

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

**5 OFFORD ROAD, GODMANCHESTER,
HUNTINGDON, CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

CHER ECB 3185

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NGR: TL 2280 6888	Report No. 3285
Parish: Godmanchester	Site Code: AS1203
Approved: Claire Halpin MIFA	Project No. 3449
Signed:	Date: May 2009

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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	<i>5 Offord Road, Godmanchester, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire</i>		
Project description	<p><i>In May 2009, Archaeological Solutions (AS) conducted an archaeological trial trench evaluation at 5 Offord Road, Godmanchester, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 5228 2688). The evaluation was undertaken in compliance with a planning condition attached to the construction of a new tennis court and stable/store building.</i></p> <p><i>The evaluation revealed a post-medieval pit, and modern land drains.</i></p>		
Project dates (fieldwork)	<i>12-13/05/2009</i>		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>	Future work (Y/N/?)	
P. number	<i>3449</i>	Site code	<i>AS 1203</i>
Type of project	<i>Archaeological evaluation</i>		
Site status			
Current land use	<i>Garden area</i>		
Planned development	<i>Stable/store building and tennis court</i>		
Main features (+dates)	<i>Post-medieval pit</i>		
Significant finds (+dates)	<i>Post-medieval pottery sherd and CBM</i>		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Cambridgeshire</i>	<i>Huntingdonshire</i>	<i>Godmanchester</i>
HER or SMR for area	<i>Cambridgeshire HER</i>		
Post code (if known)	<i>PE29 2LD</i>		
Area of site	<i>c. 3000m²</i>		
NGR	<i>TL 5228 2688</i>		
Height AOD (max/min)	<i>34-35m AOD</i>		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>CAPCA</i>		
Project Officers	<i>Zbigniew Pozorski</i>		
Funded by	<i>Mr Simon Embley</i>		
Full title	<i>5 Offord Road, Godmanchester, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire; An Archaeological Evaluation</i>		
Authors	<i>Pozorski, Z.</i>		
Report no.	<i>3285</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>May 2009</i>		

5 OFFORD ROAD, GODMANCHESTER, HUNTINGDON, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

SUMMARY

In May 2009, Archaeological Solutions (AS) conducted an archaeological trial trench evaluation at 5 Offord Road, Godmanchester, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 5228 2688). The evaluation was undertaken in compliance with a planning condition attached to the construction of a new tennis court and stable/store building.

The evaluation revealed a post-medieval pit, F1003, and modern land drains.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In May 2009, Archaeological Solutions (AS) conducted an archaeological trial trench evaluation 5 Offord Road, Godmanchester, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 5228 2688; Figs. 1-2). The evaluation was commissioned by Mr Simon Embley, in compliance with a condition of planning consent required by the local planning authority (based on the advice of Cambridgeshire Archaeology Planning & Countryside Advice (CAPCA)). It is proposed to construct a new tennis court and detached stable/store building in the garden of Offord Hill House (Plan. Refs. 08/03446/FUL & 08/03447/FUL).

1.2 The archaeological evaluation was undertaken according to a brief issued by CAPCA (dated 19/03/2009), and a specification prepared by AS (dated 20/03/2008) and approved by CAPCA. The project conformed to the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (revised 2001) and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment* (revised 2001), as well as the document *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 14 (Gurney 2003).

1.3 The aim of the archaeological evaluation was to determine, as far as was possible, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development. It also aimed to identify areas of previous ground disturbance.

Planning policy context

1.4 The relevant planning policies which apply to the effect of development with regard to cultural heritage are Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 'Planning and the Historic Environment' (PPG15) and Planning Policy

Guidance Note 16 'Archaeology and Planning' (PPG16) (Department of the Environment).

1.5 PPG16 (1990) is the national Planning Policy Guidance Note which applies to archaeology. It states that there should always be a presumption in favour of preserving nationally important archaeological remains in situ. However, when there is no overriding case for preservation, developers are required to fund opportunities for the recording and, where necessary, the excavation of the site. This condition is widely applied by local authorities.

1.6 PPG15 (1994) is the national Planning Policy Guidance Note which applies to the conservation of the historic environment by protecting the character and appearance of Conservation Areas and protecting listed buildings (of architectural or historical interest) from demolition and unsympathetic change and safeguarding their settings as far as is possible. This condition is also widely applied by local authorities.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

2.1 The site is located at Offord Hill House at No. 5 Offord Road, which lies within the parish of Godmanchester, the district of Huntingdonshire and the county of Cambridgeshire (Fig. 1). The historic core of Godmanchester lies 2.5km to the north-east of the site, whilst the larger settlement of Huntingdon is located 3.3km to the north-north-east. The adjoining villages of Offord Cluny and Offord D'Arcy are situated 2km and 2.3km to the south-south-west respectively. The site is situated close to the course of Offord Road, which runs between Godmanchester and the villages of Offord Cluny and Offord D'Arcy.

2.2 The site lies in the western section of the substantial garden and grounds associated with Offord Hill House (Fig. 2). It comprises a rectangular plot of land covering an area of c.3,500m². To the immediate east and south of the site lie further areas of Offord Hill House's grounds, whilst to the north and west lies agricultural land associated with Corpus Christi Farm, 370m to the north-east. It is proposed to construct a new tennis court and detached stable/store building in the garden area to the west of Offord Hill House.

2.2 The site comprises W part of the estate gardens, to the rear of main dwelling (DP 1). It is surrounded by farmland, except E side, where the house and the garden are located. Site boundaries are marked with trees and hedges.

3 METHOD OF WORK (Desk Based Assessment)

3.1 Archaeological databases

The standard collation of all known archaeological sites and spot-finds in the surrounding area is the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER),

based at County Hall, Cambridge. In order to provide a representative sample, the CHER database was searched for all known entries within a 300m radius of the site. Entries within this approximate 300m radius of the site are listed in Appendix 1, and plotted in Fig. 3. Their significance, where relevant, is discussed in Section 5.

3.2 Historical & cartographic documents

The principal source for historical and cartographic documents was the Huntingdonshire Archives (HA), based in Huntingdon. Relevant cartographic sources are listed in Appendix 2 and reproduced in Figs. 4 - 7.

3.3 Secondary sources

The principal source of secondary material was the Huntingdonshire Archives (HA), based in Huntingdon, as well as AS's own library. Relevant material is listed in the bibliography.

4 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

4.1 The site lies to the south-west of Godmanchester and c. 2.5km from the historic core of the town. The site lies in a predominantly rural location within the Ouse valley. The Great Ouse River is situated 1.15km to the west of the site and the surrounding relief slopes noticeably down towards its north to south aligned course. The site lies at c. 35m AOD and slopes slightly down towards its south-western corner and towards the Great Ouse River.

