

ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
INVESTIGATION  
AT  
25, HIGH STREET, BADSEY,  
WORCESTERSHIRE

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Project 2445  
Report 1217  
WSM 33517



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## **Archaeological Investigation at 25, High Street, Badsey, Worcestershire**

**Tom Vaughan and Angus Crawford**

### **Part 1 Project summary**

An archaeological investigation was undertaken at 25, High Street, Badsey, Worcestershire (National Grid reference SP 0707 4314). It was undertaken on behalf of Serk Construction Ltd, who intends to construct a two-storey dwelling with associated garage block for which a planning application has been submitted. The project aimed to determine if any significant archaeological remains were present and if so to indicate the nature, date and location.

A heavily truncated, rough unmortared stone wall or foundation base was identified, bedded into the subsoil on the southern side of the site. A small fragment of blue lias with molded scrollwork had been incorporated into the structure, which was associated with early post-medieval pottery. The worked stone is considered likely to have come from the St James' Church, which is adjacent. The wall does not appear on any cartographic sources. It is conjectured to be part of a small outbuilding, probably of agricultural use. A small pit was identified directly below the modern overburden with the skeletal remains of a dog. It was determined to be of modern origin. A small number of residual finds were recovered from the site: a prehistoric flint, plus Roman and medieval pot sherds. Only approximately one third of the site was stripped to the level of the natural clay matrix. However where it was exposed, the natural clay lay directly below a thin compacted soil with frequent modern debris and a modern gravel hardcore deposit, while the survival of the subsoil horizon was minimal and restricted to the southern side of the site. The site has thus clearly been the subject of extensive landscaping, probably during the construction of a tennis court in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## Part 2 Detailed report

### 1. Background

#### 1.1 Reasons for the project

An archaeological investigation was undertaken at 25, High Street, Badsey, Worcestershire (NGR: SP 0707 4314) on behalf of Serk Construction Ltd. They intend to construct a two-storey dwelling with associated garage block and have submitted a planning application to Wychavon District Council (reference W/03/1070), who consider that a site of archaeological interest may be affected (WSM 24402).

#### 1.2 Project parameters

The project conforms to the *Standard and guidance for archaeological excavation* (IFA 1999).

The project also conforms to a brief prepared by Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Service (HEAS 2003a) and for which a project proposal (including detailed specification) was produced (HEAS 2003b).

#### 1.3 Aims

The aims of the investigation were to establish the presence and significance of archaeological deposits, and of artefactual and ecofactual assemblages. The purpose of this was to inform the research cycle, taking into account local, regional and national research frameworks.

### 2. Methods

#### 2.1 Documentary search

Prior to fieldwork commencing a search was made of the Historic Environment Record (HER). In addition the following sources were also consulted:

##### *Cartographic sources*

- 1812 Inclosure Plan – Badsey Village (detail) CRO BA 4370 f970.5:582
- 1891 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey, 6":1 mile, sheet XXXIX.NW
- 1905 2<sup>nd</sup> edition Ordnance Survey, 6":1 mile, sheet XXXIX.NW
- 1924 3<sup>rd</sup> edition Ordnance Survey, 6":1 mile, sheet XXXIX.NW
- 1938 provisional edition Ordnance Survey, 6":1 mile, sheet XXXIX.NW

##### *Aerial photographs*

- As the site lies within the centre of the village it was determined not to be suitable for aerial photography.

##### *Documentary sources*

- 
- Place-names (Mawer and Stenton 1927).
  - County histories (VCH II).
  - Domesday (Thorn and Thorn 1982).

## 2.2 **Fieldwork**

### 2.2.1 **Fieldwork strategy**

A detailed specification has been prepared by the Service (HEAS 2003a).

Fieldwork was undertaken between 26<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> January 2004.

An area of approximately 840m<sup>2</sup> was stripped (Fig 1) under archaeological supervision using a 360° tracked excavator, employing a toothless bucket. Clean surfaces were inspected and selected deposits were excavated to retrieve artefactual and environmental material, as well as to determine their nature. The footprint of the new building was then excavated to a greater depth, and that surface was then inspected as above. Deposits were recorded according to standard Service practice (CAS 1995).

### 2.2.2 **Structural analysis**

All fieldwork records were checked and cross-referenced. Analysis was effected through a combination of structural, artefactual and ecofactual evidence, allied to the information derived from other sources.

## 2.3 **Artefacts**

### 2.3.1 **Artefact recovery policy**

All artefacts from the area of salvage recording were retrieved by hand and retained in accordance with the service manual (CAS 1995 as amended). In the event, only a small sample of the unstratified finds were retained.

### 2.3.2 **Method of analysis**

All hand retrieved finds were examined. A primary record was made of all finds on a Microsoft Access 2000 database. Artefacts were identified, quantified and dated and a *terminus post quem* produced for each stratified context where possible.

Pottery was examined under x20 magnification and recorded by fabric type and form according to the fabric reference series maintained by the service (Hurst and Rees 1992).

## 2.4 **Environment**

### 2.4.1 **Sampling policy**

The environmental sampling policy was as defined in the County Archaeological Service Recording System (1995 as amended). Large animal bone was hand-collected during excavation from context 106 of modern date. No deposits were considered suitable for bulk sampling for retrieval of other classes of environmental remains

## 2.5 The methods in retrospect

Having undertaken the project the following comments may be made with regard to the methods adopted. Only a small proportion, approximately 28%, of the site was excavated down to the surface of the natural matrix. However a structure was identified within the surface of the subsoil, indicating that archaeology was extant at a very shallow depth. In addition modern debris was noted in the layer directly over the natural clay, indicating that most earlier deposits had been removed.

## 3. Topographical and archaeological context

The site comprises the rear garden of 25, High Street, in the village of Badsey (Fig 1). It is a rectangular area, approximately 20x42m. It is roughly level at c 35m AOD, presently occupied by a tennis court with an associated outbuilding and grassed area. It is bounded by houses and gardens to the north and east, and St James' churchyard to the south.

The village lies on the south-east side of the county. It is within a relatively low lying area, at a height of 33-40m AOD, and is situated on the west bank of the Badsey Brook, a tributary of the River Avon, which flows through Evesham, 3km to the east.

The soils of the area belong to the Drayton series (411) comprising slowly permeable calcareous clayey pelosols over clay (Soil Survey of England and Wales, 1986).

