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ARCHAEOLOGICAL REPORT



Stables at THE OLD RECTORY, High Street, Yelling, Cambridgeshire

Archaeological Evaluation

Ref: MA 489
Planning ref: 23/00940/HHFUL
Event number: ECB7384

VERSION 1.0

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MINERVA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD.

Historic Environment Services

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Archaeological Evaluation Report

Prepared on behalf of Mr Hugh Reed-Herbert

by

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Report No.112

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Acknowledgements

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Summary

Minerva Archaeology is an independent practice specialising in archaeology and the historic environment. The company undertakes a wide variety of commercial archaeological projects for clients involved in housing and industrial development, pipeline and road construction, agriculture and landscaping.

In order to advise the local planning authority on the potential archaeological impact of a proposed development of an outside swimming pool at Stables at The Old Rectory, High Street, Yelling Cambridgeshire. Minerva Archaeology was commissioned to undertake an archaeological field evaluation consisting of a single trial trench within the footprint of the proposed swimming pool.

No significant archaeological features, artefacts or deposits were encountered during the evaluation. Demonstrating that the potential risk of the development impacting remains of archaeological significance, may be considered to be *Low* for all periods.

Introduction

1.1 This report has been prepared at the request of Mr Hugh Reed-Herbert, as a process of investigation to support a planning application for development at Stables at The Old Rectory, High Street, Yelling, Cambridgeshire.

1.2 The present site is located at the eastern end of the village on the northern side of the High Street, and adjacent to the 12th century Holy Cross Church in the historic core of Yelling, centred at NGR TL 26203 62501. The site is in the grounds of the old rectory, a Grade II listed 18th century building. The proposed development is located within the old rectory gardens currently occupied by formal gravel paths and fruit trees, immediately to the north of the churchyard. (Figure 1).

1.3 The present development proposed the construction of a residential swimming pool on the site of The Old Rectory.

Planning

1.4 Planning permission for the development (ref. 23/00940/HHFUL) has been granted by Huntingdonshire District Council subject to a historic environment condition in line with Paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2018) as per advice (Lu Speariett). Condition 4 and 7 states:

4)*No development, demolition, clearance or preparatory operations* ***(including excavations and archaeology)****, hereafter referred to as "the works", shall commence on site in connection with the development hereby approved, until a Tree Protection Plan has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved Tree Protection Plan shall be implemented before any equipment, machinery, or materials are brought on to the site in connection with the works, be retained intact for the duration of the construction works and only be removed or altered with the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority. Any trees, shrubs or hedges covered by the agreed protection measures, which die or become severely damaged either from natural causes or as a result of the construction works; during the construction works or within five years from the completion of the construction works, shall be replaced with trees, shrubs or hedge plants of similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed*

in writing with the Local Planning Authority. Replacement planting to be undertaken by the end of the next available planting season (Planting season is 1st November to 31st March).

Reason: *This is a pre-commencement condition to ensure that initial site operations do not harm any trees, shrubs and hedges to be retained on and adjacent to the site (and if necessary their replacement) in the interests of visual amenity, and to enhance the character and appearance of the site in accordance with Policy LP12 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.*

7) *No demolition/development shall commence until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has implemented a programme of archaeological work, commencing with the evaluation of the application area, that has been secured in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) that has been submitted to*

and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing. For land that is included within the WSI, no demolition/development shall take place other than under the provisions of the agreed WSI, which shall include:

a)the statement of significance and research objectives;

b)The programme and methodology of investigation and recording and the nomination of a competent person(s) or organisation to undertake the agreed works;

c)The timetable for the field investigation as part of the development programme;

d)The programme and timetable for the analysis, publication & dissemination, and deposition of resulting material and digital archives.

***Reason**: This is a pre-commencement condition to ensure that before any demolition and/or development commences an appropriate archaeological investigation of the site has been submitted and thereafter implemented in accordance with that investigation in accordance with Policy LP30 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.*

Scheme of Investigation

1.5 It was considered that the best strategy to characterise the archaeological potential of the site, was by the excavation of a trial trench in the area affected by the new development. The strategy was intended to establish the nature of the stratigraphic sequence while minimising unnecessary destruction of the potential archaeological resource.

1.6 The proposed development site is approximately 55m^2 in size. The archaeological brief prepared by the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team (CHET) required archaeological trial trenching to evaluate the archaeological potential of the site. As the development consists of an outdoor swimming pool 11m x 5m, surrounded by paving, a single evaluation trench measuring 1.8m in width and 10m in length will be excavated across the center of the proposed pool. Representing just over a 9.9% sample of the overall site. (Figure 1).

