
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

**PROPOSED NEW BUNGALOW, GARAGE, LANDSCAPING
& ASSOCIATED WORKS, LAND EAST OF MILL LANE,
KEMPSTON, BEDFORDSHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION, INVESTIGATION,
RECORDING, ANALYSIS AND PUBLICATION

Authors: Walter McCall PhD, MIfA (fieldwork and report) Hannah Tweedie MPhil (desk-based assessment)	
NGR: TL 0240 4760	Report No.3551
District: Bedford	Site Code: AS1309
Approved: Claire Halpin MIfA	Project No: P3767
Signed:	Date: May 2010

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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	<i>Proposed New Bungalow, Garage, Landscaping and Associated Works, Land East of Mill Lane, Kempston, Bedfordshire. Archaeological Observation, Investigation, Recording, Analysis and Publication.</i>		
<p><i>In May 2010 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological observation, investigation, recording, analysis and publication at land east of Mill Lane, Kempston, Bedfordshire (NGR TL 0240 4760). The programme was carried out during groundworks for the construction of a detached bungalow, a garage and services. It was undertaken to comply with a planning condition attached to planning approval (Bedford Borough Council Planning Ref: 09/00596/FUL).</i></p> <p><i>The site comprises a narrow swathe of land adjacent to Mill Lane in north-eastern Kempston. It lies within an area of high potential for multi-phase occupation. Excavations on the adjacent site yielded evidence for Saxo-Norman and medieval farming and domestic activity. The limestone foundations of a later structure extend the occupation into the later medieval or post-medieval period.</i></p> <p><i>The programme comprised the monitoring of ground reduction across the site and the excavation of deep foundation trenches for the detached bungalow and garage. No archaeological finds or features were present.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	<i>07 May 2010</i>		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>	Future work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>
P. number	<i>P3767</i>	Site code	<i>AS1309</i>
Type of project	<i>Monitoring & Recording</i>		
Site status	<i>-I</i>		
Current land use	<i>Construction site</i>		
Planned development	<i>Detached bungalow, garage, paved drive, associated works</i>		
Main features (+dates)	<i>-</i>		
Significant finds (+dates)	<i>-</i>		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Bedfordshire</i>	<i>Bedford</i>	<i>Kempston</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>Bedford Borough Historic Environment Record</i>		
Post code (if known)	<i>-</i>		
Area of site	<i>964m²</i>		
NGR	<i>TL 0240 4760</i>		
Height AOD (max/ min)	<i>c.28.50m</i>		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>Bedford Borough Council: Historic Environment</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>Walter McCall</i>		
Funded by	<i>Kempston Mill Ltd</i>		
Full title	<i>Proposed New Bungalow, Garage, Landscaping & Associated Works, Land East Of Mill Lane, Kempston, Bedfordshire: Archaeological Observation, Investigation, Recording, Analysis and Publication</i>		
Authors	<i>McCall, W., Tweedie, H.</i>		
Report no.	<i>3551</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>May, 2010</i>		

PROPOSED NEW BUNGALOW, GARAGE, LANDSCAPING & ASSOCIATED WORKS, LAND EAST OF MILL LANE, KEMPSTON, BEDFORDSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION, INVESTIGATION, RECORDING, ANALYSIS AND PUBLICATION

SUMMARY

In May 2010 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological observation, investigation, recording, analysis and publication at land east of Mill Lane, Kempston, Bedfordshire (NGR TL 0240 4760). The programme was carried out during groundworks for the construction of a detached bungalow, a garage and services. It was undertaken to comply with a planning condition attached to planning approval (Bedford Borough Council Planning Ref: 09/00596/FUL).

The site comprises a narrow swathe of land adjacent to Mill Lane in north-eastern Kempston. It lies within an area of high potential for multi-phase occupation. Excavations on the adjacent site yielded evidence for Saxo-Norman and medieval farming and domestic activity. The limestone foundations of a later structure extend the occupation into the later medieval or post-medieval period.

