



Land at No. 31 Orchard Street,  
Dartford,  
Kent,  
DA1 2DH

## Archaeological evaluation report

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## Summary

An archaeological evaluation was conducted by Canterbury Archaeological Trust (CAT) on land at No 31 Orchard Street, Dartford, Kent, DA1 2DH (centred NGR 554076 174256) on 12 May 2025. The work was commissioned by Sanford Construction Ltd on behalf of Old Manor Estates Ltd in support of a residential development (Planning Application Ref: 23/00994/FUL).

Two 10m by 1.8m trenches were machine excavated.

Superficial geology comprising Alluvium – Clay, Silt, Sand and Peat, was recorded in Trench 1 at a depth of 1.38m BGL (2.85m OD) and in Trench 2 at a depth of 1.57m BGL (between 2.69m OD in the north and 2.85m OD in the south).

The earliest recorded activity was of probable Medieval date and comprised a buried soil, which contained two sherds of twelfth to fourteenth century pottery, encountered at a depth of between 0.88m BGL (3.33m OD) and 1.19m BGL (3.28m OD) overlying the superficial geology identified in Trench 1. A linear feature identified in Trench 2, cut into the surface of the superficial geology at a depth of 1.57m BGL (2.85m OD), was of potential Late Medieval to Early Post-Medieval date. Both were overlain by a sequence of levelling layers of Post-Medieval date.

The Post-Medieval levelling layers were cut by a robber trench in Trench 1, at a depth of 0.20m BGL (4.01m OD) for what appeared to be a former brick-built, north to south aligned boundary wall, and a pit and mortar deposit in Trench 2, at a depth of 0.26m BGL (3.88m OD). These were sealed by a modern demolition horizon associated with the present development works.

The archaeological features and deposits recorded in the evaluation trenches are considered to be of low archaeological significance, but their survival, with evidence for medieval and post-medieval activity, contributes to our understanding of the archaeological potential of this part of Dartford.

## Project contributors

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Fieldwork: Jamie Purnell and Matilda McVicar

Post-excavation: Thomas Axtell and Jamie Purnell

## Acknowledgements

The project was commissioned by Sanford Construction Ltd on behalf of Old Manor Estates Ltd. Thanks are extended to Sanford Construction Ltd for provision of on-site plant and welfare.

The archaeological evaluation was monitored by Casper Johnson, Senior Archaeological Officer, Heritage Conservation Group, Kent County Council.

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 On 12 May 2025 Canterbury Archaeological Trust (CAT) undertook an archaeological evaluation on land at No 31 Orchard Street, Dartford, Kent, DA1 2DH (NGR 554076 174256, centred; Figure 1).
- 1.1.2 The work was commissioned by Sanford Construction Ltd on behalf of Old Manor Estates Ltd in advance of a proposed 'Demolition of the existing 2 buildings and erection of a residential development (C3) comprising of 4 No. 2-bed flats and 10 No. 1-bed flats (14 in total) including ground floor landscaped areas, roof top garden area and PV panels' (Planning Application Ref: 23/00994/FUL).
- 1.1.3 Under the Town and Country Planning Act, Dartford Borough Council as Local Planning Authority (LPA) granted approval of the planning application on 19 April 2024 subject to attached conditions.
- 1.1.4 Condition 3 relating to archaeological matters states:
- 'No development shall take place, including demolition and ground works, until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of:
- i. archaeological field evaluation works in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation and timetable which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority; and
  - ii. following on from the evaluation, any safeguarding measures to ensure preservation in situ of important archaeological remains and/or further archaeological investigation and recording in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation and timetable which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.'

1.1.5 In mitigation of the potential impact that the proposed works may have on the buried archaeological resource, and in accordance with the provision of the National Planning Policy Framework (DLHC 2024), Sanford Construction Ltd (the Client) commissioned Canterbury Archaeological Trust (CAT) to prepare a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) and undertake a programme of archaeological evaluation to meet the requirements of Condition 3.

1.1.6 The archaeological evaluation was carried out in accordance with a WSI (CAT 2025a) approved by Kent County Council Heritage Conservation Group (KCC HCG) and involved the excavation of two 10m by 1.8m evaluation trenches.

1.1.7 This report sets out the results of the evaluation to inform on the potential below ground archaeological resource surviving within the proposed development area. The results will enable the LPA to formulate the scope of any further archaeological mitigation works that might be required in line with existing national and local planning policy and guidelines.

1.1.8 The archaeological evaluation was monitored by a Senior Archaeological Officer at KCC HCG and conforms to the relevant standards and guidance of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CifA 2023a-b), Historic England (HE 2015), and the KCC Manual of Specifications Part B: Evaluation – trial trenching requirements.

## 1.2 Location, geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The proposed development area is situated at No.31 Orchard Street in Dartford, Kent and comprises an irregular shaped parcel of previously developed land measuring approximately 476 sqm. It borders commercial buildings to the west and north, terraced residential buildings

to the east, and a ground level public car park to the south. The proposed development area was previously occupied by a two-storey commercial building and separate building to the west, with hard standing for access and car parking.

- 1.2.2 The proposed development area lies approximately 5m above Ordnance Datum (OD).
- 1.2.3 Bedrock geology within the proposed development area is shown as Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation, Seaford Chalk Formation and Newhaven Chalk formation - Chalk, overlain by superficial deposits of Alluvium - Clay, Silt, Sand and Peat (BGS 2025a).
- 1.2.4 Borehole records 100m south-east (TQ57SW175) and 150m north-east (TQ57SW125) of the proposed development area have recorded made ground to a depth of 0.5m and 1.4m below the existing ground surface, respectively, with 'brown gravel and sand' recorded below that, to a minimum depth of 5m (BGS BH on-line).

## 2 Archaeological and historical background

### 2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The archaeological potential is based on the proximity of historical and archaeological remains presently recorded in the Kent Historic Environment Record (KHER) which lie within, or in immediate proximity to the proposed development area. Data available from the KHER was detailed within the project WSI (CAT 2025a) and is reproduced below.

