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**KINGS HEAD HOTEL, 6 NEW MARKET,  
BECCLES, SUFFOLK**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING





**KINGS HEAD HOTEL, 6 NEW MARKET, BECCLES, SUFFOLK**

**Archaeological Monitoring**

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Registered in England and Wales: 7874460

November 2012

<b>Site Code</b>	BCC 038	<b>NGR</b>	642200 290374
<b>Planning Ref.</b>	DC/10/1242	<b>OASIS</b>	britanni1-136556
<b>Project No.</b>	1013	<b>Report No.</b>	R1016
<b>Approved By</b>	Tim Schofield	<b>Date</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> November 2012



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## **Abstract**

*The site had significant potential for the presence of well-preserved archaeological remains relating to the 17<sup>th</sup> century coaching inn and stables. A small area of cobbled surface abutted by brick rubble foundations surviving to the south was recorded during the monitoring. These overlay an older brick surface dating to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century which in turn sealed a pit containing a timber post (not in situ) and CBM (ceramic building material) demolition material. The northern and eastern areas of the site were noted as suffering significant intrusive disturbance in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and the archaeological evidence therefore points to at least two phases of demolition and redevelopment. Earlier timber structures were demolished and replaced with brick structures and a rough cobbled surface in the early to middle 19<sup>th</sup> century. These in turn were demolished in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and replaced first with a layer of tarmac and later a concrete surface.*

*The only surviving evidence of an earlier structure was the re-deposited timber post. In situ features and finds pre-dating the early 19<sup>th</sup> century were most likely destroyed or substantially disturbed during modern redevelopment over the last 200 years.*

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

On the 8<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> October 2012, Britannia Archaeology Ltd (BA) undertook a programme of archaeological monitoring at the Kings Head Hotel, 6 New Market, Beccles, Suffolk (NGR 642200 290374) in advance of the renovation of the existing building (Figure 1). The works comprised the excavation of foundation trenches for a retaining wall in the rear car park and a concrete pad to support a new stairwell. This was undertaken on behalf of Witcomb Project Management Ltd, representing JD Wetherspoon plc, Wetherspoon House, Reeds Crescent, Watford, Hertfordshire as a condition of planning consent reference DC/10/1242.

Monitoring work was conducted in accordance with a design Brief issued by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team (SCCAS/CT) (Keith Wade, dated 6<sup>th</sup> August 2012) and a Written Scheme of Investigation by BA (dated 30<sup>th</sup> August 2012) and approved by SCCAS/CT.

## **2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION (Figs 1 & 3)**

The site is located 60m south east of St. Michael's Church in the historic medieval core of Beccles and in an Area of Archaeological Importance defined for Beccles in the Waveney Local Development Framework (LDF) (Brief, Section 1.2, Wade 2012). The assessment site lies at c.14m AOD and 300m to the east of the River Waveney and is bounded by Sheep Gate to the south, New Market to the west, Exchange Square to the East and adjoining buildings to the north.

Underlying superficial geology comprises Lowestoft Formation – Diamicton, chalky till, together with outwash sands and gravels, silts and clays dating to the Quaternary





Period. The bedrock geology comprises Crag Group sedimentary shallow marine sandstones (British Geological Survey).

### **3.0 PLANNING POLICIES**

The archaeological investigation was carried out on the recommendation of the local planning authority, following guidance laid down by the National Planning and Policy Framework (NPPF, DCLD 2012) which replaces Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (PPS5, DCLG 2010). The relevant local planning legislation is set out in the Waveney Local Development Framework (LDF, 2009), Policy CS17.

#### **3.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, DCLG March 2012)**

The NPPF recognises that 'heritage assets' are an irreplaceable resource and planning authorities should conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance when considering development. It requires developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. The key areas for consideration are:

- The significance of the heritage asset and its setting in relation to the proposed development;
- The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance;
- Significance (of the heritage asset) can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction, or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification;
- Local planning authorities should not permit loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred;
- Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest that are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets.

#### **3.2 Waveney Local Development Framework (LDF, adopted Jan 2009)**

This replaced the Waveney Local Plan in January 2009 and the relevant section relating to heritage is Policy CS17:

The District Council will work with partners and the community to protect and enhance the built and historic environment in the District. Proposals for development are expected to conserve or enhance the areas listed below :-

- the character and setting of the following conservation areas: Lowestoft (North and South), Beccles, Bungay, Halesworth, Southwold, Southwold Harbour,



Holton, Homersfield, Somerleyton, Wangford, Wissett, Wrentham, and Walberswick (part) listed buildings and locally listed buildings;

- scheduled ancient monuments, sites of archaeological interest and their settings;
- the local distinctiveness of existing non-designated built environments.

In particular, proposals in conservation areas will be assessed against the relevant Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans.

## 4.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND (Fig 2)

### 4.1 Archaeological/Historical Sources

The following archaeological background utilises the Suffolk Historic Environment Record (SHER) and Record Office (1km search centred on the site), English Heritage PastScape ([www.pastscape.org.uk](http://www.pastscape.org.uk)), and the Archaeological Data Service ([www.ads.ahds.ac.uk](http://www.ads.ahds.ac.uk)) (ADS).

Beccles is an historic market town in north east Suffolk on the banks of the River Waveney. The origins of the modern settlement are Anglo-Saxon, when the town was a prosperous river port and the name is probably derived from Old English *bece læs* meaning 'pasture by the stream' (Mills, 2003). The size of the Saxon town is further attested in its Domesday Book entry, which records a large settlement of 120 households under the lordship of the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds in 1066 and 1086 with a sizable tax assessment of 4.8 geld units ([www.domesdaymap.co.uk](http://www.domesdaymap.co.uk)).

