
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

**EPPING MAGISTRATES COURT, HEMNALL STREET,
EPPING, ESSEX**

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Authors: Zbigniew Pozorski	
NGR: TL 4617 0227	Report No: 5111
District: Epping Forest	Site Code:
Approved: Claire Halpin MCIfA	Project No: 6259
Signed:	Date: 5 May 2016

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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	<i>Epping Magistrates Court, Hemnall Street, Epping, Essex</i>		
<p><i>In May 2016 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation at Epping Magistrates Court, Hemnall Street, Epping, Essex (NGR TL 4617 0227). The evaluation was commissioned by Marden Homes Limited and was undertaken in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission to demolish the existing Magistrates Court and erect a block of 8No apartments with access, parking and hard landscaping.</i></p> <p><i>The site lies within an area of archaeological potential being within the medieval settlement area of Epping, to the rear of the historic High Street and fronting the early streets of Star Lane and Hemnall Street. Post-medieval archaeological remains were revealed close by.</i></p> <p><i>In the event the evaluation revealed no archaeological features or finds except modern drainage. The site had suffered severe modern truncation related to the construction of the courthouse and its basements.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	<i>03/05/2016</i>		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>	Future work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>
P. number	<i>6259</i>	Site code	
Type of project	<i>An Archaeological Evaluation</i>		
Site status	<i>Conservation Area</i>		
Current land use	<i>Former magistrates court</i>		
Planned development	<i>Construction of residential apartment block</i>		
Main features (+dates)	<i>-</i>		
Significant finds (+dates)	<i>-</i>		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Essex</i>	<i>Epping Forest</i>	<i>Epping</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>Essex HER</i>		
Post code (if known)	<i>SM16 4LU</i>		
Area of site	<i>c.450m²</i>		
NGR	<i>TL 4617 0227</i>		
Height AOD (min/max)	<i>108.00/108.40m</i>		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>ECC HEA</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>Zbigniew Pozorski</i>		
Funded by	<i>Marden Homes Limited</i>		
Full title	<i>Epping Magistrates Court, Hemnall Street, Epping, Essex. An Archaeological Evaluation</i>		
Authors	<i>Pozorski, Z.</i>		
Report no.	<i>5111</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>May 2016</i>		

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EPPING MAGISTRATES COURT, HEMNALL STREET, EPPING, ESSEX

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

SUMMARY

In May 2016 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation at Epping Magistrates Court, Hemnall Street, Epping, Essex (NGR TL 4617 0227). The evaluation was commissioned in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission to demolish the existing Magistrates Court and erect a block of 8No apartments with access, parking and hard landscaping.

The site lies within an area of archaeological potential being within the medieval settlement area of Epping, to the rear of the historic High Street and fronting the early streets of Star Lane and Hemnall Street. Post-medieval archaeological remains were revealed close by.

In the event the evaluation revealed no archaeological features or finds except modern drainage. The site had suffered severe modern truncation related to the construction of the courthouse and its basements.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In May 2016 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation at Epping Magistrates Court, Hemnall Street, Epping, Essex (NGR TL 4617 0227; Figs. 1 & 2). The evaluation was commissioned by Marden Homes Limited and was undertaken in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission to demolish the existing Magistrates Court and erect a block of 8No apartments, with access, parking and hard landscaping (Epping Forest Council Planning Ref. EPF/0832/15).

1.2 The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a brief issued by Historic Environment Advisor of Essex County Council (ECC HEA; dated 11/05/2015) and a written scheme of investigation (specification) prepared by AS (dated 11/05/2015) and approved by ECC HEA. The project conformed to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2014), and the document *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).

1.3 The evaluation aimed 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 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 at the northern end of the historic core of Epping, on the north-western side of Hemnall Street facing Star Lane, and to the rear of the High Street (Fig. 1). Until recently it was occupied by the former Magistrates Court and an open yard area. The court has been demolished shortly before the evaluation.

