

**An Archaeological Evaluation at
Aylesham and Snowdown Welfare Scheme, Spinney Lane,
Aylesham, Canterbury, Kent**

Planning Ref: DOV/07/01486

NGR 623660 151929

Project No. 3932

Site Code: AYL09



**ASE Report No. 2009134
OASIS id: archaeol6-64133**

**Alice Thorne
with contributions by
Anna Doherty and Gemma Driver**

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Abstract

An archaeological evaluation was conducted on land at Spinney Lane, Aylesham, Canterbury, Kent in advance of the construction of welfare facilities and a car park. Three trial trenches were excavated to a cumulative length of 60m. One linear feature of uncertain date was observed within the north-west corner of the site. This produced several fragments of cattle bone, and a single, highly abraded sherd of probable Bronze Age or Late Iron Age/ Early Roman pottery.

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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 GPM Partnerships Limited on behalf of the Aylesham and Snowdown Welfare Committee to undertake an archaeological evaluation in advance of the redevelopment of the current bowls club car park at Spinney Lane, Aylesham, Canterbury, Kent. The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 623660 151929 and its location is shown in Figure 1.
- 1.1.2 A specification for the evaluation was prepared by The Heritage Conservation Group of Kent County Council prior to commencement of the work.
- 1.1.3 The fieldwork was undertaken by Alice Thorne (Senior Archaeologist) and Leanne Peyre (Assistant Archaeologist) on the 24/08/09. The project was managed by Neil Griffin (Project Manager) and Dan Swift (Post-Excavation Manager).

1.2 Geology and Topography

- 1.2.1 The site is located to the north of Spinney Lane, on flat ground to the south of the current bowls club, with a sports field bordering the site to the west. The site currently comprises grassed areas and a gravel car park.
- 1.2.2 The British Geological Survey Map Sheet 289 Solid and Drift Edition (1:50,000 scale) indicates that the site lies on the Cretaceous Upper Chalk, which is described as soft white with flints, with nodular chalk at its base. Deposits of Soliflucted Head are located within the vicinity.

1.3 Planning Background

- 1.3.1 The site has planning permission for the erection of a detached building, incorporating changing rooms, bars, offices and amenity rooms. There is also permission for the construction of a sports hall, netball and tennis courts, erection of flood lighting and alterations to existing vehicular access. The local planning Authority's reference for the scheme is DOV/07/01486.
- 1.3.2 The local planning authority placed the following condition on the planning consent:

No development shall take place until the applicant(s), or their agents or successors in title, has or have secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written specification and timetable which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority (Kent and Medway Structure Plan Policy QL7 and Dover District

Plan Polices HE6 and HE7)

Reason: to ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded.

1.4 Aims and Objectives

1.4.1 The aim of this evaluation, as set out in the specification was to:

- *Determine whether any significant archaeological remains survive on site. Assessment of the results should provide guidance on what further mitigation measures would be appropriate. Such measures may include detailed archaeological excavation; and/ or an archaeological watching brief during construction work.*
- *The evaluation will also aim to contribute to the heritage knowledge of the Aylesham area and in particular to establish the presence or absence of any archaeological remains associated with the nearby crop marks.*

(Section 6, HCGKCC, 2009)

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1** The proposed development site lies in an area of archaeological importance relating to a series of cropmarks which are located immediately south of the site in fields adjacent to Spinney Lane. Crop marks in the area show an extensive archaeological landscape, including ring ditches (likely to be the remains of ploughed out prehistoric round barrows), enclosures, track ways and field boundaries. A number of crop marks may extend under Spinney Lane, and may possibly extend into the area of the development site itself (Figure 2).

