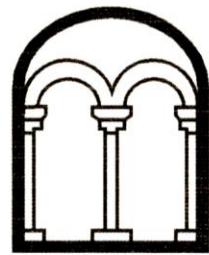


**BECHERS  
NAGS HEAD LANE, HARGRAVE,  
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION,  
INVESTIGATION, RECORDING, ANALYSIS  
AND PUBLICATION**

**Albion**  
archaeology



**BECHERS  
NAGS HEAD LANE, HARGRAVE,  
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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION,  
INVESTIGATION, RECORDING, ANALYSIS  
AND PUBLICATION**

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Compiled by	Checked by	Approved by
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23rd April 2018

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## Preface

*All statements and opinions in this document are offered in good faith. This document has been prepared for the titled project or named part thereof and was prepared solely for the benefit of the client. The material contained in this document does not necessarily stand on its own and should not be relied upon by any third party. This document should not be used for any other purpose without an independent check being carried out as to its suitability and the prior written authority of Albion Archaeology (a trading unit of Central Bedfordshire Council). Any person/party relying on the document for such other purposes agrees and will by such use or reliance be taken to confirm their agreement to indemnify Albion Archaeology for all loss or damage resulting therefrom. Albion Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for this document to any party other than the persons/party by whom it was commissioned. This document is limited by the state of knowledge at the time it was written.*

## Acknowledgements

*The project was commissioned by Lilian Pallikaropoulos and monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Liz Mordue, Assistant Archaeological Advisor for Northamptonshire County Council. All Albion projects are under the overall management of Drew Shotliff (Operations Manager).*

*This report has been prepared by Gareth Shane (Project Supervisor). Fieldwork was carried out by Gareth Shane and illustrations were prepared by Joan Lightning (CAD Technician).*

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## Version History

Version	Issue date	Reason for re-issue
1.0	23/04/2018	n/a

## Key Terms

The following terms or abbreviations are used throughout this report:

AAA	Assistant Archaeological Advisor for NCC
CI/A	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
Client	Lilian Pallikaropoulos
DA	Development area
HE	Historic England (formerly English Heritage)
HER	Historic Environment Record
NCC	Northamptonshire County Council
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation



## **Non-Technical Summary**

*Planning consent (15/00613/FUL) was granted by East Northamptonshire Council for the demolition of a bungalow and garage and erection of two dwellings with integral garaging at Bechers, Nags Head Lane, Hargrave.*

*The Assistant Archaeological Advisor (AAA) for Northamptonshire County Council advised that due to the archaeological potential of the site, a programme of archaeological mitigation would be required. Accordingly a condition (13) was attached to the planning consent.*

*The village of Hargrave lies approximately 7.5km east of Higham Ferrers in east Northamptonshire, close to the boundary with Bedfordshire. The development area (DA) is a property known as Bechers, which lies on the west side of Nags Head Lane, towards the north end of the lane, c. 200m north of the junction with Church Street and Church Lane. It is centred on grid reference TL 03800 70840 and covers an area of 1,230m<sup>2</sup>. Immediately prior to the commencement of the archaeological works, the DA was occupied by a single bungalow and detached garage within a garden.*

*The archaeological works were undertaken between 25th July 2017 and 7th February 2018, in coordination with the groundworks contractor, to monitor the various components of ground disturbance that could impact buried archaeological remains. Initial removal of the footings for the former bungalow and garage were monitored. This was followed by groundworks associated with the construction of the foundations for the two new dwellings. The final component of the monitoring was excavation of soak-aways at the rear of the plot, together with associated drainage trenches.*

*Apart from evidence of a former cultivation soil surviving at the western margin of the DA, beyond ground disturbance associated with the modern bungalow, no evidence of former human activity in the form of archaeological features or artefacts was revealed during the groundworks.*

*No further analysis or publication of the site record is required. This document will be uploaded onto the OASIS database (ref. albionar1-248352) and the archive deposited with the NARC.*



## 1 INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 *Project Background*

Planning consent (15/00613/FUL) was granted by East Northamptonshire Council for the demolition of a bungalow and garage and erection of two dwellings with integral garaging at Bechers, Nags Head Lane, Hargrave.

