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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD**

**ACTON MAGISTRATES COURT,  
WINCHESTER STREET, ACTON, LONDON**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING**

Authors: Zbigniew Pozorski (Fieldwork & report) Megan Stoakley (Research)	
NGR: TQ 20335 79952	Report No: 4348
District: London Borough of Ealing	Site Code: AMU 12
Approved: Claire Halpin MfA	Project No: 4976
Signed:	Date: 2 July 2013

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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD**

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

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

e-mail [info@ascontracts.co.uk](mailto:info@ascontracts.co.uk)  
[www.archaeologicalsolutions.co.uk](http://www.archaeologicalsolutions.co.uk)



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- 1 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD DATA (HER)**

**OASIS SUMMARY SHEET**

<b>Project details</b>			
<b>Project name</b>	<i>Acton Magistrates Court, Winchester Street, Acton, London</i>		
<p><i>In May and June 2013 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out archaeological monitoring and recording at Acton Magistrates Court, Winchester Street, Acton, London (NGR TQ 20335 79952). The monitoring was commissioned in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for the redevelopment of the site for residential use including construction of new extensions and alterations.</i></p> <p><i>The site is situated within the Archaeological Priority Zone (APZ) of the London Borough of Ealing centred on medieval Acton. A medieval priory was present to the east of the site. Prehistoric and Roman finds are also known from the surrounding area. The site had the highest potential for medieval and post-medieval archaeological remains associated with the historic core of Acton.</i></p> <p><i>In the event the monitoring revealed no archaeological features or finds.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	<i>23/05 – 18/06/2013</i>		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>	Future work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>
P. number	<i>4796</i>	Site code	<i>AMU 12</i>
Type of project	<i>Archaeological Monitoring &amp; Recording</i>		
Site status	<i>Archaeological Priority Zone (London Borough of Ealing)</i>		
Current land use	<i>Disused courthouse</i>		
Planned development	<i>Conversion to residential use and construction of extensions</i>		
Main features (+dates)	<i>-</i>		
Significant finds (+dates)	<i>-</i>		
<b>Project location</b>			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Greater London</i>	<i>London Borough of Ealing</i>	<i>Acton</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>Greater London HER</i>		
Post code (if known)	<i>W3 8PF</i>		
Area of site	<i>c. 175m<sup>2</sup></i>		
NGR	<i>TQ 20335 79952</i>		
Height AOD (min/max)	<i>12.50/12.80m</i>		
<b>Project creators</b>			
Brief issued by	<i>Advice from English Heritage Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (EH GLAAS)</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>Zbigniew Pozorski</i>		
Funded by	<i>Verve Properties Ltd</i>		
Full title	<i>Acton Magistrates Court, Winchester Street, Acton, London: Archaeological Monitoring &amp; Recording</i>		
Authors	<i>Pozorski, Z., Stoakley, M.</i>		
Report no.	<i>4348</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>July 2013</i>		

# **ACTON MAGISTRATES COURT, WINCHESTER STREET, ACTON, LONDON**

## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING**

### **SUMMARY**

*In May and June 2013 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out archaeological monitoring and recording at Acton Magistrates Court, Winchester Street, Acton, London (NGR TQ 20335 79952). The monitoring was commissioned in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for the redevelopment of the site for residential use including construction of new extensions and alterations.*

*The site is situated within the Archaeological Priority Zone (APZ) of the London Borough of Ealing centred on medieval Acton. A medieval priory was present to the east of the site. Prehistoric and Roman finds are also known from the surrounding area. The site had the highest potential for medieval and post-medieval archaeological remains associated with the historic core of Acton.*

*In the event the monitoring revealed no archaeological features or finds.*

### **1 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 In May and June 2013 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological monitoring and recording at Acton Magistrates Court, Winchester Street, Acton, London (NGR TQ 20335 79952). The monitoring was commissioned in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for the redevelopment of the site comprising the change of use of the court building (Class D1) to residential use (Class C3) including the conversion of the existing building to create seven self-contained residential flats. The planning application also includes the construction of a two-storey building for use as two maisonettes as well as alteration and repair works (Planning Ref. PP/2012/0737).

1.2 The monitoring was undertaken in accordance to advice issued by English Heritage Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (EH GLAAS) and a written scheme of investigation (specification) prepared by AS (dated 30/07/2012), and approved by EH GLAAS. 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 EH (London Region) *Archaeological Guidance Papers* (revised 2009), in particular *Archaeological Guidance Paper No 3; Standards for Archaeological Fieldwork in London*.

