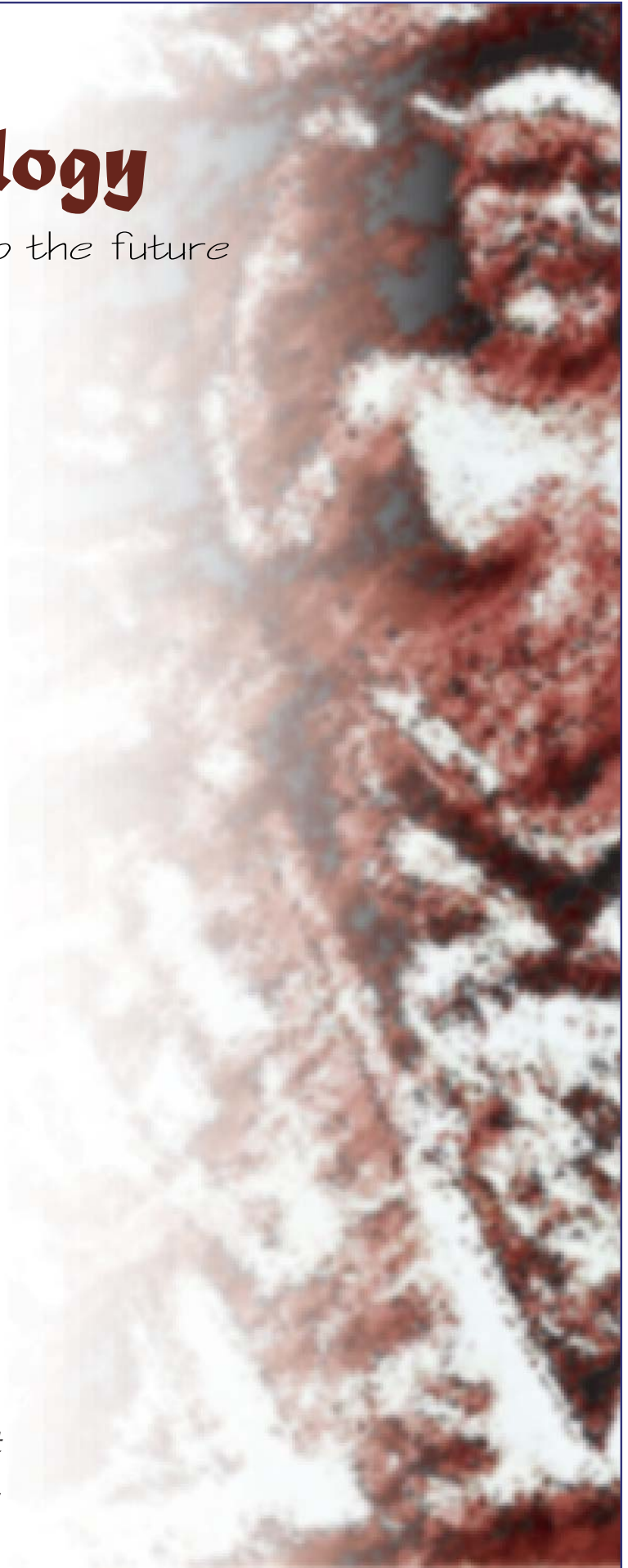


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*An Archaeological Project at
Albion Lodge, Hanley Swan,
Worcestershire*





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Albion Lodge, Hanley Swan,
Worcestershire*

A Report for Mr Andrew Darwent, Albion Lodge

November 2004

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Project: PJ 125

WSM 33955

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1. Project Background

1.1. Location of the Site

Hanley Swan is located to the west of the ridge of the Malvern Hills, which run north to south and parallel with the River Severn to the east (NGR SO 8166 4294). The village is within the parish of Hanley Castle on the B4209 Hanley Castle to Malvern Wells road (Figure 1)

Albion Lodge lies centrally within the village, set back from the road behind mature Yew hedges. The former farmhouse has been much extended and is currently used as a residential care home.

1.2. Project Details

A planning application was presented to Malvern Hills District Council for the erection of an extension to the care home (MH/03/1810). The planning process determined that the proposed development site lies within an archaeologically sensitive area, which may contain remains relating to medieval and later pottery, tile and brick production. It was determined that the groundwork associated with the proposed development may pose a threat to any buried remains associated with the early ceramic industry of the area. As a result, the Planning Archaeologist, Worcestershire County Council, placed a ‘watching brief’ planning condition on the application, for which a brief of work was written (WAS 2004). Unfortunately, due to communication problems, the watching brief did not go ahead. As a consequence, the Planning Archaeologist requested that a series of test pits be excavated on the site in order to evaluate the archaeological sensitivity of the site, post-development.

1.3. Reasons for the Project

The original archaeological watching brief was suggested as the appropriate response to the threat posed to the potential archaeological site by the development process. This would have involved the excavation of foundation and service trenches for the proposed extension.

A watching brief is defined as:

A formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons. This will be in a specified area on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed (IFA 2001).

The watching brief was proposed in order that a record of any archaeological remains or deposits encountered during the excavation of the foundations for the building, would be made and placed into context using our current archaeological knowledge of the area.

