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**GUETH COTTAGE, MALDON ROAD,
WITHAM, ESSEX**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING

Authors: Zbigniew Pozorski	
NGR: TL 8210 1440	Report No: 5374
District: Braintree	Site Code: WHMR 15
Approved: Claire Halpin	Project No: 6265
MCIfA	Date: May 2017

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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	<i>Gueth Cottage, Maldon Road, Witham, Essex</i>		
<p><i>In August 2015 and September 2016 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological monitoring and recording at Gueth Cottage, Maldon Road, Witham, Essex (NGR TL 8210 1440). The monitoring was commissioned by Mr Paul Smith in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission to erect two new dwellings with associated parking, landscaping and amenity space on the site, together with retention of existing dwelling.</i></p> <p><i>The site lies within an area close to the medieval settlement area of Witham, focussed on Newland Street to the north-west. In addition, Maldon Road is believed to have formed an element of a postulated D-shaped late Iron Age/Saxon settlement enclosure. The site therefore had a potential for archaeological remains associated with the postulated late Iron Age/Saxon enclosure and for evidence of medieval and post-medieval activity associated with the historic core of the settlement at Witham.</i></p> <p><i>In the event the monitoring revealed no archaeological features or finds.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	<i>07/08/15 and 30/09/16</i>		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>	Future work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>
P. number	<i>6265</i>	Site code	<i>WHMR 15</i>
Type of project	<i>Archaeological Monitoring & Recording</i>		
Site status	<i>-</i>		
Current land use	<i>Garden</i>		
Planned development	<i>Construction of 2 dwellings</i>		
Main features (+dates)	<i>-</i>		
Significant finds (+dates)	<i>-</i>		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Essex</i>	<i>Braintree</i>	<i>Witham</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>Essex HER</i>		
Post code (if known)	<i>CM8 2AB</i>		
Area of site	<i>c.80m²</i>		
NGR	<i>TL 8210 1440</i>		
Height AOD (min/max)	<i>c.22m AOD</i>		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>ECC</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>Zbigniew Pozorski</i>		
Funded by	<i>Mr Paul Smith</i>		
Full title	<i>Gueth Cottage, Maldon Road, Witham, Essex: Archaeological Monitoring & Recording</i>		
Authors	<i>Pozorski, Z.</i>		
Report no.	<i>5374</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>May 2017</i>		

GUETH COTTAGE, MALDON ROAD, WITHAM, ESSEX

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING

SUMMARY

In August 2015 and September 2016 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological monitoring and recording at Gueth Cottage, Maldon Road, Witham, Essex (NGR TL 8210 1440). The monitoring was commissioned by Mr Paul Smith in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission to erect two new dwellings with associated parking, landscaping and amenity space on the site, together with retention of existing dwelling.

The site lies within an area close to the medieval settlement area of Witham, focussed on Newland Street to the north-west. In addition, Maldon Road is believed to have formed an element of a postulated D-shaped late Iron Age/Saxon settlement enclosure. The site therefore had a potential for archaeological remains associated with the postulated late Iron Age/Saxon enclosure and for evidence of medieval and post-medieval activity associated with the historic core of the settlement at Witham.

In the event the monitoring revealed no archaeological features or finds.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In August 2015 and September 2016 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological monitoring and recording at Gueth Cottage, Maldon Road, Witham, Essex (NGR TL 8210 1440; Figs. 1 & 2). The monitoring was commissioned by Mr Paul Smith in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission to erect two new dwellings with associated parking, landscaping and amenity space on the site, together with retention of existing dwelling (Braintree District Council Planning Ref. 4/00741/FUL).

1.2 The monitoring was undertaken in accordance to a brief issued by the Historic Environment Advisor of Essex County Council (ECC HEA) and a written scheme of investigation (specification) prepared by AS (dated 02/06/2015), and approved by ECC HEA. 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.

1.4 The specific aims of the project were to identify any evidence of medieval or post-medieval activity within the area of proposed development, and the relationship to the medieval and post-medieval town development as well to identify any evidence of the postulated late Iron Age/Saxon enclosure of which Maldon Road may form the eastern arm, and occupation of this date within the enclosure.

