HERITAGE NETWORK

Land to the rear of

76 HIGH STREET
Barkway, Herts.

(HN405)

Historic Building Record and Archaeological Monitoring Report

REGISTERED ORGANISATION IFA

THE HERITAGE NETWORK LTD
Registered with the Institute of Field Archaeologists as an Archaeological Organisation
Archaeological Director: David Hillelson, BA MIFA

Land to the rear of

76 HIGH STREET

Barkway, Herts.

HN405

Historic Building Record and Archaeological Monitoring Report

Prepared for Mr. & Mrs. G. Cooper

by

Karin Semmelmann, MA PIFA

Report no. 192

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Contents

	Summary	Page i
Section 1	Introduction	Page 1
Section 2	Historical Context	Page 2
Section 3	Historic Building Record	Page 4
Section 4	Fieldwork	Page 6
Section 5	Discussion & Conclusion	Page 9
Section 6	Schedule of Site Visits	Page 11
Section 7	Illustrations	*following* Page 11

Acknowledgements

The fieldwork for this project was carried out by Karin Semmelmann and David Kaye. The report was written and illustrated by Karin Semmelmann and edited by David Hillelson.

The Heritage Network would like to express its thanks to Mr & Mrs Cooper, owners; Tom Doig, local historian; Michael Livings, 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:	76 High Street, Barkway, Herts. SG8 8EF		
County:	Hertfordshire	**District:**	North Herts.
Village/town:	Barkway	**Parish:**	Barkway
Planning reference:	02/00176/1	**NGR:**	TL 38385 35595
Client name and address:	Mr & Mrs G. Cooper, as above		
Nature of work:	Barn conversion	**Present land use:**	Barn
Size of affected area:	375m^2	**Size of area investigated:**	375m^2
Site Code:	n/a	**Other reference:**	HN405
Organisation:	Heritage Network	**Site Director:**	David Hillelson
Type of work:	Monitoring & recording	**Finds location/Museum:**	n/a
Start of work	06/01/2003	**Finish of work**	19/03/2003
Related SMR Nos:	N/a	**Periods represented:**	n/a
Previous summaries/reports:	n/a		

Synopsis: In response to a planning application for the conversion of the barn at 76 High Street, Barkway, Hertfordshire, the Heritage Network was commissioned by Mr & Mrs Cooper to record the barn and monitor the groundworks associated with the development.

The existing barn appears to have been constructed between 1808 and 1814, and was used as part of a slaughterhouse complex, with the associated lean-to acting as a pig pen. Although the cartographic evidence indicates that there was an annexe to the east of the barn, the archaeological evidence suggests that this may have been a free-standing building. Evidence for another free-standing building, possibly a bake-house, was revealed during the groundworks, as were cobbled surfaces in front of the barn, a probable layer of consolidation material east of the cart pond and drainage systems, both recent and possibly 19th century, from the east of the barn to the pond.

1. Introduction

1.1 This report has been prepared on behalf of Mr & Mrs G. Cooper as part of a programme of archaeological monitoring and building recording on conversion works and development groundworks at the rear of 76 High Street, Barkway, Herts. The archaeological fieldwork was undertaken in response to a planning condition placed on the development by the North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC) 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 and Archaeological Monitoring and Recording* prepared by the *County Archaeology Office* (CAO) of Hertfordshire County Council (Ref.SB 20/12/02), and the Heritage Network's approved *Project Design*.

1.2 The site is located at the western end of the garden at the rear of 76 High Street, and is adjacent to the cart pond on Church Lane, at the core of the village of Barkway (NGR TL 38385 35595). It lies within the curtilage of a grade II listed building and within the core of the medieval settlement as defined by Archaeological Area no.69 (AA69) in the District Local Plan. The 13th century parish church of St. Mary Magdalene lies 200m to the west.

1.3 The development proposes the conversion of a timber framed barn to domestic use, and the rebuilding of a lean-to against its western elevation to extend the available accommodation, together with associated drainage and landscaping works.

1.4 The aim of the project has been to record the existing fabric of the buildings prior to conversion and monitor all aspects of the development programme which were likely to affect either the fabric of the barn, or underlying archaeological remains. All exposed potential archaeological features and deposits were investigated, and artefactual and ecofactual elements were retrieved which would allow the date, character and significance of the site to be assessed, subject to the limitations of reasonable safety and practicality.

2. Historical Context

2.1 Barkway, in the northeast corner of Hertfordshire, stands on high ground above the river Quin, on a geology of clay overlying chalk. The village consists of a single street (now the B1368) which, from early times, had been an important communication route between Ware and Cambridge. Known in Saxon times as *Bergwant* or "the way over the hill", it branched from the Old North Road (Ermine Street), now the A10, at the Roman settlement at Braughing, continuing its route northwards through Royston (where it crossed the Icknield Way) and on to Huntingdon. At Barkway, the road crossed an Iron Age trackway which followed the North Hertfordshire Chalk Ridge, running parallel to the Icknield Way but a few miles to its south.The route can be traced from Wallington and Therfield, continuing to Nuthampstead, Langley and beyond. It was at this crossing that Barkway developed.

2.2 Barkway parish is recorded in Domesday within Edwinstree Hundred. The settlement was large enough to support a priest, and was later divided between eight manors including Barkway, Newsells, Rokey, Berwyk, Rectory of Barkway, Great Cokenach, Hedleys, and Little Cokenach in Nuthampstead. A moated motte with two baileys stands to the northeast of the village on Periwinkle Hill.

2.3 A market place existed from the early 13th century, and the village was granted a Tuesday Market and an annual fair dedicated to St Mary Magdalene in 1270. The earliest part of the present village church of St Mary Magdalene, the chancel, also dates to the 13th century.

2.4 During the 14th century the road gained a reputation for being unsafe after the lord of Rokey Manor, John de Lancaster was charged with robbing the Earl of Pembroke at Barkway in 1347. A little while later, servants of Queen Isabella were also attacked.

2.5 Several inns are recorded in the village during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and these undoubtedly thrived providing refreshment for travellers from London via Ware to Cambridge and the north. During the Medieval and post-Medieval periods, the route to Cambridge through Barkway was an accepted and busy alternative to the route via Royston which often became impassable in winter where it followed the steep and damp chalk ridge to the south of the town. Pepys mentions stopping at Barkway on a journey to his family estates in Huntingdon.

2.6 Following the excavation of a cut through the steep ridge to the south of Royston in the early 1800s, conditions on the main route improved and Barkway began to become isolated. The final blow was struck with the construction of the railway lines from London via Hitchin to Royston, and from London to Cambridge.

