
**ARCHAEOLOGICAL STRIP, MAP AND SAMPLE
INVESTIGATION AT
HOME FARM, LITTLE CASTERTON ROAD,
RYHALL, RUTLAND
(RLCR 10)**

**Work Undertaken For
Mr. & Mrs. Bourne**

March 2010

Report Compiled by
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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
PROJECT
SERVICES**



**Quality Control
Home Farm,
Little Casterton Road,
Rutland
(RLCR 10)**

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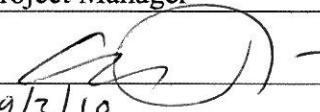
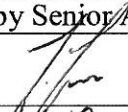
Checked by Project Manager	Approved by Senior Archaeologist
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Date: 19/3/10	Date: 19-03-10

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1. SUMMARY

An archaeological strip, map and sample investigation was undertaken during at Home Farm, Little Casterton Road, Ryhall, Rutland. The investigation monitored the excavation of two areas associated with the construction of two extensions to the existing farmhouse.

The site lies in an area of archaeological potential between various cropmark complexes. Immediately to the southwest is an enclosure of probable Iron Age-Roman date and further to the west are cropmarks of settlement or field systems likely to be of the same period. To the northeast of the site are cropmarks of ring ditches which may form part of a dispersed Neolithic or Bronze Age barrow cemetery along with a prehistoric trackway, part of which appears as an alignment of pits.

The investigation revealed a sequence of deposits comprising natural clay and limestone brash, buried topsoil and modern surfaces. A brick lined cesspit or soakaway was cut through the former topsoil and had been widened and used as a repository for demolition debris and waste.

No finds were retrieved during the investigation.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Planning Background

Archaeological Project Services was commissioned by Mr. and Mrs. Bourne to undertake an archaeological strip, map and sample investigation during groundworks associated with the construction of two extensions to Home Farm at Little Casterton Road, Ryhall, Rutland. Approval for the development was sought through the submission of planning application FUL/2009/1048/NT. The investigation was carried out between the 19th and 20th

of February 2010.

2.2 Topography and Geology

Ryhall is located 17km east of Oakham on a rise in a loop in the River Gwash in the county of Rutland (Fig. 1). Home Farm is situated southwest of the village, to the south of Little Casterton Road, at National Grid Reference TF 0318 1009. The proposed extensions are on the west side of the farm.

The investigation site is on a northeast-facing slope overlooking the river at c. 40m OD. Soils in the area are Elmton 3 Association brashy calcareous fine loamy soils developed on Jurassic Upper Lincolnshire limestone (Hodge *et al.* 1984).

2.3 Archaeological Setting

Cropmarks identified approximately 300m north-east of the site include ring ditches which may form part of dispersed Neolithic or Bronze Age barrow cemetery located on the flood plain of the River Gwash (Fig 2 - 2). Two of these monuments lie either side of a 500m long, sinuous prehistoric trackway, part of which appears as an alignment of pits. Worked flint, possibly of Mesolithic date has also been recovered in this area (Fig 2 - 3).

Immediately to the southwest of the site is an enclosure of probable Iron Age-Roman date (Fig 2 - 1), with further settlement or field system remains to the west.

A settlement at Ryhall is recorded in the Domesday Survey of 1086, indicating origins for the village in at least the late Saxon period (Thorn 1980). The core of the village would seem to lie south of the River Gwash, centred around the 13th century church of St. John the Evangelist and the 16th century manor house, Ryhall Hall. A watermill still occupies the corner of Mill Street and the remains of a

medieval predecessor are also known alongside the River Gwash. The properties fronting onto Mill Street on the north bank of the river and running back to Back Lane probably also form part of the early street pattern of the village.

3. AIMS

The aim of the archaeological investigation was to record and interpret any archaeological features exposed during the stripping of the area and, if present, to determine their date, extent, function and origin.

