

Archaeological Watching Brief at the former  
Builder's Yard rear of 67 High Street,  
Wingham, Kent

Site Code WING/WB/16



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**SWAT ARCHAEOLOGY**

Swale and Thames Archaeological Survey Company  
The Office, School Farm Oast, Graveney Road  
Faversham, Kent ME13 8UP

Tel; 01795 532548 or 07885 700 112

info@swatarchaeology.co.uk [www.swatarchaeology.co.uk](http://www.swatarchaeology.co.uk)

# Archaeological Watching Brief at the former Builder's Yard, rear of 67 High Street, Wingham, Kent

Site Code WING/WB/16



Plate 1 Aerial view of site (red target) showing the site prior to development.

(Google Earth 09/07/2013: Eye altitude 201m).

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## *Abstract*

*In January 2016 SWAT Archaeology carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording at the former Builder's Yard, rear of 67 High Street, Wingham Kent. The works were commissioned by Torran Construction Limited and carried out during the excavation of ground works associated with the construction of proposed buildings. The Watching Brief was conducted in accordance with an archaeological Watching Brief specification issued by Kent County Council Heritage & Conservation (2013).*

*The monitoring and recording revealed a stratigraphic deposit sequence comprising topsoil overlying subsoil and geological Head deposits. Variations to this occurred adjacent to existing access points to site where frequent demolition material had been pressed into the upper soil sequence in order to stabilise and reinforce ground conditions. Archaeological monitoring was carried out throughout the duration of the groundworks, which took approximately 8 days in January 2016. No archaeological finds or features were present.*

**Archaeological Watching Brief at the former Builder's Yard, rear of 67 High Street,  
Wingham, Kent  
NGR Site Centre: 624418 157684  
Site Code: WING/WB/16**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) were commissioned by Torran Construction Ltd to undertake a programme of archaeological works at the former Builder's Yard, rear of 67 High Street, Wingham Kent (**Figure 1**). Planning consent (DOV/14/00320) was granted by Dover District Council (DDC) for the erection of 4 dwellings on the site of a former builder's yard including demolition of existing buildings and part re-use of existing materials and provision of temporary construction access from St Mary's Meadow, with the following condition (Condition 4);

*With the exception of the temporary access hereby approved, no development (including demolition) shall take place until the applicant(s), or their agents or successors in title, has or have secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written specification and timetable which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Reason: To ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded.*

- 1.2 Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation (KCC), who provide an advisory service to DDC, requested that the programme of archaeological work consists of an *Archaeological Watching Brief* be undertaken to record any archaeological remains uncovered during associated groundworks.
- 1.3 The fieldwork was carried out in January 2016 in accordance with a Watching Brief Specification prepared by Kent County Council (KCC May 2013).

**2. Site Description and Topography**

- 2.1 The site is centred on NGR 624418 157684, located on the outskirts of the village of Wingham, c. 6 miles west of Sandwich, at the junction of the A257 High Street, which heads west to Canterbury, and Adisham Road, which heads south to Aylesham. The development site consists of an area of a former builder's yard to the rear of 67 High Street. Access to the site is by a driveway adjacent to 67 High Street. Prior to arrival extant buildings had been demolished to ground level.

2.2 The site lies on roughly level ground at a height of 5.3m above Ordnance Datum aOD. Prior to fieldwork, the site surface consisted of a combination of concrete surfaces and small grassed verges. The Site excavation works were divided into three areas; Area 1 (200sq.m), Area 2 (160sq.m) and Area 3 (105sq.m) totally approximately 0.046 hectares (**Figure 2**).

2.3 According to the British Geological Society, the underlying geology comprises White Chalk bedrock of the Margate Chalk Member overlaid by superficial deposits of undifferential Clay and Silt Head Deposits.

### **3. Archaeological and Historical Background**

3.1 A brief archaeological and historical background is detailed within the KCC Specification;

*The site lies within the historic medieval town of Wingham and adjacent to the presumed line of the Canterbury to Richborough Roman road. No archaeological remains are known from the site itself but a number of archaeological finds have been made within and around the village. These include a possible Neolithic occupation site to the north-west and the site of a known Roman villa to the south-west. Other finds in the village relate to the medieval settlement and its post-medieval development.*

(2013:2.2)

3.2 The site lies within an area of known archaeological potential associated with important Neolithic, Roman and Medieval activity. To the north-west a Neolithic occupation site has been identified (TR 25 NW 22). To the north-east an Iron-Age settlement site (TR 25 NW 52). To the east a possible rectilinear earthwork (TR 25 NW 461). To the south-west medieval pits (TR 25 NW 157) and a Roman villa with important early Saxon or Friesen pottery was found to the south (TR 25 NW 14).

