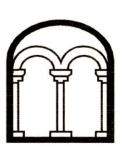
# THE LIMES CHURCH WALK HARROLD BEDFORDSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION, INVESTIGATION, RECORDING, ANALYSIS AND PUBLICATION

Albion archaeology





# THE LIMES CHURCH WALK HARROLD BEDFORDSHIRE

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION, INVESTIGATION, RECORDING, ANALYSIS AND PUBLICATION

Project: TL2566 Accession Code: BEDFM: 2015.01 OASIS ref.: albionar1-198944

> Document: 2015/204 Version: 1.0

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9th December 2015

Prepared on behalf of: Mr and Mrs Barnard



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#### Preface

Every effort has been made in the preparation and submission of this document, and all statements 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.

This report has been prepared by Anna Rebisz-Niziolek (Assistant Archaeological Supervisor) and Jackie Wells (Artefacts Officer) and edited by Ben Barker (Project Officer). Anna Rebisz-Niziolek undertook the fieldwork, while Drew Shotliff (Operations Manager) managed the project. All Albion Archaeology projects are under the overall management of Drew Shotliff.

Albion Archaeology is grateful to Mr and Mrs Barnard for commissioning the project. We would also like to acknowledge the assistance of Geoff Saunders of Bedford Borough Council's Historic Environment Team, who monitored the project on behalf of the Local Planning Authority.

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### Version History

Version	Issue date	Reason for re-issue
1.0	09/12/2015	N/A

### **Key Terms**

The following terms or abbreviations are used throughout this report:

BBC Bedford Borough Council

ClfA Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

HER Historic Environment Record HET Historic Environment Team

Procedures Manual Procedures Manual Volume 1 Fieldwork, 2nd edn, 2001

Albion Archaeology

WSI Written Scheme of Investigation



### Non-Technical Summary

A planning application (14/02085/FUL) was approved by Bedford Borough Council for the alteration of the existing house and garage and the construction of a new porch and detached double garage at The Limes, Church Walk, Harrold, Bedfordshire. Due to the high archaeological potential of the site, the Borough Council's Historic Environment Team (HET) recommended that a condition should be attached to the planning consent requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological work. This advice was in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

Albion Archaeology was commissioned to prepare a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) in accordance with the advice of the HET, and to carry out the subsequent programme of archaeological works.

The site is situated on level ground near the centre of the village of Harrold at SP 9523 5673, at a height of c. 43m OD. The river Great Ouse flows c. 100m to the south. The underlying geology consists of argillic brown earths over fine loams with a substrate of alluvial valley gravels, which in turn overlie solid geology of oolitic limestone.

The groundworks for the development were carried out under archaeological observation between 6th and 15th July 2015 in accordance with the approved WSI. Although they did not extend to the depth of the undisturbed geology, they did reveal various make-up layers, some waterlogged deposits and a possible robbed-out wall. The subsoil in both excavated areas produced two sherds of residual Roman pottery, 21 sherds of late Saxon pottery, a significant amount of medieval pottery (160 sherds), and three sherds of post-medieval pottery. A small quantity of Roman and medieval roof tile (186g), post-medieval glass (8g), animal bone (512g), and ferrous slag (215g) was also recovered.

The relatively large assemblage of late Saxon and medieval pottery suggests that the site may contain significant archaeological remains that are now preserved in-situ beneath the development. Such remains would have the potential to provide information on the development of the village in the late Saxon period and later pottery production within Harrold during the early medieval period.

The small size of the investigation area and the limited extent of the groundworks preclude any further analysis beyond that presented in this report, which will be uploaded onto the Archaeology Data Service's OASIS website (OASIS ID no. albionar1-198944). The project archive will be deposited with Bedford Museum (accession no. BEDFM: 2015.01).



### 1. INTRODUCTION

# 1.1 Background

A planning application (14/02085/FUL) was approved by Bedford Borough Council (BBC) for the alteration of the existing house and garage and the construction of a new porch and detached double garage at The Limes, Church Walk, Harrold, Bedfordshire. Due to the high archaeological potential of the site, the Historic Environment Team (HET) of BBC recommended that a condition should be attached to the planning consent requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological work. This advice was in accordance with *National Planning Policy Framework*.

