

**Archaeological Evaluation Report  
Land to the South of Windmill Hill Road  
Herstmonceux, East Sussex  
BN27 4RT**

**NGR: TQ 64575 12142**

**Planning Refs: WD/2019/1771/MAJ & WD/2019/1772/MAJ**

**ASE Project No: 200395**

**Site Code: WIH20**

**ASE Report No: 2020013**

**OASIS ID: archaeol6-405983**



**By Giles Dawkes**

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<b>Reviewed and approved by:</b>	<b>Dan Swift</b>	<b>Project Manager</b>	
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**Abstract**

*This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation carried out by Archaeology South-East at land to the south of Windmill Hill Road, Herstmonceux, East Sussex between the 6th and the 8th September 2020. The fieldwork was commissioned by Herstmonceux Community Land Trust in advance of a residential redevelopment.*

*Nine trenches were excavated. An intact subsoil horizon was recorded in all trenches. There was no evidence of any significant truncation. Three shallow, undated ditches were recorded sealed beneath the subsoil in three of the trenches. The rest of the trenches were archaeologically negative.*

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site Background**

- 1.1.1 Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Herstmonceux Community Land Trust to undertake an archaeological evaluation of Land to the south of Windmill Hill Road, Herstmonceux, East Sussex, centred National Grid Reference TQ 64575 12142 (Figure 1).

### **1.2 Geology and Topography**

- 1.2.1 According to the latest data available from the British Geological Survey, the underlying geology at the site consists of Tunbridge Wells Sand Formation of siltstone, mudstone and sandstone. No superficial deposits are recorded in the vicinity (BGS 2020).

### **1.3 Planning Background**

- 1.3.1 Planning permission has been granted for the redevelopment of the site (Wealden District Council Planning Ref: WD/2019/1771/MAJ & WD/2019/1772/MAJ). Following consultation between Wealden District Council and East Sussex County Council (Wealden District Council's advisers on archaeological issues), the following condition was attached to the planning permissions:

*11. No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No phase of the development here by permitted shall be brought into use until the archaeological site investigation and post-investigation assessment (including provision for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition) for that phase has been completed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.*

*The archaeological site investigation and post-investigation assessment will be undertaken in accordance with the programme set out in the written scheme of investigation approved under condition.*

*REASON: To ensure that the archaeological and historical interest of the site is safeguarded and recorded to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework and to enable the recording of any items of historical or archaeological interest, in accordance with the requirements of SPO2, SPO13 and WCS14 to the Wealden Core Strategy Local Plan 2013, coupled with the requirements of paragraphs 189 - 199 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2018.*

- 1.3.2 In response, a Written Scheme of Investigation (ASE 2020) for a programme of archaeological evaluation was submitted to and approved by the East Sussex County Council archaeological officer prior to fieldwork.

## **1.4 Scope of Report**

- 1.4.1 This report details the results of the following archaeological evaluation carried out between 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020. The fieldwork was carried out by Giles Dawkes and managed by Paul Mason (fieldwork) and Dan Swift (post-excavation).

## **2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The archaeological background to the site is a summary taken from a Desk Based Assessment on the site undertaken by Canterbury Archaeological Trust (CAT 2019).

### ***Prehistoric***

- 2.2 A Neolithic to Bronze Age gully was identified during an evaluation carried out on land adjacent to Lime Cross Recreation Ground, Herstmonceux, 760m west of the site (SMR Number MES36400). At Boreham Street (centred 1.14km east of the site) during a watching brief and field walking undertaken in advance of the groundworks 960m east of the site, struck flint was found. Three of the recovered flint artefacts are of possible Mesolithic or early Neolithic origin, with the remainder being assigned to the Bronze Age (Event ID: EES14341; SMR Number MES7373). A barbed and tanged arrowhead (early Bronze Age – 2350 BC to 1501 BC) has been found 750m south of the site (SMR Number MES17250).
- 2.3 On land adjacent to Lime Cross Recreation Ground, Herstmonceux, 880m north-west of the site, several features including ditches, gullies, pits and postholes were identified in nine evaluation trenches with Bronze Age occupation represented. One Bronze Age pit yielded a fragmented baked clay pedestal thought to be typical of those used in salt production, though the significance of this find here is uncertain (Event ID: EES18779; SMR Number MES36401).

### ***Roman***

- 2.4 During an evaluation and watching brief for the Windmill Hill to Hazards Green Transfer, centred 1.8km east of the site, three roads with possible Roman to medieval origins were found. The watching brief uncovered deposits associated with an ancient marine inlet together with posts associated with a possible Roman jetty (Event ID: EES17268).

### ***Saxon & Medieval***

- 2.5 No Anglo-Saxon archaeological remains are reported within the site or within a 1km radius of the site.
- 2.6 Herstmonceux is recorded in Domesday Book, in the Hundred of Foxearle, as a settlement of 42 households (30 villagers. 12 cottagers) and 1 church. This church may be All Saints Church, which overlooks Herstmonceux Castle, c 2.5km south-east of the current village of Herstmonceux (formerly Gardners Street) and 2.1km south of the site. The medieval centre was, therefore, over 2km south of the present settlement. The nearest evidence of medieval land use or settlement to the site during this period is Comphurst medieval farmstead, Wartling, located 510m south of the PDA, an L-plan regular courtyard featuring a small secondary yard.



### ***Post-medieval & Modern***

- 2.7 Thomas Budgen's 1798 map depicts a large settlement at Gardners Street (later renamed Herstmonceux) to the north-west, with the site lying in undeveloped land to the south of the road running from this settlement southeast to Boreham Street in the small settlement of Windmill Hill. There are several small properties shown on the map to the north-west of the PDA (arguably among them is Miller's House, which dates to the eighteenth century), and on the opposite side of the road to the north beside what would become Victoria Road, as well as a windmill some 100m or so to the east.
- 2.8 The bulk of the settlement, however, is east of the site and east of the windmill, lining both sides of the main road and concentrating on the area around Joe's Lane and Comphurst Lane that run north and south of the main road respectively.
- 2.9 The post-style windmill on Windmill Lane, which appears on the 1798 map, 120m east of the site, has been dated using dendrochronology, the findings of which suggest it was rebuilt in 1814.
- 2.10 The area around the site was predominantly agricultural in character during the post-medieval period, and this continued through to the modern day.