However, as outlined in Section 1, this avenue of data collection designed to enhance our understanding of the small-scale medieval industries of Worcester was not possible. Therefore, it was deemed possible, that significant information may be gleaned from the excavation of a series of test-pits around the development area in order to redress the balance.

2. Methods and Process

2.1. Project Specification

- ❑ The project fieldwork conforms to the Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Field Evaluation (IFA 2001).
- ❑ The archive conforms to the standards and guidelines established by the Archaeological Data Service.
- ❑ The project conforms to a brief prepared by the Planning Advisory Section, Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Service (WHEAS, 2004) and for which a project proposal and detailed specification was produced (Mercian Archaeology (2004).
- ❑ Mercian Archaeology adhere to the service practice and health and safety policy as contained within the Mercian Archaeology Service Manual (Williams 2003)

2.2. Aims of the Project

The archaeological project aimed to:

- ❑ Use the results of the archaeological work to produce a report highlighting: -
 1. The survival and location of any archaeological deposits.
 2. Make an analysis and interpretation of all identified natural and cultural deposits
- ❑ Based on the above, establish the significance, survival, condition and period of any archaeological remains and place them within context at local, regional or national level where relevant.

3. The Documentary Research

3.1. The Topography

Hanley Swan lies on the relatively flat plain between the River Severn to the east and the ridge of the Malvern Hills to the west. The underlying geology of the area is Mercian Mudstone (Keuper Marl) below Pleistocene fan gravels. The soils are surface water and ground water gleys of the Brockhurst 2 Association (Hurst 1994). The properties of the clay deposits, which lie below the soil horizons (topsoil and subsoil), are ideally suited to the production of ceramics. The other components for economically viable ceramic production was also in abundance across Malvern Chase, in the form of timber that was a requirement to fire the pottery kilns and brick-making clamps. Local pottery also has inclusions of Malvernian stone. The pinkish stone particles can be seen in the sections of broken pottery. The crushed stone was added to the clay as a ‘temper’ (also termed grog, or filler). The temper was added to change the properties of the clay by reducing plasticity.

The ceramic wares (pottery, brick and tile) produced around Hanley Swan and Hanley Castle could be readily exported along the River Severn to Worcester and further afield.

A Brief Archaeological Overview

It is well documented that during the medieval period the parish of Hanley Castle (including Hanley Swan) was the centre of a significant regional ceramic industry. For a complete overview of the medieval ceramic industry in the area, reference should be made to Derek Hurst’s paper (Hurst 1994).

The physical evidence of the ceramic industry includes the location and identification of several kilns, waster dumps and clay pits. At Forty Green, a significant dump of pottery manufacturing waste (WSM 09685) helped identify a medieval pottery-manufacturing centre (Pearson and Griffin, 2001). A further production site is listed as Catterall Cottage, Hanley Swan (WSM 26909) and a possible tile kiln is recorded near Hanley Swan Pond (WSM 32736). Medieval pottery and wasters have also been recorded close to Brickwalls Farm (WSM 30572) and medieval pottery scatters have been recorded at the rear of Bay Tree Cottage, Gilberts End (WSM 08514); at Ravelin, Gilberts End (WSM 8515); West of Ivy House (WSM 08516) and south-east of Balcony, Hanley Swan (WSM 8517). Further quantities of medieval pottery and roof tile, some glazed, were recorded at Clap Gate Field (WSM 08519) and at The Grange, Hanley Swan (WSM 25880).

There is further evidence of the medieval past of the Hanley parish with remnant ridge and furrow north of Gilberts End (WSM 15103) and south of Hanley Swan (WSM 11755).

3.2. Brief Historic Background

The section below is based on the introduction to *'The Records of Hanley Castle'* edited by J.P.Toomey (Toomey 2001), unless otherwise stated.

There is limited evidence relating to Hanley during the pre-Norman period. Anglo-Saxon charters concerning the boundaries of the manors of Powick to the north and Upton to the south indicate that the manor of Hanley took much the same form as today's civil parish.

At Domesday the manor of Hanley was granted to William FitzOsbern, the earl of Hereford. The limits of Malvern Chase (forest) were recorded as being 5 leagues, stretching from the Malvern Hills to the west, the River Severn to the east, the River Teme to the north and the Leadon in the south, giving some idea of the extent of availability of wood as fuel for the ceramics industry, although at this time the chase was protected as a royal forest, reserved for aristocratic hunting pursuits with only licensed management of the woodland.

Charters and documents highlight population expansion during the 13th century with the focus of settlement at Church End, where a weekly market was held close to the church of St Mary (possibly earlier dedicated to St Botolph).

An inquisition of 1295 refers to the well-recognised ceramics industry of Hanley Manor. There were sixteen potters digging clay and making pots. A later inquisition indicates that in 1350 there were no potters in Hanley (Hurle 1978, 24), possibly indicating the stark reality of the devastation caused to local communities by the Black Death of the early to mid-14th century.