Planning policy context

1.5 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.

1.6 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 off the western side of Maldon Road, Witham (Fig. 1), and c.100m south of the junction between Newland Street and Maldon Road, and comprises the existing garden area to the rear of Gueth Cottage with a number of mature trees.

3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

3.1 The site lies at c.22m AOD between the rivers Brain (c.300m to the south-west) and Blackwater (c.650m to the east). The underlying geology is of Eocene London Clay of Thames Group (British Geological Survey 1978). The drift geology and soils association on which the site itself lies are not charted, as they lie beneath the built up area of Witham, but to the west is a large area of chalky till overlain by Hanslope association soils described as slowly permeable calcareous (and some non calcareous) clayey soils (Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983).

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Prehistoric

4.1 A Palaeolithic handaxe (HER 81058; probably lower Palaeolithic; Wymer 1996) was found during quarrying in Witham and assemblage of over 40 Palaeolithic axes was found within Iron Age/Roman site at Ivy Chimneys c.1.2km south-west of the site (HER 14042). The eastern part of East Anglia is among the richest areas of Britain for stone tools of such early date.

4.2 Human presence in the area from late Neolithic times is attested by a find of Grooved Ware pottery (Holgate 1996) and polished axe heads (HER 81165). Cropmarks of ring ditches c.450m east of the site (HER 81247) are thought to be of Bronze Age date, and a palstave dating to this period has been recovered in Witham (HER 81309).

4.3 An earthwork c.850m north-west of the site is thought to represent an Iron Age hillfort (HER 8106 – 8110). Three inhumations associated with iron pokers of currency bars were located at this site; few iron objects have been recovered from Iron Age contexts in Essex, making these finds significant (Sealy 1996). The position of the hillfort would have allowed it to control access to the valleys of the Brain and Blackwater (Rodwell 1993). The Ivy Chimneys area (north of Hatfield Road and c.1.2km south west of the site), later the site of a Romano-British temple complex, was the site of settlement in the early, middle and late Iron Age. Iron Age pottery has been recovered c.850m north east of the evaluation site (HER 8264) and cinerary urns c.250m to the south (HER 81258).

Romano-British

4.4 The Roman settlement at Rivenhall is located c.3.5km north of the site, on the road from London to Colchester. The same road later became Newland Street. Occupation on a smaller scale is attested closer to Witham (HER 81261), and possibly within the Chipping Hill area of the town itself (HER 81141). Several Roman coins have been recovered around the town (e.g. HER 81238, 81296), and Romano-British urns were found along the road out of the town towards Maldon (HER 81261).

4.5 The site of Ivy Chimneys, Witham (Turner 1982), had been occupied in the pre-Roman Iron Age and in the early Romano-British period a wooden temple, within a temenos, was constructed. In the 2nd/3rd centuries a large pond, fed by springs, was excavated and was used for ritualised deposition of coins and other precious items, becoming the focus of activity at the site. The 3rd century saw the construction of a new timber temple, possibly with a large Jupiter column adjacent to it. Towards the end of the 4th century, however, Christianity appears to have been adopted; a small two-celled stone chapel was constructed and a baptismal font set up within the existing pond. The location of this temple complex on a major road, but not within a settlement, is unusual (Wickenden 1996).

Saxon to medieval

4.6 Early Saxon occupation is attested in the Maltings Lane area of Witham, including two possible buildings and a cemetery (Wade 1997, cited in Medlycott 1998). In the middle to late Saxon period, Witham had the status of a Royal Vill. It follows the pattern seen throughout Essex of such sites being located close to known major Roman settlements and on Roman roads which had survived to this date; a Saxon cemetery is located just east of Rivenhall, again following a pattern seen across central and northern Essex. Like many other Royal Vills, Witham became the site of a *burh* during Edward the Elder's campaign of 912. It has previously been thought that the construction of the *burh* comprised a refortification of the Iron Age hillfort, but excavations have produced no evidence of this. Two more plausible potential locations have been suggested, one at Rivenhall End (suggested by a rectangular enclosure at 'Burgate'), the other closer to the evaluation site, evidenced by a D shaped enclosure beneath the medieval town (Rippon 1996). The line of Maldon Road is believed to have formed an element of that postulated D-shaped late Iron Age/Saxon settlement enclosure (HER 9048). A bank along its south western side can be seen on the 1839 Tithe Map for the town, and settlement evidence within the earthwork enclosure could be present within the proposed development site.