### 2.2 Designations

2.2.1 The proposed development area does not affect or impact upon any World Heritage Sites, Registered Battlefields or Registered Parks and Gardens.

2.2.2 The proposed development area does not lie within a Conservation Area.

2.2.3 There are several Listed Buildings within a 250m radius of the proposed development area. All the following are Grade II Listed:

- A Methodist Church (KHER TQ57 SW1060; NHLE 1086035), built 1844–45 by W Pocock, 150m south-south-west of the proposed development area.
- Kent House (The County Court) (KHER TQ57 SW1084; NHLE 1336339), a mid-nineteenth-century building, 155m south-west of the proposed development area.
- The Coach and Horses Public House (KHER TQ57 SW1066; NHLE 1116040), a fifteenth- to sixteenth-century timber-framed building, 160m south of the proposed development area.
- Nos 53 and 55 Spital Street (KHER TQ57 SW1071; NHLE 1115767), a pair of mid-nineteenth-century buildings, 180m south-west of the proposed development area.
- Priory Farmhouse containing the remains of Dartford Priory Gatehouse (Formerly listed as Priory Farmhouse and Gate, Hythe Street) (KHER TQ57 SW1042; NHLE 1086030). This is the surviving south-west corner of a courtyard of a house built by Henry VIII between 1541–1545, within the precinct of Dartford Priory, 190m north-west of the proposed development area.
- The Royal Oak Public House (KHER TQ57 SW1061; NHLE 1086036), a timber-framed building, probably seventeenth century but refaced in the nineteenth century, 195m south-west of the proposed development area.
- Beadles (KHER TQ 57 SW 1058; NHLE 1387277), a car showroom and offices, dated 1910, 195m south-south-west of the proposed development area.

### 2.3 Prehistoric (500,000 BP – AD 43)

2.3.1 The location of the proposed development area is relatively near to Taplow/Mucking gravel deposits which have particular archaeological potential, being a key component of the Middle Palaeolithic sites dated to approximately 200,000BP and the context for critical chronological sequences in Lower Thames Palaeolithic sites in Kent to the west of the proposed development area at Crayford and in the Ebbsfleet Valley. However, no Palaeolithic or other prehistoric archaeological remains have been reported within a 250m radius of the proposed development area.

### 2.4 Romano British (AD 43 – 450)

2.4.1 Watling Street (KHER TQ86 SW132), the Roman Road running from Dover to London and beyond, passed 165m south of the proposed development area. A section of road surface with associated ditch (KHER TQ 57 SW 247), possibly a temporary alignment before Watling Street was fully established, has been found 155m south-south-west of the proposed development

area. The remains of a newborn child were found within the fill of the roadside ditch. The road had gone out of use by the late first century AD.

- 2.4.2 Substantial archaeological material has been recovered that gives evidence to Roman occupation surrounding the area of the proposed development area. Features such as a yard, pits, fence-line, ditch and child burial were found during excavations at Spiral Street, 150m south-southwest of the proposed development area. A pit and gully, which was roughly parallel to the Waltling street road were also identified 175m south of the proposed development area (KHER TQ57SW429), which contained pottery, iron nails and seeds, and a pit located further to the south also contained a large quantity of pottery, seeds and charcoal.
- 2.4.3 Finds from this period include: Flagons' (KHER TQ57 SW59) uncovered at the site of J.C. Beadle's Motor Works, Spital Street, 220m south-west of the proposed development area; A coin mould? (KHER TQ57 SW67) found 190m south-east of the proposed development area; A First-Century AD flagon (KHER TQ57 SW79) found at Hythe Street, 180m north-east of the proposed development area; and a coin (KHER TQ57 SW50) recovered 130m west-south-west of the proposed development area.

## 2.5 Anglo-Saxon (AD 450–1066)

- 2.5.1 No Anglo-Saxon archaeological remains are reported within a 250m radius of the proposed development area.

## 2.6 Medieval (AD 1066–1540)

- 2.6.1 Dartford is recorded as a settlement in the Domesday survey of 1086, in the hundred of Axton, consisting of 156 households with one mill and four churches. The name, Spital Street, is likely to relate to the nearby leper hospital of this period.
- 2.6.2 A number of Medieval structural remains had been identified in proximity to the proposed development area. At Nos 22–26 Spital Street, 180m south of the proposed development area, archaeological excavation in 2014 found two mid/late thirteenth-century masonry buildings constructed of chalk and flint foundations and chalk and earth floors. Two stack-tiled hearths were also found in the south of the site, which were in use until the fifteenth century when another building was constructed close to the road. Located 230m north-west of the proposed development area Medieval and Tudor walls, foundations and drains were found (KHER TQ57 SW1106) associated with Dartford Priory. Potential Medieval remains of timber and stone structures, pits, hearths and thirteenth century and later pottery were found at Spiral Street 165m south-southwest of the PD.
- 2.6.3 Pottery dating back to this period has been recovered from the rear garden of No. 37 Orchard Street, 20m east of the proposed development area (KHER TQ57SW164), Lower Hythe Street, 145m south-south-east of the proposed development area (KHER TQ57SW193), and a hearth and pottery (KHER TQ57SW1107) found at No 14 Hythe Street, 140m south-south-east of the proposed development area.

