

**Forest of Arden Hotel & Country Club  
Maxstoke  
Warwickshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief



*for*

**Brooke Smith Planning**

*on behalf of*

**Marriot Forest of Arden Hotel & Country Club**

CA Project: 660180

CA Report: 14029

January 2014

FOREST OF ARDEN HOTEL & COUNTRY CLUB  
MAXSTOKE  
WARWICKSHIRE

Archaeological Watching Brief

CA Project: 660180  
CA Report: 14029

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date	
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## SUMMARY

**Project Name:** Forest of Arden Hotel & Country Club  
**Location:** Maxstoke, Warwickshire  
**NGR:** SP 2317 8556  
**Type:** Watching Brief  
**Date:** 11 November 2013  
**Planning Reference:** PAP/2013/0329  
**Location of Archive:** Warwickshire Museum  
**Site Code:** MFA 13

In November 2013, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological watching brief during groundworks for a new storage building at the Marriott Forest of Arden Hotel & Country Club, Maxstoke, Warwickshire. The watching brief, which was commissioned by Brooke Smith Planning, agents for Marriott Forest of Arden Hotel & Country Club, was undertaken to fulfil a condition attached to planning consent for the development.

All groundworks were archaeologically monitored but no features or deposits of archaeological interest were encountered during groundworks and no artefactual material pre-dating the modern period was identified in the excavated spoil.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In November 2013, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief during groundworks for a new storage building at the Marriott Forest of Arden Hotel & Country Club, Maxstoke, Warwickshire (site centred at NGR: SP 2317 8556; Fig. 1). The watching brief, which was commissioned by Brooke Smith Planning, agents for Marriott Forest of Arden Hotel & Country Club, was undertaken to fulfil a condition attached to planning consent for the development (North Warwickshire Borough Council, planning ref: PAP/2013/0329, Condition 5).
- 1.2 The archaeological watching brief was requested by Anna Stocks, Warwickshire County Council's Planning Archaeologist (WCCPA), as the site lies within the grounds of the early 18th-century Hermitage Farm, which is partially surrounded by a large medieval moat. There was therefore the potential for medieval and later remains to be encountered during groundworks associated with the development. The scope of works was set out in a *Brief* issued by WCCPA (2013) and in the *Written Scheme of Investigation* prepared by CA (2013).
- 1.3 The project was undertaken in accordance with the WSI (CA 2013) and followed best practice, as set out in the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (IfA 2008), and the English Heritage procedural documents *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (EH 1991) and *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (EH 2006).

### **The site**

- 1.4 The site is located at Hermitage Farm, which is situated immediately to the south of the M6 motorway, c. 1.2km to the south of the village of Maxstoke, Warwickshire (Fig. 1). The development comprised the construction of a new storage building on the south side of the farm complex, adjacent to existing buildings. The ground slopes gently to the west, with the site lying close to the 100m Ordnance Survey contour.
- 1.5 The bedrock comprises Triassic rocks of the Mercia Mudstone Group, locally overlain by superficial deposits of mid-Pleistocene glacio-fluvial sand and gravel. (BGS 2013).

### ***Archaeological and historical background***

- 1.6 The Warwickshire Historic Environment Record (HER), which was consulted on 7 February 2014, shows a number of sites within the surrounding area (HER numbers in parenthesis).
- 1.7 Evidence for the earliest human activity comprises two Bronze Age barbed-and-tanged flint arrowheads (WA4544 and WA883), which were found in fields to the east of Packington Lane, c. 600m to the south-east of the site.
- 1.8 There are currently no other known sites of prehistoric activity in the vicinity, and Roman and early medieval remains are similarly scarce, although undated cropmarks c. 1km to the north-west of the site may date to these periods (MWA 1501). In the medieval period Hermitage Farm was the site of a moated farmstead or manor house (WA416), reputedly founded on the site of an early 12th-century hermitage (MWA 417), and there was a hamlet or village c. 1.2km to the south, which was subsequently deserted (MWA 402 and 404). The site of the deserted medieval settlement, which comprises an enclosure, boundary ditches and a trackway, has been identified from cropmarks in a field to the south of Packington Old Hall. The site of the church, that of St James, of which nothing now remains, is situated on a small rise in an arable field c. 500m to the south-east of the former village (WA403).
- 1.9 Packington Old Hall is located approximately 1km to the south of the current site. The two-storey house was built in 1679 and may incorporate parts of a 16th-century timber-framed house that stood within the moated site (WA404). There is a post-medieval dovecote within the grounds (WA 405).