The programme comprised the monitoring of ground reduction across the site and the excavation of deep foundation trenches for the detached bungalow and garage. No archaeological finds or features were present.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In May 2010 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological observation, investigation, recording, analysis and publication at Land east of Mill Lane, Kempston, Bedfordshire (NGR TL 0240 4760; Figs 1 & 2). The programme was commissioned by Ian Hale Planning and Design Consultancy on behalf of Kempston Mill Ltd. It was undertaken in compliance with a planning condition required by the local planning authority (Bedford Borough Council Planning Ref: 09/00596/FUL). The archaeological observation was carried out during groundworks for the construction of a detached bungalow, a garage and services.

1.2 The archaeological observation, investigation, recording, analysis and publication was undertaken according to a brief issued by the Historic Environment Team of Bedford Borough Council (BBC) (*Brief for a Programme of Archaeological Observation, Investigation, Recording, Analysis and Publication, Land East of Mill Lane, Kempston, Bedfordshire*) (dated 23/12/2009) and a written scheme of investigation (specification) prepared by AS (dated 8th January 2010). The project conformed to the Institute of Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct and Standard and*

Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (revised 2008). It also adhered to *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).

1.3 The project aimed to determine the nature, function and character of any archaeological remains on the site and to understand any remains within their cultural and environmental setting. The objectives were to identify and record any features of interest that are exposed during groundworks for the proposed development. Specific objectives were to:

- establish the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation in the development site;
- establish the relationship of any remains identified with the surrounding contemporary landscapes;
- recover artefacts to assist in the development of a regional type series; and
- recover palaeo-environmental remains in order to determine local environmental conditions

Planning policy context

1.4 PPG16 (1990), the national Planning Policy Guidance Note which applies to archaeology and PPG15 (1994) 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) have been replaced by Planning Policy Statement 5 (2010), the national Planning Policy Statement that applies to the historic environment

1.5 PPS5 (2010) states that those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest are heritage assets. The Planning Policy Statement 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. It aims to conserve England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance. It states that opportunities to capture evidence from the historic environment and to contribute to our knowledge and understanding of our past, and to make this publicly available, should be taken, particularly where a heritage asset is to be lost.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

2.1 The site is located to the east of Mill Lane on a narrow plot of land. It lies within the historic floodplain of the river Great Ouse which is to the north of the site. Riverview Way, a modern housing development lies adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site. The site is currently undeveloped and is used as open land/pasture.

3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

3.1 The site lies to the east of Mill Lane. It lies on the gently sloping land of the river Great Ouse floodplain at a height of c. 28-29m AOD.

3.2 The geology of the area comprises alluvium and floodplain/terrace gravels overlying Great Oolite Limestone. The site lies at the boundary of two different soil associations, Thames and Hanslope. Soils of the Thames association are characterised as stoneless mainly calcareous clayey soils affected by groundwater, while soils of the Hanslope association are described as slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils, with some areas of slowly permeable non-calcareous clayey soils.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 Human activity in the vicinity of the site is evident from the prehistoric period onwards, the HER records two palaeoliths which were found to the east of the site (HER 253). To the north of the site in the Biddenham Loop extensive cropmarks have been noted (HER 1476), including a probable trackway, with several ring ditches including double rings clustered around it; a number of rectilinear enclosures; and a pit alignment, which crosses the promontory from east to west. Evidence of a Roman road has been uncovered to the west of the site and a possible paved Roman ford has been designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (HER 814). Although the possible ford lies on the line of a Roman road, it is now thought more likely that the remains are of a collapsed post-medieval bridge (HER 11527), although no investigations have yet been carried out to confirm or reject this hypothesis. A number of Roman coins have been found in the area including a Roman silver coin hoard which has an end date of AD 395 (HER 1191), later excavations revealed an area of Roman settlement including a villa and cemetery in this area, close to Church End (HER 162). A large assemblage of 42 coins recorded to the west of the site including bronze coins dating to the late 3rd to early 4th century (HER 15974).

