

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT:  
THE STABLE, DAWNS LANE, ASLOCKTON, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**

Planning References: 14/01181 and FUL 15/00157/VAR  
NGR: SK 74115 40035  
AAL Site Code: ASDA 15  
OASIS Reference Number: allenarc1-225083



Report prepared for Prospect Archaeology Limited  
on behalf Hamilton Knight Limited

By  
Allen Archaeology Limited  
Report Number AAL 2015130

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Allenarchaeology



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## **Executive Summary**

- Allen Archaeology Limited was commissioned by Prospect Archaeology Limited on behalf Hamilton Knight Limited to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks for the construction of two dwellings on land at 'The Stables', Dawns Lane, Aslockton, Nottinghamshire.
- Aslockton is rich in prehistoric and Roman remains, and recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086 as being of a substantial size. To the northeast of the site are the earthworks of Cranmers Mound, a castle owned by the family of Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.
- The groundworks revealed a dumped deposit containing late post-medieval to early modern pottery within a large pit extending beyond the footprint of the new buildings. A well was also revealed and along with other deposits is likely to be associated with the previous land use as stables.

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Allen Archaeology Limited was commissioned by Prospect Archaeology Limited on behalf Hamilton Knight Limited to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks for the construction of two dwellings on land at 'The Stables', Dawns Lane, Aslockton, Nottinghamshire.
- 1.2 The fieldwork, recording and reporting was carried out in a manner consistent with current national guidelines, as set out in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists '*Standard and guidance for archaeological watching briefs*' (CIfA 2014), the English Heritage document '*Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*' (English Heritage 2006) and a written scheme of investigation (Field 2015) . All English Heritage guidelines on archaeological practice were also followed.

## 2.0 Site Location and Description

- 2.1 The village of Aslockton is situated 16.5km east of Nottingham and 3km east of Bingham, north of the A52. The village is situated north of the River Smite and Dawn's Lane is west of Main Street. The development site occupies a sub-rectangular plot of land to the east of an existing dwelling known as Abbey Cottage, and was occupied by a block of stables, demolished prior to the groundworks commencing. The site is accessed by an existing driveway off Dawn's Lane to the west. It lies within the Aslockton Conservation Area which is based around the historic core of the village, and is centred on NGR SK 7411 4003.
- 2.2 The site is located on a low lying area in the floodplain of the River Smite. The bedrock geology comprises Cropwell Bishop Formation mudstone below undifferentiated fluvial sand and gravel river terrace deposits (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

## 3.0 Planning Background

- 3.1 Planning permission has been granted for the construction of two dwellings (following demolition of stables) on land at 'The Stables', Dawns Lane, Aslockton, Nottinghamshire (References 14/01181 and FUL 15/00157/VAR). Permission was granted subject to a number of conditions including the requirement for:
- 3.2 'No development shall take place until the applicants, or their agents or successors in title, have secured the implementation of a programme for a watching brief to be carried out during construction or excavation work on the site, by a professional archaeologist or archaeological organisation. The details of such a scheme of investigation shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Borough Council also prior to the commencement of the development on site.'
- 3.3 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 Aslockton is situated close to the River Smite, which is a tributary of the River Deon, itself a tributary of the River Trent which lies to the west of the village. The area is rich in prehistoric and Roman remains, and cropmarks of an unknown date have been recorded on the north side of Mill Lane, north of Dawn's Lane. Further extensive cropmarks and finds scatters of a probable later prehistoric and Roman date are recorded around the village.
- 4.2 In the Domesday Book of 1086 there are four principal landowners listed; King William, Walter D'Aincourt, Gilbert of Ghent and Ilbert de Lacy, with most of the land being outlying farmland administered from other larger estates. The village was of a substantial size, with 25 villagers of varying status listed (Williams and Martin 2002).
- 4.3 To the northeast of the site are the earthworks of Cranmers Mound, a castle owned by the family of Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and executed by Mary I for treason. The earthworks include the motte, with fishponds, a hollow way and ridge and furrow, and there is a further medieval moated site to the south of the village.

## 5.0 Methodology

- 5.1 Groundworks were monitored by an experienced field archaeologist from AAL on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup>, and Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> May and Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2015. Machine excavation was undertaken using a tracked excavator fitted with a toothless bucket (Plate 1). All exposed plan and section surfaces were inspected for archaeological features and deposits to determine the stratigraphic sequence.