4.7 The Domesday Survey records that much of the Hundred of Witham was held after the Norman Conquest, by the King. The manor of Witham was in the hands of Peter the Sheriff in 1086, and had doubled in value since 1066 (from £10 to £20) though the estate had suffered losses due to a cattle plague. The estate is recorded as having included enough woodland for 150 pigs, suggesting a significant woodland component to the local environment of

the time. A total of five mills in Witham are listed in the Domesday Survey.

4.8 The manor of Witham was granted by Stephen to the Knights Templar in 1147. They established a preceptory there in 1164, which they held until 1312 when it passed to the Knights Hospitallers in whose possession it remained until 1538. The Knight's Templar planned and built the 'new town' of Witham (known at first as Wulvesford, then as Newland) at about the time that their market charter was granted, in 1212. The new town was located to the south of the older settlement on Chipping Hill (which was not immediately abandoned), along the London - Colchester road. References exist to rents being paid by 17 shops in the vicinity in the 1260s. A map of 1765 shows the town of Witham, on the London to Colchester Road, and shows the Church of St Nicholas (which is thought to have predated the new town though its current structure dates to c.1330) a little to the north, where the older settlement had been located.

4.9 It is thought that the Knights Templar established a fulling mill at Witham in 1185; this would be among the earliest fulling mills in England and thus of significance in understanding the development of the cloth industry on a national scale (Boyes 1996). The cloth industry is known to have been the mainstay of Witham's economy in the medieval and post medieval periods, and documented from the 14th century onwards.

Post medieval to modern

4.10 Witham's economy in the post medieval and early modern periods remained based in agriculture (especially the production of seeds) and cloth; the latter industry reaching its zenith in the 17th century. Three cloth warehouses are attested in the vicinity of the evaluation site, at Nos. 61 and 16 Newland Street, and No. 4 Guithavon Street. Guithavon Street and All Saints Church, located to the north of the site, were established in 1841 by W. H Pattison. Although there is still a market at Witham, the original market was gradually infilled throughout the post medieval period (Medlycott 1999).

4.11 A number standing buildings from the post medieval period are recorded along Newland Street, including No. 100 (16th century), No. 83 (17th century) and Nos. 90, 78 and No. 86 (18th century), and several archaeological investigations in the vicinity of the evaluation site have noted the presence of post-medieval remains.

4.12 Witham did not grow significantly in the post medieval or early modern periods, remaining as a small market town and retaining its medieval focus along the London to Colchester Road. Significant expansion occurred only in the 1960s, with the Town Development Scheme and London overspill housing.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 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.

5.2 Levels for the proposed development (including ground beams) were to be largely built up from existing following piling. The monitored elements of the development comprised partial ground reduction within the (piled) footprint of proposed new dwellings and service trenches/pits associated with the new build (Fig. 2).

6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

6.1 Deposits located within the area of excavation were recorded in sample sections along the excavation limits and in the main service trench and are presented below.

<i>Sample section 1 (DP 4)</i> <i>North-west ground reduction limit, facing south-east</i> <i>0.00 = 22.21m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.10m	L1000	Modern topsoil. Dark grey, soft, sandy silt.
0.10 – 0.25m	L1001	Levelling layer Light grey, loose, fine sandy gravel.
0.25 – 0.61m	L1002	Buried topsoil. Mid brownish grey, friable, silty sand.
0.61 – 0.82m	L1003	Subsoil. Mid yellowish brown, friable, silty sand.
0.82m+	L1004	Natural dark orangey yellow, loose, sandy gravel.

