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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD**

**LAND R/O 26 HIGH STREET, PUCKERIDGE, HERTFORDSHIRE,  
SG11 1RN**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

**HER Enquiry No: 340/14**

Authors:	Gareth Barlow (Fieldwork & report) Lauren Wilson (Background Research)	
NGR: TL 3856 2337		Report No: 4820
District: East Herts		Site Code: AS 1744
Approved: Claire Halpin MIfA		Project No: P5527
Signed:		Date: 27 March 2015

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**OASIS SUMMARY SHEET**

<b>Project details</b>			
Project name	<i>Land R/O 26 High Street, Puckeridge, Hertfordshire SG11 1RN</i>		
<p><i>In March 2015 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an Archaeological evaluation at land R/O 26 High Street, Puckeridge, Hertfordshire, SG11 1RN (NGR TL 3856 2337). The evaluation was commissioned and was undertaken in advance of the proposed construction of a detached 2-bedroom dwelling with detached garage, access, parking amenity space and landscaping. The evaluation was undertaken as a requirement of a planning condition imposed by East Herts District Council (East Herts District Council Planning Ref. 3/13/1197/FP) which requires a programme of archaeological work.</i></p> <p><i>The site lies within the historic core of Puckeridge and had a potential for prehistoric, Roman and medieval archaeological remains.</i></p> <p><i>In the event the evaluation revealed a modern (19<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> century) pit.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	25 <sup>th</sup> March 2015		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>	Future work	<i>TBC</i>
P. number	<i>P5527</i>	Site code	<i>AS1744</i>
Type of project	<i>Archaeological Evaluation</i>		
Site status	<i>-</i>		
Current land use	<i>Residential</i>		
Planned development	<i>Construction of new dwelling</i>		
Main features (+dates)	<i>Modern pit</i>		
Significant finds (+dates)	<i>none</i>		
<b>Project location</b>			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Hertfordshire</i>	<i>East Herts</i>	<i>Standon</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>Hertfordshire HER</i>		
Post code (if known)	<i>SG11 1RN</i>		
Area of site	<i>225m<sup>2</sup></i>		
NGR	<i>TL 3856 2337</i>		
Height AOD (min/max)	<i>c.75m AOD</i>		
<b>Project creators</b>			
Brief issued by	<i>Advice Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Unit</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>Gareth Barlow</i>		
Funded by	<i>Nemesis Developments</i>		
Full title	<i>Land R/O 26 High Street, Puckeridge, Hertfordshire SG11 1RN. Archaeological Evaluation</i>		
Authors	<i>Barlow, G., and Wilson, L.</i>		
Report no.	<i>4820</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>27 March 2015</i>		

## LAND R/O 26 HIGH STREET, PUCKERIDGE, HERTFORDSHIRE, SG11 1RN

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

#### SUMMARY

*In March 2015 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an Archaeological evaluation at land R/O 26 High Street, Puckeridge, Hertfordshire, SG11 1RN (NGR TL 3856 2337). The evaluation was commissioned and was undertaken in advance of the proposed construction of a detached 2-bedroom dwelling with detached garage, access, parking amenity space and landscaping. The evaluation was undertaken as a requirement of a planning condition imposed by East Herts District Council (East Herts District Council Planning Ref. 3/13/1197/FP) which required a programme of archaeological work.*

*The site lies within the historic core of Puckeridge and had a potential for prehistoric, Roman and medieval archaeological remains.*

*In the event the evaluation revealed a modern (19<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> century) pit.*

#### 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In March 2015 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an Archaeological evaluation at land R/O 26 High Street, Puckeridge, Hertfordshire, SG11 1RN (NGR TL 3856 2337; Figs.1 - 2). The evaluation was commissioned by Nemesis Developments and was undertaken in advance of the proposed construction of a new detached 2-bedroom dwelling with detached garage, access, parking amenity space and landscaping. The evaluation was undertaken as a requirement of a planning condition imposed by East Herts District Council (East Herts District Council Planning Ref. 3/13/1197/FP) which required a programme of archaeological work.

