

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

208 – 212 HIGH STREET, EPPING, ESSEX, CM16 4AQ

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION

Authors: Zbigniew Pozorski (Fieldwork and report) Kate Higgs MA (Research)	
NGR: TL 4607 0212	Report No. 4282
District: Epping Forest	Site Code: EP8
Approved: C. Halpin MIFA	Project No. 5005
Signed:	Date: March 2013

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CONTENTS

	OASIS SUMMARY
	SUMMARY
1	INTRODUCTION
2	DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE
3	THE EVIDENCE
	3.1 Topography, geology & soils
	3.2 Archaeological & historical background
4	METHODOLOGY
5	DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS
6	CONFIDENCE RATING
7	DEPOSIT MODEL
8	DISCUSSION
9	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
10	BIBLIOGRAPHY
Appendix 1	Concordance of Finds
Appendix 2	Specialist reports

OASIS SUMMARY SHEET			
Project name	208 – 212 High Street, Epping, Essex, CM16 4AQ		
<p><i>In March 2013 Archaeological Solutions Limited (AS) carried out an archaeological trial trench evaluation of land at Nos. 208 - 212 High Street, Epping, Essex, CM16 4AQ (NGR TL 4607 0212; Figs. 1-2). The evaluation was carried out in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission, granted on appeal, to re-develop the site for mixed use: retail, office and residential use (Epping Forest District Council Planning Ref. EPF/2538/11).</i></p> <p><i>The development area is one of significant archaeological potential lying within the known focus of medieval settlement at Epping. In the event the only features revealed during the evaluation were modern service trenches relating to buildings on Hemnall Street and High Street, and post-medieval and modern features related to former buildings that previously occupied the site.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	March 2013		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	N	Future work (Y/N/?)	TBC
P. number	5005	Site code	
Type of project	Archaeological trial trench evaluation		
Site status	Conservation Area		
Current land use			
Planned development	Mixed: retail, office and residential		
Main features (+dates)	Post-medieval and modern wall, pits, post holes		
Significant finds (+dates)	None		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	Essex	Epping Forest	Epping
HER/ SMR for area	Essex HER		
Post code (if known)	CM16 4AQ		
Area of site	c. 750m ²		
NGR	TL 4607 0212		
Height AOD (max/ min)	c.100m AOD		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	Essex County Council Historic Environment Branch (ECC HEM)		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	Zbigniew Pozorski		
Funded by	Stace LLP		
Full title	208 – 212 High Street, Epping, Essex, CM16 4AQ. Archaeological Evaluation.		
Authors	Pozorski, Z., and Higgs, K.		
Report no.	4282		
Date (of report)	March 2013		

208 – 212 HIGH STREET, EPPING, ESSEX, CM16 4AQ AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION

SUMMARY

In March 2013 Archaeological Solutions Limited (AS) carried out an archaeological trial trench evaluation of land at Nos. 208 - 212 High Street, Epping, Essex, CM16 4AQ (NGR TL 4607 0212; Figs. 1-2). The evaluation was carried out in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission, granted on appeal, to re-develop the site for mixed use: retail, office and residential use (Epping Forest District Council Planning Ref. EPF/2538/11).

The development area is one of significant archaeological potential lying within the known focus of medieval settlement at Epping. In the event the only features revealed during the evaluation were modern service trenches relating to buildings on Hemnall Street and High Street, and post-medieval and modern features related to former buildings that previously occupied the site.

INTRODUCTION

1.1 In March 2012, Archaeological Solutions Limited (AS) carried out an archaeological trial trench evaluation of land at Nos. 208 - 212 High Street, Epping, Essex, CM16 4AQ (NGR TL 4607 0212; Figs. 1-2). The evaluation was carried out in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission, granted on appeal, to re-develop the site for mixed use: retail, office and residential use (Epping Forest District Council Planning Ref. EPF/2538/11).

1.2 The evaluation was undertaken according to a design brief issued by Essex County Council Historic Environment Branch (ECC HEM, L. Belton, dated September 2012) and a specification (Written Scheme of Investigation) issued by AS (dated 10th September 2012), approved by ECC HEM. It followed the procedures outlined in the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct, Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (revised 1999). It also adhered to the relevant sections of *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).

