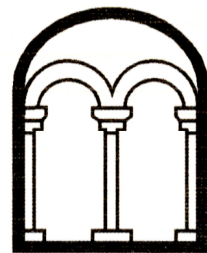


**MAGNA PARK EXTENSION  
DHL SUPPLY CHAIN  
LUTTERWORTH  
LEICESTERSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION,  
INVESTIGATION, RECORDING, ANALYSIS AND  
PUBLICATION**

**Albion**  
archaeology



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IDI Gazeley



## ***Contents***

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Non-Technical Summary	6
<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>7</b>
1.1 Project Background	7
1.2 Site Location and Description	7
1.3 Archaeological and Historical Background	8
<b>2. METHODOLOGY AND OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1 Methodological Standards	9
2.2 Project Objectives	9
2.3 Implementation	9
2.4 Archiving	10
<b>3. RESULTS</b>	<b>11</b>
3.1 Introduction	11
3.2 Overburden	11
3.3 WB1 – Area to the NW of Excavation Area 3	11
3.4 WB2 – The New A5 Roundabout	11
3.5 WB3 – Area to the NW of the Rugby Road Roundabout	11
<b>4. CONCLUSIONS</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>5. BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>6. FIGURES</b>	<b>15</b>



## **List of Figures**

Figure 1: Site location plan

Figure 2: Plan of watching brief areas

Figure 3: Selected photographs

Figure 4: Selected photographs

*The figures are bound at the back of the report.*



## Preface

*All statements and opinions in this document are offered in good faith. This document has been prepared for the titled project or named part thereof and was prepared solely for the benefit of the client. This document should not be relied upon or used for any other project without an independent check being carried out as to its suitability and the prior written authority of Albion Archaeology (a trading unit of Central Bedfordshire Council).*

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## Acknowledgements

*The project was commissioned by Simon Mortimer of RPS (formerly CgMs Heritage) on behalf of IDI Gazeley and monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Rickard Clark, Leicestershire County Council Principal Archaeologist. Fieldwork was undertaken by Lewis Busby, Adam Williams (Archaeological Supervisors) and Ian Turner (Project Officer). This report was prepared by Ian Turner with contributions from Joan Lightning (CAD Technician).*

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## Key Terms

The following abbreviations are used throughout this report:

Client	IDI Gazeley
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
Consultant	RPS
HER	Leicestershire County Council's Historic Environment Record
PA	Principal Archaeologist (Leicestershire County Council)
PDA	Permitted development area
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation



## **Non-Technical Summary**

*Harborough District Council granted planning permission (15/00919/FUL) for the construction of an extension to Magna Park Lutterworth, Leicestershire.*

*On the recommendation of the Principal Archaeologist (PA) of Leicestershire County Council, two conditions (nos 5 and 6) were attached to the planning consent, requiring a programme archaeological work to be undertaken in accordance with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (CgMs 2016).*

*The programme of archaeological work initially comprised excavation of six areas within the permitted development area, which was undertaken in autumn 2016 (Albion Archaeology 2017). In addition, although outside of the scope of the initial WSI, it was agreed with the PA that works associated with the construction of a new roundabout on the A5 and improvements at the A4303/A426 Rugby Road roundabout should be subject to an archaeological watching brief, in order to comply with the archaeological conditions. Albion Archaeology was commissioned by RPS (formerly CgMs Heritage) on behalf of IDI Gazeley to undertake the works.*

*The watching brief comprised monitoring of groundworks in three locations within the PDA (Areas WB1–3) (Figure 2). No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were identified within any of the watching brief areas.*

*In WB1, an area to the NW of the previously investigated excavation Area 3, the topsoil was removed to expose the underlying subsoil. The formation level of construction was reached at this point and, therefore, no further ground reduction was undertaken. The archaeological horizon was not exposed and archaeological remains may potentially survive beneath the subsoil.*

*WB2, an area to the SW of the current A5 in the location of the new roundabout, identified a c.0.75m-high bank of modern made ground, underlying the road. Whilst no features or deposits were present elsewhere within the stripped area, it is possible that remains associated with the Roman road may survive beneath this made ground.*

*The ground reduction in WB3, an area to the NW of the Rugby Road roundabout, showed only areas of modern disturbance. No features or deposits associated with the nearby former medieval hospital were present.*

*This report will be uploaded onto the OASIS website (albionar1-342601) and the project archive deposited with Leicestershire County Council Museums Service (Accession no. X.A14.2019).*