4.2 During the early medieval period the area was the focus for an Anglo-Saxon cemetery (HER 258), and excavations to the south-east of the site have revealed a variety of finds including an axe, beads and brooches. Two deserted medieval villages are also known in the area (HER 17019 & 17020). Kempston Mill, to the north of the site, and an associated moat (HER 1081, 5828), are thought to originate in the medieval period; the Domesday Book records a mill in Kempston belonging to Countess Judith which was possibly located here. A possible moated manorial site is located to the east of the site (HER 3396), and excavations here revealed evidence of occupation on the site from the 10th century onwards, with evidence of posthole structures and eaves drip gullies, followed by 11th to 12th century beamslot buildings. Later occupation was focused further to the north-east and in 1815 the present manor house building was built in almost the exact location as its predecessor. Numerous buildings associated with the manor estate would have been located in the area including a pest house (HER 11531). To the immediate west of the site, the Grade II Listed (Old) Mill House dates to c.1800, is built of red brick and is thought to encase parts of an earlier building. Previous excavations to the east of the site (HER

14853) revealed evidence for occupation dating from the Palaeolithic to the medieval period, with features including ditches, gullies and post-pits.

4.3 Archaeological excavations carried out by HAT (now AS) in 2002 on the adjacent site to the immediate west revealed medieval and post-medieval activity in the form of domestic occupation, the foundations of a small medieval/post-medieval building and evidence of agricultural activity (now recorded on the Bedford Borough HER as HER 17019). The excavations followed a trial trench evaluation that revealed a late Iron Age ditch in addition to sparse early medieval ditches, the latter possibly associated with the medieval mills on the site. The excavation revealed evidence for Saxo-Norman and medieval farming dating from the 9th to late 13th centuries. It revealed linear ditches which were probably part of a system of field boundaries and drainage ditches. Several pits were recorded, including one that appeared to be a pottery dump or rubbish pit, containing over 13kg of ceramics dated to the mid 9th to 12th century. The limestone foundations of a small medieval or post-medieval structure were also found.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 The project comprised the monitoring of the ground reduction and the excavation of foundation trenches for the bungalow and garage (Fig 3; DP 1-6).

5.2 Undifferentiated overburden was mechanically excavated, thereafter all further investigation was undertaken by hand. Exposed surfaces were cleaned as appropriate and examined for archaeological features and finds. Archaeological features and deposits were recorded using *pro forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed as necessary.

6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS (Figs 2 & 3)

Site visit 26/04/10 (DP 1 - 3)

The rubble surface was first stripped across the entire development area, reducing the ground level by 0.40 – 0.75m. Foundation trenches for a new domestic structure (c.15 x 8m) and garage (c.6.5 x 5.5) were mechanically excavated at a width of 0.65m and a maximum depth of 1.05m.

Sample Section 1

Garage (DP4) South-west side, north-east facing 0.00m = 28.44m AOD		
0.00 – 0.42m	L1000	Topsoil. Loose, dark grey brown garden soil with frequent rootlets.
0.42 – 0.77m	L1001	Made Ground. Loose, dark brown red coarse sand with occasional small stones.
0.77m+	L1002	Natural geological deposit. Loose, light yellow orange sand and gravel.

Sample Section 2

Bungalow (DP5) East side, west facing 0.00m = 28.55m AOD		
0.00 – 0.48m	L1000	Topsoil. As above.
0.48m+	L1002	Natural geological deposit. As above.

Sample Section 3

Bungalow (DP6) North side, south facing 0.00m = 28.52m AOD		
0.00 – 0.12m	L1000	Topsoil. As above.
0.12 – 0.60m	L1001	Made Ground. As above.
0.60 – 0.83m	L1003	Made Ground. Very loose, mottled dark grey and red brown coarse grey sand and gravel.
0.83m+	L1002	Natural geological deposit. As above.

Description: No archaeological finds or features were present.

7 CONFIDENCE RATING

7.1 It is not felt that any factors restricted the identification of archaeological features or finds

8 DEPOSIT MODEL

8.1 The site featured a pronounced slope from its south-east corner down to the northern end, following the contour of Mill Lane. A very thick layer (0.75m) of modern rubble and building debris (concrete, bricks, large stones, etc.) was stripped off the higher southern end prior to the excavation of the garage footings. The ground level was reduced by up to 0.40m. The exposed topsoil, L1000, was a very thick layer (0.42m) of garden soil likely associated with the allotments that used to occupy the site. No finds were present, although a beehive thimble and copper buckle dating from the mid 14th – mid 15th century were discovered in the allotment soil by a local resident prior to the stripping of the site. The dark brown red sand beneath, L1001 (0.35m thick), resembled a subsoil, but was likely made ground serving to build up the surface to the level of the adjacent plots and the road. L1001 directly overlaid the natural geological deposit, L1002.

