



HERITAGE NETWORK



WYDDIAL BURY FARM
Wyddial, Herts.

(HN337)

*Historic Building Record &
Archaeological Monitoring Report*



THE HERITAGE NETWORK LTD

Registered with the Institute of Field Archaeologists as an Archaeological Organisation

Archaeological Director: David Hillelson, BA MIFA

WYDDIAL BURY FARM

Wyddial, Herts.

HN337

Historic Building Record & Archaeological Monitoring Report

Prepared on behalf of Greg Hodge, Esq. by

Chris Turner BSc

&

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Acknowledgements

The fieldwork for this project was carried out by Chris Turner, Geoff Saunders, Karin Semmelmann and David Kaye. The report was written by Chris Turner and Karin Semmelmann, and edited by David Hillelson. The illustrations were prepared by Karin Semmelmann.

The Heritage Network would like to express its thanks to Greg Hodge, owner; Tim Bond, architect; and the staff of the County Archaeology Office, HCC for their co-operation and assistance in the execution of this project.

Summary

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Site name and address: | Wyddial Bury Farm, Wyddial, Herts | | |
| County: | Hertfordshire | District: | East Herts |
| Village/town: | Wyddial | Parish: | Wyddial |
| Planning reference: | 3/00/0593 | NGR: | TL 37445 31718 |
| Client name and address: | Greg Hodge, as above | | |
| Nature of application: | Housing/ barn convn | Present land use: | Farmyard |
| Size of application area: | 1775m ² | Size of area investigated: | 320m ² |
| Site Code: | HN337 | Other reference: | n/a |
| Organisation: | Heritage Network Ltd | Site Director: | David Hillelson |
| Type of work: | Evaluation, monitoring & recording | Findings location/Museum: | Hertford Museum |
| Start of work | 27th February 2002 | Finish of work | 7th February 2003 |
| Related SMR Nos.: | n/a | Periods represented: | post med/ modern |
| Previous summaries /reports: | n/a | | |

Synopsis: As the result of an application for the development of a site at Wyddial Bury Farm, Wyddial, The Heritage Network was commissioned by the owner to undertake a programme of archaeological works requested by the County Archaeological Officer, including building recording and field excavation.

A photographic, drawn and written record of the 19th century brick built barns was made prior to the start of the conversion works, which noted a number of additions and alterations since their construction.

The evaluation trenches on the site of two new houses revealed evidence for a late 19th century out building and modern activity, including a concrete stanchion and organic contamination below a chalk floor. A chalk floor was also revealed during the groundworks for the barn conversion, with organic contamination present in Barns 2 & 3.

No features or deposits pre-dating the post- medieval period were encountered during the investigations.

1. Introduction

1.1 This report has been prepared on behalf of Mr Greg Hodge as part of a programme of archaeological works on a development site at Wyddial Bury Farm, Wyddial, Herts. The archaeological fieldwork was undertaken in response to a planning condition placed on the development by the East Hertfordshire District Council (EHDC) according to the provisions of the Department of the Environment's *Planning Policy Guidance Notes 15 and 16* (PPG 15 & 16). It followed the provisions set out in the *Design Brief for Historic Building Recording, Archaeological Evaluation and Archaeological Monitoring and Recording*, dated 20/07/01, prepared by the *County Archaeology Office* (CAO) of Hertfordshire County Council, and the Heritage Network's approved *Project Design*.

1.2 The site lies to the south of the church in the medieval core of the settlement, centred on TL 374345 31718 (Fig.1). The development proposes the conversion of existing Victorian barns to dwellings, and the construction of two new dwellings on the site of now demolished modern barns. The medieval core of Wyddial is defined as *Area of Archaeological Significance No. 7* (AS7) on the district local plan, and Wyddial Bury Farm is believed to be the location of the associated medieval manor. The Victorian barns are traditional 19th century structures which have been identified as being of interest, being of a type facing a high rate of loss through redundancy, conversion and demolition (Brown & Glazebrook, 2000).

1.3 The Project Design (Turner 2002) defined two areas of focus for the archaeological work: building recording of the historic structures and monitoring of the groundworks associated with their conversion; and the archaeological evaluation of the site of the two new dwellings (Fig.2).

1.4 The aim of the project has been to consider the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains that were liable to be threatened by the development, and to provide an archaeological and historical context for such remains should they be discovered. In addition, all aspects of the development programme which were likely to affect either the fabric of the barn, or underlying archaeological remains were monitored. This involved identifying and recording historic features revealed by the development programme and any exposed archaeological features and deposits, and retrieving artefactual and ecofactual elements which would allow the date, character and significance of the site to be assessed, subject to the limitations of reasonable safety and practicality.

2. Historic Building Recording

Introduction

2.1 The barns at Wyddial Bury Farm lie to the east of the farmhouse. They are orientated roughly east to west and are curved to follow the contour of the road (Plate 1a). They were constructed in 1867 of Cambridge White brick on a foundation of locally made, friable red bricks. Some internal and external alteration has been carried out to the south face since their construction. As the western end of the building had already been renovated, the present study concentrates on the remaining six subdivisions which are being converted into four residential units (Fig.5).

External elevations

2.2 The northern elevation faces the road and the parish church of St. Giles. It is built entirely of Cambridge White bricks in Flemish Bond, with small geometric decorative detail in contrasting red brickwork in every bay. The bays are divided by simple, “pilaster-strip” style buttresses, which are approximately 0.60m wide. The Cambridge White brickwork is relieved by a single vertical line of red bricks. The centrally located gables are decorated with diaper work, also in red brick, and the easternmost gable is further embellished with a coat of arms (Plate 1b). Access to the courtyard is through an arch, which lies at the western end of the range (Plate 2a).

2.3 The southern elevation, which has seen fairly extensive alterations, was originally also of Cambridge White bricks in a Flemish Bond. A line of red bricks, two courses high, runs along the remaining original walls, approximately 1.75m above ground level.

2.4 Most of the windows have been replaced, but a single arched window with red brick forming the relieving arch remains in Barn 2 (Plate 2b).

2.5 A relieving arch made of red brick over the window in Barn 5 may indicate the former presence of a door, which was subsequently replaced by the window (Plate 3a). The north end of the south wall of Barn 5 is unique in that it is finished with brown bricks. The same type of bricks have been used to create the horizontal decorative line north of the window. This would suggest that the south wall of Barn 5 has been rebuilt fairly faithfully to the original, with the exception of the decorative brickwork.

2.6 The southern elevation of Barn 3 and the north-western half of the southern elevation of Barn 4 had been rebuilt in Fletton brick (Plate 3b). This appears to have been done at different times as the builds are dissimilar. The south wall of Barn 3 had been rebuilt of polychrome bricks set in a Flemish Bond with very pebbly cement mortar. In contrast, the rebuild of the north-western half of the south wall of Barn 4 is predominantly of the same type of bricks but in a failed Flemish Bond, as the headers are misaligned (Plate 4a). The bottom 0.76m, however, contains a number of different forms of construction. A single course of headers lies below the polychrome brick walling and below this are 6 courses of red brick on the western side, 6 to 7 courses of pinky-red brick on the eastern side, and a column of red headers dividing the two. These lowest courses are mixed headers and stretchers.

2.7 The south wall of Barn 6 has been breached for a modern window, which is offset to the east, and a small buttress at either end (Plate 4b). The wall, which is also of Cambridge Whites, has three decorative lines of red brick, two courses high, and a red brick diamond shaped decorative detail below the apex of the roof. There is a small angled buttress at either end of the wall, and differential weathering to the brickwork suggests that there may have once been a centrally placed buttress.

