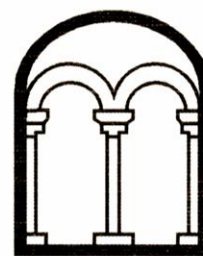


**12 MANOR LANE
WYMINGTON
BEDFORDSHIRE**

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

Albion
archaeology



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INVESTIGATION,
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Prepared for:
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Preface

All statements and opinions in this document are offered in good faith. This document has been prepared for the titled project or named part thereof and was prepared solely for the benefit of the client. The material contained in this report does not necessarily stand on its own and should not be relied upon by any third party. This document should not be used for any other purpose without an independent check being carried out as to its suitability and the prior written authority of Albion Archaeology (a trading unit of Central Bedfordshire Council). Any person/party relying on the document for such other purposes agrees and will by such use or reliance be taken to confirm their agreement to indemnify Albion Archaeology for all loss or damage resulting therefrom. Albion Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for this document to any party other than the persons/party by whom it was commissioned. This document is limited by the state of knowledge at the time it was written.

Acknowledgements

The project was commissioned by Mr Cochrane and was monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Geoff Saunders, the Archaeological Officer of Bedford Borough Council.

The archaeological works were undertaken by Gareth Shane, who also prepared this report, with contributions from Joan Lightning (CAD Technician). The project was managed by Gary Edmondson (Project Manager). All Albion projects are under the overall management of Drew Shotliff (Operations Manager).

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Key Terms

The following abbreviations are used throughout this report:

Albion	Albion Archaeology
BBC AO	Bedford Borough Council Archaeological Officer
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
HER	Historic Environment Record
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation



Non-Technical Summary

Planning permission (17/00619/FUL) was granted by Bedford Borough Council (BBC) for a one- and two-storey rear and side extensions at 12 Manor Lane, Wymington, Bedfordshire. Due to the high archaeological potential of the development area (DA) a condition (no. 6) was attached to the planning consent, requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological mitigation works.

The village of Wymington lies close to the county boundary between Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire, some 2km south of the centre of Rushden, Northants. Manor Lane lies in the northern part of the village, with the DA located on the south side of the lane at the eastern limit, centred on grid reference SP 9549 6445 at a height of c. 72m OD. The DA is a residential property bordered to west by another residential property, to the south, by St Lawrence Lower School and to the west by the graveyard of St Lawrence's Church.

A manor at Wymington is recorded in Domesday Book (1086), suggesting at least late Saxon origins for the settlement. The DA is located in the core of the medieval settlement (HER 16957), between the church of St Lawrence (HER 944), which dates from the 14th century and the site of the medieval manor house (replaced by a post-medieval building) (HER 84). An archaeological evaluation at the adjacent St Lawrence Lower School revealed four features, one of which contained sherds of Saxo-Norman St Neots ware.

The archaeological mitigation strategy was detailed in a written scheme of investigation, which was approved prior to the commencement of works. The archaeological works comprised the monitoring of the excavation of footing trenches for the new extensions, together with any associated ground reduction which had the potential to reveal archaeological remains.

Monitoring of groundworks took place on 24th and 25th July 2017, during a period of mixed weather conditions. On the first day the turf, topsoil and some of the subsoil was removed to a depth of 0.3m. On the following day all the foundation trenches were excavated to a maximum depth of 0.8m. The trenches were excavated through the remaining subsoil and into the undisturbed geological strata. Apart from modern activity associated with the standing building (e.g. drainage trenches), only a single undated pit was revealed. The stratigraphic relationships and nature of the fill suggest that this was also modern, though of uncertain function. No artefacts were observed.

Based on the results of the observations of the footing trenches, it was agreed with the BBC Archaeological Officer that, as the depth of the drainage trench would not extend through the subsoil, no further observation of this work was required.