1.3 The project of archaeological monitoring and recording aimed to identify any evidence of archaeological deposits and/or artefacts, and to

determine the nature and extent of those deposits within the limits of construction groundworks.

### *Planning policy context*

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 Acton comprises a district of west London and it is encompassed by Ealing c. 2km to the west, Shepherd's Bush c. 2km to the east, North Acton c.2.5km to the north and Gunnersby c. 1.75km to the south. The site is located c. 3km to the north of the west-east River Thames and c. 3.5km to the south of the west-east Grand Union Canal. The north-east/south-west railway line is situated c. 125m to the east of the site.

2.2 The site is situated on the eastern side of the north-south Winchester Street and comprises seven buildings associated with the former Acton Magistrates Court. The part of the site subject to the monitoring is rectangular in plan and rests on an area of hard-standing covering c. 175m<sup>2</sup>. It is located at the southern end of the site.

### **3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS**

3.1 Acton is located on a low-lying plateau c. 3km to the north of the River Thames. Approximately 2km to the south, the land rises gradually from c. 5m AOD to c. 10m AOD. The site rests on ground rising between 12.50 and 14.70m AOD. The area of groundworks lies at c. 12.70m AOD

3.2 The solid geology of the site comprises the Eocene London Clay (British Geological Survey 1978). Overlying river terrace gravels may be present towards the north of the site. The soils of the site and the surrounding urban environment remain un-surveyed (Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983).

### **4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

#### *Palaeolithic*

3.2.1 Palaeolithic flint implements (MLOs 519, 464, 12588 & 1586) have been discovered c. 200m – 400m to the north of the site. Flint implements have also been found c. 400m to the west (MLO 11482) and c. 500m to the south (MLO 13735). An axe (MLO 11282) was discovered c. 10m to the east of the site.

#### *Mesolithic - Neolithic*

3.2.2 Mesolithic flint implements comprising three cores and six flakes (MLO 25532) were discovered c. 400m to the west of the site. Neolithic flint implements comprising blades, flakes and an arrowhead (MLO 12732) were discovered c. 450m to the west. Prehistoric implements (MLO 11294) have also been discovered c. 15m to the south-east.

#### *Romano-British*

3.2.3 Two pits of Romano-British date (MLO 23983) were discovered during archaeological investigations (ELO 2688) on the High Street c. 250m to the north-west (Heathcote 1989). A small assemblage of Romano-British pottery sherds (MLO 4536) were discovered c. 400m to the north of the site.

#### *Medieval*

3.2.4 The place-name 'Acton' is thought to signify 'Oak Town' and the settlement may have Saxon origins. The village, however, is not recorded until 1181 AD. Evidence of early medieval settlement comprising a residual rim sherd (c.1220 AD; MLO 76024) was recovered during an excavation along the High Street (ELO 531) c. 400m to the north-west (CA 2003). The medieval settlement of Acton (MLO 72237) is situated c. 400m to the north-west, appears to have lain along Horn Lane and houses are recorded in the village from the 13<sup>th</sup> century onwards. From the 14<sup>th</sup> century onwards, two taverns are recorded in the village, namely the Tabbard and the Cock.

3.2.5 The site of Berrymead Priory (MLO 100897), situated adjacent to the east of the site comprised a monastery of 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> century date. It was known to be held by St Paul's Cathedral and it was surrendered to the Crown in 1544 as part of the Dissolution of the Monasteries. The priory was demolished shortly after the Dissolution and was replaced by a manor house (MLO 82517).

#### *Post-medieval*

3.2.6 An archaeological evaluation (ELO 531) conducted on the High Street c. 400m to the north-west revealed a pit and deposition layer containing 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> pottery (MLO 76024; CA 2003). The deposition layer represented a buried soil horizon in an area used for grazing in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

3.2.7 17<sup>th</sup> century archaeological remains comprise a possible backfilled cellar (MLO 75212) discovered during an archaeological evaluation conducted on Horn Lane (ELO 3624) c. 450m to the north-west (MoLA 2000). Derwentwater House (MLO 25393), situated c. 100m to the north-west, is believed to date from the 17<sup>th</sup> century and gained notoriety for its association with the Countess of Derwentwater, whose husband was beheaded in 1716 for his involvement with the Jacobite uprising.

