
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD
**LAND OFF SACOMBE ROAD, WATERFORD HAMEL,
HERTFORD, HERTFORDSHIRE**
ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION

HER Enquiry No. 122/17

Author: Katie Lee-Smith (Fieldwork and report) Kate Higgs MA (Oxon.) (Background research)	
NGR: TL 31850 14998	Report No: 4313
District: East Herts	Site Code: AS 1898
Approved: Claire Halpin MCI fA	Project No: 7199
Signed:	Date: August 2017

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- Desk-based assessments and environmental impact assessments*
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- Trial trench evaluations*
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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET			
Project details			
Project name	Land off Sacombe Road, Waterford Hamel, Hertford, Herts		
<p>In August 2017, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological trial trench evaluation on land off Sacombe Road, Waterford Hamel, Hertford, Hertfordshire (NGR TL 31850 14998). The evaluation was carried out to provide for a planning condition attached to planning permission for an 'Eco' style residential development. It was required based on the advice of the Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Advisor (HCC HEA).</p> <p>The evaluation revealed no archaeological features or finds. The site was truncated. No residual finds were present.</p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	11, 14, 15 August 2017		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	N	Future work	TBC
P. number	7199	Site code	AS 1898
Type of project	Archaeological trial trench evaluation		
Site status	None		
Current land use	Quarry vehicle repair and storage depot		
Planned development	'Eco' style residential development		
Main features (+dates)	None		
Significant finds (+dates)	None		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	Hertfordshire	East Herts	Stapleford
HER for area	Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER; enquiry No. 122/17)		
Post code (if known)	-		
Area of site	c. 1 ha.		
NGR	TL 31850 14998		
Height AOD (max/ min)	c.72m AOD		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Team		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	Archaeological Solutions Ltd		
Funded by	Tarmac		
Full title	Land off Sacombe Road, Waterford Hamel, Hertford, Hertfordshire. Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation		
Authors	Lee-Smith, K., & Higgs, K.		
Report no.	4313		
Date (of report)	August 2017		

LAND OFF SACOMBE ROAD, WATERFORD HAMEL, HERTFORD, HERTFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION

SUMMARY

In August 2017, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological trial trench evaluation on land off Sacombe Road, Waterford Hamel, Hertford, Hertfordshire (NGR TL 31850 14998). The evaluation was carried out to provide for a planning condition attached to planning permission for an 'Eco' style residential development. It was required based on the advice of the Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Advisor (HCC HEA).

The evaluation revealed no archaeological features or finds. The site was truncated. No residual finds were present.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In August 2017, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological trial trench evaluation on land off Sacombe Road, Waterford Hamel, Hertford, Hertfordshire (NGR TL 31850 14998; Figs. 1 - 2). The evaluation was carried out to provide for a planning condition attached to planning permission for an 'Eco' style residential development. It was required based on the advice of the Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Advisor (HCC HEA).

1.2 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a specification compiled by Phoenix Consulting Archaeology Limited (dated 11th June 2012), and approved by HCC HEA. It conformed to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Evaluation* (2014), and the document *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).

1.3 The objectives of the evaluation were 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 is located to the east of the village of Waterford, within the parish of Stapleford and the district of East Hertfordshire. Waterford is 1km to the north of Hertford's northern area of Bengoe, and 2.2km to the north-north-west of its historic core, and 5km to the west of Ware. The village of Stapleford is situated 2km to the north. The site lies 800m to the east of Waterford.

2.2 The site comprises an irregularly-shaped plot of land, which covers an approximate area of one hectare (Fig. 2). It is bound to the immediate north-east by Sacombe Road, and to the south by Vicarage Lane. Two residential dwellings fronting Vicarage Lane also lie to the immediate south of the site. To the immediate west of the site is agricultural land which incorporates a band of established trees. The site currently comprises former commercial quarry vehicle repair and storage depot, now demolished to slab level, which stands in its north-western section, and an overgrown triangular plot to the south-east.

3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

3.1 The site is situated on a ridge of high-lying ground located to the north of the confluence of the Rivers Beane, Rib and Lea (Fig. 1). The River Beane flows roughly north to southwards 600m to the west of the site, while the River Rib is located 700m to the east. The site lies on sloping land, with the surrounding relief declining into each of the river valleys. The site's relief slopes down to the south-west and at approximately 72m AOD.