The feature and deposits have been fully analysed for this report. No additional analysis or publication is deemed necessary. This report will be uploaded onto the OASIS website, reference no. albionar1-285612. The project archive will be deposited with The Higgins Art Gallery & Museum, Bedford under accession no. BEDFM 2017.55.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Project Background*

Planning permission (17/00619/FUL) for one- and two-storey rear and side extensions at 12 Manor Lane, Wymington, Bedfordshire was granted by Bedford Borough Council (BBC).

Due to the high archaeological potential of the development area (DA) a condition (no. 6) was attached to the planning consent, requiring the implementation of an archaeological mitigation strategy. This was done on the advice of the Borough Council's Historic Environment Team (HET), in accordance with the guidelines provided in the *National Planning Policy Framework*, and in accordance with Saved Policies BE24 and BE25 of the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2002, Policy CP23 of the Bedford Borough Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan (2008).

The HET specified that the mitigation strategy should consist of detailed archaeological monitoring and recording of all groundworks associated with the development.

Albion Archaeology was commissioned to undertake the programme of archaeological works, to fulfil the requirements of the planning condition in accordance with a WSI, which was approved by the BBC Archaeological Officer (AO) (Albion 2017).

1.2 *Site Location, Topography and Geology*

The village of Wymington lies close to the county boundary between Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire, some 2km south of the centre of Rushden, Northants. Manor Lane lies in the northern part of the village with the DA located on the south side of the lane, at the eastern limit (Figure 1). The DA is a residential property, bordered to west by another residential property, to the south by St Lawrence Lower School and to the west by the graveyard of St Lawrence's Church.

The DA is centred on grid reference SP 9549 6445, at a height of *c.* 72m OD.

The underlying geology is an exposure of Blisworth Limestone Formation with most of the surrounding ground, which is at a higher elevation, comprising Kellaways Sand Member Sandstone and Siltstone Interbedded bedrock (British Geological Survey 2016).

1.3 *Archaeological Background*

A manor at Wymington is recorded in Domesday Book (1086), suggesting at least late Saxon origins for the settlement. The DA is located in the core of the medieval settlement (HER 16957) between the church of St Lawrence (HER 944), which dates from the 14th century and the site of the medieval manor house (replaced by a post-medieval building) (HER 84).

An archaeological evaluation at the adjacent St Lawrence Lower School revealed four features, one of which produced sherds of Saxo-Norman St



Neots ware. This evidence had survived despite extensive truncation and terracing associated with the construction of the school (HER 18028; Firth 2003, 5).

Other more recent archaeological investigations within Wymington parish at 9a High Street (Wilson 2005) and North Lodge (Finn 2015) revealed only modern disturbance.

Ordnance Survey maps show the DA as forming part of a small land parcel devoid of buildings on the first edition map of the 1880s.

1.4 Project Objectives

The purpose of the archaeological investigation was to make a full record of any archaeological remains impacted by the development, and to place them within their cultural and environmental setting.

The research framework for Bedfordshire states that generally few medieval rural settlements have been investigated within the county. It also highlighted the potential for acquiring information about the origins and development of villages from within or around the edges of existing settlements (Oake 2007, 14).

The general aims of the archaeological fieldwork were to:

- monitor all groundworks that had the potential to reveal archaeological remains;
- investigate the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of archaeological deposits encountered within them.



2. METHODOLOGY

The archaeological investigation took place on 24th and 25th July 2017, in mixed weather and generally good lighting conditions; this allowed the deposits and exposed sections to be examined under differing lighting conditions. The ground reduction was undertaken by a digger fitted with a toothless ditching bucket and the footing trenches were excavated with a toothed bucket. The works comprised a combination of limited ground reduction together with excavation of a continuous footing trench for the extensions. Based on the results of the observations of the footing trenches, it was agreed with the AO that, as the depth of the drainage trench would not extend through the subsoil, no further observation of this work was required.

Any potential archaeological features were cleaned, excavated by hand and recorded using Albion Archaeology's *pro-forma* sheets. All deposits were assigned a unique context number commencing at (01).

