

**FORMER YHA, 7 FALCON SQUARE  
CASTLE HEDINGHAM, ESSEX**


**ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
MONITORING & RECORDING**

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

**FORMER YHA, 7 FALCON SQUARE,  
CASTLE HEDINGHAM, ESSEX**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
MONITORING & RECORDING**

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NGR: TL 7856 3560	Report No. 3419
Parish: Castle Hedingham	Site Code: CH7
Approved: Claire Halpin MIFA	Project No. 3638
Signed: 	Date: Nov 2009

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**CONTENTS**

**OASIS SUMMARY SHEET**

**SUMMARY**

**1 INTRODUCTION**

**2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE**

**3 METHODOLOGY**

**4 RESULTS**

**5 CONFIDENCE RATING**

**6 DEPOSIT MODEL**

**7 DISCUSSION**

**DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

**APPENDICES**

## OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

<b>Project details</b>			
Project name	Former YHA, 7 Falcon Square, Castle Hedingham, Essex		
<b>Summary:</b>			
In October 2009, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording during groundworks associated with the development of two residential dwellings at 7 Flacon Square, Castle Hedingham, Essex (Planning Ref. 07/02283/FUL).			
The site is situated in Castle Hedingham, a small market town in the north-west corner of the county of Essex. Castle Hedingham was a sizeable settlement by the late Saxon period and following the Norman Conquest, a ring work was erected to the east of the site by Aubrey de Vere. A keep was added in c.1125-60 and the town was possibly planned and created to the south-west at this time. A market established by 1216.			
In the event no archaeological features or finds were identified during the monitoring.			
Project dates (fieldwk)	16 Oct 09, 27 Nov 09		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	N	Future work (Y/N/?)	N
P. number	3638	Site code	CH7
Type of project	Monitoring and recording		
Site status	-		
Current land use	Youth Hostel building		
Planned development	Demolition of the rear section of the existing building and development of two new residential dwellings.		
Main features (+dates)	-		
Significant finds +dates)	-		
<b>Project location</b>			
County/ Parish	Essex		Castle Hedingham
HER/ SMR for area	Essex HER (EHER)		
Post code (if known)			
Area of site	800 sq m		
NGR	TL 7856 3560		
Height AOD(max/ min)	c.50m AOD		
<b>Project creators</b>			
Brief issued by	Essex County Council Historic Environment Branch (ECC HEM)		
Project supervisors/ PO)	Gareth Barlow		
Funded by	St Giles Property Developments Ltd		
Full title	Former YHA, 7 Falcon Square, Castle Hedingham, Essex. Archaeological Monitoring and Recording		
Authors	Adams, M., Barlow, G.		
Report no.	3419		
Date (of report)	Nov 2009		

## **FORMER YHA, 7 FALCON SQUARE, CASTLE HEDDINGHAM, ESSEX ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING**

### **SUMMARY**

*In October 2009, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording during groundworks associated with the development of two residential dwellings at 7 Falcon Square, Castle Hedingham, Essex (Planning Ref. 07/02283/FUL).*

*The site is situated in Castle Hedingham, a small market town in the north-west corner of the county of Essex. Castle Hedingham was a sizeable settlement by the late Saxon period and following the Norman Conquest, a ring work was erected to the east of the site by Aubrey de Vere. A keep was added in c.1125-60 and the town was possibly planned and created to the south-west at this time. A market established by 1216.*

*In the event no archaeological features or finds were identified during the monitoring.*

### **1 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 In October 2009, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording during groundworks associated with the development of two residential dwellings at 7 Falcon Square, Castle Hedingham, Essex (NGR TL 7856 3560 Figs. 1-2). The recording was commissioned by St Giles Properties Ltd in compliance with an archaeological condition attached to a planning approval (Planning Ref. 07/02283/FUL). It was undertaken in advance of the excavation of footing trenches and ground reduction within buildings footprint.

