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NORTH MIDLAND CONSTRUCTION PLC

LAND OFF CRICKET LANE, LICHFIELD, STAFFORDSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

JANUARY 2018

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DATE ISSUED: January 2018
JOB NUMBER: BM11331
OASIS REFERENCE: Wardella2-306142
REPORT NUMBER: WB-01

NORTH MIDLAND CONSTRUCTION PLC

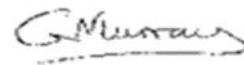
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JANUARY 2018

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CONTENTS

SUMMARY	1
1 INTRODUCTION	2
2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES.....	3
3 METHODOLOGY	4
4 BACKGROUND	7
5 RESULTS.....	9
6 DISCUSSION.....	11
7 RECOMMENDATIONS	12
BIBLIOGRAPHY	13

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Plates

DRAWINGS

BM11331-001 Site Location Plan
BM11331-002 Groundworks subject to an Archaeological Watching brief

SUMMARY

Wardell Armstrong LLP was commissioned by North Midland Construction PLC to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the excavation the removal of an old sewer and its replacement with a tank sewer on land adjacent to Cricket Lane, Lichfield, Staffordshire (NGR 412413 308105).

The investigation was required as a result of consultation between North Midland Construction PLC, working on behalf of Severn Trent Water Ltd, and Staffordshire County Council Historic Environment Team. This consultation was based on the possibility that the remains of Ryknield Street, a former Roman road and archaeological features and artefacts associated with it may be present at Cricket Lane.

No features or artefacts of archaeological significance were identified during the groundworks.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 Wardell Armstrong LLP (WA) was commissioned by North Midland Construction PLC (hereafter referred to as 'the client') to undertake an archaeological watching brief at land adjacent to Cricket Lane, Lichfield, Staffordshire (NGR 412413 308105) (Hereafter known as the "Site").
- 1.1.2 A watching brief is defined as a programme of monitoring and investigation carried out during a non-archaeological activity within a specified area of land or development where construction operations may disturb or destroy archaeological remains.
- 1.1.3 The watching brief was conducted in accordance with the specification provided by Staffordshire County Council (2017) (SCC) and was carried out in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) Standard and Guidance for 'Archaeological Watching Briefs' (2014a). All stages of the project were carried out in accordance with the requirements established in the English Heritage volume entitled the 'Management of Research Projects for the Historic Environment' (2015).
- 1.1.4 In addition, the archaeological watching brief conformed to the guidelines and standards laid down in the following documents;
- *Code of Approved Conduct for the Regulation of Arrangements in Field Archaeology*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists: Reading (2014b);
 - *Standards and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists: Reading (2014c);
 - *Excavation Manual*, Wardell Armstrong LLP: Birmingham (2017)

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1.1 The overarching project aim was to ensure the archaeological monitoring/ recording of groundworks across the Site and the subsequent recording of any archaeological features and finds within. Where archaeological remains were present, the archaeological watching brief aimed to interpret and characterise them.

2.1.2 The specific project objectives addressed by the watching brief were:

- To identify, record and understand evidence for the Rykniel Street Roman road (including its flanking ditches) along the line of the sewer pipe.
- To recover evidence for other activity within the area of the Roman road.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 *Fieldwork Strategy*

- 3.1.1 A “*Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief*” (2017) was produced by SCC and was used by WA as the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the archaeological watching brief.
- 3.1.2 The groundwork was divided into two sections, to the north between NGR SK 12614 08275 and SK 12561 08207 across an arable field and to the south, between SK 12561 08207 and SK12471 08816 within the current tarmacked course of Cricket Lane.
- 3.1.3 All groundworks within the arable field at Cricket Lane between NGR SK 12614 08275 and SK 12561 08207 were subject to an archaeological monitoring. The topsoil and subsoil were removed to the level of the undisturbed natural or archaeological horizon, whichever was higher by a 360° tracked excavator fitted with a toothless bucket (see Plate 1). Deposits were then recorded as defined by the methodology contained in the WSI (SCC, 2017).