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 3.1** The specification outlined by the Heritage Conservation Group at KCC required that a programme of archaeological evaluation should provide a minimum 5% good overall coverage of the proposed development area. The layout of the trenches was established by Archaeology South-East and submitted to KCC for approval prior to commencement of works (Figure 3)
- 3.2** The ground work comprised the excavation of three 20m long trenches by mechanical excavator, utilising a flat blade ditching bucket.
- 3.3** All trenches were scanned with a cable avoidance tool prior to excavation.
- 3.4** All encountered archaeological deposits, features and finds were recorded according to accepted professional standards in accordance with the specification using standard Archaeology South-East context record sheets. Deposit colours were verified by visual inspection and not by reference to a Munsell Colour chart.
- 3.5** A full photographic record of the work was kept (*black and white prints, colour slides and digital images*) and forms part of the site archive. The archive is presently held at the Archaeology South-East offices at Portslade and will be offered to a suitable local museum in due course.
- 3.6** The site was levelled with respect to Ordnance Datum, using a spot height located in the middle of the road at the junction of Spinney Lane and Dorman Avenue (value 81.30m OD).
- 3.7** The spoil from the excavations was inspected to recover any artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest.

4.0 RESULTS

Trench no	Top of trench (mOD)	Base of trench (mOD)
1. NW end:	82.07	81.83
1. SE end:	82.14	81.89
2. NW end:	82.04	81.76
2. SE end:	82.07	81.74
3. NW end:	81.89	81.58
3. SE end:	82.02	81.63

Table 1: Trench Levels

4.1 Trench 1 (Figures 3 and 4)

4.1.1 This trench was orientated NW-SE, and was located within the western part of the development area. The sequence of deposits observed within the trench was as follows:

- Context [1/001] was a compact, grey deposit of gravels, comprising the car park hard standing. This varied between 90mm – 140mm in depth.
- Below this was a compact mid orangish brown silty clay interface layer, containing occasional chalk fragments, angular to rounded flint nodules and moderate quantities of modern tile, glass and dark grey gravels and grit [1/002]. This interface layer measured between 20mm to 80mm and is thought to represent the disturbed and mixed surface of the underlying natural. It is thought that this deposit has resulted from past stripping and levelling of the ground surface across this area of the site.
- Below this a compact mid orangish brown silty clay was encountered [1/003]. This contained frequent seams and patches of weathered and degraded chalk, and concentrations of angular to rounded flint nodules. This deposit represents a decalcified, soliflucted natural head deposit.

4.1.2 One ephemeral linear feature [1/004] was observed crossing the northern part of trench 1 on a NW to SE orientation at 81.73mOD. It had a width of 1.0m and a maximum depth of 0.10m. It had a shallow concave profile, and was filled by a compact mid to light orangish brown silty clay, containing moderate quantities of angular flint nodules [1/005]. Several fragments of cattle bone and a single highly abraded sherd of possible Late Iron Age/early Roman pottery was recovered from this feature.

4.1.3 This feature is thought to represent the base of a truncated field boundary or drainage ditch. It is situated slightly to the north of, and orientated on a different alignment to, a linear crop mark observed in the playing field to the west and is not thought to comprise a continuation of this. No other features were observed within the southern portion of the trench, suggesting

that the feature indicated by the crop mark does not extend into this area of the development site.

4.2 Trench 2

4.2.1 This trench was orientated NW to SE, and was located within the central part of the development area. The sequence of deposits observed within the trench was as follows:

- Context [2/001] the car park hard standing (same as [1/001]). This varied between 190mm – 250mm in depth.
- Below this an interface layer [2/002] was present with a depth of between 90mm – 130mm. This layer was the same as [1/002].
- Below this the decalcified natural head deposit was encountered [2/003]. As in trench 1, the natural geology in this area contained frequent soliflucted seams and channels of degraded chalk.

4.2.2 No archaeological finds or features were observed within this trench.

4.3 Trench 3

4.3.1 This trench was orientated NW-SE, and was located within the eastern part of the development area. The sequence of deposits observed within the trench was as follows:

- Context [3/001] the car park hard standing (same as context [1/001] and [2/001]). This varied between 140mm – 260mm in depth.
- Below this the interface layer [3/002] (same as context [1/002] and [2/002]) present to a depth of between 40mm – 150mm.
- Below this the decalcified natural head deposit was encountered [3/003]. In this area of the site the underlying natural comprised a much more homogenous silty-clay deposit than that observed in the other two trenches, with no solifluction chalk seams.

