



The Queenborough Lines Canal Bank Cycle Path, Halfway road, Sheerness West, Sheerness, Kent

Archaeological Watching Brief Report





**THE QUEENBOROUGH LINES CANAL BANK CYCLE PATH,
HALFWAY ROAD,
SHEERNESS WEST, SHEERNESS, KENT**

Archaeological Watching Brief

Prepared for:
Kent County Council
Regeneration and Economy Division
2nd Floor
Invicta House
Maidstone
Kent
ME14 1XX

By:
Wessex Archaeology
Bridgewood House
Laker Road
Rochester Airport Industrial Estate
Rochester
Kent
ME1 3QX

Report reference: 76300.02

August 2011

DISCLAIMER

THE MATERIAL CONTAINED IN THIS REPORT WAS DESIGNED AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF A REPORT TO AN INDIVIDUAL CLIENT AND WAS PREPARED SOLELY FOR THE BENEFIT OF THAT CLIENT. THE MATERIAL CONTAINED IN THIS REPORT DOES NOT NECESSARILY STAND ON ITS OWN AND IS NOT INTENDED TO NOR SHOULD IT BE RELIED UPON BY ANY THIRD PARTY. TO THE FULLEST EXTENT PERMITTED BY LAW WESSEX ARCHAEOLOGY WILL NOT BE LIABLE BY REASON OF BREACH OF CONTRACT NEGLIGENCE OR OTHERWISE FOR ANY LOSS OR DAMAGE (WHETHER DIRECT INDIRECT OR CONSEQUENTIAL) OCCASIONED TO ANY PERSON ACTING OR OMITTING TO ACT OR REFRAINING FROM ACTING IN RELIANCE UPON THE MATERIAL CONTAINED IN THIS REPORT ARISING FROM OR CONNECTED WITH ANY ERROR OR OMISSION IN THE MATERIAL CONTAINED IN THE REPORT. LOSS OR DAMAGE AS REFERRED TO ABOVE SHALL BE DEEMED TO INCLUDE, BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO, ANY LOSS OF PROFITS OR ANTICIPATED PROFITS DAMAGE TO REPUTATION OR GOODWILL LOSS OF BUSINESS OR ANTICIPATED BUSINESS DAMAGES COSTS EXPENSES INCURRED OR PAYABLE TO ANY THIRD PARTY (IN ALL CASES WHETHER DIRECT INDIRECT OR CONSEQUENTIAL) OR ANY OTHER DIRECT INDIRECT OR CONSEQUENTIAL LOSS OR DAMAGE

QUALITY ASSURANCE

SITE CODE	76300	ACCESSION CODE		CLIENT CODE	
PLANNING APPLICATION REF.	PAG/SW/10/TEM P/0024	NGR	590948, 173328 TO 593613 174785		

VERSION	STATUS*	PREPARED BY	APPROVED BY	APPROVER'S SIGNATURE	DATE	FILE
01	I	M.COLLINGS	M.WILLIAMS			R:\PROJECTS\76300\REPORTWORKING VERSIONS\76300.01
02	E	S.MOUNCE				R:\PROJECTS\76300\REPORTWORKING VERSIONS\76300.02

* I= INTERNAL DRAFT E= EXTERNAL DRAFT F= FINAL

Contents

	Summary	v
	Acknowledgements.....	vi
1	INTRODUCTION	1
	1.1 Project Background	1
	1.2 Site Location, topography and geology	2
2	ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	2
	2.1 Introduction.....	2
3	AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	3
	3.1 General.....	3
	3.2 Site Specific.....	3
4	METHODOLOGY	4
	4.1 Scope of Work.....	4
	4.2 Fieldwork Methodology.....	4
	4.3 Recording	4
	4.4 Health and Safety.....	4
5	FIELDWORK RESULTS	5
	5.1 Introduction.....	5
	5.2 Archaeological Results.....	5
6	ARTEFACTS	6
7	ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE	6
8	CONCLUSIONS	6
9	ARCHIVE.....	7
	9.1 Preparation and Deposition	7
	9.2 Archive.....	7
	9.3 Copyright	7
	9.4 Security Copy	8
10	REFERENCES	9
	APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT SUMMARY TABLE.....	10
	APPENDIX 2: KENT COUNTY COUNCIL HER SUMMARY FORM	11

List of Figures

- 1 Site Location Plan
- 2 Northeast facing section of Queenborough Lines

List of Plates

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| Front | View along the Queenborough Lines to the cut-through section |
| Back | Oblique view of section of cut through Queenborough Lines |

- 1 Excavation of cut through the Queenborough Lines
- 2 Section of the Queenborough Lines
- 3 Infilled section of the Queenborough Lines

4 World War II Air Raid Shelter in bank

Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by The Regeneration and Economy Division of Kent County Council (KCC) to undertake an archaeological watching brief along the alignment of the Queenborough Lines, a 19th century linear fortification. The Site is at Halfway Road, Sheerness West, Sheerness on the Isle of Sheppey in Kent.

