

**PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE OF LAND TO AMENITY  
LAND/PUBLIC OPEN SPACE, RELOCATION OF  
EXISTING PUBLIC TOILET, CREATION OF CAR  
PARKING AND ERECTION OF BOLLARDS,  
LAND AT KEMPSTON MILL, MILL LANE,  
KEMPSTON, BEDFORDSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION, INVESTIGATION,  
RECORDING, ANALYSIS AND PUBLICATION**

Authors: Zbigniew Pozorski MA (field work & report)	
NGR: TL 02392 47634	Report No. 3596
District: Borough of Bedford	Site Code: AS 1309
Approved: Claire Halpin MIFA	Project No. 3767
Signed:	Date: July 2010

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**OASIS SUMMARY SHEET**

<b>Project details</b>			
<b>Project name</b>	<i>Proposed Change of Use of Land to Amenity Land/Public Open Space, Relocation of Existing Public Toilet, Creation of Car Parking and Erection of Bollards, Land at Kempston Mill, Mill Lane, Kempston, Bedfordshire</i>		
<i>In July 2010 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological observation, investigation, recording, analysis and publication at land at Kempston Mill, Mill Lane, Kempston, Bedfordshire (NGR TL 02392 47634). The programme was commissioned by Ian Hale Planning and Design Consultancy on behalf of Kempston Mill Ltd, in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for the proposed change of use of land to amenity land/public open space, relocation of existing public toilet, creation of car parking and erection of bollards.</i>			
<i>The site is located in the northern part of Kempston and lies within an area of archaeological potential. Previous excavations carried out on an adjacent site revealed evidence of Iron Age, Saxo-Norman and post-medieval occupancy. The archaeological features and finds relate to domestic occupation, agricultural activity and use of mills on the site. The site therefore had a potential for prehistoric, medieval and post-medieval archaeological remains.</i>			
<i>In the event the investigation revealed no archaeological features or finds.</i>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	20 <sup>th</sup> July 2010		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	Y	Future work (Y/N/?)	N
P. number	3767	Site code	AS 1309
Type of project	<i>Archaeological Observation, Investigation, Recording, Analysis and Publication</i>		
Site status	-		
Current land use	<i>Pasture land</i>		
Planned development	<i>Car park and amenity area</i>		
Main features (+dates)	-		
Significant finds (+dates)	-		
<b>Project location</b>			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Bedfordshire</i>	<i>Bedford</i>	<i>Kempston</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>Bedfordshire HER</i>		
Post code (if known)	-		
Area of site	<i>c. 300m<sup>2</sup></i>		
NGR	<i>TL 02392 47634</i>		
Height AOD (min/max)	<i>27.30/27.50m</i>		
<b>Project creators</b>			
Brief issued by	<i>BBC</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>Zbigniew Pozorski</i>		
Funded by	<i>Kempston Mill Limited</i>		
Full title	<i>Proposed Change of Use of Land to Amenity Land/Public Open Space, Relocation of Existing Public Toilet, Creation of Car Parking and Erection of Bollards, Land East Land at Kempston Mill, Mill Lane, Kempston, Bedfordshire. Archaeological Observation, Investigation, Recording, Analysis and Publication.</i>		
Authors	<i>Pozorski, Z.</i>		
Report no.	<i>3596</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>July 2010</i>		

**PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE OF LAND TO AMENITY  
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**SUMMARY**

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*The site is located in the northern part of Kempston and lies within an area of archaeological potential. Previous excavations carried out on an adjacent site revealed evidence of Iron Age, Saxo-Norman and post-medieval remains. The archaeological features and finds relate to domestic occupation, agricultural activity and the use of mills on the site. The site therefore had a potential for prehistoric, medieval and post-medieval archaeological remains.*

*In the event the investigation revealed no archaeological features or finds.*

**1 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 In July 2010 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological observation, investigation, recording, analysis and publication at land at Kempston Mill, Mill Lane, Kempston, Bedfordshire (NGR TL 02392 47634; Figs. 1 & 2). The programme was commissioned by Ian Hale Planning and Design Consultancy on behalf of Kempston Mill Ltd, in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for the proposed change of use of land to amenity land/public open space, relocation of existing public toilet, creation of car parking and erection of bollards (Bedford Borough Council Planning Ref. 05/02037/FUL).

