



Land at Convent of Mercy, Gravesend, Kent DA12 1NY

Archaeological Desk-based Assessment

Project Code: DA CMG 24

NGR: TQ 65655 72859

Report No: 2024/149

Archive No: 5248

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October 2024

Document Record

This report has been issued and amended as follows:

Version	Approved by	Position	Comment	Date
01	J Rady	Project Manager		25/11/24

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SUMMARY

This report presents the results of a provisional desk-based assessment, rapid archaeological appraisal, and a site walkover of land at Convent of Mercy, Gravesend, Kent. DA12 1NY (TQ 65655 72859; Figs 1 and 2); it was commissioned of Canterbury Archaeological Trust, in view of proposed development of the site.

The report focuses on the Historic Environment Record, map regression, satellite and aerial photography, and existing site records analyses, with provisional historical contextualisation and site walkover.

There is a chance that extant archaeological features, artefacts or ecofacts may be disturbed or destroyed by groundworks within the site.

There is a largely unknown potential for prehistoric, Romano-British, Early Medieval and medieval archaeology to be extant within the site although there is a low potential for palaeolithic deposits to be present in any areas of gravels. The area was mainly used as an open field in the pre-post-medieval to modern period with it being identified as orchards and arable land in the 1840s Tithe maps. The only recorded development within the site is the construction of the convent building and surrounding structures in the west of the site.

Further mitigation of the potential effects of development groundworks is likely to be a condition on planning consent

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report presents the results of a provisional desk-based assessment, rapid archaeological appraisal, and site walkover of land at Convent of Mercy, Gravesend, Kent DA12 1NY (TQ 65655 72859; Figs 1 and 2); it was commissioned of Canterbury Archaeological Trust, in view of proposed development of the site.
- 1.2 Main proposed groundworks at the site look to focus on the northern portion, however this report will refer to the entire redline area with the understanding that services or other groundworks may be undertaken across the site. The following assessment will therefore bear these qualifications in mind.

2. Scope of study and caveats

- 2.1 It is understood that the scope of this initial appraisal is of necessity limited by the context of its production. The research undertaken, verbally agreed with the client and in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2023), has treated only with readily available circumstantial evidence in order to provide an initial assessment of the potential extent, nature and significance of any archaeological evidence within and near the proposed development area (PDA).
- 2.2 The report includes analysis and interpretation of the Historic Environment Record (HER), National Heritage List for England (NHLE on-line), map regression, aerial and satellite photographs, LiDAR and any existing site records analyses, with some provisional historical contextualisation where this might qualify archaeological data in a meaningful way through understanding the site's general history. It has been beyond the means of this project to pursue detailed questions requiring an in-depth study of primary documentary and cartographic sources at this stage. Only readily available maps showing significant topographical developments are reproduced.
- 2.3 Both designated and non-designated heritage assets are considered in the report, for the purpose of providing additional context for consideration of the significance of potential archaeological heritage assets. This report is not expected to produce any detailed heritage statements pertaining to any extant and known heritage assets or their setting, or, for example, to provide any detailed historic landscape analysis or other research requiring specialist input, such as geoarchaeological, or Palaeolithic study. Such studies may form the basis of a developing mitigation strategy and be requested as additional work by the Local Authority but will necessarily form the basis of separate projects and funding.
- 2.4 The level of detail and scope of this assessment and report are sufficient for the findings of a rapid appraisal, pointing to the need for further study if likely/recommended. Any request made of the client for further desk-based work should clearly demonstrate the benefits of such an approach, however, as opposed to actual fieldwork, for example, which would provide direct evidence, rather than more, and probably equivocal, circumstantial evidence.

2.5 An interim impact assessment is offered with this report. This is clearly based on the circumstantial evidence gathered from desk-based assessment. This interim impact assessment is offered chiefly as guidance to the client in terms of any potential for follow-on work. The interim impact assessment herein should not be considered or referred to as an 'impact assessment' *per se*, since we recognise that more fixed and specific detail of groundworks are required in order to compare with sufficient actual evidence from fieldwork for a full impact assessment. A further review point between this study and any follow-on fieldwork might indeed take the form of a standalone or add-on impact assessment, if and when a frozen design and particular strategy for development groundworks have been made available for consideration, and if sufficiently relevant, reliable, and detailed comparative data are available.

2.6 Relevant policy and research frameworks for the study are set out below as terms of reference.

3. Policy and research frameworks

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

National policy

3.2 The NPPF sets out a series of core planning principles designed to underpin plan-making and decision-taking within the planning system. Paragraph 195 (NPPF 2023, 57) states that heritage assets are:

an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

3.3 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. Furthermore, the historic landscape encompasses visible, buried, or submerged remains, which includes the buried archaeological resource.

3.4 When determining planning applications, the following NPPF (2023) paragraphs are pertinent:

200. In determining applications, 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.

201. 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 a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

202. Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision.

203. In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and

c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

204. In considering any applications to remove or alter a historic statue, plaque, memorial or monument (whether listed or not), local planning authorities should have regard to the importance of their retention in situ and, where appropriate, of explaining their historic and social context rather than removal.

Considering potential impacts

205. 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 (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

206. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;

b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.*

207. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and

b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and

c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and

d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

208. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

209. The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

210. Local planning authorities should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred.

211. Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted.

212. Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

213. Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 207 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 208, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.

214. Local planning authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies.

3.5 A footnote to paragraph 206b reads: "Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest, which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets".

Local policy

3.6 Applying the same general principles on a more local scale, the Gravesham Borough Council (GBC) Local Plan Core Strategy identifies a wide range of heritage assets within Gravesham Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, Historic landscapes, known archaeological sites and areas of archaeological significance and a 'significant number of un-listed buildings and features of local historic and/or architectural value.' The GBC identifies heritage as a 'valuable but fragile asset' and the local plan requires 'any proposals for development to demonstrate a thorough understanding of the heritage significance of any affected assets, their context and setting.' Of relevance are the following recommendations (GBC 2014, 149-151).

Policy CS20: Heritage and the Historic Environment

5.16.10 The Council will accord a high priority towards the preservation, protection and enhancement of its heritage and historic environment as a non-renewable resource, central to the regeneration of the area and the reinforcement of sense of place. Particular attention in this regard will be focused on those heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. Securing viable, sustainable and appropriate futures for such assets at risk will need to be reconciled with the sensitivity to change that many present.

5.16.11 Proposals and initiatives will be supported which preserve and, where appropriate, enhance the significance of the Borough's heritage assets, their setting where it contributes to the significance of the asset and their interpretation and enjoyment, especially where these contribute to the distinct identity of the Borough.

These include:

- *Gravesend Town Centre, its development as a heritage riverside town, and its setting;*
- *The Borough's urban and rural conservation areas; and*
- *Surviving built features and archaeology relating to the Borough's maritime, military, industrial and transport history.*

5.16.12 When considering the impact of a proposed development on a designated heritage asset, the weight that will be given to the asset's conservation value will be commensurate with the importance and significance of the asset. For non-designated assets, decisions will have regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Research frameworks

3.7 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 is still in preparation, initial outputs are available (SERF on-line) and have been considered in preparing this report, in order to take current research agendas into account.

