

**EDWORTH MANOR
CHURCH END
EDWORTH
BEDFORDSHIRE**

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

Albion
archaeology



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Preface

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1.1	19/09/2018	Following comments from CBCAO
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Key Terms

Throughout this document the following terms or abbreviations are used:

CBC	Central Bedfordshire Council
CBCAO	Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeological Officer
CI/A	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
HER	Central Bedfordshire and Luton Historic Environment Record
LPA	Local Planning Authority
NHLE	National Heritage List for England
PDA	Permitted development area
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation



Non-technical Summary

Planning consent (CB/18/00420/FULL) was granted by Central Bedfordshire Council for the demolition of an existing barn and construction of a new agricultural storage barn at Edworth Manor, Church End, Edworth, Bedfordshire.

The permitted development area (PDA) is located in an area with the potential to contain heritage assets of archaeological interest, and accordingly a condition (no. 4) was attached to the planning permission, requiring a programme of archaeological works.

Archaeological observation and investigation works took place on 18th July 2018 in a period of dry, bright weather conditions. The monitored groundworks comprised the excavation of 10 roughly square foundation pits for the new barn. These were excavated by a machine fitted with a wide toothless bucket. Most were cut through the concrete floor of the former barn. The pits measured c. 1.2 by 1m and extended up to 1m below the existing ground level, into the undisturbed geological stratum.

Only modern deposits associated with the construction of the former barn were present, indicating that the former soil profile had been removed to the geological stratum. No archaeological features or deposits were observed and no artefacts were recovered. Had any substantial archaeological features, such as pits or ditches, been present they would have been clearly defined against the undisturbed geological strata. However, no such features were present and no artefacts were recovered.

The project archive will be deposited with The Higgins Art Gallery & Museum, Bedford (accession no. BEDFM 2018.35). This report will be uploaded onto the Archaeology Data Service's OASIS website (ref. albionar1-318896).



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Planning consent (CB/18/00420/FULL) was granted for the demolition of an existing barn and construction of a new agricultural storage barn at Edworth Manor, Church End, Edworth, Bedfordshire (Figure 1).

The permitted development area (PDA) is located in an area with the potential to contain heritage assets of archaeological interest and accordingly the following condition (no. 4) was attached to the planning permission:

No development or demolition shall take place until a written scheme of archaeological investigation; that includes the provision for post excavation analysis and publication, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development hereby approved shall only be implemented in full accordance with the approved archaeological scheme.

Reason: This condition is pre-commencement as a failure to secure appropriate archaeological investigation in advance of development would be contrary to paragraph 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) that requires developers to record and advance of understanding of the significance of any Heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) as a consequence of the development.

Accordingly, the Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeological Officer (CBCAO) issued a brief for a programme of archaeological observation, investigation, recording, analysis and publication (CBC 2018). Albion Archaeology was commissioned to prepare Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) and undertake the archaeological works.

1.2 Site Location and Development Description

The village of Edworth is situated close to the Bedfordshire-Hertfordshire border, within Central Bedfordshire. The A1 (Great North Road) lies *c.* 1.3km to the west; Biggleswade is situated 4.5km to the north-west and Shefford is *c.* 8km to the west. The village is situated on the south side of a road that runs between Langford and Dunton.

The PDA is situated on the east side of Manor Farm, immediately north of St George's parish church. It is centred on TL 2233 4076, and occupies the site of a former agricultural storage barn.

The land around Edworth undulates and the PDA is situated at *c.* 50m OD. Edworth lies at the base of two low topographical ridges, one immediately to the west, between the village and the Ivel Valley, and one to the north-east. The underlying geology comprises Gault Clay, overlain by deposits of Boulder Clay¹.

¹ <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>



1.3 Archaeological Background

A search of the Central Bedfordshire and Luton Historic Environment Record (HER) was made (search ref.: 201819/059). The following text is a review of data recorded within a 500m-radius of the PDA, referred to as the 'study area'.

1.3.1 Undated

A series of linear and curvilinear cropmarks were identified on aerial photographs, c. 650m to the north of the PDA (HER 9101). They have not been tested by archaeological excavation and, therefore, remain undated. It is possible that they correspond to the extensive earthworks associated with the deserted medieval village of Edworth. It should be noted, however, that they are not aligned with the current road and could represent prehistoric activity.

