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PERSIMMON HOMES NOTTINGHAM

LAND AT CAVENDISH PARK, CLIPSTONE, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT


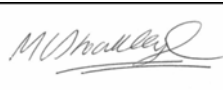

August 2017

DATE ISSUED: August 2017
JOB NUMBER: CL12041
SITE CODE: NOT-A
GRID REFERENCE: SK 58576 64036
OASIS REFERENCE: wardella2-291622
REPORT VERSION NUMBER: 001

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Land at Cavendish Park, Clipstone, Nottinghamshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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Figure 1: Site location

Figure 2: Area monitored during watching brief

SUMMARY

Wardell Armstrong (WA Ltd) were commissioned by Persimmon Homes Nottingham to undertake an archaeological watching brief. This occurred during soil stripping of the initial phase of works for a new housing development. This was located on a plot of land at the edge of a modern housing estate, Cavendish Park, to the north of the village of Clipstone, Nottinghamshire.

This watching brief formed the second phase of archaeological work at the site. A geophysical survey had already been undertaken (Railton 2017), the results of which were inconclusive, but suggested the possibility of modern disturbance. This possibility appeared to be confirmed by Google Earth imagery of 2007.

The present development has received full planning permission, with condition 11 citing *“no development shall be commenced until a scheme for archaeological investigation, mitigation and recording has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter works shall take place in accordance with the agreed scheme”*.

In August 2017, the development required initial preparatory works which included scrub clearance as part of the ecological mitigation scheme, and topsoil stripping to create a level and safe working platform and further investigations into the archaeological potential of the site. At the time of the planning of these works and into their initiation, no advice was forthcoming from archaeological planning at Nottinghamshire County Council. Advice given by Ursilla Spence, Senior Practitioner, Archaeology, Nottinghamshire County Council, for an earlier phase of the development to the south of the present site stated that *“I would certainly recommend archaeological work for phases affecting land to the north”* (Planning Consultation email advice, 14/01303/FULM, 9th October 2014). As a result, and despite evidence suggesting modern disturbance of the site, it was deemed prudent to monitor these initial preparatory works under an archaeological watching brief. This document outlines the results of the watching brief monitoring. Further work may still be required for the longer-term development plans and to fulfil the condition of the planning permission for the new development, dependent on updated advice from Nottinghamshire County Council.

The archaeological watching brief was undertaken between Tuesday 25th and Friday 28th July 2017. It monitored the soil strip of areas within the eastern half of Phase 1 of the development area. A mid orange sand was revealed, overlain by between 0.02m and 0.35m of mid brown sandy topsoil. Evidence for modern disturbance, in the form of possible tyre marks, toothed bucket marks, a water monitoring post and fabric membranes, clean builders' sand and modern bricks were encountered across the site.

No evidence for past human activity was encountered during the excavations. As a result, and aided by Google Earth imagery showing the proposed area clearly stripped of all topsoil and highly disturbed in 2008, it was concluded that the potential for archaeological finds or features to be encountered during the development of the site would be negligible.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Wardell Armstrong (WA) thanks Persimmon Homes Nottingham for commissioning the project, and for all their assistance throughout the work. Also, WA thank all groundwork staff, particularly Mick Wheatley and Darrel Clark of Persimmon Homes Nottingham, and the subcontracting groundwork team of Maxplant, for all assistance.

The archaeological watching brief monitoring was undertaken by Cat Peters. Cat Peters wrote the report. The figures were produced by Adrian Bailey. The project was managed by Frank Giecco and the report edited by Megan Stoakley.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Circumstances

1.1.1 In July 2017, Wardell Armstrong (WA Ltd) undertook an archaeological watching brief during initial topsoil stripping. This occurred in relation to the initial scheme of works forming part of Phase 1 of the extension of a housing development at Cavendish Park, Clipstone (SK 58576 64036; Figure 1). The work was commissioned by Persimmon Homes Nottingham.

1.1.2 Archaeological work was required as a condition for planning permission for the housing development. This was outlined in condition 11, which cited that *“no development shall be commenced until a scheme for archaeological investigation, mitigation and recording has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter works shall take place in accordance with the agreed scheme”*.