## 2.7 Post-Medieval (AD 1540–1900)

- 2.7.1 Edward Hasted (1797, 286) described the part of Dartford parish in which the proposed development area is located as follows:
- 2.7.2 *...northward from the high street is the Water-lane (so called from the little stream, the Cranford, which rises about a mile and a half southward of the town, at Hawley, which runs through it) and leads to the wharfs at the water side, not far distant from which stands the Place-house, formerly the priory, with the buildings belonging to it, now used as a farm house and*

*offices, adjoining to which is a piece of land, inclosed with a wall, formerly belonging to the priory, exceeding rich, which has been for many years been made use of as a public garden ground...*

- 2.7.3 The Andrews, Dury and Herbert map of 1769 shows the proposed development area as set in orchards or gardens on the west side of the road (Hasted's 'Water-lane') leading north out of Dartford, parallel to Dartford creek. The northern road was lined on the western side by properties, and the orchards extended as far as another road to the west running parallel. The Ordnance Survey (OS) drawing of 1799 shows the former orchard divided into gardens or small field plots, but little indication of houses or buildings along the roadside in the vicinity; the main residential area lay along the high street to the south and the northern road where it approached Dartford creek. The 1801 Mudge map likewise shows the proposed development area as set within a block of fields/gardens, the edges of which are defined by roads, with south and eastern sides developed.
- 2.7.4 The 1871 First Edition OS map shows new development along the road east of the proposed development area, and a school (Wesleyan School for Girls) marked, if not yet built, to its north. The proposed development area is bordered to the east by the rear gardens of houses, but to the south and west by orchards, which also are shown within the proposed development area. By the time the 1895 second edition OS map was published the entire area had been developed, with the orchards that lent their name to the street removed; a single building lay within the north-east part of the proposed development area, slightly offset to the street layout. The school, L-shaped in plan, had now been built to the north-east, and more buildings lay to the east, a terrace of houses to the south, and an undeveloped street (Kent Road) to the west.
- 2.7.5 A variety of Post-Medieval structural remains have been identified within a 250m radius of the proposed development area. A wall footing dated to the sixteenth- to early seventeenth century (KHER TQ 57SW249), probably indicating a cellar wall within the rear of buildings fronting Spital Street, was located 150m south-south-west of the proposed development area. At Nos 22-26 Spital Street, 180m south of the proposed development area (KHER TQ57SW1112) potential sixteenth century masonry building, followed by seventeenth-century building which contained a clay pipe furnace. Remains of an L-shaped Tudor Gatehouse (KHER TQ57SW126) 190m north-west of the proposed development area built by Henry VIII between 1541 and 1545. Constructed from red brick with some stone rubble to the ground floor. The remains of timber and stone structures, pits, hearths and pottery were identified, 165m south-south-west of the proposed development area at Spital Steet (KHER TQ57SW136).
- 2.7.6 There is evidence for industrial activity surrounding the proposed development area during this period. The site of mills and smelting furnaces in which attempted to extract gold from 'Black Ore' brought back from Baffin Island, Canada by Martin Frobisher (KHER TQ57SW246), was located 175m from the proposed development area. The Steam brewery (KHER TQ57 SW201), 75m south-south-east of the proposed development area; first operated as the Oak Brewery, under W. Miskin, before 1870. The site was demolished in 1939. Located 240m south-south-east of the proposed development area the site of potential eighteenth-century clay tobacco pipe workshop (KHER TQ57SW175) was found. An iron foundry and later engineering works (KHER TQ57 SW245) founded by John Hall in 1785, were identified 145m north-north-east of the proposed development area. Lastly a stonemasons' yard (KHER TQ57 SW195) was located 160m south-west of the proposed development area, next door to the Masons Arms public house on Spital Street.

## 2.8 Modern (AD 1900 – Present)

- 2.8.1 The OS maps show there is very little change of the proposed development area from 1907 up until 2003, where satellite images show the construction of a new building on the north-west side of the proposed development area. Since this there have been no apparent changes within the proposed development area in later images, up to and including the latest in 2022.
- 2.8.2 Several Second World War features have been located within a 250m radius of the proposed development area, which include six air raid shelters and the remains of an Anderson shelter, located 20m east of the proposed development area. A First World War VAD (Voluntary Aid Detachment) Hospital (KHER TQ57SW1095) was located 135m southwest of the proposed development area in Kent Road.
- 2.8.3 Other features from this period include the site of St. Anselm's Roman Catholic church (KHER TQ57 SW137), Spital Street, 200m south-south-east of the proposed development area; it opened in 1900 and was demolished around 1970. The Dartford Tramway (KHER TQ57SW421), operated from 1906 until 1935, passed 60m east of the proposed development area.

## 3 Methodology

### 3.1 Aims and objectives

- 3.1.1 Archaeological field evaluation is defined by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) as ‘a programme of non-intrusive and/or intrusive fieldwork which seeks to determine the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts. It may form a single or final phase of work within a defined area or site on land, in an inter-tidal zone or under water’ (CIfA 2023a). The purpose is to ‘determine, record and report on the nature, extent, preservation and significance of archaeological remains within a defined area’ (CIfA 2023a).
- 3.1.2 The principal aim of the evaluation trenching was to determine the nature and extent of survival of archaeological remains within the proposed development area. The purpose was to ascertain the extent, depth below ground surface, depth of deposits, character, significance and condition of any archaeological remains present.
- 3.1.3 More specific objectives included:
- ascertain whether the superficial gravel deposits, seen to the west of the site, are present within the proposed development area; and any evidence for palaeolithic activity.
  - assess whether any Roman remains are present on site, and the nature of the land use during this period.
  - uncover any potential medieval or post-medieval agricultural or settlement activity.
  - place and assess any archaeological remains revealed within context of other recent investigations in the immediate area and within the setting of the local landscape and topography.
  - Is there further evidence for modern use during the First and Second World Wars.
- 3.1.4 The results of the evaluation trenching would inform on the potential for surviving archaeological remains within the proposed development area and enable the LPA and KCC HCG Senior Archaeological Officer to determine the scope of any further archaeological mitigation that may be required.

### 3.2 Methodology

- 3.2.1 The archaeological evaluation was carried out in accordance with the approved WSI (CAT 2025a). All archaeological work was undertaken by professional archaeologists in the employ of Canterbury Archaeological Trust.
- 3.2.2 All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the accepted professional standards set out in the CIfA *Standard for archaeological field evaluation* (2023a) and *Universal guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (2023b). Canterbury Archaeological Trust is a Registered Organisation with CIfA and conforms to their Code, regulations and standards and guidance.
- 3.2.3 CAT informed the KCC HCG Senior Archaeological Officer of the start date of the work and informed them on the progress of work. A site visit by the KCC HCG Senior Archaeological Officer was conducted prior to trench reinstatement.
- 3.2.4 Archaeological evaluation involved the mechanical excavation of two trenches within the footprint of the proposed development works. The trenches each measured 10m in length by 1.8m in width (Figure 2). Following clearance of the demolition debris at each trench location, each trench was excavated with a mechanical excavator fitted with a flat-bladed toothless

bucket. Deposits were reduced in spits to a depth of 1m under continuous archaeological supervision.

