



Archaeological Watching Brief at Leeds Castle, Hollingbourne, Maidstone, Kent *June 2010*

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Leeds Castle, Ashford Road, Hollingbourne, Maidstone, Kent.

Archaeological Watching Brief

**NGR: 8338 5383
Site Code LC/WB/10**

**Report for
Leeds Castle Enterprises Ltd**

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Contents

1.0	SUMMARY	1
2.0	INTRODUCTION	1
	2.1 PLANNING BACKGROUND	1
	2.2 SCHEDULE OF VISITS	2
	2.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	2
	2.4 PROPOSED GROUNDWORKS	2
	2.5 CONFIDENCE RATING	2
3.0	ARCHAEOLOGICAL & GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	
	2	
4.0	METHODOLOGY	3
5.0	RESULTS	3
	5.1 GENERAL	3
	5.2 DEPOSIT MODEL	3
6.0	FINDS	
	3	
7.0	DISCUSSION	
	4	
8.0	CONCLUSION	4
9.0	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	4
10.0	REFERENCES	4
	APPENDIX 1 - KENT COUNTY COUNCIL SMR SUMMARY FORM	
	5	
	APPENDIX 2 - GAZETEER OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES	6

List of Figures

Fig. 1 Location of site of proposed development.

Fig. 2 Location of Building Foundation

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NGR: 8338 5383

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1.0 SUMMARY

In April 2010, Swale and Thames Archaeological Survey Company carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief of a proposed development site at Leeds Castle, Ashford Road, Hollingbourne, Maidstone, Kent: (MA/09/2288).

The Watching Brief revealed no archaeological features.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Planning Background

A planning application (PAN: MA/09/2288) for the construction of an access ramp and entrance extension, conversion of ticket office to coffee shop and change of use of coffee shop and toilets to new staff room was submitted to Maidstone Borough Council. Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation (KCCHC), on behalf of Maidstone Borough Council requested that an Archaeological Watching Brief be undertaken in order to record any archaeological remains uncovered during associated groundworks. The following condition 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.

1

2.2 Schedule of Visits

An Archaeologist attended the site and monitored excavation works on the following dates:

7th April 2010
8th April 2010

2.3 Aims and Objectives

The purpose of the monitoring and recording, if been specified by Kent County Council would be to:

'contribute to the knowledge of Leeds Castle through the recording of any archaeological remains exposed as a result of excavations in connection with the groundworks. Particular attention will be made to the character, height below ground level, condition, date and significance of the deposits'

2.4 Proposed Groundworks

The groundworks involved;

- Excavation of footings
- Excavation of any trenches for services and drainage
- Any other ancillary groundworks associated with the application

2.5 Confidence Rating

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

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL & GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The underlying geology at the site is probably Upper Chalk Beds capped by Head Brickearth. The topsoil sealing the Head Brickearth had a maximum thickness of 300mm. Topographically the site sits on parkland with higher ground rising to the east. According to the County HER the site lies 175m east of finds of Bronze Age (TQ85 SW14) and a Mesolithic flint scatter (TQ 85 SW21). The development site is situated in the grounds of Leeds Castle, a 13th c. moated castle substantially rebuilt in the 19th c. (TQ 85 SW4).

4.0 METHODOLOGY

The Watching Brief was conducted in accordance with the generic specifications compiled by Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation and it also complied with the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (1999). The works comprised the observation of all groundworks, including the inspection of subsoil and natural deposits for archaeological features and finds.

5.0 RESULTS

5.1 General

The site, formerly an earlier development had the topsoil truncated by an earlier 20th century development. The removal of the tarmac and re-deposited building gravel revealed subsoil of Head Brickearth truncated by the earlier development. Continued machining of the subsoil to a maximum depth of about 1.50m revealed no archaeological features

5.2 Deposit Model

A common stratigraphy was revealed across the entire site:

00mm-50mm Tarmac.

50mm-c.300mm Concrete rubble overlaying re-deposited gravel.

300mm+ Brickearth

No archaeological features were recorded.

6.0 FINDS

There were no archaeological features present and no finds were retrieved.

7.0 DISCUSSION

The Archaeological Watching Brief carried out at Leeds Castle, revealed that no archaeological features were present.

8.0 CONCLUSION

The Archaeological Watching Brief has fulfilled the primary aims and objectives of the KCC Specification if it had been issued. No buried archaeological features have been affected as a result of the development programme.

9.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

SWAT would like to thank Leeds Castle Enterprises Ltd for commissioning the project.

