

**An Archaeological Watching Brief During Geotechnical
Investigations at Hollingbourne Business Park,
Hollingbourne, Kent**

NGR TQ 81413 55699

**Project No. 2856
Site Code HBP 07**



**by
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Summary

Geotechnical investigations were undertaken at the Hollingbourne Business Park, Hollingbourne, Kent. The work comprised two phases including the archaeological supervision of ten test pits excavated in order to record extant geology (April 2007) and seven test pits, excavated in order to both record extant geology and to undertake soak away testing (March 2007) . No archaeological features were noted however a small quantity of residual prehistoric pottery was recovered. The general stratigraphic sequence comprised, top soil, overlying sub soil, overlying a head deposit of flint with clay. The underlying solid geology was sands derived from the Folkestone Beds.

Archaeology South-East

Archaeology South-East is a division of the Field Archaeology Unit, University College London, one of the largest groupings of academic archaeologists in the country. Consequently, Archaeology South-East has access to the conservation, computing and environmental backup of the college, as well as a range of other archaeological services.

The Field Archaeology Unit and South Eastern Archaeological Services (which became Archaeology South-East in 1996) were established in 1974 and 1991 respectively. Although field projects have been conducted world-wide, the Field Archaeology Unit retains a special interest in South-East England with the majority of our contract and consultancy work concentrated in Hampshire, Surrey, Sussex, Kent, Greater London and Essex.

Based in the local community, the Field Archaeology Unit sees an important part of its work as explaining the results to the broader public. Public lectures, open days, training courses and liaison with local archaeological societies are aspects of its community-based approach.

Drawing on experience of the countryside and towns of the south east of England the Unit can give advice and carry out surveys at an early stage in the planning process. By working closely with developers and planning authorities it is possible to incorporate archaeological work into developments with little inconvenience.

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ILLUSTRATIONS

- Figure 1: Site Location Plan
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of University College London Field Archaeology Unit (UCLFAU), have been commissioned by WSP Environmental Ltd. to undertake an archaeological watching brief during geotechnical test pitting at the Hollingbourne Business Park Site, Hollingbourne, Kent. In view of the archaeological potential of the site, Kent County Council (KCC) requested that an *archaeological watching brief* be maintained during the geotechnical site investigations.
- 1.2** The site covers some 8 ha and is situated on land between the A20 and M20 east of Maidstone. It is centred at NGR TQ 81413 55699.
- 1.3** The geotechnical works comprised two phases. Firstly, seven test pits, excavated so as to record the underlying geology and to allow soak away testing to be conducted. Secondly, ten test pits were dug to record underlying geology. An archaeological presence was required in order to ascertain the presence/absence of archaeological remains, and to mitigate against any possible exposure and damage.
- 1.4** A Written Scheme of Investigation was issued by Archaeology South-East in March 2007 and approved by the KCC Archaeological Officer.
- 1.5** The fieldwork was undertaken from 6th-7th March by Clive Meaton (Archaeologist) and subsequently from the 10th-13th April by Andrew Margetts (Archaeologist).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1** An *Archaeological Assessment* of the site has already been undertaken by WSP Environmental Ltd (WSP 2005). This document concluded that the site has moderate potential for the survival of archaeological deposits on the site.
- 2.2** Recent excavations in the vicinity of the site, particularly those associated with the CTRL corridor, have shown that activity in the area is likely to be largely rural in character, potentially of prehistoric to Romano-British date. The archaeological evidence points to an area of long term multi period rural occupation embedded within the surrounding landscape (*ibid.*). Moreover, there is clear evidence of Iron Age tree clearance and areas of Bronze Age activity.
- 2.2** The underlying geology, according to the British Geological Survey (sheet 288) comprises Gault clay and Folkestone beds.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

Phase 1

- 3.1** The geotechnical investigations involved the excavation of seven test pits; 3 in Field 1, and 4 in Field 2 (Field 1 Test Pits numbered 1,2, and 5, Field 2 numbered 3a, 3b, 4 and 6. Numbers assigned by geotechnical contractors, Fig. 2). The pits were dug using a tracked excavator with a narrow ditching bucket (c.1m wide), and were approximately 2m wide by 3m long and up to 3m deep. Due to the underlying sand deposits (Folkestone Beds), and the inherent instability of the baulks, pits 2 through 7 were stepped down from a 2m to a 1m width, at approximately 500mm below the ground surface. All excavations were under constant archaeological supervision.

