

INVICTA ARCHAEOLOGICAL



S E R V I C E S L T D

**Desk Based Assessment for land at Farmstead Drive,
Edenbridge, Kent**

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FARMSTEAD DRIVE, EDENBRIDGE, KENT: ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK BASED ASSESSMENT

Summary

This desk-based assessment of land at Farmstead Drive, Edenbridge, Kent, was commissioned by Sevenoaks District Council in May 2022, in view of proposing redevelopment of the site. The aim of this Desk Based Assessment is to review available existing evidence in order to assess the extent and nature of any archaeological remains within the Proposed Development Area (PDA) and surrounding area and assess the likelihood of such resources being affected by development proposals.

This assessment has established that there is low archaeological interest surrounding the assessment area for all archaeological periods, however, much of the PDA has previously been built upon and therefore any archaeological remains are unlikely to have survived.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This report presents a desk-based assessment of the archaeological potential of land to the north of Farmstead Drive, Edenbridge (site centred on NGR TQ 44523 47141) (Fig 1). This report was commissioned by Sevenoaks District Council in May 2022, as a pre-application desk-based assessment in view of plans for unspecified development on the site.
- 1.2. The objective of the current research, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2019) has been to review available existing evidence in order to assess the extent and nature of any archaeological remains within the Proposed Development Area (PDA), and within a 500m radius Assessment Area (AA) which may indicate the presence of any so far unrecognised Heritage Assets, and therefore show the likelihood of such archaeological remains being affected by the proposed new works.

2. POLICY AND RESEARCH FRAMEWORKS

- 2.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (2019) sets out a series of core planning principles designed to underpin plan making and decision taking within the planning system. The policies outlining the approach towards the Historic Environment are laid out in Chapter 16 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment' The relevant policies are 184 – 202. Prime amongst these are:

“An irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.”

2.1 By definition, the historic environment includes all surviving physical remains of past human activity. Heritage assets include extant structures and features, sites, places and landscapes.

2.2 When determining planning applications, the following paragraphs are pertinent:

“189. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

190. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

191. Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision.

192. In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and

c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

193. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

194. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

- a)** grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;
- b)** assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.

195. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a)** the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
- b)** no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
- c)** conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- d)** the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

196. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

197. The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

198. Local planning authorities should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred.

199. Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted. Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest, which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage

assets. Copies of evidence should be deposited with the relevant historic environment record, and any archives with a local museum or other public depository.

200. *Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.*

201. *Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 195 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 196, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.*

202. *Local planning authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies. "Local planning authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies."*

LOCAL POLICY

2.3 The Sevenoaks District Council Local Development Framework identifies the importance of Heritage and the Historic Environment in the area and actively seeks to protect and enhance it.

Key issue 3 - To ensure that the District's historic heritage is protected.

This importance is laid out specifically in Paragraphs:

"5.1.1 A distinguishing feature of the District is the high quality of the natural and built environment. Sevenoaks contains two AONBs and other areas of attractive landscape identified in the Countryside Assessment. The built and historic heritage of Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Historic Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Ancient Monuments and sites of archaeological interest, contribute to the special quality and character of many parts of the District. A key responsibility of the plan is to ensure their continued protection, conservation and enhancement. The District's towns and villages also include other areas of high-quality environment." (Sevenoaks District Council Local Development Framework, 2011)

“5.1.2 National policies provide for the protection of key historic assets and these will be applied rigorously across the District to ensure that its historic heritage is maintained. At a local level Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans will be used to provide guidance on distinguishing features of the historic environment that should be protected, together with identifying opportunities for enhancement. A general guidance document on Conservation Areas will be produced to complement the specific guidance for individual areas.” (*ibid*)

Policy SP1 “The District’s heritage assets and their settings, including listed buildings, conservation areas, archaeological remains, ancient monuments, historic parks and gardens, historic buildings, landscapes and outstanding views will be protected and enhanced.” (*ibid*)

AREA RESEARCH FRAMEWORKS

2.4 The regional South-East Research Framework for the historic environment (SERF) is still in preparation, however, in light of the national and local policy outlined above, the initial outputs which are available online¹ have been taken into consideration during the preparation of this report.

