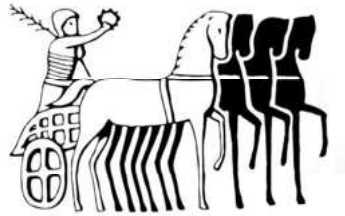


Colchester Archaeological Trust



**CAT Report 2071
Issued August 2024**

**Historic building recording of two air-raid shelters
at Buckland Mill, Crabble Hill, Dover, Kent,
CT17 0SU**

July 2024



CAT project ref.: 2024/05c

**Historic building recording of two air-raid shelters at
Buckland Mill, Crabble Hill, Dover, Kent,
CT17 0SU**

July 2024

NGR: TR 30444 42872

**Planning district.: Dover
Planning ref.: DOV/20/01068**

**CAT project ref.: 2024/05c
CAT Report 2071**

**KCC archaeological officer: Ben Found
OASIS id: colchest3-525541**

**report prepared by
Sarah Veasey**

fieldwork by Sarah Veasey

**Commissioned by: Richard Tonge (TetraTech)
On behalf of: TetraTech**

Prepared by:	Sarah Veasey	Project Officer (Archaeology & Historic Buildings)
Reviewed by:	Chris Lister	Director, Business Operations
Reviewed and approved by:	Howard Brooks	Interim Director of Archaeology
Issued:	23/08/2024	

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1 Summary

A programme of historic building recording was carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust on two air-raid shelters in the grounds of Buckland Mill, Crabble Hill, Dover, Kent in July 2024. The shelters were constructed in 1939 for use by the mill workers, but it seems that after a Spitfire crash caused the closure of the mill, they were subsequently used by the public.

The structures comprise a series of arched I-beams (known as Colliery Arches) set into a concrete plinth and covered with corrugated iron. Both shelters had an entrance projecting to the south-west, which comprised a set of poured concrete steps. The arches used in the construction of the shelters mirror those used in the parts of the network of secret wartime tunnels beneath Dover Castle as well as The Deep Shelter at Fan Bay Battery.

2 Introduction (Fig 2)

This is the archive report of an historic building recording carried out at Buckland Mill, Crabble Hill, Dover, Kent. The work was commissioned by Richard Tonge on behalf of TetraTech and was carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) on 8th-10th July 2024. The site is located at NGR TR 30444 42872.

A planning application (DOV/20/01068) was submitted to Dover District Council in September 2020 for an *outline application for the erection of up to 135 dwellings, access, associated parking, road/footways, open space, surface water drainage, and ancillary works (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale reserved).*

As the remains of two air-raid shelters were identified during groundworks, the Senior Archaeological Officer at Kent County Council (KCCAO) was approached for consultation. The KCCAO recommended a Historic England Level 2 historic building survey. The recommendation was based on the National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2023).

A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the building recording was prepared by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT 2024) and supplied to the KCCAO. All work was carried out in accordance with this WSI.

In addition to the project brief and WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was undertaken in accordance with:

- *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (Historic England 2015),
- Professional standards of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, including its *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2020a-c, 2022),
- East of England standards and frameworks published by East Anglian Archaeology (Brown & Glazebrook 2000, Gurney 2003, Medlycott 2011) and the recent review updates on <https://researchframeworks.org/eoe/>
- *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice* (Historic England 2016)
- Relevant health and safety guidelines and requirements (CAT 2024).

3 Aims

The aim of the building recording was to provide a detailed record and assessment of the buildings prior to conversion. The building recording was carried out to Level 2 (Historic England 2016) which is defined as:

“...a descriptive record, made in similar circumstances to Level 1 but when more information is needed. It may be made of a building which is judged not to require a more detailed record, or it may serve to gather data for a wider project. Both the exterior and interior of the building will be seen, described and photographed. The

examination of the building will produce an analysis of its development and use and the record will include the conclusions reached, but it will not discuss in detail the evidence on which this analysis is based. A plan and sometimes other drawings may be made but the drawn record will normally not be comprehensive and may be tailored to the scope of a wider project."

In particular, the record considered:

- Plan and form of the site.
- Materials and method of construction.
- Date(s) of the structure(s).
- Original function and layout.
- Original and later fixtures and fittings.
- The significance of the site in its immediate local context.

4 Methodology

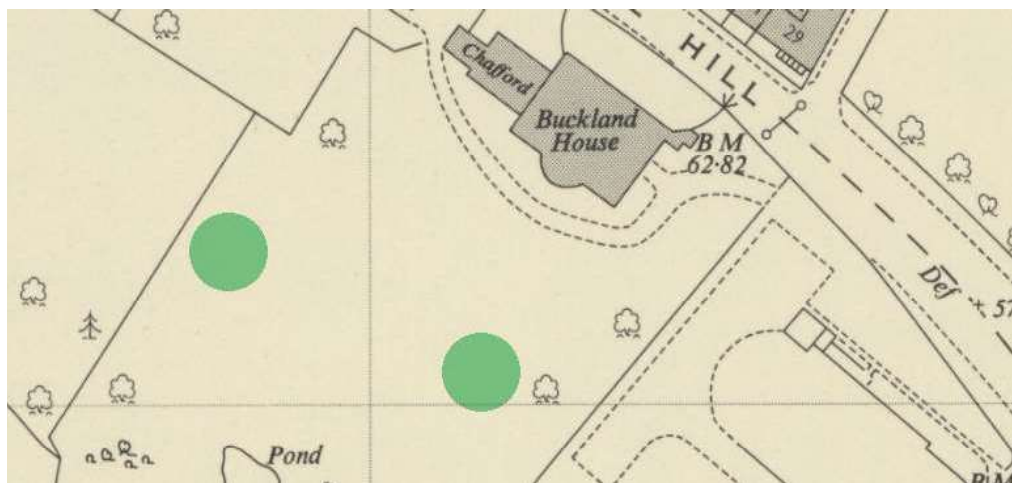
The following are included in this report:

- A documentary, cartographic and pictorial survey of the evidence pertaining to the history and evolution of the site.
- A large-scale block plan of the site.
- Annotated and phased floorplan of the building at a scale of 1:50.
- A description of the building. The description addresses features such as materials, dimensions, method of construction and phasing.
- A photographic record comprising digital photographs of both general shots and individual features. Selected examples of the photographic record are clearly tied into the drawn record and reproduced as fully annotated photographic plates supporting the text. The photographic record is accompanied by a photographic register detailing location and direction of shot (Appendix 1).