1.2 The monitoring and recording was conducted in accordance with a brief issued by the Essex County Council Historic Environment Branch (ECC HEM) (Garwood, 4<sup>th</sup> September 2009), and a specification prepared by AS (dated 14<sup>th</sup> September 2009). The recording conformed to the Institute of Archaeologists' (IFA) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (revised 2001), *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*, Gurney (2003).

1.3 The objectives of the project were:

- To determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quantity of any surviving archaeological remains and geological deposits that are threatened by the proposed development;
- To ensure the archaeological monitoring of all aspects of the development programme likely to affect 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 publication of the project results, if appropriate;

- To secure the conservation and long-term storage of any artefactual/ecofactual material recovered from the site.

#### *Planning policy context*

- 1.4 The relevant planning policies which apply to the effect of development with regard to cultural heritage are Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 'Planning and the Historic Environment' (PPG15) and Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 'Archaeology and Planning' (PPG16) (Department of the Environment).
- 1.5 PPG16 (1990) is the national Planning Policy Guidance Note which applies to archaeology. It 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, where necessary, the excavation of the site. This condition is widely applied by local authorities.
- 1.6 PPG15 (1994) is the national Planning Policy Guidance Note which applies to conservation of the historic environment by protecting the character and appearance of Conservation Areas and protecting listed buildings (of architectural or historical interest) from demolition and unsympathetic change and safeguarding their settings as far as is possible. This condition is also widely applied by local authorities.

## **2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE/BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The site lies within an area of archaeological potential in the village of Castle Hedingham, to the north of Falcon Square and bordered to the west by Castle Lane. It comprises a former youth hostel on the Falcon Street frontage.
- 3.2 It is proposed to demolish the rear block of the youth hostel and to construct two cottages and car ports, as well as converting the front part of the hostel to residential use. The dwellings are to be constructed on raft foundations
- 3.3 The site lies within an area of archaeological significance, within the historic medieval core of Castle Hedingham. The development of the settlement is described in detail in the Historic Town Assessment Report (Medlycott 1999). The town developed on the main Colchester-Cambridge Road above the river Cole, and developed into a sizeable settlement by the late Saxon period (Historic Environment Record No. 16206). Following the Norman Conquest, a ringwork was erected by Aubrey de Vere. A keep was added in c.1125-60, and the town was possibly planned and created to the south west at this time, with a market established by 1216. The medieval town featured a hospital and nunnery (EHER 6816), which were presumably dissolved during the reformation, as they are no longer evident on post-medieval cartographic sources. The town of Castle Hedingham showed little growth or development during the post-medieval period. The castle was abandoned, and the buildings (with the exception of the keep) deliberately dismantled in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Finally in the eighteenth century Hedingham Castle House was built within the Inner Bailey and the grounds landscaped to include several ornamental lakes.

3.4 The site lies within the area of the medieval town (HER 18248), within an area encompassed by the inner bailey of the castle (HER 16076). Another defensive ditch may have existed closer to the castle, parallel with Bayley Street and along the boundary of Church Ponds (and hence running through the line of the current site). Castle Lane may also have had early properties constructed along it. A substantial possible levelling deposit on the site was noted during a site visit by ECC HEM, containing post-medieval/modern pottery, brick and tile fragments.

#### 4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 The archaeological monitoring comprised the observation of groundworks, inspection of subsoil and natural deposits for archaeological features, the examination of spoil heaps and the recording of soil profiles. Deposits were excavated by hand and recorded by means of *pro forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed as appropriate. Excavated spoil was searched for archaeological finds.

4.2 The monitoring and recording focused on intrusive activity associated with the ground works including ground reduction and the excavation of foundations. The site was visited in October 2009, and in late November 2009 when a soakaway was excavated.

#### 4 RESULTS

##### 4.1 Site visit 16/10/09

The site visit monitored the excavation of footings for the new building by 360° mini digger with a toothless ditching bucket (DP1).

