



## Titchfield Abbey, Fareham Hampshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report





**TITCHFIELD ABBEY  
FAREHAM  
HAMPSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT**

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**Reference**

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- I= Internal Draft E= External Draft F= Final

**TITCHFIELD ABBEY, FAREHAM,  
HAMPSHIRE**

**Archaeological Watching Brief Report**

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- Figure 1** Site, trench and gully location  
**Plate 1** East facing section of gully 4  
**Plate 2** West facing representative section of the soakaway

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**Titchfield Abbey, Fareham,  
Hampshire****Archaeological Watching Brief Report****Summary**

Wessex Archaeology (WA) was commissioned by English Heritage South East Region (the Client), to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Titchfield Abbey, Fareham, Hampshire (hereafter the Site) centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 453909 106801.

The Site is a Scheduled Monument (SM no. 26713) comprising the remains of a 13<sup>th</sup> century monastery converted into a mansion in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Ongoing maintenance and improvements at the property were required and comprised the mechanical excavation of a soakaway and drainage trench. The works were located within a grassed area and a gravel access drive positioned at the front of the gatehouse.

Within the footprint for the soakaway and drainage trench, garden soil material was observed throughout. A gully of post-medieval date was exposed within the drainage trench.

No evidence was found for the dwarf wall for railings as shown in 18<sup>th</sup> century engravings.

**Titchfield Abbey, Fareham,  
Hampshire**

**Archaeological Watching Brief Report**

**Acknowledgements**

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by English Heritage South East Region and would like to thank Dave Latham in this regard. The advice and assistance of Vivienne Griffiths of Quadron (Site Co-ordinator) and the ground staff are also gratefully acknowledged.

The watching brief fieldwork was undertaken by Rebecca Fitzpatrick and Julia Sulikowska. This report was compiled by Rebecca Fitzpatrick. Illustrations were prepared by Rob Goller. The project was managed by Sue Farr on behalf of Wessex Archaeology

## Titchfield Abbey, Fareham, Hampshire

### Archaeological Watching Brief Report

#### 1 INTRODUCTION

##### 1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology (WA) was commissioned by English Heritage South East Region (the Client), to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Titchfield Abbey, Fareham, Hampshire, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 453909 106801 (hereafter the 'Site').
- 1.1.2 Titchfield Abbey is a Scheduled Monument (SM no. 26713) and comprises the remains of a medieval monastery converted into a mansion in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.
- 1.1.3 The existing access into the Site has eroded and is in a poor state of repair, resulting in restricted access to the Abbey. A soakaway and drainage channel was excavated and subject to an archaeological watching brief. The works formed part of the Class VI Schedule Monument Consent approval, which has been granted by the Inspector of Ancient Monuments in order to facilitate the repair work.
- 1.1.4 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI, WA 2011) was prepared and approved by the English Heritage prior to the commencement of works. The document set out the strategy and methodology which was employed by Wessex Archaeology in order to undertake the watching brief and conformed to current best practice and to the guidance outlined in *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* ('MoRPHE', English Heritage 2008) and the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (IfA 2008).
- 1.1.5 The watching brief fieldwork was conducted on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> February 2011.

##### 1.2 Site Location, Topography and Geology

- 1.2.1 The Site is positioned within the valley of the River Meon and is surrounded by open farmland. It is accessed via Mill Lane which forms the eastern boundary of the Abbey ruins.
- 1.2.2 A series of medieval fish ponds (that form part of the SM), are positioned to the west of the Site within a group of trees known as Carron Row. These step down the valley side and connect to the River Meon to the east of the Site.
- 1.2.3 The British Geological Survey map for the area (1:50,000 Solid and Drift Series Sheet 316) indicates that the underlying geology of the Site consists of London Clay.

