

**An Archaeological Watching Brief at The Larches,
Stowe Nine Churches, Church Stowe,
Daventry (SP 632 567).**

Stephen Jones

For: Mr and Mrs R Franks

<p>Checked by Project Manager</p> <p>Signed:Date:</p> <p>Name:</p>
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Summary

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by the University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on the 12th October 2004 on behalf of Mr and Mrs R Franks, during groundworks for development on land at The Larches, Stowe Nine Churches, Church Stowe, Daventry, Northamptonshire. The location of the development is situated within a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM NN120), comprising of a series of earthwork banks and ditches, therefore the groundworks had potential to disturb any surviving buried archaeological deposits. Planning permission and Scheduled Monument had been granted on the condition that a scheme of archaeological investigation was implemented, comprising of archaeological attendance for inspection and recording during the groundworks. Survival of a ditch relating to the earthworks was visible to the west of the property during the excavation of the foundation trenches. This was visible as a linear feature c.3.1m wide, c.0.8m deep. No finds were evident.

Introduction

The proposed development for Mr and Mrs R Franks comprises of a three-bedroom house and connecting land at The Larches, Stowe Nine Churches, Church Stowe, Daventry, Northamptonshire (SP 632 567).

As the location of the development is situated within a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM NN120), comprising of a series of earthwork banks and ditches, the groundworks had potential to disturb any surviving buried archaeological deposits. Scheduled Monument Consent had been granted on the condition that a scheme of archaeological investigation was implemented, comprising of archaeological attendance for inspection and recording during the groundworks.

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by the University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on the 12th October 2004.

Aims and Methods

The aim of the work was to ascertain whether any archaeological deposits were present and whether they would be destroyed by the groundworks. Any deposits encountered would be recorded as appropriate. The work followed the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* and the *Design Specification for archaeological work* (ULAS 04/11/2004; Appendix 2).

Results.

The excavation of the foundation trenching (c.1.1m deep, c.0.75m wide, see Figure 2) by JCB was closely monitored. A very dark greyish-brown silty-clay topsoil (Context

1), c.0.4m maximum deep, containing occasional stones and brick fragments was observed. Below this a natural substratum (Context 4) was also evident; generally consisting of bright yellow sand containing occasional layers or lenses of orange or white sand with occasional fragments of sandstone, more frequent in the eastern extent of the site.

In the profile of the western extent of the foundation trenching (S1:01, See Figure 4) an area of slightly disturbed natural (Context 5) was also observed at a maximum depth of c.1m. A linear feature (Contexts 6, 7), some 3.2m wide c.0.75m deep, was also visible in this area, consisting of dark orangey brown sandy silt with occasional roots and medium stones and pebbles. The eastern extent of this feature was also visible in the footings to the south (S1:02, Fig 4). Immediately to the west of the linear feature another possible feature (Context 3), c.1.15m wide, c.0.7m deep, containing orange brown silty sand was also visible, containing occasional small pebbles and sandstone fragments. This was not visible however in the opposite face of the foundation trench. Adjacent to this an area of disturbed pale orange brown silty sand (Context 2), c.0.75m deep was also evident, containing abundant root disturbance.

A former drain was also visible to truncate the topsoil, running approximately north south through the central area of the development. No other features were observed during the machining.

No finds were recovered.

Conclusion

The Scheduled Ancient Monument comprises a series of earthwork banks and ditches (SAM NN120), surviving for a length of c. 200m, with continuation to the north as a cropmark. It is believed to form part of a prehistoric landscape boundary system of possible Late Bronze Age to Iron Age date identified in the East Midlands and often described as 'Triple Ditches' (Pickering 1978).

The linear feature (Contexts 6, 7) appears to relate to a ditch within the earthworks of the SAM. Unfortunately no dating evidence was found during the watching brief which could confirm a prehistoric, or other, date. The layers of disturbed natural substratum or subsoil visible directly west of this feature (Contexts 2 and 4) may relate to the bank construction of the earthwork, whilst (Context 3) could be associated with a pit. No evidence of a further ditch was visible within the footings to the east extent of the site, suggesting that survival of a third ditch, visible as part of the earthworks in the woodland to the southeast, appears to terminate just before entering the area of the property. It is also worth noting that on the SAM Records the ditch is not visible to survive to the north of the development area (See Figure 2).

Archive

The archive consists of one annotated plan, a sheet of permagraph containing 1:50 sketch sections, site notes and colour transparency slides. Deposition details are to be finalised.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Mr and Mrs R Franks for their help and co-operation with this watching brief. The project was managed by Patrick Clay.