4. METHODS

Two areas of ground associated with the proposed extensions to the farmhouse were reduced by machine, operating under archaeological supervision, to a depth where natural deposits were observed. The sides of the open areas were then cleaned and rendered vertical. Selected deposits were excavated further to retrieve artefactual material and to determine their function. Each deposit was allocated a unique reference number (context number) with an individual written description. A list of all contexts and their descriptions appears as Appendix 1. A photographic record was compiled and sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10 and 1:20. Recording was undertaken according to standard Archaeological Project Services' practice.

Following excavation finds were examined and a period date assigned where possible (Appendix 2). The records were also checked and a stratigraphic matrix produced. Phasing was assigned based on the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them and supplemented by artefact dating.

5. RESULTS

Following post-excavation analysis two phases were identified;

Phase 1	Natural deposits
Phase 2	Recent deposits

Archaeological contexts are listed below and described. The numbers in brackets are the context numbers assigned in the field.

Phase 1 Natural deposits

The earliest deposit identified at the site consisted of firm to hard mid yellowish brown clay and limestone brash (005) and was recorded in the base of both Area 1 and 2 (Figs 4-5, Sections 1-2) (Plates 2-3 & 5-6).

In Area 1, deposit (005) was overlain by a 50mm thick, firm mid yellowish brown clay (004) (Fig 5, Section 1) (Plate 3).

Phase 2 Recent deposits

Overlying natural deposit (005) in Area 1 and (004) in Area 2, was a firm dark grey clay (003) with occasional small limestone fragments (Fig 5, Sections 1-2) (Plate 3). This deposit ranged in thickness between 0.16m and 0.30m.

Cut though deposit (003) was a semi-rectangular, sharp sided feature [009] with a width of 0.82m (Figs 3-4) (Plates 5-6). The length of the feature and its full shape in plan could not be discerned due to truncation by [010].

The semi-rectangular cut [009] was lined with brick masonry (008) (Figs 3-4) (Plates 5-6). The bricks themselves measured 0.23m long by 0.11m wide by 70mm thick and looked to be late post-medieval to modern in date.

Deposit (011) filled the c. 0.17m outer gap between cut [009] and brick structure (008) and consisted of loose mid to light yellowish brown clayey sand, gravel and

limestone fragments (011) (Figs 3-4) (Plates 5-6).

Semi-rectangular cut [009] and brick structure (008) were truncated by a roughly semi-ovoid cut [010] measuring at least 1.60m wide by at least 1.25m long. This cut looked to enlarge the brick lined semi-rectangular pit [009] and was filled with at least two deposits. The earliest of these was a friable dark brown to black clayey sand mixed with cinders and charcoal (006). The second deposit filling [010] was a friable to loose mid greyish brown clayey sand and gravel deposit (007) containing frequent bricks and occasional large pieces of metal (Figs 3-4) (Plates 5-6).

Overlying feature [010] in Area 2 and deposit (003) in Area 1 was an up to 80mm thick layer of hard black tarmac which extended throughout the both areas of investigation (Fig 5, Sections 1-2) (Plate 3).

The tarmac layer was covered by a deposit of yellowish brown sand and gravel (001), up to 0.10m thick (Fig 5, Sections 1-2) (Plates 1, 3 & 4)

6. DISCUSSION

The earliest deposit encountered during the investigation was a natural layer of clay and limestone brash which extended throughout the site. In Area 1 this was covered by a possible clay subsoil, although the 50mm thickness of this deposit raises the possibility that it may be the upper surface of the clay brash natural.

In both areas the natural was overlain by a layer of dark greyish brown clay which probably represents a buried former topsoil. In Area 1 a late post-medieval to modern, rectangular brick structure cut through the former topsoil. The rectangular structure probably represents

the remains of a brick lined cesspit or soakaway.

The fills within the structure suggest that the brick lined pit was later used to dispose of demolition debris and waste. The brick structure has been truncated due to re-cutting and widening of the pit. Presumably, this was in order to dispose of more waste.

A layer of black tarmac sealed by gravel overlay this feature and the former topsoil. These layers represent successive modern surfaces of the farmyard driveway.

