

**TOTTENHAM HOUSE AND ESTATE SUB-STATION,
MARLBOROUGH,
WILTSHIRE**

NGR: SU 2469 6466 (centred)

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION



Trench 1 Looking West

December 2020
Report No. 1391



ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANCY, MANAGEMENT & FIELD SERVICES

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Quality Assurance

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Author: T. Michaels BSc MCIfA

Date: 11th December 2020

Approved: R. King BA MCIfA

QA Checked: D. King BA MCIfA

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SUMMARY

On the 7th and 8th December 2020 Foundations Archaeology undertook an archaeological evaluation on land at Tottenham House and Estate, Marlborough, Wiltshire (NGR: SU 2469 6466 (centred)). The project was commissioned by Ben Stephenson of BSA Heritage, on behalf of the landowner, to inform proposals for a new electricity sub-station.

The project comprised the excavation and recording of a single trench at the location of a proposed new electricity sub-station building.

The evaluation has indicated that the site of the proposed sub-station has a very low potential for the presence of archaeological remains. The only possible feature identified within the evaluation trench was most likely natural in origin. With the exception of Modern material, no artefactual evidence was recovered during the works.

GLOSSARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Archaeology

For the purpose of this project, archaeology is taken to mean the study of past human societies through their material remains from prehistoric times to the modern era. No rigid upper date limit has been set, but AD 1900 is used as a general cut-off point.

CBM

Ceramic Building Material.

Medieval

The period between AD 1066 and AD 1500.

Natural

In archaeological terms, this refers to the undisturbed natural geology of a site.

NGR

National Grid Reference from the Ordnance Survey Grid.

OD

Ordnance datum; used to express a given height above sea-level. (AOD Above Ordnance Datum).

OS

Ordnance Survey.

Post-medieval

The period between AD 1500 and AD 1900.

Prehistoric

The period prior to the Roman invasion of AD 43, traditionally sub divided into; *Palaeolithic* – c. 500,000 BC to c. 12,000 BC; *Mesolithic* – c. 12,000 BC to c. 4,500 BC; *Neolithic* – c. 4,500 BC to c. 2,000 BC; *Bronze Age* – c. 2,000 BC to c. 800 BC; *Iron Age* – c. 800 BC to AD 43.

Ride

A formal track or road within a landscaped park/garden. Sometimes referred to as 'drive'.

Roman

The period traditionally dated AD 43 until AD 410.

Saxon

The period between AD 410 and AD 1066.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Foundations Archaeology on the 7th and 8th December 2020 on land at Tottenham House and Estate, Marlborough, Wiltshire (NGR: SU 2469 6466 (centred)). The project was commissioned by Ben Stephenson of BSA Heritage, on behalf of the landowner. The work was required to inform proposals for a new estate electricity sub-station.
- 1.2 The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), prepared by Foundations Archaeology (2020) and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation* (2014).
- 1.3 The CIfA code of conduct was adhered to throughout.

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Outline Planning Permission (Ref: 17/12461/OUT) has been granted for the restoration of Tottenham House, Wiltshire. As the house is Grade I listed and the stables Grade II* listed, separate Listed Building Consent ('LBC') has also been granted (Ref: 18/00195/LBC).
- 2.2 Both the Outline Planning Permission and the LBC have similar planning conditions requiring that suitable Written Schemes of Investigation be in place ahead of permitted works commencing (Planning conditions 14 and 3 respectively and discharged as part of: 19/03601/DOC & 19/03597/DOC). The WSI was submitted in response to a new application for the construction of an electricity sub-station in the grounds of the Estate. The requirement for trial trenching was agreed with Mike Cepak, the Wiltshire archaeological officer.
- 2.3 The wider site is located approximately three miles southeast of Marlborough and south of Savernake Forest. The total area which may see change extends over an area in excess of 400ha, but the area related to the current works is located to the northwest of Tottenham House itself (Figures 1 & 2) at the edge of the Grand Avenue tree belt and close to the northern boundary of the Estate.
- 2.4 The works relate to trial trenching within the footprint of the proposed sub-station site, which will be located approximately 750 metres northwest of Tottenham House itself and just to the north-northeast of the east to west course of a likely Roman road. The proposed sub-station site lies within the extensive Grade II* 'Tottenham House and Savernake Forest' Registered Park and Garden designation.
- 2.5 Past archaeological research has included completion of a desk-based assessment by CgMs in 2017 (Smalley 2017). The wider Estate has also been subject to extensive archaeological evaluation by Wessex Archaeology fifteen years ago (Wessex Archaeology 2005). Earlier work in the 1960s located the

