

**LAND ADJACENT TO BROADBENTS,
BUTTERCROSS LANE, EPPING, ESSEX**

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

**LAND ADJACENT TO BROADBENTS,
BUTTERCROSS LANE, EPPING, ESSEX**

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Authors: Gareth Barlow Kate Higgs Gary Brogan	
NGR: TL 4607 0236	Report No. 3306
District: Epping Forest	Site Code: EP6
Approved: Claire Halpin MIFA	Project No. 3478
Signed:	Date: June 2009

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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	<i>Land adjacent to Broadbents, Buttercross Lane, Epping, Essex</i>		
Project description	<p><i>In June 2009, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) conducted an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching on land adjacent to Broadbents, No.4 Buttercross Lane, Epping, Essex. The evaluation was carried out in compliance with a planning condition requiring a programme of archaeological work in advance of the proposed redevelopment of the site to provide a single new residential dwelling (Epping Forest DC Planning Ref. EPF/2179/07).</i></p> <p><i>Despite the potential for medieval and post-medieval archaeological remains at the site, the evaluation revealed only a post-medieval made ground layer. The latter may have been associated with the rapid development of Epping in the 18th and 19th centuries.</i></p>		
Project dates (fieldwork)	<i>28/05/2009 – 01/06/2009</i>		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>	Future work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>
P. number	<i>3478</i>	Site code	<i>EP6</i>
Type of project	<i>Archaeological evaluation</i>		
Site status	<i>Area of archaeological potential</i>		
Current land use	<i>Vacant area of former allotments</i>		
Planned development	<i>Single two-storey dwelling</i>		
Main features (+dates)	<i>Post-medieval made ground layer</i>		
Significant finds (+dates)	<i>18th to 20th century pottery, CBM and clay pipe stems</i>		
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Essex</i>	<i>Epping Forest</i>	<i>Epping</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>Essex HER</i>		
Post code (if known)			
Area of site	<i>c. 700m²</i>		
NGR	<i>TL 4607 0236</i>		
Height AOD (max/ min)	<i>c. 100m AOD</i>		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>ECC HEM</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>Gareth Barlow</i>		
Funded by	<i>A. J. Poulton (Epping) Ltd</i>		
Full title	<i>Land adjacent to Broadbents, Buttercross Lane, Epping, Essex. An archaeological evaluation</i>		
Authors	<i>Barlow, G., & Higgs, K.,</i>		
Report no.	<i>3306</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>June 2009</i>		

LAND ADJACENT TO BROADBENTS, BUTTERCORSS LANE, EPPING, ESSEX

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

SUMMARY

In June 2009, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) conducted an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching on land adjacent to Broadbents, No.4 Buttercross Lane, Epping, Essex. The evaluation was carried out in compliance with a planning condition requiring a programme of archaeological work in advance of the proposed redevelopment of the site to provide a single new residential dwelling (Epping Forest DC Planning Ref. EPF/2179/07).

Despite the potential for medieval and post-medieval archaeological remains at the site, the evaluation revealed only a post-medieval made ground layer. The latter may have been associated with the rapid development of Epping in the 18th and 19th centuries.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In June 2009, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) conducted an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching on land adjacent to Broadbents, No.4 Buttercross Lane, Epping, Essex (NGR TL 4607 0236; Figs. 1 & 2). The evaluation was commissioned by A. J. Poulton (Epping) Ltd and was carried out in compliance with a planning condition requiring a programme of archaeological work in advance of the proposed redevelopment of the site. The latter comprises a single new residential dwelling (Epping Forest DC Planning Ref. EPF/2179/07).

1.2 The evaluation was undertaken in conjunction with the relevant planning policies, which apply to the effect of development with regard to cultural heritage. Of particular relevance was Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 '*Archaeology and Planning*' (PPG16), which is widely applied by local authorities. PPG16 (1994) applies to archaeology and states that there should always be a presumption in favour of preserving nationally important archaeological remains *in situ*. However, when there is no overriding case for preservation, developers are required to fund opportunities for the recording and, when necessary, the excavation of the site.

1.3 The evaluation was undertaken according to a brief issued by Essex County Council Historic Environment Branch (HEM; Mr. A. Garwood, dated 22nd April 2009), and a written scheme of investigation prepared by AS (dated 22nd April 2009). It was undertaken according to the requirements of the document *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003). It adhered to the Institute of Field Archaeologists' (IFA) *Code of*

Conduct and followed the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations* (revised 2001).

