ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

MANOR HOUSE, 1 NORTH STREET, ROTHERSTHORPE, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

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NGR: SP 7142 5686	Report No. 3323
Parish:	Site Code: AS 1209
Approved: Claire Halpin MIFA	Project No. 3353
Signed:	Date: June 2009

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Project name	*Manor House, 1 North Street, Rothersthorpe, Northamptonshire: An Archaeological Evaluation*		
Project description *In June 2009 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an evaluation at Manor House, 1 North Street, Rothersthorpe, Northamptonshire (NGR SP 7142 5686). The evaluation was commissioned by Mr Cartlo Vitiello to comply with a planning condition imposed by the local planning authority, based on advice from the SNDC Archaeological Advisor. The development comprises the proposed construction of a swimming pool.* *Rothershorpe is located south-west of Northampton. The site is situated within the core of the historic village, adjacent to the north-west side of an earthwork called 'The Berry' believed to date from the early medieval to medieval period.* *Despite the potential for archaeological remains to survive at the site, no features or finds were present. A yard surface associated with previous modern stable was revealed.*			
Project dates (fieldwork)	*04-05/06/09*		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	*N*	Future work (Y/N/?)	
P. number	*3353*	Site code	*AS 1209*
Type of project	*Trial trench evaluation*		
Site status	*N/A*		
Current land use	*Lawn garden to the rear of the house*		
Planned development	*Construction of swimming pool*		
Main features (+dates)	-		
Significant finds (+dates)	-		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	*Northamptonshire*	*South Northamptonshire*	*Rothersthorpe*
HER for area	*Norhamptonshire*		
Post code (if known)			
Area of site			
NGR	*SP 7142 5686*		
Height AOD (max/ min)	*82.51m/82.47m*		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	*Brian Giggins, South Northamptonshire District Council Archaeological Advisor*		
Project Officer	Zbigniew Pozorski *MA*		
Funded by	*Mr Cartlo Vitiello*		
Full title	*Manor House, 1 North Street, Rothersthorpe, Northamptonshire: An Archaeological Evaluation*		
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MANOR HOUSE, 1 NORTH STREET, ROTHERSTHORPE, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE`

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

SUMMARY

In June 2009 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an evaluation at Manor House, 1 North Street, Rothersthorpe, Northamptonshire (NGR SP 7142 5686). The evaluation was commissioned by Mr Cartlo Vitiello to comply with a planning condition imposed by the local planning authority, based on advice from the SNDC Archaeological Advisor. The development comprises the proposed construction of a swimming pool.

Rothershorpe is located south-west of Northampton. The site is situated within the core of the historic village, adjacent to the north-west side of an earthwork called 'The Berry' believed to date from the early medieval to medieval period.

Despite the potential for archaeological remains to survive at the site, no features or finds were present. A yard surface associated with previous modern stable was revealed.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In June 2009 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation at Manor House, 1 North Street, Rothersthorpe, Northamptonshire (NGR SP 7142 5686; Figs. 1-2). The evaluation was commissioned by Mr Cartlo Vitiello in compliance with a condition of planning consent imposed by the local planning authority (South Northamptonshire District Council (SNDC), Planning Ref 5/08/0595, Planning Appeal Ref. S/2008/1352/P) based on advice from the SNDC Archaeological Advisor. The evaluation was conducted ahead of the construction of a swimming pool within the garden.

1.2 The archaeological evaluation was undertaken to a brief prepared by the SNDC Archaeological Advisor (dated 13th December 2008) and a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by AS (dated 18th December 2008) and approved by SNDC. The project conformed to the Institute of Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (revised 2001).

1.3 The aim of the archaeological evaluation was to obtain, as far as was possible, sufficient information to establish the extent, character, quality, date and condition of any archaeological remains within the area affected by the proposed development.

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 that 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.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND GEOLOGY

2.1 Rothersthorpe is a small village south-west of Northampton. The Manor House (DP 1) is located on the south side of North Street, the main east to west road through the village, within the historic core of the village. The location of the proposed swimming pool is toward the rear of the long garden plot in an area of lawn (DP 2). The manor house is Grade II listed and dates to the early 18th century.