3.2.8 18<sup>th</sup> century archaeological remains comprise two cess pits (MLO 102543) discovered during an archaeological watching brief (ELO 10378) conducted at Acton Square c. 400m to the north-west. Archaeological investigations conducted at Horn Lane (ELO 6089) c. 400m to the north-west revealed a number of brick walls and floors (MLO 97826) shown to relate to both Acton House and the later Derwentwater House (MoLA 2004).

3.2.9 Archaeological investigations (ELO 2688) conducted on the High Street c. 300m to the north-west revealed quarry pits, refuse pits and masonry (MLO 23939; Heathcote 1989) while excavations c. 450m to the north-west (ELO 3812) revealed a series of pits and drains (WLAFG 1988). The 19<sup>th</sup> century public library (MLO 82629) is situated c. 90m to the north-west of the site.

## **5 METHODOLOGY**

5.1 The principal elements monitored were the mechanically-excavated service and foundation trenches of the new building (Fig. 2). The first stage of work comprised removal of concrete covering the area of former yard/car park and piling works which were monitored. Afterwards the trenches were excavated and monitored.

5.2 The archaeological monitoring comprised the observation of all groundworks, the inspection of the subsoil and natural deposits for archaeological features and the examination of spoil heaps and the recording of soil profiles. Archaeological features and 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

6.1 Deposits located within area of groundworks were recorded in sample sections presented below.

<i>Sample section 1 (DP 4)</i> <i>North-western corner of the site, facing east-north-east</i> <i>0.00 = 12.47m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.04m	L1000	Modern layer of crushed CBM.
0.04 – 0.50m+	L1001	Made ground. Dark greyish brown, compact, sandy silt with occasional CBM fragments and small stones.

<i>Sample section 2 (DP 5)</i> <i>Service trench along northern limit of the site, facing south-south-east</i> <i>0.00 = 12.63m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.10m	L1000	Modern layer of crushed CBM. As above.
0.10 – 0.24m	L1002	Made ground. Light grey, friable, silty sand with frequent CBM fragments.
0.24 – 0.28m	L1003	Mid yellow, loose, sand with moderate CBM fragments.
0.28 – 0.55m+	L1001	Made ground. As above.

<i>Sample section 3 (DP 6)</i> <i>Service trench along northern limit of the site, facing south-south-east</i> <i>0.00 = 12.74m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.08m	L1000	Modern layer of crushed CBM. As above.
0.08 – 0.52m+	L1001	Made ground. As above.

<i>Sample section 4 (DP 9)</i> <i>Western foundation trench, facing east-north-east</i> <i>0.00 = 12.54m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.08m	L1000	Modern layer of crushed CBM. As above.
0.08 – 0.28m	L1004	Dark grey, friable, sandy silt with frequent roots.
0.28 – 0.71m	L1001	Made ground. As above.
0.71m+	L1005	Natural mid to dark yellow, compact, clay.

<i>Sample section 5 (DP 11)</i> <i>South/central foundation trench, facing east-north-east</i> <i>0.00 = 12.62m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.10m	L1000	Modern layer of crushed CBM. As above.
0.10 – 0.83m+	L1001	Made ground. As above.

<i>Sample section 6 (DP 12)</i> <i>South/eastern foundation trench, facing west-south-west</i> <i>0.00 = 12.68m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.15m	L1000	Modern layer of crushed CBM. As above.
0.15 – 1.00m+	L1001	Made ground. As above.

<i>Sample section 7 (DP 14)</i> <i>North/eastern foundation trench, facing south-south-east</i> <i>0.00 = 12.72m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.10m	L1000	Modern layer of crushed CBM. As above.
0.10 – 0.80m+	L1001	Made ground. As above.

Description: No archaeological features or finds were identified.

## 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 The site was commonly overlain by modern layer (L100; 0.05 – 0.20m thick) consisting mainly of crushed CBM derived from the removal of a concrete floor and associated works. The most substantial deposit was Made Ground L1001, a dark greyish brown, compact, sandy silt with occasional CBM fragments and small stones (0.30 – 0.85m+ thick). L1001 was present above natural clay (L1005). The latter was encountered only in the western part of the site and was present c. 0.70m below existing ground level.