1.1.3 A geophysical survey of the Phase 1 area had already been completed, though the results were inconclusive with regards to gauging the archaeological potential of the site (Railton 2017), meaning that the likelihood of encountering archaeological finds or features could not be ruled out. It did reveal the potential for modern disturbance, however, a potential corroborated by Google Earth imagery from 2007 (*confer* 4.2.5).

1.1.4 The timetable for the new development meant that topsoil stripping had to be initiated prior to the geophysical report being signed off and a formal programme of archaeological work being outlined and agreed by the Local Authority. As an interim contingency, based on previous advice for the site to the south which indicated that future development in the area to the north would require archaeological work, a programme of archaeological monitoring occurred across all topsoil stripping. The aim was that monitoring would continue until an agreement was reached, or until evidence could be found that meant archaeological finds or deposits would not be disturbed by the development.

1.2 Project Documentation

1.2.1 The project conforms to a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), prepared by Frank Giecco of Wardell Armstrong (Giecco 2017). This was in line with professional guidance and good practice, as outlined by the Chartered Institute for Archaeology (CIfA 2014a).

1.2.2 This report outlines the results of the watching brief monitoring, relating to the initial

topsoil stripping occurring in advance of the new housing development.

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 topsoil stripping occurring as part of the initial preparatory groundworks for Phase 1 of the development at Cavendish Park, Clipstone, Nottinghamshire (Figure 1). This focused on Housing Plots 1-12, adjacent to the north-eastern boundary of the site and on the new roadway across the centre of the south-western part of the site and the new compound area forming much of the north-western half of the site (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 Copies of this report, available upon request, will be sent to the Nottinghamshire Historic Environment Record.

2.2.4 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

Nottinghamshire Archives, Nottingham. The archive can be accessed under the unique project identifier **WA 17, NOT-A, CL12041**.

- 2.2.5 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 Ltd as a part of this national project. The OASIS reference for the project is: **wardella2-291622**.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 Location and Geological Context

3.1.1 The site lies to the north of the village of Clipstone. Clipstone is in Nottinghamshire, 6km north-east of Mansfield (Figure 1). To the south and east of the site lies a modern housing development, Cavendish Park, of which this development will be a north-western extension. The areas to the north and west are predominantly farmland and woodland with public footpaths and with the River Maun to the north. The development site is centred on SK 58576 64036 (Figure 2).

3.1.2 The underlying solid geology in the area is mapped sandstone of the Nottingham Castle Sandstone Formation, a sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 246 to 251 million years ago (BGS 2017). These rocks were formed from rivers depositing mainly sand and gravel detrital material in channels to form river terrace deposits, with fine silt and clay from overbank floods forming floodplain alluvium and some bogs depositing peat (*ibid*).

3.2 Historical and Archaeological Background

3.2.1 A number of cropmarks have been identified from aerial photographs of the Clipstone area, indicative of possible surviving sub-surface archaeological features. These included a possible ring-ditch which was located to the immediate south of the development site (Nottinghamshire HER L6819). Linear features have also been identified to the north-east, possibly representing former field boundaries (Nottinghamshire HER L6819). A further three possible rectilinear enclosure sites have also been noted to the north of the development site (Nottinghamshire HER L4085).

3.2.2 As a result of this potential, a geophysical survey was undertaken of the development site in May 2017, the aims of which were to identify the presence/absence, nature and extent of potential archaeological features. This survey detected magnetic disturbance in several parts of the site, the probable results of modern disturbance. It also identified a number of weak linear and curvilinear positive magnetic anomalies in the southern half of the site, but concluded that “*these were unconvincing as archaeological features*” (Railton 2017, 7).

3.2.3 Google Earth imagery, analysed during initial phases of this present stage of work when outlining an appropriate level of mitigation in lieu of formal advice from Nottinghamshire County Council, seemed to indicate that the whole of the present development site was stripped in 2007 and re-instated (*confer* 4.2.5).

