

**An Archaeological Watching Brief at the Barn, Little  
Moatenden, Maidstone Road, Headcorn, Kent**

**Planning Ref: MA/06/2257**

**NGR TQ 81963 46634**

**Project No: 3431**

**Site Code: LMH08**

**ASE Report No. 2008125**

**OASIS id: archaeol6-47241**

**Maggie Henderson**

**August 2008**

**Archaeology South-East**

**Units 1 & 2**

**2 Chapel Place**

**Portslade**

**East Sussex**

**BN41 1DR**

**Tel: 01273 426830**

**Fax: 01273 420866**

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

**Abstract**

*An archaeological watching brief was carried out by Archaeology South-East on land at Little Moatenden, Maidstone Road, Headcorn, Kent (NGR: TQ 81963 46634) on the 26th of June 2008 for Kent County Council.*

*A single L-plan trench was excavated to provide a drainage link between the converted barn and the established man-hole to the east of the site. The trench was 0.45 m wide, 13.40 m in length and a maximum of 0.89 m in depth.*

*No archaeological features were observed within the two deposits visible within the extent of the trench. The ground through which the trench was excavated had already been much disturbed by the inclusion of modern services, four of which were encountered within the upper deposit of garden soil. The garden soil sloped down from the northwest to the southeast reaching its maximum observed depth of 0.89 m below the current ground level at the southeastern end of the trench. The garden soil overlay an alluvial deposit of firm reddish yellow clay silt which again dipped down towards the southeast and the known location of a pond which had been in situ in 1843 but had been back-filled in its entirety by the release of the second edition Ordnance Survey map of 1897.*

## **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction**
- 2.0 Archaeological Background**
- 3.0 Archaeological Methodology**
- 4.0 Results**
- 5.0 The Finds**
- 7.0 Discussion and Conclusions**

**Bibliography**

**Acknowledgements**

**SMR Summary Sheet**

**OASIS Form**

## **FIGURES**

Figure 1: Site Location

Figure 2: Site and Trench location

Figure 3: East Sutton Tithe Map 1843

Figure 4: Ordnance Survey Map 1897

Figure 5: Ordnance Survey Map 1908

Figure 6: Ordnance Survey Map 1939

Figure 7: Trench Plan and Sections

## **TABLES**

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

Table 2: List of recorded contexts

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site Background**

In June 2008 Archaeology South-East (a division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology, UCL) carried out a watching brief to the south of the Grade II listed barn at Little Moatenden, Maidstone Road, Headcorn, Kent (NGR TQ 81963 46634 - Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr B. Burman, to satisfy a condition of planning consent (planning reference MA/06/2257) relating to its proposed conversion for residential use.

### **1.2 Geology and Topography**

- 1.2.1 The site is located in the Weald of Kent on the south-west side of Maidstone Road (A274), 5km to the south-east of Maidstone and 2.5km to the north-west of the village of Headcorn.
- 1.2.2 The underlying geology of the site is alluvium over Weald Clay (British Geological Survey Map (Solid and Drift Edition Sheet 288, Maidstone 1976).
- 1.2.3 The site is situated at a height of just over 20m AOD, and the land slopes away gently to the south-west towards the valley of the River Beult.

### **1.3 Planning Background**

- 1.3.1 The scope of the watching brief was agreed verbally with Adam Single of the Heritage Conservation Group (HCG) at Kent County Council (KCC).
- 1.3.2 The agreed specification was to maintain a watching brief during the groundworks carried out to the rear of the barn at Little Moatenden. The groundworks in this instance comprised the excavation of a single L-plan drainage trench (Fig. 2). The trench was 0.45 m wide by a maximum of 13.40 m in length. The excavation extended c. 3.40 m from the south elevation of the barn and turned to the southeast across a modern path and lawn to connect with a pre-existing manhole.

### **1.4 Scope of Report**

- 1.4.1 This document presents the results of the archaeological watching brief carried out on land to the rear of the barn at Little Moatenden Farm, Headcorn, Kent on the 25th June 2008.
- 1.4.2 The fieldwork was undertaken by Maggie Henderson (Senior

Archaeologist). The project was managed by Ron Humphrey (Assistant Director).

## **2.0 HISTORIC BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Introduction**

- 2.1.1 In May 2008 Archaeology South-East carried out a historic building survey of the Grade II listed barn at Little Moatenden, Headcorn, Kent. The work was carried out to satisfy a condition of planning consent relating to its proposed conversion for residential use. The main elements of the project involved the compilation of a written description and analysis of the barn and the creation of a drawn and photographic record, in turn supported by a brief programme of research at the Centre for Kentish Studies. The results of the historic research of the site are reproduced here in order to place the site of the excavation in its overall context.

