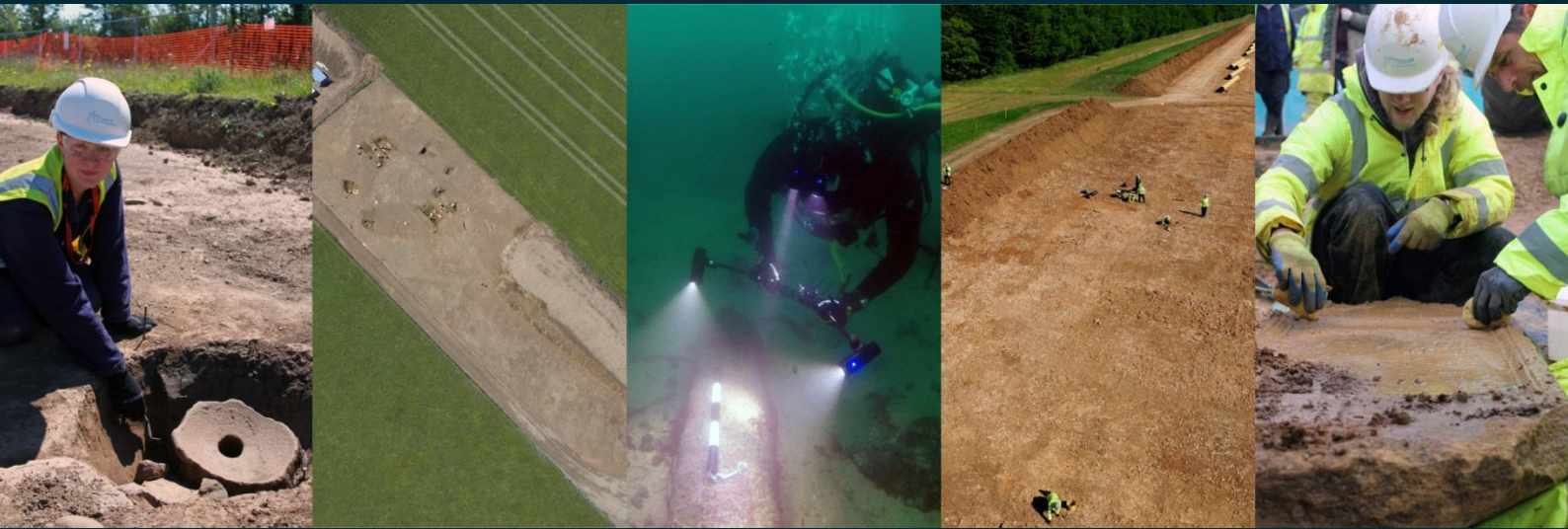


Land to the rear of The Mews, Wem Lane, Wem, Shropshire

Archaeological Watching Brief



for
Planning Potential

on behalf of
Cambian Childcare Properties Ltd

CA Project: 6257
CA Report: 17683

February 2018



Land to the rear of The Mews, Wem Lane,
Wem,
Shropshire

Archaeological Watching Brief

CA Project: 6257
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Document Control Grid						
Revision	Date	Author	Checked by	Status	Reasons for revision	Approved by
A	12 February 2018	Noel Boothroyd	Ian Barnes	Internal review	Client comment	TBC
B	13 February 2018	Noel Boothroyd	Ian Barnes	Issue	Curator comment	TBC

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Fig. 1 Site location plan (1:25,000)

Fig. 2 The site, showing location of groundworks (1:350).



SUMMARY

Project Name: Land to the rear of The Mews
Location: Wem Lane, Wem, Shropshire
NGR: 355513 330800
Type: Watching Brief
Date: 10 August 2017
Planning Reference: 16/00173/FUL
Location of Archive: Shropshire Museums
Site Code: RMW 17

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the development of a school and associated infrastructure at the site.

No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks, and no artefactual material was recovered.



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In August 2017 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief for Planning Potential on behalf of Cambian Childcare Properties at land to the rear of The Mews, Wem Lane, Wem, Shropshire (centred at NGR: 355513 330800; Fig. 1). The watching brief was undertaken to fully discharge condition 6, attached to a planning consent granted by Shropshire Council (SC, planning ref: 16/00173/FUL) for the construction of a school and associated infrastructure.
- 1.2 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a brief for a programme of archaeological work (SC 2016) and subsequent detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2017) and approved by the LPA acting on the advice of Dr Andy Wigley (Natural and Historic Environment Manager, SC). The fieldwork also followed *Standard and guidance for an Archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014).

