

**61-67 Leatherhead Road,
Ashted, Surrey**

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Millgate Homes**

by Simon Cass

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code LRA 07/57

May 2007

Summary

Site name: 61-67 Leatherhead Road, Ashtead, Surrey

Grid reference: TQ 1835 5767

Site activity: Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 3rd–4th May 2007

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Simon Cass

Site code: LRA 07/57

Area of site: 0.375ha

Summary of results: No finds or features of archaeological interest were noted during this evaluation.

Monuments identified: None.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Leatherhead Museum in due course.

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford✓ 16.05.07
	Steve Preston✓ 17.05.07

Leatherhead Road, Ashted, Surrey An Archaeological Evaluation

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Report 07/57

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out 61-67 Leatherhead Road, Ashted, Surrey (TQ 1835 5767) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Greg Meier of Millgate Homes, Millgate House, Ruscombe Lane, Ruscombe, Twyford, Berkshire, RG10 9JT.

A planning consent (MO/2006/1606/PLAMAJ) was granted by Mole Valley District Council to demolish existing buildings on the site and construct new retirement homes. The consent was subject to a condition (16) relating to archaeology which required the site to be investigated prior to the commencement of groundworks. The archaeological investigation was to take the form, initially, of an evaluation of the site by means of trial trenching.

This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Planning Policy Guidance, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990), and the District Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Gary Jackson, Archaeological Officer with Surrey County Council, adviser to the District. The fieldwork was undertaken by Simon Cass and Andrew Lawler on the 3rd-4th May 2007 and the site code is LRA 07/57. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Leatherhead Museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the southern margins of Ashted on the north side of Leatherhead Road (Figs 1 and 2). The site lies at a height of approximately 68m AOD and is located on a convergence of different geological outcrops listed as Taelle Gravels, Thanet and Reading Beds with chalk present just to the south (BGS 1978). Deposits corresponding to all of these varying geologies were observed in the trenches. Prior to demolition the site contained four detached houses and associated garages (Fig. 2).

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location from which a range of sites and finds of various periods are recorded (Cotton *et al.* 2005). Ashted is noteworthy for its Roman villa and kiln sites (Bird and Bird

1987, 175). In particular the county Sites and Monuments Record notes the findspots of Iron Age remains found in 1925 just to the south of the site, although relatively few details are known of this find. It is possible that further deposits of similar date could be present on the site.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological or palaeoenvironmental deposits within the area of development. Specifically, this projects aims were:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on this site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present; and
- to determine if any deposits of Iron Age date are present.

Seven trenches were to be excavated by a JCB-type machine under constant archaeological supervision. They were sited to avoid areas of previous disturbance but still within the areas to be affected by the planned groundworks. In the event several trenches were repositioned to avoid live services running through the centre of the site, an amendment agreed to by the County Archaeological Officer. Five trenches were to be dug 15m long and two trenches 8m long, all 1.6m wide. This was intended to sample approximately 4% of the site area.

A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Results

The seven trenches dug varied in length from 7.6m–15.9m as shown on Figure 1.

Trench 1

This trench was 15.9m long and 1.23m deep. The stratigraphy encountered in this trench consisted of 0.35m of topsoil, a mid-dark brown sandy silt, above 0.76m of subsoil, a mid-pale reddish brown silty clay. This overlay mid reddish brown sandy clay interpreted as natural geology. No archaeological deposits were encountered.

Trench 2

This trench was 15.3m long and 1.26m deep. The stratigraphy encountered in this trench consisted of 0.42m of topsoil above 0.79m of subsoil deposit overlying the natural geology orange/brown sandy clays with gravel

inclusions, these becoming more apparent towards the northern end of the trench. No archaeological deposits were encountered.

Trench 3 (Plate 1)

This trench was 13.6m long and 1.28m deep. This trench was moved a short way west of its intended position to avoid the active mains sewerage pipe passing through the centre of the site. The stratigraphy encountered in this trench consisted of 0.33m of topsoil above 0.84m of subsoil. Beneath this was the natural geology which varied in character from reddish brown sandy clay with flint nodules in the southern end to dark reddish brown/pale brown mottled sandy clay with gravel and chalk inclusions towards the north. No archaeological deposits were encountered.