## 1. INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 **Project Background**

Harborough District Council granted planning permission (15/00919/FUL) for the construction of an extension to Magna Park Lutterworth, Leicestershire. The consented development comprised:

*'Demolition of the Emmanuel and Lodge cottages and the construction of a 100,844 sq m warehouse distribution facility with ancillary B1 office space, gatehouse, associated vehicle fuelling and washing facilities, HGV, car and cycle facilities, fencing and security infrastructure, structural landscaping and associated highway layout within and around the site, including alterations to existing vehicular and pedestrian access, creation of a new access to Bittesby Farm and Bittesby Barn Buildings, creation of a new A5/Mere Lane roundabout and partial dualling of the A5 and development of public transport infrastructure including bus stop and lay-by, together with drainage and water management infrastructure including attenuation ponds and water treatment facility, waste management facilities, rooftop solar photovoltaic panels, and necessary enabling works all in accordance on land immediately adjacent and linked to Magna Park, Lutterworth.'*

On the recommendation of the Principal Archaeologist (PA) of Leicestershire County Council, two conditions (nos 5 and 6) were attached to the planning consent, requiring a programme archaeological work to be undertaken in accordance with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (CgMs 2016).

The programme of archaeological work initially comprised excavation of six areas within the permitted development area (PDA), which was undertaken in autumn 2016 (Albion Archaeology 2017). In addition, although outside of the scope of the initial WSI, it was agreed with the PA that works associated with the construction of a new roundabout on the A5 and improvements at the A4303/A426 Rugby Road roundabout should be subject to an archaeological watching brief, in order to comply with the archaeological conditions. Albion Archaeology was commissioned by RPS (formerly CgMs Heritage) on behalf of IDI Gazeley to undertake the works.

### 1.2 **Site Location and Description**

The PDA is located to the west of Lutterworth and comprises approximately 55 hectares of land centred at NGR SP 5076 8550. It is an irregularly shaped plot of land, bordered by Mere Road and Magna Park to the south-east, Watling Street (A5) to the south-west and field boundaries and outlying fields to the north-west and north-east (Figure 1). The Rugby Road Roundabout lies c.4km to the south-east at the junction between the A4303 and the A426.

The solid geology across the PDA comprises mudstone belonging to the Penarth Group Formation. It is overlain by diamiction (formerly known as boulder clay).



The ground level of the PDA rises from the north-west boundary (c.110m OD) towards the south-east boundary (just above 125m OD).

### **1.3 Archaeological and Historical Background**

The archaeological potential of the PDA was evaluated by a staged programme of work: desk-based assessment (CgMs 2015), geophysical survey (ArchaeoPhysica 2015), fieldwalking (MoLA 2014) and trial trenching (Albion Archaeology 2015), undertaken in support of the planning application. The geophysical survey, fieldwalking and trenching included the PDA and a wider study area to the north-west, which is associated with a separate planning application.

The Scheduled Ancient Monument of Bittesby Deserted Medieval Village (MLE1226) is located close to the PDA. The evaluation demonstrated that archaeological remains associated with the monument were not present within the PDA. The route of Roman Watling Street (MLE1388 / MWA420), followed by the modern A5, is located south-west of the PDA.

In autumn 2016, archaeological excavation was undertaken on six areas within the PDA where the evaluation had identified significant heritage assets (Albion Archaeology 2017). The investigations revealed several phases of past human activity. The earliest was represented by the residual find of a flint core fragment of later Neolithic to Bronze Age date; however, no below-ground features of this period were present. Dispersed early-middle Iron Age activity was identified, including two extensive linear boundaries and at least one small settlement. The Roman period was represented by field systems and an activity focus adjacent to Watling Street (the modern day A5). Further away from Watling Street was evidence of activity on the periphery of a settlement previously identified outside of the PDA. Evidence was also identified for medieval open fields, which covered much of the PDA in this period, as well as a single post-medieval ditch.

The Rugby Road roundabout lies immediately to the west of the former location of the medieval hospital of St John at Lutterworth. The main site of the hospital was subject to a number of evaluations and excavations (ULAS 2002), which identified a substantial medieval cemetery and cobble structures as well as the site of the old mill. Evaluation of the area to the west of the former hospital, in vicinity of the current works, revealed ditches possibly representing evidence of 13th-century closes (LAU 1992). A full historical account of the hospital can be found in the *Victoria County History* (McKinley 1954, 42–4).





## 2. METHODOLOGY AND OBJECTIVES

The methodological approach to the project is summarised below.