3.2 The solid geology of the site comprises Upper Cretaceous chalk (BGS 2015), overlain by glacial gravels. Soils of the area comprise those of the Ludford Association, which are described as deep, well drained fine loamy, coarse loamy and sandy soils, locally flinty and in places over gravel (SSEW 1983).

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Prehistoric

4.1 The site lies in an area of archaeological potential. The gravels of major river valleys such as the Rivers Beane and Rib are known to have been preferentially settled in the early prehistoric period. A probable later Bronze Age field system has been identified along Sacombe Road and 800m to the south of the site in association with a group of deep shafts and enclosure with bank and internal ditch (HER 17997).

4.2 Cropmarks of three sides of a rectilinear enclosure have been identified to the east and south of St John's Wood (HER 7609). A 1996 evaluation also dated the rectilinear enclosure to the late Bronze Age on the basis of finds of sherds of late Bronze Age pottery, in addition to an early Bronze Age sherd. A second cropmark of a sub-circular enclosure lies to the south of St John's Wood and east of the site (HER 7610). A complex of ditched enclosures at St John's Wood also represents a late Iron Age to early Roman farmstead (HER 31044).

Romano-British

4.3 In the late Iron Age and Romano-British period the principal settlements were at *Verulamium* (St Albans), Welwyn, Baldock and Braughing. Part of a Roman field system, with a possible round house, has been identified near the Sacombe Road and 800m to the south of the site (HER 18001). Roman pottery has also been found on the allotments at the junction of Sacombe Road and Bengoe Street further southwards (HER 18759).

Anglo-Saxon

4.4 There is only limited evidence for Saxon remains in the area and the site lies well-beyond the extent of the occupied manor of Bengeo, located further southwards. Hertford consisted of a Saxon *burh* with a probable 10th century foundation. A shallow fire pit located near the Sacombe Road and 800m to the south of the site has been radiocarbon-dated to the 8th - 10th century AD (HER 18002).

Medieval

4.5 The manor of Bengeo is listed in the 11th century Domesday Book as *Belingehou*, with the –hou suffix deriving from the Old English *hoh*, meaning ‘heel’ and would usually refer to a sharply projecting spur of land (Gover, Mawer & Stenton 1938). However, the site likely fell within the south-eastern section of the manor of Waterford, which was held of the lands of the manor of Stapleford in socage and was evidently formed out of it (HER 6171). In the early 14th century, Waterford manor was held by Geoffrey de la Lee who held property in Stapleford in 1305. The medieval period is also represented by the site of Benwick Hall, which stood at Bulls Mill on the eastern bank of the River Beane (HER 6196).

Post-medieval

4.6 The post-medieval period in Waterford is represented by Waterford Hall, which is a brick house built c.1600 on a medieval manorial site. It has ranges of post-medieval farm buildings (HER 11156). Further post-medieval structures comprise Willow Cottage, which appears to be an early 19th century house in stock brick, but the steeply-pitched roof is thatched and the brickwork probably conceals a 17th century or earlier timber frame (HER 30142). No.44 High Road in Waterford is a 17th century house used as a pub in the 19th century (HER 30422). Waterford Mill was demolished in the mid 19th century, leaving its outbuildings (HER 30421).

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 The HCC HEA required trial trenches to be excavated across the site. Six trenches were excavated, each 10m x 1.8m (labelled Trenches 1 - 6), and one trench was 15m x 1.8m (labelled Trench 7) (Fig.3). The position of the proposed trenches was altered slightly to take account of practicalities, for example, the presence of services.

5.2 The topsoil, subsoil and 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

6.1 The individual trench description is presented below:

Trench 1 Fig. 3

Sample section 1A 0.00 – 71.79m AOD		
0.00-0.20m	L1003	Tarmac
0.20 – 0.42m	L1004	Base for Tarmac
0.42 – 0.47m	L1005	Tarmac
0.47 – 0.52m	L1001	Subsoil. Mid – light grey brown, friable, sandy silt with occasional CBM
0.52m+	L1002	Natural. Mid yellowish red, friable, sandy gravel

Sample section 1B 0.00 – 71.43m AOD		
0.00-0.30m	L1007	Concrete
0.30 – 0.42m	L1004	Base for concrete
0.42 – 0.47m	L1005	Tarmac
0.47 – 0.67m	L1001	Subsoil. As above
0.67m+	L1002	Natural. As above

Description: Trench 1 contained no archaeological features or finds.