The ceramics industry of the parish did, however, recover to such an extent in fact, that in 1573 John Hornyold, Lord of the Manor, complained that Malvern Chase was being spoiled by excessive tree felling to fire kilns for making brick, pot and tile (Hurle 1978, 24).

It is no coincidence that during the medieval period the manor of Hanley was also commonly known as Potter's Hanley (VCH IV 1924, 89).

3.3. The Cartography

The earliest available map of the area was the 1797 inclosure map of Hanley Castle (WRO). However, this was of no use regarding the project.

There was no mid-19th century tithe apportionment map of the area available at Worcestershire Records Office.

The 25" to 1 mile 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1886 shows Albion Lodge set in grounds with formal walks and gardens (Figure 2). A watercourse is shown running diagonally north-east to south-west towards the northern property boundary of Albion Lodge. This appears to supply a sub-rectangular pond, which is shown on the 2nd edition Ordnance Survey map of 1904 as a marshy area, suggesting this may have been seasonally wet. A physical depression in the adjacent field to the north of Albion Lodge suggests this may once

have been another pond connected by the same watercourse. It is possible that these ponds are artificial.

The 3rd edition Ordnance Survey map of 1927 shows a small rectangular enclosure in the area of the pond proposed above. Albion Lodge is shown without formal gardens, although it is likely that this is simply a lack of surveyed detail.

Cartographic Sources Consulted

Source	Reference Number
Inclosure Map of Hanley Castle (1797)	Worcester Records Office BA 816/2 s269.81
Ordnance Survey 1 st edition Worcestershire Sheet XLVII.2 (1886)	Worcester Records Office
Ordnance Survey Digital Mapping based on 2 nd edition (1904)	Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Service printout (no permission to reproduce)
Ordnance Survey Digital Mapping based on 3 rd edition (1927)	Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Service printout (no permission to reproduce)

Other sources used are referenced within the report.

4. The Archaeological Project

4.1. The Fieldwork Methodology

The archaeological project was undertaken between 28th October and 1st November 2004.

Proforma Record Forms were used to record the site stratigraphy in tandem with site notes to produce the final record contained within this report.

The initial site inspection indicated that it would be impractical to excavate 10 individual test-pits due to the presence of landscaped gardens containing mature trees and evidence of services across small areas of the site that were open. Therefore, Test pits 1-4 were amalgamated to form a 2 x 2 metre pit, Test pits 5-6 were amalgamated into one 2 x 1 metre trial pit, and a further four 1 x 1 metre test pits were excavated (Test pits 7-10).

All test pits were hand excavated using combinations of pickaxe, mattock, shovel, spade and trowel.

The location and reference numbers of the pits are shown on Figure 3.

The methodology adopted and the favourable working conditions meant that the aims and objectives of the brief could be fully met and the fieldwork was successfully concluded, even though some test pits were amalgamated.

4.2. The Fieldwork Results

Test pits 1 - 4

Test pits 1-4 were excavated close to the new build and consequently the top 0.30 metres was very compact after the building processes and subsequent levelling. There was no covering of topsoil in this area, but just a disturbed layer of compact dark brown silty-clay [100] to a depth of 0.32 metres. The subsoil below [101] was a firm greyish silty-clay with charcoal flecking, thick roots and fragments of mortar. The undisturbed natural red and greyish clay was encountered at 0.53 metres below the surface.

Finds were located in this test pit (see finds report below).

Test Pits 5 - 6

Test Pit 5-6 was excavated slightly further away from the new build where there was significantly less compaction and a marked difference in soil properties. The topsoil of around 0.36 metres [200] was dark and humic, typical of a garden / cultivation soil. It contained frequent small sub-angular Malvernian (pinkish) stone. The subsoil [201] below, was very similar in composition but was slightly siltier, greyer and contained gravel. The undisturbed natural parent material was encountered at 0.54 below the ground level.

Finds were located in this test pit (see finds report below).

Test Pit 7

Test Pit 7 was excavated between trees in the south-western corner of the grounds. The soil build up above the natural (gravel with some clay in this area) was noticeably shallow, the natural being encountered at just 0.20 metres below the turf. The subsoil [301] was a greyish-brown silty clay with around 75% gravel.

Finds were located in this test pit (see finds report below).

Test Pit 8

The profile of Test Pit 8 was similar to that of number 7. The subsoil [401] was greyish-brown silty clay with pockets of gravel. The natural was seen at 0.30 metres below the turf. The area was heavily disturbed by roots

Finds were located in this test pit (see finds report below).

Test Pit 9

Test Pit 9 was also excavated between trees on the northern side of the site and was, therefore, heavily disturbed by roots. The profile was again, turf and topsoil [500], subsoil [501] and natural [502]. The natural was encountered at 0.30 metres below the turf. The subsoil was similar to that in Test Pit 8, but had less gravel content.

Finds were located in this test pit (see finds report below).

Test Pit 10

The final test pit was excavated between more trees on the northern side of the site. It was similar in profile to test pits 8 and 9, with shallow topsoil and turf [600] and subsoil [601] over natural [602]. The natural was found at 0.35 metres below the turf. The subsoil was a greyish brown silty-clay, gravel was not in evidence.

