

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

BLACK BARN, CHURCH LANE, WIDDINGTON, ESSEX

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION

Authors: Laszlo Lichtenstein (Fieldwork & Report) Peter Thompson (Archaeological Background)	
NGR: TL 5419 3171	Report No: 4490
District: Uttlesford	Site Code: WDBB14
Approved: Claire Halpin MfA	Project No: P5316
Signed:	Date: 9 October 2014

Archaeological Solutions is an independent archaeological contractor providing the services which satisfy all archaeological requirements of planning applications, including:

Desk-based assessments and environmental impact assessments
Historic building recording and appraisals
Trial trench evaluations
Geophysical surveys
Archaeological monitoring and recording
Archaeological excavations
Post excavation analysis
Promotion and outreach
Specialist analysis

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

**Unit 6, Brunel Business Court, Eastern Way,
Bury St Edmunds IP32 7AJ
Tel 01284 765210**

**P I House, Rear of 23 Clifton Road, Shefford,
Bedfordshire, SG17 5AF
Tel: 01462 850483**

**e-mail info@ascontracts.co.uk
www.archaeologicalsolutions.co.uk**



twitter.com/ArchaeologicalS



www.facebook.com/ArchaeologicalSolutions



CONTENTS

OASIS SUMMARY

SUMMARY

- 1 INTRODUCTION**
- 2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE**
- 3 TOPOGRAPHY**
- 4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**
- 5 METHOD OF WORK**
- 6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS**
- 7 CONFIDENCE RATING**
- 8 DEPOSIT MODEL**
- 9 DISCUSSION**
- 10 DEPOSITION OF ARCHIVE**
- 11 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**
- 12 BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| APPENDIX 1 | CONCORDANCE OF FINDS |
| APPENDIX 2 | SPECIALIST REPORT |

OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	<i>Black Barn, Church Lane, Widdington, Essex</i>		
<p><i>In October 2014 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an archaeological excavation on land at The Black Barn, Church Lane, Widdington, Essex (NGR TL 5419 3171; Figs.1 – 2). The excavation was commissioned by GP Construction (Cambridge) Ltd and conducted in compliance with a planning condition of Uttlesford District Council, as advised by Essex County Council Historic Environment Branch (ECC HEM), attached to planning approval for the proposed construction of a replacement outbuilding to provide a new pool building (Planning Ref. UTT/13/0433).</i></p> <p><i>Widdington Hall lies adjacent to the north, part of an historic church and moated manor complex. The moated site is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (No. 20707), and Widdington Hall is Grade II listed, with parts dating from the 15th century. The moated site is recorded on the Essex Historic Environment Record (HER 205), and was rectangular, though no southern arm survives. The east and west parts are still water-filled, and traces of an outlet ditch are visible in the field to the west.</i></p> <p><i>Within the area of the proposed swimming pool building a range of farm buildings are shown on 19th century OS maps, suggesting a farm complex associated with the late 18th/19th century high farming tradition.</i></p> <p><i>The site therefore has a potential for remains of medieval and post-medieval occupation associated with the manorial complex and later farm.</i></p> <p><i>In the event three modern (19th – 20th century) pits, a drain and a concrete foundation cut were present.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	<i>April 2013</i>		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>	Future work	<i>No</i>
P. number	<i>P5316</i>	Site code	<i>WDBB14</i>
Type of project	<i>An archaeological excavation</i>		
Site status	<i>Immediately adjacent to Scheduled moated site of Widdington Hall</i>		
Current land use	<i>Agricultural building/Garden</i>		
Planned development	<i>New structure with swimming pool beneath</i>		
Main features (+dates)	<i>Modern pits and drain</i>		
Significant finds(+dates)	<i>Modern</i>		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Essex</i>	<i>Uttlesford</i>	<i>Widdington</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>Essex HER</i>		
Post code (if known)	<i>CB11 3SF</i>		
Area of site	<i>-</i>		
NGR	<i>TL 5419 3171</i>		
Height AOD (max/ min)	<i>110mAOD</i>		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>Essex County Council HEM Team (Richard Havis)</i>		
Project Supervisor	<i>Laszlo Lichtenstein</i>		
Funded by	<i>GP Construction (Cambridge) Ltd</i>		
Full title	<i>Black Barn, Church Lane, Widdinton, Essex. An Archaeological Excavation</i>		
Authors	<i>Lichtenstein, L., and Thompson, P.</i>		
Report no.	<i>4690</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>9 October 2014</i>		

BLACK BARN, CHURCH LANE, WIDDINGTON, ESSEX

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION

SUMMARY

In October 2014 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an archaeological excavation on land at The Black Barn, Church Lane, Widdington, Essex (NGR TL 5419 3171). The excavation was commissioned by GP Construction (Cambridge) Ltd and conducted in compliance with a planning condition of Uttlesford District Council, as advised by Essex County Council Historic Environment Branch (ECC HEM), attached to planning approval for the proposed construction of a replacement outbuilding to provide a new pool building (Planning Ref. UTT/13/0433).