4. Location

4.1 The proposed development area (PDA) is situated in the south side of Gravesend, in north-west Kent (Figs 1 and 2). The ground is currently occupied by the Convent of Mercy in the west of the site centre with open managed garden to the north and south. In the north of the PDA, a greenhouse and fountain are situated, with a small statue in the north-east. A line of trees acts as a boundary for most of the site, which is bounded on all sides by residences (off The Turnstone to the east, The Yews and The Lapwings to the north, Hillside Avenue to the south and Hillside Drive to the east). The site lies c 1.4km south of the Thames River, close to the estuary.

5. Geology and topography

5.1 The PDA lies on a small, mounded area at a height of c 35m above Ordnance Datum (OD). The ground to the north, east and south slopes downwards to a height of 15m OD. The ground rises to form Windmill Hill c 800m north-west from the edge of the site.

5.2 Bedrock geology within the PDA is shown as Thanet Formation – Sand (Sedimentary bedrock formed between 59.2 and 56 million years ago during the Palaeogene period), with no overlying superficial deposits recorded.

5.3 Bedrock geology 50m south of the PDA is shown as Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation, Seaford Chalk Formation and Newhaven Chalk Formation – Chalk (formed between 93.9 and 72.1 million years ago during the Cretaceous period). This sits below the Thanet Formation which formed later, atop the Chalk base, to form the heightened elevation (BGS on-line).

5.4 The site lies atop a promontory of Thanet Formation eroded by tributaries of the palaeo-Thames either side of the mound. There are several other outcroppings of Thanet Formation to the east and to the west. The slopes of this promontory are visible in the land formation (Figs 3-6)

5.5 Both Lynch Hill 'Purfleet' (equivalent to Bridgland's (1994) Corbetts Tey) and Taplow 'Aveley' (equivalent to Bridgland's (*Ibid*) Mucking) gravels are marked within 1km of the PDA by the BGS. These gravel members are of particular archaeological importance, being a key component of the Lower/Middle Palaeolithic dating to the Hoxnian. 'Purfleet' gravels date to c 300,000BP; Marine Isotope Stage 9 (MIS; Morigi et al 2011, 82-84) and 'Aveley' gravels date to c 200,000BP; MIS 7 interglacial (*Ibid*, 100-101). At Dartford, further complication is to be expected from the ancient confluence of the Cray and

Darenth with the Thames, bringing the potential for interdigitation with tributary terrace systems and spreads of alluvial floodplain deposits (ibid, 46).

5.6 LiDAR data (Fig 7) further displays the heightened elevation of the PDA showing it on the northern side of a valley. Windmill Hill can also be seen with LiDAR, looking over the PDA to the north-west.

6. Designations

6.1 The PDA does not affect or impact upon any World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas, Registered Battlefields, or Registered Parks and Gardens.

6.2 Historic landscape characterisation has been checked on-line. The PDA lies within 'Post 1810 settlement (general).' The centre of Gravesend, lying over 1km north-west of the site, is noted as 'Town & city extent' and most likely represents the size and extent of the town pre-nineteenth-century. The PDA, seems to lie on the periphery of the town, in what may have been an isolated rural environment before the rapid growth and construction of Gravesend

6.3 There are three listed buildings in the vicinity of the PDA, and they all form a group (Fig 8).

- Grade II listed Parrock Hall (HER TQ67 SE1063; NHLE 1054775), lies c 300m north-west of the PDA. This is denoted as 'Parrock House' on the First Edition OS map published in 1869 (Fig 10) but changed to 'Parrock Hall' in the revised edition, published in 1869 (Fig 11). The revised edition also indicates that it is an 'Industrial School' which would have been a later adaptation of the building. It may have initially been used, as the National Heritage Listing states, as the former manor house of Milton Manor. The Hall was built in the early eighteenth century as a high-status home.
- Grade II listed Old Manor (HER TQ67 SE1068; NHLE 1366609), lies c 400m north-west of the PDA. Although the older south wing has an eighteenth-century front, it is most likely and older structure with an early nineteenth century north wing. This building is referred to as 'Parrock Farm' on the First Edition OS map and the occupiers likely owned a large portion of the rural landscape around the PDA at this time, using it for farmland. A Grade II listed Granary (HER TQ67 SE1069; NHLE 1341487) lies just north-west of the House. This was also constructed in the eighteenth century and forms part of the wider farming landscape.

7. Archaeological and historical evidence

7.1 An HER search (Figs 8–10) was ordered from Kent County Council, as well as a list of reports of archaeological investigations not yet included in the HER. The HER and reports search covers a radius of 500m around NGR TQ 65655 72859. These records have been assessed in terms of their particular relevance to the PDA and only significant evidence is cited in this report.

7.2 General historical context for archaeological findings is provided where applicable/significant in terms of results, and a survey of published and unpublished maps (including geology and LiDAR survey) has been undertaken.

7.3 All results of analyses are presented below in synthesis and in order of chronology.

Prehistoric (c 500,000 BP – AD 43)

7.4 The Thames Estuary remained to the south of ice sheets that periodically covered most of Britain during the Pleistocene, which has allowed better preservation of Palaeolithic occupation evidence than in other parts of the country. This marks the area as a key region for Palaeolithic archaeology (O'Connor and Heppell 2006, 6).

7.5 A Palaeolithic handaxe was discovered in the village of Chalk in the 1960s by D A Roe, in the vicinity of the PDA. A possible scraper was also identified from gravel beds at Chalk in the 1890s by G M Arnold (HER TQ67 SE279). The exact location where these were found is uncertain.

Romano-British (c AD 43–450)

7.6 No Romano-British archaeological remains are reported within the PDA or within a 500m radius of NGR TQ 65655 72859.

Early medieval (c AD 450–1066)

7.7 No Early Medieval archaeological remains are reported within the PDA or within a 500m radius of NGR TQ 65655 72859.

Medieval (c AD 1066–1540)

7.8 The settlement nearest to the PDA recorded in the *Domesday* survey of 1086 is Milton. Milton was a settlement in the *hundred* of Tollington with a recorded population of 26 households in 1086, putting it in the largest 40% of settlements recorded in Domesday. Other resources recorded include one mill, and one church (Domesday on-line, sv Milton). Gravesend is also recorded in the Domesday book in the *hundred* of Tollington with a recorded population of twelve households in 1086 (Domesday on-line, sv Gravesend).