3.2 Not recorded on the HER is a large Roman occupation site found through field walking by the Kent Archaeological Field School in an area to the north of the village adjacent to the postulated Roman road route to Richborough on high ground south of Petts Lane and overlooking the Wingham River or Lesser Stour. In three days of investigation over 300 sherds of Roman pottery were retrieved (P Wilkinson, *pers com*).

3.3 According to the Domesday Book Saxon Wingham was in the possession of the Archbishop of Canterbury and in 1286 Archbishop Peckham founded a college located to the south of the development site. The village houses date for the most part from the medieval period and are mostly Grade II listed including the house fronting the

development site and include 69 High Street, The Central Stores and 72-80 High Street (TR 25 NW 184). It is a possibility that medieval activity may spill over into the development site in the shape of stables, pig sties, chicken runs and the ubiquitous medieval rubbish pits.

#### **4. Aims and Objectives**

4.1 The purpose of the monitoring and recording, as specified by KCC (2010) was to:  
*Contribute to heritage knowledge of the area through the recording of the archaeological remains exposed as a result of excavations in connection with the groundworks.*

(2013: 3.1).

4.3 The objectives of the monitoring were therefore:

- To ensure the archaeological excavation and monitoring of all aspects of the development programme likely to affect buried archaeological remains;
- To secure the adequate recording of any archaeological remains revealed by the development programme;
- To secure the full analysis and interpretation of the site archive and the appropriate publication of the project results, if required;
- To secure the analysis, long term conservation and storage of the project archive.

4.4 The specific archaeological requirements of the watching brief are summarised below;

- Monitoring of all ground works;
- Mitigation by a programme of archaeological excavation and recording in the event that additional archaeological remains are encountered;
- Post-excavation and publication, where required.

#### **5. Methodology**

5.1 The archaeological work and the preparation of this report were undertaken in accordance with the methodology set out in the *Specification* (KCC 2013), with a generic Part B Specification for Watching Brief (KCC 2010) and in compliance with the standards outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief* (CIfA 2014).

5.2 Prior to archaeological attendance the Site was cleared of extant spoil heaps, rubbish dumps and loose vegetation along with the demolition of the existing buildings.

- 5.3 Excavation of three areas, Area 1, Area 2 and Area 3 (**Figure 2**) was carried out by building contractors using a 360° machine equipped with a toothless ditching bucket necessary to remove the overburden to a predesigned formation level (**Plates 2-11**). This excavation was carried out in two phases; Phase 1 included the removal of the overlying concrete surface (where present), hardcore base and the upper layer of topsoil, which contained frequent inclusions of pressed-in modern building materials (bricks, concrete, plastics, metal, etc.). Phase 2 was then concerned with the removal of remaining clean soils until natural geological deposits were exposed (for comparison see **Plate 6** and **Plate 7**).
- 5.4 All excavation was carried out under the constant supervision of an experienced archaeologist (See **Table 1**, below).
- 5.5 Following excavation works Type 2 hardcore was imported and laid, in layers, within excavated areas in order to provide a stable formation level for the concrete slab foundation (**Plate 5**). All construction works, including drainage and services were then constructed either within or above the hardcore base.
- 5.6 Where possible the areas of excavation were hand-cleaned with the intention of revealing any observed features in plan and section. If found, archaeological features under threat were to be excavated to enable sufficient information about form, development date and stratigraphic relationships to be recorded without prejudice to more extensive investigations, should these prove to be necessary.

## 6 Timetable

- 6.1 Archaeological monitoring was carried out on the following days;

<i>Task</i>	<i>Dates</i>	<i>Staff</i>
Archaeological monitoring during excavation of Area 1	07/01/2016 – 09/01/2016 incl.	Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA
Archaeological monitoring during excavation of Area 2	14/01/2016 – 15/01/2016 incl.	Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA
Archaeological monitoring during excavation of Area 3	20/01/2016 and 22/01/2016	Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA

**Table 1** Schedule of Attendance

## 7. Results

- 7.1 The foundation design comprised three open areas (**Figure 2**) excavated to a depth between 0.98m and 1.33m below the existing ground level which is recorded at a level of approximately 5.3m aOD. **Table 2** summarises the excavation extents of each area;



