



*An Archaeological Watching  
Brief  
at Ladywell,  
Hanley Swan, Worcestershire*


*A Report for Mr and Mrs Brandreth*

August 2007

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**Project: PJ 191**

**WSM 37310**



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# 1. Project Background

## 1.1. Location of the Site

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

Ladywell lies to the north of the core of the village on the Rhydd Green to Welland road. The house known as Ladywell was undergoing restoration at the time of the watching brief, the works involving excavation of new footings for a garage and a conservatory, with further excavation for drainage and an associated soakaway.

## 1.2. Project Details

A planning application was presented to Malvern Hills District Council for the erection of replacement garage and conservatory at Ladywell (MH/07/0075). 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 and brick and tile production. It was determined that the groundwork associated with the proposed development may disturb 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 (WHEAS 2007) and a written scheme of investigation (Mercian Archaeology 2007) for the work was subsequently approved.

## 1.3. Reasons for the Watching Brief

The archaeological watching brief was suggested by the Planning Archaeologist as the appropriate response to the threat posed to the potential archaeological site by the development process. 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).*

A watching brief at the site was proposed in order that a record of any archaeological remains or deposits encountered during excavations associated with the development may be made and placed into context.

## 2. Methods and Process

### 2.1. Project Specification

- ❑ The archaeological project conforms to the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief* (IFA 2001).
- ❑ The project conforms to a brief prepared by The Planning Archaeologist, Worcestershire County Council (Brief MH/07/0075; WHEAS, March 2007), for which a project proposal and detailed specification was produced (Mercian Archaeology 2007).
- ❑ Mercian Archaeology adhere to the service practice and health and safety policy as contained within the *Mercian Archaeology Service Manual* (Williams 2003)
- ❑ The record archive will be offered to the appropriate museum after discussion with the client and / or archaeological curator.
- ❑ *The Code of Conduct of the Institute of Field Archaeologists* (1997) will be adhered to.
- ❑ *The Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology, Institute of Field Archaeologists* (1997) will also be followed
- ❑ *Guidelines for Finds Work, Institute of Field Archaeologists* (2001) will be followed.
- ❑ The project and any recommendations will conform to the government advice contained in *Planning Policy Guidance: Archaeology and Planning* (DoE, PPG 16 1990).
- ❑ The documentary research will follow the guidelines contained within the *Institute of Field Archaeologists Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment* (2001)
- ❑ *Guidelines for the Preparation of Archives for Long-Term Storage* (Walker 1990) and *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections*, Museum and Galleries Commission (1992) will be followed.
- ❑ *Conservation Guidelines No 2*, United Kingdom Institute of Conservation.
- ❑ *Management of Archaeological Projects 2*, English Heritage 1991
- ❑ *Environmental Archaeology and Archaeological Evaluations: Recommendation Regarding the Environmental Archaeology Component of Archaeological Evaluations in England, Association for Environmental Archaeology Working Paper Number 2* (1995)

## 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 archaeological deposits from any period.
  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

*Abbreviations used: WSM ~ Worcestershire Historic Environment Record number.*

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). Archaeological work at Albion Lodge, which is located around 500 metres to the north-east of the development site, identified fragments of vitrified brick, which may have been part of a destroyed pottery kiln in the vicinity; sherds of pottery dating from the 13<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and locally produced roof tile were also found (WSM33955). More recent work at Albion Cottages, adjacent to the north of Albion Lodge (WSM 37305; Darren Miller pers comm), encountered evidence for Anglo-Saxon cultivation (a single sherd of Stamford ware), post-medieval enclosure (two ditches), and modern development (made ground and truncation horizons).

There is further evidence of the medieval past of the Hanley parish with remnant ridge and furrow between Gilbert's End and Robert's 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 13<sup>th</sup> 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 Botulph).

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-14<sup>th</sup> 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-19<sup>th</sup> century tithe apportionment map of the area available at Worcestershire Records Office.