3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

3.1 Epping lies on a ridge of land situated between the River Lea and River Roding and the site lies at c.108m AOD. It marks the northern end of the surviving ancient woodland of Epping Forest which, prior to the 17th century, was known as Waltham Forest. The local geology is London Clay overlain by slowly permeable clayey soil (British Geological Survey 1978). The soils of the area belong to the Hanslope and the Windsor associations, described respectively as slowly permeable calcareous soils and slowly permeable

seasonally waterlogged clayey soils mostly with brown subsoils (Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983).

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Prehistoric - Roman

4.1 Prehistoric archaeological remains in the wider area comprise a Neolithic arrowhead (HER 3702) and a Bronze Age palstave (HER 3708) discovered in Epping Forest c.1km to the north-east of the site. The Iron Age hillfort Ambresbury Banks (EHER 24) is located c.3km to the south-west of the site. Comprising a large subrectangular banked enclosure, pottery discovered in its outer ditch suggests a construction date of the second half of the 1st millennium BC with a period of re-use in the Belgic period. Roman archaeological remains within the wider area comprise a tile kiln (HER 3761) discovered c.650m to the north-east of the site.

Medieval

4.2 The earliest surviving record for Epping is in the 1086 Domesday survey where *Eppinges* probably derives its name from 'settlement of the people of the ridge used as a look-out place' (Mills 1991). Epping was a medieval foundation with its primary settlement north of the Cobbins Brook now known as Epping Upland (HER 3826). The town was a deliberate plantation by the canons of Waltham Abbey, who began asserting by the mid 12th century, to capitalize on trade along the London to Cambridge Road. In 1253 the canons gained a charter, legalizing their use of forest timber to make houses and stalls. The medieval market-house and market-place (HERs 18474 & 18475) were situated close to the Church of St John the Baptist, a 14th century chapel located c.200m to the west of the site (EHER 3813). An archaeological evaluation to the northwest of the High Street at 237-255 (EHER 17693) revealed medieval rubbish pits which contained sherds of 13th-14th century Harlow Ware pottery, confirming that the town lay along the Lea Valley trade route.

Post-medieval

4.3 The town only developed slowly until the 18th – 19th centuries when it picked up owing to its location for staging posts between London and Cambridge, Bury St Edmunds and Norwich, with up to 25 coaches passing through each day. In the early 19th century, the High Street was lined with 26 coach-houses. Two former coach-houses survive to the present day and have been converted into public houses, the Black Lion and The George and Dragon c.100m to the north of the site. Epping was also renowned for its agricultural produce, most notably geese and butter. The stage coach business collapsed with the advent of the railways but Epping's fortunes revived with the introduction of a branch line in 1865. In the wider vicinity, the site of a former windmill (Mill Hill) (HER 3739) is located c.625m to the east of the site.

4.4 Archaeological investigation on the plot immediately adjacent revealed post-medieval archaeological remains (EHER 46455). A least one structure is also shown on the site on the 1875 Ordnance Survey map, suggesting earlier structural remains may be present. Investigations at 12 & 12A Hemnall Street by AS in 2012 revealed modern features (Leonard & Stoakley 2012). The court building, now demolished, was erected in 1938.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 Two trenches were excavated using a mechanical 180° excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket (Fig. 2). The trenches were located in the southern part of the site where modern truncation appeared to be less disruptive as observed during the monitoring of the demolition works. Trench 1 measured 1.50 x 1.6m, and Trench 2 measured 7 x 1.60m.

5.2 Hardstanding and building floors and foundations were removed prior to the evaluation. An undifferentiated overburden was mechanically excavated under close archaeological supervision. Exposed surfaces were cleaned by hand and examined for archaeological features. Deposits were recorded using *pro forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale, and photographed as appropriate. Excavated spoil was searched for finds and the trenches were scanned by a metal detector.

6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

Trench 1 (Fig. 2, DP 2-3)

<i>Sample section 1A (DP 5): west end, north-north-west facing</i> <i>0.00 = 108.15m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.08m	L1000	Modern layer of dark grey, loose, silty sand with crushed CBM and debris.
0.08 – 0.41m	L1001	Made ground. Dark grey, compact, clayey silt with frequent CBM fragments.
0.41 – 0.71m	L1002	Made ground. Light to mid greyish yellow, compact, clay with grey silt and moderate CBM fragments.
0.71m +	L1003	Natural mid yellow, compact, clay with occasional small stones.