Albion Archaeology was commissioned to prepare a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (Albion Archaeology 2015) in accordance with the advice of the HET, and to carry out the subsequent programme of archaeological works.

The required programme of archaeological works, as described in the WSI comprised the observation and recording of relevant groundworks and investigation of any revealed archaeological remains. The results are presented in this report.

# 1.2 Site Location and Description

The site is situated on level ground near the centre of the village of Harrold at SP 9523 5673, at a height of c. 43m OD (Figure 1). The river Great Ouse flows c. 100m to the south. The house and the garden lie adjacent to the small lane (Church Walk) shown on the pre-inclosure map of Harold (1797) and the 1st edition OS map (1882). The maps show the land as an unoccupied field, possibly the rear garden of Harrold House (41 High Street).

The underlying geology consists of argillic brown earths over fine loams with a substrate of alluvial valley gravels, which in turn overlie solid geology of oolitic limestone.

# 1.3 Archaeological Background

The historical and archaeological background to Harrold has been summarised in the Extensive Urban Survey, undertaken by English Heritage and Bedfordshire County Council (Albion Archaeology 2003).

Archaeological investigations at a nearby property (no. 10 Church Walk) in advance of the construction of a side extension, porch and conservatory identified a ditch which was tentatively dated to the Roman period (Albion Archaeology 2004). Construction work on an adjacent property to the east did not reveal archaeological features, although a moderate assemblage of medieval pottery was recovered (Albion Archaeology 2012). Work to the north-west at Longridge revealed a series of archaeological remains, ranging in date from the Iron Age to the post-medieval period (Brown 2009; Burke and Bassir 2009).



Building work elsewhere in the vicinity of Church Walk has produced a variety of evidence for medieval settlement. Approximately 100m north-east of the site, medieval ditches and pits were recorded in 1991 and 1992 (HER 16113), along with some post-medieval debris. Medieval pottery and pits, together with human bone, have also been found on the opposite side of the road, to the rear of nos 15 and 17 Church Walk (HER 16114).

Further afield, within and close to the village (e.g. HER 64, HER 543) physical remains dating to all periods since early prehistory have been recorded during both quarrying and housing developments. Excavations on the north side of the High Street, at the former Bridgman Joinery, produced evidence of extensive late Iron Age / Romano-British field systems and Saxon buildings whilst high concentrations of medieval pottery and slag were found at Harrold Priory Middle School to the west (Ingham and Shotliff 2012).



## 2. METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Introduction

Archaeological observation of the groundworks associated with the development took place over two short periods during July 2015.

Initially, from 6th to 8th July, the groundworks for the construction of a new garage (Area 1) were observed as well as an electrical cable trench within the footprint of the new porch (Area 2). From 14th to 15th July the footings of the new porch in Area 2 were monitored.

Area 1 was situated 7m south of the existing building; it measured c. 7.9m x 8.7m. Area 2 comprised an L-shaped trench to the east of the house; it measured c. 8m x 10m.

All ground reduction was carried out by a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket.

## 2.2 Methodology

The project adhered throughout to the standards set out in the CIfA's Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief (2014), Historic England's Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) Project Managers Guide (2015) and in Albion's Procedures Manual.

A full methodology is provided in the WSI (Albion Archaeology 2015).

## 2.3 Project Archive

The project archive can be found at Bedford Museum under accession code BEDFM: 2015.01. An OASIS online record of the project has been submitted under the reference albionar1-198944.



# 3. RESULTS

### 3.1 Contextual Summary

#### 3.1.1 Introduction

The results of the observation works are presented below. Detailed context descriptions are presented in Appendix 1; their locations are shown on Figure 2.

Areas 1 and 2 each revealed a different sequence of deposits beneath the modern ground surface. Undisturbed geological deposits were not reached in either area.

### 3.1.2 Area 1

Area 1 was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.84m near its south-western corner (Figure 3). The topsoil (100) within this area was generally a midbrown, sandy silt garden soil. However, it was harder and stonier near the path. The topsoil was up to 0.38m deep.