2.8 The roof trusses consist of a king post with a squared head, raking struts and cleats supporting the purlins (Fig. 6 & Plate 5a). The first two king posts in Barn 1 have squared joggles supporting the raking struts. All the others have sloping joggles.

2.9 The roof line of Barns 1-3 is broken by irregularly spaced air vents.

Internal layouts

2.10 Barn 1 measures approximately 8.80m in length and 5.19m in width (Fig. 5 & Plate 5b). The western wall has a modern door at ground level, leading to the part of the barn that has already been renovated. The barn is linked to those on either side of it by a door set immediately below the roof in both the west and the east walls. The south wall is pierced by a single door at the eastern end, which leads to the remains of a tiled annexe, and one recent and one modern window to the west of it. A single door in the southern end of the east wall connects Barn 1 with Barn 2.

2.11 Barn 2 measures approximately 9.30m in length. Five cow stalls are set into the north wall (Fig. 5 & Plate 6a). Each stall has two feeding troughs on the floor, water bowls on the walls and vertical tying bars. A drainage channel runs down the centre of the barn. The walls have been concreted to half height. Some of the plaster has fallen from the wall above the concrete, revealing that the interior wall was constructed from various, possibly cheaper, types of bricks. The remaining original window is in the south wall of this barn, and to the east of it is a sliding barn door approximately 3.42m wide. A single door in the southern end of the east wall connects Barn 2 with Barn 3.

2.12 Barn 3 measures approximately 5.50m in length and the presence of three cow stalls and a drainage channel indicate that this was also used as a cow byre in fairly recent times. A single window pierces the south wall, which has been rebuilt. A single door in the southern end of the east wall connects Barn 3 with Barn 4.

2.13 Barn 4 measures approximately 9.40m in length and has a replacement window at its north-western end and a sliding barn door measuring approximately 4.37m in width at its south-western end. It is being used as a vehicle storage area. A single door in the southern end of the east wall connects Barn 4 with Barn 5.

2.14 Barn 5 is a small wedge-shaped area, measuring approximately 6.80m in width along the north wall and approximately 3.0m in width along the south wall (Fig. 5 & Plate 3a). A single replacement window pierces the south wall. The walls are plastered and painted, as in the other barns, but unlike them this barn has a ceiling. This appears to have functioned as an office in

recent times. The door connecting Barn 5 with Barn 6 lies towards the eastern end of the south wall.

2.15 Barn 6, which is in total approximately 7.0m in length, has been subdivided to provide living accommodation (Fig. 5 & Plate 6b). The door in the south wall leads into a kitchen cum living area, which measures no more than 4.34m in length. The window to the north of the door in the south wall has a sink below it. To the south of the kitchen is a bathroom, which measures approximately 2.12m by 2.34m. It is lit by the southernmost window in the barns. In the south-east corner of the barn is a bedroom which measures approximately 3.27m by 3.04m. The window in the south gable provides the light for this room.

3. Fieldwork

TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

- 3.1** The site is situated between 125 and 130m OD contours with the ground relatively level.
- 3.2** The site consists of a farmyard which had until recently been occupied by modern farm buildings and is bounded on the north by existing Victorian barns, on the west by existing farm buildings, with fields to the east and the south.
- 3.3** The modern farm buildings had been demolished shortly before the evaluation began, leaving a layer of debris. In addition modern aggregate had been imported to raise the ground level in the area of the proposed new dwelling in the south east of the site.
- 3.4** The underlying geology of the area is boulder clay with chalk marl striations overlying chalk.
- 3.5** No geotechnical test pits had been carried out on the site prior to this archaeological evaluation.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

- 3.6** Two trial trenches were excavated across the footprints of the proposed new buildings.
- 3.7** Overburden was removed using a JCB 3CX wheeled excavator fitted with a 1.6m wide toothless ditching bucket. Spoil from the machining was inspected for archaeological artefacts.
- 3.8** The trenches were cleaned by hand, and all potential archaeological features were sampled to ascertain their nature, depth, date, and quality of preservation.
- 3.9** All work was carried out in accordance with the detailed method statement contained in the approved *Project Design*.

RESULTS

Trench 1

- 3.10** This trench was located across the proposed footprint for the dwelling to the south of the existing barns. It was orientated NW-SE and measured 10.20m in length and 1.60m wide (Fig. 7).
- 3.11** The overburden in this trench consisted of a white (10YR 8/1) mixed demolition rubble chalky clay, 0.25 to 0.30m in depth.
- 3.12** Two walls were encountered in this trench, [101] and [102].
- 3.13** The subsoil consisted of a reddish brown (10YR 4/4) clay, 0.20 to 0.25m in depth. The subsoil was only encountered to the east of wall [101].
- 3.14** Beneath the overburden was layer [100] of dark brown (10YR 3/2) silty clay with late post medieval to modern brick rubble inclusions, 0.22 to 0.25m in depth. This layer was only

encountered to the west of wall [101] and possibly represents part of an occupation layer outside the building.

3.15 Wall [101] ran across the trench on a N-S alignment, it survived to a depth of five courses from surface level. It had a width of 0.38m and was built of modern bricks which measured 0.22m long by 0.11m wide by 0.065m deep.

3.16 Wall [102] ran across the trench on an E-W alignment and survived only in a disturbed state. It consisted of reddish brown brick rubble, with lime mortar. The brick fragments displayed no frog features. Only a 1.20m long stretch of the wall survived, this portion had a depth of 0.50m and a width of 0.50m.

3.17 The natural reddish brown (5YR 5/4) clay with chalk marl striations was reached at a depth of 0.50m below the surface.

Trench 2

3.18 This trench was located across the proposed footprint for the dwelling in the south eastern corner of the site. It was orientated NE-SW and measured 9.60m in length and 1.60m wide. (Fig.8).

3.19 This part of the site had recently been built up with a layer of modern aggregate, 0.50m thick, and capped with chalk and demolition debris, 0.28m in depth.

3.20 A large concrete stanchion base [204], measuring approximately 1.30m in diameter, was observed at the eastern end of the trench. This base sat on layer [200], below the modern aggregate. This feature is part of a 20th century barn clearly marked on the 1976 OS plan of the site and surviving into the 1980s.

3.21 Beneath the modern build up was a thin layer [200] of very dark greyish brown silty clay, (10 YR 3/2), this layer was 0.08 - 0.15m thick.

3.22 A compacted layer of redeposited chalk was observed under layer [200]. This feature [201] measured 5m in length and 0.10m in depth. This type of compacted chalk layer often represents a foundation base for farm outbuildings. It probably represents a surface for some temporary wooden chicken sheds that were located in this part of the farm.

3.23 A similar layer to [200] was observed under chalk layer [201]. This layer [202] was also dark silty clay (10YR 3/2) and measured 0.15m thick.

3.24 Underlying layer [202] was a layer of greenish grey clay (5/ 5 GY). This layer [203] measured 0.50m in depth. Ground water appeared to be rising through the base of this layer. This was initially interpreted as being the location of a former pond although there is no cartographic evidence to support this theory. The organic staining of the layer may drive from animal waste seeping from the former barns.

3.25 A small sondage was excavated in the western end of this trench to confirm the depth of layer [203] and the absence of buried archaeological horizons below. The natural light grey (5YR 7/1) marly clay was reached at a depth of 1.50m below the surface.

Concordance of finds

3.26 No artefacts were observed or recovered from any stage of this evaluation, reflecting the lack of archaeological activity on this site.

