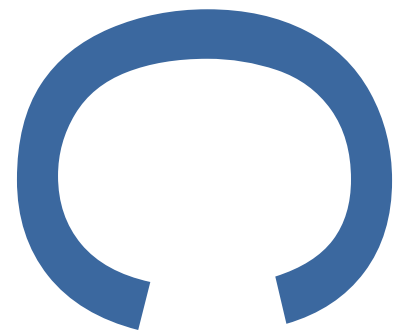


**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING  
OF WORKS ASSOCIATED WITH  
THE ALTERATION AND  
LANDSCAPING AT MOOR HALL  
THORLEY, BISHOPS STORTFORD,  
HERTFORDSHIRE, CM23 4BJ**



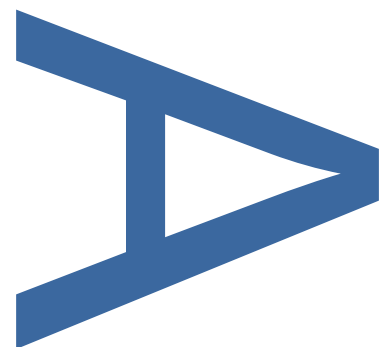
**LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY: EAST  
HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**PLANNING REFERENCE: 3/21/0346/HH**

**PCA REPORT NO: R15407 V1**

**SITE CODE: MHT21**

**APRIL 2022**



**PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY**

## **Archaeological Monitoring of Works Associated with Alteration and Landscaping at Moor Hall, Thorley, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, CM23 4BJ**

**Local Planning Authority:** East Hertfordshire District Council

**Planning Reference:** 3/21/0346/HH & 3/21/0347/LBC

**Central National Grid Reference:** NGR TL 46729 18916

**Site Code:** MHT21

**Report No.** R15407 v1

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**April 2023**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*Archaeological monitoring was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. (PCA) on works associated with alteration and landscaping at Moor Hall, Thorley, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, CM23 4BJ on 10th August, 28<sup>th</sup> September, 10<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and 21<sup>st</sup> October 2022.*

*The aim of the monitoring was to record any archaeological features present to secure the protection of and proper provision for any archaeological remains in accordance with Policies HA1 and HA3 of the East Herts District Plan 2018 and the National Planning Policy Framework.*

*Areas monitored were the western side of the house for new landscaping and driveway, an east-west aligned cable trench to the south of the house, landscaping areas south of the house, and foundation trenches to the south and east of the house.*

*Evidence for post-medieval and modern activity was found, including remnants of landscaping, a brick drain, and potential manuring.*

*During the excavation of foundation trenches in an area to the south of the house evidence was recovered for a possible agricultural building and what appeared to be the remains of the moat recorded and extant a short way to the south of the house.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Archaeological monitoring was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. (PCA) on works associated with alteration and landscaping at Moor Hall, Thorley, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, CM23 4BJ (centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (NGR TL 46729 18916, Figure 1) on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2022.
- 1.2 The archaeological work was commissioned by Snell David Architects Ltd. in response to an archaeological condition (3) attached to the planning consent, (Planning Reference: 3/21/0346/HH and 3/21/0347/LBC) for the demolition of the side extension and porch, the relocation of the entrance, erection of a new porch, single-storey side extensions, and a two-storey rear extension, in addition to external alterations and alterations to the driveway. This was due to high archaeological significance of the proposed development area (PDA). The work was undertaken in line with the National Planning Policy Framework published in 2012 and revised in 2018.
- 1.3 The monitoring was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by Adam Garwood of PCA (Garwood 2021) in response to the condition attached to the planning consent.
- 1.4 A programme of historic building recording was undertaken prior to and during the works. This is described in a separate report (Garwood 2023) which should be read in conjunction with this document.
- 1.5 The aim of the monitoring was to record any archaeological features present to secure the protection of and proper provision for any archaeological remains in accordance with Policies HA1 and HA3 of the East Herts District Plan 2018 and the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 1.6 This report describes the results of the investigations. The site archive will be deposited at Bishop's Stortford Museum.

## **2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY**

### **2.1 Geology**

- 2.1.1 The geology of the site comprises superficial deposits of Lowestoft Formation Diamicton overlying Thanet Formation and Lambeth Group (undifferentiated) Clay, Silt and Sand (BGS 2022).

### **2.2 Topography**

- 2.2.1 Moor Hall, Thorley lies to the immediate south-west of Bishop's Stortford (Figure 1), in the valley of the River Stort which runs c. 2km to the east. The site lies on level ground at c. 86m AOD with land overall falling from the Chilterns in the west to the River Stort in the east. Lancaster Lake lies c.430m south of the Hall and Brookfield Spring approximately 270m east.

### **3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORIC BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The following information is derived from the Heritage Statement prepared by Brighter Planning Consultancy (2021), as well as the Historic Building Record (Garwood 2023).
- 3.2 The settlement of Thorley is located within a parish covering c.1,527 acres to the south of Bishop's Stortford and on the upper slopes of the Stort river valley. Moor Hall lies to the south-west of Bishop's Stortford and at the end of Moor Hall Lane.
- 3.3 The manor of Thorley was held in the reign of Edward the Confessor by a certain Godid, a 'man' of Asgar the Staller. After the Conquest it was purchased from the King by William Bishop of London, to whom Godid remitted her right. Before 1086, however, it had been acquired by Geoffrey de Mandeville and he was holding it at the time of the Domesday Survey.
- 3.4 Place name evidence records 'Torlei' in the 11th century, 'Thorleia' in the 12th century and 'Thorley' by the 13th century. The root of Thorley is thought to derive from Tor, Old English for stone hill and Lei meaning meadow or pasture.
- 3.5 The site has medieval origins with the original Manor House of Moor Hall recorded as belonging to Merton Priory from 1291-1544. It is thought that this house may have once stood further north and where the remains of a moat are located.
- 3.6 The Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record includes four entries relating to the site. Two entries relate to the Hall and adjacent farm buildings (HER 12209 & 11158) while the other two entries relate to the former farmstead (HER 18819), located 60m west of the current farmhouse (and still visible in aerial photos) and to the discovery of a silver seal matrix (HER 17639).
- 3.7 Moor Hall and its associated farm buildings are grade II listed building (NHLE 1214154) comprising multiple phases of construction. Between 1291 and 1544 the manor belonged to Merton Priory. In 1544 it was acquired by Clement Newce, and the family held it until at least 1611. The earliest building phase



- dates to the c.16th century, with notable later additions dating to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It has been in ownership of the applicant's family since 1920.
- 3.8 The house was certainly built by the 16th century as in 1535 the 'rent of assize with rents and farms in Morehall in Thorley' held by Merton Priory was assessed at £5 6s. 8d. In 1544, the estate was granted as the manor of Morehall to Sir Henry Parker, the 8th Baron Lord Morley. In 1544 Parker alienated Morehall to Clement Newce (died 1579) and it descended with the Newce family until as late as 1611, when William Newce died seised of it. Thereafter Morehall (an archaic spelling of Moor Hall) was held with Tedenhoebury in Sawbridgeworth by the Taylor family in 1779 (VCH 1912).
- 3.9 HER records refer to traces of a post-medieval farmstead site situated 60m west of the farmhouse (HHER 18819). A medieval silver seal matrix with suspension ring and lettering around a carved black intaglio was discovered during metal detecting in the same area (HHER 17639). The stone may be jasper. The inscription appears to be FAVSE: AMVE: SOIT: HONVE, a phrase in old French meaning 'May a false mistress be shamed'.
- 3.10 Excavations relating to the current applicants' swimming pool installation in 2000 yielded late medieval and post-medieval finds in addition to a farmyard boundary ditch (Beacon, 2021).
- 3.11 Moor Hall is not shown on Dury and Andrews' 1766 Topographical Map of Hartford-shire, despite its undoubted existence by this date. A. Bryants' Survey of the County of Hertford completed in 1820-21 does however show Moor Hall, annotated as Moor Place, along with adjacent farm buildings to the west. The Tithe map and award surveyed in June 1845 depict in more detail the layout of the buildings at Moor Hall. At this date farm buildings (plot 61) lay at a short distance to the west of the farmhouse (Moor Hall). They adopted a courtyard plan with a yard enclosed by a series of farm out-buildings including a large barn along the western side. Shortly after this survey was completed, these farm buildings were demolished and replaced by the present (listed) farm buildings, relocated closer to and to the east of the farmhouse. Plot 66 is noted as the Moat and although not shown it was most likely sited just to the north of

the house. The award also records that the land holding covered 161 acres, 1 rod and 25 poles and was mainly in arable use, but did include some pasture and woodland, so maybe supported a small dairy herd. The award also records the landowner as Mr James Yates and Mr John Bush as the tenant farmer.