5 Historical background (Fig 2)

The following archaeological background includes extracts of the Kent Historic Environment Records (KHER).

The two air-raid shelters detailed in this report are in the grounds of the former Buckland Paper Mill, Crabble Hill, Dover, Kent. To the north-east of the structures is Buckland House (NHLE No. 1115552), a Grade II listed Georgian building. The house was constructed for the manager of the paper mill to reside in but was later utilised as offices.



Map 1 Extract of the 1955 National Grid OS map. The approximate locations of the air-raid shelters highlighted in green.

Construction of the shelters can be dated to 1939, by a newspaper article published by *The Dover Express and East Kent News*, on Friday 16th June 1939 (Plate 1), which reads:

"The foundations of an ancient building have been found during excavations in the garden of Buckland House, Crabble Hill, adjoining the Conqueror Mills of Messrs. Wiggins, Teape and Co., Ltd. Buckland House is the residence of Mr J. D. Gordon, Manager of the Mills, and the excavations are being made for providing A.R.P shelters for mill workers"

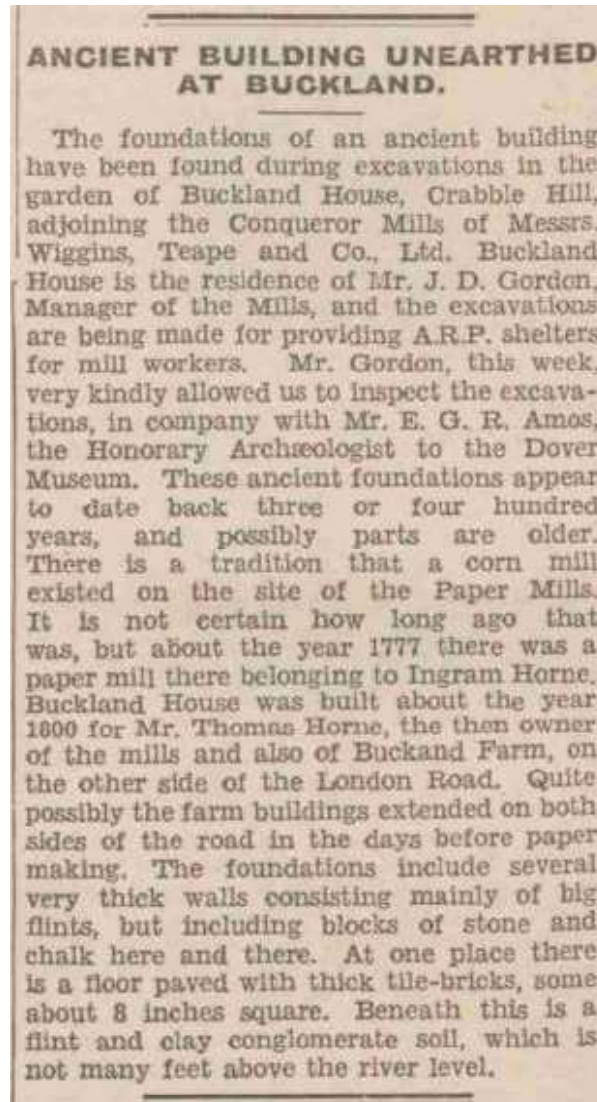


Plate 1 Article from *The Dover Express and East Kent News*, 16th June 1939

Construction of the air-raid shelters appears to have destroyed any trace of the aforementioned 'ancient building'.

In July 1940, only a year after the construction of the shelters, an RAF Spitfire crashed into the roof of one of the papermills (Hancock N.D.) causing considerable damage to the building. This resulted in the closure of the mill until after the end of the war. The mill reopened in 1945. In an archive collated by the BBC, Barry Fincham, a local Dover man, recalled staying and sleeping in deep air-raid shelters in the grounds of Buckland Mill in 1944. He also recalls The Royal Engineer Regiment occupying Buckland Mill House, however there are no other records of this.

6 Building recording descriptive record (Figs 1-4)

Two subterranean air-raid shelters were recorded at Buckland Mill, Dover. As they are being left *in-situ*, the shelters were not fully exposed, but the corrugated cladding was pulled back to allow recording of the interior.



Photograph 1 Shelter one. Photograph taken facing east.



Photograph 2 Detail of arches of shelter one. Photograph taken facing north-east.

The air-raid shelters are both L-shaped in plan and have a footprint of roughly 28m². The frame of the shelters is composed of twelve arches (Photograph 2), each comprising two curved iron I-beams, set into a poured concrete plinth. The two I-beams are joined together with an iron fish-plate held with square-headed bolts (Photograph 3). Between each arch are four iron bars, seemingly operating as through-

purlins, which are held in place by wooden chocks. The exterior of the arches are clad in corrugated iron sheets, painted black. The superstructure stands on a concrete pad (Photograph 4).

Each shelter has a set of entrance steps, projecting to the south-west (Photograph 5). The entrance has been formed from poured concrete, reinforced with rebar, with a concrete slab roof over the north-eastern end. An iron cross-bar is present between the two arches adjacent to the entrance.



Photograph 3 Detail of fish-plate and square-headed bolts in frame of shelter one. Photograph taken facing south-east.



Photograph 4 North-western end of shelter one. Photograph taken facing east.



Photograph 5 Concrete entrance to shelter one. Photograph taken facing south-west.

Due to accessibility issues and safety concerns, shelter one (Photograph 6) was not entered and was recorded from ground level. Internal photography was achieved via a pole-cam.

A layer of fabric was laid over the top of shelter one, seemingly some kind of burlap, probably as a crude form of insulation. The floor of the shelter is exposed concrete, with two parallel timbers set into it at each side, running the full length. These are possibly related to timber benches which would have been present on each long edge of the shelter.



Photograph 6 Overview of shelter one. Photograph taken facing north.



Photograph 7 Interior of shelter one. Photograph taken facing north-west.

At the north-western end of shelter one are the remains of an escape ladder, roughly central to the floor (Photograph 8). This would have led to an escape hatch in the roof of the structure, in case the main entrance became blocked. Adjacent to the ladder is an Elsan-style chemical toilet (Photograph 8). Hanging from some of the arches are light fittings, with metal lamp holders and braided cables (Photograph 9).



Photograph 8 Interior of shelter one, the escape ladder and chemical toilet visible. Photograph taken facing north.