4.2 Geologically, much of the area surrounding the site comprises first river terrace gravels, which rise from the Great Ouse River in the west towards higher Oxford Clay, overlain by boulder clay and glacial till (BGS 1995). The river floodplains to the west are associated with alluvium, although the site itself is located upon soils of the Evesham 3 Association derived from the Jurassic and Cretaceous clay geology (SSEW 1983). Such soils are described as slowly permeable calcareous clayey, and fine loamy over clayey soils, as well as some slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged non-calcareous clayey soils.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

5.1 Prehistoric

5.1.1 The site lies within an area of the Great Ouse River that has revealed widespread evidence of prehistoric activity. Palaeolithic and Mesolithic implements have been found to the east of Godmanchester (Macaulay 1994), whilst field-walking near the proposed route of the A14 trunk-road and 900m to the south-west of the site revealed a number of artefact scatters comprising early Neolithic flint and 5th century Roman pottery sherds (CHER MCB18427).

5.1.2 More recently, aerial reconnaissance has yielded evidence for extensive cultivation and monumental earthworks of the wider area. To the north of the A14 trunk-road, a Neolithic cursus and earthwork monument has been recorded. The surrounding local area is marked by early Bronze Age barrows indicating a long and intensive use of the landscape around the town. Later Bronze Age and early Iron Age evidence is not well represented in the archaeological record, although it is likely that the Roman town at Godmanchester had an Iron Age precursor.

5.2 Romano-British

5.2.1 The site's surrounding area of the Great Ouse River has also revealed widespread evidence of Romano-British activity associated with the Romano-British town of *Durovigutum* at Godmanchester. Archaeological investigations have established that the town, which began as a fort, was of considerable importance given its situation on the main pivot of a Roman crossroads and the major river of the region. Romano-British activity is also known to have extended beyond the town with several villas known in the wider area and Offord Road, along which the site lies, follows the course of the Sandy to Godmanchester Roman road (CHER MCB17569).

5.2.2 Occasional finds continue to add to the picture of a thriving Romano-British settlement at Godmanchester with an extensive hinterland of private estates and small agricultural settlements. Three find-spots of Roman pottery sherds and coins have been found during the ploughing of arable land at West Farm, which lies 1.4km to the north-east of the site (CHERs 02513, 02514 & 02516). Two 4th century Roman minim coins were also found to the west of Offord Road and 850m to the west of the site (CHER 02510).

5.3 Anglo-Saxon

5.3.1 Post-Roman and Anglo-Saxon settlement in Godmanchester is still imperfectly understood, and thus the Anglo-Saxon history of the area surrounding the site remains relatively unknown. No Anglo-Saxon find-spots have been found in the site's proximity, yet excavations throughout the town have found evidence for Anglo-Saxon occupation overlying Roman sites. Excavations at the Cardinal Distribution Park, c. 3.3km to the north-east of the site identified at least five *Grubenhäuser* (Saxon buildings) and an associated enclosure and field system dating to the early and middle Anglo-Saxon period, and indicates that the area was part of a 'rural hinterland' (Murray & Last 1999).

5.4 Medieval

5.4.1 Relatively little archaeology associated with the medieval period has been recorded in the vicinity of the site. Medieval ridge and furrow earthworks have been identified in four locations close to the site, confirming that the site lay well within an agricultural heartland during the medieval period (CHERs 08409, 09964, 10123 & 11590). By the time of Domesday Book in 1086, however, Godmanchester was already a settlement of considerable

importance, and boasted a church (Morris 1981). Surrounding the town was its dependent manor of 5000 acres, divided into common fields and farmed by the locals, whilst the villages of Offord Cluny and Offord D'Arcy date to the medieval period.

5.5 Post-medieval & later

5.5.1 Unlike many other similar settlements the lands surrounding Godmanchester, farmed by the medieval system of allotment and rotation, remained essentially unchanged until the 19th century. Commonable land was held by the local citizens, and enclosure was not actively encouraged or indeed considered necessary until the end of the 18th century. The town of Godmanchester remained a relatively unchanged place, dependent on Huntingdon for its commercial prosperity until the 20th century. The only known find-spot from the area surrounding the site and dating from the post-medieval and later periods comprises the railway line to the west running from Thrapston to Huntingdon, and which formed part of the Midland Railway (CHER 00691).

5.6 The site

5.6.1 No relevant documentary sources referring directly to the site were found in the Huntingdon Archives (HA). The scarcity of information is consistent with cartographic sources indicating that Offord Hill House at No. 5 Offord Road, with which the site is closely associated, dates only to the early 20th century and is thus of little historic significance. The site therefore remained as undeveloped agricultural land, likely associated with Corpus Christi Farm 370m to the north-east, until its incorporation to the residential garden of Offord Hill House at some point between 1900 and 1926. It is proposed to construct a new tennis court and detached stable/store building within the site.

6 CARTOGRAPHIC SOURCES

6.1 1st edition Ordnance Survey map, 1885

The earliest cartographic source to depict the site in any cartographic detail comprises the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map, which dates to 1885 (Fig. 4). In 1885, Offord Hill House was yet to be established at No. 5 Offord Road and thus both the site and the plot of land between it and Offord Road comprised undeveloped agricultural land, most likely associated with Corpus Christi Farm 370m to the north-east. The site formed a small part of a large field extending to the west, although its northern boundary was clearly demarcated by a narrow band of woodland by 1885.

6.2 2nd edition Ordnance Survey map, 1900

The 2nd edition Ordnance Survey map dates to 1900 and 15 years after the previous cartographic source, yet depicts no noticeable change or

development to the site (Fig. 5). By 1900, Offord Hill House remained undeveloped, and the site and the plot of land between it and Offord Road comprised undeveloped agricultural land. The site formed a small part of a large field extending to the west, whilst the aforementioned narrow band of woodland continued to demarcate its northern boundary.

6.3 3rd edition Ordnance Survey map, 1926

The 3rd edition Ordnance Survey map of 1926 is significant in that it is the earliest cartographic source to depict the presence and development of Offord Hill House at No. 5 Offord Road and to the immediate east of the site (Fig. 6). By 1926 the easternmost section of the former field had been enclosed to form the extensive garden and grounds of Offord Hill House. The site formed the westernmost extent of the substantial garden and grounds, bound to the north by the aforementioned narrow band of woodland, and to the east, south and east by a property boundary of fence-line.

6.4 Provisional edition Ordnance Survey map, 1950

In 1950 (Fig.7) the site remained much as it did in the previous map of 24 years earlier and the map depicts the site as the westernmost extent of the substantial garden and grounds surrounding Offord Hill House. The site was bound to the north by the aforementioned narrow band of woodland, and to the east, south and east by a property boundary of fence-line. Although undeveloped, by 1950 the site, particularly its northern, central and southernmost sections, contained established trees.

7 METHODOLOGY (Trial Trenching)

7.1 To evaluate the presence of any archaeological remains it was required to excavate trial trenches focussed on the footprint of the proposed tennis court and stable/store building. Two trenches, measuring 10 x 1.80m and 25 x 1.60m, were excavated in locations approved by CAPCA (Fig. 8).

7.2 The trenches were mechanically excavated using a 360° excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. Top soil and undifferentiated overburden were removed mechanically under close archaeological supervision. All further investigation was undertaken by hand. Exposed surfaces were cleaned by hand and examined for archaeological features and finds. Deposits were recorded using *pro-forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed as appropriate. Excavated spoil was searched for finds and the trenches were scanned with a metal detector.