7. CONCLUSION

A strip, map and sample investigation was undertaken at Home Farm, Little Casterton Road, Ryhall, Rutland in order to record and interpret any archaeological remains that might be affected by the construction of two extensions to the farmhouse.

The work was required due to the sites location within an area of archaeological significance between various cropmark complexes. Immediately to the southwest is an enclosure of probable Iron Age-Roman date and further to the west are cropmarks of settlement or field systems probably of the same period. To the northeast are cropmarks of ring ditches which may form part of a dispersed Neolithic or Bronze Age barrow cemetery along with a prehistoric trackway, part of which appears as an alignment of pits.

However, no prehistoric or Roman remains were uncovered during the investigation. Instead, a sequence of deposits comprising natural clay and limestone brash, buried topsoil and modern surfaces was revealed. A brick lined cesspit or soakaway was cut through the former topsoil and had been widened and used as a repository for demolition debris.

No artefacts were recovered during the investigation

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Mr. and Mrs. Bourne for commissioning the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. The work was coordinated by Gary Taylor who edited this report along with Tom Lane. Dave Start kindly allowed access to the library maintained by Heritage Lincolnshire.

9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Gary Taylor
Site Supervisor: Andrew Failes
Photographic reproduction: Sue Unsworth
Illustration: Andrew Failes
Post-excavation analysis: Andrew Failes

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Hodge, C.A.H., Burton, R.G.O., Corbett, W.M., Evans, R. & Seale R.S., 1984 *Soils and Their Use in Eastern England*. Soil Survey of England and Wales **13**

Thorn, F., 1980, *Domesday Book: Rutland*
29

11. ABBREVIATIONS

APS Archaeological Project Services
CBM Ceramic Building Material
IFA Institute of Field Archaeologists