Evidence of Late Iron Age and Roman activity has been identified both within the present village and in the surrounding fields. Most of these have been stray finds of 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> century date (WSM 02739, 30329, 30142, 30143, 32616 and 32626), although a coin of the Emperor Vespasian (AD 69-79) was recovered from fields to the south-west (WSM 02720) and one of the Dubunnic King Antedrigus (c 25-0 BC) was recovered in fields to the north (WSM 02740). An area of archaeological interest has been identified off Bretforton Road, north of the village (WSM 29068), while further afield Black Bank Ground and Black Bank Meadow have revealed Roman material and possible Iron Age potsherds, indicative of potential intensive occupation activity (WSM 07207, 29151 and 30854). As yet no systematic intrusive archaeological investigations have been undertaken.

The settlement was first recorded as: *Baddeseia* in 709, when Offa and Kenred granted five and a half *mansæ* to bishop Egwin for the foundation of Evesham Abbey, and subsequently under a number of variations, such as *Baddesege*, in 714, *Badsetenagemære*, c 850, *Baddesig*, c 860, *Badesei*, in 1086, *Baddesham*, in 1251, *Baddesheye*, in 1275, and *Baddeseye*, in 1291 before it settled in its present form in 1535. It is thought to derive from the diminutive of the Old English forename *Beadu-*, and meant 'Bæddi's well-watered land' or 'Island, or dry ground in marsh, of a man called Bæddi' (WSM 24404; Nash 1795, 52; Mawer and Stenton 1927, 260-1; VCH II, 353; Mills 1991, 20).

The Domesday Survey of 1086 noted the estate within the Saxon Hundred of Fishborough as part of the lands of Evesham Abbey. It contained 6½ hides prior to the Norman Conquest of 1066. In addition the records state that the lordship held 2 ploughs, there were 12 villagers with 8 ploughs, 4 slaves and 1 widow. The value was £6, but had fallen to £3 10 shillings (Thorn and Thorn 1982, 10, 175c/d).

Throughout the medieval period the manor generally descended in association with the manor in the hamlet of Aldington, situated to the north-west. Two mills are known to have existed along the Badsey Brook from at least the 12<sup>th</sup> century when they were held of Evesham Abbey by Phillip the Steward for an annual rent of 1 mark. By the time of the Reformation in 1539 this had risen to 24 shillings (WSM 02850 and 21249). Seyne House at the south end of High Street is recorded as an infirmary for sick monks of the abbey until its suppression in 1539. Thereafter it was granted to Sir Phillip Hoby in 1545 who also held the manor at Abbot's Morton 11km north of Evesham (WSM 03601). Although much restored, the Manor

House toward the north end of the village is considered to be of national significance. It is two-storey with timber frame and tiled roof (WSM 03602; VCH II, 353-6).

St James' church is thought to have 11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> century elements although the earliest surviving record of its dedication, by the bishop of St Asaph, dates to the feast of St John in 1295. The nave is from *c* 1120, when the church is thought to have had a simple plan with a short narrower chancel and no aisles. The present chancel is in the decorated gothic style of the late 13<sup>th</sup> century, the rebuilding of which may have been the reason behind the aforementioned dedication. The north transept was added *c* 1330, the west tower was rebuilt *c* 1450 and the south aisle with associated porch was added in 1885 during extensive restoration (WSM 02747; VCH II, 356-7; Pevsner 1968, 74).

Cartographic sources indicate the nature of the site over the last 190 years. The Inclosure Plan of 1812 indicates the site to have comprised part of a larger undeveloped strip of land between High Street to the west and Chapel Street to the east, associated with a building to the north-west, owned by a Piery? Jones (Fig 4). At this time the village comprised a narrow linear development along High Street with extensive orchards adjacent and fields further out. The 1891 Ordnance Survey map reveals little change (Fig 5). By 1905 there had been development on the outskirts of the village, but no apparent alterations to the study area (Fig 6). The census return of 1901 recorded 165 houses in the parish (VCH II, 353). By 1924 the village had expanded further, particularly on the south-east side while a number of the orchards appear to have been grubbed up (Fig 7). This trend continued through 1938 (Fig 8), down to the present day (Fig 1). It is however unclear when the site itself was developed in its present state.

## 4. Description

### 4.1 Artefactual analysis

A summary of the artefacts recovered can be seen in Table 1. The assemblage recovered from the assessment came from four stratified contexts and the site surface. The assemblage ranged in date from the Roman to modern periods. The recovered pottery assemblage consisted of eighteen sherds from four stratified contexts and the site surface.

The pottery was identified and grouped by fabric and context (Table 2). The majority of the sherds were undiagnostic but could be dated between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century by fabric type.

Other finds included ceramic building material, a flint waste flake, a clay pipe stem and an unidentified piece of corroded metal. A large fragment of worked limestone was also recovered from context 109. It could not be independently dated but it is relevant to note that there is a church located next to the assessment area, so this find may represent part of the construction or maintenance work.

#### *Prehistoric*

A single unstratified waste flint exhibiting bulbar scars was recovered.

#### *Roman*

Two small sherds of wheel-made Malvernian ware (fabric 19, [109]) were the only Roman finds recovered. They were too small (4g) to provide any information on form type.

#### *Medieval*

Only one sherd of medieval pottery was recovered, from context 105. This was a small body sherd of Worcester-type sandy glazed ware (fabric 64.1) dating to between the late 11<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> century. This context also contained a fragment of medieval roof tile identified as



Worcester fabric 2a. The dating of this tile can only be placed broadly within the medieval period.

#### *Post-medieval*

Eleven sherds of post-medieval pottery were identified. Four sherds of black glazed red sandy ware (fabric 78.1), two sherds of post-medieval orange ware (fabric 90) and one sherd of post-medieval buff ware (fabric 91) were unstratified. Another two sherds of post-medieval orange ware were recovered within context 107 and a single sherd of post-medieval buff ware from context 108. Context 109 contained a piece of oxidised glazed Malvernian ware (fabric 69) dating to the early post-medieval period, thus ruling out a Roman date for context 109 by *terminus post quem*. An in-depth analysis of form types was not undertaken but all sherds were identified as originating from domestic kitchenware.

Post-medieval brick fragments were recovered as unstratified finds and from contexts 107 and 108. Roof tile fragments of post-medieval date were also recovered as unstratified finds and from context 108. Due to diagnostic difficulties the ceramic building materials could only be placed broadly within the period. An unstratified clay pipe stem of post-medieval date was also recovered.

#### *Modern*

The modern pottery assemblage consisted entirely of two sherds of unstratified porcelain (fabric 83) and two sherds of modern stone china (fabric 85) from context 107. Further modern finds consisted of a single unstratified piece of roof tile and another from context 105.

