

Apple Tree Farm Site, Ifield Avenue, Ifield, Crawley.
West Sussex.

Archaeological Watching Brief

Planning Reference: CR/2007/0043/FUL

NGR 525301 138267

Site Code: ATF 08

Project no. 3241

ASE Report No. 2008149

Oasis ID. archaeol6-48204



March 2008

By Deon Whittaker

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Abstract

Archaeology South-East was commissioned by RSK Environment Ltd., on behalf of their client, to undertake an archaeological watching brief at the Apple Tree Farm Site, Ifield Avenue, Ifield, Crawley. The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 525301 138267). Excavation of an approximately 100m long temporary service trench, two 30m trenches and a topsoil strip was subject to archaeological monitoring. Natural, possibly truncated deposits, formed of possible drift alluvium and Wealden clay underlay a poorly developed topsoil with a surface deposit of mixed modern construction materials. No archaeological remains were observed except late C19th and C20th pottery fragments from the overlying deposits.

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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 at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London, was commissioned by RSK Environment Ltd., on behalf of their client, to undertake an archaeological watching brief at the Apple Tree Farm Site, Ifield Avenue, Ifield, Crawley, henceforth known as 'the site'. The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 525301 138267 and its location is shown in Figure 1. The work was carried out between the 16th and 26th June 2008 by Deon Whittaker (Archaeologist).

1.2 Geology and Topography

1.2.1 The British Geological Survey Sheet 302 Solid and Drift, shows that the site lies on solid geology of Wealden Clay, between the second terrace of the River Mole alluvial deposits (drift geology).

1.2.2 The site lies on fairly flat ground at between c.62.00m and 63.00m AOD with the River Mole lying approximately 100m to the north. The site is bounded by Ifield Avenue to the east and rough open ground and residential properties to the south, west and north.

1.3 Planning Background

1.3.1 Planning permission was granted by Crawley Borough Council for the construction of a Sanatan Mandir and community centre with associated car parking (Planning Ref: CR/2007/0043/FUL).

1.3.2 The West Sussex County Council (WSCC) Archaeologist was consulted by Crawley Borough Council and in light of the known archaeological potential of the site recommended that a programme of archaeological works be implemented in line with advice given in PPG16 (the Government's advice on *Archaeology and Planning*). Condition 9 of the planning permission therefore states that:

An archaeological investigation of the site shall be carried out at the expense of the developer in accordance with a specification to be submitted to and agreed by the Local Planning Authority in writing (following the demolition of any existing buildings and) before the commencement of any building works.

REASON: The site is of archaeological significance and it is important that it is recorded by excavation before it is destroyed by development in accordance with Policy BN17 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2000.

1.4 Aims and Objectives

1.4.1 The general aim of the archaeological work was ensure that any features, artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest that would be affected by the proposed groundworks were recorded and interpreted to appropriate standards.

1.4.2 The ground works monitored were:

- Topsoil stripping
- Excavation of a temporary service trench
- Excavation by machine of two 30m investigatory trenches.

1.5 Scope of Report

1.5.1 This report describes the site and the results of the watching brief.

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND (after Hart 2008)

