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**MARSH HOUSE, MARSH LANE,
KING'S LYNN, NORFOLK PE30 3AD**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION

Authors: Gareth Barlow (Fieldwork & report)	
NGR: 563620 321484	Report No: 5047
District: King's Lynn	Site Code: ENF138336
Approved: Claire Halpin CMIfA	Project No: 6326
Signed:	Date: 22 February 2016

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Project details			
Project name	<i>Marsh House, Marsh Lane, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE30 3AD</i>		
<p><i>In February 2016 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at Marsh House, Marsh Lane, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE30 3AD (NGR 563620 321484). The evaluation was undertaken in advance of the proposed construction a residential development. It was required to comply with a planning condition attached to planning approval (Kings Lynn Council Planning Ref. 14/00567/OM), based on the advice of Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Team (NCC HES).</i></p> <p><i>The evaluation revealed no archaeological features or finds. The natural deposits of marine silts and clays indicate the site was regularly, or permanently, flooded until recent times.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	February 2016		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>	Future work	<i>N</i>
P. number	<i>6276</i>	Site code	
Type of project	<i>Archaeological Evaluation</i>		
Site status			
Current land use	<i>Vacant - demolished</i>		
Planned development	<i>Residential</i>		
Main features (+dates)	<i>None</i>		
Significant finds (+dates)	<i>None</i>		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Norfolk</i>	<i>King's Lynn</i>	<i>Gaywood</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>Norfolk Historic Environment Record</i>		
Post code (if known)	<i>PE30 3AD</i>		
Area of site	<i>3757m2</i>		
NGR	<i>563620 321484</i>		
Height AOD (min/max)	<i>3-4m AOD</i>		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>Norfolk County Council</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>Gareth Barlow</i>		
Funded by	<i>Norfolk Pride Developments</i>		
Full title	<i>Marsh House, Marsh Lane, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE30 3AD. An Archaeological Evaluation</i>		
Authors	<i>Barlow, G.</i>		
Report no.	<i>5047</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>February 2016</i>		

**MARSH HOUSE, MARSH LANE,
KING'S LYNN, NORFOLK PE30 3AD**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

SUMMARY

In February 2016 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at Marsh House, Marsh Lane, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE30 3AD (NGR 563620 321484). The evaluation was undertaken in advance of the proposed construction a residential development. It was required to comply with a planning condition attached to planning approval (Kings Lynn Council Planning Ref. 14/00567/OM), based on the advice of Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Team (NCC HES).

The site historically lay on the edge of dryland adjacent to the coastal salt marshes and mudflats. The area was likely unoccupied in the prehistoric and medieval periods due to regular marine flooding.

Settlement developed to the south in the Saxon and medieval periods, exploiting the dryland and wetland resources, adjacent to a main road from the core settlement at King's Lynn across the marsh. Marsh reclamation for grazing took place at this time. Enclosure of the marshland took place from the 16th century, with the Marsh House plot probably enclosed in 1810. The current buildings on the site will have caused significant localised ground disturbance, but the rest of the site may have less in the way of previous truncation.

The evaluation revealed no archaeological features. The natural deposits of marine silts and clays indicated that the site was regularly, or permanently, flooded until recent times.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In February 2016 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at Marsh House, Marsh Lane, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE30 3AD (NGR 563620 321484; Figs.1 - 2). The evaluation was undertaken in advance of the proposed construction a residential development. It was required to comply with a planning condition attached to planning approval (Kings Lynn Council Planning Ref. 14/00567/OM), based on the advice of Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Team (NCC HES).

1.2 The project was carried out in accordance with advice (dated 25th June 2015) and a generic brief for an evaluation issued by Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Service (NCC HES, dated

24/9/2012, revised 21/04/2015). It complied with a specification compiled by AS (dated 29th June 2015) and approved by NCC HES. It followed the procedures outlined in the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2014). It also adhered to the relevant sections of *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).

