



Northamptonshire County Council

Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land
at 23-25 High Street, Stagsden

Bedfordshire

June 2009

Accession number: BEDFM:2009.46



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August 2009

Report 09/069

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Northamptonshire
County Council



**NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
JUNE 2009**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION
ON LAND AT 23-25 HIGH STREET
STAGSDEN, BEDFORDSHIRE**

JULY 2009

ACCESSION NUMBER: BEDFM:2009.46

REPORT 09/069

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QUALITY CONTROL

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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at 23-25 High Street, Stagsden, Bedfordshire.	
Short description (250 words maximum)	Northamptonshire Archaeology carried out an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land proposed for residential development to the rear of 23-25 High Street, Stagsden, Bedfordshire. Documentary evidence had indicated that a Tithe Barn, possibly of medieval date once stood in the area. The foundations of the barn were located in the northern part of the development area close to the High Street. No other archaeological remains dating to earlier than the 18th century were present. Much of the site had been subjected to extensive modern ground disturbance.	
Project type	Trial trench evaluation	
Site status	None	
Previous work	None	
Current Land use	Garden	
Future work	Yes	
Monument type/period	Medieval Tithe Barn (HER 7273)	
Significant finds		
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Bedfordshire	
Site address	23-25 High Street, Stagsden, Bedfordshire	
Study area (sq.m or ha)	4383m ²	
OS Easting & Northing	SP 9831 4903	
Height OD	57.6m	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	Bedfordshire County Council	
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Director/Supervisor	Adrian Burrow	
Project Manager	Anthony Maull	
Sponsor or funding body	T C Newton & Sons Ltd	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	15th June 2008	
End date	17th June 2009	
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical	BEDFM:2009.46	Modern ceramics
Paper		Site context sheets, indexs, HER notes
Digital		Text, photographs, digitised plans & sections
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
	Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (NA report)	
Title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at 23-25 High Street, Stagsden, Bedfordshire.	
Serial title & volume	09/069	
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Report cover: The Stagsden Village Sign in old Norman; *Stachedene*

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION
ON LAND AT 23-25 HIGH STREET, STAGSDEN
BEDFORDSHIRE**

Abstract

Northamptonshire Archaeology carried out an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land proposed for residential development to the rear of 23-25 High Street, Stagsden, Bedfordshire. Documentary evidence had indicated that a Tithe Barn, possibly of medieval date once stood in the area. The foundations of the barn were located in the northern part of the development area close to the High Street. No other archaeological remains dating to earlier than the 18th century were present. Much of the site had been subjected to extensive modern ground disturbance.

1 INTRODUCTION

An archaeological evaluation comprising trial excavation was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) on behalf of T C Newton and Sons Ltd, on land to the rear of 23-25 High Street, Stagsden, Bedfordshire (NGR: SP 9831 4903; Fig 1).

The work was undertaken as a condition for planning consent for residential development on the land. The evaluation met the requirements of a specification prepared by NA (2009) in response to a brief issued by Bedfordshire County Council Heritage and Environmental Section (BCCHES 2008).

The aims of the archaeological evaluation, as stated in the brief (Ibid, section 4) were:

- establishing the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation on the development site
- recovering artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region
- recovering palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Topography and geology

The development site is located in the historic core of the medieval village of Stagsden, within the valley of the Great Ouse, which flows to the east of the village. The area of the evaluation lies to the south of the High Street, within the gardens of two individual properties. A pond is located on the south of the area. To the north-west, across the road is St Leonard's Church. The land slopes gently to the south, at an elevation of 57.6m aOD.

The underlying geology comprises Rowsham association with gley clays overlying gravel and loam drifts (www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/index.htm).

2.2 Archaeological and historical background

The development area lies within the historic medieval core of the village (HER 16929), an area of archaeological sensitivity. It is situated directly to the south of the main village crossroads, opposite St Leonard's Church, a grade 1 listed building with Norman origins. The village has a long history highlighted by its mention in the Domesday Book when it was called Stachedene (Williams 1992: 634). Four major landowners held land within the village; including Countess Judith, Hugh de Beachamp, The Bishop of Bayeaux and Count Eustace.

By the 13th century there were four moated sites in the parish, with the Mordant family acquiring more property in the 15th-17th centuries (BCAS 1998:5). The parish was predominantly open fields until its enclosure by Act of Parliament in 1828 (CRO MA53). The estate was bought by the Crown Commission of Woods and Forests in 1873 and was sold at auction in 37 lots in 1921 (see 3.4).

Very little previous investigation has taken place within the centre of Stagsden. However, the bypass to the east of the village identified substantial remains belonging to the Iron Age and Roman periods (Dawson 2002).

2.3 Historic Environment Record

The Bedfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER) lists a number of sites within a 1km radius of the site dating from the prehistoric to post medieval periods (Table 1). A series of cropmarks identified by aerial photography include HER 16348, 16349, 16520, 16521, 16524, 16527 and 16553. Subsequent archaeological evaluation and excavation on some of these sites have proved they are Late Iron Age and Roman enclosures and settlements situated on a south facing slope overlooking a minor tributary of the River Great Ouse (Dawson 2002).

Within the application area a medieval tithe barn is recorded (HER 7273) in the southern part of the walled garden of 25 High Street. The ploughed-out remains of medieval settlements lie to the east of the village (HER 2558) and 1km to the west at North End (HER 1844). A number of other medieval sites, defined by moated enclosures, are recorded, including Wick End (HER 80) 1km to the north of the village and Bishop Odo's manor (HER 2556) 1.5km to the west.

The result of the HER search are tabulated below and the sites adjacent to the development area within Stagsden village are shown on Figure 2 and in bold in Table 1.

Table 1: Historic Environment Record

HER NO	NGR (SP)	DESCRIPTION	References
80	9877 5006	Moated site located at Wick End. Well filled moat generally surrounding Wick End farm.	
96		Generic number for ridge and furrow within Bedfordshire. Ridge and furrow noted around the village.	
1481	9856 4892	Site of Chalybeate Spring, Spring Lane immediately east of historic core of Stagsden village.	VCH 3, 1912, 96
1844	972 494 973 495	Extensive earthworks west of Stagsden at North End. Comprised house platforms with some houses shown on Jeffreys map	Jeffrey's Map of Circa c1765

STAGSDEN, BEDFORDSHIRE

HER NO	NGR (SP)	DESCRIPTION	References
		of c1765. 4 dwellings shown on 6' OS map of 1881.	6' OS map of 1881
2556	9655 4908	Moated site of considerable area located in Up End wood. Triangular shaped earthworks and minor enclosure to north-east. A considerable quantity of stone roofing tiles were recovered during a excavation in 1923. Moat associated with Bishop Odo's manor.	
2558	990 486	Site of medieval (pre Domesday settlement), shrunken way leading to probable house (??moat) platform. Area now ploughed flat. Rectangular pond centred at 988 488.	1828 Enclosure map CRO MA 53
3537	9870 5016	Site of fishpond located to the north of Wick End, Stagsden, slightly above stream, rubble spread, bank and dam.	
4998	9810 5066	Site of Burdelys Manor, Wick End, Stagsden. Held by the Beauchamps, surrounded by a moat (see HER 3554).	
5393	9825 4910	St Leonard's Church, 14th century chancel, South aisle and lower part of tower with 15th century north chapel and south porch	
6939		No 23 High Street, Stagsden. 19th century estate building (demolished).	
6940		Church rooms dated 1898	
7273		Tithe barn (site of) including yard and paddocks.	Reference in Arthur Mee. Kings England, Bedford and Huntingdon, 1939, 1939, page 45. Describes church in use with old thatched barn in ruins. Ref: CRO X67/383 describes sale catalogue for Tithe barn.
7267	983 502	How Wood, Stagsden, listed as Ancient Woodland which originally encompassed a larger area.	
7288	9815 4925	Site of quarry, field name shown as 'Edsons hole'. Believed to be source of stone for St Leonard's Church.	1828 Enclosure map CRO MA 53
7289	9752 4950	Site of quarry near Stagsden North End	
7290	9860 4920	Clay pits (site of), at Brookmead Farm	1828 Enclosure map CRO MA 53
14711	9920 4980	Cropmarks (site of) Late Pre-Roman Iron Age settlement situated on south facing slope overlooking minor tributary of the Ouse. Investigated during 1998 evaluation of the site (Stagsden golf course) described enclosures, settlement ditches and surfaces, possibly yards.	South Midlands Archaeology 22, 1992
14712	9910 4960	As above	
16115	978 485	Cropmarks (site of) to south of village core. Watching brief revealed ditch and pit.	South Midlands archaeology 22, 1992
16348	994 494	Cropmarks (site of) to north-east of village, comprising rectangular enclosure on ridge investigated during archaeological study of golf course.	BCAS 1998/21
16349	991 489	Cropmarks (site of) to north-east of village, comprising rectangular enclosure on ridge.	

