
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

**FORMER WAGGON AND HORSES PUBLIC HOUSE,
1 HIGH STREET, WATTON AT STONE,
HERTFORDSHIRE**

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Authors: Zbigniew Pozorski (Fieldwork and Report) Kate Higgs (Research) Antony Mustchin (Editor)	
NGR: TL 29700 19735	Report No: 3962
District: East Hertfordshire	Site Code: AS 1034
Approved: Claire Halpin	Project No: 2846
Signed:	Date: November 2011 Revised: December 2012

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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	<i>Former Waggon and Horses Public House, 1 High Street, Watton at Stone, Hertfordshire</i>		
<p><i>In November 2011 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried an archaeological evaluation at the former Waggon and Horses Public House, 1 High Street, Watton at Stone, Hertfordshire. The site had a potential for medieval and post-medieval archaeological remains.</i></p> <p><i>In the event the evaluation revealed no archaeological features or finds. The area of evaluation was characterised by the presence of substantial deposits of modern (20th century) made ground indicative of extensive previous ground disturbance.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	21-22/11/2011		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	Y	Future work (Y/N/?)	N
P. number	2846	Site code	AS 1034
Type of project	<i>An Archaeological Evaluation</i>		
Site status	<i>Within Watton at Stone's Conservation Area (CA) and adjacent to Area of Archaeological Significance No. 126</i>		
Current land use	<i>Disused public house with associated car park</i>		
Planned development	<i>Change of use to residential and construction of two detached dwellings</i>		
Main features (+dates)	-		
Significant finds (+dates)	-		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Hertfordshire</i>	<i>East Hertfordshire</i>	<i>Watton at Stone</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>Hertfordshire HER</i>		
Post code (if known)	<i>SG14 3ST</i>		
Area of site	<i>c. 2100m²</i>		
NGR	<i>TL 29700 19735</i>		
Height AOD (min/max)	<i>c. 60m</i>		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>HCC HEU</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>Zbigniew Pozorski</i>		
Funded by	<i>Tilehouse Properties Ltd</i>		
Full title	<i>Former Waggon and Horses Public House, 1 High Street, Watton at Stone, Hertfordshire. An Archaeological Evaluation</i>		
Authors	<i>Pozorski, Z.</i>		
Report no.	3962		
Date (of report)	<i>November 2011 (Revised December 2012)</i>		

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AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

SUMMARY

In November 2011 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried an archaeological evaluation at the former Waggon and Horses Public House, 1 High Street, Watton at Stone, Hertfordshire. The site had a potential for medieval and post-medieval archaeological remains.

In the event the evaluation revealed no archaeological features or finds. The area of evaluation was characterised by the presence of substantial deposits of modern (20th century) made ground indicative of extensive previous ground disturbance.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In November 2011 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried an archaeological evaluation at the former Waggon and Horses Public House, 1 High Street, Watton at Stone, Hertfordshire (NGR TL 29700 19735; Figs. 1 and 2). The evaluation was commissioned by Tilehouse Properties Ltd and was undertaken in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for redevelopment of the site. The latter comprised the proposed change of use from public house to residence, conversion and extension of existing outbuildings to form garaging with modifications to existing vehicular crossover as well as for the construction of two detached dwellings with associated car parking and vehicular access (East Hertfordshire District Council Planning Ref. 3/11/0126/FP).

1.2 The evaluation was part of a programme of works which included building monitoring and recording (Collins 2011). The pubic house was the subject of an historic building appraisal (Prosser and Collins 2010). This report provides for the results of the evaluation.

1.3 The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a brief issued by Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Unit (HCC HEU; dated 10/03/2011) and a written scheme of investigation (specification) prepared by AS (dated 20/09/2011) and approved by HCC HEU. It conformed to the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (revised 2008), as well as the document *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).

1.4 The principal objectives of the evaluation were:

- the investigation and recording of any surviving archaeological remains within the area of the new development;
- the analysis, conservation and long-term storage of any artefactual/ecofactual material recovered from the site in appropriate conditions;
- the provision of an adequately detailed report that will place the findings of the monitoring and recording of the development programme in their local and regional context, and; and
- the full analysis and interpretation of the site archive.

