

Post Medieval remains at 1 London Rd, Godmanchester



**Archaeological
Monitoring and Recording**



November 2012

Client: Mr P.J. Andrew

OA East Report No: 1374

OASIS No: oxfordar3-128045

NGR: TL 24781 70246

Post Medieval remains at 1 London Rd, Godmanchester

Monitoring and Recording

Site Code: GODLON12

CHER No. ECB3726

Date of Works: 30/5/2012 and 6/6/2012

Report No: 1374

Excavator: Jonathan House

Client: Mr P.J. Andrew

Report Date: June 2012

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Summary

On the 6/6/2012, OA East carried out archaeological monitoring and recording at 1 London Rd, Godmanchester (TL 24781 70246). The monitoring took the form of an observation of the reduced ground resulting from the removal of the previous structures, and the excavation of a single 1m by 1m test pit.

A sub-surface brick structure was seen in the area of ground reduction, the structure ran outside of the excavation area, and formed a narrow pit, possibly a drain or a machine wheel pit.

Several deposits were encountered within the 1m by 1m test pit, the deposits encountered were of post-medieval date, however undated deposits were seen earlier in the sequence. Residual Roman pottery was recovered from later deposits within the sequence.

1 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 1.1.1 The site is located at the northern end of London Road, on the corner with Earning Street. The top of deposits within the development area is 11.97m AOD, the immediate area is relatively flat, the ground rises to the south, while the River Ouse runs to the north-west of the site.
- 1.1.2 River Terrace Deposits, 1 To 2 - Sand And Gravel. Superficial Deposits formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period, with Oxford Clay Formation bedrock (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1.1 The proposed development lies within the core of Roman Godmanchester (Durovigutum), which was a town of some importance during the Roman period. The importance of Godmanchester during the Roman period was primarily geographical as it controlled the crossing of the river Great Ouse. A legionary fort was established at Godmanchester very soon after the invasion in AD 43, and a civilian settlement quickly grew and expanded after the abandonment of the fort. Several major public buildings were built in Godmanchester over the period of Roman occupation including a mansio, baths and basilica (town hall) temple. The site itself is located close to the route of a Roman Road (Ermine Street; HER 01543, now preserved by London Road). Roads were commonly a focus for the disposal of human remains during the Roman period and finds of human remains might therefore be anticipated at this site. The junction for London Road, Earning Street, and London Street, is thought to be the southern entrance to the Roman town, suggesting the development area would have been immediately outside and in close proximity to the southern town gate. Godmanchester has been subject to research over the years and it is clear that finds and structures belonging to the Roman period survive in many parts of the town. Of particular relevance to this site are several investigations that have taken place nearby (HER: ECB677, ECB1280, 05561, CB14808, 02633).

3 METHODOLOGY

- 3.1.1 The objective of this investigation was to determine as far as reasonably possible the presence/absence, location, nature, extent, date, quality, condition and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits within the development area.
- 3.1.2 The Brief required that archaeological monitoring should be undertaken of demolition/grubbing out of footings, with investigation of any potential archaeological deposits.
- 3.1.3 All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using OA East's *pro-forma* sheets. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales digital photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits.
- 3.1.4 Site conditions were dry and sunny, on site conditions did not inhibit the intended work.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Area of Ground Reduction

- 4.1.1 An area of ground reduction resulted from the removal of part of the building range of the main house, the part of the structure removed had been used as an extra room and a garage. The floor plan and foundations of these rooms formed the area of ground reduction, part of the structure on the east side remained standing and is intended to be incorporated into the new development.
- 4.1.2 The original levels were not seen as part of the work however the ground reduction as part of the demolition was 0.45m below the garden level, and 0.58m below the level of the adjacent car park to the south (11.97m AOD). The ground at the lower level was quite disturbed and contained either remains of demolition or evidence for the original construction, where the ground remained undisturbed the layer of material (100) was a dark grey brown, sandy silt, containing a wide selection of 20th Century and post-medieval finds.
- 4.1.3 At this level a brick feature was seen, which had probably been associated with the demolition structure at least at some point in time, as it had been constructed from the same bricks (Yellow stock bricks and Yellow perforated bricks, pers. comm. R. Atkins), and could have aligned and fitted with the demolished rooms. The feature **110**, formed a narrow linear pit, measuring 0.5m wide, the sides of the pit were formed by a single course of stretchers, with a double course at the end. The brick feature appeared to extend beyond the excavation area, and 3m in length was exposed. Partial excavation of the backfill showed the base as a sloping (see plate 2), the slope continued down from the end, but was not fully excavated.

