



Roman and Post-medieval Remains at Manor Farm Eltisley

Archaeological Watching Brief Report



May 2012

Client: Julie Herring

OA East Report No: 1338

OASIS No: oxfordar3-1258070

NGR: TL 273 593

Roman and post-medieval remains at Manor Farm, Eltisley, Cambridgeshire

Watching Brief

Site Code: ESLMAF12

CHER No. ECB3714

Date of Works: 22/2/2012 to 27/2/2014

Report No: 1338

Main Author: Rob Atkins

Client: Julie Herring

Report Date: May 2012, July 2013, April 2014

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Summary

Oxford Archaeology East carried out three phase of an archaeological watching brief at Manor Farm, Eltisley (TL 273 593). The first phase was carried out over four days (22nd to 27th February 2012) during construction of a sewage treatment plant and associated service trenches and a soakaway.

This revealed a dense concentration of Roman pits and ditches in the area directly to the north of the moat surrounding Manor Farm. Two undated pits within the courtyard of the moated site may be of Roman or later date. The pits were sealed by a post-medieval and/or modern cobbled and brick surface which probably related to a series of late 18th to early 19th century barns located within the eastern part of the moated site.

The second phase was undertaken between 1st and 6th July 2013 in the area to the south of the manor house. Two medieval ditches, aligned north to south, were recorded. These were later cut by a post-medieval ditch. To the east lay an undated post-hole.

A third phase of work took place on the 22-23rd of April 2014. Two trenches were excavated for services to the manor house. The first, to the north, crossing the existing entrance to the manor and the second to the south of the property. The trench to the north revealed post medieval gravel, tarmac and cobbled surfaces along with two ditches aligned east to west and the possible original cut of the moat. To the south, the ground was very disturbed but did reveal the possible course of the original moat.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology East conducted three phases of archaeological watching briefs over three years at land within Eltisley Manor Farm. The first over four days during February 2012 (Figs. 1 and 3), the second phase during July 2013 and the third phase in April 2014.
- 1.1.2 Eltisley Manor is a Scheduled Monument (known as the Moated Site at Manor Farm, Eltisley, South Cambs, Cambridgeshire SM No. 33274) and as such is protected under the 1979 Ancient Monument and Archaeological Areas Act. Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) was applied for and approved before any ground works were undertaken on the site. The manor farm house is a grade II listed building (51151) with surviving architectural elements dating to the 15th century, as well as 17th and 18th century modifications. There are several late post-medieval and modern farm buildings within the eastern half of the moated site and although these are not individually listed, they form part of the curtilage of the main building.
- 1.1.3 The archaeological watching briefs were undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by the Historic Environment Team, Cambridgeshire County Council (Gdaniec 2011) and a specification by Oxford East (Macaulay 2012). The archaeological work forms part of the planning application (S/0559/11) for an extension to the main house and the construction of a new sewage treatment plant.
- 1.1.4 The main house and former farm buildings have become relatively dilapidated in recent years and the development forms part of a long term plan by the owners (Mr and Mrs Herring) to restore the property.
- 1.1.5 The work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed redevelopment area, in accordance with the guidelines set out in *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment* (Department for Communities and Local Government 2010). The results will enable decisions to be made by English Heritage and Cambridgeshire County Council, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority, with regard to the treatment of any archaeological remains found.
- 1.1.6 The site archive is currently held by OA East and will be deposited with the appropriate county stores in due course.

1.2 Geology and Topography

- 1.2.1 The natural drift geology is comprises glacial deposits of boulder clay (BGS 1975). Pockets of sand and gravel (referred to as till) have also been recorded in the boulder clay in Eltisley Parish (Edmonds and Dinham 1965). The site lies at just over 64m OD.
- 1.2.2 The village of Eltisley lies in the southern half of a parish of the same name. The parish itself is small, at just 800ha, and is situated on the border of Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire. It occupies a plateau of watersheds dividing streams which flow south-east to the Bourn Brook, west of the upper Ouse at St Neots and the Lower Ouse at St Ives.
- 1.2.3 Manor Farm is located in the historic village of Eltisley, which lies 7km east of St Neots, 18km west of Cambridge, just south of the modern A428 (Fig. 1). The farm house dates from at least the 15th century and is positioned within an earlier moated site approximately half a kilometre south of the medieval village green.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

Eltisley Manor Farm

- 1.3.1 The watching briefs took place within, around and to the north-east of the moated manor site. It is likely that this was the sole manor for the parish, as recorded in the Domesday Book (Duncombe 1973, 52). The estate of Eltisley, which was assessed at three hides, was given to the canons of the Cathedral of St Mary, Bayeux (Calvados) after the Norman Conquest. The canons may have lost these lands by 1088 (Duncombe 1973, 47-8).
- 1.3.2 In the middle of the 12th century Neil, Bishop of Ely, confirmed grants of land made by Roger de Mowbray whose family had obtained Eltisley. It was in the holding of the Argentine family of Upleatham in the 12th century and by 1349 it was held by Sir Alexander Goldingham, when it was locally known as the manor of Stowe or Goldinghams. The date of the construction of the moat is unknown but is likely to have occurred in the 12th or 13th century. The manor was acquired and sold many times in the course of the medieval and post-medieval periods including in 1789 when the Revd. William Walford, Mary Walford and Thomas Walford sold it to Edward Leeds of Croxton Park. Thereafter the manor has descended with the manor of Croxton until recent times.
- 1.3.3 The moat is c.10m wide and surrounds a rectangular area of some 1.4 ha. It is fed by a spring at the south-east corner where there is a pond. Remains of a wall are visible along the west edge of the moat. The moat has a causeway entrance on the north side of Manor Farm, implying the existence of a north-south route either pre-dating or merging into the road to Caxton (Casa-Hatton 2002). The 1835 1" map (surveyed 1807-17) shows the moat with an entranceway in the middle of its northern side, as does the Tithe Map (1841) and the Enclosure Map (1868). The 1" map has a track way leading from the causeway entrance to Caxton Roadway c.40m to the east of the site and it is therefore possible that the existing causeway and the entranceway of the moat could be in their original location. Recent test pitting has revealed the remains of another undated cobbled surface to the north-west, but it is uncertain whether this was a trackway or a courtyard surface (Fairbairn 2012). Directly to the south-east of the moat is a ditched bank that seems to run from the moated site to Eltisley Wood and follows a hedged boundary (Fig. 2; CHER 2411; RCHME 1968, no 20).
- 1.3.4 Within the moat itself stood a 15th century manor house, described in the RCHME as being "partly of two storeys, partly of a one-storey with attics, has its frame cased in modern brick, and tiled roofs" (1968, 94). The RCHME interpreted the manor to be constructed on a Class-D plan with a cross wing at the west end and two-bay hall forming part of a range extending further to the east. The RCHME records the eastern part of the moated enclosure as being 'covered by' 19th century buildings (1968, 97). It is possible that some of these buildings date from the late 18th century as the 1" map shows up to three farm buildings in this area. These are likely to be the buildings whose foundations are still present in the courtyard.
- 1.3.5 The 1" map records the site as a farm, implying that the manorial role had been superseded and that it was principally in use as a farm by this time. Additional farm buildings were constructed soon after the 1" survey with one of the barns having "AW 1839" on its main beam. The Tithe Map (1841) and the Enclosure Map (1868) show these extra farm buildings forming a continuous circuit of structures from the entranceway over the moat, along its eastern side and then joining the manor house.

- 1.3.6 A recent community test pit survey within the western half of the moat found four residual Roman pottery sherds and pottery spanning the Late Saxon/Saxo-Norman to modern period (Fairbairn 2012). The test pits exposed several features, including cobbled surfaces, but these were not excavated. A brick with a date inscribed 1701 was found in the attic space during the recent building work on the roof (Julie Herring *pers. comm.*). The brick is 9¼" in length, 4½" wide and 2¼" thick, and is in a bright orange sandy fabric. Lime mortar is attached to all sides of the brick.

Archaeological and historical evidence in the parish

Prehistoric

- 1.3.7 Prehistoric trackways are thought to stem from the present day village green, however few other prehistoric remains have been found in the village. Two cropmark systems may be prehistoric and/or Roman in date (CHER 08428, 1km to the south & CHER 15971 at TL 284 586; not on plan). A Neolithic axe was found in a garden at 60 Caxton End, to the north of Manor Farm (CHER MCB16718; not on plan). Three parallel rows of undated pits, c.800m to the east of the site, may date to the Iron Age (Fig. 2, CHER 02403; Rudd 1967).