3.2 *Artefact methodology*

- 3.2.1 Where finds are recovered they will be recorded and their location noted on a Site plan at a relevant scale. The finds will be retained, recorded and discussed within the report and recommendations made for further conservation. The necessity for the long-term conservation of finds from the Site would be agreed with WA and the SCC Historic Environment Team as an advisor to the Lichfield District Council (LDC).
- 3.2.2 Any finds of significance beyond those anticipated within the WSI (SCC, 2017) will cause development to pause so that adequate recording or preservation may be made in consultation with the LDC or personnel nominated by them.

3.3 *Sampling Methodology*

- 3.3.1 Where appropriate, any features encountered will be sampled for environmental evidence. This work will be undertaken in line with current Historic England guidance and will be agreed upon, following discussion with the SCC Historic Environment Team advising the LDC.

3.4 *The Archive*

A written record of the progress of the watching brief will be maintained and where appropriate, supported by the production of plans and section drawings (at

appropriate scales). Where appropriate a digital photographic record will be maintained and supported by a register.

- 3.4.1 The project archive will be compiled in accordance with the guidelines contained in *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-term Storage* (Kirsten Walker, 1990), *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in Creation* (Brown, 2011) and *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections* (Museums & Galleries Commission, 1992). Digital data (photographic as well as reports, graphic data etc.) will be securely stored in an appropriate format and media which can be maintained in perpetuity in their original form and in line with current best practice (Brown 2011).

3.5 ***Presentation of Report***

- 3.5.1 A draft report on the results obtained from the monitoring and any subsequent excavation will be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and personnel nominated by them for comment within 8 weeks of the completion of Site work.
- 3.5.2 Upon receiving these comments they will be addressed and WA will produce a final amended report as soon as is practical. Copies of the final written and illustrated report will be sent to:
- the client
 - the Local Planning Authority and
 - the SCC Historic Environment Record (HER).
- 3.5.3 The copy of the report sent to the SCC HER should be accompanied by a completed copy of the Activity and Source Submission Form and a CD Rom containing a full pdf copy of the report, supplementary documents and all drawings.
- 3.5.4 The archive including a copy of the watching brief report, will be deposited with the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery at Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent.
- 3.5.5 The written report will become publicly accessible, as part of the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record, within six months of completion. WA will also submit a short summary report for inclusion in the West Midlands Archaeology Journal within 6 months of the fieldwork completion.
- 3.5.6 WA supports the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) project. This project aims to provide an online index and access to the extensive and expanding body of grey literature, created from developer-funded

archaeological work. As a result, details on the findings of this project will be made available by WA as part of this national project. The project can be accessed under the unique project identifier **Wardella2-306142**.

4 BACKGROUND

4.1 *Location and Geological Context*

4.1.1 The Site is orientated north east-south west, to the north east the site runs parallel to Cricket Lane across the adjacent arable field (Plate 2 and Plate 3) before switching course linking this section with an inspection pit and a section of the sewer which traverses the road.

4.1.2 The underlying solid geology of the area is Triassic sandstone overlain by alluvial deposits (British Geological Survey, 2018).

4.2 *Historical and Archaeological Background*

4.2.1 The archaeological potential of the Land Off Cricket Lane, Lichfield has been considered in "*Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief*" (2017) and is summarised below.

4.3 *Prehistoric*

4.3.1 There is no evidence of prehistoric activity at the site.

4.4 *Romano British*

4.4.1 The course of Ryknield Street Roman road is thought to follow the course of Cricket Lane (PRN 01144). In the wider area, the projected course of the roman road follows Cricket Lane and is recorded to pass beneath the Shoulder of Mutton (NGR SK 12303 07876).

4.4.2 The HER records a number of Romano-British findspots, a result of metal detecting in field to the west of the site (S. Dean pers. comm.)

4.5 *Medieval*

4.5.1 The area is likely to have been agricultural land during much of the early medieval and medieval periods (Staffordshire Extensive Urban Survey Project, 2011).

4.5.2 The Staffordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation Project (Edwards & Lake, 2012) supports this view identifying evidence for strip fields (medieval field systems).

