

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

**PROPOSED JUNIOR ACADEMY AND DRIVING RANGE,
WEST ESSEX GOLF CLUB, BURY ROAD,
SEWARDSTONE, ESSEX E4 7QL**

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION

Authors: Gareth Barlow (fieldwork and report)	
NGR: TQ 3941 9664	Report No: 4822
District: Epping Forest	Site Code: WAGC15
Approved: C Halpin MIfA	Project No: 5734
Signed:	Date: 31 March 2015

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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET			
Project name	<i>Proposed Junior Academy and Driving Range, West Essex Golf Club, Bury Road, Sewardstone, Essex E4 7QL</i>		
<i>In March 2015 Archaeological Solutions Limited (AS) conducted an archaeological evaluation of land at West Essex Golf Club, Bury Road, Sewardstone, Essex (NGR TQ 3941 9664). The evaluation was undertaken to comply with a planning condition on approval for the development of the site. The latter comprises the construction of a new driving range and a practice area, in addition to the construction of a reservoir.</i>			
<i>The site is located in a rural area, c. 4km north of the London North Circular road, and c.4km south of the M25. It is situated in the Lea valley, an area known for Palaeolithic and Mesolithic deposits and find spots. The site is also situated between two small hamlets with a significant number of Grade II listed buildings in their historic cores, in addition to a Second World War anti-air gun site, now a designated scheduled monument. Despite this, no archaeological finds are known to have originated from within the 54.7ha of the golf course grounds.</i>			
<i>The proposed development of the site largely comprises minor landscaping changes, including the construction of several practice greens, the alteration of bunds, and the installation of a drainage system. However, it also includes the construction of a large reservoir in the eastern part of the site. Previous ground disturbance appears limited and related to landscaping associated with the existing golf course.</i>			
<i>The evaluation of the proposed reservoir area revealed only modern features; a backfilled pond (F1007), a drain trench (F1004) and a ditch (F1002).</i>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	<i>26th & 27th March 2015</i>		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>	Future work (Y/N?)	<i>TBC</i>
P. number	<i>5734</i>	Site code	<i>WAGC15</i>
Type of project	<i>Archaeological Evaluation</i>		
Site status	<i>n/a</i>		
Current land use	<i>Golf Course</i>		
Planned development	<i>Redevelopment of area of golf course</i>		
Main features (+dates)	<i>Backfilled modern pond, drainage ditches</i>		
Significant finds (+dates)	<i>None</i>		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Essex</i>	<i>Epping Forest</i>	<i>Waltham Abbey</i>
HER for area	<i>Essex County Council Historic Environment Record (ECC HER)</i>		
Post code (if known)	<i>E4 7QL</i>		
Area of site	<i>54.7ha</i>		
NGR	<i>TQ 3941 9664</i>		
Height AOD (min/max)	<i>c.98m</i>		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>n/a</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>Archaeological Solutions Ltd</i>		
Funded by	<i>West Essex Golf Club</i>		
Full title	<i>Proposed Junior Academy and Driving Range, West Essex Golf Club, Bury Road, Sewardstone, Essex E4 7QL. An Archaeological Evaluation</i>		
Authors	<i>Barlow, G.</i>		
Report no.	<i>4822</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>March 2015</i>		

CONTENTS

	OASIS SUMMARY
	SUMMARY
1	INTRODUCTION
2	DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE
3	METHODOLOGY
4	ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND
5	METHODOLOGY
6	DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS
7	CONFIDENCE RATING
8	DEPOSIT MODEL
9	DISCUSSION
10	DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE
11	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
12	BIBLIOGRAPHY

**PROPOSED JUNIOR ACADEMY AND DRIVING RANGE,
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ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION

SUMMARY

In March 2015 Archaeological Solutions Limited (AS) conducted an archaeological evaluation of land at West Essex Golf Club, Bury Road, Sewardstone, Essex (NGR TQ 3941 9664). The evaluation was undertaken to comply with a planning condition on approval for the development of the site. The latter comprises the construction of a new driving range and a practice area, in addition to the construction of a reservoir.

