

**Archaeological Watching Brief Report
Poorhole Lane, Broadstairs
Kent**

NGR: 636615 168105

**ASE Project No: 6717
Site Code: PHB14**

**ASE Report No: 2014323
OASIS ID: archaeol6-190936**



By Sophia Adams

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September 2014

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Abstract

A watching brief was undertaken by Archaeology South-East on behalf of Jackson Civil Engineering and KCC on a linear road improvement scheme at Poorhole Lane, Broadstairs, Kent from 8th July to 7th August 2014.

No significant archaeological artefacts, deposits or features were recorded at the site. Only two, small late 19th or 20th century posthole features cut the subsoil in the north-western part of this probably associated with tree planting activity in this area. A similar stratigraphic sequence was observed across the remainder of the site with topsoil over subsoil over brickearth over the natural chalk.

No evidence was found of the proposed plague pit that has been thought to give Poorhole Lane its name. Consideration of the historical mapping and topographic evidence shows the suggested location is unlikely owing to the presence of an early post-medieval house within a quarried hollow at this point.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), the contracting division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology (CAA), Institute of Archaeology (IoA), University College London (UCL) was commissioned by Jackson Civil Engineering to undertake a watching brief on a linear road scheme at Poorhole Lane, Broadstairs, Kent centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 636615 168105 (Figure 1). The scheme is an improvement work by KCC Highways.

1.2 Geology and Topography

1.2.1 According to the latest data from the British Geological Survey (BGS 2014) the site lies on head clay and silt overlying solid geology of Margate Chalk.

1.2.2 The site lies along the full extent of Poorhole Lane on the east side of Westwood near Broadstairs along relatively flat terrain. It is bounded on the west side by the existing roadway and pedestrian paving and. On the east side the site abuts the limits of the Westwood Lodge grounds including deciduous woodland at one end then the property limits of workshops, The Cottage, warehouses and a cultivated field.

1.3 Planning Background

1.3.1 The County Archaeological Officer deemed it appropriate for the groundworks of this road improvement scheme to be monitored by an archaeological contractor. Three test pits were excavated prior to the commencement of development and a watching brief was undertaken in tandem with the groundworks.

1.4 Aims and Objectives

1.4.1 This project aimed to contribute to knowledge of the heritage of this area and ascertain the validity of the claim that Poorhole Lane was named after its proposed location in proximity to or over a plague pit in the medieval or even post-medieval periods.

1.5 Scope of Report

1.5.1 This report provides an account of the Test Pit survey and the watching brief. The work was undertaken between 8th July 2014 and 7th August 2014 consecutively by Cat Douglas, Steve Price and Sophia Adams

1.5.2 The fieldwork was managed by Neil Griffin (Project Manager) and the post-excavation analysis was managed by Jim Stevenson (Project Manager)

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Overview

2.1.1 No desk-based survey was carried out in advance of the watching brief. The archaeological potential of the site had been noted by the County Archaeological Officer for this KCC scheme. This evidence indicated possible medieval to post-medieval remains on the site including the potential for human burials. No evidence for earlier archaeological evidence is known for this site. The following information has been previously detailed in the Scheme of Work for this archaeological watching brief.

2.2 Period Summaries

Medieval to Post-Medieval

- 2.2.1 The potential of this area has been gauged in relation to documentary evidence of a mass grave. There is documentary evidence for a “plague pit” adjacent to Poorhole Lane, based on a late 18th century plan. The OS Field Drawings (c.1800) indicate Poorhole Lane forming a dog leg following the current alignment of the western access to Westwood Lodge. On the 1st Ed OS map, Poorhole Lane has been realigned to the current route. This realignment may be more associated with landscaping for Westwood than avoidance of a plague pit. The original alignment corresponds to the current southerly access to Westwood Lodge. The location indicated on the late 18th century plan as a possible plague pit is currently at a reduced level/sunken. There are buildings on the potential site of the plague pit identifiable on the early OS maps. This part of the site was partly occupied by a garage and the plot for The Cottage.
- 2.2.2 This area has been subject to extraction for bricks. A brickfield is noted on early OS maps to the south of Poorhole Lane.
- 2.2.3 Westwood Lodge is a post medieval residence identifiable on the 1st Ed OS map but not on the OS Field Drawings, although there are some possible cottages marked on the OS Field Drawings to the west. Westwood Lodge is placed within landscaped woodland and formal gardens with associated outbuildings south west of the main house.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 Fieldwork Methodology