Planning policy context

1.5 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 former Waggon and Horses Public House is located towards the northern extent of the village of Watton at Stone, which lies within the district of East Hertfordshire and the county of Hertfordshire (Fig. 1). The historic core of Watton at Stone lies to the immediate south-east, while the mainline Stevenage to London railway line runs north-west to south-eastwards 300m to the south-west of the site. The village of Datchworth is situated 2.6km to the south-west, and the hamlet of Stapleford lies 2.8km to the south. The site lies along the north-eastern frontage of the High Street, which is the main thoroughfare through the village of Watton at Stone. It also lies within Watton at Stone's Conservation Area (CA), and adjacent to Area of Archaeological Significance No. 126, as identified in the local plan.

2.2 The site comprises the former Waggon and Horses Public House, an associated outbuilding and its grounds, which were formerly in use for car parking and an area of grass (Fig. 2). It occupies a roughly rectangular plot of land covering an area of approximately 2,100m² located at the corner of the High Street and Walkern Road. To the immediate north of the site lies the course of the River Beane, whilst to the east and south respectively lie the High Street and Walkern Road. To the west of the site is a telephone

exchange. The former Waggon and Horses Public House comprises a Grade II listed building (IoE No. 356282), which has been subject to a historic building appraisal (Prosser and Collins 2010), whilst an outbuilding in the site's western section was subject to historic building recording (Collins 2011).

3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

3.1 The village of Watton at Stone is located within a predominantly rural area of East Hertfordshire (Fig. 1). It lies within the small valley of the River Beane, which flows on a north-east to south-eastern aligned course to the immediate north of the site. The site itself is situated at approximately 60m AOD, with its relief sloping down noticeably to the north and the River Beane. Geologically the site is located upon a solid geology of Upper Cretaceous Upper Chalk, which is overlain by a drift geology of chalk with flint, as well as clay, sand, gravel and other alluvial deposits (British Geological Survey 1978). The site also located upon soils of the Ludford Association, which are described as deep well drained fine loamy, coarse loamy and sandy soils (Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983).

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Prehistoric

4.1 The site lies adjacent to Area of Archaeological Significance No. 126, as identified in the local plan, which includes the medieval core of the village and also evidence of Roman occupation. Archaeological evidence for early settlement within Watton at Stone comprises isolated finds of Paleolithic hand axes, as well as a Mesolithic site to the north of the village. Cropmarks of a circular enclosure located to the south of Blue Hill and 300m to the north-west of the site represent the ploughed remains of a late Neolithic to early Bronze Age round barrow (HER 7654). A late Bronze Age settlement has also been excavated within the village and various Iron Age finds have been uncovered including a burial site of a wealthy individual (Cal-Fernandez 2010).

Romano-British to Anglo-Saxon

4.2 Watton Road, which extends south-westwards from the High Street 450m to the south-east of the site, is judged to comprise a Roman road running towards *Verulamium* (The Viatores 1964). Further Romano-British sites are known within Woodhall Park and near Watton House, whilst an early Roman bronze mirror of national importance was discovered just over the parish boundary in Aston (Sandison 1984). Place-name evidence suggests a Saxon origin for Watton at Stone (Gover, Mawer and Stenton 1938), although no relevant findspots are recorded in the surrounding area. It is first mentioned as *Wattun* in the 10th century Anglo Saxon wills, and as both *Wodtune* and *Watone* in the Domesday Book (Page 1912).

Medieval

4.3 The Manor of Watton was held by King Edgar until its transfer to the Abbey of Westminster in the 12th century. A church is also known to have stood in Watton since at least the 13th century, although the current church dates to the 16th century. A late 12th century medieval chapel and hermitage were excavated within Chapel Wood 1.6km to the south-west of the site (Sandison 1984). The village acquired its suffix at Stone in around 1300 and is thought to refer to a lump of Hertfordshire Puddingstone, probably used as a marker, which is reputedly still visible on the corner of the site (Cal-Fernandez 2010). Evidence for medieval activity, however, is limited to Watton Place, which is a large, originally a timber-framed house, built in the late 15th century (HER 17664).

