

Archaeological Monitoring of Land at Church Farm, Offham, West Malling, Kent

Site Code OFF/WB/15



Report for Laurence J Betts Ltd
Date of report 09/03/2016

SWAT ARCHAEOLOGY

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Site Code OFF/WB/16

Date of report: 09/03/2016



Plate 1. Aerial view of site (red target) showing the site prior to development.

(Google Earth 20/04/2015: Eye altitude 632m).

1.0 Summary

1.1. From the 15th to the 16th February 2016 Swale and Thames Archaeological Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief on ground works involved in the build of a new training building on the site of a demolished timber shed at Church Farm, Offham in Kent. (Fig. 1 & Plates 2-6).

1.2. The works were carried out on behalf of the owners Laurence J Betts Ltd.

1.3. An Archaeological Watch was kept during the reduction of the site. Services were in place from the previous building (Figure 2).

The archaeological work was undertaken in one phase.

Phase 1: Site reduction ranging from about 70cm to 1.30m (Plates 4-6)

1.4. The Archaeological Watching Brief was to watch for any signs of archaeological activity. In particular, any evidence of archaeological activity associated with the known archaeological sites in the area including the adjacent church of St Michael's first established (it is said) by the Saxon Lord of the Manor in c. 632AD.

1.5. The Planning Application Number for the development is TM/15/02685/FUL.

1.6. Although the archaeological potential has been highlighted by KCC Heritage Conservation the Archaeological Watching Brief revealed no buried archaeological features or burials, and no archaeological finds were retrieved.

2.0 Introduction

2.1 Planning Background

Planning application TM/15/02685/FL was submitted to Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council the Local Planning Authority (LPA). Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation (KCCHC), on behalf of the LPA requested that an Archaeological Watching Brief be undertaken in order to record any archaeological remains uncovered during the development work. The following condition (4) was attached to the planning consent:

No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a watching brief to be undertaken by an archaeologist approved by the Local Planning Authority so that the excavation is observed and items of interest and finds are recorded. The watching brief shall be in accordance with a written programme and specification which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

3.0 Schedule of Visits

An archaeologist suitably experienced attended the site (Dr Paul Wilkinson SWAT Archaeology) and monitored the excavation works on 15th, 16th February 2016.

4.0 Aims and Objectives

4.1. The reason for the monitoring and recording, were to:

“The objectives of the archaeological watching brief are to contribute to the heritage knowledge of the area through the recording of the archaeological remains exposed as a result of excavations in connection with the ground works “(KCC 2015).

4.2. The ground works were to reduce the demolition overburden and natural soil to the same level as the adjoining roadway (Plates 3-6).

4.3. A full programme of proposed works by the contractor were made available to SWAT Archaeology before the on-site monitoring took place.

4.4. Confidence Rating

No factors hindered the recognition of archaeological and deposits during the monitoring and recording exercise.

5.0 Archaeological and Geological Background

5.1. The underlying geology at the site according to the British Geological Survey map is Bedrock geology of Hythe Formation- Sandstone & Limestone interbedded with Superficial Deposits of Head- Clay, Silt, Sand & Gravel. The geology revealed on site was mid orange brown sandy silty clay topped by dark brown humic topsoil.

5.2. The application site consisted of an area adjacent and to the west of St Michael’s Church (TQ 65 NE 11). To the south the Old Manor House (TQ 65 NE 114) itself part of Church Farm (MKE 84288). The site itself is generally level at a height of about 68m OD.

5.3. The site lies within an area of known archaeological potential associated with important Palaeolithic, Roman and Medieval activity. Palaeolithic finds were noted nearby by Harrison in 1929 (TQ 65 NW 14). In 1963 a Romano-British jar was found whilst excavating a new driveway on a housing estate at Offham (TQ 65 NE 26).

6.0 Methodology

6.1. The Watching Brief was conducted in accordance with the Archaeological Specification compiled by KCC and it also complied with the Institute of Field Archaeologists' Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (CifA: Dec 2014).

6.2. The works comprised the observation of all ground works, including the inspection of subsoil and natural deposits for archaeological features and finds.

6.3. The Watching Brief was carried out in one phase according to the needs of the building contractors from 15th-16th February 2016.

6.4. Excavation of the area was carried out by contractors using a 360 degree machine equipped with a toothless bucket necessary to remove the soil down to formation level (Plates 2-4).