<i>Sample section 2 (DP 5)</i> <i>North-east ground reduction limit, facing south-west</i> <i>0.00 = 22.05m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.19m	L1000	Modern topsoil. As above, S.S.1.
0.19 – 0.54m	L1002	Buried topsoil. As above, S.S.1.
0.54 – 0.63m	L1003	Subsoil. As above, S.S.1.
0.63m+	L1004	Natural gravel. As above, S.S.1.

<i>Sample section 3 (DP 6)</i> <i>South-east ground reduction limit, facing north-west</i> <i>0.00 = 22.16m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.10m	L1000	Modern topsoil. As above, S.S.1.
0.10 – 0.34m	L1001	Levelling layer. As above, S.S.1.
0.34 – 0.80m+	L1002	Buried topsoil. As above, S.S.1.

<i>Sample section 4 (DP 8)</i>		
<i>Service trench, facing north-east</i>		
<i>0.00 = 22.07m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.30m	L1005	Modern concrete.
0.30 – 0.66m	L1002	Buried topsoil. As above, S.S.1.
0.66 – 0.83m	L1003	Subsoil. As above, S.S.1.
0.83m+	L1004	Natural gravel. As above, S.S.1.

Description: No archaeological features or finds were identified. At the time when the monitoring took place the ground has been partially reduced in the eastern part of the site in order for a piling mat to be laid.

Two drainage soakway pits were located along the north-western site boundary wall (Fig. 2). These could not be safely investigated due to their depth but it appeared the pits exposed only a deposit of made ground overlying buried topsoil. The made ground was likely associated with construction of the wall.

7 CONFIDENCE RATING

7.1 The recognition of archaeological features or finds during the programme of archaeological monitoring and recording was inhibited by some groundworks having been undertaken prior to the monitoring visit (a piling mat being laid in places), but limited deeper groundworks were undertaken and monitored for the remainder of the development (services).

8 DEPOSIT MODEL

8.1 The site was commonly overlain by modern Topsoil L1000, a dark grey, soft, sandy silt (0.05 – 0.20m thick) above levelling layer L1001 (0.15 – 0.25m thick). Below was buried topsoil (L1002; 0.20 – 0.40m+ thick), a mid brownish grey, friable, silty sand above Subsoil L1003, a mid yellowish brown, friable, silty sand (0.10 – 0.25m thick). The natural gravel, L1004, was present at 0.60 – 0.80m below existing ground level and comprised a dark orange yellow, loose, sandy gravel.

9 DISCUSSION

9.1 The site had a potential for archaeological remains, in particular for Iron Age, Saxon, medieval and post-medieval archaeology. Maldon Road is believed to have formed an element of a postulated D-shaped late Iron Age/Saxon settlement enclosure. The site also lies close to the medieval settlement of Witham.

9.2 In the event no archaeological features or finds were revealed. No indication of any previous development of the site was identified with the exception of modern made ground. Little evidence of previous truncation appeared to have taken place.

10 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

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

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions would like to thank Mr Paul Smith for funding the project and for his assistance.

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

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APPENDIX 1 CONTENTS OF THE ARCHIVE

Records	Number
Brief	N
Specification	Y
Registers	3 (Context, Drawing, Digital Photo)
Context Sheets	6
Site drawings A1	0
Site drawings A3	1
Site drawings A4	0
Site photographs b/w	0
Site photographs colour slides	0
Digital Photographs	20

