment records (KCC HER and Portable Antiquities Scheme records) were also consulted in comparison.
- 3.2 Of key importance from the point of view of buried archaeological remains is recent archaeological evaluation of the area which built on earlier findings (Boden 2011; see Fig 4).
- 3.3 A survey of published and unpublished maps (including geology and contour survey) has been undertaken. A full list of maps consulted is provided in the list of sources at

² <http://www.kent.gov.uk/leisure-and-community/history-and-heritage/south-east-research-framework>

the end of the report. Only maps showing significant topographical developments are reproduced here.

- 3.4 Aerial photographic evidence was consulted. No pertinent geophysical surveys were available. Only photographs, images or results showing significant features or topographical developments are reproduced, the findings incorporated with map regression, documentary evidence and archaeological sections of the report as appropriate and fully referenced.
- 3.5 All results of analyses are presented below in synthesis and in order of chronology. UAD and HER numbers are given in parentheses.
- 3.6 A brief walkover of the site was undertaken 09/08/16, and an informal photographic record kept in relation to the current state of the setting of the Scheduled Monument in view of current plans to improve the same. This material is considered in a separate section.

Location, geology and topography

- 3.7 The PDA comprises the immediate hinterland of the Scheduled Monument of Reculver Roman Fort and Anglo-Saxon monastery (SM 1018784, TR 86 NW 1, TR 86 NW 2; Figs 1–3). The main focus of the report constitutes an “L” shaped area around the Roman fort area itself, part of which forms the periphery of the Scheduled area (in red on Figs 1–2). Grassy areas predominate (until very recently filled with caravans, see below), with occasional buildings and associated hard standing and a small road which follows the shape of the area and divides it. The area is bounded to north by the monument and the coastline, to the west by a lane and the Waterways Caravan Site, and to the east by a (recently and illegally cut) drain and further fields.
- 3.8 Bedrock geology within the PDA is shown as outcropping Thanet Formation– Sand Silt and Clay bedrock, with no superficial deposits recorded.³ Immediately to the south and east of the PDA, Tidal Flat Deposits - Clay And Silt are recorded, filling the Wantsum Channel.
- 3.9 In the past, up to and including much of the medieval period, the extant area of the fort would have lain in the southern part of a more extensive headland, beside a navigable channel important for communications and trade along the Kent peninsular.

Designations

- 3.10 The PDA constitutes part of, and the immediate hinterland of, the Scheduled Monument of Reculver Roman Fort and Saxon Monastery (SM 1018784), and lies within the Reculver Conservation Area (Designated on 09.12.1997).
- 3.11 The PDA does not affect or impact on any World Heritage Sites, Registered Battlefields, Listed Buildings or Registered Parks and Gardens.

³ <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>

Archaeological and historical background

Prehistoric (c 500,000BP – AD 43)

- 3.12 Although the geology recorded by the British Geological Survey within the PDA is not of a type likely to produce Palaeolithic implements, the area of coast between Reculver and Herne Bay, about 1km to west, has been identified as an area of particular density of Palaeolithic implements with palaeochannels exposed in the eroding cliff face (Wymer 1999, 94, 126–7). At least two Palaeolithic handaxes have been found on the beach at Reculver (TR 26 NW 61, TR 29 NW 19) to the east of the PDA, as well as a fossil elephant tooth (TR 26 NW 1212).
- 3.13 Mesolithic flintwork has been similarly recovered from the beach at Reculver, but again well to the east of the PDA, including a collection of flakes and blades (TR 26 NW 1020; Wymer and Bonsall 1977, 151) and a ‘Thames pick’ (TR 26 NW 22) dredged up off the coast. A core and second tranche axe are further recorded as being from Reculver in a gazetteer of Mesolithic artefacts (Wymer and Bonsall 1977, 151) but are not recorded on the HER. Elsewhere, *in situ* Mesolithic flint working debris has been discovered at Hillborough, (Bishop and Lyne 2008), indicating that the landscape around the PDA was well-used in this period. Coastal erosion and, particularly throughout the Mesolithic, rising sea levels, have brought the sea considerably closer to the study area than it once was; during that time the PDA would have occupied relatively high ground with a good view over the Wantsum, Stour and Swale valleys (Bishop and Lyne 2008).
- 3.14 Neolithic pottery and artefacts (TR 26 NW 15) are amongst those found on the beach at Reculver, particularly to the east of the Scheduled Monument; the majority of prehistoric archaeological material eroding out of the cliff to the west of the Roman fort and in the region of the PDA is of Bronze or Iron Age date.
- 3.15 Rescue excavations at the eroding cliff face have uncovered a complex of pits and ditches (TR 26 NW 1011) containing pottery dating from the late Bronze Age and early Iron Age (Philp 2005, 66, 192), strongly suggestive of a settlement to the immediate west of the PDA.
- 3.16 Bronze Age activity in the vicinity of the PDA is further indicated by the chance find of a flanged axe (TR 26 NW 3) and a palstave (TR 26 NW 16), though the precise findspots are not recorded.
- 3.17 The location of settlement of this period in the vicinity of the PDA, on relatively high ground, is typical for the late Bronze Age and early Iron Age in Kent; also typically, later Iron Age settlement seems to have moved elsewhere. The Roman name *Regulbium* is probably derived from a Celtic place-name meaning ‘Great Headland’ (Mills 2011, 1103), which probably better described the topography then than it does now.
- 3.18 Five Iron Age gold coins (TR 26 NW 5) have been found at Reculver, and in addition to this, the Portable Antiquities Scheme archive records a gold quarter stater dating from 200–175 BC, and three Mediterranean copper alloy coins, dating from 304–127

BC, though it is conceivable that these may have been later Roman imports.⁴ Another Iron Age coin (TR 26 NW 75) has been found within the scheduled area to the east.

Romano-British (c AD 43 – 410)

- 3.19 The Roman fort at Reculver (TR 86 NW 1), known as *Regulbium* in the late fourth-/early fifth-century text *Notitia Dignitatum*, replaced a first-century temporary military invasion camp on the same site. At that time this occupied a promontory that could have extended 1–3 miles north of the current coastline, controlling passage through the Wantsum Channel, and perhaps access to a harbour which has been postulated close-by (Philp 2005, 3). A ditch containing late Iron Age pottery discovered during cliff-top rescue excavation has been identified as part of the mid-first-century Roman ‘fortlet’ (Philp 2005, 192).
- 3.20 Excavations at the eroding cliff section to the west of the fort have revealed evidence of a metalled road surface (TR 26 NW 1008; Willson 1976). This Roman road was probably that considered by Roman roads expert Ivan Margary to have been a second road from the fort, heading west on to the higher ground in the direction of Bishopstone. It seems highly likely that the road is identical with that shown as still in use as ‘The King’s Highe Way’ on an estate map of 1685 (Fig 5), and forming a crossroads with that from Canterbury (Reculver Lane), at the heart of the post-medieval settlement (Figs 6-8) to the west of the fort. The road and its probable Roman forebear have therefore been lost to coastal erosion in the vicinity of the fort.
- 3.21 Evidence of settlement and road features revealed by erosion to the west of the fort include a rubbish pit dated to the late second or early third century (TR 26 NW 1063) which produced a “Romano-Gaulish” clay figurine (TR 26 NW 64). A pit associated with the road metalling discovery already mentioned (TR 26 NW 1008; Willson 1976) adds further weight to the suggestion that the extra-mural settlement associated with the fort, the *vicus*, may have extended as ribbon development along the road this far west.
- 3.22 Of key significance for the Roman period in relation to the current scheme, however, are features identified to the south and east within the immediate setting of the fort, and within the former camping area. This evidence derives from various excavations undertaken in the 1960s, 1990s and more recently (see Boden 2011, and Fig 4). In summary, first-, second- and third-century settlement features, including metalled surfaces, ditches, pits, an oven etc., indicate that fort-related settlement, the *vicus*, extended into this area too.
- 3.23 Human remains also seen during recent evaluation of the area (*ibid*) may or may not date to the Roman period.
- 3.24 Roman activity at Reculver continued until the early fifth century, when the *Notitia Dignitatum* records that the *Cohors I Baetasiorum* was stationed at the fort after the collapse of the Roman Empire. The fate, or indeed the fullest extent, of the *vicus* is unknown, and it is not unlikely that fort related settlement extended to the south of the current monument, as well as west, along the road.

⁴ PAS reference: KENT5100; KENT5086; KENT5087; KENT5088

Anglo-Saxon (c 450 – 1066)

- 3.25 By the end of fourth century, in the run up to Rome's official abandonment of Britain in AD 410, the fort was already becoming derelict (Wilmott 2011, 3), and it probably became an early Anglo-Saxon estate centre (Everitt 1986, 76). In AD 669, an Anglo-Saxon monastery (TR 26 NW 2) was founded on the site.
- 3.26 A great number of Anglo-Saxon period finds have been recovered from the foreshore at Reculver, including a claw beaker (TR 26 NW 78), a fragment of a garnet disc brooch (TR 26 NW 68), glass and *porosphaera* beads (TR 26 NW 14), and pottery (TR 26 NW 66). An entire Frankish vessel (TR 26 NW 1003) and a bottle (TR 26 NW 71), found in collapsed cliff material, were dated AD 500–700. In 1894, an Anglo-Saxon bronze bowl (TR 26 NW 13) was washed up on the beach at Reculver, and earlier, in the eighteenth century, 20 *sceattas*, and a Merovingian silver coin and three gold coins were found, some or all of which may derive from graves eroded out of the cliff-face (Richardson 2005, 65). The headland at Reculver was probably therefore the site of a pre-Christian Anglo-Saxon cemetery, but judging by the lack of recent Anglo-Saxon discoveries at the beach there, it has mostly or entirely lost to the sea (*ibid*, 66). It is not impossible however that human remains also seen during recent evaluation of the area (Boden 2011) date to the Anglo-Saxon period, although these were, notably, not found within a grave cut.
- 3.27 Everitt (1986, 76) identified Reculver as an early Anglo-Saxon estate centre, though little archaeological evidence for this has been recovered in the immediate vicinity of the PDA, other forms of evidence point to Reculver as an important manor which held detached pasture at Shottenden and Chelmington (*ibid*, 159–8).