Photograph 9 Detail of light fitting in shelter one. Photograph taken facing north-east.

Shelter two (Photograph 10) has been backfilled, with a combination of concrete and burnt material (Photograph 11), so any meaningful recording was inhibited. From what was exposed, it can be presumed that it used the same materials and construction techniques as shelter one. The presence of the burnt material may indicate that shelter two was subject to fire damage at some point or it may represent waste material from the paper mill.



Photograph 10 Overview of shelter two. Photograph taken facing west.



Photograph 11 North-western end of shelter two. Photograph taken facing south.

A trench was machine-excavated in the area between the two shelters to explore the possibility of that another shelter may be present. No evidence of any further shelters was uncovered.

7 Discussion

During the German bombing raids of the First World War, it became very apparent that the civilian population was in need of some kind of protective measures against this aerial threat. Despite this realisation, it was not until Nazi Germany started to pose a threat that the British Government passed the Air-Raid Precaution Act of 1937, which placed an obligation on local governments to provide shelters and anti-gas precautions for public protection. This was followed by the Civil Defence Act of 1939, which, among other things, made it compulsory for employers at mines, factories and commercial buildings, with more than 50 employees, to provide air-raid precautions.

The shelters recorded at Buckland Mill were constructed in mid-1939, just months before the outbreak of the Second World War, likely in response to the Civil Defence Act. They were originally for the use of the mill workers, but only a year after their construction the mill was closed due to damage from a Spitfire crash. It seems following this disaster, the shelters were opened for public use.

The Air-Raid Precautions Department of the Home Office issued a series of handbooks offering practical guidance for safeguarding the civil population during air-raids. Handbook No. 6 sets out recommendations for factories and business premises, which included different methods of providing protection (Plate 2). It's likely this handbook was used by the proprietor of Buckland Paper mill when organising for the air-raid shelters to be constructed.

The structures are built from a series of iron arches, known as Colliery Arches – a technique used in coal mining, also known as 'Collieries', the same construction technique used in some of the secret wartime tunnels under Dover Castle and The Deep Shelter at Fan Bay Battery. It's plausible to suggest that the use of Colliery Arches comes from advice from the Home Office Handbook and the resources may

have been obtained from Kent's failing mining industry¹. Point 3 in Plate 2 suggests the use of 'galleries (of the type used in mines)', mining galleries refer to the tunnels or passageways created by mining. As the materials mirror those used in larger, nearby military installations, this may imply the arches and cladding were government issue.

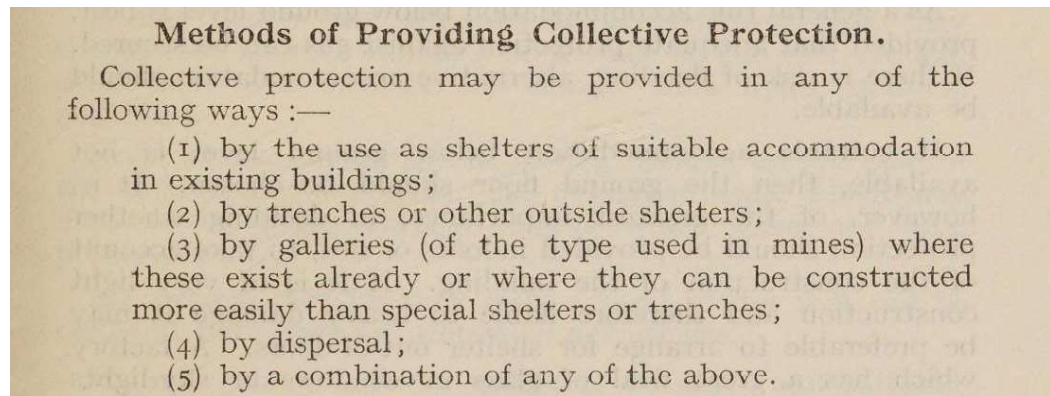


Plate 2 Extract from *Air Raid Precautions Handbook No. 6: Air Raid Precautions in Factories and Business Premises* (Home Office 1938).

Although the subterranean nature of the shelters would have offered higher protection than an above ground or semi-sunken shelter, they still would have not survived a direct hit. The intent for this type of shelter was to protect the occupants from flying debris, shrapnel and, potentially, the collapse of nearby buildings. It seems likely that even if the nearby Buckland House or buildings of the papermill were destroyed, the occupants of the shelter would have had a good chance of survival.

The significance of air-raid shelters as a heritage asset lies not in the architectural merit of the structure but in what they symbolise. They are possibly the most common of all home front heritage assets but are also the most neglected (Moshenska 2012). The importance of recording these structures is paramount due to the direct link they have to the impact modern warfare had on British civilians, especially as living witnesses to historic events become fewer and fewer.

8 Acknowledgements

Colchester Archaeological Trust would like to thank Richard Tonge and TetraTech for commissioning and funding the historic building recording. The recording was carried out by Sarah Veasey. Figures are by Sarah Veasey based on on-site recording. The project was monitored by Ben Found for Kent County Council.

9 References

Note: all CAT reports, except for DBAs, are available online in .pdf format at <http://cat.essex.ac.uk>

Brown, I, Burridge, D, Clarke, D, Guy, J, Hellis, J, Lowry, B, Ruckely, N & Thomas, R	1996	<i>20th Century Defences in Britian: An Introductory Guide</i>
---	------	--

¹ Coal in Kent was notoriously hard to mine and was consequently the most expensive coal in Britain. The difficulties in extracting the coal meant that of the nine shafts that were successfully sunk, only four produced coal. Consequently, the coal mining industry in Kent lasted just shy of 100 years.

