

THE HERITAGE NETWORK LTD

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Archaeological Director: David Hillelson, BA MIFA

WARREN FARM Braughing, Herts.

HN398

Archaeological Monitoring Report

Prepared on behalf of Mrs Christine Wootton

by

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Report No.177

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Acknowledgements

The fieldwork for this project was carried out by Karin Semmelmann.

The Heritage Network would like to express its thanks to Christine Wootton, owner, 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: | Warren Farm, Braughing, Herts. | | |
| County: | Hertfordshire | District: | East Herts |
| Village/town: | Braughing | Parish: | Braughing |
| Planning reference: | 3/02/1683 | NGR (to 8 figures): | TL4070 2390 |
| Client name and address: | Mr & Mrs Wootton, as above | | |
| Nature of work: | Barn & menage | Present land use: | Paddock |
| Size of affected area: | 1080m ² | Size of area investigated: | 820m ² |
| Site Code: | HN 398 | Other reference: | n/a |
| Organisation: | The Heritage Network | Site Director: | David Hillelson |
| Type of work: | Monitoring & recording | Finds location/Museum: | Hertford Museum |
| Start of work | 12/12/02 | Finish of work | 13/12/02 |
| Related SMR Nos: | 277 | Periods represented: | Modern |
| Previous summaries/reports: | n/a | | |

Summary of fieldwork results: As the result of an archaeological condition on the planning permission for the construction of a barn and menage at Warren Farm, Braughing, Herts., the Heritage Network was commissioned by the owners to monitor and record the groundworks.

The site lies approximately 1.5km south-east of the village of Braughing. Aerial photographs show a prehistoric rectilinear field system and probable trackway in close proximity to the site and the SMR records the finding of a bronze age axe in nearby Warren Wood. The investigations at the site, however, only revealed a modern land drain and associated soakaway.

1

Introduction

1.1 This report has been prepared on behalf of *Mrs Christine Wootton* as part of a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording of development groundworks for a barn and menage at Warren Farm, Braughing, Herts. The planning permission for the development (planning ref. 3/02/1683), granted by the East Hertfordshire District Council (EHDC), was subject to a standard archaeological condition, according to the provisions of the Department of the Environment's *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16* (PPG16). The scope of the required work followed the model *Design Brief for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording* issued by the *County Archaeology Office* (CAO) of Hertfordshire County Council, acting as advisers to EHDC, and the *Project Design* prepared by the Heritage Network.

1.2 Warren Farm is centred on grid reference TL 4070 2390, approximately 1.5km south-east of the village of Braughing. It falls within Area of Archaeological Significance no.97 (AAS97), which defines a possible Bronze Age landscape in the East Hertfordshire District Local Plan. The *County Sites and Monuments Record* (SMR) contains entries that lie within 50m of the study area, including the cropmarks of a prehistoric rectilinear field system and probable trackway on the opposite side of the road at Upp Hall, and a bronze age axe which was discovered in Warren Wood in 1937.

1.3 The building works included the construction of an open-fronted barn and associated menage in the paddock immediately south of the existing barns. The combined area of development measured 1080m².

1.4 The aim of the monitoring and recording programme has been to identify and record any surviving archaeological features and deposits which may have been exposed in the course of the groundworks, and to retrieve artefactual and ecofactual elements which would allow the date, character and significance of the site to be assessed, subject to the limitations of reasonable safety and practicality.

1.5 The data gained in the course of the project will be compiled in a report which sets it in its archaeological and historical context. The report will be submitted to the planning authority and, subject to any requirement for further analysis as per the provisions of English Heritage's *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (MAP2), will complete the requirements of the planning condition.

1.6 The present report details the findings of the fieldwork programme. It will be submitted to the planning authority and the archive will be deposited with the Hertford Museum, thus completing the requirements of the planning condition.

2 Fieldwork

METHODOLOGY

2.1 The timetable for the fieldwork followed the client's groundwork schedule. Two site visits were made to supervise the ground reduction.

2.2 The ground reduction was undertaken by a tracked JCB with a 1.0m toothless bucket.

2.3 The spoil was inspected for archaeological artefacts.

2.4 All work was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the LPA Design Brief and followed the Heritage Network's approved Project Design.

MONITORING AND RECORDING

2.5 The combined area of the barn and the menage measured approximately 1080m² and was orientated approximately NE-SW.

2.6 The groundworks had already been completed for the barn before the Heritage Network was contracted to monitor the site. The area occupied by the menage measured 41m in length and 20m in width.

Topsoil strip

2.7 The ground was reduced by approximately 0.05m at the north-western end of the menage and by 0.30m elsewhere to remove the topsoil.