<i>Area</i>	<i>Size</i>	<i>Phase</i>	<i>Min Depth</i>	<i>Max Depth</i>	<i>Average Depth</i>	<i>Overall average depth</i>	<i>Approx. level of Upper Geology</i>
Area 1	200sq.m	Phase 1	0.35m	0.40m	0.37m	0.98m	4.32m aOD
		Phase 2	0.55m	0.66m	0.61m		
Area 2	160sq.m	Phase 1	0.32m	0.35m	0.33m	0.90m	4.40m aOD
		Phase 2	0.55m	0.58m	0.57m		
Area3	105sq.m	Phase 1	0.32m	0.47m	0.39m	1.06m	4.34m aOD
		Phase 2	0.65m	0.68m	0.67m		

**Table 2** Depth and areas of excavation (Note: existing surface level taken as 5.3m aOD)

- 7.2 Although partially undulated, the upper geological horizontal was, on the whole, relatively horizontal. On average, a total depth of approximately 1m was removed within the two phases across the three areas, thereby exposing natural geology at a level of approximately 4.3-4.4m aOD.
- 7.3 A selection of photographs illustrating the excavated trenches and the conditions on site are provided on **Plates 2-11**.
- 7.4 The monitoring and recording revealed a stratigraphic sequence comprising dark grey brown silty clay topsoil, with moderate to frequent modern demolition material inclusions (**001**), overlying a cleaner mid brown silty clay subsoil (**002**). The recorded natural geological layer comprised mid red brown silty clay Brickearth (**003**) at a depth between 1.06m and 1.33m below the existing surface. Variations to this occurred adjacent to the western extent of Area 1 where more brick rubble (**004**) was present, most likely used to reinforce a former eroded entranceway (**Plates 4 & 5**). Similarly, where existing modern drains were present broken brick hardcore (**005**) had clearly been used for the backfilling of trenches. It was evident at the time that the frequency of modern inclusions within the upper Phase 1 strip was most likely because of recent demolition activity.
- 7.5 No archaeological features, find or deposits were present within any of the excavated areas. No residual finds, which may have indicated the presence of archaeological features surrounding the site, were present within the excavated deposits.

## **8. Discussion**

- 8.1 A common stratigraphic sequence was confirmed across the site with topsoil directly overlying subsoil and natural sands. Despite the potential for archaeological remains

within the Site and the surrounding area the watching brief identified no additional finds, features or deposits. It is therefore suggested that the proposed development had no impact on any archaeological remains.

## **9. Conclusion**

9.1 Archaeological monitoring and recording has been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the Specification. No additional buried archaeological remains were recorded during the works.

## **10. Acknowledgments**

10.1 SWAT Archaeology would like to thank the client, Torran Construction Ltd, for commissioning the archaeological work. Thanks are also extended to Ben Found at Kent County Council for his advice and assistance. The project was managed by Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA, SWAT Archaeology.

## **11. Archive**

11.1 The project archive which includes plans, photographs and written records are currently held at SWAT offices under the Site code WING/WB/16.

11.2 The physical archive for this phase of works comprises the following;

- 1 file/document case of paper records and A4 graphics.
- 12 digital images.
- 1 CD containing digital archive.
- Correspondence.
- Finds: 0 box (as per KCC guidance).
- Context Register including: Context Register (1), Drawings Register (1), Photographic Register (1), Levels Sheets (x), Environmental Samples Register (x) and Context Sheets (5)

## **12. References**

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA), 2014, *Standard and guidance: Archaeological Watching Brief*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, Reading

Kent County Council Heritage & Conservation (2010) *Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief (Generic), Part B*

Kent County Council, Heritage Conservation (2013) *Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief at the Former Builder's Yard, rear of 67 High Street, Wingham, Canterbury, Kent CT3 1AA*

<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>

<http://webapps.kent.gov.uk/KCC.ExploringKentsPast.Web.Sites.Public.Default.aspx>

### 13. Appendix 1 - Kent County Council HER Summary Form

**Site Name:** Development of land at the rear of 67 High Street, Wingham in Kent

**SWAT Site Code:** WING/WB/16

**Site Address:** As above

**Summary:**

Swale and Thames Survey Company (SWAT) carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief on the development site above. The site has planning permission for a new housing whereby Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation (KCCHC) requested that Archaeological Watching Brief be undertaken to determine the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains.

The archaeological monitoring consisted of site visits which encountered no buried archaeological features or artefacts.

