

Marches Archaeology

**Bengrove Farm
Sandhurst
Gloucestershire**

**A report on a
programme of archaeological works**

April 2004

Marches Archaeology Series 337

This report is produced by

Marches Archaeology

**Marches House
6 High Street
Clun
Shropshire
SY7 8JB**

Tel:- 01588 640976

Fax:- 01588 640796

e-mail:- marches@archaeology.kc3.co.uk

For:-

**G. Warren and Sons
Bengrove Farm
Sandhurst
Gloucestershire
GL2 9NU**

Marches Archaeology is the trading name of Marches Archaeology Limited (Registered in England and Wales: 4095678). The directors are Nic Appleton-Fox and Richard Stone, who have worked in close association since 1991. All principal members of staff are members of the Institute of Field Archaeologists and abide by its code of practice and other regulations. *Marches Archaeology* provides a full range of archaeological services to a client base of architects, local authorities, national bodies and private individuals. Our standard services include; excavation, watching briefs, building survey, building analysis, planning advice, landscape survey, photographic recording and historical research. Specialist consultants are available to provide environmental, geophysical and finds advice and analysis.

VAT Reg. No. 656 0767 15

**Bengrove Farm
Sandhurst
Gloucestershire**

**A report on a programme
of archaeological works**

NGR: SO 8324 2248

**Report by
Jo Wainwright**

Contents

	<i>Summary</i>	2
1	Introduction	2
2	Scope and aims	2
3	Methodology	3
4	Site description	4
5	The programme of works	4
6	Discussion	5
7	Acknowledgements	6
8	References	6
9	Archive	6

