

# HERITAGE NETWORK



## **HUNSDON HOUSE** **Eastwick Road, Hunsdon, Herts.**

HN656

### *Archaeological Monitoring Report*



# *THE* HERITAGE NETWORK *LTD*

*Registered with the Institute of Field Archaeologists as an Archaeological Organisation*

Archaeological Director: David Hillelson, BA MIFA

## HUNSDON HOUSE Eastwick Road, Hunsdon, Herts.

HN656

### *Archaeological Monitoring Report*

*Prepared on behalf of Mr and Mrs Jaafar*

By

Mark Winter, BSc PgDip

Report no. 415

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*The cover photograph shows Hunsdon House looking north*

## Acknowledgements

The fieldwork for this project was carried out by Mark Winter. The report text and illustrations were prepared by Mark Winter, and edited by David Hillelson.

The Heritage Network would like to express its thanks to Paul Grundy, Walker and Company Chartered Surveyors; Bernie Brooks, Estate Manager; and Alison Tinniswood, County Historic Environment Unit, HCC, for their co-operation and assistance in the execution of this project.

## Summary

<b>Site name and address:</b>	Hunsdon House, Eastwick Road, Hunsdon, Hertfordshire		
<b>County:</b>	Hertfordshire	<b>District:</b>	East Hertfordshire
<b>Village/town:</b>	Hunsdon	<b>Parish:</b>	Hunsdon
<b>Planning reference:</b>	3/06/1554	<b>NGR:</b>	TL 41885 12575
<b>Client name and address:</b>	Mr and Mrs Jaafar, Hunsdon House, Eastwick Road, Hunsdon, Hertfordshire		
<b>Nature of work:</b>	New security gate	<b>Former land use:</b>	Gateway
<b>Site status:</b>	AAS 202	<b>Reason for investigation:</b>	Direction of local planning authority (PPG 16)
<b>Position in planning process:</b>	After full determination (as a condition)	<b>Project brief originator:</b>	Local Authority
<b>Size of affected area:</b>	14.58m <sup>2</sup>	<b>Size of area investigated:</b>	14.58m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Site Code:</b>	HN 656	<b>Other reference:</b>	n/a
<b>Organisation:</b>	Heritage Network	<b>Site Director:</b>	David Hillelson
<b>Project type, methods etc.:</b>	Monitoring	<b>Archive recipient:</b>	Hertford Museum
<b>Start of work</b>	30/04/2007	<b>Finish of work</b>	02/05/2007
<b>Related SMR Nos:</b>	n/a	<b>Periods represented:</b>	Modern
<b>Oasis UID</b>	heritage1-27053	<b>Significant finds:</b>	Brick, glass & ceramic bottles
<b>Monument types:</b>	Pit and rubble spread		
<b>Physical archive:</b>	Brick, glass bottle and ceramic bottle		
<b>Previous summaries/reports:</b>	None		

### Synopsis:

In response to a condition on the planning permission for construction of a new security gate at Hunsdon House, Eastwick Road, Hunsdon, Herts., the Heritage Network was commissioned by the owners to undertake the archaeological monitoring of the development groundworks.

The monitoring of the groundworks revealed a small, modern pit and a spread of modern demolition debris.

## 1. Introduction

**1.1** This report has been prepared at the request of *Walker and Company Chartered Surveyors*, acting on behalf of *Mr and Mrs Jaafar*, as part of the archaeological monitoring and recording of development works at Hunsdon House, Eastwick Road, Hunsdon, Hertfordshire.

**1.2** The investigation was a requirement of the planning consent granted by East Herts District Council (EHDC), under the provisions set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note No.16 (PPG16) on Archaeology and Planning (DoE 1990), for the construction of a security gate (ref. 3/06/1554). The extent of the work was defined in a *Design Brief for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording* prepared by the County Historic Environment Unit (CHEU) of Hertfordshire County Council acting as archaeological advisers to the EHDC (ref.AT 22/12/2006). A full specification of the work was contained in the Heritage Network's approved *Project Design*, dated March 2007.

**1.3** Hunsdon House is located 1.2 km south of the village of Hunsdon, on the eastern side of the road linking the village with the A414. The study area is centred on grid reference TL 41885 12575. On the basis of the known archaeology on and in the vicinity of the present site, the CHEU advised that archaeological monitoring of the groundworks associated with the development should be undertaken, together with the recording and appropriate investigation of any observed archaeological remains, before the development proceeded.

