
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

**REDBOURN DELIVERY OFFICE, CROWN STREET,
REDBOURN, HERTFORDSHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING

Authors: Zbigniew Pozorski	
NGR: TL 17065 12415	Report No: 4381
District: St Albans	Site Code: AS 1617
Approved: Claire Halpin MIfA	Project No: 5080
Signed:	Date: 30 July 2013

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CONTENTS

OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

SUMMARY

- 1 INTRODUCTION**
- 2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE**
- 3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS**
- 4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**
- 5 METHODOLOGY**
- 6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS**
- 7 CONFIDENCE RATING**
- 8 DEPOSIT MODEL**
- 9 DISCUSSION**
- 10 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

BIBLIOGRAPHY

APPENDICES

- 1 CONTENTS OF THE ARCHIVE**
- 2 HER SUMMARY SHEET**

OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	<i>Redbourn Delivery Office, Crown Street, Redbourn, Hertfordshire</i>		
<p><i>In July 2013 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological monitoring and recording at former Redbourn Delivery Office, Crown Street, Redbourn, Hertfordshire (NGR TL 10765 12415). The monitoring was commissioned by Mr James Douglas in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for the construction of a two storey detached dwelling following the demolition of a former Royal Mail sorting office.</i></p> <p><i>The site is located within Area AS.R.5 as identified on the Local Plan, which encompasses the Saxon and medieval village core of Redbourn. The latter is located on the line of Roman Watling Street and prehistoric flint artefacts have also been found in the vicinity. Therefore the site had a potential for archaeological remains dating from Mesolithic to post-medieval period.</i></p> <p><i>In the event the monitoring revealed no archaeological features or finds. Deposits present on the site consisted mostly of modern made ground. Two modern soakways were present within the area of the groundworks.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	<i>09, 11, 12/07/2013</i>		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>	Future work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>
P. number	<i>5080</i>	Site code	<i>AS 1617</i>
Type of project	<i>Archaeological Monitoring & Recording</i>		
Site status	<i>Within Area AS.R.5</i>		
Current land use	<i>Former mail delivery office</i>		
Planned development	<i>New residential dwelling</i>		
Main features (+dates)	<i>-</i>		
Significant finds (+dates)	<i>-</i>		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Hertfordshire</i>	<i>St Albans</i>	<i>Redbourn</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>Hertfordshire HER</i>		
Post code (if known)	<i>AL3 7RD</i>		
Area of site	<i>c. 175m²</i>		
NGR	<i>TL 10765 12415</i>		
Height AOD (min/max)	<i>c. 100m AOD</i>		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>Requirement of SADC</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>Zbigniew Pozorski</i>		
Funded by	<i>Mr James Douglas of Germanitas LLP</i>		
Full title	<i>Redbourn Delivery Office, Crown Street, Redbourn, Hertfordshire. Archaeological Monitoring & Recording</i>		
Authors	<i>Pozorski, Z.</i>		
Report no.	<i>4381</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>July 2013</i>		

REDBOURN DELIVERY OFFICE, CROWN STREET, REDBOURN, HERTFORDSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING

SUMMARY

In July 2013 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological monitoring and recording at former Redbourn Delivery Office, Crown Street, Redbourn, Hertfordshire (NGR TL 10765 12415). The monitoring was commissioned by Mr James Douglas in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for the construction of a two storey detached dwelling following the demolition of a former Royal Mail sorting office.

The site is located within Area AS.R.5 as identified on the Local Plan, which encompasses the Saxon and medieval village core of Redbourn. The latter is located on the line of Roman Watling Street and prehistoric flint artefacts have also been found in the vicinity. Therefore the site had a potential for archaeological remains dating from Mesolithic to post-medieval period.

