
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

**PROPOSED NEW GLASSHOUSE AND LAGOON,
LAND SOUTH OF SHARMER FARM, FOSSE WAY,
RADFORD SEMELE, WARWICKSHIRE.**

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

| | |
|---|--------------------|
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| NGR: SP 3564 6218 | Report No. 3396 |
| District: Radford Semele | Site Code: AS1238 |
| Approved: Claire Halpin MIFA | Project No. 3623 |
| Signed: | Date: October 2009 |

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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

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| Project details | | | |
| Project name | <i>Proposed New Glasshouse and Lagoon, Land South of Sharmer Farm, Fosse Way, Radford Semele, Warwickshire</i> | | |
| Project description (250 words) | <p><i>In October 2009 Archaeological Solutions Ltd carried out an archaeological evaluation (trial trenching) at Land south of Sharmer Farm, Fosse Way, Radford Semele, Warwickshire (NGR SP 3564 6218). The evaluation was required to comply with a planning condition attached to the approval to erect a new glasshouse and to extend an existing lagoon (Planning Ref. 08/01838/FUL).</i></p> <p><i>The site had an archaeological potential associated with undated cropmarks (MWA 4633). It is also in the vicinity of Bronze Age features including pits, hearths and a burnt mound (MWA 7440, MWA 800). The Fosse Way passes close by the site.</i></p> <p><i>In the event the four trial trenches revealed only the shallow remains of modern plough scars. No archaeological features or finds were present.</i></p> | | |
| Project dates (fieldwork) | <i>6th October 2009</i> | | |
| Previous work (Y/N/?) | <i>N</i> | Future work (Y/N/?) | <i>?</i> |
| P. number | <i>P3623</i> | Site code | <i>AS1238</i> |
| Type of project | <i>Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation</i> | | |
| Site status | <i>-</i> | | |
| Current land use | <i>Agricultural (Market garden)</i> | | |
| Planned development | <i>New glasshouse and lagoon extension</i> | | |
| Main features (+dates) | <i>-</i> | | |
| Significant finds (+dates) | <i>-</i> | | |
| Project location | | | |
| County/ District/ Parish | <i>Warwickshire</i> | | <i>Radford Semele</i> |
| HER/ SMR for area | <i>Warwickshire County Council (WCC)</i> | | |
| Post code (if known) | <i>-</i> | | |
| Area of site 1500 sq m | | | |
| NGR | <i>SP 3564 6218</i> | | |
| Height AOD (max/ min) | <i>c. 67m AOD</i> | | |
| Project creators | | | |
| Brief issued by | <i>Warwickshire County Council (WCC)</i> | | |
| Project supervisor/s (PO) | <i>Lisa Smith</i> | | |
| Funded by | <i>Blackdown Growers Ltd.</i> | | |
| Full title | <i>Proposed New Glasshouse and Lagoon, Land South of Sharmer Farm, Fosse Way, Radford Semele, Warwickshire. An Archaeological Evaluation</i> | | |
| Authors | <i>Smith L., & Tweedie, H</i> | | |
| Report no. | <i>3396</i> | | |
| Date (of report) | <i>13th October 2009</i> | | |

PROPOSED NEW GLASSHOUSE AND LAGOON, LAND SOUTH OF SHARMER FARM, FOSSE WAY, RADFORD SEMELE, WARWICKSHIRE

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

SUMMARY

In October 2009 Archaeological Solutions Ltd carried out an archaeological evaluation (trial trenching) at Land south of Sharmer Farm, Fosse Way, Radford Semele, Warwickshire (NGR SP 3564 6218). The evaluation was required to comply with a planning condition attached to the approval to erect a new glasshouse and to extend an existing lagoon (Planning Ref. 08/01838/FUL).

The site had an archaeological potential associated with undated cropmarks (MWA 4633). It is also in the vicinity of Bronze Age features including pits, hearths and a burnt mound (MWA 7440, MWA 800). The Fosse Way passes close by the site.

