

wa-archaeology.com

DESK BASED ASSESSMENTS  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION  
GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY  
TOPOGRAPHICAL AND LANDSCAPE SURVEY  
HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING  
EIA AND HERITAGE CONSULTANCY



**WARDELL ARMSTRONG LLP**

**ST. MARYS RC PRIMARY SCHOOL, 30 LINKS GARDENS, LEITH, EDINBURGH**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT**




**November 2016**

**DATE ISSUED:** November 2016  
**JOB NUMBER:** CP11720/16  
**SITE CODE:** STM-C  
**OASIS REFERENCE:** Wardella2-262589  
**GRID REFERENCE:** Centred on NT 27750 75980  
**REPORT NUMBER:** RPT-001

Wardell Armstrong LLP

St. Marys RC Primary School, 30 Links Garden, Leith, Edinburgh

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

PREPARED BY:	EDITED BY:	APPROVED BY:
Damion Churchill	Richard Newman	Frank Giecco
		
Project Officer	Post-Excavation Manager	Regional Manager

*This report has been prepared by Wardell Armstrong Archaeology with all reasonable skill, care and diligence, within the terms of the Contract with the Client. The report is confidential to the Client and Wardell Armstrong Archaeology accepts no responsibility of whatever nature to third parties to whom this report may be made known.*

*No part of this document may be reproduced without the prior written approval of Wardell Armstrong Archaeology.*



Wardell Armstrong Archaeology is the trading name of Wardell Armstrong LLP, Registered in England No. OC307138.

Registered office: Sir Henry Doulton House, Forge Lane, Etruria, Stoke-on-Trent, ST1 5BD, United Kingdom

UK Offices: Stoke-on-Trent, Cardiff, Carlisle, Edinburgh, Greater Manchester, London, Newcastle upon Tyne, Sheffield, Taunton, Truro, West Bromwich. International Offices: Almaty, Moscow

DESK BASED ASSESSMENTS  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION  
GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY  
TOPOGRAPHIC AND LANDSCAPE SURVEY  
HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING  
EIA AND HERITAGE CONSULTANCY

## CONTENTS

SUMMARY .....	1
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	2
1 INTRODUCTION .....	3
1.1 Circumstances of the Project .....	3
2 METHODOLOGY .....	5
2.1 Written Scheme of Investigation .....	5
2.2 The Archaeological Watching Brief .....	5
2.3 The Archive .....	6
3 BACKGROUND .....	8
3.1 Location and Geological Context .....	8
3.2 Historic and Archaeological Background .....	8
3.3 Previous Archaeological Work .....	9
4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS .....	10
4.1 Introduction .....	10
4.2 Archaeological Watching Brief Results .....	10
5 CONCLUSIONS .....	11
5.1 Conclusions .....	11
6 BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	12
6.1 Secondary Sources .....	12
6.2 Internet Sources .....	13
APPENDIX 1: AREA DATA .....	14
APPENDIX 2: DES ENTRY .....	15
APPENDIX 3: PLATES .....	16
APPENDIX 4: FIGURES .....	17

## **PLATES (APPENDIX 4)**

Plate 1 – An overview of Area 1, looking west, 1 x 1m scale.....	16
Plate 2 – An overview of Area 2, looking east, 1 x 1m scale.....	16

## **FIGURES (APPENDIX 5)**

Figure 1: Site location

Figure 2: Detailed site location showing areas monitored during watching brief

## **SUMMARY**

In 2016 Wardell Armstrong Archaeology was commissioned by Martin Farquharson at Wardell Armstrong LLP on behalf of their client Morrison Construction to undertake an archaeological watching brief at St. Marys RC primary school, 30 Links Gardens, Leith, Edinburgh (NGR NT 27750 75980). This was a result of formal planning consent being granted (Planning reference: 15/05101/FUL) with a condition attached to the decision notice (Condition 1), stipulating the need for archaeological investigation of the site prior to the development of a single storey, 2 classroom building with ancillary accommodation.

The previous and on-going archaeological works undertaken by Wardell Armstrong Archaeology at St Marys primary school, consisted of an evaluation and open area excavation. These investigations revealed both confined and shrouded human burials indicating that there was considerable potential for the significant below ground archaeology associated with the burial of human remains during the cutting of service trenches within the school grounds.

The archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the week of the 4<sup>th</sup> of July 2016. Two areas were monitored during excavations for service trenches associated with the proposed development.

