

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT:
BADGERS, BUNNY LANE, SHERFIELD ENGLISH, WILTSHIRE**

Planning Reference: S/2012/0231
NGR: SU 27430 24121
AAL Site Code: SEBB 12
OASIS Reference Number: allenarc1-133782



Report prepared for Mr David Page

By
Allen Archaeology Limited
Report Number 2012103

November 2012



Allenarchaeology



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Executive Summary

- Allen Archaeology was commissioned by Mr David Page to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the construction of a new dwelling at Badgers, Bunny Lane, Sherfield English in Wiltshire.
- The site lies in an area of archaeological interest, close to the deserted medieval village of 'Cowsfield Louveras,' and Testwood Chapel, it is also situated within the grounds of the former Broxmore House.
- The watching brief exposed two undated probable quarry pits, exposed beneath the foundations of a number of brick foundations of probable 19th century agricultural buildings, and a series of later drains, probably inserted during the use of the site by the US Army in World War Two.
- A brick mortar-lined cistern is likely to be associated with several pumps shown on 1896 and 1901 Ordnance Survey mapping, whilst a further circular brick structure is more likely to have functioned as a soakaway associated with the agricultural buildings.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Allen Archaeology Limited (hereafter AAL) was commissioned by Mr David Page to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the groundworks for a new dwelling at Badgers, Bunny Lane, Sherfield English in Wiltshire.
- 1.2 The excavation, recording and reporting conforms to current national guidelines, as set out in the Institute for Archaeologists '*Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief*' (IfA 1994, revised 2001 and 2008), the English Heritage document '*Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*' (English Heritage 2006) and a specification prepared by this company (AAL 2012). All appropriate English Heritage guidance on archaeological best practice was also followed (www.helm.org/server/show/nav.7740).
- 1.3 The documentary archive will be submitted to Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum within six months of the completion of the project.

2.0 Site Location and Description

- 2.1 Although Sherfield English is situated in Hampshire in the administrative district of Test Valley Borough Council, the site on Bunny Lane itself is in Wiltshire and falls under the authority of Salisbury District and the parish of Whiteparish. Sherfield English is 16km east-southeast of the centre of Salisbury and 4.7km east-southeast of Whiteparish. The proposed development area is located c. 2.55km northwest of the village on land off Bunny Lane, and is centred on NGR SU 27430 24121.
- 2.2 The bedrock geology of the area consists of undifferentiated Culver Chalk Formation, with no superficial geology recorded, although variations in the chalk may include flint seams, and areas of sand or clay (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

3.0 Planning Background

- 3.1 Planning permission was granted on 29th March 2012 for the '*demolition of an existing dwelling and garage and erection of a replacement dwelling*' at Badgers, Bunny Lane, Sherfield English, Romsey, SO51 6FT (Planning Application S/2012/0231). As part of the planning conditions associated with the permission, the client was required to commission a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording during the development.
- 3.2 This decision was in line with the recommendations of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), with the particular chapter of relevance being '*Chapter 12: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment*' (Department for Communities and Local Government 2012).

4.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 4.1 The site lies within an area of archaeological significance according to records held at the Wiltshire Historic Environment Record (Clare King, letter dated 7th March 2012) and other sources.

- 4.2 The former medieval settlement of 'Cowsfield Louveras' is known to have existed from 1166 AD to the west of the development area. This settlement was once an outlier of the settlement at Whiteparish although neither is mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086. Earthworks associated with this settlement are recorded to the east of Rowdens Farm although it is unclear if these extend into the current development area as their full extent has not been recorded (Wiltshire Historic Environment Record (hereafter WHER) Reference SU22SE453). The settlement suffered greatly as a result of the Black Death but saw some repopulation in the following century, and continued to be occupied until its final abandonment in the 16th century. The original size of the settlement is unclear, but it may have represented little more than a hamlet in a forest clearing. There was little prime meadow land in the area due to the neighbouring settlement at Sherfield (Evans 1975, 163) which means that the settlement may always have been relatively impoverished.
- 4.3 Also as part of the settlement, and attached to the manor of the former village was Testwood Chapel, which is located to the west of the site (English Heritage Pastscape Number 223075).
- 4.4 Less than 100m to the west of the site there is a 4-bay granary that rests on staddle stones which dates to the post-medieval period (English Heritage Pastscape Number 527907).
- 4.5 There may have been an estate at Broxmore as early as the 16th century but Broxmore House was built in 1812, at the same time as which the local area was emparked, becoming Broxmore Park (<http://history.wiltshire.gov.uk/community/getcom.php?id=242>). The house and stables were appropriated in 1941 for use by the American Army during World War Two (*ibid.*). The house with associated buildings were demolished in the late 1940s and the land was disparked (*ibid.*, English Heritage Pastscape Number 662053).