Medieval (c 1066 – 1540)

- 3.28 Domesday evidence suggests a substantial early medieval settlement in the area, and from 1200 a market was held there.⁵ This probably centred on the crossroads west of the church, adjacent to the location of today's King Ethelbert pub. Few indications of medieval settlement are currently observable, and it would seem that the rapid rate of erosion may have obliterated much of the settlement, at least on the north side of the crossroads. Archaeological evidence from the area consists of one copper-alloy seal matrix (TR 26 NW 70) broadly dated to the medieval period.
- 3.29 St Mary's church clearly remained important; major remodelling in the twelfth century resulted in the construction of the iconic double spires. Some medieval pottery and ceramic building materials featured among finds from the recent evaluation within the eastern part of the PDA (Boden 2011; see Fig 4), and again, human remains seen during the same work could date to the continued monastic use of the fort area during the medieval period in some way, but were apparently isolated and not found within a grave cut.
- 3.30 The Wantsum channel began to silt up and would eventually join the Isle of Thanet to the Kentish mainland in the late medieval period, after which time much of the land was 'improved' for agriculture.

⁵ <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/list-index-soc/markets-fairs-gazetteer-to-1516/kent>

Post-medieval (c 1540 – 1900)

- 3.31 The estate map of 1685 (Fig 5) depicts a reasonably sized settlement remaining clustered around the crossroads next to the church, formed by the Canterbury Road and ‘the King’s Highe Way’, but already threatened by the sea. The lane and drain bounding the southern part of the PDA is already visible on this map, and succeeding historic maps demonstrate a continuity of pastoral land-use throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Figs 6–11). At the close of the eighteenth century, Hasted described how the northern part of the fort wall had ‘been very lately, nearly all of it, destroyed by the falling off the cliff down on the sea shore, where vast fragments of it lie’ by his day (1800, 109). Reculver itself he calls ‘a small mean village, of five or six houses, situated a small distance from the church, and inhabited mostly by fishermen and smugglers, and would be unworthy of notice, but for the reputation it derives from former times’.
- 3.32 By 1807 it had been agreed that the church was to be demolished (Gough 1983, 135) and materials were used to build a new church at Hillborough (TR 26 NW 1158), c 2km to the south-east.
- 3.33 The King Ethelbert Inn (TR 26 NW 1174), constructed around 1843, is now a locally listed building.

Modern (c 1900 – 2000)

- 3.34 The towers of the church had been preserved and used as maritime navigation aids, being consolidated and underpinned in 1909.
- 3.35 During the Second World War, a series of pillboxes lined the coast at Reculver, two to the west of the PDA (TR 26 NW 104, TR 26 NW 105): now destroyed.
- 3.36 After the war, a rise in the popularity of caravan holidays made Reculver a new destination for holiday-makers, who came to take advantage of the caravan parks established there, which, as can be seen from aerial photographs fully occupied the PDA (Figs 12–14).

4. SITE WALKOVER

- 4.1 A walkover survey of the hinterland of the Scheduled Monument and the monument itself was undertaken 09/08/16 (see Figs 15ff) in order to judge existing impacts to the historic landscape setting of the monument as well comparative information for considering different options for development.
- 4.2 The monument is revealed on approach along Reculver Lane, with the towers and raised fort area foregrounded by the recently constructed children’s play area and the King Ethelbert pub, and lawns (Viewpoint 1; Fig 16). The immediate setting of the monument, continuing the main approach on the western side from the visitor’s point of view, is clearly more ‘functional’ than ‘historical’ in tone (Plates 2–6; Figs 16–18), with facilities, other than the public house itself, presenting a somewhat ‘down at heel’ quality; some of the car park and other signage is not ideally positioned for an appreciation of the focal points of the monument (Plate 3; Fig 17), and fuel containers etc. associated with the pub also detract from the initial experience and setting of the

monument (Plates 5–6; Fig 18). Here too, the Roman fort wall has become overgrown with vegetation (Plate 6), which should be investigated in terms of potential and ongoing damage to the ancient monument, above and beyond any matters of intelligibility for the viewer or aesthetic connotations (see also below).

- 4.3 The PDA itself has reverted to grass/scrub land (with a large number of thistles) since the most recent available satellite images were taken, following the removal of a large number of caravans (Plates 7ff; Figs 19–24). The Roman fort walls are much overgrown with vegetation (including mature trees which partially obscure the Reculver Towers from these positions), or screened by hedge plants on the near side of the track surrounding the fort. The screening effect of the vegetation is undoubtedly exacerbated by the use of the boundary of the monument for over ground cables on poles, which make the edge of the field seem more like a typical field in rural Kent than anything of particular historic significance. While the obscuring effect of vegetation is less significant when viewing the monument from the scheduling boundary to the east of the monument, the interruption of the modern poles and cables in the setting is arguably more noticeable, hardly contributing to the sense of an historically significant place which is highly valued as such (see Plates 14–15; Fig 24).
- 4.4 Twentieth-century buildings outside the scheduled area, associated with the use of the area as a caravan site, are less noticeable to the viewer who is focussed on the monument itself, being (arguably) sufficiently distant to afford a buffer zone around the monument (cf. Plates 12 and 13; Figs 22–3).
- 4.5 Approaching the eastern side of the monument along the front, and ignoring the perfectly acceptable aspects associated with the coastal setting (concrete and metal sea defences and fencing), purely functional wire fencing on the monument, above the Roman wall, again reduces the aesthetic value of the setting as a whole (discussed in more detail below). The wall itself is revealed as covered in vegetation (Plates 16ff; Figs 25–26), again raising concerns about sustainability of the fabric, let alone the intelligibility, of one of the key elements of the monument.
- 4.6 Views of the Wantsum from the vantage point of the fort are a key interpretive factor, but again interrupted by modern cables (Plate 20; Fig 27). The twentieth-century buildings, as well as a concrete ‘road’, associated with the use of the area as a caravan site, could also be said to detract from this view, although it is surely the general form of the landscape that generates the interest here. The latter is more obscured by foreground cables than individual elements in the landscape itself.
- 4.7 The same could be said of views from the monument over the PDA towards the south-west and south (Plates 21–22; Fig 28), where existing buildings beyond the grassland ‘buffer’ seem less of an intrusion to the viewer than foregrounded cables.

5. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Methodology

- 5.1 Significance criteria for the setting of the Scheduled Monument have been based on international/national, regional, and district, local and parish levels, although it should be remembered that even scant or apparently locally insignificant heritage assets will

generally contribute to a regional research framework; this system has been further qualified in terms of the setting of the monument through recourse to Historic England *Conservation Principles* (English Heritage 2008; see below); further qualification is achieved through application of James Semple Kerr's method, as detailed in his *Conservation Plan* (2013; see below).

‘Standard criteria’ for defining significance

- 5.2 A typical method of assessing significance of heritage assets, which might be used as a significance test within an environmental impact assessment, for example, is presented in Table 1. We might call these ‘standard criteria’, which provide a starting point for assessment.

Significance rating	Criteria
Very High	Sites, structures, features or landscapes of International/National significance such as: World Heritage Sites; Scheduled Monuments; Protected Wrecks, Registered Battlefields, Listed Buildings; Sites, structures, features or landscapes which appear to be of equivalent status to the above, but which have not been assessed previously for listing or scheduling
High	Significant sites, structures, features or landscapes on a National/Regional or County level, such as: English Heritage Registered Parks and Gardens; Conservation Areas; Listed Buildings; sites, structures, features or landscapes which, although not considered sufficiently important or well preserved to be of National importance, are considered important within a regional or county context
Medium	Significant sites, structures, features or landscapes on a district level, such as: Those with a District value or interest for education or cultural appreciation; Those so badly damaged that too little remains to justify inclusion into a higher grade
Low	Important sites, structures, features or landscapes on a local or parish level, such as: Those with a local or parish value or interest for education or cultural appreciation; Those so badly damaged that too little remains to justify inclusion into a higher grade.
Very Low	Sites, structures or features with no significant value or interest or which are so badly damaged that too little remains to justify inclusion into a higher grade.

Table 1: Typical criteria for assessing significance of heritage assets

Conservation principles

- 5.3 Historic England's *Conservation Principles* (English Heritage 2008), provide a more useful definition of the significance of ‘place’ in terms of conserving heritage (*ibid*, 21, sections 3.2–3):

The significance of a place embraces all the diverse cultural and natural heritage values that people associate with it, or which prompt them to respond to it. These values tend to grow in strength and complexity over time, as understanding deepens and people's perceptions of a place evolve.

In order to identify the significance of a place, it is necessary first to understand its fabric, and how and why it has changed over time; and then to consider:

- *who values the place, and why they do so*
- *how those values relate to its fabric*
- *their relative importance*
- *whether associated objects contribute to them*
- *the contribution made by the setting and context of the place*
- *how the place compares with others sharing similar values.*

5.4 *Conservation Principles* goes on to define four overall groups of heritage values that should be considered in assessing heritage significance: Evidential Value, Historical Value, Aesthetic Value and Communal Value; subdivisions of these, such as Illustrative Value and Social Value, should also be considered (see Table 2).