1.3 The evaluation of the site aimed to determine the presence/absence, date, extent, state of preservation and significance of any archaeological layers or subsoil archaeological features, in order to identify if any archaeological issues will affect the application and if further mitigation is required if the development is approved.

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 on the southern side of Marsh Lane, King's Lynn, within the valley floor of the Gaywood River. It until recently comprises existing office buildings, since demolished, and it is proposed to construct a new residential development on the site. Opposite is the former Alderman Jackson School site which was also trial trenched (Fig. 2).

3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

3.1 Kings Lynn's topography is defined by its position on the fenlands of upper Norfolk and proximity to the estuary of the Wash. The land rises very slowly to the south-east and the river Gaywood runs c.350m to the south of the site.

3.2 The underlying geology consists of the Kimmeridge Clay Formation of mudstone, formed in the Jurassic period. The superficial geology is defined as loamy and clayey soils of coastal flats with naturally high groundwater.

3.3 The present site lies at approximately 3m AOD.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 The site lies within an area of archaeological significance, within a landscape with known archaeological remains recorded on the Norfolk Historic Environment Record. Medieval saltern workings and a Neolithic axehead have been found locally. The site lies also lies within an area of palaeoenvironmental potential in the river valley.

4.2. A previous archaeological desk-based assessment has been prepared for the site (NPS Archaeology 2014). In summary:

The site historically lay on the edge of dryland adjacent to the coastal salt marshes and mudflats. The area was likely unoccupied in the prehistoric and medieval periods due to regular marine flooding.

Settlement developed to the south in the Saxon and medieval periods, exploiting the dryland and wetland resources, adjacent to a main road from the core settlement at King's Lynn across the marsh. Marsh reclamation for grazing took place at this time. Enclosure of the marshland took place from the 16th century, with the Marsh House plot probably enclosed in 1810. The current buildings on the site will have caused significant localised ground disturbance, but the rest of the site may have less in the way of previous truncation.

4.3 The site thus had a potential for multi-period occupation, with a particular potential for medieval settlement/industry/agriculture.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 The site extends to some 3757m². Four trenches each 30m x 1.6m, were excavated across the site, representing a c.5% sample of the site (Fig. 3). A programme of metal detecting was also undertaken during and after mechanical excavation of the trenches.

5.2 Undifferentiated overburden was removed under close archaeological supervision using a 360° tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.80m wide 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. 3 – 4)

<i>Sample section: 1A</i> <i>Centre of northeast-southwest leg, northwest facing</i> <i>0.00m = 3.30m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.36m	L1016	Made ground. Friable, mid orange brown silty coarse sand, with moderate sub-rounded sandstone.
0.36 – 0.52m	L1002	Possible buried soil. Firm, mottled dark orange brown and mid blue brown clay silt.
0.52 – 0.57m+	L1003	Marine clay. Large patches of firm, mid blue grey and mid orange brown silty clay.

<i>Sample section: 1B</i> <i>Northwest end, northeast facing</i> <i>0.00m = 3.30m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.20m	L1016	Made ground. As above.
0.20 – 0.37m	L1017	Made ground. Firm, mixed patches of dark blue grey silty clay, dark red brown clay silt, and pale yellow brown silty sand.
0.37 – 0.44m+	L1003	Marine clay. As above.

Description: Trench 1 contained no archaeological features or finds.

Trench 2 (Figs. 3 – 4)

<i>Sample section: 2A</i> <i>Northwest end, southwest facing</i> <i>0.00m = 3.26m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.05m	L1000	Made ground. Friable, mid orange grey silty coarse sand.
0.05 – 0.34m	L1001	Made ground. Mixed patches of firm, mid blue brown clay silt and mid orange brown silty clay.
0.34 – 0.63m	L1002	Possible buried soil. As above, Trench 1.
0.63 – 0.85m+	L1003	Marine clay. As above, Trench 1.

