

The Vicarage, Hammersley Lane, Tylers Green, Buckinghamshire

An Archaeological Evaluation

For The Diocese of Oxford

by Sian Anthony

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code: VTG03/106

December 2003

Summary

Site name: The Vicarage, Hammersley Lane, Tylers Green, Buckinghamshire

Grid reference: SP 9035 9370

Site activity: Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 4th December 2003

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Sian Anthony

Site code: VTG03/106

Area of site: 0.2ha

Summary of results: A layer of mixed modern and residual finds was located in both trenches but this was cut into by three walls of a structure found in Trench 2. Three sherds of pottery of medieval date were also recovered.

Monuments identified: 19th century to modern? structure foundations

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held by Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd, 47–49 De Beauvoir Road, Reading, RG1 5NR, and will be deposited with Buckinghamshire Museum Service in due course with accession number AYBCM:2003.187.

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford✓ 16.12.03
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The Vicarage, Hammersley Lane, Tylers Green, Buckinghamshire An Archaeological Evaluation

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Report 03/106

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at The Vicarage, Hammersley Lane, Tylers Green, Buckinghamshire (SP 9035 9070) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr David Butcher, Hives Partnership Planning, 48 Queens Road, Reading, on behalf of The Diocese of Oxford.

Permission is to be sought from Wycombe District Council for demolition of the existing property and construction of three dwellings on the site. A programme of archaeological work has been implemented to inform the decision on archaeological grounds.

This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Planning Policy Guidance, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990), and the District policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr David Radford, Archaeological Officer, Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Services. The fieldwork was undertaken by Sian Anthony and Simon Cass on the 4th December 2003 and the site code is VTG03/106. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Buckinghamshire County Museum in due course with accession code AYBCM: 2003.187.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located in the village of Tylers Green, which is merged with Penn, high in the Chiltern Hills and north east of High Wycombe. The site is bounded by the Church of St Margaret's to the north and a modern cemetery on the west. Hammersley Lane lies to the east and runs down to the A40 (Fig. 2). The site slopes gently down from the east at *c.* 163m above Ordnance Datum to *c.* 161.5m. The underlying geology is clay with flints over Upper Chalk (BGS 1990) this was confirmed in observations in the trenches as a silty clay mid brown soil with frequent flints.

Archaeological background

Penn and Tylers Green are known to be important centres of medieval and post-medieval decorated tile manufacturing (Green 2003), however the focus of this activity seems to be further to the south-east around

Beacon Hill and Church Road. No actual medieval tile kilns have been located; however, evaluation at Rose Cottage, Tylers Green (*c.* 400m to the north-east of the site) did find a post-medieval kiln and associated structure (Fell 2001). Finds of tiles, wasters and debris have been found through Church and Elm Road. Other archaeological work in the vicinity has only found negative evidence (Hindmarch 2003; Anthony 2002; 2003).

A search of historic maps was undertaken to investigate the previous use of the site. Early maps of Buckinghamshire are predominantly symbolic. Penn is shown from after Blaeu's map of 1645 but Tylers Green is not shown until Jeffrey's map of 1770 (Fig. 3). This does not name Tylers Green but shows Hammersley Lane with structures or occupation where the site and church lie, although it is not detailed. Bryant's map (1824, not illustrated) does not show structures on Hammersley Lane except for the present church site. The tithe map of 1840 (Fig. 4) shows a small rectangular cottage-sized structure on the site of the present church but nothing on the site of the Vicarage. It is described as part of a plot of land belonging to Earl Howe and occupied by Elizabeth Birch containing a house, garden and meadow; land to the west is described as a meadow and orchard, land to the south as arable and further meadow. The only other occupation on the west side of the lane is further to the south. On the east there is only the structure that may be the forerunner of the Horse and Groom public house (shown as the Queen's Head on Fig. 2).

The First Edition Ordnance Survey (1880 but surveyed in 1874, not illustrated due to poor quality) shows that the church and Vicarage are both now built. The Vicarage is a square building with a small western wing and a small 'L'-shaped outbuilding in the rear garden. A further square building lies in the extreme north-western corner of the garden. In 1898 (Fig. 5) only the front garden and driveway has been extended to the south, by 1900 (not illustrated) the main building may have joined to the outbuilding, but the smaller scale of the map may have reduced the legibility. The rear garden may be open to the field behind it (what is now the modern graveyard). The buildings are shown as separate in 1923 and 1925 with no other change except it is now called Old Vicarage. The buildings are again shown as joined in 1938 and 1960 although a new outbuilding has been erected to the north of the main building. By 1973, the modern shape of the Vicarage is complete with the outbuilding to the north joined to the main building and no outbuildings in the rear garden, the graveyard to the west is complete and the front driveway has now been truncated forming the present site area (Fig. 2).