¹<http://www.kent.gov.uk/leisure-and-community/history-and-heritage/south-east-research-framework>

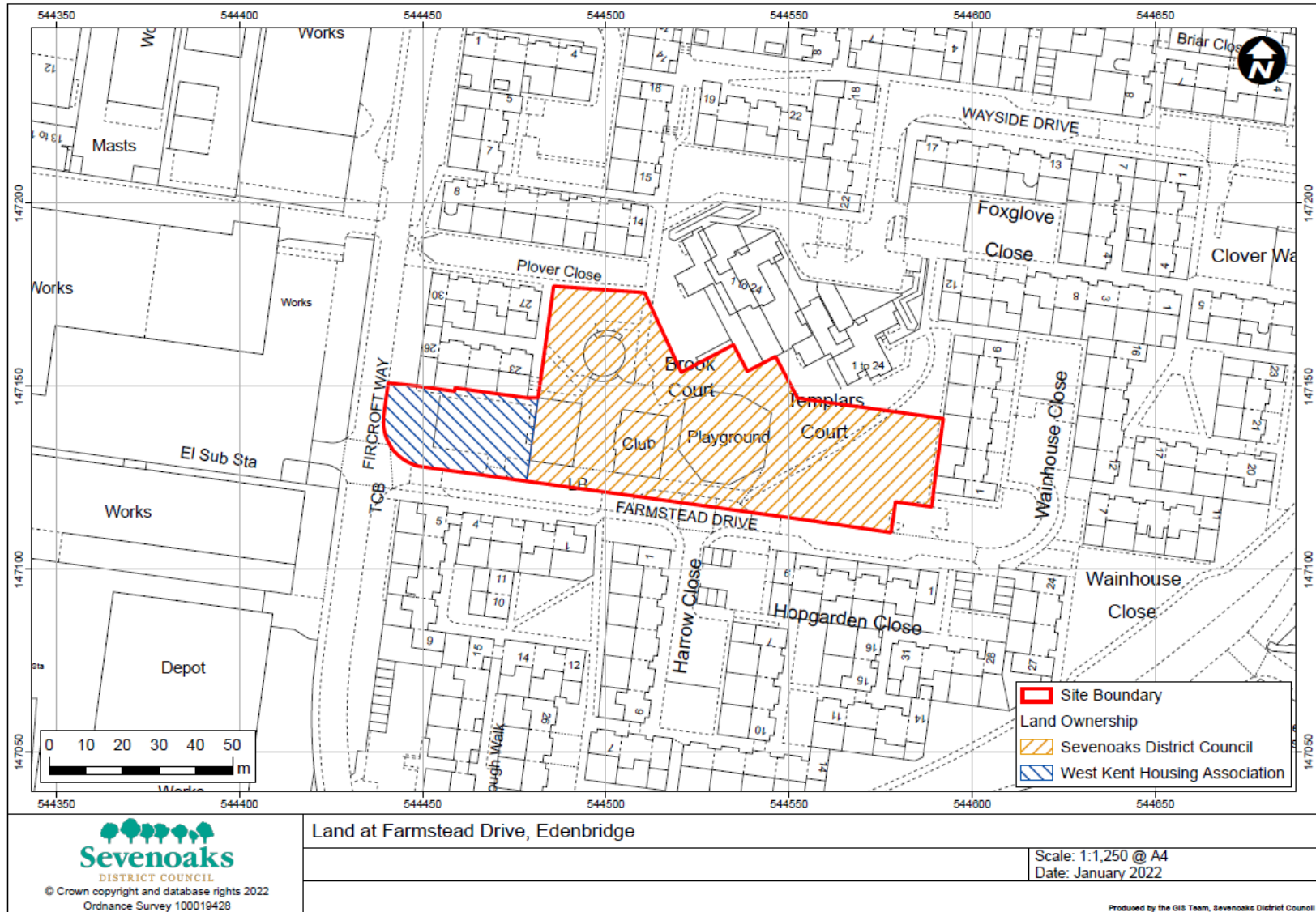


Figure 1 Site Location 1:1250

3 LOCATION, GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

3.1 The proposed development area (PDA) occupies an irregular, roughly rectangular, shaped plot of land, between Farmstead Drive and Plover Close and Fircroft Way and Wainhouse Close. Farmhouse Drive lies on relatively flat land above a stream to the west. The site is contained within an area measuring approximately 55m at its widest, north to south and 150m in length, west to east. The land appears to be currently waste. The area lies at a height of approximately 41mOD.

