



Land at Brookers Farm, Luddesdown Road, Luddesdown, Gravesend Kent DA13 0XE

Written scheme of investigation for an archaeological evaluation

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Client: Vineyards Farms Ltd

NGR: 567186 166544 (centred)

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PART B: KCC Manual of Specifications: Evaluation – trial trenching requirements

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This specification sets out the requirements for a programme of archaeological evaluation to be undertaken on Land at Brookers Farm, Luddesdown Road, Luddesdown, Gravesend, Kent DA13 0XE (NGR 567186 166544 centred; Figure 1).
- 1.2 The archaeological evaluation is to be conducted in support of the following planning proposal:
- ‘Engineering works to construct a formal car parking area for Vineyard Farms Ltd office, winery and vineyard workers, and other users of Brookers Farm’ (Planning Application Ref: 20240091).’*
- 1.3 Under the Town and Country Planning Act, Gravesham Borough Council as the Local Planning Authority (LPA) granted approval for the proposal on 5 February 2024 subject to attached conditions. Condition 4 relating to archaeological matters states:
- ‘No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of*
- i. archaeological field evaluation works in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation and timetable which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority; and*
- ii. following on from the evaluation, any safeguarding measures to ensure preservation in situ of important archaeological remains and/or further archaeological investigation, recording, reporting and dissemination of the results, in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation and timetable which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.*
- Reason: To ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded and in accordance with Policy CS20 of the Gravesham Local Plan: Core Strategy (2014).’*
- 1.4 In mitigation of the potential impact that the proposed works may have on any buried archaeological resource, and in accordance with the provision of the National Planning Policy Framework (DLHC 2023), Vineyard Farms Ltd (the Client) has commissioned Canterbury Archaeological Trust (CAT) to prepare this Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) and undertake a programme of archaeological evaluation to meet the requirements of Condition 4.
- 1.5 The archaeological evaluation will involve the excavation of five evaluation trenches, positioned across the proposed development area (PDA). The archaeological works will be monitored by the Senior Archaeologist at Kent County Council (KCC) Heritage Conservation Group (HCG).
- 1.6 The results of the evaluation works will inform on the site’s potential for surviving archaeological remains. They will enable the KCC HCG to determine the scope of any further archaeological mitigation works that may be required. Further mitigatory measures may include, but are not necessarily limited to, further excavation works and/or an archaeological watching brief during groundworks, to be agreed with the Client, the LPA and KCC HCG.

- 1.7 This specification provides a proposed programme and outline methodology for undertaking the archaeological evaluation works only, setting out the aims and objectives, the standards to be attained, the nature of the monitoring and the format for reporting.
- 1.8 Further stages of archaeological mitigation work will be subject to separate specifications that will need to be agreed with the LPA and the KCC HCG.
- 1.9 The evaluation will conform to the relevant standards and guidance of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2023a and 2023b) and the KCC Manual of Specifications Part B: Evaluation – trial trenching requirements.

2 Site location, topography and geology

- 2.1 The site is situated east of Luddesdown Road, north of the settlement of Luddesdown, between Cuxton and Meopham in North Kent. The site comprises the north-west corner of a field (currently partitioned into three), part of the track that bounds the field to the west and north, and the field access (Figure 1).
- 2.2 The site lies at a height of c. 50m above Ordnance Datum (OD), at the base of, and on the lower north-west facing slopes of, a north-east to south-west aligned dry valley.
- 2.3 The British Geological Survey (BGS on-line) maps the bedrock geology of the site as chalk of either the Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation or the New Pit Chalk Formation, with overlying superficial Head deposits of clay, silt, sand and gravel within the base of the dry valley, in the north-western two-thirds of the site.

3 Archaeological and historical background

- 3.1 The site does not lie within a World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Registered Battlefield or Registered Park and Garden. Brookers Farm, a Grade II listed building lies 150m north-west from the edge of the site. This is an eighteenth century building with later additions, including a nineteenth century gabled porch.
- 3.2 A Desk-Based Assessment (DBA) report (Grigsby 2023) was recently produced for the Client for Luddesdown Court, c. 430m to the south-west of the Brookers Farm site. This DBA report consulted the Kent Historic Environment Record (KHER) for a 750m radius around the site centre. The resulting archaeological and historical background chapter has largely been reproduced below, with the cartographic evidence having been revisited for a brief map regression of the Brookers Farm site.

