

Archcliffe Fort, Dover, 2020

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Evaluation trenching at Archcliffe Fort, Dover, 2020

1. Summary and introduction

1.1 Although damaged, Archcliffe Fort on the western outskirts of Dover (Fig. 1; NGR 631542 140291, centred) constitutes a multi-period defence work of considerable archaeological/historical interest. It forms an important element within the surviving sequence of artillery defences represented at Dover. The bulk of the extant structures here date to between the seventeenth- and early twentieth-century. The walls and outer defences are the oldest parts and include the most significant elements of the fort, with the interior containing a series of nineteenth- and twentieth-century structures, reflecting the use and habitation of the fort over the last two centuries. The site is a Scheduled Monument (No. 26797).

1.2 Archcliffe Fort is today occupied by the Emmaus Dover community, a charity offering a home and work to formerly homeless people. The community has plans to undertake new building work on the site and to carry-out certain other groundworks to improve access to its busy second-hand furniture shop and the general amenities on site. Canterbury Archaeological Trust has been engaged to advise on the new project and undertake any fieldwork required on site. A study considering the archaeological implications of the new proposals was prepared in 2016 (Parfitt 2016, revised 2019).

1.3 There have never been any large-scale archaeological investigations undertaken within Archcliffe Fort, despite the site's obviously high potential. Since 1992, however, Canterbury Archaeological Trust has undertaken at least eight minor investigations at the site. Most of these have been small-scale watching briefs conducted during the course of service trenching, renovation or building work inside the fort (e.g. Parfitt 1992; 1996; 1997; 2001; 2012). Most recent was the hand-excavation of a new gas trench across the lawn between the former married quarters and the Emmaus furniture shop, dug with the assistance of local volunteers in April 2017. This established that the metalled courtyard/parade ground, still extant across much of the interior of the fort and to be remodelled as part of the proposed new project, had once extended further to the north-east under the current grassed area (Parfitt 2017).

1.4 In the spring of 2020 two archaeological evaluation trenches were cut to investigate specific parts of the fort ahead of the proposed new building works (Fig. 2). Trench 1, adjacent to the site of a concrete building platform (Parfitt 2016, Building 9), revealed little of consequence and established that a visible mound was nothing more than a dump of twentieth century soils. Trench 2, however, produced some unexpected results and at a depth of 1.54m revealed the top of a buried brick wall of nineteenth century date. This apparently formed part of a cellar relating to a lost building within the fort. Subsequent research has identified a building in this area marked on early nineteenth century plans (Figs 15 & 16). The structure seems to have been largely forgotten following its demolition during the later nineteenth century.

2. Location, topography and geology

2.1 The fort is situated on the western outskirts of Dover, adjacent to the old coast road to Folkestone. It stands at an elevation of around 17 metres OD, upon a low promontory overlooking Shakespeare Beach and Dover's historic Western Docks (Fig. 1).

2.2 In topographical terms, although the site occupies a cliff-top position, it actually lies in the bottom of a dry chalk valley, truncated obliquely by the Strait of Dover. The marine truncation of this valley led to the creation of a slight bay immediately to the north-east of the Archcliffe headland

(Fig. 1). From the sixteenth century this bay formed Dover's principal harbour area (Biddle and Summerson 1982).

2.3 The sequence of pre-Fort deposits on the site consists of solid chalk of New Pit Chalk Formation at the base, overlain by superficial layers of drift material, comprising thick chalky solifluction deposits ('coombe rock'), sealed by silty brown clay 'head' containing sub-angular to sub-rounded flints. These drift deposits closely match recorded sequences in other local downland valleys but of special note at Archcliffe Fort is the recovery of a molluscan sequence of Late-glacial date (10–13ka BP) from deeply buried chalk solifluction deposits revealed during roadworks associated with the construction of the A20 (Bates and Barham 1993, 41–44).

2.4 The top of the silty brown clay 'head' deposits, above the coombe rock, generally occur between about 0.60 and 1.20m below present ground level within the fort. Prehistoric flintwork and pottery has been recovered from the uppermost horizons of these deposits.

3. History of Archcliffe Fort and its importance (based on Parfitt 2016)

3.1 Archcliffe Fort represents an important element in the sequence of surviving artillery defences located at Dover. It effectively forms an extension of the great nineteenth-century fortress occupying the Western Heights overlooking the town and port (Fig. 1). The fort itself, however, has origins much earlier than anything else on this western side of Dover, with records of defence works here going back to the late medieval period.

3.2 The extant remains of Archcliffe Fort comprise a solid stone curtain wall on the north-east and north-west sides, with projecting angle bastions at the north and west corners (Fig. 2). Built c.1640 from mortared ragstone and backed with an earthen rampart, the north-west (landward) wall is fronted by a dry ditch, crossed by a bridge leading to an almost centrally placed single arched entrance. Although modified during the nineteenth century, these defences today represent one of the few surviving examples of an early seventeenth-century bastioned fort in south-east England.

3.3 Expanding on Doug Welby's booklet of 1991, Liv Gibbs has provided a reasonably detailed account of the history of the fort, at the same time noting that an in-depth study of the history of the site has yet to be carried out (Gibbs 2004, 24). As a background to the present project, a heritage assessment report concerning the buildings inside the fort was prepared by Canterbury Archaeological Trust in 2016 (Parfitt 2016, revised Feb. 2019).

3.4 The earliest recorded structures at Archcliffe appear to date to the later medieval period when, in 1370, Edward III ordered the construction of a rampart and ditch on the headland in order to defend a pre-existing watchtower, probably built at some time during the Hundred Years War (Statham 1899, 80). In the reign of Henry VIII orders were given for the construction of a substantial new bulwark on the Archcliffe headland. This was erected between March 1539 and mid-summer 1540 and was made of earth, revetted with timber. Over the following years, the bulwark fell into disrepair but in 1568 the captain's lodging was renovated. In 1635 it was again reported that the bulwark was in a ruinous state, but a few years later significant funds became available for repairs and improvements.

3.5 The new works included the construction of a gatehouse, lodgings for soldiers and the erection of a brick wall 20ft high around the work, fronted by a ditch. In 1640, however, it was recorded that most of the brick wall had collapsed due to poor design and construction. Given the strategic importance of the site, rebuilding work followed and it was probably at this time that the surviving ragstone walls and angle bastions were constructed (Figs 1 & 2). The fort was maintained

throughout the eighteenth century but from the 1790s, with the building of new defences on the Western Heights overlooking the fort, Archcliffe began to be considered obsolete. In 1803 Brigadier General Twiss regarded it inadequate to defend Dover Bay if an enemy landing was attempted due to the fort guns being masked by housing development in the Pier District, on the seaward side of the fort. However, it was decided to keep the fort armed until the new defences on the Heights were fully operational.

3.6 In the event, the fort and its guns were maintained throughout most of the nineteenth century. By the spring of 1844 the South Eastern Railway Company had reached Dover by digging two short tunnels beneath the south-west corner of the fort. These tunnels could be closed by stout gates if there was a threat of enemy attack.

3.7 In 1872 six rifled muzzle-loading (RML) guns were installed at the fort and these were updated in 1884. Only three of the 10in RMLs were still mounted in 1895, with a 64pdr in place for drill. The fort's low elevation prevented any new heavy ordnance being mounted at the fort during the First World War, although small calibre quick firing guns were added for defence of the beach below.

3.8 Almost half the interior of the historic fort was destroyed during a major expansion of the railway during the early twentieth century: the two railway tunnels, nineteenth century gun emplacements and the underground magazines along the cliff edge were all completely removed in 1927–28. This event finally brought to an end the fort as a functioning coastal artillery work. By 1956 the Ministry of Defence had ceased to regard Archcliffe Fort as a military installation and it was scheduled as an Ancient Monument in October 1964. In June 1978 it was announced that the fort was to be sold, but in 1979 it was transferred to the Department of the Environment, as a result of which it is now under the care of English Heritage (Gibbs 2004).

3.9 In 1995 occupation of the fort was taken over by the Emmaus Dover community, a registered charity providing a home and work for formerly homeless people. The community supports itself by selling good quality second-hand furniture and other items from a shop on the site. The community is also keen to develop the site as a local tourist attraction for those interested in the historic fort and the fine views across the Western Docks and the Strait of Dover that are to be had from its ramparts.

3.10 As a promontory overlooking the sea, with a sheltered bay for the use of boats adjacent and fresh water springs nearby, it seems quite possible that the Archcliffe headland was more extensively occupied throughout the past than might otherwise be inferred from the available, fort related, documentary evidence. Any further opportunities to examine the nature and extent of pre-fort activity should be fully taken up, in addition to any investigations specifically concerned with the history and origins of the fort itself.

4. The excavated trenches (Fig. 2)

4.1 Prior to commencement of the proposed new building programme, three archaeological investigations were planned to assess the impact of these works at specific points within the fort:

- Trench 1, An evaluation trench to be cut across a low mound south-west of Building 9
- Trench 2, An excavation on the site of a proposed soakaway south-west of *Karen's Block*
- Trench 3, An excavation on the site of a proposed soakaway west of the Shop

4.2 Trenches 1 and 2 were excavated in March 2020 but given the generally inconvenient positioning of Trench 3, in the car park immediately in front of the shop entrance, excavation of this trench was

postponed. Accordingly, the following report details the findings made in Trenches 1 and 2, both located to the south-west of *Karen's Block* (Fig. 2).