## 9 DISCUSSION

9.1 The site had a potential for archaeological remains, in particular for the medieval and post-medieval archaeology associated with the historic core of Acton. It is located within the core of the medieval village and a priory was present to the east of the site. The site also had a potential for prehistoric and Roman remains.

9.2 In the event no archaeological features or finds were revealed, and no residual finds were recovered.

9.3 The site may contain earlier remains as deposits below the made ground were not encountered due to shallow excavations. This would apply particularly to the eastern part of the site.

## 10 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

10.1 Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited with any donated finds from the site at London Archaeological Archives and Resource Centre (LAARC). The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross-referenced and checked for internal consistency.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions would like to thank Verve Properties Ltd for funding the project and Paul Brookes Architects Ltd for commissioning the project.

Archaeological Solutions Ltd would like to thank Ms Melanie Bell of the Greater London Historic Environment Record for her assistance.

AS would also like to acknowledge the input and advice of Mr Sandy Kidd of English Heritage Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service, and Ms Kim Stabler, formerly of EH GLAAS.

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## APPENDIX 1 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD DATA (HER)

The following sites are those that lie within a 500m radius of the site. The table has been compiled from data held by the Greater London Historic Environment Record (GLHER).

HER No.	NGR TQ	Description
<b>Palaeolithic</b>		
MLO11482	2000 8000	Various implements from Sadler collection.
MLO519	2043 8019	Implement found on the surface of the London Clay.
MLO464	2036 8037	Flakes found in-situ, c. 1869.
MLO12588	2012 8036	Implements found during construction of Derwentwater Estate. Includes one ex-Colja Brown.
MLO1586	2046 8038	Numerous flint implements.
MLO13735	2030 7950	Thermal flake re-touched on one edge.
MLO11282	2037 7994	Axe.
<b>Mesolithic</b>		
MLO25532	2000 8000	Three cores and six flakes.
<b>Neolithic</b>		
MLO12732	2000 8000	Arrowhead, blades and flakes. Sadler Collection.
<b>Prehistoric (Undated)</b>		
MLO11294	2040 7987	Worked flints and cores.
<b>Roman</b>		
MLO23938 ELO2688	2010 8010	Evaluation and excavation revealed two Roman pits.
MLO4536	2035 8037	Potsherds.
<b>Medieval</b>		
MLO72237	2000 8030	Horn Lane, medieval settlement of Acton.
MLO100897	2036 7994	Berrymead Priory is a medieval monastery located on the site of the modern car park at Salisbury Street, Acton.
<b>Post-medieval</b>		
MLO102543 ELO10378	2000 8017	Two probable 18 <sup>th</sup> to 19 <sup>th</sup> century cess pits or soakaways were found during a watching brief at Acton Square.
MLO76024 ELO531	1995 8008	A quarry pit and a soil layer were found through excavation at the site of 193-197 High Street, Acton, by Compass Archaeology in 2003.
MLO23939	2010 8010	Evaluation and excavation by the Department of Greater London Archaeology in 1989. Post-medieval quarry and rubbish pits, and bricks and walls were found.
MLO75212 ELO3624	2006 8030	A possible backfilled cellar dating to the 17 <sup>th</sup> or 18 <sup>th</sup> centuries was found through excavation at 23-24 Horn Lane, Acton.
MLO97826 ELO6089	2008 8028	The fragmented remains of brickwork believed to be associated with the former 18 <sup>th</sup> century Derwentwater house were recorded within an evaluation. The watching brief recorded a number of 18 <sup>th</sup> and 19 <sup>th</sup> century brick walls and floors shown to relate to both Acton House and the later Derwentwater House.
MLO13417 ELO3812	2000 8020	Evaluation and excavation in 1988 found assorted post medieval pits and drains.
MLO25393	2022 8026	Derwentwater house is believed to date from the 17 <sup>th</sup> century. It gained notoriety for its association with the countess of Derwentwater whose husband was beheaded