1.3.2 Prehistoric (pre-43 BC)

No prehistoric heritage assets, other than find-spots, have been recorded in the study area. A Bronze Age co-axial field system (HER 3545) and early-middle Iron Age settlement have been previously identified in the vicinity of Topplers Hill, but this is situated c. 800m to the south-west of the PDA, on the western side of the A1.

Two Iron Age coins have been found c. 270m to the south-west (HER 18606) and c. 440m to the south-east (HER 19713) of the PDA.

1.3.3 Roman (43 BC– c. AD 410)

Heritage assets of Roman date within the study area comprise the suggested route of a Roman road (HER 5342) and finds of Roman pottery and a mosaic (HER 522).

The putative Roman road is situated c. 510m north-west of the PDA. Its route was published in 1964 by the Viatores as road no. 176, running eastwards from Little Brickhill on the A5 to Dunton and beyond. There is little to no evidence for much of this route having been a Roman road, but a short section does correspond to a raised drive in Woburn Park (Simco 1984, 78–9). The A1 (Great North Road), situated 1.3m to the west of the PDA, also follows the line of a Roman road (HER 505).

A Roman mosaic (HER 522) was reportedly uncovered in the vicinity of the Old Rectory, situated c. 380m to the north of the PDA, but remains unconfirmed. Similarly, finds of Roman pottery in the vicinity of the Old Rectory also remain unconfirmed.

1.3.4 Anglo-Saxon (c. AD 410–1066)

No heritage assets of Anglo-Saxon date have so far been recorded in Edworth. However, at the time of the Domesday Survey in 1086 a manor already existed at Edworth, suggesting at least a late Saxon origin for the settlement.



1.3.5 Medieval (1066–1550)

The majority of the heritage assets recorded in the study area are medieval in origin and correspond to the deserted or shrunken medieval settlement of Edworth (HER 17169). It encompasses the entire modern settled area of Edworth and incorporates a strip of land that extends southwards to the A1 (The Great North Road), which contains Manor Farm and the church. The PDA is situated within the medieval core of the village, as defined in the HER (17169), lying on its eastern edge.

At the time of Domesday, 1086, the principal manor of Edworth was held by two knights under William d'Eu and comprised eight villagers, two smallholders, five slaves and land and meadow for ten ploughs² (Page 1908, 223–6).

The only extant medieval building is the 13th-century Grade I listed Church of St George (NHLE 1113833; Page 1908, 223–6), situated *c.* 140m south-west of the PDA. It would have formed the main focus of medieval settlement in Edworth, along with the manor house, and several areas of earthworks in the vicinity of the church have been identified.

Earthworks of a moat were identified to the north of the church during an earthwork survey in 1984 (HER 1484; EBD1303), and could indicate the location of a medieval manorial site. A network of holloways and ditches, two house-platforms and underlying ridge and furrow were also recorded during the survey. Further earthworks pertaining to a moat (HER 1163 and HER 9596) have been recorded to the east of the church. Many of these above-ground earthworks have since been levelled, but below-ground elements are likely to survive as archaeological remains. To the south of the church earthworks suggestive ofcroft boundaries, house platforms and a pond (HER 2848) have been identified.

Within the study area earthworks pertaining to close boundaries, ponds, a track and ridge and furrow (HER 2580) have been identified in fields to the south of the Edworth's rectory, *c.* 370m to the south-west of the PDA. Further rectilinear earthworks are present in fields *c.* 440m to the north-east of the PDA and comprise close boundaries and ridge and furrow (HER 3512). Ridge and furrow also survives as earthworks and/or cropmarks *c.* 330m to the north-east of the PDA (HER 2579).

1.3.6 Post-medieval (1550–1900)

The post-medieval settlement pattern within Edworth consists of a scatter of post-medieval houses and farms, the majority of which have not been recorded in the HER.

Several designated buildings exist in the study area, the oldest being the Grade II listed Old Rectory (NHLE 1312675), situated *c.* 440m to the north of the PDA. It dates to the 16th century, but was reworked and extended in the 18th and 19th centuries. Its original T-shaped plan is still visible despite recent alterations.

² <http://opendomesday.org/place/TL2240/edworth/>



The Grade II listed 17th-century Manor House (NHLE 1312667) and 18th-century barn (NHLE 1113834) are situated to the west of the PDA at Manor Farm. An undesignated 18th-century dovecote (HER 5654) is also situated in this location.

1.3.7 Modern (1900–present day)

Modern heritage assets recorded in the study area comprises the cropmarks of a former WWII anti-aircraft gun battery and a searchlight emplacement (HER 9226), situated *c.* 170m to the east of the PDA. A mound constructed in WWII for a light is also situated *c.* 390m to the south-east (HER 428).