The proposed development comprised the construction of a new cycle path along the alignment of the fortification, in part running behind the rampart to reflect the line of the military road.

The watching brief was maintained throughout the excavation of a new cut through the rampart bank and the infilling of an existing cut. Archaeological monitoring was undertaken between the 28th November and 6th December 2010.

The Queenborough Lines were constructed in the 1860s to defend the landward side of Sheerness Dockyard, comprising a canal, rampart and covered way running across the north-west peninsula of the Isle of Sheppey from the River Medway to the River Thames. The Lines represent one of the phases of Napoleonic fortification. This fortification was preceded by defences dating back to the 16th century when Henry VIII built a blockhouse, one of three on the Isle of Sheppey. The dockyard at Sheerness was expanded in the 18th century and in 1782 a canal and flooded ditch defence were constructed. The fort was revamped in the 1860s and a large new battery was built at Garrison Point and the canal was extended finalising the defence known as the Queenborough Lines.

A section cut through the Queenborough Lines was recorded and the possible remains of a firestep were identified. Two pieces of 20th century pottery were observed from the uppermost deposit (104) underlying the topsoil (101) but these were too small to merit recovery and no other artefacts were recovered or observed during the fieldwork. The paucity of dating evidence does not enable any detailed interpretation and phasing of the section recorded and it is difficult to conclusively relate the information gained to the known evolution of the fortification. It is likely that the section recorded relates to the latest phase of the defences modification and use during World War II.

In addition to recording the rampart section, the probable remains of a World War II Air Raid Shelter were noted along the alignment of the bank. No other archaeological remains were observed and no artefacts were recovered.

Acknowledgements

This project was commissioned by The Regeneration and Economy Division of Kent County Council (KCC) and Wessex Archaeology is grateful to Sharon Bayne in this regard. Wessex Archaeology would also like to thank Adam Single, Archaeological Officer at the Heritage Conservation Group at Kent County Council for his advice.

The watching brief was maintained between the 28th November and 6th December 2010 by Chris O'Brien. The report was prepared by Michelle Collings and Sarah Mounce. The illustrations were prepared by Linda Coleman. The project was managed on behalf of Wessex Archaeology by Mark Williams.

**THE QUEENBOROUGH LINES CANAL BANK CYCLE PATH,
HALFWAY ROAD, SHEERNESS WEST, SHEERNESS, KENT****Archaeological Watching Brief****1 INTRODUCTION****1.1 Project Background**

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by The Regeneration and Economy Division of Kent County Council (KCC) to undertake an archaeological watching brief on land at Halfway Road, Sheerness West, Sheerness on the Isle of Sheppey in Kent ('the Site'). The Site extends between National Grid Reference (NGR) 590948 173328 at the western extent to NGR 593613 174785 at the eastern extent and is illustrated on **Figure 1**.
- 1.1.2 The Site is located to the southern edge of Sheerness between Linden Drive and Barton's Point. It lies along the alignment of the Queenborough Lines, a 19th century linear fortification built to defend the landward side of Sheerness Dockyard, extending across the north-west peninsula of the Isle of Sheppey from the River Medway to the River Thames. Groundworks comprising a cut through the rampart located at NGR 593518 174731, were undertaken close to Barton's Point immediately adjacent to the existing footbridge.
- 1.1.3 The proposed development comprises the construction of a new cycle path. The western section between Linden Drive and Halfway Road involves re-surfacing the existing public right of way which runs alongside the top of the rampart. Towards the eastern end from Halfway Road to Barton's Point, where the fortification is best preserved, the cycle path will run behind the rampart to reflect the line of the military road.
- 1.1.4 A planning application for the new cycle path was submitted to KCC (Reference PAG/SW/10/TEMP/0024). Approval was granted in October 2010 subject to an archaeological investigation comprising a watching brief. This was to be maintained throughout the excavation of the new cut through the rampart bank and a programme of infilling of an existing cut to the northeast of this.
- 1.1.5 A Specification for the Archaeological Watching Brief was prepared by the KCC Heritage Conservation Group (2010) detailing the aims, objectives and methodology. The watching brief was undertaken in accordance with the Specification which was adhered to throughout the course of the fieldwork.
- 1.1.6 The watching brief was carried out by Wessex Archaeology between the 28th November and 6th December 2010.

