
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

**59 GRACECHURCH STREET,
DEBENHAM, SUFFOLK**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING

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NGR: TM 1692 6323	Report No. 3271
District: Stowmarket	Site Code: DBN130
Approved: Claire Halpin MIFA	Project No. 3268
Signed:	Date: March 2009

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Project name	<i>59 Gracechurch Street, Debenham, Suffolk: Archaeological monitoring and recording.</i>		
<p><i>In March 2009 Archaeological Solutions Limited conducted archaeological monitoring and recording at 59 Gracechurch Street, Debenham, Suffolk (Grid Ref: TM 1692 6323). The monitoring was carried out in advance of a small residential extension.</i></p> <p><i>The desk-based assessment demonstrated potential for multi-period remains, particularly of medieval date. In the event no archaeological finds or features were present.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	<i>04/03/09, 06/03/09 & 09/03/09</i>		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>	Future work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>
P. number	<i>3268</i>	Site code	<i>DBN130</i>
Type of project	<i>Archaeological monitoring and recording</i>		
Site status	<i>Area of archaeological importance</i>		
Current land use	<i>Existing single storey extension</i>		
Planned development	<i>New two storey extension</i>		
Main features (+dates)	<i>-</i>		
Significant finds (+dates)	<i>-</i>		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Suffolk</i>	<i>Stowmarket</i>	<i>Debenham</i>
SMR for area	<i>Suffolk HER</i>		
Post code (if known)	<i>IP14 6RQ</i>		
Area of site	<i>c.28m²</i>		
NGR	<i>TM 1692 6323</i>		
Height AOD (max)	<i>c. 50m AOD</i>		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Conservation Team (SCCAS – CT)</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>Phillippa Sparrow</i>		
Funded by	<i>Mr. and Mrs. Worrell</i>		
Full title	<i>59 Gracechurch Street, Debenham, Suffolk: Archaeological monitoring and recording.</i>		
Authors	<i>Sparrow, P, Unger, S, Newton, A</i>		
Report no.	<i>3271</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>March 2009</i>		

59 GRACECHURCH STREET, DEBENHAM, SUFFOLK: ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING

SUMMARY

In October 2008 Archaeological Solutions Limited conducted archaeological monitoring and recording at 59 Gracechurch Street, Debenham, Suffolk (Grid Ref: TM 1692 6323). The monitoring was carried out in advance of a small residential extension.

The desk-based assessment demonstrated potential for multi-period remains, particularly of medieval date. In the event no archaeological finds or features were present.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In March 2008, Archaeological Solutions Limited (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording at 59 Gracechurch Street, Debenham, Suffolk (NGR TM 1692 6323 Figs 1 – 2, DP1). The monitoring was carried out during the groundworks associated with the construction of a two-storey residential extension (DP5).

1.2 The monitoring and recording was undertaken according to a specification prepared by AS (dated 08/09/2008), and a brief issued by Suffolk County Council Archaeology Service Conservation Team (SCCAS-CT; dated 20/08/2008). It also complied with the Institute of Field Archaeologists' (IFA) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (revised 1999) and guidance document *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).

1.3 The objectives of the project were set out in the brief and specification and are summarised here:

- To ensure the archaeological excavation and 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.
- To secure the analysis, long term conservation and storage of the project archive.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 The site lies in Debenham, a village located between Stowmarket and Framlingham, Suffolk. The River Deben meanders through the centre of the village on a north-west to south-east alignment. Gracechurch Street is one of the main roads entering Debenham from the west and the site is positioned to the south of this road, just outside the centre of the village. It is in an area of archaeological importance defined by Suffolk Historic Environment Record. Residential housing surrounds 59

Gracechurch Street to the south, east and west whilst the road is located immediately to the north. The site encompasses a residential house (No. 59) that had a single storey extension, demolished ahead of the construction of the new extension.

2.2 The site is located at approximately 50m AOD on level land level. The solid geology consists of Upper Cretaceous chalk overlain by drift geology of chalky till. The soils of the area are of the Hanslope association (SSEW 1983). They consist of slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils with a slight risk of water erosion (SSEW 1983). Traditionally these soils support winter cereals with some other arable crops as well as some grassland (SSEW 1983).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND (Fig. 3)

3.1 The location of Debenham, with good soils for cultivation and close to the source of the River Deben, would have been conducive to prehistoric settlement. However, there is little reported finds of prehistoric date in the parish. The only prehistoric finds in the village were found during a recent archaeological investigation. An evaluation at Low Road in 1999 (*c.* 250m south of the site) revealed a Neolithic pit and two Bronze Age features. A later excavation produced Mesolithic, Bronze Age and other prehistoric finds across the site (SHER DBN 104). These finds suggest that there was some prehistoric activity in the vicinity but that this may not have been particularly intensive.

3.2 Despite the lack of prehistoric finds in the area, the south and west sides of Debenham has produced a moderate amount of Roman evidence. Over 200m north-west of the site, a Roman slave shackle was discovered close to Derry Brook Farm (SHER DBN 002). The same evaluation at Low Road, which produced prehistoric finds, also produced Roman finds and features (SHER DBN 104). In addition Roman pottery and building material was also discovered in close proximity to medieval remains opposite the school, *c.* 250m west of the site (SHER 096). In 1986 a decorated bronze bracelet was found in a garden at Great Back Lane, near to the centre of the village (SHER DBN 033). Significantly, two sherds of Roman pottery were found in Sackville Street, only 125m south-west of the site (SHER DBN 003). These finds may represent early settlement by the Romans in the area, possibly encouraged by the proximity of the River.

