



WHITBREAD PLC

**LAND AT BODIEVE BUSINESS PARK, WADEBRIDGE,
CORNWALL**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT




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WHITBREAD PLC

Land at Bodieve Business Park, Wadebridge

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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SUMMARY

Wardell Armstrong were commissioned by Whitbread PLC to undertake an archaeological watching brief during initial excavations undertaken in advance of the construction of a new hotel with car parking on a plot of land at Bodieve Business Park, Wadebridge. Following on from a heritage impact assessment (Buschmann 2017), Phil Copleston of Cornwall Historic Environment Planning, at Cornwall County Council, issued a requirement for an archaeological watching brief to be undertaken during the groundworks.

The archaeological watching brief, undertaken between Wednesday 14th and Friday 16th June 2017, monitored the ground reduction of the site in preparation for the construction of a new building. A fragmentary slate bedrock was revealed, overlain in areas by a maximum of 0.25m of mid grey-brown silty topsoil.

A dry-stone wall, running along the south-eastern extent of the ground reduction area, which must pre-date 1881, was noted, with the earlier road alignment to the south-east and these were not affected during groundworks undertaken during the archaeological monitoring phase.

No evidence for past human activity was encountered during the excavations, with much of the site retaining evidence of recent remediation. Only the far south-eastern boundary and north-eastern area retained topsoil and had not been truncated and levelled. It is likely that this remediation occurred in conjunction with the development of the adjacent site to the north-west in, c. 2009.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Wardell Armstrong (WA) thanks Whitbread PLC for commissioning the project, and for all their assistance throughout the work. Also, WA thank all groundwork staff, particularly James Thomas of Midas, and the construction team from Morcum Construction Ltd, for all assistance.

The archaeological watching brief monitoring was undertaken by Cat Peters, who also wrote the report. The figures were produced by Adrian Bailey. The project was managed by Frank Giecco and the report edited by Dave Jackson.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Circumstances

1.1.1 In June 2017, Wardell Armstrong (WA) undertook an archaeological watching brief during initial excavations for a new hotel on land at Bodieve Business Park, located to the north-east of Wadebridge (SW 99953 73053; Figure 1). The work was commissioned by Whitbread PLC.

1.1.2 Archaeological work was required at the bequest of Phil Copleston of Historic Environment Planning at Cornwall County Council, due to the potential for archaeological features within the site. A heritage impact assessment highlighted the potential for remains of the prehistoric to medieval periods to survive, despite evidence for recent development-related activity occurring at the site.

1.2 Project Documentation

1.2.1 The project conforms to a Written Scheme of Investigation, prepared by Frank Giocco of Wardell Armstrong and approved by Phil Copleston of Cornwall County Council (Giocco 2017).

1.2.2 This report outlines the results of this scheme of archaeological works.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Standards and Guidance

2.1.1 The archaeological watching brief was undertaken following the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and Guidance for archaeological watching briefs* (2014a), and in accordance with the WSI (Giecco 2017).

2.1.2 The fieldwork programme was followed by an assessment of the data as set out in the *Standard and Guidance for archaeological watching briefs* (CifA 2014a) and the *Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (CifA 2014b).

2.2 The Watching Brief

2.2.1 The watching brief comprised the monitoring of all initial excavations occurring as part of the groundworks for a new hotel at Bodieve Business Park (Figure 1). This consisted of the reduction of much of the site, removing up to 1.6m of material (Figure 2). The general aims of the monitoring were:

- to establish the presence/absence, nature, extent and state of preservation of archaeological remains and to record these where they were observed;
- to establish the character of those features in terms of cuts, soil matrices and interfaces;
- to recover artefactual material, especially that useful for dating purposes;
- to recover palaeoenvironmental material where it survives in order to understand site and landscape formation processes.

2.2.2 No finds were encountered during the excavations, and no environmental samples were taken during the project.

2.2.3 A full professional archive has been compiled in accordance with the project specification, and the Archaeological Archives Forum recommendations (Brown 2011) adhering to European best-practice (EAC 2014). The archive will be deposited within the Historic Environment Record offices in the Kennall Building in Truro, along with copies of the report, available upon request. The archive can be accessed under the unique project identifier **WA 17, WAD-A, CL11925**.

