

10 WATFORD ROAD, ST ALBANS, HERTFORDSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING

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NGR: TL 13986 06058	Report No: 4326
District: St Albans	Site Code:
Approved: Claire Halpin MIfA	Project No: 5266
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OASIS SUMMARY

Project details			
Project name	<i>10 Watford Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire</i>		
<p><i>In May 2013 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological monitoring and recording at 10 Watford Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire AL1 2AJ (NGR TL 13986 06058; Figs. 1 & 2). The monitoring was commissioned by Philip & Kate Fulton in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for the proposed erection of a new part single, part two-storey extension and conversion of garage to habitable accommodation (St Albans Council Planning Ref. 5/2012/2665).</i></p> <p><i>The site lies in an area where possible Romano-British occupation and burials may be anticipated, within the area designated as AS.R.25 on the Local Plan (which encompasses the area of Saxon Kingsbury, the Saxon and medieval town of St Albans and Sopwell Nunnery), on the western side of Watford Road.</i></p> <p><i>The site also lies on the edge of the preceding Iron Age oppidum of Verlamion, and has the potential for further evidence of pre-Roman Iron Age occupation.</i></p> <p><i>In the event the monitoring revealed no archaeological features or finds. The site stratigraphy was not preserved; made ground overlay the natural in each trench and this may account for the lack of archaeology. No further evidence of burials or other features associated with the St Stephens Roman cemetery were present.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	<i>May 2013</i>		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>	Future work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>
P. number	<i>5001</i>	Site code	
Type of project	<i>Archaeological Monitoring & Recording</i>		
Site status	<i>Within AS.R.25 on the Local Plan</i>		
Current land use	<i>Garden</i>		
Planned development	<i>Extension and conversion</i>		
Main features (+dates)	<i>None</i>		
Significant finds (+dates)	<i>None</i>		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Hertfordshire</i>	<i>St Albans</i>	<i>St Stephen</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>Hertfordshire HER/St Albans UAD</i>		
Post code (if known)	<i>AL1 2AJ</i>		
Area of site	<i>-</i>		
NGR	<i>TL 13986 06058</i>		
Height AOD (min/max)	<i>c. 103m AOD</i>		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>Requirement of SADC</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>Lisa Smith</i>		
Funded by	<i>Philip & Kate Fulton of 10 Watford Road</i>		
Full title	<i>10 Watford Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire. Archaeological Monitoring & Recording</i>		
Authors	<i>Smith. L.</i>		
Report no.	<i>4326</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>May 2013 (Revised 12/07/13)</i>		

10 WATFORD ROAD, ST ALBANS, HERTFORDSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING

SUMMARY

In May 2013 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological monitoring and recording at 10 Watford Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire AL1 2AJ (NGR TL 13986 06058). The monitoring was commissioned by Philip & Kate Fulton in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for the proposed erection of a new part single, part two-storey extension and conversion of garage to habitable accommodation (St Albans Council Planning Ref. 5/2012/2665).

The site lies in an area where possible Romano-British occupation and burials may be anticipated, within the area designated as AS.R.25 on the Local Plan (which encompasses the area of Saxon Kingsbury, the Saxon and medieval town of St Albans and Sopwell Nunnery), on the western side of Watford Road.

St Stephen's Hill is the location of a Roman cemetery (St Stephen's Cemetery, UAD Monument 155), investigated since the 1930s during development of King Harry Lane and subsequent more modern developments. The cemetery has revealed evidence of cremation and inhumation burials, ditched enclosures, a mausoleum and pits (UAD Monuments 155, 685 & 714, Events 238, 346, 348 and 360). The current site has the potential for significant features relating to the St Stephen's Roman cemetery to survive. The cemetery largely comprised cremation burials and other features of the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD. It's core is centred on Havercroft Close, and it extends on either side of King Harry Lane and along Watford Road. Three cremation burials and other features have been recorded immediately adjacent to the site during foundation excavations for an extension to No 8 Watford Road (UAD Monument 686-8). Seven cremation burials were also recorded from a similar foundation trench for an extension at No 3 King Harry Lane in 1999 (UAD Monument 684). Further evidence of cremation has also been recorded at No 1 a King Harry Lane (UAD Monument 155).

The site also lies on the edge of the preceding Iron Age oppidum of Verlamion, and had the potential for further evidence of pre-Roman Iron Age occupation.