		in 1716 for his involvement with the Jacobite rising.
MLO82591	2004 8011	George & Dragon PH & 185 High Street. 17 <sup>th</sup> and 18 <sup>th</sup> century buildings.
MLO82629	2027 8004	Acton public library. This building was constructed in 1898-1900 by Maurice B Adams.
MLO82496	2002 8017	Church of St Mary. 19 <sup>th</sup> century.
MLO82217	2023 8036	Gates, gate piers & railings to the rear of Nos. 13 & 15. 17 <sup>th</sup> to early 18 <sup>th</sup> century.
MLO82517	2035 7994	Berrymead Priory on Salisbury Street was a 16 <sup>th</sup> century manor house built after the dissolution of the Berrymead Priory in 1544.
MLO82623	2005 8002	18 <sup>th</sup> century cinerary urn, obelisk and commemorative monument.
<b>Modern</b>		
MLO82631	2032 8002	Acton town hall. It was built in 1909-10 to the designs of Raffles and Gridley.
MLO81919	2049 8008	This former cinema, built as the Dominion, was constructed in 1936-7 for Albert Bacal and N. Lee, by the architect Frank Ernest Bromige.
MLO82628	2034 8001	This chimney was built in 1904 by D J Ebbetts ARIBA.
<b>Undated</b>		
MLO71209	2030 8017	A possible plough soil of unknown date was identified through excavation at 9 Grove Place, Acton.

## PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



DP 1. View for the site from Winchester Street. Looking north-east.



DP 2. Piling in progress. Looking north-east.



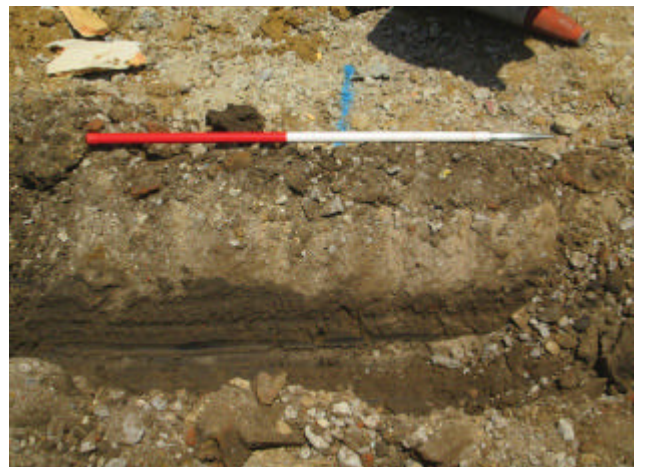
DP 3. Service trench along northern side of the site. Looking east-north-east.



DP 4. North-western corner of the site. Sample section 1. Looking west-south-west.



DP 5. Service trench. Sample section 2. Looking north-north-west.



DP 6. Service trench. Sample section 3. Looking north-north-west.



DP 7. Foundation trenches in western part of the site. Looking east.



DP 8. . Foundation trenches in north-western corner. Looking north-north-west.



DP 9. Western foundation trench. Sample section 4. Looking west-south-west.



DP 10. Foundation trench in south/central part of the site. Looking south-west.



DP 11. Foundation trench in south/central part of the site. Sample section 5. Looking west-south-west.



DP 12. South-eastern foundation trench. Sample section 6. Looking east-north-east.