Value type	Definition
Evidential value	‘Derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.’
Historical value	‘Derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present.’ <i>Conservation Principles</i> identifies two main subdivisions of historical value: illustrative value and associative value. Illustrative value depends on the visibility, and perhaps also the intelligibility, of historic features; it ‘has the power to aid interpretation of the past through making connections with, and providing insights into, past communities and their activities through shared experience of a place.’ Associative value connects the place with important historical figures or events.
Aesthetic value	‘Derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place’ and ‘can be the result of the conscious design of a place’ (Design value), or ‘the seemingly fortuitous outcome of the way in which a place has evolved and been used over time.’
Communal value	‘Derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory’ and includes commemorative and symbolic values which ‘reflect the meanings of a place for those who draw part of their identity from it, or have emotional links to it.’ It also includes social value, ‘associated with places that people perceive as a source of identity, distinctiveness, social interaction and coherence.’

Table 2: conservation principles for assessing significance of heritage assets

Kerr’s method

5.5 James Semple Kerr, in his *Conservation Plan* (2013) presents further useful and qualitatively testable refinement of such concepts, building on the Australia ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) guidelines to the *Burra* Charter, and ICOMOS New Zealand criteria. It is included here because it constitutes a more sensitive instrument for subtler yet pervasive aspects of the place in terms of significance.

5.6 Kerr’s method is paraphrased in Table 3:

Criteria	Qualifications
Ability to demonstrate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Philosophies and customs

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designs, functions, techniques, processes, styles (early, seminal, intact, representative, rare, climactic?) • Uses, and associations with events or persons <p>Both in terms of particular elements and cumulative significance of various elements</p>
Associational links without surviving evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associational links not attested by any known evidence
Formal or aesthetic qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the place a considerable degree of unity in its scale, form and materials • Does the place have a relationship between its parts and the setting which reinforces the quality of both?

Table 3: paraphrasing Kerr (2013) on significance types

5.7 Kerr's qualifications of method are particularly useful in terms of the combination of heritage significance and formal and aesthetic qualities.

5.8 The assessment of significance for the setting of the Scheduled Monument has been undertaken with reference to all three systems, considering the setting of the monument from the visitor's point of view, both in terms of viewing the monument within the landscape and viewing the landscape from the monument.

5.9 Archaeological heritage assets that may be affected by groundworks as part of the scheme have been considered from the point of view of 'standard criteria' only.

Assessment of magnitude of change

5.10 The significance of the setting of the Scheduled Monument has then been compared with the magnitude of change to them which the proposed changes will bring about, in order to produce a statement of impact.

5.11 Assessment of the magnitude of change is based on the level of impact and the current state of/condition of the area(s) to be affected (see Table 4).

5.12 There are a number of variables in determining magnitude of change, including the particular sensitivity of a site to change, the nature of past development or management effects and, of course, the differing nature and scope of proposed changes.

5.13 The historic landscape setting of the Reculver monument does not to date seem to have been overly considered in management of development and use in the area (cf. use of the immediate hinterland as a caravan site); the project to develop the setting of the Roman fort and Anglo-Saxon monastic focus within it as part of a Country Park therefore represents a significant advance in and opportunities for conservation management planning.

5.14 The survival and quantity/quality of buried archaeological evidence within a given area remains uncertain without excavation: desk-based study can only deal in potential based on existing evidence. Magnitude of change with regard to such evidence is therefore difficult to predict and must be managed via an iterative mitigation process that might include field evaluation and/or archaeological watching briefs for example.

5.15 Moreover, the relationship of any buried or extant archaeological features to their historic landscape setting should be considered dynamically, since impacts on particular

aspects of the historic environment have implications for understanding, appreciation and conservation of the historic landscape as a whole.

High	Change to the buried archaeological resource or historic landscape resulting in a fundamental change in the ability to understand and appreciate the resource and its historical context and setting.
Moderate	Change to archaeological resource or historic landscape resulting in an appreciable change in the ability to understand and appreciate the resource, and its historical context and setting.
Low	Change to archaeological resource or historic landscape resulting in a small change in the ability to understand and appreciate the resource and its historical context and setting.
Negligible	Negligible change or no material change to archaeological resource or historic landscape. No real change in the ability to understand and appreciate the resource and its historical context and setting.
Uncertain	Extent and exact location of archaeology is uncertain; impact is therefore uncertain or because precise construction methods/impacts are uncertain.

Table 4: Criteria Used to Determine Magnitude of Change

Assessment of impacts

5.16 The significance of impacts on the historic landscape setting of the Scheduled Monument will be determined through reference to Table 5.

Magnitude of Change	Significance					
		Very high (international / national)	High (regional / county)	Medium (district)	Low (local)	Very low (site specific)
	High	Major	Major	Major or Moderate	Moderate	Minor
	Moderate	Major	Major or Moderate	Moderate	Minor	Minor
	Low	Moderate	Moderate or Minor	Minor	Minor or Neutral	Neutral

	Negligible	Minor	Minor or Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
	Uncertain	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown

Table 5: Identifying the level of impacts

5.17 Direct and indirect previous impacts, and potential impacts have been considered.

5.18 A mitigation strategy is proposed and perceived residual impacts stated.

6. STATEMENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Periphery and historic landscape setting of the scheduled monument

6.1 By ‘standard’ criteria the area of the scheduled monument within the PDA and its immediate setting (also within the PDA) achieve a ‘very high’ significance rating, being designated, or immediately associated with a designated heritage asset of national importance.

6.2 A clear and significant evidential value also persists here in the monument and its immediate and wider setting (and links directly to the importance of the archaeological evidence, outlined below), as well as the nationally recognised historical values. We would recognise especially the associative values of Roman Britain as a whole, and of particular aspects of that body of knowledge, in particular the conquest of AD 43, the development of the ‘Saxon Shore Forts’ later in the period, and the end of Roman rule, all in relation to the Wantsum as well as inland links to Canterbury, Richborough and beyond. Indeed, while always more imposing, the fort at Richborough is a useful comparison, *especially as* it forms part of the same fort system; the significance of the Reculver is directly connected to the Richborough fort at the other end of the Wantsum, a strong argument that its conservation management as a heritage asset should be equivalent.

6.3 Moreover, early medieval monasticism at Reculver is also central to the associative value of both the monument and its near and more general setting, as the liminal location of such institutions was a key factor of their selection and meaning, and can still be appreciated to a degree. The wider area is, further, key to an understanding of the development of a medieval township here, again a function of association with the Wantsum.

6.4 The illustrative value of the area within the extended scheduling boundary of the monument that forms part of the PDA, and the immediate and wider setting is perhaps currently more in keeping with the siting of an initial Roman fortlet at the end of the Wantsum with little attendant settlement, or an Anglo-Saxon monastery in a clearly marginal place, meaning that enhancement of the sense of an ancient relatively unsettled landscape backing on to the sea could be preferable. On the other hand, this was not such an ‘empty’ place in the developed Roman or medieval periods, so some new development in the wider vicinity of the fort boundary cannot be considered negative, per se, on the basis of protecting or reconstructing an ancient scene.

- 6.5 The scope for aesthetic and communal values relating to the heritage asset and its setting has surely been extended with the removal of caravans from the area of the PDA, in particular that adjacent to the Roman wall (and within the scheduled area) and in the immediate setting of the same, to the north and west of the 'lane' that crosses the site. Certainly other aesthetics and social values will have been prevalent during use of the site for caravanning, which were hardly conducive with Reculver as location for 'solitude and reflection', which might be in keeping with the early fort or Anglo-Saxon monastery. Again, however, much of the history of the place has actually been one of neither open spaces nor a rural setting: consider the *vicus*, and Anglo-Saxon and medieval settlement, for example.
- 6.6 The scheduled monument at Reculver, to use Kerr's (2013) terminology, has a clear and indeed rare 'ability to demonstrate' Roman colonial, Romano-British, Anglo-Saxon monastic and medieval settlement customs, designs/functions etc. and uses and historical associations, although much of these factors remain 'associational' connotations with no obvious or currently known or extant evidence.
- 6.7 Kerr's criteria of 'formal and aesthetic qualities' is perhaps more useful here in that it emphasises scale, form and materials, and whether the place has 'a relationship between its parts and the setting which reinforces the quality of both'. The chief extant elements within the Reculver monument itself, the Roman fort and the Anglo-Saxon and medieval church remnants, are eloquent of ancient continuity when considered together: a Roman military powerbase which came to be used as a local centre of the dominant ideology of medieval Europe; both uses are tied inextricably to their wider location: the mouth of the Wantsum.
- 6.8 Critically, however, it is the buried archaeological heritage assets that might add an alternative view of the past at this location, of settlement clustering in the hinterland of the fort and monastery, now hidden. Maintenance or construction of a purely 'rural' or 'marginal' aesthetic would be an imposition on such a heritage.

Archaeological evidence

- 6.9 Any extant archaeological remains found within the PDA relating to the Pleistocene would be considered as being of at least regional significance and therefore given a 'high' rating based on the 'standard' criteria.
- 6.10 Any extant archaeological features, layers, artefacts or ecofacts, particularly relating to the later prehistoric, Roman, Anglo-Saxon and medieval periods, within the PDA are likely to be of at least regional significance as a result of their proximity and relationship to a scheduled monument relating to these periods. Such evidence would also contribute to understanding of the monument and the historic landscape as a whole.

7. PREVIOUS IMPACTS

- 7.1 Notable existing impacts on the periphery of and setting of the ancient monument have already been identified, chiefly resulting from less considered approaches to the setting of ancient monuments in the past, but also for want of closer monitoring of the fabric itself. None of the following compare favourably with the ongoing conservation management of the Richborough Roman fort or its immediate setting, for example.