4.3 Working to a previously approved Written Scheme of Investigation (Parfitt 2020), the trenching was conducted over the weekend of 21–22 March 2020. The work was led by professional staff from Canterbury Archaeological Trust, assisted by experienced volunteer members of the Dover Archaeological Group. The weather was sunny and dry but with a stiff, cold sea breeze.

4.4 The work generated an archive which comprises 27 recorded contexts, 4 measured plans, 2 measured sections and about 100 digital photographs. A small quantity of finds was recovered, including an interesting series of military buttons. All the field records have been checked and indexed.

4.5 Trench 1 (Figs 2, 3, 5–9 & 17)

4.5.1 Trench 1 was cut parallel with the workshops at the end of Gipson's Block, towards the south-western side of the surviving fort (Fig. 2). Here, a concrete building platform (Parfitt 2016, Building 9) is abutted on its south-western side by a low, turf-covered mound around 6 metres across and 0.25m high. Since it is proposed that this mound will be levelled and removed to make way for a new lorry turning area, a single trench was cut across the feature in order to establish something of its composition, date and significance.

4.5.2 According to the detailed site plan of 1884 (TNA: MP/AF C0002; Fig. 5), this part of the fort was then occupied by a kitchen garden, with no trace of any mound here. It thus seemed likely that the mound was of twentieth-century date and this was largely confirmed by the evidence from the excavated trench, which showed the feature to be composed of dumped dark soil with some pebbles and cinder (Contexts 102, 103, 105 & 106) abutting the face of Building 9.

4.5.3 As dug, the trench was 1.00m wide and about 6.70m long, aligned north-east by south-west (Figs 2, 3 & 7). It was hand-excavated and taken to a maximum depth of 0.55m. At the north-eastern end it cut down the face of the concrete platform of Building 9, allowing the construction to be observed.

4.5.4 Excavation work ceased once the bottom of the mound deposits were identified, with a small *sondage* cut at the north-eastern end to examine the base of the concrete platform and something of the earlier soil deposits below (Fig. 9).

The excavated sequence (Figs 3, 5, 7–9)

4.5.5 In the base of the *sondage* a layer of dark grey clay loam containing very frequent small sub-rounded flint pebbles (Fig. 3, Section 2, Context 108; Fig. 9) represented the earliest deposit exposed. This extended under the concrete platform and its well-defined surface could represent some sort of walking surface. The deposit was not excavated since it is unlikely to be affected by the new works.

4.5.6 Also exposed within the *sondage*, sealing the pebble layer, predating the mound and again extending under the concrete platform, was a deposit of dark grey-brown clay loam containing frequent small flint pebbles and occasional small chalk pieces (Section 2, Context 107). This layer was about 0.17m thick and produced 14 pieces of pottery, two fragments of clay roof tile and a single prehistoric struck flint (Table 1). Apart from one small sherd of cream and brown marbled slipware, perhaps of seventeenth century date, all the pottery recovered relates to a single, fine plain white

china foot-ring plate or saucer of nineteenth- or early twentieth-century date. The pebbles in this layer are most likely derived from the underlying deposit.

4.5.7 At some later stage Context 107 provided a base for the construction of a concrete building platform (Building 9; here Context 109), which was laid directly on its surface (see below, **4.6**).

4.5.8 Overlying soil layer 107 and abutting the face of the adjacent concrete platform (Context 109) was a deposit of dark grey loam containing small flint pebbles and small chalk pieces (Section 2, Context 106). This appeared to represent the first of the mound dump deposits heaped against the building platform. The full extent of this layer was not exposed. It was about 0.13m thick but failed to produce any datable finds. Further to the south-west an unexcavated soil layer of similar composition (Section 2, Context 104) is likely to represent a continuation of this layer. This was noted to contain pieces of Welsh slate and fragments of yellow stock brick and it could be seen to overlap the tail of the present asphalt trackway adjacent.

4.5.9 Layer 106 was sealed by another deposit of dark grey loam containing occasional small flint pebbles and small chalk pieces (Section 2, Context 105). This layer also abutted the face of the adjacent concrete platform and was between 0.07 and 0.13m thick. It did not produce any datable finds.

4.5.10 Partially sealing layer 105, the main body of the mound was composed of another dump of dark grey-brown loam containing some fragments of brick, concrete and pebble (Section 2, Context 103). This was up to 0.24m thick and produced a small quantity of finds including pieces of pottery, glass, clay tobacco pipe (including a complete bowl), roofing tile, animal bone and a single prehistoric struck flint (Table 1). Perhaps most useful for dating is small piece of drainpipe of black pitch fibre, a material mainly in use between the 1950s and 1970s.

4.5.11 Towards the north-eastern end of the trench, a thin layer of coal fire ash and cinder rested on the surface of layer 103 (Section 2, Context 102; Fig. 8). This was no more than 0.04m thick but it produced three clay tobacco pipe fragments including one with a marked spur, a residual prehistoric struck flint (Table 1) and a small piece of white glazed wall tile, that could be twentieth- rather than nineteenth-century in date.

4.5.12 The mound deposits were all sealed by an upper layer of top soil which itself is likely to represent part of the mound construction. This deposit (Section 2, Context 101) was up to 0.16m thick and consisted of a dark grey-brown loam with occasional pebbles and brick fragments. It produced four residual prehistoric struck flints (Table 1) and a modern glass counter.

4.5.13 Upon completion of the recording, the trench was backfilled by hand, with the original profile of the mound being reinstated.

Conclusion

4.5.14 From the evidence of the excavation, the mound abutting the south-western side of the twentieth-century concrete building platform (Building 9) can be seen to amount to nothing more than a succession of comparatively recent soil dumps. The fact that these deposits abut what had originally been the exposed face of the concrete platform must indicate that the mound itself is of twentieth century date. This is borne out by some of the artefacts recovered from its make-up, notably the pitch fibre drainpipe fragment from Context 103. The available map evidence would appear to suggest that the mound is post 1884 (Fig. 5).

4.6 Observations on the concrete building platform (Building 9) (Figs 2, 5, 7–10 & 17)

4.6.1 Details of the concrete building platform located to the south-west of Karen's Block have been set out previously (Parfitt 2016, Building 9; Fig. 2), although its exact date of construction has still yet to be determined. The structure is absent on an aerial photograph of the fort taken in 1927 and is also absent on one dated 1953 (NMR June 1953; Fig. 17), implying a later twentieth century date. It does not appear on any large-scale Ordnance Survey map until 1974. Interestingly, the 1953 photograph shows the outline of a rectangular structure aligned roughly north–south partially occupying the same site. It is presently unclear exactly what this represents but there is some possibility that parts of the structure still survive below the concrete platform.

4.6.2 A few specific structural features concerning Building 9 may be usefully highlighted here. Ground observation shows that the rectangular base had originally been constructed as a free-standing platform, about 0.34m high. This had been built directly off the existing ground surface (represented by layer 107 in Trench 1). Horizontal wooden shuttering (2 boards high) had been used to hold the concrete in place during the pour (Figs 9 & 10).

4.6.3 Towards the north-eastern end the platform was constructed over the line of a pre-existing brick retaining wall (Figs 2 & 10), which itself would appear to post-date the 1884 site plan (Fig. 5). Probably at some later date the ground level directly behind Karen's Block was reduced, undermining the concrete base and necessitating the insertion of two courses of concrete blocks as underpinning along its north-eastern side (Fig. 10).

4.7 Trench 2 (Figs 2, 4–6, 11–16)

4.7.1 This trench was hand-excavated on the site of a proposed new soakaway pit on an open area to the south-west of *Karen's Block* and 10 metres north-east of Trench 1 (Fig. 2). The main aim of the excavation was to establish the full thickness and sequence of deposits present at this point. In particular, it was intended to establish the presence of any prehistoric flint bearing layers above the natural geology here.

4.7.2 The excavation was 1.20m square and was taken to a maximum depth of 1.64m (in sondage) but in the event failed to reveal any undisturbed soil deposits. Buried nineteenth century brick walling was located at a depth of 1.54m and this seems to form part of some larger underground fort structure located in this area, the full extent of which was not determined (Fig. 14). No buildings are shown in this area on the 1884 site plan, with a large underground tank being located too far to the north-east to represent the present structure.

The excavated sequence (Figs 4, 11–14)

4.7.3 The full sequence of deposits exposed were entirely of nineteenth- and twentieth-century date, most representing infill and consolidation deposits post-dating the buried brick structure. No undisturbed pre-fort soils were revealed. (Elsewhere within the fort such primary deposits have often been located at depths of less than one metre, see above **2.4**).

4.7.4 At the base of the excavated sequence, brick and rubble demolition deposits (Fig. 4, Section 1, Contexts 215 and 216) abutted and partially sealed two fragments of earlier brick walling (Walls 217 and 218), the precise interpretation of which remains unclear due to the small area seen (Figs 4 & 14). It was readily apparent from the character of the rubble deposits that these represented the collapsed upper levels of the brick structure revealed.

