

**LAND ADJACENT TO CRANFORD COTTAGE, WENDENS AMBO, ESSEX**  
**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING**

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

### LAND ADJACENT TO CRANFORD COTTAGE, WENDENS AMBO, ESSEX

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING

Authors: Stephen Quinn BSc (report and fieldwork)	
NGR: TL 509 359	Report No: 3945
District: Uttlesford	Site Code: WACC 11
Approved: Claire Halpin	Project No: 4272
Signed:	Date: October 2011



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## OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

<b>Project details</b>			
Project name	<i>Land adjacent to Cranford Cottage, Wendens Ambo, Essex</i>		
<p><i>In October 2011, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording in advance of a proposed development on land adjacent to Cranford Cottage, Wendens Ambo, Essex (NGR: TL 509 359). The proposed development comprises the construction of a new house, garage and access on part of the former garden of Cranford Cottage. The monitoring was commissioned by Mr and Mrs Pike to comply with a planning condition attached to planning approval for the development (Ref. UTT/2337/10).</i></p> <p><i>In March 2011, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) conducted an archaeological evaluation of the site (Dyson et al 2011). It revealed Roman, medieval and post-medieval features, and the occurrence of sparse struck flint is also suggestive of prehistoric activity. The archaeological evidence is comparable to that recorded on the adjacent site where Roman and medieval features were revealed (Wightman 2009).</i></p> <p><i>The excavation of foundation trenches associated with the proposed new house and garage was monitored. A flint surface, L2005, of probable early post-medieval date, was identified, and also an undated ditch, F2006. Both features had been previously identified in the trial trench evaluation (Dyson et al 2011).</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	<i>12<sup>th</sup> October 2011</i>		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	<i>Y</i>	Future work	<i>N</i>
P. number	<i>4272</i>	Site code	<i>WACC 11</i>
Type of project	<i>Archaeological Monitoring &amp; Recording</i>		
Site status	<i>Area of archaeological potential</i>		
Current land use	<i>Garden lawn</i>		
Planned development	<i>House, garage and access.</i>		
Main features (+dates)	<i>Cobbled flint surface, Ditch (Undated)</i>		
Significant finds (+dates)	<i>None</i>		
<b>Project location</b>			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Essex</i>	<i>Uttlesford</i>	<i>Wendens Ambo</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>Essex HER (EHER)</i>		
Post code (if known)	<i>CB11 4JU</i>		
Area of site	<i>Approximately 250m<sup>2</sup></i>		
NGR	<i>TL 509 359</i>		
Height AOD (max/ min)	<i>55m AOD</i>		
<b>Project creators</b>			
Brief issued by	<i>Essex County Council Historic Environment Branch (R Havis)</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>Stephen Quinn</i>		
Funded by	<i>Mr &amp; Mrs Pike</i>		
Full title	<i>Land adjacent to Cranford Cottage, Wendens Ambo, Essex: Archaeological Monitoring and Recording</i>		
Authors	<i>Quinn S, Thompson P</i>		
Report no.	<i>3945</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>October 2011</i>		

## **LAND ADJACENT TO CRANFORD COTTAGE, WENDENS AMBO, ESSEX**

### **ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING**

#### **SUMMARY**

*In October 2011, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording in advance of a proposed development on land adjacent to Cranford Cottage, Wendens Ambo, Essex (NGR: TL 509 359). The proposed development comprises the construction of a new house, garage and access on part of the former garden of Cranford Cottage. The monitoring was commissioned by Mr and Mrs Pike to comply with a planning condition attached to planning approval for the development (Ref. UTT/2337/10).*

*The site lies on the western side of Duck Street within the village of Wendens Ambo. The village dates back to at least the Saxon period, and was recorded at Domesday with an 11<sup>th</sup> C. church. Roman activity is also well known from the area, with a villa site approximately 300m to the north-west at Chinnel Barn, investigated in the mid 19<sup>th</sup>C, then prior to M11 construction 1973-4 and during motorway widening 1992-5 (TL 507 361: EHER 169 & 170). Investigations at Rookery Lane to the west of the site (Ennis 2006; Wightman 2009) revealed extensive stratified deposits of Roman and medieval date.*

*In March 2011, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) conducted an archaeological evaluation of the site (Dyson et al 2011). It revealed Roman, medieval and post-medieval features, and the occurrence of sparse struck flint is also suggestive of prehistoric activity. The archaeological evidence is comparable to that recorded on the adjacent site where Roman and medieval features were revealed (Wightman 2009).*