1.2 Site Location, topography and geology

- 1.2.1 The location of the new cut through the rampart lays close to Barton's Point, immediately adjacent to an existing footbridge close to the Sea Cadet's Headquarters.
- 1.2.2 The underlying geology of the Site and the surrounding area consists of Alluvium over London Clay as mapped by the British Geological Survey (KCC 2010: 1.7).
- 1.2.3 The Queenborough Lines are sited on an area of relatively flat former marshland that lays at an elevation of approximately 0m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The archaeological background was detailed in the Specification prepared by KCC (2010: 3.1-3.8) based on the information recorded in the Historic Environment Record (HER) and is reproduced here with due acknowledgment.
- 2.1.2 The Queenborough Lines were constructed in the 1860s in order to defend the dockyard at Sheerness from landward attack. The Lines are a rare surviving element of the 1860s defence programme constructed at a time when a land-based invasion was considered a genuine threat.
- 2.1.3 The Queenborough Lines were constructed in response to a report by the Royal Commission of the Defences of the United Kingdom which was published in 1860. Works to improve the defences at Sheerness were two-fold, comprising the construction of a new battery at Garrison Point to command the seaward approaches to the Medway and a new defence to the rear of the dockyard in order to defend it from landward attack. Initially the new landward defences were conceived as three new redoubts situated some two miles to the south of the dockyard. These proposals were dropped and instead a simple linear defence, known as the Queenborough Lines, was constructed much closer to the dockyard on flat marshland.
- 2.1.4 The Lines took the form of a continuous rampart bank with a broad outer ditch or 'canal' to the fore. To the rear of the fortification, was a covered way, a military road protected by the ramparts, for the movement of troops and equipment. Narrower outer ditches in front of the canal and to the rear of the military road were constructed in order to give some control of the water levels in the main ditch. A firing step would have been located on top of the ramparts for infantry fire, whilst two small forts at each end (Queenborough and Cheyney Rock) were proposed to provide heavy artillery fire. The artillery defences as originally designed were never installed.
- 2.1.5 Although the fixed armaments were never installed the Lines were maintained as a line of defence until the end of World War I. From the 1890s the Lines were used for emergency defence manned by volunteer

and regular forces from Sheerness and elsewhere as part of the mobilisation policy of the time. The Lines were utilised during the Great War as part of a wider network of defences around the dockyard.

2.1.6 The final chapter in the defensive history of the Lines came during World War II when the defences were used as part of a security cordon around the town, as well as being a convenient location for the construction of a number of air-raid shelters.

2.1.7 The Queenborough Lines are an important monument, being a significant and rare example of a late defensive line with a moat; the monument is therefore considered to be of national importance. Changes in defence technology and thinking meant that by the time of its completion defensive lines such as this were largely obsolete. As such it is one of the last linear fortifications of its type constructed in the country. Although the Queenborough Lines are not presently designated it is understood that the monument is currently being considered for Scheduling by English Heritage.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 General

3.1.1 The objectives of the watching brief were identified in the Specification prepared by KCC (2010: 4.1). The general aim of the watching brief was to contribute to the heritage knowledge of the area and the understanding of the construction, development and use of the Queenborough Lines through the recording of the archaeological remains exposed as a result of excavations in connection with the groundworks.

3.2 Site Specific

3.2.1 In particular the Site specific objectives were to:

- Provide a detailed record of the exposed cross-section through the rampart revealed as part of the works to form the new cut-through.
- Provide a written and drawn record of any details exposed which inform our knowledge of the construction of the rampart and the firestep.
- Record any evidence for any modification, reforming and refortification of the Lines with particular reference to alterations associated with the First and Second World Wars.
- Provide an interpretation of the remains exposed and relate these remains to present knowledge of the form and function of the Queenborough Lines.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Scope of Work

4.1.1 The watching brief was undertaken during groundworks carried out along the alignment of the Queenborough Lines, as illustrated in **Figure 1**. Archaeological monitoring was maintained during the excavations of the new cut-through section, measuring 15.7m in width by 0.2m to 1.6m in height. Monitoring was also undertaken during the infilling of an existing cut to the northeast of the new cut section, located as shown in **Figure 1**. This was to ensure that the monument was not damaged and that the final profile was in keeping with the existing rampart. All work was undertaken in accordance with the Specification provided by KCC (2010) and in compliance with the standards outlined in the Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (2008).