HER NO	NGR (SP)	DESCRIPTION	References
		Comprised prehistoric activity in addition to Iron Age and Roman settlement.	
16520	975 483 977 488	Cropmarks (site of) to south of village, comprising IA/Roman settlements investigated during Stagsden bypass excavation. Enclosures and other possible cropmarks located on ridge between two valleys.	Dawson M 2000. Iron Age and Roman settlement on the Stagsden bypass, Bedfordshire Monograph 3
16521	983 484	Cropmarks (site of) to south of village, Investigated during Stagsden bypass works. Comprised oval enclosure with SE facing entrance.	
16522	979 486	Cropmarks (site of) to south of village, Investigated during Stagsden bypass works. Comprised small sub-square enclosure with NE entrance and other linear ditches on ridge top.	
16523	974 490	Cropmarks (site of) to west of village, comprised trapezoidal enclosure on slight ridge.	
16524	980 497	Cropmarks located between Stagden and Bury End. 2 fairly large 100+m conjoined rectilinear enclosures.	
16525	978 506	Cropmarks located west of Burdeleys Manor, circa 50m irregular-shaped enclosure.	
16553	992 505	Possible group of cropmarks comprising of irregular conjoined enclosures, though very indistinct.	
16929	983 490	Site of medieval core of Stagsden.	

2.4 Historic maps

A search of the historic maps was carried out using the Central Bedfordshire Council and Bedford Borough Council Online Archives and the Bedfordshire and Luton Archives and Record Service as well as secondary online sources (see bibliography for details).

Estate Map of 1799-1800 (Fig 3)

The earliest map consulted was the Stagsden Estate Map. This pre-enclosure map is a little too small for detailed discussion but does show a number of buildings within the development area, fronting the High Street to the south of St Leonard's Church. A long, narrow structure set back a little from the road and aligned north-east to south-west is probably the Tithe Barn, having the right position, dimensions and orientation. The land to the south of the buildings, labelled 'West End Field' was open fields.

1828 Enclosure Map (Fig 4)

The parish was enclosed by act of Parliament in 1828 (CRO MA53; Dawson 2002 fig 4) and the village became much more sub-divided, with many plot boundaries extending south off the High Street. The field established to the east of the site, named as 'Home Close'.

The Tithe Barn is shown as a long, narrow structure. A much smaller out-building lies adjacent to the south.

The map also shows another, substantial square building in the area of Trench 2. It has an extension on the east side, orientated north-east to south-west. Another small building occupies the street frontage adjacent to the crossroads, in

the area of Trench 5. The building shown at 25 High Street is possibly the same house that survives today.

1884 First Edition Ordnance Survey Map (Fig 5)

This is the first detailed modern map of the village. It shows the village form, plot boundaries and buildings largely as they exist today. The Church Rooms (HER 6940) have been built (1869) on the street frontage. It is irregular in plan, the western part of the barn is smaller and narrower than the eastern. The small building to the south is still present.

The building within the plot of No. 25 High Street has been joined by further adjacent structures.

1902 Ordnance Survey, 1:10,560 (not illustrated)

The basic layout of boundaries in the development area is largely unchanged. The tithe barn is still present, but the smaller western part immediately to the rear of the Church Rooms has gone, presumably demolished, with only the larger eastern part remaining. Also gone are the small building adjacent to the barn and the large building to the south.

1926 3rd Edition Ordnance Survey Map (Fig 6)

This shows very little change from the previous map.

1950 Ordnance Survey, 1:10,560 (not illustrated)

There is no significant change from the previous map. The tithe barn is still standing in the early post-war period.

1960 Ordnance Survey, 1:10,560 (not illustrated)

The Tithe Barn has finally been completely demolished. No other significant changes are evident.

2.5 Sales Catalogue

A search of the Bedfordshire and Luton Archives and Records Service found a Crown Estate Sale Catalogue, (CRO X67/383) dated 1921 (Fig 7). Within the development area were two sales lots, numbers 29 and 30.

Lot 29 is a row of three cottages with gardens located opposite Church Farm. The cottages were recorded as substantially built of stone, with ornamental tiled roofs and chimneys, and were let to Messrs Collins.

Lot 30 was detailed as an accommodation property and included the tithe barn, yard and paddock area. The Tithe Barn is recorded as a large stone, timber and thatched building with open yard fronting the Main Street, a grass paddock and pond. It was let to Messrs Collins on a yearly rent of £5.

2.6 Photographs

Two wall mounted photographs were kindly supplied by the current resident of the Church Rooms, showing the property and its surrounds at two different periods of time.

The earlier photograph (Fig 8) was taken from the Church Yard, looking south-east. It dates from between the building's construction in 1869 (the date is visible on a plaque on the front wall) and its renovation and enlargement in 1898 (see

Table 1; HER No: 6940). The Tithe Barn can clearly be seen behind the Church Rooms as a large structure with a steeply-pitched thatched roof. The south-western end (on the right) corresponds with the foundations recorded in Trench 1 (Fig 11). As the historic maps indicate, the west end of the barn was demolished sometime between 1884 and 1902, this would suggest the photograph dates to between 1869 and 1902.

The later photograph (Fig 9) post-dates the large scale 1898 extensions to the Church Rooms. The western section of the Tithe Barn is no longer standing although the masonry wall between the two buildings can be seen. The Ordnance Survey shows that the demolition of the western end of the barn had occurred before 1902.

3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Objectives

The specific aim of the project was to:

- Establish the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation on the development site.
- Recover artifacts to assist in the development of the type series within the region.
- Recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions.

The positions of the trenches were located in consultation with the Bedford Borough Consultant Archaeologist and were placed within the footprints of proposed building plots (NA 2009, section 4.3). A total of 64 sq m was excavated.

Initially there were four 8m long trial trenches (Trenches 1–4; Fig 11). An additional trench (Trench 5) was excavated at the request of the Bedford Borough Consultant Archaeologist to further clarify the extent and character of the archaeological remains along the street frontage.

3.2 Methodology

The trenches were excavated using a JCB 3CX digger fitted with a 1.6m wide toothless ditching bucket under archaeological supervision. Mechanical excavation proceeded as far as the surface of the natural substrate or the first archaeologically significant layer.

The trenches were related to the Ordnance Survey National Grid and Ordnance Datum using survey-grade GPS equipment (Leica Systems 1200). Archaeological information was recorded on pro-forma sheets, with a unique context number being allocated to each distinct deposit and feature. Sections and plans were drawn at an appropriate scale. A photographic record comprising both 35mm monochrome negatives, with associated prints, and colour transparencies was maintained, with additional digital photographs. All records were compiled into a comprehensive and fully cross-referenced site archive. The archive will be deposited with the Bedfordshire Museum under the archive number BEDFM:2009.46.

All works were carried out according to the *IfA Code of Conduct* (2007) and *Standard and Guidelines for Archaeological Evaluation* (IfA 2008), and all procedures complied with the *Northamptonshire Archaeology Fieldwork Manual* (2006) the Northamptonshire County Council Health and Safety provisions and Northamptonshire Archaeology Health and Safety at Work Guidelines.

4 THE EVALUATION EVIDENCE

The foundations of the Tithe Barn were present in Trenches 1 and 4. Trenches 2 and 3 contained only modern features and deposits while Trench 5 contained part of the foundation of another building.

The natural substrate was consistent in trenches 1, 2, 4 and 5, comprising yellow/grey clay with orange sand patches. In Trench 3, the natural substrate consisted of pebbles and cobbles. No original subsoil was present on the site except in Trench 3. The site had been subject to extensive ground disturbance in the modern period, relating to the existing and previous buildings. Some areas were reduced in level, and other areas had substantial dumped deposits.