<i>Sample section 1B (DP 6): east end, south-south-east facing</i> <i>0.00 = 108.20m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.18m	L1000	As above.
0.18 – 0.41m	L1001	As above.
0.41 – 0.65m	L1002	As above.
0.65m +	L1003	Natural clay. As above.

Description: A modern ditch (F1004), likely a drainage ditch, was present in the trench and also a modern drain.

Ditch F1004 was linear (2.20+ x 0.80+ x 0.30m+; DP 4), orientated north-east / south-west and located in the eastern end of the trench. It had steep sides and flattish and stepped base. Its fill, L1005, was a dark grey, compact, clayey silt with frequent CBM fragments. The fill contained fragments of CBM, white factory-made earthenware, some with blue willow pattern decoration, glass bottles and oyster shells. The ditch was likely a drainage ditch.

The trench also contained a modern drain, orientated east-north-east / west-south-west.

Trench 2 (Fig. 2, DP 7-8)

<i>Sample section 2A (DP 9): south-west end, south-east facing</i> <i>0.00 = 108.18m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.10m	L1000	As above, Tr. 1.
0.10 – 1.10m+	L1006	Modern made ground. Mixed yellow clay, grey silt and sand and CBM rubble.

<i>Sample section 2B (DP 10): north-east end, north-west facing</i> <i>0.00 = 108.24m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.10m	L1000	As above, Tr. 1.
0.10 – 0.90m	L1006	Made ground. As above.
0.90m +	L1003	Natural clay. As above, Tr. 1.

Description: No archaeological features or finds were present.

7 CONFIDENCE RATING

7.1 It is not felt that any factors inhibited the recognition of archaeological features or finds within the southern part of the site. The northern half of the site contained deep basements of the former courthouse which prevented the works in that area. Most of the central part of the site was also severely truncated and monitoring at the end of recent demolition works proved the only area containing less modern disturbance/truncation was the one where Trenches 1 and 2 would be located.

8 DEPOSIT MODEL

8.1 After removal of the building floors, car park and yard surface, the site was commonly overlain by a modern layer L1000 (0.05 – 0.20m thick) related to the demolition works. The majority of the site also contained modern made ground associated with the construction of the courthouse and its recent demolition. These deposits were 0.50 to 1.00m+ thick.

8.2 The southern part of the site also contained modern made ground (L1001, L1002; 0.40 – 0.65m thick in total).

8.2 The natural clay, L1003, was present at 0.60 – 0.95m below existing ground level and comprised a mid yellow, compact, clay with occasional small stones.

9 DISCUSSION

9.1 The site had a potential for archaeological remains, in particular for the medieval and post-medieval archaeology. It is located within the medieval settlement area of Epping, to the rear of the historic High Street. Post-medieval archaeological remains were revealed close by.

9.2 In the event no archaeological features or finds were found with the exception of a modern drainage ditch. No residual finds were recovered. The site was subject to severe modern truncation likely associated with the construction of the court in 1938. The northern part of the site contained deep basements and deep (2.50m+) foundations with all possible archaeological horizons truncated. The remaining area contained only modern deposits above the natural clay where the site had not been previously truncated.

10 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

10.1 Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited with any donated finds from the site at Epping Museum. The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross-referenced and checked for internal consistency.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions would like to thank Marden Homes Limited for funding the project and for assistance.

AS would also like to acknowledge the input and advice of Ms Maria Medlycott, the Historic Environment Advisor of Essex County Council.

