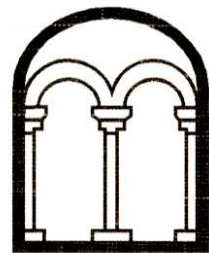


**LAND ADJACENT TO
51 HIGH STREET
ROXTON
BEDFORDSHIRE**

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

Albion
archaeology



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Produced for:
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Contents

Preface.....	2
Key Terms.....	2
1. INTRODUCTION	4
1.1 Planning Background.....	4
1.2 Site Location, Topography and Geology	4
1.3 Archaeological Background.....	5
1.4 Project Objectives.....	6
1.5 Methodology.....	6
2. RESULTS	8
2.1 Area 1.....	8
2.2 Area 2.....	9
2.3 Artefacts	12
3. CONCLUSIONS	15
4. BIBLIOGRAPHY	16
5. APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT SUMMARY	17
6. FIGURES AND IMAGES	22

List of Figures

Figure 1: Site location

Figure 2: Modern map overlaid on 1884 Ordnance Survey map

Figure 3: All features plan and selected sections

List of Images

Image 1: General view of Area 1, looking north-east

Image 2: Section through pit [19]

Image 3: Section through pit [22]

Image 4: General view of Area 2, looking east

Image 5: General view of Area 2, looking south-west

Image 6: Section through ditch [67]

Image 7: Well [50] and stone well lining (52)

Image 8: Stone well lining (52)



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 Anna Kettle. The archaeological works were monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Geoff Saunders (Bedford Borough Council Archaeological Officer).

The fieldwork was undertaken by Ian Turner (Supervisor) and Mark Phillips (Project Officer), who also prepared this report, with contributions from 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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Key Terms

Throughout this document the following terms or abbreviations are used:

BBC	Bedford Borough Council
HER	Historic Environment Record
HET	Historic Environment Team (BBC)
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation



Non-Technical Summary

Planning permission (14/03065/FUL) and listed building consent (14/03066/LBC) were granted by Bedford Borough Council for development at 51 High Street, Roxton, Bedfordshire. A condition requiring a programme of archaeological observation and historic building recording was attached to the planning permission.

Archaeological monitoring of the groundworks with the potential to impact on archaeological remains took place between 6th May and 21st July 2015. Two areas were observed: Area 1 in the south of the plot and Area 2 in the north of the plot, near to the existing dwelling.

The earliest evidence for past human activity was St Neots ware pottery, dated to the c. 10th to early 12th centuries, recovered as residual material from the fills of later pits and ditches. No definite features dating from this period were identified. However, the pottery is likely to indicate the presence of settlement activity close to the site at this time.

The earliest features were ditches and pits in Area 2, which produced early medieval pottery (12th to 13th centuries) and small amounts of animal bone. Two north-south aligned ditches formed a boundary parallel to the present High Street; they could have defined a house plot or a croft. However, given the small area that was uncovered and the modest finds assemblage it is difficult to characterise activity on the site with certainty.

Pottery dating from the high medieval (1250–1400) and late medieval (1400–1500) periods indicates continuing activity at the site. The high medieval pottery was recovered as residual material within the later medieval pits in Areas 1 and 2.

Finds dating to the post-medieval period (1500–1750) were recovered mostly as residual artefacts within later features or topsoil and subsoil. Some of this material is likely to be contemporary with the present house on the site which is believed to date back to the 17th century.

Modern finds were associated with the 19th-century farmstead in Area 2 and the small cottage in Area 1 that was demolished in the late 20th century.

In summary, the evidence recovered during the investigations consists of a small finds assemblage recovered from pits and ditches that have been partially truncated by the later activity on the site. It contributes to a wider dataset recovered from small-scale archaeological interventions within villages established in the medieval period. Locally, it helps to build up a picture of the extent and development of the medieval settlement of Roxton.

The project archive has no potential for further analysis beyond that presented in this report. It will be deposited with Bedford Museum (accession no. BEDFM 2015.04). This report will be uploaded onto the Archaeology Data Service's OASIS website (OASIS ID no. albionar1-201460).



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Planning Background*

Planning permission (14/03065/FUL) and listed building consent (14/03066/LBC) were granted by Bedford Borough Council for development at 51 High Street, Roxton, Bedfordshire. The development comprises: a single-storey side extension to the existing dwelling; conversion and extension of a former stable and barn to form two dwellings; and the erection of a detached dwelling with carport/garage.

A Heritage Statement was submitted as part of the planning application (Kettle 2014). The existing dwelling at 51 High Street is a grade II listed 17th-century house situated in the Roxton Conservation Area. The barn and stable affected by the development works are not listed, but are considered to be curtilage-listed buildings that are of historical interest. The development site is located in an area of archaeological interest with the potential for archaeological remains associated with settlement activity from the Anglo-Saxon period onwards. For these reasons the Borough Council's Historic Environment Team (HET) recommended that a programme of archaeological works would be required as a condition of planning permission. This comprised historic building recording and archaeological monitoring during construction works. The HET issued a brief, detailing their requirements (BBC 2015).

Albion Archaeology was commissioned to carry out the archaeological works in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (Albion 2015) prepared in response to the HET brief. The WSI detailed the methodology for historic building recording and archaeological observation, investigation and recording of any archaeological remains and a programme of post-fieldwork analysis, reporting and archiving.

This report presents the results of the archaeological observations.

1.2 *Site Location, Topography and Geology*

The village of Roxton is located in north Bedfordshire, 11.5km to the north-east of Bedford (Figure 1). It is bounded to the west by the A421 and to the east by the A1, which join c. 900m to the north. It lies to the west of the River Great Ouse close to its confluence with the River Ivel at Tempsford.

The development area is situated in the eastern part of the village, on the north-east side of the junction of Poplar Close and High Street. Prior to the redevelopment works it contained a single residential dwelling, a barn, a stable building and an extensive garden with lawns and planted areas. The ground is approximately level at a height of 23 m OD.

The solid underlying geology consists of Peterborough Member, a mudstone forming part of the Oxford Clay Formation that was formed in the Jurassic period. Superficial geology consists of river terrace deposits, clay, sand, silt and gravel,



associated with the river Great Ouse, which flows north-south on the east side of the village¹.

1.3 Archaeological Background

The archaeological and built heritage background to the site was examined in a Heritage Statement prepared by the client to accompany their planning application (Kettle 2014) and in the WSI (Albion 2015). Evidence exists for activity in this part of the Great Ouse valley during the prehistoric and Roman periods. However, the evidence from later periods is of more direct relevance to the present report.