<i>Sample section: 2B</i> <i>Southeast end, southwest facing</i> <i>0.00m = 3.40m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.03m	L1004	Made ground. As above, Trench 1.
0.03 – 0.10m	L1005	Made ground. Firm, mixed patches of dark blue grey silty clay, dark red brown clay silt, and pale yellow brown silty sand.
0.10 – 0.29m	L1001	Made ground. As above, Trench 2.
0.29 – 0.62m	L1002	Possible buried soil. As above, Trench 1.
0.62 – 0.79m+	L1003	Marine clay. As above, Trench 1.

Description: Trench 2 contained no archaeological features or finds. A modern feature cut Made Ground L1000.

Trench 3 (Figs. 3 - 4)

<i>Sample section: 3A</i> <i>Southeast end, southwest facing</i> <i>0.00m = 3.18m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.20m	L1014	Made ground. Friable, mid brown orange silty coarse sand, with occasional medium sub-rounded sandstone.
0.20 – 0.32m	L1015	Made ground. Firm, dark-mid blue grey silty clay.
0.32 – 0.48m	L1002	Possible buried soil. As above, Trench 1.
0.48 – 0.62m+	L1003	Marine clay. As above, Trench 1.

<i>Sample section: 3B</i> <i>Northwest end, northeast facing</i> <i>0.00m = 3.30m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.30m	L1008	Topsoil. Firm, mid orangey grey brown clay silt.
0.30 – 0.52m	L1009	Made ground. Friable, mid brown orange coarse sand, with occasional medium rounded sandstone.
0.52 – 0.66m+	L1003	Marine clay. As above, Trench 1.

Description: Trench 3 contained no archaeological features or finds.

Trench 4 (Figs. 3 – 4)

<i>Sample section: 4A</i> <i>Southwest end, southeast facing</i> <i>0.00m = 3.07m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.30m	L1008	Topsoil. As above, Trench 3.
0.30 – 0.38m	L1009	Made ground. As above, Trench 3.
0.38 – 0.56m	L1002	Possible buried soil. As above, Trench 3
0.56 – 0.77m+	L1003	Marine clay. As above, Trench 3.

<i>Sample section: 4B</i> <i>Northwest end, northeast facing</i> <i>0.00m = 3.23m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.33m	L1008	Topsoil. As above, Trench 3.
0.33 – 0.46m	L1009	Made ground. As above, Trench 3.
0.46 – 0.67m	L1002	Possible buried soil. As above, Trench 1.
0.67 – 0.74m+	L1003	Marine clay. As above, Trench 1.

<i>Sample section: 4C</i> <i>Northwest end, northeast facing</i> <i>0.00m = 3.23m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.34m	L1008	Topsoil. As above, Trench 3.
0.34 – 0.37m	L1009	Made ground. As above, Trench 3.
0.37 – 0.66m	L1002	Possible buried soil. As above, Trench 1
0.66m+	L1003	Marine clay. As above, Trench 1.

Description: Trench 4 contained no archaeological features or finds. A modern feature cut Topsoil L1008

7 CONFIDENCE RATING

7.1 It is not felt that any factors restricted the identification of archaeological features or finds.

8 DEPOSIT MODEL

8.1 The whole site exhibited evidence of modern disturbance. In the north-western sector Made Ground L1016 was a friable, mid orange brown silty coarse sand, with moderate sub-rounded sandstone (0.36m thick). It overlay a possible buried soil, L1002, a firm, mottled dark orange brown and mid blue brown clay silt (0.16m thick). The marine clays (L1003) comprising large patches of firm, mid blue grey and mid orange brown silty clay, were encountered at a depth of 0.52m.

8.2 In the south-western sector of the site Made Ground L1000, a friable, mid orange grey silty coarse sand (0.05m thick), was present. It overlay Made Ground L1001 (0.29m thick) comprising mixed patches of firm, mid blue brown clay silt and mid orange brown silty clay. Below

L1001 was a possible buried soil L1002 (0.29m thick). The marine clays (L1003) were encountered at a depth of 0.63m.

