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**PROPOSED UK POWER NETWORKS CABLE ROUTE,
POTTERS CROUCH, ST ALBANS,
HERTFORDSHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING

Authors: Zbigniew Pozorski	
NGR: TL 1156 0530	Report No: 5202
District: St Albans	Site Code: AS 1842
Approved: Claire Halpin	Project No: 6523
MCIfA	Date: 14 September 2016

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

**Unit 6, Brunel Business Court, Eastern Way,
Bury St Edmunds IP32 7AJ
Tel 01284 765210**

**P I House, Rear of 23 Clifton Road, Shefford,
Bedfordshire, SG17 5AF
Tel: 01462 850483**

**e-mail info@ascontracts.co.uk
www.archaeologicalsolutions.co.uk**



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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	<i>Proposed UK Power Networks cable route, Potters Crouch, St Albans, Hertfordshire</i>		
<i>In August 2016 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out archaeological monitoring and recording at Potters Crouch, St Albans, Hertfordshire (NGR TL 1156 0530). The monitoring was commissioned by UK Power Networks, as a requirement of a St Albans City & District Council during the laying of an underground electricity cable in fields around the village.</i>			
<i>The site is located within area identified as ASR29 on the Local Plan which encompasses an area of Roman occupation. Cropmarks of pits and linear ditches were recorded to the immediate east and a possible medieval pottery kiln was also recorded in the field to the west. Therefore the site had a potential for Romano-British and medieval archaeology.</i>			
<i>In the event the monitoring revealed no archaeological features. Two fragments of Roman CBM were recovered from the field south-west of the village, close west of Potters Crouch Farm.</i>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	23 – 26/08/2016		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	N	Future work (Y/N/?)	N
P. number	6523	Site code	AS 1842
Type of project	<i>Archaeological Monitoring & Recording</i>		
Site status	<i>Within area designated as ASR29</i>		
Current land use	<i>Side yard of the house</i>		
Planned development	<i>New residential dwelling</i>		
Main features (+dates)	-		
Significant finds (+dates)	<i>2 fragments of Roman floor tiles</i>		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Hertfordshire</i>	<i>St Albans</i>	<i>St Michael</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>Hertfordshire HER</i>		
Post code (if known)			
Area of site			
NGR	<i>TL 1156 0530</i>		
Height AOD (min/max)	<i>116/122 AOD</i>		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>Advice from SADC</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>Zbigniew Pozorski</i>		
Funded by	<i>UK Power Networks</i>		
Full title	<i>Proposed UK Power Networks cable route, Potters Crouch, St Albans, Hertfordshire: Archaeological Monitoring & Recording</i>		
Authors	<i>Pozorski, Z.</i>		
Report no.	<i>5202</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>September 2016</i>		

PROPOSED UK POWER NETWORKS CABLE ROUTE, POTTERS CROUCH, ST ALBANS, HERTFORDSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING

SUMMARY

In August 2016 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out archaeological monitoring and recording at Potters Crouch, St Albans, Hertfordshire (NGR TL 1156 0530). The monitoring was commissioned by UK Power Networks as a requirement of a St Albans City & District Council during the laying of an underground electricity cable in fields around the village.

The site is located within area identified as ASR29 on the Local Plan which encompasses an area of Roman occupation. Cropmarks of pits and linear ditches were recorded to the immediate east and a possible medieval pottery kiln was also recorded in the field to the west. Therefore the site had a potential for Romano-British and medieval archaeology.

In the event the monitoring revealed no archaeological features. Two fragments of Roman CBM were recovered from the field south-west of the village, close west of Potters Crouch Farm.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In August 2016 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out archaeological monitoring and recording at Potters Crouch, St Albans, Hertfordshire (NGR TL 1156 0530; Figs. 1 & 2). The monitoring was commissioned by UK Power Networks in compliance with a requirement of a St Albans City & District Council during the laying of an underground electricity cable in fields around the village (St Albans City & District Council Ref. 5/2015/2858).

1.2 The monitoring was undertaken in accordance with advice from St Albans City & District Council District Archaeologist (SADC), and a written scheme of investigation (specification) prepared by AS (dated 14/12/2015), and approved by SADC. The project conformed to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for An Archaeological Watching Brief* (2014), 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 Potters Crouch is a settlement located c.3.5km south-west of St Albans city centre, close to M1 motorway. The proposed c.440m route extends from adjacent to Apps Pond Cottage to the north of the village to Blunts Lane to the south of the village (Fig. 2).

3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

3.1 The site lies between 116 and 121m AOD on land gently rising towards the north. The solid geology of the area is chalk of the Lewes Nodular Chalk

Formation and Seaford Chalk Formation, overlain by sands and gravels (British Geological Survey 1978). Soils on the site are those of the Marlow association, described mainly as well drained fine loamy over clayey and clayey soils (Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983).