1.2 The project was carried out in accordance with advice issued by Alison Tinniswood of Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Unit (HSS HEU), and a specification compiled by AS (dated 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2015) and approved by HCC HEU. It followed the procedures outlined in the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct, Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (revised 2008). It also adhered to the relevant sections of *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).

1.3 The principal objectives of the evaluation were:

- to establish whether any archaeological deposit exists in the area, with particular regard to any which are of sufficient importance to merit preservation *in situ*;

- to identify the date, approximate form and purpose of any archaeological deposit within the application area, together with its likely extent, localised depth and quality of preservation;
- to evaluate the likely impact of past land uses, and the possible presence of masking colluvial/ alluvial deposits, along with the potential for the survival of environmental evidence; and
- to provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological conservation strategy dealing with preservation, the recording of archaeological deposits, working practices, timetables and orders of cost.

## **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 Puckeridge is a village situated in the East Herts District of the county of Hertfordshire. It is situated c. 11.7km to the west of Bishop Stortford. Much Hadham is c. 6.7km to the south-east, Standon is c. 1.4km to the south-west and Braughing is c. 2.7km to the north-east. The A10 runs north-south to the west of Puckeridge and the A120 runs west-east to the south of the town. The River Rib runs on a roughly north-south course c. 600m to the east of the High Street and several tributaries run a west-east course c. 250m – 1km to the south-west of the site.

2.2 The site lies in the north-west side of the village on the land behind 26 High Street. It is bordered on two sides by a shared drive, which the proposed property would also share, off Huntsman Close and currently compromises domestic garden space.

### **3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS**

3.1 The site is located within the Rib Valley, with the river following a north to south course c. 600m to the east of the site. The site lies at c. 75m AOD on the western side of the valley, which has a gradual gradient, continuing sloping up to the west and down to the river in the east.

3.2 The solid geology of the site comprises (Cretaceous) Upper Chalk of the Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation and Seaford Chalk Formation, overlain by London Clay and soils of the Melford association, described as chalky till, deep and well-drained fine loam. A watching brief conducted at 13-15 Buntingford Road c. 300m to the north of the site encountered the natural clay at depths of 0.15m – 0.18m, overlain by a thin layer of modern made ground (Brook 2008).

### **4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

#### **Prehistory**

4.1 67 struck flints and over 0.5kg of un-worked burnt stone fragments were found as residual material in later deposits during an excavation of a Roman cemetery c. 800m north of the site. They were thought to be mostly Mesolithic or early Neolithic with a few Bronze Age specimens, and represented knapping waste (CHER 30571).

#### **Iron Age**

4.2 Puckeridge is close to the Scheduled Ancient Monument of the late Iron Age/ early Roman town at Braughing/ Puckeridge (SAM 75, AAS 94). The latter is centred on Wickham Hill c. 550m to the north-east of the site. A significant quantity of late Iron Age archaeological remains have been discovered within the environs of the site and in the wider area. Excavations to the north of the town revealed timber buildings with partial rebuilding between 15 BC and 40 AD which were later replaced before being abandoned at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century (CHER 2188).

#### **Romano-British**

4.3 The Roman town at Braughing was centred at Wickham Hill to the north-east of the site (SAM 75, AAS 94). Traffic would have passed along Stane Street (the modern B1368) and Ermine Street, the Roman road from London to York (the modern Buntingford Road). A late Iron Age/ early Roman occupation site was located c. 500m to the north of the site (HHER 2281). A second phase of building overlying the remains of late Iron Age structures (above) was excavated and comprised rectangular timber buildings of sill-beam type dated to c. 43-65 AD

(Potter 1971). The excavation also revealed evidence of foreign trade with the discovery of a *Terra rubra* plate with a graffito reading 'GRAECUS' or 'Greek' (*Ibid*). The site appears to have been abandoned towards the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD (Partridge 1981).

4.4 There was a large Roman cemetery c. 800m-1km to the north of the site containing 245 cremations and 65 inhumations, the earliest are mid to late 1<sup>st</sup> century AD; the two latest are 3<sup>rd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> century (CHER 18122).