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The archaeological watching brief took place between Tuesday 25th and Friday 28th July 2017, and monitored the topsoil stripping of several areas within the initial area of Phase 1. The locations of the watching brief monitoring are shown in Figure 2.

4.2 Results

4.2.1 The topsoil strip occurred in advance of a bund being constructed adjacent to the north-western boundary of the initial development area. This bund was to comprise the topsoil stripped material from the site, and so clearing this area was a priority. The stripped area measured 20m in width and 74m in length. Modern disturbance in the form of a water monitoring post was noted (Plate 1).



Plate 1: Water monitoring post in bund area, facing south-west

4.2.2 The watching brief also monitored topsoil stripping adjacent to the north-western boundary of the site, ready for work to begin on the initial phase of new housing in the area. The stripped area measured 17m wide and 58.5m long. This area included an artificial bank; modern brick, fabric membrane and builders' sand was encountered at the edge of the road. Possible toothed bucket marks were also noted (Plate 2).



Plate 2: Possible toothed bucket marks noted at north-eastern part of site, facing north-west

4.2.3 The third area monitored during the archaeological watching brief occurred in the central part of the southern half of the site, and comprised a linear stripped area, 7m in width and 82m in length. This was stripped to allow new drainage to be installed prior to the main house construction phase occurring. Possible tyre marks were observed in this area (Plate 3).



Plate 3: Possible tyre marks observed in road soil strip, facing south-west

- 4.2.4 In all areas monitored during the topsoil strip, a mid brown sandy topsoil of between 0.02m and 0.36m depth was encountered. This overlay a mid-orange sand. Modern disturbance was identified in the form of builders' sand, fabric membrane and occasional bricks encountered up to 2m adjacent to the north-eastern boundary. Modern heaped banded material was also encountered in areas adjacent to the existing roads and adjacent housing, identified as soil-filled features by the geophysical survey (Railton 2017, Figure 5). Even in areas away from the road network and adjacent housing, evidence for modern disturbance in the form of possible toothed ditching bucket marks and tyre tracks were observed beneath the topsoil (Plates 2 and 3).
- 4.2.5 Local knowledge suggested that the site may have been subjected to sand-quarrying 20 years ago, and that was why the route of the overhead electricity cables had been changed from running east-west across the site, as shown on Ordnance Survey Mapping of 1987, to running to the north of the site, as presently. Although this could not be corroborated, Google Earth imagery does appear to show that in late 2007, the whole area was stripped, and subjected to dumper machine activity (compare Plates 4 and 5). This may have been sand quarrying activity, or may occurred prior to the construction of the roads in the vicinity for a proposed development at that time. Certainly by 2010, the roads had been established and the site reinstated (Plate 6).