site of Roman pottery production south of the main house which has since been scheduled. The Estate was also visited by the Wiltshire Archaeological Society in 1859, when a presumably Roman tessellated pavement was viewed, also south of the main house (Wilts ANHM 1860).

- 2.6 Evaluation in 2005 confirmed that the Registered Park has potential for prehistoric and later archaeological remains. In particular, further Roman pottery production evidence was found north of the scheduled area, well to the east of the sub-station. The course of the Roman road runs along the line of the 'Grand Avenue' close to the sub-station site. The tessellated floor noted during the 19th century visit was noted to lie '100 yards from the house' and early Ordnance Survey maps marked a Roman 'villa' there, just north of the scheduled pottery production area.
- 2.7 Past investigation also indicates that the area was settled in the prehistoric period, with a nearby Neolithic causewayed camp and numerous likely Bronze Age round barrows attesting activity in these periods. Further evidence for later prehistoric settlement has been identified as well, a greater distance to the south east of the main house. Widespread prehistoric or Roman field systems have also been identified across the Registered Park area.
- 2.8 The 2017 CgMs desk-based assessment inferred relatively low potential for Anglo-Saxon and Medieval remains and this seems appropriate in light of the known settlement patterns and that the area was probably part of Savernake Forest in those periods, albeit it may have been largely open ground. It is possible that boundaries relating to forest management lay close to the sub-station, with one possibly crossing through the scheduled area and beyond.
- 2.9 There is also potential for remains close to Tottenham House and its ancillary buildings related to the Estate's Post-medieval development as a high-status residence, although Tottenham House was only located here in the early 18th century, with predecessors further east. It is unlikely that any related structures lay in the sub-station area though, given the distance from the house and associated map evidence. As was often the case, the Estate was requisitioned in the Second World War and was used for the storage of materiel. Although the mapped remains of this activity do not extend into the sub-station site, related features cannot be discounted entirely.
- 2.10 In 2019, Foundations Archaeology undertook two phases of evaluation trenching. Phase I confirmed the presence of four parkland rides to the southwest of Tottenham House. The evaluation also indicated the presence of remains most likely related to the former King Harry building, approximately 600m to the south west of Tottenham House. Numerous investigations along the route of the 'Lady Lawn'/'East Garden' ha ha confirmed that it comprised a brick wall, with a substantial ditch facing outwards. Trench 7 of this phase of evaluation was located approximately 500m southeast of the proposed sub-station and identified made-ground concealing an extension of the ha ha marked on historic maps (Figure 1).

- 2.11 The Phase II works were principally located within the Scheduled Monument to the southwest of Tottenham House. This phase of evaluation identified possible later Iron Age to early Roman pits and ditches. A further trench circa 650 metres south east of the sub-station tested a former pond which had been converted into a swimming pool in the 20th century. No earlier evidence came to light in that trench.
- 2.12 Past research and investigations beyond the Estate confirmed the course of the Roman road only tens of metres to the south of the sub-station site, running broadly from west to east (Figure 2). Nearby cropmarks have been noted, which may also indicate related activity. However, three trial trenches opened in the walled kitchen garden east of Pond Cottage and bisecting the anticipated course of the road found no evidence for it, or any related Roman or other activity earlier than the Post-medieval period.
- 2.13 More recent monitoring of enabling works in the vicinity of Pond Cottage and the road, including a trench which crossed the line of the road, also found no indication of a road surface or related features or finds. Most recently, a single fifty metre long trial trench was investigated across the footprint of a proposed energy centre for the Estate, approximately 350m to the southeast of the proposed substation (Figure 2). This also found no indication of Roman or other significant activity (Hood 2020).
- 2.14 The geology within the site comprises clay, silt and sand of the Lambeth Group and some areas of chalk of the Newhaven Chalk Formation. Past investigations indicate a typical topsoil depth of 0.3m with up to a further 0.8m of sub-soil above the natural geology.
- 2.15 The wider site therefore contained the potential for significant archaeological features and deposits, predominately dating to the prehistoric, Roman, and Post-medieval periods. This did not prejudice the works against recording evidence relating to other periods.

