

Land at Crick Road Portskewett Monmouthshire

Archaeological Watching Brief



for
Integral Geotechnique

CA Project: 5532
CA Report: 15668

August 2015



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Portskewett
Monmouthshire

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

Fig. 2 Borehole location plan (1:5000)



SUMMARY

Project Name: Land at Crick Road
Location: Portskewett, Monmouthshire
NGR: ST 4937 8842
Type: Watching Brief
Date: 29 July 2015
Location of Archive: To be deposited with the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales
Site Code: PORT 15

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during the excavation of twelve boreholes on land at Crick Road, Portskewett, Monmouthshire.

No archaeological features were observed during groundworks, and no artefactual material was recovered.



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In July 2015 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief for Intergral Geotechnique at land at Crick Road, Portskewett, Monmouthshire (centred on NGR: ST 4937 8842; Fig. 1). The watching brief was undertaken during a geotechnical site investigation, conducted prior to the submission of any planning proposals for the site. The objective of the watching brief was to record all archaeological remains exposed during the investigation.
- 1.2 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by CA (2015) and approved by Judith Doyle Archaeological Planning Manager, Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT), archaeological advisor to Monmouthshire County Council (MCC). The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (IfA 2009), the *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (English Heritage 1991) and the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (EH 2006).

The site

- 1.3 The proposed development area is approximately 11.5ha in extent, and comprises five open fields. The site is bounded to the west by the Castlegate Business Park, to the east and south by residential development and to the north by open fields. The site slopes from c.19m AOD in the north to c.17m AOD in the south.
- 1.4 The underlying bedrock geology of the area is mapped as Mercia Mudstone Group – Sandstone of the Triassic Period. In the south of the site, superficial deposits are mapped as River Terrace Deposits, 2 - sand and gravel of the Quaternary Period; in the north, no superficial deposits are recorded (BGS 2015). Sand deposits were observed in the boreholes at the vertical limit of excavation.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The site lies within an area of known archaeological interest. The following is a summary of archaeological evidence noted in the vicinity of site.

- 2.2 Prehistoric evidence has been recovered during the course of excavation at Castle Lake, located across the Nedern Brook from Caldicot Castle (c. 600m to the west of the site). Water-logged material dating to c. 2500 BC (including a fragment of plank-sewn boat) was recovered, alongside evidence of a house platform and trackway dating to the second millennium BC (Nayling & Caseldine 1997). Roman buildings have been identified near Portskewett Hill (c. 500m to the north-east) associated with iron working. Dating evidence suggests activity here ranged from the 1st to 4th centuries AD (Arnold & Davies 2000).
- 2.3 The site lies approximately 500m to the north-west of the historic core of Portskewett. This area predominantly dates from the late-medieval and post-medieval periods, with a number of historic structures (i.e. the 17th century Manor Farmhouse, c. 500m to the south-east of 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 2015). An archaeologist was present during the drilling of boreholes (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 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 the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales.

5. RESULTS (FIGS 2)

- 5.1 This section provides an overview of the results of the watching brief; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts can be found in Appendix A.
- 5.2 The excavations consisted of 12 boreholes and excavated up to 0.5m below present ground level (bpgl). The sandy natural substrate was seen in all boreholes at a typical depth of 0.4m bpgl; this was overlain by a sandy clay subsoil which was typically 0.2-0.3m in thickness. This in turn was sealed by a sandy clay topsoil, typically 0.1m in thickness.
- 5.3 No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks and, despite visual scanning of spoil, no artefactual material was recovered.

8. DISCUSSION

- 8.1 The watching brief identified no archaeological remains within the boreholes. However, the nature of the investigation precludes a definitive statement of archaeological potential and, as such, the assessment of the boreholes is unlikely to indicate the levels of possible archaeological survival on site.
- 8.2 The stratigraphic sequence was identical across the observed boreholes, with only minor variations in the depth of topsoil and subsoil observed (such as in Boreholes 6 and 7, where the subsoil measured up to 0.6m thick).

9. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Charlotte Haines. The report was written by Charlotte Haines. The illustrations were prepared by Dan Bashford. The archive has been

compiled by Hazel O'Neill, and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Ian Barnes.

10. REFERENCES

Arnold & Davies 2000 *Roman & early Medieval Wales*

BGS (British Geological Survey) 2015 Geology of Britain Viewer
<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> Accessed 17th July 2015

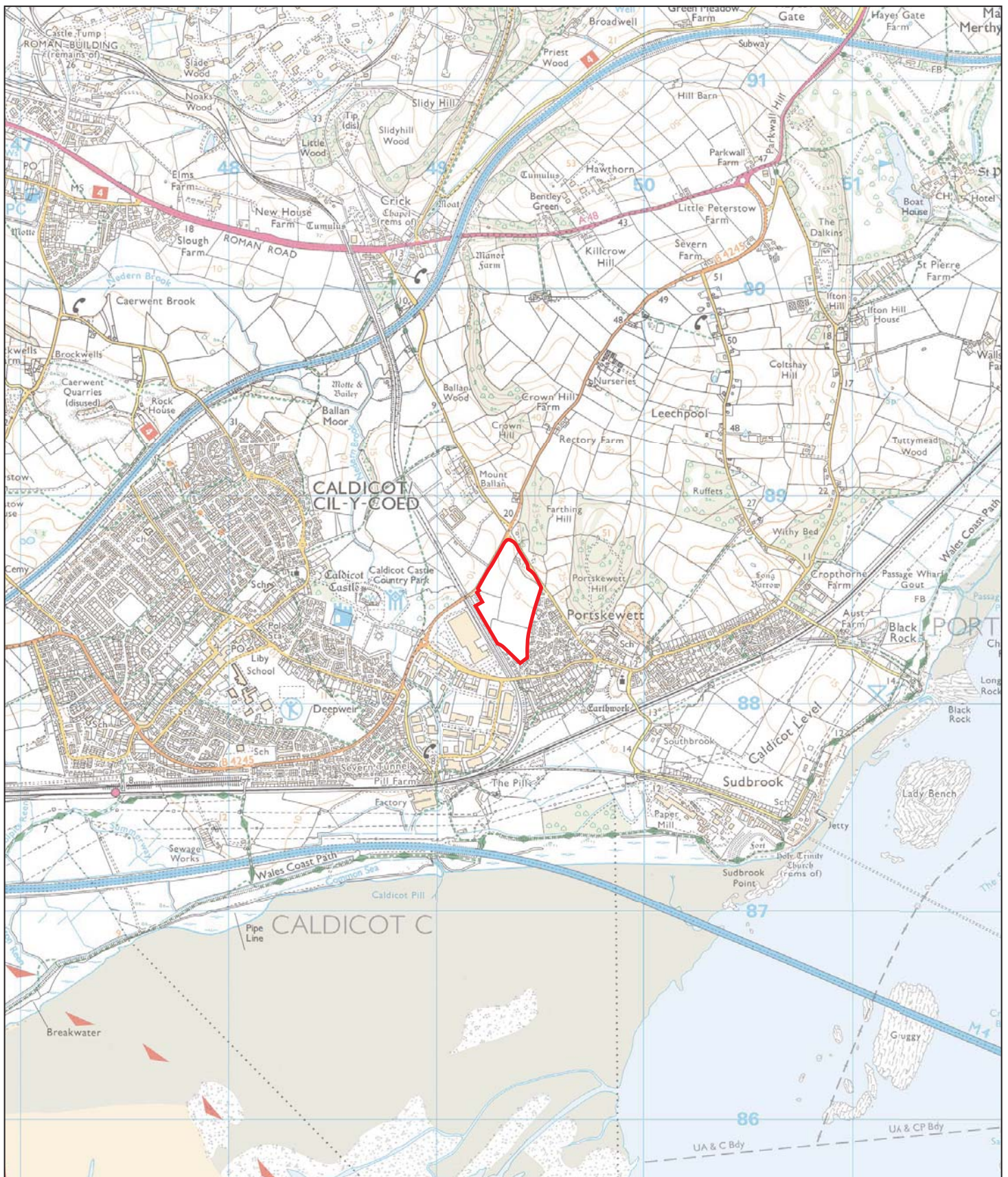
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2015 *Land at Crick Road, Portskewett, Monmouthshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Watching Brief: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

