

Event Code: EHE 2093

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT:
LAND AT ARKSTONE COURT FARM, KINGSTONE, HEREFORDSHIRE**

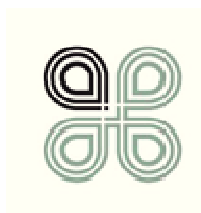
Planning Reference: S122263/F
NGR: SO 4367 3621
Site Code: KING 13
OASIS Reference Number: allenarc1-162630
Event Number: EHE2093



Report prepared for Mr Will Watkins

By
Allen Archaeology Limited
Report Number AAL 2013136

November 2013



Allenarchaeology



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Executive Summary

- Allen Archaeology Limited was commissioned by Mr Will Watkins to carry out a programme of monitoring and recording during groundworks for the construction of poultry units at Arkstone Court Farm, Kingstone, Herefordshire.
- There is limited evidence for archaeological activity predating the medieval period in the vicinity of the site. Some evidence for medieval settlement activity has been recorded in the vicinity of the site, and the site itself may have been part of a medieval deer park.
- The watching brief exposed a number of tree boles associated with the former use of the site as an orchard, several plough scars of probable modern date, and two undated linear features, likely to represent post-medieval or early modern boundaries.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Allen Archaeology Limited was commissioned by Mr Will Watkins to carry out a programme of monitoring and recording during groundworks as a condition of planning consent for the construction of new poultry units at Arkstone Court Farm, Kingstone, Herefordshire.
- 1.2 The excavation, recording and reporting conformed to current national guidelines, as set out in the Institute for Archaeologists 'Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief (IfA 1994, revised 2008), a brief for the works (Cotton 2013) and to a specification prepared by Allen Archaeology Limited (AAL 2013).
- 1.3 The documentary archive will be submitted to Hereford Museum and Art Gallery within six months of the completion of the report.

2.0 Site Location and Description

- 2.1 Arkstone Court Farm is situated in the administrative district of Herefordshire Council, approximately 1.2km east of Kingstone and 8km southwest of central Hereford. The proposed development area comprises a block of agricultural land of c.1ha immediately to the east of the farm, centred on NGR SO 4367 3621.
- 2.2 The bedrock geology of the area comprises Raglan Mudstone Formation, overlain by a superficial geology of Hummocky (Moundy) glacial deposits of till, sand and gravel (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

3.0 Planning Background

- 3.1 A planning application was submitted for '*Four poultry units for the production of broilers*' at Arkstone Court Farm (Reference S122263/F). Planning permission was granted subject to conditions, including the undertaking of a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording during the groundworks for the scheme.
- 3.2 This approach is consistent with the guidelines that are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (Department for Communities and Local Government 2012), which superseded PPS 5 in March 2012.

4.0 Archaeological Background

- 4.1 An archaeological desk-based assessment has been carried out for the proposed development (Conway 2011). This identified a very limited archaeological potential for any activity predating the medieval period. Medieval activity is better represented in the area, with a possible moated enclosure and deserted medieval village remains to the north and west of the site, and further medieval settlement evidence at Meer Court. The unlocated medieval settlement of Webton is also believed to have existed in the vicinity.
- 4.2 The development area may have been part of a medieval deer park, but the full extent of this feature is unclear. Much of the site formed part of an orchard from at least the early 19th century. The orchard was cleared from the site in the later 20th century.

5.0 Methodology

- 5.1 Groundworks were monitored by Adrian Hadley on behalf of AAL over a period of fourteen working days, between Monday 13th May and Tuesday 18th June 2013. Machine excavation was undertaken using a tracked excavator fitted with a toothless bucket. All exposed plan and section surfaces were inspected for archaeological features and deposits to determine the stratigraphic sequence.
- 5.2 All deposits were recorded in plan and section and were also photographed with an identification number board, appropriate scales and a directional arrow. General site shots were taken to show the location of the groundworks (Plate 1).
- 5.3 Standard AAL context recording sheets were used to record all context information (e.g. archaeological features and stratigraphic relationships). 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 1. Numbers within square brackets represent cut features (e.g. ditch [21]).



