

# **Hastings Water Supply**

Archaeological Walkover Survey of Beauport Park

April 2007

By

Richard James BA AIFA

**Archaeology South-East  
1 West Street,  
Ditchling, Sussex  
BN6 8TS**

**Tel: 01273 845497**

**Fax: 01273 844187**

**Email: [fau@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:fau@ucl.ac.uk)**

**Website: [www.archaeologyse.co.uk](http://www.archaeologyse.co.uk)**

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1** Archaeology South-East (ASE) have been commissioned by 4 Delivery Limited to carry out an archaeological walkover survey along part of the route corridor of the proposed Darwell to Beauport Raw Water Pipeline replacement scheme in East Sussex (Fig. 1).
- 1.2** A Desk-Based Assessment, which informed an Environmental Impact Assessment of all route options, has already been undertaken by ASE<sup>1</sup>. A full walkover survey of the pipeline route was carried out as part of the Assessment in July 2006. However, the portion of the route traversing the woodland at Beauport Park could not be adequately assessed due to the masking effects of profuse summer ground vegetation. Consequently, this area has been revisited in April 2007, when ground cover was still dormant (Figs 2 & 3).
- 1.3** The work was carried out following consultation with the Archaeological Officer of East Sussex County Council.

## **2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1** Full details of the archaeological background are contained in the Desk-Based Assessment report. In summary, Beauport Park comprises an area of largely 19<sup>th</sup> century woodland, including much ornamental planting, created from what was originally farmland. The area is archaeologically sensitive due to the presence of a significant Romano-British ironworking site (Scheduled Ancient Monument 383).

## **3.0 METHODOLOGY**

- 3.1** The walkover survey comprised an assessment of the pipeline easement where it passed through the woodland. The line was laid out in advance by 4 Delivery. Identified sites were plotted on to a 1:2500 base map, and a grid reference was recorded (where tree cover permitted) with a hand-held GPS unit (average accuracy +/- 7m).

## **4.0 RESULTS**

- 4.1** The ground conditions along the route were generally good, with low ground vegetation cover. Some extensive stands of rhododendron, originating as 19<sup>th</sup> century ornamental planting, occupied the southern part of the route adjacent to the hotel and Red River Wood, but access was generally available to most of these areas to inspect the ground. Only one area was completely inaccessible due to the sheer density of rhododendron roots and stems, but as this was on a particularly steep slope it is considered unlikely that anything of archaeological significance lies within the area (Fig. 2). Deciduous woodland

---

<sup>1</sup> C. Meaton, *An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment for the Hastings Water Supply Project*. Unpublished ASE Report 2269, November 2006 (Revision 3).

dominated in the northern half of the area, with many young trees growing closely together and occasional areas of coppice. The area adjacent to Stonegate included a dense stand of conifers. The walkover survey identified three sites of archaeological interest:

- Site 1 (Fig. 2: TQ 7905 1339 – 7911 1339) – a linear earthwork, approximately 60m in length and 3m wide. Ground level was lower to the north of the earthwork, with the bank measuring 0.75m in height. To the south it was 0.25m. No clear flanking ditch was observed. The earthwork was first observed 12m to the east of the existing pipeline, and headed due east, petering out before it reached the boundary of the adjacent caravan site. Several small trees, including coppiced examples, were noted on the bank itself, and the eastern half was largely obscured by a dense stand of rhododendrons. No trace of the earthwork was found to the west of the existing pipeline. The earthwork is not marked on any historic maps, the earliest of which dates from 1804, suggesting it predates the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The most likely interpretation is either a former field boundary or a former woodbank.
- Site 2 (Fig. 2: TQ 7904 1351) – a linear terrace, 3m wide and cut 0.2m into the hillside. Only part was visible traversing a clearing in the woodland, disappearing into dense scrub and vegetation at either end. The feature was traced intermittently in both directions, and appears to correspond with a sinuous track or path marked on modern OS maps but no longer in use. This feature appears to be of late 19<sup>th</sup> century or later date, and represents landscape design associated with Beauport Park. An earlier, straighter path marked on the 1804 map in the general vicinity could not be traced.
- Site 3 (Fig. 3: TQ 7908 1456) – a prominent hollow-way, 8m wide and up to 1m deep, leaves the existing track and continues due east through the woods for approximately 130m, where it joins with a modern trackway. This feature does not appear to be marked on any historic maps, and is interpreted as a pre-19<sup>th</sup> century trackway.