The Assistant Archaeological Advisor (AAA) for Northamptonshire County Council advised that due to the archaeological potential of the site a programme of archaeological mitigation would be required. Accordingly a condition (13) was attached to the planning consent:

*No development shall take place within the application site until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Reason: To ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded, in accordance with NPPF Paragraph 141.*

A brief was issued by the AAA, detailing the requirements for a programme of archaeological observation, investigation, recording, analysis and publication (NCC 2016). Albion Archaeology was commissioned to produce a written scheme of investigation (WSI) in accordance with the brief, and to carry out the programme of archaeological works. The works are reported in this document.

### 1.2 *Site Location, Topography and Geology*

The village of Hargrave lies approximately 7.5km east of Higham Ferrers in east Northamptonshire, close to the boundary with Bedfordshire. The development area (DA) is a property known as Becher; it lies on the west side of Nags Head Lane, towards the north end of the lane, c. 200m north of the junction with Church Street and Church Lane (Figure 1). It is centred on grid reference TL 03800 70840 and covers an area of 1,230m<sup>2</sup>. Immediately prior to the commencement of the works the DA was occupied by a single bungalow and detached garage within a garden.

The solid geology in this area is Oxford Clay Formation Bedrock<sup>1</sup>. The overlying superficial deposit is Oadby Member Diamicton; glacial till with sand and gravel outwash deposits.

### 1.3 *Archaeological Background*

To the east of Nags Head Lane, opposite the DA, enclosure cropmarks have been identified in aerial photographs (SMR8212). These have not been investigated and are undated. Evidence for activity dated to the Iron Age and Romano-British periods has been found elsewhere, near to Hargrave.

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<sup>1</sup> Contains British Geological Survey materials © NERC [2016]



The DA lies on the north-east edge of the historic settlement of the village of Hargrave (SMR1787). The settlement is likely to have its origins in the late Saxon period. Archaeological evaluation on land at the rear of the Nags Head public house, 200m south of the DA, uncovered boundary ditches dating from the 10th to 12th centuries (CBA Group 9 Newsletter 1995, 39).

The village contains a number of historic listed buildings. The nearest one to the DA is the grade II listed Nags Head public house, a 17th/18th-century timber-framed building.

The first edition 25-inch Ordnance Survey map, published in 1886, shows that Nags Head Lane was thinly populated at this time. To the north of the Nags Head public house the only buildings shown are a property situated on the opposite side of the lane from the DA, with a small farmstead a short distance to the north of the DA. Most of the development on Nags Head Lane dates from the mid-20th century.

#### **1.4 Project Objectives**

Based on evidence from surrounding evaluations and the historic environment record, the DA had potential to reveal evidence for the medieval or earlier occupation of Hargrave.

The research agenda for the East Midlands states that more work is needed to understand the origin and development of all types of nucleated and dispersed medieval settlement in Northamptonshire (Knight et al. 2012 Objectives 7.2.1 and 7.2.2).

The aims of the investigation programme were:

- To establish whether any evidence for medieval, or earlier, settlement existed on the DA;
- To determine and understand the date, nature, function and character of any past activity within the DA, in terms of its cultural and environmental setting;
- To recover artefactual and environmental materials to assist in understanding the cultural and economic basis of former settlements, and indications of change over time;
- To produce a site archive for future deposition with an appropriate museum, and to provide information for accession to the Northamptonshire HER.

The research aims were reviewed throughout the project to ensure that they were still relevant to the data being uncovered.



