

# **An Archaeological Evaluation at Rectory Farm, Rectory Lane, Sevenoaks**

**NGR 553037 154284**

**Project No. 3145  
(RFS07)**

**by  
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## **Abstract**

*Archaeology South-East (ASE), the contracting division of University College London Centre for Applied Archaeology, were commissioned by Cherry and Peter Moss, to undertake an archaeological evaluation in advance of construction of a new house within the farm curtilage at Rectory Farm, Rectory Lane, Sevenoaks. The work took place during the 8<sup>th</sup> and the 9<sup>th</sup> August 2007.*

*One trench was excavated by machine orientated northwest to southeast across the site. Natural Folkestone Beds were encountered at a maximum height of 151.25m A.O.D in the southeast of the site, truncated by later disturbance to 150.98m A.O.D to the northwest. A total of two features were recorded during the investigation, including a pit and a wall footing of post medieval date.*

# Archaeology South-East

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), the contracting division of University College London Centre for Applied Archaeology were commissioned by Cherry and Peter Moss., to undertake an archaeological evaluation in advance of construction of a new house within the farm curtilage at Rectory Farm, Rectory Lane, Sevenoaks (Fig.1, NGR 553037 154284).
- 1.2 This document represents the Evaluation Report described in section **9.** of the *Specification for Archaeological Evaluation* prepared by Kent County Council (KCC) prior to commencement of the work.
- 1.3 The site is located between Rectory Farmhouse and St Nicholas' Church in the centre of Sevenoaks. The area to be developed is situated in the front garden of the existing property on an area currently occupied by a flat lawn and a studio/workshop and is approximately 33 x 26m in size. According to the British Geological Survey (1:50 000 map sheet No. 287), the underlying geology at the site comprises Folkestone Beds.
- 1.4 The Heritage Conservation Group at Kent County Council advised that the following condition, for a programme of archaeological work, should be applied to any consent on planning application SE/07/01465:

*No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written specification and timetable which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.*

Reason: To ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded.

- 1.5 The specific aims of the project included:
- Assessing the likely impact of the proposed development on the archaeological remains using the results of the fieldwork
  - Assessing the impact of past development on the site's archaeological potential.
  - Assessing the potential of the site to contain nationally important remains
  - Assessing the potential for information on the growth and development of Sevenoaks to be present on the site
  - Establishing the degree of medieval and post-medieval activity on the site
  - Establishing the degree of prehistoric and Roman activity on the site
  - Contributing to the environmental and landscape history of the area

- 1.6 The on-site archaeological work was carried out on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> October 2007 by Andrew Margetts (Archaeologist) and Paul Derwent (Site Assistant). The project was managed by Neil Griffin (Project Manager) and by Louise Rayner (Post-Excavation Manager).

## **2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

2.1 The site of the development lies on the edge of the historic core of Sevenoaks, around 100m west of the High Street. Known local archaeological sites listed in the Kent Historic Environment Record (HER) are limited to a medieval well 110m east and a number of medieval buildings fronting the High Street including St Nicholas' Church itself, which dates from the eleventh century. Recent archaeological work by Archaeology South East off Rockdale Road to the north revealed medieval features and pottery set back from the main road.

2.2 Information supplied by the applicant indicates that the site was originally part of a complex known as Home Farm owned by the Church for the Living of the Rector of St Nicholas. Home Farm was sold off and demolished in 1936 and replaced by Rectory Farm.

### **2.3 SMR Records**

2.3.1 The SMR database holds numerous Grade II listed buildings entries within a 500m radius of the site. Many of these date from the 18<sup>th</sup> century with surviving timber framed buildings surviving from the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries at High Street, Dorset Street and London Road, with a 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> century outbuilding at the Black Boy public house at Bank Street. The High Street also boasts almshouses and a school with origins in 1432 and St Nicholas Church dating from the 13<sup>th</sup> century

2.3.2 Of particular interest to the archaeological field is a gold stater of Tasciovanus (Evans type vii) found near Sevenoaks at an unknown date. Its present whereabouts is unknown. Tasciovanus, a Catuvellaunian monarch reigned from circa. 20BC – 15 CE. (Spink 2002 & de Jersey 1996) A further Romano – British coin has been recorded close to the site at TQ 531546.