Plate 1: General view of the stripped site, looking south-southwest

6.0 Results

- 6.1 Throughout the site the topsoil 01, was a compact brown clayey silt, varying from 0.20m to 0.45m thick, and overlying an orange/brown clayey silt natural, 02.
- 6.2 Plough marks of probable modern date were recorded on two different orientations, one group running broadly northwest to southeast in the northwest part of the soil strip for the poultry units, and the other group running north-northeast to south-southwest in the northeastern part of the site. One plough mark, [07] was excavated to provide further information; it contained an orange brown sandy silt 08 and did not provide any evidence of the date of the ploughing.

- 6.3 A number of irregular features interpreted as tree boles were recorded across the area of the poultry units; two towards the west side of the site (cut numbers [09] and [11]), and another further to the east, [06], all of which remain undated.



Plate 2: Ditch [13], looking northwest. Scale is 1m



Plate 3: Ditch [21] looking northeast. Scale is 0.5m

- 6.4 In the southern part of the site were two shallow, truncated linear features, [13] (Plate 2) and [16], both aligned broadly northwest to southeast, and possibly representing parts of the same linear boundary. Both were filled with an orange brown silt; [14] and [17],

respectively. A possible recut [18], was also identified in ditch [16]. These features remain undated.

- 6.5 Ditch [21], orientated north-northeast to south-southwest, was recorded during soil stripping for drainage at the north end of the site (Plate 3). It was filled with a mid orange/brown silt, 22, and was again devoid of finds.

7.0 Discussion and Conclusions

- 7.1 The archaeological monitoring recorded few features and deposits of archaeological interest. Intermittent ditch [13] and [16] is likely to represent a component of a field boundary shown on historic mapping from the later 19th century until at least 1964, whereas there was no depiction of ditch [21], suggesting that this may be an earlier boundary feature. Also recorded were a number of tree boles, which is unsurprising given that much of the site was an orchard until sometime after 1964; and two orientations of plough scars, which may either pre- or post-date the former orchard.

8.0 Effectiveness of Methodology

- 8.1 The archaeological watching brief methodology was appropriate to the nature and extent of the proposed development. It has demonstrated that the groundworks have had a negligible impact on the local archaeological resource.

9.0 Acknowledgements

- 9.1 Allen Archaeology Limited would like to thank Mr Will Watkins for this commission and the groundworkers for their cooperation during the monitoring visits.

10.0 References

AAL, 2013, *Specification for an archaeological watching brief: Land at Arkstone Court Farm, Kingstone, Herefordshire*. Allen Archaeology Limited unpublished planning document

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Appendix 1: Context Summary List

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
01	Layer	Compact orange brown clayey silt with occasional sub-rounded medium and coarse gravel. Seals 02	Topsoil
02	Layer	Compact brown slightly clayey silt with occasional rounded gravel and cobbles	Natural
03	Feature	Series of faint plough marks, aligned NNE-SSW	Plough marks
04	Feature	Series of faint plough marks, aligned ESE-WNW	Plough marks
05	Cut	Irregular/concave sides and irregular base. Contains 06	Cut for tree bole
06	Fill	Compact light brown silt with occasional rounded medium gravel	Natural silting of [05]
07	Cut	Linear, orientated NNE-SSW, vertical sides and flat/irregular base. Contains 08	Cut for shallow gully or plough mark
08	Fill	Compact orange brown sandy silt	Natural silting of [07]
09	Cut	Irregular, orientated ENE-WSW, shallow concave sides and irregular base. Contains 10	Cut of tree bole
10	Fill	Compact orange brown slightly sandy clayey silt, occasional sub-rounded to flat fine and medium gravel	Natural silting of [09]
11	Cut	Irregular sides and base. Contains 12	Cut of tree bole
12	Fill	Compact, brown slightly sandy clayey silt, occasional sub-rounded to flat fine and medium gravel	Natural silting of [11]
13	Cut	Linear, orientated NW-SE with concave sides and base. Contains 14	Cut of boundary ditch
14	Fill	Loose, brown silt with occasional sub-rounded gravel	Natural silting of [13]
15	Void	Void	Void
16	Cut	Linear, orientated NW-SE, with concave sides and base. Contains 17, 19	Cut of ditch, former field boundary
17	Fill	Compact brown silt with occasional sub-rounded gravel	Natural silting of [16]
18	Cut	Linear, orientated NW-SE, with irregular/concave sides and irregular/flat base. Contains 19	Recut of ditch [16]
19	Fill	Compact brown sand with occasional sub-rounded cobbles	Natural silting of recut [18]
20	Void	Void	Void
21	Cut	Linear, orientated NNE-SSW, concave sides and flat base. Contains 22	Cut of ditch
22	Fill	Loose, mid orange brown silt with occasional sub-rounded gravel	Natural silting of [21]