1.3.1 Anglo-Saxon (400–1066)

The Domesday entry for Roxton in 1086 lists two manors and twelve villagers, three smallholders, two slaves, a mill and woodland for twenty pigs, indicating a modest-sized settlement. The manors were held by Hugh de Beauchamp and William Speke. In 1066, they had been held by twelve freemen. An Anglo-Saxon strap end was found *c.* 240m north-east of the development area (HER 16029).

1.3.2 Medieval (1066–1550)

The development site is located *c.* 150m to the south-west of the medieval parish church of St Mary Magdalene (HER 1105) and is situated within the inferred extent of the medieval settlement (HER 17154), which corresponds to the surviving historic village core. Roxton Park, 250m to the west, contains earthworks which include ridge and furrow cultivation and a park boundary (HER 5136). Medieval artefacts have been found to the north-east of the village (HER 16029 and 19387).

1.3.3 Post-medieval and modern (1550–present)

A number of listed buildings, including domestic, commercial and communal properties, exist along Roxton High Street and Ford Lane, ranging in date from the 17th to 19th centuries. Amongst these, a 17th-century cottage (HER 2410) and the 19th-century Chequers Inn Public House (HER12461), are the closest to the development area. Other HER records include the sites of former buildings and landscaped parkland and the parish churchyard.

The development site lies within the designated Roxton Conservation Area. It contains a dwelling known as Hills Farmhouse, a Grade II listed, timber-framed, 17th-century cottage (HER 2399). Located within the plot and in relatively close proximity to Hills Farmhouse are two outbuildings, comprising stables and a barn. A cottage at 57 High Street (HER 2396) formerly stood to the south-east of the present development site. The HER entry for this cottage describes it as a 17th-century timber-framed, thatched cottage that was demolished when Poplar Close was created.

The 1813 Enclosure map is the earliest known map showing the development site. It depicts a group of buildings comprising the farmhouse, stables and barn and it also shows a building corresponding to the former cottage (HER 2396) in the south-east of the development site.

Contains British Geological Survey materials © NERC [2013]



The earliest detailed map of the site is the 1884 Ordnance Survey 25-inch map (Figure 2). This shows the house on the street frontage with the stables and barn in the north of the plot. In southern half of the plot the map shows a number of other outbuildings within yard areas. The former cottage in the south-west corner of the plot (HER 2396) formed a separate residential property with a small garden to south of the cottage where Poplar Close is now located.

In 1927 Hills Farmhouse was sold, along with an outbuilding extending to the west of the current stable, which is no longer extant. The farmland, barn, stables, other outbuildings and The Old Cottage remained in the ownership of the farmer. Hills Farmhouse was modified extensively by its new owner in the “Arts and Crafts” style. Significant changes included new bay and dormer windows and removal of the massive chimney stack.

After 1964 the barn and stables and an area of land to the south of the farmhouse were sold to the owner of Hills Farmhouse. The stables and barn were extensively rebuilt and adapted for ancillary residential use.

1.4 Project Objectives

Research into the varied settlement pattern of medieval Bedfordshire has been identified as an objective within the local archaeological research agenda (Oake 2007, 14 in Oake et al). Investigation at the micro scale can provide evidence for the chronology, structure and function of individual settlements and classes of settlement.

Regional objectives also highlight the origins and development of the varied pattern of medieval rural settlement as a subject of research (Medlycott 2011, 70). The built environment is closely linked to the study of landscape and settlement. The need for the study of medieval buildings through survey as part of the planning consent process is also highlighted (ibid 2011, 70–71).

The general objectives of the archaeological investigation were to determine:

- the nature of any archaeological remains present at the site.
- the integrity and state of preservation of any archaeological features or deposits present at the site.

The specific objectives of the investigation were to determine:

- if there is any evidence for the date and character of the medieval settlement, in particular dating evidence for the earliest phase of activity.

The project will result in an integrated archive report that fully describes the building recording and archaeological works. The results of the archaeological investigation are reported below and the results of historic building recording form the subject of a separate report.

1.5 Methodology

The methodology for the archaeological works is set out in full in the WSI (Albion 2015). Archaeological monitoring of the groundworks took place between 6th



May and 21st July 2015. Archaeological investigations were carried out in two areas:

1.5.1 Area 1

This area was located in the southern part of the site where a new cottage and car port were being built (Image 1). The ground was machined down to undisturbed geological deposits within an area measuring approximately 24m east-west by 12m north-south. A number of possible archaeological features were exposed. These were identified and recorded in plan and limited hand excavation was undertaken to characterise the features. Most appeared to represent modern disturbance which was probably associated with the former cottage that occupied this part of the site until it was demolished in the later 20th century. Two medieval features were identified and excavated in the south-west corner of the area. Some ground reduction was undertaken to the east of Area 1 to form a driveway. This consisted mainly of topsoil removal and did not affect any archaeological deposits.

1.5.2 Area 2

This area was located in the northern part of the property, between the north end of the barn and the existing dwelling (Images 4 and 5). Ground reduction was undertaken to form a T-shaped plot with maximum dimensions of 37m east-west by 14m north-south. A section at the eastern end approximately 11m long had been disturbed by modern construction work. The remainder of the trench was reduced to the level of undisturbed geological deposits, exposing a number of archaeological features. These were recorded in plan and subject to limited investigation in order to characterise the features. Hand excavation was carried out on archaeological features that would be unavoidably destroyed by the construction of strip footings. An undated pond or quarry pit was examined within the strip footing trench at the west end of Area 2, close to the street frontage.



2. RESULTS

The results of the fieldwork are summarised below and are illustrated in Figure 3 and Images 1 to 8. Full details of the contexts are presented in Appendix 1.

2.1 Area 1

2.1.1 Topsoil and subsoil deposits

In Area 1 the combined thickness of topsoil and subsoil above the geological horizon averaged 450mm.

Topsoil (1) was a dark grey/black sandy silt layer up to 350mm thick. It contained items of 19th- and 20th-century domestic debris in the form of brick and coal (not collected), modern ceramics and late 19th/early 20th-century vessel glass.

The subsoil (2) was dark grey-brown sandy silt which varied in thickness from 50mm to 190mm. It contained occasional fragments of brick, coal, modern bottle glass (not collected) and a mixed pottery assemblage dating from the medieval, post-medieval and modern periods.

The topsoil and subsoil layers are likely to be derived from garden cultivation in the modern period.