4.2 Fieldwork Methodology

4.2.1 A section was cut through the rampart bank using a 360° tracked mechanical excavator, fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. All machine excavation was conducted under constant archaeological supervision by a suitably qualified archaeologist. The machine excavated arisings were separated and stored adjacent to the area and spoil heaps were routinely inspected for artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest.

4.2.2 Access was afforded during the groundworks to the archaeologists to enable all archaeological features and deposits revealed during the excavations to be investigated and recorded. Possible archaeological features, deposits and any diffuse areas were hand cleaned where necessary and sample sections excavated. Archaeological features and deposits were recorded in accordance with best archaeological practice and in keeping with the methodology as set out in the Specification prepared by KCC (2010).

4.3 Recording

4.3.1 All recording was undertaken using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording system.

4.3.2 A complete drawn record of the excavated sections, drawn to appropriate scales (1:20 for plans, 1:10 for sections) were undertaken. The plans and sections were annotated with coordinates and aOD heights.

4.3.3 Photographs were taken as appropriate, providing a record of the cut-through section to illustrate its location and context, and images of the Site overall. The photographic record comprises black and white, colour images and digital photography. A photographic register of all photographs taken is contained within the project archive.

4.4 Health and Safety

4.4.1 All work was carried out in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act etc. 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1992, and all other relevant Health and Safety legislation, regulations and codes of practice in force at the time.

- 4.4.2 Wessex Archaeology prepared a Risk Assessment (WA 2010) which was read and understood by all staff attending the Site.

5 FIELDWORK RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 This section presents the results of the archaeological watching brief. Detailed descriptions of the contexts recorded are included in **Appendix 1**. **Figure 1** presents the Site along with the locations of the cut-through and infilled sections of the rampart. **Figure 2** illustrates the northeast facing section along with key photographs (**Plates 1-4**).

5.2 Archaeological Results

- 5.2.1 The height at the base of the cut-through section was 1.88m aOD rising to 3.46m aOD at the top of the rampart.
- 5.2.2 The in-filled section, prior to backfill, retained a height of 1.85m aOD at the base of the rampart rising to 3.54m aOD at the top of the rampart.
- 5.2.3 Located between the cut-through and the infilled sections the full profile of the rampart was surveyed. The height along the southeast and northwest edges recorded an elevation of 1.71m aOD and 1.77m aOD, respectively, rising to 3.51m aOD at the top of the rampart.
- 5.2.4 Sealing the rampart was dark brown silty clay topsoil (101) which overlay a series of layers that formed the rampart structure. Beneath these construction layers was orangey brown clay natural (110).
- 5.2.5 Towards the southeast end of the cut-through section, a moderately steep slope descending to a gentle slope consisting of layers (105) and (106) was recorded. The basal layer comprised compacted brownish orange clay (106) overlain by dark yellowish brown silty clay (105). It is possible that these two layers formed the original slope of the earlier linear rampart.
- 5.2.6 The northwest edges of these two layers (105 and 106) appeared to have been cut into by [103]. The profile of the cut presents a 90° stepped edge suggesting the possible formation of a firestep. The height of the step measured 0.8m from the base of the cut-through section with the width of the standing platform measuring 0.5m. The surviving height of the edge above the firestep was limited to 0.4m suggesting either collapse or deliberate dismantlement of the defences when they went out of use. It can also be assumed that the earlier linear rampart does not survive to its original height either.
- 5.2.7 Three layers were recorded on the northwest side of cut [103]; situated at the base of the cut-through section was a heavily compacted clay deposit (108). This was overlain by a 1m thick deposit of dark brown silty clay (107); this layer contained lenses of topsoil material suggesting that it was used to deliberately backfill the firestep once it had been abandoned. Above this layer and covering the firestep was mid brown silty clay deposit (104) which

contained two sherds of 20th century pottery. It is likely that this deposit also formed part of the backfill or landscaping process.

- 5.2.8 Sealing the profile of the south-eastern edge of the rampart (layers 105 and 106) was layer (102) consisting of dark grey brown clayey silt. This layer was most likely the result of collapse or weathering of the upper limits of the rampart and most likely forms part of the same landscaping episode as layers (104) and (107).

