


**5 – 11 STOKES AVENUE, WATTON
NORFOLK**

**MONITORING OF WORKS UNDER
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SUPERVISION AND CONTROL**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

**5 – 11 STOKES AVENUE, WATTON,
NORFOLK**

**MONITORING OF WORKS UNDER
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SUPERVISION AND CONTROL**

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NGR: TF 9049 0098	Report No: 3553		
District: Breckland	Site Code: ENF 124771		
Approved: Claire Halpin	Project No: P3564		
Signed: 	Date: June 2010		

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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	5-11 Stokes Avenue, Watton, Norfolk. Monitoring of Works Under Archaeological Supervision and Control		
<i>Between December 2009 and May 2010, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) conducted archaeological monitoring and recording at Nos. 5 - 11 Stokes Avenue, Watton, Norfolk (NGR TF 9049 0098). The monitoring was commissioned by Gaswise Services Ltd in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning approval for the construction of seven houses (Planning Ref. 3PL/2007/0938/0).</i>			
<p><i>The site lies on the eastern side of Stokes Avenue in Watton. An undated female burial (NHER 20401), possibly Romano-British, was recorded below the foundations of a house to the immediate south of the monitoring area, demonstrating that archaeological remains have survived beneath or between the houses already built there.</i></p> <p><i>The current project comprised the monitoring of the demolition of the existing houses, the ground reduction within the old building footprints, and the excavation of deep foundation trenches around each of the seven building plots. No archaeological finds or features were present.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	07 December 2009 – 05 May, 2010		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	N	Future work(Y/N/?)	N
P. number	3564	Site code	ENF 124771
Type of project	Archaeological Monitoring		
Site status	-		
Current land use	Residential		
Planned development	7 residential units		
Main features (+dates)	-		
Significant finds (+dates)	-		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	Norfolk	Breckland	Watton
HER/ SMR for area	Norfolk Historic Environment Record (NHER)		
Post code (if known)	-		
Area of site	c.1500m ²		
NGR	TF 9049 0098		
Height AOD (max/ min)	c.41m AOD		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	Norfolk Landscape Archaeology		
Project supervisor/s(PO)	Walter McCall		
Funded by	Gaswise Services Ltd		
Full title			
5-11 Stokes Avenue, Watton, Norfolk. Monitoring of Works Under Archaeological Supervision and Control			
Authors	Walter McCall, Peter Thompson MA		
Report no.	3553		
Date (of report)	May 2010		

5 – 11 STOKES AVENUE, WATTON, NORFOLK

MONITORING OF WORKS UNDER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SUPERVISION AND CONTROL

SUMMARY

Between December 2009 and May 2010, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) conducted a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording at 5-11 Stokes Avenue, Watton, Norfolk (NGR TF 9049 0098 Figs 1 & 2). The monitoring was commissioned by Gaswise Services Ltd in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for the construction of seven houses (Planning Ref. 3PL/2007/0938/0).

The site lies on the eastern side of Stokes Avenue in Watton. An undated female burial (NHER 20401), possibly Romano-British, was recorded below the foundations of a house to the immediate south of the monitoring area, demonstrating that archaeological remains have survived beneath, or between, the houses already built there.

The current project comprised the monitoring of the demolition of the existing houses, the ground reduction within the old building footprints, and the excavation of deep foundation trenches for each of the seven dwellings. In the event no archaeological finds or features were present.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Between December 2009 and May 2010 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) conducted a programme of archaeological monitoring at 5-11 Stokes Avenue, Watton, Norfolk (NGR TF 9049 0098 Figs. 1 and 2). The monitoring was commissioned by Gaswise Services Ltd in compliance with a planning condition attached to the construction of seven houses (Planning Ref. 3PL/2007/0938/0).

1.2 The monitoring was conducted in accordance with a brief issued by Norfolk Landscape Archaeology (dated 06/08/2007) and a specification compiled by AS (dated 7/07/2009). The archaeological monitoring followed the procedures outlined in the Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (revised 2008), and *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).