### **2.2 Historic Background to the Site**

- 2.2.1 Moatenden derives its name from Margaret de Moddenden Abbess of Malling, who in 1224 founded there the first English home of the Trinitarian Order for the Redemption of Captives (Atkins 1957) on land granted to them by Richard de Rokesley, seneschal to the Archbishop of Canterbury. Following the dissolution of the priory in 1538 the manor passed to Thomas Cromwell, chief minister to King Henry VIII. Cromwell subsequently fell out of favour with the king and was executed in 1540, after which, much of the land was leased to Sir Anthony Aucher of Swingfield who then purchased it in 1544 (Page 1926). Subsequently, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I the Filmer Family of East Sutton acquired the manor, in whose possession it remained until the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- 2.2.2 The existing house at Moatenden (listed as Moatenden Priory: Images of England, IoE No.174308) is thought to be of late 15<sup>th</sup> or earlier 16<sup>th</sup> century date, although it is believed that at one end it may incorporate elements of the original house of the Trinitarian Friars. The moat survives substantially intact and there are also the remains of the priory fishpond. An 18<sup>th</sup> century barn is located a little to the south-west of the house.
- 2.2.3 The house at Little Moatenden is thought to date to the late 16<sup>th</sup>/early 17<sup>th</sup> century (Images of England, IoE No. 174099), with the barn itself being listed as 17<sup>th</sup> century in date. The earliest known reference to the site is in the 1843 tithe award for East Sutton (IR29/17/358) where Sir Edmund Filmer is identified as the owner and Thomas Boorman listed as the occupier. The house (Plot 475) is described as 'House and Garden, Little Moatenden' whilst the farm buildings (Plot 477) are described as 'Barn, Lodges and Yards'.
- 2.2.4 The historic building survey of the barn carried out by Archaeology South East in May 2008 found the general framing of the barn to be

characteristic of a late 16<sup>th</sup> or earlier 17<sup>th</sup> century date with later additions in the form of lean-to structures. The lean-tos on the south and west sides of the barn have their origins in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, rebuilt in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## **2.3 Cartographic Evidence**

- 2.3.1 Although Moatenden (*Mottenden*) is depicted on Hasted's 1798 map of Kent, the map is drawn at too small a scale to allow detailed interpretation. The map represents only the principal residence, with the farmstead of Little Moatenden absent, although it was certainly in existence by this time.
- 2.3.2 The earliest cartographic source to depict the assessment site is the tithe map of East Sutton dated 1843 (DC6/TO/S39B; Fig. 3). The site is seen bordering the parish boundary which is defined at selected points by marker stones. The house is shaded red, whilst the barn and other outbuildings are shaded grey. The farmyard is shown to the south-west of the house, bordered on its north side by an L-plan range of buildings and on its south side by the barn. Several other smaller structures are present on the site, including the oast-house which is sited to the north-west. The barn is shown lying between two ponds, with a wide projection on its south side and three small enclosed areas presumably for livestock.
- 2.3.3 The first edition Ordnance Survey map is not held at the Centre for Kentish Studies, so the next source reproduced is the second edition Ordnance Survey map of 1897 (Fig. 4). The map represents the site similarly to the previous map, though to a greater level of detail. The pond formerly shown to the south-east of the barn is no longer shown and several alterations can be identified to the outbuildings, with some buildings having been removed and others constructed. The barn itself appears unaltered, though the projection on its south side is more clearly defined and depicted as being open-fronted.
- 2.3.4 The period between the production of the 1897 map and the subsequent Ordnance Survey map (Fig. 5) of 1908 appears to have resulted in no discernible alterations to the barn and only small scale changes elsewhere on the site. The most notable modification appears to have been the rebuilding of part of the range on the north side of the farmyard.
- 2.3.5 The 1939 Ordnance Survey map (Fig. 6) shows that the barn had been considerably reduced in length at its eastern end by this time, corresponding with its present extent. The small enclosures to the south of the barn have also been removed by the date the map was issued.

### 3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

Number of Contexts	2
No. of files/paper record	1
Plan and sections sheets	1
Bulk Samples	0
Photographs	4
Bulk finds	0
Registered finds	0
Environmental flots/residue	0

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

- 3.1 The objectives of the archaeological watching brief were to contribute to knowledge of Little Moatenden, Maidstone Road, Headcorn through the monitoring of the excavation of new groundworks in order to ensure that any features, artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest exposed and affected by the groundworks were recorded and interpreted to appropriate standards. Particular attention was to be made to the extent, character, height below ground level, condition, date and significance of the deposits.
- 3.2 The spoil from the excavations was inspected to recover any artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest.
- 3.3 A narrow L-plan trench was excavated to the rear (south) of the barn at Moatenden Farm (Fig. 2). The trench extended 3.40 m from the southern elevation of the barn, then turned towards the south-east, continuing for a length of 13.40 m and terminating at an already *in situ* manhole. The trench was a uniform 0.45 m wide with a maximum depth of 0.89 m. The trench was excavated using a mechanical mini-excavator supplemented by hand excavation where *in situ* services were revealed.
- 3.4 A photographic record was created to demonstrate progress, methodology and findings. However, the narrow nature of the trench created difficulties in obtaining meaningful photographic representation and as such, although only a simple stratigraphic sequence was revealed, both the long section and the short return were recorded by the creation of scaled section drawings in addition to an overall plan of the trench. The water table at the southeastern end of the trench was encountered during the excavation.
- 3.5 The photographic record (including monochrome prints, colour slide and digital images) will form part of the site archive. The archive is presently held at Archaeology South-East offices at Portslade, East Sussex, and will in due course be transferred to a suitable local museum.