Finds were located in this test pit (see finds report below).

Unstratified

Unstratified finds from bare earth within the grounds were retrieved for analysis.

5. The artefacts by L.C. Griffin

Artefactual analysis

Aims

The brief required an assessment of the quantity, range and potential of artefactual material from the excavation.

The aims of the finds assessment were:

- ❑ To identify, sort, spot date, and quantify all artefacts
- ❑ To describe the range of artefacts present
- ❑ To preliminarily assess the significance of the artefacts
- ❑ To make recommendations about the future analysis, reporting, and other appropriate requirements of artefacts.

This report covers material of medieval, post-medieval and modern date.

Method of analysis

All hand-retrieved finds were examined. They were identified, quantified and dated to period. All information was recorded on a Microsoft Access 2000 database and a paper copy provided.

Pottery fabrics are referenced to the fabric reference series maintained by the Worcestershire County Council Archaeological Service (Hurst and Rees 1992).

Results of analysis

Pottery formed the bulk of the artefactual assemblage totalling 37 fragments weighing 720g and accounting for 64.9% of the assemblage. The group was primarily of late medieval to post-medieval date, although small amounts of earlier medieval and modern material were also identified (see Table 1). The majority of sherds displayed moderate levels of abrasion and the average sherd size was relatively small. All sherds have been grouped and quantified according to fabric (see Table 2). The vast majority of sherds were identified as being oxidised glazed Malvernian ware (fabric 69) as would be expected from a site in Hanley Castle, where much of this material is known to have been produced.

A total of 19 diagnostic sherds were present and could be dated accordingly, the remaining undiagnostic sherds were datable by fabric type to the general period or production span. The forms present were generally indicative of the later period of Malvernian production (late 15th-early 17th century), although earlier forms were present. A small number of sherds appeared to be highly fired/overfired and may represent 'wasters' resulting from the local production of this ware.

Other material retrieved from the site included 13 fragments of roof tile, 12 of which were identified as being of local production, five fragments of brick and a clay pipe stem. A small proportion of these tile fragments and one large piece of brick appeared to be overfired and were also identified as probable wasters.

Discussion of the artefacts

The discussion below is a summary of the finds and associated location or contexts by period. Where possible, dates have been allocated and the importance of individual finds commented upon as necessary.

Medieval

Just two rim sherds could be firmly identified as medieval in date. Both came from the same context (201: Test Pit 5-6) and could be identified as coming from two Malvernian unglazed ware cooking pots (Fabric 56).

Both rims were of the most commonly identified 'short everted folded rim' form (Deansway types 56.2-4; Bryant 2004) and could be dated to between the 13th and 14th centuries.

Late medieval/early post-medieval

Two contexts were allocated terminus post quem dates of early 17th century (301 and 402) on the basis of the pottery retrieved. Finds of this period consisted mainly of sherds of oxidised glazed Malvernian ware (fabric 69). Although some of the forms identified within this group are known to have been produced in the earlier medieval period, association of these with other diagnostic sherds within the same contexts indicated that none retrieved from the site could be firmly dated to earlier than the 15th century.

A total of 22 sherds of oxidised glazed Malvernian ware were retrieved from the site. The sherds represented a narrow range of commonly identified vessel forms (Bryant 2004) consisting of bowl (Deansway type 69.1; context 200 and unstratified), flared bowl (Deansway type 69.9; context 301), jar/bunghole jar (Deansway type 69.8; context 201 and unstratified),

jug (Deansway types 69.3 and 4; context 201 and unstratified) and pipkin/jar (Deansway type 69.7; context 201) forms. In addition, three strap handles were also retrieved from the site (context 201 and unstratified). A number of sherds within this group displayed heavily decayed glazes and five were identified as possible wasters on the basis of their heavily overfired appearance (contexts 201, 301 and unstratified).

The twelve fragments of locally produced roof tile were also assigned to this period and included one piece of ridge tile with a characteristic thin green glaze running along the upper surface (context 601). Three fragments from a single test pit (contexts 100 and 101) were warped from overfiring and identified as probable wasters on this basis. Likewise, a large brick from context 201 displayed areas of vitrification as a result of exposure to very high temperatures.

Later post-medieval/modern

The remaining material consisted of eight sherds of commonly identified later post-medieval and modern pottery, five sherds of flowerpot, four fragments of brick, one of late post-medieval roofing tile and a fragment of clay pipe.

The later post-medieval pottery included sherds of commonly identified fabrics and forms dating between the later 17th to 18th centuries. The group consisted of a single sherd of black glazed red sandy ware (fabric 78; context 201; Test Pit 5-6), two sherds of creamware (fabric 84; contexts 101 and 501), a small fragment of miscellaneous late stoneware (fabric 81.4; context 201; Test Pit 5-6) and two sherds of post-medieval buff ware (fabric 91) - one from a slip decorated plate (context 201; Test Pit 5-6) and the other from a mottled ware tankard (context 101; Test Pit 1-4). The latest datable material consisted of two sherds of modern stone china (fabric 85), which could be dated to between the late 19th century, and present day (contexts 501 and 601, Test Pits 9 and 10).