6.5. All excavation was carried out under the constant supervision of an experienced archaeologist (Dr Paul Wilkinson MCifA).

6.6. Where possible the areas of excavation were subsequently hand-cleaned with the intention of revealing any observed features in plan and section.

6.7. If found archaeological features under threat were to be excavated to enable sufficient information about form, development date and stratigraphic relationships to be recorded without prejudice to more extensive investigations, should these prove to be necessary.

6.8. The archaeological watching brief was carried out in accordance with current IfA Standards and Guidance, (CifA: 2014), and methodology discussed with the Senior Archaeological Officer KCC.

7.0 Results

7.1 General

No archaeological features or finds were revealed or recovered. The subsoil encountered across the site was the Superficial deposits of Clay, Silt & Sand overlaid by topsoil. No archaeological features were revealed in the natural geology and no archaeological finds retrieved from the topsoil.

8.0 Finds

No finds were retrieved.

9.0 Discussion

The development site is in an area of archaeological potential. However, no archaeology was revealed on the development site.

10.0 Conclusion

The Archaeological Monitoring has fulfilled the primary aims and objectives of the KCC Archaeological Specification. As far as it is known no buried archaeological features have been affected as a result of the development.

11.0 Acknowledgments

SWAT Archaeology would like to thank Laurence J Betts Ltd for commissioning the project. Fieldwork was undertaken and report written by Paul Wilkinson.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Wilkinson". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Dr Paul Wilkinson, BA (Hons), PhD., FRSA., MCIfA.

References

HER data (KCC 2015)

CIfA (2014) Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs

KCC Archaeological Watching Brief (2015)

Appendix 1

Kent County Council HER Summary Form

Site Name: Development of land at Church Farm, Offham, Kent

SWAT Site Code: OFF/WB/16

Site Address: As above

Summary:

Swale and Thames Survey Company (SWAT) carried out Archaeological Monitoring on the development site above. The site has planning permission for a new training centre whereby Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation (KCCHC) requested that Archaeological Monitoring be undertaken to determine the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains.

The Archaeological Monitoring consisted of site visits which encountered no buried archaeological features or artefacts.

District/Unitary: Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council

Period(s):

NGR (centre of site to eight figures) 566000 158750

Type of Archaeological work: Archaeological Monitoring

Date of recording: February 2016

Unit undertaking recording: Swale and Thames Survey Company (SWAT. Archaeology)

Geology: Underlying geology is Superficial deposits of Clay, Silt, Sand and Gravel

Title and author of accompanying report: Wilkinson P. (2016) Archaeological Monitoring at Land at Church Farm, Offham, West Malling, Kent

Summary of fieldwork results (begin with earliest period first, add NGRs where appropriate)

See above

Location of archive/finds: SWAT. Archaeology. Graveney Rd, Faversham, Kent. ME13 8UP

Contact at Unit: Paul Wilkinson

Date: 09/03/2016

Plates



Plate 2. General view of site showing existing barn before demolition (looking north)



Plate 3. General view of site after removal of barn (looking north)



Plate 4. The site showing reduction of site (looking south-east)