Site specific

2.7 The Inclosure Award of 1808 records the present site as being associated with the property to the south (Fig. 2a). A range of out-buildings stood to the north of the site which were part of a messuage and butcher's shop belonging to Ann Sutton. These buildings were destroyed by fire in 1864 (T. Doig, pers. comm.).

2.8 The present barn was first recorded in the sales particulars of Thomas Cockett, dated 1814 and first depicted in the 1st edition Ordnance Survey plan of 1878 (Fig. 2b). The late 19th century maps show additional structures that were later demolished. The 1898 Ordnance Survey plan (Fig. 3a) shows that the subdivisions of the land were different to that on the 1878 plan. By 1921, however, the site had taken its present form (Fig. 3b).

3. Historic Building Record

3.1 The barn is a 2-bayed, timber structure set on a dwarf wall of red brick and under a slate roof (Fig. 4). All the elevations are weatherboarded. The northern wall plate projects beyond the eastern barn wall.

3.2 The weatherboarding has been renewed on the east elevation from a height of 1.48m above the dwarf wall. The first three boards above the dwarf wall in the west elevation have also been replaced, apart from the last 0.57m to the south. Although the weatherboarding on the north elevation all appears to be of the same date from the outside, interior inspection shows that the weatherboarding in the north elevation of Bay 1 is more recent.

3.3 The dwarf supporting wall is constructed from locally made, frogged red bricks measuring approximately 23cm x 11cm x 6cm (9½$_0$ x 4˜ x 2˜ in.).

North elevation

3.4 The dwarf wall is approximately 0.45m high, and the westernmost 0.50m has been rebuilt (Fig. 4). Both the cill beam and the wall plate are of one continuous length. The barn entrance is on the western side in Bay 1.

3.5 Bay 2 has primary bracing and no mid-rail. The studs are of a uniform scantling and are roughly equally spaced. Although a few studs are waney edged, the majority are box cut.

East elevation

3.6 The dwarf wall is approximately 0.32m (1ft) high (Fig. 4). There is primary bracing above the mid-rail, but no bracing below. Possible because of this, the timber lower section of the wall is leaning to the east. The collar beam is shaped to form a central ledge, below which is a long, narrow window set between the studs.

South elevation

3.7 The first 2.80m of the eastern end of the dwarf wall have been rebuilt (Fig. 4). Here it is 5 courses, (approximately 0.38m) high, whilst at the western end it is 4 courses (approximately 0.28m) high. The elevation has primary bracing and no mid-rail.

3.8 The studs are modern replacement, and probably derive from Scales Wood where timber is cut with a waney edge (T. Doig, pers.comm.). The weatherboarding has also been replaced.

3.9 Bay 2 has a window set between the studs at the western end of the bay, slightly below the wall-plate.

West elevation

3.10 The dwarf wall is 3 courses (approximately 0.20m) high to the north and 4 courses (approximately 0.28m) high to the south (Fig. 4). The elevation has primary bracing, but no mid-rail.

Roof

3.11 This is a clasped purlin roof with raking queen struts. Diagonal braces rising to the west are present in all but the north elevation of Bay 1. The tie beam appears to be of elm, and has chisel cut carpenters' assembly marks on the northern end.

Lean-to

3.12 This is a three-sided, flint built structure, with the north elevation remaining open (Figs. 5 & 6). The upper part of the rear wall may have been the work of Mr. Edwards at the turn of the 20th century (T. Doig, pers.comm.). There is a door at the northern end of the west elevation, which suggests that the building may once have been enclosed.

3.13 The interior is subdivided by a low, 0.23m wide brick wall made of fairly modern Cambridge White bricks (Fig. 6). The bricks measure 0.23m x 0.10m x 0.07m and are set in cement mortar. The western half appears to have had a ceiling as the joists are still extant.

3.14 A drain lies 1.28m from the south wall and 2.10m from the east wall. This feeds into a gully, which was partly revealed during the ground reduction, that apparently runs from the cart pond to the High Street.

3.15 Two brick culverts were revealed during the ground reduction, one on the east and the other on the west elevation (see below).

4. Fieldwork

Ground reduction

4.1 The ground reduction was undertaken with a JCB mini-digger with a 1.0m toothless bucket (Fig. 5).

4.2 The interior of the barn was reduced by between 0.25m at the north end and 0.75m at the south. The floor surface was formed from sand, soil and general debris and was approximately 0.17m deep at the north-eastern end of the barn. A cinder layer measuring approximately 0.01m deep was revealed, below which was a chalk floor. This lay above brown silty clay (10YR 4/3) with chalk and charcoal flecks and occasional stones <0.40mm.

4.3 After the concrete floor surface of the lean-to had been removed, the interior was reduced between approximately 0.35m at the eastern end and 0.40m at the western end. Two chalk layers sandwiching a 0.08m deep layer of cinders layer were revealed. The upper chalk floor was between 0.10m and 0.18m deep, and the lower chalk floor was approximately 0.12m deep. This lay above dark yellowish-brown (10YR 4/4) clay. The groundworkers reported that quantities of coal fragments had been observed during the removal of the concrete. These lay between the chalk floor and the concrete.

4.4 During the ground reduction a glazed pipe set into a brick culvert was revealed against the east wall, approximately 0.47m from the south elevation (Fig. 6). Another culvert was revealed approximately 2.90m north of the south-west corner of the lean-to. This was made of local red brick set in lime mortar and measured in excess of 0.45m in width. The line of the gully was also revealed during the ground reduction.

Footings trenches

4.5 The footings trenches were dug by a JCB mini-digger with a 0.45m toothed bucket.

4.6 The footings trench for a garden wall measured 12.0m in length, 0.50m in width and between 0.60m and 1.50m in depth (Figs. 5 & 6).

- The remains of a culvert made of locally produced red brick set in lime mortar were revealed approximately 1.0m north of the boundary fence and 0.30m below the ground surface. Below the brick culvert, at a depth of approximately 1.40m was a modern drain.

- Some masonry rubble was apparent 9.20m south of the northern end of the trench in the west facing section. This lay immediately below the topsoil and extended as far as the culvert.

- A chalk layer approximately 0.03m deep, 0.80m long and 0.45m below the present ground was revealed 2.90m north of the fence. This lay immediately above the clay natural, and below several diverse deposits. Above the chalk was a layer of gravelly soil, approximately 0.09m deep, which lay below a similar depth of cobbles. Above the cobbles was a 0.08m deep layer of brick fragments, which lay below a layer of gravel measuring 0.14m in depth. This was capped by topsoil.

