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128 CANNONS CLOSE, BISHOPS STORTFORD, HERTFORDSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING

Authors: Zbigniew Pozorski MA (Fieldwork and Report) Antony Mustchin MSc (Editor)	
NGR: TL 49395 22260	Report No: 4005
District: East Hertfordshire	Site Code: AS 1421
Approved: Claire Halpin	Project No: 4387
Signed:	Date: January 2012 Revised: February 2012

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

**98-100 Fore, Street, Hertford SG14 1AB
01992 558170**

**Unit 6, Brunel Business Court, Eastern Way,
Bury St Edmunds IP32 7AJ
01284 765210**

e-mail info@ascontracts.co.uk
www.archaeologicalsolutions.co.uk



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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	<i>128 Cannons Close, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire</i>		
<p><i>In June 2011 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording at 128 Cannons Close, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire. The site is located close to the River Stort, c. 1.9km north-east of the centre of Bishop's Stortford. It lies within Area of Archaeological Significance No. 113, which identifies an area of the Roman occupation within the Cannons Close housing estate and Grange Paddocks sports fields to the west of the railway line. The site had a potential for Romano-British archaeological remains.</i></p> <p><i>In the event the monitoring revealed a residual sherd of Roman pottery. No archaeological features were found.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	<i>23/06/2011</i>		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>	Future work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>
P. number	<i>4387</i>	Site code	<i>AS 1421</i>
Type of project	<i>Archaeological Monitoring and Recording</i>		
Site status	<i>Within Area of Archaeological Significance No. 113</i>		
Current land use	<i>Semi-detached bungalow with rear and front gardens</i>		
Planned development	<i>Rear and side extensions to the house</i>		
Main features (+dates)	<i>-</i>		
Significant finds (+dates)	<i>Residual Roman pottery sherd</i>		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Hertfordshire</i>	<i>East Hertfordshire</i>	<i>Bishop's Stortford</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>Hertfordshire HER</i>		
Post code (if known)	<i>CM23 2BL</i>		
Area of site	<i>c. 410m²</i>		
NGR	<i>TL 49395 22260</i>		
Height AOD (min/max)	<i>c. 62m AOD</i>		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>HCC HEU</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>Zbigniew Pozorski</i>		
Funded by	<i>Mr Malcolm McPherson</i>		
Full title	<i>128 Cannons Close, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire. Archaeological Monitoring and Recording</i>		
Authors	<i>Pozorski, Z.</i>		
Report no.	<i>4005</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>January 2012 (Revised February 2012)</i>		

128 CANNONS CLOSE, BISHOP'S STORTFORD, HERTFORDSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING

SUMMARY

In June 2011 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording at 128 Cannons Close, Bishops Stortford, Hertfordshire (NGR TL 49395 22260). The monitoring was commissioned by Mr McPherson in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for the construction of extensions to the house.

The site is located close to the River Stort, c. 1.9km north-east of the centre of Bishop's Stortford. It is located within Area of Archaeological Significance No. 113, which identifies an area of the Roman occupation within the Cannons Close housing estate and Grange Paddocks sports fields to the west of the railway line. The site had a potential for Romano-British archaeological remains.

In the event the monitoring revealed a residual sherd of Roman pottery. No archaeological features were found.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In June 2011 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording at 128 Cannons Close, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire (NGR TL 49395 22260; Figs. 1 & 2). The monitoring was commissioned by Mr McPherson in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for the construction of extensions to the house (East Hertfordshire District Council Planning Ref. 3/11/0200/FP).

1.2 The monitoring was undertaken in accordance to an advice issued by Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Unit (HCC HEU; dated 15/04/2011), and a written scheme of investigation (specification) prepared by AS (dated 19/04/2011), and approved by HCC HEU. The project conformed to the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for An Archaeological Watching Brief* (revised 2008), as well as the document *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).

1.3 The objectives of the project of archaeological monitoring and recording were:

- The investigation and recording of any surviving archaeological remains within the area of the new development in accordance with the requirements of the HCC HEU advice;
- The analysis, conservation and long-term storage of any artifactual/ ecofactual material recovered from the site in appropriate conditions;

- The provision of an adequately detailed project report that will place the findings of the monitoring and recording in their local and regional context, having made reference to the relevant regional research agendas and through cartographic, documentary and other research;
- The full analysis and interpretation of the site archive in order to promote local and regional research, and the appropriate dissemination and publication of the project results.