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Leonard, C., & Stoakley, M., 2012, *Blacksmiths, Land Adjacent to 12 & 12A Hemnall Street, Epping, Essex. An Archaeological Evaluation*. AS unpublished report No 4026

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	Y
Specification	Y
Registers	1 (Digital Photo)
Context Sheets	7
Site drawings A1	0
Site drawings A3	1
Site drawings A4	0
Site photographs b/w	0
Site photographs colour slides	0
Digital Photographs	21

APPENDIX 2 HER SUMMARY SHEET

Site name/Address: Epping Magistrates Court, Hemnall Street, Epping, Essex	
Parish: Epping	District: Epping Forest
NGR: TL 4617 0227	Site Code:
Type of Work: Archaeological evaluation	Site Director/Group: Z. Pozorski
Date of Work: 03/05/2016	Size of Area Investigated: 35.00m ²
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: Epping Forest Museum	Funding source: Marden Homes
Further Seasons Anticipated?:	Related HER No.s:
Final Report: Pozorski, Z., 2016, <i>Epping Magistrates Court, Hemnall Street, Epping, Essex</i> . AS	
Periods Represented: 19 th – 20 th century	
SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:	
<p>In May 2016 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation at Epping Magistrates Court, Hemnall Street, Epping, Essex (NGR TL 4617 0227). The evaluation was commissioned by Marden Homes and was undertaken in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission to demolish the existing Magistrates Court and erect a block of 8No apartments, with access, parking and hard landscaping on the site.</p> <p>The site lies within an area of archaeological potential within the medieval settlement area of Epping, to the rear of the historic High Street and fronting the early streets of Star Lane and Hemnall Street. Post-medieval archaeological remains were revealed in close vicinity. The site therefore has a potential for evidence of medieval and post-medieval activity associated with the historic core of the settlement at Epping.</p> <p>In the event the evaluation revealed no archaeological features or finds except the late 19th century linear drainage. The site had suffered severe 20th century truncation related to construction of the courthouse and its basements.</p>	
Previous Summaries/Reports:	
Author of Summary: Z. Pozorski	Date of Summary: 04/05/2016

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



DP 1. The site. Looking north-east.



DP 2. Trench 1. Looking south-west.



DP 3. Trench 1. Looking east-north-east.



DP 4. Trench 1, Ditch F1004. Looking south-west.



DP 5. Trench 1, west end. Sample section 1A. Looking south-south-east.



DP 6. Trench 1, east end. Sample section 1B. Looking north-north-west.



DP 7. Trench 2. Looking east.



DP 8. Trench 2. Looking north-east.



DP 9. Trench 2, south-west end. Sample section 2A. Looking north-west.