8.3 In the south-eastern sector Topsoil L1008 was a firm, mid orangey grey brown clay silt (0.34m thick). It overlay Made Ground L1009, a friable, mid brown orange coarse sand with occasional medium rounded sandstone (0.03m - 0.22m thick). Below L1009 was a possible buried soil, L1002 (0.29m thick). The marine clays (L1003) were encountered at a depth of 0.66m.

8.4 In the north-eastern sector Made Ground L1014 was a friable, mid brown orange silty coarse sand with occasional medium sub-rounded sandstone (0.20m thick). It overlay a 0.12m thick made ground layer (L1015) of firm, dark-mid blue grey silty clay. Below L1015 was a possible buried soil, L1002 (0.16m). The marine clays (L1003) were encountered at a depth of 0.48m.

9 DISCUSSION

9.1 The site lies along the edge of dryland adjacent to coastal salt marshes and mudflats. Settlement in the Saxon and medieval periods developed adjacent to the road across the marsh from the core settlement in Kings Lynn. Although it was considered that the area of the site was unoccupied from the prehistoric to the medieval periods there was the potential for remains of industrial activity such as salterns. Additionally, marsh reclamation for grazing started to take place from this time. Enclosure of the marsh took place from the 16th century, with the Marsh House plot probably enclosed in 1810.

9.2 The recorded natural deposits suggest the site was regularly, if not permanently, flooded until reclaimed.

9.3 The natural deposits on the site can be characterised as natural alluvial silt and clay (L1002 and L1003), most likely derived from salt marsh habitats. To the north, across Marsh Lane at the site of the former Alderman Jackson School, these layers overlay gravel deposits (Barlow 2016), which were not encountered at the present site. At the Alderman Jackson School site, the gravel surface was found to slope towards the south, being encountered at a depth of 1.02m below the modern ground surface at the southern end of Trench 8, approximately 50m north of the present site. It is likely that these deposits also underlie the present site but at too great a depth to be detected in the present trial trench evaluation.

9.4 No archaeological features or finds were found during the evaluation, and no evidence of enclosure ditches was present within the trenches. Only modern features were recorded. This would seem to support the suggestion that the area was unoccupied until recent times.

10 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited at the Norwich Castle Museum. The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross referenced and checked for internal consistency.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions Limited would like to thank the client, Norfolk Pride Developments for funding the evaluation (in particular Mr Mark Attridge for assistance).

AS would also like to acknowledge the input and advice of Mr James Albone of Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Team.

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SSEW 1983 Soil Survey of England and Wales: Legend for the 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales Harpenden, Rothamsted Experimental Station/Lawes Agricultural Trust

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



1
View of site looking north.



2
View of site looking south.



3
Trench 1 looking southwest.



4
Sample Section 1B, looking southwest.



5
Trench 2 looking southeast.



6
Sample Section 2A, looking northeast.



7
Trench 3 looking northwest.



8
Sample Section 3A, looking northeast.



9
Sample Section 3B, looking southwest.



10
Trench 4 looking southwest.



11
Sample Section 4A, looking northwest.



12
Sample Section 4B, looking southwest.

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



1
View of site looking north.



2
View of site looking south.



3
Trench 1 looking southwest.



4
Sample Section 1B, looking southwest.



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Trench 2 looking southeast.