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 The site lies within an area of archaeological significance at Potters Crouch. Fields to the north of the village through which the cable route runs are identified as ASR29 on the Local Plan which encompasses an area of Roman occupation. The Potters Crouch area was part of a Late Iron Age and Roman landscape, being the hinterland of the Verlamion Iron Age oppidum and later Roman town of Verulamium (SADC 2015). An Iron Age/early 1st century AD brooch and knife were found separately in the Potters Crouch area.

4.2 The name Potters Crouch emerged possibly after a potter living nearby and Richard Le Pottere and his son William Pottere are mentioned in the late 13th and 14th century documents (SADC 2015). Two probably locally made St Albans Ware jugs have been found in the area. Potter Cross could also have given the name to the settlement.

4.3 The Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record records cropmarks of pits and linear ditches in the field north of the village (HER MHT17342) where the longest section of the new cable route is located. A possible medieval pottery kiln was also recorded in the field to the west (HER MHT1384).

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 The principal element monitored was the mechanically-excavated trench for a new electric cable (Fig. 2). The trench was c.440m long, 0.60m wide and 1.20 – 1.40m deep.

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

6.1 Deposits located within the trench were recorded in sample sections presented below.

<i>Sample section 1 (DP 3)</i> <i>North field, facing east</i> <i>0.00 = 118.00m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.32m	L1000	Topsoil. Mid to dark, brownish grey, soft, sandy silt.
0.32m+	L1001	Natural mid yellow, friable, silty sand.

<i>Sample section 2 (DP 6)</i> <i>North field, facing east-north-east</i> <i>0.00 = 119.50m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.26m	L1000	Topsoil. As above.
0.26m+	L1001	Natural sand. As above.

<i>Sample section 3 (DP 7)</i> <i>North field, facing north-east</i> <i>0.00 = 121.52m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.34m	L1000	Topsoil. As above.
0.34m+	L1001	Natural sand. As above.

<i>Sample section 4 (DP 9)</i> <i>North-west field, facing west-south-west</i> <i>0.00 = 117.12m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.31m	L1000	Topsoil. As above.
0.31m+	L1001	Natural sand. As above.

<i>Sample section 5 (DP 11)</i> <i>North-west field, facing west-south-west</i> <i>0.00 = 117.47m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.35m	L1000	Topsoil. As above.
0.35m+	L1001	Natural sand. As above.

<i>Sample section 6 (DP 13)</i> <i>South-west field, facing north-north-east</i> <i>0.00 = 117.61m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.29m	L1000	Topsoil. As above.
0.29m+	L1001	Natural sand. As above.

<i>Sample section 7 (DP 15)</i> <i>South-west field, facing east</i> <i>0.00 = 118.21m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.33m	L1000	Topsoil. As above.
0.33m+	L1001	Natural sand. As above.

Description No archaeological features or finds were identified within the excavated trench. Two highly abraded fragments of CBM, likely floor tiles,

were found within close proximity (<5m) of the trench in the field south-west of the village. The CBM fragments are likely of Roman date.

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 Topsoil L1000, a mid to dark, brownish grey, soft, sandy silt (0.25 – 0.35m thick). It directly overlay natural deposits of mid yellow, friable, silty sand (L1001) over mid yellow, compact, clay (L1002).

9 DISCUSSION

9.1 The site had a potential for archaeological remains, in particular for the Romano-British and medieval archaeology. The site lies within an area of Roman settlement and cropmarks are recorded in vicinity. A possible medieval pottery kiln is also located within the area.

9.2 In the event no archaeological features were revealed within the excavated trench. Two fragments of Roman CBM were recovered from the field south-west of the village, close west of Potters Crouch Farm.

10 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

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

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions would like to thank UK Power Networks for funding the project, Freedom Group for their assistance and the contractor Morrison Utility Services for assistance.

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

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Soil Survey of England and Wales (SSEW), 1983, *Legend for the 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales*. SSEW, Harpenden

APPENDIX 1 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD DATA (HER)

The following sites are those that lie within a 500m radius of the assessment site. The table has been compiled from data held by the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record (HHER).