1.4 The principal objectives of the archaeological trial trench evaluation were to determine the location, date, extent, character, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development. In particular, it was important to locate any evidence of medieval/post-medieval occupation, its nature and extent, to examine the relationship of any of this evidence of occupation in the context of the development of the historic town, and to identify and record any medieval or post-medieval back land development.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

2.1 The site, adjacent to Broadbents, is located at No. 4 Buttercross Lane in Epping. It is within the district of Epping Forest and the county of Essex (Fig. 1). The historic core of the settlement lies 300m to the north-east of the site, whilst the High Street is located c.100m to the east. Buttercross Lane comprises a small, predominantly residential cul-de-sac.

2.2 The site lies along the north-eastern frontage of Buttercross Lane and to the immediate south-east of the residential dwelling of Broadbents, No. 4 Buttercross Lane (Fig. 2). To the north-east of the site is a public car park associated with a surgery located along the High Street, whilst to the south-east lies LSP House and property boundaries associated with Nos. 271 – 277 High Street. The site comprises a roughly rectangular plot of land covering an area of c. 700m². It consists of a vacant area of former allotments, on which it is proposed to construct a new, single two-storey dwelling.

3 METHOD OF WORK (Archaeological and Historical Background)

3.1 Archaeological databases

The standard collation of all known archaeological sites and spot-finds in the area is the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER). In order to provide a representative sample, the EHER database was searched for all known entries within a 1km radius of the site. Entries within this approximate 1km radius of the site are listed in Appendix 1, and plotted in Fig. 3. Their significance, where relevant, is discussed in Section 5.

3.2 Historical & cartographic documents

The principal source for maps and primary documentary sources was the Essex Record Office (ERO) in Chelmsford. All available material regarding the study area and the buildings was consulted, has been listed in Appendix 1.

3.3 Secondary sources

The principal source for secondary material was the Essex Record Office (ERO) in Chelmsford, as well as the library resources at AS. Sources have been referenced appropriately in the bibliography.

4 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY & SOILS

4.1 The site lies within the town of Epping, close to its historic core and thus within an urban setting (Fig. 1). The meandering course of Cobbin's Brook lies 2.6km to the north-west of the site, whilst the wider area lies within the basin of the River Lea 7km to the west. The site lies at c. 100m AOD, on gently sloping land. The solid geology of the Epping area comprises chalk overlain by London Clay (BGS 1978). It is complicated by the presence of more superficial Claygate Beds and Head Deposits in the vicinity of Epping's High Street. The site is also located upon soils of the Windsor Association, which are described as slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged clayey soils, mostly with brown subsoils (SSEW 1983).

4.2 Recent archaeological work in the area of the site has revealed indications of the stratigraphy likely to be encountered within the site. An archaeological evaluation to the rear of the Thatched House Hotel and 100m to the east revealed concrete, tarmac, building rubble and made up ground overlying the natural drift geology to a depth of 0.45 - 0.70m (Roberts & Wilkins 2003). Areas of ground disturbance were also identified across much of the Thatched House Hotel site due to 18th and 19th century building. Archaeological monitoring and recording at No. 6 Station Road and 250m to the south revealed the natural clay deposits at a depth of 0.50m – 0.70m (Hounsell 2003).

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

5.1 Prehistoric & Romano-British

5.1.1 In common with many of the clay upland areas in Essex, few prehistoric and Romano-British remains are known from the vicinity of the town of Epping and none are recorded in proximity of the site (Hunter 1999). This is despite the location of Ambresbury Banks, c. 3km to the south-west, which comprises an Iron Age hillfort in Epping Forest. Excavations have shown that the site was probably a refuge for people and their livestock (Hunter 1999, 49 - 50). Examination of the pollen and sediments in the vicinity indicate that from the Neolithic the area comprised lime-dominated woodlands with cover persisting through the Iron Age and Romano-British periods.

5.2 Anglo-Saxon

5.2.1 In the Domesday Book of 1086 Epping is variously referred to as *Epinga*, *Eppingham* and *Epping*, meaning 'upland dwellers' (Reaney 1960, 23). King Harold originally conferred the manor on the monks and abbots of Waltham Abbey. After the Conquest, Waltham Abbey was deprived of much of its landed property because of the association with Harold, although it was eventually restored. It was contained within the legal boundary of Waltham Forest with deer thus being protected by Forest Law. The middle Saxon period saw the establishment of the wood pasture system in the Epping area, yet no Anglo-Saxon find-spots are known from the area surrounding the site (Hunter 1999, 26-28).

5.3 Medieval

5.3.1 The settlement at Epping was a deliberate plantation by the canons of Waltham Abbey in the mid 12th century, to enhance the income from their estate by capitalising on trade along the alternative road from London to Cambridge (Powell 1983). By 1235 the manor of Epping apparently possessed some 50 tenants who lived on the heath providing various services for their landlords, the monks of Waltham Abbey. The canons obtained a charter and the privilege to clear timber for use in the construction of stalls and houses in 1253, although there are suggestions that there was earlier occupation in the area, originally on the north side of Cobbins Brook (EHER 3826; Medlycott 1999).