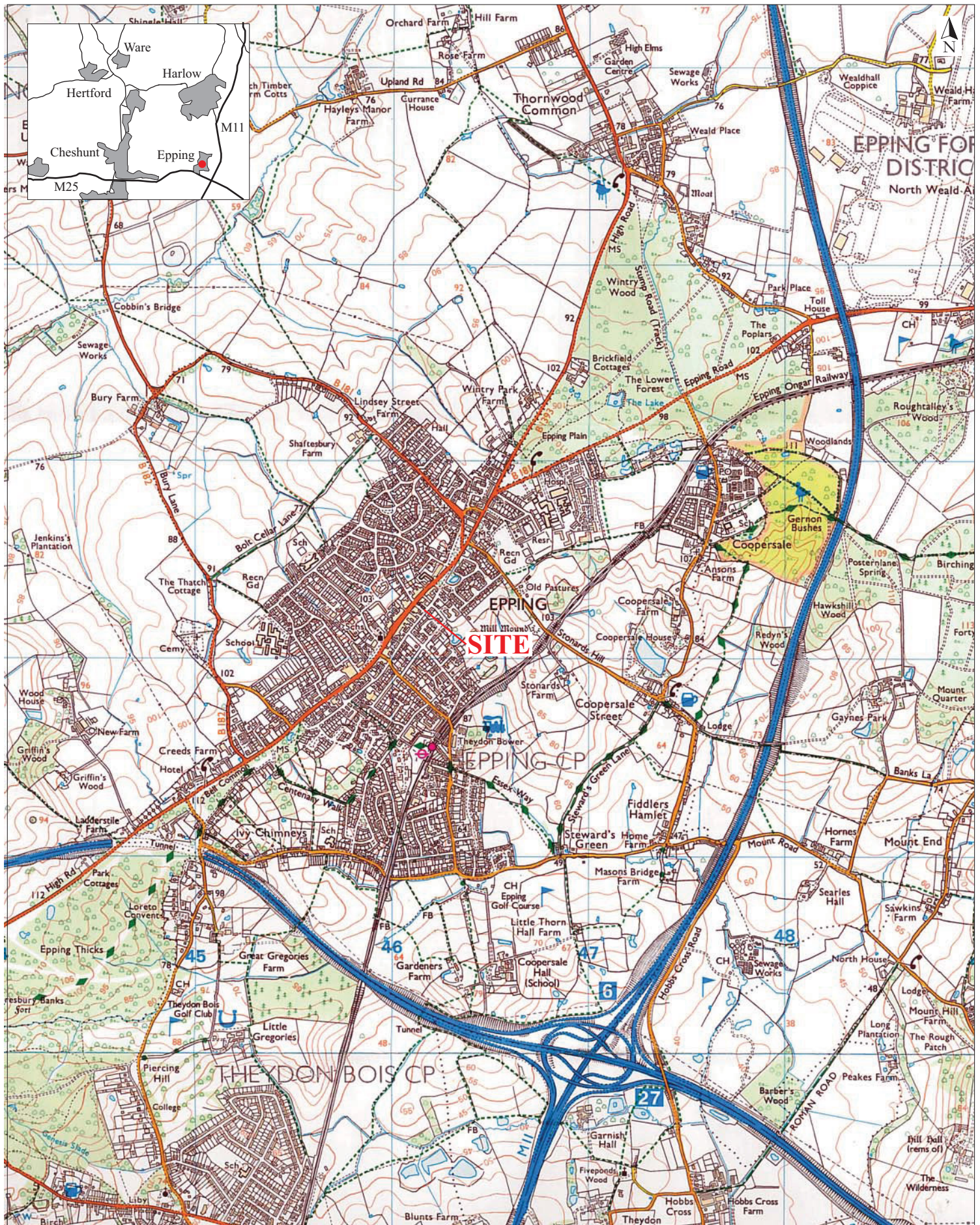
DP 10. Trench 2, north-east end. Sample section 2B. Looking south-east.



DP 11. North part of the site with basements exposed. Looking north-north-east.