3.6 No deposits suitable for environmental sampling were encountered.

## 4.0 RESULTS

### 4.1 List of Recorded Contexts

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length (m)	Max. Width (m)	Max. Depth (m)	Max. Height (m OD)
01	Deposit	Garden soil	-	-	0.89	
02	Deposit	Alluvium	-	-	0.62	

Table 2: List of recorded contexts

### 4.2 Summary (Fig. 7)

- 4.2.1 No archaeological deposits or features were discovered during the excavation of the drainage trench.
- 4.2.2 The drainage trench which extended from the rear of the barn to terminate at an existing man hole was monitored by an archaeologist during excavation. The trench measured a 0.45 m in width and 13.40 m in length and was excavated by mini excavator to a maximum depth of 0.89 m at the southeastern end of the trench rising to 0.70 m at the northwestern end.
- 4.2.3 The stratigraphic sequence comprised a deposit of alluvium or subsoil (02) at 0.62 m thick, situated 0.22 m below the ground surface in the short north - south orientated trench. The top of the deposit dipped away to the southeast, situated 0.35 m below the top edge of the trench in the long northwest - southeast orientated return and disappearing below the water table at a depth of 0.89 m below the ground surface just 1.70 m short of the southeastern limit of the excavation. The deposit comprised very firm, mid reddish yellow clay silt with some whitish mottling and chalk flecks and fragments.
- 4.2.5 A deposit (01) of garden soil overlay the alluvium/subsoil throughout the trench. The deposit was a maximum of 0.89 m thick at the southeastern end of the trench rising to 0.22 m thick at the northwestern end. The layer comprised medium, mid-brown clay silt with abundant thin, fibrous roots with frequent irregular small sandstone fragments and a rare larger block - also of irregular shape up to maximum dimensions of 300 by 150 mm. The deposit also contained fragments of modern plant pot, tile and brick.
- 4.2.6 Four modern services were located within deposit (01): a cable at the southeastern end in addition to two plastic water pipes situated one to each side of an iron pipe. No individual cuts were detected for the services.

## **5.0 THE FINDS**

Modern tile, brick and pottery was observed within layer (01) but none were retained.

## **6.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 6.1 The watching brief provided no evidence of archaeological features.
- 6.2 The excavated trench extending out from the southern elevation of the barn passed over the area shown to be the location of three small enclosures on the historic maps *in situ* on the Tithe map and all of the Ordnance Survey maps until the issue of the 1939 edition map. No trace of any such boundaries was visible within the sections of the excavated trench indicating that the area had been landscaped by or after 1939.
- 6.3 The pond shown to the east of the excavated trench on the 1843 Tithe map is no longer *in situ* by the second edition Ordnance Survey map of 1897. The loss of the pond clearly indicates in-fill and subsequent landscaping of the feature in the second half of the 19th century.
- 6.4 The two deposits revealed consist of water lain alluvium which dips down towards the former location of the pond overlain by a garden soil deposit.

## **6.5 Impact Assessment**

- 6.5.1 The results of a watching brief allow for conclusions to be reached regarding any archaeological potential of the site and the impact that the development has had upon any archaeological remains, including the impact on future planning decisions taken on the site.
- 6.5.2 As no archaeological features were uncovered on the site it is sufficient to conclude that the watching brief monitoring verifies that the groundworks undertaken on the 26th of June 2008 had no impact on any archaeological resource.
- 6.5.3 The results of this watching brief are specific to the groundwork carried out on the 26th of June 2008 and it should be noted that the very narrow nature of the drainage excavation allowed only a keyhole examination of the deposits. Any future planning decisions for other areas of the site should be considered from an archaeological perspective in their own right.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Archaeology South-East, 2008, *The Barn, Little Moatenden, Maidstone Road, Headcorn, Kent*, unpublished ASE report

Atkins, P. 1957 *Headcorn: its parish, church and people. Short notes from a history of Headcorn.*

Page, W. (ed.) 1926 *A History of the County of Kent: Volume 2.* Victoria County History.

## Internet Sources

Images of England

<http://www.imagesofengland.org.uk/search>

Accessed 14-5-08

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The co-operation and assistance of Adam Single of Kent County Council and the client Mr B. Burman is greatly acknowledged.

### HER Summary Form

Site Code	LMH 08					
Identification Name and Address	The Barn, Little Moatenden, Maidstone Road, Headcorn, Kent					
County, District &/or Borough	Kent					
OS Grid Refs.	TQ 81963 46634					
Geology	Alluvium over Weald Clay					
Arch. South-East Project Number	3431					
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. 26th June 08	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Mr B. Burman					
Project Manager	Ron Humphrey					
Project Supervisor	Maggie Henderson					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM ✓	Other Modern		
<p>100 Word Summary.</p> <p>In June 2008 Archaeology South-East carried out a watching brief on the excavation of a drainage trench to the rear of the Grade II listed barn at Little Moatenden. Two deposits were encountered within the 0.45 m wide by 13.40 m in length L-plan trench which was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.89 m. The lower deposit comprised alluvium and the upper deposit garden soil. The alluvium dipped to the southeast towards the known location of a pond which had been <i>in situ</i> in 1843 but had been back-filled in its entirety by 1897. The upper deposit of garden soil as a consequence reached the maximum depth at the southeastern end of the trench. No archaeological features or remains were encountered.</p>						

