

# **The Shippen, Beacon Road, St Agnes, Cornwall – Archaeological Watching Brief**

**Planning Reference: PA13/06857**

**Reports4Planning**

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Archaeological Watching Brief**

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## Non-technical Summary

*ECUS Ltd were commissioned by Reports4Planning to carry out an archaeological watching brief during groundworks at The Shippen, Beacon Road, St Agnes, Cornwall (**Figure 1**) centred on National Grid Reference 171378 50069 (hereafter 'the Site'). Planning permission (PA13/0657) has been gained from Cornwall Council for the conversion of a small stone former shippen into a studio unit with a small extension for a bathroom at its northern end.*

*The watching brief was undertaken in two stages watching brief and comprised the photographic recording of the extant shippen prior to conversion and monitoring of all intrusive ground works. A rectangular area measuring 5.20 m by 4 m for the proposed extension at the northern end of the shippen, the line of associated drainage and radon sump was continuously monitored. No archaeological features or finds of any period were revealed during the archaeological monitoring.*

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Ecus Ltd were commissioned by Reports4Planning to carry out an archaeological watching brief during groundworks at The Shippen, Beacon Road, St Agnes, Cornwall (**Figure 1**) centred on National Grid Reference 171378 50069 (hereafter 'the Site').

1.1.2 Planning permission (PA13/0657) has been gained from Cornwall Council for the conversion of a small stone barn into a studio unit with a small extension for a bathroom at its northern end. As required as a condition of the planning permission (Condition 7) a programme of archaeological investigation comprising a watching brief was proposed. Condition 7 states:

*No development shall take place within the area to be developed until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological recording based on a written scheme of investigation submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.*

1.1.3 This is to ensure that provision is made to record finds of archaeological interest in accordance with the requirements of Section Achieving Sustainable development and paragraph 128 in the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 and Saved Policy 4T of the Carrick Local Plan 1998.

1.1.4 The work was conducted and undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (Ecus, 2016). The site work was undertaken by Paul White, CMIFA on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2016.

### 1.2 Location, Topography, Geology

1.2.1 The site is located on the eastern side of Beacon Road, 800 m southwest of the centre of St Agnes, Cornwall. The site comprises a small stone built shippen and an area of hard standing set down for agricultural purposes.

1.2.2 The site is flat and the bedrock geology is mapped as Porthtowan Formation, a Mudstone and Sandstone sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 375 to 398 million years ago in the Devonian Period (BGS, 2016).

### 1.3 Archaeological and Historical Background

1.3.1 The Site comprises of a small animal barn, or shippen, that is located within an anciently enclosed landscape to the west of St Agnes town. To the west of the Site are the remains of the post-medieval West Polbreen Tin Mine. Approximately 250 m south of the Site are the remains of an Iron Age or Early Medieval Linear earthwork, known as Bolster Bank. This linear earthworks Curves around the southern edge of St Agnes Beacon which is located northwest of the Site.

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1 Aims and Objectives**

- 2.1.1 It is proposed to undertake a two stage watching brief on the site to comprise the rapid photographic recording of the extant barn to be converted and monitoring of all intrusive ground works.

#### ***Building Recording***

- 2.1.2 The photographic record of the structure is to be undertaken prior to any building works to record the existing structure prior to its conversion. The photographic survey is to be undertaken using 35mm SLR cameras using Ilford HP5 (ISO 400) black and white film. Photographic scales will be used in all photos wherever possible.
- 2.1.3 The film record will be complemented by digital photography taken with a 16 megapixel camera. The recording of the structure will form part of the wider archaeological mitigation strategy of the site.

#### ***Archaeological Monitoring***

- 2.1.4 The aim of the watching brief is to provide information concerning the presence/absence, date, nature and extent of any buried archaeological remains and to investigate and record these within the proposed development area.
- 2.1.5 The fieldwork will consist of the monitoring of groundworks made beneath the present ground surface. This will include the excavation of footings for the extension and any drainage and soakaways.
- 2.1.6 A continuous archaeological presence will be maintained during groundworks undertaken within the area of the watching brief. Excavated material will be visually examined for archaeological material and a metal detector may be used to enhance artefact recovery.