## 2 METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Standards

The standards and requirements set out in the following documents were adhered to throughout the project:

• Albion Archaeology	<i>Procedures Manual: Volume 1 Fieldwork</i> (3rd edn, 2017).
• English Heritage	<i>Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation</i> (2011)
• Historic England	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment</i> (MoRPHE) (2015)
• CfA	<i>Charter and by-law ; Code of conduct</i> (2014)
	<i>Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief</i> (2014)
	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i> (2014)
	<i>Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives</i> (2014)
• NARC	<i>Northamptonshire Archaeological Archives Standard</i> (June 2014)

### 2.2 Archaeological Investigation and Recording

Archaeological works commenced on 25th July 2017. The following components of the groundworks had potential to impact archaeological remains:

- The removal of footings associated with the former bungalow and garage
- The excavation of the footprints of the new buildings.
- The drainage run and associated soak-away pits to the rear of the property.

The existing footings were removed with a toothed bucket, due to the nature of the work, with all other excavation works being undertaken by a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ‘ditching’ bucket, operating under close archaeological supervision.

All soil deposits were recorded using Albion Archaeology’s *pro formae* sheets; they were also drawn and photographed as appropriate. All deposits revealed were photographed and recorded using a unique number sequence, commencing at 1. Context numbers in square brackets refer to the cuts [\*\*] and round brackets to fills or layers (\*\*). A full methodology is provided in the approved WSI (Albion 2017).





## 3 RESULTS

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### 3.1 Introduction

All deposits within the DA are described below, with associated plan and images shown in Figures 2 and 3–5 respectively.

### 3.2 Removal of the Existing Footings

Although the superstructure of the former bungalow and detached garaged had been removed, the concrete footings remained *in situ* and had to be removed prior to development of the site. These footings proved to be substantial for both buildings — 1m wide and extending up to 1m deep into the undisturbed geological strata.

Revealed in the sides of these excavations was a soil profile that was similar for both buildings. The upper 0.4–0.6m comprised made-ground, consisting of:

- friable dark grey-black silt (01) up to 0.25m thick — disturbed former topsoil containing fragments of modern building material
- firm mid-yellow-brown clay (02), which ranged from 0.4–0.5m thick and included patches of topsoil (01) — a disturbed / mixed subsoil incorporating some topsoil (Figure 3: Image 1).

Below this disturbed soil profile was the undisturbed geological strata (03), consisting of firm light yellow-brown clay with moderate chalk flecks and small fragments. The garage area revealed that this deposit had been affected by rooting associated with adjacent trees.

To the rear of the property, away from the lane, small areas of an undisturbed soil profile were exposed comprising friable dark grey-brown silt topsoil (05) up to 0.2m thick, above mid-yellow-brown silt subsoil (04) up to 0.1m thick (Figure 3: Image 2). This profile would appear to be a former cultivation soil.

The disturbed upper soil profile appears to have been associated with the creation of the buildings in the 1950s. No archaeological features cutting into the undisturbed geological strata were identified below this level. It is assumed that any features would have shown up well against the exposed geological strata.

### 3.3 Excavation of the Footings for the New Buildings

Originally it had been intended to excavate strip footings for the new buildings, but ground conditions were unsuitable and a redesign was necessary. This resulted in a delay to the programme of works, with the new strategy comprising an arrangement of 30 piles for each plot, extending up to 6m below ground level. The piles were to be connected by ring beam trenches (Figure 4: Image 3). Following discussion with the AAA, it was agreed that the piling would not be monitored and that monitoring would resume when the ring beam trenches were dug.

This work resumed in mid-November 2017, with the monitoring works revealing a similar disturbed profile across most of the area (Figure 4: Image 4). No archaeological features were revealed where the geological stratum was exposed.



To the rear of the site small areas of an undisturbed soil profile — contexts (05) and (04) were again revealed. No archaeological features or finds were identified.