*Plate 1: View of the development area during excavation, looking south.*

- 5.2 A full written record of the archaeological deposits was made on standard Allen Archaeology Limited context recording sheets. Each deposit, layer and cut was allocated a unique three digit identifier (context number), and accorded a written description, a summary of these are included in Appendix 2.

5.3 Deposits were drawn in section at an appropriate scale. All archaeological deposits and features were recorded photographically. General site shots were also taken to show the landscape context of the groundworks, a selection of these have been included in the report.

## 6.0 Results (Figure 2-4)

6.1 The earliest deposit recorded within the building plots was a compact reddish brown natural clay with occasional sand and gravel inclusions 007 (Plate 2).



*Plate 2: South facing representative section within footings, scales 2x1m*

6.2 Overlying the natural throughout almost the entire site was a dark-grey brown clayey silt dumped deposit, 008, containing pottery and tile dating from the medieval to early modern periods. This appeared to be within a very large cut [012], potentially representing a large scale levelling or landscaping event.

6.3 Cutting deposit 008 was a brick lined well [011] (Plate 3, Figure 4). Measuring 1m in diameter by 3.6m deep the well was constructed of un-bonded bricks measuring 0.2m x 0.12m x 0.08m, and was infilled with concrete during the groundworks. Also cutting 008 was a modern pipe trench filled with pea gravel, aligned broadly north - south across Plot 1 and heading towards the well.



*Plate 3: View of Well 009, looking east, 2x1m*

- 6.4 Recorded exclusively within Plot 2 sealing 008 was a mid-dark brown silty sand dumped deposit 005, containing frequent modern detritus, which in turn was sealed by a 0.25m thick topsoil 004.
- 6.5 A path surface of pea gravel with frequent modern inclusions, 002 was recorded to the west of the site within the area reduced for the new site entrance, overlain by a thin layer of topsoil 001.

## **7.0 Discussion and Conclusion**

- 7.1 The development area appears to have been subject to extensive landscaping, with a large cut extending across almost the entire site. Dating evidence from the deposit infilling this cut ranged in date from the medieval to early modern periods, and it is possible that the cut relates to a landscaping event prior to the construction of the former stables on the site. A well was constructed cutting through this dumped deposit and is also likely to be related to the recently demolished stables.

## **8.0 Effectiveness of Methodology**

- 8.1 The watching brief methodology was appropriate to the size and type of project. It has proved that the development has had a limited impact upon the local archaeological resource.

## **9.0 Acknowledgements**

- 9.1 Allen Archaeology Limited would like to thank Prospect Archaeology Limited on behalf of Hamilton Knight Limited for this commission and for the cooperation of the ground workers during the fieldwork.



## 10.0 References

CIfA, 2014, *Standard and guidance for archaeological watching briefs*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists: Reading

Department for Communities and Local Government, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*. Department for Communities and Local Government: London

English Heritage, 2006, *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*. Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England: London

Field, N, 2015, *Written Scheme of Investigation: Archaeological Observation and Recording The Stables, Dawns Lane, Aslockton, Notts*. Prospect Archaeology Ltd.: Lincoln

Williams, A and Martin, G H, 2002, *Domesday Book: A complete translation*, Alecto Historical Editions: London

## Appendix 1: Post-Roman Pottery Report

By Jane Young

### Introduction

Twenty sherds of post-Roman pottery representing eighteen vessels and two pieces of tile were presented for examination. The material was quantified by three measures: number of sherds, weight and vessel count within each context.

The assemblage has been fully archived to the standards for acceptance to a museum archive and within the guidelines laid out in Slowikowski, *et al.* (2001). Visual fabric identification of the medieval pottery was undertaken by x20 binocular microscope. The pottery data was entered on an access database using fabric codenames (see Table 1 and 2) developed for the Lincoln Ceramic Type Series (Young, Vince and Nailor 2005) and the preliminary Nottingham Type Series (Nailor and Young 2001)

### Condition

The pottery is mainly in a slightly abraded condition with sherd size varying between 1 gram and 102 grams. The two pieces of tile are in a similar condition and weigh 16 grams and 105 grams. Most of the vessels recovered are only represented by a single sherd and no cross-context joins were noted.

### The pottery and tile

In total eighteen vessels, in eight main post-Roman ware types and two pieces of tile were examined (Table 1). The identified material is of possible medieval to early modern date. A limited range of vessel forms is represented with most sherds coming from jars or bowls.

