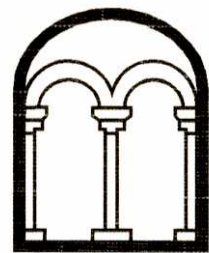


**DYNEVOR COTTAGE
RECTORY LANE
AMPTHILL
BEDFORDSHIRE**

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

Albion
archaeology



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Produced for:
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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 Barry Wright Partnership on behalf of Mr Simon Houfe. The project was monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Martin Oake, the Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist.

Fieldwork was carried out by Christiane Meckseper (Project Officer), Iain Leslie (Archaeological Supervisor) and Gareth Shane (Assistant Supervisor). The report was prepared by Gareth Shane and Christiane Meckseper with contributions from Jackie Wells (Finds Officer). All Albion projects are under the overall management of Drew Shotliff (Operations Manager).

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1.0	23rd July 2013	n/a
1.1	4th September 2013	Added information on soakaway

Key Terms

Throughout this project design the following terms or abbreviations are used:

CBC	Central Bedfordshire Council
CBCA	Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist
HER	Central Bedfordshire Council's Historic Environment Record
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists
LPA	Local Planning Authority
PDA	Proposed development area
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation



Non-Technical Summary

Planning permission (CB/10/03198/FULL) was granted for a two-storey side extension at Dynevor Cottage, Rectory Lane, Ampthill, Bedfordshire.

As the development site lies in an area of archaeological sensitivity (within the medieval core of Ampthill and adjacent to the parish church of St. Andrews) a condition was placed on the planning permission requiring the implementation of a scheme of archaeological investigation during the groundworks.

Albion Archaeology was commissioned to carry out the archaeological works in accordance with the methodology described in a Written Scheme of Investigation (Albion Archaeology 2013), produced in response to a brief prepared by the Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist (CBC 2013)

Pottery sherds of 12th- and 13th-century date and a small quantity of animal bone were found in made ground within the footing trenches. No definite archaeological features were identified on the site. The presence of a pit cannot be excluded but it is most likely that the finds were incorporated into the soils as part of a general background presence of medieval activity. They do not, however, indicate any specific domestic or industrial activity on the development site itself.

In the medieval period the development area was most likely agricultural or garden land at the back of, and uphill from, the plots fronting Church Street and adjacent to the parish church.

Dynevor Cottage is a modern octagonal building which incorporates a 19th-century cottage along the frontage of Rectory Lane. Ordnance Survey maps suggest that the cottage definitely stood on the site by 1901, but it may have been built in the late 19th century as earlier maps also show structures on the site but they are less clear. The post-medieval pottery and tobacco pipes retrieved during the archaeological investigations are most likely associated with activity in and around the cottage.

The grounds of the cottage must have been landscaped considerably in order to construct the present-day modern garage and western extension and to create the garden to the north of the cottage.

As the finds represent stray artefacts, albeit located at some depth and representing medieval activity, they are of no more than local significance.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Project Background*

Planning permission (CB/10/03198/FULL) has been granted for a two-storey side extension at Dynevor Cottage, Rectory Lane, Ampthill, Bedfordshire.

As the Development Area (DA) lies in the historic core and Conservation Area of Ampthill, a condition attached to the planning consent (Condition 2) required the implementation of a programme of archaeological investigation as a consequence of the development.

This recommendation was in accordance with national planning guidelines in the form of Policy 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which states that Local Planning Authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of heritage assets before they are lost, which can be achieved by imposing planning conditions or obligations as appropriate (CLG 2012). It is also in line with Policy 45 of the Development Strategy for Central Bedfordshire (Pre-submission version January 2013). In this instance, the heritage assets referred to represented those with archaeological interest.

A brief detailing the requirements for the programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording was issued by the Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist (CBCA 2013) and addressed in the WSI (Albion Archaeology 2013).

1.2 *Site Location and Description*

Dynevor Cottage lies on Rectory Road adjacent to the parish church of St Andrew in the northern part of Ampthill (Figure 1). Rectory Lane is a narrow gravel track that runs northwards past St Andrew's Church to The Rectory, a former 19th-century estate house some distance to the north-east of the cottage.

