

**2 HORSLOW STREET
POTTON
BEDFORDSHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION

Albion
archaeology



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On behalf of:
Mr Andrew Strath



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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.

Acknowledgements

The project was commissioned by TMV Architectural Design on behalf of Mr Andrew Strath and monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Hannah Firth, Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Kathy Pilkinton (Archaeological Supervisor) and Ben Carroll (Assistant Archaeological Supervisor). This report was prepared by Kathy Pilkinton with figures produced by Joan Lightning (CAD Technician). Finds reporting was by Jackie Wells (Finds Officer).

All Albion projects are under the overall management of Drew Shotliff (Operations Manager).

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Key Terms

The following terms or abbreviations are used throughout this report:

CBC	Central Bedfordshire Council
BCA	Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist
HER	Central Bedfordshire and Luton Historic Environment Record
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists
PDA	Proposed Development Area



Non-Technical Summary

Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) received a planning application (CB/14/00189/FULL) for the erection of an oak-framed timber triple garage and log store to the rear of Chigwell House (2 Horslow Street), a Grade II listed building.

As the development site had the potential to contain heritage assets with archaeological interest the Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist (CBCA) issued a brief stipulating trial trench evaluation in order to appraise the significance of any archaeological heritage assets present and to assess the impact of the proposed development on those assets (CBC 2014).

The trial trenching only revealed two modern pits and a large area of rooting, which are of little archaeological significance. The evaluation has demonstrated that the construction of the garage will not have any impact on the significance of sub-surface archaeological remains.

The PDA lies in the garden of Chigwell House, an 18th-century Grade II listed building and also within the Potton Conservation Area. The proposed development lies to the rear of Chigwell House and as such is likely to be shielded from view of the majority of buildings within the Conservation Area. Its proximity to Chigwell House itself will have a minor affect on the setting of this listed building, although the impact of the development has been minimised by sympathetic design proposals.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Project Background*

Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) received a planning application (CB/14/00189/FULL) for the erection of an oak-framed timber triple garage and log store to the rear of Chigwell House (2 Horslow Street), a Grade II listed building.

As the development site had the potential to contain heritage assets with archaeological interest the Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist (CBCA) issued a brief stipulating trial trench evaluation in order to appraise the significance of any archaeological heritage assets present and to assess the impact of the proposed development on those assets (CBC 2014).

The recommendations are in accordance with paragraph 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Policy 45 of the Development Strategy for Central Bedfordshire (pre-submission version, Jan 2013).

This report presents the findings of the evaluation in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (Albion Archaeology 2014) prepared in response to the brief issued by the CBCA.

1.2 *Site Location and Description*

The town of Pottton is located 17km east of Bedford, close to the border with Cambridgeshire. The similar small towns of Sandy and Biggleswade lie to the west and south-west respectively. The proposed development area (PDA) is located on the east side of Horslow Street at the back of Chigwell House (2 Horslow Street), a Grade II listed building (Figures 1 and 2). It occupies an area of c. 0.3ha, centred on grid reference TL 222 493.

Pottton is situated on the lower slopes of the Greensand Ridge at a height of 50m OD, near to the boundary with the Gault Clay to the east of the ridge. The Pottton Brook runs approximately north-south along the east side of the town. The underlying bedrock is Woburn Sands Formation (Lower Greensand). Recorded superficial deposits within Pottton consist of a band of alluvial deposits along the line of the Pottton Brook¹.

1.3 *Archaeological and Historical Background*

Archaeological and historical evidence for Pottton comprises documents and maps, as well as data from a limited number of archaeological investigations. The evidence was summarised in an Extensive Urban Survey (EUS) (Albion Archaeology 2003). Known historic assets and other heritage-related information are recorded in the Historic Environment Record (HER) which is maintained and updated by CBC.

The PDA is located within the north-west part of the historic core of the town. Documentary evidence for Pottton exists from the late Saxon period with charters that mention the town dating from the 10th and 11th centuries (Albion 2003, 9).