- 3.1.1 Three test pits each measuring 1.8m by 1.8m were excavated by machine on the eastern side of Poorhole Lane in advance of groundworks. These were excavated to at least the top of the natural chalk.
- 3.1.2 An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during groundworks for the road-box at either end of Poorhole Lane (for construction of two roundabouts), and work to widen the eastern side of the lane and the excavation of one of the north-eastern soakaways (see Figure 2).
- 3.1.3 All machine excavation was undertaken with a toothless bucket.
- 3.1.4 Written, drawn and photographic records were made of all areas and the features identified were excavated by hand.
- 3.1.5 All archaeological deposits were recorded using standard context sheets and test pit record sheets used by ASE.

3.2 The Site Archive

- 3.3.1 The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE. The contents of the archive are tabulated below (Table 1).

Number of Contexts	11
No. of files/paper record	1
Plan and sections sheets	2
Photographs	16 B&W 147 digital
Bulk finds	1 small box

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Test Pits 1-3

- 4.1.1 Three test pits, each 1.8m x 1.8m, were excavated by machine on the north-east side of Poorhole Lane in the vicinity of The Cottage (Figure 2). No archaeological features were discovered in any of the test pits.
- 4.1.2 In all three test pits the lowest deposit was the natural geology of chalk. The variation in depth of the chalk between all three test pits, from 0.40m to 1.00m below ground level (see Table 1), reflects that natural undulating form of the top of this geology.
- 4.1.3 In Test Pits 1 and 2 the chalk was overlain by subsoil then topsoil. In Test Pit 3 the topsoil lay directly over the chalk.

Test Pit	Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Depth below Ground Level m	Deposit Thickness m
1	001	Layer	Topsoil	>1.80	>1.80	0.00	0.40
1	002	Layer	Subsoil	>1.80	>1.80	0.40	0.60
1	003	Layer	Natural Chalk	>1.80	>1.80	1.00	>0.30
2	001	Layer	Topsoil	>1.80	>1.80	0.00	0.40
2	002	Layer	Subsoil	>1.80	>1.80	0.40	0.32
2	003	Layer	Natural Chalk	>1.80	>1.80	0.72	>0.10
3	001	Layer	Topsoil	>1.80	>1.80	0.00	0.40
3	002	Layer	Natural Chalk	>1.80	>1.80	0.40	>0.60

Table 2: List of recorded contexts in Test Pits 1-3

4.2 Watching Brief: road-boxes and roadway

- 4.2.1 A watching brief was carried out from the north-west end of Poorhole Lane and continued along the length of the roadworks until it reached the area investigated by the Test Pit survey. A further area was examined at the south-east end of the lane next to the cultivated field in the road-box around the planned roundabout location. The excavation of a soakaway was also observed at the north-west end of the site (see Figure 2).
- 4.2.2 The stratigraphic sequence across the entire area, including the soakaway consists of natural chalk [003] overlain by natural reddish yellow sand and clay matrix (brickearth) [011]. Over the brickearth was a layer of yellowy brown, clayey silt subsoil [002] covered by the humic rich topsoil [001] and tarmac. The topsoil, subsoil and brickearth were all riddled with tree roots.
- 4.2.3 The chalk natural [003] was revealed in three areas ranging from a depth of 41.20m AOD towards the western end of the site sloping down to the east to c.40.50m AOD where it was observed below where a tree stump had to be

removed.

4.2.4 The overlying brickearth [011] was revealed intermittently in the southern part of the stripped area at a depth of 41.15m AOD maintaining a more consistent level across the exposed area than the natural chalk.

4.2.5 Two small features, one roughly squared [006] the other roughly circular [004], cut into the top of the subsoil [002]. These were located 0.94m apart towards the north-western end of the site. Both contained chalk rich fills [005] and [007] with slate and CBM fragments and abundant roots. The smaller, rounder of the two [004] contained a pierced 1898 farthing. The larger, squarer one [006] had a slightly more silty fill and contained a fragment of a clay pipe stem. The location and fills suggest contemporaneity and a post-medieval, probably post-Victorian, 20th century date as the coin has clearly been reused for a non-monetary purpose.