Bibliography

Pickering , J., 1978 'The Jurassic Spine' *Current Archaeology* **64**, 140-143.

Stephen Jones
03.11.2004

ULAS Report 2004-171

Appendix 1

Context Number	Feature Type	Description	Comments
1	Topsoil	Very dark greyish brown silty topsoil	
2	Layer	Disturbed pale orange brown silty sand. Occ. Root disturbance	Possible remains of bank of earthwork?
3	Feature? Pit?	Orange brown very silty sand	Not visible on opposite side on footings section to south
4	Natural	Bright yellow sand containing occasional layers of orange or white sands and sandstone. Very soft.	Paler to the east extent of site.
5	Layer	Disturbed Natural	Subsoil/Earthwork bank make-up
6	Ditch Fill	Dark orangey brown sandy silt. Quite frequent roots. Occasional medium stones and pebbles.	
7	Ditch Cut	Cut for above feature	

Appendix 2

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

Design Specification for Archaeological Watching Brief

The Larches, Stowe Nine Churches, Church Stowe,

Daventry, Northamptonshire SP 632 567

Client: Mr and Mrs R Franks

1. Introduction

1.1 *Definition and scope of the specification*

In accordance with Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (PPG16, Archaeology and Planning), para.30, and the conditions placed on planning permission, this specification constitutes a 'written scheme of archaeological investigation' which ULAS intends to implement on behalf of the Client in mitigation of any damage which may be caused to buried archaeological remains from the development. The scheme addresses the requirements for the Scheduled Monument Consent granted by the Dept of Culture, Media and Sport (HSD 9/2/6339; 3.2. 25.5.2004).

1.2 The purpose of a watching brief, as laid down in the Institute of Field Archaeologists *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*:

- 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.
- 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 treatment.

1.3 This document provides a scheme of works for:

Archaeological attendance during groundworks. Based on the results of this work further levels of work may be required.

2. Aims and Objectives

2.1 *Aim*

It is the aim, that through archaeological observation of groundworks by the client's contractors. ULAS will obtain an adequate record of any archaeological deposits or finds disturbed or exposed by all areas disturbed by work associated with the development or assess whether further work is required.

2.2 *Objectives*

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
- To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed ground works.
- To excavate and record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the ground works.
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

3. Background

- 3.1 The application area lies within a Scheduled Ancient Monument of a series of earthwork banks and ditches (SAM NN120), surviving for a length of c. 200m, with continuation to the north as a cropmark. It forms part of a prehistoric landscape boundary system of possible Late Bronze Age to Iron Age date identified in the East Midlands and often described as 'Triple Ditches' (Pickering 1978). Sections across the earthwork have not confirmed its date.
- 3.2 Planning permission and Scheduled Monument Consent has been granted with the condition that a scheme of archaeological investigation is implemented, comprising archaeological attendance for inspection and recording during groundworks, a 'watching brief'.

4 Methodology

4.1 General Methodology and Standards

- 4.1.1 All work will follow the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) Code of Conduct and adhere to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*. The project will be managed by a Member of the IFA (P. Clay).
- 4.1.2 Staffing, Recording systems, Health and Safety provisions and Insurance details are included below.
- 4.1.3 Internal monitoring procedures will be undertaken including visits, where appropriate, to the site by the project manager. These will ensure that project targets are being met and professional standards are being maintained. Provision will be made for external monitoring meetings with the Planning authority and the client, if required.
- 4.1.4 The project will involve the presence on site of an archaeologist to observe any groundworks and prepare a record of significant features by photography, drawings and written account as appropriate. The archaeologist will cooperate at all times with the contractors to ensure that their work is not delayed or hindered. However, if any archaeological deposits are seen to be present, the archaeologist will have the power to temporarily halt the works in order to define and record areas of archaeological importance.
- 4.1.5 Any archaeological deposits encountered will be recorded and excavated using standard ULAS procedures (see section 5 below).
- 4.1.6 In the event that unforeseen archaeological discoveries are made during the development, ULAS shall have the power to halt any ground works and shall inform the site agent/project manager, the Planning Archaeologist and Planning Authority and prepare a short written statement with plan detailing the archaeological evidence. Following assessment of the archaeological remains by the Planning Archaeologist, the Archaeological Contractor shall, if required, implement on behalf of the Client a contingency scheme for emergency excavation of affected archaeological features. The latter will be specified in a supplement to this specification.