In the event the monitoring revealed no archaeological features or finds. Deposits present on the site consisted mostly of modern made ground. Two modern soakways were present within the area of the groundworks.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In July 2013 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out archaeological monitoring and recording at the former Redbourn Delivery Office, Crown Street, Redbourn, Hertfordshire (NGR TL 10765 12415; Figs. 1 & 2). The monitoring was commissioned by Mr James Douglas of Germanitas LLP in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for the construction of a two storey detached dwelling following demolition of a former Royal Mail sorting office (St Albans Planning Ref. 5/2011/2571).

1.2 The monitoring was undertaken in accordance to a requirement of the St Albans City & District Council District Archaeologist (SADC) and a written scheme of investigation (specification) prepared by AS (dated 31/10/2012), 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.

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 The site lies within the centre of Redbourn to the rear of buildings fronting High Street to the east (Fig. 1). It comprises rectangular plot of land bounded by Crown Street to the east and Crown Street link to the High Street to the north. The site was occupied by a single storey Royal Mail delivery office which has been recently demolished.

3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

3.1 The site is located at c.100m AOD on the floor of the valley of the River Ver, which runs on an approximately north-south course c. 200m to the east.

The surrounding valley rises moderately steeply to the west, while the site actually slopes very slightly down towards the south. The site is situated on a low gravel terrace, which is slightly elevated above the floodplain of the River Ver.

3.2 The solid geology of the area is Upper Cretaceous Chalk of White Chalk Subgroup (British Geological Survey 1978). Soils on the site are soils of the Charity 2 association described as well drained flinty fine silty soils present in valley bottoms and calcareous fine silty soils over chalk or chalk rubble on valley sides (Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983).

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 Previous archaeological investigations have recovered prehistoric material in the vicinity of the site and suggest Mesolithic to Neolithic occupation or activity on the gravel terrace on the west side of the River Ver in the Redbourn area. Recorded finds include Mesolithic struck flint from the rear of 80 High Street (HER 6495), Mesolithic and Neolithic worked flints found to the rear of 38 High Street (HER 9638, West 2006), and a Neolithic flint axe (HER 559) has also been recorded to the south-west of the site.

4.2 Redbourn High Street follows the course of the major Roman Road of Watling Street (HER 4607) from London to Wroxeter. Traces of Roman domestic occupation have been recorded close to the High Street (HER 6496) although the extent of any settlement remains unknown. Two Roman spindle whorls (HER 1488) have also been recorded in the western part of the village.

4.3 The site lies within the area designated on the Local Plan as AS.R.5 which includes the area of the Saxon and medieval village. The Domesday survey notes that Redbourn had a population of 100 in 1086, with c. 2000 acres of arable land under cultivation. The parish was still heavily wooded at this time, and there are several references to the lack of pasture available in the medieval period. The common, whose north-eastern edge is c. 500m to the south-west of the site, is recorded as being the site of St James Chapel in 1178. Also in 1178, two barrows on the common were excavated by the monks. The excavation revealed ten skeletons and associated grave goods. One of the bodies was interpreted as being that of St Amphibalus (the clerk who converted St Alban). The chapel of St James was enlarged into a small priory. The abbey owned most of the village since before Domesday, but the building of the priory after 1178 was one of the reasons for a gradual shift in settlement to the main road. However, a survey of 1617 shows that the village still had two principal centres either side of the Common, Church End (c. 800m to the west) and Street End, closer to the High Street with relatively little development along the old Roman road.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 The principal elements monitored were the mechanically-excavated foundation trenches for the building following removal of foundations and floors of the former delivery office which were also monitored (Figs. 2-3).

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 located within area of excavation were recorded in sample sections presented below.

<i>Sample section 1 (DP 4)</i> <i>West foundation trench, facing north-east</i> <i>0.00 = 100.24m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.42m	L1000	Modern made ground. Mid to dark grey, friable, silty sand with moderate CBM fragments.
0.42 – 0.60m	L1001	Made ground. Light brown, compact, silty sand with occasional CBM fragments.
0.60 – 0.74m	L1002	Dark grey, loose, sand.
0.74m+	L1003	Natural dark yellow, compact, flint gravel with clayey silt.

