

HERITAGE NETWORK



PEARCE'S FARM SHOP Puckeridge, Herts.

(HN476)

Archaeological Monitoring Report



PEARCE'S FARM SHOP
Puckeridge, Herts.

HN476

Archaeological Monitoring Report

Prepared on behalf of David Pearce Esq.

by

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and

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Acknowledgements

The fieldwork for this project was carried out by Karin Semmelmann and David Kaye. The report text and illustrations were prepared by Karin Semmelmann and Geoff Saunders. The report was edited by David Hillelson.

The Heritage Network would like to express its thanks to David Pearce, Hamels Park Farm; Steve Martin, groundworks contractor; and the staff of the County Archaeology Office, Hertfordshire County Council for their co-operation and assistance in the execution of this project.

Summary

Site name and address:	Pearce's Farm Shop, Hamels Park Farm, Standon, Herts.		
County:	Hertfordshire	District:	East Herts.
Village/town:	Puckeridge	Parish:	Standon
Planning reference:	3/01/2292	NGR:	TL 38351 24336
Client name and address:	David Pearce, Hamels Park Farm, Buntingford, Herts. SG9 9NA		
Nature of work:	Extension	Present land use:	Open land
Size of affected area:	c.130m ²	Size of area investigated:	c.130m ²
Site Code:	HN476	Other reference:	n/a
Organisation:	Heritage Network	Site Director:	David Hillelson
Type of work:	Monitoring	Archive location:	Hertford Museum
Start of work	18/07/2004	Finish of work	19/10/2004
Related SMR Nos:	n/a	Periods represented:	Romano-British
Previous summaries/reports:	n/a		

Synopsis: In response to a condition on the planning permission for an extension at Pearce's Farm Shop, Hamels Park Farm, Standon, Herts., the Heritage Network was commissioned by the owner to undertake the archaeological monitoring of the development groundworks.

Despite the proximity of the study area to late pre-Roman Iron Age and Romano-British settlements and to Ermine Street, no archaeological features were encountered on the site. Several sherds of unstratified Romano-British pottery were recovered during the fieldwork and are indicative of settlement activity in the vicinity of the site at this period.

1. Introduction

1.1 This report has been prepared on behalf of *Mr. David Pearce* as part of a programme of monitoring and recording the groundworks for an extension to the north of Pearce's Farm Shop, Hamels Park, Standon, Hertfordshire. The planning permission for the development (ref. 3/01/2292), granted by the East Herts. District Council (EHDC), was subject to a standard archaeological condition, in accordance with the provisions of the Department of the Environment's *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16* (PPG16). The scope of the required work followed the *Design Brief for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording* issued by the *County Archaeology Office* (CAO) of Hertfordshire County Council, acting as advisers to EHDC (ref. JS 27/04/04). A full specification of the work was contained in the Heritage Network's approved *Project Design*, dated July 2004.

1.2 The site, centred on NGR TL 38351 24336, is located on the eastern side of the A10, 300m to the north of the junction with the B1368. The development proposes an extension to the north-western elevation of the existing farm shop (see Figure 1).

1.3 The site lies within *Area of Archaeological Significance no.94* (AAS94), which defines an area of significant archaeological activity dating to the late Iron Age and Romano-British period, in the District Local Plan, and represents the Roman small town of Braughing. In addition, the site lies adjacent to the present A10 trunk road, which follows the line of Ermine Street, the Roman Road linking London with Lincoln. Significant remains have previously been recorded on the site during earlier development.

1.4 The aim of the present project has been to identify and record any archaeological features and deposits which were uncovered; and to retrieve artefactual and ecofactual elements which would allow the date, character, and significance of the site to be assessed in accordance with current regional research agenda (Brown and Glazebrook, 2000), and subject to the limitations of reasonable safety and practicality.

1.5 The present report is intended to set the site in its archaeological and historical context, and complete the requirements of the planning condition.

2. Fieldwork

TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

2.1 The site lies to the north of the village of Puckeridge on land which slopes gently downwards from west to east away from the A10. The geology was reasonably consistent across the site and comprised a layer of very dark brown (10YR 2/2), silty clay topsoil beneath which was a dark yellowish brown (10YR 3/4), slightly silty clay over the reddish brown (5YR 4/4), natural gravel.

METHODOLOGY

2.2 The timetable for the fieldwork followed the client's groundwork schedule. A number of site visits were made to supervise the ground reduction and excavation of the footings and drainage trenches.