4.7 The footings trenches for the lean-to extension measured 0.45min width and approximately 0.90m in depth (Figs. 5 & 6).

- The west facing trench edge revealed a chalk layer approximately 0.07m deep, which extended 0.60m north of the lean-to.

- Intermittent patches of similar material were also present in the south and east facing trench edges.

- In addition, chalk and masonry rubble was present in the east facing trench edge. This area of the footings appeared to be more disturbed than elsewhere.

Drainage Trenches

4.8 Trench 1 led from the garden wall trench to the corner of the barn. It measured 7.75m in length, 0.45m in width and 1.20m in depth (Figs. 5 & 6).

- A 0.20m deep layer of chalk was present in both sections. There was a 2.30m wide break in this layer 5.30m north west of the junction with the garden wall trench in the north east facing section. The break was also apparent in the south west facing section approximately 4.80m north west of the junction and measured 3.30m.

- Above the chalk layer in the northeast facing section was a layer of rubble and cobbles measuring 0.30m in depth.

- A layer of mid-brown silty clay measuring between 0.10m and 0.20m in depth was present below the chalk and above the clay natural.

4.9 Trench 2 measured 6.86m in length, 0.45m in width and 1.20m in depth (Figs. 5 & 6). This ran parallel with the barn and ended at the eastern footings trench for the extension to the lean-to.

- The chalk layer was present in both sections, below which was a layer of rubble and cobbles, approximately 0.20m deep. This layer was confined to the area in front of the barn entrance.

4.10 Trench 3 ran from the northwest corner of lean-to footings to the yard entrance, approximately 1.15m south of the neighbouring barn (Figs. 5 & 6). It measured 5.30m in length, 0.45m in width and 0.55m in depth. No archaeology was observed.

4.11 Trench 4 ran from the yard entrance to Church Lane (Figs. 5 & 6). It measured approximately 7.60m in length, 0.45m in width and 0.67m in depth.

- A layer of brick fragments measuring approximately 0.10m in depth was observed immediately below the topsoil and above the clay. The bricks appeared to have been made locally, and were very abraded.

5. Discussion & Conclusion

5.1 The earliest record of the barn is in the sale particulars of Thomas Cockett dated 1814. As the barn does not appear in the Inclosure Map of 1808 (Fig. 2a), it would appear from the historic record that the barn was built at some time between 1808 and 1814, on land that had been recorded as belonging to 78 High Street in the Inclosure Awards.

5.2 Although the present barn is not shown on the Inclosure map, the northern part of the site consisted of a range of buildings which are recorded as having burnt down in 1864 (T. Doig, pers. comm.). No archaeological evidence for these buildings was observed in the groundworks. It could be suggested that the cinder layers may be evidence for this fire but for the fact that they were only present in lean-to and the barn and not in the trenches.

5.3 The Ordnance Survey plans of 1878 and 1898 (Figs. 2b & 3a) depict the lean-to as an enclosed building and also show that there was a shallower bay to the east of the barn and a free-standing building, orientated north-south, to the east of this. The lean-to may be the stables and the free-standing building could represent the woodhouse mentioned in the sales particulars. Both the additional bay and the building had been demolished by 1921 (Fig. 3b).

5.4 The land to the rear of 76 High Street is also depicted as having been subdivided in the late 19th century. In 1878 a boundary line ran from the north-east corner of the barn, parallel with the north elevation of the eastern annexe before turning north before the woodhouse and forming a dog-leg to the northern property boundary. By 1898 this had been changed to run roughly north-south between the barn and the woodhouse. An enclosed area had also been created by then, which encompassed the lean-to and the land to the west of it. All of the land to the rear of the property had been unified by 1921.

5.5 Although no evidence for the eastern annexe to the barn was observed in either the groundworks or the barn itself, there was some indication of the presence of the free-standing structure in the form of masonry remains in the footings trench for the garden wall.

5.6 The groundworks also revealed some of the former yard surfaces (Fig. 6). The cobbled areas noted in front of the barn entrance and its now-demolished eastern annexe are doubtless just that. The chalk layer, which lay below and extended beyond this, is possibly an earlier yard surface.

5.7 The break in the chalk and cobbled surfaces may have been due to the construction of a wall on the line of the boundary between the barn and the woodhouse shown on the 1898 plan.

5.8 The line of the culvert between the cart pond and the High Street was seen to enter the property at the western end of the lean-to. It then cut diagonally through the building to the west elevation of the barn, from which point it appears to run parallel with the southern property boundary. The brickwork suggests a 19th century date for the culvert itself, although a glazed pipe was later inserted into it.

5.9 As the land by the cart pond must have seen fairly heavy traffic, the need to consolidate the ground can well be understood. This was possibly the function of the locally produced brick pieces, which may either have come from a demolished building, or have been laid as reject bricks.

Conclusion

5.10 The land to the rear of 76 High Street appears to have been subject to a number of changes to both structures and subdivisions between the early 19th century and 1921.

5.11 The barn was built in the early 19 th century and was at one time part of a slaughterhouse complex, with the lean-to being used as a pig-pen and the house as a butcher's shop (T. Doig, pers.comm.). Whether the eastern annexe and the free-standing building were constructed at the same time is unclear.

5.12 Although the eastern annexe of the barn appears on the 1898 Ordnance Survey plan as being an integral part of the barn, there is no evidence for this in the existing building. Indeed, the sub-division of the land as shown on the 1878 Ordnance Survey plan suggests that the eastern range lay in the gardens of 76 High Street, whereas the barn and the lean-to were beyond the boundary and may have been leased out. By 1898, the boundary had been altered to encompass the eastern annexe, which may suggest a change of use and/or ownership.

5.13 The demolition of the annexe as well as the possible woodhouse, and the unification of the subdivided land in the early 20 th century, suggests further changes in use. It is possible that by this time the slaughterhouse complex was no longer in use, and the site had become a private residence.