Two layers of subsoil (101) and (103) were present to a maximum depth of 0.52m. The lower subsoil (103) displayed orange mottling, presumably a product of weathering of the underlying gravel terrace.

The topsoil and upper subsoil produced a mixed assemblage of pottery, ranging in date from the late Saxon to the modern period. It included a considerable quantity of medieval Harrold shelly ware (Section 3.2). Smaller quantities of domestic waste, including animal bone, glass and tile, were also present.

Feature [105] was partially exposed in the south-west corner of Area 1 at a depth of c. 0.75–0.8m. It was sub-rectangular in plan and was approximately 1.75m long by 1.2m long. It was filled by two deposits (106) and (107) that contained moderate amounts of broken limestone and mortar. The feature is likely to represent the disturbed remains of a wall foundation. No dating evidence was recovered and the limited extent of the exposed feature makes further interpretation difficult.

#### 3.1.3 Area 2

Area 2 was excavated to a depth of 0.6m in plan; the narrow, electrical cable trench was excavated to a depth of 0.85m. The northern half of the area revealed subsoil (117) and disturbed subsoil deposits (119), similar to those in Area 1.

The southern half of the area exposed a series of make-up layers, (108)/(111), (109)/(125), (113), associated with the previous garage and house construction. Below these were blue-grey, clayey deposits, containing moderate amounts of small snail shells and medieval pottery (110)/(116)/(124) (Figure 3). The composition of these clayey deposits suggests that they were formed under



prolonged waterlogged conditions, possibly within a pond or palaeochannel. However, the limited area of excavation makes it impossible to determine if the deposits formed *in situ* or were brought onto the site from elsewhere.

# 3.2 Finds Summary

### 3.2.1 Introduction

An assemblage comprising mainly pottery, animal bone, and a small number of non-ceramic objects was collected from eight deposits (Table 1).

Area	Feature	Spot date	Finds summary		
1	(100) Topsoil	Modern	Pottery (123g), ceramic roof tile (87g);		
			vessel glass (7g)		
	(101) Subsoil Modern I		Pottery (2kg); ceramic roof tile (99g);		
		ferrous slag (215g); window glass (1g);			
		animal bone (439g); shell (16g)			
2	(110) Layer (?waterlogged deposit)	12th-13th century	Pottery (79g)		
	(113) Modern disturbance	12th-13th century	Pottery (111g)		
	(116) Layer (?waterlogged deposit)	12th-13th century	Pottery (12g)		
	(117) Subsoil	12th-13th century	Pottery (73g)		
	(119) Subsoil	12th-13th century	Pottery (79g); animal bone (6g)		
	(124) Layer (?waterlogged deposit)	12th-13th century	Pottery (61g); animal bone (67g)		

Table 1: Artefact Summary by Area and Feature

## **3.2.2 Pottery**

A total of 195 pottery sherds (2.5kg) was collected, the majority from subsoil deposit (101). Most sherds survive in good condition, demonstrated by a mean weight of 13g, and are relatively unabraded. Thirteen 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.
Roman				
R13	Shell	2	28	(101):2
Late Saxon				
B01	St Neots-type ware	4	37	(101):2, (119):1, (124):1
B01A	St Neots-type ware (orange)	1	4	(101):1
B01B	St Neots-type ware (fine)	5	83	(101):2, (124):3
B01C	St Neots-type ware (mixed)	11	173	(100):1, (101):10
Medieval				
B05	Shell	160	2,060	(100):9, (101):132, (110):5,
				(113):4;
				(116):1, (117):3, (119):4, (124):2
C01	Sand	1	7	(101):7
C05	Sand (red margins)	4	88	(101):4
C61	Calcareous sandy	2	17	(101):2
E01D	Late medieval reduced ware	1	18	(101):1
E02	Late medieval oxidised ware	1	6	(101):1
Post-medieval				
P03A	Staffordshire red-slipped ware	1	15	(100):1
Modern				
P100	Horticultural earthenware	2	26	(101):2

**Table 2:** Pottery Type Series



#### Roman

Two shell-tempered body sherds (28g) present within subsoil (101), have been classified as Roman in date, largely due to their poor and abraded condition, which is in marked contrast to medieval shelly examples from the same deposit.