<i>Sample section 2 (DP 6)</i> <i>South foundation trench, facing north-west</i> <i>0.00 = 100.36m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.35m	L1000	Modern made ground. As above.
0.35 – 0.63m	L1004	Made ground. Mid brownish grey, friable, clayey silt with occasional CBM fragments.
0.63m+	L1003	Natural gravel and silt. As above.

<i>Sample section 3 (DP 10)</i> <i>North foundation trench, facing south-east</i> <i>0.00 = 100.42m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.32m	L1000	Modern made ground. As above.
0.32 – 0.66m	L1001	Made ground. As above.
0.66m+	L1003	Natural gravel and silt. As above.

No archaeological features or finds were identified. Two modern soakways were located at the southern boundary of the site (DP 7 – 8).

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 Made Ground L1000, a mid to dark grey, friable, silty sand with moderate CBM fragments (0.30 – 0.45m thick). It overlay layers of made ground (c. 0.30 – 0.40m thick).

8.2 The natural geology, L1003, was present at 0.60 – 0.75m below existing ground level and comprised a dark yellow, compact, flint gravel with clayey silt.

9 DISCUSSION

9.1 The site had a potential for archaeological remains dating from Mesolithic to post-medieval period. Prehistoric flint artefacts were found in vicinity of the site and the village is located on the line of Roman Watling Street. The site is situated within Area AS.R.5 as identified on the Local Plan, which encompasses the Saxon and medieval village core of Redbourn.

9.2 In the event no archaeological features or finds were revealed. Two modern soakways were present. No residual finds were recovered. The area appeared to be much disturbed by the modern development of the former postal delivery office.

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 James Douglas of Germanitas LLp for commissioning the project.

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

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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	3 (Context, Drawing, Digital Photo)
Context Sheets	5
Site drawings A1	0
Site drawings A3	0
Site drawings A4	1
Site photographs b/w	0
Site photographs colour slides	0
Digital Photographs	17

APPENDIX 2 HER SUMMARY SHEET

Site name and address:	Redbourn Delivery Office, Crown Street, Redbourn, Hertfordshire
County: Herts	District: St Albans
Village/Town:	Parish: Redbourn
Planning application reference:	St Albans Planning Ref. 5/2011/2571
Client name/address/tel:	Mr James Douglas
Nature of application:	Construction of a single dwelling
Present land use:	Former mail delivery office
Size of application area: c. 175m ²	Size of area investigated 100m ²
NGR (8 figures):	TL 10765 12415
Site Code:	xx
Site director/Organization:	Archaeological Solutions Ltd
Type of work:	Archaeological Monitoring & Recording
Date of work:	09, 11, 12/07/2013
Location of finds/Curating museum:	St Albans
Related SMR Nos:	Periods represented: None
Relevant previous summaries/reports: -	-
Summary of fieldwork results:	<p><i>In July 2013 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological monitoring and recording at former Redbourn Delivery Office, Crown Street, Redbourn, Hertfordshire (NGR TL 10765 12415). The monitoring was commissioned by Mr James Douglas in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for the construction of a two storey detached dwelling following the demolition of a former Royal Mail sorting office.</i></p> <p><i>The site is located within Area AS.R.5 as identified on the Local Plan, which encompasses the Saxon and medieval village core of Redbourn. The latter is located on the line of Roman Watling Street and prehistoric flint artefacts have also been found in the vicinity. Therefore the site had a potential for archaeological remains dating from Mesolithic to post-medieval period.</i></p> <p><i>In the event the monitoring revealed no archaeological features or finds. Deposits present on the site consisted mostly of modern made ground. Two modern soakways were present within the area of the groundworks.</i></p>
Author of summary: Z Pozorski	Date of Summary: July 2013

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



DP 1. The site. Looking east-north-east from direction of High Street.



DP 2. The site. Looking south-west.