2.1.2 Geological deposits

The undisturbed geological deposits consisted of patches of gravel with a mid-orange sandy silt matrix (3) and patches of light yellow sandy silt (4).

These are river terrace deposits, mostly consisting of sands and gravels, which were deposited during the Quaternary period, up to 3 million years ago.

2.1.3 Late medieval archaeological features (1400–1500)

Two features, pits [19] and [22], located in the south-west corner of Area 1 contained late medieval pottery (Image 1).

Pit [19] was examined in section but was obscured in plan by a shallow modern feature [16] (Section 4, Image 2). It was more than 750mm wide and 420mm deep. It contained a thin, light grey-orange primary fill (20) with a moderate concentration of charcoal flecks. The main fill (21) was dark orange-brown sandy silt with occasional charcoal and a moderate amount of stones which included medium and large examples. Finds comprised a single broken pig incisor and a small amount (354g) of medieval pottery. The majority of the pottery (fabric type E01, 34 sherds, 227g) dates from the late medieval period with most of it derived from a single vessel.

Pit [22] was sub-circular pit in plan with a maximum breadth of 1.5m (Section 5, Image 3). The single fill (23) consisted of dark sandy silt with some patches of light orange sandy clay. It contained medieval pottery with some dated to the late medieval period and a piece of ferrous slag.



2.1.4 Modern activity (post-1750)

The other cut features identified in Area 1 are dated to this period on the basis of the presence of small amounts of coal, roofing slate, brick, tile and modern ceramics. In the main, these features were only tested in order to identify dating evidence and to characterise them. Features [16] and [24] were more fully excavated. The modern features are summarised below and further information can be found in the context summary in Appendix 1.

The features included five pits, [6] [10] [14] [16] and [24]. Pit [16] in the south-west corner of Area 1 was partially excavated (Figure 3, Section 4). It was a shallow scoop, 80mm deep with upper (18) and lower fills (17). The lower fill, situated around the outer edge of the cut, consisted of a light sandy mortar deposit containing fragments of brick. A large pit [14] partially visible at the southern edge of the area had a straight northern edge and angled corners, suggesting a probable rectangular plan. Pit [24] was half-sectioned to recover dating evidence (Figure 3, Section 6). It was 120mm deep with a flat base. The sole fill (25) contained fragments of coal and an iron nail.

Two structural features were identified and recorded: posthole [12] and a rectangular brick foundation or post pad [26]. A number of other modern postholes, some with traces of decayed wood, were noted on plan but not separately recorded.

Linear feature [8] consisted of a shallow truncated cut which was curved in plan. The fill (9) contained roofing slate, coal, brick, window glass and modern pottery.

These features represent 19th-century activity, probably associated with the cottage that formerly occupied this part of the site.

2.2 Area 2

2.2.1 Topsoil and subsoil deposits

The depth of overburden (combined topsoil and subsoil) varied across Area 2. It was up to 900mm at the west end and across the northern side of the area, decreasing to a minimum of 400mm to the south-east.

The deposits were similar to those noted in Area 1 with dark silty topsoil (77) up to 500mm deep and dark brown sandy silty subsoil (78).

2.2.2 Geological deposits

The undisturbed geological deposits (79) matched those seen in Area 1 with a mixture of light yellow sandy silt and mid-orange gravels.

2.2.3 Early medieval features (1150–1250)

Early medieval features in Area 2 comprised two pits [53] and [60] and various ditches clustered in the eastern part of the trench. The ditches can be resolved into north-south and east-west aligned boundaries; however, the relationship between the two has been obscured by a later feature.



North-south aligned boundary

The northern part of the boundary consisted of two separate ditches [67] and [69] (Figure 3, Sections 2 and 3; Images 5 and 6). Excavated segments through both showed steep-sided, flat-based profiles up to 550mm wide and 200mm deep. Ditch [69] clearly post-dated ditch [67] with the relationship being visible in plan. The fills of both ditches produced a small amount of animal bone and Saxo-Norman pottery with a sherd of early medieval pottery in ditch [67]. A probable southern continuation of this boundary is represented by ditch [71]. Partial excavation of this feature produced Saxo-Norman and early medieval pottery.

The relationship of ditches [67] and [69] suggests that the boundary was renewed on at least one occasion. These two ditches had differing fills with clay silt in the earlier ditch and silty sand in the later ditch, which suggests they formed under quite different conditions. Ditch [71] is likely to be the southern continuation of the boundary; however the presence of a later feature obscured this relationship in plan.

East-west aligned boundary

The existence of this boundary is inferred from a short section of a possible ditch [73] located next to the northern edge of the trench. It was obscured by a later feature to the west and truncated by modern construction disturbance to the east. Limited sample excavation of this feature recovered vitrified clay and early medieval pottery from a fill (74) of dark grey silty loam.

Pit

Pit [53] was located towards the west end of Area 2. It was sub-oval in plan, 1.8m long by 1.5m wide. The feature was seen in plan but lay below the formation level of the development works. Limited sample excavation of the fill (54) recovered small amounts of Saxo-Norman and early medieval pottery.

Pit [60] was located in the eastern part of the area, close to the early medieval boundary ditches (Figure 3, Section 1). It was excavated down to the level affected by development, a depth of 500mm at this point. The sides were straight and near vertical. The fill (61) contained Saxo-Norman and early medieval pottery.

2.2.1 Late medieval features (1400–1500)

Pit [65] was a large irregular feature, 4.5m long and at least 2.5m wide, located towards the eastern end of Area 2. Its southern side was truncated by modern construction disturbance associated with the former stables building. The feature lay below the level affected by development works. Limited sample excavation to characterise the feature recovered animal bone, Saxo-Norman, early medieval and late medieval pottery.

2.2.2 Post-medieval archaeological features (1500-1750)

Pit [62] / [75] was roughly semi-circular in plan and overlay the early medieval ditches and pit [60] in the eastern part of the trench (Figure 3, Section 1). It had moderately steep sides at the west end. The curving southern edge was well defined against the geological deposits at the west but was poorly defined where it crossed the fill of early medieval ditches at its eastern end. An initial sample slot [75] recovered animal bone and Saxo-Norman and early medieval pottery. A



subsequent section [62] produced a more mixed finds assemblage from the upper part of the feature (63) comprising animal bone, Saxo-Norman, early and late medieval pottery, as well as a small quantity of post-medieval pottery and brick.

The distinctive shape of this feature could indicate that its extent was constrained along the north side, possibly by a former boundary such as a fence line.