8 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

Trench 1 (Figs. 8 & 9, DPs 3, 5 - 6)

Sample sections:

<i>Sample Section 1 DP6</i> <i>N end, ESE facing</i> <i>0.00 = 34.31m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.17m	L1000	Topsoil. Brownish mid grey, soft sandy silt.
0.17 – 0.30m	L1001	Subsoil. Yellowish light grey, compact clayey silt.
0.30m +	L1002	Natural light yellow, compact clay with white chalk.

<i>Sample Section 2</i> <i>S end, ESE facing</i> <i>0.00 = 34.13m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.13m	L1000	Topsoil. As above.
0.13 – 0.29m	L1001	Subsoil. As above.
0.29m +	L1002	Natural clay. As above.

Description: Trench 1 contained no archaeological features or finds. A field drain traversed the trench.

Trench 2 (Figs. 8 & 9, DP 4, 7 - 9)

Sample sections:

<i>Sample Section 4 (DP 9)</i> <i>E end, NNE facing</i> <i>0.00 = 35.24m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.20m	L1000	Topsoil. As above.
0.20 – 0.50m	L1001	Subsoil. As above.
0.50m +	L1002	Natural clay. As above.

<i>Sample Section 5</i> <i>W end, NNE facing</i> <i>0.00 = 34.49m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.18m	L1000	Topsoil. As above.
0.18 – 0.48m	L1001	Subsoil. As above.
0.48m +	L1002	Natural clay. As above.

Description: Trench 2 contained a tree hollow and a rectangular pit, F1003. Modern drains traversed the trench.

F1003 was a rectangular pit (1.19 x 0.87+ x 0.37m; Fig. 3: DP 8) located in western part of the trench. It had vertical sides and flattish base. Its single fill, L1004, was a dark greyish brown, firm clayey silt. It contained post-medieval

pottery (8g), CBM (76g) and oyster shell (5g). F1003 was truncated by modern land drain.

9 CONFIDENCE RATING

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

10 DEPOSIT MODEL

10.1 Topsoil (L1000) and subsoil (L1001) commonly overlay the natural drift geology at between 0.30-0.50m below existing and were present in both trenches. L1000 was a brownish mid grey, soft sandy silt while L1001 was a yellowish light grey, compact clayey silt.

10.2 The deposits overlay the natural, L1002, a light yellow, compact silty clay with frequent white chalk and occasional flint gravel.

11 DISCUSSION

11.1 Despite the potential for prehistoric and Roman remains, no features or find related to these periods were found. The only archaeological feature was post-medieval pit (Tr.2 F1003).

11.2 The evaluation revealed numerous modern land drains, indicative of farming.

12 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

12.1 Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited with the finds from the site, at the County Archaeology Store (CAS). 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. Copies of the final report will be lodged with the CHER, CAS and the National Monument Record, Swindon.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions would like to thank Mr Simon Embley for funding the evaluation and for his assistance. AS would also like to thank his agents, David Mead of Partners in Planning, and Michael Ingham of Michael Ingham Associates for their assistance.

AS gratefully acknowledge the input and advice of Andy Thomas and Dan McConnell of Cambridgeshire County Council's Cambridgeshire Archaeology Planning and Countryside Advice (CAPCA).

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(all consulted 12th May 2009)

GENUKI website;
<http://www.genuki.org.uk/>

Heritage Gateway website;
<http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk>

Images of England (IoE) website;
<http://www.imagesofengland.org.uk>

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATABASE (CHER)

CHER	NGR TL	Description
Prehistoric (to AD 43)		
MCB18427	2213 6833	Field-walking near the proposed route of the A14 trunk-road revealed a number of artefact scatters comprising early Neolithic flint and 5 th century Roman pottery sherds
Romano-British (AD 43 – 410)		
02510	2366 6978	Two 4 th century Roman minim coins found to the west of Offord Road
02513	236 696	Roman pottery sherds and coins found during ploughing of arable land at West Farm
02514	236 689	Roman pottery sherds and coins found during ploughing of arable land at West Farm
02516	236 694	Roman pottery sherds and coins found during ploughing of arable land at West Farm
MCB17569	2188 6167	Course of the Sandy to Godmanchester Roman road
Medieval (AD 1150 – 1500)		
08409	229 687	Medieval ridge and furrow in a field near Godmanchester, which also contained undated marks/possibly fungus rings
09964	2300 6900	Medieval ridge and furrow visible in fields to the north of the B1043 road
10123	230 693	Medieval ridge and furrow with headlands and three alignments seen as earthworks
11590	2210 6913	Medieval ridge and furrow earthworks aligned east to west
Early modern (AD 1750 – 1900)		
00691	1397 7033	Railway line from Thrapston to Huntingdon formed part of the Midland Railway, which closed in 1963
Undated remains		
08184	221 678	Undated ring ditches identified by aerial photography at Offord Cluny
08185	223 681	Undated linear cropmark field boundaries and enclosure identified by aerial photography at Offord Cluny

APPENDIX 2 CARTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE

Date	Description	Fig. No.	Scale	Location
1885	Huntingdonshire sheet XXII.5; 1 st edition Ordnance Survey map	4	25":1 mile	HA
1900	Huntingdonshire sheet XXII.5; 2 nd edition Ordnance Survey map	5	25":1 mile	HA
1926	Huntingdonshire sheet XXII.5; 3 rd edition Ordnance Survey map	6	25":1 mile	HA
1950	Huntingdonshire sheet XXII.NW; provisional edition Ordnance Survey map	7	6":1 mile	HA
1999	Ordnance Survey Explorer series 225; site location	1 & 3	1:25,000	AS
2009	Detailed site location plan	2	1:1,250	Client
2009	Proposed development plan	8	1:200	Client

APPENDIX 3 CONCORDANCE OF FINDS

AS 1203: 5 Offord Road, Godmanchester, Cambs

Concordance of finds by feature

Feature	Context	Description	Spot Date	Pottery	CBM (g)	Other
1003	1004	Pit Fill		(1) 8g	76	Oyster Shell (1) 5g

APPENDIX 4 SPECIALIST REPORTS

The Pottery by Peter Thompson

The evaluation recovered one abraded sherd of brown glazed Border Ware from a mug containing horizontal incised decoration of mid to late 17th century date (Pit F1003 L1004).

The Ceramic Building Materials *Andrew Peachey*

Pit F1003 (L1004) contained three fragments (76g) of post-medieval peg tile in a cream fabric tempered with sparse sand and red clay pellets. All three fragments are highly abraded and have been categorised as peg tile by their thickness (12-14mm), which is the only extant dimension or typological characteristic.

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



DP 1. No 5 Offord Road, Godmanchester.
The house. Taken from W.



DP 2. The site. Taken from S.



DP 3. S part of the site and Trench 1. Taken
from NE.



DP 4. N part of the site and Trench 2. Taken
from E.



DP 5. Trench 1. Taken from NNE.



DP 6. Trench 1, N end. Sample section.
Taken from ESE.