Site Background

Study Area

2.1 In order to establish the archaeological and historical context for the site, the overview set out below has been drawn under licence from the Cambridge Historic Environment Record (CHER), Minerva Archaeology's own records and other sources. The study area extends to a 1km radius around the centre of the site.

Topography

2.2 The present site is located at the High Street in the historic village core of Yelling, 20m north of the 12th century Holy Cross Church. The name Yelling derives from Old English and means G(I)ella's People (KEPN 2024). To the east and north of the site earthworks indicate the presence of medieval moated sites. The land rises gently from about 30m in the north of the parish to 60m in the south. The site sits at approximately 54m AOD (Speariett, 2024).

2.3 The parish of Yelling belongs to the Southeast Claylands Area which is described as a landscape that supports extensive arable farming with distinctive hedgerow trees (HLTSPD 2022).

Geology

2.4 Locally the soils belong to the West Walton and Ampthill Clay Formation (Mudstone), while superficial deposit is Diamicton, an Oadby Member (BGS 2024).

2.5 Yelling is crossed by a small stream in the centre and is located east of the Great River Ouse. To the east is a chalybeate spring, called Nill Well or Papworth St. Agnes.

Previous Stages of work

2.6 No previous work has been conducted on the site prior to the present stage of works.

Archaeological Areas (Alert, Areas of significance etc)

2.7 Not applicable.

Conservation Areas

2.8 None within the site or within the 1km study area.

Scheduled Monuments

2.9 None lie within the site or within the 1km study area.

Listed Buildings

2.10 Thirteen listed buildings lie within the 1km study area, in the village of Yelling, most of which are in a linear formation following the High Street. Twelve buildings in Yelling comprise of Grade II listing and one of Grade II* listing.

2.11 The Old Rectory is an early 18th century, red brick built, listed building Grade II (List Entry no, 1211758). The double-pile house consists of five bays with an early-

mid 19th century gault brick wing to the north-west. The two-storey house with attic is covered with 18th century hipped plain tile roofs with two ridge stacks, three gabled dormer windows with hung sashes and glazing bars.

2.12 Only 20m to the southeast of the Old Rectory Farm is the listed II* Parish Church of the Holy Cross (List Entry no. 1211788). The oldest surviving part of the Church is the late 12th century north arcade, while the south aisle and arcade are 13th century as well as the rebuilt chancel. Further alterations to the church were made in the 14th century when the clerestory was added to the nave and the west tower and southern porch were erected and the walls of the chancel were altered and raised. The church was later restored in the 18th century and the mid-19th century.

2.13 Approximately 100m to the north of the site is the Grade II Rectory Farmhouse, (List Entry no. 1289856) probably 17th century, timber-framed and plastered with some painted brick and a thatched roof.

2.14 Also in the vicinity of the site, approximately 110m to the south of the site, is the 17th century double-pile Church Farmhouse (List Entry no. 1211816). It is built in local soft red brick and has a hipped slate roof with two symmetrical plain brick chimney stacks. The Barn to the South of Church Farmhouse (List Entry no. 1211760) is a 17th century four bayed barn, built with red soft brick, similar to the Church Farmhouse.

2.15 Nine other listed buildings are documented in the village of Yelling that lie within the study area. All of these have Grade II listing and date from the 17th to 19th century.

Ancient Woodland

2.16 No ancient woodlands are located within a 1km radius of the present site.

Historic Parks and Gardens

2.17 No historic parks and gardens are located within a 1km radius of the present site.

Registered Battlefields

2.18 No Registered Battlefields are located within or in the immediate vicinity of the study area.

Significant Heritage Assets and Historic Narrative

Prehistoric - Roman

- The site sits within a wider active prehistoric landscape east of the River Great Ouse. However, the earliest evidence of prehistoric activity in the vicinity of the study area only consists of aerial photos and are showing enclosures, possibly dating to the Iron Age or Roman period (MCB18906, MCB19081 and MCB19082) and are located south of the village.
- There is some evidence of Roman activity in Yelling, a Roman flagon (CHER00842) was found in the northwest of the village in a field. Roman coins

and pottery were found in Yelling Parish during a field walk in the early 20th century, but the exact location is unknown (CHER02535). During excavation works for a gas pipeline in the early 1990s, it was reported that a Roman road has been found (CHER10201), but the location is vague and there is no record evidence either.

