

Archaeological Testpitting at Trinity School, Foxton Cambridgeshire



Archaeological Evaluation Report



September 2014

**Client: Manchester
Metropolitan University**

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Archaeological Testpitting at Trinity School, Foxton, Cambridgeshire

Archaeological Evaluation

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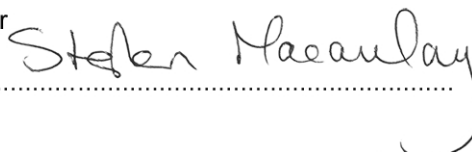
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Report Date: August 2014

Report Number: 1657
Site Name: Trinity School, Foxton
HER Event No: ECB4253
Date of Works: July 2014
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Prepared by: Jemima Woolverton
Position: Assistant Supervisor
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Position: Senior Project Manager
Date: 22/8/14
Signed:



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Summary

Between the 9th and 10th July 2014 Oxford Archaeology East conducted archaeological test pitting at the Trinity School, Foxton. The project was a community project working with pupils of the school alongside professional OAE archaeologists and the work was located in the school garden (TL 5411 2485).

The archaeological remains included two parallel concrete walls, probably part of a 1950s raft foundation for a shed or outdoors storage unit, and a Victorian rubbish pit.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 An archaeological evaluation was conducted at Trinity School Foxton, 8 Station Road, Foxton, Cambridgeshire, CB22 6SA.
- 1.1.2 This archaeological community testpitting exercise was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by the Bones Without Barriers project run by Manchester Metropolitan University.
- 1.1.3 The work was designed to give Trinity students a practical experience of archaeology.
- 1.1.4 The site archive is currently held by OA East and will be deposited with Trinity School Foxton in due course.

1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The site is situated to the north-west of the parish church on relatively level ground. It lies on a bedrock of West Melbury Chalk (British Geological Survey, 2002).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 Foxton lies south of the River Cam, to the west of Hoffer Brook and to the east of Shepreth/Foxton Brook. Occupation of the river valleys in south-west Cambridgeshire is characterised in the Iron Age, Roman and medieval periods by settlements paired on either side of a ford. Foxton and Barrington are an example of this type of settlement pattern.

Prehistoric

- 1.3.2 Prehistoric activity in Foxton dates back to the Palaeolithic. Axes dating to this period and to the Neolithic have been found to the south west of the village at West Hill (Malim 1990). Finds of bronze axes and the identification of a ring ditch to the west attest to later prehistoric activity in this vicinity. Possible Bronze Age burial mounds are known lie to the west (CHER 08631) and north (CHER 08634 & 08635).

Iron Age / Roman

- 1.3.3 The presence of extensive crop marks to the south and west suggest that a considerable prehistoric and Roman settlement existed, these remains are considered of National Importance and are Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SM 85, 215 & 216). Archaeological investigation of these crop marks in 1993 has shown them to be part of a substantial Iron Age and Roman rural settlement (Herods Farm, Foxton - Macaulay 1995).
- 1.3.4 Roman finds have been located all around the south and west of the village and a mid Roman cemetery has also been excavated in this area (Maynard et al. 1994). These may be associated with the settlement at Herods Farm as well as with the villa discovered further to the west at Shepreth.

Saxon

- 1.3.5 Early Saxon cemeteries have been found along the major river valleys in South Cambridgeshire (Malim & Hines 1998) and an Anglo-Saxon cemetery has been identified in the eastern part of the Cam valley at Foxton. Saxon burials are recorded on the CHER to the west (MCB4858) and south-east (MCB 4889) of the development site.
- 1.3.6 It is possible that the layout of the modern settlement dates back to this period. The town brook, or 'common stream', seen to the south of the village on aerial photographs, joins the Shepreth Brook in the west to the Hoffer Brook in the north east. This stream continued in use at least until the construction of the medieval moated site in the 12th century.