6. Schedule of Site Visits

Date	Staff	Hours	Comments
06/01/03	KS	4	Record barn
07/01/03	DK& KS	8	Record barn
09/01/03	KS	4	Monitor ground reduction
16/01/03	KS	3	Inspect groundworks
17/01/03	KS	1	Inspect drainage trenches
19/03/03	KS	2	Inspect drainage trench

7. Bibliography

Armour, N & Doig, T. 1998. *Barkway First School* Heritage Network report no. 37

Doig, T. 1998. Barkway Market Place and School *Hertfordshire's Past* Issue 43/44

Hillelson, D. 1999. *Brewery House, Barkway* Heritage Network report no. 79

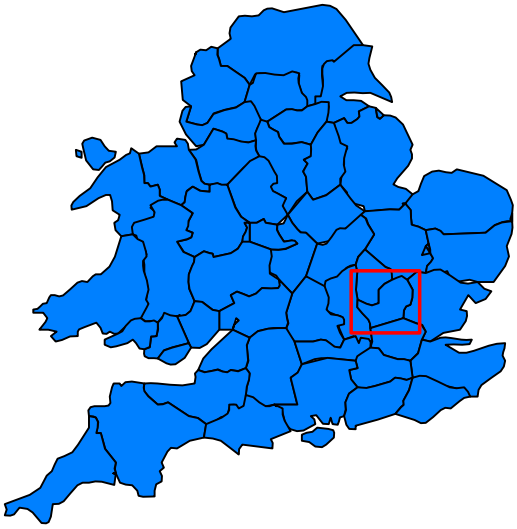
Turner, C., Doig, T. & Hillelson, D. 1998. *71 High St.* Barkway Heritage Network report no. 38

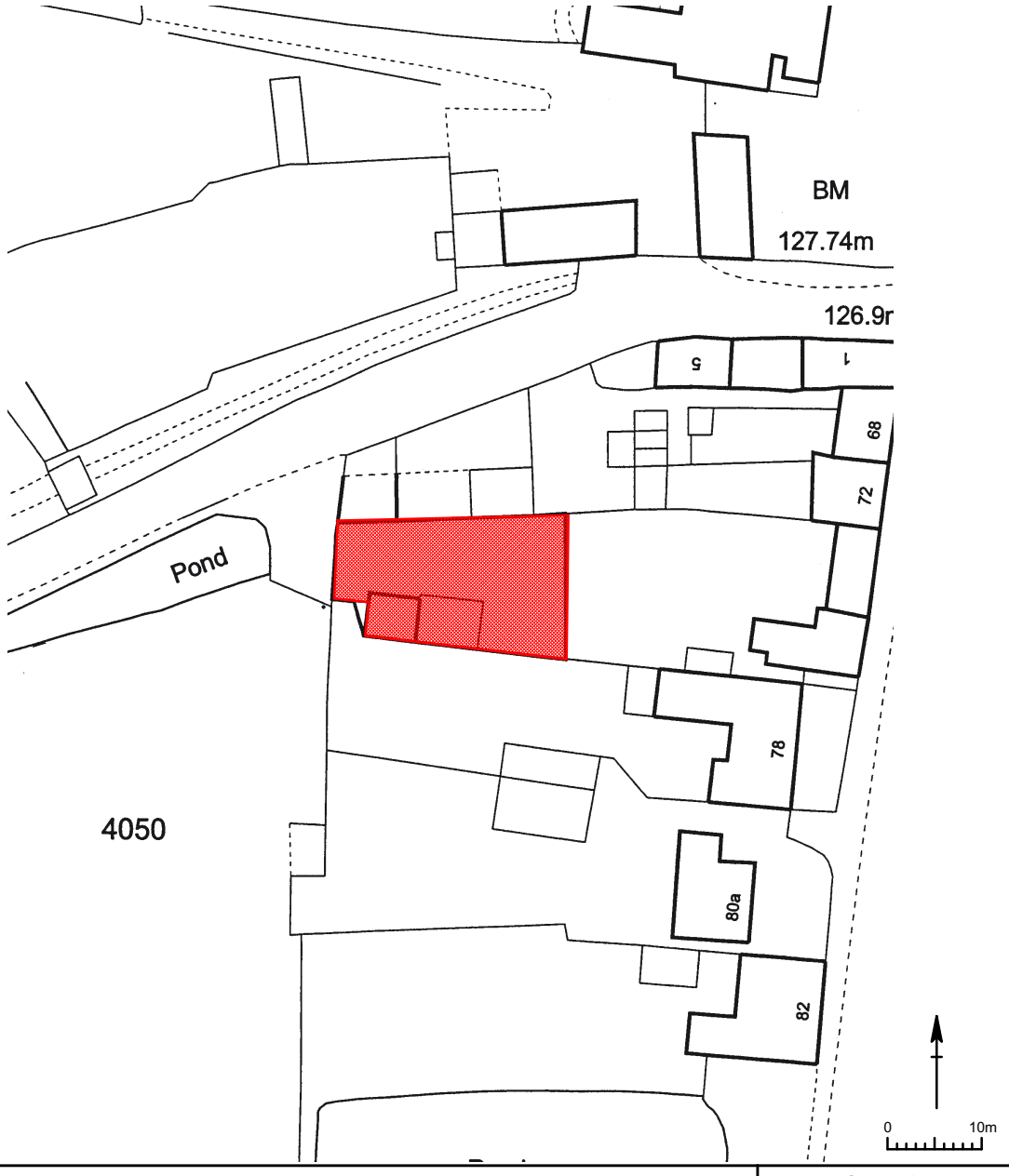
8. Illustrations

Figure 1 ..... Site location
Figure 2a..... Extract from Inclosure Award (1808)
Figure 2b ..... 1st edition Ordnance Survey Plan (1878)
Figure 3a..... 2nd edition Ordnance Survey Plan (1898)
Figure 3b ..... Ordnance Survey Plan (1921)
Figure 4 ..... Elevations
Figure 5 ..... Trench location
Figure 6 ..... Archaeological features
Figure 7 ..... Sections

Plate 1..... North elevation of the barn
Plate 2..... East elevation of the barn
Plate 3..... North elevation of the barn and lean-to
Plate 4..... North elevation of the lean-to
Plate 5..... Detail of tie-beam