Saxon – Medieval

- Late Saxon and Medieval pottery were found at The Old Rectory under an old Elm, which was felt to make way for a new drive to the former gardener's cottage on the rectory grounds (CHER02536).
- The Old Rectory is in the vicinity of Medieval Earthworks, such as a filled-in moat east of the Holy Cross Church at Friends Close (CHER01047), where pottery from the 12th century onwards was found. A second moat (CH02421) was probably located north of the Holy Cross Church, but the evidence is uncertain.
- Medieval Earthworks and a Stamford Ware jug handle (CHER02537) were also discovered in the Old Rectory Garden when works were carried out for an electricity pole.
- Further evidence for Medieval Earthworks in Yelling are located at Wood Close (MCB32469), at Manor Farm (CHER02491) and the remains of Ridge and Furrow systems can be traced around the village.
- An archaeological evaluation undertaken at land at 178 High Street, revealed a sub-circular pit with 11th and 12th century medieval pottery, a linear feature with 12th century and 14th century and a ditch with Post-medieval and modern pottery (MCB20000).
- A Medieval gravestone was found at Friends close, east of the Old Rectory

(CHER02461) and

- Further Medieval finds were a brooch (CB14512), found at Church Farm and another brooch (CB14714) of unknown origin and a Medieval jetton found at Rectory Farm, dating to the 14th century (CHER02499). Also, unstratified Medieval and Post-medieval pottery was found at Rectory Farm (CHER02500).

Post-medieval - Modern

- A modern building of interest is the Yelling Baptist Church and cemetery (CB14934), built in the mid-19th century, while several other buildings from the same period are now extent, such as the School (now a private residence) (MCB24557), Top Farm (MCB24542), parts of Church Farm (MCB24545), The White Swan Pub (MCB24547) and the Post Office (now a private residence) (MCB24550).

Methodology

Introduction

3.1 All work was carried out in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (Weber 2024), current health and safety legislation, and with CIfA and ALGAO guidance documents (Sycamore 2024).

Fieldwork

3.2 The overburden was removed, under close supervision, to the first significant archaeological horizon or to the natural geological horizon, as appropriate, using a 3.5-tonne tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.2m wide toothless bucket. Therefore, the trench was excavated in one and a half spits to reach the agreed 1.8m width.

3.3 Spoil from the machining was scanned for archaeological artefacts both visually and using a metal detector.

3.4 The artefact content of the topsoil, subsoil and made ground was assessed by conducting a bucket sampling of standard 90 litres of spoil was hand sorted for each soil horizon encountered. Bucket sampling points were carried out at each end of the evaluation trench.

3.5 All identified trenches were photographed and recorded using the appropriate pro-forma. Scaled plans and sections were drawn on drafting film at scales of 1:20 and 1:50.

Post excavation

3.6 During the course of the excavations no artefacts or ecofacts were recovered. As such, no physical archive was retrieved for post excavation processing and analysis or the attention of appropriate specialists.

Archive Deposition and OASIS

3.7 The results of the present stage of work will be uploaded to the Archaeology Data Service's OASIS database.

3.8 On completion of all stages of the present project, it is intended that the full archive, including the documentary records owned by Minerva Archaeology, and the material records owned by the client and held in the care of Minerva Archaeology, will be deposited with *Cambridgeshire County Store and ADS*.

Copyright

3.9 Minerva Archaeology shall retain full copyright of any commissioned reports, tender documents or other project documents, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, with all rights reserved; excepting that it hereby provides an non-exclusive licence to the client for the use of such documents by the client in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the Project Brief and the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI).

3.10 Minerva Archaeology will assign copyright on completion of the project to the museum or repository undertaking the ultimate curation of the archive, but will retain

the right to be identified as the author of all project documentation and reports as defined in the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (Chapter IV, s.79).

Fieldwork Data

Site Stratigraphy

4.1 The site for the new pool was located south of an existing barn building in an area with gravel footpaths and two raised garden beds. While the southern part of the trench was excavated within a gravel path, the northern part was on well-kept grass. (Figure 2).

4.2 The observed stratigraphy was different along the length of the trench. The southern half was a dark grey brown soft topsoil with modern CBM underlying the gravel and overlaying a mid-grey brown moderate silty clay with chalk and 19th century CBM inclusions. In the northern half of the trench, where the ground level fell slightly towards the north, a mid-grey brown layer with some crushed 19th century bricks was underlaying the topsoil and overlaying the subsoil.

4.3 The natural had an orange brown grey colour and was firm silty sandy clay with chalk inclusions.

TRENCH DATA

4.4 A single trench was excavated within the footprint of the proposed swimming pool, measuring c.10m in length and c.1.8m in width, representing approximately a 9.9% sample of the site by area (Figure 2).

Trench 1

4.5 Trench 1 was located south of the barn building and approximately 20m north of the churchyard site boundary (Figure 2-3, Plate 1). It was aligned northwest to southeast and measured 10m in length, 1.8m in width and a maximum depth of 1.20m.

