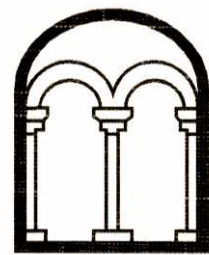


**4 MOOR END LANE,
EATON BRAY, DUNSTABLE,
BEDFORDSHIRE**

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

Albion
archaeology



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Preface

Every effort has been made in the preparation of this document to provide as complete a summary as possible within the terms of the method statement. All statements and opinions in this document are offered in good faith. Albion Archaeology cannot accept responsibility for errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by a third party, or for any loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in this document.

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Albion Archaeology was commissioned to carry out the archaeological works by Mr A. Barber. The project was monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by the Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist.

Fieldwork was carried out by Wiebke Starke, Marcin Koziminski (Archaeological Supervisors) and Sławomir Utrata (Assistant Archaeological Supervisor). The report was compiled by Wiebke Starke with figures created by Joan Lightning (CAD Technician).

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Key Terms

Throughout this document the following terms or abbreviations are used:

CBCA	Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist
HER	Historic Environment Record
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists
LPA	Local Planning Authority
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation



Non-technical Summary

Archaeological observation, investigation and recording were undertaken during works associated with the demolition of existing light industrial buildings and the erection of two 3-bedroom dwellings and garages at 4 Moor End Lane, Eaton Bray, Bedfordshire.

The development area lies within the outer margin of the medieval village of Eaton Bray. No buildings are shown at the site on either the tithe map of 1849 or enclosure map of 1860. Two buildings are shown on the site on the OS map of 1880, one of which appears to have been demolished by the time of the 1920 OS map. The other building is assumed to have been demolished prior to the construction of the current buildings on the site.

The groundworks comprised the excavation of geotechnical test pits, foundation trenches for dwellings and garages and a number of service trenches and manholes, as well as general ground reduction.

Investigation and research have concluded that the site has been re-developed several times throughout the late 19th and 20th centuries. This is reflected in the results of the archaeological observation, during which no features pre-dating the modern period were found. The majority of features and deposits can be associated with a previous light industrial complex and late 19th-century building. They mainly comprise large disturbed areas where material extraction and backfilling occurred. Make-up and levelling layers were recorded throughout the site, which also suggest it has been subject to repeated re-landscaping and re-development.

It is apparent that the works undertaken on site prior to the current development have had a severe impact on the ground and have most likely already destroyed any archaeological sub-surface remains that might once have existed.



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Project Background*

Planning permission has been granted for the demolition of existing light industrial buildings and the erection of two 3-bedroom dwellings and garages at 4 Moor End Lane, Eaton Bray in south Bedfordshire (Application no. CB/11/04106/FULL).

Because the site has the potential to include heritage assets of archaeological interest, a condition attached to the planning consent (no. 5) required the implementation of a programme of archaeological investigation as a consequence of the proposed development. This is in line with the requirements of *PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment* (DCLG 2010) and policies within its replacement, the National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG 2012) which states that Local Planning Authorities should ‘*require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part)...*’.

The Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist (CBCA) issued a brief detailing the requirements of the archaeological work at the site (CBC 2012), comprising observation, investigation, recording, analysis and publication.

Albion Archaeology carried out the archaeological works in accordance with the methodologies described in the Written Scheme of Investigation (Appendix 1), which was approved by the CBCA.

1.2 *Site Location and Description*

4 Moor End Lane is located on the south-eastern side of the village of Eaton Bray centred on grid reference SP 97646 / 20052 and lies at a height of *c.* 100m OD (Figure 1).

Prior to the archaeological monitoring the site contained a group of 20th-century light industrial buildings, of which the standing structures had been demolished by the time the observation commenced leaving only the concrete floor slabs and foundations.

The geology of the area comprises deposits of gravel, sand, silt and clay overlying chalk of the West Melbury Marly Chalk Formation.

1.3 *Archaeological Background*

A building assessment and desk-based archaeological assessment of the site was undertaken in October 2011 (John Moore Heritage Services 2011) to accompany the planning application. The results are summarised below.

Eaton Bray is mentioned in the Domesday survey of 1086 and is therefore likely to be at least late Saxon in origin. The site is located within the southern margin of the postulated extent of the medieval village (HER 16884) which appears to have originally consisted of four settlement foci — Moor End (immediately to the north of the site), Eaton Green Common, St Mary’s



Church and Great Green Common. Other than the postulated extent of the medieval village, a moated site (HER 3242) known as Moors Hall during the 16th century is the only recorded medieval heritage asset within 250m of the site. In 2007, a single archaeological trench was excavated across the footprint of a proposed garage at this site, revealing a substantial ditch. The recovered finds largely dated to the 19th/20th centuries, but a small quantity of later medieval material was also recovered. It was concluded that the moat had been deliberately backfilled during the 20th century but that the site still had potential to preserve remains relating to the medieval settlement (Northamptonshire Archaeology 2007).