OASIS Form

**OASIS ID: archaeol6-47241**

**Project details**

Project name	An Archaeological Watching Brief at the Barn, Little Moatenden, Maidstone Road, Headcorn, Kent
Short description of the project	In June 2008 Archaeology South-East carried out a watching brief on the excavation of a drainage trench to the rear of the Grade II listed barn at Little Moatenden. Two deposits were encountered within the 0.45 m wide by 13.40 m in length L-plan trench which was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.89 m. The lower deposit comprised alluvium and the upper deposit garden soil. The alluvium dipped to the southeast towards the known location of a pond which had been in situ in 1843 but had been back-filled in its entirety by 1897. The upper deposit of garden soil as a consequence reached the maximum depth at the southeastern end of the trench. No archaeological features or remains were encountered.
Project dates	Start: 26-06-2008 End: 26-06-2008
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	lmh08 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Monument type	GARDEN SOIL Post Medieval
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Planning condition

**Project location**

Country	England
Site location	KENT MAIDSTONE HEADCORN LITTLE MOATENDEN

Study area	7.40 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 81963 46634 51.1893461936 0.604246569650 51 11 21 N 000 36 15 E Point

---

#### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	Kent County Council
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East
Project director/manager	Ron Humphrey
Project supervisor	Maggie Henderson
Type of sponsor/funding body	Client

---

#### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Local Museum
Digital Contents	'none'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography'
Paper Archive recipient	Local Museum
Paper Contents	'other'



Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Drawing','Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General Notes','Photograph','Plan','Section'
-----------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

---

**Project bibliography 1**

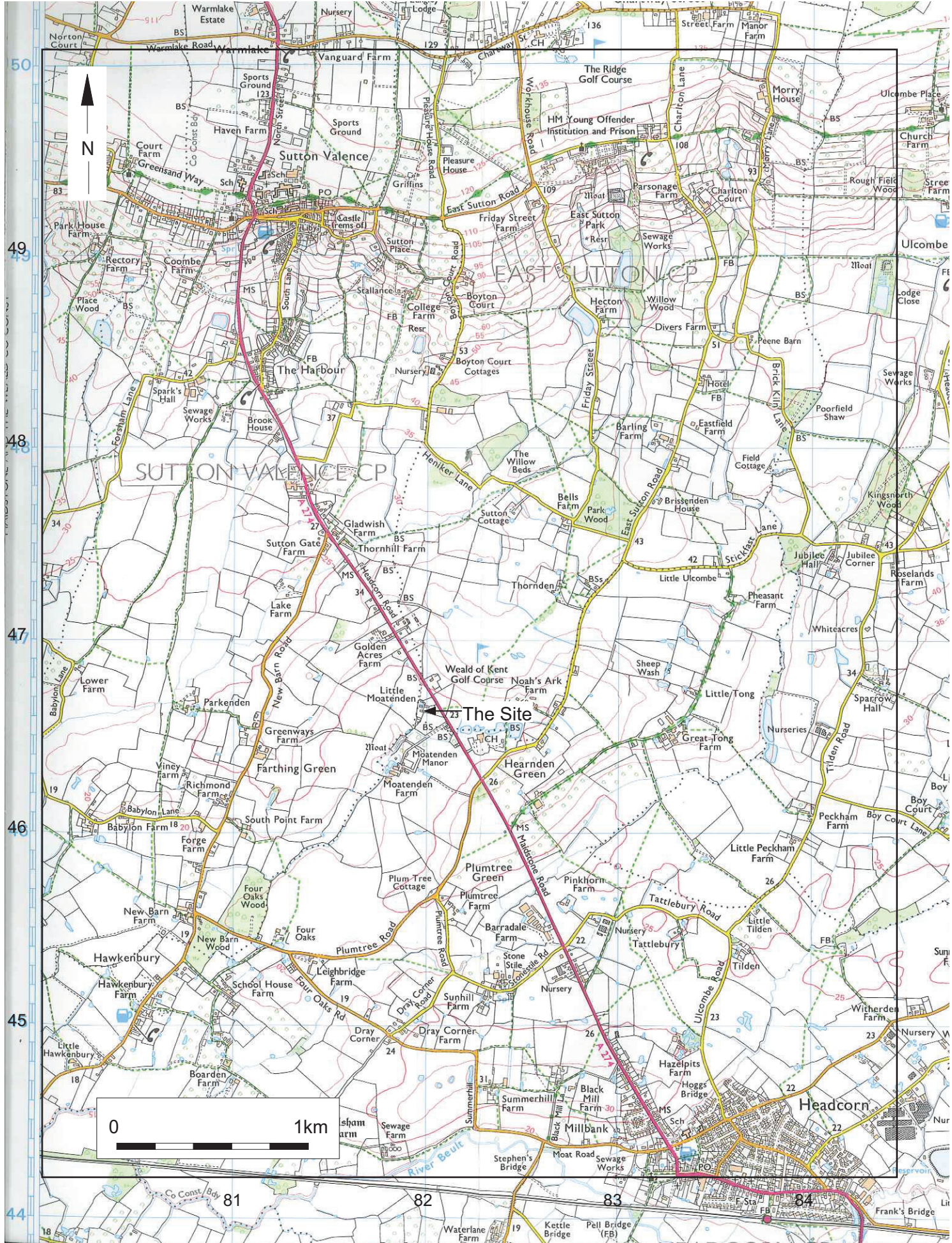
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	An Archaeological Watching Brief at the Barn, Little Moatenden, Maidstone Road, Headcorn, Kent
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Henderson, M.
Date	2008
Issuer or publisher	Archaeology South-East
Place of issue or publication	Archaeology South-East