Codename	Full name	Earliest date	Latest date	Total sherds	Total vessels
BERTH	Brown glazed earthenware	1550	1800	10	8
BEVO2	Beverley Orange ware Fabric 2	1230	1350	1	1
BL	Black-glazed wares	1550	1750	2	2
CREA	Creamware	1770	1830	3	3
ENGS	Unspecified English Stoneware	1750	1900	1	1
NOTS	Nottingham stoneware	1690	1900	1	1
SWSG	Staffordshire White Salt-glazed stoneware	1700	1770	1	1
WHITE	Modern Whiteware	1850	1900	1	1

Table 1: Pottery types with total quantities by sherd and vessel count

context	cname	full name	sub fabric	form type	sherds	vessels	weight
002	BERTH	Brown glazed earthenware	fine orange-red sandy	large bowl	1	1	23
002	BL	Black-glazed wares	fine orange sandy	large bowl ?	1	1	10
002	WHITE	Modern whiteware		cup ?	1	1	1
008	BERTH	Brown glazed earthenware	med red sandy	jar/bowl	1	1	11
008	BERTH	Brown glazed earthenware	fine orange-red sandy	large bowl	1	1	102
008	BERTH	Brown glazed earthenware	fine orange sandy	jar ?	2	1	20
008	BERTH	Brown glazed earthenware	fine orange sandy	large jar	2	1	22

008	BEVO2	Beverley Orange ware Fabric 2	Fabric B	jug/jar	1	1	5
008	ENGS	Unspecified English Stoneware	grey	jar/bottle	1	1	10
008	BERTH	Brown glazed earthenware	med orange sandy	large jar/bowl	1	1	22
008	BERTH	Brown glazed earthenware	marbled coarse orange	large bowl ?	1	1	22
008	BERTH	Brown glazed earthenware	fine-med orange sandy	large bowl ?	1	1	39
008	BL	Black-glazed wares	med-coarse purple	jug/jar	1	1	12
008	CREA	Creamware		?	1	1	2
008	CREA	Creamware		plate	1	1	2
008	CREA	Creamware		small lid	1	1	5
008	NOTS	Nottingham stoneware		cup/small bowl	1	1	15
008	SWSG	Staffordshire White Saltglazed stoneware		tiny jar/bowl	1	1	2

*Table 2: Pottery by context*

## Medieval

A single small external flake from a jug or jar with what appears to be combed decoration may be of medieval date. The fine oxidised fabric is similar to that used for Beverley Type 2 vessels (BEVO2) produced in Beverley from the 13<sup>th</sup> to early/mid 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. Unfortunately this fine fabric is similar to that used for early modern flowerpots, although the sherd in question is lower-fired than would normally be expected for an early modern vessel. Vessels in Beverley 2 are not an uncommon find in parts of Nottinghamshire and it is possible that the type may also have been produced in Southwell.

## Late Post-medieval to Early modern

Seventeen vessels are of 17<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century date. These include earthenwares (BERTH and BL), stonewares (ENGS, NOTS and SWSG) and industrial fine earthenwares (CREA and WHITE). The latest of these vessels belongs to the period between the late 19<sup>th</sup> and mid 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. At least four of the eight Brown-glazed Earthenware vessels (BERTH) are large bowls of 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> to mid 20<sup>th</sup> century type. Two sherds are from jars of 18<sup>th</sup> to mid 20<sup>th</sup> century type whilst the other sherds could come from jars or bowls of similar date. One of the two Black-glazed Earthenware (BL) sherds comes from a late 17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century Staffordshire/Derbyshire jug or jar. The other sherd is from a large bowl of 18<sup>th</sup> to mid 20<sup>th</sup> century type. The earliest of the two utilitarian stoneware sherds comes from an 18<sup>th</sup> century Nottingham Stoneware jar or cup (NOTS). The other sherd is from a 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century grey stoneware jar or bottle (ENGS). A small Staffordshire-type White Salt-glazed ware (SWSG) sherd comes from tiny jar or bowl of early/mid to late 18<sup>th</sup> century date. Two Creamware sherds (CREA) are identifiable as a plate and a small lid. The other tiny flake could come from any form. Creamware was popular between the mid/late 18<sup>th</sup> and mid 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. A tiny sherd in a white earthenware fabric (WHITE) with an internal and external burgundy-coloured glaze may be from a cup of 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century date.

## **Tile**

Two pieces of tile were examined. One fragment is from an 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century pantile (PANT) whilst the other piece is from a flat roof tile (PNR) of similar date.