¹ Contains British Geological Survey materials ©NERC [1914]



A weekly market at the town is first mentioned in 1202 (*ibid*, 9). The location of a rectangular market, sited away from the church, and evidence for a grid of streets (King Street, Brook End, Sun Street and Bull Street) have been proposed as evidence of a deliberately planned layout for this part of the medieval settlement. Documentary references for the streets indicate the extent of the town in the medieval period. Horslow Street, which borders the west of the PDA, is mentioned in a document dating from 1351. Buildings dating from the 15th and 16th century are recorded at 4 Sun Street (HER 2205) and 27-28 Market Square (HER 2200).

Recent archaeological investigations within the town have produced evidence of medieval activity:

- A series of 28 test pits were dug in May 2012 as part of a community project (Access Cambridge Archaeology 2012). The results showed a lack of any early material dating from the prehistoric to Saxon periods. Medieval pottery dated to between the mid 11th to mid 14th centuries was recovered from trenches around the Market Square, parish church and close to the river. The results suggest that settlement in this period was focussed around the market and the church which lies to the east of Potton, on the other side of the Potton Brook. Test pits 11 and 12 located *c.* 200m to the north-east of the PDA produced moderate amounts of medieval pottery. Test pit number 8, which was located *c.* 80m to the north-west of the PDA, produced a small amount of medieval pottery.
- An archaeological evaluation on land to the rear of Crown Cottage *c.* 150m to the east of the PDA revealed a small number of undated features: two post-holes, a tree-throw hollow and a pit (Archaeological Solutions 2008). These were of no archaeological significance.
- A trial trench evaluation was undertaken in 2006 at Braybrooks Drive *c.* 400m to the south-east of the PDA (Heritage Network 2006). Six trenches were excavated on land adjoining the west side to the Potton Brook. The trench located furthest from the brook contained archaeological features, one of which was a pit which produced late medieval pottery, a horn core and slag.

The town continued to develop during the post-medieval period and in the 18th century it became the principal market town for east Bedfordshire. Chigwell House, which is part of the PDA and fronts onto Horslow Street, is an 18th-century building with some 19th-century re-workings. It is Grade II listed. In 1783, part of the town was destroyed by a fire which started in King Street and spread to the Market Square, burning down an estimated 50 buildings (Albion Archaeology 2003, 14). In the late 19th century the town was a centre for the local coprolite extraction industry and an important market gardening town.

1.4 Project Objectives

The existing background information shows that the PDA is located in an area with the potential for heritage assets with archaeological interest. In particular, it may contain deposits relating to the medieval and post-medieval development



of Potton and possibly backyard activity related to the use of Chigwell House. However, this potential is currently untested and, therefore, the objectives of the investigation were to determine:

- the date, nature, location and extent of any archaeological features or deposits within the PDA;
- the integrity and state of preservation of any archaeological features or deposits.

The results of the evaluation will provide information to assess the significance of any archaeological heritage assets and inform on methodologies to protect the significance of those assets.



2. METHODOLOGY

The trial trenching took place between 3rd and 4th March 2014. It comprised the excavation of one trial trench measuring 10m x 2m located across the footprint of the proposed triple garage (Figure 2).

The trench was opened using a mechanical excavator fitted with a flat-edged bucket, operated by an experienced driver under close archaeological supervision. All excavation and recording was carried out by experienced Albion staff.

Any potential archaeological features were investigated by hand and recorded using Albion Archaeology's *pro forma* sheets. Each trench was subsequently drawn and photographed as appropriate. All deposits were recorded using a unique number sequence, commencing at 101 for Trench 1, 201 for Trench 2 *etc.* Context numbers in square brackets refer to the cuts [***] and round brackets to fills or layers (***). The trenches were inspected by the CBCA prior to their backfilling.

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

• Albion Archaeology	<i>Procedures Manual: Volume 1 Fieldwork</i> (2nd edn, 2001).
• Bedford Borough Council	<i>Preparing Archaeological Archives for Deposition in Registered Museums in Bedford</i> (2010)
• EAA	<i>Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England</i> (Gurney 2003)
• English Heritage	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) Project Managers' Guide</i> (2009)
	<i>Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation, 2nd edition</i> (2011)
• IfA	<i>By-Laws and Code of Conduct</i>
	<i>Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation (updated 2009) and finds (updated 2008)</i>

The project archive will be deposited with Bedford Museum (Accession No. BEDFM: 2014.09). Details of the project and its findings will be submitted to the OASIS database (ref: albionar1-170565) in accordance with the guidelines issued by English Heritage and the Archaeology Data Service.