In the event the four trial trenches revealed only the shallow remains of modern plough scars. No archaeological features or finds were present.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In October 2009 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation (trial trenching) at Land South of Sharmer Farm, Fosse Way, Radford Semele, Warwickshire (NGR SP 3564 6218)(Figs. 1 - 2). The evaluation was commissioned by Blackdown Growers Ltd. It was undertaken in compliance with a planning condition attached to the approval for the construction of a new glasshouse and adjacent lagoon (Planning Ref. 08/01838/FUL) (Fig 3).

1.2 The evaluation was conducted in response to a brief issued by the Planning Archaeologist of Warwickshire County Council (WCC) (Anna Stocks, dated August 2009), an advice letter issued by Anna Stocks (dated 12 August 2009), and a specification prepared by AS (dated 27 August 2009). It complied with the Institute of Field Archaeologists' (IFA) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations* (revised 2001).

1.3 The aims of the evaluation were to determine the location, date, extent, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed lagoon, in order to identify if any further work or mitigation will be required by WCC.

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 (Fig. 1-2)

2.1 Sharmer Farm lies to the south-east of Royal Leamington Spa, in the parish of Radford Semele c. 2.25km from the centre of the village of Radford Semele. The village of Ufton lies c.2.25km to the east of the site. The area is agricultural land and remains undeveloped. The Grand Union Canal Mainline (from Braunston to Warwick) runs to the north of the site and to the south, the Chiltern main line railway runs connecting London to Birmingham.

2.2 The site of the proposed glasshouse and lagoon lies to the south of Sharmer Farm, to the east of the B455 Fosse Way, adjacent to a large existing glasshouse to the immediate east. The site is within an area of archaeological potential, being across an area of linear features of unknown date which appear as cropmarks on aerial photographs (Warwickshire Historic Environment Record MWA 4633). The site also lies in the vicinity of a number of Bronze Age features, including pits, hearths, and a burnt mound (MWA 7440, MWA 800). The hearths may have been the remains of funeral pyres. There is therefore the potential for the groundworks associated with the proposed development to have an impact on deposits and features associated with activity from the prehistoric period onwards.

3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

3.1 The site lies on moderately sloping and undulating land. The site is at a height of c. 67m AOD. It is situated in an area of solid geology comprising Triassic Arden Sandstone (BGS 1983).

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Prehistoric

4.1 The site lies adjacent to the field where a number of Bronze Age features, including pits and hearths (MWA 7440, MWA 801), these were interpreted as either funeral pyres or a pot boiling site and were radiocarbon dated to c.1000BC. In addition, a burnt mound (MWA 800) was discovered dated to the Late Bronze Age. Hearths associated with this were radiocarbon dated to 2990 (+/- 100) BP. In addition, excavation c. 1km south of the site has revealed a late Bronze Age pit (MWA 8821). Analysis of the pottery assemblage, which included sherds from a carinated bowl dated the feature to after c. 1200BC. A human cremation burial dated to the Middle Bronze Age was located nearby and was radiocarbon dated to between 1530 and 1320 BC. Further prehistoric remains comprise chance finds to the NNE (c. 775m) two flint blade fragments and three flint fragments were recovered believed to date to the Neolithic or Bronze Age.

Romano-British

4.2 The site is bordered by Fosse Way, a Roman road of mid 1st century origin running from Cirencester to Leicester partly along a temporary frontier line. The modern B455 follows the same route although none of the Roman road has so far been uncovered in the immediate proximity of the site. The only other Romano-British remains in proximity to the site are 1.5 km to the WNW. This constitutes the site of a Roman villa which is visible as a cropmark on aerial photographs (MWA 1905). Partial excavations have revealed the poorly-preserved remains of a Roman villa probably of the courtyard type, with stone and timber buildings, pits and ditches dating from the early 2nd Century AD to the early 4th Century AD. A number of other Romano-British remains have been recovered from the area surrounding the site, yet mainly comprise chance finds of Roman coins dating from the 3rd and 4th Centuries AD (MWA 6925, MWA 7119, MWA 9268, MWA 9915, MWA 9918).

