

**EDF ENERGY CABLE  
CRAFTON STUD FARM  
CRAFTON  
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

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Project: ECC 1012

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Produced for:  
EDF Energy Networks Ltd

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**Table 1:** Artefact assemblage by trench and context



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Figure 2: All features plan

Figure 3: Section drawing and photograph of wall

*The figures are bound at the back of the report.*



## **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.*

*Day to day management of the fieldwork and post-excavation stages of the project was undertaken by Joe Abrams (Project Manager). This report has been prepared by Richard Gregson (Project Supervisor) and edited by Joe Abrams. The fieldwork was undertaken by Richard Gregson. Joan Lightning (CAD Technician) produced the figures. All Albion Archaeology projects are under the overall management of Drew Shotliff (Operations Manager).*

*Albion Archaeology is grateful to Dick Humberstone of EDF Energy Networks Ltd for commissioning the project. We would also like to acknowledge the assistance of David Radford (Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service) who monitored the site.*

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## **Structure of the Report**

After the introductory Section 1, there is a summary of the results of the watching brief in Section 2, followed by a brief conclusion (Section 3). Section 4 is a bibliography and Appendix 1 contains an archaeological context summary.

## **Key Terms**

Throughout this report the following terms or abbreviations are used:

<i>Albion</i>	Albion Archaeology
<i>Client</i>	EDF Energy Networks Ltd
<i>IFA</i>	Institute of Field Archaeologists
<i>BCAS</i>	Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service
<i>Procedures Manual</i>	<i>Procedures Manual Volume 1 Fieldwork, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition 2001.</i> Bedfordshire County Council



### **Non-Technical Summary**

*In December 2004 Albion Archaeology was commissioned by EDF Energy Networks Ltd to undertake a watching brief during the groundworks required for a new electricity cable trench at Crafton Stud Farm, Crafton, Buckinghamshire.*

*Because the proposed work had the potential to disturb archaeological deposits, therefore archaeological monitoring of groundworks was required. The parameters of the work were set out in a brief issued by the Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service (BCAS 2004).*

*The site was centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) SP 8900 1970 , immediately south of Crafton Chapel and approximately 1.5km west of Mentmore village. The site lies at an average height of 118m above Ordnance Datum (AOD). The soils of the area are derived from the underlying upper greensand and gault geology (British Geological Survey 1979).*

*The archaeological monitoring was undertaken between 13<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> December 2004. During this period all excavations which required monitoring were completed. A mechanical excavator was used to open the cable trench.*

*The cable trench was located adjacent to known medieval earthworks (CAS1009) and therefore the potential for archaeological remains from this period was considered high. However, no medieval remains were revealed during the works. Instead, post-medieval ditches, a pit and a wall were encountered; these have augmented our understanding of how land in this area was used during the post-medieval and modern periods.*

*The accession number for the site archive is 2004.54. The archive will be kept in secure storage at the offices of Albion Archaeology at St Mary's Church, Bedford until deposition with the Buckinghamshire County Museum Technical Centre is completed.*



## 1. INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 Background

A new electric cable was required at Crafton Stud Farm, Crafton, Buckinghamshire. The proposed works comprised the excavation of a trench for the new service. Because these works had the potential to disturb archaeological remains, a brief for an archaeological watching brief was issued by the Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service (BCAS).

Albion Archaeology was commissioned by EDF Energy Networks Ltd to prepare a project design for the scheme of works and subsequently to undertake the watching brief, produce a report on the results, and prepare an archive on their behalf.

### 1.2 Site Location and Description

The site of the proposed new cable is centred at NGR SP 8900 1970, immediately south of Crafton Chapel and approximately 1.5km west of Mentmore village (Figure 1). The site lies at an average height of 118m above Ordnance Datum (AOD).

The soils of the area are derived from the underlying upper greensand and gault geology (British Geological Survey 1979).

### 1.3 Archaeological Background

The historical and archaeological background to Crafton has been summarised in the project design (Albion Archaeology 2004). In summary, many of the known remains listed on the SMR date to the medieval period. These include a relatively large number of earthworks collectively referred to as CAS1009 (Figure 2). These earthworks indicate the location of former field enclosures, ponds and trackways.