Brown, N & Glazebrook, J	2000	<i>Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 2. Research agenda and strategy.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 8 (EAA 8).
CAT	2024	<i>Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for historic building recording at Buckland Mill, Crabble Hill, Dover, Kent, CT17 0SU</i> by E Holloway
ClfA	2020a	<i>Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives.</i> Published 2014, revised 2020
ClfA	2020b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials.</i> Published 2014, revised 2020
ClfA	2020c	<i>Standard and guidance for archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings and structures</i>
ClfA	2022	<i>Code of Conduct.</i> ClfA Chartered Institute for Archaeologists; published 2014, revised 2022.
EAA 14	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the east of England</i> east Anglian Archaeological occasional papers 14 by D. Gurney
EAA 24	2011	<i>Research and Archaeology Revisited: A Revised Framework for the east of England,</i> east Anglian Archaeological occasional papers 24 by M Medlycott
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Hancock, T N	N.D.	<i>Aircraft Crashes in the South Eastern Counties (Sussex, Kent, Surrey and London [south of the Thames]) 1914-2009</i>
Historic England	2015	<i>MoRPHE: Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment</i>
Historic England	2016	<i>Understanding Historic Buildings. A guide to good recording practice</i>
Home Office	1938	<i>Air Raid Precautions Handbook No. 6: Air Raid Precautions in Factories and Business Premises</i>
MHCLG	2023	<i>National planning policy framework</i>
Moshenska, G	2012	<i>The Archaeology of the Second World War: Uncovering Britain's Wartime Heritage</i>

Websites accessed:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/19/a3358019.shtml>

<http://www.bucklandmill.altervista.org/timeline/timeline.htm>

https://www.dover-kent.co.uk/ww2_bombing.html

<https://www.dovermuseum.co.uk/Exhibitions/Coal-Mining-in-Kent/History/History-of-the-Kent-Coalfields.aspx>

10 Abbreviations and glossary

air-raid shelter	a building or structure designed to protect people from bombs dropped during air raids
CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
ClfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
colliery	a coal mine and its associated buildings and equipment
EHEN	Kent Historic Environment Record, held by the KCC
First World War	global conflict from 1914-1918
fish-plate	a flat piece of metal used to connect two beams
HE	Historic Environment
I-beam	a girder which has the shape of an I in section
NGR	National Grid Reference
OASIS	Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations, http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main
Second World War	global conflict from 1939-1945

11 Archive deposition

The archive is currently held by the Colchester Archaeological Trust at Roman Circus House, Roman Circus Walk, Colchester, Essex CO2 7GZ, but will be permanently deposited with the Archaeological Data Service.

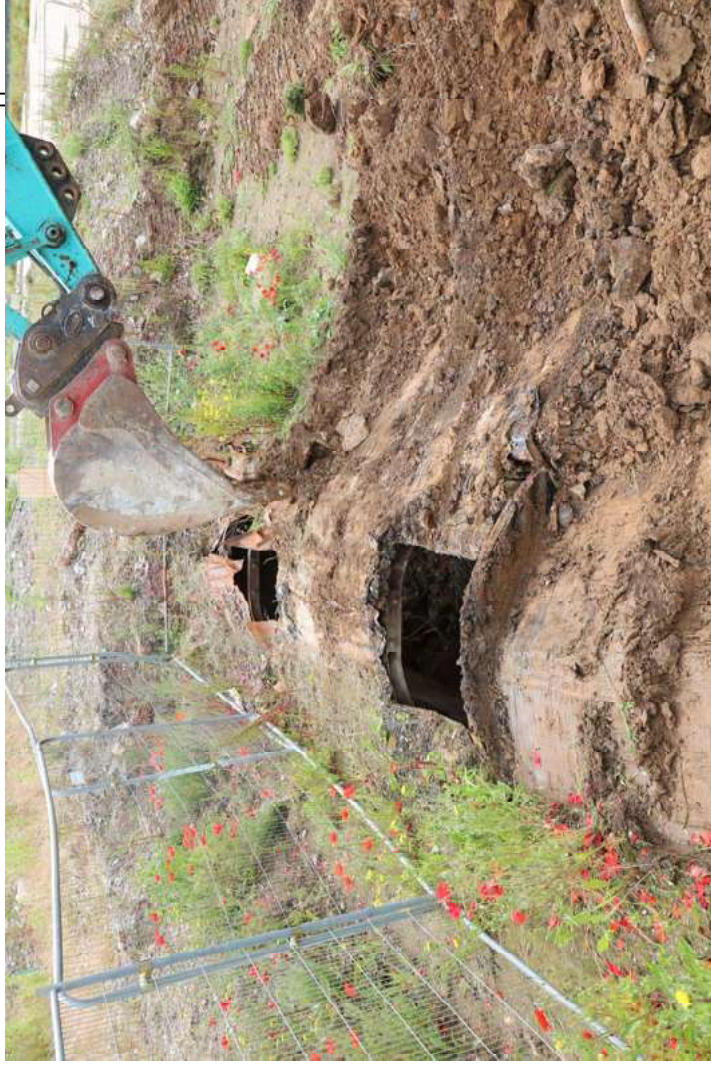
12 Contents of digital archive

The CAT WSI
The report (CAT Report 2071)
Digital plans
Site digital photos and log

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Distribution list

TetraTech
Ben Found, KCCAO
KHER



2024.05c_Photograph_001
Machining of shelter one. Photograph taken facing south-east.



2024.05c_Photograph_002
Interior of shelter one. Photograph taken facing north.



2024.05c_Photograph_003
Detail of toilet and ladder at north-western end of shelter one. Photograph taken facing north.



2024.05c_Photograph_004
Shelter one. Photograph taken facing north.



2024.05c_Photograph_005
Interior of shelter one. Photograph taken facing south-east.



2024.05c_Photograph_006
Detail of fishplate and square-headed bolts in frame of shelter one. Photograph taken facing south-east.



2024.05c_Photograph_007
North-western end of shelter one. Photograph taken facing east.



2024.05c_Photograph_008
Location shot. Photograph taken facing east.



2024.05c_PhotoGraph_009
South-eastern end of shelter one. Photograph taken facing north-west.



2024.05c_PhotoGraph_010
Detail of light fitting in shelter one. Photograph taken facing north-east.



2024.05c_PhotoGraph_011
Entrance viewed from south-eastern end of shelter one. Photograph taken facing west.



2024.05c_PhotoGraph_012
South-eastern of shelter one after removal of corrugated iron cladding. Photograph taken facing north-west.



2024.05c_Photograph_013

Shelter one. Photograph taken facing north.



2024.05c_Photograph_014

Shelter one. Photograph taken facing north north-west.



2024.05c_Photograph_015

Concrete entrance to shelter one. Photograph taken south-east.



2024.05c_Photograph_016

Concrete entrance to shelter one. Photograph taken facing south-west.



2024.05c_Photograph_017
Concrete entrance to shelter one. Photograph taken facing west.



2024.05c_Photograph_018
Detail of concrete steps, shelter one. Photograph taken facing west.



