# ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING UNDERTAKEN AT PLUMPTON COLLEGE, DITCHLING ROAD, PLUMPTON, EAST SUSSEX.

**N. G. R. TQ 35810 13490**

**Project Number 08 / 05**

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## *ABSTRACT.*

*A programme of archaeological recording was undertaken at the site of a proposed west wing extension to Plumpton College, Ditchling Road, Plumpton, East Sussex.*

*It is regrettable that the footprint of the new college building was excavated / reduced without an archaeologist being present. Fortunately the results of the fieldwork suggest it is unlikely that any extensive remains of genuine archaeological note were destroyed by the unmonitored groundworks.*

*No in-situ deposits, cut features or structures of archaeological significance were discovered during the project. However, a small assemblage of humanly – struck flint dating to the Mesolithic and later prehistoric periods was identified. This flintwork adds to the evidence for the Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age exploitation of local 'low – lying' resources previously recorded in the area.*

*No evidence for any subsequent Romano–British, Anglo-Saxon or significant in-situ medieval settlement / occupation activity was revealed. Plumpton College is located between the site of a former medieval moated homestead (now Plumpton Place) and the 12th century church of St. Michael and All Angels. As such, the recovery of only two sherds of medieval pottery from the investigated deposits is striking.*

## 1.0. INTRODUCTION.

1.1. Lewes District Council has granted planning permission for the construction of a two – storey west wing addition to the main building at Plumpton College, Ditchling Road, Plumpton, East Sussex (N. G. R. TQ 35810 13490) (Figure 1).

1.2. However, as Plumpton College lies within an area of known archaeological potential (see sections 3.1. and 6.1.) it was believed that the proposed development could impact upon features and / or deposits of archaeological significance. Greg Chuter the East Sussex County Council Assistant Archaeologist therefore requested that the following condition was attached to the planning permission (Lewes District Council Planning Application Number: LW/07/0998).

*'No development shall take place within the area indicated until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has / have secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and carried out in accordance with that approval.'*

1.3. Unfortunately this planning condition was not complied with. No archaeological work was undertaken either in advance of, or during the initial excavation / reduction by machine of the footprint of the proposed college extension, or the establishment of the nearby site compound (Figure 2).

1.4. A site meeting was held on the 3rd June 2008 to consider the situation at the college and an appropriate archaeological response. These discussions were attended by Christopher Greatorex of C. G. Archaeology, Greg Chuter the East Sussex County Council Assistant Archaeologist, Mike Barber of MJB

Architecture and representatives from the development company Westridge Construction Ltd.

1.5. As a result of the site meeting outlined above, C. G. Archaeology was commissioned by Mike Barber of MJB Architecture on behalf of Plumpton College to carry – out the following programme of archaeological work.

- background research into the historical / archaeological context of the development site
- the assessment and recording of the new building footprint subject to unmonitored excavation
- the manual excavation of an archaeological trial–trench across the new building footprint subject to unmonitored excavation
- an examination of the spoil heaps derived from the unmonitored excavation work undertaken at the site
- a watching brief maintained on future intrusive groundworks carried – out at the site
- a watching brief maintained on the reinstatement of the site compound

1.6. The methodology employed during the archaeological project (see Section 5.0. for details) was based upon a targeted Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Christopher Greatorex of C. G. Archaeology and agreed with Greg Chuter the East Sussex County Council Assistant Archaeologist.

1.7. The archaeological fieldwork was carried – out by Christopher Greatorex and Annalie Wood of C. G. Archaeology between the 5th June 2008 and 22nd July 2009. The collation of historic cartographic evidence (see Section 6.2.) was undertaken by David Dunkin on the 14th June 2008.

## 2.0. TOPOGRAPHICAL AND GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND.

2.1. Plumpton College is located at the foot of a north – facing escarpment of the South Downs. A site survey carried – out prior to the commencement of groundworks shows that the precise footprint of the new college building once encompassed an 'open' area of the campus grounds that rose slightly towards the south - west. No other obvious topographical features were recorded.

2.2. The 1: 50,000 British Geological Survey (Sheet 318 / 333: Brighton and Worthing) indicates that the development site lies at a boundary of Lower Chalk and Head.

## 3.0. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.

3.1. Plumpton College is located within a region rich in known archaeological remains / find-spots and historic buildings (see Section 6.1. for details). Indeed, the footprint of the new extension lies just 130m. west of the site of a former medieval moated homestead (now occupied by Plumpton Place) and only 70m. east of St. Michael and All Angels parish church built in the 12th century. For this reason it can be suggested that the present college grounds may once have been the scene of significant medieval activity and even permanent settlement.

3.2. It should be noted that the estate at Plumpton College was purchased by the County Council in 1919. By 1926 the college had grown enough to justify the first major new build on the site. The college increased in size from this point onwards and in 1937 a major extension was added. Further significant expansion took place during the 1970s with the building of new workshops and hostels (information extracted from www.plumpton.ac.uk).

## 4.0. PROJECT OBJECTIVES.

4.1. The primary objectives of the archaeological fieldwork can be defined as follows.

- Assess and record all archaeologically significant layers and cut features exposed as a result of the unmonitored excavations undertaken across the development site.

- Recover as many archaeologically significant artefacts exposed / disturbed by the unmonitored excavations undertaken across the development site as practicably possible.

- Ensure that all archaeological deposits, cut features, structures and artefacts revealed during the manual excavation of a single trial–trench across the footprint of the proposed new building are investigated, recorded, sampled and interpreted to an acceptable standard.

- Ensure that all archaeological deposits, cut features, structures and artefacts exposed during the subsequent archaeological watching brief maintained at the site are investigated, recorded, sampled and interpreted to an acceptable standard.

- Determine the extent, character, condition and date of all observed archaeologically significant deposits, cut features and structures.

- Ensure that all significant discoveries of ecofactual evidence made during the fieldwork are recorded and analysed to an acceptable standard.

- Establish the palaeoenvironmental potential of any located archaeologically significant deposits and cut features.

- Provide information on which to base future decision concerning the treatment of any archaeologically significant deposits, cut features and structures found within the proposed development site.

## 5.0. INVESTIGATIVE METHODOLOGY.

### 5.1. Background research.

5.1.1. An inspection was made of the East Sussex County Historical Environment Record (HER) (see Section 6.1.). This study was supplemented by an examination of historic cartographic sources held at the East Sussex Record Office, Lewes (see Section 6.2.). Relevant published papers were also consulted.

### 5.2. Assessment and recording of new building footprint.

5.2.1. A plan of the already excavated / reduced building footprint showing the areas of exposed 'natural' geology and still extant topsoil / subsoil was first prepared at a scale of 1: 100. A wider groundworks location plan encompassing the whole fieldwork project was also produced at a scale of 1: 500.

5.2.2. A number of cut features located across the already excavated / reduced building footprint were quickly investigated in order to ascertain their character and origin / date. A short row of six sub-circular postholes identified during this work was recorded on the aforementioned 1: 100 scale plan. Three of these modern postholes were excavated *in-toto* and drawn in section at a scale of 1: 10.

5.2.3. The exposed north and east – facing sections / baulks of the excavated / reduced building footprint were examined carefully and drawn at a scale of 1: 100.

5.2.4. The areas of topsoil / subsoil still surviving across the already excavated / reduced building footprint were systematically scanned for archaeological

artefacts, both by eye and with a metal detector. All of the finds recovered from this exercise were retained for subsequent identification.

5.3. **Excavation of archaeological trial–trench.**

5.3.1. A single c.14.20m. – long and 0.60m. - wide archaeological trial-trench sited towards the north – east corner of the already reduced building footprint (Figure 10) was excavated manually by staff from C. G. Archaeology and Westridge Construction Ltd. The extant deposits of topsoil and subsoil were carefully removed in horizontal spits until the undisturbed surface of 'natural' geology had been reached. Each exposed deposit was scanned by eye and with a metal detector, with all recovered artefacts being retained for subsequent identification. The location of the trench was plotted on to the 1: 100 scale plan noted in Section 5.2.1.

5.4. **Examination of spoil heaps.**

5.4.1. The spoil derived from the unmonitored reduction of the new building footprint and establishment of the nearby site compound was scanned by eye and with a metal detector. All discovered artefacts were retained for post-fieldwork identification. It was ascertained that most of the excavated spoil had been spread across the southern end of a field sited to the north of the main college complex (Figure 12). The location of this field / spread was plotted on a 1: 5000 scale Ordnance Survey map.

5.5. **Watching brief maintained on intrusive groundworks.**

5.5.1. The following intrusive groundworks were subject to a constant archaeological watching brief.

- those footings for the new college building that impacted upon areas of still *in-situ* topsoil / subsoil (Figure 11)

- the excavation of a new c.2m. – long and 0.65m. - wide water tank holder (Figure 10)

- the excavation of a new c.4.8m. – long and 2.5m. – wide calor gas tank holder (Figure 2)

- the creation of a new path leading from the south – east corner of St. Michael and All Angels Church cemetery to the new college extension (Figure 2)

5.5.2. The groundworks listed above were carried – out under archaeological supervision by Westridge Construction Ltd. using a mechanical digger fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. In this way the deposits described in Section 7.4. were removed in spits until the depths required by Westridge Construction Ltd had been reached. Each exposed deposit was examined by eye and with a metal detector, with all recovered artefacts being retained for subsequent identification.

5.5.3. The building footings and water tank holder subject to archaeological investigation were marked on a 1: 100 scale foundation plan drawn – up and supplied to C. G. Archaeology by MJB Architecture. The position of the new gas tank holder and path were recorded on the 1: 500 scale groundworks location plan.