5.0 Methodology

- 5.1 The groundworks were monitored by Edward Oakley of AAL over two days; Monday 20th and Tuesday 21st August 2012. The site was stripped with a tracked 360° excavator fitted with a toothless bucket.
- 5.2 A full written record of the archaeological deposits was made on standard AAL context recording sheets. Photography formed an integral part of the recording strategy, and all photographs incorporated scales, with an identification board and directional arrow. A selection of these images has been included in Appendix 1.
- 5.3 Each deposit or layer was allocated a unique identifier (context number), and accorded a written description, a summary of these are included in Appendix 2. Numbers in square brackets reflect cut features (e.g. pit [128]).

6.0 Results (Figure 2 and 3)

- 6.1 The uppermost deposit across the site was topsoil 100, which comprised loose dark grey brown sandy silt with frequent charcoal, chalk fragments and modern ceramic building material (hereafter CBM). Towards the east side of the site the topsoil sealed a series of intercutting ceramic drains and a backfilled pit [127] which was only observed in section. Across the majority of the site the topsoil also sealed a probable levelling layer 101 of compact very light grey crushed chalk and brown silt with modern CBM fragments. In the northeast corner of the site it sealed 115, another levelling layer of loose to friable dark grey brown sandy silt with frequent small stones, flint and modern CBM fragments.
- 6.2 In the western half of the site were a series of brick walls for a former structure; 103 and 114 aligned broadly north – south, with a single east – west internal partition. A floor surface 104 was recorded within the structure, comprising compact and friable light grey crushed chalk and sandy silt with occasional modern CBM fragments and flint. This layer was cut by pit [127] (visible in section only) to the south and sealed a levelling layer 105 of firm mid brown sandy clayey silt with frequent chalk fragments, occasional CBM and slate fragments. On the north side of the partition wall 104 sealed a circular brick built cistern or soakaway 122 that had been cut through the natural chalk and sealed with a domed brick roof; a drain 123 was fed into the cistern from the northwest corner of the partition.
- 6.3 Prior to the construction of the walls and cistern the area south of the internal partition had been raised and levelled as a result of the natural slope of the ground. Two build up layers were recorded; 112 a loose dark brown mixed sandy silt with frequent rubble, CBM and occasional slate, which sealed layer 113 consisting of firm mid brown sandy silt with frequent chalk and occasional CBM fragments. Another layer 102, which was probably the same as 113, recorded east of the building comprised compact mid brown sandy silt with frequent chalk fragments, moderate CBM and slate.
- 6.4 An east – west aligned cut for a brick-lined and stone capped culvert [119] ran across the southern part of the site. It was sealed by 102 and was vertically cut into the natural geology 116. Directly to its south were two north – south aligned brick walls 120 and 121 bonded with mortar, their relationship with 102 is uncertain.
- 6.5 Towards the northeast corner of the site was a large circular brick-lined cistern 126. It too had a domed roof with a circular opening and had been lined with mortar.
- 6.6 Below wall foundation 103 an elongated cut for a possible quarry pit [128] was recorded cutting into the natural geology. It contained two undated natural silting deposits 108 and 109, sealed by a backfill 107 of compact mid dark grey brown sandy silt with chalk and CBM fragments, occasional slate and rare clinker.
- 6.7 Wall 114 of the same brick building sealed another sub-circular quarry pit [124] which had been backfilled with redeposited natural 125.

