Archaeology South-East

ASE

Archaeological Evaluation Report
Old Clayton Kennels
Storrington, West Sussex

NGR: 511012 113691

Planning Ref: HDC/23/0701

ASE Project No: 240609
Site Code: OCK24

ASE Report No: 2025006
OASIS id: archaeol6-530736

By Jake Wilson

REGISTERED CIfA ORGANISATION

UCL INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY

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Abstract

This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation carried out by Archaeology South-East at Old Clayton Kennels, Storrington, West Sussex between the 06/01/2025-07/01/2025. The fieldwork was commissioned by EDP Ltd on behalf of Highwood Construction Ltd. in advance of residential development. Seven evaluation trenches were excavated.

The archaeological horizon and the sealing overburden do not appear to have been significantly truncated or disturbed in the majority of the evaluated areas, however, no archaeological finds, deposits or features whatsoever were recorded.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE) was commissioned by EDP Ltd on behalf of Highwood Construction Ltd. to undertake an archaeological evaluation at Old Clayton Kennels, Storrington, West Sussex (centred on NGR 511012 113691; Figure 1).

1.2 Geology and Topography

1.2.1 The site is a square parcel of land measuring c.1.36ha and occupied by the Old Clayton Kennels and Cattery. It comprises buildings and fenced enclosures surrounded by access roads, hardstanding, grassland and trees. The boundaries of the site are defined by the main road (A283) to the south and property boundaries to the north, east and west, separating the site area from an agricultural field to the east and areas of existing residential development to the north and west.

1.2.2 According to the British Geological Survey 1:50,000 scale geological mapping available online (BGS 2024), the natural geology of the site comprises sandstone of the Folkestone formation, which is sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 125 to 100 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period. No superficial geological formations are recorded.

1.2.3 The site is located on level ground, which lies at c. 57m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD).

1.3 Planning Background

1.3.1 Outline planning permission was granted by Horsham District Council (HDC) for the demolition of the existing structures and the construction of a care home and 8 bungalows (HDC/23/0701), subject to an archaeological planning condition as follows:

5 Pre-Commencement Condition:

1. With the exception of the above ground demolition and removal of existing buildings, no development or preliminary groundworks shall commence until a programme of archaeological trial trenching has been secured and undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the planning authority.

2. A mitigation strategy detailing the excavation/preservation strategy shall be submitted to the local planning authority following the completion of this work.

3. No development or preliminary groundworks shall commence on those areas containing archaeological deposits until the satisfactory completion of fieldwork, as detailed in the mitigation strategy, and which has been signed off by the local planning authority through its historic environment advisors.

4. The applicant will submit to the local planning authority a post-excavation

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assessment (to be submitted within three months of the completion of fieldwork, unless otherwise agreed in advance with the Local Planning Authority). This will result in the completion of post excavation analysis, preparation of a full site archive and report ready for deposition at the local museum, and submission of a publication report.

Reason: This matter is fundamental as 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 34 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

1.3.2 Accordingly, a Written Scheme of Investigation (ASE 2024) was submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority and all parties prior to the commencement of fieldwork.

1.4 Scope of Report

1.4.1 This report details the findings of the archaeological evaluation, which was carried out on the 06/01/2025-07/01/2025.

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2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Below is a summary of the findings of an Archaeological Desk Based Assessment (DBA) for the site (EDP 2023).

2.2 The site does not contain any designated heritage assets and is not within an archaeological notification area. The site does contain one non-designated archaeological site recorded on the HER. It relates to the construction and operation of Clayton Farm, which dates from the 16th century and later.

2.3 There is currently no evidence for early prehistoric activity or finds within the site boundary or in fact anywhere within the immediately surrounding area. There is one example of Neolithic activity within the 1km search area, this comprises a flint leaf arrowhead (MWS4622) that was found by chance encounter approximately 700m south-west of the site boundary. It is most likely that the find represents casual loss in antiquity and does not provide evidence for either permanent or even regular Neolithic activity in the environs of the site. Limited evidence for Bronze Age activity within the 1km search area is attested by the chance finds of two Bronze Age swords and spearheads (MWS1182) and a Bronze Age urn and possible cremation (MWS1193). The swords and spearheads were found near Sandgate in 1812, approximately 875m north-west of the site, whereas the urn and the probable cremation were found c.750m to the north of the site boundary at Heath Common. The urn has been dated to the Middle Bronze Age (1600 – 1001 BC) and it was found to contain a fragment of calcined bone. It is considered that there is only a low potential for the site to contain archaeological remains of middle to late prehistoric date.