- 7.2 The apparent lack of control of vegetation and its impact on the fabric of the wall of the Roman fort is a concern, quite apart from the impact to the intelligibility of the place as a Roman military building.
- 7.3 The caravan site and any associated buildings, hard-standing, 'roads' have in the past had direct and negative impact on the setting of the ancient monument. Significantly, these negative impacts, especially on the intelligibility of the monument, have recently been somewhat reduced through the removal of the caravans and reversion of the PDA to mainly grassed areas. The latter can be viewed as a 'buffer' zone around the Scheduled Monument, bounded by the line of the lane running across the site and some of the associated buildings, which would ideally be preserved and carefully improved (see below).
- 7.4 The most obvious negative impacts on the setting of the monument currently are the over ground cables that interrupt views of the monument from the south and east especially, as well as dominating views of the setting from within the monument. A further negative impact in terms of the setting of the monument is produced by an old fuel tank and car parking immediately to the north of the King Ethelbert pub and immediately adjacent to the monument's main entrance; these and some of the car park signage are hardly conducive to the place being imbued with very high heritage value, and again do not compare well with the treatment of the associated fort at Richborough.
- 7.5 The caravan site and any associated buildings, hard-standing, 'roads', poles for cables, fencing etc. in particular any excavations resulting from these uses, will likely have had a direct impact on any extant archaeological record, which at this location must be considered at least moderate.
- 7.6 A recently (and apparently illegally) cut drain, bounding the PDA to the south, will probably also have impinged on a significant archaeological resource.

8. BRIEF DESCRIPTIONS OF THE DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS AND ASSOCIATED IMPACTS ON THE PERIPHERY AND SETTING OF THE SCHEDULED MONUMENT

- 8.1 None of the proposed options will have a negative impact when compared to the current view of the Country Park from higher ground at its western end, as even the PDA is mostly screened from this vantage point, and totally so from any approach from this direction (the mine angle of approach), by the local topography (see Fig 33).

Option 1 (Fig 29)

- 8.2 This option is that submitted previously for consideration by Historic England, prompting the request for submission and appraisal of a number of options. This option includes car parking, motorhomes, and campsite/leisure use within and directly adjacent to the Scheduled Monument, which would impinge upon the already partially compromised setting of the monument, incurring an at least moderate negative change with regard to the intelligibility of a very important heritage asset, and appreciation of it as a separate entity in the landscape: a major negative impact.

Option 2 (Fig 30)

- 8.3 This option respects the Scheduled Monument spatially by removing all car parking beyond a buffer zone surrounding it. The construction of a number of chalets for visitors, also outside the line of the current 'road' through the site, is proposed; these buildings would help provide a source of income that would make the long term scheme economically sustainable.
- 8.4 This option will allow for the immediate setting of the heritage asset to continue to benefit from the removal of caravans that had characterised its immediate hinterland for many years, providing a 'buffer zone'. In effect, this could constitute a low magnitude of change and therefore a moderate but manageable impact on the overall setting of the monument, particularly if the construction materials, and perhaps the design of the chalets, are carefully chosen, and their number restricted as far as possible view of economic sustainability.

Option 3 (Fig 31)

- 8.5 Option 3 emphasises a softening of the edge of the country park in relation to the wider landscape, but the location of motorhomes, car parking and camping both within and at the periphery of the Scheduled Monument area constitutes an at least moderate magnitude of change in terms of the intelligibility of the monument, and therefore a major negative impact.

Option 4 (Fig 32)

- 8.6 This is an improvement on Option 3 with regards to the positioning of car parking at the edge of the area, but still imposes motorhome parking within and at the periphery of the Scheduled Monument area, constituting a moderate magnitude of change in terms of the intelligibility of the monument, and therefore a major negative impact.

Preferred option

- 9.1 It is proposed that Option 2 should be taken forward, having by far the least impact on designated heritage asset and its setting, the archaeological resource, and appreciation of the historic landscape.

9. IMPACTS OF THE SCHEME ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE

- 9.2 The buried archaeological resource is chiefly vulnerable to groundworks, which are a feature of the scheme whichever option is preferred. All negative groundworks therefore, will likely have a direct and major impact on any buried archaeological features that may be present within areas to be developed, either through demolition or other removals or cutting of new foundations, drainage trenches etc.
- 9.3 All options include the removal of existing buildings and hardstanding in the vicinity of the Scheduled Monument. Option 2 makes provision for the building of visitor chalets in an area already evaluated (Boden 2011; Fig xxx) and found to contain archaeological heritage assets of very high significance; there is potential here, if archaeological remains are affected and their destruction unmitigated, of a major negative impact on the historic environment.

10. PROPOSED MITIGATION MEASURES

9.4 All forms of mitigation will be conducted in liaison with Historic England and in consultation with the local authority/CCC Archaeological Officer.

The scheduled monument periphery and setting

10.1 In preferring Option 2, the impact of the scheme on the setting of the Scheduled Monument will be mitigated by maintenance of an existing buffer zone around the monument itself, the use of wooden structures for the proposed chalets to the east of the monument, and screening of parking and motorhome areas.

Archaeological evidence

10.2 Evaluation trenching in the area set aside for visitor chalets in Option 2 has already been undertaken (Boden 2011) and produced significant results.

10.3 A formal review of field evaluation results in liaison with the CCC Archaeological Officer and the archaeological contractor should be undertaken. Significant archaeological evidence has come to light through evaluation procedures, and an appropriate programme of mitigation through further excavation (preservation by record) or archaeological watching brief will need to be agreed with the CCC Archaeological Officer and implemented by a CIfA accredited archaeological contractor prior to any development groundworks.

11. CONCLUSION

11.1 Four options for development of visitor facilities in the hinterland (in an area centred TR 22771 69247) of Scheduled Monument of Reculver Roman Fort and Saxon Monastery (SM 1018784), and within the Reculver Conservation Area (Designated on 09.12.1997) have been considered in terms of impacts on the setting of what is an important heritage asset.

11.2 The proposed scheme forms part of the development of the area as an economically sustainable Country Park offers new opportunities, in close liaison with Historic England, for:

- Upping the publicity profile of the monument and its setting and thereby improving its level of perceived value, leading to better protection
- Consistent conservation management planning, policy and implementation through local interested parties
- Encouragement of local agents, champions and fund raisers for the monument and its setting, such as a “Friends” group
- In light of the above, realising further heritage focussed aesthetics through community activities, ranging from tours and open days to perhaps field walking or other community archaeology projects

- Perhaps as an adjunct for the above, providing a framework within which further research on the monument can be undertaken.
- 11.3 The four options for the current scheme have been considered in terms of the current state, continuing maintenance and improvement of the setting of the monument as part of an historic landscape *per se*.
- 11.4 Baseline geological, topographical, archaeological and historical data have been reviewed, and a site walkover was conducted on 09/08/16 with a particular view to understanding potential impacts of the various design options on the existing setting of the monument.
- 11.5 Having applied a range of standard heritage impact assessment criteria, this report finds that Option 2 is preferred, in that it will capitalise on an existing improvement in the current setting of the monument, and also allow for further improvements on an ongoing basis through continued sensitive development of the Country Park for future generations of visitors to the monument.
- 11.6 A raft of mitigation recommendations for the current proposed scheme is also offered, including measures designed to soften any impact on the setting of the monument, balancing visitor requirements in the area with an appreciation of the historic landscape.

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MAPS AND VIEWS CONSULTED:

Extract from an Estate map of 1685, reproduced from Roach Smith (1850)

Andrews, Dury and Herbert map of Kent (1769)

Tithe map (1839)

Ordnance Survey 1st Ed (1877)

Ordnance Survey 2nd Ed (1896).

Ordnance Survey 3rd Ed (1907).

Google Earth (including 1940s, 1960s and 1990s Aerial Photographs).