Phase 2

- 3.2** The geotechnical investigations involved the excavation of ten test pits; located in land belonging to Woodcut, Barty and Bridge Farms (Test Pits 101-110, numbered by geotechnical contractors, Fig. 2). The pits were dug using a JCB with a narrow ditching bucket (c.600mm wide), and were approximately 600mm wide by 2m long and up to 4.3m deep. All excavations were under constant archaeological supervision.
- 3.3** The stratigraphic sequence was recorded according to standard UCLFAU practice, and in line with advice given in PPG16 (the government's advice on *Archaeology and Planning*). Deposits/contexts were described on standard pro-forma recording sheets used by UCLFAU, and a full photographic record was made, including digital images.

4.0 RESULTS

*All context numbers are shown in square brackets: [**/**]*

4.1 Phase 1

4.1.1 Test Pit 1

The deposits encountered during the excavation of Test Pit 1 comprised of c.300mm of topsoil/ploughsoil [1/01]. This consisted of mid greyish brown silty clay with moderate inclusions of angular flint nodules (<80mm). Underlying this was the natural mid orange brown clay with flints [1/02].

4.1.2 Test Pit 2

The deposits encountered during the excavation of Test Pit 2 comprised of c.300mm of topsoil/ploughsoil [2/01]. This consisted of mid greyish brown silty clay with moderate inclusions of angular flint nodules (<80mm). Underlying this was the natural mid orange brown clay with flints [1/02].

4.1.3 Test Pit 3a.

The deposits encountered during the excavation of Test Pit 3 comprised of c.300mm of topsoil/ploughsoil [3a/01]. This consisted of mid greyish brown silty clay with moderate inclusions of angular flint nodules (<80mm). Underlying this was c.350mm of mid yellow brown silty clay subsoil with moderate inclusions of angular flint nodules (<20mm) [3a/02]. Beneath [3a/02] was c.700mm mid orange brown natural clay [3a/03]. This Head Deposit was underlain by the orange yellow sand [3a/06] (Folkestone Beds). A possible Palaeochannel [3a/05] was recorded in Test Pit 3 cut into the underlying sand [3a/06], and revealed in the bottom half of both sections. It was approximately 1m wide and 400mm deep and although only partially revealed, appeared to form a shallow, gentle profile. It was filled by [3a/04], a mid greenish grey silty sandy clay, with 20% rounded flint gravels. Interestingly a similar deposit was noted in Test Pit 3b, a short distance to the north, forming a thin band some c.300mm thick across the sections. Thus the fill of the channel was may have been derived from deposits a little further to the north.

4.1.4 Test Pit 3b.

The deposits encountered during the excavation of Test Pit 3b comprised firstly of c.300mm of topsoil/ploughsoil [3b/01]. This consisted of mid greyish brown silty clay with moderate inclusions of angular flint nodules (<60mm). Underlying this was c.400mm of mid yellow brown silty clay subsoil with moderate inclusions of angular flint nodules (<20mm) [3b/02]. Underlying this was c.300mm of mid greenish grey silty sandy clay with 20% rounded flint gravels [3b/03]. Underlying this was c.800mm of mid orange brown natural clay

[3b/03]. This Head Deposit was underlain by the orange yellow sand of the Folkestone Beds [3a/04].

4.1.5 Test Pit 4.

The deposits encountered during the excavation of Test Pit 4 comprised firstly of c.300mm of topsoil/ploughsoil [4/01]. This consisted of mid greyish brown silty clay with moderate inclusions of angular flint nodules (<50mm). Underlying this was c.300mm of mid yellow brown silty clay subsoil with moderate inclusions of angular flint nodules (<30mm) [4/02]. Beneath Context 4/02 was the mid orange brown natural clay (Context 4/03).

4.1.6 Test Pit 5.

The deposits encountered during the excavation of Test Pit 5 comprised firstly of c.400mm of topsoil/ploughsoil [5/01]. This consisted of mid greyish brown silty clay with moderate inclusions of angular flint nodules (<40mm). Directly beneath [5/01] was a mid orange brown clay with flints natural [5/02]. Beneath Context 5/02 was the mid orange brown natural clay [5/03].