The 25” to 1 mile 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey map of 1886 shows the development site with gardens laid out around it and a series of enclosed fields to the south. (Figure 2).

#### Cartographic Sources Consulted

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

Other sources used are referenced within the report.

## 4. The Watching Brief

### 4 Watching Brief: The Fieldwork Methodology

Paul Williams of Mercian Archaeology undertook the watching brief on groundworks at the site during August 2007.

The site photography was carried out using digital format. A 1-metre scale was used where possible.

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 watching brief was carried out on three areas of the site, which were disturbed by foundation and service trenches, the areas are shown in Figure 3.

## 4.2. The Results of the Watching Brief

*Abbreviations used:*

*AOD ~ Above Ordnance Datum (Newlyn)*

The watching brief was carried out in two stages, the first monitored the excavation of foundation trenches for a new garage adjacent to the west of the present house, and on a new drainage run across the approach driveway along the house frontage (north). The second element of the fieldwork (Stage 2) monitored the excavation of foundation trenches for a new conservatory, at the southern side of the house (Figure 3).

### Stage 1: The Garage Foundations

An existing modern garage building was demolished prior to the commencement of the watching brief and the site cleared. A blue brick surface [200] was removed by hand and the bricks were stored on-site for later re-use.

The brick surface had been laid onto a thin screed of mortar and crushed brick rubble [201], which lay directly over a dark greyish-brown humic topsoil / garden soil containing occasional sub angular stones, roots and moderate charcoal flecks [202]. This material was some 30-centimetres thick across the area, and sealed the undisturbed natural pinkish-buff and grey clay, which contained occasional patches of orange and grey gravel [203]. The trench was excavated to 1-metre below ground level.

Finds from this area were limited to material from layer [202]. These included pottery sherds with a wide date-range (late 12<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century), indicating the level of previous ground disturbance and re-deposition of material.

### Stage 1: The Pipe Trench

A new drainage pipe trench was excavated from the eastern corner of the northern elevation porch of the house, to a soakaway pit located to the north-east. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 70-centimetres, with undisturbed natural clay deposits encountered at around 35-centimetres below ground level (at 29.65m AOD).

A greyish-brown humic topsoil [100] butted the northern wall of the existing house, but had been truncated by a layer of stone and gravel, which formed the access driveway from the road.

The topsoil was around 20-centimetres thick against the wall, but had been completely removed by the depth of the driveway. This sealed a layer of redeposited natural [101], which merged into the undisturbed natural [104] further to the north-east, indicating that it was a dump of material, rather than a layer across the site.

Sandwiched between the layers of undisturbed and redeposited natural, was a deposit of greyish-brown silty clay containing pockets of disturbed natural reddish clay, occasional sub-angular stones and rare charcoal flecks [103]. The deposit was 15-centimetres deep and extended to around 1-metre along the excavated pipetrench and notably contained a large quantity of pottery sherds. The feature was part excavated (50% of visible deposit) and the



pottery retrieved for analysis (see below). The ceramic material ranged in date from the late 12<sup>th</sup> century to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, indicating that the deposit in which it was found, was dumped in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, suggesting this occurred when the present house was built.

## **Stage 2: The Conservatory Foundation Trenches**

Foundation trenches for a new conservatory were excavated against the south elevation of the house. The trenches were excavated to a maximum of 60-centimetres deep and 50-centimetres wide; the undisturbed natural clay was observed in areas at around 30-centimetres below the surface. Unfortunately, this area had been heavily truncated by, and was crossed by earthenware drainage pipes and pipes associated with a former well. There were no finds retrieved from this area.

# 5. The Artefacts

*By Laura Griffin*

## **5.1. Aims**

The brief required an assessment of the quantity, range and potential of artefacts 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

## **5.2. Method of analysis**

All hand-retrieved artefacts were examined and identified, quantified and dated to period. Pottery fabrics are referenced to the fabric reference series maintained by the Worcestershire County Council Archaeological Service (Hurst and Rees 1992).