Significance

Hanley Castle has long been known to have been associated with the production of pottery between the medieval and early post-medieval periods and therefore, the small amount of waster material identified on this site was not wholly unexpected.

Of particular note was the brick from context 201 (Test Pit 5-6), which displayed areas of vitrification. The intensity of heat which would be needed for vitrification of clay would be far greater than the average single firing. Therefore, it is possible that this brick may have been used in the actual structure if a kiln, where it would have been repeatedly subjected to high temperatures.

There is a wealth of documentary evidence relating to the pottery industry and previous fieldwork carried out within the village has uncovered disused clay pits, sand pits, one kiln and much 'waster' material in the form of vessels, tile and brick (JD Hurst, 1994). Of particular note is the presence of substantial kiln waste dumps at nearby Brickwalls Farm, Gilbert's End which had a similar date range to the material from this site (Pearson and Griffin 2001).

Finds Analysis Section Bibliography and Tables

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Material	Total	Weight (g)
Medieval pottery	2	19
Late medieval/ earlier post- medieval pottery	22	567
Later post-medieval pottery	6	62
Modern pottery	2	4
Roof tile	13	634
Brick	5	1351
Clay pipe stem	1	2

Table 1: Quantification of material

Fabric no.	Fabric name	Total sherds	Weight (g)
56	Malvernian unglazed ware	2	19
69	Oxidised glazed Malvernian ware	22	567
78	Post-medieval red sandy ware	1	16
81.4	Miscellaneous late stoneware	1	6
84	Creamware	2	32
85	Modern stone china	2	4
91	Post-medieval buff ware	2	8
100	Miscellaneous post-medieval wares	5	68

Table 2: Quantification of the pottery by fabric

6. Discussion of the Physical and Documentary Evidence

The archaeological project determined that there were no significant archaeological features within the area of trenching. The deposits, however, showed that the area away from the building and outside the lawned area was little disturbed. The lack of any subsoil depth indicates that the area was probably pastureland prior to it being turned over to gardens and showed no evidence of having been ploughed. This ties in with the cartographic evidence, which shows that a watercourse once ran in this direction, with a series of ponds along it. Ploughing across this area would have been problematic and logical land-use would most likely have been for grazing animals.

The soil to the east of the new build (Test Pits 5-6) is typically a well-turned and enriched garden soil. This ties in with the evidence of this area having been within the walled garden of the original farmhouse, which from brief inspection of the building appears to date from the Georgian period (although the walled garden may be Victorian). This indicates that the over fired brick (within context 201) described in the finds report as being ‘possibly from a kiln’ cannot have been from a kiln in this location, as there was no significant archaeological evidence for one.

It is not surprising that a quantity of medieval and early post-medieval pottery was found across the site. The information contained on the Historic Environment Record suggests pottery is scattered widely across fields around the village, pottery was also noted along public footpaths by Peter Ewence during the 1970’s (Hurst 1994) and during this archaeological project, Albion Lodge gardener Dave Branch commented that in his many years of digging holes around the village, he has always encountered pottery finds. However, it is not possible to say if the ceramics are derived from waster dumps from local kilns, or from pottery vessels that were used locally. It can be said that the majority were manufactured locally.

Medieval and early post medieval ceramic production in Hanley Parish has been well documented (Hurst 1994). The documentary evidence suggests that there are many archaeological remains relating to pottery, tile and brick production in the area that have yet to be found. In view of the widely scattered remains of locally produced ceramics, it may be that in future archaeological projects a more scientific method may be adopted in the search for specific sites (production). Magnetometer survey is one such option, although within the central village this may not be an option due to potential interference from, for example, cables, pipes and iron railings.

7. Conclusion

The results of the archaeological watching brief demonstrate that there was no significant archaeological remains or deposits located within the area of trenching. The finds evidence mirrors the evidence of finds scatters from across the whole of the village and that contained in the Worcestershire Historic Environment Record.

8. Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Andrew Darwent of Albion Lodge, the residents of Albion Lodge, Steve Davis, Building Consultant, Estimator and Designer and Dave Branch, gardener at Albion Lodge for his comments. Thanks are also due to Laura Griffin for the finds analysis, Martin Cook of Mercian Archaeology, Deborah Overton of Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Service for undertaking the Historic Environment Record search, Mike Glyde, Planning Archaeologist, Worcestershire County Council and the staff of Worcester Records Office.