1.3 The principal objectives of the evaluation was to determine, as far as is reasonably possible, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development. An adequate representative sample of all areas where archaeological remains are potentially threatened was studied, and attention was given to sites and remains of all periods. The evaluation also sought to clarify the nature and extent of existing disturbance and intrusions and hence assess the degree of archaeological survival of buried deposits and surviving structures of archaeological significance.

Planning policy

1.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012) states that those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest are heritage assets. The NPPF 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. The NPPF requires applications to describe the significance of any heritage asset, including its setting that may be affected in proportion to the asset's importance and the potential impact of the proposal.

1.5 The NPPF aims to conserve England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, with substantial harm to designated heritage assets (i.e. listed buildings, scheduled monuments) only permitted in exceptional circumstances when the public benefit of a proposal outweighs the conservation of the asset. The effect of proposals on non-designated heritage assets must be balanced against the scale of loss and significance of the asset, but non-designated heritage assets of demonstrably equivalent significance may be considered subject to the same policies as those that are designated. The NPPF states that opportunities to capture evidence from the historic environment, to record and advance the understanding of heritage assets and to make this publicly available is a requirement of development management. This opportunity should be taken in a manner proportionate to the significance of a heritage asset and to impact of the proposal, particularly where a heritage asset is to be lost.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

2.1 The site is located within the town of Epping, which lies within the district of Epping Forest and the county of Essex (Fig. 1). The village of Theydon Bois lies 3km to the south of Epping, whilst Junction 6 of the M11 and Junction 27 of the M25 motorways lies 2.2km to the south-south-east. The site itself lies within the historic core of Epping and within its Conservation Area (CA), and thus within an area of archaeological potential. It lies along the south-eastern frontage of the High Street. To the immediate south-east of the sites lies Hemnall Street, whilst its western and eastern boundaries are formed by Nos. 206 and 214 High Street respectively.

2.2 The site occupies a roughly rectangular plot of land covering an area of approximately 750m² (Fig. 2). The proposed development comprises the demolition of No. 208 - 212 High Street and the redevelopment of the site to provide a mixed use development comprising retail, office and residential use.

3 THE EVIDENCE

3.1 Topography, Geology & Soils

3.1.1 Epping lies on a ridge of land situated between the River Lea and River Roding and the site lies at c.90-100m AOD. It marks the northern end of the surviving ancient woodland of Epping Forest which, prior to the 17th century, was known as Waltham Forest. The local geology is London Clay overlain by slowly permeable clayey soil. The soils of the site belong to the Hanslope (411d) and the Windsor (712c) association.

3.2 Archaeological & Historical Background

Prehistoric - Roman

3.2.1 Prehistoric archaeological remains in the wider area comprise a Neolithic arrowhead (HER 3702) and a Bronze Age palstave (HER 3708) discovered in Epping Forest c.1km to the north-east of the site. The Iron Age hillfort Ambresbury Banks (EHER 24) is located c.3km to the south-west of the site. Comprising a large subrectangular banked enclosure, pottery discovered in its outer ditch suggests a construction date of the second half of the 1st millennium BC with a period of re-use in the Belgic period. Roman archaeological remains within the wider area comprise a tile kiln (HER 3761) discovered c.750m to the north-east of the site.

Medieval

3.2.2 The earliest surviving record for Epping is in the 1086 Domesday survey where *Eppinges* probably derives its name from 'settlement of the people of the ridge used as a look-out place' (Mills 1991). Epping was a medieval foundation with its primary settlement north of the Cobbins Brook now known as Epping Upland (HER 3826). The town was a deliberate plantation by the canons of Waltham Abbey, who began assarting by the mid 12th century, to capitalize on trade along the London to Cambridge Road. In 1253 the canons gained a charter, legalising their use of forest timber to make houses and stalls. The medieval market-house and market-place (HERs 18474 & 18475) were situated close to the Church of St John the Baptist, a 14th century chapel located c.100m to the west of the site (EHER 3813). An archaeological evaluation to the northwest of the High Street at 237-255 (EHER 17693) revealed medieval rubbish pits which contained sherds of 13th-14th century Harlow Ware pottery, confirming that the town lay along the Lea Valley trade route.