### 2.1 Methodological Standards

The project adhered throughout to the standards set out in the following documents:

• Albion Archaeology	<i>Procedures Manual: Volume 1 Fieldwork</i> (3rd edn, 2017).
• ClfA	<i>Charter and by-law; Code of conduct</i> (2014)
	<i>Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief</i> (2014)
	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i> (2014)
• EAA	<i>Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England</i> (2003)
• Historic England	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) Project Managers' Guide</i> (2015)
	<i>Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation</i> , (2nd edn, 2011)

### 2.2 Project Objectives

The general objective of the watching brief was to identify any potential archaeological remains exposed during construction works and to characterize any such remains encountered.

More specifically the project aimed to:

- Identify any evidence for features or deposits associated with the Roman road (Watling Street) exposed during construction of the new A5 roundabout;
- Identify any features or deposits associated with the medieval hospital of St John (in particular human remains) exposed during improvements to the Rugby Road roundabout;
- Monitor any works adjacent to excavation Area 3 to identify whether any further contemporary remains survived with the PDA.

### 2.3 Implementation

The watching brief was undertaken between 14th February and 26th June 2019. Three areas were monitored:

- an area to the NW of archaeological Area 3 (WB1);
- an area to the SW of the A5 during construction of the new roundabout (WB2);
- an area to the NW of the Rugby Road roundabout (WB3).



The stripping was done by a mechanical excavator fitted with a flat-edged bucket, operated by an experienced driver under close archaeological supervision. Overburden was removed down to the top of the archaeological deposits or the required maximum depth for the development, whichever was encountered first. Any potential archaeological features were cleaned, excavated by hand and recorded using Albion Archaeology's pro forma sheets. All features and deposits were assigned a unique context number commencing at 1 and subsequently drawn and photographed as appropriate.

#### **2.4 Archiving**

The project archive will be deposited at the Leicestershire County Council Museums Service (accession number X.A14.2019). Details of the project and its findings will be submitted to the OASIS database (reference no.: albionar1-342601) in accordance with the guidelines issued by Historic England and the Archaeology Data Service.



### 3. RESULTS

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#### 3.1 Introduction

All features and deposits found during the investigation are discussed by area below and shown in Figure 2. A selection of representative photographs is presented in Figures 3 and 4.

#### 3.2 Overburden

Topsoil generally comprised dark brown-grey clay silt, which was *c.*0.15–0.35m thick. Where present, subsoil was generally light orange-grey or light brown silty clay, *c.*0.1m–0.3m thick.

#### 3.3 WB1 – Area to the NW of Excavation Area 3

Monitoring of ground reduction in advance of the creation of soil bunds was undertaken within a triangular area NW of the former excavation Area 3. The triangle measured 40m long and 15m wide, at its widest point. This area was stripped of its *c.*0.3m-thick topsoil to reveal the underlying subsoil. This represented the formation level of construction and no further ground reduction was undertaken. The archaeological horizon was not exposed.

No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were present within the stripped area, although some may survive beneath the subsoil (Figure 3).

#### 3.4 WB2 – The New A5 Roundabout

Ground reduction of a broadly semi-circular area was monitored to the SW of the current A5, forming the footprint of the new A5 roundabout. This area was *c.*70m by 22m. The current A5 road surface was to be retained and incorporated into the new roundabout construction, with ground reduction required only to the SW. The surface of the A5 was found to be set on a bank of made ground, *c.*0.75m higher than the surrounding ground level (Figures 3 and 4).

The NE part of the stripped area did not fully penetrate the bank, revealing only made-ground underneath the *c.*0.2m-thick topsoil, which comprised mid-brown-grey clay silt with frequent fragments of concrete. To the SW of the bank, the topsoil and a 0.15m-thick subsoil were removed to reveal the underlying geological light orange-grey clay. A series of tractor tyre ruts, one of which contained fragments of modern willow pattern china, truncated the clay (Figure 4).

No archaeological features or deposits were present within the stripped area.

#### 3.5 WB3 – Area to the NW of the Rugby Road Roundabout

Monitoring of ground reduction was undertaken immediately NW of the Rugby Road roundabout (also known as the Frank Whittle aircraft roundabout). The area was slightly curvilinear, measuring *c.*60m long by up to 8m wide. It was stripped of its *c.*0.3m-thick topsoil and 0.2m-thick subsoil, revealing the natural geology of mid-orange gravelly sand. The area had been heavily disturbed by modern services.



No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were present within the stripped area.