Prehistoric (500,000 BP–AD 43)

- 3.3 Luddesdown is situated to the west of the Medway Valley Palaeolithic Project (MVPP) areas 18, 30 and 35, defined in the MVPP report as belonging to the broad group KT 2 - Medway Gap. The report notes the following (Wenban-Smith *et al* 2007, 5):

Few Pleistocene fluvial deposits are mapped in the area. However, it does include the site of Cuxton, which is contained in a small patch of fluvial gravel with a base at c. 15m OD... Furthermore, patches of gravel mapped as 'Head Gravel' are shown by BGS mapping on the inside (east side) of the river bend, where Pleistocene fluvial deposits would be most likely to be preserved. These are surrounded by extensive spreads of superficial Head deposits that may also hide fluvial deposits. Cuxton is one of Britain's most spectacular Palaeolithic sites, having produced very many fine handaxes from a few tiny test pits.

- 3.4 The Palaeolithic sites at Cuxton lie c.4km east of Luddesdown and include:
- abundant Lower/Middle Palaeolithic finds (HER TQ76 NW428), including twenty handaxes, mostly pointed, from an excavation at 15 Rochester Road;
 - Lower/Middle Palaeolithic finds (HER TQ76 NW384), including twenty six handaxes, some amongst them large and very finely worked specimens, uncovered from a test pit at 21 Rochester Road as part of the fieldwork programme for the MVPP.
- 3.5 Regarding the sites at Cuxton, which is possibly the youngest Acheulian site in Britain and, perhaps, Europe (Wenban-Smith *et al* 2007, 31), the MVPP states that 'previous work by Bridgland... has confirmed that the terrace is part of the main Medway river system, and not associated with the west bank tributary that enters the Medway from the west here (here provisionally named "the Luddesdown River")'. However, this tributary, the palaeochannel system west of Cuxton and running just south of Luddesdown Court is one of two areas suggested in the MVPP as worth exploring as possible areas of high potential, these being as follows (*ibid*, 32). (a) up and down the main Medway Valley in the vicinity of Cuxton; and (b) along the flanks of the dry tributary valley that enters the Medway from the west at Cuxton, coming from Luddesdown and hence here provisionally named the Luddesdown River. Although there is now no stream in this valley, it must have contained substantial drainage periodically through the Pleistocene, and terrace remnants may be preserved at various places along its flanks.
- 3.6 The remains of a possible Iron Age structure with associated pottery (HER TQ66 NE21) were found just 25m north-east of Luddesdown Court, on land between the church and the manor house, c 20m from the north-west corner of the churchyard. The finds were of burnt clay, showing signs of timber wattles and were associated with fragments of La Tène pottery.
- 3.7 The fragmented cropmark (HER TQ66 NE40) of a probable Iron Age or Romano-British rectilinear enclosure is visible on aerial photographs east of the site, within the field (now vineyard) east of Cutter Ridge Road; the KHER records the entry as c. 140m south-east of the site.
- Romano-British (AD 43–450)*
- 3.8 Other, perhaps, than the aforementioned cropmark, Romano-British archaeological remains are scarce within the locality of Luddesdown.
- Anglo-Saxon (AD 450–1066)*
- 3.9 No evidence from the Anglo-Saxon period was recorded within 750m of the PDA.
- Medieval (AD 1066–1540)*
- 3.10 Luddesdown is recorded as a settlement in the Domesday survey of 1086, in the hundred of Tollington, with a recorded population of 22 households and with a church (Domesday on-line, sv Luddesdown).
- 3.11 Luddesdown Court is believed to date in origin to the early/mid 13th century (Austin 2023). Both Luddesdown Court and the parish church offer ample evidence for the continuation of the settlement at Luddesdown into the medieval period. Presently, however, aside from the building evidence, no medieval archaeology has been found in the vicinity.