Length (m):	10	**Width (m):**	1.8	**Maximum Depth (m):**	**1.20**	**Orientation**	NW-SE
Level at NW End of Trench (mOD)		**Top**	54.80	**Level at SE End of Trench (mOD)**		**Top**	54.95
		Base	53.50			**Base**	54.15

Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)		
			Length	Width	Depth
-	Topsoil	Dark greyish-brown, soft silty sandy clay, occasional modern CBM	>10.00	>1.80	0.29-0.45
-	Made Ground	In northern half of trench. Mid greyish-brown, moderate silty clay with occasional 19th century crushed CBM and stone debris.	>5.12	>1.80	0.34
-	Subsoil	Mid greyish-brown, moderate silty clay with chalk inclusions and very occasional 19th century CBM	>10.00	1.80	0.13-0.23
-	Natural	Mid orangish-brown, firm silty clay with chalk inclusions	>10.00	>1.80	0.08-0.20
[101]	Cut	NE-SW orientated linear cut of a hedgerow with moderate to irregular gentle sloping sides and an irregular base	>1.80	1.10	0.14
(102)	Fill	Light greyish-brown, moderate silty clay with very occasional flecks of charcoal	>1.80	1.10	0.14

4.6 The depth of the natural at the southern half of Trench 1 was gently sloping towards the north at a depth of 0.80m from the top of the trench (Plate 2). In the middle of the trench, the ground started dropping down towards the northern end of Trench 1 from 0.80m to 1.20m. At the same point, the stratigraphy changed as well and a layer of made ground became visible, between the topsoil and the subsoil (Plate 3).

4.7 A linear feature [101], crossing the trench at the northern end, orientated in south-east to north-west was identified as a hedgerow due to the shallow nature of the feature, the irregular edges and base, with a sterile fill (102). The fill contained a few occasional flecks of charcoal (Figure 3, Plates 4-5).

4.8 No other archaeological features, deposits, or finds were encountered in Trench 1.

ARTEFACTS AND ECOFACTS

4.9 No artefacts or ecofacts were observed, or collected through the duration of the evaluation.

Environmental samples

4.10 No samples were taken during this stage of works.

Discussion

Aims and Objectives

5.1 The aims of the present investigation in accordance with the CHET brief (Speariett, 2024) were:

- to establish the location, depth, extent, date, character and condition of any remains that are liable to be threatened by the development;
- to consider the local and regional archaeological and historical context of such remains, and their significance and quality, in relation to current published regional research; and,
- to provide sufficient information to advise the planning application for the development of the site, and ensure that an appropriate strategy for the mitigation of damage or destruction of any such remains is adopted should it get consent.
- to provide sufficient record of any potential archaeological remains that may be revealed during the groundworks for the development of the site, and ensure that an appropriate strategy for mitigation either by preservation by record or preservation in situ, can be adopted.

5.2 In addition to the brief, and considering the background of the site and study area, it was considered that this investigation also had the potential to contribute to an understanding of the origins and development of Yelling from the Late Iron Age period onwards, in particular:

- The origins and development of Yelling from the Iron Age period onwards;
- The nature and extent of settlement and field pattern in the Anglo-Saxon and medieval periods
- The extent of changes to the village layout between the 14th and 18th centuries.

5.3 The East of England Regional Research Framework also highlighted several areas of further study that the present project had potential to contribute to:

- LIA-Rom 05: How can we better understand the Late Iron Age to Roman transition?
- E-Sax 01/05: How best can we synthesise what we already know about the Early Anglo-Saxon period and settlement?
- E-Sax 09: How best can we study Early Anglo-Saxon settlement cores in or near existing settlements?
- MSax-LSax 10: How did towns develop during the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon periods?
- Med (Rural) 03: How can we improve our understanding of medieval agricultural practices?

- Med (Rural) 22: How can we better understand the significance and setting of medieval rural castles?

Evidence

5.4 The present evaluation area was formed by gravel footpaths and two raised garden beds as well as an ornamental bush. The eastern part consisted of established apple trees and the northern part of a well-kept lawn.

5.5 Evaluation trenching demonstrated a change in stratigraphic sequence within the trench, comprising topsoil, above subsoil and then the natural substrate at the southern half of the trench and made ground between topsoil and subsoil in the northern half of the trench. The natural substrate presented as consistent orange brown silty clay. The change of the stratigraphic sequence is likely to be the result of landscaping, and was an attempt to level the area for the formal garden elements.

5.6 The linear crossing the northern half of the trench was, indicative of a former hedgerow or similar linear root activity, shallow in depth, with irregular shaped edges.

5.7 There was no evidence of cemetery soil, inhumations or disarticulated remains that would indicate the churchyard once extended into the current site.

5.8 The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1887 indicates that the site has remained largely undeveloped, being part of one of three small fields between the churchyard and The Old Rectory building. (Old Maps 2024).

5.9 At least one boundary had been removed by 1901 and the present became part of a larger field north of the church. This field division was still in place in the first half of the 20th century.