In the event the monitoring no archaeological features or finds. The site stratigraphy was not preserved; made ground overlay the natural in each trench and this may account for the lack of archaeology. No further evidence of burials or other features associated with the St Stephens Roman cemetery were present.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In May 2013 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological monitoring and recording at 10 Watford Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire AL1 2AJ (NGR TL 13986 06058; Figs. 1 & 2). The monitoring was commissioned by Philip & Kate Fulton in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission

for the proposed erection of a new part single, part two-storey extension and conversion of garage to habitable accommodation (St Albans Council Planning Ref. 5/2012/2665).

1.2 The monitoring was undertaken in accordance to a requirement of St Albans City and District Council District Archaeologist (SADC) (Simon West), and a written scheme of investigation (specification) prepared by AS (dated 02/04/2013), and approved by SADC. The project conformed to the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct* and *Standard and Guidance for An Archaeological Watching Brief* (revised 2008), and 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 aims were to identify any further surviving evidence of the St Stephen's Roman Cemetery (in particular burials or other features, such as have been recorded immediately adjacent at No 8 Watford Road). It was also important to identify any evidence the preceding Iron Age settlement which was present on top of the plateau.

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 in an area where possible Romano-British occupation and burials may be anticipated, within the area designated as AS.R.25 on the Local Plan (which encompasses the area of Saxon Kingsbury, the Saxon and medieval town of St Albans and Sopwell Nunnery), on the western side of Watford Road. The site comprises the existing detached dwelling of No.10 Watford Road.

2.2 St Stephen's Hill is the location of a Roman cemetery (St Stephen's Cemetery, UAD Monument 155), investigated since the 1930s during development of King Harry Lane and subsequent more modern developments. The cemetery has revealed evidence of cremation and inhumation burials, ditched enclosures, a mausoleum and pits (UAD Monuments 155, 685 & 714, Events 238, 346, 348 and 360). The current site has the potential for significant features relating to the St Stephen's Roman cemetery to survive. The cemetery largely comprised cremation burials and other features of the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD. It's core is centred on Havercroft Close, and it extends on either side of King Harry Lane and along Watford Road. Three cremation burials and other features have been recorded immediately adjacent to the site during foundation excavations for an extension to No 8 Watford Road (UAD Monument 686-8). Seven cremation burials were also recorded from a similar foundation trench for an extension at No 3 King Harry Lane in 1999 (UAD Monument 684). Further evidence of cremation has also been recorded at No 1 a King Harry Lane (UAD Monument 155).

2.3 The site also lies on the edge of the preceding Iron Age oppidum of Verlamion, and has the potential for further evidence of pre-Roman Iron Age occupation.

3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY & SOILS

3.1 The site is situated at c. 103m AOD, close to the crest of the south-western slope of the valley of the River Ver. The loop of the river passes c.1km to the north and c. 1.2km to the east, with the undulating Chiltern plateau extending to the south and west. The site lies on a solid geology of (Upper Cretaceous) Upper Chalk that is typically overlain by 'plateau drift', characterised as yellow/red stony clay with pockets of sand and gravel.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 As noted above, the site is situated in an area with a dense concentration of pre-Roman late Iron Age and Roman archaeological remains, dominated in the immediate environs of the site by the St. Stephen's cemetery. The site is located on the north-eastern periphery of the late Iron Age *oppidum* of *Verlamion* and to the south of the major Roman urban centre of *Verulamium*, adjacent to the major road of Watling Street (HER 14339) as it ran south-east from the London gate. St. Stephen's cemetery (HER 14155) is situated immediately to the north of the site. The cemetery is comprised of numerous enclosures that appear to have their own internal phasing, spanning the late 1st to early 3rd centuries AD, yielding at least 351 interments, predominantly cremations and possibly including pyre sites. However; the full extent of the cemetery, including the southern boundary has not been defined. Three truncated burials and a ditch have been recorded at the adjacent 8 Watford Road (HER 14686), the base of a possible tile and flint funerary structure was recorded at 6 Watford Road (HER 12135), and further cremations were recorded at 3 King Harry Lane (HER 14685). As a result of the presence of these Roman archaeological remains, the site lies within Area of Archaeological Significance on the St. Alban's UAD Local Plan.