### **3.4 Excavation of the Soak-away Pits and Service Trenches**

Each of the new buildings had an associated rectangular soak-away pit, measuring *c.* 2.5m long by 1.5m wide, located close to the western boundary of the DA (Figure 2). These were subject to archaeological monitoring, as based on previous observations they were considered to be in relatively undisturbed ground beyond the former buildings. The soak-aways revealed some disturbance of the upper soil profile, with traces of the former cultivation soil profile surviving below:

- topsoil (05) 0.2–0.25m thick
- subsoil (04) up to 0.4 thick, merging into the undisturbed geological stratum (03) (Figure 5: Image 5).

No archaeological features were identified.

At the same time monitoring of associated service trenches was undertaken. The trenches were 0.3m wide and up to 0.4m deep. Only a disturbed soil profile was revealed.



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## 4 SUMMARY OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

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The DA is located within an archaeologically sensitive area of Hargrave, with cropmarks of possible prehistoric or Roman date recorded in the vicinity.

Monitoring of the various components of the groundworks revealed extensive disturbance, which appears to have been associated with construction of the former bungalow and detached garage. The only elements of an undisturbed former cultivation soil profile were revealed at the western margin of the site, beyond the disturbance associated with the former buildings.

No archaeological features or artefacts were revealed during the groundworks.

No further analysis or publication of the site record is required. This document will be uploaded onto the OASIS database (ref. albionar1-248352) and the archive deposited with the NARC.



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## 6 APPENDIX 1: OASIS SUMMARY

### 7 OASIS ID: albionar1-248352

#### Project details

Project name	Bechers, Nags Head Lane, Hargrave, Wellingborough
Short description of the project	Planning consent was granted by East Northamptonshire Council for the demolition of a bungalow and garage and erection of two dwellings with integral garaging at Bechers, Nags Head Lane, Hargrave. The archaeological works were undertaken in coordination with the groundworks contractor to monitor the various components of ground disturbance that could impact buried archaeological remains. The initial removal of the footings for the former bungalow and garage was monitored. This was followed by groundworks associated with the construction of the foundations for the two new dwellings. The final component of the monitoring was excavation of soak-aways at the rear of the plot, together with associated drainage trenches. Apart from evidence of a former cultivation soil surviving at the western margin of the site, beyond ground disturbance associated with the modern bungalow, no evidence of former human activity in the form of archaeological features or artefacts was revealed during the groundworks.
Project dates	Start: 25-07-2017 End: 07-02-2018
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	BH2890 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	15/00613/FUL - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	ENN108311 - HER event no.
Type of project	Recording project
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Planning condition

#### Project location

Country	England
Site location	NORTHAMPTONSHIRE WELLINGBOROUGH WELLINGBOROUGH Bechers, Nags Head Lane, Hargrave, Wellingborough
Study area	1230 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 03800 70840 Point

#### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Albion Archaeology
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body