Trench 4 (Plate 2)

This trench was 14.8m long and 1.46m deep. The stratigraphy encountered in this trench consisted of 0.51m of topsoil above 0.75m of subsoil above dark brown sandy silt with gravel inclusions and chalk patches, interpreted as natural geology. No archaeological deposits were encountered.

Trench 5

This trench was 13.4m long and 1.34m deep. The stratigraphy encountered in this trench consisted of 0.39m of topsoil above 0.84m of subsoil. This in turn overlay reddish brown sandy clay with flint/gravel inclusions. Part of this trench, from 8.6m to 11.0m, was obstructed by a ceramic sewerage pipe and not bottomed at this point. No archaeological deposits were encountered.

Trench 6

This trench was 8.6m long and 1.17m deep (Fig. 4). It was rotated approximately 90⁰ from its intended position to avoid intersecting the route of the active sewerage pipe. The stratigraphy encountered consisted of 0.28m of topsoil above 0.67m of subsoil overlying reddish brown clay with chalk inclusions, interpreted as the natural geology. This trench was obstructed by sewerage pipes from 0m to 3.7m and not bottomed in this area. No archaeological deposits were encountered.

Trench 7

This trench was 7.6m long and 1.14m deep (Fig. 4). This trench was moved slightly north and rotated approximately 45⁰ from its intended position to avoid a live water main. The stratigraphy encountered in this

trench consisted of 0.22m of topsoil above 0.84m of subsoil. Below this was reddish brown clay, interpreted as natural geology. This trench was obstructed by two unidentified metal service pipes from 0m to 1.1m. No archaeological deposits were encountered.

Finds

No finds of archaeological interest were recovered from this evaluation.

Conclusion

The results of this evaluation would suggest that this area, whilst being relatively undisturbed by modern activities, has little or no potential for archaeological remains. The presence of live services caused some alteration of trench positions but overall, a reasonable sample percentage of the site was still obtained.