The site is located in a rural area, c. 4km north of the London North Circular road, and c.4km south of the M25. It is situated in the Lea valley, an area known for Palaeolithic and Mesolithic deposits and find spots. The site is also situated between two small hamlets with a significant number of Grade II listed buildings in their historic cores, in addition to a Second World War anti-air gun site, now a designated scheduled monument. Despite this, no archaeological finds are known to have originated from within the 54.7ha of the golf course grounds.

The proposed development of the site largely comprises minor landscaping changes, including the construction of several practice greens, the alteration of bunds, and the installation of a drainage system. However, it also includes the construction of a large reservoir in the eastern part of the site. Previous ground disturbance appears limited and related to landscaping associated with the existing golf course.

The evaluation of the proposed reservoir area revealed only modern features; a backfilled pond (F1007), a drain trench (F1004) and a ditch (F1002).

INTRODUCTION

1.1 In March 2015 Archaeological Solutions Limited (AS) conducted an archaeological evaluation of land at West Essex Golf Club, Bury Road, Chingford, Essex E4 7QL (NGR TQ 3941 9664; Figs. 1 - 2). The evaluation was undertaken in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for a new attenuation pond as part of proposals to remodel the site (Epping Forest District Council Planning Approval Ref EPF/1983/14), based on the advice of the Historic Environment Advisor of Essex County Council (ECC HEA).

1.2 The evaluation was conducted in accordance with a brief issued by the Historic Environment Advisor of Essex County Council (ECC HEA; *Brief for Archaeological Trial Trenching at the West Essex Golf Club, Bury Road, Chingford, Essex E4 7QL* (dated 3rd February 2015), and a specification compiled by AS

(dated 5th February 2105), approved by ECC HEA. It adhered to the *IfA Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations Gurney (2003) Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*.

1.3 The aim of the trial trenching was to determine the location, date, extent, character, condition significance and quality of any archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development.

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 (Figs.1 - 2)

2.1 The site is located c.3km to the south of the historic market town of Waltham Abbey in the Lea Valley. The hamlet of Sewardstone is situated c.2km to the north-west, with the hamlet of High Beech immediately adjacent to the north, and Sewardstonebury c.400m to the south. The course of the River Lea flows through the eastern edge of Sewardstone, with King George's Reservoir adjacent to the east of the river. The site is bordered by Bury Wood to the south east; a large patch of woodland south of Epping Forest.

2.2 The site is sited within a short distance of four major roads: the M25 c.2km north of the site; the M11 c.6km south east; the A10 c.4km west; and the A406 c.7km south of the site. The nearest rail link is provided by Chingford station, approximately 400m south west of the site.

2.3 The site comprises a large plot of land covering some 54.7ha between Sewardstonebury and High Beach and the area of proposed development covers roughly one third of the total grounds of West Essex Golf Club, on the club's central-eastern border.

3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

3.1 The site is situated on a hill at approximately 98m AOD. It is on the eastern side of the Lea valley and the land slopes gently down from its western edge towards the river. The local soil of the site is composed of the Windsor soil association which is formed of slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged clayey soils; this overlies a tertiary clay formation. The bedrock geology of the site is formed of the Eocene London clay formation.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 An archaeological desk-based assessment has been undertaken (Waring & Summers 2014), in summary:

Although the site is situated in a landscape favourable to prehistoric, Roman and medieval settlement and activity, there is very limited archaeological evidence for these periods in the vicinity of the site. Scattered find spots, notably of Roman building materials suggest activity possibly related to a potential occupation site 1km away adjacent to the River Lea. The hamlets in the local landscape and the field boundaries, including those within the site appear well-established by the post-medieval period and may have medieval origins. The site appears to remain part of an agricultural landscape on the periphery of the hamlets of High Beech and Sewardstonebury until the 1930s when the land is acquired by the West Essex Golf Club, although field boundaries appear to remain unaltered to the present day suggesting landscaping was limited to minor levelling (including bunkers) and the cultivation of grass fairways. In the Second World War the Lippots Hill gun site was established close to the north and preserves a high concentration of listed buildings, but had no direct impact on the assessment site.