2.4 There is currently no evidence for Roman activity or finds anywhere within the 1km study area around the site and so therefore the potential for the site to contain archaeological features, deposits and/or remains of Roman date is assessed as being low.

2.5 Similarly, there is currently no evidence for early medieval activity or finds anywhere within the 1km study area around the site and so therefore the potential for the site to contain archaeological features, deposits or remains of this date is considered only low.

2.6 Within the wider study area defined around the site, there is only one reference to potential activity during the medieval period. This comprises a cluster of earthworks located on Heath Common, c.785m NE of site. The earthworks (MWS11265) are listed in the HER as being the remains of medieval or post-medieval holloways and identified from aerial photographs. The earthworks are shown running in a broadly north-east to south-west orientation. The nature of the evidence indicates that, if there is any evidence for medieval activity at the site it will focus on the exploitation and management of the agricultural landscape and will not involve either settlement or industry. Overall, it is assessed that the site has a low potential to contain significant archaeological remains of medieval origin.

2.7 The post-medieval period is the most heavily attested era within the study area, with ten records being held by the HER, eight focusing on agriculture. The one

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West Sussex HER entry present within the site relates to Clayton Farm Historic Farmstead (MWS9827), located on the north side of the main road. This is described as a 19th century regular farmstead courtyard, with an associated detached farmhouse (beyond the eastern edge of the site), all of which is still extant with no apparent alteration. The farmhouse (Old Clayton, 1039953) is designated as a Grade II listed building and can be seen to the east of the eastern site boundary, once again on the north side of the road. The house is described in the listing citation as dating from the 16th century (or earlier) and being of timber-framed construction. Six further 19th century farmsteads and out farms are located in the wider landscape. Additional evidence of post-medieval settlement is seen with two parkscapes, at Randall House (MWS34) and at Sandgate Park (MWS3865). There is a 'moderate' potential for hitherto unknown or unrecorded archaeology of post-medieval date to be encountered within the site area.

2.8 Within the wider 1km search area surrounding Old Clayton Kennels are two WWII sites. They comprise the site of a WWII Army Camp at Barn's Farm (MWS7547) and site of a WWII Army Camp at Sandgate Park (MWS10698). There is no evidence that either wartime facility extended to include land within the site. At the same time, there is no indication or evidence for comparable or associated facilities at or within the site and therefore the conclusion is that the site has a low potential to contain significant archaeological finds or features of modern derivation.

Summary of Recent Archaeological Investigations

2.9 No previous archaeological investigation is known to have been undertaken on the site.

2.10 Project Aims and Objectives

2.10.1 The general aims of the archaeological investigation 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 make an informed decision as to the requirement for any further archaeological work at the site.*

Site Specific Aims

2.10.2 Site-specific research aims are identified as follows:

- *To identify any evidence for Mesolithic and Neolithic activity within the site.*
- *To identify any additional evidence for Bronze Age funerary activity and associated settlement given the proximity of known sites to the north.*

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- *To identify any additional archaeological phases relating to the Clayton Farm historic farmstead, particularly in relation to its origins – is there evidence for earlier medieval settlement in this location?*

Research Framework

2.10.3 The following site-specific research aims have been drawn from the South-East Research Framework (SERF, KCC 2024):

- *The use of the Weald in later prehistory: how good is the evidence for occupation or exploitation of the Weald in later prehistory? Was it a barrier to communication? (SERF Bronze Age/Iron Age)*
- *An understanding of the multifaceted landscape (SERF post-medieval and modern)*
- *To what extent did farms change/specialise over time? How does this vary with the underlying geology? (SERF post-medieval and modern)*

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3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 Evaluation

3.1.1 The trial trench evaluation involved the excavation of seven trenches targeted on the main areas of likely disturbance (Figure 2) arising from developmental impacts. All trenches were located as per the WSI (ASE 2024), surveyed and levelled using GPS survey equipment.

3.1.2 All trench locations were scanned prior to excavation using a Cable Avoidance Tool (CAT) operated by accredited ASE personnel.