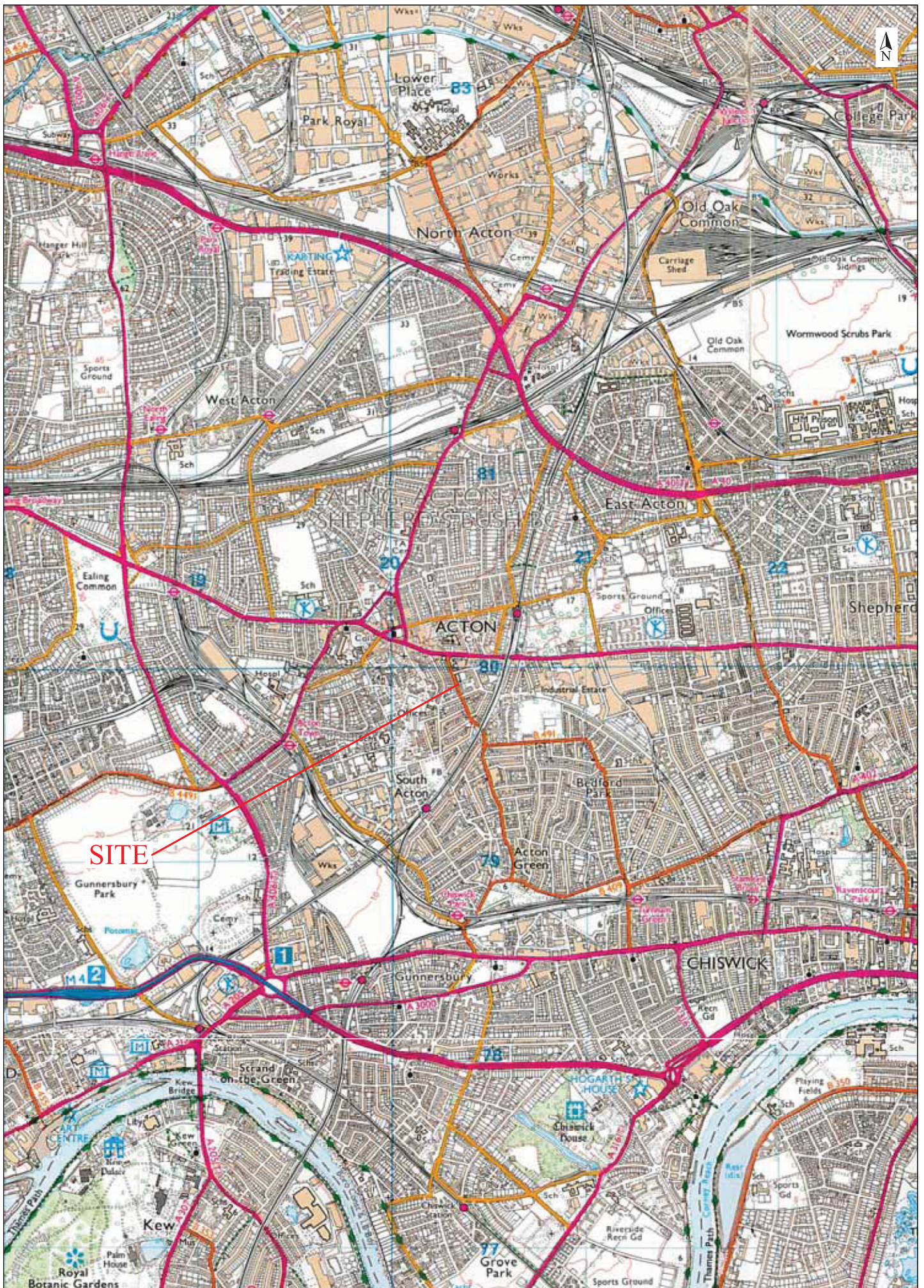




DP 13. North-eastern foundation trench.  
Looking north-east.