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits within the area of development.

- 1) To determine if archaeologically relevant layers have survived on this site
- 2) To determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present.
- 3) To determine if further deposits representing medieval or post-medieval tile production are present on site.

Originally 30m of trenching was requested by Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service, this was revised to 20m with 10m of contingency trenching if significant deposits were uncovered or if the aims of the brief were not fulfilled by the first 20m of trenches. Two trenches were to be excavated, one aligned SE–NW by the south of the house, the other aligned N–S close to the back wall of the house. These were to be excavated by a JCB-type machine using a toothless ditching bucket, under constant archaeological supervision. All trenches, deposits or potential deposits were to be hand cleaned and the spoilheaps monitored for finds.

A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1. A complete list of features is detailed in Appendix 2.

Results

Trench 1 (Fig. 7)

The trench was curved to allow access for the machine in the small garden. It was 14.5m long (Fig. 6). The stratigraphy consisted of turf and topsoil (0.2m) onto a mixed rubble and silty clay soil horizon (0.3m). This overlay a layer of mid brown silty clay (50) with many pieces of modern brick and tile, large pieces of scrap metal and residual pottery, also frequent flints and rounded pebbles (0.25m). These were cut through by two modern pipe trenches at the western end. Undisturbed mid orange clay layers with frequent flint and rounded pebbles were reached at 0.8m deep (161.24m AOD).

Trench 2 (Fig. 7, Pls 1 and 2)

Trench 2 was 9.8m long. The stratigraphy consisted of turf and topsoil (0.16m) onto mortared flint walls that lay at 161.77m AOD (Features 1, 2 and 3, Fig. 7) (0.5m), onto a foundation (4) for the walls of disturbed brown orange clay with red brick rubble, corroded iron nails and one piece of reinforced glass present (0.1m). This lay on undisturbed basal orange brown clay layers with frequent flint and rounded pebbles. The east facing section consisted of turf and topsoil onto a mixed layer (51), dark brown silty clay with frequent red brick and tile and large scrap iron fragments. A modern disturbance cut into the section and wall 1. This was filled with red brick rubble and slate. Two drainage trenches lay at the northern end of the trench, a further drainage pipe and modern red brick foundation wall were uncovered at the southern end of the trench when it was lengthened to gain a clearer idea of the width of wall 3.

Finds

Pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 7 sherds with a total weight of 91g. All the pottery was medieval or later, with some of the medieval pottery appearing to originate from a local but unknown source. Where appropriate, the pottery was recorded using the coding system of the Milton Keynes Archaeological Unit type-series (e.g. Mynard and Zeepvat 1992; Zeepvat et al. 1994), as follows:

MS3: *Medieval Grey Sandy Wares*. Mid 11th – late 14th century. 1 sherd, 14g.

PM8: *Red Earthenware*. 17th century. 2 sherds, 45g.

PM25: *White Earthenware*. Late 18th – 20th century. 1 sherd, 6g

In addition, the following was noted:

F1: *Local medieval sandy ware*. 3 sherds, 26g. Moderate to dense sub-rounded quartz up to 0.5mm, long with variable quantities of ironstone and flint. The fabric is very similar to that of the 15th century vessels noted during previous excavations at Tylers Green (Hutchings and Farley 1989, 105) and Leyhill, Latimer (Farley and Lawson 1990, 46). The three sherds from this site include two jar rims which are different from those from the excavations mentioned above, with their forms and reduced fabric suggesting an earlier date. The range of inclusions makes it likely that they are of local manufacture, although as Williams (1990, 50) noted, the same range of inclusions is found in a range of pottery types from the western Chilterns region, and makes differentiation between the products of the various kilns somewhat difficult.

The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Appendix 3.

Other finds by Sian Anthony

Finds of modern red brick and tile and corroded iron metal objects were recovered from layers 50 (Trench 1) and 51 (Trench 2). A piece of metal-reinforced glass and red brick and tile were recovered from the foundation cut of wall 3 (4, 52). Slate and building rubble were recovered from the modern disturbance in the east facing section of Trench 2, none of these finds were retained.