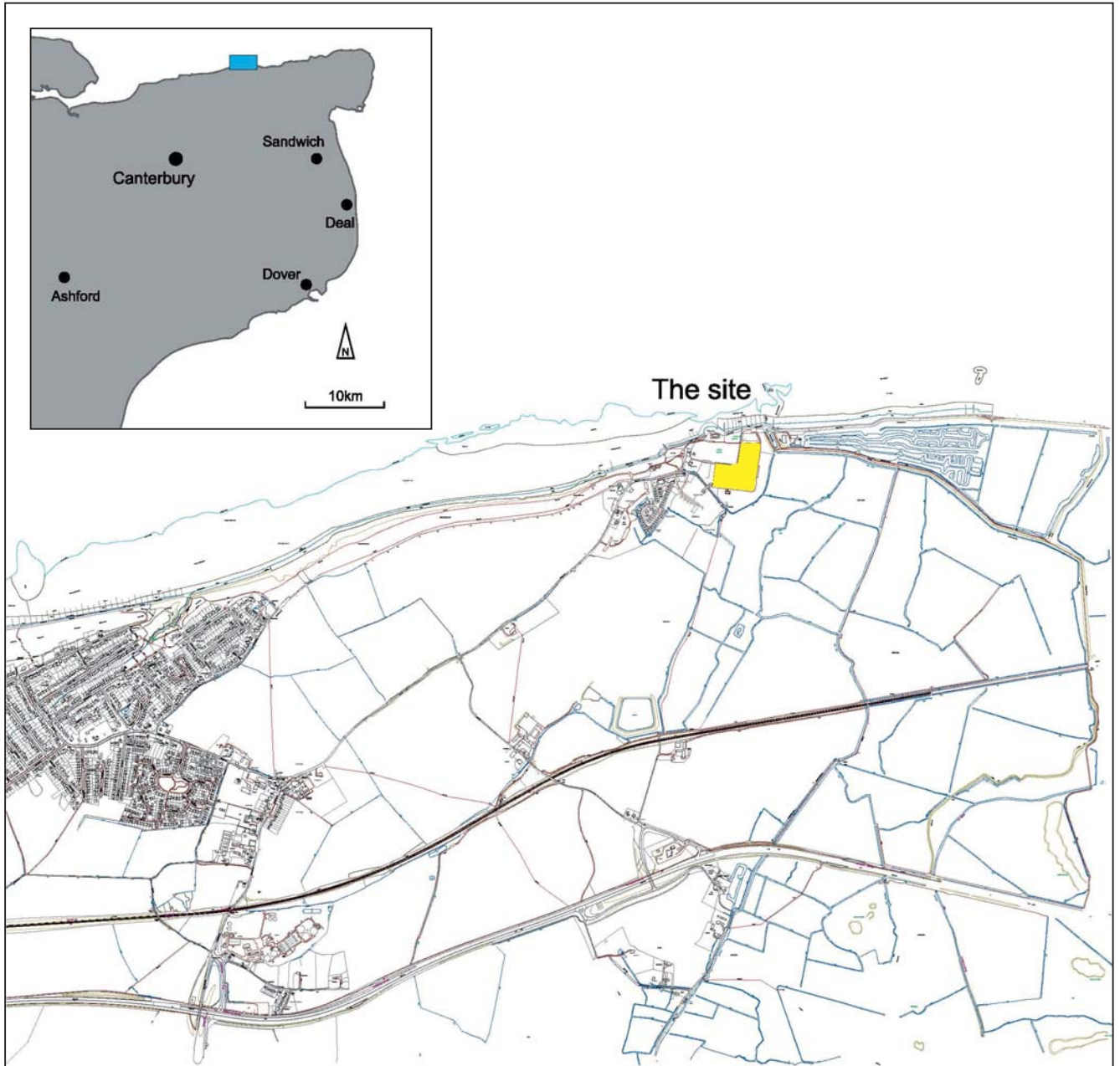


Fig 1. Site location plan

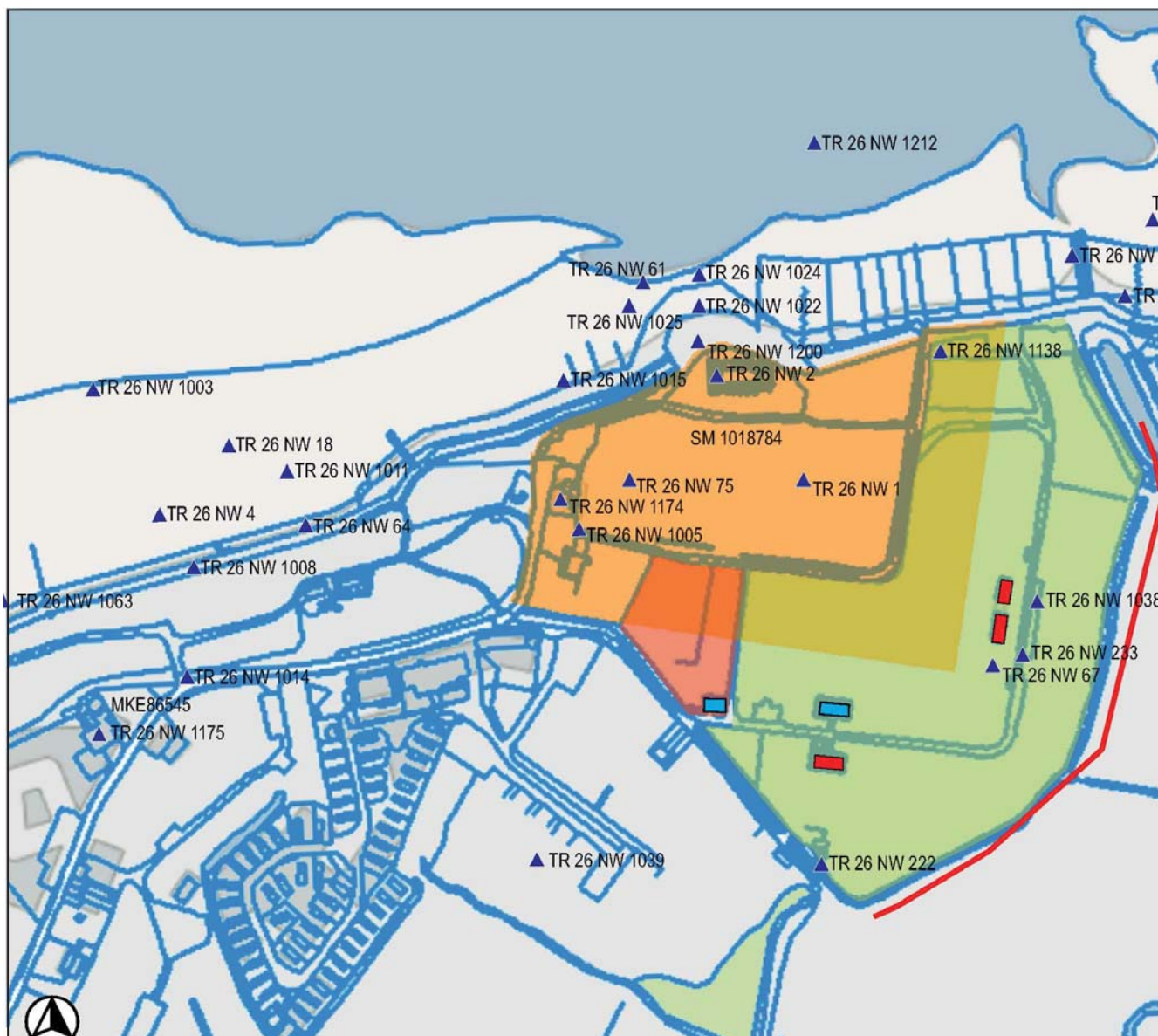


Fig 3. The Proposed Development Area (PDA), in relation to the Scheduled Monument of Reculver Roman Fort and Anglo-Saxon Monastery, Canterbury Urban Archaeological Database and Historic Environment Records

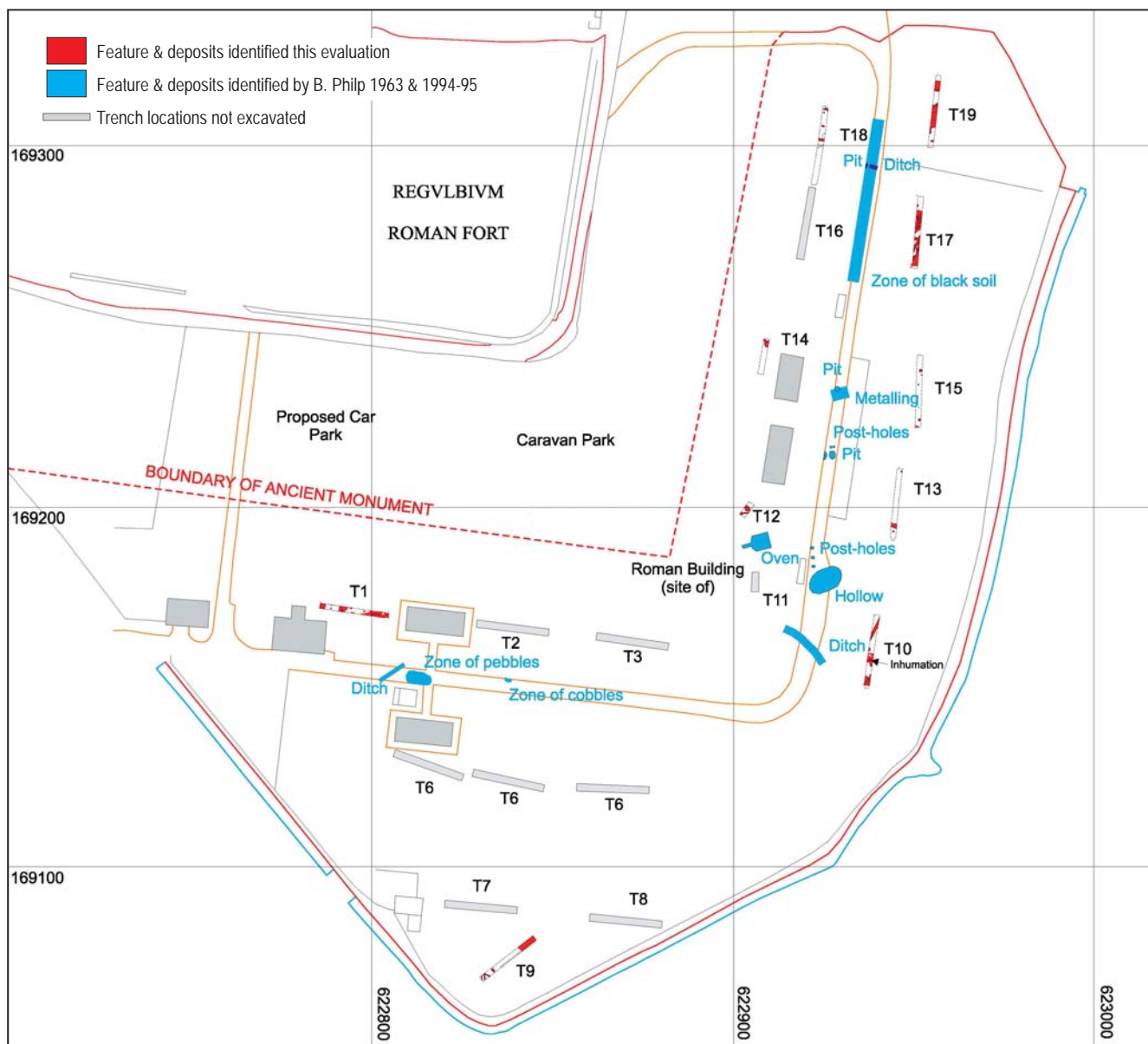


Fig 4. Archaeology previously encountered within the PDA including the recent evaluation trenches (Boden 2011) and earlier finds in blue