The site is located within the medieval core of the town (HER: BCC 018) and 1km HER search returned 52 results listed as monuments, 22 events and 24 listed buildings within 50m of the site. The Kings Head is included in all three categories of results (BCC082, ESF21632 and 363000) and is described as a 17<sup>th</sup> century AD coaching inn and stables which has been much altered throughout the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

HER events close to the site have produced mixed results with the majority recorded as negative watching briefs. The exception is at St Michael's Church (60m to the north east) where an evaluation (ESF19086) followed by an excavation (ESF19087) uncovered compacted layers thought to be former floor surfaces inside the tower. This excavation concluded that these surfaces related to the construction of the Tower itself rather than being successive floors. An area of burning was thought to relate to the fire of 1586.

Immediately south of the site a large, undated clay lined pit (BCC 014) truncated by a foundation trench excavation was recorded during an intervention in 1990 (ESF15202 not noted in the event section of the search). It measured 4m across and was over 2m in depth. The fill was highly organic, of peaty consistency, and damp to the touch. Survival of organic matter in this deposit was particularly good, with a quantity of cut and/or stitched leather being retrieved. The pit was aceramic and besides the organic matter, contained little in the way of rubbish.



Another watching brief (BCC032) located 40m south east of the site revealed several pits and two wells dating to the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century AD. The remaining monument and event records and documentary sources indicate a low level of prehistoric and Roman activity, a moderate level of Anglo-Saxon activity and a high level of medieval and post-medieval activity within the 1km search radius.

The predominant potential for archaeology was likely to date to the medieval and post-medieval periods, especially relating to the coaching inn itself.

## 5.0 PROJECT AIMS

The specific aim of the investigation was to provide a record of archaeological deposits which would be damaged or removed by any development [including services and landscaping] permitted by the current planning consent (Brief, Section 2.1, Wade 2012).

## 6.0 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The research objectives for the project are in line with those laid out in *Research and Archaeology Revisited: a revised framework for the East of England*, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 24, Maria Medlycott, 2011.

The specific objectives are set out in the SCCAS CT brief and are summarised below (Brief Section 2.2, Wade, 2012):

- the (academic aim is centred on) potential of this development to produce evidence for the post Roman occupation of the site.

## 7.0 FIELDWORK METHODOLOGY

Excavation of the footings was undertaken using a 5 tonne 360° excavator under the supervision of a suitably qualified archaeologist. The concrete car park surface was first removed and then the subsoil layer was inspected for archaeological features and finds. The ground was then further reduced to c.0.75m into the superficial geology (Figures 4, & 5). Sample sections and plans were drawn to scale, pro-forma record sheets were completed and appropriate photographs were taken. All excavated spoil was inspected for finds.

## 8.0 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS (Figs. 3-5)

The site visits were undertaken by the author during dry ground conditions. Two foundation trenches for a retaining wall and an area reduced for a concrete pad were monitored (DP 3 & 7). A small area of surviving cobbled surface, 1014, and a pit, 1007, containing early 19<sup>th</sup> century demolition material was recorded in the centre of the site.





The cobbled surface was roughly constructed from rounded flint stones varying in size from 0.05m – 0.30m and bonded with a mixture of soil and ash clinker. It was abutted to the south by a layer of red brick and mortar rubble, 1005, which may have formed the foundations for outbuildings or other structures contemporary with the cobbled surface. To the north of the cobbled surface, the stratigraphic sequence showed evidence of ground disturbance/demolition and a single mixed layer of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century demolition material and soil, 1002, was present.

The cobbled surface and brick and mortar rubble overlay an earlier rough red brick surface comprising un-frogged, handmade bricks, 1009, and this in turn sealed pit 1007. This brick surface was roughly constructed and had no obvious pattern.

Pit 1007 was large and mostly obscured beyond the limit of excavation. It contained early 19<sup>th</sup> century demolition material and also the remains of a timber post, 1010, which was not *in situ* (laid horizontally). It measures 0.38m+ x 0.20m, has three rough, elliptical mortise joints cut down its vertical axis, angled at approximately 45 degrees to the vertical and a rebate cut into the end.

## 9.0 DEPOSIT MODEL

The deposit model varied slightly across the site with areas of truncation to the north and more intact layers to the south.

The upper most layer was a hard concrete surface, 1000, forming the existing car park and was present in all areas. This overlay an earlier tarmac surface, 1001, which was also present across the site.

In the northern and eastern areas (sample sections 1, 2, 4 and 5) a mixed layer of soil and CBM (19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century), 1002, was present below the tarmac. This layer appeared to be widely disturbed, representing a phase of demolition prior to the construction of the tarmac surface.

The natural drift geology, 1003, was present below soil layer 1002 and comprised light orange and yellow sand with patches of sandy clay. Bands of iron mineralisation indicative of podsolization were observed at a depth of 0.60m suggesting the area was water saturated in antiquity.

The south of the site contained more intact layers and sample section 3 recorded a layer of brick rubble, 1005, below the tarmac surface 1001, with a light grey mortar bedding layer, 1006, present underneath. These were possibly the remains of foundations for earlier outbuildings or surfaces which were demolished prior to the tarmac being laid. A layer of intact soil, 1015, was present below the bedding layer, but no datable finds were recovered. The final layer observed in the southern sequence was the natural drift geology described above.



The deposit model reveals that significant ground disturbance occurred prior to the laying of a tarmac surface in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Some layers relating to earlier outbuildings survived to the south, however these were also significantly truncated.

## 10 DISCUSSION

Much of the site has suffered significant ground disturbance in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The layout of the buildings suggest that the northern area might have contained a metalled road surface for the coaches to pull into the 17<sup>th</sup> century Coaching Inn, however the monitoring revealed that only demolition deposits were present in this area.

A small area of cobbled surface abutted by brick rubble foundations survived to the south. These overlay an older brick surface dating to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century which in turn sealed a pit containing a timber post (not *in situ*) and demolition material.