5.6. **Watching brief maintained on the reinstatement of site compound.**

5.6.1. Under archaeological supervision a layer of hardcore was stripped from the area of the site compound by Westridge Construction Ltd. using a tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. The still *in-situ* topsoil exposed as a result of this procedure was scanned by eye and with a metal detector. All recovered artefacts were retained for subsequent identification. The position of the compound was recorded on the 1: 500 scale groundworks location plan.

## 5.7. General.

5.7.1. Each archaeological context identified during the fieldwork was investigated manually by C. G. Archaeology in order to assess its archaeological character / palaeoenvironmental potential and then documented on an individual pro-forma. A full photographic record of the project was also maintained as appropriate.

## 6.0. RESULTS OF BACKGROUND RESEARCH.

### 6.1. The Historical Environment Record.

6.1.1. The inspection of the East Sussex County Historical Environment Record (HER) produced 25 entries of archaeological / historical / architectural significance within a c.1km. radius of Plumpton College. These are tabulated in numerical order and described briefly below. Full details of the search are held within the Project Archive (see Section 10.0).

**Table 1: The HER search**

| HER NO. | GRID REF. | DATE. | SUMMARY DESCRIPTION. |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| **MES1862** | TQ 36 13 | Bronze Age | Looped palstave found at Lentridge Farm. |
| **MES1864** | TQ 3603 1278 | ? | Greek cross cut in the turf above Plumpton Place. Thought to commemorate Simon de Montfort's victory at the 1264 Battle of Lewes. However, the date of the cross is uncertain. |
| **MES1867** | TQ 354 128 | Bronze Age | Three bowl barrows and a mound located on Plumpton Plain. |
| **MES1868** | TQ 3553 1271 | Bronze Age | Bowl barrow located on Plumpton Plain. |
| **MES1870** | TQ 3579 1266 | Bronze Age | Two bowl barrows and a platform barrow located on Plumpton Plain. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **MES1871** | TQ 3603 1344 | Medieval – Modern | Plumpton Place. House constructed by John Mascall in 1568 on the site of a medieval moated homestead. The north wing is the earliest build. The west front has two gabled wings and a projecting porch. Its original timber frame was covered with a brick and flint facade in the early 17th century. The house was divided into workers cottages during the 18th and 19th centuries. Plumpton Place was fully restored by Sir Edwin Lutyens in 1928. The moat survives to a depth of 3m. on the north and west sides of the house. A Grade II* Listed Building. |
| **MES1873** | TQ 3595 1267 | Neolithic – Bronze Age | Possible long barrow, a bowl barrow and a platform barrow located on Plumpton Plain. |
| **MES1881** | TQ 36 13 | Post-medieval? | Upper Mill: A Listed Building (windmill). No details provided. |
| **MES1882** | TQ 3604 1345 | Modern | Plumpton Place gardens created in 1928 by Sir Edwin Lutyens. Extensive restoration and replanting was carried – out in 1986 / 1987. |
| **MES1887** | TQ 36 13 | Mesolithic | Flint tranchet axe found at Plumpton Hill. |
| **MES2029** | TQ 3519 1280 | Bronze Age | The site of a ploughed – out bowl barrow located on Streat Hill. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **MES4599** | TQ 3829 2747 | Post-medieval? | Trackway running from Titsey to Westmeston. See Ordnance Survey Linear Archive File (LIN 135) for details. |
| **MES7130** | TQ 3625 1397 | Post-medieval | Drews Farmhouse, Plumpton Lane. A Grade II Listed Building. 17th century. |
| **MES7131** | TQ 3642 1348 | Modern | The former schoolroom, Plumpton Lane. A Grade II Listed Building. Built in 1857. |
| **MES7134** | TQ 3652 1340 | Post-medieval – Modern | Hackmans, Plumpton Lane. A Grade II Listed Building. 17th century with 19th century alterations. |
| **MES7135** | TQ 363 132 | Modern | The Half Moon Inn, Plumpton Lane. A Grade II Listed Building. 19th century. |
| **MES7142** | TQ 3591 1348 | Post-medieval | Mill Barn: Now adjacent to, but originally part of Plumpton Place (MES1871). A large L – shaped building. The north wing is timber – framed, the east wing is faced with tarred weatherboarding. A Grade II Listed Building. 17th century. |
| **MES7144** | TQ 3568 1350 | Medieval – Modern | Plumpton Parish Church. The nave dates to the early 12th century. The west tower is 13th century with 14th century additions. The chancel was rebuilt rather later in the 13th century, but the east wall is modern. The porch probably dates from the 17th century, while the vestry is of |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 19th century origin. A Grade II Listed Building. |
| **MES7146** | TQ 3597 1343 | Modern | The Gatehouse at Plumpton Place (MES1871). Designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens in 1928. A Grade II Listed Building. |
| **MES7148** | TQ 3631 1318 | Post-medieval | The Cottage, Ditchling Road. A Grade II Listed Building. 17th century. |
| **MES7149** | TQ 3639 1346 | Post-medieval | The Eugh, Plumpton Lane. A Grade II Listed Building. 17th century or earlier, with 18th century alterations. |
| **MES7150** | TQ 3645 1324 | Post-medieval – Modern | The Laines, Plumpton Lane (originally the rectory). A Grade II Listed Building. 18th century with 19th century alterations. |
| **MES7151** | TQ 3615 1363 | Post-medieval? – Modern | The Mill House. Faces the northern lake at Plumpton Place (MES1871). Originally an 18th century or earlier mill building, but adapted by Sir Edwin Lutyens in 1928 as a subsidiary residence. A Grade II Listed Building. |
| **MES7421** | TQ 3637 1414 | Post-medieval | Documentary evidence for the site of a building. |
| **MES7422** | TQ 3627 1420 | Post-medieval | Documentary evidence for the site of a building. |

6.1.2. None of the Historical Environment Record entries listed above were impacted upon directly by the development scheme considered within this document.

## 6.2. The cartographic evidence.

6.2.1. The following historic maps were examined at the East Sussex Record Office, Lewes.

- Estate map by Figg (E. S. R. O. ref: 5060/2) c.1735 (Figure 3)
- Estate map (E. S. R. O. ref: 5179/3) c.1750 (Figure 4)
- Tithe map and Apportionment for the parish of Plumpton (E. S. R. O. ref: TD/E 95) 1839 (Figure 5)
- 6" Ordnance Survey (Sheet 53 NE) 1st Edition 1874 (Figure 6)
- 6" Ordnance Survey (Sheet 53 NE) 1899
- 25" Ordnance Survey (Sheet 53 / 7) 2nd Edition 1899? (Figure 7)
- 25" Ordnance Survey (Sheet 53 / 7) 1910 (Figure 8)
- 6" Ordnance Survey (Sheet 53 NE) 1912 (Figure 9)

6.2.2. Each of the plans listed above locates the footprint of the new college extension within an enclosed field of rather limited archaeological interest. The c.1750 estate map (Figure 4) appears to show the presence of a possible and otherwise unrecorded structure (character and function unclear) adjacent the eastern perimeter of this field. However, none of the examined plans document any discernible features of archaeological / historical importance across the precise area of current development. At the time of the 1839 tithe map (Figure 5) the field in question was known as 'The Lags'. The plot (number 431) was owned by the Earl of Chichester but leased out to a Benjamin Wood for arable cultivation. Full details of the tithe apportionment form an integral part of the Project Archive (see Section 10.0.).

6.2.3. Despite the close proximity of St. Michael and All Angels Church, Mill Barn and Plumpton Place (see sections 3.1. and 6.1.1.) it would thus appear that between the years c.1735 (Figure 3) and 1912 (Figure 9) the site under consideration was not utilised for any activities likely to have left *in-situ* archaeological remains.

6.2.4. It should be noted that a brief summary of the establishment and post 1919 expansion of Plumpton College is presented within Section 3.2.

## 7.0. RESULTS OF FIELDWORK.

### 7.1. Assessment and recording of new building footprint.

7.1.1. Prior to the involvement of C. G. Archaeology in the project, the footprint of the new college building had been reduced by machine to a depth below the original ground surface of between c.0.10m. and 1.5m. The c.59.0m. – long and 47.0m. - wide area of unmonitored excavation was at its deepest across the south and west, but became steadily shallower towards the north / north – east (in effect the footprint had been terraced into the predominant slope of the pre-developed site: see Section 2.1.).

7.1.2. The character and stratigraphic sequence of the layers exposed along both the north and east – facing sections / baulks of the excavated building footprint is summarised in Table 2.

**Table 2: New building footprint: sequence of layers observed in section**

| CONTEXT NUMBER | DESCRIPTION | THICKNESS |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
| **1.** | **Topsoil**<br>A compact but friable, light grey – brown slightly silty clay loam.<br>Containing c.2% flint nodules (c.10mm. – 0.30m.) and c.1% chalk pieces (c.10mm. – 0.20m.).<br>Above Context 2 (undulating context boundary). | c.0.10m. – 0.40m. |
| **2.** | **Subsoil**<br>A compact, mid orange – brown silty clay.<br>Containing c.2% flint nodules (c.10mm. – 0.25m.) and c.2% chalk pieces (c.10mm. – 0.20m.).<br>Below Context 1 (undulating context boundary).<br>Above Context 3 (fairly level context boundary). | c.0.10m. – 0.70m. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **3.** | **Natural geology**<br>A chalky loam / chalk rubble Head deposit.<br>Below 2 (fairly level context boundary). | ? |

7.1.3. No other contexts of archaeological significance or any topographic 'features' of genuine interest were observed in section. The rather uninformative north and east – facing section drawings of the building footprint (1: 100 scale) are held within the Project Archive (see Section 10.0.).