3.1.3 All trenches were then excavated by a tracked machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under archaeological supervision, grading in spits of no more than 100mm at a time until the first archaeological horizon, or natural geology was uncovered.

3.1.4 Trenches were different lengths depending on their location. This was to avoid several services which were noted across the site. Trenches 3 and 7 had to be shortened to avoid active Tree Protection Orders. Actual trench lengths are recorded in Appendix 1.

3.1.5 All spoil was placed at a minimum of 0.50m away from the evaluation trench edge and was separated between topsoil and subsoil.

3.1.6 All deposits were then recorded using standard ASE context sheets (with colours recorded by visual inspection only). A digital photographic record was made of the trenches.

3.1.7 Spoil heaps and trench bases were scanned by eye, for unstratified artefacts.

3.1.8 All hand excavation, recording and planning was conducted in line with WSI (ibid) and with Sussex Archaeological Standards (CDC / ESCC / WSSC, 2019).

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3.2 Archive

3.2.1 The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will be deposited at the Horsham Museum in due course.

Context sheets	0
Section sheets	0
Plans sheets	0
Colour photographs	0
B&W photos	0
Digital photos	27
Context register	0
Drawing register	0
Watching brief forms	0
Trench Record forms	7

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

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4.0 RESULTS

4.0.1 No archaeological finds, features or deposits were recorded in any of the evaluation trenches. Deposits and measurements of the archaeologically negative trenches are tabulated in Appendix 1 at the back of this report and photographs of the trenches are illustrated on Figure 3.

4.0.2 All of the trenches exhibited a similar stratigraphy of topsoil and subsoil sealing sandstone of the Folkestone Formation. The geology was encountered at its highest within Trench 6 at 55.35M AOD and its lowest within Trench 1 at 54.22M AOD. The subsoil horizon ranged in thickness from between 0.11m-0.23m.

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5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Overview of stratigraphic sequence

5.1.1 All trenches exhibited a similar stratigraphy of topsoil and subsoil sealing sandstone of the Folkestone Formation geology.

5.1.2 No archaeological finds, features or deposits were recorded in the evaluation.

5.1.3 The methodology, as set out in the WSI (ASE 2024), was successfully employed during the evaluation. The conditions on site were conducive to confident and efficient identification and recording of archaeological features and as such it is considered that this evaluation successfully achieved its general objective.

5.2 Deposit survival and existing impacts

5.2.1 Modern impacts were encountered in Trenches 3 and 4, in the form of large, shingle-filled soakaways cut into the natural geological horizon.

5.2.2 The intact subsoil horizon was between 0.11m and 0.23m thick and was generally around 0.14m thick.

5.3 Consideration of research aims

5.3.1 In terms of the general aims of the evaluation, the archaeology and the sealing overburden did not appear to have been significantly truncated or disturbed in the majority of the evaluated areas, and therefore the preservation of the archaeological horizon across the site can be considered as good.

5.3.2 No archaeological deposits, features or finds were recorded and so none of the site-specific research aims can be addressed.

5.4 Conclusions

5.4.1 Seven archaeological evaluation trenches were excavated. The archaeological horizon and the sealing overburden do not appear to have been significantly truncated or disturbed in the majority of the evaluated areas, however, no archaeological finds, deposits or features whatsoever were recorded.

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Accessed 9th February 2025

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KCC, 2024 South-East Research Framework (SERF)

CDC / ESCC / WSSC, 2019 *Sussex Archaeological Standards*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ASE would like to thank EDP Ltd for commissioning the work and for their assistance throughout the project, and the West Sussex County Archaeologist for their guidance and monitoring. The evaluation was directed by Jake Wilson. Adam Cheshire produced the figures for this report; Jon Sygrave and Darryl Palmer managed the fieldwork, Dan Swift the post-excavation process.

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HER Summary

site code	OCK24					
Project code	240609					
Planning reference	DC/23/0701					
site address	Old Clayton Kennels, Storrington					
District/Borough	Horsham, West Sussex					
NGR (12 figures)	511012 113691					
Geology	Sandstone of the Folkstone formation					
Fieldwork type	Eval					
Date of fieldwork	06/01/2025- 07/01/2025					
Sponsor/client	EDP Ltd					
Project manager	Jon Sygrave & Darryl Palmer					
Project supervisor	Jake Wilson					
Period summary						
Project summary	Seven archaeological evaluation trenches were excavated. The archaeological horizon and the sealing overburden do not appear to have been significantly truncated or disturbed in the majority of the evaluated areas, however, no archaeological finds, deposits or features whatsoever were recorded.					