<b>SMR Ref.</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Description</b>
MKE419	TQ 55	20BC - 15 CE	Gold stater of Tasciovanus - Late Iron Age
MKE420	TQ 531546	364-376 CE	A third brass of Valens found in Buckhurst Avenue – Romano British

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

- 3.1 One trench, 12.0m by 1.8m was excavated across the area (see Fig. 2).
- 3.2 The trench layout was designed to provide a representative sample of the development area. This trench was accurately laid out using GPS.
- 3.3 The trench was scanned prior to excavation using a CAT scanner. It was then excavated under constant archaeological supervision using a rubber tracked 2 ton 360° excavator equipped with a toothless bucket.
- 3.4 The trench was left open for at least 24 hours and cleaned and inspected regularly for features in accordance with section 7. of the KCC Specification.
- 3.5 Spoil heaps and the trench base were scanned with a metal detector as was the spoil derived from excavated features.
- 3.6 All exposed archaeological features and deposits were cleaned by hand, planned and recorded. They were then excavated in accordance with the *Specification for Archaeological Evaluation*.
- 3.7 All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using the standard context record sheets used by ASE. Soil colours were recorded using visual inspection and not by reference to the Munsell Colour chart.
- 3.8 Archaeological structures, features and deposits exposed or excavated were planned in relation to the trench and the trench planned onto a copy of the Ordnance Survey map not smaller than 1:2500 scale.
- 3.9 Mr and Mrs Moss and the KCC Archaeological Officer were informed of progress on the site.
- 3.10 A full photographic record (black and white and colour slide) of the work was kept as appropriate and will form part of the site archive. All archaeological features were photographed.
- 3.11 Archaeological deposits were levelled with a theodolite in relation to a known bench mark above ordnance datum.
- 3.12 Once recording had taken place the trenches were backfilled by machine, in appropriate sequence, spread evenly and compacted to ensure a surface flush or nearly flush with the ground surface. No reinstatement of the original surface (i.e. turf) was undertaken.

#### 4. RESULTS (Figure 3)

4.1 **Trench 1** was excavated to a length of 12 metres and to depths of between c.460mm (151.25m A.O.D) at the southeastern end and to c.780mm (150.98m A.O.D) at the northwestern end, at which points the natural Folkestone Beds were encountered and mechanical excavation ceased.

Context	Type	Description	Max dimensions
1/001	Layer	Topsoil, firm Sandy silt, dark black brown. mod. CBM. roots and occ. Plastic	300mm thick
1/002	Layer	Made-ground, loose mixed mid orange brown sandy silt with lenses of building sand, fre. CBM, sandstone frags (<50mm) occ glass, roots	500mm thick
1/003	Mas	Stone and brick wall footing	460mm width, 350mm depth
1/004	Cut	Pit	5m length, 1m width, 150mm depth
1\005	Fill	Dark black brown sandy silt, fre. CBM, glass. Mod. Sandstone frags (30mm)	
1/006	Layer	Natural Mottled mid yellow + orange sand. fre. Sandstone frags (<30mm)	

4.2 Trench 1 was much disturbed through heavy rooting and the presence of multiple services and drains. **Context 1/003** consisted of two courses of a post medieval stone and brick wall footing. This ran at a diagonal across the northwestern end of the trench. The footing was c.1.9m in length, c.460mm in width and 350mm deep. The large rag-stone blocks and bricks it was constructed with were bonded by mortar but no pointing was visible. A date of 18-19<sup>th</sup> century is probable for the construction date of this wall.

4.3 A large pit **1/004** was located mid trench to the eastern side and was c.5m in length, c.1m in width and c.150mm in depth. It had gradually sloping sides that ran under the baulk section. **Context 1/004** was filled by **Context 1/005**, this comprised a dark black brown sandy silt that contained frequent fragments of ceramic building material (CBM) and glass as well as moderate amounts of sandstone fragments. This fill was derived from the backfilling of the feature.

#### 5. THE FINDS by Trista Clifford

The evaluation recovered a small collection of finds. These are quantified in Table 1 below.

