

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING REPORT:

LAND OFF MAIN STREET, FARNDON, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Planning Reference: 16/01695/FUL
NGR: SK 7706 5171
AAL Site Code: FAMS 17
Museum Accession Number: NCMG 2016-46
OASIS Reference Number: allenarc1-289060



Report prepared for Mr Chris Hassell

By
Allen Archaeology Ltd
Report Number AAL 2017095

July 2017



Allenarchaeology



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Cover image: View of site, looking north-east

Executive Summary

- Allen Archaeology Limited was commissioned by Mr Chris Hassell to undertake a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording during groundworks for the construction of one dwelling with an attached garage, on land fronting onto 9 Main Street, Farndon, Nottinghamshire NG24 3SA.
- An archaeological desk-based assessment has previously been undertaken for the site and indicated a high archaeological potential, with evidence of later prehistoric activity in the area which lies close to the Fosse Way, a Romano-British road that runs between Lincoln and Exeter. Situated approximately 300m to the southeast of the site a number of Late Upper Palaeolithic flint scatters were recorded during the construction of the new A46 in 2009, highlighting the potential for late Pleistocene archaeology in the vicinity. Further evidence of Anglo-Saxon, medieval and post-medieval activity has also been recorded within the area. Archaeological evaluation by trenching however showed that there was only a limited potential for remains of likely post-medieval date to be encountered.
- The scheme of works required the monitoring and recording of an extensive plot for the footings for a new dwelling and garage. The monitoring revealed a topsoil and ground raising deposit containing modern building debris, suggesting the area had been used as a dump and wasteland. A large circular undated pit containing rough unhewn limestone blocks, possibly from a former nearby structure, was also discovered.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Allen Archaeology Limited (AAL) were commissioned by Mr Chris Hassell to undertake a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording during groundworks as a condition of planning consent for the construction of one dwelling with attached garage at land fronting 9 Main Street, Farndon, Nottinghamshire.
- 1.2 The excavation, recording and reporting conformed to current national guidelines, as set out in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists '*Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief*' (CIfA 2014), with reference to regionally identified research aims (Knight *et al.* 2012) and the Historic England document '*Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide*' (Historic England 2015). The archaeological monitoring was undertaken to a specification prepared by this company (AAL 2017).

2.0 Site Location and Description

- 2.1 Farndon is located approximately 22km to the northeast of the centre of Nottingham, and 3.4km southwest of the centre of Newark-on-Trent, in the administrative district of Newark and Sherwood District Council. The proposed development site itself (hereafter referred to as 'the site') is located on the south side of Main Street c. 280m east-southeast of Farndon church, centred on NGR SK 7706 5171. The site is bordered by Main Street to the north, a trackway to the west, gardens to the south and open ground to the east (Figure 1).
- 2.2 The local bedrock geology comprises Edwalton Member mudstone (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>), overlain by superficial Holme Pierrepont Sand and Gravel Member formed towards the end of the last glacial stage (MIS 2). This deposit forms the latest of all the gravel terraces associated with the River Trent (McNabb 2007). The site is generally flat and lies at c.12 – 13m above Ordnance Datum.