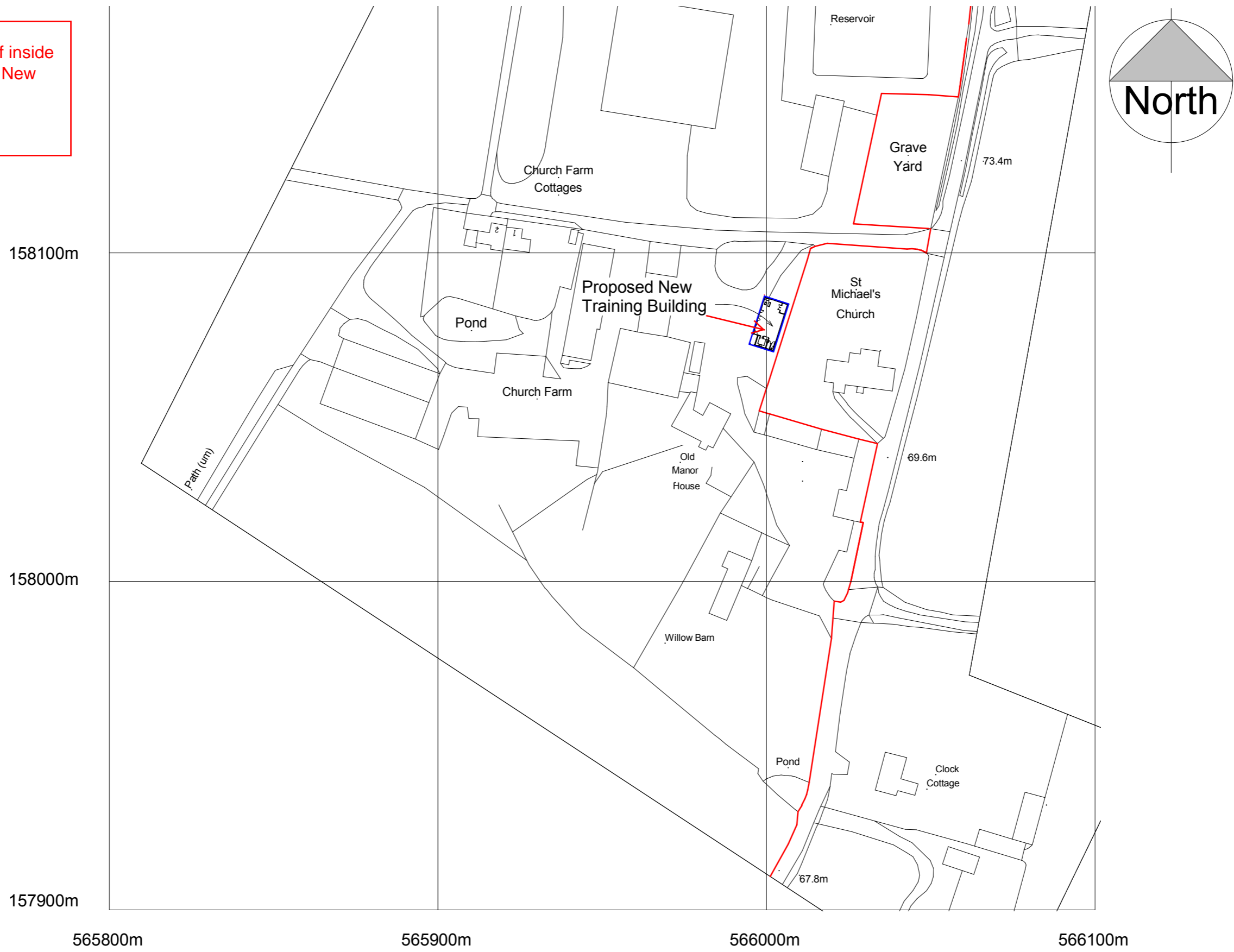


Plate 5. Reduction of site completed (looking south-east)

