## HISTORIC BUILDING SURVEY AND EVALUATION BY TRIAL TRENCHING: CHURCH FARM, YELLING, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Planning Applications: 11/02080/FUL and 11/02081/LBC
NGR: TL 62400/26200
AAL Site Code: YELL 13
OASIS ID: allenarc1-146086
CHER Event Number: ECB3900


Report prepared for Ms Sanchia Ascroft

By
Allen Archaeology Limited
AAL Report Number 2013146

## Allenarchaeology

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## Document Control

| Element | Name | Date |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Report prepared by: | Maria Piirainen | $12 / 12 / 2013$ |
| Illustrations prepared by: | Maria Piirainen | $06 / 12 / 2013$ |
| Report edited by: | Chris Clay | $13 / 12 / 2013$ |
| Report produced by: | AAL 2013146 | $13 / 12 / 2013$ |

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## Executive Summary

- Allen Archaeology Limited was commissioned by Ms Sanchia Ascroft to undertake archaeological works comprising building recording and trial trenching at Church Farm in Yelling, Cambridgeshire, prior to changing the use of the barn into an office and replacing the adjacent outbuildings.
- The threshing barn is a three bayed $17^{\text {th }}$ century timber box-frame structure with brick elevations and dark painted weatherboarded gables. The half-hipped roof is thatched and there are brick ventilation slits on all elevations. The roof consists of pine rafters on a roof truss with trenched purlin structure. Arched braces support the tie beams and post. The north elevation has an outshut with lean-to roof.
- The range of outbuildings to the northwest was in poor shape and little remained of the original structures. The earliest brickwork evident was in English Bond with later rebuilding/repairs in Flemish Bond and Monk Bond. The outbuildings are of later date than the threshing barn, although were present on the Ordnance Survey map from 1887.
- The evaluation comprised two trial trenches situated within the former footprint of Outbuildings 1, 2 and 3. They exposed a series of levelling layers associated with the construction of the outbuildings, as well as former foundations in Trench 2.


### 1.0 Introduction

1.1 Allen Archaeology Limited (hereafter AAL) was commissioned by Ms Sanchia Ascroft to undertake an historic building survey and an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching as part of a planning condition for a residential development at Church Farm, Yelling in Cambridgeshire.
1.2 The methodology conforms to the guidelines established by English Heritage in 'Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice' (2006), 'Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment' (2006), the guidelines set out in the Institute for Archaeologists 'Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures' (1996, revised 2001 and 2008), 'Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluations' (1994), a generic brief for historic building recording and archaeological evaluation prepared by Cambridgeshire County Council Historic and Historical Environment Team (2012), as well as a specification produced by this company (AAL 2012).
1.3 A copy of the survey report and the full project archive will be submitted to Cambridgeshire Museums Service within six months of the completion of this report.

### 2.0 Site Location and Description

2.1 Yelling is situated in the administrative district of Huntingdonshire District Council, approximately 19 km west-northwest of central Cambridge and 10 km south of Huntingdon. Church Farm is situated on the south side of High Street, and comprises a principally north south aligned range of agricultural buildings, centred on NGR TL 26226240.
2.2 The local bedrock geology comprises undifferentiated West Walton Formation and Ampthill Clay Formation Mudstone, overlain by superficial deposits of glacial till (http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/ geologyofbritain/home.html).

### 3.0 Planning Background

3.1 Planning applications were submitted to Huntingdonshire District Council in December 2011 for the 'refurbishment and change of use of barn to office. Internal alterations and replacement outbuildings to provide ancillary office accommodation and two dwellings with parking, including demolition works' (Planning references 1102080FUL and 1102081LBC). Planning permission was granted in March 2012 subject to conditions, including the undertaking of a programme of historic building recording in advance of any demolition works, and a programme of archaeological trial trenching in order to determine the archaeological potential of the proposed development area.
3.2 The approach adopted is consistent with the recommendations of Chapter 12: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Department for Communities and Local Government 2012).