The watching brief revealed levelling deposits likely associated with the construction of the school. Each area was excavated to the depth required to accommodate a new service. No archaeological remains were identified within the study area.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Wardell Armstrong Archaeology (WAA) thanks Martin Farquharson at Wardell Armstrong LLP, for commissioning the project, and Morrison Construction, the client, for all their assistance throughout the work. Thanks also to John Lawson, Curator of Archaeology at the City of Edinburgh Council, for his assistance throughout the project. Further thanks are extended to Allan Booker of Morrison Construction for his assistance throughout the fieldwork phase of the project.

Wardell Armstrong Archaeology are also grateful to the staff at the RCAHMS, Edinburgh for their help during this project.

The archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Dagmar Richardson. The report was written by Damion Churchill and the figures were produced by Helen Phillips.

The report was edited by Richard Newman, Post Excavation Manager for WAA, who also managed this project.

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Circumstances of the Project**

- 1.1.1 In March 2016, Wardell Armstrong Archaeology were invited by Wardell Armstrong LLP, on behalf of their client Morrison Construction, to undertake an archaeological watching brief at St. Marys RC Primary School, 30 Links Gardens, Leith, Edinburgh (centred on NGR NT 27750 75980, Figure 1). This was in advance of the proposed development of a single storey, 2 classroom building with ancillary accommodation at the site (Planning Application number 15/05101/FUL).
- 1.1.2 The site lies on the north side of Leith Links, an archaeologically sensitive area with archaeological features identified within its vicinity associated with the siege of Leith in 1559-60 and the burial of plague victims. Furthermore, the site is located within the former grounds of a late 19<sup>th</sup> century smallpox hospital, and to the south of the Edinburgh Ropery, which was in existence by 1804.
- 1.1.3 The previous and on-going archaeological works undertaken at St Marys primary school, consisting of an evaluation (STM-A) and open area excavation (STM-B) revealed both confined and shrouded human burials. This indicated that there was considerable risk that the significant below ground archaeological remains with inhumations could be disturbed during the excavation of service trenches within the school grounds. The Initial Assessment report detailing the results of the excavation is forthcoming.
- 1.1.4 As a result of this potential at St. Marys RC Primary School, in accordance with advice given in Scottish Planning Policy (SPP), John Lawson, Curator of Archaeology at the City of Edinburgh Council deemed, further archaeological monitoring consisting of a watching brief necessary prior to the commencement of any other works on site (Pers. Comm.), in line with Condition 1 of the decision notice (City of Edinburgh Council, 2015)
- 1.1.5 Consequently the purpose of the archaeological watching brief was to establish the presence/absence of further archaeological remains at St. Marys RC Primary School and to mitigate the impact of the placement of underground services associated with the proposed development of the site upon any archaeological remains present.

1.1.6 This report outlines the archaeological investigation undertaken on-site, the subsequent programme of post-fieldwork analysis, and the results of this scheme of archaeological works carried out in order to meet this condition.



## **2 METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1 Written Scheme of Investigation**

- 2.1.1 The archaeological watching brief was undertaken as part of on-going archaeological works associated with the proposed development at St. Marys RC Primary School. The watching brief was undertaken at the request of John Lawson, Curator of Archaeology, City of Edinburgh Council.
- 2.1.2 This request was made in line with condition 1 of the planning application decision notice (City of Edinburgh Council, 2015) which required a scheme of archaeological work to be undertaken prior to the commencement of works associated with the construction of a single storey, 2 classroom building with ancillary accommodation at the site in accordance with Structure Plan Policy 16, and national policy SPP23.
- 2.1.3 The archaeological watching brief was conducted whilst the open area excavation (STM-B) was being completed elsewhere on the site. In consequence, a separate Written Scheme of Investigation was not deemed necessary as one had been prepared for the excavation (WAA, 2016). The aims and objectives of both the excavation and the watching brief were the same.
- 2.1.4 The archaeological watching brief was undertaken following the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (2014a), and in accordance with the WAA Excavation Manual (2012).
- 2.1.5 The fieldwork programme was followed by an assessment of the data as set out in the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief* (CIfA 2014a) and the *Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (CIfA 2014b).