3. RESULTS AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

3.1 Introduction

The results of the trial trenching are summarised below and shown on Figure 3. Details of all the observed features and deposits are provided in Appendix 1.

3.2 Results

3.2.1 Overburden and undisturbed geological deposits

Topsoil (101) comprised dark brown sandy silt, *c.* 0.4m thick, overlain by a thin turf covering associated with recently laid lawn.

Subsoil (102) comprised, a heavily rooted, orangey brown sandy silt, up to 0.3m thick. It contained a sherd (5g) of 18th/19th-century Creamware pottery (fabric P38²), and two highly abraded and leached shell-tempered pottery sherds (2g). The fragmentary and poor condition of the latter precludes identification.

The underlying geological deposits (103) and (104) varied between a loose light yellow/orange sand and a root-disturbed brown sandy silt located at the SW end of the trench.

3.2.2 Tree rooting

A large irregular feature [105] was located in the NE end of the trench, resulting from where a large tree had been removed from the corner of the garden. It contained a piece of sand-tempered post-medieval flat roof tile (102g).

3.2.3 Modern pits

Two small pits were revealed. Oval pit [108] measured 0.85m wide and 0.4m deep and was backfilled with sandy silt. Pit [110] was partially obscured by the baulk, but was backfilled with silty sand and frequent amounts of medium-sized stones. Both appeared to post-date the tree rooting [105], with each containing a single, abraded brick fragment (total weight 175g) of post-medieval or later date.

3.3 Heritage Statement

The trial trenching only revealed two modern pits and a large area of rooting, which are of little archaeological significance. Away from these features, the undisturbed geological deposits had suffered little in the way of modern truncation, suggesting any potential archaeological features in the wider vicinity could be well preserved. However, the evaluation has demonstrated that the construction of the garage will not have any impact on the significance of sub-surface archaeological remains.

The PDA lies in the garden of Chigwell House, an 18th-century Grade II listed building and also within the Potton Conservation Area. The proposed development lies to the rear of Chigwell House and as such is likely to be shielded from view of the majority of buildings within the Conservation Area. Its proximity to Chigwell House itself will have a minor affect on the setting of

² Fabric type identified in accordance with the Bedfordshire Ceramic Type Series



this listed building, although the impact of the development has been minimised by sympathetic design proposals.



4. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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5. APPENDIX 1: TRENCH SUMMARIES



Trench: 1

Max Dimensions: Length: 10.00 m. Width: 1.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.68 m. Max: 0.7 m.

Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 52224: Northing: 24932)

OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 52223: Northing: 24935)

Reason: To evaluate area

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
100	Turf line	Friable dark brown black clay silt occasional small stones Turf lawn surface, 0.1m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
101	Topsoil	Friable dark brown black sandy silt moderate small-medium stones Original topsoil, 0.38m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
102	Subsoil	Friable mid orange brown sandy silt moderate small stones Heavily disturbed by rooting, 0.3m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
103	Natural	Loose light yellow orange silty sand occasional small stones To NE end of the trench	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
104	Natural	Friable mid brown orange sandy silt occasional small stones To SW end of the trench, heavily disturbed by rooting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
105	Treethrow	Irregular sides: steep base: uneven dimensions: min breadth 2.m, max depth 0.61m, min length 5.55m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
106	Lower fill	Friable mid grey brown sandy silt occasional small-medium stones Finds comprise brick and tile, 0.46m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
107	Upper fill	Friable mid orange brown sandy silt occasional small stones 0.21m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
108	Pit	Circular sides: U-shaped base: concave dimensions: max breadth 0.85m, max depth 0.4m, max length 0.75m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
109	Fill	Friable mid orange brown sandy silt moderate small-medium stones Finds comprise brick and tile	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
110	Pit	Circular dimensions: min breadth 0.55m, min length 1.55m	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
111	Fill	Loose mid orange brown silty gravel frequent medium-large stones Finds from surface of feature comprise small brick fragments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