The proposed development comprises shallow landscaping to develop the facilities of several areas of the golf course, as well as the construction of a reservoir in the eastern part of the site. The bulk of the landscaping will have a very limited impact on any archaeological remains, if present as it is unlikely to truncate any deeper than the subsoil, however the footprint of the proposed reservoir will have a very high impact as it will completely truncate any archaeological remains, if present. The site appears to have been subject to very little historic ground disturbance beyond ploughing and minor landscaping associated with the golf course from the 1930s to the present day.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 The brief required trial trenching based on a 5% sample of the reservoir site. A 100 x 1.80m trench was excavated. A 50m perpendicular trench crossing the first at its mid point was originally proposed, however, site conditions dictated that this was staggered with a 15m E/W trench at the mid point on the eastern side, and a 40m E/W on the western side further towards the south. The trenches were excavated using a tracked 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket.

5.2 Undifferentiated overburden was removed under close archaeological supervision using the mechanical excavator fitted with a 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.

6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

Individual trench descriptions are presented below.

Trench 1 (Figs. 2-3)

<i>Sample section 1A:</i> <i>North end, west facing</i> <i>0.00m = 73.11m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.24m	L1000	Topsoil. Firm, mid grey brown clay silt with occasional medium angular and rounded flints.
0.24m+	L1001	Natural deposits. Firm, pale brown yellow silty clay with occasional patches with occasional medium rounded flints.

<i>Sample section 1B:</i> <i>South end, east facing</i> <i>0.00m = 71.05m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.32m	L1000	Topsoil. As Above
0.32m+	L1001	Natural deposits. As above

Description: Trench 1 contained a modern backfilled pond F1007, a modern drain trench (F1004), and an undated, but probably modern ditch (F1002) parallel to F1004.

Ditch F1002 was linear (3.50+ x 0.72 x 0.16m), orientated northwest-southeast. It had moderately sloping sides and a concave base. Its fill (L1003) was a firm, mid grey brown silty clay with occasional small and medium rounded flints. It contained no finds.

F1004 was a modern drain trench (17.00 x 1.00 x 0.50+m), orientated northwest-southeast. It had moderately sloping sides and the base was not exposed. Its lowest fill (L1006) was a friable, dark brownish grey, organic silty clay that contained no finds. The upper fill (L1005) was a firm, pale brownish yellow silty clay with occasional small sub-angular flints. This fill covered a modern ceramic drain pipe.

F1007 was a backfilled pond of undetermined shape (26.00+ x 6.50+ x 1.40+m). It had moderately sloping sides and its base was not reached. The lowest fill exposed (L1008) was the base fill on the western side at least, comprising a firm, pale brownish grey clay silt that contained no finds. Above this was L1009, a friable black layer of wood and leaf fragments. This layer contained modern CBM and modern glass bottles. The upper fill (L1010), representing the deliberate backfilling of the pond, comprised a mixture of large patches of firm, mixed small patches of mid grey brown clay silt and pale orange brown silty clay with occasional to moderate medium rounded flints, and firm, pale orange brown clay with no inclusions. This fill contained modern CBM, Tarmac fragments, and large concrete lumps.

Trench 2 (Figs. 2 & 3)

<i>Sample section 2A:</i> <i>West end, south facing</i> <i>0.00m = 73.04m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.30m	L1000	Topsoil. As Tr 1A
0.30m +	L1001	Natural deposits. As Tr.1A.

<i>Sample section 2B:</i> <i>East end, north facing</i> <i>0.00m = 71.06m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.29m	L1000	Topsoil. As Tr 1A
0.29m +	L1001	Natural deposits. As Tr.1A.

Description: Trench 2 contained no archaeological finds or features.

Trench 3 (Figs. 2 & 3)

<i>Sample section 3A:</i> <i>South end, north facing</i> <i>0.00m = 71.25m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.09m	L1000	Topsoil. As Tr 1A
0.09m +	L1001	Natural deposits. As Tr.1A.

Description: Trench 3 contained a modern pond F1007 previously recorded in Trench 1.

7 CONFIDENCE RATING

7.1 It is not felt that any factors inhibited the recognition of archaeological features of finds.

8 DEPOSIT MODEL

8.1 A topsoil (L1000) comprising a firm, mid grey brown clay silt with occasional medium angular and rounded flints was present across the whole site, varying in depth from 0.09m on the eastern side to 0.32m at the southern end. This topsoil directly overlay the natural deposits (L1001) of firm, pale brown yellow silty clay with occasional patches with occasional medium rounded flints.