Two sample sections were recorded of the stratigraphy revealed by the excavation, these are shown in the table below.

##### Sample Section 1 (Fig. 4)

Sample Section 1 (DP2)	
0.00m = 50.26m AOD	
0.00 – 0.40m+	L1000. Modern Demolition/levelling. Friable mid orange brown clayey sand. Mixed lenses of pale grey crushed concrete and yellow grey sand

##### Sample Section 2

Sample Section 2 (DP3)	
0.0m = 50.37m AOD	
0.00 – 0.15m	L1001. Topsoil. Friable dark grey brown organic sandy silt with occasional small round flint
0.15 – 0.35m	L1002. Subsoil. Firm mid grey brown sandy silt with occasional small flint and chalk fleck

No archaeological features or finds were present.

#### 4.2 Site visit 27/11/09

The site visit recorded the excavation of a new soakaway (6m x 2m). The excavation was carried out by a 360° mini digger with a toothless ditching bucket.

Two sample sections were recorded of the stratigraphy revealed by the excavation, these are shown in the table below.

Sample Section 3 (DP4)	
0.00m = 50.63m AOD	
0.00 – 0.12m	L1000. Modern Demolition/Leveling. Friable mid orange brown clayey sand. Mixed lenses of pale grey crushed concrete and yellow grey sand
0.13 - 0.50m	L1003. Modern Made Ground. Friable mid grey brown sand.
0.51 – 1.21m	L1005. Modern Made Ground. Friable mid orange brown sand. Mixed lenses of crushed concrete and pebbles.
1.21m +	L1004. Natural Clay

Sample Section 4 (DP5)	
0.00m = 50.58m AOD	
0.00 – 0.10m+	L1000. Modern Demolition/Leveling. Friable mid orange brown clayey sand. Mixed lenses of pale grey crushed concrete and yellow grey sand
0.11 – 0.34m	L1003. As above, Sample Section 3.
0.35 – 1.01m	L1005. As above, Sample Section 3.
0.101m +	L1004. As above, Sample Section 3.

No archaeological features or finds were present.

#### 5 CONFIDENCE RATING

5.1 It is not felt that any factors inhibited the recognition of archaeological features or finds during the programme of monitoring and recording, excepting that the two new buildings are to be of raft construction and the ground reduction was shallow (0.35 - 0.40m). The principal ground reduction was too shallow to expose archaeological remains, if present.

#### 6 DEPOSIT MODEL

6.1 Topsoil L1001 was a friable dark grey brown sandy silt with occasional small round flint and was present across site. In the western sector of the site it was overlain by a demolition/levelling layer, L1000. The latter was a friable mid orange brown clayey sand.

6.2 Topsoil L1001 directly overlay Subsoil, L1002, a firm mid grey brown sandy



silt with occasional small flint and chalk flecks. The subsoil extended beyond the depth of excavation and consequently the natural geological layers were not observed.

## **7 DISCUSSION**

7.1 The dwellings are to be constructed on raft foundations consequently the ground reduction was shallow and the natural was not exposed. The excavation of the soakaway, though deep, was not large in plan (6m x 2m).

7.2 No archaeological feature or finds were recorded. In particular no evidence for the putative line of the substantial defensive ditch could be clearly identified. The ground works were generally too shallow and small scale to reveal archaeological remains, if present.

## **DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE**

The archive will be lodged with Braintree District Museum.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Archaeological Solutions would like to thank St Giles Property Developments Ltd for funding of the archaeological monitoring and recording.

Archaeological Solutions is also pleased to acknowledge the advice and input of Teresa O'Connor of ECC HEM.