Figures

List of illustrations

- Fig. 1 Location of site
- Fig. 2 Location of the areas of excavation seen

April 2004

Marches Archaeology Series 337

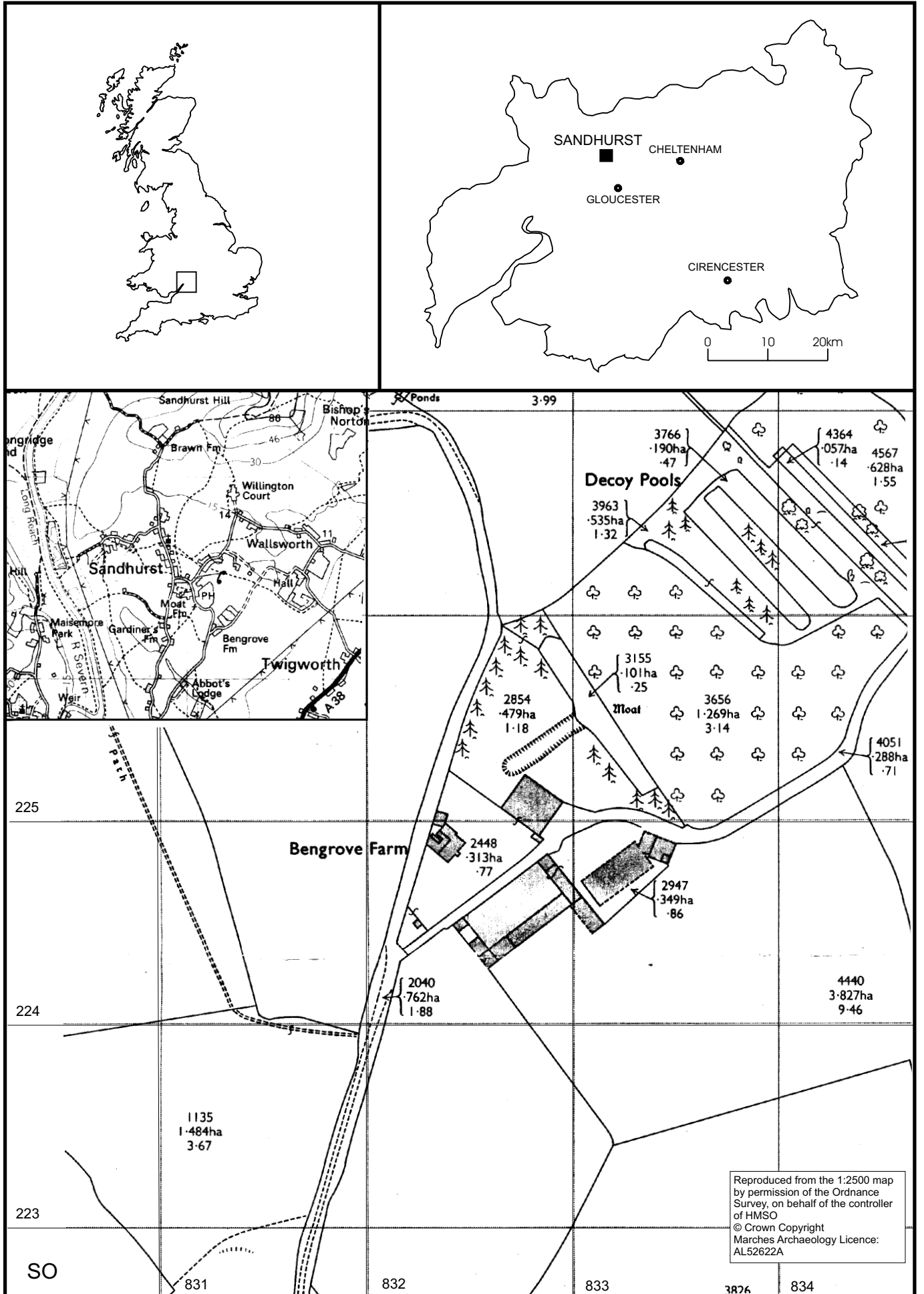


Fig. 1: Location of site

**Bengrove Farm
Sandhurst
Gloucestershire**

NGR: SO 8324 2248

**A report on a programme
of archaeological works**

Summary

A programme of archaeological works at Bengrove Farm, Sandhurst, Gloucestershire revealed no features or deposits dating earlier than probably the 19th century. The features seen are more than likely to be associated with the farm building complex which was erected in the later part of the 19th century. The deposits excavated in areas away from the farm buildings can be interpreted as cultivation soils.

1 Introduction

A planning application has been approved by the local planning authority for permission to insert a track and convert barns to residential use. The site is situated at NGR: SO 8324 2248 (Fig. 1).

A desk-based assessment carried out by Marches Archaeology identified a moated site immediately to the north of the site (Stone, 2000).

In March 2003 the Local Planning Authority's Archaeological Advisor produced a 'Brief for a programme of archaeological recording'. Since that date there have been alterations to the scheme. During a telephone conversation with the Local Planning Authority's Archaeological Advisor it was decided that the earlier Brief would suffice for this scheme. G. Warren and Sons (the client) commissioned Marches Archaeology to provide the archaeological services detailed in the Brief.

2 Scope and aims

The scope of the project was defined as:

- Archaeological monitoring of all ground and below ground works forming part of the development.
- A stratigraphic record of deposits exposed by groundworks was to be made.
- A record of the extent and depth of groundworks was to be made.
- A record of all finds and environmental material recovered was to be made.

- If significant archaeology was observed the applicant should have allowed a period of up to but not exceeding five days uninterrupted access to record archaeological deposits.
- Negative evidence was also to be reported and the implications considered.

The purpose of an archaeological watching brief is defined by the Institute of Field Archaeologists as:

‘to allow, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established (or established with sufficient accuracy) in advance of development or other potentially disruptive works’

and:

‘to provide an opportunity, if needed, for the watching archaeologist to signal to all interested parties, before the destruction of the material in question, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support a treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard’.

3 Methodology

Documentary research

No documentary study was undertaken for this project as a desk-based assessment of the site was carried out as part of an earlier Brief (Stone, 2000).

Fieldwork

Observations and appropriate recording were initially undertaken of the excavation of a service trench (Area 1) in the area to the north and east of the moat and the interior of Units 2 and 3 were stripped under supervision to the maximum impact level of 150mm (Area 2) (Fig. 2). These excavations were carried out on 12th May 2003. No significant archaeological features or deposits were encountered. It was agreed between the Local Planning Authority’s Archaeological Advisor, Marches Archaeology and the client that monitoring of the remaining work would be restricted to areas close to the moat which had more archaeological potential. Consequently two further areas of excavation were observed on 19th February 2004 (Area 3) and on 26th March 2004 (Area 4).

The recording system included written, drawn and photographic data. The primary written record was by means of site notes, accompanied by sketches. Context numbers were allocated and trench record sheets completed. Plans of significant data were made. The photographic record was made using black and white negative and colour transparency film.

Office work

On completion of fieldwork a site archive was prepared. The written, drawn and photographic data was catalogued and cross-referenced and a summary produced.

4 Site description by *Richard Stone*

The site lies south and east of a wide sweeping bend in the River Severn, one kilometre south-south-east of the parish church of Sandhurst (Fig. 1). It consists of an isolated farm complex, situated on the eastern side of Base Lane in low-lying open mixed arable and pasture land 1.5km east of the River Severn and 3.5km north of the centre of Gloucester.

