

Archaeological Watching Brief:

Land to the side of

668 Lightwood Road

Lightwood

Stoke-on-Trent

Staffordshire

NGR SJ 92497 41151

Planning Application No: SOT/53434

Site Code: LRL13

Accession No: 2013.LH.16

Report No. 009

June 2013

Produced by: Richard Cramp BA(Hons), MA, AIfA

On behalf of: Mr A. Hurst



Cramp Sutherland Archaeological Services

34 Belgrave Crescent, Woodsmoor, Stockport, SK2 7BA

Mob: 07847 235914

Email: richard@csarc.co.uk

Contents

	Non-technical summary	1
1.0	Introduction	1
2.0	Site location & character	1
3.0	Geology	2
4.0	Archaeological and historical background	2
	<i>Site history</i>	2
	<i>Site development</i>	4
5.0	Methodology	4
	<i>Aims & objectives</i>	4
	<i>Method statement</i>	5
6.0	Results	6
	<i>Description of the watching brief</i>	6
7.0	Discussion	6
8.0	Conclusions	7
9.0	Acknowledgements	9
10.0	References	9
FIG. 1:	Site location	11
FIG. 2:	Site plan, with the boundary of the development area outlined in red	12
FIG. 3:	Extract from Yates' 1775 map	13
FIG. 4:	Extract from 1883 OS map	13

FIG. 5: Extract from 1924 OS map	14
FIG. 6: Extract from 1937 OS map	14
 PLATE 1: Panoramic view of the development area, looking north west	 15
PLATE 2: General view looking south east, during removal of topsoil (100)	16
PLATE 3: Excavation of strip trench through natural (101), looking north west	16

© CSARC 2013

CSARC shall retain full copyright of this written report under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988*, all rights reserved, excepting that *CSARC* hereby provides full license to the client for the use of this document in all matters relating to the project.

Non-technical summary

Cramp Sutherland Archaeological Services (CSARC) conducted an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of foundation and service trenches for a residential development on land adjacent to number 668 Lightwood Road, Lightwood, Stoke-on-Trent (NGR SJ 92497 41151). The development was in an area of potential archaeological interest due to its proximity to the site of an important AD 3rd-century Roman coin hoard.

Monitoring of the groundworks was carried out in April 2013, but no archaeology was observed. The natural clay subsoil was encountered at very shallow depths.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Full planning consent to develop a greenfield site for a bespoke detached dwelling adjacent to 668 Lightwood Road, Lightwood, Stoke-on-Trent, was granted by the Local Planning Authority (LPA), Stoke-on-Trent City Council, on 20th September 2012 (ref. SOT/53534).

1.2 The development area (DA) is close to the findspot of a significant Late Roman coin hoard, which is an archaeological asset designated in the City of Stoke-on-Trent Historic Environment Record (HER). A condition for an archaeological watching brief to monitor the groundworks was therefore requested by the LPA's Planning Archaeologist (PA) (Goodwin 2013). CSARC was commissioned by architects JPK Design Ltd on behalf of Mr A. Hurst to undertake the project.

2.0 Site location & character

2.1 Lightwood is an outlying residential suburb of Longton, the southernmost of the six towns that form the modern city of Stoke-on-Trent (Fig. 1). The DA is 2.9 km south east of the centre of Longton, located at NGR SJ 92497 41151.

2.2 The boundaries of the DA are demarcated to the south west by number 668 Lightwood Road, also known as Cuckoo Lodge, and to the south by a private access road (Fig. 2, Plate 1). The western side of the field is bordered by a hawthorn hedge with open Green Belt farmland beyond. To the north are private residences and to the north east is Lightwood Road (A5005).

2.3 The DA is at the southern end of a grass paddock, within the curtilage of the former Cuckoo Lodge Farm. The defined area comprises c. 0.12 hectares. Although flat, lying at an average elevation of 203m aOD, due to its position below a ridge above a valley, there is a marked downward slope from NE – SW. Consequently, the embanked north east side of the site, adjoining Lightwood Road, is c. 4.0m higher than the south west side.