It has been suggested that CAS1009 represents the remains of a medieval village. The cable trench is in very close proximity to these earthworks, and therefore the watching brief represented an important opportunity to augment our knowledge of CAS1009.



## 2. RESULTS OF OBSERVATION AND RECORDING

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### 2.1 Introduction

The programme of archaeological observation was undertaken between 13<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> December 2004. During this period all excavations which required monitoring were completed. A mechanical excavator was used to open the cable trench.

Detailed technical information on all the deposits and archaeological features referred to below can be found in Appendix 1.

### 2.2 Methodology

The watching brief adhered to the standards and field methods set out in section FIELDWORK METHODOLOGY of the brief (BCAS 2004) specifically;

- 1 Any stripping of overburden or excavation of service trenches was monitored to try to and identify *in situ* archaeological deposits.
- 2 All disturbed soil was scanned for artefacts.
- 3 Any excavated features and deposits were fully recorded in accordance with the Albion's *Procedures Manual* and the detailed requirements in section FIELDWORK METHODOLOGY of the *brief*.
- 4 All archaeological observations were recorded at a suitable scale on base plans that were tied in to the OS national grid.
- 5 Significant features were photographed using a digital camera.

Throughout the project the standards set out in the Institute of Field Archaeologists Codes of Conduct and Standards and Guidance documents (specifically *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*, September 1999), in English Heritage's *Management of Archaeological Projects* (1991) and Albion Archaeology's *Procedures Manual* were adhered to.

### 2.3 Extent and Nature of Groundworks

One trench was excavated for the purpose of laying the new electricity cable (Figure 2). It was c.160m in length, 0.35m wide and generally 1.10m deep.

This trench truncated the undisturbed geological deposit (1002) as well as several archaeological features and deposits located along its course.

### 2.4 Topsoil, Subsoil and Undisturbed Geological Deposits

The underlying, undisturbed geological deposit (1002) revealed in the trench was light orange/grey silty clay.

A layer of colluvial material (1004) overlay (1002) in a relatively large part of the site (Figure 2). It was 0.54m thick and consisted of mid to dark grey clay. This layer contained a single sherd of abraded late medieval pottery, charcoal fragments and pieces of animal bone (Appendix 2).

Subsoil (1001) was mid brown grey silty clay varying from 0.05m to 0.28m in depth. Topsoil (1000) was a dark brown clay silt varying from 0.10m to 0.30m





in depth. It is possible that the variation in the depth and character of these layers indicates the remnants of plough truncated earthworks associated with the deserted medieval village immediately south of the site (Figure 1).

### **2.5 Ditch [1005]**

A ditch [1005] orientated north to south was recorded in the eastern part of the site (Figure 2). The ditch was 1.35m in width and 0.65m in depth. [1005] does not appear to have been aligned with the postulated medieval village earthworks some of which are in close proximity. It is suggested that [1005] may have been a post-medieval field boundary.

Deposit (1006) within the ditch was a homogenous silty clay suggesting that it accumulated gradually through natural processes. One fragment of burnt bone was recovered.

### **2.6 Ditch [1013]**

A second ditch [1013] orientated north-north-west to south-south-east was recorded to the south-west of [1005] (Figure 2). Its depth below subsoil was 1.02m and it was 2.02m wide. Given the similarity in orientation, it may have some relationship with [1005]. However, it also appeared to be in line with a field boundary to the south-east. No earthworks were observed in the immediate vicinity of this ditch.

Deposit (1014) within the ditch was homogenous silty clay suggesting that it accumulated gradually through natural processes. Two pieces of un-burnt animal bone were recovered from it (Appendix 2).

### **2.7 Pit [1009]**

A large pit [1009] was located immediately adjacent to ditch [1013]. However, it did not share any stratigraphic relationship with this feature. It was 11.60m long and at least as 0.35m in width. The full extent of this feature could not be ascertained within the confines of the service trench. Although, it was apparent that it reached a maximum depth of 0.56m towards its south-western end.

Deposit (1010) within [1009] comprised an orange grey sandy clay. It contained numerous stones and fragments of post-medieval ceramic building material. It is suggested that this building debris may have been deposited into a purpose-dug or existing hollow [1009] when an outbuilding belonging to one of the houses in Crafton village was knocked down. It is likely that this activity took place during the post-medieval or modern periods.