7.0 Discussion and Conclusion

- 7.1 The earliest activity recorded on the site is likely to be represented by two undated pits, probably associated with local quarrying, as indicated by historic mapping. The Tithe Map of 1842 with associated award lists a Robert Bristow Esq. as the landowner and owner of Broxmore House. It shows a U-shaped range of buildings in the area of the current development area at this time, likely to represent farm buildings associated with the nearby Broxmore House. This would suggest that the pits are earlier than this date, and the Tithe Map shows that quarrying for chalk was widespread in the area at this time.
- 7.2 The Ordnance Survey Map of 1876 shows that a western range of buildings had been added to the complex of buildings on the current site, forming a very typical layout of farm buildings for the period, arranged around a central crewyard.
- 7.3 According to the Post Office Directory, from 1855 the house fell in to the ownership of a Thomas B. Evans Esq, after Bristow's death in the early 1850s. The estate was soon taken over by a Major Durie who is listed as the owner in the Post Office Directory of 1859 and 1875 (listed as Lieutenant-Colonel C. Durie). In year 1895 Mrs Durie was the listed owner (Kelly's Directory of Wiltshire 1895).
- 7.4 The 1896 and 1901 Ordnance Survey maps indicate several pumps (indicated by an italicised letter 'P') in an east – west alignment across the farmstead. One of these is likely to explain the brick cistern 126, which was lined with mortar to improve water retention, and would have been located within the former crewyard. The smaller brick built circular feature 122 was not lined with mortar, and its presence within the area of one of the buildings, with a connecting drain, suggests a function as a soakaway is more likely.
- 7.5 The subsequent owners of the estate were: Henry Webley Esq. in 1898 and 1907, it was occupied by Mrs Vartey-Rogers in 1903 and by Carrol Wheeler Ansdell from 1911 to at least 1915 (Kelly's Directory of Wiltshire 1898, 1903, 1907, 1911 and 1915).
- 7.6 In 1941 Broxmore House and its auxiliary buildings were utilised by the US Army who are likely to have installed the additional drains recorded in the eastern part of the site. After the war the house fell out of use and was finally demolished in the late 1940s.

8.0 Effectiveness of Methodology

- 8.1 The archaeological monitoring and recording was appropriate to the scale and nature of the proposed development. It clearly showed that the site had been heavily disturbed by late post-medieval activity in form of quarry pits and elements of a brick built farmstead.

9.0 Acknowledgements

- 9.1 Allen Archaeology Limited would like to thank Mr David Page for this commission.

10.0 References

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Kelly's Directory of Wiltshire 1895

Kelly's Directory of Wiltshire 1898

Kelly's Directory of Wiltshire 1903

Kelly's Directory of Wiltshire 1907

Kelly's Directory of Wiltshire 1911

Kelly's Directory of Wiltshire 1915

Post Office Directory 1855

Post Office Directory 1859

Post Office Directory 1875

Appendix 1: Colour Plates



Plate 1: General view looking north, with walls 120 and 121 in foreground and culvert 119 in middle distance. Scales are 2m and 1m



Plate 2: Brick soakaway 122, looking north. Scale is 2m



Plate 3: Culvert 119, looking west. Scale is 2m



Plate 4: Quarry pit [124], looking northwest. Scales are 2m and 1m



Plate 5: Quarry pit [128], looking south. Also note remains of wall 103. Scales are 2m and 1m