Dynevor Cottage lies slightly separate from a row of cottages to the south on the western side of Rectory Lane. It is surrounded on all sides by garden and parkland with mature trees.

Ampthill lies on the Greensand Ridge and the land rises markedly from St Andrew's Church in the east to Church Hill in the west with the DA lying at *c.* 100m OD. It is centred on grid reference TL 03670 38293.

1.3 *Archaeological Background*

Ampthill is mentioned in the Domesday book of 1086 and grew into a sizable settlement due to the market which was first granted in 1291 and was held at the meeting of four roads coming from Bedford, Shefford (now Church Street), Dunstable and Woburn.



St Andrew's Church (HER 859)¹, the other focus of the historic town, lies 250m to the north-east of the market place and is of 14th- and 15th-century origin. It is possible that the focus of the earlier Saxon settlement may have been around the parish church.

St Andrew's stands on the northern side of a small square coming off Church Road that is lined in the east with Dynevor House (HER 6122), an 18th-century town house, and a row of 18th-century Feoffee Almshouses (HER 6123) which are first recorded in this location in 1485 (BCC 2005). A further 18th-century town house (HER 6124) and a gothic style almshouse of 16th-century origin (HER 2825) lie on the eastern side of the square. All buildings are Grade II listed.

Rectory Lane leads from the small square northwards, between the grounds and garden features of the 19th-century Avenue House (HER 15499) to the west and the grounds of St. Andrew's Church to the east. Further north along the lane lie Rectory Cottage (HER 15650), a Victorian cottage dating to around 1875, and The Old Rectory (HER 13439), 200m to the north-west, a 19th-century house that was used as a rectory until the late 19th century.

A programme of archaeological investigation during underpinning work at the Feoffee Almshouses in 1997 (EBD 943)² produced a collection of post-medieval pottery, clay pipe fragments, an articulated human skeleton plus several fragments of disarticulated human bone. Substantial foundations recorded beneath the floor of St. Andrew's Church by the Ampthill & District Archaeological & Local History Society confirmed the existence of an earlier probably Romanesque structure (EBD 811).

Archaeological investigations at 2 St Andrew's Close (EBD 1020) to the west of St Andrew's Church, revealed two perpendicular ditches. One ditch contained pottery dating to the 11th and 12th century and the other pottery ranging in date from the 12th to the 18th century. It is likely that these ditches represent early land divisions in this part of Ampthill, possibly contemporary with the predecessor of St. Andrew's Church.

1.4 Project Objectives

The site had the potential to reveal information on a number of research objectives identified in the research framework for Bedfordshire (Oake et al 2007). While the built historic environment around St Andrew's Church suggests that the area around the church was not built upon until the 17th or 18th century, archaeological evidence suggests that there was activity in this area at a much earlier date. Archaeological investigations have shown that the 14th-century St Andrew's Church may have had a Romanesque predecessor and land divisions dating from the 11th century onwards have been found in its vicinity. Archaeological investigations have also shown that burials associated with the church may occur in locations outside the present-day churchyard.

¹ Numbers in brackets are entries in the Historic Environment Record (HER) of Central Bedfordshire.

² Archaeological investigations recorded in the HER are given the prefix "EBD" for Event Bedfordshire.



The research framework for Bedfordshire (Oake et al. 2007) states that very little is known archaeologically, and to an extent historically, about the origin and development of small towns within the region and more work is needed before individual towns can be understood and placed in the wider context of the regional economy and society (Oake 2007, 14).

The specific objectives of the investigation were:

- Is there any evidence for Saxon settlement near St Andrew's Church?
- Is there any evidence for further early land divisions contemporary or earlier than the current St Andrew's Church?
- Is there evidence for further human burials to the west of St Andrew's Church outside the current churchyard?
- Is there any evidence relating to the Romanesque predecessor of St Andrew's church and/or the development of the church?