Planning policy context

1.4 Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS5; 2010) states that those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest are heritage assets. The Planning Policy Statement aims to deliver sustainable development by ensuring that policies and decisions that concern the historic environment recognise that heritage assets are a non-renewable resource, take account of the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits of heritage conservation, and recognise that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term. It aims to conserve England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance. It states that opportunities to capture evidence from the historic environment and to contribute to our knowledge and understanding of our past, and to make this publicly available, should be taken, particularly where a heritage asset is to be lost.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

2.1 The site is located within a residential estate to the west of B1383 Stansted Road, Bishop's Stortford (Fig. 1). It is located in the northern part of Cannons Close estate. The site is occupied by a semi-detached bungalow with a rear garden. The bungalow is now subject to the construction of rear, side and first floor extensions.

3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

3.1 The topography of Bishop's Stortford is undulating and slopes away towards the River Stort, which flows on an approximate north to south orientation at c. 58m AOD. Situated above the flood plain on the eastern side of the river valley, and c. 125m south-east of the River Stort, the site is approximately 62m AOD. The proposed development is relatively flat and the adjacent land slopes gently towards the River Stort to the north-west and west.

3.2 The solid geology of the environs is Upper Cretaceous chalk of White Chalk Subgroup (British Geological Survey 1978). The chalk is present as a narrow strip along the River Stort. To the east of the site the natural geology is Paleocene clay with silt and sand of the Lambeth Group.

3.3 The town of Bishop's Stortford lies across the junction between different soil types. The majority of the East Hertfordshire district and most of Bishop's Stortford

lies on soils of the Hanslope association, which are described as slowly permeable, calcareous clayey soils with some slowly permeable non-calcareous clayey soils, all of which are at slight risk of water erosion (Soil Survey of England and Wales SSEW 1983). The area of Bishop's Stortford within the valley of the River Stort, including the site, comprise soils of the Melford association, described as deep, well-drained fine loamy over clayey, coarse loamy over clayey and fine loamy soils, some with calcareous clayey subsoils (SSEW 1983).

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Prehistoric

4.1 In comparison with the nearby Lea Valley to the south-west, few finds have been discovered in Bishop's Stortford or within the corresponding section of the River Stort valley (Hunns 2000). A single Paleolithic hand axe was recovered from the River Stort in the 19th century. Other early remains, including Mesolithic finds, were discovered during rescue excavations in the 1960's to the north and north-east of the town, in close proximity to the site. Evidence of later prehistoric activity in the town is also sparse. Concentrations of later prehistoric remains have been discovered to the south of the town. An excavation in Thorley in 1994 revealed probable Bronze and Iron Age settlement close to the Stort Valley (McDonald 1997) and further remains have been discovered nearby.

Romano-British

4.2 The site is located within an area designated on the local plan as Area of Archaeological Significance No. 113. The area encompasses the Cannons Close housing estate and Grange Paddocks sports fields to the west of the railway line, reflecting the presumed extent of Romano-British occupation of the area. The remains found in the area included buildings, rubbish pits, burials, large quantities of pottery and finds from the 1st – 4th centuries AD (Hunns 2000). A possible tile kiln was discovered to the north of the settlement (Cooper 2005) while several burials were also observed during construction works some 130m to the south, and included a stone coffin burial (HER 514) and a group of cremations, suggesting that a cemetery probably exists on the eastern side of the settlement. A gold ring and Roman pottery were also found.

4.3 Four urned Roman cremations were found close to the current site in 1961 (HER 512), probably part of a larger burial group. Excavations carried out by Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust (HAT, now AS) in the late 1990s at Legion's Way revealed the course of Roman Stane Street and associated occupation. An evaluation carried out by HAT in 2001 at Grange Paddocks revealed three phases of Romano-British fields/ enclosures and evidence for a cemetery with burials of pre- and post-2nd century date (Crank *et al* 2001).

