

*An Archaeological Watching  
Brief  
at Greenways, Roberts End,  
Hanley Swan, Worcestershire*


*A Report for Andrew & Sarah Darwent*

December 2007

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**Project: PJ 203**

**WSM 38577**



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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)

The development site lies centrally within the village, close to the Swan Pool, off the Rhydd Green to Welland Road. Greenways is a modern bungalow within a small development of similar units; the works monitored by this watching brief involved excavation of new footings for a domestic extension, with further excavation for associated drainage.

## 1.2. Project Details

A planning application was presented to Malvern Hills District Council for the extension of the existing property at greenways, to provide two-storey accommodation (MH/07/0673). 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/07/0673; WHEAS, September 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 less than 300 metres to the 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). A watching brief carried out during September 2007 at Ladywell, also less than 300 metres to the east of the site, retrieved a finds assemblage that was particularly notable for the pottery of late medieval/early post-medieval period. This formed a well-preserved and closely dated group, which provided a good example of the variety of forms being produced by the kilns in the Hanley area during the late 15<sup>th</sup>-early 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, though the condition of the pottery and distinct absence of misfired or waster sherds indicated that production was not being carried out on this specific site but the material was almost certainly produced in the very close vicinity (WSM 37310).

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 Leaddon 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 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-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 as within an area of orchard (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

Mercian Archaeology undertook the watching brief on groundworks at the site during November 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 the areas of the site, which were disturbed by foundation and service trenches; this is shown in Figure 3.

### 4.2. The Results of the Watching Brief

*Abbreviations used:*

*AOD ~ Above Ordnance Datum (Newlyn)*

The watching brief determined the presence of three stratigraphic layers across the site; a dark greyish-brown humic topsoil / garden soil containing occasional sub angular stones, roots and moderate charcoal flecks [100], a mixed greyish-brown coloured clayey subsoil containing occasional gravel [101] and sterile undisturbed natural pinkish-buff and grey clay, which contained occasional patches of orange clay and grey gravel [102 – the ‘natural’].

Layers 100 and 101 had been disturbed during the construction of the bungalow, probably during the 1960’s. It was also apparent that topsoil may have been brought to the site from elsewhere, as this displayed little ‘mixing’, which would have occurred had the soil been redeposited following the completion of the building works on the bungalow

Finds from this area came from both contexts 100 and 101, with the majority from the subsoil [101]. However, due to disturbance during the construction of the present bungalow, the material was mixed, with medieval shers and modern ceramic fragments within the same context, indicating the level of previous ground disturbance and re-deposition of material.

There were no archaeological features or deposits encountered during the watching brief.



## 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 (100 and 101) and the ground surface and consisted of 19 finds weighing 574g. Datable material ranged from medieval to modern periods, with majority being of late medieval/early post-medieval date (see Appendix 1, Table 1).

Pottery totalled 16 sherds, forming 84% 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 three pieces of flat roof tile (context 100).

### 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 / Early Post-Medieval**

Thirteen sherds of pottery could be dated to the medieval and early medieval periods, all of oxidised glazed Malvernian ware (fabric 69). A number of sherds displayed glaze ranging from speckled green to dark greenish brown in colour. The majority of sherds were undiagnostic body fragments but identifiable form types included the handle of a pipkin/skillet (context 100; Deansway type 6) which could be dated to the 15<sup>th</sup> century and two sherds from flared bowls dating between the late 15<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> century (context 101; Deansway type 9).

Three fragments of flat roof tile could also be dated to this period and were all of Malvernian fabric. One example was also nibbed.

### **Post-Medieval and Modern**

Three sherds could be identified as being later post-medieval and modern in date. The earliest of these sherds was from a machine pressed plate of post-medieval red ware (fabric 78; context 100) and decorated with inlaid slip. This sherd could be dated to the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The remaining two sherds were of modern stone china dating to the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries (fabric 85). One was from a teacup, which had clearly been burnt due to being grey in colour (context 101). The other was from a plate displaying blue transfer decoration (context 100).

### **Significance**

This assemblage is particularly notable for the pottery of medieval/early post-medieval date due to Hanley area being well-documented as a pottery and tile production centre during the late 15<sup>th</sup>-early 17<sup>th</sup> 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 material will almost certainly have been produced in the very close vicinity.

## 6. Comment on the Physical and Documentary Evidence

No archaeologically significant features were identified during the watching brief at the site, though soil profile at the site indicated that there had been much disturbance during the construction of the present bungalow in the 1970's. It was also evident that topsoil had been introduced to the site from elsewhere. From this evidence, it can be argued that it is certain that the construction of the bungalow would have destroyed any surviving earlier archaeology within its footprint.