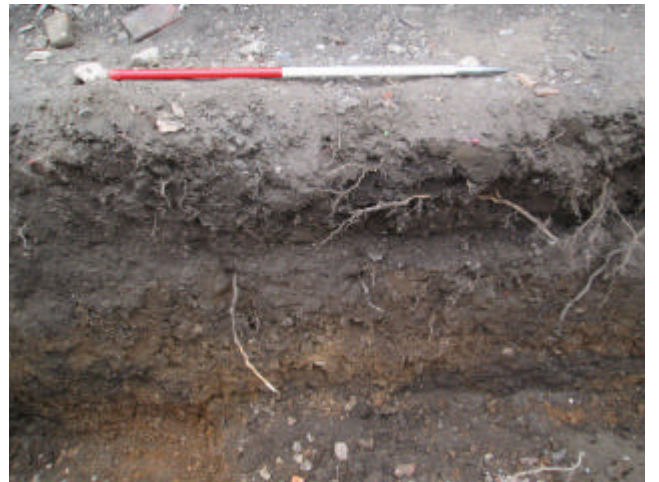
DP 3. West foundation trench. Looking west-north-west.



DP 4. West foundation trench. Sample section 1. Looking south-west.



DP 5. South foundation trench. Looking east.



DP 6. South foundation trench. Sample section 2. Looking south-east.



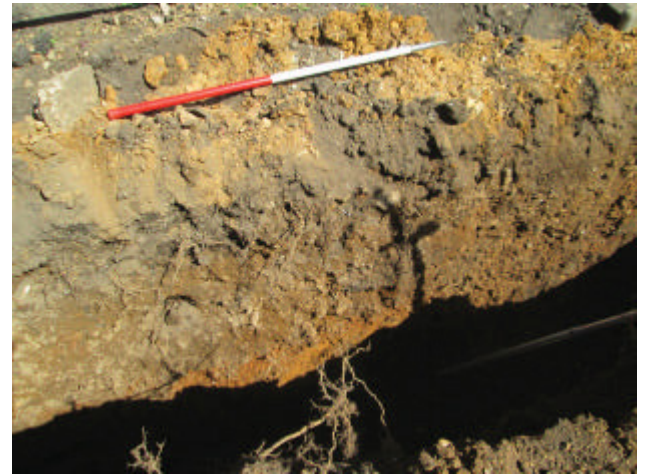
DP 7. South foundation trench. Modern soakway. Looking east-south-east.