Roman

- 1.3.8 It has been speculated that a Roman Road ran west from Cambridge towards Ermine Street at Caxton Gibbet and continued via Eltisley and Croxton (Malim 2000, Ch. 21), broadly following the route of the modern A428.
- 1.3.9 The extent of Roman activity within the parish itself is unknown. A Roman ditch and artefacts from this period have been found in four different locations, spanning an area of c.500m by c.250m. These may represent up to three different settlements (Fig. 2). Four residual Roman sherds were found during a test pit evaluation at Manor Farm, adjacent to the west of the watching brief area (CHER ECB 3672; Fairbairn 2012). A small excavation 250m to the north, at Eltisley school, found a probable ditch containing three pottery sherds, two of which were Roman; this was thought to represent part of a Roman field system (CHER 15602; Hickling & Mortimer 2004).
- 1.3.10 The Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record notes a scatter of Roman pottery, c.500m to the north-east of the site, found during a field walking survey carried out by the Eltisley Local History Society in 2001. Within this field, a geophysical survey carried out by GSB Prospection Ltd in 2004, found a complex of ditches including enclosures and pit anomalies concentrated within a c.100m by 80m area. These were interpreted as a putative small Roman farmstead (CHER 17255). The majority of the ditch anomalies were directly to the north of moat (CHER 1179) with the field systems extending in all directions from this area. Roman pottery was seen in this area during the geophysical survey.
- 1.3.11 Around 300m to the north of the site, small quantities of Roman pottery and three early to mid 4th century coins were found in the back of the garden of Mr C and Mrs M Flinders at 'Heylock', 68 Caxton End (M. Flinders *pers. comm.*). It is possible these artefacts are from a further Roman farmstead.

Saxon to modern

- 1.3.12 No Early Saxon remains have been found within the parish although a possible Middle Saxon ditch was uncovered during a small excavation at Eltisley school, 200m to the north of the site (Hickling & Mortimer 2004). Archaeological work here also uncovered

Late Saxon to medieval occupation, although it appears that from the 13th century the area reverted to arable agriculture (Atkins 2003; Hickling & Mortimer 2004).

- 1.3.13 The Domesday book (1086) records Eltisley as *Hecteslei* meaning 'Wood (leah) of Elti'. This suggests an Anglo-Saxon settlement in a wooded area (Duncombe 1973, 46). The place-name evidence seems to suggest that clearance of woodland occurred relatively late, with assarting from the wood still in progress during the late 12th century (*ibid*, 46). It is also recorded that during the reign of Edward The Confessor Eltisley formed part of the estates of Earl Aelfgar, who died in c.1062, and was one of the 12 villis of the Royal Hundred of Longstowe.
- 1.3.14 In 1086, 27 peasants were recorded at Eltisley. Since only heads of households are recorded, historians have argued that these figures need multiplying by a factor of four or five to arrive at a more accurate estimate of population. This would put the population of the village at this time between 108 and 135 people. Although only rated as 3 hides, it had land for 9 ploughs and was valued at £13; the same as the rate valued in Edward the Confessor's time. This would have made it one of the most valuable in the Longstowe hundred and implies that, by the time of the Domesday book, Eltisley was already a well-established settlement.
- 1.3.15 Tradition has it that a 10th century Saxon nunnery founded at Eltisley was transferred to Hinchbrooke after the Norman Conquest. Pandionia, daughter of a Scottish king, took refuge in the nunnery (Haigh 1988). The site of this possible nunnery is unknown, if it ever existed (RCHME 1968, 90). On early OS maps, the site of the nunnery, also referred to as Eltisley Abbey, is located to the south of the church, which is dedicated to St Pandionia and St John the Baptist. This location is, however, not proven and it has also been argued that it was located at Papley Grove (Haigh 1988).
- 1.3.16 Eltisley was apparently been divided into two fields in the late 12th and early 13th century (probably East and North) and by the 14th century there were three (Papley, Middle and East) (Duncombe 1973, 53). This subdivision of Eltisley may be due to the fact that by 1279, there were three manors. Musters Manor is known from 1202, although it was absorbed into the principal manor of Eltisley in the 14th century and the whereabouts of the manor house is unknown. There was a manor at Papley which originated in a series of grants of land in Eltisley and Caxton made to Hinchbrooke between the mid-12th and early 14th century (Fig. 2). The moated site on the northern side of Fig. 2 is presumably this manor house (CHER 1049). In this period there were several large farms held in freehold and several of these moated sites may have belonged to these farms.
- 1.3.17 Eltisley, despite the division into new manors and other land parcels, continued to be relatively wealthy, with 40 villagers paying tax in 1327 and 136 adults paying poll tax in 1377, which was the third highest population in The Hundred. This is a significantly larger population than that calculated for 1086, implying an expansion in population in the 12th and 13th centuries, which is in line with national population growth at this time. Subsequently, there was a relative decline in population in Eltisley during the later medieval and post-medieval periods (Duncombe 1973, 47).
- 1.3.18 Eltisley itself seems to have had at least two main centres of population. A document of 1456 distinguishes between dwellings in 'le Estende' and 'le Upende' (Duncombe 1973, 47). The former is Caxton End (formerly called East End) while the latter is presumably around The Green and the church.
- 1.3.19 It has been suggested that cereal farming predominated in Eltisley (Duncombe 1973, 52). In 1334 the lessee of Papley paid Hinchbrooke Priory 27 quarters of corn a

year, half being barley and the remainder oats. In 1384-5 the render had been reduced to 20 quarters of grain, mostly wheat and dredge (Duncombe 1973, 52-3). There was apparently no large-scale livestock farming, although trespass by steers and sheep were presented in court in the period 1402-20.

- 1.3.20 Eltisley is centred on a medieval green at the junction between the Cambridge to St Neots Road and the Biggleswade to St Ives Road (Fig. 2). There was a further roadway from The Green leading eastwards to Caxton. The church is situated by The Green on the roadway to St Neots. It has architectural features dating from c.1200AD. The Green itself is faced by several buildings dating from the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, suggesting that this was probably the main settlement area for medieval Eltisley (Duncombe 1973, 47). There are also earthworks, including former medieval house platforms, adjacent to the west of the road to Biggleswade (CHERs 2351 and 10020; Fig. 2). The presence of medieval houses along this road to Potton End raises the possibility that there were also houses along the other roads.
- 1.3.21 Along the Caxton route there was a second green at Caxton End with a moated site adjacent and to the east, implying another centre of population (CHER 1179; Fig. 2). It is uncertain whether Caxton End represented a separate medieval focus, or resulted from later expansion of the original village nucleus. Two 17th and 18th century houses presently front the south side of the route way (RCHME 1968, 90) although it is not known if earlier medieval structures were located here. This route way may have formerly been a major thoroughfare; in the 15th century it seems to have been referred to as the King's Highway from St Neots to Caxton (Duncombe 1973, 47).
- 1.3.22 Ridge and furrow earthworks have survived as cropmarks and covered most of the parish up to recent times (RCHME 1968, 96). This ridge and furrow was plotted by the RCHME (Fig. 2).

1.4 Acknowledgements

- 1.4.1 The author would like to thank Julie Herring who commissioned and funded the archaeological work. Mary Flinders kindly lent the author maps and reports on Eltisley. The project was managed by Stephen Macaulay. The brief for archaeological works was written by Kasia Gdaniec. The fieldwork was carried out by Rob Atkins, James Fairbairn, Nick Gilmour, Michael Green, Jon House and Helen Stocks-Morgen and the illustrations prepared by Stuart Ladd. The author would also like to thank Chris Faine, Carole Fletcher and Stephen Wadeson for their specialist reports on the artefacts and ecofacts.

2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 The objective of these watching briefs 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.
- 2.1.2 The Briefs required that all the stages of construction that included ground works be monitored to fulfil both an archaeological condition placed on the site, as part of the planning consent, and also the terms and conditions of Scheduled Monument Consent (Gdaniec 2011). All work was carried out by a tracked 360° excavator under constant archaeological supervision.

2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 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.
- 2.2.2 Site conditions were variable, from very wet to dry.