The present information contained on the Worcestershire Historic Environment Record suggests that locally produced medieval and early post-medieval pottery is scattered widely across the fields around Hanley Swan and fragments of locally produced pottery have been noted along public footpaths and in local gardens (Hurst 1994). During previous 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 settlement activity here prior to the mid-20th century. The condition and mixed nature of the 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century pottery retrieved during the watching brief and the distinct absence of misfired or waster sherds, 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 local material identified 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 the development at Greenways. The evidence suggests that the area was undeveloped until the present house was constructed in the 1970's. Finds from the site were confined to material from dumped or disturbed deposits, the wide date range of retrieved artefacts, dating from the late 15<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries indicate the level of disturbance*

## 8. Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank the clients Mr and Mrs Darwent and their agent, Sue Goodman. Thanks are also due to Laura Griffin for her finds analysis, Deborah Overton of Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Service for undertaking the Historic Environment Record search, Darren Miller of the same organisation for his comments on the work at Albion Cottages and, Mike Glyde, Planning Archaeologist, Worcestershire County Council and the staff of Worcester Records Office.

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Plate 1: Site soil profile



Plate 2: Work in progress at the site

## APPENDIX: THE FINDS ASSEMBLAGE

Material	Total	Weight (g)
Medieval/early post-medieval pottery	13	311
Post-medieval pottery	1	13
Modern pottery	2	2
Roof tile	3	248

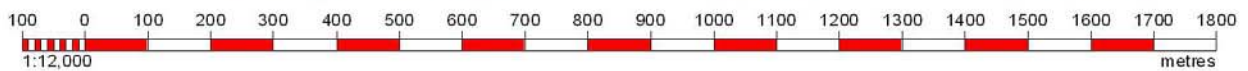
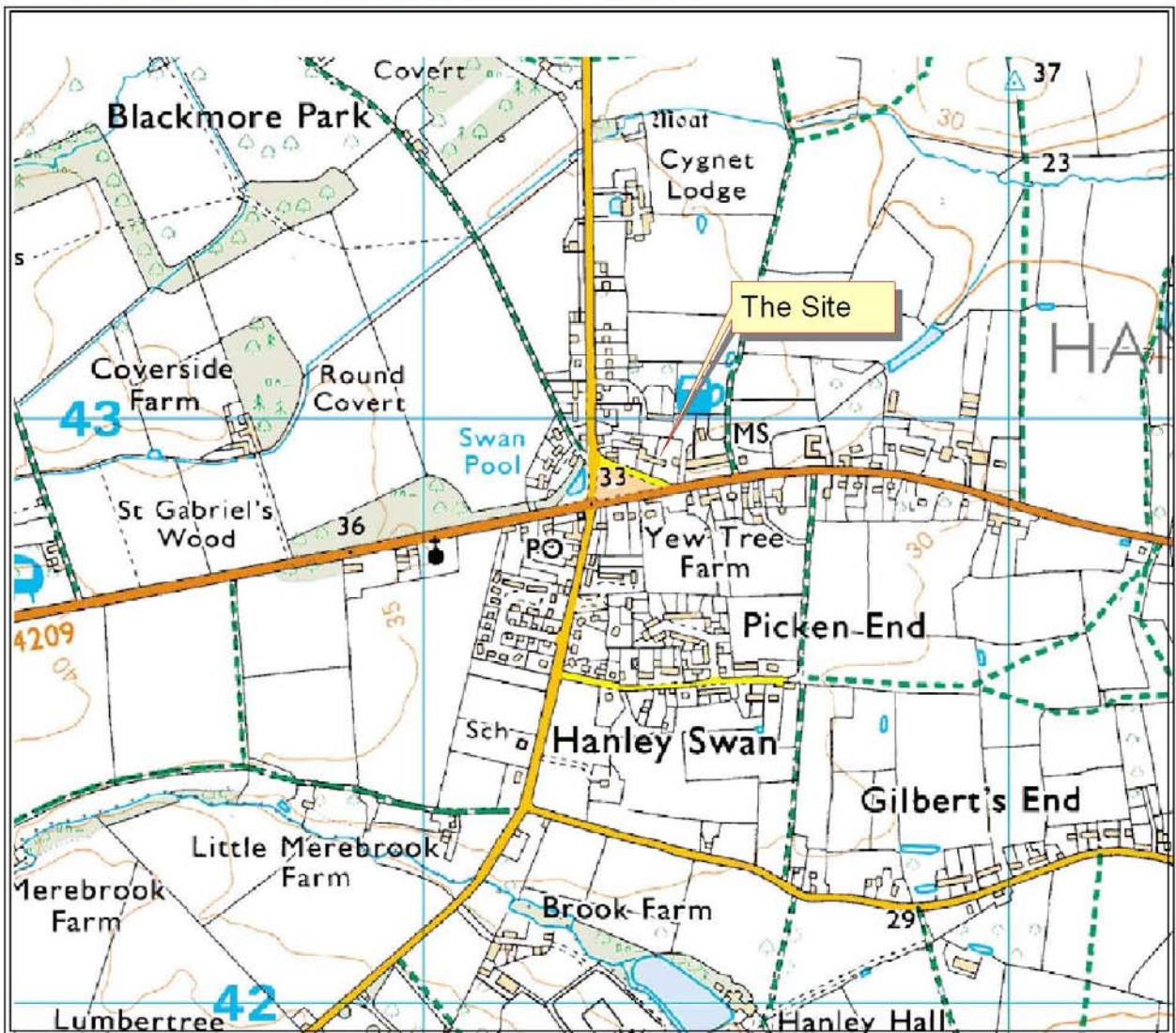
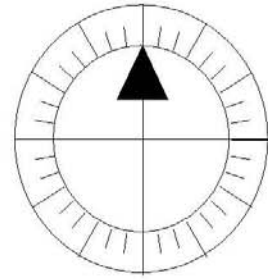
*Table 1: Quantification of the assemblage*