3.12 Both the second and first edition OS maps show a water feature just north-east of the house which is thought to represent part of a former moated enclosure.

3.13 The property was sold in conjunction with three other farms in 1920, which is when the applicants grandfather Mr J. E. Tinney purchased Moor Hall and the Thorley Hall farms. It has since remained in the hands of the Tinney family, with the present occupant David Tinney, the first of the family to reside at Moor Hall.

## **4 METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 Excavation and Sampling**

- 4.1.1 Archaeological monitoring of ground reduction related to the exterior landscaping works was undertaken initially (Figure 3). The machine reduced the ground across the western and southern areas by approximately 0.2-0.25m, with a cable trench of approximately 1m in depth running from the east to the western boundary. The semi-circular sloped terraced area to the immediate south of the house was reduced at its maximum by 1.45m. This work had been undertaken prior to the first monitoring visit on 10 August 2022.
- 4.1.2 The landscaping area to the south of the house was later subject to additional reduction once the patio and garden room had been removed. Foundation trenches were excavated both here and to the immediate east of the house. Excavations for underpinning were also inspected to ensure no archaeology was present. These works were undertaken with a PCA archaeologist in attendance (see below).
- 4.1.3 Ground reduction was carried out under archaeological supervision using a 360° mechanical excavator with toothless ditching bucket. Topsoil and subsoil deposits were removed in spits down to the required level for the landscaping works. Any archaeological features below these levels were recorded and preserved in situ. Exposed surfaces were cleaned by trowel and hoe as appropriate, and all further excavation was undertaken manually using hand tools.
- 4.1.4 Field excavation techniques and recording methods are detailed in the PCA Fieldwork Induction Manual (Operations Manual I; Taylor & Brown 2009).

### **4.2 Recording Methodology**

- 4.2.1 High-resolution digital photographs were taken at all stages of the evaluation process. Cameras with an APS-C or larger sensor and with a resolution of no less than 10 megapixels were used. Images are of archival quality, non-proprietary RAW (.DNG) or .TIFF files. Suitable horizontal and vertical scales were used as appropriate. Digital Photographs were taken of all deposits.

4.2.2 Deposits or the removal of deposits judged by the excavating archaeologist to constitute individual events were each assigned a unique record number (often referred to within British archaeology as 'context numbers') and recorded on individual pre-printed forms (Taylor and Brown 2018). Archaeological processes recognised by the deposition of material are signified in this report by round brackets (thus), while events constituting the removal of deposits are referred to here as 'cuts' and signified by square brackets [thus].

4.2.3 The record numbers assigned to cuts, deposits and groups are entirely arbitrary and in no way reflect the chronological order in which events took place. All features and deposits excavated during the evaluation and excavation are listed in Appendix 1. Artefacts recovered during excavation were assigned to the record number of the deposit from which they were retrieved.

### **4.3 Environmental Sampling**

4.3.1 No environmental samples were taken due to a lack of suitable deposits.

## 5 QUANTIFICATION OF ARCHIVE

### 5.1 Paper Archive

Context register sheets	1
Context sheets	13
Sections at 1:10 & 1:20	1
Photo register sheets	2

### 5.2 Digital Archive

Digital photos	78
Digital plans	1
Access database	1

### 5.3 Physical Archive (to be discarded)

Pottery	31 sherds/ 1.015kg
Clay Tobacco Pipe	2 fragments
Glass	7 fragments/25g

## 6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

6.1 The archaeological monitoring of the works was undertaken over a series of five site visits. These, including a summary of the work monitored are outlined in the table below, and can be seen in Figure 4.

Date of visit	Summary of Works
10-8-2022	Recording of area after lowering of ground level, for landscaping and additional works, to the west and south of the house.
28-9-2022	Excavation of foundation trenches for extension on the eastern side of the house.
10-10-2022	Works for underpinning the southern end of the property.
19-10-22	Excavation of foundation trenches for extension to the south of the house
21-10-2022	Excavation of slab foundation base within the trenches excavated on 19-10-2022.

Table 1: Summary of works.

6.2 A large part of the grounds to the west of the house had been reduced in plan before the first site visit was undertaken. This area was surveyed and walked over, and the remaining sections were inspected on the first site visit. Very few remains could be observed and the results are described below (Section 6.5, 6.6 and 6.7).

6.3 The works on the 28<sup>th</sup> September 2022 also yielded no archaeology, with the exception of one piece of unstratified, modern pottery. The ground in this area was heavily disturbed, presumably from centuries of work in the area (the construction of the Victorian extension, laying of the patio, laying of the drive area, pipes and cables from various periods running from the house) and so the ground seemed to be a blend of natural, redeposited natural, and building materials such as pea gravel. The works did uncover brickwork relating to the cellar, presumably a coal chute (Plate 16).

6.4 Similarly, no archaeology was identified for the excavations relating to underpinning, executed on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2022, which comprised hand excavation of ground under the walls of the kitchen and breakfast room and rebuilding with concrete and brick.

## **6.5 Western Area (Driveway; Plate 1)**

- 6.5.1 The western area covers approximately the width of the western elevation of the house and a few metres either side (totalling approximately 37m) and extending from the house to the boundary in the west (c.42m). Any top and sub soil in this monitoring area was removed prior to the site visit, and the pathway extending from the door of the western elevation had been constructed prior to archaeological monitoring so it is not known if features existed in this area, however it is likely past landscaping would have disturbed any that may have been present.
- 6.5.2 In this area, two unstratified find spots (1 and 2) were noted closer to the field, with three other features (Treethrow [3], linear feature [7], and brick drain (9)) with one further find spot (8) situated closer to the house. Feature [3] (Plate 4) was a curvilinear treethrow that measured approximately 1.5m long and 0.3m wide.
- 6.5.3 Feature [7] extended approximately 1.2m northeast to southwest from the drain structure (9). Its function was uncertain, and it did not appear to align with any of the previous landscaping or hardscaping in the area. Its sole fill (13) comprised a compact dark greyish brown silty clay. No finds were retrieved from this feature.
- 6.5.4 Feature (9) (Plate 5; Plate 6) was a brick drainage structure leading from the house and extending approximately 8.4m before its onward trajectory was no longer visible. The drain consisted of unfrosted red bricks measuring 0.2mx0.1mx0.05m. The drain was constructed with the bricks lining a small ditch, then further bricks placed side by side along their stretcher length atop this ditch to form a hollow through which presumably waste could run. A single sherd of a plate dating from 1789–1900 was retrieved from this feature.

## **6.6 Service Trench and Southern Landscaping Area**

- 6.6.1 The service trench ran approximately east to west from the swimming pool area's boundary wall in the east, to the westernmost hedgerow that formed a boundary with the neighbouring public footpath. The trench was excavated prior to archaeological surveillance, but examination of the sections showed it

yielded no archaeological evidence. Some ceramic building material (CBM) appeared to be blended into the top and sub soil, however this is likely a result of disturbance related to modern landscaping activity and potentially introduced through bioturbation from roots of nearby trees and hedges.

6.6.2 The semi-circular area to the south of the house (Plate 3) also yielded no archaeological evidence, with no CBM sherds in top or sub soil. This area had been excavated without archaeological monitoring, so it is not known if any archaeology was in the central areas away from the remaining bulk section. The applicant of the proposed development stated that this area was field, when they moved into the property in the 1990s, that has since been landscaped (D Tinney pers. Comm.), so it is possible any potential archaeology here may have been disturbed by this.

## **6.7 Southern Area (Patio; Plate 2)**

6.7.1 Immediately south of the house was the patio area where features [4], [5], [15], and (6) were situated.

6.7.2 Feature [4] was large, uneven, and curvilinear in plan when it was first encountered during the initial ground reduction works (Plate 7). It was approximately 8.2m in length and 2.5m at its widest point. The feature yielded 200g of pottery dating to between 1630 and 1700 AD at the surface that were likely introduced through a combination of manuring of the neighbouring fields and bioturbation. This feature yielded a 19<sup>th</sup> century glass bottle.