Context	Material	Total	Weight (g)
U/s	Post-medieval Brick	3	523
U/s	Knapped flake waste	1	3
U/s	Clay pipe stem	1	8
U/s	Modern pottery	2	23
U/s	Post-medieval pottery	7	74
U/s	Modern roof tile	1	41
U/s	Post-modern roof tile	3	34
105	Medieval pot	1	2
105	Medieval tile	1	204
105	Modern brick	1	52
107	Post-medieval brick	5	222
107	Unknown Iron find	1	12
107	Modern pottery	2	4
107	Post-medieval pottery	2	37
107	Medieval floor tile	1	103
107	Post-medieval roof tile	2	115
108	Post-medieval brick	1	444
108	Post-medieval pottery	1	13
109	Worked blue lias stone	1	873
109	Post-medieval pottery	1	9
109	Roman pottery	2	4

Table 1: Quantification of the assemblage.

Context	Fabric name	Fabric	Total	Weight (g)	Period
U/s	Red sandy ware	78.1	4	57	Post-medieval
U/s	Porcelain	83	2	23	Modern
U/s	Post-medieval orange ware	90	2	10	Post-medieval
U/s	Post-medieval buff ware	91	1	7	Post-medieval
105	Worcester-type sandy glazed ware	64.1	1	2	Medieval
107	Modern stone china	85	2	4	Modern
107	Post medieval orange ware	90	2	37	Post-medieval
108	Post medieval buff ware	91	1	13	Post-medieval
109	Wheelthrown Malvernian ware	19	2	4	Roman
109	Oxidized glazed Malvernian ware	69	1	9	Early post-medieval

Table 2: Quantification of pottery assemblage fabrics by context.

#### 4.2 Environmental analysis (Liz Pearson)

A total of 1kg of animal bone (184 fragments) was hand-collected from context 106. This comprised an almost complete articulated dog skeleton, which was well preserved and included most anatomical parts of an adult, medium sized animal. No evidence of butchery was noted. Further detailed analysis was not considered appropriate on account of the modern date.

#### 4.3 Phase 1 Natural deposits

The natural matrix comprised a compact dark yellow-grey clay. It was only revealed across approximately 28% of the site strip, which elsewhere was not taken down below the level of the soil and overburden horizons.

Subsoil was only noted on the south side of the site. Elsewhere the natural matrix lay directly below the modern topsoil and overburden.

#### 4.4 Phase 2 Post-medieval deposits

A single feature was noted bedded into the subsoil. This was a heavily truncated wall or foundation toward the south side of the site (Plate 3). It was aligned east to west and comprised unmortared rough blue lias stones and incorporated a fragment with evidence of scrolled molding. It had a defined terminus to the east but was truncated to the west.

#### 4.5 Phase 3 Modern deposits

A modern tarmac-surfaced tennis court occupied the central area of the site. It had been laid over a gravel hardcore levelling layer. The hardcore bedded directly over the natural clay matrix to the south-east, and over a thin heavily compacted silty clay with frequent modern debris.

A single feature of modern date was identified directly below the hardcore. This was a small sub-rectangular pit, containing the skeletal remains of a domestic dog. The rich dark organic

character of the primary fill indicated the comparatively recent date of deposition. It had been interred in a prone position.

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1 Prehistoric

There have been no prehistoric finds within the vicinity, therefore the recovery of a waste flint is of note. However it was not recovered from a stratified deposit so does not have a clear provenance and may have been brought onto the site from elsewhere during modern groundworks.

### 5.2 Roman

The two Roman pottery sherds recovered were very small and abraded, indicating that they were not found within their primary context of deposition. They were infact retrieved in association with a structure also containing early post-medieval material. Thus the sherds were residual, and may relate to Roman activity which has previously been identified in the surrounding area.

### 5.3 Medieval

Similarly a single medieval pottery sherd was recovered from a feature containing modern material. The site lies in the centre of the attested medieval village, so it is not surprising to find residual medieval material here. However the very low level of residual finds is of note, indicating that deposits may have been substantially removed during modern landscaping.

### 5.4 Post-medieval/modern

The wall or foundation identified toward the southern side of the site is not indicated on any of the cartographic sources of the last two centuries, when the site was apparently devoid of buildings. It was heavily truncated although its shallow depth and the roughness of construction indicate that it cannot have been part of any substantial structure. It was probably part of a small agricultural outbuilding.

The lack of a surviving subsoil horizon over much of the site indicates that the area has been subject of extensive landscaping, which removed almost all deposits down to the natural clay matrix. This most probably occurred during the construction of the tennis court in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## 6. Publication summary

The Service has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, the Service intends to use this summary as the basis for publication through local or regional journals. The client is requested to consider the content of this section as being acceptable for such publication.

*An archaeological investigation was undertaken on behalf of Serk Construction Ltd at 25, High Street, Badsey, Worcestershire (NGR: SP 0707 4314; HER: WSM 33517). A heavily truncated, rough unmortared stonewall or foundation base was identified bedded into the subsoil on the southern side of the site. A small fragment of blue lias with molded scrollwork had been incorporated into the structure, which was associated with early post-medieval pottery. The worked stone is considered likely to have come from the St James' church, which is adjacent. The wall does not appear on any cartographic sources. It is conjectured to be part of a small outbuilding, probably of agricultural use. A small pit was identified directly*

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*below the modern overburden with the skeletal remains of a dog. It was determined to be of modern origin. A small number of residual finds were recovered from the site: a prehistoric flint, plus Roman and medieval pot sherds. Only approximately one third of the site was stripped to the level of the natural clay matrix. However where it was exposed, the natural clay was determined to lie directly below a thin compacted soil with frequent modern debris and a modern gravel hardcore deposit, while the survival of the subsoil horizon was minimal and restricted to the southern side of the site. The site has thus clearly been the subject of extensive landscaping, probably during the construction of the tennis court in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.*

## 7. **The archive**

The archive consists of:

- 5 Fieldwork progress report sheets AS2
- 1 Photographic record sheet AS3
- 18 Digital photographs
- 1 Drawing number catalogue sheet AS4
- 1 Context number catalogue sheet AS5
- 10 Abbreviated context record sheets AS40
- 3 Scale drawings
- 1 Box of finds
- 1 Computer disk

The project archive is intended to be placed at:

Worcestershire County Museum

Hartlebury Castle

Hartlebury

Near Kidderminster

Worcestershire DY11 7XZ

Tel Hartlebury (01299) 250416

## 8. **Acknowledgements**

The Service would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Mr R. Knight (Serk Construction Ltd) and Mr M. Glyde (Worcestershire Historic Environment Planning Advisor).