THE HERITAGE NETWORK LTD	76 High Street, Barkway	HN405





Site Location

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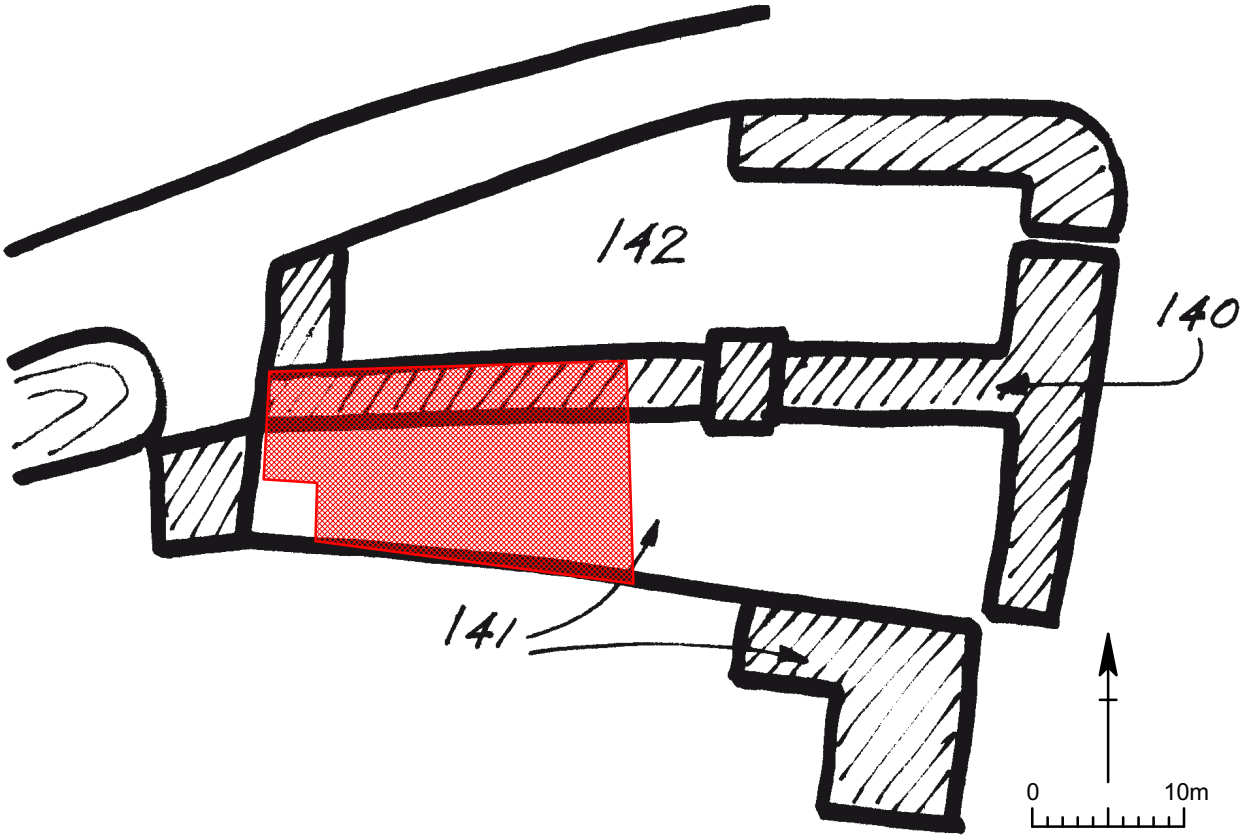
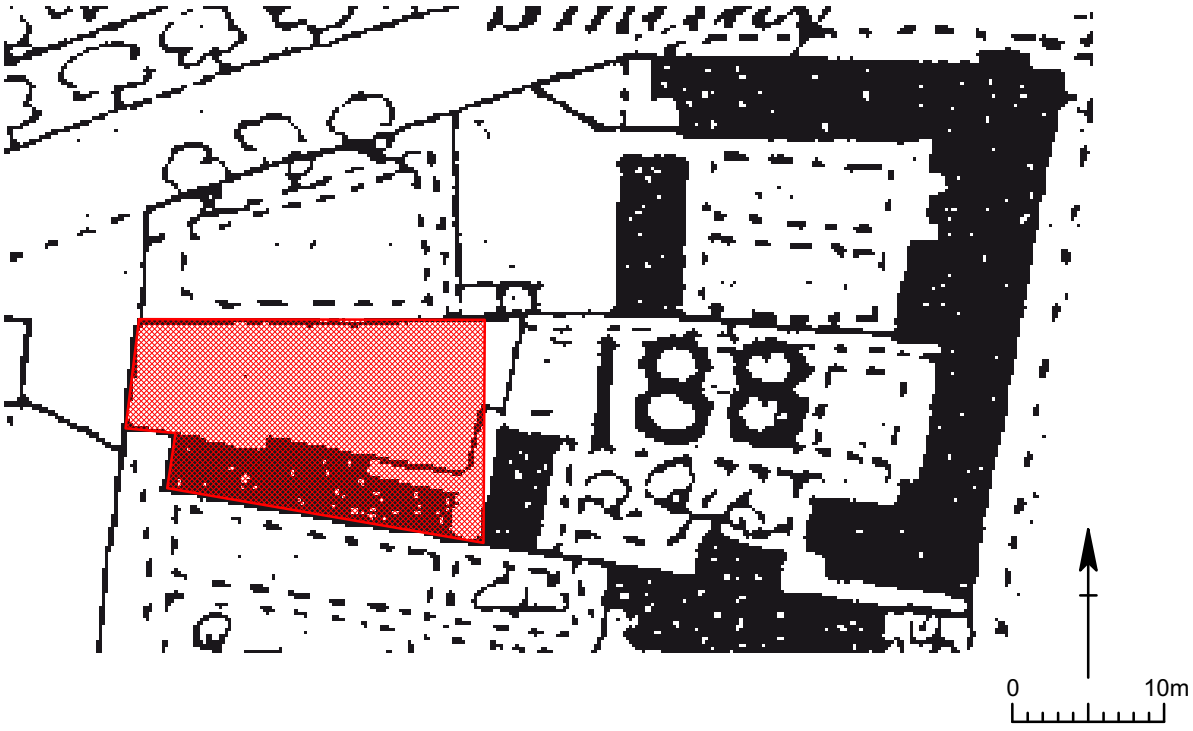
Scale 1:750