- 2.1** The archaeological background to the site is derived from a 500m radius search of the WSCC Historic Environment Record and is summarised below.
- 2.2** Archaeological remains in the immediate vicinity of the site are sparse, with two sites recorded on the West Sussex HER within 500m. These are both situated to the south of the site and include a post-medieval mill (WSCC HER no 4033) and a Friends Meeting House built in 1676 (HER no 4029, also recorded as Listed Building no. 363371). Further afield, two Scheduled Ancient Monuments are recorded, both of which are medieval moated sites. These include a small rectangular moated site some 650m to the west of the study site at Ifield Court (SAM no 20014) and a larger, more complex site with inner and outer moat containing a late 16th Century House some 920m to the southeast of the site at Ewhurst Place (SAM no 12884).
- 2.3** Some nine listed buildings are recorded in the West Sussex HER within 500m of the site, all to the south, west and east of the site. These comprise domestic houses of 17th to 19th century date, with a 15th century hall house to the south (HER Listed Building no. 363369). A Conservation Area, as defined in the Crawley Borough Council Local Plan Proposals Map, lies some 200m to the west of the application site.
- 2.4** On initial inspection of the site there appeared to be a layer of construction debris spread across the site (annotated as 'Made Ground' on Figs 3 and 4). Shovel sized sondages, dug by the contractors, revealed that below this debris lay a rotting turf-line, perhaps one or two years old. This suggests that the recent adjacent development has led to excess spoil being spread over this site. This existence of the turf-line indicates that although there has been a significant area of modern deposits and construction traffic, there was still potential for preserved archaeological remains.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 3.1** New ground work excavations undertaken by building contractors were monitored at all times by the archaeologist until it became clear beyond reasonable doubt that no archaeological remains were present (e.g. once excavation reached undisturbed natural subsoils). A machine fitted with a 450mm toothless bucket was used for the excavation of an approximately 100m long temporary service trench. A machine fitted with a 1.8 metre toothless bucket was used to excavate two 30m trenches (Figure 2)
- 3.2** In addition to the three trenches monitored, it was also necessary to monitor the initial topsoil strip across the site which was carried out by a machine with a toothless bucket.
- 3.3** The excavation of the temporary service trench was recorded and observed contexts were given the numbers [001 – 003]. The following excavations of Trenches 1 and 2 were assigned numbers in the format [1/001] and [2/001] respectively.
- 3.4** The WSCC Archaeologist was kept informed of progress as necessary and made the decisions regarding the best way to proceed given the nature of the stratigraphy as discussed below.
- 3.5** The site was recorded on the available maps with all excavations levelled with respect to Ordnance Survey datum wherever practicable. A photographic record was made in digital format, monochrome and colour transparency.
- 3.6** All work was carried out in accordance with the *Recommended Standard Conditions for Archaeological Fieldwork, Recording, and Post-Excavation Work (Development Control)*, WSCC, February 2007

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

Number of Contexts	11
No. of files/paper record	1
Plan and sections sheets	0
Bulk Samples	0
Photographs	11
Bulk finds	0
Registered finds	0
Environmental flots/residue	0

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Recorded Contexts

4.1.1 The excavation of a 100m temporary service trench along the south western edge of the site (Figure 2) was designed to link to a known service pipe in the western corner of the site. The trench was 450mm in width and generally between 150mm - 1.5m deep sloping down to the northwest to connect with the known services. In the western corner, the pre-existing service trench was re-excavated in order to connect services. Two thirty metre trenches were also excavated. The observed contexts were as follows:

4.1.2 Table 2: List of Recorded Contexts

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Max. Depth	Height m.AOD
001	Deposit	Mixed	Site	Site	300mm	62.8m
002	Deposit	Silty Clay	3m	2m	2.2m	62.2m
003	Deposit	Silty Sand	3m	2m	-	60.0m
004	Cut	Linear	3m	2m	2.2m	62.2m
005	Deposit	Silt	100m	450mm	1.3m	61.2m
006	Deposit	Clayey Silt	-	-	200mm	61.85m
1/001	Deposit	Mixed	30m	1.8m	300mm	62.77m
1/002	Deposit	Clayey Silt	10m	1.8m	150mm	62.57m
1/003	Deposit	Silty Sand	30m	1.8m	-	62.22m
2/001	Deposit	Mixed	30m	1.8m	600mm	63.27m
2/002	Deposit	Silty Sand	30m	1.8m	-	63.04m