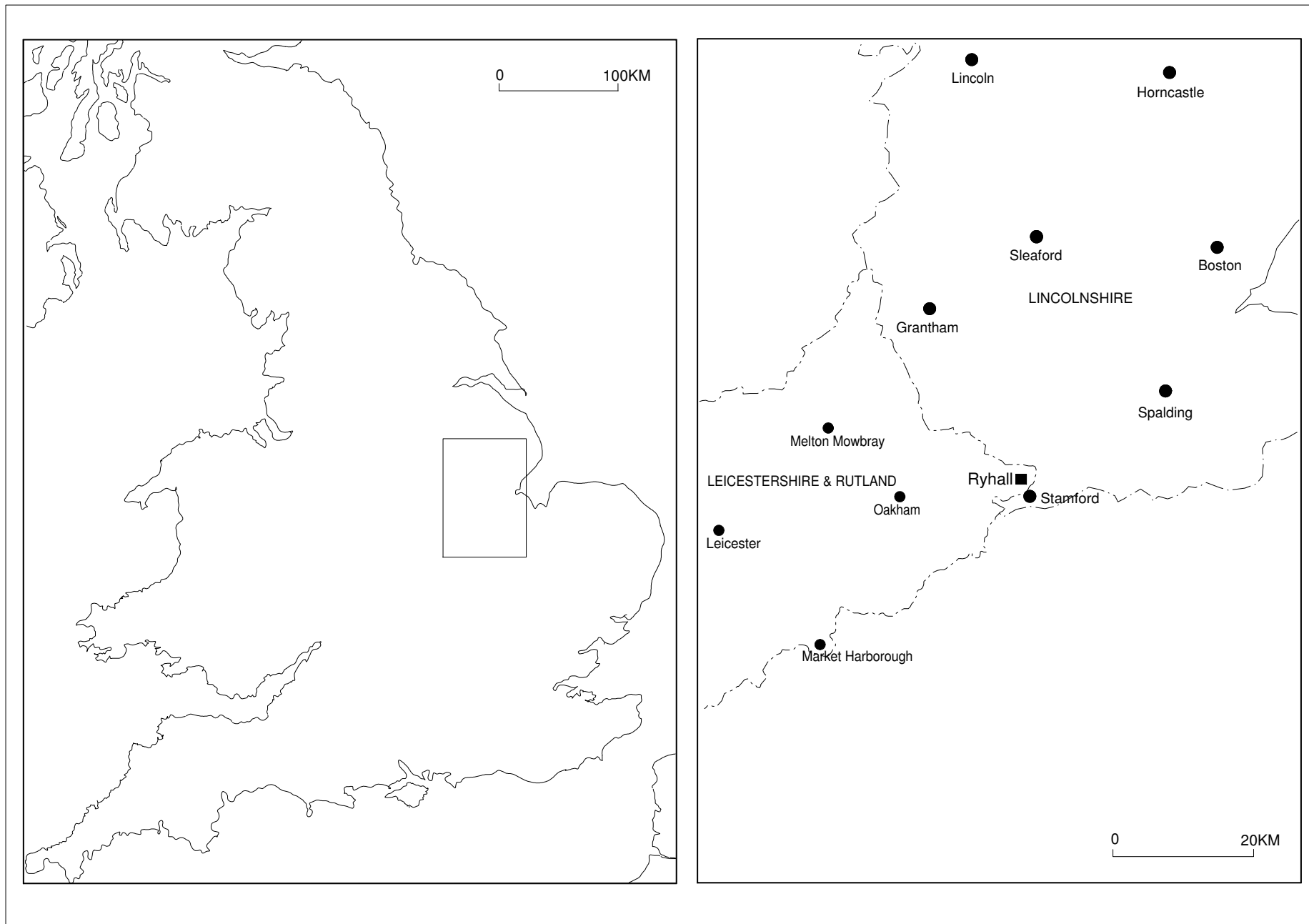


Figure 1: General location plan

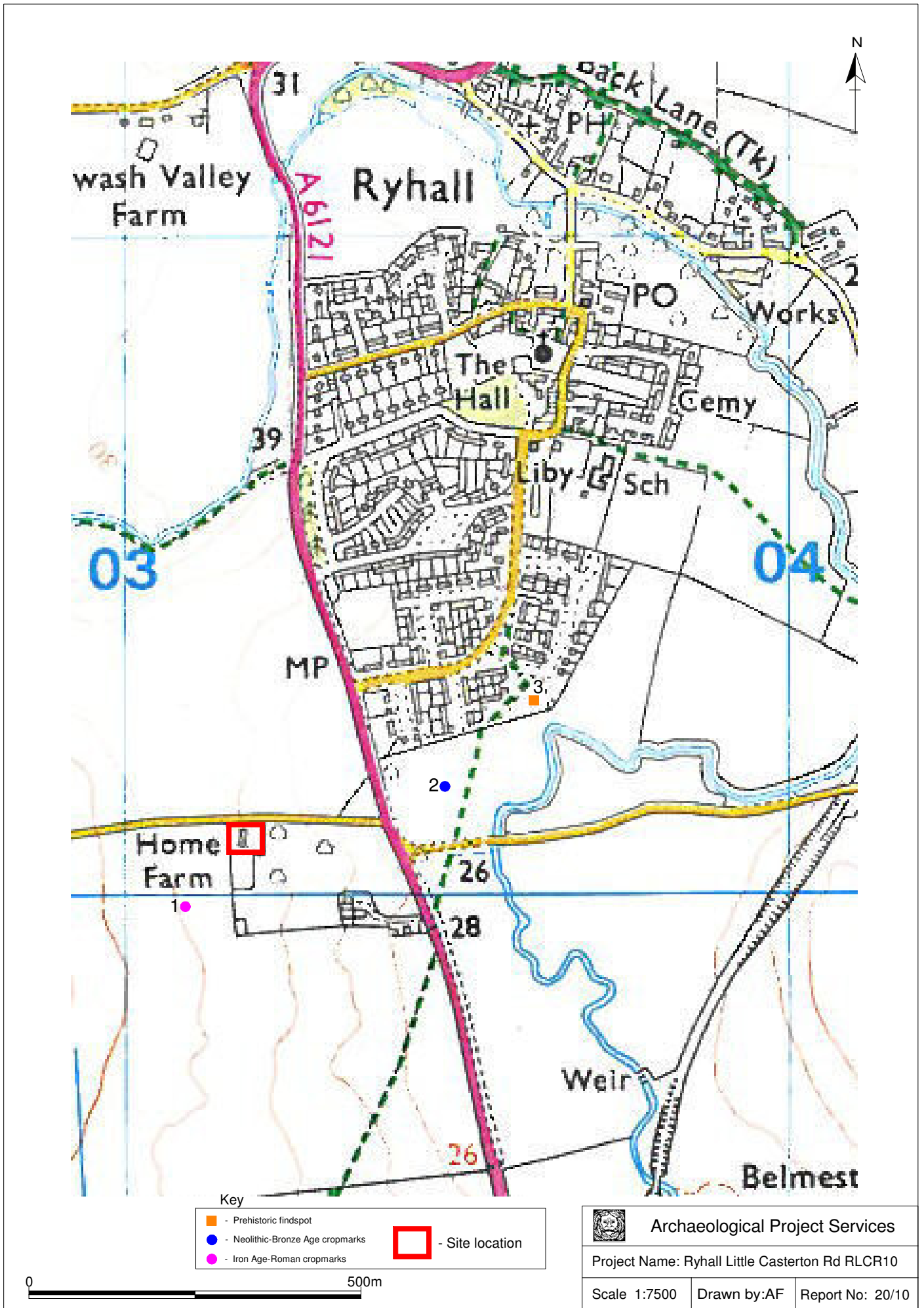


Figure 2 - Site location

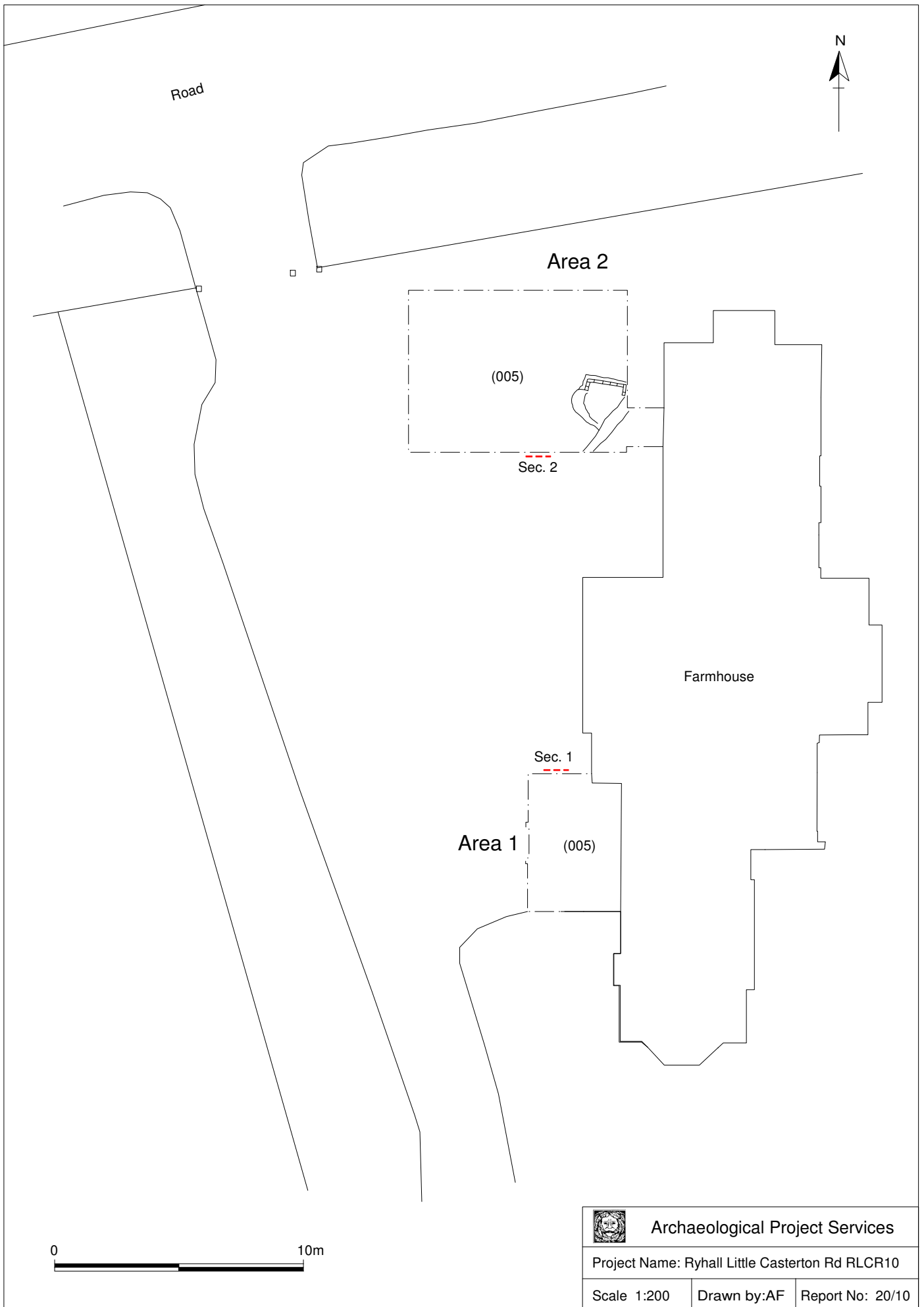