2.2.3 Modern activity (post-1750)

Modern features consisting of brickwork and disturbed ground in the south as well as tarmac and concrete in the east of the area are noted on the plan. These features are related to the 20th-century reconstruction of the stables building that previously occupied this area.

2.2.4 Undated

Three features at the west end of the area produced no dateable artefacts.

The largest of these was a possible pond or quarry pit [55] that filled the north-west end of the trench. It was more than 5m wide and 7m long and clearly extended beyond the northern edge of the investigation area. The feature was investigated during the excavation of the foundation trench forming the north-west corner of the new development. It had moderately steep sides with a slope of approximately 45°. The feature was more than 1.2m deep with the base not visible in the foundation trench. It contained an upper fill (56) of mid yellow-brown sandy loam and dark grey clay silt lower fill (57).

A pit [58] was partially exposed in the south-west corner of the trench, next to the foundations of the existing house. Only limited sample excavation was possible due to the position of the feature. The fill (59) was mid yellow-brown clay loam.

Well [50] was located close to the southern side of the trench (Images 8 and 9). It had a circular construction cut, 2.5m in diameter. The fill of the construction cut (51) was mid-red sandy gravel with pockets of darker silty soil and fragments of Ironstone. The lining of the well (52) was made with squared Ironstone blocks up to c. 500m long and 100–250mm thick. These were not mortared but were closely fitted into irregular courses. The stones were curved on the inner face to form a shaft with an internal diameter of c. 700mm, narrowing towards the top where it was capped with horizontal slabs of stone. The well had partly silted up but a c. 4.7m length of a lead pipe with a perforated lower end that was extracted from the well indicates the overall depth.

Well [50] appears to be the most recent of the three undated features. Surviving lead pipes in the well show that it supplied water to the existing house. The use of carefully fitted Ironstone blocks for the well lining suggests it was probably built before bricks became a universal material of choice in the modern period. The dark silty fill in the lower part of feature [55] suggests that it was probably a pond which remained open for some time. At its southernmost end the upper, disuse, fill of [55] was cut by the construction pit for the stone-lined well [50]. No dating evidence was recovered from pit [58] but it is clear from its location that it predates the construction of the house, which dates from the 17th century.



2.3 Artefacts

Twenty-one deposits yielded an assemblage comprising pottery, ceramic building material, animal bone, and a small quantity of non-ceramic artefacts, most deriving from Area 1 (Table 1).

Area	Feature	Fill	Date Range	Finds Summary
1	01 Topsoil	01	Modern	Pottery (52g); pantile (178g); vessel glass (172g)
	02 Subsoil	02	Modern	Pottery (330g); ceramic roof tile (21g); oyster shell (2g)
	06 Pit	07	Modern	Clay tobacco pipe (1g); coal (2g); roofing slate (11g)
	08 Ditch	09	Modern	Pottery (6g); brick (31g); coke (2g); roofing slate (15g)
	10 Pit	11	Modern	Pottery (131g); coal (4g); roofing slate (12g)
	12 Post hole	13	Modern	Pottery (2g)
	14 Pit	15	Modern	Pottery (8g)
	16 Pit	17	Post-medieval	Brick (860g); lava quern (31g)
	16 Pit	18	Modern	Pottery (15g)
	19 Pit	21	Late medieval	Pottery (354g); animal bone (2g)
	22 Pit	23	Late medieval	Pottery (83g); ferrous slag (10g)
	24 Pit	25	Undated	Coal (3g); iron nail x1
	26 Foundation	27	Undated	Brick (2.2kg)
2	53 Pit	54	Early medieval	Pottery (45g)
	60 Pit	61	Early medieval	Pottery (48g)
	62 Pit	63	Post-medieval	Pottery (53g); brick (560g); animal bone (22g)
	65 Pit	66	Late medieval	Pottery (113g); animal bone (486g)
	67 Ditch	68	Early medieval	Pottery (33g); animal bone (1g)
	69 Ditch	70	Late Saxon	Pottery (34g); animal bone (11g)
	71 Ditch	72	Early medieval	Pottery (20g)
	73 Ditch	74	Early medieval	Pottery (14g); vitrified clay (16g)
	75 Pit	76	Early medieval	Pottery (23g); animal bone (9g)

Table 1: Artefact Summary by Area

2.3.1 Pottery

The assemblage totals 151 sherds (1.3kg) representing approximately 98 vessels. Sherds have a mean weight of 9g, and are moderately abraded. The pottery ranges in date from the *c.* 10th to 19th centuries. Thirty fabric types were identified using common names and type codes in accordance with the Bedfordshire Ceramic Types Series (Table 2).

Fabric type	Common name	Sherd No.	Wt. (g)	Fill / Sherd No.
<i>Late Saxon</i>				
B01	St Neots-type ware	13	98	(54):4, (61):2, (63):2, (70):2, (72):1, (76):2
B01A	St Neots-type ware (orange)	4	17	(61):1, (63):1, (66):1, (72):1
B01B	St Neots-type ware (fine)	8	33	(61):2, (66):3, (68):3
B01C	St Neots-type ware (mixed)	1	3	(23):1
B01D	St Neots-type ware (red inclusions)	1	11	(61):1
B04	St Neots-type ware (coarse)	1	15	(68):1
Sub-total		28	177	
<i>Medieval</i>				
B07	Shell	20	182	(02):1, (11):1, (21):3, (23):2, (54):2, (61):2, (63):2, (66):2, (68):1, (72):2, (74):1, (76):1
C01	Sand	1	7	(76):1
C03	Fine sand	3	11	(54):1, (66):2
C05	Sand (red margins)	4	16	(02):1, (23):3
C09	Brill-Boarstall ware (fine)	2	29	(21):1, (23):1
C11	Brill-Boarstall ware (gritty)	1	20	(21):1
C53	Sand (pasty)	3	10	(61):1, (76):2
C71	Sand (buff-grey cored)	6	49	(21):6



Fabric type	Common name	Sherd No.	Wt. (g)	Fill / Sherd No.
Sub-total		40	324	
Late medieval				
E01	Reduced ware	42	290	(21):34, (23):5, (63):2, (66):1
E01D	Reduced ware (red margins)	4	21	(66):4
E02	Oxidised ware	2	16	(02):1
Sub-total		48	327	
Post-medieval				
P01	Fine glazed red earthenware	14	261	(02):9, (09):1, (11):1, (15):1, (18):1, (63):1
P03	Black-glazed earthenware	2	30	(01):1, (02):1
P14	Blackware	1	1	(02):1
P25	Frechen stoneware	1	39	(02):1
P28C	Midland Purple	1	53	(02):1
P36B	Nottingham stoneware	2	7	(63):2
P57	Midland Yellow	2	21	(02):2
Sub-total		23	412	
Modern				
P35	English porcelain	1	1	(18):1
P37	White salt-glazed stoneware	1	2	(13):1
P45	Transfer-printed earthenware	4	19	(01):1, (11):1, (15):1, (18):1
P48	English stoneware	2	90	(01):1, (02):1
P55	White earthenware	3	7	(09):1, (15):1, (18):1
P100	Horticultural earthenware	1	5	(01):1
Sub-total		11	119	
Total		151	1,364	