5.10 The LIDAR Map of England and Wales shows the site with no features of interest apart from possible earthworks in the field north-east of the church. (LIDAR 2024).

Conclusion

5.11 Overall the site appears to be largely untouched other than the removal of a field boundary in the early 20th century and the formal laying out of garden paths.

5.12 The investigation of the present site had the aim of gathering data that might increase our understanding of the origins and development of Yelling from the prehistoric period onwards, in particular:

- The origins and development of Yelling from the Iron Age period onwards;
- The nature and extent of settlement and field pattern in the Anglo-Saxon and medieval periods
- The extent of changes to the village layout between the 14th and 18th centuries.

5.13 Despite evidence for archaeological activity from the later prehistoric period onwards being identified within 1000m of the study area and the vicinity of the

churchyard, no significant archaeological features, artefacts or deposits were encountered during the evaluation.

5.14 This demonstrates that the potential risk of the development impacting remains of archaeological significance, may be considered to be Low for all periods.

Confidence Rating

5.15 During the course of the fieldwork, the conditions were acceptable for the identification of potential features and deposits, and for their investigation. As such the confidence rating for the work may be considered to be *High*.

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Illustrations

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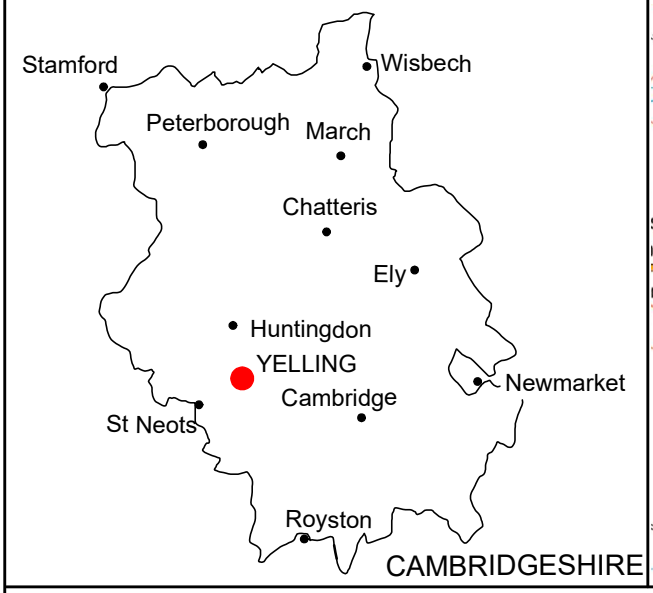
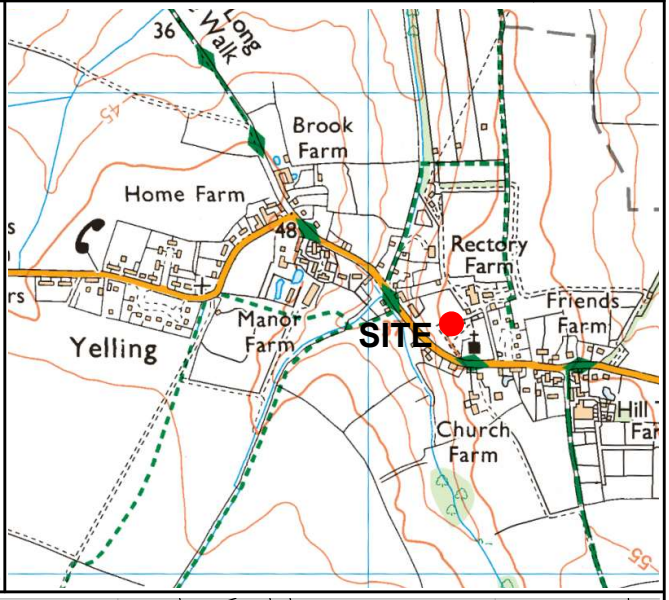
Plate 4 ..... Section of hedgerow [101], looking East
Plate 5 ..... Trench 1 – feature [101], Looking South.