Medieval

4.3 Medieval remains are represented only by chance finds c.1km to the SE of the site. A coin of William I of Scotland (1165- 1214) and a coin of Elizabeth I (1558- 1603) were discovered by metal detectorists (MWA 7348).

Post-medieval & Modern

4.4 A possible brick kiln c.1km to NW of the site is suggested by the tithe map, although no earthworks remain (MWA 1918). During the Second World War an anti aircraft battery was located on Frizmore Hill c.750m to the SSW of the site it is visible as a cropmark on aerial photographs (MWA 4565).

Undated

4.5 The site is located across an area of linear features of unknown date which appear as cropmarks on aerial photographs (MWA 4633). To the immediate north of the site (c.250m) aerial photos reveal a cropmark showing an undated circular enclosure (MWA 805).

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 Four trenches were excavated in locations approved by WCC (Fig 2). They measured between 5m and 60m in length. All trenches were 1.6m wide. The trenching represented a 5% sample of the site and were laid out to achieve a broad site coverage.

5.2 By agreement with WCC, Trench 3, originally designed to be 10m in length was divided into two 5m trenches. This was due to the presence of an irrigation system running along the western extent of the site.

5.3 Undifferentiated overburden was mechanically excavated, thereafter all further investigation was undertaken by hand. Exposed surfaces were cleaned as appropriate and examined for archaeological features and finds. Archaeological features and deposits were recorded using *pro forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed as necessary.

6 RESULTS

6.1 Trench 1

Figs. 2 DP 1

| | | |
|--|-------|--|
| <i>Sample Section 1</i> | | <i>Fig. 2</i> |
| <i>South-east end, south-east facing</i> | | |
| <i>0.00m = 67.16m AOD</i> | | |
| 0.00 – 0.33m | L1000 | Topsoil. Dark greyish brown silty clay with occasional rounded stones and CBM fragments. |
| 0.33m+ | L1001 | Natural clay. Mid pinkish red clay with bluish grey veins of clay and occasional rounded pebbles throughout. |

Description: No archaeological features or finds were present.

6.2 Trench 2

Figs. 2 DP 2

| | | |
|--|-------|-----------------------------|
| <i>Sample Section 2</i> | | <i>Fig. 2</i> |
| <i>South-west end, south-east facing</i> | | |
| <i>0.00m = 67.14m AOD</i> | | |
| 0.00 – 0.30m | L1000 | Topsoil. As above Tr. 1 |
| 0.30m+ | L1001 | Natural clay. As above Tr.1 |

Description: No archaeological features or finds were present.

6.3 Trench 3

Figs. 2

DP 3

| | | |
|--|-------|-----------------------------|
| <i>Sample Section 3</i> | | <i>Fig. 2</i> |
| <i>South-east end, north-east facing</i> | | |
| <i>0.00m = 67.23m AOD</i> | | |
| 0.00 – 0.25m | L1000 | Topsoil. As above Tr. 1 |
| 0.25m+ | L1001 | Natural clay. As above Tr.1 |

Description: No archaeological features or finds were present.

6.4 Trench 4

Figs. 2

DP 4

| | | |
|-------------------------------|-------|-----------------------------|
| <i>Sample Section 4</i> | | <i>Fig. 2</i> |
| <i>North end, east facing</i> | | |
| <i>0.00m = 67.29m AOD</i> | | |
| 0.00 – 0.32m | L1000 | Topsoil. As above Tr. 1 |
| 0.32m+ | L1001 | Natural clay. As above Tr.1 |

Description: No archaeological features or finds were present.

7 CONFIDENCE RATING

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

8 DEPOSIT MODEL

8.1 A layer of topsoil (L1000) was present across the entire site. It consisted of a dark greyish brown silty clay with occasional rounded stones and CBM fragments. It varied in thickness (0.25m - 0.33m) and directly overlay the natural clay (L1001).