Post-medieval to modern

4.4 Watton at Stone prospered in the post-medieval period as a prominently located road-side settlement along the main route north of Hertford. Evidence for post-medieval trade through Watton at Stone is evidenced by the discovery of a lead seal with coat of arms of Elizabeth I found by metal detector 450m to the north-west of the site (HER 6558). The village also contains a large number of early modern standing structures, many of which are Grade II listed buildings, including the road bridges of Moor Bridge and Mill bridge, a water corn mill, the Methodist church and a malthouse that stood opposite the site (HERs 5176, 5177, 5818, 17663 and 17662).

The site

4.5 The HER database records that the former Waggon and Horses Public House comprises a timber-framed building of two principal elements; the oldest part is the two-bay, two-storey range fronting the High Street, dating to the late 16th or early 17th century (HER 17351). It contains hints of an earlier building, possibly an open hall, but has inserted upper floors. The two-storey rear range to the east, which makes an L-plan, has a higher roof pitch and was added in the early to mid 17th century. The building was altered in the late 18th and 19th centuries. The database also refers to a long cart shed and stable on the west side of the yard, which is of 19th century brick and is partly open-fronted. The historic building listing (IoE No. 356282) reveals that the existing outbuilding falls within the curtilage of the former public house's Grade II listing.

4.6 The historic building appraisal undertaken by AS at the former Waggon and Horses Public House in January 2007 and July 2010 indicated that the public bar area has undergone much modification, although at the upper level early and original fixtures and fittings survive with a number of phases of development discernable (Prosser and Collins 2010). Tantalising hints of an earlier building, possibly an open hall, survive but the principal phase with the most survival can more confidently ascribed to the late 16th or early 17th century. The rear range, with its higher roof pitch was added in the early-mid

17th century, perhaps a short time after the date for the principal range. This may have prompted the raising of the roof of the north side of the historic core to give access to the new wing. This wing was also given an additional short bay at the north end housing the chimney stack, which suggests that it was heated from the outset.

4.7 The subsequent historic building recording undertaken in October 2011 centred on the outbuilding in the site's western section confirmed that the building is within the curtilage of the Grade II listed main building (Collins 2011). Technical analysis revealed a modest 19th century range, originally of three discrete units forming cartsheds and stables. The two northern units were originally open-fronted to accommodate carriages or carts with perhaps some storage use. The southern unit was likely the stables, and although altered, the original form survives in places. The presence of a Baltic bracking mark on a single wall-plate perhaps suggests a date in the early- to mid-19th century and construction of the building may be associated with a substantial phase of expansion and remodelling to the public house at this time.

4.8 Historic cartographic sources depicting the site are consistent with both the HER database and architectural investigations. The former Waggon and Horses Public House is depicted on historic maps from as early as 1766, although both Dury and Andrews' and Bryant's maps of Hertfordshire are drawn at too small a scale to reveal any further information about the site. The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map, which dates to 1881, reveals that the site was formerly occupied by additional, albeit smaller, outbuildings located across the site's centre, although by the 2nd edition Ordnance Survey map of 1898 only two further outbuildings and a pump remained. By 1923 two early 20th century structures had been constructed in the central section of the site, although the main public house building and extant outbuilding remained unaltered. The final historic map of 1972 depicts the site much as it remains to this day.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 Two trenches were excavated using a mechanical 360° excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket (Figs.2 - 3). The trench locations were approved by HCC HEU and were located within the footprints of the proposed two new detached dwellings. Trench 1 measured 10 x 1.60m and Trench 2 measured 15 x 1.60m. During the excavation of the trenches it was acknowledged that in order to reach the deposits with archaeological potential the trenches would have to be significantly deep (c. 2.50m). Due to health and safety and practical reasons, the full stratigraphy within the trenches was exposed only in part (test pits) leaving the remaining areas excavated to 1.20 – 1.50m below existing, and this was discussed and agreed with HCC HEU.

5.2 Topsoil and undifferentiated overburden were mechanically excavated under close archaeological supervision. Exposed surfaces were cleaned by hand and examined for archaeological features. Deposits were recorded using *pro forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale, and photographed as appropriate.

