
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

**GARAGE COURT, MINGAY ROAD,
THETFORD, NORFOLK**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING

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NGR: TL 8621 8244	Report No. 3350
District: Breckland	Site Code: ENF124545
Approved: Claire Halpin MIFA	Project No. 3776
Signed:	Date: May 2010

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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	<i>Garage Court, Mingay Road, Thetford, Norfolk. Archaeological Monitoring and Recording</i>		
Project description (250 words)	<p><i>In May 2010 Archaeological Solutions Ltd carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording at Garage Court, Mingay Road, Thetford, Norfolk (NGR TL 8621 8244). The archaeological monitoring was required in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning approval for the construction of two bungalows (Planning Ref. 3PL/2009/0921/F). It was commissioned by Brooks & Wood Ltd</i></p> <p><i>The development lies to the south-east of Thetford's town centre within the Barnham Cross housing estate. It is situated just outside the area of the Saxon defences of the town, close to an area where medieval industrial activity has been recorded.</i></p> <p><i>The monitoring revealed no archaeological features or finds.</i></p>		
Project dates (fieldwork)	<i>5th & 10th May 2010</i>		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>	Future work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>
P. number	<i>P3776</i>	Site code	<i>ENF124545</i>
Type of project	<i>Archaeological Monitoring & Recording</i>		
Site status	<i>-</i>		
Current land use	<i>Garages and parking</i>		
Planned development	<i>Two new bungalows</i>		
Main features (+dates)	<i>-</i>		
Significant finds (+dates)	<i>-</i>		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Norfolk</i>	<i>Breckland</i>	<i>Thetford</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service</i>		
Post code (if known)	<i>-</i>		
Area of site	<i>1400m²</i>		
NGR	<i>TL 8621 8244</i>		
Height AOD (max/ min)	<i>c. 25m AOD</i>		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>Norfolk Landscape Archaeology</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>Lisa Smith</i>		
Funded by	<i>Brooks & Wood Ltd</i>		
Full title	<i>Garage Court, Mingay Road, Thetford, Norfolk. Archaeological Monitoring & Recording</i>		
Authors	<i>Smith L.</i>		
Report no.	<i>3350</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>May 2010</i>		

GARAGE COURT, MINGAY ROAD, THETFORD, NORFOLK

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING

SUMMARY

In May 2010 Archaeological Solutions Ltd carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording at Garage Court, Mingay Road, Thetford, Norfolk (NGR TL 8621 8244). The archaeological monitoring was required in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning approval for the construction of two bungalows (Planning Ref. 3PL/2009/0921/F). It was commissioned by Brooks & Wood Ltd.

The development lies to the south-east of Thetford town centre within the Barnham Cross housing estate. It is situated just outside the area of the Saxon defences of the town, close to an area where medieval industrial activity has been recorded.

The monitoring revealed no archaeological features or finds.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In May 2010 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording at Garage Court, Mingay Road, Thetford, Norfolk (NGR TL 8621 8244; Figs. 1-2). The archaeological monitoring was required in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning approval for the construction of two bungalows (Planning Ref. 3PL/2009/0921/F).

1.2 The archaeological monitoring was conducted in response to a brief issued by Norfolk Landscape Archaeology (James Albone, dated 4th January 2010) and a specification prepared by AS (dated 13th January 2010). The project conformed to the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (revised 2008), as well as the document *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).

1.3 The site lies just outside the area of the Saxon defences of the town of Thetford, close to an area where medieval industrial activity has been recorded. There was therefore a potential for the presence of archaeological remains of these dates. The objectives of the project of archaeological monitoring and recording were:

- to ensure the archaeological 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; and
- to secure the analysis, interpretation, publication (if required), long-term conservation and storage of the project archive.

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 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 (Fig. 1-2)

2.1 The site lies to the south-east of Thetford's town centre within the Barnham Cross housing estate. It is situated just outside the area of the Saxon defences of the town, close to an area where medieval industrial activity has been recorded, to the south of the London Road.