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**PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX**



1  
General view of the site. Looking East



2  
Sample Section 1. Looking East.



3  
Sample Section 2. Looking East.



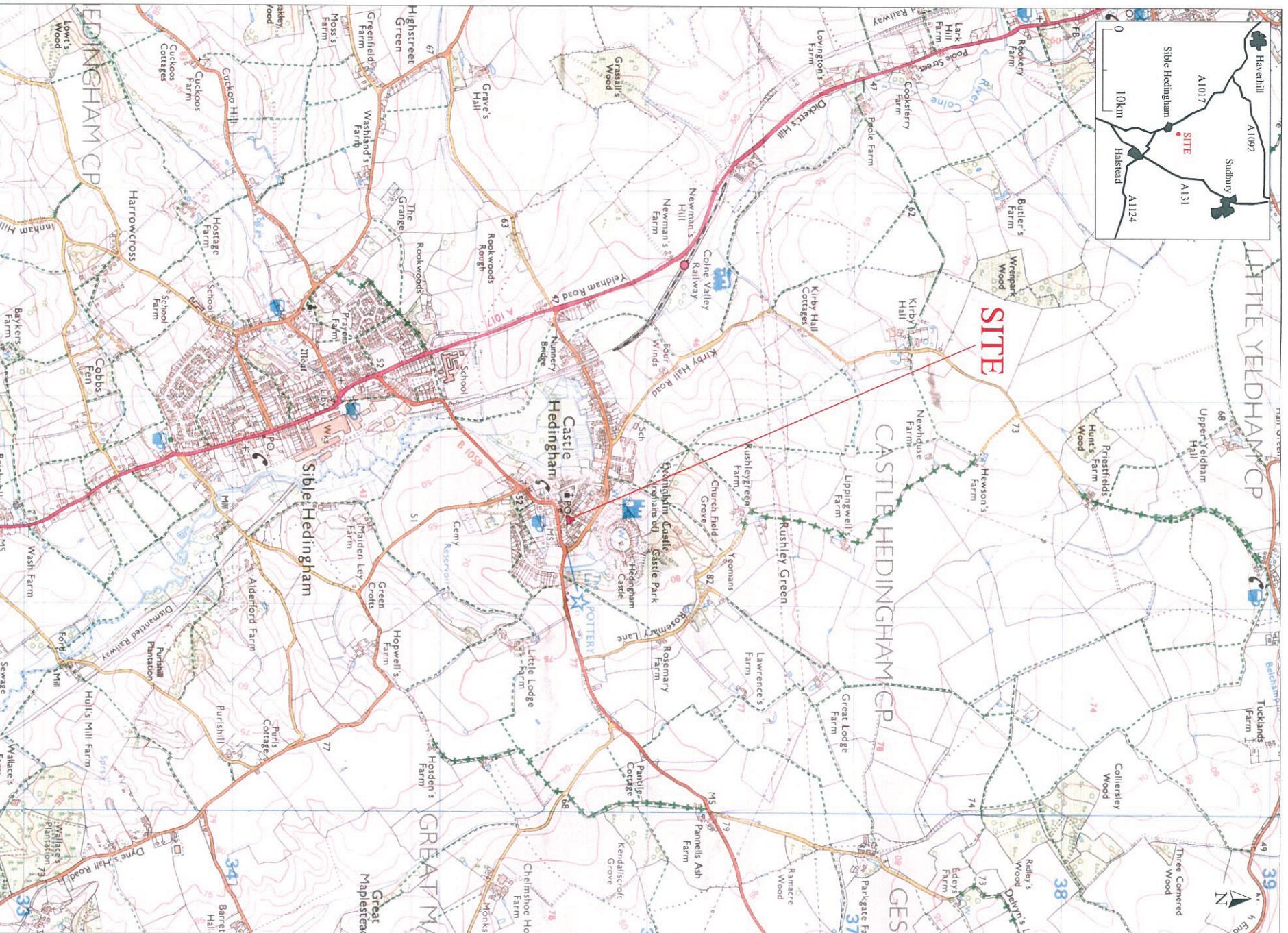
4

*Sample Section 3. Looking North*



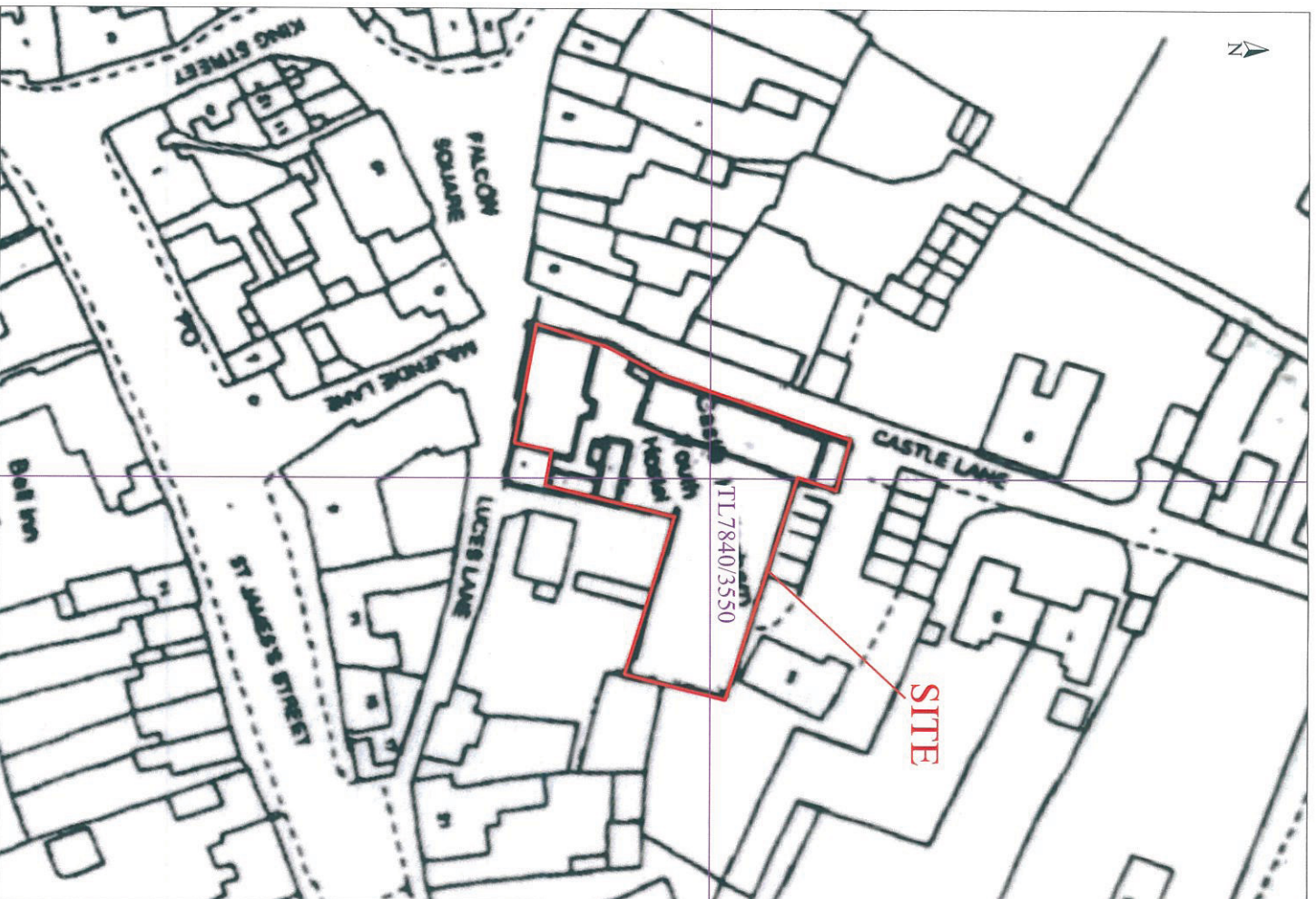
5

*Sample Section 4. Looking North*