Similarly, at Poplar Farm, on the High Street, a large ditch containing late 12th- to early 13th-century pottery was uncovered during trial trenching. It is likely to represent a field or property boundary (ASC 2004). Both these archaeological investigations demonstrate that remains relating to medieval Eaton Bray do survive within the present-day village.

Several listed buildings dating to between the 16th and 19th centuries are located along Moor End Road.

No buildings are shown in the location of the site on either the tithe map of 1849 or enclosure map of 1860. Two buildings are shown on the site on the OS map of 1880, one of which appears to have been demolished by the time of the 1920 OS map. The other building is assumed to have been demolished prior to the construction of the current buildings on the site.

1.4 Project Objectives

The immediate objective of the archaeological fieldwork was to monitor and supervise all groundworks associated with the development that had the potential to reveal archaeological remains, and to investigate, characterise and record any archaeological deposits encountered within them.

The CBCA Brief states the following about the potential research objectives of the project:

‘The development site has potential to contain remains relating to the development of the village of Eaton Bray and therefore the need for the investigation of rural Saxon and medieval settlements to examine diversity, characterise settlement forms and understand how they appear, grow, shift and disappear (Wade 2000, 24-25; Oake 2007, 14; Medlycott 2011, 70) should be considered.’

The general aims of the investigation were to:

- Establish the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation within the development area;
- Establish the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscapes;
- Recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions.



2 METHODOLOGY

The archaeological monitoring of the groundworks took place between 9th May and 17th July 2012.

Deposits encountered during the archaeological works were investigated and recorded in accordance with Albion's *Procedures Manual*. Spoil heaps were checked on a regular basis for archaeological artefacts recovery.

Throughout the project the standards set out in the following documents were adhered to:

• Albion Archaeology	<i>Procedures Manual: Volume 1 Fieldwork</i> (2 nd ed., 2001).
• English Heritage	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment</i> (2009)
	<i>Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation (Second Edition)</i> (2011)
• East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 14	Gurney, D. <i>Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England</i> (2003)
• IfA	By-Laws and Code of Conduct
	<i>Standard and Guidance for Excavation</i> (2008)
	<i>Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief</i> (2008)
• Bedford Museum	<i>Procedure for preparing archaeological archives for deposition with registered museums in Bedfordshire (version 2.8)</i>

A detailed methodology is provided in the Written Scheme of Investigation (Appendix 1).

The project archive will be deposited with Luton Museum (accession no. 2012.15). This report will be uploaded onto the Archaeology Data Service's OASIS website.



3 DESCRIPTION OF GROUNDWORKS

The groundworks comprised the excavation of geotechnical pits, general ground reduction, excavation of foundation trenches for both house and garage in Plots 1 and 2, and the excavation of service trenches and manholes. These works are described in detail below and illustrated in Figure 2.

In total four geotechnical pits were dug prior to construction groundworks.

- Pit I (0.8m x 1m, depth 0.8m)
- Pit II (1m x 1.9m, depth 0.65–2.1m)
- Pit III (1.2m x 1.8m, depth 2.7m)
- Pit IV (0.6m x 2.5m, depth 3m)

Three pits were located in the southern half of the site and one in the northern half near the site entrance. Pits I, III and IV were placed within the area of the external yard whereas Pit II was at the southern edge on the latest demolished building.

Subsequent to the removal of the concrete slabs from the former building and hard standing in the yard, a general ground reduction of *c.* 0.2m occurred throughout the site.

A further ground reduction of 0.25m occurred in the south-west corner of the site over an area of 8.5m x 9.5m due to ground contamination.

The foundation trenches for Plots 1 and 2 were dug as continuous trenches measuring 0.6–0.8m in width and 0.9–1.1m in depth.

Four manholes (MH) were excavated prior to the excavation of the service trenches. MH1 and 2 and a connecting trench were excavated 2m SSW of the Plot 1 garage. MH3 and 4 were excavated as one by the roadside of Moor End Lane.