4.2 Test Pit

- 4.2.1 A single test pit was located within the footprint of the demolished structure (see fig .2), avoiding obvious modern disturbance or any potential later features. Features were encountered at the base of the test pit, the features were likely to be intercutting pits, the earliest being **105**, although the relationship was unclear. The fill (104) was a dark brown clayey silt, no finds were recovered from the context, however the feature was only partially excavated, 0.2m in depth was excavated. The feature was not bottomed within the test pit. A second pit **106**, was cutting from the same horizon, the fill (107) was a dark greenish brown, clayey silt, finds were present within the fill, the latest material dating to 17th century, Roman sherds were present in the assemblage. The feature was again only partially excavated, and was also not bottomed, no useful dimensions of the features could be discerned within the test pit and are likely to represent small portions of larger features.
- 4.2.2 The features were sealed by an undated layer (102), a dark reddish brown, sandy silt, the layer measured 0.07 in thickness. This layer was overlain by a thicker layer (101), a dark greyish brown sandy silt, the deposit measured 0.41m in thickness and contained a great variety of finds, the latest of which being of 19th century date, sherds of Roman date were also present in the assemblage.
- 4.2.3 The above layer was cut by a feature **109** seen as a right angle cut in the corner of the test pit, 0.54m from the top of the cut, the feature was lined with bricks, the sides of the cut were vertical, within the section. The total recorded depth was 0.7m, however the feature was also not bottomed.

- 4.2.4 The uppermost layer excavated within the test pit measured 0.1m and was made up of mid brown, sandy silt, with demolition/construction materials mixed within.

5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1.1 The pits were the earliest deposits within the sequence, and although the earliest dated deposit was 17th century, the undated pit, is likely to be earlier, and it is highly probable earlier deposits would survive, such as medieval and Roman remains, in areas where later pitting was absent. Evidence from the test pit showed features to be cutting from 0.6m below the area of reduced ground, and outside of the reduced ground a further 0.4m to 0.5m of modern deposits, providing at least 1m of coverage above the archaeological grade, excluding late post medieval features of potential interest.
- 5.1.2 The thin layer of material (102), may represent a phase of construction or demolition of a building which preceded the current standing property, with the overriding layer (101), a very mixed top soil material resembling a garden soil. The finds assemblage from this buried soil suggesting a latest date of 19th century, this is likely to represent the last disturbances in the soil, before being built on, or covered by modern garden deposits. Feature **109** was seen to cut this material, and was likely to have been constructed as part of the now demolished extension. A small portion of the feature was seen within the test pit, but it is likely the feature is a well, and a pump is noted on the first edition map at the location (<http://www.old-maps.co.uk/maps.html> date accessed: 11/6/12).

6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 6.1.1 The author would like to thank Mr P.J. Andrew who funded the archaeological work. The project was managed by Aileen Connor.
- 6.1.2 The brief for archaeological works was written by Dan McConnell, who monitored the watching brief.

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APPENDIX A. OASIS REPORT FORM

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

Project Details

OASIS Number	<input type="text"/>		
Project Name	<input type="text"/>		
Project Dates (fieldwork) Start	<input type="text"/>	Finish	<input type="text"/>
Previous Work (by OA East)	<input type="text"/>	Future Work	<input type="text"/>

Project Reference Codes

Site Code	<input type="text"/>	Planning App. No.	<input type="text"/>
HER No.	<input type="text"/>	Related HER/OASIS No.	<input type="text"/>

Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt

Please select all techniques used:

<input type="checkbox"/> Field Observation (periodic visits)	<input type="checkbox"/> Part Excavation	<input type="checkbox"/> Salvage Record
<input type="checkbox"/> Full Excavation (100%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Part Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Systematic Field Walking
<input type="checkbox"/> Full Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Recorded Observation	<input type="checkbox"/> Systematic Metal Detector Survey
<input type="checkbox"/> Geophysical Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Remote Operated Vehicle Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Test Pit Survey
<input type="checkbox"/> Open-Area Excavation	<input type="checkbox"/> Salvage Excavation	<input type="checkbox"/> Watching Brief

Monument Types/Significant Finds & Their Periods

List feature types using the [NMR Monument Type Thesaurus](#) and significant finds using the [MDA Object type Thesaurus](#) together with their respective periods. If no features/finds were found, please state "none".

