



Getrag Carpark, JLR Halewood, Merseyside

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

November 2018

McDermotts Building and Civil Engineering Ltd

Issue No: 2018-19/1931
OA Reference No: L11144
NGR: SJ 45066 83873
Acc. No. MOL.2018.55

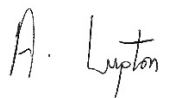


Client Name: McDermotts Building and Civil Engineering Ltd
Document Title: Getrag Carpark, JLR Halewood, Merseyside
Document Type: Watching Brief Report
Report No.: 2018-19/1931
Grid Reference: SJ 45066 83873
Planning Reference: 17/00006/FUL
Site Code: JHW18
Invoice Code: L11144
Receiving Body: Merseyside Historic Environment Record

OA Document File Location:

OA Graphics File Location:

Issue No: 2018-19/1931
Date: August 2018
Prepared by: Mike Birtles (Assistant Supervisor)
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PROCUREMENT

Getrag Carpark, JLR Halewood, Merseyside

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Written by Mike Birtles

With illustrations by Mark Tidmarsh

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Summary

Oxford Archaeology (OA) North was commissioned by McDermotts Building and Civil Engineering Ltd, on behalf of Jaguar Land Rover, to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks on the site of Getrag carpark, Jaguar Land Rover Halewood, Merseyside. The work was undertaken as a condition of planning permission (planning ref 17/00006/FUL). This report outlines how OA implemented the specified requirements.

Prior to its development in 1961-62, the area of the site was largely occupied by the moated manor of Old Hutt, its ancillary buildings, associated features, and surrounding agricultural land. This landscape had changed little from the first available mapping to the time of its destruction during the construction of the Ford plant.

Old Hutt was excavated in 1960, but the excavation was limited in its scope and was largely an exercise in following the walls of the former manor house. As a result, the conclusions of the excavation were limited. However, the excavators did identify the basic chronology of the manor house and the kitchen complex, in addition to expanding understanding of the size and layout of the manor house complex.

The watching brief was undertaken in June and July 2018 and included the monitoring of topsoil stripping, and ground reduction for an access road and for an attenuation tank. This identified that the site had been landscaped using redeposited clay that contained brick, plastic and reinforced steel bar and was overlain by imported topsoil, probably during the construction of the car plants post - 1960. The deepest excavation, that of the attenuation tank, was located partially over the north-east corner of the moat; it reached a depth of 1.8m below ground level without exposing either natural deposits or archaeological remains. The same thickness of made ground was observed in the southern and eastern edges of excavation, which were likely to lie beyond the limits of the moat. This would suggest that the made ground deposits not only extended across the development site, but were also likely to have been deposited to a thickness that would seal any archaeological remains of the manor below the depth of impact associated with the works within the current scheme of development.

Acknowledgements

Oxford Archaeology North would like to thank Mark Dowd, Dave Kelsall, and Steve Wintle of McDermotts Building and Civil Engineering Ltd, and James Wilson of Jaguar Land Rover for commissioning this project. Thanks are also extended to Doug Moir who monitored the work on behalf of Merseyside Environmental and Archaeological Advisory Service, and for his advice and guidance.

The watching brief was undertaken by Mike Birtles, who also compiled the report. The illustrations were prepared by Mark Tidmarsh. The project was managed for Oxford Archaeology North by Stephen Rowland.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of work

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) North was commissioned by McDermotts Building and Civil Engineering Ltd on behalf of Jaguar Land Rover (JLR), to undertake an archaeological watching brief at the site of Getrag carpark, Jaguar Land Rover Halewood, Merseyside (centred NGR SJ 45066, 83873; Fig 1). The work was undertaken as a condition of planning permission (Planning ref 17/00006/FUL). Following the completion of a cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (Arcadis 2017), the Archaeological Advisor at Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (MEAS) recommended to the Local Authority that the work necessary to discharge the planning condition should comprise an archaeological watching brief. This report outlines how OA North implemented the specified requirements in June and July 2018.