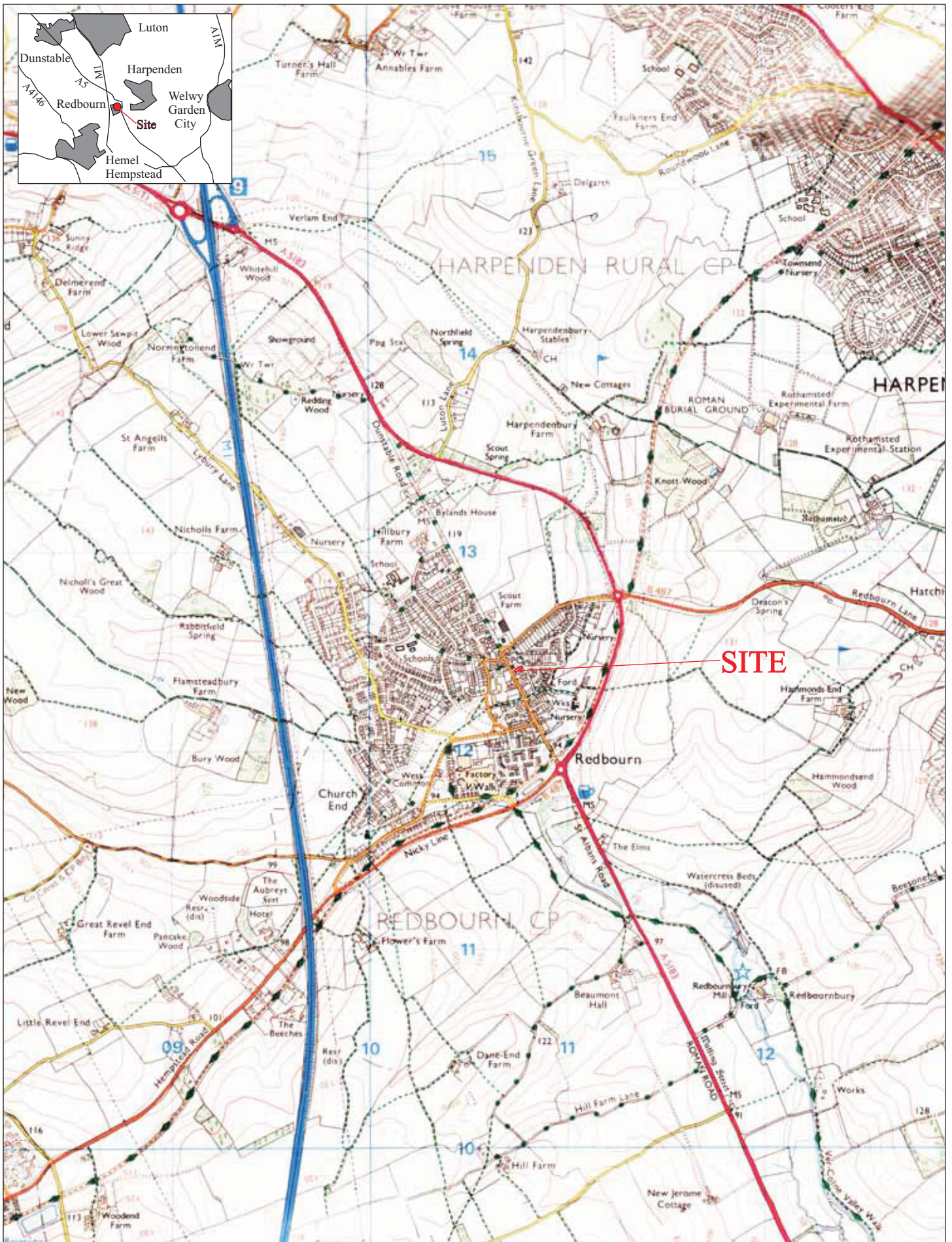
DP 8. South foundation trench. Modern soakway. Looking east-south-east.



DP 9. North foundation trench. Looking north-east.

