
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

**PROPOSED DRIVEWAY,
26 COPPER BEECH CLOSE, BOX LANE,
BOXMOOR, HERTFORDSHIRE, HP3 0DG**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
MONITORING AND RECORDING**

HER Enquiry No. 18/16

Authors: Andrew A. S. Newton (fieldwork & report) Lauren Wilson (background research)	
NGR: TL 03615 05668	Report No: 5271
District: Dacorum	Site Code: AS 1861
Approved: Claire Halpin MCIfA	Project No: 6655
	Date: 14 December 2016

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Desk-based assessments and environmental impact assessments
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Trial trench evaluations
Geophysical surveys
Archaeological monitoring and recording
Archaeological excavations
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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	<i>Proposed driveway, 26 Copper Beech Close, Box Lane, Hertfordshire</i>		
<p><i>In July 2016 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an archaeological monitoring and recording at 26 Copper Beech Close, Box Lane, Boxmoor, Hertfordshire (NGR TL 03615 05668). The monitoring was undertaken during groundworks associated with the proposed new driveway. It was required in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning approval requiring a programme of archaeological work (Dacorum Borough Council Planning Ref. 4/00261/16/FHA).</i></p> <p><i>In the event, no archaeological finds or features were present but modern deposits, possibly associated with levelling to facilitate the construction of the existing house, were identified.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	24 th & 25 th May 2016		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	N	Future work	N
P. number	6655	Site code	AS 1861
Type of project	<i>Archaeological monitoring & recording</i>		
Site status	-		
Current land use	<i>Residential</i>		
Planned development	<i>New driveway</i>		
Main features (+dates)	-		
Significant finds (+dates)	-		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Hertfordshire</i>	<i>Dacorum</i>	<i>Boxmoor</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>Hertfordshire HER</i>		
Post code (if known)	<i>HP3 0DG</i>		
Area of site	<i>c.1200m²</i>		
NGR	<i>TL 03615 05668</i>		
Height AOD (min/max)	<i>c.100-105m AOD</i>		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Advisor</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>Andrew A.S. Newton</i>		
Funded by	<i>Mr & Mrs Neverton</i>		
Full title	<i>Proposed Driveway, 26 Copper Beech Close, Box Lane, Hertfordshire. Archaeological Monitoring and Recording</i>		
Authors	<i>Andrew A. S. Newton MPhil, Lauren Wilson MA</i>		
Report no.	<i>5271</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>December 2016</i>		

PROPOSED DRIVEWAY, 26 COPPER BEECH CLOSE, BOX LANE, BOXMOOR, HERTFORDSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING

SUMMARY

In July 2016 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an archaeological monitoring and recording at 26 Copper Beech Close, Box Lane, Boxmoor, Hertfordshire (NGR TL 03615 05668). The monitoring was undertaken during groundworks associated with the proposed new driveway. It was required in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning approval requiring a programme of archaeological work (Dacorum Borough Council Planning Ref. 4/00261/16/FHA).

In the event, no archaeological finds or features were present but modern deposits, possibly associated with levelling to facilitate the construction of the existing house, were identified.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In July 2016 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an archaeological monitoring and recording at 26 Copper Beech Close, Box Lane, Boxmoor, Hertfordshire (NGR TL 03615 05668; Figs.1 - 2). The monitoring was commissioned by Mr Graham French on behalf of Mr & Mrs Neverton and was undertaken during the groundworks associated with a proposed new driveway. It was required in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning approval requiring a programme of archaeological work (Dacorum Borough Council Planning Ref. 4/00261/16/FHA).

1.2 The monitoring was carried out in accordance with advice issued by Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Advisor (HCC HEA) and a specification compiled by AS (dated 29th March 2016) and approved by HCC HEA and the LPA. It followed the procedures outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct, Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Monitoring* (2014). It also adhered to the relevant sections of *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).