The archaeological evidence points to at least two phases of demolition and redevelopment. Earlier timber structures were demolished and replaced with brick structures and a rough cobbled surface in the early to middle 19<sup>th</sup> century. These in turn were demolished in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and replaced first with a tarmac surface and later a concrete surface.

The only surviving evidence of earlier structures is the re-deposited timber post. *In situ* features and finds pre-dating the early 19<sup>th</sup> century have most likely been destroyed or substantially disturbed during modern redevelopment over the last 200 years.

## 11 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Britannia Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Witcomb Project Management Ltd Management, representing JD Wetherspoon plc for funding the project.

We are also grateful to Mr Keith Wade and Dr Colin Pendleton of Suffolk County Council Conservation Team for their time, help and advice.



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English Heritage PastScape [www.pastscape.org.uk](http://www.pastscape.org.uk)

Archaeological Data Service (ADS) [www.ads.ahds.ac.uk](http://www.ads.ahds.ac.uk)

English Heritage National List for England  
[www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/national-heritage-list-for-england](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/national-heritage-list-for-england)

DEFRA Magic <http://magic.defra.gov.uk/website/magic>

**APPENDIX 1            DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD – (See Fig.5 for DP's 5-6)**



DP1: Sample Section 1, facing NNW.



DP2: Sample Section 2, facing SW.



DP3: Post Excavation North Area,  
facing S.



DP4: Sample Section 3, facing NE.



DP7: Post Excavation – Concrete Pad  
Area, Facing SSW.



DP8: Sample Section 5, Facing W



## APPENDIX 2 DETAILED CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

CONTEXT NUMBER	CONTEXT	DESCRIPTION
1000	Concrete Surface	Light grey, hard, concrete with small angular to rounded stone inclusions.
1001	Tarmac Surface	Dark, grey black, hard, tarmac.
1002	Soil/Demolition Layer	Mid grey brown, firm, sandy silt with occasional flint stone and 19 <sup>th</sup> – 20 <sup>th</sup> century CBM inclusions.
1003	Natural Drift Geology	Light orange yellow, firm, sand with occasional patches of sandy clay and bands of podsol mineralisation.
1004	Cobbled Surface	Rough flint cobbles (50mm x 20mm to 300mm x 150mm), un-aligned, rounded stones, un-knapped facing. Bonded with clinker, ash and soil.
1005	Brick & Mortar Rubble Layer	Light red grey, hard, red brick and mortar. Bricks had shallow frogs.
1006	Mortar Bedding Layer	Light white/yellow grey, soft, cement mortar
1007	Pit	Sub-circular plan (0.85 x 0.32+ x 0.44m), steep sides and a concave base.
1008	Fill of Pit 1006	Mid grey brown, friable, sandy silt with occasional flint and post med CBM inclusions.
1009	Brick Surface	Light red grey, hard, red brick and mortar. Bricks were handmade and un-frogged.
1010	Timber Post	Post (upright), laid horizontally not <i>in situ</i> , aligned NE-SW, broken dry and decayed with worn mortise joints, box heart, cut/tool marks around mortise joints, 3 x elliptical mortise joints and 1 x rebate end, no surface treatment evident.
1011	Soil Layer – Same as 1002	See 1002
1012	Concrete Surface – same as 1000	See 1000
1013	Concrete Paving – Same as 1000	See 1000
1014	Mixed soil Layer – Same as 1002	See 1014
1015	Soil Layer	Mid grey brown, firm, sandy silt with occasional flint stone inclusions.





## APPENDIX 3 OASIS SHEET (Copied from the OASIS website)

OASIS ID: britanni1-136556

### Project details

**Project name** Kings Head Hotel, 6 New Market, Beccles, Suffolk -  
Monitoring

**Short description of the project** Monitoring of foundation trenches for a retaining wall and concrete pad to the rear of the 17th century coaching inn. The monitoring recorded a small area of cobbled surface abutted by brick rubble foundations survived to the south. These overlay an older brick surface dating to the early 19th century which in turn sealed a pit containing a timber post (not in situ) and CBM demolition material. The northern and eastern areas of the site were noted as suffering significant intrusive disturbance in the 19th and 20th centuries. The archaeological evidence therefore points to at least two phases of demolition and redevelopment. Earlier timber structures were demolished and replaced with brick structures and a rough cobbled surface in the early to middle 19th century. These in turn were demolished in the 20th century and replaced first with a tarmac surface and later a concrete surface. The only surviving evidence of earlier structures is a re-deposited timber post. In situ features and finds pre-dating the early 19th century were most likely destroyed or substantially disturbed during modern redevelopment over the last 200 years.

