

An Archaeological Watching Brief at Manor Farm, Sheldon, Derbyshire



Scheduled Bronze Age burial mound situated to the south-west
of the development site

ARS Ltd Report 2014/29
February 2014

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Executive summary

In January 2014 Archaeological Research Services Ltd. was commissioned by Mark Taberner to undertake an archaeological watching brief Manor Farm, Sheldon, Derbyshire. The monitoring was carried out during ground works relating to the construction of an agricultural building to house livestock, measuring 502m².

The development is situated within 50m of a scheduled burial mound, and a medieval boundary bank occurs within 30m of the site of the building. The work had been requested by the Senior Conservation Archaeologist for the Peak District National Park Authority and required an archaeologist to be on site to observe all ground works and to ensure preservation by record of any archaeological deposits discovered.

No archaeological features, deposits or small finds were identified within the extent of excavation.

1 Introduction

1.1 Location and Scope of Work

1.1.1 In January 2014 Archaeological Research Services Ltd. was commissioned by Mark Taberner to undertake an archaeological watching brief Manor Farm, Sheldon, Derbyshire. The monitoring was carried out during ground works relating to the construction of an agricultural building to house livestock, measuring 502m². The development (planning ref: NP/DDD/1213/1071) is situated close to a scheduled Bronze Age burial mound and a medieval boundary bank. The work had been requested by the Senior Conservation Archaeologist for the Peak District National Park Authority and required an archaeologist to be on site to observe all ground works and to ensure preservation by record of any archaeological deposits discovered.

1.1.2 The ground works involved the removal of topsoil followed by the digging of 23 foundation holes for the insertion of the posts that make up the framework of the building.

1.1.3 The site is centred at NGR SK 16964 69034, and lies slightly to the north-east of the village of Sheldon.

1.2 Geology

1.2.1 The solid geology of the site comprises limestone of the Monsal Dale Limestone Formation (British Geological Survey 2014).