3.0 Geology

3.1 The geological setting is characterised by surface drifts of Quaternary glacial till, containing sand and gravel outwash deposited during the last ice age (c. 15000 years BP). The underlying solid geology (bedrock) is the Etruria Formation, which comprises deposits of sedimentary mudstone, sandstone and conglomerate clays (British Geological Survey).

4.0 Archaeological and historical background

4.1 *Site history*

4.1.1 There is no reference in the HER to archaeological finds or deposits within the stipulated parameters of the DA itself.

4.1.2 The site is 150m north of number 698 Lightwood Road (NGR SJ 9254 4101), where the Lightwood Hoard (PRN 01222) was discovered in 1960. The cache comprised 2,461 silver and bronze Roman coins, two silver snake bracelets and part of a silver clasp. Mintmarks on the coins indicate they were buried after AD 276 (Mountford 1963, 17-36).

- 4.1.3** Other possible Roman finds in the vicinity include a handled beaker (PRN 01988), found 350m north of the DA (NGR SJ 9240 4150) in 1930. About 1.3 km north east is a Roman road, the Rykniel Way, which broadly follows the line of the modern A50/Utttoxeter Road.
- 4.1.4** In the mid 12th century the DA was within the limits of the New Forest that stretched from Trentham to Tunstall. Created as a hunting ground by royal decree, it was disafforested in *c.* 1204 (Cockin 2006, 370). Subsequent references to ‘assarting’ imply clearance of the land for cultivation. By the 18th century the area was a distinct territory covering about 650 acres, known as Lightwood Forest. Despite its appellation, it mostly comprised heathland, extending from Longton to Rough Close (Cockin 2006, 316). From the 17th-20th centuries the area was part of the duke of Sutherland’s Trentham Hall estate. The regularly arranged, quadrilateral fields, of which the DA was a part (see **4.2**), were probably created after the ‘forest’ was enclosed by the Sutherland estate in 1734 (SRO, D593/V/3/74).
- 4.1.5** The history of Cuckoo Lodge Farm is obscure, although the historical map evidence suggests that it was extant by the 18th century (see **4.2.1**). In 1919 it was put up for auction (TNA, SC00970) by the administrators of the Trentham estate. The sales brochure listed it as a ‘highly desirable and compact agricultural holding’ (Swift 2004, 95). In the 1940s a parcel of ‘Cuckoo Lodge land’ was put up for sale (Swift 2004, 92). It was identified as plot number 130 on the 1937 OS map, which included the field containing the DA (see **4.2.2**). It was described as ‘part turf, part arable’ and a ‘valuable block of freehold accommodation land’, i.e. grazing pasture for livestock.
- 4.1.6** In the 1970s the field was still being used to graze cattle (Poole, pers. comm.). By the 1990s it was no longer employed for agricultural purposes and latterly was used for exercising dogs (Keeling 2009, 6).

4.2 *Site development*

4.2.1 Cuckoo Lodge Farm can be identified on Yates' county map of 1775 (Fig. 3), but the 1883 Ordnance Survey (OS) map is the first to show the DA in some detail (Fig. 4). It reveals a rectilinear field measuring c. 225m NW-SE x 45m NE-SW, giving a total area of 1.01 hectares (2.49 acres), with the farm buildings at its south west corner.

4.2.2 The 1924 OS map (Fig. 5) exhibits no discernible changes, but the 1937 edition (Fig. 6) indicates that c. 35% of the land at the northern end of the field has been lost to residential development. The farm buildings have also been significantly remodelled and their curtilage altered. The north east boundary of the field along the roadside has also been adjusted.

4.2.3 The 1953 OS map (not illustrated) shows the building to the south west as three separate premises, the nearest to the DA now identified as Cuckoo Lodge. The 1978 edition (not illustrated) demonstrates that about 65% of the field depicted in 1883 has been taken up by ribbon development along Lightwood Road, although there is no subsequent encroachment shown on later OS maps.

5.0 **Methodology**

5.1 *Aims & objectives*

5.1.1 A watching brief is defined by the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* as a programme of observation and investigation conducted during any work carried out for non-archaeological reasons (IfA 2008).