Widdington Hall lies adjacent to the north, part of an historic church and moated manor complex. The moated site is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (No. 20707), and Widdington Hall is Grade II listed, with parts dating from the 15th century. The moated site is recorded on the Essex Historic Environment Record (HER 205), and was rectangular, though no southern arm survives. The east and west parts are still water-filled, and traces of an outlet ditch are visible in the field to the west.

Within the area of the proposed swimming pool building a range of farm buildings are shown on 19th century OS maps, suggesting a farm complex associated with the late 18th/19th century high farming tradition.

The site therefore has a potential for remains of medieval and post-medieval occupation associated with the manorial complex and later farm.

In the event three modern (19th – 20th century) pits, a drain and a concrete foundation cut were present.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In October 2014 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an archaeological excavation on land at The Black Barn, Church Lane, Widdington, Essex (NGR TL 5419 3171; Figs.1 – 2). The excavation was commissioned by GP Construction (Cambridge) Ltd and conducted in compliance with a planning condition of Uttlesford District Council, as advised by Essex County Council Historic Environment Branch (ECC HEM), attached to planning approval for the proposed construction of a replacement outbuilding to provide a new pool building (Planning Ref. UTT/13/0433).

1.2 The excavation was conducted in accordance with a brief issued by Essex County Council Historic Environment Branch (ECC HEM) (Richard Havis dated 26/04/2013), and a written scheme of investigation prepared by Archaeological Solutions (dated 01/09/2014), approved by ECC. The project adhered to appropriate sections of Gurney (2003) 'Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England', *East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 14*, and the Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Excavation* (revised 2008).

1.3 The principal research aim for the project was to determine the location, date, extent, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains threatened by the proposed development, and to excavate and report on these remains.

1.4 The brief notes the principal objectives are to identify

- evidence for medieval and post-medieval buildings associated with the hall
- evidence of earlier occupation of the hall site

Planning policy context

1.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012) states that those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest are heritage assets. The NPPF 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. The NPPF requires applications to describe the significance of any heritage asset, including its setting that may be affected in proportion to the asset's importance and the potential impact of the proposal.

1.6 The NPPF aims to conserve England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance with substantial harm to designated heritage assets (i.e. listed buildings and scheduled monuments) only permitted in exceptional circumstances when the public benefit of a proposal outweighs the conservation of the asset. The effect of proposals on non-designated heritage assets must be balanced against the scale of loss and significance of the asset, but non-designated heritage assets of demonstrably equivalent significance may be considered subject to the same policies as those that are designated. The NPPF states that opportunities to capture evidence from the historic environment, to record and advance the understanding of heritage assets and to make this publicly available is

a requirement of development management. This opportunity should be taken in a manner proportionate to the significance of a heritage asset and to impact of the proposal, particularly where a heritage asset is to be lost.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE Figs.1 & 2

2.1 The site lies to the rear of The Black Barn, adjacent to the Scheduled moated site of Widdington Hall. The Black Barn is a residential conversion of a farm building, and the site of the proposed new pool house is occupied by a probable mid 20th century agricultural building, to be demolished.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 Widdington Hall lies adjacent to the north, part of an historic church and moated manor complex. The moated site is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (No. 20707), and Widdington Hall is Grade II listed, with parts dating from the 15th century. The moated site is recorded on the Essex Historic Environment Record (HER 205), and was rectangular, though no southern arm survives. The east and west parts are still water-filled, and traces of an outlet ditch are visible in the field to the west. Within the area of the proposed swimming pool building a range of farm buildings are shown on 19th century OS maps, suggesting a farm complex associated with the late 18th/19th century high farming tradition.

3.2 The site therefore has a potential for remains of medieval and post-medieval occupation associated with the manorial complex and later farm.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 ECC HEM required the open area archaeological excavation of the entire footprint of the proposed new pool building (c.15m x 7m). The building footprint was stripped of overburden under close archaeological supervision on to the natural horizon.