5.3.2 It is believed that the town was first established on the northern side of the High Street, soon expanding along the southern side on the line of the Epping Forest and parish boundary or *Purlieu bank* (Medlycott 1999). An evaluation by trial trenching at land to the rear of No. 237- 255 High Street and approximately 160m to the south-west of the site did not reveal evidence of a medieval street frontage, although medieval rubbish pitting dating from the 13th - 14th centuries were present toward the street frontage (EHER 17693).

5.4 Post-medieval & later

5.4.1 Epping was a thriving market town by the late 15th century and was inhabited by an increasing number of craftsmen and businesses. Much of its growth was due to the location of the town at the convergence of four roads (Medlycott 1999). The town developed slowly in the earlier post-medieval period but expanded more rapidly in the 18th and 19th centuries when Epping became a noted supplier of agricultural produce, specialising in butter and geese, for the London market, and a staging post for coaches. Traffic in Epping decreased significantly with the advent of the railways, yet revived slightly with the extension of a branch line from London in 1865 and the subsequent creation of modern roads.

5.4.2 Recent archaeological work in Epping has revealed extensive evidence for post-medieval remains, predominantly 17th century and later

finds of brick and pottery, and the remains of drainage or boundary ditches (EHERs 17804, 16304 & 17694). Mill Hill, which lies 700m to the east of the site comprises an overgrown artificial mill mound known to date to at least 1777 (CHER 3739). The early modern period is well-represented by a number of extant structures, including two milestones along the A11 trunk-road (EHERs 15119 & 15118), a Gas Works at Bower Hill (EHER 40404), and drinking fountain on the High Street (EHER 40385).

5.5 The site

5.5.1 The site lies within an area of archaeological potential, in particular for evidence of the development of the medieval and post-medieval town of Epping. Although Epping's primary settlement was to the north side of Cobbins Brook, at the village now known as Epping Upland, the town developed its present location from the mid 12th and particularly in the 13th century as a deliberate plantation of the canons of Waltham Abbey (Powell 1983). The site therefore has the potential to reveal evidence of medieval/post-medieval occupation, particularly any medieval or post-medieval back land development to the rear of the High Street 100m to the east.

5.5.2 The site lies along the north-eastern frontage of Buttercross Lane, which is depicted on Ordnance Survey maps as early as 1881 (not illustrated). The *Victoria County History* reveals that Epping was well known for its excellent butter, which fetched the highest prices in London, as well as its pork and sausages (Powell 1983). The butter industry lent its name to a post-medieval butter cross that stood in the High Street near the present police station, thought to have been removed in 1781, and Buttercross Lane, along which the site lies (*ibid.*).

5.5.3 Although the site has a potential to reveal evidence of medieval/post-medieval occupation, cartographic sources have consistently revealed that the site remained undeveloped throughout the late 19th and 20th centuries. The Ordnance Survey map of 1936, for example, reveals that no development was evident on site and it remains as a vacant area of former allotments to the south-east of Broadbents. Despite its potential for evidence of the medieval and post-medieval periods, the archaeological evaluation to the rear of the Thatched House Hotel, only 100m to the east, revealed no evidence of medieval 'back-yard' activity to the rear of the High Street, or activity associated with former structures fronting Hemnall Street (Roberts & Wilkins 2003).

6 METHODOLOGY (Fieldwork)

6.1 The evaluation comprised the excavation of a single trial trench, measuring 10 x 1.80m, in a location approved by ECC HEM (Fig. 4).

6.2 The trench was mechanically excavated using a 360° excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. Topsoil and undifferentiated overburden

were removed mechanically under close archaeological supervision, to the level of the archaeological horizon. All further investigation was undertaken by hand. The exposed surface was cleaned by hand and examined for archaeological features and finds. Deposits were recorded using *pro forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed as appropriate. Excavated spoil was searched for finds and the trench was scanned with a metal detector.

6.3 Mechanical excavation stopped at a recognised archaeological layer and four 1m by 1m test pits were hand dug through this layer to the natural geological deposit below.

7 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

7.1 Trench 1 (Fig. 2, DP 1 - 4)

Sample sections:

<i>N end, W facing</i>		
<i>0.00 = 107.17m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.20m	L1000	Topsoil. Mid grey brown, firm sandy silt.
0.20 – 0.40m	L1001	Subsoil. Mid orangey grey brown, firm sandy silt.
0.40m+	L1003	Made ground. Pale to mid orangey brown, firm sandy silty clay.