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 specific aims of the archaeological fieldwork were, therefore, to:

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

Possible heritage assets within the PDA had potential to relate to the Saxon, medieval and post-medieval development of Edworth — in particular, remains pertaining to the possible medieval moat (HER 9596) situated immediately to the south of the PDA.

With regards to the investigation of medieval settlement the regional research framework states that few medieval settlements have been investigated archaeologically within Bedfordshire, and research is needed into the diversity, characterisation of settlement forms and the appearance, growth, shift and disappearance of settlements (Oake 2007, 14; Medlycott 2011, 70). This needs to be undertaken at the micro-scale of investigating the chronology, structure and function of individual settlements (for example the PDA) and at the macro-scale of broad patterns of settlement (Oake et al. 2007, 14).

Any information pertaining to the possible medieval moat would have been of significance; although Bedfordshire contains a large number of moated sites, over half have been destroyed (Edgeworth 2007, 99). Edgeworth has emphasised the potential for finding earlier settlement remains beneath moated sites, which often form a sequence of occupation (2007, 100). The landscape around such monuments can also provide information about how these sites were linked to adjacent settlement and how they functioned (*ibid.*).

Dependent on the nature of any remains that are revealed, specific research aims would be derived from regional research frameworks (e.g. Brown and Glazebrook 2007; Oake et al. 2007; Medlycott 2011).



2. METHODOLOGY

A detailed methodology is provided in the Written Scheme of Investigation (Albion 2018) and summarised below.

Throughout the project the standards set out in the following documents were adhered to:

• Albion Archaeology	<i>Procedures Manual: Volume 1 Fieldwork</i> (3rd edn, 2017).
• Bedford Borough Council	<i>Preparing Archaeological Archives for Deposition in Registered Museums in Bedford</i> (ver. 2.8, 2010)
• CIfA	<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)

Archaeological observation and investigation works took place on 18th July 2018 in a period of dry, bright weather conditions. The monitored groundworks comprised the excavation of 10 roughly square foundation pits for the new barn. These were excavated by a machine fitted with a wide toothless bucket (Figure 2 and Figures 3–5: images 1–5). The foundation pits were numbered 1–10, with each pit assigned a discrete block of context numbers, starting at (10) for Pit 1, (20) for Pit 2 etc. The pits were *c.* 1.2 by 1m and up to 1m deep.

Deposits encountered were investigated and recorded in accordance with Albion's *Procedures Manual*. Soil heaps were checked for artefact recovery.

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3. RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

The features and deposits observed are described below with associated plan, sections and images shown in Figures 2–5. Numbers in square brackets refer to cut features [**] and round brackets (**) refer to deposits. The ground surface on the section drawings in Figure 2 lay at 50m OD.

3.1 *Modern Deposits*

Pits 1–4, 6, 7 and 10 showed the same soil profiles from top to bottom:

- white concrete to a maximum thickness of 0.2m (10), (20), (30), (40), (60), (70) and (100);
- a rubble sub-stratum, comprising brick (mostly fragments) and stone in a variable soil matrix that ranged from reddish brown to dark brown silty clay. The deposit varied from 0.1–0.25m thick (11), (21), (31), (41) (61), (71) and (101) (Sections 1 and 3 on Figure 2; Figure 3: images 1 and 2; Figure 4: image 3), which lay directly above the geological stratum.

In Pit 5 the concrete (50) and rubble sub-stratum (51) sealed black, friable silt layer (52), up to 0.1m thick, which was directly above the geological stratum (Section 2 on Figure 2; Figure 4: image 4). Deposit (52) is difficult to characterise, given the limited extent of the pit; however, it appears to be modern disturbance associated with the creation of the former barn rather the remains of an archaeological feature.

Pits 8 and 9 showed a similar sequence, although there was no concrete above the rubble sub-stratum (80) and (90), which was up to 0.4m thick (Section 4 on Figure 2; Figure 5: image 5). It would appear that the footprint for the barn floor had been cut too wide in the east and the area beyond the concrete floor was infilled with available material — mostly rubble but also some soil.

No archaeological features, deposits or finds were present within the excavated pits.

3.2 *Undisturbed Geological Deposits*

Undisturbed geological deposits comprised firm mid-black-blue clay silt, which was reached in all the foundation pits.

3.3 *Significance of Results*

Although the PDA is located in an area of archaeological potential, no evidence was recovered for activity pre-dating the construction of the former barn in the modern period.