3.0 Planning Background

- 3.1 Planning permission was granted for '*the construction of one dwelling with attached garage, on land fronting 9 Main Street, Farndon, Nottinghamshire NG24 3SA*' (16/01695/FUL), following an archaeological desk-based assessment (AAL 2013) and evaluation (2016) of the site. The permission was subject to conditions including the requirement that no groundworks should take place until the implementation of a programme of archaeological mitigation work had been secured in accordance with a written scheme of investigation that had been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.
- 3.2 The agreed scheme of works comprised the monitoring of all groundworks by a suitably competent archaeologist, and the recording of any archaeological remains exposed, effectively 'preserving the archaeology by record'.
- 3.3 The relevant national planning policy which applies to the effect of development with regard to cultural heritage is 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 An archaeological desk-based assessment was prepared for the site and indicated a high archaeological potential for the area (AAL 2013). The results of the assessment are summarised below.
- 4.2 The site is located close to the Late Upper Palaeolithic site of Farndon Fields, discovered during construction of the new A46 in 2009. Later prehistoric activity is represented by part of a Neolithic polished axe-head that was found in a garden in Hawthorne Crescent in 1964. Bronze Age activity is also present in the form of the cropmark of a round barrow to the southwest and a small collection of flint artefacts found to the northeast of the site.
- 4.3 The site lies close to the Roman Fosse Way, which broadly follows the line of the old A46, c.120m to the southeast of the site, and ran between the cities of Lincoln and Exeter.
- 4.4 A 10th century sword of Norse type was found during excavations beneath the medieval church of St. Peter's, 280m to the west-northwest of the site. Farndon is listed in the Domesday Book of 1086 AD, as a berewick (outlying estate) of Newark belonging to the Bishop of Lincoln (Williams and Martin 2002). It does not have a separate entry therefore the precise elements of the estate are not known.
- 4.5 Newark and its surrounding area is closely associated with the English Civil War, with remnants of fortifications present throughout the landscape. In the 17th century Newark became a strong Royalist centre and was besieged three times, the last of these taking place between December 1645 and May 1646. This siege saw an extensive set of siege works constructed by the Parliamentarians to surround Newark and blockade the town. A section of these earthworks survives in the field adjacent to the site and has been identified as an angle bastion with the faces of the bastion and a stretch of curtain wall surviving as a slight terrace and ditch (RCHM 1964, 36). The line of the circumvallation joins the northeast face of the bastion. The projected line of the defences runs northwest from the corner bastion and is likely to run through the proposed development site.
- 4.6 Prior to the current works, the site was subject to a programme of evaluation by trial trenching (AAL 2016). This revealed the remains of post-medieval activity within the proposed development area, consisting of a possible refuse pit, intersected by a late 17th or 18th century ditch (in Trench 2), and an 18th or 19th century, irregular-shaped pit, containing material representing possible clearance of the area (in Trench 3). It appears unlikely that the features related to the Civil War defences observed to the east. It is likely that activity occurred from at least the end of the 17th century and nature of the features was more indicative of agricultural use.

5.0 Methodology

- 5.1 The groundworks comprised of the excavation of an extensive area of footings and reduction of ground inside to the footprint of the proposed dwelling and garage (Figure 2). The footings were excavated to a depth of at least 1m, over an area measuring c.24m long and 23m wide, by a mechanical excavator fitted with a smooth ditching bucket.
- 5.2 The monitoring was undertaken by the author between 22nd and 24th May 2017.
- 5.3 A full written record of the archaeological deposits was made on standard AAL context recording sheets. Archaeological deposits were drawn in plan and section at an appropriate scale (1:20 for the section and 1:50 for the site plan). Digital photography formed an integral part of the recording strategy.

- 5.4 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. Three-digit numbers within square brackets reflect cut features, e.g. pit cut [103], and three-digit numbers without brackets denote layers and deposits, e.g. topsoil 100.

6.0 Results

- 6.1 Excavation of the area revealed natural sand and gravels that were overlain by a light brown silty sand ground raising deposit, 101. These deposits were sealed by a dark grey sandy silt topsoil, 100 (Plate 1). Both the topsoil and ground raising layer were extremely mixed and contained large amounts modern brick, tile, plastics and glass bottles (not retained). Two worked pieces of masonry were also recovered from the ground raising layer. The pieces were not related to each other and are post-medieval in date. It is likely that they were dumped here during ground raising and may be parts of a drain and garden wall.
- 6.2 A circular pit, [103], was revealed towards the north-eastern area of excavation (Plate 2). The pit was steep-sided, measured 0.70m in depth and was full of rough, unhewn burnt limestone blocks, 20 – 30cm in length. No other cultural material was recovered from the dark brownish grey silty sand fill, 104.