5. Recording Systems

- 5.1 The ULAS recording manual will be used as a guide for all recording.
- 5.2 Individual descriptions of all archaeological strata and features excavated or exposed will be entered onto pro-forma recording sheets.
- 5.3 A site location plan based on the current Ordnance Survey map (reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO) will be prepared. This will be supplemented by detail plans at an appropriate scale which will show the location of the areas investigated in relation to the site and OS grid.

5.4 A record of the full extent in plan of all significant archaeological deposits encountered will be made on drawing film, related to the OS grid at an appropriate scale (typically 1:20). Sections including the half-sections of individual layers of features will be drawn as necessary. The OD height of all principal strata and features will be calculated and indicated on the appropriate plans.

5.5 An adequate photographic record of the investigations will be prepared illustrating in both detail and general context the principal features and finds discovered. The photographic record will also include 'working shots' to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological operation mounted.

5.6 This record will be compiled and fully checked during the course of the excavations.

6. Environmental Sampling

6.1 If significant archaeological features are subject to excavation, the sampling strategy will include the following:

A range of features to represent all feature types, areas and phases will be selected on a judgmental basis. The criteria for selection will be that deposits are datable, well sealed and with little intrusive or residual material.

Any buried soils or well-sealed deposits with concentrations of carbonised material present will be intensively sampled taking a known proportion of the deposit.

Spot samples will be taken where concentrations of environmental remains are located. In particular charcoal within any tree throw pits will be sampled. Depending on the results of the watching brief provision will be made for up to 12 accelerator radiocarbon dates ('Brief' 2.5).

Waterlogged remains, if present, will be sampled for pollen, plant macrofossils, insect remains and radiocarbon dating provided that they are uncontaminated and datable. Consultation with the specialist will be undertaken.

7. Finds and Samples

7.1 The IFA *Standards and Guidance* for Finds Work will be adhered to.

7.2 All antiquities, valuables, objects or remains of archaeological interest, other than articles declared by Coroner's Inquest to be subject to the Treasure Act, discovered in or under the Site during the carrying out of the project by ULAS or during works carried out on the Site by the Client shall be deemed to be the property of ULAS provided that ULAS after due examination of the said Archaeological Discoveries shall transfer ownership of all Archaeological Discoveries unconditionally to an approved Museum for storage in perpetuity.

7.3 Before commencing work on the site, a site code shall be agreed with the planning archaeologist.

7.4 During the fieldwork, different sampling strategies may be employed according to the perceived importance of the strata under investigation. Close attention will always be given to sampling for date, structure and environment. In particular charcoal within any tree throw pits will be sampled together with other dating evidence (e.g pottery, flint) for this activity.

7.5 All identified finds and artefacts are to be retained, although certain classes of building material will, in some circumstances, be discarded after recording with the approval of the Planning Archaeologists. The IFA *Guidelines for Finds Work* will be adhered to.

7.6 All finds and samples will be treated in a proper manner. Where appropriate they will be cleaned, marked and receive remedial conservation in accordance with recognised best practice. This will include the Site code number, finds number and

context number. Bulk finds will be bagged in clear self sealing plastic bags, again marked with Site code, finds and context numbers and boxed by material in standard storage boxes (340mm x 270mm x 195mm). All metal objects will be x-rayed and then selected for conservation. All materials will be fully labelled, catalogued and stored in appropriate containers.

8. Health and Safety

- 8.1 ULAS is covered by and adheres to the University of Leicester Statement of Safety Policy and the ULAS Health and Safety Policy (2001). Generic risk assessments and relevant legislation guidelines are contained within the ULAS Health and Safety Manual (2001). This augments and updates the Standing Committee of Archaeological Unit Managers (SCAUM) Health and Safety Manual (1997).
- 8.2 Health and Safety procedures will be agreed between ULAS and the site tenants prior to the commencement of work, and will be subject to review by both parties for the duration of the works.
- 8.3 The HSE have advised the Institute of Field Archaeologists that archaeological investigations are exempt from CDM regulations.

9. Insurance

- 9.1 All employees, consultants and volunteers are covered by the University of Leicester public liability insurance with Gerling Insurance Service Co. Ltd. and others (leading policy no. 62/99094/D). Professional indemnity insurance is with Sun Alliance, £10m cover, policy no. 03A/SA 001 05978. Employer's Liability Insurance is with Eagle Star, cover £10m.

10. Monitoring arrangements

- 10.1 Unlimited access to monitor the project will be available to both the Client and his representatives and Planning Archaeologist subject to the health and safety requirements of the site.
- 10.2 All monitoring shall be carried out in accordance with the IFA *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*.
- 10.3 Internal monitoring will be carried out by the ULAS project manager.