### **2.8 Ditch [1015]**

A third ditch [1015] orientated east to west was observed in western part of the cable trench (Figure 3). [1015] was 2.02m in width and 0.66m in depth.

Within the confines of the new service trench it was cut into relatively level ground, although it is worth noting that if it had continued on the same east-west alignment it would have run eastwards down the slope of the field. It may therefore have been for the purposes of drainage or perhaps it was another field boundary. No earthworks were observed in the immediate vicinity of [1015].



Deposit (1016) within the ditch was a homogeneous silty clay suggesting that it accumulated gradually through natural processes. No artefacts were recovered from it.

## **2.9 Ditch [1017]**

A fourth ditch [1017] orientated north-east to south-west was observed in the southern part of the site (Figure 2). It was 0.84m deep and 1.92m wide. Within the cable trench [1017] was on fairly level ground. However, if it had continued on the same alignment to the north-east, it would have run diagonally across the slope. It may therefore have functioned as a drain or field boundary.

Three deposits (1018), (1019) and (1020) were observed within the ditch. No artefactual material was recovered from any of them.

## **2.10 Pit [1026]**

[1026] was located in the extreme south of the site (Figure 2). Since none of this pit's original edges were observed the full shape and dimensions remain unknown. Its depth within the service trench was 0.27m. The pit was sealed by post-medieval make-up layer (1025), (Figure 3).

Deposit (1027) within this feature consisted of a dark grey silty clay. No artefactual material was recovered from it. It remains unclear whether this deposit was deliberately backfilled into the pit or whether it accumulated through natural processes.

[1026] was truncated by wall foundation trench [1021] adjacent to it (Figure 3). No trace of [1026] was visible to the north of foundation trench [1021].

## **2.11 Wall foundation trench [1021]**

Immediately north of [1026] was a wall foundation trench [1021]. This was orientated north-east to south-west (Figures 2 and 3). The foundation cut had sloping, non-symmetrical sides. It was 2.08m wide and 0.75m deep.

[1021] was located *c.*0.30m south-west of an existing field boundary (Figure 2) and significantly appeared to be on the same alignment. This may indicate that the original field boundary was walled in this area or that the current field boundary is respecting the line of a now demolished building.

Primary deposit (1022) within the trench was a levelling layer of yellowish grey silty clay. It was 0.16m thick.

Located stratigraphically above (1022) was the first component (1030) of the wall foundation. This comprised random, uncoursed, roughly hewn pieces of flint and fragments of ceramic building material set into mortar. It was 0.72m wide and 0.49m thick.

Sealing (1030) and bonded to it were four courses of bricks (Appendix 2) mortared together (1031). It is assumed that more courses would have continued above existing ground level to form the remainder of the wall. What was left was 0.47m wide and 0.34m thick.



On either side of the wall foundations were deposits (1023) and (1024) and similar in character to (1022). Both deposits were 0.59m thick and served as construction trench backfill.

### **2.12 Layers (1025) and (1032)**

Make-up layer (1025) was observed to the east of foundation trench [1021]. It appeared to seal and therefore post date (1023) within [1021].

A second make up layer (1032) was observed to the west of [1021]. This was located across a field entrance. It seems likely that this layer was introduced relatively recently to provide a more stable ground surface at this point.



### **3. SYNTHESIS**

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#### **3.1 Interpretation**

Despite the close proximity of the site to the remains of a deserted medieval village (CAS1009), all the archaeological remains recorded during this watching brief are believed to date to either the post-medieval or modern periods.

Four ditches were identified during the works in all cases these are interpreted as the backfilled remnants of post-medieval field systems and/or drainage ditches.

A post-medieval wall foundation was also observed. It is suggested that this may have been the forerunner of an existing fenced field boundary, or a building located on the line of the existing field boundary. To the south-east of this wall was a pit sealed by a make up layer. Both the pit and the make-up layer appeared to respect the wall. It is therefore suggested that they post-date its existence, although are likely to have been formed during its period of use.

Modern features included a hollow or purpose dug pit used to deposit building debris from an outbuilding and a layer of metalling adjacent to a field gateway.