### **2.3 Project Aims and Objectives**

- 3.1.1 The general aims of the evaluation are:
- To establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains and deposits within the site
  - To determine the survival, extent and minimum depth below modern ground level of any such remains
  - To determine the nature and significance of any archaeological deposits to enable the Archaeological Advisor to Local Planning Authority to make an informed decision as to the requirement for any further archaeological work at the site
- 3.2 It also has the potential to contribute to the following South-East Research Framework (SERF; KCC 2020) topics:
- The use of the Weald in later prehistory (SERF Middle Bronze Age/Iron Age)
  - To what extent and in what ways have developments in agricultural technology and demand influenced historic landscape development? (SERF Historic Landscapes)
  - To what extent and in what ways can past landscapes and their components (prehistoric onwards) be understood in the present landscape? (SERF Historic Landscapes)

### 3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

(Figure 2)

#### 3.1 Fieldwork Methodology

3.1.1 Nine trenches measuring 30m by 1.8m were mechanically excavated using a toothless ditching bucket under archaeological supervision. There was no modification of the proposed trench location plan as described on Figure 2 of the WSI (ASE 2020)

3.1.2 Machine excavation continued to the surface of the underlying geological deposit, or to the top of archaeological deposits.

3.1.3 All hand excavation and recording was then undertaken in line with sections 4 and 5 of the WSI (ibid) and according to accepted standards for archaeological work in Sussex (WSCC, ESCC & CDC 2019; ClfA 2019).

#### 3.2 Archive

3.2.1 The site archive is currently held at ASE offices and will be submitted to the recipient archive depository at the end of the project. The contents of the site archive are tabulated below (Tables 1 and 2).

Context sheets	32
Section sheets	1
Plans sheets	0
Colour photographs	0
B&W photos	0
Digital photos	14
Context register	0
Drawing register	0
Watching brief forms	0
Trench Record forms	9

Table 1: Quantification of site paper archive

Bulk finds (quantity e.g. 1 bag, 1 box, 0.5 box 0.5 of a box )	0
Registered finds (number of)	0
Flots and environmental remains from bulk samples	0
Palaeoenvironmental specialists sample samples (e.g. columns, prepared slides)	0
Waterlogged wood	0
Wet sieved environmental remains from bulk samples	0

Table 2: Quantification of artefact and environmental samples

## 4.0 RESULTS

4.0.1 A simple stratigraphic sequence of natural geology overlain by subsoil and topsoil was recorded across the site. The subsoil varied in thickness between 0.3m and 0.36m and the topsoil between 0.30m and 0.33m.

4.0.2 The top of the natural geology was located at between 40.20m OD in Trench 4 in the south-west of the site and 49.84m OD in Trench 6 in the north-east of the site.

### 4.4 Negative trenches 2, 3, 5, 7, 8 and 9

(Figure 8)

4.4.1 No archaeological features or deposits were present in these trenches. A list of recorded contexts in these trenches is given in Appendix 1 at the back of this report.

### 4.1 Trench 1

(Figure 3)

Context	Type	Interpretation	Length	Width	Depth m	Height m AOD
1/001	Deposit	Topsoil	30m	1.8m	0.26	45-72-46.89
1/002	Deposit	Subsoil	30m	1.8m	0.2	
1/003	Deposit	Tunbridge Wells Sand Formation	30m	1.8m	-	45.26-46.43
1/004	Cut	Ditch	>1.8m	1.5m	0.38	
1/005	Fill	Ditch fill	>1.8m	1.5m	0.38	

Table 3: Trench 1 list of recorded contexts

4.1.1 The natural yellow brown clay, sand and silts of the Tunbridge Wells Sand Formation [1/003] was located at 45.26-46.43m OD.

4.1.2 North-east aligned ditch [1/004] was cut into [1/003] and had steep concave sides and a flat base. The fill [1/005] was a dark brown clay silt with no finds.

4.1.3 Overlying and sealing the feature was a grey brown clay silt subsoil [1/002] and a dark brown silt topsoil [1/001].

## 4.2 Trench 4

(Figure 4)

Context	Type	Interpretation	Length	Width	Depth m	Height m AOD
4/001	Deposit	Topsoil	30m	1.8m	0.3	40.86-41.34
4/002	Deposit	Subsoil	30m	1.8m	0.36	
4/003	Deposit	Tunbridge Wells Sand Formation	30m	1.8m	-	40.20-40.68
4/004	Fill	Ditch fill	>1.8m	0.75m	0.23	
4/005	Cut	Ditch	>1.8m	0.23m	0.23	

Table 4: Trench 4 list of recorded contexts

- 4.2.1 The natural yellow brown clay, sand and silts of Tunbridge Wells Sand Formation [4/003] was located at 40.20-40.68m OD.
- 4.2.2 North-north-east aligned ditch [4/005] was cut into [4/003] and had steep concave sides and a flat base. Ditch fill [4/004] was dark brown clay silt with no finds.
- 4.2.3 Overlying and sealing the feature was grey brown clay silt subsoil [4/002] and dark brown silt topsoil [4/001].

## 4.3 Trench 6

(Figure 5)

Context	Type	Interpretation	Length	Width	Depth m	Height m AOD
6/001	Deposit	Topsoil	30m	1.8m	0.3	48.76-50.48
6/002	Deposit	Subsoil	30m	1.8m	0.34	
6/003	Deposit	Tunbridge Wells Sand Formation	30m	1.8m	-	48.12-49.84
6/004	Cut	Ditch fill	>1.8m	0.7m	0.19	
6/005	Fill	Ditch	>1.8m	0.7m	0.19	

Table 5: Trench 6 list of recorded contexts

- 4.3.1 The natural yellow brown clay, sand and silts of Tunbridge Wells Sand Formation [6/003] was located at 48.12-49.84m OD.
- 4.3.2 Cutting [6/003] was east-north-east aligned ditch [6/005] with a shallow profile and a flat base. The ditch fill was sterile brown clay with no finds.