Medieval

- 1.3.7 The testpitting site lies north-west of the medieval parish church of St Lawrence (200m to the south-west) and to the west of the medieval moated manor of Mortimer's Farm (MCB1619). The moat may have been fed by the town brook, the northern arm of which may have run down the south eastern side of Mortimer's Lane before joining the moat and finally flowing into the Hoffer Brook. Saxon, Medieval and Post-medieval settlement and buildings were recorded at Mortimer's Lane, Foxton in 2007 (Thatcher & Rees, 2007) Medieval Activity on Land between Nos 3-11 Mortimer's Lane, Foxton, OA East Report No. 1066), a site which lies to the east of the site (CHER 17771). Further evidence of medieval settlement is known (CHER 09822), these survive as earthworks (hollow way, house platforms) and even a dovecote, which has medieval origins.
- 1.3.8 The name Foxton is first mentioned in the Domesday survey as *Foxetune* (EPNS 1973), interpreted as 'Farm where foxes abound'. The name appears to have changed by 1396 to Foxston and again by 1549 to Faxton.

Modern

- 1.3.10 Trinity School is sited in the building of the old village primary school, built in 1883, extended in 1911 and 1979 to house increased numbers of children. It was originally supported by the Methodist Chapel located to the south-west of the site (British History Online). In 2002 Foxton Primary School moved to its present site on Hardman Road, the facilities were renovated and soon after the Pupil Referral Unit took occupancy of the premises (Foxton Primary School pers. comm.). The primary school had several temporary classrooms, including a double-sided classroom immediately to the south of the site of our excavation (Foxton Primary School pers. comm.). This was located on Bury land which had been granted to the primary school but was reclaimed by the Bury after the Primary School vacated the premises (Foxton Primary School pers. comm.). This may explain why the temporary classroom and shed on our site visible on a 1997 aerial photograph was demolished, and why staff have no recollection of it.
- 1.3.11 The Methodist Church congregation moved to the village hall around the year 2003 because the church facilities required renovating, and the Pupil Referral Unit took occupancy soon after (Foxton Primary School pers. comm.)
- 1.3.12 The Pupil Referral Unit was rebranded as Trinity School in 2012.

1.4 Acknowledgements

- 1.4.1 The author would like to thank Bones without Barriers who commissioned the project with the school, and the Heritage Lottery Fund who provided the funding. Thanks also

to Alexandra Curson who assisted with the excavation and supervision of Trinity School students, and to the staff and students who engaged fully with the excavation. The project was managed by Faye Sayer, Manchester Metropolitan University.

2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 The objective of this community excavation was to give the students practical experience of field archaeology.
- 2.1.2 We also wished to recover evidence of previous occupation of the site and to record any archaeology present.

2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 The Brief required that we excavate one or two test pits would be excavated with the students. A single test pit 1m x 2m was excavated.
- 2.2.2 Originally it was planned to excavate each testpit in 10cm spits, but this methodology changed during the excavation according to requirements of working with the students and when we uncovered archaeological features.
- 2.2.3 All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using Jigsaw Cambridgeshire's *pro-forma* sheets. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales and colour and digital photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits.
- 2.2.4 Site conditions were good, with hot weather on the first day and rain on the second.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The results are presented by test pit. Silty-sand natural was partly exposed. This was overlain by subsoil, comprising a light greyish brown sandy silt, and topsoil, comprising a medium greyish brown sandy silt 0.18m thick.

3.2 Test Pit 1

- 3.2.1 Test pit 1 (1m x 2m) uncovered two concrete walls running parallel to each other 0.8m apart. The walls sat directly above the edges of a Victorian pit underneath, cut into natural. All contexts contained Victorian and modern pottery and other artefacts.

3.3 Finds Summary

- 3.3.1 Ninety-two fragments of post-medieval pottery were recovered from the testpit, mostly dating to the 19th and 20th centuries, and a thirty fragments of animal bone, much of it butchered.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Victorian

- 4.1.1 A pit containing Victorian and other late post-medieval pottery was cut into natural [6]. Finds are consistent with use of the site as a school since 1883 and previous domestic use.

4.2 1950s

- 4.2.1 Two concrete structures probably relate to a 1950s raft foundation. An aerial photograph provided by Foxton Primary School dating to 1997 (Plate 2) shows a temporary classroom and shed or outside storage previously stood on the site; our raft foundation probably relates to the shed. A thin sandy band visible in the southern section probably relates to a construction layer for the raft foundation. It is unlikely that the raft foundation relates to the pit, although soil disturbance in the erection of the concrete would partly explain why the finds from the test pit were so mixed.