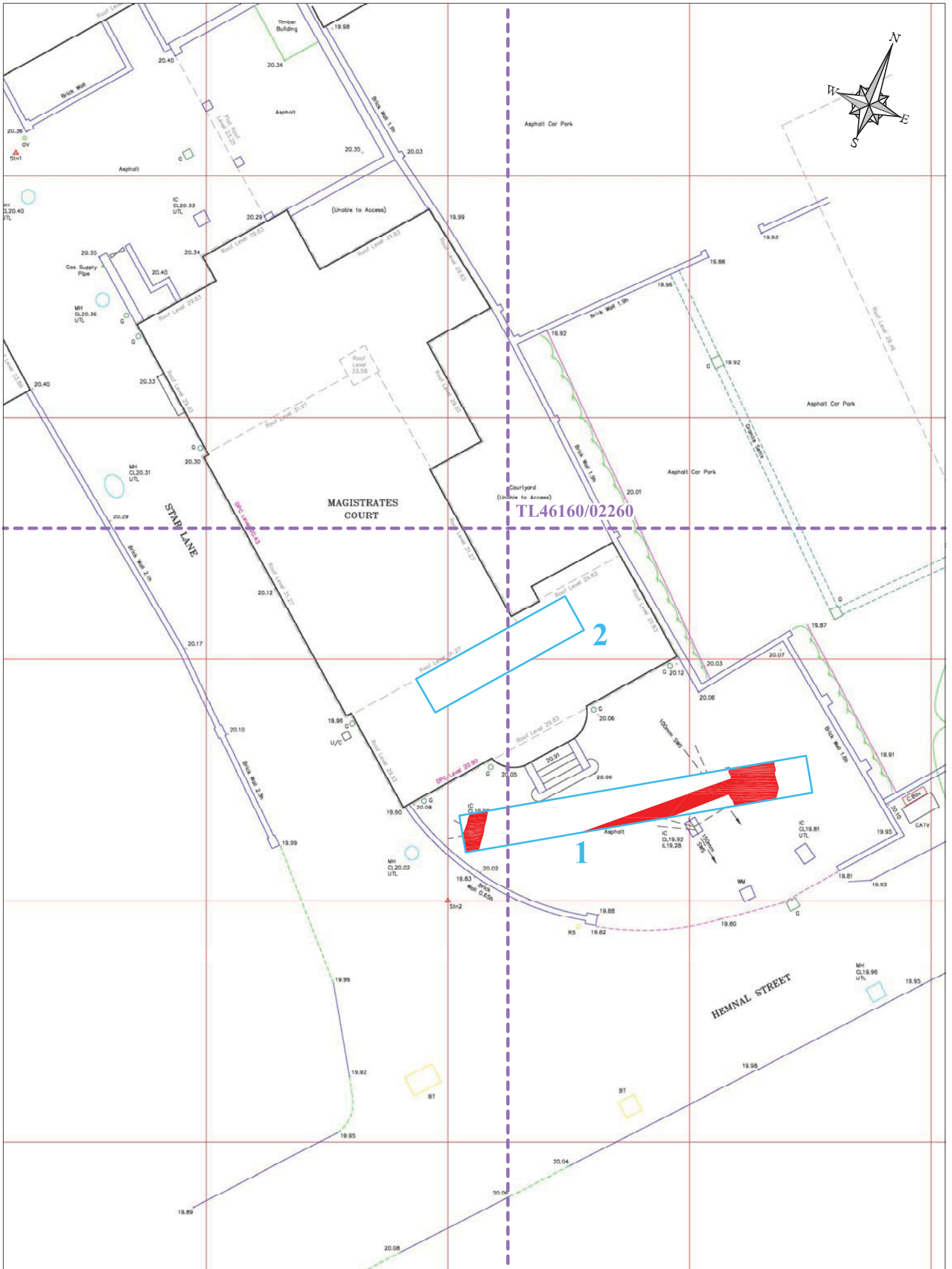


DP 12. Central part of the site during demolishing works. Looking south-east.



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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4
 Epping Magistrates Court, Epping, Essex (P6259)