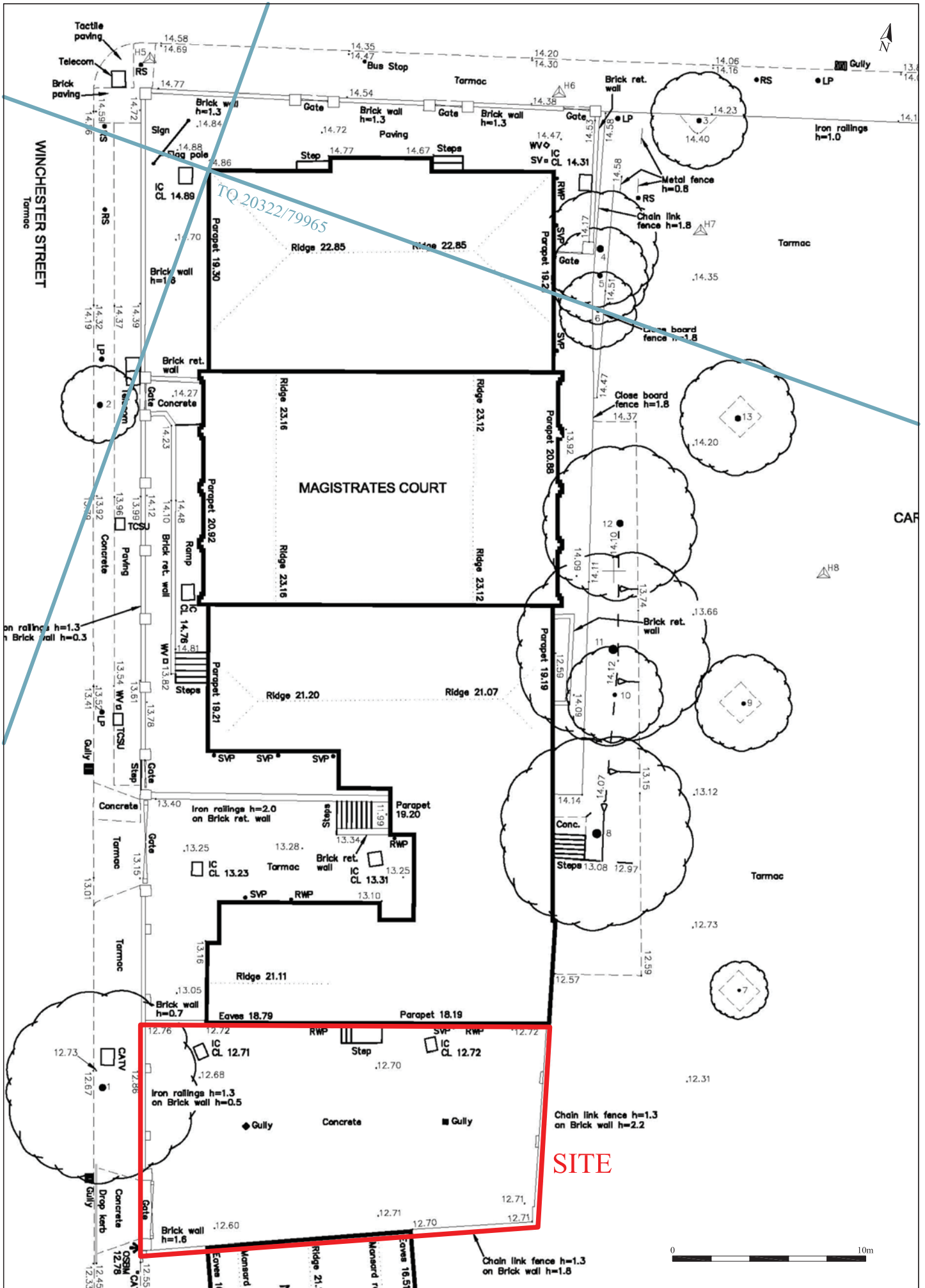


DP 14. North-eastern foundation trench.  
Sample section 7. Looking north-north-west.