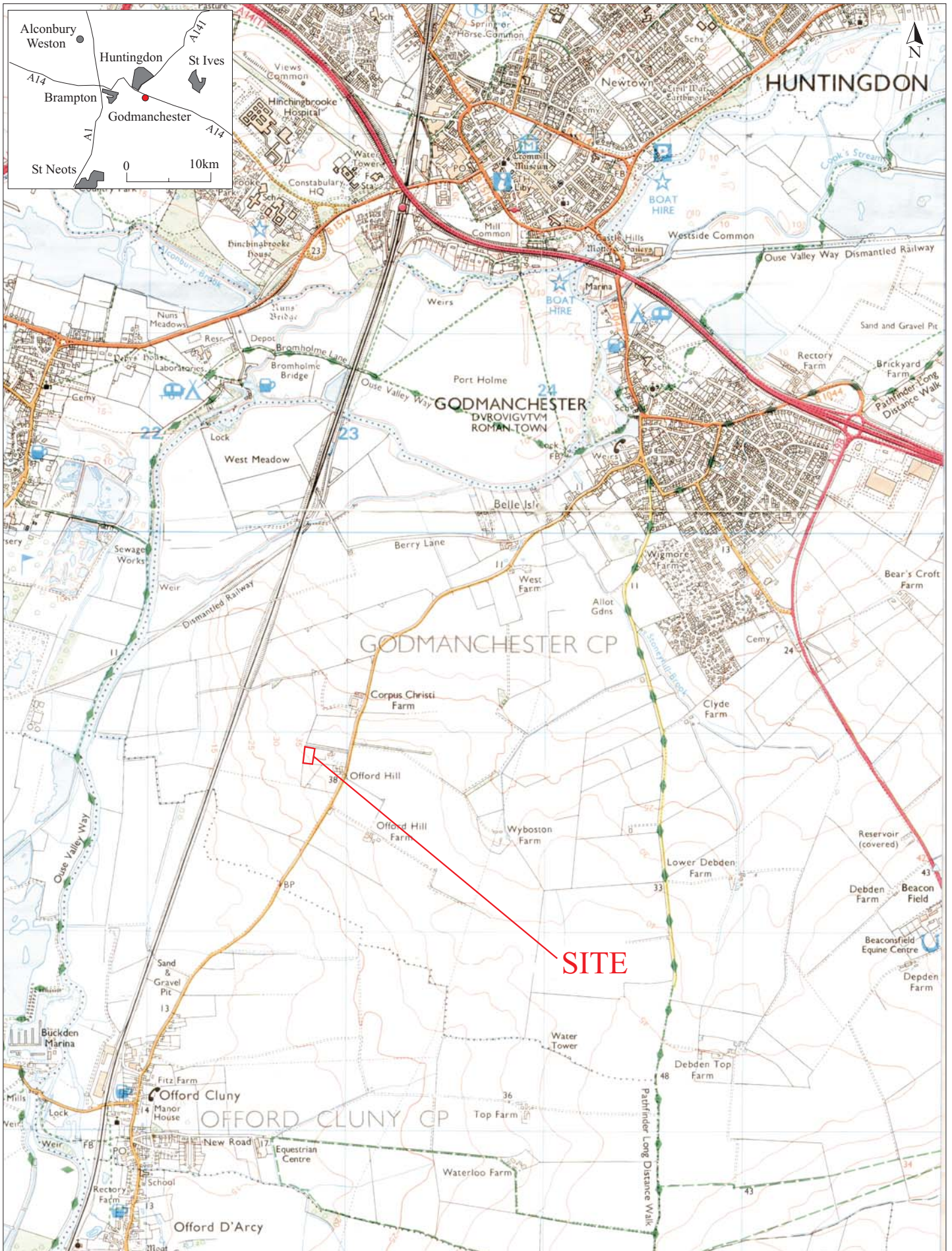
DP 7. Trench 2. Taken from WNW.



DP 8. Pit F1003. Taken from NNE.

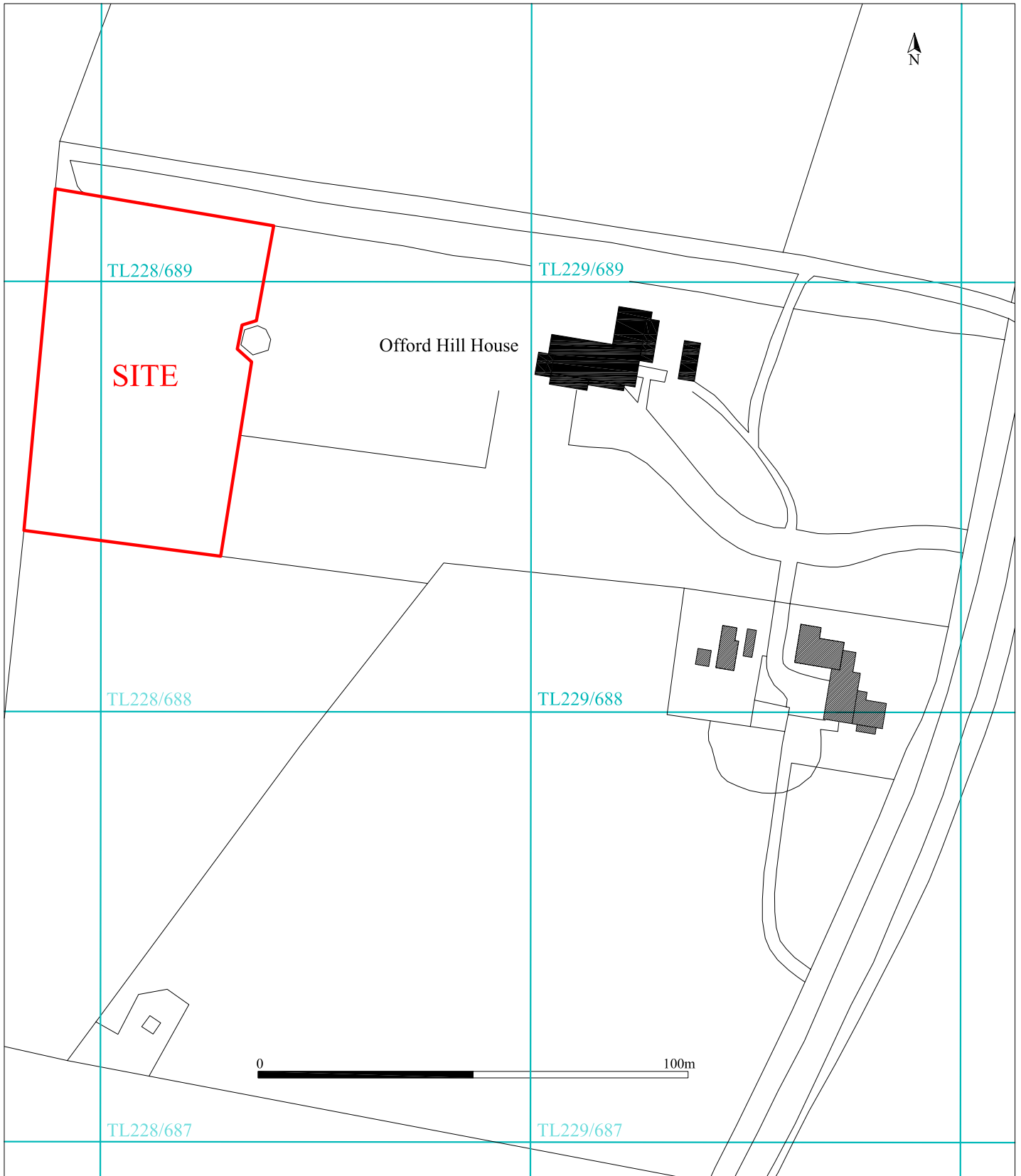


DP 9. Trench 2, E end. Sample section.
Taken from NNE.