The general objectives of the investigation were to determine:

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



2. METHODOLOGY

Archaeological observation of the groundworks was undertaken between 21st May and 3rd June 2013. All groundworks that had the potential to impact upon archaeological remains were archaeologically monitored. These comprised the reduction of floor levels within the existing garage, ground reduction for the footprint of the extension and excavation of associated footings.

As the underlying geology consisted of sand, the sides of the footings trenches were very unstable and suffered repeated collapse. For this reason only limited investigation could be undertaken of layers within the trenches and recording was undertaken from the trench edge only. The last stage of the works, a hand-dug soakaway, was inspected on 29th August 2013.

The majority of the excavations were carried out using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket for ground reduction and a toothed bucket for excavation of the footings. The works were undertaken under close archaeological supervision. Deposits encountered were investigated and recorded in accordance with Albion's *Procedures Manual*. Spoil heaps were checked on a regular basis for the recovery of artefacts.

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

• Albion Archaeology	<i>Procedures Manual: Volume 1 Fieldwork</i> (2 nd edn, 2001).
• Bedford Museum	<i>Procedure for preparing archaeological archives for deposition with registered museums in Bedfordshire</i> (Version 2.8, 2010)
• EAA	<i>Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England</i> (2003)
• English Heritage	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) Project Managers' Guide</i> (2006)
	<i>Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation</i> , 2nd edition (2011)
• IfA	<i>By-Laws and Code of Conduct</i>
	<i>Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs and Field Excavations</i> (updated 2008) and <i>finds</i> (updated 2008)

A detailed methodology is provided in the WSI (Albion Archaeology 2013).



3. RESULTS

3.1 *Introduction*

As the existing ground level within the site differed considerably from west to east, a terrace had to be excavated to create a level ground to accommodate the footprint of the new building. This resulted in ground reduction of *c.* 1.20m in the west and up to 0.50m in the east prior to the excavation of the new footings (Figures 2 and 3). The dimensions of the footings trenches were 0.65m wide and 1.00m deep.

A modern service trench (now disused) for the existing cottage cut diagonally across the footprint of the building and a manhole was located in the northern central part of the site (Figure 3). This had truncated the deposits described below.

Ground reduction within the existing garage was 0.50m (Figure 5).

3.2 *Overburden and Undisturbed Geological Deposits*

Overburden consisted of a garden soil (001) which comprised 0.3m of dark black grey sandy silt. This lay above a layer of dark reddish brown silty sand (002) with moderate fragments of brick and lenses of more clayey concentrations of demolition material consisting of concentrations of brick, stones and mortar flecks. This varied in thickness from 0.50–0.80m and represents made-up ground, most likely imported for levelling and building up the area within the cottage garden.

The same layers were encountered within the soakaway to the west of the new building.

A small assemblage of medieval pottery and animal bone was retrieved from layer (002) within the western end of the E-W aligned northern new garage foundation trench. The pottery and bone were located towards the base of the layer at a depth of *c.* 1.10m below present ground level (Figure 4). The area was cleaned by hand and machine but no archaeological feature, such as a possible pit, could be clearly distinguished.

Within the eastern length of the E-W aligned footings a further subsoil (003) was encountered at a depth of 0.80m below present ground level. It comprised mid reddish brown silty sand and was *c.* 0.70m thick. This may represent a layer of colluvium as the ground rises significantly from the eastern street front of the property to the back of the garden in the west.

Undisturbed geological deposits (004) consisted of light orange yellow sand. This was encountered at various depths across the site ranging from 0.85m in the east to 1.60m in the west below existing ground level.

3.3 *Artefacts*

A number of pottery and animal bone fragments were recovered from the topsoil and the two subsoils. A concentration of medieval pottery was located at a depth of *c.* 1.20m in the north-eastern corner of the footings trench. This



was collected and bagged as belonging to layer (200). Cleaning in plan and section revealed no feature, such as a pit or ditch, which might have contained the finds. However, the area was heavily truncated by the modern service trench and collapse of the trench sides significantly hampered investigation.