## 9. **Personnel**

The fieldwork and report preparation was led by Tom Vaughan. The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Simon Woodiwiss. Finds analysis was undertaken by Angus Crawford, environmental analysis by Liz Pearson and illustration by Carolyn Hunt.

## 10. Bibliography

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## 11. Abbreviations

HER Historic Environment Record.

NMR National Monuments Record.

WCRO Worcestershire County Records Office.

WSM Numbers prefixed with ‘WSM’ are the primary reference numbers used by the Worcestershire County Historic Environment Record.

## Appendix 1 Context descriptions

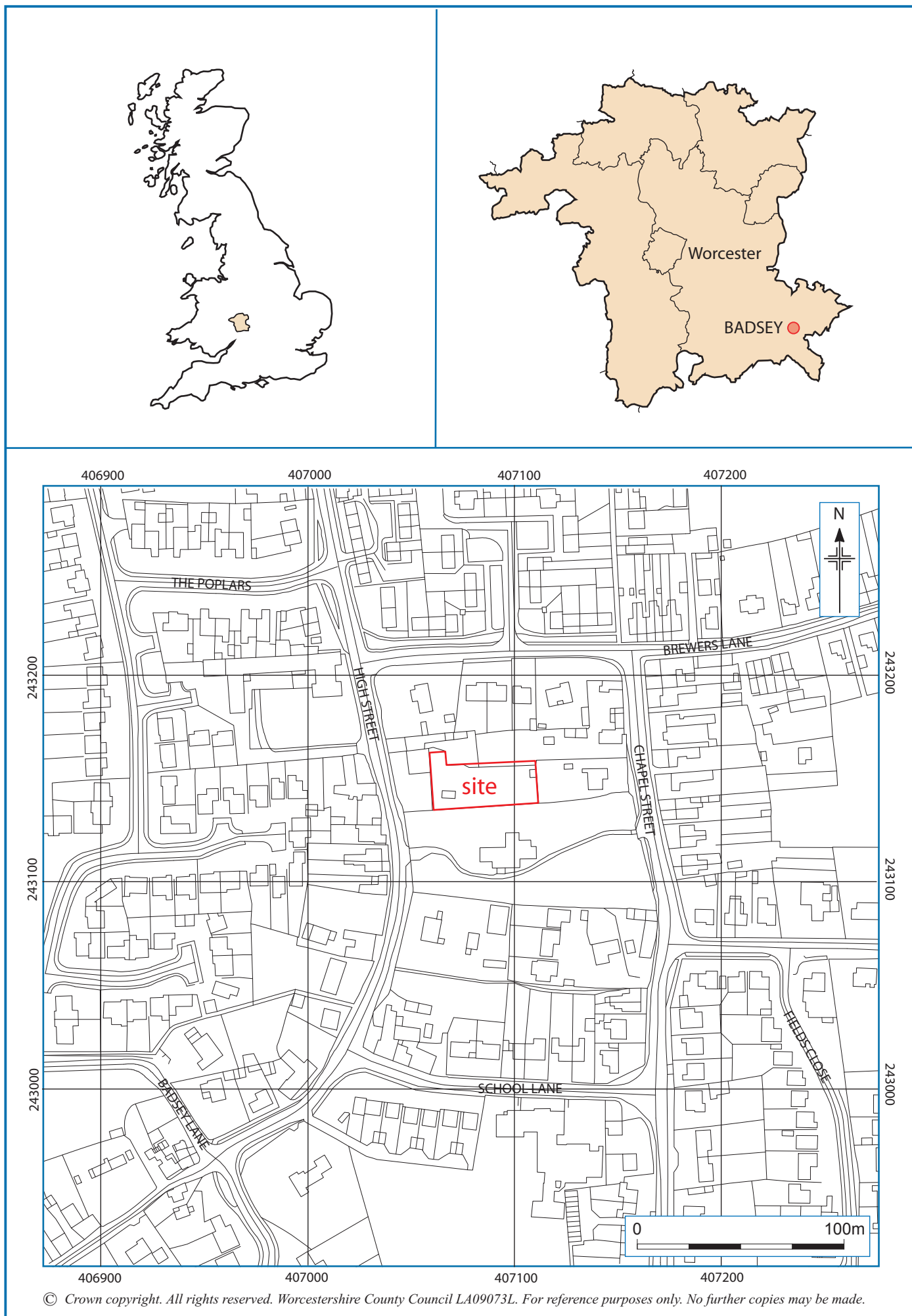
Maximum dimensions: Length: *c* 42m Width: *c* 20m Depth: 0.22-0.63m

Orientation: east-west

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
100	Current surface	Black tarmac tennis court surface. Compact and cohesive. Seals [101] below.	0.00-0.04m
101	Hardcore	Light beige yellow sub-angular small-medium gravel chips. Compacted but not cohesive. Overlies [102] and [107].	0.04-0.21m
102	Natural	Mid yellowish/grey beige clay. Light blue-grey with depth. No inclusions. Compact and cohesive. Occasional tree root activity ( $\leq$ 0.09m diameter). Underlies [101], [103] and [107].	0.21m +m
103	Topsoil	Mid greyish brown turfed silty clay. No very compact but moderately cohesive. Occasional post-medieval and modern debris (not retrieved). Frequent roots. Slightly diffuse boundary with [102] below (but no defined sub-soil layer). Surrounds tennis court area.	0.00-0.36m
104	Pit	Sub-rectangular cut with sub-rounded ends. Ill-defined in plan/clear in section. Sharp break of slope. Slightly concave sides at <i>c</i> 70° to horizontal, curving to a flattish base. Aligned east-west. Truncated during machining. Contains [105] and [106]. Cuts [102]. Sealed by [101].	0.26-0.43m
105	Fill	Light yellowish beige slightly silty clay. Cohesive. Not compact. Occasional charcoal, pot and animal bone. Truncated during machining. Sealed by [101]. Slightly diffuse boundary with [106] below.	0.26-0.42m
106	Fill	Black silt. Frequent charcoal and articulated dog bone. Moderately compact and cohesive. Lines sides and base of cut [104]. 0.01-0.06m thick Slightly diffuse boundary with [105] above.	0.26-0.43m

