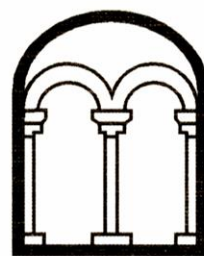


**MANOR COTTAGE
SCHOOL LANE
BOLNHURST
BEDFORDSHIRE**

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

Albion
archaeology



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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 Jeremy Lucas 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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1.0	10/11/2017	n/a
1.1	15/11/2017	Incorporating comments of the Senior Archaeological Officer

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
PDA	Permitted development area
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation



Non-Technical Summary

Planning permission (17/01763/FUL) for the erection of a single-storey rear/side extension and a 1.5-storey side extension at Manor Cottage, School Lane, Bolnhurst was granted by Bedford Borough Council (BBC). Due to the high archaeological potential of the permitted development area (PDA) a condition (no. 3) was attached to the planning consent, requiring the implementation of an archaeological mitigation strategy.

Bolnhurst is a small village in the civil parish of Bolnhurst and Keysoe, which lies in north Bedfordshire, about 11km- north of Bedford and about 10km west of St Neots. The PDA lies on the north side of School Lane at its junction with Kimbolton Road, centred on grid reference TL 0854 5985, at a height of c. 75m OD.

The PDA lies within the probable extent of the medieval settlement of Church End (HER 17059). Bedfordshire's settlement pattern features numerous 'End' settlements, which are considered to represent the remnants of an early Saxon landscape that was subject to large-scale reorganisation towards the end of the Anglo-Saxon period. By the medieval period, Church End was a linear-shaped settlement spreading out along the roads to Keysoe and Bushmead.

Excavations during the construction of a soakaway for the Schoolhouse, located immediately north-west of the PDA identified a number of medieval pits (HER 7803).

At Turnpike Farm (opposite the PDA, immediately to the east of Kimbolton Road) lies a scheduled, medieval moated enclosure and associated cultivation earthworks (NHLE 1012069). Similarly, immediately to the west, at Manor Farm is another scheduled site — an Iron Age univallate hillfort and another medieval moated enclosure (NHLE 1012066).

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 2nd and 10th October 2017, during a period of mixed weather conditions. On 2nd October the trench footings for the eastern extension were reduced to their full depth of 1.2m through the turf and soil profile into the undisturbed geological strata. On 10th October the footing trench for the northern extension was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.2m.

The eastern area was relatively undisturbed with some evidence for raising of the ground level, possibly associated with creation of the present-day garden. Below this was a former cultivation soil, which in turn sealed a linear band of disturbance, thought to define the line of a former hedge that had been grubbed out. The northern area showed more disturbance, probably relating to previous work associated with the standing building. Below a layer of made ground was the undisturbed geological strata; no archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were observed.

No further analysis or reporting is required beyond deposition of the archive and unloading of this report onto the OASIS database (ref. albionar1-294869).



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Project Background*

Planning permission (17/01763/FUL) for the erection of a single-storey rear/side extension and a 1.5-storey side extension at Manor Cottage, School Lane, Bolnhurst was granted by Bedford Borough Council (BBC).

Due to the high archaeological potential of the permitted development area (PDA) a condition (no. 3) 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 in a brief (BBC 2017) that the mitigation strategy should consist of archaeological monitoring of groundworks and the investigation and recording of any archaeological remains that were revealed.

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

1.2 *Site Location, Topography and Geology*

The PDA lies in Bolnhurst, a small village in the civil parish of Bolnhurst and Keysoe, Bedfordshire, situated some 11km north of Bedford and about 10km west of St Neots. The PDA lies on the north side of School Lane at its junction with Kimbolton Road.

The PDA is centred on NGR TL 0854 5985, at a height of *c.* 75m OD. The superficial geology is Oadby Member – Diamicton (boulder clay), formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period. The solid geology is Oxford Clay Formation – Mudstone, formed approximately 157 to 166 million years ago in the Jurassic Period¹.