1.3 The monitoring aimed

- To ensure the archaeological excavation and 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

- To secure the full analysis and interpretation of the site archive and the appropriate publication of the project results, if required

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 PSS5 (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 (Fig. 1)

2.1 Watton is situated in the Norfolk Breckland and lies on the A1075 between Thetford and Dereham. The site comprises a small plot along the eastern side of Stokes Avenue, to the west of the min town centre and south of the Brandon Road. It was formerly occupied by four semi-detached dwellings.

3 METHODOLOGY (Background Research)

Information was sought from a variety of available sources in order to meet the objectives of the desk-based assessment.

3.1 Archaeological databases

The standard collation of all known archaeological sites and spot finds within Norfolk comes from the Norfolk Historic Environment Record (NHER). In order to provide a representative sample, the HER database was searched for all known entries within an approximate 1 km radius of the site. These are listed (Appendices 1 and 2). Their significance, where relevant, is discussed in Section 4.2.

4 THE EVIDENCE

4.1 Topography, geology and soils

4.1.1 The site is located on the south slope of a slight valley running west to east. The local soil is of 'typical stagnogley' type described as slowly permeable and seasonally waterlogged, which overlies solid Upper Cretaceous chalk.

4.2 Archaeological and historical background

Prehistoric (c. 700,000 BC – AD 43)

4.2.1 Prehistoric activity in the area is attested by several polished Neolithic stone axes including HER 4694, 8771 and 8776.

Romano-British (AD 43-410)

4.2.2 In 1984 part of a human skeleton probably of a woman aged 50 or more was found at 13 Stokes Avenue to the south of the monitoring area. The remains are undated, but a sherd of Roman pottery was associated with the burial and, if not residual, indicates the burial could be Romano-British (NHER 2041). A stretch of Roman road has been located in Watton (NHER 8786), and a Roman coin and two sherds of pottery have been recovered from an unknown location but within 1 km of the site (NHER 25656).

Saxon (AD 410-1066)

4.2.3 No Saxon remains have been recorded from within the monitoring area

Medieval (AD 1066 – 1539)

4.2.4 Watton is first mentioned in 1086 as *Wadetuna* meaning 'Farmstead of a man called Wada' and by then it had a settlement, manor house and church. In 1202 King John granted the town a Market Charter, and the main trade was in wool and cloth, and other produce deriving from agriculture. The 25 inch OS map indicates the presence of a three sided moat some 600 metres north-east of the monitoring area, but bungalows have since been built on the site and nothing is now visible (NHER 13290). A late medieval coin was found by metal detecting at an unmarked location but within 1 km of the monitoring site (NHER 40121).

Post-medieval (AD 1540 – 1900)

4.2.5 Local tradition links Wayland Wood outside Watton as the original setting for the incident that created the story of the 'Babes in the Wood'. In 1674 a great fire destroyed much of the village and the Clock Tower was built five years later complete with a fire bell to commemorate the event. There are 7 Listed Buildings in Watton within approximately 1 km of the monitoring site (Appendix 2).

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 The current project comprised the monitoring of the demolition of the existing houses, the ground reduction within the old building footprints, and the excavation of deep foundation trenches for each of the seven dwellings, Plots 1 – 7 (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 3 & 4)

Site visit 07/12/09 Fig 3, DP 1 & 2

Two pairs of semi-detached residential units were still standing on the site. Nos. 5 & 7 Stokes Avenue were demolished, and the footprint grubbed out to a depth of 0.90m in order to remove the concrete floor and rubble. The resultant hole was immediately backfilled. The foundation trenches of the new building, Plots 3 - 5, were excavated under careful supervision at a width of 0.65m and a depth of 1.35m. No archaeological finds or features were present.

Sample Section 1, Plots 3-5 (Fig. 4)

East side, west facing		
0.00m = 36.09m AOD		
0.00 – 0.05m	L1000	Topsoil. Firm, dark grey brown sandy silt.
0.05 – 0.40m	L1001	Subsoil. Compact, mid orange brown sandy silt.
0.40m+	L1002	Natural geological deposit. Compact, light yellow orange sandy clay with moderate small rounded chalk and flint.

