

**Land at 23-25 Broadway / Tonbridge Road
An Archaeological Evaluation Report (TRM07)**

SITE CENTRED AT: 575645 155400

**By
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ASE Project No. 2963

Planning Ref: Application No. MA/05/1719

June 2007

Abstract

Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of University College London Field Archaeology Unit (UCLFAU), was commissioned by CgMs Consulting to undertake an archaeological evaluation at 23-25 Broadway/Tonbridge Road, Maidstone, centred at: 575645 155400. The work was carried out on the 22nd of May 2007, in advance of development.

One trench was excavated within the footprint of the development. A sandstone foundation wall was encountered at the northern end of the trench. This is likely to be earlier than c. 1844. No other archaeological findings were recorded.

CONTENTS

1	Introduction	1
1.1	<i>Site Location.....</i>	<i>1</i>
1.2	<i>Planning summary</i>	<i>2</i>
1.3	<i>Aims and Objectives.....</i>	<i>3</i>
2	Background	4
3	Archaeological Methodology	6
4	Stratigraphic Results	7
5	The Finds	8
6	Discussion	9
7	Acknowledgements	10
8	References.....	11

FIGURES

- | | |
|--------|---------------------------|
| Fig. 1 | Site location plan |
| Fig. 2 | Trench location plan |
| Fig. 3 | Trench 1 Plan and Section |

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location

- 1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of University College London Field Archaeology Unit (UCLFAU), were commissioned by CgMs consulting to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at 23-25 Broadway/Tonbridge Rd, Maidstone, Kent (NGR 575645 155400) (see Fig 1). The work was carried out on the 22nd of May 2007, in advance of development.
- 1.1.2 The site is bounded to the north by Broadway, to the east and south by existing properties and to the west by Station Approach. The site comprised partly demolished buildings at the time of the archaeological work. A benchmark in Broadway outside the site had a value of 11.80mOD (Ordnance Survey).
- 1.1.3 The fieldwork was conducted by Dan Swift (Senior Archaeologist), on the 22nd May 2007. The project was managed by Neil Griffin (Project Manager).

1.2 Planning summary

- 1.2.1 Through the normal planning consultation procedure, the County Archaeological Officer recommended the need for archaeological work. Further to this advice Maidstone Borough Council have placed the following condition on the consent (Application No. MA/05/1719):

No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the District Planning Authority. The scheme shall include amongst other things, the method of excavation, recording and reporting to be carried out on the site by an archaeological body approved by the District Planning Authority, together with any further archaeological works and safeguarding measures which may be required within the areas of archaeological interest identified by the evaluation works referred to above.

1.3 Aims and Objectives

1.3.1 The objective of the evaluation was to establish whether there are any archaeological deposits at the site that may be affected by the proposed development. The excavation was thus to ascertain the extent, depth below ground surface, depth of deposit, character, significance and condition of any archaeological remains on site.

1.3.2 The evaluation was to establish the extent to which previous development on the site has affected archaeological deposits.

1.3.3 Particular issues that the evaluation should address include:

- establishing the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation in the development site
- establishing the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscapes

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 An archaeological desk-based assessment undertaken by CgMs Consulting (Gailey 2006) outlines the archaeological and historical background to the site. The information in the desk-based assessment has been used below with due acknowledgement.

2.2 *Geology*

2.2.1 According to the British Geological Survey (England and Wales Sheet 288 for Maidstone) the site is situated on Weald Clay.

2.3 *Topography*

2.3.1 The study site lies on a hill which slopes southwards and westwards towards the River Medway, approximately 150m to the east. The site slopes from approximately 11.5mAOD in the north-west to 6.2mAOD in the south east.

2.4 *Archaeological and historical background*

2.4.1 The desk-based assessment (Gailey 2006) collated information for the study area (defined by a 500m radius around the site) held in the Kent Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) and this is summarised below.

2.4.2 Bronze Age ditches are recorded approximately 200m north of the study site on the site of St Peters hospital (SMR TQ75NG388 KE17694 TQ75585563).