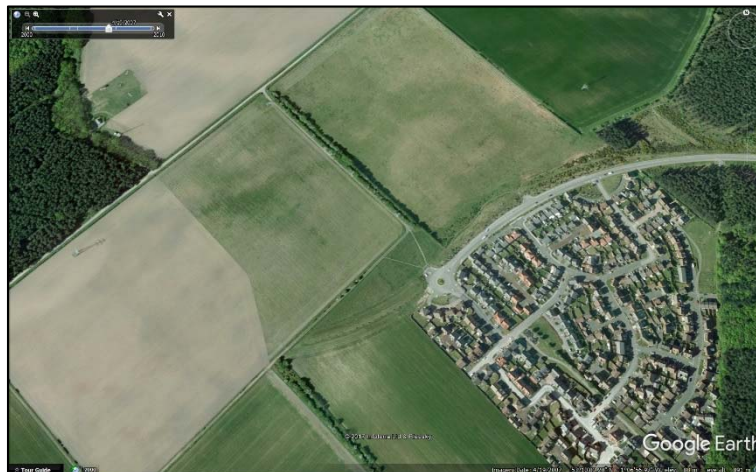


Plate 4: Google Earth imagery, 19th April 2007

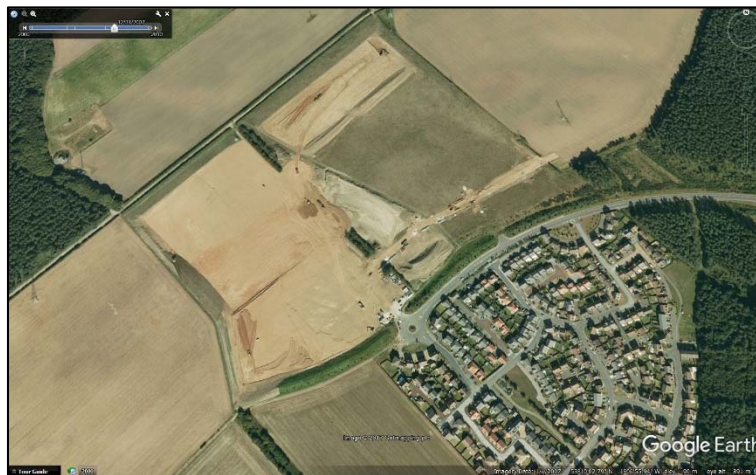


Plate 5: Google Earth imagery, 31st December 2007

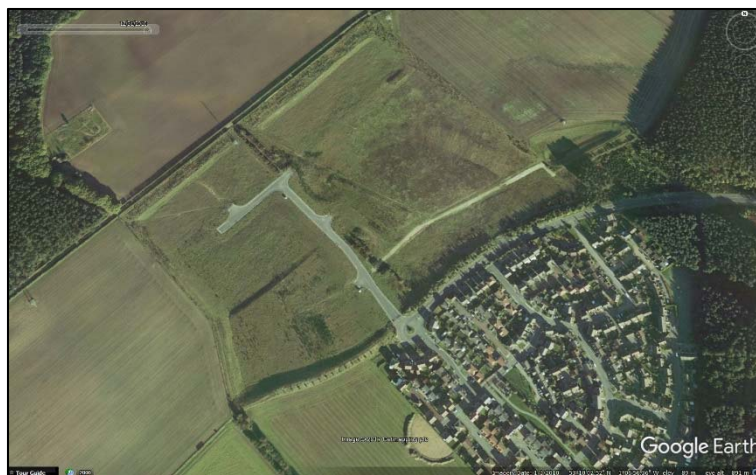


Plate 6: Google Earth imagery, 31st December 2010

4.2.6 As a result of the evidence for modern disturbance encountered across the site during the watching brief monitoring, and the strong likelihood that any archaeological finds or features would have been removed in modern times, it was decided that the monitoring would be discontinued after a week.

5 CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Summary

- 5.1.1 An archaeological watching brief was undertaken, covering all topsoil stripping occurring as part of the preliminary work for a new housing development. Archaeological work was required as a condition for planning permission for the housing development. This was outlined in condition 11, which cited that *“no development shall be commenced until a scheme for archaeological investigation, mitigation and recording has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter works shall take place in accordance with the agreed scheme”*.
- 5.1.2 A geophysical survey of the Phase 1 area had already been completed, though the results were inconclusive with regard to gauging the archaeological potential of the site (Railton 2017). It suggested that the site had been subjected to modern disturbance, a suggestion corroborated by Google Earth imagery of 2007.
- 5.1.3 The timetable for the new development meant that topsoil stripping had to be initiated prior to the geophysical report being signed off and without a formal programme of archaeological work being outlined and agreed by the Local Authority. As an interim contingency, a programme of archaeological monitoring occurred across all initial topsoil stripping. The plan was to continue monitoring until an agreement was reached with the Local Authority, or until it could be proved that no archaeological finds or features would be adversely affected by the development.
- 5.1.4 No evidence for past human activity was encountered during the excavations, with much of the site retaining evidence of recent disturbance. As a result, the watching brief ceased after an initial week of monitoring.