Site visit 05/01/10 Fig 3, DP 3 & 4

The remaining residential units, Nos. 9 & 11 Stokes Avenue, were demolished prior to commencement of works (22/12/09). The footprint was grubbed out to remove the concrete flooring and rubble, and immediately backfilled. The foundation trenches for Plots 1 & 2 were excavated under careful supervision at a width of 0.65m and a maximum depth of 1.32m. No archaeological finds or features were present.

Sample Section 2, Plots 1-2 (Fig. 4)

North side, south facing		
0.00m = 41.29m AOD+		
0.00 – 0.63m	L1000	Topsoil. As above.
0.63m+	L1002	Natural geological deposit. As above.

Sample Section 3, Plots 1-2 (Fig. 4, DP 4)

East side, west facing			
0.00m = 41.15m AOD			
0.00 – 0.70m	L1000	Topsoil.	As above.
0.70m+	L1002	Natural geological deposit. As above.	

Site visit 08/02/10

The foundation trench along the west side of Plots 6 & 7 was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.35m. No archaeological finds or features were present. Work ceased due to inclement weather and the trench backfilled.

Site visit 04/05/10 (DP 5 & 6)

The foundation trench along the west side of Plots 6-7 was re-excavated and extended around the northern side of the new structure to a maximum depth of 1.40m. No archaeological finds or features were present.

Sample Section 4, Plots 6-7 (Fig. 4, DP 6)

West side, east facing			
0.00m = 41.26m AOD			
0.00 – 0.31m	L1003	Demolition layer. Friable, mid grey brown silty sand with frequent building rubble and moderate flint.	
0.63m+	L1002	Natural geological deposit. As above.	

Additional Description of Deposits: A layer of hessian matting separated the made ground from the natural clay and chalk beneath. The natural geological deposit changed from a light orange yellow to a light yellow grey clay at a depth of 0.60-0.70m.

Site visit 05/05/10 (Fig. 3, DP 5)

The remaining foundation trenches for Plots 6-7 were excavated at an average depth of 1.40m and a maximum depth of 1.75m on the south side. Two service pipes were exposed in the north-west corner. No archaeological finds or features were present.

Sample Section 5, Plots 6-7 (Fig. 4)

South side, north facing			
0.00m = 36.31m AOD			
0.00 – 0.44m	L1000	Topsoil.	As above.
0.70m+	L1002	Natural geological deposit. As above.	

Additional Description of Deposits: The hessian matting was only present in the western foundation trench. The made ground, L1003, observed across most of the plot was replaced along the southern and eastern perimeters by Topsoil L1000.

7 CONFIDENCE RATING

7.1 It is not felt that any factors restricted the identification of archaeological features or finds during the monitoring and recording.

8 DEPOSIT MODEL (Fig. 4, DP 4 & 6)

8.1 The stratigraphic sequence varied between the three structures. Plots 1 & 2 in the northern sector of the site featured a thick layer of topsoil (0.63-0.70m) directly overlaying the natural geological deposit. The topsoil, L1000, was a very dark and sandy silt. This topsoil layer was preserved along the perimeter of the building site on the northern, eastern, and southern sides. The same sequence was observed on the southern side of Plots 6 & 7, although the topsoil here was thinner at 0.44m. The eastern side of Plots 3-5 featured a much thinner topsoil (0.05) and a subsoil (0.35m). Subsoil L1001 was a firm orange brown sandy silt. It was not observed anywhere else on the site.

8.2 The topsoil in the middle of the site, within the footprints of the previous residential units, was replaced by a demolition layer comprising modern building rubble (brick, concrete, stones, etc.) in a matrix of grey brown silty sand. This demolition layer, L1003, was visible on the western side of Plots 6-7 at a maximum depth of 0.65m. It directly overlay the natural geological deposit. In the western side of the building it overlay hessian matting.

8.3 The natural geological deposit consisted of compact, sandy clay with moderate small rounded chalk and flint. At a depth of 0.60-0.70, the clay shifted from a light orange yellow colour a light yellow grey.