1.2 Location, topography and geology

- 1.2.1 The site is located immediately east of the Jaguar Land Rover Car Plant within Halewood, Merseyside, and is bounded to the south by South Road (A561). The development site itself comprises an area of carparking on the western side, bounded by a north/south-aligned road, beyond which lies in an area of landscaped grassland, partially bisected by an east/west spur road (Fig 2).
- 1.2.2 The geology of the area is mapped as Kinnerton Sandstone Formation, a sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 247 to 252 million years ago in the Triassic Period (British Geological Survey 2018). The superficial deposits comprise glacial till formed up to two million years ago in the Quaternary Period during ice age conditions (*ibid*).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The archaeological and historical background of the site has been described in detail in the cultural Heritage Impact assessment for the Getrag Car Park scheme (Arcadis 2017), and will not be reproduced in full here. Prior to its development in 1961-62 the area of the site was largely occupied by the moated manor of Old Hutt, its ancillary buildings, associated features, and surrounding agricultural land. This landscape had changed little from the first available mapping to the time of its destruction during the construction of the Ford Motor plant.
- 1.3.2 Old Hutt was excavated in 1960 (Fig 3; Wrathmell 1992) but the investigation was limited in its scope and was largely an exercise in following the walls of the former manor house. As a result, the conclusions of the excavation were limited. However, the excavators did identify the basic chronology of the manor house and the kitchen complex, in addition to expanding understanding of the size and layout of the manor house complex itself.
- 1.3.3 The development of Old Hutt can be traced back to the fourteenth century, with the construction of a hall with stone walls and a timber roof, along with detached kitchen. Overall, evidence for the layout of the manor is fragmentary, although probate inventories of 1626 and 1675, in which the buildings and rooms are named and valued

in order, does provide some indication of the plan. By the mid-seventeenth century the upper end of the hall had been remodelled, which included an eastward-projecting wing at the southern end of the hall. The lower end of the hall appears, by that time, to be in use only as a reception room. The erection of a chamber block to the east of the screens passage, part of which survived until 1960, and the reconstruction of the kitchens to incorporate them into the main complex also occurred in this phase (Arcadis 2017).

- 1.3.4 By the early 1960s the surviving remains of Old Hutt comprised the gate house with a later farm house attached, two sections of the original manor house consisting of a section of wall containing an early fourteenth-century arched doorway and a further section of brick wall on a sandstone plinth which incorporated a fireplace, as well as a number of ancillary farm buildings (*ibid*).
- 1.3.5 Cartographic evidence (*ibid*) indicates that, during the nineteenth and earlier twentieth centuries, parts of the moat were partially infilled, but the feature was still visible on the ground until construction of the Ford Motor plant. The moat was investigated during the 1960 excavation on the east and south sides, but does not seem to have been excavated to its full depth or extent during the excavations, and understanding of the construction methodology of the moat and platform is therefore limited (*ibid*). Geotechnical investigation of the site in 2017 did not reveal any evidence of the moat (*ibid*).
- 1.3.6 Old Hutt moated manor site was one of five moated sites within a 5km radius, of which only two survive today. This included Wrights Moat, which was located some 350m to the north-west of the site, but still within the confines of the Jaguar Land Rover factory, which also investigated during the 1960 excavations (*ibid*).

2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The project aims and objectives were as follows:

- i. To provide a permanent-presence archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with ground reduction, the construction of the access route and compound;
- ii. To identify, investigate, and record any archaeological deposits affected by the proposed groundworks;
- iii. To determine or confirm the approximate date or date range of any remains, by means of artefactual or other evidence.