Plate 1: Northeast-facing representative section, scales 1m



Plate 2: Southeast-facing section through circular pit [103], scales 1m

- 6.3 No other archaeological deposits were identified during the groundworks and monitoring has confirmed that the development has had a negligible impact on limited archaeological remains on the site.

7.0 Discussion and Conclusions

- 7.1 Excavation of the footings for one large dwelling with associated garage revealed mixed topsoil and subsoil layers containing modern waste.
- 7.2 Two pieces of post-medieval masonry, probably from a drain and a garden wall respectively, and a large circular pit, containing burnt limestone blocks were encountered.
- 7.3 None of the archaeological deposits identified during the evaluation phase of works (AAL 2016), were identified during the current excavation. The linear feature [203] identified in the evaluation (*ibid.* section 6.4), did not continue within the footings.

8.0 Effectiveness of Methodology

- 8.1 The archaeological monitoring methodology was appropriate to the scale and nature of the project. The works have shown that there are no significant archaeological deposits present on the site.

9.0 Acknowledgements

- 9.1 Allen Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Mr Chris Hassell for this commission.

10.0 References

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Appendix 1: Architectural Stone

By Mike Wood

Introduction

Two fragments of architectural stone were recovered. The material was all derived from ground raising layer 101.

Methodology

The material was counted and weighed in kilograms, then examined visually to identify any diagnostic pieces and the overall condition of the assemblage. Reference was made to published guidelines (Schofield and Samuel 2010). A summary of the material is recorded in Table 1.

Assemblage

| Context | Form | Date range | Weight (kg) | Measurements (mm) | Comments |
|---------|-----------------|---------------|-------------|-------------------|--|
| 101 | Ashlar moulding | post-medieval | 11.6 | 435x232x50 | Curved fragment of limestone ashlar, no visible tool marks. |
| 101 | Drain | post-medieval | 3.13 | 180x165x57 | Curved fragment of red sandstone, probably used in a drain. Fairly roughly cut on both sides exhibiting frequent chisel marks. |

Table 1: Architectural stone

Discussion

The architectural stone appears to have derived from structural elements of two different types. The curved chunk of limestone could be from a decorative arch in a garden wall, while the sandstone is most likely a type of drain cover. Neither piece is particularly diagnostic, but both could fit a broad post-medieval date.

Recommendations for further work

The artefacts are in a stable condition and require no conservation. All of the stone could be returned to the landowner or be discarded.

References

Schofield, J and Samuel, M, 2010, *Dealing with architectural fragments*, Association of Diocesan and Cathedral Archaeologists Guidance Note 3