6 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Secondary Sources

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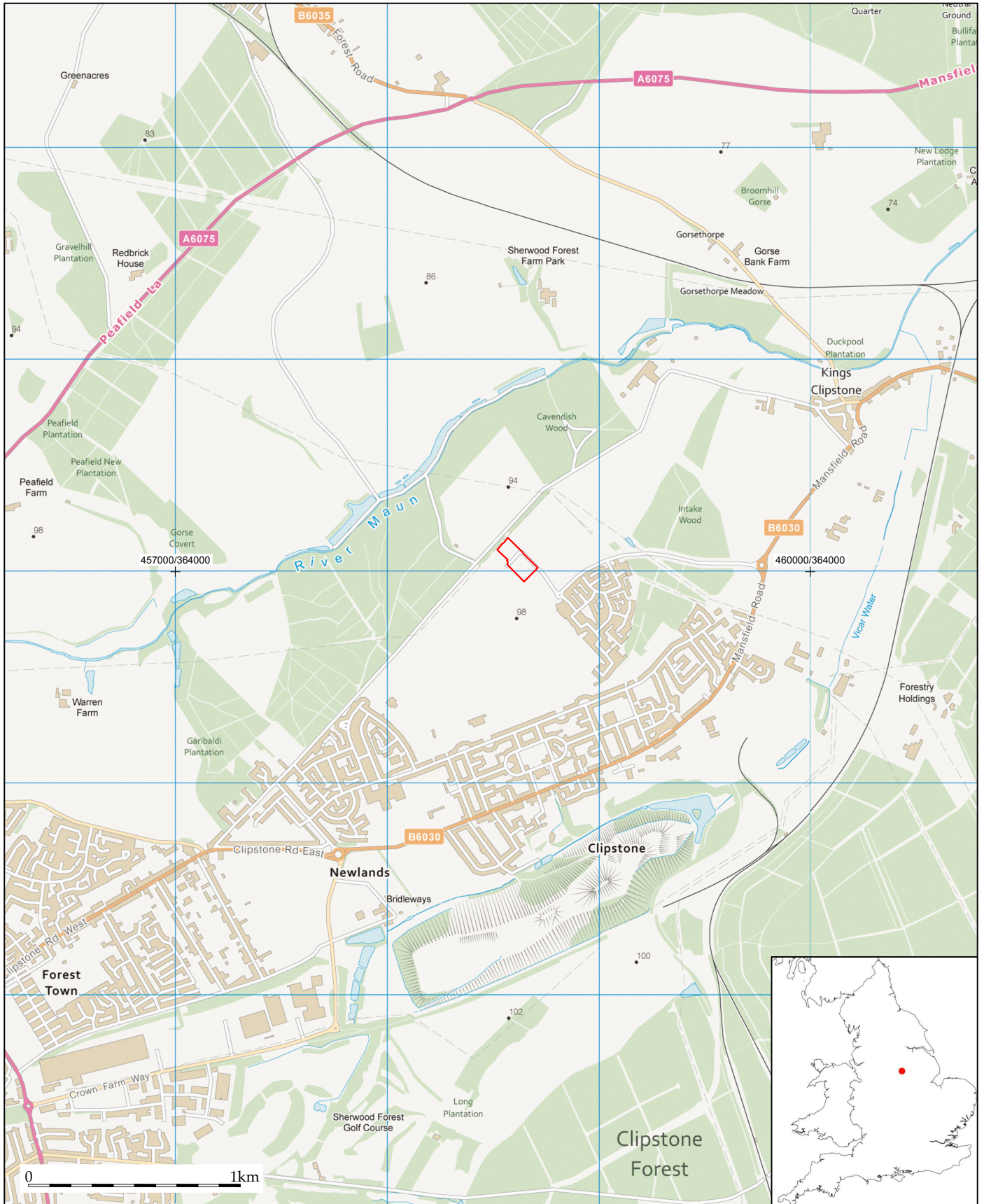
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Websites

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APPENDIX 1: FIGURES






 <p>Wardell Armstrong 2017</p>	PROJECT:	Land at Cavendish Park, Clipstone, Nottinghamshire	KEY:  Site location	
	CLIENT:	Persimmon Homes Nottingham		
	SCALE:	1:25,000 at A4		
	DRAWN BY:	AB		
	CHECKED BY:	AB		
	DATE:	August 2017		
	REPORT No:	CL12041		
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Figure 1: Site location.