5.2 Undifferentiated overburden was removed under close archaeological supervision using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. Thereafter, all further investigation was undertaken by hand. Exposed surfaces were cleaned as appropriate and examined for archaeological features and finds. Deposits were recorded using *pro forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed. Excavated spoil was checked for finds and the trenches were scanned by metal detector.

6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

Deposits encountered on the site during the excavation were recorded in sample sections presented below:

<i>Sample section 1</i> <i>0.00 = 109.20m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.73m	L1000	Topsoil. Dark grey brown, firm, silt
0.73m+	L1001	Subsoil. Light grey, firm, silty clay with occasional chalk
	L1002	Natural. Pale grey, white/yellow, hard, clayey chalk

<i>Sample section 2</i> <i>0.00 = 109.25m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.14m	L1003	Re-deposited topsoil. Mid grey, friable, silt with occasional clay and chalk.
0.14 – 0.64m	L1000	Topsoil. As above
0.64 – 0.86m	L1001	Subsoil. As above
0.86m+	L1002	Natural. As above

Description Modern features – a drain (F1004), a concrete foundation cut (F1006), and three pits (F1008, F1010 and F1012) – were present.

Modern Brick Drain F1004 was linear (7.00+ x 0.20 x 0.25m). The brick is modern (19th/20th century; CBM Report below).

Modern Concrete Foundation Cut F1006 (5m x 0.30 x ?) was linear, orientated E/W. It cut Pit F1012.

Pit F1008 was subcircular and it contained modern debris, specifically modern (19th/20th century) CBM (132g).

Pit F1010 was subcircular and it contained modern debris, specifically modern (19th/20th century) CBM (74g).

Pit F1012 was subcircular and it contained modern debris, specifically modern (19th/20th century) CBM (62g) and plastic.

7 CONFIDENCE RATING

7.1 Modern features were present but it is not felt that any factors restricted the identification of archaeological features or finds had they been present.

8 DEPOSIT MODEL

8.1 Topsoil L1000, was a dark grey brown, firm, silt (0.14 – 0.31m thick). It overlay Subsoil L1001, a light grey, firm, silty clay with occasional chalk. At the base of the sequence the natural, L1002, was a pale grey, white/yellow, hard, clayey chalk.

9 DISCUSSION

9.1 Widdington Hall lies adjacent to the north, part of an historic church and moated manor complex. The moated site is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (No. 20707), and Widdington Hall is Grade II listed, with parts dating from the 15th century. The moated site is recorded on the Essex Historic Environment Record (HER 205), and was rectangular, though no southern arm survives. The east and west parts are still water-filled, and traces of an outlet ditch are visible in the field to the west.

9.2 Within the area of the proposed swimming pool building a range of farm buildings are shown on 19th century OS maps, suggesting a farm complex associated with the late 18th/19th century high farming tradition.

9.3 The site therefore had a potential for remains of medieval and post-medieval occupation associated with the manorial complex and later farm.

9.4 In the event three modern (19th – 20th century) pits, a drain and a concrete foundation cut only were present.

10 DEPOSITION OF ARCHIVE

10.1 Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited at Saffron Walden Museum. The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross-referenced and checked for internal consistency. In addition to the overall site summary, it will be necessary to produce a summary of the artefactual and ecofactual data.

11 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions Limited would like to thank GP Construction (Cambridge) Ltd for funding the excavation, in particular Mr Simon Grigg-Pettitt for his assistance.

AS is pleased to acknowledge the advice and input of Mr Richard Havis of the Essex County Council Historic Environment Management Team.

12 BIBLIOGRAPHY

British Geological Survey 1991 *East Anglia Sheet 52°N-00° 1:250,000 Series Quaternary Geology*. Ordnance Survey, Southampton

Gurney, D. 2003 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper no. 14

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

APPENDIX 1 CONCORDANCE OF FINDS

WDBB14, Black Barn, Church Lane, Widdington
Concordance of finds by feature

Feature	Context	Segment	Description	Spot Date	Pottery	CBM (g)	A.Bone (g)	Other
1004	1005		Fill of Modern Drainage Cut			2620		
1008	1009		Fill of Rubbish Pit			132		
1010	1011		Fill of Rubbish Pit			74		
1012	1013		Fill of Rubbish Pit			62		Plastic - 3g

APPENDIX 2 SPECIALIST REPORT

The Ceramic Building Materials

Andrew Peachey MIfA

Excavations recovered a total of seven fragments (2888g) of Victorian to modern CBM in a relatively fresh condition. Modern Drainage Cut F1004 contained two fragments of mould-made, 19th-20th century soft red brick; while Rubbish Pits F1008, F1010 and F1012 contained fragments of highly fired red earthenware floor tile and white earthen ware, glazed bathroom or kitchen tile, the latter stamped on the reverse 'MADE IN ENGLAND', comparable to types still available in the present at Homebase and other industrial estates.