The project adhered throughout to the standards prescribed in the following documents:

• Albion Archaeology	<i>Procedures Manual: Volume 1 Fieldwork</i> (2nd edn, 2003).
• Bedford Borough Council	<i>Preparing Archaeological Archives for Deposition in Registered Museums in Bedford</i> (ver. 2.8, 2010)
• ClfA	<i>Charter and by-law; Code of conduct</i> (2014)
	<i>Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief</i> (2014)
	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i> (2014)
• EAA	<i>Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England</i> (2003)
• Historic England	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) Project Managers' Guide</i> (2015)
	<i>Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation</i> , (2nd edn, 2011)

The archive of finds and records generated during the project will be deposited with the Higgins Art Gallery & Museum, Bedford under accession number BEDFM 2017.55

Details of the project and its findings will be submitted to the Archaeology Data Service's OASIS database under reference no. albionar1-285612.



3. RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

The foundation trenches for the extension were located to the SE of the standing building (Figure 2) extending from the middle of the NE side for 15.5m and returning to intersect the SE corner of the standing building (Figure 2 and Figure 3: image 2). These trenches were 0.6m wide and a maximum 0.8m deep, extending into the undisturbed geological strata.

Features and deposits are described below from latest to earliest and are shown in Figure 2 with associated sections and selected images (Figures 3–5).

3.2 Overburden

The topsoil (01) comprised firm dark black, clay silt, up to 0.25m thick, with occasional small fragments of brick and slate (Figure 3: image 1). The thickness of the deposit suggests a former cultivation soil, probably a garden soil, though it may have originally been an arable cultivation soil.

Below this was firm mid yellow-grey clay (02), up to 0.5m thick with occasional stones, and limestone fragments. This defines an extensive subsoil deposit.

3.3 Undisturbed Geological Strata

This comprised compact mid yellow eroded limestone of the Blisworth Limestone Formation.

3.4 Modern Deposits

The footing trenches revealed sequential drains associated with the house, with an early drain [06] extending eastwards from the building. This had been recently replaced by a new drain [08], aligned parallel to the eastern wall of the building (Figure 2: section 1 and Figure 4: image 3).

The sole feature revealed was pit [04] located at the SE corner of the new footings (Figure 2 and Figure 3: image 2). The pit was apparent in both footing trench edges. The base tapered markedly to the south, whilst continuing below the bottom of the footing trench (Figure 4: image 4). The pit was 1.88m long, at least 0.6m wide and 0.75m deep with an asymmetrical profile (Figure 2: section 2; Figure 4: image 4; and Figure 5: image 5). The single firm mid orange-grey clay fill (05) contained no finds.



4. CONCLUSIONS

No significant archaeological features were encountered during the investigation. The topsoil and subsoil had been subject to a moderate amount of disturbance. This is likely to be associated with the construction of the existing building in the late Victorian period, as well as backyard activity. The sole feature, pit [04], is likely to be modern in date but is of uncertain function.

The results of the investigation have been fully analysed in this report. No additional analysis or publication is deemed necessary. This report will be uploaded onto the OASIS website, reference no. albionar1-285612, and the project archive deposited with The Higgins Art Gallery & Museum, Bedford under accession no. BEDFM: 2017.55.

