An Archaeological Watching Brief at Chartwell House, Kent.

Car Park Extension

TQ 455 519

Project No. 2654

By

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Archaeology South-East

Archaeology South-East is a division of the Field Archaeology Unit, University College London, one of the largest groupings of academic archaeologists in the country. Consequently, Archaeology South-East has access to the conservation, computing and environmental backup of the college, as well as a range of other archaeological services.

The Field Archaeology Unit and South Eastern Archaeological Services (which became Archaeology South-East in 1996) were established in 1974 and 1991 respectively. Although field projects have been conducted world-wide, the Field Archaeology Unit retains a special interest in South-East England with the majority of our contract and consultancy work concentrated in Hampshire, Surrey, Sussex, Kent, Greater London and Essex.

Based in the local community, the Field Archaeology Unit sees an important part of its work as explaining the results to the broader public. Public lectures, open days, training courses and liaison with local archaeological societies are aspects of its community-based approach.

Drawing on experience of the countryside and towns of the south east of England the Unit can give advice and carry out surveys at an early stage in the planning process. By working closely with developers and planning authorities it is possible to incorporate archaeological work into developments with little inconvenience.

Abstract

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during excavations associated with the extension of car parking facilities at Chartwell House, a Registered Historic Park and Garden listed Grade II. Several areas across the site were subject to archaeological monitoring, including ground reduction for resurfacing work, excavation of drainage ditches and the topsoil strip of the new car park area to the north of the site. The previously utilised areas revealed a degree of truncation associated with former terracing and landscaping. Poorly drained alluvial deposits were recorded at the site of the car park extension. No archaeological deposits or artefacts were present.*

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Archaeology South East (ASE), a division of University College London Field Archaeology Unit (UCLFAU), were commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the construction of a car park extension and the excavation of drainage trenches. The site was located within the grounds of Chartwell House, near Westerham, Kent TQ 454518 (Figure 1)

1.2 An archaeological desk based assessment of the car park extension was undertaken by CgMs Consulting in November 2006 (Weaver 2006). This identified that the extension and associated drainage works would impact upon an area situated within the grounds of Chartwell House, a Registered Historic Park and Garden, listed Grade II*. The Archaeological Officer for Kent County Council and the Territory Archaeologist for the National Trust therefore required an archaeological watching brief to take place during the excavation of groundworks associated with the scheme.

1.3 The general objective of the archaeological work was to monitor the groundworks to ensure that any features, artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest exposed and affected by the excavations were recorded and interpreted to appropriate standards.

1.4 A Written Scheme of Investigation for these works was developed by Steven Weaver of CgMs and approved by the Archaeological Officer for Kent County Council and Territorial Archaeologist for the National Trust.

1.5 The fieldwork was undertaken by Michelle Collins, Alice Thorne, Deon Whittaker and Clive Meaton during six visits from 23 January 2007 - 7 February 2007. The project was managed by Neil Griffin *(*Project Manager).

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 The Specification for Archaeological Watching Brief (Weaver 2007) outlined the archaeological and historic background of the site. A brief summary of this information is given here, with due acknowledgement, for a fuller description, the Specification should be referred to.

2.2 The underlying geology within the site area is identified as Cretaceous Lower Greensand (Geological Survey of Great Britain 1990, Sheet 287).

2.3 An SMR research showed that there were no sites of archaeological interest or find spots in the footprint or immediate vicinity of the car park extension area. The eastern extent of the site is situated within the grounds of Chartwell House, a Registered Historic Park and Garden, listed Grade II* and the former residence of Sir Winston Churchill.

2.4 There is evidence from the Prehistoric, Roman, Medieval and Post-Medieval periods from the surrounding area. Approximately 1km to the north west of the site is the earthwork remains of Squerries Park Camp, an Iron Age univallate hillfort and Scheduled Ancient Monument (Kent No. 75) and 900m west is the projected line of the London to Lewes Roman Road. There is no known evidence from the Saxon / Early Medieval periods in the immediate vicinity, although Westerham (2.5km northwest) may originate from this time. In the Medieval – Post Medieval periods the extension area is though to have been part of the agricultural landscape and peripheral to the main foci of occupation.

2.5 In summary, the archaeological potential of the site was as follows: low-moderate potential to impact upon archaeological remains dating to the Iron Age and Medieval periods and a low potential identified for all other periods. The works would impact upon an area situated within the grounds of Chartwell House, a Registered Historic Park and Garden, listed Grade II*

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 The general aim of the fieldwork was to record and analyse any archaeological remains revealed in the course of all works that disturbed the ground, below current ground level, during development.

