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HUGHES WAREHOUSE, FISON WAY, THETFORD, NORFOLK

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING OF WORKS UNDER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SUPERVISION AND CONTROL

Authors:	Mark Blagg-Newsome (Fieldwork and report) Peter Thompson (Archaeological background) Thomas Light (Graphics)	
NGR: 586590 284480		Report No: 5432
District: Breckland		Site Code: ENF142206
Approved: Claire Halpin MCIfA		Project No: P7113
		Date: 4 October 2017

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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	<i>Hughes Warehouse, Fison Way, Thetford, Norfolk</i>		
<p><i>In May 2017 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an archaeological monitoring at Hughes Warehouse, Fison Way, Thetford, Norfolk (NGR 586590 284480; Figs. 1-2). The monitoring was undertaken in compliance with a condition attached to planning approval for an extension (Breckland Council Planning Reference 3PL/2016/1553/F), based on the advice of Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Service (NCC HES).</i></p> <p><i>The monitoring revealed no archaeological features or finds. The site stratigraphy was truncated and archaeological features if present may have been removed in the past, likely when the original depot was constructed. No residual archaeological finds were present.</i></p>			
Project dates	<i>May 2017</i>		
Previous work (Y/N/)	<i>N</i>	Future work	<i>N</i>
P. number	<i>7113</i>	Site code	<i>ENF142206</i>
Type of project	<i>Archaeological Investigation for Monitoring of Works Under Archaeological Supervision and Control</i>		
Site status	<i>-</i>		
Current land use	<i>Warehouse</i>		
Planned development	<i>Extension of existing warehouse</i>		
Main features (dates)	<i>None</i>		
Significant finds	<i>None</i>		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Norfolk</i>	<i>Breckland</i>	<i>Thetford</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Record</i>		
Post code (if known)			
Area of site	<i>1.75ha.</i>		
NGR	<i>586590 284480</i>		
Height AOD	<i>c.49m AOD</i>		
Brief issued by	<i>Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Service</i>		
Project supervisor	<i>Archaeological Solutions Ltd</i>		
Funded by	<i>Munnings Construction Limited</i>		
Full title	<i>Hughes Warehouse, Fison Way, Thetford, Norfolk, Archaeological Investigation for Monitoring of Works Under Archaeological Supervision and Control</i>		
Authors	<i>Blagg-Newsome, M.</i>		
Report No.	<i>5432</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>October 2017</i>		

HUGHES WAREHOUSE, FISON WAY, THETFORD, NORFOLK

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING OF WORKS UNDER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SUPERVISION AND CONTROL

SUMMARY

In May 2017 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an archaeological monitoring at Hughes Warehouse, Fison Way, Thetford, Norfolk (NGR 586590 284480; Figs. 1-2). The monitoring was undertaken in compliance with a condition attached to planning approval for an extension (Breckland Council Planning Reference 3PL/2016/1553/F), based on the advice of Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Service (NCC HES).

The site is in an area of archaeological significance. The prehistoric Icknield Way ran close to the east of the Hughes site (NHER 1398). Bronze Age round barrows and cremations are known from further north on Gallows Hill (NHER 5744, 5853). A Romano-British temple was located some 300m north of the Hughes site, and the 'Thetford hoard' and two coin hoards have been located in the vicinity centred on Gallows Hill (NHER 5853, 16462, 14825). Middle Iron Age pits and other prehistoric finds and multi-period features have been identified north of the site (NHER 38138, 32116, 36794, 37306), and a Romano-British field system is located to the west (NHER 30258). A Post-medieval brickworks existed approximately 150m south-west of the site (NHER 5944).

The monitoring revealed no archaeological features or finds. The site stratigraphy was truncated and archaeological features if present may have been removed in the past, likely when the original depot was constructed. No residual archaeological finds were present.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In May 2017 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an archaeological monitoring at Hughes Warehouse, Fison Way, Thetford, Norfolk (NGR 586590 284480; Figs. 1-2). The monitoring was undertaken in compliance with a condition attached to planning approval for an extension (Breckland Council Planning Reference 3PL/2016/1553/F), based on the advice of Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Service (NCC HES).