1.3 The objectives of the project of archaeological monitoring and recording were:

- Archaeological monitoring and recording of all groundworks associated with the new driveway
- The provision of an adequately detailed project report
- The dissemination and publication of the project results, as appropriate

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 lies on the periphery of settlement in the residential area of Hemel Hempstead known as Boxmoor, to the south-west of the main town. Boxmoor became subsumed by the urban sprawl of Hemel Hempstead in the mid-20th century and as such comprises mostly Victorian residential properties split from the main town by the river, the railway line and the A41 trunk road.

2.2 The site is roughly rectangular and comprises a large detached residential property with Nos. 28 and 24a to the west and east. The property is fronted by Copper Beech Close to the south and by a wooded area known as Thomas' Wood to the north.

3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

3.1 The site lies between c.100-105m AOD on the southern side of the River Bulbourne valley. The land steeply rises to the south-west to reach a

height of 150m AOD in c.700m, and falls to the north-east towards the River which lies at a distance of c.500m from the site.

3.2 The underlying geology consists of the Holywell Nodular Chalk Formation and New Pit Chalk Formation, formed in the Cretaceous Period. The overlying soil is a freely draining, slightly acidic but base-rich soil.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Prehistory

4.1 Finds of this date are limited in the surrounding area; struck flints, two blade cores and one sherd of pottery of late Neolithic or early Bronze Age date have been found during an evaluation adjacent to Boxmoor Roman villa c.280m to the east of the site (HHER 11687). Also recorded are Mesolithic to Bronze Age struck flints and pottery in the garden of 7 Box Lane c.100m to the east of the site (HHER 31097). Slightly further afield, part of a buried prehistoric land surface was uncovered during evaluations prior to the construction of the A41. Peat deposits, up to two metres deep, infilled four periglacial features known as pingos c.430m to the north-east (HHER 11481).

Romano-British

4.2 The Scheduled Ancient Monument of Boxmoor House Roman Villa lies only c.150m to the east of the site (1015488). First excavated in the 1840s it is a modest villa with hypocaust. The earliest building was of timber and dated to the 1st - 2nd century AD. This was then destroyed by fire and replaced by a cob building with later evidence of rebuilding. By the 4th century it had been reduced to half its original size before being abandoned in the mid-4th century (HHER 72). Building development further to the east recorded ditches, a trackway, wall foundations and oven all likely to be associated with the villa (HHER 11687). A Roman ditch and postholes directly to the south of the villa at 7 Box Lane are also thought to relate to the villa complex (HHER 31098). The upper fill of this ditch contained pottery, nails, metalworking debris, animal bone and flints. Two Roman cremations with grave goods were found during works to the Independent Chapel on Box Lane in 1837, c.90m to the east of the site (HHER 516).

4.3 An evaluation c.200m to the north of the site found several ditches and beam slots of a timber building of Roman origin. This building is postulated to be part of the Boxmoor Roman Villa complex with finds including pottery and glass sherds (HHER 11911). Separated from the above burial site and only 50m to the east of this building is recorded a single un-urned cremation (HHER 12807). Also in the archaeological record is a single key, dug up in a garden in 1903 c.270m to the north-west of the site (HHER 515).

4.4 This concentration of Roman activity was stimulated by the presence of the one of the main routes from Verulamium running through the Bulbourne

valley c.750m to the north of the site (HHER 4595). The route is engineered from an old Iron Age trackway and follows the old A41, it is largely unknown within Hemel Hempstead itself but can be largely postulated to follow the course of the River Bulbourne (HHER 4595).

Medieval

4.5 In stark comparison the evidence for the medieval period is limited. A disc brooch, considered to be of Anglo-Saxon date and now held in the Ashmolean Museum was found c.200m to the north-east of the site (HHER 1606).

Post-medieval

4.6 There is no evidence in the archaeological record to suggest Boxmoor as a village before the building of the railway. In the 1830s the London and Birmingham Railway was forced to build the track a mile west of Hemel Hempstead. The station offered fast commuting to London and stimulated the growth of a small Victorian housing boom to the south-west of the station. Boxmoor House c.100m to the east of the site incorporated a Tudor-period farmhouse into the 1840s Victorian house (HHER 12852), latterly it was used as a school and a convalescent home. Box Lane Court was also extended in the 19th century (HHER 17608).