## **5.0 DISCUSSION**

### **5.1 Overview of stratigraphic sequence**

- 5.1.1 A simple stratigraphic sequence of natural geology overlain by subsoil and topsoil was recorded across the site. The subsoil varied in depth between 0.3m and 0.36m thick and the topsoil 0.30m and 0.333m thick.
- 5.1.2 The top of the natural geology was located at between 40.20m OD in Trench 4 in the south-west of the site and 49.84m OD in Trench 6 in the north-east of the site.
- 5.1.3 Three undated ditches were the only features recorded, these were found in three separate trenches.
- 5.1.4 The evaluation methodology was successfully employed and weather, and site conditions were conducive to there being a high degree of confidence in the results.

### **5.2 Deposit survival and existing impacts**

- 5.2.1 An intact subsoil horizon between 0.3m and 0.36m thick beneath topsoil between 0.30m and 0.33m was recorded in all trenches. There was no evidence of any significant truncation of the natural geology.
- 5.2.2 The integrity of the archaeological horizon is therefore considered to be good and the results of the evaluation a good representation of the archaeological potential of the site.
- 5.2.3 The archaeological features were all found sealed beneath the subsoil horizon which suggests that the features are of some antiquity.

### **5.3 Discussion of archaeological remains by period**

- 5.3.1 Three shallow, undated ditches were recorded. These do not appear on known early map sources such as the Tithe map of 1839 (Figure 6), nor the 1874 Ordnance Survey map (Figure 7). All three ditches were found sealed beneath an intact subsoil horizon and are therefore probably of some antiquity.

### **5.4 Potential impact on archaeological remains**

- 5.4.1 The integrity of the archaeological horizon is considered to be good and the limited results of the evaluation a good representation of the actual archaeological potential of the site. Given the paucity, and nature of the archaeological features found in this evaluation, it seems unlikely that development of the site will impact upon significant archaeological remains.

### **5.5 Consideration of research aims**

- 5.5.1 The general aims of the evaluation have been met and are all discussed above.
- 5.5.2 The South-East Research Framework (SERF; KCC 2020) topics are difficult to

address given the paucity of dating evidence.

## **5.6 Updated Research Agenda**

5.6.1 To attempt to determine the date of the three undated ditches.

## **7.7 Conclusions**

7.7.1 Nine trenches were excavated. An intact subsoil horizon was recorded in all trenches. There was no evidence of any significant truncation. Three shallow, undated ditches were recorded sealed beneath the subsoil in three of the trenches. The rest of the trenches were archaeologically negative.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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CIfA, 2019 *Regulations, Standard and Guidance*

KCC, 2020 South-East Research Framework (SERF)

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/leisure-and-community/history-and-heritage/south-east-research-framework>

WSCC, ESCC, CDC, 2019 *Sussex Archaeological Standards*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ASE would like to thank by Herstmonceux Community Land Trust for commissioning the work and for their assistance throughout the project, and Neil Griffin, County Archaeologist East Sussex County Council for his guidance and monitoring. The evaluation was directed by Giles Dawkes. Paul Mason managed the fieldwork and Dan Swift the post-excavation process.

**HER Summary**

Site code	WIH20				
Project code	200395				
Planning reference	WD/2019/1771/MAJ & WD/2019/1772/MAJ				
Site address	Land to the south of Windmill Hill Road, Herstmonceux, East Sussex, BN27 4RT				
District/Borough	Herstmonceux				
NGR (12 figures)	564575 512142				
Geology	Tunbridge Wells Sand Formation				
Fieldwork type	Eval				
Date of fieldwork	6th - 8th September 2020				
Sponsor/client	Herstmonceux Community Land Trust				
Project manager	Paul Mason				
Project supervisor	Giles Dawkes				
Period summary					
					Undated
Project summary	Nine trenches were excavated. An intact subsoil horizon was recorded in all trenches. There was no evidence of any significant truncation. Three shallow, undated ditches were recorded sealed beneath the subsoil in three of the trenches. The rest of the trenches were archaeologically negative.				
Museum/Accession No.					