1.2 In May 2010 a programme of monitoring and recording was carried out during groundworks for the construction of an adjacent detached bungalow, a garage and services (Fig.2 First phase of watching brief). No archaeological features or finds were present (McCall & Tweedie 2010)

1.3 The work was undertaken in accordance to a brief issued by the Historic Environment Team of Bedford Borough Council (BBC; dated 23/12/2009), and a written scheme of investigation (specification) prepared by AS (dated 19/07/2010), and approved by BBC. 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).

1.4 The objective of the programme of archaeological observation, investigation, recording, analysis and publication was to identify and record any archaeological features, structures and deposits that were exposed during groundworks for the proposed development. The investigation was to determine and understand the nature, function and character of the site in its cultural and environmental setting.

#### *Planning policy context*

1.5 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

1.6 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**

2.1 The site is located in the northern part of Kempston, on a narrow plot of land to the east of Mill Lane (Fig. 1). It lies within the historic floodplain of the river Great Ouse which is to the north of the site. To the west of the site is an existing car park and on the eastern side is a small paddock. The Kempston Mill development lies to the south of the car park site. The site to the east of Mill Lane is currently undeveloped and is used as an open land/ pasture.

### **3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS**

3.1 The site is located to the east of Mill Lane. It lies on the gently sloping land of the river Great Ouse southern floodplain at a height of c. 27.50m AOD.

3.2 The geology of the area comprises alluvium and floodplain/terrace gravels overlying Great Oolite Limestone (British Geological Survey 1978). The site lies at the boundary of two different soil associations, Thames and Hanslope (Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983). 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 3<sup>rd</sup> to early 4<sup>th</sup> 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 10<sup>th</sup> century onwards, with evidence of posthole structures and eaves drip gullies, followed by 11<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> 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 excavation carried out by HAT (now AS) in 2002 on the adjacent site to the immediate west (Hounsell & O'Brien 2002; O'Brien 2003) 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 excavation followed a trial trench evaluation (Keir & Ralph 2001) 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 9<sup>th</sup> to late 13<sup>th</sup> 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 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> century. The limestone foundations of a small medieval or post-medieval structure were also found.

## 5 METHODOLOGY

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

5.2 The principal element investigated was mechanically-excavated ground reduction area for the new car park and amenity area, located to the north of the new bungalow (Fig. 2).

## 6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

<i>Ground reduction area, N part of the site. Sample section, View E (DP 4)</i>		
<i>0.00 = 27.30m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.15m	L2000	Topsoil. Blackish dark grey, soft, sandy silt with moderate modern CBM.
0.15 – 0.45m	L2001	Subsoil. Mid grey, friable, sandy silt with frequent modern CBM.
0.45m+	L2002	Natural mid yellow, compact, clay.

6.1 The site was commonly overlain by Topsoil L2000, a dark, blackish grey, soft, sandy silt (0.15 – 0.20m thick). L2000 overlay Subsoil L2001, a mid grey, friable, sandy silt (0.20 – 0.40m thick). The natural clay, L2002, was present at 0.40 – 0.45m below existing ground level and comprised a light to mid yellow, compact, clay.

6.2 No archaeological features or finds were identified. Deposits located within the area of ground reduction were recorded in sample section shown below.

## **7 CONFIDENCE RATING**

7.1 Approximately 75% of the area was reduced to a level still above the natural deposits. The excavation reached a maximum depth of only 0.40 – 0.45m below existing. At this level Topsoil L2000 and Subsoil L2001 were still present. The construction work did not require the ground to be further reduced.

## **8 DISCUSSION**

8.1 The site had a potential for archaeological remains, in particular for the Iron Age, medieval and post-medieval archaeology. Such remains have been found during the previous works within the Kempston Mill development to the immediate west and south-west of the area of current investigation.

8.2 In the event no archaeological features or finds were revealed. No indication of any previous development of the site was identified. No residual finds were recovered. Archaeological remains, if present, may be preserved below the level of reduction required by construction works.