11. Report and Archive

- 11.1 The full report in A4 format will follow within 6 months and copies will be dispatched to: Sites and Monuments Record (1), Planning Archaeologist (1), National Monuments Record (1), Planning Authority (1), Client (2). The report will include consideration of –

The aims and methods adopted in the course of the watching brief.

The nature, location, extent, date, significance and quality of any structural, artefactual and environmental material uncovered.

The anticipated degree of survival of archaeological deposits.

The anticipated archaeological impact of the current proposals.

Appropriate illustrative material including maps, plans, sections, drawings and photographs.

Summary. A summary will also be included as part of the OASIS entry.

The location and size of the archive.

A quantitative and qualitative assessment of the potential of the archive for further analysis leading to full publication, following guidelines laid down in *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage).

- 11.3 A full copy of the archive as defined in *The Guidelines For The Preparation Of Excavation Archives For Long-Term Storage* (UKIC 1990), and *Standards In The Museum: Care Of Archaeological Collections* (MGC 1992) and *Guidelines for the Preparation of Site Archives and Assessments for all Finds* (other than fired clay objects) (Roman Finds Group and Finds Research Group AD 700-1700 1993) will be presented to an approved local Museum. This archive will include all written, drawn and photographic records and finds relating directly to the investigations undertaken. Where there are no finds, the archive will be deposited with the Northamptonshire SMR.
- 11.4 A summary of the results of the project will be submitted for inclusion in the next available issue of an appropriate archaeological journal.
- 11.5 The copyright of all original finished documents shall remain vested in ULAS and ULAS will be entitled as of right to publish any material in any form produced as a result of its investigations.

12. Acknowledgement and publicity

- 12.1 ULAS shall acknowledge the contribution of the Client in any displays, broadcasts or publications relating to the site or in which the report may be included.
- 12.2 ULAS and the Client shall each ensure that a senior employee shall be responsible for dealing with any enquiries received from press, television and any other broadcasting media and members of the public. All enquiries made to ULAS shall be directed to the Client for comment.

13. Staffing

- 13.1 Archaeological attendance will be for the duration of groundworks likely to affect buried archaeological remains. It is envisaged that one suitably qualified archaeologist will be in attendance, supplemented by others should emergency excavation be required.

14. Bibliography

MAP 2, The management of archaeological projects 2nd edition English Heritage 1991

MGC 1992, Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections 1992 (Museums and Galleries Commission)

Pickering, J., 1978 'The Jurassic Spine' *Current Archaeology* **64**, 140-143.

RFG/FRG 1993, Guidelines for the preparation of site archives (Roman Finds Group and Finds Research Group AD 700-1700 1993)

SMA 1993, Selection, retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections. Guidelines for use in England, Wales and Northern Ireland 1993 (Society of Museum Archaeologists)

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APPENDIX 1

Draft Project Health and Safety Policy Statement

A risks assessment will be produced by on-site staff prior to commencement, which will be updated and amended during the course of the evaluation.

1. Nature of the work

- 1.1 The work will involve observation of machine excavation during daylight hours to reveal underlying archaeological deposits. Overall depth is likely to be *c.* 0.5 m with possible features excavated to a depth of another 1m. Remaining works will involve the examination of the exposed surface with hand tools (shovels, trowels etc) and excavation of archaeological features. Deeper features will be fenced with lamp irons and hazard tape.

2 Draft Risks Assessment

2.1 *Working on an excavation site.*

Precautions. Trenches to be stepped, if necessary, to ensure that the depth does not exceed 1.2m. Spoil will be kept 1.5m away from the edge of the excavated area to prevent falls of loose debris. Loose spoil heaps will not be walked on. Protective footwear will be worn at all times. Hard hats will be worn when working in deeper sections or with plant. A member of staff qualified in First Aid will be present at all times. First aid kit to be kept in site accommodation/vehicle. Vehicle and mobile phone to be kept on site in case of emergency.

2.2 *Working with plant.*

Precautions. Archaeologists experienced in working with machines will supervise topsoil stripping at all times. Hard hats, protective footwear and hazard jackets will be worn at all times. Machine driver to be suitably qualified and insured. If services or wells are encountered machining will be halted until extent has been established by hand excavation or areas where it is safe to machine have been established.

2.3 *Working within areas prone to waterlogging.*

If waterlogging occurs on site preventing work continuing it is proposed to excavate a sump, suitably fenced and clearly marked to enable the water to drain away. If this is insufficient a pump will be used. The sump will be covered when not in use and backfilled if no longer required. Protective clothing will be worn at all times and precautions taken to prevent contact with stagnant water which may carry Wiells disease or similar.