Post-medieval

3.2.3 The town only developed slowly until the 18th-19th centuries when it picked up owing to its location for staging posts between London and Cambridge, Bury St Edmunds and Norwich, with up to 25 coaches passing

through each day. In the early 19th century, the High Street was lined with 26 coach-houses. Two former coach-houses survive to the present day and have been converted into public houses, the Black Lion and The George and Dragon c.125m to the north-east of the site. Epping was also renowned for its agricultural produce, most notably geese and butter. The stage coach business collapsed with the advent of the railways but Epping's fortunes revived with the introduction of a branch line in 1865. In the wider vicinity, the site of a former windmill (Mill Hill) (HER 3739) is located c.625m to the east of the site.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Two linear trial trenches, measuring 20mx 1.6m were excavated using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, following demolition of existing structures.

4.2 Undifferentiated overburden was removed under close archaeological supervision using a 180° mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.70m wide toothless ditching bucket. Thereafter, all further investigation was undertaken by hand. Exposed surfaces were cleaned as appropriate and examined for archaeological features and finds. Deposits were recorded using *pro forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed. Excavated spoil was checked for finds and the trenches were scanned by metal detector.

5 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

5.1 The individual trench descriptions are presented below:

Trench 1

Sample Section 1A West end, south facing. 0.00 = 108.03m AOD		
0.00-0.49m+	L1002	Modern wall. Constructed of red bricks and aligned E/W

Sample Section 1B East end, south facing. 0.00 = 107.96m AOD		
0.00- 0.10m	L1000	Modern Made Ground. Brownish grey, loose, silty sand with frequent CBM rubble.
0.10- 0.14m	L1007	?Former Yard Surface. Dark grey, compact, sandy silt.
0.14- 0.22m	L1008	?Former Yard Surface. Mid – dark yellow, compact, sand with gravel and modern CBM fragments
0.22- 0.46m	L1009	Modern Made Ground. Mid brownish grey, friable, silty sand with modern CBM fragments
0.46m+	L1001	Natural. Mid yellow, compact, clay.

Description: The trench contained Pit F1003 and ?Ditch F1005. Both features contained post-medieval finds. A modern wall, M1002, was revealed in section. A modern drain traversed the trench.

Wall M1002 was constructed of red bricks, regularly laid (225 x 105 x 65mm) bonded with a chalky white mortar. Its construction cut. F1016, was visible. The fill of the latter, L1017, was a dark grey, loose, silty sand.

Pit F1003 was oval in plan (0.90m+ x 0.57m+ x 0.07). It had gently sloping sides and a flattish base. Its fill, L1004, was a dark grey, compact, clayey silt. It contained post-medieval CBM (81g).

?Ditch F1005 was linear in plan (2.20m+ x 2.50m+ x 0.65), orientated NE/SW. It had moderate – steep sides and a flattish base. Its fill, L1006, was a dark grey, compact, clayey silt with occasional small stones. It contained post-medieval (late 16th – early 18th century) pottery (222g), post-medieval CBM (81g), an iron fragment (56g) and oyster shell (28g).

Trench 2

Sample Section 2A West end, south facing. 0.00 = 108.07m AOD		
0.00- 0.17m	L1014	Concrete floor
0.17- 0.24m	L1007	?Former Yard Surface. Dark grey, compact, sandy silt. As above Tr.1.
0.24- 0.69m	L1009	Modern Made Ground. As above Tr.1.
0.69m+	L1001	Natural. As above Tr.1.

Sample Section 2B East end, south facing. 0.00 = 108.01m AOD		
0.00- 0.28m	L1014	Concrete floor. As above.
0.28- 0.63m	L1015	Modern Made Ground. Dark grey, friable, clayey silt with modern CBM fragments.
0.63m+	L1001	Natural. As above Tr.1.

Description: The trench contained modern Pit F1012 and post-medieval Post Hole F1010. Modern services were present within the trench.

Post Hole F1010 was circular in plan (0.39m x 0.31m x 0.11). It had steep sides and a flattish base. Its fill, L1011, was a dark brown, loose, sandy silt. Part of a decayed timber post was present. It contained post-medieval CBM (107g) and animal bone (16g).

Pit F1012 was oval in plan (1.30m x 0.65m x 0.61). It had steep sides and a flattish base. Its fill, L1013, was a dark grey, friable, clayey silt. It contained modern pottery (6g), post-medieval CBM (81g) and animal bone (31g).

6 CONFIDENCE RATING

6.1 It is not felt that any factors inhibited the recognition of archaeological features or finds during the evaluation. Modern services were present in each trench but did not inhibit the evaluation.