### 4.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

4.1 There is no evidence for prehistoric or Roman activity in the vicinity of the site, although it lies c. 2.5 km west of the line of Ermine Street, one of Roman Britain's major thoroughfares, running from London to Lincoln, York and Hadrian's Wall.
4.2 Evidence for Anglo-Saxon activity is restricted to a small scatter of pottery found c .200 m to the northwest during construction of a new drive to 'Old Rectory' (Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (hereafter CHER) Reference 02536).
4.3 In the Domesday Book of 1086 Yelling is listed under two landowners; St Benedict of Ramsey and Aubrey de Vere. The two estates were populated by 24 villagers of varying status (along with their dependents), and a church is also listed in the estate of Aubrey de Vere (Williams and Martin 2002).
4.4 The parish church of Holy Cross is located directly to the north of the site. It has elements of $12^{\text {th }}, 13^{\text {th }}$ and $14^{\text {th }}$ century date, and was rebuilt extensively in the $19^{\text {th }}$ century (CHER Reference 10333).
4.5 To the east of the parish church is a moated enclosure, where limited investigations have exposed a cobbled courtyard of $12^{\text {th }}$ century date and traces of a possible timber barn. The moat appears to have been infilled in the $14^{\text {th }}$ century (CHER Reference 01047). Another possible moated enclosure is located to the north of the site although the details available for this feature are extremely limited (CHER Reference 02421).
4.6 There are numerous findspots of medieval date in the vicinity of the site, including two brooches found to the southwest of the site (CHER References CB14714 and CB14152) and a $14^{\text {th }}$ century jetton found to the north (CHER Reference 02499).
4.7 Church Farmhouse is a mid $17^{\text {th }}$ century double pile farmhouse of mid $17^{\text {th }}$ century date and is Grade II Listed (List Entry Number 1211816). The barns that are part of the proposed development are located to the west of the farmhouse, one of which is also Grade II Listed (List Entry Number 1211760), and is a mid to late $17^{\text {th }}$ century barn with thatched roof and weather boarded gables.

### 5.0 Photographic Survey Methodology

5.1 The building survey was undertaken by the author on Friday $30^{\text {th }}$ November 2012. Although the weather was bright and sunny the sun was low which generated poor light for some exterior and interior shots.
5.2 The entire barn was in poor structural condition and supported by scaffolding inside and out. The area west of the outbuildings was overgrown therefore restricting the available views for photography.
5.3 The works described below are based on a generic brief provided by the Historic and Natural Environment Team at Leicestershire County Council, and equate to a level of detail
commensurate with a Level 2 survey as detailed in the English Heritage document: Understanding Historic Buildings, A Guide to Good Recording Practice (English Heritage 2006).

With regard to the constraints above, wherever possible, photographs were taken of the following: -

- All external elevations;
- All internal elevations, including internal walls and subdivisions;
- The roof structure of the buildings, internally and externally, where visible;
- The relationship of the structures to their surroundings;
- Architectural details, i.e. windows, doors, decorative brickwork, and other significant features, fixtures or fittings. Generally a single representative shot was taken of particular features such as windows or openings of a single type that occur more than once within the structure; and
- A general internal photographic record of the building. Photographs were taken of each room/discrete internal space from sufficient points to show the form, general appearance and methods of construction.
5.4 All photos taken were linked to a floor plan or a plan of the landscape around the structures


### 6.0 Photographic Survey Results (Figures 2-6)

6.0.1 The photographic building survey included one east - west aligned barn which will be converted to form an office and a north - south aligned range of outbuildings which will be replaced by new dwellings. For the purpose of this report the range of outbuildings has been split into four buildings (in the archive list as OB1, OB2 etc).