4.7.5 Located in the northern corner of the excavated trench, Wall 217 was L-shaped in plan, with maximum dimensions of 0.70m (NW–SE) by 0.90m (NE–SW). It was at least two courses high (0.16m), constructed of red bricks set in a coarse grey mortar containing quantities of chalk/lime specks and coal specks (Figs 4, 5 & 14). Traces of surface mortar rendering occurred on the south-east and south-west faces of the brickwork.

4.7.6 Abutting the south-western side of the 217 brickwork was a small, added section of later brickwork (Wall 218). This was about 0.26m wide, constructed from red bricks (some with shallow frogs) set in a grey mortar containing chalk/lime specks and coal specks – very similar to that used in Wall 17 (Figs 4, 5 & 14). The south corner of this brickwork appeared to have been deliberately chamfered.

4.7.7 The demolition deposits (Context 215 and 216) associated with Walls 217 and 218 produced a small collection of finds, including fragments of pottery, glass, clay tobacco pipe, glazed wall tile, roofing tile, animal bone and six military buttons. The pot-sherds recovered are all stonewares and chinawares broadly datable to the nineteenth century. The collection of military buttons found are all likely to broadly date to the early nineteenth century, with two more closely placed within the period c. 1802–1831.

4.7.8 The use of grey mortar with chalk and coal grits in the exposed walling is suggestive of early nineteenth century work, as seen in better dated structures on the adjacent Western Heights. Such an early date could explain the absence of any building shown here on the 1884 site plan, with the implication that the structure had already been demolished by this date (see further consideration below, **6.4**).

4.7.9 Rubble deposit 215, associated with the demolition of Walls 217 and 218, was sealed by a continuous soil layer about 0.15m thick (Section 1, Context 214). This consisted of a light grey gritty loam containing much brown flint pea shingle and small chalk pieces. It yielded a few fragments of chinaware, clay tobacco pipe, glazed wall tile, roofing tile, animal bone and nine military buttons datable to c. 1802–1831.

4.7.10 Sealing soil layer 214 was a thin but continuous layer of rammed chalk rubble, no more than 0.08m thick and perhaps representing a walking surface (Section 1, Context 213; Fig. 13). Apart from a few fragments of red and yellow brick this layer failed to produce any datable finds.

4.7.11 Chalk surface 213 was sealed by a substantial soil dump layer about 0.40m thick (Section 1, Context 212). This consisted of a dark grey loam containing much small pebble and occasional small chalk pieces and produced a few sherds of pottery, including earthenware, stoneware and chinaware, clay tobacco pipe, roofing tile, animal bone and eight military buttons. The pottery recovered is all broadly datable to the nineteenth century. The buttons all appear to be of late eighteenth- to nineteenth-century date, with the latest datable to c. 1802–1831.

4.7.12 Soil dump 211 supported a walking surface, which seems to have been prepared with some care. An initial base of crushed yellow mortar and broken yellow stock brick, up to 0.08m thick (Context 211), was sealed by a thin layer of rammed orange gravel (Context 207; Fig. 4, Plan 1; Fig. 12), which in turn provided the base for a thin layer of asphalt (Context 206), somewhat poorly preserved and confined the eastern quarter of the excavated trench (Fig. 4, Plan 1; Fig. 12), where it was up to 0.02m thick. None of these layers produced any datable finds but the stratigraphic sequence must suggest a later nineteenth century date. The 1884 fort plan shows a north-west by south-east aligned path immediately adjacent to the site of Trench 2 (Fig. 5) and it is possible that

the present asphalt surface is related to this (NB: Previous ground survey at the fort has demonstrated that the 1884 plan is not always entirely accurate in terms of precise measurement).

4.7.13 The gravel bedding (207) for the asphalt surface was cut by two small pits on the south-western side of the trench (Fs 205 and 210; Figs 4 & 12). Neither feature was fully exposed but F. 205 appeared to be the largest, with F.210 amounting to little more than a shallow scoop. Pit F. 205 itself, seemed to be oval in shape and measured a minimum of 0.75m in length (E–W), 0.62m wide (N–S) and 0.52m deep, with very steep sides and dished base (Fig. 4, Section 1b; Figs 12 & 13). It was filled by two successive soil layers (Contexts 204 & 208) which produced small amounts of pottery, glass, clay tobacco pipe, glazed wall tile, roofing tile and animal bone, all of nineteenth century date. No finds came from F. 210.

4.7.14 The infilled pits and the asphalt surface were sealed by a soil dump layer up to 0.15m thick (Section 1, Context 203). This consisted of a grey-brown clay loam containing much small flint pebble and occasional yellow brick fragments. It produced two pieces of clay tobacco pipe stem but no other datable finds.

4.7.15 The soil dump layer (203) provided the base for a layer of poured pebble concrete around 0.20m thick (Section 1, Context 202). The surface of this was quite rough and irregular with no indication that it had ever been smoothed off to form a floor surface (Fig. 11). A large iron bar had been incorporated into the concrete but this appeared to have no structural purpose and merely included to eke out the amount concrete required. There were no other datable finds but a twentieth century date for this layer seems most likely.

4.7.16 The concrete layer was sealed by between 0.14 and 0.25m of dark modern top soil (Section 1, Context 201). A very recent garden retaining wall had been erected to hold back the thicker soil on the south-western side but this was removed during the excavation.

4.7.17 The excavated trench has been temporarily left open in anticipation of further investigations potentially being required here.

Conclusion

4.7.18 The results from the excavation of Trench 2 are most unexpected, failing to locate any undisturbed pre-fort deposits but instead establishing the presence in this area of some sort of demolished underground fort structure. If this is not an element of the fort drainage system, it quite possibly represents a basement or cellar relating to an otherwise unknown building (see further below, **6.4**).

4.7.19 The structure clearly extends beyond the limits of the excavated trench on all sides. The character of the associated mortar and brickwork suggests that it is of early nineteenth century date and the absence of any structure shown here on the 1884 site plan helps to confirm this.

4.7.20 Following demolition and infilling of the underground structure, the area had been consolidated with successive dumps of soil. Interleaved with these deposits were perhaps three successive walking surfaces (Contexts 213, 206 & 202), implying that after the demolition of the underground structure this area had remained open ground.

5. Finds (not illustrated; Table 1)

5.1 A small collection of finds was recovered during the evaluation (Table 1). The bulk of the material

consists of pottery and glass, together with clay tobacco pipe fragments, pieces of broken roof tile, a small amount of animal bone and a few prehistoric struck flints. Trench 2 also produced an interesting collection of military buttons.

5.2 The material has been processed according to standard Canterbury Archaeological Trust procedures. It currently remains in the possession of the Trust (Dover Office) but will shortly be transferred to the English Heritage regional store at Dover Castle, together with a complete copy of the field archive. Brief notes on the main categories of find are set out below.

5.3 Pottery

5.3.1 The evaluation trenching produced a total of 42, mostly small, sherds of pottery (447g), scattered throughout seven separate contexts within Trenches 1 and 2 (Table 1). Virtually all of this material appears to date to the nineteenth- or early twentieth-century, with only one probably earlier piece – a small fragment of cream and brown marbled slipware from Context 107, perhaps seventeenth century.

5.3.2 The assemblage largely comprises glazed chinawares (27 sherds), mostly plain cream and white, together with three small fragments of ‘willow pattern’. There are also eight sherds of earthenware including two pieces of probable flower-pot. Five fragments of earthenware (representing two different vessels) have internal glaze, whilst the sherd of marbled slipware is decorated on both surfaces.

5.3.3 Another seven sherds are of brown, nineteenth-century stoneware, including three conjoining fragments of a straight-sided bottle (neck and rim missing) contained in Context 216.

Context	Pottery	Glass	Clay pipe	Clay roof tile	Wall tile	Military buttons	Struck flint	Animal bone	Other
101	-	-	-	-	-	-	4 (119g)	-	Glass counter
102	-	-	3 (7g)	-	1 (30g)	-	1 (54g)	-	-
103	6 (98g)	4 (94g)	6 (26g)	5 (239g)	-	-	1 (14g)	4 (55g)	-
107	14 (54g)		-	2 (153g)	-	-	1 (48g)	-	-
203	-	-	2 (9g)	-	-	-	-	-	-
204	3 (11g)	5 (33g)	3 (6g)	1 (16g)	-	-	-	2 (4g)	-
208	-	-	-	-	1 (8g)	-	-	-	-
212	8 (75g)	-	6 (11g)	3 (184g)	-	8	-	10 (51g)	-
214	4 (57g)	-	3 (8g)	3 (322g)	2 (122g)	9	-	5 (171g)	Copper nail; iron nail & rod
215	3 (37g)	2 (4g)	3 (12g)	2 (163g)	1 (7g)	3	-	2 (17g)	-
216	4 (115g)	-	4 (10g)	2 (662g)	-	3	-	2 (28g)	-
Total	42 (447g)	11 (131g)	30 (89g)	18 (1739g)	5 (167g)	23 (48g)	7 (235g)	25 (326g)	4 (175g)

Table 1 Distribution of finds recovered from the evaluation

5.4 Glass

A small amount of glass was recovered during the trenching. In all, there are 11 fragments (131g); 4 pieces are from vessels and 7 small fragments are window glass. Amongst the vessel glass recovered is a large base in clear glass and the neck of a small medicine bottle, also in clear glass. Nothing appears earlier than the nineteenth century. There is also a small, bun-shaped glass counter of shiny green glass (3g) from Context 101. This could be twentieth century, rather than nineteenth century in date.