3 AIMS

- 3.1 The aims of the archaeological evaluation were to gather high quality data from the direct observation of archaeological deposits in order to provide sufficient information to establish the nature, extent, preservation and potential of any surviving archaeological remains; as well as to make recommendations for management of the resource, including further archaeological works if necessary. In turn, this would allow reasonable planning/mitigation decisions to be taken regarding the archaeological provision for the areas affected by the development.
- 3.2 These aims were achieved through pursuit of the following specific objectives:
- i) to define and identify the nature of archaeological deposits on site, and date these where possible;

- ii) to attempt to characterise the nature of the archaeological sequence and recover as much information as possible about the spatial patterning of features present on the site;
- iii) where possible to recover a well dated stratigraphic sequence and recover coherent artefact, ecofact and environmental samples;
- iv) to provide sufficient information on the archaeological potential of the site to enable that archaeological implications of the proposed changes to be assessed;
- v) to inform formulation of a strategy to avoid or mitigate impacts of the proposed changes on surviving archaeological remains.

4 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 A single northwest – southeast aligned trench, with spurs at either end, was excavated crossing the footprint of the new build, as shown in Figure 2. The trench was 1.7m wide and comprised a total of 56.5m of linear trenching, which equated to an area of 95.6m².
- 4.2 Non-significant overburden was removed, under constant archaeological supervision, to the top of archaeological remains or the underlying natural deposits, whichever was encountered first. This was achieved using a 360° tracked mechanical excavator, equipped with a toothless grading bucket. Features and spoil tips were scanned visually, and by metal detector, for finds.
- 4.3 Where potential archaeological features were present, these were subject to appropriate levels of investigation. All excavation and recording work was undertaken in accordance with the WSI and the Foundations Archaeology Technical Manual 3: Excavation Manual.

5 RESULTS

- 5.1 Natural deposits of orange brown clay, with gravel bands were present at an average of 0.78m (163.96m AOD) below the Modern ground surface. These were sealed by an orange brown clay/silt clay subsoil (1002), between 0.54 and 0.7m thick, which contained occasional patches of flint pebbles and gravel, but was entirely devoid of artefacts. The subsoil was overlaid by a dark brown loose clay silt topsoil (1001), between 0.14 and 0.25m thick. This deposit was heavily root disturbed and was also devoid of artefacts. An isolated deposit of modern dumped material was present between the top and subsoil horizons approximately 10m from the southwestern end of the trench. Due to the presence of plastic within this deposit, the material was noted but not retained.

- 5.2 Present near the northwestern end of the trench was linear feature [1003] (Figure 3). This feature was roughly aligned northeast-southwest and contained (1004), a pale brown clay silt fill. This deposit was heavily root disturbed and contained no obvious charcoal or artefactual evidence. Due to the proximity of the trench to the purported Roman road, it was decided that the feature should be excavated to 100% in order to aid artefact retrieval. However, during this additional excavation, no artefacts were recovered. The edges of the feature were shown to be uneven in both plan and section and upon this further excavation, it was decided that the feature was probably not archaeological but natural in origin.

6 DISCUSSION

- 6.1 The evaluation has indicated that there is a very low potential for the presence of archaeological remains. The only possible feature identified within the evaluation trench was most likely natural in origin. With the exception of Modern material, no artefactual evidence was recovered during the works.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The evaluation has indicated a very low potential for the presence of archaeological remains within the proposed development area.
- 7.2 The archive is currently held at the offices of Foundations Archaeology, but will be deposited in due course with the Wiltshire Heritage Museum, Devizes under Accession Number DZSWS:02.2020; a digital report/archive will also be submitted to OASIS. A short note will be submitted for publication in the relevant local archaeological journal.