*The excavation of foundation trenches associated with the proposed new house and garage was monitored. A flint surface, L2005, of probable early post-medieval date, was identified, and also an undated ditch, F2006. Both features had been previously identified in the trial trench evaluation (Dyson et al 2011).*

#### **1 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 In October 2011, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording in advance of a proposed development on land adjacent to Cranford Cottage, Wendens Ambo, Essex (NGR: TL 509 359; Figs.1 - 2). The proposed development comprises the construction of a new house, garage and access on part of the former garden of Cranford Cottage. The monitoring was commissioned by Mr and Mrs Pike to

comply with a planning condition attached to the approval for the development (Ref. UTT/2337/10).

1.2 The archaeological monitoring was carried out in accordance with a brief issued by Essex County Council Historic Environment Branch (ECC HEM) (R. Havis, dated May 2011), and a specification compiled by AS (dated 13/05/2011). It was conducted according to the IfA *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (revised 2008) and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation* (also revised 2008). It also adhered to the document *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).

1.3 The objectives of the project were:

- To ensure the archaeological monitoring of all aspects of the development programme likely to affect buried archaeological remains;
- To secure the adequate recording of any archaeological remains revealed by the development programme;
- To secure the full analysis and interpretation of the site archive and the appropriate publication of the project results, if required; and
- To secure the analysis, long-term conservation and storage of the project archive.

## **Planning policy context**

1.4 PPS5 (2010) states those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest are heritage assets. The Planning Policy Statement aims to deliver sustainable development by ensuring that policies and decisions that concern the historic environment recognise that heritage assets are a non-renewable resource, take account of the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits of heritage conservation, and recognise that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term. It aims to conserve England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance. It states that opportunities to capture evidence from the historic environment and to contribute to our knowledge and understanding of our past, and to make this publicly available, should be taken, particularly where a heritage asset is to be lost.

## **2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE (Figs. 1 - 2)**

2.1 Wendens Ambo is a small village in north-west Essex located 24km south of Cambridge and 3 miles south-west of Saffron Waldon. The site is at the south-west end of Wendens Ambo on lawns immediately to the south of Cranford Cottage (DP 1), and is to the west of the meeting of Duck Street and Rookery

Lane. The north-south running M11 is situated 150m to the west. It is a rural residential area, surrounded by detached and semi-detached properties.

### 3 THE EVIDENCE

#### 3.1 Topography, geology and soils (Fig. 1)

3.1.1 The village is located where a west to east running tributary valley joins the south to north flowing River Cam. The village probably takes its name from 'winding valley' and the site is on the southern lower slope of the tributary valley at approximately 55m AOD. The local soil is loam over clay with the underlying bedrock comprising chalk.

#### 3.2 Archaeological and Historical Background

3.2.1 In 2006 residual prehistoric worked flint and pottery was recovered during an evaluation on Duck Street, some 120m to the north of the site (TL 510 361: EHER 46002). Bronze Age pottery was recovered 300m to the west at Chinnel Barn where excavations were carried out ahead of construction of the M11. Here an Iron Age round house and associated pits and gullies were also found (EHER 170). Geophysical survey carried out ahead of widening the motorway identified more features and Middle Iron Age pottery was recovered.

3.2.2 At Chinnel Barn a Roman corridor villa was excavated which included a hypocaust and bath house and is a Scheduled Monument (TL 507 361: EHER 169). Infant burials were also present, and the finds recovered from the villa dated it to between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD. Romano-British field systems were identified overlying the Iron Age remains, along with corn drying kilns and a possible pre-Boudiccan granary. At the Duck Street site the 2006 evaluation identified a series of 1<sup>st</sup> century ditches and gullies, and a north-east to south-west aligned metalled road or yard underlying 4<sup>th</sup> century Roman deposits (EHER 46000). Mid 2<sup>nd</sup> to mid 3<sup>rd</sup> century pottery was also present in the subsoil and all these remains suggest a continuation of the Roman field systems to the west. Surface finds including Roman tile were found in the small field to the west of the road in the angle of Duck Street and Chinnel Lane (TL 510 360: EHER 260).