Post-Medieval (AD 1540–1900)

- 3.12 The Andrews, Dury and Herbert map of 1769 shows the site as undeveloped land between two unnamed roads (Luddesdown Road and Cutter Ridge Road), north of one building in a roadside plot and a group of three in another more southern roadside plot.
- 3.13 The 1797 Ordnance Survey (OS) drawing shows the site in more detail. The site lies within a field north of an unnamed farm with multiple buildings; the building that had stood to the north is no longer apparent.
- 3.14 The 1801 Mudge map shows at least three buildings to have been built to the north of the site, where The Golden Lion Public House and Brookers Farm now stand.
- 3.15 The First Edition OS map of 1869 reveals that the site was mostly an orchard, possibly open to the rest of the field. This orchard looks to have been removed by the Second Edition OS map of 1898.

Modern (AD 1900–Present)

- 3.16 There was no change noted to the site from the third and fourth OS maps of 1909 and c. 1940. Aerial images from 1946, 1990 and 2008 show the site to have been arable farmland.

Previous archaeological investigations

- 3.17 A geophysical survey was conducted by Canterbury Archaeological Trust (Russell 2024) in support of the present application. A summary of the results is presented below:

‘The geophysical survey identified no anomalies that could be identified as archaeological in origin. The LiDAR data available also showed no obvious archaeological features present on site. A build-up of hill-wash may, however, have masked the identification of any archaeology.....’

4 Aims

- 4.1 Archaeological field evaluation is defined by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) as ‘a programme of non-intrusive and/or intrusive fieldwork which seeks to determine the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts. It may form a single or final phase of work within a defined area or site on land, in an inter-tidal zone or under water’ (CIfA 2023a). The purpose is to ‘determine, record and report on the nature, extent, preservation and significance of archaeological remains within a defined area’ (CIfA 2023a).
- 4.2 The principal aims of the evaluation work are to determine the presence of any archaeological remains on the site, and to ascertain the extent, depth below ground surface, depth of deposits, character, significance and condition of any archaeological remains on site.
- 4.3 More specific objectives include to:
- identify whether the Head deposits on site hold potential for the recovery of Palaeolithic flintwork;
 - identify whether activity associated with the nearby rectangular enclosure, of probable Iron Age or Romano-British date, extends north-west into the site;

- identify whether any archaeological remains survive at depth under deposits of hill-wash; and
 - identify whether the site was put to any use other than agriculture in the medieval and Post-medieval periods.
- 4.4 The evaluation will provide sufficient information for all parties concerned, particularly the LPA, to devise appropriate mitigation measures, if required. Such measures may, for example, include preservation *in situ* and/or further detailed archaeological excavation prior to development and/or an archaeological watching brief during construction work. An evaluation may therefore result in the need for an agreed mitigation strategy and the implementation of further archaeological works to fulfil the planning conditions.

5 Methodology

- 5.1 The archaeological investigations shall be carried out in accordance with this method statement.
- 5.2 All archaeological work will be undertaken by professional archaeologists in the employ of Canterbury Archaeological Trust.
- 5.3 All archaeological work will be carried out in accordance with the accepted professional standards set out in the ClfA *Standard for archaeological field evaluation* (2023a) and *Universal guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (2023b). Canterbury Archaeological Trust is a Registered Organisation with ClfA and conforms to their Code, regulations and standards and guidance.
- 5.4 The general methodology for the archaeological evaluation is set out in Part B of this specification.
- 5.5 Archaeological evaluation will involve the mechanical excavation of five trenches within the footprint of the proposed development works. The trenches will each measure 10m in length by 1.8m in width. A proposed trench layout is included with this document (Figure 2). Each trench will be excavated with a mechanical excavator fitted with a flat-bladed toothless bucket. Deposits will be reduced in spits to the upper surface of surviving archaeology or top of archaeology, whichever is higher. All works will be under continuous archaeological supervision.
- 5.6 Care will be taken not to damage archaeological deposits through excessive use of mechanical excavation. Where exposed, archaeological features and deposits will be sample excavated by hand. Excavation will not exceed a depth greater than 1m below the existing ground level. Limited, slightly deeper excavation of archaeological features within the trench may be undertaken where this would not compromise safety.
- 5.7 The results of the evaluation trenching will inform on the potential for surviving archaeological remains within the PDA and enable the LPA and KCC HCG Senior Archaeological Officer to determine the scope of any further archaeological mitigation that may be required. It should be anticipated that further archaeological evaluations/investigations may be required within the site depending on developments in the proposed project design scheme.