6. APPENDIX 2: OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM

Project details

Project name	2 Horslow Street (Chigwell House), Potton
Short description of the project	Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) received a planning application (CB/14/00189/FULL) for the erection of an oak-framed timber triple garage and log store to the rear of Chigwell House (2 Horslow Street), a Grade II listed building. As the development site had the potential to contain heritage assets with archaeological interest the Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist (CBCA) issued a brief stipulating trial trench evaluation in order to appraise the significance of any archaeological heritage assets present and to assess the impact of the proposed development on those assets (CBC 2014). The trial trenching only revealed two modern pits and a large area of rooting, which are of little archaeological significance. Away from these features, the undisturbed geological deposits had suffered little in the way of modern truncation, suggesting any potential archaeological features in the wider vicinity could be well preserved. The PDA lies in the garden of Chigwell House, an 18th-century Grade II listed building and also within the conservation area of Potton. The proposed development lies to the rear of Chigwell House and as such is likely to be shielded from view of the majority of buildings within the conservation area. However, its proximity to Chigwell House itself will affect the setting of this listed building, though the impact of the development could be minimised by sympathetic design proposals.
Project dates	Start: 03-03-2014 End: 04-03-2014
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	HS2342 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	CB/14/00189/FULL - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	BEDFM 2014.09 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Field evaluation
Monument type	PITS Modern
Significant Finds	CBM Modern
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches"
Development type	Small-scale extensions (e.g. garages, porches, etc.)
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Prompt	Development Strategy for Central Bedfordshire
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location



Country	England
Site location	BEDFORDSHIRE MID BEDFORDSHIRE POTTON 2 Horslow Street, Potton
Study area	0.30 Hectares
Site coordinates	TL 222 493 52.1280569177 -0.214628783177 52 07 41 N 000 12 52 W 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	Robert Wardill
Project supervisor	Kathleen Pilkinton