The site

- 1.3 The development area is approximately 0.23ha in extent, and comprises of open ground with a small area of hardstanding. The site is bounded to the west by the residential property known as the Mews, and on all other sides by agricultural land, with a stream, Siddleymoore Brook, running along the northern boundary. The site lies at approximately 77m AOD and is level.
- 1.4 The underlying bedrock geology of the area is mapped as Lias Group - Mudstone of the Jurassic and Triassic Periods. Superficial deposits of Till, Devensian – Diamicton of the Quaternary Period are also noted (BGS 2017). The natural substrate exposed across the area of observations was a gravelly sand with areas of grey-brown sandy clay.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Wem has been subject to archaeological assessment (Buteux *et al* 1996), though the site lies at the eastern edge of the area reviewed. This, and other pertinent public domain information, is summarised below.



- 2.2 The site lies c.50m to the west of the posited alignment of the Wroxeter to Whitchurch Roman road, corresponding with the modern alignment of Wem Lane to the north of the site. The road survives as section of agger to the south east of the site. A pre-Domesday settlement existed, but its location has not been resolved (Buteux *et al* 1996).
- 2.3 The majority of other archaeological sites in the vicinity of the site indicate activity in the Post-Medieval and early modern periods, including the farmstead located to the south of Brook Farm (c.100m southwest of the site).

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The objectives of the archaeological works 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.

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The fieldwork followed the methodology set out within the WSI (CA 2017). An archaeologist was present during intrusive groundworks comprising foundation trenching for the new school building (Fig. 2).
- 4.2 Where archaeological deposits were encountered written, graphic and photographic records were compiled in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual*.
- 4.3 The archive and artefacts from the evaluation are currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the site archive will be deposited with Shropshire Museums. 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.

5. RESULTS (FIG 2)

5.1 The natural geological substrate consisting of brown gravelly sand with areas of grey-brown sandy clay, was revealed at an average depth of 0.15m below present ground level. This was overlain by a dark brown silty sand topsoil averaging 0.15m in thickness.

5.2 No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks and, despite visual scanning of spoil, no artefactual material was recovered.

6. DISCUSSION

6.1 Despite the archaeological potential of the application area (see archaeological background above) the watching brief identified no archaeological remains within the area of observed groundworks. The absence of archaeological deposits may indicate that structural remains associated with activity along the Roman road, or Post-medieval developments, either do not extend as far as or were not exposed by the development, or that they may have been removed during previous development.

7. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Martyn Cooper. The report was written by Noel Boothroyd. The illustrations were prepared by Aleksandra Osinska. The archive has been compiled and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Ian Barnes.

8. REFERENCES



BGS (British Geological Survey) 2017 *Geology of Britain Viewer*
<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> Accessed 25 April 2017

Buteux, V., Hurst, D., Morriss, R., Pearson, E. and Stamper, P. 1996 *Archaeological Assessment of Wem, Shropshire* Hereford & Worcester CAS Rep. Rep 351

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2017 *Land to the rear of the Mews, Wem Lane, Wem, Shropshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