2.4.3 Romano-British activity in the vicinity is demonstrated by 2530 skeletons discovered approximately 400m south west of the study site in the 19th century (SMR TQ75NE37 TQ 75525525), a Romano British bronze statuette and lamp discovered in a garden close to St Peters hospital approximately 200m north of the study site (SMRTQ75NE55 TQ75575563).and the presence of the Roman Road of Stone Street (Margary route 13) which passed through what was later to become Maidstone on the east bank of the river Medway approximately 1100m east of the study site (Gailey 2006).

2.4.4 The name Maidstone is thought to have originated as 'Maidens Stone', first recorded in Saxon charters of c 975. The study site is thought likely to lay within agricultural land on the outskirts of the settlement. The domesday survey mentions Maidstone as comprising arable, meadow, woodland, a church, five mills and two eel fisheries.

2.4.5 During the medieval period the study site lay on the edge of a group of

medieval tenements on the west bank of the Medway, approximately 150m west of the medieval bridge over the river. This small developed area continued into the post-medieval period. Two late 18th century maps show the site situated on the western edge of settlement plots which fronted the Tonbridge road. It is possible that pits, middens or garden features associated with these settlement plots could be present within the site.

2.4.6 The Maidstone Tithe Map (1844) shows buildings in the north east and north western corner of the study site, fronting the Tonbridge Road. Buildings are evident on the western, southern and eastern boundaries of the site although the central area remained undeveloped.

2.4.7 Development continued through the 19th century with the construction of the adjacent Maidstone West railway station (SMR TQ75NE199 TQ755553) and further industrial buildings along the study sites boundaries. This development included the construction of a building within the central area of the site. Further development is evident in the mid 20th century, with the redevelopment of existing buildings as a Garage

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 One 15m long trench was excavated (Fig. 2) using an 18 tonne tracked machine fitted with a smooth 1.8m wide grading bucket. The purpose of this was to reveal any possible archaeological layers and/or cut features in the substratum by removing deposits in spits of no more than 20cm at a time down to natural undisturbed geology.
- 3.2 All recording was undertaken in accordance with accepted professional standards according to the UCLFAU Fieldwork Manual (draft) and the methodology outlined within the 'Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation' document (Gailey 2007). A photographic record of the trenches was kept. The spoil from the excavations was inspected by the archaeologist in order to recover any artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest.
- 3.3 The trench was levelled in relation to a nearby benchmark of 11.80m OD situated on Broadway immediately outside the site. The trench was located in the position prescribed within the 'Specification for an Archaeological Excavation' (Gailey 2007) (Fig. 2).
- 3.4 The archive is presently held at the Archaeology South-East office in Ditchling and will be offered to a suitable museum in due course.

4 STRATIGRAPHIC RESULTS

- 4.1 Generally, the same sequence was observed along the length of the trench consisting of tarmac and modern hardcore [+] over a weathered dirty sandy silty subsoil [1] sealing a clean sandy silt subsoil [4] which in-turn overlay clean natural sand [5] (see table 1). At the northern end of the trench, however, a foundation of mortared sandstone blocks [3] ran from east to west across the excavation. This appeared to be sealed by [1], but cut through [4]. No deposits suitable for environmental sampling were encountered.

Trench 1

Trench 1 measured 1.8m east to west by 15m north to south.

Level on top of deposit	Description
11.01mOD (N) 10.91mOD (mid) 10.85mOD (S)	[+] Modern tarmac surface and hardcore
10.56mOD (N) 10.51mOD (mid) 10.45mOD (S)	[1] Dirty weathered subsoil. Friable mid greyish brown sandy silt with occasional Ceramic Building Material (CBM) and animal bone.
10.31mOD	[3] Foundation wall c 0.70m in width -maximum. Roughly hewn and irregularly shaped sandstone blocks up to 0.30m in diameter, loosely mortared with a soft, yellow, coarse-sandy mortar of varying thickness. Irregularly bonded pattern. Survived to a height of c. 0.70m.
10.31mOD	[2] Poorly defined construction cut for [3]
10.31mOD (N) 10.28mOD (mid) 10.15mOD (S)	[4] Friable mid orangey brown sandy silt subsoil
9.38mOD (N) 9.53mOD (mid) 9.27mOD (S)	[5] Soft mottled orange yellow sand

Table 1: Stratigraphic summary - Trench 1

5 THE FINDS

by Trista Clifford

- 5.1 A very small assemblage of finds was recovered from the evaluation and these are quantified below in Table 2. All are unstratified.