8.2 The natural clay (L1001) was a mid pinkish red clay with bluish grey veins of clay and occasional rounded pebbles throughout. It was seen in the base of all trenches beneath the topsoil. The natural was cut by modern plough marks (up to 0.01m in depth), aligned SW/NE.

9 DISCUSSION

9.1 The site had an archaeological potential associated with undated cropmarks (MWA 4633). It is also in the vicinity of Bronze Age features including pits, hearths and a burnt mound (MWA 7440, MWA 800). The Fosse Way passes close by the site.

9.2 In the event the four trial trenches revealed only the shallow remains of modern plough scars. No archaeological features or finds were present.

9.3 The area of the evaluation was limited to a narrow strip of land that had been ploughed over a long period of time.

DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

The requirements for archive storage will be agreed with Warwickshire Museum. The archive will be deposited within six months of the conclusion of the fieldwork, and confirmed with WCC. A summary of the contents of the archive will be supplied to WCC at the time of deposition to the museum.

The archive will be prepared in accordance with the UK Institute for Conservation's *Conservation Guideline No.2* and other relevant reference documents.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions Limited would like to thank Blackdown Growers Ltd. for funding the project and specifically Mr D Cox for his help and support.

AS also gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the staff at Warwickshire County Council.

AS is pleased to acknowledge the advice and input of Anna Stocks of Warwickshire County Council

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Institute of Field Archaeologists 1994 (revised 1999) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations*

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



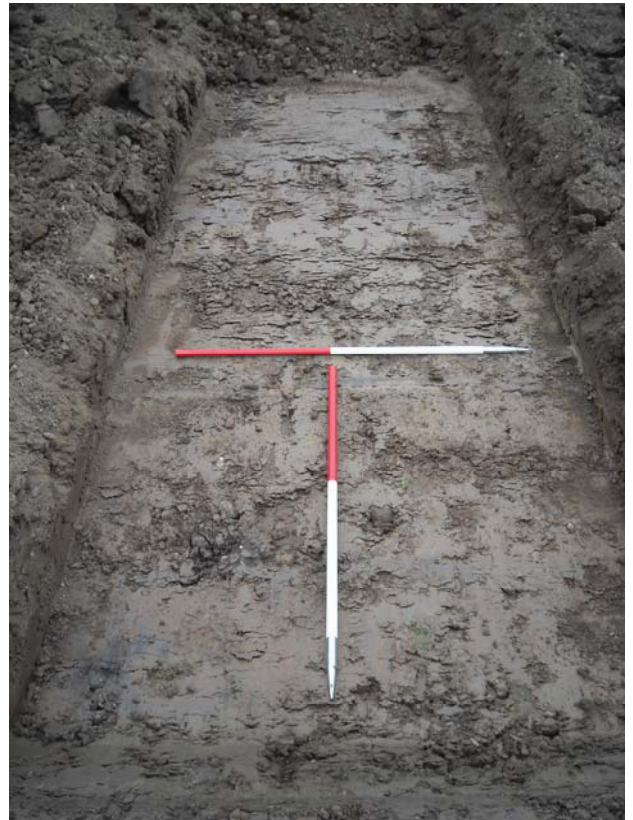
1
Trial Trench 1. Looking North West.



