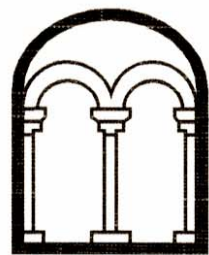


**LAND TO REAR OF 36 HIGH STREET
RISELEY
BEDFORDSHIRE**

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

Albion
archaeology



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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION,
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AND PUBLICATION**

Document: 2014/99
Version: 1.0

Project Code: HS2395
Bedford Museum accession no.: BEDFM 2014.32
OASIS ID: albionar1-177720

Compiled by	Approved by
Mark Phillips	Drew Shotliff

Issue date: 8th October 2014

Produced for:
John James Development Ltd



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Preface

Every effort has been made in the preparation of this document to provide as complete an assessment as possible, within the terms of the specification. 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.

The project was commissioned by John James Development Ltd and was monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Geoff Saunders, (Bedford Borough Council).

The fieldwork was undertaken by Slawomir Utrata (Supervisor) and Anna Rebisz-Niziolek (Assistant Supervisor). This report has been prepared by Mark Phillips (Project Officer). Artefacts analysis was undertaken by Jackie Wells (Finds Officer). The illustrations are by Joan Lightning (CAD Technician). All Albion projects are under the overall management of Drew Shotliff (Operations Manager).

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Version History

<i>Version</i>	<i>Issue date</i>	<i>Reason for re-issue</i>
<i>1.0</i>	<i>08/10/2014</i>	<i>n/a</i>

Key Terms

Throughout this document the following terms or abbreviations are used:

DA	Development Area
HER	Historic Environment Record
HETO	Historic Environment Team Officer (Bedford Borough Council)
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation



Non-Technical Summary

Bedford Borough Council granted planning permission (13/02628/FUL) for the construction of a one-and-half storey dwelling, detached car-port and associated works on land to the rear of 36 High Street, Riseley. The site lies within an area of archaeological sensitivity. Following advice from Bedford Borough Council's Historic Environment Team, a condition was attached to the planning consent requiring a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording. The necessary works were undertaken by Albion Archaeology on 29th to 30th April 2014 during groundworks for the new house (Area 1) and on 30th September 2014 for the construction of the carport (Area 2).

Geological deposits comprised sand and gravel river terrace deposits in Area 1 and the underlying Oxford Clay bedrock which was seen in deeper foundation trenches in Area 2. The river terrace deposits in Area 1 were overlain by two successive layers of colluvium (hill wash) formed by erosion from higher ground to the south-east of the site.

The earliest dateable archaeological feature was a pit [12] that was partially exposed in the easternmost corner of Area 1. It was cut through the lower colluvium and sealed by the upper colluvium and contained a single sherd of pottery dated to the 15th–16th centuries. Two NE-SW aligned ditches, located close to the pit, were cut through the upper colluvium, indicating that they post-date pit [12]. A small sherd of abraded pottery dating from the 12th or 13th century was the only object recovered from the ditches and is residual in this context.

An undated, clay-filled, circular feature was partially exposed at the south-west side of Area 1; it is interpreted as a well. Modern activity was evidenced by 20th-century disturbance in the north of Area 1; a make-up layer with 18th- and 19th-century pottery along the south-west side of Area 1; and features or deposits containing stone, brick and tile rubble in Area 2.

The pit and ditches found in Area 1 may be related to late medieval/early post-medieval development in this part of the village. The paucity of artefacts suggests that the features did not form part of a domestic focus. The modern evidence probably relates to the use of the existing building at the front of the plot and its later modification.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Planning Background*

Bedford Borough Council granted planning permission (13/02628/FUL) for the construction of a one-and-a-half storey dwelling, detached car-port and associated works on land to the rear of 36 High Street, Riseley. The site lies within an area of archaeological sensitivity. Following advice from Bedford Borough Council's Historic Environment Team, a condition was attached to the planning consent requiring a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording.