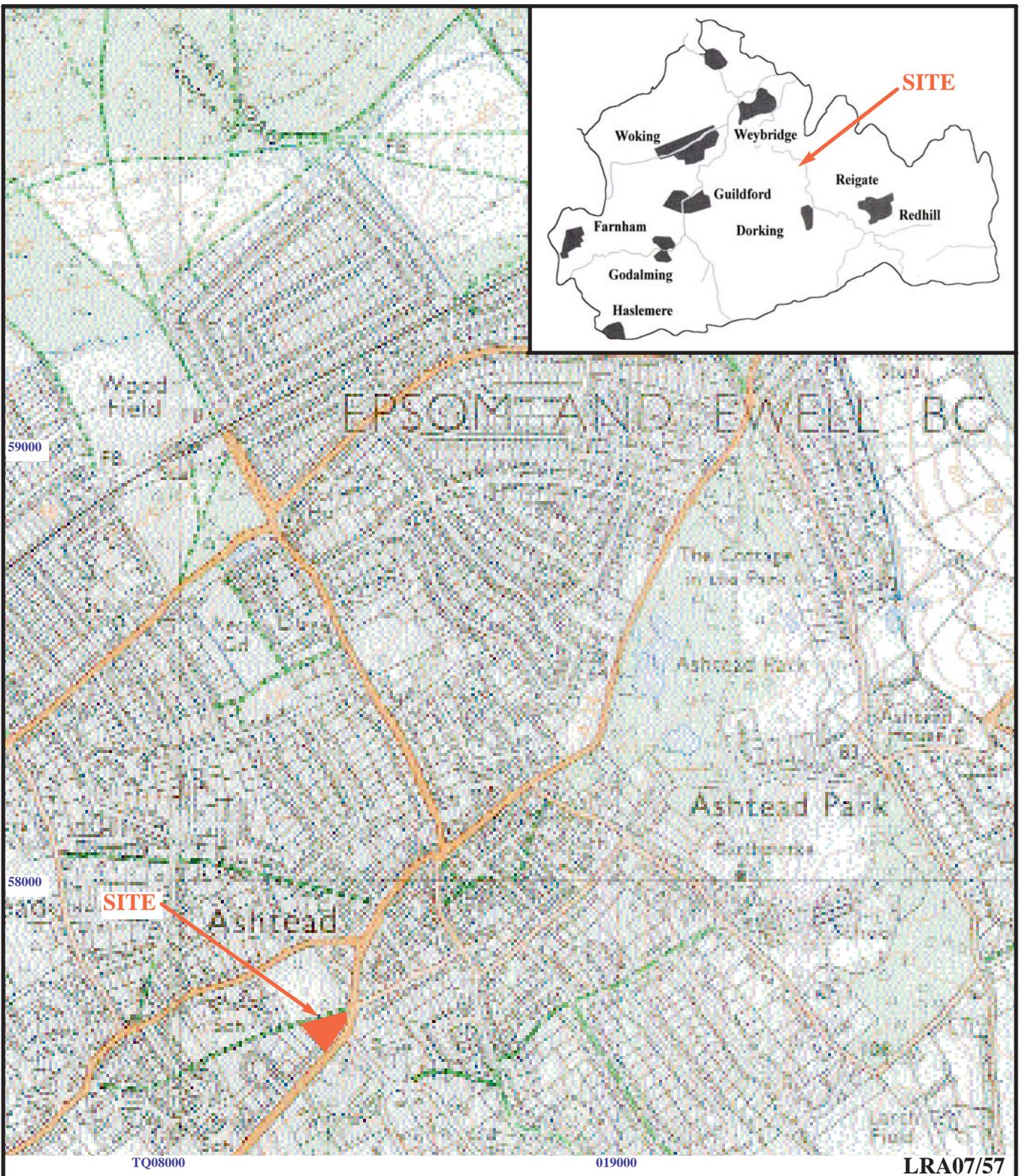
References

BGS, 1978, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 286, Drift Edition, Keyworth
Bird, J and Bird, D G (eds), 1987, *The Archaeology of Surrey*, Guildford
Cotton, J, Crocker, C and Graham, A (eds), 2004, *Aspects of archaeology and history in Surrey*, Guildford
PPG16, 1990, *Archaeology and Planning*, Dept of the Environment Planning Policy Guidance 16, HMSO

APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at South or West end

Trench	Length (m)	Breadth (m)	Depth (m)	Comment
1	15.9	1.6	1.23	0-0.35m Topsoil (mid-dark brown sandy silt); 0.35-1.01m Subsoil (mid-pale reddish brown silty clay); 1.01m+ Natural geology (reddish brown sandy clay)
2	15.3	1.6	1.26	0-0.42m Topsoil; 0.42-1.21m Subsoil; 1.21m+ Natural geology (orange brown sandy clay with gravel inclusions)
3	13.6	1.6	1.28	0-0.33m Topsoil; 0.33-1.17m Subsoil; 1.17m+ Natural geology (reddish brown sandy clay and gravels with occasional chalk patches) [Plate 2]
4	14.8	1.6	1.46	0-0.51m Topsoil; 0.51-1.26m Subsoil; 1.26m+ Natural geology (mid-dark brown sandy silt and gravels and chalk patches) [Plate 1]
5	13.4	1.6	1.34	0-0.39m Topsoil; 0.39-1.23m Subsoil; 1.23m+ Natural geology (reddish brown sandy clay and gravels)
6	8.6	1.6	1.17	0-0.28m Topsoil; 0.28-0.95m Subsoil; 0.95m+ Natural geology (reddish brown sandy clay with occasional chalk patches)
7	7.6	1.6	1.14	0-0.22m Topsoil; 0.22-1.06m Subsoil; 1.06m+ Natural geology (reddish brown sandy clay)