**Project dates** Start: 08-10-2012 End: 15-10-2012

**Previous/future work** Yes / Not known

**Any associated project reference codes** BCC 038 - Sitecode

**Any associated project reference codes** P1013 - Contracting Unit No.

**Any associated project reference codes** DC/10/1242 - Planning Application No.

**Type of project** Recording project

**Site status** Conservation Area

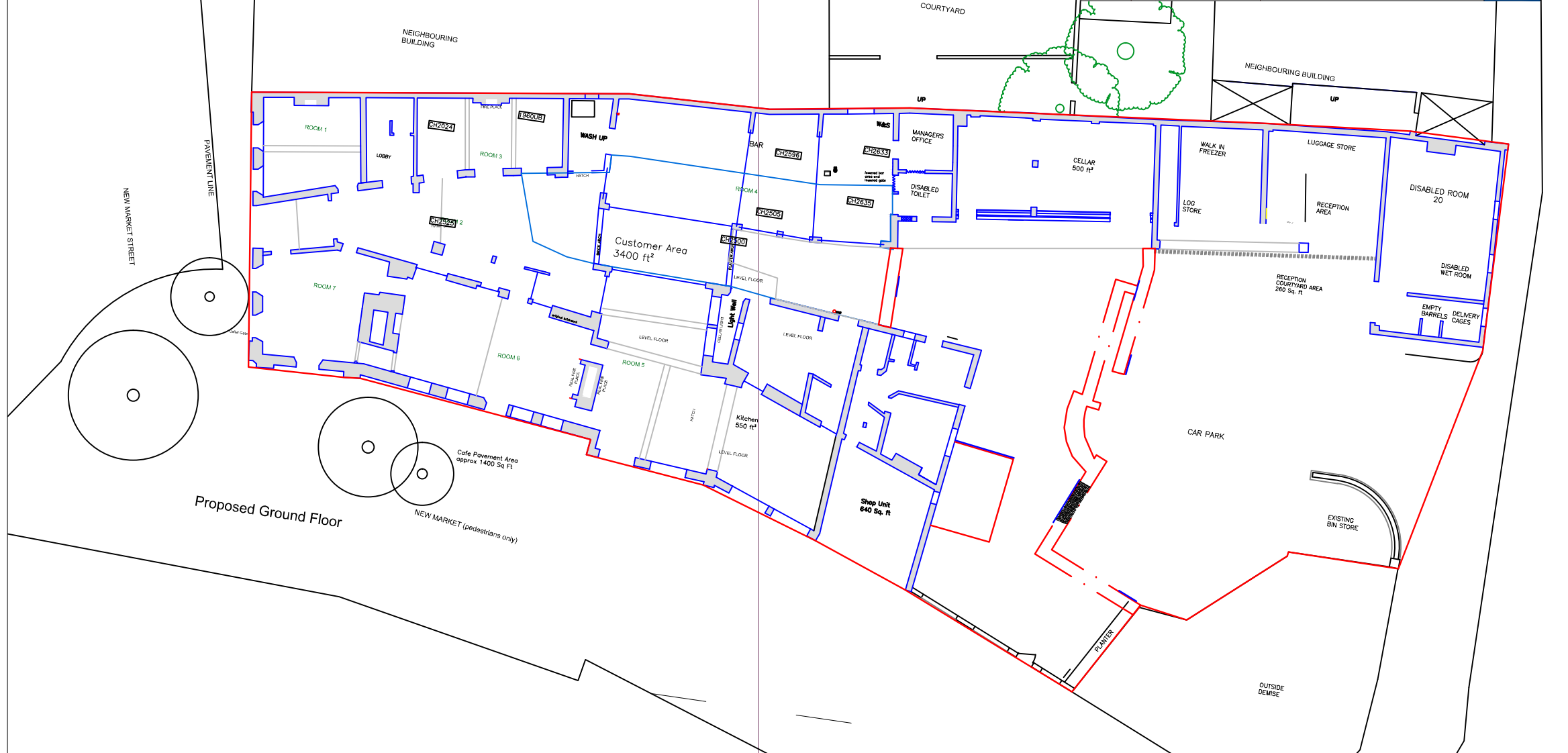
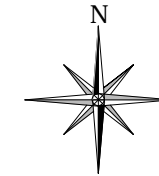
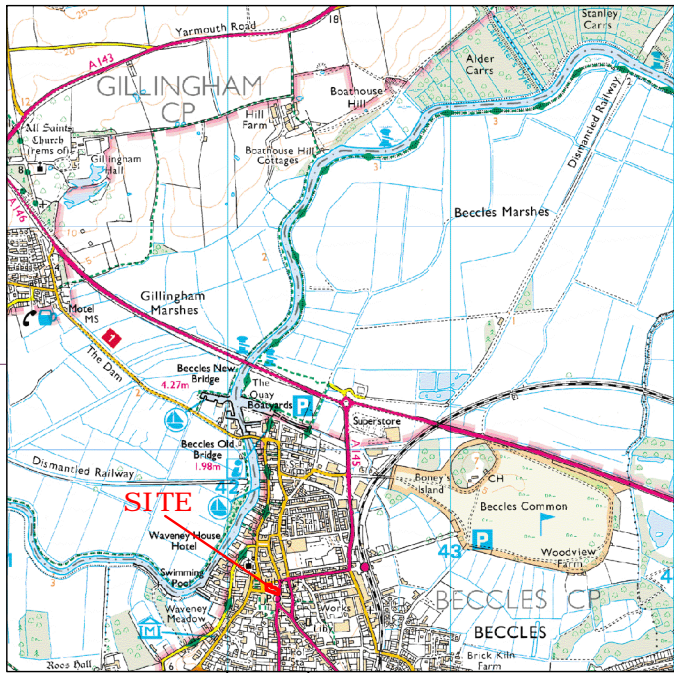
**Current Land use** Other 15 - Other

**Monument type** COACHING INN Post Medieval





<b>Significant Finds</b>	TIMBER POST Post Medieval
<b>Investigation type</b>	""Watching Brief""
<b>Prompt</b>	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
<b>Project location</b>	
<b>Country</b>	England
<b>Site location</b>	SUFFOLK WAVENEY BECCLES BCC 038 Kings Head Hotel, 6 New Market
<b>Postcode</b>	NR34 9HA
<b>Study area</b>	340.00 Square metres
<b>Site coordinates</b>	TM 422 903 52 1 52 27 22 N 001 33 55 E Point
<b>Height OD / Depth</b>	Min: 0.13m Max: 0.14m
<b>Project creators</b>	
<b>Name of Organisation</b>	Britannia Archaeology Ltd
<b>Project brief originator</b>	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
<b>Project design originator</b>	Matthew Adams
<b>Project director/manager</b>	Timothy Schofield
<b>Project supervisor</b>	Matthew Adams
<b>Type of sponsor/funding body</b>	Developer
<b>Name of sponsor/funding body</b>	JD Wetherspoon plc
<b>Entered by</b>	Matt Adams (matt@britannia-archaeology.com)
<b>Entered on</b>	31 October 2012