Detailed requirements for the archaeological works were set out in a brief issued by the Historic Environment Team Officer (HETO) (BBC 2014). Albion Archaeology was commissioned by the developer John James Development Ltd to carry out the archaeological works. Albion produced a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) in accordance with the terms of the brief which details the methodology for the works (Albion 2014).

This report presents the results of the archaeological monitoring works.

1.2 *Site Location, Topography and Geology*

The village of Riseley is located in north Bedfordshire. It is a linear settlement and its main thoroughfare, High Street, is situated along the south side of the Riseley Brook which flows from the south-west to the north-east.

The development area occupies a plot to the rear of 36 High Street, in the south-western end of the village. 36 High Street was formerly the Five Bells public house but is now a residential property. The development area is within the garden area at the rear of the former public house. The development is at NGR TL 03913/62565.

The plot lies on the south side of a shallow valley formed by the Riseley Brook. The ground rises from approximately 55m OD on the road frontage to over 58m OD at the rear of the plot. The underlying geology is Oxford Clay.

1.3 *Archaeological Background*

The development area (DA) lies within the medieval village of Riseley (HER 17089) as defined in the Historic Environment Record. Riseley is recorded in the Domesday Survey of 1086 as a fairly large manor with up to 25 households. The settlement is strung out along the High Street with the parish church c. 500m to the north-east of the DA and set back from the main road.

A medieval moated site lies c. 900m to the north-east of the DA on the opposite side of the High Street in a field known as "Hall Close". This is a scheduled monument (HER 347) and consists of a moated enclosure with associated trackways, fishponds and other earthworks. A low ring-shaped bank may be the foundation for a dovecote. A trackway leads from the moated site up to the Riseley Brook and most likely would have accessed the High Street across a ford in the brook.



To the north of the moat a series of ridges represent the remains of medieval ridge and furrow cultivation earthworks. Ridge and furrow remains existed in a number of fields of Riseley parish (HER 4475) but modern cultivation has levelled many of these former earthworks. Medieval pottery has been found at locations close to the High Street in the north-eastern part of the village (HER 575 and 11996 respectively) and groundworks for the construction of a driveway and retaining wall at 129 High Street revealed four ditches and a considerable quantity of pottery, animal bone and associated artefacts (HER event number EBD 540).

There are references to brick and tile making in Riseley from the 1550s onwards and the site of a brick and tile works (HER 3023) lies to the south of the High Street in the north-eastern part of the village.

To date little archaeological investigation has been undertaken in the south-western part of the village where the DA is located.

1.4 Project Objectives

The full project objectives are detailed in the WSI. The general objectives were to identify and characterise any archaeological remains present on the site and to produce an archive report detailing the results. Specific research objectives related to Saxon, medieval and post-medieval rural settlements were identified from the published local and regional research agendas (Glazebrook 1997, Brown and Glazebrook 2000, Oake et al 2007 and Medlycott 2011).

The works uncovered a small number of archaeological features which are described in Section 2 of this report. The data recovered was not able to address the possible research objectives identified in the WSI or to support additional post-excavation analysis.

1.5 Methodology

The methodology for the archaeological works is set out in full in the WSI (Albion 2014). The site was attended on 29th and 30th April 2014 during of groundworks for the new house (Area 1) and on 30th September 2014 when foundation trenches for the carport were excavated (Area 2). Groundworks for the house plot consisted of ground reduction to form a level terrace in the sloping ground on this part of the site (Figure 2).



2. RESULTS

2.1 Introduction

The features and deposits are summarised below by area and sequence beginning with the earliest deposits. Plans and sections are illustrated in Figure 2. Detailed context descriptions for all features and deposits are included in Appendix 1.

2.2 Area 1

This area was reduced to form a level terrace for the new house located in the southernmost part of the development plot.

2.2.1 Geological deposit (5)

A variable layer (5) consisting of mid orange/yellow sand with patches of gravel and mixed gravel and sand was exposed in the western half of Area 1. The nature of the deposit suggests that it is likely to have been deposited in a fluvial environment (i.e. by a stream or river).