7.1.4. The areas of still extant topsoil / subsoil **(1 / 2)** and exposed natural geology **(3)** found across the base of the excavated / reduced building footprint are recorded on Figure 10. The *in-situ* topsoil / subsoil **(1 / 2)** (impossible to differentiate between contexts due to crushing by machine) was scanned for any surviving archaeological artefacts. This exercise produced a small assemblage of humanly - struck flint dating to the Mesolithic and later prehistoric periods (most pieces being collected from the north – east corner of the site) two small sherds of possible medieval pottery (precise date unclear) and three fragments of late 19$^{th}$ / early 20$^{th}$ century china (not retained). It should be noted that all of the flints recovered from the project were subject to specialist analysis and reporting (see Section 8.0.).

7.1.5. A number of negative 'features' located across the base of the excavated / reduced building footprint were investigated in order to ascertain their character and date. It was demonstrated that the majority of these cuts were either of natural origin (almost certainly periglacial) or modern drainage runs (no context numbers assigned). However, a short east – west aligned row of 20$^{th}$ century postholes was recorded at the eastern end of the site **(6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16)** (Figure 10). This fence-line appears to have once formed part of a sub–rectangular – shaped enclosure / pen / yard shown on the pre–development Ordnance Survey sheet (Figure 1) and is of no archaeological significance. Full details of each identified posthole and three representative 1: 10 scale section drawings are held within the Project Archive (see Section

10.0.). The only other discovery made during this phase of the fieldwork comprised a large 20th century cut **(4)** presumably associated in some way with the construction of the adjacent college building (Figure 10).

7.2. **Excavation of archaeological trial-trench (see Table 2 for context descriptions).**

7.2.1. A layer of topsoil **(1)** with a surviving thickness of c.0.14m. was first stripped from the hand - dug trial–trench shown on Figure 10. This procedure revealed a c.0.16m. – 0.23m. – thick deposit of subsoil **(2)** which was itself removed to expose the uppermost surface of the immediately underlying natural chalk Head **(3)**.

7.2.2. No other archaeologically significant layers, cut features or structures were discovered during the excavation of the trial–trench. Even so, a small number of humanly – struck flints dating to the Mesolithic and later prehistoric periods and a single molar from an adult sheep / goat (not retained) were recovered from Context 1.

7.3. **Examination of spoil heaps (see Table 2 for context descriptions).**

7.3.1. The spoil derived from the unmonitored excavation / reduction of the new building footprint and the establishment of the nearby site compound was scanned for archaeological artefacts.

7.3.2. It transpired that the spoil removed from the building footprint **(1, 2, 3)** had been spread across the southern end of a field located to the north of the main college campus (Figure 12). The examination of this material yielded a modest collection of humanly – struck flint dating to the Mesolithic and later prehistoric periods and one very short segment of post-medieval clay tobacco pipe stem. Mesolithic and later prehistoric humanly – struck flints and one amorphous lump of undated lead weighing 33.8g. (not retained) were also

recovered from the topsoil **(1)** stripped from the site compound (spoil heap positioned alongside southern perimeter of compound).

7.4. **Watching brief maintained on intrusive groundworks (see Table 2 for context descriptions).**

7.4.1. New building footings and water tank holder.

7.4.1.1. Layers of topsoil **(1)** and subsoil **(2)** were removed from those building footings highlighted on Figure 11 and the area of the new water tank holder (Figure 10). A constant archaeological watching brief was maintained on these groundworks until an undisturbed surface of the immediately underlying natural chalk Head **(3)** had been exposed. The overall depths of excavation are held within the Project Archive (see Section 10.0.). No discoveries of archaeological significance were made during this stage of the fieldwork.

7.4.2. New gas tank holder.

7.4.2.1. A layer of topsoil **(1)** with a thickness of between c.0.50m. and 0.70m. was first stripped from the area of the new calor gas tank holder (Figure 2). This procedure revealed a c.0.50m. – 0.70m. – thick deposit of subsoil **(2)** which was itself removed to expose the immediately underling natural chalk Head **(3)**. No discoveries of archaeological interest were made.

7.4.3. Creation of new path.

7.4.3.1. A c.0.20m. – thick spit of topsoil **(1)** was lifted from the route of the new path shown on Figure 2. No other deposits or features of archaeological significance were uncovered during this exercise. Nevertheless, the watching brief did enable the recovery of a small assemblage of humanly – struck flint dating to the Mesolithic and later prehistoric periods.

7.5. **Watching brief maintained on reinstatement of site compound (see Table 2 for context description).**

7.5.1. A layer of hardcore (no context number assigned) was stripped from the area of the site compound (Figure 2) to reveal the base of the still *in-situ* topsoil **(1)** at an average depth below the original ground surface of c.0.30m. The examination of this exposed 'surface' yielded a small collection of humanly – struck flint dating to the Mesolithic and later prehistoric periods and 15 pieces of fire – cracked flint with a total weight of 395g. (not retained). However, no other deposits, features or artefacts of archaeological significance were discovered before the site was reinstated with the adjacent spoil (see Section 7.3.2.).

**Table 3: Context Register**

| CONTEXT NUMBER. | SUMMARY DESCRIPTION / VISIBLE PHYSICAL RELATIONSHIPS. |
|---|---|
| | |
| **1.** | Silty clay loam topsoil.<br>Above 2.<br>Cut by 4. |
| **2.** | Silty clay subsoil.<br>Above 3.<br>Below 1.<br>Cut by 4. |
| **3.** | Natural Head deposit.<br>Below 2.<br>Cut by 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16. |
| **4.** | 20th century cut.<br>Filled by 5.<br>Cuts 1, 2, 3. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **5.** | Silty clay fill of 20th century cut.<br>Fill of 4. |
| **6.** | Cut of 20th century posthole.<br>Filled by 7.<br>Cuts 3. |
| **7.** | Silty clay fill of 20th century posthole.<br>Fill of 6. |
| **8.** | Cut of 20th century posthole.<br>Filled by 9.<br>Cuts 3. |
| **9.** | Silty clay fill of 20th century posthole.<br>Fill of 8. |
| **10.** | Cut of 20th century posthole.<br>Filled by 11.<br>Cuts 3. |
| **11.** | Silty clay fill of 20th century posthole.<br>Fill of 10. |
| **12.** | Cut of 20th century posthole.<br>Filled by 13.<br>Cuts 3. |
| **13.** | Silty clay fill of 20th century posthole.<br>Fill of 12. |
| **14.** | Cut of 20th century posthole.<br>Filled by 15.<br>Cuts 3. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **15.** | Silty clay fill of 20th century posthole.<br>Fill of 14. |
| **16.** | Cut of 20th century posthole.<br>Filled by 17.<br>Cuts 3. |
| **17.** | Silty clay fill of 20th century posthole.<br>Fill of 16. |

## 8.0. FLINTWORK by Chris Butler.

### 8.1. Introduction.

8.1.1. An assemblage of 125 pieces of worked flint weighing 1,578g. was recovered during the fieldwork (Table 4).

8.1.2. The assessment comprised a visual inspection of the assemblage, counting the number of pieces of each type of worked flint present, noting details of the range and variety of pieces, general condition and the potential for further detailed analysis. A handwritten archive of the assemblage was also produced.

### 8.2. The assemblage.

8.2.1. The raw material comprised predominantly a patinated, mottled blue to light blue – grey flint with occasional pieces of grey and black – coloured flint. All of the material appears to derive from downland sources.

**Table 4: The flint assemblage**

| FLINT TYPOLOGY. | NUMBER OF PIECES. |
|---|---|
| | |
| Hard hammer – struck flakes | 66 |
| Soft hammer – struck flakes | 23 |
| Soft hammer – struck blades | 2 |
| Soft hammer – struck bladelets | 3 |
| Bladelet fragments | 1 |
| Flake / blade fragments | 16 |
| Chips | 2 |
| Multi–platform flake cores | 3 |
| Core fragments | 5 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Microburin? | 1 |
| Scrapers | 2 |
| Notched flake | 1 |
| **TOTAL** | **125** |

8.2.2. The majority of the debitage comprised a range of hard hammer – struck flakes, together with a number of flake fragments. Few of these had any evidence for platform preparation or a systematic knapping process. The majority of these pieces are likely to be later prehistoric in date.

8.2.3. There were also a number of soft hammer – struck flakes, together with a few blades and bladelets, many of which did exhibit platform preparation. The soft hammer – struck pieces and a small number of hard hammer – struck pieces can probably be dated to the Mesolithic period. This is supported by the presence of a possible microburin (a waste piece from microlith production) typical of pieces found from the Mesolithic period. Three small multi–platform flake cores exhibiting minimal platform preparation could also be Mesolithic. However, the remaining core fragments are all likely to be later prehistoric in date.

8.2.4. Three implements were found. These comprised an end – and – side scraper manufactured on a hard hammer – struck flake, an end scraper on a flake fragment with minimal retouch at the distal end and a hard hammer - struck flake with a small notch at the distal end. All of these are likely to be later prehistoric in date.

8.2.5. There was no spatial differentiation of the flintwork, with Mesolithic and later prehistoric pieces being collected from all parts of the site. Much of the flintwork exhibits frequent abrasion and edge damage typical of plough soil derived assemblages. On occasions the presence of patination can be helpful in assigning pieces to different dates (Butler 2005). In this assemblage, those pieces with a light blue – grey patination were most frequently Mesolithic. It is therefore possible that all pieces of this type date to that period.

8.3. Research potential.

8.3.1. This mixed assemblage contains both Mesolithic and later prehistoric flintwork. It is recommended that no further work be undertaken on the assemblage, although the flintwork will be retained for possible further study in the future. A handwritten assessment summary is held within the Project Archive (see Section 10.0.).

## 9.0. SUMMARY.

9.1. No *in-situ* deposits, cut features or structures of archaeological significance were discovered during the fieldwork undertaken at Plumpton College. The project also failed to identify a single context of palaeoenvironmental significance.