2.2 The proposed swimming pool is located immediately north-west of 'The Berry', a triangular earthwork believed to date back to the early medieval or medieval period. The Berry is a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

2.3 The solid geology of the immediate area comprises Lower Jurassic clay and siltstones or silty mudstones. The site is on the edge of the Hanslope and Ragdale soil associations. The Hanslope soils are slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils historically suitable for winter cereals and grassland in the moist lowlands. The Ragdale soils a re slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged clayey and fine loam over clayey soils more suitable for stock rearing and dairying (Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 Prehistoric

3.1.1 Evidence for pre-Iron Age human activity or occupation in Rothersthorpe is extremely limited, probably because the clay geology of the area was not favourable to agriculture and would probably have been covered by extensive areas of woodland (Taylor et al 2002, 10). The limited evidence for pre-Iron Age activity in Rothersthorpe comprises a scatter of prehistoric struck flint including a

scraper, recorded alongside Iron Age and Roman finds from the village (Mon. No. 343308).

3.1.2 Settlement began at Rothersthorpe during the middle to late Iron Age in the form of two enclosures at Swan Valley (Holmes & Chapman 2005). The enclosures, one rectangular and one D-shaped were located on the sides of the river valley and contained hut circles and smaller enclosures. The rural landscape of Iron Age and Roman Northamptonshire was apparently characterised by both single enclosures and groups of varying complexity and longevity, although not all would have contained settlement (Deegan 2007, 81).

3.2 Roman

3.2.1 During the Roman period Rothersthorpe appears to have existed as a small nucleated settlement in the hinterland between the settlements at Duston and Towcester, both of which appear to have late Iron Age origins. A previously undetected Roman site, 100m to the west of the Iron Age sites, was identified and briefly examined during a watching brief in 1996 (Holmes & Chapman 2005). However the bulk of the evidence for a settlement is known through surface finds of Roman pottery and kiln waste (Mon. Nos. 343308 & 343309). A Roman coin has also been recorded in the village (Mon. No. 343286).

3.3 Anglo-Saxon

3.3.1 It is thought that during the late Anglo-Saxon period 'The Berry', a defensive ringwork, was constructed. These fortifications are situated between the junction of North Street and Church Street and were small defended areas of buildings surrounded partly or completely by large ditches and earthworks. The earthwork remains of the inner rampart are still visible in the north-east corner and southern end. The enclosure subsequently formed part of the manorial complex during the medieval period.

3.4 Medieval

3.4.1 By the time of Domesday survey (1086), Rothersthorpe lay in Collingtree Hundred and was held by Geoffery Alselin (Salzman 1937, 285). The manor was granted by King John to Simon de Pateshull in 1209, and remained held by his heirs or successors (By birth or marriage) until it passed to Thomas Reeve Thornton of Brockhall in 1773 (Salzman 1937, 285). The principal surviving evidence for the medieval settlement comprises the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, founded in the 13th century. Early medieval pottery has also been recorded in the village (Mon. No. 973495), while cropmarks and archaeological remains have suggested that the modern village of Rothersthorpe has been subject to a degree of shrinkage or shifting from its medieval predecessor.

3.5 Post-medieval and Modern

3.5.1 As industrialisation began to alter the surrounding urban centres and landscape, Rothersthorpe has been heavily influenced by the establishment of transport networks. Firstly a tramway (Mon. No. 343311) was built through Rothersthorpe in 1804 to link the Grand Union Canal to Northampton, but this was demolished and replaced by the Northampton Arm of the Grand Union Canal in 1815. In modern times, the village has been passed to the south by the West Coast Mainline railway route from London to Glasgow and the M1 now passes only 800m to the north.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 A single trench was positioned within the footprint of the proposed swimming pool. The trench was 8m long and 2m wide (Figs 2 and 3) and was excavated using a 360º mini mechanical excavator fitted with a wide toothless bucket, under the close supervision of an archaeologist.

4.2 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 trench was scanned by metal detector.

5 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

5.1 Trial trench 1 Fig. 3, DP 3 - 4

Sample Section 1; N end of trench, E facing, DP 5 0.00 = 82.51m AOD		
0.00 – 0.14m	L1000	Topsoil. Dark greyish brown silty, sandy clay.
0.14 – 0.22m	L1001	Made ground. Light orange-brown loose silty sand.
0.22 – 0.32m	L1002	Former surface. Compact surface of blue-grey granite/basalt chippings and gravel.
0.32 – 0.48m	L1003	Buried soil. Mid to dark greyish brownish orange firm silty clay.
0.48m+	L1004	Natural clay. Mid yellowish orange, firm clay

Sample Section 2; S end of test trench, E facing, DP 6 0.00 = 82.47m AOD		
0.00 – 0.14m	L1000	Topsoil. As above.
0.14 – 0.19m	L1001	Made ground. As above.
0.19 – 0.28m	L1002	Former surface. As above.
0.28 – 0.41m	L1003	Buried soil. As above.
0.41m+	L1004	Natural clay. As above.