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Plates

Plate 1



View of the site looking east towards the new extension

Plate 2



Test Pit 5-6 taken from the fire escape of the new build

Plates

Plate 3



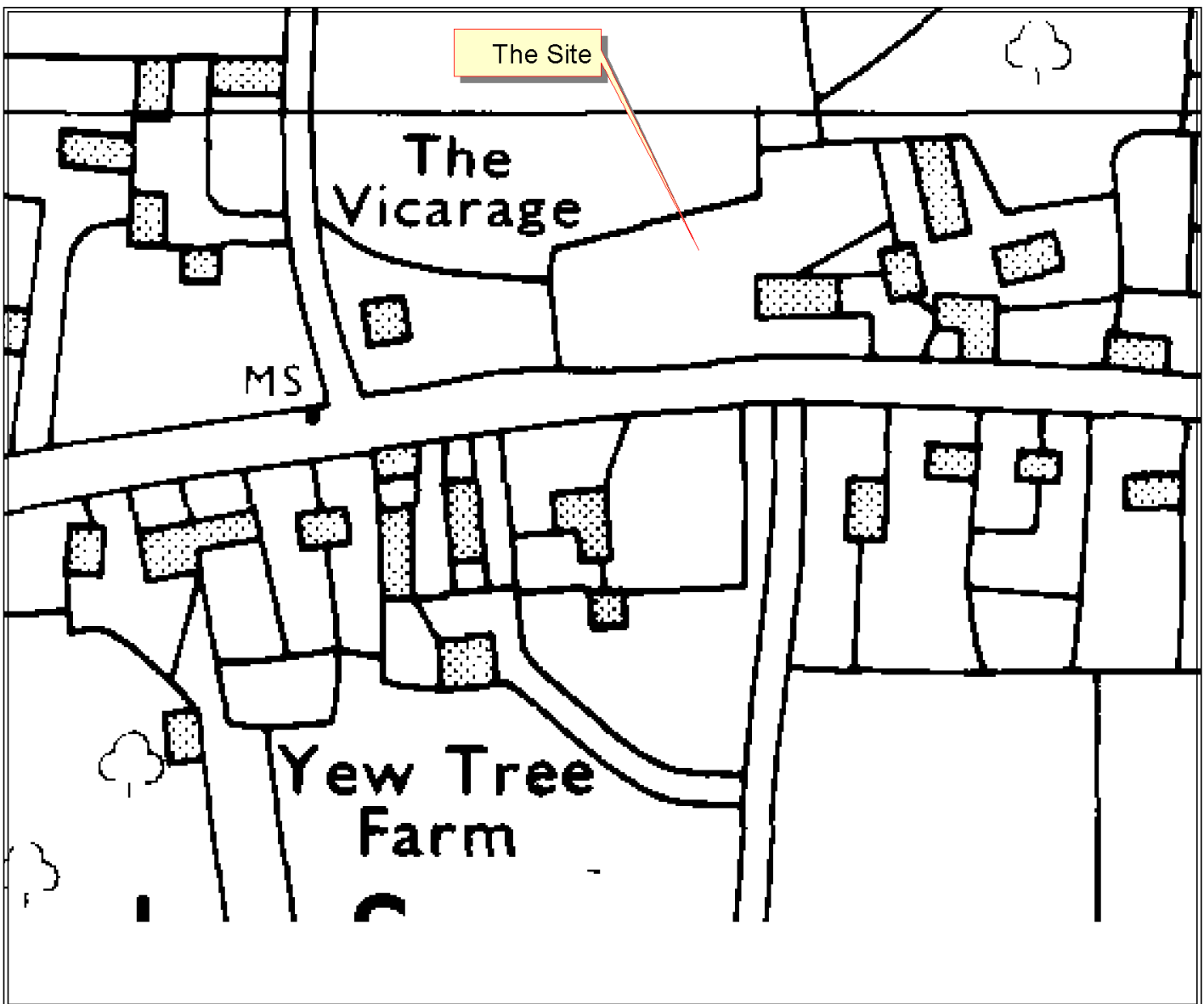
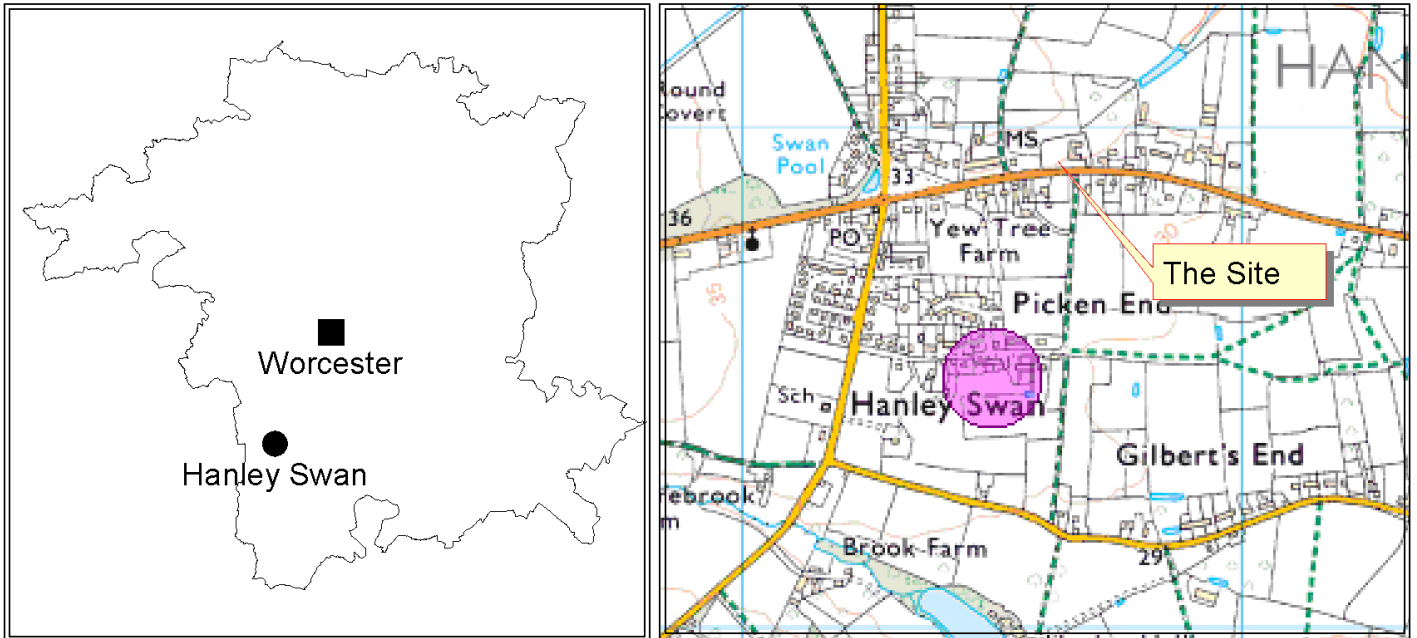
Test Pits 1-4 on the west side of the new build