8.2 A much thinner surface of hard packed building rubble and gravel was stripped off the lower northern half of the site. The sequence of topsoil and red sand was observed in the north-western corner of the foundation trench around the perimeter of the larger house flat located here. In this instance, the topsoil was much thinner (0.12m) and the red sand more substantial (0.48m). A second thin made ground layer (0.23m) of loose sand and gravel, L1003, separated L1001 from the natural deposit beneath. The eastern foundation trench of the house revealed a much simpler stratigraphic sequence of topsoil (0.48m) directly above the natural geological deposit.

8.3 The natural geological deposit consisted of loose yellow orange sand and gravel.

9 DISCUSSION

9.1 Desk-based research identified the potential of the site for evidence from the prehistoric period onwards. A trial trench evaluation undertaken on the adjacent site revealed a late Iron Age ditch and early medieval ditches. The excavations that followed recorded Saxo-Norman features dating from the 9th to 13th centuries comprising field boundary and drainage ditches. The limestone foundations of a small medieval/post-medieval building in association with medieval rubbish pits were also revealed suggesting the potential for similar activity in the current site.

9.2 The monitoring of the current plot revealed no archaeological finds or features.

DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

The archive records, with an inventory, will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross-referenced and checked for internal consistency. The archive will be deposited with the Bedford Museum (Accession Number BEDFM2010.18)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions would like to thank Kempston Mill Ltd for funding the programme of archaeological monitoring. AS also acknowledges Ian Hale Planning & Design Consultancy who commissioned the project.

Archaeological Solutions is also pleased to acknowledge the advice and input of Mr Geoff Saunders of Bedford Borough Council.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Gurney, D. 2003 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14/ALGAO

Institute for Field Archaeologists (revised 2008) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