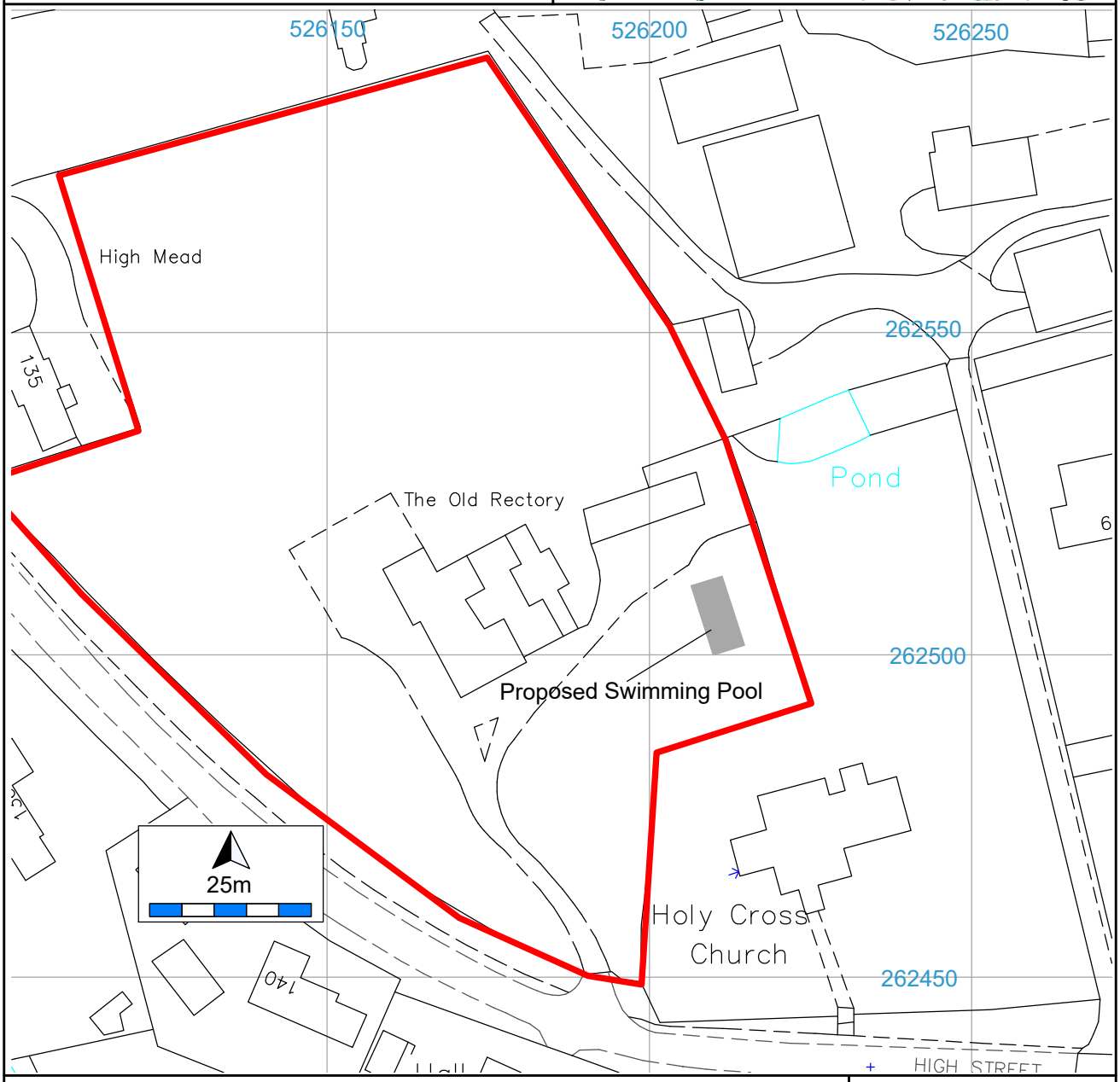
MINERVA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