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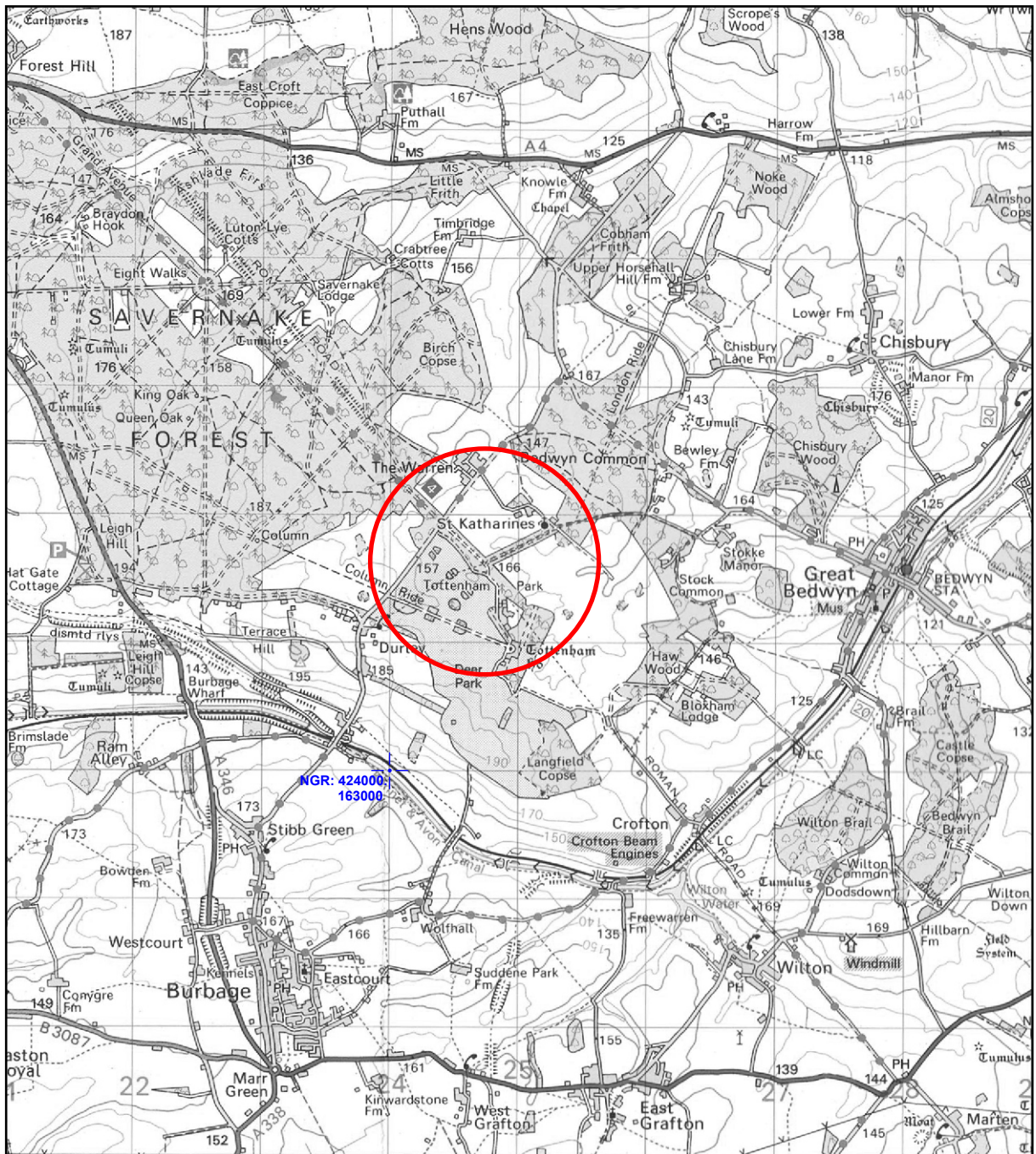
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