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Bedford Museum
Physical Archive ID	BEDFM 2014.09
Physical Contents	"Ceramics"
Digital Archive recipient	Albion Archaeology
Digital Contents	"Ceramics","other"
Digital Media available	"Database","Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Albion Archaeology
Paper Contents	"other"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Correspondence","Microfilm","Miscellaneous Material","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	2 Horslow Street, Potton, Bedfordshire: Archaeological Field Evaluation
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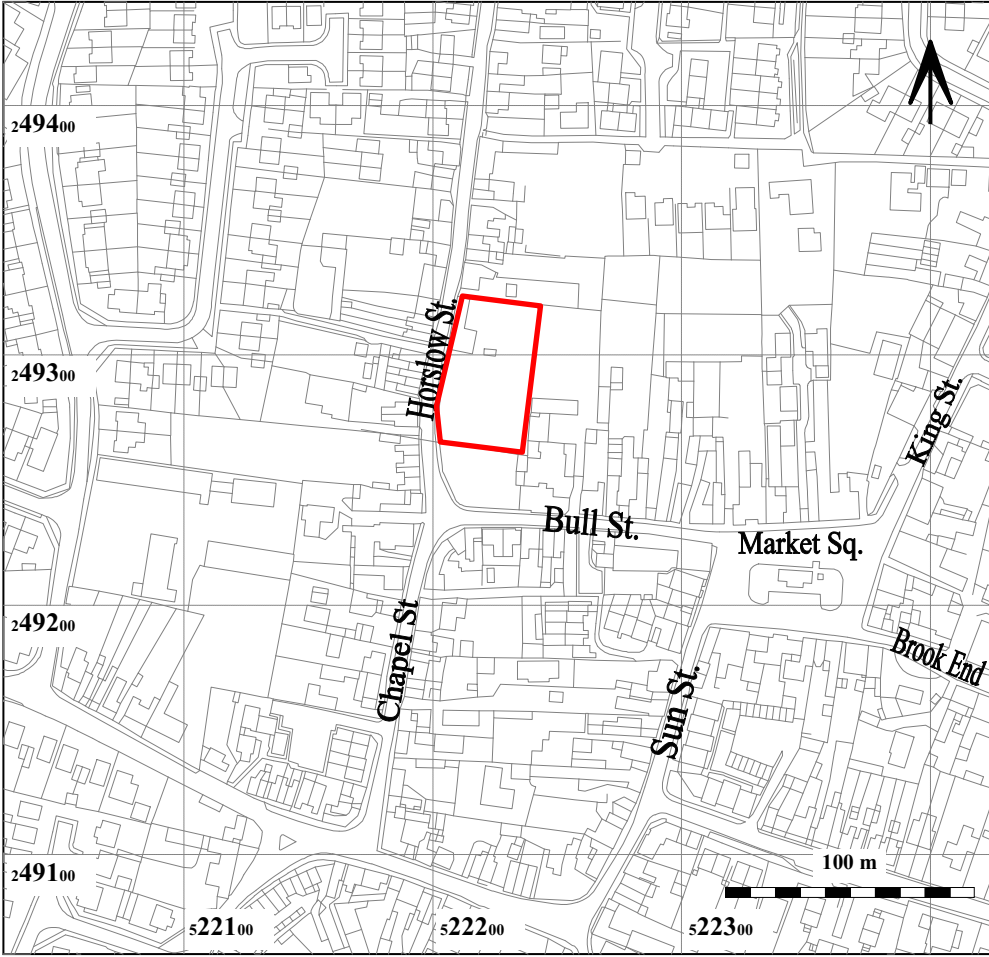