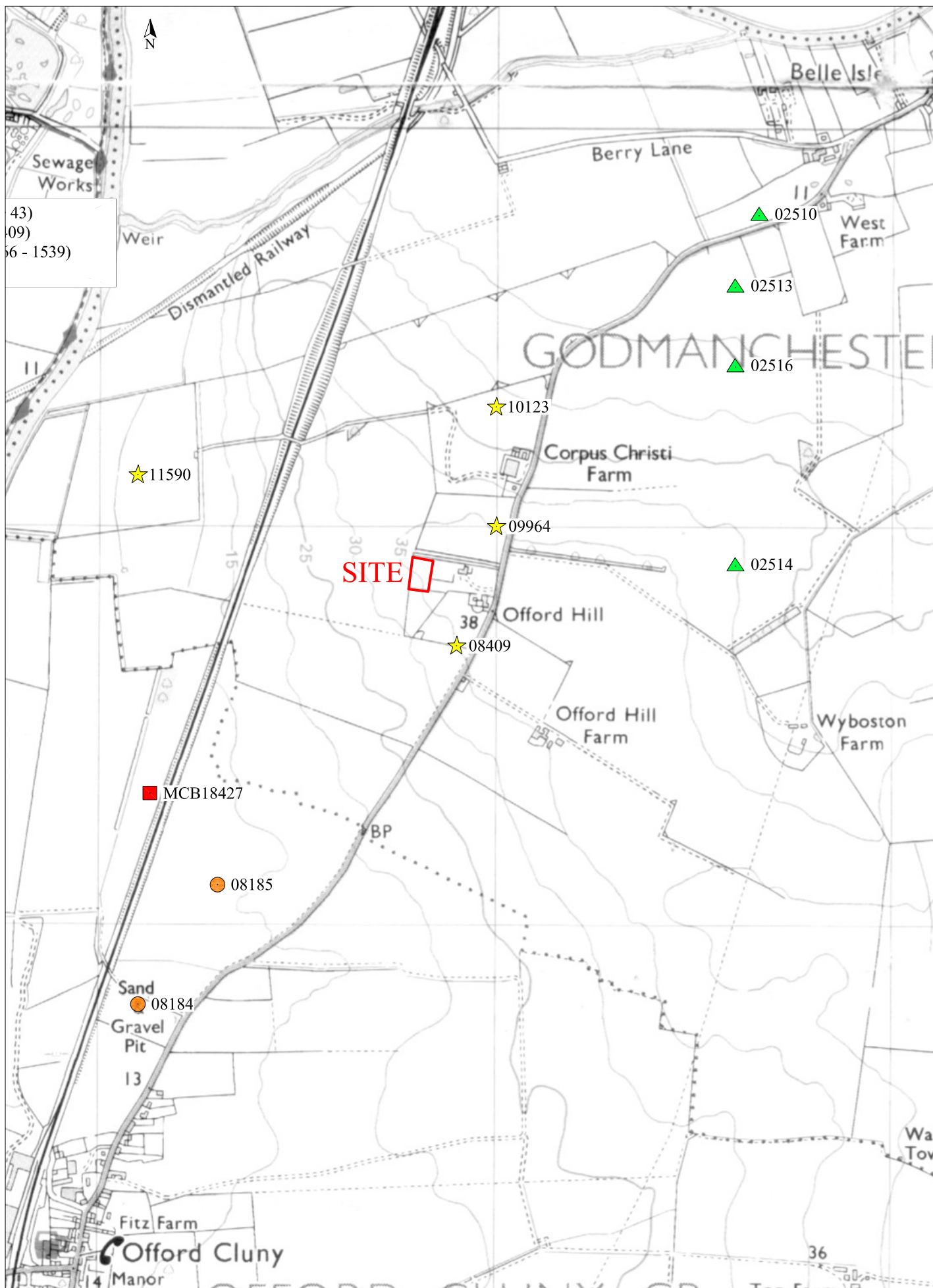


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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4



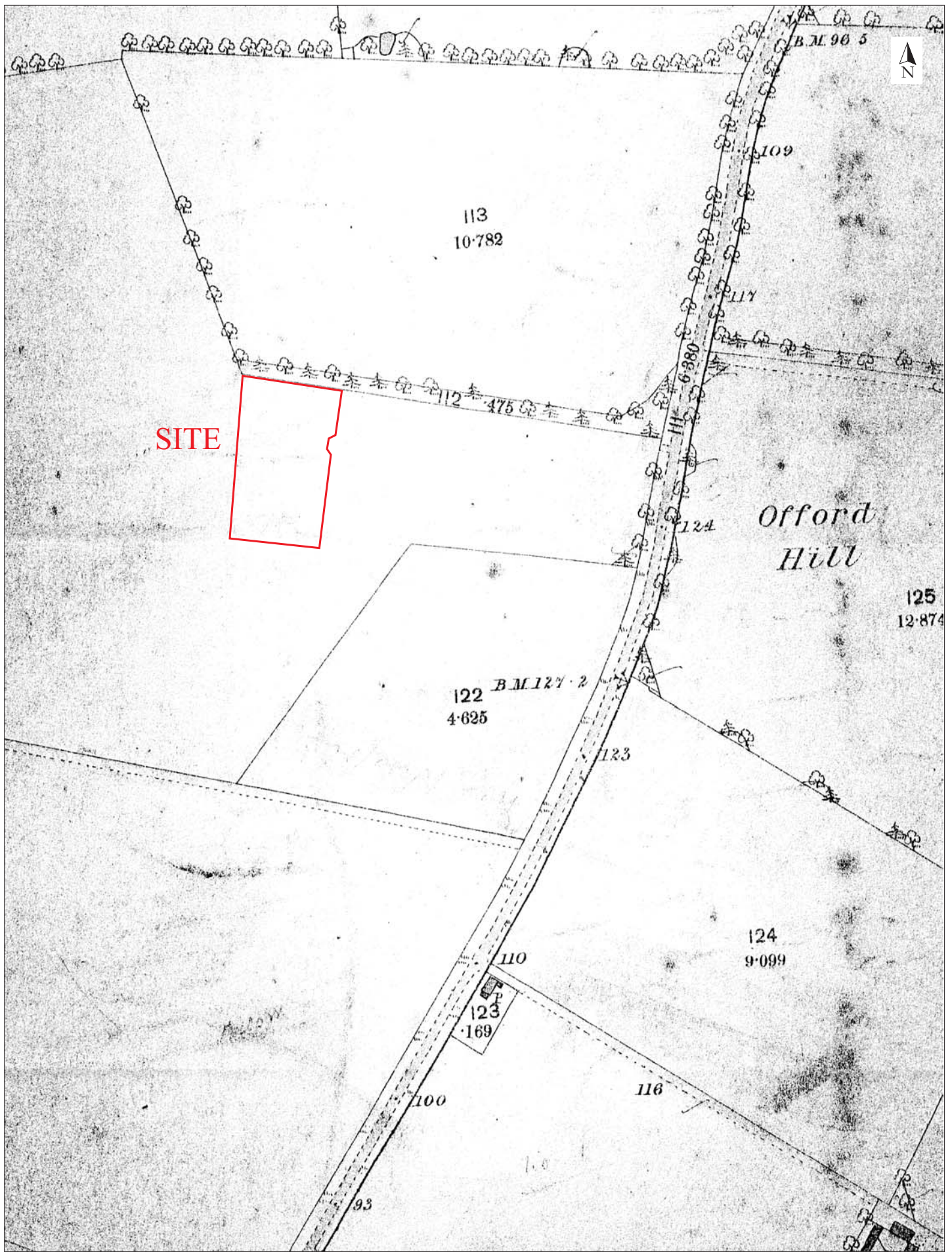
Archaeological Solutions Ltd
Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan
Scale 1:1250 at A4



