



Amberfield Cottages Chart Sutton, Kent

Archaeological Evaluation



Ref: 228220.02
December 2019



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Kent

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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by KWL Limited, to produce a report for the archaeological evaluation of a parcel of land located at Amberfield Cottages, Chart Sutton, Kent. The evaluation area was centred on NGR 579234 150275.

The evaluation was undertaken as part planning condition for the development of the site for residential purposes.

The evaluation comprised the excavation of single trial trench (measuring 20 m by 2.4 m). The trench revealed intact topsoil and subsoil deposits overlying natural geology, with evidence of disturbance, most likely caused by bioturbation, present at the northern end of the trench.

The purpose of the evaluation was to investigate the potential for buried archaeological remains, specifically the potential for the continuation an earthwork visible to the west.

Two 19th century/modern features were recorded during the evaluation, with no evidence of the proposed Iron Age earthwork located within the trench.

Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology would like to thank KWL Limited for commissioning the archaeological evaluation, in particular Richard Clarke. Wessex Archaeology is also grateful for the advice of Kent County Archaeologist, who monitored the project for the Local Planning Authority (LPA), and to KWL Limited for their cooperation and help on site.

The fieldwork was directed by Lance Lewis, with the assistance of Matthew Flemming. This report was written by Lance Lewis and edited by Andrew Souter. The project was managed by Mark Williams on behalf of Wessex Archaeology.



Amberfield Cottages Chart Sutton, Kent

Archaeological Evaluation

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project and planning background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by KLW Limited to undertake an archaeological evaluation of a 1150 m² parcel of land located in Amberfield Cottages, Amber Lane, Chart Sutton, Kent, centred on NGR 579234 150275 (TQ 79234 50275) (**Fig. 1**).

1.1.2 Consultation with the Kent County Council (KCC) Senior Archaeologist for a previous planning application highlighted an undated earthwork within the site, tentatively associated with a nearby Scheduled Iron Age Oppidum. As the feature is potentially of significant archaeological value the KCC County Archaeologist requested a programme of evaluation, with the intention of dating the earthwork.

1.1.3 All works were undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI) which detailed the aims, methodologies and standards to be employed in order to undertake the evaluation (Wessex Archaeology 2019). The KCC County Archaeologist approved the WSI, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority (LPA), prior to fieldwork commencing.

1.1.4 The evaluation, comprising one trial trench measuring 20m by 2.4m, was undertaken on 09/12/2019. The evaluation forms the latest stage of archaeological mitigation within the site which has included a previous desk-based assessment (AB Heritage 2015). Further archaeological mitigation may be required by the local planning authority.

1.2 Scope of the report

1.2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a detailed description of the results of the evaluation, to interpret the results within a local, regional or wider archaeological context and assess whether the aims of the evaluation have been met.

1.2.2 The presented results will provide further information on the archaeological resource that may be impacted by the proposed development and facilitate an informed decision with regard to the requirement for, and methods of, any further archaeological mitigation.

1.3 Location, topography and geology

1.3.1 The evaluation area was located to the south of Amber Lane in Chart Sutton, Maidstone, approximately 2km southwest of Langley and 2.55km east-southeast of Boughton Monchelsea. The site is bounded to the north by Amber Lane and residential development, to the east by an area of woodland, to the south by cultivated arable farmland and to the west by Amberfield Cottage. The site appears to be largely unoccupied, with occasional trees and a pond with a surrounding fence line.

1.3.2 Existing ground levels are approximately 108 m OD, with adjacent areas undulating due to the presence of earthworks features (AB Heritage 2015).



- 1.3.3 The underlying geology is mapped as Hythe Formation, interbedded sandstone and limestone, with superficial deposits of Head, clay silt and gravel. (British Geological Survey online viewer).

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The archaeological and historical background of the site was assessed in a prior desk-based assessment (DBA: AB Heritage 2015), which considered the recorded historic environment resource within a 500 m study area of the previous planning application. A summary of the results is presented below, with relevant entry numbers from the Kent Historic Environment Record (HER) and the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) included. Additional sources of information are referenced, as appropriate.