Phase One

- 2.2.3 Between the 22nd and 27th February 2012 archaeological monitoring was carried out in two areas, during the instalment of a sewage treatment plant, related service trenches and a soakaway.
- 2.2.4 The first area comprised the excavations for the sewage treatment works, within the north-east of the courtyard (Fig. 4). This area measured 3.8m by 2.2m in plan and was 2.9m deep. Here, a cobbled and brick surface (2) was recorded overlying two pits. Machining was temporarily halted whilst the pits were hand excavated. Also investigated were two service trenches for the sewage pipes from the main manor house building and another from one of the former farm buildings to the west (Fig. 4). The trenches were 0.6m wide and between 0.2m and 0.6m deep. The truncated remains of the cobbled and brick surface (2) were observed in both service trenches, along with a later pit or ditch (18).
- 2.2.5 A third trench, 0.4m wide and 0.6m deep, ran northwards from the treatment plant area, across the moat, towards the second area of investigation; a soakaway a few metres to the north of the moat (Fig. 3). Three Roman ditches and a pit were found in this area and these were hand excavated. A high level of root disturbance and the small size of the trench made excavation very difficult and it is uncertain if all features were completely excavated. Afterwards, a small pipe was laid within the trench, which was then backfilled with chippings and upcast soil.

Phase Two

- 2.2.6 Phase two of the watching brief involved the monitoring of topsoil and subsoil stripping of an area 20m by 6m and the excavation of foundation trenches during the extension of the manor house. Also, the monitoring of nine pits excavated for the underpinning of a barn to the south east of the manor.

Phase Three

- 2.2.7 Phase three consisted of the monitoring of two trenches. One to the north of the manor house excavated for the installation of heating system pipes and a small trench to the south for a mains electricity cable.
- 2.2.8 The pipe trench was excavated to a depth of 0.9m through the existing concrete access and features were recorded in section where present. The cable trench was excavated to a depth of 0.7-0.8m through made ground.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 A variety of features and layers were found during the watching briefs and a list of all layers and features can be seen in Appendix A. The archaeological remains are discussed below by area and phase.

3.2 Phase 1

Service trenches and sewage treatment area within moated site

- 3.2.1 Two undated pits (**4** & **6**) were partially exposed within this area (Fig. 4). These pits pre-dated the post-medieval/modern courtyard surface (2) and are therefore likely to be either Roman or medieval in date. Although their full extents were not visible within the trench they appeared to be sub-rounded in plan. They were 1.6m and at least 0.95m in diameter and 0.2m and 0.65m deep respectively (Fig. 5, Sections 1 & 2). Both had steep sides, flat bases and were filled by sterile, mid grey brown sandy clay deposits.
- 3.2.2 Truncating pits **4** and **6** was a cobble and brick courtyard surface (2), up to 0.1m thick, which was recorded in three locations over a c.17m by c.6m area (Fig. 4). Courtyard surface 2 was c.0.48m below the present ground surface and consisted of large cobbles, up to 0.14m in length, with brick pieces laid in between. The bricks were of different types and included large late medieval examples (5" width) as well as later 17th to early 18th century types. It is uncertain if the brickwork was a later patching of the courtyard or whether they were laid at the same time as the cobbles.
- 3.2.3 One large, shallow undated feature (**18**) of uncertain function was seen cutting the cobbled surface. This feature was 2.5m wide and 0.4m deep with moderately sloped sides and a flat base (Fig. 4). Truncating this feature was a modern make up layer and the concrete (1) of the present courtyard.

Roman features to the north of the moat

- 3.2.4 No features were uncovered in the northern service trench within the moated area, where the natural was encountered directly below the 0.2m thick topsoil deposit. To the north of the moat, the trench was aligned north to south, before turning eastwards for 8m to form a soakaway (Figs. 3 & 6). The north to south section of the trench did not cut through to the base of modern deposit 16, and it is possible that other features directly to the north of the moat remain preserved beneath this layer.
- 3.2.5 In contrast, the west to east section of this trench revealed four features cutting the natural subsoil. Three of these features appeared to be ditches aligned roughly north to south (**8**, **12** & **14**), the fourth was a probable pit (**10**). The westernmost ditch (**8**) was 1.04m wide and at least 0.4m deep with moderate to steep sides (Fig. 6, Section 3). It was filled with a mid brown grey silty clay with some small chalk inclusions and a few

large stones up to 0.15m in length. A moderate quantity of relatively unabraded artefacts and ecofacts were recovered from this ditch comprising five pottery sherds (0.114kg), two fired clay/daub fragments (0.107kg) and three animal bone fragments (0.065kg). Directly to the east of ditch **8** was a probable pit (**10**) which was 0.62m in diameter and c.0.32m deep. It had moderate to steep sides and contained a single small Roman pottery sherd (9g). Ditches **12** and **14**, adjacent to the east of pit **10**, were undated and were 0.78m and 0.94m wide and c.0.18m and 0.28m deep respectively.

- 3.2.6 These four features were sealed by a thick layer at least 0.4m deep which comprised a mid to dark grey brown silty clay (16). This may have been part of the post-Roman ground surface but was, in all likelihood, predominantly the remains of dredging soil from more recent cleaning of the moat. This layer was overlaid by a 0.2m thick, dark grey brown clay silt topsoil (15).

3.3 Phase 2

Patio extension

- 3.3.1 This phase included stripping of the areas to the south of the manor house and a further trench measuring 0.7m wide and 0.6m deep (Fig. 3). Grey boulder clay natural was revealed below the modern ground surface. This was overlain by a 0.3m thick topsoil (28) consisting of a dark greyish brown silty clay. No subsoil was present.
- 3.3.2 A north to south aligned ditch (**23**) was excavated in the western end of the trench (Fig 3). Ditch **23** was 1.4m wide and 0.45m deep with a steep sided profile and a concave base. Its primary fill comprised redeposited natural (22), 0.1m thick, that was sealed by a dark greyish brown silty clay (21), 0.35m thick, tertiary deposit that contained late medieval pottery and animal bone. Two metres to the east lay an undated ditch (**20**) on a parallel alignment. The ditch had steep sides and a concave base, measuring 0.8m wide and 0.25m deep. This was filled by a mid brown silty clay (19).
- 3.3.3 An east to west ditch (**27**) was partially exposed along the southern edge of the trench that truncated ditch (**20**). It was at least 1.2m wide and 0.58m deep and had stepped sides. This ditch had a single fill (26) which contained medieval pottery and post medieval tile.
- 3.3.4 To the east, a small undated post-hole was seen cutting the natural (Fig. 3). This post-hole (**25**) was 0.4m wide and 0.12m deep with steep sides and a flat base. It contained a single dark grey fill (24).
- 3.3.5 At the eastern end of the excavation area an undated sub-circular pit (**30**) was revealed within the foundation trenches. This pit, which measured 0.9m wide and 0.34m deep, had steep sides, a flat base and contained a dark greyish brown silty clay fill (29).

Pads for barn underpinning

- 3.3.6 Nine trenches were excavated to underpin the existing barn (Fig. 3), eight of which measured 1.2m long, 0.6m wide and 1m deep. The foundations of the barn consisted of hand made red brick pads laid directly onto a mid brown topsoil deposit, 0.3m thick, overlying grey boulder clay natural.
- 3.3.7 The trench located in the south-east of the barn, which was 2.8m long and 1.2m wide, revealed a 0.35m thick topsoil deposit with brick rubble. This sealed a dark brownish grey silty clay (31), 0.75m thick. This deposit overlay a mid blueish grey clay with occasional charcoal (32), 0.4m thick. The natural was exposed at a depth of 1.4m. The deposits recorded are thought be the infilling of a ditch (**33**), however the small scale

nature of the intervention did not allow for the edges to be revealed. The trench was located along the projected line of the ditch **27** and likely to be the continuation of this ditch.

Service Trench

- 3.3.8 A north to south aligned trench measuring 0.7m wide and 0.6m deep was excavated to the east of the barn. At the northern end of the trench, a 0.4m thick layer of concrete and hardcore was recorded overlying the natural clay deposits.
- 3.3.9 To the south of the trench (Fig. 3) modern rubble and topsoil were stripped to reveal the uppermost fill of a large ditch, thought to be a continuation of ditch **27/33**; revealed during the patio extension and foundation pads. The deposit was dark blue grey silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks, 7.6m wide. To the south of this deposit a concentration of large cobbles was visible within the deposit, which is likely to represent a single dump of stones to stabilise the ground.