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OASIS Form

OASIS ID (UID): archaeol6-530736
Project Name: Evaluation at Old Clayton Kennels
Activity type: Evaluation
Sitecode(s): OCK24
Project Identifier(s): 240609, OCK24
Planning Id: DC/23/0701
Reason for Investigation: Planning requirement
Organisation Responsible for work: Archaeology South-East
Project Dates: 06-Jan-2025 - 07-Jan-2025
HER: West Sussex HER

Project Methodology: The trial trench evaluation involved the excavation of seven trenches targeted on the main areas of likely disturbance (Figure 2) arising from developmental impacts. All trenches were located as per the WSI (ASE 2024), surveyed and levelled using GPS survey equipment. All trench locations were scanned prior to excavation using a Cable Avoidance Tool (CAT) operated by accredited ASE personnel. All trenches were then excavated by a tracked machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under archaeological supervision, grading in spits of no more than 100mm at a time until the first archaeological horizon, or natural geology was uncovered. Trenches were different lengths depending on their location. This was to avoid several services which were noted across the site. Each trench length is recorded in Appendix 1. All spoil was placed at a minimum of 0.50m away from the evaluation trench edge and was separated between topsoil and subsoil. All deposits were then recorded using standard ASE context sheets (with colours recorded by visual inspection only). A digital photographic record was made of the trenches. Spoil heaps and trench bases were scanned by eye, for unstratified artefacts. All hand excavation, recording and planning was conducted in line with WSI (ibid) and West Sussex Archaeological Standards (WSCC, 2024).

Project Results: The archaeological horizon and the sealing overburden do not appear to have been significantly truncated or disturbed in the majority of the evaluated areas, however, no archaeological finds, deposits or features whatsoever were recorded.

Archive:
Physical Archive, Digital Archive - to be deposited with West Sussex Record Office;

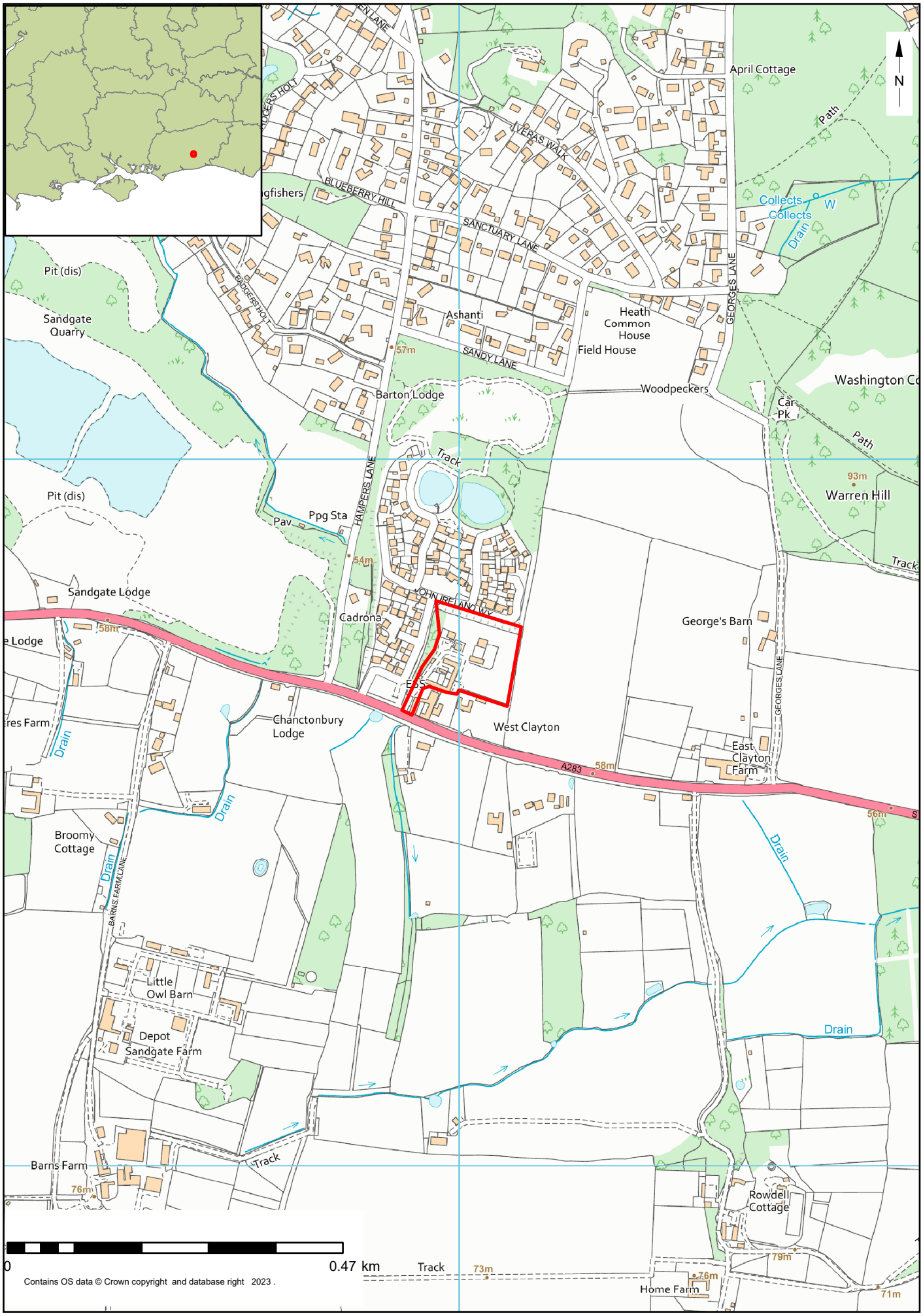
Reports in OASIS:
Wilson, J., (2025). *Evaluation at Old Clayton Kennels*. Archaeology South-East: Archaeology South-East. 2025006.