6.7.3 The feature was excavated further during the foundation trench and slab excavation works (Plate 13). These offered an insight into part of the extent and profile of the feature. The foundation trench reached a maximum depth of 1.3m yet did not reach the bottom of this feature. The sides appeared to be steep in profile, and it is possible that this represents a possible southern moat.

6.7.4 The main fill (11) of feature [4] was very dark, moist, and silty, some rare flecks of charcoal and small pieces of chalk were observed throughout, though these were scarcer the deeper the excavation. This feature had been disturbed and the fill was blended with redeposited natural and construction debris. Two upper fills were observed and were likely a result of redeposition or disturbance of the



material. Fill (19) was a compact light yellowy grey silty clay that reached a maximum depth of 0.93m and a maximum width of 1.02m. Fill (20) was moderately compact light greyish yellow silty clay with a depth of 0.8m and a maximum perceptible width of 1.2m.

- 6.7.5 Feature [5] (Plate 12) was a small circular pit with vertical sides and a concave base situated between [4] and (6)/[15]. A gate used to be located here (D Tinney, pers. comm.) however [5] does not fit the appearance for a post hole for a gate post and as such its purpose remains uncertain. Its fill (12) was very blended, comprising a mixture of dark brownish silty clay and chalk. A large piece of CBM, probably a brick, was in its centre, possibly representing backfill. The pit was approximately 0.42m deep and 0.55m in diameter.
- 6.7.6 Feature [15] (Plate 9, Plate 14) was dark on plan with regular rectangular shape, steep sides, and an uneven base, measuring c.3.7m x 2.8m and up to 0.6m deep. It ran parallel and immediately adjacent to wall (6), which was approximately 3.3m long. The section of Feature [15] was revealed during the excavation of the foundation trenches. It comprised a very dark greyish brown silty clay fill with flecks of chalk and a deposit of CBM, possibly tiles. It is possible that the interface between it and the natural beneath represents blending of this demolition fill and the natural. The uneven base also suggests that the natural here could be redeposited. A total of 88g of pottery was retrieved from fill (14), all of which dated to between 1760 and 1800 AD, clay pipe was also retrieved from this fill and was tentatively dated to between 1730 and 1910. Fill (14) also yielded a small quantity of glass and undatable metalwork.

## **7 THE FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE**

### **7.1 Post-Roman Pottery**

**Chris Jarrett**

Introduction

- 7.1.1 A small assemblage of post-Roman pottery was recovered from the site, which dates solely to the post-medieval period and particularly the 17th-18th centuries. The aims of this report are to identify the pottery types and forms present and to provide a deposition date for the context the pottery was recovered from. The assemblage was collected solely by hand. The pottery is totally domestic in nature and of little importance. The assemblage consists of 31 sherds (1.015kg) with 26 estimated number of vessels (ENV) present: five sherds, 5 ENV, 583g of the pottery was unstratified. None of the sherds were deemed to be residual, although more residual vessels may be present amongst the post-medieval redwares as the forms recorded in this class of pottery were long lived. The assemblage consists of only sherd material, although many of the sherds could be assigned to a vessel shape. The pottery was mostly deposited under secondary conditions. Pottery was recovered from four contexts as small sized groups (under 30 sherds). The pottery is discussed together by its types (The Assemblage) and distribution (Contextual Analysis).

Methodology

- 7.1.2 With the non-existence of a published set of codes for the pottery in Hertfordshire the Museum of London pottery type codes (2014) have been used to classify the ceramics. The material was quantified for each context by fabric, vessel form and decoration using sherd count (with fresh breaks discounted), estimated vessel numbers and weight measured in grams. The guideline for cataloguing the pottery follows that for the Medieval Pottery Research Group (1998) and Barclay et al (2016). Examples of the fabrics can be found in the archives of PCA and/or the Museum of London. The pottery was quantified using sherd counts, estimated number of vessels (ENV) and weight measured in grams. The finds were examined macroscopically and entered on to a database, by fabric, form and decoration.

The assemblage

7.1.3 The range of pottery types and the forms recorded in the assemblage are shown in Table 2.

Expansion	Fabric	Date range	SC	ENV	Wt (g)	Forms
Chinese porcelain	CHPO	1580-1900	1	1	4	Unidentified
Creamware with developed pale glaze	CREA DEV	1760-1830	1	1	3	Unidentified
English porcelain with under-glaze blue-painted decoration	ENPO BW	1745-1830	1	1	6	Saucer
Isleworth combed slipware	ISLE SLIP	1760-1830	1	1	46	Rounded dish
Metropolitan slipware	METS	1630-1700	1	1	28	Bowl or dish
Post-medieval fine redware	PMFR	1580-1900	22	17	904	Bowl or dish, flared, medium rounded bowl, rounded dish, jar, including a shouldered example
London-area post-medieval redware	PMR	1580-1900	1	1	6	Flower pot
Staffordshire-type combed slipware	STSL	1660-1870	1	1	3	Unidentified
London tin-glazed ware with pale blue glaze and dark blue decoration (Orton and Pearce style H)	TGW H	1680-1800	1	1	3	Bowl
Refined whiteware with under-glaze transfer-printed decoration	TPW	1780-1900	1	1	12	Plate

Table 2: Pottery types and forms quantified by sherd count (SC), ENV and weight in grams.

7.1.4 Post-medieval fine red earthenwares (PMFR) usually associated with an Essex source (e.g., Davey and Walker 2009) but could have been made in Hertfordshire and West London and dated from c. 1580, accounts for the main type of pottery in the assemblage: 22 sherds, 17 ENV, 904g. The forms recorded in PMFR consist of mostly bowls and dishes with rolled, often rounded rims, besides a jar with an internal lid-seated rim recovered from context (14). A Metropolitan slipware (METS) bowl or dish sherd has a poor quality oval border on the rim and probably dates to the end of this pottery's production period of c. 1630–1700 and was found in context (11).

7.1.5 Factory made refined earthenwares, dating from c. 1740 (Hildyard 2005), are poorly recorded (2 sherds, 2 ENV, 15g) and include a thin walled sherd of developed creamware (CREA DEV), dated 1760–1830, noted in context (14) and a sherd of a transfer-printed refined whiteware (TPW) plate decorated with the Willow pattern, found in context (9).

7.1.6 Single sherds of plain Chinese porcelain (CHPO) and a saucer made in expensive late 18th-century blue and white English porcelain (ENPO BW) with finely painted foliage decoration and possibly from a Worcester source. Both sherds of porcelain were found in context (14) with a tin-glazed ware (TGW H) rounded bowl rim with an external simple scroll-type border, a sherd of an Isleworth slipware (ISLE SLIP) rounded dish rim and a sherd of a Staffordshire-type combed slipware (STSL) closed form.

#### Contextual analysis

7.1.7 The distribution of the pottery is displayed in Table 2, which shows for each context containing pottery a description of the deposit, the quantification by sherd count, ENV and weight in grams, the pottery types and forms present and a spot date for the deposit. The pot was recovered from the fills of a possible moat feature, a pit and a brick drainage structure. Unstratified finds were also recovered, some of which were assigned a context number to locate the finds.

Context	Description	SC	ENV	Wt (g)	Context ED	Context LD	Pottery type (form)	Spot date
0		2	2	473			PMFR (unidentified): WB #2 PMFR (flared dish)	
1	Unstratified find spot	1	1	22			PMFR (unglazed shouldered jar)	
2	Unstratified find spot	1	1	46			PMFR (flared bowl)	
8	Unstratified find spot	1	1	42			PMFR (jar)	
9	Brick drainage channel	1	1	12	1780	1900	TPW (plate)	1789–1900
11	'Moat' [4]	6	6	200	1630	1700	METS (bowl or dish), PMFR (bowl or dish, unidentified)	1630–1700

14	Pit [15]	19	14	220	1760	1800	CHPO (unidentified), CREA DEV (unidentified), ENPO BW (saucer), PMFR (bowl or dish, medium rounded bowl, jar, unidentified), PMR (flowerpot), STSL (closed form), TGW H (rounded bowl)	1760–1800
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Table 3: Distribution of the pottery. SC: sherd count, Wt (g): weight in grams

- 7.1.8 Feature [4] contained in its fill (11) only sherds of post-medieval fine redware besides a sherd of a METS bowl or dish decoration dated 1630–1700, but with poor quality decoration and more likely to date towards the end of the 17th century.
- 7.1.9 Pit [15] contained in its fill (14) mostly 18th-century pottery types (see Table 3), such as the ISLE SLIP rounded dish, the ENPO BW saucer and a sherd of developed creamware. Together the pottery types suggest a deposition date of c. 1760–1800.
- 7.1.10 The brick drainage channel (9) has associated with it a sherd of a TPW plate decorated with the Willow pattern dated c. 1789 onwards.