	Excavated Areas
	Site Boundary

NGR: 642200 290374      REPORT NUMBER: 1016

PROJECT:  
KINGS HEAD HOTEL, 6 NEW MARKET,  
BECCLES, SUFFOLK

CLIENT:  
WITCOMB PROJECT MANAGEMENT LTD

DESCRIPTION:  
SITE LOCATION & PROPOSED  
WORKS PLAN

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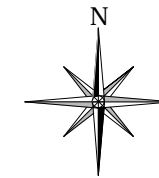
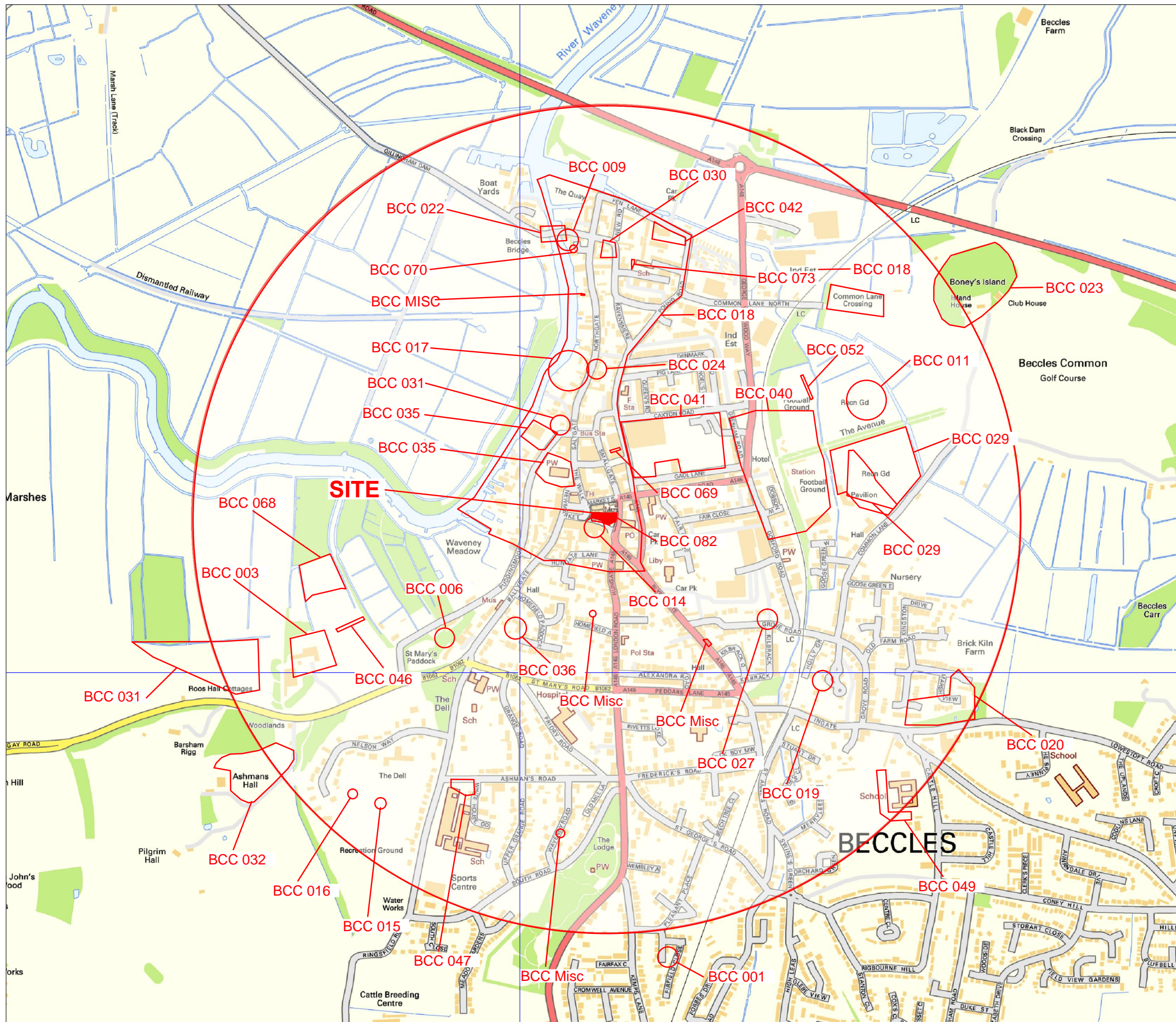
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BCC 029	Event/Monument Number
	Event/Monument
	Site