## *Results of Analysis*

The artefactual assemblage came from two stratified contexts (103 and 201) and the ground surface and consisted of 173 finds weighing 4348g. Datable material ranged from medieval to modern periods, with majority being of late medieval/early post-medieval date (see Appendix 1, Tables 1 and 3).

Pottery totalled 153 sherds, forming 88% of the assemblage recovered. The level of preservation was fair with moderate levels of surface abrasion in evidence. All sherds have been grouped and quantified according to fabric (see Appendix 1, Table 2). A number of diagnostic sherds were present and could be dated accordingly. All remaining sherds were datable by fabric type to the general period or production span.

Other finds consisted of 13 pieces of flat roof tile (context 103), one fragment of brick (context 201), three shards of green bottle glass (context 103), one fragment of mortar (context 201), one piece of clay pipe stem (context 103) and one piece of iron slag (context 103).

## **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.

As would be expected for a site in this area, the majority of sherds within the assemblage were of Malvernian production. The fabrics and forms of this industry have been discussed at length by Bryant (2004) within the medieval pottery report for Deansway, Worcester and all form types discussed below have been referenced according to the typology outlined within this report.

## **Medieval**

Nine sherds of pottery could be dated to the medieval period; all were residual. The first group consisted of seven fragments of unglazed Malvernian ware (fabric 56; contexts 103, 201 and unstratified) cooking pot fragments of late 12th-13th century date (Deansway types 56.1 and 56.2). All were abraded and displayed traces of sooting and/or blackening, attesting to their use over an open fire.

The remaining two sherds were both handles of oxidised glazed Malvernian ware (fabric 69; contexts 103 and 201) and identifiable as coming from rounded jug forms of late 14th-15th century date (Deansway type 69.4).

## **Late medieval / early post-medieval**

The majority of pottery retrieved from the site fell into this category due to the date range of forms spanning the late 15th-early 17th centuries. All was of oxidised glazed Malvernian ware and formed a substantial assemblage of 113 sherds, which included a number of commonly identified form types. These consisted of sherds from a dripping dish (Deansway 69.5), pipkin/skillet (Deansway type 69.6), pipkin/jar (Deansway type 69.7), jar/bunghole jar (Deansway type 69.8), flared bowl (Deansway 69.9) and chafing dish (Deansway type 69.12) forms.

In addition, there was a further rim sherd of an unusual form which had no parallel within the Deansway report but is thought to have come from a conical bowl, similar to that published by Morris within her type series for medieval pottery in Worcester (Morris 1980, 246, fig. 76 TV 191). This is a form not commonly identified but known to be of similar date to the more familiar flared bowl form.

Remaining body sherds of this fabric type could also be dated to a similar date due to the distinctive thin greenish brown glaze, characteristic of Malvernian vessel of later production.

As well as the above sherds, there were also three that appeared very highly fired, almost to the point of vitrification and were classified as wasters. However, the presence of such material would not necessarily indicate production in this specific location, as due to the well-

documented potting industry within the Hanley Swan and Hanley Castle area, wasters and other kiln material are commonly found on all sorts of sites in the vicinity.

Other artefacts thought to be of this date consisted of 13 fragments of flat roof tile, also of Malvernian fabric. As with the pottery, this type of tile was produced between the 13th and early 17th centuries. However, with the majority of material from this site being of the later medieval/early post-medieval periods, it would seem most likely that this tile is of similar date.

## Post-medieval

Both stratified contexts from which finds were retrieved (context 103 and 201), could be dated to the 18th century on the basis of the material recovered.

Pottery of post-medieval date consisted of a narrow range of fabrics commonly identified from sites within this region. This included post-medieval red wares (fabric 78; context 103) and post-medieval buff wares (fabric 91; contexts 103 and 201) of late 17th-18th century date with identifiable forms including slip-decorated dishes and jars. In addition, a single sherd of post-medieval orange ware (fabric 90; unstratified) was also retrieved and identified as being from a jar of similar date.