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



1 Area of new pool looking north



2 Area of new pool looking south



3 F1006 looking west



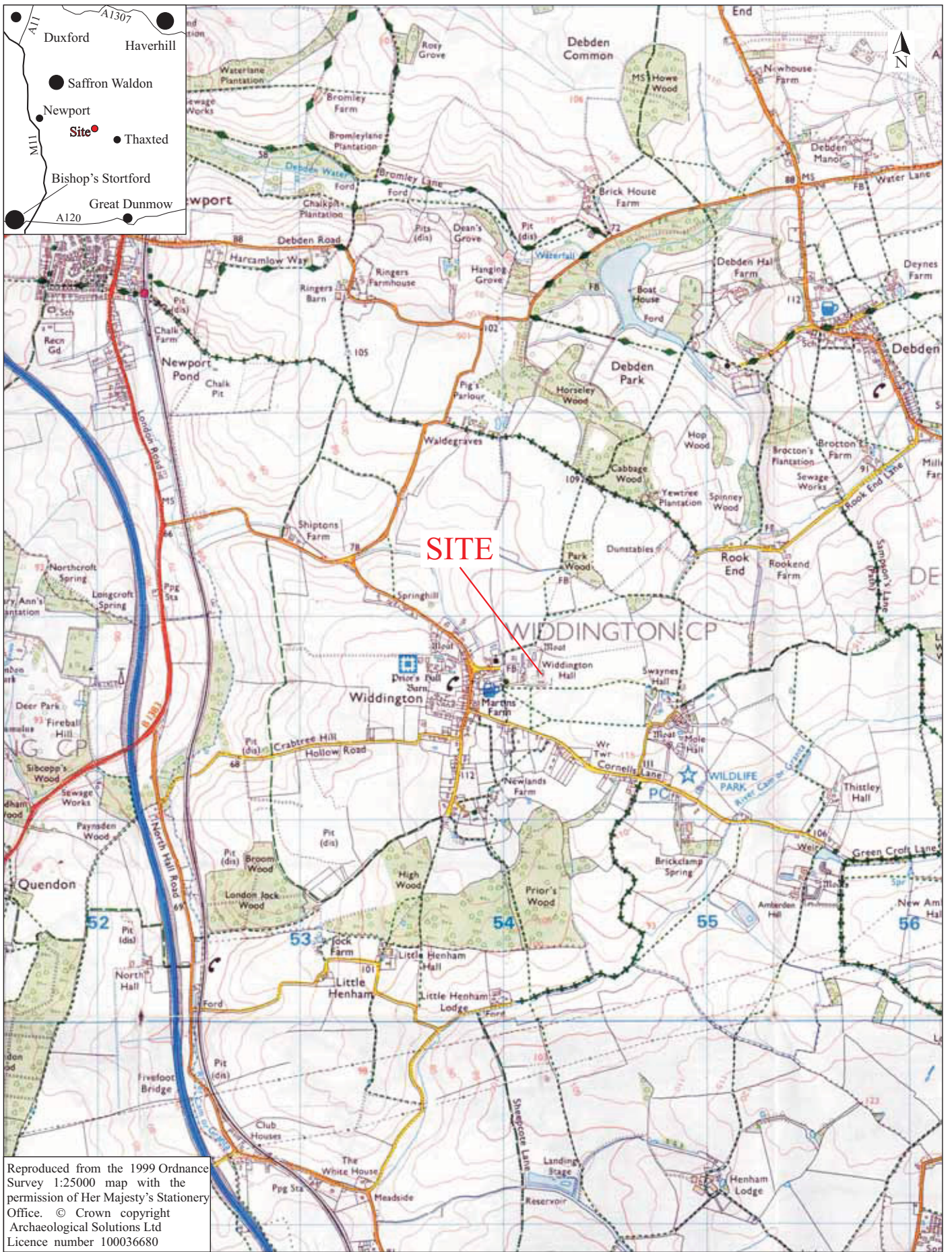
4 F1004 looking north-west