- 5.8 The Archaeological Contractor will confirm the nature and location of any constraints on-site prior to the commencement of excavation and take account of these limitations when preparing a finalised trench layout plan, which will be submitted to the KCC HCG Senior Archaeological Officer for approval if it differs significantly from the proposed plan accompanying this document. Any subsequent amendments to the trench design must be agreed in advance with the KCC HCG Senior Archaeological Officer and a revised trench plan must be submitted for approval.
- 5.9 Canterbury Archaeological Trust will inform the KCC HCG Senior Archaeological Officer of the start date of the work (at least five days before, or as mutually agreed) and arrange for monitoring visits. The Archaeological Contractor will keep the KCC HCG Senior Archaeological Officer informed of the progress of work and will notify them immediately if particularly important archaeological or geoarchaeological remains are encountered.
- 5.10 Should significant remains be exposed it may be necessary to enlarge or extend the evaluation trenches to allow further investigation of any significant features or deposits that may be encountered.
- 5.11 Environmental sampling, if required, will follow the methodology set out in Part B of this specification. Should waterlogged remains be encountered these will be sampled as appropriate. Waterlogged and environmental samples will be processed by the CAT Environmental Manager who will assess the nature of the remains encountered in the samples in respect to (for example) mineralised plant remains and preserved insects.
- 5.12 Should human remains be encountered CAT will inform the Client and KCC HCG. Inhumation and cremation burials will normally be left *in situ* for the purposes of evaluation. If the removal of human remains is determined to be necessary as part of the scheme, a Ministry of Justice Licence (in accordance Section 25 of the Burial Act 1857) will be obtained. The need for a Ministry of Justice Licence applies to both inhumation and cremated remains. CAT will comply with the conditions of the Licence before proceeding. Inhumation and cremation burials will be excavated in accordance with normal practice. CAT will have available within the team an experienced osteoarchaeologist who will provide on-site support as required. The objectives will be to obtain data on the full extent, character and status of the burial context, both in terms of individual graves and burial groups. Excavation will be undertaken to recognized standards to maximise the recovery of data of social significance, which may include the bulk sampling of grave fills.
- 5.13 Prior to the commencement of fieldwork, the Archaeological Contractor shall agree with the developer, or their agent, any fencing, signage and security required during the works and requirements for reinstatement at completion. The Archaeological Contractor shall ensure that arrangements are in place for appropriate reinstatement prior to the commencement of any excavations.
- 5.14 Following the evaluation, the scope of further works will be agreed with the KCC HCG Senior Archaeological Officer and LPA. These may include another phase of evaluation and more detailed excavation, archaeological watching brief during groundworks or, where feasible and appropriate, design measures to accommodate the preservation of archaeology.
- 5.15 All stages of the project will be carried out in accordance with the procedures laid down in Historic England's 2015 *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE). The Archaeological Contractor should confirm, before site work begins, an agreement that provides for the full implementation of the approved programme of

archaeological work, including provision for post-excavation analysis, publication and archiving of the site, has been signed by the relevant parties.

6 Site recording, reporting, and archiving

- 6.1 Site recording, reporting and archiving should be undertaken in accordance with the methodologies outlined in Part B of this specification.
- 6.2 All archaeological features and deposits will be recorded individually using CAT pro forma context sheets, measured plan and section drawings, and photography. Supplementary recording systems will be compiled for investigations and samples taken for bulk screening, environmental archaeological analysis and soil micromorphology. Feature plans and sections will be drawn at an appropriate scale following the conventions set out in the CAT guidelines for site recording and excavation procedures (2001).
- 6.3 The final report for each stage of work will include an Archiving Statement that will summarize the selection and retention policy applied for physical and digital data, the size and nature of the physical archive and the intended location of the digital archive. The Archive Statement should confirm that funding has been ringfenced for deposition of both the digital and physical archive.

7 Public benefit

- 7.1 The historic environment is a shared irreplaceable resource (CIfA 2024). Increasing understanding of the past is fundamental to archaeology and is, itself, a public benefit.
- 7.2 Where appropriate CAT are able to provide the Client with specialist support to enable a programme of outreach as part of the project.

8 Monitoring

- 8.1 Site monitoring should be arranged in accordance with the methodology outlined in Part B of this specification. As a minimum the KCC Heritage Conservation team should be informed, in writing, at least one week prior to the commencement of each phase of work.