Context	CBM	weight (g)	Bone	weight (g)	Stone	weight (g)
1	6	158	1	50	1	434

Table 2: Quantification of finds

- 5.2 Six fragments of ceramic roof tile were recovered. Three are of high fired, fine sandy fabrics with sparse iron rich inclusions up to c.3mm. The remaining three are of a lower fired fabric tempered with fine sand and occasional coloured quartz <1mm. All are post medieval in date, probably 18th-19th century.
- 5.3 A single piece of coarse sandstone was recovered, with evidence of facing on one side.
- 5.4 A single right sheep tibia was also recovered. The distal end is missing; however the bone shows no evidence of butchery.
- 5.5 The finds are considered to hold little potential for further analysis and may therefore be discarded.

6 DISCUSSION

- 6.1 The general character and fragmentary nature of the mortar suggest that the foundation [3] is of early post medieval or medieval date, and whilst the foundation contained no dateable material, it was sealed beneath context [1], which contained CBM giving a broad date of c. 18th to 19th century. Additionally, historic mapping such as the 1844 Maidstone Tithe map and the 1867 Ordnance Survey map (see Gailey 2007) do not show any walls in the area of the foundation. It therefore seems likely that the foundation relates to a structure of an earlier date than 1844.

7 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeology South-East would like to thank CgMs for commissioning this work.

8 REFERENCES

Gailey, S, 2006, *Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment 23-25 Broadway, Maidstone, Kent* unpublished CgMs report.

Gailey, S, 2007, *Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation,*

SMR Summary Sheet

Site Code	TRM07					
Identification Name and Address	23-25 Broadway/Tonbridge Rd, Maidstone, Kent					
County, District &/or Borough	Kent					
Ordnance Survey Grid Reference	NGR 575645 155400					
Archaeology South-East Proj. No.	2963					
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. 22/05/07	Excav.	WB. 16/10/06	Other		
Sponsor/Client	CgMs Consulting					
Project Manager	Neil Griffin and Louise Rayner.					
Project Supervisor	Dan Swift					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM ✓	Other		
<p>100 Word Summary.</p> <p><i>Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of University College London Field Archaeology Unit (UCLFAU), was commissioned by CgMs Consulting to undertake an archaeological evaluation at 23-25 Broadway/Tonbridge Road, Maidstone, centred at: 575645 155400. The work was carried out on the 22nd of May 2007, in advance of development.</i></p> <p><i>One trench was excavated within the footprint of the development. A sandstone foundation wall of uncertain date was encountered at the northern end of the trench. No other archaeological findings were recorded.</i></p>						