## 4. CONCLUSIONS

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The watching brief programme comprised archaeological monitoring of groundworks in three locations within the PDA (Areas WB1–3). No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were present within any of the watching brief areas.

In WB1, an area to the NW of the previously investigated excavation Area 3, the topsoil was removed to expose the underlying subsoil. The formation level of construction was reached at this point and no further ground reduction was undertaken. The archaeological horizon was not exposed and archaeological remains may potentially survive beneath the subsoil.

WB2, an area to the SW of the current A5 in the location of the new roundabout, identified a c.0.75m-high bank of modern make-up material underlying the road. Whilst no features or deposits were present elsewhere within the stripped area, it is possible that remains associated with the Roman road may survive beneath this made ground.

The ground reduction in WB3, an area to the NW of the Rugby Road roundabout, showed only areas of modern disturbance. No features or deposits associated with the nearby former medieval hospital were present.



## 5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

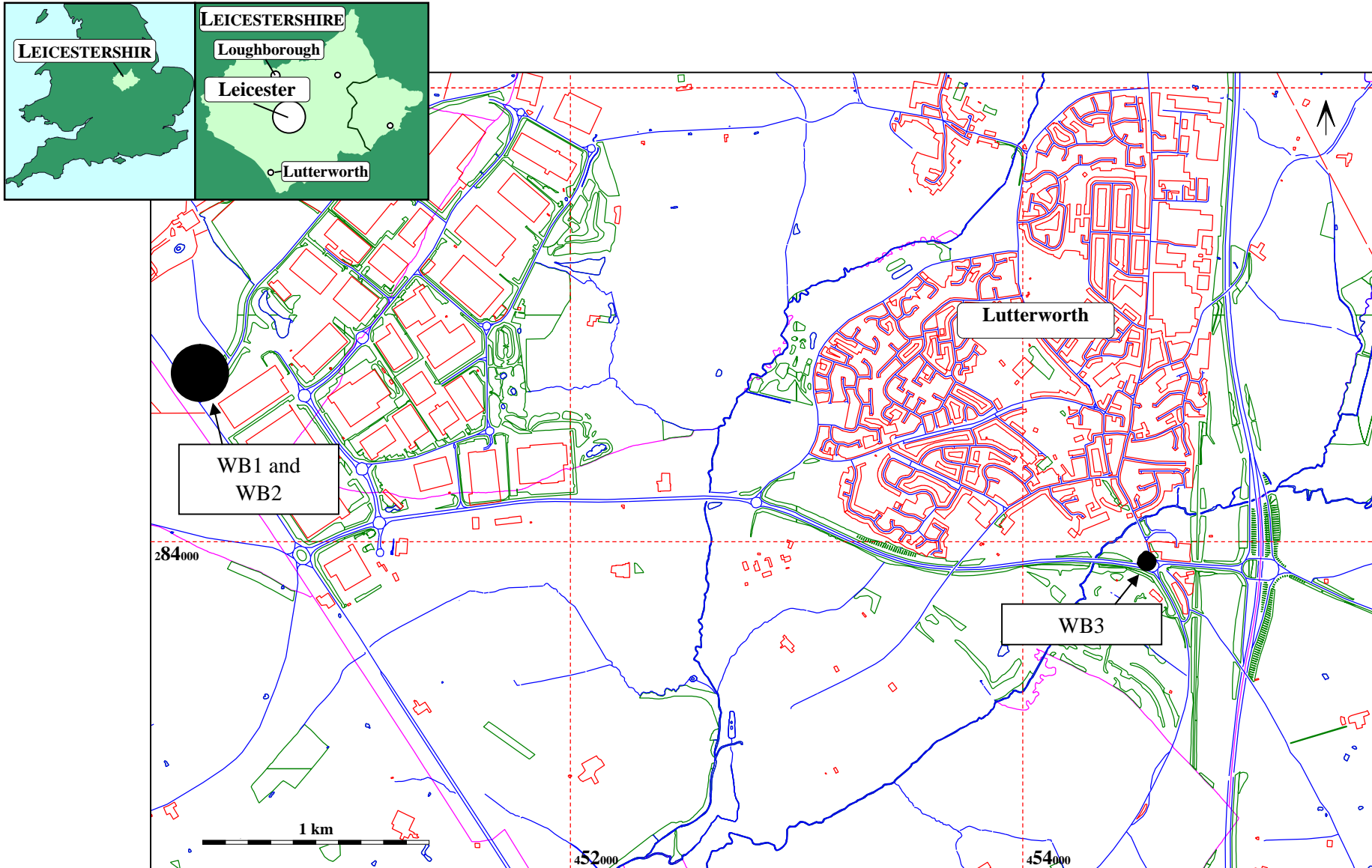
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## 6. FIGURES