Figure 1

THE HERITAGE NETWORK LTD	76 High Street, Barkway	HN405

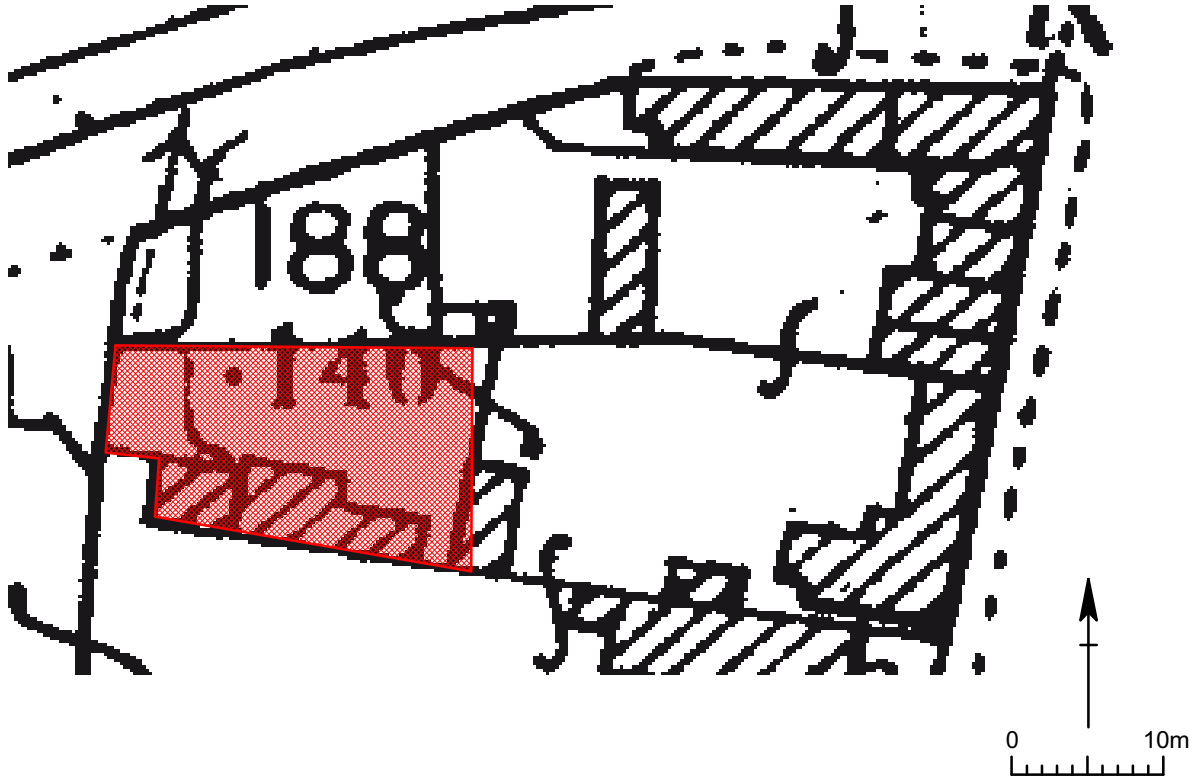


Extract from Inclosure Award (1808) *(Courtesy of Tom Doig)*	Scale 1:500
	Figure 2a

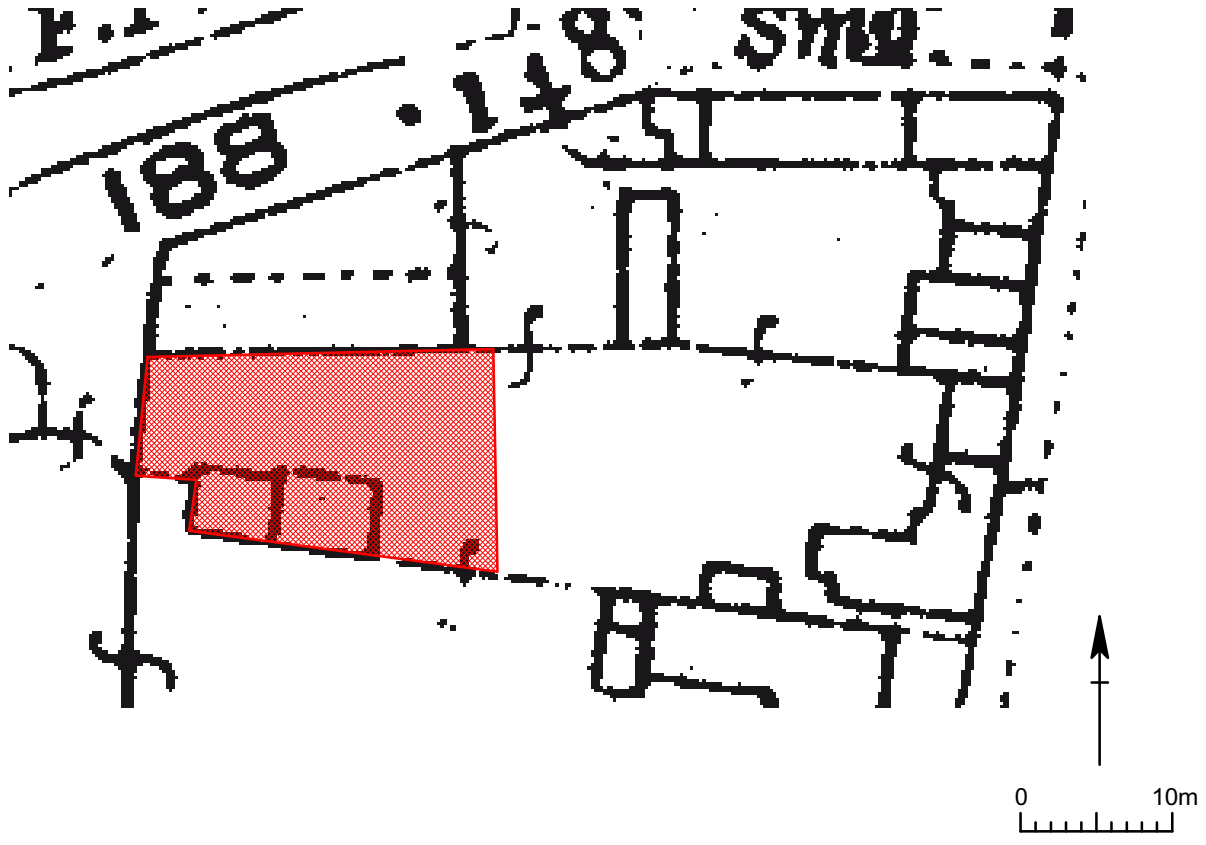


1st edition Ordnance Survey Plan (1878)	Scale 1:500
	Figure 2b

THE HERITAGE NETWORK LTD	76 High Street, Barkway	HN405



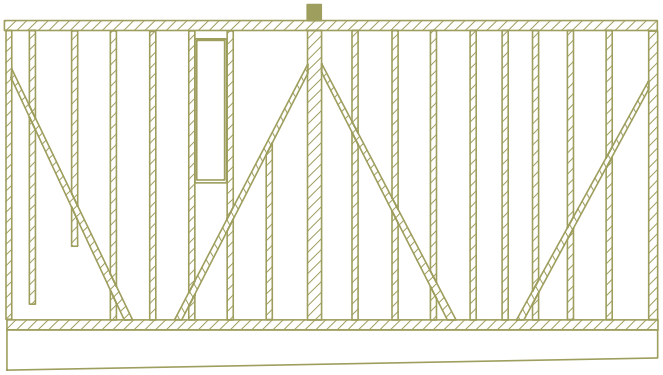
2nd edition Ordnance Survey Plan (1898)	Scale 1:500
	Figure 3a