Monument	Period	Object	Period
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Project Location

County	<input type="text"/>	Site Address (including postcode if possible)
District	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Parish	<input type="text"/>	
HER	<input type="text"/>	
Study Area	<input type="text"/>	National Grid Reference <input type="text"/>

Project Originators

Organisation	<input type="text"/>
Project Brief Originator	<input type="text"/>
Project Design Originator	<input type="text"/>
Project Manager	<input type="text"/>
Supervisor	<input type="text"/>

Project Archives

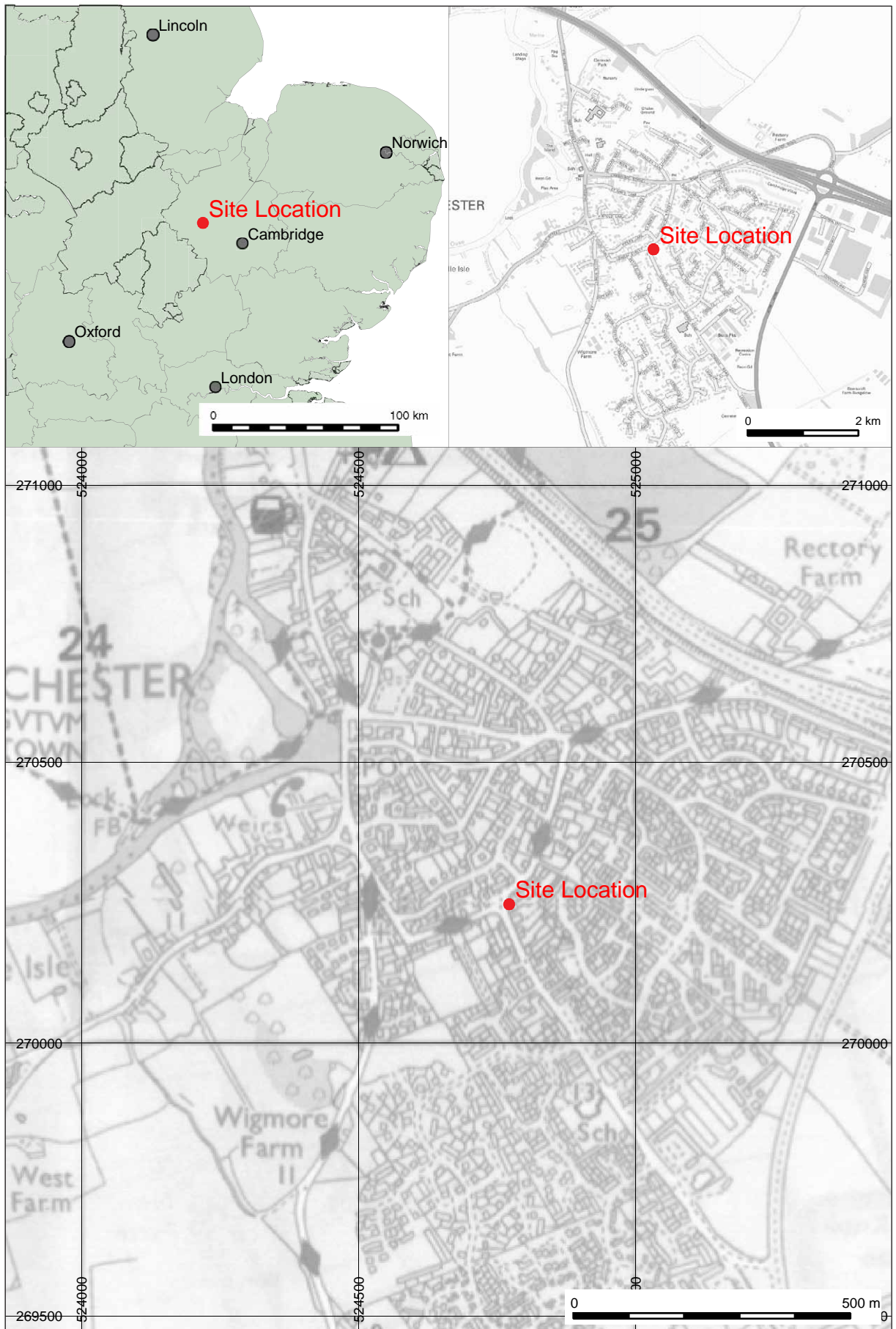
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Archive Contents/Media