Appendix 2: Context Summary List

CBM = Ceramic Building Material

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
100	Layer	Loose dark grey brown sandy silt with frequent charcoal, chalk fragments and CBM	Topsoil and turf
101	Layer	Compact, very light grey crushed chalk and CBM fragments in a brown silty matrix. Some small flint and CBM fragments. Below 100, seals 102	Redeposited chalk levelling layer
102	Layer	Compact mid brown sandy silt with frequent chalk fragments, moderate CBM and slate fragments. Below 101, seals wall 103	Make-up/levelling layer
103	Structure	Brick wall with light yellow/grey mortar containing grit and crushed CBM. Sealed by 102, above 107	Wall
104	Layer	Compact/friable light grey mixed crushed chalk and CBM with fragments of flint in a sandy silt matrix. Seals 105, below 110	Surface make up layer
105	Layer	Firm mid brown sandy clayey silt with frequent chalk fragments, some CBM and occasional slate fragments. Seals 116, sealed by 104	Make up layer
106	Cut	Steep sided linear aligned north – south	Possible wall construction cut
107	Layer	Compact mid dark grey brown sandy silt with chalk and CBM fragments, some slate and rare clinker. Seals 108, sealed by 103	Backfill of pit [128]
108	Fill	Friable mid brown sandy silt with frequent chalk fragments and flint nodules. Seals 109, Sealed by 107	Silting within pit [128]
109	Fill	Loose/friable very light brown sandy silt (mainly silt) with moderate small flint nodules and occasional chalk flecks. Seals 116, sealed by 108	Primary silting of pit [128]
110	Fill	Loose dark grey brown sandy silt with frequent brick ends and some slate. Seals 104, sealed by 100	Modern disturbance and backfill
111	Layer	Very light grey compacted chalk, within 110	Lens of redeposited chalk in 110
112	Layer	Loose dark brown mixed sandy silt with frequent rubble, CBM and slate fragments. Below 100, seals 113	Levelling layer against wall 114
113	Layer	Firm mid brown sandy silt with frequent chalk fragments and occasional CBM. Sealed by 112, seals 114	Make up layer against wall 114
114	Structure	Brick wall with light yellow/grey mortar with grit and crushed CBM, seals 117, below 113 and 105	Wall
115	Layer	Loose/friable dark grey brown sandy silt with frequent small stones and flint and moderate CBM. Below 100, seals 120, 121 and 118	Levelling layer
116	Layer	Compact very light grey chalk	Natural
117	Cut	Linear running north-south shallow with vertical sides and flat base. Contains 114, cut into 116	Construction cut for wall 114
118	Fill	Brick lined linear with stone capping and thin mortar lining. Sealed by 102 and 115, within 119	Culvert
119	Cut	Linear running east-west with vertical sides and flat base. Contains 118, cuts 116	Cut for culvert
120	Structure	Brick wall with light yellow mortar with grit and crushed CBM	Wall
121	Structure	Brick wall with light yellow mortar with grit and crushed CBM	Wall
122	Structure	Circular in plan with vertical sides cut into chalk and brick domed roof, no fill. Sealed by 104, cuts 116	Cistern
123	Structure	Brick lined culvert with brick capping. Sealed by 100	Culvert, runs into cistern 122
124	Cut	Large sub-circular in plan with vertical sides and a flat base. Contains 125, cuts 116	Cut of possible quarry pit
125	Fill	Friable mid grey brown sandy silt with frequent angular stone and flint nodules. Sealed by 100, within 124	Backfill of [124]

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
126	Structure	Circular in plan with vertical sides, flat base and brick domed roof with circular brick opening. Brick lined with smooth mortar	Cistern
127	Cut	Feature with gradual sides and curved base, contains 110 and 111	Cut of pit, observed in section
128	Cut	Feature with gradual sloping sides and slight curved base, contains 107, 108 and 109	Cut of quarry pit
129	Fill	Firm mid brown sandy clayey silt with frequent chalk fragments	Infill of wall cut [106]
130	Fill	Loose to compact light grey mixed crushed chalk and sandy silt with CBM and flint	Infill of wall cut [117]