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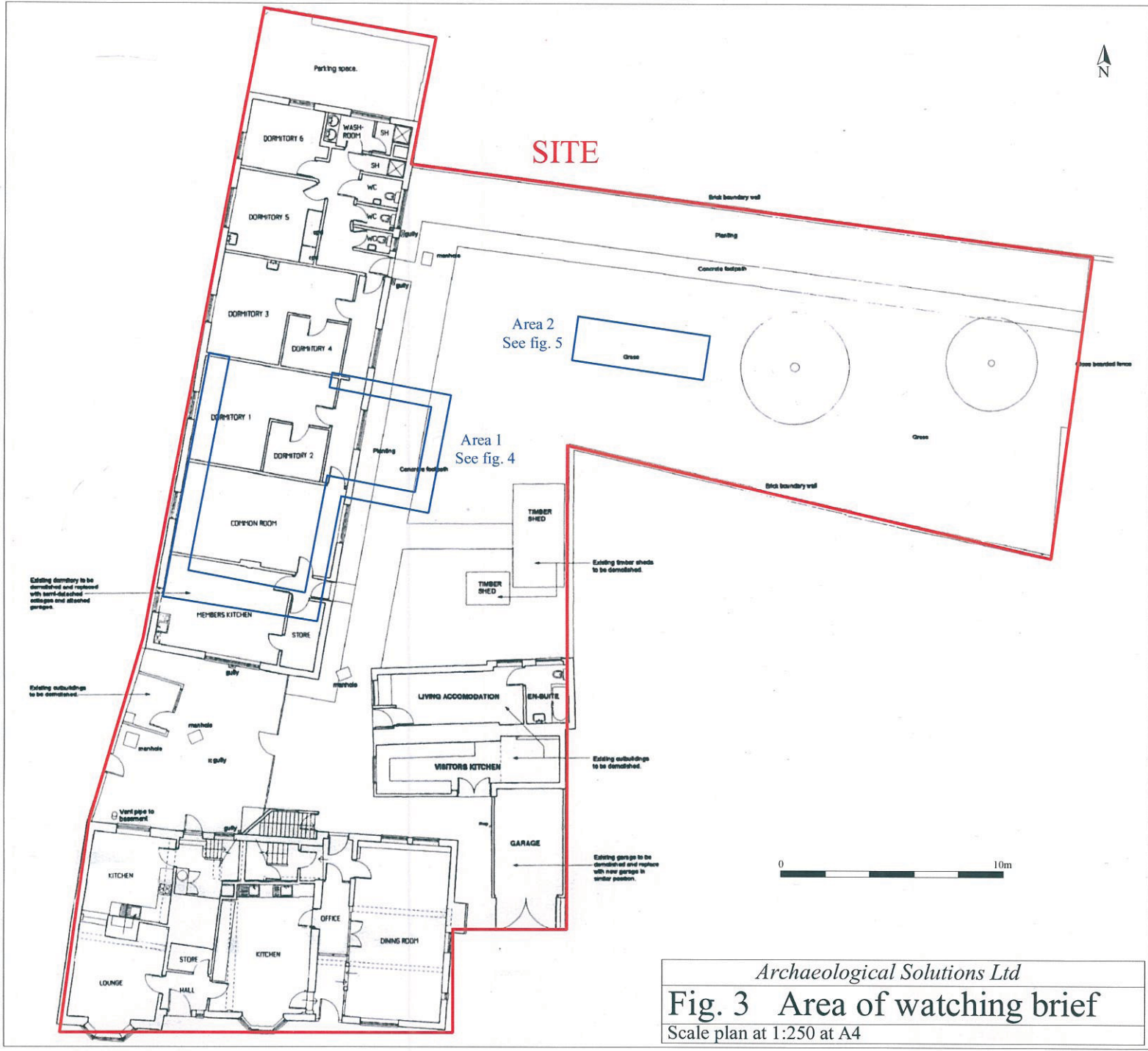
*Archaeological Solutions Ltd*  
**Fig. 1 Site location plan**  
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4