7.9 No other medieval archaeological remains are reported within the PDA or within a 500m radius of NGR TQ 65655 72859.

Post-medieval (c AD 1540–1900)

7.10 The closest parish to the site described by Hasted, in his own day, include the Parish of Milton, described thus (Hasted 1800, 335–346):

‘EASTWARD from Gravesend lies Milton, on the southern shore of the river Thames. It is called in Domesday, and other antient records, Meletune and Melestun, and takes its name from its middle distance between the parishes of Gravesend and Chalk... THE

PARISH of Milton is but small, being not more than three quarters of a mile, from east to west, and a mile and half north to south. The high London road leads along the southern part of it, close to which stand the Court-lodge and Paddock-farm. It contains about eleven hundred acres of land, of which fifty are marsh. There is much fertile land in it of a loamy soil, which changes more and more southerly to an entire sand; the surface of it is a continued series of hill and dale. The eastern part of the town of Gravesend is within this parish'

- 7.11 The parish of Gravesend is also described by Hasted as follows (Ibid, 319-335):

'THE PARISH OF GRAVESEND lies on the north side of the London road, which runs along the southern side of it at the distance of about one mile from the town, which is situated twenty-two miles from London and eight from Rochester, the soil towards the west is chalk, and towards the south-east much inclined to gravel; in which part of this parish, at a small distance from the London road southward is Mount Pleasant, the property and residence of Mr. Joynes, of Gravesend. Round the town, in great part owing to the manure from it, there are some rich and fertile ground'

- 7.12 Three dene-holes (chalk extraction pits) lie 150–400m west of the PDA. Two of these have been dated to the seventeenth century (HER TQ67 SE359; TQ67 SE360), both of which were found to be c 8m in depth with deeper chambers. Debris was uncovered in one of the shafts which seemed to represent a nineteenth century attempt to fill the void when an earlier brick dome failed. The third dene-hole (HER TR67 SE19) is recorded as undated but contains similar attributes to the first two. It is recorded as c 10m in depth and was sealed by a brick arch in the seventeenth century.
- 7.13 Parrock Farm, which lies 410m north-west of the PDA, is most likely a post-medieval loose courtyard plan farmstead with buildings to three sides of the yard. The farmstead includes the 'Old Manor' described above on the north-eastern side. Loose courtyard plans are often created from piecemeal developments around a central yard, and they typically develop in relationship to fields that reflect the gradual enclosure from medieval open fields, woodland, Downland and heathland (Lake *et al* 2014, 114–117). Early mapping suggests the PDA seems to lie in open fields, potentially part of the wider farming landscape of the area.
- 7.14 The Andrews, Dury and Herbert map of 1769 (Fig 11) shows the area of the PDA as open field in this period. The site seems to lie south of Gravesend and Milton (here recorded as 'Mylton'). Denton is also represented to the northeast as 'Lower Denton in Ruins' and Chalk is situated to the east. Nearby Parrock Hall and Parrock Farm seem to be written as 'Paddock Park'. The topography of the area is represented by dark-shaded circles showing the area marked by hills and uneven terrain.
- 7.15 The 1801 Mudge Map (Fig 12) provides more of an overview of the area. There seems to be little change in the direct vicinity of the PDA, and it continues to be in open fields. Parrock Farm is displayed here north of the site with a few buildings illustrated.
- 7.16 The first detailed plan of the site currently available is the Tithe maps (Fig 13). The site is split between two parishes in the mid nineteenth century. The 1842 Tithe map showing

the parish of Milton occupies the western portion of the site and the 1846 Tithe map showing the parish of Denton occupies the eastern portion. The PDA lies to the south of 'Old London Road' which runs east to west. Parrock Hall and Parrock Farm are situated just off this road also and there seems to be evidence of expanding residential and commercial properties 500m to the north-west. The land to the north, south, and east is recorded entirely as open fields.

7.17 Apportionments on-line provide a record of the ownership and land use of the fields at the time of the Tithe maps. The western portion, on the Milton side, is recorded as being owned by Alexander Raphael of Parrock Farm. The field at this time was being used as an orchard. The eastern portion of the site, on the Denton side, was recorded as arable land.

7.18 The First Edition OS map, surveyed in 1863 to 1865 (Fig 14) continues to show the PDA in open fields. However, settlements around the PDA expands on this map. To the north-west, Milton has grown significantly since the date of the Tithe maps. A new road is also shown 300m west of the PDA dotted with cottages. The land to the east and south of the PDA remains unchanged.

7.19 The 1895 second edition (Fig 15) continues to illustrate the expansion of Milton. This map is the first to show a building within the PDA. The building, which still survives, is built in Flemish bond with string course and machine-made bricks confirming a date of late nineteenth century (Figs 16–18). Here, it is labelled as 'Hillside' and 'Thorns' and continues to show the parish boundary running through the area with the structure sitting within the Milton side. 'Old London Road' has been renamed here to 'Old Road East' and various buildings have been constructed to the south of it. Other changes are evident with the construction of new buildings. The Milton Mount College had been constructed 510m north-west, Milton Hall had been constructed 350m north and Milton Barracks have been constructed 630m north-west.

7.20 Various archaeological investigations 200m north of the PDA at St John's Roman Catholic Comprehensive school, demonstrated evidence dating to the nineteenth century (HER EKE10939; EKE19663). Deep deposits of made ground in two trenches seemed to represent infilled clay quarries associated with a nineteenth-century brick works close to the area.

Modern (c AD 1900–2000)

7.21 Aerial photography from the 1940s (Fig 19) provides a closer and more detailed look of the area. The road leading to the PDA has been occupied by more residential development and the surrounding areas to the north, west and south have been entirely developed. Directly east of the PDA, bounding its edge, two fields have remained open. The area further east shows evidence of more recent developments with open fields occupying the space over 500m south-east from the PDA.

7.22 Three pillar boxes dated to George V to George VI are noted in a 500m radius of the PDA (HER TQ67 SE309; TQ67 SE353; TQ67 SE319.) These are all located in areas of newer

developments and may indicate the date at which these developments occurred, including the development of buildings directly next to the PDA.

7.23 Five Second World War temporary structures were extant within a 500m radius of the PDA but are all now demolished or dismantled.

- A Home Guard Headquarters was set up in 1940 in a barn at Parrock Manor most likely for the defence of the 'Echo Square' junction of roads (HER TQ67 SE1206). The HER records this barn as being demolished in 1952.
- Three Air Raid Wardens posts lay within 500m from the PDA (HER TQ67 SE1221; TQ67 SE1166; TQ67 SE1201). They were constructed as part of a wider network for coordinating emergency services during the war and dismantled or destroyed post-war.
- A Police Telephone Box lay 450m north-west of the PDA (HER TQ67 SE1189). This was erected around 1939 and removed in 1946.

7.24 The open fields to the south-east of the PDA have been entirely developed as shown in the Revised OS edition surveyed in 1915 to 1955 (Fig 20) and aerial photography from the 1960s (Fig 21). Further developments can be seen closer to the PDA to the south and directly north-west. An area 100m west of the PDA has seemingly been cleared to allow space for a sports field.

7.25 Christ Church is located off Old Road East 310m north-west of the PDA (HER TQ67 SE1025). This was originally located on Parrock Street but was relocated in 1934 and is visible on the Revised OS edition surveyed in 1915 to 1955.

7.26 The Convent of Mercy, which lies in the western portion of the PDA has been used as such after the convent moved from premises adjoining St. John's Church in 1955, where they were 'secured as a convent and school' in 1840 (Benson and Hiscock 1981).

7.27 A later church building was erected in the centre of the PDA in stretcher bond between the 1940s and 1960s (Fig 22). A later extension was added to the nineteenth century building as an extension to the convent (Fig 23).

7.28 Later satellite imagery from 2003 onwards (Figs 24--27) indicates little change in the vicinity of the PDA. The open field bounding the PDA to the east has further residential development in the 2003 image and St John's Roman Catholic Comprehensive school is constructed around this period 300m north-west of the PDA. The school undergoes significant changes between 2007 and 2015.