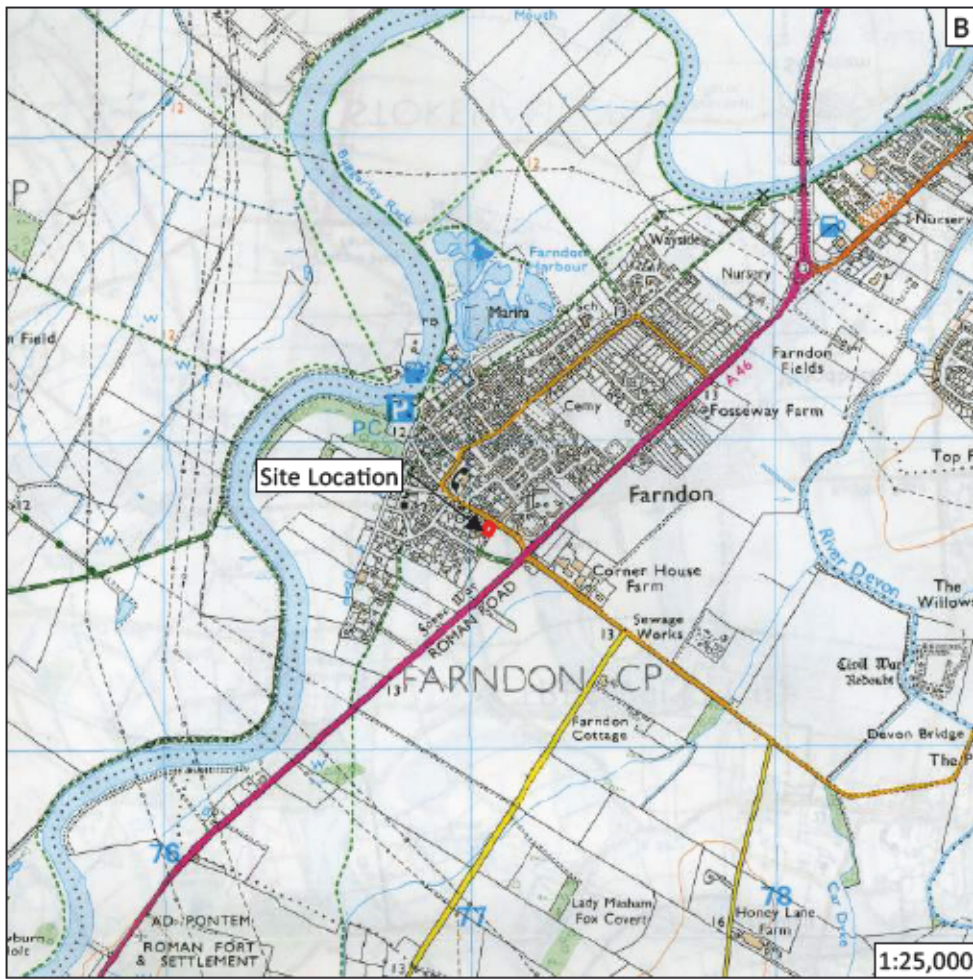
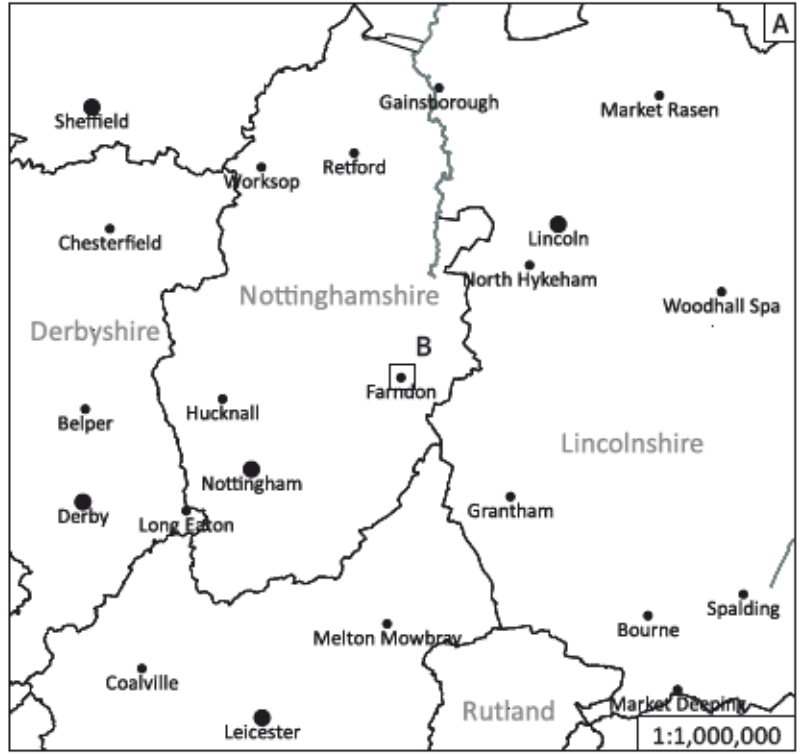


Figure 1: Site location outlined in red

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| | |
|-----------|--|
| Site Code | FAMS 17 |
| Scale | 1:10,000,000 1:1,000,000 1:25,000 @ A4 |
| Drawn by | R J Birtwistle |
| Date | 05/06/17 |