## **The Site Sequence**

The post-Roman pottery and tile was recovered from two deposits. Deposit 002 produced three small sherds of pottery and two pieces of tile. A tiny white earthenware sherd with an internal and external burgundy-coloured glaze appears to be from a cup of 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century date. Two coarse earthenware sherds come from large bowls. The black-glazed bowl is of 18<sup>th</sup> to mid 20<sup>th</sup> century type, but the brown-glazed bowl although similar is unlikely to post-date the 19<sup>th</sup> century. One fragment of tile comes from an 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century pantile whilst the other piece is from a flat roof tile of similar date.

Eight sherds from six vessels were recovered in Plot 1 from pit fill 008 along with three Brown-glazed Earthenware vessels and one Black-glazed Earthenware jug or jar. A small external flake from a jug or jar with what appears to be combed decoration may be of Beverley Type 2 production dating to between the 13<sup>th</sup> and early/mid 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. Four vessels are brown-glazed earthenware jars or bowls of 18<sup>th</sup> to mid 20<sup>th</sup> century date. A small grey stoneware sherd from a jar or bottle confirms a 19<sup>th</sup> to mid 20<sup>th</sup> century date for the group. Two of the brown-glazed vessels are large bowls of 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> to mid 20<sup>th</sup> century type and one sherd could come from a large jug or jar of similar date. The Black-glazed Earthenware (BL) sherd comes from a late 17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century Staffordshire/Derbyshire jug or jar. Five sherds were also recovered from this layer in Plot 2. They comprise three Creamware vessels of probable mid/late 18<sup>th</sup> to mid 19<sup>th</sup> century date including a small fluted lid with blue hand-painted decoration, an 18<sup>th</sup> century Nottingham Stoneware jar or cup and tiny jar or bowl of early/mid to late 18<sup>th</sup> century Staffordshire-type White Salt-glazed ware.

## **Discussion**

This is a small group of mainly early modern pottery and tile. Only further recoveries in the area will determine if the late post-medieval pottery types are typical for the area. The early modern pottery (as noted in the archive) could be discarded, as the group contains nothing of note.

## **References**

Nailor, V and Young, J. 2001 A fabric type series for post-Roman pottery in Nottingham (5<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. Unpublished report.

Slowikowski, A. Nenk, B. and Pearce, J. 2001. *Minimum Standards for the Processing, Recording, Analysis and Publication of Post-Roman Ceramics*. Medieval Pottery Research Group, Occasional Paper 2.

Young, J, Vince A G and Nailor V 2005 *A Corpus of Anglo-Saxon and Medieval Pottery from Lincoln*, Lincoln Archaeology Studies 7, Oxbow, Oxford

## Appendix 2: Context Summary List

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
001	Layer	Light-mid brown silty sand/silty clay, infrequent inclusions of small rounded pebbles. Seals 002	Topsoil
002	Layer	Dark grey-brown ashy/ silty sand/silty clay, frequent pea gravel and pebbles. Infrequent brick and glass inclusions. Sealed by 001	Modern path surface
003	Void		
004	Layer	Light-mid brown silty sand/silty clay, infrequent inclusions of small rounded pebbles. Seals 005	Topsoil
005	Layer	Mid-dark brown silty sand/silty clay, occasional inclusions of small rounded pebbles, and infrequent inclusions of plastic. Sealed by 004	Dump of modern material
006	Void		
007	Layer	Compact red-brown clay. Occasional sand or gravel lenses. Cut by [012]	Natural
008	Fill	Firm dark-grey brown clayey silt, frequent inclusions of charcoal flecks and occasional inclusions of pebbles and flint. Fills pit [012]	Fill of terracing cut [012]
009	Structure	Un-bonded bricks 20x12x8cm lining well [011]	Well
010	Layer	Moderately compacted dark brown silt, with very frequent inclusions of pea gravel (70%). Infill of pipe trench [013].	Backfill of modern pipe trench
011	Cut	Cut of brick lined well with vertical sides. 1m in diameter. Filled by 009	Cut of well
012	Cut	Large cut extends beyond the limits of excavation. Filled by 008	Possible large terrace/levelling event
013	Cut	Cut of modern pipe trench located in Plot 1	Pipe trench