1
Footprint of garage (foreground) and house (background). Looking NE.



2
Foundation trench of garage. Looking NE.



3
Foundation trenches of house. Looking NE



4
Sample Section 1, garage plot. Looking SW



5
Sample Section 2, house plot. Looking E

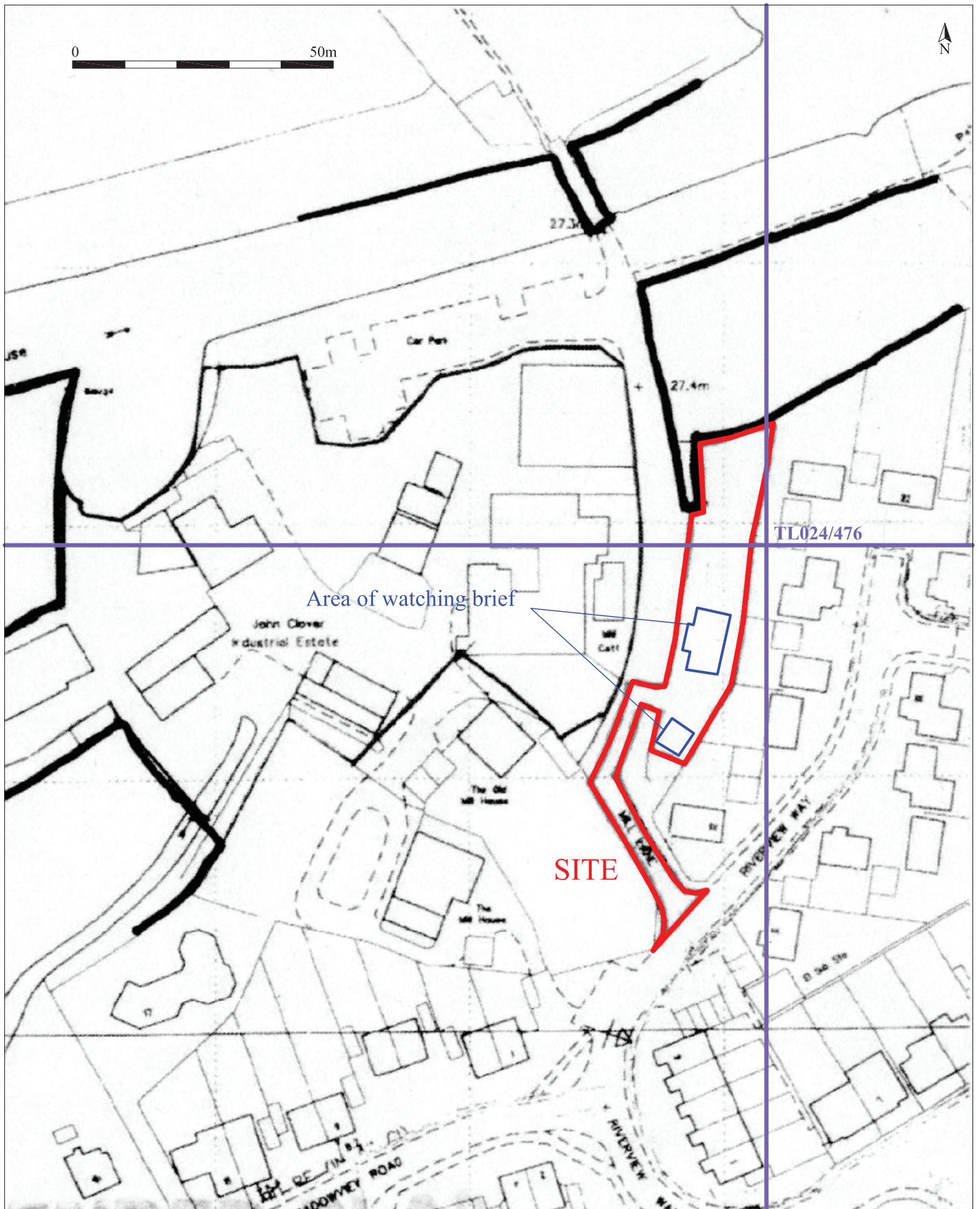


6
Sample Section 3, house plot. Looking N



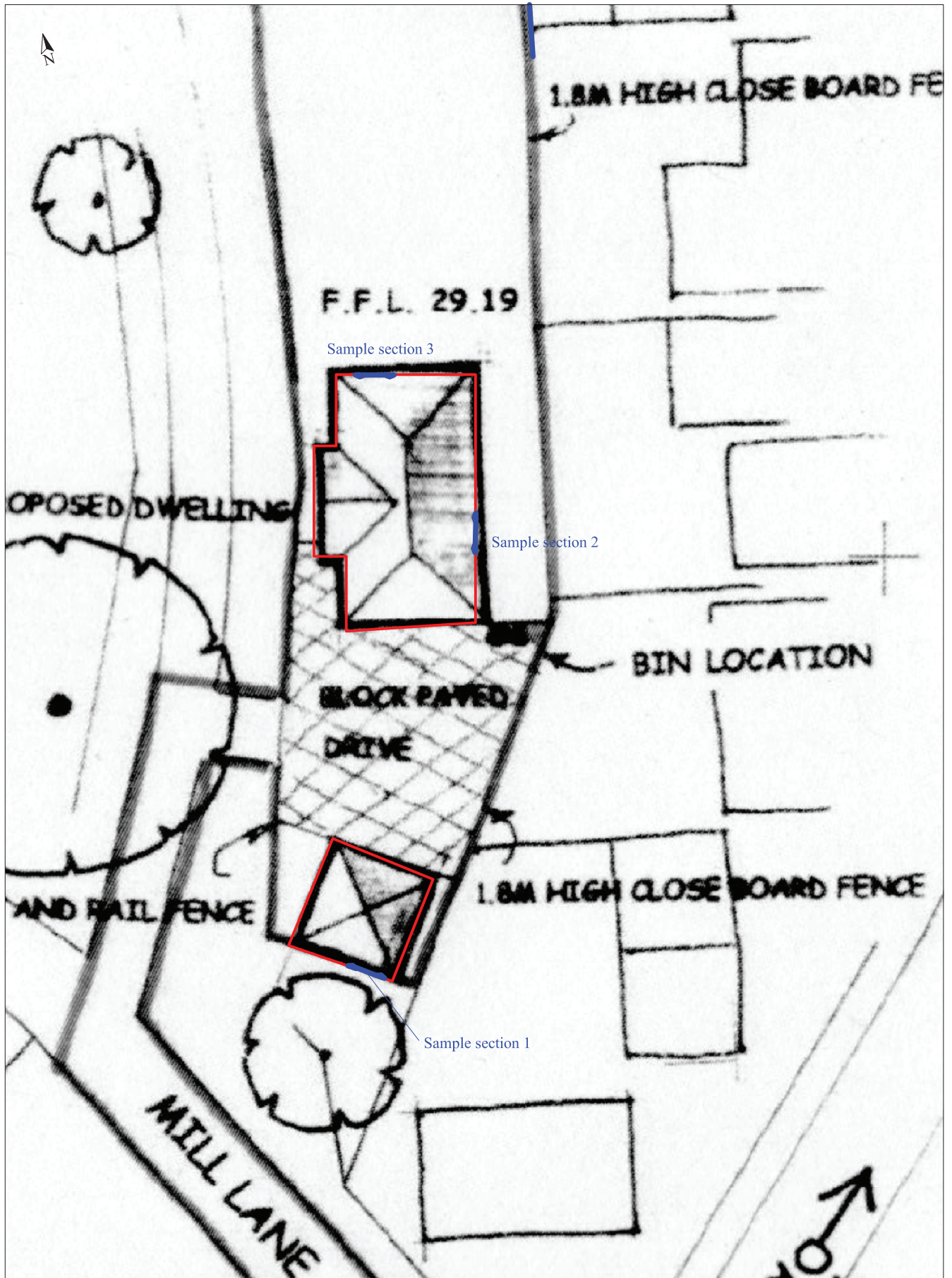
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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4