9.2. Nevertheless, a small assemblage of humanly – struck flint dating to the Mesolithic and later prehistoric periods was recovered from the site. This flintwork adds to the evidence for the Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age exploitation of local 'low – lying' resources previously recorded at Streat (TQ 352 146) (Clarke 1932; Wymer and Bonsall 1977; Butler 2007) Stanton's Farm ( TQ 367 148) (Ainsworth 1988 pers. comm.) and Novington Manor (TQ 370 135) (Butler 1989; Butler and Funnell 1992).

9.3. No evidence for any subsequent Romano–British, Anglo-Saxon or significant *in-situ* medieval settlement / occupation activity was revealed as a result of the fieldwork. The central hub of Plumpton College is located between the site of a former medieval moated homestead and the 12th century church of St. Michael and All Angels (see Section 3.1.). As such the recovery of only two sherds of possible medieval pottery from the investigated deposits (see Section 7.1.4.) is striking. In the late 1980s a programme of archaeological fieldwalking undertaken at Novington Manor gleaned over 1,300 fragments of possible Saxo-Norman - 16th century pottery from four fields found just c.750m. to the east of Plumpton Place (TQ 370 135) (Butler 1989; Butler and Funnell 1992). Perhaps it is here that the primary focus of local medieval settlement lies.

9.4. It is of course regrettable that the footprint of the new college building was excavated / reduced without an archaeologist being present. Fortunately, the results of the fieldwork (in particular the absence of cut features exposed in section or across those areas of still extant topsoil / subsoil) suggest it is

unlikely that any extensive remains of genuine archaeological note were destroyed by the unmonitored groundworks. Even so, the future discovery of *in-situ* archaeologically significant contexts within the grounds of Plumpton College should certainly not be discounted.

9.5. It should be noted that the investigative methodology employed by C. G. Archaeology is judged to have satisfied the Project Objectives set out in Section 4.0. of this report.

## 10.0. ARCHIVE.

10.1. It is intended that the paper and digital written, drawn and photographic records arising from this project will be collated in accordance with *'Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage'* (UKICI 1990) and deposited with the retained flint assemblage, two sherds of medieval pottery and a single clay tobacco pipe stem fragment at Barbican House Museum, Lewes.

## 11.0. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

11.1. C. G. Archaeology would like to thank Greg Chuter the East Sussex County Council Assistant Archaeologist, Mike Barber of MJB Architecture, Westridge Construction Limited and the Plumpton College authorities for their assistance during the project. Figure 11 is based upon a plan drawn – up and supplied to C. G. Archaeology by MJB Architecture.

## 12.0. REFERENCES.

Ainsworth, C. 1988. (*pers. comm.*) (reference found within HER entry MES1331).

Butler, C. 1989. 'The results of a fieldwalking survey at Novington Manor, Plumpton, East Sussex'. *Sussex Archaeological Collections* ***127****, 31 – 38.*

Butler, C. 2005. *'Prehistoric flintwork'*. Tempus Publishing Ltd.

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Butler, C. and Funnell, J. 1992. 'Further fieldwalking at Novington Manor, Plumpton, East Sussex'. *Sussex Archaeological Collections* ***130****, 13 – 21.*

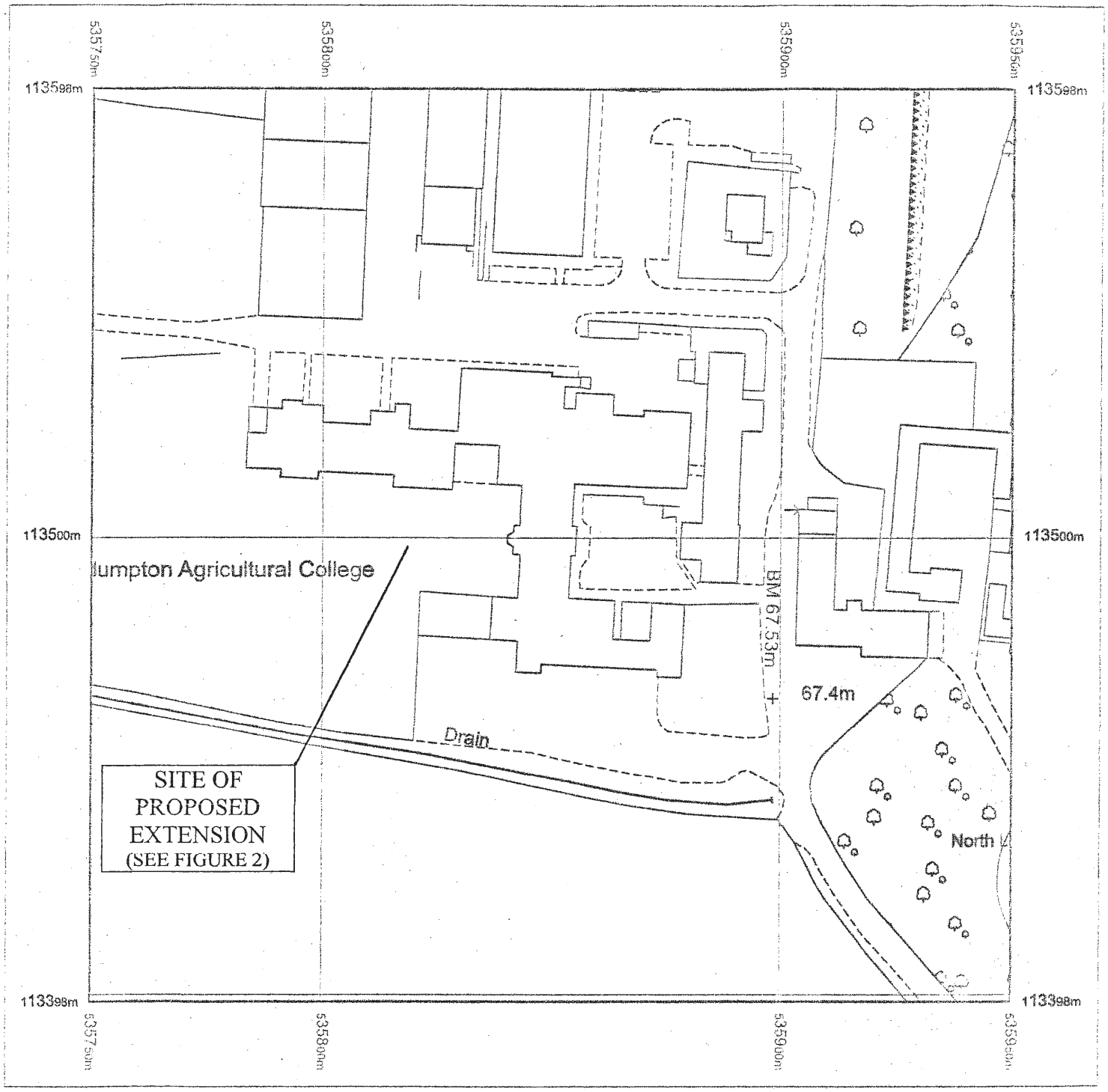
Clark, J. G. D. 1932. *'The Mesolithic Age in Britain'.* Cambridge University Press.

Wymer, J. J. and Bonsall, C. J. 1977. *'Gazetteer of Mesolithic sites in England and Wales with a gazetteer of Upper Palaeolithic sites in England and Wales'.* Council for British Archaeology Research Report No. 20.

## HISTORICAL ENVIRONMENT RECORD SUMMARY SHEET.

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Site Code.** | PAC 08 | | | | | |
| **Site identification and address.** | Plumpton College, Ditchling Road, Plumpton | | | | | |
| **County, district and / or borough.** | East Sussex | | | | | |
| **O.S. grid ref.** | TQ 35810 13490 | | | | | |
| **Geology.** | Head | | | | | |
| **Project number.** | 08 / 05 | | | | | |
| **Fieldwork type.** | **Eval.** X | **Excav.** | **W.Brief.** X | **Survey.** | **Other.** | |
| **Site type.** | **Rural.** | **Urban.** | **Other.** Grounds of college | | | |
| **Date of fieldwork.** | 5th June 2008 – 22nd July 2009 | | | | | |
| **Client.** | Plumpton College | | | | | |
| **Project manager.** | Christopher Greatorex | | | | | |
| **Project supervisor** | Annalie Wood | | | | | |
| **Period summary.** | **Palaeo.** | **Meso.** X | **Neo.** X | **B. Age.** X | **I. Age.** | **R – B.** |
| | **A. S.** | **Med.** X | **P. Med** X | **Other.** | | |

**Project Summary.**
A programme of archaeological recording was undertaken at the site of a proposed west wing extension to Plumpton College. It is regrettable that the footprint of the new college building was excavated / reduced without an archaeologist being present. Fortunately the results of the fieldwork suggest it is unlikely that any extensive remains of genuine archaeological note were destroyed by the unmonitored groundworks. No *in-situ* deposits, cut features or structures of archaeological significance were discovered during the project. However, a small assemblage of humanly – struck flint dating to the Mesolithic and later prehistoric periods was identified. This flintwork adds to the evidence for the Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age exploitation of local 'low – lying' resources previously recorded in the area. No evidence for any subsequent Romano-British, Anglo-Saxon or significant *in-situ* medieval settlement / occupation activity was revealed. Plumpton College is located between the site of a former medieval moated homestead (Plumpton Place) and the 12th century church of St. Michael and All Angels. As such the recovery of only two sherds of medieval pottery from the investigated deposits is striking.