2.2.4 Wardell Armstrong supports 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 WA as a part of this national project. The OASIS reference for the project is: **wardella2-290179**.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 Location and Geological Context

3.1.1 The site is located to the north-east of the centre of Wadebridge, which is in north Cornwall, located to the north-east of Truro and north-west of Plymouth (Figure 1). To the immediate north-east of the site runs the A39, to the south-east the B3314 and to the south-west of the site, beyond an access road to Jewsons from the B3314, are playing fields associated with a school. To the north-west of the site is a Jewsons hardware depot. The site itself at the time of the works comprised a south-west north-east orientated roughly rectangular plot of land, with evidence of modern disturbance (centred on SW 99953 73053; Figure 2).

3.1.2 The underlying solid geology in the area is mapped as Trevoise Slate Formation and Rosenum Formation, a sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 375 to 398 million years ago (BGS 2017). The local environment previously dominated by open seas with pelagite deposits.

3.2 Historical and Archaeological Background

3.2.1 A heritage impact assessment has been undertaken of the site (Buschmann 2017). The following information is a summary of the findings of that study, to give a brief historical context to the site:

3.2.2 **Prehistoric:** a Bronze Age round barrow is known at Wadebridge which, along with a sub-rectangular enclosure, a sub-circular enclosure or barrow and cropmark evidence of a further enclosure, as well as the fairly high level of activity of the period in the wider area, indicated that there was the potential for prehistoric activity to have occurred in the vicinity of the site.

3.2.3 **Romano-British:** further enclosures of the Romano-British period are known from within a 1km radius of the site and some of these may have earlier origins. Hendra Roman camp and other sites and find spots of the Roman period are also known from a wider area.

3.2.4 **Medieval:** an early reference to the settlement of Wadebridge dates to 1313 when a market and two fairs were granted, to what was then known as Wade. Since the establishment of a nearly 320 feet long bridge, spanning the River Camel in 1468, the settlement became known as Wadebridge. Prior to this, it is thought that a chapel had been established both sides of the earlier ford, for travellers to pray before, and give thanks after, a safe crossing of the river at this point. As well as these two former

chapels, a medieval well dedicated to St Wenna is also known to have existed in the vicinity.

- 3.2.5 Other, more rural settlements are known from the area in the medieval period, including a settlement at Gonvena recorded in 1166 at Tenant, documented in 1201, Bodieve, recorded in 1302 and Trevarner, mentioned in 1327. These would have associated agricultural features and a strip field system is known from Higher Treworder which may be of medieval origin.
- 3.2.6 **Post-Medieval and Modern:** from the medieval period onwards, Wadebridge grew into a trade centre of some note and much of this was based on shipping, demonstrated by the development of Bradford Quay from the late 16th century. Several merchants' houses of the period are known from within a 1km radius of the site, most are listed buildings and include Gonvena Mansion, Little Gonvena and Spring Gardens. The construction of grand residences in the area continued into the 19th century and several apiaries established in the area at this time.
- 3.2.7 The trade, which culminated in this wealth, was aided by the extension of the old A39 following the Turnpike Act of 1838, which included a milestone which once existed to the immediate south-east of the site (MCO53288) and the establishment of the Wadebridge and Bodmin Railway line, one of the earliest in the world, which opened in 1834.
- 3.2.8 The site monitored during the watching brief formed the southern part of a large field spanning the gap between the road pre-dating the A39 and the road to the south, the current B3314 in the late 19th century, as shown on early Ordnance Survey mapping and this remained the same until at least 1974 (Buschmann 2017, Figures 4-7). This southern road was realigned post-1974, further south-east to meet a roundabout and the A39 (Plate 1), the south-eastern boundary at this date being a hedgerow, with the old route forming a triangular area of wasteland to the south-east. The site itself in 2001 remained agricultural, at least until 2005 (Plates 1 and 2).



Plate 1: Google Earth imagery, 31st December 2001



Plate 2: Google Earth imagery, 31st December 2005

3.2.9 At some point between 2005 (Plate 2) and 2009 (Plate 3), the Jewsons builders' merchants warehouse was constructed on the site to the immediate north-west and had been provided with an access road forming the south-western boundary of the present site (Plate 3). The 2009 image seems to indicate that much of the present watching brief site had, at a minimum, had topsoil removed and perhaps been truncated and levelled to provide the compound area for the warehouse construction teams (Plate 3).