9 DISCUSSION

9.1 There is an overall dearth in archaeological finds between the prehistoric and Saxon periods in the area, probably primarily because few archaeological investigations have been carried out. Human activity is noticeable in the presence of several Neolithic stone tools recovered from fields (NHER 8771 and 8776), and the Roman road thought to be that running from Denver to Caistor St Edmund (NHER 8786). A possible medieval moat might relate to the earlier development of the village (NHER 13290). In particular the presence of the undated, but possibly Roman burial (NHER 20401), indicated that there was a good potential for archaeology in close proximity to the site, because archaeological deposits have survived either beneath or between the houses already built there.

9.2 In the event the monitoring and recording revealed no archaeological finds or features.

DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

Archive records, with an inventory, will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross-referenced and checked for internal consistency. The archive will be deposited with the Norfolk Museums Service.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions Limited would like to thank Gaswise Services Ltd for their co-operation and funding of the monitoring and recording (in particular Mr Frank Neal and Mr David Muncaster)

AS is also pleased to acknowledge the advice and input of Dr Ken Hamilton of Norfolk Landscape Archaeology

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Institute of Field Archaeologists 1994 (revised 2008) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*

WEB SITE

www.heritage.gov.uk/

APPENDIX 1 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD DATA

The following sites are those that lie within a c. 1 km radius of the assessment site. The table has been compiled from data held by the Norfolk Historic Environment Record (NHER).

NHER Number	Grid Reference	Description
<i>Prehistoric c.700 BC – AD 43</i>		
8776	TF 909 006	A polished Neolithic flint axe head (c.4,000-2,300 BC) was found in 1967 on the surface of a field
8771	TF 9115 0083	A polished Neolithic axehead was found in 1964 on the surface of a field
4694	TF 8962 0089	Neolithic flint adze found in field in 1972(in Saham Toney parish)
<i>Romano-British AD 43-410</i>		
8786	TF 9199 0072	Roman Road thought to be part of route from Denver to Caistor St Edmund
20401	TF 9049 0054	A trench dug at 13 Stokes Avenue in 1984 found human skeletal remains, possibly of a woman aged 50+. The remains are undated but a sherd of Roman pottery was associated with the burial
25656	TF 91 00	Metal detecting in 1989 found a Roman coin of Constans (320-350) and two sherds of Romano-British pottery
<i>Medieval 1066-1539</i>		
40121	91 00	Metal detecting in 2001 found one late medieval and two post-medieval coins
13290	9108 0088	An early 25 inch OS map shows a three sided moat but bungalows have since been built on the site and nothing is now visible
<i>Negative Evidence</i>		
45353	TF 90206 00753	A watching brief in 2006 by Norfolk Archaeological Unit found no evidence of any archaeological remains

APPENDIX 2 LISTED BUILDINGS

The following listed buildings are those that lie within c. 1 km of the monitoring site. The table has been compiled from data held by the Norfolk Historic Environment Record (NHER).

Identification number	Name and Grid Reference	Description
19202	Harvey House (TF 9147 0088)	A 5 storey 7 bayed fine red brick mansion built in 1720 Georgian style and with Tuscan doorcase, with wings added in the 19 th century
40382	36 High Street (TF 91528 00829)	Late 18 th century brick built house converted into 20 th century shop
46119	77-83 High Street (TF 9113 0075)	Four almshouses built in 1871 and restored in 1975
46120	56-58 High Street (TF 9144 0082)	Late 17 th century clay lump building refaced in brick in the 18 th with one converted to a shop in the 19 th
46121	74, 76 and 76A (TF 9134 0081)	A range of 3 brick built early 19 th century shops with refurbished 20 th century shop fronts
46315	60-60A High Street (TF 9140 0083)	An early 18 th century house converted to a shop with flat above in the 19 th century
46513	33 High Street (TF 9150 0078)	Mid 19 th century brick shop

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



1
5 & 7 Stokes Avenue, partially demolished.
Looking west.