**District/Unitary:** Dover District Council

**Period(s):**

**NGR (centre of site to eight figures)** 624418 157684

**Type of Archaeological work:** Archaeological Watching Brief

**Date of recording:** January 2016

**Unit undertaking recording:** Swale and Thames Survey Company (SWAT. Archaeology)

**Geology:** Underlying geology is Clay and Silt Head deposits overlaying Chalk

**Title and author of accompanying report:** Wilkinson P. (2016) Archaeological Watching Brief at the former Builders's Yard, rear of 67 High Street, Wingham, Canterbury, Kent

**Summary of fieldwork results (begin with earliest period first, add NGRs where appropriate)**

See above

**Location of archive/finds:** SWAT. Archaeology. Graveney Rd, Faversham, Kent. ME13 8UP

**Contact at Unit:** Paul Wilkinson

**Date:** 03/08/2017

14. Appendix 2 – Plates



Plate 2 General view of the northern (Area 1) area of the site (looking north-east) at the start of Phase 1 excavation



Plate 3 The site showing Phase 1 reduction of site of Area 1 (looking east)



Plate 4 General view of site showing Phase 2 reduction of Area 1 (looking northeast)



Plate 5 Reduction of Area 1 (Phase 2) completed and Type 2 rolled in ready for building slabs (looking west)



Plate 6 Phase 1 site reduction Area 2 (looking southwest)



Plate 7 Area 2 during Phase 2 site reduction (looking southwest)



Plate 8 Phase 1 site reduction Area 2 close-up (looking southwest)



Plate 9 Phase 1 site reduction Area 3 (looking north)





Plate 10 Phase 1 site reduction Area 3 (looking south)



Plate 11. Phases 1 & 2 site reduction within the northern extent of Area 3 (looking north) – note Area 1 during Type 2 compaction in the background.