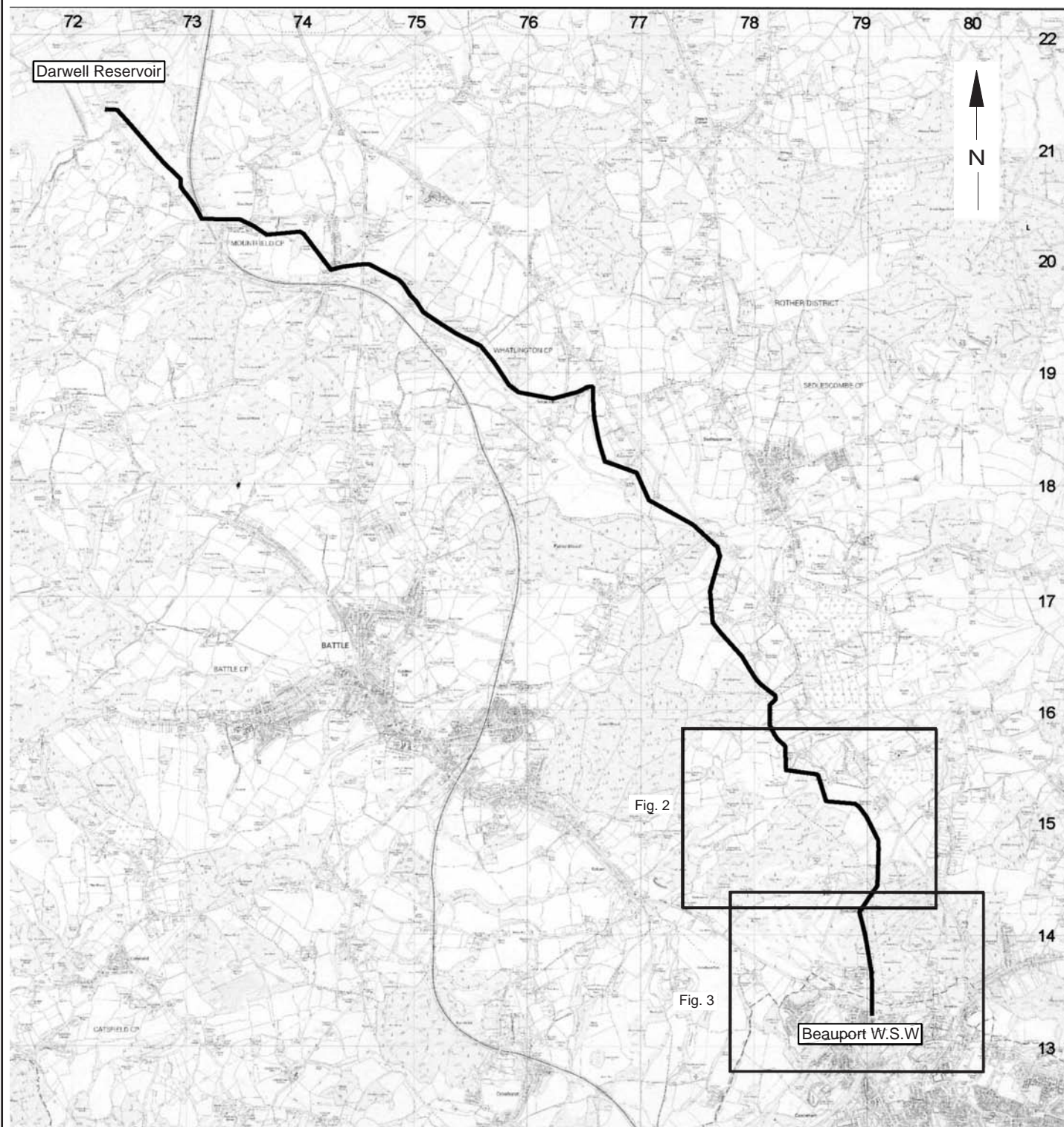
No other features of archaeological significance were noted during the walkover. The woodland is not classified as Ancient Woodland, and appears to be of relatively recent origin – this would be supported by the tree population, with a scatter of large mature farmland/parkland trees such as beech, oaks and more exotic species such as cedar, swamped by a swathe of smaller, younger trees representing late growth. Consequently, none of the characteristic archaeological features associated with historic woodlands were observed, such as woodbanks (excepting Site 1) or sawpits. However, although the 1804 map (reproduced in the Desk-Based Assessment) indicates much of

the area was originally farmland, no former field boundaries were observed either.