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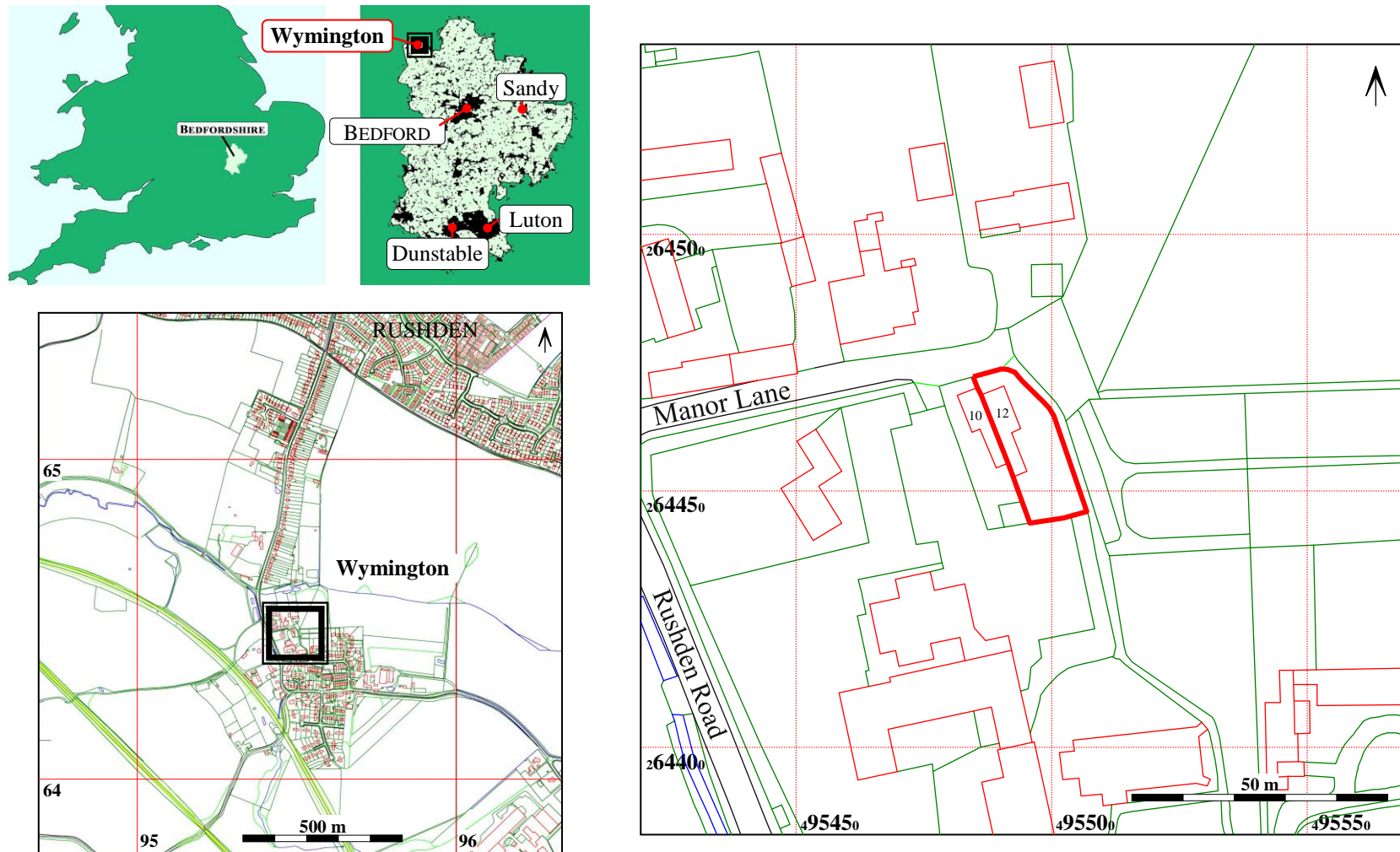


Figure 1: Site location.