Fabric no.	Fabric name	Total	Weight (g)
69	Oxidised glazed Malvernian ware	13	194
78	Post-medieval red ware	1	13
85	Modern stone china	2	2

*Table 2: Quantification of the pottery fabric type*



# Figure 1: Location of the Site

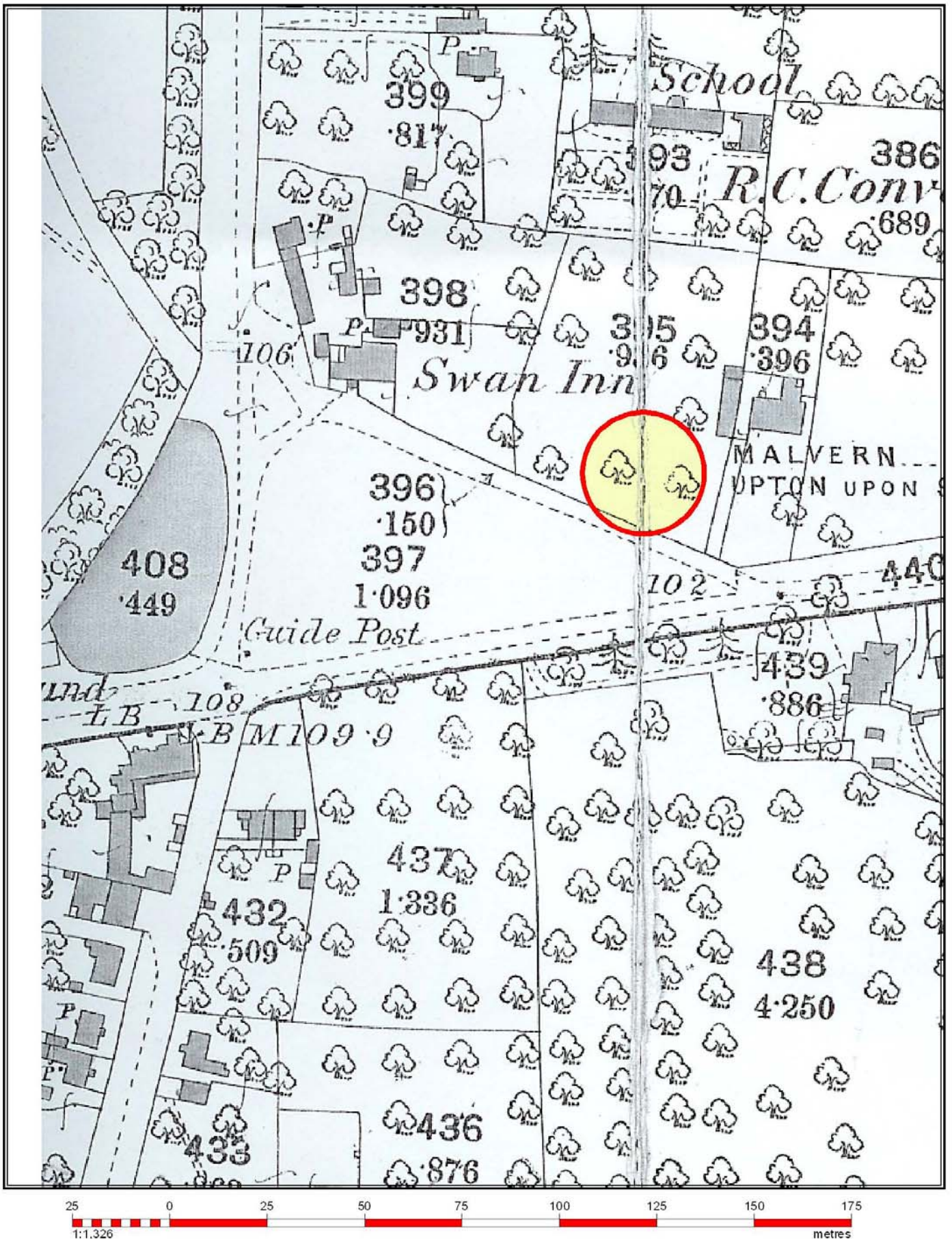


Location of the development site at Hanley Swan (highlighted).