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Context	Pottery	weight (g)	CBM	weight (g)	Stone	weight (g)	Glass	weight (g)	Mortar	weight (g)
1	2	28	9	424						
2	2	38	5	520			5	276		
3			1	1490	1	>6000				
5	7	160	9	1238			26	2260	1	<2
Totals	11	226	24	3672	1	>6000	31	2536	1	0

Table 1. Quantification of the finds from the evaluation at Rectory Farm, Sevenoaks

### 5.1 Pottery

A total of eleven pottery fragments weighing 226g were recovered from three contexts. The topsoil, [001], contained a creamware fragment, and a fragment from a stoneware bottle. Context [002] contained a blue transfer printed pearlware fragment of later 19<sup>th</sup> century date, and a rim sherd from a Chinese porcelain plate or shallow bowl. Two fragments of Chinese porcelain, possibly part of the same vessel, were also recovered from pit fill [005], along with creamware, white china, glazed red earthenware and an unglazed black stoneware bowl fragment which may be basalt ware. The pottery from [005] dates to the 18-19<sup>th</sup> century.

### 5.2 CBM

5.2.1 A total of 24 fragments weighing 3672g were collected from four contexts. Three tile fabrics and three brick fabrics were devised, described below:

#### *Tile*

- T1- Abundant fine sand-tempered with frequent voids c.1mm, occasional iron rich inclusions up to 1mm and occasional white inclusions up to 2mm. Sparse large voids up to 7mm; some marbling
- T2- Abundant medium-fine sand-tempered yellow clay matrix with occasional iron rich inclusions up to 2mm; marbled
- T3- Abundant medium sand with frequent iron oxide up to 1mm and angular red flint 1-3mm, marbled; poorly sorted

#### *Brick*

- B1- Medium fired medium sand-tempered with frequent iron oxide <1mm-3mm and sparse angular grey flint c. 1mm
- B2- High fired marbled red and yellow clays with poor mixing. Fine sand temper with moderate round voids up to 1mm
- B3- High fired abundant medium to coarse sand temper with occasional iron rich inclusions.



- 5.2.2 Context [001] contained several medium to well fired peg tile fragments in fabric T1, one of which has a square countersunk nail hole. The context also contained modern tile fragments and a piece of land drain. Context [002] contained two conjoining fragments of peg tile with two square nail holes in T1, and a similar tile fragment also with a square nail hole in fabric T2. A third probable peg tile fragment in F3 was also recovered.
- 5.2.3 A single incomplete red brick, 965mm wide and 680mm thick was sampled from wall footing [003]. The brick is unfrogged and is fabric B3. The remains of a pale grey coarse sand mortar adhere to the surfaces of the brick.
- 5.2.4 Pit fill [005] contained five pieces of peg tile in T1, and one in T2 and T3. The fragment in Fabric T2 has the remains of a pale buff chalky mortar adhering to the upper surface. Two brick fragments were recovered from this context. The first, in fabric B1, is very abraded. The second, in fabric B2, is higher fired and much less abraded with a thickness of 280mm.
- 5.2.5 A small pale grey fragment of a sandy mortar was also recovered from [005].
- 5.2.6 A date of 18-19<sup>th</sup> century is probable for the brick and tile assemblage.

### 5.3 *Glass*

Thirty one fragments of glass weighing 2536g were recovered from two contexts. The surface of the glass is, in most cases, flaking and iridescent. Context [002] contained the base from a green glass bottle. Six bases with kicks of varying heights and eight necks from green glass bottles were recovered from [005], along with several body sherds. These are late post-medieval in date, probably 18-19<sup>th</sup> century.

### 5.4 *Stone*

One large block of dressed Kentish Rag was sampled from wall footing [003]. The remains of a pale grey coarse sand mortar adhere to the surfaces of the stone.

## **6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 6.1 The underlying geology encountered during the course of the evaluation comprised Folkestone Beds.
- 6.2 It was found during the project that the site had received some degree of disturbance of fairly modern origin. This included drains and other services that were associated with the farmhouse. Additional disturbance occurred through root action.