3.3 The following groundworks were subject to archaeological monitoring and recording (Figure 2): Service Trench A, Area B (topsoil strip), manhole excavation C, Service Trenches D, E and F, the Car Park Extension.

3.5 The groundworks associated with the construction of the car park extension and drainage trenches and were undertaken by a mechanical excavator fitted with a wide blade toothless ditching bucket. Occasionally, a toothed ditching bucket was used to remove hard materials. The mechanical excavator was only used to remove non-archaeologically significant material until archaeological features, layers or to the top of the natural geology was exposed.

3.6 All archaeological features were recorded according to standard UCLFAU practice. Where practicable, all features were planned at 1:20 and section drawings were drawn at 1:10. Drawings were done on plastic draughting film. Features and deposits were described on standard pro-forma recording sheets used by UCLFAU with particular attention being made to height below ground level. A full photographic record was kept of the work as appropriate.

4 RESULTS

4.1 *Service Trench A* (Figure 2)
Service Trench A was 85m long, ranged from 1.5m-3.5m in width and 2-2.5m depth. The stratigraphic sequence observed was as follows:

[20] Tarmac surface. 150mm thick.
[21] Mid orange brown sandy silt. .400mm thick.
[22] Light green grey silty sand.. 600mm thick.
[23] Dark blue black clay with organic material. 100mm thick,
[24] Mid grey blue silty clay. Contains fragments of charcoal and sandstone, made ground. 550mm thick,
[25] Orange brown silty clay, natural. – to limit of excavation at 2.3m,.

4.2 *Area B* (Figure 2)
Limited area strip, approximately, 30 m long, 1.5 m wide. The stratigraphic sequence observed was as follows:

[26] Gravel surface. 90mm thick.
[27] Made ground. 120mm thick.

4.3 *Manhole C* (Figure 2)
2m X 2.5 m and 2.5m deep. The stratigraphic sequence observed was as follows:

[28] Tarmac surface.
[29] Hardcore - 400mm thick..
[30] Dark grey brown silt, root disturbed. 100mm thick -
[31] Orange brown silty clay, root disturbed. Subsoil. 300mm thick.
[32] Orange brown silty clay. Natural. Depth of 2.5m at limit of excavation.

4.4 *Service Trench D* (Figure 2)
Service Trench D was approximately 39m long, 1.1 m wide and 2.5 m deep. The stratigraphic sequence observed was as follows:

[33] Tarmac surface.
[34] Hardcore. 400mm thick.
[35] Dark grey silty clay. 100mm thick.
[36] Very dark grey silty clay, no inclusions, 70mm thick Fill of [37]:
[37] Steep sided cut with slightly concave base. Slight slope to south side. Associated with modern construction. Cut into [38]. 3m wide :
[38] Orange brown silty clay. 800mm depth. Subsoil
[39] Orange grey mottled clay to depth of 2.5m limit of excavation. Natural

4.5 *Service Trench E* (Figure 2)
Service Trench E was approximately 50 metres long,1.5m wide, 200mm deep . The clearance of the upper deposits only were monitored in this trench.. The stratigraphic sequence observed was as follows:

[38] Tarmac - 200mm in thick.
[39] Made ground / tarmac base.

4.6 *Car Park Extension* (Figure 2)
Topsoil strip and levelling for construction. Approximately 15m square, 2 m deep. The stratigraphic sequence observed was as follows:

[07] Dark brown grey of loose - friable topsoil. Modern brick present. .1.2 m deep
[06] Light brown yellow deposit of friable clay silt subsoil. no inclusions. 100 mm deep.
[09] Mid grey deposit firm silty clay, with manganese (alluvial deposit). .
[08] Orange mottled grey deposit firm – friable silty clay (alluvial deposit).

5 Interpretation and Conclusion

5.1 The underlying geology encountered during the course of the groundworks consisted of of Atherfield Clay overlain by Hythe Beds (Geological Survey of Great Britain 1990, Sheet 287).

5.2 The general deposits are consistent throughout the site, consisting of made ground and surfacing material over the previously developed and landscaped / terraced portions of the site. This terracing was particularly evident in the vicinity of Trench A. The excavations typically revealed deposits of silty subsoils, occasional clay lenses, with a silty clay natural substrate (Atherfield Clay)

5.3 The Car Park Extension was located in the lowest area of the site. The monitoring of the groundworks in this area exposed deposits which may have been alluvial in nature, [09] and [08].

5.4 In conclusion, no archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were uncovered during the monitoring of ground works at the Chartwell House site. The work which was undertaken concurrently with this watching brief on a new sewer run at Chartwell and in its vicinity was also archaeologically sterile.