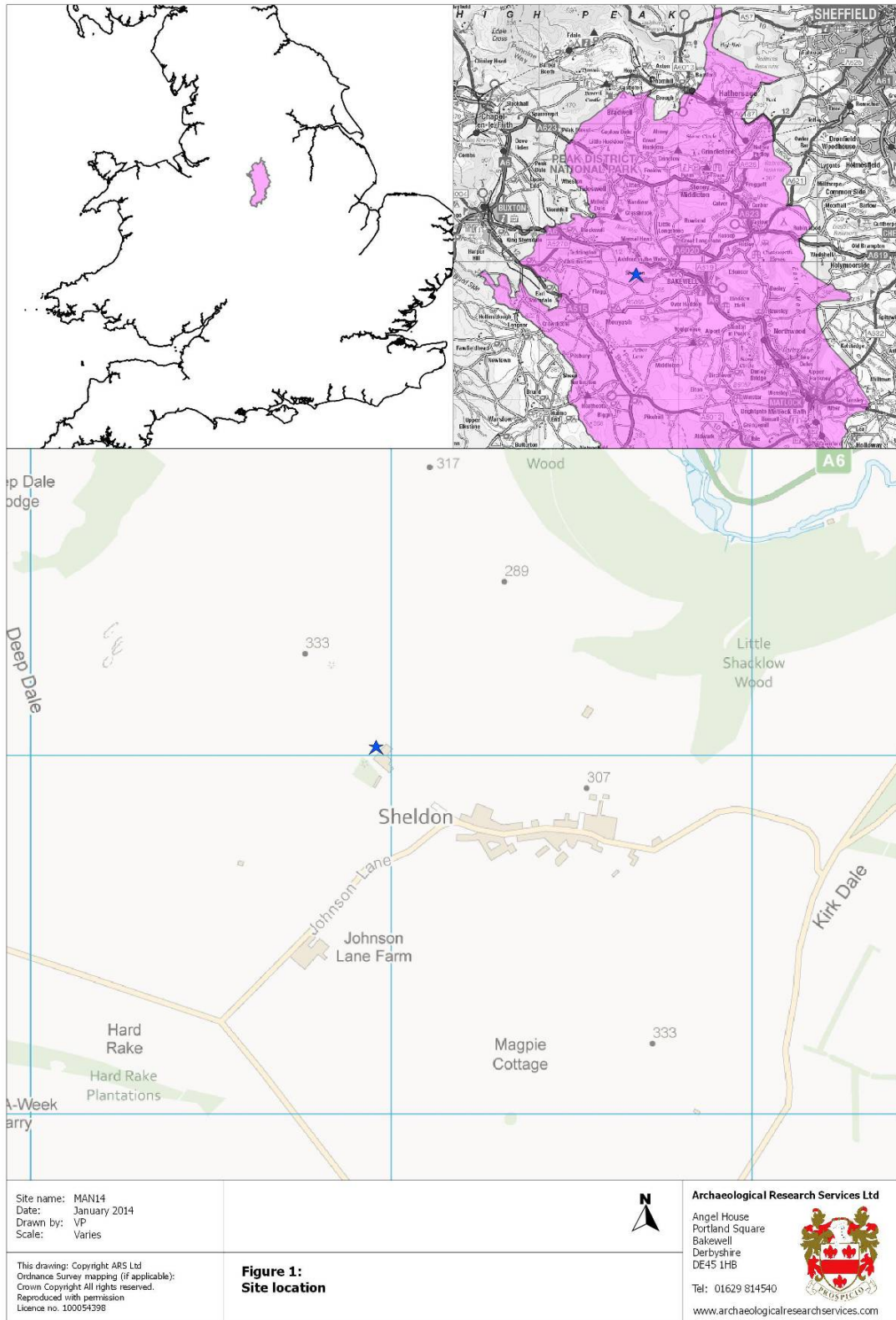
1.3 Background

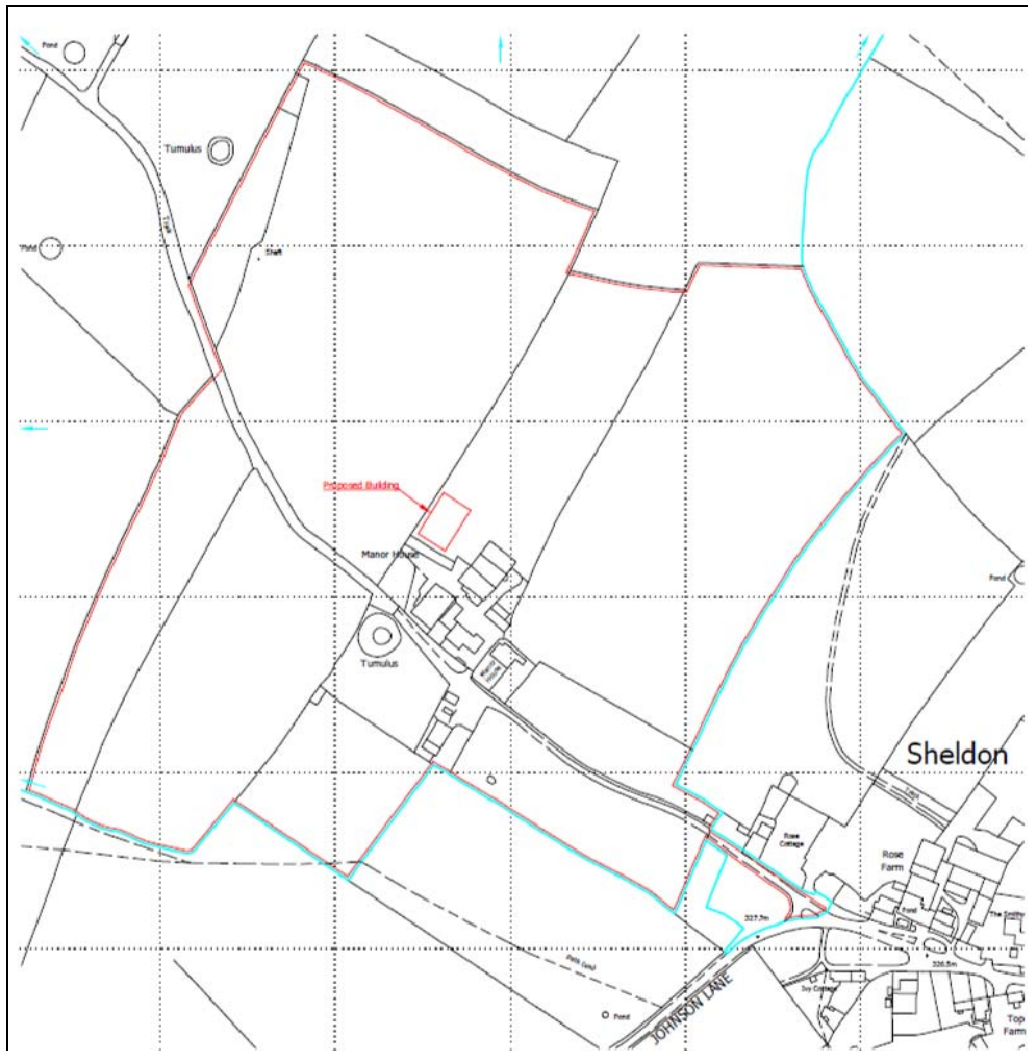
1.3.1 A search of the Derbyshire Historic Environment Record (HER) has revealed that a large Bronze Age barrow (Scheduled Monument number: 1008956; HER record number: 12403) is located in a field directly opposite Manor Farm, within 50m of the development area. The mound was excavated in 1845 and although had previously been opened, fragments of two urns, flint flakes, burnt bone, charcoal, and human bone (representing an adult and a juvenile) were recovered. The barrow stands about 5 feet high, situated in a small copse that has not been ploughed. The mound is largely intact and a slab to the west may be the vestige of a kerb (Heritage Gateway 2014a).