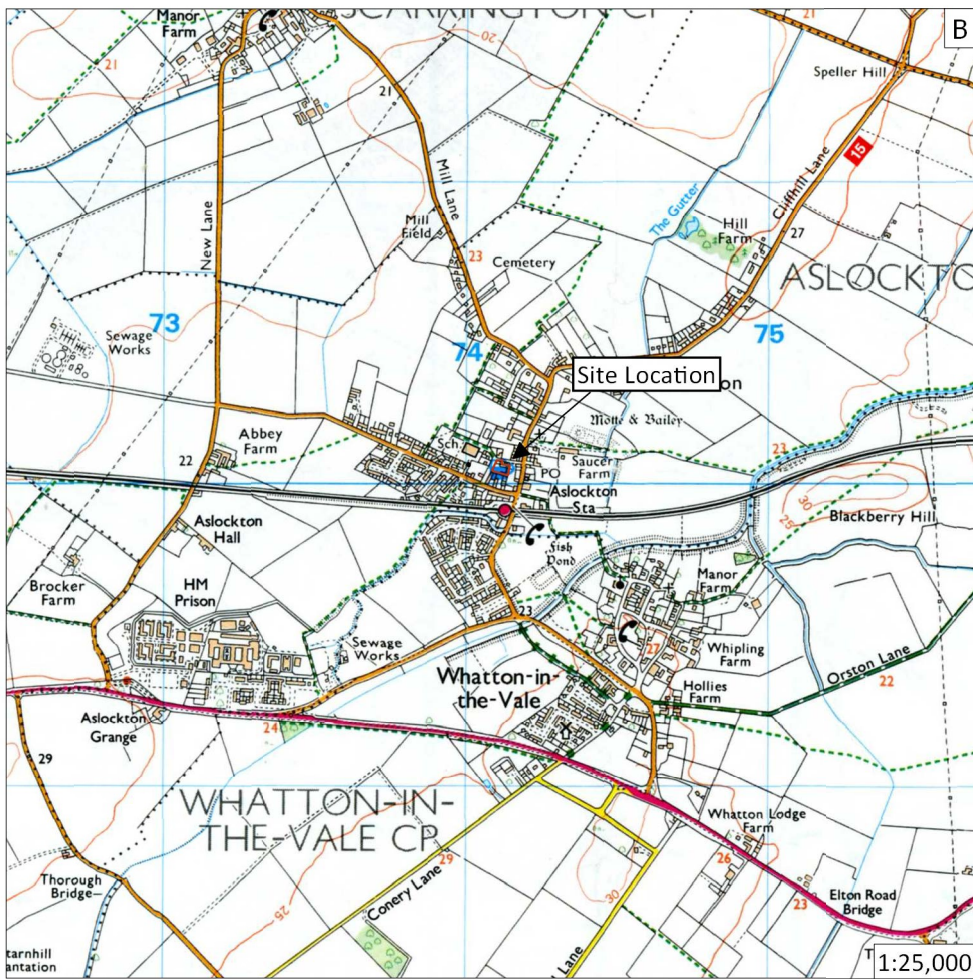
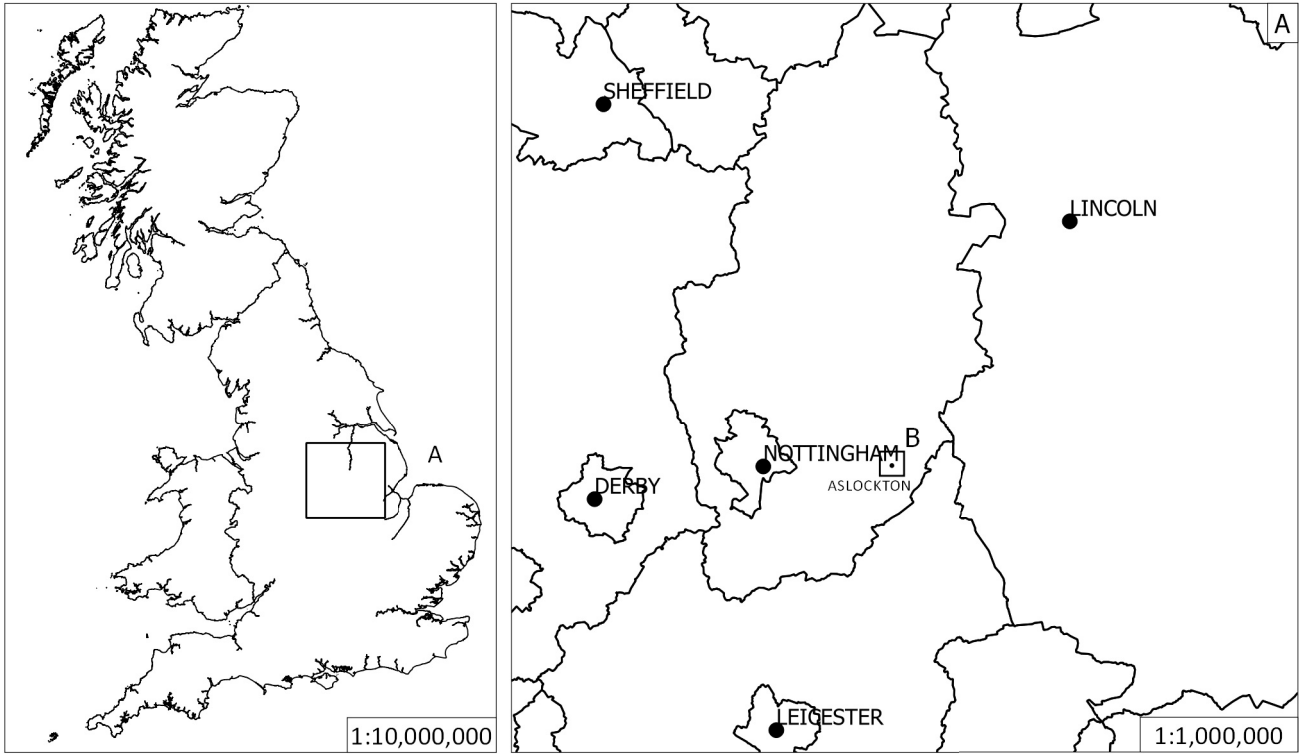