6. Bibliography

CGMS Consulting, 2006 An Archaeological Desk Based Assessment: S98 Sewer Requisition, Chartwell House, Westerham, Kent.

Weaver, S. 2007. Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief Car park Extension, Chartwell House, Westerham, Kent. CgMs Consulting Ltd. Unpublished Report.

SMR Summary Form

Site Code	CHH06					
Identification Name and Address	Chartwell House , nr Westerham, Kent					
County, District &/or Borough	Westerham, Kent					
OS Grid Refs.	*TQ 455519*					
Geology	Atherfield Clay & Hythe Beds					
Arch. South-East Project Number	2654					
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. 22nd Jan – 7th Feb 07	Other		
Sponsor/Client	National Trust					
Project Manager	Neil Griffin and Louise Rayner					
Project Supervisor	Neil Griffin					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM	Other Modern ✓		

100 Word Summary.

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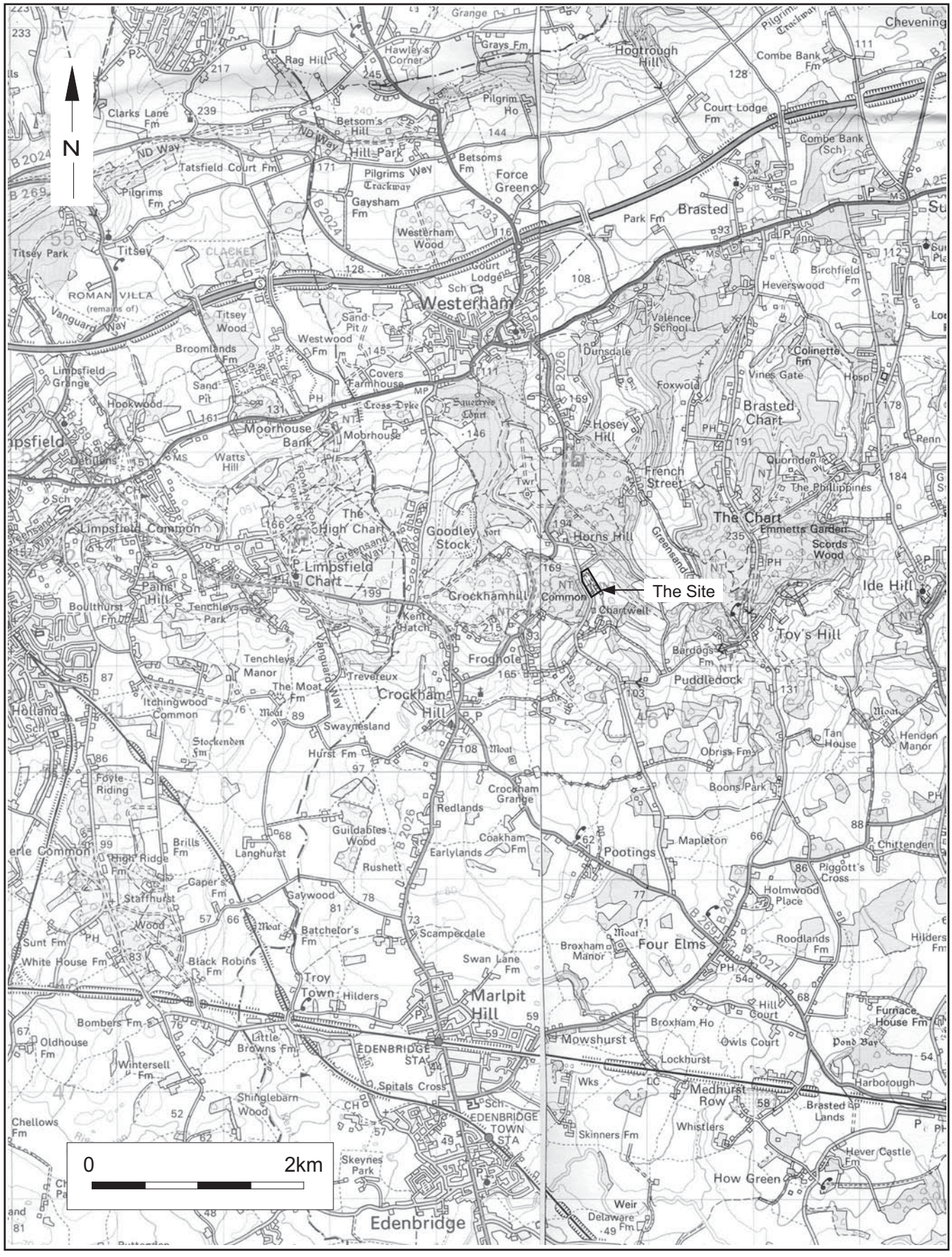
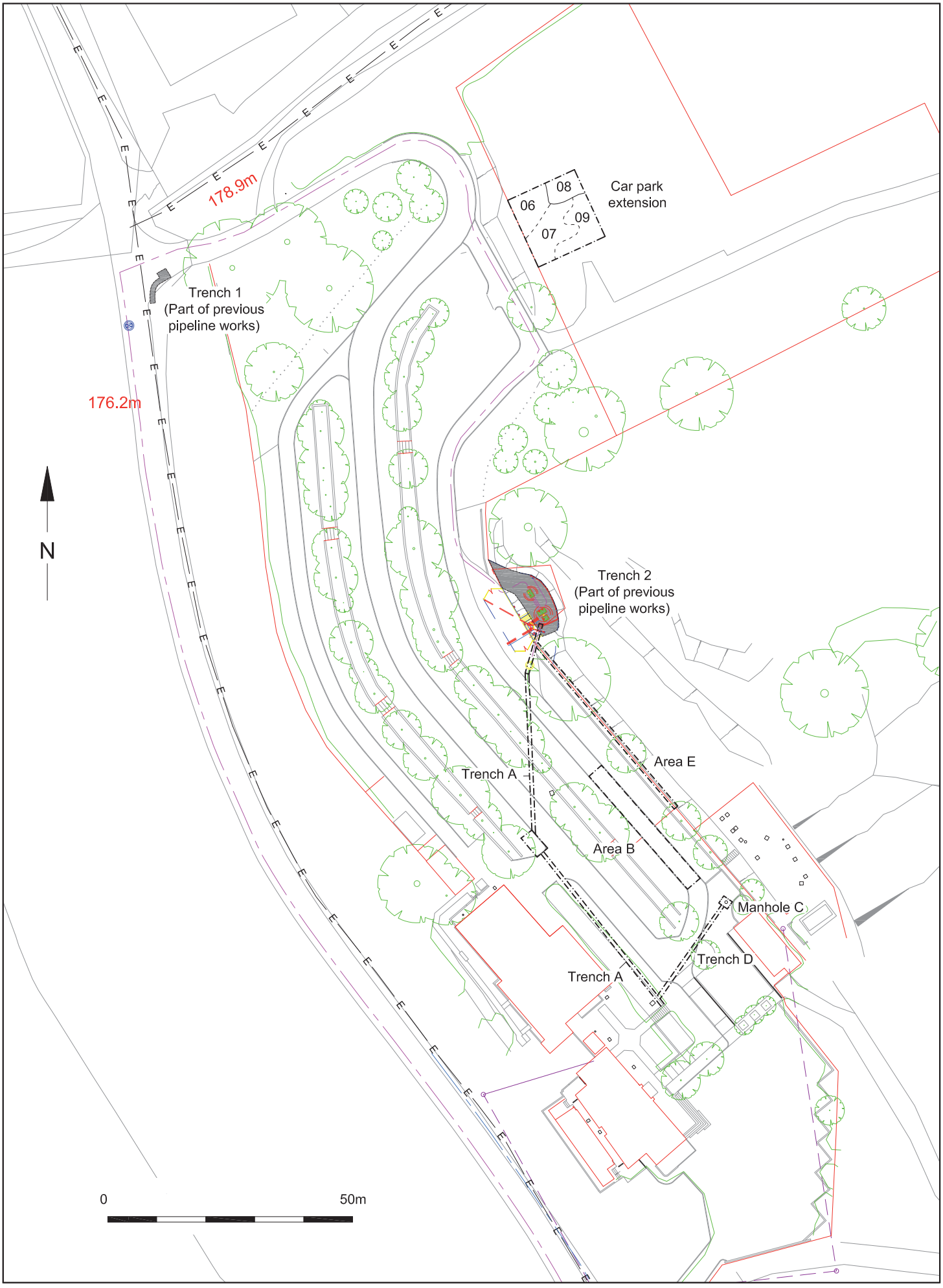


© **Archaeology South-East**			Chartwell House Car Park Extension	Fig. 1
Ref: 2654	April 2007	Drawn by: JLR	Site Location Plan	



© Archaeology South-East			Chartwell House Car Park Extension	Fig. 2
Ref: 2654	April 2007	Drawn by: JLR	Areas Monitored During Watching Brief	