2.4 *Working with chemicals.*

If chemicals are used to conserve or help lift archaeological material these will only be used by qualified personnel with protective clothing (i.e. a trained conservator) and will be removed from site immediately after use.

2.5 *Other risks*

Precautions. If there is any suspicion of unforeseen hazards being encountered e.g. chemical contaminants, unexploded bombs, hazardous gases, work will cease immediately. The client and relevant public authorities will be informed immediately.

2.6 *Other constraints*

All trenches will be located at least 1.5m away from existing buildings. All trenches will be located at least 15m from the stream course on the north western part of the site. No other constraints are recognised over the nature of the soil, water, type of excavation, sources of vibration and contamination.

3. Insurance details



Corporate Division

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

P.O. Box 35
9 South Parade
Leeds LS1 1JW
Tel: (0113) 2915010
Fax: (0113) 2830251
E-Mail: sam.nappey@ars.aon.co.uk

7 August 2004

Our Ref: EU/SN/Ext 5010

Dear Sirs

University of Leicester – Liability Insurances

We act as Insurance Brokers for the above and can confirm that we have arranged on their behalf the following liability insurances:-

Employers Liability

Insurer : Zurich Insurance
Policy Number : J0198732
Expiry Date : 31 July 2002
Indemnity Limit: : £10,000,000 any one occurrence
Extension : Indemnity to Principal

Public Liability

Insurer : Gerling Insurance Service Company Ltd
Policy Number : 62/99094H/D
Expiry Date : 31 July 2002
Indemnity Limit: : £10,000,000 any one occurrence
£10,000,000 any one period for Products

Liability :
Extension : Indemnity to Principal
Liability assumed under Contract or

Agreement

We trust that the above information is sufficient for your needs if not, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully

Miss Sam Nappey
Account Handler
Education Unit



Corporate Division

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

P.O. Box 35
9 South Parade
Leeds LS1 1JW
Tel: (0113) 2915010
Fax: (0113) 2830251
E-Mail: sam.nappey@ars.aon.co.uk

7 August 2004

Our Ref: EU/SN/Ext 5010

Dear Sirs

University of Leicester – Professional Indemnity Insurance

We act as Insurance Brokers for the above and can confirm that we have arranged on their behalf the following insurance:-

Insurer : Royal & Sun Alliance Insurance London
Policy Number : PI45000A
Expiry Date : 31 July 2002
Indemnity Limit: : £10,000,000 any one claim and in all

We trust that the above information is sufficient for your needs if not, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sam Nappey', is written over a horizontal line.