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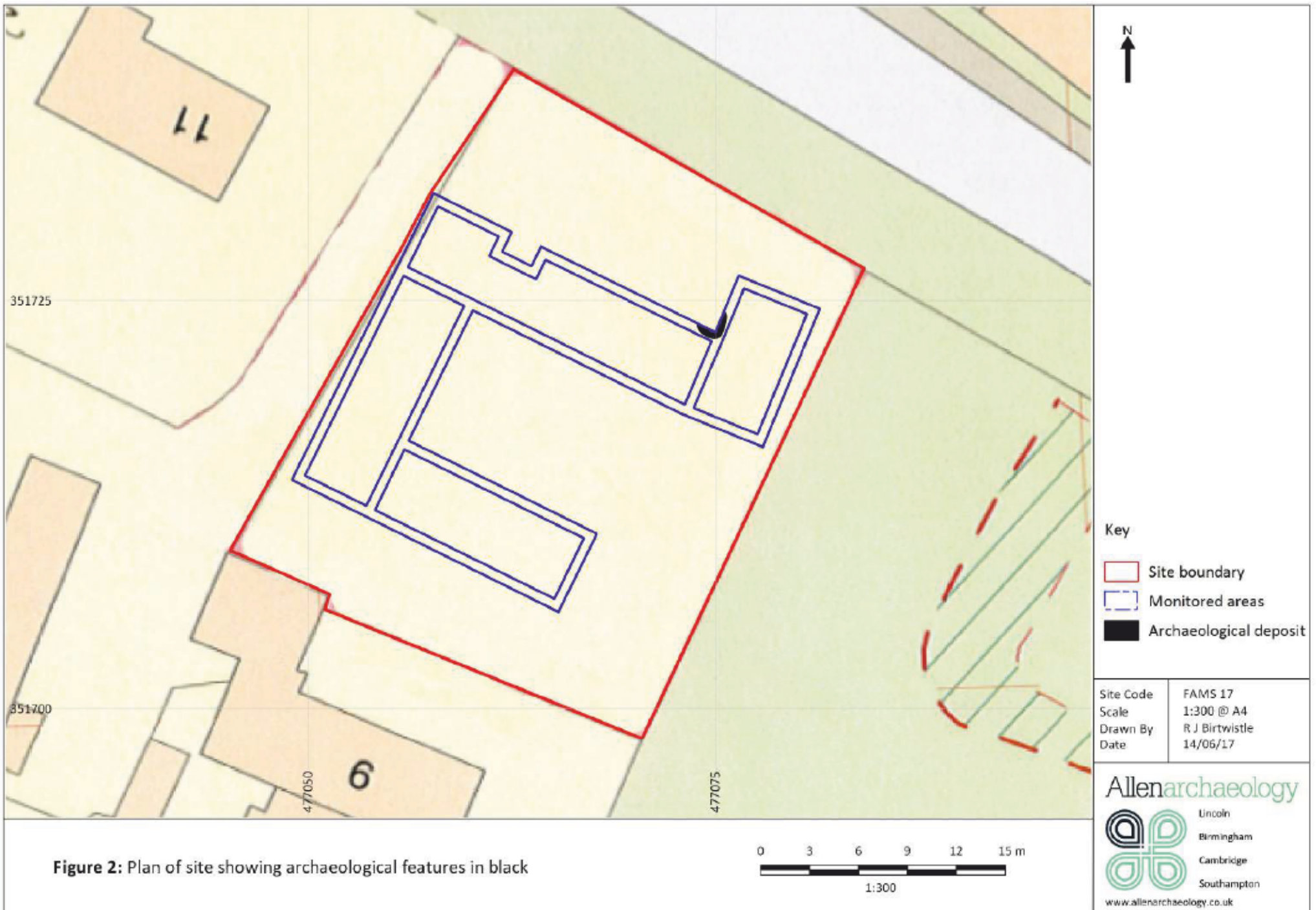
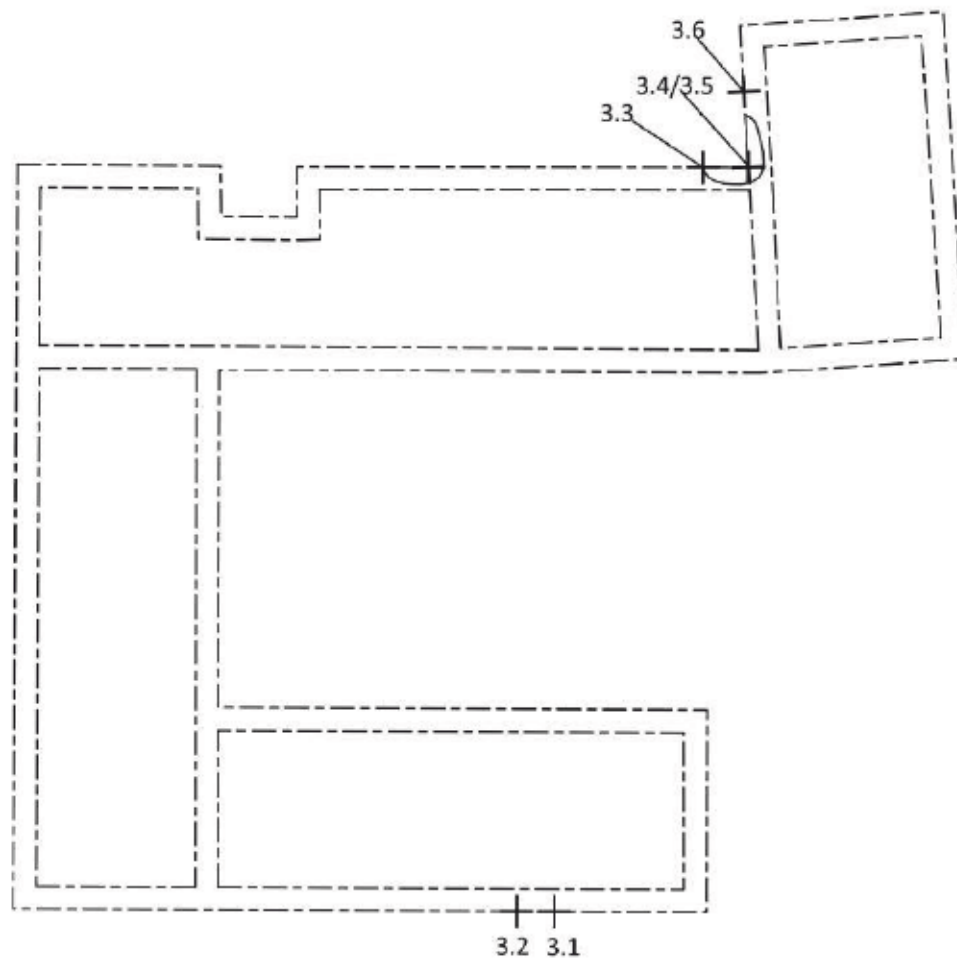