### 6.1 The Barn (Figures 3-6)

6.1.1 The barn is a $17^{\text {th }}$ century, three bay, box-frame threshing barn with brick elevations. Most of the brickwork has been repaired on several occasions and only in sections is a Flemish Bond visible. The barn has also a northern brick outshut, dark painted weatherboarded gables and a half-hipped thatched roof. There are brick ventilation slits grouped in fours on all elevations (Plates 1-4).
6.1.2 On the south elevation there is a large opening onto the former threshing floor. On the opposing northern elevation there is an outshut with a lean-to roof which is likely to have covered a similar large opening to allow a throughflow of air over the threshing floor (Plates 2, 5 and 6).
6.1.3 West of the outshut there is a second doorway on the north elevation, with a thick stone lintel (Plate 7).
6.1.4 As with the exterior, the interior contained scaffolding, restricting a full detailed view of the structure. The ground floor was a modern concrete surface and the lower part of all interior elevations had a thick concrete render to c. 0.8 m height (Plates 8 and 9 ).
6.1.5 In front of the wooden doorframe of the outshut on the north elevation is a wooden bracing strut reinforcing the brick structure. Directly south of this a wooden post supporting the floor above sits on a chamfered stone plinth (Plate 10).
6.1.6 The thatched roof is fastened to wooden laths which lay on top of pine rafters (likely to be a later addition), supported by a $16^{\text {th }}-17^{\text {th }}$ style roof truss and trenched purlin structure. Arched braces help support the tie beams and posts (Plates 11 -14).

### 6.2 Outbuilding 1 (Figures 3, 4 and 6)

6.2.1 Outbuilding 1 had been largely ruinous for some time prior to the survey. It was very overgrown and only parts of the east and north elevation were still visible. The remaining east elevation was in English Bond whereas the north and apparently later elevation had been rebuilt using Flemish Bond (Plates 15 -17).
6.3 Outbuilding 2 (Figures 3, 4 and 6)
6.3.1 Outbuilding 2 was also in a poor state of repair, with no roof surviving. Access constraints and overgrowth meant only the east elevation could be photographed. This was in a probable $20^{\text {th }}$ century Stretcher Bond brickwork which had been keyed into the brickwork of the earlier adjacent Outbuilding 1 at the south end. The east elevation had four windows, each with one side hung and one top hung casement (Plates 17 and 18).
6.3.2 The north elevation serves as a partition wall to Outbuilding 3, and the later brickwork of the east elevation has been keyed into the partition wall (Plate 19).

### 6.4 Outbuilding 3 (Figures 3, 4 and 6)

6.4.1 As with the previous structures, Outbuilding 3 was in poor shape and half of the roof had collapsed, making it unsafe to enter. The brickwork was in English Bond and appears to be identical to that used in Outbuilding 1. There is a wooden stable door in the east elevation with strap hinges and a segmental brick arch. The square, six pane, fixed light windows are probably of a later date (Plates 19-21).
6.5 Outbuilding 4 (Figures 3, 4 and 6)
6.5.1 Outbuilding 4 was relatively intact in comparison to Outbuildings 1 to 3 , probably as a result of relatively recent rebuilding. It had a gabled pantile roof that is likely to have extended over the entire range. The elevations were in Monk Bond, and had been keyed into Outbuilding 3 to the south. A boundary wall to the north is also in Monk Bond and appears to be of one build with
the outbuilding. The east elevation has two six pane glass windows flanking a large square opening (Plate 22), with another window in the north elevation. There are three further similar windows in the west elevation (Plate 23).
6.5.2 The building is being used as a general purpose store, and internally whitewashed walls and a concrete floor. On the southern elevation there is a segmental arched opening leading into Outbuilding 3, with plank and batten wooden door (Plate 24).

### 7.0 Discussion and Conclusion

7.1 The barn has a $17^{\text {th }}$ century box-framed structure with later brick infill and is the oldest structure on site, although has been subject to many episodes of repair and alteration. The Outbuildings are generally in a poor state of repair and have also been subject to numerous episodes of repair. Although later than the barn, Ordnance Survey Maps from the late $19^{\text {th }}$ century show a similar layout of structures on the site as those present at the time of the survey.

### 8.0 Evaluation Methodology

8.1 The archaeological evaluation was carried out by a team of three experienced archaeologists over a single day, Thursday $24^{\text {th }}$ January 2012. Machine excavation was carried out using a tracked excavator fitted with a 1.6 m wide toothless bucket.
8.2 Prior to the fieldwork, the outbuildings had been demolished, and two trenches were excavated within their former footprint. Trench 1 measured $8 \mathrm{~m} \times 1.60 \mathrm{~m}$ and Trench 2 measured $12 \mathrm{~m} \times 1.60 \mathrm{~m}$.
8.3 All exposed plan and section surfaces were inspected for any archaeological features and deposits to determine the stratigraphic sequence. Each context was recorded on pro-forma AAL context record sheets, accompanied by plan and section drawings at appropriate scales. A digital photographic record was also maintained.
8.4 Each deposit, layer or cut was allocated a unique identifier (context number), and accorded a written description, a summary of these are included in Appendix 5. Three digit numbers within square brackets reflect cut features (for example pit [105]).