5.1.2 The project was conducted according to the PA's specification (Goodwin 2013) and an approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by CSARC (Cramp 2013). Site procedures adhered to current best archaeological practice and the relevant national codes of conduct,

standards and guidance advocated in the *By-laws of the Institute for Archaeologists* (IfA 2012).

5.1.3 Within the limitations of the development, the specified aims and objectives of the project were designed to:

- monitor the removal of topsoil,
- inspect exposed sub-soil horizons for archaeological features or deposits,
- examine the spoil for archaeological material,
- mitigate the effect of the development on any existing archaeology, through appropriate preservation by record.
-

5.2 *Method statement*

5.2.1 The watching brief was undertaken on 15th April 2013. All machine excavation within the designated area was performed by a 360° tracked mini-digger using ditching buckets. Due to the site gradient, approximately two-thirds of the higher part of the DA to the north east was stripped and reduced to create a level horizon within the slope. The remaining lower, south western portion, which would eventually be on a raised plinth, required only strip trenches for its foundations.

5.2.2 Written records in the form of site notes, annotated sketches and *pro-forma* context sheets were produced, augmented by high-resolution colour digital and 35mm monochrome print photography to record specific stages of the fieldwork.

5.2.3 In accordance with the IfA's *Standard and guidelines for the creation and deposition of archaeological archives* (IfA 2009), CSARC will deposit an ordered archive of data collated during the project at The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Bethesda Street, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent (site code: **LRL 13**, accession number: **2013.LH.16**).

6.0 Results

6.1 *Description of the watching brief*

6.1.1 Preparatory groundwork commenced with the stripping of the topsoil/turfline (**100**) across the eastern part of the development (Fig. 2), an area measuring approximately 11.0m NE-SW x 21.0m NW-SE (231m²). The topsoil consisted of a friable dark grey/brown, silty loam approximately 0.15m-0.20m thick.

6.1.2 All the finds observed during the project were encountered within (**100**). They included a broken red clay 'nib' roof tile and the neck of a green glass bottle. Five tiny sherds of glazed and undecorated white-bodied earthenware and four fragments with coloured decoration were also found, along with one sherd of unglazed (bisque), white ceramic ware.

6.1.2 Removal of the topsoil horizon exposed the natural subsoil (**101**) (Plate 2). This comprised a firm, yellow/red clayey sand, with frequent inclusions of small rounded pebbles and moderate inclusions of medium size pebbles. Small, irregularly shaped patches of clean, yellow sand were also observed within the natural.

6.1.3 The ground was then reduced to a pre-determined depth of c. 0.50m below modern ground level on the upper slope to the north east, decreasing to c. 0.15m lower down the gradient in a south west direction toward the centre of the DA. No archaeological features were observed within (**101**).

6.1.4 The strip trenches excavated for the western end of the development were typically 0.75m wide. The pre-determined formation level for the footings was required to be at least 1.0m into the solid natural geology. In this area the topsoil layer (**100**) was between 0.10m and 0.15m thick and again directly overlay the natural subsoil (**101**) (Plate 3). This location proved to be archaeologically sterile.

- 6.1.5** Excavated spoil was removed from site at regular intervals and was visually inspected by the monitoring archaeologist as often as possible. No archaeological components were recovered.

7.0 Discussion

- 7.1** Prior to its enclosure in 1734, the site was probably common grazing land consisting of rough grass, bracken and heather, similar to the protected open heaths to the south around Barlaston. The tenants and freeholders of Lightwood Forest had, '*rights of turbary ... and pasture for their cattle without stint*' (SRO, D593/V/3/74). In other words, they could cut peat or turves for use as fuel or roofing material (*turbary*), and there was no limit to the number (*stint*) of livestock allowed to roam the open waste. It is feasible that these common rights had been in place since the 13th century.

- 7.2** Following enclosure, the field containing the DA probably served as improved pasture, i.e. it was re-seeded as grassland and used for controlled grazing, until the late 20th century. Historical map evidence does reveal, however, progressive contraction of the field due to suburban encroachment at its northern end between 1924 and 1978.