4.2.6 The dimensions of [004] and [006] indicate they may have been postholes but the entire surrounding area was disturbed by tree roots and a tree throw [008] so it is possible these features may in fact relate to planting activity.

Context	Type	Description	Length m	Width m	Deposit Thickness m	Height m AOD
001	Layer	Topsoil	Entire Area	Entire Area	0.30	42.22
002	Layer	Subsoil	Entire Area	Entire Area	0.45	41.92
003	Layer	Natural Chalk	Entire Area	Entire Area	>0.50	41.30
004	Cut	Possible Posthole	0.35	0.35	0.16	
005	Fill	Fill of [004]	0.35	0.35	0.16	
006	Cut	Possible Posthole	0.44	0.40	0.21	
007	Fill	Fill of [006]	0.44	0.40	0.21	
008	Cut	Tree Throw	1.45	1.20	0.35	
009	Fill	Silty Fill of Tree Throw	1.20	1.20	0.35	
010	Layer	Chalky Fill of Tree Throw	1.45	1.00	0.35	
011	Layer	Brickearth	Entire Area	Entire Area	>0.05	41.64

Table 3: List of recorded contexts watching brief area
N.B. contexts 001-003 same as recorded in test pits.

5.0 THE FINDS

5.1 Summary

5.1.1 Only a small assemblage of finds was discovered, the majority of these were found in the topsoil of the test pits. A pierced farthing was discovered in feature [006] along with

5.2 Bulk Finds by Elke Raemen

5.2.1 A small assemblage of finds was recovered during the evaluation (table 4). Finds were all washed and dried or air dried as appropriate. They were subsequently quantified by count and weight, and bagged by material and context. Finds are packaged and stored according to IFA guidelines (2008). No further conservation is required.

Context	Pottery	Wt (g)	CBM	Wt (g)	Fe	Wt (g)	Glass	Wt (g)	Cork	Wt (g)	Fired clay	Wt (g)	Slag	Wt (g)	Clay pipe	Wt (g)
01	1	180	5	136	3	<2	5	1706	1	<2						
05			1	30	1	16					5	58	1	12		
07															1	<2

Table 4: Quantification of the finds

5.2.2 Finds were recovered from topsoil [001] and the fills of two possible postholes [005 and [007].

5.2.3 The topsoil finds [001] included a complete stoneware ink bottle of 19th to early 20th century date, as well as an associated cork fragment. Three aqua bottles of Paterson's Camp Coffee & Chicory were found, one of which was complete. A complete (height 204mm, diam. 57mm), cylindrical green glass bottle with "BARRETT'S MARGATE" embossed near the base was recovered as well. All glass bottles date to the later 19th to early 20th century. In addition, three iron sheet fragments, including a rim, derive from tins (e.g. for food), dating to the mid 19th to early 20th century.

5.2.4 A farthing and fragments of fired clay, slag, ceramic building material and an iron object were found in the fill [005] of feature [004]. The farthing had been pierced in 3 places close to the rim of the coin. A clay pipe stem was found in fill [006] of feature [007]. Both appear to be contemporary post-medieval features of probable late 19th or early 20th century date placing them contemporary with the artefacts recovered in the topsoil.

5.2.5 Summary

The assemblage is small and late in date. The assemblage is not considered to be of significance and no further work is required. Finds are recommended for discard.