Excavated spoil was searched for finds and the trenches were scanned by a metal detector.

6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

Trench 1 (Figs. 2-3, DP 2)

<i>Sample section 1A (DP 3): West end, north-west-north facing</i> <i>0.00 = 60.50m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.23m	L1000	Topsoil. Dark grey, soft, sandy silt.
0.23 – 0.61m	L1001	Made ground. Mid yellow, very compact, clay with frequent flint gravel.
0.61 – 1.42m	L1002	Made ground. White, friable, sandy chalk with occasional CBM fragments.
1.42 – 2.50m	L1003	Made ground. Mid to dark grey sandy silt with occasional gravel.
2.50m +	L1004	Natural mid yellow, loose, silty gravel.

Description: No archaeological features or finds were present.

Trench 2 (Fig. 2, DP 4-5)

<i>Sample section 2A (DP 6): North end, east-north-east facing</i> <i>0.00 = 60.42m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.31m	L1000	Topsoil. As above, Tr. 1.
0.31 – 0.92m+	L1001	Made ground. As above, Tr. 1.

<i>Sample section 2B (DP 7): Central part, east-north-east facing</i> <i>0.00 = 60.52m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.33m	L1000	Topsoil. As above, Tr. 1.
0.33 – 0.98m	L1001	Made ground. As above, Tr. 1.
0.98 – 1.40m	L1005	Made ground. Mid brown, compact, silty sand with occasional CBM fragments, car parts and rubbish.
1.40 – 2.50m	L1003	Made ground. As above, Tr. 1.
2.50m +	L1004	Natural gravel. As above, Tr. 1.

<i>Sample section 2C (DP 8): North end, east-north-east facing</i> <i>0.00 = 60.56m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.27m	L1000	Topsoil. As above, Tr. 1.
0.27 – 0.89m	L1001	Made ground. As above, Tr. 1.
0.89 – 1.20m+	L1005	Made ground. As above.

Description: No archaeological features or finds were present.

7 CONFIDENCE RATING

7.1 Within the limits of the evaluation (test pitting of made ground deposits) it is not felt that any factors inhibited the recognition of archaeological features or finds.

8 DEPOSIT MODEL

8.1 The site was commonly overlain by Topsoil L1000, a dark grey, soft, sandy silt (0.10 – 0.30m thick). It overlay deposits of made ground which were present to a depth of 2.50m below existing ground level. The uppermost deposit of made ground present throughout the site was L1001, a mid yellow, very compact, clay with frequent flint gravel (0.40 – 0.70m thick).

8.2 The natural geology, L1004, comprised a mid yellow, loose, silty gravel. It was encountered at c. 2.50m below existing ground level. It also was reported to be present at c. 1.60m below existing within a small test pit dug earlier by a contractor to ascertain ground conditions. The pit was located in the central part of the site, adjacent to the tarmac car park.

9 DISCUSSION

9.1 The site had a potential for archaeological remains, in particular for the medieval and post-medieval. Such remains may have been related to the medieval settlement of Watton and to the post-medieval use of the site as a public house.

9.2 In the event no archaeological features or finds were revealed. Within the northern part of the site, where the trenches were located, substantial deposits of modern ground were present, indicative of extensive previous ground disturbance. The substantial layers of made ground were likely deposited in the past to provide a level extension to the public house yard. Throughout all the deposits of made ground modern finds comprising CBM, rubbish and car parts were present.

10 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

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

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions would like to thank Tilehouse Properties Ltd for funding the project (in particular Mr Mark Shadbolt for his assistance).