Modern

4.7 For the modern period, the HER is dominated by the presence of World War II camps at Pixies Hill c.900m to the north-west and at Felden c.800m to the south-west (HHER 12339). The Felden camp was a prisoner of war camp, whereas Pixies Hill was a military camp utilised by the Scout and Guide movement in the 1960s. Also during this period Boxmoor was absorbed by the expanding urban development of Hemel Hempstead. Within close proximity to the site, the remnants of a World War II anti-tank trap lie in 7 Box Lane's rear garden c.100m to the east (HHER 31096). No. 26 first appears on cartographic sources in the 1940s, suggesting that the house was part of the later mid-20th century expansion of Boxmoor (www.old-maps.co.uk).

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 The principal element monitored was the mechanical excavation and reduction of the existing ground surface in order to make provision for the new drive (Fig. 3).

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 area of the groundworks were recorded in sample sections presented below (Fig.4).

<i>Sample Section 1 (DP 3)</i> <i>0.00 = 103.85m AOD</i>		
0.00-0.14m	L1000	Topsoil. Mid grey firm silt with occasional small sub-rounded stones/flint
0.14-0.32m	L1001	Subsoil. Light to mid grey firm slightly clayey silt with occasional sub-rounded stones/flint
0.32-0.69m	L1002	Possible made ground. White to very light grey chalk rubble
0.69-0.96m	L1003	Subsoil. Mid grey brown firm silty clay with very occasional CBM fragments
0.96m +	L1004	Natural substrate. Firm white chalk

<i>Sample Section 2 (DP 4)</i> <i>0.00 = 104.55m AOD</i>		
0.00-0.20m	L1000	Topsoil. As above
0.20-0.54m	L1001	Subsoil. As above
0.54-0.99m	L1002	Possible made ground. As above
0.74-0.97m	L1005	Lens of yellow grey fine sand
0.99-1.42m	L1003	Subsoil. As above
1.42m +	L1004	Natural. As above

<i>Sample section 3 (DP 5)</i> <i>0.00 = 104.50m AOD</i>		
0.00-0.14m	L1001	Subsoil. As above
0.14-1.04m	L1002	Possible made ground. As above
1.04-1.23m	L1003	Subsoil. As above
1.23m +	L1004	Natural. As above

<i>Sample section 4 (DP 7)</i> <i>0.00 = 104.60m AOD</i>		
0.00-0.32m	L1000	Topsoil. As above
0.32-1.24m	L1003	Subsoil. As above
1.24m +	L1004	Natural. As above

<i>Sample section 5 (DP 8)</i> <i>0.00 = 103.85m AOD</i>		
0.00-0.27m	L1000	Topsoil. As above
0.27-0.88m	L1006	Subsoil. L1001 mixed through with frequent chalk rubble
0.88-1.54m	L1003	Subsoil. As above
1.54m +	L1004	Natural. As above

Description: No archaeological features or finds were present. Deposits in closer proximity to the house appeared to relate to levelling/terracing associated with the construction of the house.

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 natural substrate, L1004, was a firm/compact white chalk. This was overlain by subsoil L1003, a mid grey brown firm silty clay. The subsoil was, in turn, overlain by Topsoil L1000. In that part of the site closest to the existing house Subsoil L1003 was overlain by L1002, a white to very light grey chalk rubble, and L1001, a light to mid grey firm slightly clayey silt. These deposits were overlain by topsoil L1000

9 DISCUSSION

9.1 Despite the potential of the site to contain archaeological remains of Roman date, based on the proximity of Boxmoor House Roman Villa, no archaeological features, finds or deposits were recorded within the site.

9.2 The site displayed a basic tripartite stratigraphy of topsoil, subsoil, and natural substrate. In the area closest to the existing house additional layers were observed; L1002 appears to be a levelling layer, perhaps to facilitate the construction of the house at the crest of the naturally occurring slope.