Stables at The Old Rectory, High Street, Yelling, Cambridgeshire

MA 489







Site Location

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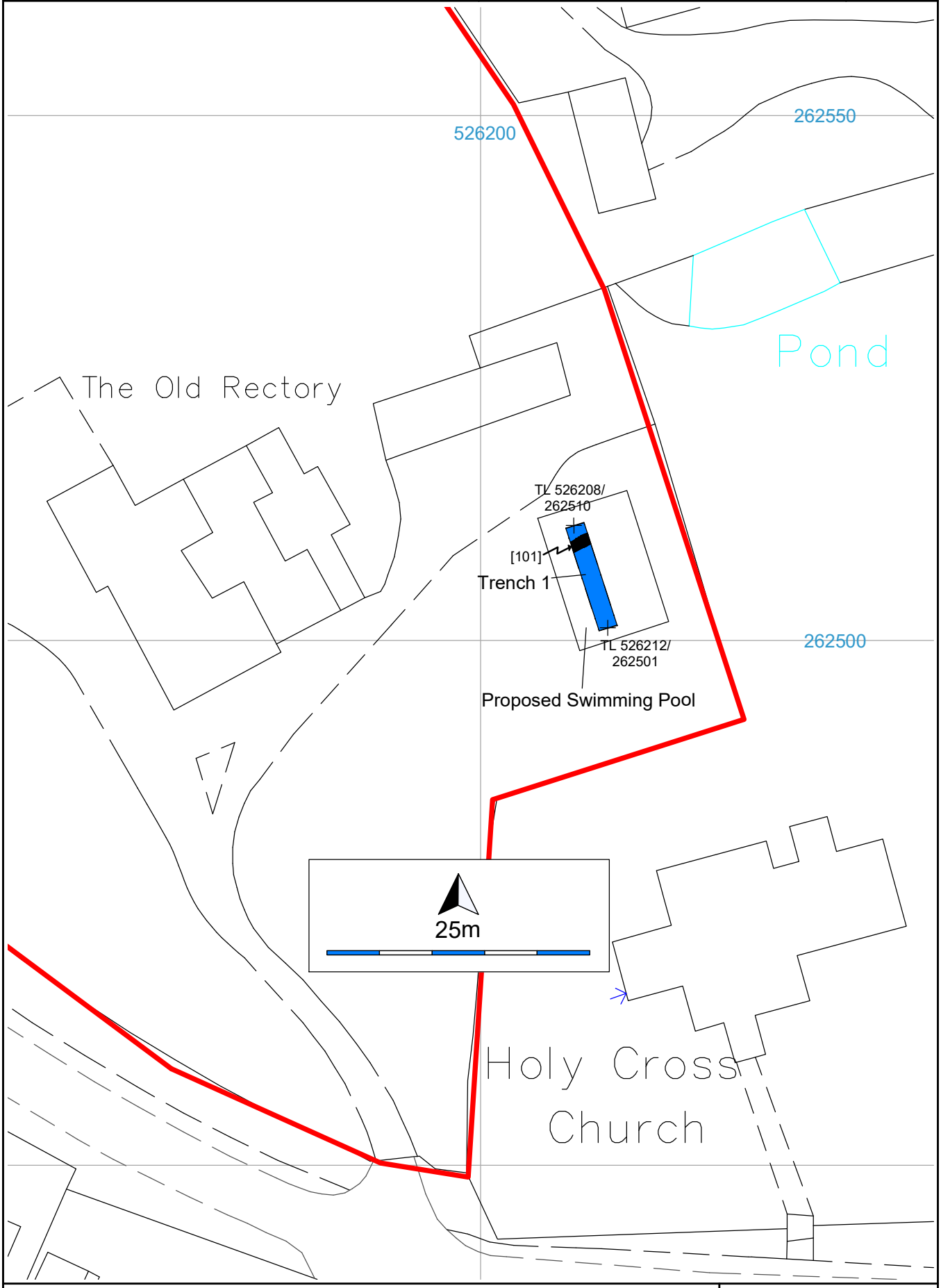
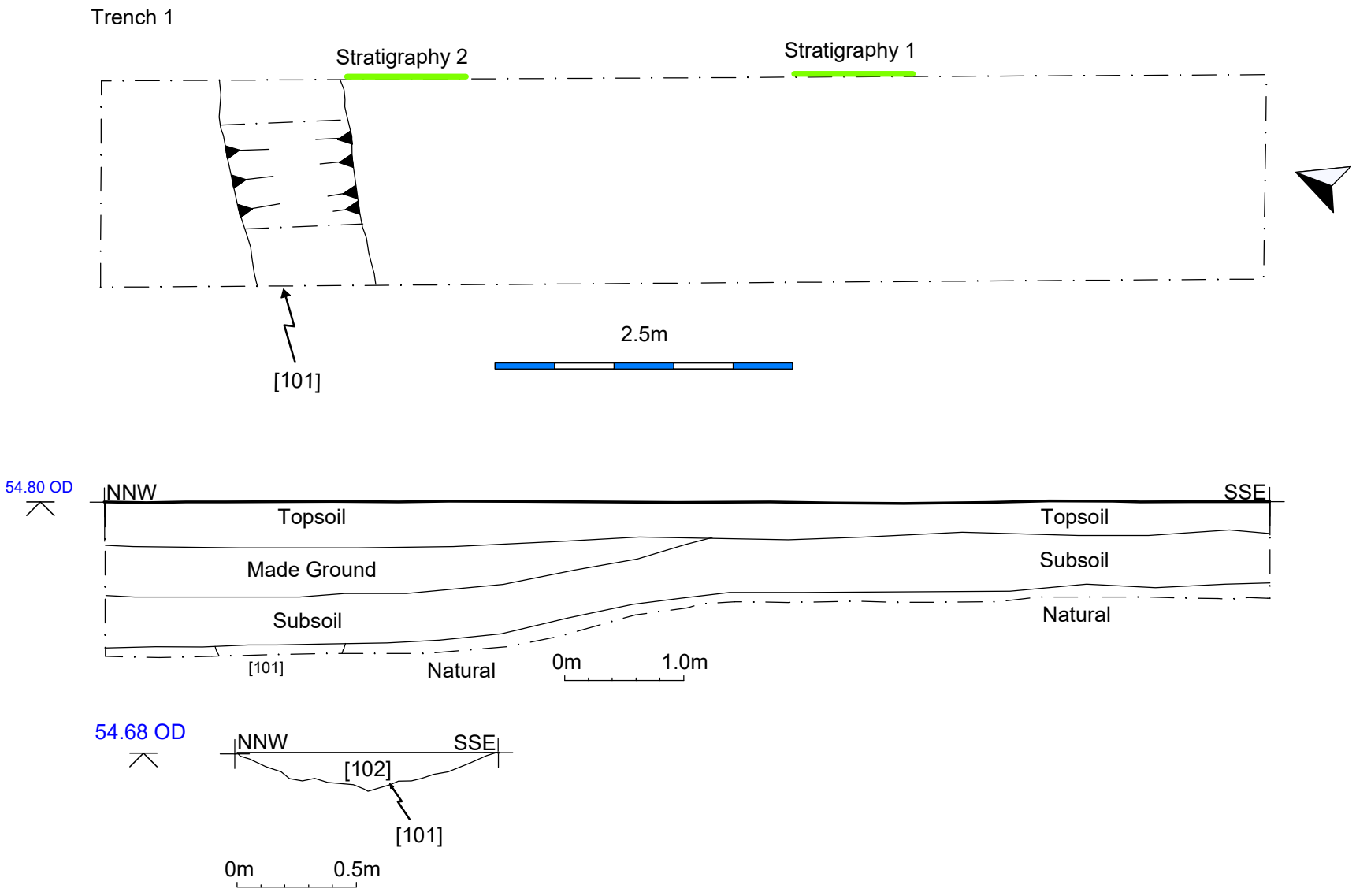
Scale 1:1000