4.2 The parish church of St. Stephen's (HER 14163) is located c.200m to the east of the site, and is one of four putative Saxon foundations in St. Albans. The church was supposedly founded by 'Abbot Ulsinus' in c.950AD and has a graveyard (HER 14158) that includes one possible grave beneath a 10th century wall footing. The church was at the north corner of a large rural parish, but also at one of the entrances to the town of the late Saxon and medieval abbey, from which the modern town developed. Also, possibly reflecting the location of Watford Road on the periphery of a significant urban centre, medieval clay pits (HER 14332) and un-dated chalk mines (HER 9663) have been recorded in the vicinity.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 The principal elements monitored were the foundation trenches for the extension and two corner trenches (Fig. 2).

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

Deposits encountered on the site were recorded in sample sections presented below:

<i>Sample section 1</i> <i>0.00 = 103.10m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.16m	L1000	Modern paving and underlying levelling layer
0.16 – 0.66m	L1001	Made ground. Dark blackish grey, loose, clayey sand with frequent small pebbles and occasional CBM
0.66m +	L1002	Natural. Mid reddish brown clayey sand with frequent flint and pebbles

<i>Sample section 2</i> <i>0.00 = 103.09m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.12m	L1000	Modern paving and underlying levelling layer
0.12 – 0.62m	L1001	Made ground. As above.
0.62m+	L1002	Natural. As above.

<i>Sample section 3</i> <i>0.00 = 103.05m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.13m	L1000	Modern paving and underlying levelling layer
0.13 – 0.59m	L1001	Made ground. As above
0.59m+	L1002	Natural. As above

No archaeological features or finds were present. A modern service was present. The site stratigraphy was not intact as made ground overlay the natural in each trench.

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 paving and an underlying levelling layer, L1000 (c.0.12m thick). Below the paving Made Ground L1001 was (c.0.50m thick in total). It comprised a dark blackish grey, loose, clayey sand with frequent small pebbles and occasional CBM

8.2 The natural geology, L1002, was present at c.0.60m below existing ground level and comprised a mid reddish brown clayey sand with frequent flint and pebbles

9 DISCUSSION

9.1 The site lies in an area where possible Romano-British occupation and burials may be anticipated, within the area designated as AS.R.25 on the Local Plan (which encompasses the area of Saxon Kingsbury, the Saxon and medieval town of St Albans and Sopwell Nunnery), on the western side of Watford Road.

9.2 The site also lies on the edge of the preceding Iron Age oppidum of Verlamion, and had the potential for further evidence of pre-Roman Iron Age occupation.

9.3 In the event the monitoring no archaeological features or finds. The site stratigraphy was not preserved; made ground overlay the natural in each trench and this may account for the lack of archaeology. No further evidence of burials or other features associated with the St Stephens Roman cemetery 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 St Albans Museum. The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross-referenced and checked for internal consistency.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions would like to thank Mr Philip & Mr Kate Fulton for commissioning the project and for their assistance. AS would also like to acknowledge Mr Mark Knight of Knight Architecture & Design and Mr Tony Grant for their assistance.

AS would also like to acknowledge the input and advice of Mr Simon West, the St Albans City and District Council District Archaeologist.

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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.