3.3 It is thought that the settlement at Debenham originated in the Anglo-Saxon period, deriving its name from the Old English meaning 'the village in a deep valley' (website 1). Some academics have suggested that Debenham was along one of the most important routes of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom (website 1). Saxon pottery has been discovered in the village, a small scatter at Great Back Lane (SHER DBN 046) and more importantly, Saxo-Norman Thetford ware pottery sherds were found approximately 250m north-east of the site, opposite the school (SHER DBN 096). The Domesday entry for Debenham (1086) lists a substantial settlement in the possession of Odo Bishop of Bayeaux and William Malet with four manors and two churches recorded (Morris 1986). The village is thought to have boasted two markets and a fair, several medieval moated sites and a wealth of medieval finds discovered across the village (A Survey of Suffolk Parish Histories 1990). The Historic Environment Record

also lists numerous medieval pottery scatters across the village. The evaluation at Low Road revealed a substantial amount of Saxon and medieval pottery indicative of settlement (SHER SBN 104). 15th century pottery and animal bones was discovered amongst medieval stone footings along Gracechurch Street in the 1960's (SHER DBN 005). Other medieval pottery was found slightly further along the street at 44-46 Gracechurch Street (SHER DBN 091). A large pottery rim was also discovered less than 50m east of the site at 51 Gracechurch Street (SHER DBN 092). This evidence suggests medieval settlement extended along the modern Gracechurch Street and evidence of this occupation may be in close proximity to the site.

3.4 Debenham expanded in the early post-medieval period and evidence of this rapid expansion can be seen by the quantity of post-medieval listed buildings routed along the main street. Gracechurch Street continued to be part of the main settlement of Debenham with several 16th and 17th century buildings built on the eastern part of the road (SHER DSF 6033 & DSF 3657). The tithe map of Debenham depicted the site lying within an irregularly shaped plot of land which was likely to have been agricultural in character (Fig. 4). The 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map also depicted the land as remaining undeveloped at this time, with small amounts of development occurring to the east and north of the site (Fig. 5). Pastoral use of land has positive implications for archaeological survival whilst arable land may have caused some truncation. However, in general this type of land use (rather than intensive development) suggests a potential for the survival of any archaeological deposits at the site.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 All the main phases of intrusive groundworks were monitored. These comprised the excavation of foundations and a service trench. Deposits were recorded by means of *pro forma* recording sheets, scale drawings and photographs as appropriate. Excavated spoil was searched for archaeological finds and the trenches scanned with a metal detector.

5 RESULTS

5.1 Site visit 04/03/09

The excavation of footings in the southern area of the site was monitored.

<i>Sample Section 1 (Fig. 6, DP2)</i>	
<i>0.00m = 50.23m AOD</i>	
0.00m – 0.29m	L1000. Garden soil. Dark brown sandy clay.
0.29m – 0.36m	L1001. Levelling Layer. Light yellow-orange sandy clay.
0.36m – 0.84m	L1002. Make-up layer. Light orange grey chalky clay.
0.84m – 1.49m	L1003. Levelling layer. Light orange yellow gravelly sandy clay.
1.49m – 1.81m+	L1004. Natural clay. Grey.

<i>Sample Section 2 (Fig. 6, DP3)</i>	
<i>0.00m = 50.31m AOD</i>	
0.00m – 0.20m	L1005. Made ground. Orange brown sandy clay.
0.20m – 0.90m	L1001. Levelling layer. As above.
0.90m – 1.60m	L1002. Make-up layer. As above.
1.60m – 2.60m+	L1004. Natural clay. As above.

Description: No archaeological features or finds were present.

5.2 Site visit 06/03/09

Excavation of the central north-east to south-west footing was monitored.

<i>Sample Section 3 (Fig. 6)</i>	
<i>0.00m = 50.18m AOD</i>	
0.00m – 0.17m	L1005. Made ground. As above.
0.17m – 0.89m	L1001. Levelling layer. As above.
0.89m – 1.58m	L1002. Make-up layer. As above.
1.58m – 2.59m+	L1004. Natural clay. As above.

Description: No archaeological features or finds were present.

5.3 Site visit 09/03/09

Excavation of the remaining footings at the north end of the site was monitored.

<i>Sample Section 4 (Fig. 6, DP4)</i>	
<i>0.00m = 50.26m AOD</i>	
0.00m – 0.26m	L1005. Made ground. As above.
0.26m – 0.92m	L1007. Fill of F1006. Light yellow brown silty clay.

Description: No archaeological features or finds were present. One modern service trench (F1006) containing a sewage pipe, was present on a north-west to south-east alignment (0.60m+ x 1.0m x 0.66m). It cut layer L1002. It had vertical sides and a flat base. The ceramic sewage pipe was located towards the eastern side of the cut. F1006 contained one fill (L1007) which comprised light yellow brown silty clay. It contained no finds.

6 CONFIDENCE RATING

6.1 It is not felt that any factors inhibited the recognition of archaeological features or finds during the monitoring and recording.

7 DEPOSIT MODEL

7.1 Layer L1000 was present to a depth of 0.29m along the western and southern edges of the site and comprised garden soil. It was not present beneath the footprint of the former extension where made-ground, Layer L1005, an orange brown sandy clay with frequent CBM, was located. L1005 ranged from 0.17m to 0.36m in depth. Layer L1001 was present beneath L1000 and L1005 (depth 0.08 - 0.70m). L1001 was a levelling layer that comprised a light yellow orange sandy clay and was likely associated with the preparation of the ground prior to the construction of residential dwellings. L1002 was present beneath L1001 (depth 0.49 - 0.60m). It comprised a light orange grey chalky clay and probably represented a further make-up layer. L1003 was situated beneath L1002 in the southern edge of the site. It comprised a light orange yellow gravelly sandy clay and was probably another levelling layer associated with the preparation of the site prior to development. L1004 comprised the natural grey clay and was located on average 1.50m below the present ground level.