3.2 The British Geological Survey records the bedrock geology within the PDA as Weald Clay Formation - Mudstone. Sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 133.9 to 126.3 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period. No overlying deposits are recorded (British Geological Survey 2022).

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 The methodology employed during this assessment has been based upon professional guidance, primarily the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standard and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment (CIfA 2014).

4.2 The Assessment Area has a 500m radius from a point at the centre of the site. The heritage resource within the Assessment Area has been analysed in order to provide a context for the discussion and interpretation for both the known and potential resources within the Assessment Area.

4.3 Several sources were accessed, primarily;

- The Kent Historic Environment Record (KHER) and Heritage Gateway
- The Archaeological Data Service (ADS)
- OASIS, PastScape and MAGIC.gov
- Historic manuscripts, surveyed maps, and Ordnance Survey maps held online²
- Primary and secondary sources held online
- Published and unpublished archaeological reports relating to excavations and observations

4.4 The Site was not visited due to the high development which has already taken place in the area with residential housing and the subsequent lack of any observable open, and untouched, space.

4.5 Data used to compile this report consists of secondary information derived from a variety of sources, only some of which have been directly examined for the purposes of this Study. The

²Due to the current Covid-19 pandemic, access to the Kent History and Library Centre was not available

assumption is made that this data, as well as that derived from other secondary sources, is reasonably accurate.

4.6 The records held by the KHER are not a record of all surviving heritage assets, but a record of the discovery of a wide range of archaeological and historical components of the historic environment. The information held within it is not complete and does not preclude the subsequent discovery of further elements of the historic environment that are, at present, unknown.