2.2 Archaeological and historical context

Early Prehistoric (c. 500,000 BC – 2000 BC)

- 2.2.1 No early prehistoric records were recorded within the study area during the DBA and there are no additional records.

Later Prehistoric (c. 2000 BC – AD 43)

- 2.2.2 The site appears to have been settled during the Iron Age, when the Iron Age Oppidum variously known as Boughton Camp (the name of the Scheduled Monument: NHLE no. 1005139), Loose Camp and Quarry Wood Camp (the name used in the SERF). The camp is located approximately 2.7km to the northwest of the site and is believed to be a occupation centre for the local Cantiaci tribe.
- 2.2.3 A number of linear earthworks are recorded extending across the landscape, significantly outside of the immediate surroundings of the oppidum, possible representing the former territorial boundaries of the camp. The earthworks vary but predominantly consist of either a buried ditch or bank and ditch. A plan of the earthworks is included within the Quarry Wood Camp article in *Archaeologia Cantiana* (KAS 1971).
- 2.2.4 In the vicinity of the site there was a linear earthwork c. 60m to the northeast of the site (KHER no. TQ 75 SE 125), with an additional linear earthwork 670m to the west-northwest of the site (KHER no. MKE41624). Earthworks present within the site are potentially part of this system of earthworks. The earthworks are along the same alignment as MKE41624 and may have been a contiguous part of the earthwork prior to later truncation.
- 2.2.5 Should a link been proved between the earthworks within the site and Boughton Camp it would represent a significant heritage asset.
- 2.2.6 Other Iron Age evidence within the area consists of a single findspot of a Silver Iron Age coin (KHER no. MKE71328).
- #### *Romano-British (AD 43 – AD 410)*
- 2.2.7 Recorded Romano-British features within the study area consist of two Roman Roads (KHER nos. MKE75998 & MKE44113). Despite the lack of recorded evidence within the area it is likely that there will be isolated activity within the area of the Roman Roads, one of which is located c. 30m to the south of the site. The centre of occupation in the area during the Romano-British period was located at a small nucleated farming settlements and villas in Maidstone and further north.



Anglo-Saxon and Medieval Period (AD 410 – AD 1536)

- 2.2.8 Occupation within the wider area during the Anglo-Saxon and Medieval period was centred on Maidstone, and the surrounding area was likely to be occupied by dispersed farmsteads. One later medieval farmstead survives within the study area, c. 130m to the northwest of the site.

Post-medieval to modern (AD1057-present)

- 2.2.9 Maidstone was incorporated as a Borough in 1549, with the population growing substantially over the post-medieval periods. Chart Sutton grew during this time, with a number of farmsteads and farmhouses still extant, including a multi-yard farmstead of Amberfield Farm, c 120m to the southwest (KHER no. MKE87131), and the Grade II Listed farmhouse of Marshalls Place c. 100m to the east-northeast of the site (NHLE no. 1100333). The development continued into the modern period, with multiple residential housing developments.
- 2.2.10 A Supermarine Spitfire crashed in the grounds of Amberfield Farm c 220m to the west-southwest (KHER no. TQ 75 SE 377), in addition to multiple other crashes in the surrounding area.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 General aims

- 3.1.1 The general aims of the evaluation, as stated in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2019) and in compliance with the ClfA's *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014a), were:
- To provide information about the archaeological potential of the site; and
 - To inform either the scope and nature of any further archaeological work that may be required; or the formation of a mitigation strategy (to offset the impact of the development on the archaeological resource); or a management strategy.

3.2 General objectives

- 3.2.1 In order to achieve the above aims, the general objectives of the evaluation were:
- To determine the presence or absence of archaeological features, deposits, structures, artefacts or ecofacts within the specified area;
 - To establish, within the constraints of the evaluation, the extent, character, date, condition and quality of any surviving archaeological remains;
 - To place any identified archaeological remains within a wider historical and archaeological context in order to assess their significance; and
 - To make available information about the archaeological resource within the site by reporting on the results of the evaluation.