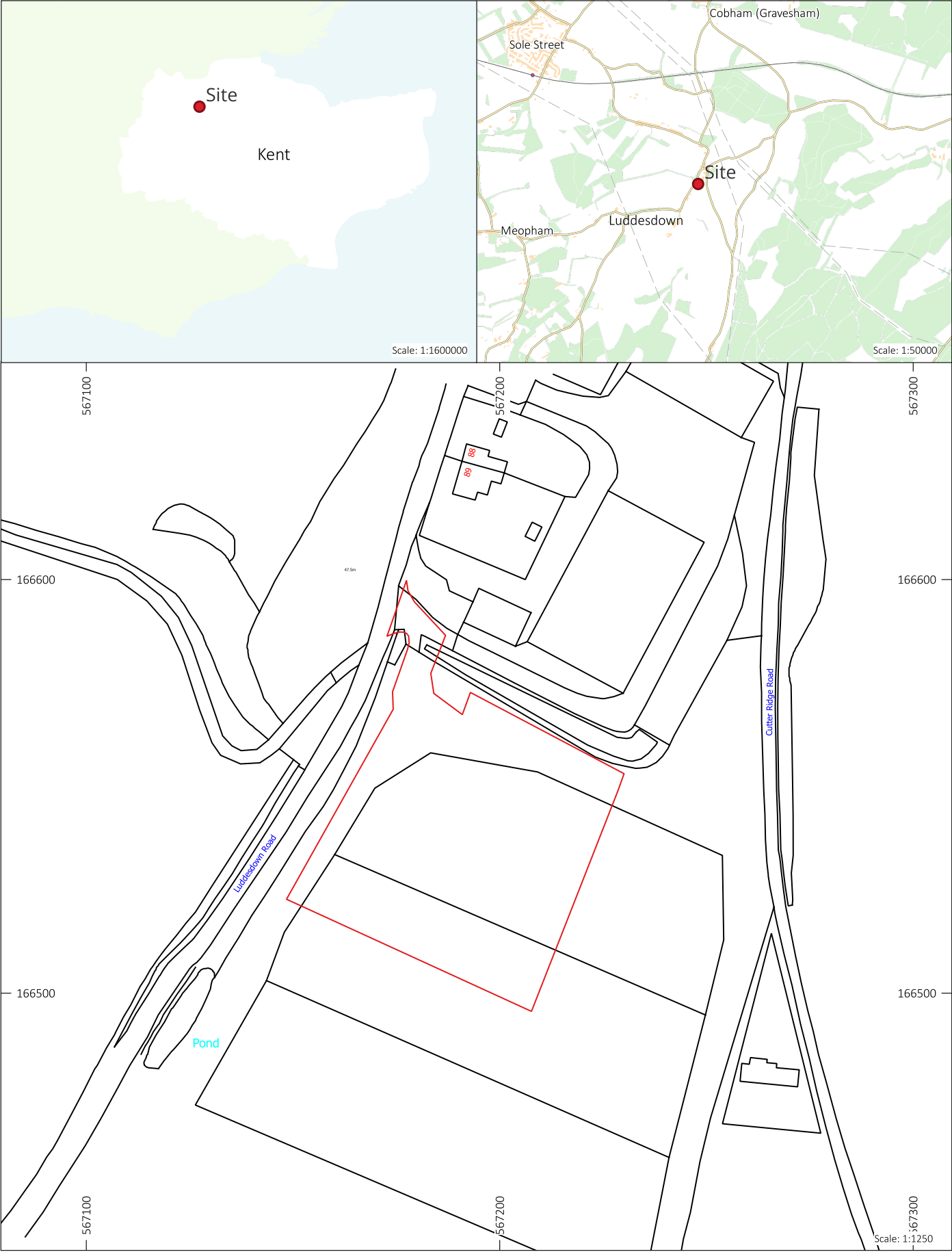
9 Health and safety

- 9.1 The archaeological works will be conducted in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and all other applicable health and safety legislation.
- 9.2 CAT is a Constructionline Gold and Acclaim accredited SSIP member.
- 9.3 All works will be conducted in accordance with the CAT Health and Safety General Policy (2024).
- 9.4 A project specific risk assessment and method statement (RAMS) will be produced, and all staff will be made familiar with the RAMS before commencement of site work.
- 9.5 All tasks will be carried out by competent staff who have an appropriate level of training to enable them to carry out their work safely.