Later material of 18th century date consisted of two sherds of white stoneware (fabric 81.5; contexts 103 and 201), which although from different contexts were clearly from the same vessel due to a lustrous brown band around the rim. There were also two sherds of porcelain (contexts 103 and 201) and 11 of creamware (fabric 84; context 201), the latter of which could be closely dated to between 1780 and 1795.

Other finds of this period included the shards of bottle glass (context 103), clay pipe stem (context 103) and brick fragment (context 201).

## Significance

This assemblage is particularly notable for the pottery of late medieval/early post-medieval date. This forms a well-preserved and closely dated group and provides a good example of the variety of forms being produced by the kilns in the Hanley area during the late 15th-early 17th centuries.

The condition of the pottery and distinct absence of misfired or waster sherds would indicate that production was not being carried out on this specific site but the medieval potting and tiling industry of this area is well-documented and therefore the material will almost certainly have been produced in the very close vicinity.

## Finds Analysis Section Bibliography

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## 6. Comment on the Physical and Documentary Evidence

A single feature was identified during the watching brief at the site, though it proved to be a dump of material, rather than an undisturbed cut-feature, which could have been dated from its fill. The dumped material probably derived during the construction of Ladywell, probably during the final quarter of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, or from modification works in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is certain that the construction of the house and its cellars has destroyed any surviving earlier archaeology within its footprint.

The information contained on the Historic Environment Record suggests pottery is scattered widely across the fields around the village and fragments of locally produced pottery have been noted along public footpaths and in local gardens (Hurst 1994). During recent archaeological works at Albion Lodge in the village, the establishment gardener Mr Dave Branch commented that in his many years of digging holes around the village, he has always encountered pottery finds. The ceramic assemblage from the site does not suggest that there was activity here prior to the late 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century. The condition of the pottery retrieved and the distinct absence of misfired or waster sherds, also indicates that pottery / tile production is unlikely to have been carried out on this specific site, but the medieval potting and tiling industry of this area is well-documented and therefore the material will almost certainly have been produced in the very close vicinity.

## 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 evidence suggests that the area was undeveloped until the present house was constructed in the late 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Finds from the site were confined to material from dumped or disturbed deposits, the wide date range of retrieved artefacts, dating from the late 12<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries indicate the level of disturbance*

## 8. Acknowledgements

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Plate 1: Deposit [103] looking south-west



Plate 2: Work in progress at the site

## APPENDIX: THE FINDS ASSEMBLAGE

### Appendix 1: Artefactual Analysis of material

Material	Total	Weight (g)
Medieval pottery	9	242
Late medieval/early post-medieval pottery	113	2615
Post-medieval pottery	31	411
Roof tile	13	879
Brick	1	55
Mortar	1	1
Vessel glass	3	18
Clay pipe	1	2
Slag	1	125

*Table 1: Quantification of the assemblage*

Fabric no.	Fabric name	Total	Weight (g)
56	Malvernian unglazed ware	7	152
69	Oxidised glazed Malvernian ware	115	2705
78	Post-medieval red ware	7	245
81.5	White salt-glazed stoneware	2	10
83	Porcelain	2	5
84	Creamware	11	48
90	Post-medieval orange ware	1	21
91	Post-medieval buff ware	8	82