2.2.2 Lower colluvium (4)

This layer of mid orange brown sandy clay, up to 0.35m thick, was found above the geological deposit across the eastern half of Area 1. It is interpreted as colluvium (hill wash) deposited by erosion from the higher ground to the south-east.

2.2.3 Pit [12]

A cut feature [12], interpreted as a pit, was partially exposed in the easternmost corner of Area 1 (Figure 2: Section C; Figure 4). It was steep-sided with a flat base and appeared from the visible portion to be sub-square in plan. Its fill (13) produced a single small sherd of pottery dated to the late medieval/early post-medieval period (15th–16th centuries) and a small fragment of animal bone. This feature was cut through the lower colluvium (4) and was sealed by an upper colluvial layer (3).

2.2.4 Upper colluvium (3)

This layer of mid brownish grey clay-silt extended across the whole of Area 1. It was up to 0.6m thick at the eastern side of the trench, gradually thinning to 0.3m at the west. It is interpreted as colluvium (hill wash) deposited by erosion from the higher ground to the south-east.

2.2.5 Ditches [7] and [10]

Two ditches extended from the north-east side of Area 1 and terminated in rounded terminals part-way across the trench. They were aligned roughly NE-SW, converging slightly towards the south-west. The southern ditch [7] was at least 11.6m long and 0.68m deep (Figure 5). The northern ditch [10] had a shallower profile and was at least 6m long. One small, abraded sherd of early medieval pottery dated to the 12th or 13th centuries was recovered from fill (11), the sole fill of ditch [10]. Both ditches were cut through the upper colluvium (3).



2.2.6 Possible well [14]

A rounded or circular feature [14] partially exposed at the south-west edge of Area 1 is interpreted as a possible well (Figure 6). It was *c.* 2.4m in diameter. A clean, clay fill (15) is likely to be a deliberate capping deposit used to seal the disused well. The deposits above the well consisted of a modern make-up layer (6) which lay above the western part of the trench.

2.2.7 Modern features and deposits

Areas of disturbance and small cut features containing modern debris (not numbered but shown in grey on Figure 2) were observed across the northern part of Area 1. A dark soil layer (6) in the south-west part of the area is interpreted as a make-up/levelling deposit; it contained modern debris including 18th- and 19th-century pottery.

2.2.8 Upper layers, topsoil and subsoil

The overburden observed in Area 1 consisted of topsoil (1), comprising dark brown grey clayey silt, 0.2–0.3m thick, overlying a layer of subsoil (2). The subsoil comprised dark grey brown silty clay and was 0.1m thick.

2.3 Area 2

Groundworks in this area on the northern edge of the development plot consisted of strip footings (up to 2.7m deep) for the construction of a carport. See Figure 2 for location and details.

2.3.1 Geological deposits

Geological deposits consisted of an upper layer (18) of light orange/yellow clay found at a depth of *c.* 0.35m and a lower deposit (19) of blue, powdery clay silt (probably part of the Oxford Clay) at a depth of *c.* 1.65m below the ground surface.

2.3.2 Possible ditch [20]

This possible ditch was seen in section in Trench 1. It was *c.* 1.5m wide and 0.37m deep and sealed beneath a subsoil layer (17). Its fill (21) of mid orange brown sandy silt contained modern brick rubble.

2.3.3 Feature [22]

Also in Trench 1, close to ditch [20], was another possible cut feature [22]. Its full extent was not clearly discernable within the narrow machine-cut trench. It contained a deposit (23) of loose brown soil with modern brick rubble representing modern demolition or construction debris.

2.3.4 Demolition debris layer

In Trench 2, at the northern end of Area 2, a layer (24) observed in the northern side of the trench consisted of mid brown clay silt soil with a moderate amount of limestone rubble along with brick, tile, charcoal and slag.

2.3.5 Topsoil and subsoil

The uppermost deposits in Area 2 consisted of a thin layer of topsoil (16) above a subsoil (17) consisting of light brown sandy silt with occasional stones.



2.4 Artefacts

2.4.1 Introduction

Five deposits yielded a small assemblage comprising mainly pottery (Table 1), the majority deriving from subsoil (2), and make-up layer (6).