#### Late Saxon

Late Saxon pottery comprises 21 sherds (297g) of wheel-thrown, shell-tempered St Neots-type ware (fabric B01 and variants), which occur as residual finds in later deposits. Vessel forms are bowls with simple upright rims, single bowls with a characteristic hammerhead rim and inturned rim, and a jar.

#### Medieval

The majority of the assemblage (160 sherds: 2kg) comprises shell-tempered wheel-thrown vessels of 12th- to 13th-century date, likely to represent products of known production centres in the village — High Street (SP 947567) and Brook Lane (SP 948569) (Hall 1972), or of other undiscovered kilns in the vicinity. The incidence of medieval shelly pottery is well attested throughout Harrold (Wells 2012, 101), and many finds of waster sherds have been noted during informal field survey in the fields around the village (Northamptonshire Archaeology 2003).

Diagnostic vessels are jars with simple everted, square or triangular rims (diameter 260mm); bowls with upright rims (diameter 400mm) and jugs (diameter 100-120mm). Three partial strap jug handles, two with thumbed and stabbed decoration, also occur. Decorative elements are rare — mainly applied thumbed strips and a body sherd with a crudely incised lattice design. The presence of kiln seconds or wasters is suggested by several brittle and over-fired sherds, and an applied strip which has sheared away from the vessel body.

Seven contemporary local sandy ware sherds (C01, C05, C61) also occur. Forms are a miscellaneous jar rim and a rectangular rim bowl.

Subsoil (101) yielded a sherd of late medieval south-east Midlands reduced ware (E01D: 18g) and a contemporary sherd of oxidised ware (E02: 6g).

### Post-medieval

A sherd from a 17th-century Staffordshire red-slipped earthenware bowl (15g) and two pieces of modern plant pot (26g) were respectively collected from topsoil (100) and subsoil (101).

### 3.2.3 Ceramic building material

An abraded shell-tempered roof tile fragment (64g), likely to be Roman in date, derived from topsoil (100). Five pieces of sand-tempered late medieval / post-medieval flat roof tile (122g) were collected from topsoil (100) and subsoil (101).



### 3.2.4 Other finds

Topsoil (100) contained a translucent olive green glass fragment (7g) deriving from the rim and neck of a late 17th-century wine bottle. A piece of pale green window glass (1g), likely to be of 16th- to 17th-century date was collected from subsoil (101). The latter also contained ferrous smelting slag (215g) of indeterminate date.

### 3.2.5 Ecofacts

Forty-one animal bone fragments (512g) were collected, the majority (439g) from subsoil (101) in Area 1. Individual pieces have a mean weight of 12g, and survive in fair condition. Diagnostic bone elements are mainly large / medium mammal limb bone shafts. Miscellaneous rib, vertebra, mandible fragments and loose teeth occur in smaller quantities. A single piece of oyster shell (16g) was collected from the same deposit.



### 4. CONCLUSIONS

Although the groundworks at The Limes, Church Walk, Harrold were limited in their depth and extent, the associated archaeological observation revealed a variety of subsoil deposits which contained a significant amount of late Saxon and medieval pottery, plus residual material from earlier phases of activity.

The relatively large assemblage of early medieval pottery recovered, and the late Saxon material, suggests that site may contain significant archaeological remains that are now preserved *in situ* beneath the development.

The remains have the potential to provide information on the development of the village of Harrold and pottery production within Harrold during the early medieval period. The significance of such remains is highlighted in the regional and county research agenda for the medieval period (Brown and Glazebrook 2000, Oake et al 2007, Medlycott 2011), which recommend further research into settlement form and pattern, the origins and development of villages, and settlement continuity.

An undated wall foundation, possibly robbed out, was also located in Area 1. This suggests the previous existence of an earlier building, or wall, at this location. The remains were not revealed to a sufficient extent to accurately determine form, function or date.

Area 2 uncovered some disturbed ground, associated with the construction of the existing house. Waterlogged deposits encountered within Area 2 may be the remains of a palaeochannel or pond feature in this area. Pottery recovered from this deposit was identified as 12th- to 13th-century in date. This deposit may have the potential to yield information relating to palaeo-environmental conditions during the early medieval period. However, in the limited exposure revealed during the groundworks, the deposit appeared to have been disturbed and it was unclear whether the material had formed *in situ* or had been imported from elsewhere.