7 DEPOSIT MODEL

7.1 The uppermost layer in the trenches were surfaces and modern made ground. The geological natural was L1001, a mid yellow compact clay (0.46 – 0.69m below the present day ground level.

8 DISCUSSION

8.1 The recorded features are tabulated:

Trench	Context	Description	Date
1	1003	Pit	Post medieval
	1005	?Ditch	Post medieval
		Drain	Modern
2	1010	Post Hole	Post medieval
	1012	Pit	Modern
		Drain	Modern

8.2 The development area is one of significant archaeological potential lying within the known focus of medieval settlement at Epping. In the event the only features revealed during the evaluation were modern service trenches relating to buildings on Hemnall Street and High Street, and post-medieval and modern features related to former buildings that previously occupied the site.

9 DEPOSITION OF ARCHIVE

9.1 Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited, with the finds from the site, at Epping Museum. The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross-referenced and checked for internal consistency. In addition to the overall site summary, it will be necessary to produce a summary of the artefactual and ecofactual data.

10 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions would like to thank Stace LLP for funding the evaluation and for their assistance (in particular Mr Marc Knight).

AS is pleased to acknowledge the input and advice of Ms Laura Belton and Ms Maria Medlycott of Essex County Council Historic Environment Management Team.

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SSEW 1983 *Soil Survey of England and Wales: Legend for the 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales* Harpenden, Rothamsted Experimental Station/Lawes Agricultural Trust

APPENDIX 1 CONCORDANCE OF FINDS

EP8, 208-212 High Street, Epping

Concordance of finds by feature

Feature	Context	Trench	Description	Spot Date	Pottery	CBM (g)	A.Bone (g)	Other
1003	1004	1	Fill of Pit			81	25	
1005	1006	1	Fill of Pit	Late 16th-early 18th C	(6) 222g	513		Fe. Frag (1) - 56g O. Shell - 28g
1010	1011	2	Fill of Posthole			107	16	
1012	1013	2	Fill of Pit	Early modern- Modern	(2) 6g	359	31	

APPENDIX 2

The Pottery

by Peter Thompson

The evaluation recovered 8 sherds weighing 217g from two features.

Pit F1005 (L1006) contained six sherds of moderately abraded post-medieval red earthenware weighing 213g (classed as Fabric 40 in the Essex fabric codes). Surfaces are generally smooth orange or red-brown with grey cores and there is a minimum of four vessels. Diagnostic sherds comprise a jug rim with an upright hollow rim containing green glaze and a strap handle, the remainder of the jug is unglazed. A second everted hollow rim also has internal glaze to the rim, and there are two base sherds. One base has patchy internal glaze at the base angle and the other has splash glaze on the underside. The remaining two sherds are unglazed and a late 16th-early 18th century date is indicated.

Pit F1012 (L1013) contained two sherds (4g) of factory made white earthenware, one heavily abraded and one with willow pattern decoration indicating an early modern to modern date.

The Ceramic Building Materials

Andrew Peachey

The trial trenching recovered a total of 15 fragments (1060g) of post-medieval peg tile, sparsely distributed in Pits F1003, F1005, F1012 and Post Hole F1010 in a slightly abraded, well-preserved condition. The peg tile was manufactured in a very hard-fired, oxidised red-orange fabric with inclusions of common fine sand and occasional flint. The tiles were knife-trimmed with pre-firing circular peg holes, and were probably produced between the 17th and 19th centuries AD.

Animal Bone

Julia E. M. Cussans

Four bones were recovered from trial trench excavations at High Street, Epping. These were rated as having good preservation with minor levels of abrasion and a low occurrence of fresh breaks. From Pit fill L1004 (F1003) two rib fragments were recovered, one belonging to a large (cattle sized) mammal and the other belonging to a medium (sheep sized) mammal. A large mammal long bone fragment was recovered from L1011, fill of Posthole F1010. Finally a sheep/goat scapula was recovered from Pit fill L1013 (F1012); this had broken into three pieces following excavation. Butchery marks in the form of small cuts were observed on all of the bones except the

medium mammal rib fragment. Canid gnawing was noted for contexts L1004 and L1013. No other modification or points of interest were noted.

