

Archaeological Investigation
at No.8 Church Lane, Emberton
Milton Keynes, MK46 5DD

(NGR 488537, 249493)

Planning Application Ref. 13/01881/FUL



July 2014

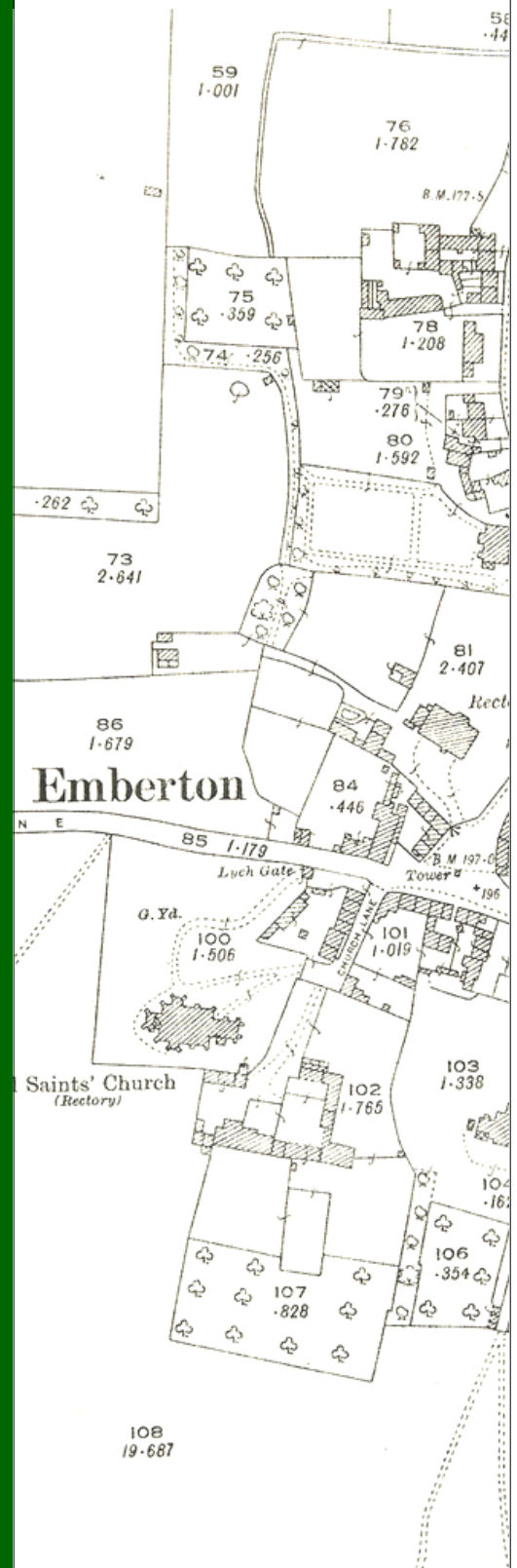
Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd

for

Judith Taylor & Simon Harris

Souterrain

Archaeological Services Ltd



**ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION AT
No.8 CHURCH LANE
EMBERTON, OLNEY
MILTON KEYNES
MK46 5DD
(NGR 488537, 249493)**

Application Reference 13/01881/FUL
Milton Keynes Historic Environment Record Event No. EMK1233

Souterrain Project: SOU14-339

July 2014

Produced for:

Judith Taylor and Simon Harris
(The Planning Applicants)

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Preface

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Summary

In May 2014, Souterrain Archaeological Services Limited carried out an archaeological watching brief during ground preparation for an extension to a 19th century cottage at No. 8 Church Lane, Emberton. Milton Keynes.

The site, which lies within the medieval core of the village and adjacent to the churchyard, was suspected to contain buried archaeological remains. The objective of the investigation was to ensure that the archaeological interest of the site was safeguarded.

Nothing of archaeological significance was present. The works revealed that the hill slope was probably terraced in the 19th century to enable the construction of cottages.