Nayling & Caseldine 1997 *Excavations at Caldicot* CBA research rep. 108



APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Borehole No.	Context No.	Type	Context interpretation	Description	Depth/thickness (m)
1	1000	Layer	Topsoil	Dark orange brown sandy clay	0.3
1	1001	Layer	Subsoil	Dark orange brown sandy clay with occasional rounded pebbles	0.1
1	1002	Layer	Natural	Dark orange sand	NE
2	2000	Layer	Topsoil	Dark orange brown sandy clay	0.3
2	2001	Layer	Subsoil	Dark orange brown sandy clay with occasional rounded pebbles	0.1
2	2002	Layer	Natural	Dark orange sand	NE
3	3000	Layer	Topsoil	Dark orange brown sandy clay	0.3
3	3001	Layer	Subsoil	Dark orange brown sandy clay with occasional rounded pebbles	0.1
3	3002	Layer	Natural	Dark orange sand	NE
4	4000	Layer	Topsoil	Dark orange brown sandy clay	0.3
4	4001	Layer	Subsoil	Dark orange brown sandy clay with occasional rounded pebbles	0.1
4	4002	Layer	Natural	Dark orange sand	NE
5	5000	Layer	Topsoil	Dark orange brown sandy clay	0.3
5	5001	Layer	Subsoil	Dark orange brown sandy clay with occasional rounded pebbles	0.1
5	5002	Layer	Natural	Dark orange sand	NE
6	6000	Layer	Topsoil	Dark orange brown sandy clay	0.3
6	6001	Layer	Subsoil	Dark orange brown sandy clay with occasional rounded pebbles	0.4
6	6002	Layer	Natural	Dark orange sand	NE
7	7000	Layer	Topsoil	Dark orange brown sandy clay	0.3
7	7001	Layer	Subsoil	Dark orange brown sandy clay with occasional rounded pebbles	0.6
7	7002	Layer	Natural	Dark orange sand	NE
8	8000	Layer	Topsoil	Dark orange brown sandy clay	0.2
8	8001	Layer	Subsoil	Dark orange brown sandy clay with occasional rounded pebbles	0.1
8	8002	Layer	Natural	Dark orange sand	NE
9	9000	Layer	Topsoil	Dark orange brown sandy clay	0.2
9	9001	Layer	Subsoil	Dark orange brown sandy clay with occasional rounded pebbles	0.1
9	9002	Layer	Natural	Dark orange sand	NE
10	10000	Layer	Topsoil	Dark orange brown sandy clay	0.2
10	10001	Layer	Subsoil	Dark orange brown sandy clay with occasional rounded pebbles	0.1
10	10002	Layer	Natural	Dark orange sand	NE
11	11000	Layer	Topsoil	Dark orange brown sandy clay	0.25
11	11001	Layer	Subsoil	Dark orange brown sandy clay with occasional rounded pebbles	0.1
11	11002	Layer	Natural	Dark orange sand	NE
12	12000	Layer	Topsoil	Dark orange brown sandy clay	0.25
12	12001	Layer	Subsoil	Dark orange brown sandy clay with occasional rounded pebbles	0.15
12	12002	Layer	Natural	Dark orange sand	NE