### ***Archaeological objectives***

- 1.10 The objectives of the archaeological works, as outlined in the WSI (CA 2013) were:
- to monitor groundworks and to identify, investigate and record all significant buried archaeological deposits revealed on the site during the course of the development groundworks;



- at the conclusion of the project, to produce an integrated archive for the project work and a report setting out the results of the project and the archaeological conclusions that can be drawn from the recorded data.

### **Methodology**

- 1.11 All intrusive groundworks within the development area were monitored by an experienced archaeologist (Fig. 2) and all mechanical excavation was carried out with a ditching blade.
- 1.12 Features and deposits were planned and recorded in accordance with CA's *Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual* (CA 2007). Each context was recorded on a *pro-forma* context sheet by written and measured description; principal deposits were recorded by drawn plans (scale 1:20 or 1:50, or electronically using Leica 1200 series GPS as appropriate) and drawn sections (scale 1:10 or 1:20 as appropriate). A photographic record of the fieldwork was maintained in 35mm black & white negative film and digital colour. There were no finds and no deposits were encountered that were suitable for environmental sampling.
- 1.13 The archive from the evaluation is currently held by CA at their offices in Newport Pagnell. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner, the archive will be deposited with Warwickshire Museum. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix B, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

## **2. RESULTS**

- 2.1 The geological substrate, 2, consisting of glacial sand and gravel, was revealed at an average depth of 0.25m below present ground level (Fig. 3). This was overlain by a layer of rubbly topsoil, 1, with an average thickness of 0.25m; the condition of the topsoil and the absence of subsoil suggest that it is probably redeposited.
- 2.2 Passing through the centre of the site on a north-west to south-east alignment was a modern trench containing a yellow plastic pipe, which extended from a pump house in the farm complex to a nearby pond. Parallel and adjacent to this were the remains a timber fence that had recently been removed. No features or deposits of

archaeological interest were observed during groundworks and, despite visual scanning of spoil, no artefactual material pre-dating the modern period was identified.

### **3. DISCUSSION**

- 3.1 Despite the archaeological potential of the application area, the watching brief identified no archaeological remains within the area of observed groundworks. The absence of archaeological deposits suggests that any structures or features associated with the medieval moated site did not extend into the development area. The rubbly nature of the topsoil and the absence of subsoil suggest that the site may have been stripped previously and the topsoil reinstated.

### **4. CA PROJECT TEAM**

- 4.1 The fieldwork was undertaken by Mark Patenall. The report was written by Robert Scott and Simon Carlyle, with illustrations prepared by Dan Bashford. The archive has been compiled and prepared for deposition by Dan Wojcek. The project was managed for CA by Simon Carlyle.

### **5. REFERENCES**

BGS (British Geological Survey) 2013 [www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex](http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex), accessed 1 November 2013

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2013 *Forest of Arden Hotel and Golf Course, Maxstoke, Warwickshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*, unpublished document