Miss Sam Nappey
Account Handler
Education Unit

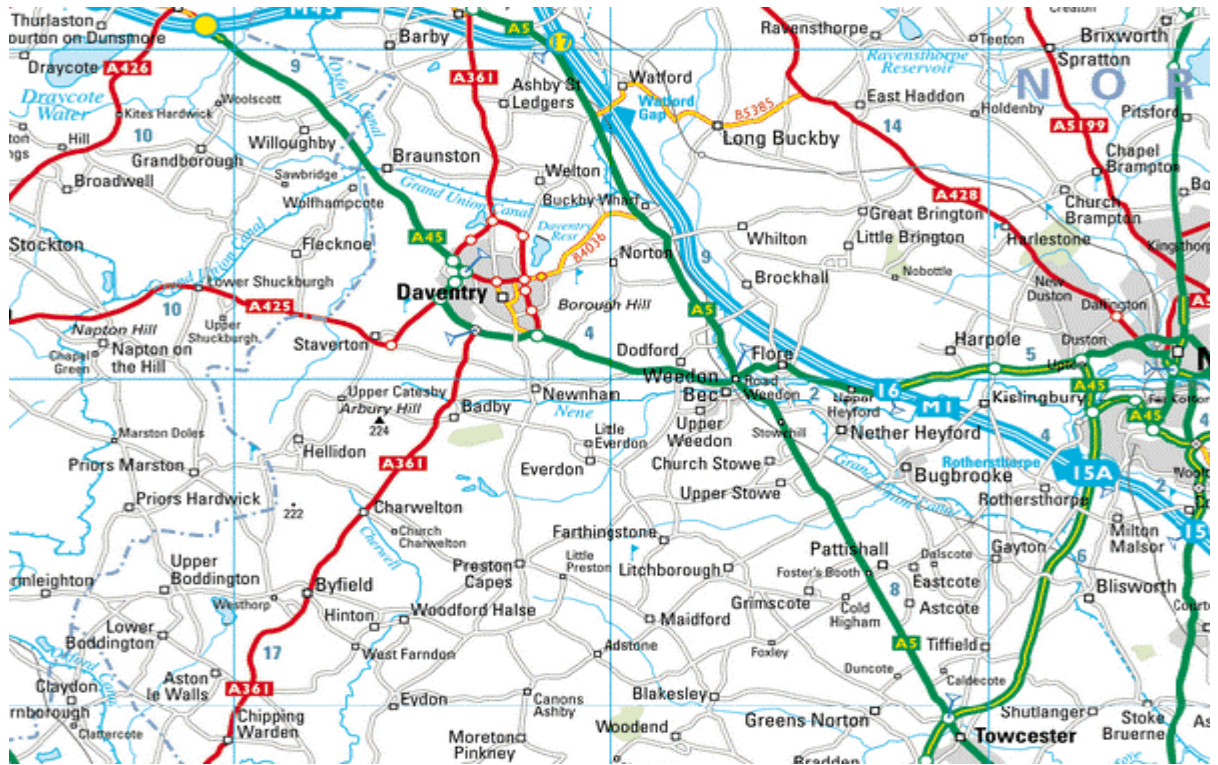


Figure 1. Location map of area, showing Church Stowe.
Scale 1:200000

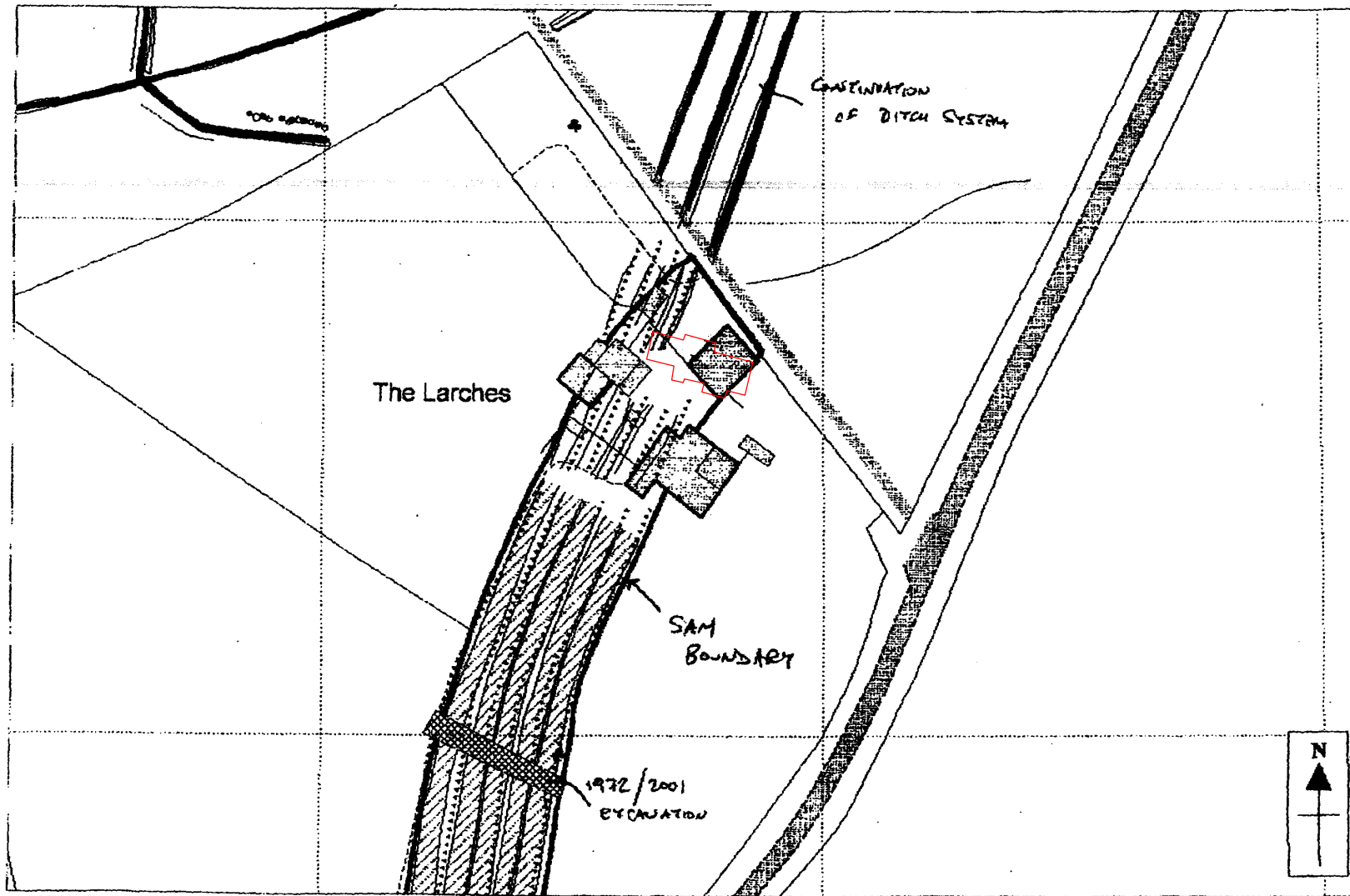


Figure 2 : Location of development in relation to Scheduled Ancient Monument.