4.5.3 A knife (MST15338), thought to be medieval in date was found nearby and is recorded in the HER.

4.6 ***Post Medieval***

- 4.6.1 During the post medieval period a 18th century turnpike road (1729) connecting Coleshill, Lichfield and Rugeley was located to the south west of Cricket Lane (PRN 58502). The Wryley and Essington Canal (PRN 02221) was constructed between 1794 and 1797 through what was a predominantly agricultural landscape, the canal can still be found to the north east of Cricket Lane.

5 RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The watching brief was undertaken between 8/1/18 and 9/1/18, with an area of approximately 3m by 80m excavated in the arable field adjacent to Cricket Lane (Plate 4).

Table 1 Stratigraphic descriptions (Plate 5)			
Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
001	Topsoil	Soft, dark blackish black loamy sand with moderate amounts of sub-rounded pebbles.	0.00m – 0.40m
002	Subsoil	Friable, greyish red sand with moderate amounts of sub-rounded pebbles.	0.40m – 0.60m North end of Site 0.40m – 0.55m South end of Site
003	Natural	Friable, shades of red (dark to light) fine sand with common sub-rounded/sub-angular cobbles and moderate amounts of sub-rounded/ sub-angular pebbles.	0.60m – 5m+

5.1.2 Results are detailed below in chronological order, deposit numbers are given in **(parenthesis)** and cut numbers are given in **[square brackets]**.

5.1.3 **Natural:** The Natural **(003)** was found below the subsoil **(002)** at a depth of 0.55m at the Southern end of Site and at 0.60m at the Northern end of Site. A test pit was excavated to a depth of 5m which indicated medium to coarse red sand persisted to this depth.

5.1.4 **Subsoil:** The subsoil **(002)** formed a thin interface between the Natural **(003)** and topsoil **(001)** (See Plate 5). The deposit was shallower in the southern end of the excavation area, a result of the natural topography.

5.1.5 **Topsoil:** The topsoil **(001)** consisted of a thick dark layer of loamy soil.

5.1.6 **Cricket Lane:** The removal of the tarmac and kerbing revealed metal pipes (likely to be part of an irrigation system) and ducting which follows the existing course of Cricket Lane.

5.1.7 The current road is of typically modern construction, and consisted of capping layer of

coarse clastic material over the natural, the upper surface of the capping layer was visible during works. The upper surface of the capping layer was flush with the level of the undisturbed natural in the field adjacent to Cricket Lane. The capping layer was overlain by a sub-base which consisted of angular limestone clasts and gravel, a base of gravel and a binder course of bitumen (Plate 2).

6 DISCUSSION

6.1 *Archaeological Watching Brief*

- 6.1.1 No features or artefacts of archaeological significance were recovered during groundworks within the field adjacent to Cricket Lane.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 *Further analysis and reporting*

7.1.1 No further work or reporting on the works at Cricket Lane is required.

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APPENDIX 1
PLATES



Plate 1: The 360° tracked excavator fitted with toothless bucket ready for excavation



Plate 2: Groundworks abutting Cricket Lane and the BT ducting.



Plate 3: Vegetation at Cricket Lane.