Trench 2 Fig. 3

Sample section 2A 0.00 – 71.85m AOD		
0.00-0.16m	L1007	Concrete
0.16-0.27m	L1004	Base for concrete
0.27m+	L1002	Natural. As above, Trench 1.

Sample section 2B 0.00 – 71.79m AOD		
0.00-0.14m	L1007	Concrete
0.14-0.37m	L1004	Base for concrete
0.37m+	L1002	Natural. As above, Trench 1.

Description: Trench 2 contained no archaeological features or finds. A modern service traversed the trench.

Trench 3 Fig. 3

Sample section 3A 0.00 – 71.10m AOD		
0.00-0.06m	L1007	Concrete
0.06 – 0.36m	L1004	Base for concrete
0.36-0.58m	L1001	Subsoil. As above, Trench 1.
0.58m+	L1002	Natural. As above, Trench 1.

Sample section 3B 0.00 – 71.04m AOD		
0.00-0.10m	L1007	Concrete
0.10 – 0.42m	L1004	Base for concrete
0.42-0.62m	L1001	Subsoil. As above, Trench 1.
0.62m+	L1002	Natural. As above, Trench 1.

Description: Trench 3 contained no archaeological features or finds.

Trench 4 Fig. 3

Sample section 4A 0.00 – 71.82m AOD		
0.00 - 0.22m	L1007	Concrete
0.22 – 0.32m	L1004	Base for concrete
0.32m+	L1002	Natural. As above, Trench 1.

Sample section 4B 0.00 – 71.86m AOD		
0.00 - 0.09m	L1007	Concrete
0.09 – 0.21m	L1004	Base for concrete
0.21 – 0.27m	L1005	Tarmac
0.27 - 0.38m	L1006	Base for Tarmac
0.38m+	L1002	Natural. As above, Trench 1.

Description: Trench 4 contained no archaeological features or finds. A modern service traversed the trench.

Trench 5 Fig. 3

Sample section 5A 0.00 – 72.05m AOD		
0.00-0.15m	L1003	Tarmac
0.15 – 0.29m	L1004	Base for Tarmac
0.29 -0 39m	L1001	Subsoil. As above, Trench 1.
0.39m+	L1002	Natural. As above, Trench 1.

Sample section 5B 0.00 – 72.01m AOD		
0.09 – 0.05m	L1004	Base for Tarmac
0.05 - 0.14m	L1006	Base for Tarmac
0.14 –0.26m	L1001	Subsoil. As above, Trench 1.
0.26m+	L1002	Natural. As above, Trench 1.

Description: Trench 5 contained no archaeological features or finds.

Trench 6 Fig. 3

Sample section 6A 0.00 – 71.79m AOD		
0.00-0.15m	L1000	Topsoil. Mid – dark grey brown, friable, sandy silty
0.29 -0 35m	L1001	Subsoil. As above, Trench 1.
0.35m+	L1002	Natural. As above, Trench 1.

Sample section 6B 0.00 – 71.83m AOD		
0.00 - 0.16m	L1000	Topsoil. As above
0.16 – 0.36m	L1001	Subsoil. As above, Trench 1
0.36m+	L1002	Natural. As above, Trench 1.

Description: Trench 6 contained no archaeological features or finds.

Trench 7 Fig. 3

Sample section 7A 0.00 – 71.93m AOD		
0.00-0.23m	L1000	Topsoil. As above, Trench 6.
0.23 -0 40m	L1001	Subsoil. As above, Trench 1
0.40m+	L1002	Natural. As above, Trench 1.

Sample section 7B 0.00 – 71.89m AOD		
0.00 - 0.10m	L1000	Topsoil. As above, Trench 6.
0.10 – 0.25m	L1001	Subsoil. As above, Trench 1.
0.25m+	L1002	Natural. As above, Trench 1.