Conclusion

Trench 2 located three walls of a small flint and mortar structure; research into the historic maps suggest that there were no recorded structures on this site until the First Ordnance Survey map of 1874. This shows the original Vicarage building that was probably constructed at the same time as St Margaret's Church to the north. Later maps also show that between 1960 and 1973, major alterations took place to the building including demolition of the rear wing of the original square building and total remodelling of the Vicarage in general. This rear wing is in alignment with the walls of the structure located in Trench 2. With modern finds (glass, brick and tile) recovered from the foundation cut of wall 3, it seems likely that the structure located is of Victorian date,

probably this rear wing of the old Vicarage: the mortar was also not of lime mortar but of a soft concrete mixture. Finds and pottery found from the layer inside the structure also confirms that it is of a later date with some residual earlier pottery.

As no decorated tile, or evidence of tile production were located at this site, it seems likely that it does not lie within the focus of tile production of Penn and Tylers Green. The presence of occasional, residual medieval pottery may only indicate the use of the fields for farming and the presence of the pottery from manuring. There seems little potential for further archaeology to be located on this site.

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APPENDIX 1: Trench details
 0m at south or west end

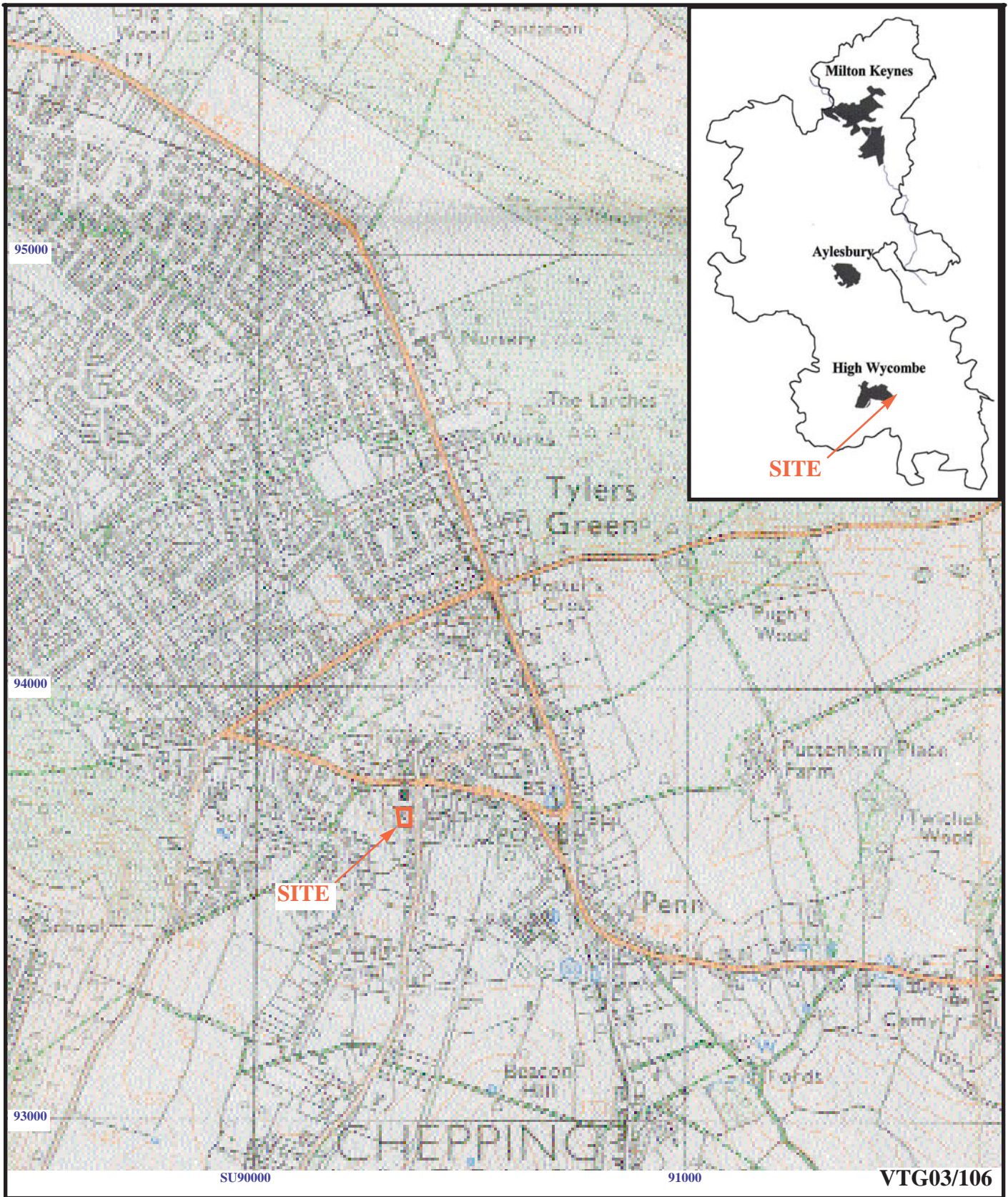
<i>Trench No.</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	14.5	1.6	0.8	Topsoil 0-0.2m, onto demolition rubble and garden soil horizon 0.2-0.35m, onto brown silty clay with occasional red brick and tile fragments onto undisturbed orange brown silty clay with frequent flints.
2	9.8	1.6	0.81	South facing section: Turf layer 0-0.16m, onto a flint wall 0.16 – 0.76m, onto orange brown clay with large rounded pebbles and flints 0.76 – 0.81m. North facing section: Turf layer 0-0.16m onto a homogenous layer (51) of dark brown silty clay with frequent flint, rounded pebbles, red brick tile and brick, corroded iron objects. [Plates 1, 2]

