

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD**

**5 MARSHCROFT LANE,  
TRING, HERTFORDSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING**

Authors: Stephen Quinn, BSc (report) Adam Dyson, BA (fieldwork) Peter Thompson (desk-based assessment)	
NGR: SP 93349 12398	Report No: 3944
District: Dacorum	Site Code: AS 1440
Approved: Claire Halpin	Project No: 4558
Signed:	Date: October 2011

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<b>Project details</b>			
Project name	5 Marshcroft Lane, Tring, Hertfordshire		
<p><i>In October 2011 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording in advance of a proposed development at 5 Marshcroft Lane, Tring, Hertfordshire (NGR: SP 93349 12398). The proposed development comprises the erection of a two-storey and single-storey rear extension to the existing residential property. The monitoring was commissioned by Mr Leigh Pretty of Bluetree Developments to comply with a planning condition attached to planning approval for the development (Dacorum Borough Council Ref. 4/01231/11/FHA).</i></p> <p><i>The site lies within an area designated as an Area of Archaeological Significance on the local plan. Prehistoric activity is known from the area including a beaker period burial from The Grove (HER 620). A cropmark of an undated rectangular enclosure also lies nearby. Grove Farm Cottages are of late medieval date.</i></p> <p><i>The principal potential of the site was for evidence of prehistoric or later activity. In the event no archaeological features or finds were present.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	13 <sup>th</sup> October 2011		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	N	Future work	N
P. number	4558	Site code	AS 1440
Type of project	Archaeological Monitoring & Recording		
Site status	Area of Archaeological Significance		
Current land use	Backyard		
Planned development	Rear extension		
Main features (+dates)	None		
Significant finds (+dates)	None		
<b>Project location</b>			
County/ District/ Parish	Hertfordshire	Dacorum	Tring
HER/ SMR for area	Herts HER		
Post code (if known)	HP23 5PN		
Area of site	Approximately 96m <sup>2</sup>		
NGR	SP 93349 12398		
Height AOD (max/ min)	Approximately 129m		
<b>Project creators</b>			
Brief issued by	Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Unit		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	Adam Dyson		
Funded by	Mr Leigh Pretty of Bluetree Developments		
Full title	5 Marshcroft Lane, Tring, Hertfordshire. Archaeological Monitoring & Recording		
Author	Quinn S., & Thompson, P.		
Report no.	3944		
Date (of report)	October 2011		

## **5 MARSHCROFT LANE, TRING, HERTFORDSHIRE**

### **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 at 5 Marshcroft Lane, Tring, Hertfordshire (NGR: SP 93349 12398). The proposed development comprises the erection of a two-storey and single-storey rear extension to the existing residential property. The monitoring was commissioned to comply with a planning condition attached to planning approval for the development (Dacorum Borough Council Ref. 4/01231/11/FHA).*

*The site lies within an area designated as an Area of Archaeological Significance on the local plan. Prehistoric activity is known from the area including a beaker period burial from The Grove (HER 620). A cropmark of an undated rectangular enclosure also lies nearby. Grove Farm Cottages are of late medieval date.*

*The principal potential of the site was for evidence of prehistoric or later activity. In the event no archaeological features or finds were present.*

#### **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 at 5 Marshcroft, Tring, Hertfordshire (NGR: SP 93349 12398; Figs.1-2). The proposed development comprises the erection of a two-storey and single-storey rear extension to the existing residential property. The monitoring was commissioned by Mr Leigh Pretty of Bluetree Developments to comply with a planning condition attached to planning approval for the development (Dacorum Borough Council Ref. 4/01231/11/FHA).

1.2 The monitoring was carried out in accordance with a specification (WSI) compiled by AS (06/09/2011), and advice received from the HCC HEU Planning Archaeologist. The WSI was approved by HCC HEU. The project 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 project had the particular aims of identifying any archaeological deposits and associated artefacts in the area affected by the proposed development. Any and all evidence for the past environment of the site revealed

during the work was also to be recorded and analyzed. Further aims were as set out in the HCC HEU advice and Institute for Archaeologists' (IfA) documents, namely:

- To ensure the archaeological monitoring of all aspects of the development programme likely to affect buried archaeological remains and alterations to the fabric of the building;
- 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;
- 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 Tring is a small town situated 10km east of the centre of Aylesbury and is immediately north of the A41(T). The site lies on the northern edge of the town on the east side of Marshcroft Lane, close to where it joins Grove Road. The site comprises the existing semi-detached dwelling of 5 Marshcroft Lane. It is proposed to extend the property to the rear. The surrounding area is residential and characterised by similar two-storey semi-detached and terraced dwellings. The area where the proposed rear extension is to be built is currently a concrete back yard.