---

Entered by	Maggie Henderson (m.henderson@ucl.ac.uk)
Entered on	22 August 2008

---





© Archaeology South-East

Little Moatenden, Maidstone Road, Headcorn, Kent

Fig. 1

Project Ref: 3431

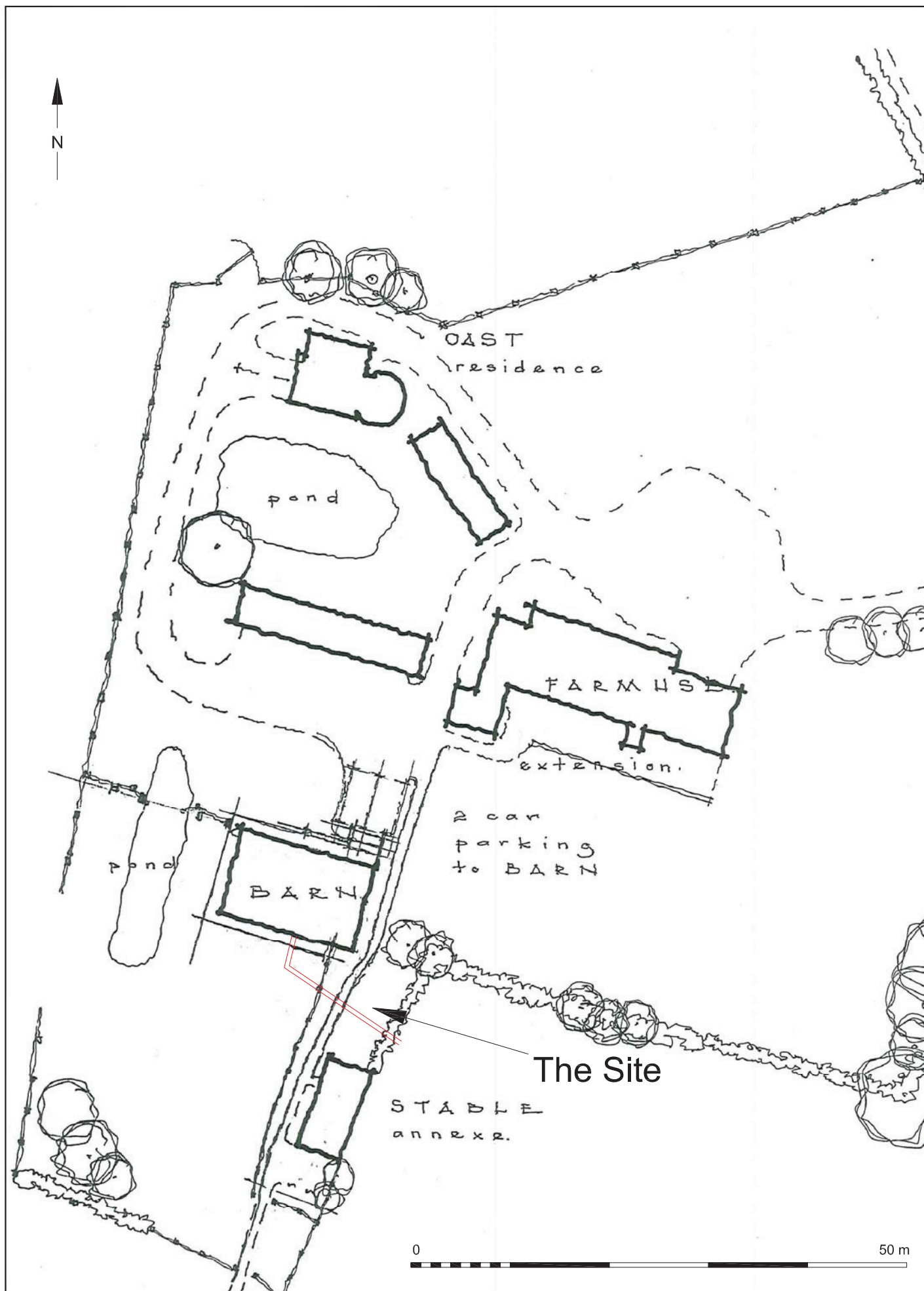
Aug 2008