1.2 The monitoring was undertaken in response to advice from and a generic brief for a programme of works under archaeological supervision

and control issued by Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Service (NCC HES). It was undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (specification) prepared by AS (dated 13th March 2017), and approved by NCC HES. The project followed the procedures outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct, Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief* (2014). It also adhered to the relevant sections of *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).

1.3 The requirements of the project were:

- to ensure the archaeological excavation and 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;
- to secure the full analysis and interpretation of the site archive and the appropriate publication of the project results, if required; and
- to secure the analysis, 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 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 The site is located on an Industrial Estate in the north-west of Thetford. It comprises the premises of Hughes Electrical Depot off Fison Way which encloses 1.75 ha, and it is proposed to extend the existing building at its north-east end.

3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

3.1 The site is located near the end of a spur with the meandering Little Ouse river flowing 1.3km to the west and south. The local soils are characterised as deep well drained sandy soils, very acid in places with subsurface pan. The superficial geology is Croxton Sand and Gravels which overlie the solid geology comprising the Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Prehistoric

4.1 Palaeolithic tools have been recovered from the local river terraces and from closer by in areas to the south-west and north-east of the site (NHER 59573, 56290). Thetford is located on the north-south running prehistoric Icknield Way, and the town probably originated owing to the presence of three fords crossed by this route. The approximate course of the ancient trackway passes just to the east of the site (NHER 1398). The nationally important Neolithic flint mines of Grimes Graves are located approximately 7km to the north-west. A possible Bronze Age round barrow is located 150m to the north of the site, another barrow was originally located adjacent to the first (NHER 5744).

Iron Age

4.2 During the Early Iron Age a double ditched enclosure was built at the site of Thetford Castle between two fords, which later formed the outer bailey of the medieval fortification (NHER 5747). Middle Iron Age pits were excavated at Fison's Way and Howlett Way approximately 350m north of the site (NHER 38138). Iron Age to Roman linear features and a possible enclosure were also identified here. A prehistoric struck flint and post-medieval drains were identified in a pipe trench immediately north of the Hughes site (NHER 32116), and undated linear features were identified in

the same area (NHER 36794). Neolithic flint flakes and burnt flints have been excavated just to the north of these features, off Howlett Way (NHER 37306).

Romano-British

4.3 At Gallows Hill, a Romano-British temple complex was identified in an area beyond Wyatt Way approximately 200m to the north of the site, which is now largely built over (NHER 5853). Aerial photography followed by excavation identified a large rectangular enclosure interpreted as a Romano-British temple, which had three phases of activity during the Iron Age to Roman periods. The 4th century Thetford Treasure now in the British Museum also came from this vicinity which included gold jewellery and silver spoons and strainers possibly associated with wine drinking. The hoard is likely to represent either a votive deposit or was concealed in a time of crisis. A Late Iron Age mint and several Bronze Age cremations were also identified at the Gallows Hill site. Two hoards of Roman silver coins also dated to the 4th century were excavated to the north-west of the Hughes site, and so not far from the location of the Thetford hoard (NHER 16462, 14825). Romano-British field systems and a malting/drying kiln were identified at Alpha Business Park to the west of the Hughes site (NHER 30258). A Romano-British and late Roman cemetery were excavated to the south-east of Thetford, near the castle (NHER 17269).

Anglo-Saxon and Medieval

4.4 Early Saxon *grubenhauser* have been excavated in the area of the late Roman cemetery (NHR 17269). Early Saxon (and Medieval) settlement has also been excavated in the vicinity of Red Castle in Thetford, and 7th-8th century occupation has been identified on the south side of the town close to St Margaret's cemetery, and also beside Brandon Road. The earliest mention of Thetford (*Theoford*) is in the late 9th century and means 'public or peoples ford'. At this time the town was developing fast, and in the 10th and 11th centuries it was the sixth largest town in England with its own mint and pottery kilns, and was the seat of the Bishop of East Anglia. It was a prime target during the Danish invasions and two battles were fought outside the town in the 11th century.