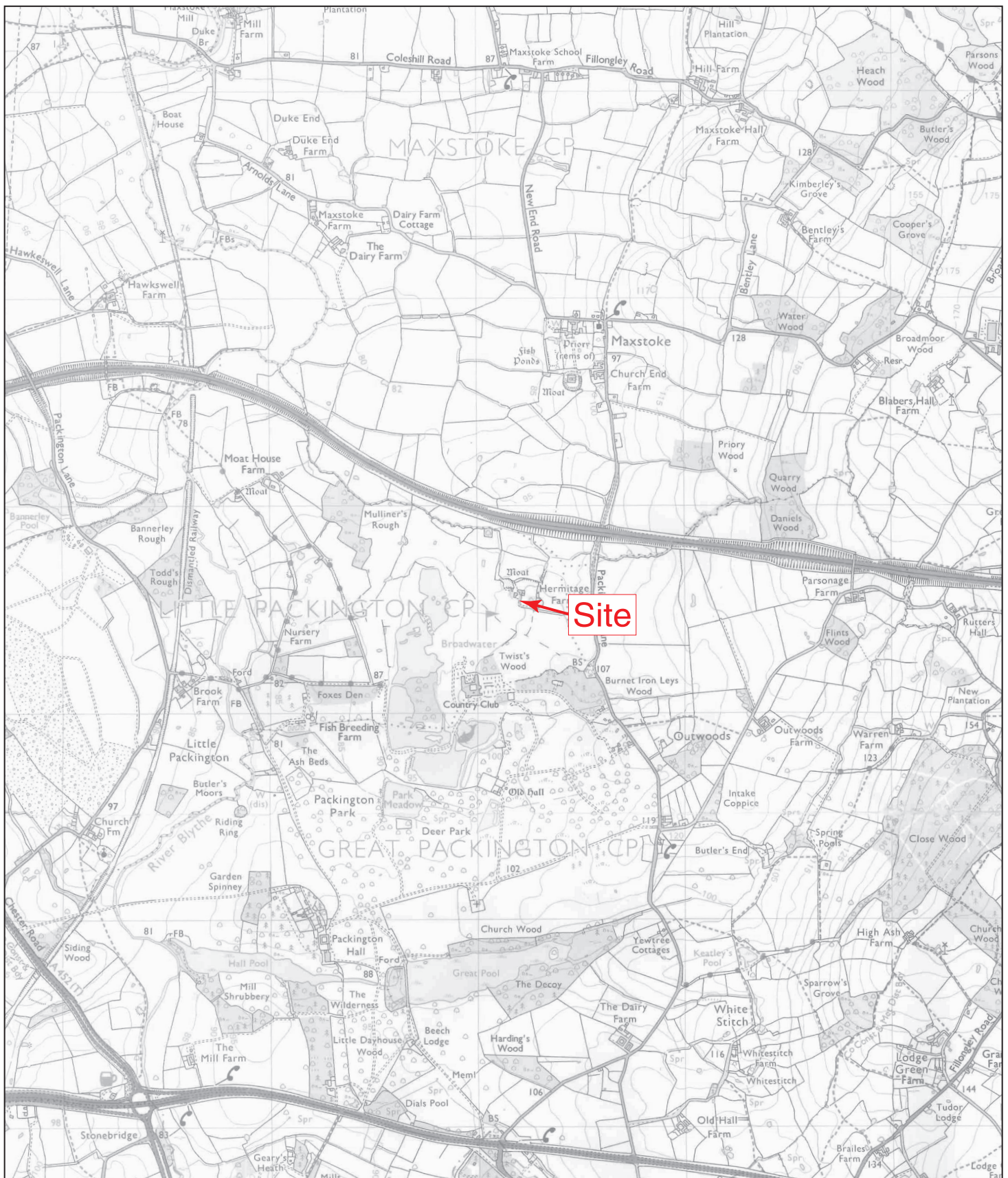


**APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS**

<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Context interpretation</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Depth/ thickness (m)</b>	<b>Spot-date</b>
1	Layer	Topsoil	Mid greyish-brown silty clay with modern debris, possibly redeposited	0.25	modern
2	Layer	Geological substrate	Reddish-brown soft sand and gravel	-	-

**APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		
Project name	Forest of Arden Hotel & Country Club, Maxstoke	
Short description	All groundworks were archaeologically monitored but no features or deposits of archaeological interest were encountered during groundworks and no artefactual material pre-dating the modern period was identified in the excavated spoil.	
Project dates	11 November 2013	
Project type	Watching brief	
Previous work	None	
Future work	None	
Monument type	None	
Significant finds	None	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
Site location	Forest of Arden Hotel & Country Club, Maxstoke, Warwickshire	
Study area	c. 150m <sup>2</sup>	
Site co-ordinates	SP 2317 8556	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology (CA)	
Project Brief originator	WCCPA	
Project Design (WSI) originator	CA	
Project Manager	Simon Carlyle (CA)	
Project Supervisor	Mark Patenall (CA)	
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVE</b>		
	Accession no: -	Content
Physical	Warwickshire Museum	-
Paper		Site records
Digital	Warwickshire HER	Report, digital photos
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2013 <i>Forest of Arden Hotel and Golf Course, Maxstoke, Warwickshire</i> , CA typescript report <b>14029</b>		