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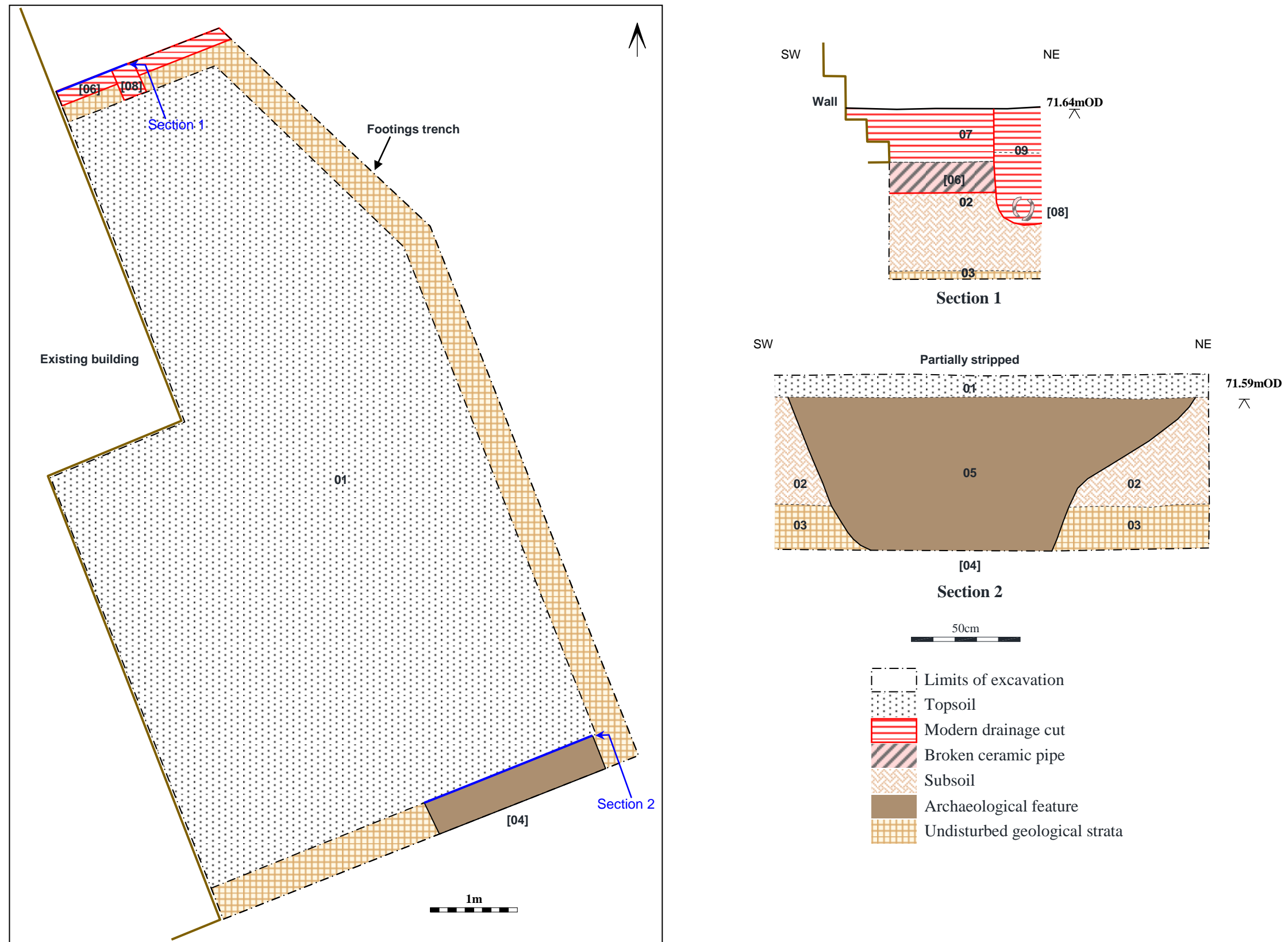


Figure 2: All-features plan and selected sections



Image 1: General view of area looking northwards, during initial strip of topsoil (01)



Image 2: General view of area looking from the SE, after the footing trenches had been excavated to formation level. Pit [04] is visible in the foreground (labelled).

Figure 3: Selected images 1 and 2



Image 3: NW area of footing trench showing the two sequential drains, with the earlier example [06] parallel to the northern edge of the footing trench, whilst the later example [08] crosses the earlier drain at right angles, truncating it. Scale 0.3m in 10cm divisions.



Image 4: Overhead view of pit [04], showing wider northern profiles, and fill (05) in the base of the trench. Scale 0.3m in 10cm divisions.

Figure 4: Selected images 3 and 4



Image 5: Northern section of pit [04]. Scale 0.3m in 10cm divisions.

Figure 5: Selected image 5

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