10 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

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

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions would like to thank Mr & Mrs Neverton for funding the works and Mr Graham French 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.

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Gurney, D. 2003 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper no. 14

SSEW 1983 *Soil Survey of England and Wales: Soils of South East England (sheet 4)*. Harpenden, Rothamsted Experimental Station/Lawes Agricultural Trust

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 CONTENTS OF THE ARCHIVE

Records	Number
Brief	N
Specification	Y
Registers	4 (Context, Drawing, Drawing Sheet, Digital Photo)

Context Sheets	7
Site drawings A1	0
Site drawings A3	0
Site drawings A4	5
Site photographs b/w	0
Site photographs colour slides	0
Digital Photographs	15

APPENDIX 2 HER SUMMARY SHEET

Site name and address:	<i>26 Copper Beech Close, Box Lane, Hertfordshire, Hemel Hempstead</i>
County: Herts	District: Dacorum
Village/Town:	Parish: Little Munden
Planning application reference:	Dacorum Borough Council Planning Ref. 4/00261/16/FHA
Client name/address/tel:	Mr & Mrs Neverton
Nature of application:	Construction of new rear extension, new porch and conversion of outbuilding with new rear extension.
Present land use:	Garden
Size of application area: c.800m ²	Size of area investigated c.1200m ²
NGR (8 figures):	<i>TL 0361 0566</i>
Site Code:	AS 1861
Site director/Organization:	Archaeological Solutions Ltd
Type of work:	Archaeological Monitoring & Recording
Date of work:	24-25/5/2016
Location of finds/Curating museum:	Dacorum Museum
Related SMR Nos:	Periods represented: None
Relevant previous summaries/reports: -	-
Summary of fieldwork results:	<p><i>In May 2016 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an archaeological monitoring & recording at 26 Copper Beech Close, Box Lane, Boxmoor, Hertfordshire (NGR TL 03615 05668). The work was commissioned by Mr Graham French and was undertaken during groundworks associated with the proposed new driveway. The work was required in compliance with a planning consent condition on approval requiring a programme of archaeological work (Dacorum Borough Council Planning Ref. 4/00261/16/FHA).</i></p> <p><i>In the event, no archaeological finds or features were present but modern deposits, possibly associated with levelling to facilitate the construction of the existing house, were identified.</i></p>
Author of summary: A. A. S. Newton	Date of Summary: November 2016