Plate 3: Google Earth imagery, 8th October 2009

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The watching brief was undertaken between Wednesday 14th and Friday 16th June 2017 and monitored the ground reduction of the site by a mechanical tracked excavator. The ground reduction took place within the area highlighted in red in Figure 2. As this ground reduction took the excavations into the natural occurring bedrock, it was not necessary to continue monitoring further development-related excavations, planned to include foundation trenches and trenches for new service provisions for the new building.

4.2 Results

4.2.1 The ground reduction began at the south-western part of the site and required the removal of between a minimum of 0.02m at the far south-western extent (Plate 4) and a maximum of 1.6m at the north-eastern extent of the site (Plate 5).



Plate 4: Ground reduction from south-western extent of site, facing north-east



Plate 5: Ground reduction towards north-eastern part of site, facing north-east

4.2.2 A maximum of 0.25m of mid grey-brown silty topsoil was observed, along the south-eastern boundary of the ground reduction and at the north-eastern extent (Plate 6), though across much of the site, no topsoil existed, only a weeded stony deposit.



Plate 6: Revealing topsoil towards north-east corner of site, facing north-east

4.2.3 Beneath the topsoil lay a fragmentary slate bedrock (Plate 7), occurring in east-west striations and in areas towards the centre of the site, east-west orientated features were revealed. Further investigation revealed these to comprise a dark brown silty soil directly on the rock, with no evidence for archaeological activity. As these occurred beneath some of the fragmentary rock, they must represent the natural accumulation of soil within natural breaks in the seams of the bedrock (Plate 8).



Plate 7: Bedrock beneath topsoil at south-eastern boundary of site, facing south-east



Plate 8: Exposed seams in natural bedrock, facing west

4.2.4 Along much of the south-eastern boundary of the site, an overgrown dry stone wall survived (Plate 9). This was not affected by the groundworks during the archaeological monitoring phase and it is likely that this is the same boundary that once demarked this former agricultural field from the earlier route of the road to the south-east, in which case the original location of the milestone (MCO53288, *confer* 3.2.7) lay on the south-east side of this and was not affected by the development (Plate 10). This would mean that the wall predates 1881 (Figure 4 in Buschmann 2017). There was a steep bank to the south-east of the wall, with a drop to the former road level and this area was heavily overgrown (Plate 9).



Plate 9: Stone wall at south-eastern boundary of ground reduction, facing south-east



Plate 10: Completed ground reduction from north-east corner of site, facing west

5 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1.1 Phil Copleston of Historic Environment Planning at Cornwall County Council requested an archaeological watching brief to monitor groundworks occurring as part of the development, because of the potential for archaeological features to survive within the site. This work followed on from a Heritage Impact Assessment relating to the site in January 2017 (Buschmann 2017).
- 5.1.2 No evidence for past human activity was encountered during the excavations, with much of the site retaining evidence of recent remediation. Only the far south-eastern boundary and north-eastern area retained topsoil and had not been previously truncated and levelled. It is likely that this remediation occurred in conjunction with the development of the adjacent site to the north-west, during c. 2009.

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CIFA 2014b, *Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials*, Chartered Institute of Field Archaeologists, Reading