3.2.3 The Duck Street evaluation also identified medieval features consisting of two, 12<sup>th</sup> to early 13<sup>th</sup> century ditches and a 14<sup>th</sup> to early 15<sup>th</sup> century pit (EHER 46001). In addition a metalled yard or track, aligned north-east to south-west (presumably a different one to EHER 46000), was of 15<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup> century date. These features probably indicate the presence of previously unknown occupation in the vicinity. In the medieval period there were two settlements *Wenden Magna* and *Wenden Parva*, and the latter is believed to have been approximately 5-600m to the north where excavations found remains of late Saxon timber

buildings and some pottery (EHER 163, 167 & 17339). Documentary evidence suggests that the church was located near the Old Vicarage (EHER 162). The Church of St Mary the Virgin ministering to *Wenden Magna* is located 250m north of the site (EHER 217). It contains reused Roman brick, probably from the villa, and the nave and west tower date from the late 11<sup>th</sup> century. There were subsequent periods of rebuilding during the medieval period through to the 15<sup>th</sup> century clerestory and some 16<sup>th</sup> century windows. The church was further rebuilt in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. An Early Saxon warrior burial was found to the east near Audley End Station (EHER 229). Several houses in the village are of medieval origin.

3.2.4 In 1662 the two medieval parishes were amalgamated as Wendens Ambo and an extensive programme of building was undertaken. The closest listed buildings to the site are the Old Rectory Cottages, Beam End and a cottage 70m north-east of Willows, which are all in Duck Street and originated in the 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries (LB 415553, 417058 & 41552). The base of a wall, thought to be post-medieval, was found in Duck Street approximately 130m to the north of the site (TL 511 361: EHER 46869). There are a number of WWII defences in Wendens Ambo including one in Duck Street (TL 510 361: EHER 10385). An evaluation carried out by Archaeological Solutions at The Bourn, Duck Street, did not uncover any archaeological features (Barlow, Brogan & Thompson 2009).

### 3.3 Previous Investigation

3.3.1 In March 2011, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) conducted an archaeological evaluation of the site (Fig.2; Dyson *et al*). It revealed Roman, medieval and post-medieval features, and the occurrence of sparse struck flint is also suggestive of prehistoric activity.

3.3.2 The Roman features were dispersed and recorded in Trench 1 (Ditch F1010 and Pit F1013) and Trench 3 (Pit F1006 and Ditch F1021). Ditches F1010 (Tr.1) and F1021 (Tr.3) contained large assemblages of Roman pottery, and Ditch F1010 contained a thatch or loomweight. Medieval (12<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> century) features were found in Trenches 2 (Pit 1027) and 3 (Ditch F1018, Layer 1020 & Pit F1023), towards the front of the site. The post-medieval feature was Flint Surface S1035 (Trench 2), but it may be earlier. A trackway metalled with flint cobbles dating from the medieval period was recorded on the adjacent site.

3.3.3 The archaeological evidence was comparable to that recorded on the adjacent site where Roman and medieval features were revealed (Wightman 2009). It was suggested that the Roman features may indicate agricultural activity peripheral to the Roman villa complex at Chinnel Barn. The adjacent site also recorded medieval features dating from the 12<sup>th</sup> century or earlier. It was suggested that the medieval activity may relate to a farmstead on the edge of the medieval village of Wendens Ambo.



## 4 METHODOLOGY (Archaeological monitoring and recording)

4.1 The archaeological monitoring observed the excavation of the foundation trenches for the proposed garage and house. The footings were excavated at a width of 0.80m and to a maximum depth of 2.6m. The excavation was carried out using a tracked 360° mechanical excavator (DP 7 & 8).

4.2 Exposed surfaces were cleaned by hand and examined for archaeological features. Excavated spoil was searched for archaeological finds. Deposits were recorded using pro forma recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed as appropriate.

## 5 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS (Fig. 3)

### Sample Sections

Five sample sections were recorded of the stratigraphy and are tabulated below:

#### Sample Section 1 (DP 2)

<i>North-east facing</i> <i>Length: 1m</i> <i>0.00 = 56.32m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.10m	L2000	Topsoil. Mid grey brown, loose silty clay with moderate small angular flints and stones.
0.10m – 0.38m	L2001	Made ground. Light orange brown, compact silty clay. Moderate ceramic building material fragments and occasional small angular flints.
0.38m – 0.70m	L2002	Buried topsoil. Dark grey brown, firm clay silt with occasional chalk flecks.
0.70m – 0.81m	L2003	Subsoil. Mid grey orange, firm silty clay with occasional chalk flecks and occasional small angular flints.
0.81m+	L2004	Natural geology. Light yellow orange, compact sandy chalky clay with frequent chalk fragments and occasional large flint nodules.