MONITORING OF GROUNDWORKS

Footings trench

3.27 The footings trench for the new south wall of the barn measured approximately 0.70m in width and between 1.20m and 1.30m in depth. The only features observed in this trench were a chalk layer and a greenish deposit of indeterminate dimensions (Fig.9).

3.28 The chalk layer was between 0.10m and 0.15m deep and lay approximately 0.45m below the present ground surface. It ran almost the full length of the trench, ending 1.0m west of the western trench end and approximately 9.85m from the southern trench end.

3.29 The greenish deposit lay at the eastern end of Barn 2, and appeared to have been the result of cow manure leaching into the ground from the drainage channels.

Damp proof course

3.30 This trench was opened against the north wall of the barns to allow a damp proof course and an internal lining wall to be inserted. The only section of this trench to be inspected was that in Barns 2 and 3. This measured 0.60m in length and 0.68m in depth.

3.31 Below the concrete was a layer of cobbles and flint which lay on a bed of yellow (2.5Y 8/6) clay heavily mixed with chalk. The combined depth of the concrete and cobble/flint layer was 0.20m, and that of the yellow clay was also 0.20m (Fig.9).

3.32 Below this was a 0.27m deep layer of dark yellowish brown (10YR 4/4) clay with chalk and stone inclusions of all sizes. Both these clay layers appeared to have been dumped indiscriminately.

3.33 They lay above a chalk surface, which was approximately 0.08m deep and 0.32m below the ground surface. The length of this chalk layer could not be determined in Barn 2 because of the instability of the sides. In Barn 3, however, it was visible throughout the length of the trench.

Drainage trenches

3.34 Two shallow drainage trenches were inspected in Barn 3 (Fig.9). They measured approximately 0.35m in width and between 0.10m and 0.30m in depth. The chalk layer was present throughout the westernmost drainage trench, below which was a black deposit, 0.03m deep and circa 1.40m long. This lay immediately below the drainage channel for the cow byre. Interwoven with this was a brown deposit measuring 0.80m in length and 0.04m in depth. Neither deposit could be identified as they were so wet. The eastern drainage trench was only 0.10m deep and nothing was visible in section.

Ground reduction

3.35 The removal of the concrete in Barns 1 and 2 was monitored. No archaeology was observed.

4. Discussion

Evaluation and groundworks

4.1 Despite the immediate proximity of the site to the church and the fact that it is thought to be the location of the medieval manor, only post-medieval/ modern deposits were encountered during this evaluation.

4.2 Nevertheless, the evaluation trenches did reflect the layout of the farm portrayed in the cartographic record with an evolution of a series of out-buildings across the south eastern half of the farmyard from the 19th century onwards.

4.3 The walls [101 & 102] encountered in Trench 1 coincide with out-building 'A', shown on the 19th century plans of the site (Figs. 3a-4a). Wall [101] appears to be a load bearing wall, but the rubble construction of [102] suggests it was subsidiary to the main structure.

4.4 The large concrete stanchion base [204] in Trench 2 was part of a series of stanchions for a modern barn 'B', running E-W, which was built between 1960 and 1976 (Fig.4b).

4.5 The compacted chalk surface [201] in Trench 2 may be a base for a yard surface but it is likely that it was the foundation for a series of 20th century chicken sheds that existed in this part of the farm prior to 1960.

4.6 The level of organic contamination in Trench 2, Context [203], suggests that this area was either used for the storage of animal waste, or animals were accommodated above it for a long period of time. Similar areas of contamination were revealed during the groundworks in Barns 2 and 3, which had been used as cow byres.

4.7 Layers of chalk and cobble and flint were the principal archaeological features revealed during the groundworks for the barn conversion. The chalk layer appears to have been a floor surface both inside and outside the barns. The cobble and flint layer appears to have been a levelling deposit.

4.8 No evidence for any features or deposits pre-dating the medieval period was observed within these two trenches or during the groundworks for the barns.

Building recording

4.9 The building recording of the Victorian barns has shown that they have undergone a variety of alterations since their construction in the mid-19th century. This includes the recent replacement of windows in the south elevation, the insertion of a new window and the removal of the centrally placed buttress in the south gable, the rebuilding of the west wall in Barn 5 and the south wall in Barns 3 and 4, and the addition of an annexe at the western end of the range between 1960 and 1976.

4.10 Internal alterations included the insertion of the cow byres and the subdivision of Barn 6 to provide living accommodation in the second half of the 20th century.

5. Schedule of Site Visits

| Date | Staff | Hours | Comments |
|----------|-----------|-------|--------------------------------------|
| 27/02/02 | KS,CT&GIS | 9 | Excavation & recording |
| 28/02/02 | CT&GIS | 4 | Record trenches |
| 17/04/02 | KS &GS | 5 | Photograph barns |
| 04/09/02 | KS&DK | 5 | Inspect groundworks |
| 24/09/02 | KS | 2 | Inspect footings trench |
| 24/09/02 | KS | 3 | Inspect footings trench |
| 26/09/02 | KS | 2 | Inspect DPC trench |
| 16/10/02 | KS | 1 | Inspect concrete removal |
| 25/11/02 | KS | 3 | Inspect footings & drainage trenches |
| 07/02/03 | KS | 1 | Inspect footings trench |
| 07/02/03 | KS | 1 | Inspect footings trench |