43)
09)
66 - 1539)

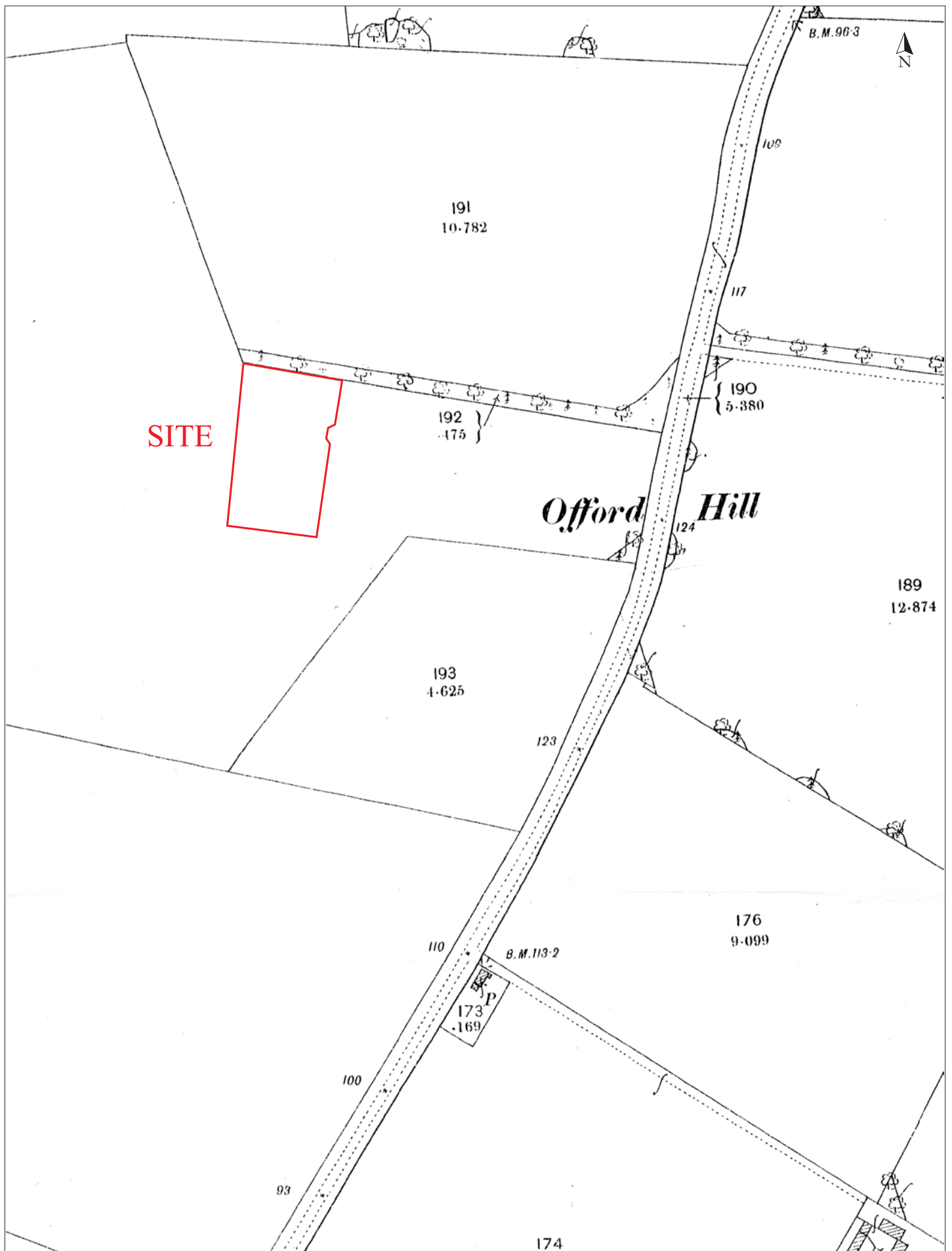
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Archaeological Solutions Ltd
Fig. 3 HER data
 Scale 1:12,500 at A4