- 6.3 **Context 1\002** comprised a probable construction\demolition deposit associated with the building of the standing 1930's house and the demolition of its forbear and outbuildings. This deposit contained lenses of disturbed building sand that seemed to underlie the topsoil. The shallow topsoil deposit (**Context 1\001**) is of recent origin as it has been laid over a drain grate (see Fig. 3) and it appears that the building sand represents the bedding for a cobbled yard surface found just outside the development area that would have once extended to the area of the trench.
- 6.4 This investigation succeeded in identifying post medieval archaeological features on the site. These appear to comprise a wall footing and a pit. No medieval, Roman or prehistoric finds or features were revealed during the work.
- 6.5 A large post medieval outbuilding is known from the northern area of the courtyard and appears on the ordnance survey map of 1871 (OS 1871). The northern exterior wall of this outbuilding still stands on the site and forms the limit of the courtyard alongside Rectory Lane. By overlaying the ordnance survey maps of 1875 (OS 1875) and 1895 (OS 1895 see Figs. 4 and 5) on the wall footing found during excavations an implication towards a relationship between the outbuilding shown in the map evidence and the archaeological remains can, with the addition of the dating evidence (see section 5.2.6), be suggested.
- 6.6 Pit **1/004** seems to be related to the deposition of waste material of a 18<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> century date and given the high proportion of ceramic building material (mainly tile) it seems probable that this pit is linked to a phase of remodeling during Rectory Farm's history.
- 6.7 The demolition\construction deposit **1\002** served to truncate the natural through most of the trench. This disturbance in conjunction with the post medieval activity known at the site would possibly have served to destroy any archaeology of preceding periods if indeed it had ever existed.
- 6.8 In conclusion, this investigation has only provided evidence for post medieval activity at the site. It seems certain that this period of activity has seriously affected the archaeological potential of the site. The evidence presented here is only valuable for information on the growth and development of Sevenoaks from a mid 19<sup>th</sup> century date onwards and does not contribute significantly towards the environmental and landscape history of the area but merely the development of the farm itself.

## 7. **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Archaeology South-East would like to thank Mr and Mrs Moss who commissioned the work. Thanks are also due to Adam Single of Kent County Council for his guidance throughout the project.

**REFERENCES**

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OS, 1875 – Kent, 1:10,560

OS, 1895 – Kent, 1:10,560

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Rectory Farm, Rectory Lane, Sevenoaks.

**SMR Summary Sheet**

Site Code	RFS07					
Identification Name and Address	Rectory Farm, Rectory Lane, Sevenoaks					
County, District &/or Borough	Sevenoaks					
Ordnance Survey Grid Reference	NGR 553037 154284					
Archaeology South-East Proj. No.	3145					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval. ✓	Excav.	Watching Brief	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field	Shallow Urban ✓	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval. 08.10.07- 09.10.07	Excav.	WB.	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Cherry and Peter Moss					
Project Manager	Neil Griffin					
Project Supervisor	Andy Margetts					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM✓	Other		
<p>100 Word Summary.</p> <p><i>Archaeology South-East (ASE), the contracting division of University College London Centre for Applied Archaeology, were commissioned by Cherry and Peter Moss, to undertake an archaeological evaluation in advance of construction of a new house within the farm curtilage at Rectory Farm, Rectory Lane, Sevenoaks. The work took place during the 8<sup>th</sup> and the 9<sup>th</sup> August 2007.</i></p> <p><i>One trench was excavated by machine orientated northwest to southeast across the site. Natural Folkestone Beds were encountered at a maximum height of 151.25m A.O.D in the southeast of the site, truncated by later disturbance to 150.98m A.O.D to the northwest. A total of two features were recorded during the investigation, including a pit and a wall footing of post medieval date.</i></p>						

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**OASIS ID: archaeol6-33103**

**Project details**

Project name	Rectory Farm
Short description of the project	Archaeology South-East (ASE), the contracting division of University College London Centre for Applied Archaeology, were commissioned by Cherry and Peter Moss, to undertake an archaeological evaluation in advance of construction of a new house within the farm curtilage at Rectory Farm, Rectory Lane, Sevenoaks. The work took place during the 8th and the 9th August 2007. One trench was excavated by machine orientated northwest to southeast across the site. Natural Folkestone Beds were encountered at a maximum height of 151.25m A.O.D in the southeast of the site, truncated by later disturbance to 150.98m A.O.D to the northwest. A total of two features were recorded during the investigation, including a pit and a wall footing of post medieval date.
Project dates	Start: 08-10-2007 End: 09-10-2007
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	RFS07 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	WALL Post Medieval
Significant Finds	GLASS Post Medieval
Methods & techniques	'Targeted Trenches'
Development type	Rural residential
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

**Project location**

Country	England
Site location	KENT SEVENOAKS SEVENOAKS Rectory Farm

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Rectory Farm, Rectory Lane, Sevenoaks.