HHER	NGR SP	Description
Prehistoric		
505	TL 115 052	Possible Roman finds. The Viatores noted that 'a Roman coin and pottery are said to have been found when the house of the Crown Lands Forester was built at the crossroads at Potterscrouch'; their information came from P Curnow, formerly assistant curator at Verulamium Museum, but they did not see these finds and their date is unconfirmed. Branigan noted that the Potterscrouch crossroads are equidistant between Gorhambury and Park Street villas and on the putative line of the Roman road from Verulamium to Silchester, and made the theoretical suggestion that a villa might have been sited here. There is no actual evidence for a villa, or even any certain Roman remains. Branigan, Keith B, 1967, <i>Romano-British rural settlement in the western Chilterns</i> ; <i>Archaeological Journal</i> 124, 129-59, - p153, and map The Viatores, 1964, <i>Roman roads in the south-east Midlands</i> , - p138, 160
1384	TL 115 052	Possible medieval pottery kiln. The evidence for a kiln here is documentary only, from the place name and personal names of potters living in the area in late 13C and 14C. The two jugs described by Renn were not found here, and were associated with Potterscrouch only on the grounds that they clearly represent a late medieval fabric distinctive to south Herts. The fabric has now been fully classified as Late Medieval Herts Glazed Ware but the production centre is still unknown and there is nothing to associate it with Potterscrouch. Renn, D F, 1964, <i>Potters and kilns in medieval Hertfordshire</i> , - p9-10
9662	TL 115 049	Cropmark of field boundaries, unknown date.
18058	TL 099 056	Cropmark of possible enclosure and boundaries. Potters Crouch Plantations, Westwick Row. Cropmarks of a ditched enclosure and other features, which are part of a wider landscape of cropmarked enclosures, pits and boundaries. Unknown date.
16935	TL 099 058	Cropmarks of possible enclosure and geological features west of Beechtree Cottages. Cropmarks show geological features, but also the ditch of a possible enclosure. Unknown date.
17342	TL 116 053	Cropmarks of pits and linear ditches. Faint cropmarks of what appears to be a complex of pits and ditches. Unknown date.
18059	TL 101 053	Cropmark of a ditch, Potters Crouch Plantations. Unknown date.
18068	TL 120 049	Cropmark of possible trackway, Blunts Way. Widely-spaced double-ditched feature. Unknown date.

APPENDIX 2 CONTENTS OF THE ARCHIVE

Records	Number
Brief	N
Specification	Y
Registers	3 (Context, Drawing, Digital Photo)
Context Sheets	3
Site drawings A1	0
Site drawings A3	0
Site drawings A4	1
Site photographs b/w	0
Site photographs colour slides	0
Digital Photographs	23

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DP 1. Field north of the village. Looking north-north-west.



DP 2. Field north of the village. Cable trench, looking north-north-west.



DP 3. Field north of the village. Sample section 1. Looking west.



DP 4. Field north of the village. Cable trench, looking south.



DP 5. Field north of the village. Cable trench, looking north.



DP 6. Field north of the village. Sample section 2. Looking west-south-west.



DP 7. Field north of the village. Sample section 3. Looking south-west.



DP 8. Access to field north-west of the village. Looking north-west.



DP 9. Field north-west of the village. Sample section 4. Looking east-north-east.



DP 10. Field north-west of the village. Cable trench, looking north.



DP 11. Field north-west of the village. Sample section 5. Looking east-north-east.



DP 12. Field south-west of the village. Cable trench, looking south-east.



DP 13. Field south-west of the village. Sample section 6. Looking south-south-west.



DP 14. Field south-west of the village. Looking north-west.



