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**PROPOSED NEW ACCESS
THE STABLES, CHURCH LANE, HUNSDON,
HERTFORDSHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING

HER Request Ref. 227/12

Authors: Lisa Smith (Fieldwork & report)	
NGR: TL 41785 12800	Report No: 4325
District: East Herts	Site Code: AS1596
Approved: Claire Halpin MIfA	Project No: 5101
Signed:	Date: 31 May 2013

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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	<i>The Stables, Church Lane, Hunsdon, Hertfordshire SG12 8PP. Archaeological Monitoring & Recording.</i>		
<p><i>In May 2013 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological monitoring and recording at The Stables, Church Lane, Hunsdon, Hertfordshire SG12 8PP (NGR TL 41785 12800). The monitoring was commissioned by Ms Deborah Wakeling in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for a new access (East Herts Planning ref. 3/12/1534/FP).</i></p> <p><i>The site lies on the eastern side of Church Lane, Hunsdon, to the immediate north of the medieval church of St Dunstan, and close to Hunsdon House. The site lies within Area of Archaeological Significance 202, designated on the EHDC Local Plan. This includes the medieval moated manorial site and later Tudor royal palace of Hunsdon House, elements of its medieval and later parkland (recorded on the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record HER 2789, 2016 & 6551) and the medieval parish church of St Dunstan (HER 4364). Hunsdon House is a large brick tower house, dating part to the mid 15th century. It was acquired by Henry VIII in 1529-30 and became a royal palace until 1559, when it was granted by Elizabeth I to Henry Carey. Much of the house was demolished in the 1740s and it was then altered and added-to substantially in the early 1800s. The Stables was formerly part of the ancillary buildings to the main house.</i></p> <p><i>The depth of the excavation for the new access was shallow and did not extend below the topsoil and former gravel drive. No archaeological features or finds were present.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	28 th May 2013		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	N	Future work (Y/N/?)	No
P. number	5018	Site code	AS1596
Type of project	Archaeological Monitoring & Recording		
Site status	Within Area of Archaeological Significance 202		
Current land use	Residential property		
Planned development	New access		
Main features (+dates)	None		
Significant finds (+dates)	None		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	Hertfordshire	East Herts	Hunsdon
HER/ SMR for area	Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record		
Post code (if known)	SG12 8PP		
Area of site	c.80m ²		
NGR	TL 41785 12800		
Height AOD (min/max)	c. 69.50m		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Unit		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	Lisa Smith		
Funded by	Ms Deborah Wakeling of The Stables		
Full title	The Stables, Church Lane, Hunsdon, Hertfordshire. Archaeological Monitoring & Recording.		
Authors	Smith, L.		
Report no.	4325		
Date (of report)	May 2013		

THE STABLES, CHURCH LANE, HUNSDON, HERTFORDSHIRE SG12 8PP

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING

SUMMARY

In May 2013 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological monitoring and recording at The Stables, Church Lane, Hunsdon, Hertfordshire SG12 8PP (NGR TL 41785 12800). The monitoring was commissioned by Ms Deborah Wakeling in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for a new access (East Herts Planning ref. 3/12/1534/FP).

The site lies on the eastern side of Church Lane, Hunsdon, to the immediate north of the medieval church of St Dunstan, and close to Hunsdon House. The site lies within Area of Archaeological Significance 202, identified on the EHDC Local Plan. This includes the medieval moated manorial site and later Tudor royal palace of Hunsdon House, elements of its medieval and later parkland (recorded on the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record HER 2789, 2016 & 6551) and the medieval parish church of St Dunstan (HER 4364). Hunsdon House is a large brick tower house, dating part to the mid 15th century. It was acquired by Henry VIII in 1529-30 and became a royal palace until 1559, when it was granted by Elizabeth I to Henry Carey. Much of the house was demolished in the 1740s and it was then altered and added-to substantially in the early 1800s. The Stables was formerly part of the ancillary buildings to the main house.