8.0 Conclusions

- 8.1** The project fulfilled the primary objectives of the specified brief by monitoring groundworks associated with the topsoil strip and the excavation of strip trenches for the development. It demonstrated that the works have not impacted any archaeology.
- 8.2** The revealed sequence of soil deposits identified a simple, uniform stratigraphic sequence, consisting of a shallow topsoil (**100**) directly overlying natural geology (**101**). Where revealed, the natural horizon had not been disturbed. This profile probably extends across the rest of the field.

- 8.3** A few finds were encountered in the topsoil horizon. They were interpreted as residual deposits, probably being no earlier than 19th century in date. The material was not considered to hold any potential for further analysis and was not retained.
- 8.4** Although the OS map evidence implies that the DA had not been directly impacted by suburban development, no identifiably pre-modern archaeological features or deposits were encountered during the watching brief. This would be consistent with the site's likely history as unimproved common waste during the medieval and post-medieval periods and its use for pastoral husbandry from the 18th century until the late 20th century.

9.0 Acknowledgements

9.1 Fieldwork was undertaken by Richard Cramp of CSARC. Thanks are extended to Jonathan Goodwin MifA, Stoke-on-Trent Planning Archaeologist; Staffordshire Record Office (SRO), Stafford; Karen Stone, of JPK Design Ltd; the client, Andy Hurst; and Mr and Mrs J. Poole of Cuckoo Lodge, for their assistance and co-operation.

9.2 Map data is reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of H.M.S.O. © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. License No. 1000551532.

10.0 References

Primary sources

Staffordshire Record Office (SRO).

8 Geo II (1734). An act for enclosing the common or waste called Lightwood Forest, otherwise Cocknage Banks, and Blurton Common, in the manor and parish of Trentham, Staffs (Doc Ref No D593/V/3/74).

The National Archives (TNA).

Sales particulars for the Trentham Estates, Staffordshire, Vol. 2: comprising the lots lying to the east of the North Staffs. rly. line from Stoke to Stafford, 21st Oct 1919 (Doc Ref No SC00970).

Secondary sources

Cockin, T. 2006. *The Staffordshire encyclopaedia* (2nd edn). Barlaston: Malthouse Press.

Cramp, R. 2013. *Written scheme of investigation for an archaeological watching brief on land adjacent to 668 Lightwood Road, Lightwood, Stoke-on-Trent (NGR SJ 92497 41151)*. Cramp Sutherland Archaeological Services.

Goodwin, J. 2013. *Brief for an archaeological watching brief at land adjacent to 668 Lightwood Road, Lightwood, Stoke-on-Trent ST3 7HE (NGR SJ 92497*

41151). Stoke-on-Trent City Council Planning Policy & Design (Archaeology).

Keeling, P. 2009. *Paddock, off Lightwood Road: extended phase 1 habitat site survey report*. Evolution Ecology.

Mountford, A.R. 1963. 'The Lightwood Hoard', in *North Staffordshire Journal of Field Studies* **3**, 17-36.

Swift, G. & Swift, A. 2004. *Lightwood and locality*. Lightwood: Shooters Hills & Lightwood Heritage Group.

On-line sources

British Geological Survey

URL <<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>> [date accessed: 27/05/2013].

Institute for Archaeologists

Codes, standards and guidelines (revised 2012).

Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief (revised 2008).

Standard and guidelines for the creation, preparation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives (revised Oct 2009).

URL <<http://www.archaeologists.net/codes/ifa>> [date accessed: 28/05/13].