2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 The works were undertaken to meet all relevant guidance of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA; 2014a; 2014b; 2014c). A programme of field observation accurately recorded the location, extent, and character of deposits within the development groundworks. Three areas were monitored during the watching brief, which comprised the general topsoil strip, and ground reduction in the area of the access road, as well as ground reduction down to 1.8m below present ground level in an area measuring 31m by 21m for the attenuation tank (Figs 2 and 3). Following discussion with MEAS, it was agreed that excavation of the service duct and miner drainage runs would not need to be monitored.
- 2.2.2 The on-site contractor used a 360 machine fitted with a toothless bucket for excavation (toothed buckets inhibit observation of archaeological features and their recording). The work comprised observation during the groundworks and the systematic examination of any subsoil horizons exposed. Any resultant spoil was also systematically examined during the course of the operation. The excavation area was only entered by OA North staff when it was considered safe to do so.
- 2.2.3 A photographic record (using high-resolution digital SLR) was undertaken. A plan was produced of the area of groundworks showing the location and extent of the ground disturbance.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The results of the watching brief are presented below, and include a stratigraphic description of the deposits revealed by the groundworks. The full details of all excavations with dimensions and depths of all deposits can be found in *Appendix A*. Ground conditions throughout the watching brief were good, and the excavation remained dry throughout.

3.2 Description of deposits

3.2.1 The soil sequence across the area was fairly uniform. Removal of a 0.1m-thick layer of imported topsoil, **101** (Plates 1 and 2; surface at 21.71–22.06m OD), revealed a deposit of redeposited clay (**102**), which was observed across the stripped area. This was the formation level for the site, and was cut into only during the excavation of the attenuation tank, where deposit **102** was found to exceed the 1.8m depth of those groundworks (Fig 3, Plate 3; base at c 20.2m OD). The mixed red and blue-grey clay contained lenses of soil, and modern detritus, including reinforcing bars, bricks and plastic. The natural geology was not reached during the course of works, and no archaeological features or finds were observed.



Plate 1: Topsoil strip of the former grassed area showing levelling layer **102**



Plate 2: Topsoil strip of an access road for the proposed carpark



Plate 3: Attenuation tank excavation

4 DISCUSSION

- 4.1.1 Although no archaeological features or finds were identified during the watching brief, it is entirely possible that remains associated with the Old Hutt moated manor lie sealed beneath the deposit of made ground that was observed extending across the site. Certainly in the area of the attenuation tank, these deposits exceeded 1.8m in depth (ie, 20.2m OD). The site of the attenuation tank encompasses the north-east corner of the moat and, at first sight, it might be tempting to associate the depth of made ground with the backfilling of the moat, which, in 1960, still formed localised depressions some 2m below the level of the central platform occupied by the manor house (Wrathmell 1992). However, there is no apparent change in the thickness of the made ground at the southern and eastern edges of the attenuation tank, which seem to lie beyond the area occupied by the moat. This would suggest that the made ground is likely to be of considerable thickness, even beyond the area of the moat.

APPENDIX A CONTEXT INVENTORY

Context No.	Type	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
101	Layer	Across site	Across site	0.1	Imported topsoil	-	modern
102	Layer	across site	Across site	>1.8m	Re-deposited clay landscaping layer	Modern building material, not collected	modern

APPENDIX B BIBLIOGRAPHY

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APPENDIX C SITE SUMMARY DETAILS

Site name:	Getrag Carpark JLR Halewood, Merseyside
Site code:	JHW18
Grid Reference	SJ 45066 83873
Type:	Watching Brief
Date and duration:	June-July 2018
Area of Site	11264m ²
Location of archive:	The archive is currently held at OA, Mill 3, Moor Lane Mills, Moor Lane, Lancaster, LA1 1QD, and will be deposited with the Museum of Liverpool (NML) in due course.
Summary of Results:	The whole area under grass was stripped of topsoil, below which was a levelling layer of redeposited clay containing modern debris including reinforcing bar and brick. A further excavation measuring 31m x 21m, was reduced by 1.8m to accommodate an attenuation tank. The natural geology was not exposed and no archaeological remains were identified.