A small assemblage of unstratified clay tobacco pipe, modern ceramic pipe fragments and animal bone was recovered from the soakaway. This was not kept.

3.3.1 Pottery

The recovered pottery comprises 17 Saxo-Norman and early medieval sherds (142g), and two large pieces of modern flower pot (300g). The early pottery is generally fragmented, with an average sherd weight of 8g, although it survives in fair condition. Eight fabric types were identified using common names and type codes in accordance with the Bedfordshire Ceramic Type Series, currently maintained by Albion Archaeology (Table 1).

Saxo-Norman (c. AD 900–1150)

Four sherds (23g) of wheel-thrown, shell-tempered St Neots-type ware were collected. An everted rim jar is only diagnostic vessel form. Sooting on the surface of two sherds suggests their derivation from cooking pots. The wares are likely to be locally manufactured, although no specific production centres are known.

Fabric Type	Common Name	Sherd No.	Context/Sherd No.
<i>Saxo-Norman</i>			
B01A	St Neots-type ware (orange)	1	(002):1
B01C	St Neots-type ware (mixed inclusions)	1	(002):1
B01D	St Neots-type ware (red inclusions)	2	(002):2
<i>Early medieval</i>			
B07	Shell	2	(002):2
C01	Sand	6	(001):1; (002):5
C04	Coarse sand	3	(001):1, (002):2
C59B	Harsh sand	1	(002):1
C71	Sand (buff-grey cored)	1	(002):1

Table 1: Pottery Type Series

Early medieval (c. AD 1150–1250)

Thirteen undiagnostic sherds (119g) are datable to the early medieval period. The majority are locally manufactured sand-tempered wares; while two are shell-tempered — the latter known to derive from production sites on the Beds./Bucks./Northants. borders. Vessels are represented entirely by body sherds, and occur in both hand made and wheel-thrown forms. Sooting on the exterior surfaces of seven sherds indicates their use as cooking pots.

3.3.2 Ecofacts

The animal bone assemblage comprises 19 fragments (772g), the majority (605g) deriving from garden soil (001). Individual pieces are of moderate size, demonstrated by an average weight of 41g, and display variable surface erosion. Diagnostic elements are limb bone, rib, scapula, vertebra, mandible



and foot bone (calcaneus) fragments, some of which bear cut / saw marks. The bones all derive from large mammals, probably cattle and sheep, although none can be identified to species.

Layer (001) also contained two abraded oyster shell fragments (18g).

3.3.3 Other Finds

Single post-medieval clay tobacco pipe stem fragments (8g) derived from layers (001) and (002). The latter also contained two sand-tempered pieces of modern roof tile (125g), a fragment of land drain (414g), and two sizeable chunks of mortar (786g).

3.4 Conclusion and Significance

The archaeological investigations on the development site did not reveal the presence of any archaeological features. A small assemblage of medieval pottery and animal bone was retrieved.

The presence of a pit containing these finds cannot be excluded but it is most likely that the finds were incorporated into the soils as part of a general background presence of medieval activity and do not indicate any specific domestic or industrial activity on the development site itself.

In the medieval period the development area was most likely agricultural or garden land at the back of and uphill from the plots fronting Church Street and adjacent to the parish church.

Dynevor Cottage is a modern octagonal building which incorporates a 19th-century cottage along the frontage of Rectory Lane. Ordnance Survey maps suggest that the cottage definitely stood on the site by 1901, but it may have been built in the late 19th century as earlier maps also show structures on the site but they are less clear. The post-medieval pottery and tobacco pipes retrieved during the archaeological investigations are most likely associated with activity in and around the cottage.

The grounds of the cottage must have been landscaped considerably in order to construct the present modern western extension of the cottage and its garage, and to create the garden to the north of the cottage. The majority of layers recorded during the investigations represent made-up ground and levelling layers.

As the finds represent stray artefacts, albeit located at some depth and representing medieval activity, they are of no more than local significance.