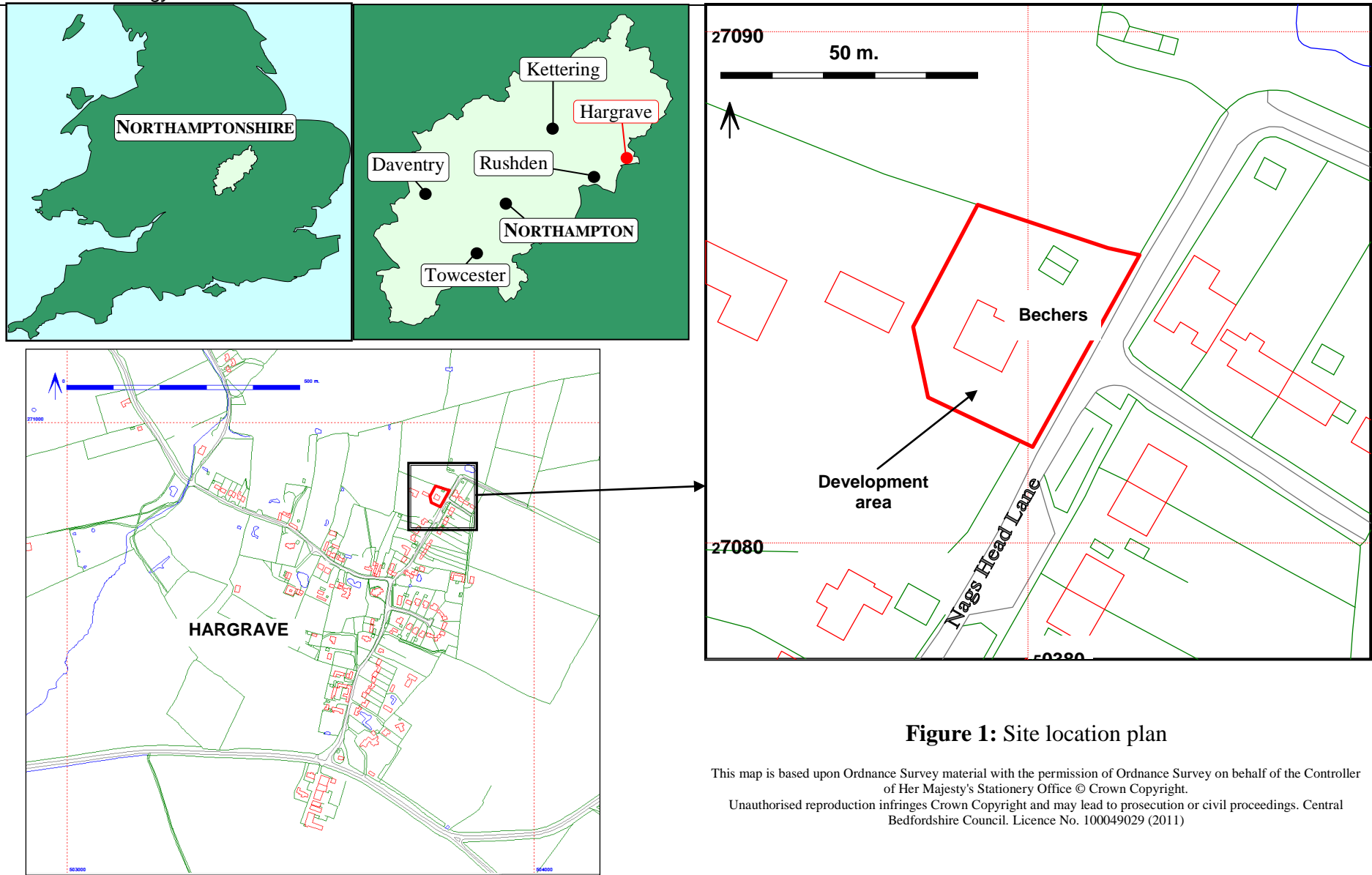
Project design originator	Albion Archaeology
Project director/manager	Gary Edmondson
Project supervisor	Gareth Shane

#### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	ADS
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Northamptonshire Archaeological Resource Centre
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Correspondence","Miscellaneous Material","Photograph","Report"

#### Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Bechers, Nags Head Lane, Hargrave, Northamptonshire: Archaeological Observation, Investigation, Recording, Analysis and Publication
Author(s)/Editor(s)	'Shane, G'
Author(s)/Editor(s)	'Edmondson, G'
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Issuer or publisher	Albion Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	Bedford
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Entered on	26 March 2018