Shell

Julia E. M. Cussans

Two oyster shell valves were recovered from Pit fill L1006 (F1005). One of these was an upper valve and one was a lower valve although they did not appear to be a matching pair. The upper valve had a small notch on the ventral edge which may have resulted from shucking. No other modifications were noted.

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



1
Trench 1 looking east



2
Trench 2 looking east



3
F1005 looking north-east



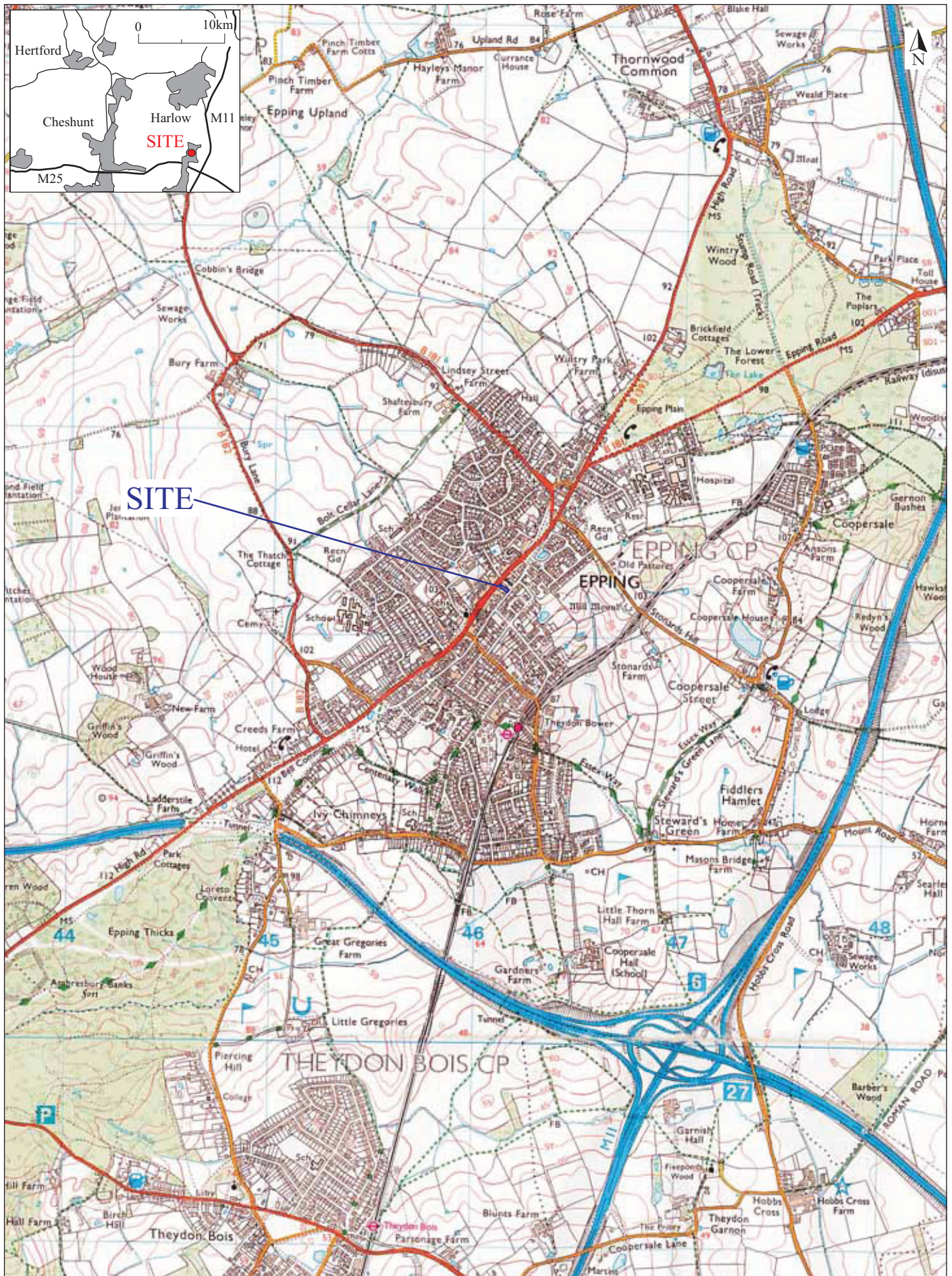
4
F1012 looking west



5
Sample section 1A looking north

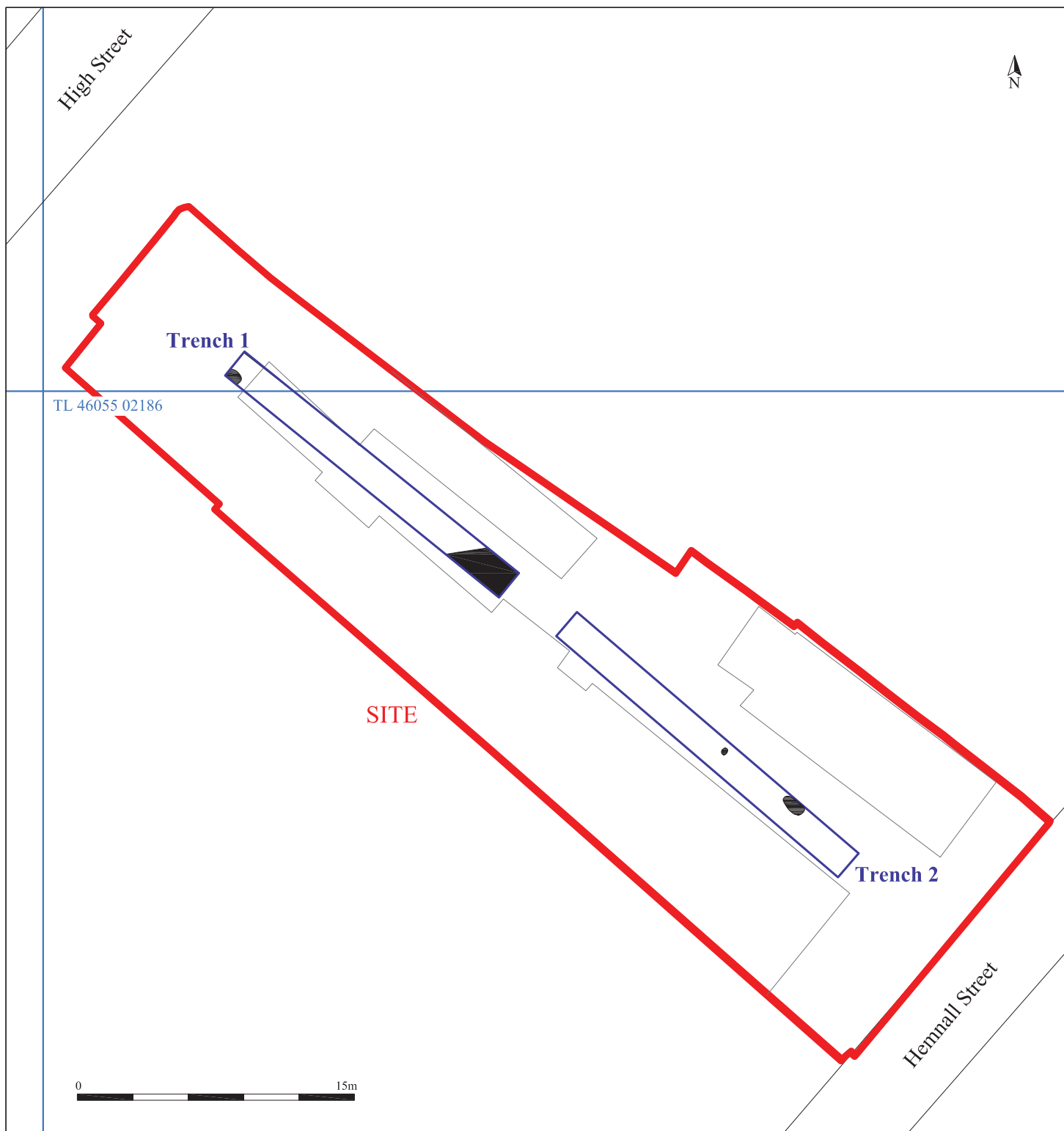


6
Sample section 2A looking north