3.3 Site-specific objectives

- 3.3.1 Following consideration of the archaeological potential of the site and the South East Regional Framework (SERF), the site-specific objectives of the evaluation are:



- To determine and record the nature of the existing earthworks within the site and investigate their potential links to the nearby Scheduled Monument of Boughton Camp (NHLE ref 1005139).

4 METHODS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 All works were undertaken in accordance with the detailed methods set out within the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2019) and in general compliance with the standards outlined in ClfA guidance (ClfA 2014a). The methods employed are summarised below.

4.2 Fieldwork methods

General

- 4.2.1 The trench was laid out using GNSS in the approximate position shown in **Figure 1**. The trench location had to be adjusted slightly due to on site constraints. The trench locations are tied in to the Ordnance Survey (OS) National Grid and Ordnance Datum (OD) (Newlyn), as defined by OSGM15 and OSTN15.
- 4.2.2 One trial trench, measuring 20 m in length and 2.4 m wide, was excavated in level spits using a 360° excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket, under the constant supervision and instruction of the monitoring archaeologist. Machine excavation proceeded until the archaeological horizon was exposed.
- 4.2.3 Where necessary, the base of the trench/surface of archaeological deposits were cleaned by hand. A sample of archaeological features and deposits identified was hand-excavated, sufficient to address the aims of the evaluation.
- 4.2.4 Spoil derived from both machine stripping and hand-excavated archaeological deposits was visually scanned for the purposes of finds retrieval. Where found, artefacts were collected and bagged by context. All artefacts from excavated contexts were retained, although those from features of modern date (19th century or later) were recorded on site and not retained.
- 4.2.5 The trench completed to the satisfaction of the client and the KCC County Archaeologist were backfilled using excavated materials in the order in which they were excavated, and left level on completion. No other reinstatement or surface treatment was undertaken.

Recording

- 4.2.6 All exposed archaeological deposits and features were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's pro forma recording system. A complete drawn record of excavated features and deposits was made including both plans and sections drawn to appropriate scales (generally 1:20 or 1:50 for plans and 1:10 for sections) and tied to the Ordnance Survey (OS) National Grid. The Ordnance Datum (OD: Newlyn) heights of all principal features were calculated, and levels added to plans and section drawings.
- 4.2.7 A Leica GNSS connected to Leica's SmartNet service surveyed the location of archaeological features. All survey data is recorded in OS National Grid coordinates and heights above OD (Newlyn), as defined by OSGM15 and OSTN15, with a three-dimensional accuracy of at least 50 mm.
- 4.2.8 A full photographic record was made using digital cameras equipped with an image sensor of not less than 10 megapixels. Digital images have been subject to managed quality control

and curation processes, which has embedded appropriate metadata within the image and will ensure long term accessibility of the image set.

4.3 Artefactual and environmental strategies

4.3.1 Appropriate strategies for the recovery, processing and assessment of artefacts and environmental samples were in line with those detailed in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2019). The treatment of artefacts and environmental remains was in general accordance with: *Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA 2014b) and *Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation* (English Heritage 2011).

4.4 Monitoring Service location and other constraints

4.4.1 The client provided information regarding the presence of any below/above-ground services, and any ecological, environmental or other constraints and took full responsibility for services within the site boundary.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The excavated trial trench contained archaeological features and deposits, indicating the presence of archaeological remains within the site (**Fig. 1**).

5.1.2 The uncovered features comprising one ditch terminus 104 with and one pit 106. Both in which 19th century/modern glass was retrieved.

5.1.3 The following section presents the results of the evaluation with archaeological features and deposits discussed by period.