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Postcode	TN13 2XX
Study area	12.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 530 542 51.2658534563 0.193315879573 51 15 57 N 000 11 35 E Point
Height OD	Min: 150.98m Max: 151.25m

**Project creators**

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South East
Project brief originator	Heritage Conservation Kent County Council
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East
Project director/manager	Neil Griffin
Project supervisor	Andrew Margetts
Type of sponsor/funding body	Client
Name of sponsor/funding body	Mr Moss

**Project archives**

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive Exists?	No
Paper Archive Exists?	No

**Project bibliography 1**

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Other bibliographic details	3145 project number
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Description	eval rep

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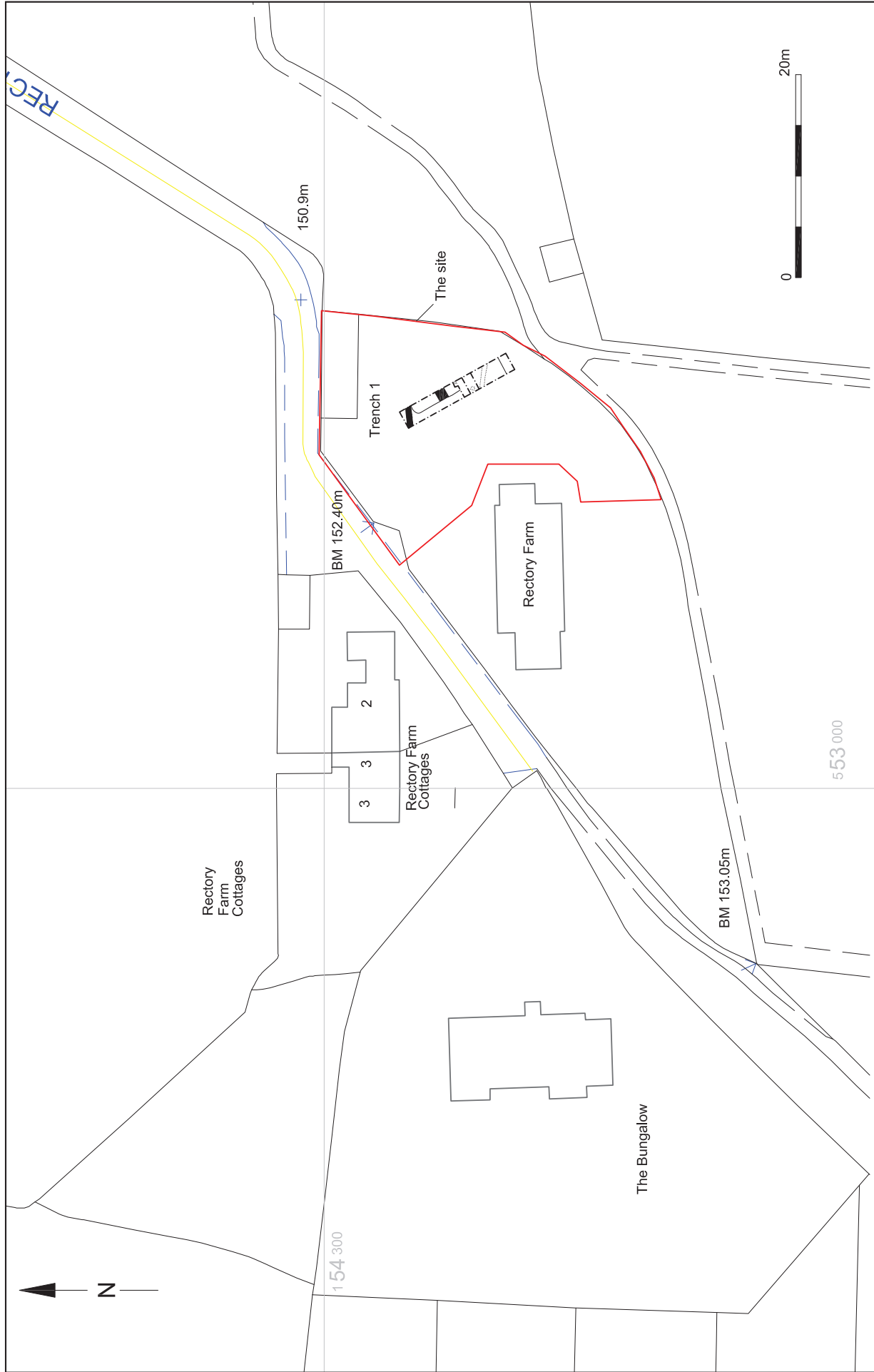
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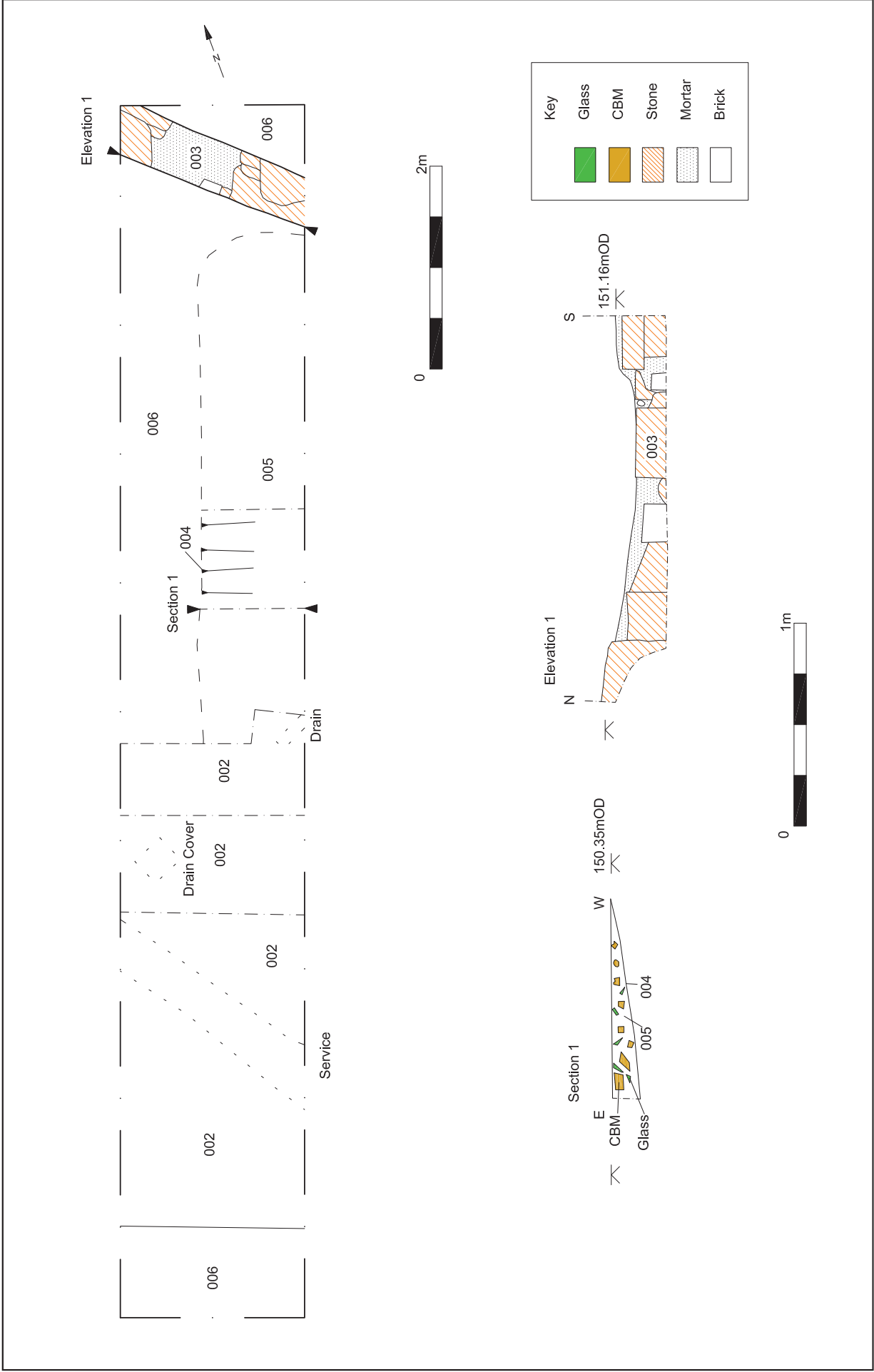
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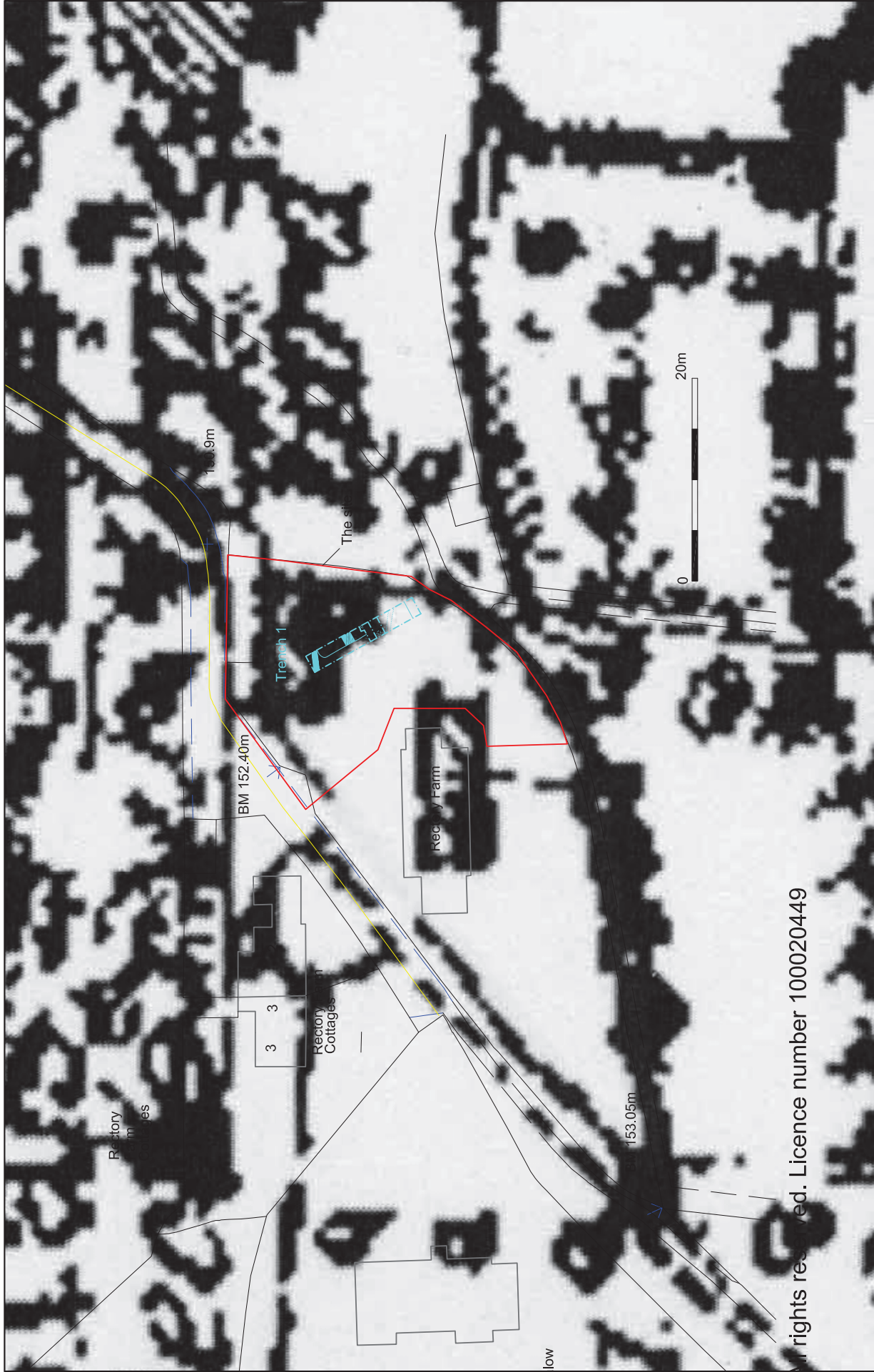