Description: Trench 7 contained no archaeological features or finds.

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 in the northern sector of the site (Trenches 1 – 5) were layers of Tarmac and concrete (L1003 – L1007) (0.27 – 0.47m thick). Below the concrete and Tarmac in Trenches 1, 3 and 5, was Subsoil L1001, a mid – light grey brown, friable, sandy silt with occasional CBM (0.05 – 0.22m thick). Below Subsoil L1001 was the natural, L1002, a mid yellowish red, friable, sandy gravel (0.26 - 0.67m below the present day ground surface).

8.2 In the southern sector of the site (Trenches 6 – 7) uppermost was Topsoil L1000, a mid – dark grey brown, friable, sandy silt (0.10 – 0.23m thick). L1000 overlay Subsoil L1001 (0.06 – 0.20m thick). Below Subsoil L1001 was the natural, L1002, (0.25 - 0.40m below the present day ground surface).

9 DISCUSSION

9.2 The site lies in an area of archaeological potential. The gravels of major river valleys such as the Rivers Beane and Rib are known to have been preferentially settled in the early prehistoric period. A probable later Bronze Age field system has been identified along Sacombe Road and 800m to the south of the site in association with a group of deep shafts and enclosure with bank and internal ditch (HER 17997).

9.2 Previous archaeological investigation of the area surrounding the site is extensive, particularly in association with Rickney's Quarry, which lies 800m to the east-north-east of the site (HERs EHT4139, EHT4140, EHT4141, EHT4542, EHT6958, EHT7709, EHT7732 & EHT7931). More significantly, land at Sacombe Road has been subject to a geotechnical investigation (HER HT1565), evaluation (HER EHT6784) and area excavation (HER EHT7152).

9.3 In the event the evaluation revealed no archaeological features or finds. The site had been truncated when previously developed. No residual finds were present.

DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

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

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions would like to thank Tarmac for funding the archaeological trial trench evaluation, and Mr Bill Sinclair for his assistance on site. AS would like to acknowledge the assistance of the client's consultant, Dr Andy Richmond of Phoenix Consulting Archaeology.

AS is also pleased to acknowledge the staff of the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record, in particular Dr. Isobel Thompson. AS would also like to thank the staff of the Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies (HALS), based in County Hall, Hertford.

AS would like to acknowledge the input and advice of Ms Alison Tinniswood, HCC Historic Environment Advisor.

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**APPENDIX 1
CONTENTS OF THE ARCHIVE**

Records	Number
Brief	N
Specification	Y
Registers	Context, Photo, Digital Photo, Drawing
Context Sheets	8
ite drawings A1	-
Site drawings A3	1
Site drawings A4	-
Site photographs b/w	-
Site photographs colour slides	-
Digital Photographs	12

APPENDIX 2 HER SUMMARY SHEET

Site name and address:	<i>Land off Sacombe Road, Waterford Hamel, Hertford, Herts</i>
County: Herts	District: <i>East Herts</i>
Village/Town: Hertford	Parish: <i>Stapleford</i>
Planning application reference:	-
Client name/address/tel:	<i>Tarmac</i>
Nature of application:	<i>Residential</i>
Present land use:	<i>Quarry vehicle repair and storage depot</i>
Size of application area: c.135m ²	Size of area investigated <i>1 ha.</i>
NGR (8 figures):	TL 31850 14998
Site Code:	AS 1898
Site director/Organization	<i>Archaeological Solutions Ltd</i>
Type of work:	<i>Trial trench evaluation</i>
Date of work:	<i>11, 14, 15 August 2017</i>
Location of finds/Curating museum:	<i>Hertford</i>
Related HER Nos:	Periods represented: <i>Modern</i>
Relevant previous summaries/reports: -	-
Summary of fieldwork results:	<p><i>In August 2017, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological trial trench evaluation on land off Sacombe Road, Waterford Hamel, Hertford, Hertfordshire (NGR TL 31850 14998). The evaluation was carried out in anticipation of a planning condition attached to planning permission for an 'Eco' style residential development. It was required based on the advice of the Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Advisor (HCC HEA).</i></p> <p><i>The evaluation revealed no archaeological features or finds. The site was truncated. No residual finds were present.</i></p>
Author of summary: Katie Lee-Smith	Date of Summary: <i>August 2017</i>