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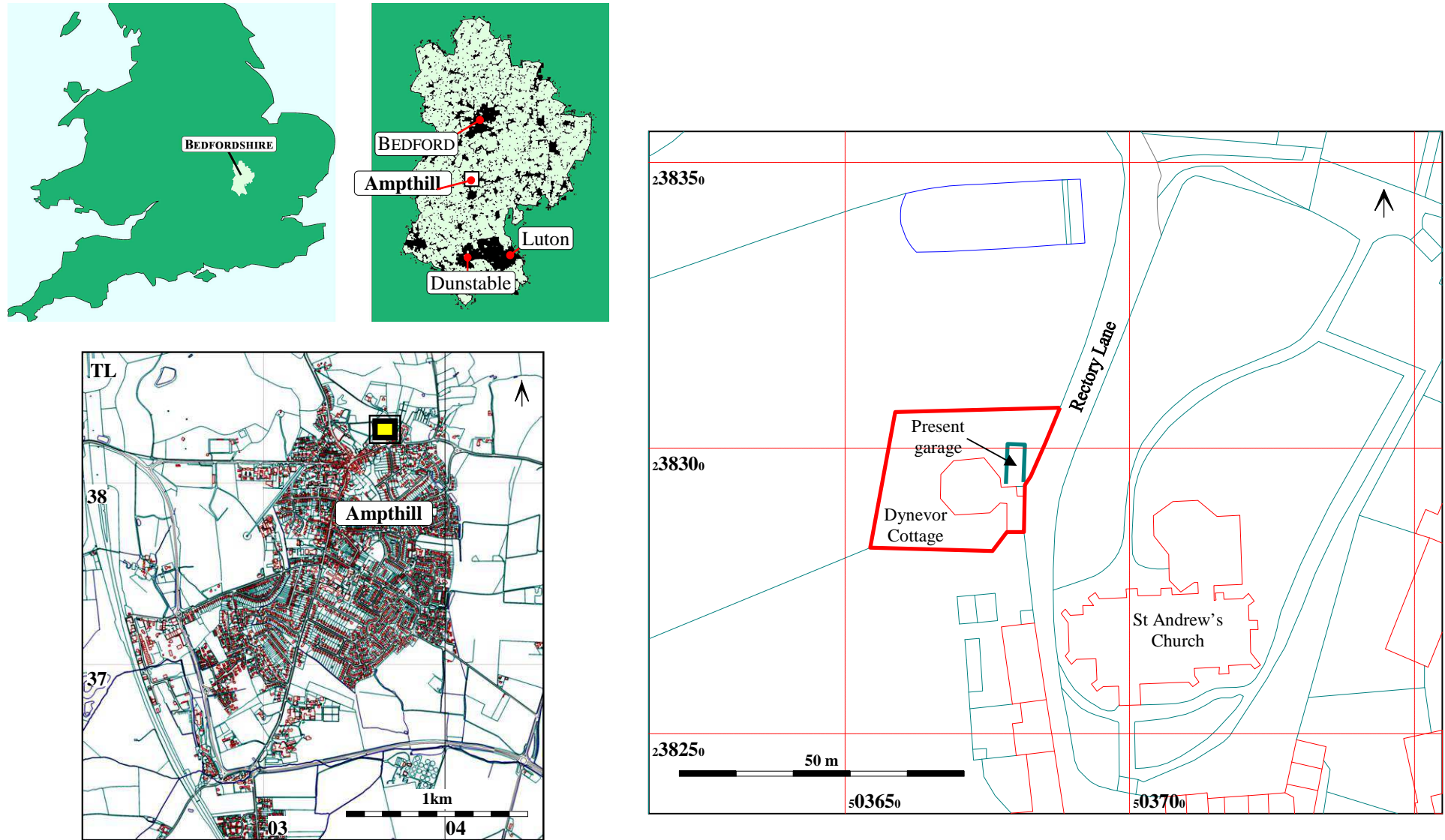