2.2 The site lies within the area designated as an Area of Archaeological Significance on the local plan. Prehistoric activity is known from the area, including a beaker period burial from The Grove (HER 620). A cropmark of an

undated rectangular enclosure also lies nearby. Grove Farm Cottages are of Late Medieval date.

### **3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS**

3.1 Tring is located within the chalk escarpment of the Chiltern Hills. The ground slopes steeply to the west and south of Tring, although the site is on a fairly flat area at approximately 135m AOD with the Grand Union Canal 750m to the north-east.

3.2 The local soil is typical argillic brown earth of the Charity 2 association which comprises well drained fine silts which locally can be very flinty, and are sometimes shallow overlying flint gravels (Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983).

### **4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

4.1 Evidence for early human activity in the Tring area is fairly limited and is confined to the northern area around the site. A Bronze Age Beaker burial comprising a skeleton with grave goods including flint arrow heads, stone wrist guards and the Beaker pottery was discovered at The Grove 150m to the south (HHER 620: SP 9330 1225). A stone bracer from the same location probably came from the same burial (HHER 1766). Iron Age pottery was found 750m to the south-west where a 4<sup>th</sup> century Roman coin of Arcadius was also located (HHER 6390, 6379: SP 927 122). Crop marks of an undated double ditched 60x21m rectangular enclosure have been identified 320m to the south-east (HHER 2557: SP 936 123). Further afield, a Palaeolithic hand-axe and objects of Bronze and Iron Age date have been found in the Wigginton area (Greene and Williamson 2008). The prehistoric route known as the Icknield Way runs to the north-west of the town, whilst the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age boundary 'Grims Ditch' passes to the south.

4.2 Tring is located on the Roman Road of Akeman Street which forms the southern edge of the town. However, Roman finds in the vicinity are restricted to a 4<sup>th</sup> century coin of Constantine I found 400m to the west (HHER 6072: SP 930 124), and the coin described above. The closest known Romano-British settlement is at Cow Roast some 3km to the south-east of the town, although the discovery of a Roman cemetery to the north-east of Tring at Folly Bridge on the line of the Icknield Way suggests that another Roman settlement may have lain there (Greene and Williamson 2008).

4.3 Anglo-Saxon activity is known from the wider area but Tring itself has produced no sites or finds from this period. The earliest record of the town is in the Domesday Book of 1086, by which time it was considered important enough

to have an administrative district bear its name. By the early 14<sup>th</sup> century, Tring had been granted a weekly market and annual fair, and the Lay Subsidy returns indicate that it was the third wealthiest settlement in Dacorum Hundred after Hemel Hempstead and Berkhamstead (Greene and Williamson 2008). The market place is thought to have been located in the vicinity of the church from where the town is thought to have developed outwards, with smallholder plots extending along the east side of Akeman Street

4.4 The two principal streets of the medieval and post-medieval town were the High Street (formerly Market Street) and Akeman Street, where several 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century buildings survive. During the post-medieval period, Tring was characterised as a thriving commercial centre, the dominant industries being lace-making and straw-plaiting. Other industries included canvas making, silk weaving, milling, malting and brewing. Akeman Street had a school for straw-plaiting, a silk-weavers, maltings and breweries among other industries. Browns brewery was the largest brewery in Tring and was built in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the rear of the Royal Oak Public House to the north of the site.

4.5 By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century the manor of Tring and the Tring Park Estate which lies to the south of the town was bought by the Rothschild family. They had a significant impact on the town, Nathaniel Mayer (Lord) Rothschild and his architect William Huckvale carrying out a great deal of rebuilding there in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The site of Grove Place, off Grove Road is shown on the 1880 OS map as a group of farm cottages, now gone. A large extant building was added later and used as a laundry (HHER 17610: SP 9365 12415). Nearby post-medieval Grove Farm, now destroyed, was in the area of a medieval hamlet known as Tring Grove (HHER 16075: 93300 12400). Grade II listed Grove Farm Cottages were originally built as a late medieval cruck house open hall which has subsequently undergone changes (HHER 15953: SP 92365 12349).