2.8 The stratigraphy consisted of very dark greyish brown (2.5Y 3/2) sandy silt topsoil over dark brown (10YR 3/3) sandy silt with very frequent gravel, frequent chalk fragments and occasional charcoal and coal flecks and fragments.

2.9 The topsoil contained fragments of Victorian and modern brick and tile, a few modern pottery sherds and some iron objects including a large horse-shoe measuring 0.21m in width and 0.20m in length.

2.10 A linear feature measuring approximately 0.90m in width, 11.0m in length and 0.18m in depth was revealed 10.50m east of the new barn. This was orientated north-west to south-east and ran from the southern edge of the area, petering out into a very gravelly area with indistinct edges. This gravelly area did not appear to extend as far as the northern edge of the menage area (Fig.2). The fill of the linear feature was topsoil as described above. A small area was investigated and found to contain a fragment of Victorian/modern brick.

3 Discussion and conclusions

3.1 The linear feature had every appearance of a recent land drain emptying into a soakaway. The gravelly area, which represents the possible soakaway in question, was aligned with a barn to its north, which had previously been used for cattle. The smell as the topsoil was being removed suggested that the soakaway also served the cattle shed, but there was no direct evidence to support this.

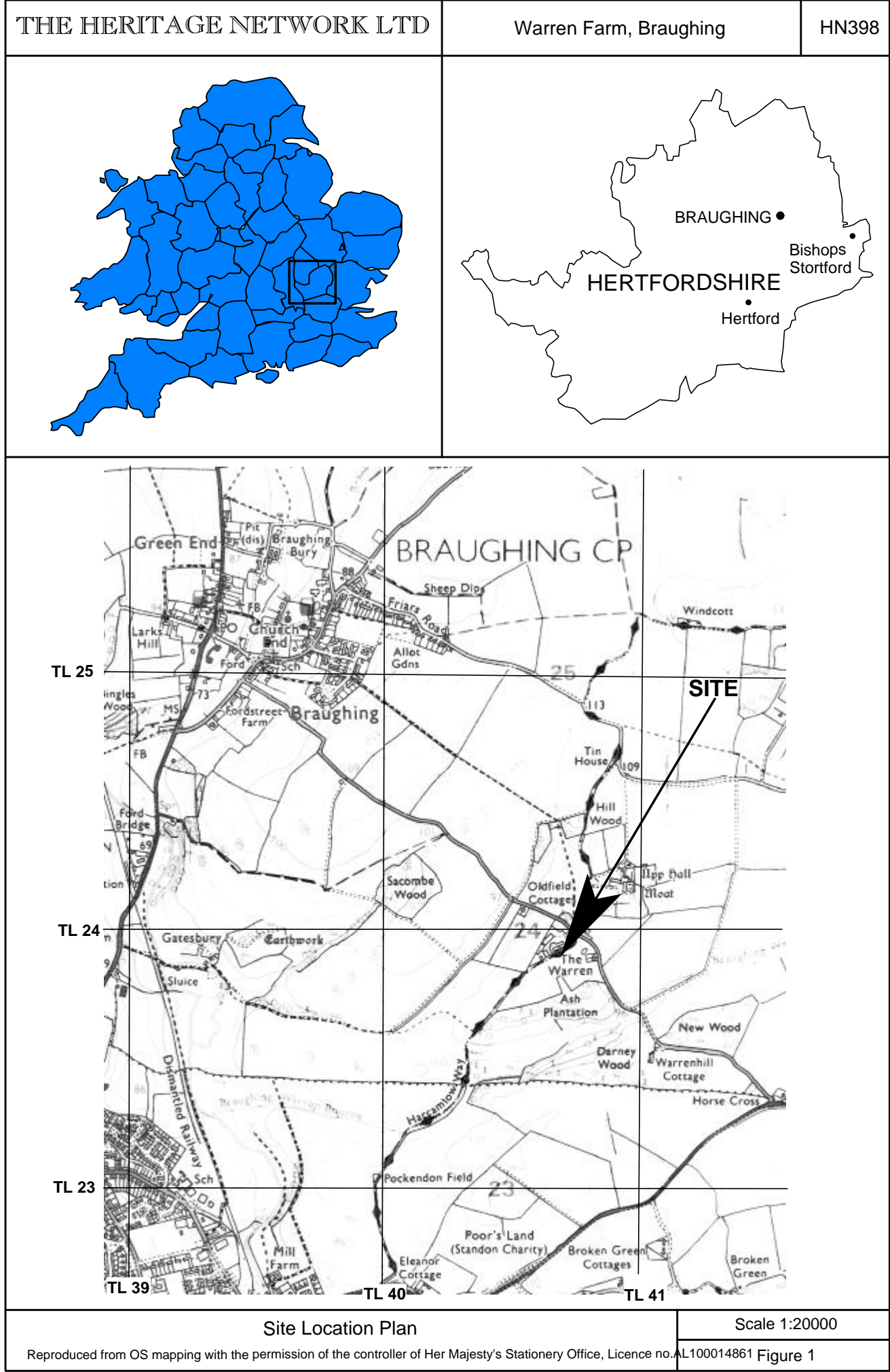
4 Schedule of Site Visits

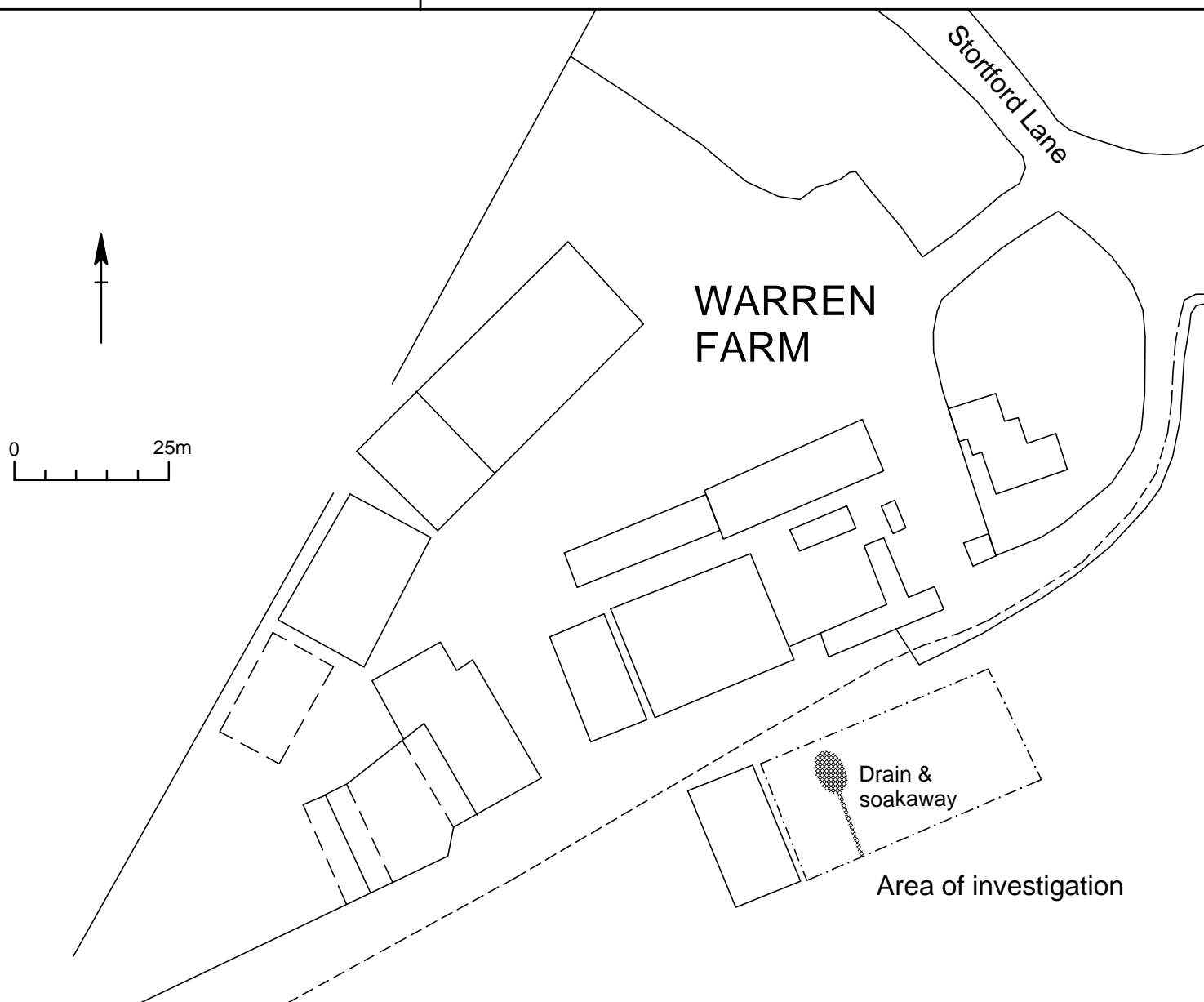
| Date | Staff | Hours | Comments |
|----------|-------|-------|-----------------------|
| 12/12/02 | KS | 3 | Monitor topsoil strip |
| 13/12/02 | KS | 7 | Monitor topsoil strip |

5 Illustrations

Figure 1 Site location plan

Figure 2 Area of investigation





Area of investigation

Scale 1:1000

Figure 2