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



1

View of the corner trenches, facing north-east



2

View across the site towards the foundation trenches, facing south-east



3

Foundation trenches, facing south-east



4

Foundation trenches, facing south-east



5

Sample section 1, facing north-east



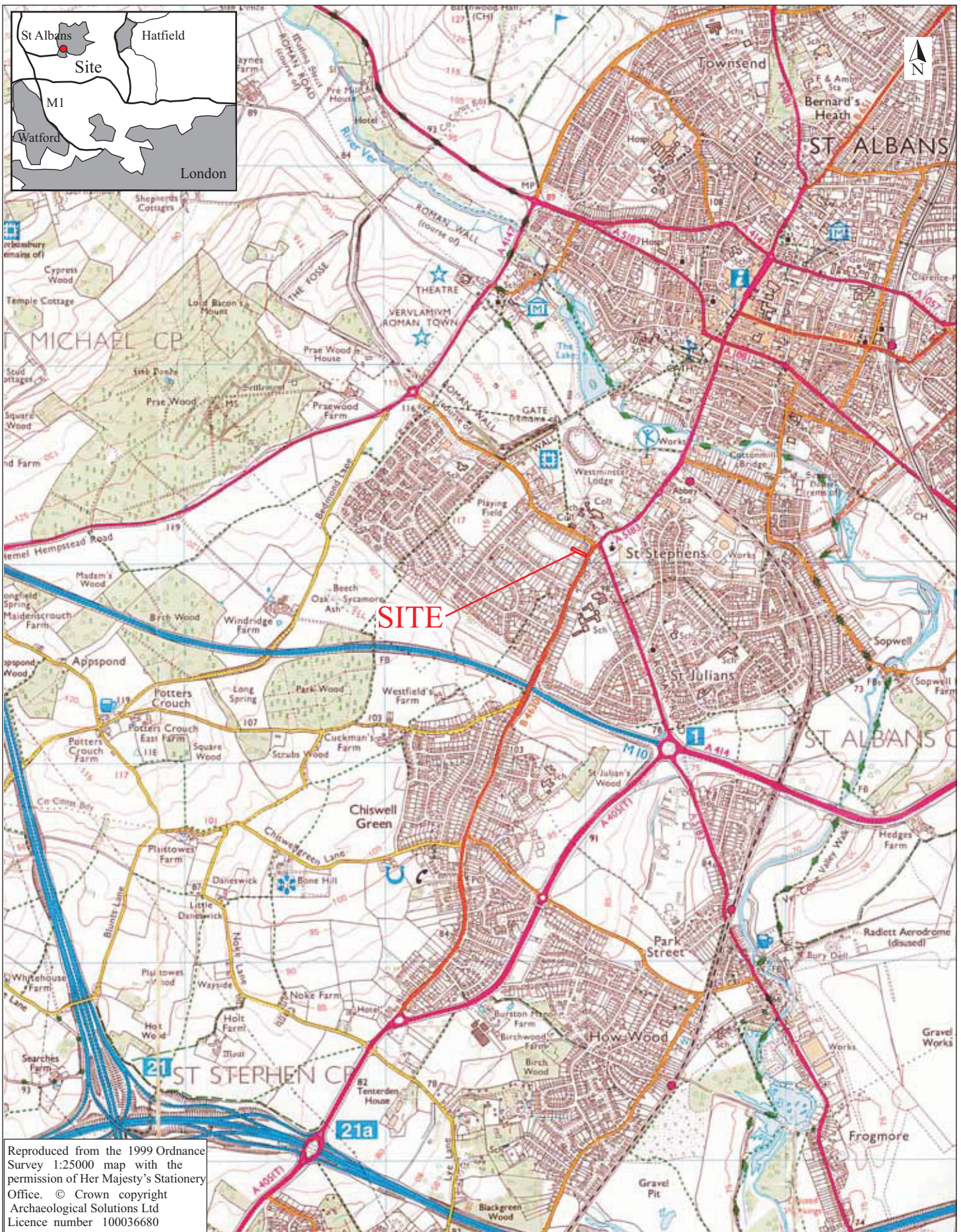