Anglo-Saxon and medieval

4.4 There have been suggestions that the late medieval church of St Michael may stand on a pagan Saxon site although there is no archaeological evidence to support

this. It is known that the late Anglo-Saxon manor of Stortford was held during the reign of Edward the Confessor by Eadgifu Swanneshals, also known as Edith the Fair, and the purported mistress of King Harold (Hunns 2000). Following the Norman Conquest (1066) the manor became the possession of William, Bishop of London. An important Norman structure in the town, Waytemore Castle (a motte and bailey castle) was built in the 11th century and lies c. 400m to the south-west of the site, in a defensive position close to the ford of the River Stort. The Domesday Book of 1086 depicts a substantial settlement (*Estereferd*); it records six hides, with land for ten ploughs and woodland for 300 pigs. The settlement also had two mills and a resident priest with two knights (Morris 1976). Once the town and its castle had been sold to the Bishop of London, the settlement became known as *Bishop's Estereferd*, being later corrupted to the present 'Stortford'.

Post-medieval and later

4.5 A significant event for the town during the post-medieval period was the opening of the Stort Navigation in 1769, which linked Bishop's Stortford with London via the Lea Navigation, itself constructed in the 18th century. This provided a direct link to the markets of London and, as a result, the prosperity of the town in the 18th and 19th centuries was fuelled by the brewing and malting industry. High numbers of maltings and inns are recorded in the HER (Cooper 2005). The 18th century brought massive growth and transformed the economy of Bishop's Stortford. Although it was still described as a considerable market town in 1770 (Munby 1977), its horse and cattle fairs had enabled an enormous expansion in leather-working by the 1750's through the tanners of Water Lane. As was common in the post-medieval period, from 1900 onwards the settlement of Bishop's Stortford grew significantly in size, expanding to the south towards Thorley. The modern period has seen the construction of numerous new housing estates in the town including Cannon's Close to the north-east.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 The principal elements monitored were mechanically-excavated foundation trenches for the new rear and side extensions to the house and a trench for a new soakaway with associated drainage (Fig. 2).

5.2 The archaeological monitoring comprised the observation of all groundworks, the inspection of the subsoil and natural deposits for archaeological features, the examination of spoil heaps and the recording of soil profiles. Deposits were recorded using *pro-forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed as appropriate. Excavated spoil was checked for finds and the excavated area was scanned by metal detector.

6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

Deposits located within the area of excavation were recorded in sample sections presented below.

<i>Sample Section 1</i> <i>West foundation trench, north part, facing west (DP 5)</i> <i>0.00 = 62.19m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.27m	L1000	Made ground. Mid to dark grey, loose, silty sand with occasional modern CBM fragments
0.27m+	L1001	Natural mid to dark yellow, compact, silty clay

<i>Sample Section 2</i> <i>West foundation trench, central part, facing east (DP 6)</i> <i>0.00 = 62.24m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.14m	L1000	Made ground. As above.
0.14m+	L1001	Natural clay. As above.

<i>Sample Section 3</i> <i>South foundation trench, central part, facing north (DP 8)</i> <i>0.00 = 62.29m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.41m	L1002	White, friable, chalk.
0.41m+	L1001	Natural clay. As above.

Description: A sherd of Roman pottery (3rd – 4th century AD) was recovered from L1000.

7 CONFIDENCE RATING

7.1 It is not felt that any factors inhibited the recognition of archaeological features or finds during the programme of archaeological monitoring and recording.

8 DEPOSIT MODEL

8.1 Within the area of the proposed rear and side extensions to the house a concrete paving had been removed prior to excavation. As such, the uppermost deposit was Made Ground L1000, a mid to dark grey, loose, silty sand with occasional modern CBM fragments (0.10 – 0.30m thick). L1000 overlay the natural (L1001), a mid to dark yellow, compact, silty clay. To the south of the house, within the drive area, L1002 overlay the natural. This was a sterile layer of white, friable, chalk (0.30 – 0.45m thick), and is interpreted as a modern redeposited material.

8.2 The natural geology, L1001, was present at 0.25 – 0.45m below existing ground level and comprised a mid to dark yellow, compact, silty clay.

9 DISCUSSION

9.1 The site had a potential for archaeological remains, in particular for Romano-British remains. It is located within Area of Archaeological Significance No. 113 which identifies a zone of Roman occupation.

9.2 In the event no archaeological features were revealed. The only archaeological evidence found was a residual pottery sherd of Roman (3rd – 4th century AD) date from Made Ground L1000.