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

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The Viatores, 1964, *Roman Roads in the South-East Midlands*. Victor Gollancz, London

APPENDIX 1 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD (HER) DATA

HER	NGR TL	Description
Prehistoric		
7654	29570 19991	Cropmarks of a circular enclosure approx. 24m in diameter, representing the ploughed-down remains of a late Neolithic to early Bronze Age round barrow to the south of Blue Hill
Medieval		
17664	29987 19425	Watton Place is a large building that was originally a timber-framed house built in the late 15th century
Post-medieval and later		
5176	2972 1976	Moor Bridge road bridge, over the Beane, behind the Waggon and Horses. Brick, mostly Hitch patent brick
5177	3003 1945	Mill Bridge road bridge, over the Beane. Brick, possibly dated to 1830 when the mill was built
5689	30040 19389	Village pump on the High Street with classical style well head and housing, built in 1894
5818	30043 19485	Site of water corn mill with date stone of 1830 and from which milling ceased c1930, and in 1965 it was a warehouse
6558	295 201	Lead seal with coat of arms of Elizabeth I found by metal detector in 1983-4, comprising 2 discs soldered together and originally attached by a wire or tape between the discs probably to a bale of goods, probably for export to the German market
17351	29710 19690	The Waggon and Horses is a timber-framed building of two principal elements; the oldest part is the two-bay, two-storey range fronting the High Street, dating to the late 16th or early 17th century
17662	29709 19653	The 1880 OS map shows a 'Malthouse' on the south side of the road, opposite the Waggon and Horses
17663	29907 19473	The Methodist church in Watton High Street was built between 1881 and 1898
Undated		
7655	29577 20018	Cropmarks of a linear ditch approx. 100m long, partly superimposed on ring ditch to the south of Blue Hill
7656	29700 19994	Cropmarks of a curvilinear ditch, approx. 60m long
10293	300 197	Large soilmark feature north of Mill Lane; either a partially visible rectangular feature with rounded corners or a former field boundary
10294	2940 1980	Vaguely rectangular enclosure seemingly aligned next the main road out of the village to the west
12505	2996 1970	Registered common land of Lamma field

APPENDIX 2 CONTENTS OF THE ARCHIVE

Records	Number
Brief	Y
Specification	Y
Registers	3 (Context, Drawing, Digital Photo)
Context Sheets	6
Site drawings A1	0
Site drawings A3	0
Site drawings A4	1
Site photographs b/w	0
Site photographs colour slides	0
Digital Photographs	20

APPENDIX 3 HER SUMMARY SHEET

Site name and address:	Former Waggon and Horses Public House, 1 High Street, Watton at Stone, Hertfordshire
County: Hertfordshire	District: East Hertfordshire
Village/Town:	Parish: Watton at Stone
Planning application reference:	East Hertfordshire District Council Planning Ref. 3/11/0126/FP
Client name/address/tel:	Tilehouse Properties Ltd
Nature of application:	Change of use to residential and construction of two detached dwellings
Present land use:	Disused public house with associated car park
Size of application area: c. 2100m ²	Size of area investigated 45m ²
NGR (8 figures):	TL 2970 1973
Site Code:	AS 1034
Site director/Organization:	Archaeological Solutions Ltd
Type of work:	Trial trench evaluation
Date of work:	21-22/11/2011
Location of finds/Curating museum:	Hertford
Related SMR Nos:	Periods represented: None
Relevant previous summaries/reports: -	<p>Collins, T., 2011, Outbuilding at the Former Waggon and Horses P.H., 1 High Street, Watton-at-Stone, Hertfordshire: Historic Building Recording. Archaeological Solutions Ltd unpublished report No. 3934</p> <p>Prosser, L. and Collins, T., 2010, Waggon and Horses, 1 High Street, Watton-at-Stone, Hertfordshire: Historic Building Appraisal. Archaeological Solutions Ltd unpublished report No. 3627</p>
Summary of fieldwork results:	<p>In November 2011 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried an archaeological evaluation at the former Waggon and Horses Public House, 1 High Street, Watton at Stone, Hertfordshire. The site had a potential for medieval and post-medieval archaeological remains.</p> <p>In the event the evaluation revealed no archaeological features or finds. The area of evaluation was characterised by the presence of substantial deposits of modern (20th century) made ground.</p>
Author of summary: Z Pozorski	Date of Summary: November 2011 (Revised December 2012)

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



DP 1. Former Waggon & Horses PH, Watton at Stone, Herts. Looking north.



DP 2. Trench 1. Looking west-south-west.



DP 3. Trench 1, west end. Sample section 1A. Looking south-south-east.