Table 2: Pottery Type Series

Late Saxon

Late Saxon pottery derives entirely from Area 2 and comprises 28 sherds (177g) of wheel-thrown, shell-tempered St Neots-type ware (fabric B01 and variants). Most occur as residual finds in later features — pits [53], [60], [62], [65], [75]; and ditches [67], [71], although two late Saxon sherds are the only ceramic finds within ditch [69]. The fabrics range in date from the *c.* 10th to early 12th centuries. A bowl with a characteristic inturned rim is the sole vessel form.

Medieval

Forty sherds (324g) are datable to the early or high medieval periods, and derived from features in Areas 1 and 2. The assemblage mainly comprises shell-tempered, wheel thrown vessels of 12th- to 13th-century date (B07), known to derive from production centres on the Beds./Bucks./Northants. borders. Contemporary local sandy wares (C01, C03, C05, C53, C71) also occur, in both handmade and wheel-thrown forms. Vessels are undecorated jars with simple everted rims, and a single bowl. Sooting on the surfaces of a number of both sand and shelly sherds indicate their use as cooking pots.

Imported regional finewares collected from pits [19] and [22] are three sherds (49g) of 13th- to 14th-century Brill-Boarstall ware (C09, C11), manufactured in Buckinghamshire. Forms include a glazed jug with a square rim.

Late medieval

Forty-eight wheel-thrown pottery sherds (327g) in the south-east Midlands late medieval reduced ware tradition (E01) and contemporary oxidised ware (E02)



occurred in pits [19], [22], [62] and [65]. Forms are a well-made, undecorated jar and bowl, both with rectangular rims.

Post-medieval

Mainly from topsoil (1) and subsoil (02) in Area 1, post-medieval pottery totals 23 sherds, weighing 412g. Locally manufactured glazed earthenwares, most deriving from large bowls, are dominant with small quantities of regional wares (Blackware, Nottingham stoneware, Midland Purple and Midland Yellow) and a single sherd of German stoneware, the latter deriving from a drinking jug.

Modern

Mass-produced 18th- and 19th-century wares (11 sherds: 119g) derive mainly from topsoil (01) and the upper fill (18) of modern pit [16]. They comprise a standard range of English stoneware, earthenware (including blue willow pattern and sponge decorated ware), and single sherds of porcelain and a plant pot. Forms are an ink bottle and several flat ware sherds.

2.3.2 Ceramic building material

Topsoil (01) and subsoil (02) respectively yielded a 17th- to 18th-century pantile fragment (178g) and a piece of Gault clay roof tile (21g). Nine sand-tempered stock-moulded brick fragments (3.6kg) derived from pits [16], [62] and foundation [26]. Few retain measurable dimensions, although widths range from 100–110mm and depths from 50–60mm. A piece of modern brick (31g) collected from ditch [8] has not been retained.

2.3.3 Other finds

A disparate collection of artefacts derived from features in Area 1. Incomplete glass vessels from topsoil (01) comprise a small blue green octagonal moulded lemonade bottle, datable to the 1890s onwards, and a colourless moulded ink well, datable to the early 1900s. One side of the former is embossed 'Chivers & Sons Ltd, Histon, Cambridge' and the opposing side reads 'The Cambridge Lemonade'.

Pits [6], [10] and ditch [8] each yielded 18th- to 19th-century roofing slate fragments, possibly made from Blue Welsh slate. None retain original edges or diagnostic traits. A tiny clay tobacco pipe bowl fragment (1g) of post-medieval or later date also derived from pit [6].

The lower fill of pit [16] contained a worn lava quern or millstone fragment (31g) of medieval or post-medieval date. A piece of undiagnostic ferrous slag (10g) derived from late medieval pit [23], and a rectangular sectioned, tapering nail shank from undated pit [24].

2.3.4 Ecofacts

Sixteen animal bone fragments (531g) were collected from six features, all but one in Area 2. The majority of the assemblage (486g) derived from late medieval pit [65]. Pieces survive in fair condition, with a mean fragment weight of 33g, although are largely unidentifiable to species. Diagnostic bone elements are a toothless mandible fragment, a broken pig incisor, and miscellaneous limb bones.

An oyster shell fragment (2g) derived from subsoil (02) in Area 1.



3. CONCLUSIONS

The earliest evidence for past human activity on the site was St Neots ware pottery, dated to the *c.* 10th to early 12th centuries. This was recovered as residual material from the fills of later pits and ditches. No definite features dating from this period were identified. The material is likely to indicate the presence of settlement activity close to the site at this time.

The earliest features were ditches and pits in Area 2 with pottery dated to the early medieval period (12th to 13th centuries). Finds recovered from these features consisted of comparatively small amounts of pottery and animal bone. Two north-south aligned ditches formed a boundary parallel to the present High Street. These could have defined a house plot or a croft. However, given the small area that was uncovered and the modest finds assemblage, it is difficult to characterise activity on the site with certainty.

Pottery dating from the high medieval (1250–1400) and late medieval (1400–1500) periods was recovered, indicating continuing activity. The high medieval pottery was recovered as residual material within the later medieval pits found in Areas 1 and 2.

Finds dating from the post medieval period (1500–1750) were recovered mostly as residual artefacts within later features or topsoil and subsoil. Some of this material is likely to be contemporary with the present house on High Street frontage which is believed to date back to the 17th century.

Modern finds were associated with the 19th-century farmstead in Area 2 and the small cottage in Area 1 that was demolished in the late 20th century.

In summary, the evidence recovered during the investigations consists of a small finds assemblage recovered from pits and ditches that have been partially truncated by the later activity on the site. It contributes to a wider dataset recovered from small-scale archaeological interventions within villages established in the medieval period. Locally, it helps to build up a picture of the extent and development of the medieval settlement of Roxton.