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Figure 2: 1st Edition Ordnance Survey (1886)



The 1st edition Ordnance Survey with the approximate location of Greenways highlighted.

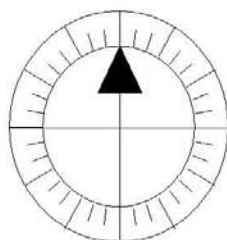
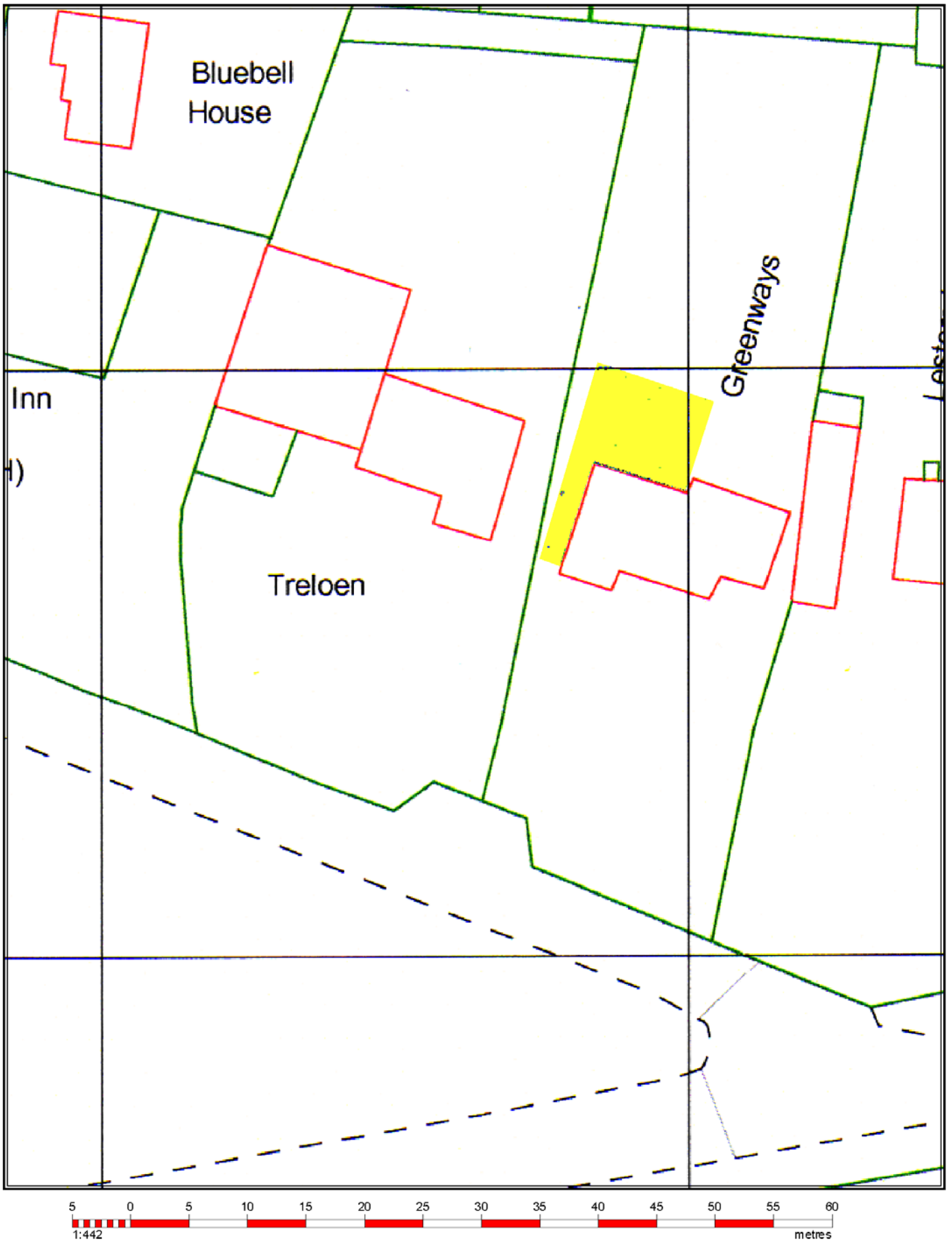


Figure 3: Area Monitored During Watching Brief



The extent of the area monitored during the watching brief at Greenways, Hanley Swan.