4.1.7 Test Pit 6.

The deposits encountered during the excavation of Test Pit 6 comprised firstly of c.400mm of topsoil/ploughsoil [6/01]. This consisted of mid greyish brown silty clay with moderate inclusions of angular flint nodules (<60mm). Directly beneath [6/01] was c.300mm of mid yellow brown silty clay subsoil with moderate inclusions of angular flint nodules (<20mm) [6/02]. Beneath [6/02] was the natural orange brown clay with flints [6/03] at which point archaeological recording ceased.

4.1.8 No archaeological features or artefacts were found during the course of the Phase 1 work, and all deposits noted in section were formed through natural process

4.3 Phase 2

4.3.1 Test Pit 101.

The deposits encountered during the excavation of Test Pit 101 comprised of c.250mm of topsoil/ploughsoil [101/01]. This consisted of mid greyish brown silty clay with moderate inclusions of angular flint nodules (<50mm), and occasional modern building materials (<40mm). Directly beneath [101/01] was a mid blue grey natural clay [101/02].

4.3.2 Test Pit 102.

The deposits encountered during the excavation of Test Pit 102 comprised of c.300mm of topsoil/ploughsoil [102/01]. This consisted of mid greyish brown silty clay with occasional inclusions of angular flint nodules (<30mm). Underlying this was c.200mm of mid yellow

brown silty clay subsoil [102/02]. This contained occasional inclusions of angular flint nodules (<30mm). and occasional charcoal flecks. Underlying this was the mottled orange grey natural clay [102/03].

4.3.3 *Test Pit 103.*

The deposits encountered during the excavation of Test Pit [103] comprised firstly of c.300mm of topsoil/ploughsoil. [103/01]. This consisted of mid greyish brown silty clay with moderate inclusions of angular flint nodules (<40mm), and occasional modern building materials (<30mm). Underlying this was c.400mm of mid grey brown silty clay subsoil [103/02]. This contained moderate inclusions of angular flint nodules (<50mm). Underlying this 103/02 was the mottled mid grey brown natural clay [103/03].

4.3.4 *Test Pit 104.*

The deposits encountered during the excavation of Test Pit 104 comprised firstly of c.300mm of topsoil [104/01], a mid greyish brown sandy silt. Beneath this was c.400mm of mid grey brown silty sand subsoil [104/02]. This contained occasional inclusions of angular flint nodules (<30mm). Underlying this was the dark yellow brown natural clay [103/03].

4.3.5 *Test Pit 105.*

The deposits encountered during the excavation of Test Pit 105 comprised firstly of c.350mm of topsoil [105/01]. This consisted of mid greyish brown sandy silt with occasional inclusions of angular flint nodules (<30mm). Underlying this was . c.130mm of mid grey brown silty clay [105/02], fill of feature [105/03]. This contained occasional inclusions of modern building materials (<20mm) as well as two residual pot sherds of probable late prehistoric date. Feature [105/03] was a linear cut with sharply sloping sides and a flat base (Fig. 3). This was interpreted as a probable modern feature. Feature [105/03] was cut into the mottled mid orange brown natural clay [105/04].

4.3.6 *Test Pit 106.*

The deposits encountered during the excavation of Test Pit 106 comprised firstly of c.300mm of topsoil/gardensoil [106/01]. This consisted of dark black brown sandy silt with occasional inclusions of angular flint nodules (<40mm) and occasional inclusions of modern building materials (<40mm). Directly beneath was c.500mm of mid yellow brown sandy clay subsoil [106/02]. This contained moderate inclusions of angular flint nodules (<30mm). Underlying this was the mid brown yellow natural sand [106/03] at which point archaeological recording ceased.

4.3.7 *Test Pit 107.*

The deposits encountered during the excavation of Test Pit 107 comprised firstly of c.300mm of topsoil/ploughsoil [107/01]. This consisted of mid grey brown silty clay with moderate inclusions of angular flint nodules (<40mm). Directly beneath was c.200mm of mid orange brown silty clay subsoil [107/02]. This contained moderate inclusions of angular flint nodules (<50mm). Beneath [107/03] was the mid yellow brown natural sand [107/03]

4.3.8 *Test Pit 108.*

The deposits encountered during the excavation of Test Pit 101 comprised firstly of c.400mm of topsoil/ploughsoil [108/01]. This consisted of mid greyish brown silty clay with moderate inclusions of angular flint nodules (<40mm). Directly beneath [108/01] was the natural mid orange brown clay with flints [108/02].