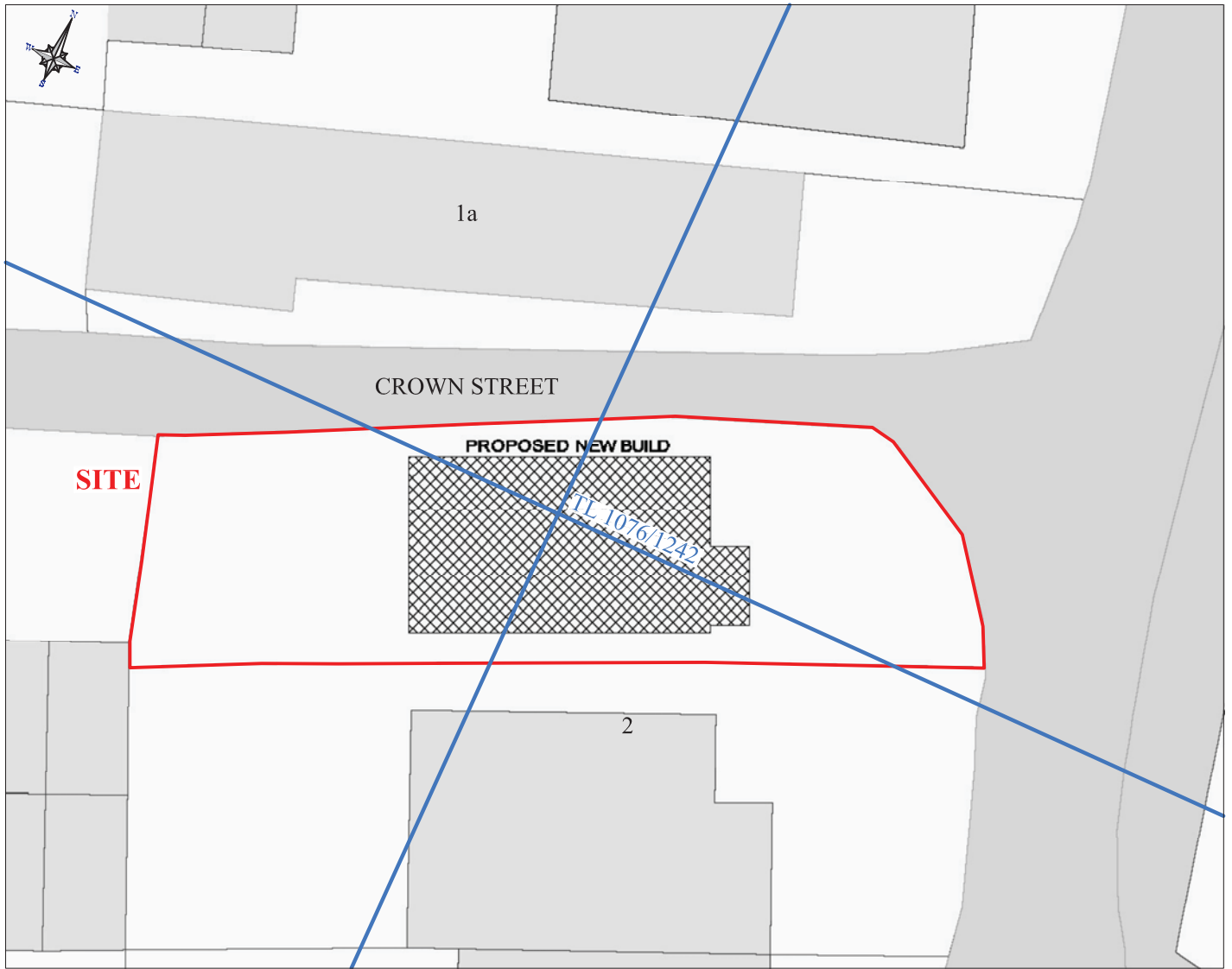


DP 10. North foundation trench. Sample section 3. Looking north.