Feature	Description	Fill	Date range	Finds Summary
2	Subsoil	2	Late medieval / early post-medieval	Pottery (102g); ceramic roof tile (8g)
6	Make-up layer	6	Modern	Pottery (36g)
7	Ditch	8	Undated	Burnt stone (4g)
10	Ditch	11	Early medieval	Pottery (2g)
12	Pit	13	Late med / early post medieval	Pottery (1g); animal bone (1g)

Table 1: Artefact summary by feature

2.4.2 Ceramics

Seven pottery sherds (141g) were recovered. They survive in good condition, with a mean sherd weight of 20g, and are largely unabraded. Seven fabric types were identified using common names and type codes in accordance with the Bedfordshire Ceramic Type Series (Table 2).

Fabric Type	Common name	Sherd No.	Wt (g)	Fill / Sherd No.
<i>Medieval</i>				
B07	Shell	1	2	(11):1
E02	Late medieval oxidised	1	102	(2):1
E03	Late medieval smooth	1	1	(13):1
<i>Modern</i>				
P35	English porcelain	1	20	(6):1
P38	Creamware	1	2	(6):1
P39	Mocha ware	1	8	(6):1
P45	Transfer-printed ware	1	6	(6):1

Table 2: Pottery Type Series

The earliest pottery, collected from ditch [10], comprises a shell-tempered body sherd (2g) of 12th–13th-century date, known to derive from production sites on the Beds. / Bucks. / Northants. borders. Pit [12] and subsoil (2) yielded single sherds of 15th–16th-century oxidised ware (total weight 103g). Both are likely to derive from manufacturing centres in Northamptonshire, perhaps Potterspury or Glapthorn. Subsoil (2) also yielded an abraded fragment of post-medieval roof tile (8g).

Mass-produced wares of 18th–19th-century date collected from make-up layer (6) comprise single body sherds of creamware, mocha ware, transfer-printed ware, and a small lid in English porcelain.

2.4.3 Ecofacts

An undiagnostic animal bone fragment (1g) was recovered from pit [12].



3. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

3.1 *Natural Deposits and Processes*

Geological data from this area¹ indicate that the bedrock consists mainly of the Oxford Clay Formation with Cornbrash Formation, Blisworth Clay Formation and Blisworth Limestone Formation to the north of the Riseley Brook. Superficial deposits comprise river terrace deposits and alluvium along the line of the Riseley Brook with pockets of glaciofluvial sands and gravels to the north of the brook. The geological deposits recorded during the archaeological monitoring comprise sands and gravels (5) in Area 1 and blue clay (19) in the deeper foundation trenches in Area 2. The sands and gravels (5) are most likely to correspond to the river terrace deposits whilst the blue clay represents part of the Oxford Clay below the river terrace deposits.

Two different colluvial layers were identified in Area 1, a lower layer of orange brown sandy clay (4) and an upper layer of mid brown clay silt (3). The lower colluvium appears to be more closely derived from the underlying sandy terrace deposits and is cut by the archaeological features in this trench. The upper colluvium sealed pit [12] which contained a sherd of later medieval/early post-medieval pottery. Both layers represent hill-wash deposits derived from the higher ground to the south-east of the development area. The upper colluvium is likely to have resulted from soil erosion caused by agricultural activity in the late medieval and post-medieval periods.

3.2 *Archaeological Features*

Archaeological features in Area 1 consisted of a pit [12], two ditches [7 and 10] and a possible well [14]. The well is undated and sealed beneath a modern make-up layer.

Pit [12] was cut through the lower colluvium (4) and sealed by the upper colluvium (3). It contained a single sherd of late medieval/early post-medieval pottery dated to the 15th/16th centuries which provides a possible date for its excavation and indicates that the colluvium was deposited in the late medieval period or later.

Dating evidence recovered from the two nearby ditches [7 and 10] consisted of a single abraded sherd of 12th- or 13th-century pottery from the fill of ditch [10]. As the ditches cut the upper colluvium, the sherd of abraded pottery is clearly residual in this context.