5.1.4 Detailed descriptions of individual contexts are provided in the trench summary tables (**Appendix 1**). **Figure 1** shows all archaeological features recorded within the trenches, together with the preceding geophysical survey results (REF). **Figure 2** provides detail of the concentration of features in the central part of the site.

5.2 Soil sequence and natural deposits

5.2.1 The topsoil comprised of Dark brown sandy clay with moderate compaction, abundant rooting and sub-angular flints throughout. With a clear boundary to the subsoil. The topsoil has a depth of 0.0m -0.17m. The subsoil was made up of dark greyish brown with reddish hue, silty clay. With a firm compaction including common small sub-angular flints and sparse rooting disturbance throughout. The boundary with natural is somewhat diffused. Subsoil has a depth of 0.17m – 0.23m. The natural ground soil consists of light reddish grey brown, clay. With a firm compaction, including sparse sub-angular flints throughout. The natural soil has a depth of 0.23m+.

5.3 Trench 1

5.3.1 Two archaeological features were recorded during the evaluation. East-northeast/south-southwest aligned linear ditch terminus 104 was located in the approximate centre of the trench. The terminus was at least 1.52m in length, 0.95m wide and 0.36m deep, with irregular concave sides and a undulating base. The terminus contained a single secondary fill.



- 5.3.2 Pit 106 was located in the southern half of the trench, to the south south of ditch terminus 104. The pit was sub oval in shape, with moderately sloped concave sides and an undulating base, measuring 0.6m in width, 1.45m in length and 0.1m deep. The pit contained a single deliberate backfill fill.

6 ARTEFACTUAL EVIDENCE

- 6.1.1 19th century and modern glass finds were recovered from both investigated features.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

- 7.1.1 No archaeological features or deposited needing environmental sampling were recorded during the evaluation.

8 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1.1 The evaluation has been successful in fulfilling the aims and objectives of the evaluation. The evaluation did not reveal any evidence relating to the proposed Iron Age earthwork within the site, but did show evidence of disturbance likely caused by bioturbation and the removal of trees/hedgerows by the landowner, along with evidence of 19th century and modern activity in the form of a ditch terminus and a pit.
- 8.1.2 There were no identifiable Iron Age finds or features, within the evaluation trench.

9 ARCHIVE STORAGE AND CURATION

9.1 Museum

- 9.1.1 The archive resulting from the evaluation is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Maidstone. Maidstone Museum has agreed in principle to accept the archive on completion of the project. Deposition of any finds with the museum will only be carried out with the full written agreement of the landowner to transfer title of all finds to the museum.

9.2 Preparation of the archive

- 9.2.1 The archive, which includes paper records, graphics, artefacts, ecofacts and digital data, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by Maidstone Museum, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; ClfA 2014c; Brown 2011; ADS 2013).
- 9.2.2 All archive elements are marked with the **site/accession code**, and a full index will be prepared. The physical archive currently comprises the following:

- 01 files/document cases of paper records and A3/A4 graphics;

9.3 Selection policy

- 9.3.1 Wessex Archaeology follows national guidelines on selection and retention (SMA 1993; Brown 2011, section 4). In accordance with these, and any specific guidance prepared by the museum, a process of selection and retention will be followed so that only those artefacts or ecofacts that are considered to have potential for future study will be retained. The selection policy will be agreed with the museum, and is fully documented in the project archive.



9.4 Security copy

- 9.4.1 In line with current best practice (eg, Brown 2011), on completion of the project a security copy of the written records will be prepared, in the form of a digital PDF/A file. PDF/A is an ISO-standardised version of the Portable Document Format (PDF) designed for the digital preservation of electronic documents through omission of features ill-suited to long-term archiving.

9.5 OASIS

- 9.5.1 An OASIS online record (<http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main>) has been initiated, with key fields and a .pdf version of the final report submitted. Subject to any contractual requirements on confidentiality, copies of the OASIS record will be integrated into the relevant local and national records and published through the Archaeology Data Service ArchSearch catalogue.