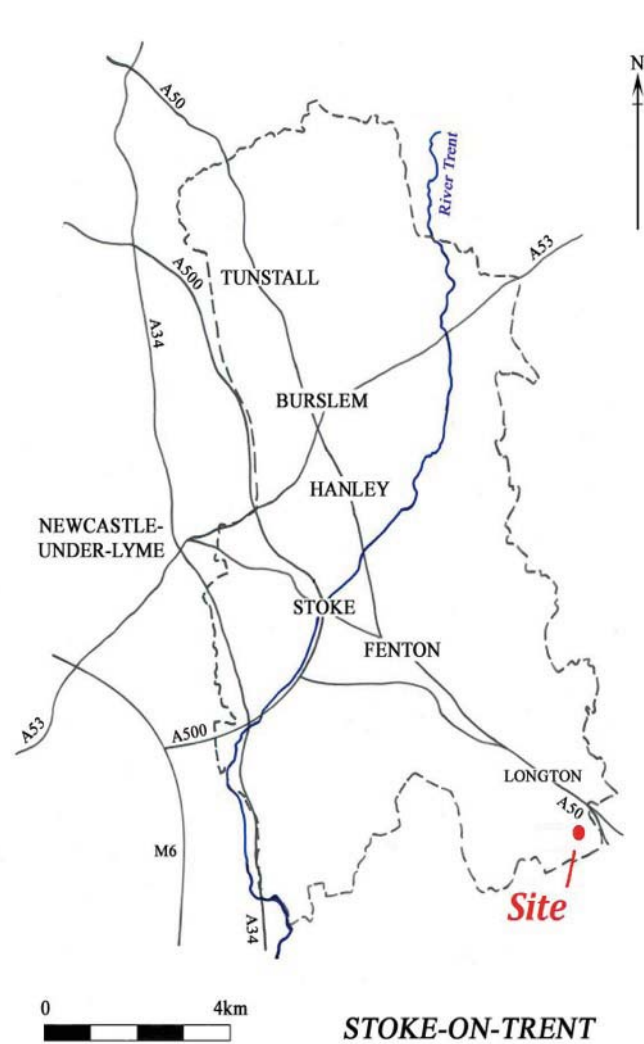
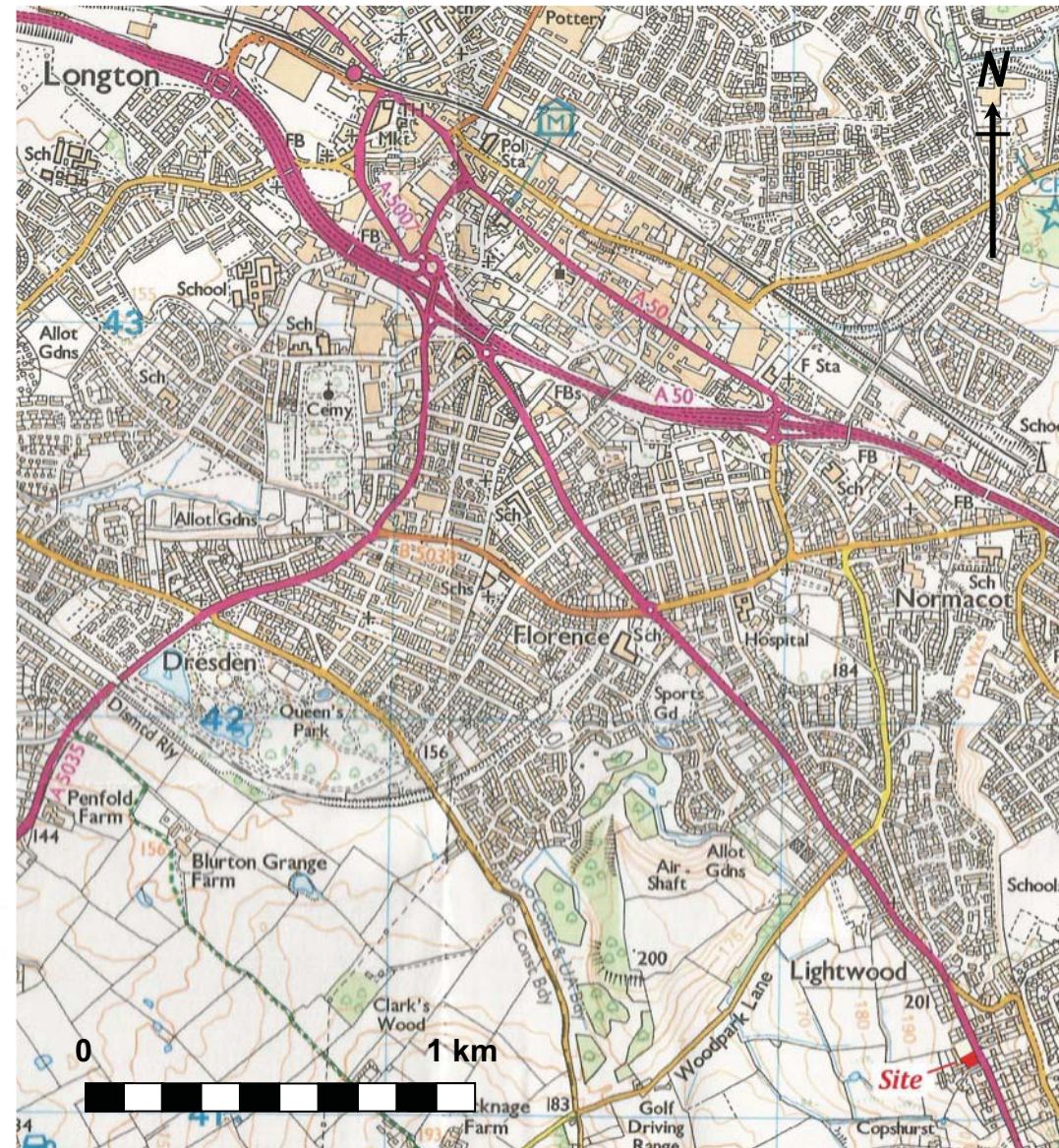