1.3.2 A Medieval linear earthwork (HER record number 12420) has been plotted using aerial photographs from 2000, apparently extending from the barrow possibly under Manor House to the top of Farm Green (Heritage Gateway 2014b).

1.3.3 A search of the National Record of the Historic Environment (NRHE) has determined that two prehistoric finds have been recorded within 100 metres of the site location; a prehistoric flint axe (Monument No. 308475); and a Bronze Age axe hammer (Monument No. 308478) (Pastscape 2014).

1.3.4 The field in which the investigation area is placed is currently used as pasture. Information provided by the landowner suggests that the area encompassing the footprint of the proposed barn housed a tin-shed up until recently, although it is not believed that the site has been subject to any significant development and remains relatively undisturbed.





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Figure 2. Detailed location of site (from planning application NP/DDD/1213/1071)

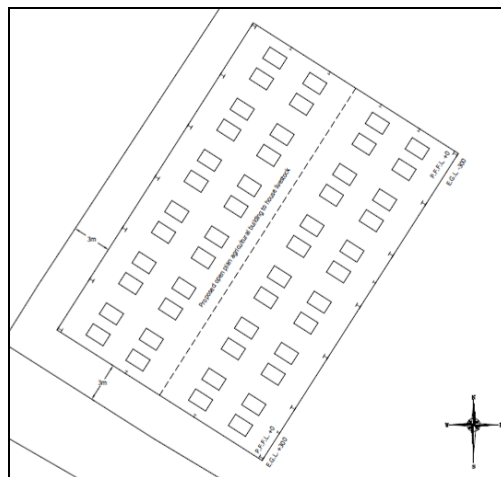


Figure 3. Plan of proposed building (from planning application: NP/DDD/1213/1071)

2 Aims of the Project

2.1 The aim of the watching brief was to observe all ground works for the presence of archaeological remains and fully record and excavate any archaeological features encountered.

3 Methodology

3.1 The excavation was undertaken using a 360 degree excavator fitted with a toothless bucket.

3.1.1. A risk assessment complying with the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) was undertaken before commencement of the work and health and safety regulations were adhered to at all times.

3.1.2. The Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) Code of Conduct (2013) and Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief (2014) was adhered to at all times.

4 Results

4.1 Topsoil strip

4.1.1 The topsoil strip was completed over a one day period, on 3rd February 2014. The strip involved removing the overlying topsoil and subsoil in approximately 0.10m spits until the required level of excavation was achieved. The sloped nature of the site required a larger volume of soil to be taken from the south-western half of the trench in order to create a flat platform on which to erect the building. The excavations reached a maximum depth of 1m at the south-western end of the trench, and 0.45m at the north-eastern end of the trench.

4.1.2 The stratigraphical sequence consisted of a layer of topsoil (100) comprising dark brown clay-silt, varying in depth between 0.08m and 0.3m, present across the entirety of the excavation area. The upper surface of the topsoil was vegetated with short grass and occasional modern debris was present across the upper surface including modern bricks and corrugated metal sheeting. Occasional inclusions of sub-angular limestone pebbles were observed throughout the topsoil. No finds or features of archaeological interest were observed in the topsoil deposit.

4.1.3 Directly underlying the topsoil was a subsoil deposit (101). This was present across the entirety of the excavation area and comprised mid-orange brown clay-silt with frequent sub-angular limestone pebbles, cobbles and boulders. Some areas of the subsoil contained inclusions of modern debris such as corrugated metal sheeting, bricks and metal objects, probably related to the tin-shed that is known to have existed at the site until recently. The subsoil varied in depth between 0.08m and 0.3m below the ground level due to the uneven nature of the overlying topsoil, and was between 0.12m and 0.18m thick.

4.1.4 Underlying the subsoil was the natural limestone geology (102), present in large irregular angular blocks.

4.1.5 Following the topsoil strip, a layer of limestone gravel and boulders was spread over the stripped area in order to build up the ground level and create a stable and flat base for the construction of the building.

4.1.6 No archaeological finds or features were observed during the topsoil strip.



Figure 4. Initial topsoil strip of the site, looking north.



Figure 5. Subsoil at the north-eastern end of the site, looking north-west



Figure 6. Stratigraphy at the south-western end of the site. Note the shallow deposits of topsoil and subsoil, with the limestone bedrock occurring approximately 0.30m below the ground level. Scale = 1m.