### **2.2 Fieldwork Methodology**

- 2.2.1 Excavation of topsoil and subsoil was undertaken by a mechanical 360 excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket and continuously monitored by an experienced and qualified archaeologist. All excavated areas were cleaned and inspected for archaeological features and finds.
- 2.2.2 Ecus Ltd staff will investigate archaeological remains by excavation and recording commensurate with the scale of work and using Ecus pro forma recording system (based on Museum of London Archaeology Service recording system). Where practical, and without including unreasonable delay to the groundworks programme, excavation will include sampling of features and deposits in order to recover artefacts, ecofacts and dating evidence, and in order to determine stratigraphic relationships. Recording will include written, drawn, and photographic elements as conditions allow.
- 2.2.3 The watching brief was maintained in compliance with the standards outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (CIfA 2014).



- 2.2.4 Photographs were taken of the general site conditions, location of groundwork, details of excavated sections showing alluvial deposits to produce a photographic record consisting of digital images in jpeg format.
- 2.2.5 Strategies for the recovery of artefacts, environment samples and human remains were included in the WSI (ECUS, 2016). No environmental samples were taken and no human remains were encountered.

### 3. Results

#### 3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 This section presents the results from the archaeological watching brief and is broken down into the individual components that were monitored during the works.

#### 3.2 Building Recording

##### *External*

- 3.2.1 The stone barn within the site is single storey structure with a modern concrete apron slab in front of the entrance on the eastern side of the building. The barn measured 6.15 m in length, 4.40 m in width and 2.00 m to the eaves (**Plate 1**).



**Plate 1:** Eastern façade of stone barn. Scales 2 m

- 3.2.2 The walls were 0.55 m thick and were constructed of course stone with concrete patching and some lime mortar. The roof was corrugated iron sheeting held down with iron chains externally at the northern and southern ends. Two stable doors were present in the eastern elevation. The southern door was 1.55 m in height with concrete patching of render above the lintel and modern block work timbers. In front of the southern door was a stone

trough which fitted into the door frame. The northern doorway was 1.94 m from ground level to the lintel with the door being 1.25 m in height. Both doors were constructed of modern wooden planks with modern hinges with roundhead screws.

### ***Internal***

- 3.2.3 The internal dimensions of the barn were 5.00 m in length and 3.20 m in width with no evidence of internal subdivisions. The internal roof structure comprised two A-frame rafters with purlins laid onto frame and nailed in place (**Plate 2**). The beams were built of modern machine cut softwood to 0.10 m by 0.05 m. Half hipped joint with cross beam planks also nailed into place. Rafters were placed on stone corbels. Western rafters measured 90 mm by 165 mm and were machine cut whilst the eastern and northern rafters appeared hand sawn and worked with internal cleft edge.



**Plate 2:** Detail of internal roof structure

### **3.3 Archaeological Monitoring**

- 3.3.1 A rectangular area measuring 5.20 m by 4 m for the proposed extension, line of associated drainage and radon sump was monitored (**Plate 3**). The stratigraphy comprised 0.15 m of dark brown topsoil with frequent sub angular stones overlying an orange sandy silt natural geology with clay patches. Foundations trenches 0.50 m wide and 0.85 m deep were excavated through the natural geology. No archaeological features were observed and no finds recovered.





**Plate 3:** General shot of the monitored area looking west. Scales 2 m

## 4. Conclusion

- 4.1.1 The archaeological watching brief recorded the stone barn present within the site and monitored the excavation of the area of the proposed extension. No archaeological features or finds of any period were revealed during the archaeological monitoring.

## 5. Storage and Curation

### Archive

- 5.1.1 The complete project archive will be prepared and arrangements for the deposition of the Archive on completion of the project will be made in accordance with *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage* (UKIC 1990)
- 5.1.2 The archive is currently held at ECUS Ltd, Eastlands II, London Road, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG21 4AW with project code 8622 and will be deposited with the Royal Cornwall Museum, Truro.
- 5.1.3 An OASIS form (Oasis ID - ecusltd1-264256) has been initiated and a copy is provided in Appendix 2 of this report.

## 6. References

### 6.1 Bibliography

British Geological Survey 2016 *British Geology Viewer*. Available at [mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html](http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html) [accessed 30/09/2016]

The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) 2014. Standard and Guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment.