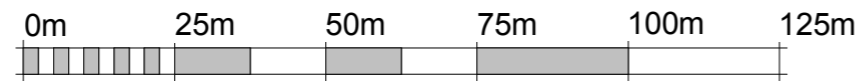


Plate 6. Typical site reduction section

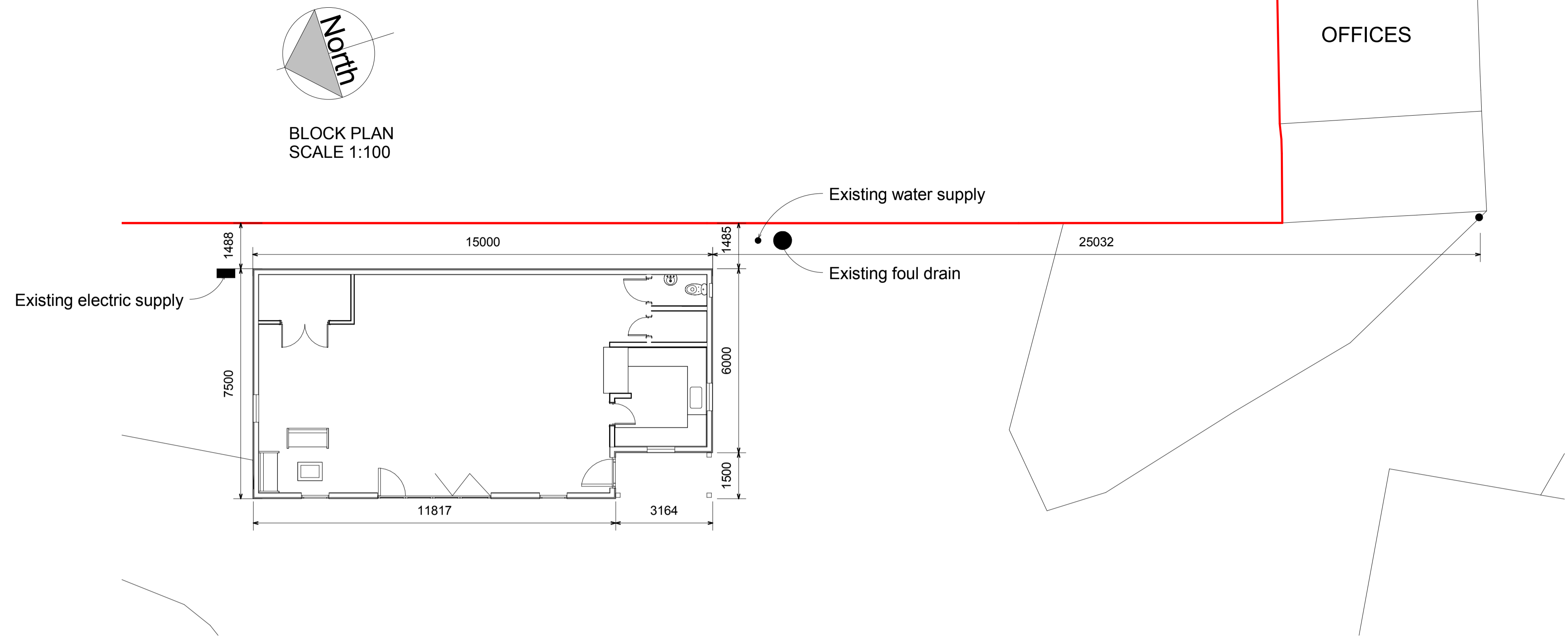
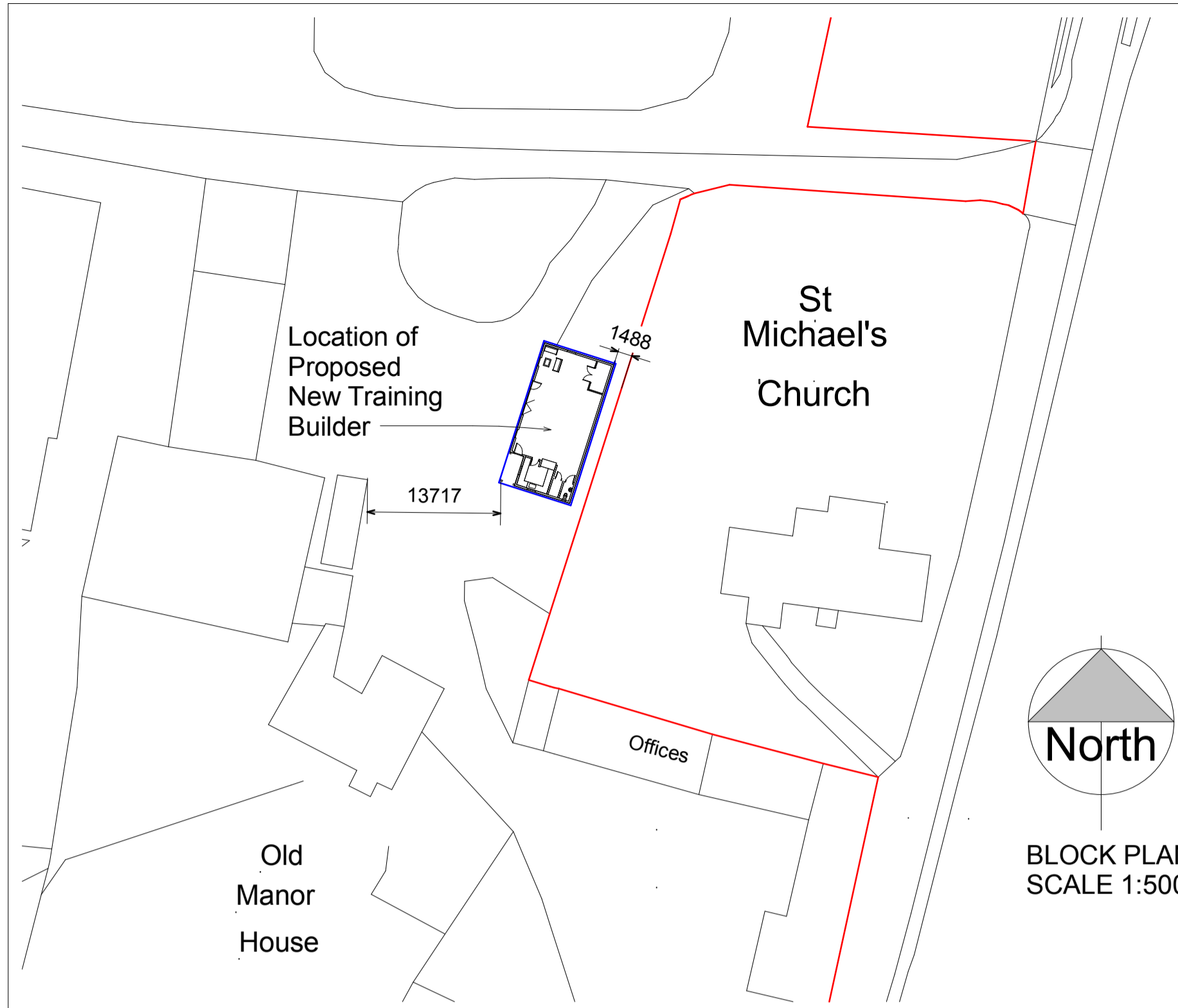
Figure 1.
Area of Watching Brief inside
blue line of 'Proposed New
Training Building'