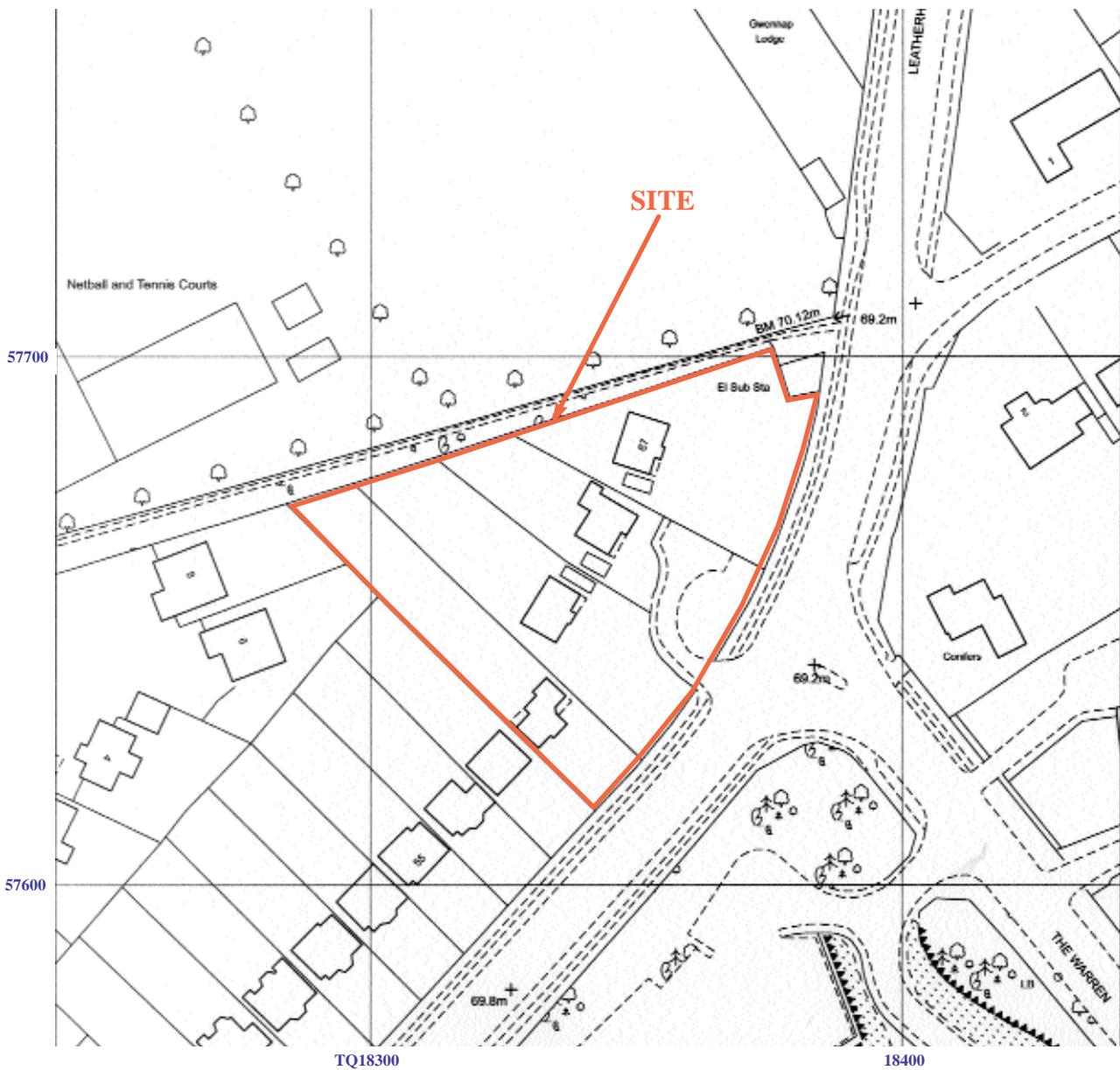


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Figure 1. Location of site within Ashtead and Surrey.

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Figure 2. Detailed location of site on Leatherhead Road.