Figure 3 - Site plan and Section locations

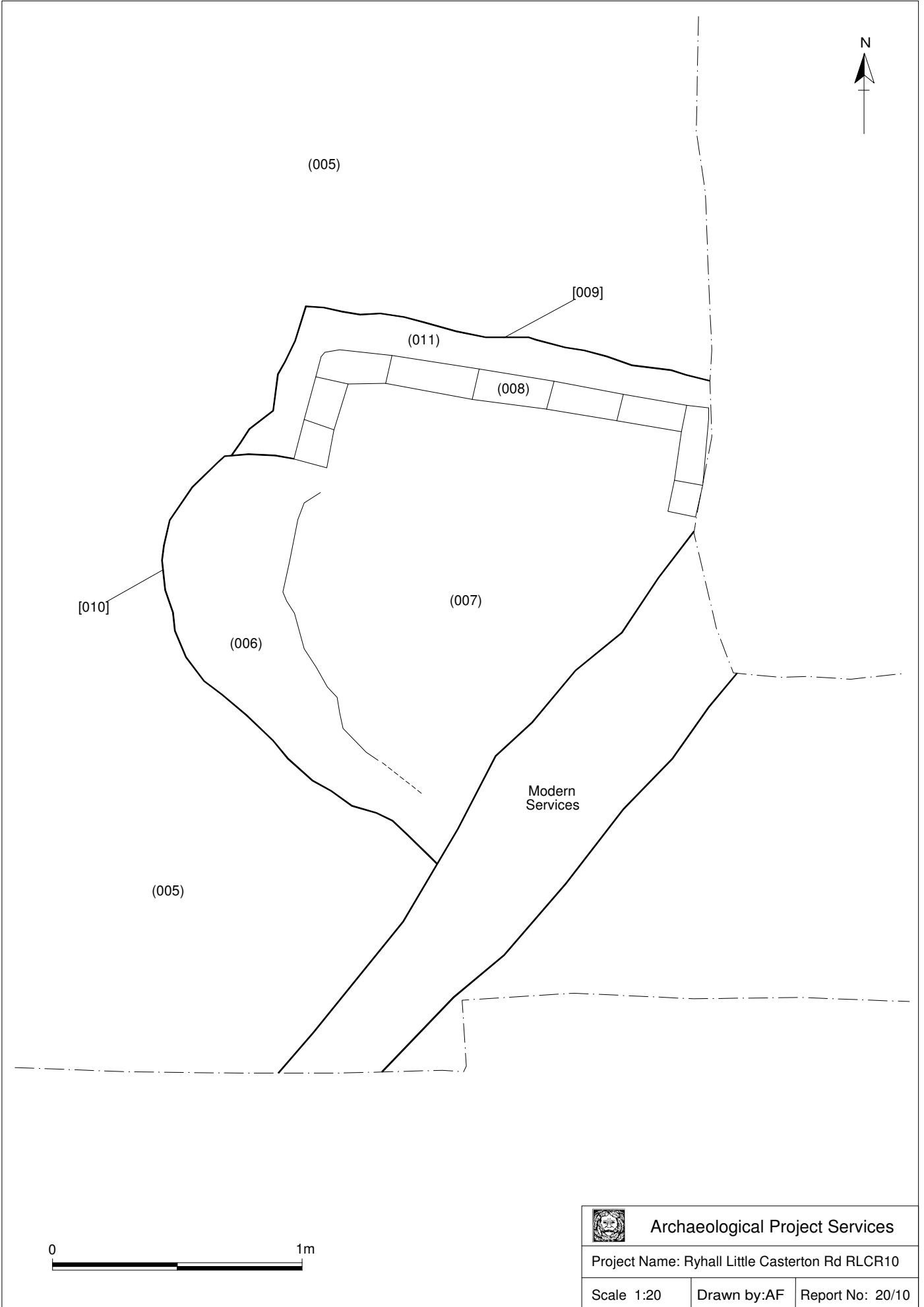
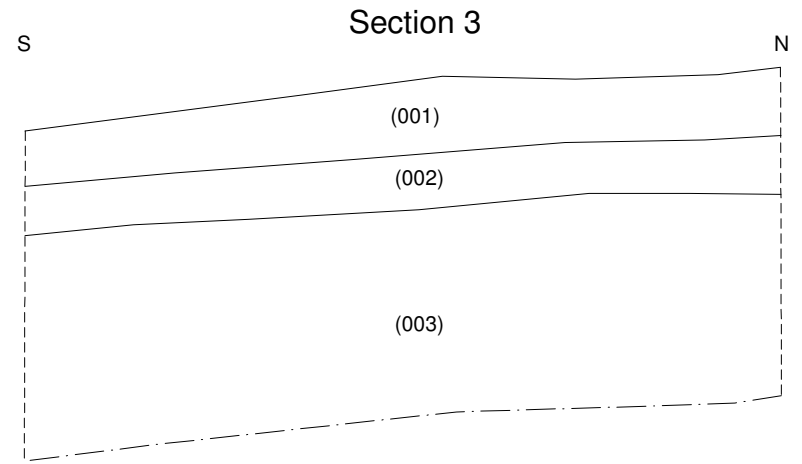
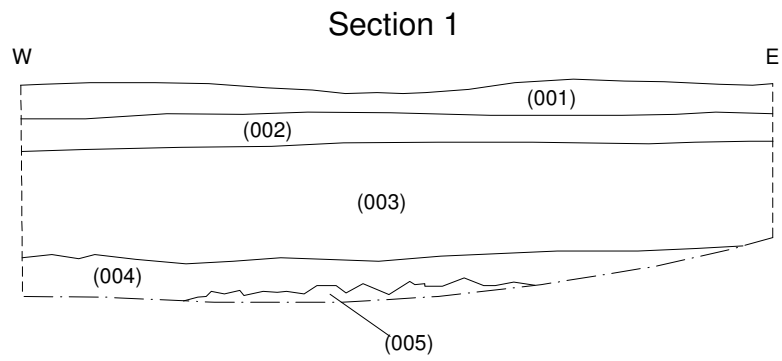


Figure 4 - Plan of Area 2 showing brick structure (008)




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Figure 5 - Sections 1-2



Plate 1 – The farmhouse



Plate 2 – Plan of Area 1



Plate 3 – Section 1, Area 1



Plate 4 – Area 2 prior to excavation



Plate 5 – Area 2



Plate 6 – Area 2, showing brick lined feature [009]