4.3.2 No archaeological finds or features were observed within this trench.

5.0 THE FINDS

5.1 The Pottery by Anna Doherty

- 5.1.1 Only one sherd of pottery, weighing 4 grams was recovered from trench 1 [1/005]. It is thin-walled with an unoxidised core and orange oxidised surfaces, and contains sparse to moderate quantities of grog. The sherd is relatively well-fired, strongly suggesting that it dates to the Late Iron Age/early Roman period. However, given the presence of a probable Bronze Age landscape in the vicinity, the possibility that it might be a Beaker sherd cannot be ruled out. In either case, the sherd is small and noticeably abraded, and is therefore likely to be residual. No further work is required, although the sherd should be integrated with any assemblage recovered in the event of further excavation.

5.2 The Animal Bone by Gemma Driver

- 5.2.1 Context [1/005] produced 15 fragments of cattle-sized animal bone. The assemblage consists of rib and long bone fragments as well as a small fragment of scapulae. The assemblage is in a poor condition and the surface of the bone has been eroded. There is no evidence of butchery, burning, gnawing or pathology.
- 5.2.2 Due to the size and condition of this assemblage, it has no potential for further analysis.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1** Three evaluation trenches with a cumulative length of 60m were excavated within the proposed development site, all located within the area of the current car park.
- 6.2** One linear feature [1/004] orientated NW to SE was observed within trench 1. This is thought to represent the base of a field boundary or drainage ditch of uncertain date. A single, abraded, probably residual sherd, possibly dating to the Bronze Age or Late Iron Age/early Roman periods, was recovered from the fill of this feature.
- 6.3** The ditch did not bear any relation to any proximate crop marks and no further archaeological remains were observed within the evaluation trenches. The absence of a buried topsoil or subsoil, together with the presence of a mixed interface layer indicates that the site has been stripped in the past, possibly during the construction of the current car park. This process was likely to have impacted any potential archaeology. However, the depth of this site strip is not thought to have been extensive, as has been demonstrated by the survival of the feature [1/004].
- 6.4** The evaluation has shown that some limited archaeological remains survive within the site boundary. As the dating and nature of these remains is unclear, it would be prudent to conduct an archaeological watching brief. This will be maintained in accordance with a specification provided by KCC.

Bibliography

Heritage Conservation Group, Kent County Council, 2009. Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation at Aylesham and Snowdown Welfare Scheme, Spinney Lane, Aylesham, Canterbury, Kent.

Acknowledgements

Archaeology South-East would like to thank GPM Partnerships Limited for commissioning the project and The Heritage Conservation Group of Kent County Council for their guidance throughout the project.

SMR Summary Form

Site Code	AYL09					
Identification Name and Address	Aylesham and Snowdown Welfare Scheme, Spinney Lane, Aylesham, Canterbury					
County, District &/or Borough	Kent					
OS Grid Refs.	623660 151929					
Geology	Cretaceous Upper Chalk					
Arch. South-East Project Number	3932					
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. 24/08/09	Excav.	WB.	Other		
Sponsor/Client	GPM Partnerships Limited					
Project Manager	Neil Griffin					
Project Supervisor	Alice Thorne					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB ✓
	AS	MED	PM	Other Modern		
<p>100 Word Summary.</p> <p><i>An archaeological evaluation was conducted on land at Spinney Lane, Aylesham, Canterbury, Kent in advance of the construction of welfare facilities and a car park. Three trial trenches were excavated to a cumulative length of 60m. One linear feature of uncertain date was observed within the north-west corner of the site. This produced several fragments of cattle bone, and a single, highly abraded sherd of probable Late Iron Age/ Early Roman pottery.</i></p>						