Description: No archaeological features or finds were present. A surface, L1002, of a former stable yard was revealed at a depth of between 0.19m to 0.22m below existing.

6 CONFIDENCE RATING

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

7 DEPOSIT MODEL

7.1 The topsoil, L1000, was uniformly 0.14m thick across the trench and composed of dark greyish brown silty, sandy clay with frequent roots. This sealed a thin layer of made ground, L1001, which was composed of light orange-brown loose silty sand. This layer was between 0.05m and 0.08m thick. Below this was Surface L1002. This layer of blue-grey stone chippings and gravel formed a yard surface associated with stables. It was on average 0.10m thick and contained a field drain in the northern end of the trench (in Sample Section 1). The surface material (L1002) sat directly on a buried soil horizon (L1003) which consisted of firm mid to dark greyish brownish orange silty clay, on average 0.15m thick. The buried soil L1003 sealed the natural mid yellowish orange, firm clay (L1004). The top of the natural clay was revealed to be between 82.03m AOD and 82.06m AOD.

8 DISCUSSION

8.1 Despite the potential for archaeological remains to survive at the site, no features or finds were present. A modern yard surface associated with a former stable (Vitiello *pers. comm*.) was present and this had been constructed with imported stone chippings and gravel.

DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited at Northampton Museum. The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross-referenced and checked for internal consistency. A copy of the report will also be deposited.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions would like to thank Mr Cartlo Vitiello for commissioning and funding the project and Mr Brian Giggins of SNDC for his input and advice.

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PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX

1
Manor House.

2
General view of the site. Looking North-west

3
The Trench. Looking North.

4
The Trench. Looking South.

5
Sample Section 1. Looking West.

6
Sample Section 2.. Looking West.

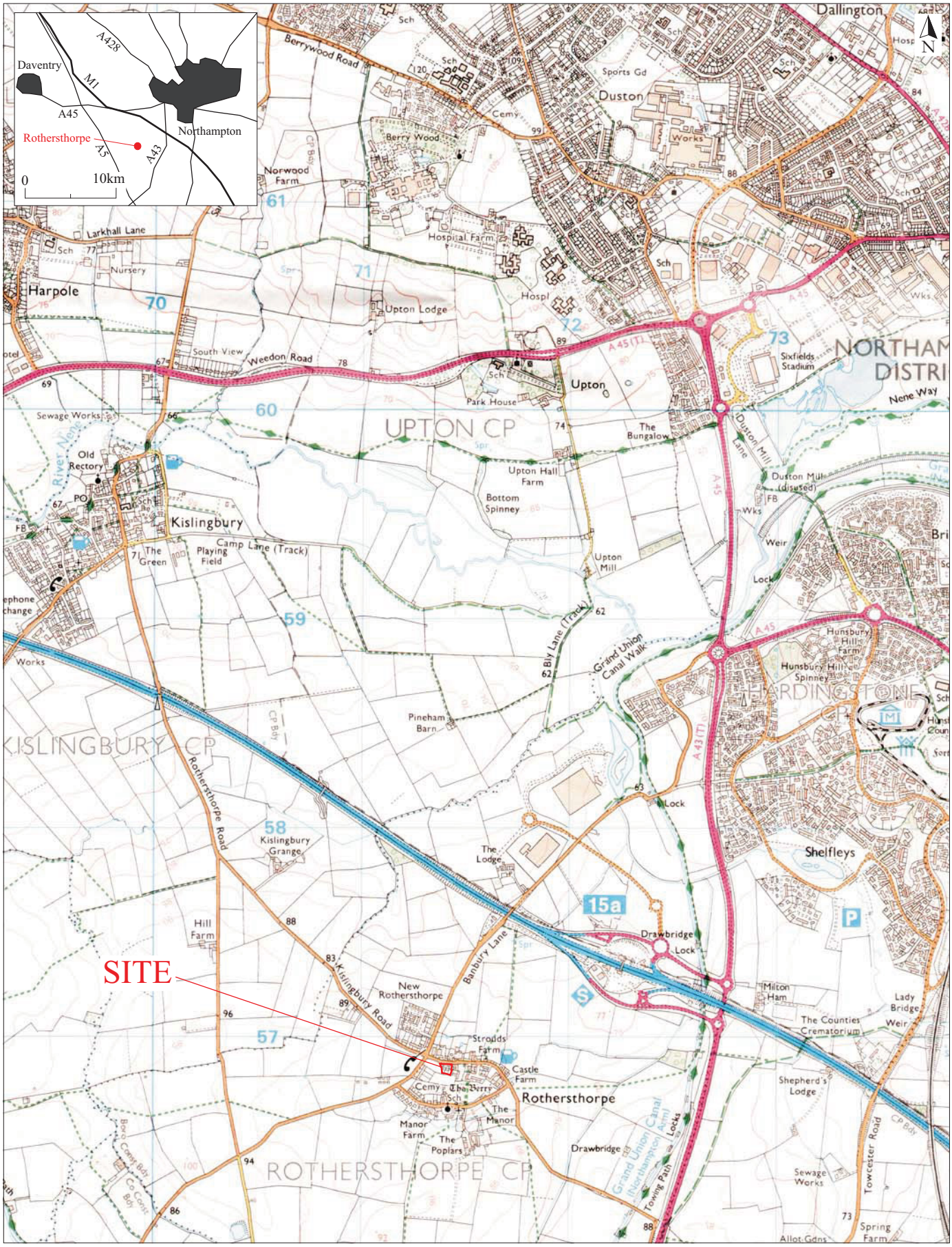

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Fig. 1 Site Location Plan

Scale 1:25000 at A4