6.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 No significant archaeological artefacts, deposits or features were recorded at the site. A similar simple stratigraphic sequence was observed overlying the natural in the test pits and watching brief area with the exception of a layer of brickearth visible in parts of the stripped roadway that was not found in the test pits. The latter was not found uniformly across the whole site probably as a result of variations in the natural geology.
- 6.2 All evidence for human activity on the site pertained to the late 19th or 20th century. This consisted only of two possible postholes and scattered finds in the topsoil.
- 6.3. No evidence was uncovered of the proposed plague pit or any other forms of burial. Reconsideration of the topography of the area and the documentary evidence asserts this absence:
- The only evidence for the presence of a plague-pit near the site is a note on an 18th century map and later speculation based on this
 - A sixteenth century cottage is located to the east of the site just beyond the test pitted area in the location of the marked plague-pit on the 18th century map. This cottage appears to sit with a quarried out hollow in the natural chalk. If any pre sixteenth century burials were located here they may have been removed before the construction of the site and digging of the quarry. Certainly no later human remains can have been buried here
 - The line of Poorhole Lane appears to have altered in the last century south of its original route through the entrance to Westwood Lodge. It is possible, should such a plague pit exist, it was actually located further north-east close to the earlier route but this is conjecture only
- 6.4. The results of the excavation suggest researchers may need to consider alternative sources for the derivation of the road name: Poorhole Lane.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Kent County Council 2007. *Standard Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief/evaluation/excavation*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ASE would like to thank Jackson Civil Engineering for commissioning the work and for their assistance throughout the project, and Wendy Rogers County Archaeologist Kent County Council for her guidance and monitoring. The excavation was directed by Sophia Adams with Steve Price and Cat Douglas providing secondary supervisory cover. The author would like to thank all archaeologists who worked on the excavations. Robert Cole produced the figures for this report; Neil Griffin project managed the excavations and Jim Stevenson and Dan Swift project managed the post-excavation process.

HER Summary

Site Code	PHB14					
Identification Name and Address	Poorhole Lane, Broadstairs					
County, District &/or Borough	Kent					
OS Grid Refs.	NGR: 636615 168105					
Geology	Margate Chalk					
Arch. South-East Project Number	6717					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	Watching Brief	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field	Shallow Urban	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	WB. 8/7/14-7/8/14	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Jackson Civil Engineering					
Project Manager	Neil Griffin					
Project Supervisor	Sophia Adams					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM	Other -Modern		
<p>Summary</p> <p>A watching brief was undertaken by Archaeology South-East on behalf of Jackson Civil Engineering and KCC on a linear road improvement scheme at Poorhole Lane, Broadstairs, Kent from 8th July to 7th August 2014.</p> <p>No significant archaeological artefacts, deposits or features were recorded at the site. Only two, small late 19th or 20th century posthole features cut the subsoil in the northwestern part of this probably associated with tree planting activity in this area. A similar stratigraphic sequence was observed across the remainder of the site with topsoil over subsoil over brickearth over the natural chalk.</p> <p>No evidence was found of the proposed plague pit that has been thought to give Poorhole Lane its name. Consideration of the historical mapping and topographic evidence shows the suggested location is unlikely owing to the presence of an early post-medieval house within a quarried hollow at this point.</p>						

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-190936

Project details

Project name	Poorhole Lane, Broadstairs
Short description of the project	A watching brief was undertaken by Archaeology South-East on behalf of Jackson Civil Engineering and KCC on a linear road improvement scheme at Poorhole Lane, Broadstairs, Kent from 8th July to 7th August 2014. No significant archaeological artefacts, deposits or features were recorded at the site. Only two, small late 19th or 20th century posthole features cut the subsoil in the north-western part of this probably associated with tree planting activity in this area. A similar stratigraphic sequence was observed across the remainder of the site with topsoil over subsoil over brickearth over the natural chalk. No evidence was found of the proposed plague pit that has been thought to give Poorhole Lane its name. Consideration of the historical mapping and topographic evidence shows the suggested location is unlikely owing to the presence of an early post-medieval house within a quarried hollow at this point.
Project dates	Start: 08-07-2014 End: 07-08-2014
Any associated project reference codes	PHB14 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 11 - Thoroughfare
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS

Project location

Country	England
Site location	KENT THANET BROADSTAIRS AND ST PETERS Poorhole Lane
Postcode	CT10 2PP
Site coordinates	TQ 636634 168100 50.9269107901 0.329098082973 50 55 36 N 000 19 44 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	Heritage Conservation Group at Kent County Council

Project design originator	Heritage Conservation Group at Kent County Council
Project director/manager	Neil Griffin
Project supervisor	Sophia Adams
Type of sponsor/funding body	County Council
Name of sponsor/funding body	KCC