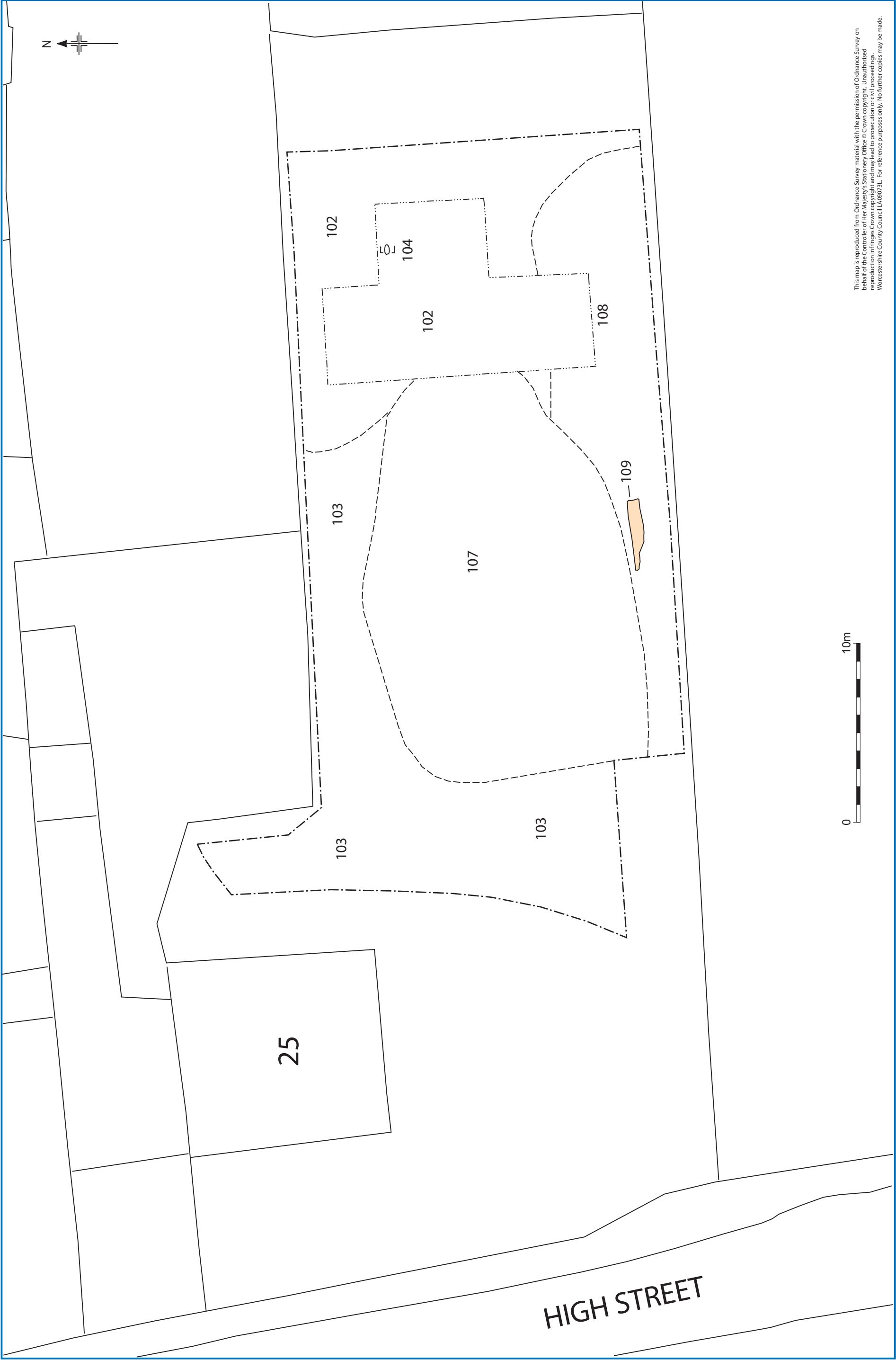
107	Layer	Dark blackish grey slightly silty clay. Frequent small red brick/tile frags and flecks, china, pot, charcoal/coal, bone, mortar, small-medium grey gravel chips, iron debris. Higher density to west. Very compact. Cohesive. Defined boundary with [101] above and [102] below. Patchy deposit, mainly on west side of site.	0.21-0.26m
108	Subsoil	Mid brownish beige slightly silty clay. Frequent medium light beige/grey sub-angular sedimentary ?limestone rock frags. Very occasional brick flecks and pot. Gen. clear boundary with [102] below. South side of site only.	0.25-0.54m
109	Structure	Aligned east-west unmortared stone foundation base. Two or three courses of rough irregular grey sedimentary ?limestone rock slabs. Occasional irregular light fawn/yellow sandstone frags. Bedded onto [108]. Sealed by [103]. No defined trench cut. Occasional pot. Roughly squared east end. Truncated to west. 3.94m long. Max. 0.86m wide	0.20-0.45m



Location of the site.

Figure 1





Plan of the site.