3.4 Phase 3

Pipe Trench

- 3.4.1 A north to south aligned trench was excavated across the existing access over the moat (Fig. 3). The trench measured 1.0m in width, approx 40m in length and 0.9m in depth. The trench revealed four possible cut features and four layers.
- 3.4.2 The trench was sealed by a modern concrete layer (40) with a flint and stone bedding, overlying a layer of modern gravel and tarmac (41). Two layers of cobbling were also revealed (42 & 51). Layer 42 consisted of large sandstone and quartz pebbles and crushed brick and was 0.1-0.3m in depth and ran 23m north to south, the cobbles were held within a light grey clay matrix. Layer 51 consisted of fine pebbles, flint and brick. It was only present at the southern end of the pipe trench running 10m from the southern end of the trench. It was 0.1m in depth and lay directly below the garden turf.
- 3.4.3 Ditch **43** was aligned east to west and was 1.0m in width and 0.34m in depth. Its fill (44) was a plastic light grey clay with occasional small flint and stone inclusions containing two pieces of tile. Ditch **45** was also aligned east to west. It was 1.36m in width and 0.42m in depth and filled by a plastic light grey clay with occasional small flint and stone inclusions that contained one piece of pottery.
- 3.4.4 A third linear, possible ditch/moat (**47**), was also recorded aligned east to west. This feature was 4.92m in width and not fully excavated. Fill (48) was a plastic dark grey silty clay with no inclusions and contained no finds.
- 3.4.5 Feature **49** ran north-west to south-east and was a tile drain. It was 0.24m in width and 0.22m in depth and filled by a soft dark grey clayey silt (50) with no inclusions and contained tile.

Cable Trench

- 3.4.6 A north to south trench was excavated across a possible southern entrance over the moat (Fig. 3). The trench measured 0.5m in width, approximately 13m in length and 0.7-0.8m in depth. It was sealed by a layer of modern concrete and brick rubble (52) 0.7m in depth that contained large lumps of concrete, brick and stone.

- 3.4.7 A single possible cut feature was uncovered. Possible Ditch/Moat (**53**) was aligned east to west. Only one edge was visible but it was 11m in width. As a result it was not fully excavated one fill (54) was recorded, a plastic mid grey clay with occasional small flint and stone inclusions that contained deep frogged brick.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Overview

- 4.1.1 The watching brief (Phase 1) found evidence of Roman settlement with dense activity just to the north of the moat. Relatively unabraded artefacts and ecofacts were recovered from one of the ditches and it is likely that there was domestic Roman occupation very close to this part of the site.
- 4.1.2 The extent of this settlement is uncertain, it is possible that two undated pits found in the eastern part of the moated enclosure dated to this period. Further evidence for Roman settlement in the locality includes residual Roman pottery sherds found during a community project in 2011 directly to the west of this area, in the western part of the moated site (Fairbairn 2012). Also, a probable Roman field system found 250m to the north (Hickling & Mortimer 2004). It is not, however, certain if this constituted part of the same settlement, or related to another contemporary settlement. A possibility for this lies c.300m to the north of the site where Roman pottery and coins have been found in the back garden of 'Heylock' No 68 Caxton End. A third Roman farmstead has also been found located c.500m to the north-east of the site. This settlement was identified during fieldwalking in 2001, a subsequent geophysical survey found enclosure and pit anomalies.
- 4.1.3 The c.300-500m distance between the three postulated Roman settlements is consistent with contemporary settlement patterns identified elsewhere in Cambridgeshire (Atkins 2010; Atkins & Mudd 2003). Certainly within the area around Stow Longa and Tilbrook (Huntingdonshire), as well as around Ely (East Cambridgeshire), it has been demonstrated that Roman farmsteads were positioned every few hundred metres.
- 4.1.4 It is interesting to note that the Roman ditches in the watching brief site, the Eltisley school site and the settlement located in the geophysical survey were aligned on north to south and east to west axis' (GSB 2004, fig. 4; Hickling & Mortimer 2004, 13). The latter excavation site also recorded Saxon and Saxo-Norman features on the same alignment, suggesting the survival of at least some of the Roman field boundaries/routeways into later periods.
- 4.1.5 At the subject site, the evidence from Phase 2 indicates that this broad layout endured into the medieval period. Two ditches (**20 & 23**), recorded to the south of the manor house, were of 11th century date and pre-dated the moat. It is likely that these represented the remains of cultivation strips. In the wider landscape, aerial photographs of the ridge and furrow clearly show the fields laid out on a north to south axis.
- 4.1.6 In contrast, it was noted at the Eltisley school excavations that although Caxton Road, to the north, is the closest principal thoroughfare, none of the ditch alignments appeared to respect its alignment (north-west to south-east). It is also of note that all five moated sites in Eltisley (HERS 1049, 2296/1143, 1179, 1142 & 1145/1144) are aligned north to south, as is the road to St Ives. It is therefore possible that the route of Caxton Road represents the abandonment of the Middle/Late Saxon planned layout during the later medieval/post-medieval period (Hickling & Mortimer 2004, 13).

- 4.1.7 The watching brief at Manor Farm did not find any definite evidence of Saxon or high medieval features or artefacts. Residual late medieval bricks (probably dated to pre-AD 1500) are of interest but it is uncertain where they originated from. These bricks were found within an extensive cobbled and brick surface which is likely to have been the courtyard surface relating to the existing late 18th and early 19th century farm buildings within the eastern half of the moat. The existing Manor Farm house dates from the 15th century and it is possible the bricks were taken and reused during renovation of the house in the 18th or 19th centuries.
- 4.1.8 Phase 2 revealed an east to west ditch (**27**) which may have been the original moat, dug in the 13th century, that slowly went out of use. At some point in the 16th century the moat was refashioned. This would have been part of a wider resurgence of moats, related to their use as garden ornamentation and often involving their re-shaping along more regular outlines. This appears to be corroborated by the evidence from the nine pits excavated for underpinning the barn during Phase 2, where a cut (**33**) was seen which appeared to line up with ditch **27** and ditch **53** seen in phase 3.
- 4.1.9 These findings were supported by the evidence uncovered during Phase 3, which also elucidated aspects of the development of the access to the manor. The pipe trench to the north of the manor revealed two ditches running parallel on an east to west alignment that may have linked to the ditches seen in Phase 2. The most notable finding in the pipe trench to the north was the possible original cut of the moat (**47**), which suggests that either the existing entrance to the manor was not its original access point or that this was afforded by a bridge over the moat in this location. The overlying layer (**47**) suggests that the moat was filled and a cobble track laid out, possibly in the late 18th and early 19th century, linked to the construction of the farm buildings within the eastern half of the moat. This route was then re-surfaced by gravel, tarmac and concrete to form the existing access.
- 4.1.10 The pipe trench also revealed a surface (51) to the south of the works, which was also seen in a preceding community project nearby (Fairbairn 2012). This was originally thought to date to the medieval period but finds of stoneware and brick indicate that this surface was later in date, possibly even Victorian, and may represented a garden path to the main entrance of the manor.
- 4.1.11 The cable trench excavated to the south of the manor during Phase 3 was in close proximity to the pits excavated for the underpinning of the barn (Phase 2) and revealed a very similar sequence of layers and features. A 0.7-0.8m thick layer of modern made ground (52), which contained large amounts of brick and concrete rubble, was dumped into the area to form an access over the moat to the south. This overlay layer 54, which possibly represented the fill of the original moat. Ditch **53**, seen at the north end of the cable trench, most likely represented the original cut of the moat to the south of the manor. This feature was more than double the width of the corresponding cut observed in the northern part of the possible original moat (**47**). Its increased width at this point is perhaps indicative of it being the corner of the original moat.

5 FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

5.1 Roman pottery

by Steve Wadeson

- 5.1.1 Six Roman pottery sherds (0.123kg) from five different vessels were recovered from two features (**8** & **10**). Five of the sherds (0.114kg) were wheel thrown shell-tempered fragments from jars but were not closely datable. A single grey sandy ware sherd (9g) with some mica inclusions was also not closely datable.
- 5.1.2 The latest phases of work produced a further two sherds of Roman pottery weighing 0.017kg. From ditch **27**, which otherwise produced medieval pottery, was recovered a heavily abraded sherd of South Gaulish Samian from La Graufesenque (Tomber & Dore, 1998, p28-29). The sherd is possibly from a cup or small bowl and can be broadly dated to AD50-110. Ditch **45** produced a single abraded, grog-tempered, sandy oxidised ware body sherd, possibly from a flagon dating to the mid 1st-2nd century.