## 2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1.1 The Site comprises the remains of the medieval monastery of St Mary and St John the Evangelist that was converted in the 16<sup>th</sup> century into a mansion.
- 2.1.2 The abbey was founded in AD1232 by Peter de Roches, Bishop of Winchester, for Premonstratensian canons. The history of the abbey was uneventful and at the suppression of the monasteries in 1537 the monastic estate passed to Thomas Wriothesley. By 1542 he had converted the monastic buildings into the residence known as 'Place House' which remained largely unaltered until the majority of it was demolished in 1781.
- 2.1.3 The upstanding remains of the abbey include the cloister, used in the 16<sup>th</sup> century as the courtyard of the mansion, and the nave of the church which became its gatehouse. The four towers of the gatehouse, which flank and rise above the walls of the nave, form the most visually impressive element of the ruined structure. The remains of ancillary buildings which lie to the west of the cloister and four medieval fishponds situated to its north-west are also included within the Scheduled area.
- 2.1.4 The position of additional buildings including the chapter house, library and the choir of the church are also known from archaeological investigations carried out by Sir William St John Hope in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and are largely enclosed within a boundary wall of 16<sup>th</sup> century date. Beyond this to the west, the north gable and west wall of a substantial stone building, probably of 16<sup>th</sup> century date, lie within an area which shows evidence of further structures.
- 2.1.5 To the north-west of the main complex of abbey buildings, a line of four (originally five) medieval fishponds are visible, lying in a natural hollow running down towards the River Meon. Excavations carried out by C K Currie in advance of restoration works demonstrated that the construction of the ponds was started shortly after the foundation of the abbey in the 13<sup>th</sup> century and that they all continued in use after the Dissolution in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.
- 2.1.6 Drains leading to the abbey and a pondside building, all of 13<sup>th</sup> century date were also discovered east of the dam of the lower pond. A further fishpond to the north of this line has been considerably altered during the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- 2.1.7 A tithe barn of pre-Dissolution date and associated with the monastery, lies 300m south-west of the cloisters and is Grade I Listed.
- 2.1.8 In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, excavations carried out initially by Sir William St John Hope helped to clarify the layout of the focal monastic buildings.
- 2.1.9 The Site is within the Titchfield Abbey Conservation Area designated in 1994.



### **3 AIMS & OBJECTIVES**

#### **3.1 General**

- 3.1.1 The objective of the watching brief was to establish within the constraints of the agreed strategy the presence or absence, location, extent, date, character, condition, and depth of any surviving remains which may be affected by the proposed works.

### **4 WATCHING BRIEF METHODOLOGY**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

- 4.1.1 The following methodology was completed in order to meet the aims and objectives of the archaeological watching brief. All works were undertaken in accordance with the WSI and requirements of the Client and the Property Curator for English Heritage. All Site attendance and recording was conducted in compliance with the standards outlined in the Institute for Archaeologists' Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief (IfA 2008).

#### **4.2 Fieldwork**

- 4.2.1 The fieldwork consisted of the monitoring of groundworks made beneath the present ground surfaces for the purposes of excavation of a drainage trench and a soakaway. Monitoring of the relaying of the gravel on the entrance drive to the principal car park was also conducted. Excavations were halted whilst investigations were carried out by hand within the aforementioned footprint of the drainage trench.

- 4.2.2 The drainage trench measured 3m in length, 0.60m in width and from 0.40m to 0.50m in depth. Due to the water table encountered at approximately 1.10m below ground level (BGL) the soakaway dimensions were extended to 2.50m in length, 1.50m in width and 1.10m in depth (maximum). An additional drainage trench, measuring 3.50m in length, 0.40m in width and up to 0.80m in depth was excavated across the existing driveway to accommodate a cut-off drain with an iron grid.

- 4.2.3 The excavation of the drainage trench and soakaway was conducted by a tracked mini digger under constant archaeological supervision. All machine excavation was carried out using a 0.60m wide toothless bucket in discrete level spits of approximately 0.20m depth and spoil stored adjacent to the excavation area.

- 4.2.4 The gravel resurfacing works comprised the raking of the gravel driveway surface with a tracked mini digger equipped with a toothed bucket, subsequent compacting with a road roller and resurfacing of the driveway with fresh gravel. These works did not break ground sufficiently to expose any archaeological features.

#### **4.3 Health and Safety**

- 4.3.1 All work was carried in accordance with Health and Safety at Work *etc.* Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety regulations 1992 and all

other relevant Health and Safety legislation and regulations and codes of practice in force at the time.