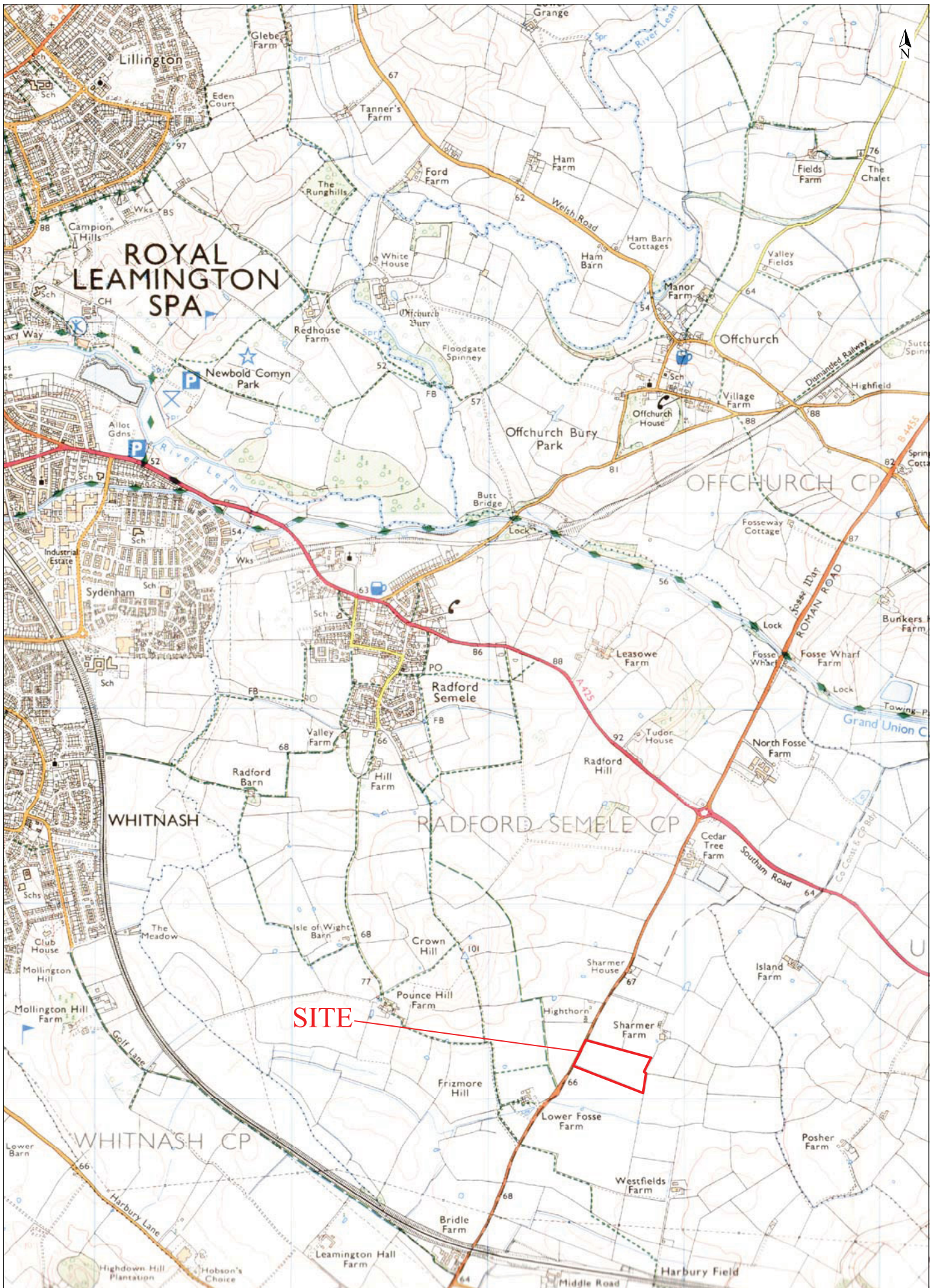
2
Trial Trench 2. Looking North East.