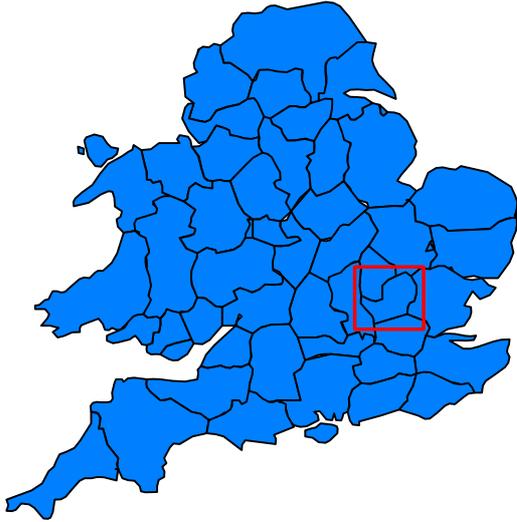
6. Illustrations

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Wyddial Bury Farm, Wyddial

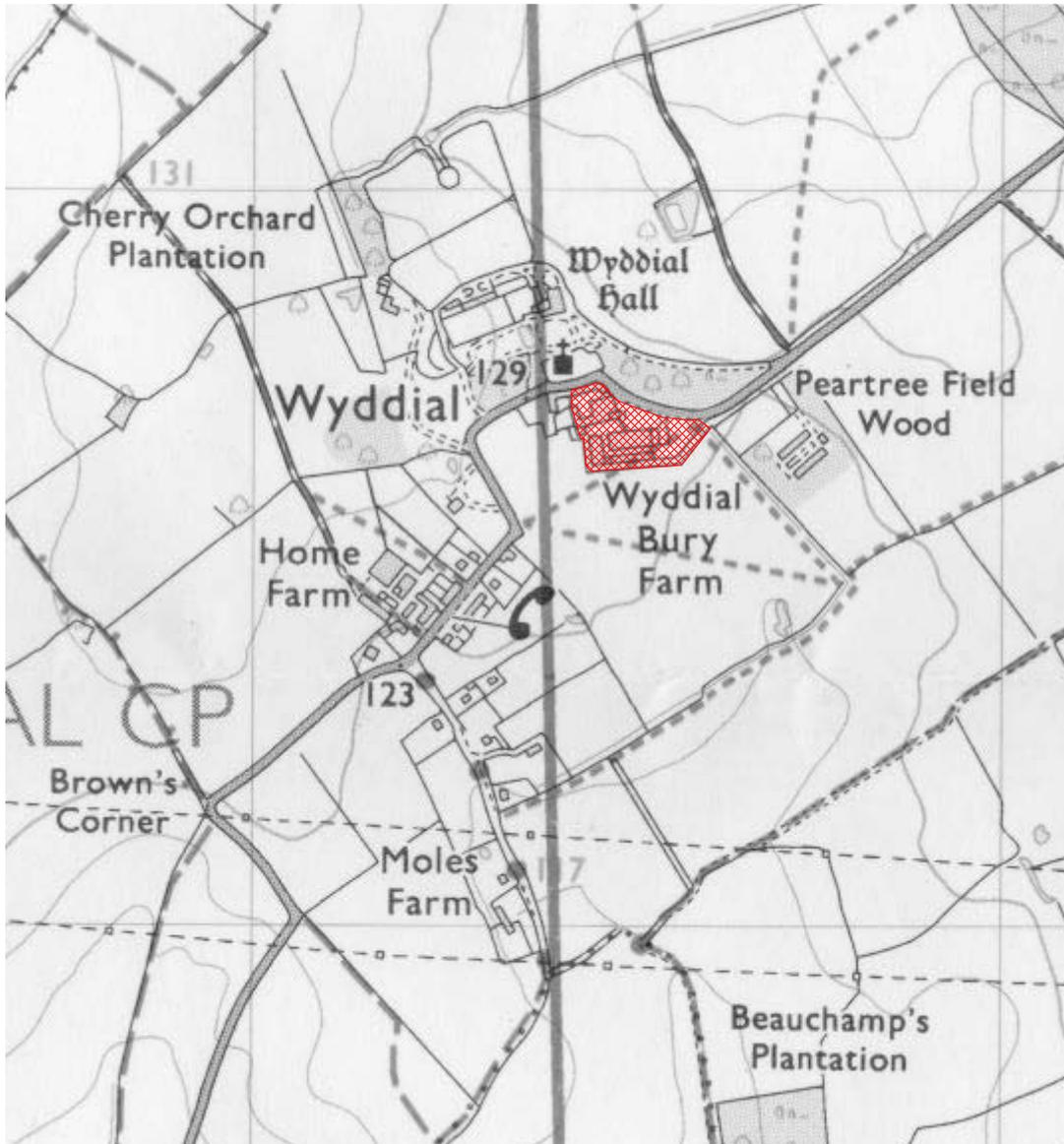
HN337



TL 37

Meridian Line

TL 38



TL 32

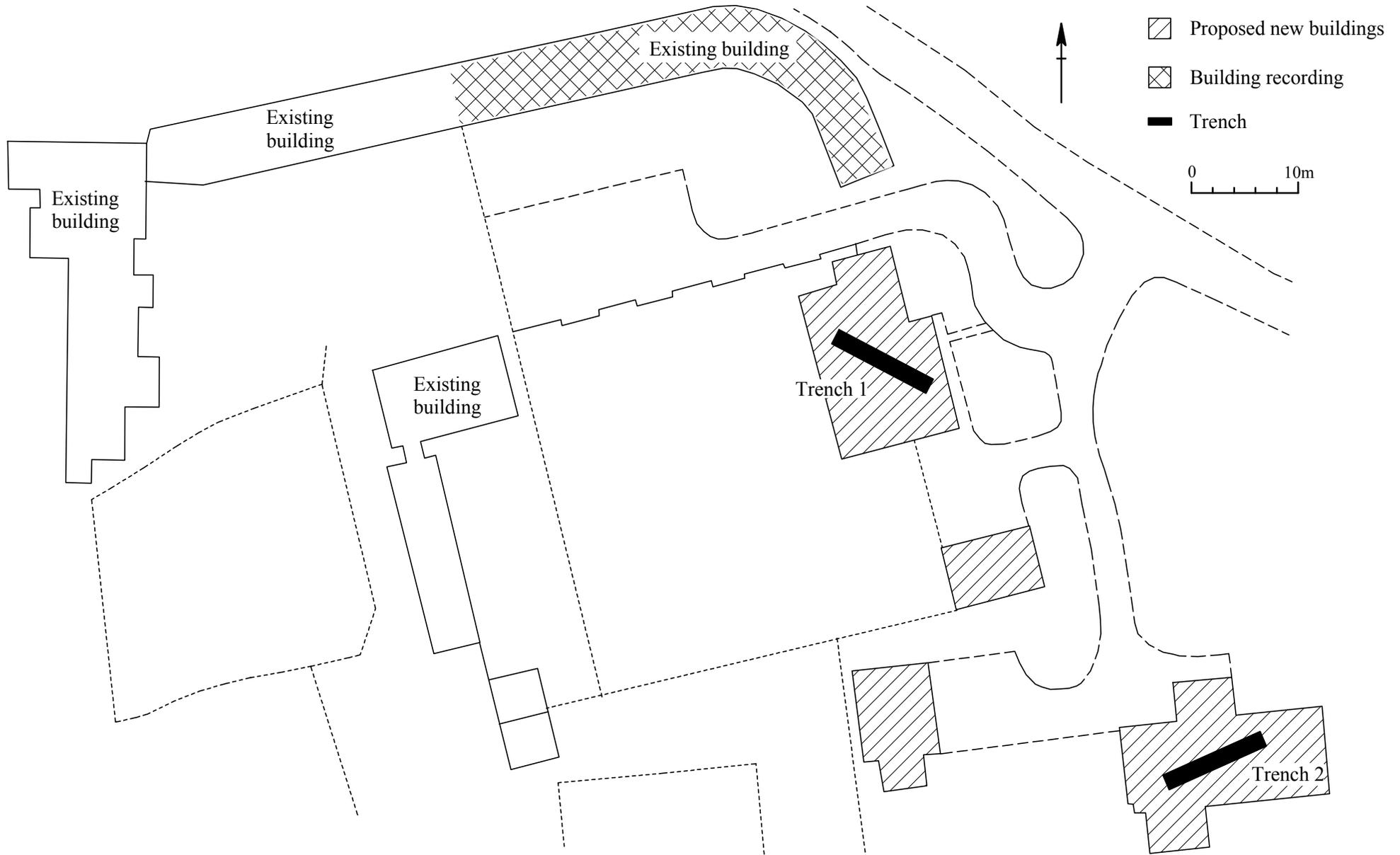
TL 31

Site Location

Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey with the permission of the controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, Licence no.AL100014861