The project archive has no potential for further analysis beyond that presented in this report. It will be deposited with Bedford Museum (accession no. BEDFM 2015.04). This report will be uploaded onto the Archaeology Data Service's OASIS website (OASIS ID no. albionar1-201460).



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5. APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT SUMMARY



Area: 1
 Extent (ha): 0.026
 OS Co-ordinates: TL1529554302
 Description: Area machined at south end of site for new cottage and access

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
1	Topsoil	Loose dark grey sandy silt moderate small-medium stones. Contained occasional fragments of brick and coal, modern ceramics and bottle glass	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2	Subsoil	Friable dark brown grey sandy silt moderate small-medium stones. Contained occasional fragments of brick and coal, modern ceramics and bottle glass	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	Natural	Firm mid orange sandy silt frequent small-medium stones. Gravel natural	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Natural	Friable light orange yellow sandy silt frequent small-medium stones. Silty natural with localised patches of gravel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Pit	Oval dimensions: max breadth 1.m, max length 1.4m. Pit containing modern (19th-20th C) debris: not excavated	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Fill	Friable mid orange brown sandy silt moderate small-medium stones. Contained fragments of coal and roofing slate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8	Gulley	Curving linear dimensions: max breadth 1.3m, max length 5.5m	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Fill	Friable mid brown grey sandy silt moderate small-medium stones. Contained fragments of roofing slate, coal, brick, window glass and modern ceramics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10	Pit	Sub-oval dimensions: max breadth 1.4m, max length 2.2m. Not excavated	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Fill	Friable dark grey sandy silt moderate flecks charcoal, moderate small stones. Contained occasional fragments of coal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
12	Posthole	Oval dimensions: max breadth 0.45m, max length 0.55m	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13		Friable dark grey sandy silt moderate small stones. Contained occasional sherds of modern ceramics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
14	Pit	Rectangular dimensions: min breadth 0.7m, max length 4.1m. Not excavated	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	Fill	Mid orange brown sandy silt occasional small-large stones. Contained occasional fragments of brick, modern ceramics and clay pipe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
16	Pit	Sides: concave base: flat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17	Fill	Loose light yellow white . Sandy mortar deposit containing fragments of brick	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
18	Upper fill	Light brown grey sandy silt moderate small stones, occasional large stones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
19	Pit	Dimensions: min breadth 0.75m, min depth 0.42m	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20	Fill	Friable light grey orange sandy silt moderate small-large stones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21	Upper fill	Friable dark orange brown sandy silt occasional flecks charcoal, frequent small-large stones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
22	Pit	Sub-circular sides: steep base: flat dimensions: max breadth 1.5m, max depth 0.37m, max length 1.75m	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23	Fill	Friable dark orange brown sandy silt frequent small-large stones. Fill contained patches of light grey/orange sandy clay	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
24	Pit	Sub-rectangular N-S sides: concave base: flat dimensions: max breadth 1.m, max depth 0.12m, max length 2.5m	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25	Fill	Firm mid brown silty clay occasional flecks charcoal, frequent small-large stones. Occasional fragments of coal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



Area: 1
Extent (ha): 0.026
OS Co-ordinates: TL1529554302
Description: Area machined at south end of site for new cottage and access

26	Foundation	Rectangular dimensions: max breadth 0.5m, max length 0.65m. Small rectangular cut filled with bricks : Possible post pad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27	Foundation	Brick fill of possible post-pad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



Area: 2
Extent (ha): 0.032
OS Co-ordinates: TL1528754351
Description: Area machined at north of site for construction of building to replace former stables

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
50	Well	Circular dimensions: max depth 4.7m, max diameter 2.5m. Not excavated. Lead water-pipe pulled out was 4.7m long indicating the depth of the well	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
51	Fill	Mid red brown sandy gravel occasional medium-large stones. Contained patches of grey silty soil and occasional fragments of Ironstone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
52	Well	0.7m diameter well shaft formed from blocks of Ironstone up to 500mm long and 150mm thick, roughly shaped overall with a smooth, curved inner edge. No mortar between stones.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
53	Pit	Sub-oval N-S sides: steep dimensions: max breadth 1.5m, max length 1.8m	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
54	Fill	Friable dark grey clay silt occasional flecks charcoal, moderate small stones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
55	Pond	Irregular dimensions: min breadth 5m, min depth 1.2m, min length 7m	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
56	Fill	Friable mid yellow brown sandy loam moderate small stones. Deep, relatively homogenous clean fill, possible deliberate infilling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
57	Lower fill	Friable dark grey clay silt occasional flecks charcoal, moderate small stones, occasional medium stones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
58	Pit	Sub-circular dimensions: min breadth 1.2m, min length 1.35m	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
59	Fill	Friable mid yellow brown clay loam moderate small stones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
60	Pit	Sides: near vertical. Rounded western edge, truncated by later features to the east.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
61	Fill	Firm dark grey silty loam occasional small stones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
62	Pit	Asymmetrical	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
63	Upper fill	Friable dark yellow brown silty loam occasional flecks CBM, occasional flecks charcoal, frequent small stones, occasional medium stones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
64	Lower fill	Dark grey clay silt occasional small stones. Contained a lens of redeposited natural towards the top of the deposit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
65	Pit	Irregular E-W dimensions: min breadth 2.5m, max length 4.5m	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
66	Fill	Mid yellow brown clay silt occasional small stones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
67	Ditch	Linear N-S sides: asymmetrical base: flat dimensions: max breadth 0.55m, max depth 0.2m, min length 5.5m	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
68	Fill	Dark grey clay silt occasional flecks charcoal, occasional small stones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
69	Ditch	Linear N-S sides: steep base: flat dimensions: max breadth 0.5m, max depth 0.2m, min length 5.75m	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
70	Fill	Dark yellow brown sandy silt moderate small stones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
71	Ditch	Linear dimensions: max breadth 1.4m, min length 3.5m	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
72	Fill	Dark grey silty loam occasional small-medium stones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
73	Ditch	Linear E-W. Small section of possible E-W ditch affected by modern disturbance in east end of trench	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
74	Fill	Dark grey silty loam occasional small stones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
75	Pit	Asymmetrical dimensions: max breadth 3m, max length 5.8m. Possible irregular shaped pit overlying junction of earlier boundary/drainage ditches. Not fully excavated	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
76	Pit	Friable dark yellow brown silty loam occasional flecks charcoal, frequent small stones, occasional medium stones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



Area: 2
Extent (ha): 0.032
OS Co-ordinates: TL1528754351
Description: Area machined at north of site for construction of building to replace former stables