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PROJECT TITLE

**Land at Crick Road, Portskewett
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FIGURE TITLE

Site location plan

0 1km

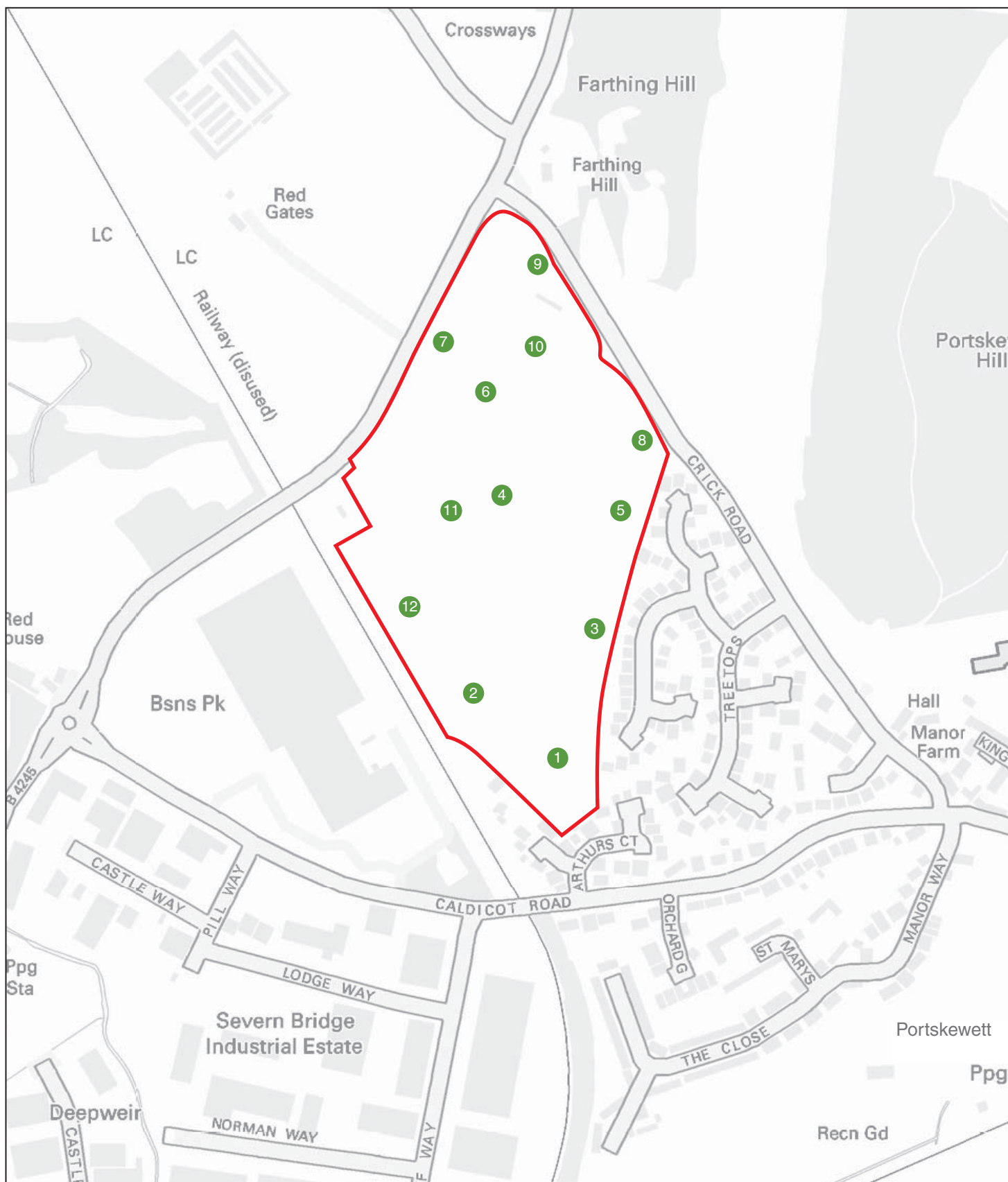
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DRAWN BY **DJB**
CHECKED BY **LM**
APPROVED BY **IB**

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DATE **28-08-15**
SCALE @A4 **1:25,000**

FIGURE NO.

1



- site boundary
 borehole



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PROJECT TITLE

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FIGURE TITLE

Borehole location plan

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