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



1
View of Trench 1 looking north-east



2
View of Trench 2 looking north-west



3
View of Trench 3 looking north-west



4
View of Trench 4 looking north-west



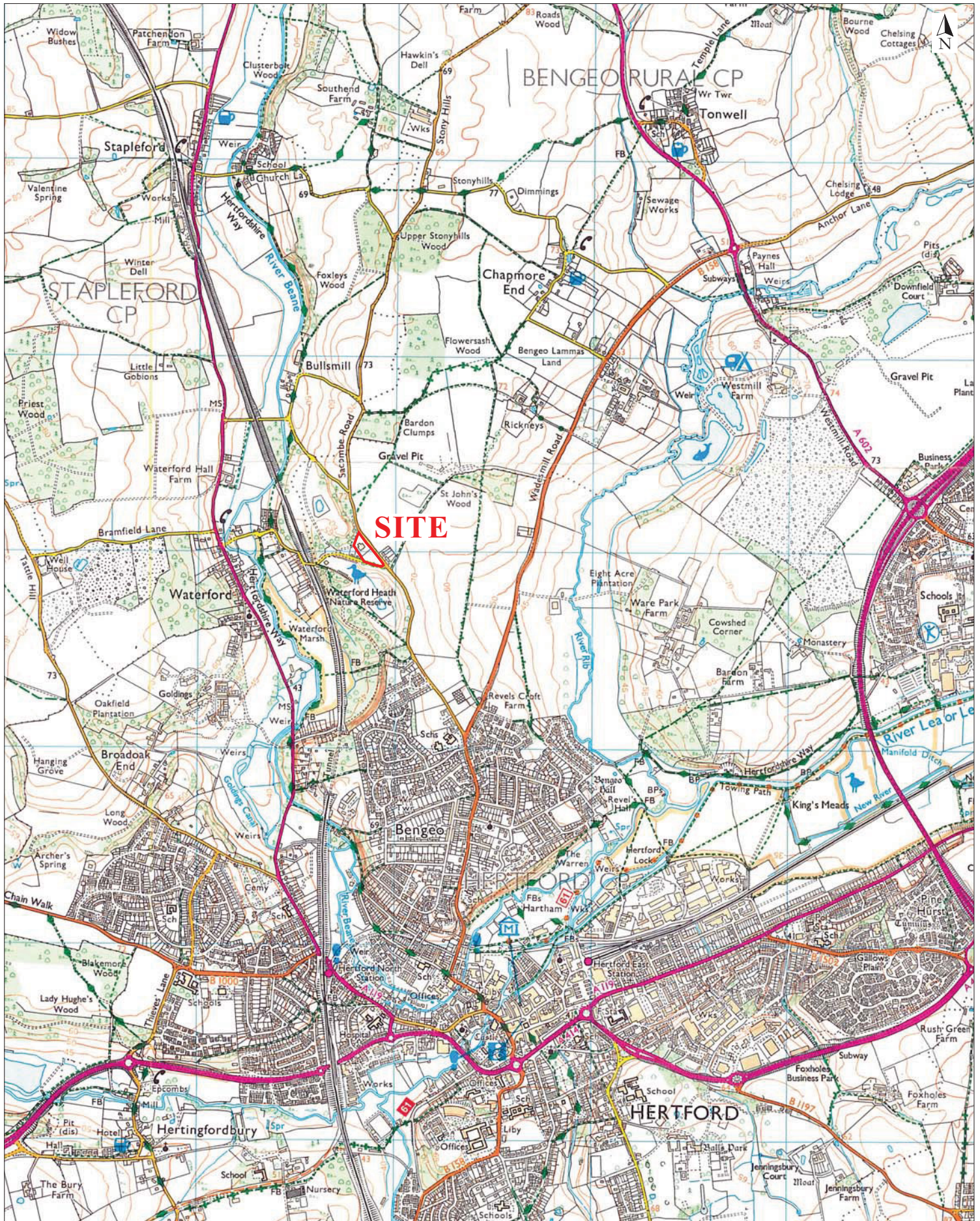
5
View of Trench 5 looking east