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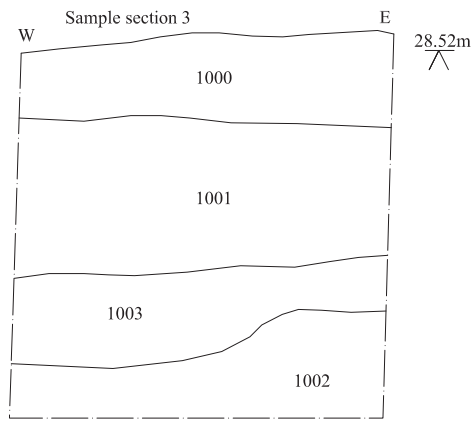
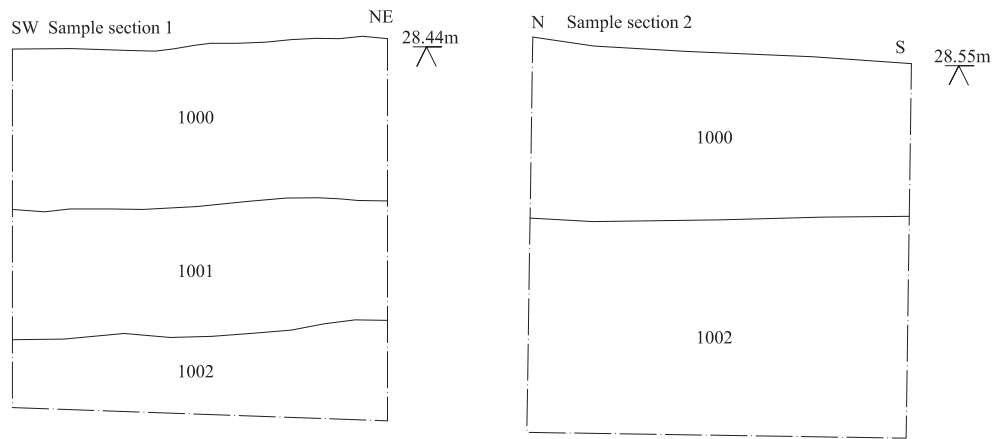
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Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan
 Scale 1:1000 at A4



— Area of watching brief

0 20m

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 Fig. 3 Area of watching brief
 Scale 1:250 at A4



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Fig. 4 Sample sections

Scale 1:20 at A4