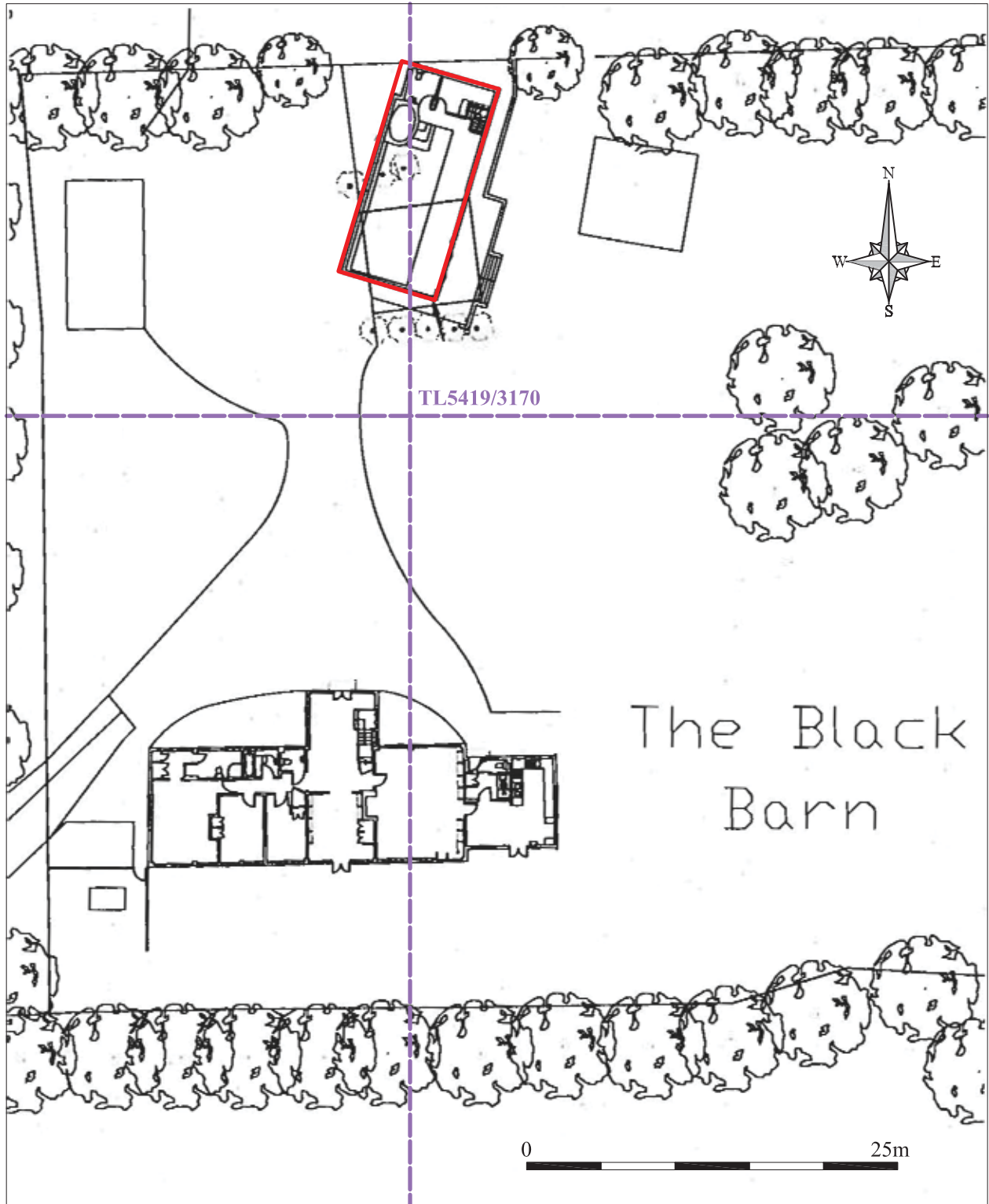
3 Sample section 1



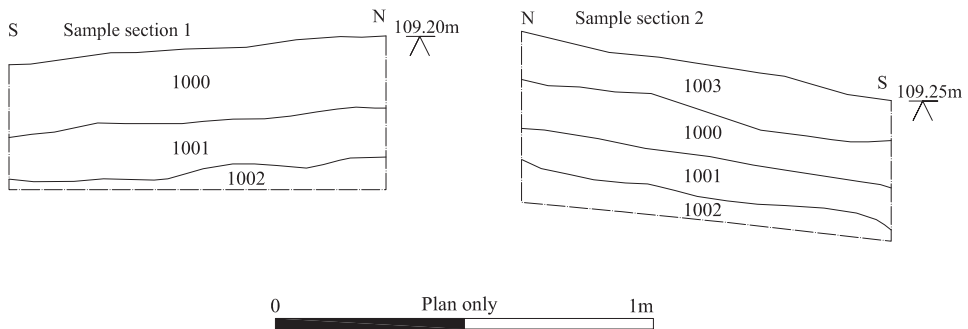
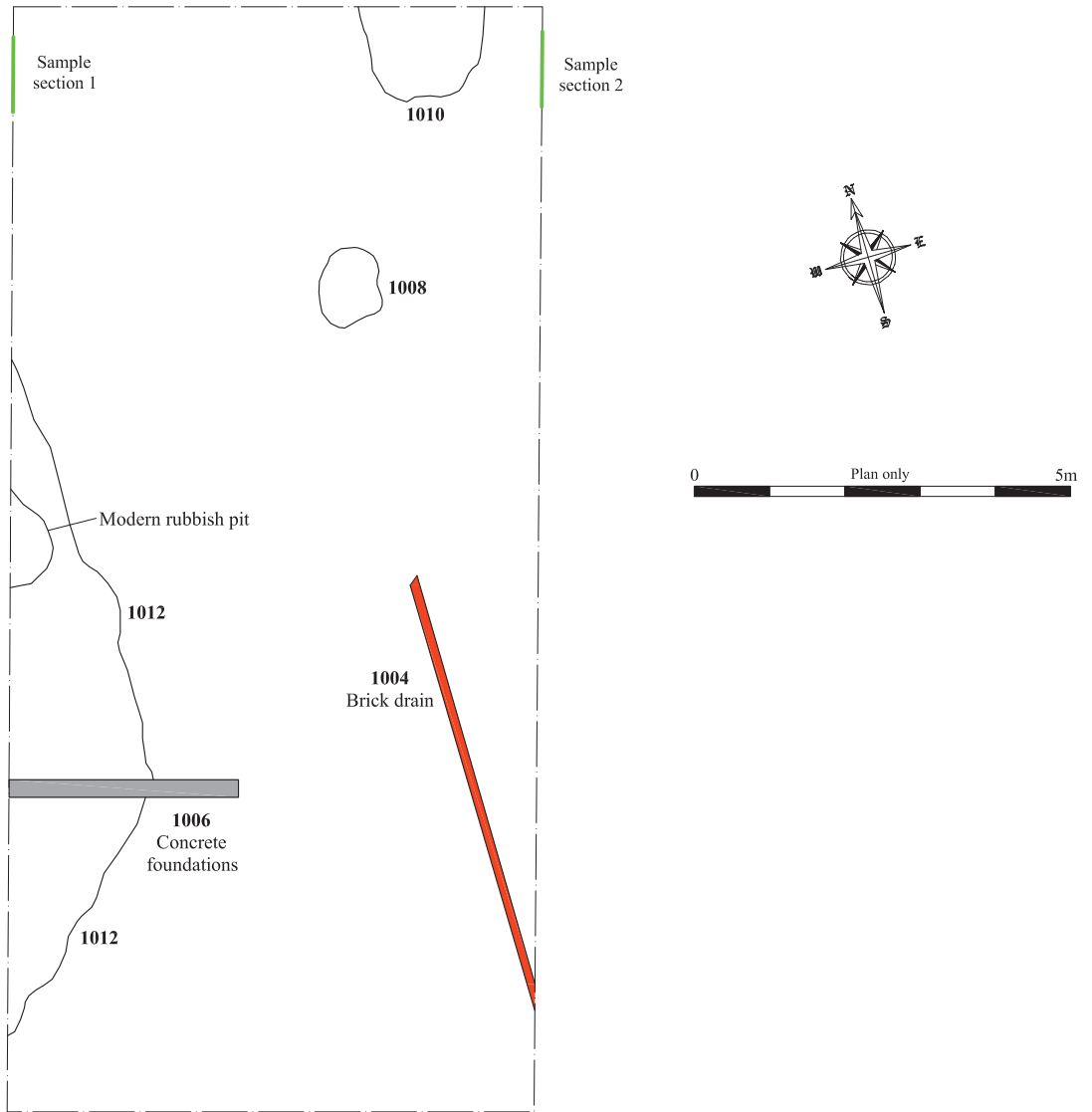
4 Sample section 2



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



Archaeological Solutions Ltd
Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan
Scale 1:400 at A4



Archaeological Solutions Ltd

Fig. 3 Trench plan and sections

Scale 1:100 and 1:20 at A3