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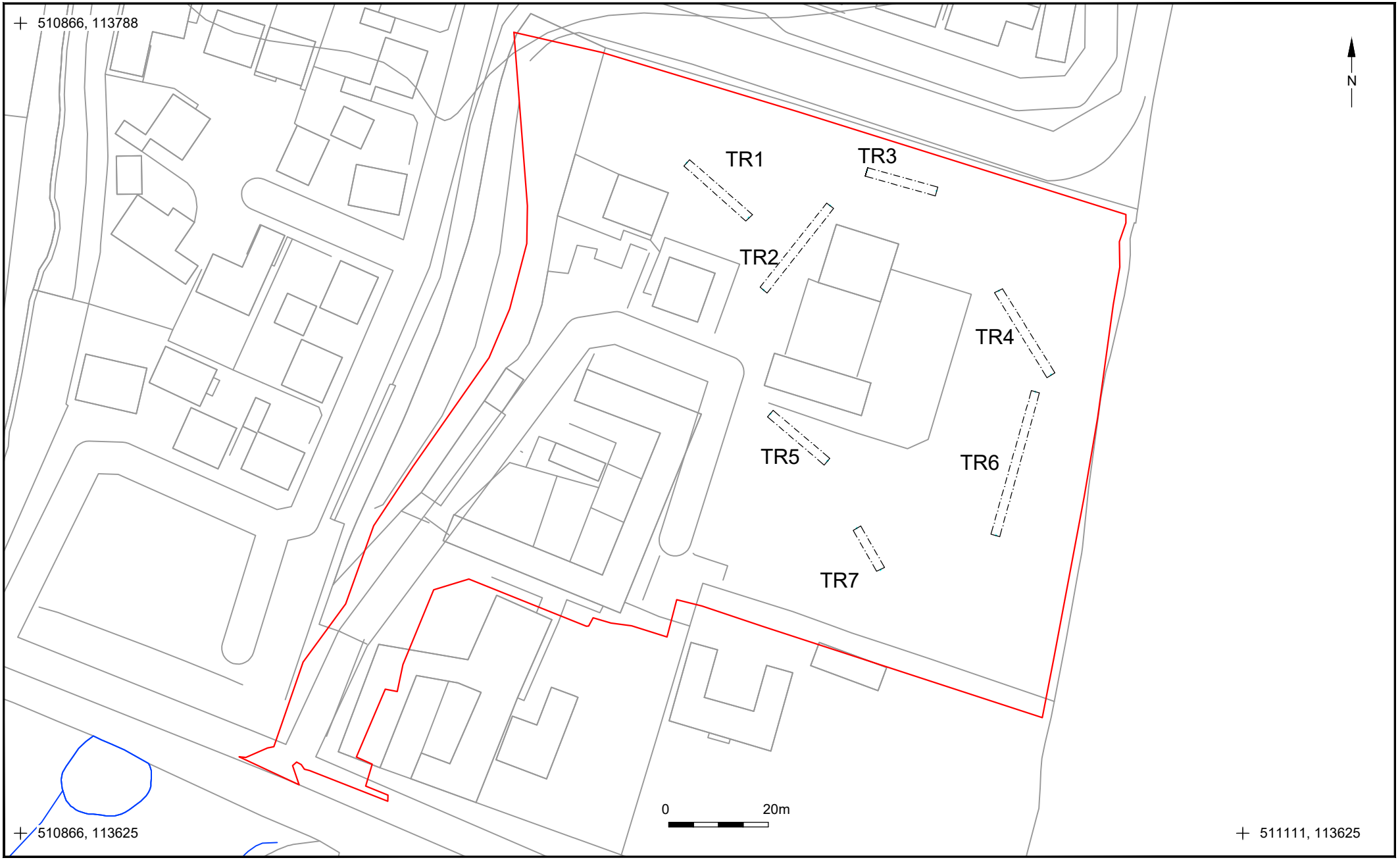
Appendix 1: Archaeologically negative trenches