#### Significance and Conclusions

- 7.1.11 The pottery has little significance at a local level. The pottery recovered from Fill (14), Pit [15] is of interest for containing late 18th-century fashionable pottery types, Chinese porcelain, English porcelain and creamware, which is in keeping with a higher socio-economic property such as Moor Hall farmhouse. The pottery, however consist of small sherds and has little meaning. Overall, the assemblage is largely domestic in character and consists of pottery types frequently recorded in the county of Hertfordshire. The pottery has the potential to date the contexts it was recovered from. There are no recommendations for further work on the material, which can be discarded.

## **7.2 Clay Tobacco Pipes**

**Chris Jarrett**

- 7.2.1 A total of two fragments of clay tobacco pipes were recovered by hand from the archaeological work and were found in one context: Fill (14) of Pit [15]. The clay tobacco pipe pieces consist of a bowl and stem. The bowl survives only as the base of the back of the bowl (facing the smoker) and the top of a thin stem with a fine bore. The heel or spur and other decoration is absent, which would help assign the bowl fragment to a type, however, the bowl fragment can be broadly dated to the late 18th-19th century. The plain stem is thin with a fine bore and can only be broadly dated c. 1730–1910.
- 7.2.2 The clay tobacco pipes have no significance as the finds are fragmentary with little meaning. The only potential of the finds is to broadly date the contexts the finds were recovered from. There are no recommendations for further work on the finds that can be discarded.

## **7.3 Glass**

**Chris Jarrett**

Methodology

- 7.3.1 A total of seven fragments (25g) of glass was recovered from the archaeological work solely by hand and was only found in two contexts. The glass dates solely to the post-medieval period and consists of fragments of a bottle and window glass. The assemblage was quantified by fragment count, estimated number of vessels (ENV) and weight and were examined and reported upon in accordance with CIFA guidelines (2014).
- 7.3.2 Fill (14), Pit [15] produced six fragments of window glass. Five fragments (3g) come from a naturally weathered diamond or triangular window quarry with an apex surviving and made in pale olive-green glass 1mm thick and is probably of an early post-medieval date. A second fragment (1g) of window glass is made in blue-green-tinted glass, 1.25mm thick, is absent of bubbles, unweathered and probably dates to the 19th century.
- 7.3.3 Fill (11) of the possible moat [4] produced a single fragment (21g) of a moulded cylindrical bottle made in green-tinted glass, with weathered surfaces, and

dates to the 19th-century.

#### Significance and potential of the assemblage

- 7.3.4 The glass has little significance at a local level as the finds are fragmentary, small in quantity and have little meaning. The occurrence of the early post-medieval dated diamond window quarry found in Fill (14), Pit [14], represents a higher socio-economic item that would be expected to be associated with such a property as Moor Hall Farm, During the early post-medieval period most properties could not afford window glazing. The glass has only the potential to broadly date the contexts from which it was recovered. There are no recommendations for further work on the glass, which as it has been fully catalogued, can be discarded.

### **7.4 Metalwork**

#### **Thomas Lucking, Pers. Comm.**

- 7.4.1 A total of seven heavily encrusted iron nails (total weight 55g) and an incomplete horseshow (79g) of post-medieval date were recovered from (14) of [15]. This small assemblage is typical of material associated with rural occupation and agricultural activity. As such, this assemblage is of relatively low archaeological value, for which this report provides sufficient record, and may be discarded.

## **8 DISCUSSION**

- 8.1 Much of the areas monitored for redevelopment were subject to disturbance and excavation prior to archaeological monitoring so it is uncertain if there was archaeological evidence that was removed through earlier landscaping and similar.
- 8.1.1 The area to the east of the house was devoid of archaeology (Plate 16). This area was subject to Victorian alteration and had an area of hard standing driveway. If there had been anything of archaeological value it would have been destroyed by landscaping and Victorian construction works, as indicated by areas of redeposited natural. Part of this area closer to the house also had utility services running through the ground, which also constituted disturbance.
- 8.1.2 The area to the west of the house (Plate 1) was proposed to be developed into a driveway area from an area of landscaped lawn. This area had three unstratified find spots (1, 2, and 8) as well as three other features (Treethrow [3], linear feature [7], and brick drain (9)). Comparing the location of this evidence with historic maps indicates that a garden boundary was in place at the time of the 1874 Ordnance Survey (OS) map and those features (3,7, and 9) were situated within this boundary, whereas findspots 1 and 2 were situated in an area of field and were likely a result of medieval or post-medieval manuring of fields in this area.
- 8.1.3 The positioning of treethrow [3] (Plate 4) when compared to the site plans indicate the likelihood of it being a result of hedges that were planted as part of landscaping works c.20 years ago (D Tinney, pers. Comm.). Feature [7] and feature (9) could not be identified as aligning with any features on historic maps.
- 8.1.4 The applicant of the proposed development stated that, when they initially moved into the property in the 1990s, the southern patio area had a low wall of only a few brick courses high that ran around the patio area adjacent to a large hedge (D Tinney, pers. Comm.). This aligns with the area in which brick foundation (6) was identified. Excavation of foundation trenches offered a section view of this wall which indicated that only a single course of degraded unfrosted red bricks the same as those used for drain (9) remained.



- 8.1.5 It is possible that feature [4] (Plate 7, Plate 13, Plate 15) represents a small stretch of an extension of the moat recorded a short way to the north of the property. Its trajectory, shape, depth, and profile all support this hypothesis. Fill (11) (albeit disturbed at its higher levels) could represent a single backfilling event after periods where the moat was cleared out as part of routine maintenance. It is possible this could represent a fishpond, considering its depth and shape, but it is not unheard of for moats to be used for the same purpose. The works relating to the insertion of the swimming pool c.2000, detected a boundary ditch, which could represent an onward extent of this.
- 8.1.6 Historic cartographic sources suggest that feature [15] could be the line of the southernmost barn, the length of which was reduced sometime between the 1951 and 1960 OS maps of the area. However it does not line up very well with the barn on the maps (Figure 5), so could represent another, smaller structure that never existed long enough to be on any map. Its very rectangular shape in plan certainly does not align with the typical appearance of a pit, a hedge or field boundary (as was observed continuing from this area during works associated with the installation of the swimming pool to the east) and has more the appearance of the footprint of an outbuilding/barn, bounded by a wall (6) to the north. However, no post holes or beam slots or foundations were identified either, which are typical indicators of buildings.
- 8.1.7 The finds of clay tobacco pipe, tile and window glass could also support the notion for this to be a demolished outbuilding/barn. It is difficult to determine the true function with little of the feature visible within the foundation trench, and with no obvious context in the surrounding areas.

## **9 CONCLUSIONS**

- 9.1 The watching brief at Moor Hall, Thorley, has recorded a small number of features which nevertheless give some indication of elements not yet known or recorded within the historic context of the building. While the area to the west (and south) of the house had been reduced prior to the first archaeological visit, and few, if any, archaeological features were observed in this area, excavation of new foundations to the south of the house revealed evidence for a possible moat arm, and a possible former outbuilding.
- 9.2 Visibility of features within the constrictions of the foundation trenches was limited, therefore it is not possible to determine the function of any of the features with absolute certainty, however, the artefactual evidence suggests they date from 1630–1700 for the possible upper moat fill and 1760-1800 for the possible building, which fits in well with the historic development of Moor Hall.

## **10 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

- 10.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. would like to thank Snell David Ltd. Architects for commissioning and funding the work on behalf of David and Sally Tinney. PCA are also grateful to Alison Tinniswood of Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Team for monitoring the work on behalf of the Local Planning Authority. The project was managed for PCA by Christiane Meckseper and was supervised by Kerry Boughton. Figures accompanying this report were prepared by PCA's CAD Department.