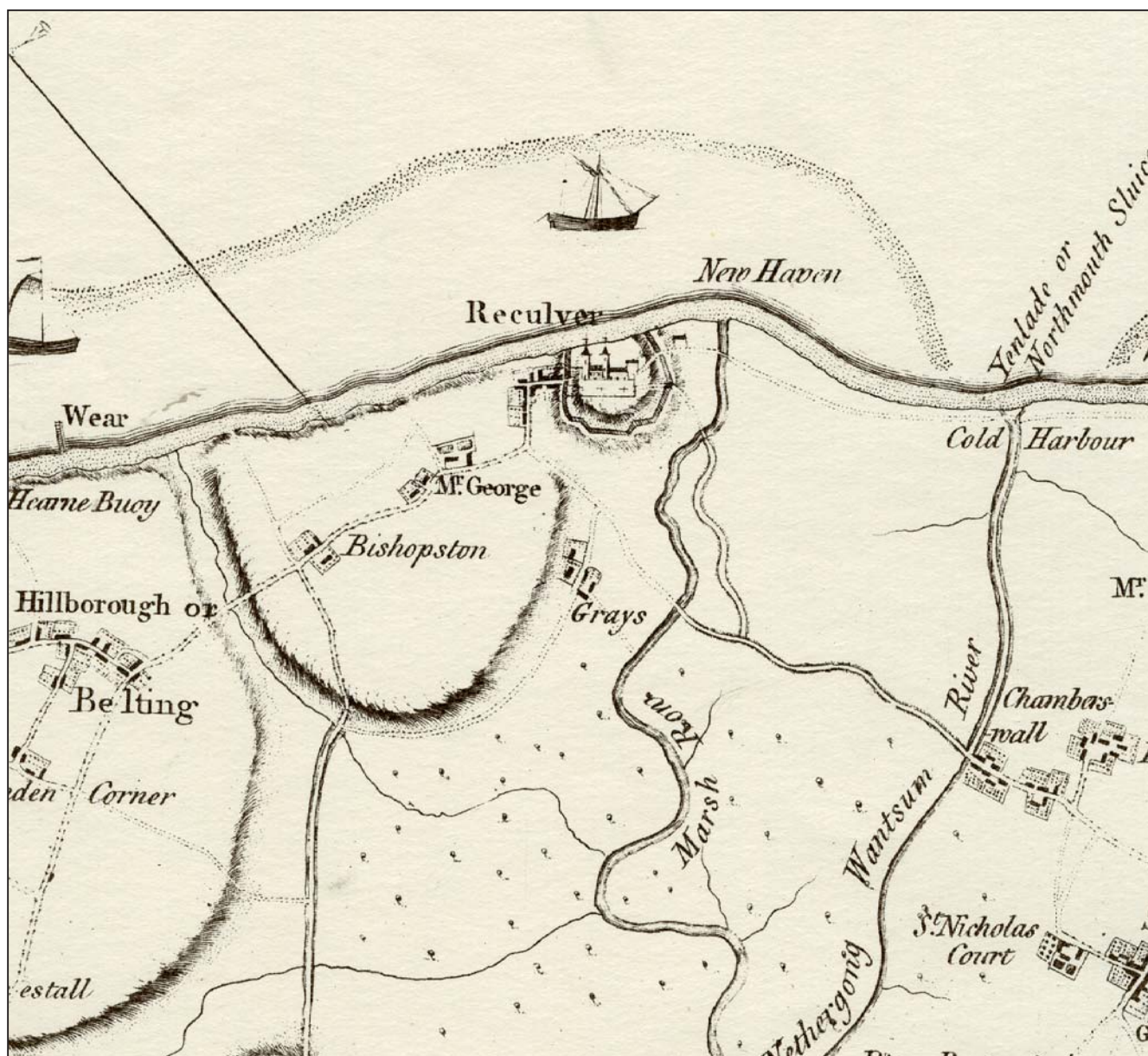


Fig 6. Extract from the 1769 Andrews, Dury and Herbert map of Kent

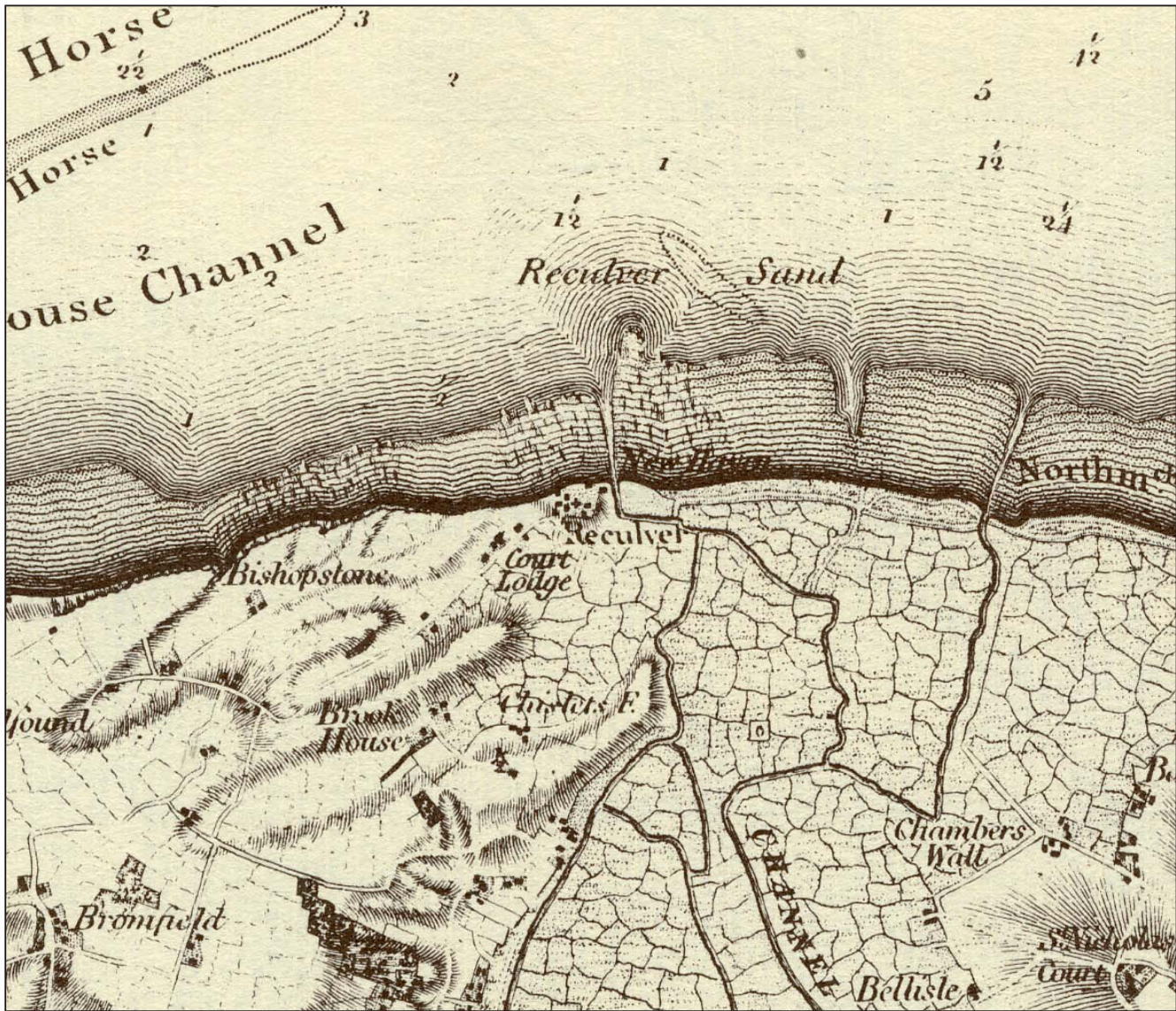


Fig 7. Extract from the 1801 Mudge map



Fig 8. Extract from the 1839 Tithe map

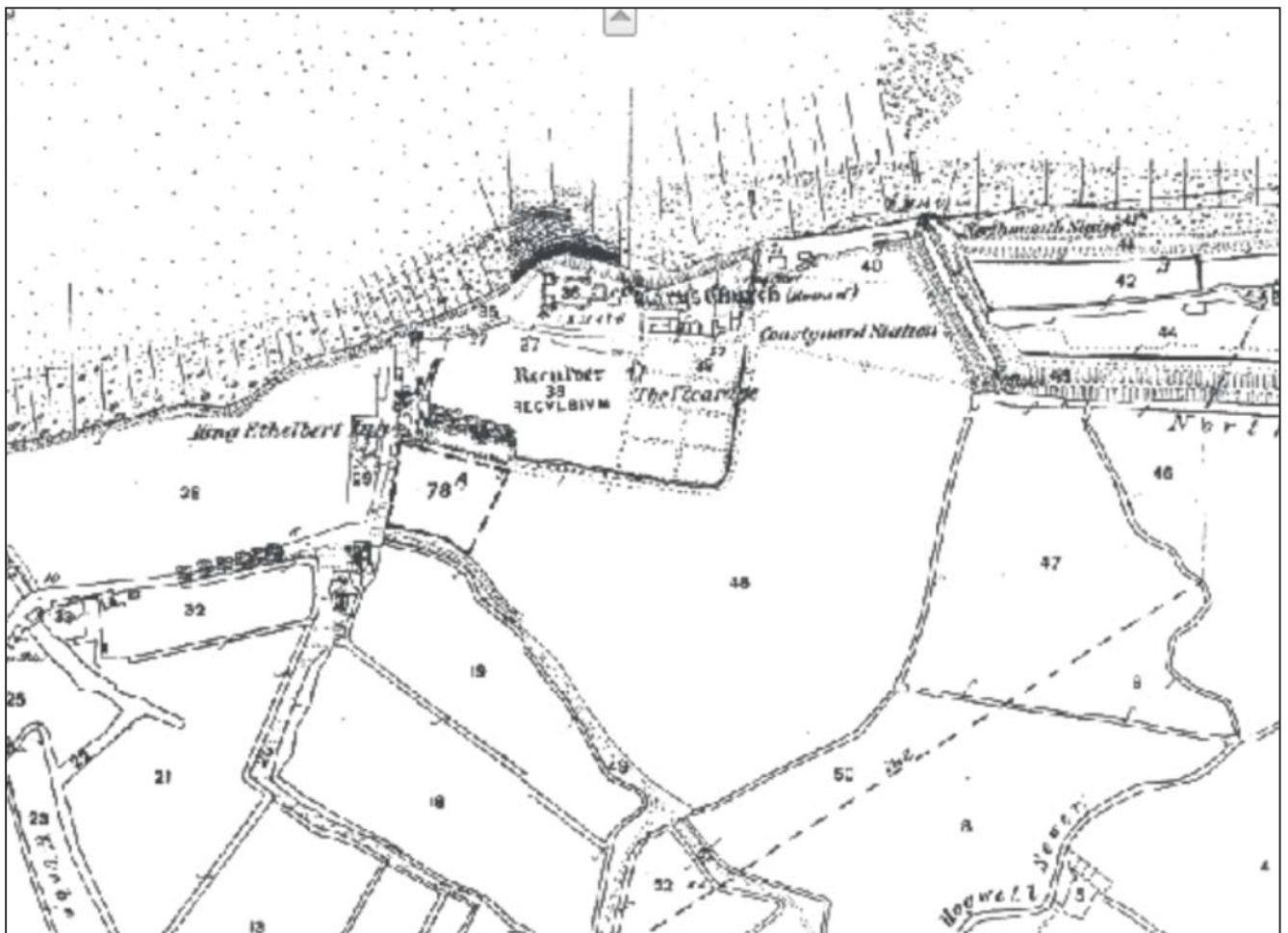


Fig 9. 1st Edition Ordnance Survey

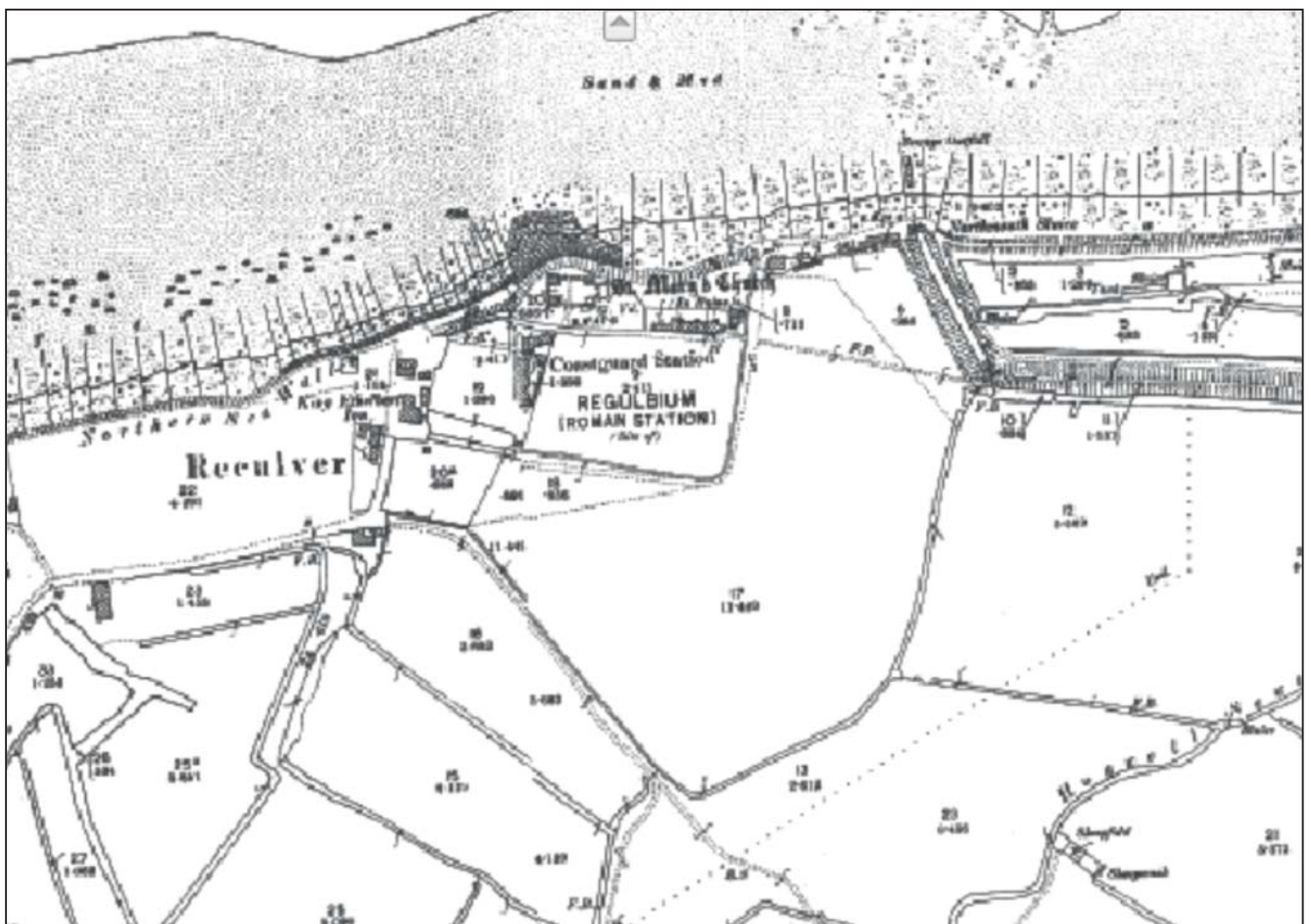


Fig 10. 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey, late 19th century

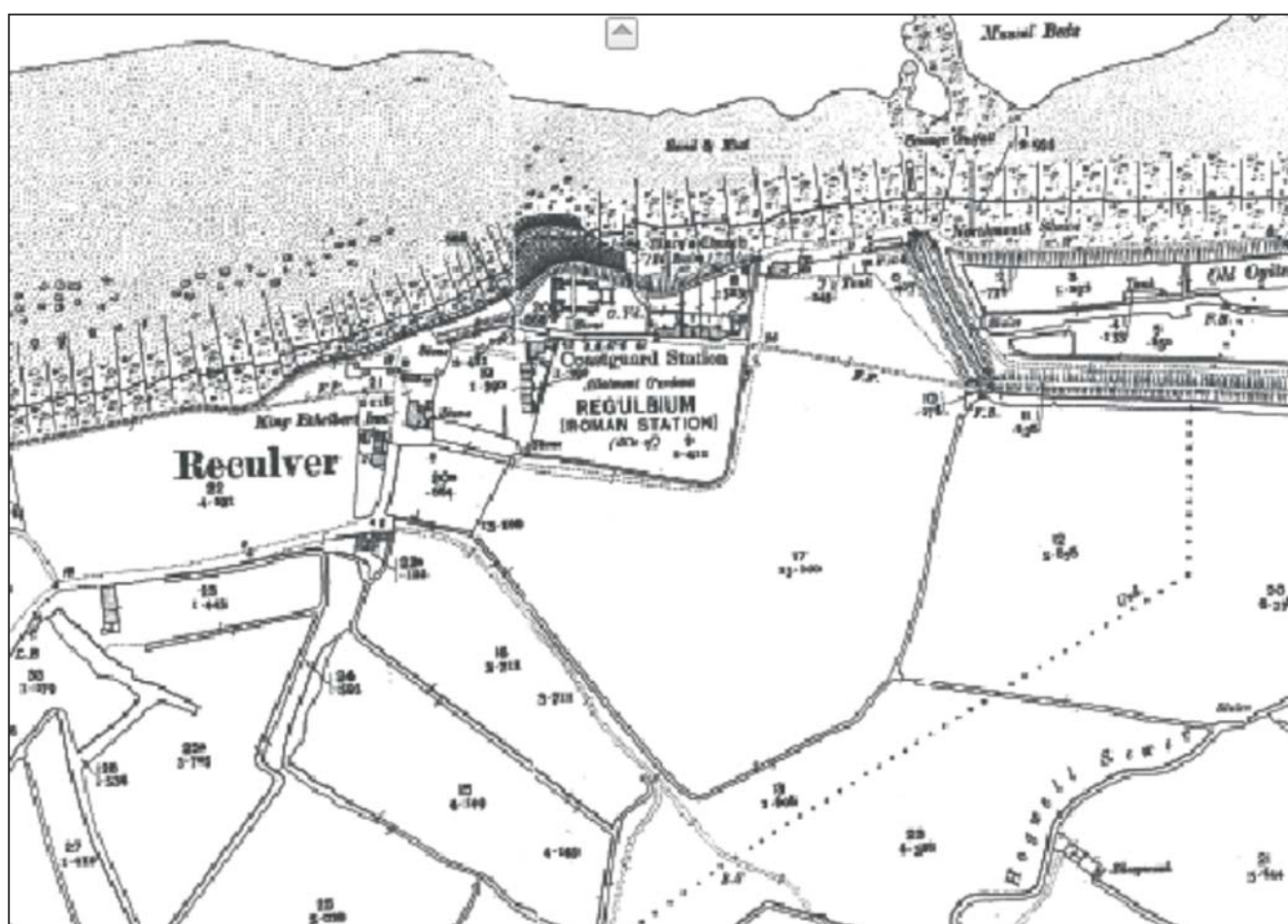


Fig 11. 3rd Edition Ordnance Survey, late 20th century



Fig 12. 1940s aerial photograph (from Google Earth)



Fig 13. 1960s aerial photograph (from Google Earth)



Fig 14. 2011 aerial photograph (from Google Earth)



Fig 15. Walkover area and views showing viewing angles of the following plates



Plate 1. View 1, looking north-east across lawns and the Children's Play Area from the approach along Reculver Lane



Plate 2. looking approximately north from the bend in Reculver Lane towards the King Ethelbert pub



Plate 3. Looking north-east from the car park



Plate 4. Looking east along the sea wall.