4.1 The Tithe Barn, Trenches 1 and 4.

The foundations of the Tithe Barn were present in Trenches 1 and 4 (Fig 11).

A section of the south-west corner of the structure was present in Trench 1. The foundation trench [104], which cut the natural clay, was orientated north-east to south-west. It measured 0.7m wide and 0.4m deep, with vertical sides and a flat base (Fig 12, Plan 1 and Fig 13, Section 2; Fig 8). The wall foundations (102) were constructed of roughly cut and un-hewn limestone, up to 0.4m long, within a matrix of compacted yellow lime mortar. A large rectangular slab of limestone on the corner of the foundation wall may have been a post-pad for a structural timber.

On the north-east side of the trench the material of the barn's southern wall foundation was different, comprising a darker mixed yellow/grey clay (103) with limestone pieces and yellow mortar. Alternatively, it may have been the backfill of a robber trench dug to remove the limestone following the demolition of the barn as in Trench 4. No dating evidence was recovered from the barn foundations in Trench 1.

The southern wall of the barn appears to continue into Trench 4 (Fig 11). This would suggest that the building was at least 28m long. Within Trench 4, the barn foundation trench [403], had the same dimensions as in Trench 1, measuring 0.7m and 0.4m deep, with a near vertical sided and flat-base (Fig 12, Plan 2 and Fig 14, Section 5). The foundations in Trench 4 had been completely robbed out; the backfill (402) was very compact clayey silt with small limestone fragments and small pebbles. Within this fill were 14 spent ammunition cartridges from various gun types, including military rounds dating from the 1940's. This indicates that the demolition of the barn and the robbing of sections of its foundations occurred either during the Second World War, or in the post-war period. The foundation trench was truncated by modern features containing plastic and ceramic pipe on the east end of the trench.

In Trench 1, a small curving gully [106] extended up to the south-west corner of the barn foundation [104] (Fig 12, Plan 1 and Fig 13, Section 4). It measured

0.5m wide and 0.12m deep, with a shallow concave profile. Fill (105) was a firm, mid grey sandy silt with small patches of yellow mortar throughout. This was interpreted as a drainage feature relating to the barn. Between the terminal of this gully and the barn wall was a small posthole [108], with a very shallow concave profile measuring 0.3m in diameter and 70mm deep (Fig 12, Plan 1 and Fig 13, Section 3). Its fill (107), was a loose dark grey-brown sandy silt. In both Trenches 1 and 4, the barn foundations were sealed by topsoil, dark grey sandy clay loam, up to 0.25m thick.

4.2 Trench 2

Trench 2, aligned north-west to south-east, was located within the footprint of proposed building plot 1 (Fig 11). No structural evidence was found for the large building depicted in this area on the 1828 Enclosure Map, although a layer of possible demolition rubble was present.

The natural boulder clay (204) was at a depth of 0.44m. Above (204) on the south-west of the trench was a spread of dark grey sandy clay loam (203), up to 0.12m thick, containing frequent limestone fragments and charcoal flecking and four sherds of 19th-20th century ceramics. This deposit was very similar to the overlying subsoil. The same material could be seen across an area of the site to the north of Trench 2 which had been previously stripped away by machine, indicating this deposit covered a sizable area. It is possible that layer (203) represents demolition debris from the building depicted in this area on the 1828 Enclosure Map.

The subsoil (202) appeared to be modern, a dark grey silty clay up to 0.26m thick, containing limestone fragments and charcoal. Above this was (201) a turf layer, 80mm thick.

4.3 Trench 3

This trench was located in the east of the site, aligned east to west, within proposed building plot 5 (Fig 11). The Historic Environment Record indicates that no recorded structures were present on this part of the site. The natural substrate (309), small rounded cobbles, was present at a depth of 0.58m. Cut into this was a pit [306]; which was oval in plan with a shallow curved profile and flattened base (Fig 12, Plan 3, Fig 13, Section 1). The pit measured 0.8m wide and 0.35m deep. Its fill (305), a dark grey-brown silty clay with frequent limestone fragments and small sub-angular gravel, contained one sherd of 19th-20th-century wall tile and four fragments of roof tile.

Overlying the pit was a buried subsoil (304) a firm dark grey silty clay 0.2m thick with frequent gravel, limestone fragments and charcoal. Over this was a buried topsoil (303) of reddish grey sandy silt loam 0.10m thick.

At the east end of the trench these layers were truncated by a modern service trench [308]. The fill (307) was rubble and clay with frequent charcoal, coal and small limestone fragments, including brick, tile, and 19th-20th-century ceramics. It was 0.6m deep and steep-sided and continued beyond the limits of the excavation.

This service trench and the underlying layers were sealed by a dump of mixed yellow and grey clay (302) 0.15m thick, which was overlain by topsoil (301) a dark grey clay loam, 0.15m thick.

4.4 Trench 5

Trench 5, aligned east to west, was located in the gravel driveway to the front of the existing house, within proposed building plot 4 (Fig 11). and contained part of the truncated foundations of a structure.

Natural clay (506) was present at a depth of 0.7m. Cut into the clay was a foundation trench [505] aligned east to west (Fig 12, Plan 4 and Fig 14, Section 6). Only the north side of the foundation cut was visible. It had a shallow, flattened profile at least 0.6m wide 0.25m deep. The foundation wall (504) which was very truncated, was constructed of angular limestone pieces within a very compact dark grey clay matrix. Several sherds of 19th-20th-century ceramics, roof and floor tile and brick fragments were recovered from this fill. This area of the street frontage has been occupied by buildings since at least the late 18th century, although the dating of the pottery suggests a comparatively recent structure, such as the small building in this location seen on the 1926 3rd Edition Ordnance Survey Map.

The foundations were overlain by a thin layer of firm, mid grey clayey silt (503). Above this was a deposit of firm clean dark brown silty sand (502), 0.48m thick. This was a modern deposit relating to the existing building raising the ground surface in this area of the driveway higher than that to the east. A large concrete slab was on the north side of the trench, providing a hard-standing on the driveway. These deposits and the foundations were truncated to the east by a modern service trench, on the same alignment as the foundations containing a power cable leading into the house. The gravel of the driveway, (501) formed the surface layer.

5 THE FINDS

5.1 The post-medieval pottery by Iain Soden

Seven sherds of modern pottery were recovered from three contexts.

They comprise as follows:

- (203) One sherd of glazed earthenware pancheon (mixing bowl), c 1900
 One sherd of stoneware ginger beer/mineral water bottle, c1900
 One sherd of plain earthenware, 19th-20th century
 One sherd under-glaze blue transfer printed earthenware, 19th-20th century
- (502) One sherd plain earthenware, 19th-20th century
- (504) One sherd unglazed earthenware flower pot, 19th-20th century
 One sherd glazed earthenware, c1900

In addition, one piece of wall tile derives from context (305). It is plain and glazed light greenish-blue. It may derive from a kitchen or bathroom and is unlikely to be much older than c1900.

This is an small assemblage of little value for dating, as none is sufficiently distinctive to place any context much more than 20 years either side of the turn of the 19th-20thcenturies.

5.2 The ceramic building materials by Pat Chapman

Ceramic tile

There are seven tile sherds, weighing 487g. Six of these are from roof tiles, the other is part of a floor tile. The four small roof tile sherds from pit fill (305) are c 12mm thick, made from fine sandy orange clay with one surface sanded from the mould. Two sherds from foundation fill layer (504) are also roof tile, one a fragment made from a coarse sandy clay, the other sherd is 18mm thick and made from a silty clay, but rough on both surfaces.

The floor tile also comes from (504). This comprises a corner from a plain tile, 25mm thick with smoothed straight sides and an upper surface smoothed by wear. It is made from a silty clay with occasional shelly inclusions, fired to pale orange with a large dark grey core. There are traces of mortar on the base and sides.

Brick

There is a brick fragment from (503). It is orange brown, handmade and quite vesicular and the surviving surfaces are smooth. A fragment, possibly from a brick, was found in foundation fill (504).

These tile and brick fragments could date from the 14th to 18th centuries.

5.3 The ammunition casings by Adrian Burrow

A total of fourteen spent ammunition casings were recovered from (402), the backfill of the robbed-out foundation trench of the Tithe Barn in Trench 4.