Archaeological features found in Area 1 appear to be related to the post-medieval development of the settlement. The ditches, which can be only broadly dated to the post-medieval period, were probably boundary or drainage ditches that may have defined the south side of an enclosure situated next to the High Street. The absence of finds in these features suggests that they were not located within a focus of domestic activity.

¹ Contains British Geological Survey materials © NERC 2014



In Area 2 the features and deposits comprised two possible cut features [20] and [22] and a demolition layer (24), all of which contained brick and tile debris. The features are all likely to be associated with 20th-century building activity on the site.

The project archive will be deposited with Bedford Museum (accession no. BEDFM 2014.32). This report will be uploaded onto the Archaeology Data Service's OASIS website (OASIS ID no. albionar1-177720).



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5. APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DETAILS

Area 1: Monitoring of ground reduction for new house

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
1	Topsoil	Firm dark brown grey clay silt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Subsoil	Firm dark grey brown silty clay occasional small-medium stones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	Colluvium	Firm mid brown grey clay silt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Colluvium	Friable mid orange brown sandy clay	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Natural	Loose mid orange yellow silty sand . With patches of clean gravel and grey, mixed gravel-sand	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Make up layer	Friable dark brown grey silty clay	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7	Ditch	Linear NE-SW sides: concave base: concave dimensions: max breadth 1.75m, max depth 0.68m, min length 11.65m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Lower fill	Firm mid brown grey silty clay moderate small-medium stones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9	Upper fill	Firm light brown grey silty clay	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Ditch	Linear NNE-SSW sides: concave base: flat dimensions: max breadth 0.6m, max depth 0.19m, min length 6m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Fill	Firm mid brown grey clay silt occasional small stones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
12	Pit	Sub-square sides: near vertical base: flat dimensions: min breadth 0.35m, max depth 0.24m, min length 0.5m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	Fill	Firm mid brown silty clay occasional flecks charcoal, occasional small stones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
14	Well	Circular dimensions: min depth 0.7m, max diameter 2.6m	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	Fill	Firm light grey brown clay . With blue mottling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Area 2: Monitoring of carport strip foundations

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
16	Topsoil	Friable mid brown sandy silt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17	Subsoil	Friable light brown sandy silt occasional flecks charcoal, moderate small stones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18	Natural	Light orange yellow clay silt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19	Natural	Friable blue clay silt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20	Ditch	Sides: concave base: concave . Obscure feature: possible ditch seen in section	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21	Fill	Friable mid orange brown sandy silt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22	Feature	Modern feature, possible pit	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23	Fill	Loose mid brown . With broken brick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24	Demolition layer	Mid brown clay silt . With stone, brick, tiles and charcoal flecks	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



6. APPENDIX 2: OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM

6.1 OASIS ID: *albionar1-177720*

Project details

Project name	Land to the rear of 36 High Street, Riseley
Short description of the project	Bedford Borough Council granted planning permission for the construction of a one-and-half storey dwelling, detached car-port and associated works on land to the rear of 36 High Street, Riseley. The site lies within an area of archaeological sensitivity. Following advice from Bedford Borough Council's Historic Environment Team, a condition was attached to the planning consent requiring a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording. The earliest dateable archaeological feature was a pit [12] that was partially exposed in the easternmost corner of Area 1. It was cut through the lower colluvium and sealed by the upper colluvium and contained a single sherd of pottery dated to the 15th-16th centuries. Two NE-SW aligned ditches, located close to the pit, were cut through the upper colluvium, indicating that they post-date pit [12]. A small sherd of abraded pottery dating from the 12th or 13th century was the only object recovered from the ditches and is residual in this context. An undated, clay-filled, circular feature was partially exposed at the south-west side of Area 1; it is interpreted as a well. Modern activity was evidenced by 20th-century disturbance in the north of Area 1; a make-up layer with 18th- and 19th-century pottery along the south-west side of Area 1; and features or deposits containing stone, brick and tile rubble in Area 2. The pit and ditches found in Area 1 may be related to late medieval/early post-medieval development in this part of the village. The paucity of artefacts suggests that the features did not form part of a domestic focus. The modern evidence probably relates to the use of the existing building at the front of the plot and its later modification.
Project dates	Start: 29-04-2014 End: 30-09-2014
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	HS2395 - Contracting Unit No. 13/02628/FUL - Planning Application No. BEDFM 2014.32 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Recording project
Monument type	DITCH Post Medieval
Monument type	WELL Post Medieval
Monument type	PIT Post Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Post Medieval
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	BEDFORDSHIRE BEDFORD RISELEY Land to the rear of 36 High Street, Riseley
Study area	350.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 0391 6256 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	Mark Phillips
Project supervisor	Slawomir Utrata