2024.05c_Photograph_019
Detail of concrete pad over entrance of shelter one. Photograph taken facing north.



2024.05c_Photograph_020
Overview of shelter one. Photograph taken facing west.



2024.05c_Photograph_021
Overview of shelter one. Photograph taken facing east.



2024.05c_Photograph_022
Detail of arches of shelter one. Photograph taken facing north-east.



2024.05c_Photograph_023
Detail of arches of shelter one. Photograph taken facing east.



2024.05c_Photograph_024
Shelter one with scale. Photograph taken facing south-east.



2024.05c_Photograph_025
Shelter one with scale. Photograph taken facing north-east.



2024.05c_Photograph_026
Shelter one entrance with scale. Photograph taken facing south-west.



2024.05c_Photograph_027
Shelter one entrance with scale. Photograph taken facing west.



2024.05c_Photograph_028
Shelter two. Photograph taken facing south.



2024.05c_Phograph_029
North-western end of shelter two. Photograph taken facing south.



2024.05c_Phograph_030
Overview of shelter two. Photograph taken facing south.



2024.05c_Phograph_031
Entrance to shelter two. Photograph taken facing east.



2024.05c_Phograph_032
Shelter two. Photograph taken facing south-east.



2024.05c_Photograph_033
Shelter two. Photograph taken facing north-west.



2024.05c_Photograph_034
Detail of structure at north-western end of shelter two. Photograph taken facing south-east.



2024.05c_Photograph_035
Entrance to shelter two. Photograph taken facing south.



2024.05c_Photograph_036
Shelter two with scale. Photograph taken facing north-west.



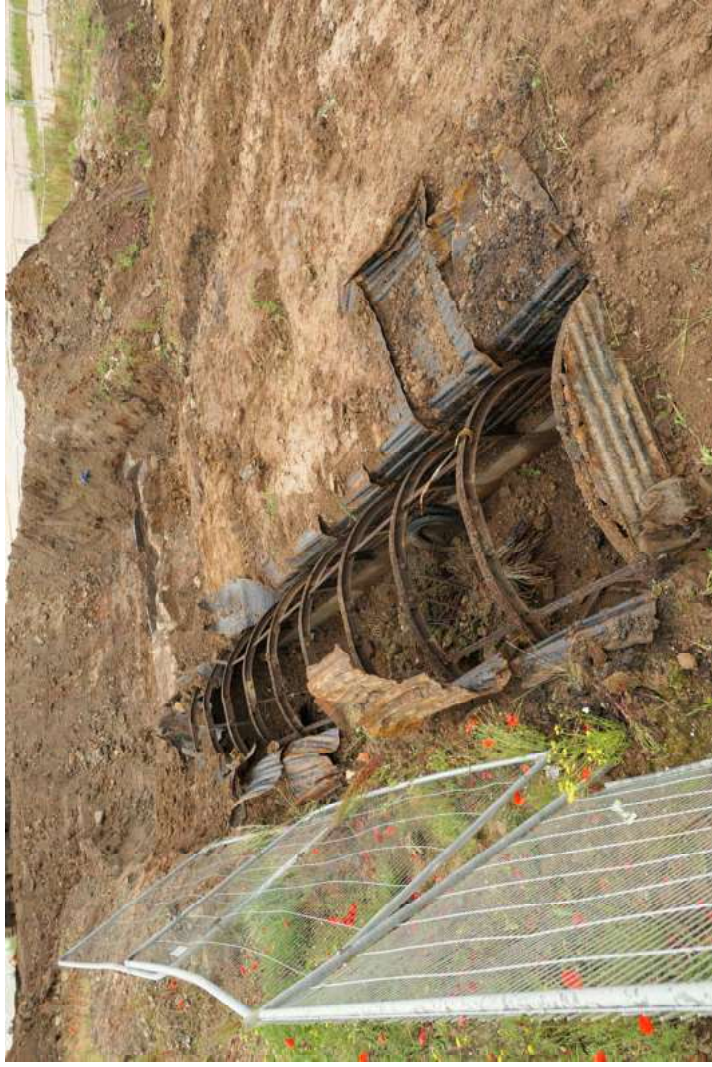
2024.05c_Photograph_037
Detail of removed cross-bar from shelter two south-eastern end. Photograph taken facing north-west.



2024.05c_Photograph_038
Shelter two entrance with scale. Photograph taken facing south-west.



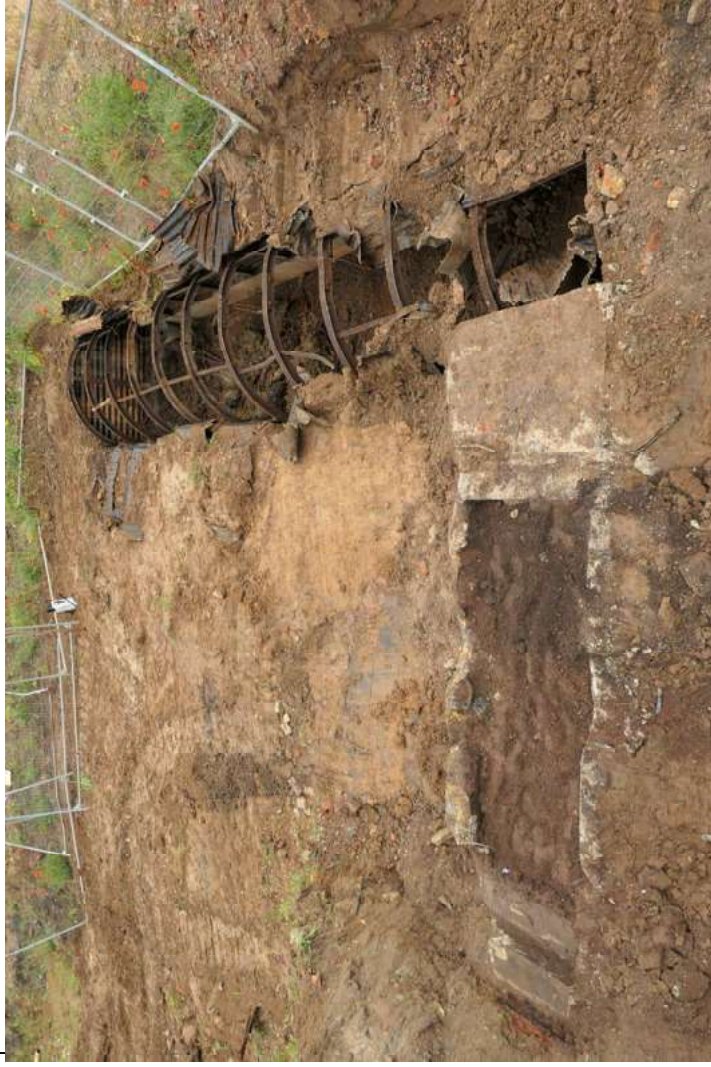
2024.05c_Photograph_039
Shelter two with scale. Photograph taken facing south-east.