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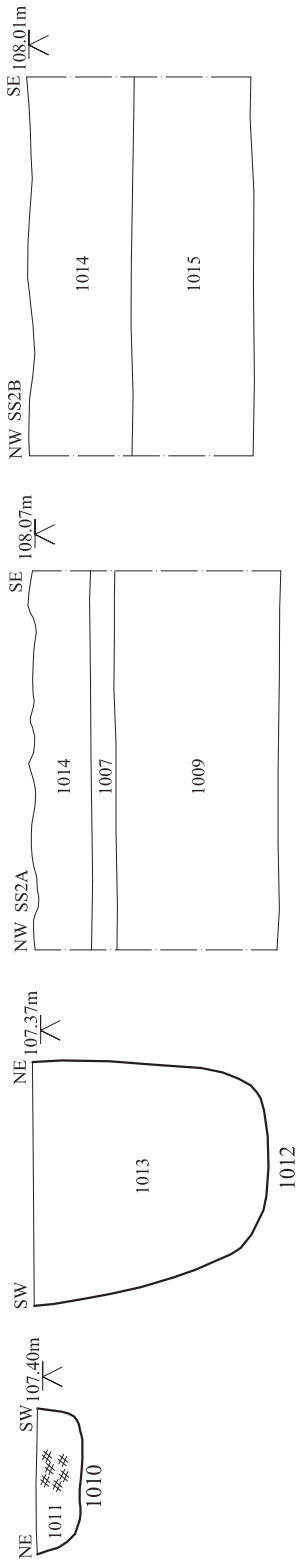
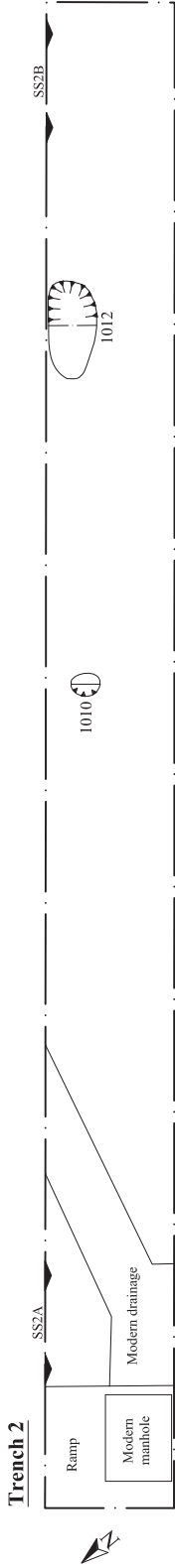
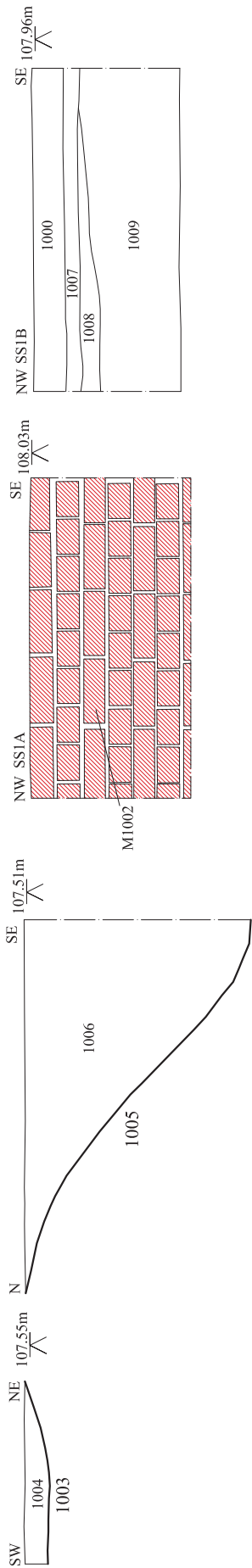
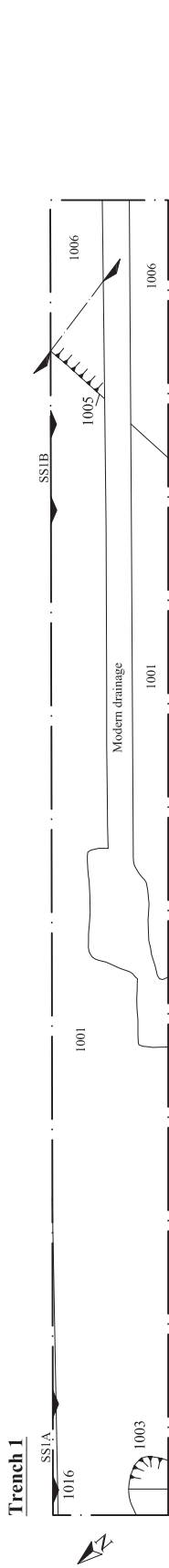
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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4