10 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

10.1 Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited with any donated finds from the site at Bishop's Stortford Museum. The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross-referenced and checked for internal consistency.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions would like to thank Mr Malcolm McPherson for his co-operation and assistance, and for funding the project.

AS would also like to acknowledge the input and advice of Ms Alison Tinniswood of Hertfordshire County Council, Historic Environment Unit.

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APPENDIX 1 CONTENTS OF THE ARCHIVE

Records	Number
Brief	N
Specification	Y
Registers	3 (Context, Drawing, Digital Photo)
Context Sheets	3
Site drawings A1	0
Site drawings A3	0
Site drawings A4	1
Site photographs b/w	0
Site photographs colour slides	0
Digital Photographs	11

APPENDIX 2 HER SUMMARY SHEET

Site name and address:	128 Cannons Close, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire
County: Hertfordshire	District: East Hertfordshire
Village/Town:	Parish: Bishop's Stortford
Planning application reference:	East Hertfordshire District Council Planning Ref. 3/11/0200/FP
Client name/address/tel:	Mr Malcolm McPherson
Nature of application:	Construction of rear and side extensions to house
Present land use:	Rear garden and side drive
Size of application area: c. 410m ²	Size of area investigated 60m ²
NGR (8 figures):	TL 4939 2226
Site Code:	AS 1421
Site director/Organization:	Archaeological Solutions Ltd
Type of work:	Archaeological monitoring and recording
Date of work:	23/06/2011
Location of finds/Curating museum:	Bishop's Stortford
Related SMR Nos:	Periods represented: Roman
Relevant previous summaries/reports: -	-
Summary of fieldwork results:	<p>In June 2011 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological monitoring and recording at 128 Cannons Close, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire. <i>The site is located close to the River Stort, c. 1.9km north-east of the centre of Bishop's Stortford.</i> It is located within Area of Archaeological Significance No. 113, which identifies an area of the Roman occupation within the Cannons Close housing estate and Grange Paddocks sports fields to the west of the railway line. The site had a potential for Romano-British archaeological remains.</p> <p>In the event the monitoring revealed a residual sherd of Roman pottery. No archaeological features were found.</p>
Author of summary: Z Pozorski	Date of Summary: January 2012 (Revised February 2012)

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



DP 1. 128 Cannons Close, Bishops Stortford. View W.



DP 2. Foundation trenches for rear extension. View NE.



DP 3. N foundation trench. View E.



DP 4. W foundation trench, N part. View N.



DP 5. W foundation trench. Sample section 1. View E.