Plate 5. Looking east



Plate 6. Looking south-east



Plate 7. Looking north-west



Plate 8. Looking west



Plate 9. Looking north at the obscured Scheduled Monument

Fig 20



Plate 10. Looking west-north-west



Plate 11. L looking approximately west-north-west

Fig 21.



Plate 12. Looking north-west

Fig 22



Plate 13. Looking north-west

Fig 23



Plate 14. Looking west



Plate 15. Looking west



Plate 16. Wall close up, looking west



Plate 17. Wall close up, looking west



Plate 18. Wall close up, looking north-north-west



Plate 19. Wall close up, looking south-west



Plate 20. View of the Wantsum from within the fort, looking east

Fig 27



Plate 21. View of the PDA from within the fort, looking south-east



Plate 22. View of the PDA from within the fort, looking south-west

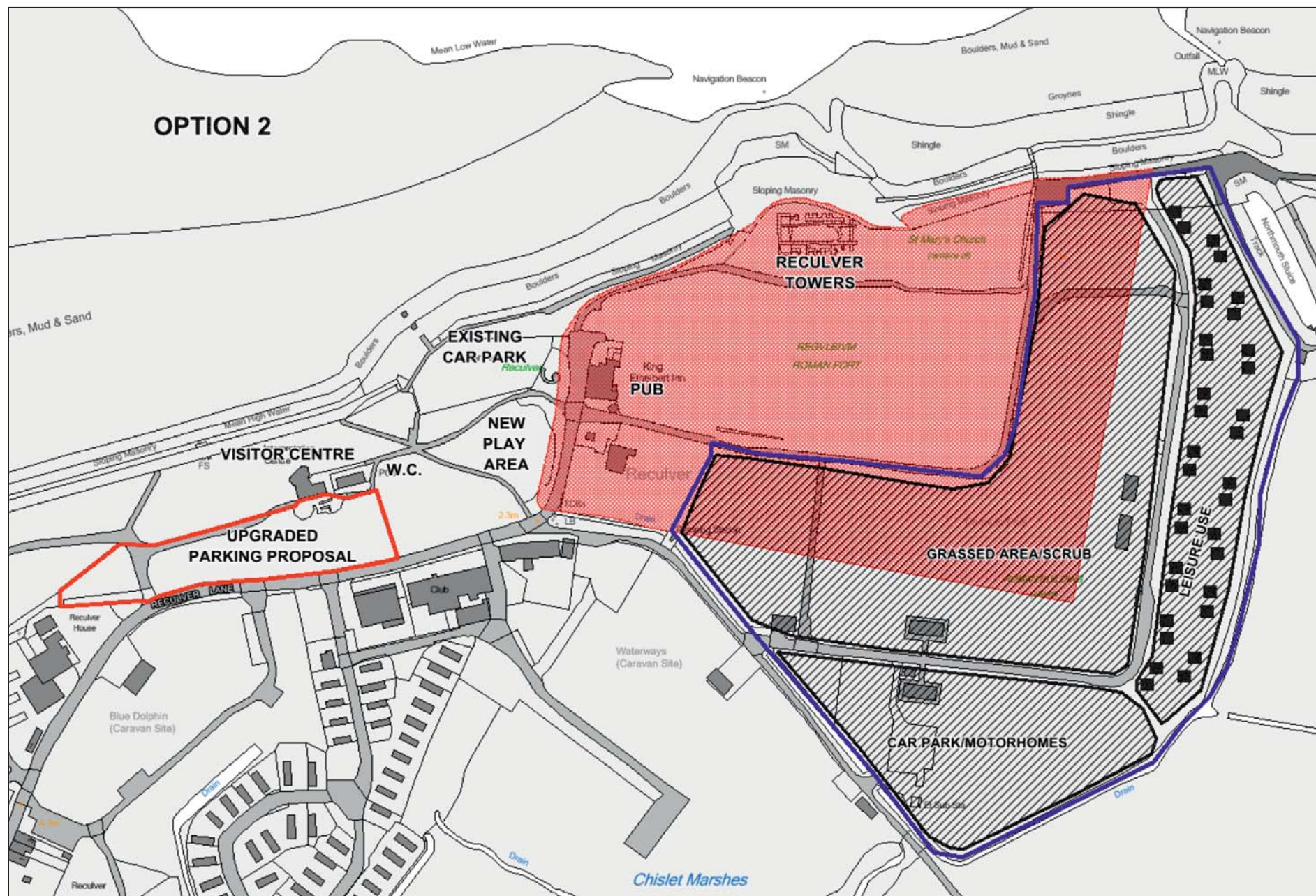


Fig 30. Option 2

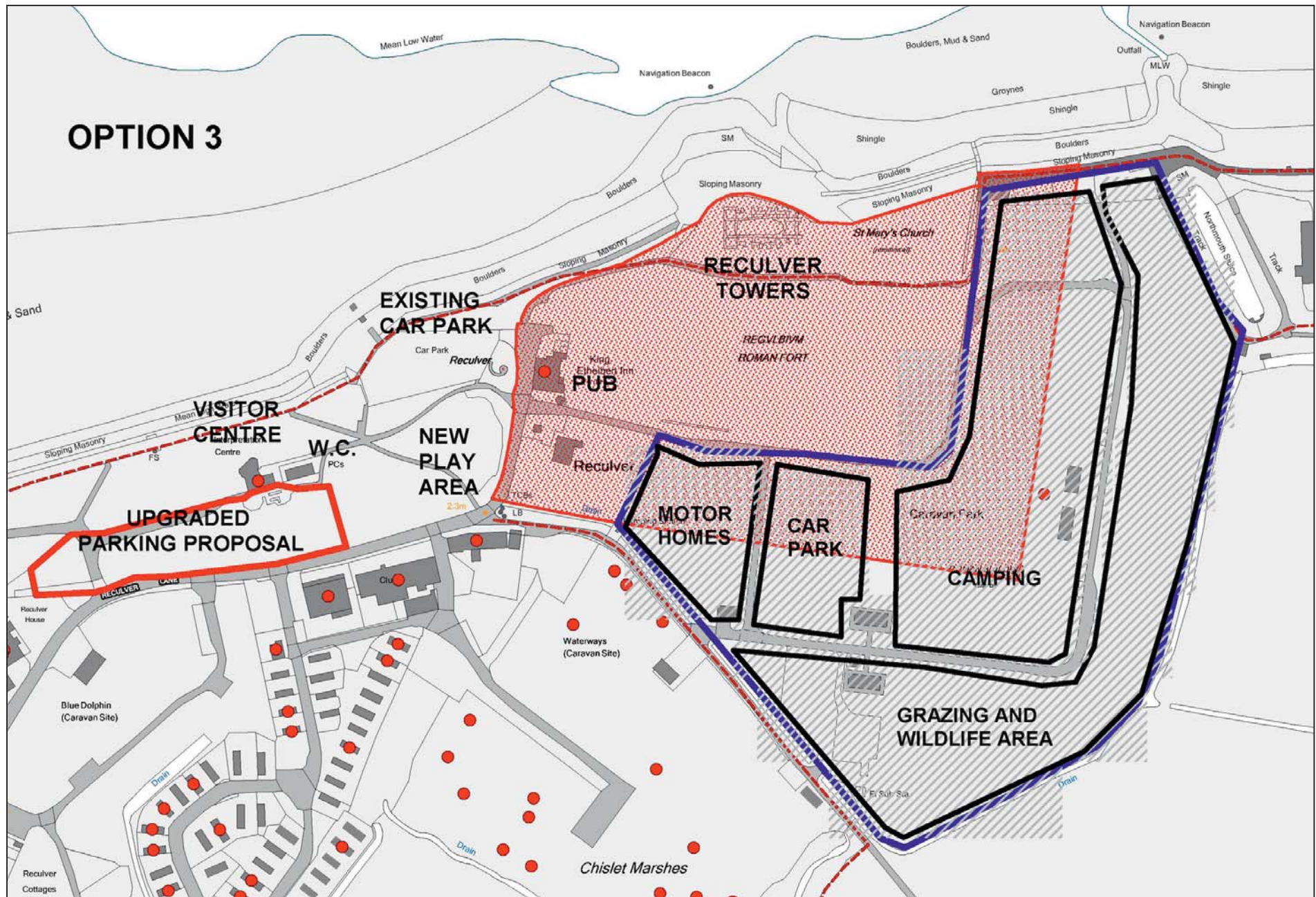


Fig 31. Option 3.



Fig 33. View of the Country Park, including the Scheduled Monument, looking east; the proposed chalets in Option 2 would not be visible from this viewpoint, or any other from this side of the monument.