2
New residential units on Plots 3-5. Looking
north-west.



3
Foundation trenches, Plots 1 & 2. Looking
north-east.



4
Sample section 3, Plots 1 & 2. Looking
east.



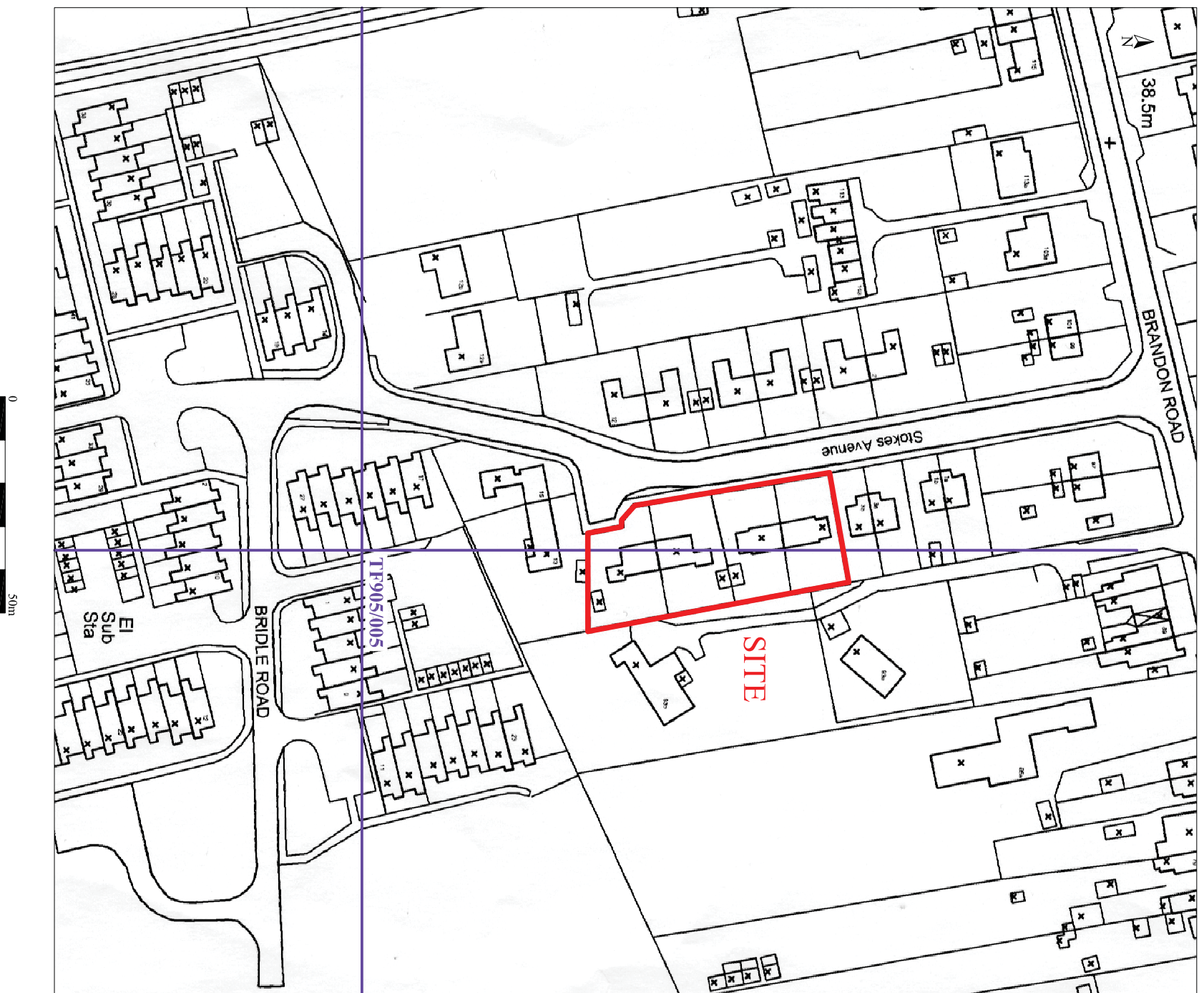
5
Foundation trenches, Plots 6 & 7. Looking
east.