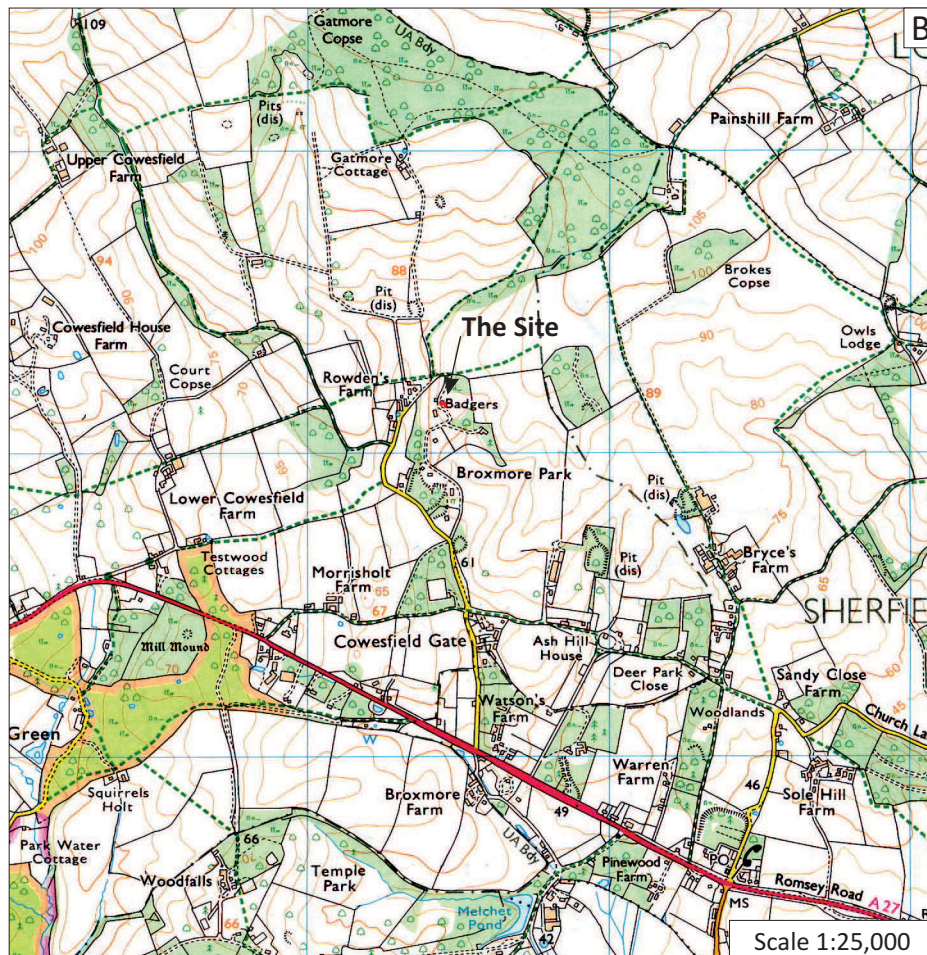
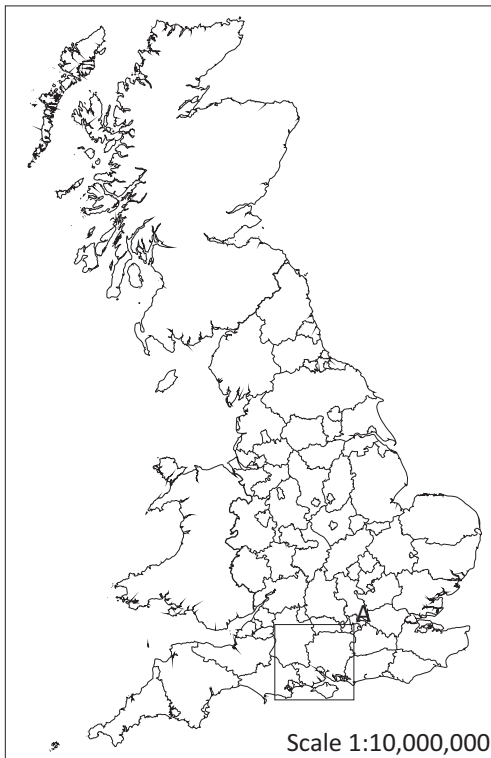
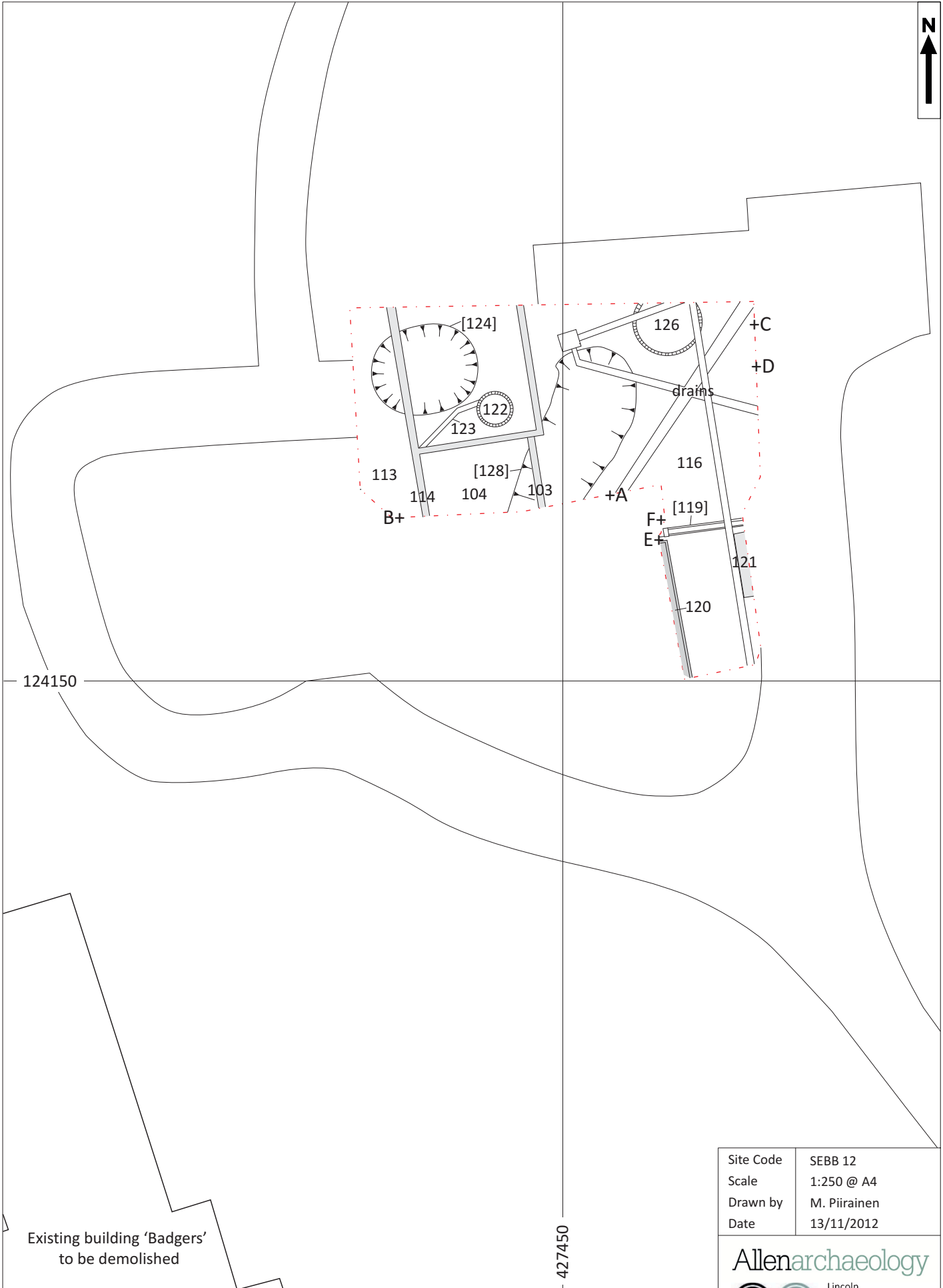