6

Sample section 2, facing south-west

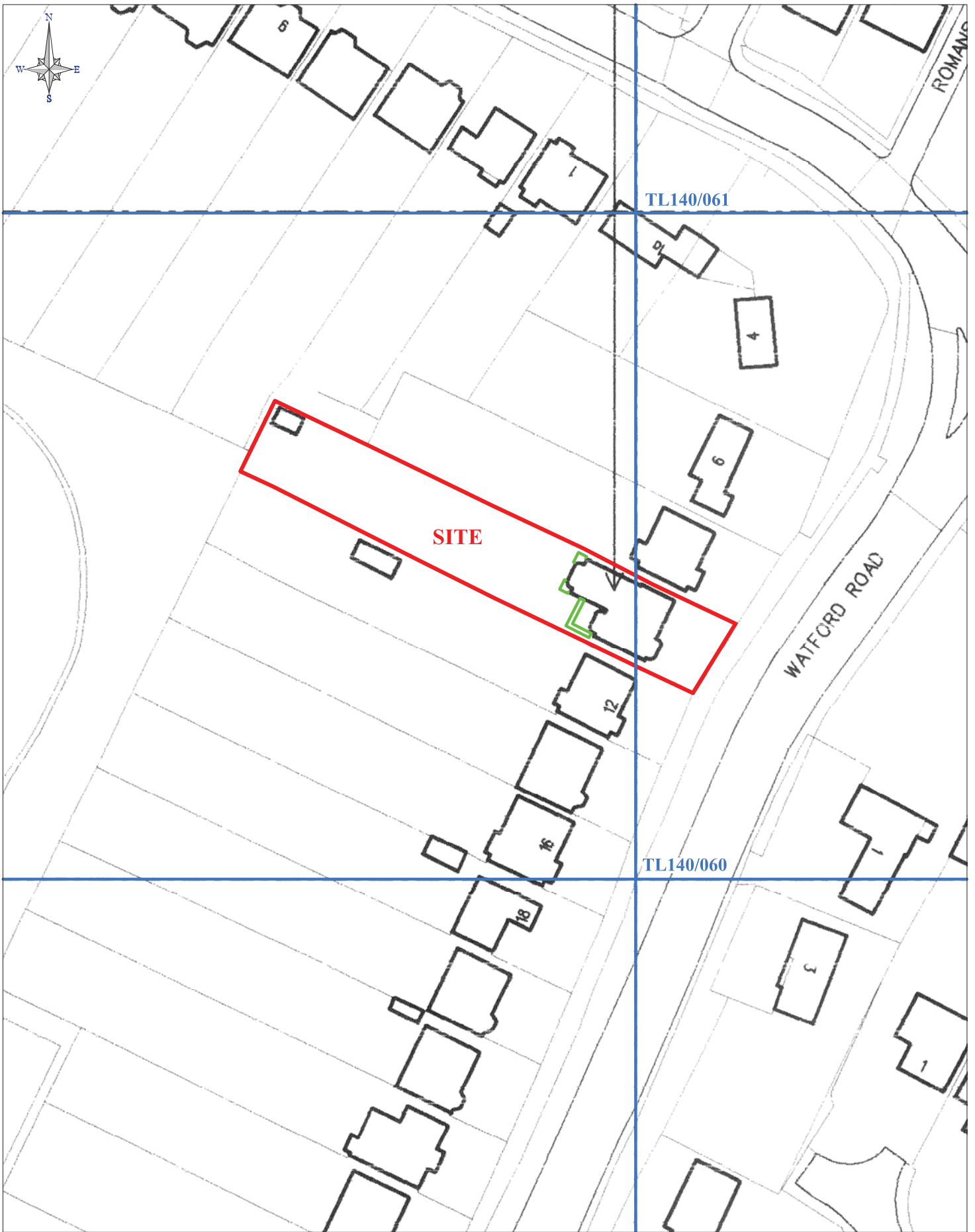


7

Sample section 3, facing north-west

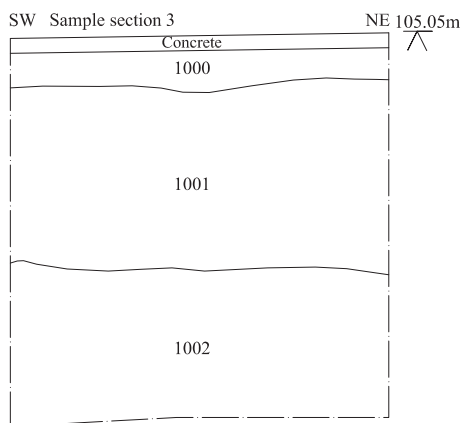
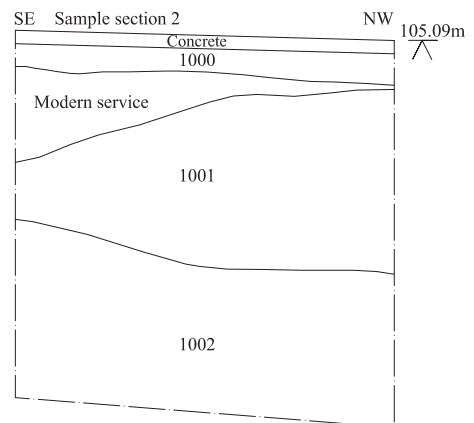
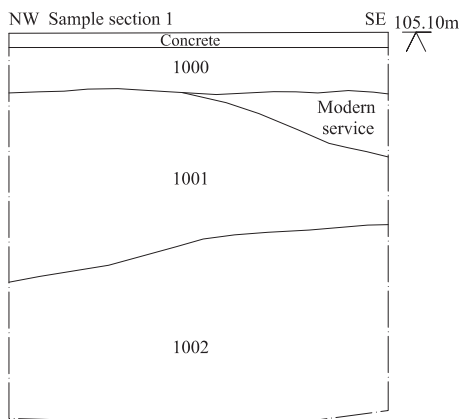
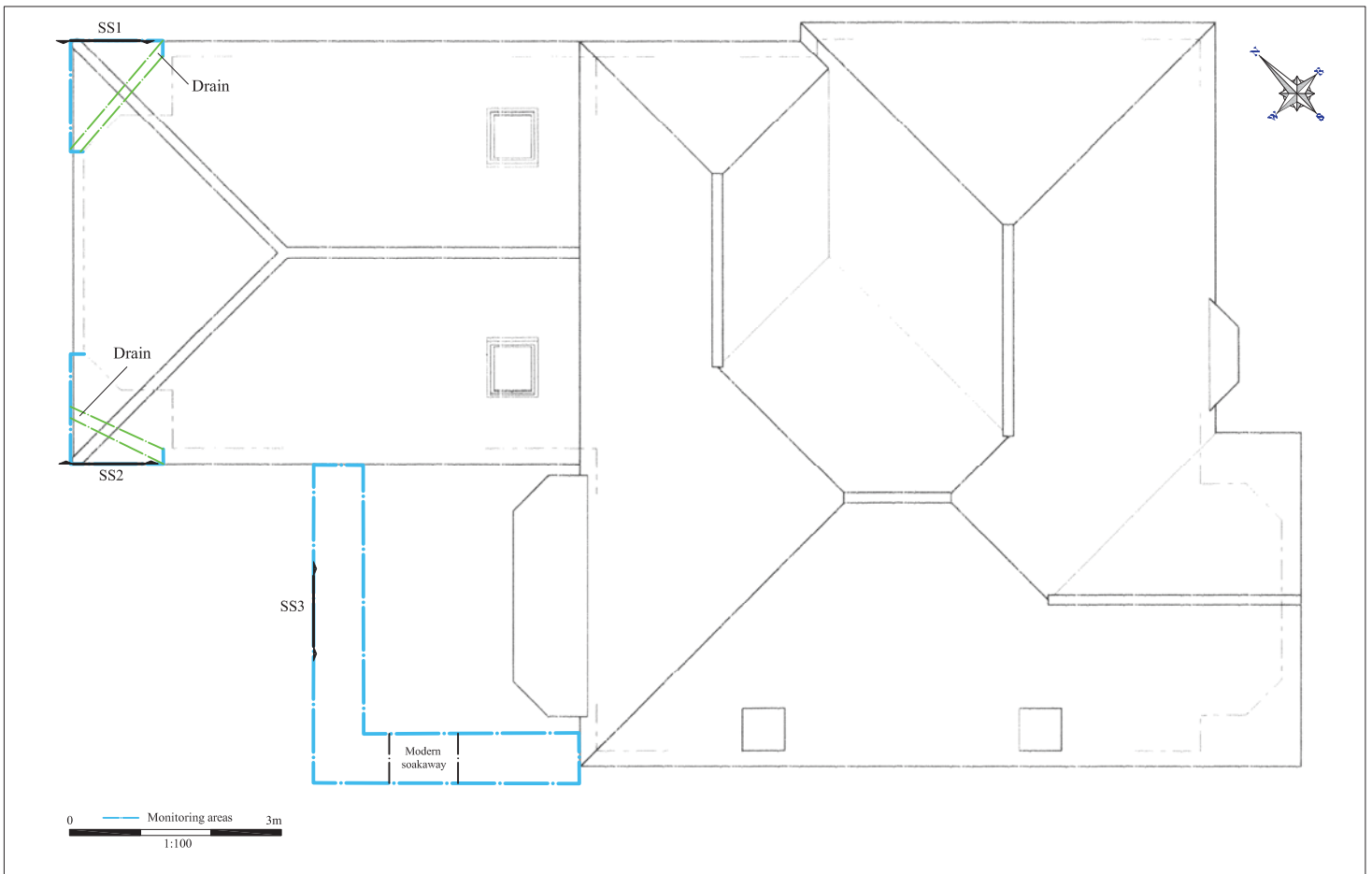


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Fig. 1 Site location
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4



0 ——— Monitoring areas 50m

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Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan
Scale 1:750 at A4



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Fig. 3 Plan and sections

Scale 1:100 and 1:20 at A4