Scale 1:10000

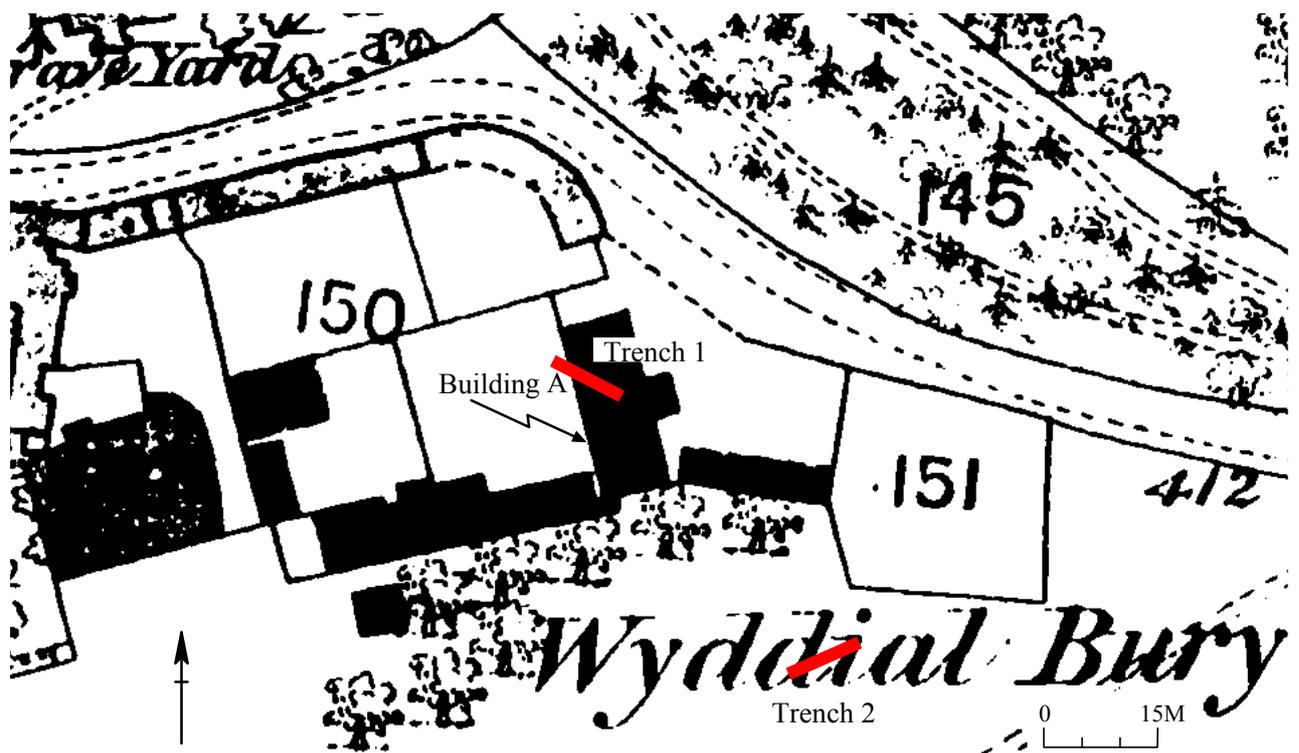
Figure 1



Areas of investigation

Scale 1:500

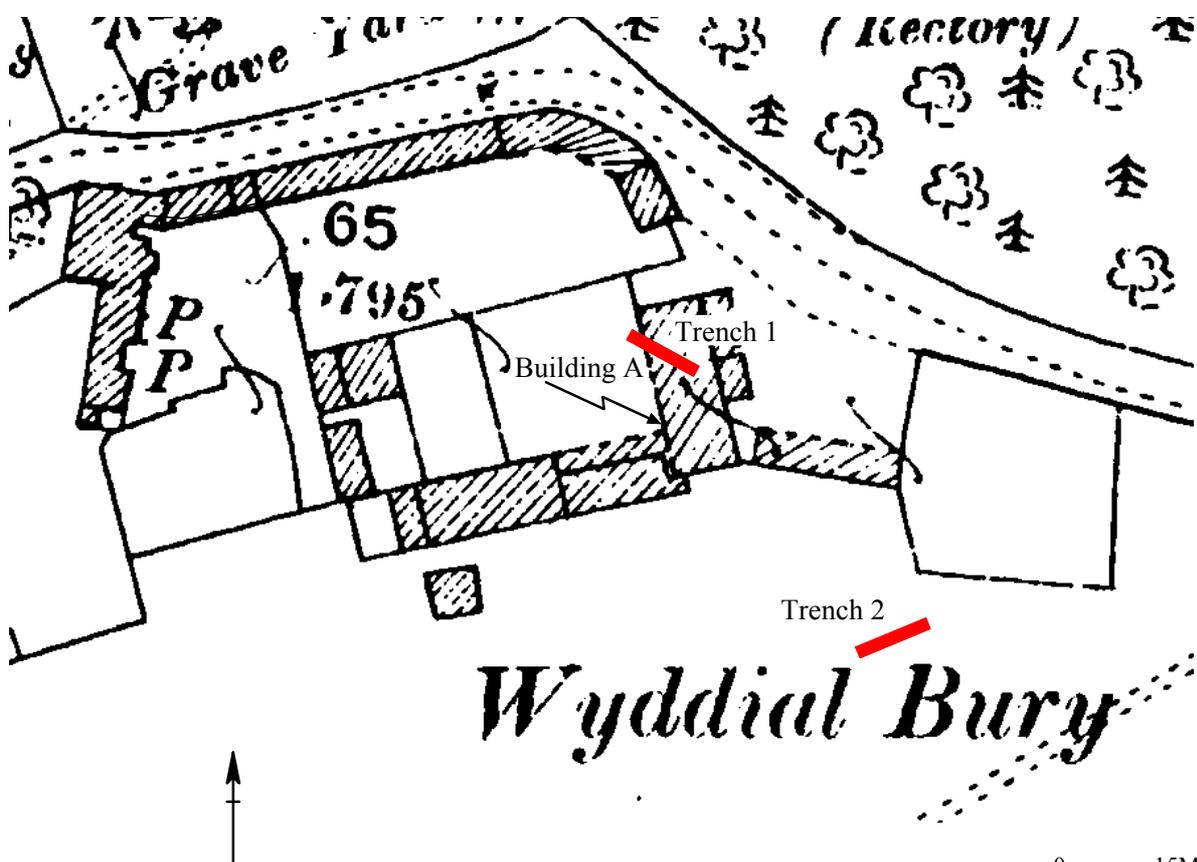
Figure 2



1877 1st edition OS map, 1877

Scale 1:1000

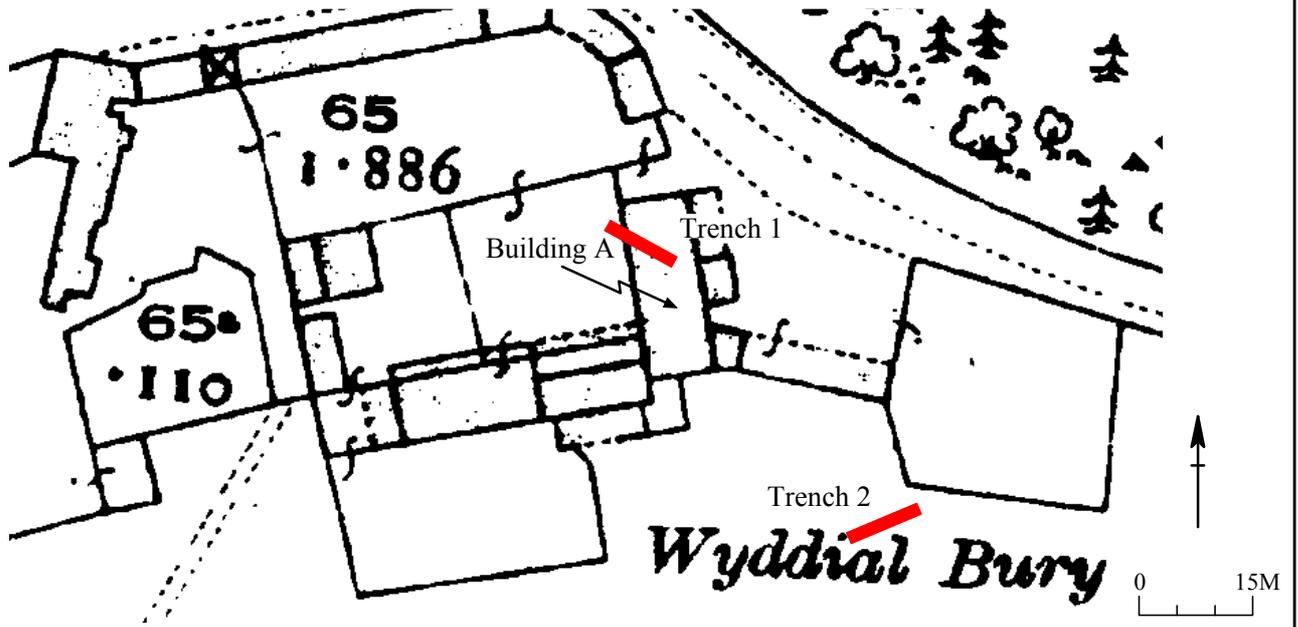