Medieval & Post-medieval

4.5 As mentioned the medieval motte and bailey castle was built on the site of the Iron Age fort and is a Scheduled Monument (NHER 5747). However, Thetford fell into decline during the later medieval period partly due to the bishop moving his seat to Norwich.

Post-medieval to Modern

4.6 The site of a Post-medieval brickworks is shown on an 18th century map located approximately 150m south-west of the site (NHER 5944). A WWII pillbox was located 80m to the west of the site (NHER 54528), and a

WWII army camp and airfield was located some 600m to the east (NHER 24572).

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 The ground reduction and excavation associated with the construction of the extension was undertaken under close archaeological observation (Fig.2).

5.2 The overburden was removed under close archaeological supervision and control using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. All subsequent excavation was undertaken by hand

5.3 Exposed sections were cleaned and examined for archaeological features. Deposits were recorded using *pro forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed as appropriate. Open trenches and excavated spoil were manually/ visually searched and scanned by metal detector to enhance the recovery of archaeological finds.

6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

Sample sections were drawn and are presented below:

Sample Section 1 (Fig. 2)

<i>Sample section 1:</i> <i>0.00m = 49.19m AOD</i>		
0.00 - 0.08m	L1000	Made Ground. Friable, mid reddish brown silty sand with occasional small angular flints
0.08m+	L1002	Natural deposits. Friable, light yellow orange sand and gravel

Sample Section 2 (Fig. 2)

<i>Sample section 1:</i> <i>0.00m = 49.11m AOD</i>		
0.00 - 0.16m	L1000	Made Ground. Friable, mid reddish brown silty sand with occasional small angular flints
0.16m+	L1002	Natural deposits. Friable, light yellow orange sand and gravel

Sample Section 3 (Fig. 2)

<i>Sample section 3:</i> <i>0.00m = 48.79m AOD</i>		
0.00 - 0.18m	-	Concrete
0.18 - 0.86m	L1000	Made Ground. Friable, mid reddish brown silty sand with occasional small angular flints
0.86m+	L1002	Natural deposits. Friable, light yellow orange sand and gravel

Sample Section 4 (Fig. 2)

<i>Sample section 4:</i> <i>0.00m = 48.80m AOD</i>		
0.00 - 0.20m	L1001	Made Ground. Gravel
0.20 - 0.24m	L1000	Made Ground. Friable, mid reddish brown silty sand with occasional small angular flints
0.24m+	L1002	Natural deposits. Friable, light yellow orange sand and gravel

Description: No archaeological features or finds were present.

7 CONFIDENCE RATING

7.1 Within the parameters of the investigation it is not felt that any factors restricted the identification of archaeological features or finds.

8 DISCUSSION

8.1 The site is in an area of archaeological significance. The prehistoric Icknield Way ran close to the east of the Hughes site (NHER 1398). Bronze Age round barrows and cremations are known from further north on Gallows Hill (NHER 5744, 5853). A Romano-British temple was located some 300m north of the Hughes site, and the 'Thetford hoard' and two coin hoards have been located in the vicinity centred on Gallows Hill (NHER 5853, 16462, 14825). Middle Iron Age pits and other prehistoric finds and multi-period features have been identified north of the site (NHER 38138, 32116, 36794, 37306), and a Romano-British field system is located to the west (NHER 30258). A post-medieval brickworks existed approximately 150m south-west of the site (NHER 5944).

8.2 The monitoring revealed no archaeological features or finds. The site stratigraphy was truncated and archaeological features if present may have been removed in the past, likely when the original depot was constructed. No residual archaeological finds were present.

10 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

10.1 Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited at the Norwich Castle Museum. The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross referenced and checked for internal consistency.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) would like to thank Munnings Construction Limited for funding the works and for assistance (in particular Mr Phil Munnings for assistance) and Paul Robinson Partnership (UK) LLP for assistance.

AS is also pleased to acknowledge the input and advice of Mr David Robertson of Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Service, and Mr Peter Watkins for providing the HER information.