2.3 The machining was undertaken using a wheeled JCB variously fitted with 300mm, 450mm, and 900mm toothed buckets, and a 1500mm toothless bucket, as required.

2.4 Spoil from the various stages of the groundworks was inspected for archaeological artefacts.

2.5 The project has been carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Design Brief, and with the Heritage Network's approved Project Design.

MONITORING AND RECORDING

2.6 The groundworks included, the reduction of the ground level within the footprint of the new extension, the excavation of the footing trenches, the ground reduction for a concrete access ramp for the extension, the excavation of drainage trenches, and the excavation of a soakaway.

Ground reduction

2.7 The ground was reduced by c.0.20m within the footprint of the extension.

2.8 No archaeological features were revealed, but a fragment of amphora handle, probably Dressel 28 of late 1st to early 2nd century AD date, was recovered unstratified.

Footings trenches

2.9 The footings trenches for the new extension measured approximately 0.45m in width and 1.0m in depth (Figure 2). Telephone and electricity cables were present at the southern end of Trench A.

2.10 No archaeological features and only a few fragments of modern ceramics were revealed.

Concrete ramp

2.11 The ground was reduced by c.0.35m for the construction of a concrete access ramp for the new extension (Figure 2).

2.12 No archaeological features were revealed, but three undiagnostic and abraded bodysherds of miscellaneous greywares of probable 2nd century AD date, were recovered unstratified.

Drainage trenches

2.13 The drainage trenches measured approximately 0.3m wide by 0.7m deep (Figure 2). No archaeological features were revealed, but four sherds of pottery of various fabrics were recovered unstratified.

2.14 The pottery sherds recovered include, one piece of the foot ring from a samian vessel, one bodysherd of early Roman grog and sand tempered ware, and one small sherd of early Roman grog-tempered ware. A single sherd of white slipped ware of Romano-British date with a micaceous fabric was also recovered. The sherd, which was probably imported, shows evidence for a handle and possibly forms part of a flagon or jug.

Soakaway

2.15 A single soakaway, measuring approximately 1.6m square by 1.1m deep, was excavated on the north-east side of the new extension (Figure 2).

2.16 No archaeological features were revealed, but a single undiagnostic and abraded bodysherd with a micaceous fabric was recovered unstratified. The sherd is possibly white slipped ware of Romano-British date, from which the outer coating of slip has worn off. Two abraded fragments of possible Romano-British CBM were also recovered unstratified.

Finds concordance

Context	Pottery		CBM		Slag		Shell		Comments
	Wt.	No.	Wt.	No.	Wt.	No.	Wt.	No.	
Footprint	440	1							Amphora handle
Concrete ramp	15	3					10	4	Oyster shell
Drainage trench	50	4							
Soakaway	4	1	115	2	15	2			
Total	509	9	115	2	15	2	10	4	

2.17 The finds recovered during the fieldwork were all unstratified within the overburden and heavily abraded in nature. This indicates that the material was not in its place of primary deposition and its heavily abraded nature may be the result of ploughing on the site prior to the construction of the farm shop.

Recommendations

2.18 Given the small size of the assemblage from the site, its abraded nature, and the fact that the material was unstratified and not in its primary place of deposition, no further work is proposed on this assemblage.

3. Discussion and conclusion

3.1 Despite the site's location within an area of known archaeological activity, the monitoring of the groundworks associated with the new development failed to reveal any features other than modern service trenches.

3.2 The artefacts of Romano-British date recovered during the fieldwork are indicative of the known archaeological activity in the vicinity of the site at this period. The abraded nature of the artefacts suggests that they may derive from features which were ploughed out prior to the construction of the farm shop.

Conclusion

3.3 Despite the proximity of the site to significant prehistoric and Roman remains, the fieldwork failed to reveal any archaeological features or deposits. The unstratified artefacts of Romano-British date are evidence of the known activity in the vicinity of the site during this period.