© <b>Archaeology South-East</b>		Rectory Farm, Sevenoaks	Fig. 2
Ref: 3145	Oct 2007	Trench Location Plan	
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© <b>Archaeology South-East</b>		Rectory Farm, Sevenoaks	
Ref: 3145	Oct 2007	Trench plan with section and Elevation	
		Drawn by:	SM

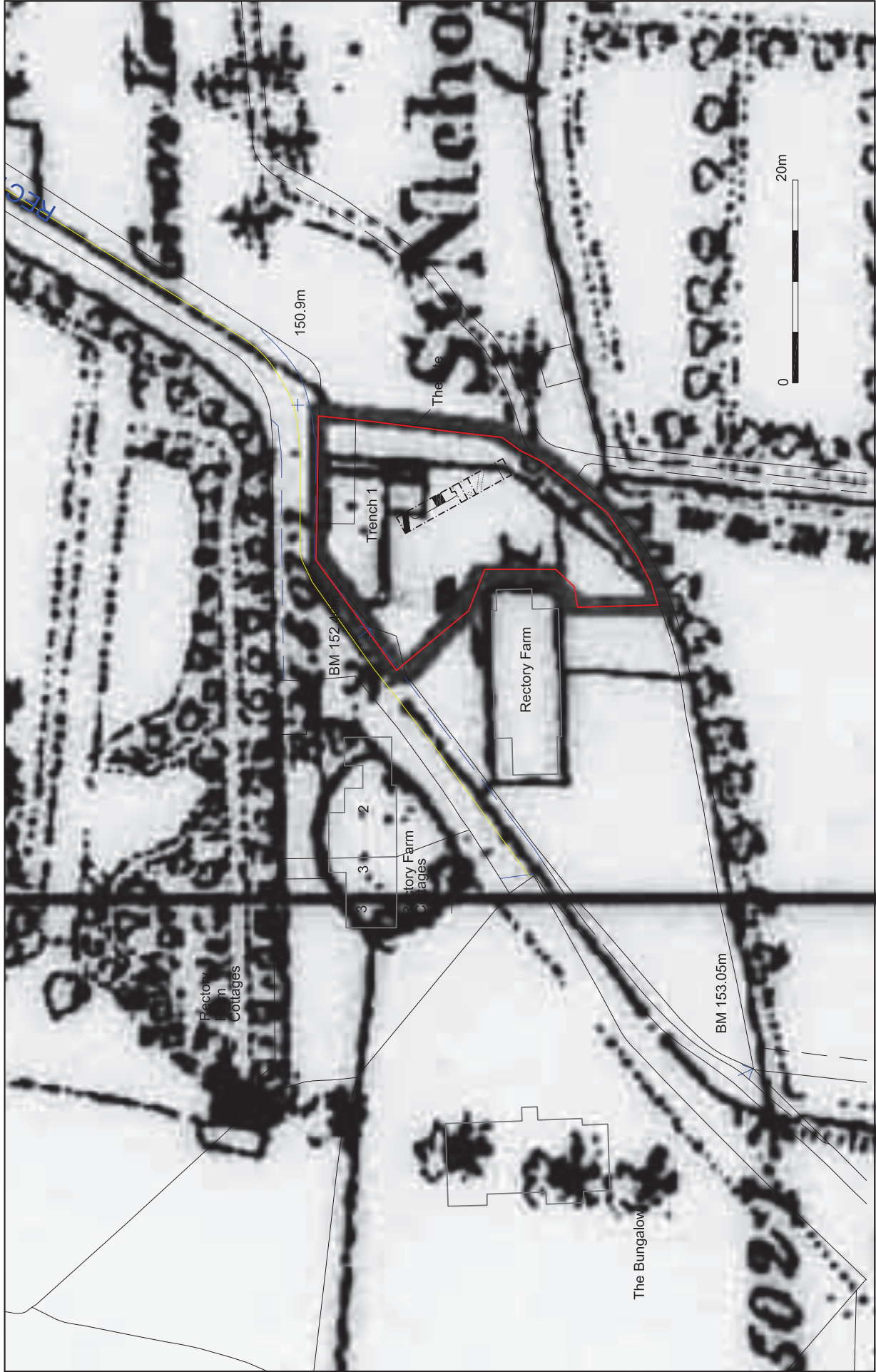
Fig. 3



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Fig. 4

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Ref: 3145	Oct 2007	Drawn by:	SM
		Trench 1 overlying 1895 OS map	

Fig. 5