- 3.2.5 Upon agreement with the KCC HCG Senior Archaeological Officer, test-pits were excavated at the ends of Trench 2 and the west end of Trench 1 to assess the extent and depth of archaeological and superficial geological deposits.
- 3.2.6 Following mechanical clearance, the exposed sections in each trench were photographed and the trenches recorded using *pro forma* trench recording sheets. The trenches were surveyed using a Leica GS16 GNSS with Smart Net, tied to the OS National Grid (EPSG: 27700 OSGB36). A full digital photographic record of the evaluation was maintained. The digital photographic record comprises part of the site archive.
- 3.2.7 All stages of the project were carried out in accordance with the procedures laid down in Historic England's 2015 *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE).

### 3.3 Health, safety and welfare

- 3.3.1 All site works were conducted in accordance with a project specific risk assessment and method statement (CAT 2025b) and CAT's health and safety general policy (CAT 2024).
- 3.3.2 All CAT and plant operatives were inducted on site safety procedures before commencement of works. CAT is a member of Constructionline and is Acclaim SSIP (Safety Schemes in Procurement) accredited.
- 3.3.3 The work area was fully enclosed by secure fencing and the location of each trench was scanned using a Cable Avoidance Tool (CAT 4+) before commencement of excavation.

### 3.4 Project archive

- 3.4.1 The project archive has been prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (AAF 2011; ClFA 2020a; 2020b SMA 1995).
- 3.4.2 The archive name 'Land at Orchard Street, Dartford, Kent, DA1 2DH', CAT site code EV OSD 24, and archive number 5337 have been used.
- 3.4.3 All fieldwork records have been collated and checked for consistency and a full digital copy made. A digitised plan of the archaeological resource has been compiled using AutoCAD and QGIS. Photographic records have been catalogued and cross-referenced with trench records.
- 3.4.4 All retained materials recovered during the project have been processed, catalogued, and packaged in accordance with the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation guidelines (UKIC 1990). The finds have all been washed and marked where appropriate. No environmental samples were recovered during the course of this evaluation.
- 3.4.5 The project archive is presently held in the offices of CAT (92a Broad Street, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 2LU). Upon completion of the project, the project archive will be transferred to an approved local archive receiving body as recommended by KCC HCG.
- 3.4.6 The digital archive will be prepared in accordance with ADS (2013 and online) and ClFA (2019) guidance for long term curation.

## 4 Results

### 4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The evaluation results are presented in trench tables listed below. Context data is expressed as thickness of deposit/feature and depth below ground level (BGL) in metres to the top of the deposit.

### 4.2 Geology

4.2.1 The upper surface of the superficial geology, comprising Alluvium - Clay, Silt, Sand and Peat was recorded at a depth of 1.38m BGL within a test-pit excavated in Trench 1 and 1.57m BGL within a test-pit excavated in Trench 2.

### 4.3 Trench 1

(Figure 2–3; Photos 3–6)

4.3.1 Trench 1 was located centrally within the proposed development footprint and was aligned approximately west to east. The existing ground level ranged from 4.10m OD at the west-northwest end to 4.54m OD at the east-southeast end. The excavated trench measured 10.95m long by 1.87m wide and was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.19m BGL. A test-pit was excavated in the west end of the trench to a depth of 1.76m BGL. A summary of recorded contexts is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Trench 1 contexts

<b>TR 1</b>		Length: 10.95m	Width: 1.80m	Orientation: W-E	Ground level: 4.10m OD (W) – 4.54m OD (E)	
Context	Interpretation	Description	Thickness (m)	Depth BGL (m)	Provisional date	
100	Demolition debris	Medium dark brown, soft, silty clay with modern demolition debris.	0.20-0.24	---	Modern	
101	Backfill of wall robber trench 102	Dark brown, soft, silty clay with abundant yellow and red stock brick fragments representing demolished wall debris.	0.76+	0.20	Post-medieval	
102	Wall robber trench	Robber trench cut, aligned N-S, measuring 0.73m wide, with vertical cut sides, extending to observed depth of 0.76m BGL. Base not reached.	0.76+	0.20	Post-medieval	
103	Levelling layer	Dark grey brown, soft, silty clay.	0.30–0.32	0.20–0.24	Post-medieval	
104	Levelling layer	Dark brown, soft, silty clay with chalk flecking. Pottery, animal bone and shell present.	0.32–0.70	0.74	Post-medieval	
105	Levelling layer	Pale grey, soft, silty clay with frequent chalk nodules.	0.05–0.26+	0.50	Post-medieval	
106	Buried soil	Mottled brown to dark brown, firm, silty clay with small, rounded flint inclusions.	0.06–0.46+	0.88-1.19	Medieval?	
107	Alluvium	Medium green to mid grey, firm clay.	0.40+	1.38	---	

4.3.2 The superficial geology of alluvium (107) was exposed at the north-west end of Trench 1 within a machine excavated test-pit at a depth of 1.38m BGL. Above the alluvium, a buried soil layer (106) was identified at a depth of between 0.88m-1.19m BGL, from which medieval pottery, dated to the twelfth to thirteenth century, tile fragments, and a residual prehistoric worked flint, was recovered.

4.3.3 Three levelling layers (103, 104, 105) were identified above these deposits. The earliest levelling layer (105) contained frequent chalk inclusions. Pottery of eighteenth to twentieth century date was recovered from levelling layer (104). The upper levelling layer (103) was

encountered at a depth of between 0.20m and 0.24m BGL and was truncated by a wall robber trench (102). The robber trench (102) was aligned north-east to south-west, and measured 0.73m wide by at least 0.76m deep, and was infilled with a wall demolition debris comprising both red and yellow stock bricks (101).