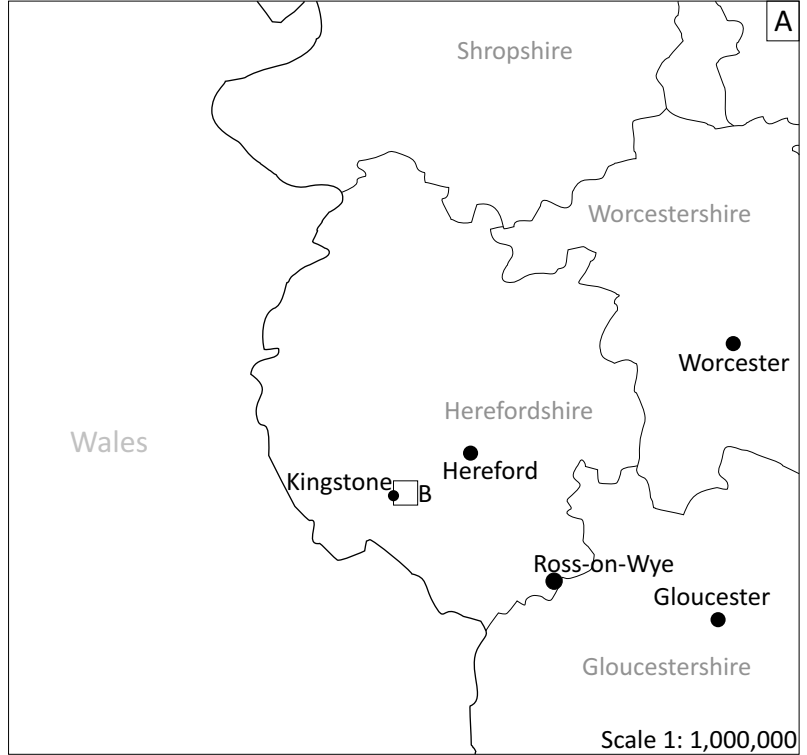
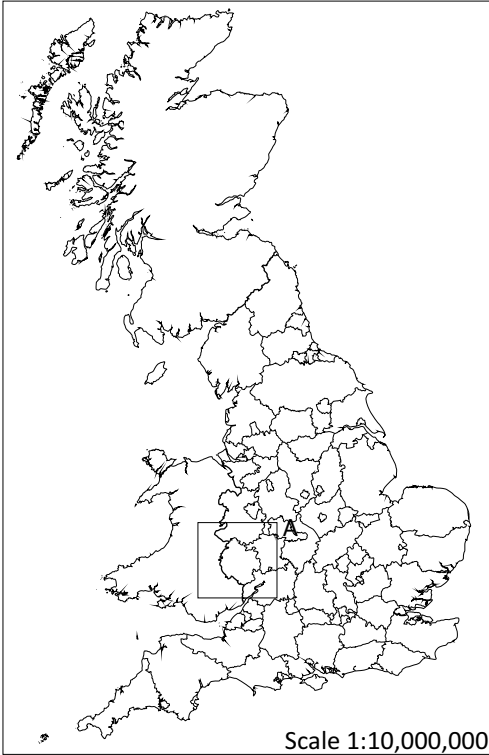