3
Trial Trench 3. Looking North West.

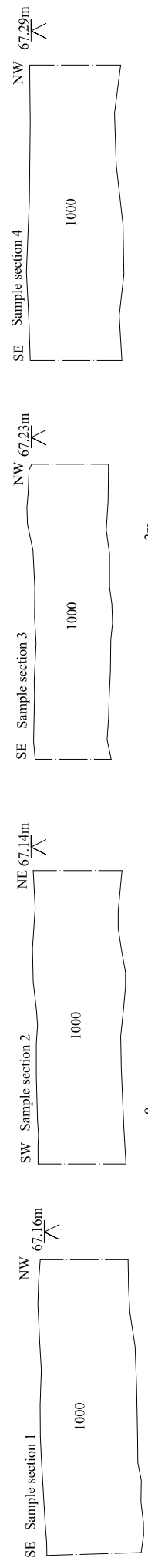
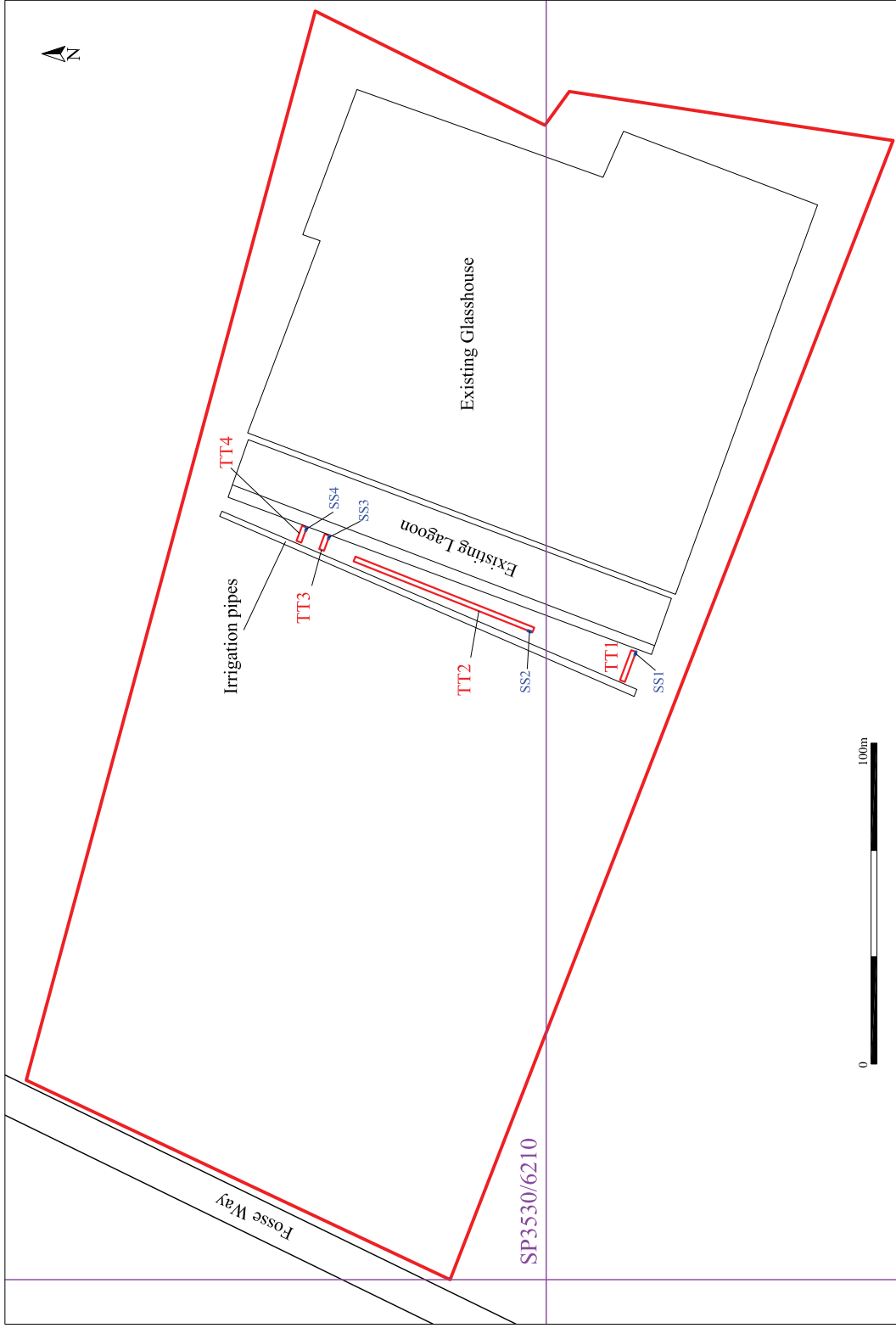