APPENDIX 2 HER SUMMARY SHEET

Site name/Address: Gueth Cottage, Maldon Road, Witham, Essex	
Parish: Witham	District: Braintree
NGR: TL 8210 1440	Site Code: WHMR15
Type of Work: Archaeological Monitoring and Recording	Site Director/Group: Z. Pozorski
Date of Work: 07/08/15 and 30/09/16	Size of Area Investigated: c.200m2
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: Colchester	Funding source: Mr Paul Smith
Further Seasons Anticipated?:	Related HER No.s:
Final Report: Pozorski, Z, 2016, Gueth Cottage, Maldon Road, Witham, Essex. Archaeological Monitoring and Recording.	
Periods Represented: -	
SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:	
<p><i>In August 2015 and September 2016 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological monitoring and recording at Gueth Cottage, Maldon Road, Witham, Essex (NGR TL 8210 1440). The monitoring was commissioned by Mr Paul Smith in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission to erect two new dwellings with associated parking, landscaping and amenity space on the site, together with retention of existing dwelling.</i></p> <p><i>The site lies within an area close to the medieval settlement area of Witham, focussed on Newland Street to the north-west. In addition, Maldon Road is believed to have formed an element of a postulated D-shaped late Iron Age/Saxon settlement enclosure. The site therefore had a potential for archaeological remains associated with the postulated late Iron Age/Saxon enclosure and for evidence of medieval and post-medieval activity associated with the historic core of the settlement at Witham.</i></p> <p><i>In the event the monitoring revealed no archaeological features or finds.</i></p>	
Previous Summaries/Reports:	
Author of Summary: Z. Pozorski	Date of Summary: 08/11/2016

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



DP 1. Footprint of proposed two new dwellings. Looking north.



DP 2. Western part of the site. Looking north-west.



DP 3. Eastern part of the site. Looking north-north-west.



DP 4. North-west limit of ground reduction. Sample section 1. Looking north-west.



DP 5. North-east limit of ground reduction. Sample section 2. Looking north-east.



DP 6. South-east limit of ground reduction. Sample section 2. Looking north-east.



DP 7. Service trench. Looking south.



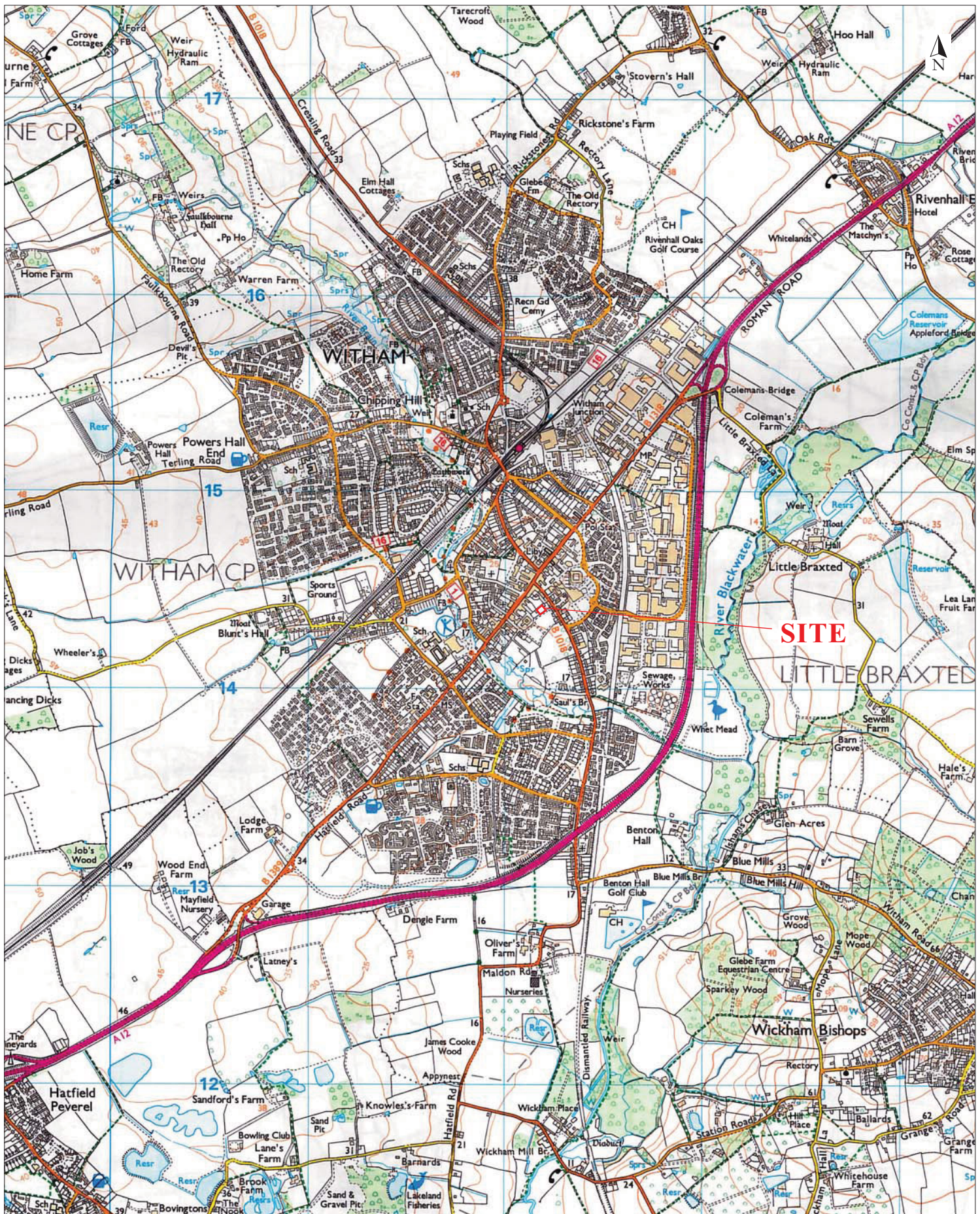
DP 8. Service trench. Sample section 4. Looking south-west.