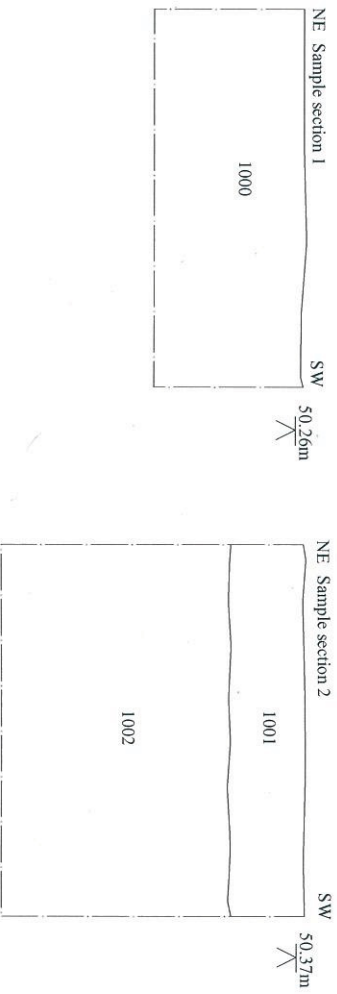
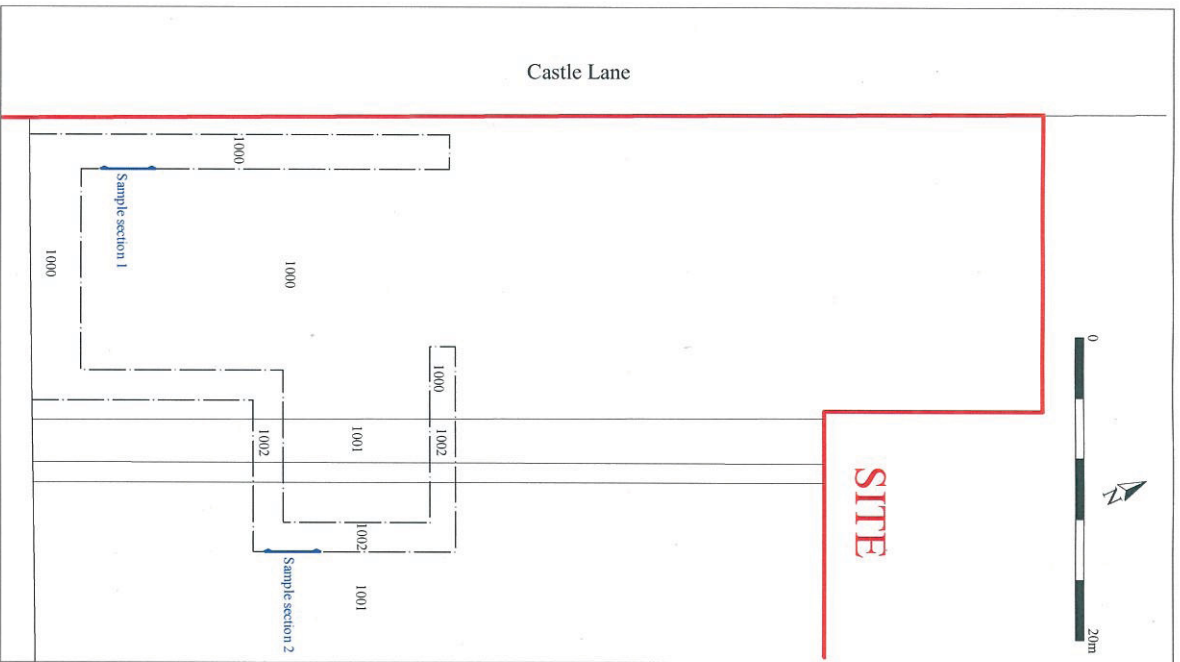