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**PROJECT TITLE**

**Forest of Arden Hotel and Golf Course, Maxstoke, Warwickshire**

**FIGURE TITLE**

**Site location plan**

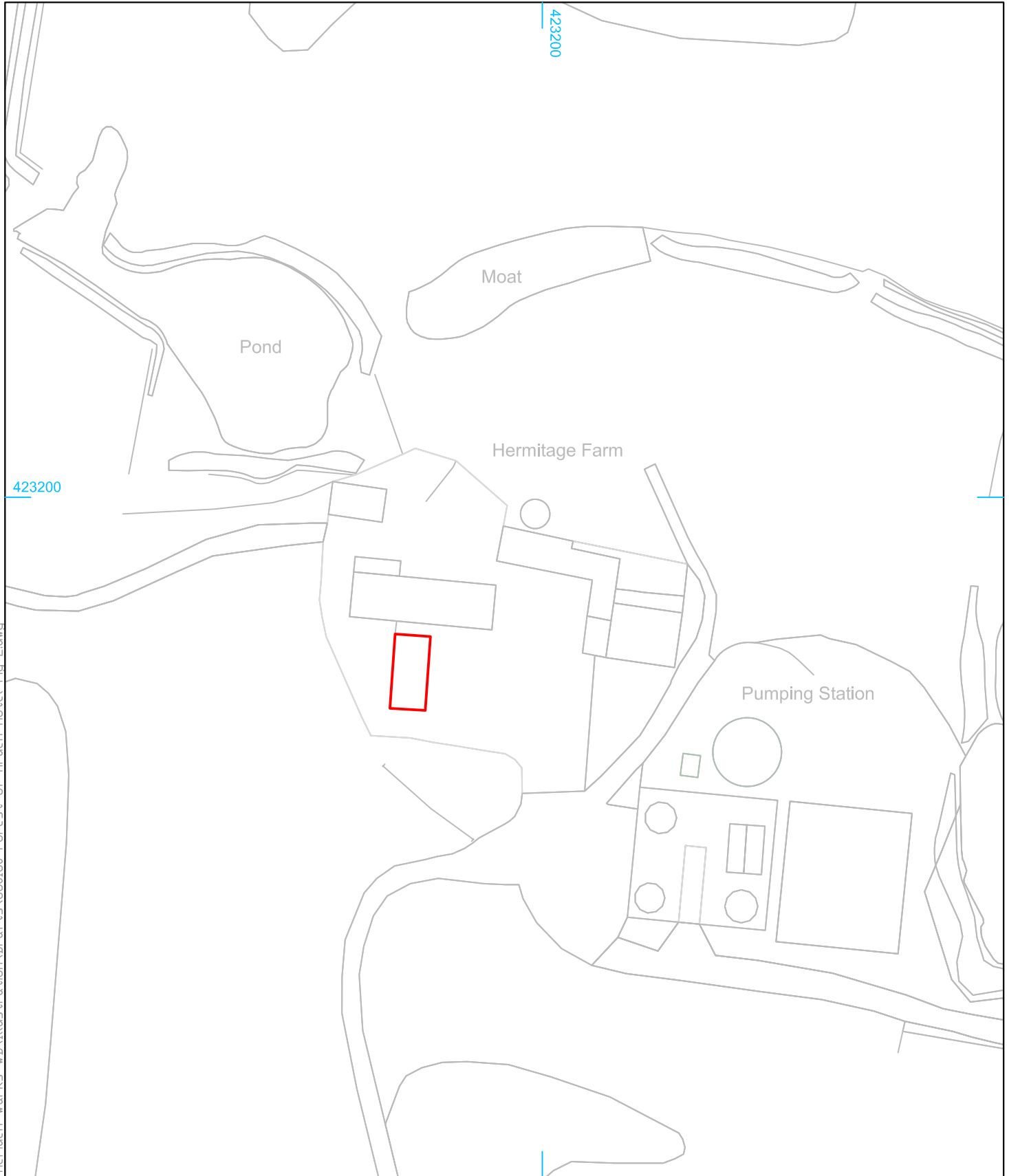


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**PROJECT NO.** 660180    **DATE** 03.01.2014  
**DRAWN BY** DJB    **REVISION** 00  
**APPROVED BY** LM    **SCALE@A4** 1:25,000

**FIGURE NO.**

**1**



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 site



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PROJECT TITLE  
**Forest of Arden Hotel and Golf Course,  
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FIGURE TITLE  
**Site location plan**

PROJECT NO.	660180	DATE	03-01-2014	FIGURE NO.
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APPROVED BY	LM	SCALE@A4	1:1000	



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**3 Excavated footprint of new building, looking south**



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*PROJECT TITLE*

**Forest of Arden Hotel and Golf Course,  
 Maxstoke, Warwickshire**

*FIGURE TITLE*

**Photograph**

PROJECT NO. **660180** DATE **12.02.2014**  
 DRAWN BY **DJB** REVISION **00**  
 APPROVED BY **LM** SCALE@A4 **N/A**

*FIGURE NO.*

**3**