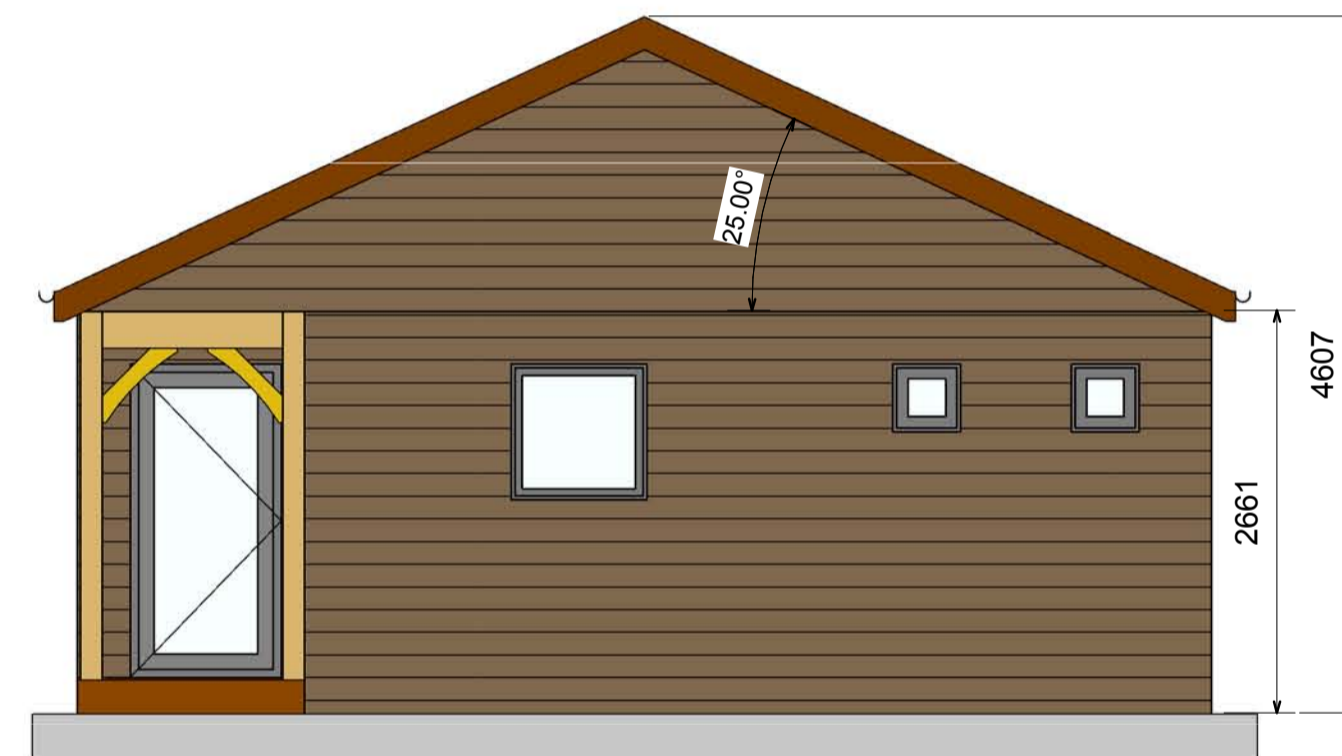
%%169Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Licence no. 100041040