The proposed development comprised a rear/side (northern) extension to link to an existing garage and a second extension to the east.

1.3 *Archaeological Background*

The Bedfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER) and the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) record several entries for the area around the PDA. The following summary is drawn from the BCC brief.

The PDA lies within the postulated extent of the medieval settlement of Church End (HER 17059). Bedfordshire's settlement pattern features numerous 'End' settlements, which are considered to represent the remnants of

¹ Contains British Geological Survey materials ©NERC [2014]



an early Saxon landscape that was subject to large-scale reorganisation towards the end of the Anglo-Saxon period. By the medieval period, Church End was a linear-shaped settlement spreading out along the roads to Keysoe and Bushmead.

Excavations during the construction of a soakaway for the Schoolhouse to the immediate north-west of the PDA identified a number of medieval pits (HER 7803).

At Turnpike Farm (opposite the PDA, immediately to the east of Kimbolton Road) lies a scheduled, medieval moated enclosure and associated cultivation earthworks (NHLE 1012069). Similarly, immediately to the west, at Manor Farm is another scheduled site — an Iron Age univallate hillfort and another medieval moated enclosure (NHLE 1012066).

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 highlights 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 2nd and 10th October 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 mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, whilst the footing trenches were excavated with a toothed bucket. The works comprised a combination of limited ground reduction, together with excavation of the footing trenches for the extensions.

Any potential archaeological horizons were cleaned, and recorded using Albion Archaeology's *pro-forma* sheets. All deposits were assigned a unique context number commencing at (1).

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)
• CfA	<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 records generated during the project will be deposited with the Higgins Art Gallery & Museum, Bedford under accession number BEDFM 2017.97.

Details of the project and its findings will be submitted to the Archaeology Data Service's OASIS database under reference no. albionar1-294869.



3. RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

The foundation trenches for the extensions were located on the east and north sides of the existing building (Figure 2); they are discussed separately in the following sections. All the trenches were 1.2m deep and 0.6m wide with the exception of a short run off the rear of the garage that was 1.8m deep due to underpinning works. No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were recovered from the investigation areas. Soil deposits are described below from latest to earliest and are shown in Figure 2 with associated sections, whilst selected images are contained in Figures 3 and 4.

3.2 Eastern Extension Footings

This rectangular area extended 10m by 8m to the east of the standing building (Figure 2 and Figure 3: Image 1).

3.2.1 Overburden

The topsoil (1) comprised friable, black, clay silt, up to 0.25m thick, below which was friable mid-grey-brown clay silt (2), up to 0.3m thick (Figure 2: Sections 2–4 and Figure 3: Image 2). The topsoil would appear to be redeposited cultivation soil, possibly associated with landscaping of the garden area; whilst (2) was a probable buried former cultivation soil. The latter showed evidence of recent root disturbance possibly associated with the use and remodelling of the garden.

3.2.2 Undisturbed geological strata

This comprised firm mid-yellow-grey clay, with frequent chalk flecking (4), which correlated to Oadby Member-Diamicton (boulder clay).

3.2.3 Possible former hedge line

Below the probable buried former cultivation soil (2) there was a roughly linear band of friable mid-yellow-brown clay (3) up to 0.3m thick, which was confined to the northern part of the area. This deposit was recorded as feature [6]; it extended at least 10m E-W by up to 1.9m wide in the east, whilst continuing northwards, beyond the footing trench (Figure 2 and Sections 2 and 4; Figure 3: Image 2). The deposit merged with the undisturbed geological strata. It was originally considered to be a variation in the soil profile but is now thought more likely to be disturbance associated with the removal of vegetation, possibly a hedge line based on the apparently linear form. This would appear to predate the formation of the cultivation soil.

3.3 Northern Extension Footing

Located to the rear of the standing building, this northern extension linked its existing components (Figure 2). The footing trench was 'L'-shaped in plan, extending some 11.5m NW-SE and turning to the south in the west for 2m.