9 DISCUSSION

9.1 The site is situated between two small hamlets with a significant number of Grade II listed buildings in their cores within the Lea valley, an area known for Palaeolithic and Mesolithic deposits and find spots. The brief also notes that the proposed reservoir lies adjacent to a historic footpath leading between these to medieval hamlets, suggesting potential for evidence of medieval and earlier activity. Also a scheduled Second World War anti-aircraft gun site lies adjacent to the site.

9.2 A desk based assessment (Waring 2014) suggested that the potential for prehistoric, Romano-British, and Anglo-Saxon/medieval remains was low, and only moderate for post-medieval. The results of this evaluation accord well with this, with only features of modern date revealed.

10 DEPOSITION OF ARCHIVE

10.1 Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited 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.

11 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions Limited would like to thank West Essex Golf Course for funding this evaluation, Mr Ian Bailey of Kalex Ltd for commissioning the project on behalf of the client and for assistance and Mr Martin Guy of Martin Guy Developments for assistance.

AS is pleased to acknowledge the advice and input of Ms Maria Medlycott of Historic Environment Advisor of Essex County Council (ECC HEA).

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PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



1
General view of site looking southeast



2
General view of site looking southwest



3
Ditch F1002, Trench 1, looking northwest



4
Drain F1004, Trench 1, looking east



5
Sample section 1A, Trench 1, looking east



6
Sample section 1B, Trench 1, looking west



7
Trench 1 post exc, looking south



8
Sample section 2A, Trench 2, looking north



9
Trench 2 post exc, looking east



10
Sample section 3A, Trench 3, looking south



11
Pond F1007, Trench 3, looking south

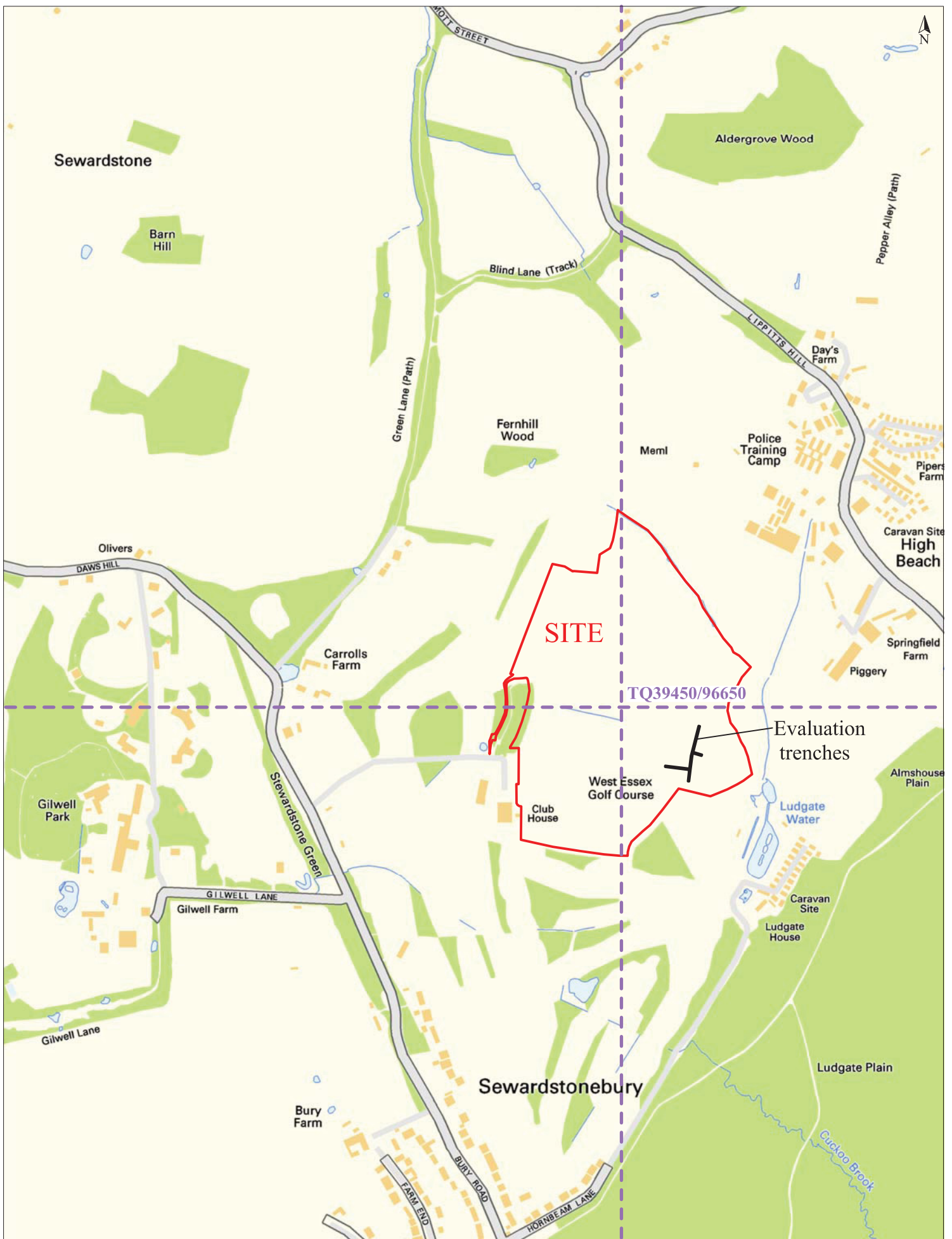


12
Trench 3, post exc, looking west



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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4
 West Essex Golf Club, Sewardstone (P5734)



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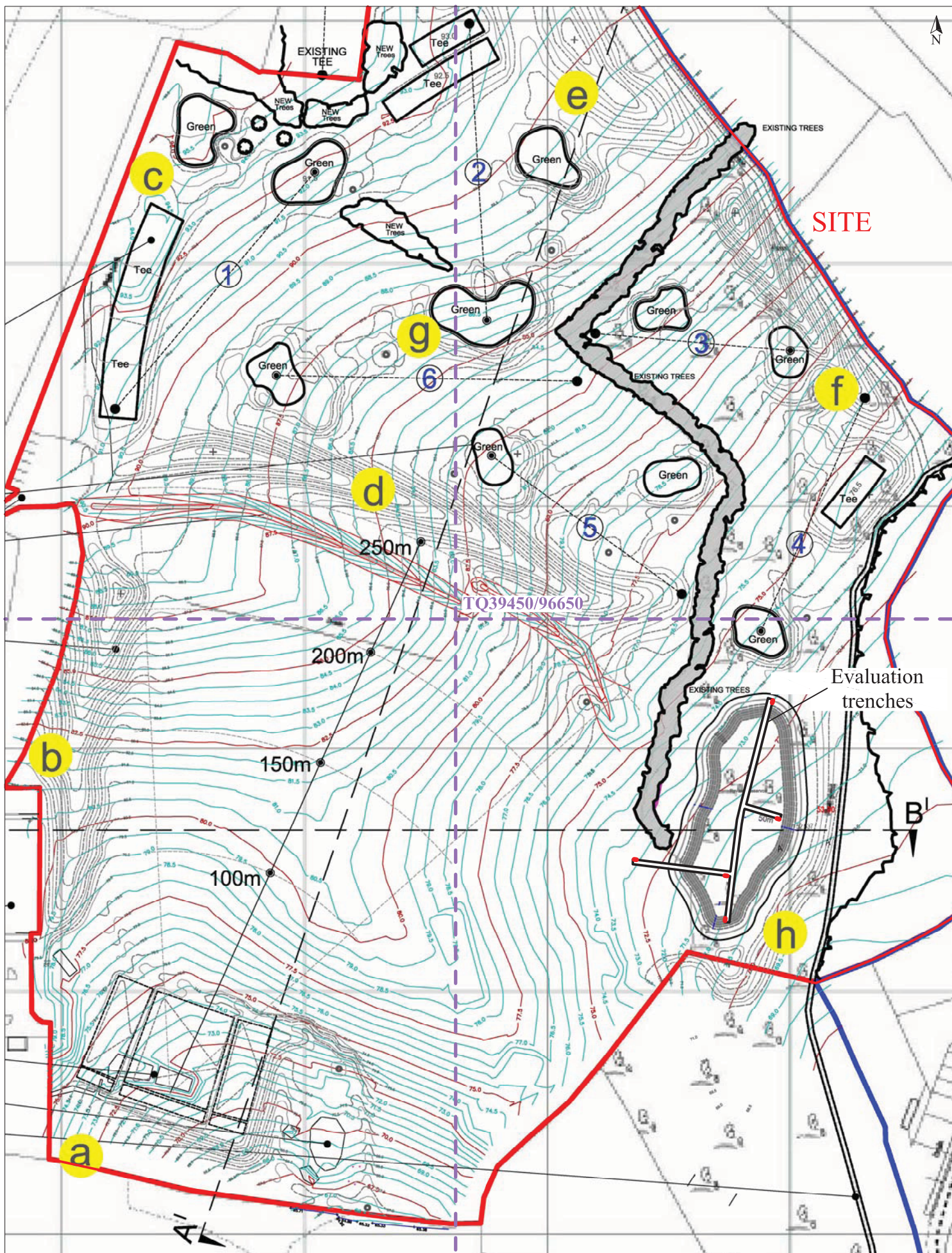
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Fig. 2A Detailed site location plan