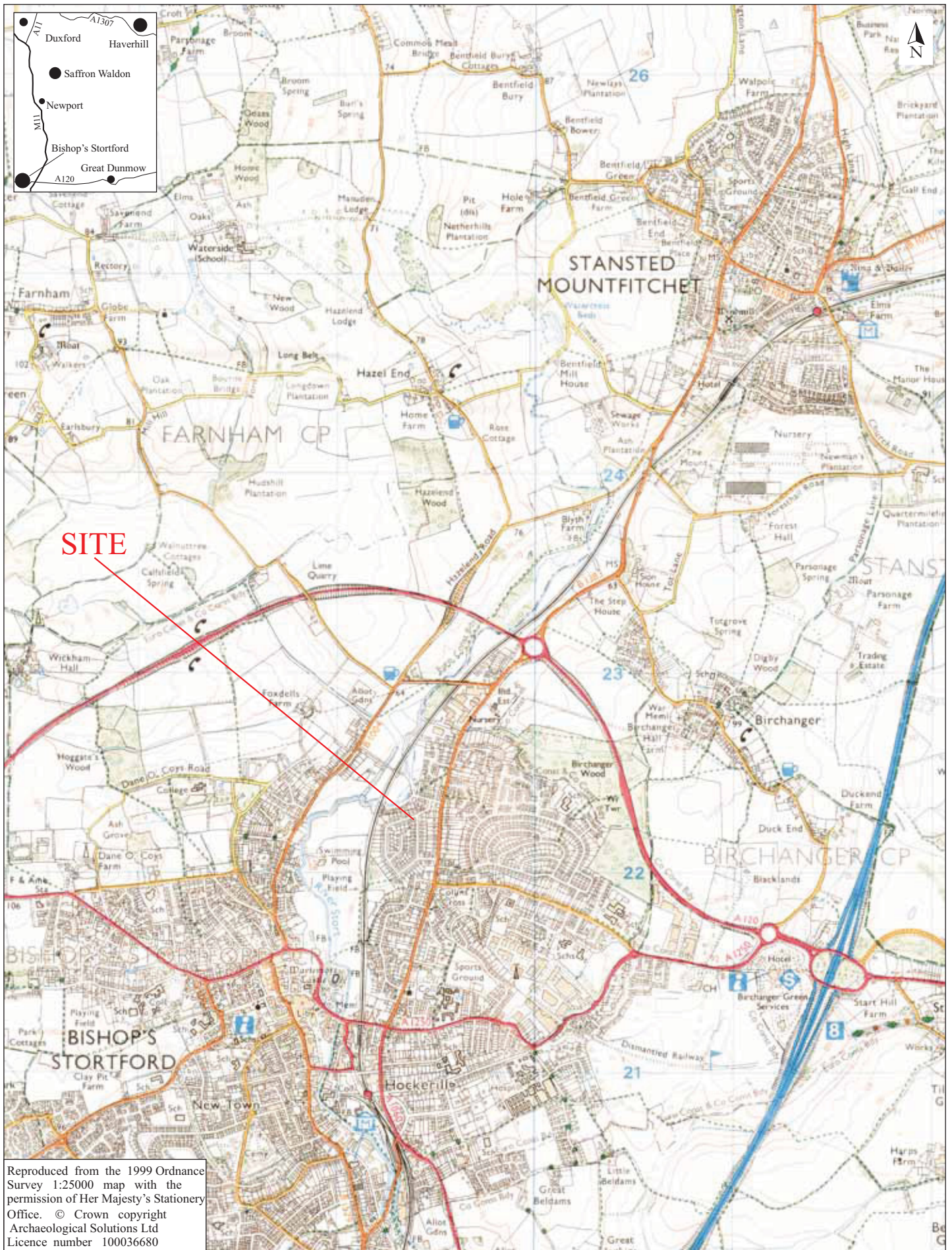
DP 6. W foundation trench. Sample section 2. View W.



DP 7. S rear/side foundation trench. View E.