5 DESIGNATIONS

5.1 There are no conservation areas within a 500m radius of the PDA.

5.2 There are no Scheduled Monuments within a 500m radius of the PDA.

5.3 There are no Listed buildings that fall within a 500m radius of the PDA.

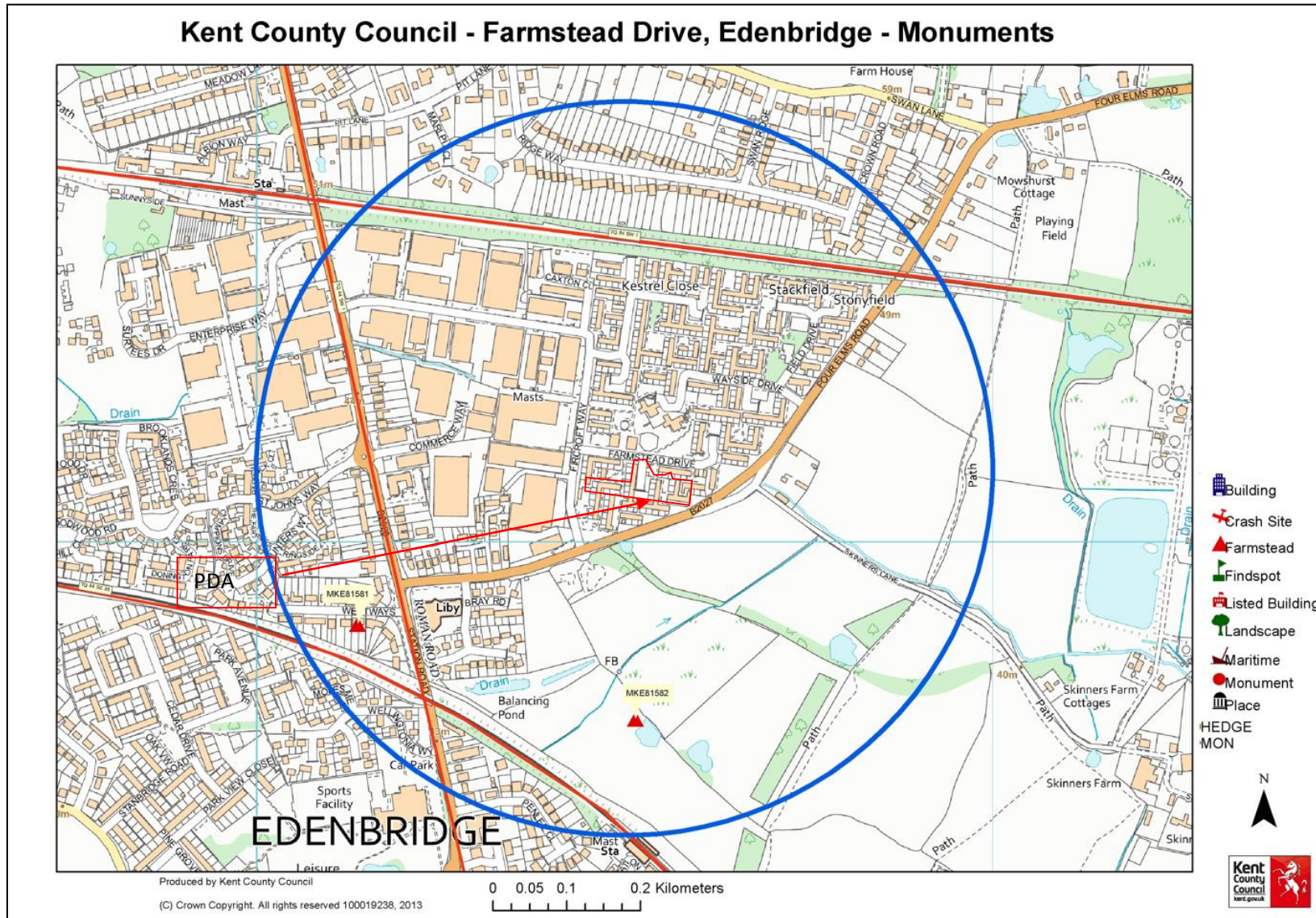


Figure 2 HER search of a 500m radius around the PDA showing results for Monuments. Courtesy of Kent County Council

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

6.1 A search of the Historic Environment Record with additional lists of archaeological investigations not yet published was commissioned from Kent County Council Heritage Conservation Group. Further historic environment records, such as the National Monuments Records, were also consulted. The HER reports search covers a radius of 500m around the PDA (centred on NGR TQ 44523 47141). Only records deemed to have particular relevance and/or significance to the PDA is cited in this report.

Prehistoric (c.500,000BC – AD43)

6.2 There are no records of sites or monuments from this period within the Assessment area.

Roman (AD43 – 410)

6.3 The earliest recorded utilisation of the landscape in the assessment area is the construction of a Roman Road, which runs through the Assessment Area and is still in use as the Hight Street of Edenbridge. (HER: TQ44 SW1)

Anglo-Saxon (c.AD 450–1066)

6.4 There are no records of sites or monuments from this period within the Assessment area.

Medieval (AD 1066 – 1540)

6.5 No record exists of a settlement in Edenbridge at the time of the Domesday Survey, however, parts of the current church date to the 11th century (National Heritage List for England: Listed Building Number 1085930).

6.6 As such, it is likely that a settlement did exist in the town at the time, and possibly as far back as the Anglo-Saxon period due to the presence of the stone church in the 11th century.

Post-Medieval (AD 1540 – 1900)

6.7 Edward Hasted, writing in 1797, stated;

‘SOUTHWARD from Westerham lies Eatonbridge, called in old records, Eddelnesbregge, and Edilnebrigg, and in Latin, Pons Edelmi. Its present name of Eatonbridge, is a corruption of its true one of Edenbridge, which it took from its situation on the banks of the little river Eden, one of the heads of the river Medway.