NGR: 642200 290374      REPORT NUMBER: 1016

PROJECT: KINGS HEAD HOTEL, 6 NEW MARKET, BECCLES, SUFFOLK

CLIENT: WITCOMB PROJECT MANAGEMENT LTD

DESCRIPTION: HER DATA

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PLOT: A3	APPROVED: TPS	VERSION: 01
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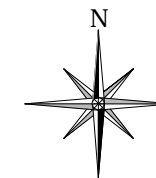
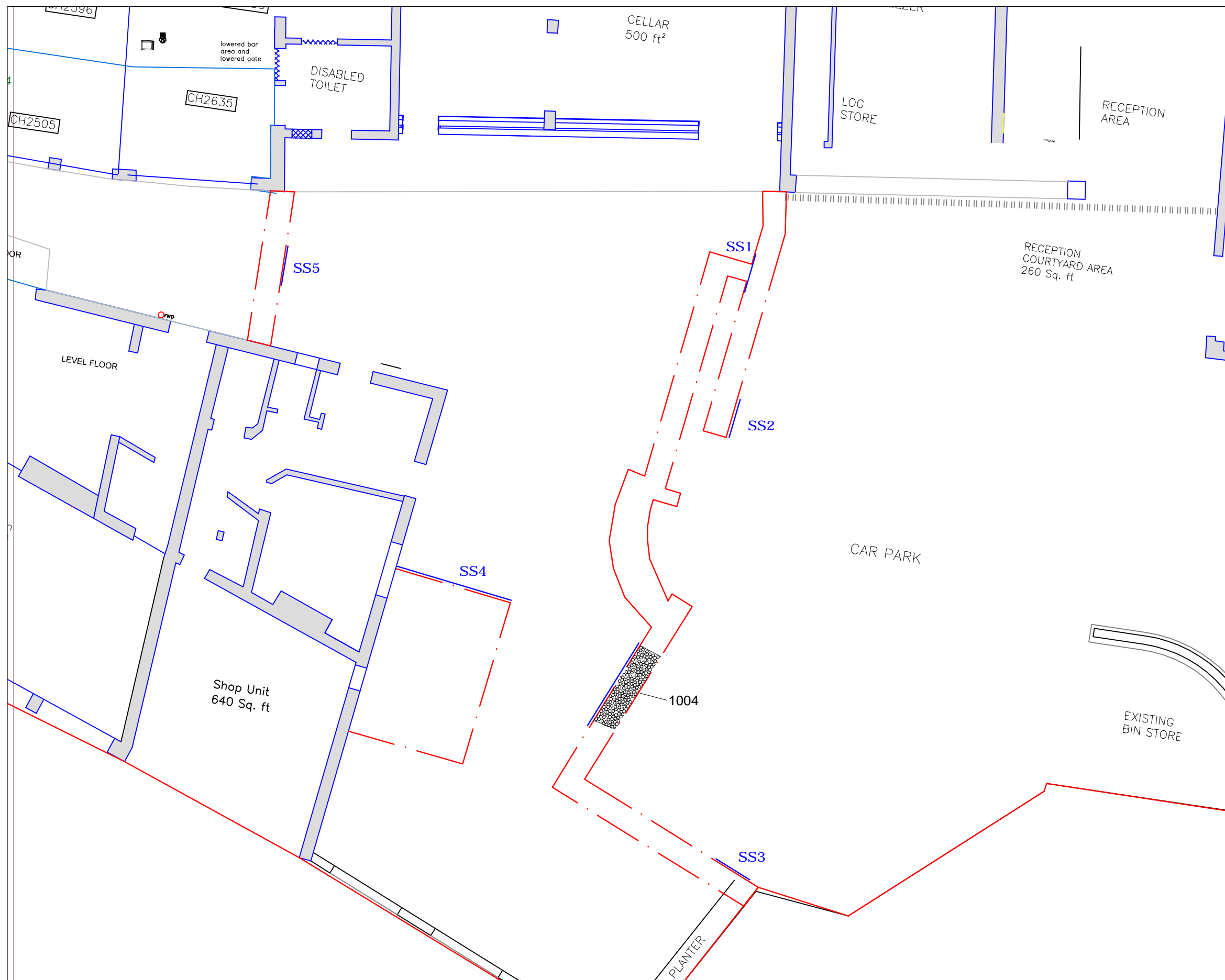
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290000

642000





	Archaeological Feature
	Sample Section
	Excavated Areas
	Site Boundary

NGR: 642200 290374      REPORT NUMBER: 1016

PROJECT:  
KINGS HEAD HOTEL, 6 NEW MARKET,  
BECCLES, SUFFOLK

CLIENT:  
WITCOMB PROJECT MANAGEMENT LTD

DESCRIPTION:  
DETAILED SITE PLAN

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4 THE MILL, CLOVERS COURT, SUFFOLK  
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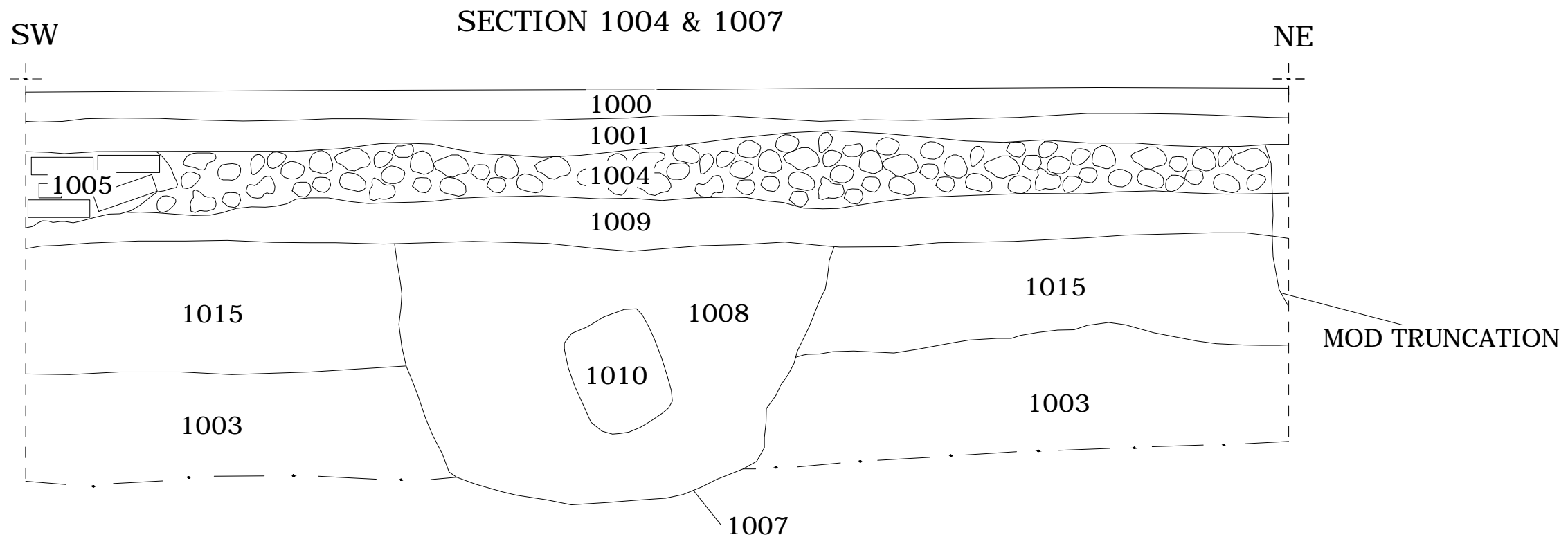
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E: info@britannia-archaeology.com  
W: www.britannia-archaeology.com