8 DISCUSSION

8.1 Despite the potential for medieval remains, no archaeological features or finds were present on site. A modern service pipe (F1006) was present. All of the layers located above the natural clay were likely associated with the construction of the residential dwelling.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions Limited would like to thank Brooks Architects, and Mr and Mrs Worrel for commissioning the project.

AS would also like to acknowledge the input of Jess Tipper at Suffolk County Council Archaeology Service Conservation Team.

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Website 1

<http://www.debenhamsuffolk.co.uk/>

APPENDIX 1 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD DATA

The following sites are those that lie within a *c.* 1km radius of the assessment site. The table has been compiled from data held by the Suffolk Historic Environment Record (SHER). The locations of the sites are shown in Fig. 3. Their significance, where relevant, is discussed in Section 3.

HER No.	NGR TM	Description
<i>Prehistoric (700,000 BC – AD 43)</i>		
DBN 104	1701 6287	An evaluation at Low Road in 2000 revealed prehistoric finds and features.
<i>Roman (AD 43 – 410)</i>		
DBN 002	166 635	A Roman slave shackle (four links, shackle and barrel padlock) found at the side of a ditch.
DBN 003	1682 6311	Two Roman pottery sherds discovered in Sackville Street. More were found but many discarded.
DBN 033	174 629	Decorated bronze bracelet found at 2 Great Back Lane.
DBN 096	1665 6322	One Roman pottery fragment and four fragments of tile (tegula) were found close to other medieval finds.
DBN 104	1701 6287	An evaluation at Low Road in 2000 revealed Roman finds and features.
<i>Anglo-Saxon and Medieval (AD 410 – 1550)</i>		
DBN 046	1722 6345	Scatter of medieval pottery (mostly 13 th -14 th century) found at Great Back Lane. Two sherds of possible Ipswich ware were also revealed.
DBN 096	1665 6322	Small group of Saxo-Norman Thetford type ware found amongst other medieval pottery (of 13 th and 14 th century date) found opposite the School.
DBN 005	1720 6327	During the 1960's, 15 th century pottery and food bones were discovered amongst a furnace and stone footings of a rectangular medieval building in Gracechurch Street.
DBN 091	1702 6334	A small scatter of unglazed medieval pottery was discovered in the back gardens of 44-46 Gracechurch Street as well as a pot boiler.
DBN 092	1697 6326	Large and crudely-made pottery rim of medieval date found at 51 Gracechurch Street.
DBN 104	1701 6287	An evaluation at Low Road in 2000 revealed Saxon and medieval finds and features.
<i>Post-Medieval (1550-1900)</i>		
DSF6033	17117 63276	No. 37 & 39 Gracechurch Street are of 17 th century origin. Timbered framed and thatched roof with some 19 th century additions. It is a Grade II listed building.
DSF3657	17167 63259	No. 33 Gracechurch Street is a originally 16 th century house renovated in 1972. It is a Grade II listed building.
<i>Undated</i>		
DBN 029	1700 6345	An aerial photograph showed a circular soilmark (of a possible ring ditch or external bank) as well as other linear marks.

APPENDIX 2 CARTOGRAPHIC SOURCES

Date	Map	Scale	Location
1840's	Tithe map of Debenham	-	SRO
1881	1 st Edition Ordnance Survey map	25"	SRO

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



DP1. Site. From NW.