They comprise as follows:

6 x .303 calibre

4 x 9mm

3 x .50 calibre 12.7mm

1 x 20mm shell casing base plate

The .303 round is fired by the Lee-Enfield .303 rifle. The Lee Enfield was the standard British Army rifle from its adoption in 1895 until 1957 and was subsequently popular in civilian use.

The 9mm ammunition is a common round developed after the Great War and fired by either handguns or sub-machines guns

The .50 cal (12.7mm) round is fired exclusively by the Browning M2 heavy machine gun, an extremely wide-spread weapon in military use from the early 1920s to the present day.

The base plate of a 20mm cannon shell casing was also present. This ammunition is from an Oerlikon or Hispano-Suiza 20mm automatic cannon, another ubiquitous military weapon developed in the pre-war period that was in extensive use from the Second World War onwards.

Although the 9mm and .303 rounds are in civilian use, the .50 cal and 20mm ammunition are exclusively military rounds, fired by heavy automatic weapons developed in the 1920's and in use in Britain from the Second World War onwards. Huge quantities of surplus ammunition and spent casings were disposed of after the war, and it is likely that these rounds were deposited at this time. This, along with the documentary evidence, provides a *terminus post-quem* for the final demolition of the Tithe Barn as post Second World War.

6 DISCUSSION

The trial trenching confirmed the presence of the Tithe Barn within the development area. No other archaeological remains dating to earlier than the 18th century were present. All other features and deposits found during the evaluation were demonstrably modern in date.

Historic information relating to the Tithe Barn and surrounding property indicates the barn was present from at least the end of the 18th century and predates the 1828 enclosure of the property boundaries of Stagsden.

The evidence from the historic maps shows that the smaller western end of the barn, excavated in Trench 1, was demolished at some point between 1884 and 1902. Both the photograph in Fig 8, taken after 1869 and the 1884 Map clearly show the Tithe Barn extending to the south of the Church Rooms where the foundations were present in Trench 1. Although this western part of the barn was demolished first, its foundations remain intact. Mapping from 1902 onwards show only the larger eastern section of the barn, excavated in Trench 4.

The final demolition of the Tithe Barn occurred between 1950-1960, based on historic and artefactual evidence and corroborated from anecdotal knowledge from Stagsden villagers who still remember the barn standing. The barn's foundations in Trench 4 were robbed for the limestone masonry and backfilled with material securely dated to the Second World War/post-war period.

The truncated foundation remains present in Trench 5 are dated by artifacts found to the late 19th century and are probably part of one of the several small buildings that existed in this area, which are represented on the Ordnance Survey maps. No other structures of any date were present in the development area, and there was no artefactual evidence for occupation before the late 19th century.

The site has been subject to extensive modern groundworks, relating mostly to the demolition of buildings and the construction of the existing houses.

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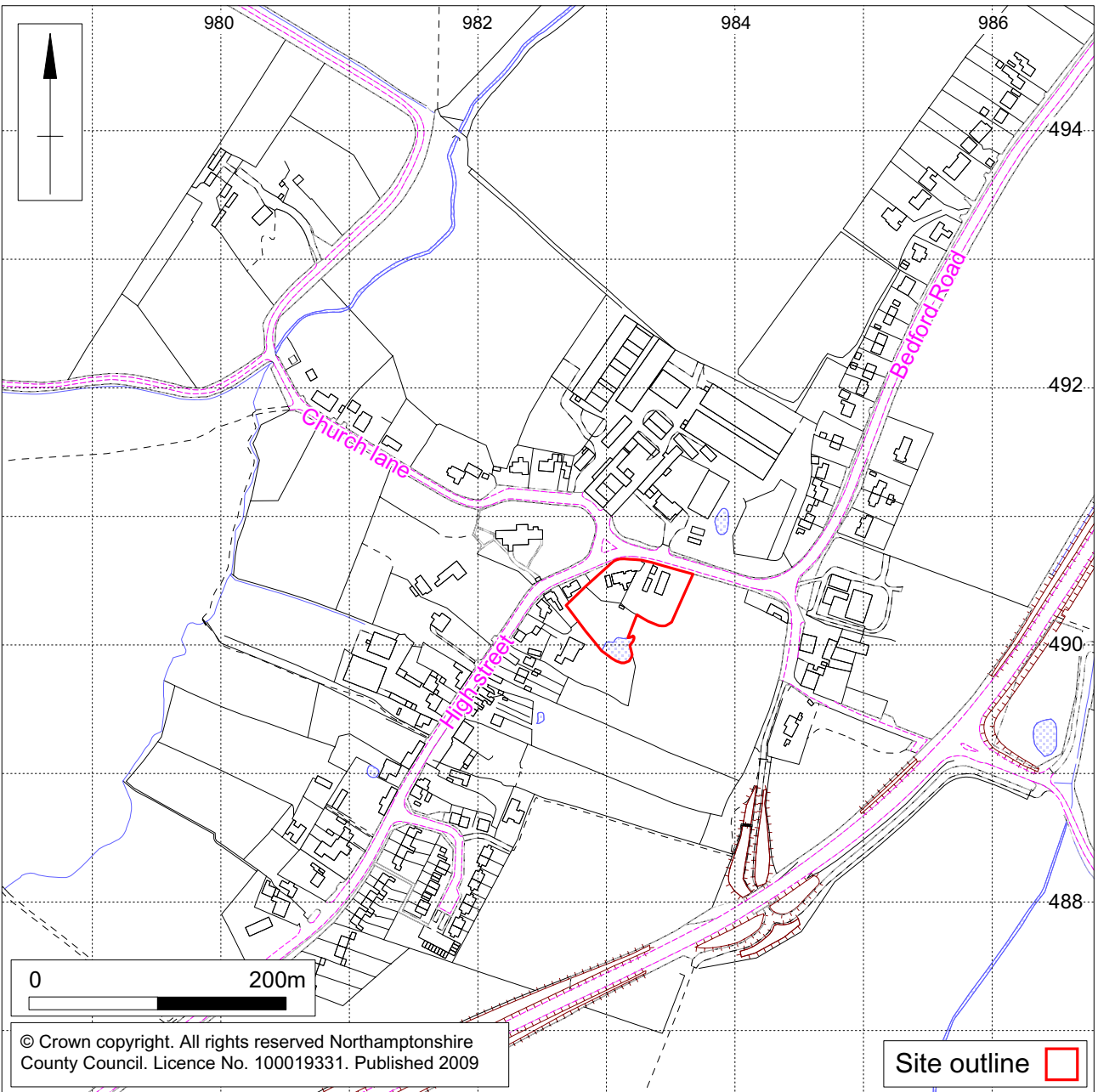
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Northamptonshire Archaeology