4. Schedule of site visits

Date	Staff	Hours	Comments
18/07/04	KS	6	Monitoring ground reduction and footings trenches
19/10/04	DGK	6	Monitoring drainage works and concrete ramp

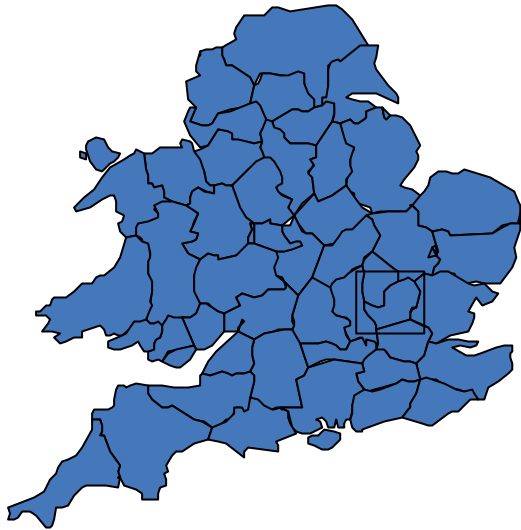
5. Bibliography

Hillelson, D. 2004, *Pearce's Farm Shop, Puckeridge: Archaeological Project Design*. Heritage Network

Smith, J. 2004, *Design Brief for Archaeological Monitoring & Recording Pearce's Farm Shop, Standon*. Hertfordshire County Council