1. SCOPE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report documents the results of archaeological observation and investigation carried out during ground preparation for a new extension at No.8 Church Lane, Emberton, Olney, MK46 5DD. (Fig. 1) in compliance with a condition attached to the planning consent. The investigation took place periodically between the 19th and 22nd of May 2014.
- 1.2 The report has been prepared by Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd (Souterrain) on behalf of Judith Taylor and Simon Harris (the planning applicants) of No.8 Church Lane, Emberton, Olney, MK46 5DD.

2. PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Planning permission (Application Ref. 13/01881/FUL) has been granted subject to conditions, by Milton Keynes Council, on the 17th October 2013 for the erection of a single storey extension.
- 2.2 The area of the proposed development is defined on the following drawings associated with the planning application: 'Proposed Single Storey Extension at No.8 Church Lane, Emberton, Olney, Bucks, MK46 5DD, Plans & Elevations as Proposed', June 2013, 13.07, 002. R. Carlisle Architectural Services.
- 2.3 The site, which is adjacent to the churchyard, lies within an archaeological notification area defining the medieval core of the village. In view of the archaeological potential of the site, a Condition (No.3) has been attached to the grant of planning permission for the implementation of a programme of archaeological works, in accordance with paragraph 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The purpose of the Condition is to ensure that features of archaeological interest encountered during groundwork are properly examined and recorded.
- 2.4 The archaeological investigation was undertaken by Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd (Souterrain) in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation¹ approved prior to the commencement of work by Nick Crank, the Archaeological Officer for Milton Keynes Council.

3. SITE LOCATION AND ASPECT

- 3.1 The Application Site, also known as Church Cottage, is located at NGR 488537, 249493. It is situated about 40m northeast of the parish church of All Saints and adjacent to the churchyard. The proposed development area within the Application Site measures approximately 40 sq.m. Prior to the development it comprised part of a garden.
- 3.2 The land around the Application Site slopes down fairly steeply to the northeast with a fall in height of more than 5m over a distance of c.100m from the church to the High Street.
- 3.3 The underlying geology is understood to be deposits of Great Oolitic Clay and Limestone of the Jurassic. The site is located around 63.65m AOD.

¹ Souterrain Archaeological Services Limited. 2014. *Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief: No.8 Church Lane Emberton Olney MK46 5DD (NGR 488537, 249493)*, App. Ref.13/01881/FUL, SOU14-339, V. 1. 28th March 2014

4. HISTORIC BACKGROUND & ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

Settlement origins

- 4.1 The origin of Emberton village is rooted at some point within the Anglo-Saxon period, but documentary references to the medieval settlement are sparse. The first element of the place name is understood to be derived from the personal name *Eanbeorht*, a name which is considered to have been more commonly used by Angles² than Saxons; the settlement is thus interpreted as *Eanbertestun*, or Eanbeorht's Farm³. Nothing is known about the village layout or extent. Prior to the Norman Conquest the manor of Emberton (*Abritane*) was held by two *thegns*: Godric, who possessed one hide, and Ulric who had two hides. In 1086 the manor was held by the same men, but under Geoffrey de Montbray, Bishop of Coutances, at which time the property was assessed at two ploughlands, meadowland of equal size, and woodland to support fifty hogs. Emberton was a small hamlet of four households, headed by two villeins and two bordars. The Bishop's manor was confiscated by William II and was later granted to Faulk Pagnell, Baron of Dudley and Lord of Newport Pagnell⁴. The manor then descended through the female line of inheritance, to John de Somery in the 14th century. The site of the manor house is located about 200m to the northeast of the Application Site⁵.
- 4.2 The oldest upstanding structure is the Church of All Saints which originated in the 14th century. A reconstructed historical map of the layout of village as it may have appeared in c.1470 was produced by local historian A.C. Chibnall. It depicts a small nucleated hamlet of about ten cottages⁶. These are located north of the church, in the three main thoroughfares - Church Lane, High Street and Olney Road. The modern village of Emberton is thus, generally presumed to be located on the same plan as the medieval settlement. Today, there are sixteen vernacular buildings of historic interest within the village, all of which are listed. It is possible that some of these occupy the sites of former medieval tenements or closes, although there have been no archaeological investigations to confirm the early settlement. The oldest buildings date from the 17th and 18th century and are dotted throughout the village. The majority are built in the local vernacular style of coursed limestone rubble. There are four 17th century buildings in the village: No.7 Olney Road, which is the Old Rectory⁷, Nos. 23-25 Olney Road⁸ and No. 31 Olney Road (The Old Post House)⁹. Buildings of 18th century date comprise: Church Farmhouse in Church Lane¹⁰, West Lane House¹¹, No.1 High Street¹², The Bell & Bear public house¹³, Nos. 1 to 5 Olney Road (a row)¹⁴ and No.19 High Street (Cedar House)¹⁵. In addition, there are four 19th century buildings of note: Nos.2 & 4 Gravel Walk¹⁶; No. 19A (The Coach House)¹⁷ and No.17 Olney Road¹⁸.