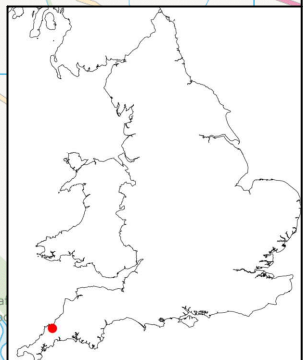
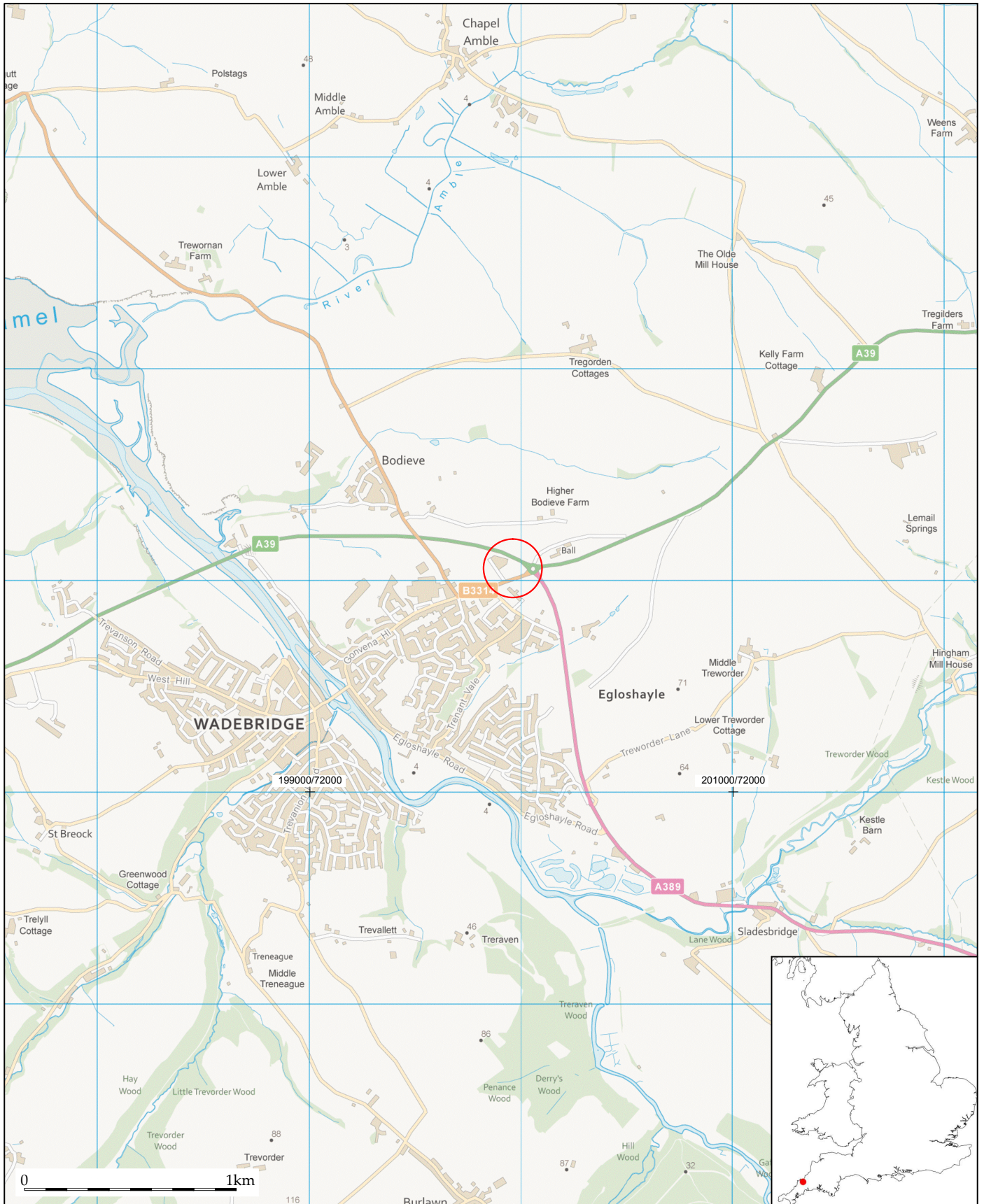
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British Geological Survey, accessed 13th July 2017