6 ARTEFACTS

- 6.1.1 Whilst very small fragments of 20th century pottery were observed within layer (104), as detailed in **Appendix 1**, no pieces were retained as they were too small to merit recovery. No other datable artefacts were observed during the excavation.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

- 7.1.1 No contexts suitable for environmental sampling were identified during the course of the fieldwork.

8 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1.1 The archaeological watching brief revealed deposits relating to the formation of the Queenborough Lines with possible modifications during World War II and probable landscaping of the earthwork once it went out of use.
- 8.1.2 Evidence for the potential profile of the landward slope of the linear rampart (layers 105 and 106) with the possible addition of a firestep (cut 103) during World War II was recorded. Probable remains of a World War II Air Raid Shelter were also noted along the alignment of the bank.
- 8.1.3 It was clear that the height of the rampart had been substantially reduced either as a result of weathering or landscaping and the firestep had been deliberately backfilled and truncated.
- 8.1.4 The watching brief provided the opportunity to record a section through the Queenborough Lines. The cut-through section provided possible evidence of World War II modifications in the form of a firestep. However, the limited nature of the works makes the observations of the excavation difficult to interpret as modification, reforming or refortification of the defences. The paucity of dating evidence also complicates any dating of the deposits recorded and does not enable the section recorded to be positively related to the known recorded history of the evolution of the Queenborough Lines.

9 ARCHIVE

9.1 Preparation and Deposition

9.1.1 The complete project archive will be prepared in accordance with Wessex Archaeology's Guidelines for Archive Preparation and in accordance with *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage* (Walker 1990) and following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995). On completion of the project, the archive will be deposited with a suitable local museum.

9.2 Archive

9.2.1 Following the fieldwork the archive and all artefacts were subsequently transported to the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Rochester. The documentary records from the fieldwork have been compiled into a stable fully cross-referenced and indexed archive in accordance with Appendix 6 of Management of Archaeological Projects (English Heritage 1991).

9.2.2 The contents of the project archive comprises an A4 ring-bound file containing the following:

- 10 Context Sheets, including 1 Context Indices
- 2 A3 Drawings, including 1 Graphics Register
- 5 Photographic Records
- A copy of the WSI

9.2.3 The project archive including plans, photographs and written records are currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology Rochester under the Site code **76300**. Where a suitable facility exists, the project archive will be deposited with a local museum. As no artefacts were recovered no permission for museum deposition is required from the landowner.

9.3 Copyright

9.3.1 The full copyright of the written and illustrative archive relating to the site will be retained by Wessex Archaeology Ltd under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved. The recipient museum, however, will be granted an exclusive license for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use shall be non-profit making, and conforms to the Copyright and Related Rights regulations 2003.

9.3.2 This report may contain material that is non-Wessex Archaeology copyright (e.g. Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey, Crown Copyright), or the intellectual property of third parties, which we are able to provide for limited reproduction under the terms of our own copyright licences, but for which copyright itself is non-transferrable by Wessex Archaeology. You are reminded that you remain bound by the conditions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with regard to multiple copying and electronic dissemination of the report.

9.4 Security Copy

- 9.4.1 In line with current best practice, on completion of the project a security copy of the paper records will be prepared, in the form of microfilm. The master jackets and one diazo copy of the microfilm will be submitted to the National Monuments Record Centre (NMR) (English Heritage) in Swindon; a second diazo copy will be deposited with the paper records at the local museum, and a third diazo copy will be retained by Wessex Archaeology.

10 REFERENCES

English Heritage 1991 *Management of Archaeological Projects*. London, English Heritage

English Heritage 2002 *Environmental Archaeology; a guide to theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation*. Swindon, Centre for Archaeology Guidelines

Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) 2008 *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*. IfA

Kent County Council Heritage Conservation Group 2010 *Specification for an archaeological watching brief and recording bank cycle path (Queenborough Lines) Halfway Road, Sheerness West, Sheerness, Kent ME12 1YL*. KCC

Society of Museum Archaeologists (SMA) 1995 *Towards an Accessible Archaeological Archive*. SMA

SMA 1993 *Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections*. SMA

Walker K. 1990 *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-Term Storage*. UKIC Archaeology Section

Wessex Archaeology 2010 *Risk Assessment, Canal Bank Cycle Path, Queenborough Lines, Sheerness, Kent*

Wessex Archaeology *Archive and Dispersal Policy for Environmental Remains and Samples*