DP 9. North west soakway pit. Looking west.

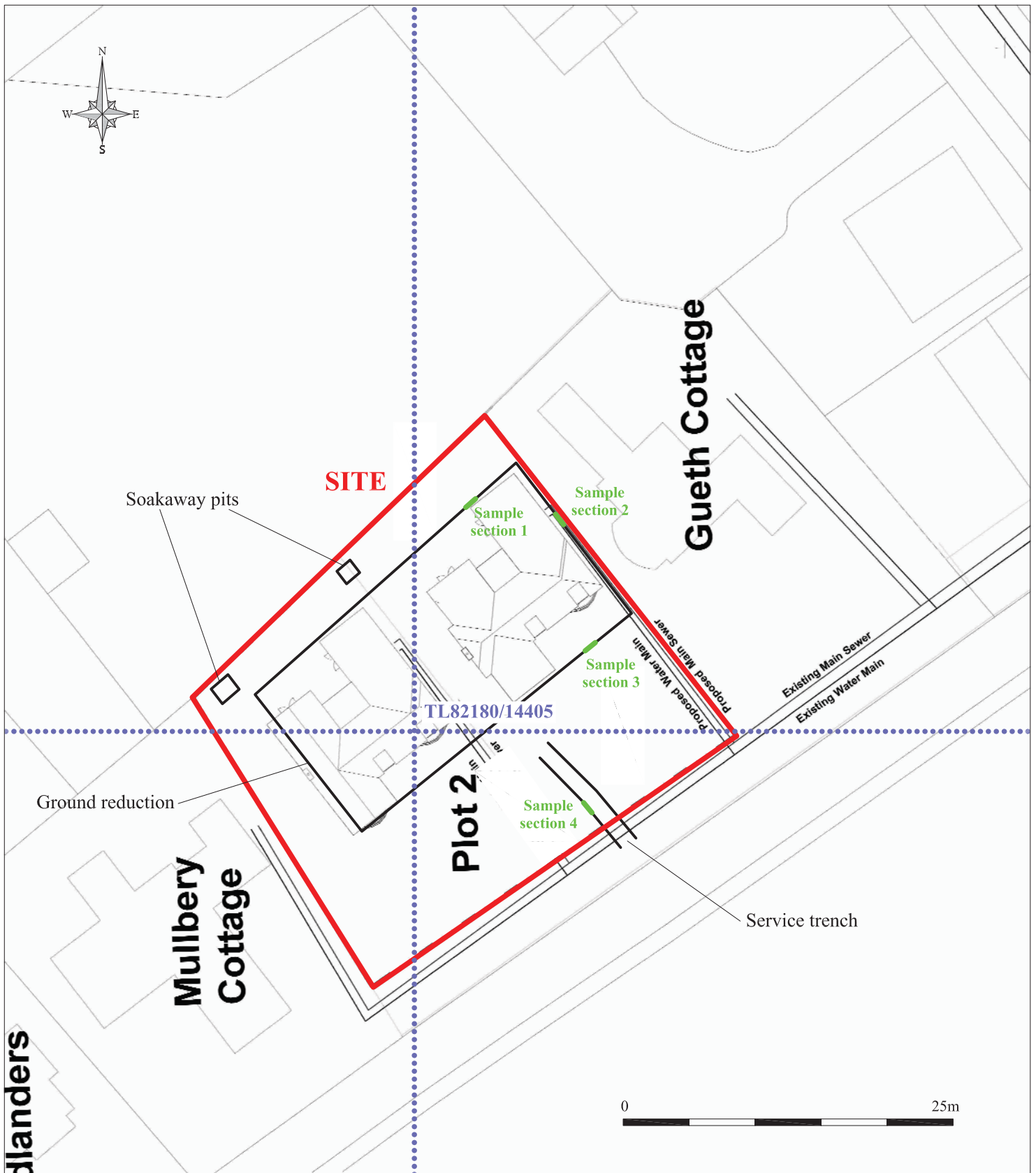


DP 10. South-west soakway pit. Looking north.