Sample section 1 (DP 3)

<i>S end, W facing</i>		
<i>0.00 = 107.58m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.20m	L1000	Topsoil. As above.
0.20 – 0.60m	L1001	Subsoil. As above.
0.60m+	L1003	Made ground. As above.

Sample section 2 (DP 4)

Description of results:

Layer L1003 contained 18th to 20th century pottery (11g), CBM (2280g), clay pipe stems (3g) and animal bone (50g) and may have represented a clay rich made ground deposit. Four test pits were excavated through this 0.17m thick layer to reveal it to be sealing natural drift geology of brownish orange silty clay, L1002 (DPs 2 and 5). No archaeological features were present.

8 CONFIDENCE RATING

8.1 It is not felt that any factors inhibited the recognition of archaeological features or finds.

9 DEPOSIT MODEL

9.1 Topsoil, L1000, was located across the entire site. It was uniformly composed of firm mid greyish brown sandy silt to a depth of 0.20m below the present ground level. Below topsoil was a subsoil, L1001, of mid orangey grey brown, firm sandy silt that thickened from 0.20m at the northern end of the trench to 0.60m at the southern end.

9.2 Sealed beneath the subsoil was a layer, L1003, of pale to mid orangey brown, firm sandy silty clay that contained 18th and 19th century pottery, CBM and clay pipe stems. This layer sealed the natural drift geology of brownish orange silty clay, L1002. The latter was located at 106.63m AOD within Test Pit 1 at the northern end of the trench, and 106.73m AOD within Test Pit 4, at the southern end of the trench.

10 DISCUSSION

10.1 Despite the potential for medieval and post-medieval archaeological remains at the site, no archaeological features were present and no environmental samples were taken.

10.2 The presence of undisturbed subsoil (L1001) overlying the 18th to 20th century Layer (L1003) suggests that there has been little modern truncation, despite the site being former allotments. The post-medieval layer, L1003, may represent a made ground deposit associated with the rapid 18th and 19th century development of the town.

ARCHIVE DEPOSITION

Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited with any donated finds from the site with Saffron Walden Museum. The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross-referenced and checked for internal consistency. In addition to the overall site summary, it will be necessary to produce a summary of the artefactual and ecofactual data.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions would like to thank A. J. Poulton (Epping) Ltd for commissioning and funding the archaeological evaluation, in particular Mr. Poulton.

Thanks are also due to the staff at Essex Record Office (ERO) in Chelmsford, and the staff at the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER), in particular Ms Alison Bennett.

AS would also like to thank Mr. Adam Garwood, of the Essex County Council Historic Environment Branch (ECC HEM) for his advice and input.

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Heritage Gateway website;
<http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk>

Images of England (IoE) website;
<http://www.imagesofengland.org.uk>

Unlocking Essex's Past website;
<http://unlockingessex.essexcc.gov.uk>

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATABASE (EHER)

EHER	NGR TL	Description
Medieval (AD 1150 - 1500)		
3826	460021	The primary settlement of the medieval town of Epping was on the north side of Cobbins Brook, at the village now known as Epping Upland, and from the mid 12 th century the canons of Waltham Abbey who owned an estate based on Eppingbury south of the brook began assarting and clearing Epping Heath within the forest, thus extending their estate
17693	460022	An evaluation by trial trenching at land to the rear of No. 237- 255 High Street did not reveal evidence of a medieval street frontage, but medieval rubbish pitting dating from the 13 th - 14 th centuries were present toward the street frontage in trial trench A
Post-medieval (AD 1500 – 1750)		
17804	459019	A watching brief at No. 106 Epping High Street did not reveal any surviving archaeological features, although its layers were mixed with artefacts ranging from the 17 th - 20 th centuries
16304	459019	Watching brief of foundation trenches to the rear of No. 4 Station Road revealed a disturbed top-soil layer with 19 th - 20 th century brick and pottery overlying a clay sub- soil
17694	460022	An evaluation by trial trenching at land to the rear of No. 237 - 255 High Street did not reveal evidence of a medieval street frontage, although a small amount of medieval activity was present and post-medieval activity was represented by two ditches, possibly the remains of drainage or boundary ditches and a well
3739	467021	Mill Hill comprises an overgrown artificial mound located on a hill amongst woodland described as Mill Hill on C&A map of 1777
Early modern (AD 1750 – 1900)		
15119	452014	19 th century milestone on the A11 trunk-road at Epping marked ' <i>LONDON 15, WOODFORD 6, HARLOW 7</i> '
40404	462013	Gas Works at Bower Hill date to 1834, although the formation of Epping Gas Co. Ltd took place in 1862
19088	459019	Watching brief undertaken at No. 46 Hemnall Street revealed 19 th century material visible after foundation trenches had been backfilled
40385	460021	Drinking fountain on the High Street with basins for humans and animals was erected for Victoria's jubilee of 1885
15118	464026	Milestone surviving from the Epping and Ongar Trust on the A11 trunk-road, and which is partially under the pavement
33561	467027	Mid 19 th century laundry building at St Margarets Hospital
Modern (AD 1900 onwards)		
15606	467027	Fairfield Road water tower comprises a 1930s reinforced concrete, square water tower
Undated		
18973	460021	No. 164 High Street has a frontage 8m by 5m and revealed two cellars of equal size, already back filled