**1.4** The aim of the investigation has been to identify and record any archaeological features and deposits which might have been uncovered; and to retrieve artefactual and ecofactual elements to allow the date, character, and significance of the site to be assessed in accordance with current regional research agenda (Brown and Glazebrook, 2000), subject to the limitations of reasonable safety and practicality.

**1.5** The present report describes the findings of the monitoring programme and is intended, together with the deposition of the site archive with Hertford Museum, Hertford, to complete the requirements of the planning condition.



## 2. Fieldwork

### TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

2.1 The new gateway is located at the southern entrance to the site at approximately 65mAOD. The ground across the study area drops away gently from the north-east.

2.2 The solid geology in this area consists of river terrace gravels at the edge of the Pre-Anglian fluvial deposits (British Geological Survey 2000, 113). Locally the drift geology is derived from the Hanslope Association (411d) described as: *Slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils. Some slowly permeable non-calcareous clayey soils. Slight risk of water erosion* (SSEW 1983).

### METHODOLOGY

2.3 The timetable for the fieldwork followed the client's groundwork schedule. A number of site visits were made to supervise the reduction of the site and excavation of drainage trenches.

2.4 The machining was undertaken using a mini digger fitted with a toothless ditching bucket or toothed bucket, as required.

2.5 All work was carried out in accordance with the approved *Project Design*, current health and safety legislation, and both IFA and ALGAO standards.

### MONITORING AND RECORDING

#### *Stratigraphy*

2.6 The stratigraphy was consistent across the site and consisted of a layer of modern tarmac, forming the existing driveway surface, overlying a 0.20m thick base layer of yellowish brown (10YR 5/8) sandy clay. Beneath this was a soft, very dark grey (10YR 3/1) sandy clay, which contained a large quantity of brick and rubble. Close to the road this overlay a dark greenish grey (Gley 1 4/10/GY) sandy clay containing frequent chalk inclusions. This covered the underlying natural geology of firm, light olive brown (2.5Y 5/4) sandy clay with frequent chalk inclusions.

#### *Ground reduction*

2.7 The ground level was reduced by approximately 0.58m across the driveway entrance. This removed the existing tarmac and its makeup, and the greenish grey sandy clay at the front of the site.

2.8 Three metal security posts, set in concrete, were removed during ground reduction. These posts measured 0.65m in diameter and extended 1m below the existing ground surface.

2.9 A small sub-circular pit [01] measuring 0.90m in diameter was uncovered in this area. This pit was filled with orange brick rubble and continued below the impact level of the present works.

**2.10** A substantial dark grey (10YR 4/1) very loose sandy clay layer (03) was observed 2.90m back from the road. This layer was 0.60m in depth and contained a large quantity of gravel and a moderate amount of brick. Two bricks, dating to the 1850s and the 1960s or 70s, were recovered from this layer.

**2.11** A modern ceramic pipe (04), probably a land-drain, was observed towards the northern limit of the reduced area.

#### *Footings trenches*

**2.12** A single trench was excavated across the site entrance. The trench measured approximately 0.80m wide by 0.80m deep. Foundation pits were excavated at each end of this trench for the gate piers. These measured approximately 1.30m square and did not exceed 1.10m in depth.

**2.13** These excavations cut through the previously observed layer (03) to reveal a pale yellow (2.5Y 7/4) sandy clay natural.

#### *Services*

**2.14** A single manhole was excavated to the east of the gateway, to accommodate the control mechanism for the gate. This was 0.50m deep and did not break through the very dark greyish brown (10YR 3/2), silty clay topsoil layer.

### 3. Discussion

3.1 The present study area lies within *Area of Archaeological Significance 202* (AAS202), as defined in the East Hertfordshire District Local Plan. It falls within the parkland of the Grade I listed 15<sup>th</sup> century moated tower house, and later royal palace, at Hunsdon House, which is likely to have had manorial origins.

3.2 Roman activity is known in the area. The site lies 1.2km east of a known Roman kiln (NMR 638620) and possible farmstead building (NMR 638621) situated at Olives Farm. A Roman baths and well (NMR 370191) have also been recorded at Hunsdon House.

3.3 Previous investigations have revealed extensive medieval structural remains in the area of the main entrance to the north of the church. Medieval moats are known to the west at Olives Farm (NMR 638957) and 1.5km to the east at Eastwick (NMR 11519 and 11520).

3.4 The remains of a former World War II fighter defence station known as RAF Hunsdon lies c.1km to the north of the present site (NMR 32450).

3.5 The monitoring of the groundworks associated with the construction of a new gateway for the southern entrance to the site, revealed a modern pit [01] containing rubble, and a large spread of demolition debris (03) which was probably imported from elsewhere. No evidence for any *in situ* structures was recorded in association with these features and deposits.