² Mawer & Stenton, *Place Names of Buckinghamshire*, English Place name Society, Vol.II (Camb.) 1969, p.xvi

³ *Ibid*; see also Hulton, C.B 1933. *The Story of Emberton*

⁴ See Ratcliffe O, 1900. *History & Antiquities of the Newport Pagnell Hundreds* (Olney)

⁵ HER No.4008, Battles Manor House/ Emberton Manor House

⁶ Chibnall, A.C, 1979. *Beyond Sherington*, (Chichester)

⁷ HER No.5358, 488600249568

⁸ HER No.5359, 488616,249740

⁹ HER No.5360, 488614, 249755

¹⁰ HER No.5350, 488509,249411

¹¹ HER No.5361, 488564 249524

¹² HER No.6338 488582, 249501

¹³ HER No.5353, 488645,249500

¹⁴ HER No.6339, 488589, 249562

¹⁵ HER No.5354 ,488732, 249450

¹⁶ HER No. 5351, 488638, 249477

¹⁷ HER No.5355, 488708, 249450

¹⁸ HER No.6340, 488609, 249691

Archaeological knowledge

- 4.3 As yet, there have been few archaeological discoveries in the village, but this is likely to be a reflection of the few archaeological investigations that have taken place rather than a genuine absence of archaeology.
- 4.4 The most significant finds in the village to date were from a watching brief carried out over a period of four days in 2006 at No.7 Church Lane, about 30m to the southeast of the present Application Site¹⁹. A medieval pit was revealed which contained an assemblage of pottery dated from the 12th to 14th centuries, while remains of undated wall footings were thought to predate the pit. There was also a single residual piece of Roman pottery found. Archaeological monitoring had been carried out two years earlier during ground-works for an extension at No.16 Olney Road (c.140m to the northeast), although there were no finds earlier than the 19th century²⁰.
- 4.5 A single chance find has been reported - a late first century AD Roman coin, found in a garden opposite the churchyard gate in 1930; about 40m to the southeast of the Application Site²¹.
- 4.6 There are two undated archaeological sites of substantial size known to exist in the environs of Emberton. One of these is an approximately square enclosure revealed as a crop-mark, which is located about 510m the northeast. The other site, in a field about 300m to the east, is visible as a number of distinct earthworks which have been interpreted as the remains of buildings located alongside a former road.

The existing building

- 4.7 The history of the existing house has been traced by Roger Carlisle in preparation of the Design and Access Statement²², as follows: *'the house was formerly two cottages, occupied by farm workers or equivalent and constructed of rubble stone, probably in the 19th century, as farm outbuildings. The cottages were built on different levels, substantiating the theory that they were built and /or extended at different times. The diverse nature of the masonry and window frames suggests that many materials have been re-cycled for use in this building over the years. There is evidence in the masonry that it was originally a single storey building (probably a barn) and that the first floor was added later. Two cottages were still present on the site in the 1950s and previous occupants are resident in the village today. The cottages were converted into the current single dwelling in 1960/61 by the previous owners...'*

5. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- 5.1 The research objectives of the investigation were:
1. To attempt to gain an understanding of former land-use in this part of the village of Emberton, particularly with a view to ascertain whether a medieval tenement existed at this location alongside Church Lane.
 2. To recover information that may contribute to understanding of the origin of the nucleated settlement - whether this took place in the late Saxon period, or whether it was a result of Post-conquest re-organisation.