#### **3.2 Summary**

The development area is located adjacent to known medieval earthworks (CAS1009) and therefore the potential for archaeological remains from this period was considered high. However, no medieval remains were revealed during the works. Instead, post-medieval ditches, a pit and a wall were encountered; these have augmented our understanding of how land in this area was used during the post-medieval and modern periods.



## 4. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Albion Archaeology. 2004. *EDF Energy Cable, Crafton Stud Farm, Crafton, Buckinghamshire. Project Design for an Archaeological Watching Brief. Report 2004:55*

Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service. 2004. *Brief for an Archaeological Watching Brief: EDF Energy Cable, Crafton.*

British Geological Survey. 1979. *Geological Survey Ten Mile Map, South Sheet.*

EH 1991 *The Management of Archaeological Projects, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition.* English Heritage (London).

IFA 1999a Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct.*

IFA 1999b Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance documents (Desk-Based Assessments, Watching Briefs, Evaluations, Excavations, Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings).*



## **5. APPENDICES**

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### **5.1 Appendix 1, Context Summary**

**Trench: 1****Max Dimensions: Length: 155.00 m. Width: 0.35 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.15 m. Max: 0.4 m.****OS Co-ordinates: Ref. 1: SP8897519742 Ref. 2: SP8896919641****Reason: Watching brief on service trench for a new electric cable.**

<b>Context:</b>	<b>Type:</b>	<b>Description:</b>	<b>Excavated:</b>	<b>Finds Present:</b>
1000	Topsoil	Firm dark brown clay silt occasional small stones Thickness 0.30m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1001	Subsoil	Firm mid brown grey silty clay occasional small stones Thickness 0.28m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1002	Natural	Firm light orange grey silty clay occasional small stones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1004	Layer	Firm mid grey clay occasional flecks charcoal, occasional small stones Thickness 0.35m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1005	Ditch	<b>Linear N-S profile: concave base: concave dimensions: max breadth 1.35m, max depth 0.65m, max length 0.35m</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1006	Ditch	Firm dark brown grey clay occasional small stones Thickness 0.65m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1009	Pit	<b>Profile: concave base: uneven dimensions: max breadth 0.35m, max depth 0.56m, max length 11.6m</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1010	Fill	Friable mid orange grey sandy clay moderate medium stones, moderate small stones, occasional large stones Thickness 0.56m.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1013	Ditch	<b>Linear NNW-SSE profile: concave base: concave dimensions: max breadth 2.02m, max depth 1.02m, max length 0.35m</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1014	Fill	Firm mid grey silty clay occasional small stones Thickness 1.02m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1015	Ditch	<b>Linear E-W profile: concave base: v-shaped dimensions: max breadth 2.2m, max depth 0.66m, max length 0.35m</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1016	Fill	Firm dark grey silty clay moderate flecks charcoal, occasional small stones Thickness 0.66m.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1017	Ditch	<b>Linear NE-SW profile: convex base: concave dimensions: max breadth 1.92m, max depth 0.84m, max length 0.35m</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1018	Primary fill	Firm mid yellow grey silty clay occasional flecks charcoal, occasional small stones Thickness 0.19m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1019	Secondary fill	Firm light yellow grey sandy clay moderate small stones Thickness 0.19m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1020	Tertiary fill	Firm mid orange grey silty clay occasional flecks charcoal, occasional small stones Thickness 0.48m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1021	Foundation trench	<b>Linear NE-SW profile: concave base: concave dimensions: max breadth 2.08m, max depth 0.75m, max length 0.35m</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1022	Levelling layer	Firm light yellow grey silty clay occasional small stones Thickness 0.16m.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1023	Backfill	Firm light yellow grey silty clay occasional small stones Thickness 0.59m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1024	Backfill	Firm light yellow grey silty clay occasional small stones Thickness 0.59m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1030	Foundation	Random uncoursed lower foundation consisting of medium to large pieces of flint and small fragments of brick or tile in an orange sandy mortar.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1031	Foundation	Wall foundation consisting of bricks bound together with mortar. Bricks measured 0.21m x 0.10m x 0.07m.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1025	Make up layer	Friable dark grey sandy clay frequent medium-large stones Thickness 0.30m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1026	Pit	<b>Base: flat dimensions: max breadth 0.35m, max depth 0.27m, max length 5m</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1027	Fill	Firm dark grey silty clay occasional small stones Thickness 0.27m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1032	Make up layer	Loose dark brown grey silty sand frequent small-medium ceramic building material, frequent small-medium stones Thickness 0.14m.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



## 5.2 Appendix 2: Finds Summary

*Jackie Wells, Finds Officer, Albion Archaeology*

The watching brief produced a small artefact assemblage, comprising pottery, brick and animal bone (Table 1). The material was scanned to ascertain the nature, condition and, where possible, date range of the artefact types present.