Previous Impacts

7.29 The PDA seems to have been consistently open land, having been recorded as 'orchard' and 'arable' land on the 1840s Tithe Maps. It probably lay as open land until at least 1863 with the construction of the building in the west of the PDA. Most of the site, however, has been managed gardens for the building.

- 7.30 The area in the north of the PDA has clear evidence of terracing. The natural slope has been cut away here to create tiered gardens. Although this may have interacted with possible archaeological deposits, this has not necessarily cut away all archaeological features (Figs 28–30).
- 7.31 The ground to the north-east rises slightly and there is evidence that some of the cut away soil may have been spread out across this area (Figs 31 and 32).
- 7.32 A property bounding the PDA to the east has evidence of extreme landscaping (Plate 33). This may suggest landscaping within the PDA; however the natural landform suggests the garden has been made up to create level ground.
- 7.33 A path has been constructed along the north-western side of the site with some trees planted alongside. This, most likely, has had very little impact on below ground archaeology and most likely only cuts into the topsoil (Fig 34)
- 7.34 Three Greenhouses are located on the far north-eastern edge at the end of this pathway constructed on a flattened concrete area (Figs 35 and 36). The foundations here are c 0.25m thick, most likely only cutting into the topsoil (Fig 37).
- 7.35 A water feature with tiled pathing and a small hedge in the shape of a cross are located in the northern portion of the PDA, within the terraced area. The feature is small but may impact below the topsoil (Figs 38–40).
- 7.36 A statue is situated in a recessed portion of the terraced area in the north. A fallen tap lies to the south of the statue suggesting nearby services below ground in the area (Figs 41 and 42).
- 7.37 An evaluation in 2008 at St John’s Roman Catholic Comprehensive School 300m north-east of the PDA located natural chalk at a level of 15-17m above Ordnance Datum (Oxford Archaeology 2008, 4). This may not necessarily be indicative of the depth of natural on the PDA, however, due to considerable natural differences in ground level in this area.

8. Interpretation

- 8.1 Due to the elevated nature of the ground, there is a low possibility of Palaeolithic remains extant within the PDA, however if remains from this period are present the importance of such potential finds are rated high due to the ‘Purfleet’ and ‘Aveley’ gravels marked nearby.
- 8.2 While existing evidence is insufficient to judge the likelihood of later prehistoric, Romano-British, Early Medieval and medieval archaeology surviving in the PDA, this may in part be due to a lack of archaeological interventions in the immediate area. Map regression suggests the PDA was open, undeveloped land, away from any settlements, before the construction of development at Hillside Drive in the late nineteenth century, although this does not negate the possibility of below ground archaeology before the post-medieval and modern periods.

8.3 Evidence of post-medieval archaeology in the area, including the development of seventeenth-century Parrock Farm, and the nineteenth-century brickworks may represent an expansion of nearby settlements at Milton, Denton and Gravesend proper. There is a chance of archaeological remains from the post-medieval and later.

Potential Impacts

8.4 Groundworks look to be focused on the northern portion of the PDA in a current terraced garden area although services and other groundworks are likely to impact a wider area.

8.5 There is a chance that extant archaeological features, artefacts or ecofacts may be disturbed or destroyed by groundworks within the PDA. Archaeological mitigation is likely to be a condition on planning consent.

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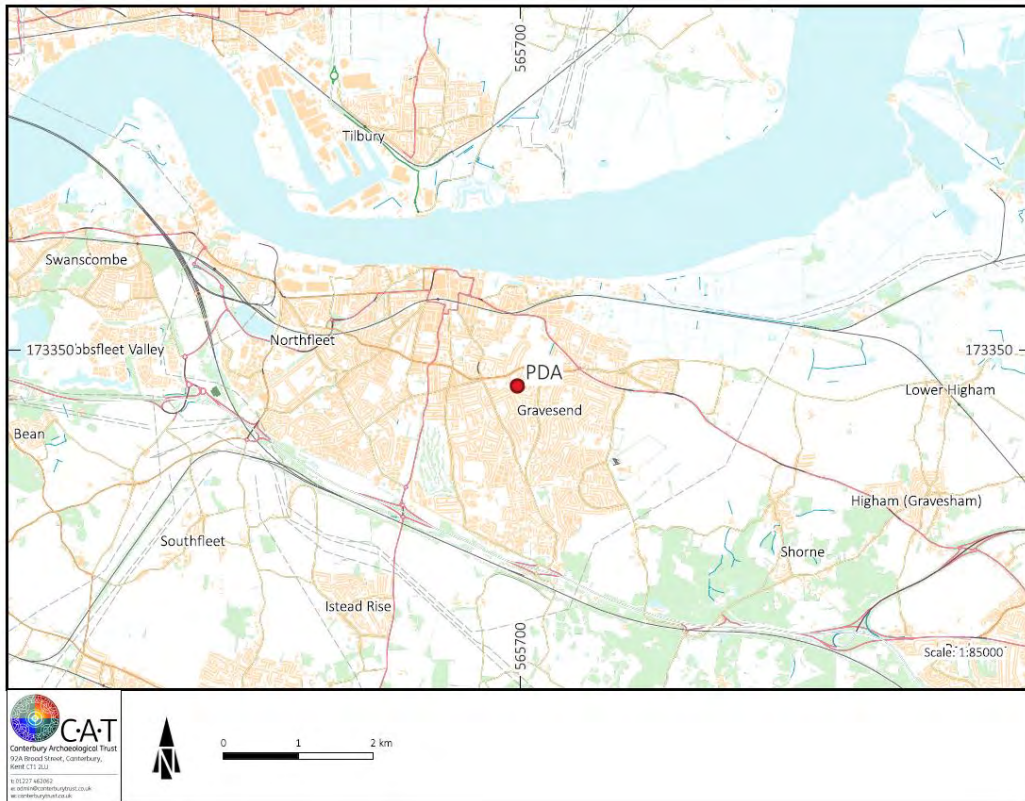