Figure 7. Strip at the south-western end of the site, excavated into the limestone bedrock. Scale = 1m.

4.2 Posthole foundations

4.2.1 The posthole foundations were excavated over a one day period, on 7th February 2014. In total, 23 postholes were required for the footings of the building; of these, 13 were archaeologically monitored, and the remaining ten (at the upslope south-western end of the site) were dug without archaeological monitoring. This is due to the fact that all the superficial deposits from the south-western end of the site had been removed during the initial topsoil strip, resulting in the postholes being dug straight into the limestone bedrock; hence, there was no potential for encountering archaeological deposits or finds.

4.2.2 The depth of the postholes varied, ranging from 1.20m in depth at the north-eastern end and becoming increasingly shallower as they progressed upslope toward the south-western end, to a maximum depth of 0.50m. It is understood that the limestone bedrock will be cut into to make the postholes deeper and a uniform depth at a later date, for which no archaeological monitoring is required.

4.2.3 The stratigraphy of the postholes at the north-eastern end of the site consisted of the made-ground layer, followed by a thin layer of subsoil overlying the natural limestone bedrock.

4.2.4 No archaeological finds or features were observed during excavation of the posthole foundations.



Figure 8. Build-up of the site after the initial topsoil strip.



Figure 9. Posthole at the north-eastern end of the site. The stratigraphy of the postholes at the north-eastern end of the site consisted of a made-ground layer, followed by a thin layer of subsoil overlying the natural limestone bedrock. Scale = 1m.



Figure 10. Stratigraphy of the postholes towards the south-western end of the site. Note that the deposits overlying the natural limestone bedrock were completely removed during the initial topsoil strip, and the only deposit being excavated is the made-ground deposit and the natural limestone bedrock. Scale = 1m.

5 Conclusion

5.1 No significant archaeological features, deposits, or small finds were identified within the extent of excavation.

6 Publicity, Confidentiality and Copyright

6.1 Any publicity will be handled by the client.

6.2 Archaeological Research Services Ltd will retain the copyright of all documentary and photographic material under the Copyright, Designs and Patent Act (1988).

7 Statement of Indemnity

7.1 All statements and opinions contained within this report arising from the works undertaken are offered in good faith and compiled according to professional standards. No responsibility can be accepted by the author/s of the report for any errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by any third party, or for loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in any such report(s), howsoever such facts and opinions may have been derived.

8 Archive Deposition

8.1 A digital and paper archive will be prepared by Archaeological Research Services Ltd, consisting of all primary written documents, plans, photographs and electronic data and is intended to be deposited at Buxton Museum (accession number: DERB 2014.2) within two months of completion of fieldwork.

9 Acknowledgements

9.1 Archaeological Research Services Ltd would like to thank all those involved in this project, in particular Mark Taberner; the ground worker James Thorp; and Sarah Whiteley, Senior Conservation Archaeologist for the Peak District National Park Authority.

10 References

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[Accessed 31st January 2014].

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<http://www.pastscape.org.uk/SearchResults.aspx?rational=m&maplat=53.21795109&maplong=-1.74612613&mapist=os&mapilo=-1.7461&mapila=53.2180&mapiloe=w&mapilan=n&mapios=SK169690&mapigrn=369050&mapigre=416950&mapipc=&mapisa=100&sort=2&recordsperpage=10> [Accessed 31st January 2014].

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OASIS ID: archaeoI5-171009

Project details

Project name	An Archaeological Watching Brief at Manor Farm, Sheldon, Derbyshire
Short description of the project	In January 2014 Archaeological Research Services Ltd. was commissioned by Mark Taberner to undertake an archaeological watching brief Manor Farm, Sheldon, Derbyshire. The monitoring was carried out during ground works relating to the construction of an agricultural building to house livestock, measuring 502m ² . The development is situated close to a scheduled burial mound, and a medieval boundary bank occurs within 30m of the site of the building. The work had been requested by the Senior Conservation Archaeologist for the Peak District National Park Authority and required an archaeologist to be on site to observe all ground works and to ensure preservation by record of any archaeological deposits discovered. No archaeological features, deposits or small finds were identified within the extent of excavation.
Project dates	Start: 03-02-2014 End: 07-02-2014
Previous/future work	No / No
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Grassland Heathland 2 - Undisturbed Grassland
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	DERBYSHIRE DERBYSHIRE DALES SHELDON Manor Farm
Postcode	DE45 1QS
Study area	502.00 Square metres
Lat/Long Datum (other)	SK 16964 69034

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeological Research Services Ltd
Project brief originator	Archaeological Research Services Ltd
Project design originator	Archaeological Research Services Ltd
Project director/manager	Chris Scott
Project supervisor	Laura Strafford
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Buxton Museum and Art Gallery
Digital Archive ID	DERB 2014.2
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography"
Paper Archive ID	DERB 2014.2
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Report"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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Manor Farm, Sheldon, Derbyshire

Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief



Archaeological Research
Services Ltd

1 Background

- 1.1 A proposal for an agricultural building to house livestock measuring 502m² to be added to Manor Farm, Sheldon (NGR SK16964 69034) was made to the Peak District National Park Authority.
- 1.2 The Senior Conservation Archaeologist for the Peak District National Park Authority has been consulted regarding this proposal and has reason to believe archaeological remains may be present on the site. The development is close to a scheduled burial mound, and a medieval boundary bank occurs within 30m of the proposed site of the building. The presence of these features suggests that the area is of some archaeological sensitivity, and it is possible that features may come to light during the course of the development works. It has therefore been recommended as a condition of the planning permission that an archaeological watching brief should be undertaken to monitor the construction of the foundations of the agricultural building (NP/DDD/1213/1071).
- 1.3 The solid geology comprises limestone of the Monsal Dale Limestone Formation (BGS 2014).
- 1.4 This Written Scheme of Investigation details the programme of work to be undertaken by Archaeological Research Services Ltd (ARS Ltd) during ground works at the site.
- 1.5 The aim of the programme of work is, in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 141 (CLG 2012), to record and enhance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost during the proposed development in a manner proportionate to their importance, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publically accessible.

2 Objectives of the watching brief

- 2.1 The objectives of the watching brief are:
 - to determine through archaeological monitoring of any ground works the nature and date of any surviving below-ground remains;
 - to make accessible the records of any remains produced by archaeological monitoring by producing a report and archive.