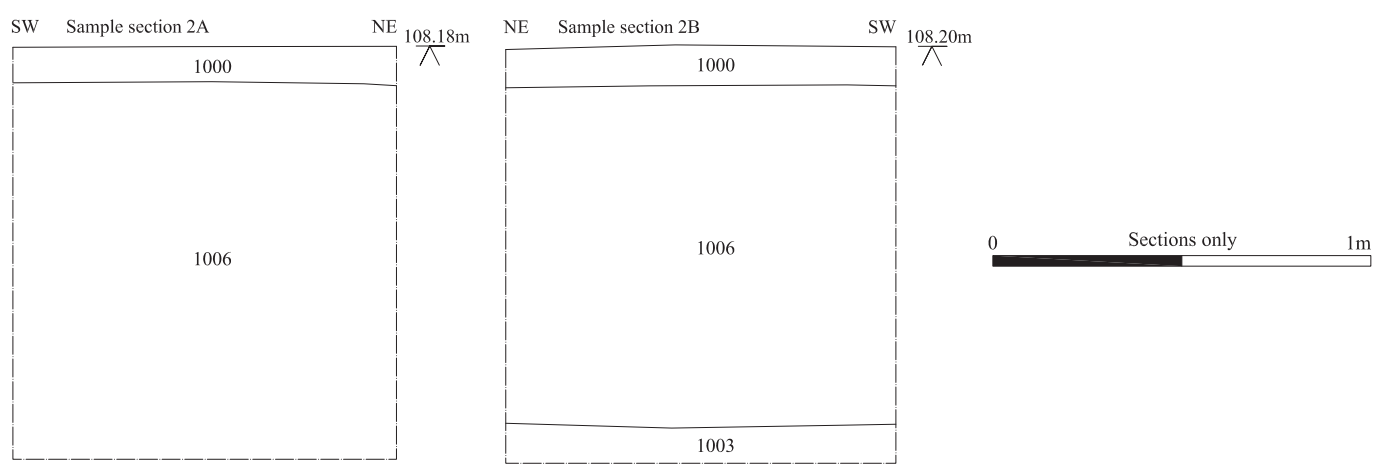
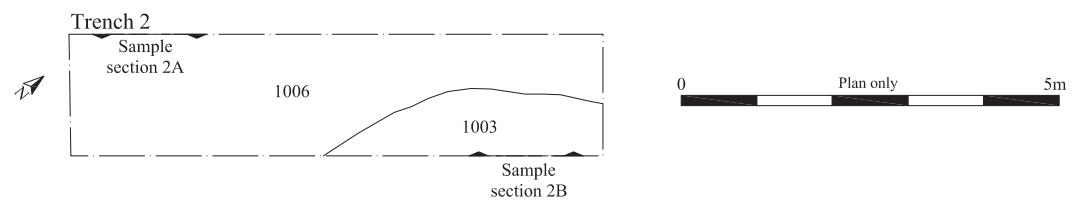
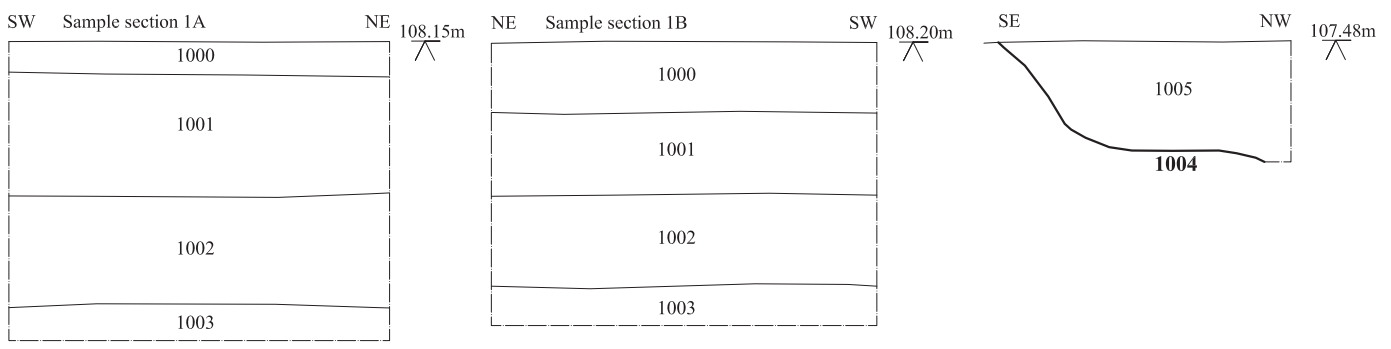
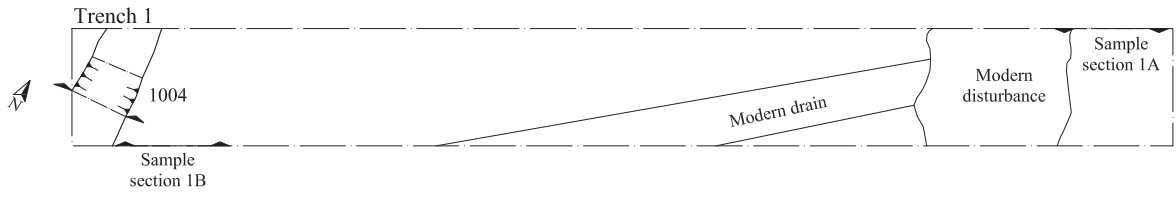


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Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan

Scale 1:200 at A4

Epping Magistrates Court, Epping, Essex (P6259)



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Fig. 3 Trench plans and sections
 Scale 1:100 and 1:20 at A4
 Epping Magistrates Court, Epping, Essex (P6259)