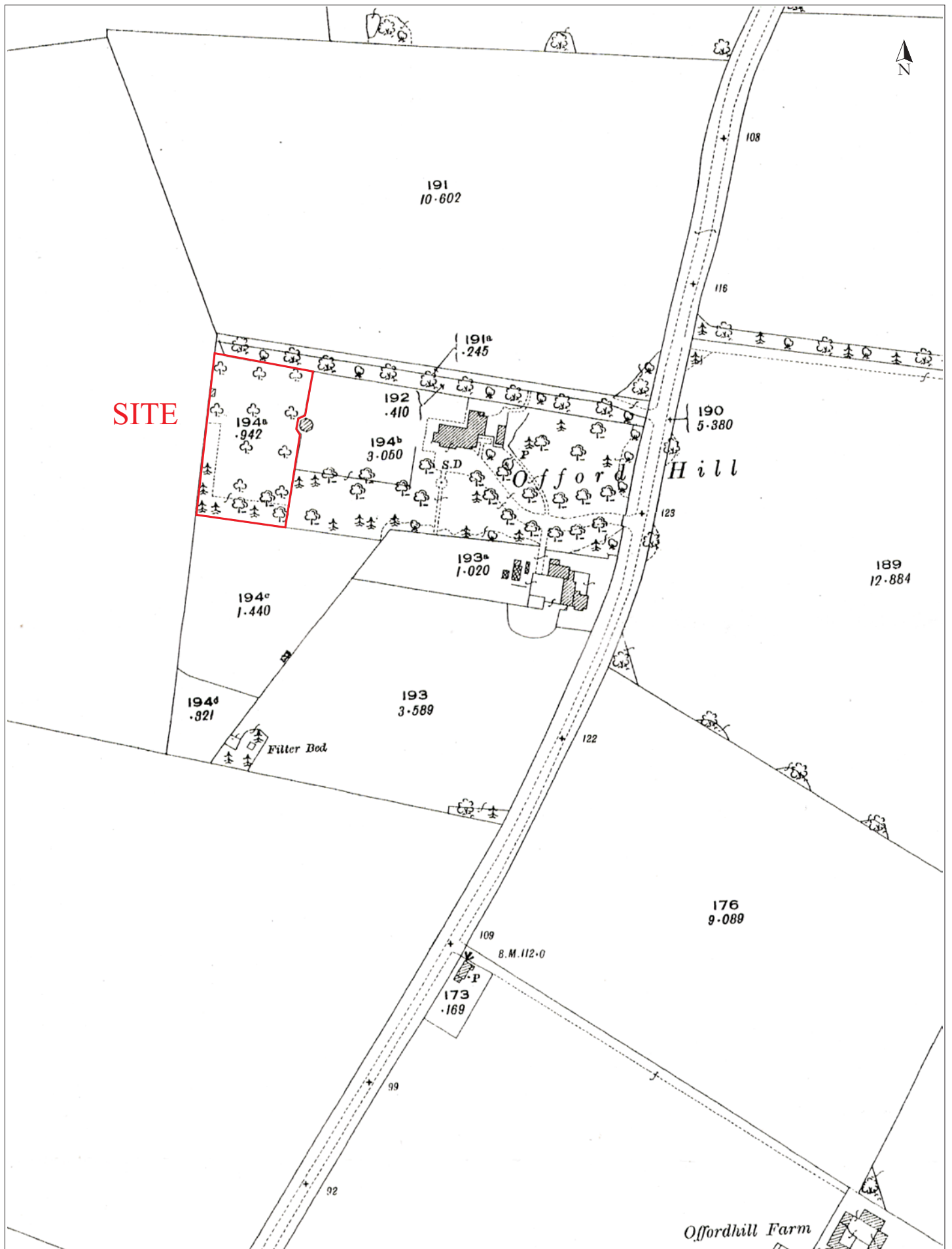
Reproduced from the 1885 Ordnance Survey 25" to 1 mile map with the permission of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown copyright Archaeological Solutions Ltd Licence number 100036680

Archaeological Solutions Ltd
Fig. 4 1st edition OS map, 1885
 Scale 25" to 1 mile at A4 (1:2500)



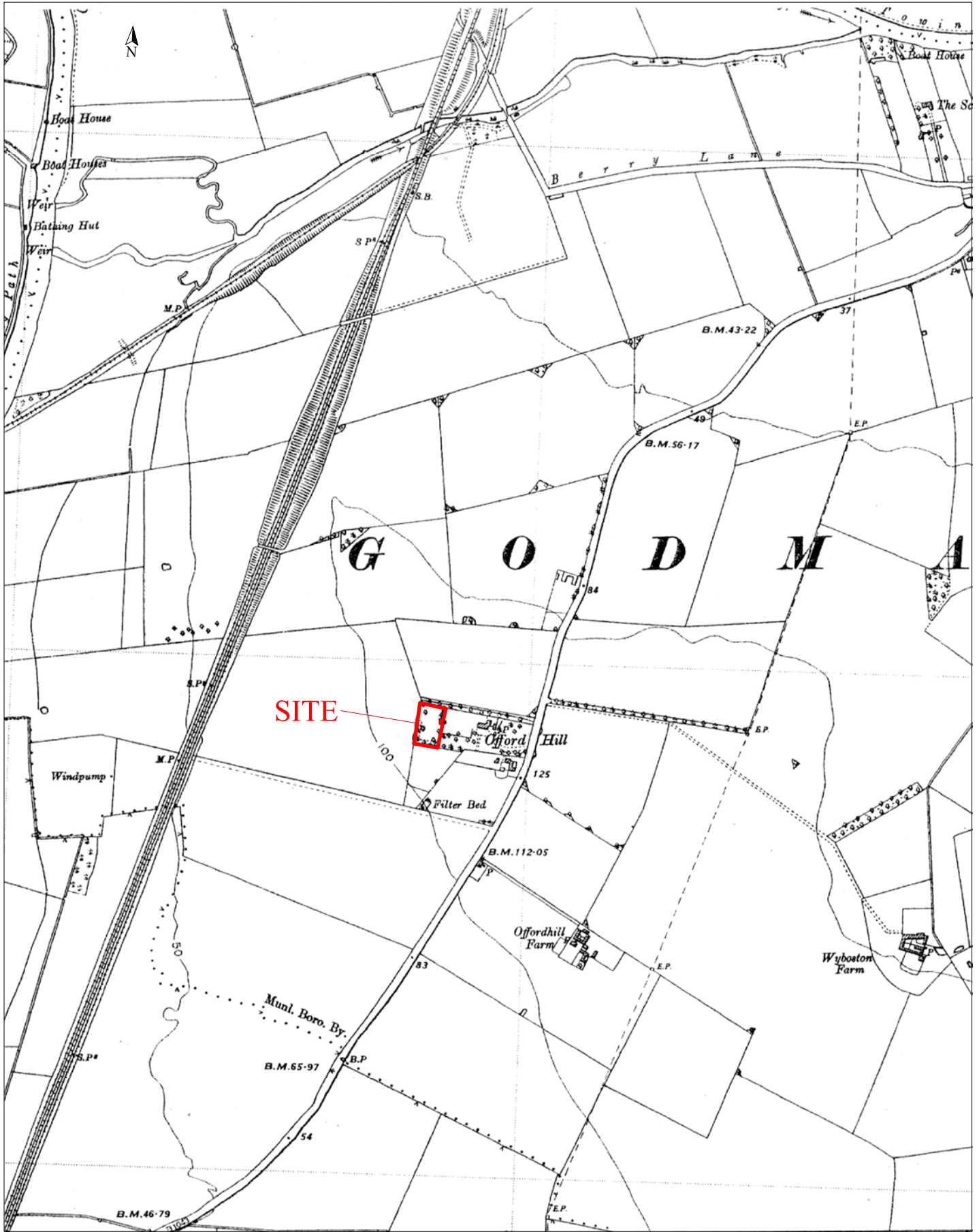
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Archaeological Solutions Ltd
Fig. 5 2nd edition OS map, 1900
 Scale 25" to 1 mile at A4 (1:2500)