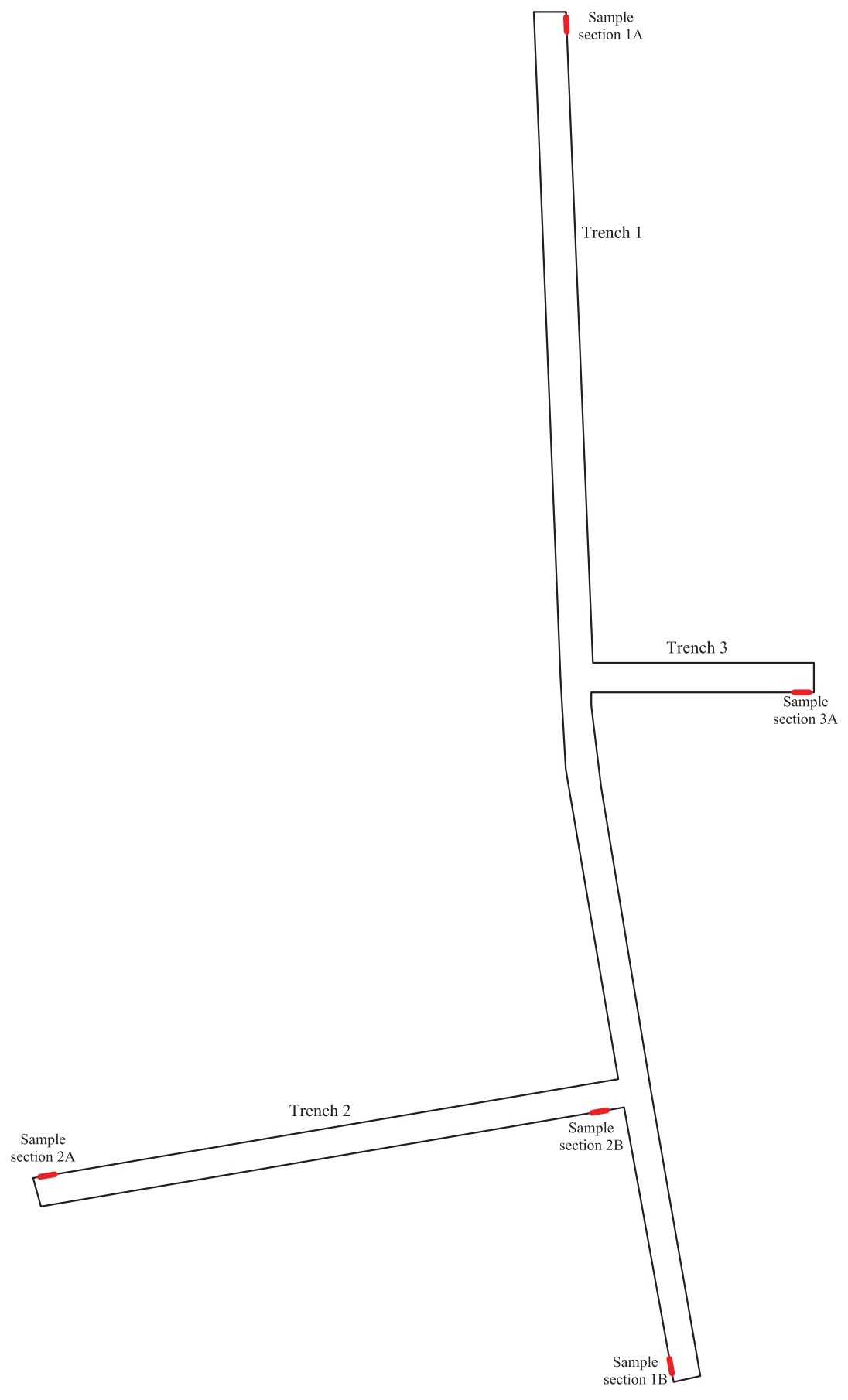
Scale 1:8000 at A4

West Essex Golf Club, Sewardstone (P5734)

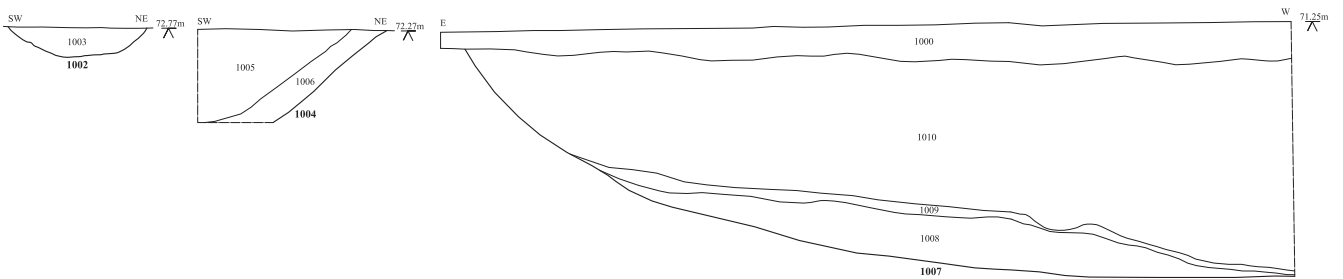
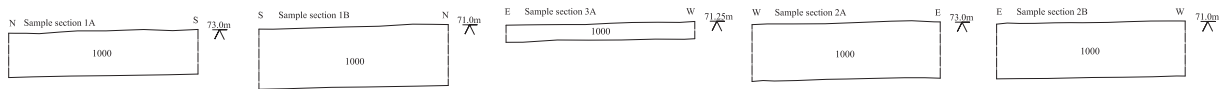
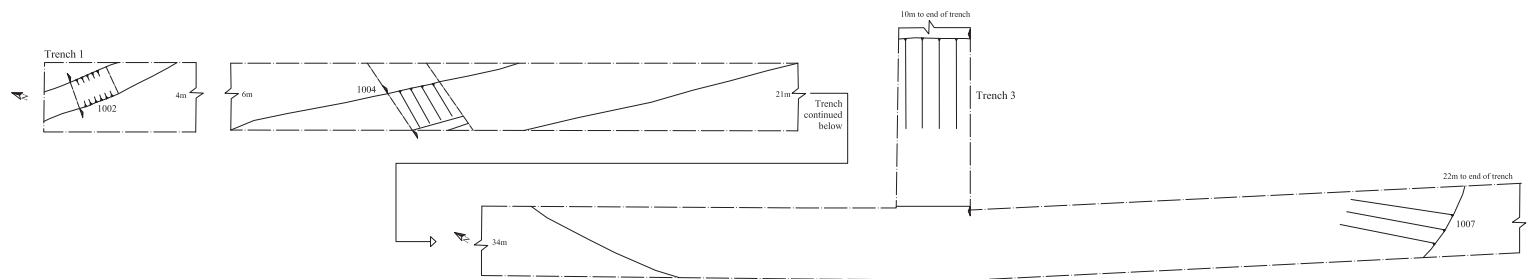


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Fig. 2B Detailed site location plan
 Scale 1:2000 at A4
 West Essex Golf Club, Sewardstone (P5734)

0 150m



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Fig. 3 Sample section location plan
Scale 1:400 at A4
West Essex Golf Club, Sewardstone (P5734)



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Fig. 4 Trench plan and sections
 Scale 1:100 and 1:20 at A3
 West Essex Golf Club, Sewardstone (P5734)