4.3.4 The robber trench was sealed by a modern demolition horizon (100) associated with the present development.

## 4.4 Trench 2

(Figure 2 and 4; Photos 7–11)

4.4.1 Trench 2 was located in the north of the proposed development footprint and was aligned north to south. The existing ground level ranged from 4.26m OD at the north end to 4.43m OD at the south end. The excavated trench measured 10.90m long by 1.70m wide and was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.99m BGL. Test-pits were excavated in the north and south ends of the trench to a maximum depth of 1.57m BGL. A summary of recorded contexts is presented in Table 1.

Table 2. Trench 2 contexts

<b>TR 2</b> Length: 10.90m Width: 1.70m Orientation: N–S Ground level: 4.26m OD (N) – 4.43m OD (S)						
Context	Interpretation	Description	Thickness (m)	Depth BGL (m)	Provisional date	
200	Demolition debris	Medium dark brown, soft, silty clay with modern demolition debris.	0.18–0.27	0.00	Modern	
201	Fill of 202	Soft black silt with yellow brick, red tile, glass bottles and a metal spring in backfill.	0.23	0.27	Post-medieval	
202	Cut of pit	Possible square pit with a sharp top of slope into concave sides and a flat base. 0.95m (L) x 0.70m (W) x 0.23m (D).	0.23	0.27	Post-medieval	
203	Mortar layer	Mortar layer with small pebble inclusions	0.09	0.27	Post-medieval to modern	
204	Levelling layer	Medium brown, firm, silty clay with rare gravel flecking and oyster shell present.	0.18	0.27	Post-medieval	
205	Levelling layer	Dark brown grey, soft, silty clay with rare chalk flecking,	0.22–0.38	0.45	Post-medieval	
206	Levelling Layer	Medium brown grey, soft, silty clay with rare chalk flecking and tile present.	0.15–0.21	0.67–0.85	Post-medieval	
207	Levelling layer	Dark grey, soft, silty clay with red roof tile present.	0.31	0.18	Post-medieval	
208	Fill of 209	Dark grey, firm, silty clay with common small to medium chalk flecks. Animal bone and CBM present.	---	1.57	Medieval to post-medieval	
209	Cut of ditch	Roughly N–S aligned linear, 0.55m (W). Not excavated.	---	1.57	Medieval to post-medieval	
210	Alluvium	Medium green to mid grey, firm clay.	---	1.57	---	

4.4.2 The superficial geology of alluvium (210) was recorded at the north end of Trench 2 within a machine excavated test-pit at a depth of 1.57m BGL. A partially exposed linear feature [209] exposed at the base of the machine excavated test-pit at the south end of Trench 2 cut into the surface of the alluvium. The feature was aligned north to south, and had a visible length of 1.45m, continuing beyond the excavation limits, and a width of 0.55m. Due to the trench depth, the feature could not be excavated, but an upper fill (208) was identified, from which two fragments of medieval/post-medieval tile and animal bone was recovered.

- 4.4.3 Linear feature [209] was overlain by levelling layer (206). This was sealed by levelling layer (205). Levelling layer (205) was overlain by levelling layer (207) identified in the south of the trench, and levelling layer (204) in the north of the trench. Levelling layer (204) was overlain by mortar layer (203), with small rounded pebble inclusions, up to 0.09m thick, and a potentially square pit [202], at least 0.95m long by 0.70m wide and up to 0.23m deep, both of which extended beyond limit of excavation.
- 4.4.4 Both were sealed by a 0.18–0.27m thick modern demolition horizon (200) associated with the present development.

## 4.5 Finds

- 4.5.1 A small assemblage of finds was recovered, comprising 30 items from 7 contexts weighing a total of 6,402g. The finds assemblage was composed of worked flint (1/19g), pottery (3/20g), ceramic building material (18/6,142g), animal bone (3/26g), marine shell (3/8g), and glass (2/187g). A summary of finds can be found in Table 3.

Table 3. *Finds assemblage*

Context	Material	Description	Amount	Weight (g)	Spot-date
101	Brick	x1 complete brick with yellow fabric; x1 partial brick with red/orange fabric; both with angular frogs	2	4526	Med/Post-Med
104	Pottery		1	4	C18th - C20th AD
104	Brick and tile	brick fragment is red with mortar adhering to two sides, quartz inclusions; orange fabric tile fragments	3	471	Med/Post-Med
104	Shell	Oyster	2	2	-
104	Bone	Cow	1	23	-
105	Tile	red fabric with grey core, sandy inclusions, x1 with mortar adhering to one surface	3	111	Med/Post-Med
105	Bone	?bird	1	1	-
105	Shell	Oyster	1	6	-
106	Tile	fragment with partial circular hole	1	116	Med/Post-Med
106	Pottery		1	13	C12th - C14th AD
106	Tile	x1 with partial circular hole; all orange sandy fabrics with few large inclusions	5	296	Med/Post-Med
106	Pottery		1	3	C12th - C14th AD
106	Flint	Worked	1	19	Prehistoric
201	Glass bottles	x1 squat round bottle with clear glass, 'A135.12' on the base; x1 brown/orange 'squished' bottle with vertical grooves/rippling, 'CTG' on the base and 'BOTTLED BY JEYES' down one side	2	187	Modern
201	Tile	red fabric with grey surface, woven cord pattern along edge	1	297	Med/Post-Med
206	Tile	orange fabric, sandy inclusions	1	286	Med/Post-Med
208	Tile	reddish-orange fabric with abundant small limestone inclusions; fragments	2	39	Med/Post-Med
208	Bone	?sheep/goat	1	2	-

- 4.5.2 The overall size of the assemblage recovered is limited, both in terms of quantity and object types, and is of low archaeological potential. No further work is recommended for this assemblage.

## 4.6 Environmental samples

- 4.6.1 No environmental samples were recovered during the evaluation.