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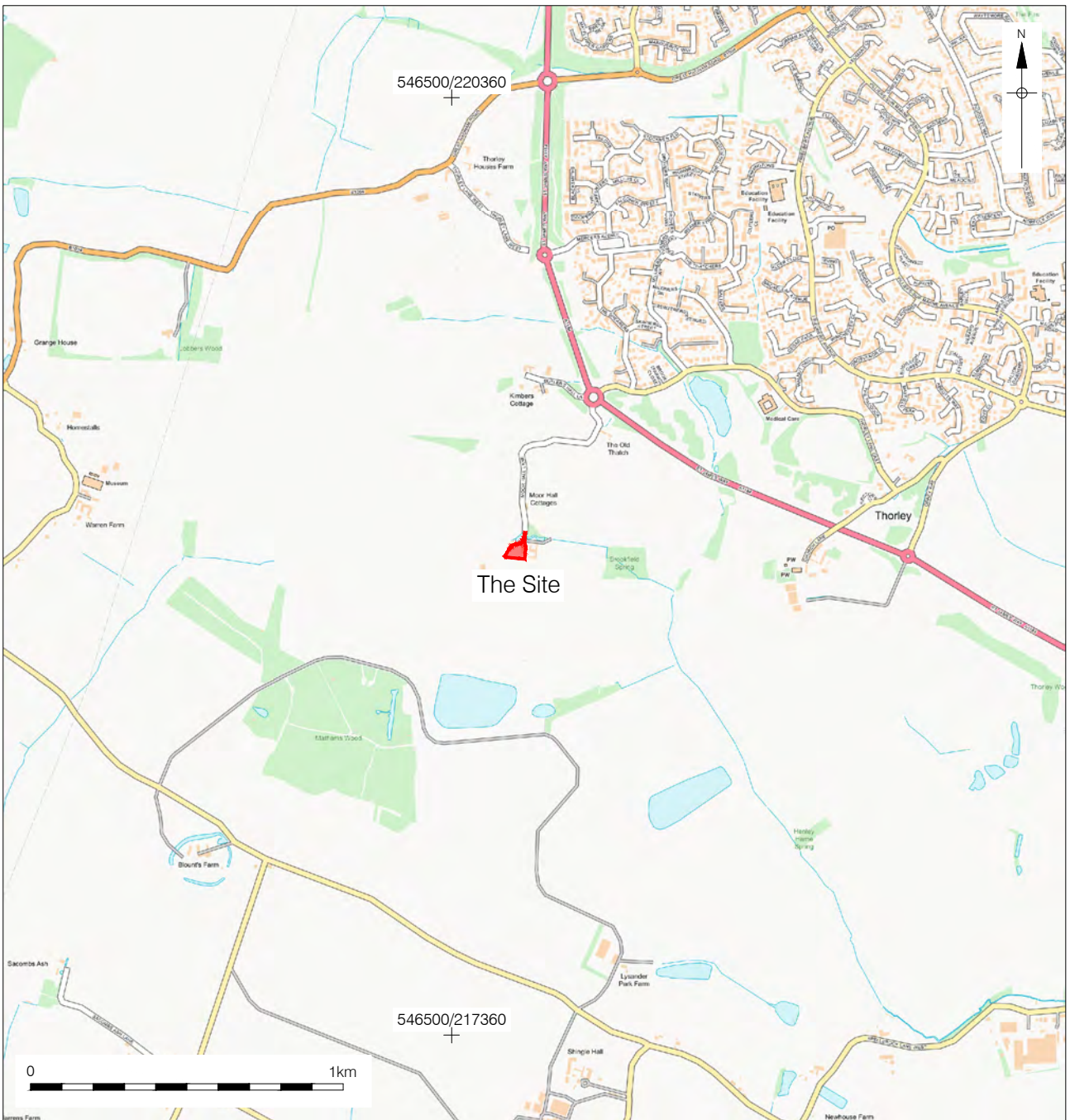
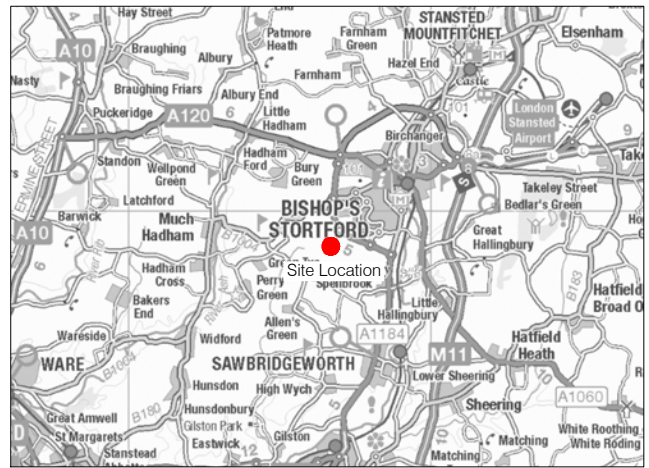
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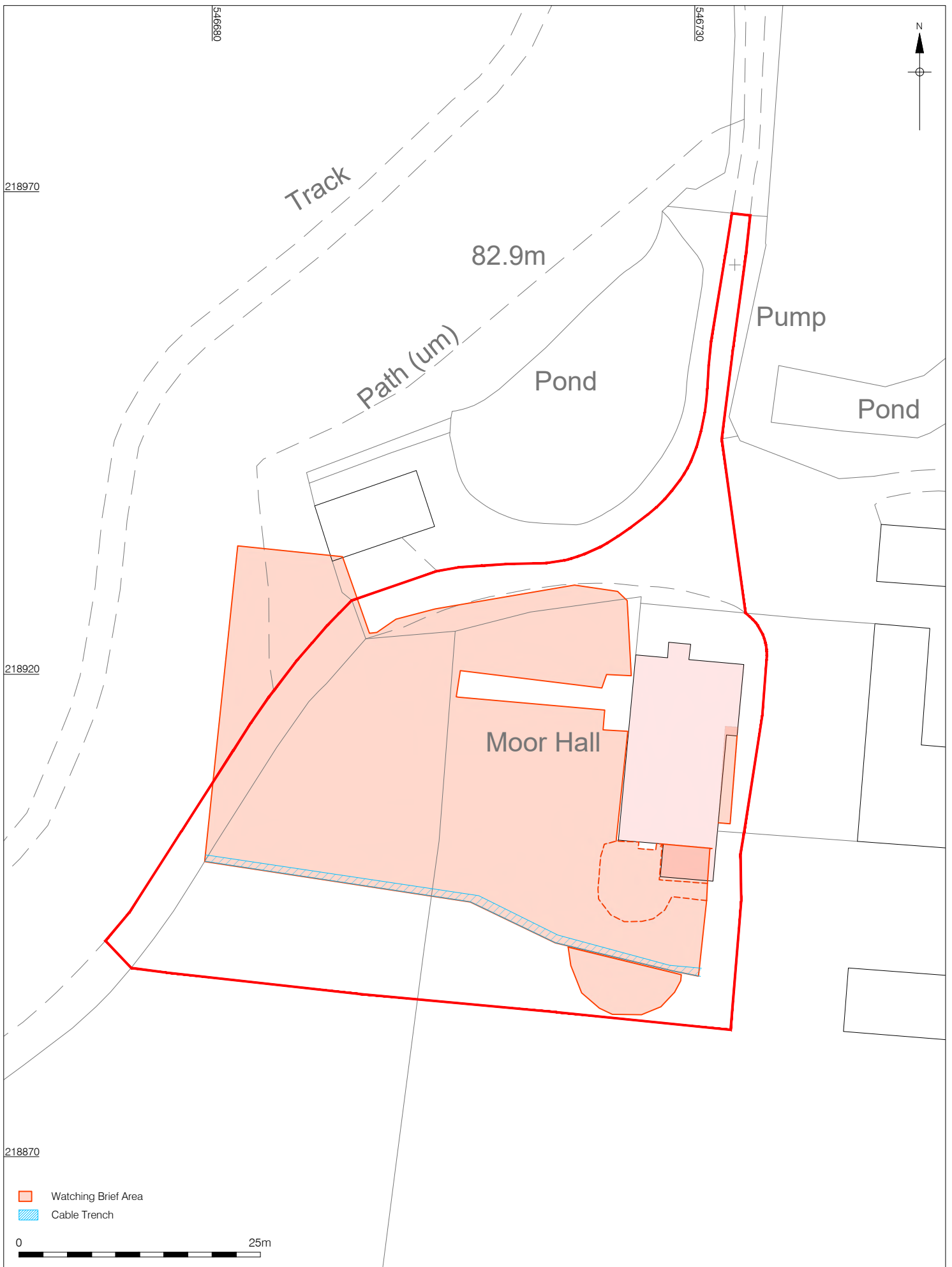
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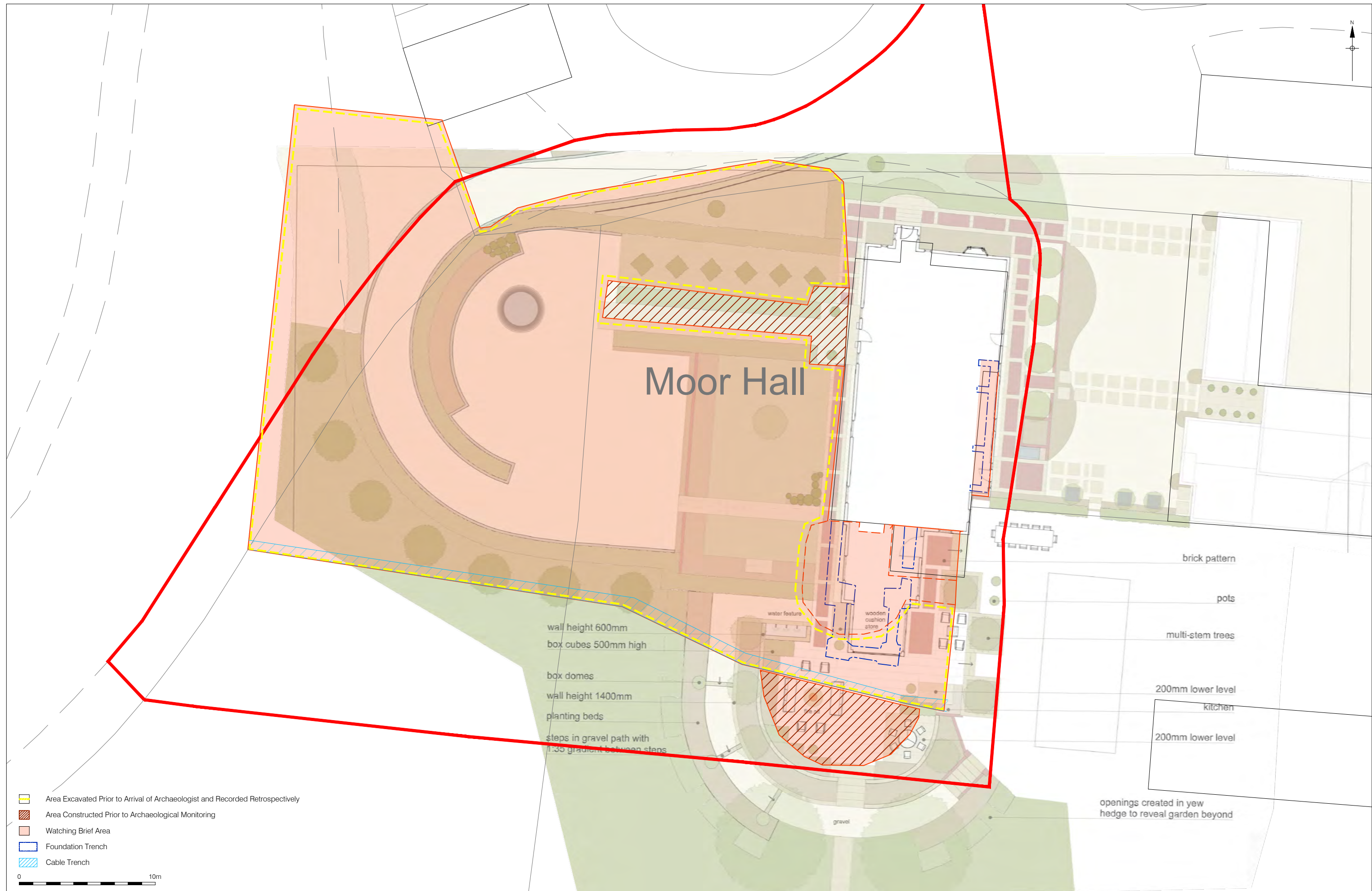