58

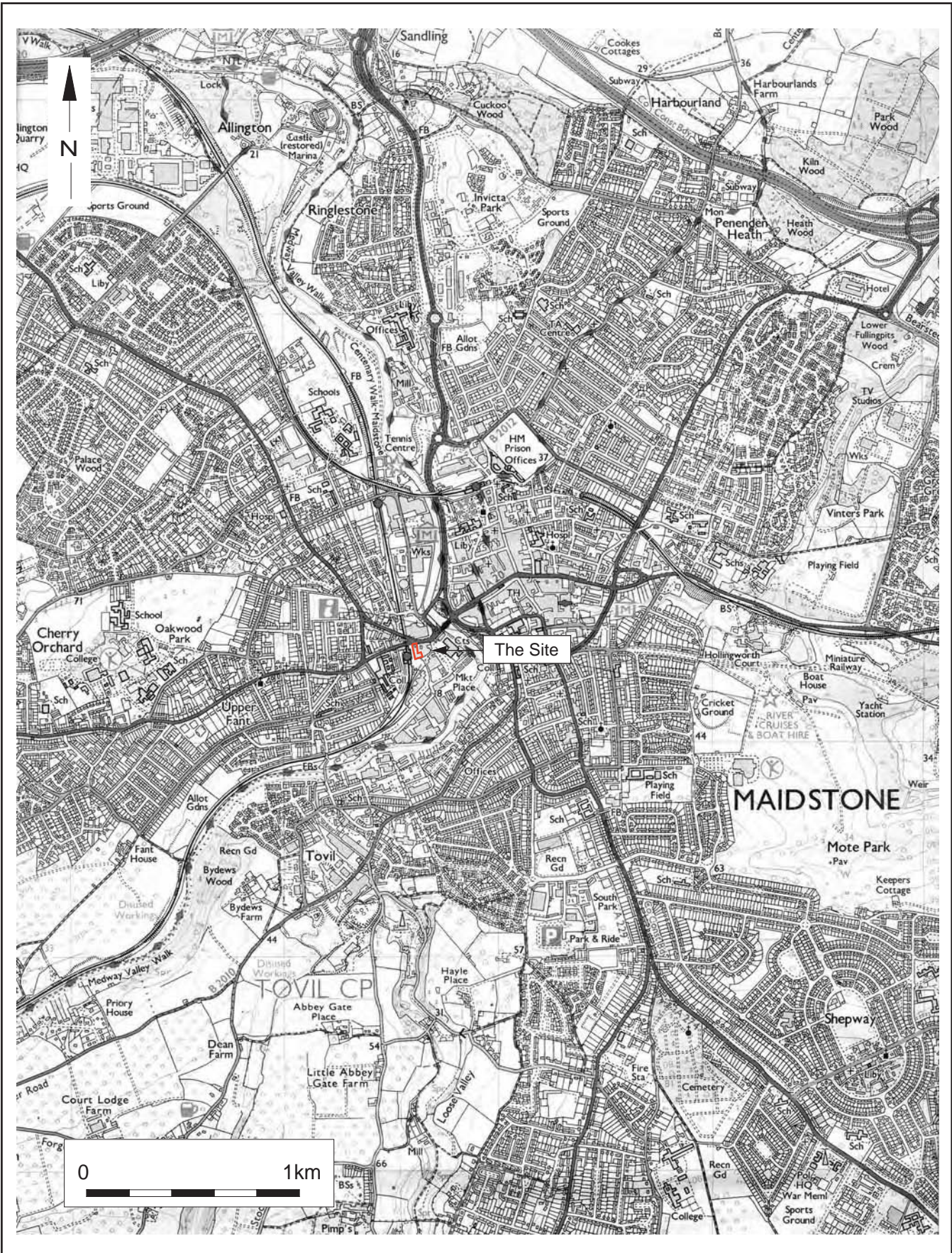
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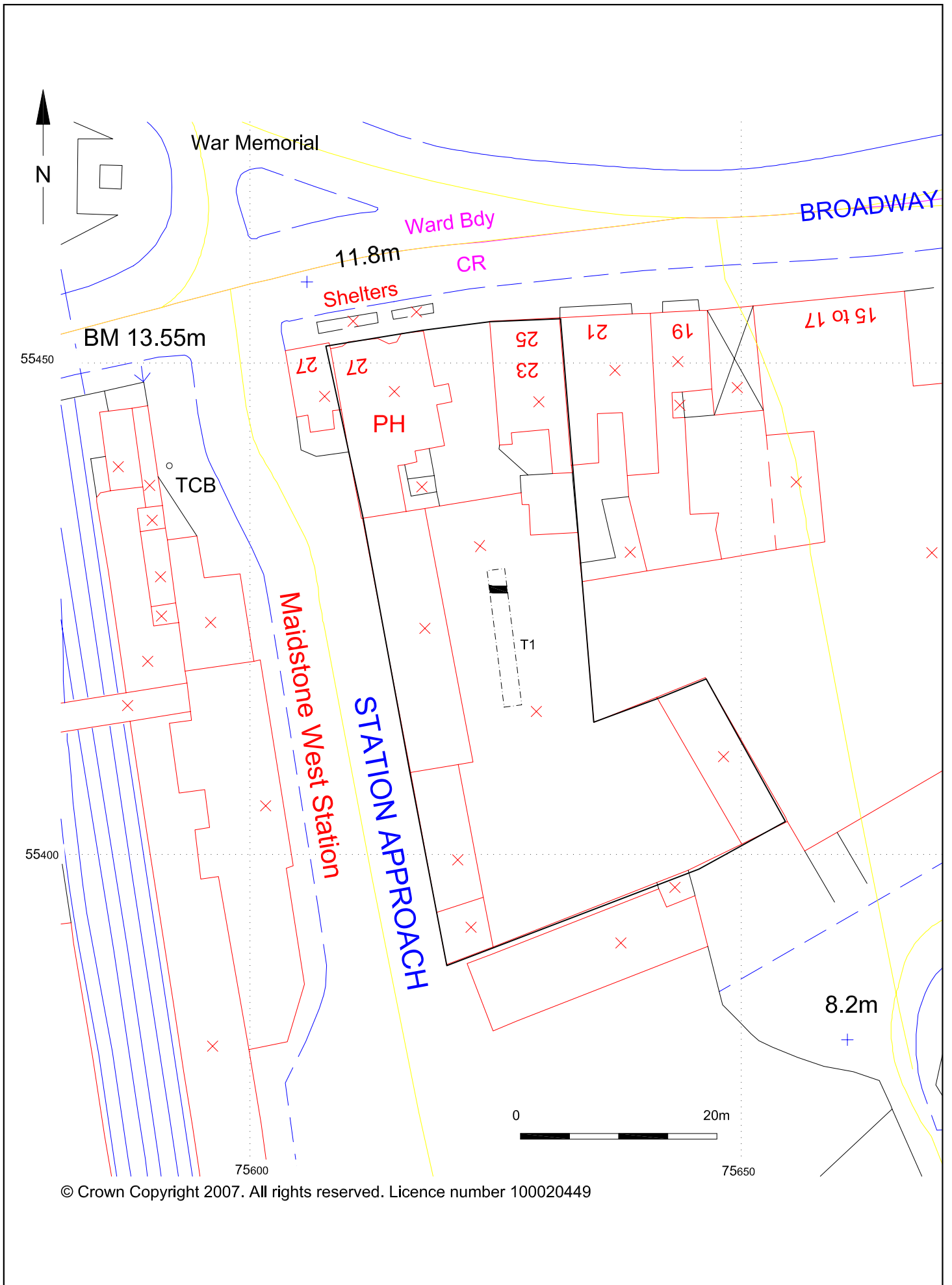
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© Archaeology South-East			Broadway and Tonbridge Road, Maidstone		Fig. 1
Ref: 2963	June 2007	Drawn by: SM	Site Location Plan		