Figure 1: Site location outlined in red

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Site Code	ASDA 15
Scale	1:25,000 @ A4
Drawn by	T Rayner
Date	24/09/15

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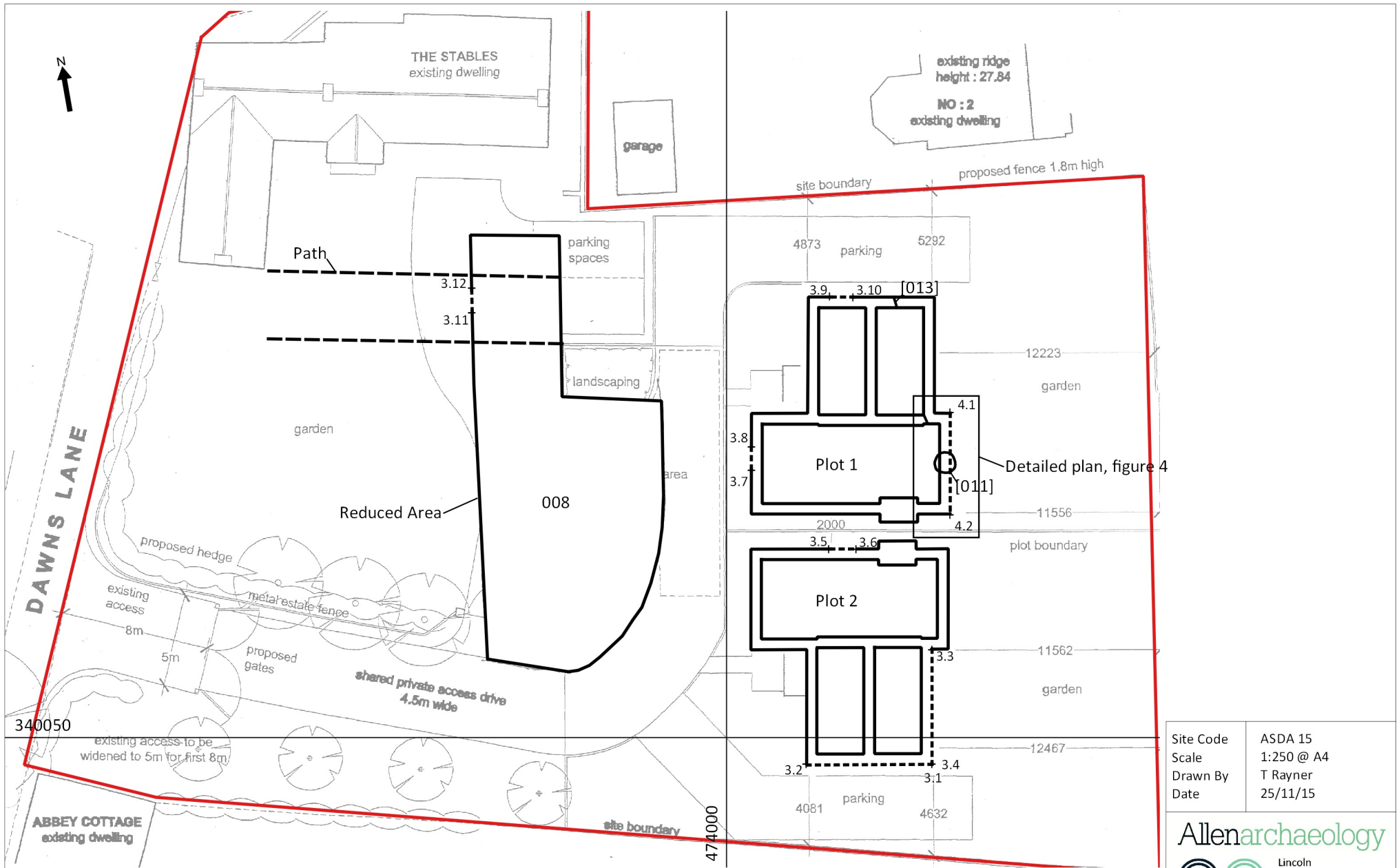