(Taken from Northamptonshire County Council Map : Licence No. 100019331. Scale 1:1000)

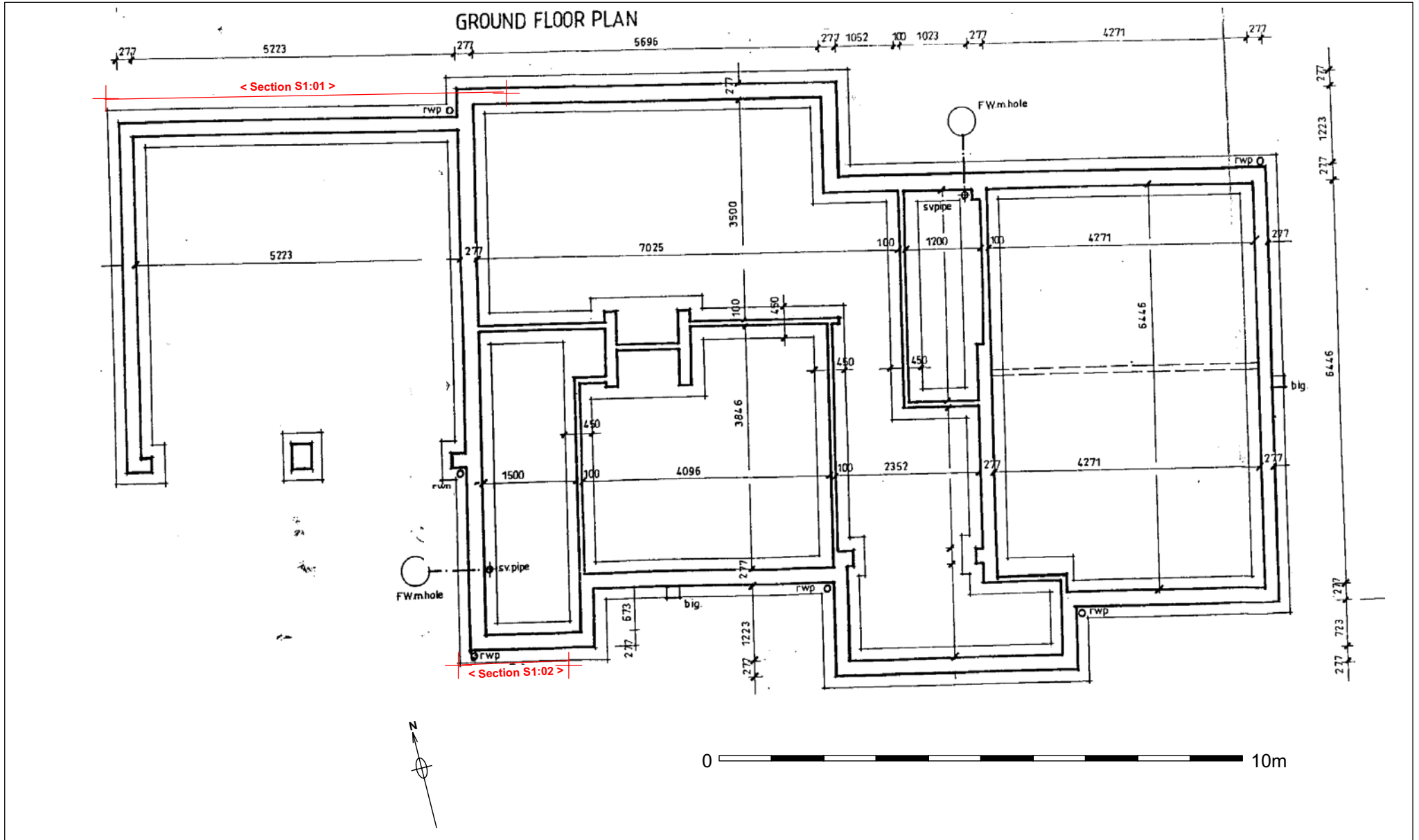


Figure 3 : Architects plan showing foundation plan and location of sections S1:01 and S1:02 Scale 1:100