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OASIS ID: archaeo17-300635

Project details

Project name	Hughes Warehouse, Fison Way, Thetford, Norfolk
Short description of the project	In May 2017 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an archaeological monitoring at Hughes Warehouse, Fison Way, Thetford, Norfolk (NGR 586590 284480; Figs. 1-2). The monitoring was undertaken in compliance with a condition attached to planning approval for an extension (Breckland Council Planning Reference 3PL/2016/1553/F), based on the advice of Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Service (NCC HES). The monitoring revealed no archaeological features or finds. The site stratigraphy was truncated and archaeological features if present may have been removed in the past, likely when the original depot was constructed. No residual archaeological finds were present.
Project dates	Start: 01-05-2017 End: 31-05-2017
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	P7113 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	ENF142206 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 3 - Built over
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches","Targeted Trenches"
Development type	Small-scale extensions (e.g. garages, porches, etc.)
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	Pre-application

Project location

Country	England
Site location	NORFOLK BRECKLAND THETFORD Hughes Warehouse, Fison Way, Thetford, Norfolk

Study area 1.75 Hectares
 Site coordinates TL 86570 84520 52.426337628876 0.744357271452 52 25 34 N 000 44 39 E Point
 Height OD / Depth Min: 49m Max: 49m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Archaeological Solutions Ltd
 Project brief originator Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Service
 Project design originator Jon Murray
 Project director/manager Jon Murray
 Project supervisor Archaeological Solutions Ltd

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No
 Digital Archive recipient Norwich Castle Museum
 Digital Contents "Survey"
 Digital Media available "Images raster / digital photography", "Survey", "Text"
 Paper Archive recipient Norwich Castle Museum
 Paper Contents "Survey"
 Paper Media available "Drawing", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Survey "