## OASIS Form

### OASIS ID: archaeol6-405983

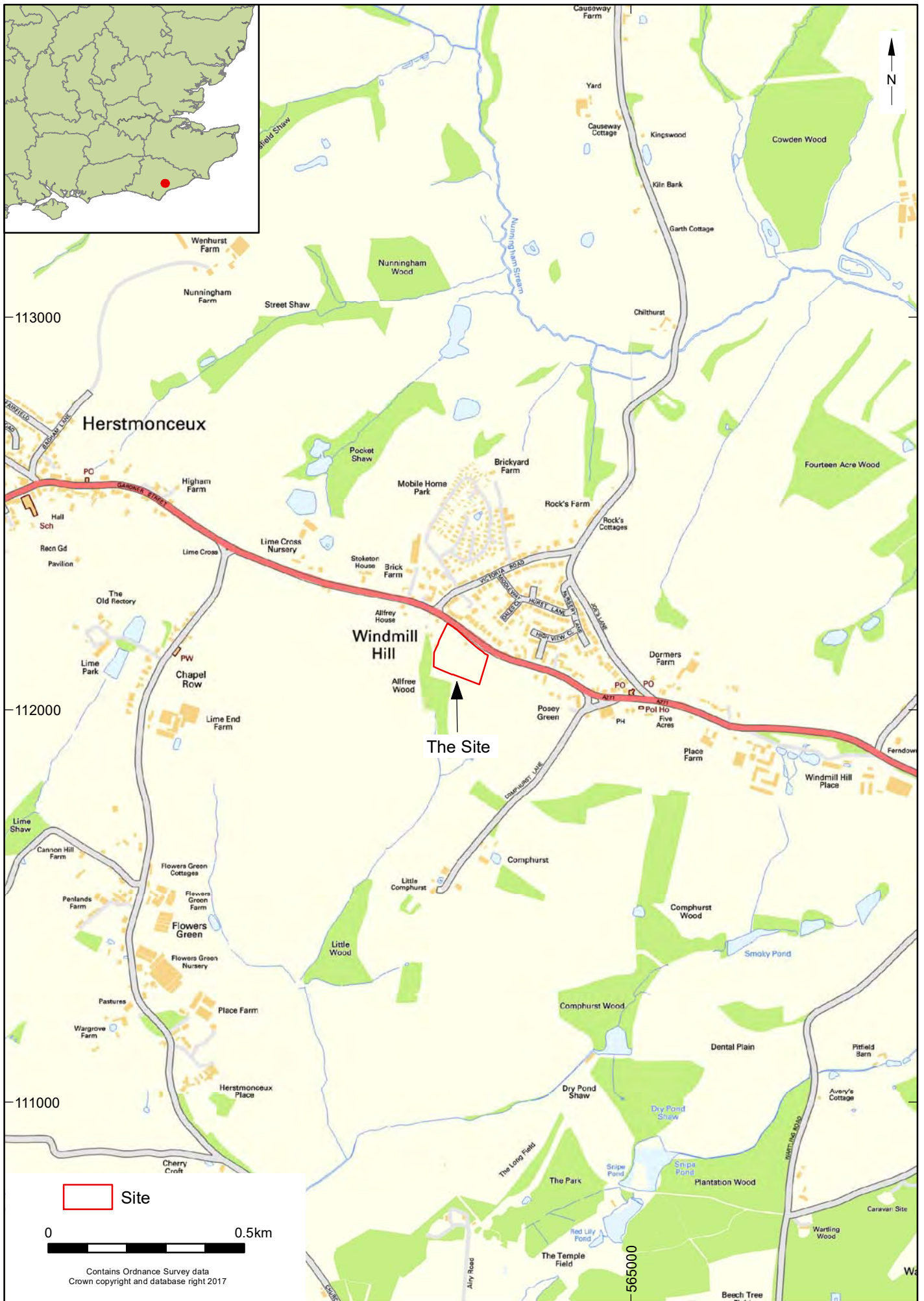
#### Project details

Project name	Archaeological Evaluation Report Land to the South of Windmill Hill Road Herstmonceux, East Sussex BN27 4RT
Short description of the project	Nine trenches were excavated. An intact subsoil horizon was recorded in all trenches. There was no evidence of any significant truncation. Three shallow, undated ditches were recorded sealed beneath the subsoil in three of the trenches. The rest of the trenches were archaeologically negative.
Project dates	Start: 06-09-2020 End: 08-09-2020
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	WIH20 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Grassland Heathland 1 - Heathland
Monument type	DITCHES Uncertain
Methods & techniques	"Test Pits"
Development type	Rural residential
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	EAST SUSSEX WEALDEN HERSTMONCEUX Land to the South of Windmill Hill Road Herstmonceux, East Sussex
Postcode	BN27 4RT
Study area	6400 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 64575 12142 50.884704569996 0.339954661817 50 53 04 N 000 20 23 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 40.2m Max: 49.84m
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	East Sussex County Council
Project design originator	East Sussex County Council
Project director/manager	Paul Mason

Project supervisor	Giles Dawkes
Type of sponsor/funding body	Client
Name of sponsor/funding body	Herstmonceux Community Land Trust
Project archives	
Digital Archive recipient	Local Museum
Digital Archive ID	WIH20
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic","Survey"
Digital Media available	"Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Local Museum
Paper Archive ID	WIH20
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Miscellaneous Material","Report"
Project bibliography	
1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Archaeological Evaluation Report Land to the South of Windmill Hill Road Herstmonceux, East Sussex BN27 4RT
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Dawkes, G
Other bibliographic details	ASE Report No: 2020013
Date	2020
Issuer or publisher	ASE
Place of issue or publication	Portslade
Description	grey lit illust bound rep
Entered by	Dan Swift (d.swift@ucl.ac.uk)
Entered on	19 October 2020

**Appendix 1: Archaeologically negative trenches: list of recorded contexts**

<b>Trench</b>	<b>Context</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>	<b>Depth m</b>	<b>Height m OD</b>
2	2/001	Layer	Topsoil	0.2	44.50
2	2/002	Layer	Subsoil	0.3	
2	2/003	Deposit	Natural	-	44.00
3	3/001	Layer	Topsoil	0.3	46.19
3	3/002	Layer	Subsoil	0.4	
3	3/003	Deposit	Natural	-	45.49
5	5/001	Layer	Topsoil	0.31	42.63
5	5/002	Layer	Subsoil	0.32	
5	5/003	Deposit	Natural	-	44.86
7	7/001	Layer	Topsoil	0.33	46.32
7	7/002	Layer	Subsoil	0.54	
7	7/003	Deposit	Natural	-	45.45
8	7/001	Layer	Topsoil	0.32	43.67
8	7/002	Layer	Subsoil	0.32	
8	7/003	Deposit	Natural	-	43.03
9	7/001	Layer	Topsoil	0.3	50.47
9	7/002	Layer	Subsoil	0.35	
9	7/003	Deposit	Natural	-	49.82