5.5 Clay tobacco pipes

5.5.1 Thirty clay tobacco pipe fragments (89g) were recovered during the excavation of Trenches 1 and 2; two-thirds came from Trench 2. The fragments mostly comprise pieces of broken stem, ranging in length between 21 and 98mm. Amongst them are four or five fragments whose overall thickness and wide bore diameter suggest that they are relatively early, probably seventeenth-century, but the remainder seem to be later.

5.5.2 Two stem fragments have the original mouth-piece surviving and another five include the start of the bowl. Only one of these (from Trench 1, Context 102) preserves an undamaged spur. This is marked W A, possibly William Arnold, a recorded Dover pipe maker, and can be dated to 1845–51. There is just one complete pipe bowl in the assemblage, also from Trench 1 (Context 103; SF 24). This is decorated with a basket weave design. The bowl is about 20mm in diameter, 30mm high and weighs 7 grams. It is probably later nineteenth century in date.

5.6 Ceramic tile

5.6.1 A quantity of ceramic tile was recovered during the excavations. The bulk of this is clay roof tile but there are also five fragments of glazed ceramic wall tile. In total, there are 18 pieces of roof tile (1739g), all somewhat fragmentary with no complete dimensions surviving. The bulk of this material is orange-red in colour, with just one piece of cream-buff fabric. Most pieces seem to represent broken peg-tile although only two tiles with a peg/nail hole were noted. There is also one fragment from Context 214 which is probably part of a pantile. Nearly half the tile fragments show traces of adhering white mortar. The fabrics suggest a post-medieval rather medieval date for all this material but it is of interest to note that the surviving military buildings within the fort seem always to have been roofed with Welsh slate.

5.6.2 The five fragments of plain white glazed ceramic wall tile (167g) mostly came from deposits in Trench 2. One large piece still retains a substantial section of the coarse grey mortar layer to which it was originally attached. All these tile fragments are of nineteenth- or twentieth-century date.

5.6.3 Also of passing note was a broken fragment of fire brick from Context 212 bearing the stamp ...ENGLAND.

5.7 Military buttons

notes by D. Holman

5.7.1 Metal detector searches of the spoil generated during the excavations produced a collection of 23 metal military buttons, all from Trench 2 (SFs 1–23). Most of these are in a reasonable condition, although a few are corroded. Some are quite heavily worn, presumably as a result of much polishing, while others are virtually unworn. The buttons were scattered throughout four separate contexts within the trench. Their distribution was:

Context 212 – 8 (SFs 1–8)	
Context 214 – 9 (SFs 9–17)	
Context 215 – 3 (SFs 18–20)	
Context 216 – 3 (SFs 21–23)	
Total	23

Context 212 (8 buttons)

SF 1	Royal Regiment of Artillery (3 guns on shield), no backmark, c. 1790–1802
SF 2	Royal Regiment of Artillery (3 guns on shield), no backmark, c. 1790–1802
SF 3	Royal Regiment of Artillery (3 guns on shield), no backmark, c. 1790–1802

- SF 4 Royal Regiment of Artillery (Georgian cypher), no backmark, c. 1802–1831
- SF 5 Royal Regiment of Artillery (Georgian cypher), backmark I MCGOWAN, LONDON, c. 1802–1831
- SF 6 Plain, undiagnostic, probably early nineteenth century
- SF 7 Plain, undiagnostic, probably early nineteenth century
- SF 8 Patterned, probably late eighteenth century

Context 214 (9 buttons)

- SF 9 Royal Regiment of Artillery (Georgian cypher), backmark I MCGOWAN, LONDON, c. 1802–1831
- SF 10 Royal Regiment of Artillery (Georgian cypher), backmark I MCGOWAN, LONDON, c. 1802–1831
- SF 11 Royal Regiment of Artillery (Georgian cypher), backmark I MCGOWAN, GERRARD ST, LONDON, c. 1802–1831
- SF 12 Royal Regiment of Artillery (Georgian cypher), backmark I MCGOWAN, LONDON, c. 1802–1831
- SF 13 Royal Regiment of Artillery (Georgian cypher), backmark I MCGOWAN, LONDON, c. 1802–1831
- SF 14 Royal Regiment of Artillery (Georgian cypher), backmark I MCGOWAN, LONDON, c. 1802–1831
- SF 15 Royal Regiment of Artillery (Georgian cypher), no backmark, c. 1802–1831
- SF 16 Royal Regiment of Artillery (Georgian cypher), no backmark, c. 1802–1831
- SF 17 Plain, undiagnostic, probably early nineteenth century

Context 215 (3 buttons)

- SF 18 Royal Regiment of Artillery (Georgian cypher), backmark I MCGOWAN, LONDON, c. 1802–1831
- SF 19 Plain, undiagnostic, probably early nineteenth century
- SF 20 Plain, hemispherical, probably late eighteenth century

Context 216 (3 buttons)

- SF 21 Royal Regiment of Artillery (Georgian cypher), no backmark, c. 1802–1831
- SF 22 Plain, undiagnostic, backmark TREBLE GILT, early nineteenth century
- SF 23 Plain, undiagnostic, probably early nineteenth century

5.7.2 *Comments*

The assemblage of military buttons recovered from Trench 2 forms an interesting group recovered from one specific locality within the fort. It seems possible that some of these buttons had originally been attached to parts of discarded clothing incorporated into the dump layers here. The bulk of the datable buttons fall within the Napoleonic period (1799–1815), when both Archcliffe Fort and the adjacent Western Height were fully garrisoned. Eight of the buttons carry a backmark of McGowan, a well-known early nineteenth century maker in London, whilst the predominance of buttons of the Royal Regiment of Artillery is clearly indicative of the fort garrison.

5.8 *Other metalwork*

Three metal objects came from Context 214. There is a complete, square sectioned copper nail with a square head, 66mm long (9g), possibly a roofing nail for slates. Also, a somewhat corroded thin iron rod, 138mm in length (33g) and a large corroded iron nail, 104mm in length (73g).

5.9 Prehistoric struck flints

5.9.1 Seven prehistoric struck flints (235g) were recovered during the evaluation, all from the dumped soil deposits in Trench 1. The flints have a mottled pale blue-grey to white patina and, apart from one smallish core fragment (60g), all are unworked waste flakes, with most retaining some original cortex.

5.9.2 Although *in situ* prehistoric flintwork has been previously recorded at Archcliffe Fort (e.g. Parfitt 1996; 1997), it cannot be certain that the present material is directly connected. Most of the soils producing these flints appear to be dump deposits, which have possibly been brought in from elsewhere.

5.10 Animal bone

5.10.1 A total of twenty-five pieces of animal bone (326g) was recovered, in small amounts from various deposits scattered throughout Trenches 1 and 2. All this material is reasonably well preserved and probably represents kitchen waste. Most of the identifiable pieces are ribs and several of these show butchery cut marks. There is also one large cut and butchered vertebra and part of a cow/horse mandible.

5.10.2 This small, mixed assemblage is too scattered and too imprecisely dated to provide any useful details concerning meat consumption within the fort at any particular period.

6. Conclusions

6.1 The trenching undertaken at Archcliffe in 2020 represents only the second time that any formal archaeological excavation has taken place within the walls of the fort. The results of the present work have been successful in providing specific information concerning points of archaeological detail that are of direct relevance to the proposed new building project.

6.2 The excavation of Trench 1 established that the low mound located on the south-western side of the concrete building platform (Building 9) comprises nothing more than a dump of soils abutting the originally free-standing face of the platform. Further background research on the platform itself, now suggests that this is probably post-Second World War in date (Fig. 17).

6.3 Trench 2 produced unexpected results and revealed the top of a buried brick wall of nineteenth century date, buried at a depth of 1.54m below present ground level. This most probably formed part of cellar relating to a lost building within the fort (see below).

6.4 Identification of the brick structure located in Trench 2

6.4.1 Following the completion of the evaluation trenching some further research has been undertaken in an effort to identify the nature of the buried nineteenth century brick structure discovered in Trench 2. It seems most likely that this represents part of an infilled cellar, implying the former existence of a now lost building to the south-east of Gibson's block (previously Commanding Royal Engineer's quarters). No locally available written accounts of the fort make any reference to such a building in this area and the detailed 1884 fort plan shows all the ground between the accommodation block and the cliff-top gun emplacements as then being open land, occupied by lawn and kitchen garden.

6.4.2 A former building in this part of the fort, however, has been identified on three general plans of the Western Heights defences drawn during the earlier nineteenth century. Oldest is a plan dated 1804 which shows a parallel but shorter rectangular block lying just to the south-east of the main range (Figs 6 & 15). The same building, complete with its small projecting (?) porch on the north-western side is also shown on plans dating to 1811 (TNA: MPH/1/506; Fig. 16) and 1814 (TNA: MR 1346). On a subsequent plan, dated 1858 (TNA: WORK/43/1598) the structure is absent, implying that it had been demolished by this date.