### **2.2 The Archaeological Watching Brief**

- 2.2.1 The archaeological watching brief consisted of monitoring two small areas being excavated for service trenches, which covered an area of approximately 9.25m<sup>2</sup>. The purpose of the archaeological watching brief was to identify whether archaeological remains were present and, if remains were identified, to quantify their nature and extent. The archaeology identified as part of the watching brief, was to be recorded and excavated prior to its loss.
- 2.2.2 In summary, the main objectives of the field investigations were:

- determine the character, date, extent and distribution of archaeological deposits and their potential significance;
- investigate and record all deposits and features of archaeological interest within the areas to be disturbed by the current development;
- disseminate the results of the fieldwork through an appropriate level of reporting.

2.2.3 The tarmac was removed by mechanical excavator under close archaeological supervision. All potential features were cleaned by hand, investigated and recorded according to the Wardell Armstrong Archaeology standard procedure as set out in the Excavation Manual (WAA, 2014).

2.2.4 The treatment of the finds followed the *Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA 2014b). All finds encountered on site were retained and returned to the office where they were identified, quantified and dated to period. A *terminus post quem* was then produced for each stratified context under the supervision of the Wardell Armstrong Archaeology Finds Officer, and the dates were used to help determine the date phases for the site. On completion of this project, the finds were cleaned and packaged.

## 2.3 The Archive

2.3.1 A full professional archive has been compiled in accordance with the specification, and in line with the Archaeological Archives Forum recommendations (Brown 2011) and EAC guidelines (2014). The archive will be deposited within the RCAHMS, and made available upon request. The archive can be accessed under the unique project identifier WAA16, STM-C CP 11720.

2.3.2 A brief summary of the results of the archaeological work will be prepared and submitted for publication in the Archaeology Scotland's annual journal 'Discovery and Excavation in Scotland' (see Appendix 2).

2.3.3 Wardell Armstrong Archaeology and Scottish Borders Council Archaeology Service, support the **Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS)** project. This project aims to provide an on-line index and access to the extensive and expanding body of grey literature, created as a result of developer-funded archaeological work. As a result, details of the results of this project will be made

available by Wardell Armstrong Archaeology, as a part of this national project under unique identifier: **wardella2-262589**.

### 3 BACKGROUND

#### 3.1 Location and Geological Context

3.1.1 Leith is a district situated to the north of the city of Edinburgh, on the coast of the Firth of Forth and, positioned at the mouth of the Water of Leith (Figure 1). Formerly a distinct and separate town now lies within the greater Edinburgh urban area, Leith is characterised by its large port, and is heavily industrialised along its coast.

3.1.2 St. Marys RC Primary School, is located to the south of the port area of Leith, on the north side of Leith Links, with Links Garden Lane immediately to the west of the site. The placement of services affects two small areas within the grounds of the primary school (Figure 2).

3.1.3 The solid geology of the area comprises Guillane Formation sedimentary rock of the Strathclyde Group type; predominantly sandstones, interbedded with siltstones, mudstones, limestones, ironstones, coals and seatrocks. This bedrock formed approximately 335 to 352 million years ago in the Carboniferous Period, and is overlain by Flandrian raised marine deposits, comprising sands and gravels laid up to two million years ago (BGS 2015).

#### 3.2 Historic and Archaeological Background

3.2.1 This historical background is compiled mostly from secondary sources. Cranmore was consulted for entries within the search area (taken as an area of approximately 0.25km radius from the site boundary). Besides identifying heritage assets that may be directly or indirectly affected by the proposed development this search boundary was expected to provide sufficient data to represent the archaeological character of the area. It is intended only as a summary of historical developments around the study area. References to the Historic Environment Record (HER) are included where known.

3.2.2 **Prehistoric:** there is no known evidence for human prehistoric activity in the proposed development area.

3.2.3 **Roman:** there is no known evidence for Roman activity in the proposed development area. A Romano-British coin has been recorded 255m to the east of the site (Cranmore ID 51935).

3.2.4 **Medieval:** there is no direct evidence of activity in the vicinity of the proposed development during the early medieval or medieval periods. No early medieval or

medieval activity has been recorded in the immediate vicinity of the proposed development.

3.2.5 Leith was first mentioned in a Charter of David I in 1128, when it was known as Inverleith, approving the construction of the Abbey of Holyroodhouse. By the 13<sup>th</sup> century, two towns had emerged, north and south, with the north governed by the Abbot of Holyrood, and the south by the Lairds of Restalrig (Russell, 1922; 9).

### 3.2.6 ***Post-medieval and Modern:***

3.2.7 The Links area formed an important part of the siege of Leith in 1559-60 as demonstrated by contemporary accounts and a map held at Petworth House, Sussex (Campbell 1827; Steer 1961; Harris 1991). The Links have been the subject of some past archaeological research (Pollard 2008). They contain two identifiable remains, the earthworks of Somerset's and Pelham's batteries and below ground evidence of siege works.