- MH1 (0.9m x 1.2m, depth 1.4m)
- MH2 (1m x 1.2m, depth 1m)
- MH3 (1m x 1.2m, depth 0.7m)
- MH4 (1m x 1.2m, depth 0.9m)

Following excavation of house foundations and the manholes, six service trenches (ST) were excavated in front of the new buildings leading to MH3 and MH4:

- ST I (3.5m x 0.3m, depth 0.45m)
- ST II (0.75m x 0.5m, depth 0.6–0.7m)
- ST III (2m x 0.5m, depth 0.8–1m)
- ST IV (0.85m x 0.5m, depth 0.6m)
- ST V (2m x 0.5m, depth 0.6m)
- ST VI (4.5m x 0.3m, depth 0.2–0.45m)



4 RESULTS

4.1 Overburden

The entire site was sealed with concrete slabs and brick footings associated with the former industrial buildings and yard.

Beneath the concrete was a layer of hardcore, which in turn sealed a make-up layer of mid grey brown reworked soil, 0.3–0.7m thick. This layer was observed throughout the site

The overburden comprised the following deposits:

- Concrete surface of external yard, single slab 0.1m thick
- Internal concrete surface, single slab 0.1m thick, at northern end of former building two layers of concrete slab
- Layer of hardcore and plastic sheeting including reinforcements in some areas underneath the former building, 0.1m thick
- Layer of hardcore underneath external concrete yard, 0.1m thick
- Make-up layer of reworked soil, 0.3–0.7m thick

The nature of the make-up layer was homogenous and relatively sterile; it yielded no artefactual remains. This suggests that it originates from ground preparation works prior to the construction of the former industrial complex.

4.2 Undisturbed Geological Deposits

Where surviving, undisturbed geological deposits were observed during the archaeological works at 0.5–0.9m below ground level. They consisted of light grey brown to light bluish grey silty clay.

4.3 Archaeological Remains

Features and deposits observed on site are all likely to be of modern date and associated with ground levelling and construction works prior to the building of the now demolished light industrial compound and a previous 19th-century building.

Evidence for some landscaping and levelling that occurred on site probably prior to the construction of the now demolished light industrial complex is apparent in make-up layer [9] which was observed with varying thickness throughout the site and observations made in geotechnical Pit II (Figure 2).

The excavation beneath concrete slabs revealed loose reinforcements, plastic sheeting and hardcore, a layer of re-deposited clay which was placed over a mixed dark grey brown/blackish deposit containing modern inclusions like brick, tile, metal and other demolition/construction debris. The two sheeted brick foundations of the demolished building were resting on a concrete beam at 0.65m depth.

The deposition of the demolition material is likely to be associated with some re-landscaping and redirecting of the drainage ditch at the back of the property which must have occurred prior to the construction of the previous building



and involved re-channelling the ditch through a pipe between two properties and building up the ground to achieve a larger sized plot for the properties.

In the foundation trenches for Plot 2 a possible ditch [5] was recorded on an east-west alignment in the area of the garage. The lack of finds and the fact it was cutting modern disturbance [3] suggests it is modern in origin (Figures 2 and 4). The disturbance [3] is thought to be the same feature as [15], which was observed in the foundation trench for the house and in service trenches to the north of Plot 2. The northern extension of disturbance [15] was observed in ST I and II leading away from Plot 2 (Figure 2).

Also observed within the house foundation trenches of Plot 2 were other large modern disturbances [10] and [21] (Figures 2, 3 and 4) and the remains of some brick foundations [12] in the northern trench. The latter, as well as the earlier disturbances [10] and [15], are possibly associated with a former late 19th-century structure on site (Figure 2 and 3).

Disturbance [21] is later than [10] and could again be associated either with the 19th- or 20th-century buildings

A large modern disturbance was encountered in the area underneath the demolished building, where the foundations for Plot 1 were excavated (Figures 2, 5 and 6). The disturbance extended beyond Plot 1 and its eastern extent was encountered in ST IV. The disturbance reached 0.1–0.2m beyond the level where the geological levels were typically encountered and was backfilled with a white chalky deposit. Embedded in this, along the outline of the demolished building, were substantial concrete foundations and brick.

Whereas the backfill deposits from most of the features could derive from surrounding soil and may represent a re-deposition and reworking of the soil, the backfill of the intrusion observed at Plot 1 is alien to the site and must be considered as deliberate backfill or dump of chalky material as a contemporary event to the construction of the foundations of the demolished building.



5 CONCLUSIONS

The deposits and features revealed during the construction groundworks are associated with the development and re-modelling of the site in the 19th and 20th centuries. The cut features observed comprised former foundation pits and amorphous features of possible material extraction or other construction-related works. The deposits comprised a make-up layer of reworked ground covering the entire development area in varying thickness. The features cut into this were backfilled with mixed material originating from the surroundings.