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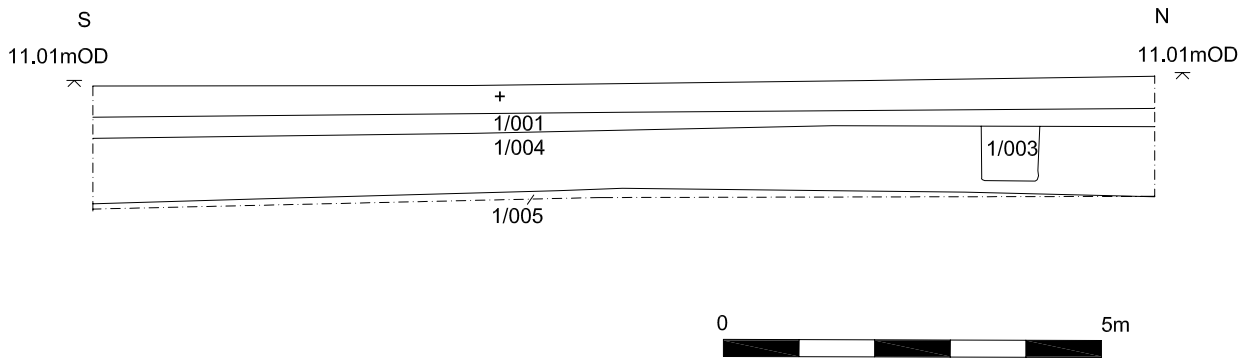


© Archaeology South-East			Broadway and Tonbridge Road, Maidstone		Fig. 2
Ref: 2963	June 2007	Drawn by: SM	Trench Location Plan		

Trench 1 Plan



Section of Trench 1



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