## Medieval

4.5 The village developed rapidly in the 13<sup>th</sup> century and in 1314, an annual market and fair were granted to Puckeridge. The number of travelers and merchants to the village increased and during the 14<sup>th</sup> century, inns and taverns were built to accommodate the travelers. Possible evidence of the village's use as a market/fairground area was discovered c. 450m to the south of the site (HHER 9246) comprising a large quantity of 14<sup>th</sup> century artifacts found by metal detectorists. The Black Death in the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century had a significant impact but the village quickly recovered and continued to thrive due to its location on a coaching route between London and Cambridge. The latter prompted urban development along the main thoroughfare of the village (the modern High Street) in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

## Post-Medieval

4.6 Development along the High Street continued into the 16<sup>th</sup> century and included residential dwellings (HHERs 12273 & 12274) c.100 - 200m to the south of the site and two inns (HHERs 12272 & 12275) c.10 - 150m to the east and south-east of the site respectively. The latter building (HHER 12275) comprises the Crown and Falcon Inn and it is recorded that Samuel Pepys stayed at this inn for a short period. The site is to the rear of the street frontage which is 16<sup>th</sup> century timber-framed and was updated in the 18<sup>th</sup> century with a new front (HHER 30780). It is possible the building succeeded earlier structures and that 'back yard' features like refuse pits may be present.

# 5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 One trench was excavated using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket (Fig. 2). The trench measured 10 x 1.60m and its location was approved by HCC HEU, within the footprint of the proposed development.

5.2 Topsoil and undifferentiated overburden were 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 (Figs. 2-3)

<i>Sample section 1A</i> <i>0.00 = 74.35m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.42m	L1000	Topsoil. Dark grey brown, firm, silty sand with occasional angular and sub angular flint
0.42 – 0.79m	L1001	Made Ground. Grey brown and mid orange brown, firm, silty sand.
0.79m +	L1002	Natural. Pale orange brown, friable, silty coarse sand.

<i>Sample section 1B</i> <i>0.00 = 74.50m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.52m	L1000	Topsoil. As above.
0.52 – 0.78m	L1001	Made ground. As above.
0.78m +	L1002	Natural. As above.

*Description: Trench 1 contained a modern pit.*

Pit F1003 was sub-circular in plan (0.60 x 0.52 x 0.15m), with steep sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1004, was a mid grey brown, firm, sandy silt. It contained modern (19<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> century) pottery.

## 7 CONFIDENCE RATING

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

## 8 DEPOSIT MODEL

8.1 Uppermost was Topsoil L1000, a dark grey brown, firm, silty sand with occasional angular and sub angular flint (0.42 – 0.52m thick). It overlay Made Ground L1001, a grey brown and mid orange brown, firm, silty sand (0.78 – 0.79m thick). The natural geology, L1002, and was present at 0.78 – 0.79m below existing ground level. It comprised a pale orange brown, friable, silty coarse sand.

## 9 DISCUSSION

9.1 The site lies within the historic core of Puckeridge and had a consequent potential for prehistoric, Roman and medieval archaeological remains.

9.2 In the event no archaeological features or finds were revealed. A modern (19<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> century) pit was present. No residual finds were found.



## 10 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

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

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) would like to thank Mr Dominic Leacy of Nemesis Developments for commissioning the project and for his assistance.

AS would also like to acknowledge the input and advice of Ms Alison Tinniswood of Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Unit.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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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

## **APPENDIX 1      SPECIALIST REPORTS**

### **The Pottery**

Peter Thompson

The evaluation recovered four lightly abraded sherds of late post-medieval to modern pottery weighing 35g from the topsoil (L1001). Four sherds (32g) are Transfer Printed Ware (TPW) including one with green print. The remaining sherd (3g) is also an undecorated factory made refined white earthenware. These are of 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries date.