The depth of the excavation for the new access was shallow and did not extend below the topsoil and former gravel drive. No archaeological features or finds were present.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In May 2013 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological monitoring and recording at The Stables, Church Lane, Hunsdon, Hertfordshire SG12 8PP (NGR TL 41785 12800; Figs. 1 & 2). The monitoring was commissioned by Ms Deborah Wakeling in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for construction of a new access (East Herts Planning ref. 3/12/1534/FP).

1.2 The monitoring was undertaken in accordance with an advice letter (dated 10th October 2012) by Alison Tinniswood of Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Unit (HCC HEU) and a written scheme of investigation (specification) prepared by AS (dated 9th

November 2012), 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:

- to ensure the archaeological monitoring of all aspects of the development programme likely to affect buried archaeological remains;
- to secure the adequate recording of any archaeological remains revealed by the development programme; and
- to secure the analysis, interpretation, publication (if required), long-term conservation and storage of the project archive.

1.4 The principal research issues will be to identify any evidence of medieval and/or early post-medieval activity associated with Hunsdon House, its ancillary buildings and the medieval church and churchyard.

Planning policy context

1.5 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.

1.6 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 lies on the eastern side of Church Lane, Hunsdon, to the immediate north of the medieval church of St Dunstan, and close to Hunsdon House.

2.2 The site lies within Area of Archaeological Significance 202, identified on the EHDC Local Plan. This includes the medieval moated manorial site and later Tudor royal palace of Hunsdon House, elements of its medieval and later parkland (recorded on the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record HER 2789, 2016 & 6551) and the medieval parish church of St Dunstan (HER 4364). Hunsdon House is a large brick tower house, dating part to the mid 15th century. It was acquired by Henry VIII in 1529-30 and became a royal palace until 1559, when it was granted by Elizabeth I to Henry Carey. Much of the house was demolished in the 1740s and it was then altered and added-to substantially in the early 1800s.

2.3 The Stables was formerly part of the ancillary buildings to the main house.

3 THE EVIDENCE

3.1 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY & SOILS

3.1.1 The site is situated at c.70m AOD at the crest of the northern side of the valley of the River Stort, with the landscape extending to the north undulating very slightly. The solid geology of Hunsdon is gravel with silt and clay. The site is located on the transition between solid geology of Paleocene Lambeth Group and Eocene Thames Group. Soils on the site are those of the Ashley association, described as fine loamy over clayey soils (Soil Survey of England and Wales, 1983).

3.2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

3.2.1 Evidence for prehistoric activity in the vicinity is limited to a late Bronze Age sword and palstave (HER 4259) recorded in the parish, but the precise location of discovery is uncertain, while the cropmark of a possible, ploughed-down barrow is located c.800m to the south-west (HER 10188).

3.2.2 The site is situated on the north-eastern periphery of the hypothetical medieval shrunken village of Hunson (HER 1809), associated with a manor in the Domesday Book and possibly earlier, but no physical evidence has been recorded. The early 14th century church of St. Dunstan (HER 4364) is located close to the south of the site, while a deer park (HER 6551) was present c.500m to the north-east from at least the early 12th century. In the mid 15th century Hunsdon House, a large brick tower house (HER 2789 & 2016), was constructed c.100m to the east of the site, and was a royal palace between 1529 and 1559, during the reigns of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I. Three very large fishponds (HER 6188) associated with Hunsdon House are located c.250m to the south and south-east of the site. Hunsdon was surrounded by an agricultural landscape that included numerous farms, such as the 15th century, moated Olives Farm (HER 4841 & 2015) c.900m to the west, which is also associated with the remnants of ridge and furrow cultivation (HER 16824). Due to the close proximity of these medieval remains and structures, the site lies within Area of Archaeological Significance 202, as designated on the EHDC Local Plan.

3.2.3 Further farms continued to develop in the agricultural landscape during the post-medieval period, notably the 16th century Nine Ashes Farm (HER 11134 & 6303) to the north and the 19th century Brickhouse Farm (HER 11132) to the south. Other post-medieval development in the locality was limited but included Copthall, a 17th century Dutch-style house (HER 11133) c.200m to the north, while an early 19th century rectory (HER 18463) was built at Hunsdonbury and a late 19th century arts and crafts house (HER 18464) at Nine Ashes, Hunsdon.