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Bedford Museum
Physical Archive ID	BEDFM 2014.32
Physical Contents	"Ceramics"
Digital Archive recipient	Albion Archaeology
Digital Contents	"Ceramics", 'other'
Digital Media available	"Database", 'Images raster / digital photography', "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Bedford Museum
Paper Archive ID	BEDFM 2014.32
Paper Contents	"Ceramics", "other"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", 'Correspondence', "Drawing", "Miscellaneous Material", "Report"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Land to Rear of 36 High Street, Riseley, Bedfordshire: Archaeological Observation, Investigation, Recording, Analysis and Publication
Author(s)/Editor(s)	'Phillips, M' 'Wells, J'
Other bibliographic details	2014/99
Date	2014
Issuer or publisher	Albion Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	Bedford

Entered by	Helen Parslow (hl.parslow@albion-arch.com)
Entered on	8 October 2014



7. FIGURES

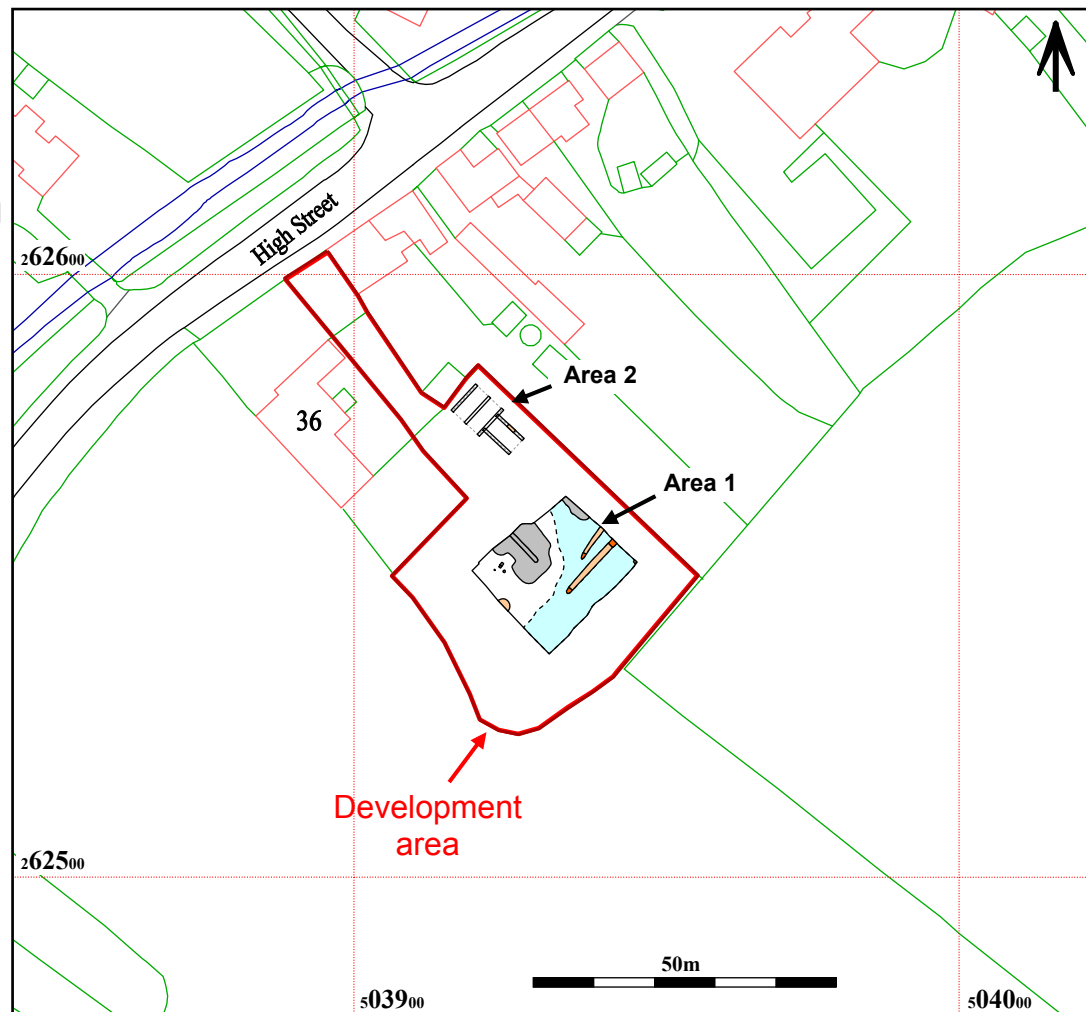
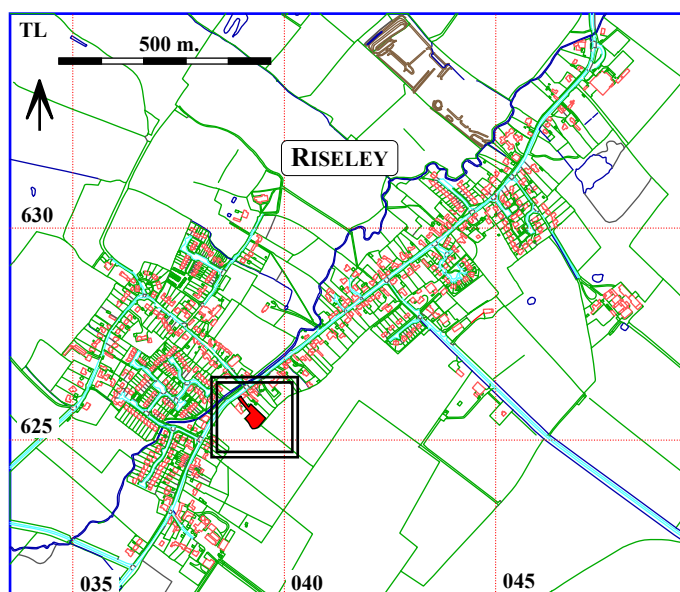
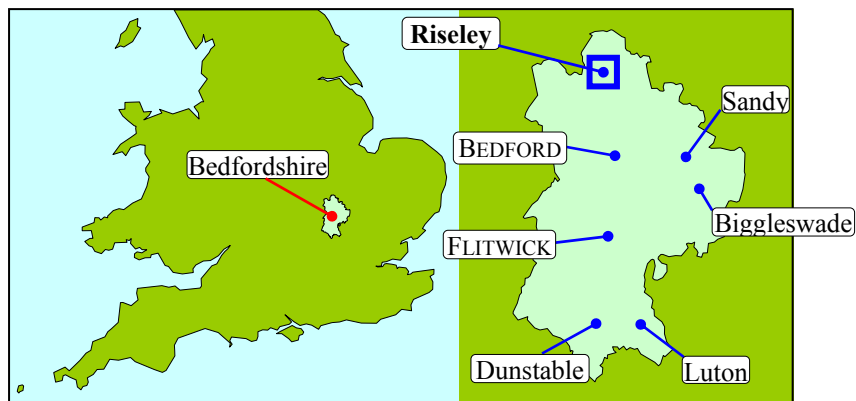