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-64133

Project details

Project name	Aylesham and Snowdown Welfare Scheme
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation was conducted on land at Spinney Lane, Aylesham, Canterbury, Kent in advance of the construction of welfare facilities and a car park. Three trial trenches were excavated to a cumulative length of 60m. One linear feature of uncertain date was observed within the north-west corner of the site. This produced several fragments of cattle bone, and a single, highly abraded sherd of probable Late Iron Age/ Early Roman pottery.
Project dates	Start: 24-08-2009 End: 24-08-2009
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	3932 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	AYL09 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Monument type	DITCH Uncertain
Significant Finds	POTTERY Uncertain
Significant Finds	ANIMAL BONE Uncertain
Methods & techniques	'Sample Trenches'
Development type	Public building (e.g. school, church, hospital, medical centre, law courts etc.)
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	KENT DOVER AYLESHAM Aylesham and Snowdown Welfare Scheme
Postcode	XXXXXX

Study area	60.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TR 23660 51929 51.2220262954 1.203407217580 51 13 19 N 001 12 12 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 81.58m Max: 81.89m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South East
Project brief originator	Kent County Council
Project design originator	KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
Project director/manager	Neil Griffin
Project supervisor	Alice Thorne
Type of sponsor/funding body	Client
Name of sponsor/funding body	GPM Partnerships Limited

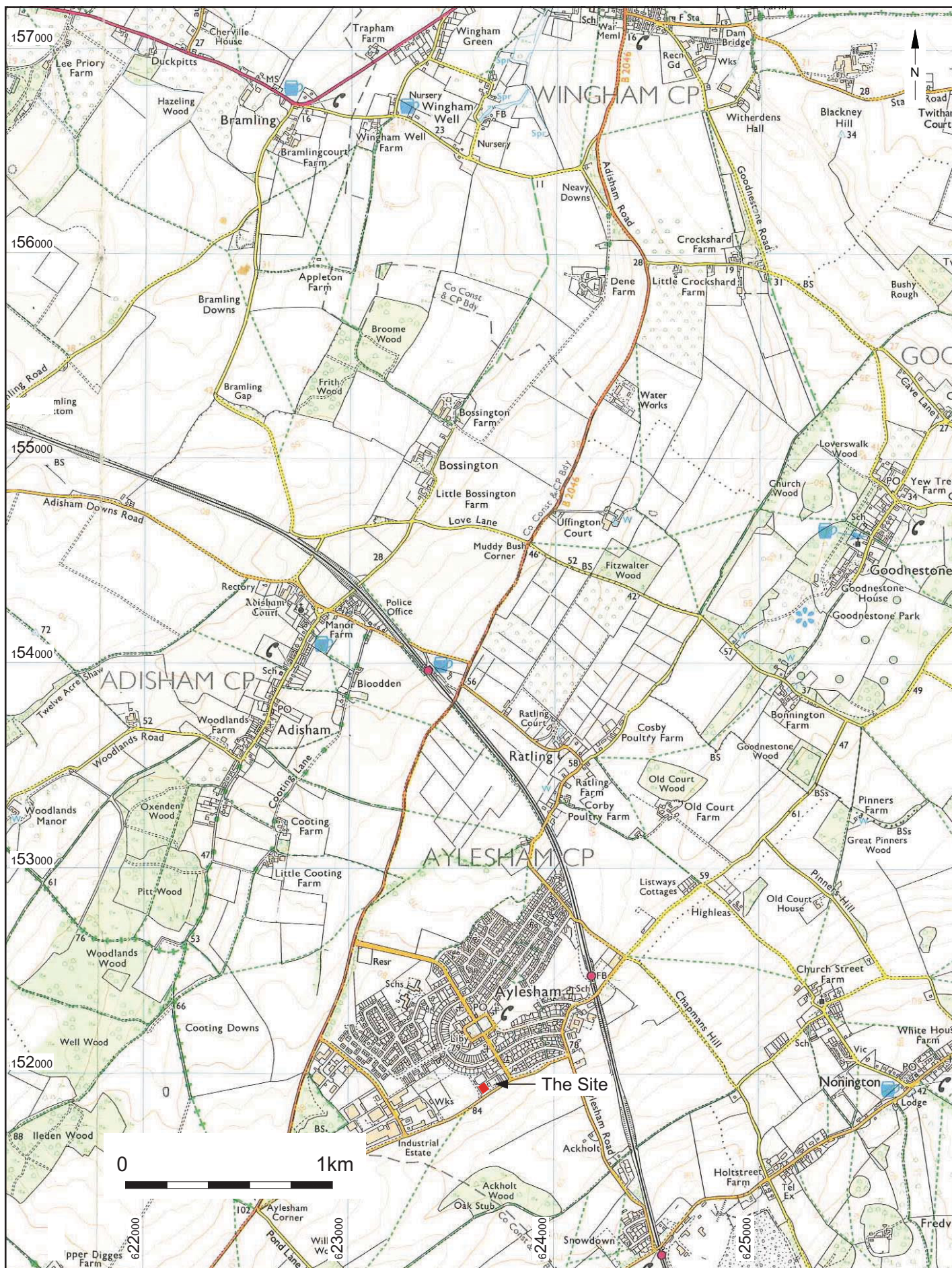
Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	local museum
Physical Contents	'Animal Bones','Ceramics'
Digital Archive recipient	Local Museum
Digital Contents	'other'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography'
Paper Archive recipient	Local Museum
Paper Contents	'Animal Bones','Ceramics','Stratigraphic'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Drawing','Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General Notes','Photograph','Plan','Report','Section'