45973	460022	Archaeological watching brief at the rear of the Forest and Firkin Public House at Nos. 204/206 High Street revealed 30cm of modern overburden, and 50cm grey silty natural deposit with pebble inclusions above an orange clay
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**APPENDIX 2
CONCORDANCE OF FINDS**

Context	Test Pit	Description	Spot Date	Pottery	CBM (g)	A. Bone (g)	Other
1001		Subsoil		(11) 98g	354	44	Clay Pipe Stems (8) 9g
1003	1	Layer		(2) 11g	64	50	
	2	Layer			172		
	3	Layer			2044		
	4	Layer					Clay Pipe Stems (3) 3g

APPENDIX 3 SPECIALIST REPORTS

The Pottery

By Pete Thompson

The test pits recovered 13 abraded sherds, weighing 106g. The pottery is all early modern to modern and is described below.

L1001

5x63g post-medieval red earthenware, probably all flower pot (19th-20th)
3x19g Transfer Printed ware, including a bowl rim and cup/small handled bowl rim (19th- 20th)
1x2g English porcelain (late 18th-20th)
2x12g Cream ware (mid 18th-19th)

L1003

1x1g Refined white earthenware (late 18th-20th)
1x9g Staffordshire white salt glaze mug base (18th)

The Ceramic Building Material

By Andy Peachey

The evaluation recovered 10 fragments (2634g) of late post-medieval to early modern CBM from the subsoil and test pits into Layer L1003. The CBM comprises fragments of brick and peg tile in very hard fired, oxidised orange-red, sand tempered fabrics that were probably produced in the 17th to 18th centuries.

A single complete brick (1934g) with dimensions of 200x100x55mm and a flat base was recovered from Layer L1003 (Test Pit 3) alongside a fragment of peg tile. The remaining CBM from Test Pits 1 and 2 included smaller fragments of peg tile and unidentifiable brick, while the CBM from the subsoil was entirely comprised of peg tile.