10 COPYRIGHT

10.1 Archive and report copyright

- 10.1.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative/digital archive relating to the project will be retained by Wessex Archaeology under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with all rights reserved. The client will be licenced to use each report for the purposes that it was produced in relation to the project as described in the specification. The museum, however, will be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use conforms to the *Copyright and Related Rights Regulations 2003*. In some instances, certain regional museums may require absolute transfer of copyright, rather than a licence; this should be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.
- 10.1.2 Information relating to the project will be deposited with the Historic Environment Record (HER) where it can be freely copied without reference to Wessex Archaeology for the purposes of archaeological research or development control within the planning process.

10.2 Third party data copyright

- 10.2.1 This document and the project archive may contain material that is non-Wessex Archaeology copyright (eg, Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey, Crown Copyright), or the intellectual property of third parties, which Wessex Archaeology are able to provide for limited reproduction under the terms of our own copyright licences, but for which copyright itself is non-transferable by Wessex Archaeology. Users remain bound by the conditions of the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with regard to multiple copying and electronic dissemination of such material.



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- Wessex Archaeology 2019 *Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Evaluation* Unpublished client report ref 2019



APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Trench summaries

NGR coordinates and OD heights taken at centre of each trench; depth bgl = below ground level

Trench No 1		Length 20 m	Width 2.40 m	Depth Unknown
Easting 679246.5710		Northing 150280.8280		m OD 106.201
Context Number	Fill Of/Filled With	Interpretative Category	Description	Depth BGL
101		Topsoil	Dark brown sandy clay, moderate compaction, common rooting throughout. sub-angular flints throughout. Boundary with subsoil clear	0-0.17
102		Subsoil	Dark greyish brown with reddish hue. Silty clay, firm compaction. Common sub-angular flints throughout. Sparse rooting throughout. boundary with natural somewhat diffuse.	0.17-0.23
103		Natural	Light reddish grey brown. Clay. Firm compaction. Sparse sub-angular flints throughout.	0.23+
104	105	Ditch terminal	Curvilinear ditch terminal with irregular, concave sides and an irregular / undulating base. Length: 0.95 m. Width: >1.52 m. Depth: 0.36 m.	0.23-0.59
105	104	Secondary fill	Mid blackish brown with a dark grey hue sandy clay with flint (10%) rooting (sparse) inclusions. Archaeological components: Glass	
106	107	Pit	Sub-circular pit with moderate, concave sides and an irregular / undulating base. Length: 1.45 m. Width: 0.60 m. Depth: 0.10 m.	0.23-0.33
107	106	Deliberate backfill	Blackish brown. silty clay. Archaeological components: Rare charcoal and glass	



Appendix 2 Kent County Council HER Summary Form

Site Name: Amberfield Cottages	
Site Address: Amberfield Cottages, Amber Lane, Chart Sutton, Kent, ME17 3SF	
Summary of discoveries: Modern ditch terminus and pit	
District/Unitary: Maidstone	Parish: Chart Sutton
Period(s): Modern	
NGR (centre of site to nearest 1m): 579234 150275 (TQ 79234 50275) (NB if large or linear site give multiple NGRs)	
Type of archaeological work: Evaluation	
Date of fieldwork (dd/mm/yy): 09/12/2019	
Unit/contractor undertaking recording: Wessex Archaeology	
Geology: Hythe Formation, interbedded sandstone and limestone, with superficial deposits of Head, clay silt and gravel (BGS online viewer)	
Title and author of accompanying report: Title: Amberfield Cottages, Chart Sutton, Kent: Archaeological Evaluation Authors: Lance Lewis, Andrew Souter	
Summary of fieldwork results (begin with earliest period first, add NGRs where appropriate) The evaluation comprised the excavation of single trial trench (measuring 20 m by 2.4 m). The trench revealed intact topsoil and subsoil deposits overlying natural geology, with evidence of disturbance, most likely caused by bioturbation, present at the northern end of the trench. Two 19th century/modern features were recorded during the evaluation, with no evidence of the proposed Iron Age earthwork located within the trench. It is possible if the earthwork was present in the trench location that it was located in the northern end which was subject to disturbance.	
Location of archive/finds: Wessex Archaeology Maidstone Office	
Contact at Unit: Mark Williams	Date: 10.01.2020