Figure 2: Plan of site showing archaeological features in black



Key

-  Limit of excavation
-  Archaeological deposit

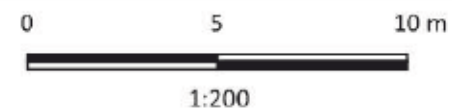
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| Scale | 1:200 @ A4 |
| Drawn By | R J Birtwistle |
| Date | 14/06/17 |

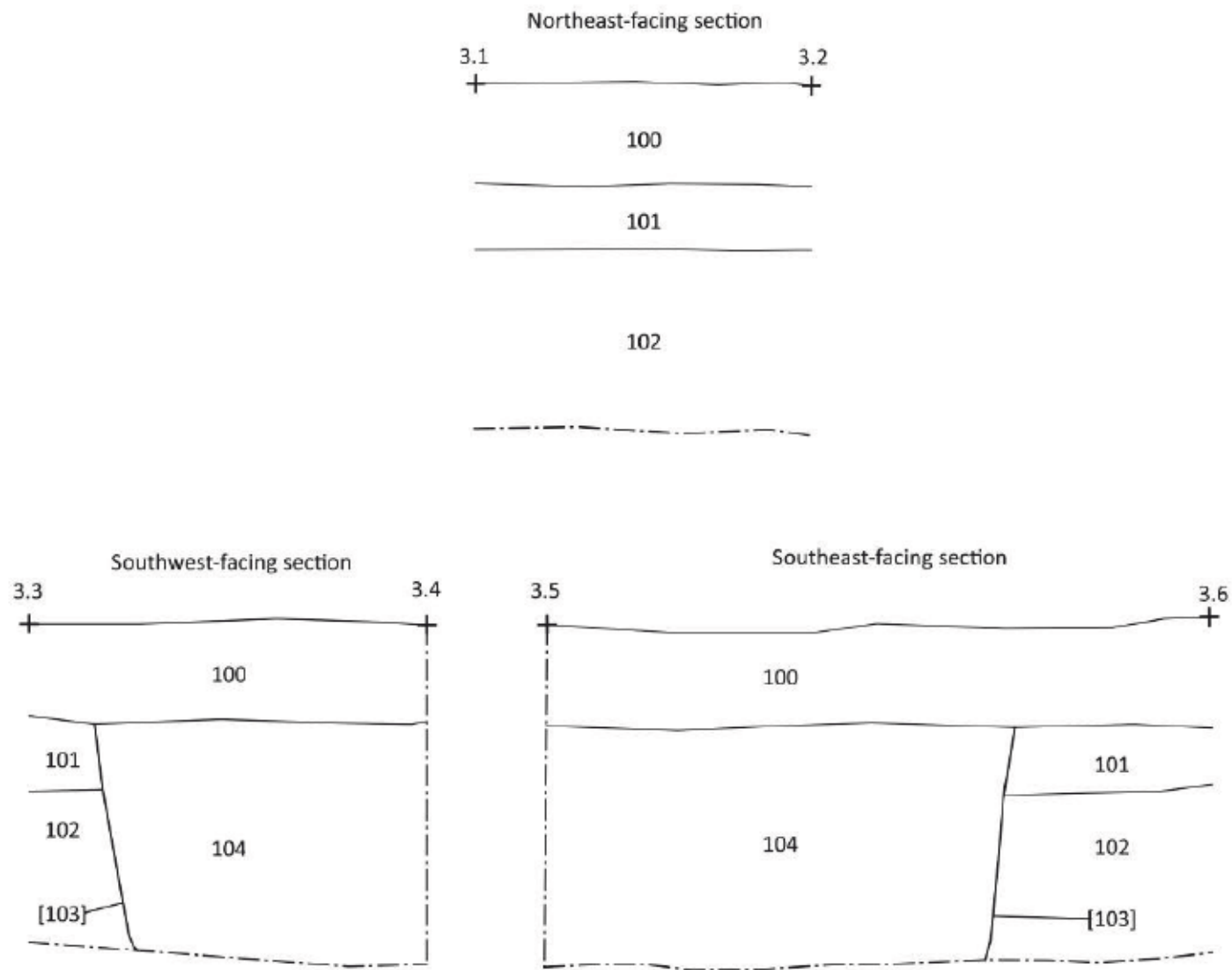
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Figure 3: Plan of site showing archaeological features and location of section points





| | |
|-----------|----------------|
| Site Code | FAMS17 |
| Scale | 1:20 @ A4 |
| Drawn By | R J Birtwistle |
| Date | 12/06/17 |

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Figure 4: Selected sections located on Figure 3



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