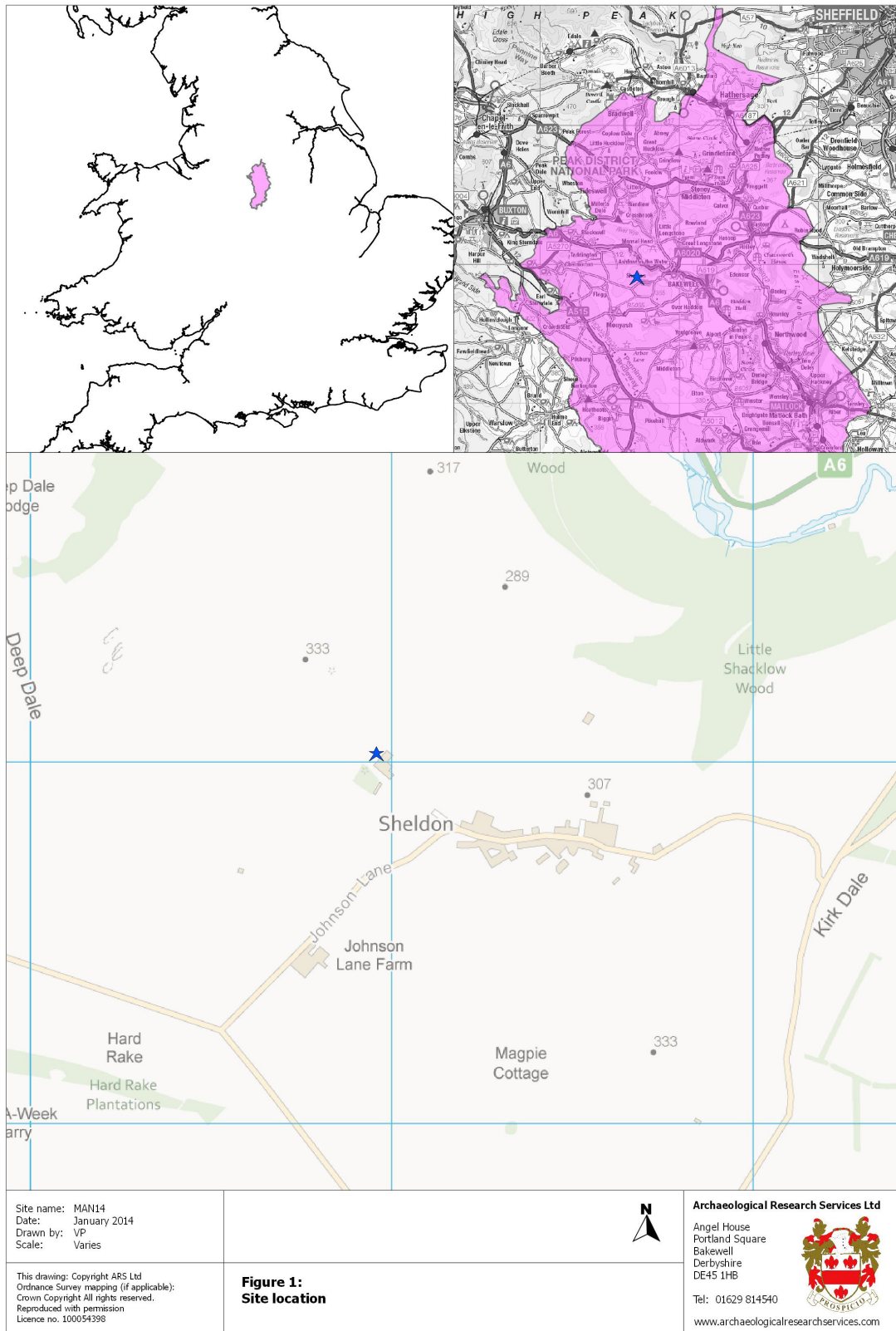


Figure 1. Location of site
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3 Project Management and Standards

- 3.1 The project will be carried out in compliance with the Institute of Archaeologists (IfA) *Codes of Conduct* (2012) and will follow the IfA's *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation* (2009).
- 3.2 Staff employed on the project will be suitably qualified and experienced for their respective project roles and have practical experience of archaeological excavation and recording. Staff will be made aware of the archaeological importance of the area surrounding the site and will be fully briefed on the work required by this specification. The member of staff will be fully conversant with the aims and methodologies of the evaluation and will be given a copy of this WSI to read. All members of staff employed by ARS Ltd are fully qualified and experienced archaeologists, which will ensure that appropriate decisions will be made in the field. ARS Ltd holds full Employer's Liability (£5 million), Public Liability (£5 million) and Professional Indemnity (£2 million) insurance.

4 Watching Brief Methodology

- 4.1 All relevant ground works will be undertaken by a suitable mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket or by hand once any overlying concrete and stone has been removed. Archaeological monitoring will not entail excavation beyond the total areas exposed by the development works. Arrangement will be made to avoid any tracking of machinery across recently stripped areas until the areas have been checked and cleared by a representative of ARS Ltd. If significant archaeological features are identified, the Senior Conservation Archaeologist for the Peak District National Park, Sarah Whiteley, will be notified and a decision taken as to the best method of proceeding.
- 4.2 ARS Ltd will provide a suitably qualified archaeologist at all times during any ground works on the site to undertake a watching brief. The on-site archaeologist will be given the opportunity to stop site work in order to investigate potential archaeological features and adequate time will be allowed for recording any such features.
- 4.3 A written, drawn and photographic record will be maintained during the watching brief plus all significant archaeological remains will be recorded and/or retrieved. All excavations will be recorded in accordance with normal principles of archaeological evaluation upon pro forma context sheets. All significant architectural features will be photographed with a high resolution digital camera (with scale) *in situ* and their location recorded on a plan of the site.
- 4.4 Where archaeological features and/or deposits are identified during the watching brief, then a sufficient quantity of the said features will be investigated by hand to allow their date, nature and degree of survival to be ascribed. All features thus investigated will be recorded in plan and section and significant archaeological finds recovered will be retained for analysis. Any archaeological features identified will be photographed and drawn in plan at a scale of 1:20 and in section at a scale of 1:10. The stratigraphy, where relevant and apparent, will be recorded.

- 4.5 For brick structures, the record will include details of brick dimensions and type (handmade/machine-made, plain/frogged), mortar (colour, composition, hardness) and the extent of structures (number of courses, thickness in skins).
- 4.6 A plan of the excavated areas will be maintained, features noted and section lines recorded. All drawings will be carried out at an appropriate scale and all contexts will be recorded using a single context recording system. The site archive will include plans and sections at an appropriate scale, a scale photographic record, and full stratigraphic records on recording forms/context sheets or their electronic equivalent. Should archaeological features be present then the locations and height AOD of the features will be accurately fixed, surveying in either the planning baselines or the features themselves.
- 4.7 The watching brief will be undertaken in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists *Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (2008) and *Code of Conduct* (2012). The records will follow standard conventions set by the Museum of London Archaeological Services (MoLAS) (2002).
- 4.8 In the unlikely event that human remains are discovered, they will initially be left *in-situ* and, if removal is deemed necessary, this will be undertaken in accordance with the relevant Ministry of Justice regulations.
- 4.9 ARS Ltd will ensure that heavy plant or machinery will not be operated in the immediate vicinity of archaeological remains until the remains have been recorded. Contractors and plant operators will be notified that any observations of archaeological remains must be reported immediately to the archaeologist on site.
- 4.10 A risk assessment will be undertaken before commencement of the work and health and safety regulations will be adhered to at all times.
- 4.11 Should archaeological remains be encountered for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard, then work on site shall cease and the Senior Conservation Archaeologist for the Peak District National Park shall be notified immediately. Site works will not re-commence until resources are in place to secure preservation *in situ* or adequate archaeological treatment of the relevant remains.