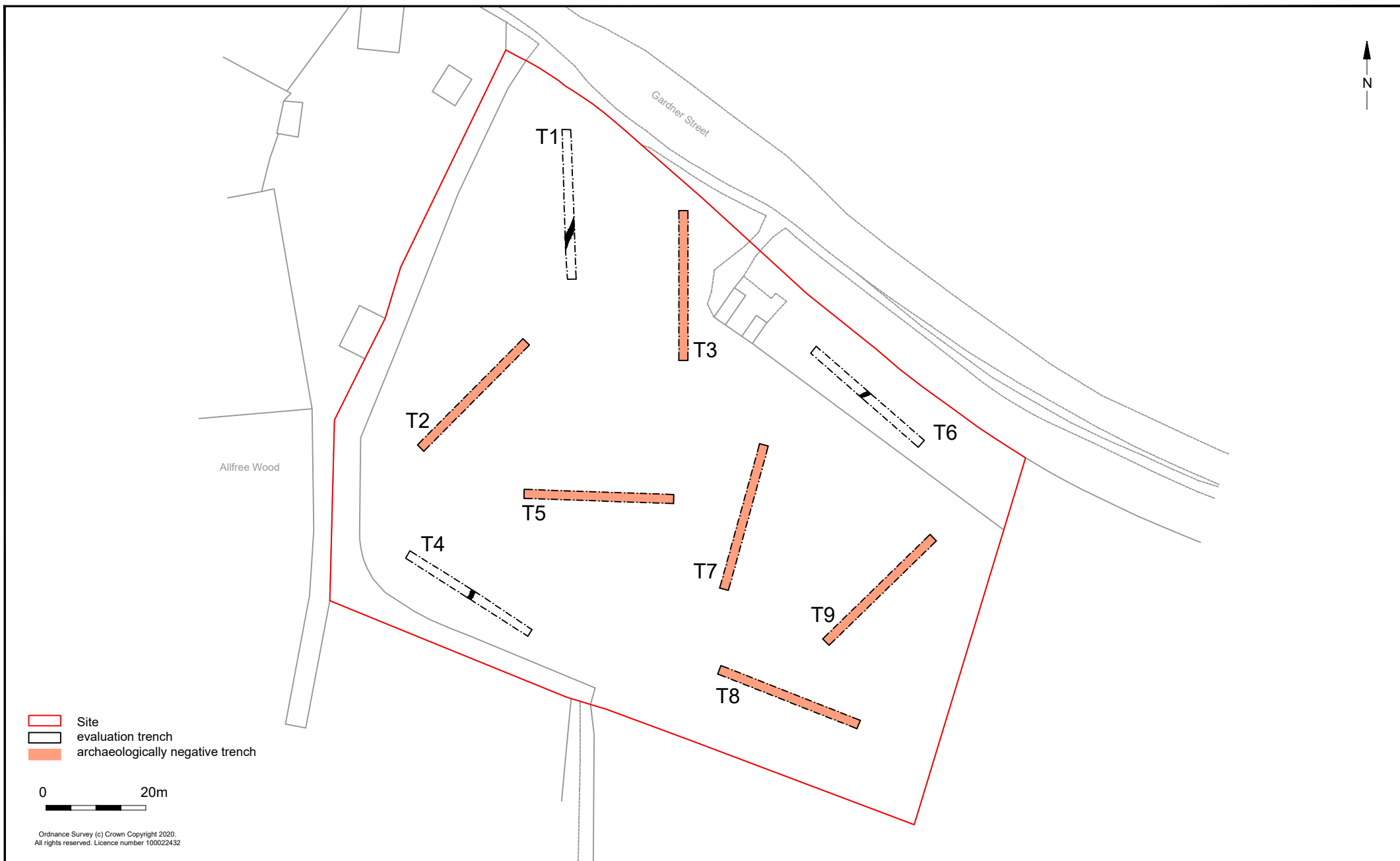


Site

0 0.5km

Contains Ordnance Survey data  
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© Archaeology South-East		Land to the south of Windmill Hill Road, Herstmonceux, East Sussex		Fig. 1
Project Ref: 200395	Oct 2020	Site Location		
Report Ref: 2020013	Drawn by: LG			

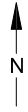


- Site
- evaluation trench
- archaeologically negative trench

0 20m

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© Archaeology South-East		Land to the south of Windmill Hill Road, Herstmonceux, East Sussex		Fig.2
		Site Plan with Trench Layout		
Project Ref: 200395	Oct 2020			
Report Ref: 2020013	Drawn by: FG			