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Local Museum
Physical Archive ID	PLB 14
Physical Contents	"Ceramics","Glass"
Digital Archive recipient	Local Museum
Digital Archive ID	PLB 14
Digital Contents	"Ceramics","Glass"
Digital Media available	"Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Local Museum
Paper Archive ID	PLB 14
Paper Contents	"Ceramics","Glass"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Miscellaneous Material","Photograph","Plan","Report"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Poorhole Lane watching brief
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Adams, S.
Other bibliographic details	ASE Report No: 2014323
Date	2014

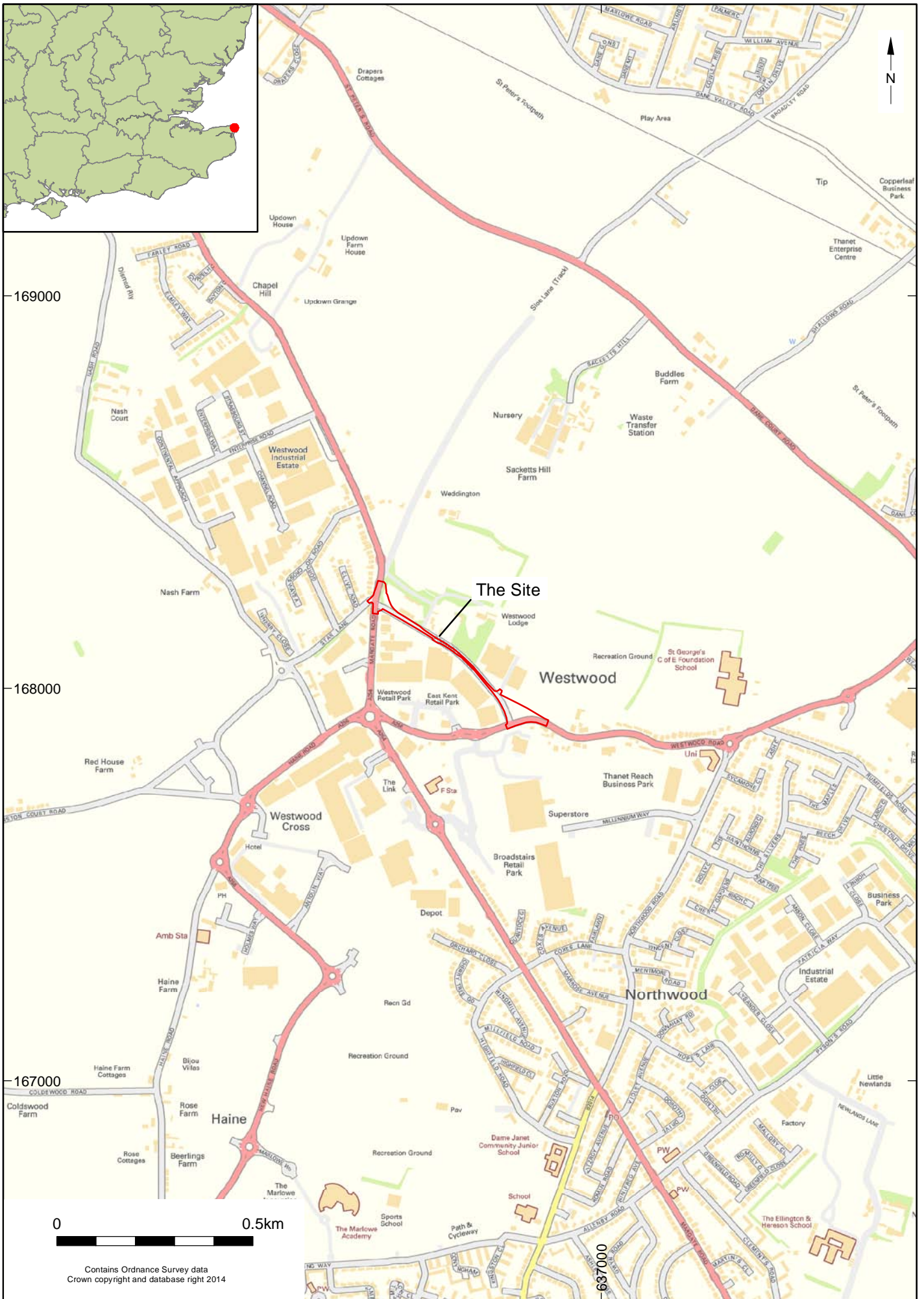
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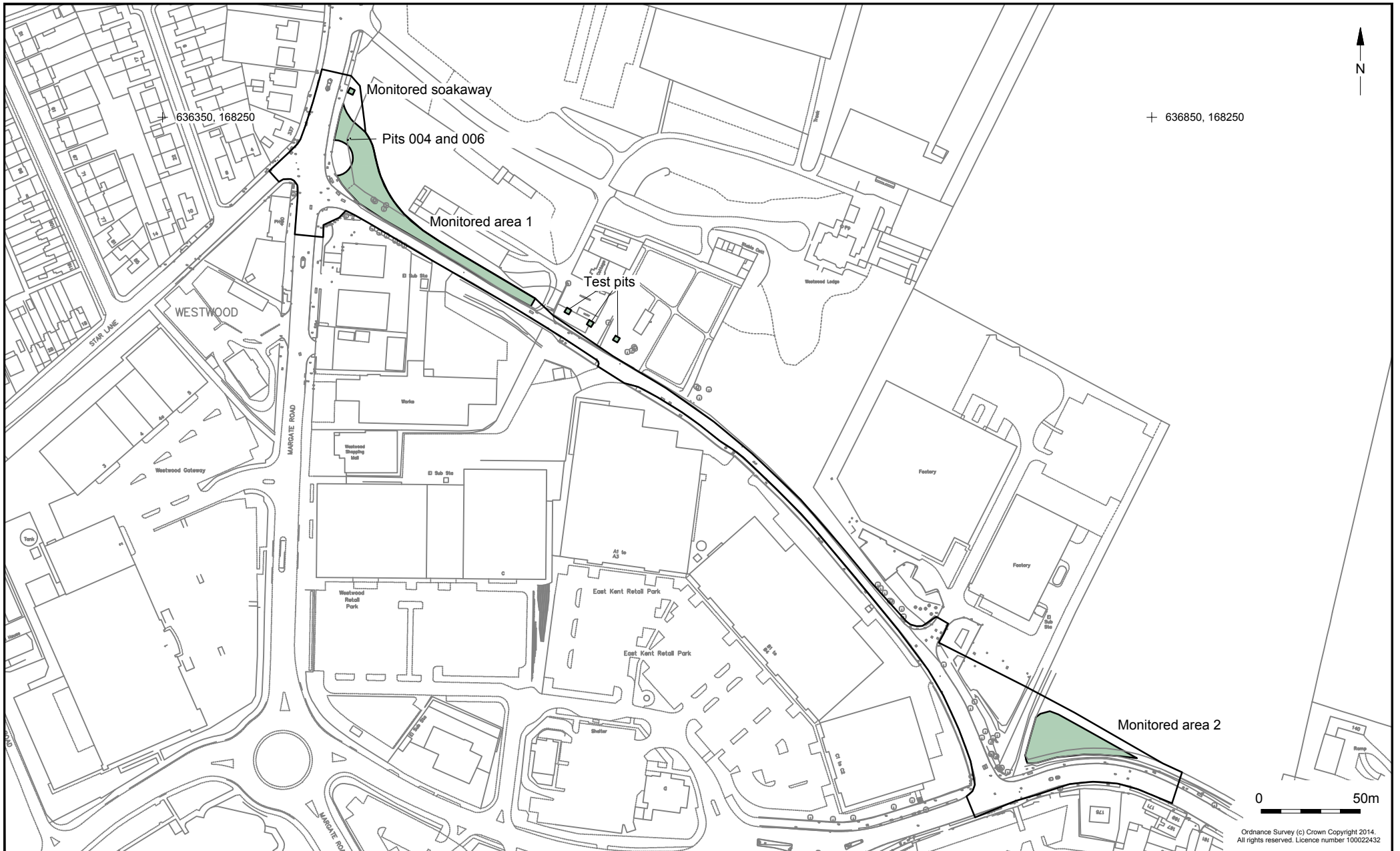
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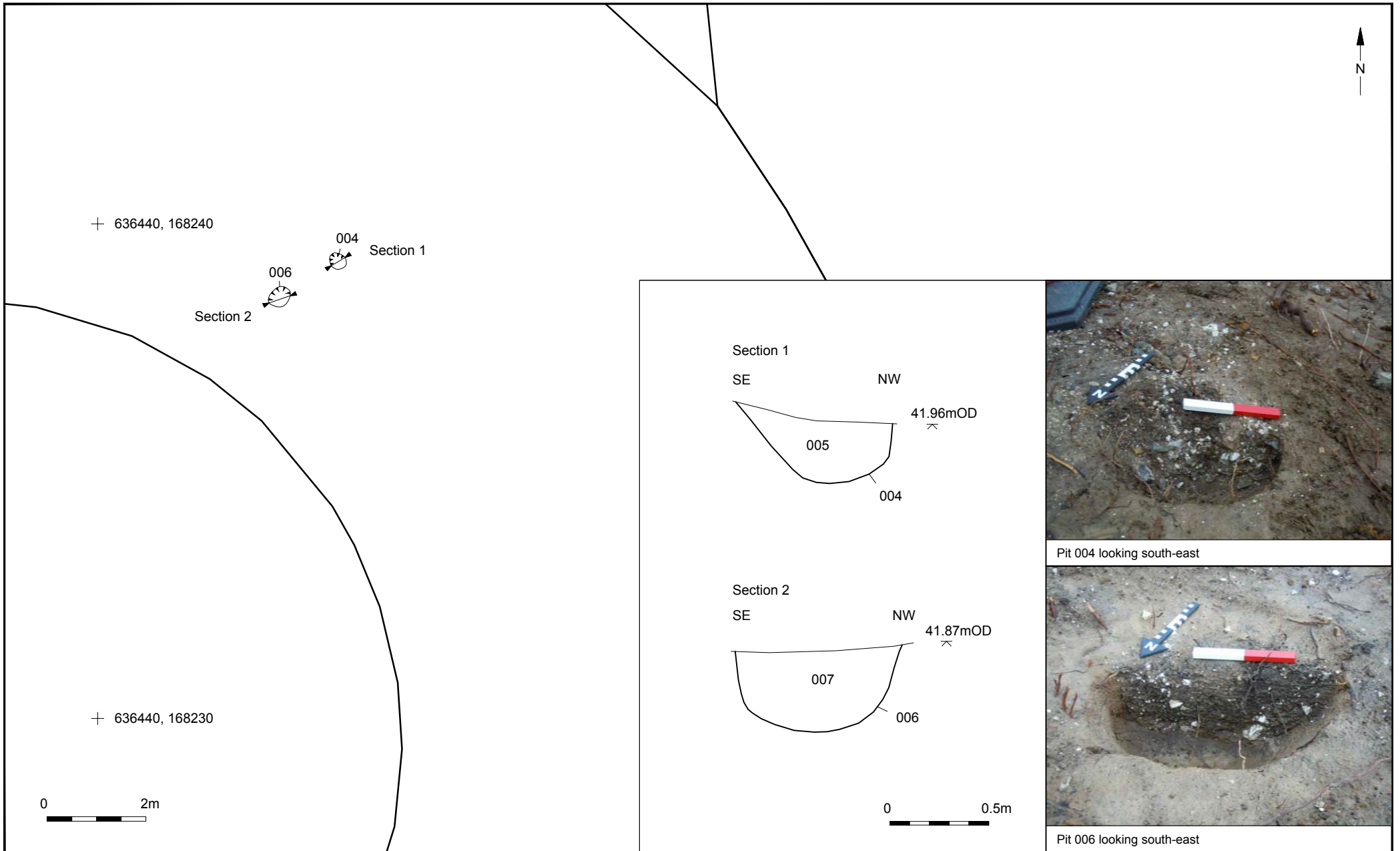
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© Archaeology South-East		Poorhole Lane, Broadstairs	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 6717	September 2014	Site location	
Report Ref: 2014323	Drawn by: RHC		



© Archaeology South-East		Poorhole Lane, Broadstairs	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 6717	September 2014	Plan of monitored areas	
Report Ref: 2014323	Drawn by: RHC		



© Archaeology South-East		Poorhole Lane, Broadstairs	Fig. 3
Project Ref: 6717	September 2014	Detail of monitored area 1	
Report Ref: 2014323	Drawn by: RHC		

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