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



DP 1. View NE across site road



DP 2. View SW across site from adjacent to existing house



DP 3. Sample Section 1. View NW



DP 4. Sample Section 2. View NW



DP 5. Sample Section 3. View NE



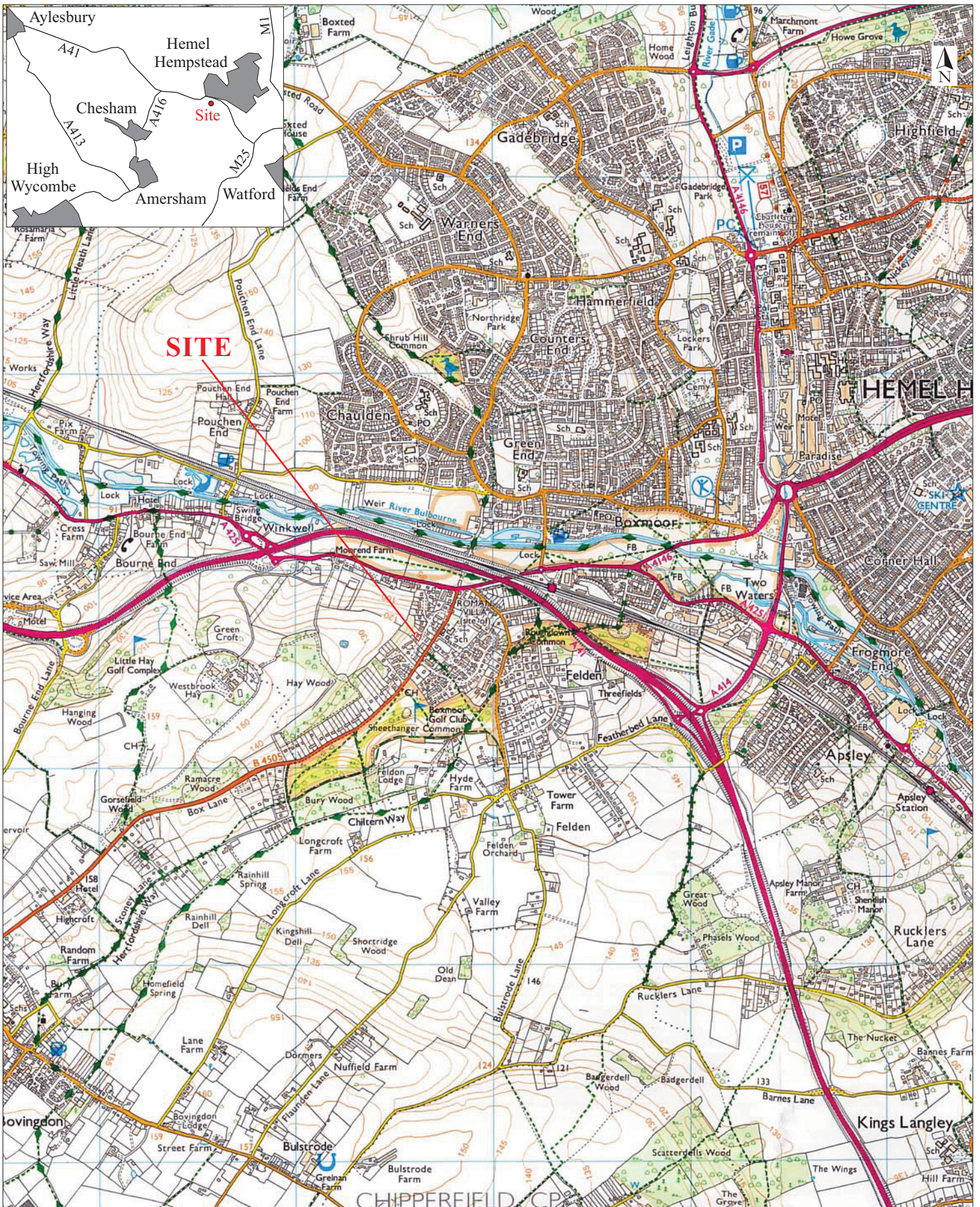
DP 6. View NE across site during ground reduction