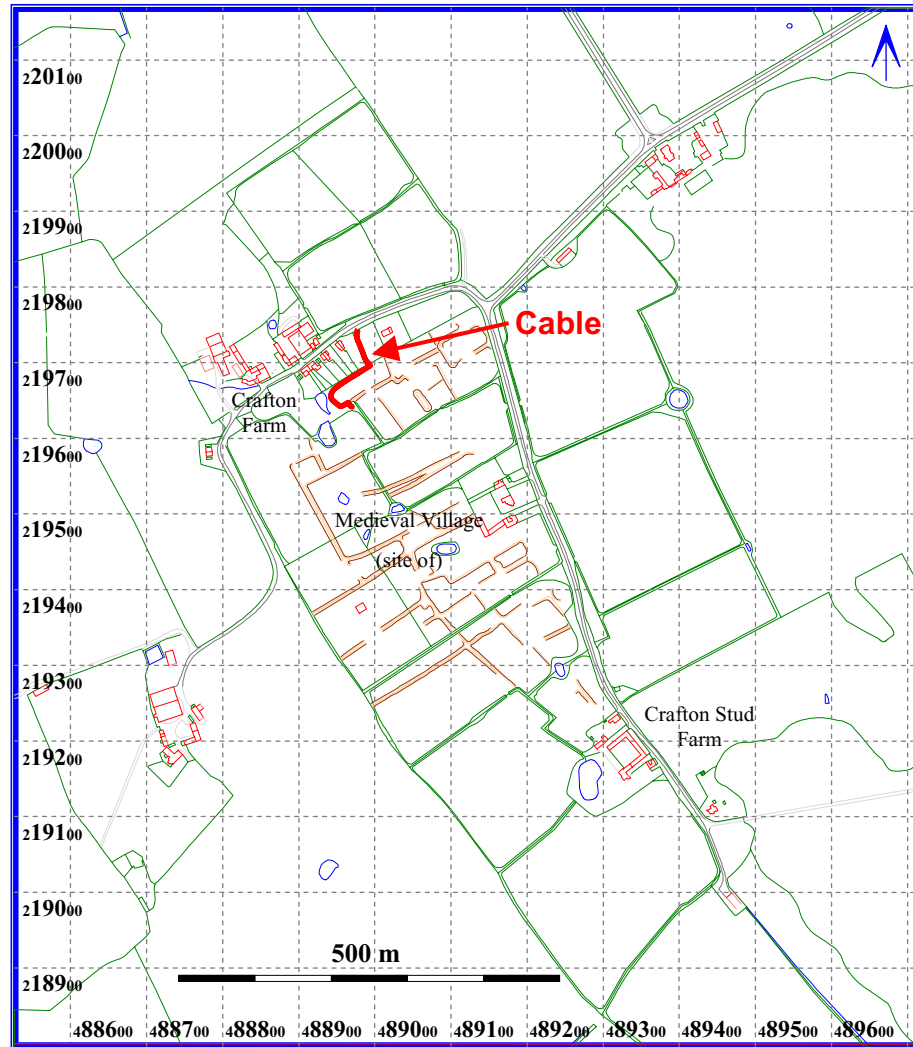
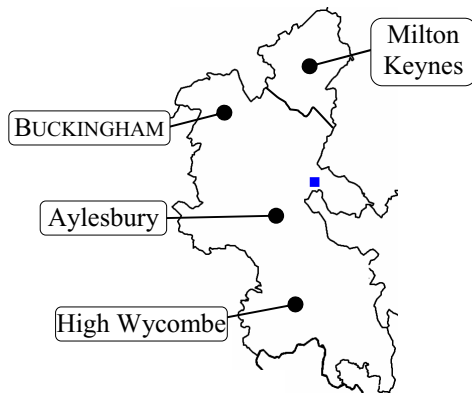
Trench	Feature	Type	Context	Spotdate	Finds summary
1	1004	Colluvium	1004	Medieval (?late)	Pottery (1g), animal bone (133g)
	1013	Ditch	1014	-	Animal bone (65g)
	1021	Foundation trench	1031	Modern	Brick (2500g)