Wessex Archaeology *Guidelines for Archive Preparation*

Web Sources

<http://www.fortified-places.com/sheerness.html>

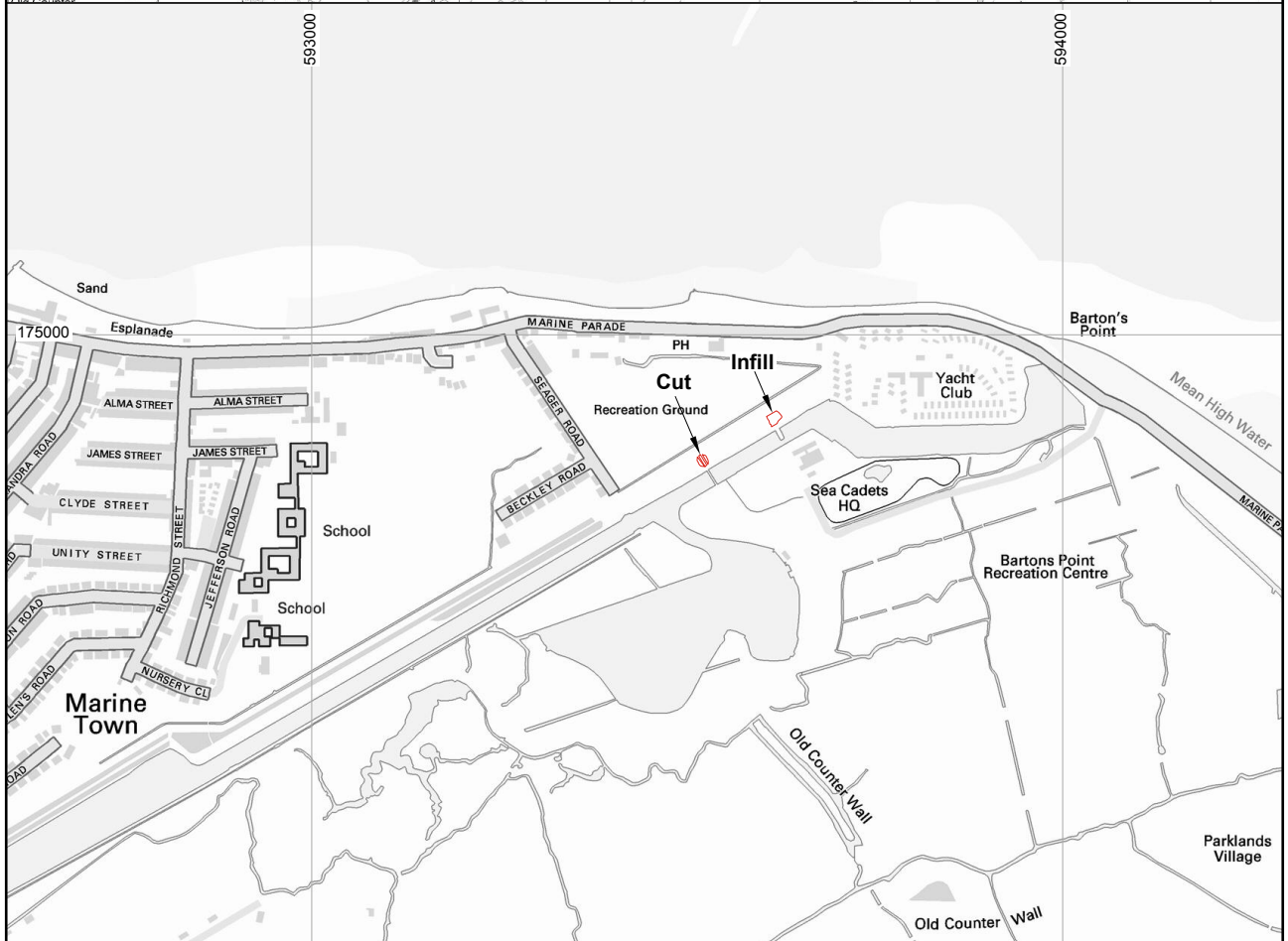
APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT SUMMARY TABLE

All archaeological deposits/features shown in **bold**
 All (+) indicate deposits/features not fully excavated
 CBM – ceramic building material