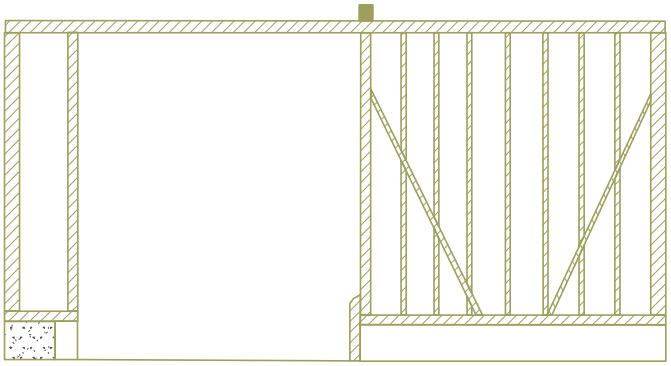
Ordnance Survey Plan (1921)	Scale 1:500
	Figure 3b

THE HERITAGE NETWORK LTD	76 High Street, Barkway	HN405

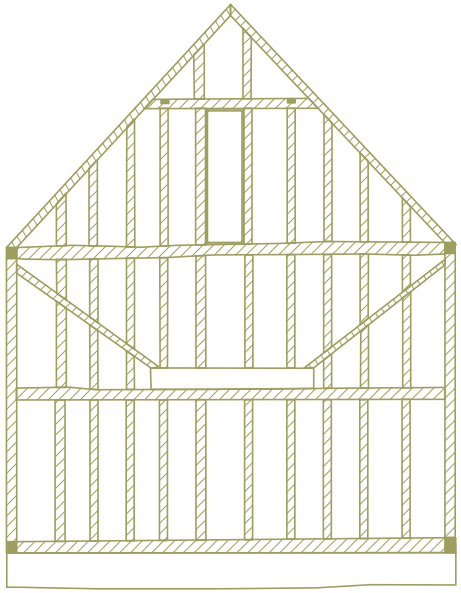
South elevation



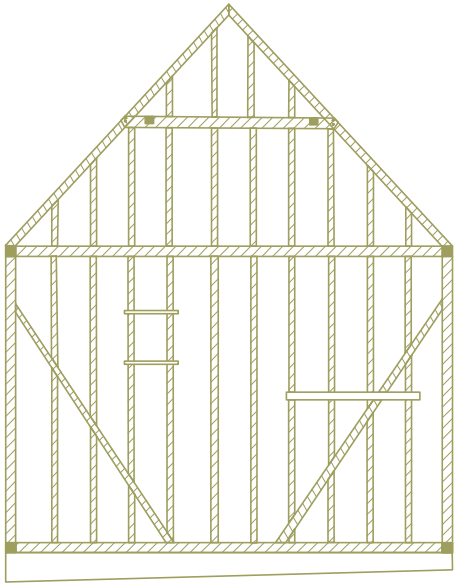
North elevation



East elevation



West elevation



Concrete

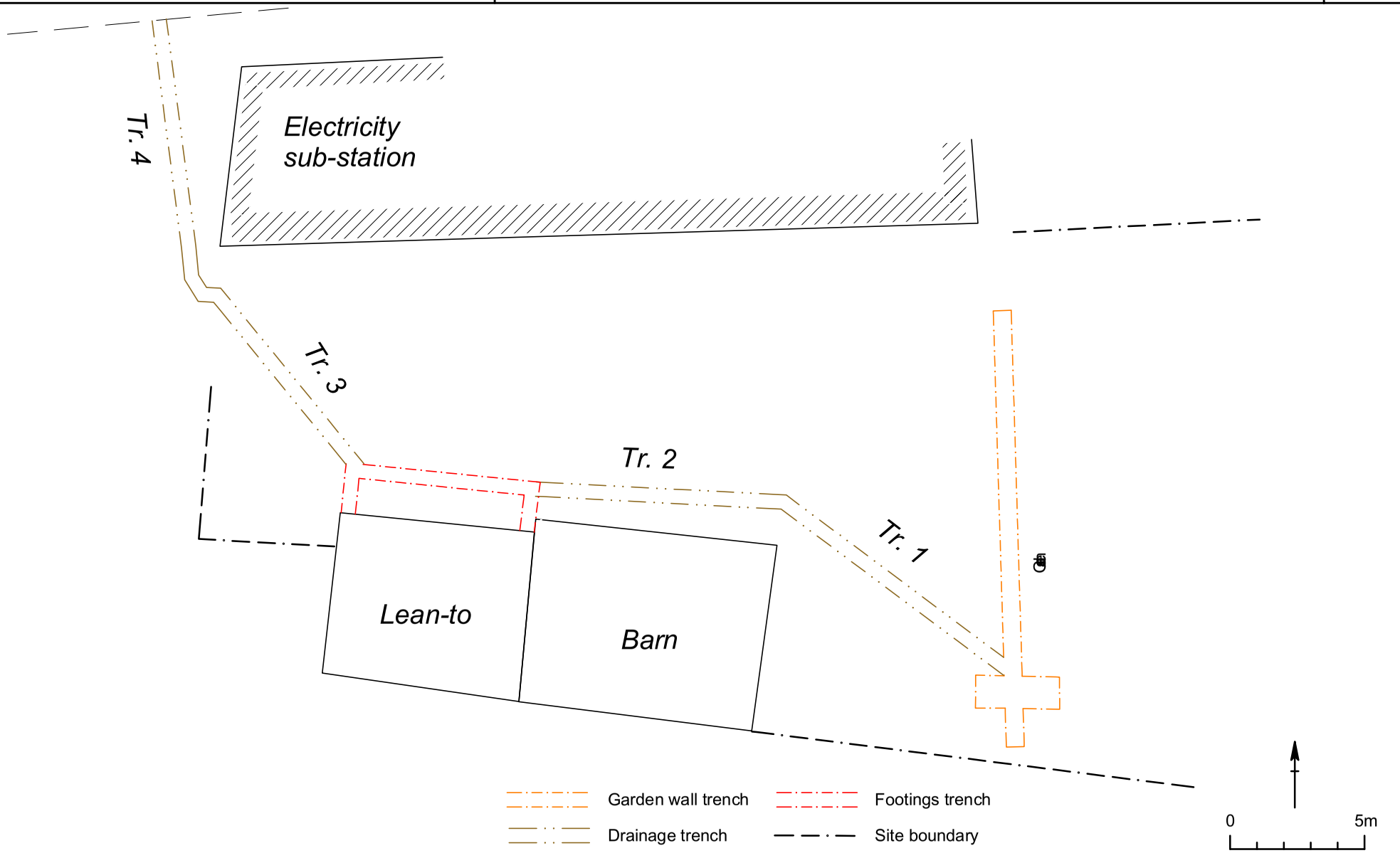
0 1m

Interior elevations

Scale 1:75

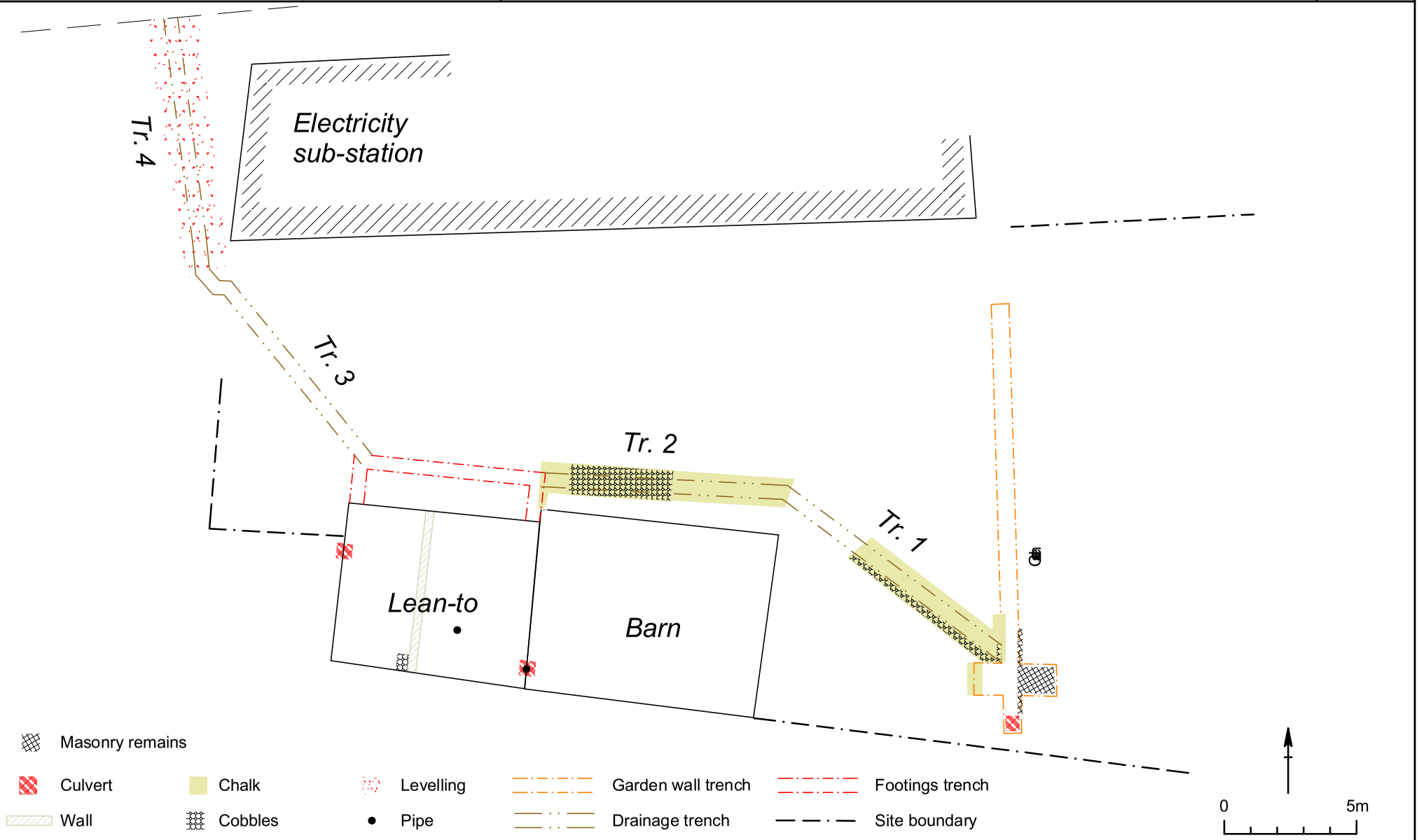
Figure 4

THE HERITAGE NETWORK LTD	76 High St. Barkway	HN405



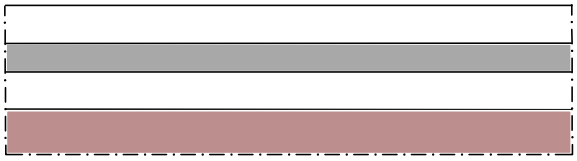
Site layout	Scale 1:150
	Figure 5