2.2 The site was formerly garages, since demolished, and hardstanding, accessed via Mingay Road. It is situated within a residential housing estate and comprises a sub-rectangular area some 70m x 20m

3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

3.1 The geology comprises chalk and Breckland sand, on the edge of a shallow valley of the river Little Ouse. Settlement in Breckland is concentrated on the better soils of the river valleys (such as those of the Little

Ouse and Thet which meet at Thetford), with wind-blown sands overlying chalk covering much of the area.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 Neolithic and Early Bronze Age occupation and burial activity is known from the Breckland areas surrounding the present town of Thetford, and Iron Age occupation and fortification are recorded from the area of Thetford Castle. A substantial Iceni ceremonial complex here was replaced by a Roman temple following the Boudiccan revolt. After the Roman period, the town was occupied by the Saxons, Danes and Scandinavians, and a mint became established by 900AD.

4.2 The importance of Thetford as the East Anglian capital during the Saxon era is reflected in its status as the 6th largest settlement in England by the time of the Domesday Survey in 1086, with 12 churches and a monastery (the Benedictines at St Georges Friary). The Cluniac Priory of Our Lady was begun on the north bank of the Little Ouse in 1107 by Roger Bigod, Earl of East Anglia, probably replacing an earlier foundation to the south of the river. It was likely established by 1114 (Penn, 1991). The Cluniac Priory became an important pilgrimage centre following a number of miracles which were reported in the 13th century. It continued as a religious house until the Dissolution in 1540.

4.3 After the Dissolution the Priory became the site of Abbey House, a small agricultural estate which developed from the mid-16th century to the 1930's, reaching its peak sometime during the mid-19th century, though the majority of the Priory buildings largely became ruinous during this time. During the 20th century, after use as a military camp by Field Marshall Haigh during WWI, the estate fell into public ownership.

4.4 To the east and north east of the current site lie the Saxon defences, and early Saxon burials are known to the east (NHER 5860). Close by to the east a medieval chalk and sand extraction site has been recorded (NHER 389670) and medieval finds have been made to the north west on the St Martins Estate (NHER 5902)

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 The archaeological monitoring comprised the observation of all significant 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 area was scanned by metal detector.

5.2 The principal elements observed comprised the excavation of two building footprints with strip foundation trenches measuring 0.60m wide and up to 1.30m deep (Fig 3; DP 1-4), following the removal of hardstanding.

6 RESULTS

Plot 1

<i>Sample Section 1</i>		<i>Fig. 4 DP 5</i>
<i>North-east facing</i>		
<i>0.00m = 24.82m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.10 m	L1000	Concrete slab and flint hardcore. Concrete slab (removed) with frequent flint nodes and fragments in a mid yellowish red silty sand matrix
0.10m – 1.30m+	L1001	Natural chalky sand. Mid reddish yellow silty sand with patches of pale yellow sand throughout and occasional fragments of chalk angular pebbles and flint nodes.

<i>Sample Section 2</i>		<i>Fig. 4 DP 6</i>
<i>South-west facing</i>		
<i>0.00m = 24.76m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.16m	L1000	Concrete and flint hardcore. As above.
0.16 – 1.28m+	L1001	Natural chalky sand. As above

Description: A concrete strip footing for a garage (L1002) was identified. No archaeological features or finds were present.

Plot 2

<i>Sample Section 3</i>		<i>Fig. 4 DP 7</i>
<i>South-east facing</i>		
<i>0.00m = 24.69m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.20 m	L1003	Topsoil. Dark greyish brown sandy silt with occasional rounded pebbles and CBM fragments
0.20m – 0.70m	L1004	Made Ground. Mid reddish brown silty sand with frequent rounded pebbles.
0.70m+	L1001	Natural. As above Sample Section 1

<i>Sample Section 4</i>		<i>Fig. 4 DP 8</i>
<i>South-west facing</i>		
<i>0.00m = 24.72m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.20 m	L1003	Topsoil. As above.
0.20m – 0.65m	L1004	Made Ground. As above.
0.65m+	L1001	Natural. As above Sample Section 1

Description: No archaeological features or finds were present.

7 CONFIDENCE RATING

7.1 It is not felt that any factors inhibited the recognition of archaeological features and finds during the archaeological investigation.

8 DEPOSIT MODEL

8.1 A slab of concrete with a preparation layer of flint hardcore (L1000) originally extended across the entire site. The slab was removed prior to monitoring. The slab and associated layer comprised frequent flint nodes and fragments in a mid yellowish red silty sand matrix. It was 0.37m thick overlying natural at the south-eastern end of the site and topsoil in north-eastern areas.