Section through the Rampart	Dimensions:	15.7m wide x 0.2m to 1.6m high	
	Co-ordinates:	593523.844, 174724.396, 1.85m aOD	
Context	Category	Description	Dimensions
101	Topsoil	Dark brown silty clay containing late 20 th century detritus.	0.15m
102	Layer	Dark grey brown compacted clayey silt with very rare small to medium sub-rounded and rounded pebbles. Located along the south-eastern side of the rampart.	2.84m x 0.68m
103	Cut - firestep	Vertical edges with flat step.	0.5m x 1.1m
104	Layer	Mid brown silty clay containing two pieces of 20 th century pottery. Possible last phase of collapse/backfill of 103.	1.42m x 0.38m
105	Layer	Dark yellowish brown silty clay on the north-western side.	3.3m x 0.62m
106	Layer	Brownish orange clay. The north-western edge was cut by 103 to form a firestep.	6.6m x 0.54m
107	Fill of 103 – deliberate backfill	Darkish brown silty clay with lenses of topsoil. Fill of firestep and north-western side of rampart.	5.92m x 1m
108	Layer	Brownish yellow orange heavily compacted clay.	4.22m x 0.24m
109	Group Number	Rampart group number.	15.7m x 1.6m
110	Possible Natural	Orangey brown clay with flint nodule inclusions.	n/a

APPENDIX 2: KENT COUNTY COUNCIL HER SUMMARY FORM

Site Name: The Queenborough Lines Canal Bank Cycle Path	
Site Address: Queenborough Lines, Halfway Road, Sheerness West, Sheerness, Kent ME12 1YL	
Summary: The watching brief provided the opportunity to record a section through the Queenborough Lines. The cut-through section provided possible evidence of World War II modifications in the form of a firestep. However, the limited nature of the works makes the observations of the excavation difficult to interpret as modification, reforming or refortification of the defences. The paucity of dating evidence also complicates any dating of the deposits recorded and does not enable the section recorded to be positively related to the known recorded history of the evolution of the Queenborough Lines.	
District/Unitary: Swale	Parish: Isle of Sheppey
Period(s): Post-medieval to modern	
NGR (centre of site : 8 figures): 590948, 173328 to 593613 174785	
Type of archaeological work: Watching Brief	
Date of Recording: 28 th November and 6 th December 2010	
Unit undertaking recording: Wessex Archaeology	
Geology: Alluvium over London Clay	
Title and author of accompanying report: The Queenborough Lines Canal Bank Cycle Path, Halfway Road, Sheerness West, Sheerness, Kent Wessex Archaeology	
Summary of fieldwork results (begin with earliest period first, add NGRs where appropriate) Evidence for the potential profile of the landward slope of the linear rampart (layers 105 and 106) with the possible addition of a firestep (cut 103) during World War II was recorded. Two pieces of 20 th century pottery were observed from the uppermost deposit (104) underlying the topsoil (101), no other artefacts were recovered or observed during the fieldwork. The paucity of dating evidence does not enable any detailed interpretation and phasing of the section recorded and it is difficult to conclusively relate the information gained to the known evolution of the fortification. It is likely that the section recorded relates to the latest phase of the defences modification and use during World War II. In addition to recording the rampart section, the probable remains of a World War II Air Raid Shelter were noted along the alignment of the bank. No other archaeological remains were observed and no artefacts were recovered. (cont. on attached sheet)	
Location of archive/finds: Wessex Archaeology Rochester Office	
Contact at Unit: Mark Williams	Date: 2 nd August 2011