Figure 1: Site location outlined in red

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Site Code	KING 13
Scales	1:10,000,000 1:1,000,000 1:25,000 @ A4
Drawn by	R Evershed
Date	18/11/13

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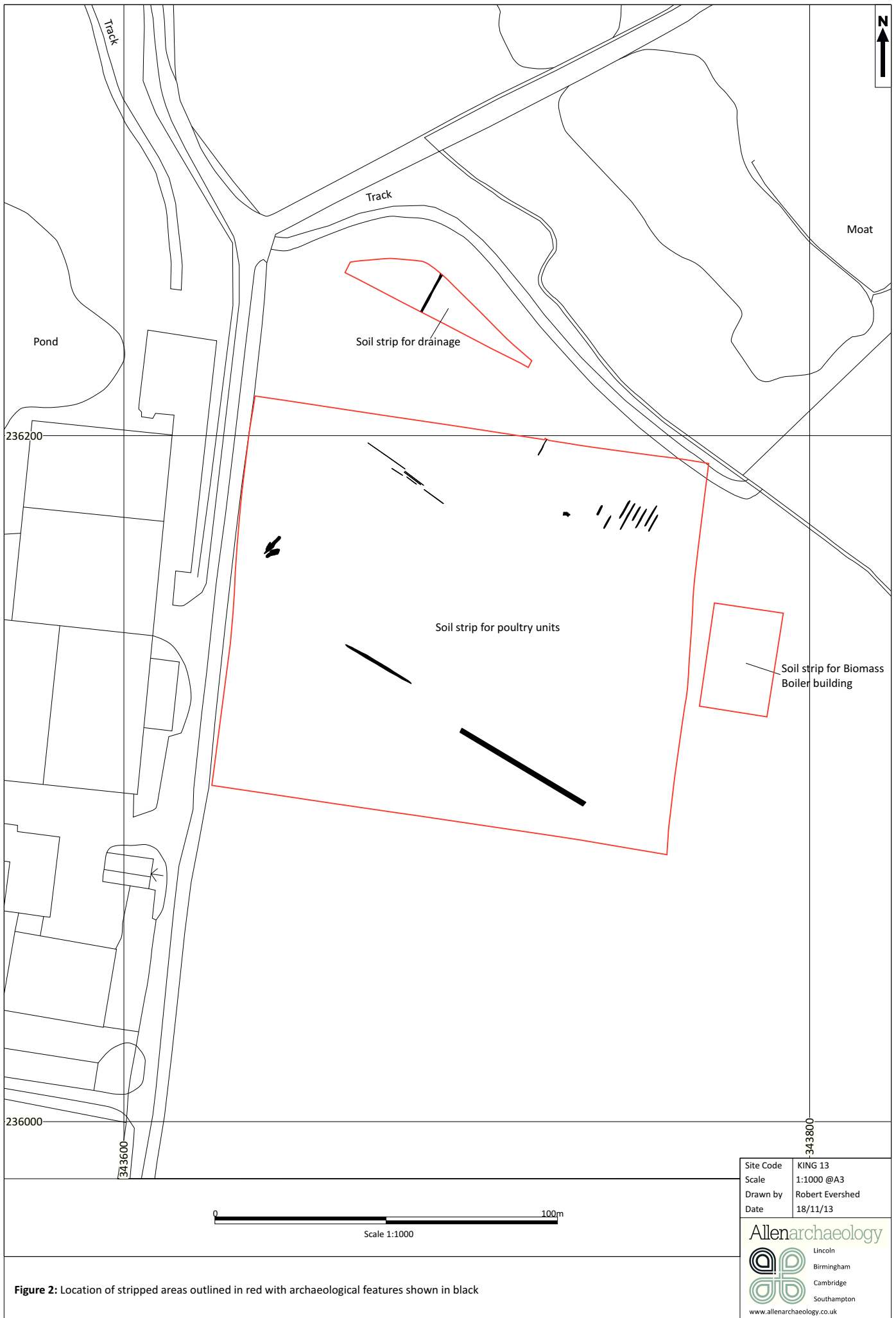


Figure 2: Location of stripped areas outlined in red with archaeological features shown in black