3.2.4 In 1941 RAF Hunsdon was established (HER 6931), with its southern perimeter extending within c.500m north-east of the site. The airfield was used by numerous wings and flights during the Second World War and was closed in 1945. Several pillbox emplacements associated with the air field remain in the landscape to the north of the site (i.e. HER 6917-9).

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 The monitoring and recording encompassed the ground works associated with the excavation of the access. A mechanical excavator was used for this purpose.

4.2 The archaeological monitoring comprised the observation of all ground works, inspection of subsoil, make-up layers, and natural deposits for archaeological features, the examination of spoil heaps for archaeological finds and the recording of soil profiles. Deposits were recorded by means of *pro forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed as appropriate.

5 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

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

<i>Sample section 1.</i> <i>0.00 = 69.53m AOD</i>		
0.00– 0.30m	L1000	Topsoil. Dark brownish grey, friable, clayey silt with occasional rounded pebbles and modern debris.

The depth of the excavation was shallow (less than 0.30m) and did not extend below the topsoil. No archaeological features or finds were present.

6 CONFIDENCE RATING

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

7 DEPOSIT MODEL

7.1 Topsoil L1000 was a dark brownish grey, friable, clayey silt with occasional rounded pebbles and modern debris.

7.2 L1001 was a gravel surface with a terram base overlying the topsoil at the southern end of the site.

8 DISCUSSION

8.1 The depth of the excavation for the new access was shallow and did not extend below the topsoil and former gravel drive. No archaeological features or finds were present.

9 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

9.1 Archive records, with inventory, will be deposited at Hertford Museum in accordance with their requirements. 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.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions Ltd would like to thank Ms Deborah Wakeling of The Stables for funding the monitoring and for her kind assistance.

AS is pleased to acknowledge the advice and input of Alison Tinniswood of Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Unit.

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Gurney, D., 2003, *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14/ALGAO

Institute of Field Archaeologists (now Institute for Archaeologists), 1994 (revised 2008), *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*. IfA Reading.

Soil Survey of England and Wales (SSEW). 1983. *Legend for the 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales*. SSEW, Harpenden.

APPENDIX 1 CONTENTS OF THE ARCHIVE

Records	Number
Brief	N
Specification	Y
Registers	Y
Context Sheets	2
Site drawings A1	
Site drawings A3	
Site drawings A4	1
Site photographs b/w	6
Site photographs colour slides	6
Digital Photographs	8

APPENDIX 2 HER SUMMARY SHEET

Site name and address:	The Stables, Church Lane, Hunsdon, Hertfordshire
County: Hertfordshire	District: East Hertfordshire
Village/Town:	Parish: Hunsdon
Planning application reference:	East Herts Planning ref. 3/12/1534/FP
Client name/address/tel:	Ms Deborah Wakeling
Nature of application:	New access
Present land use:	Access
Size of application area:	Size of area investigated c.80m2
NGR (8 figures):	TL 41785 12800
Site Code:	AS1596
Site director/Organization:	Archaeological Solutions Ltd
Type of work:	Archaeological Monitoring & Recording
Date of work:	28 May 2013
Location of finds/Curating museum:	Hertford Museum
Related SMR Nos:	Periods represented: None
Relevant previous summaries/reports: -	None
Summary of fieldwork results:	<p>In May 2013 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological monitoring and recording at The Stables, Church Lane, Hunsdon, Hertfordshire SG12 8PP (NGR TL 41785 12800). The monitoring was commissioned by Ms Deborah Wakeling in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for a new access (East Herts Planning ref. 3/12/1534/FP).</p> <p>The depth of the excavation for the new access was shallow and did not extend below the topsoil and former gravel drive. No archaeological features or finds were present.</p>
Author of summary: Lisa Smith	Date of Summary: May 2013