4.2 Temporary Service Trench Summary

4.2.1 Within the re-excavated service trench, services and the top of [003] were exposed. Context [003] was a dark, yellowish brown silty sand and was not removed during the excavations. It was overlain by [005] which was a 1.3m thick, friable, mid yellowish – brown silt, mottled grey with clay with bands of manganese or iron panning. [005] was cut by a service trench, [004], which was filled by [002] a light yellowish – brown silt, mottled grey silty clay

Both [002] and [005] were overlain by occasional patches of a friable, light brownish grey, clayey silt, with remnants of buried turf. This was sealed by: [001] a deposit of friable, dark greyish brown, clayey sandy silt, mottled with yellowish brown silt containing moderate to frequent inclusions of frogged cbm, breeze blocks, terram, and other pieces of modern construction detritus.

No archaeological remains were observed in the temporary service trench.

4.3 Trench 1 Summary

4.3.1 Trench 1 ran east to west for 30m across the southern half of the site. The eastern end was levelled at 62.04m AOD and natural deposits were reached at 61.84m AOD. The western end was levelled at 62.77m AOD and natural deposits were reached at 61.84m AOD.

The natural deposit was [1/003], a friable, mid yellowish – brown silt, mottled grey with clay with bands of manganese or iron panning. The western third of the trench contained [1/002], a friable, light brownish grey, clayey silt, with remnants of buried turf, (similar to [002]). Overlying this was context [001], a friable, dark greyish brown, clayey sandy silt, mottled with yellowish brown silt containing moderate to frequent inclusions of frogged cbm, breeze blocks, terram, and other pieces of modern construction detritus.

No archaeological remains were observed in Trench 1.

4.4 Trench 2 Summary

4.4.1 Trench 2 ran north to south for 30m across the western corner of the site. The northern end was levelled at 63m AOD and natural deposits were reached at 62.82m AOD. The southern end was levelled at 63.27m AOD and natural deposits were reached at 63.04m AOD.

The natural deposit was [2/002] and was similar to [1/003] in Trench 1. [2/003] was a friable, mid yellowish – brown silt, mottled grey with clay with bands of manganese or iron panning. [2/003] was overlain by [2/002] (probably the same as [1/001] and [001]), a deposit of friable, dark greyish brown, clayey sandy silt, mottled with yellowish brown silt containing frequent inclusions of concrete, frogged cbm, breeze blocks, terram, and other pieces of modern construction detritus up to a maximum 600mm in depth though generally between 200 – 300mm.

No archaeological remains were observed in Trench 2.

5.0 THE FINDS

5.1 No finds were recovered except late C19th and C20th pottery fragments from the overlying deposits [001], [1/001] and [2/001].

6.0 THE ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLES

6.1 No deposits suitable for environmental samples were observed.

7.0 DISCUSSION and CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1** This site is fairly flat, although a river valley is known a short distance to the north. Given the proximity of the River Mole system it is possible that the sandy silt represented by contexts [003], [1/003] and [2/003] are of alluvial origin, although they may be a natural variation in the Wealden Clay. This sandy silt rises from a depth of 60m AOD in the northwest of the site (in the re-excavated service trench), to 63m AOD in Trench 2. At the north western end of the site there is the later deposit of silt with clay [005] which may also be of alluvial formation.
- 7.2** The sporadic remains of the clayey silt and turf [1/002] and [006] have little depth and appear not to be associated with a well developed subsoil (Figure 5). This possibly indicates that the site has previously been truncated or levelled to an extent, although the evidence is not conclusive. The entire site has also been heavily tracked over, visible from some severe rutting. This, in conjunction with the clearly recent redeposited material [001], [1/001] and [2/001] (shown in Figure 6), indicates that this it has been used as a dump for construction materials, possibly from the adjacent newly built housing estate to the west bordering the site.
- 7.4** The lack of ancient features and artefacts recovered suggests that there is not a dense pattern of archaeological activity in the vicinity.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Hart, D. 2008. Apple Tree Farm Site, Ifield Avenue, Ifield, Crawley. West Sussex. Archaeological Watching Brief. Written Scheme of Investigation. ASE Document.