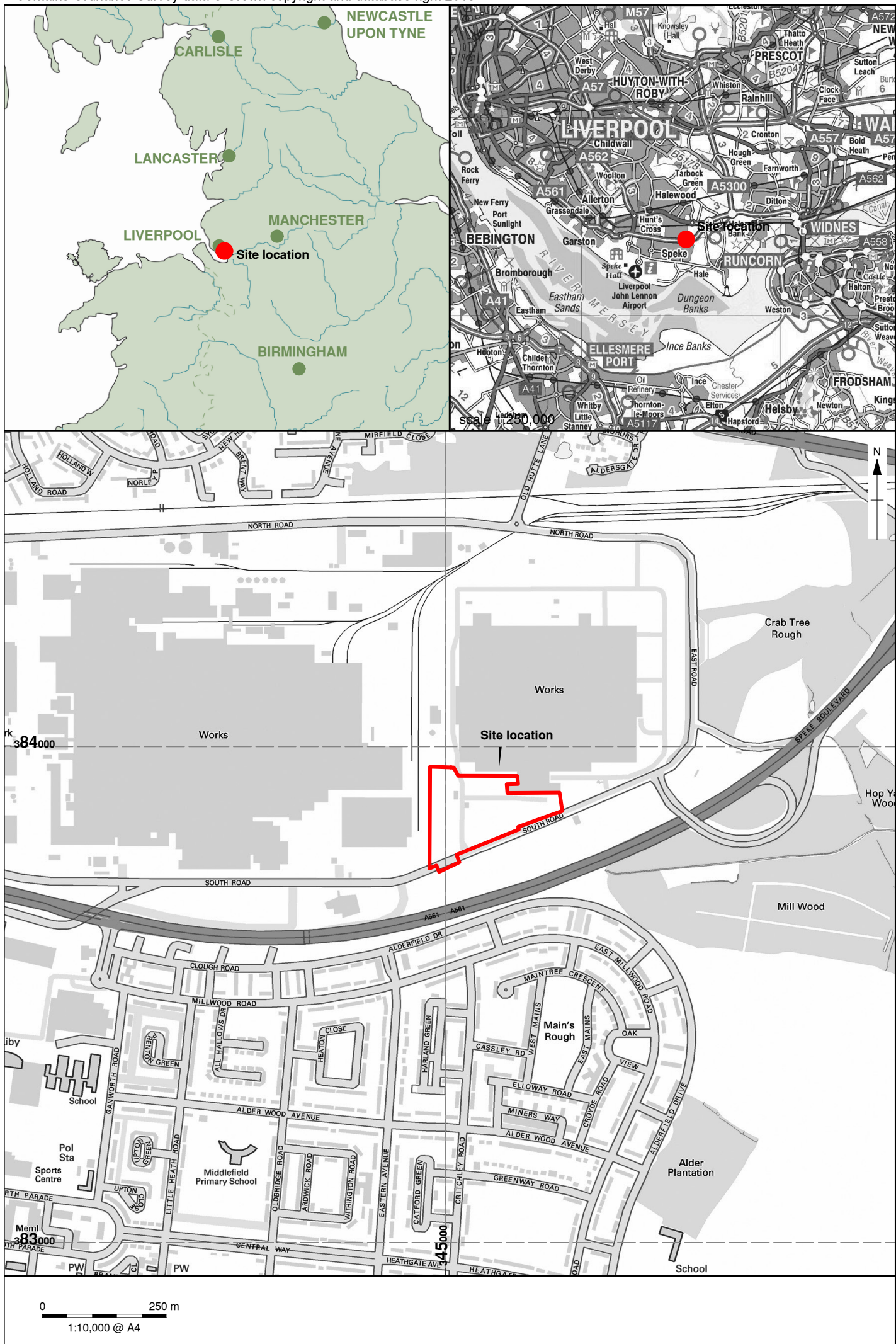


Figure 1: Site location

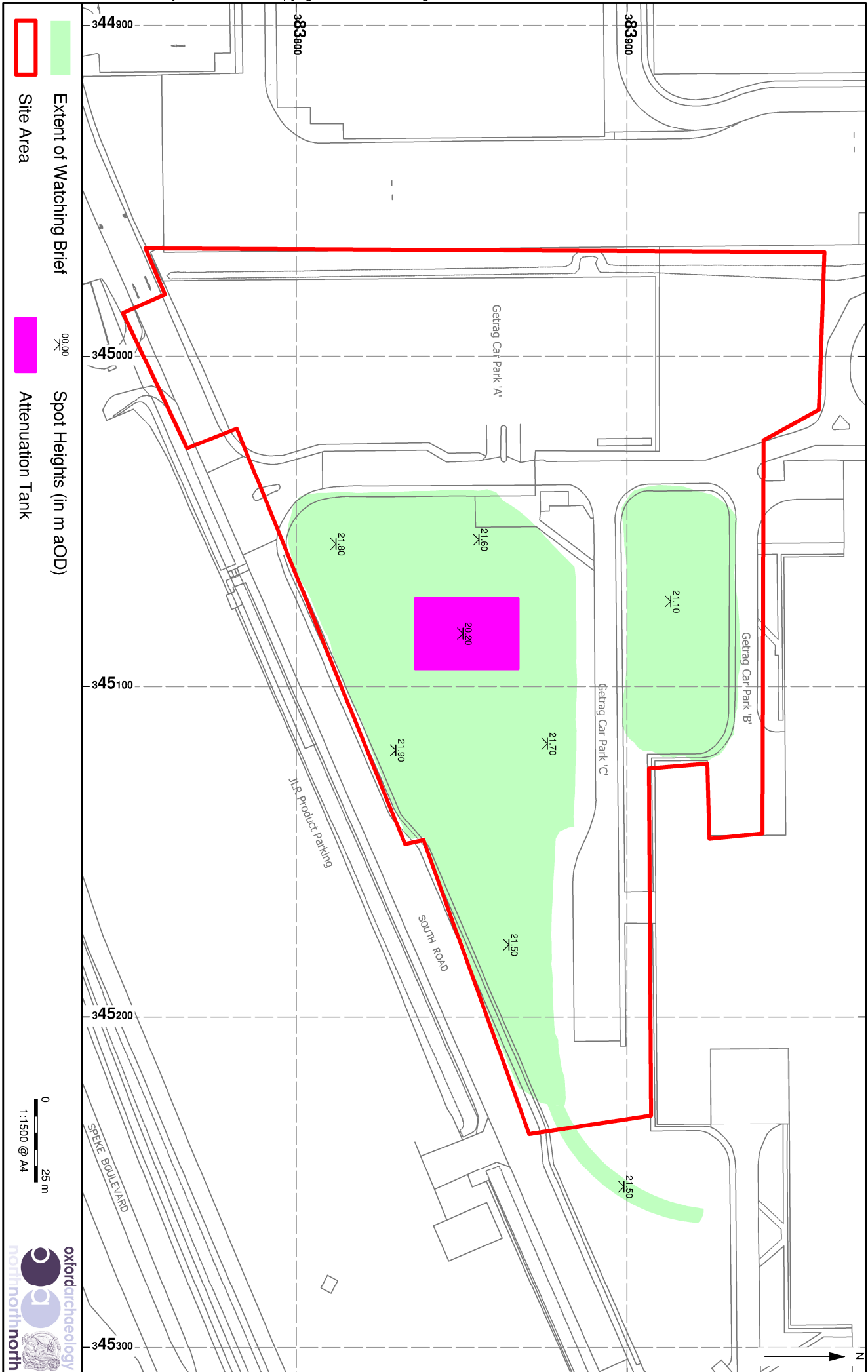


Figure 2: Extent of watching brief



Figure 3: Location of attenuation tank excavation superimposed on 1960 plan of Old Hutt moated manor



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