## 5 Conclusion

### 5.1 Interpretation

- 5.1.1 The underlying bedrock geology comprising Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation, Seaford Chalk Formation and Newhaven Chalk formation – Chalk was not reached in either trench. Overlying superficial geology comprising Alluvium – Clay, Silt, Sand and Peat, was recorded in Trench 1 at a depth of 1.38m BGL (2.85m OD) and in Trench 2 at a depth of 1.57m BGL (between 2.69m OD in the north and 2.85m OD in the south).
- 5.1.2 The earliest recorded activity was of probable Medieval date and comprised a buried soil (106), encountered at a depth of between 0.88m BGL (3.33m OD) and 1.19m BGL (3.28m OD) overlying the superficial geology identified in Trench 1, which contained two sherds of twelfth to fourteenth century pottery. A linear feature [209] identified in Trench 2, cut into the surface of the superficial geology at a depth of 1.57m BGL (2.85m OD), was of potential Late Medieval to Early Post-Medieval date. Both were overlain by a sequence of levelling layers of Post-Medieval date.
- 5.1.3 The Post-Medieval levelling layers were cut by a robber trench [102] in Trench 1, at a depth of 0.20m BGL (4.01m OD) for what appeared to be a former brick-built, north to south aligned boundary wall, and a pit [202] and mortar deposit (203) in Trench 2, at a depth of 0.26m BGL (3.88m OD). These were sealed by a modern demolition horizon (100) and (200), associated with the present development works.

### 5.2 Development impact

- 5.2.1 Ground works that extend to a depth of 0.88m BGL and greater are likely to have a negative impact on any surviving below ground archaeology.
- 5.2.2 The archaeological features and deposits recorded in the evaluation trenches are considered to be of low archaeological significance, but their survival, with evidence for medieval and post-medieval activity, contributes to our understanding of the archaeological potential of this part of Dartford.

### 5.3 Confidence rating

- 5.3.1 The evaluation is considered to have satisfactorily determined the nature, character, depth and extent of archaeology surviving within the proposed development area.
- 5.3.2 The evaluation was sufficiently resourced and was conducted under fair weather and normal ground conditions.
- 5.3.3 The overall confidence rating is good.

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## Appendix 1. Kent County Council HER Summary Form

<b>Site Name:</b> 31 Orchard Street, Dartford	
<b>Site Address:</b> Land at No. 31, Orchard Street, Dartford, Kent DA1 2DH	
<p><b>Summary:</b>  A programme of archaeological evaluation was conducted by Canterbury Archaeological Trust (CAT) on land at Orchard Street, Dartford, Kent, DA1 2DH (centred NGR 554076 174256) on 12 May 2025.</p> <p>The work was commissioned by Sanford Construction Ltd on behalf of Old Manor Estates Ltd in support of the 'Demolition of the existing 2 buildings and erection of a residential development (C3) comprising of 4 No. 2-bed flats and 10 No. 1-bed flats (14 in total) including ground floor landscaped areas, roof top garden area and PV panels' (Planning Application Ref: 23/00994/FUL).</p> <p>Two 10m by 1.8m evaluation trenches were excavated within the proposed development area.</p>	
<b>District/Unitary:</b> Ashford Borough Council	<b>Parish:</b> Dartford
<b>Period(s):</b> Medieval to modern	
<b>NGR:</b> 554076 174256 (centered)	
<b>Type of archaeological work:</b> Evaluation	
<b>Date of Recording:</b> 12/05/2025	
<b>Unit undertaking recording:</b> Canterbury Archaeological Trust	
<b>Geology:</b> Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation, Seaford Chalk Formation and Newhaven Chalk formation	
<p><b>Title and author of accompanying report:</b>  Land at No. 31, Orchard Street, Dartford, Kent DA1 2DH. Archaeological evaluation report, report no. 2025/72</p> <p>Thomas Axtell and Jamie Purnell</p>	
<p><b>Summary of fieldwork results (begin with earliest period first, add NGRs where appropriate):</b>  Superficial geology comprising Alluvium – Clay, Silt, Sand and Peat, was recorded in Trench 1 at a depth of 1.38m BGL (2.85m OD) and in Trench 2 at a depth of 1.57m BGL (between 2.69m OD in the north and 2.85m OD in the south).</p> <p>The earliest recorded activity was of probable Medieval date and comprised a buried soil, which contained two sherds of twelfth to fourteenth century pottery, encountered at a depth of between 0.88m BGL (3.33m OD) and 1.19m BGL (3.28m OD) overlying the superficial geology identified in Trench 1. A linear feature identified in Trench 2, cut into the surface of the superficial geology at a depth of 1.57m BGL (2.85m OD), was of potential Late Medieval to Early Post-Medieval date. Both were overlain by a sequence of levelling layers of Post-Medieval date.</p> <p>The Post-Medieval levelling layers were cut by a robber trench in Trench 1, at a depth of 0.20m BGL (4.01m OD) for what appeared to be a former brick-built, north to south aligned boundary wall, and a pit and mortar deposit in Trench 2, at a depth of 0.26m BGL (3.88m OD). These were sealed by a modern demolition horizon associated with the present development works.</p> <p>The archaeological features and deposits recorded in the evaluation trenches are considered to be of low archaeological significance, but their survival, with evidence for medieval and post-medieval activity, contributes to our understanding of the archaeological potential of this part of Dartford.</p>	
<b>Location of archive/finds:</b> Canterbury Archaeological Trust, 92A Broad Street, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 2LU	
<b>Contact at Unit:</b> Richard Helm	<b>Date:</b> 23/05/2025