DP2. Sample Section 1. From SE



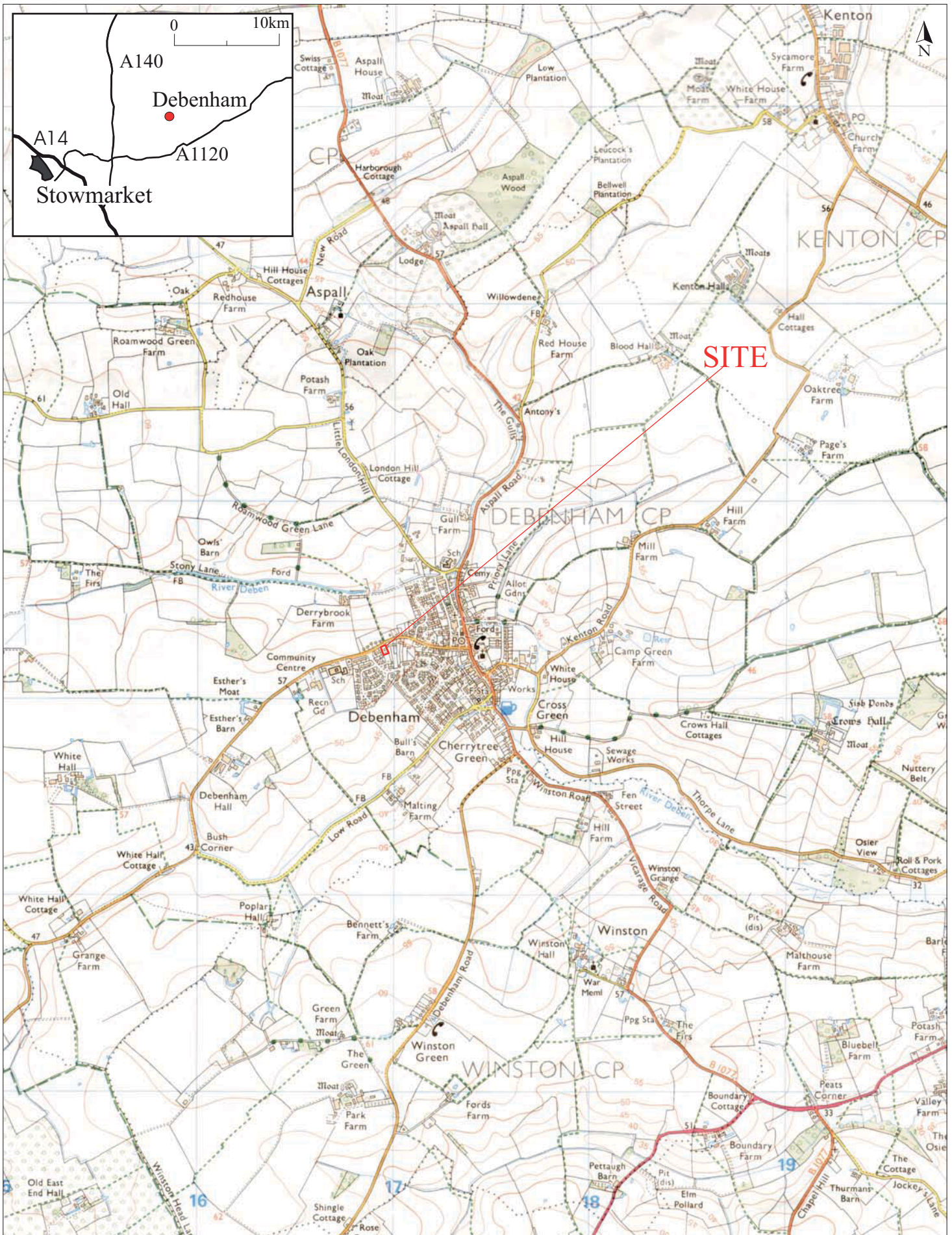
DP3. Sample Section 2. From SE



DP4. Sample Section 4. From SW.

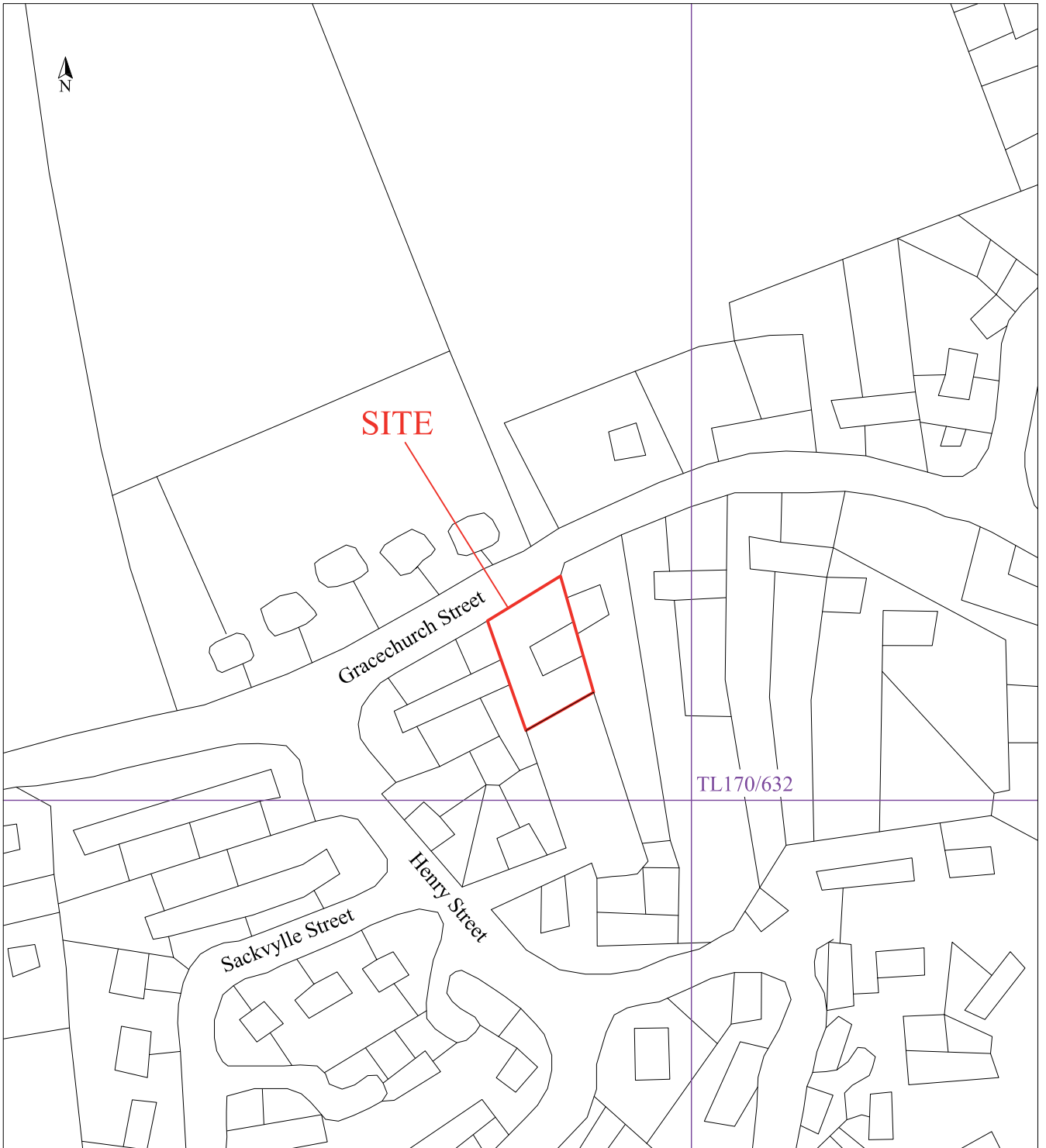


DP5. Foundation Trench. From N.