3.2.8 Map regression analysis of the development site indicates that it lies in an area that was enclosed out of Leith Links by the early 19<sup>th</sup> century but may have been part of the property of Williamson and Gavins rope walk by 1822 (Thomson 1822). The development area and the existing school lie immediately to the south of this former rope walk. This rope works and later sail cloth manufactory was in existence by 1804.

3.2.9 The development is also to the south of the site of a later 19<sup>th</sup> century smallpox hospital and may impinge upon the site of a building associated with the hospital that was erected between 1896 and 1905 (Ordnance Survey 25 inch to 1 mile series). There was a quaiting ground to the immediate east of this building range.

3.2.10 By 1931 St Marys School, then known as the Links School, had been established. The development area was clear of structures at that time.

### 3.3 **Previous Archaeological Work**

3.3.1 An archaeological evaluation conducted by Wardell Armstrong in 2016, (STM-A) in association with the proposed development of the classroom building exposed evidence of coffined human remains. Further burials were revealed in a subsequent excavation. The Initial Assessment report detailing the results of the excavation is forthcoming.

3.3.2 Previous to this, no archaeological work had been undertaken either in the immediate vicinity or within the proposed development area.

## 4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

### 4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The archaeological watching brief was undertaken on the 7<sup>th</sup> of July 2016. A total of two areas were excavated across the proposed development area (Figure 2). Tarmac was removed down to reveal the underlying deposits by a mechanical excavator with toothless grading bucket.

### 4.2 Archaeological Watching Brief Results

4.2.1 No archaeological remains were observed in either area. In each area, the tarmac levelling deposits were observed to seal a loose yellow sand presumed natural substrate, although the sand may be redeposited.

4.2.2 Each area was up to 0.80m deep, the maximum depth to which the services will be lain. Within Area 1, located to the east of the site, the sand **(101)** was overlain by a 0.42m thick mixed dark grey clayey sand material containing glass and brick inclusions **(102)**. This was overlain by a crushed brick hardcore deposit **(103)**, a levelling layer on which to lay the tarmac **(100)**.

4.2.3 Area 2, was located within the site entrance towards the west of the site. The presumed natural sand **(201)** was overlain by a 0.62m thick deposit of dark grey silty clay **(202)** with inclusions of glass, brick and slag. This was overlain by a crushed brick hardcore layer **(202)** over which lay the tarmac **(200)**.

4.2.4 As no archaeological features were identified during the course of the watching brief, no environmental samples were taken and no artefacts were recovered.

## **5 CONCLUSIONS**

### **5.1 Conclusions**

- 5.1.1 During the archaeological watching brief at St. Marys RC primary school, the excavation of two service trenches were observed. The purpose of the archaeological watching brief was to establish the presence/absence of further archaeological remains at St. Marys RC primary school and to mitigate the impact of the placement of underground services associated with the proposed development of the site upon any archaeological remains present.
- 5.1.2 The two dark grey deposits encountered within each area likely represent a period of ground consolidation, probably associated in the construction of the school.
- 5.1.3 Each area was excavated to the depth required to accommodate a new service.
- 5.1.4 Archaeology may survive below this depth, as it was not possible to establish for certain if the sand within each area was naturally occurring or re-deposited. Consequently, any further excavation associated with the insertion of services within the observed limits of each area may require further monitoring.

## 6 BIBLIOGRAPHY

### 6.1 Secondary Sources

Ainslie, J. 1804. *Old and New Town of Edinburgh and Leith with the proposed docks*. National Library of Scotland, <http://maps.nls.uk/view/74400072>

Brown, D.H. 2011. *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation*. Archaeological Archives Forum

Campbell, A. 1827. *The History of Leith*. Leith: William Reid & Son

CIfA 2014a. *Standards and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*. Reading: Institute for Archaeologists.