Site Location Plan

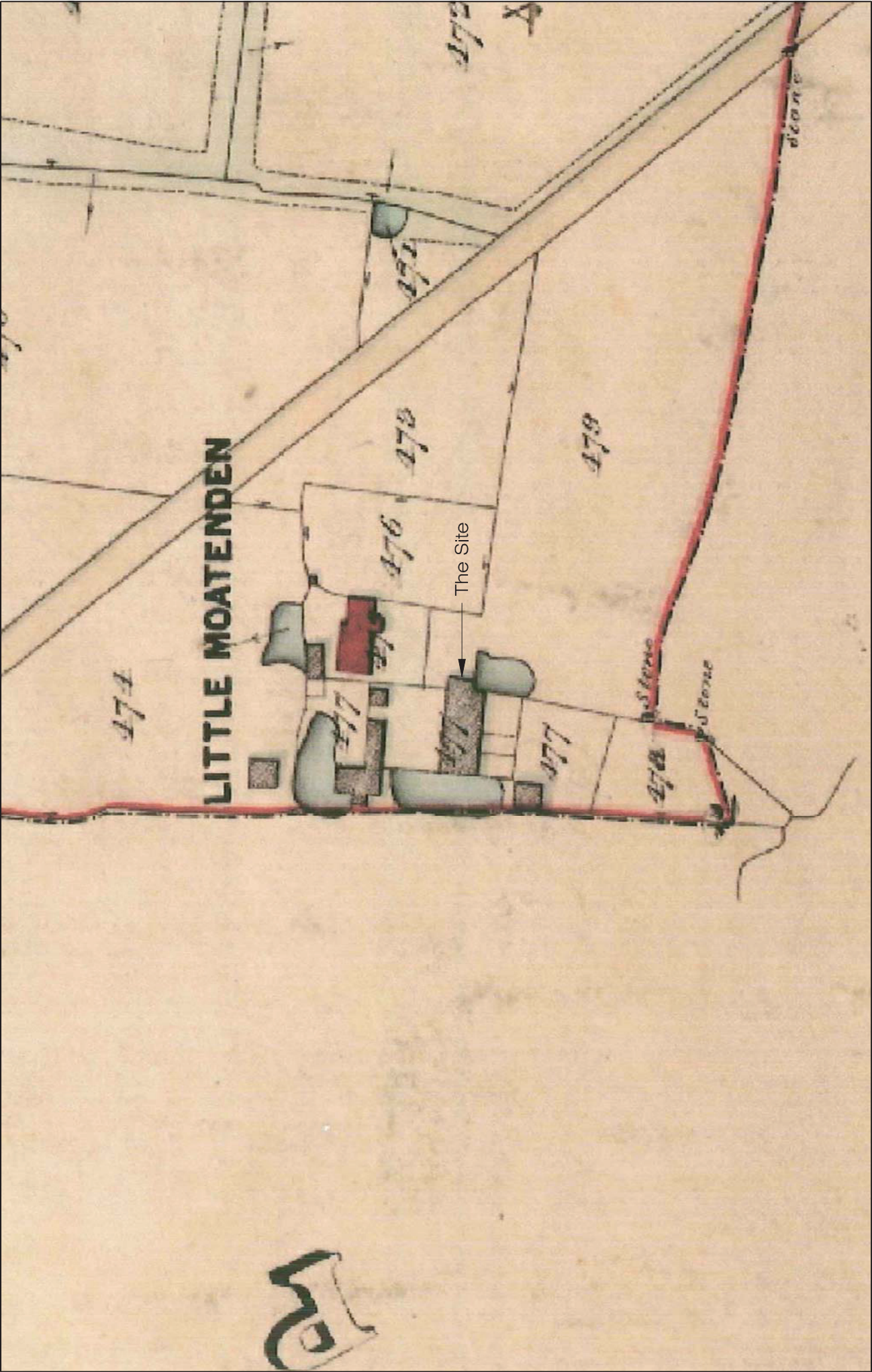
Report Ref: 2008125

Drawn by: AW



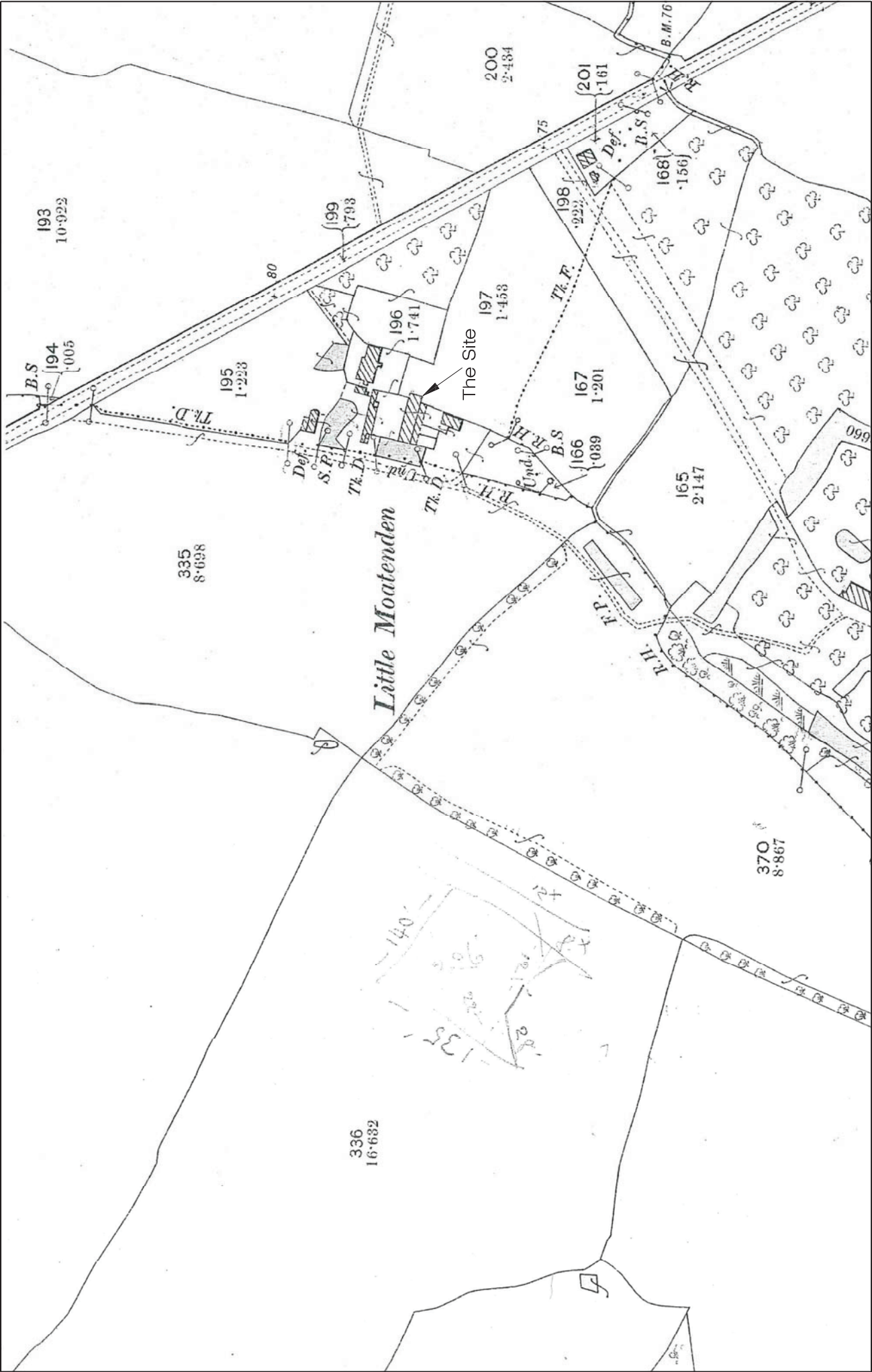


© ARCHAEOLOGY SOUTH EAST			Little Moatenden, Maidstone Road, Headcorn, Kent	Fig. 2