8.2 A layer of topsoil (L1003) was identified in north-western areas of the site after the removal of the modern concrete surface. It consisted of a dark greyish brown sandy silt with occasional rounded pebbles and CBM fragments and was approximately 0.20m deep. Below, Made Ground L1004 was a mid reddish brown silty sand with frequent rounded pebbles (0.45m – 0.50m thick). It overlay the natural.

8.3 The natural (L1001) was a mid reddish yellow silty sand with patches of pale yellow sand throughout and occasional fragments of chalk, angular pebbles and flint nodes. At the south-eastern end of the site it was directly below the modern concrete slab and preparation layers at a depth of 0.20m. In north-western areas it was identified at an increased depth of 0.65m after the removal of topsoil and made ground.

9 DISCUSSION

9.1 The monitoring revealed no archaeological features or finds. The south-eastern areas of the site were truncated as a result of the construction of garages and car parking areas associated with the surrounding housing estate. In north-western areas the original topsoil was preserved suggesting little ground disturbance below this level however no archaeological deposits were present.

10 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

10.1 The requirements for archive storage will be agreed with the local museum. A list of the contents of the archive will be supplied to NLA at the time of deposition to the museum. The archive will be prepared in accordance with the UK Institute for Conservation's *Conservation Guideline No.2* and other relevant reference documents.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions would like to thank Brooks & Wood Ltd for funding the project and for their assistance, in particular Mr Justyn French and Mr John Goodyear.

AS would also like to acknowledge the input and advice of James Albone of Norfolk Landscape Archaeology.

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PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



DP 1

General view of the site. Looking South



DP 2

Plot 1. Looking South-east



DP 3

Plot 2. Looking East



DP 4

Plot 2. Looking North-East.



DP 5

Plot 1. Sample Section 1. Looking South-West.



DP 6

Plot 1. Sample Section 2. Looking North-East.