APPENDIX 2: Feature details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
1	-	50	Layer	Post medieval - Modern	Corroded iron objects, red brick and tile
2	1	-	Wall	Post medieval - Modern	Red brick
2	2	-	Wall	Post medieval - Modern	Red brick
2	3	-	Wall	Post medieval - Modern	Red brick
2	4	52	Foundation cut for wall	Modern?	Reinforced glass, modern brick and tile
2	-	51	Layer	Modern?	Modern brick and tile

APPENDIX 3: Pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Context</i>	<i>F1</i>		<i>MS3</i>		<i>PM8</i>		<i>PM25</i>	
		<i>No</i>	<i>Wt</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt</i>
1	50	3	26						
2	51					1	32	1	6
4	52			1	14	1	13		
	Total	3	26	1	14	2	45	1	6



**The Vicarage, Hammersley Lane, Tylers Green,
Buckinghamshire, 2003**

Figure 1. Location of site within Tylers Green and Buckinghamshire.

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Figure 2. Location of site within Tylers Green.

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Figure 3. Jefferys County map of Buckinghamshire,
1770.

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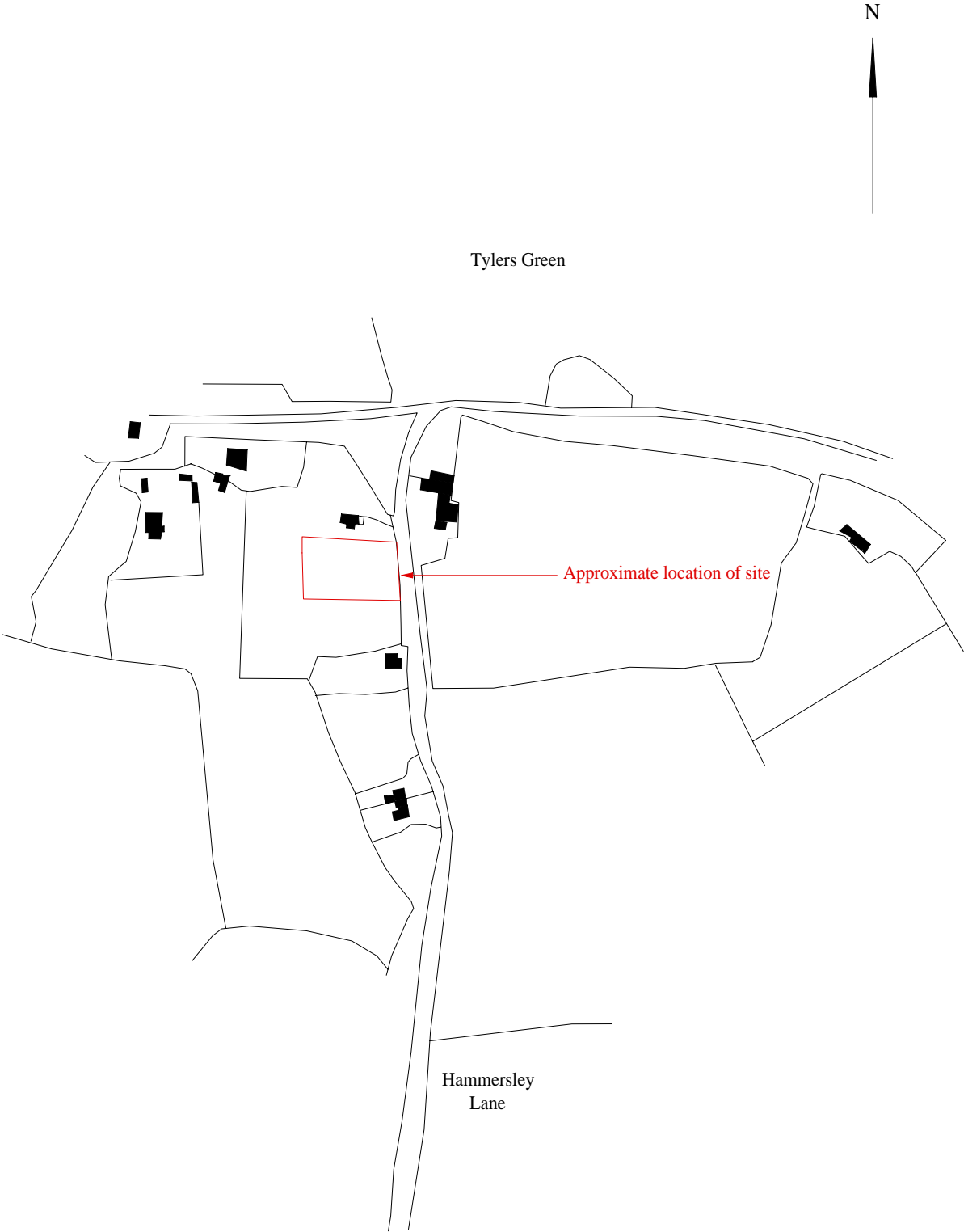
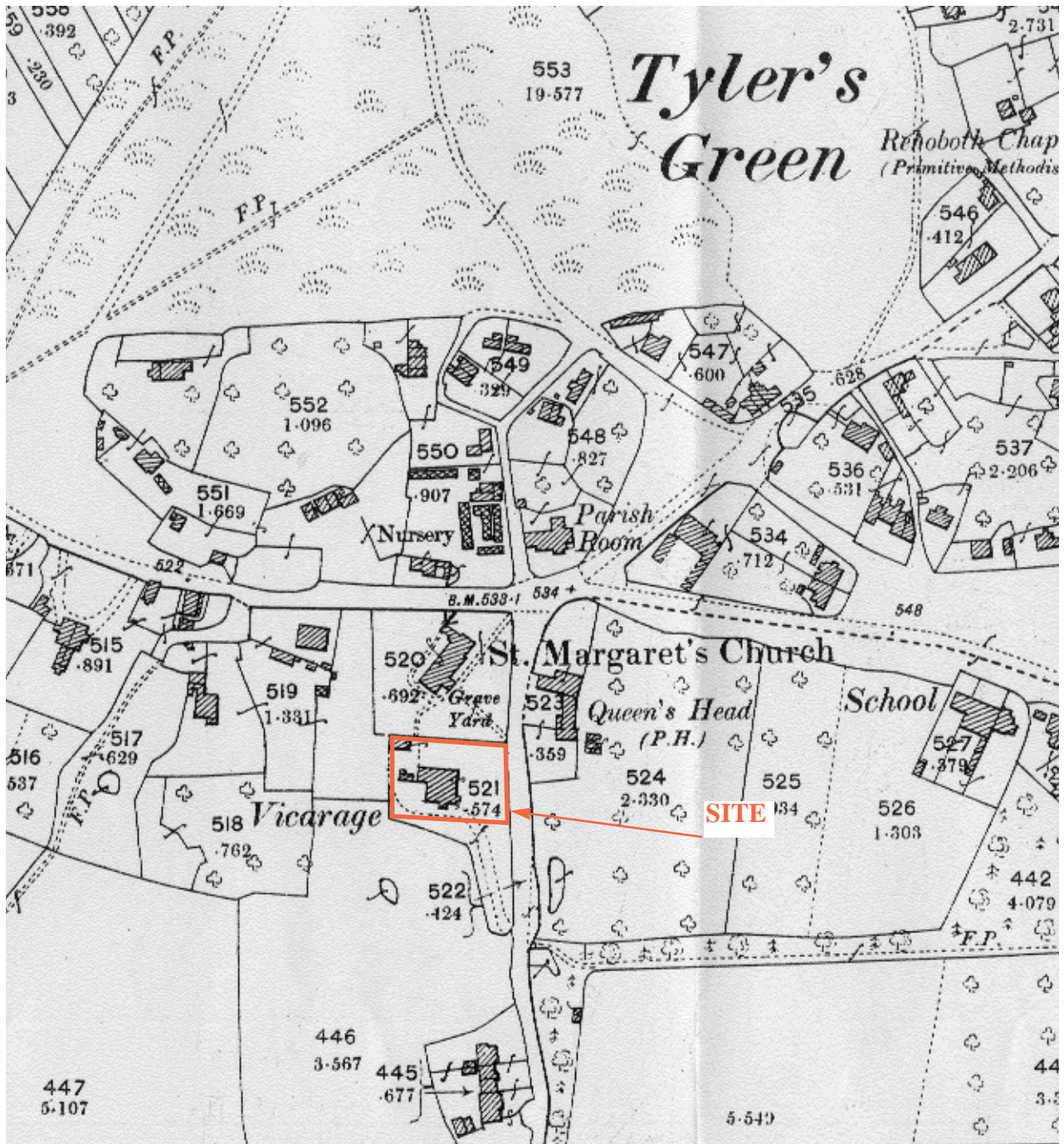