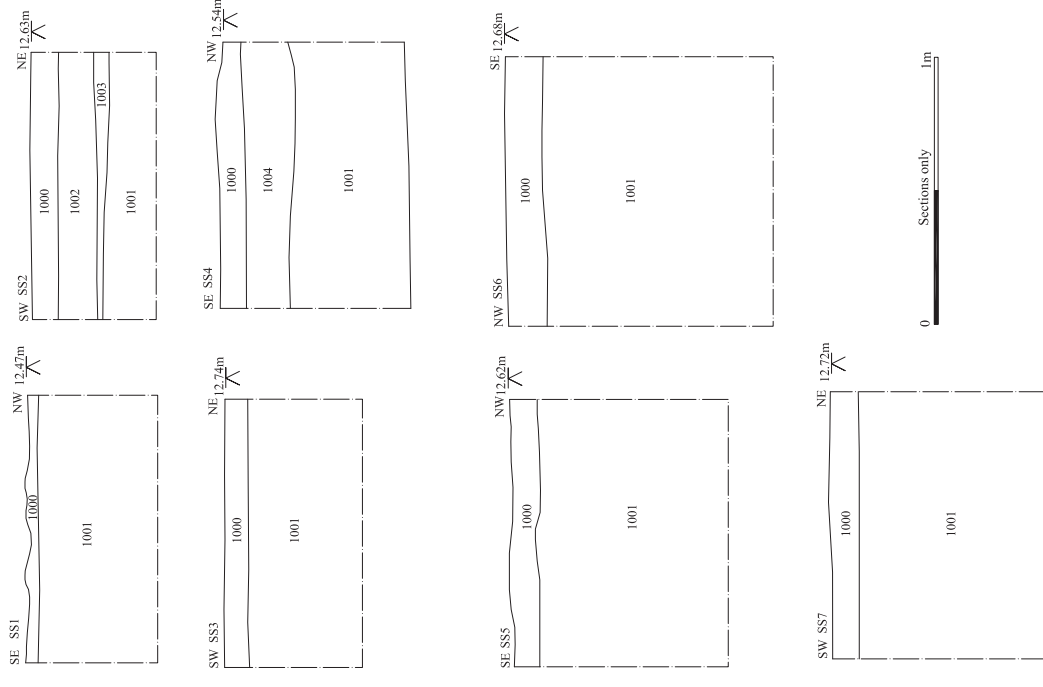
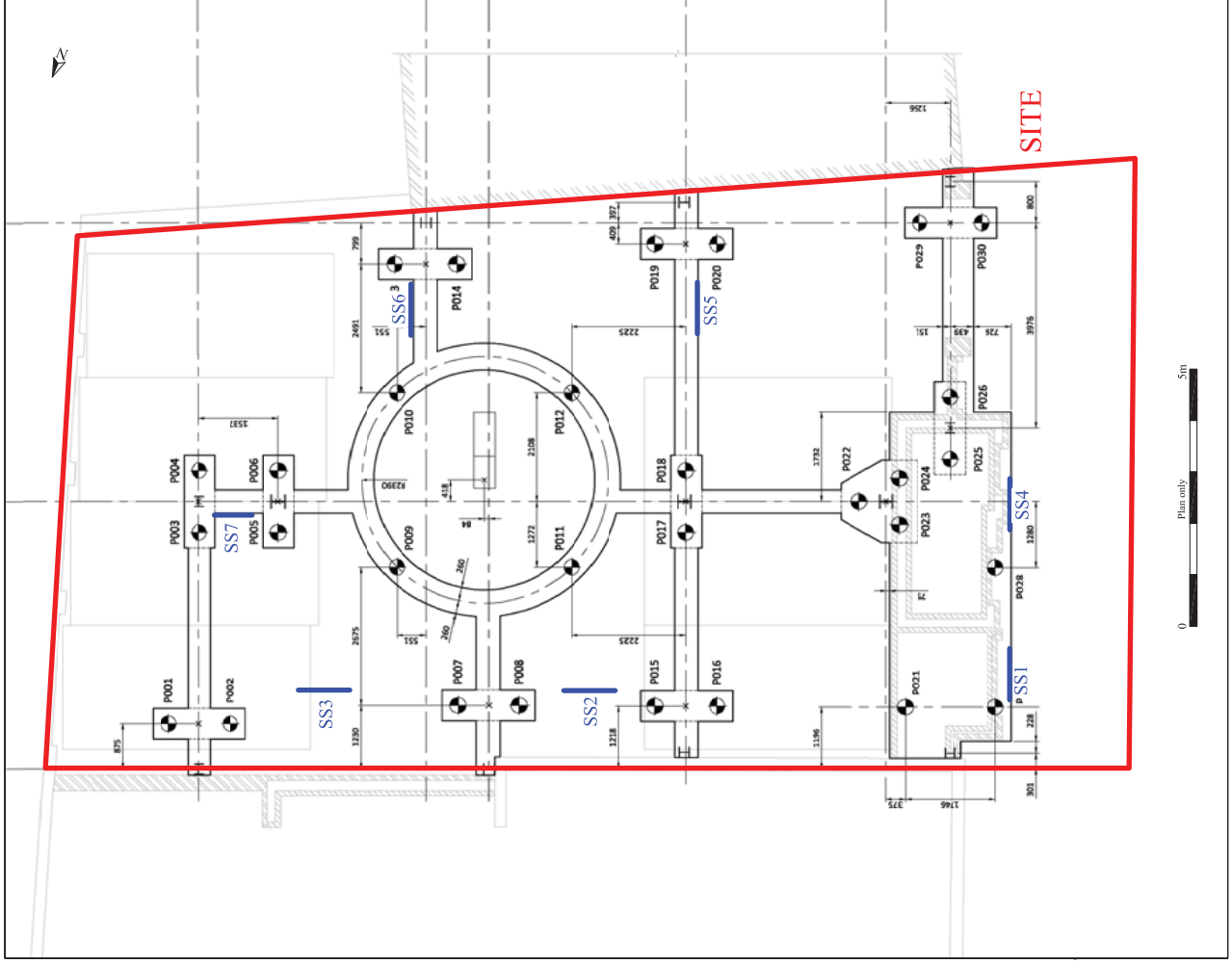


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**Fig. 1 Site location plan**  
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4



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**Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan**  
 Scale 1:250 at A4



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**Fig. 3 Area of watching brief & sections**  
 Scale plan at 1:100 & sections at 1:20 at A3