Figure 1: Site location with development site shown in red
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Site Code	SEBB 12
Scales	1:10,000,000 1:1,000,000 1:25,000 @ A4
Drawn by	M Piirainen
Date	13/11/12

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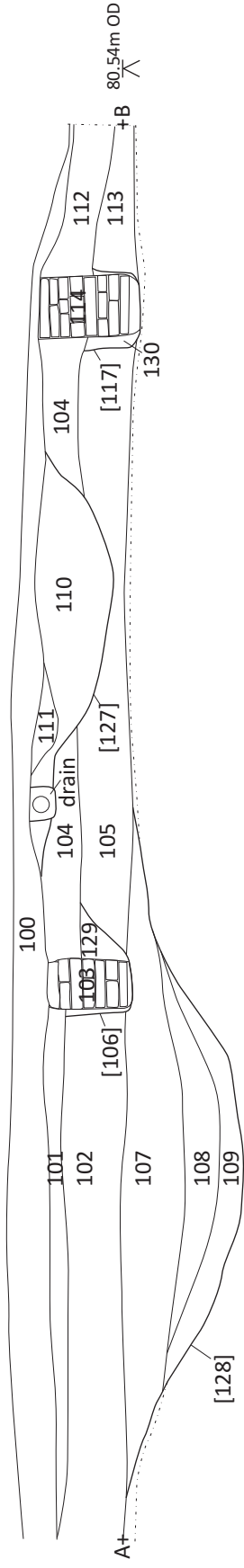


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Drawn by	M. Piirainen
Date	13/11/2012

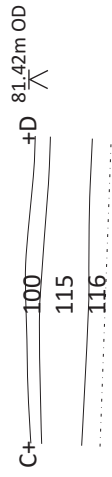
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Figure 2: Site location plan with excavated area outlined in red. Sections A-B, C-D and E-F shown on Figure 3

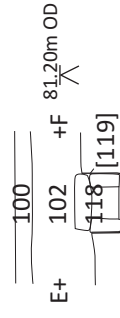
North Facing Section



West Facing Section



East Facing Section



Scale 1:50

Site Code
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Scale
1:50 @ A4
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Figure 3: Sections, located on Figure 2



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