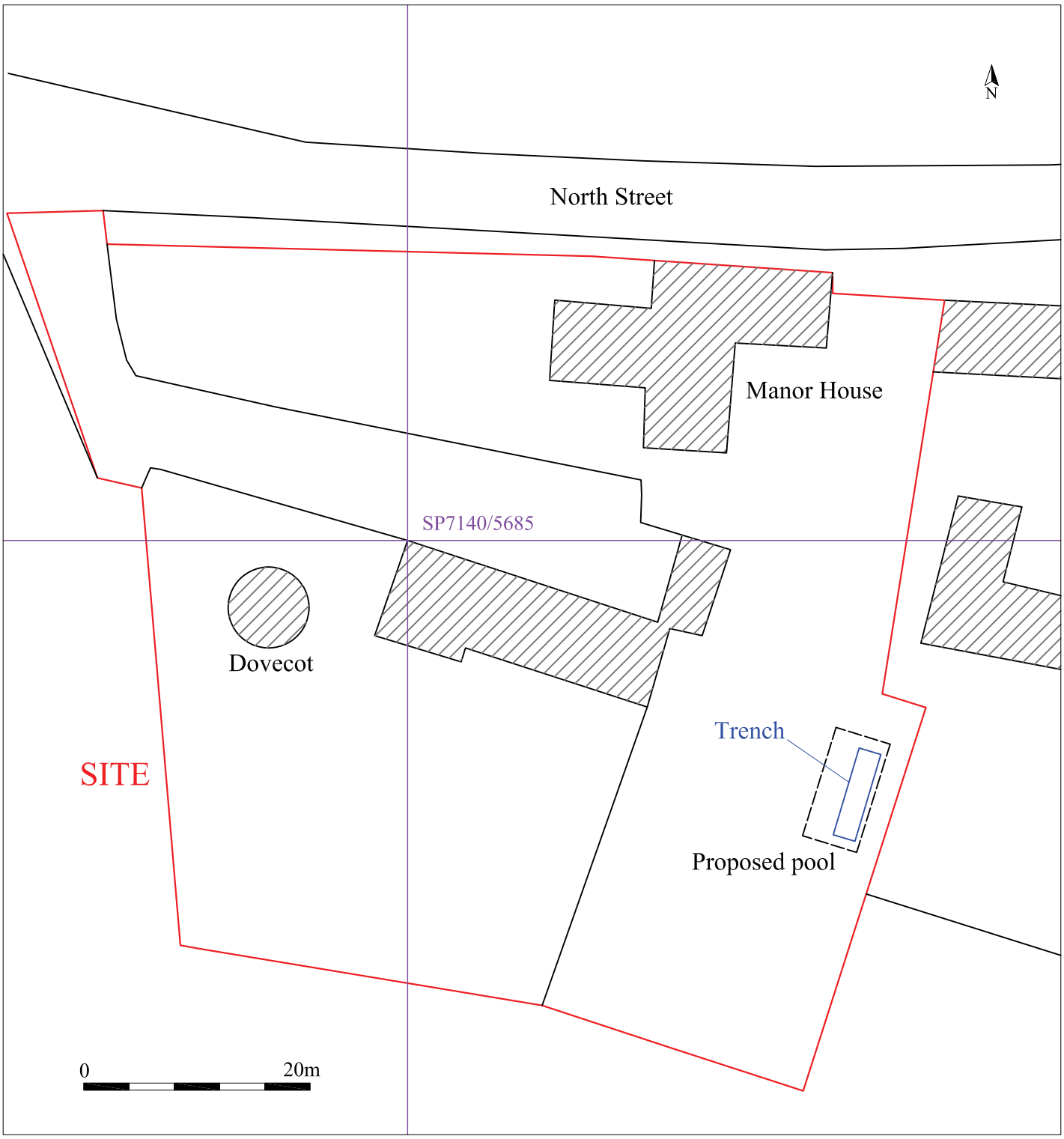

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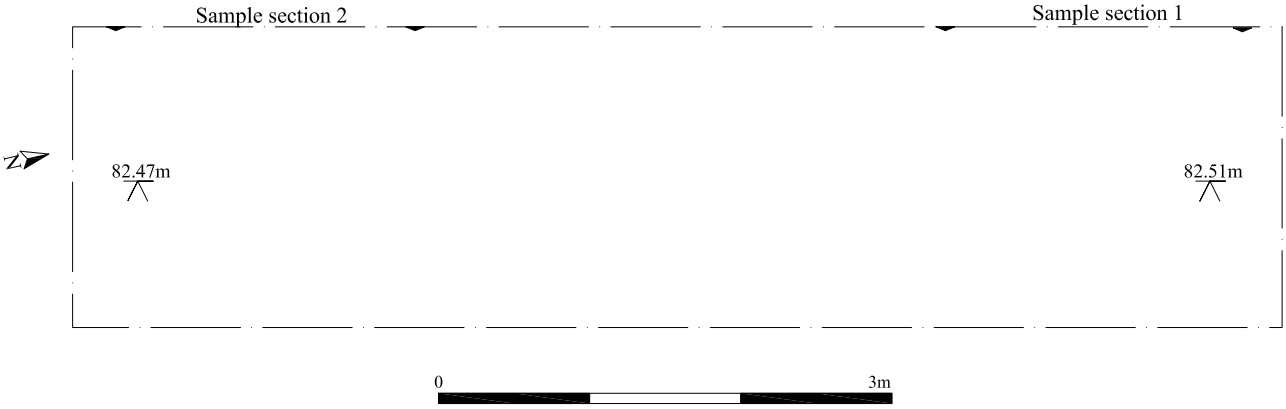
Fig. 2 Trench location plan

Scale 1:500 at A4



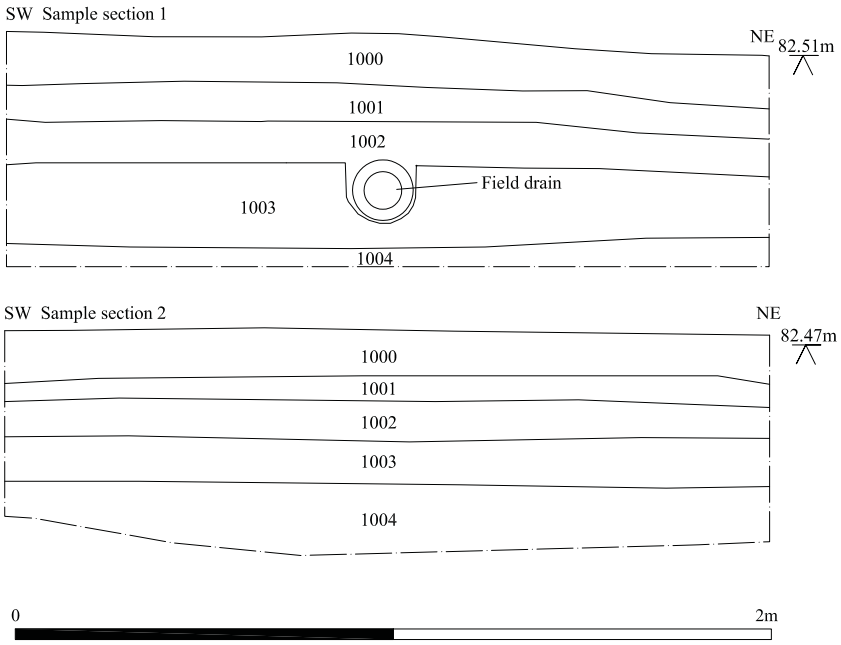


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Fig. 3 Trench plans and sections
Scale plans at 1:50 and sample sections at 1:20 at A4