### 9.0 Evaluation Results (Figures 2, 7 and 8)

### 9.1 Trench 1 (Figure 7)

9.1.1 The uppermost deposit was a probable levelling layer 100 of moderately loose, mid brownish grey clayey silt with occasional sub-rounded stones and brick fragments. This was cut by a broadly east - west aligned linear feature, [105]. The cut was steep sided with a concave base and contained a backfill 106 of moderately loose mid yellowish orange clay with occasional
small tile and brick fragments, and is likely to represent a backfilled former drain cut associated with the former buildings.
9.1.2 Towards the south end of the trench, layer 100 sealed a dumped re-deposited natural, 107, possibly derived from landscaping of the site, as the yard area to the east of the buildings has been reduced and levelled and the former buildings sat on a raised 'plinth'.
9.1.3 At the north end of the trench, deposits 101,102 and 103 were recorded as fills within a steep sided cut, [104]. The function of this feature is unclear, but the most likely interpretation is that [104] is not a cut per se, but represents the interface between dumped deposit 107 and layers 101, 102 and 103.

### 9.2 Trench 2 (Figure 8)

9.2.1 The removal of Outbuildings 2 and 3 resulted in the formation of a demolition layer, 200. It was a 0.20 m thick mix of loose dark grey and brown sandy clay with frequent building rubble. It sealed four brick foundations representing the walls of the former outbuildings. The depths of the foundations gradually became deeper towards the south which appears to correspond with the gradual slope of the ground.
9.2.2 The foundations were cut into a dumped levelling deposit 201, a 0.35 m thick dark brown sandy clay with occasional small brick and chalk fragments, which became shallower towards the north end of the trench, and is likely to be the same as deposit 100 in Trench 1. It sealed the natural geology of mottled, compact grey clay with pockets of orange brown sand and frequent poorly sorted sub-angular chalk flecks and fragments, 202.

### 10.0 Discussion and Conclusion

10.1 The trial trenching did not identify any finds, features or deposits of archaeological interest. The two trenches merely exposed deposits associated with the raising and levelling of the uneven, sloping ground surface in preparation for the construction of the former buildings on the site. It was noted in Trench 2 that the former foundations became progressively deeper to the south, reflecting the profile of the natural ground surface, also sloping down to the south.

### 11.0 Effectiveness of Methodology

11.1 The building survey methodology applied has allowed for a permanent record to be made of the building prior to demolition and modification. In addition, the evaluation methodology was appropriate to the scale and nature of the development with no deposits or features of archaeological significance were recorded on site.

### 12.0 Acknowledgements

12.1 Allen Archaeology Limited would like to thank Ms Sanchia Ascroft for this commission.

### 13.0 References

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Appendix 1: Colour Plates (Photographic Survey)


Plate 3 (Shot 2): Representative shot of the barn's ventilation slits (here on the south elevation), looking north


Plate 4 (Shot 4): West elevation of the barn, looking east


Plate 6 (Shot 24): Close up of outshut, looking southwest. Scale is 1 m


Plate 9 (Shot 9): Interior view of the barn, looking west


Plate 10 (Shot 10): Detailed shot of arched doorway of the outshut, looking east. Scale is 1 m


Plate 11 (Shot 15): Roof truss structure with ridge and trenched purlins, looking east


Plate 12 (Shot 13): Roof structure, looking east


Plate 13 (Shot 17): Arched braces and tie beams and posts, looking northeast


Plate 15 (Shot 25): Overgrown remnants of Outbuilding 1 east elevation, looking west. Scale is 1 m


Plate 16 (Shot 26): East elevation and join between Outbuilding 1 and 2, looking west