Figure 3a



2nd edition OS map, 1898

Scale 1:1000

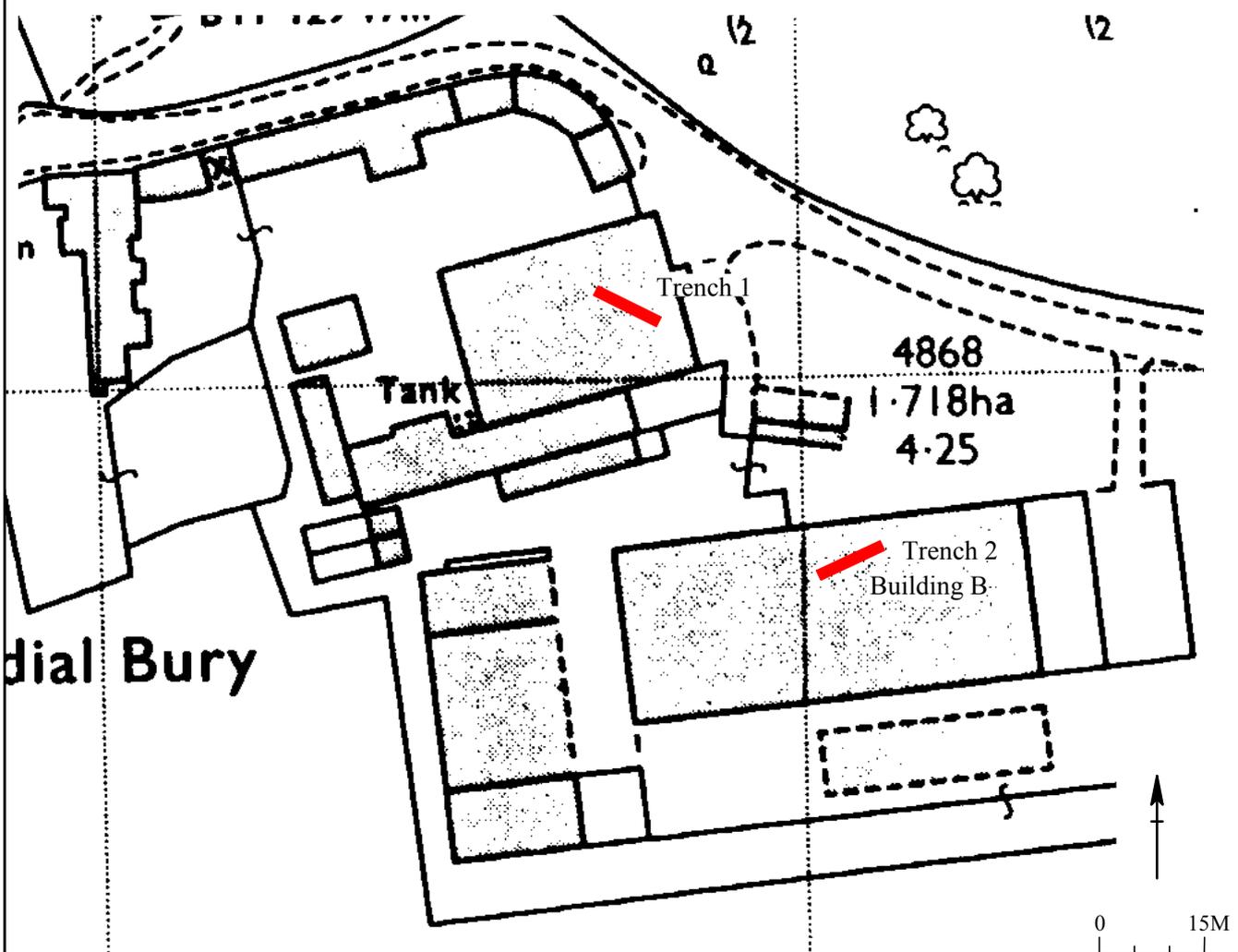
Figure 3b



1921 OS map

Scale 1:1000

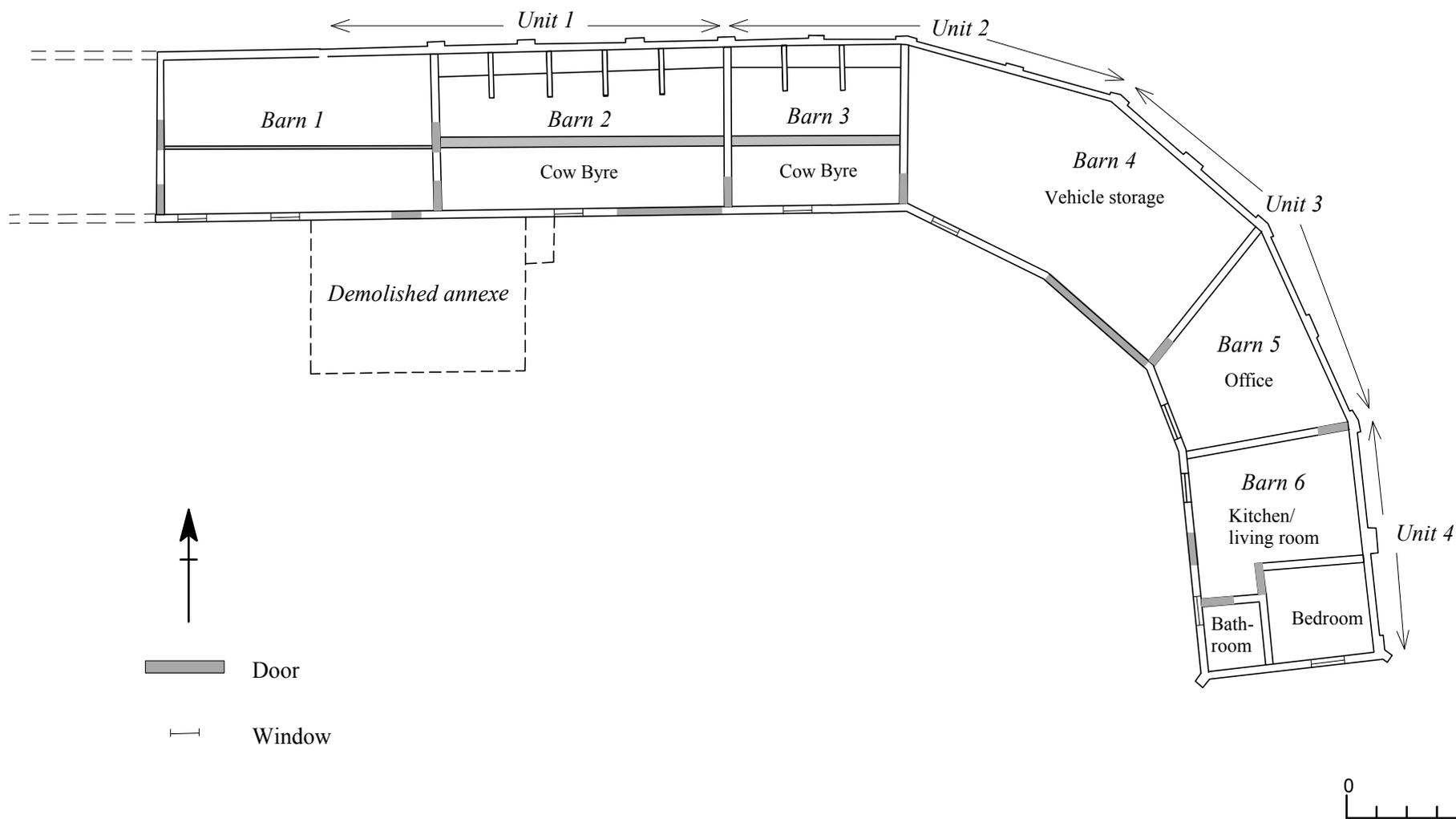
Figure 4a



1976 OS map

Scale 1:1000

Figure 4b