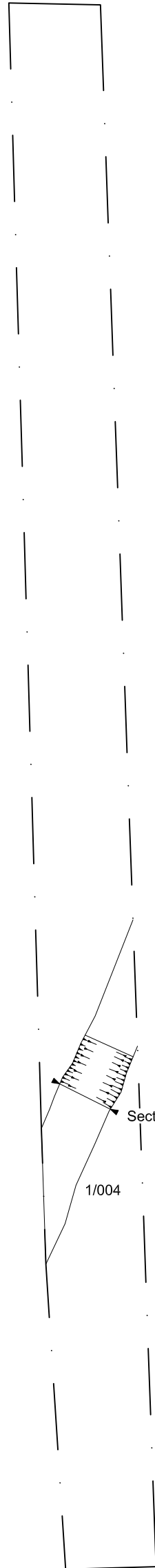


### Trench 1

+ 564538, 112203

46.89mOD  
x

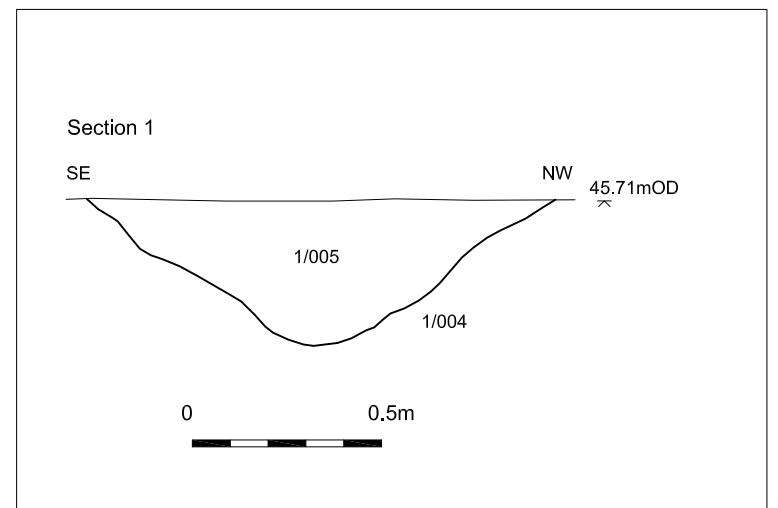
+ 564548, 112203



Photograph of Trench 1 looking north

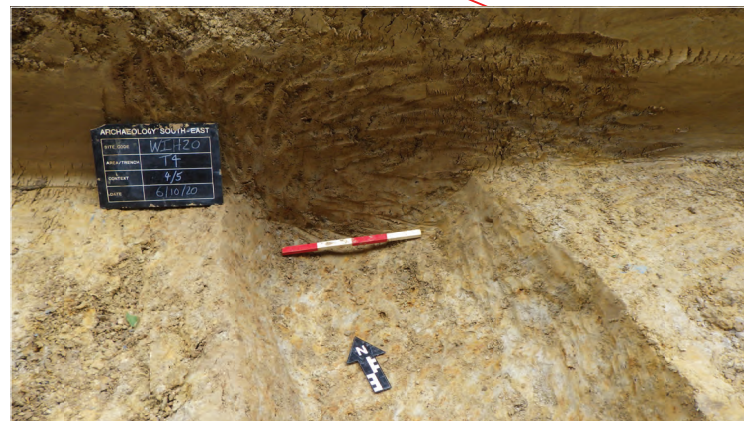
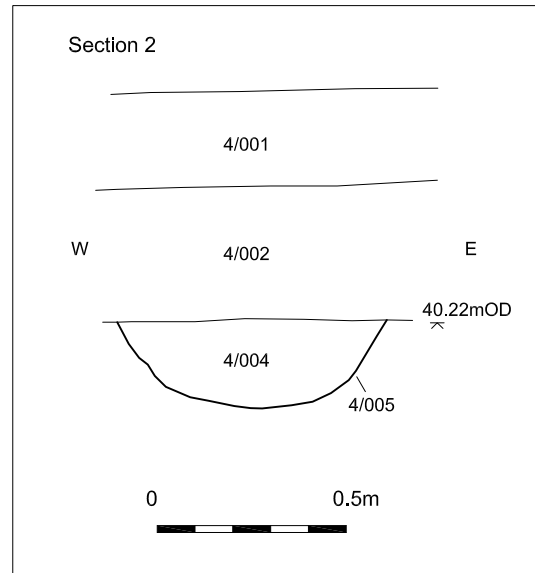
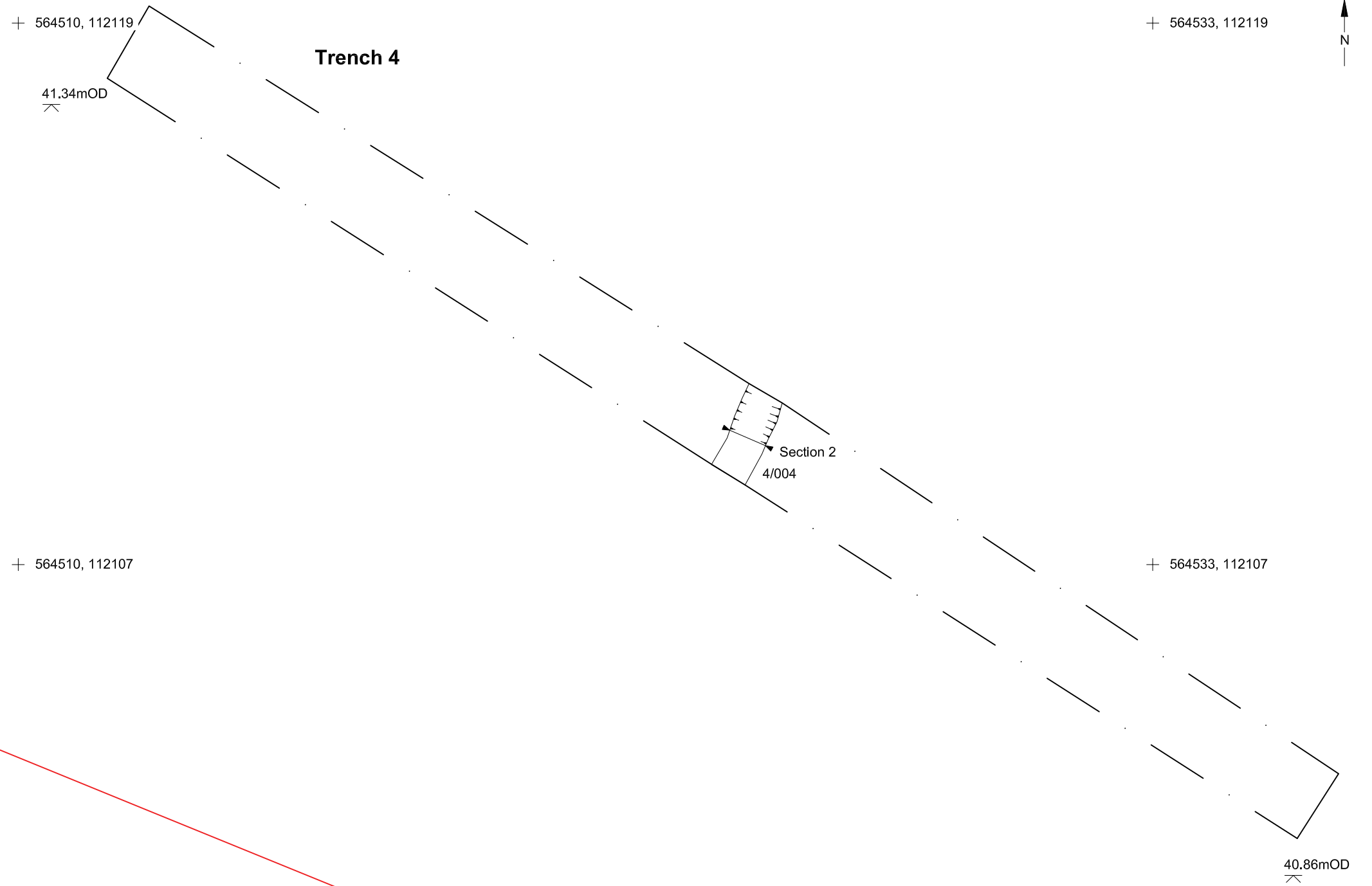