4.3 Significance

- 4.3.1 The uncovering of the raft foundation is significant since none of the current staff or students knew of buildings previously on the site. The presence of the classroom and shed on the 1997 aerial photograph (Plate 2) and on a 2000 photo on Google Earth, but not on the 2003 Google Earth image suggests this temporary building was demolished after the school stopped being used by Foxton Primary School, as anecdotal evidence suggests. KCC7/ARCH/E20/3 lists the presence of a mobile classroom in 1973, which may refer to this structure.

APPENDIX A. TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Testpit 1						
General description					Orientation	NW-SE
Test pit contained two concrete parallel walls overlying a Victorian pit. Topsoil and subsoil over a natural of silty sand, into which the pit [104] was cut.					Avg. depth (m)	0.68m
					Width (m)	1m
					Length (m)	2m
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	Layer	-	0.18	Topsoil	pottery, bone, metal, glass	9/7/14
2	Structure	0.4	0.26	Concrete raft foundation	-	9/7/14
3	Structure	0.3	0.26	Concrete raft foundation	-	10/7/14
4	Layer	-	0.23	Subsoil	pottery, bone, metal, glass	9/7/14
5	Fill	0.8	0.24	Pit fill	pottery, bone, metal, glass	10/7/14
6	Cut	0.8	0.24	Pit cut	-	10/7/14

APPENDIX B. FINDS REPORTS

B.1 Pottery

Identification by Carole Fletcher, collation by Jemima Woolverton

- B.1.1 Excavation of testpit 1 produced a range of some modern but mostly Victorian finds. Limited colour change, the presence of similar types of finds across all layers, and the limitations of excavation with a school group have meant all finds have been grouped together, not according to context.

Post-Medieval Ceramics

The Assemblage

- B.1.2 92 fragments of pottery were recovered.

Dating

- B.1.3 All of the contexts feature post-medieval ceramics, mostly dating to the 19th - 20th centuries.

Fabric	No. of sherds	Weight in Kg	Date Range for Context
Post-medieval redware (PMR)	2	0.056	15-18 th century
Post-medieval blackware (PMBL)	1	0.003	16- 18 th century
Yellowware	9	0.037	c.1820+
Pearlware	2	0.011	c.1780 – c.1830

English stonewares	4	0.029	18 - 19 th century
Transfer-printed FlowBlue	1	0.008	19 th century
Sewer pipe	3	0.076	19 th century
Clay pipe	5	0.003	19 th century
Refined White Stoneware	1	0.004	19-20 th century
Refined white earthenware (RWE)	36	0.135	19-20 th century
RWE Dyed bodyware – blue	1	0.001	19-20 th century
RWE hand-painted	1	0.001	19-20 th century
Nottinghamshire/Derbyshire stonewares	2	0.012	19– 20 th century
Transfer-printed wares (blue)	15	0.02	19-20 th century
Transfer-printed wares (green)	1	0.001	19-20 th century
Bone china/porcelain	6	0.017	19-20 th century
Modern black glazed ware	1	0.001	20-21 st century
Plant pot	1	0.004	20-21 st century

B.2 Ceramic Building Material

Identification by Rob Atkins, collation by Jemima Woolverton

- B2.1 The excavation produced a small assemblage of Post-medieval brick and tile dating from the mid 18th through to the 20th century. Some of the yellow brick is similar in style to the school building nearby.

<i>Fabric</i>	<i>No. of sherds</i>	<i>Weight in Kg</i>	<i>Date Range for Context</i>
Brick (light yellow)	8	0.166	mid 18 - mid 19 th century
Post-medieval roof tile	3	0.287	18-19 th century
Brick (yellow)	3	0.317	early 19 th -20 th century
Perforated brick	2	0.245	mid 19 th -20 th century

B.3 Glass

Identification by Carole Fletcher, collation by Jemima Woolverton

B3.1 All glass was press-moulded dating to the 19th to 20th centuries. 0.039Kg of brown glass, 0.095Kg of green glass, 0.239Kg of clear glass, 0.005Kg of white glass (probably from a lampshade), 0.009Kg of fragments of a modern thermometer, 0.018Kg of green glass medicine bottle and 0.005Kg marble.