*Table 2: Quantification of the pottery fabric type*

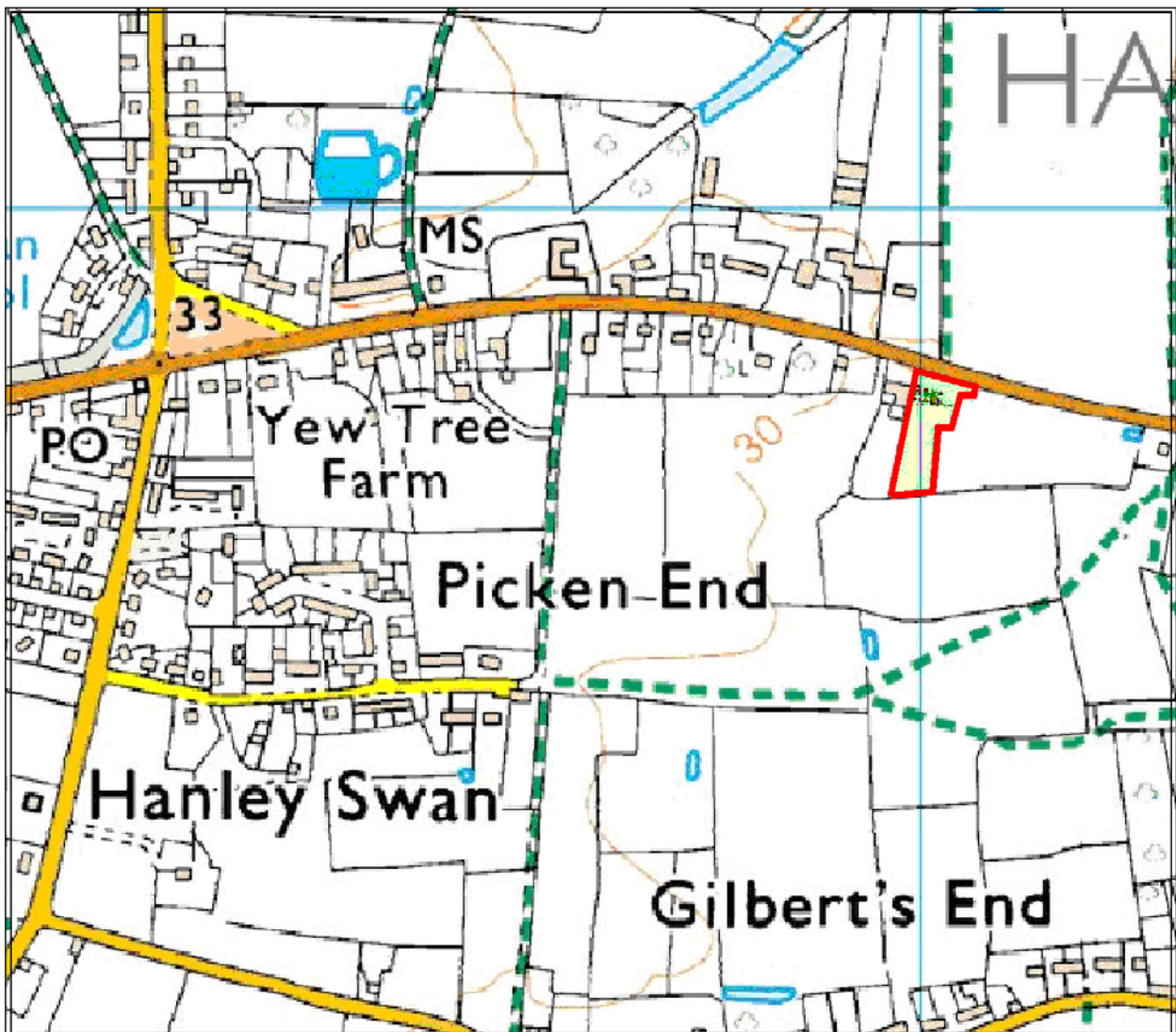
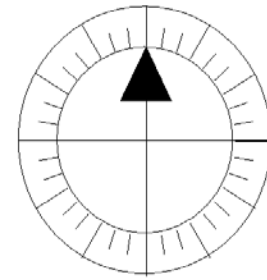
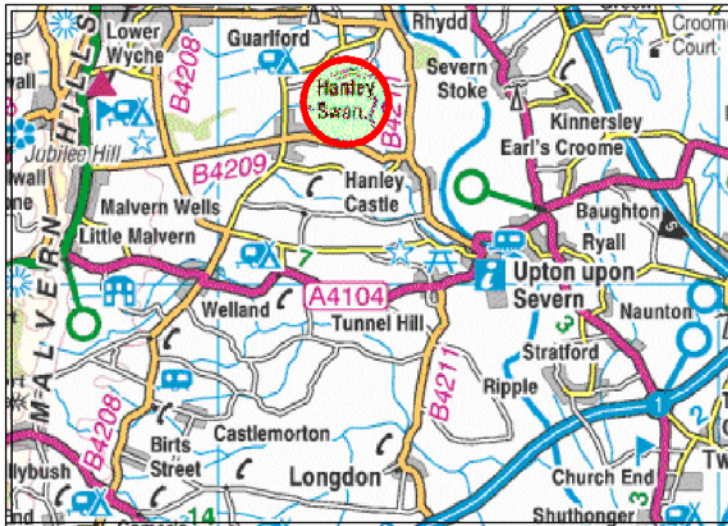
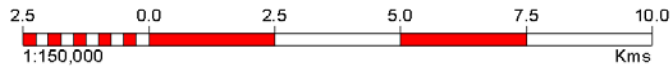
Context	Material	Type	Sum Total of	Sum Weight of	Date Range	Period
0	Pottery	Medieval	1	8	Late 12th-14th century	Medieval
0	Pottery	Medieval/post-medieval	4	41	Late 15th-early 17th century	Medieval/post-medieval
0	Pottery	Post-medieval	1	21	17th-18th century	Post-medieval
103	Glass	Vessel	3	18		Post-medieval
103	Pipe	Stem	1	2		Post-medieval
103	Pottery	Medieval	1	10	Late 12th-14th century	Medieval
103	Pottery	Medieval	1	26	Late 14th-15th century	Medieval
103	Pottery	Medieval/post-medieval	3	55		Medieval/post-medieval
103	Pottery	Medieval/post-medieval	6	406	15th-16th century	Medieval/post-medieval
103	Pottery	Medieval/post-medieval	1	59	15th-early 17th century	Medieval/post-medieval
103	Pottery	Medieval/post-medieval	4	52	16th century	Medieval/post-medieval