Dr Paul Wilkinson MIFA
June 2009

10.0 REFERENCES

IFA (1999) *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*

APPENDIX 1 Kent County Council SMR summary form

Site Name: Leeds Castle, Ashford Road, Hollingbourne, Kent. Site Code: LC/WB/10
Site Address: As above.
Summary: In April 2010, Swale and Thames Archaeological Survey Company carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief at the above address. The works were carried out on behalf of Leeds Castle Enterprises Ltd in advance of the construction of a replacement ticket office and staff room (Planning Application Number: MA/09/2288). The Watching Brief revealed no archaeological features.

Appendix 2 – Gazetteer of Archaeological Sites

Period	HER Reference	Type	National Grid Reference	Description
Mesolithic	TQ 85 SW 21	Site	TQ8413 5335	Mesolithic flint scatters in the park
Bronze Age	TQ 85 SW14	Find spot	TQ 838531	Tanged and barbed arrowhead found
Neolithic	TQ 85 SW14	Find spot	TQ 8353	Flint scraper found in the park
Anglo Saxon	TQ 85 SW22	Find spot	TQ 8401 5360	Anglo Saxon bead found outside the p
Medieval	TQ 85 SW4	Castle	TQ 8367 5327	13 th c. moated castle rebuilt in the 19 th