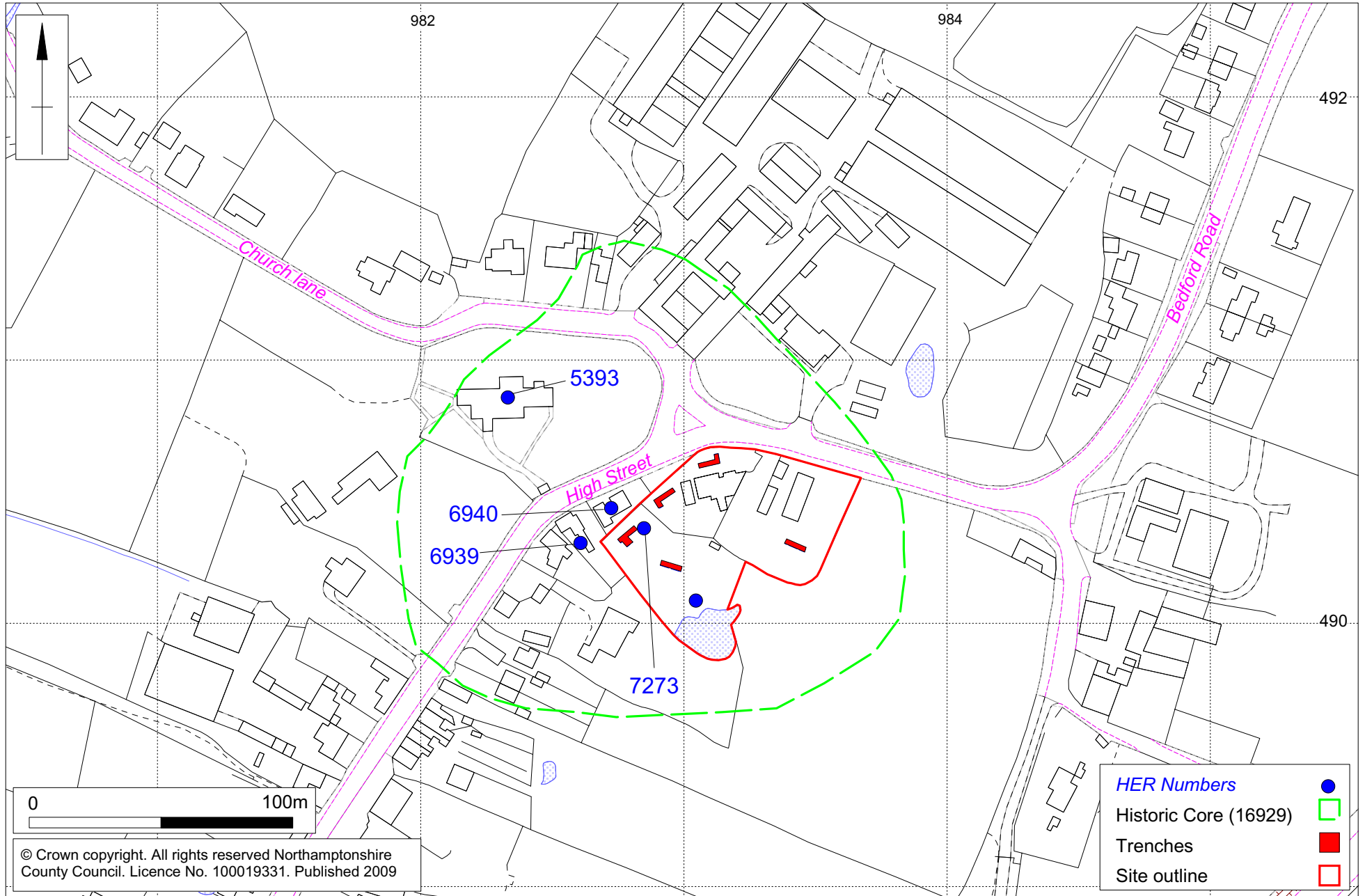
A service of Northamptonshire County Council