‘THE PARISH OF EATONBRIDGE lies at some little distance below the ridge of sand hills southward, and it is accordingly accounted within that part of the county called The Weald, and

is bounded westward by the county of Surry, from whence the little river Eden, the two streams of which from Oxsted and Lingfield having united, enters this county and directs its course across this parish, and receiving in its way several small streams, especially from the sandhills, it flows on eastward and joins the Medway at Penshurst. The river Eden crosses the village of Eatonbridge, which has the church on the east side of it, about half a mile south of which is Gabriel's house, belonging to Mr. John Stanford, and a little farther the two hamlets of Marshgreen and Stanford's-end, and about a mile distant from it on the other side are those of Marlepit-hill and Medhurst-row. The country here, and for the most part of the neighbouring parishes in this district, bears a far different aspect from that before described above the hills, the soil being for the most part a deep tillage land of stiff clay, moist and swampy, the hedge roads round the fields broad, and much filled with broad, spreading oaks, and the roads deep and miry, broad, and very much covered with green sward; the farmhouses are old-fashioned timber buildings, standing single and much dispersed, all which give the country rather a gloomy appearance, but whatever it may want in pleasantness is made up by health, fertility of soil, and its many local advantages equally profitable both to the landlord and occupier. A fair is held annually in the village on St. Mark's Day, April 25, for cattle, toys, &c.'

6.8 Given the entries for this period in the Kent HER, it would appear that this part of the modern town of Edenbridge, within the Assessment Area, was purely agricultural at this time. The two entries (HER: MKE 81581 and MKE 81582) are both farmsteads, both of which date to before 1800 (Fig 2) and are now demolished.

6.9 Two other entries date from this period and both are the two different railway lines which come through Edenbridge. The first was the London to Dover Railway, which came through in 1844 (HER: TQ84 SW1), which ran just to the north of the site (Fig 2), and the second was the Hurst Green and Ashurst Junction Railway, of 1888, which runs just to the south of the site (HER: TQ84 SE35) (*ibid*).

Modern (AD 1900 – Present)

6.10 The Modern town of Edenbridge has been subject to significant expansion in the recent past, likely starting in the 19th century due to the presence of the two railway lines making this small Wealden town well connected.