**Figure 1: Site location plan**

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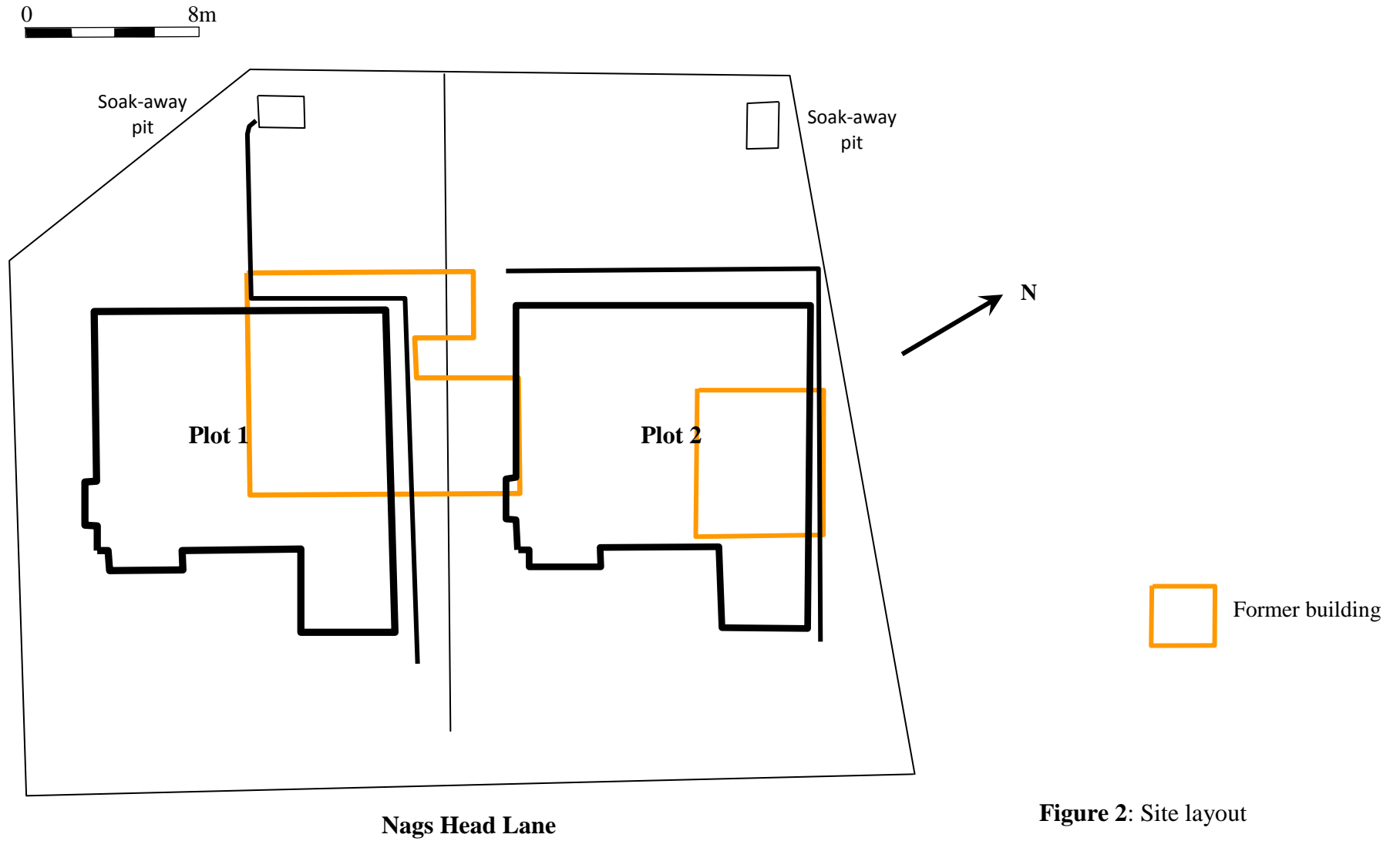


Figure 2: Site layout





**Image 1:** Section through the disturbed soil profile following removal of the footings for the existing garage.



**Image 2:** Truncated remains of a former cultivation soil profile, revealed to the rear of the existing property below modern disturbance. Scale 0.3m in 10cm intervals.

**Figure 3:** Selected imaged 1 and 2



**Image 3:** Trenches under excavation to link the piles for the two buildings.



**Image 4:** Traces of a former cultivation soil revealed in a trench linking the piles situated towards the rear of the property. Scale 0.3m in 10cm intervals.

**Figure 4:** Selected images 3 and 4



**Image 5:** Section of the soak-away, revealing traces of the former cultivation soil profile below modern disturbance.

**Figure 5:** Selected image 5

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