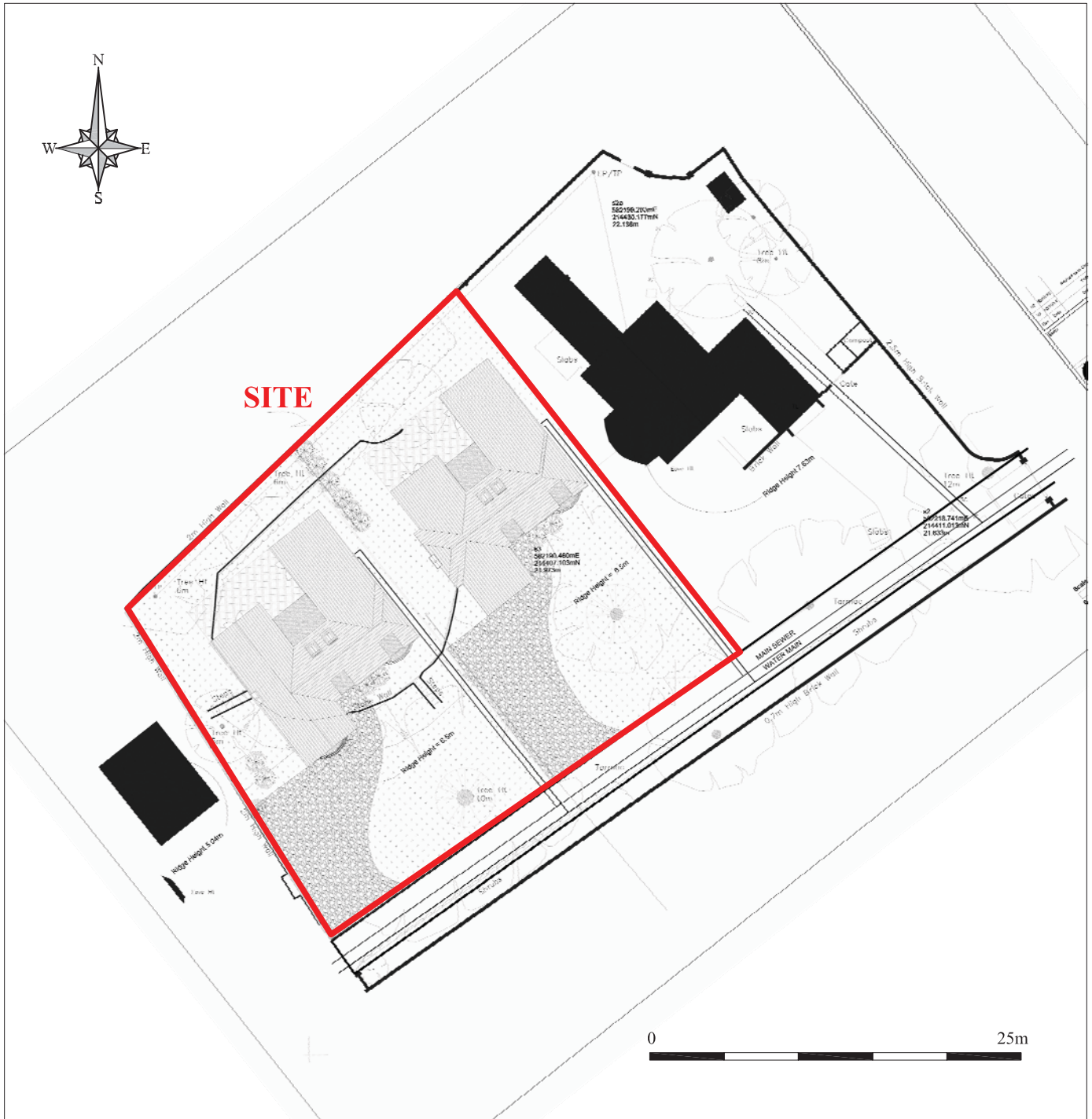


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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4
 Gueth Housing, Witham, Essex (P6265)



<i>Archaeological Solutions Ltd</i>
Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan
Scale 1:400 at A4
Gueth Housing, Witham, Essex (P6265)

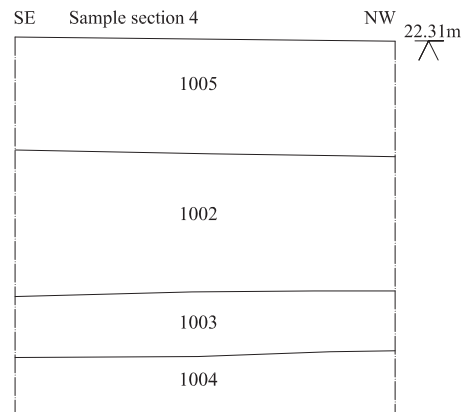