Metres
0 20 40
Scale 1:1250

Figure 1: College location plan (prior to development under discussion)

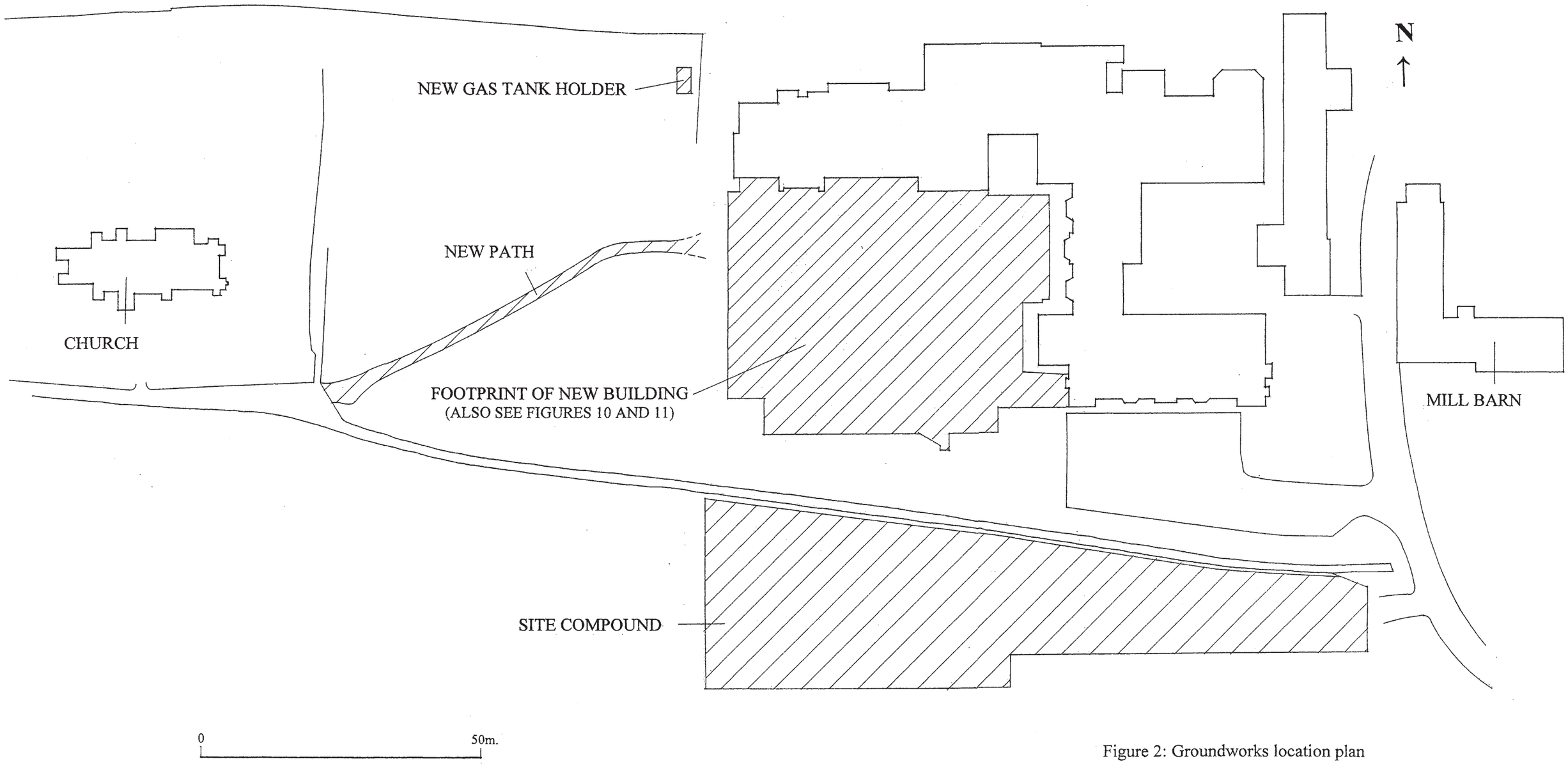



Figure 2: Groundworks location plan

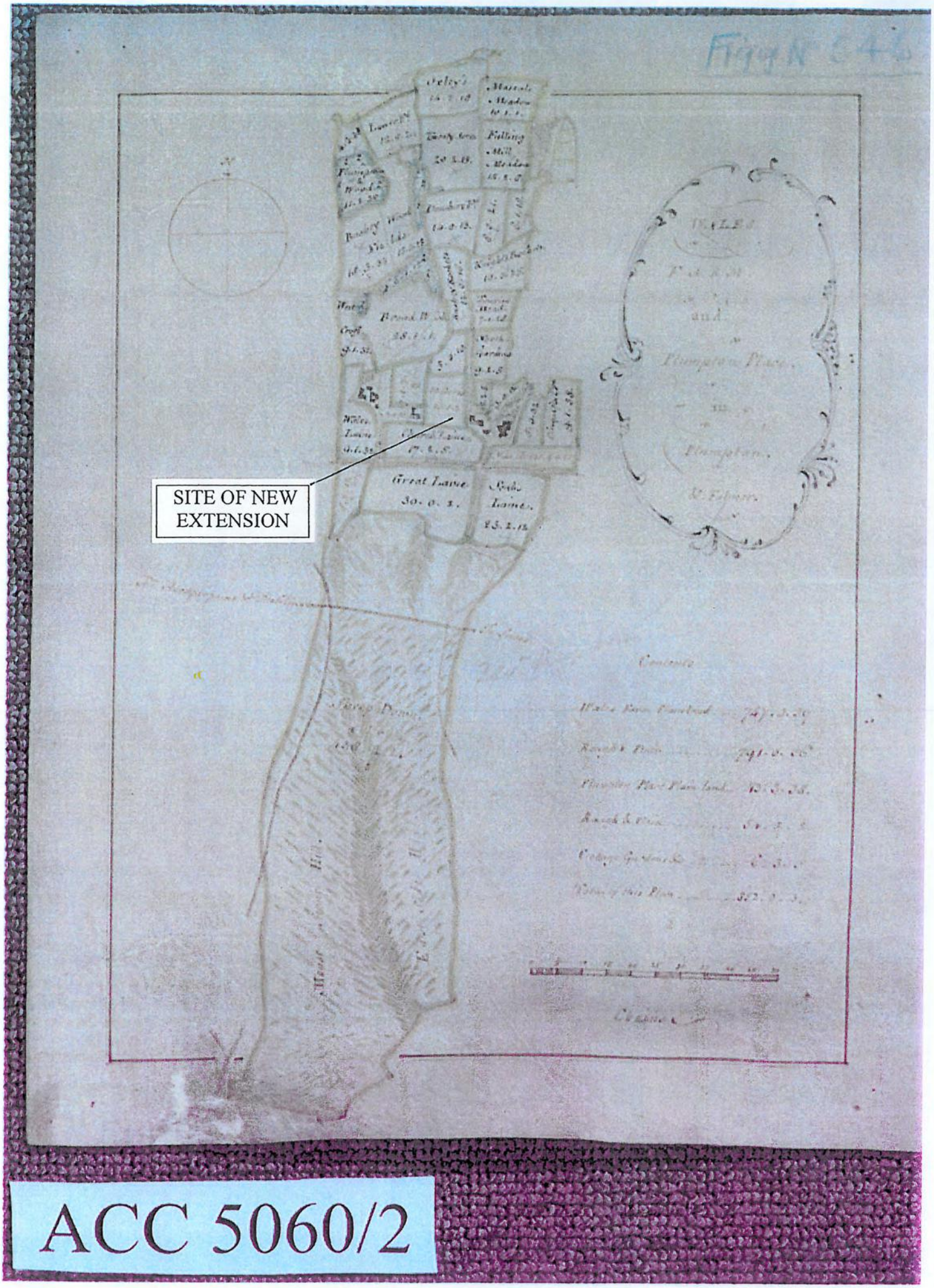





Figure 3: Estate map by Figg (E. S. R. O. ref: 5060/2) c.1735

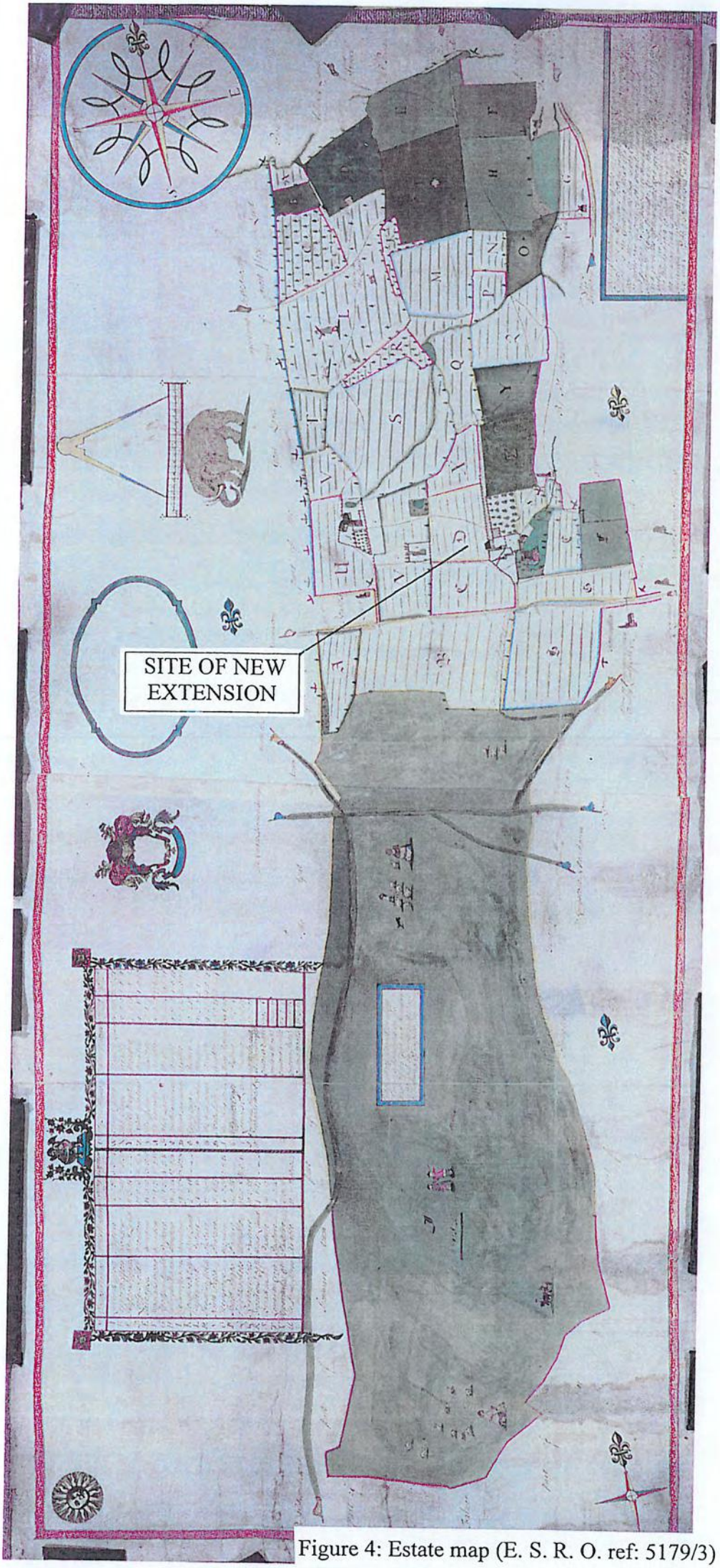



Figure 4: Estate map (E. S. R. O. ref: 5179/3) c.1750