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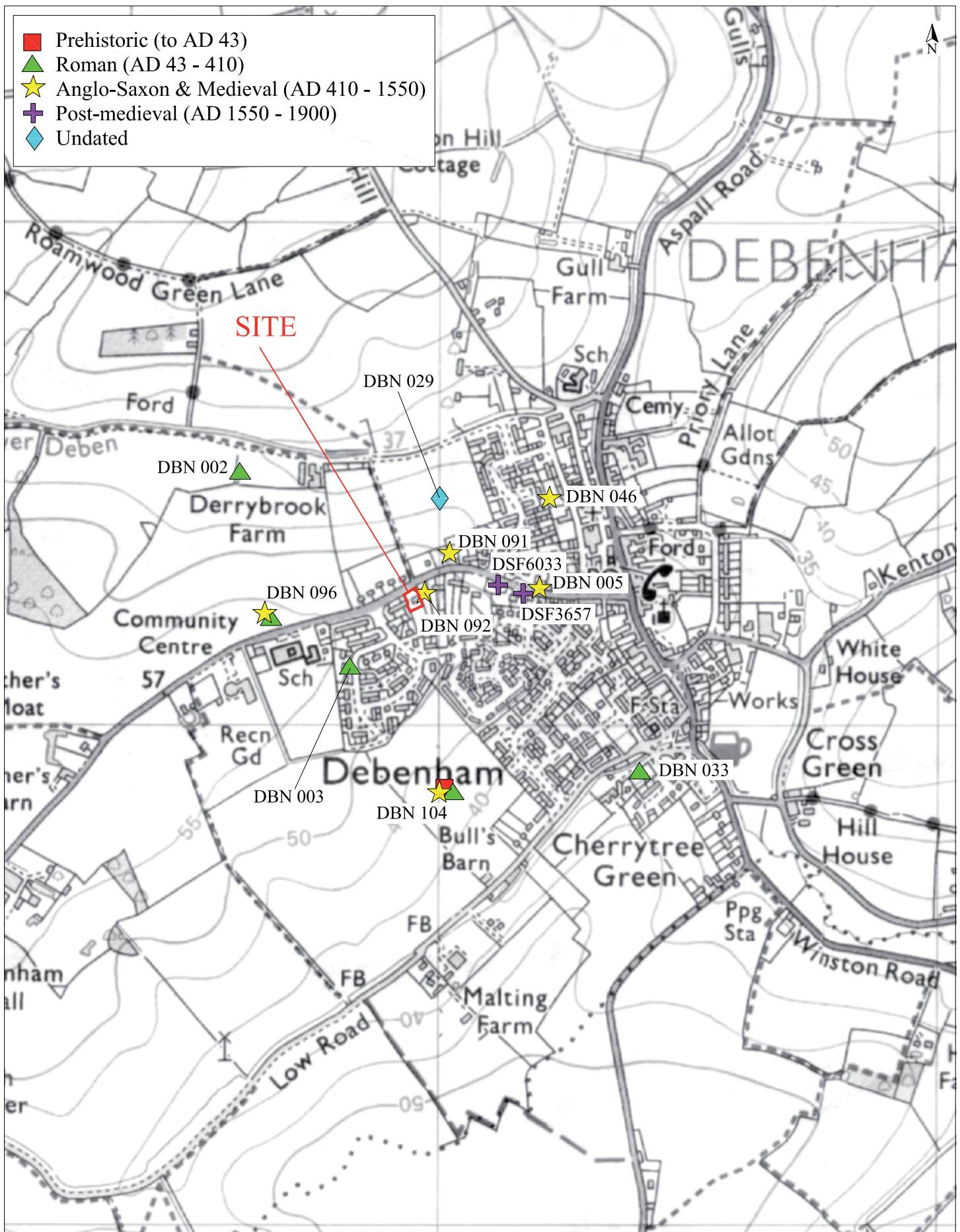
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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4



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Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan
Scale 1:2000 at A4