## **5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

**5.1** The following recommendations are suggested for further work. All suggested fieldwork is subject to discussion with East Sussex County Council Archaeology Officers:

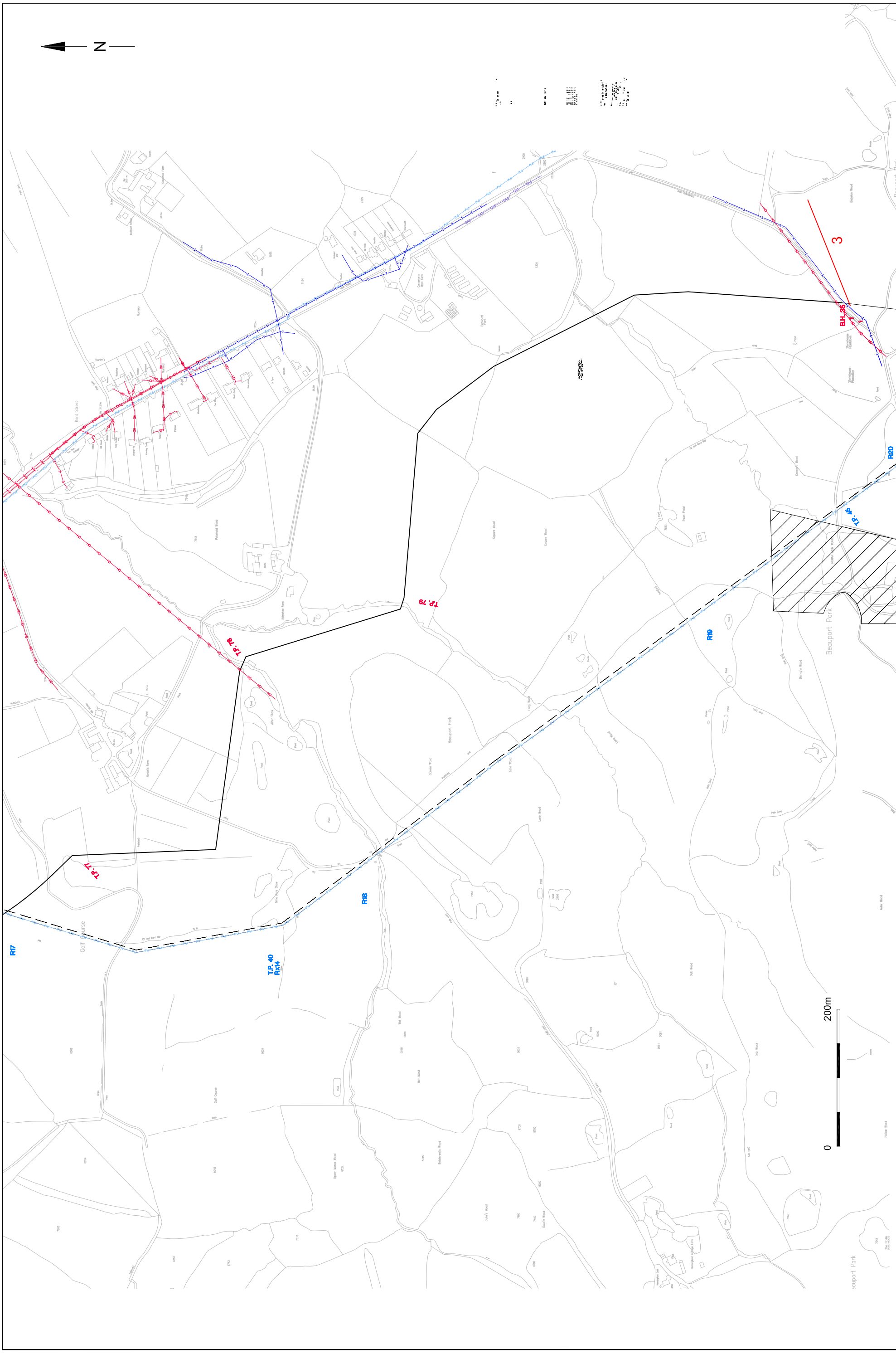
- Site 1 – This feature merits recording by topographical survey prior to commencement of groundworks. It should also be recorded during the groundworks (recording of sections through the earthwork, and excavation of any sub-surface components such as ditches).
- Site 2 – No further work is considered necessary.
- Site 3 - This feature merits recording by topographical survey prior to commencement of groundworks. It should also be recorded during the groundworks (recording of sections through the earthwork, and excavation of any sub-surface components such as ditches).