#### Sample Section 2 (DP 3)

<i>South-west facing</i> <i>Length: 1m</i> <i>0.00 = 56.10m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.12m	L2000	Topsoil. As above.
0.12m – 0.25m	L2001	Made ground. As above.
0.25m – 0.50m	L2002	Buried topsoil. As above.
0.50m +	L2004	Natural geology. As above...

**Sample Section 3**

<i>North-west facing</i> <i>Length: 1m</i> <i>0.00 = 56.22m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.25m	L2000	Topsoil. As above
0.25m – 0.42m	L2001	Made ground. As above
0.42m – 0.75m	L2002	Buried topsoil. As above
0.75m – 0.96m	L2003	Subsoil. As above
0.96m+	L2004	Natural geology. As above

**Sample Section 4 (DP 4)**

<i>South-east facing</i> <i>Length: 1m</i> <i>0.00m = 56.18m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.31m	L2000	Topsoil. As above.
0.31m – 0.55m	L2001	Made ground. As above.
0.55m – 0.80m	L2005	Flint surface. Mid blue grey, compacted flint nodules, gravel and stone.
0.80m+	L2004	Natural geology. As above.

**Sample Section 5**

<i>South-west facing</i> <i>Length: 1m</i> <i>0.00m = 56.21m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.20m	L2000	Topsoil. As above.
0.20m – 0.51m	L2001	Made ground. As above.
0.51m – 0.84m	L2002	Buried topsoil. As above.
0.84m – 0.92m	L2003	Subsoil. As above.
0.92m+	L2004	Natural. As above.

*Description: Two archaeological features were present: Ditch F2006 and cobbled flint and stone surface L1005.*

Ditch F2006 (DP 5), was linear (1.5m+ x 1.10m x 0.45m) and traversed the south-east corner of the house footings on a north/south alignment. It had moderately sloping sides with a gradual break of slope to a concave base. It contained a single fill, L2007, a mid black grey, firm silty clay with occasional chalk and charcoal inclusions. No finds were present.

Layer L2005 (DP 6), was a cobbled flint and stone surface (approx. 9.0m+ x 4.0m+ x 0.25m) the full extent of which was not visible in plan. It was a mid blue grey colour, composed of compacted flint nodules, stones and gravel. This flint surface was also identified during the trial trench evaluation and dated to the mid-late medieval period (Dyson *et al* 2011).

## 6 CONFIDENCE RATING

6.1 It is not felt that any factors inhibited the recognition of archaeological features of finds.

## 7 DEPOSIT MODEL

7.1 The current ground surface was a grass lawn. Topsoil L2000 was a mid grey brown, loose, silty clay with moderate small angular flints and stones (0.10m-0.31m thick). Beneath the topsoil was modern Made Ground L2001, a light orange brown, compact, silty clay (0.13m-0.31m thick). Fragments of ceramic building material, concrete and modern refuse were noted in this layer. Beneath L2001 was L2002, a Buried Topsoil comprising a dark grey brown, firm, clay silt with occasional chalk flecks (0.25m-0.33m thick). Below L2002 was Subsoil L2003, a mid grey orange, compact, silty clay with occasional chalk flecks and occasional small angular flints (0.08 and 0.21m thick). Beneath L2003, at an average depth of 0.80m, was the Natural Geology; a compact layer of light yellow orange, sandy chalky clay, L2004.

## 8 DISCUSSION

8.1 Ditch F2006 was recorded crossing the south-east corner of the house footings on an approximate north/south alignment. No finds were present, however, this ditch is almost certainly F1021 (Trench 3) of the evaluation (Dyson *et al* 2011). During the evaluation it was dated to the Roman period. It is one of numerous Roman features in the area, and probably relates to agricultural activities peripheral to the villa complex at Chinnel Barn, 300m north-west of the site (TL 507 361: EHER 169 & 170).

8.2 Layer L2005 was a cobbled flint surface composed of compacted flint nodules, stones and gravel, likely a trackway. The flint surface was also identified during the evaluation (S1035, Dyson *et al* 2011) and dated to the post-medieval period, possibly earlier. A wide trackway metalled with flint cobbles was recorded on the adjacent property, orientated NE/SW alignment, possibly connecting with a medieval lane (now Duck Street). Pottery recovered from this flint surface dated from the 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>, to possibly the 16<sup>th</sup> century. This suggests that the trackway may have been laid during the medieval period and continued to be used into the post-medieval period (Whightman, 2009).