6
Sample Section 2A, looking northeast.



7
Trench 3 looking northwest.



8
Sample Section 3A, looking northeast.



9
Sample Section 3B, looking southwest.



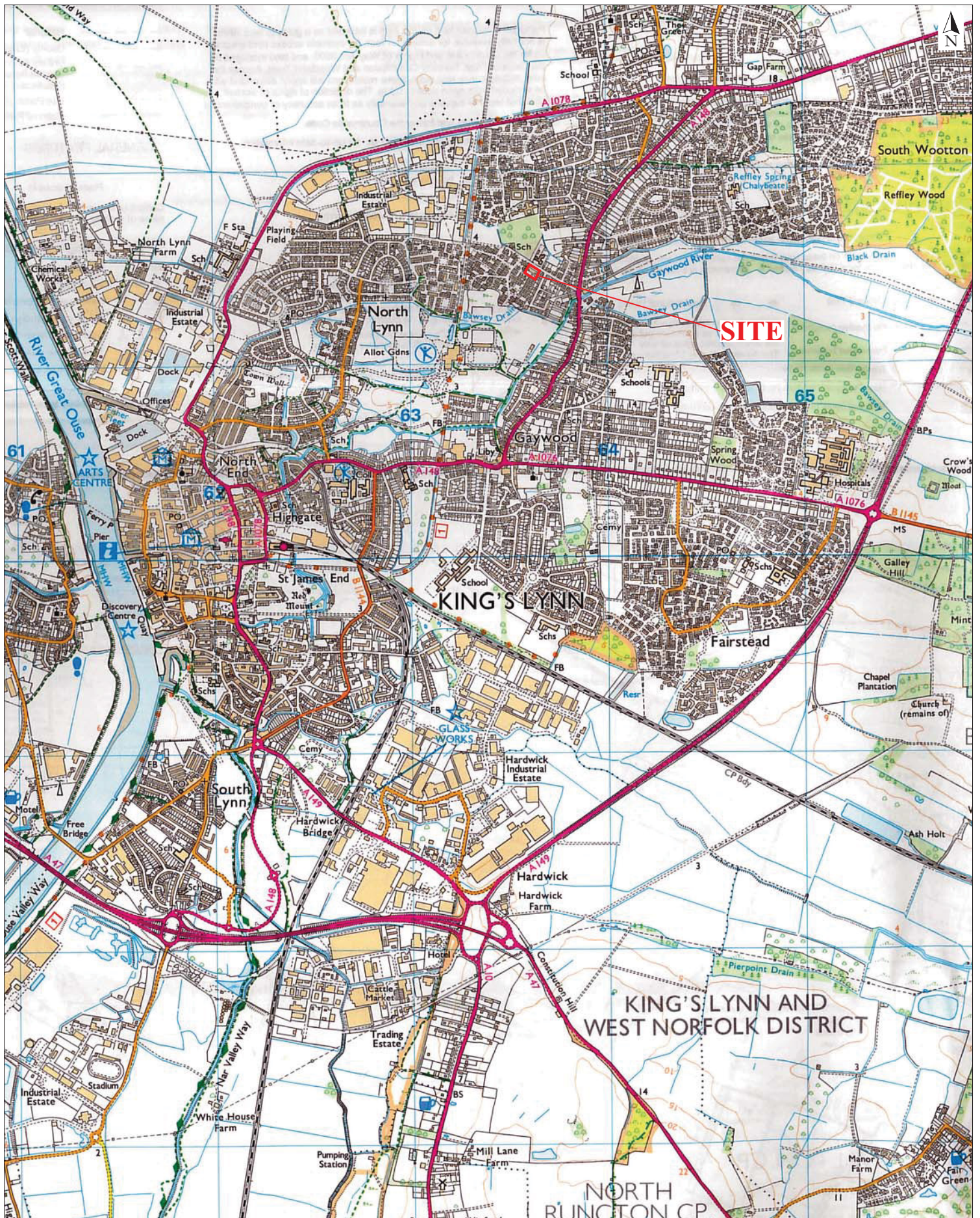
10
Trench 4 looking southwest.