Plate 18 (Shot 28): Representative window on east elevation of Outbuilding 2, looking west


Plate 19 (Shot 30): East elevation of Outbuildings 2 and 3, looking west. Scale is 1 m


Plate 21 (Shot 36): Interior view of demolished/ collapsed Outbuilding 3 looking southwest


Plate 22 (Shot 32): East elevation of Outbuildings 3 and 4, looking west. Scale is 1 m

Plate 23 (Shot 41): West elevation of Outbuildings 3 and 4, looking east. Scale is 1 m

Plate 24 (Shot 33): Interior view of Outbuilding 4, looking south. Scale is 1 m

## Appendix 2: Photographic Archive List

## OB - Outbuilding

| Shot No | Facing | Type | Building | Description |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 01 | NW | Exterior | Barn | South elevation |
| 02 | NW | Exterior/detail | Barn | Ventilation slits |
| 03 | NW | Exterior | Barn | South elevation |
| 04 | E | Exterior | Barn | West elevation |
| 05 | SE | Exterior | Barn | West and north elevation |
| 06 | ESE | Exterior | Barn | Doorway on north elevation |
| 07 | E | Interior | Barn | General view of east elevation |
| 08 | E | Interior | Barn | General view of east elevation |
| 09 | W | Interior | Barn | West elevation |
| 10 | E | Interior/detail | Barn | Doorway of outshut |
| 11 | S | Interior/detail | Barn | Opening on south elevation |
| 12 | E | Interior | Barn | Roof and timber frame structure |
| 13 | E | Interior | Barn | Roof and timber frame structure |
| 14 | E | Interior | Barn | Roof and timber frame structure |
| 15 | E | Interior | Barn | Roof and timber frame structure |
| 16 | E | Interior | Barn | Roof and timber frame structure |
| 17 | NE | Interior | Barn | Roof and timber frame structure |
| 18 | ENE | Interior | Barn | Roof and timber frame structure |
| 19 | ESE | Interior | Barn | Roof and timber frame structure |
| 20 | ESE | Interior | Barn | Roof and timber frame structure |
| 21 | ESE | Interior | Barn | Roof and timber frame structure |
| 22 | ESE | Interior | Barn | Roof and timber frame structure |
| 23 | S | Exterior | Barn | North elevation |
| 24 | SW | Exterior | Barn | North elevation outshut |
| 25 | W | Exterior | OB 1 | Overgrown east elevation |
| 26 | W | Exterior | OB1/OB2 | Joint between buildings |
| 27 | NW | Exterior | OB1/OB2 | North elevation of OB2 and east elevation of OB3 |
| 28 | E | Exterior/detail | OB2 | Representative window |
| 29 | N | Interior | OB2 | Overgrown interior |
| 30 | W | Exterior | OB2/OB3 | Joint between buildings |
| 31 | W | Exterior | OB3 | Stable door |
| 32 | W | Exterior | OB3/OB4 | East elevation |
| 33 | S | Interior | OB4 | General interior |
| 34 | S | Interior | OB4 | Doorway between OB5 and OB4 |
| 35 | NW | Interior | OB3 | General interior |
| 36 | SW | Interior | OB3 | General interior |
| 37 | S | Interior | OB3 | General interior |
| 38 | SW | Exterior | OB4 | North elevation |
| 39 | S | Exterior | OB4 | Representative window north elevation |
| 40 | SE | Exterior | OB4 | West elevation |
| 41 | E | Exterior | OB4/OB3 | West elevation |
| 42 | SE | Exterior | OB1-4 | Overgrown area behind outbuildings |
| 43 | SW | Exterior | Site | General site shot |
| 44 | S | Exterior | Site | General site shot |
| 45 | NW | Exterior | Site | General site shot |
| 46 | N | Exterior | Site | General site shot |
| 47 | NW | Exterior | Site | General site shot |
| 48 | N | Exterior | Site | General site shot |

## Appendix 3: Listing of Barn

List Entry Number: 1211760
Location: BARN TO SOUTH OF CHURCH FARMHOUSE, HIGH STREET

County: Cambridgeshire
District: Huntingdonshire
District Type: District Authority
Parish: Yelling
National Park: Not applicable to this List entry.
Grade: II
Date first listed: 24-Oct-1951
Date of most recent amendment: Not applicable to this List entry.