8.3 The monitoring revealed relatively few archaeological features, particularly given the presence of stratified Roman and medieval deposits identified during the trial trench evaluation and the nearby Duck Street investigations. The paucity of features is likely due to the limited area exposed by the footings. Those

features that were present are consistent in date and form with the activity previously identified on site, and in the environs of the site.

## **DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE**

The requirements for the deposition of the archive records, with an inventory, will be agreed with the Saffron Walden Museum. The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross referenced and checked for internal consistency.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Archaeological Solutions Limited would like to thank Mr & Mrs Pike for their co-operation and funding of the monitoring.

Archaeological Solutions would also like to thank Mr Richard Havis (ECC HEM) for his input and advice with the project, and the staff at Chelmsford Record Office

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## **WEB SITES**

[www.heritagegateway.org.uk](http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk)

[www.unlockingessex.essexcc.gov.uk](http://www.unlockingessex.essexcc.gov.uk)

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



DP.1  
General view. Looking east.



DP.2  
Sample Section 1. Looking south-west.



DP.3  
Sample Section 2. Looking north-east.



DP.4  
Sample Section 4. Looking north-west.



DP.5  
Ditch F2006. Looking east.



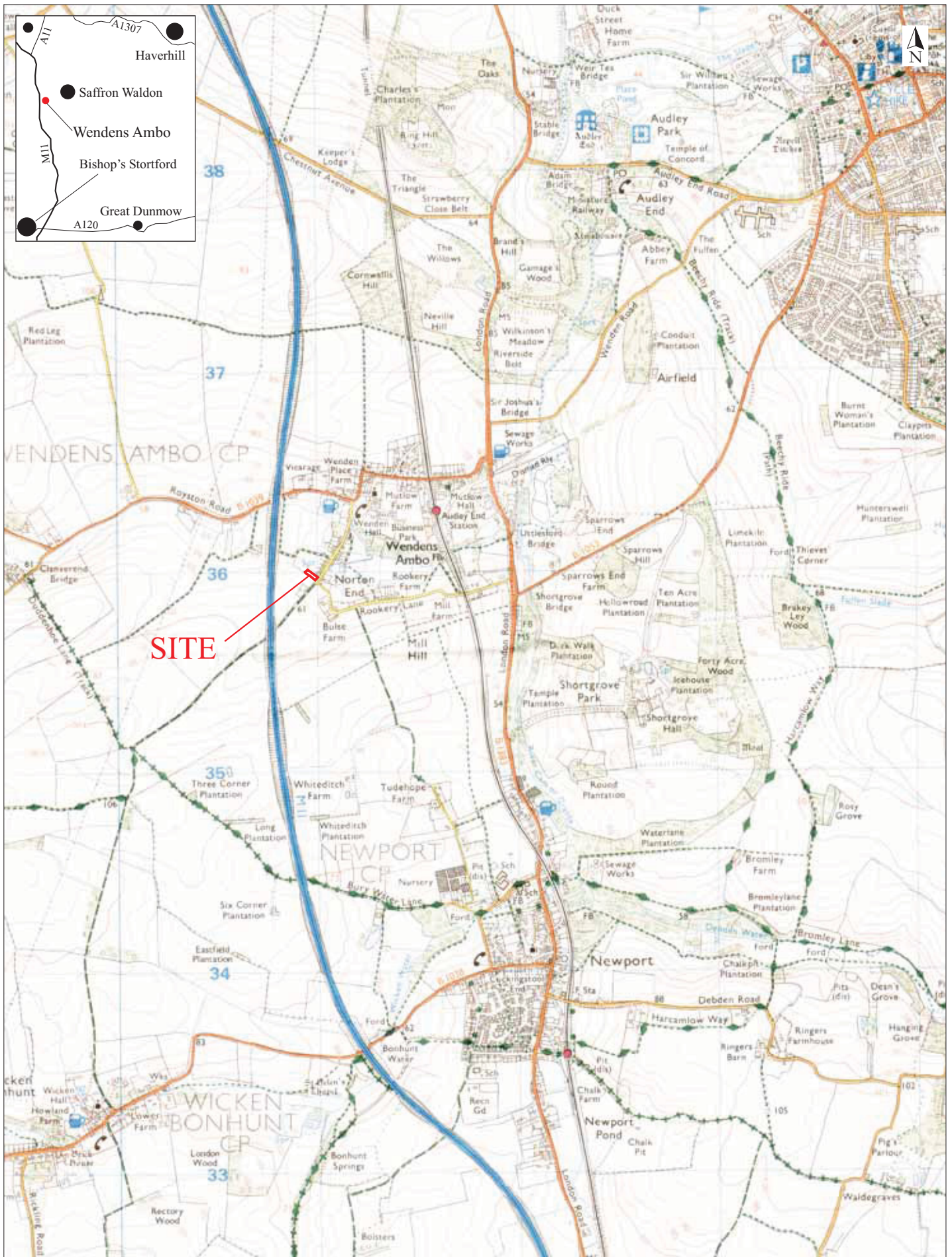
DP.6  
Flint Surface L2005. Looking south.