6
View of Trench 6 looking north-east

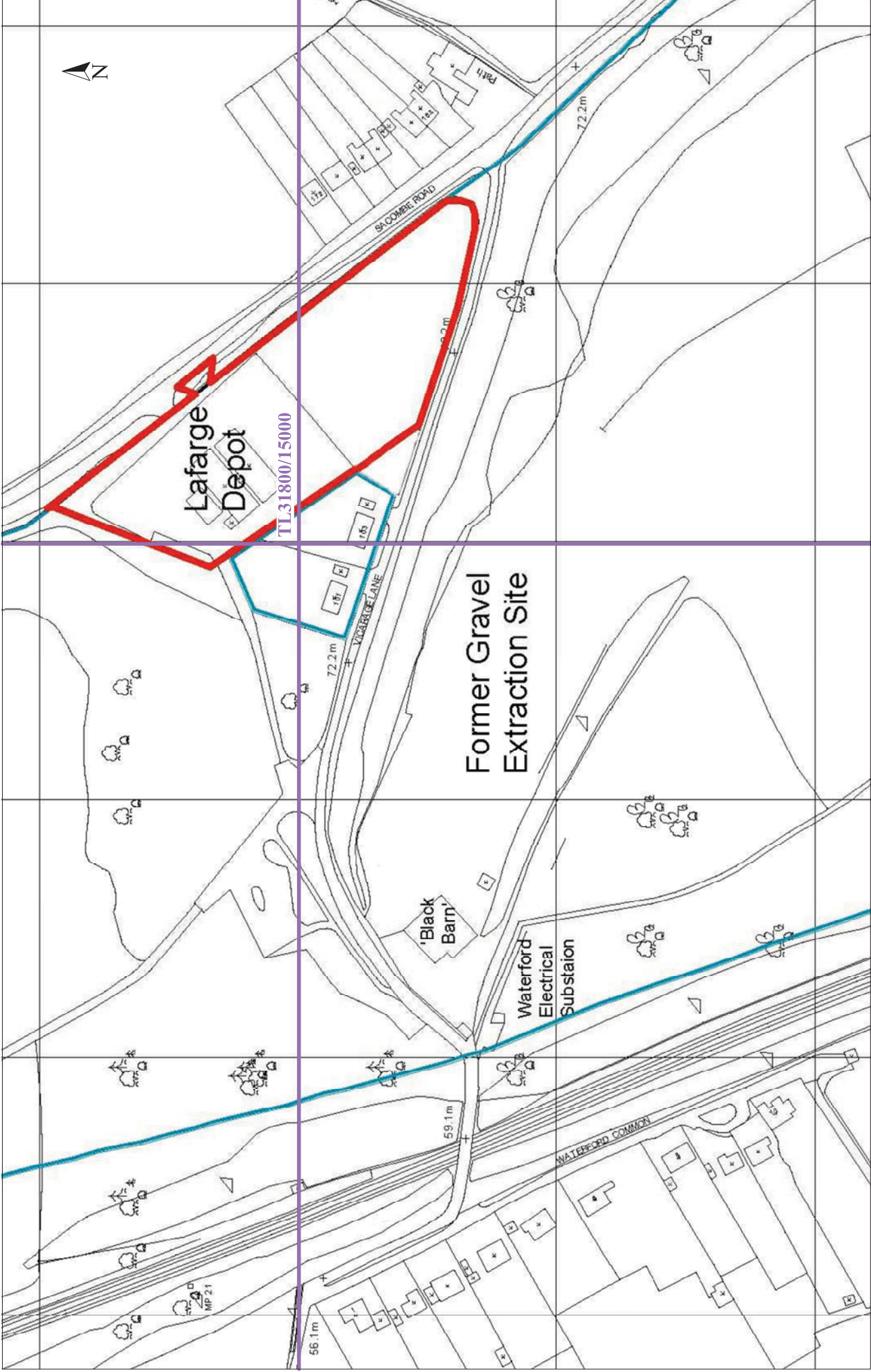


7
View of Trench 7 looking north-west



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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4
 Waterford, Hertfordshire (P7199)