B3.2 All glass except the marble and medicine bottle was discarded.

B.4 Slate

B4.1 A considerable quantity (0.591) of handmade Welsh slate was recovered, probably dating to the Victorian period.

B.5 Metal

B5.1 0.224Kg of nails recovered, along with 2 larger iron fragments (0.079Kg) and a washer (0.01Kg).

B5.2 0.115Kg of clinker/domestic waste recovered.

B.6 Flint

Two secondary flakes recovered (0.011Kg).

APPENDIX C. ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

C.1 Faunal Remains

By Chris Faine

- C.1.1 Thirty fragments of animal bone were recovered from the test pitting. The total weight of bone recovered was 0.5kg with 8 identifiable fragments being recovered. The assemblage largely consists of sawn cattle long bone, scapula and vertebral fragments, including a midshaft radius and vertically sawn axis. Other species are limited to an unfused pig radius and sheep/goat humerus. Unidentifiable elements consist mainly of sawn large animal rib fragments. The assemblage most likely represents primary butchery waste, probably Post-Medieval given the style of butchery (i.e. predominance of saw marks).

APPENDIX D. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- | | | |
|------------------------|------|--|
| Dobney, K & Reilly, K. | 1988 | <i>A method for recording archaeological animal bones: the use of diagnostic zones.</i> Circaea 5(2): 79-96 |
| Davis, S. J. M. | 1992 | A rapid method for recording information about mammal bones from archaeological sites. <i>Ancient Monuments Laboratory Report 19/92.</i> English Heritage. |
| KCC7/ARCH/E20/3 | 1973 | Cambridgeshire County Council: Architectural Drawings, Foxton: Primary School |

APPENDIX E. OASIS REPORT FORM

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

Project Details

OASIS Number	oxfordar3 - 188267		
Project Name	Archaeological Testpitting at Trinity School, Foxton		
Project Dates (fieldwork)	Start	09-07-2014	Finish 10-07-2014
Previous Work (by OA East)	No	Future Work	Unknown

Project Reference Codes

Site Code	FOXTSC14	Planning App. No.	N/A
HER No.	ECB4253	Related HER/OASIS No.	N/A

Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt	Voluntary/self-interest
Development Type	For DBA/Evaluation - select the type of development planned for the site...

Please select all techniques used:

<input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photography - interpretation	<input type="checkbox"/> Grab-Sampling	<input type="checkbox"/> Remote Operated Vehicle Survey
<input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photography - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Gravity-Core	<input type="checkbox"/> Sample Trenches
<input type="checkbox"/> Annotated Sketch	<input type="checkbox"/> Laser Scanning	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey/Recording Of Fabric/Structure
<input type="checkbox"/> Augering	<input type="checkbox"/> Measured Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Targeted Trenches
<input type="checkbox"/> Dendrochronological Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Metal Detectors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Test Pits
<input type="checkbox"/> Documentary Search	<input type="checkbox"/> Phosphate Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Topographic Survey
<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Sampling	<input type="checkbox"/> Photogrammetric Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Vibro-core
<input type="checkbox"/> Fieldwalking	<input type="checkbox"/> Photographic Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual Inspection (Initial Site Visit)
<input type="checkbox"/> Geophysical Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Rectified Photography	

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
PIT	Post Medieval 1540 to 1900		Select period...
STRUCTURE	Modern 1901 to Present		Select period...
	Select period...		Select period...

Project Location

County	CAMBRIDGESHIRE	Site Address (including postcode if possible)
District	SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE	TRINITY SCHOOL FOXTON 8 STATION ROAD, FOXTON CAMBRIDGESHIRE, CB22 6SA
Parish	FOXTON	
HER	CAMBRIDGESHIRE	
Study Area	2m x 1m	National Grid Reference 5411 2485

Project Originators

Organisation	OA EAST
Project Brief Originator	FAYE SIMPSON
Project Design Originator	FAYE SIMPSON
Project Manager	STEPHEN MACAULAY (OA EAST)
Supervisor	JEMIMA WOOLVERTON (OA EAST)

Project Archives

Physical Archive	Digital Archive	Paper Archive
Trinity School Foxton	OAE	HER
FOXTSC14	FOXTSC14	FOXTSC14