Fig. 1

Site location



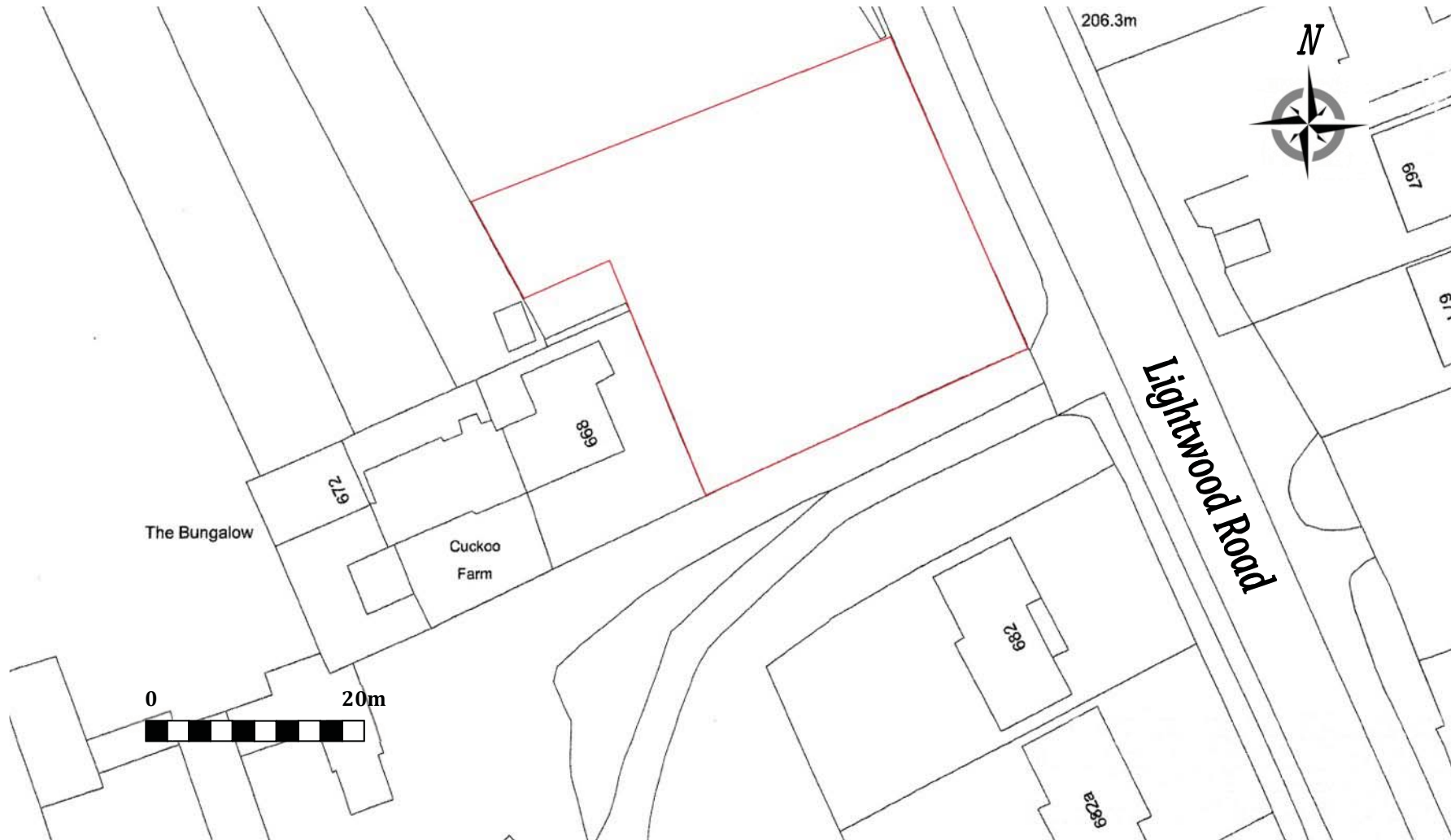


Fig. 2

Site plan, with the boundary of the development area outlined in red.

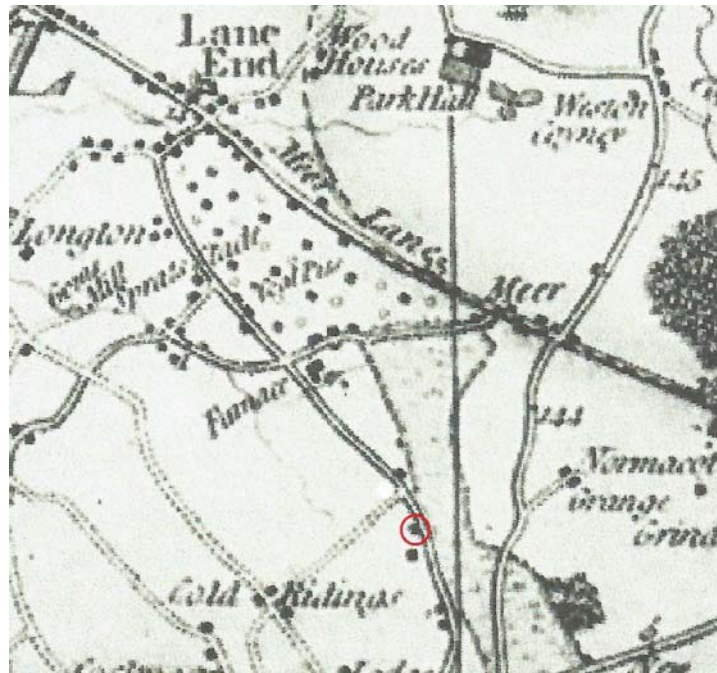


Fig. 3