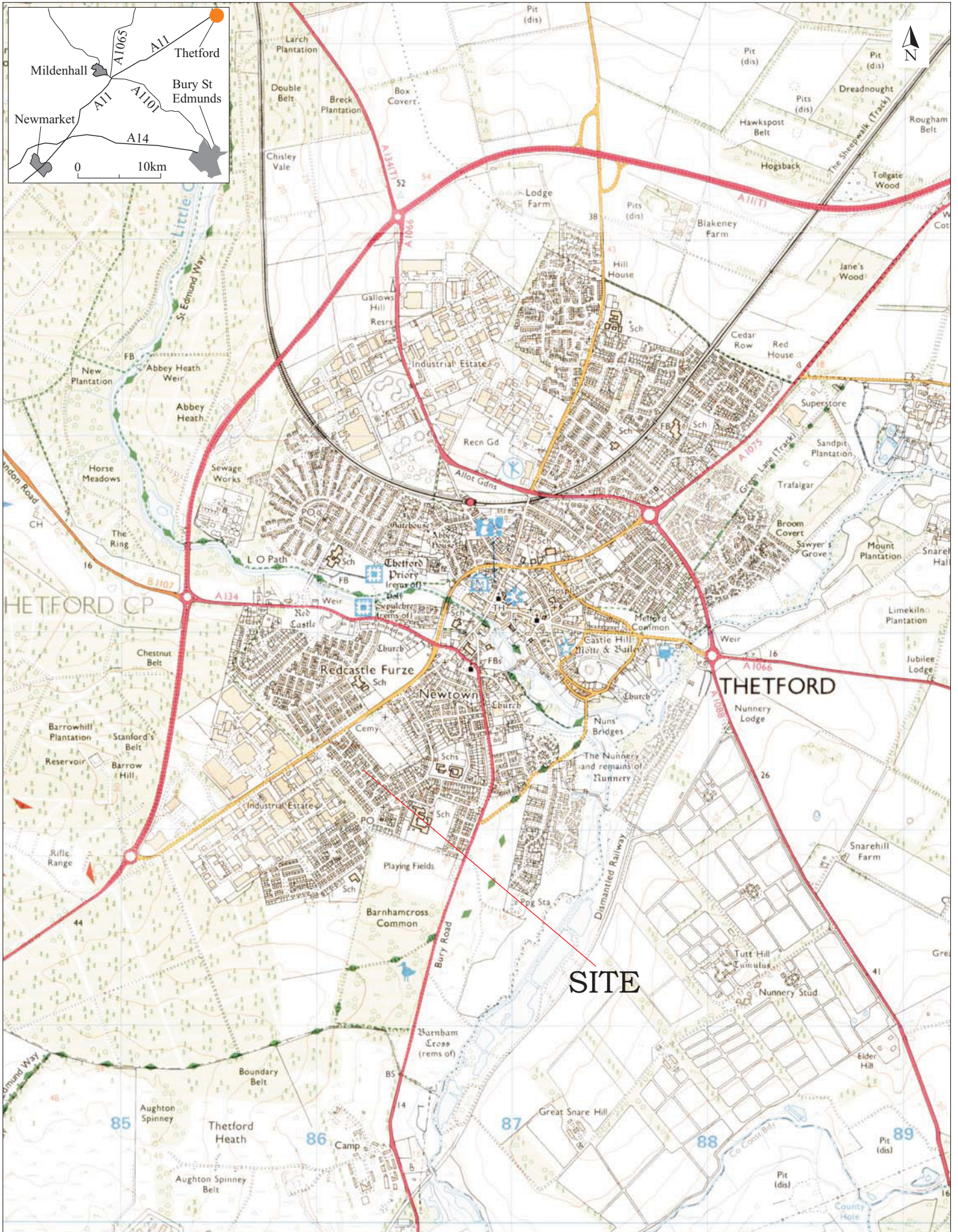
DP 7

Plot 2. Sample Section 3. Looking North-West.