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



1
View of Site looking south



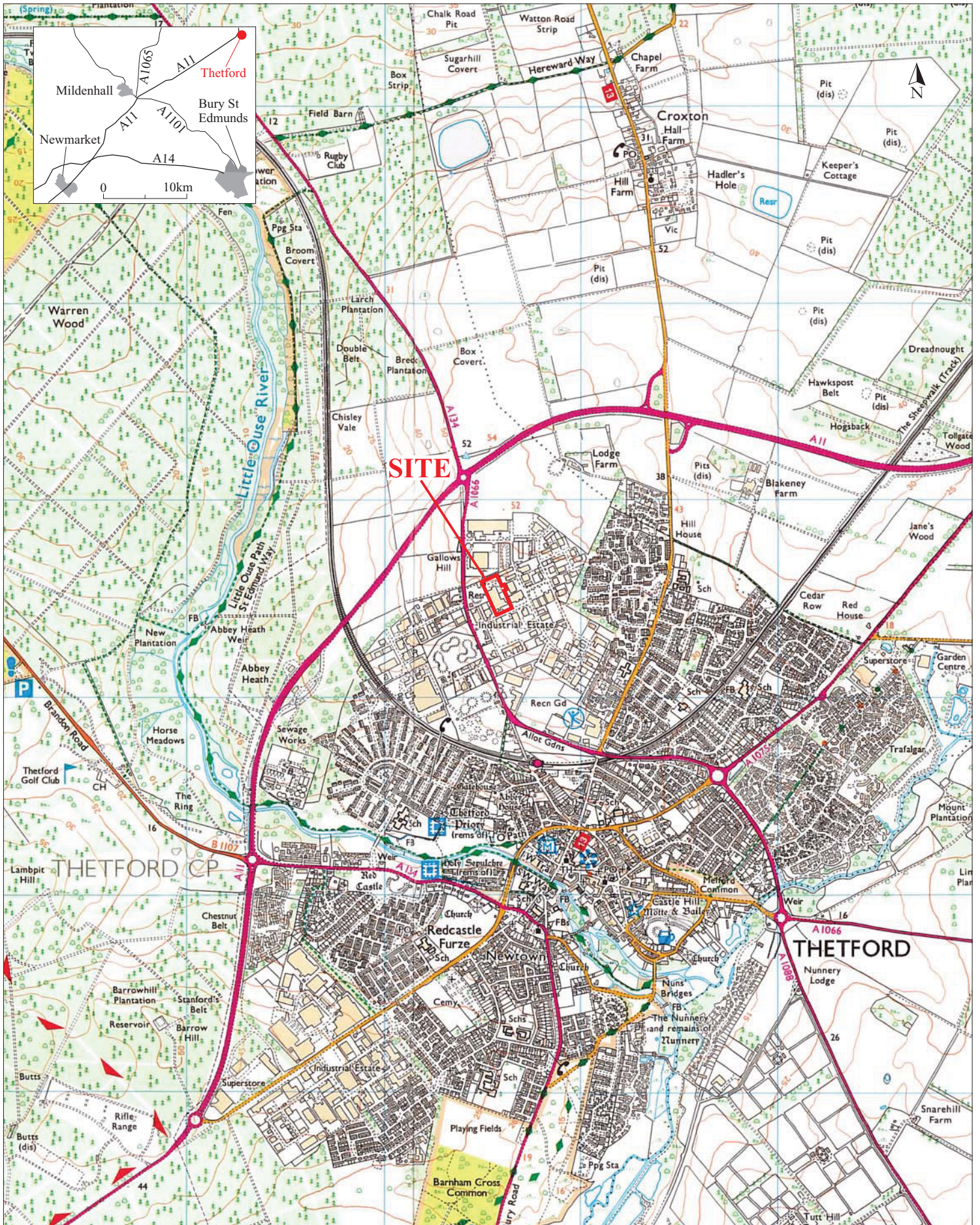
2
Sample Section 1 looking north-west



3
Sample Section 2 looking south-west

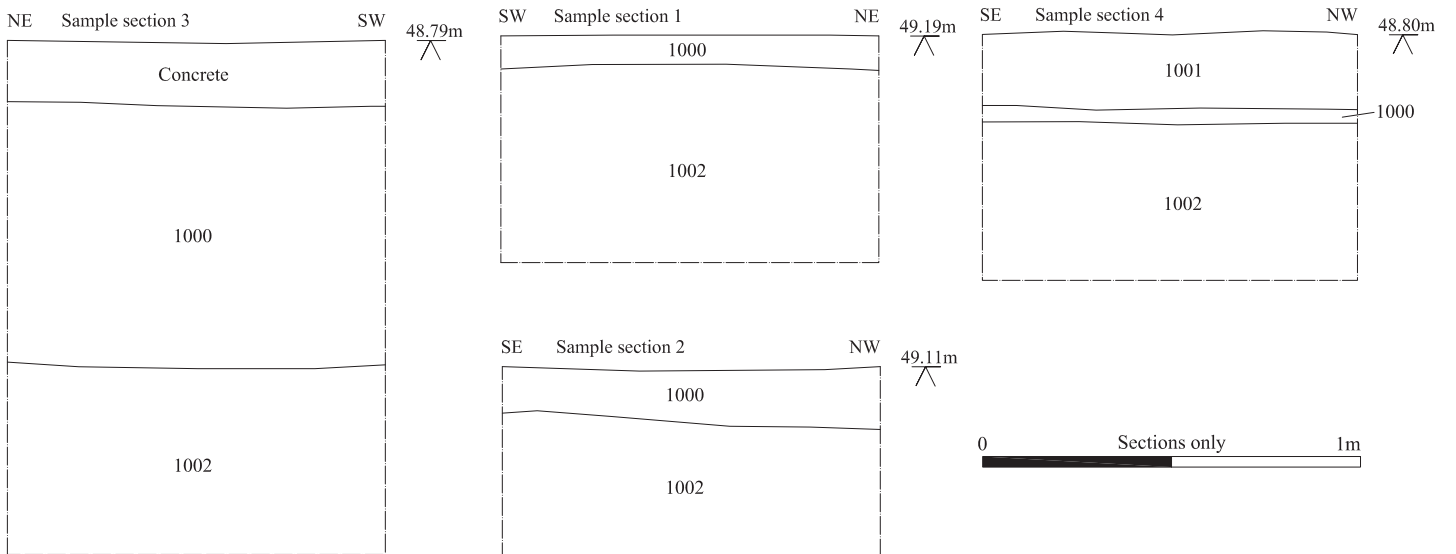
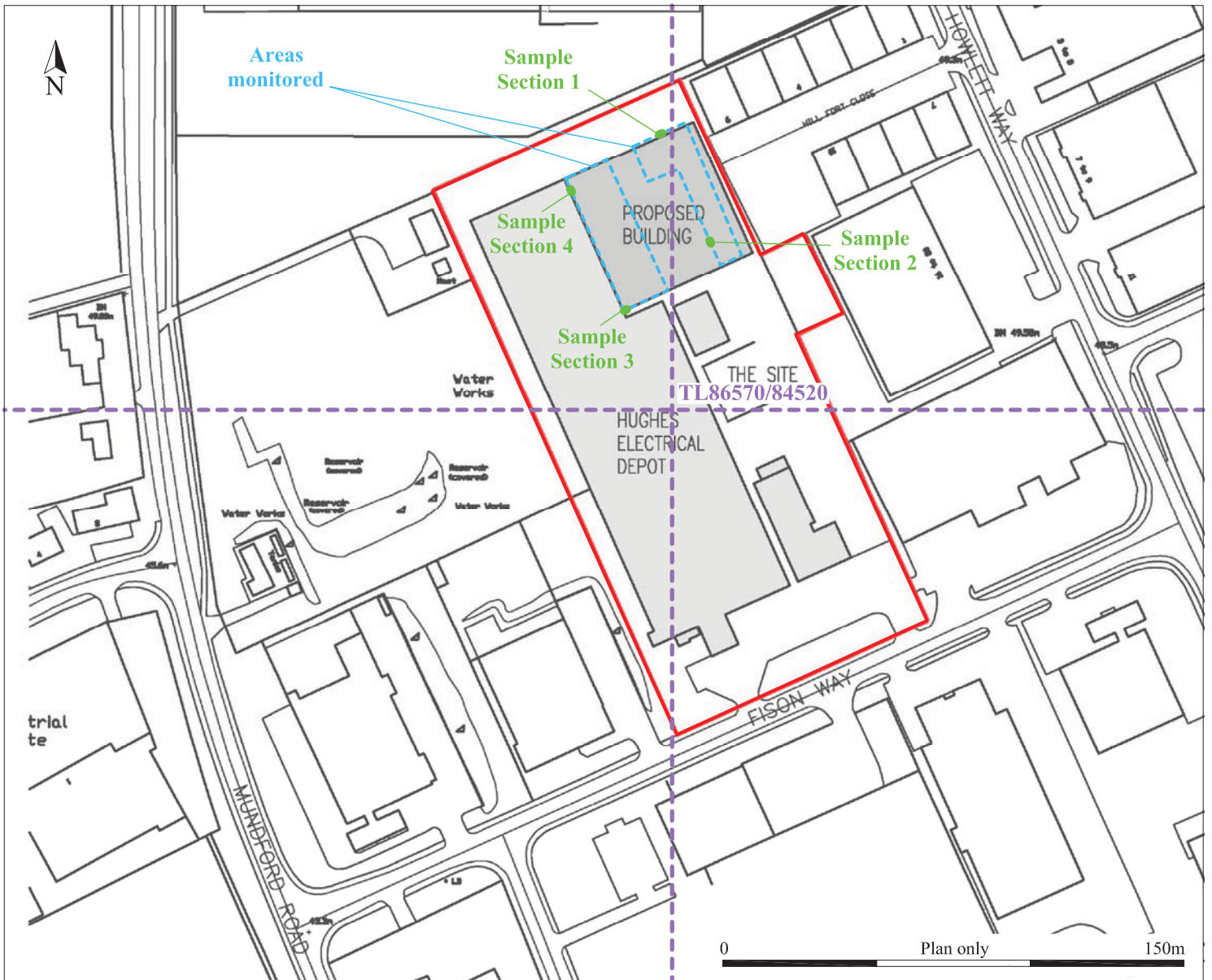


4
Sample Section 4 looking south-west



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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4
 Fison Way, Thetford, Norfolk (P7113)



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Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan
 Scale 1:2000 and 1:20 at A4
 Fison Way, Thetford, Norfolk (P7113)