2024.05c_Photograph_040
Overview of shelter one. Photograph taken facing south.



2024.05c_Photograph_041
Overview of shelter one. Photograph taken facing north.



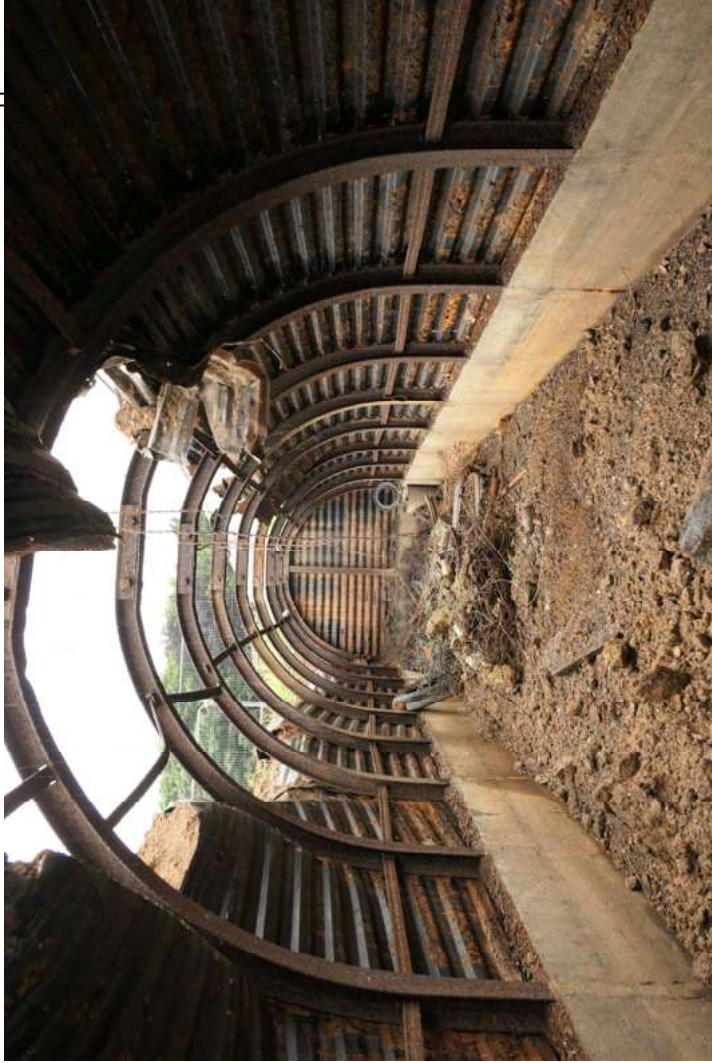
2024.05c_Photograph_042
Overview of shelter one. Photograph taken facing north-west.



2024.05c_Photograph_043
Overview of shelter one. Photograph taken facing north-west.



2024.05c_Photograph_044
Overview of shelter one. Photograph taken facing north.



2024.05c_Photograph_045
Interior of shelter one. Photograph taken facing north-west.



2024.05c_Photograph_046
Interior of entrance to shelter one. Photograph taken facing south-west.



2024.05c_Photograph_047
Overview of shelter two. Photograph taken facing east.



2024.05c_Photograph_048
Overview of shelter two. Photograph taken facing north.



2024.05c_Photograph_049

Overview of shelter two. Photograph taken facing north-west.



2024.05c_Photograph_050

Overview of shelter two. Photograph taken facing west.