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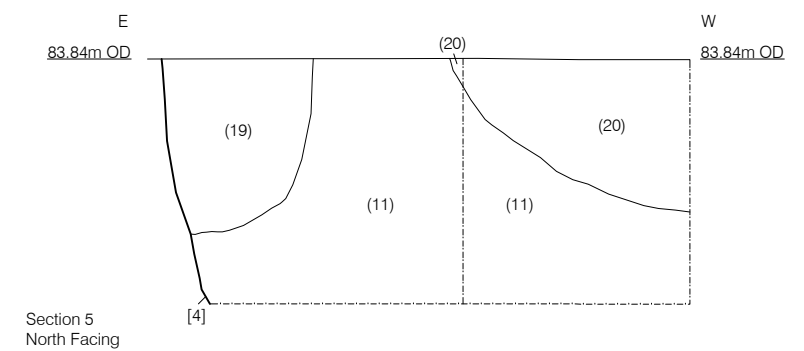
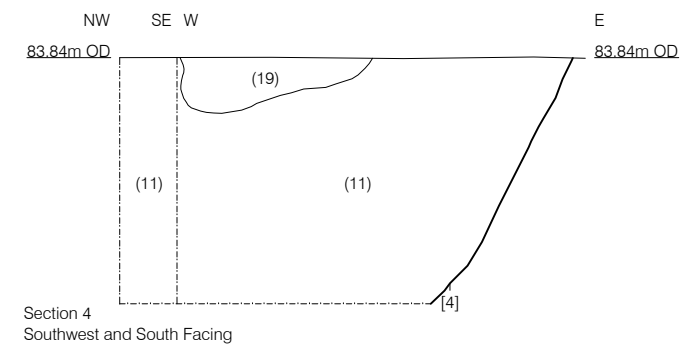
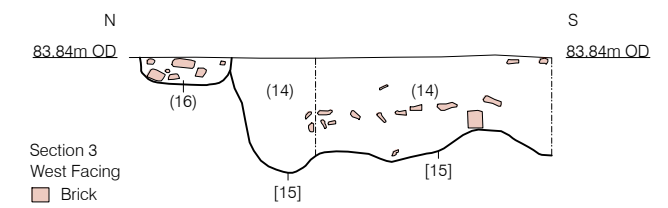
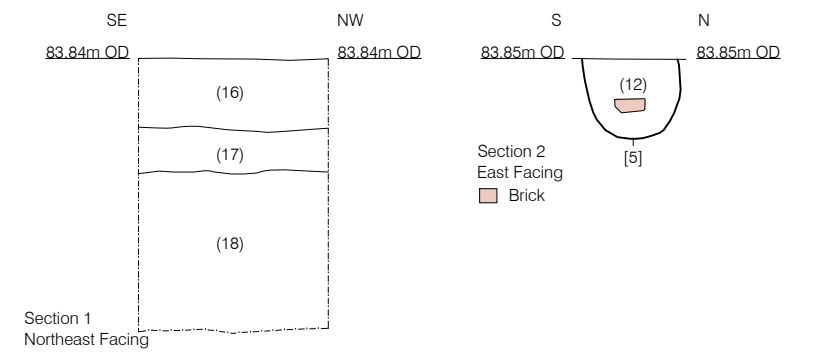
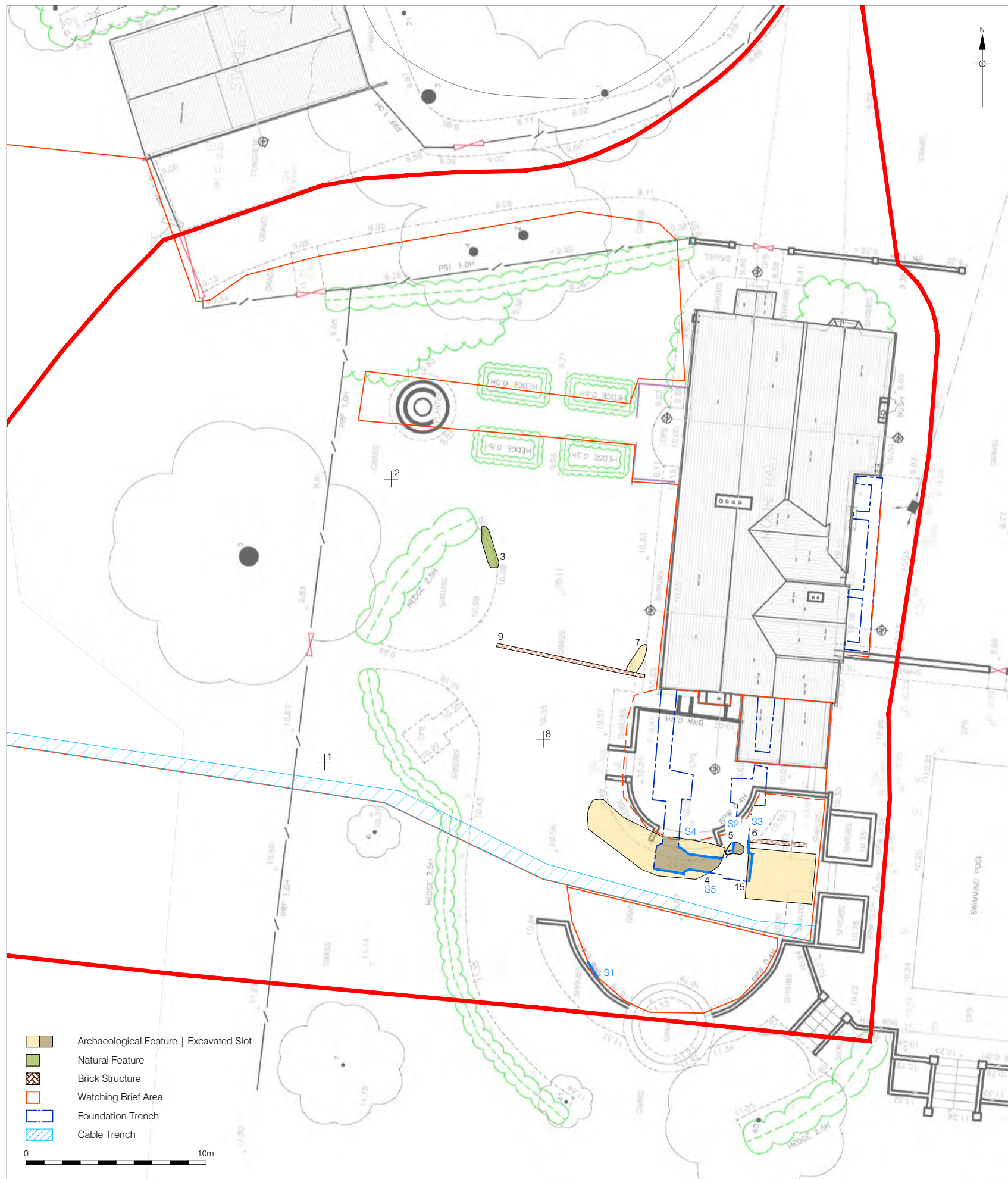