Ref: 3431	AUG 2008	Drawn by: MH	Site and Trench Location Plan	



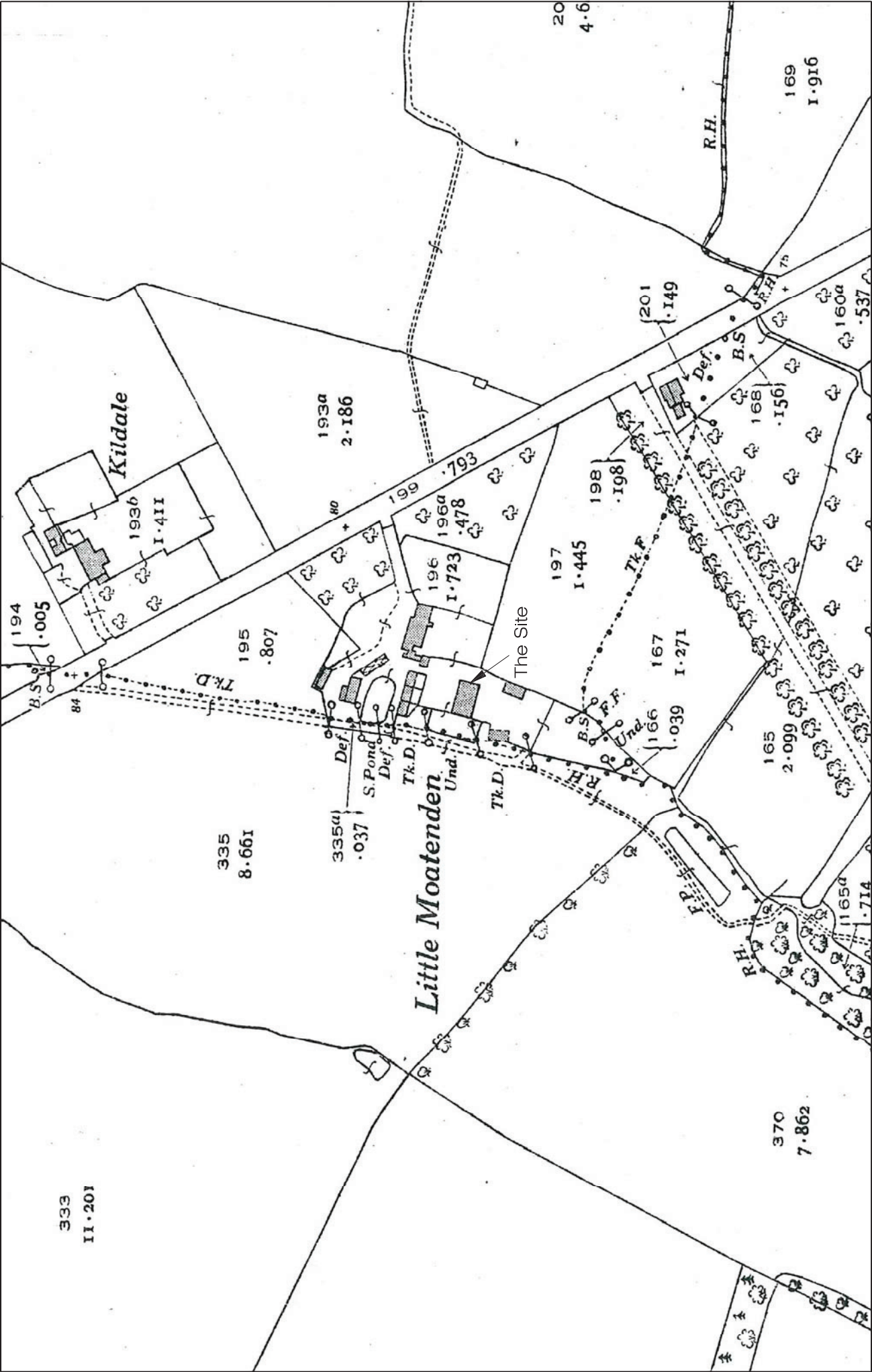
© ARCHAEOLOGY SOUTH EAST			Little Moatenden, Maidstone Road, Headcorn, Kent	Fig. 3
Ref: 3431	AUG 2008	Drawn by: MH		
			East Sutton Tithe Map, 1843 (DC6/TO/S39B)	