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



1
General view of the site. Looking north.



2
Test Pits through Layer L1003. Looking north.



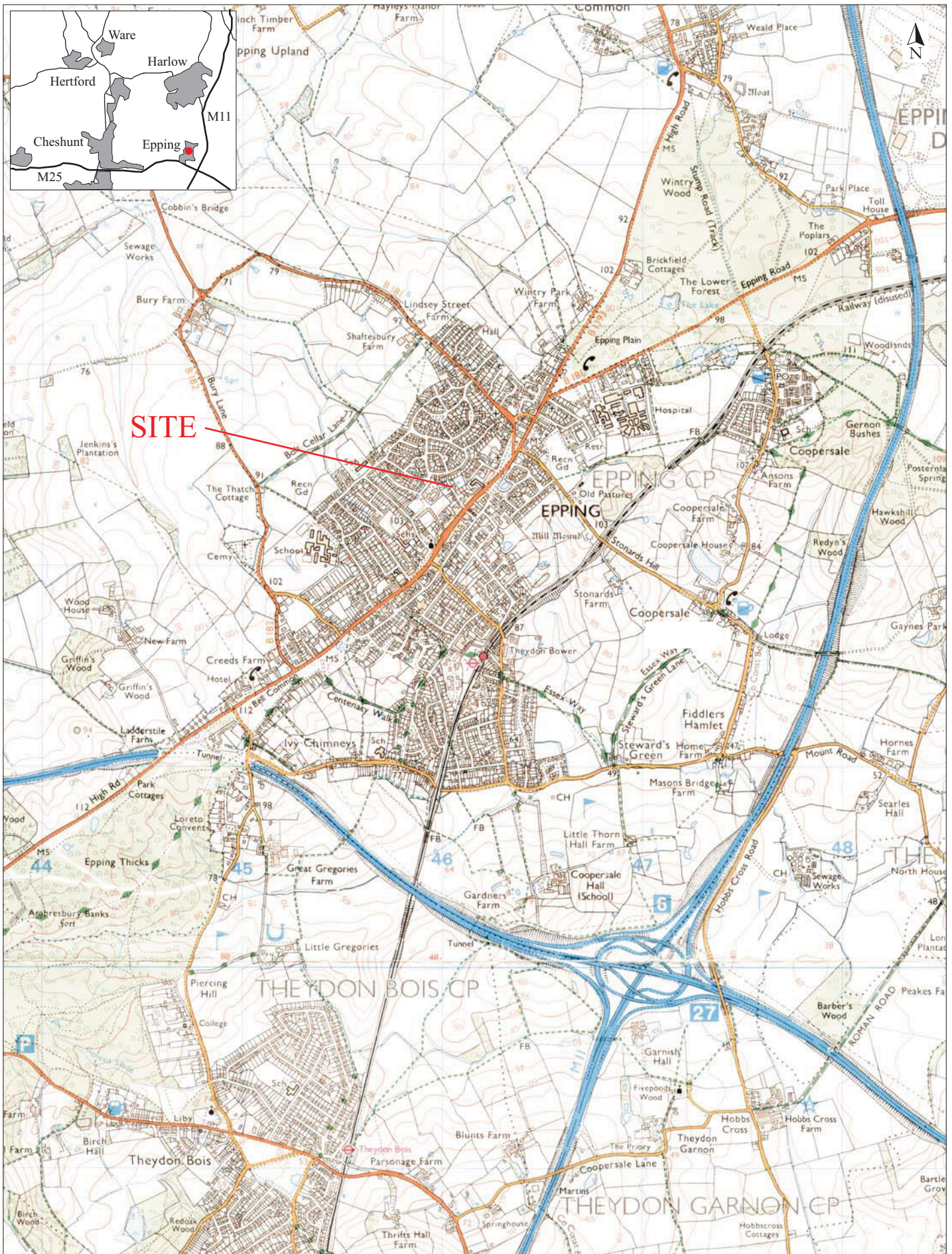
3
Sample Section 1. Looking east.