## Figures

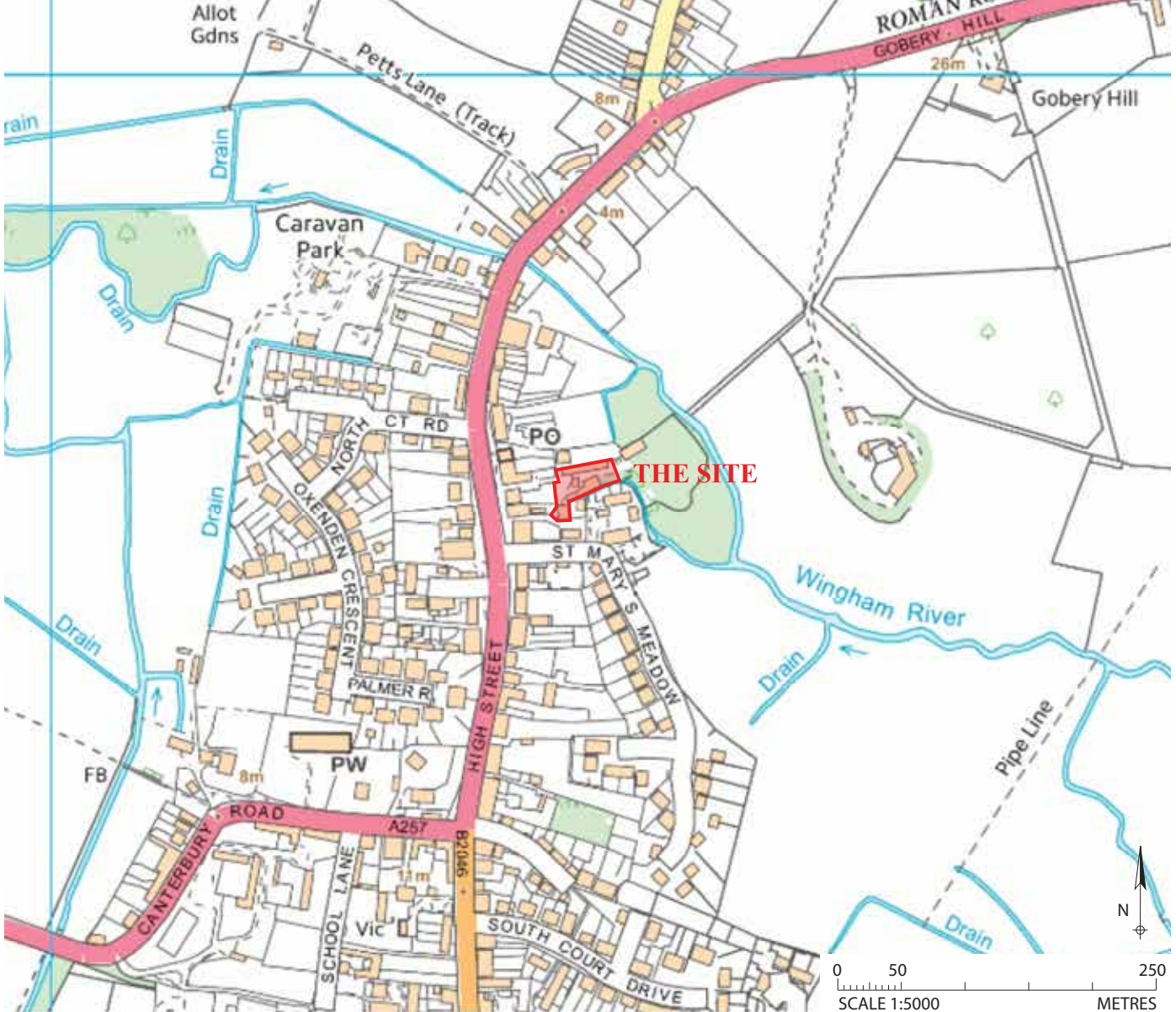
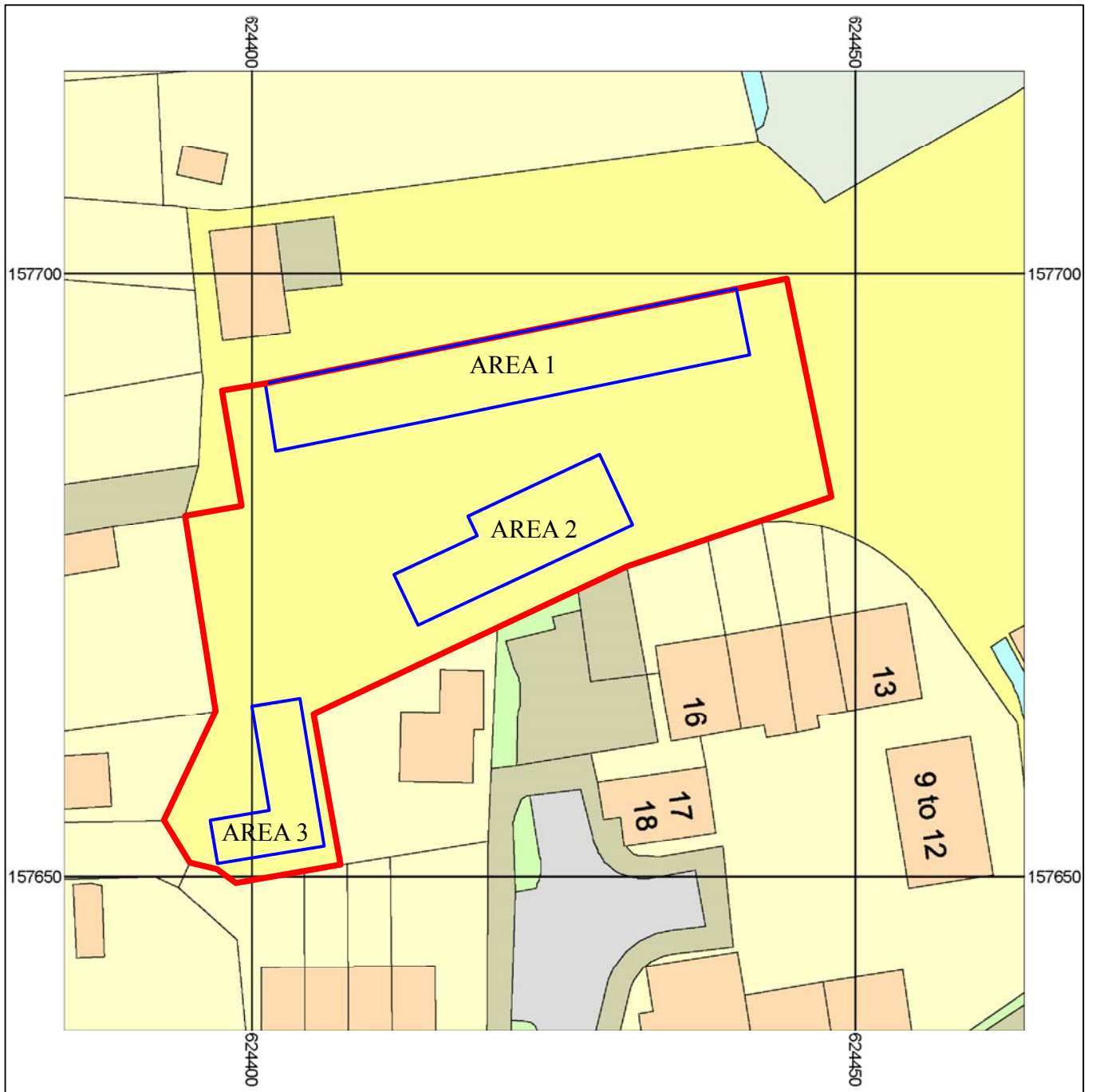


Figure 1: Site location map



LICENSE NUMBER: 100031961

1:500@A4

0m



50m



Figure 2: Areas watched