*DP.7  
Mid excavation. Looking north.*



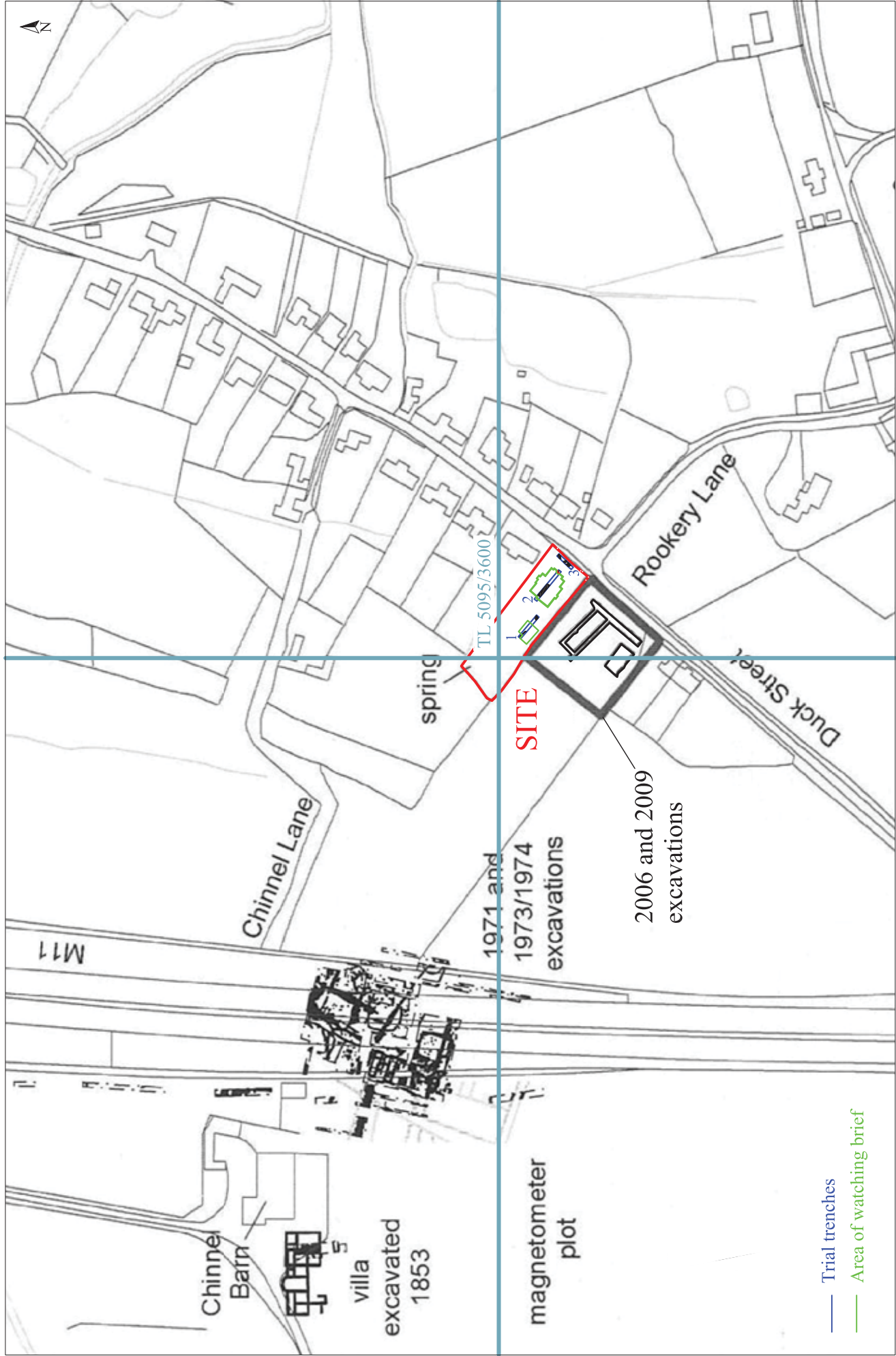
*DP.8  
Post excavation. Looking south.*