103	Pottery	Medieval/post-medieval	2	50	Early 16th-17th century	Medieval/post-medieval
103	Pottery	Medieval/post-medieval	2	188	Late 15th-16th century	Medieval/post-medieval
103	Pottery	Medieval/post-medieval	91	1764	Late 15th-early 17th century	Medieval/post-medieval
103	Pottery	Post-medieval	4	168	18th century	Post-medieval
103	Pottery	Post-medieval	2	4	18th-19th century	Post-medieval
103	Pottery	Post-medieval	8	102	Late 17th-18th century	Post-medieval
103	Slag		1	125		
103	Tile	Roof	13	879	13th-16th century	Medieval/post-medieval
201	Brick		1	55		Post-medieval
201	Mortar		1	1		
201	Pottery	Medieval	2	92	13th century	Medieval
201	Pottery	Medieval	2	40	Late 12th century	Medieval
201	Pottery	Medieval	1	2	Late 12th-14th century	Medieval
201	Pottery	Medieval	1	64	Late 14th-15th century	Medieval
201	Pottery	Post-medieval	11	48	1760-1795	Post-medieval
201	Pottery	Post-medieval	2	11	18th century	Post-medieval
201	Pottery	Post-medieval	3	57	Late 17th-18th century	Post-medieval

*Table 3: Summary of the assemblage*

# Figure 1: Location of the Site

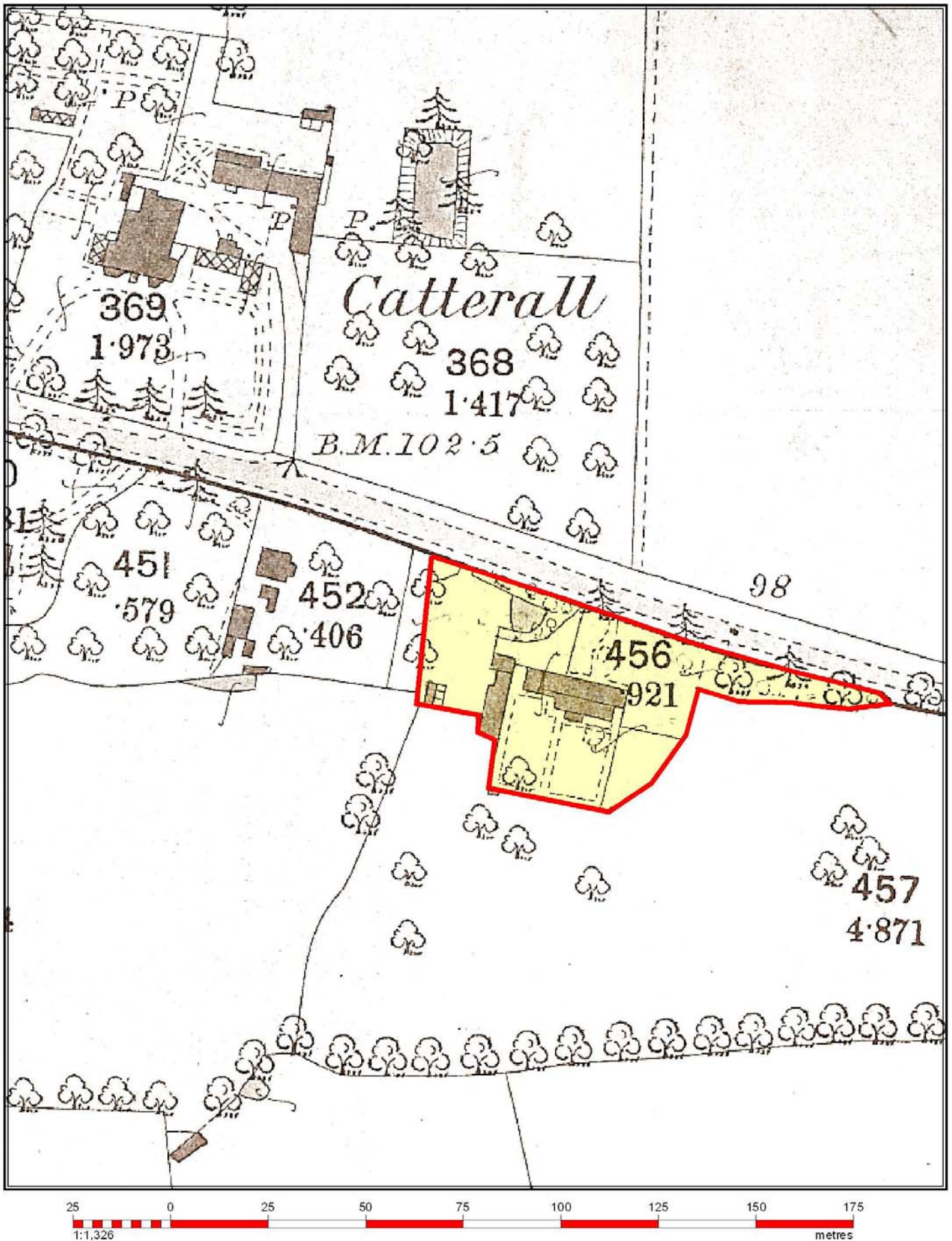


Location of the development site at Hanley Swan

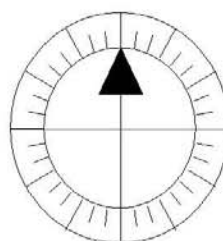
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Figure 2: 1st Edition Ordnance Survey (1886)