**Table 1: Artefact assemblage by trench and context**

A small, abraded pottery sherd (1g) in a reduced sand tempered fabric derived from colluvium (1004). The sherd is likely to be of late medieval date, although its small and fragmentary nature precludes positive identification.

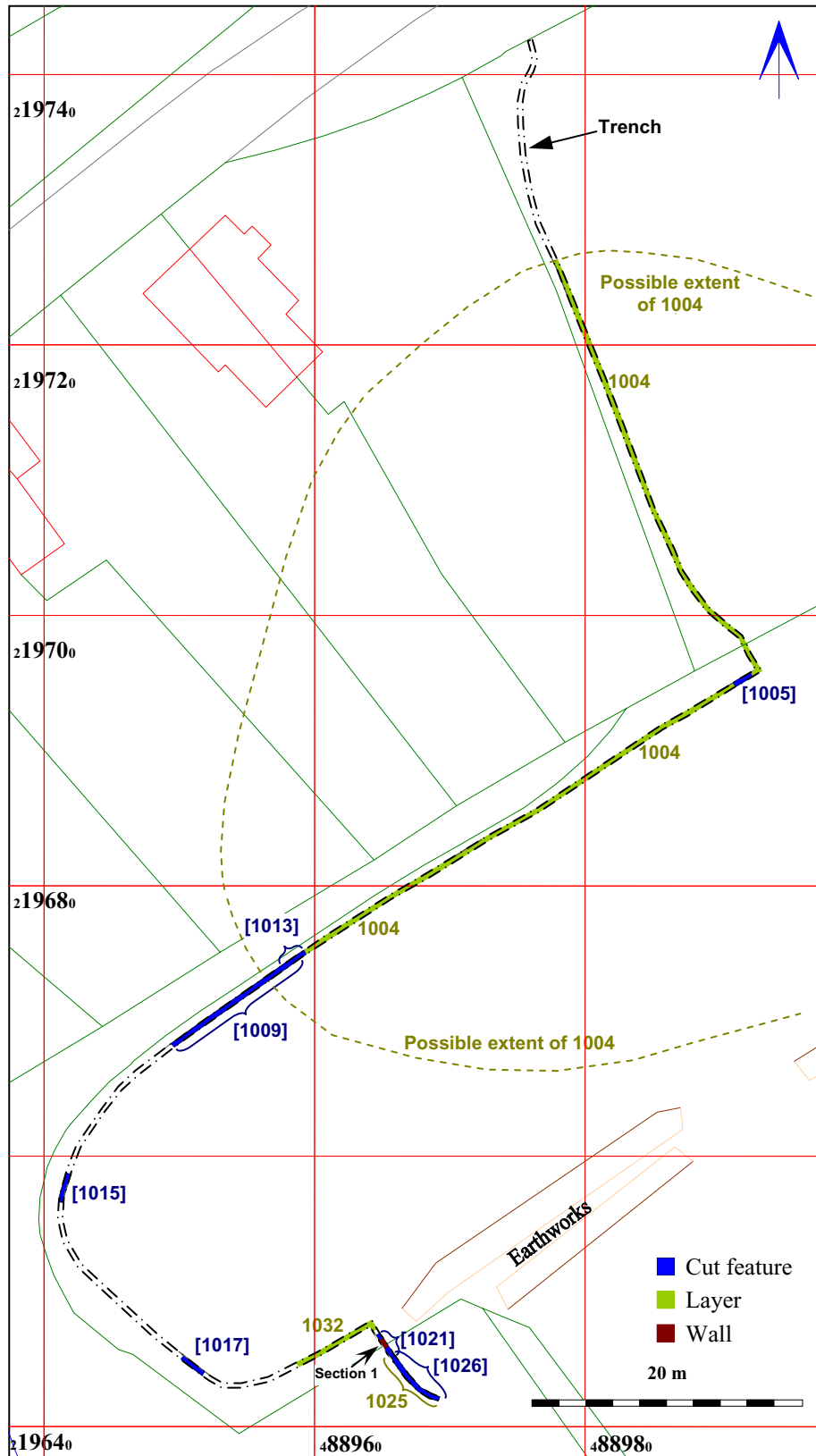
Seven pieces of animal bone, weighing 198g were recovered. Six long bone and mandible fragments derived from colluvium (1004) and an undiagnostic fragment from ditch [1013]. All are unabraded and survive in good condition. A partially complete brick was collected from foundation trench [1021]. The object is well-made in gault clay, measures 217 x 104 x 68mm, and is likely to be of 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century date.