Scale: 1:1250

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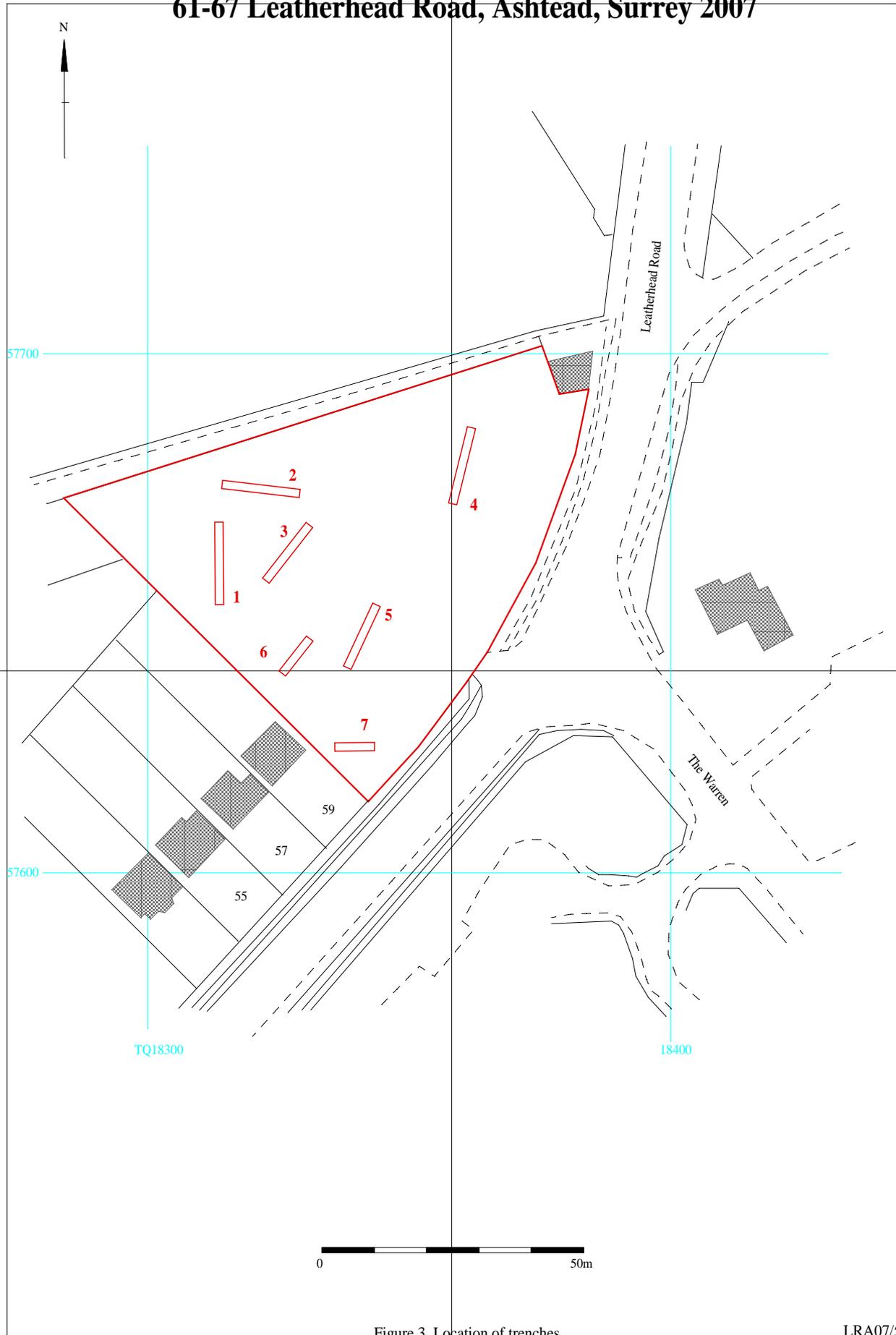


Figure 3. Location of trenches.