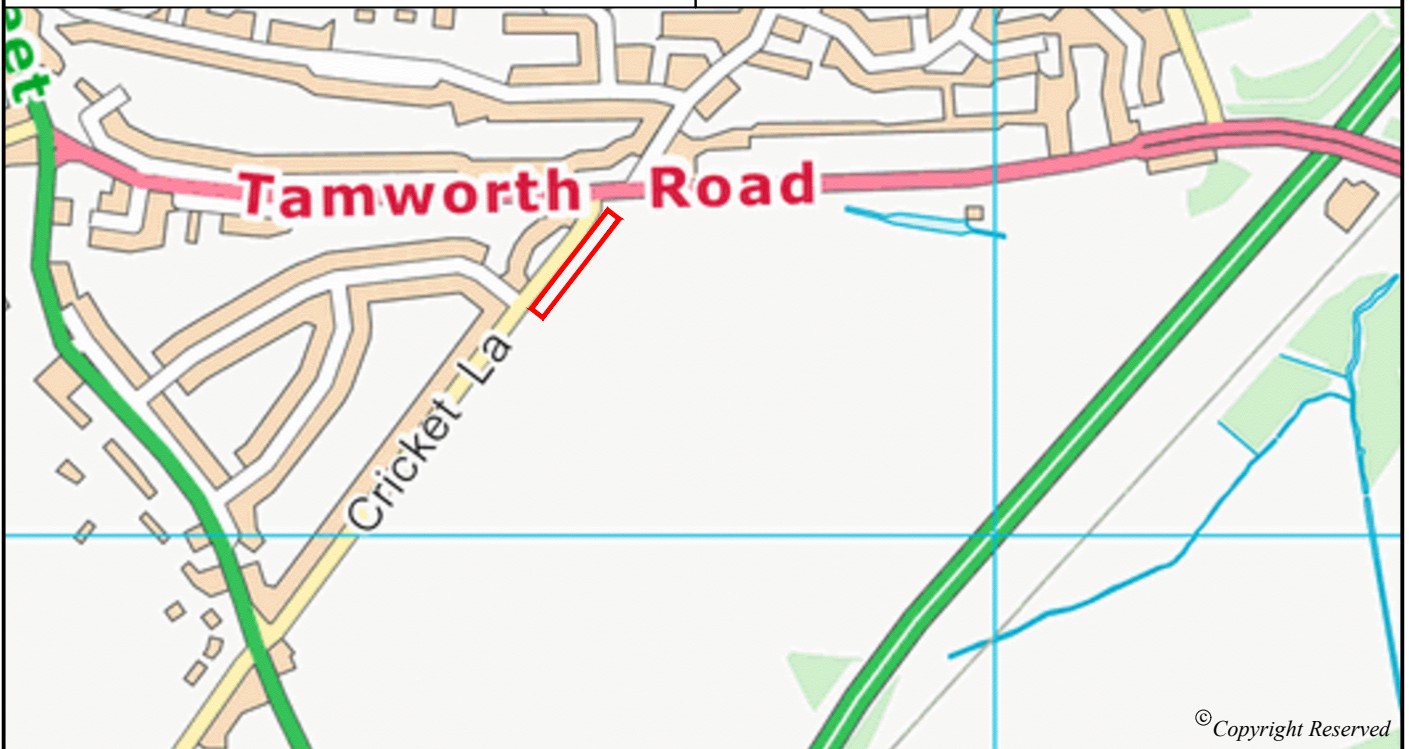
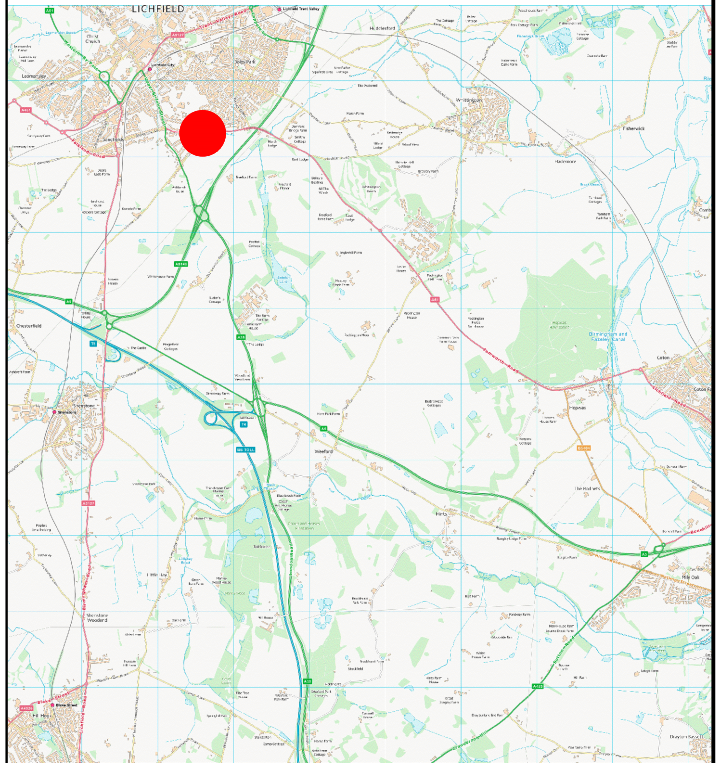
Plate 4: The course of the new sewer at Cricket Lane, stripped to the level of the undisturbed natural.