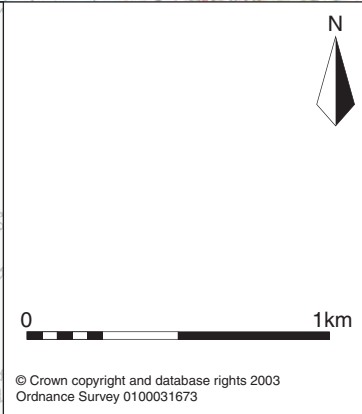
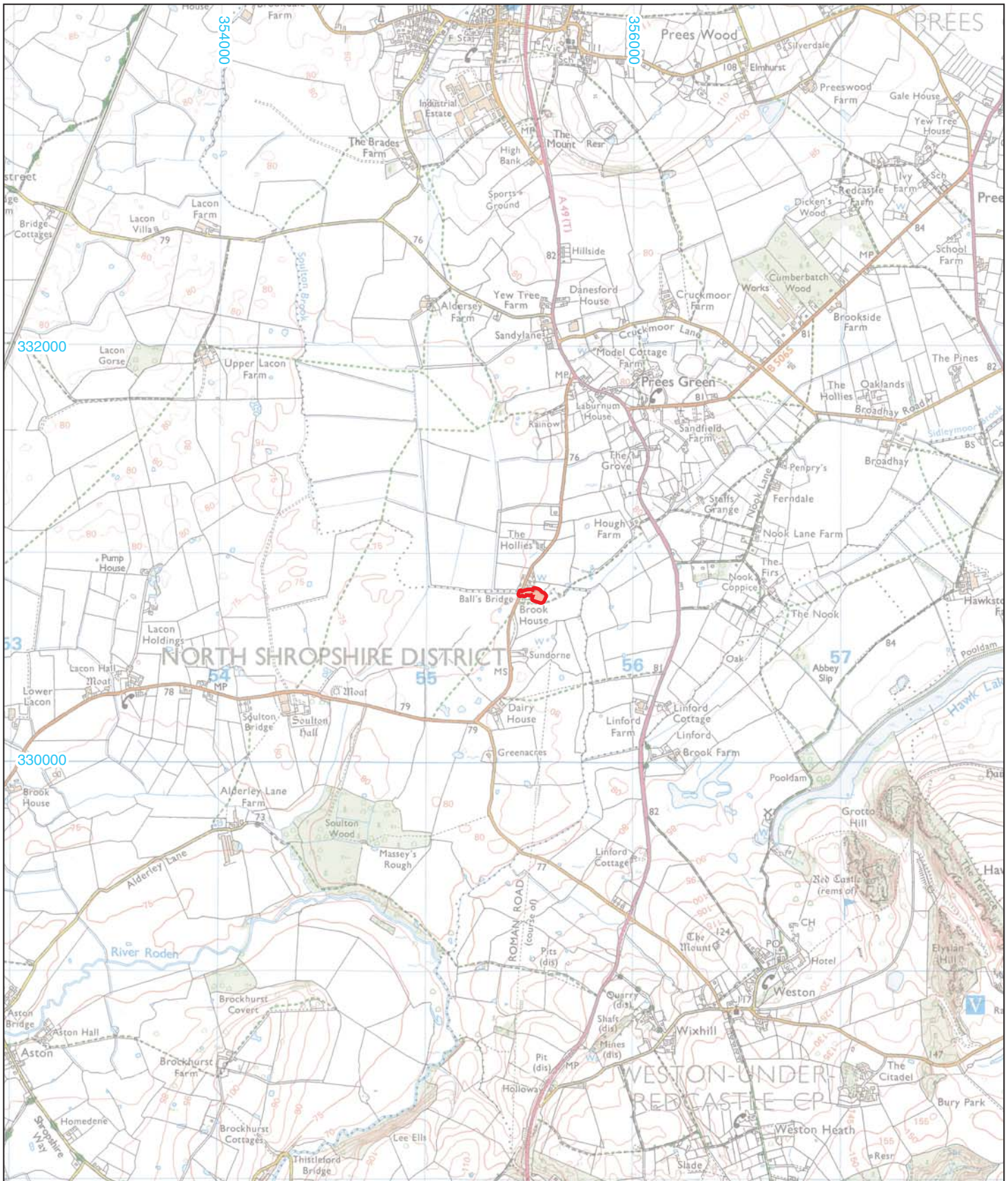


APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	Depth /thickness (m)	Spot-date
1	101	Layer		Topsoil	Dark brown silty sand topsoil	-	-	0.15	
1	102	Layer		Natural substrate	Brown gravelly sand with areas of grey-brown sandy clay	-	-	NE	

APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project Name	Land to the rear of the Mews, Wem Lane, Wem, Shropshire	
Short description	<p>An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the development of a school and associated infrastructure at the site.</p> <p>No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks, and no artefactual material pre-dating the modern period was recovered.</p>	
Project dates	August 2017	
Project type	Watching brief	
Previous work	None	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site Location	Land to the rear of the Mews, Wem Lane, Wem, Shropshire	
Study area (M ² /ha)	0.23ha	
Site co-ordinates	SJ 5551 3080	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Ian Barnes	
Project Supervisor	Martyn Cooper	
MONUMENT TYPE	None	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None	
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
	Intended final location of archive (museum/Accession no.)	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical	N/A	N/A
Paper	Shropshire Museums	Report
Digital	Shropshire Museums	Report
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
<p>Cotswold Archaeology 2017 <i>Land to the rear of the Mews, Wem Lane, Wem, Shropshire: Archaeological Watching Brief</i>. CA typescript report 17683</p>		