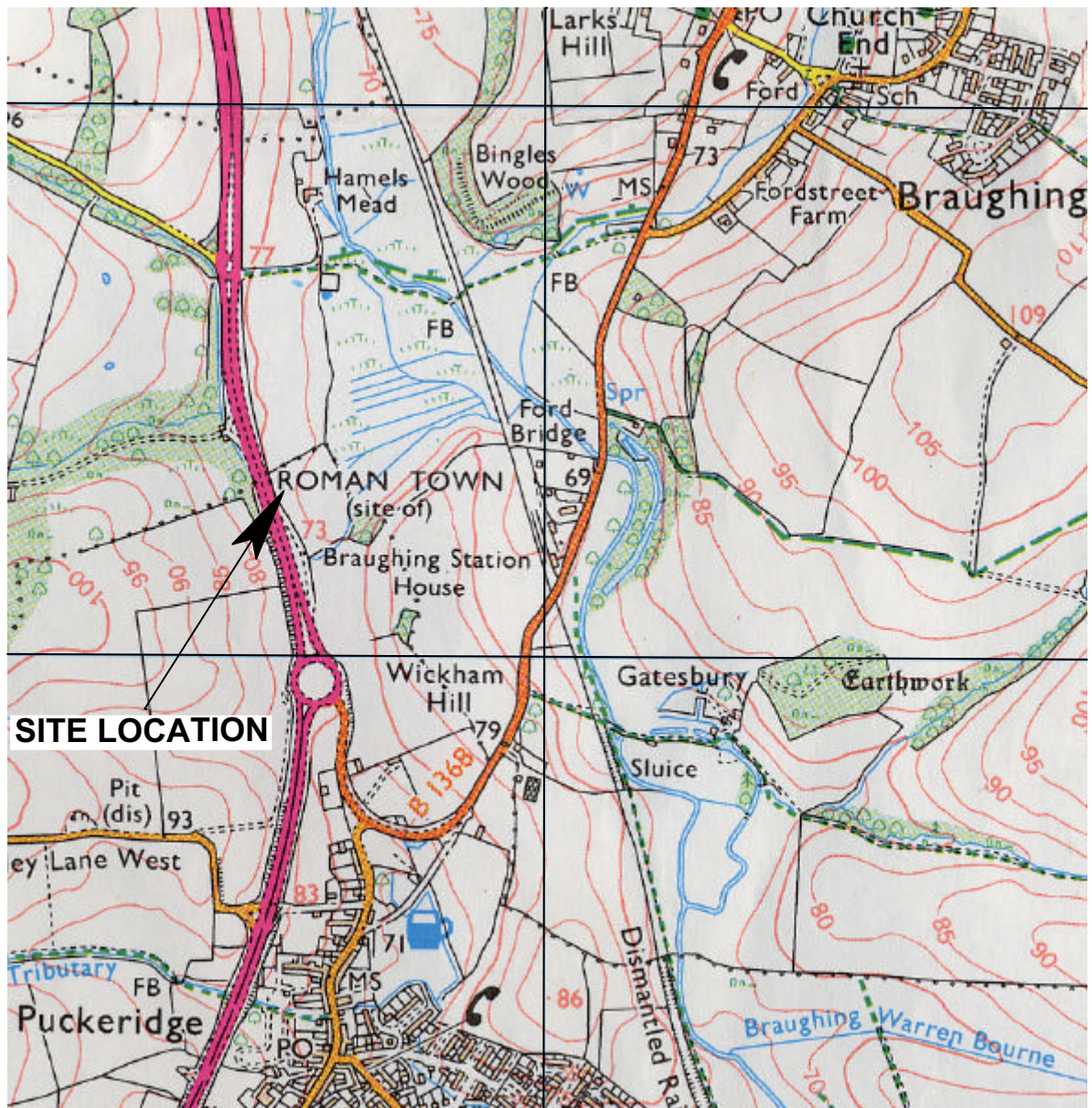
6. Illustrations

Figure 1	Site location
Figure 2	Site layout
Figure 3	Location of groundworks



TL 25

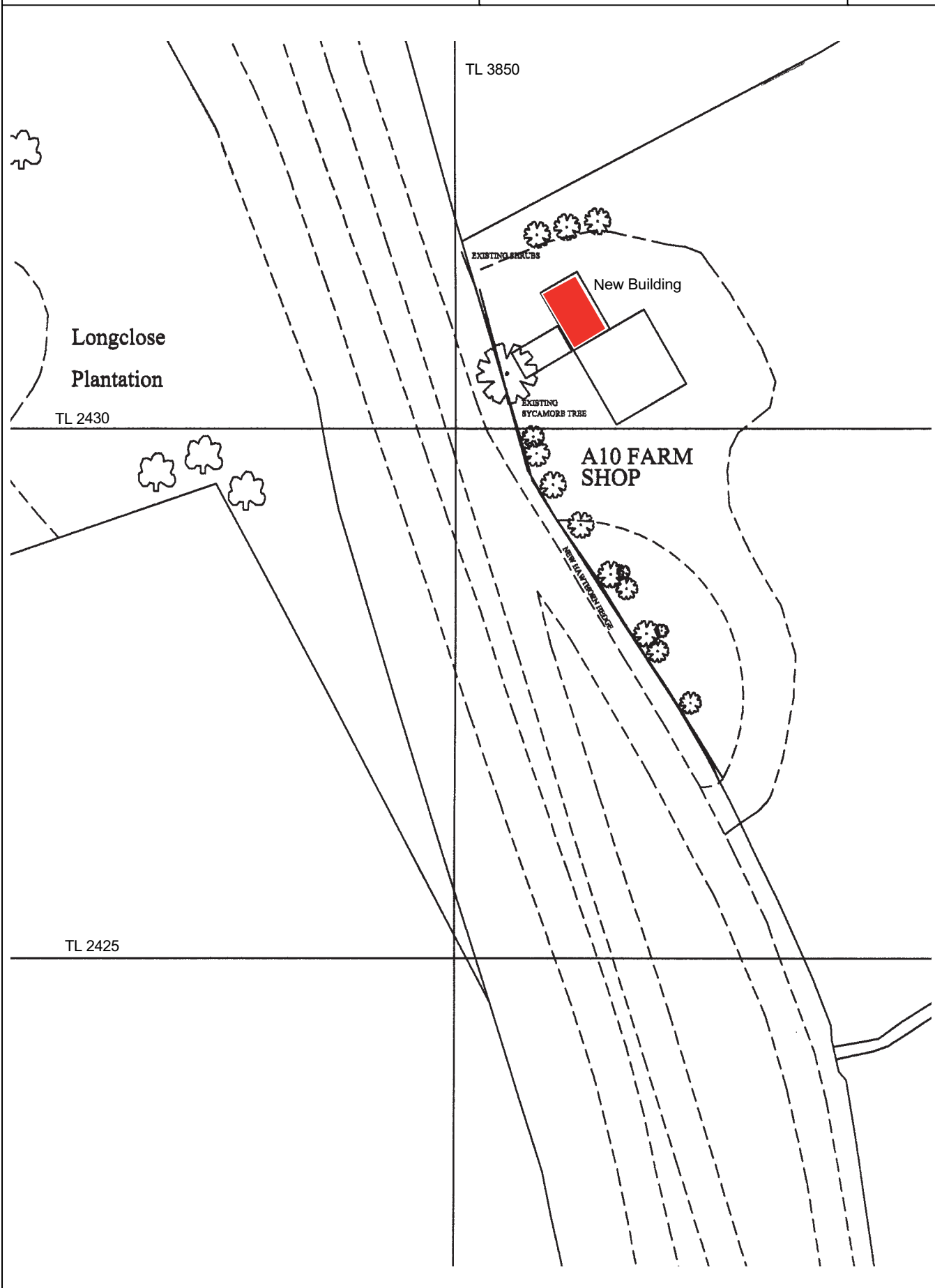
TL 24



TL 39

Site Location Plan

Scale 1:12500



Longclose