Figure 1. Proposed Development Location

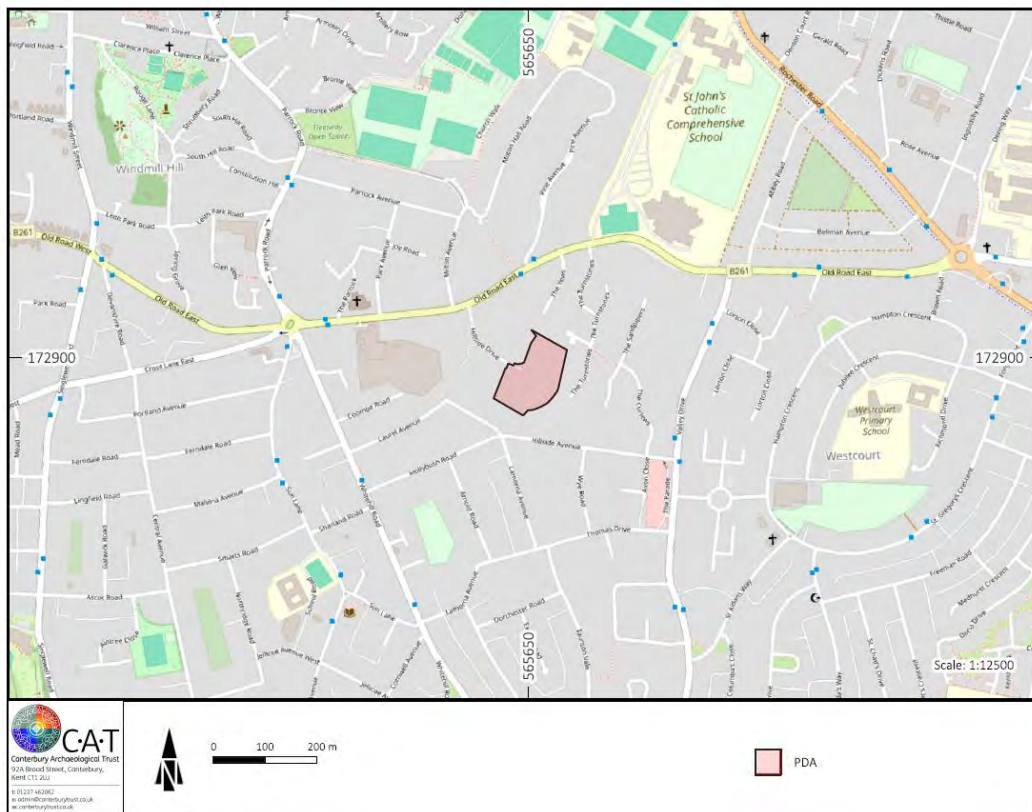


Figure 2. Proposed Development Location (Detail)



Figure 3. View of the entrance to site looking north-west.



Figure 4. View of the southern portion of site looking south-west.



Figure 5. View showing the changing in levels, looking north.



Figure 6. View showing the dramatic dip to the south of the site, looking south.



Figure 7. Map showing LiDAR data

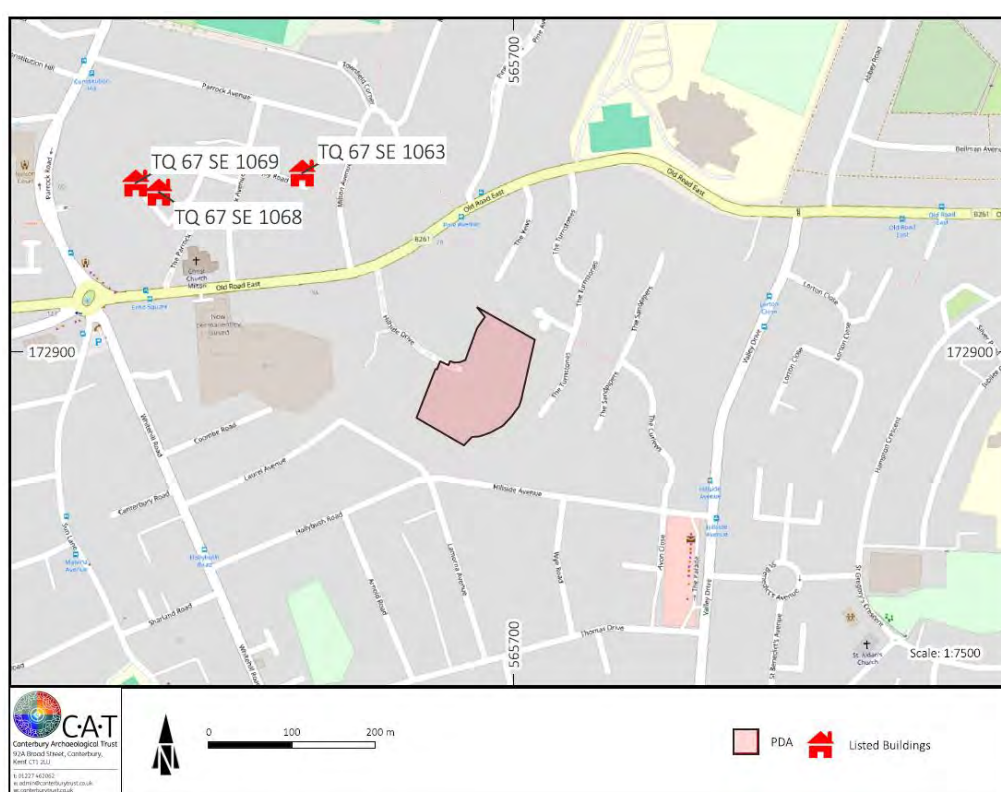


Figure 8. HER search of 500m radius of the PDA (centred) showing results for Listed Buildings

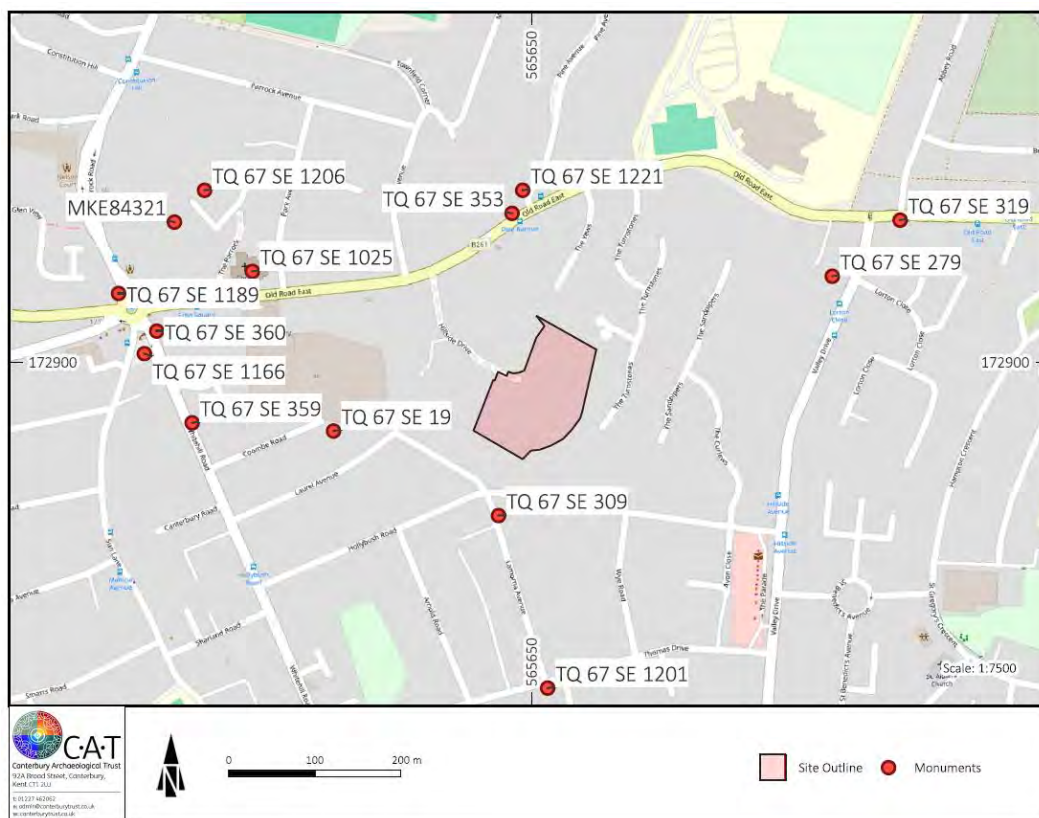


Figure 9. HER search of 500m radius of the PDA (centred) showing results for Monuments