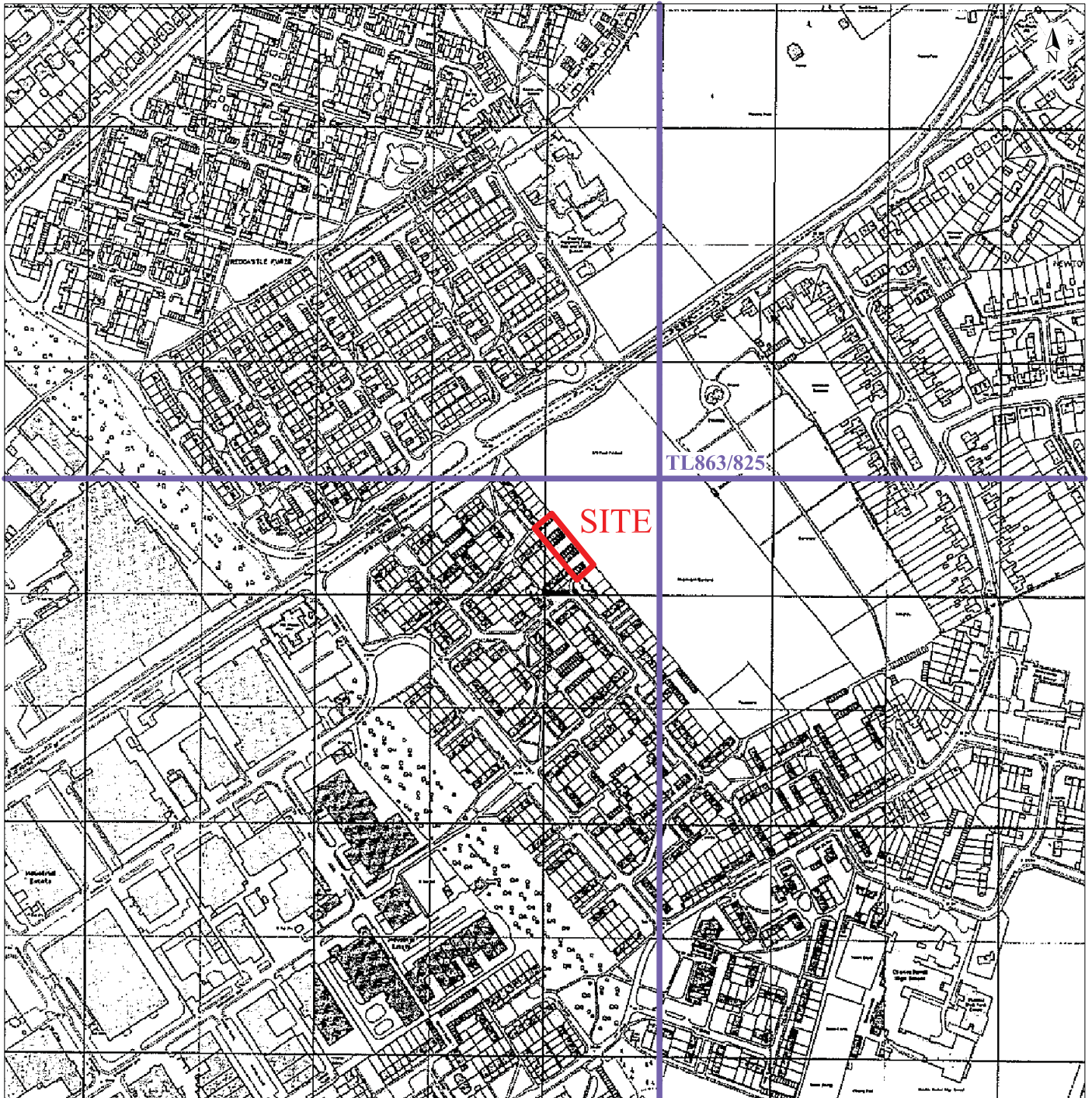
DP 8

Plot 2. Sample Section 4. Looking North-East



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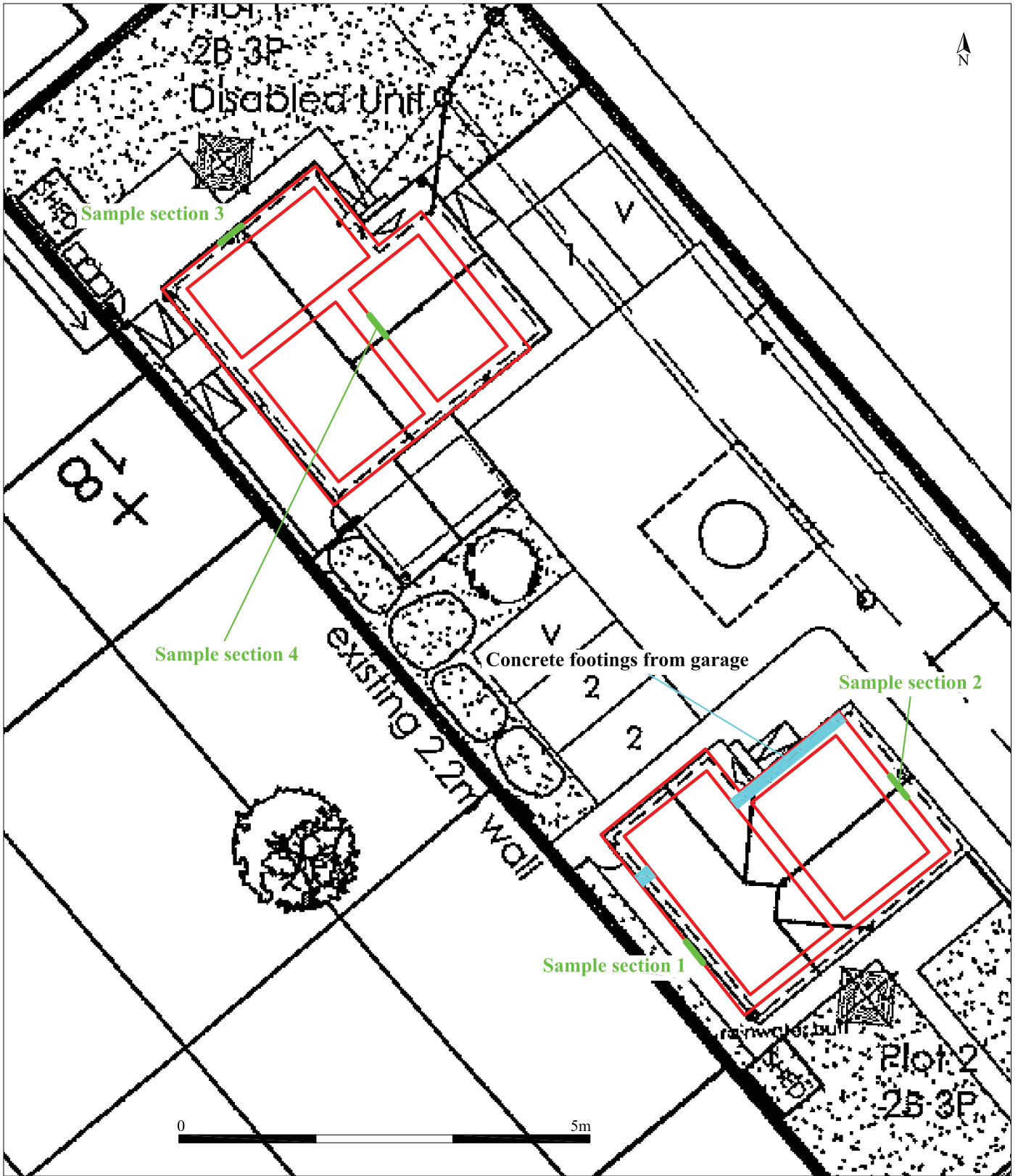
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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000