6.4.3 On present evidence, it would seem that the walling discovered during the evaluation trenching relates to this lost early nineteenth century building. Figure 6 attempts to scale-up the 1804 plan and plot the location of this building onto the current site plan. This would seem to confirm that the walling located in Trench 2 relates to the north-eastern end wall of the lost building. Further archival research and perhaps some additional excavation will be required to fully confirm the point. If correct, this would represent a new discovery of some considerable significance.

7. Impact assessment

7.1 It is proposed to remove both the concrete building platform (Building 9) and the adjacent mound of soil to the south-west during the new building project. Based on the results from Trench 1 and some further background research, these features would all seem to be of later twentieth century date and of minimal significance to the overall history of the fort. There remains some reasonable potential for earlier archaeological structures, features or deposits being preserved below them.

7.2 The unexpected discovery in Trench 2 of what is probably part of a lost early nineteenth century building within the fort is of some considerable interest. Present evidence suggests that what survives of this structure could remain intact, preserved over one metre down, below subsequent make-up layers. The proposed soakaway, if constructed in its planned position, will have some damaging impact upon part of this newly located structure.

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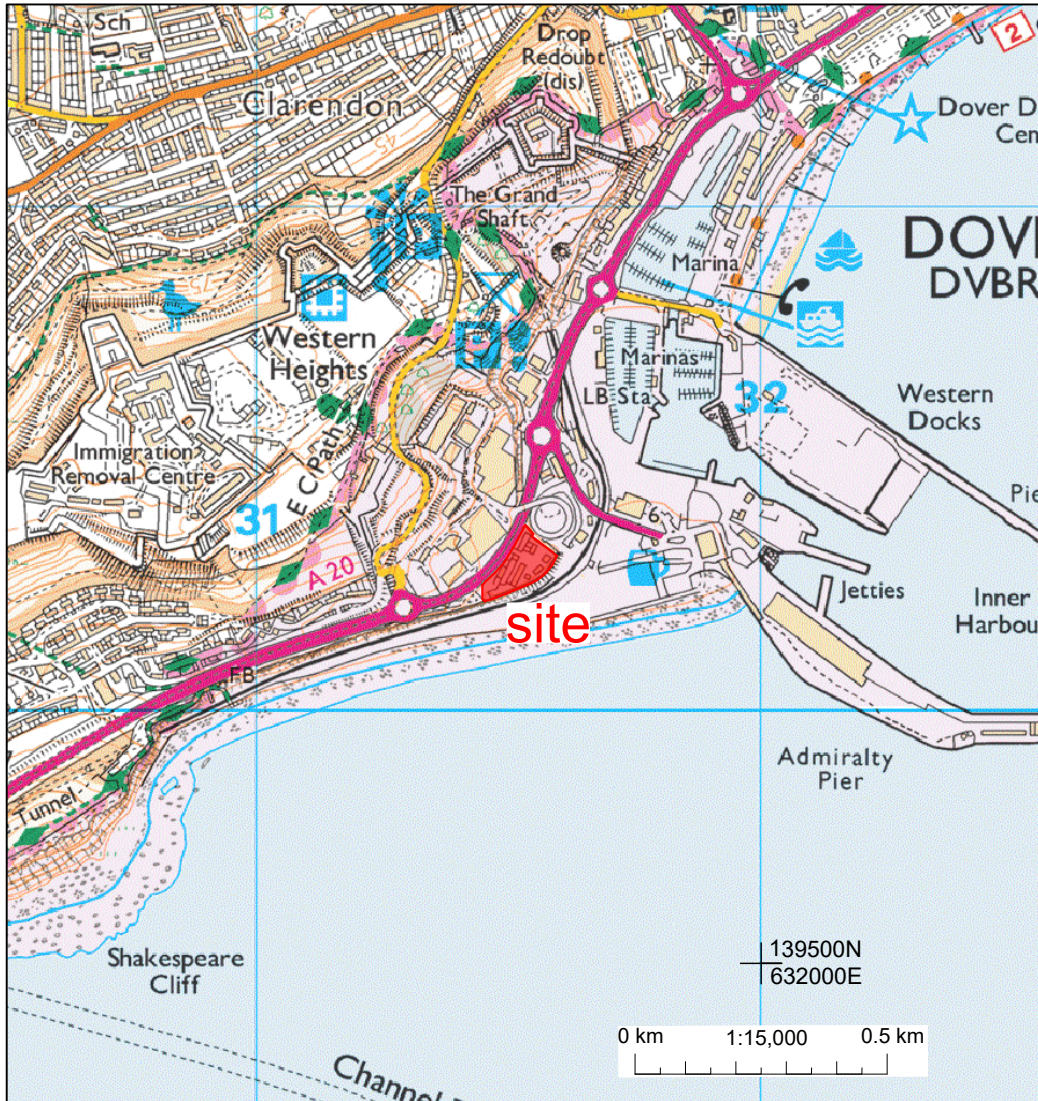
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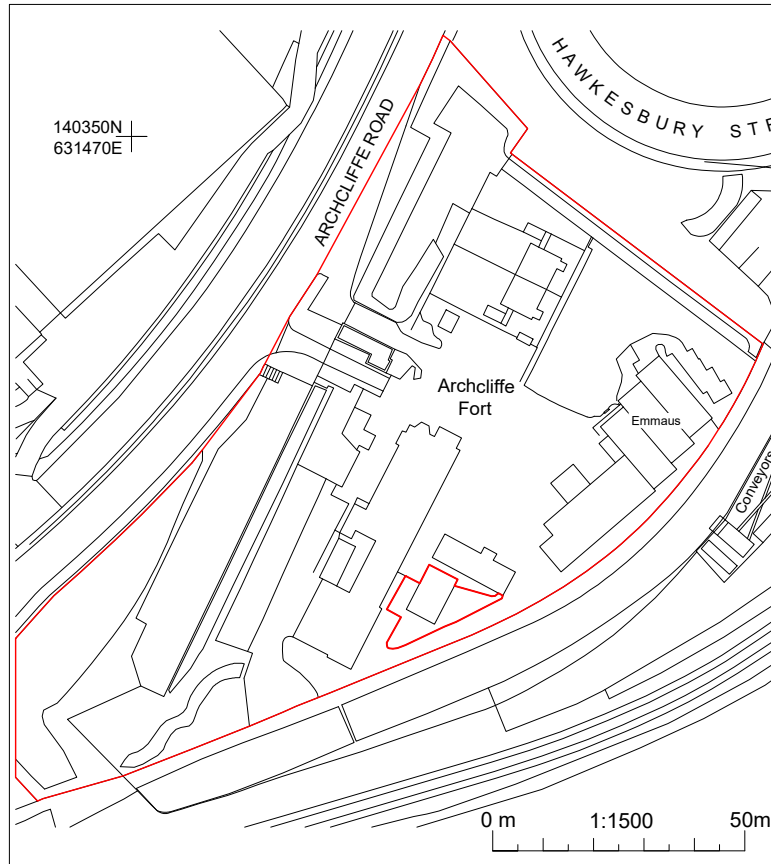
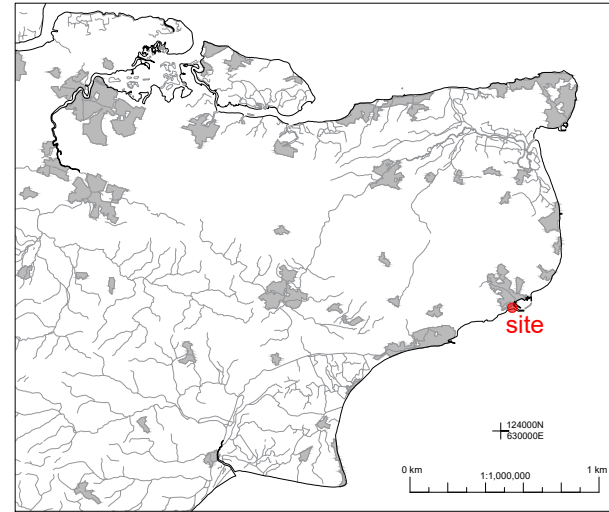
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FIG. 1



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PROJECT NAME
 Archcliffe Fort, Dover