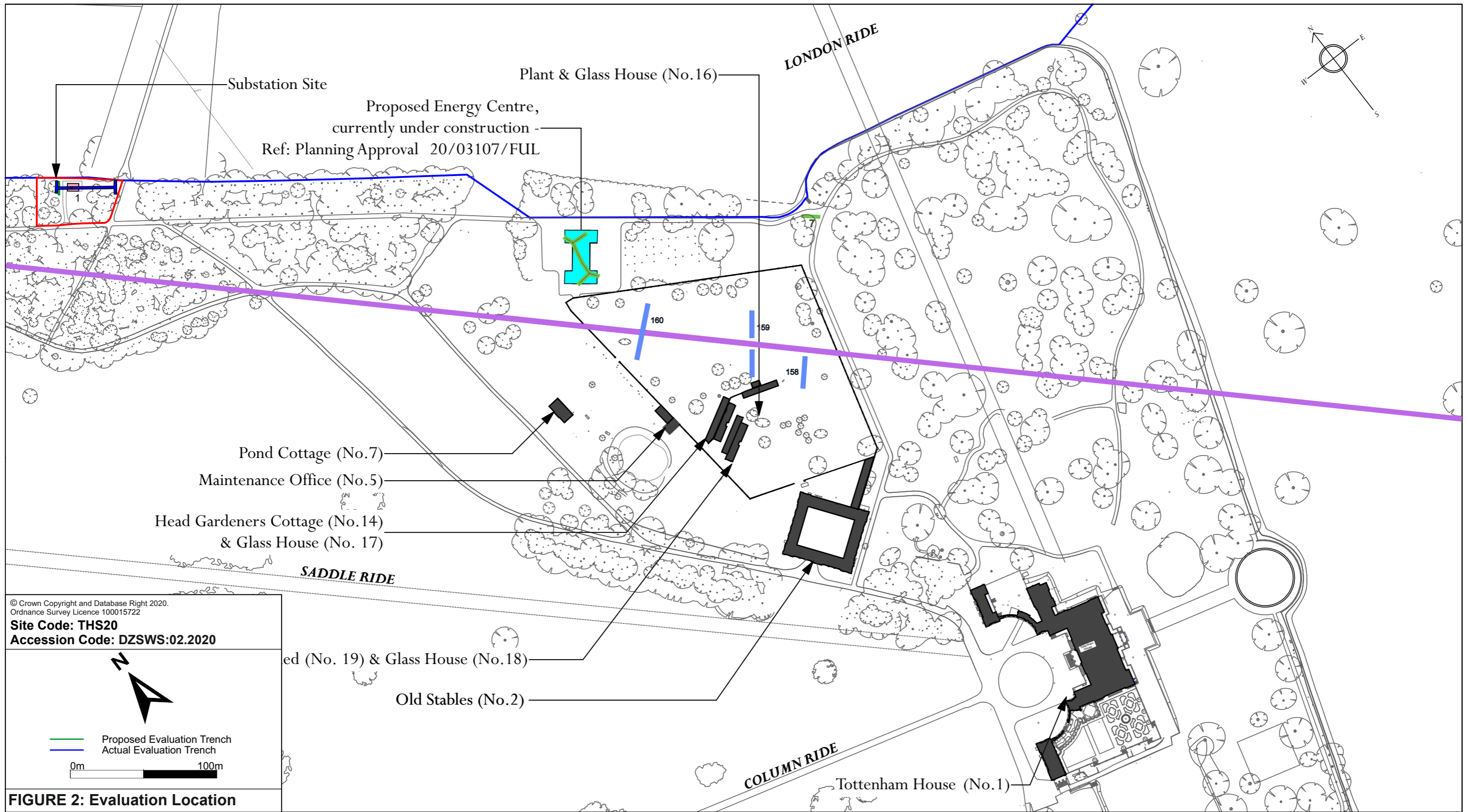
9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Site Code: THS20
Accession Code: DZSWS:02.2020