Photograph of 1/004 looking south west





Photograph of Trench 4 looking east

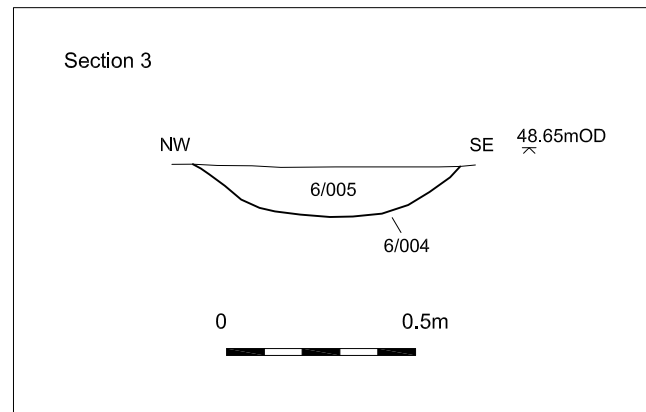


Photograph of 4/005 looking north

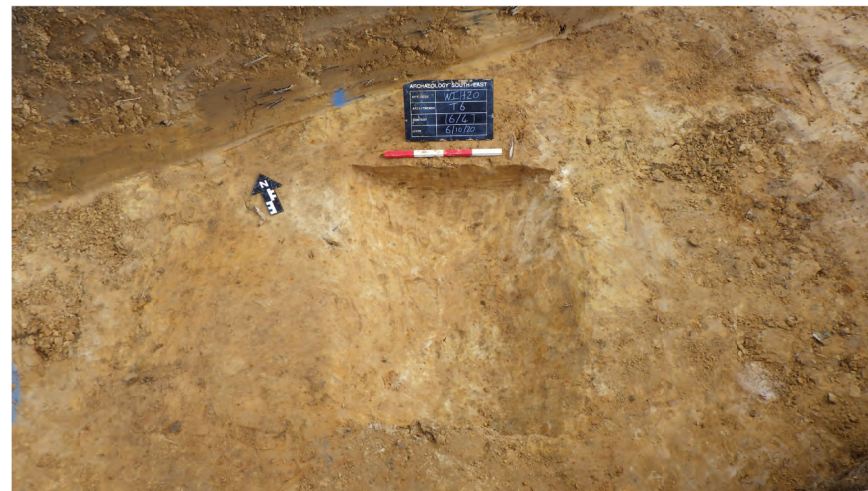
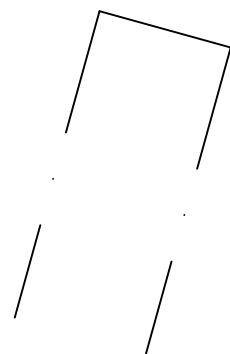