CIFA 2014b. *Standard and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials*. Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

City of Edinburgh, 2015. *Planning Application Decision Notice, Application Number 15/05101/FUL*. Unpublished document

Europae Archaeologia Consilium (EAC). 2014. *A Standard and Guide to Best Practice for Archaeological Archiving in Europe*, EAC Guidelines 1: Belgium

Harris, S. 1991. The fortifications and siege of Leith: a further study of the map of the siege in 1560. *Proceedings of the Society Antiquaries of Scotland*, 121; 359-368

Pollard, T. 2008. The Archaeology of the Siege of Leith, 1560. *Journal of Conflict Archaeology*, 4; 159-188

Russell, J. 1922. *The Story of Leith*. Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson & Sons

Steer, F.W. 1961. A Map Illustrating the Liege of Leith, 1560. *Proceedings of the Society Antiquaries of Scotland*, 95; 280-283

Thomson, C. (1822) *Plan of the Town of Leith and its environs*. National Library of Scotland, <http://maps.nls.uk/view/74401134>

WAA. 2014. *Wardell Armstrong Archaeology Excavation Manual*. Unpublished document.

WAA. 2016. *St. Marys RC Primary School, 30 Links Gardens, Leith, Edinburgh. Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation*. Unpublished document



Watkinson, D.E. & Neal, V. 1998. *First Aid for Finds*. RESCUE: The British Archaeological Trust (London)

## 6.2 Internet Sources

British Geological Survey, Geology of Britain Viewer. (Accessed on 12/07/16)  
<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html>

## APPENDIX 1: AREA DATA

### Area 1

Square Area: 4.68m<sup>2</sup>

Maximum Depth: 0.80m

Context Number	Context Type	Description
100	Deposit	Tarmac
101	Deposit	Yellow Sand
102	Deposit	Dark grey clayey sand
103	Deposit	Hardcore base

### Area 2

Square Area: 4.57m<sup>2</sup>

Maximum Depth: 0.80m

Context Number	Context Type	Description
200	Deposit	Tarmac
201	Deposit	Yellow Sand
202	Deposit	Dark grey silty clay
203	Deposit	Hardcore base

## **APPENDIX 2: DES ENTRY**

In 2016 Wardell Armstrong Archaeology was commissioned to undertake an archaeological watching brief at St. Marys RC primary school, 30 Links Gardens, Leith, Edinburgh (NGR NT 27750 75980).

The previous and on-going archaeological works undertaken by Wardell Armstrong Archaeology at St Mary's Primary School, consist of an evaluation and open area excavation. These investigations revealed both confined and shrouded human burials indicating that there was considerable potential for the significant below ground archaeology associated with the burial of human remains during the placement of services within the school grounds. The archaeological watching brief was undertaken on the 7th of July 2016. A total of two areas were excavated in advance of services associated with the proposed development being installed. The watching brief revealed levelling deposits likely associated with the construction of the school. Each area was excavated to the depth required to accommodate a new service. No archaeological remains were identified within the study area.

### APPENDIX 3: PLATES



*Plate 1 – An overview of Area 1, looking west, 1 x 1m scale*



*Plate 2 – An overview of Area 2, looking east, 1 x 1m scale*

## **APPENDIX 4: FIGURES**





Figure 1: Site location.