Cotswold Archaeology

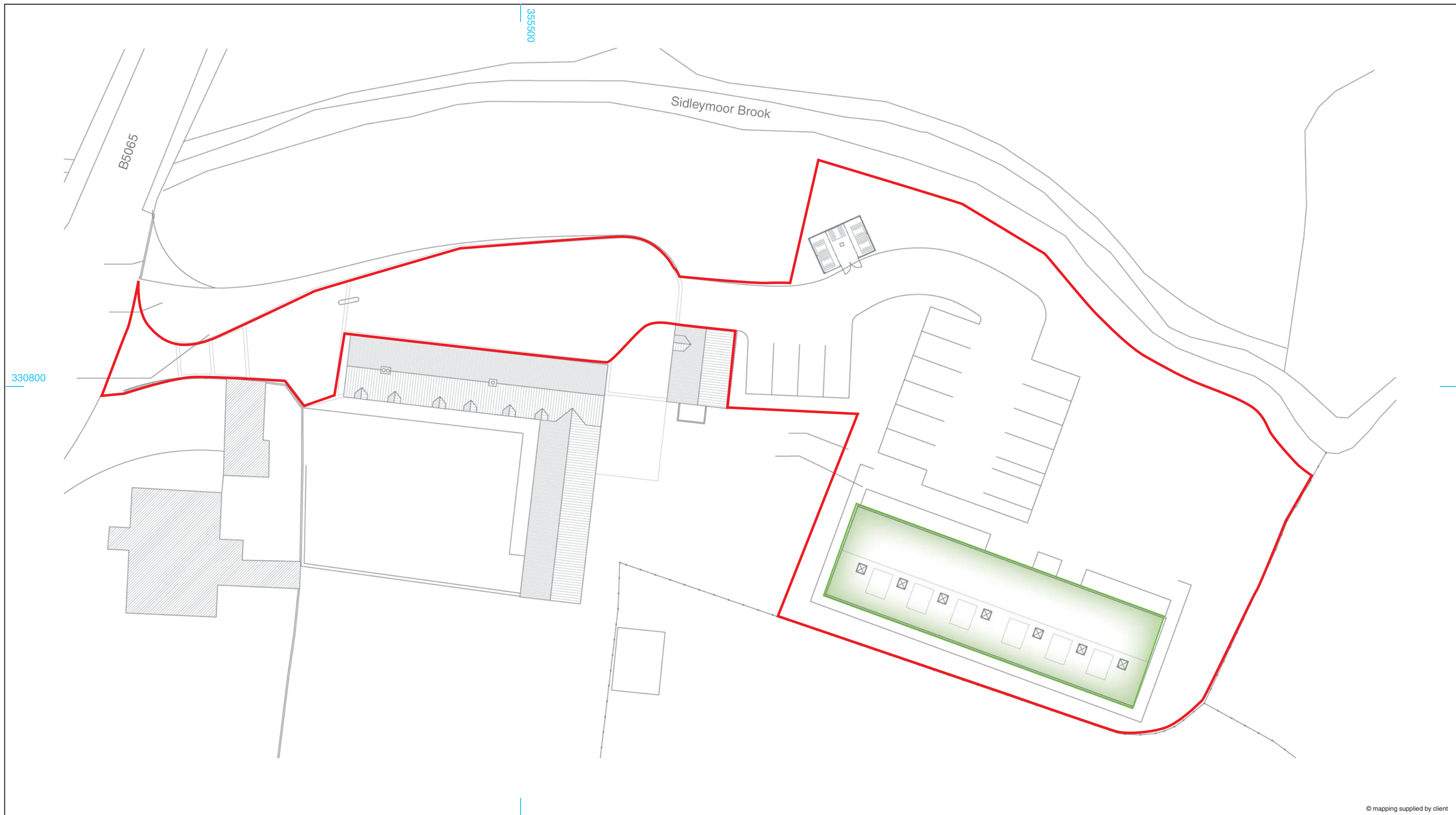
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PROJECT TITLE
 Land to the rear of the Mews, Wem Lane, Wem, Shropshire

FIGURE TITLE
 Site location plan

DRAWN BY AO **PROJECT NO.** 6257 **FIGURE NO.** 1
CHECKED BY DJB **DATE** 09/02/2018
APPROVED BY IB **SCALE**@A4 1:25,000

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- Site boundary
- Area of observed groundworks

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 enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

PROJECT TITLE
 Land to the rear of the Mews, Wem Lane, Wem, Shropshire

FIGURE TITLE
 The site, showing location of groundworks

0 1:350 15m

DRAWN BY	AO	PROJECT NO.	6257	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	08/02/2018	2
APPROVED BY	IB	SCALE@A3	1:350	

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