4
Trial Trench 4. Looking North West.



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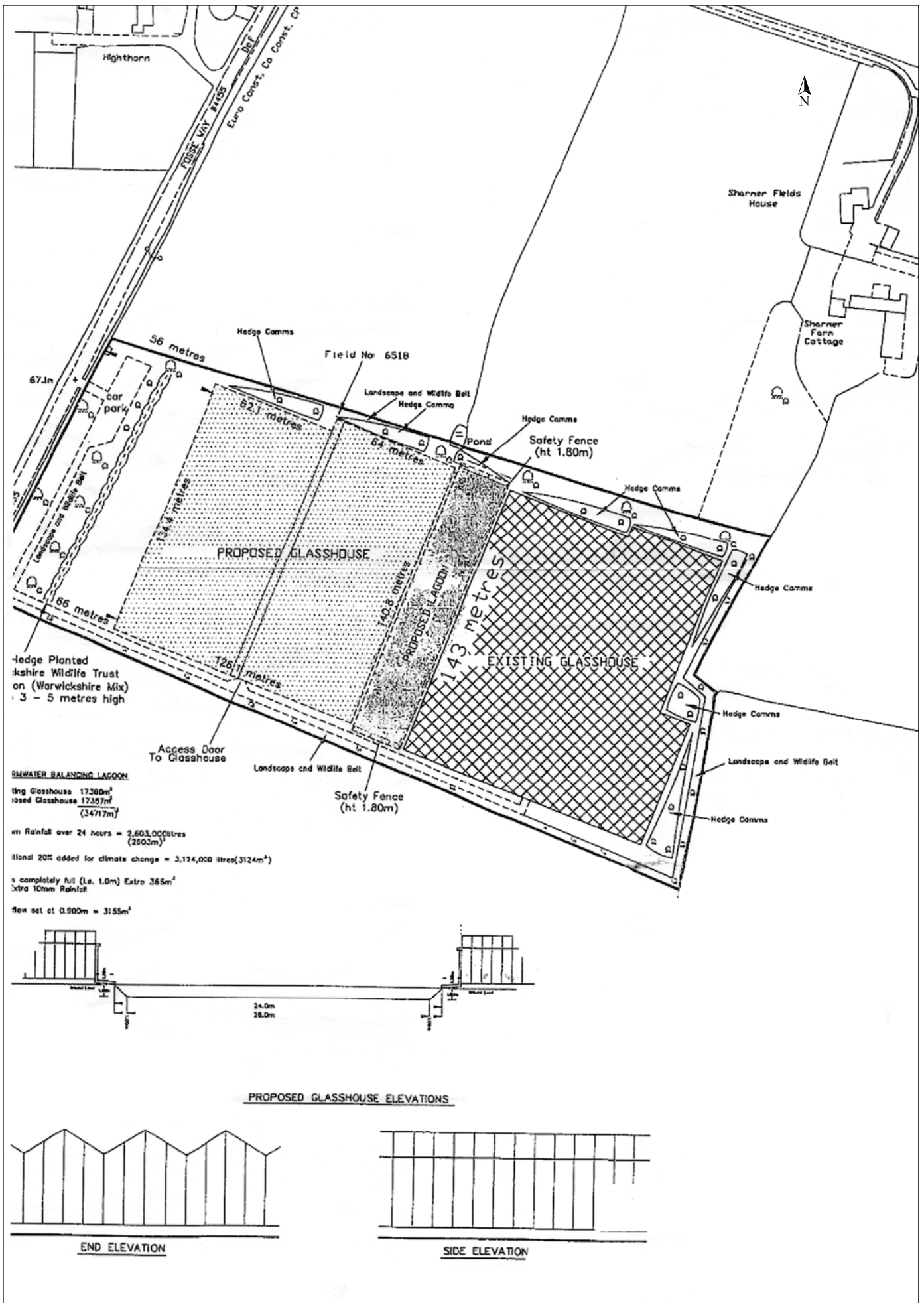
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Fig. 1 Site location
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4



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Fig. 2 Trench location plan & sections

Scale plan at 1:2000 & sample sections at 1:20 at A4



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Fig. 3 Proposed development plan
 Scale 1:2500 at A4