— Proposed pipeline route

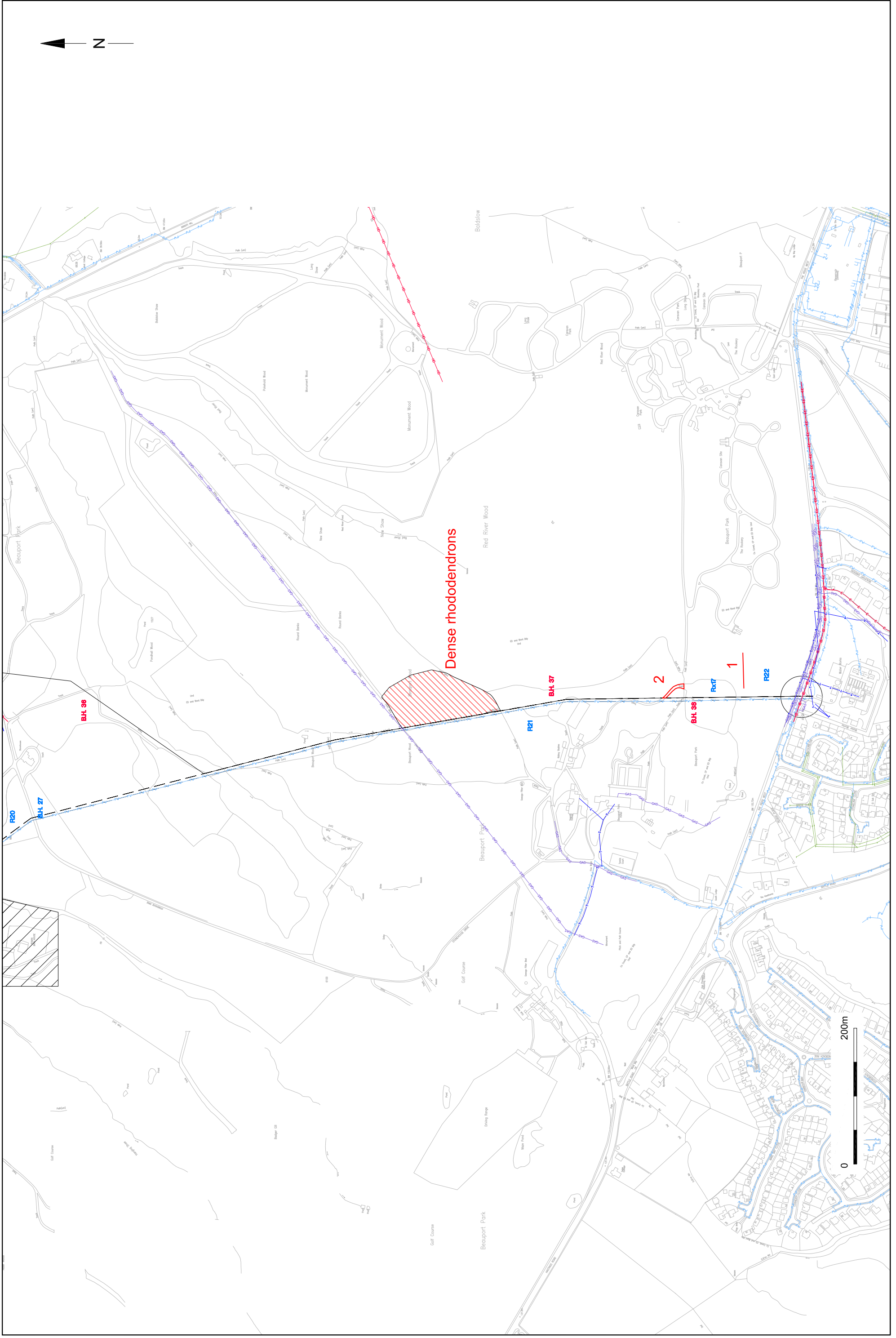
0 2km

© Archaeology South-East			Darwell - Beauport Raw Water Pipeline		Fig. 1
Ref: 2861	April 2007	Drawn by: JLR	Plan of route		



© Archaeology South-East  
 Ref: 2861 April 2007  
 Drawn by: JLR

Darwell - Beauport Raw Water Pipeline  
 Plan showing location of Archaeological Features  
 Fig. 2



© Archaeology South-East  
 Ref: 2861  
 April 2007  
 Drawn by:  
 JLR

Darwell - Beauport Raw Water Pipeline  
 Plan showing location of Archaeological Features  
 Fig. 3