Appendix 3 Oasis Form

OASIS ID: wessexar1-380164

Project details

Project name	Amberfield Cottages
Short description of the project	Wessex Archaeology was commissioned to conduct an archaeological evaluation in advance of residential development of the site. The evaluation was attempting to identify a date for an earthwork within the site that had a proposed Iron Age date, with potential links to a nearby Iron Age Oppidum. The northern end of the trench was subject to disturbance, most likely bioturbation from recently removed trees and hedgerows. A modern pit was recorded in the southern half of the trench and a modern ditch terminus in the approximate centre of the trench, both containing modern glass fragments. No prehistoric archaeological finds or features were recorded during the evaluation.
Project dates	Start: 09-12-2019 End: 09-12-2019
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	228220 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Vacant Land 2 - Vacant land not previously developed
Monument type	DITCH Modern
Monument type	PIT Modern
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches"
Development type	Rural residential
Prompt	Voluntary/self-interest
Position in the planning process	Pre-application

Project location

Country	England
Site location	KENT MAIDSTONE CHART SUTTON Amberfield Cottages
Postcode	ME17 3SF
Study area	1150 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 79234 50275 51.22292212618 0.567050466023 51 13 22 N 000 34 01 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Wessex Archaeology
Project brief originator	KLW Limited



Project design originator	Wessex Archaeology
Project director/manager	Mark Williams
Project supervisor	Lance Lewis
Type of sponsor/funding body	Landowner
Name of sponsor/funding body	Rochard and Madeleine Clarke

Project archives

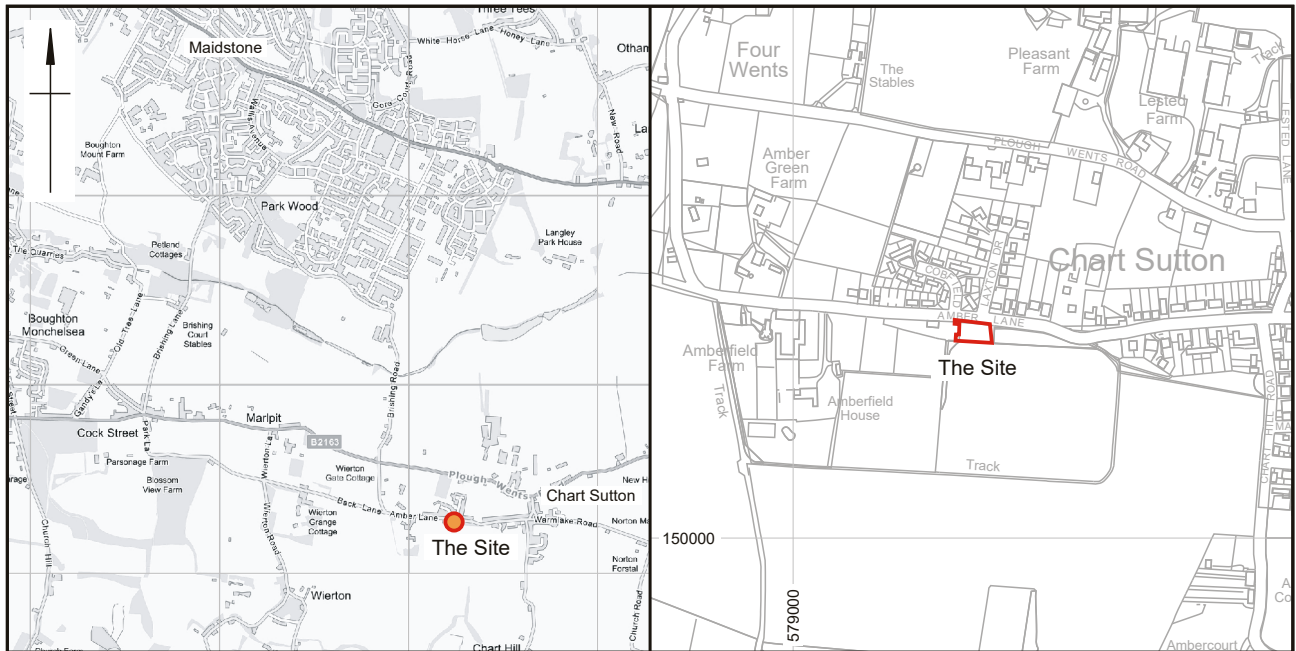
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Maidstone Museum
Digital Archive ID	228220
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Database","Images raster / digital photography","Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Maidstone Museum
Paper Archive ID	228220
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Correspondence","Diary","Drawing","Report"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Amberfield Cottages, Chart Sutton, Kent: Archaeological Evaluation
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Lewis, L
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Souter, A
Other bibliographic details	228220.3
Date	2020
Issuer or publisher	Wessex Archaeology
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Entered by	Andrew Souter (a.souter@wessexarch.co.uk)
Entered on	10 January 2020