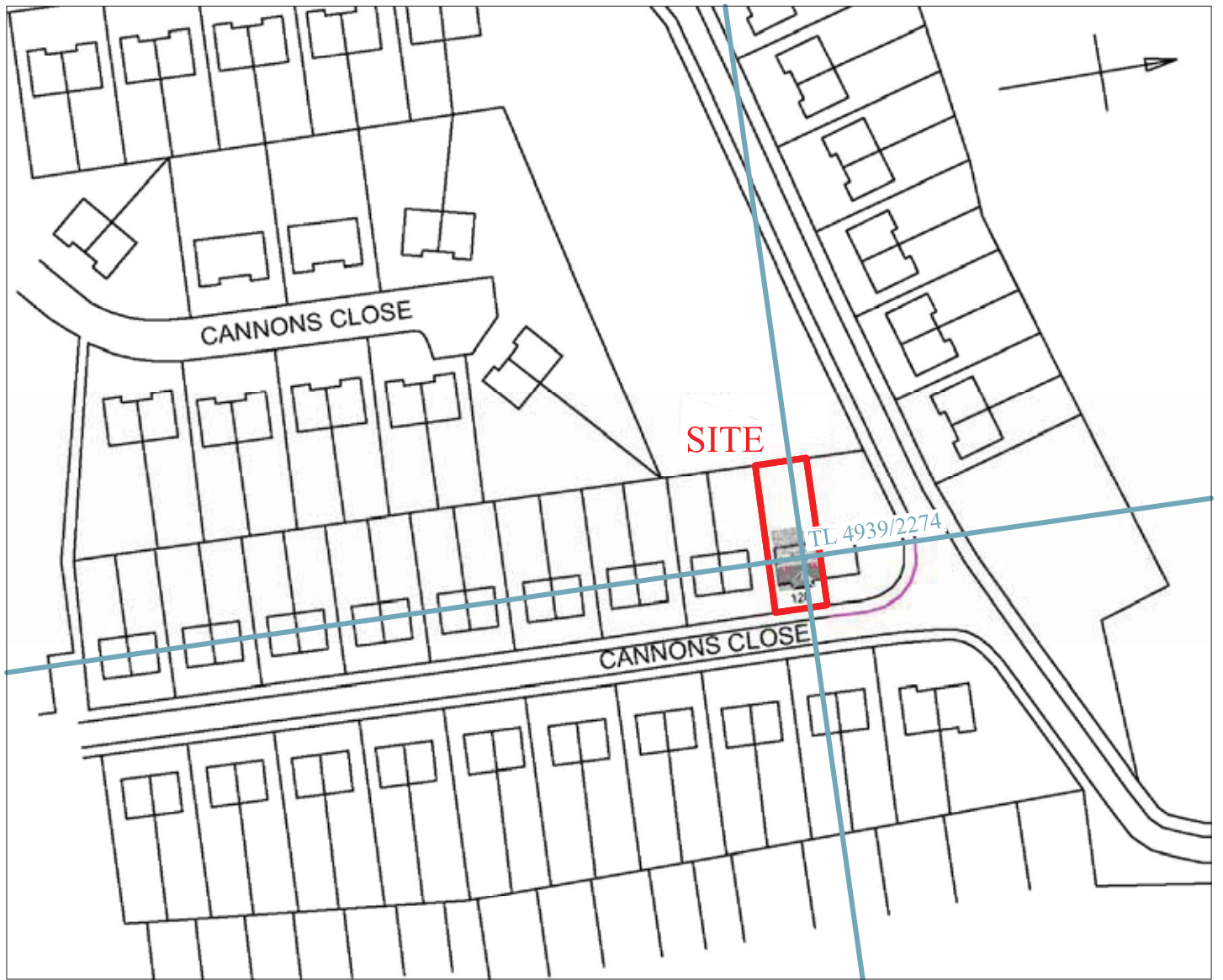


DP 8. S rear/side foundation trench. Sample section 3. View S.