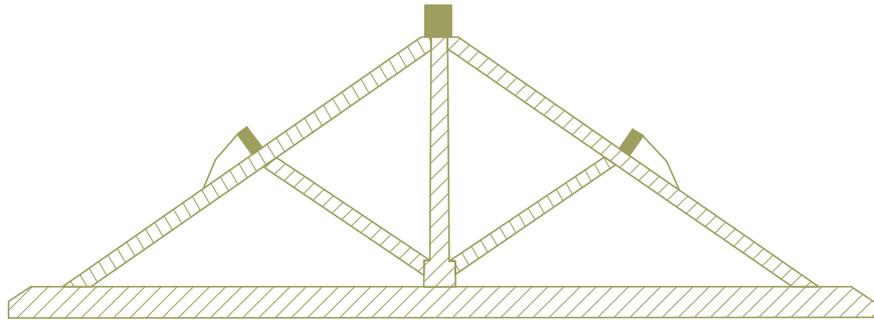


Barn plan

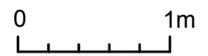
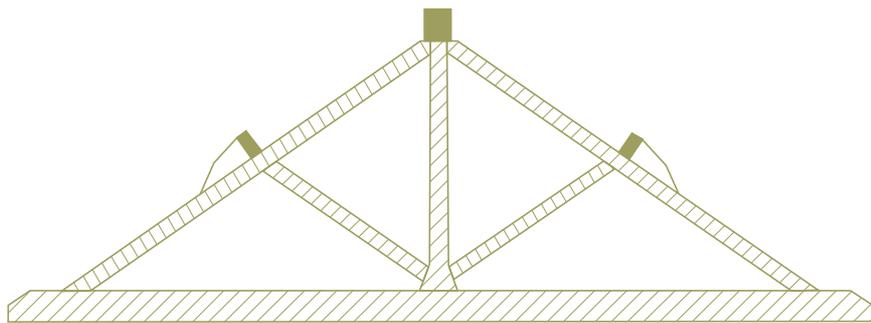
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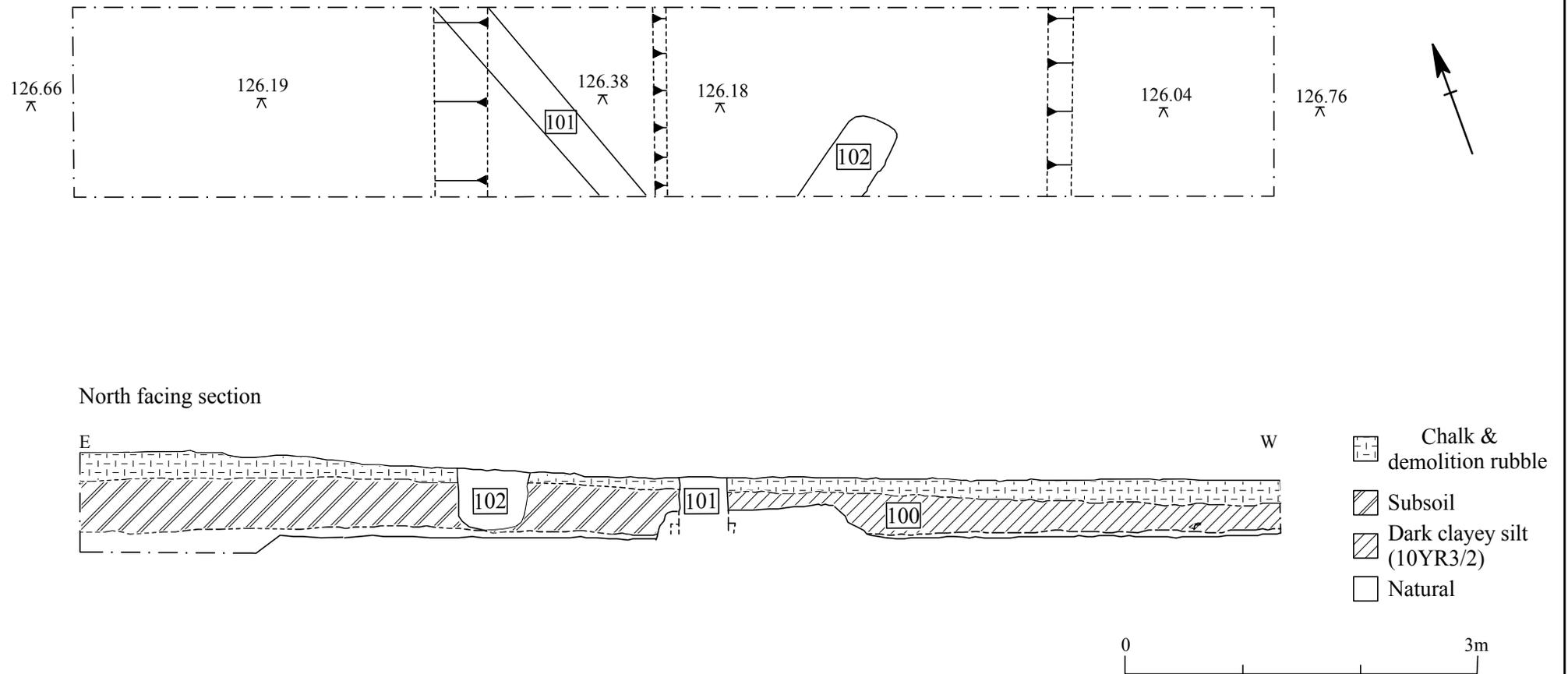
Figure 5