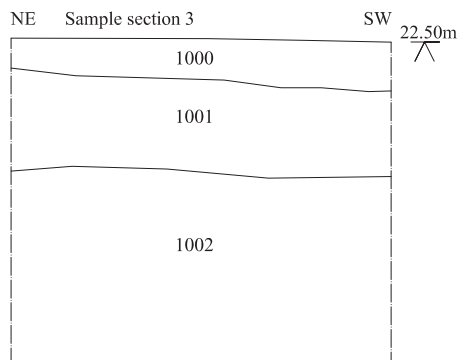
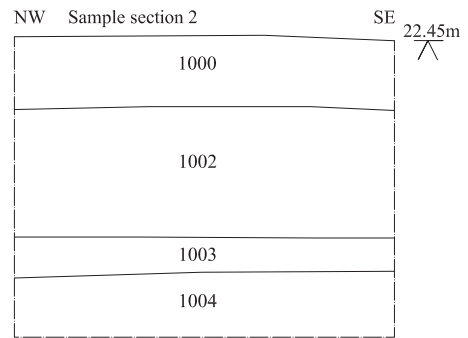
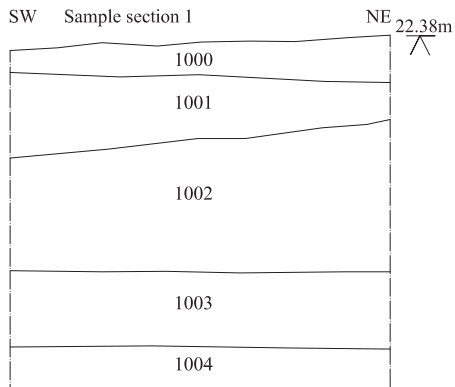


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Fig. 3 Proposed development

Scale 1:400 at A4

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Fig. 4 Sample sections
Scale 1:20 at A4
Gueth Housing, Witham, Essex (P6265)