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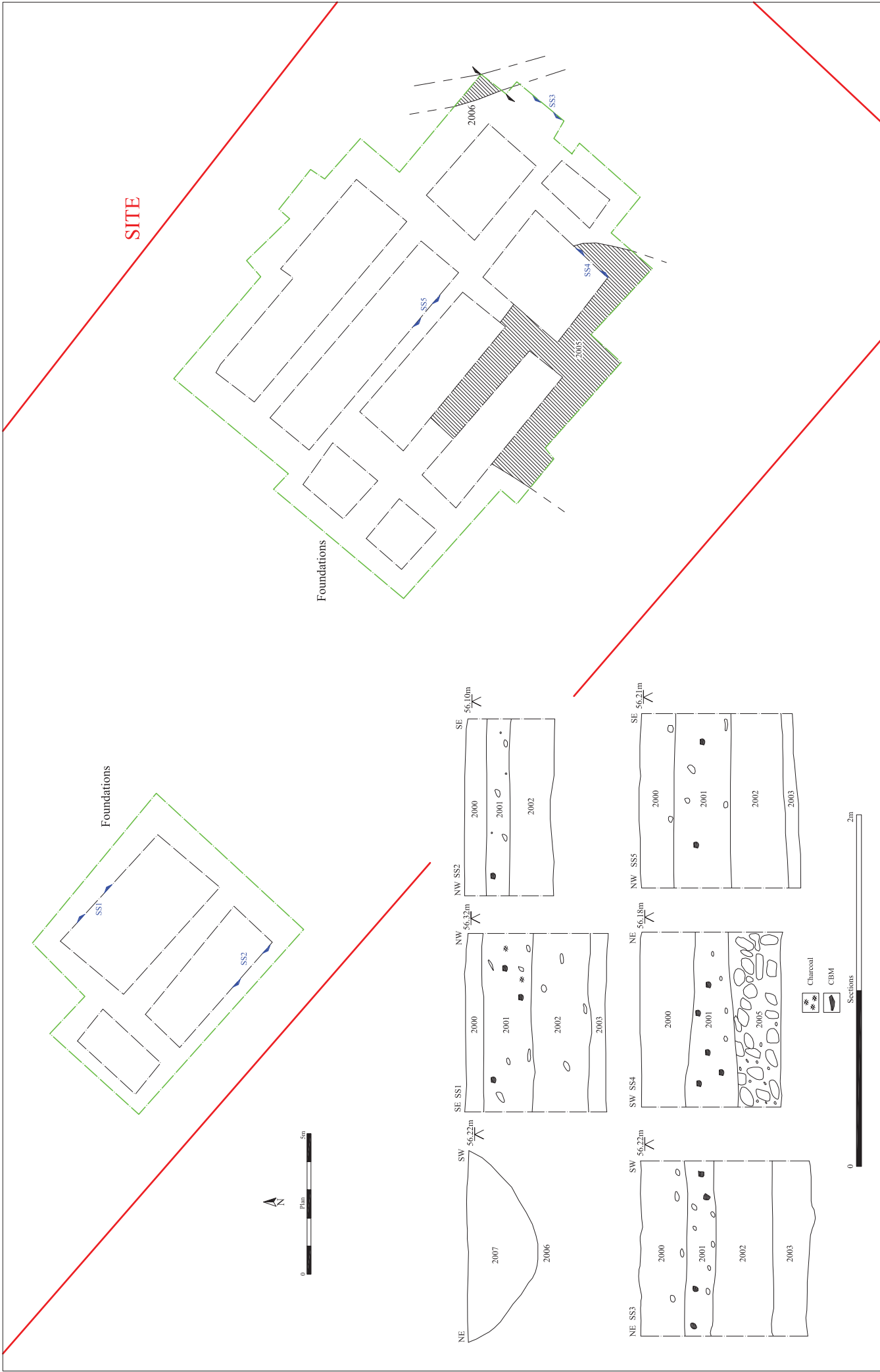
*Archaeological Solutions Ltd*  
**Fig. 1 Site location plan**  
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4