THE HERITAGE NETWORK LTD	76 High St. Barkway	HN405

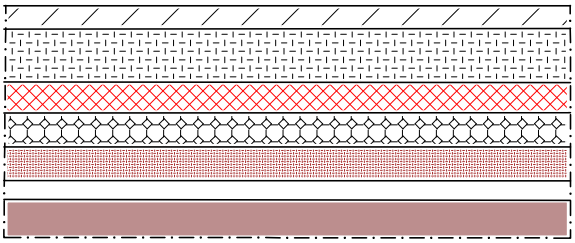


Archaeological features	Scale 1:150
	Figure 6

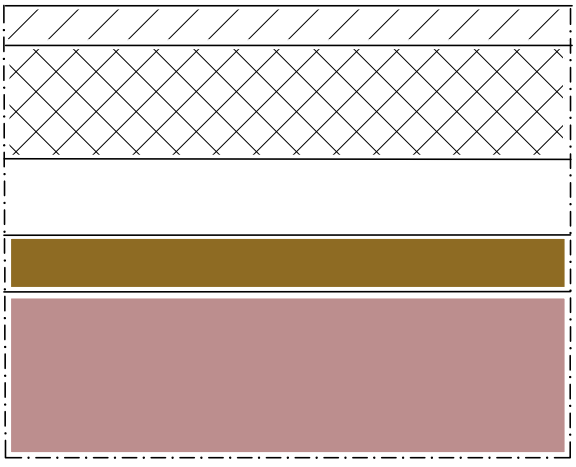
Schematic east facing section of the north-east corner of the lean-to



Schematic east facing section of the garden wall trench



Schematic north-east facing section of the garden wall trench



Sections

Scale 1:20

Figure 7

North elevation of the barn Plate 1

East elevation of the barn Plate 2

North elevation of the barn & lean-to Plate 3

North elevation of the lean-to Plate 4

Detail of the tie-beam Plate 5