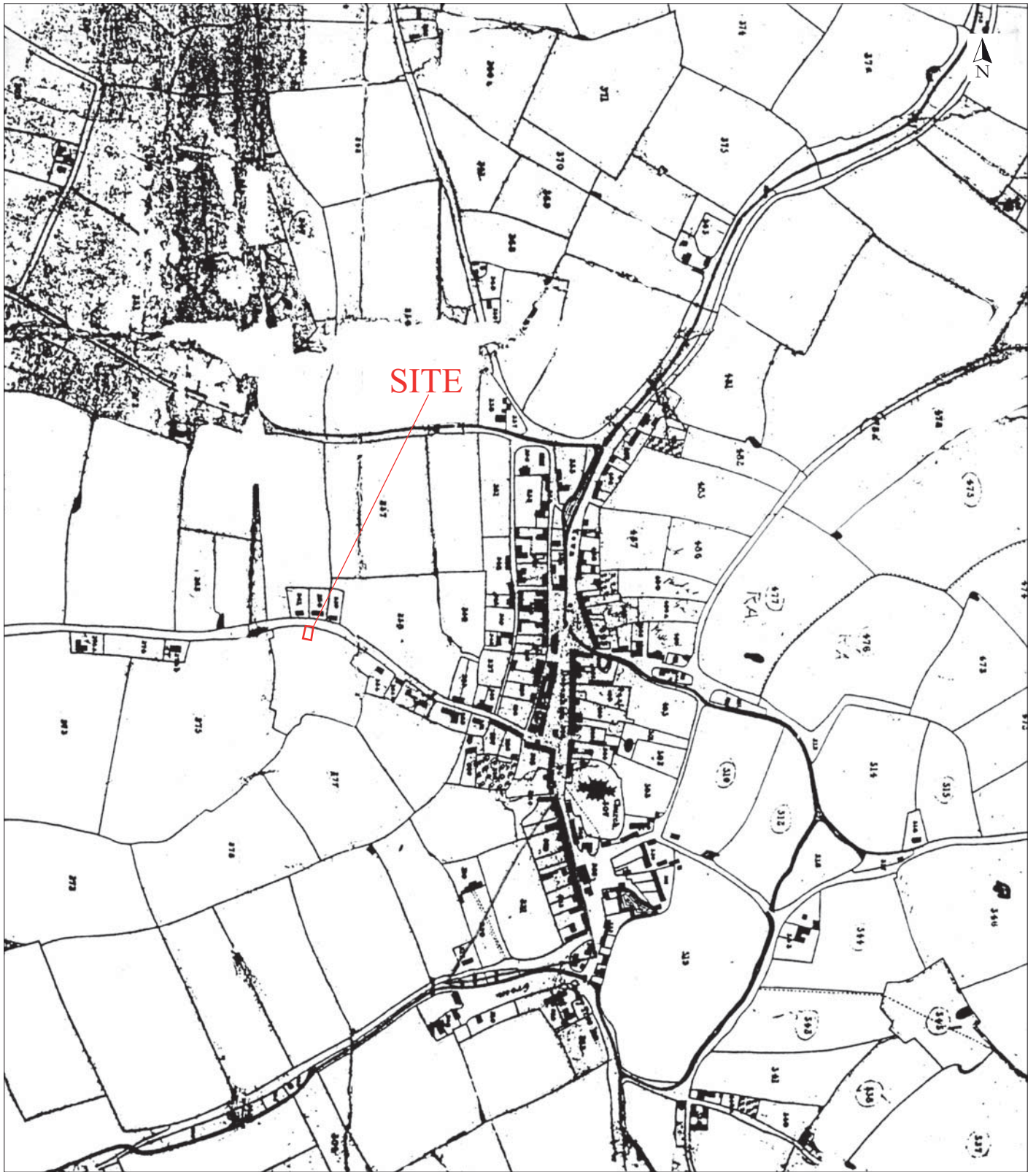


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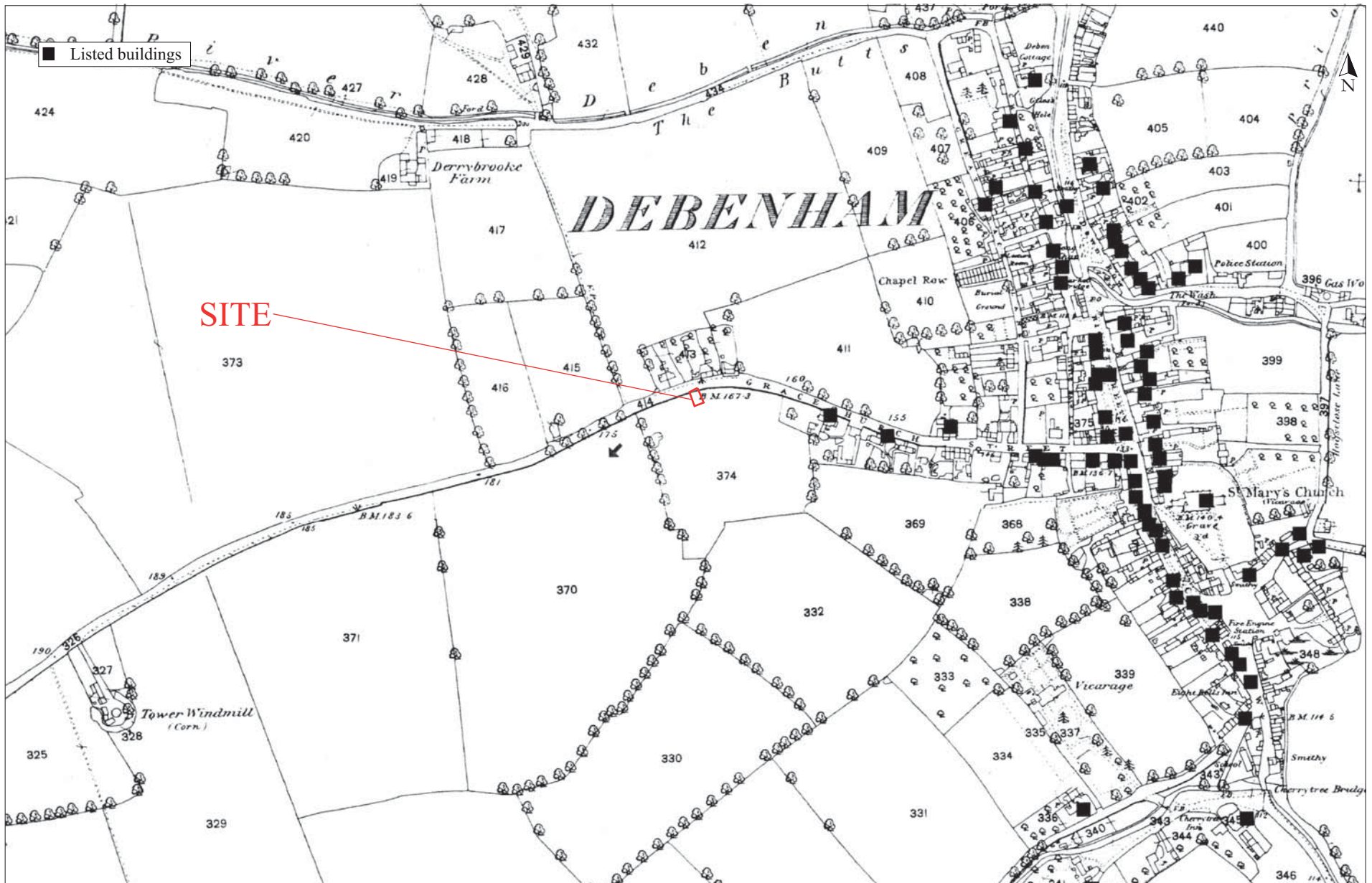
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Fig. 3 HER Data