PROJECT CODE
 AFDW-EV-2020

SITE ADDRESS
 Archcliffe Fort
 Archcliffe Road A20
 Dover
 Kent

DRAWN BY	SCALE(S)
P-S.A	see maps

DATE	LAST REVISION
24/03/20	03/0420

REF/DRG NO.	CHECKED
	KP

Fig. 1 General location maps of investigated site

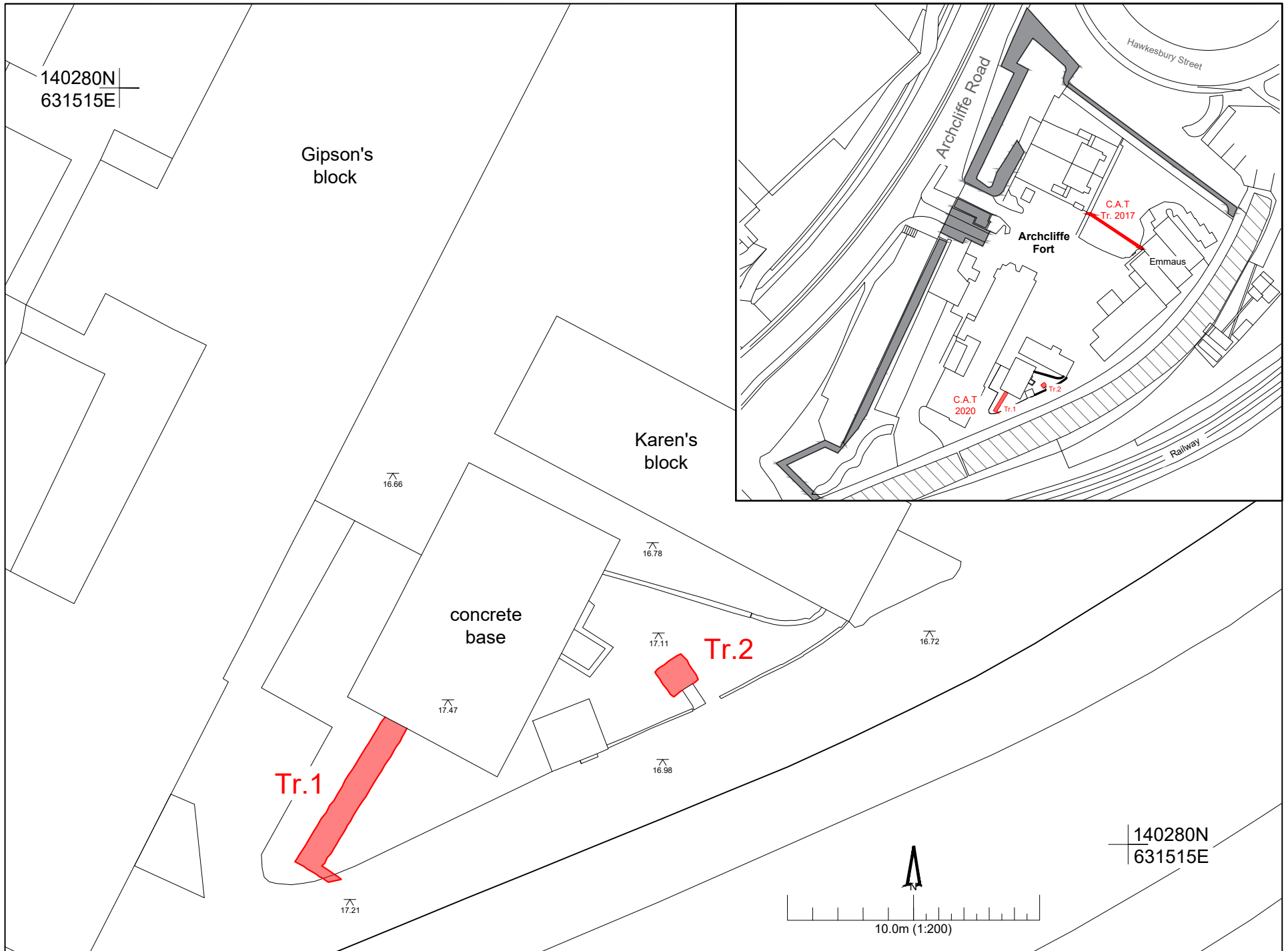
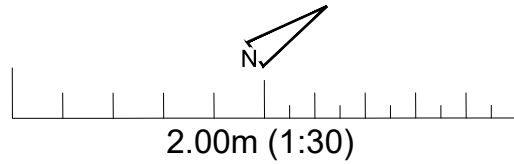
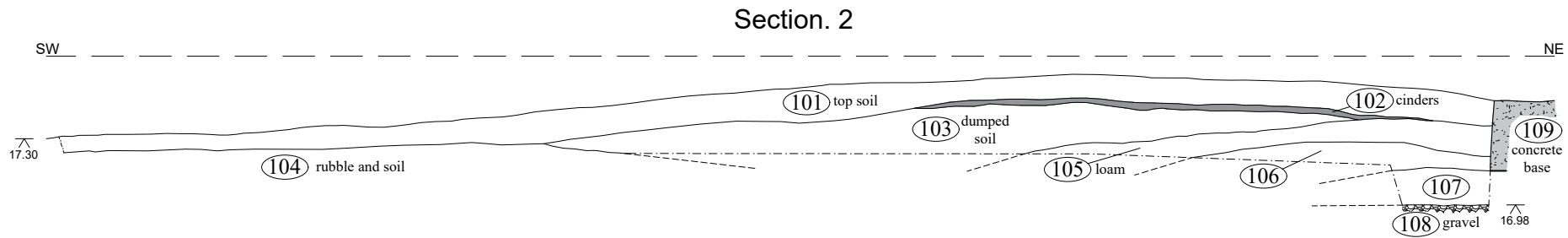


Fig. 2

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Archcliffe Fort, Dover	
PROJECT CODE	
AFGT-WB-17	
SITE ADDRESS	
Archcliffe Fort Archcliffe Road A20 Dover	
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P-SA	1:1500 @ A4 1:200
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24/03/2020	26/03/2020
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Fig.2 General plan of excavated trenches and inset showing location within Fort