Plantation

TL 2430

TL 3850

EXISTING BUCKS

New Building

EXISTING
BYCAMORE TREE

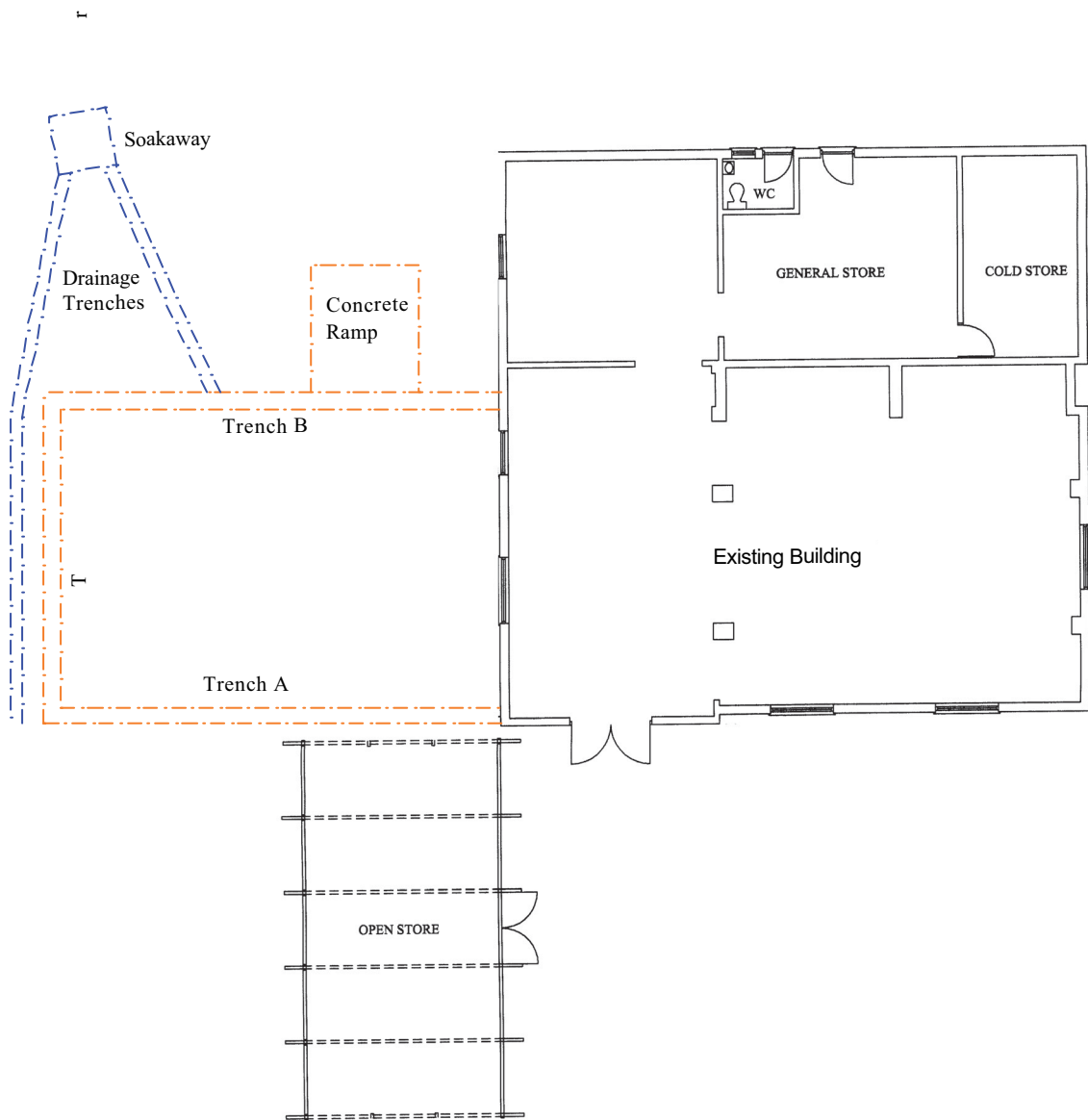
A10 FARM
SHOP

NEW 10.0M WIDE BRIDGE

TL 2425

Site layout

Scale 1:500



Location of groundworks

Scale 1:200

Figure 3