Ecus 2016 PA/06857 – The shippen, Beacon Road, St Agnes, Cornwall – Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Watching Brief

NPPF 2012, National Planning Policy Framework, Department of Communities and Local Government, London (TSO)

## Appendix 1. OASIS Form

**OASIS ID: ecusltd1-264256**

Project details

Project name The Shippen, Beacon Road, St Agnes, Cornwall -  
Archaeological Watching Brief

Short description of the project ECUS Ltd were commissioned by Reports4Planning to carry out an archaeological watching brief during groundworks at The Shippen, Beacon Road, St Agnes, Cornwall (Figure 1) centred on National Grid Reference 171378 50069 (hereafter 'the Site'). Planning permission (PA13/0657) has been gained from Cornwall Council for the conversion of a small stone barn into a studio unit with a small extension for a bathroom at its northern end. The watching brief was undertaken in two stages watching brief and comprised the rapid photographic recording of the extant barn to be converted and monitoring of all intrusive ground works. A rectangular area measuring 5.20 m by 4 m for the proposed extension and radon sump was continuously monitored. No archaeological features or finds of any period were revealed during the archaeological monitoring. The archaeological watching brief recorded the stone barn present within the site.

Project dates Start: 07-09-2016 End: 07-09-2016

Previous/future work No / Yes

Any associated project reference codes 8622 - Sitecode

Type of project Recording project

Monument type NONE None

Significant Finds NONE None

Investigation type "Field observation","Watching Brief"

PromptPlanning condition

Project location

Country England

Site location CORNWALL CARRICK ST AGNES The Shippen, Beacon  
Road, St Agnes, Cornwall

Postcode TR5 0NJ

Study area 30 Square metres

Site coordinates SW 71375 50065 50.305400660153 -5.211108446982  
50 18 19 N 005 12 39 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation ECUS ltd

Project brief originator Consultant

Project design originator ECUS Ltd

Project director/manager Paul White

Project supervisor Paul White

Type of sponsor/funding body Developer

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No

Digital Archive recipient ADS

Digital Contents "Stratigraphic","Survey"

Digital Media available "Survey","Text"

Paper Archive recipient Royal Cornwall Museum

Paper Contents "Stratigraphic","Survey"


Paper Media available "Diary","Drawing","Map","Notebook  
Excavation',' Research',' General Notes","Photograph","Plan","Report" -