Appendix 1

CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

No.	Description	Interpretation
001	Loose yellowish brown sand and gravel, up to 10mm thick	Driveway surface
002	Hard black tarmac, up to 80mm thick	Tarmac driveway surface
003	Firm dark grey clay with occasional small limestone fragments, up to 0.30m thick`	Possible former topsoil
004	Firm mid yellowish brown clay, 50mm thick	Possible subsoil? Top of deposit (005)?
005	Firm to hard mid yellowish brown clay and limestone brash	Natural clay and limestone brash
006	Friable dark brown and black deposit of clayey sand and cinders	Fill of [010]
007	Friable to loose mid greyish brown clayey gravel and sand containing frequent bricks and occasional pieces of metal	Fill of [010]
008	Half of a once rectangular brick structure with bricks measuring 0.23m long by 0.11m wide by 70mm thick	Possible brick lined cesspit or soakaway
009	Rectangular pit cut with sharp corners measuring 0.82m in width	Construction cut associated with brick structure (008)
010	Roughly ovoid/circular cut at least 1.60m wide by 1.25m long, truncated by modern services	Pit cut
011	Loose mid to light yellowish brown clayey sand, gravel and limestone fragments	Fill of [009]

Appendix 2

GLOSSARY

Bronze Age	A period characterised by the introduction of bronze into the country for tools, between 2250 and 800 BC.
Context	An archaeological context represents a distinct archaeological event or process. For example, the action of digging a pit creates a context (the cut) as does the process of its subsequent backfill (the fill). Each context encountered during an archaeological investigation is allocated a unique number by the archaeologist and a record sheet detailing the description and interpretation of the context (the context sheet) is created and placed in the site archive. Context numbers are identified within the report text by brackets, e.g. [004].
Cropmark	A mark that is produced by the effect of underlying archaeological or geological features influencing the growth of a particular crop.
Cut	A cut refers to the physical action of digging a posthole, pit, ditch, foundation trench, etc. Once the fills of these features are removed during an archaeological investigation the original 'cut' is therefore exposed and subsequently recorded.
Domesday Survey	A survey of property ownership in England compiled on the instruction of William I for taxation purposes in 1086 AD.
Fill	Once a feature has been dug it begins to silt up (either slowly or rapidly) or it can be back-filled manually. The soil(s) that become contained by the 'cut' are referred to as its fill(s).
Iron Age	A period characterised by the introduction of Iron into the country for tools, between 800 BC and AD 50.
Layer	A layer is a term used to describe an accumulation of soil or other material that is not contained within a cut.
Medieval	The Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1066-1500.
Mesolithic	The 'Middle Stone Age' period, part of the prehistoric era, dating from approximately 11000 - 4500 BC.
Natural	Undisturbed deposit(s) of soil or rock which have accumulated without the influence of human activity
Neolithic	The 'New Stone Age' period, part of the prehistoric era, dating from approximately 4500 - 2250 BC.
Post-medieval	The period following the Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1500-1800.
Prehistoric	The period of human history prior to the introduction of writing. In Britain the prehistoric period lasts from the first evidence of human occupation about 500,000 BC, until the Roman invasion in the middle of the 1st century AD.
Romano-British	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 43-410 when the Romans occupied Britain.

Appendix 3

THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

- | | |
|----|---------------------------|
| 11 | Context Record Sheets |
| 1 | Photographic record sheet |
| 1 | Section record sheet |
| 2 | Daily record sheets |
| 3 | Sheets of scale drawings |

All primary records and finds are currently kept at:

Archaeological Project Services
The Old School
Cameron Street
Heckington
Sleaford
Lincolnshire
NG34 9RW

The ultimate destination of the project archive is:

Rutland County Museum
Catmose Street
Oakham
Rutland
LE15 6HW

Accession Number:

OAKRM: 2010.1

Archaeological Project Services Site Code:

RLCR10

The discussion and comments provided in this report are based on the archaeology revealed during the site investigations. Other archaeological finds and features may exist on the development site but away from the areas exposed during the course of this fieldwork. *Archaeological Project Services* cannot confirm that those areas unexposed are free from archaeology nor that any archaeology present there is of a similar character to that revealed during the current investigation.

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