13th August 2009



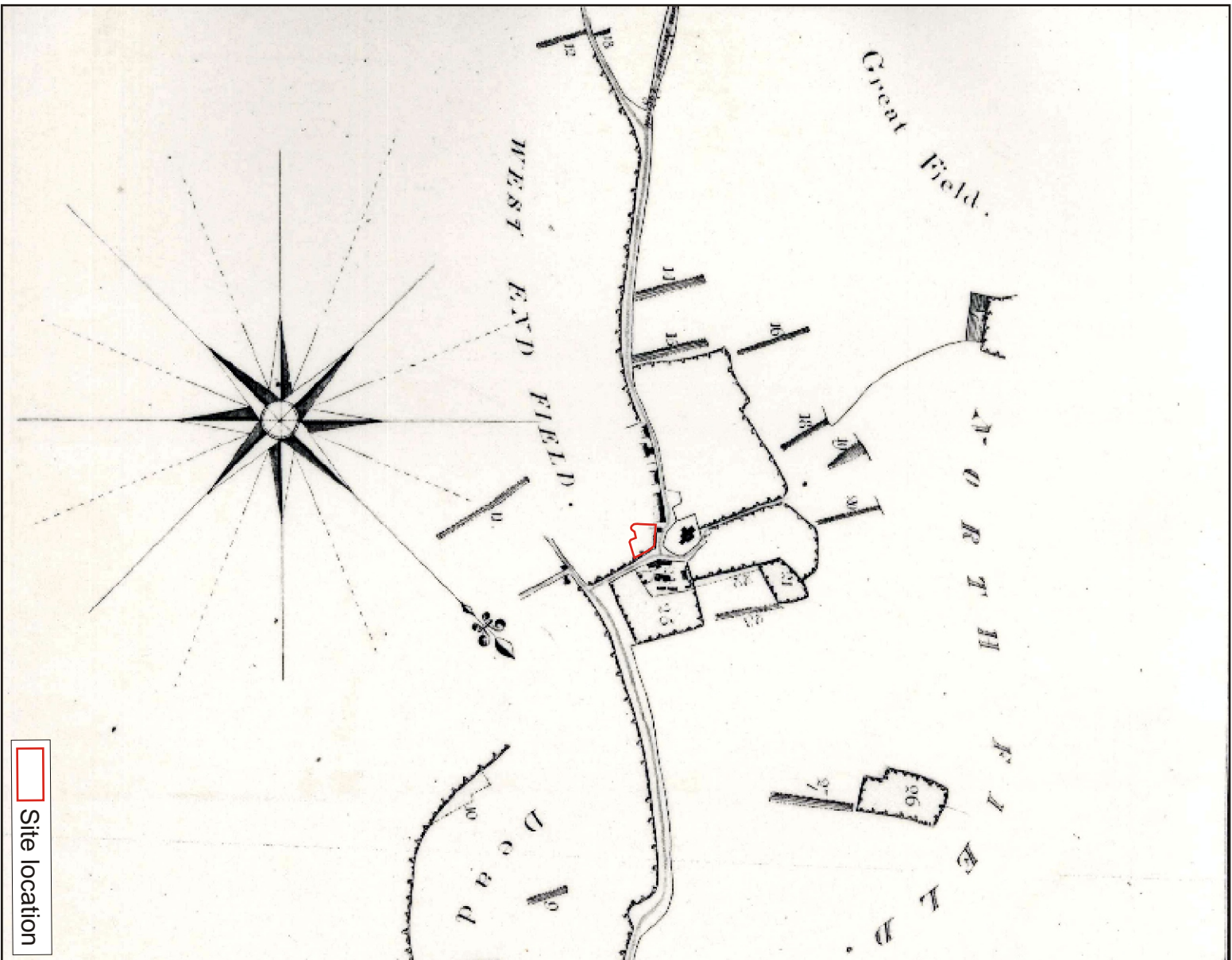
1:5000

Site location Fig 1



1:2000

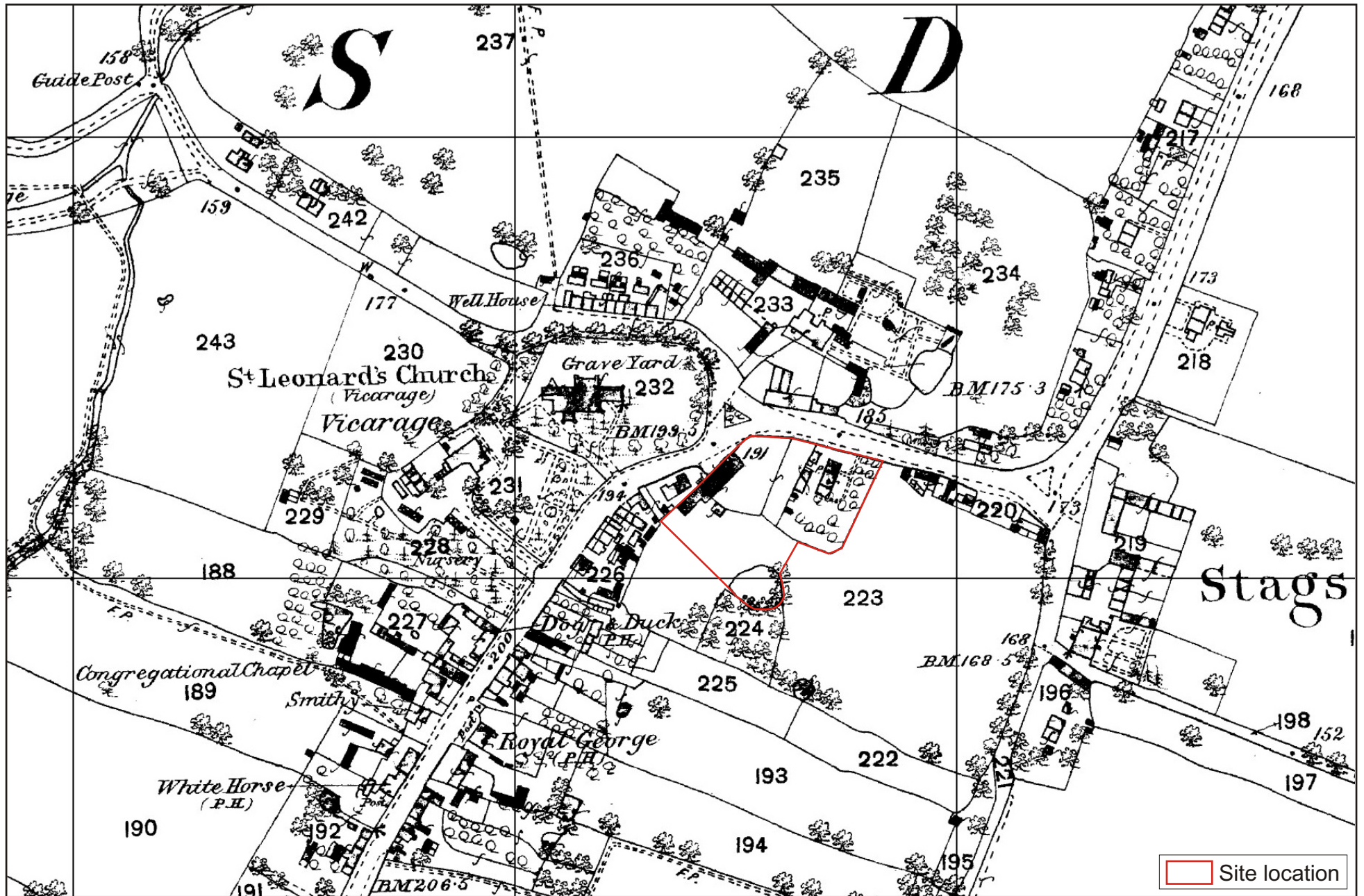
Historic Environment Record Fig 2



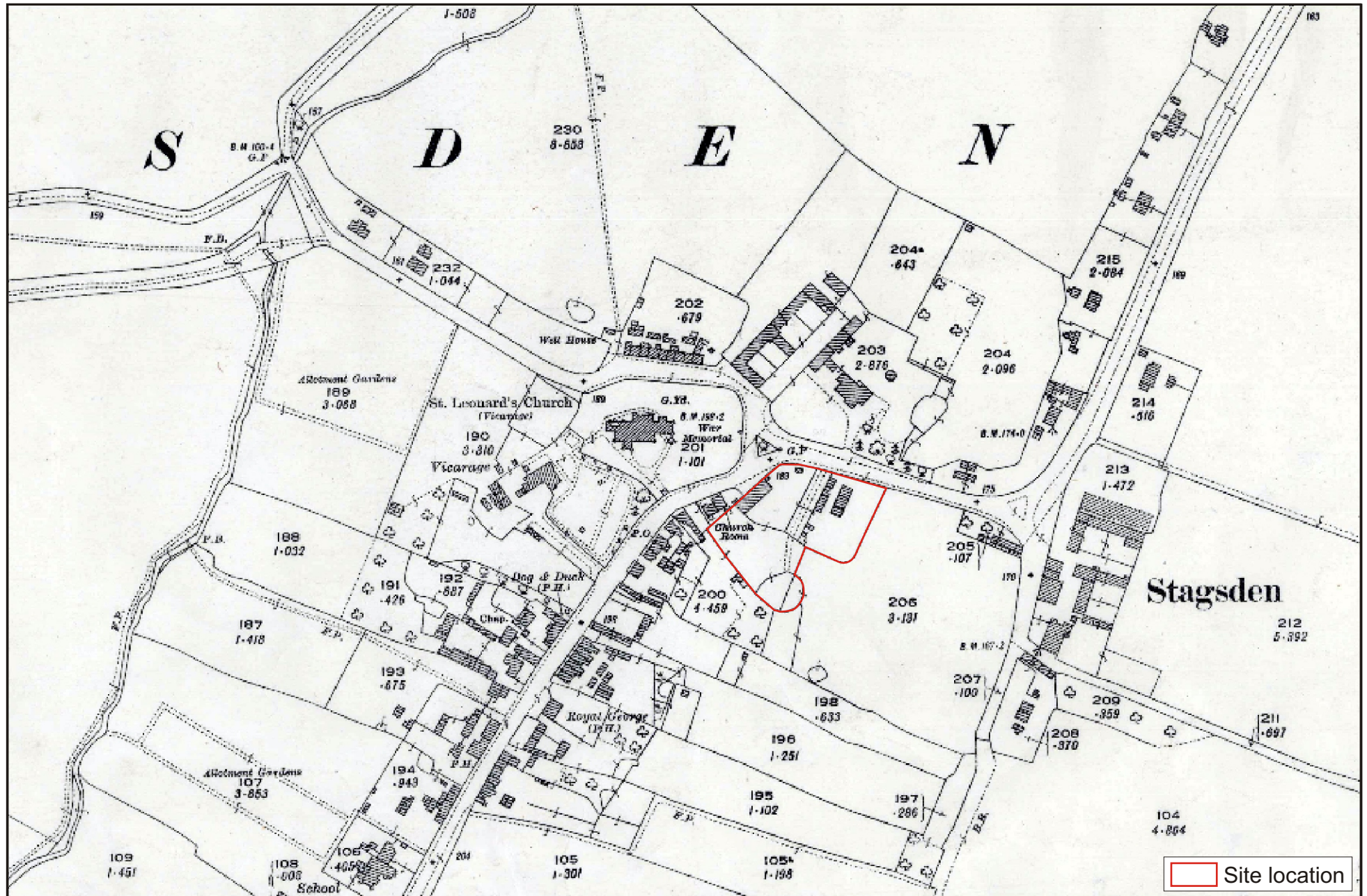
Estate Map of 1799-1800 Fig 3



Enclosure Map of 1828 (CRO MA53) Fig 4



First Edition Ordnance Survey map 1884 Fig 5



Third Edition Ordnance Survey map 1926 Fig 6

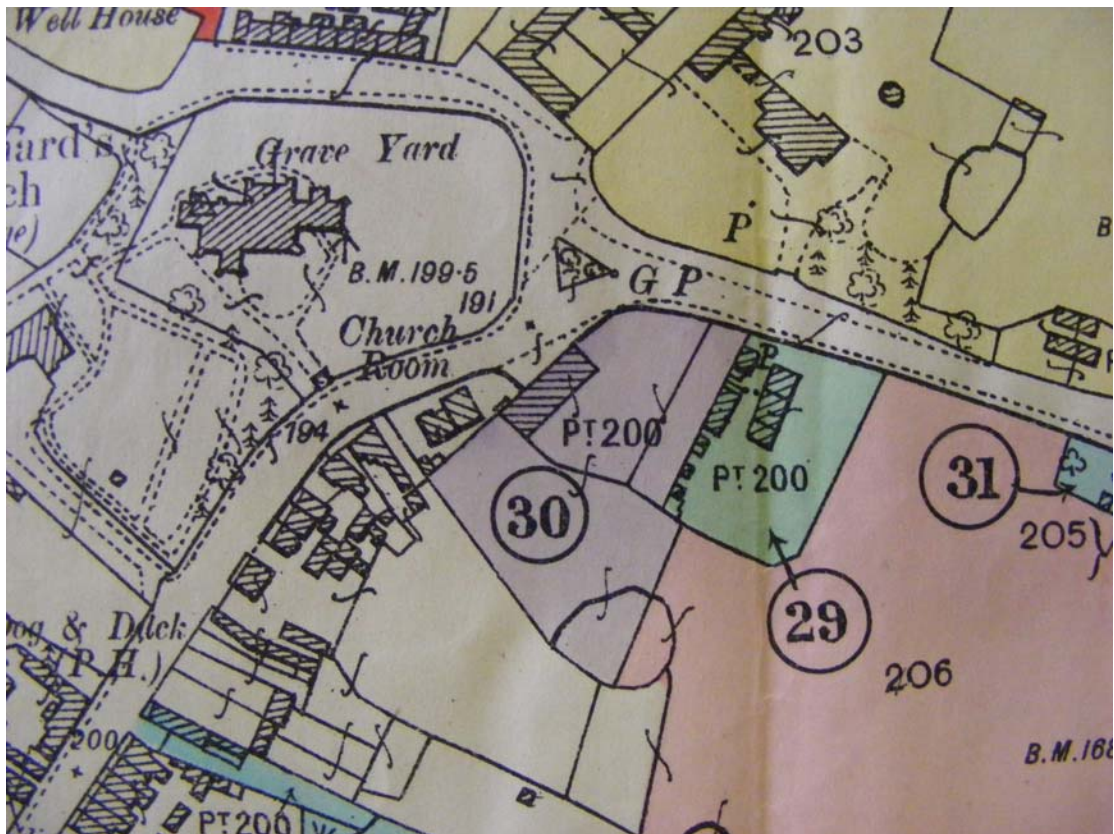


Fig 7: 1921 Crown Estate Sales Catalogue. The development area is within plots 29 and 30. Note the Tithe Barn behind Church Rooms (CRO X67/383)