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



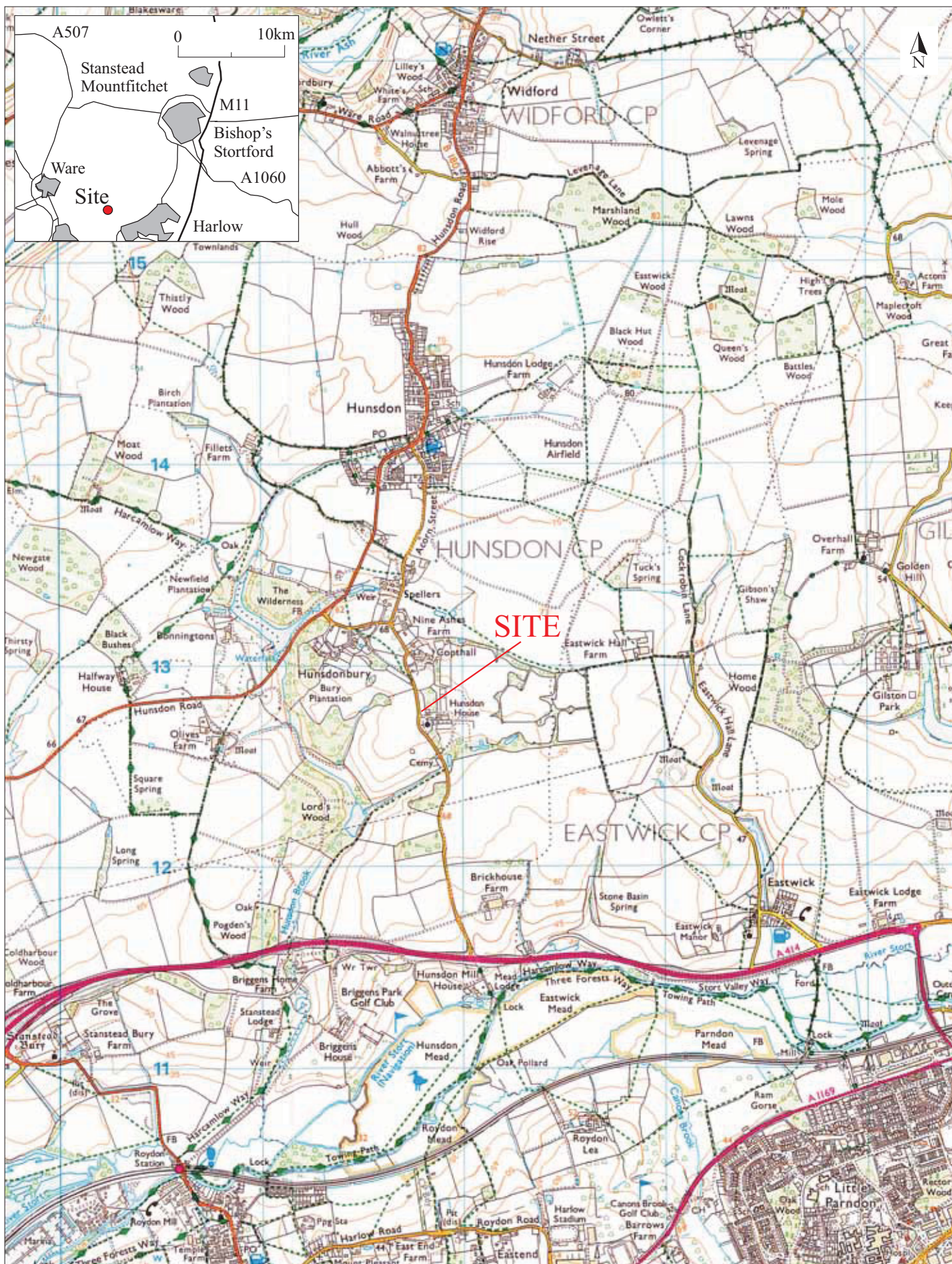
1
Land prior to topsoil stripping



2
Soil stripping in progress

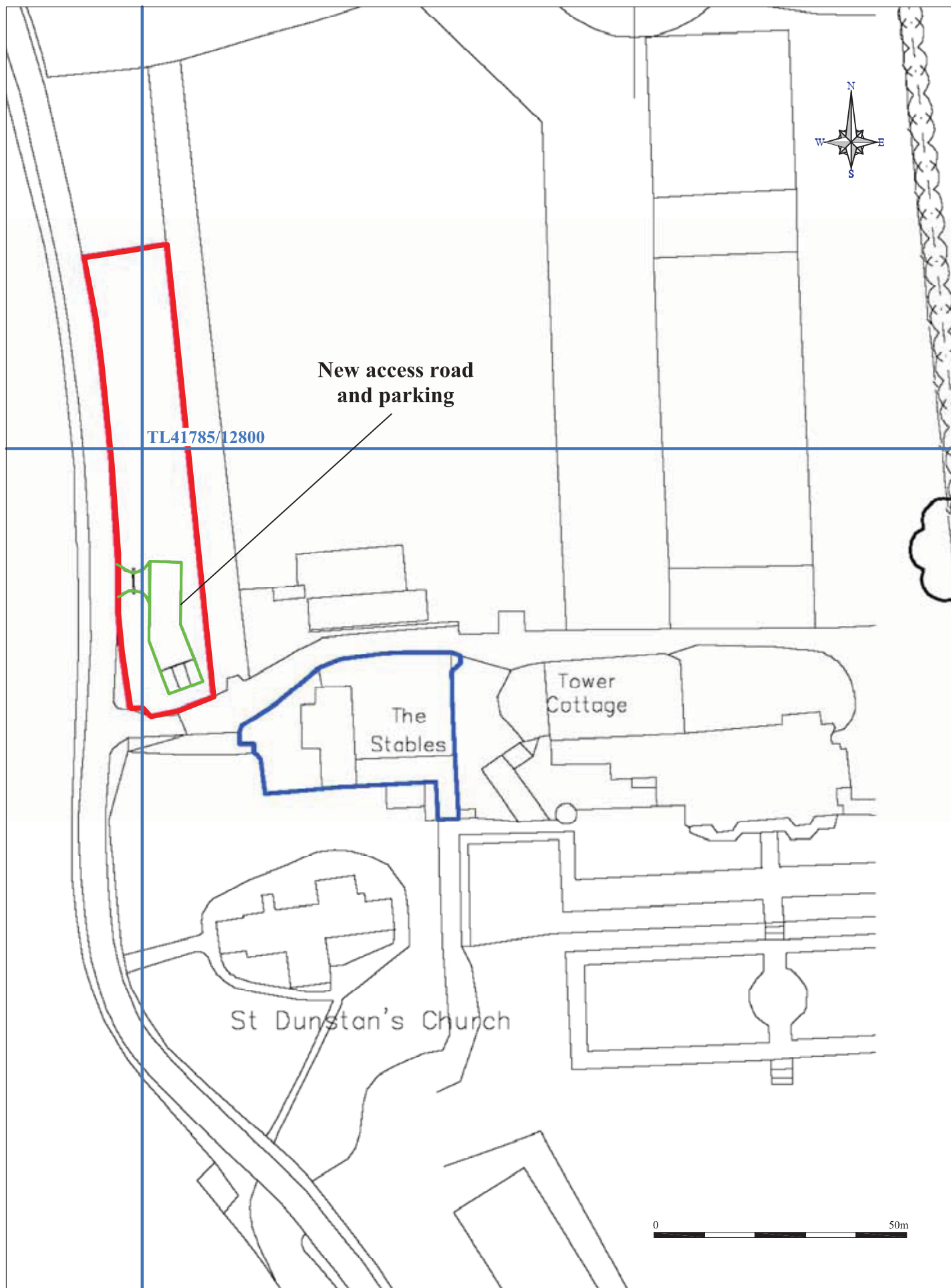


3
Sample section