5.2 Post-Roman pottery

by Carole Fletcher

- 5.2.1 A small medieval and post-medieval pottery assemblage was recovered from four contexts. Ditch **23** (context 21) produced two sherds, including a rim sherd from a developed St Neots jar (mid 11th-mid 13th century). Ditch **27** (context 26) produced six sherds of pottery weighing 0.063kg. These also included a rim sherd from a developed St Neots jar (mid 11th-mid 13th century) alongside two sherds from a Potterspurry ware vessel (mid 13th-end of 15th century) and a body sherd from a Bichrome vessel (Broad Street, Ely Bichrome ware mid 16th-17th century), probably a pipkin.
- 5.2.2 Pit **30** (context 29) produced four sherds of pottery weighing 0.012kg. Two sherds are early post-medieval redware and two sherds are Late Medieval Reduced ware, possibly from Everton, which lies approximately 13km to the south west of Eltisley.
- 5.2.3 Layer 51 produced a single sherd from a 19th-20th century stoneware jar.

5.3 Brick and roof tile

by Rob Atkins with additions by Carole Fletcher

- 5.3.1 A representative sample of three partial bricks (5.69kg) and a roof tile fragment (0.086kg) was retained from a probable late 18th/early 19th century cobbled courtyard (2). One of the brick fragments (2.437kg) was a late medieval type, c.130mm (5") wide and c.70mm thick. Similar sized bricks can be seen in the late 15th century Bishop's palace, Ely and have also been found in excavations at Wisbech Castle (Atkins 2012).
- 5.3.2 For some parts of Cambridgeshire there is an apparent correlation between width of brick and age, with 5" brick seemingly made in the late medieval period at Wisbech and a broad reduction in width to 4½" by the early 16th century.
- 5.3.3 The Eltisley brick was very crudely made with poor arises in an overfired orange sandy fabric which had been burnt red and slightly vitrified at firing. The brick had come from a sanded mould and there were some small flint inclusions on the surface. Two partial bricks probably dated to the 17th to early 18th century and were likely to be contemporary, from the same kiln. One was nearly complete (1.884kg), c.230mm long,

105mm wide and c.53mm thick and was in a yellow, poorly mixed sandy clay fabric. A small fragment of a ceramic ridge tile was in a yellow sandy clay fabric.

- 5.3.4 A further 3.305kg of ceramic building material was recovered from six contexts. Ditch **27** produced fragments from five different roof tiles, on one of which survives a single large nail hole close to the corner of the tile, suggesting this tile was double-holed. The fragments all appear to be post-medieval in date. A further two fragments of post-medieval roof tile were recovered from pit **20** (context 29).
- 5.3.5 From layer 42 was recovered a partial, yellow brick, 104-106mm wide and 61mm thick, which may be 18th or 19th century. Ditch **43** (context 44) produced two small fragments of post-medieval roof tile.
- 5.3.6 Feature **49**, described as a drain, produced two large fragments of Roman ceramic building material, a fragment from a large *imbrex* and a fragment of tile or brick. The presence of this material indicates a Roman building of some substance close to the site.
- 5.3.7 Layer 51 produced fragments of 19th-20th century or later brick and tile.

5.4 Fired clay/daub

by Rob Atkins

- 5.4.1 Two fragments of fired clay/daub (0.107kg) were recovered from pit **10**. One was a large fragment (0.105kg), and was a cream colour with chalk inclusions with one side having a smoothed face.

5.5 Animal Bone

by Chris Faine

- 5.5.1 Three fragments of animal bone (0.065kg) were recovered from pit **10**. These included part of a cattle maxilla (upper jaw), the lower part of a sheep radius and a rib fragment.

5.6 Mollusca

by Carole Fletcher

- 5.6.1 A total of 0.025 of shell fragments of marine molluscs were collected from ditch **27**. The shell does not appear to have been deliberately broken or crushed.

| Context | Type | Weight (kg) |
|---------|-------------------------------|-------------|
| 26 | Mussel: <i>Mytilus edulis</i> | 0.005 |
| 26 | Oyster: <i>Ostrea edulis</i> | 0.001 |

Table 1: Shell

APPENDIX A. CONTEXT INVENTORY

| Ctxt | Cut | Feature Type | Date/Function | Width | Depth | Artefacts |
|------|-----|-------------------|----------------------------------|-------|-------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | - | Layer | Modern yard and make up deposits | | 0.48 | |
| 2 | - | Layer | ?18th/19th century courtyard | | 0.08 | Brick and tile |
| 3 | 4 | Fill of pit | Pre-?18th/19th century courtyard | | | |
| 4 | | Pit | Pre-?18th/19th century courtyard | 1.6 | 0.2 | |
| 5 | 6 | Fill of pit | Pre-?18th/19th century courtyard | | | |
| 6 | | Pit | Pre-?18th/19th century courtyard | 0.95+ | 0.65 | |
| 7 | 8 | Fill of ditch | Roman | | | Pottery, daub + animal bone |
| 8 | | Ditch | Roman | 1.04 | 0.4+ | |
| 9 | 10 | Fill of ?pit | Roman | | | Pottery sherd |
| 10 | | ?Pit | Roman | 0.62 | 0.32 | |
| 11 | 12 | Fill of ?ditch | Roman | | | |
| 12 | | ?Ditch | Roman | 0.78 | 0.18 | |
| 13 | 14 | Fill of ?ditch | Roman | | | |
| 14 | | ?Ditch | Roman | 0.94 | 0.28 | |
| 15 | | Layer | Modern-dredging moat | | 0.2 | |
| 16 | | Layer | Modern-topsoil | | 0.4 | |
| 17 | 18 | Fill of ?ditch | Modern | | | |
| 18 | | ?Ditch | Modern | 2.5 | 0.4 | |
| 19 | 20 | Fill of ditch | Undated | 0.8 | 0.25 | |
| 20 | | Ditch | Undated | 0.8 | 0.25 | |
| 21 | 23 | Fill of ditch | Medieval | 1.4 | 0.35 | Pottery, animal bone |
| 22 | 23 | Fill of ditch | Medieval | 1.4 | 0.45 | |
| 23 | | ditch | Medieval | 1.4 | 0.45 | |
| 24 | 25 | Fill of post-hole | Undated | 0.4 | 0.12 | |
| 25 | | Post-hole | Undated | 0.4 | 0.12 | |
| 26 | 27 | Fill of ditch | Post-medieval | 1.1+ | 0.58+ | Pottery, Brick and tile |
| 27 | | Ditch | Post-medieval | 1.1+ | 0.58+ | |
| 28 | | Topsoil | Modern | | 0.3 | |
| 29 | 30 | Fill of pit | Undated | 0.9 | 0.34 | |
| 30 | | Pit | Undated | 0.9 | 0.34 | |
| 31 | 33 | Fill of ditch | Medieval | 1.2+ | 0.75 | |

| | | | | | | |
|----|----|---------------|--------------------|------|---------|-----------------------|
| 32 | 33 | Fill of ditch | Medieval | 1.2+ | 0.4 | |
| 33 | | ditch | Medieval | 1.2+ | 1.4 | |
| 40 | | Layer | Modern | | 0.1-0.2 | |
| 41 | | Layer | Modern | | 0.1-0.3 | |
| 42 | | Layer | Post-medieval | | 0.1-0.3 | Brick |
| 43 | | Cut | med/early post med | 1 | 0.34 | |
| 44 | 43 | Fill | med/early post med | 1 | 0.34 | Tile |
| 45 | | Cut | med/early post med | 1.36 | 0.42 | |
| 46 | 45 | Fill | med/early post med | 1.36 | 0.42 | Pottery and bone |
| 47 | | Cut | med/early post med | 4.92 | 0.4+. | |
| 48 | 47 | Fill | med/early post med | 4.92 | 0.4+. | |
| 49 | | Cut | Post-medieval | 0.24 | 0.22 | |
| 50 | 49 | Fill | Post-medieval | 0.24 | 0.22 | Tile |
| 51 | | Layer | Post-medieval | | 0.1 | Pottery, Brick and Fe |
| 52 | | Layer | Modern | | 0.75 | |
| 53 | | Cut | med/early post med | 11m+ | 0.2+. | |
| 54 | 53 | Fill | med/early post med | 11m+ | 0.2+. | Brick |

APPENDIX B. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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APPENDIX C. 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

| | | | |
|------------|----------------------|---|----------------------|
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| District | <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 | |
| Project Brief Originator | |
| Project Design Originator | |
| Project Manager | |
| Supervisor | |