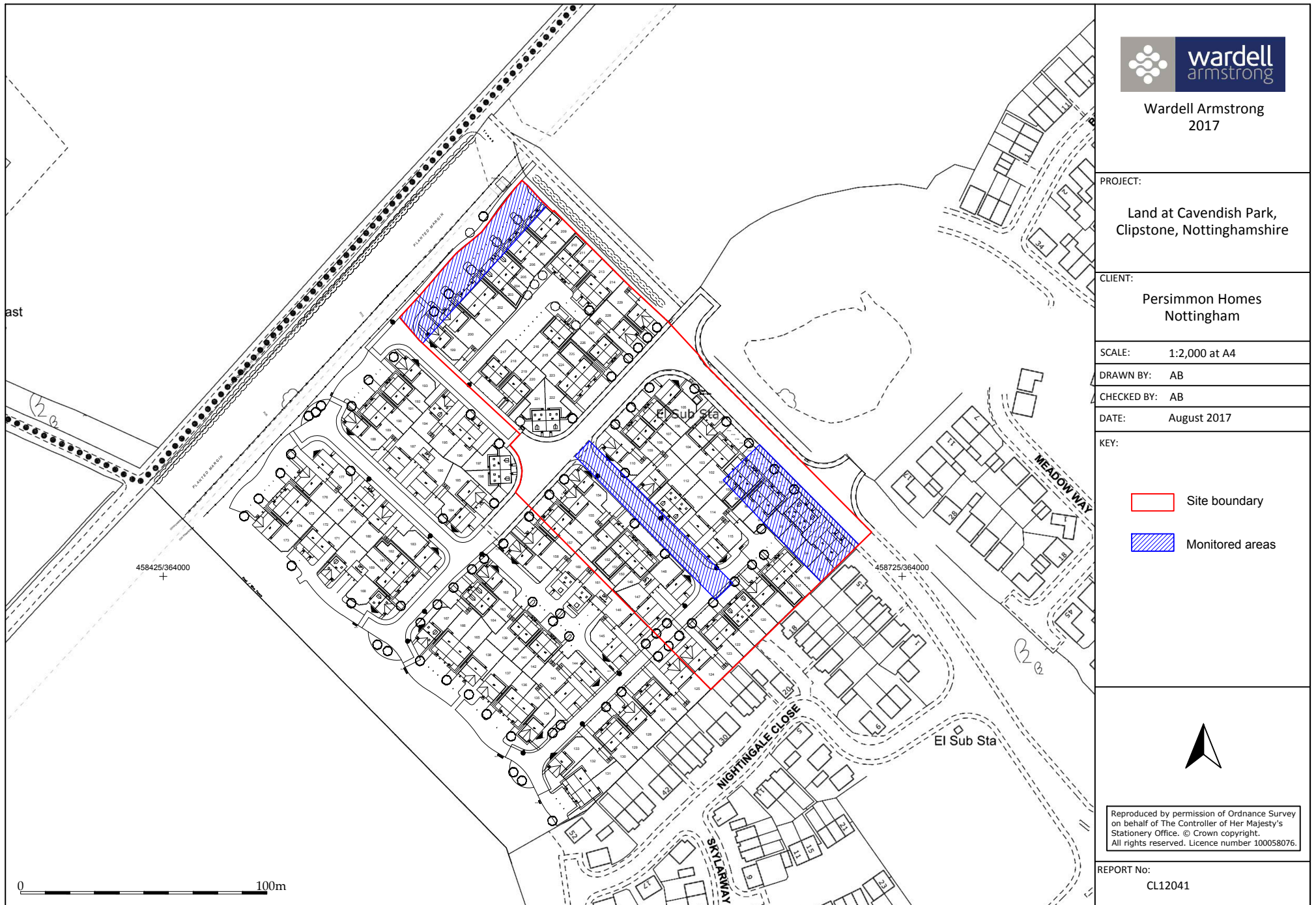


Figure 2: Areas monitored during watching brief.

STOKE-ON-TRENT
Sir Henry Doulton House
Forge Lane
Etruria
Stoke-on-Trent
ST1 5BD
Tel: +44 (0)178 227 6700

BIRMINGHAM
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