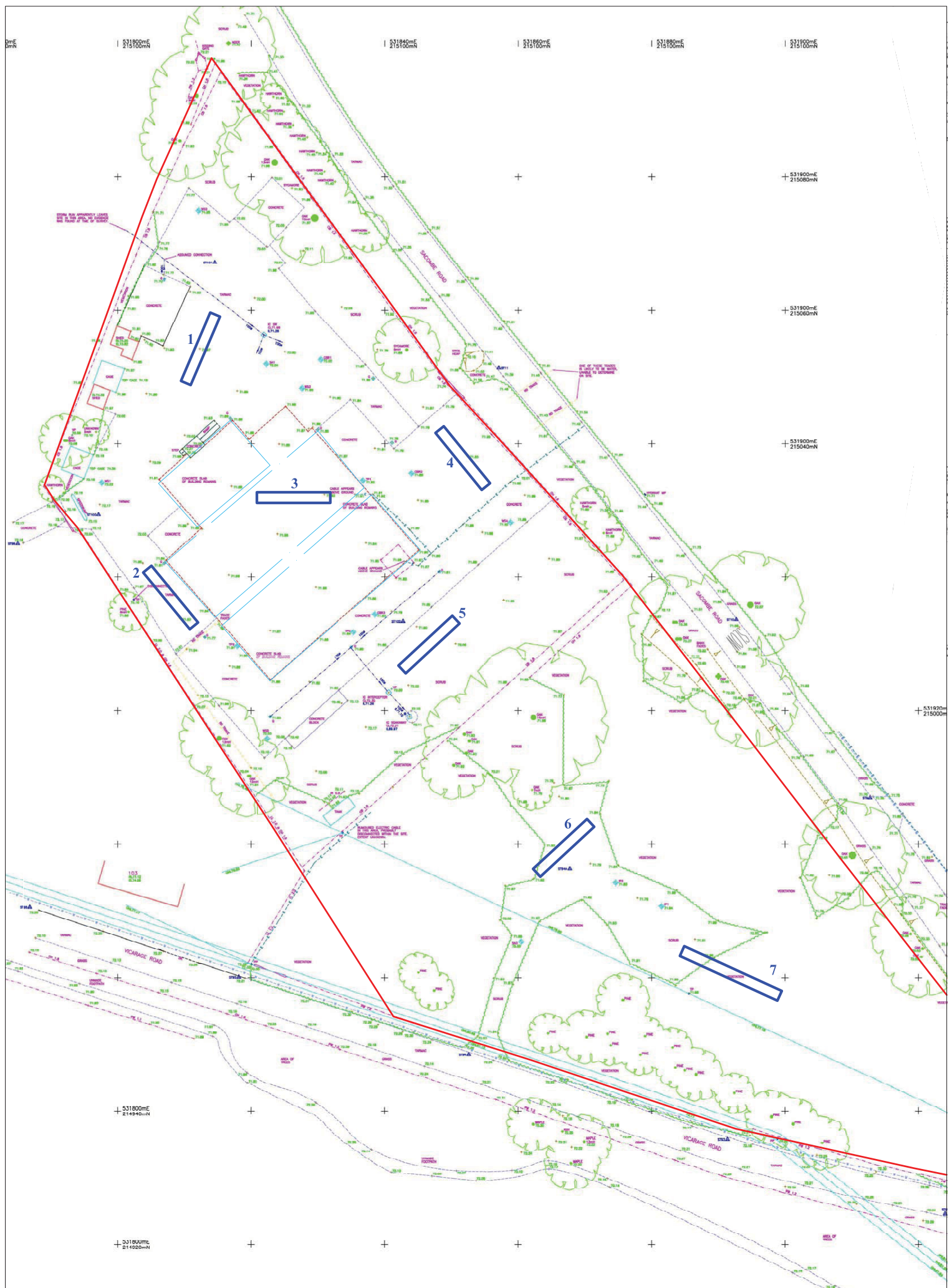
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Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan

Scale 1:2000 at A4

Waterford, Hertfordshire (P7199)





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Fig. 3 Trench locations on topo plan
 Scale 1:500 at A3
 Waterford, Hertfordshire (P7199)