Scale 1:25,000 at A4

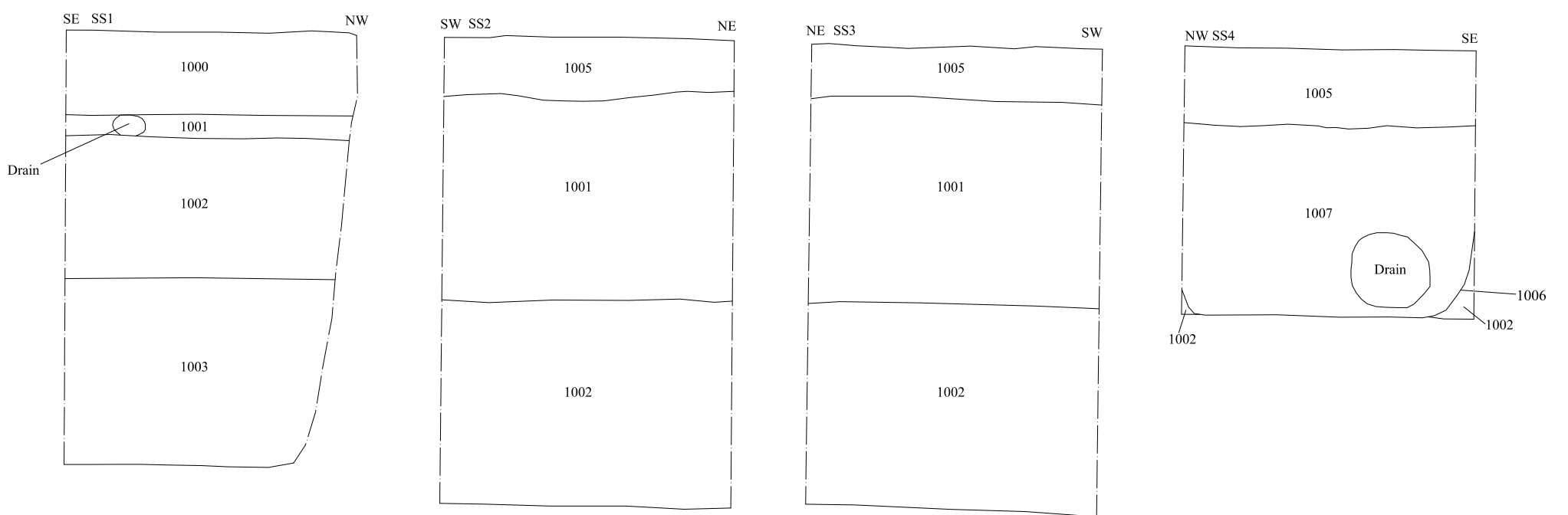
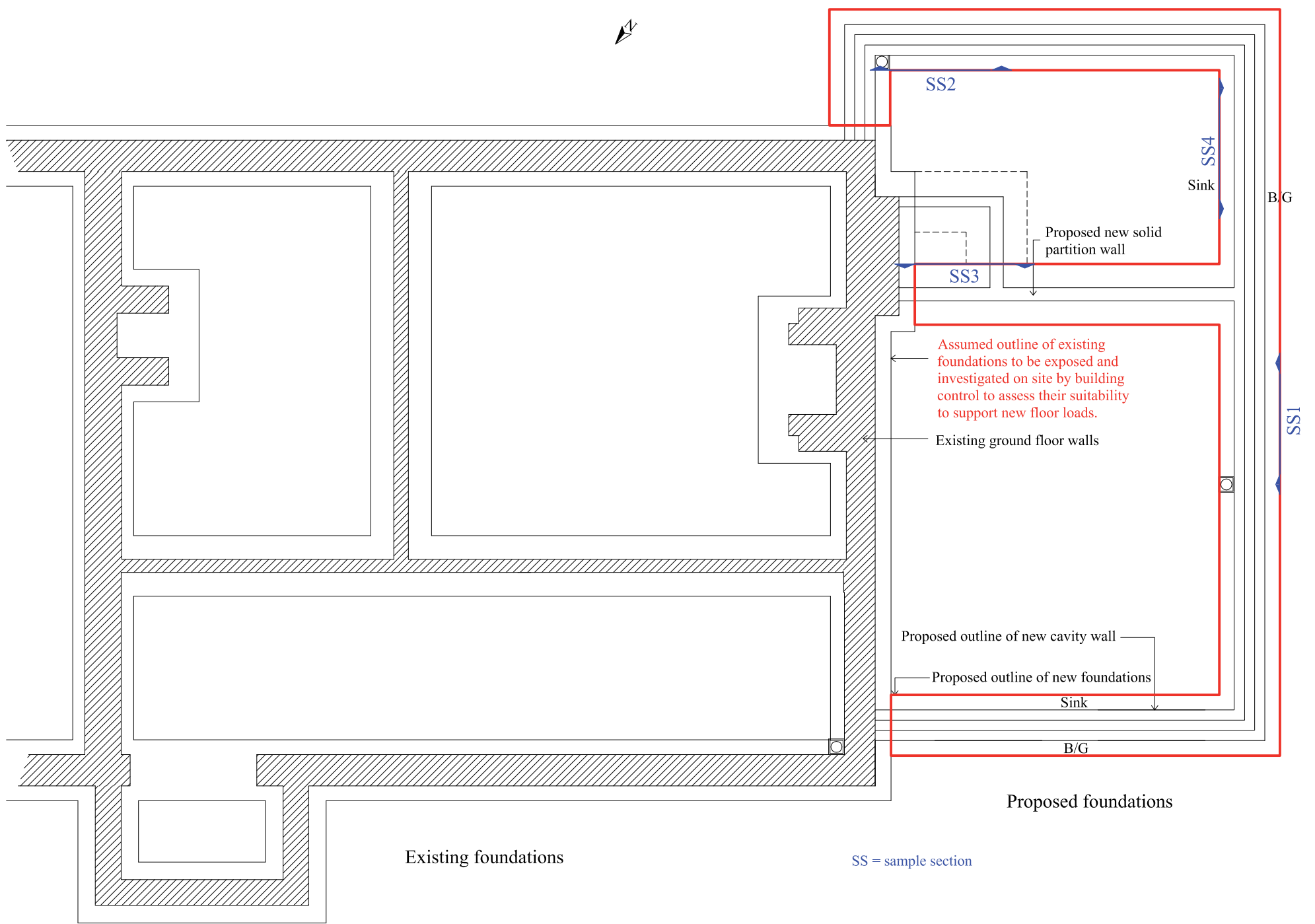