SMR Summary Form

Site Code	ATF08					
Identification Name and Address	Apple Tree Farm Site, Ifield Avenue, Ifield, Crawley. West Sussex					
County, District &/or Borough	Ifield, Crawley. West Sussex					
OS Grid Refs.	NGR 525301 138267					
Geology	Wealden Clay and Drift Geology - Alluvium					
Arch. South-East Project Number	3241					
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. 16 th – 26 th June 2008	Other		
Sponsor/Client	RSK Environmental Ltd					
Project Manager	Diccon Hart					
Project Supervisor	Deon Whittaker					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM	Other Modern ✓		
<p>100 Word Summary.</p> <p><i>Archaeology South-East was commissioned by RSK Environment Ltd., on behalf of their client, to undertake an archaeological watching brief at the Apple Tree Farm Site, Ifield Avenue, Ifield, Crawley. The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 525301 138267). Excavation of an approximately 100m long temporary service trench, two 30m trenches and a topsoil strip was subject to archaeological monitoring. Natural, possibly truncated deposits, formed of possible drift alluvium and Wealden clay underlay a poorly developed topsoil with a surface deposit of mixed modern construction materials. No archaeological remains were observed except late C19th and C20th pottery fragments from the overlying deposits.</i></p>						

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-48204

Project details

Project name Appletree Farm

Short description of the project *Archaeology South-East was commissioned by RSK Environment Ltd., on behalf of their client, to undertake an archaeological watching brief at the Apple Tree Farm Site, Ifield Avenue, Ifield, Crawley. The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 525301 138267. Excavation of an approximately 100m long temporary service trench, two 30m trenches and a topsoil strip was subject to archaeological monitoring. Natural, possibly truncated deposits, formed of possible drift alluvium and Wealden clay underlay a poorly developed topsoil with a surface deposit of mixed modern construction materials. No archaeological remains were observed except late C19th and C20th pottery fragments from the overlying deposits.*

Project dates Start: 16-06-2008 End: 26-06-2008

Previous/future work Not known / Not known

Any associated project reference codes ATF08 - Sitecode

Type of project Recording project

Site status None

Current Land use Community Service 1 - Community Buildings

Monument type . None

Significant Finds . None

Investigation type 'Watching Brief'

Prompt Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Project location

Country	England
Site location	EAST SUSSEX WEALDEN ISFIELD Apple Tree Farm Site, Ifield Avenue, Ifield, Crawley
Postcode	RH11 0XX
Study area	1.50 Kilometres
Site coordinates	TQ 25333283 38273045 51.1294656294 -0.208628360820 51 07 46 N 000 12 31 W Point
Lat/Long Datum	Unknown
Height OD / Depth	Min: 60.00m Max: 63.77m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South East
Project brief originator	Archaeology South East
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East
Project director/manager	Diccon Hart
Project supervisor	Deon Whittaker
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	RKS Environmental