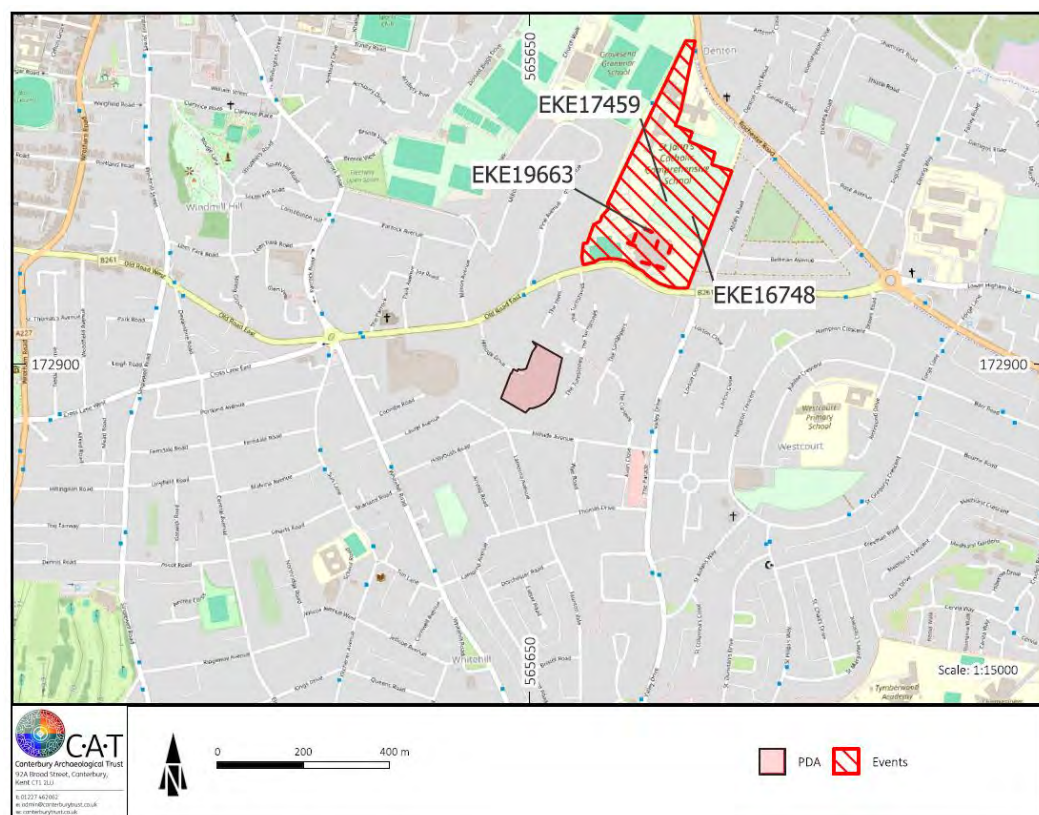


Figure 10. HER search of 500m radius of the PDA (centred) showing results for Events