Figure 2

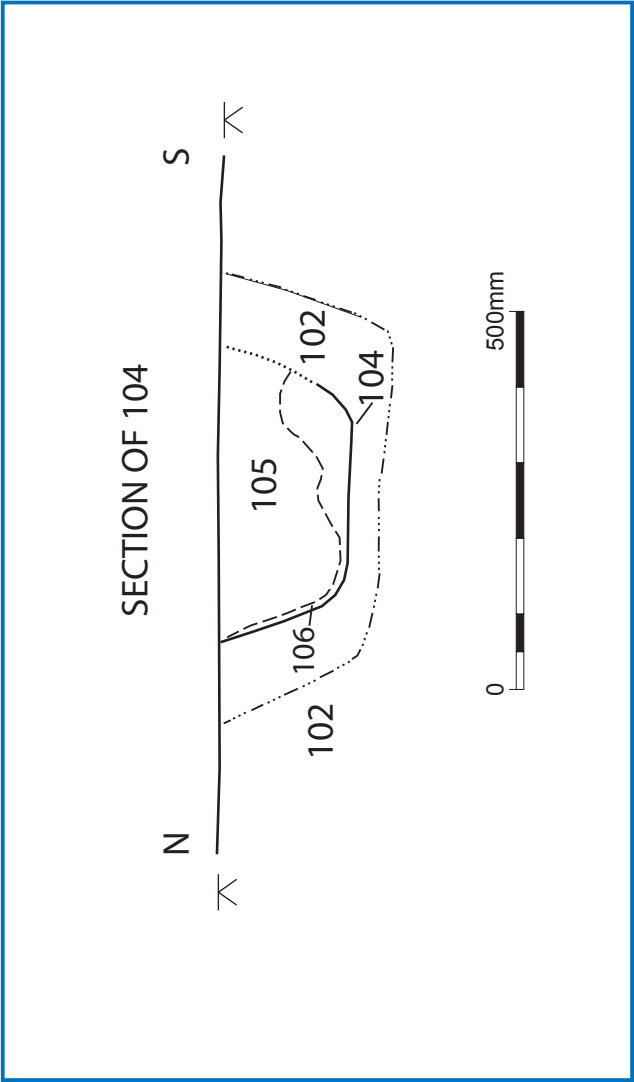
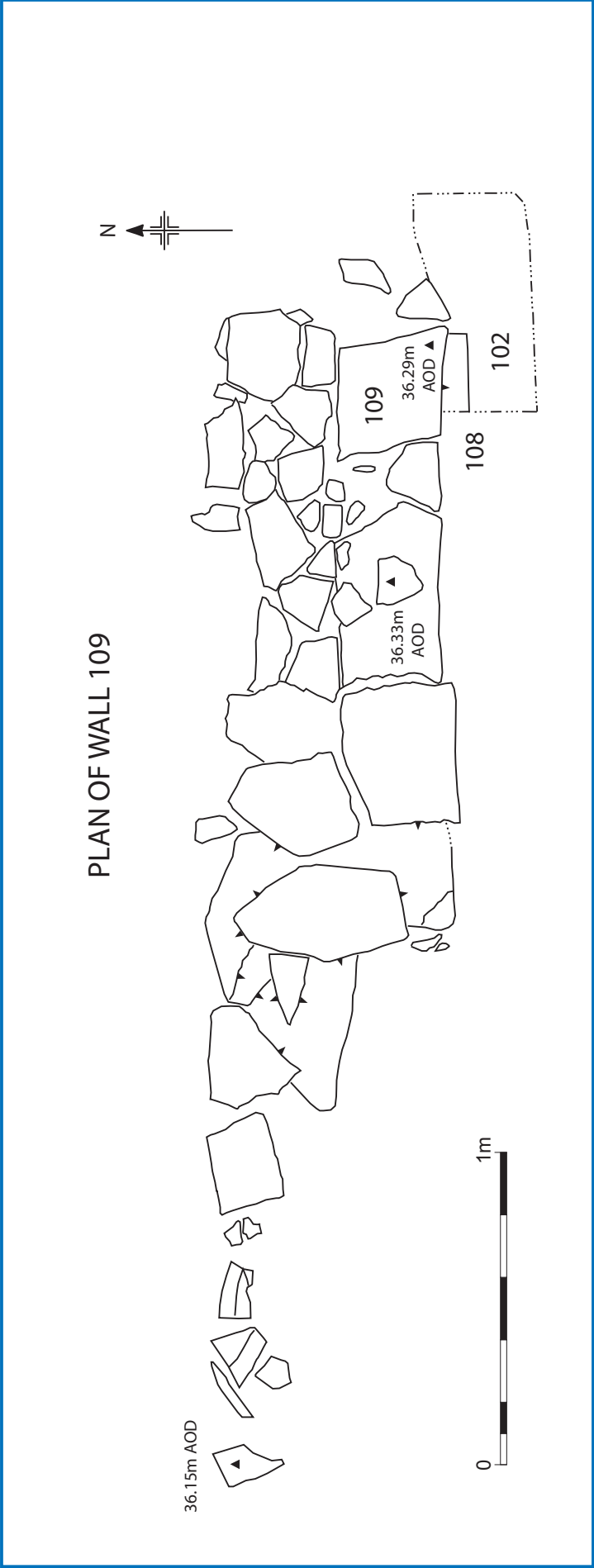
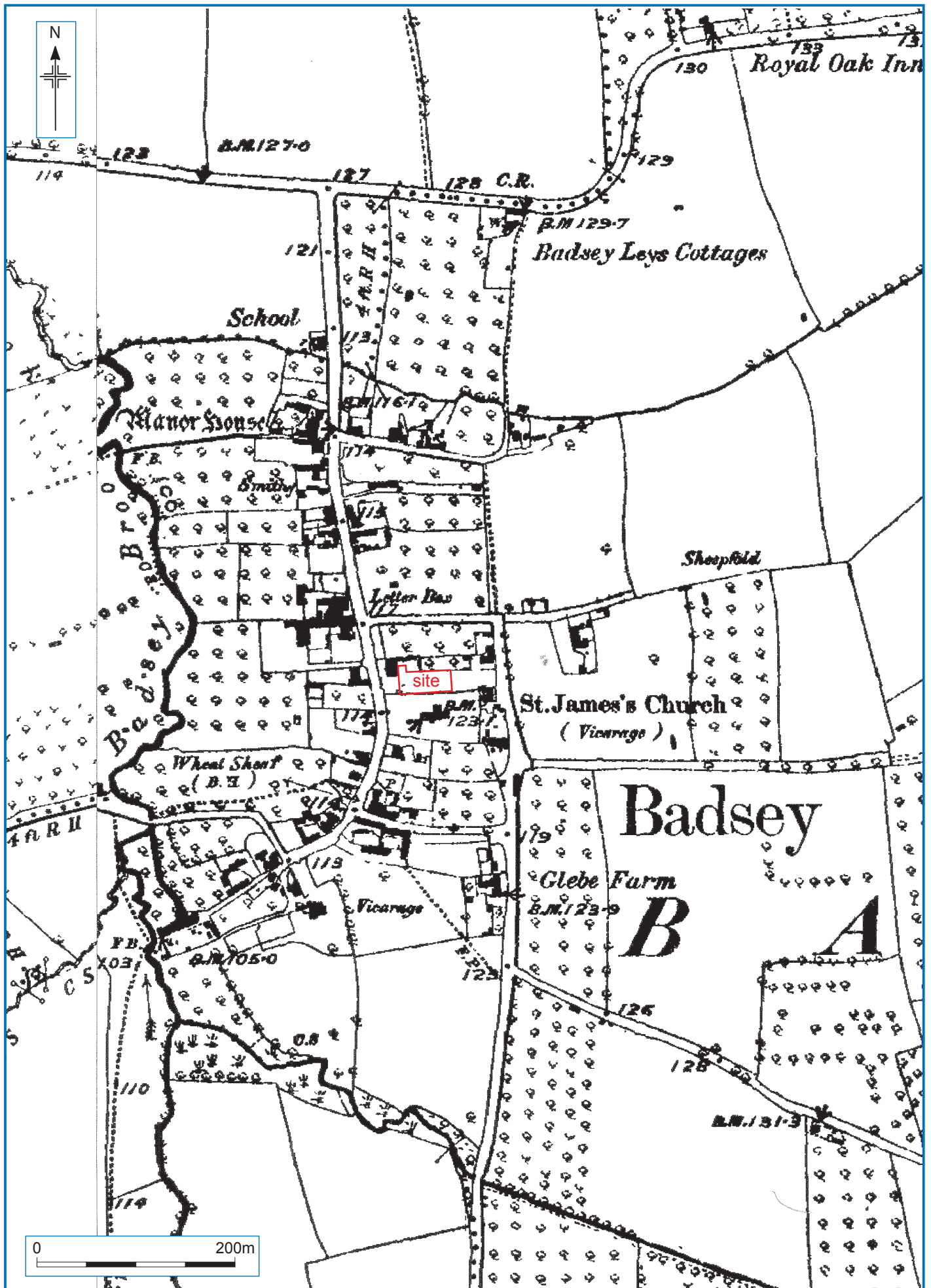


Figure 3  
Plan of wall 109 and section of 104.