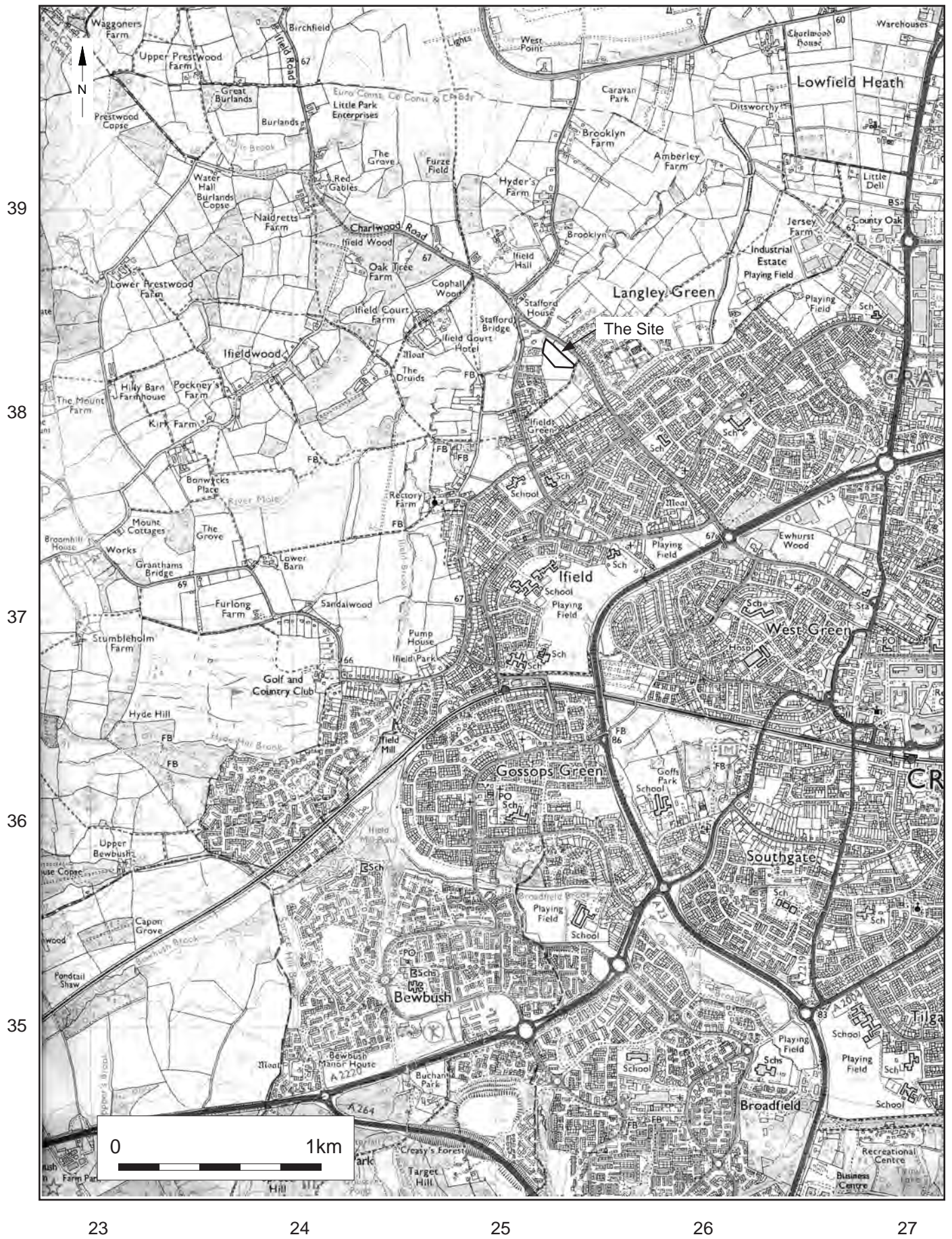
Project archives

Physical Archive	No
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Digital Archive recipient	Crawley Museum
Digital Contents	'Stratigraphic'
Digital Media	'Images raster / digital photography'
Paper Archive	No
Paper Archive recipient	Crawley Museum
Paper Contents	'Stratigraphic'
Paper Media available	'Plan','Report'