Figure 1: Site location plan

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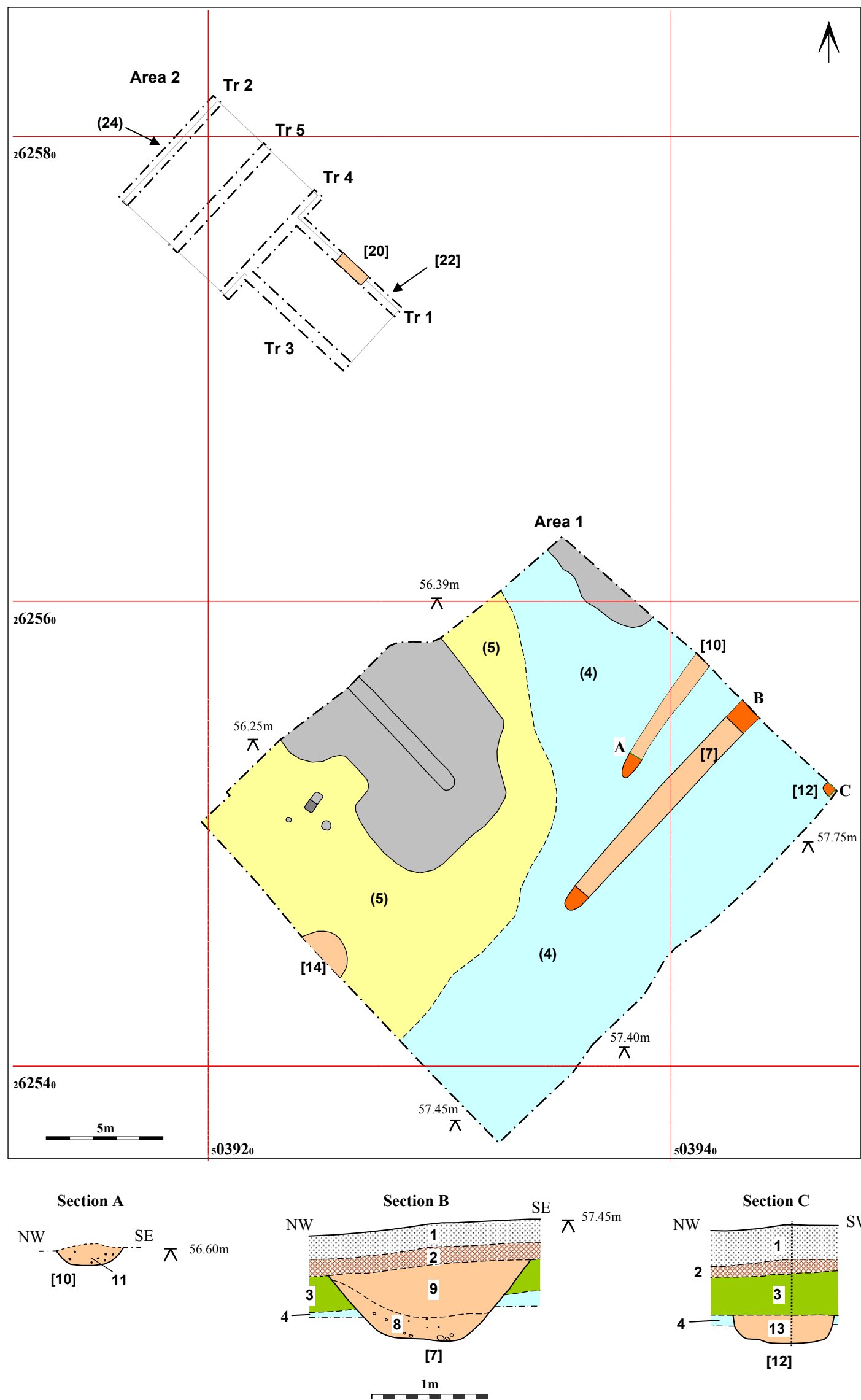


Figure 2: All features plan



Figure 3: General view of site looking towards the north-west
(In the foreground is a layer of colluvium (3) cut by ditch [7], which shows as an excavated segment at the right of the photograph.)



Figure 4: Pit [12]
(View looking north-east, 1m scale)



Figure 5: Ditch [7]
(View looking north-east, 1m scale)



Figure 6: Feature [14], possible in-filled well
(View looking south-west, 1m scale)

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