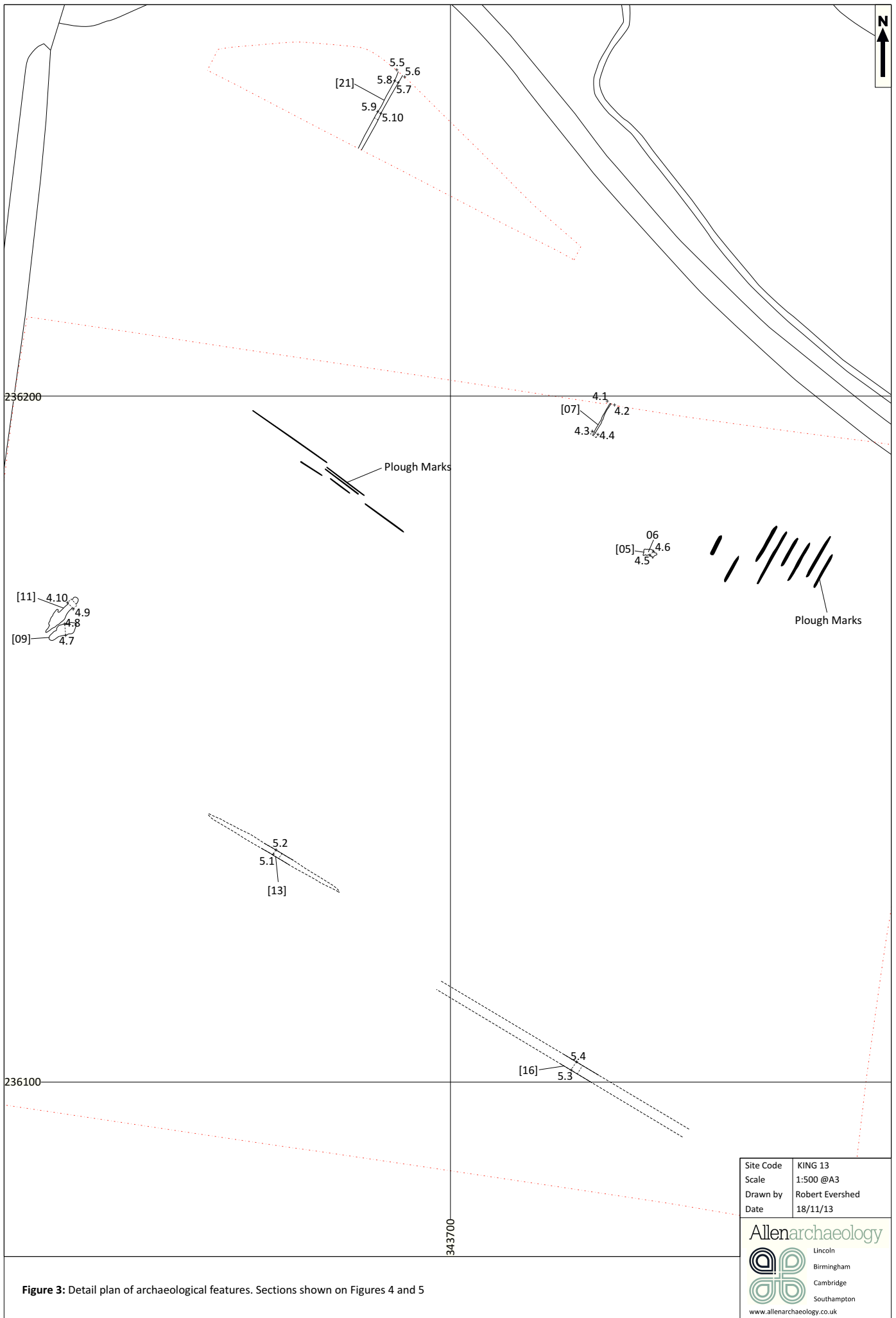

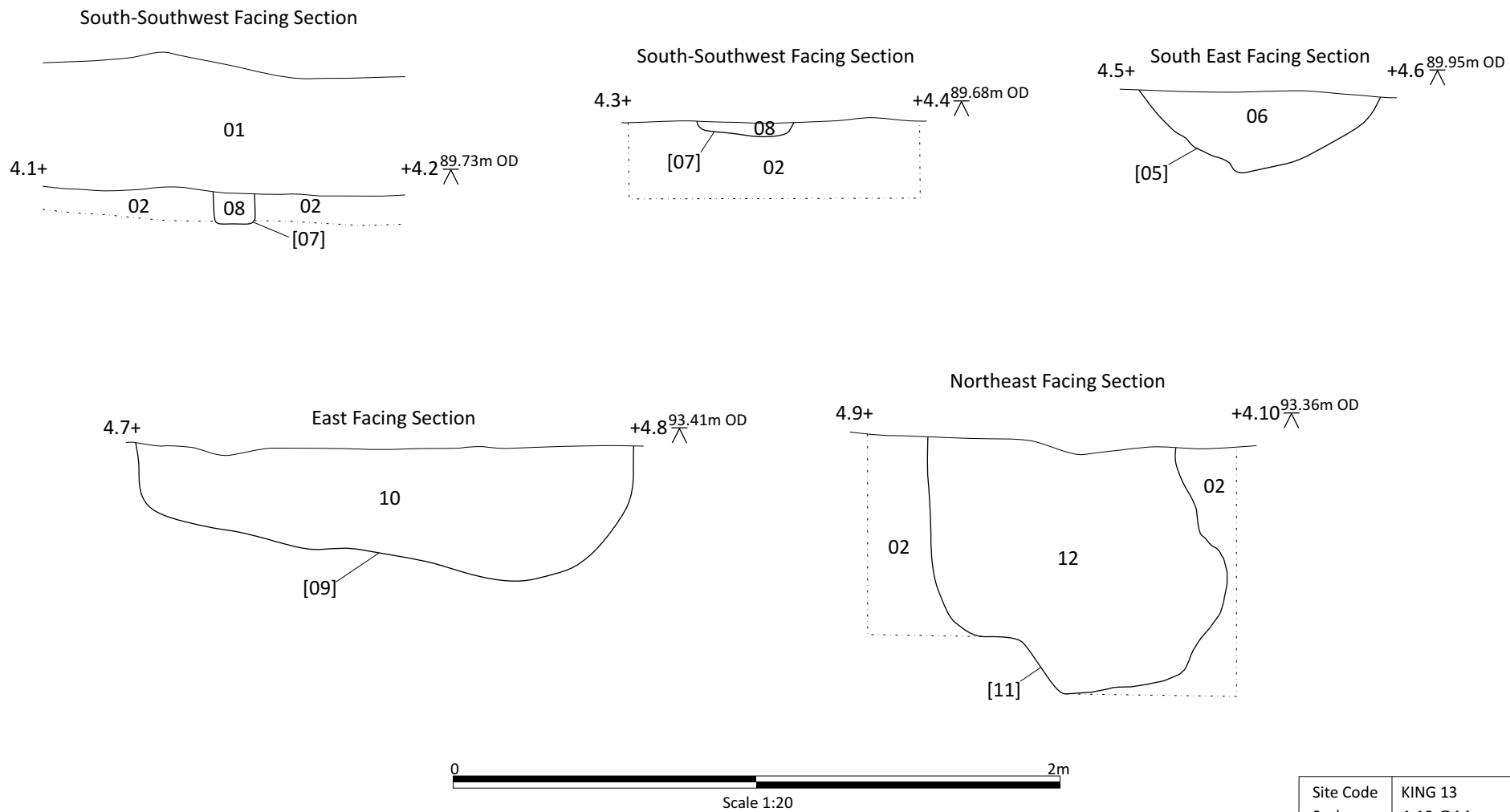


Figure 3: Detail plan of archaeological features. Sections shown on Figures 4 and 5