Trench 1



Section. 2

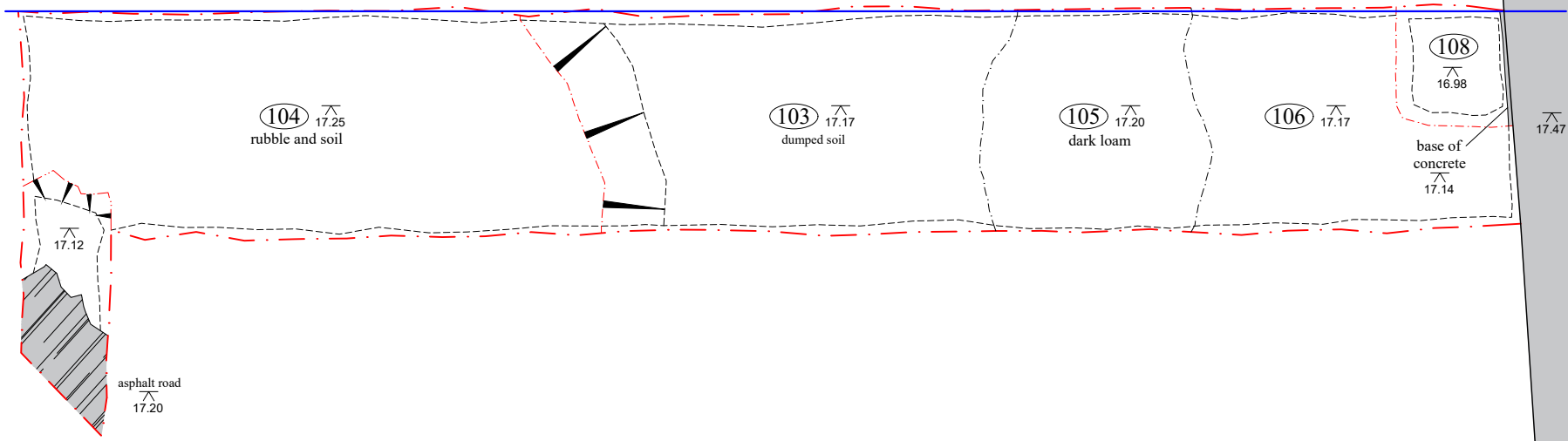


Fig. 3
Trench 1

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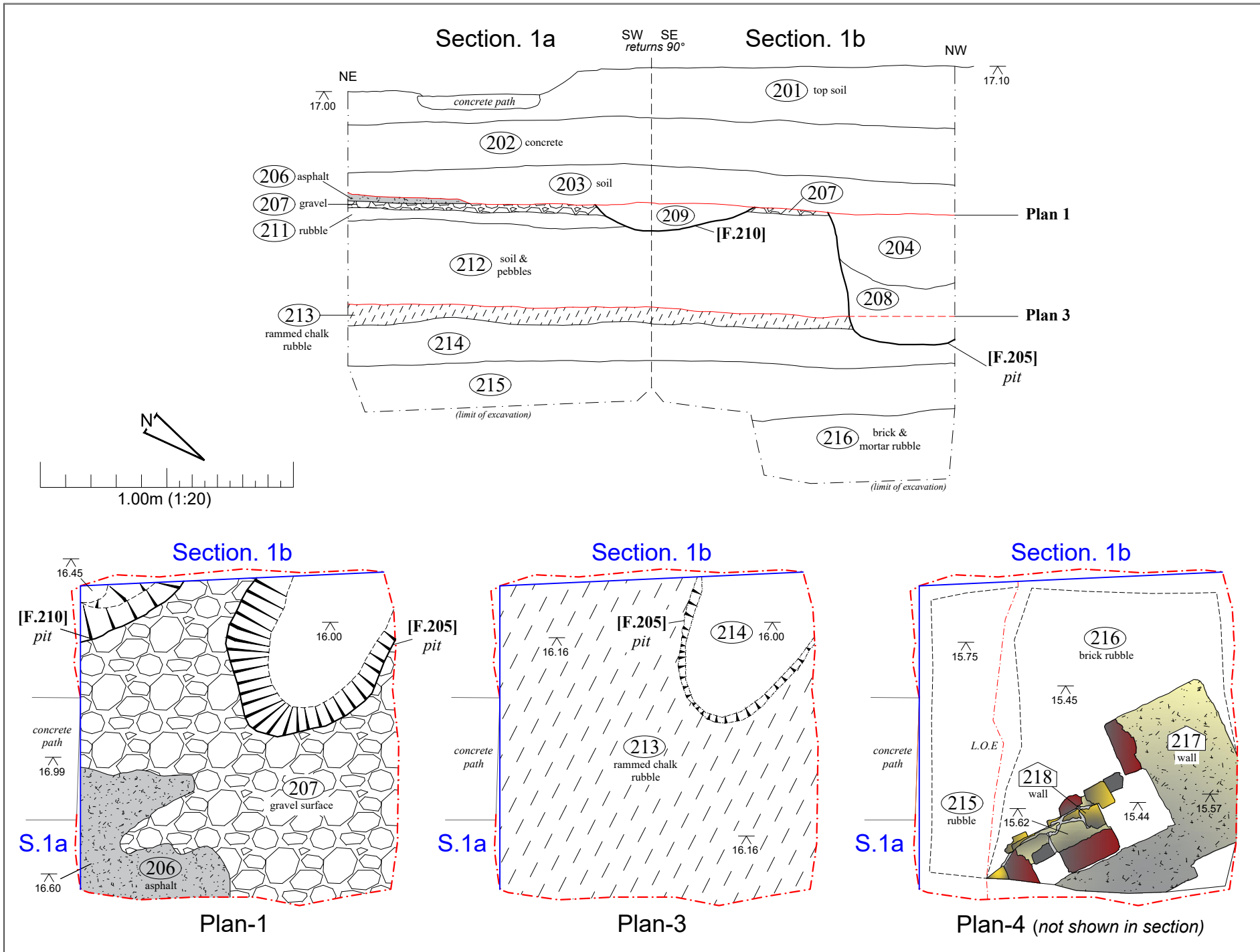
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Fig. 3 Trench 1, Plan and section

Fig. 4
Trench 2



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SITE ADDRESS Archcliffe Fort Archcliffe Road A20 Dover Kent	
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DATE 24/03/20	LAST REVISION 03/04/20
REF/DRG NO.	CHECKED KP

Fig. 4 Trench 2, Plan and section

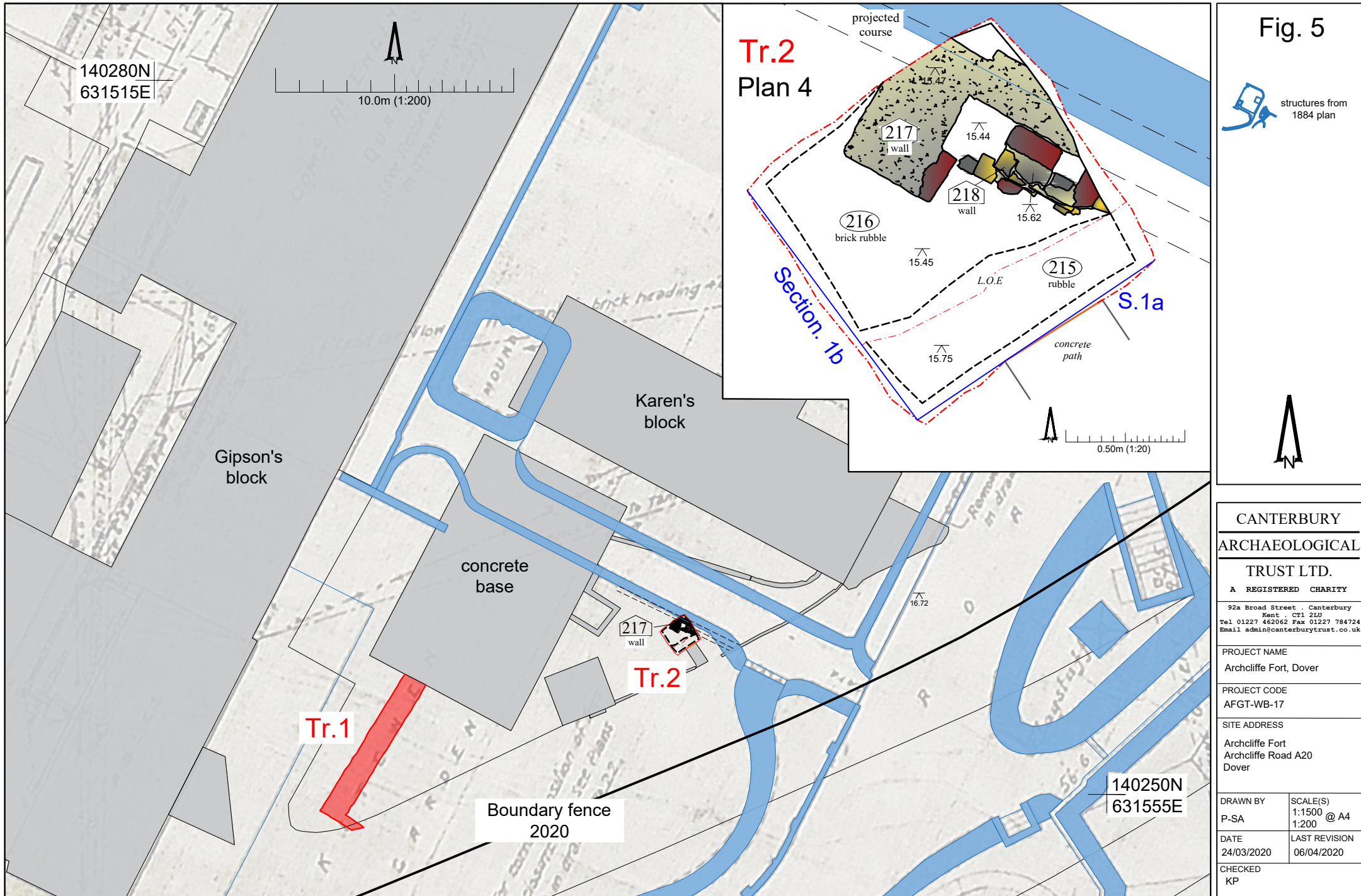


Fig. 5

structures from 1884 plan

North arrow

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Fig.5 Plan of excavated trenches in relation to the 1884 plan and inset detail plan of walls [217] and [218] in Trench 2

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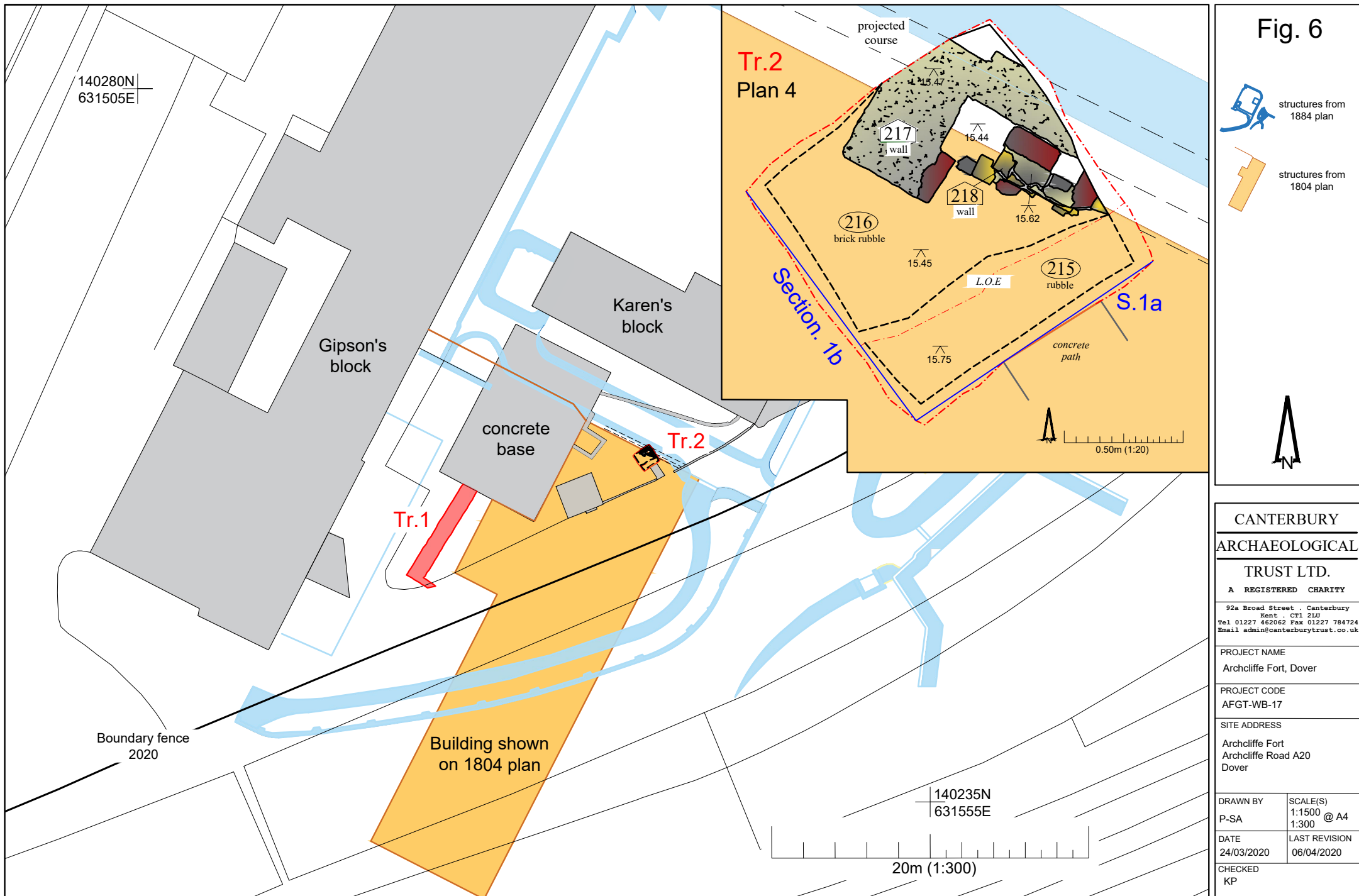