7 ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS IN THE ASSESSMENT AREA

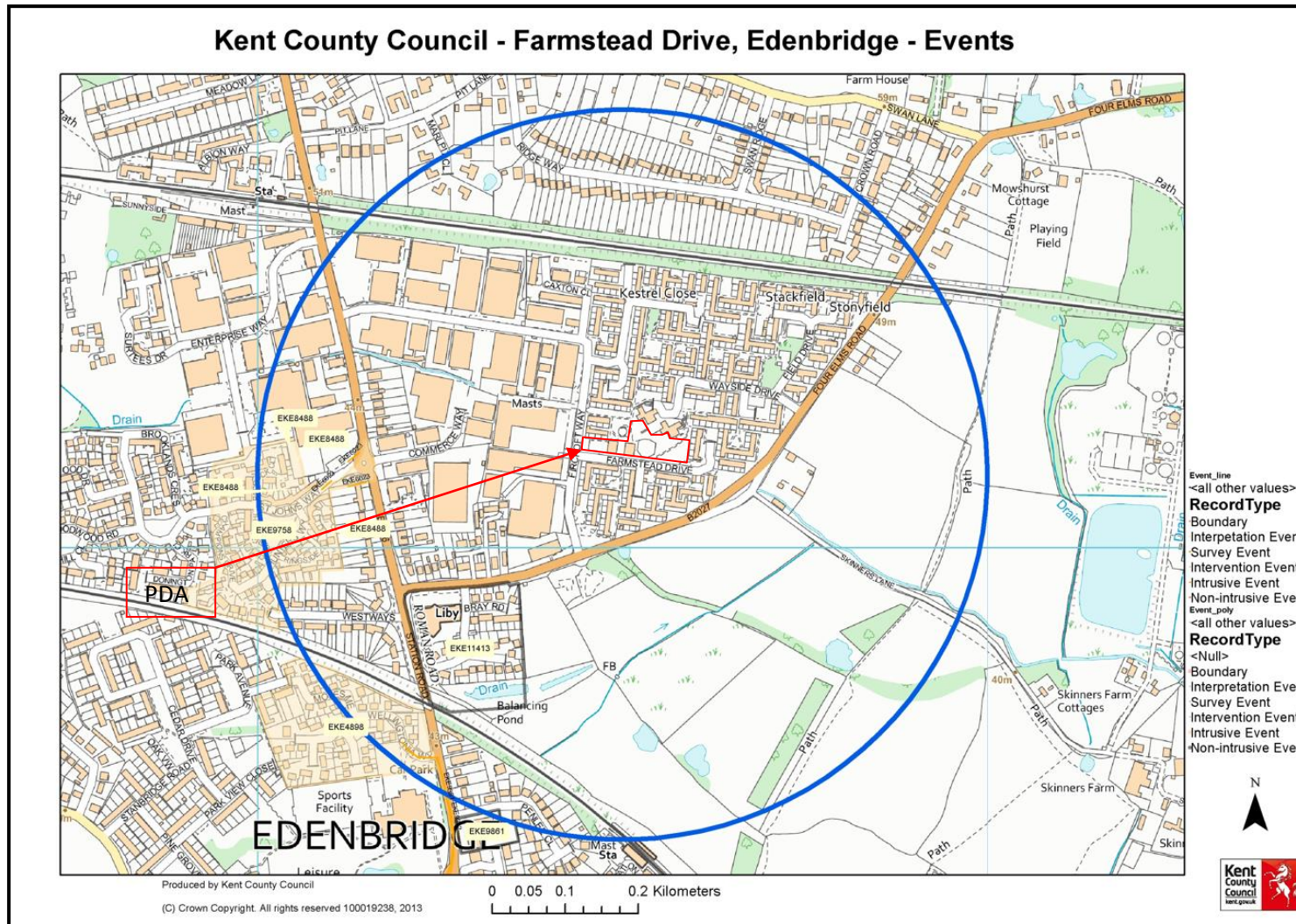


Figure 3 HER search of 500m radius of the PDA showing results for Events. Courtesy of Kent County Council

- 7.1 There are 8 recorded previous investigations in the Assessment area of the PDA, concentrated to the west and south east of the PDA (fig 3).
- 7.2 One Desk Based Assessment by Pre-Construct Archaeology in 2011 at the Eden Valley School (Unpublished document; HER: EKE 11413).
- 7.3 One Geotechnical Assessment at Westways in 1999, which did not find any archaeological features or finds (Unpublished report; HER: EKE 8488)
- 7.4 Open Area excavations by Archaeology South-East/ Oxford Archaeology near the site of Edenbridge Manor House in 2004 (HER: EKE 9381 and 9382), before construction of the “...Edenbridge western relief road revealed evidence of a substantial watercourse which carried water to the moat of Edenbridge manor house, and provided dating evidence for the digging of the moat between 1220 and 1250 and the early use of the manor. Evidence of metalworking was found, indicating that a smithy existed nearby in the twelfth to thirteenth centuries.”
- 7.5 An Archaeological Desk Based Assessment in 2005 by CgMs Consulting before construction of a Housing development in Station Road. (Unpublished document; HER: EKE 9861).
- 7.6 An Evaluation on the site of Edenbridge First School, Station Road by Archaeology South East in 1995. Despite the adjacent Roman Road, “23 trenches varying in length from 15 to 30 metres were excavated, but no archaeological finds or features were identified in any trench. No significant archaeological deposits of any period were thought to be present in the area of development.” (HER: EKE 4898).
- 7.7 An Evaluation in 2002-2003 in Station Road by Archaeology South-East, on the border of the radius to the west (HER: EKE9758 and EKE 6023) found no archaeological finds or features within the 32 trenches.