Finds Processing and Storage

- 4.12 All finds processing, conservation work and storage of finds will be carried out in compliance with IfA's *Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials*. (2008) and those set out by UKIC (1990).
- 4.13 Artefact collection and discard policies will be appropriate for the defined purpose.
- 4.14 Bulk finds which are not discarded will be washed and, with the exception of animal bone, marked. Marking and labelling will be indelible and irremovable by

abrasion. Bulk finds will be appropriately bagged, boxed and recorded. This process will be carried out no later than two months after the end of the excavation.

- 4.15 All small finds will be recorded as individual items and appropriately packaged (e.g. lithics in self-sealing plastic bags and ceramic in acid-free tissue paper). Vulnerable objects will be specially packaged and textile, painted glass and coins stored in appropriate specialist systems. This process will be carried out within two days of the small find being excavated. .
- 4.16 During and after the excavation all objects will be stored in appropriate materials and storage conditions to ensure minimal deterioration and loss of information (including controlled storage, correct packaging, and regular monitoring, immediate selection for conservation of vulnerable material). All storage will have appropriate security provision.
- 4.17 The deposition and disposal of artefacts will be agreed with the legal owner and Buxton Museum prior to the work taking place. All finds except treasure trove are the property of the landowner.
- 4.18 All retained artefacts and ecofacts will be cleaned and packaged in accordance with the requirements of Buxton Museum Artefact collection and discard policies will be appropriate for the defined purpose.

5 Monitoring arrangements

- 5.1 Reasonable prior notice of the commencement of the evaluation is to be given to the Senior Conservation Archaeologist of the Peak District National Park Authority Cultural Heritage team:

Sarah Whiteley
Senior Conservation Archaeologist
Peak District National Park Authority
Aldern House,
Baslow Road,
Bakewell,
Derbyshire
DE45 1AE

Tel: 01629 816243

- 5.2 ARS Ltd will liaise with the Senior Conservation Archaeologist at regular intervals throughout the course of the work.

6 Report

- 6.1 A report shall be produced to include background information, a summary of the works carried out and a description and interpretation of the findings. The report should also include the following.

- 6.2 A location plan showing all excavated areas with respect to nearby fixed structures and roads.
- 6.3 Illustrations of all archaeological features with appropriately scaled hachured plans and sections.
- 6.4 Specialist descriptions of artefacts or ecofacts.
- 6.5 An indication of potential archaeological deposits not disturbed by the present development.
- 6.6 Data files relating to measured survey should be provided as both a print out and in an electronic format to be agreed with the Derbyshire Historic Environment Record.
- 6.7 Copies of the final report are to be deposited with the Peak District National Park Cultural Heritage team and with the Derbyshire Historic Environment Record. Reports should be provided in both paper and electronic form.
- 6.8 The report should not give an opinion on whether preservation or further investigation is considered appropriate, but should provide an interpretation of results, placing them in a local and regional context.
- 6.9 The results of the work will be published in the appropriate issue of Archaeology and Conservation in Derbyshire and, if of regional or national significance, within an archaeological journal.
- 6.10 The Derbyshire Historic Environment Record supports the Online Access to Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) project. The overall aim of the OASIS project is to provide an online index to the mass of archaeological grey literature that has been produced as a result of the advent of large-scale developer funded fieldwork. The archaeological contractor must therefore complete the online OASIS form at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/>. Contractors are advised to contact Derbyshire Historic Environment Record prior to completing the form. Once a report has become a public document by submission to or incorporation into the HER, Derbyshire Historic Environment Record may place the information on a web-site.

7 Archive deposition

- 7.1 Upon completion of fieldwork all samples shall be processed and all finds shall be cleaned, identified, assessed, spot-dated and properly stored. A field archive shall be compiled consisting of all primary written documents, plans, sections, photographs and electronic data.
- 7.2 The field archive will be compiled in a format to be agreed by the repository museum which, in this case, will be Buxton Museum. Buxton Museum has been contacted and an accession number obtained which is DERB 2014.2.