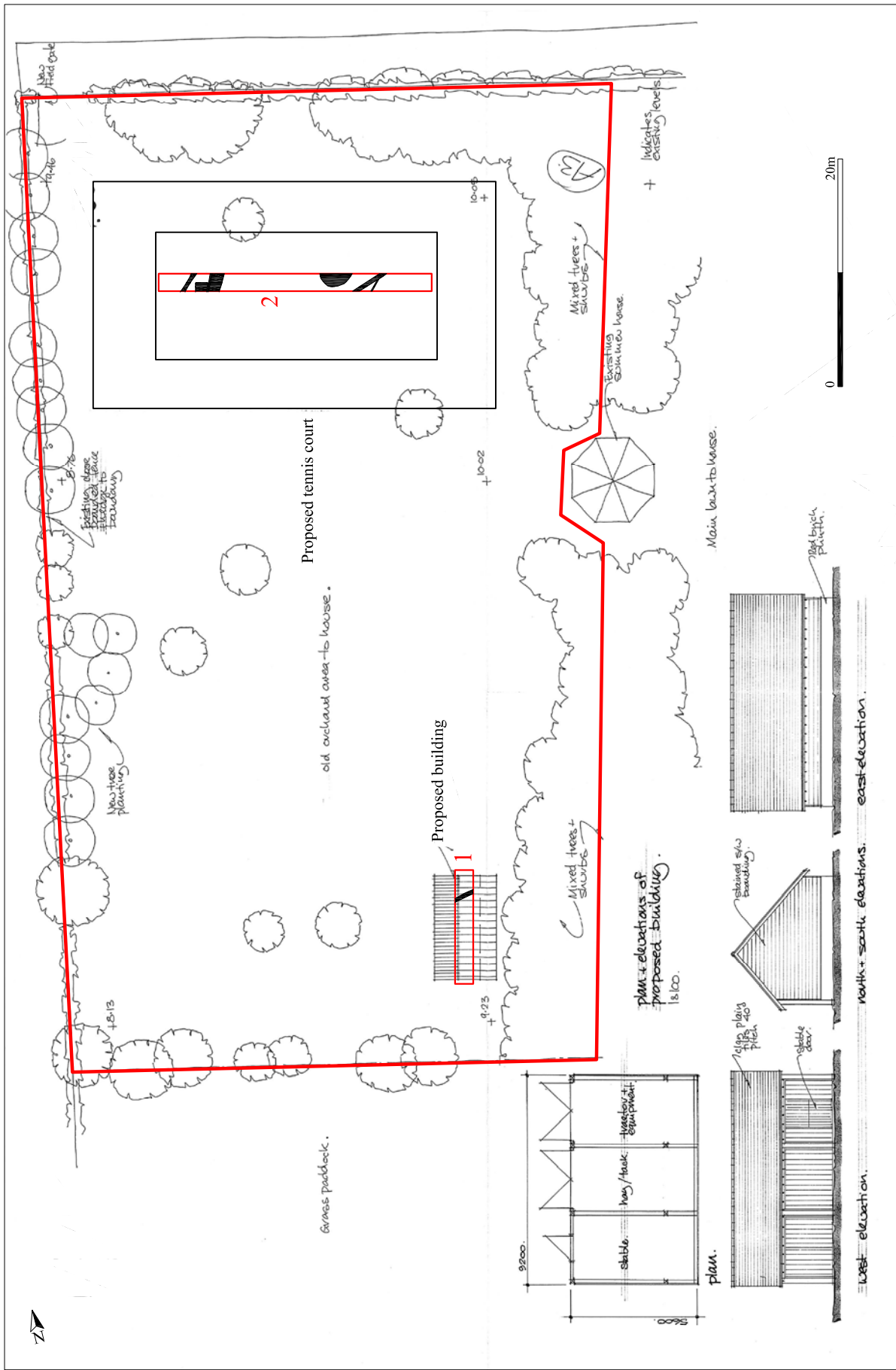
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Fig. 6 3rd edition OS map, 1926
 Scale 25" to 1 mile at A4 (1:2500)

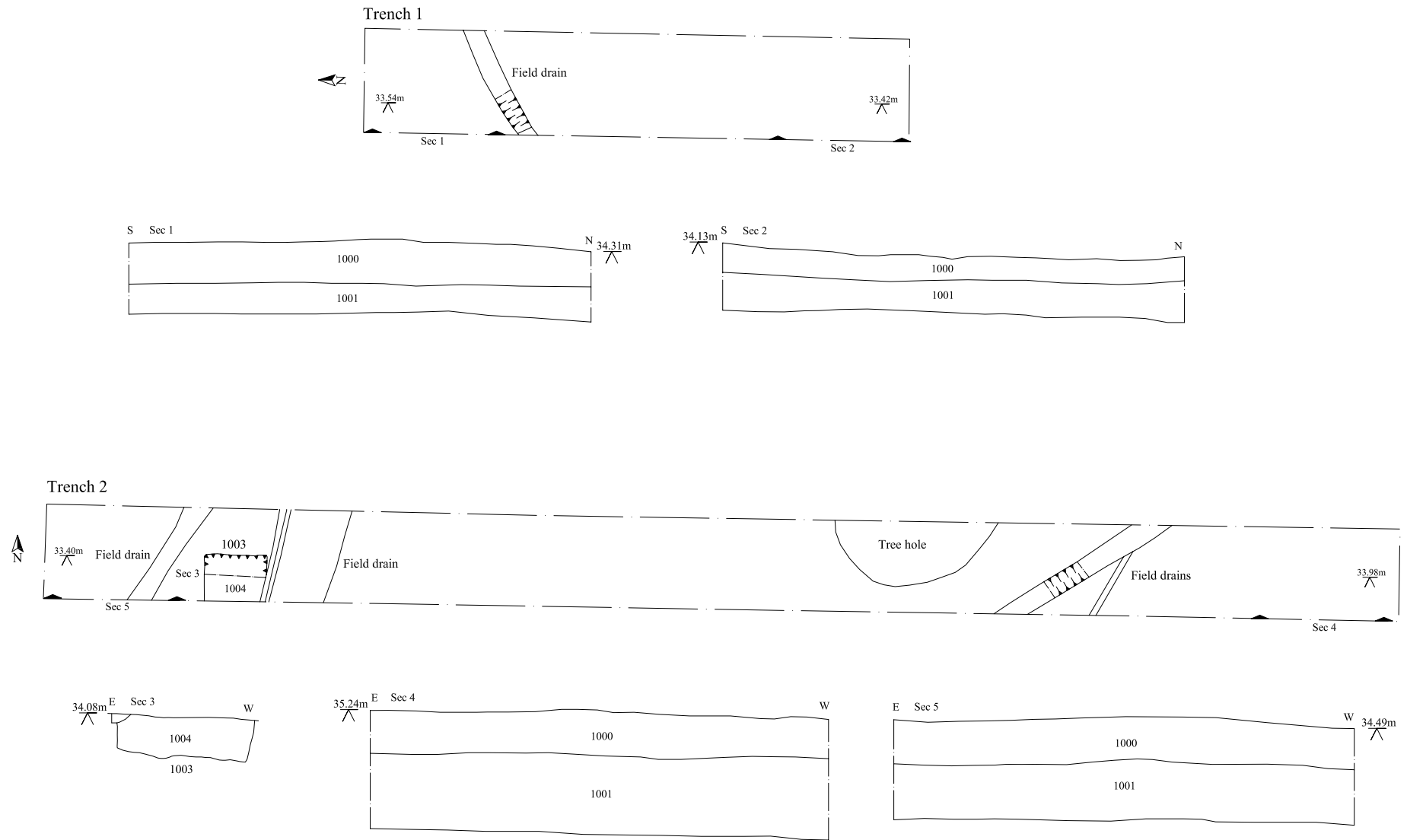


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Fig. 7 Provisional OS map, 1950
 Scale 1:10,000 at A4



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Fig. 8 Trench location plan
 Scale 1:500 at A4



0 Plan only 5m

0 Sections only 2m

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Fig. 9 Trench plans and sections
 Scale Plans 1:100 and sections 1:25 at A4