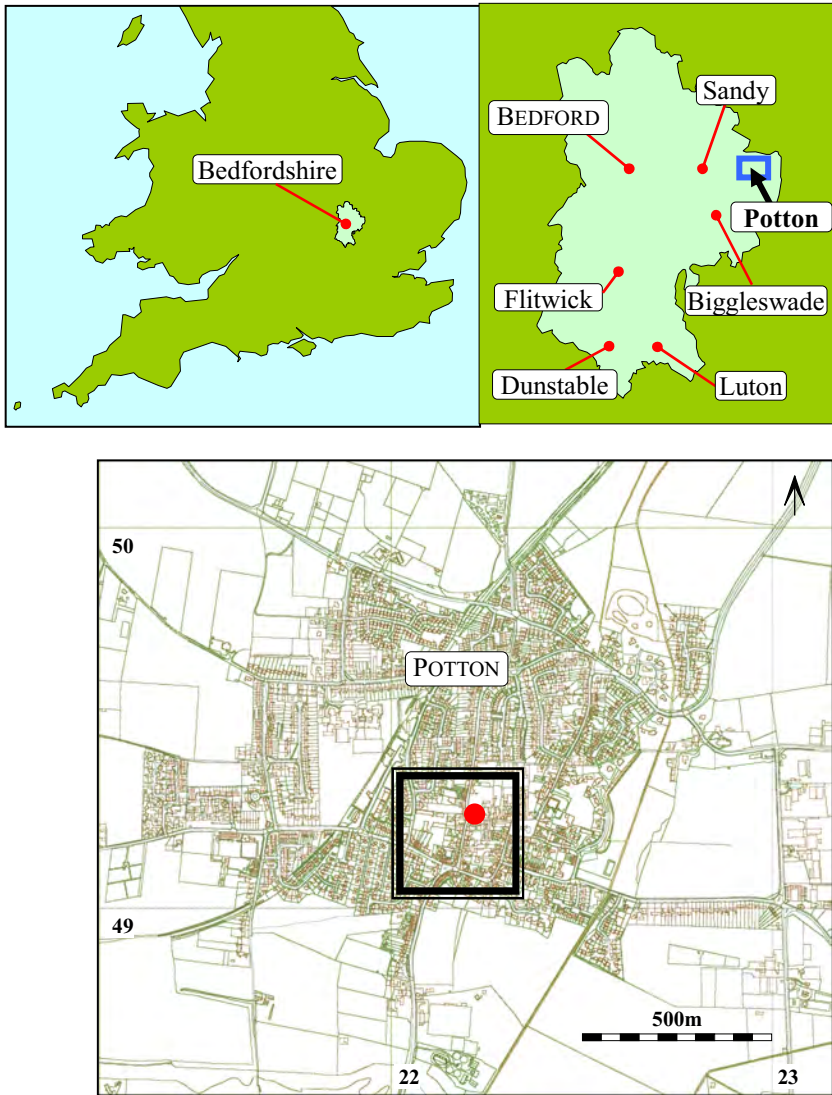
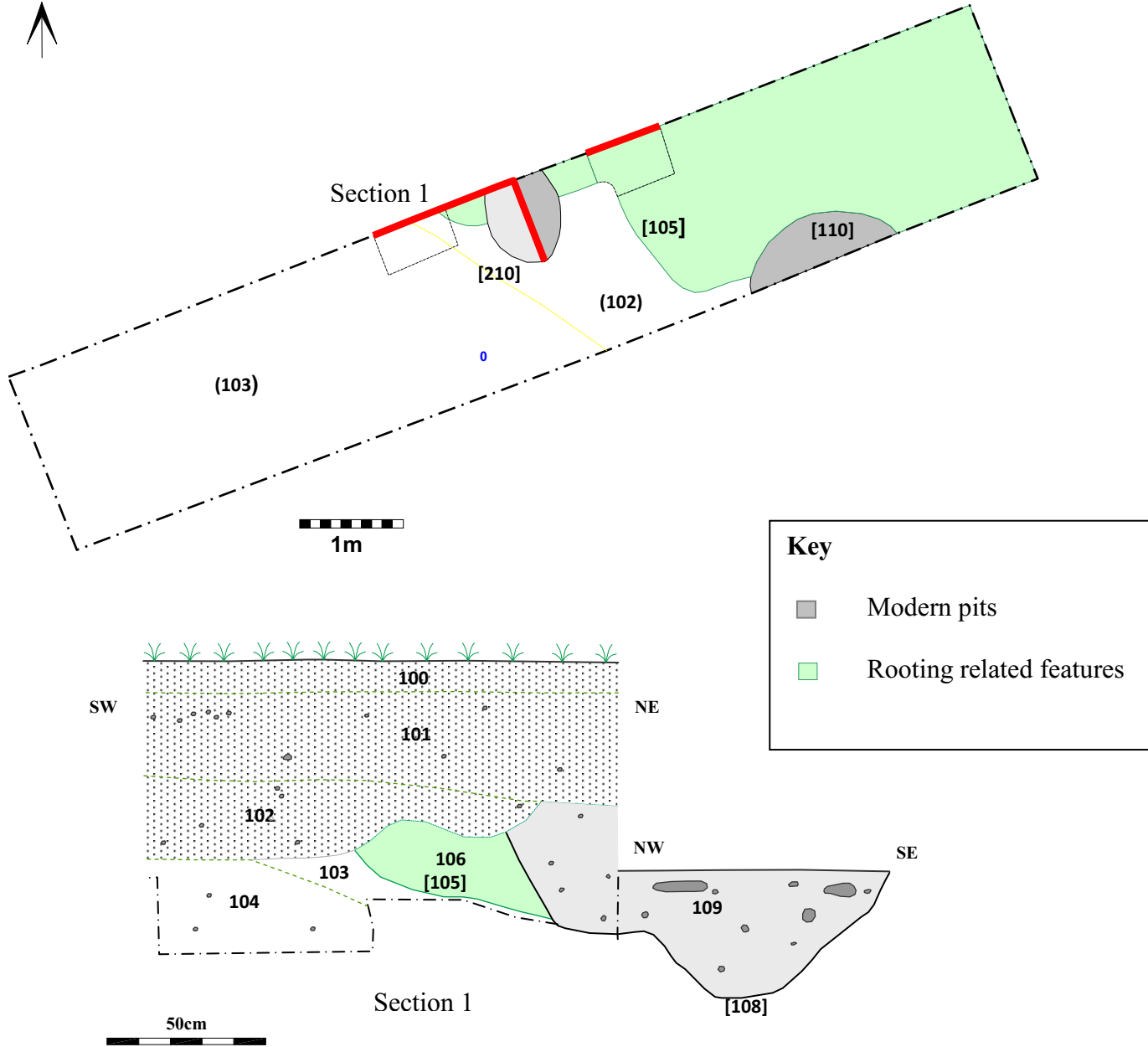


Figure 1: Site location plan

Base map reproduced from the Ordnance Survey Map with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, by Albion Archaeology, Central Bedfordshire Council., OS Licence No. 100017358(LA). © Crown Copyright.



Figure 2: Trial trench overlaid onto proposed development plan
(Site plan based on TMV Architectural Design drawing no: 02, ref: 111, date: 01/2014)



Section 1 from SE, 1m scale



Section 1 from SW, 1m scale

Figure 3: Plan and sections

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