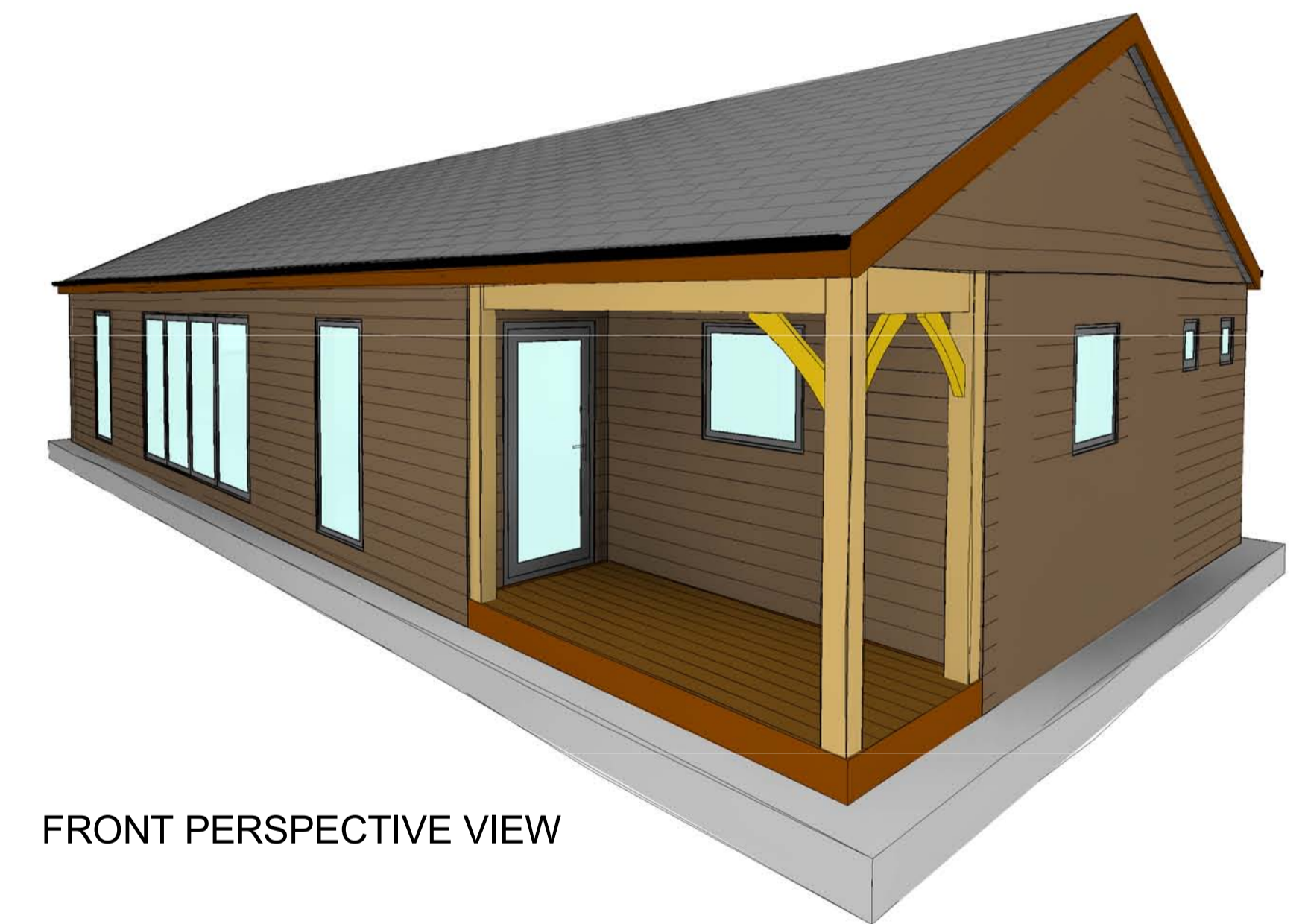
VISUAL SCALE 1:1250 @ A3



EAST ELEVATION



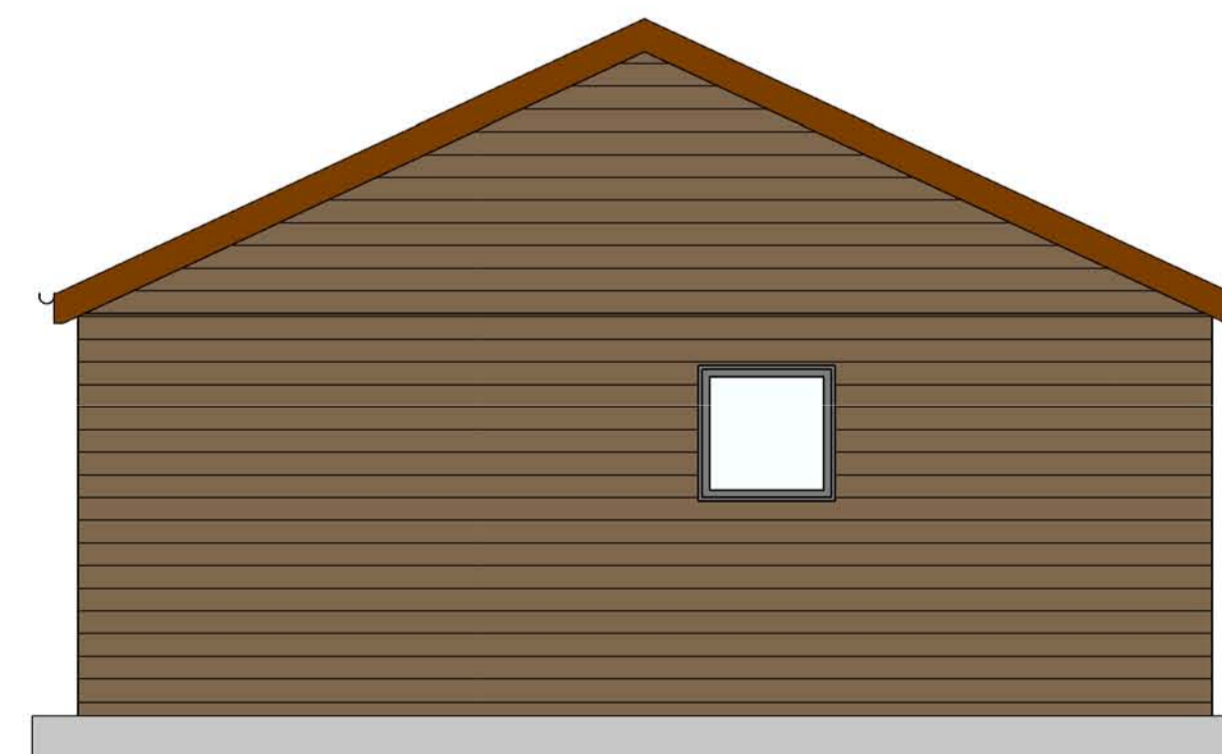
SOUTH ELEVATION



FRONT PERSPECTIVE VIEW



WEST ELEVATION



NORTH ELEVATION



REAR PERSPECTIVE VIEW

ELEVATIONS
SCALE 1:50

DIMENSIONS IN MILLIMETRES

Revision Status		
No	Description	Date
B	Remove reference to 'The Quest School' which no longer exists	03/08/2015

SPECIFICATION

HORIZONTAL REDWOOD PINE TIMBER CLADDING IN A NATURAL FINISH

25 DEGREE PITCHED ROOF WITH WESTERN RED CEDAR SHINGLES

DARK GREY EXTERIOR DOORS, WINDOWS WITH LOW E GLAZING

GREEN OAK POSTS, BEAMS AND STAYS TO THE EAST & SOUTH ELEVATION

UPVC GUTTERING TO THE FASCIA LINE

BUILDING MOUNTED ON TO STRIP FOUNDATIONS WITH LEVELLING PADS

TITLE: PLANNING DRAWING

DRG No.	PL201431188_1_B	Laurence J Betts Ltd
SCALE	NOT TO SCALE	Church Farm Offham West Malling Kent ME19 5NZ
DRAWN	ANFS	
DATE	24/06/2015	
SHEET SIZE	A1	

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