- 4.3.2 Prior to the commencement of the fieldwork a Risk Assessment was produced. Staff involved in works signed and complied with this document.

#### **4.4 Recording**

- 4.4.1 All exposed deposits were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording system.

- 4.4.2 A complete drawn record of excavated archaeological features and deposits was compiled. This included both plans and sections, drawn to appropriate scales (1:20 for plans, 1:10 for sections), and with reference to a Site grid tied to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. The Ordnance Datum (OD) height of all principal features and levels was be calculated and plans/sections were annotated with OD heights.

- 4.4.3 A full photographic record was maintained during the watching brief using digital cameras equipped with an image sensor of not less than 10 megapixels. Digital images will be subject to managed quality control and curation processes which will embed appropriate metadata within the image and ensure long term accessibility of the image set.

### **5 RESULTS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

- 5.1.1 A single feature was exposed within the southern end of the drainage trench. The feature comprised a narrow and shallow linear **4 (Plate 1)** indicative of a gully aligned in close proximity to and parallel with the existing gravel drive.

#### **5.2 Stratigraphic Sequence**

- 5.2.1 The stratigraphic sequence identified throughout the footprint of the services was consistent and comprised turf/topsoil **(1)** measuring 0.20m in depth, overlying garden soils **(2)** ranging from 0.40m to 0.70m in depth. The gully feature **(4)** was infilled with garden soil material **(3)** identical to the garden soil **(2)** revealed throughout the excavation area and comprised dark grey/brown clay with a slight silt content and common gravel inclusions.
- 5.2.2 A 0.10m thick gravel surface **(6)** and a 0.30m thick rubble hardcore layer **(7)** filled in the modern cut for the driveway **(8)**. The driveway truncated the topsoil **(1)**. No archaeological features were exposed beneath the driveway.
- 5.2.3 The natural geology, where exposed consisted of gravels in a light grey yellow clay matrix.

#### **5.3 Archaeology**

- 5.3.1 Located at the southernmost end of the drainage trench, an east to west aligned narrow linear gully **(4)** was partially exposed within the trench limits. The gully measured 0.60m in length, 0.70m in width and 0.17m in depth

(0.56 BGL). The gully contained a single fill of garden soil material (**3**) identical to garden soil **2** observed throughout the service area.

- 5.3.2 There was no differentiation between deposit **2** and **3**, however individual context numbers were issued to facilitate finds retrieval and distribution within the trench. Artefacts of post-medieval date were retrieved from both deposits (**2** and **3**). Garden soil **3** yielded a fragment of clay pipe, ceramic building material (CBM), slate fragments and mortar fragments. Similar artefacts were observed in garden soil **2** and a fragment of animal bone was also recovered from this material.

## **6 FINDS**

- 6.1.1 The watching brief produced a very small finds assemblage, deriving from two deposits (**2** and **3**) within the excavated area. All the material was of post-medieval date. The finds are quantified by context in **Appendix 1: Table 1**.
- 6.1.2 The animal bone fragment has been identified as the left tibia distal end of an adult sheep.
- 6.1.3 Given the small quantity of finds recovered, and their date range, retention for long-term curation is not recommended, and these finds will be discarded prior to archive deposition.

## **7 DISCUSSION**

- 7.1.1 The watching brief has identified garden soil deposits, a gully feature of post-medieval date and a modern driveway.
- 7.1.2 Although the gully may relate to an earlier formal garden layout at the property, given the relatively shallow depth, location and orientation of the gully, a modern date is more likely.

## **8 ARCHIVE**

- 8.1.1 Arrangements will be made with the local museum for the deposition of the archive. Provision has been made for the cost of long-term storage.
- 8.1.2 On completion of the report a cross-referenced and internally consistent archive will be produced. The primary archive, including copies of all photographs, will be deposited with the relevant museum, no later than six months after completion of the work.
- 8.1.3 The completed project archive will be prepared in accordance with the guidelines outlined in Appendix 3 of *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991) and in accordance with the *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long term storage* (UKIC 1990).
- 8.1.4 Details of the Site will be submitted online to the OASIS (Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations) database.