Project bibliography 1

Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Publication type
Title An Archaeological Evaluation at
Author(s)/Editor(s) Thorne, A
Other bibliographic 3932
details
Date 2009
Issuer or publisher Archaeology South - East
Place of issue or Archaeology South- East
publication
Description Standard grey literature report
Entered by Alice Thorne (tornath@ucl.ac.uk)
Entered on 8 September 2009



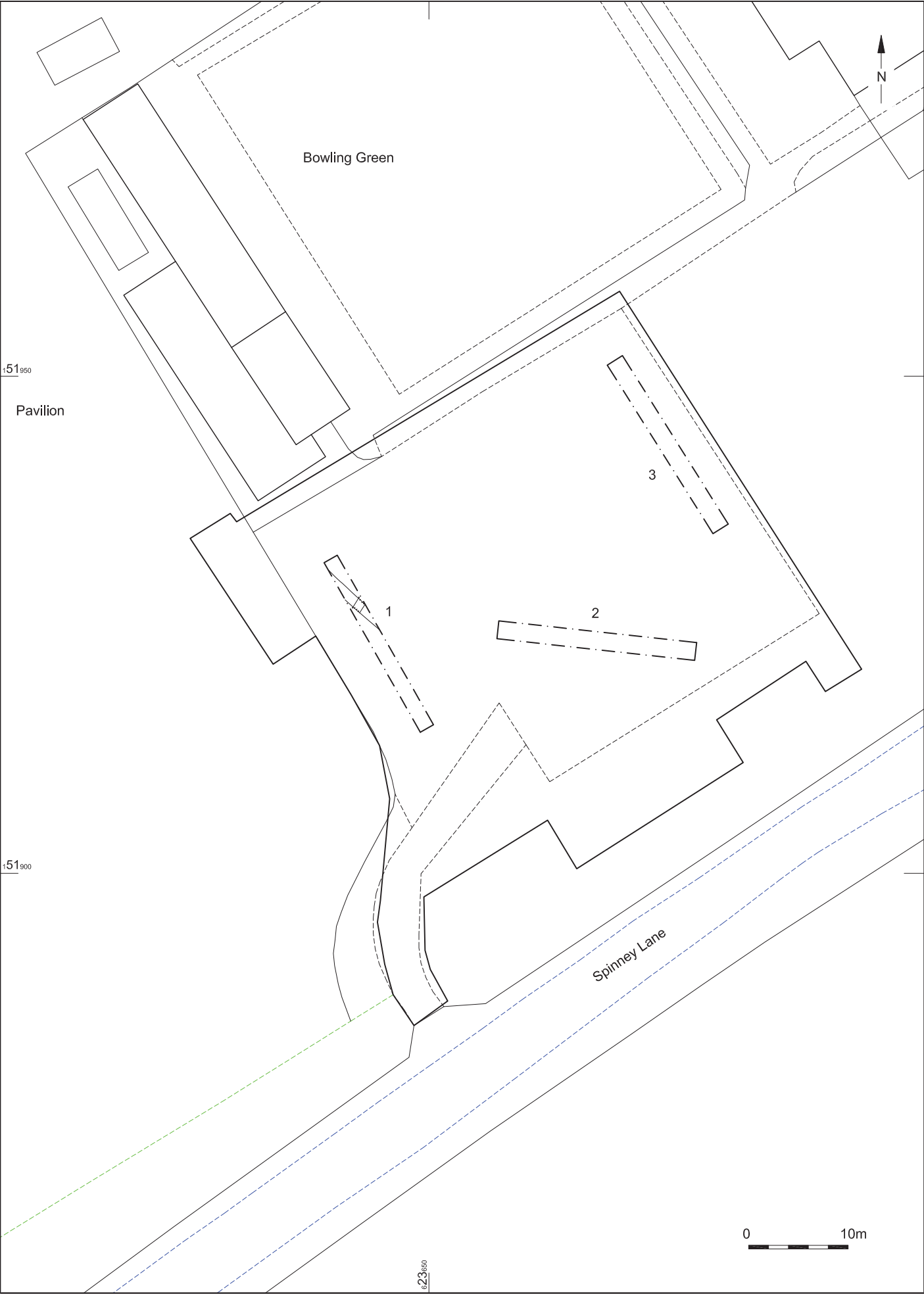
© Archaeology South-East		Aylesham and Snowdown Welfare Scheme	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 3932	September 2009	Site location plan	
Report Ref: 2009134	Drawn by: LD		