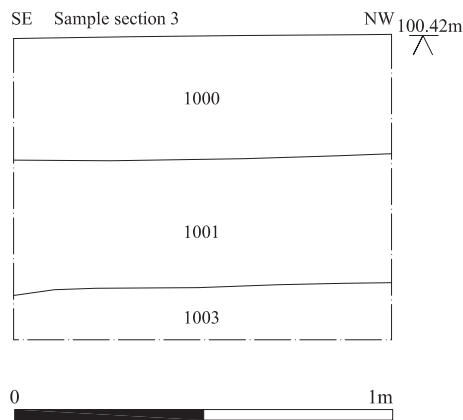
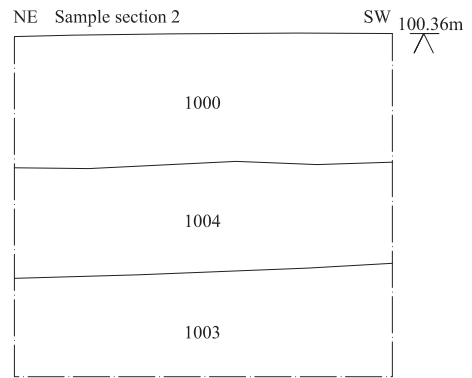
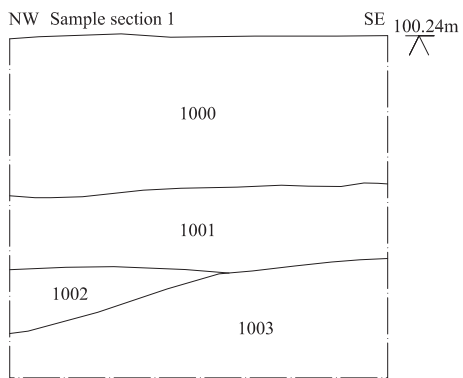
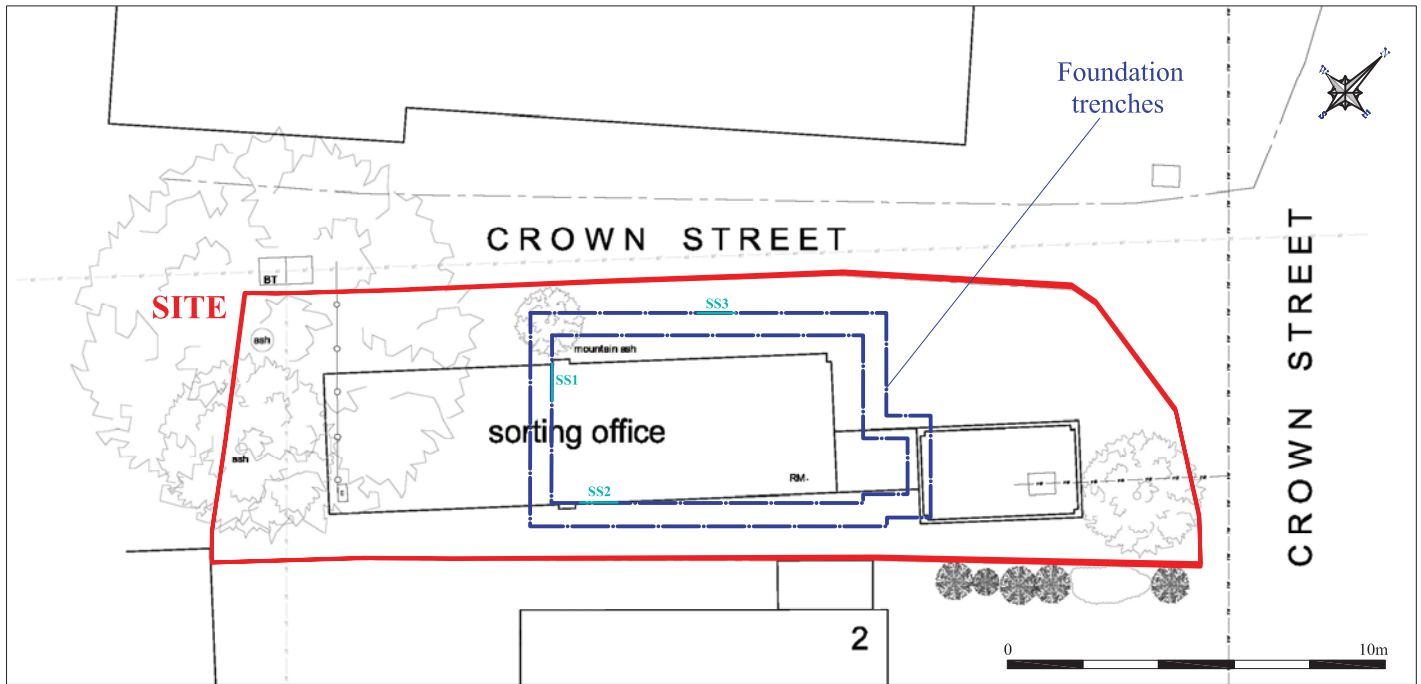
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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000



0 10m

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Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan
Scale 1:200 at A4



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Fig. 3 Plan and sections
 Scale 1:200 and 1:50 at A4