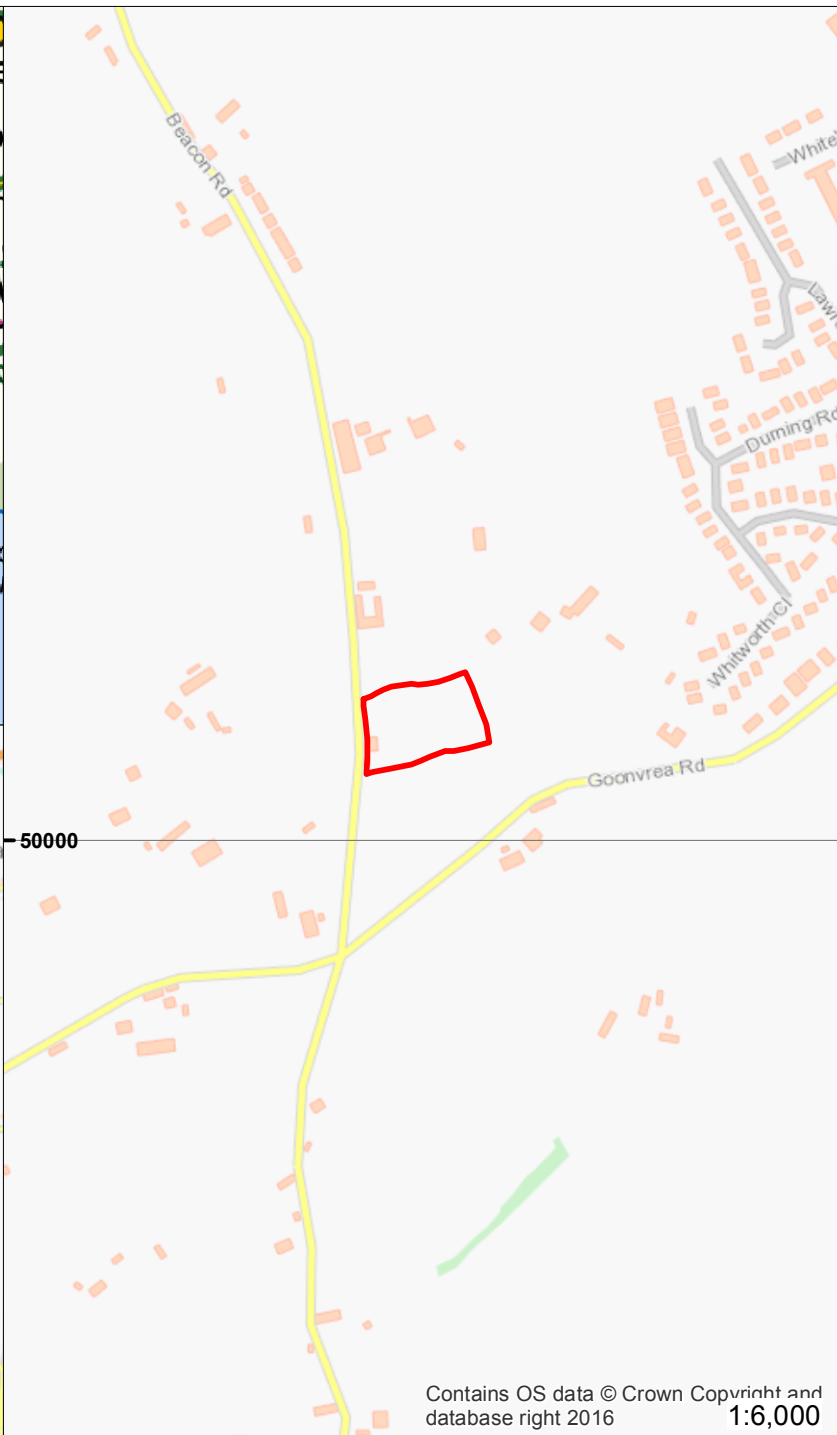
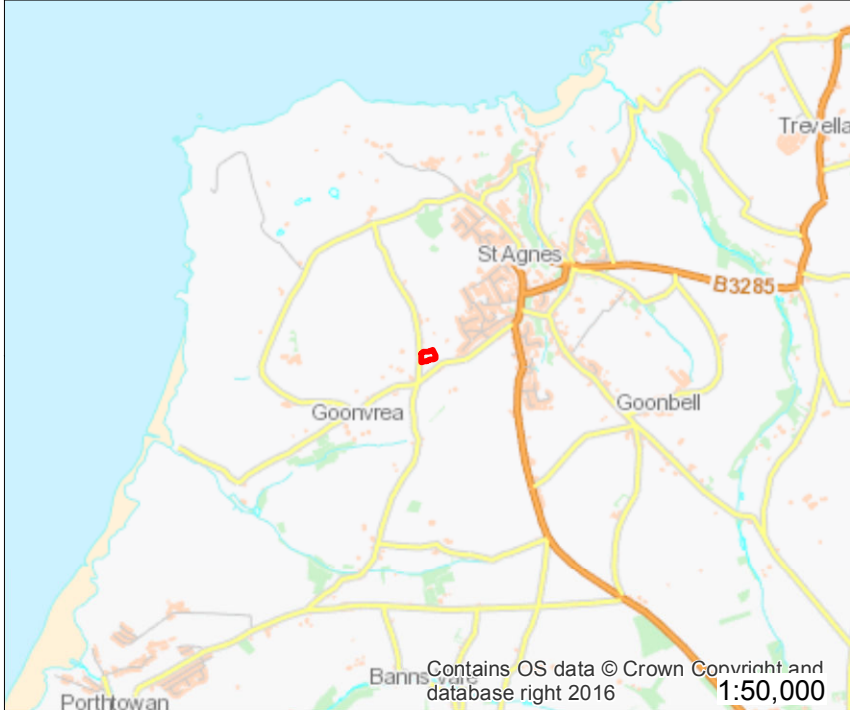
Entered by Daniel Bray (daniel.bray@ecusltd.co.uk)