## **9 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE**

9.1 Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited with any donated finds from the site at Bedford Museum, under Accession No. BEDFM.2010.18. The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross-referenced and checked for internal consistency

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Archaeological Solutions would like to thank Mr Ian Hale of Ian Hale Planning and Design Consultancy for commissioning the project on behalf of Kempston Mill Ltd, and the client for funding the works. AS would also like to acknowledge the assistance of the Site Manager, Mr Kevin Fidock. AS would like to acknowledge the input and advice of Mr Geoff Saunders of Historic Environment Team of Bedford Borough Council.



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## PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



DP 1. Land to the east of Mill Lane, Kempston Mill, Kempston. View SE.



DP 2. Ground reduction in progress. View SSW.



DP 3. The site. View W.

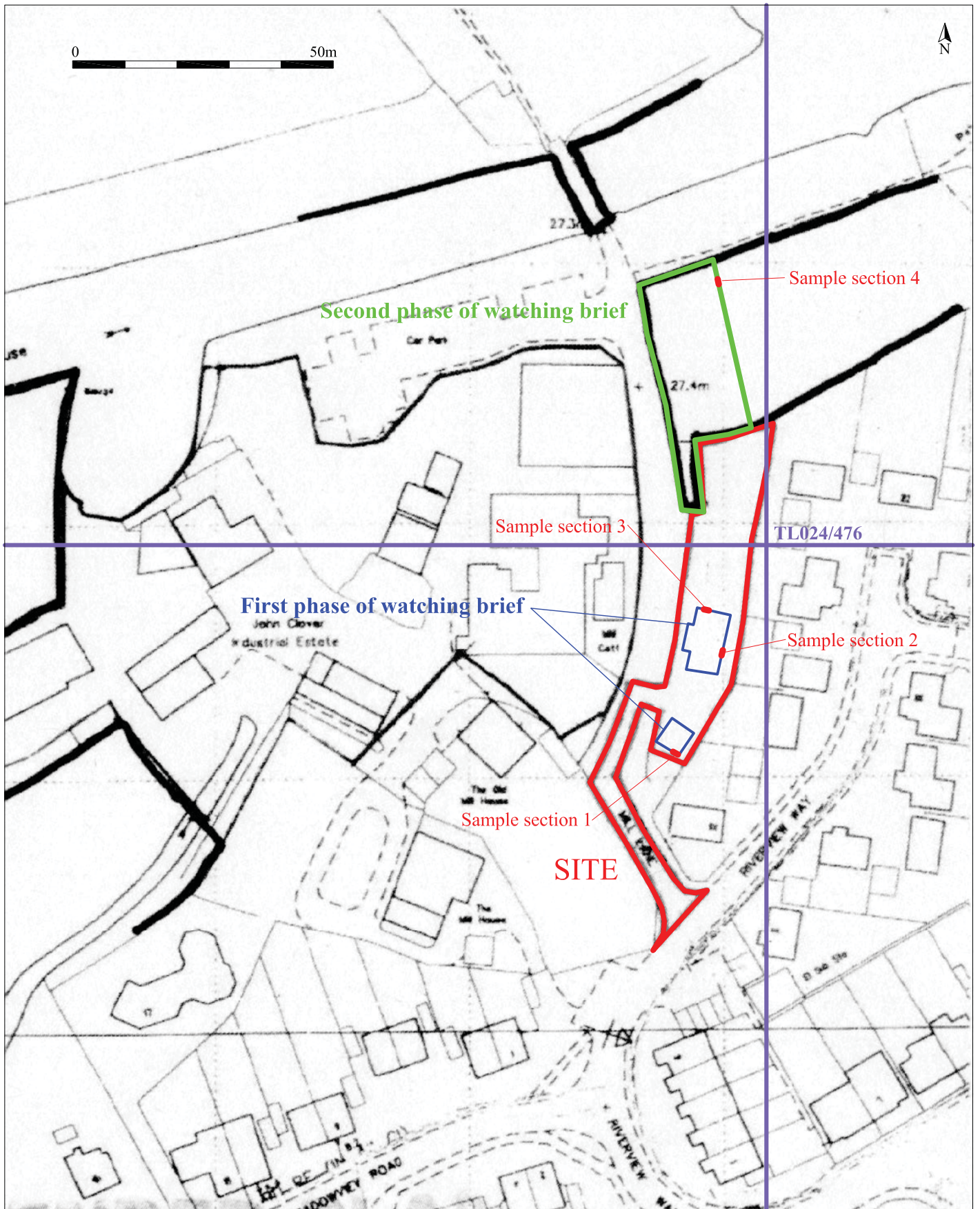


DP 4. Reduced ground within the N part of the site. View E.