11
Sample Section 4A, looking northwest.

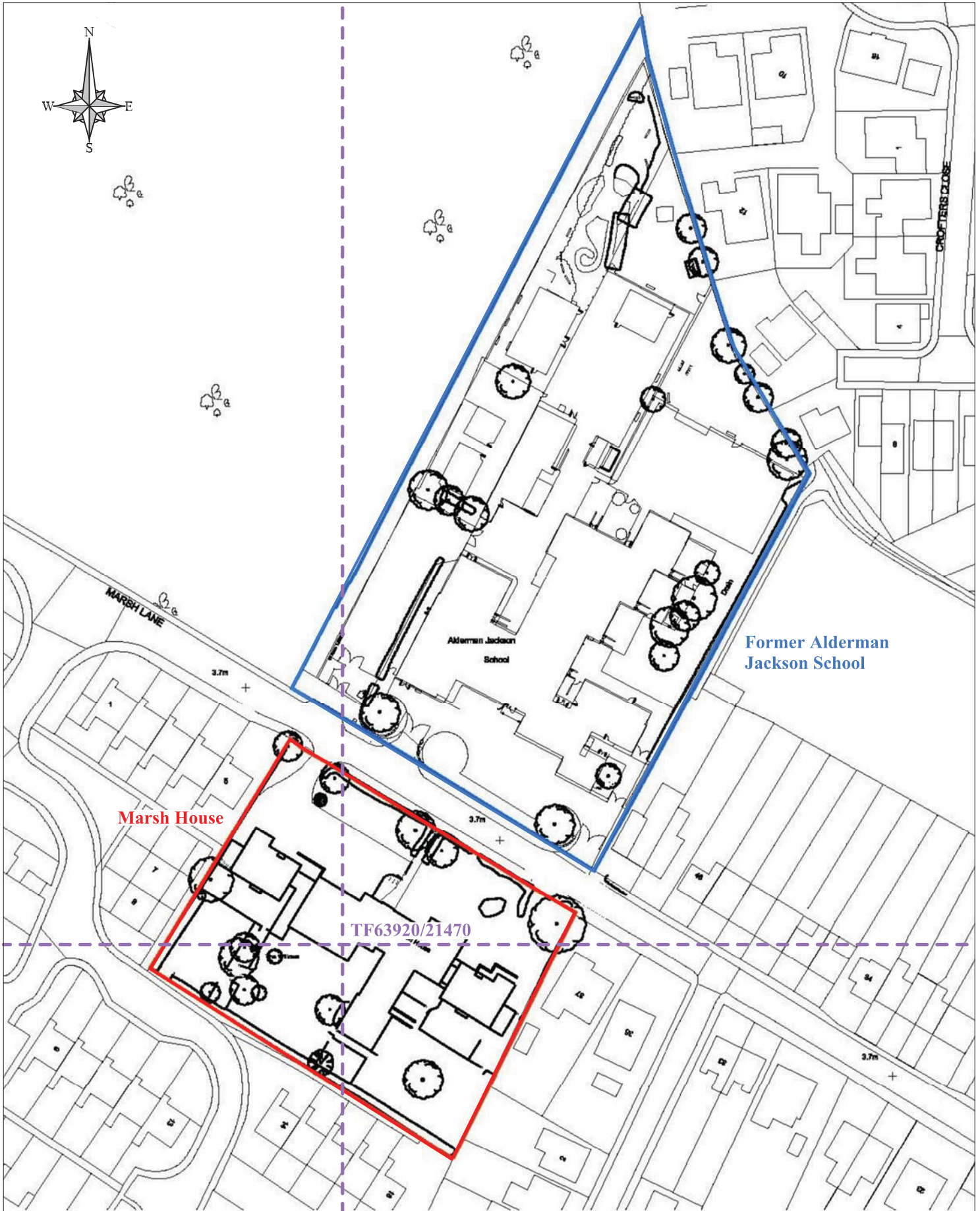


12
Sample Section 4B, looking southwest.



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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4
 Marsh House, Kings Lynn, Norfolk (P6327)