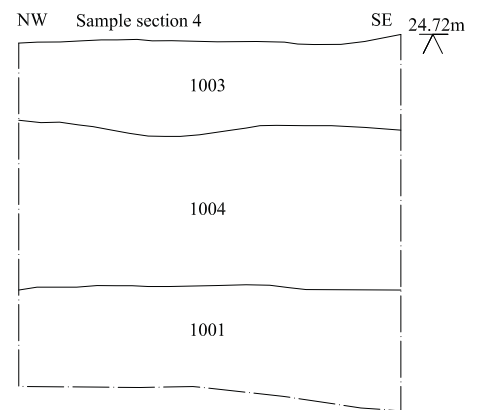
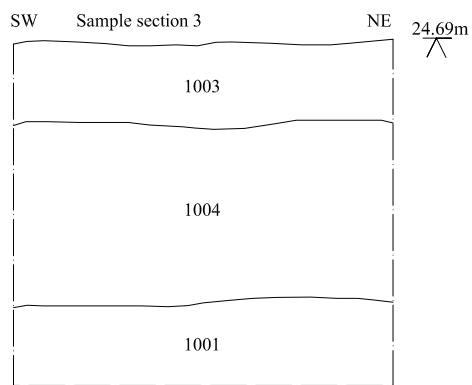
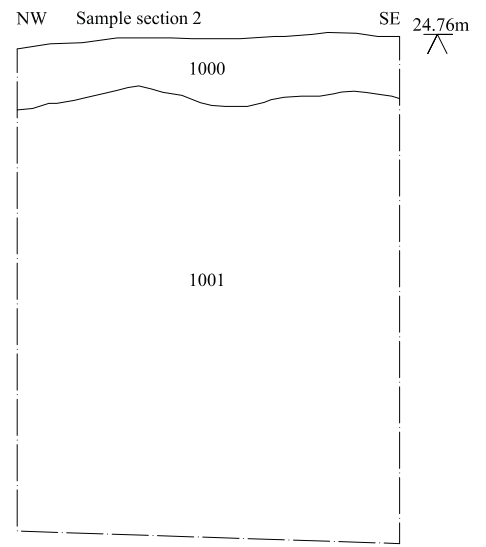
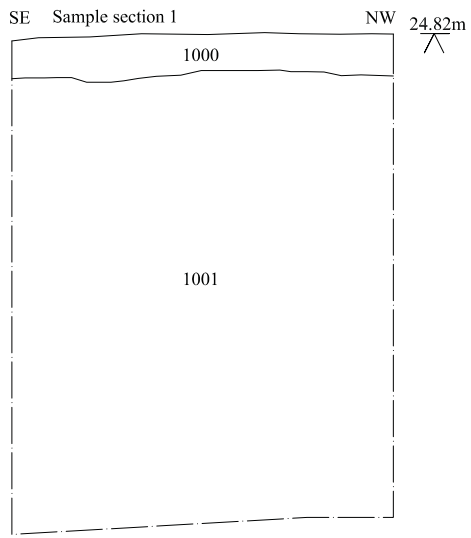
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0 50m

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Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan
 Scale 1:5000 at A4



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Fig. 3 Section location plan
Scale 1:200 at A4



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Fig. 4 Sample sections
 Scale 1:20 at A4