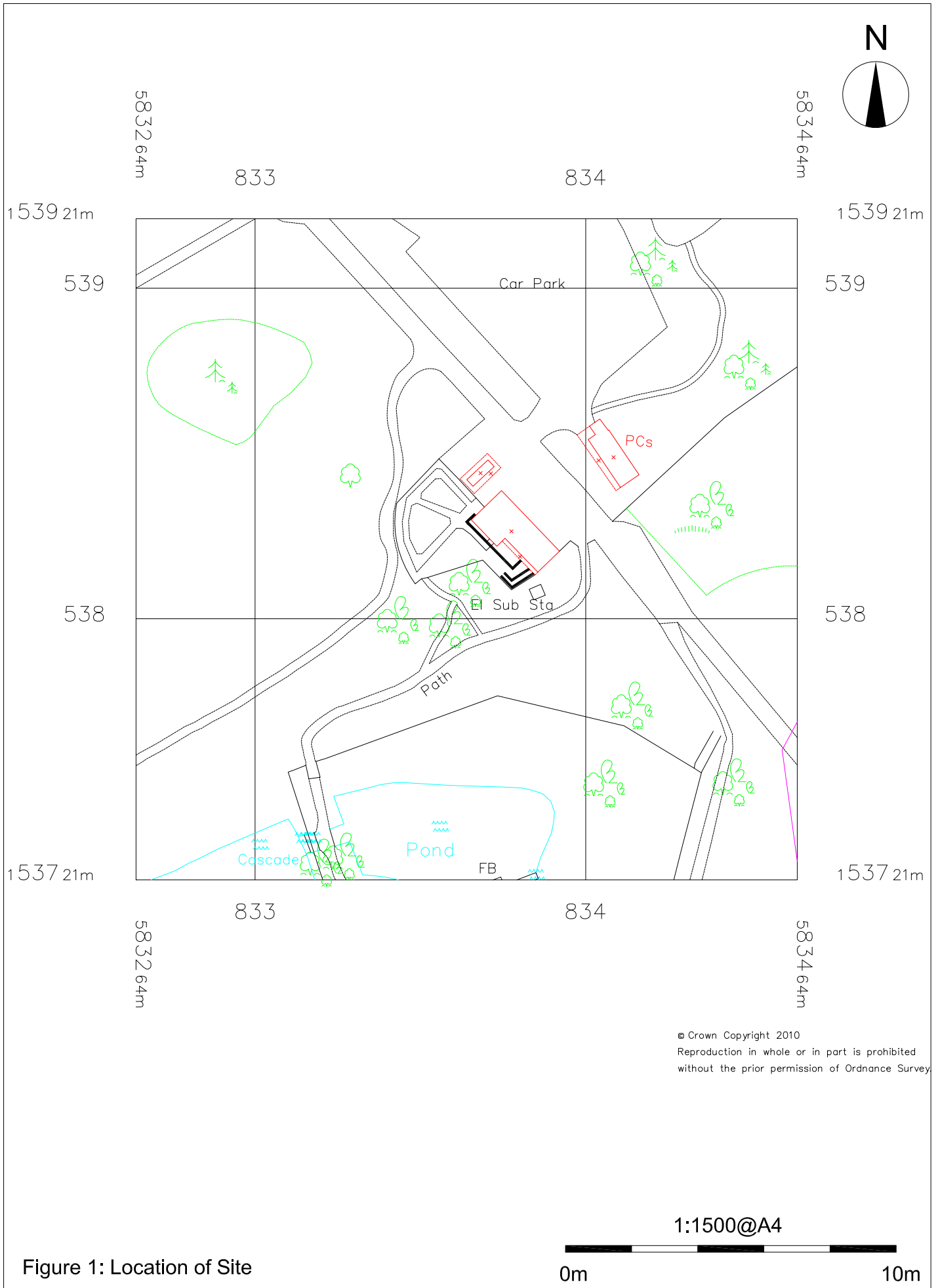


Figure 1: Location of Site

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1:1500@A4

0m

10m

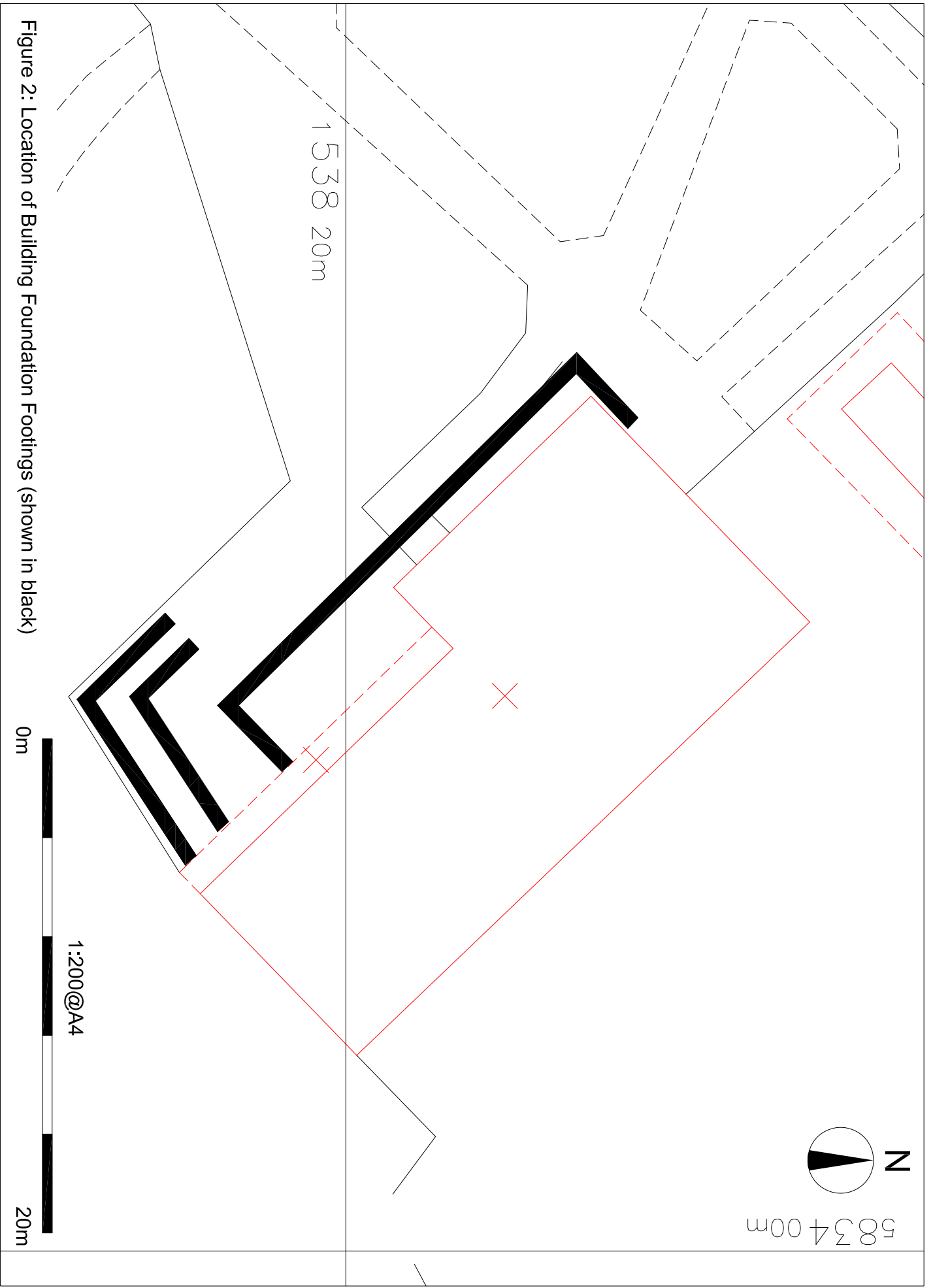


Figure 2: Location of Building Foundation Footings (shown in black)