4.3.9 *Test Pit 109.*

The deposits encountered during the excavation of Test Pit 109 comprised firstly of c.200mm of ploughsoil/gardensoil [109/01]. This consisted of dark blackish brown sandy silt with moderate inclusions of angular flint nodules (<30mm) and occasional modern building materials (<40mm). Underlying this was the fine light yellow white natural sand [109/02].

4.3.10 *Test Pit 110.*

The deposits encountered during the excavation of Test Pit 110 comprised firstly of c.160mm of topsoil [110/01]. This consisted of mid grey brown silty clay with occasional inclusions of angular flint nodules (<20mm). Underlying this was c.120mm of mottled mid orange brown silty clay subsoil [110/02]. This contained occasional inclusions of sandstone fragments and angular flint nodules (<30mm) as well as occasional modern building materials (<40mm). Beneath Context [110/02] was the mid orange yellow natural clay [110/03].

5.0 The Finds by Louise Rayner

- 5.1** Two fragments of pottery were recovered from **105/02**; both relate to the same sherd and have a combined weight of only 2g. The fragments have a fine flint-tempered fabric (rare inclusions, up to 1.0mm) with a sandy matrix and occasional burnt organic inclusions. The surfaces could not be properly cleaned and examined due to the fragile nature of the fragments.
- 5.2** The use of flint-tempered clays for pottery production is a long-lived tradition in the south-east of England from the Neolithic onwards and in some areas of Kent it continues in use into the early Roman period. These fragments are most likely to be later prehistoric in date and probably of Iron Age origin, although their condition precludes close dating.
- 5.3** The presence of these sherds is probably indicative of later prehistoric activity within the vicinity but their recovery residual alongside modern building material and condition means this activity cannot be closely dated or characterised.

6.0 DISCUSSION

6.1 Phase 1

No archaeological deposits were noted during the course of the first phase of the watching brief and no artefacts, unstratified or otherwise, recovered. This would there is no intensive archaeological activity in the immediate vicinity of the test pits. .Given the limited scope of the watching brief, it is not possible to speculate further on the ancient land use.

Phase 2

6.2 No archaeological features or deposits were noted during the course of this watching brief however a small quantity of residual prehistoric pottery was recovered from modern feature [105/03] and this suggests some, albeit limited, later prehistoric activity in the area of Test Pit 105. .

7.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

7.1 Many thanks to WSP Environmental Ltd and Steve Burden of WYG.

8.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

WSP Environmental Ltd. 2005 *Hollingbourne Business Park, Hollingbourne, Kent. Archaeological Assessment.*

**Archaeology South-East
Hollingbourne Business Park, Hollingbourne, Kent**

SMR Summary Sheet

Site Code	HBP07					
Identification Name and Address	Hollingbourne Business Park, Hollingbourne, Kent					
County, District &/or Borough	Kent County Council					
Ordnance Survey Grid Reference	NGR TQ 81413 55699					
Archaeology South-East Proj. No.	2856					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	Watching Brief	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field ✓	Shallow Urban	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	WB. Mar/Apr 07	Other		
Sponsor/Client	WSP Environmental Ltd					
Project Manager	Neil Griffin/Diccon Hart					
Project Supervisor	Clive Meaton					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM	Other: Later Prehistoric?		
<p>100 Word Summary. <i>Geotechnical investigations were undertaken at the Hollingbourne Business Park, Hollingbourne, Kent. The work comprised two phases including the archaeological supervision of ten test pits excavated in order to record extant geology (April 2007) and seven test pits, excavated in order to both record extant geology and to undertake soak away testing (March 2007) . No archaeological features were noted however a small quantity of residual prehistoric pottery was recovered. The general stratigraphy sequence comprised, top soil, overlying sub soil, overlying a head deposit of flint with clay. The underlying solid geology was sands derived from the Folkestone Beds.</i></p>						