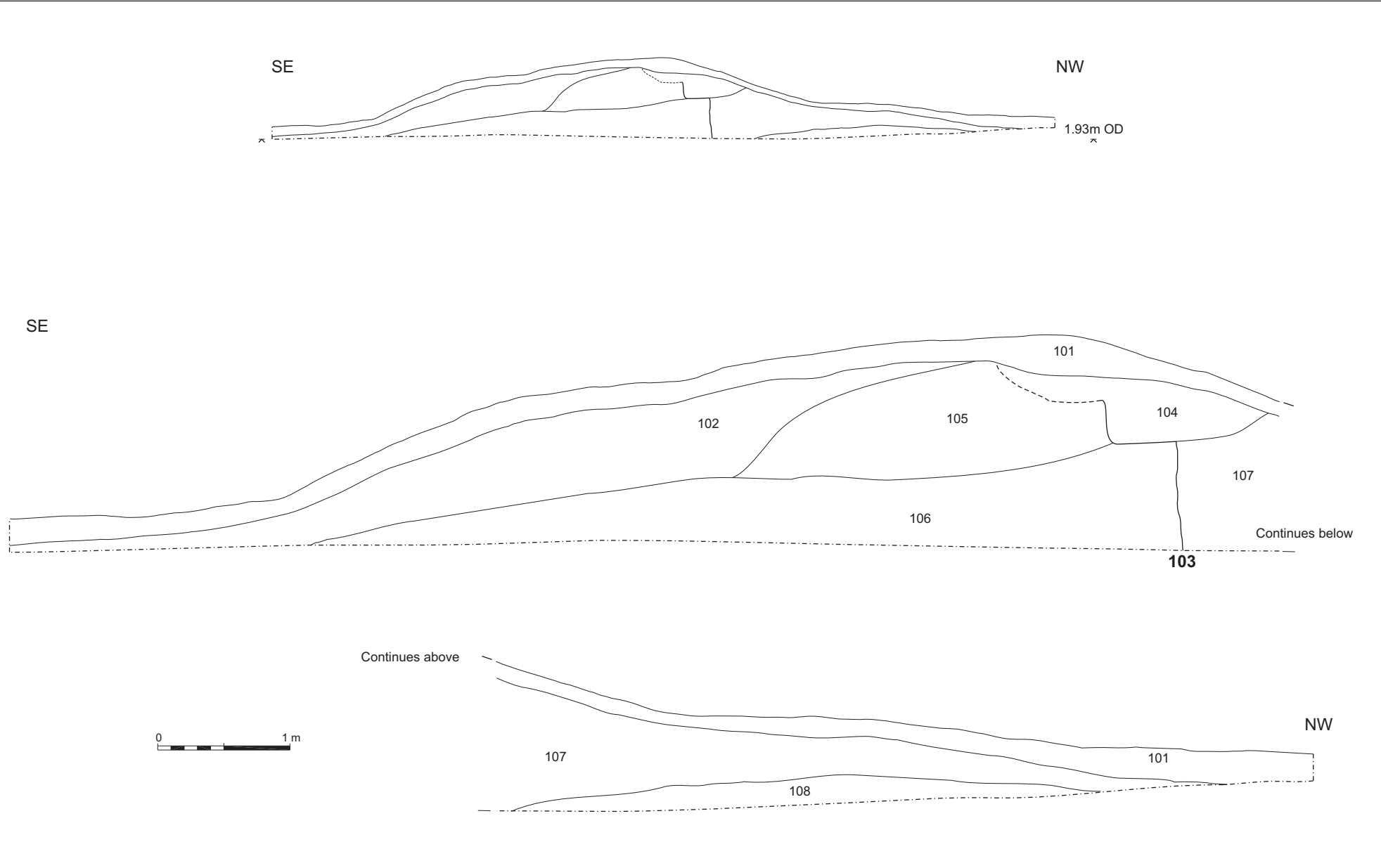
Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright and database right 2010
 This material is for client report only © Wessex Archaeology. No unauthorised reproduction.

Date:	29/03/11	Revision Number:	0
Scale:	1:50 000 & 1:10 000 @ A4	Illustrator:	LJC
Path:	Y:\PROJECTS\76300\Drawing Office\Report figs\WB\11_03_29\76300_WB.dwg		



Site location plan

Figure 1



 <p>This material is for client report only © Wessex Archaeology. No unauthorised reproduction.</p>	Date: 29/03/11	Revision Number: 0
	Scale: Main section 1:40	Illustrator: LJC
	Path: Y:\PROJECTS\76300\D.. O..\Report figs\WB\11_03_29\76300_wbSection.cdr	

North-east facing section of Queenborough Lines

Figure 2



Plate 1: Excavation of cut through the Queenborough Lines



Plate 2: North-east facing section of the Queenborough Lines

This material is for client report only © Wessex Archaeology. No unauthorised reproduction.



Date: 29/03/11

Revision Number: 0

Scale: N/A

Illustrator: LJC

Path: Y:\PROJECTS\176300\Drawing Office\Report



Plate 3: Infilled section of the Queenborough Lines



Plate 4: World War II Air Raid Shelter in bank

This material is for client report only © Wessex Archaeology. No unauthorised reproduction.

Date: 29/03/11

Revision Number: 0

Scale: N/A

Illustrator: LJC

Path: Y:\PROJECTS\76300\Drawing Office\Report



WESSEX ARCHAEOLOGY LIMITED.

Registered Head Office: Portway House, Old Sarum Park, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP4 6EB.

Tel: 01722 326867 Fax: 01722 337562 info@wessexarch.co.uk

Regional offices in **Edinburgh, Rochester and Sheffield**

For more information visit www.wessexarch.co.uk