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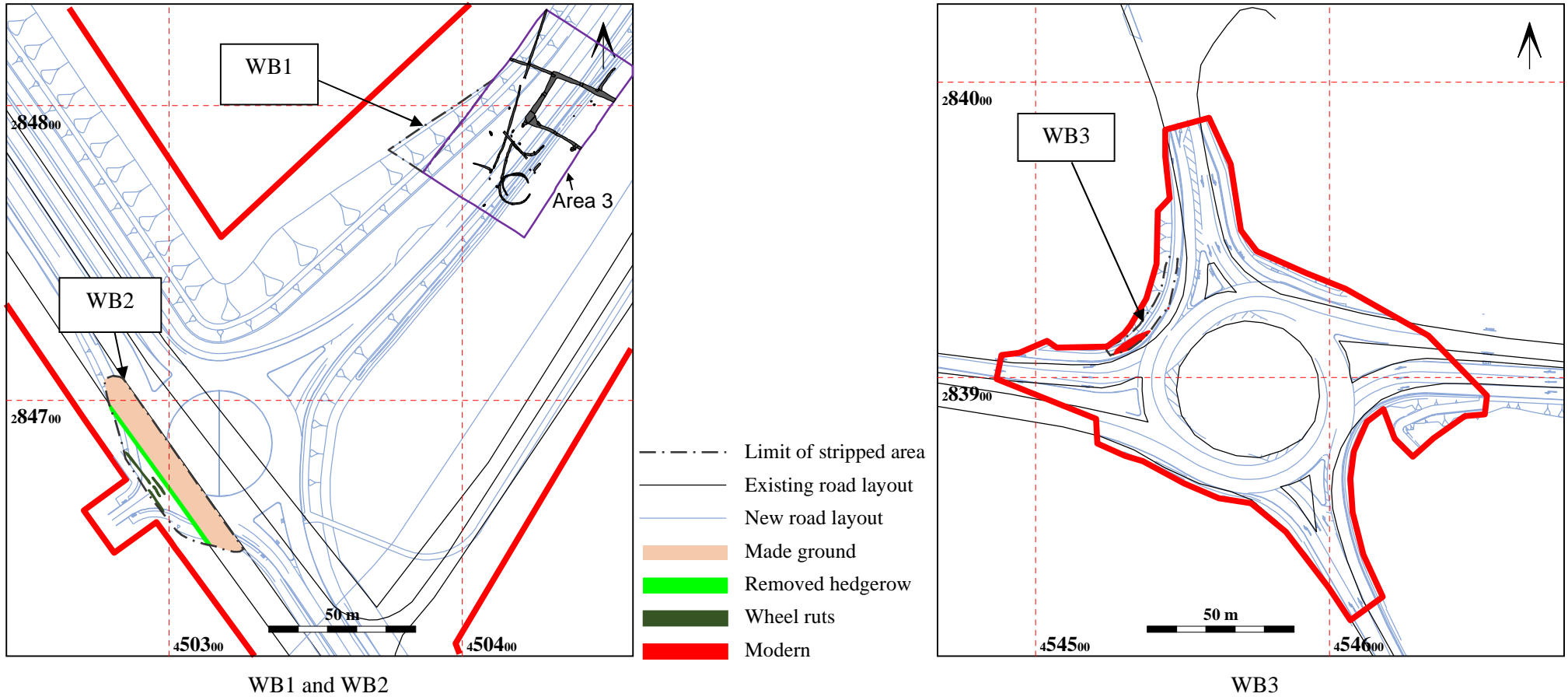


**Figure 1: Site location plan**

Contains Open Source Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2010.

*Magna Park Extension, DHL Supply Chain, Lutterworth, Leicestershire:  
Archaeological Observation, Investigation, Recording, Analysis and Publication*





**Figure 2: Plan of watching brief areas**

A5 map is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright.  
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Rigby Road map is based on satellite data obtained from Google and its data providers.



WB2 - facing NE (scale 1m)



WB1 - facing NE

**Figure 3:** Selected photographs



WB2 - facing S, showing the made ground of the A5 bank (scale 1m)



WB2 - facing SE, showing exposed geological horizon with modern tractor tyre ruts (scale 1m)

**Figure 4:** Selected photographs



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