8 INTERPRETATION AND ASSESSMENT OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE FROM THE ASSESSMENT AREA AROUND THE PDA

8.1 Prehistoric Period

No sites or finds from these periods have been recovered from the Assessment Area, this is not to say they do not exist, as development in this area was undertaken in the 20th century, but before 1990, and therefore does not appear to have had an archaeological overview. Therefore, the **Potential of the Palaeolithic to Iron Age periods within the PDA is low.**

8.2 Roman Period

The first evidence we have of utilisation of this landscape is the Roman Road which was constructed across the landscape running from London to Lewes. It is likely that sections of the

roadside would have been lightly inhabited with roadside farms or small settlements and it is known that four Roman coins have been found in the larger Edenbridge area. The site, however, lies over 300m away from the Roman Road which would have been a significant distance. As such, **the potential for the Roman period within the PDA is low to moderate.**

8.3 Anglo-Saxon Period

Nothing has been found within the Assessment Area of this date. Given the presence of a stone church soon after the Norman Conquest, it is likely that a settlement existed at the River Eden during this period. The PDA is around 1km north of this probable settlement and would, therefore have been a fair distance away. It is likely, as was the case up until the coming of the railways, that the area may have contained only a few farmsteads. Therefore, **Potential for the Anglo-Saxon period within the PDA is low.**

8.4 Medieval Period

The Listing document for the church states that a stone church is likely to have existed in the 11th century, and likely with a small settlement surrounding this. Owing to the distance between the settlement and the PDA it is likely that the PDA would have been significantly outside of this potential settlement, and the landscape is likely to have been similar to that in the previous periods with only small, isolated farms being in this area. Therefore, **Potential for the Medieval period within the PDA is low.**

8.5 Post-Medieval Period

As with the previous periods, the area around the PDA is likely to have been fields and farms, therefore **Potential for the Post-Medieval within the PDA is low.**

8.6 Modern Period

During the 20th century the town of Edenbridge started expanding. By the time of the map of 1895 (Plate 1), a few houses have appeared on the eastern side of the Roman Road to the west of the site, these are called Newhouses. The only other developments in the area are a brickworks to the north-east and a possible small farmstead to the south-west, fronting on to Four Elms Lane. Aside from the construction of more houses along the Roman Road and some along Four Elms Lane and the construction of housing in the old Brickworks, the PDA remained fields until the 1960s (Plate 3). Therefore, **Potential for modern period within the PDA is moderate.**

9 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

9.1 The area surrounding the PDA has minimal recorded archaeological remains, but it has been extensively built on, without any previous archaeological mitigation. The location, within 300m

of a Roman Road, may be significant here, but it is likely that throughout most of its history this area has been a landscape of agricultural fields and sporadic farmsteads.

9.2 The depth of the intrusions of the current structures would be important to note to assess the level of impact that may have occurred since 1939. Details of the foundation’s arrangement and depths of the proposed development are not available at present and so it is unknown how much the proposed works will impact any virgin ground that may remain.

10 GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 In keeping with the proposals set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) this desk-based assessment fulfils these requirements and complies with the relevant tests for the historic environment as set out in National Policy. It is important to remember that desk-based assessments cannot provide a definitive statement on the presence or absence of archaeological deposits in a given area. Such an assessment can only reflect the potential of that area for containing such features and/or deposits based upon existing archaeological and historical data available. Any conclusions drawn from the assessment can only be tested by the application of fieldwork techniques.

10.2 Given the assessment above, it is likely that if the project encounters any archaeology within the PDA, it is likely that this will only contain modern archaeology. However, given the proximity of the Roman Road in the Assessment Area, it is not impossible that archaeological features or finds from other periods may be located.