- 9.6 CAT aim to work collaboratively with clients, principal contractors and other contractors to ensure a positive and safe working environment.

10 References

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PROJECT
Land at Brookers Farm, Luddesdown
Road, Luddesdown, Gravesend, Kent
DA13 0XE

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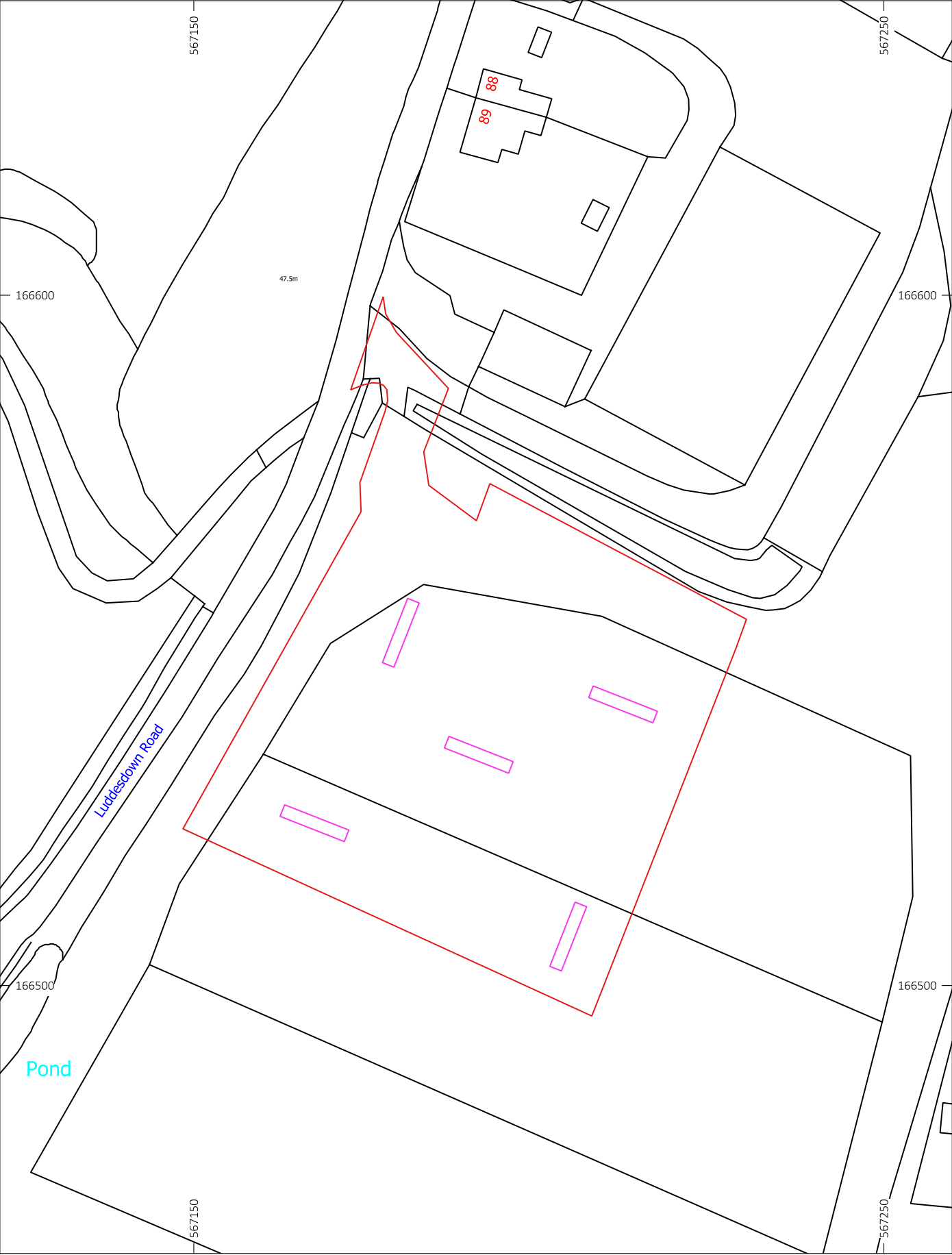
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Site Outline

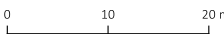
Figure 1. Proposed development location





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Site Outline

Trenches

Figure 2. Proposed trench layout