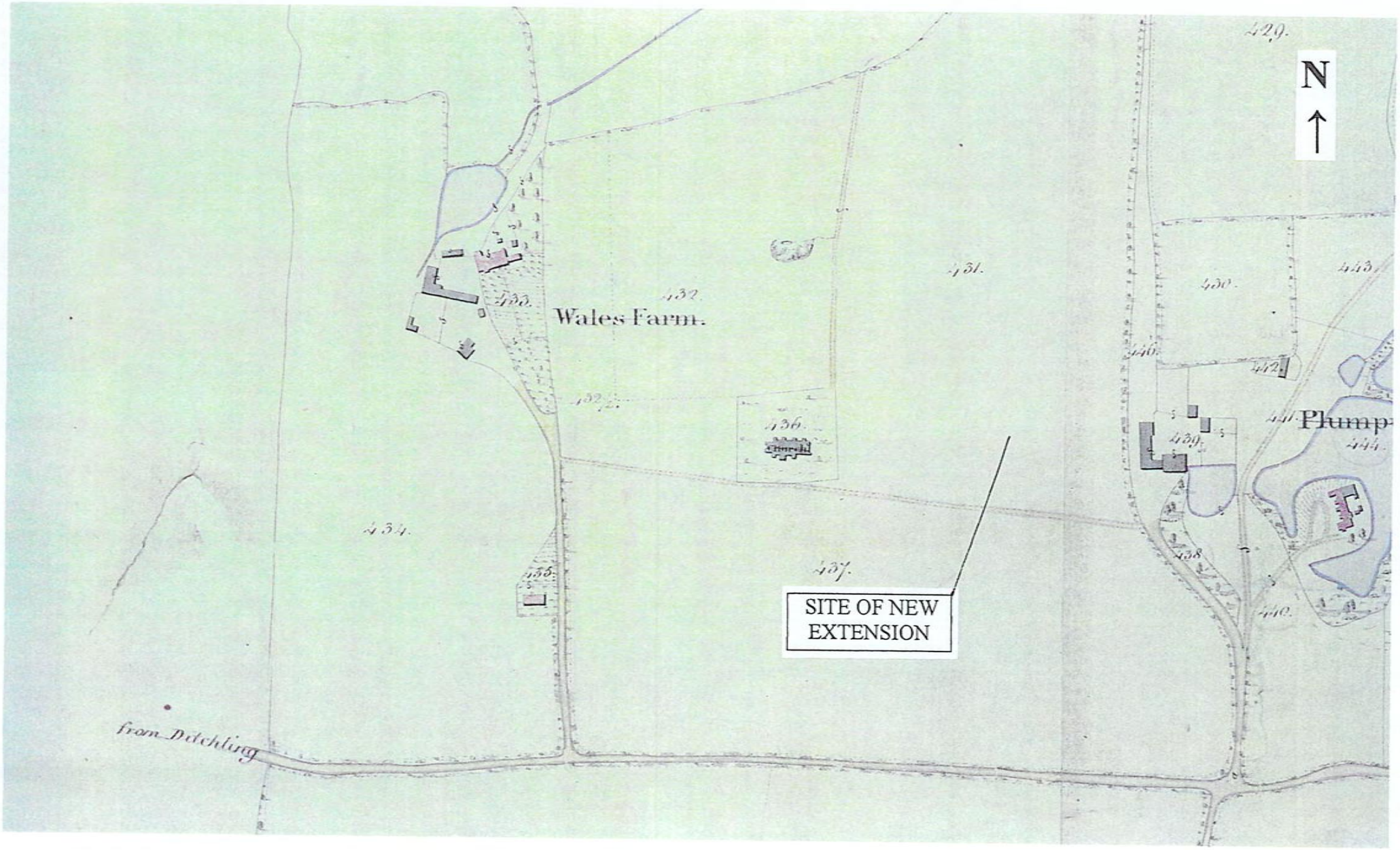



Figure 5: Tithe map for the parish of Plumpton (E. S. R. O. ref: TD/E 95) 1839

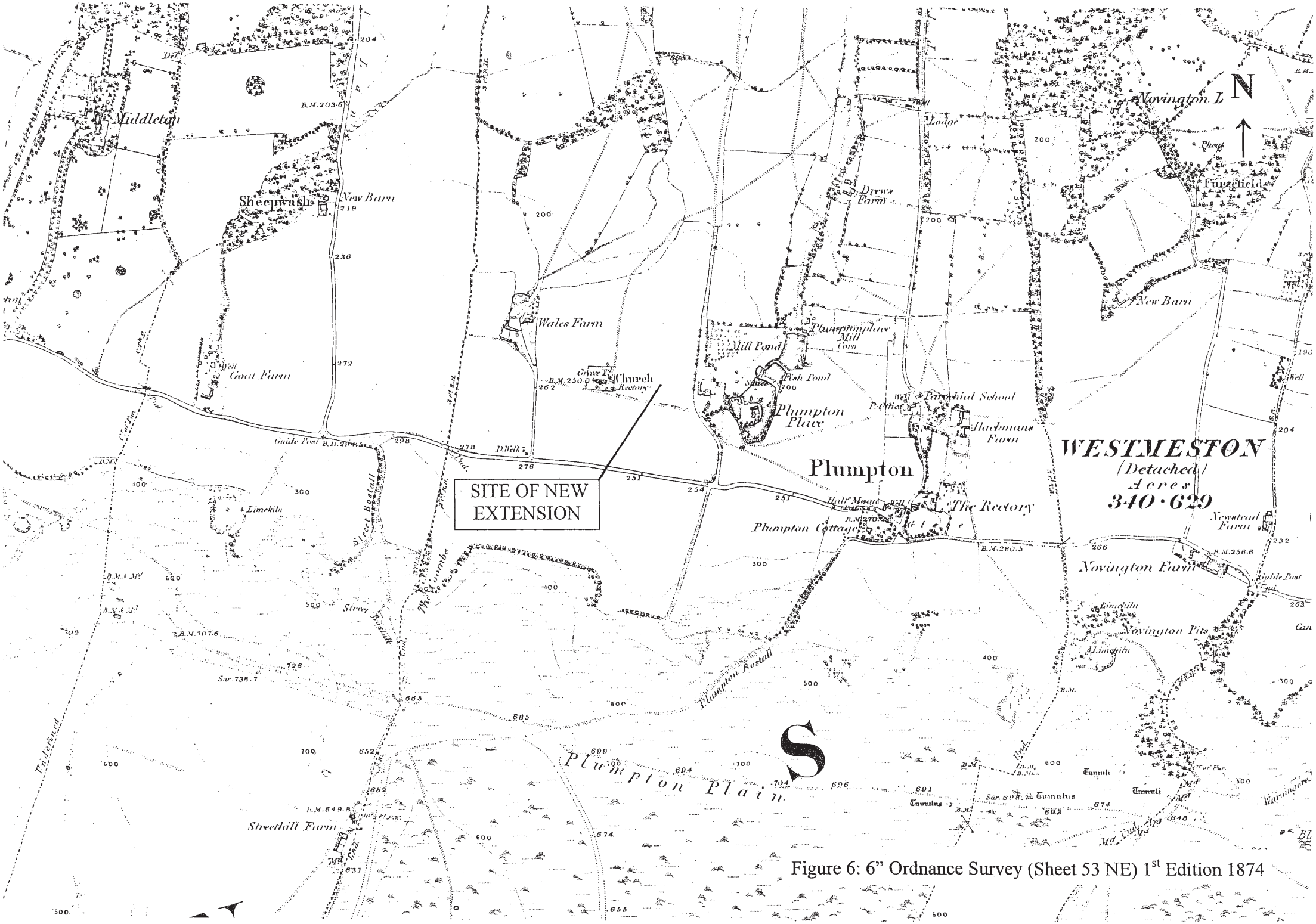



Figure 6: 6" Ordnance Survey (Sheet 53 NE) 1st Edition 1874

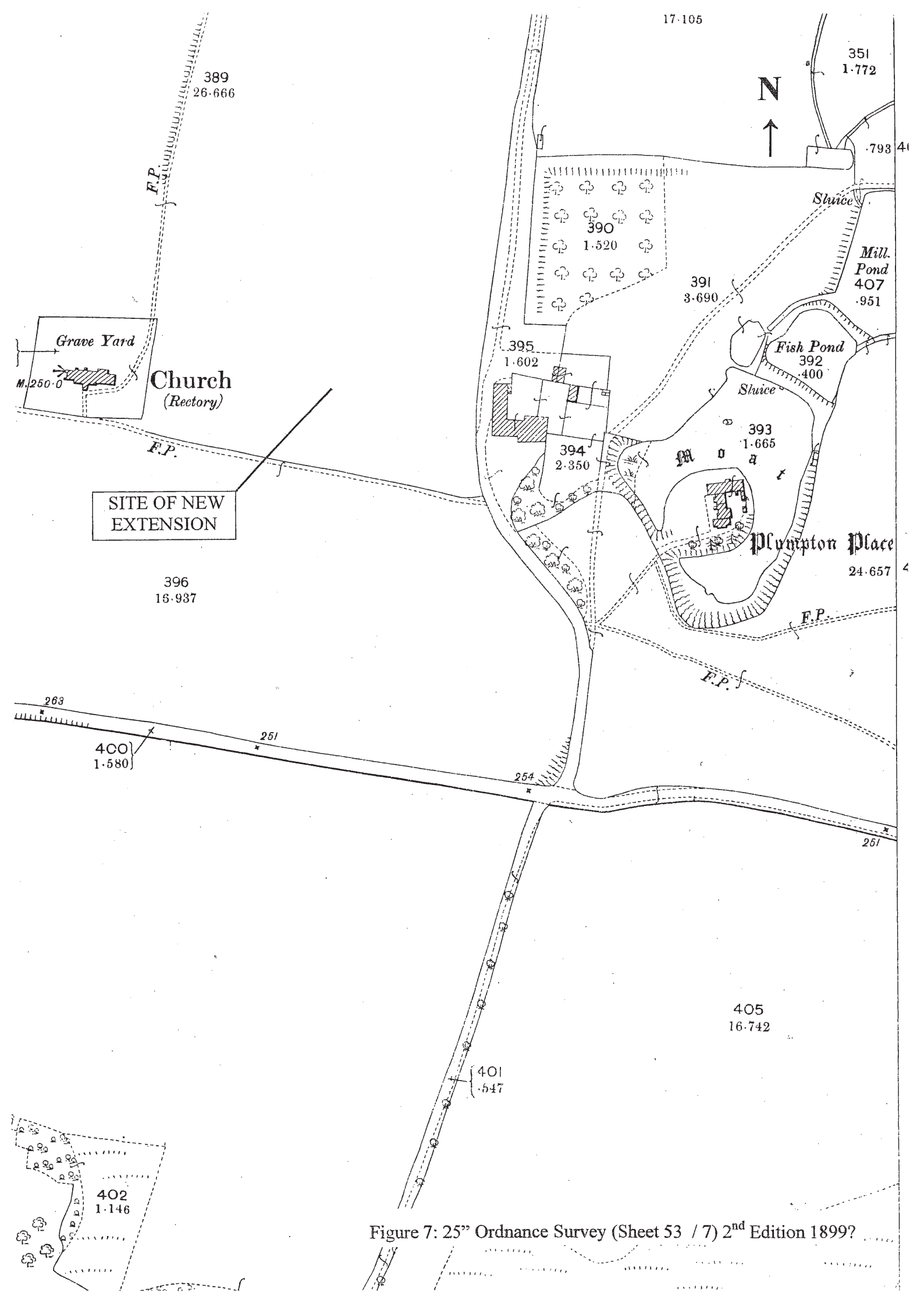



Figure 7: 25" Ordnance Survey (Sheet 53 / 7) 2nd Edition 1899?