Only a relatively small area was impacted by the new barn's foundation pads. Significant ground reduction, associated with the construction of the former barn, was evident in all the pits, with the upper soil horizons removed to the level of the geological stratum. Had any substantial archaeological features, such as pits or ditches, been present they would have been clearly defined against the



undisturbed geological strata. However, no such features were present and no artefacts were recovered.

The deposits recorded in the foundation pits have no potential to address regional research frameworks.



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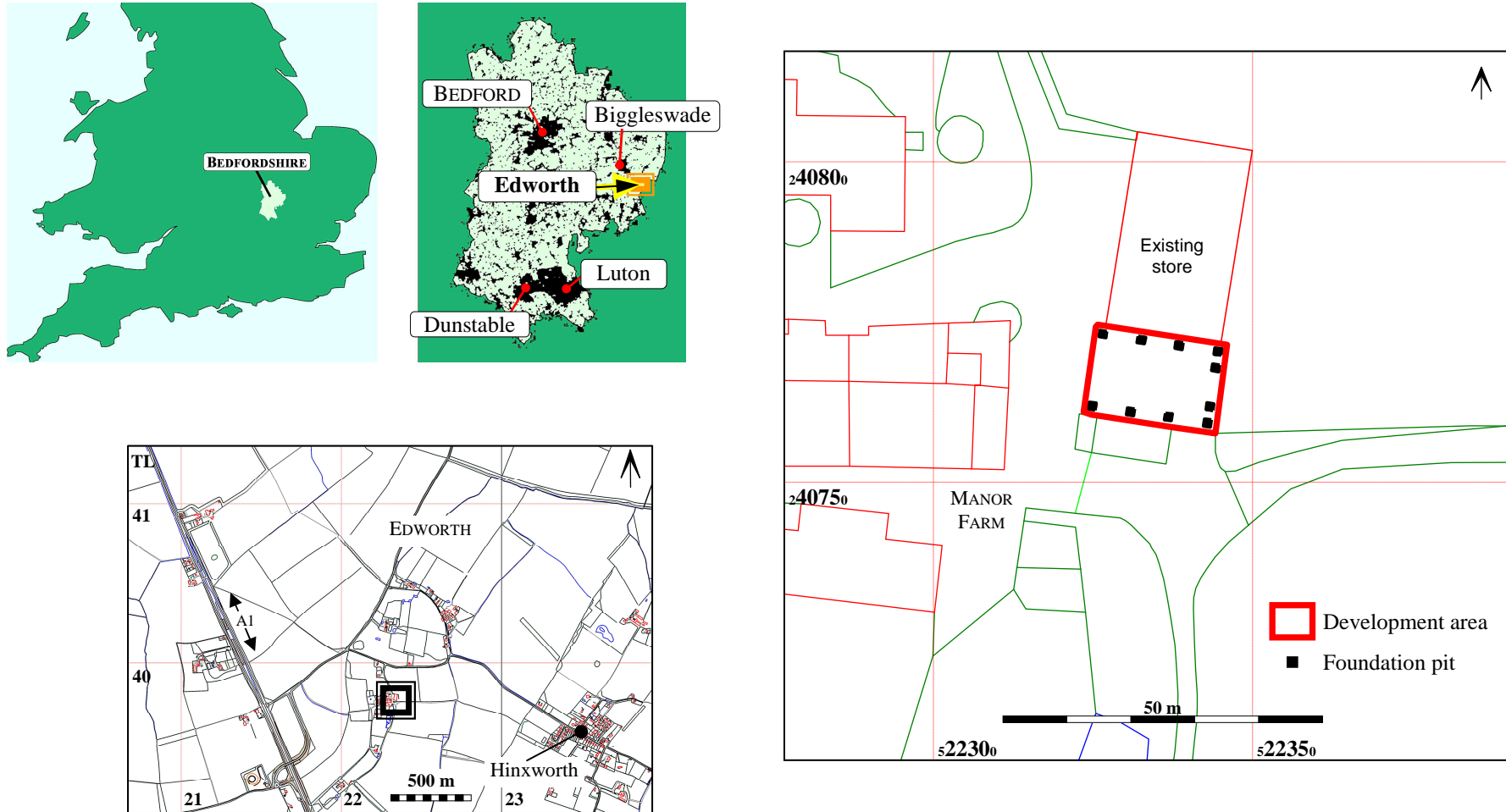