DP 4. Trench 2. Looking north.



DP 5. Trench 2. Looking south-west-south.



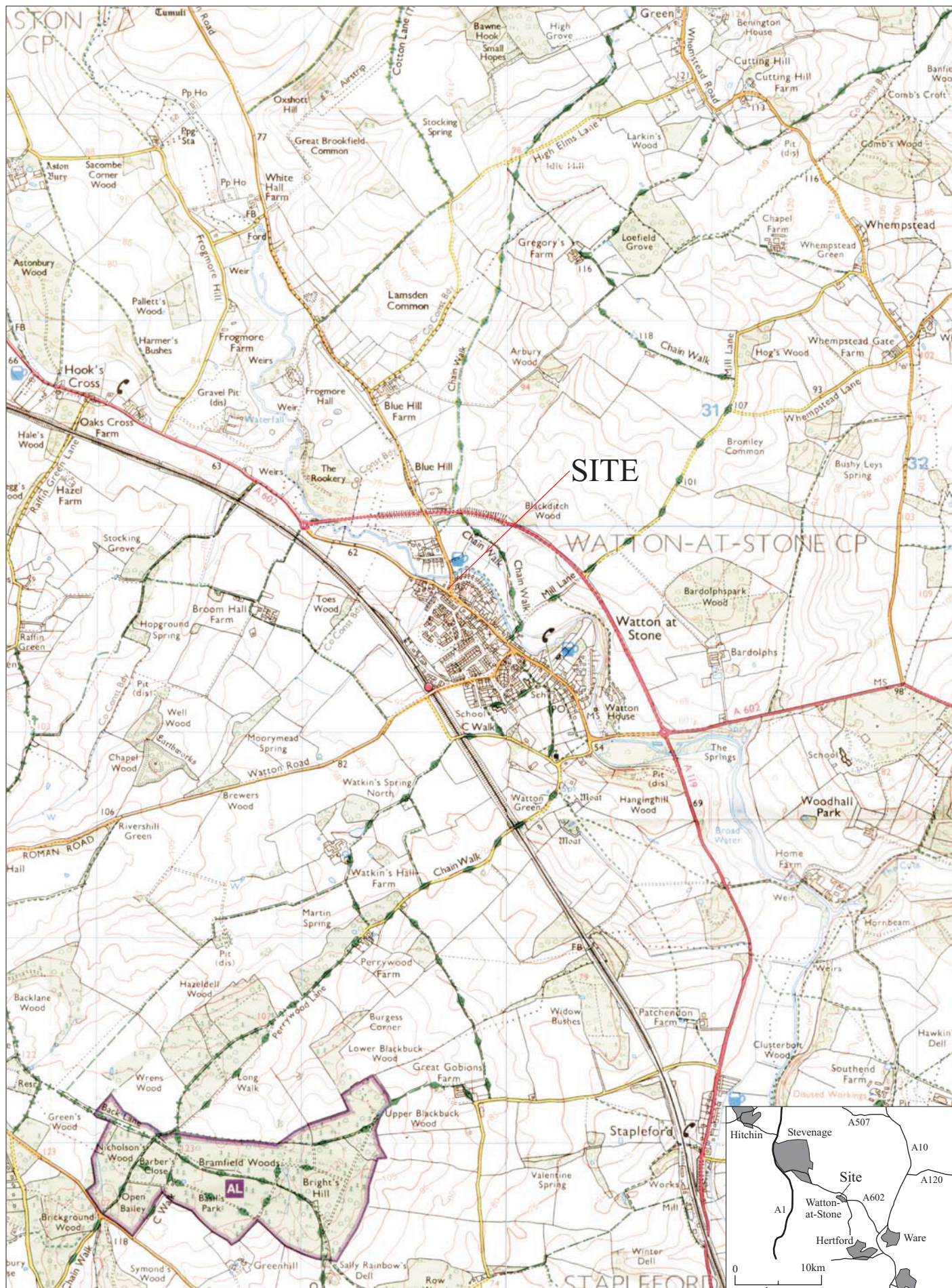
DP 6. Trench 2, north end. Sample section 2A. Looking west-south-west.