## **5 METHODOLOGY (Archaeological monitoring and recording)**

5.1 Archaeological monitoring observed the excavation of the foundation trenches for the proposed rear extension; approximately 20m of trench was excavated, 0.60m wide and to a maximum depth of 1.0m. The excavation was undertaken mechanically by a tracked JCB mini-digger. 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.



## 6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

Three sample sections were recorded of the foundation trenches and are tabulated below:

### Sample Section 1

<i>South-west facing</i> (length: 1m) 0.00 = 129.47m AOD		
0.00 – 0.41m	L1000	Modern made ground/rubble. Mid brown-grey, loose clay silt with frequent ceramic building material fragments.
0.41m – 0.51m	L1001	Modern brick surface.
0.51m – 0.70m	L1002	Chalk layer. Light white, moderately compact silty chalk.
0.70m – 1.0m+ (formation layer)	L1003	Natural geology. Light white yellow, compact sandy chalk & gravel.

### Sample Section 2

<i>North-west facing</i> (length: 1m) 0.00 = 129.36m AOD		
0.00 – 0.29m	L1000	As above.
0.29m – 0.40m	L1002	As above.
0.40m – 1.0m+ (formation layer)	L1003	Natural geology. As above.

### Sample Section 3

<i>North-west facing</i> (Length: 1m) 0.00 = 129.38m AOD		
0.00 – 0.36m	L1000	As above.
0.36m – 1.0m+ (formation layer)	L1003	Natural geology. As above.

*Description:* No archaeological features or finds were present. A series of modern layers were identified comprising a combination of demolition rubble and garden features (Deposit Model below). L1000 was present across site and consisted of a loose clay-silt with frequent fragments of CBM rubble, some of mortared. It sealed an intact layer of modern frogged bricks, L1001, which were laid over a chalk-rich layer of Made Ground/bedding. L1001 was only present in Section 1, closest to the existing house, but L1002 extended into Section 2,



around 5m from the house. Natural Geology, L1003, was present in all three sections, in Section 3 it was immediately beneath L1000.

## **7 CONFIDENCE RATING**

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

## **8 DEPOSIT MODEL**

8.1 The current ground surface was a layer of modern made ground, L1000, a mid brown grey, loose clay silt with frequent ceramic building material fragments.

8.2 Below L1000 was L1001, a buried patio surface comprising a layer of machine-made frogged red bricks. Below this was a bedding layer; L1002, consisting of white, moderately compact silty chalk.

8.3 Beneath L1002 was the Natural Geology L1003, a compact, sterile layer of light yellow white, sandy chalk and gravel.

## **9 DISCUSSION**

9.1 The principal potential of the site was for evidence of prehistoric or later activity. In the event no archaeological features or finds were present. The modern deposits recorded in Sections 1 and 2 represent demolition rubble and floor surfaces associated with the previously demolished structure at the rear of the existing property. Traces of this structure were still evident on the wall of the property, and on the party wall to the north-east (DPs 1 & 6).

9.2 The absence of any archaeological finds or features may be in part due to modern truncation associated with the construction of the existing property.

## **10 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE**

Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited with Dacorum Museum. The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross referenced and checked for internal consistency.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions Limited would like to thank Mr Leigh Pretty of Bluetree Developments for funding the monitoring and for his assistance, and their agents, Derek Kent Associates, for their assistance (in particular Ms Kate Simmons).

Archaeological Solutions would also like to thank Ms Kate Batt (HCC HEU) for her input and advice with the project.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Brown, N. & Glazebrook, J. (eds.) 2000 *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties, 2. Research Agenda and Strategy*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper no. 8

Greene, R. and Williamson, A. 2008 *Land to the rear of 29-32 Akeman Street, Tring, Hertfordshire: Archaeological Monitoring and Recording* Archaeological Solutions unpublished report 2997

Gurney, D., 2003, *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14/ALGAO

Institute of Field Archaeologists 1994 (revised 2008) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-based Assessment*

Institute of Field Archaeologists 1994 (revised 2008) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*

Institute of Field Archaeologists 1994 (revised 2008) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation*

Soil Survey of England and Wales (SSEW), 1983, *Legend for the 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales*. SSEW, Harpenden

## APPENDIX 1      CONTENTS OF THE ARCHIVE

<b>Records</b>	<b>Number</b>
Brief	N Advice letter
Specification	Y
Registers	Context, Drawing, Photographic
Context Sheets	(1000) – (1003)
Site drawings A1	-
Site drawings A3	1
Site drawings A4	-
Site photographs b/w	Y
Site photographs colour slides	Y
Digital Photographs	Y