Project Archives

| Physical Archive | Digital Archive | Paper Archive |
|------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| | | |
| | | |

Archive Contents/Media

| | Physical Contents | Digital Contents | Paper Contents |
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| Environmental | <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 |
|--|---|
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| <input type="checkbox"/> GIS | <input type="checkbox"/> Context Sheet |
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| | <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

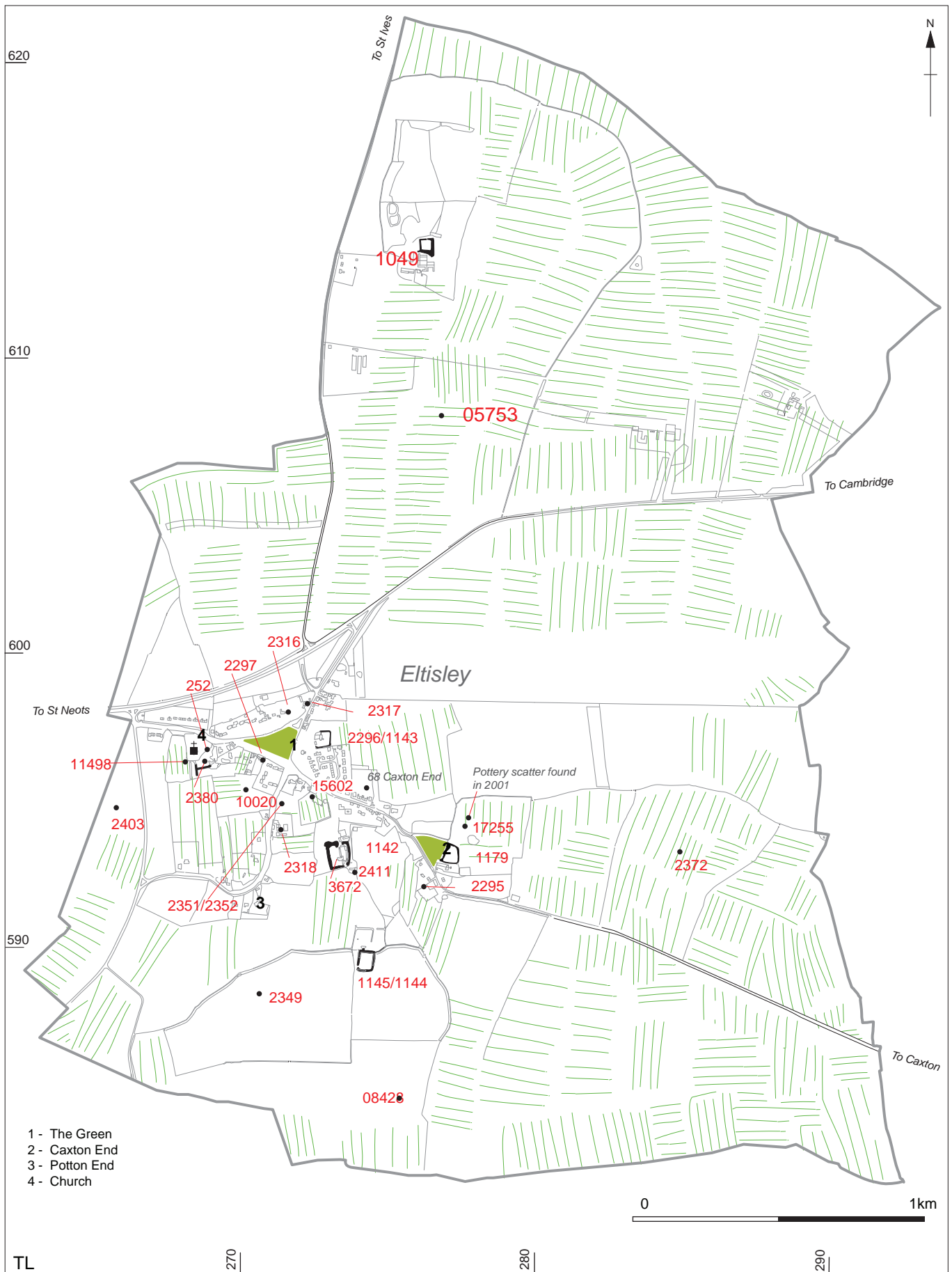


Fig. 2: Map of Eltisley Parish showing HER numbers (red), ridge and furrow, moated sites (black) and greens (green).



Figure 3: Location of sewage treatment areas, service trenches and soakaway.

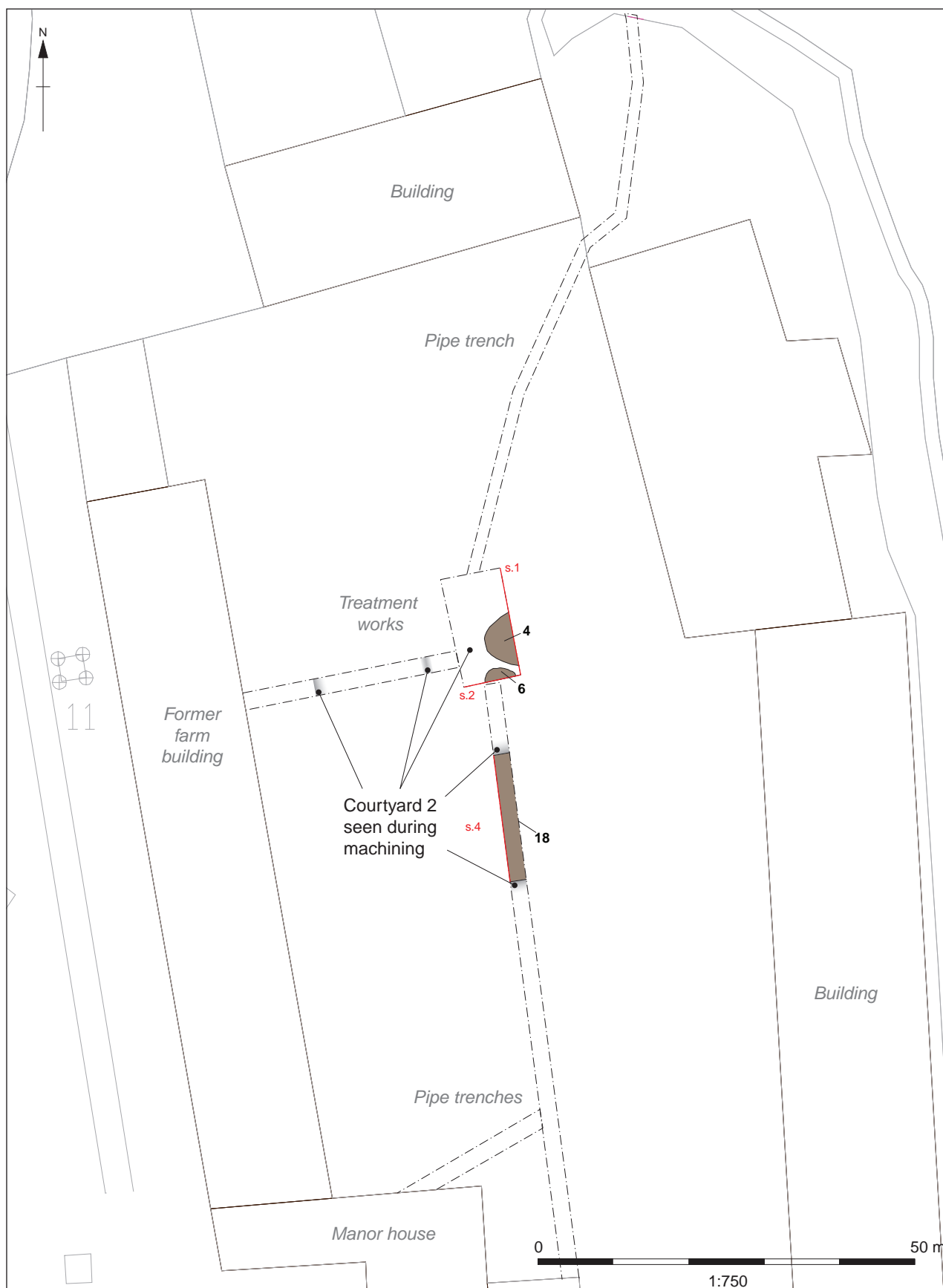


Figure 4: Location of sewage treatment area, service trenches within courtyard of the moated site
Scale 1:750