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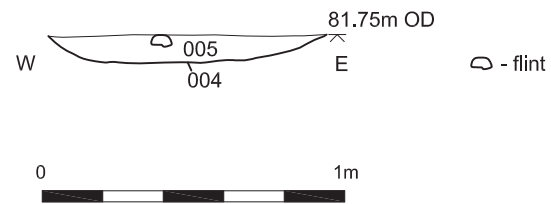
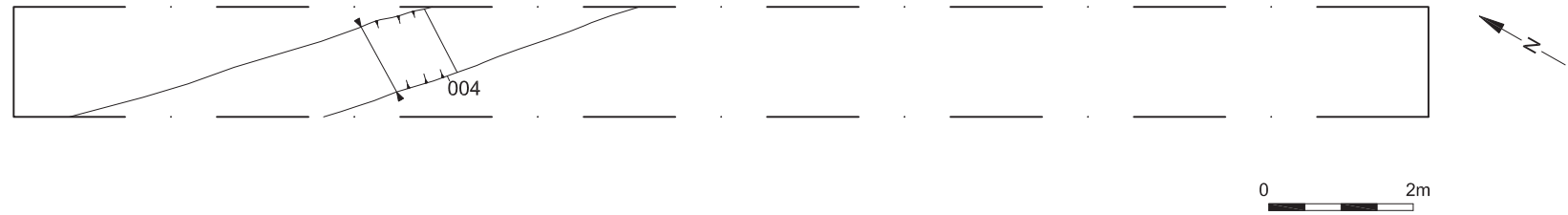
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© Archaeology South-East		Aylesham and Snowdown Welfare Scheme	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 3932	September 2009	Aerial photo of site	
Report Ref: 2009134	Drawn by: LD		



© Archaeology South-East		Aylesham and Snowdown Welfare Facility	Fig. 3
Project Ref: 3932	September 2009	Trench location	
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Trench 1



© Archaeology South-East		Aylesham and Snowdown Welfare Facility	Fig. 4
Project Ref: 3932	September 2009	Trench plan and Section	
Report Ref: 2009134	Drawn by: LD		

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