## Appendix 2. OASIS record

<b>OASIS ID (UID)</b>	<b>canterbu3-534310</b>
Project Name	Evaluation at Land at No. 31 Orchard Street, Dartford, Kent, DA1 2DH
Sitename	Land at No. 31 Orchard Street, Dartford, Kent, DA1 2DH
Site code	EV OSD 25
Project Identifier(s)	Land at No. 31 Orchard Street, Dartford, Kent, DA1 2DH
Activity type	Evaluation
Planning Id	23/00994/FUL
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Post determination
Organisation Responsible for work	Canterbury Archaeological Trust
Project Dates	12-May-2025 - 12-May-2025
Location	Land at No. 31 Orchard Street, Dartford, Kent, DA1 2DH NGR: TQ 54076 74256 LL: 51.44633757239389, 0.215772609861697 12 Fig: 554076,174256
Administrative Areas	Country: England County/Local Authority: Kent Local Authority District: Dartford Parish: Dartford, unparished area
Project Methodology	Evaluation trial trenching comprising 2 no. 10m by 1.8m trenches machine excavated and recorded in accordance with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation
Project Results	<p>Superficial geology comprising Alluvium – Clay, Silt, Sand and Peat, was recorded in Trench 1 at a depth of 1.38m BGL (2.85m OD) and in Trench 2 at a depth of 1.57m BGL (between 2.69m OD in the north and 2.85m OD in the south).</p> <p>The earliest recorded activity was of probable Medieval date and comprised a buried soil, which contained two sherds of twelfth to fourteenth century pottery, encountered at a depth of between 0.88m BGL (3.33m OD) and 1.19m BGL (3.28m OD) overlying the superficial geology identified in Trench 1. A linear feature identified in Trench 2, cut into the surface of the superficial geology at a depth of 1.57m BGL (2.85m OD), was of potential Late Medieval to Early Post-Medieval date.</p> <p>Both were overlain by a sequence of levelling layers of Post-Medieval date.</p> <p>The Post-Medieval levelling layers were cut by a robber trench in Trench 1, at a depth of 0.20m BGL (4.01m OD) for what appeared to be a former brick-built, north to south aligned boundary wall, and a pit and mortar deposit in Trench 2, at a depth of 0.26m BGL (3.88m OD). These were sealed by a modern demolition horizon associated with the present development works.</p> <p>The archaeological features and deposits recorded in the evaluation trenches are considered to be of low archaeological significance, but their survival, with evidence for medieval and post-medieval activity, contributes to our understanding of the archaeological potential of this part of Dartford.</p>
Keywords	Buried Soil Horizon - MEDIEVAL - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Ditch - MEDIEVAL - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types

OASIS ID (UID)

canterbu3-534310

Robber Trench - POST MEDIEVAL - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types

Pit - POST MEDIEVAL - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types

Funder

Private or public corporation - Old Manor Estates Ltd

HER

Kent HER - unRev – STANDARD

Person Responsible for work

Richard Helm

HER Identifiers

Archives

Physical Archive, Digital Archive - to be deposited with Archives: no repository;



Photo 1. Pre-excitation view of site, looking north-west (no scale).



Photo 2. Pre-excitation view of site, looking south (no scale).



Photo 3. View of trench 1, looking north-west (scale 1m).



Photo 4. View of robbed trench [102], looking north-west (scale 1m).



Photo 5. View of trench 1 section, looking north-east (scale 1m).



Photo 6. View of test pit in trench 1, looking north-east (scale 2m).



Photo 7. View of trench 2, looking north (scale 1m)



Photo 8. View of section in trench 2, showing pit [202], looking north (scale 1m).



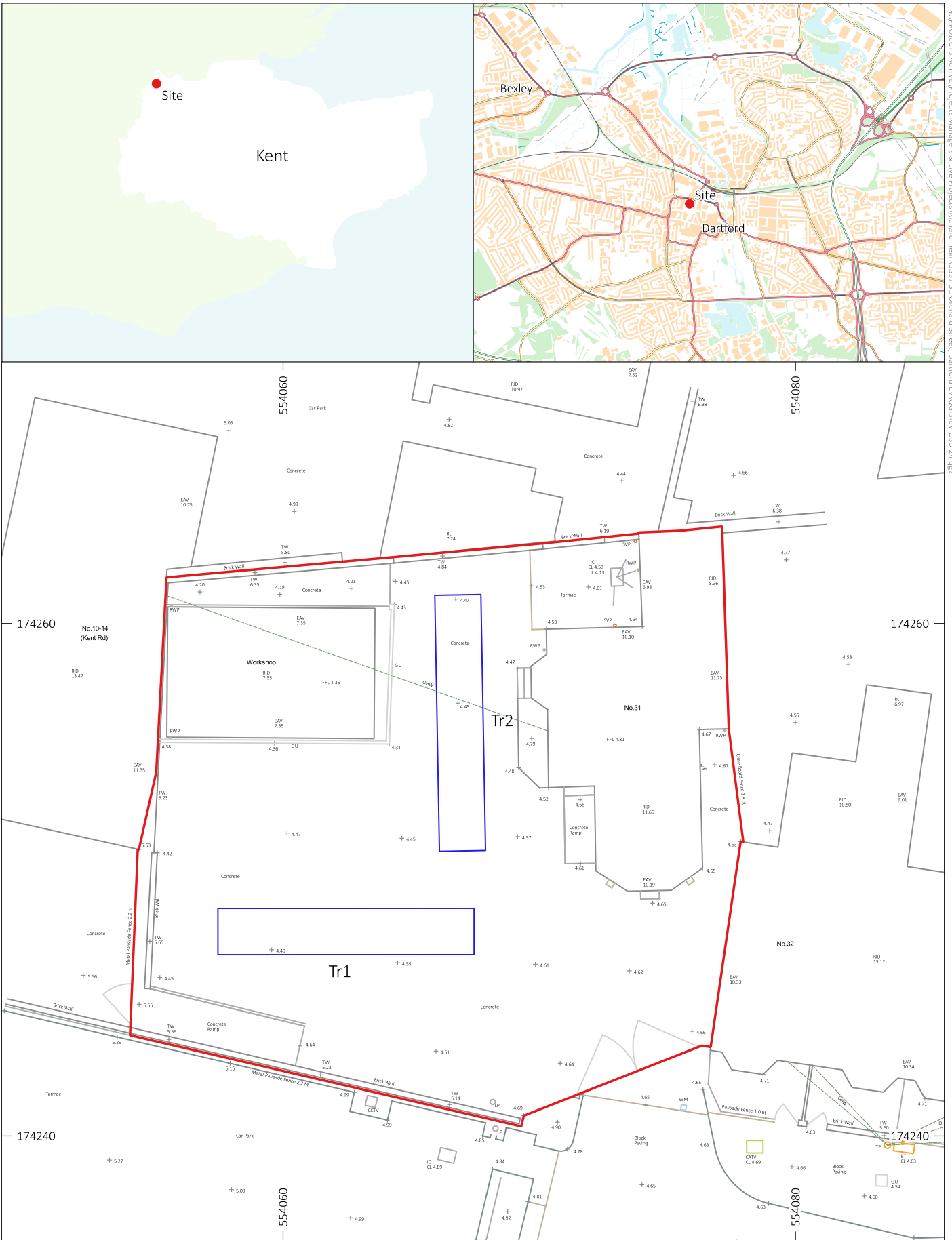
Photo 9. View of linear [209] at the base of the southern test pit in trench 2, looking east (scale 2m).