Geologically, the land is split. Most of the area around Bengrove Farm is Jurassic Blue Lias, with alluvium to the south-east. The bulk of the settlement of Sandhurst, however, is Quaternary, being of the Third Terrace of the River Severn (BGS, 1988). This land stretches as a narrow band throughout the whole of the proposed development area, just enclosing the moat to the north and the courtyard of buildings to the south. The overlying soils are imperfectly drained gleyed brown clayey soils over calcareous clay of the Evesham Series of the Lias Vale (OS, 1973).

Bengrove itself was once moated, the moat lying at the north-east of the present farm complex. The north-east arm of the moat survives (SMR: 4464), enlarged as a pond and the north-west arm is still visible as a slight depression. Aerial photographs taken by the RAF confirm this but add no further substantive information. The surviving arm of the moat was cleaned about six years ago with a drag line. The spoil was thrown up into the field to the north, with a small amount in the field to the south (Mr Warren, *pers comm*). About 100m to the north-east of the moat is a decoy pool (SMR: 13988).

The site of the proposed development lies south of the moated area, though the north-eastern part of the proposed development could be within the moated area.

The development area consists of farm buildings - the main farmhouse being to the north-west, across a private roadway. The farm buildings are arranged in a courtyard shape with an extension at the east and a single outlying building to the north.

To the west of the private drive is a three bay three storey brick farmhouse with rear extensions of more than one period. The frontage is rendered with pilasters between the bays and an open porch. The farmhouse is Listed Grade II.

5 The programme of works (Fig. 2)

Area 1

This service trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 900mm. The natural clays were seen at about 450mm below the present ground surface [103]. Above the clays was a 300mm thick cultivation soil [102]. This was a dark grey brown sandy clay silt with frequent charcoal and produced finds dating from the 19th century. Overlying this was the topsoil [101], which was about 150mm thick. The topsoil was the same matrix as [102] except it contained brick fragments.

Area 2

The earliest layer excavated was a mixed deposit of grey brown sandy clay silt with frequent brick fragments, mortar and charcoal [202]. This was not fully excavated, was a minimum 100mm thick and produced finds from the second half of the 19th century. Above this was the internal brick floor of the building.

Area 3

The natural clays [303] were seen at about 900mm below the present ground surface in the south of Area 3. These were overlain in the north by bands and pockets of natural sands and clays [302]. Two features were seen cutting [302]. Towards the north of the trench a stone lined drain [307] ran across the area in a south-west to north-east direction. In the south of the trench a rectangular cut [306], over 1.5 metres deep, contained either diseased pig or sheep burials within a mixture of lime and redeposited natural [305].

Above [305] was a humic sandy clay silt topsoil which was about 350mm thick. In the north of the trench this lensed out and had been replaced with the make-up for a yard surface and in places the foundations of a recently demolished barn [304].

Open trench excavations that had taken place in the preceding months were also recorded at this time. Only the topsoil and the natural clays and sands were observed in these trenches. A brick lined bottle well was visible to the south of Unit 2. It is understood that this will be preserved and capped.

Area 4

The natural clays [406] were seen about 700mm below the present ground surface. Overlying this in the southern end of the trench was the rubble make-up [404] of a surface or possibly a footing [402]. This consisted of a single course of rough hewn hard siltstone about 150mm thick. The feature was at least 750mm wide and about 4 metres long. A rotted sandy mortar bonded the blocks together. To the north of this was a deposit of loose brick rubble in a brown clay loam [403] presumably dumped to build up the area to the north of [402]. In the northern end of the area was a garden soil [405]. This was a dark brown clay loam with occasional small stones and charcoal flecks. To the south of the hedge line was the tarmac and make-up of the current road surface [401].

6 Discussion

No features or deposits dated to earlier than the 19th century were excavated on the site. The feature [402] seen in Area 4 is more than likely a flagged road or yard surface. It is possible that it is the footing of a wall running roughly north to south perhaps the boundary shown on the 1801 Map. However, this seems unlikely due to the substantial width of this feature.

The soil sequence seen in the south, east and far north of the site is of an agricultural nature. In other areas of the site the natural is directly underneath the make-up for yard surfaces or has been cut into by the foundations of 19th or 20th century buildings.

The brick lined bottle well seen to the south of Unit 2 and the stone lined drain seen in Area 3 were constructed with the courtyard complex in the second half of the 19th century. The animal burials excavated in Area 3 date to the 19th century or early 20th century.

None of the excavations encroached on the moated site. The paucity of medieval features and deposits in the excavated area suggests that either none existed here or, less likely, that 19th century building work and modern cultivation has destroyed the evidence.

7 Acknowledgements

Thanks to Deb Deyes and Andrew Warren for their co-operation and interest in the project.