¹⁹ HER Event No.1090, Hancock, A, 2006. 'Watching Brief: 7 Church Lane, Emberton, Milton Keynes', Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

²⁰ HER Event No.928. Hancock, A, 2004. '16 Olney Road Emberton, Milton Keynes', Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

²¹ HER No.3818

²² R. Carlisle Architectural Services (Weston Underwood, Bucks), Design & Access Statement, Justification , Heritage Statement, Site: Church Cottage, 8 Church Lane, Emberton, MK46 5DD, Proposal: Single Storey Extension to Dwelling. 19th August 2013.

3. To ascertain whether the site contains evidence for Romano-British settlement.

6 FIELD PROCEDURE

- 6.1 The investigation was conducted with due consideration to Health and Safety and in accordance with the requirements of the Written Scheme of Investigation and the Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct and Standard Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (Rev.2008).
- 6.2 Ground reduction and trenching was monitored throughout by an archaeologist, with the facility to make investigations and records as appropriate. All machine excavation was carried out with mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket. Archaeological visibility was good throughout. All recording was carried out in accordance with the written scheme. Archaeological features were surveyed to Ordnance Survey National Grid co-ordinates and height datum by RTK GPS.

7. INVESTIGATION RESULTS

- 7.1 The investigation revealed that the Application Site is located on a terrace which has been cut into a steep slope (*ante*.3.2). The existing ground height in front (SE) of the cottage is 63.62m OD. Immediately to the southwest of the cottage was a brick retaining wall (C19th), above which the ground height is 64.42m OD. The wall was removed during the works, revealing an upper layer of concrete c.0.2m to 0.3m thick, below which was a dark grey-brown topsoil c. 0.27m - 0.3m thick. The topsoil lay above the geological stratum around 63.82m OD.
- 7.2 The geological stratum was encountered on the west part of the Application Site at c.63.55m OD and on the east side of the site at around 63.20m OD. The topsoil depth in the west corner topsoil was around 0.05, this increased rapidly northwards and eastwards to around to c.0.40m over a short distance of 6m to 8m.
- 7.3 There were no archaeological features, deposits or artefacts deposits present.

8. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE & REVIEW OF RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- 8.1 The investigation revealed nothing of archaeological significance.
- 8.2 It is presumed that the terrace was cut at some juncture in the 19th century to enable the construction of farm outbuildings, which were later converted to cottages.
- 8.3 The investigation was unable to contribute to the research questions at Section 5.

9. ARCHIVE

- 9.1 The Buckinghamshire County Museum's Accessions Number for the project is AYBCM 2014.57. The paper archive comprises field drawings, notes and photographs.
- 9.2 The English Heritage OASIS Data Collection Form ID for this project is souterra1- 183475.

8.3 The Milton Keynes Historic Environment Record Event Number is EMK1233

9. COPYRIGHT & ACCESSIBILITY OF THE RECORD

- 9.1 Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd retain full copyright of any commissioned reports, tender documents or other project documents under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved; excepting that it will provide an exclusive licence to the Owner in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI).
- 9.2 Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd retains the right to be identified as the author of all project documentation and reports as defined in the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.
- 9.3 A licence is to be granted to Historic Environment Record of Milton Keynes Council for the use of all reports arising from projects for planning purposes and *bona fide* research requests.
- 9.4 In accordance with the requirements of WSI, this report is intended as a public-accessible record. A copy of the report is to be available for consultation in the Historic Environment Record. It is also to be made available on appropriate websites (e.g. www.oasis.ac.uk) and a summary of the results is to be submitted to *South Midlands Archaeology*, the on-line annual round-up of archaeological work in the region.