Fig. 6 Plan of excavated trenches in relation to the 1804 plan and inset detail plan of walls [217] and [218] in Trench 2

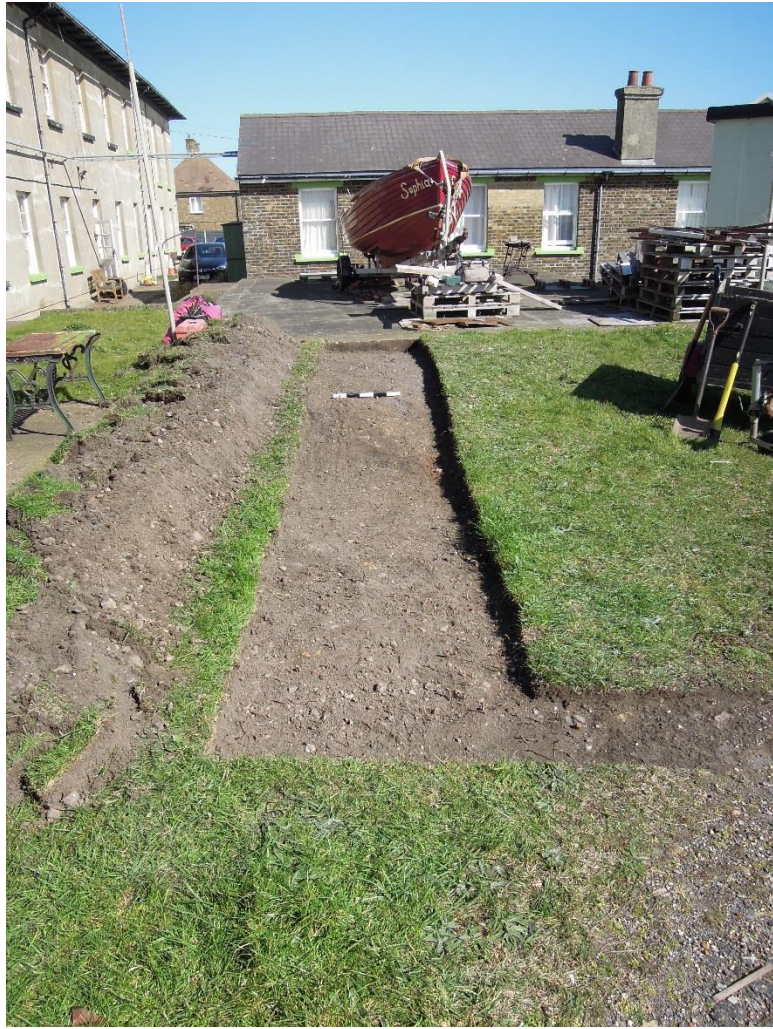


Fig. 7 General view of Trench 1, looking north-east. Scale 50cm



Fig. 8 View of south-east face of Trench 1 showing dump layers against concrete platform, looking east. Scale, 1m



Fig. 9 North-eastern end of Trench 1 showing soil dump layers abutting concrete platform. Scale, 50cm



Fig. 10 Detail of concrete building platform at east corner, looking north-west. Scale, 1m



Fig. 11 Concrete layer (202) under topsoil in Trench 2, looking north-west. Scale, 1m



Fig. 12 Detail of pit, F. 205 in Trench 2, before excavation, looking south-west. Scale 50cm



Fig. 13 Chalk surface 213 in Trench 2, cut by pit, F. 205, looking south-west. Scale, 1m



Fig. 14 Brick structures 217 and 218 located in the base of Trench 2, looking north-west. Scale, 50cm



Fig. 15 Extract from plan of 1804 showing a building (grey tone) to the south-east of the main accommodation block (TNA: ??; from a photo by Janette Platt, WSP)



Fig. 16 Extract from plan of 1811 showing a building to the south-east of the main accommodation block (TNA: MPH/1/506; from a photo by Janette Platt, WSP)

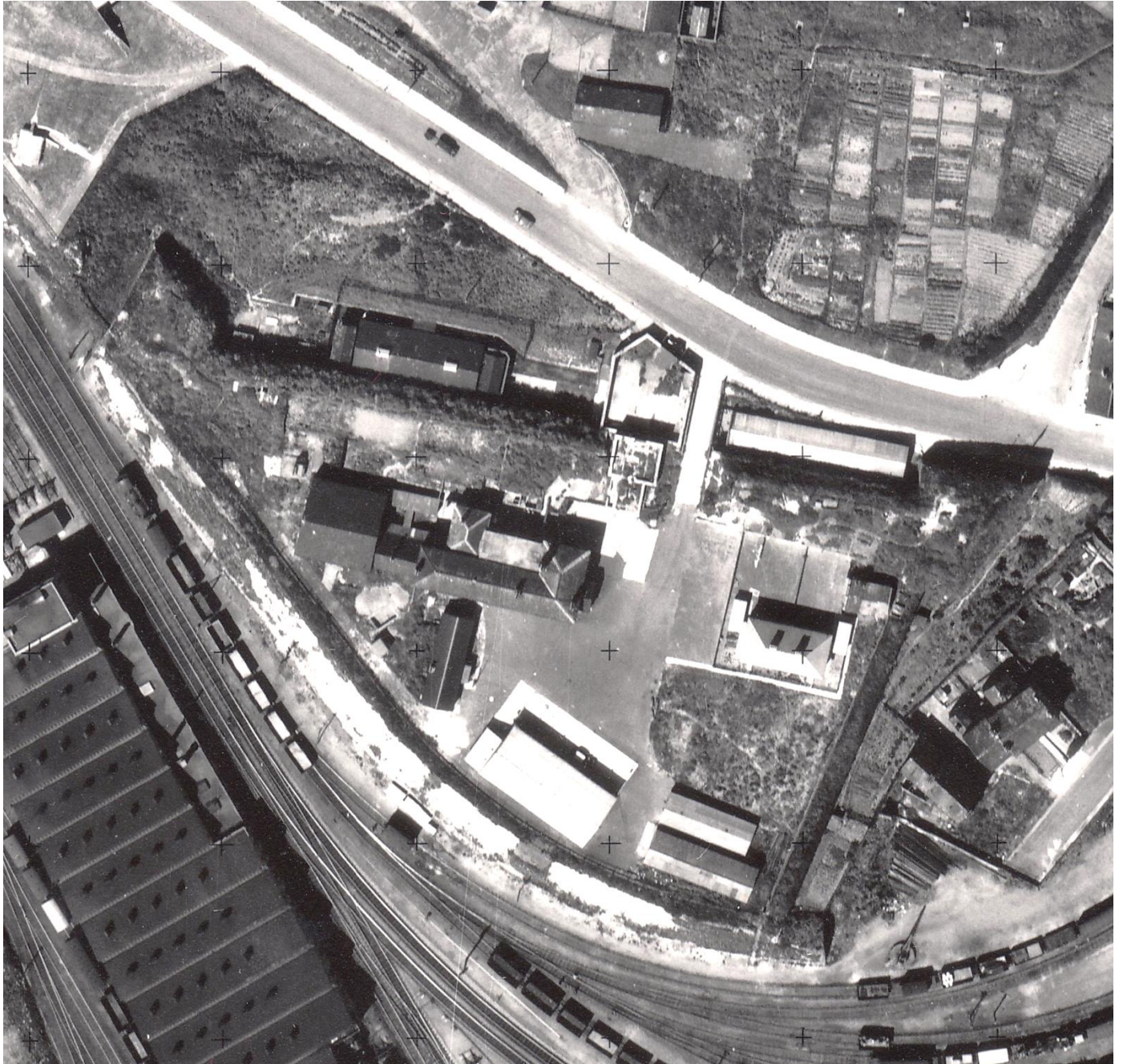


Fig. 17 Aerial view of Archcliffe Fort in 1953 confirming that the concrete building platform (Building 9) had yet to be constructed (NMR June 1953)