Figure 4. Tithe map of Tylers Green, 1840.



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Figure 5. Second Edition Ordnance Survey, 1898.

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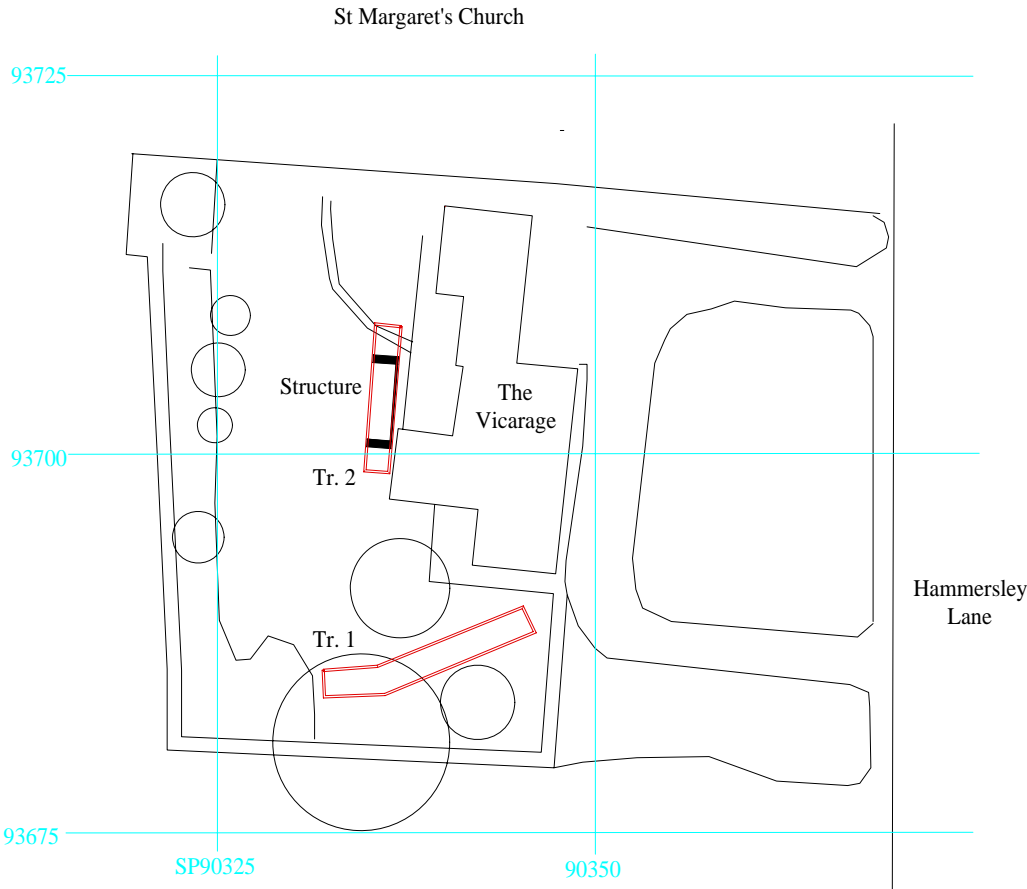


Figure 6. Detailed location of trenches.