Photo 10. View of southern test pit in trench 2, looking east (scale 2m).



Photo 11. View of northern test pit in trench 2, looking north-east (scale 2m).




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PROJECT  
31 Orchard Street,  
Dartford,  
Kent,  
DA1 2DH

COMMENTS  
Contains Ordnance Survey data @  
Crown Copyright and database right  
2023.  
CRS: OSGB36 / British National Grid

DRAWN BY RMH	SCALE(S) 1:200@A4
DATE 01/05/2025	LAST REVISION 02/06/2025
CHECKED —	REF/DRG NO. 5337 EV OSD 25_Fig01

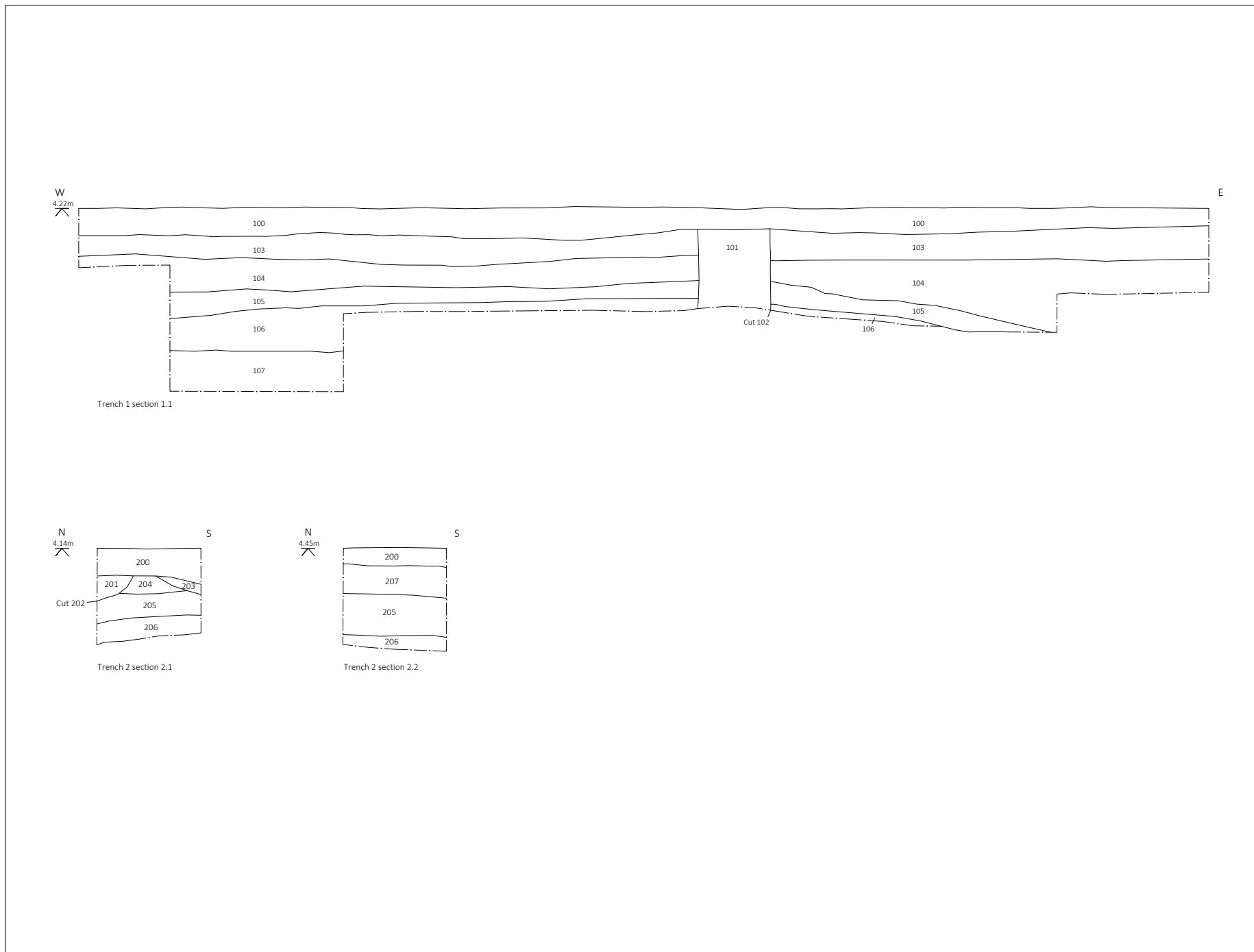



0 2.5 5 m

Site Outline  
 Evaluation trench

Figure 1. Proposed development location





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PROJECT  
 Land at No. 31 Orchard Street,  
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COMMENTS

DRAWN BY TA	SCALE(S) 1:50 @ A4
DATE 15/05/2025	LAST REVISION 28/05/2025
CHECKED ---	
REF/DRG NO. 5337_EV OSD 25_Sections.dwg	

Figure 3. Trench sections