The small size of the investigation area and the limited extent of the groundworks preclude any further analysis beyond that presented in this report, which will be uploaded onto the Archaeology Data Service's OASIS website (OASIS ID no. albionar1-198944). The project archive will be deposited with Bedford Museum (accession no. BEDFM: 2015.01).



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# 6. DETAILED CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Area: 1 Extent (ha): 0.007

OS Co-ordinates: SP9524756721

Description: Reduced level dig for garage foundation

Context:	Type:	Description: Excava	ted:	Finds Present:
100	Topsoil	Friable mid brown sandy silt occasional medium CBM, moderate small-medium stones, occasional large stones. 0.15-0.38 m. thick	~	V
101	Subsoil	Friable dark brown sandy silt occasional small-medium CBM, occasional flecks charcoal, occasional small-medium stones. 0.35-0.37 m. thick. Upper subsoil.	~	V
102	Subsoil	Friable dark brown sandy clay occasional flecks charcoal, moderate small-medium stones. Min. 0.13 m. thick. Contains occasional slag, Lower subsoil.	~	
103	Subsoil	Friable dark orange brown silty clay occasional flecks charcoal, occasional small stones. Min. 0.15 m. thick. Lower subsoil.		
104	Topsoil	Hard mid brown sandy silt frequent flecks charcoal, frequent small stones, occasional medium stones. $0.24\mathrm{m}$ . thick	~	
105	Foundation	Sub-rectangular E-W dimensions: max breadth 1.25m, min length 1.75m. Possible robbed out wall foundation		
106	Fill	Friable dark orange brown sandy clay moderate small mortar, occasional large stones		
107	Fill	Friable mid yellow brown sandy limestone frequent small-medium mortar, moderate small-medium stones, occasional large stones		



Area: 2
Extent (ha): 0.006
S.Co-ordinates: SP0524556

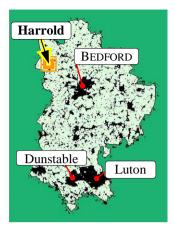
OS Co-ordinates: SP9524556730

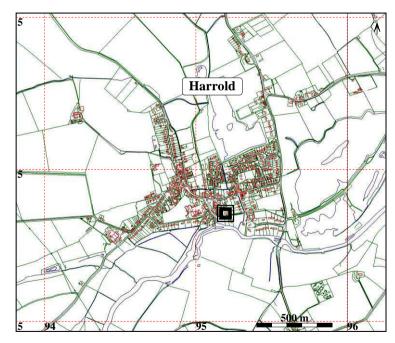
Description: Reduced level dig for house extension foundation