#### *Confidence Rating*

3.6 During the course of the fieldwork, the conditions were generally good for the identification of potential features and deposits, and for their investigation.

3.7 There are no circumstances which would lead to a confidence rating for the work which was less than High.

## 4. Schedule of site visits

Date	Staff	Hours	Comments
30/04/07	MW	8	Site monitoring
01/05/07	MW	10	Site monitoring
02/05/07	MW	8	Site Monitoring

## 5. Bibliography

Brown, N. & Glazebrook, J. 2000, *Research and Archaeology: a framework for the eastern counties, 2. Research agenda and strategy*. East Anglian Archaeology

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Winter, M., 2007, *Hunsdon House, Eastwick Road, Hunsdon, Herts., Project Design: Archaeological Monitoring*, The Heritage Network Ltd

## 6. Illustrations

Figure 1 ..... Site location

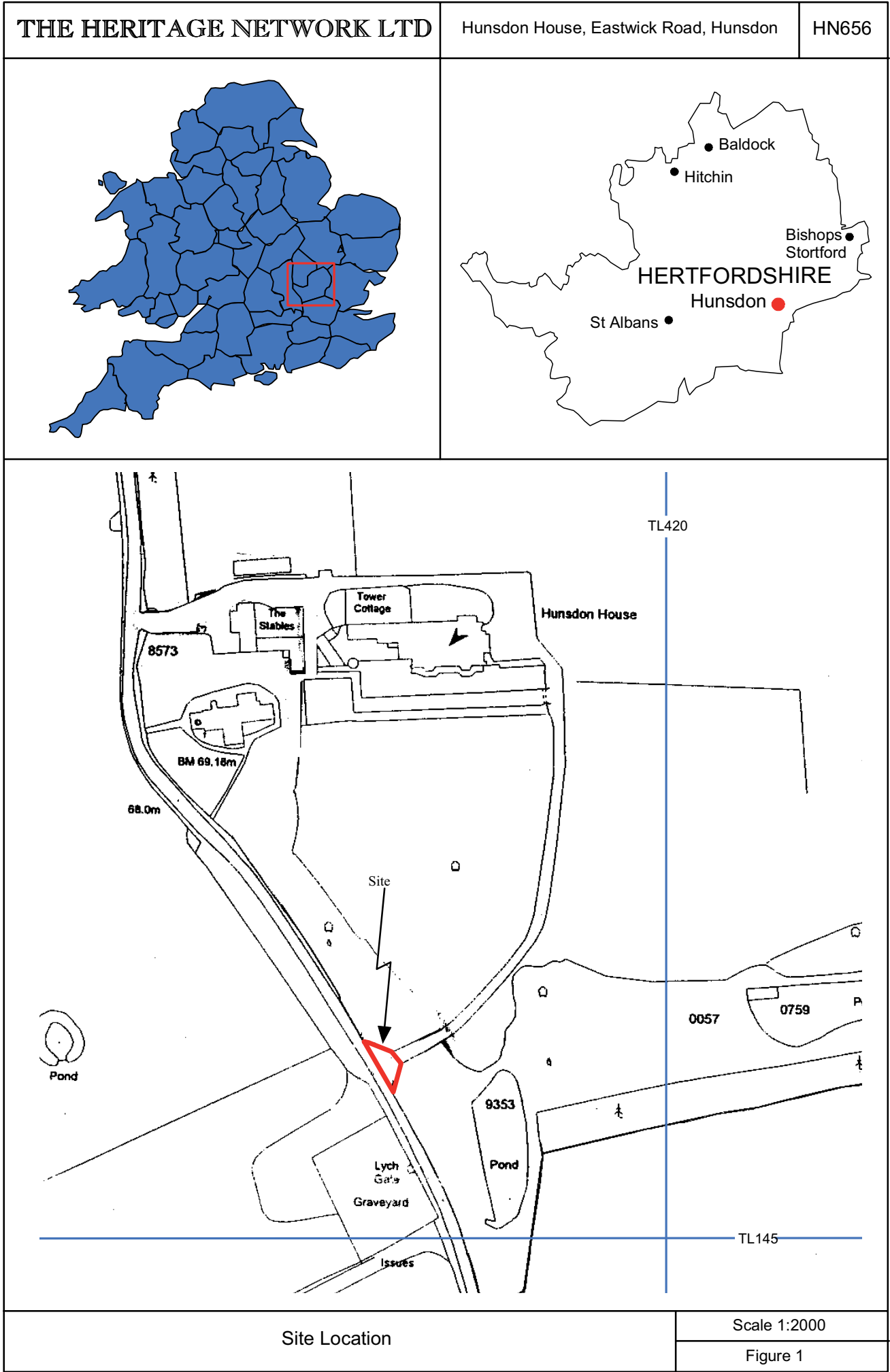
Figure 2 ..... Site plan

Plate 1 ..... Stratigraphy in gate trench

Plate 2 ..... Stratigraphy in manhole

Plate 3 ..... Pit [01]