Plate 4



Test Pits 8 and 9 on the northern side of the site

Figure 1: Location of the Site



Location of Hanley Swan,
Worcestershire

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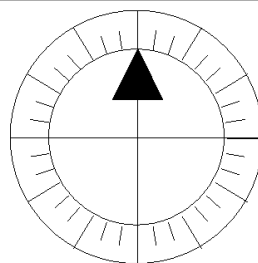
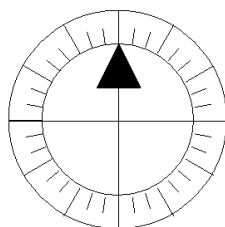
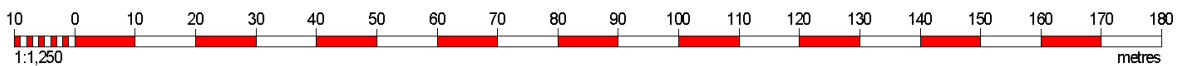
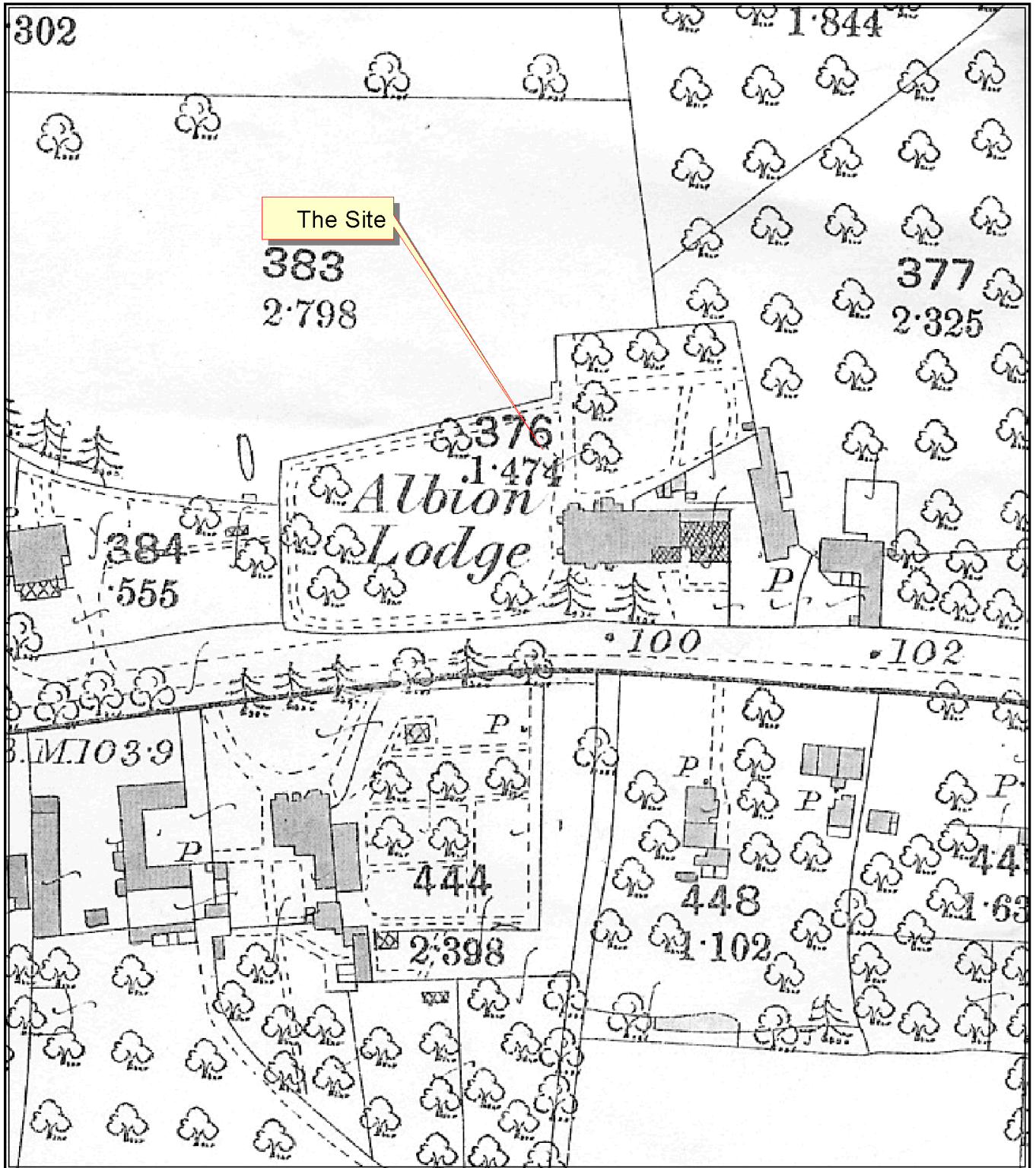