77	Topsoil	Loose dark grey sandy silt occasional flecks CBM, occasional flecks charcoal, moderate small stones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
78	Subsoil	Dark brown sandy silt moderate small-medium stones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
79	Natural	Mid yellow sandy gravel frequent small-medium stones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



6. FIGURES AND IMAGES

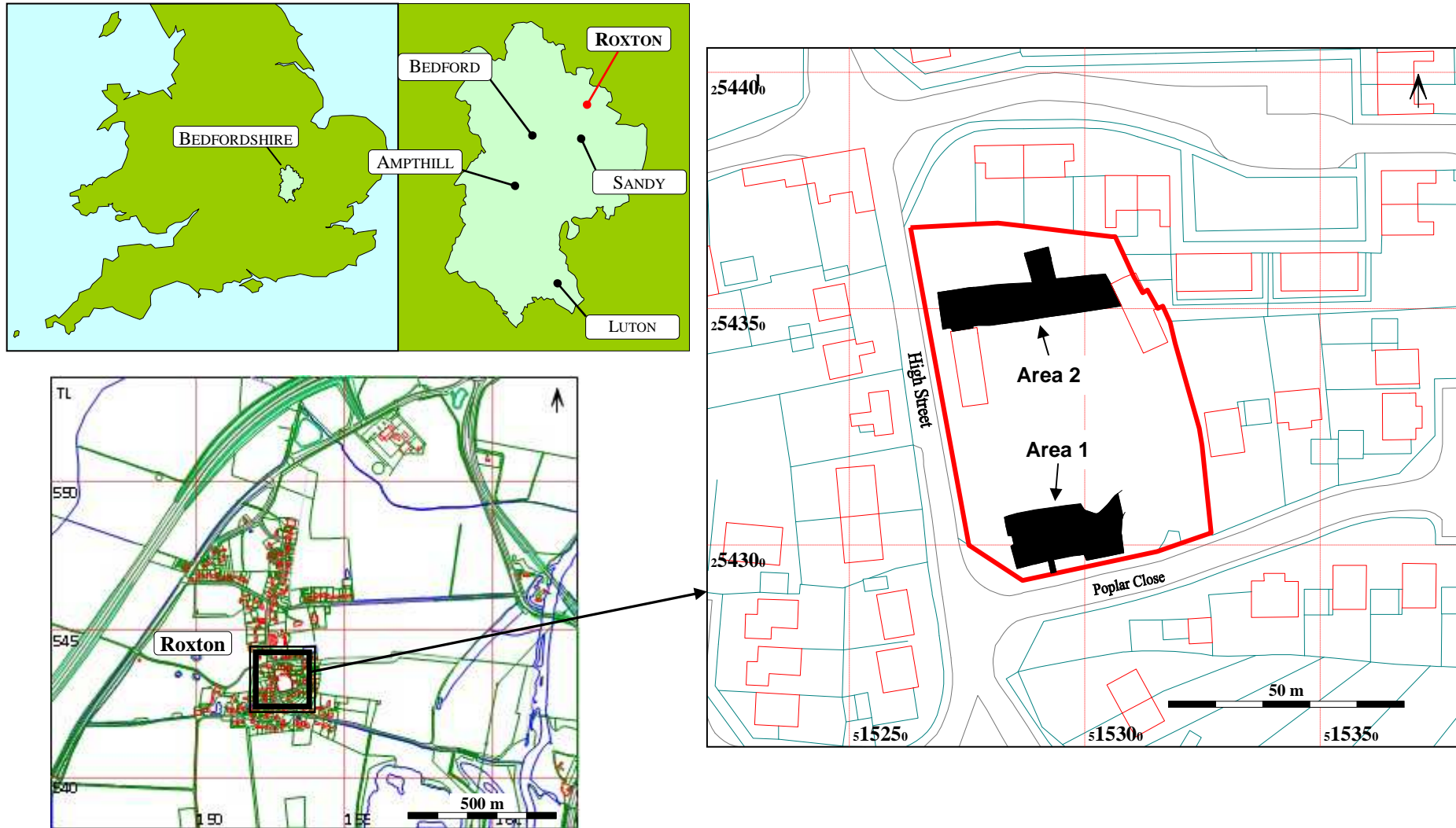


Figure 1: Site location

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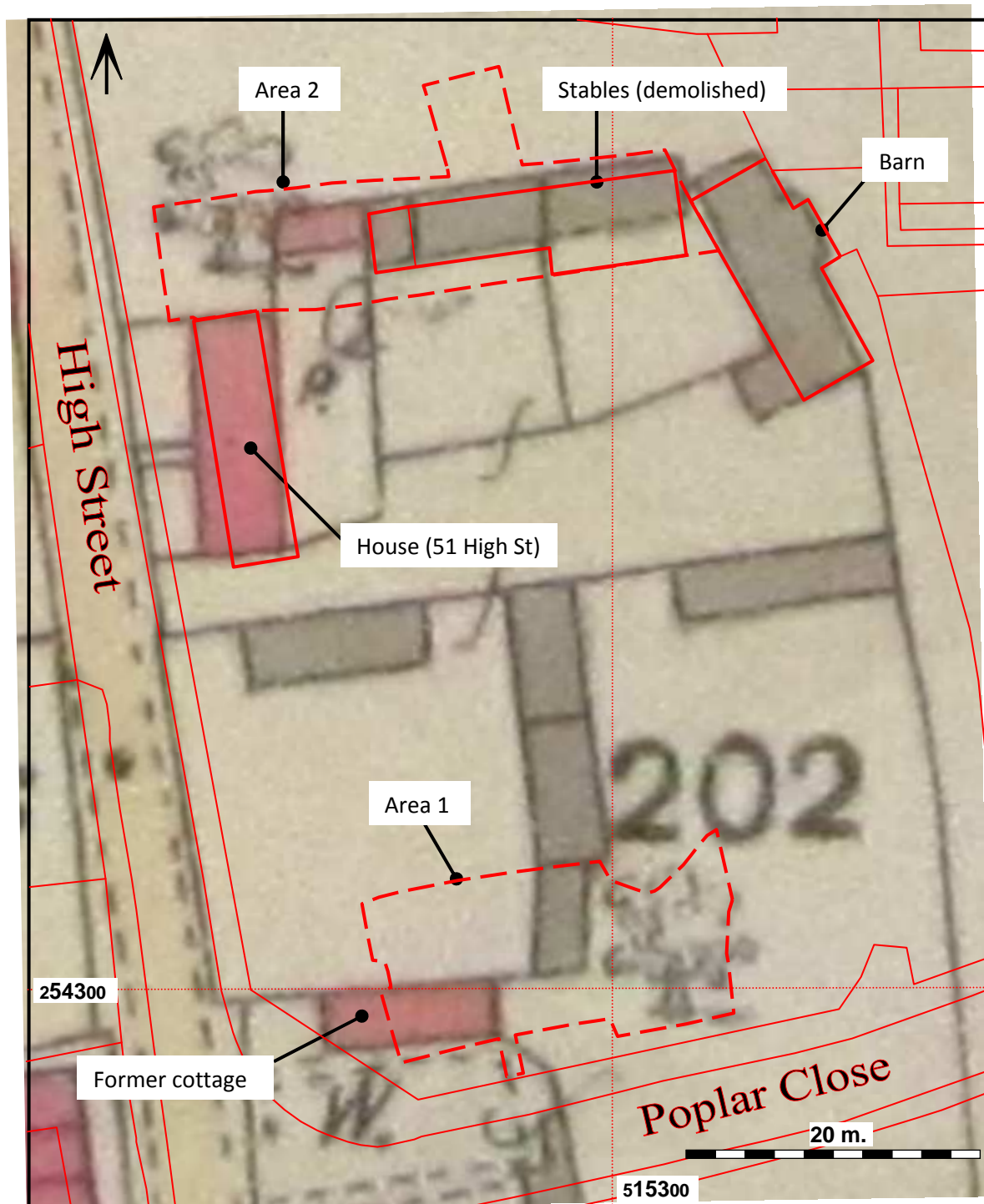