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Fig. 2 Trench location plan

Scale 1:300 at A4



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Fig. 3 Trench plans and sections

Scale plans at 1:100 and sections at 1:20 at A4

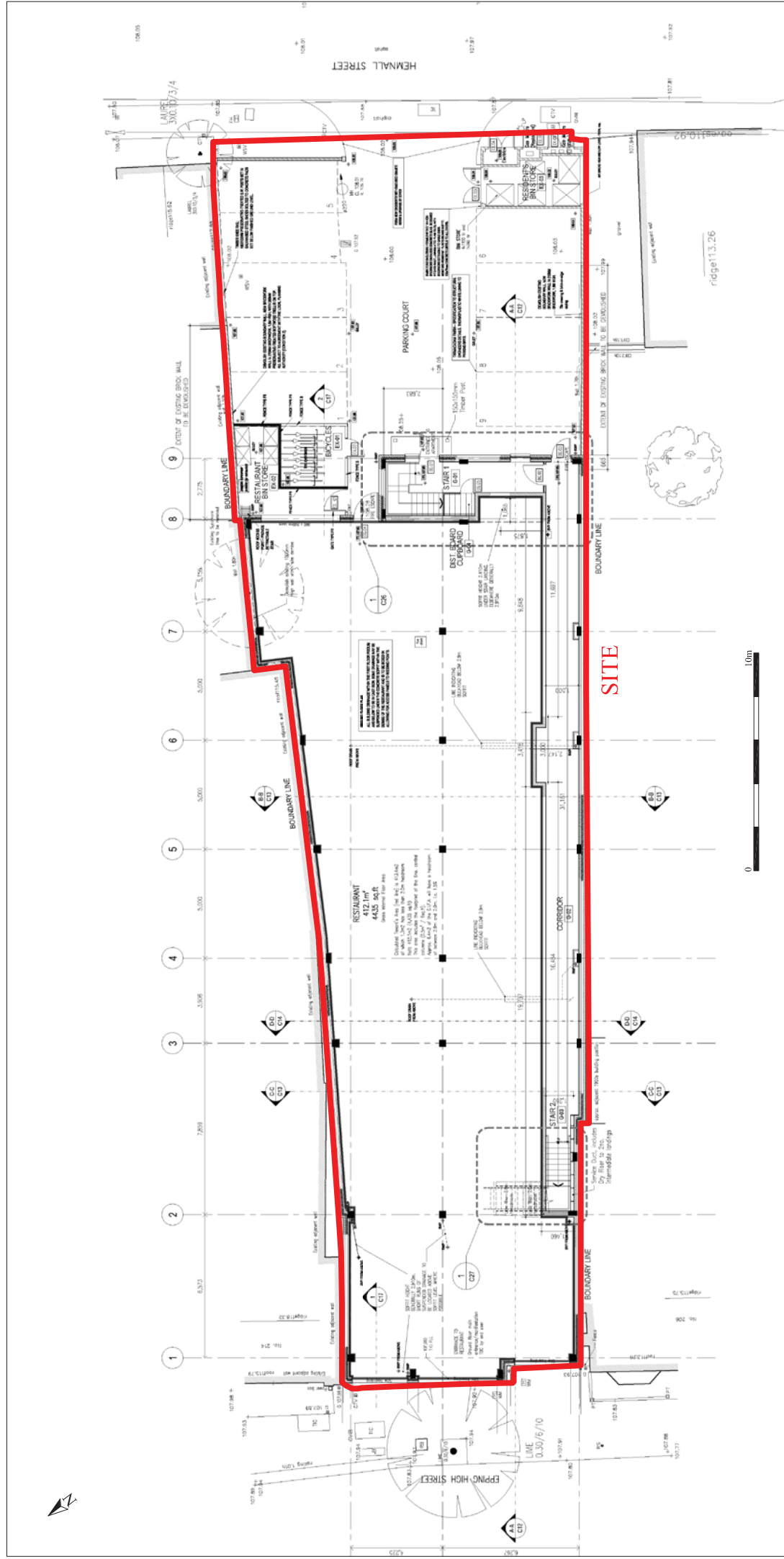


Fig. 4 Proposed development plan

Scale 1:250 at A4