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OASIS ID: archaeol6-26703

Project details

Project name	Hollingbourne Business Park, WB report
Short description of the project	Geotechnical investigations were undertaken at the Hollingbourne Business Park Site in Kent. The work comprised two phases including the archaeological supervision of ten test pits excavated in order to record extant geology (April 2007) and seven test pits, excavated in order to both record extant geology and to undertake soak away testing (March 2007). No archaeological features were noted however a small quantity of residual prehistoric pot was recovered. The general stratigraphy comprised, top soil, over sub soil, over a head deposit of flint with clay, with the underlying solid geology formed by sands derived from the Folkestone Beds.
Project dates	Start: 06-03-2007 End: 13-04-2007
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	HBP07 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
Current Land use	Cultivated Land 1 - Minimal cultivation
Significant Finds	POTTERY Late Prehistoric
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - Direction 4

Project location

Country	England
Site location	KENT MAIDSTONE HOLLINGBOURNE Hollingbourne Business Park
Postcode	ME17 1XX
Study area	8.00 Hectares
Site coordinates	TQ 81413 55699 51.2709581515 0.600973649660 51 16 15 N 000 36 03 E Point
Height OD	Min: 50.00m Max: 60.00m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South East
Project brief	Archaeology South East

originator
 Project design originator Archaeology South-East
 Project director/manager Diccon Hart
 Project supervisor Clive Meaton
 Type of sponsor/funding body consultant
 Name of sponsor/funding body WSP Environmental Ltd

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No
 Physical Archive recipient n/a
 Digital Archive Exists? No
 Digital Archive recipient n/a
 Paper Archive Exists? No

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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 Author(s)/Editor(s) Margetts, A
 Other bibliographic details Project No. 2856
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 Issuer or publisher Archaeology South East
 Place of issue or publication Ditchling
 Description WB Report
 Entered by A Margetts (andrew_margetts@tiscali.co.uk)
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OASIS:

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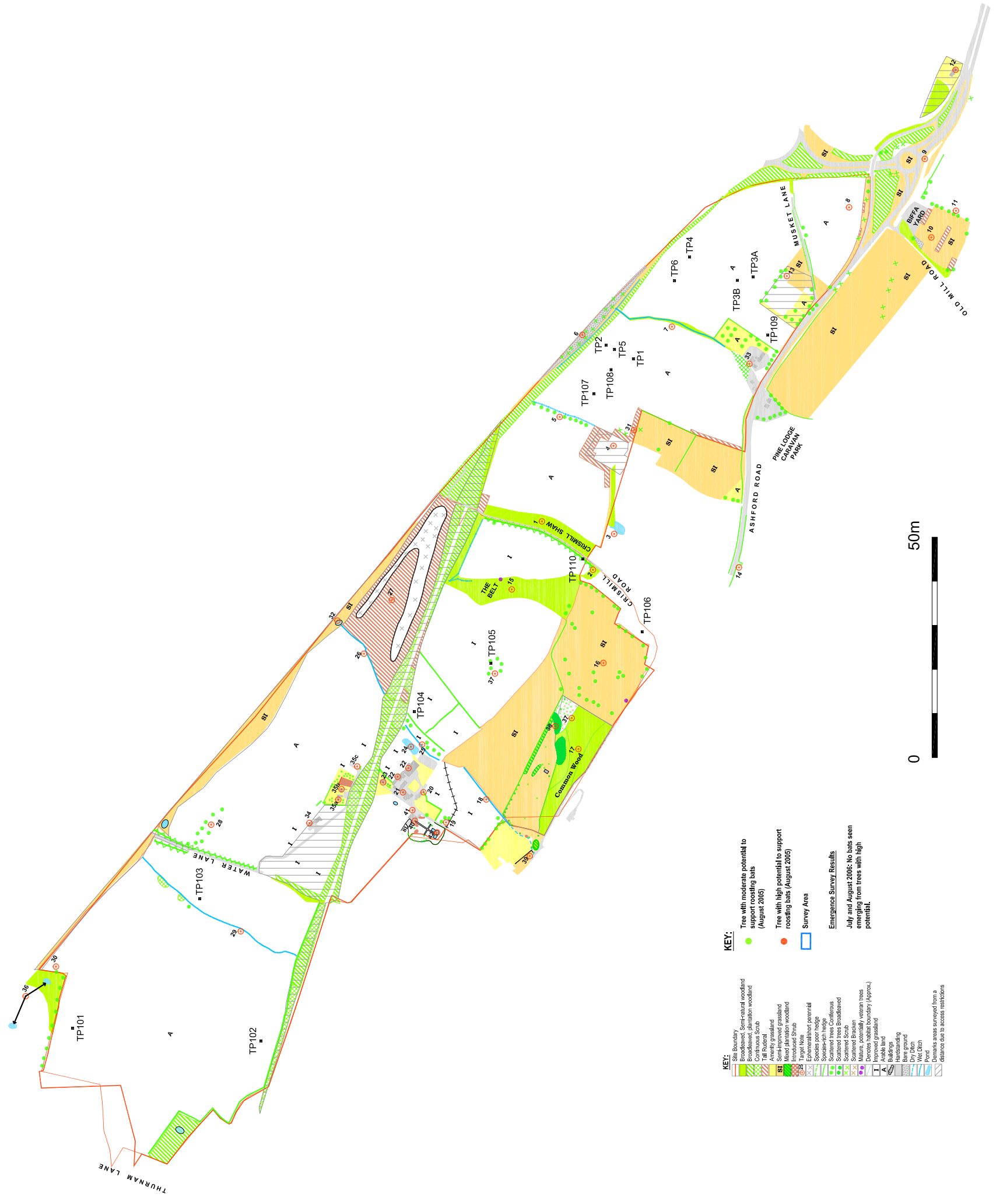
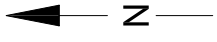
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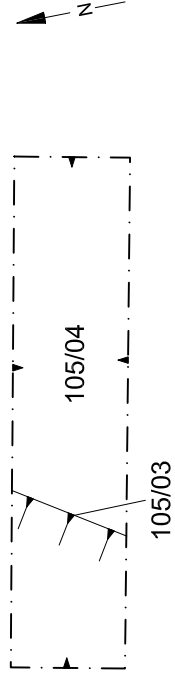
© Archaeology South-East			Hollingbourne Business Park		Fig. 1
Ref: 2856	July 2007	Drawn by: JNC	Site Location Plan		