Context:	Type:	Description: Excavat	ed:	Finds Present:
108	Make up layer	Loose light yellow brown rubble frequent small-large CBM. 0.47 m. thick	<b>v</b>	
109	Layer	Firm dark red brown silty clay . 0.03 m. thick. Contains occasional small shells. Possibly waterlogged deposit.	<b>✓</b>	
110	Layer	Firm dark blue grey silty clay occasional flecks charcoal, occasional small-medium stones. Min. 0.16 m. thick. Contains some pottery fragments and occasional small shells. Possibly waterlogged deposit.		✓
111	Make up layer	Loose light yellow brown rubble frequent small-large CBM. 0.18 m. thick	<b>v</b>	
112	Modern disturbance	Friable dark brown sandy clay moderate small stones. 0.25 m. thick.	<b>✓</b>	
113	Modern disturbance	Firm dark brown grey silty clay occasional small-medium stones. 0.44 m. thick		V
114	Make up layer	Friable dark brown grey silty clay occasional medium-large CBM, occasional flecks charcoal, occasional small mortar, moderate small-medium stones. 0.33 m. thick	<b>✓</b>	
115	Layer	Firm mid grey brown silty clay occasional flecks charcoal, occasional small stones. Min. 0.07 m. thick.		
116	Layer	Firm dark blue grey clay occasional small stones. Contains moderate small shells and occasional pottery fragments. Possibly part of waterlogged deposit.		V
117	Subsoil	Friable dark brown silty clay occasional small-large CBM, occasional flecks charcoal, occasional small-medium stones. Min. 0.03 m thick		V
118	Layer	Firm dark grey brown silty clay occasional flecks charcoal, moderate small-medium stones. Contains occasional large fragments of limestone and some animal bones. Possibly part of waterlogged deposit.		
119	Subsoil	Hard dark brown grey silty clay occasional flecks charcoal, occasional small-medium stones. Min. 0.08 m. thick. Contains frequent small shells.		V
120	Layer	Friable dark grey brown silty clay occasional flecks charcoal, moderate small-medium stones. Contains occasional crushed limestone/mortar and animal bones. Possibly part of waterlogged deposit.		
121	Layer	Friable dark grey brown silty clay occasional flecks charcoal, frequent small stones, occasional medium stones. Possibly part of waterlogged deposit.		
122	External surface	Loose dark brown sandy gravel . 0.15 m. thick.	<b>v</b>	
123	Demolition layer	Friable mid yellow brown sandy clay frequent small-medium stones. 0.24 m. thick.	~	
124	Layer	Firm dark blue grey clay occasional small stones. Min. 0.14 m. thick. Contains occasional pottery fragments and moderate small shells. Possibly waterlogged deposit.	✓	V
125	Layer	Firm dark red grey silty clay occasional small-medium stones. Possibly waterlogged deposit.	<b>v</b>	
126	Modern disturbance	Firm mid grey clay. 0.07 m. thick.	✓	









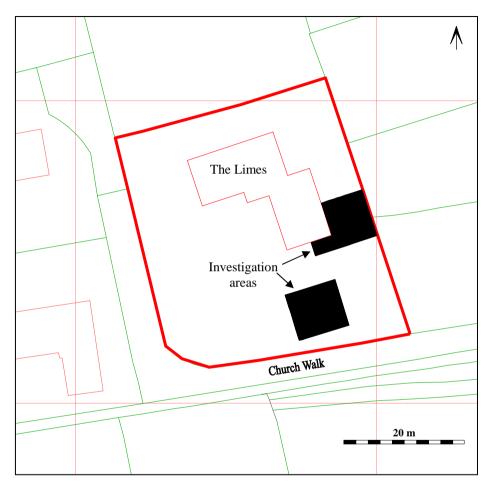


Figure 1: Site location plan

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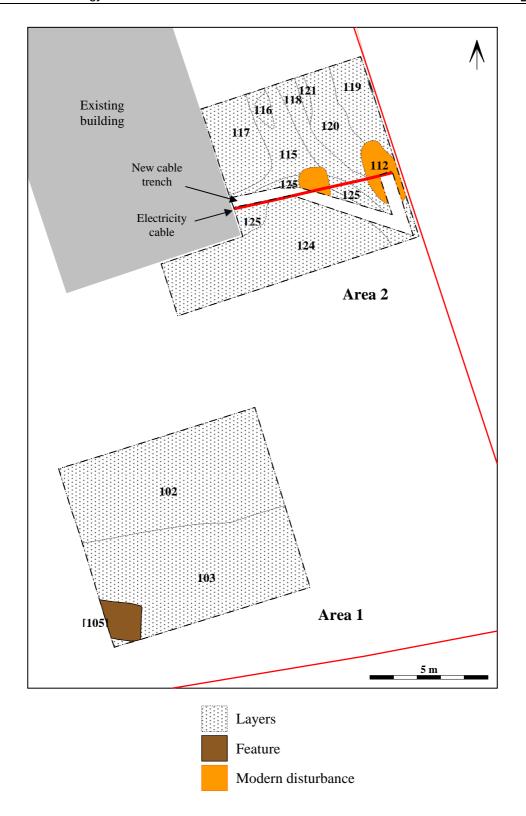


Figure 2: All-features plan

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Area 1 - looking south



Area 2 – southern baulk (1m scale)



Area 1 – southern baulk (0.3m scale)



Area 2 – looking north



Area 1 – looking northwest (1m scale)



Area 2 – looking north-east (1m scale)

**Figure 3:** Selected photographs



Albion archaeology



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