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**Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan**

Scale 1:1000 at A4

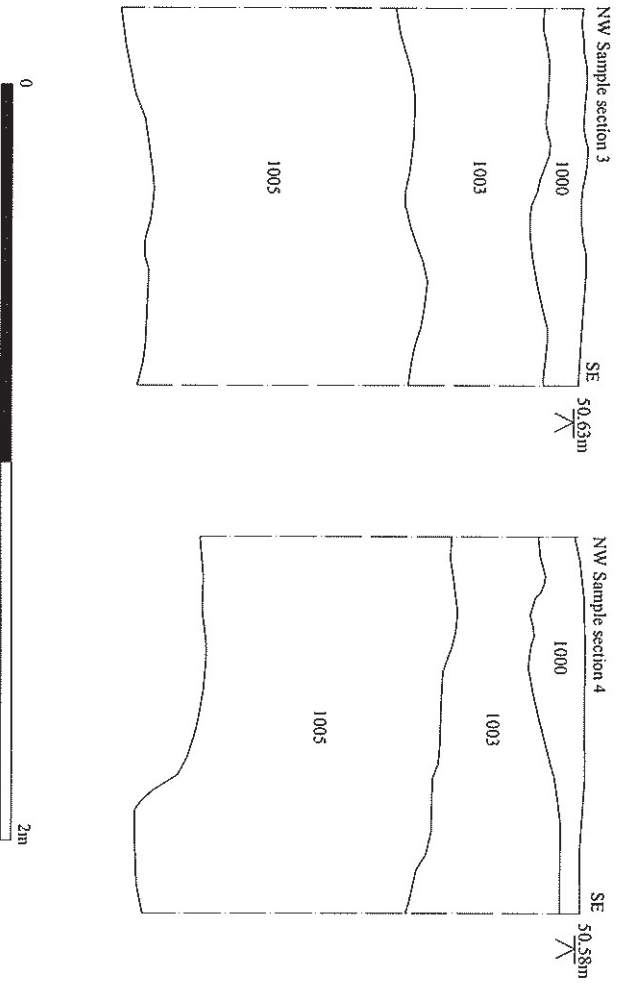
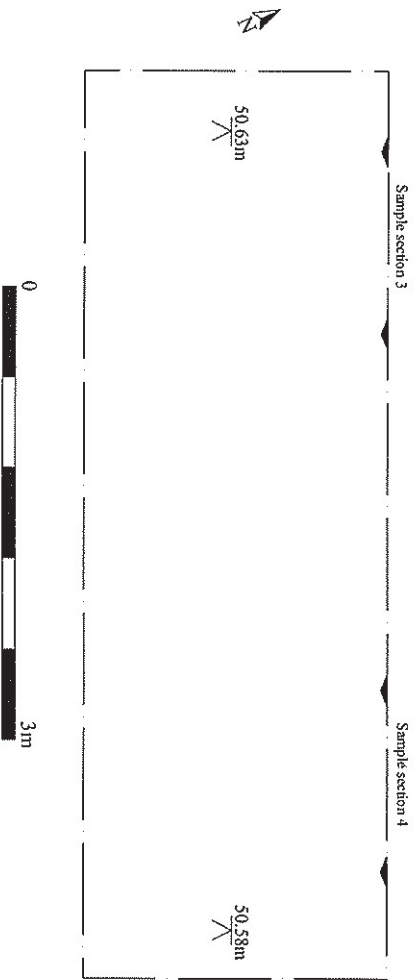




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**Fig. 4 Area 1 plan & sample sections**

Scale plan at 1:200 & sections at 1:20 at A4



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**Fig. 5 Area 2 plan & sample sections**

Scale plan at 1:50 & sections at 1:20 at A4