Plate 5: Stratigraphy at Cricket Lane.

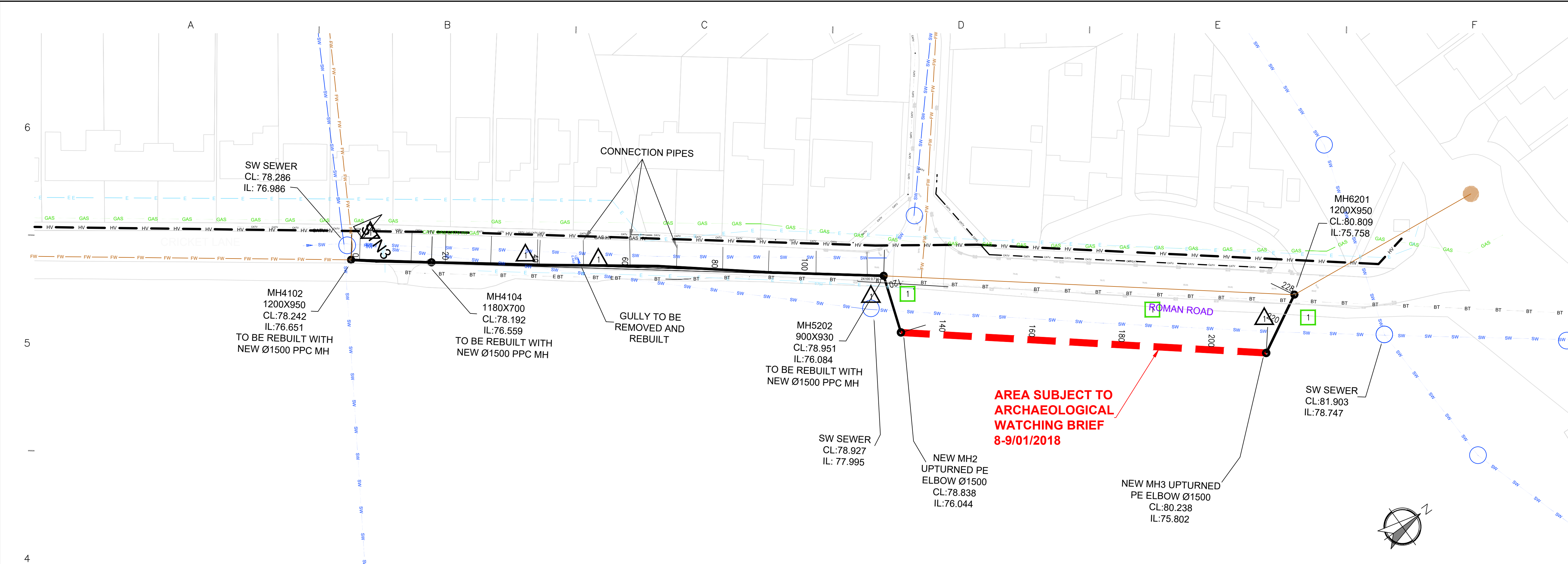
DRAWINGS

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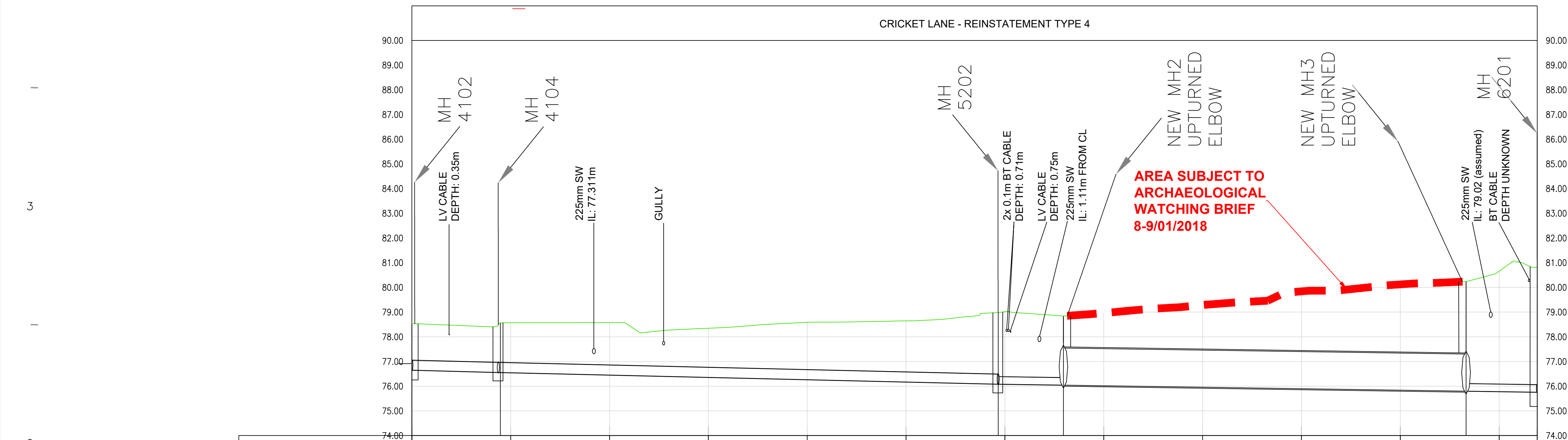


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- DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING
- NOTES:
1. SITE LOCATION: CRICKET LANE, LICHFIELD WS14 9ER.
 2. ALL DIMENSIONS IN mm AND LEVELS IN mAO D UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED.
 3. THE LOCATION OF ALL EXISTING UTILITIES ARE INDICATIVE ONLY AND ARE TO BE CONFIRMED ON SITE. THERE MAY BE ADDITIONAL SERVICES THAT ARE NOT SHOWN ON THIS DRAWING.
 4. THE DESIGN OF PERMANENT WORKS ENSURES STABILITY IN THE COMPLETED STATE. TEMPORARY WORKS DESIGNS ARE REQUIRED - REFER TO THE TEMPORARY WORKS REGISTER.
 5. THE SITE ENGINEER IS TO CONFIRM ALL EXISTING LEVELS BEFORE THE COMMENCEMENT OF WORKS AND THE PROJECT ENGINEER IS TO BE CONSULTED IF THERE IS A REQUIREMENTS TO ALTER THE LINE, LAYOUT OR POSITIONING OF