Plate 4 ..... Layer (03)





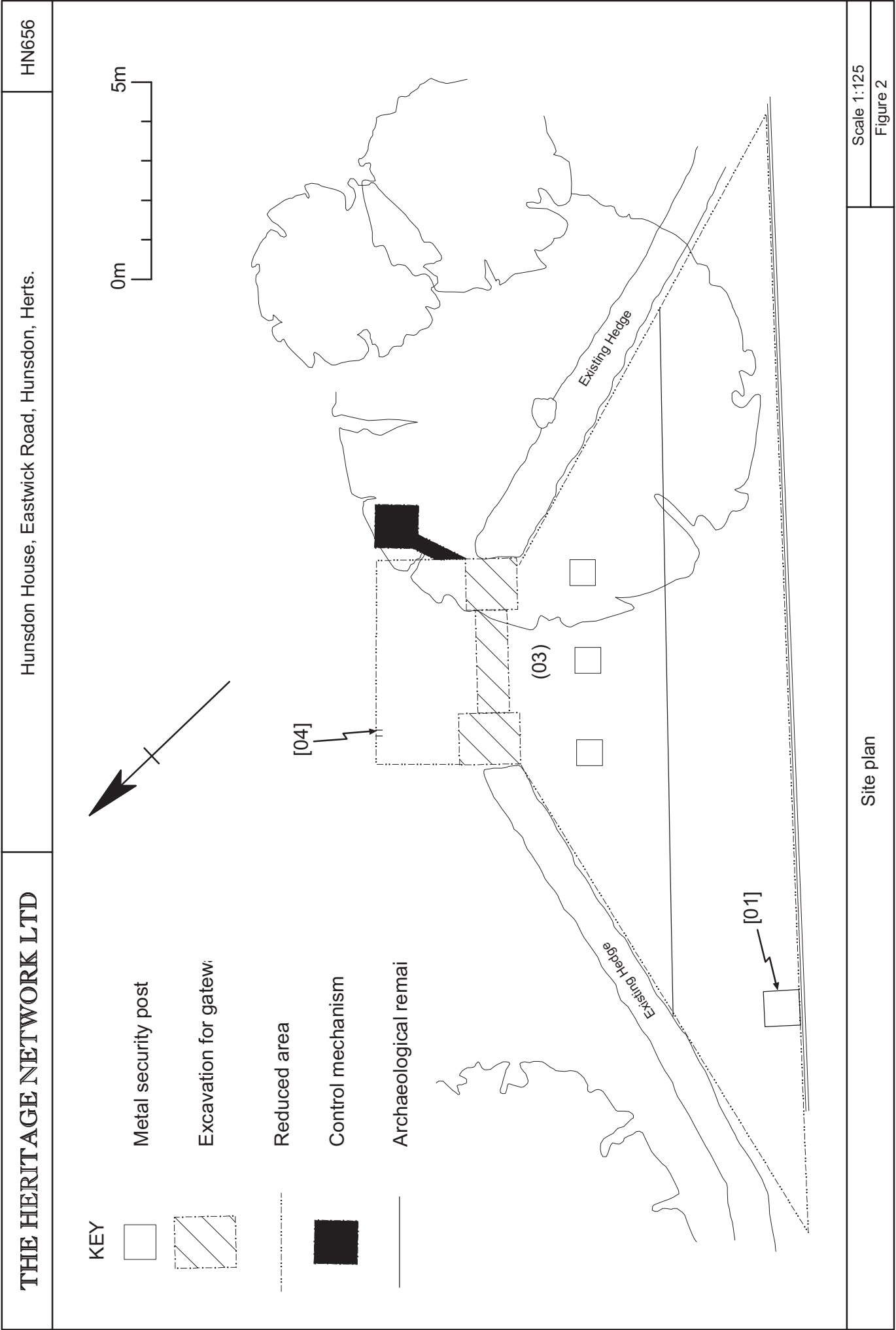




Plate 1: Stratigraphy in gate trench



Plate 2: Stratigraphy in manhole





Plate 3: Pit [01]



Plate 4: Layer (03)