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Fig. 4 Tithe map of Debenham 1840s
Not to scale



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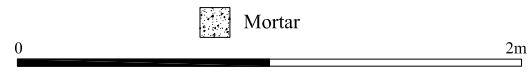
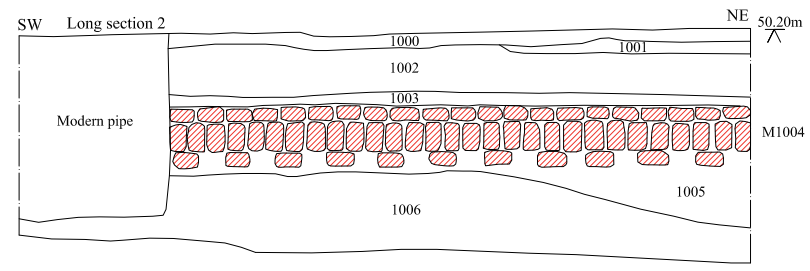
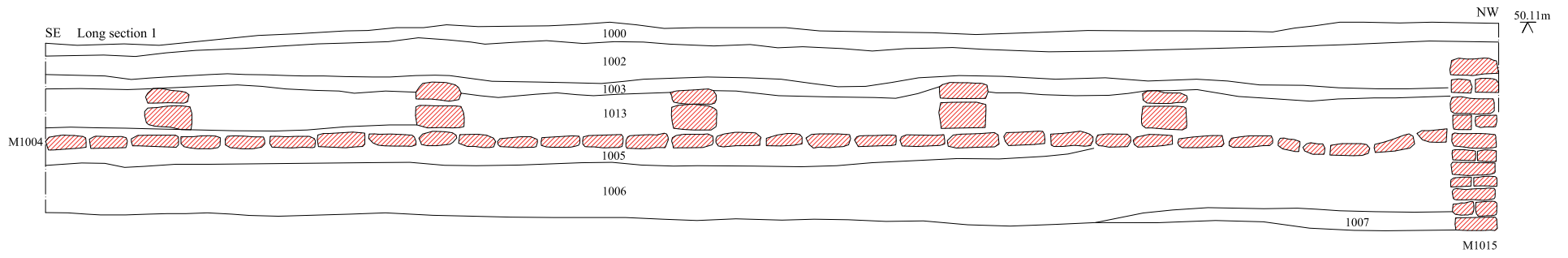
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Fig. 5 First edition OS map 1881
 Scale 1:5000



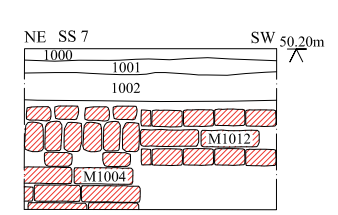
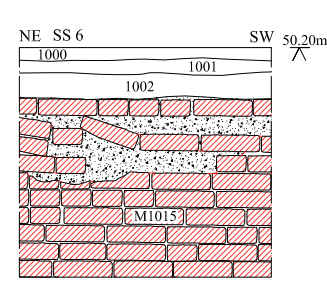
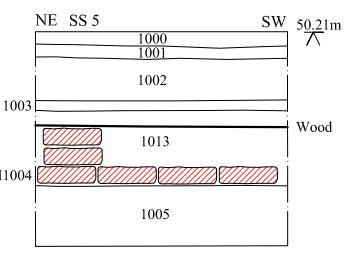
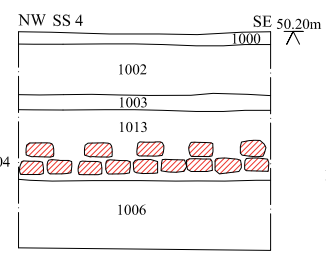
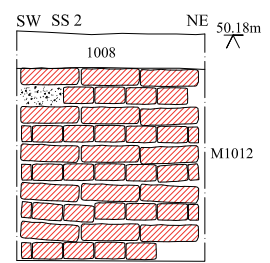
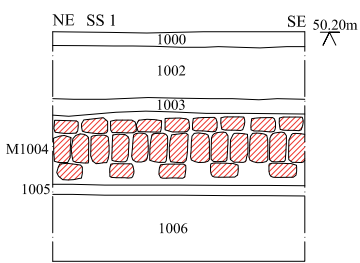
0 Plans 3m

0 Sample Sections 2m

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Fig. 6 Area of watching brief & sample sections
 Scale plans at 1:50 and sample sections at 1:20 at A3



SAMPLE SECTIONS



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Fig. 7 Sections
 Scale 1:30 at A4