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DATE: NOV 2012	AUTHOR: MCA	FIGURE: 03
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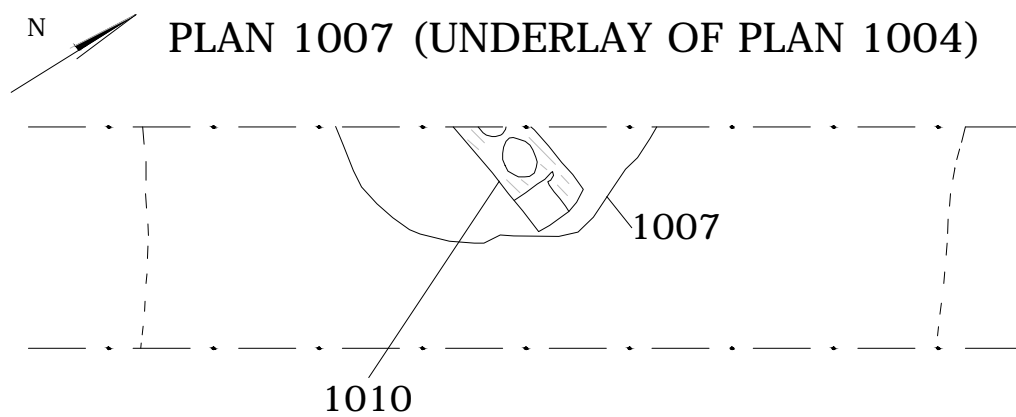
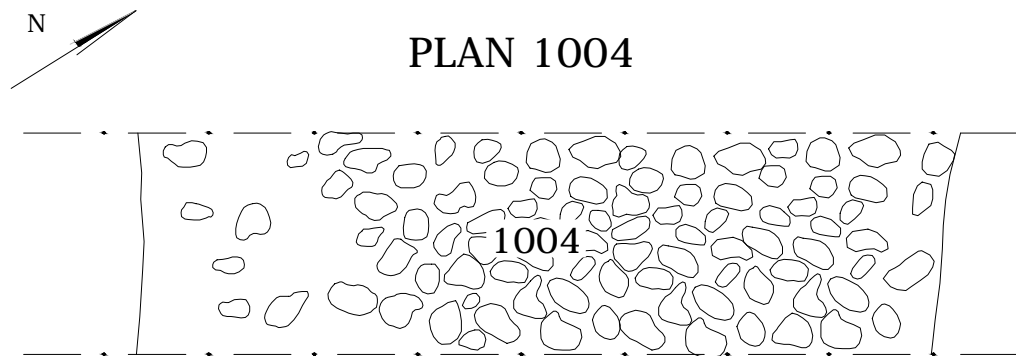
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DP 5 - COBBLED SURFACE 1004



DP 6 - PIT 1007 & TIMBER 1010



NGR: 642200 290374 REPORT NUMBER: 1016

PROJECT: KINGS HEAD HOTEL, 6 NEW MARKET, BECCLES, SUFFOLK

CLIENT: WITCOMB PROJECT MANAGEMENT LTD

DESCRIPTION: PLANS & SECTIONS

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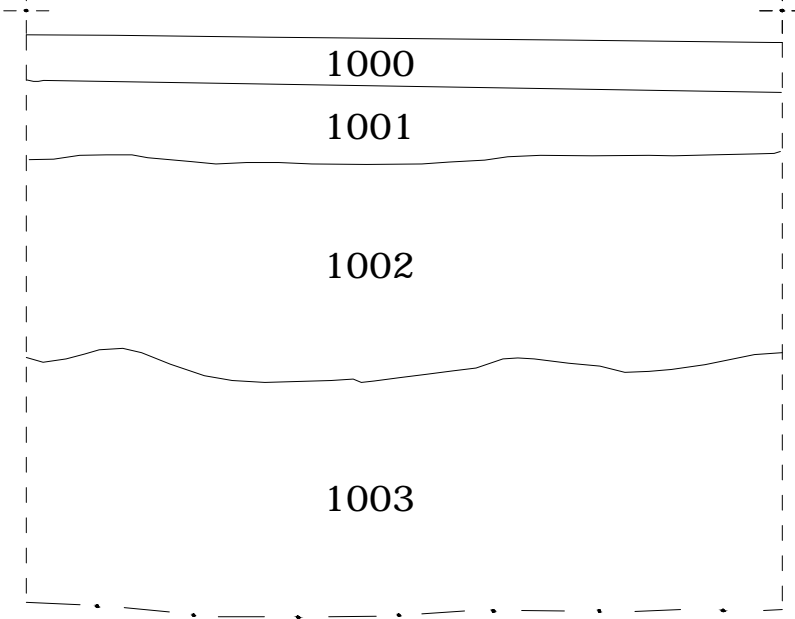
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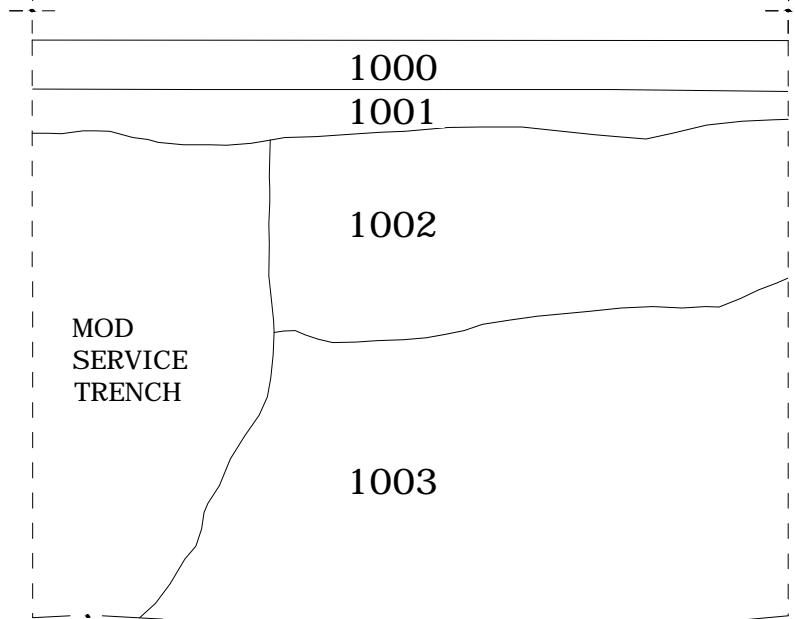
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DATE: NOV 2012 AUTHOR: MCA FIGURE: 04