15. Field south-west of the village. Sample section 7. Looking west.



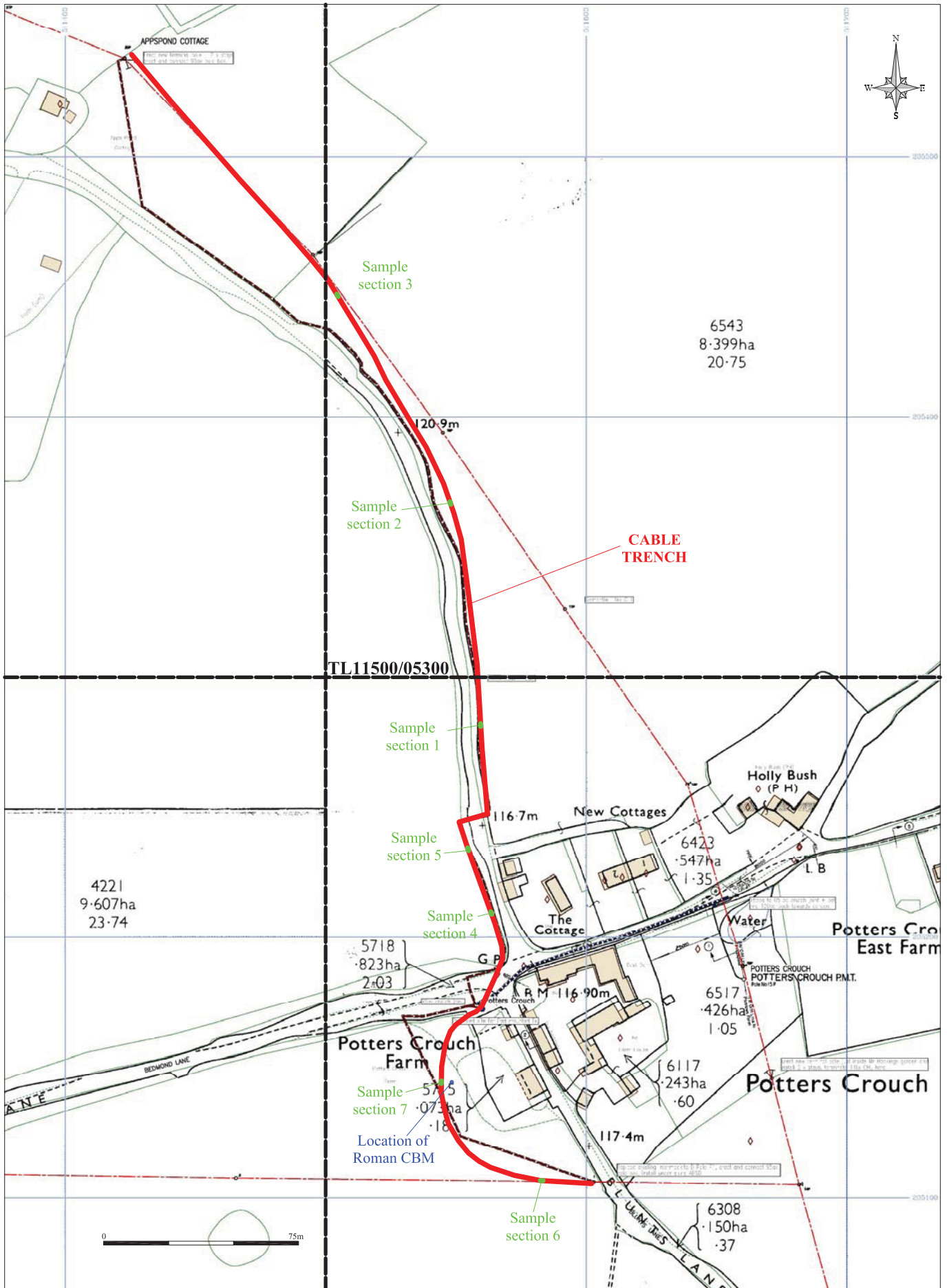
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Fig. 1 Site location plan

Scale 1:25,000 at A4

Potters Crouch, Hertfordshire, (P6253)



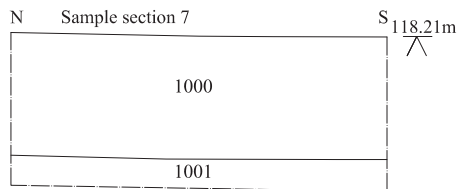
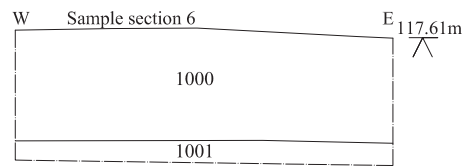
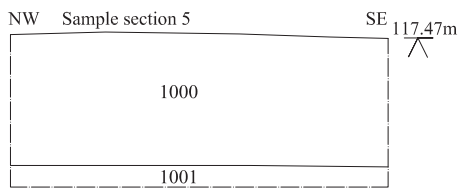
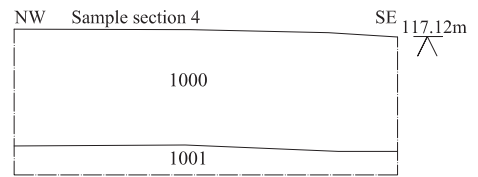
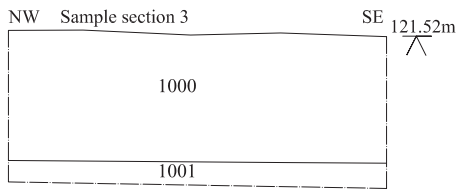
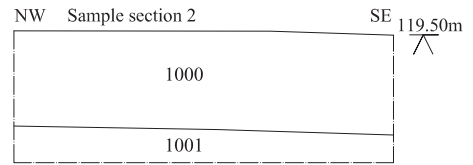
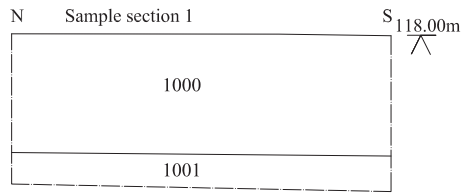
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Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan

Scale 1:2000 at A4

Potters Crouch, Hertfordshire (P6253)



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Fig. 3 Sample sections
Scale 1:20 at A4
Potters Crouch, Hertfordshire (P6253)