Archive Contents/Media

	Physical Contents	Digital Contents	Paper Contents
Animal Bones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Glass	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Human Bones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Report
	<input type="checkbox"/> Sections
	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey

Notes:



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Figure 1: Site location showing archaeological test pit. Scale 1:5000

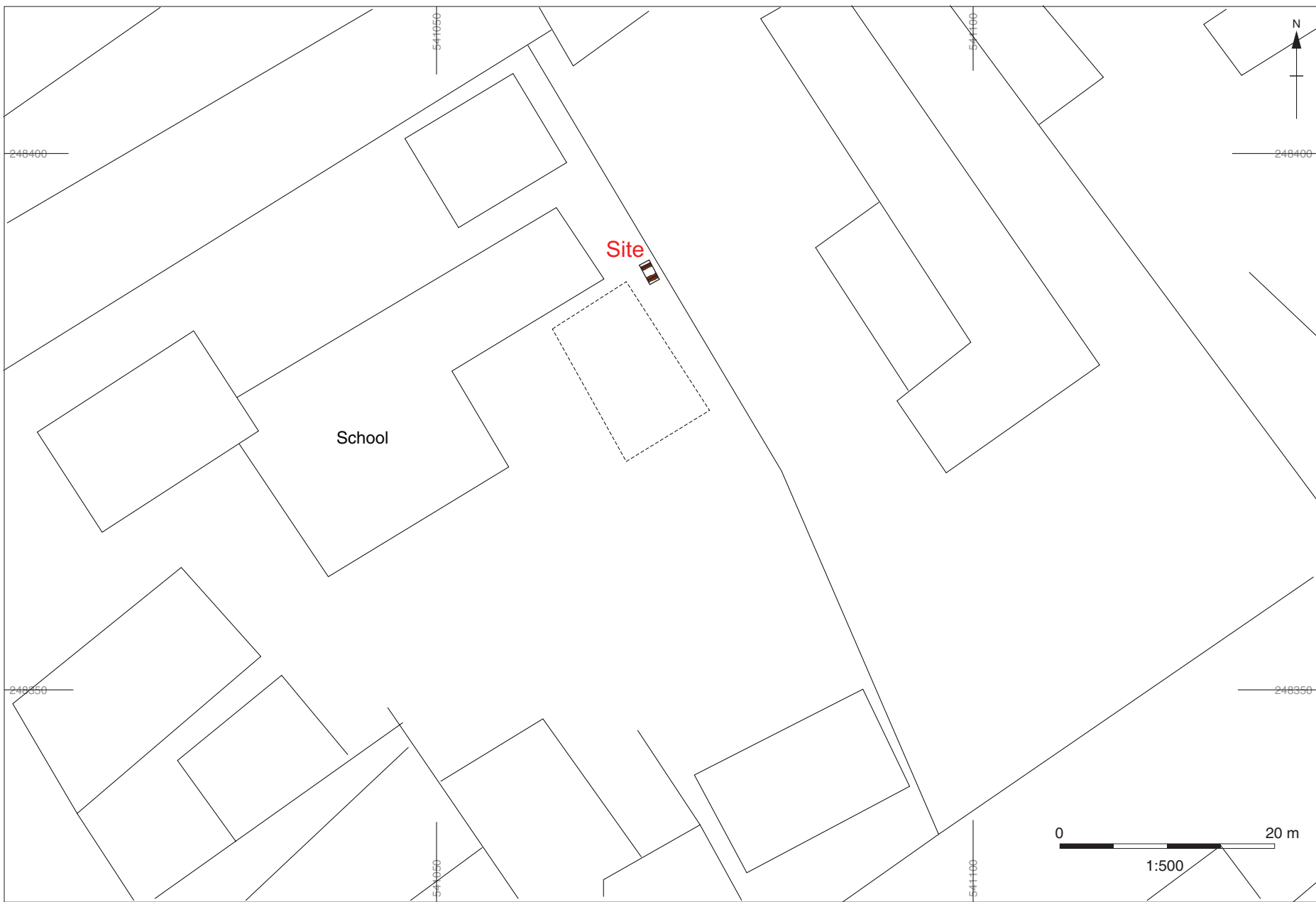


Figure 2: Plan. Scale 1:500

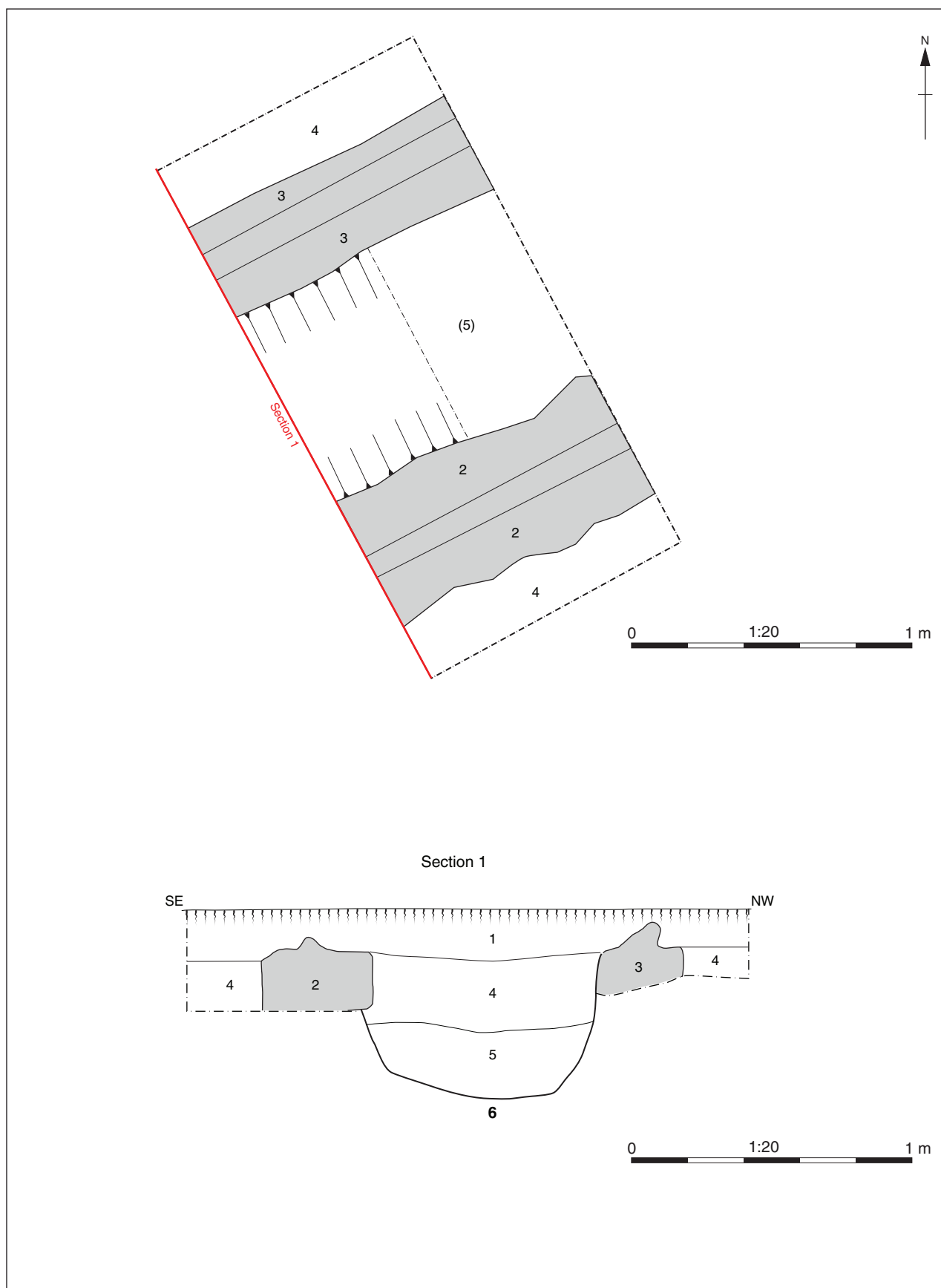


Figure 3: Building plan and section. Scale 1:20



Plate 1: Testpit 1 looking east



Plate 2: Aerial photograph of Foxton Primary School in May 1997, with shed and temporary classroom visible in the top right. Reproduced by kind permission of Foxton Primary School.



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