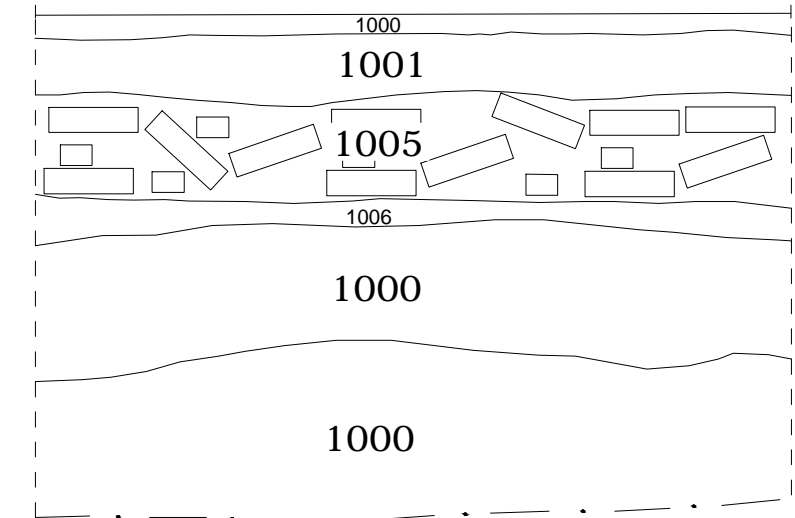
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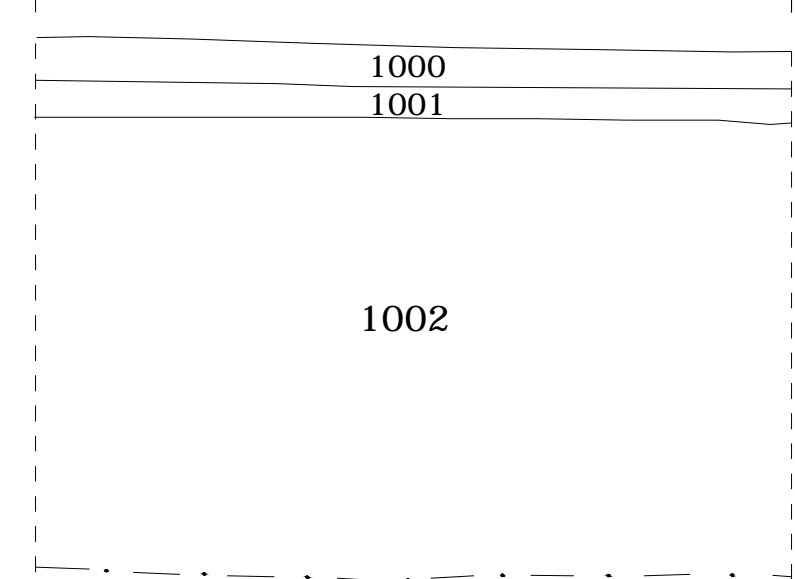
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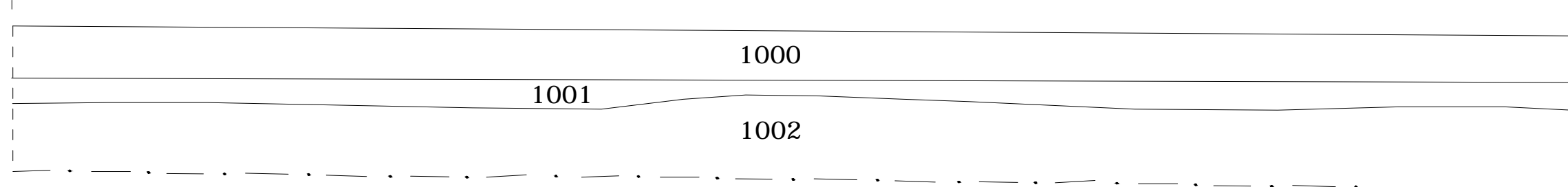
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SAMPLE SECTION 3



N S  
SAMPLE SECTION 5



WNW WNW  
SAMPLE SECTION 4



NGR: 642200 290374 REPORT NUMBER: 1016

PROJECT: KINGS HEAD HOTEL, 6 NEW MARKET, BECCLES, SUFFOLK

CLIENT: WITCOMB PROJECT MANAGEMENT LTD

DESCRIPTION: SAMPLE SECTIONS

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SCALE: 0 0.5m  
1:10

PLOT: A3 APPROVED: TPS VERSION: 01

DATE: NOV 2012 AUTHOR: MCA FIGURE: 05