Figure 1: Site location

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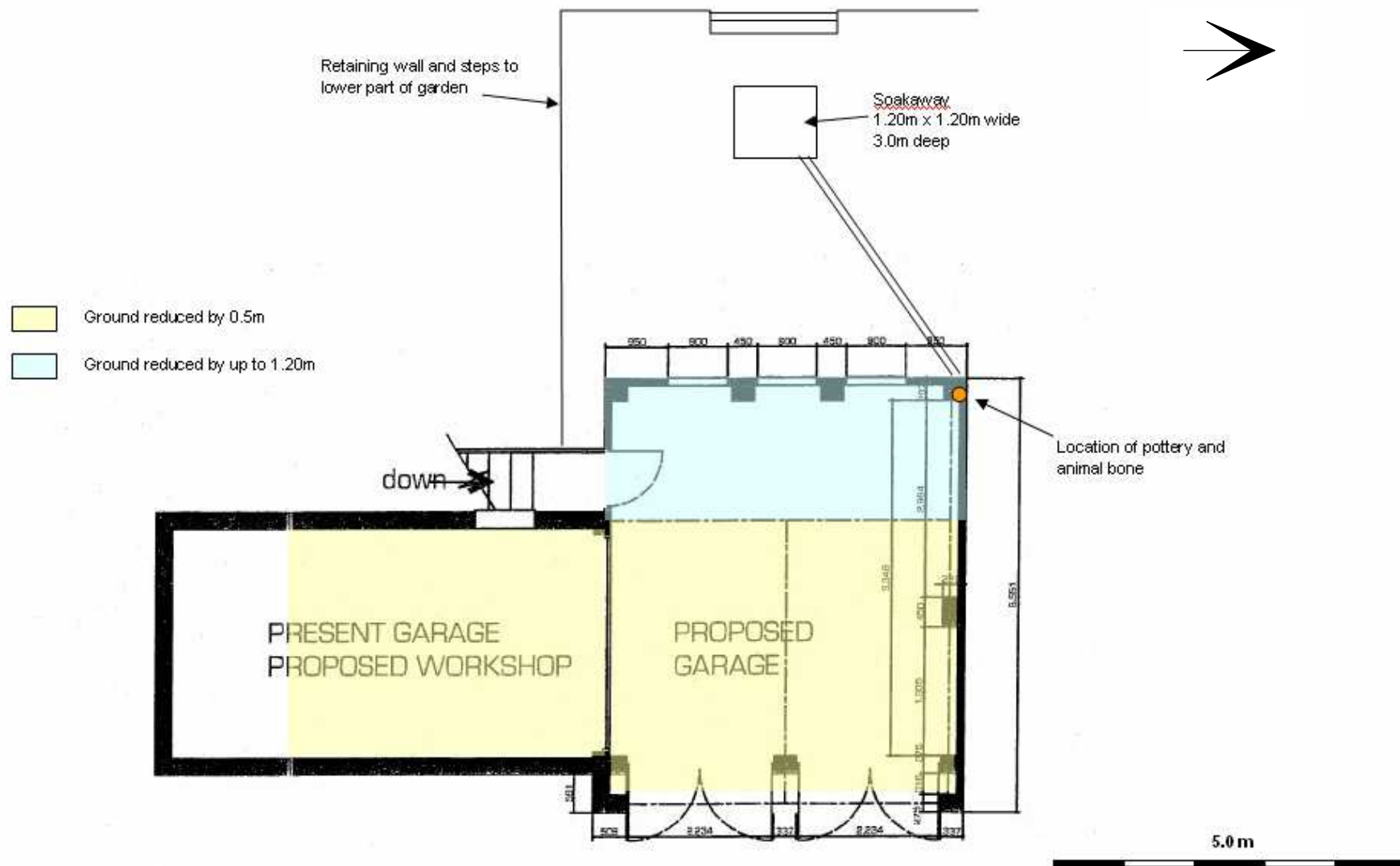


Figure 2: Original (present) garage and footprint of proposed garage with approximate location of soakaway



Figure 3: Ground reduction prior to construction of footings



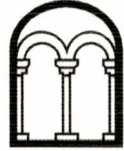
Figure 4: Possible pit and location of pottery fragments (western end of E-W footing)



Figure 5: Ground reduction within garage

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