Extract from Yates' 1775 map, with Cuckoo Lodge Farm defined by red circle.

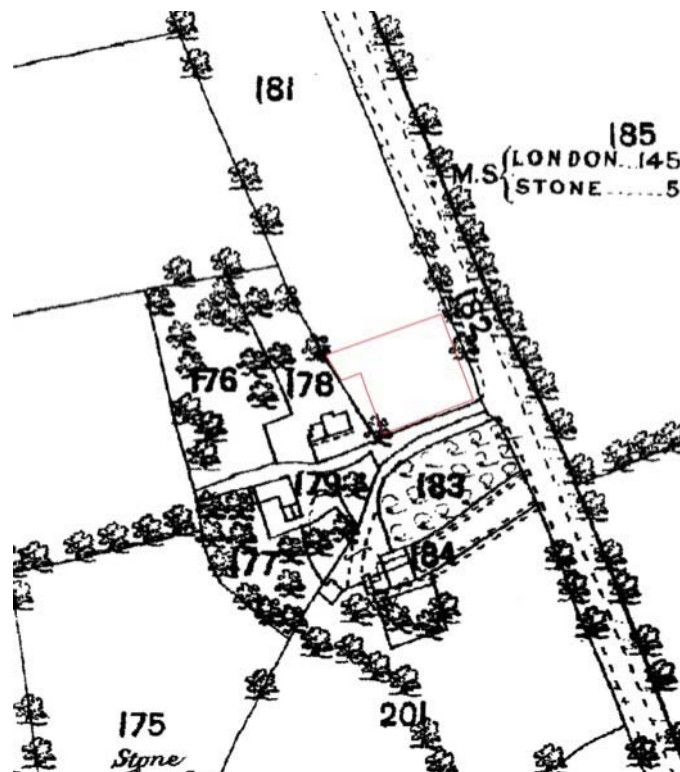


Fig. 4

Extract from 1883 OS map with development area outlined in red.