Figure 11. Extract from the 1769 Andrews, Dury and Herbert map

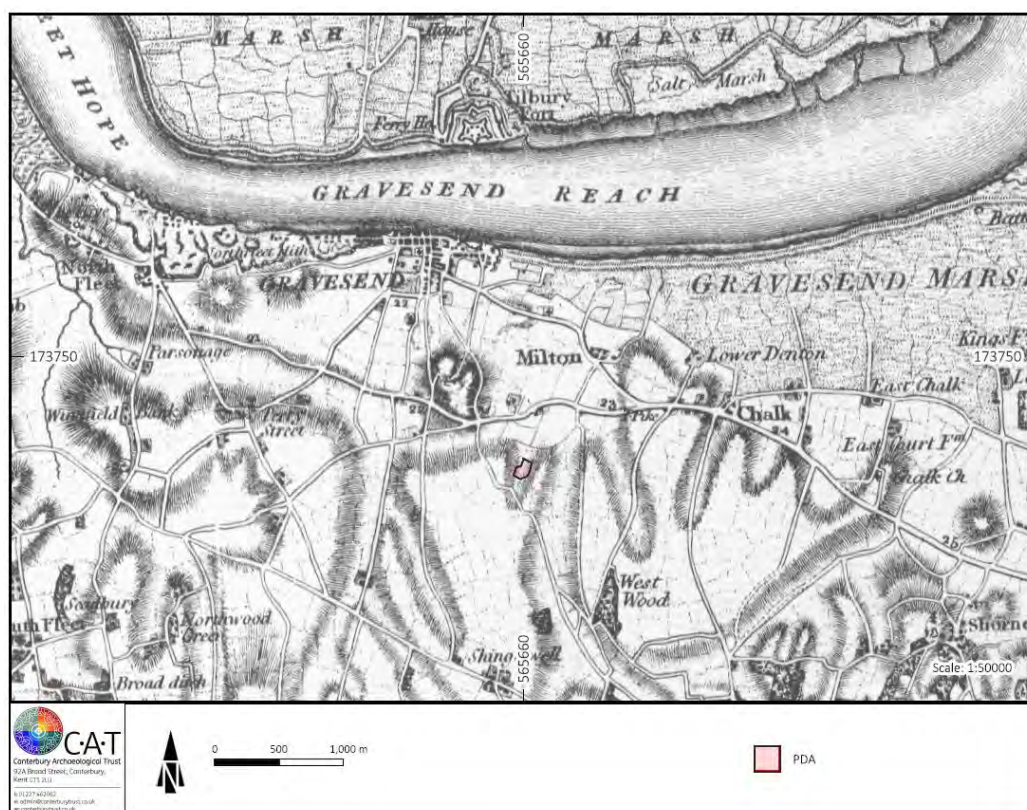


Figure 12. Extract from the 1801 Mudge map

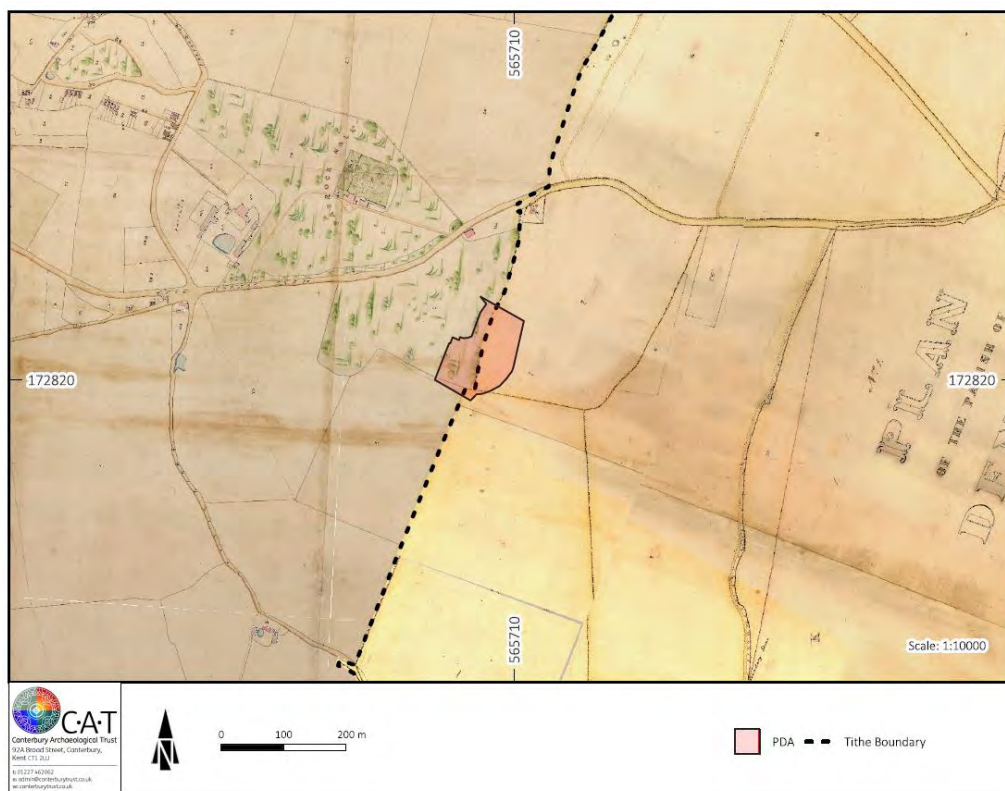


Figure 13. Extract from the 1842 Milton Tithe map (left) and the 1846 Denton Tithe map (right)

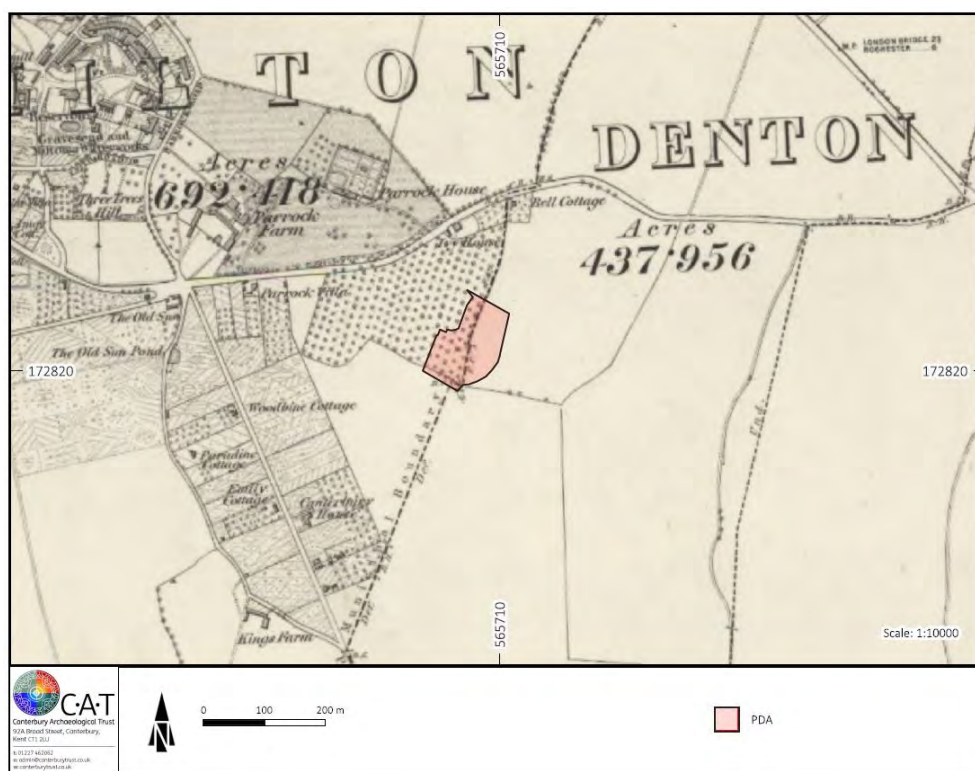


Figure 14. Extract from the First Edition 6-inch OS map Kent Sheet X, surveyed 1863 to 1865, published 1869



Figure 15. Extract from the Second Edition 6-inch OS map Essex Sheet LXXXIX.NW, revised 1895, published 1899



Figure 16. View showing the nineteenth century building, looking south



Figure 17. View showing the nineteenth century building, looking north



Figure 18. View showing the nineteenth century building, looking south



Figure 19. Aerial photograph from the 1940s (source: Google Earth)

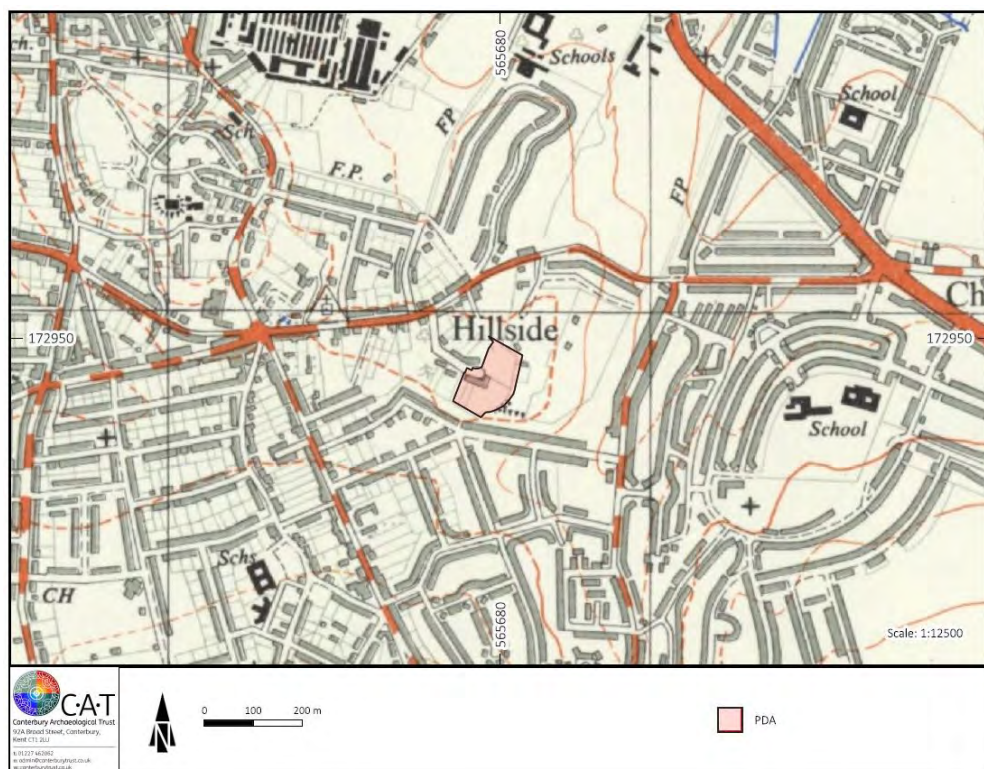


Figure 20. Extract from the Revised Edition OS map Kent Sheet TQ67-C, revised 1915 to 1955, published 1958