10.3 Due to the low possibility for archaeological remains to be encountered on the site and the degree of developmental impact which has already taken place in the area, it is suggested that no archaeological measures are required.

| Potential Risk | Period | Significance | Previous impacts |
|----------------|----------------|--------------|------------------|
| Moderate | Modern | Low | Development |
| Low | Prehistoric | High | Development |
| | Anglo Saxon | High | Development |
| | Roman | High | Development |
| | Medieval | High | Development |
| | Post- Medieval | Low | Development |

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Heritage Gateway <https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/>

Kent Historic Environment Record (HER)

National Planning Framework (NPPF 2019)

National Library of Scotland, Historic Maps. <https://maps.nls.uk/>

Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS)

PastScape Historic England

South-East Research Framework (SERF)



Plate 1 Aerial photograph 1940 (Google Earth)



Plate 3 Aerial photograph 1960 (Google Earth)



Plate 3 Aerial photograph 2021 (Google Earth)



Figure 4 Ordnance Survey 25-inch map 1895



Figure 5 Ordnance Survey 25-inch map 1907

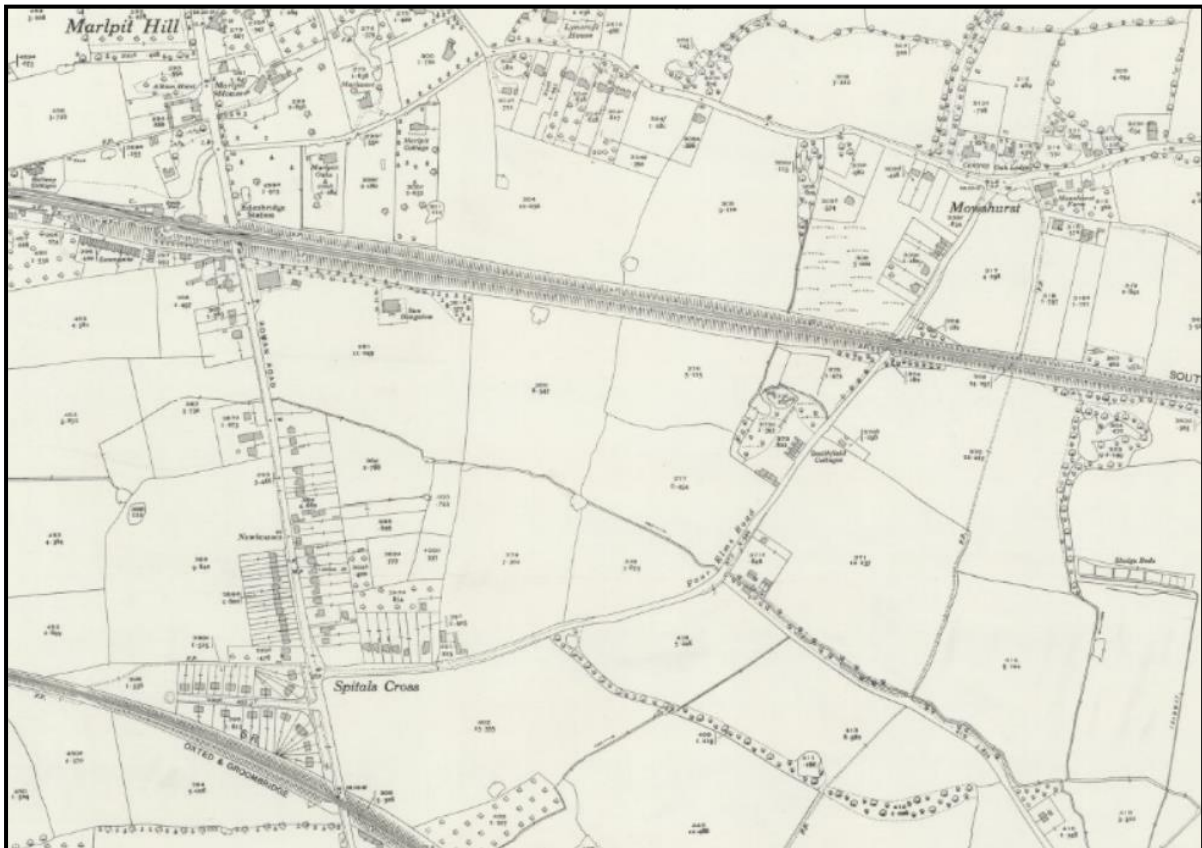


Figure 6 Ordnance Survey 25-inch map 1936