Legacy System Information: The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.
Legacy System: LBS
UID: 396284

List Entry Description
Summary of Building: Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.
Reasons for Designation: Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry
Details.
History
Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

## Details

TL 26 SE YELLING HIGH STREET
(South Side)

7/154 Barn to south of 24.10.51 Church Farmhouse

GV II

Mid to late C17 four bayed barn. Local soft red brick, half-hipped, thatched roof with timber framed and weather-boarded gable ends. Aisled bay opposite main south facing entrance. Ventilation slits decoratively grouped in pairs or fours. The interior has storey posts with thickened heads, double purlin pine roof with queen structs. Modern buttressing on south wall. RCHM (Hunts) p310.
C. Smith and 0. Cook. Farmhouse and Cottages. Batsford.

Listing NGR: TL2622662365

Appendix 4: Colour Plates (Evaluation)


Plate 3: General view of Trench 2, looking south

## Appendix 5: Context Summary List

CBM $=$ Ceramic Building Material (e.g. brick and tile)

Trench 1

| Context <br> No. | Type | Description | Interpretation |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| 100 | Layer | Moderately loose mid brownish grey clayey silt with <br> occasional mid/large sub rounded stones and brick <br> fragments, seals 101, cut by [105] | Post-medieval levelling deposit |
| 101 | Layer | Firm light yellowish brown clay with occasional small sub <br> angular stone and chalk, sealed by 100, seals 102 | Levelling layer |
| 102 | Cut | Friable dark yellowish brown silty clay with occasional <br> chalk flecks. Sealed by 101, seals 103 | Levelling layer |
| 103 | Cut | Moderately compact yellowish brown clay with occasional <br> mid to large sub angular and sub rounded stones. Sealed <br> by 102 | Levelling layer |
| 104 | Steep sided 'cut', defining extent of layers 101, 102 and <br> 103 | Possible interface with layer 107 |  |
| 105 | E - W aligned feature with steep irregular sides and <br> concave base, contains 106 | Probable former drain cut |  |
| 106 | Layer | Moderately loose mid yellowish orange clay with <br> occasional small CBM fragments and sub rounded stones. | Backfill of [105] |
| 107 | Compact yellow brown chalky clay with sub rounded <br> stones. Sealed by 100, cut by [104], seals 108 | Re-deposited natural/levelling <br> layer |  |
| 108 | Layer | Compact mid yellowish grey chalky clay with occasional <br> chalk and flint. Sealed by 107 | Natural glacial till |

Trench 2

| Context <br> No. | Type | Description | Interpretation |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| 200 | Layer | Loose and mixed dark grey and brown sandy clay with <br> frequent brick, stone and demolition rubble, seals 201 | Demolition deposit |
| 201 | Layer | Dark brown sandy clay with occasional small brick and <br> chalk fragments, sealed by 200, seals 202 | Former topsoil or dumped <br> deposit |
| 202 | Layer | Mottled compact grey clay with pockets of orange brown <br> sand and frequent poorly sorted sub angular chalk flecks <br> and fragments | Natural geology |



Figure 1: Site location outlined in red © Crown copyright 2000. All rights reserved. Licence Number 100047330

| Site Code | YELL 13 | Allenarchaeology |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Scales | 1:10,000,000 | Lincoln |
|  | 1:1,000,000 | (1) Birmingham |
|  | 1:25,000 @ A4 | Cambridge |
| Drawn by | M Piirainen | ) |
| Date | 04/12/2013 | www.allenarchaeology.co.uk |





North Elevation


South Elevation


| Site Code | YELL 13 |
| :--- | :--- |
| Scale | 1.200 @ A4 |
| Drawn by | M. Piirainen |
| Date | $04 / 12 / 2013$ |

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Trench 1
West Facing Section


Trench 2

## East Facing Section



| Site Code | YELL 13 |
| :--- | :--- |
| Scale | $1.50 @$ A4 |
| Drawn by |  |
| M. Piirainen |  |
| Date | 04/12/2013 |
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