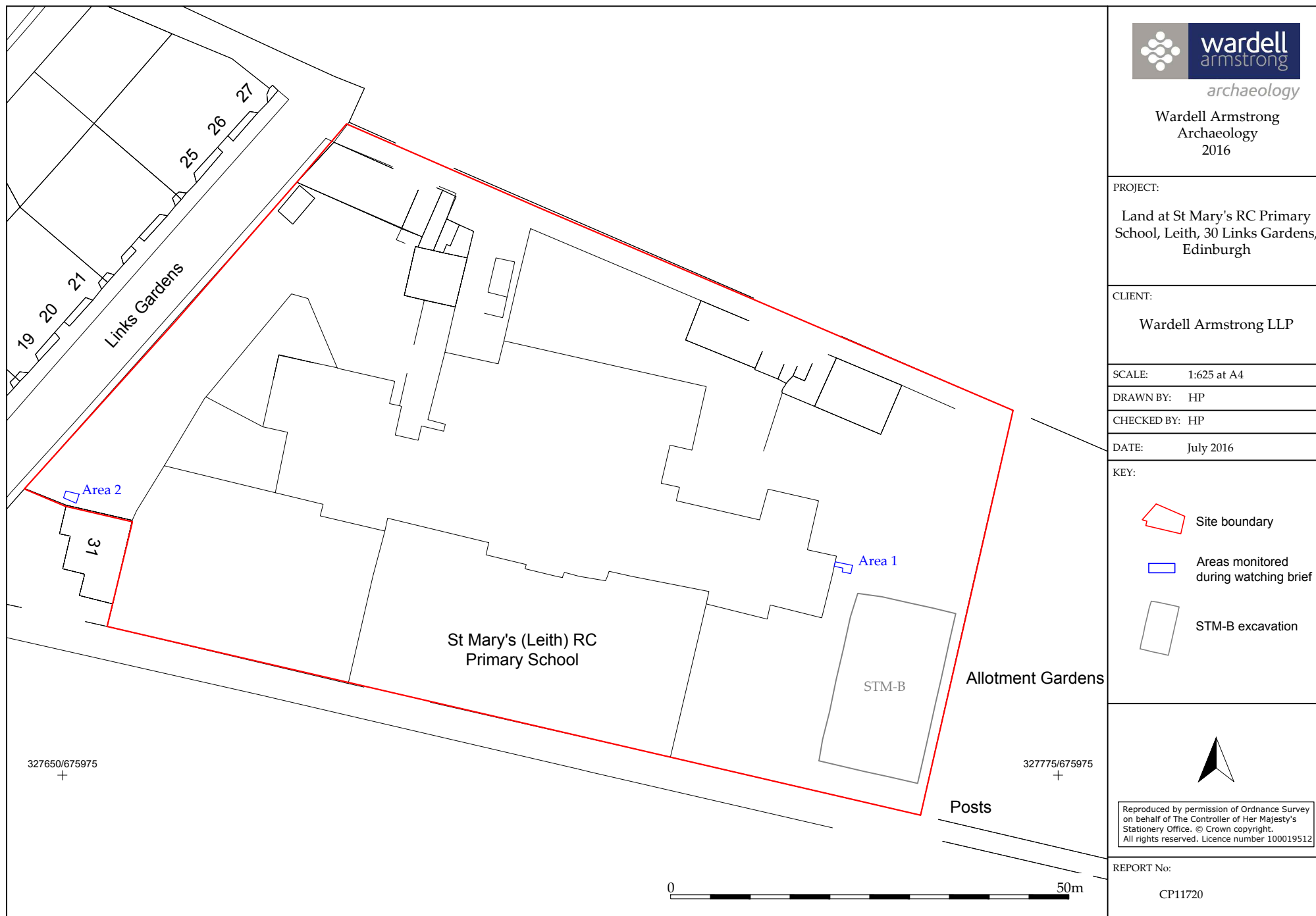


Figure 2: Detailed site location showing Areas monitored during watching brief.

STOKE-ON-TRENT  
Sir Henry Doulton House  
Forge Lane  
Etruria  
Stoke-on-Trent  
ST1 5BD  
Tel: +44 (0)845 111 7777

CARDIFF  
22 Windsor Place  
Cardiff  
CF10 3BY  
Tel: +44 (0)29 2072 9191

EDINBURGH  
Suite 2/3, Great Michael House  
14 Links Place  
Edinburgh  
EH6 7EZ  
Tel: +44 (0)131 555 3311

GREATER MANCHESTER  
2 The Avenue  
Leigh  
Greater Manchester  
WN7 1ES  
Tel: +44 (0)1942 260101

LONDON  
Third Floor  
46 Chancery Lane  
London  
WC2A 1JE  
Tel: +44 (0)20 7242 3243

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE  
City Quadrant  
11 Waterloo Square  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE1 4DP  
Tel: +44 (0)191 232 0943

PENRYN  
Tremough Innovation Centre  
Tremough Campus  
Penryn  
Cornwall  
TR10 9TA  
Tel: +44 (0)1872 560738

SHEFFIELD  
Unit 5  
Newton Business Centre  
Newton Chambers Road  
Thorncliffe Park  
Chapeltown  
Sheffield  
S35 2PH  
Tel: +44 (0)114 245 6244

TRURO  
Wheal Jane  
Baldhu  
Truro  
Cornwall  
TR3 6EH  
Tel: +44 (0)1872 560738

WEST BROMWICH  
Thynne Court  
Thynne Street  
West Bromwich  
West Midlands  
B70 6PH  
Tel: +44 (0)121 580 0909

International offices:

ALMATY  
29/6 Satpaev Avenue  
Rakhat Palace Hotel  
Office Tower, 7th Floor  
Almaty  
050040  
Kazakhstan  
Tel : +7-727-3341310

MOSCOW  
Suite 2, Block 10,  
Letnikovskaya St.  
Moscow, Russia  
115114  
Tel: +7(495) 980 07 67

Wardell Armstrong Archaeology:

CUMBRIA  
Cocklakes Yard  
Carlisle  
Cumbria  
CA4 0BQ  
Tel: +44 (0)1228 564820