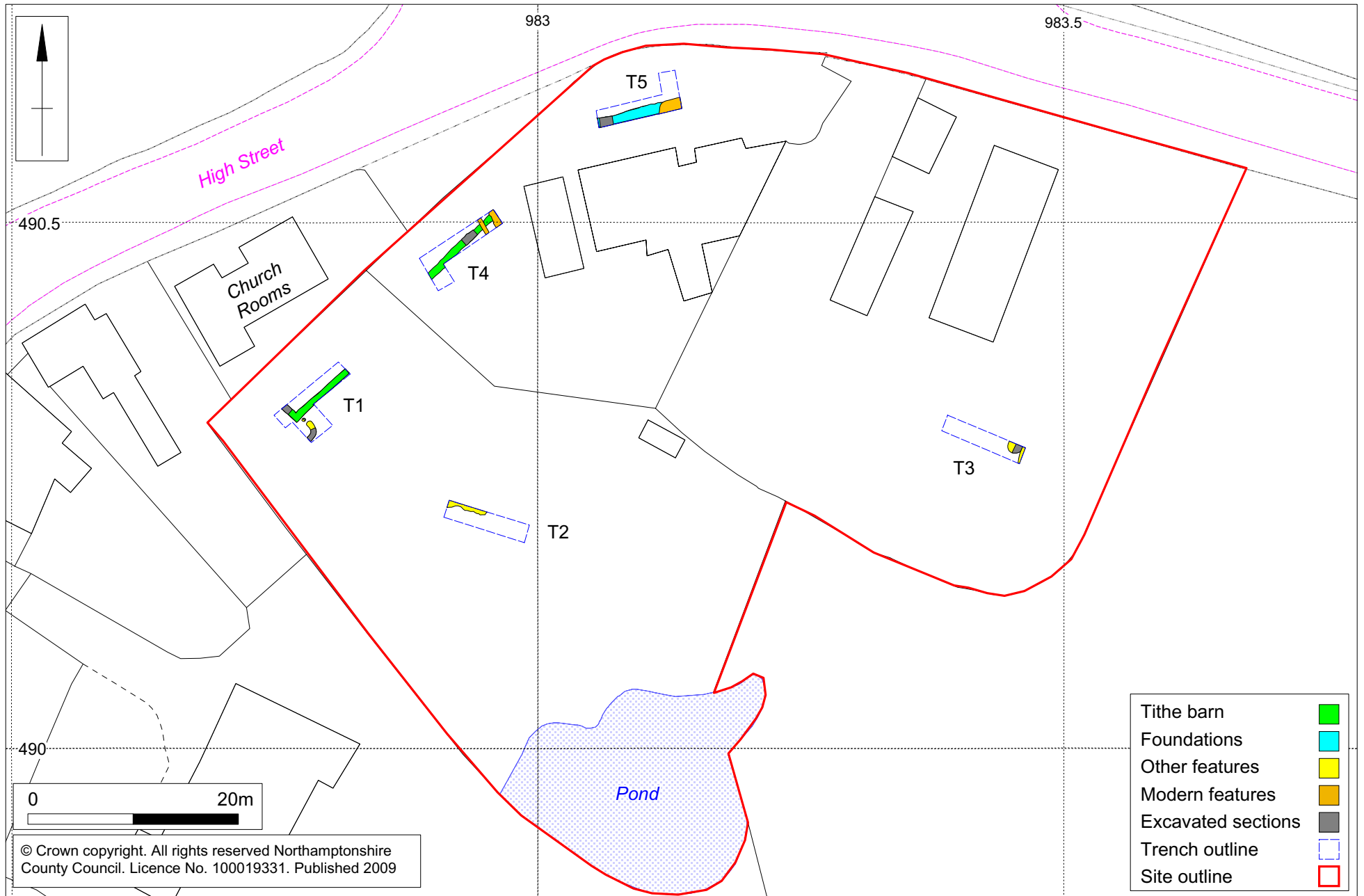
Fig 8: Photograph taken between 1867 and 1898 of the Church Rooms, with the Tithe Barn roof in the background



Fig 9: Photograph of the Church Rooms taken after the extensions in 1898, probably 1940's or later. The Tithe Barn is no longer present.