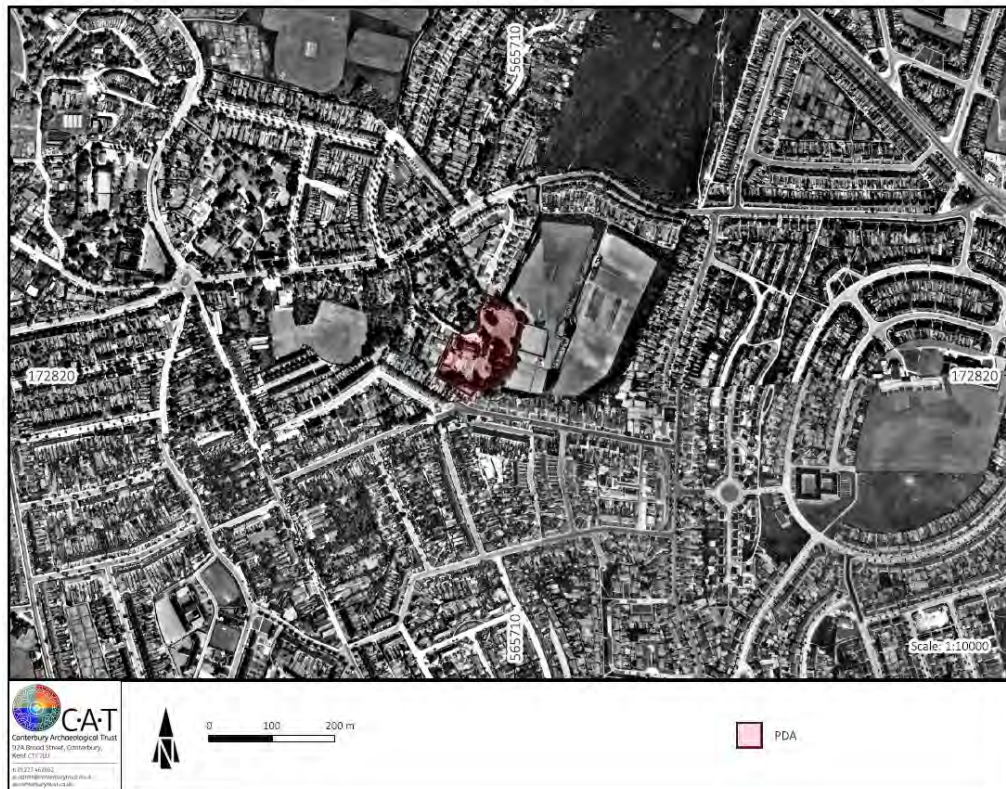


Figure 21. Aerial photograph from the 1960s (source: Google Earth)



Figure 22. View showing the twentieth century church structure, looking south-west



Figure 23. View showing the modern extension, looking north



Figure 24. Aerial photograph from 2003 (source: Google Earth)



Figure 25. Aerial photograph from 2007 (source: Google Earth)



Figure 26. Aerial photograph from 2015 (source: Google Earth)



Figure 27. Aerial photograph from 2024 (source: Google Earth)



Figure 28. View showing the terraced gardens, looking east



Figure 29. View showing the terraced gardens, looking west



Figure 30. View showing the terraced gardens, looking south-west



Figure 31. View showing deposit of soil in the north-east corner

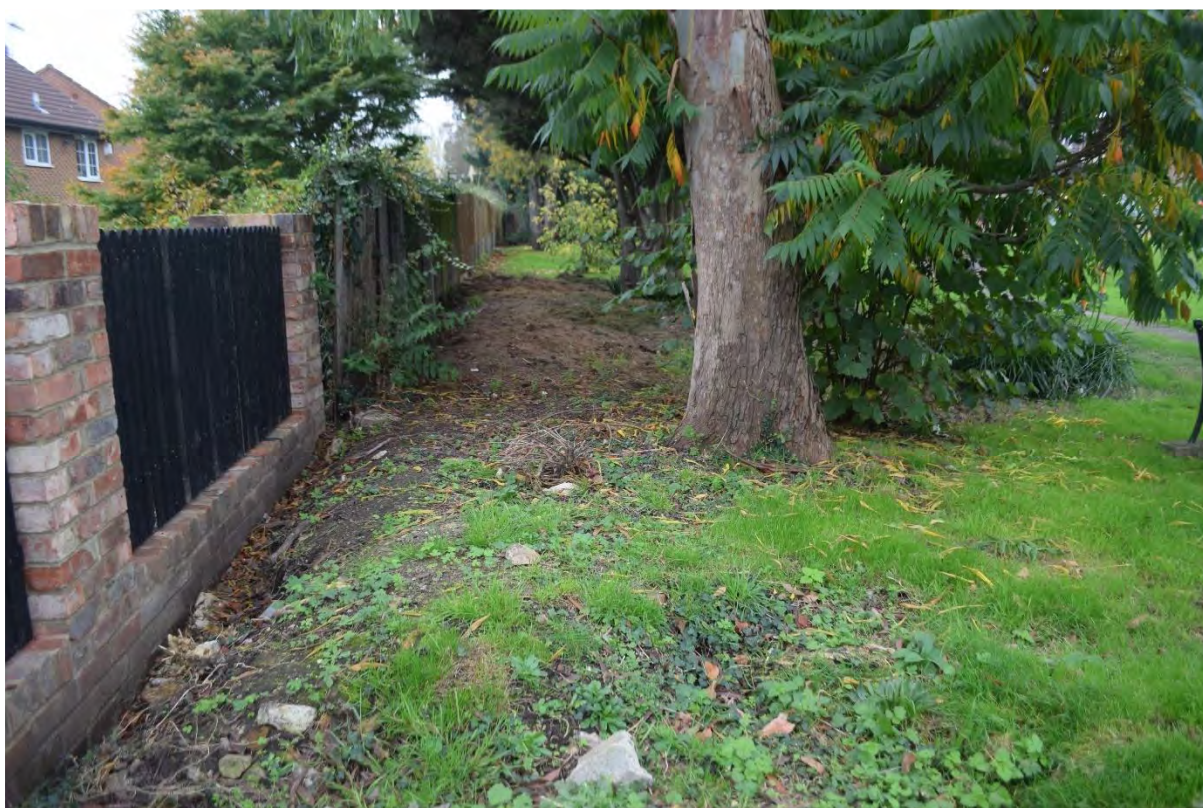


Figure 32. View showing deposit of soil alongside the eastern edge



Figure 33. View of the change in levels to bordering garden, looking north-east



Figure 34. View showing path with trees, looking south-west



Figure 35. View showing greenhouses, looking west



Figure 36. View showing greenhouse with brick foundation



Figure 37. View of the depth of concrete foundations underneath greenhouses, looking south-west



Figure 38. View showing water feature area, looking south-east



Figure 39. View showing water feature area, looking north-west



Figure 40. View showing the water feature



Figure 41. View showing statue in recessed area, looking south-east



Figure 42. View showing tap beside statue