8 Changes to Methodology or Work Programme

- 8.1 Changes to the approved methodology or programme of works will only be made with prior approval of the Senior Conservation Archaeologist of the Peak District National Park Authority Cultural Heritage team

9 References

British Geological Survey 2013. Geology of Britain Viewer [online]. Available at: <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html?src=topNav> [Accessed 28th Jan 2014]

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Appendix 1: Site Plans

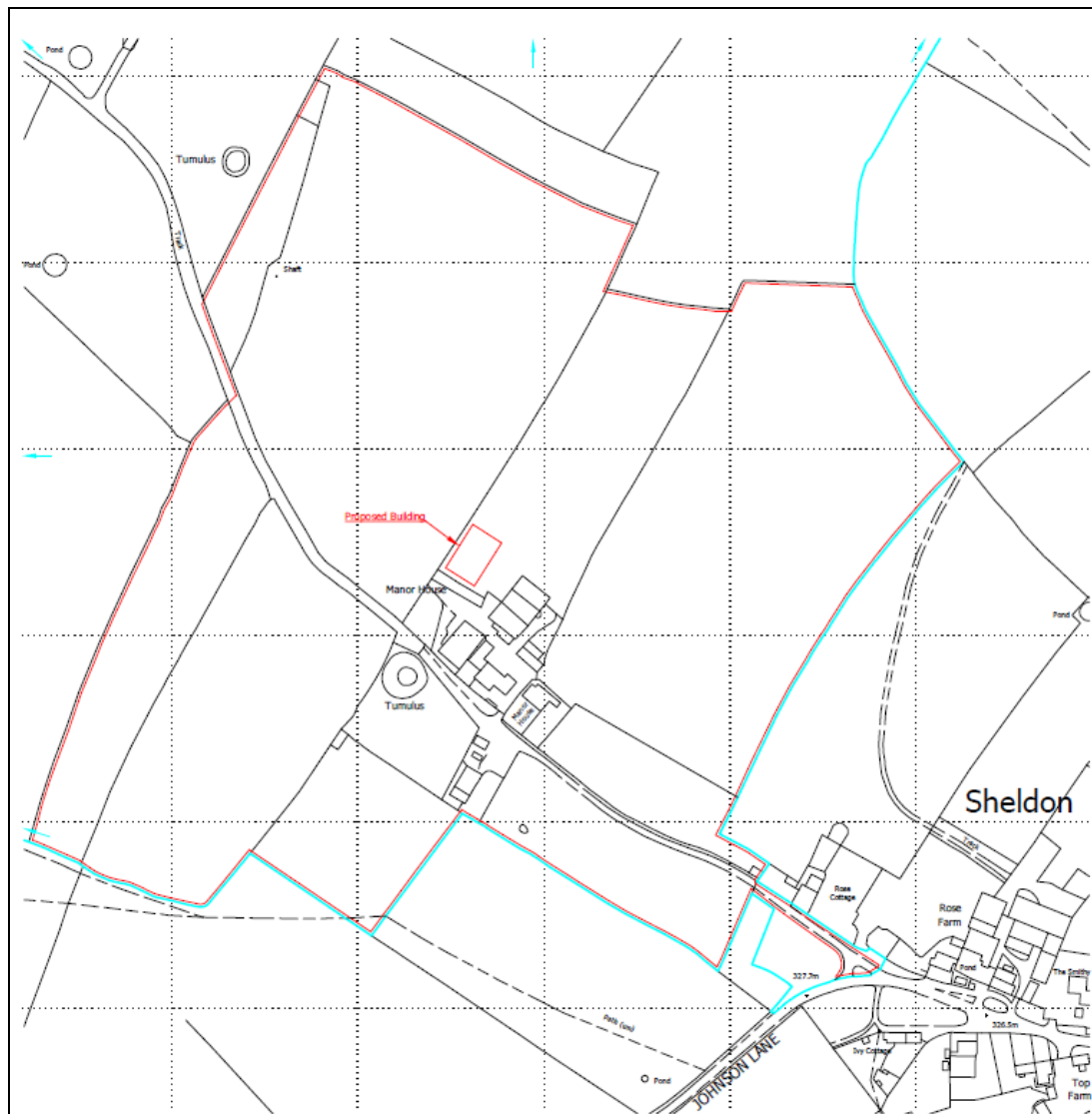


Figure 2. Detailed location of site (from planning application NP/DDD/1213/1071)
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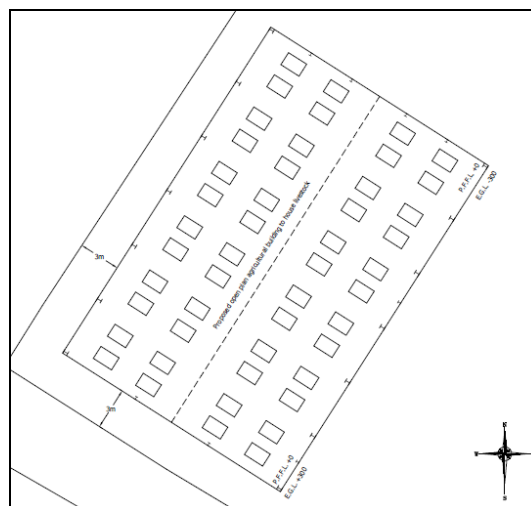


Figure 3. Plan of proposed building (from planning application: NP/DDD/1213/1071)