4
Sample Section 2. Looking east.

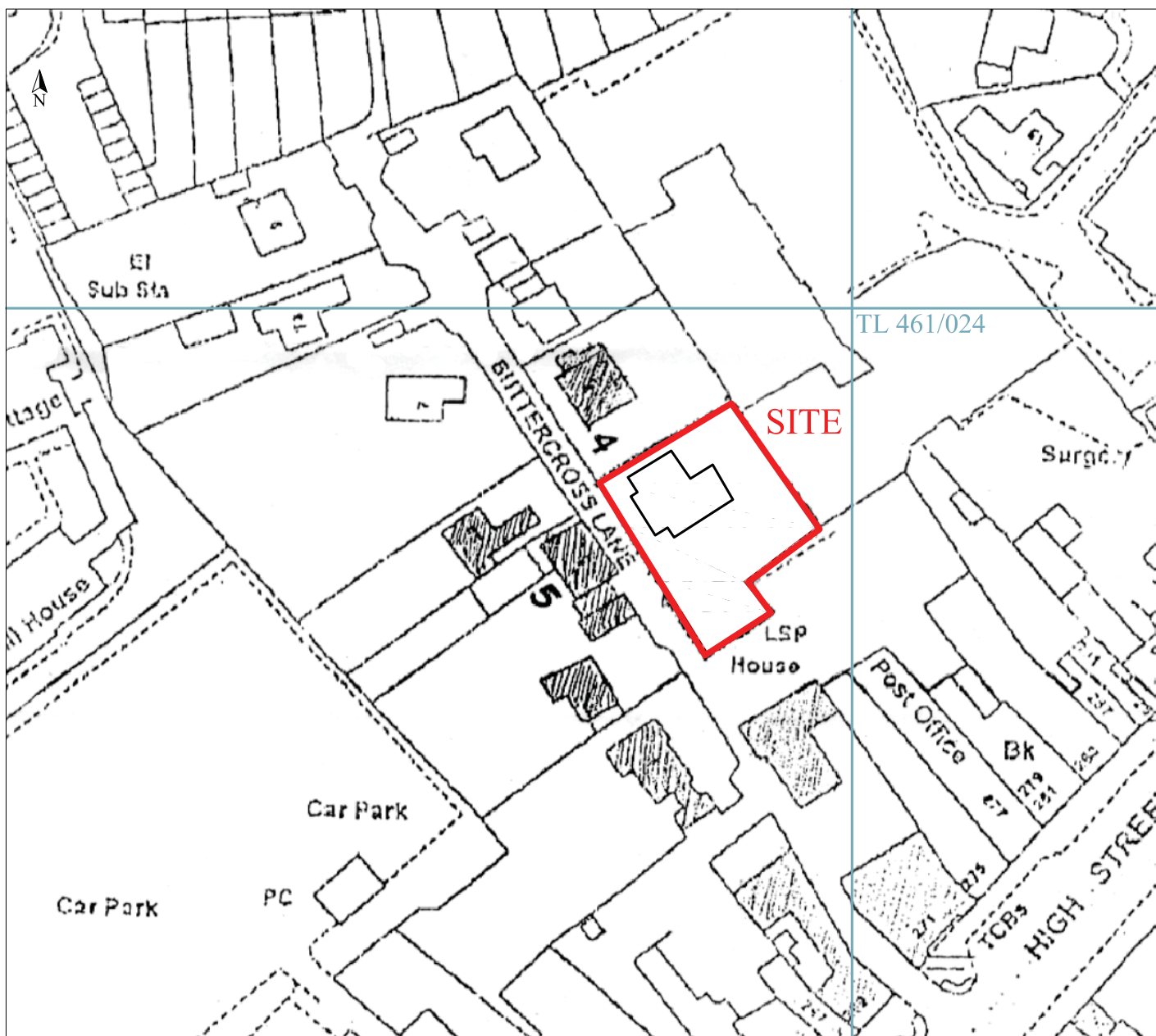


5
Test Pit 2 through Layer L1003. Looking east.



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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4