The 1st edition Ordnance Survey with the 1886 site boundaries highlighted



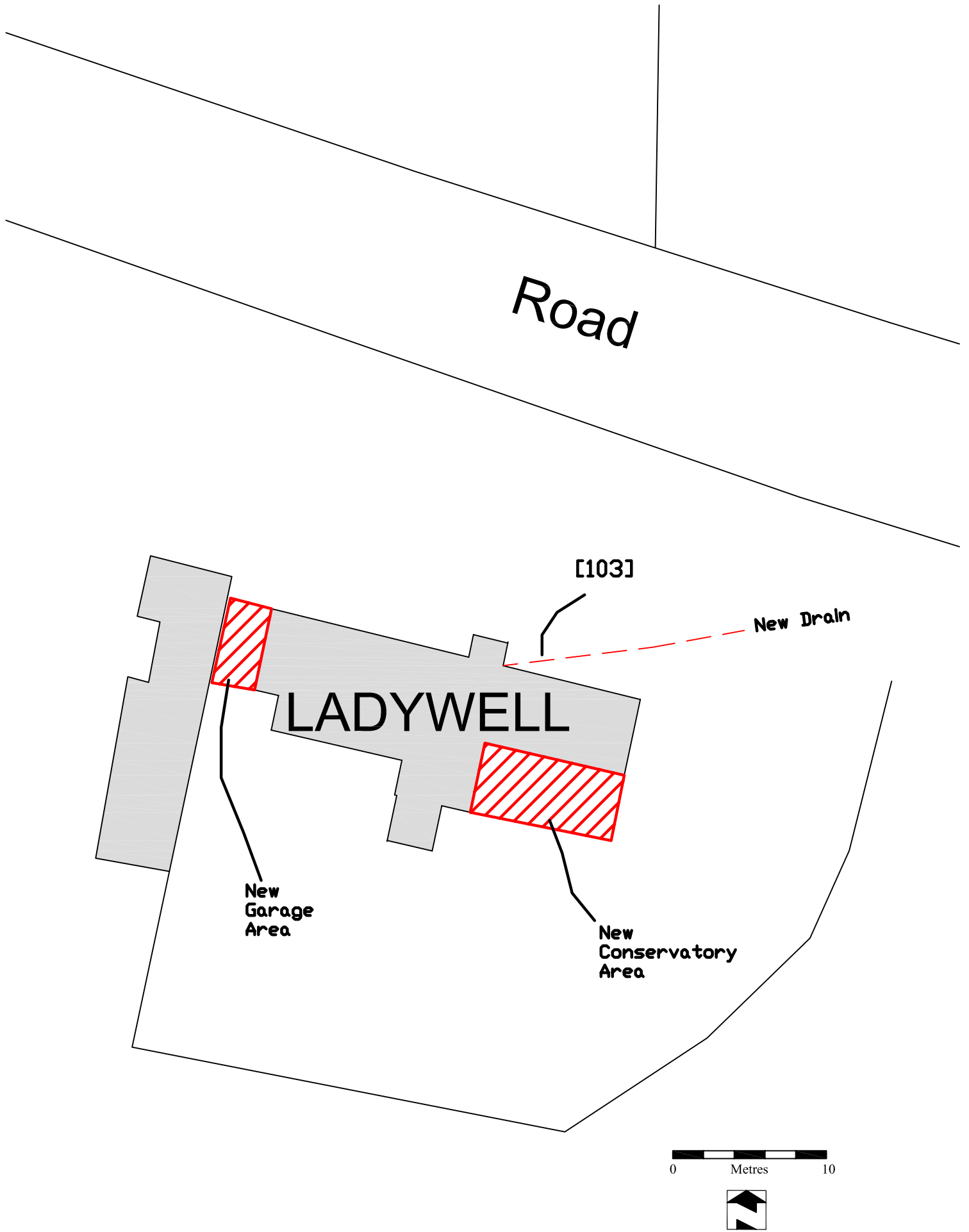


Figure 3: The Site, Showing Areas Observed