6
Sample section 4, Plots 6 & 7. Looking
west.



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



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Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan

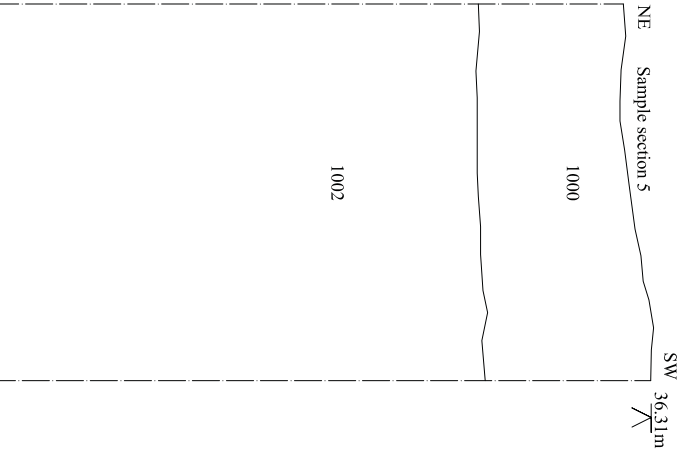
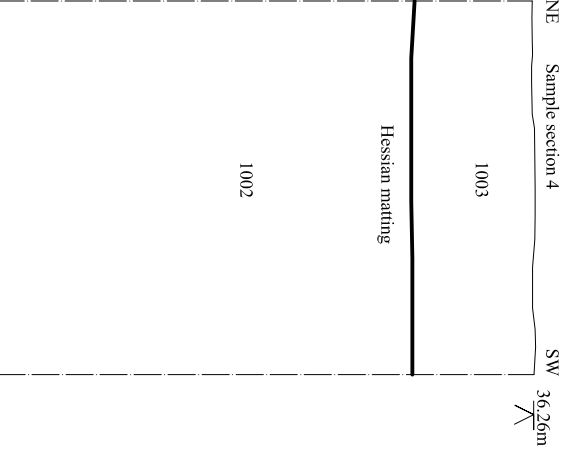
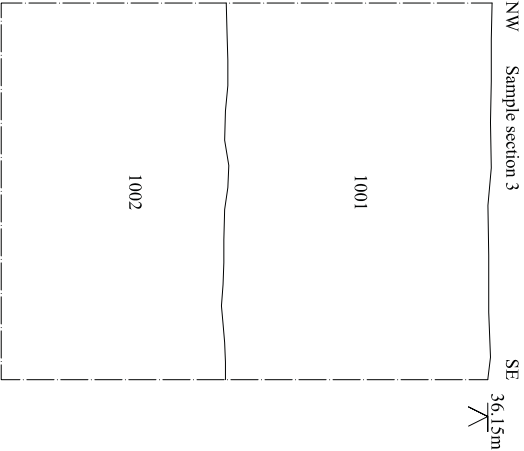
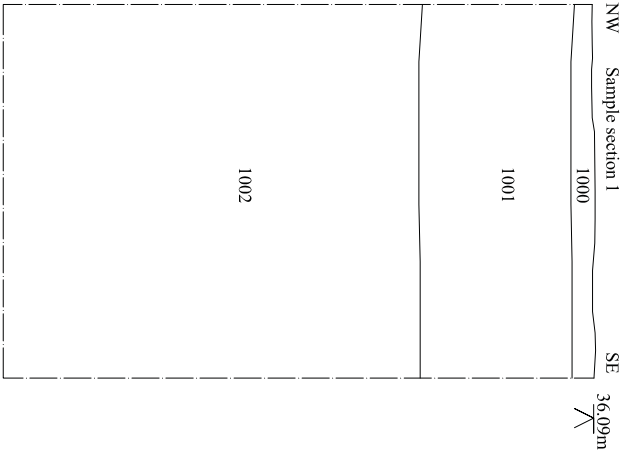
Scale 1:1250 at A4



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Fig. 3 Section location plan

Scale 1:250 at A4



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Fig. 4 Sample sections

Scale 1:20 at A4