## APPENDIX 2 HER SUMMARY SHEET

	5 Marshcroft Lane, Tring, Hertfordshire
<b>County:</b> Hertfordshire	District: Dacorum
<b>Village/Town:</b>	<b>Parish:</b> Tring
<b>Planning application reference:</b>	Planning Ref. Dacorum Borough Council Ref. 4/01231/11/FHA
<b>Client name/address/tel:</b>	Mr Pretty
<b>Nature of application:</b>	Rear Extension
<b>Present land use:</b>	Garden
<b>Size of application area:</b> c. 400m <sup>2</sup>	<b>Size of area investigated</b> c. 400m <sup>2</sup>
<b>NGR (8 figures):</b>	SP 93349 12398
<b>Site Code:</b>	AS1440
<b>Site director/Organization:</b>	Archaeological Solutions Ltd
<b>Type of work:</b>	Archaeological monitoring and recording
<b>Date of work:</b>	October 2011
<b>Location of finds/Curating museum:</b>	Dacorum
<b>Related SMR Nos:</b>	<b>Periods represented: -</b>
<b>Relevant previous summaries/reports: -</b>	-
<b>Summary of fieldwork results:</b>	<p><i>In October 2011 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording in advance of a proposed development at 5 Marshcroft Lane, Tring, Hertfordshire (NGR: SP 93349 12398). The proposed development comprises the erection of a two-storey and single-storey rear extension to the existing residential property. The monitoring was commissioned by Mr A Pretty to comply with a planning condition attached to planning approval for the development (Dacorum Borough Council Ref. 4/01231/11/FHA).</i></p> <p><i>The site lies within an area designated as an Area of Archaeological Significance on the local plan. Prehistoric activity is known from the area including a beaker period burial from The Grove (HER 620). A cropmark of an undated rectangular enclosure also lies nearby. Grove Farm Cottages are of late medieval date.</i></p> <p><i>The principal potential of the site was for evidence of prehistoric or later activity. In the event no archaeological features or finds were present.</i></p>
<b>Author of summary:</b> Steve Quinn	<b>Date of Summary:</b> October 2011

## PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



1  
*General view. Looking north.*



2  
*Mid excavation. Looking south-east.*



3  
*Sample Section 1. Looking north-east.*



4  
*Sample Section 2. Looking south-east.*

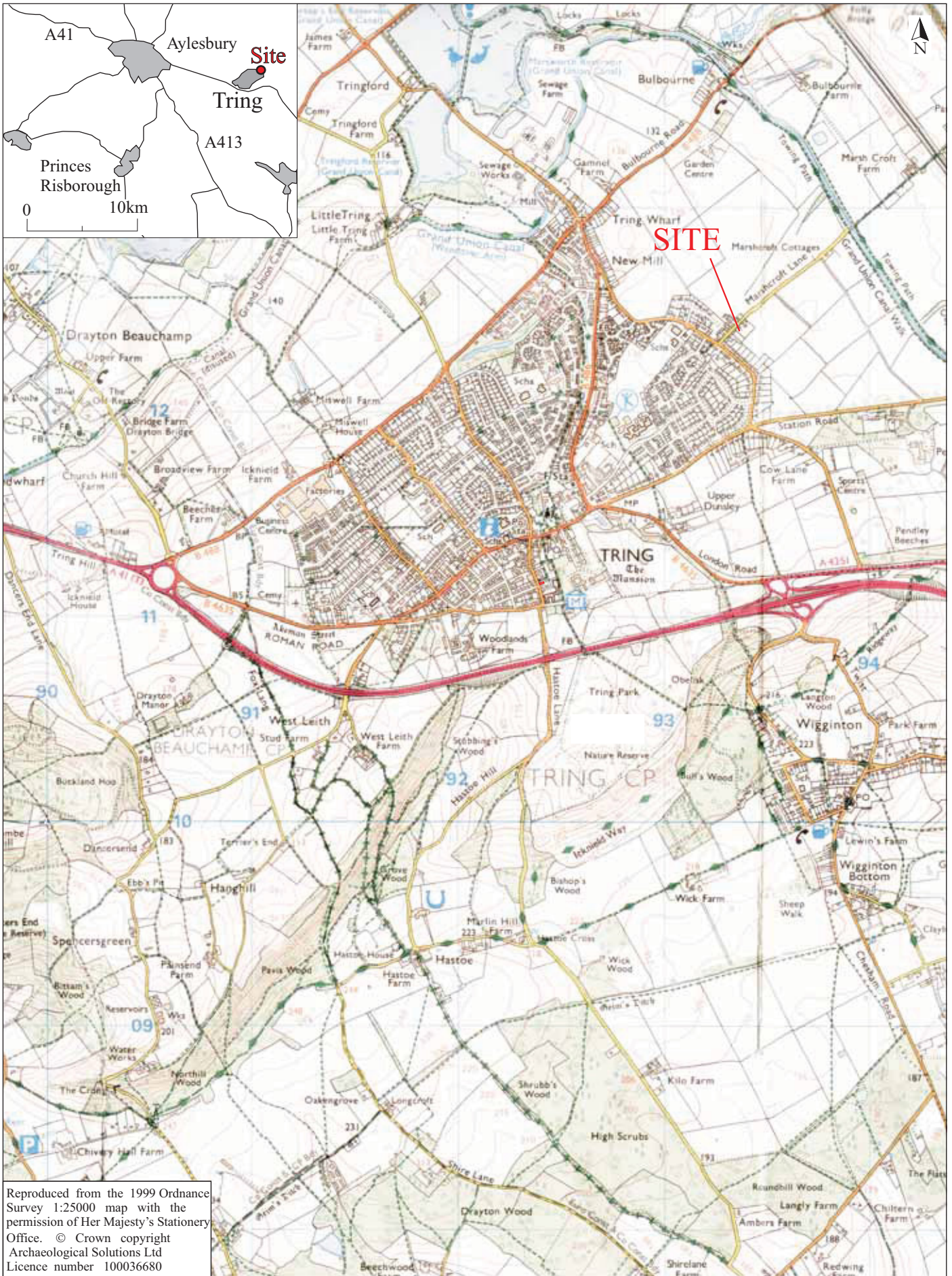


5  
*Sample Section 3. Looking south-east.*



6  
*Post excavation. Looking north-west.*