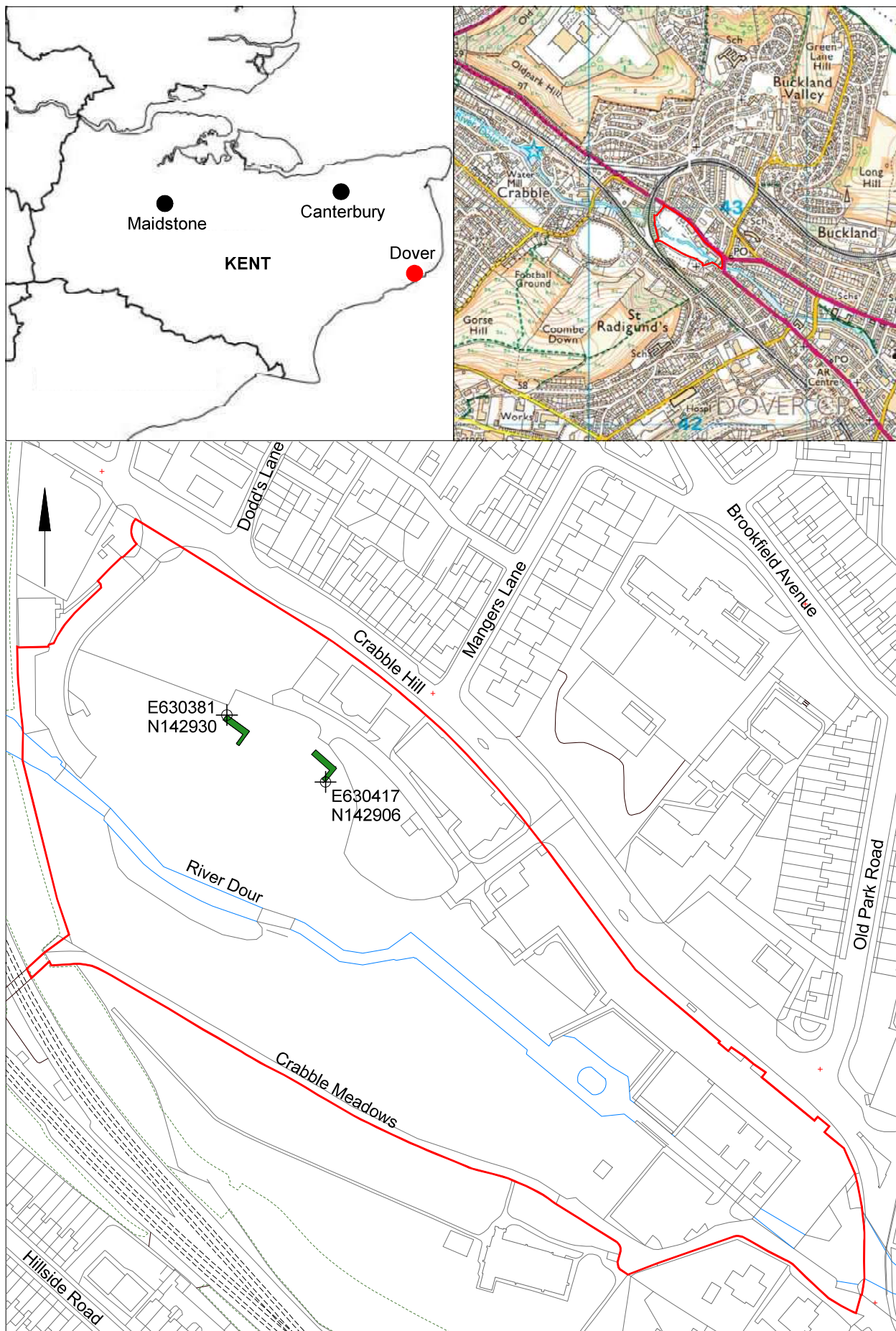


Fig 1 Site location. The recorded structures highlighted in green.

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0 100 m

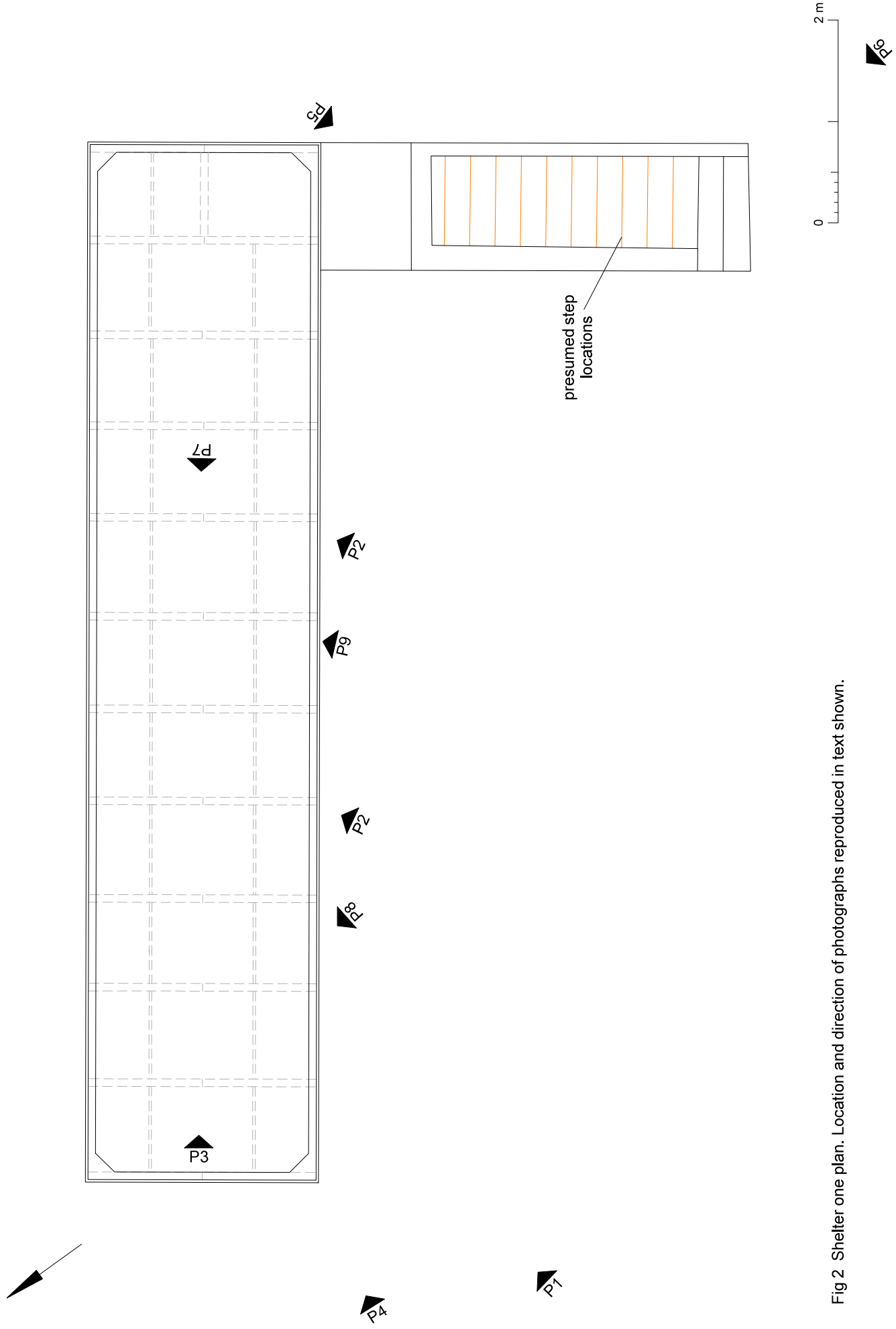


Fig 2 Shelter one plan. Location and direction of photographs reproduced in text shown.