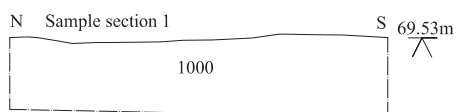
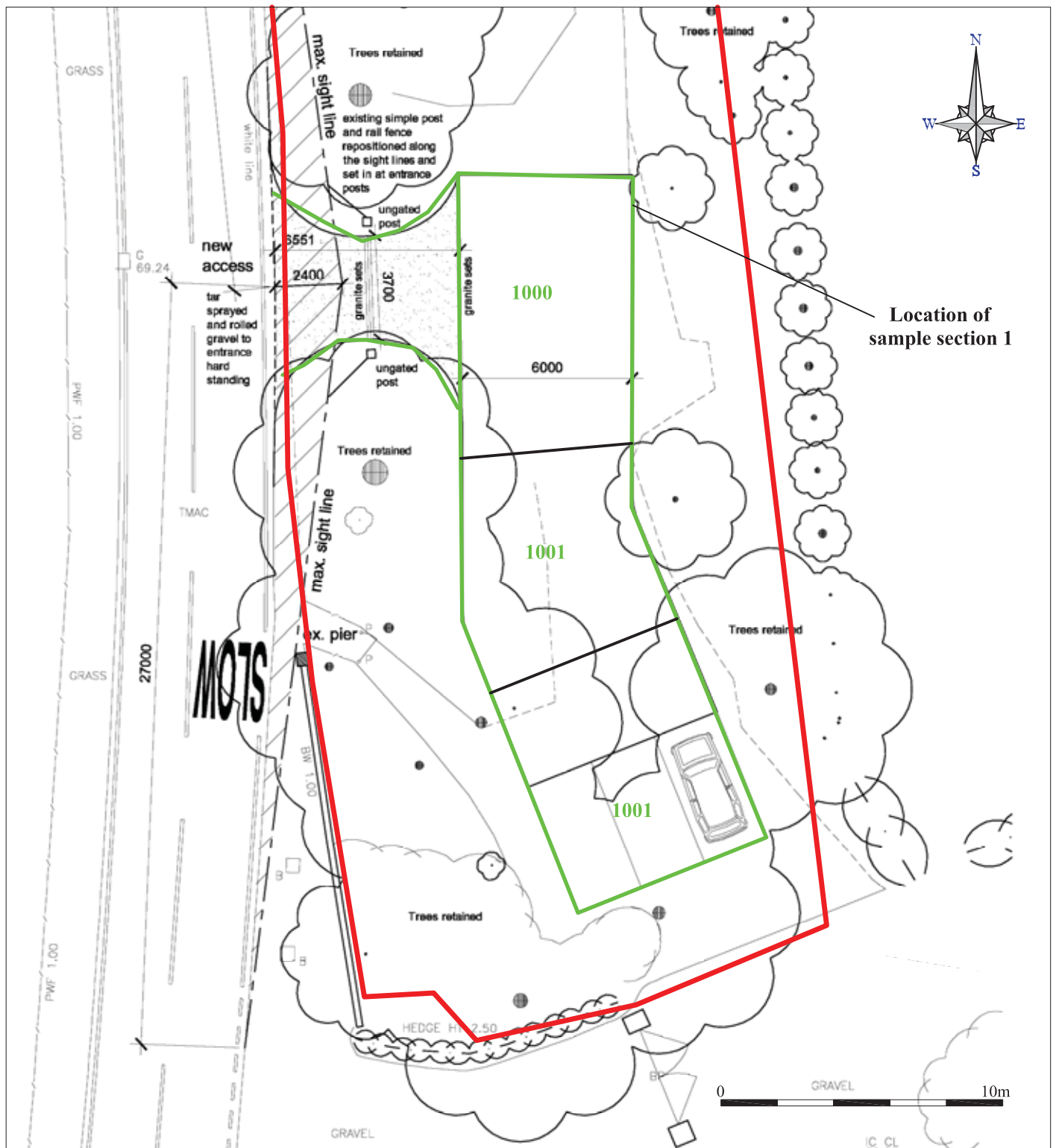


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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4



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Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan
Scale 1:1000 at A4



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Fig. 3 Proposed access road

Scale Plan 1:200, section 1:20 at A4