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Ceramics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Textiles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Worked Stone/Lithic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Digital Media	Paper Media
<input type="checkbox"/> Database	<input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photos
<input type="checkbox"/> GIS	<input type="checkbox"/> Context Sheet
<input type="checkbox"/> Geophysics	<input type="checkbox"/> Correspondence
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	<input type="checkbox"/> Research/Notes
	<input type="checkbox"/> Photos
	<input type="checkbox"/> Plans
	<input type="checkbox"/> Report
	<input type="checkbox"/> Sections
	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey

Notes:



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Figure 1: Site location

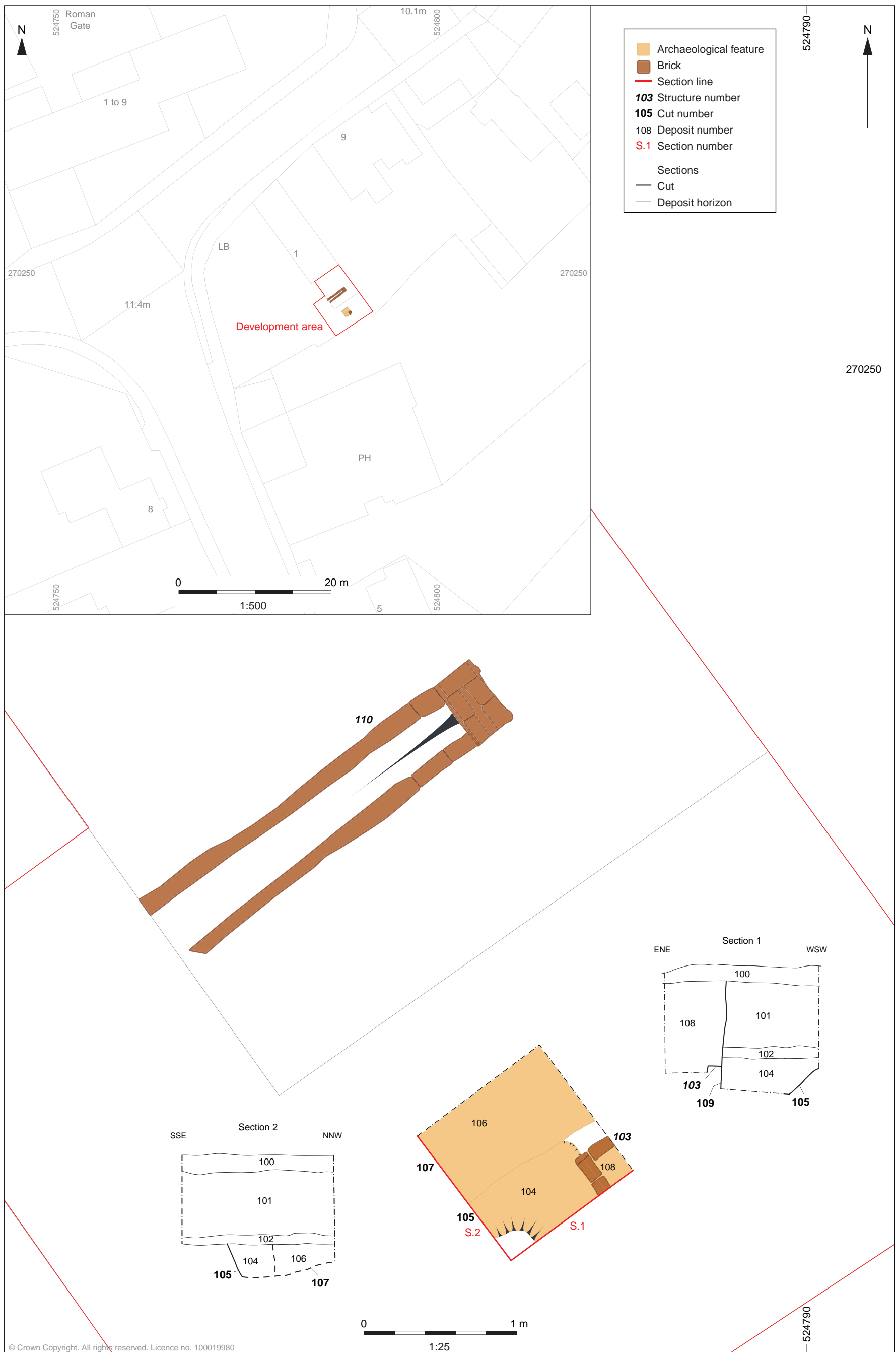


Figure 2: Site plan and sections



Plate 1: NNW facing section of test pit.



Plate 2: Shot of brick lined pit taken from north.



Plate 3: Working shot taken from north.



Plate 4: Working shot taken from west.



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