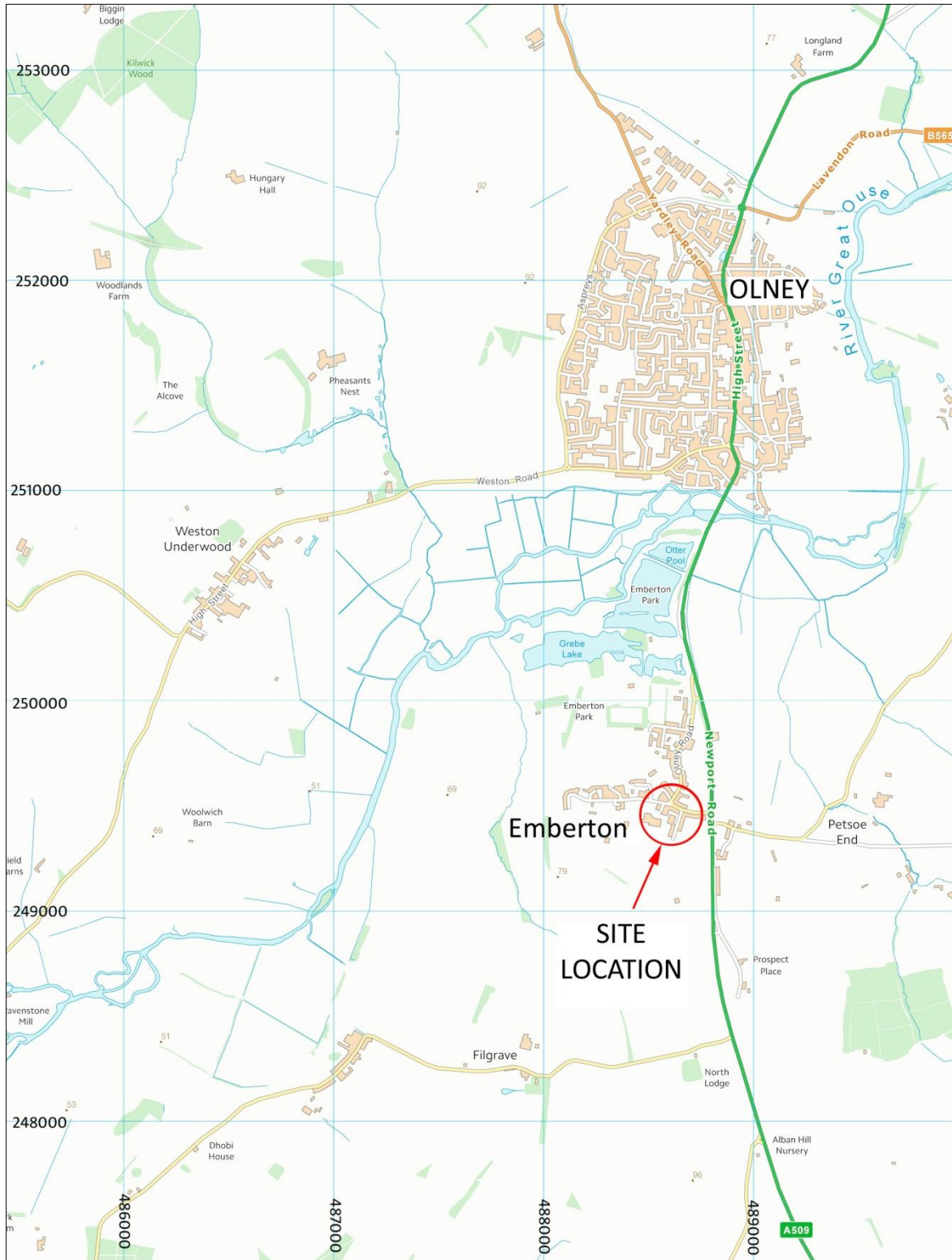


Figure 1. Location of Site

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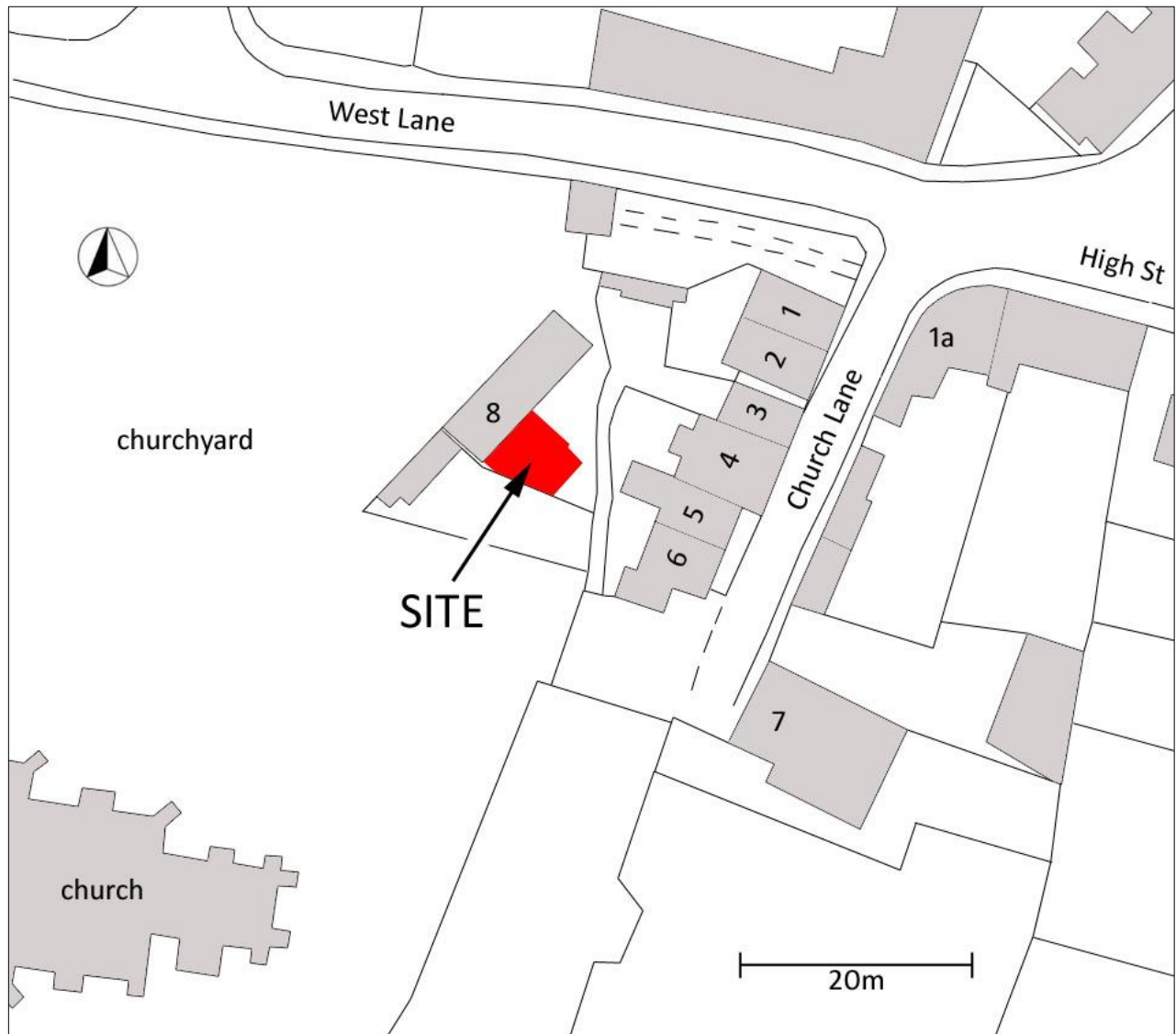
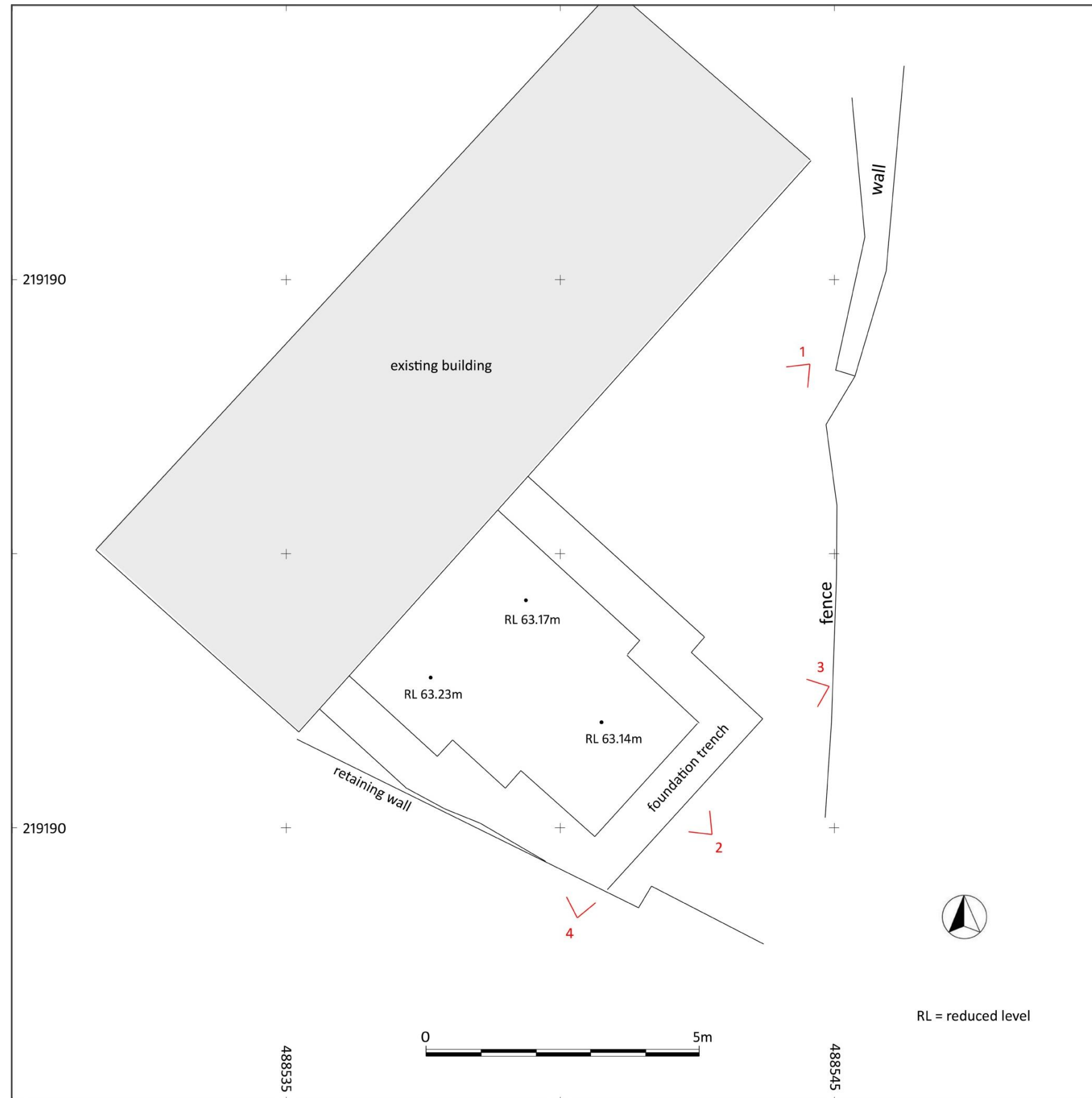


Figure 2. Area of archaeological investigation

(based on Ordnance Survey mapping. © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number AL 100015565)

Figure 3.
Area of investigation,
showing direction of photographs
(Figs 4 and 5, 1 to 4)



1



2



**Figure 4. Viewpoint 1 (top): overview of site prior to excavation, facing SW.
Viewpoint 2 (bottom): overview of foundation trenches, facing NW**



3



4

Figure 5. Viewpoint 3 (top): overview of foundation trenches facing W. Viewpoint 4 (bottom): overview of foundation trenches, facing NE