Photograph of Trench 6 looking east



0 0.5m



Photograph of 6/004 looking north

+ 564593, 112161

+ 564613, 112161



**Trench 6**

48.76mOD

6/005

Section 3

+ 564593, 112145

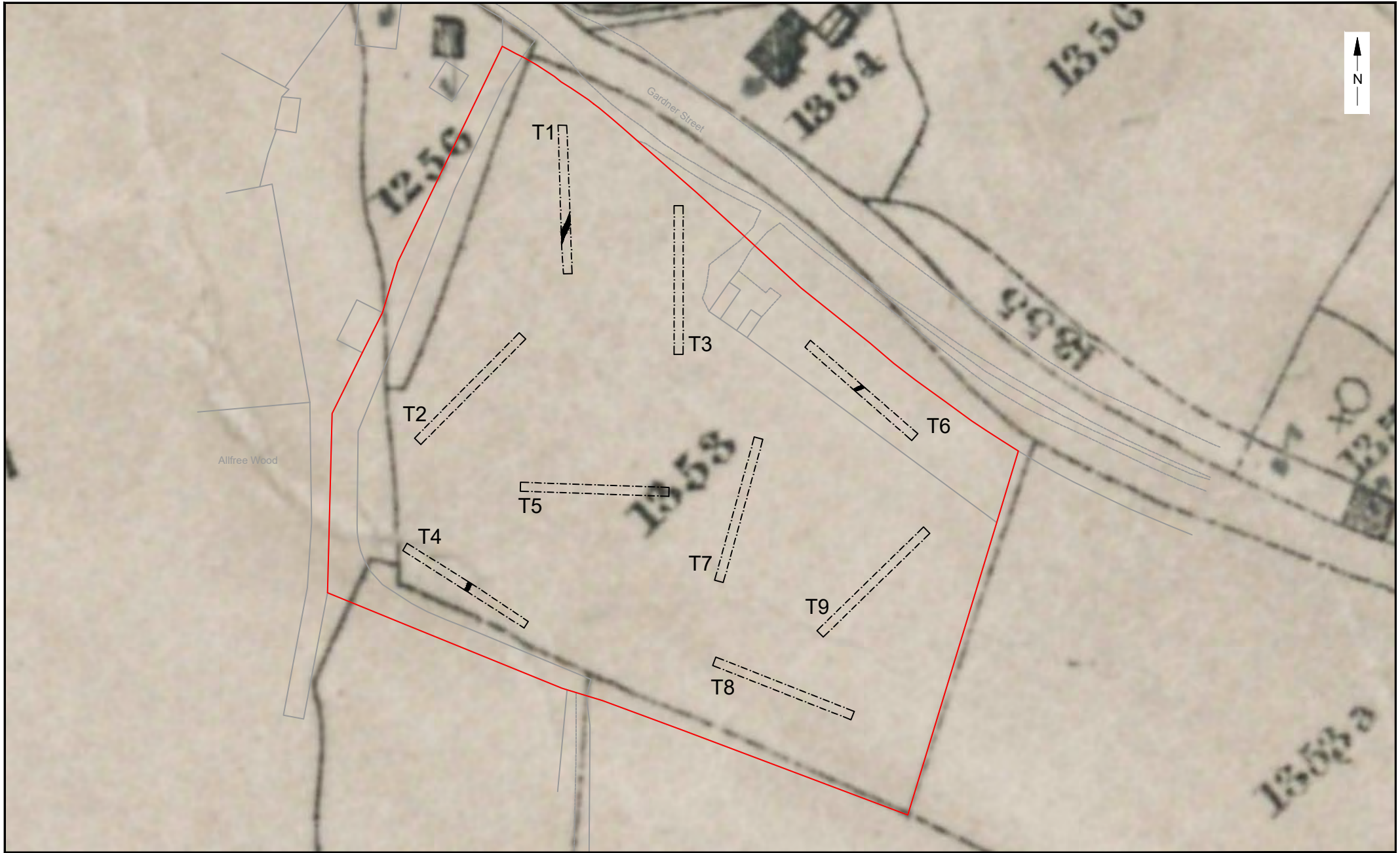
+ 564613, 112145

50.48mOD

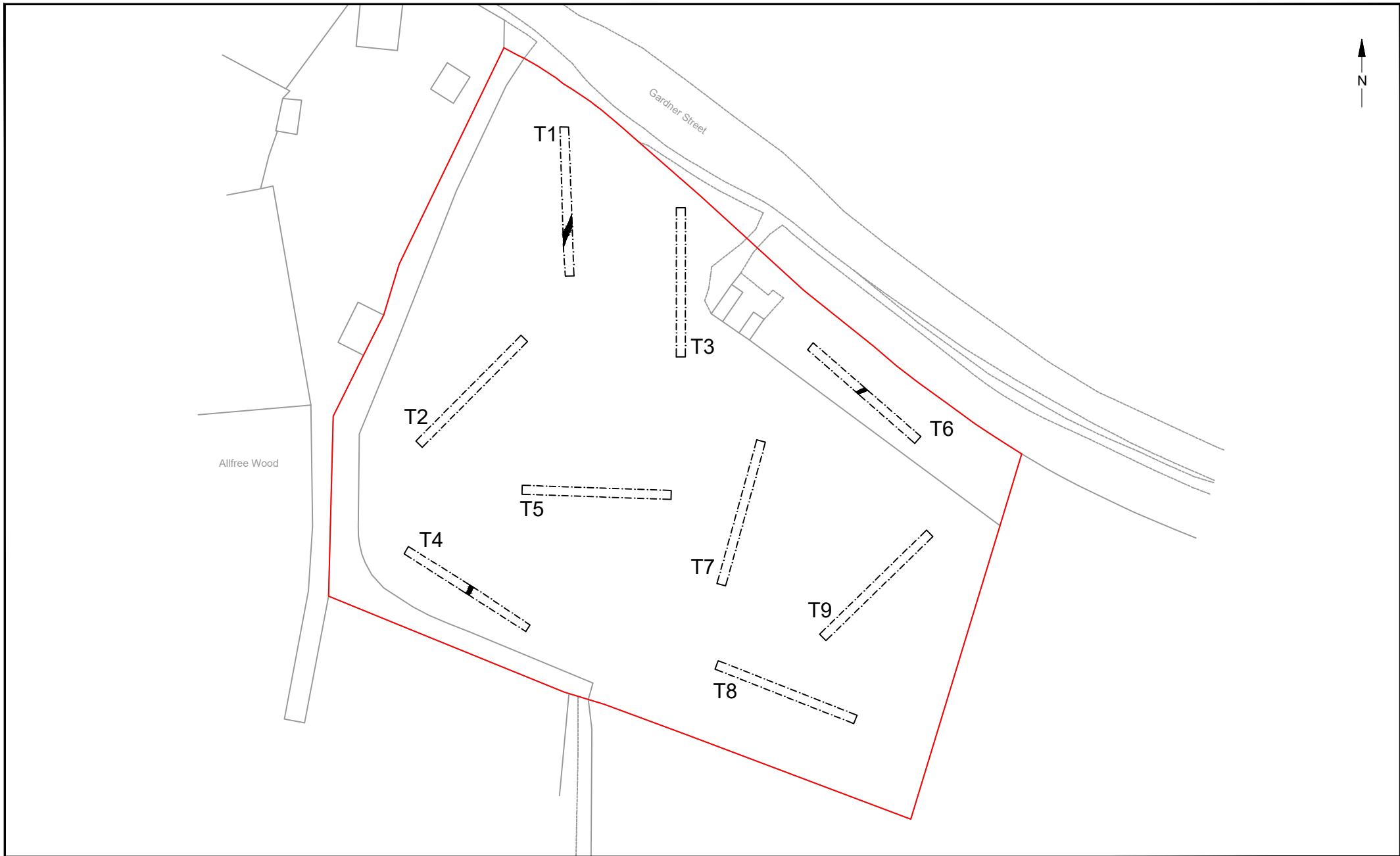
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© Archaeology South-East		Land to the south of Windmill Hill Road, Herstmonceux, East Sussex	Fig. 5
Project Ref: 200395	Oct 2020	Trench 6: Plan, section and photographs	
Report Ref: 2020013	Drawn by: FG		





© Archaeology South-East		Land to the south of Windmill Hill Road, Herstmonceux, East Sussex	Fig. 6
Project Ref: 200395	Oct 2020	Evaluation Plan with Tithe map 1839	
Report Ref: 2020013	Drawn by: FG		



© Archaeology South-East		Land to the south of Windmill Hill Road, Herstmonceux, East Sussex	Fig. 7
Project Ref: 200395	Oct 2020	Evaluation Plan with Ordnance Survey 1st Edition 1:2500 1874	
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Trench 2 looking north



Trench 3 looking north



Trench 5 looking east



Trench 7 looking north



Trench 8 looking south east



Trench 9 looking north

© Archaeology South-East		Land to the south of Windmill Hill Road, Herstmonceux, East Sussex	Fig. 8
Project Ref: 200395	Oct 2020	Photographs of archaeologically negative trenches	
Report Ref: 2020013	Drawn by: FG		

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