King post with raking struts and squared joggles



King post with raking struts and sloping joggles





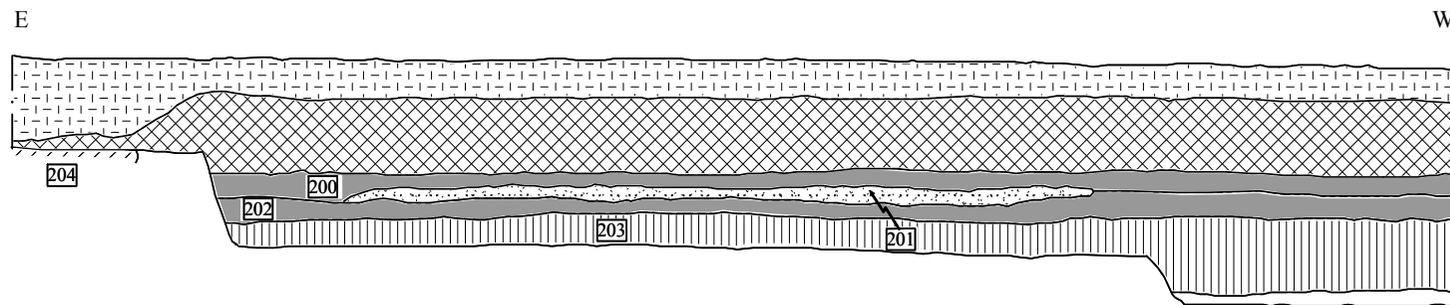
Trench 1: plan & section

Scale 1:50

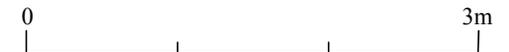
Figure 7



North facing section



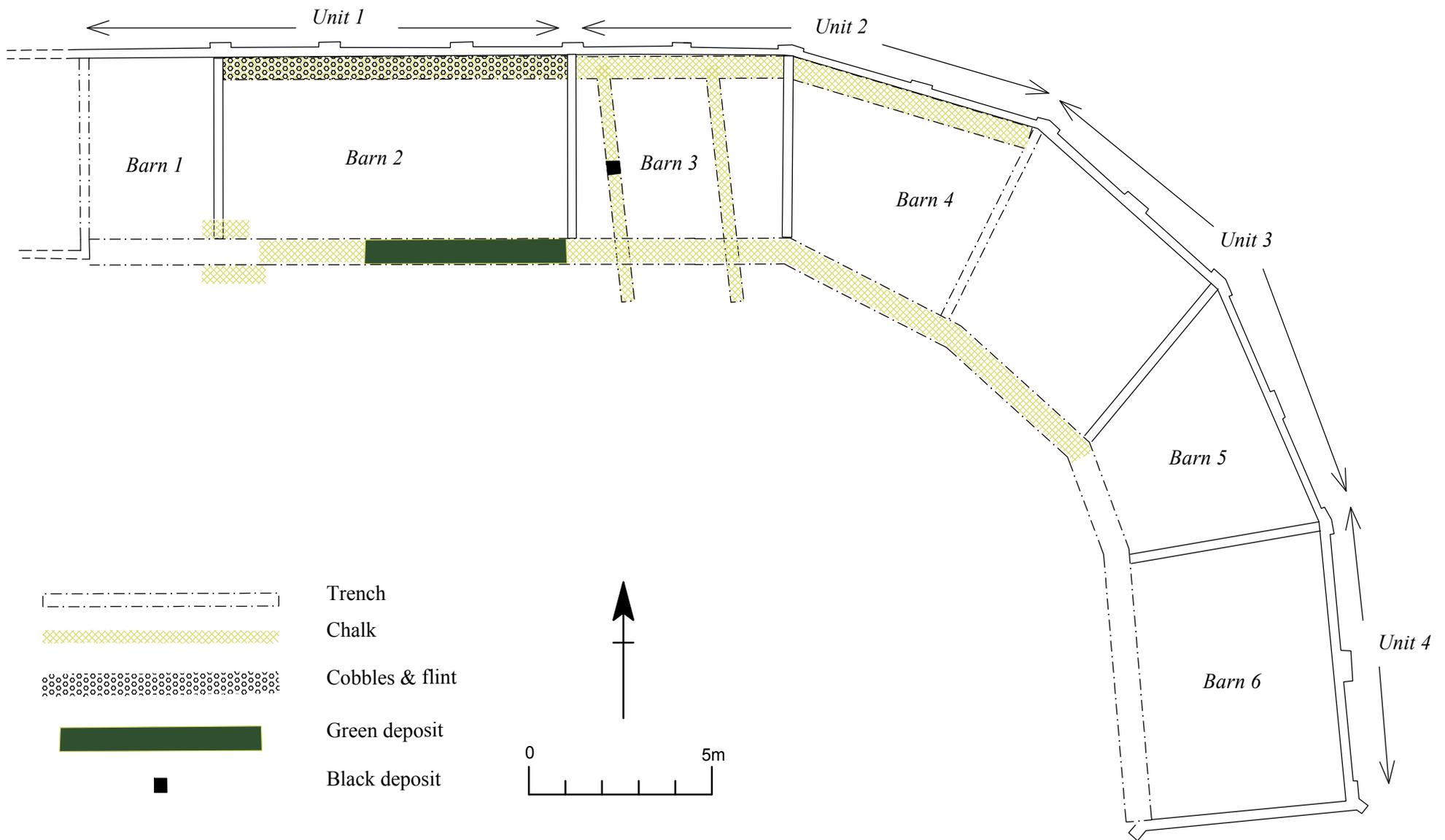
-  Chalk & demolition rubble
-  Modern aggregate
-  Dark silty clay (10YR3/2)
-  Redeposited chalk
-  Greenish clay (5/5 GY)
-  Concrete
-  Natural



Trench 2: plan & section

Scale 1:50

Figure 8



Archaeological features

Scale 1:150

Figure 9



North elevation

Plate 1a



Gable with coat of arms

Plate 1b



Entrance arch

Plate 2a



Original window

Plate 2b



Barn 5

Plate 3a



Barns 3 & 4

Plate 3b



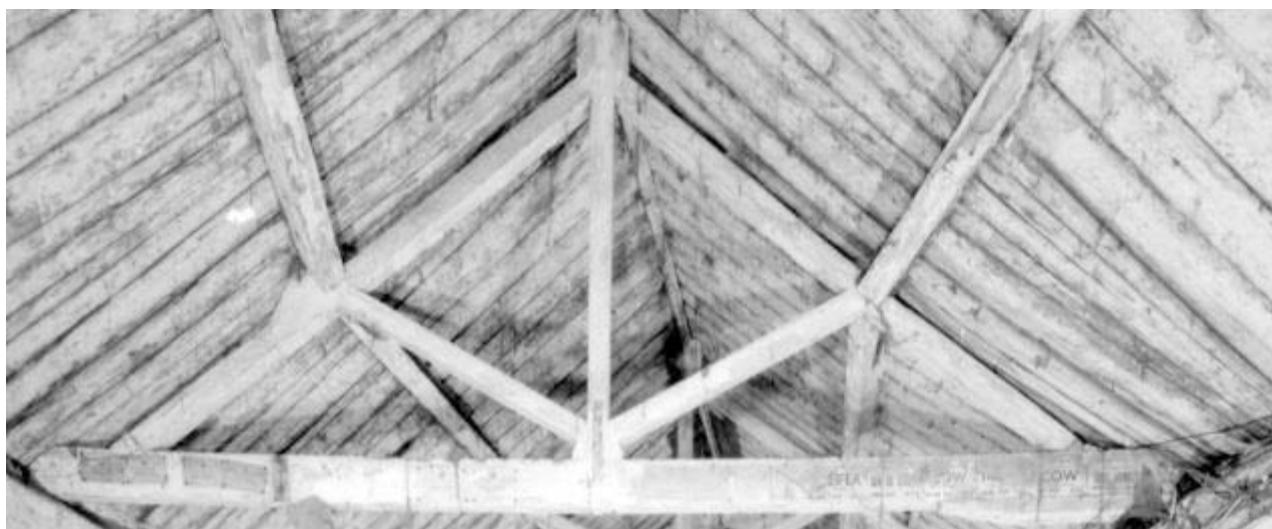
Barn 4

Plate 4a



South gable

Plate 4b



Roof truss

Plate 5a



South elevation

Plate 5b



Cow stalls

Plate 6a



Barn 6

Plate 6b