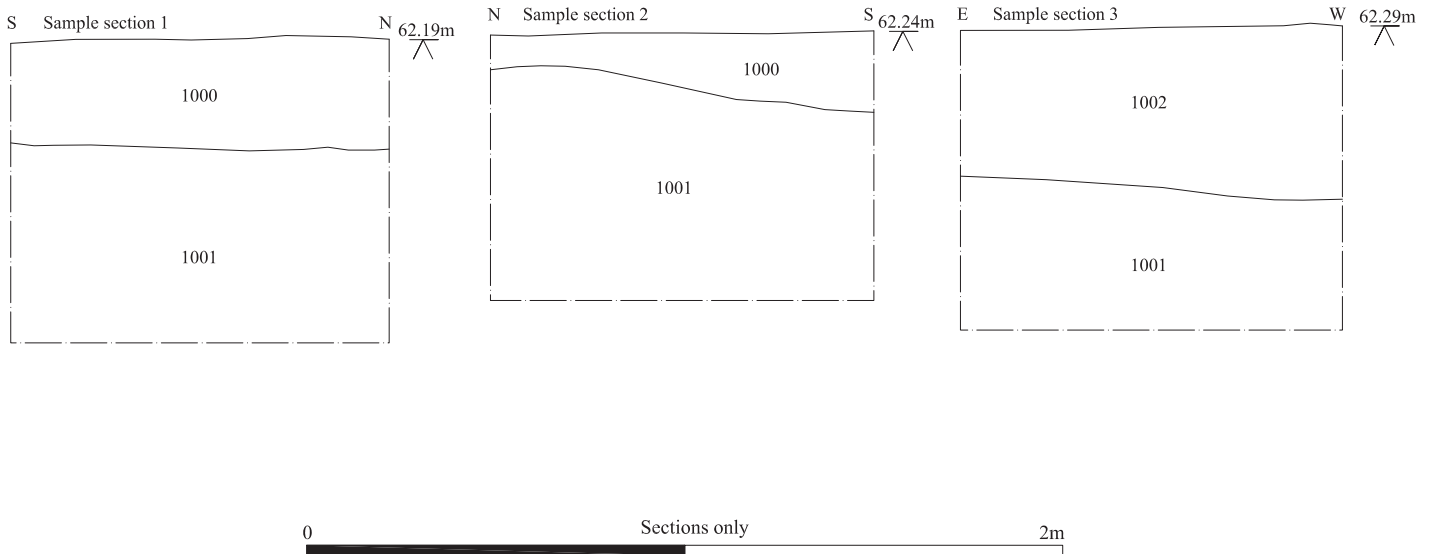
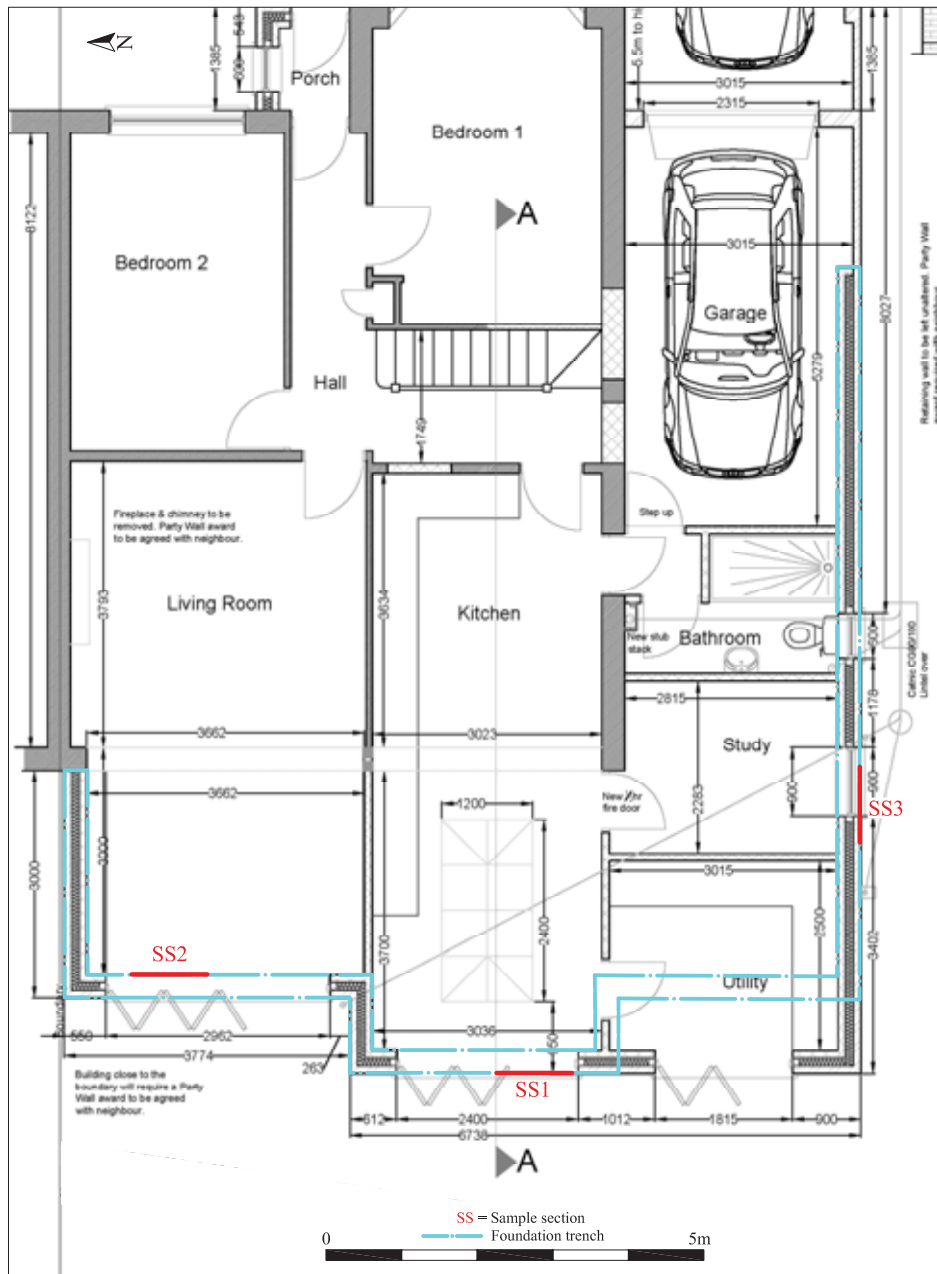


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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4



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Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan
Scale 1:150 at A4



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Fig. 3 Sections and section location plan
 Scale 1:100 and 1:20 at A4