DP 7. Sample Section 4. View N

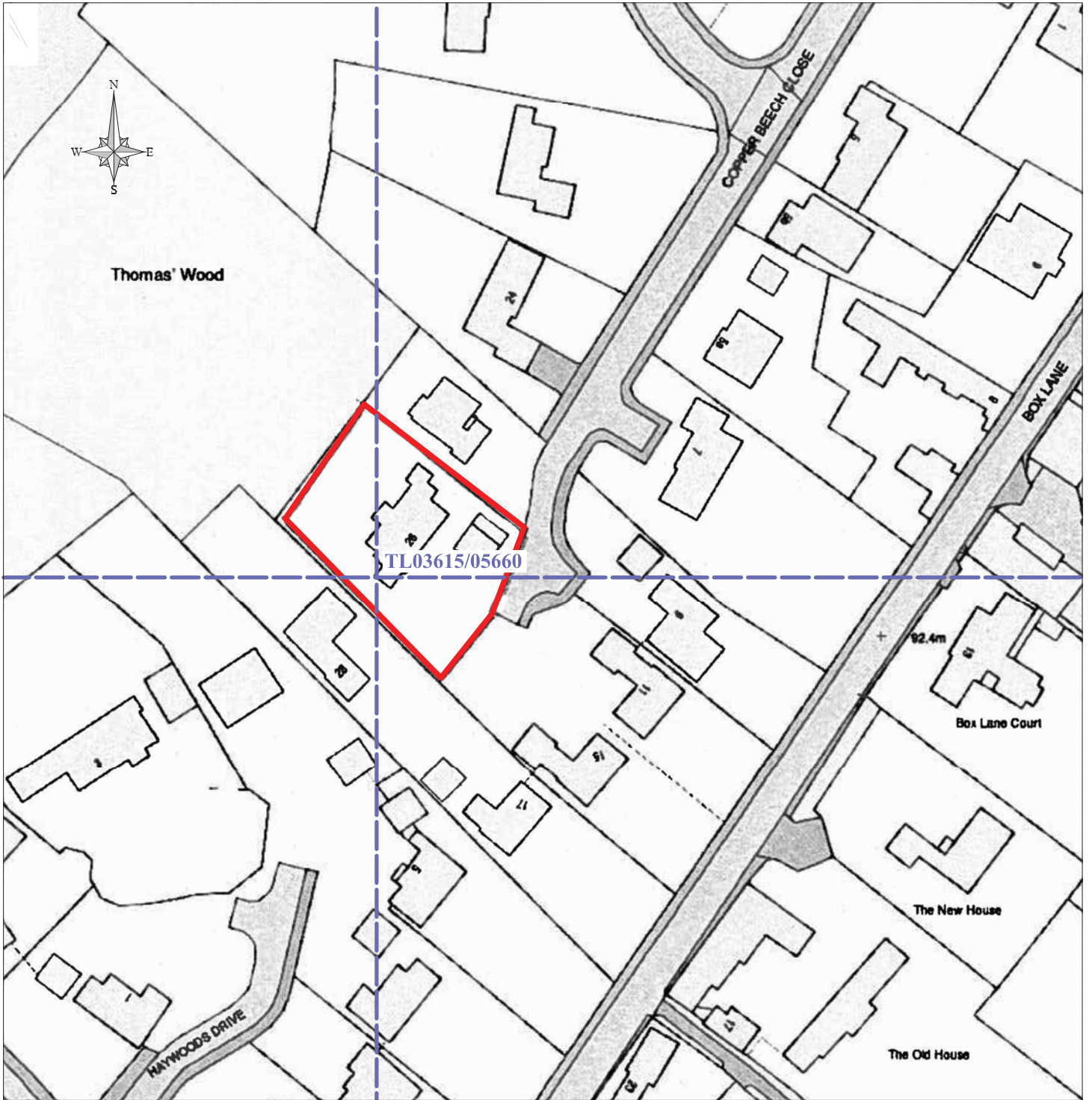


DP 8. Sample Section 5. View WNW



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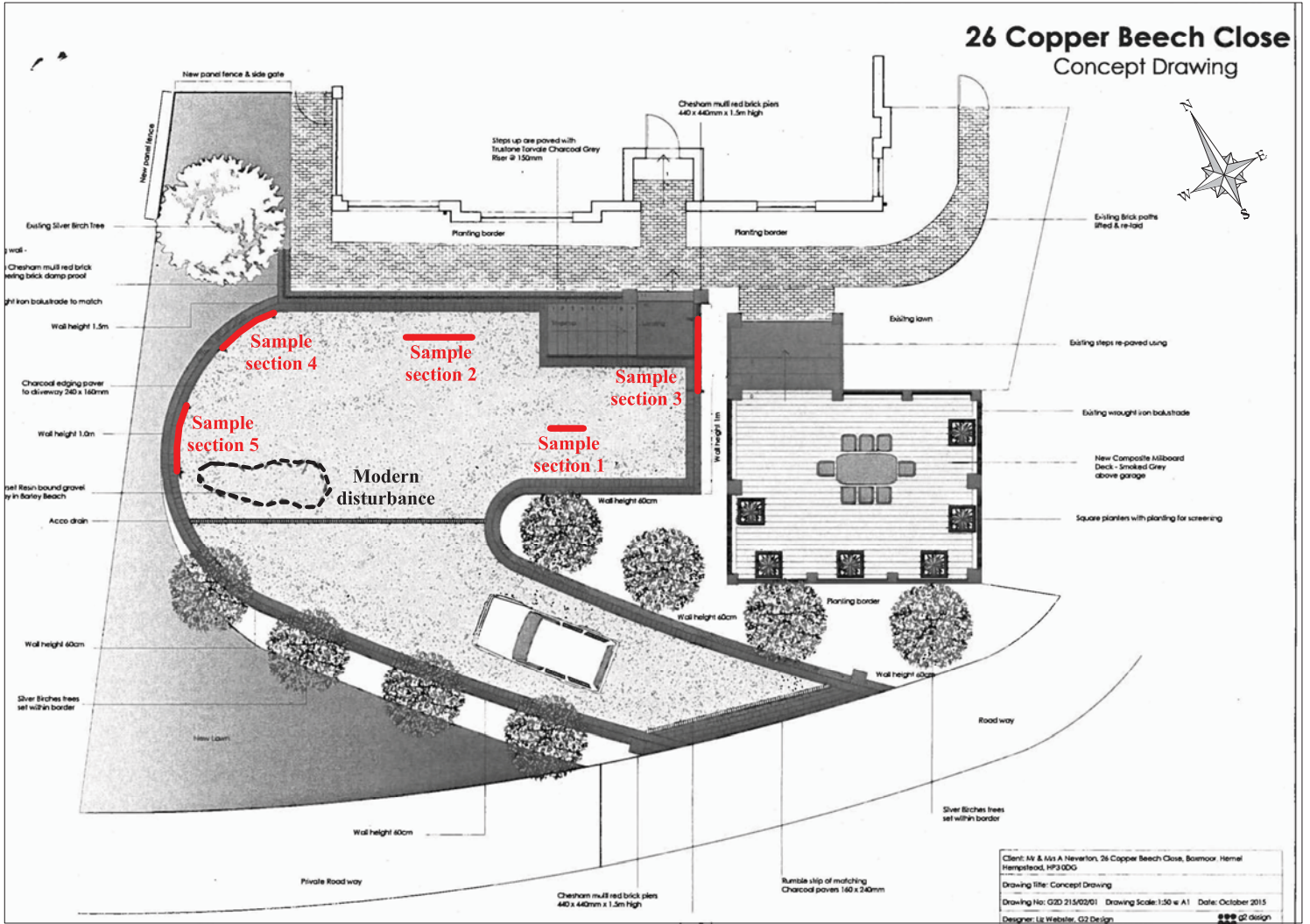
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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4
 26 Copper Beech Close, Boxmoor, Herts (P6615)



0 50m

<i>Archaeological Solutions Ltd</i>
Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan
Scale 1:1000 at A4
26 Copper Beech Close, Boxmoor, Herts (P6655)