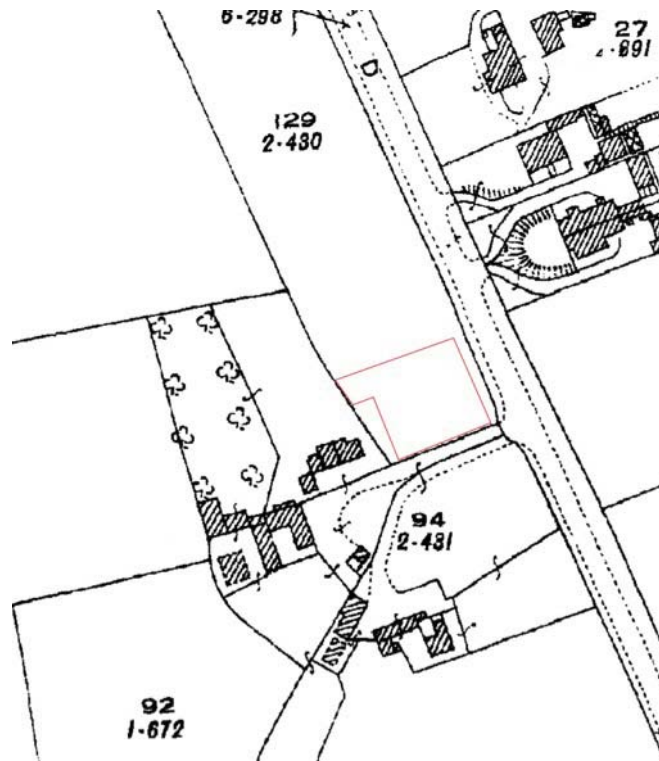


Fig. 5

Extract from 1924 OS map with development area outlined in red.

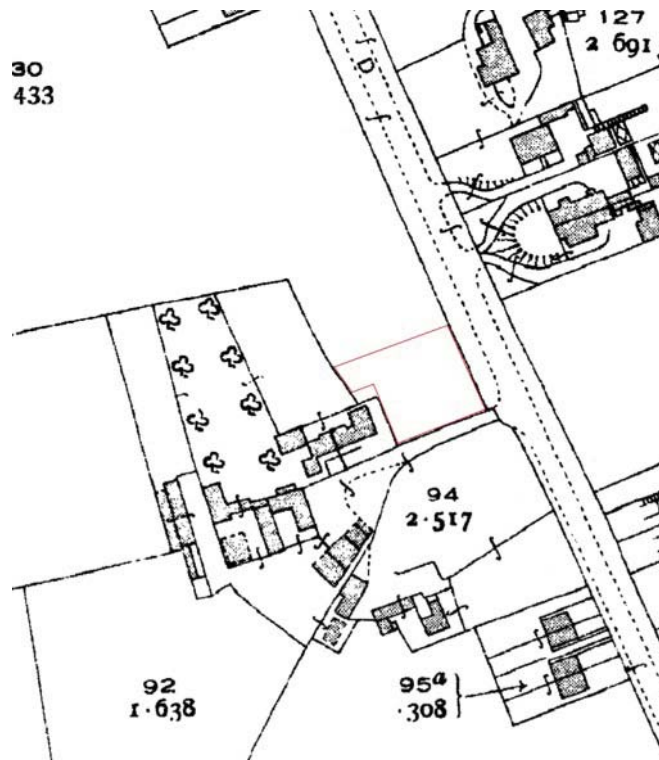


Fig. 6

Extract from 1937 OS map with development area outlined in red.



Plate 1

Panoramic view of the development area, looking north west.



Plate 2

General view looking south east, during removal of topsoil (100).



Plate 3

Excavation of strip trench through natural (101), looking north west.