APPENDIX 1: FIGURES






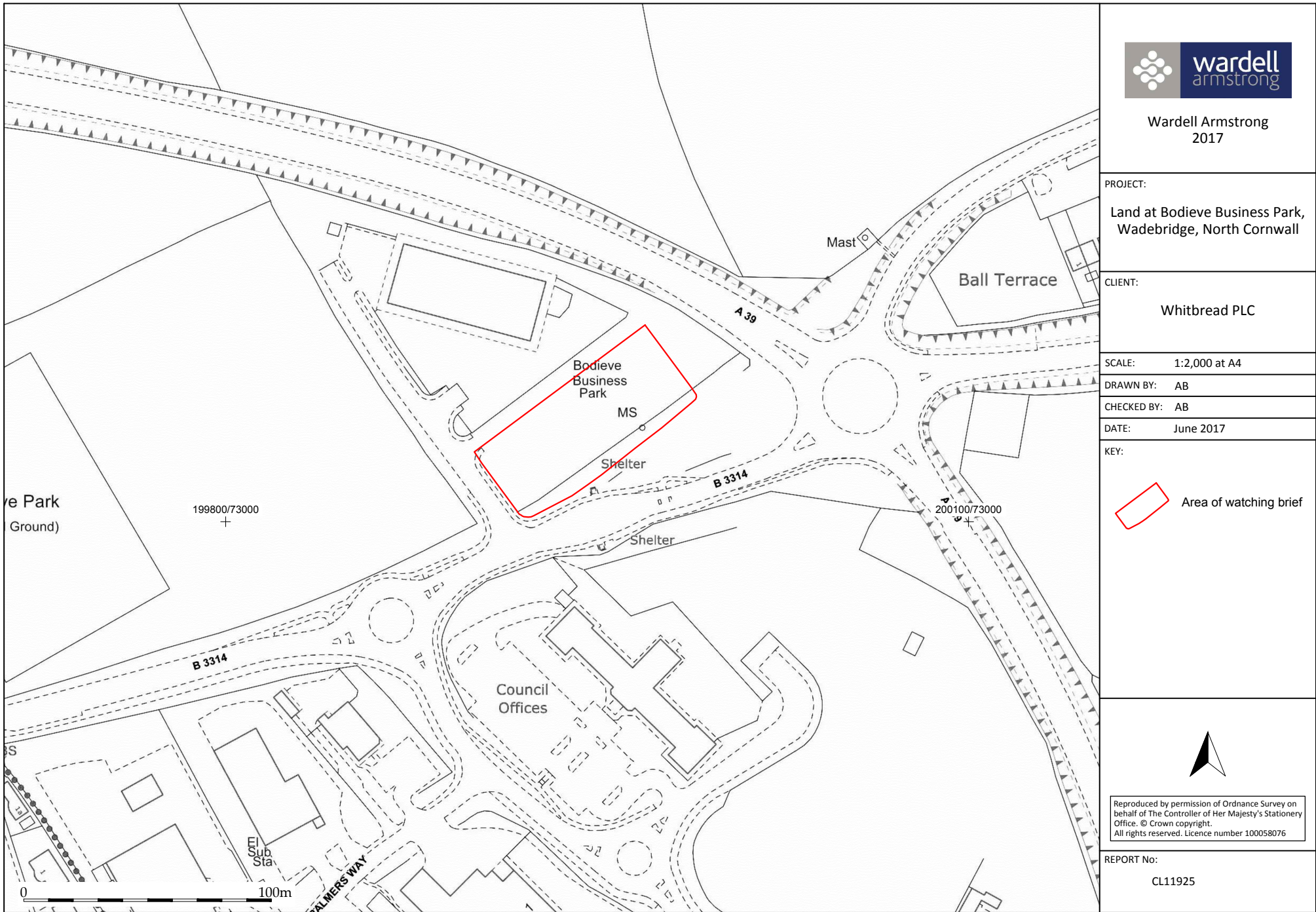
 <p>Wardell Armstrong 2017</p>	<p>PROJECT: Land at Bodieve Business Park, Wadebridge, North Cornwall</p> <p>CLIENT: Whitbread PLC</p> <p>SCALE: 1:25,000 at A4</p> <p>DRAWN BY: AB</p> <p>CHECKED BY: AB</p> <p>DATE: June 2017</p> <p>REPORT No: CL11925</p>	<p>KEY:</p> <p> Site location</p>	 <p>Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number 100058076</p>
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Figure 1: Site location.



Wardell Armstrong
2017

PROJECT:
Land at Bodieve Business Park,
Wadebridge, North Cornwall

CLIENT:
Whitbread PLC

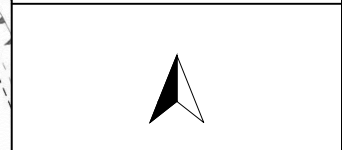
SCALE: 1:2,000 at A4

DRAWN BY: AB

CHECKED BY: AB

DATE: June 2017

KEY:
 Area of watching brief



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Figure 2: Area monitored during watching brief.

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