Entered on 30 September 2016

## Illustrations



 Site Boundary



**Reports4Planning**  
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 Watching Brief

**Figure 1: Site Location**

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 T: 0114 2669292 www.ecusltd.co.uk

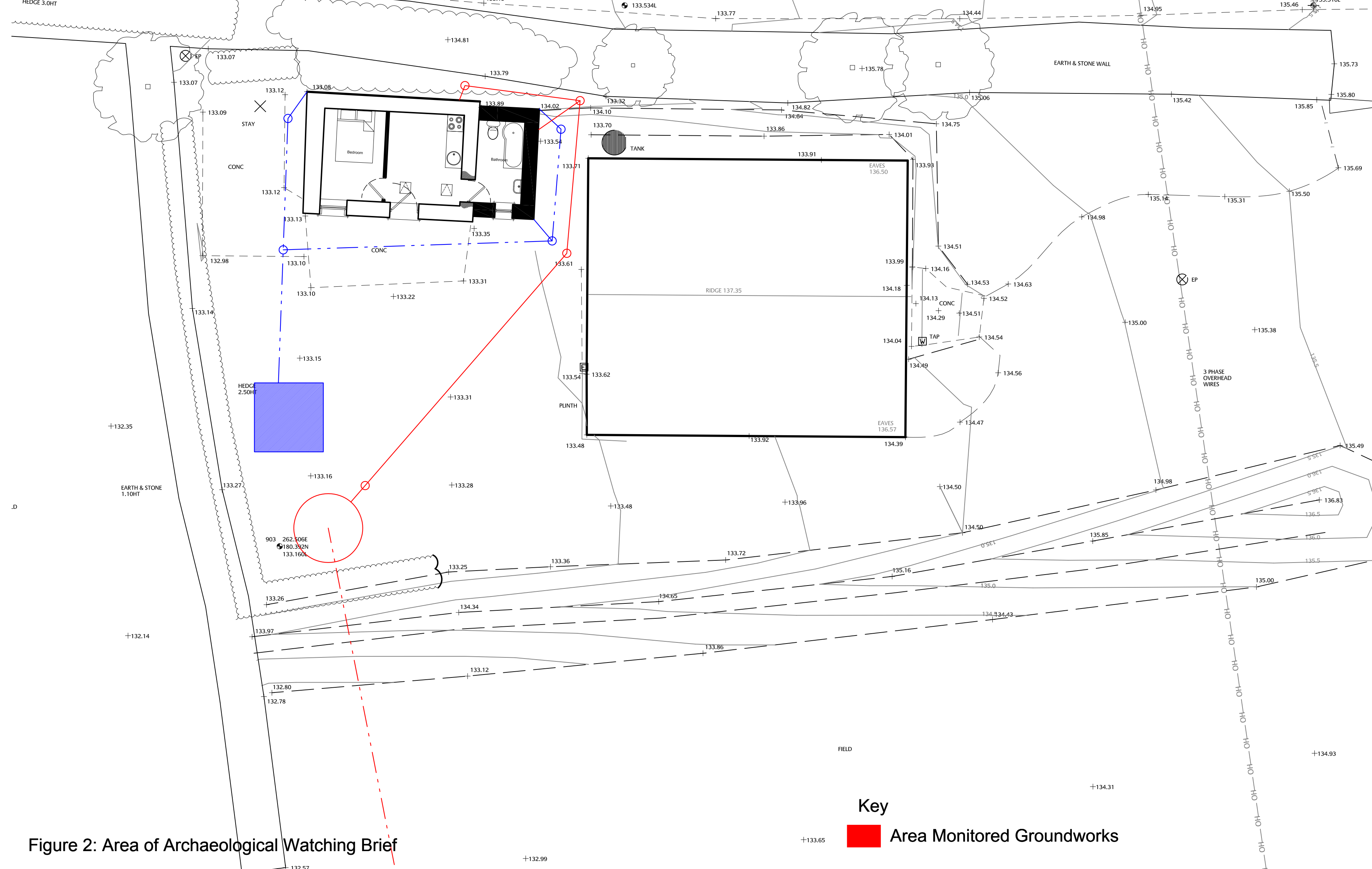


Figure 2: Area of Archaeological Watching Brief

Key

Area Monitored Groundworks

+133.65