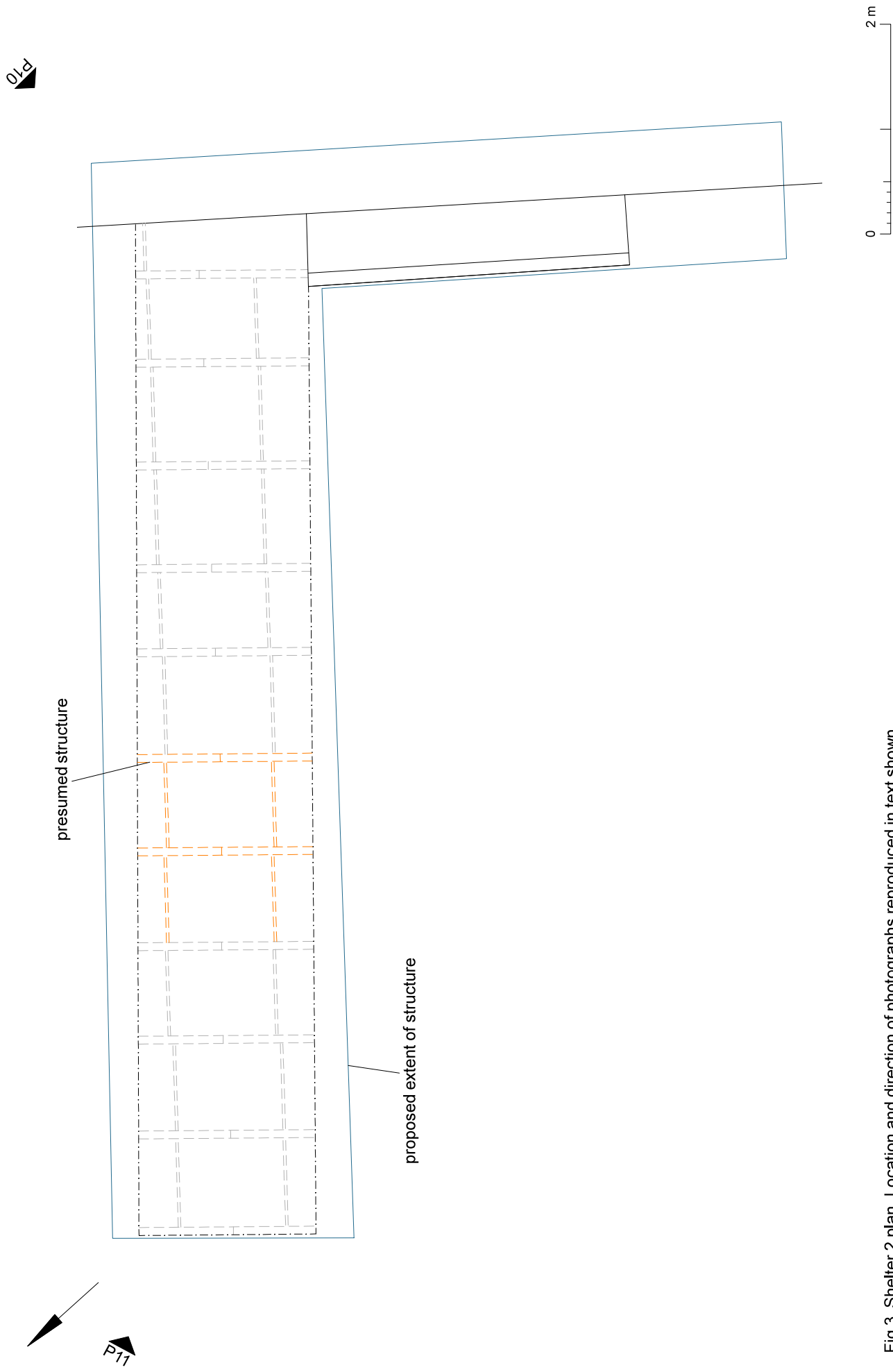


Fig 3 Shelter 2 plan. Location and direction of photographs reproduced in text shown.

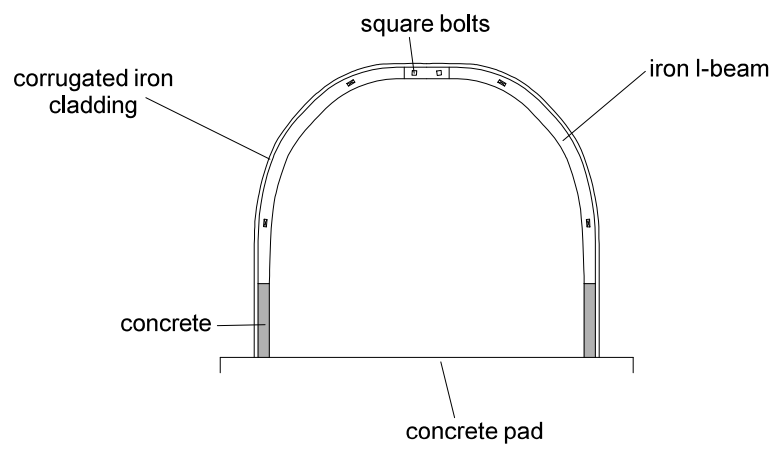


Fig 4 Shelter cross-section.

OASIS Summary for colchest3-525541

OASIS ID (UID)	colchest3-525541
Project Name	Historic building recording (Level 2) of two air-raid shelters at Buckland Mill, Crabble Hill, Dover, Kent
Sitename	Buckland Mill, Crabble Hill, Dover, Kent, CT17 0SU.
Sitecode	
Project Identifier(s)	2024/05c
Activity type	Descriptive Buildings Record (Level 2)
Planning Id	DOV/20/01068
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Post determination
Organisation Responsible for work	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project Dates	08-Jul-2024 - 10-Jul-2024
Location	Buckland Mill, Crabble Hill, Dover, Kent, CT17 0SU. NGR : TR 30444 42872 LL : 51.13871560632902, 1.292840563721266 12 Fig : 630444,142872
Administrative Areas	Country : England County/Local Authority : Kent Local Authority District : Dover Parish : Dover
Project Methodology	The building recording was carried out to Level 2 (Historic England 2016). In particular, the record considered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan and form of the site. • Materials and method of construction. • Date(s) of the structure(s). • Original function and layout. • Original and later fixtures and fittings. • The significance of the site in its immediate local context.
Project Results	A programme of historic building recording was carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust on two air-raid shelters in the grounds of Buckland Mill, Crabble Hill, Dover, Kent in July 2024. The shelters were constructed in 1939 for use by the mill workers, but it seems that after a Spitfire crash caused the closure of the mill, they were subsequently used by the public. The structures comprise a series of arched I-beams (known as Colliery Arches) set into a concrete plinth and covered with corrugated iron. Both shelters had an entrance projecting to the south-west, which comprised a set of poured concrete steps. The arches used in the construction of the shelters mirror those used in the parts of the network of secret wartime tunnels beneath Dover Castle as well as The Deep Shelter at Fan Bay Battery.
Keywords	Air Raid Shelter - Second World War - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types
Funder	Private or public corporation TetraTech
HER	Kent HER - unRev - STANDARD
Person Responsible for work	
HER Identifiers	

Archives	Digital Archive - to be deposited with Archaeology Data Service Archive;
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