DP 7. Trench 2, central part. Sample section 2B. Looking west-south-west.

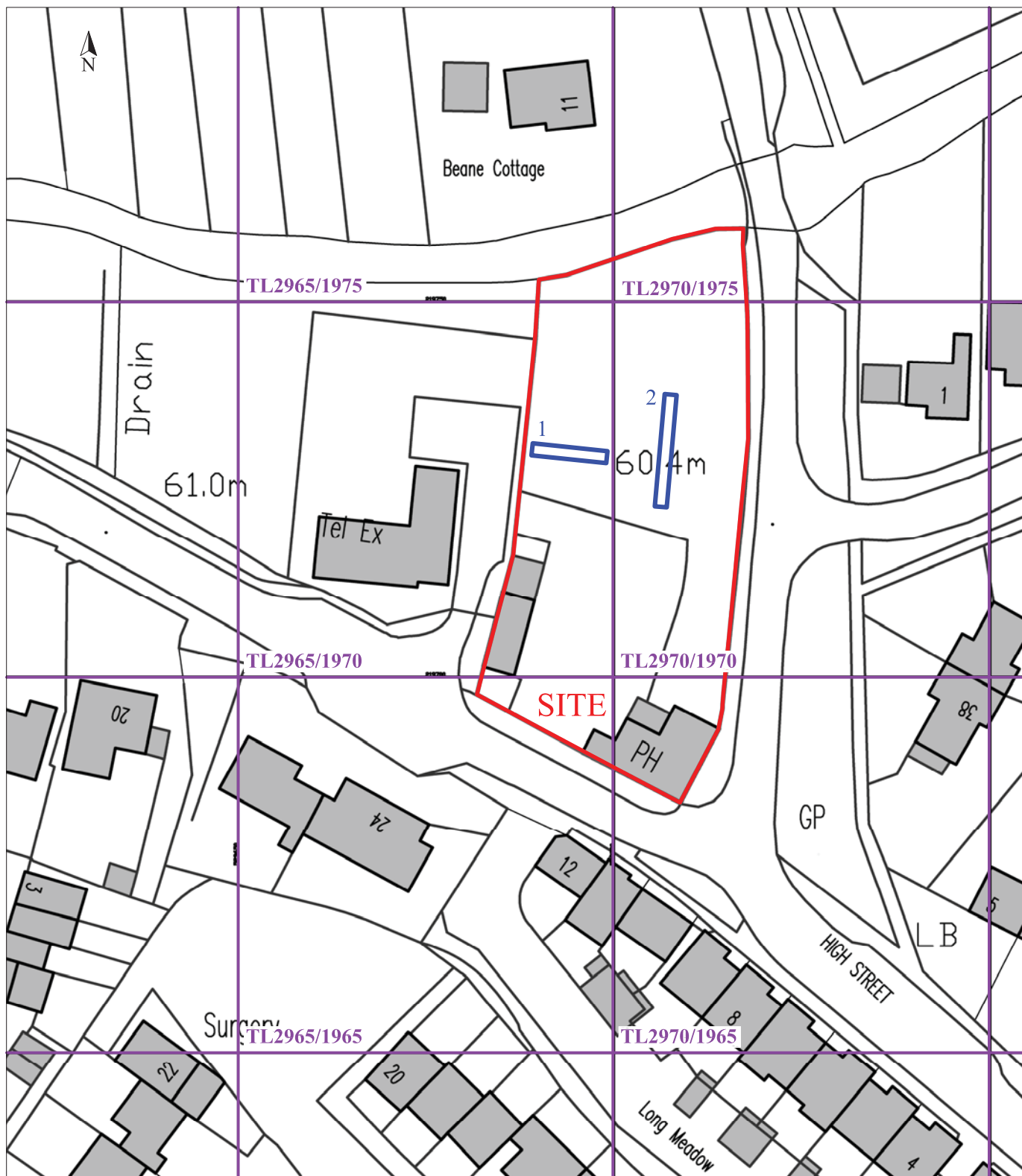


DP 8. Trench 2, south end. Sample section 2C. Looking west-south-west.