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	Date:	16/12/2019	Revision Number:	0
	Scale:	1:40000, 1:10000 & 1:400 @ A4	Illustrator:	RG/ND
	Path:	R:\PROJECTS\228220\Graphics_Office\Rep figs\eval\2019_12_16\228220_eval.dwg		

Site location plan


Figure 1



Plate 1: West facing section of ditch 104



Plate 2: West facing section of pit 106

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	Date:	16/12/2019	Revision Number: 0
	Scale:	Not to scale	Illustrator: ND
	Path:	R:\PROJECTS\228220\Graphics_Office\Rep figs\eval\2019_12_16\228220_Plates.ai	

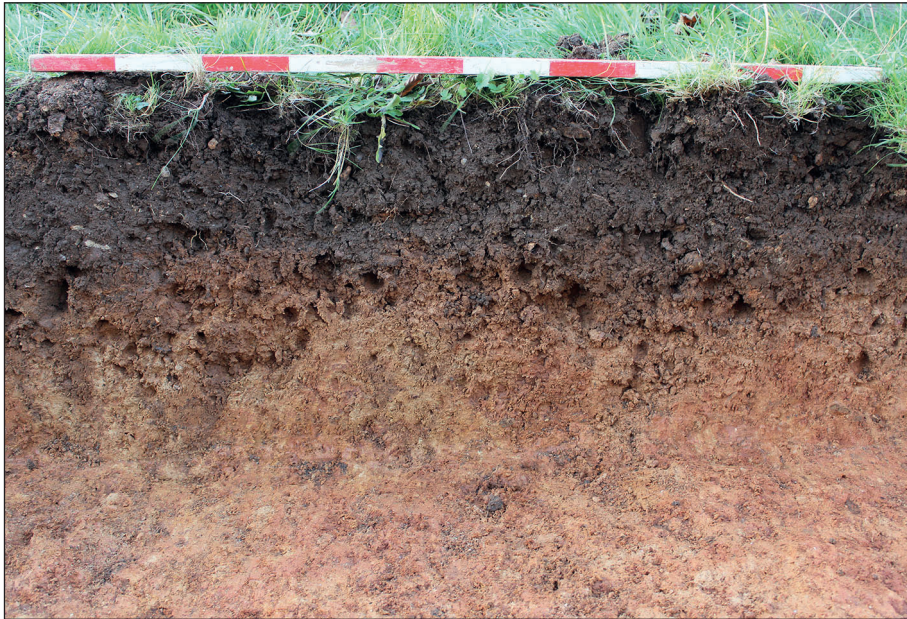



Plate 3: East facing representative section of trench 1

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