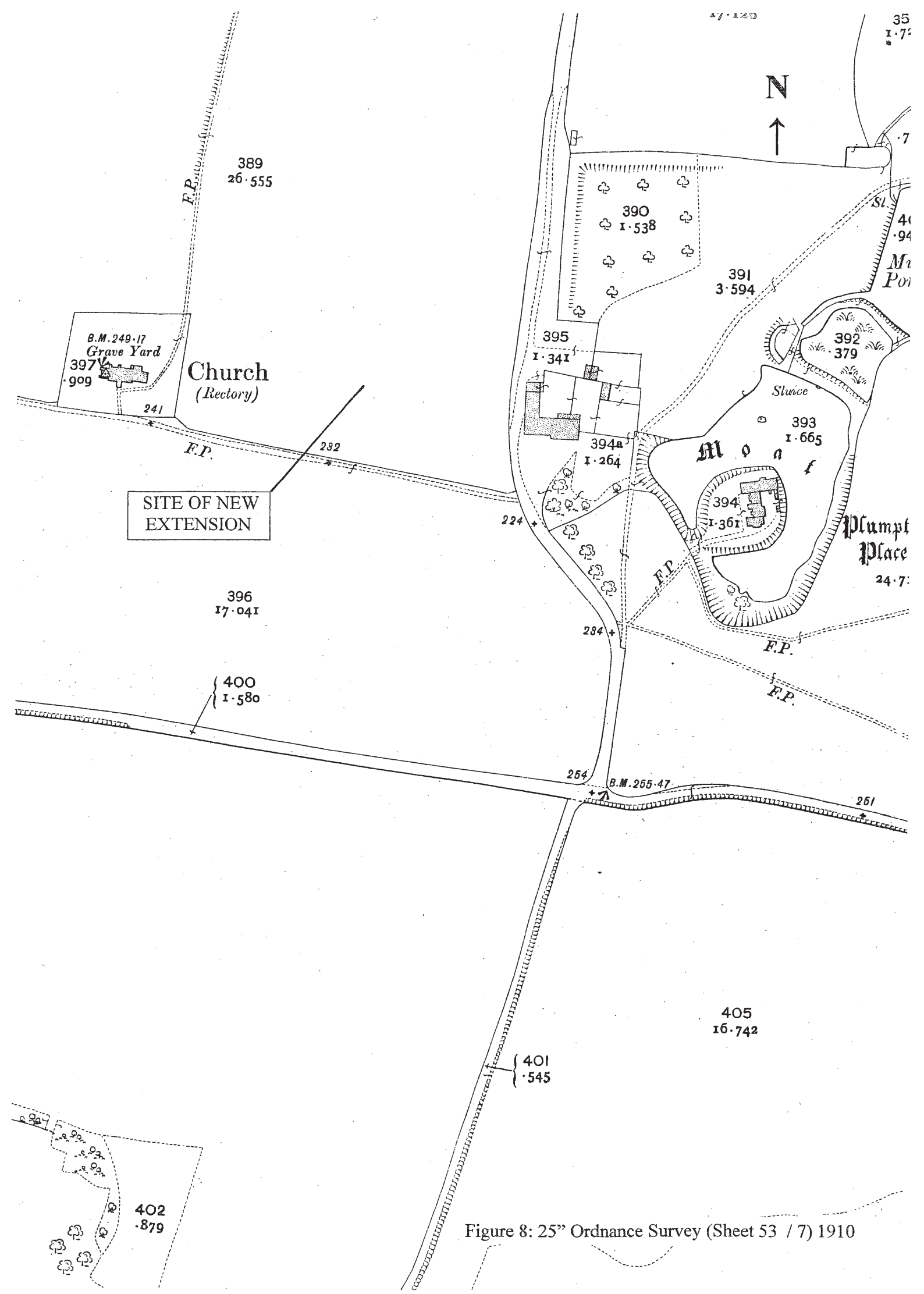



Figure 8: 25" Ordnance Survey (Sheet 53 / 7) 1910


Figure 9: 6" Ordnance Survey (Sheet 53 NE) 1912

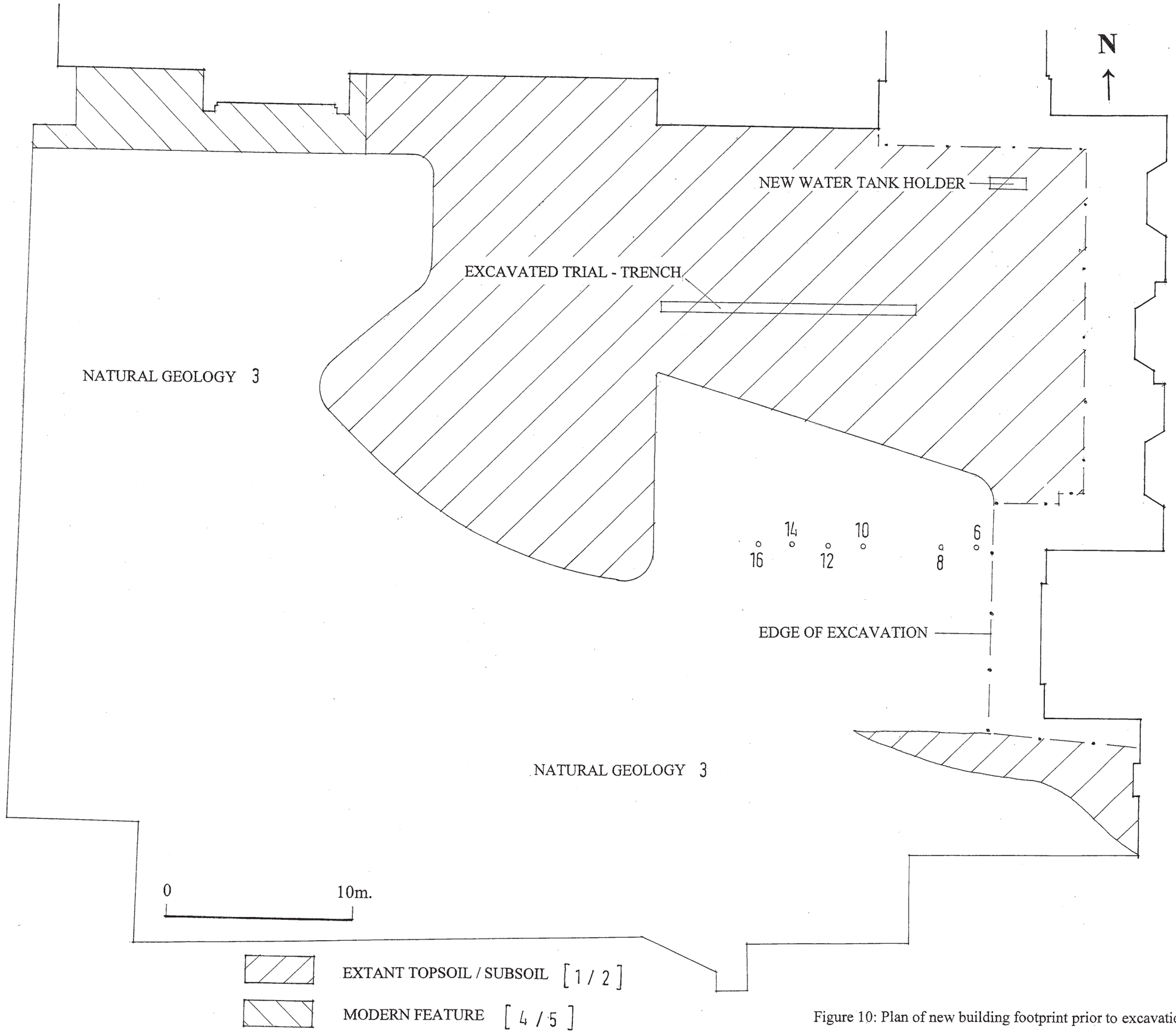



Figure 10: Plan of new building footprint prior to excavation of footings