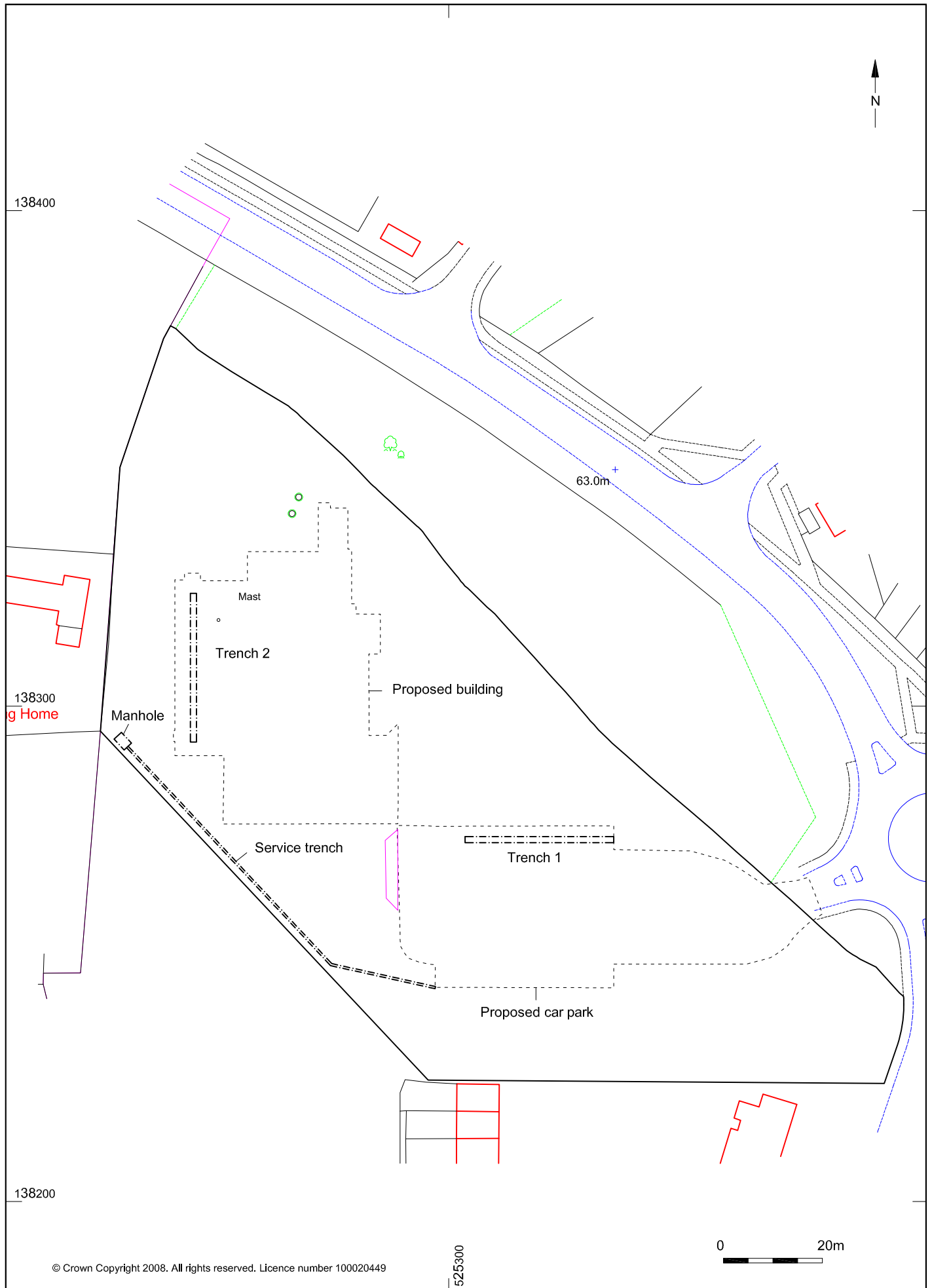
Project bibliography 1

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© Archaeology South-East		Apple Tree Farm	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 3241	Sept 2008	Site Location Plan	
Report Ref: 2008149	Drawn by: JLR		

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© Archaeology South-East		Apple Tree Farm	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 3241	Sept 2008	Site plan showing monitored areas	
Report Ref: 2008149	Drawn by: JLR		



Fig. 3: Temporary Service Trench looking south-southeast



Fig. 4: Temporary Service Trench looking north-northeast

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Fig. 5: Trench 1



Fig. 6: Trench 2

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