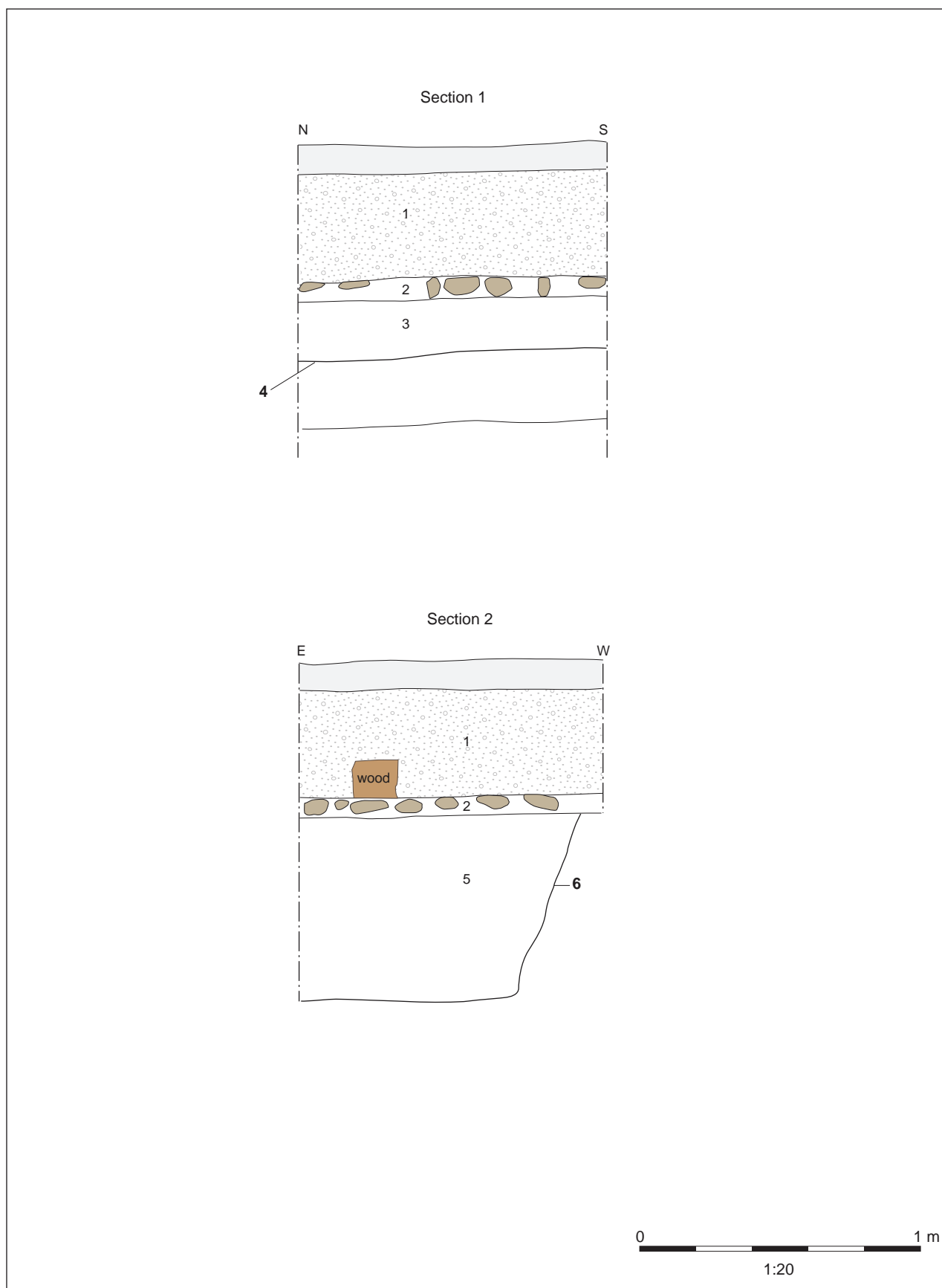


Figure 5: Sections through the treatment area within the courtyard of the moated site. Scale 1:20

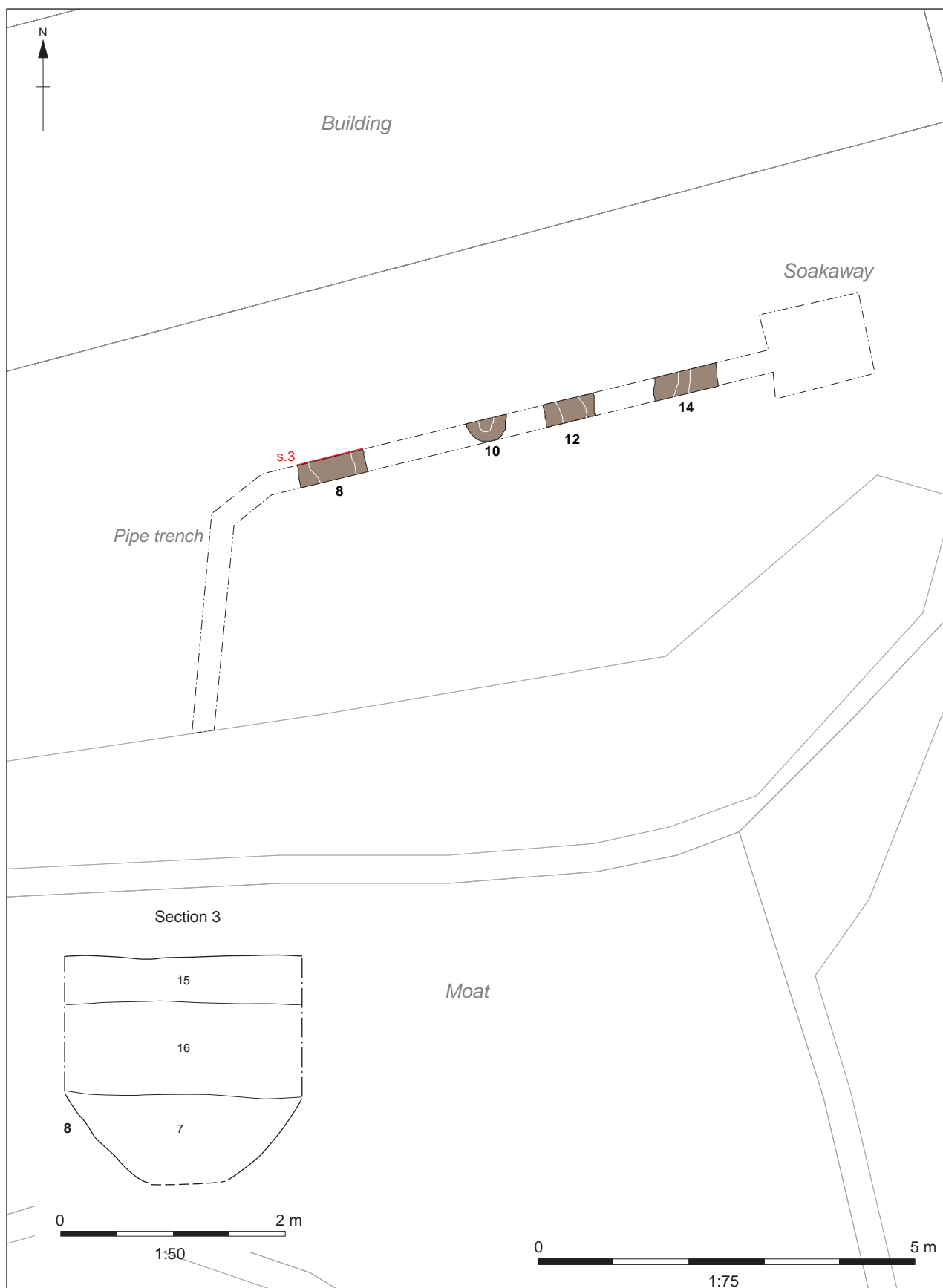


Figure 6: Plan and section of Roman features to the north of the moat. Scale 1:75