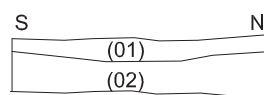
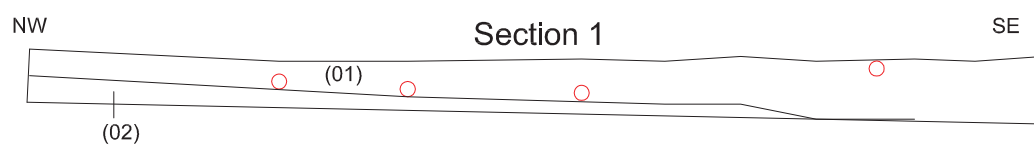
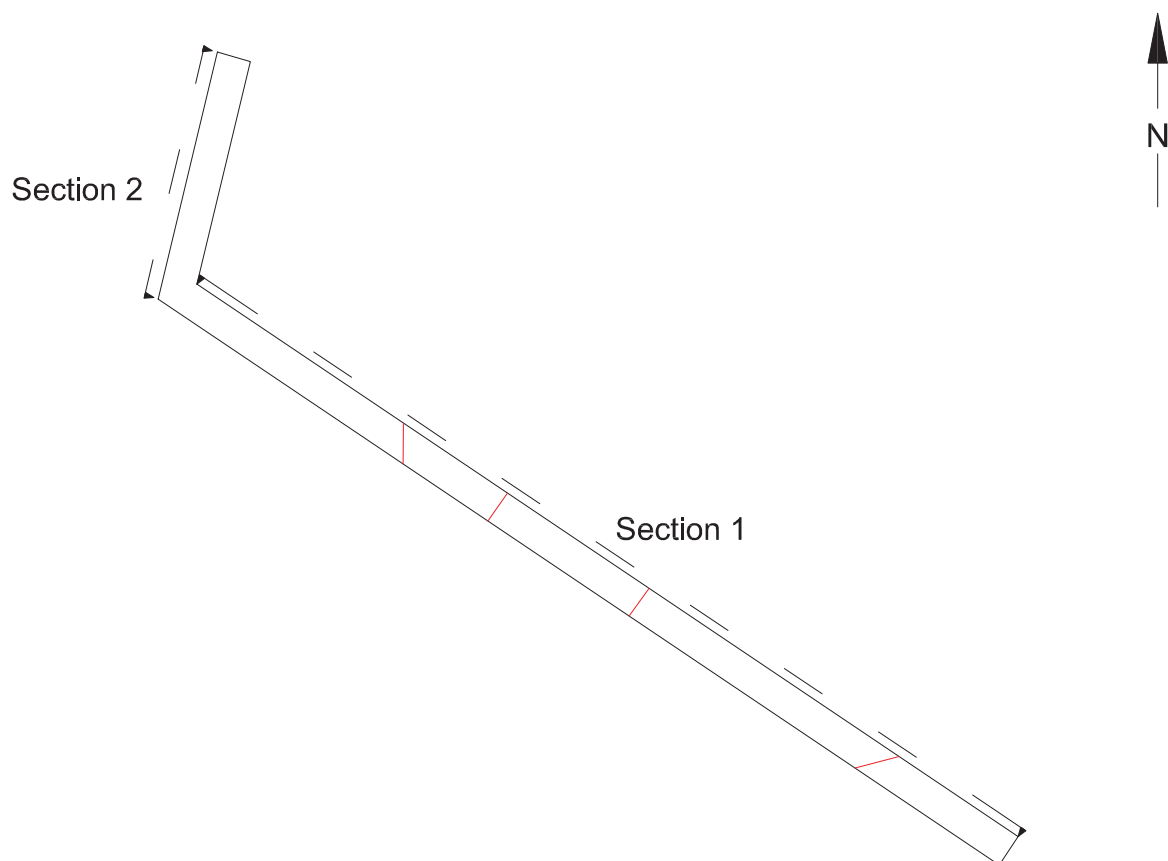


© ARCHAEOLOGY SOUTH EAST		Little Moatenden, Maidstone Road, Headcorn, Kent		Fig. 4
Ref: 3431	AUG 2008	Drawn by: MH	Ordnance Survey Map 1897 (25":1 mile, Sheet 53.9)	





© ARCHAEOLOGY SOUTH EAST		Little Moatenden, Maidstone Road, Headcorn, Kent		Fig. 6
Ref: 3431	AUG 2008	Drawn by: MH	Ordnance Survey Map 1939 (25":1 mile, Sheet 53.9)	



Section 2

○ Services



© ARCHAEOLOGY SOUTH EAST			Little Moatenden, Maidstone Road, Headcorn, Kent	Fig. 7
Ref: 3431	AUG 2008	Drawn by: MH	Trench Plan and Sections	