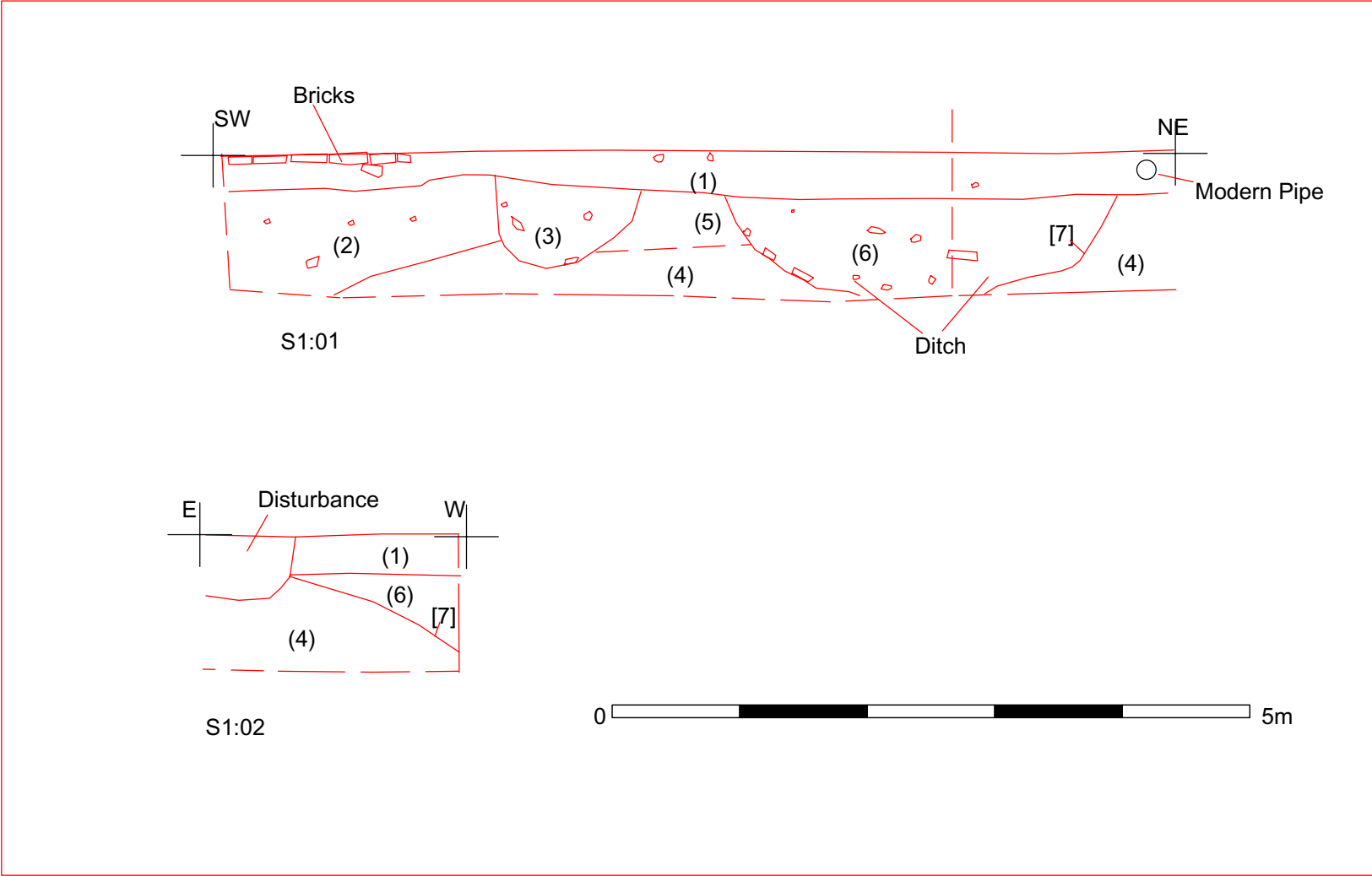


Figure 4 : Sections visible in footings of development showing ditch (6)[7] Scale 1:50



Plate 1 Showing profile of ditch (6)[7], facing northwest.



Plate 2 Showing profile of eastern extent of ditch (6)[7], facing southwest.