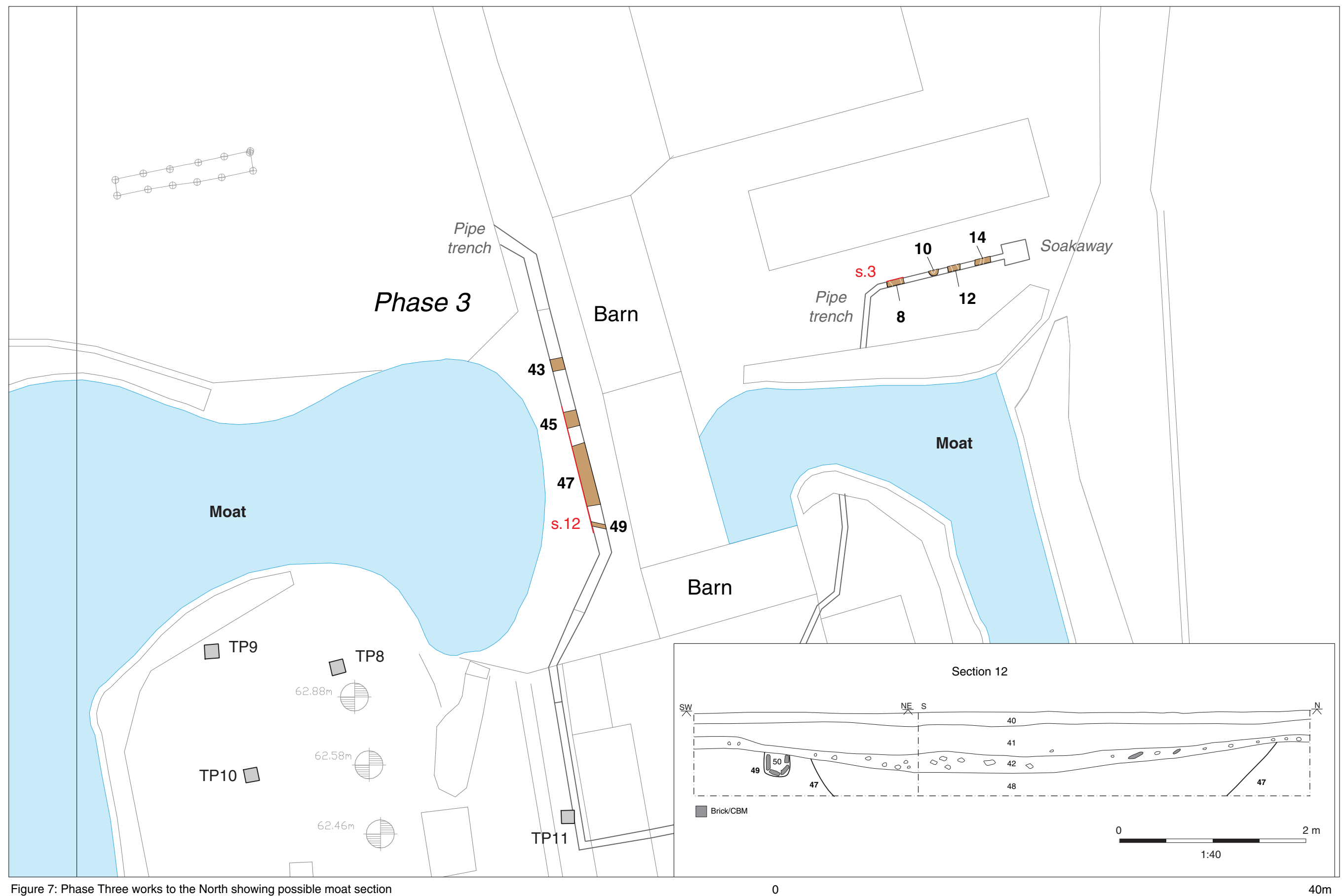


Figure 7: Phase Three works to the North showing possible moat section

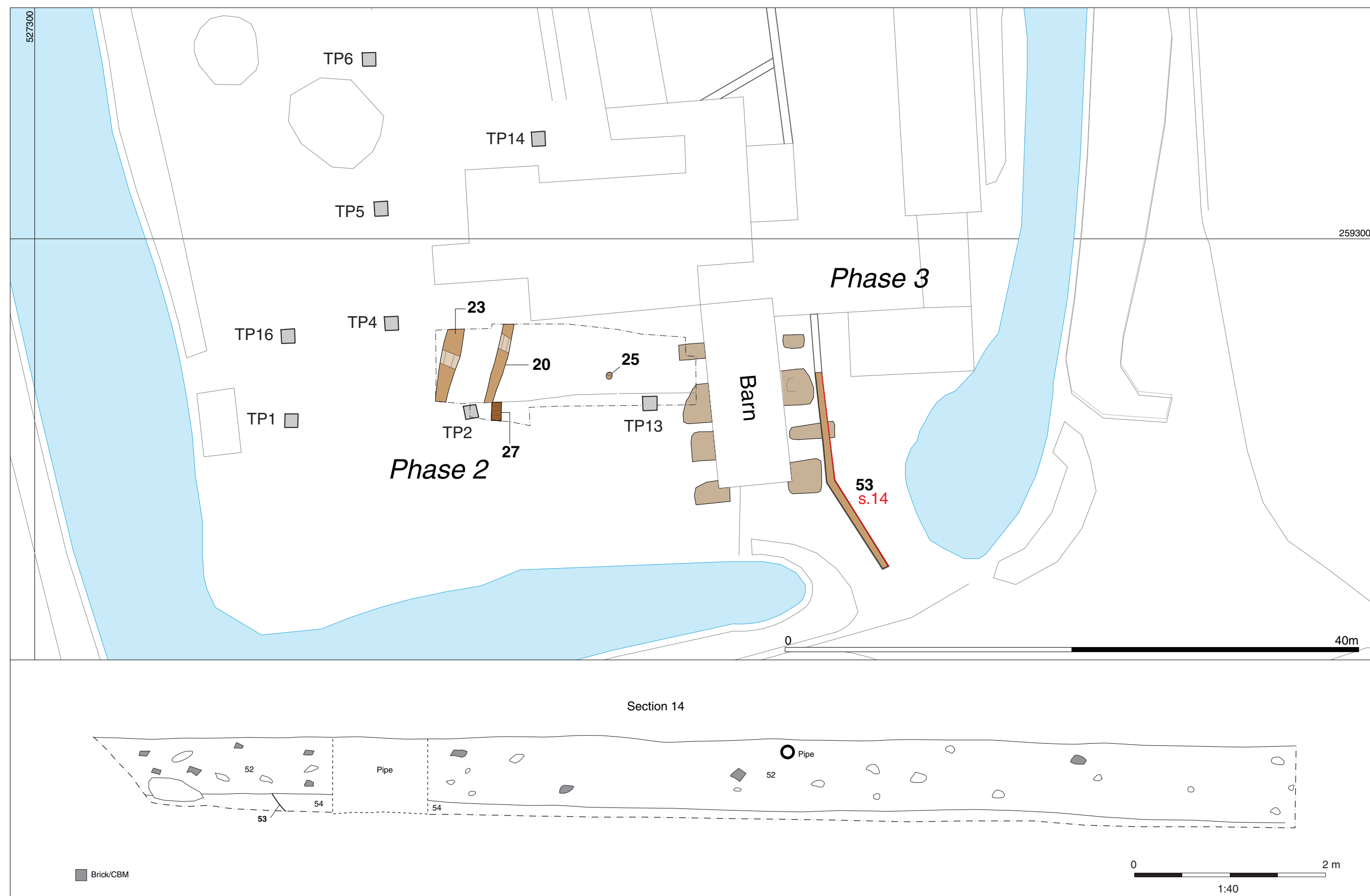


Figure 8: Phase Three works to the South with associated section



Plate 1: Phase 2 showing possible Roman ditches (20) and (23) looking north



Plate 2: Phase 2 excavation of under-pinning pits



Plate 3: Phase 3 pipe trench showing ditch (45) looking west



Plate 4: Phase 3 pipe trench and Manor house looking south



Plate 5: Phase 3 pipe cable trench looking south



**Head Office/Registered Office/
OA South**

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford OX2 0ES

t: +44 (0) 1865 263 800
f: +44 (0) 1865 793 496
e: info@oxfordarch.co.uk
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net>

OA North

Mill 3
Moor Lane
Lancaster LA1 1GF

t: +44 (0) 1524 541 000
f: +44 (0) 1524 848 606
e: [oanorth@thehumanjourney.net](mailto: oanorth@thehumanjourney.net)
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net>

OA East

15 Trafalgar Way
Bar Hill
Cambridgeshire
CB23 8SQ

t: +44 (0) 1223 850500
f: +44 (0) 1223 850599
e: [oaeast@thehumanjourney.net](mailto: oaeast@thehumanjourney.net)
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net>



Director: David Jennings, BA MIFA FSA

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