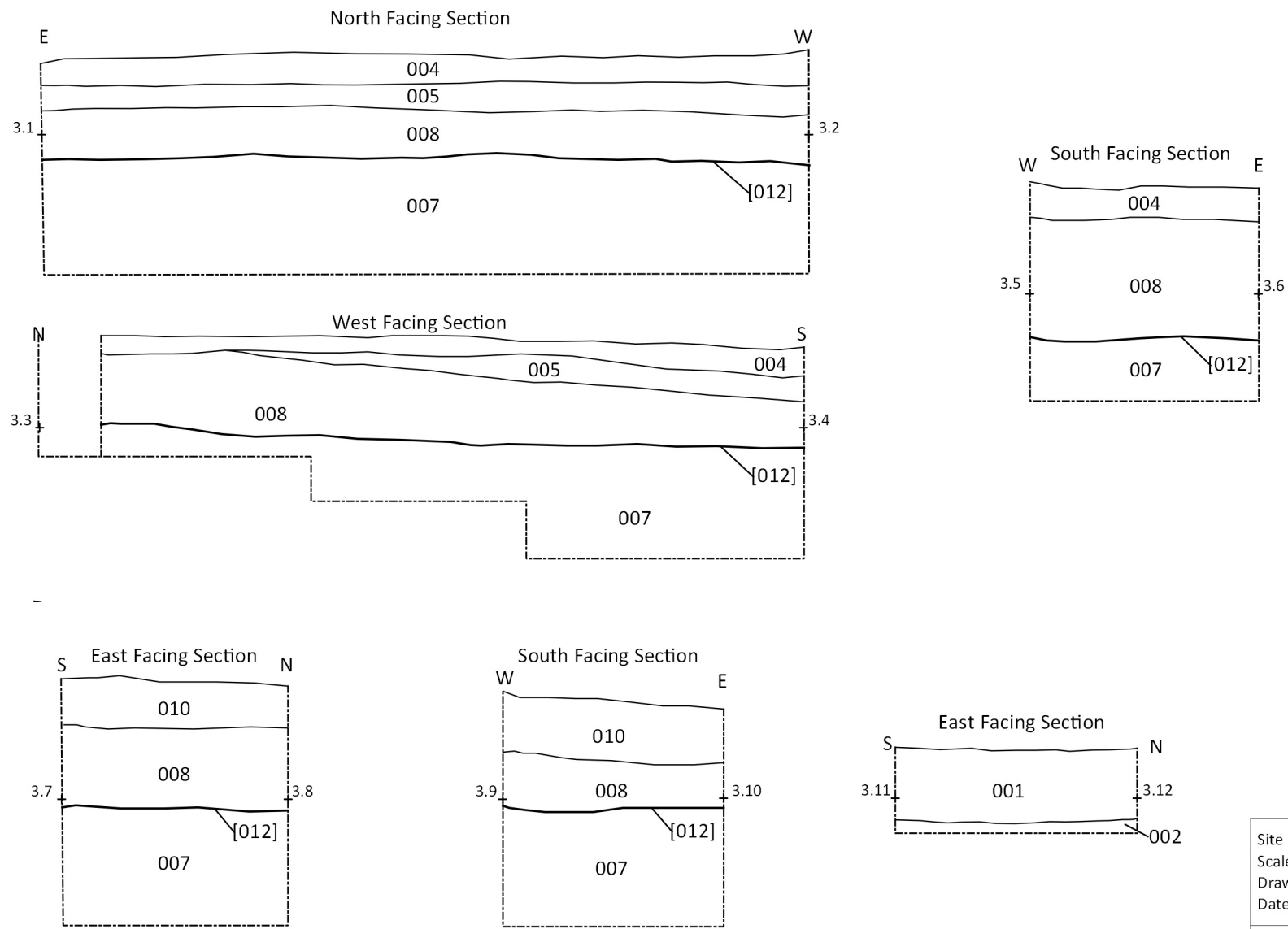
Figure 2: Detailed plan of site showing section locations