Figure 2: Modern map overlaid on 1884 Ordnance Survey map

Shows historical map in relation to modern map and areas of archaeological monitoring

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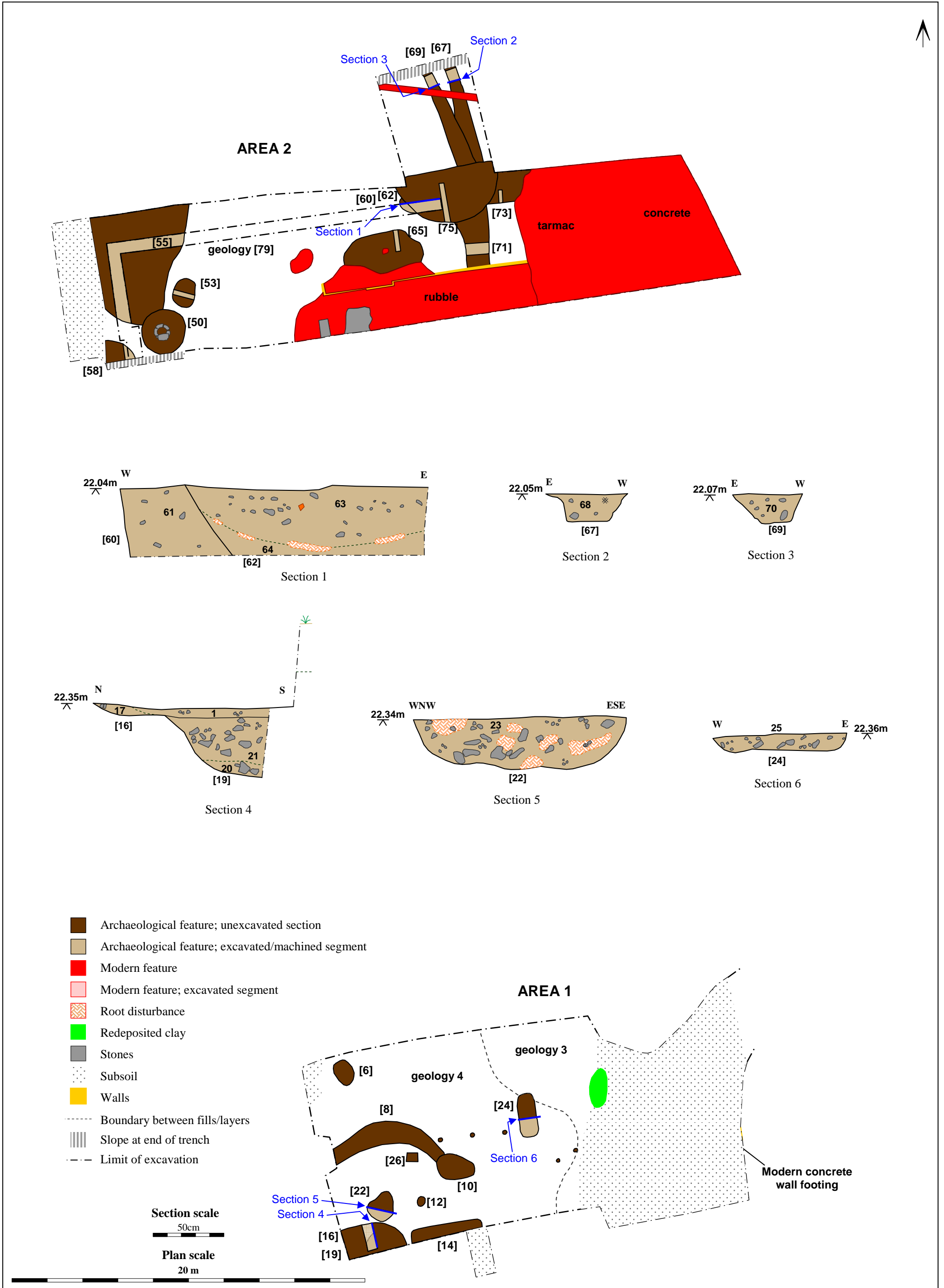


Figure 3: All features plan with selected sections



Image 1: General view of Area 1, looking north-east

Shows pits [19] and [22] in the foreground (Scale 2m)



Image 2: Section through pit [19]

West-facing section of pit (Scale 1m)



Image 3: Section through pit [22]

South-west facing section of pit (Scale 1m)



Image 4: General view of Area 2, looking east

Image shows the barn in the background and the existing house to the right. The dark soil in the foreground is feature [55] and well [50] is in front of the house. (Scale 1m)



Image 5: General view of Area 2, looking south-west
Image shows ditches [67] and [69] in the foreground. (Scale 1m)



Image 6: Section through ditch [67]
North-facing section of ditch (Scale 40cm)



Image 7: Well [50] and stone well lining (52)

Looking south, showing remains of corbelled capping at top of well (Scale 40cm)



Image 8: Stone well lining (52)

Looking south, showing construction of well

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