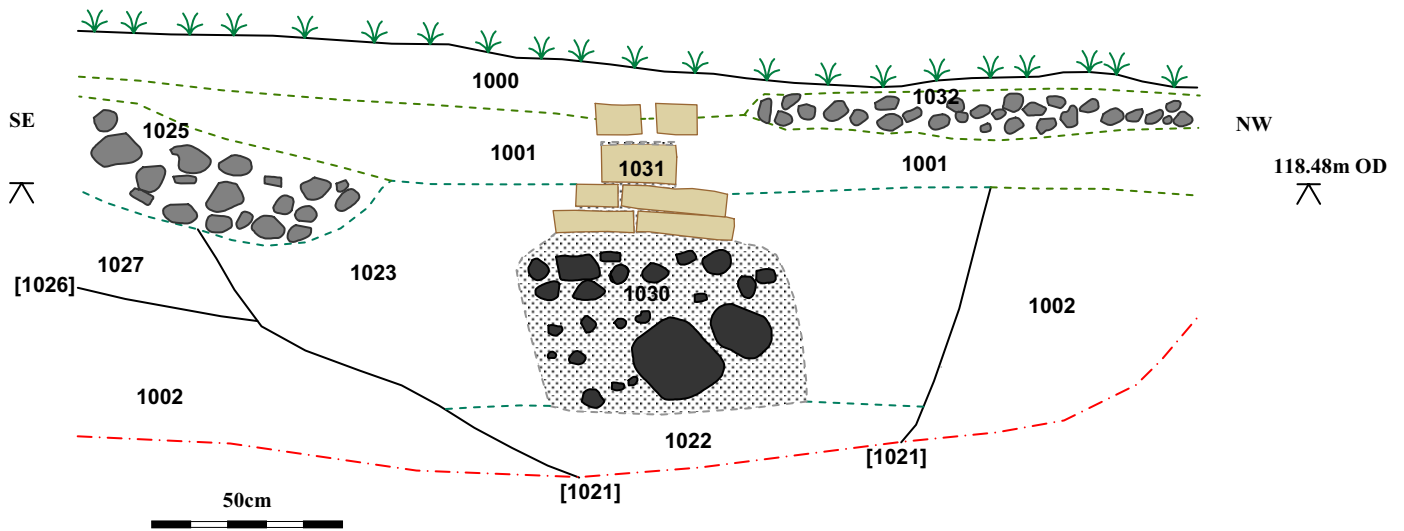
**Figure 1: Site location**

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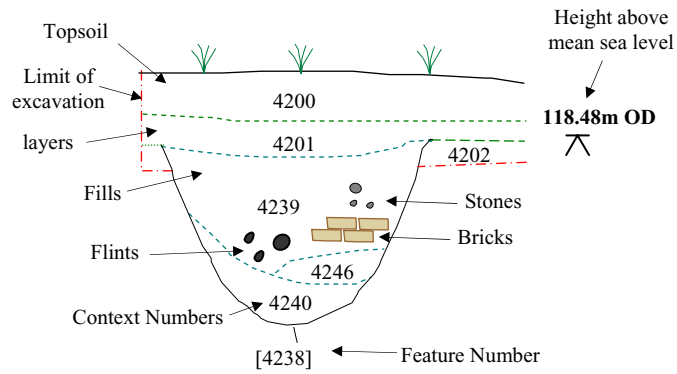


**Figure 2: All features**

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Key to Section Drawing



**Figure 3: Section drawing and photograph of wall**

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