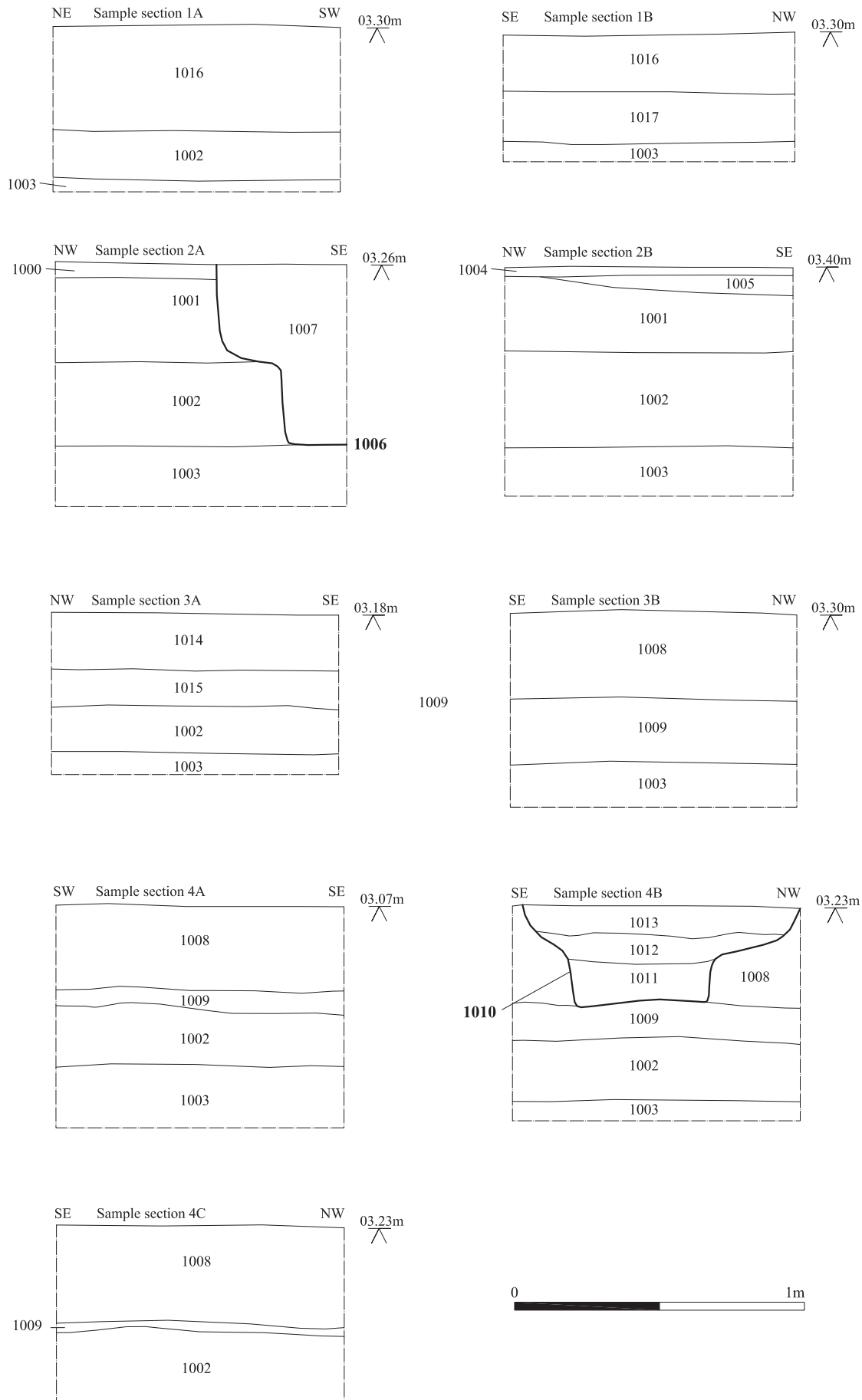
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Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan
 Scale 1:1000 at A4
 Marsh House, Kings Lynn, Norfolk (P6326)



— : Sample section

0 25m

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Fig. 3 Trench location plan
Scale 1:500 at A4
Marsh House, Kings Lynn, Norfolk (P6326)



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Fig. 4 Sample sections

Scale 1:20 at A4

Marsh House, Kings Lynn, Norfolk (P6326)