Two areas showed a larger amount of ground disturbance. One was located at the southern limit of the property and was related to drainage and re-landscaping works that occurred in the 20th century. The other was located beneath the concrete floor of the demolished building. It was most likely excavated and backfilled in association with the construction of the former building as it contained the footings for the same. The backfill of chalk/lime did not originate from the site and must be regarded as deliberate backfill. A brick wall foundation observed in the area of Plot 2 confirmed the existence of earlier buildings on the site, as recorded on late 19th-century maps.

No archaeological features pre-dating the modern period were encountered during the course of the groundworks. All prior construction and landscaping works undertaken in the 19th and 20th centuries seem to have had a heavy impact on the ground and are likely to have destroyed any earlier archaeological remains that may once have existed.



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7 APPENDIX 1: WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION

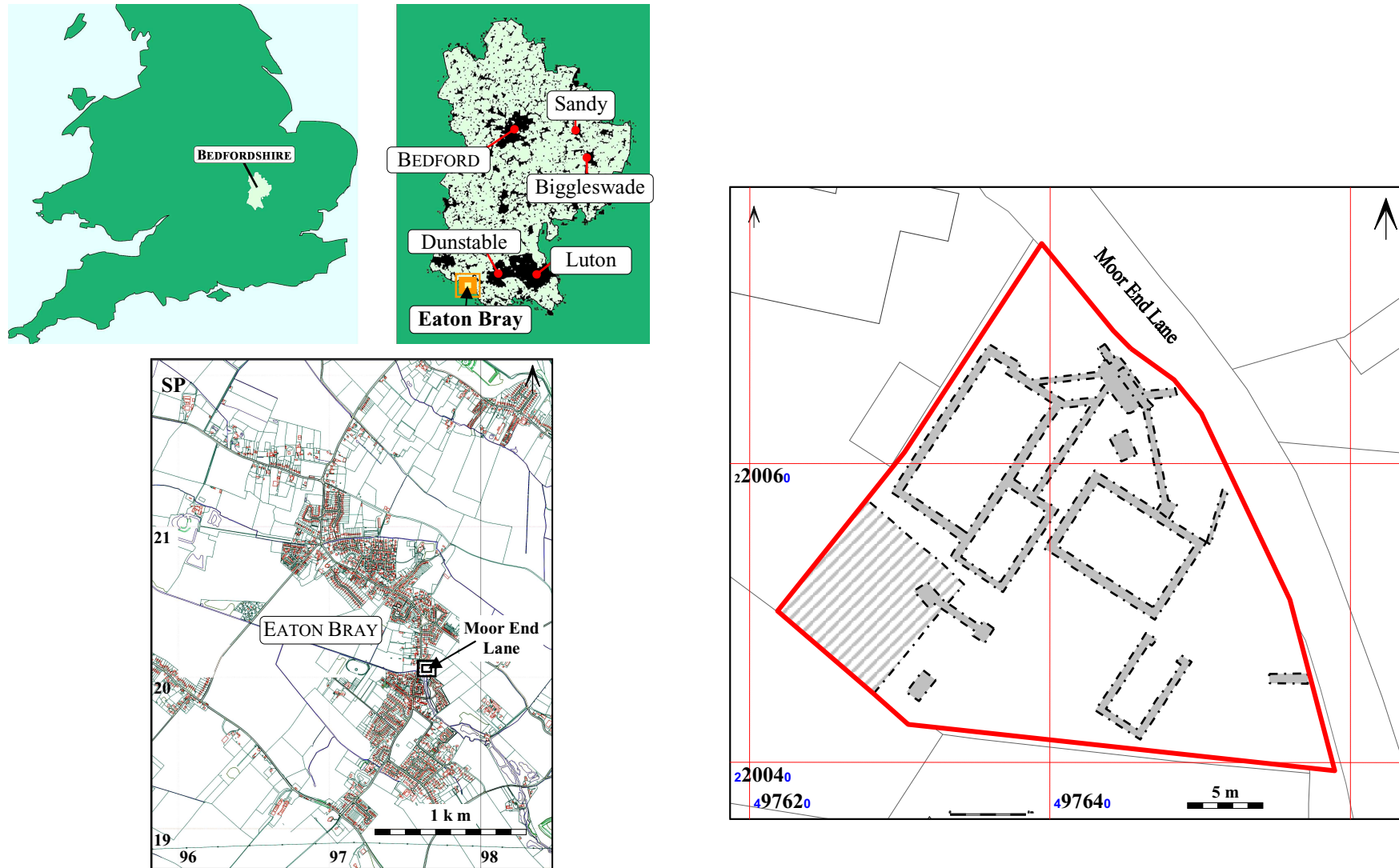


Figure 1: Site location plan

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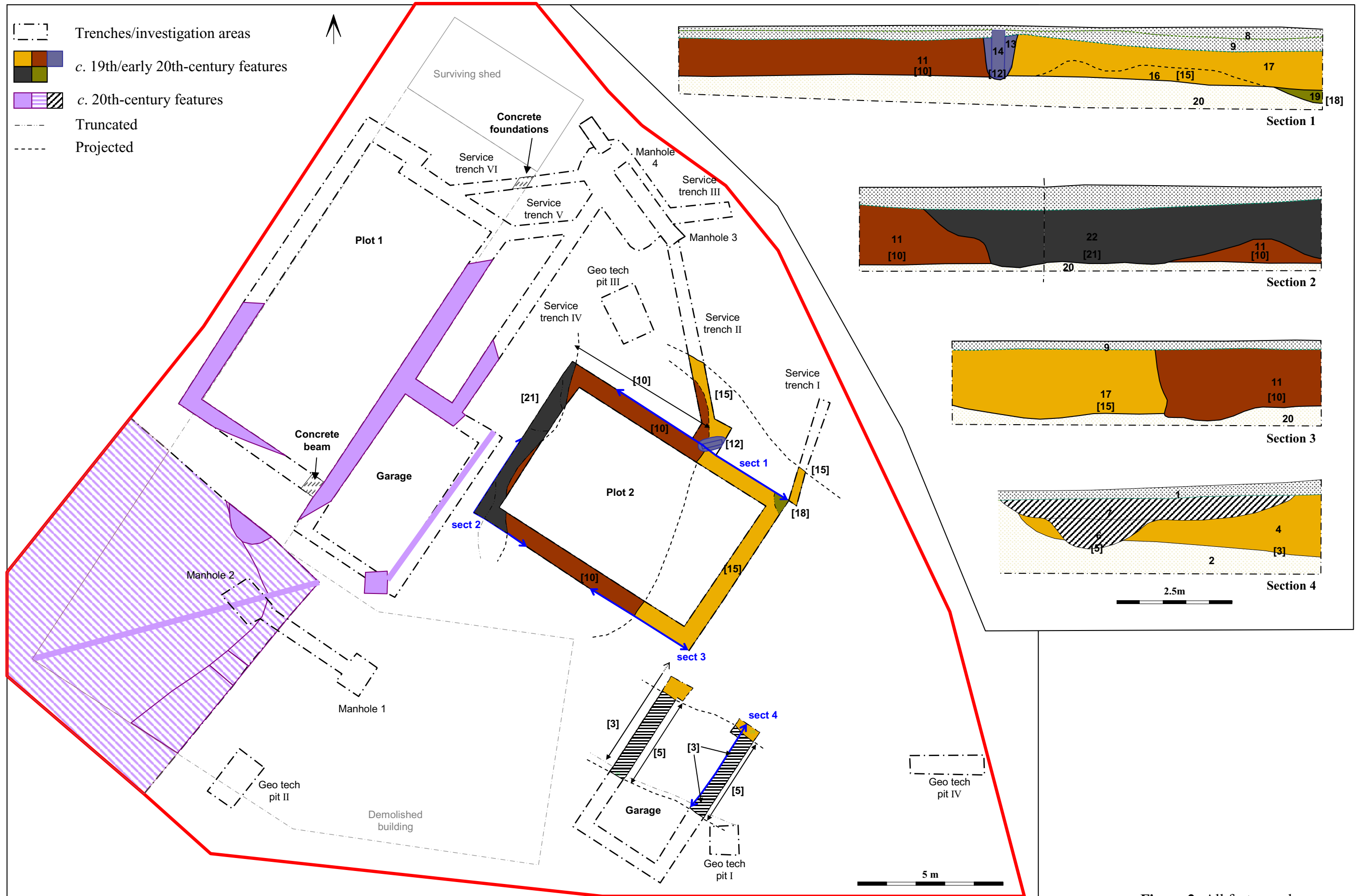


Figure 2: All features plan



Section 1 with features [10], [15], [19] and wall remains [12]



Section 2 showing feature [10] and [21]

Figure 3: Selected photographs of sections 1 and 2



Section 3 showing feature [10] and [15]



Section 4 showing ditch [5] and feature [3]

Figure 4: Selected photographs of sections 3 and 4



20th-century disturbance in foundation trench Plot 1



20th-century disturbance in Service Trench IV

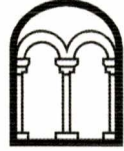
Figure 5: Selected photographs of 20th-century disturbance under Plot 1



Figure 6: 20th-century disturbance in west corner of development area

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