Detail of Badsey Village from the Inclosure Map, 1812.

Figure 4

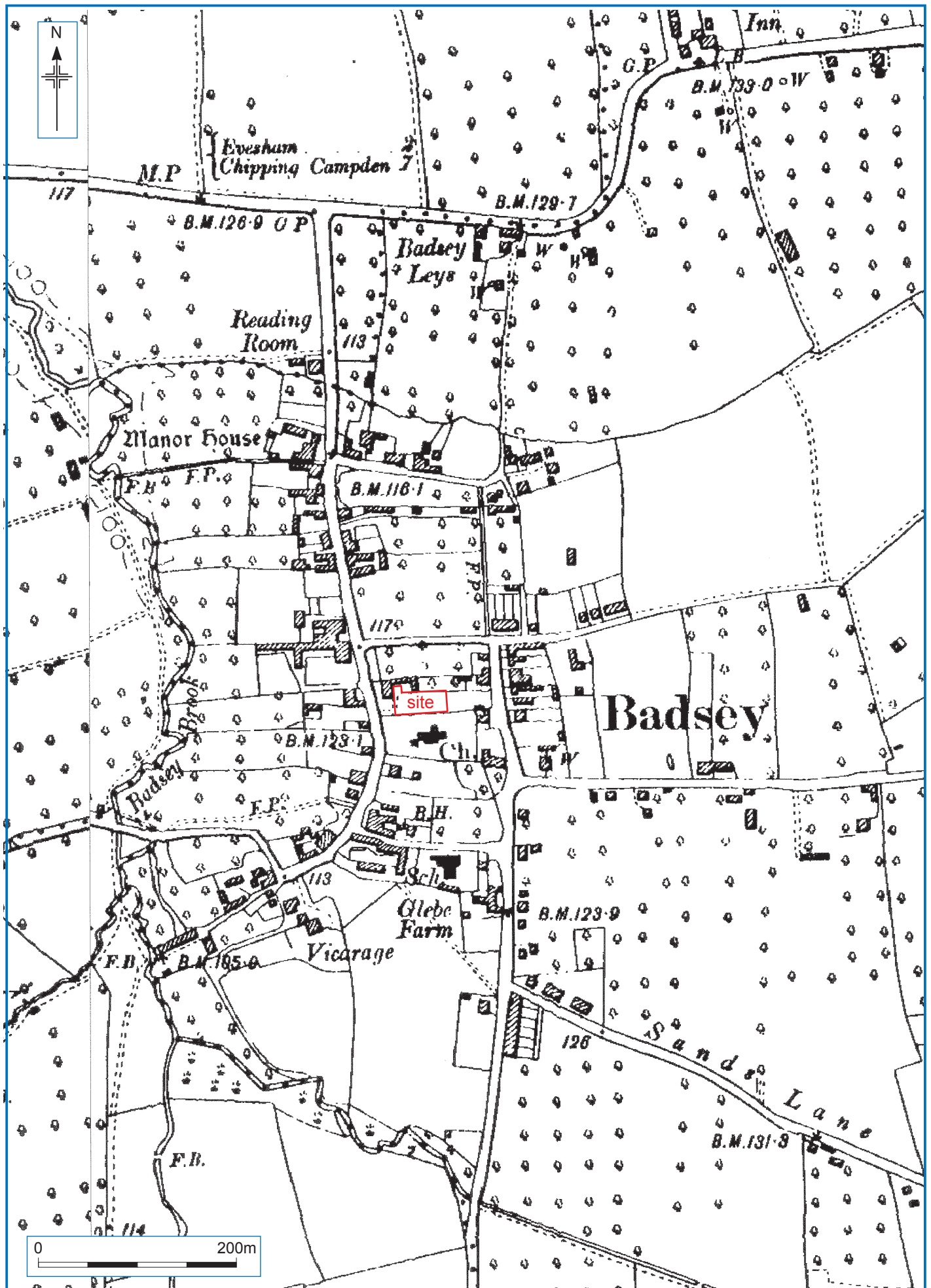


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Extract from 1st edition Ordnance Survey, 1891.