## **9 REFERENCES**

Institute for Archaeologists 2008, Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief

Wessex Archaeology 2011, Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief at Titchfield Abbey, Fareham, Hampshire. Ref 76840.01

**APPENDIX 1**
**Table 1: Finds totals by material type**

Context	Animal Bone	CBM	Clay Pipe	Mortar	Slate
3		2	1	3	2
4	1	1			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>

CBM = Ceramic Building Material

**APPENDIX 2**
**OASIS ID: wessexar1-97758**

## Project details

Project name Titchfield Abbey

Short description of the project Wessex Archaeology (WA) was commissioned by English Heritage (South East Region) (the Client), to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Titchfield Abbey, Fareham, Hampshire (hereafter the Site) centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 453909 106801. The site is a Scheduled Monument (SM no. 26713) comprising the remains of a 13th century medieval monastery converted into a mansion in the 16th century. Ongoing maintenance and improvements at the property was required and comprised the mechanical excavation of a soakaway and drainage trench. The required works were located within a grassed area and a gravel access drive positioned at the front of the gatehouse. Within the footprint for the soakaway and drainage trench, garden soil material was observed throughout. A gully, 4, was exposed within the drainage trench and of post-medieval date. No evidence was found for the dwarf wall for railings as shown in 18th century engravings.

Project dates Start: 15-02-2011 End: 31-03-2011

Previous/future work No / No

Any associated project reference 76840 - Contracting Unit No. codes

Type of project Recording project

Site status Scheduled Monument (SM)

Current Land use Community Service 2 - Leisure and recreational buildings

Monument type NONE None

Significant Finds NONE None

Investigation type 'Watching Brief'

Prompt Scheduled Monument Consent

#### Project location

Country England

Site location HAMPSHIRE FAREHAM FAREHAM Titchfield Abbey

Postcode PO15 5RA

Study area 0.10 Hectares

#### Project creators

Name of Organisation Wessex Archaeology

Project brief originator English Heritage/Department of Environment

Project design  
originator Wessex Archaeology

Project  
director/manager Sue Farr

Project  
supervisor R Fitzpatrick, J Sulikowska

Type of  
sponsor/funding  
body English Heritage

Project archives

Physical Archive  
recipient Hampshire County Museums Service

Digital Archive  
recipient Hampshire County Museums Service

Digital Contents 'Animal Bones','Ceramics'

Digital Media  
available 'Database'

Paper Archive  
recipient Hampshire County Museums Service

Paper Contents 'Animal Bones','Ceramics','other'

Paper Media  
available 'Context sheet','Drawing','Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General  
Notes','Photograph','Plan','Report','Section'

Project  
bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title Titchfield Abbey