Chainage	0+00	17+91	20+00	40+00	60+00	80+00	100+00	118+65	123+00	131+83	140+00	160+00	180+00	200+00	213+32	220+00	227.71
Ground Level			78.57	78.57	78.34	78.58	78.64	79.01	79.01	76.04	78.96	79.29	79.84	80.12	80.65		
Invert Level	76.65	76.56	76.56					76.08	76.08	76.04					75.80	75.80	75.76
Pipe Gradient	1:190 0.53%				1:213 0.47%					1:335 0.30%		1:335 0.30%			1:335 0.30%		
Pipe Details	Ø400 HPPE CLASS B BED & SURROUND								Ø300 HPPE CLASS B BED & SURROUND	Ø1500 HPPE CLASS B BED & SURROUND				Ø300 HPPE CLASS B BED & SURROUND			

CATV

W

WATER MAIN

HV

HIGH VOLTAGE ELECTRICITY

E

LOW VOLTAGE ELECTRICITY

BT

BT LINE

GAS

GAS

SW

SURFACE WATER SEWER / HIGHWAY DRAIN

FW

FOUL WATER SEWER

NEW FOUL WATER GRAVITY SEWER

NEW MH

EXISTING FW MH

EXISTING SW MH

KEY

CATV

WATER MAIN

HIGH VOLTAGE ELECTRICITY

LOW VOLTAGE ELECTRICITY

BT LINE

GAS

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