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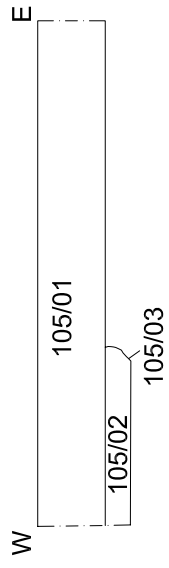


- KEY:**
- Site Boundary
 - Broadleaved, Semi-natural woodland
 - Broadleaved, plantation woodland
 - Common Heath
 - Tall Ruderal
 - Arable grassland
 - Arable
 - Wooded grassland
 - Wooded plantation woodland
 - Intruded Shrub
 - Tringa Nests
 - Species poor heath
 - Species rich heath
 - Scattered trees, Coniferous
 - Scattered trees, Broadleaved
 - Scattered Scrub
 - Scattered Bracken
 - Moore, potentially veteran trees
 - Moore, potentially veteran trees
 - Improved grassland (Approx.)
 - Arable land
 - Buildings
 - Bare ground
 - Dry Clutch
 - Wet Clutch
 - Distance areas surveyed from a distance due to access restrictions
- KEY:**
- Tree with moderate potential to support roosting bats (August 2005)
 - Tree with high potential to support roosting bats (August 2005)
 - Survey Area
- Emergence Survey Results**
- July and August 2005: No bats seen
 August 2005: Bats seen from trees with high potential.

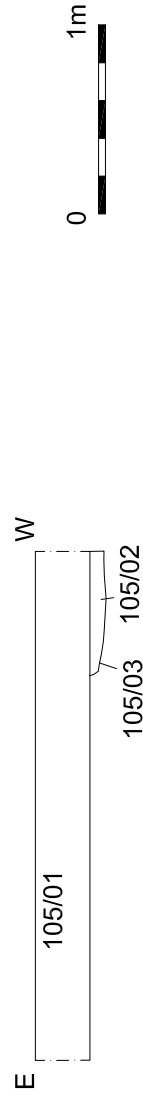
Plan of Test Pit 105



South Facing Section of Test Pit 105



North Facing Section of Test Pit 105



© Archaeology South-East		Hollingbourne Business Park		Fig. 3
Ref: 2856	July 2007	Drawn by: JNC	Test Pit 105 Plan and Sections	