### **The Ceramic Building Materials**

*Andrew Peachey MCIfA*

The evaluation recovered two fragments (214g) of slightly abraded post-medieval peg tile, contained in Pit F1003 and Topsoil L1001. The peg tile is orange-red and manufactured in a fabric tempered with medium sand and sparse red iron-rich grains (<8mm). It is 12-14mm thick with a slightly rough base, and was probably produced between the mid 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, or possibly the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## APPENDIX 2      CONTENTS OF THE ARCHIVE

<b>Records</b>	<b>Number</b>
Brief	N
Specification	Y
Registers	3 (Context, Drawing, Digital Photo)
Context Sheets	5
Site drawings A1	0
Site drawings A3	1
Site drawings A4	0
Site photographs b/w	0
Site photographs colour slides	5
Digital Photographs	5

### APPENDIX 3 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD SUMMARY SHEET

<b>Site name and address:</b>	Land R/O 26 High Street, Puckeridge, Hertfordshire, SG11 1RN, Hertfordshire
<b>County:</b> Hertfordshire	<b>District:</b> East Herts, Hertfordshire
<b>Village/Town:</b> Puckeridge	<b>Parish:</b> Puckeridge
<b>Planning application reference:</b>	EHDC Planning Ref. 3/13/1197/FP
<b>Client name/address/tel:</b>	Nemisis Developments
<b>Nature of application:</b>	Residential
<b>Present land use:</b>	Garden
<b>Size of application area:</b> 225m <sup>2</sup>	<b>Size of area investigated</b> c. 16m <sup>2</sup>
<b>NGR (8 figures):</b>	TL 3856 2337
<b>Site Code:</b>	AS 1744
<b>Site director/Organization:</b>	Archaeological Solutions Limited
<b>Type of work:</b>	Trial Trench evaluation
<b>Date of work:</b>	25 March 2015
<b>Location of finds/Curating museum:</b>	Hertford
<b>Related HER Nos:</b>	<b>Periods represented:</b> modern
<b>Relevant previous summaries/reports: -</b>	
<b>Summary of fieldwork results:</b>	<p><i>In March 2015 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an Archaeological evaluation at land R/O 26 High Street, Puckeridge, Hertfordshire, SG11 1RN (NGR TL 3856 2337). The evaluation was commissioned and was undertaken in advance of the proposed construction of a detached 2-bedroom dwelling with detached garage, access, parking amenity space and landscaping. The evaluation was undertaken as a requirement of a planning condition imposed by East Herts District Council (East Herts District Council Planning Ref. 3/13/1197/FP) which requires a programme of archaeological work.</i></p> <p><i>In the event the evaluation revealed a modern (19<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> century) pit.</i></p>
<b>Author of summary:</b> Gareth Barlow	<b>Date of Summary:</b> 27/03/2015

## PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



1  
Sample section 1A in Trench 1 looking south



2  
Sample section 1B in Trench 1 looking south



3  
F1003 in Trench 1 looking west

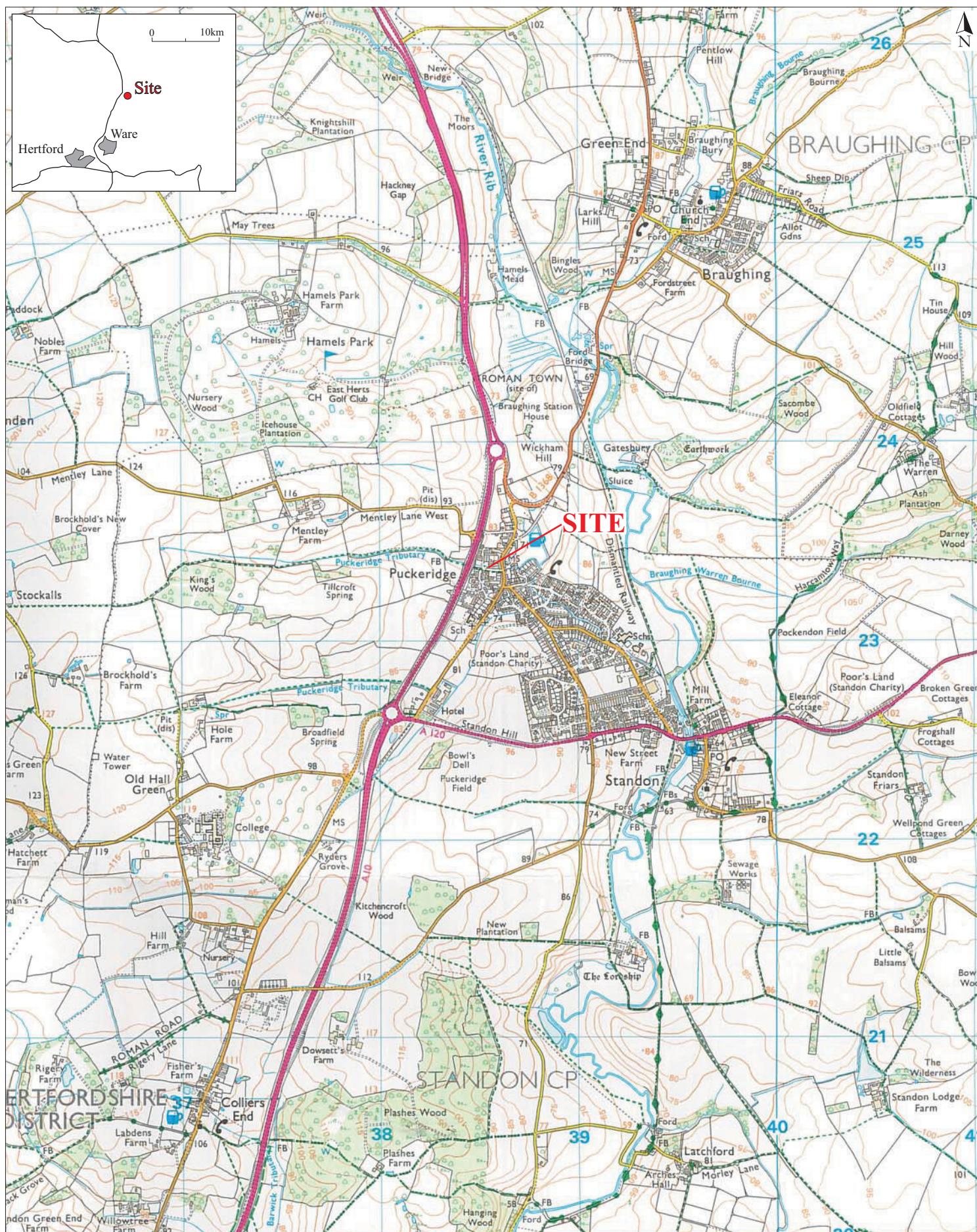


4  
General shot of site looking south-west



5  
Post excavation shot of Trench 1 looking west





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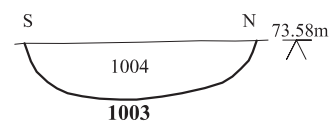
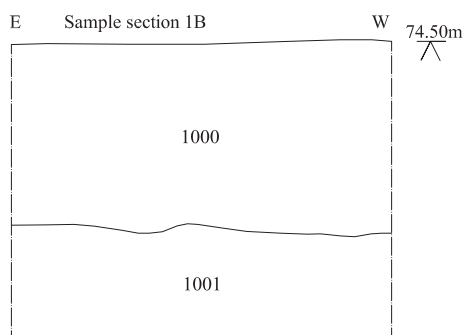
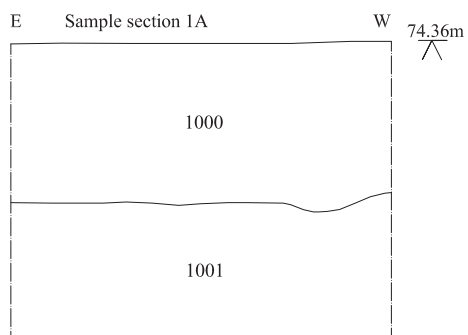
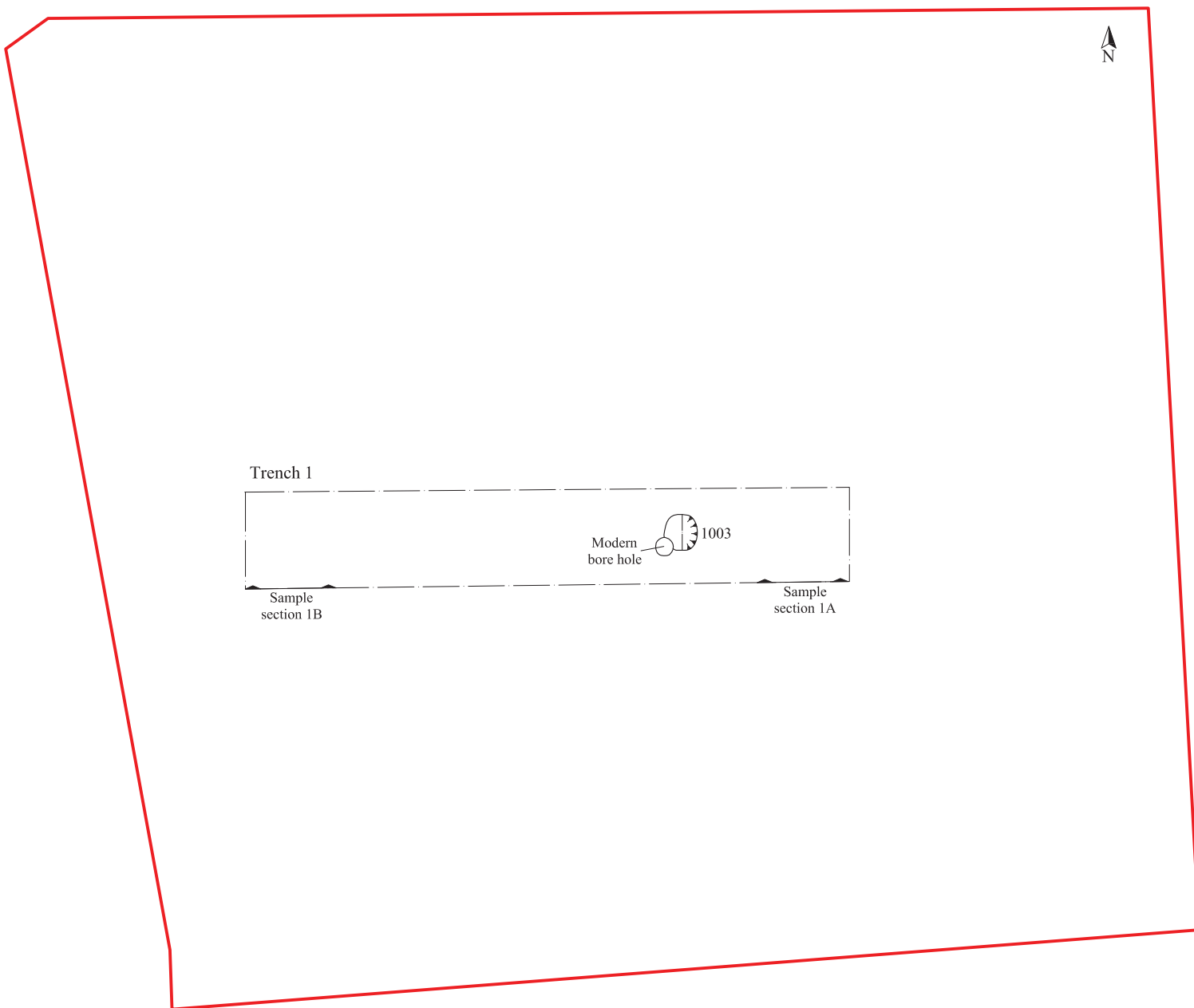
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**Fig. 1 Site location plan**  
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4  
 26 High Street, Puckeridge, Hertfordshire (P5527)





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**Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan**  
Scale 1:8000 at A4  
26 High Street, Puckeridge, Hertfordshire (P5527)



<i>Archaeological Solutions Ltd</i>
<b>Fig. 3 Site plan and sections</b>
Scale 1:100 and 1:20 at A4
26 High Street, Puckeridge, Hertfordshire (P5527)