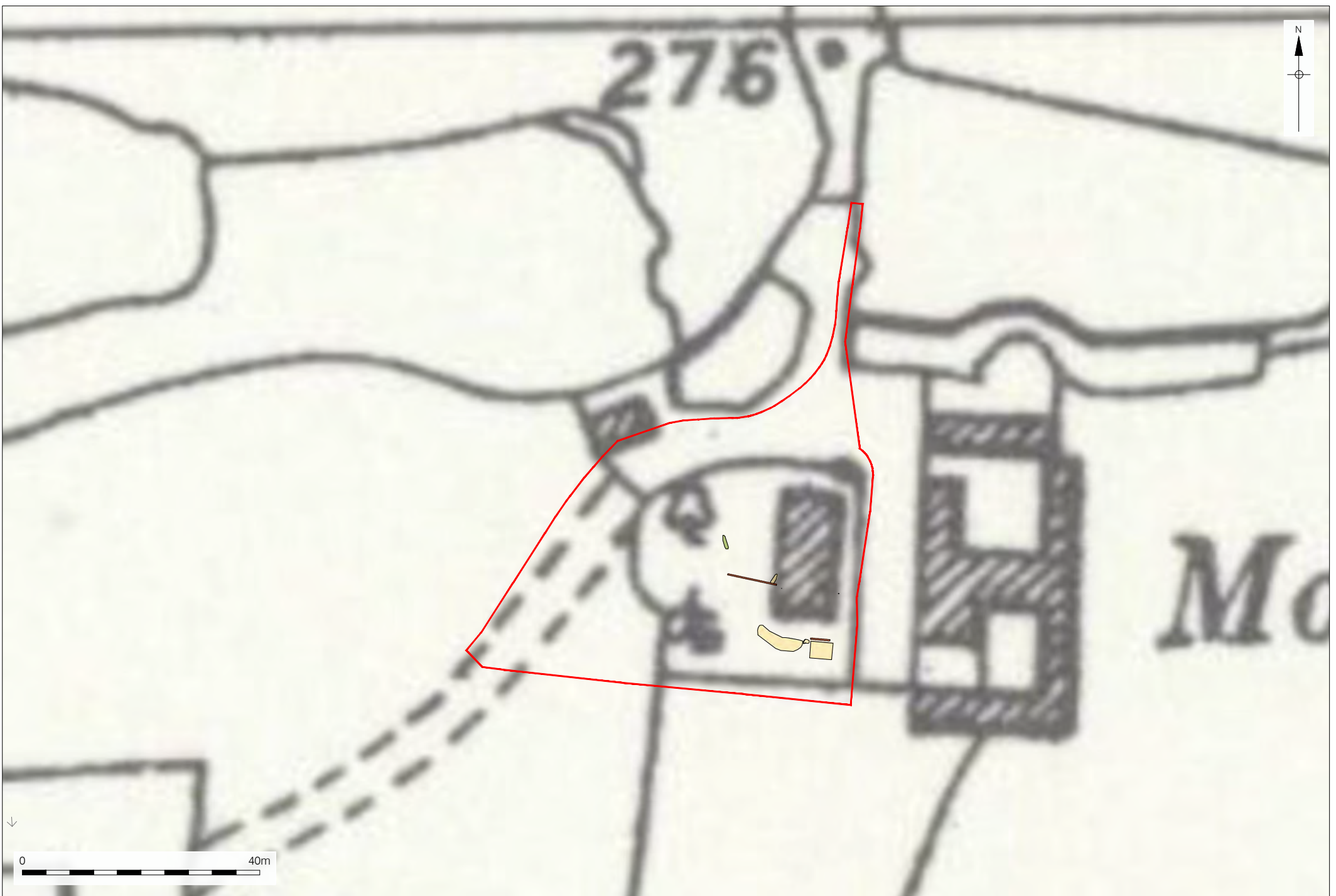
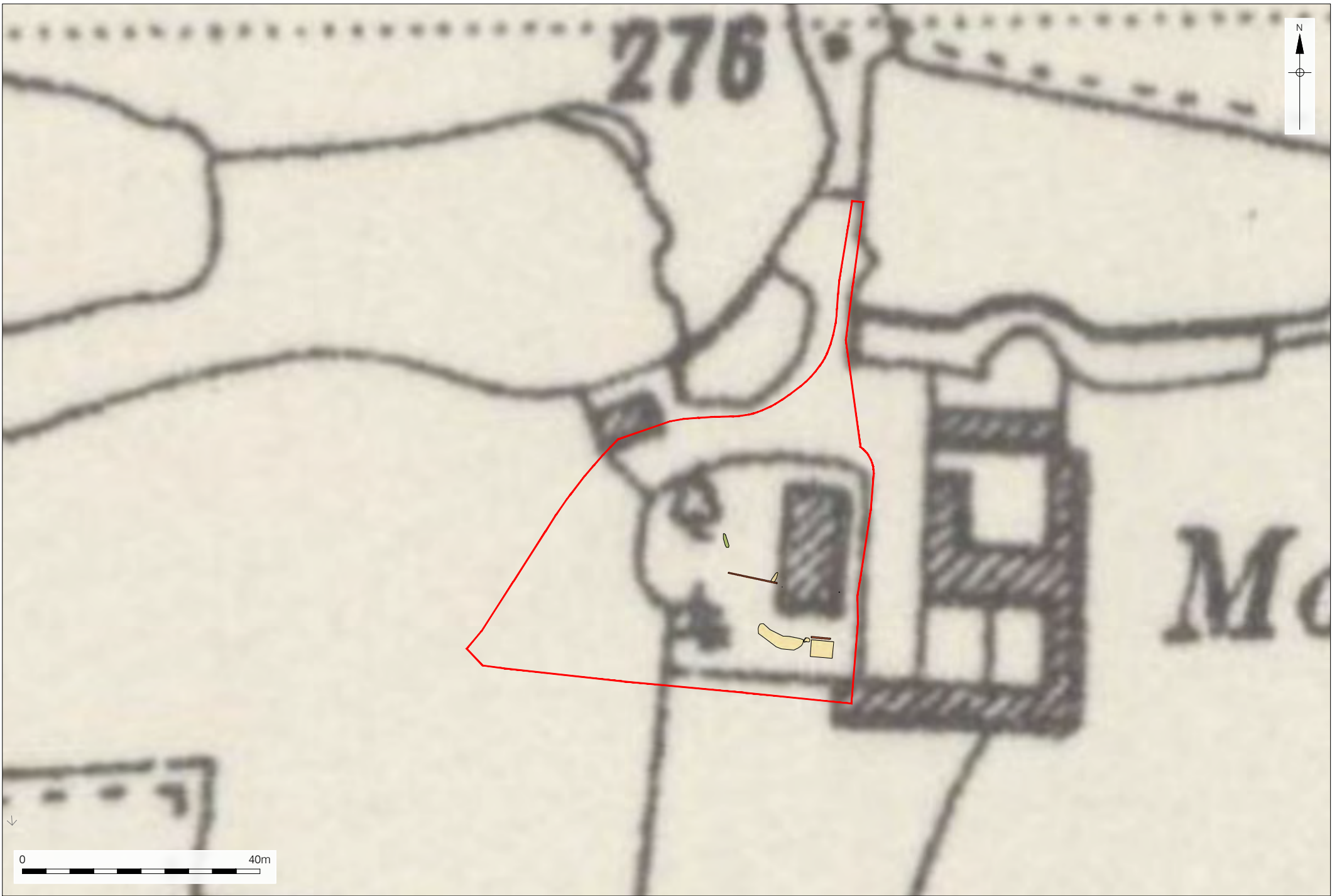