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

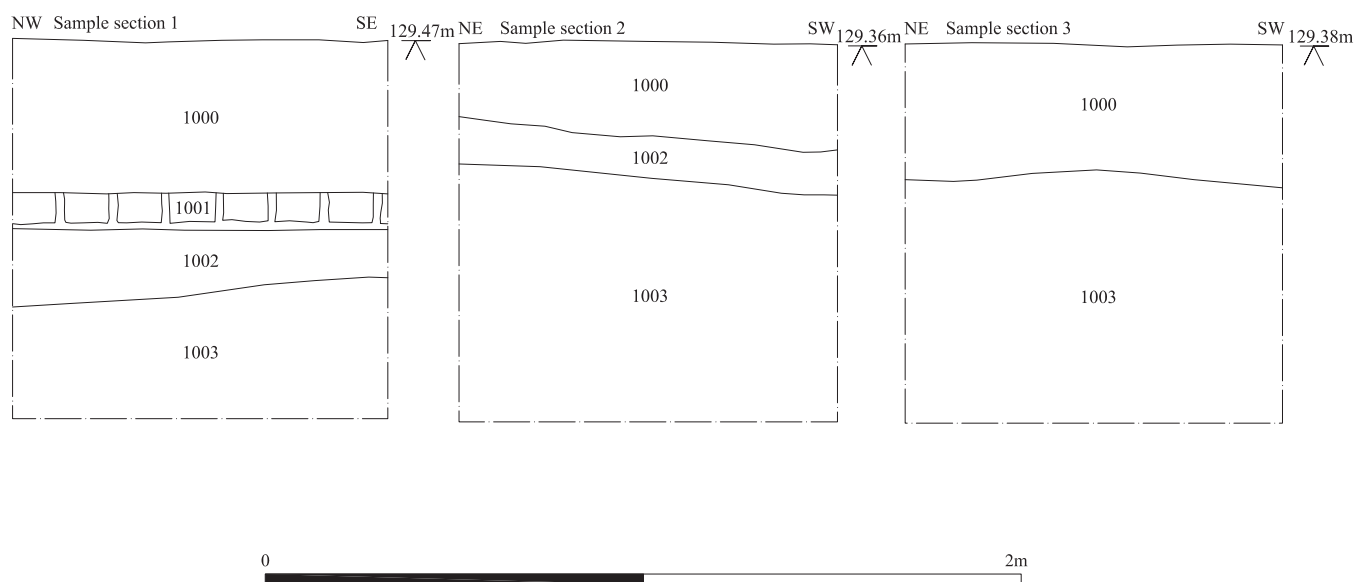
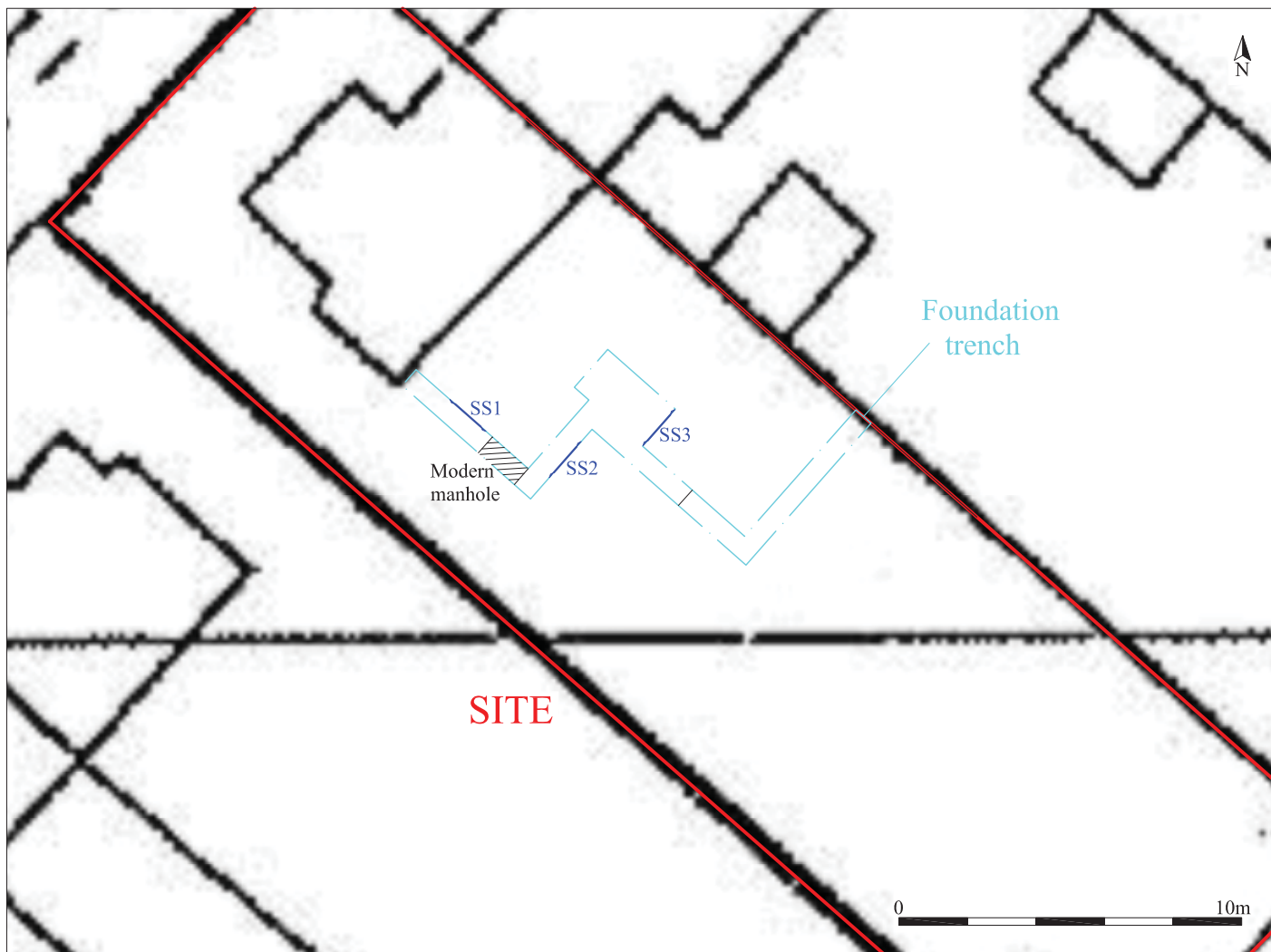




0 75m

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**Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan**  
 Scale 1:1250 at A4





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**Fig. 3 Sections and section location plan**

Scale 1:200 and 1:20 at A4