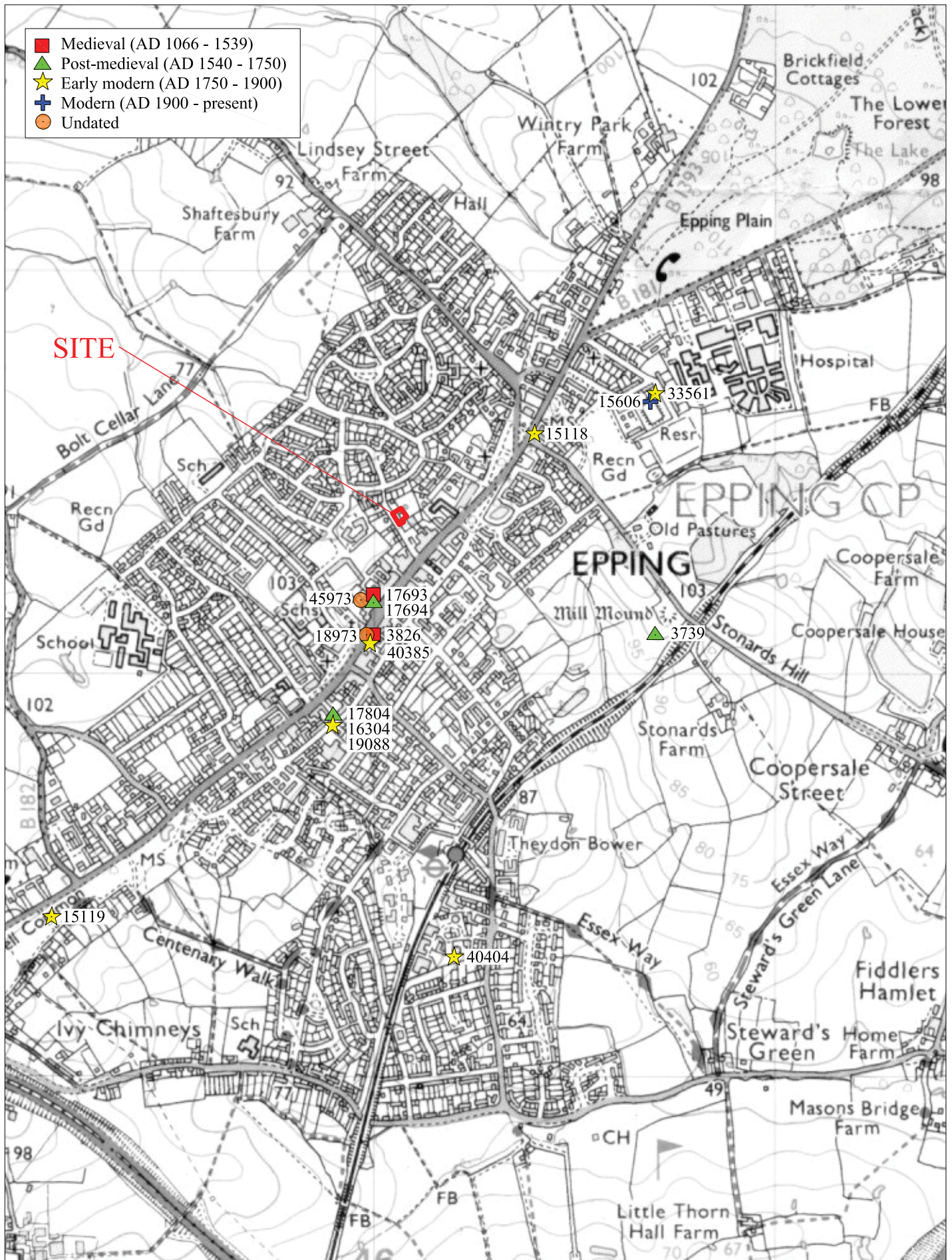


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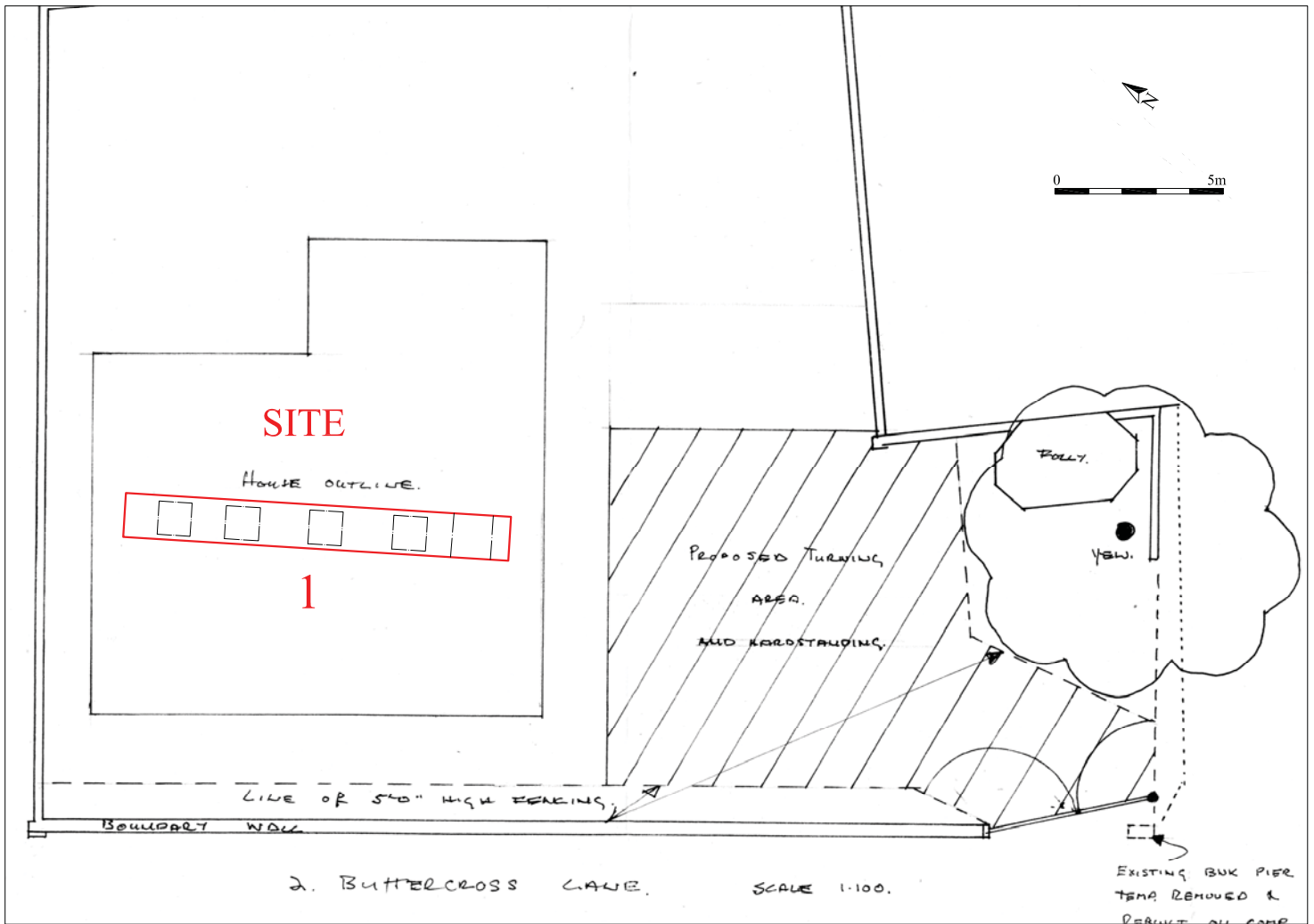
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Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan
Scale 1:1000 at A4



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Fig. 3 HER data
 Scale 1:12,500 at A4



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Fig. 4 Trench location plan
 Scale 1:200 at A4