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Fig. 1 Site Location Plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4



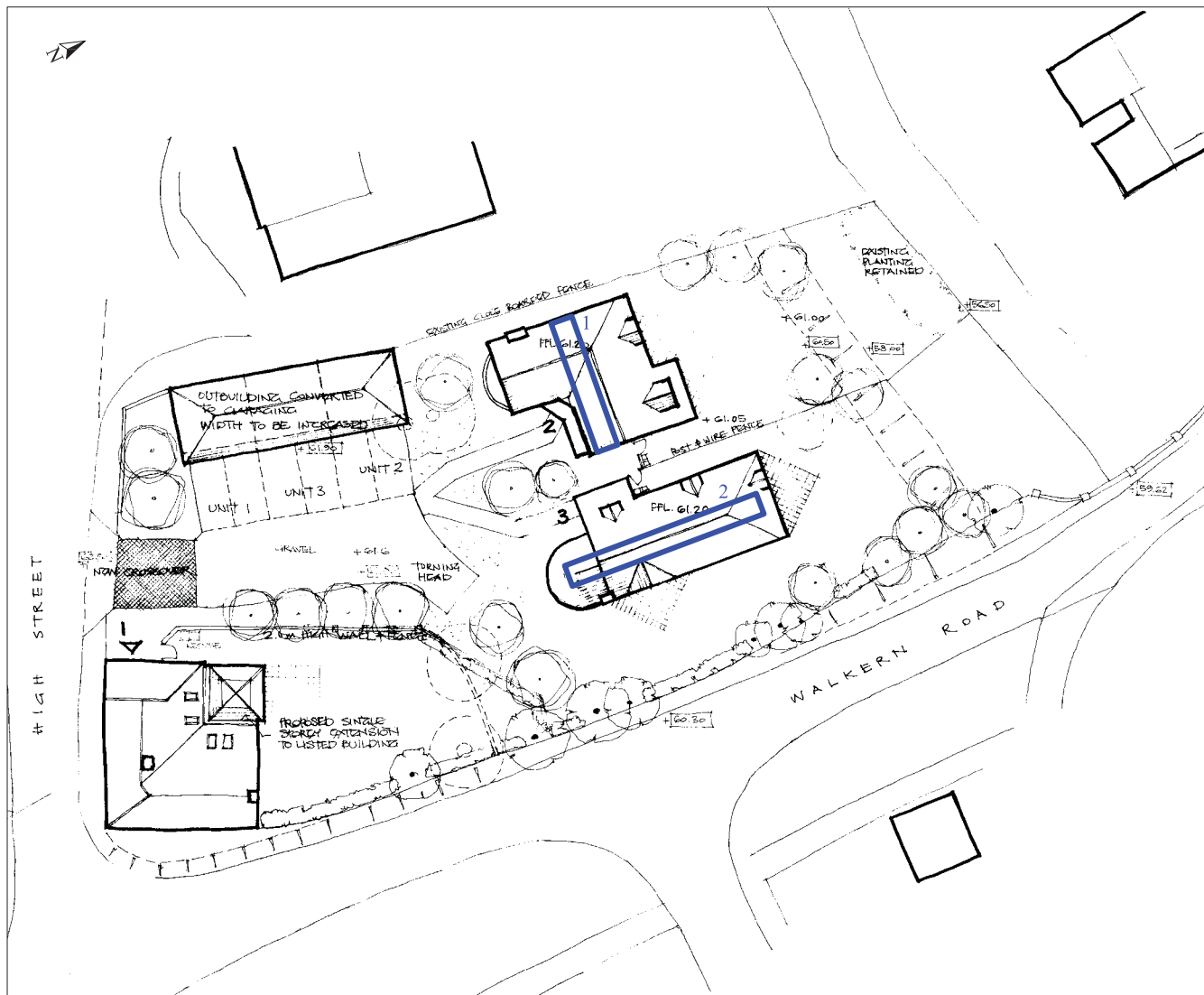
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0 50m

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Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan

Scale 1:750 at A4



0 25m

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Fig. 3 Trench location plan
 Scale 1:500 at A4