Figure 5

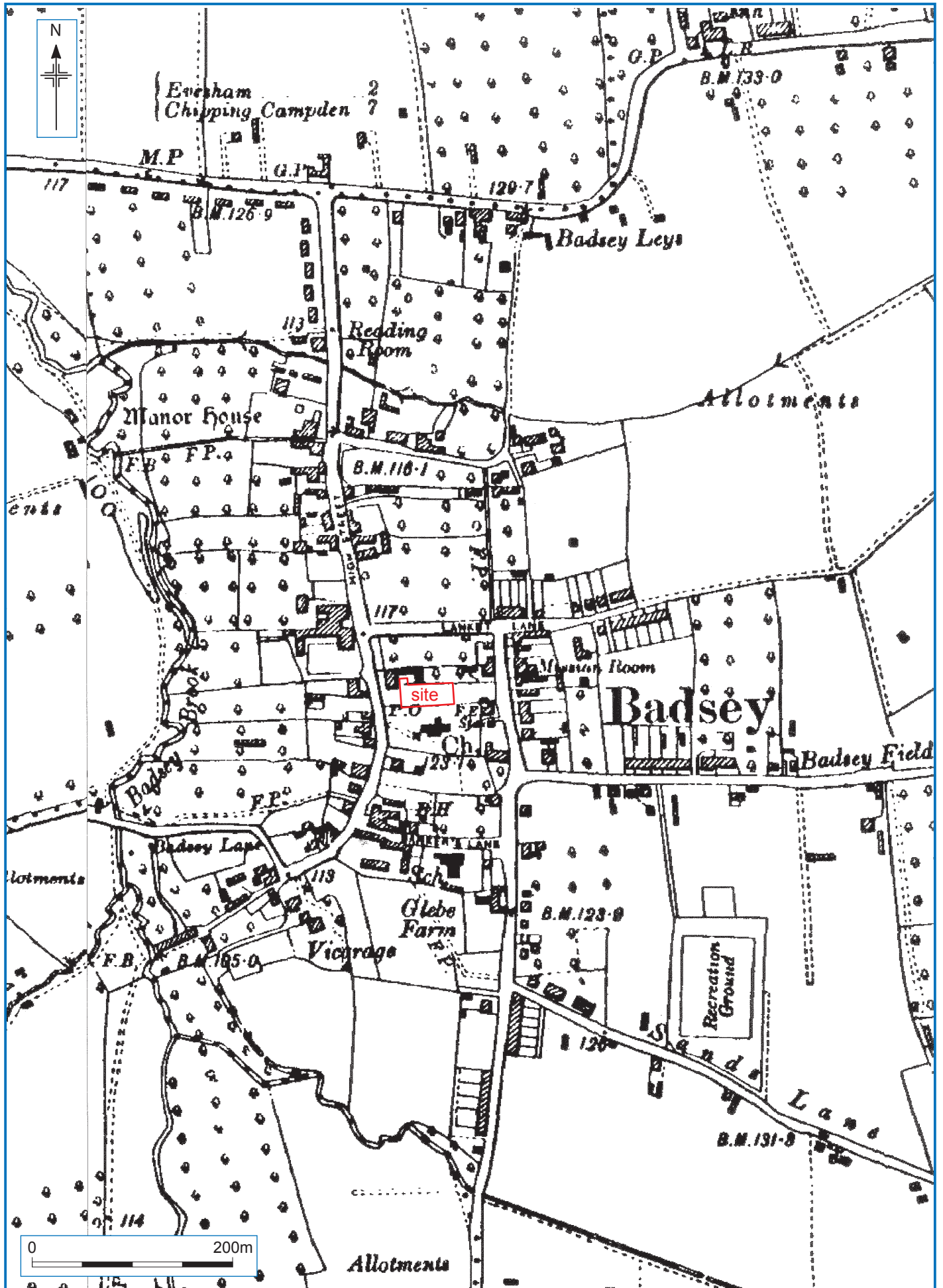




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Extract from 1905 Ordnance Survey .

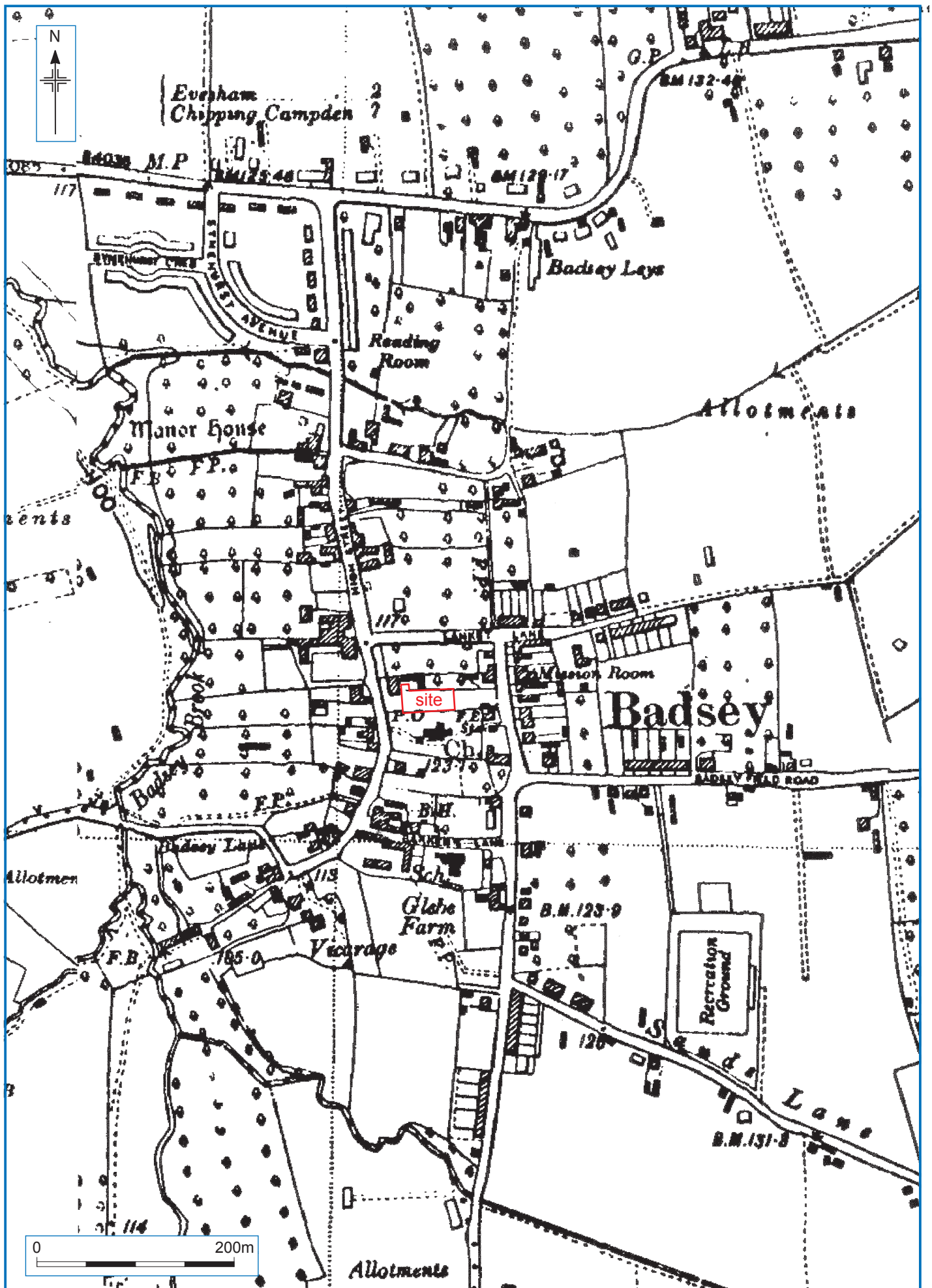
Figure 6



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Extract from 1924 Ordnance Survey .

Figure 7



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Extract from 1938 Ordnance Survey.

Figure 8





*Plate 1: Site as existing prior to stripping, view north-west.*



*Plate 2: Skeletal remains of dog within pit [104] during excavation.*





*Plate 3: Structure [109], view west.*



*Plate 4: Strip for house footprint, view north-east.*