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Drawn By	T Rayner
Date	25/11/15

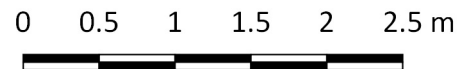
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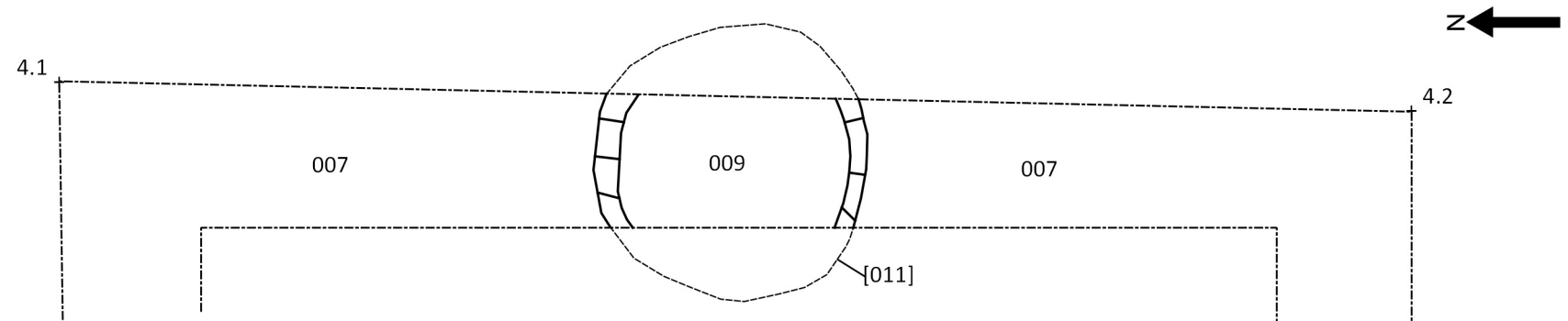
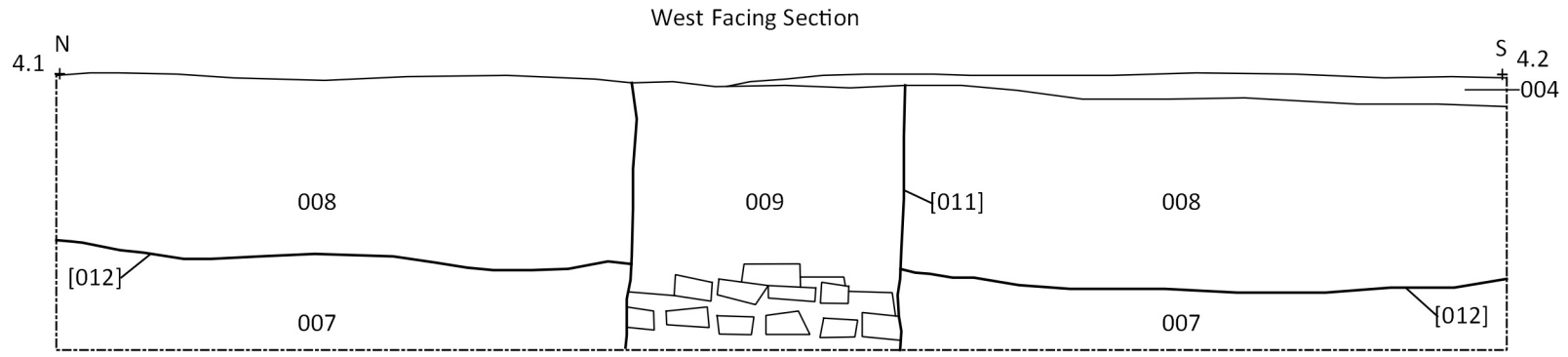


**Figure 3:** Sections within Plots 1 and 2 and within the reduced area



Site Code	ASDA 15
Scale	1:50 @ A4
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Date	30/09/15





Site Code	ASDA 15
Scale	1:25 @ A4
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**Figure 4:** Plan and section of Well within Plot 1



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