FIGURE 1: Site Location



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Proposed Evaluation Trench
 Actual Evaluation Trench

0m 100m

FIGURE 2: Evaluation Location



Scale 1:2500

Adjacent Properties and Boundaries are shown for illustrative purposes only and have not been surveyed unless otherwise stated.
 All areas shown are approximate and should be verified before forming the basis of a decision.
 Do not scale other than for Planning Application purposes.
 All dimensions must be checked by the contractor before commencing work on site.
 No deviation from this drawing will be permitted without the prior written consent of the Architect.

The copyright of this drawing remains with the Architect and may not be reproduced in any form without prior written consent.
 Ground Floor Slabs, Foundations, Sub-Structures, etc. All work below ground level is shown provisionally. Inspection of ground condition is essential prior to work commencing.
 Reassessment is essential when the ground conditions are apparent, and redesign may be necessary in the light of soil conditions found. The responsibility for establishing the soil and sub-soil conditions rests with the contractor.

- Key**
- Approved Energy Centre
 - Existing Buildings
 - Estate Boundary Line
 - Substation Site
 - Course of Roman Road
 - Foundations Archaeology Trenches
 - Wessex Archaeology Trenches

SL
 Initials

DATE: August 2020

DRAWING No: 6150/PL03

TITLE: Proposed Site Plan

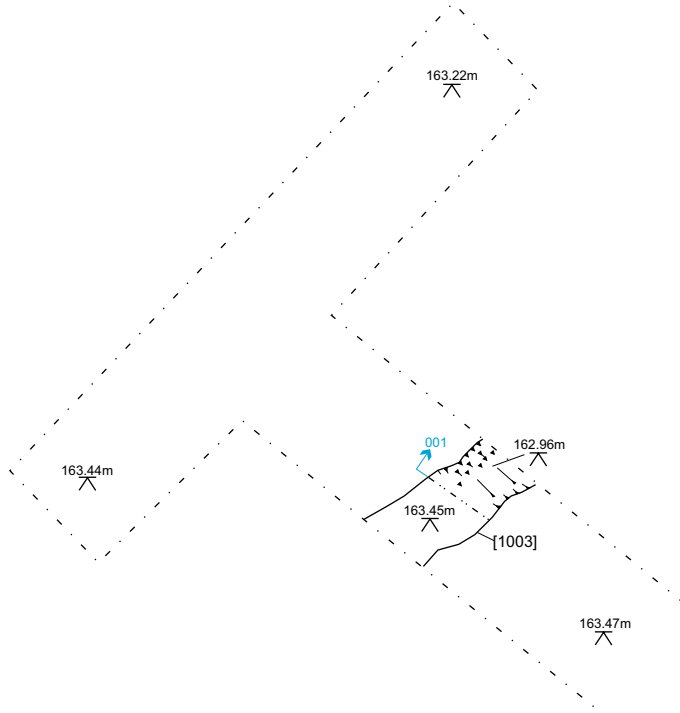
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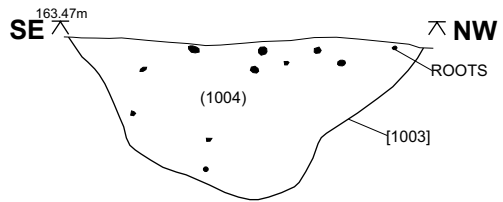
ADAM ARCHITECTURE

OLDHYDEHOUSE , 75 HYDESTREET
 WINCHESTER, HAMPSHIRE, SO23 7DW
 TELEPHONE: 01962 843843 FACSIMILE: 01962 843303
 www.adamarchitecture.com contact@adamarchitecture.com

LONDON OFFICE : 6 QUEEN SQUARE , WC1N 3AT
 TELEPHONE: 02078410140 FACSIMILE: 01962 843303
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001: NORTHEAST FACING SECTION [1003]



Site Code: THS20
 Accession Code: DZSWS:02.2020



FIGURE 3: Trench 1 Plan and Section