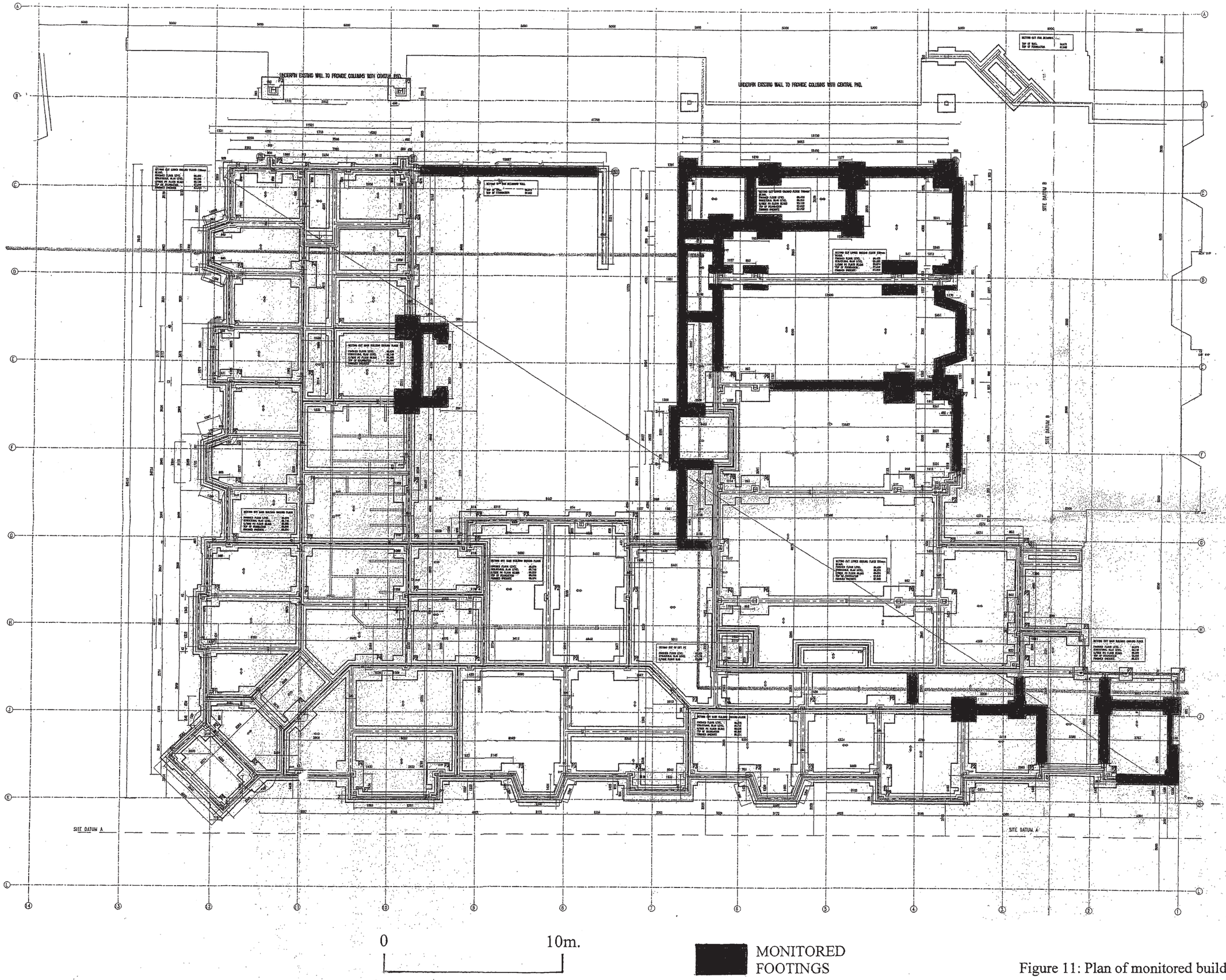



Figure 11: Plan of monitored building footings

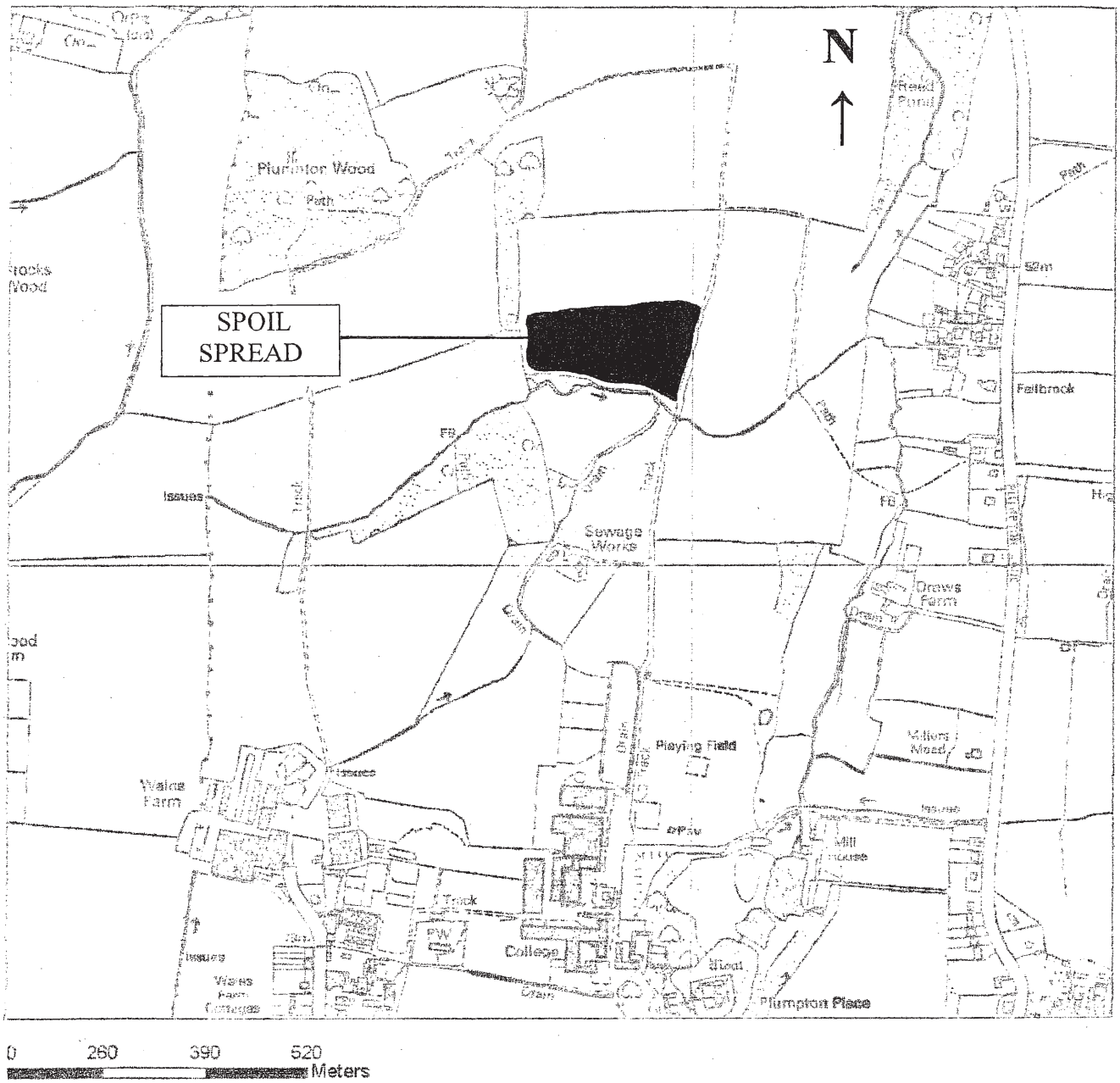



Figure 12: Location of spoil derived from excavation of new building footprint