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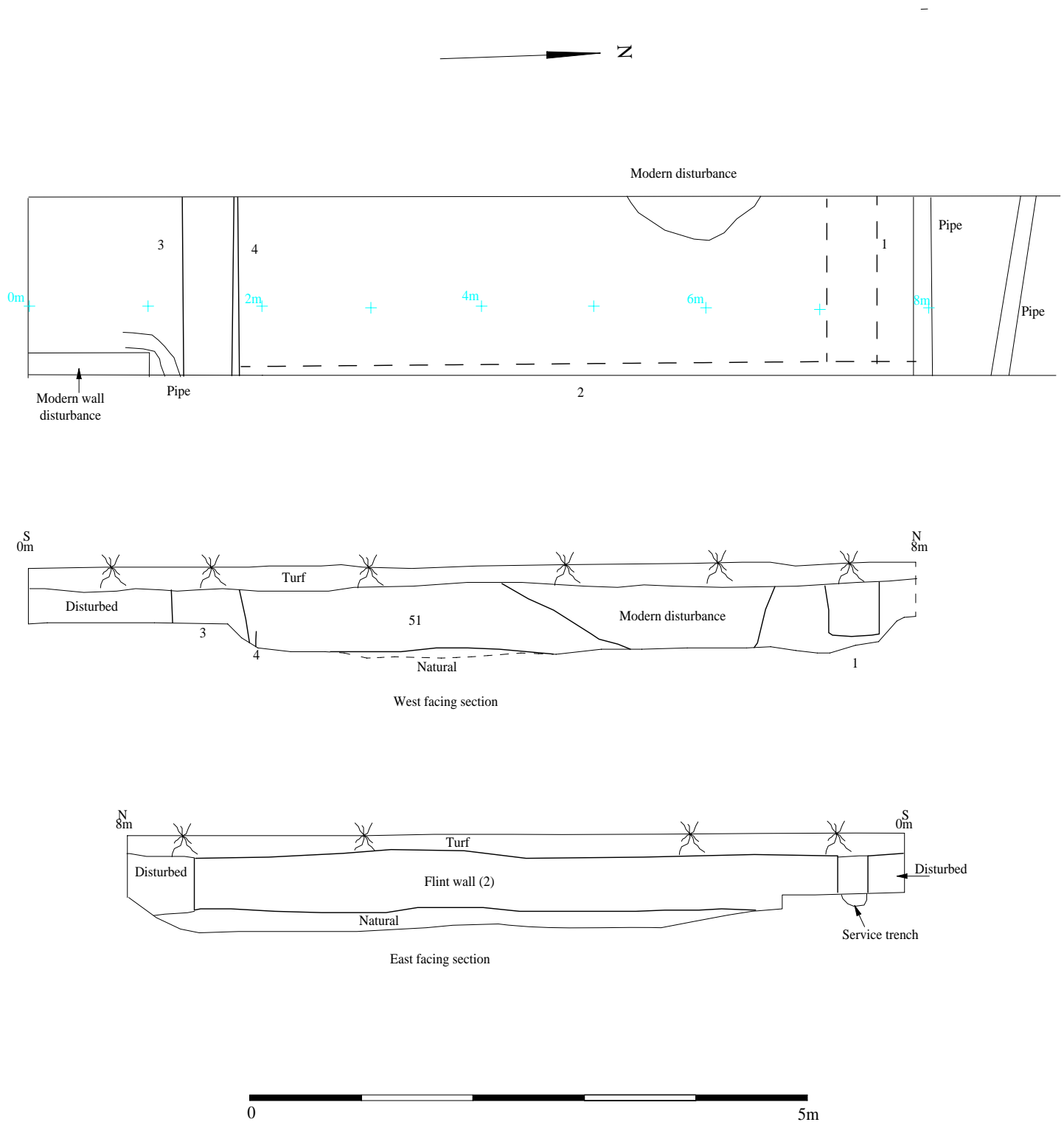


Figure 7. Plan and two sections of features in Trench 2.



Plate 1. Trench 2, looking north east, walls 2 and 3, scales 0.5m



Plate 2. Trench 2, looking east, section of wall 2 scales 0.5m