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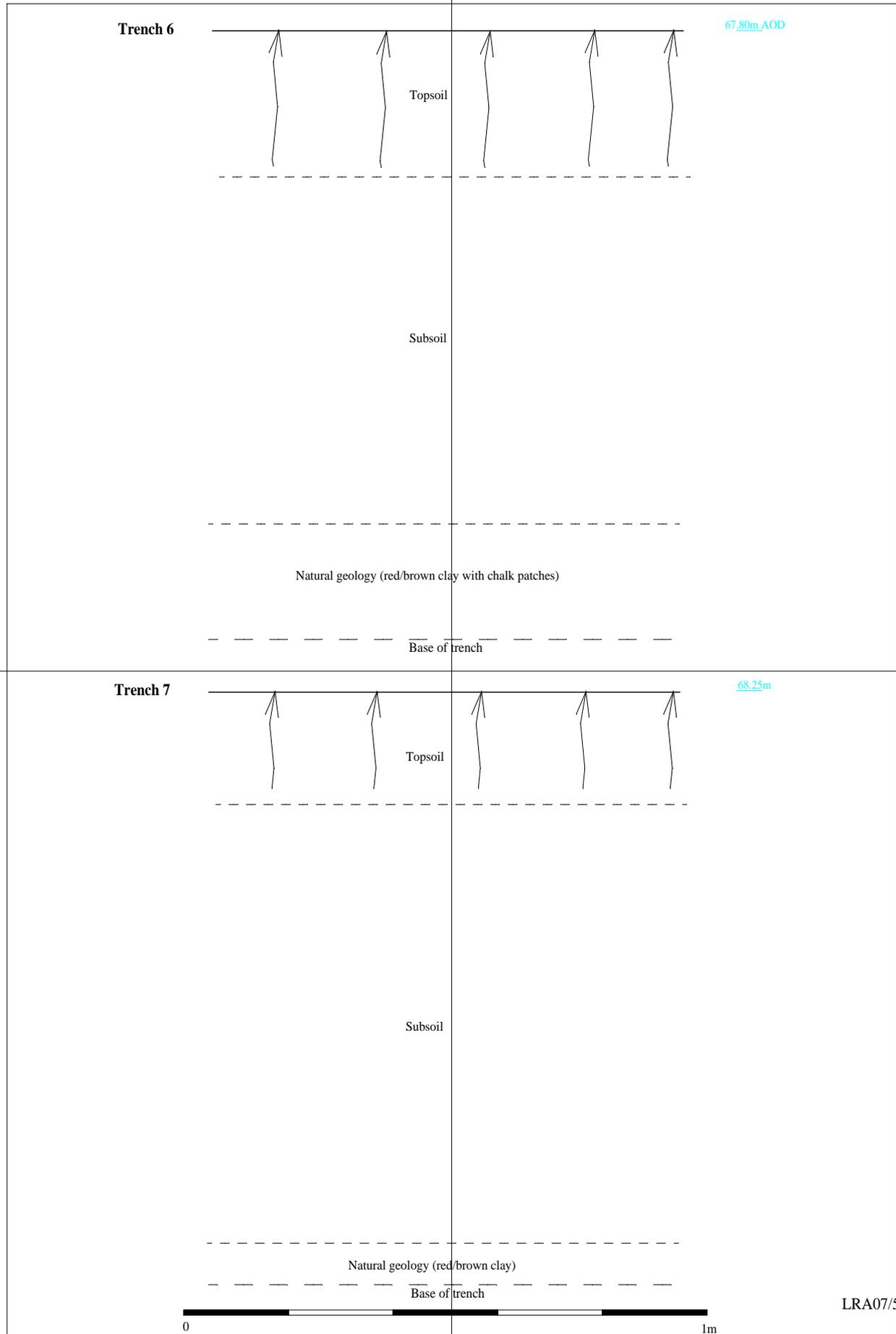


Figure 4. Representative sections of trenches 6 and 7



Plate 1. Trench 3 looking east, Scales 2m



Plate 2. Trench 4, looking north, Scales 2m.