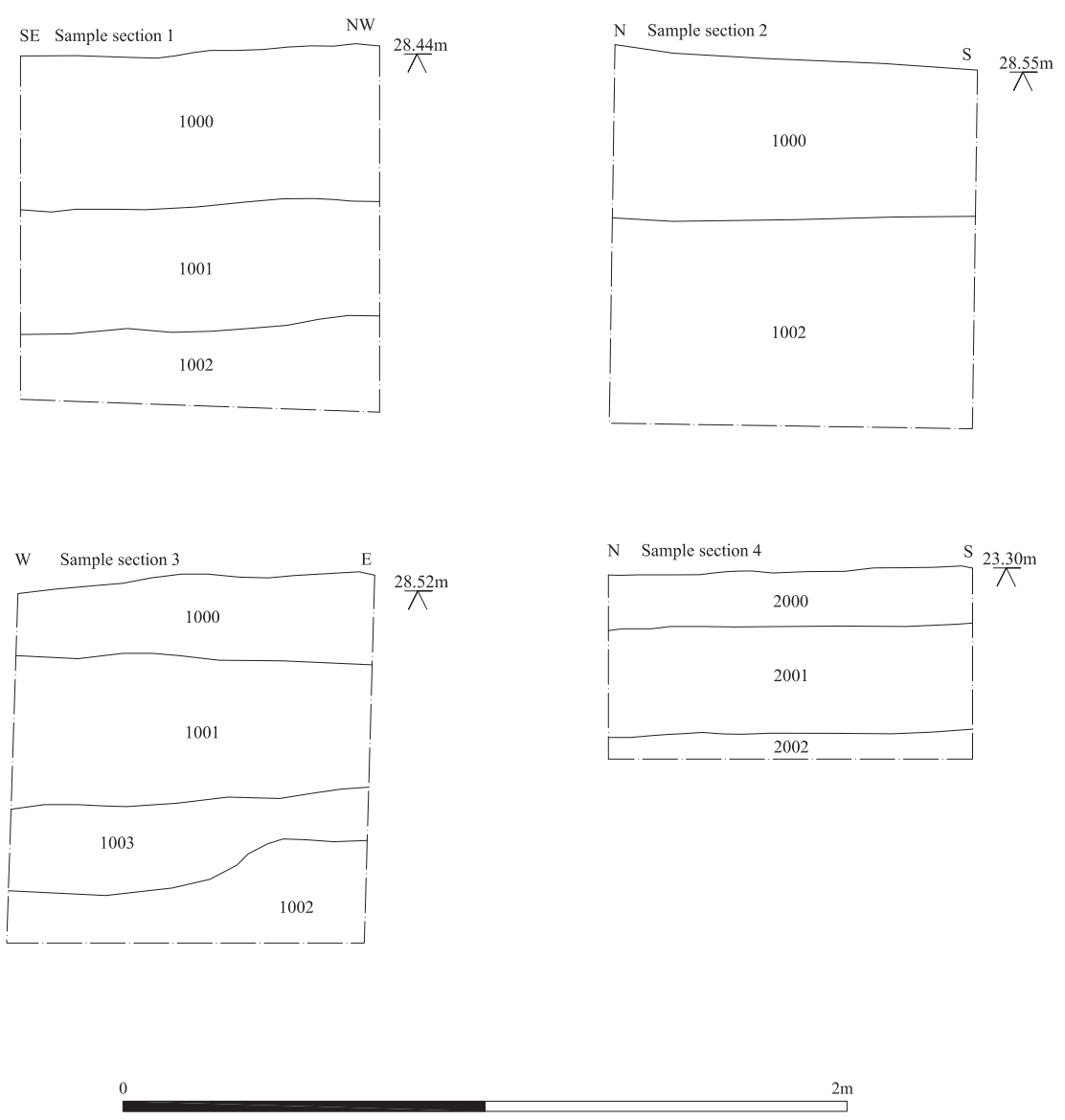
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**Fig. 1 Site location plan**  
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4



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



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**Fig. 3 Sample sections**

Scale 1:20 at A4