Author(s)/Editor(s) Fitzpatrick R

Other bibliographic details 76840

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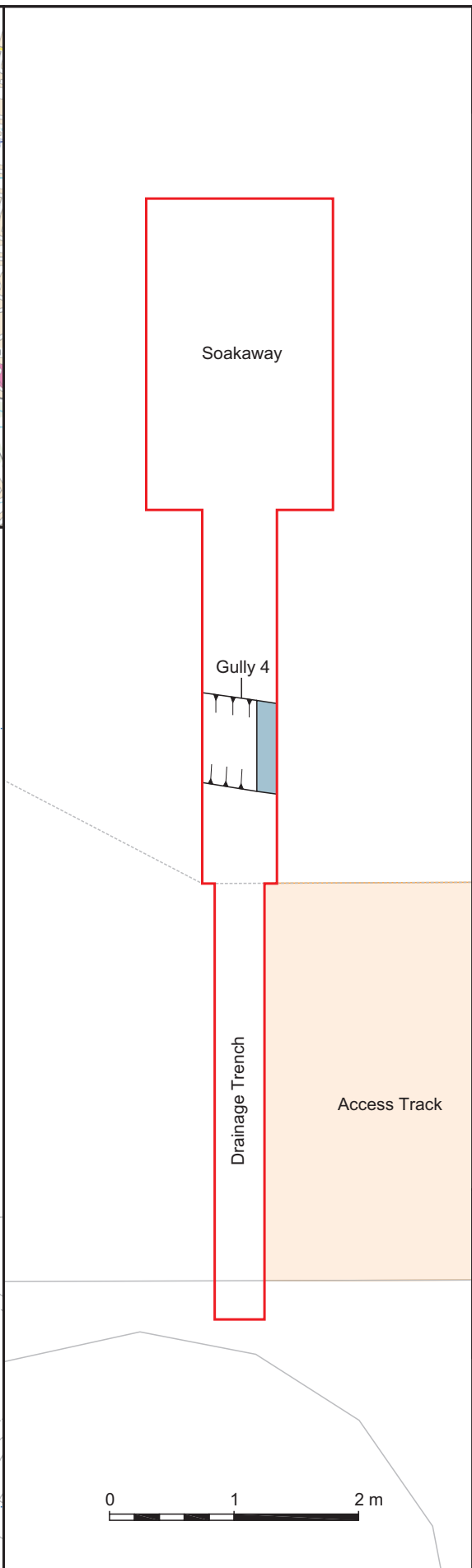
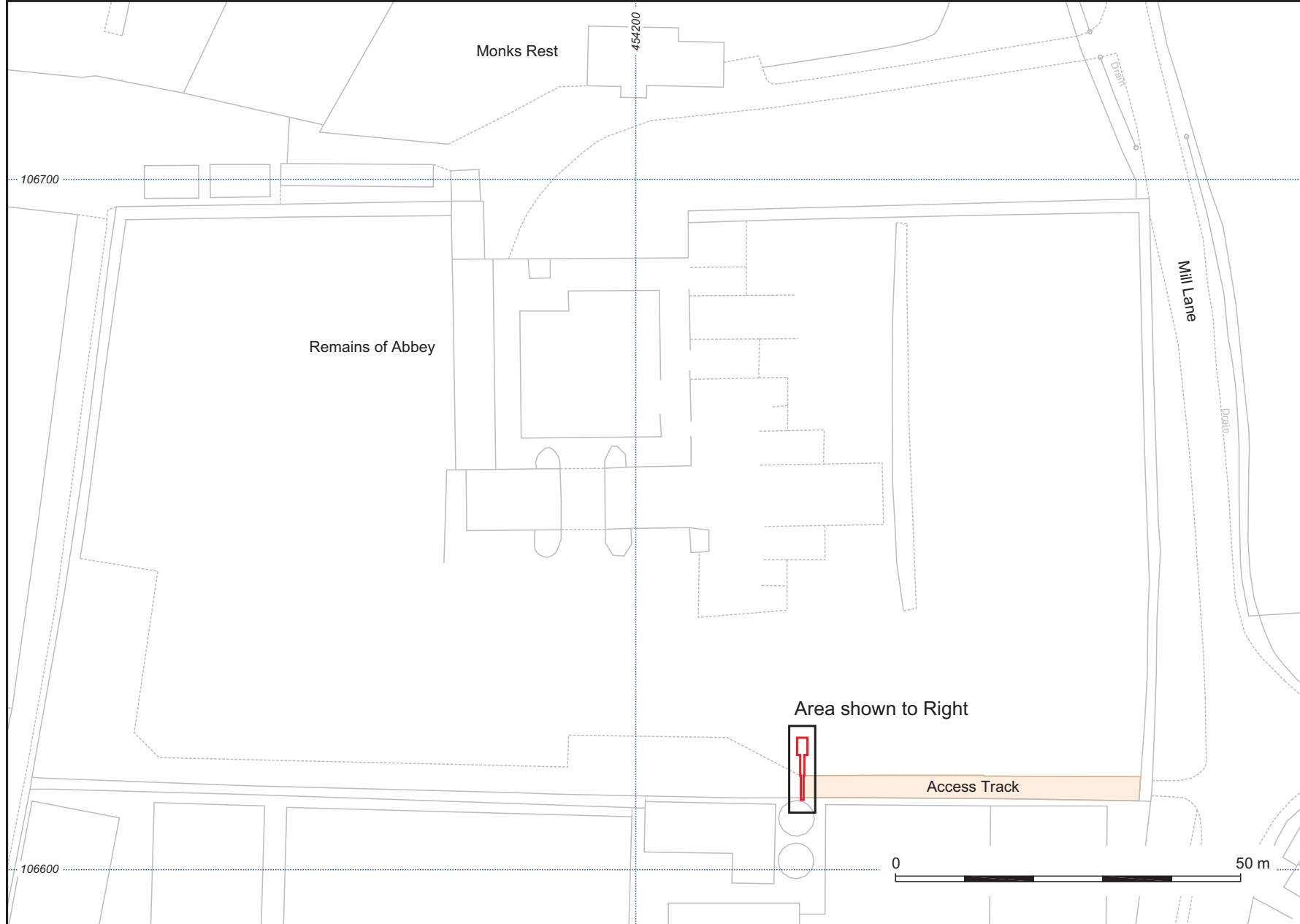
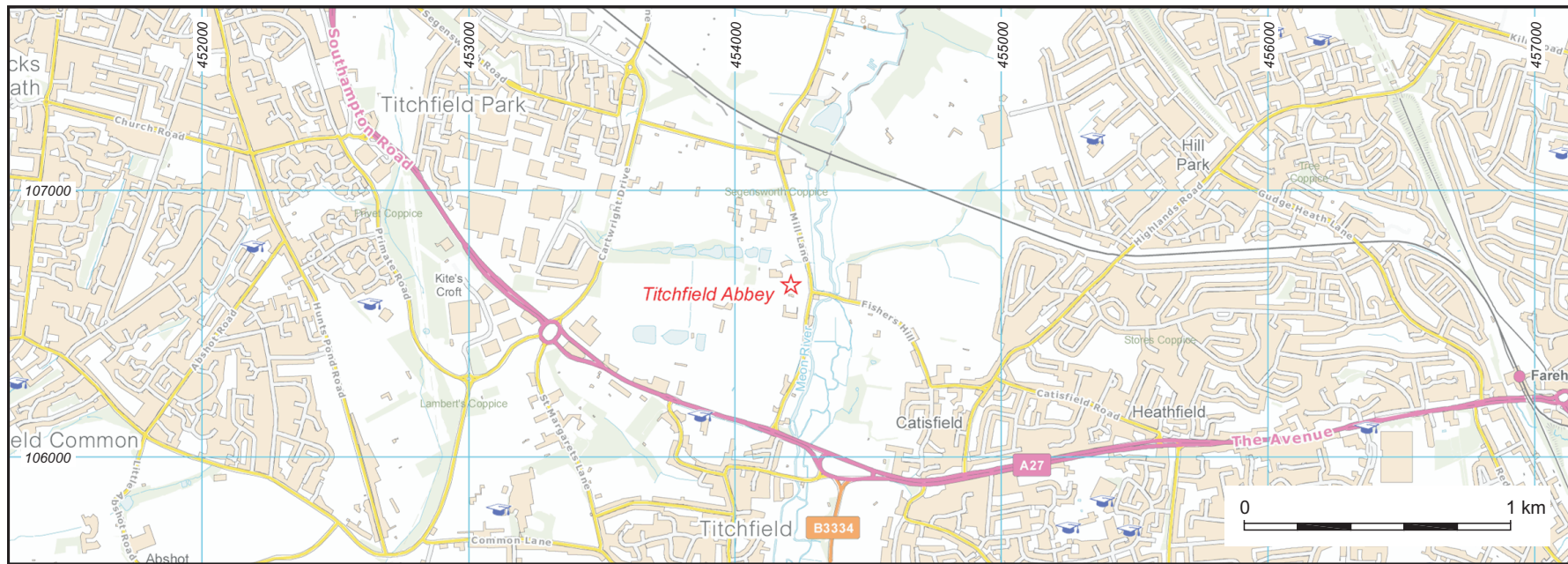
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Area of watching brief

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Site, trench and gully location


Figure 1



Plate 1: East facing section of gully 4



Plate 2: West facing representative section of the soakaway

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