Figure 1: Site location plan

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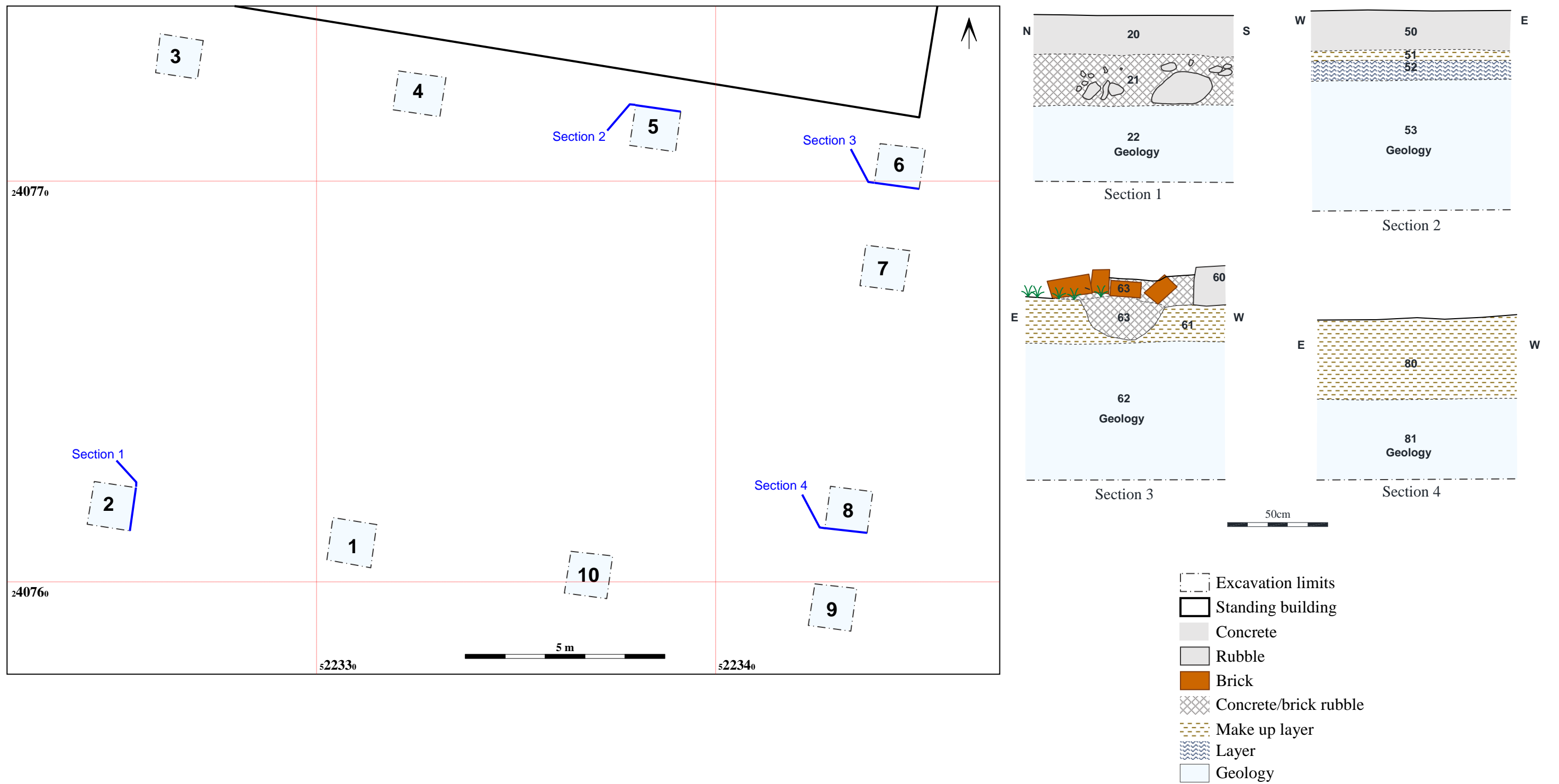


Figure 2: All-features plan and selected sections



Image 1: Pit 2, looking east (scale 0.3m in 10cm divisions)



Image 2: Pit 4, looking south (scale 0.3m in 10cm divisions)

Figure 3: Selected images 1 and 2



Image 3: Pit 6, looking south



Image 4: Pit 5, looking south (scale 0.3m in 10cm divisions)

Figure 4: Selected images 3 and 4



Image 5: Pit 8, looking south (scale 0.3m in 10cm divisions)

Figure 5: Selected image 5

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