3.3.1 Overburden / made ground

This area contained made ground (5), up to 0.5m thick, comprising firm, dark grey clay with moderate brick rubble and concrete fragments (Figure 2:



Section 1 and Figure 4: Images 3 and 4). All the original upper soil profile had been removed, prior to the creation of the made ground, which is likely to have been associated with the standing building.

3.3.2 Undisturbed geological strata

This comprised the continuation of the firm, mid-yellow-grey clay (4) seen to the east.



4. CONCLUSIONS

A linear band of disturbance revealed in the northern side of the eastern extension may represent the location of a former hedge, rather than either a variation in the geological strata or an archaeological feature. This possible hedge line does not correlate to boundaries shown on historical maps.

No archaeological features were encountered during the investigation. Whilst the eastern area was relatively undisturbed, the original soil profile had been stripped from the northern area and the ground consolidated (probably in association with the construction and use of the standing building). If archaeological remains had ever been present here, it is likely that they were removed in modern times.

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. albionar 1-294869, and the project archive deposited with The Higgins Art Gallery & Museum, Bedford under accession no. BEDFM: 2017.97.

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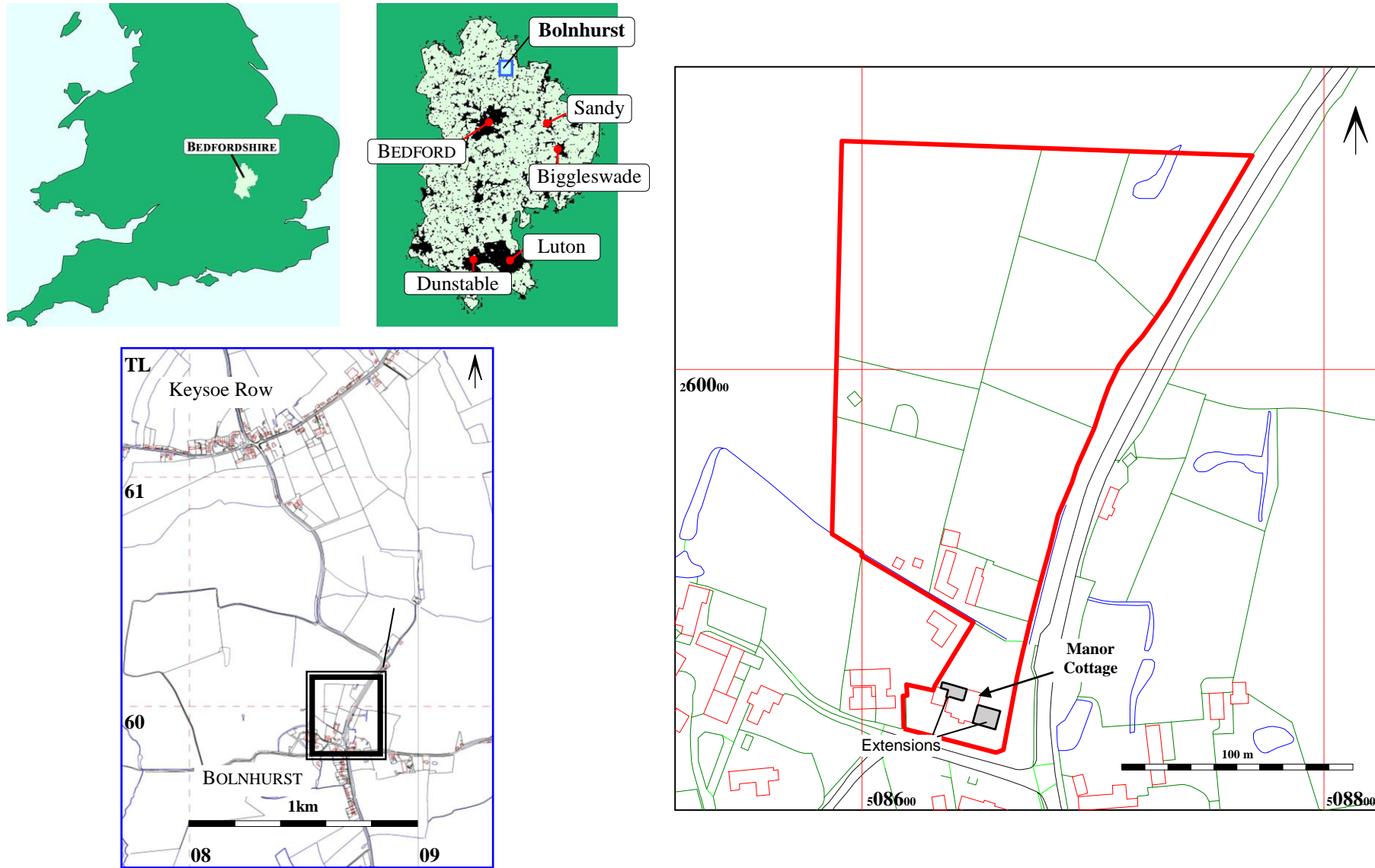
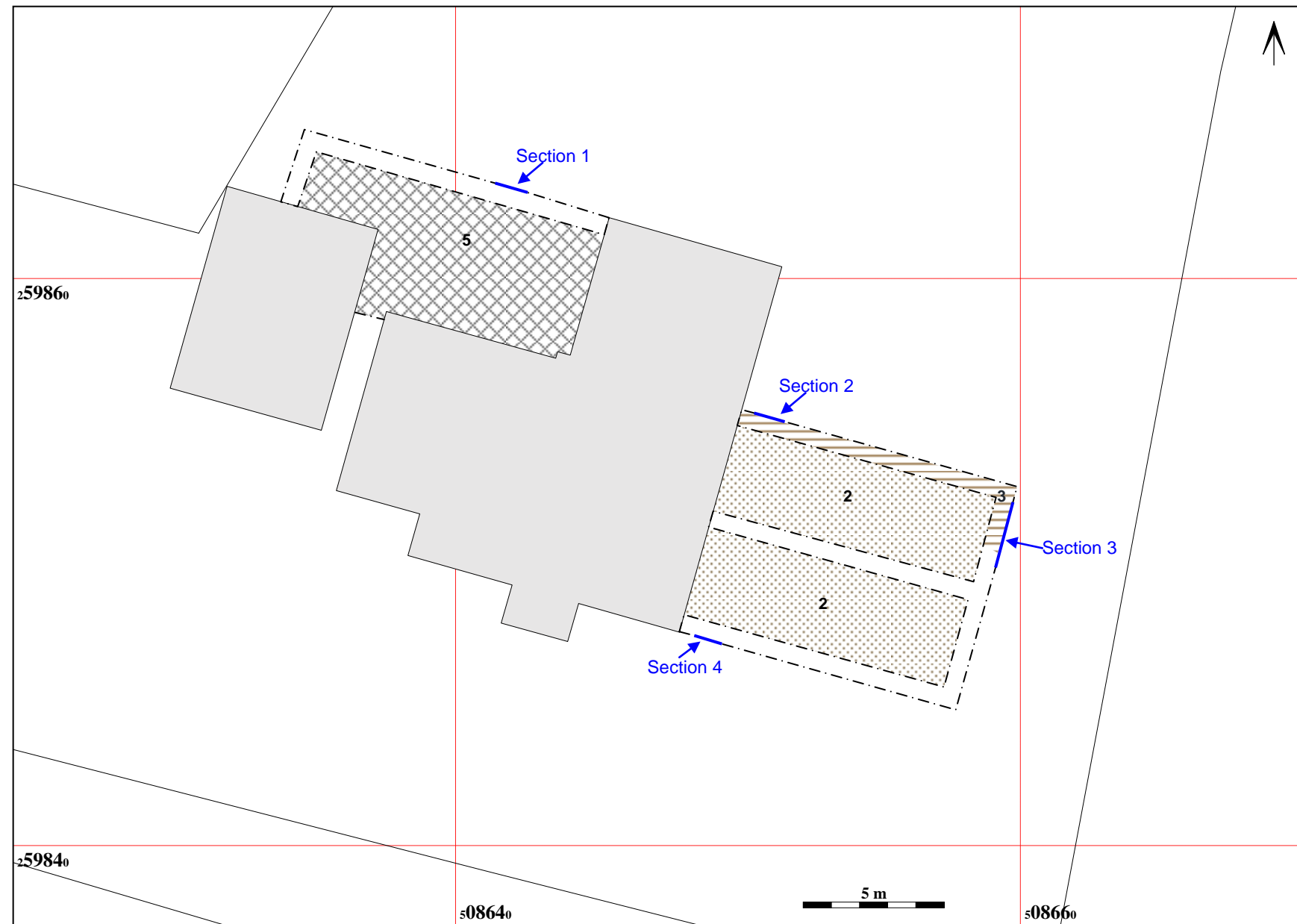