Context	Type	Interpretation	Length	Width	Depth	Height
1/001	Layer	Topsoil	16.7	1.8	0.08-0.11	54.38-54.49
1/002	Layer	Subsoil	16.7	1.8	0.14-0.21	54.27-54.39
1/003	Layer	Natural	16.7	1.8	0.01	54.06-54.22
2/001	Layer	Topsoil	21.58	1.8	0.09-0.16	54.8-54.88
2/002	Layer	Subsoil	21.58	1.8	0.12-0.19	54.64-54.78
2/003	Layer	Natural	21.58	1.8	0.01	54.45-54.6
3/001	Layer	Topsoil	12	1.8	0.15-0.17	54.89-54.97
3/002	Layer	Subsoil	12	1.8	0.11-0.18	54.72-54.83
3/003	Layer	Natural	12	1.8	0.01	54.54-54.72
4/001	Layer	Topsoil	20	1.8	0.17-0.24	55.1-55.5
4/002	Layer	Subsoil	20	1.8	0.13-0.23	54.9-55.33
4/003	Layer	Natural	20	1.8	0.01	54.78-55.1
5/001	Layer	Topsoil	15	1.8	0.11-0.17	55.17-55.29
5/002	Layer	Subsoil	15	1.8	0.14-0.18	55.06-55.14
5/003	Layer	Natural	15	1.8	0.01	54.92-54.96
6/001	Layer	Topsoil	30	1.8	0.16-0.19	55.47-55.71
6/002	Layer	Subsoil	30	1.8	0.17-0.22	55.31-55.54
6/003	Layer	Natural	30	1.8	0.01	55.09-55.35
7/001	Layer	Topsoil	9.5	1.8	0.10-0.17	55.32-55.41
7/002	Layer	Subsoil	9.5	1.8	0.11-0.20	55.15-55.3
7/003	Layer	Natural	9.5	1.8	0.1	54.95-55.16

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© **Archaeology South-East**		Old Clayton Kennels, Storrington	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 240609	Jan 2024	Site Location	
Report Ref: 2025006	Drawn by: AC		



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© **Archaeology South-East**		Old Clayton Kennels, Storrington	Fig.2
Project Ref: 240609	Jan 2025	Site Plan	
Report Ref: 2025006	Drawn by: AC		



Trench 1 looking south-east



Trench 2 looking south-west



Trench 3 looking south-east



Trench 4 looking south-east



Trench 5 looking north-west



Trench 6 looking north



Trench 7 looking south-east

© **Archaeology South-East**		Old Clayton Kennels, Storrington	Fig.3
Project Ref: 240609	Jan 2025	Blank Trench Photographs	
Report Ref: 2025006	Drawn by: AC		



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