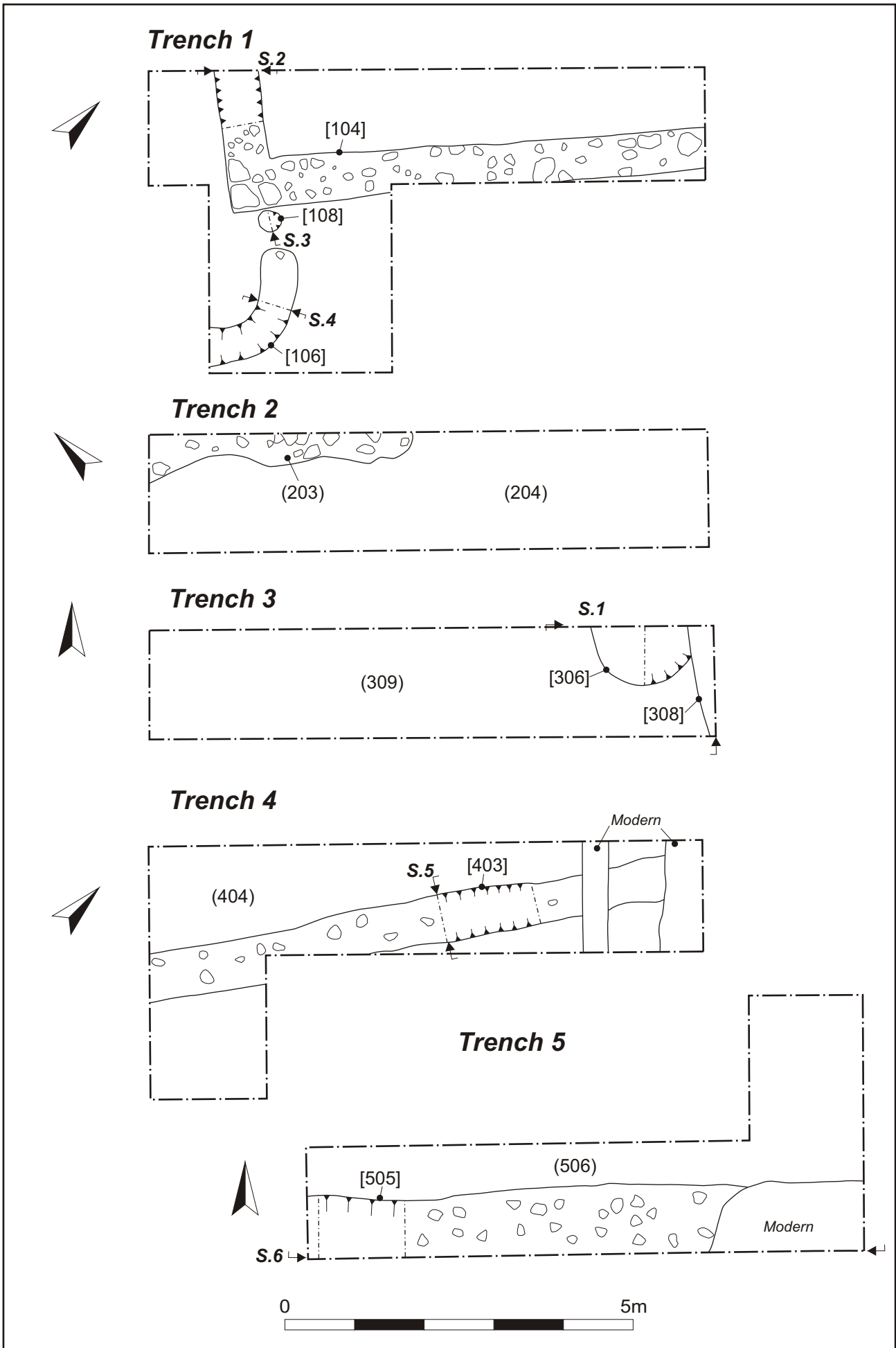


Fig 10: The foundations of the Tithe Barn in Trench 1, looking north-east



1:500

Trench locations Fig 11



Trench plans Fig 12

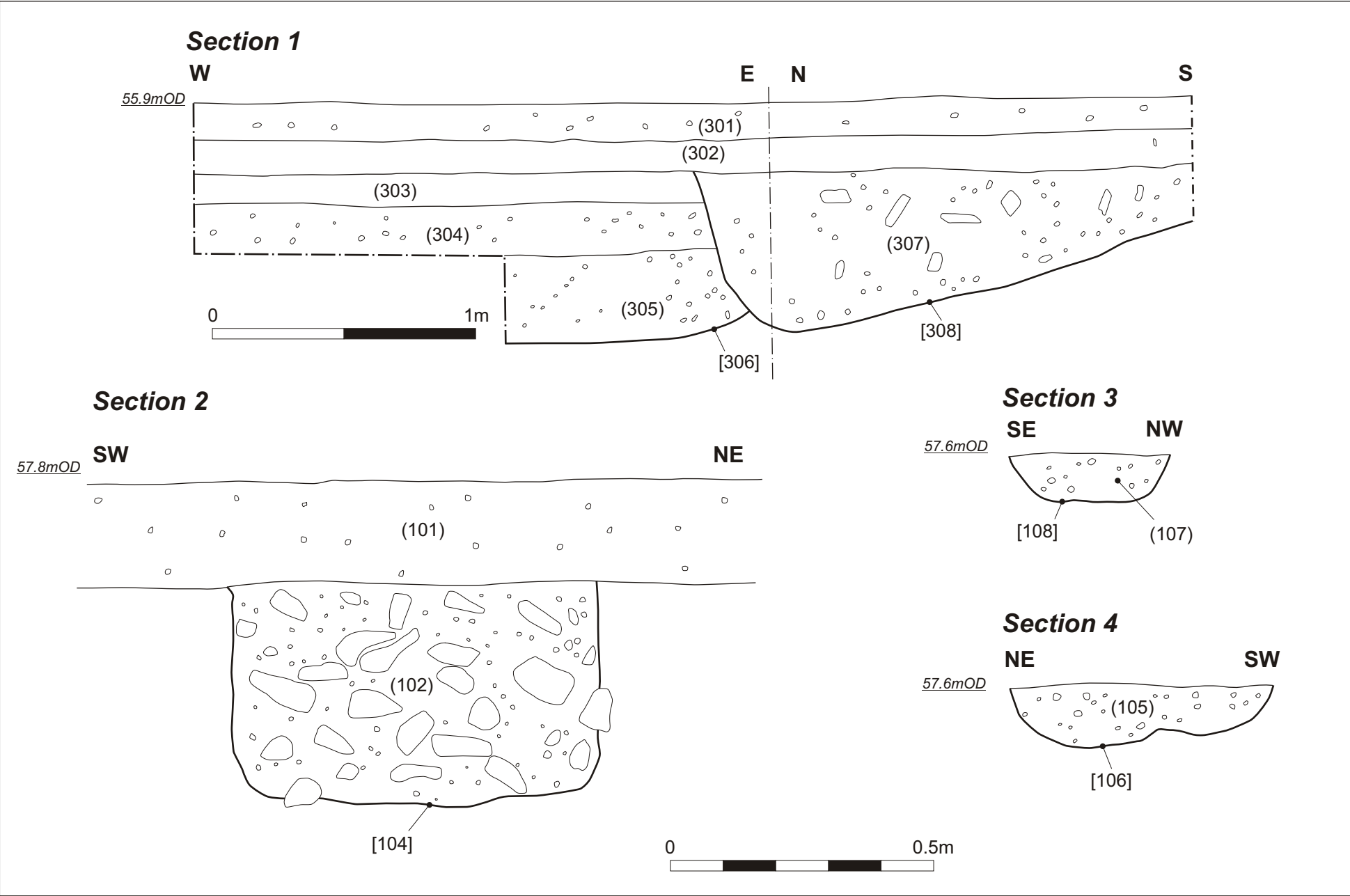


Fig 13: Sections 1-4

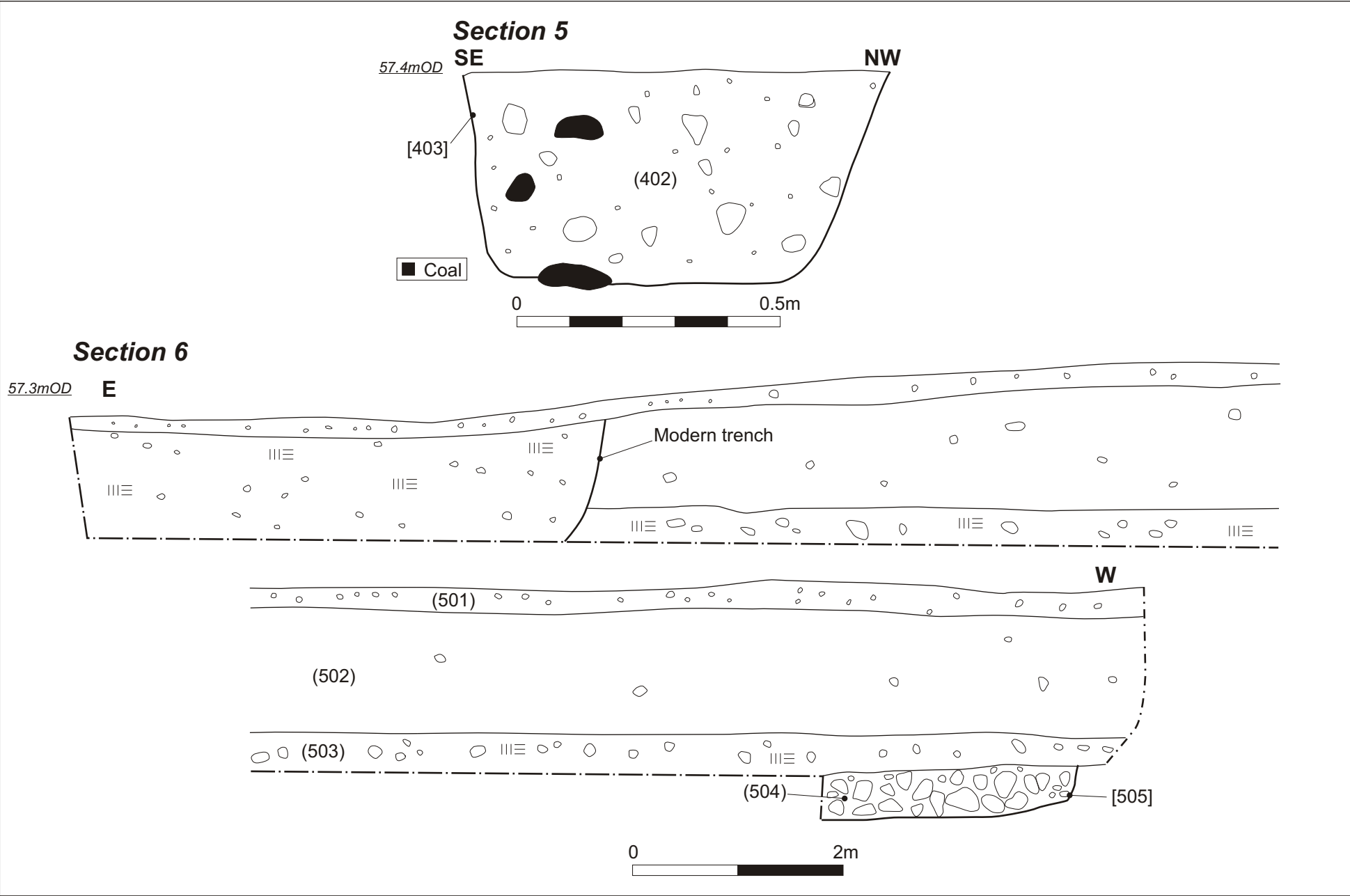


Fig 14: Sections 5 and 6