Site Code	KING 13
Scale	1:500 @A3
Drawn by	Robert Evershed
Date	18/11/13


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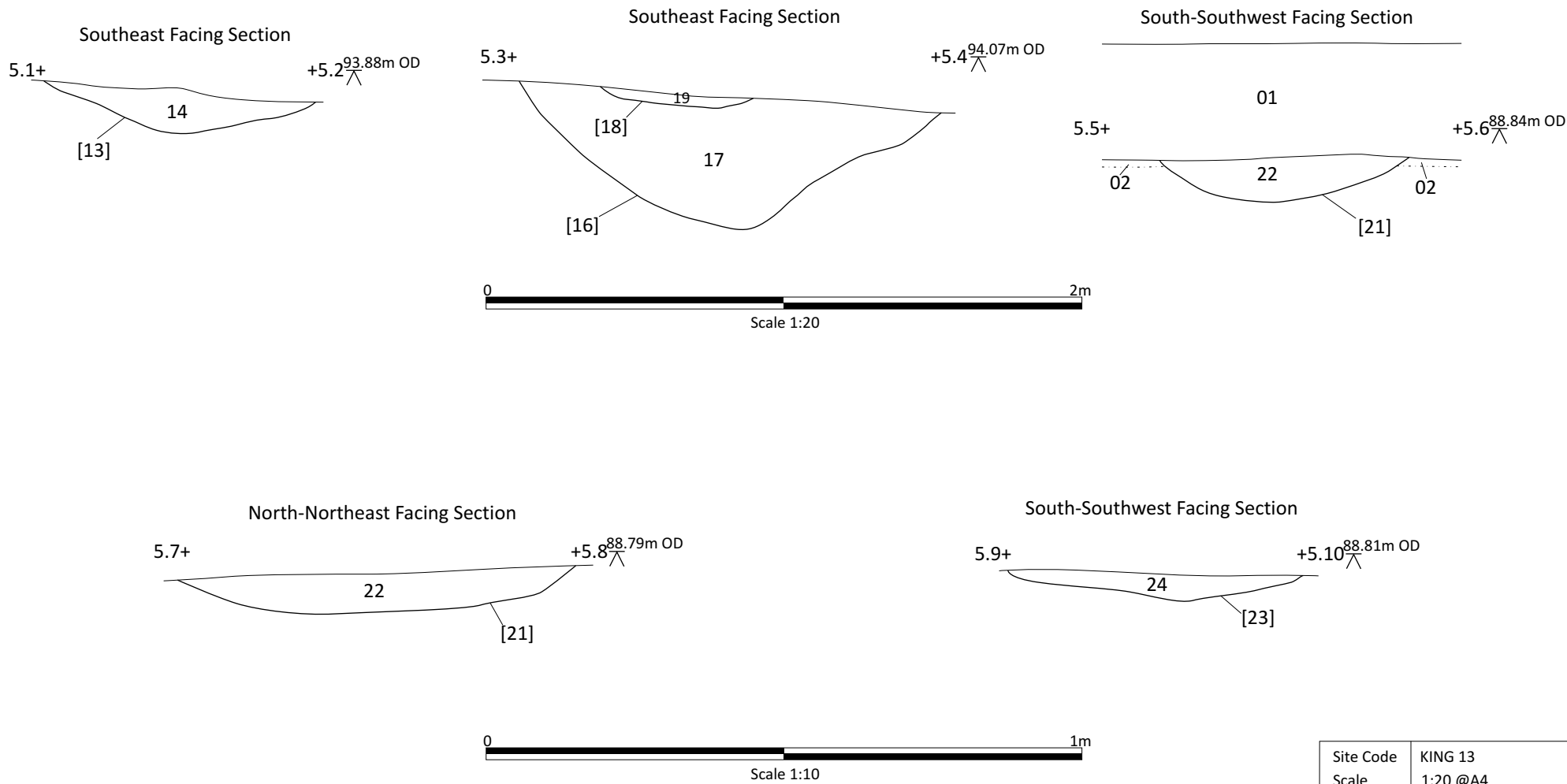
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Scale	1:10 @A4
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Figure 4: Sections, located on Figure 3



Site Code	KING 13
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Figure 5: Sections, located on Figure 3



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