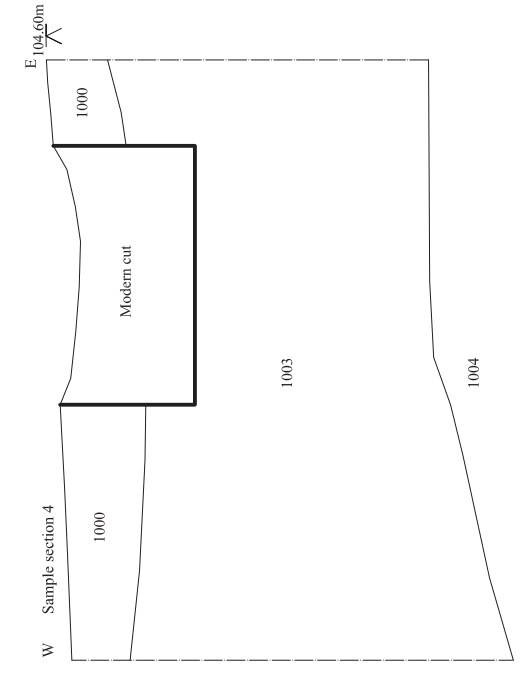
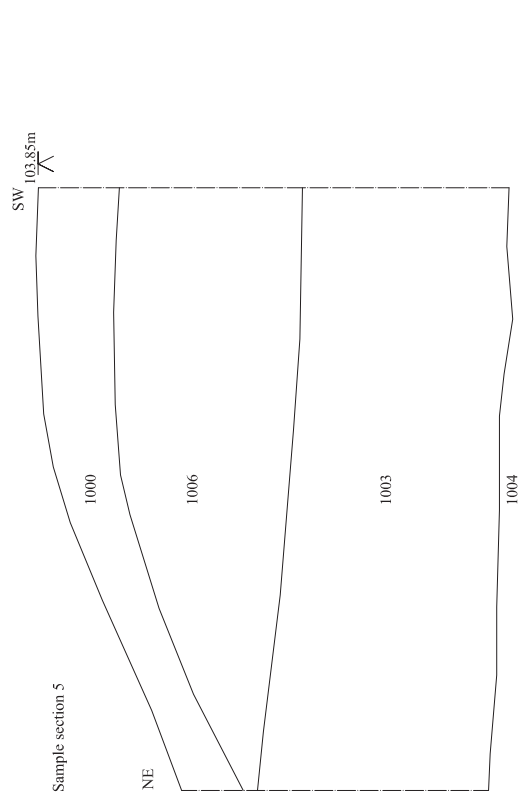
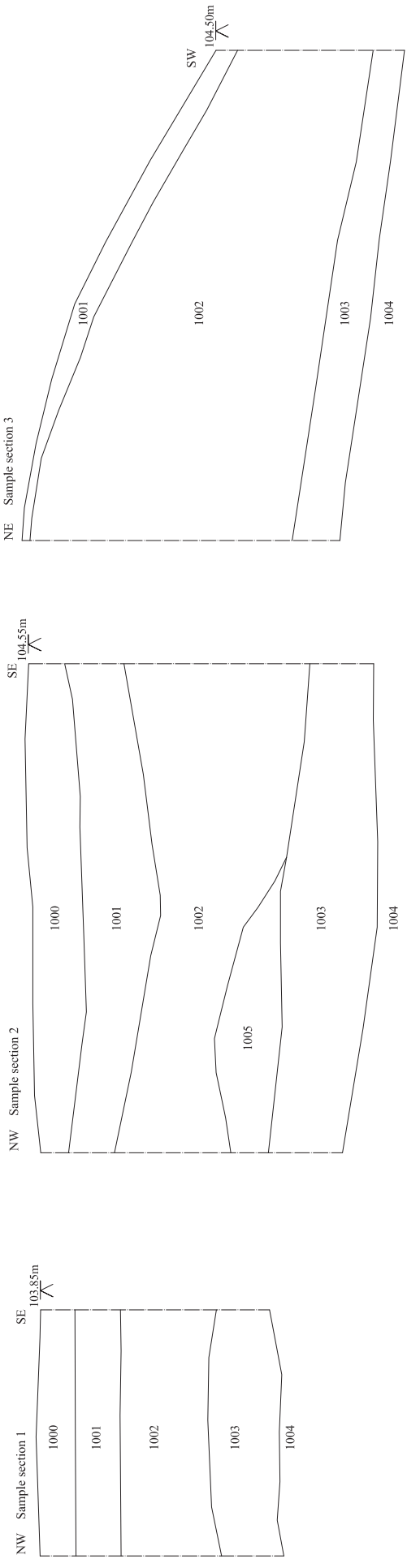
26 Copper Beech Close Concept Drawing



Client: Mr & Mrs A Newton, 26 Copper Beech Close, Boxmoor, Hemel Hempstead, HP3 0DD
 Drawing Title: Concept Drawing
 Drawing No: G2D 215/02/01 Drawing Scale: 1:50 w A1 Date: October 2015
 Designer: Liz Webster, G2 Design

0 10m

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Fig. 3 Proposed development
 Scale 1:200 at A4
 26 Copper Beech Close, Boxmoor, Herts (P6655)



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Fig. 4 Sample sections
 Scale 1:25 at A4
 26 Copper Beech Close, Boxmoor, Herts (P6655)