8 References

Maps

BGS, 1988, England and Wales: Sheet 216 – Tewkesbury, British Geological Survey 1:50,000

OS, 1973, Soil Survey of England and Wales: Sheet SO82, Ordnance Survey 1:25,000

Unpublished references

Stone, R, 2000, *Bengrove Farm, Sandhurst, Gloucestershire: A report on a desk-based assessment*, Marches Archaeology Series 123

9 Archive

The site code is BFS04A. The archive consists of:

- 4 trench recording sheets
- 1 field drawing
- 1 sheet of site diary and notes
- 4 photo record sheets
- 2 films of black and white photographic negatives
- 1 film of colour photographic transparencies

The archive is currently held by Marches Archaeology awaiting transfer to the relevant repository.

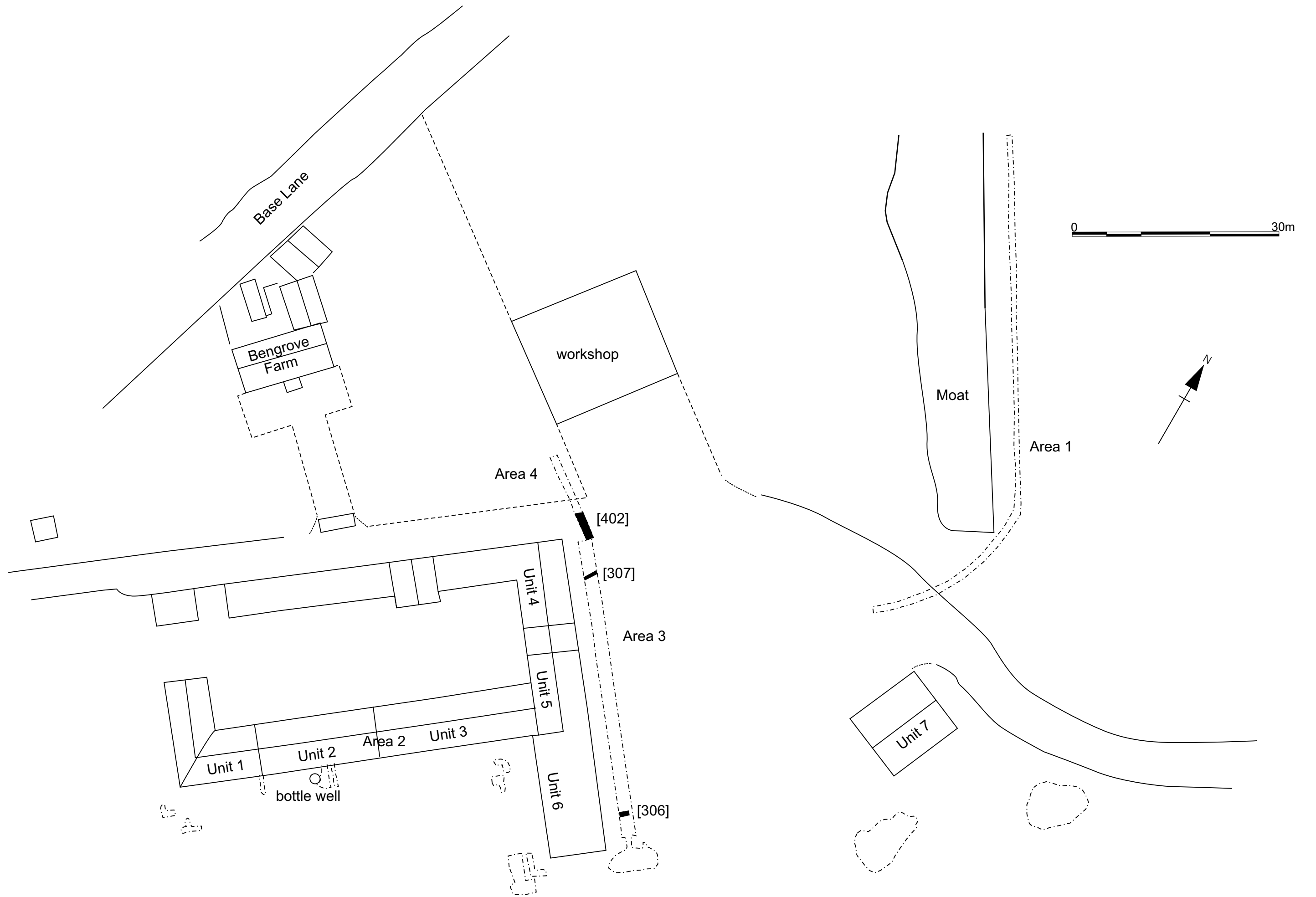


Fig. 2 Location of the areas of excavation seen