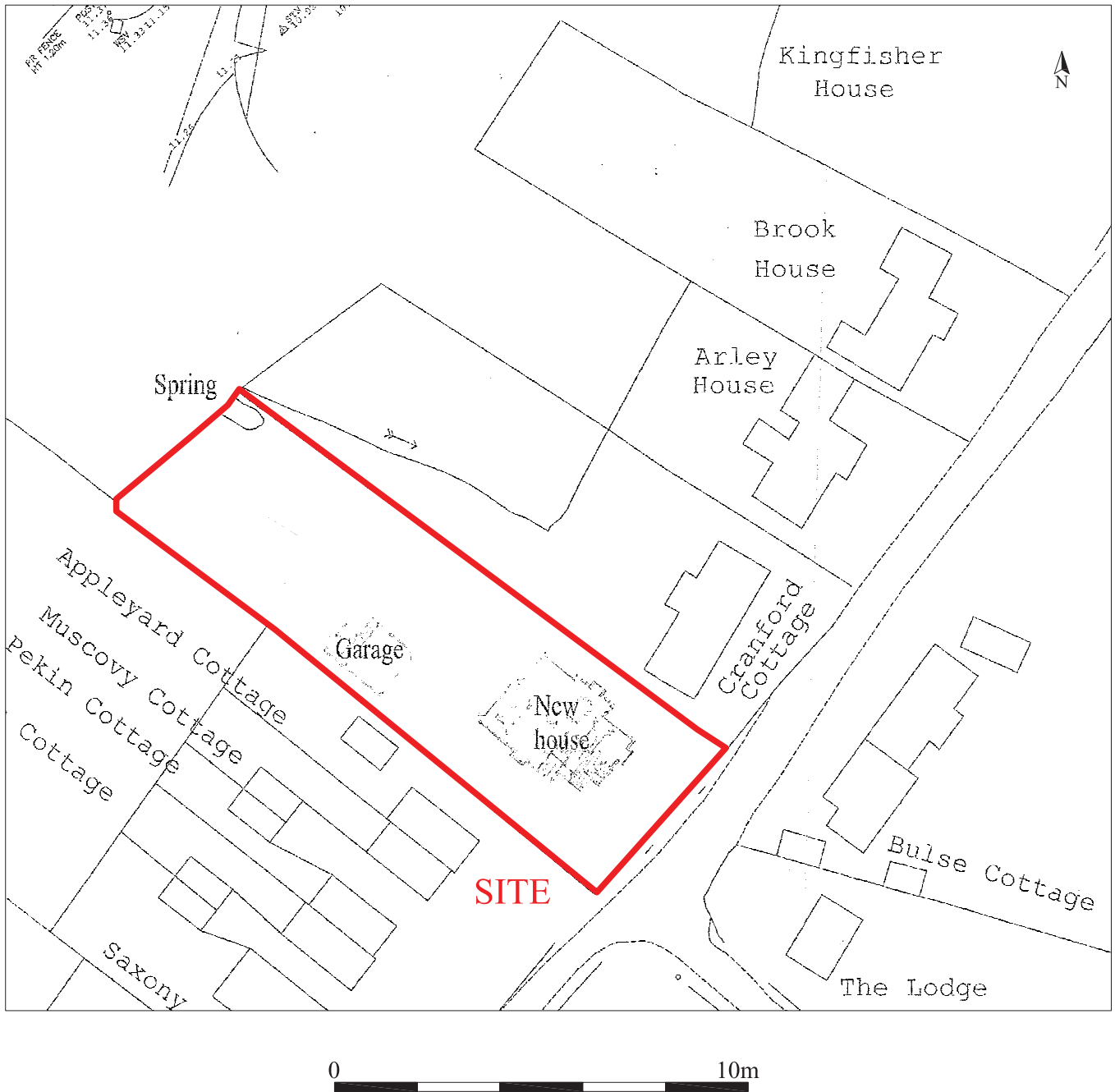


- Trial trenches
- Area of watching brief





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**Fig. 3 Area of watching brief & sections**  
 Scale plan at 1:125 & sections at 1:20 at A3



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**Fig. 4 Proposed development plan**

Scale 1:75 at A4