Figure 1

MINERVA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD	Stables at The Old Rectory, High Street, Yelling, Cambridgeshire	MA 489



Trench Layout	Scale 1:500
	Figure 2



Trench 1: Plan and Section drawings

Scale 1:50

Figure 3

PLATES



Plate 1: Trench 1 – Looking South.



Plate 2: Trench 1 – Stratigraphy 1, Northern end, looking East.



Plate 3: Trench 1 – Stratigraphy 2, Southern end, looking East.



Plate 4: Trench 1 – Section of hedgerow [101], Looking East.



Plate 5: Trench 1 – Feature [101], Looking South.

OASIS Summary for minervaa2-525006

OASIS ID (UID)	minervaa2-525006
Project Name	Evaluation at Stables at The Old Rectory, High Street, Yelling, Cambridgeshire
Sitename	Stables at The Old Rectory, High Street, Yelling, Cambridgeshire
Sitecode	MA 489
Project Identifier(s)	The Stables at The Old Forge
Activity type	Evaluation
Planning Id	23/00940/HHFUL
Reason For Investigation	Planning requirement
Organisation Responsible for work	Minerva Archaeology
Project Dates	01-Feb-2025 - 01-Feb-2025
Location	Stables at The Old Rectory, High Street, Yelling, Cambridgeshire NGR : TL 26203 62501 LL : 52.246228286302916, -0.152895962313927 12 Fig : 526203,262501
Administrative Areas	Country : England County/Local Authority : Cambridgeshire Local Authority District : Huntingdonshire Parish : Yelling
Project Methodology	All work was carried out in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), current health and safety legislation, and with CIfA and ALGAO guidance documents. The overburden was removed, under close supervision, to the first significant archaeological horizon or to the natural geological horizon, as appropriate, using a 3.5-tonne tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.2m wide toothless bucket. Therefore, the trench was excavated in one and a half spits to reach the agreed 1.8m width. Spoil from the machining was scanned for archaeological artefacts both visually and using a metal detector. The artefact content of the topsoil, subsoil and made ground was acquired by conducting a bucket sampling of standard 90 litres of spoil was hand sorted for each soil horizon encountered. Bucket sampling points were carried out at each end of the evaluation trench. All identified trenches were photographed and recorded using the appropriate pro-forma. Scaled plans and sections were drawn on drafting film at scales of 1:20 and 1:50.
Project Results	In order to advise the local planning authority on the potential archaeological impact of a proposed development of an outside swimming pool at Stables at The Old Rectory, High Street, Yelling Cambridgeshire. Minerva Archaeology was commissioned to undertake an archaeological field evaluation consisting of a single trial trench within the footprint of the proposed swimming pool. No significant archaeological features, artefacts or deposits were encountered during the evaluation. Demonstrating that the potential risk of the development impacting remains of archaeological significance, may be considered to be Low for all periods.
Keywords	
Funder	Private individual
HER	Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record - unRev - STANDARD
Person Responsible for work	Mark Sycamore

HER Identifiers	
Archives	Documentary Archive - to be deposited with Archaeology Data Service Archive;

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