Figure 1: Site location

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- Limits of excavation
- Topsoil
- Buried cultivation soil
- Fill - 3
- Made ground
- Geological strata

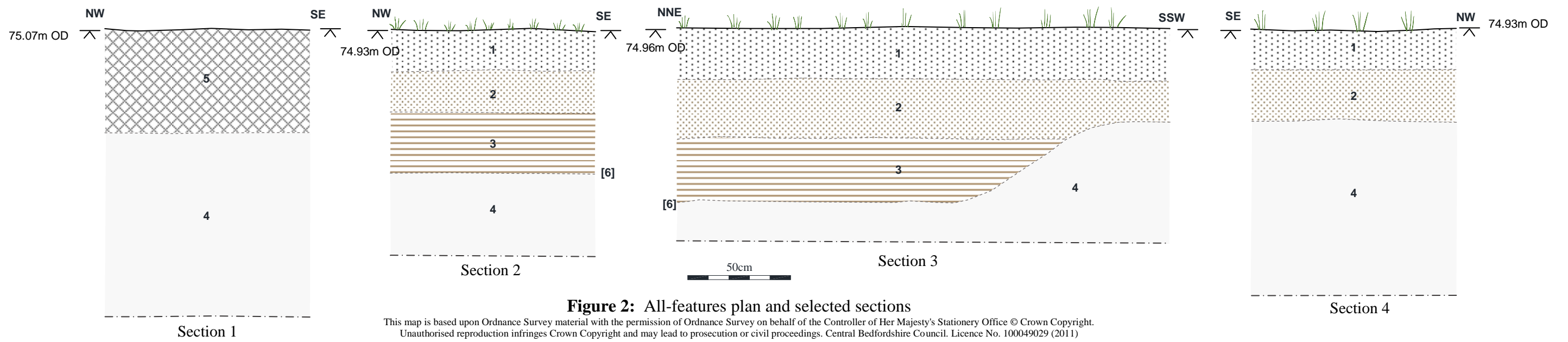


Figure 2: All-features plan and selected sections

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Image 1: General view of footprint of eastern extension, following removal of the turf



Image 2: Soil profile revealed in outer face of eastern footing trench, indicating a thick topsoil horizon, with the chalk-flecked geological strata (4) to the lower right of the image and elongated disturbance [6] to the lower left (thought to define removal of a hedge)
Scale 30cm in 10cm divisions.

Figure 3: Eastern extension – Images 1 and 2



Image 3: General view of northern extension, with footing trench under excavation



Image 4: General view of section of footing trench, showing truncated soil profile

Figure 4: Northern extension – Images 3 and 4



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