**13 APPENDIX 1: PLATES**



Plate 1: Western driveway area. View west.



Plate 2: Southern patio area. View southeast.





Plate 3: Southern landscaping area. View southeast.



Plate 4: Treethrow/hedgeline [3]. View southwest.





Plate 5: Drain (9). View south.



Plate 6: Drain (9) view of cavity and brick covering. View south.





Plate 7: Feature [4] pre-excitation. Service trench visible on the left of photo. View west.



Plate 8: Wall (6) in foreground, pit [15] in background. View south.





Plate 9: Pits [5] and [15] pre-excitation, wall (6). View east.



Plate 10: Section 1 located in southern landscaping area. View south.





Plate 11: Detailed shot of wall (6). View in plan.



Plate 12: Pit [5]. View west.





Plate 13: Oblique view of possible moat [4] being excavated. View north-west.



Plate 14: Structure (6) and feature [15]. View east.





Plate 15: Oblique view of possible moat [4]. View south-east.



Plate 16: Eastern foundation trenches, including view of possible coal chute. View west.

## 14 APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT INDEX

Context No	Cut	Type	Category	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description
1				0	0		Unstratified find spot
2				0	0		Unstratified find spot
6		Masonry	Structure	0	0		Single course of unfrogged red clay brick aligned E-W
8				0	0		Unstratified find spot
9		Masonry	Structure	0	0		Covered and lined unfrogged red clay brick drainage channel aligned E-W
16		Layer	Topsoil	0	0		Dark greyish brown clayey silt
17		Layer	Subsoil	0	0		Compact mid-brownish yellow silty clay
18		Layer	Natural	0	0		Compact light yellowy grey silty clay
3	3	Cut	Treethrow	1.5	0.3		Curvilinear, aligned approximately NW-SE
10	3	Fill	Treethrow	1.5	0.3		Dark greyish brown
4	4	Cut	Pit	8.2	2.5	1.3	Curvilinear, aligned approximately NW-SE
11	4	Fill	Pit	8.2	2.5	1.3	Compact dark greyish brown silty clay.
19	4	Fill	Pit	1	1.02	0.93	Compact light yellowy grey silty clay
20	4	Fill	Pit	1.25	1.2	0.8	Moderate light greyish yellow silty clay
5	5	Cut	Pit	0.55	0.45	0.42	Circular, vertical sides, concave base
12	5	Fill	Pit	0.55	0.45	0.42	Compact dark brownish grey
7	7	Cut	Ditch	1.2	0.3		Linear, aligned approximately NE-SW
13	7	Fill	Ditch	1.2	0.3		Compact dark greyish brown silty clay
14	15	Fill	Pit	1.89	1.4	0.61	Compact dark greyish brown silty clay
15	15	Cut	Pit	1.89	1.4	0.61	Rectangular, steep sides, uneven base, aligned approximately E-W.

## **15 APPENDIX 5: OASIS FORM**

# Summary for preconst1-514867

OASIS ID (UID)	preconst1-514867
Project Name	Watching Brief at Moor Hall, Thorley
Sitename	Moor Hall, Thorley
Activity type	Watching Brief
Project Identifier(s)	Moor Hall, Thorley
Planning Id	3/21/0346/HH, 3/21/0347/LBC
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Listed Building Consent
Organisation Responsible for work	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Project Dates	10-Aug-2022 - 21-Oct-2022
Location	Moor Hall, Thorley NGR : TL 46729 18916 LL : 51.84956071735526, 0.128846701537284 12 Fig : 546729,218916
Administrative Areas	Country : England County : Hertfordshire District : East Hertfordshire Parish : Thorley
Project Methodology	Archaeological monitoring was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. (PCA) on works associated with alteration and landscaping at Moor Hall, Thorley, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, CM23 4BJ on 10th August, 28th September, 10th, 19th, and 21st October 2022. Areas monitored were the western side of the house for new landscaping and driveway, an east-west aligned cable trench to the south of the house, landscaping areas south of the house, and foundation trenches to the south and east of the house. Archaeological monitoring of ground reduction related to the exterior landscaping works was undertaken initially. The machine reduced the ground across the western and southern areas by approximately 0.2-0.25m, with a cable trench of approximately 1m in depth running from the east to the western boundary. The semi-circular sloped terraced area to the immediate south of the house was reduced at its maximum by 1.45m. The landscaping area to the south of the house was later subject to additional reduction once the patio and garden room had been removed. Foundation trenches were excavated both here and to the immediate east of the house. Excavations for underpinning were also inspected to ensure no archaeology was present.
Project Results	Evidence for post-medieval and modern activity was found, including remnants of landscaping, a brick drain, and potential manuring. During the excavation of foundation trenches in an area to the south of the house evidence was recovered for a possible agricultural building and what appeared to be the remains of the moat recorded and extant a short way to the north of the house. All finds and features were dated to the post-medieval period.
Keywords	
Funder	
HER	Hertfordshire HER - unRev - STANDARD
Person Responsible for work	Kerry, Boughton
HER Identifiers	

Archives

Physical Archive, Documentary Archive, Digital Archive - to be deposited with Bishop's Stortford Museum;

## 16 APPENDIX 6: HERTS HER SUMMARY FORM

Site name and address: Moor Hall, Thorley, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, CM23 4BJ		
County: Hertfordshire		District: East Hertfordshire
Village/Town: Thorley		Parish: Thorley
Planning application reference: 3/21/0346/HH & 3/21/0347/LBC		
HER Enquiry reference:		
Client name, address, and tel. no.: Paul Robins, Snell David Architects Ltd., Scutches Barn, 17 High St, Whittlesford, Cambridge CB22 4LT, 01223 830880		
Nature of application: Residential re-development		
Present land use: Residential		
Size of application area:		Size of area investigated:
NGR (to 8 figures): TL 46729 18916		
Site code (if applicable): MHT21		
Site director/Organisation: Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd.		
Type of work: Watching Brief		
Date of work: 10th August, 28th September, 10th, 19th, and 21st October 2022	Start:	Finish:
Location of finds & site archive/Curating museum: Bishop's Stortford Museum		
Related HER Nos:	Periods represented:	
	Post-medieval	
Relevant previous summaries/reports:		
Summary of fieldwork results: Areas monitored were the western side of the house for new landscaping and driveway, an east-west aligned cable trench to the south of the house, landscaping areas south of the house, and foundation trenches to the south and east of the house. Evidence for post-medieval and modern activity was found, including remnants of landscaping, a brick drain, and potential manuring. During the excavation of foundation trenches in an area to the south of the house evidence was recovered for a possible agricultural building and what appeared to be the remains of the moat recorded and extant a short way to the north of the house.		
Author of summary: K Boughton		Date of summary: 17-4-23



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