Figure 2: 1st edition Ordnance Survey (1886)



The first edition Ordnance Survey map shows the grounds of Albion Lodge landscaped as formal gardens.

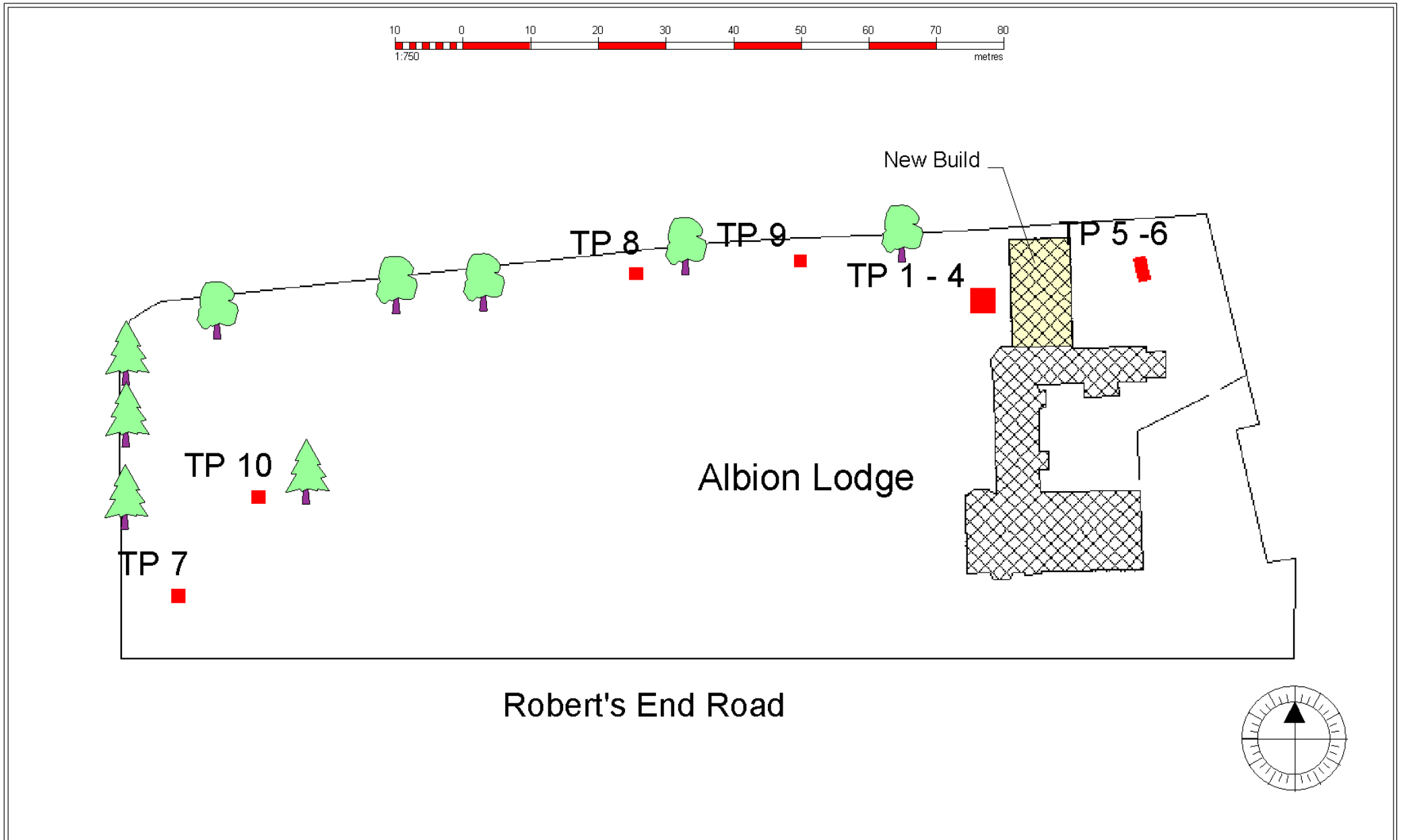


Figure 3: Location of Test Pits (Marked TP 1 - 10)