Cotswold Archaeology

Nash Waste Treatment Works
Nash
Newport

Archaeological Watching Brief

for
Skanska

CA Project: 6018
CA Report: 16534

March 2017

Andover Cirencester Exeter Milton Keynes

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Document Control Grid						
Revision	Date	Author	Checked by	Status	Reasons for revision	Approved by
A	13/03/2017	Jay Wood / Charlotte Haines	Ian Barnes	Internal review	Client Comment	Ian Barnes

CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

SUMMARY

Project Name:	Nash Waste Treatment Works
Location:	Nash, Newport
NGR:	ST 3359 8379
Type:	Watching Brief
Date:	25 August 2016 to 27 September 2016
Planning Reference:	Newport City Council planning ref: 11/1287
Location of Archive:	To be deposited with the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales
Site Code:	NASH 16

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the construction of a wind turbine at Nash Waste Treatment Works, Nash, Newport.

Groundworks in the north of the site did not expose pre-modern deposits, while alluvial deposits were observed in the south-west of the site.

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

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In August and September 2016 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief for Skanska at Nash Waste Treatment Works, Nash, Newport (centred on NGR: ST 3359 8379; Fig. 1). The watching brief was undertaken on the recommendation of Jan Bailey, Archaeological Planning Officer, Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT), the archaeological advisor to Newport City Council (NCC), following planning consent for the construction of a wind turbine and associated infrastructure (NCC Planning ref: 11/1287).

1.2 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2016) and approved by NCC acting on the advice of GGAT. The fieldwork also followed *Standard and guidance: Archaeological watching brief* (CIfA 2014).

The site

1.3 The Nash Waste Treatment Works enclose an area of approximately 28ha, however the area subject to development comprised an area of approximately 0.4ha situated within that site (see Fig. 2 for location and extent). The site is bordered to the west by Uskmouth Power Station and a steel works, and to the south, east and north by nature reserves and agricultural land. The site lies at approximately 7m AOD and is broadly level.

1.4 The underlying bedrock geology of the area is mapped as Mercia Mudstone Group of the Triassic period with superficial clay and silt Tidal Flat Deposits (BGS 2016). Alluvial deposits comprising blue grey clay were identified across the site during the watching brief.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 A Desk-Based Assessment (DBA) has been prepared in connection with the site (GGAT 2011a). The following is a brief summary of the evidence presented therein; references in italics within parenthesis indicate the Historic Environment Record code.

2.2 The development area has been subject to a number of previous archaeological studies which have recorded significant evidence for Roman activity. These include an excavation conducted by Pre-Construct Archaeology (PCA) in 1998, which recorded two Roman inhumations along with a semi-circular ditch, pits, postholes and three cattle burials (*07999g*), and a field evaluation by GGAT in 1997 which identified a Roman field system (*05912g*). Finds recovered during the evaluation included large quantities of Roman ceramics, fired clay and bone. Additionally significant quantities of Roman pottery (*03718g*) were recovered during a watching brief conducted at the site during the construction of the Water Treatment plant in 1973 (2011a).

2.3 Great House Reen (*NSW16*), which crosses the site on a north/south and north-west/south-east alignment, is depicted on the 1822 Ordnance Survey (OS) map and is believed to form part of a relict hand crafted medieval drained landscape. Julian's Pill (*NSW24*) and Juan's Reen (*NSW17*), further components of the medieval drainage system, are located immediately adjacent to and partially within the site (2011a).

2.4 Ty Portha (*05249g*), a post-medieval building first shown on the 1831 OS map, is also located within the development area. Cartographic evidence suggests it had been deserted by 1886 (2011a).

2.5 A watching brief found evidence to suggest parts of the site may have been subject to truncation during the construction of the Waste Treatment Works in 1973, however the majority of the excavations occurred within the modern made ground with only slight intrusion into the underlying alluvial clays, hence the degree of truncation remains uncertain (2011b).

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 2016). An archaeologist was present during intrusive groundworks comprising the reduction of ground level in four areas (Trenches 1 to 4) and the removal of topsoil and silt deposits adjacent to a drainage ditch (Trench 5) (Fig. 2).

4.2 Written, graphic and photographic records were compiled in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual*.

4.3 The archive from the watching brief is currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble, and will be deposited with the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW) in due course.

5. RESULTS (FIGS 2-4)

5.1 This section provides an overview of the results of the watching brief; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts are to be found in Appendix A. The results have been divided into two sections, the first details Trenches 1 to 4 which lay within the area of the proposed turbine, and the second details Trench 5, which was located in the south-western part of the site.

*Trenches 1 to 4 (Figs 2 and 3**)***

5.2 A similar stratigraphic sequence was observed within Trenches 1 to 4. Natural geological substrate was not revealed in any of the trenches. In Trenches 1, 3 and 4 the earliest deposit encountered comprised made ground consisting of clay and silt clay with occasional modern ceramic building material, plastic and metal, at a depth of between *c.* 0.5 and 1.3m below present ground level (bpgl). In Trench 2, the earliest deposit encountered comprised blue grey alluvial clay 2003, at a depth of *c*. 1.3m bpgl, which was sealed by made ground. The made ground was sealed by topsoil, typically 0.1m in thickness in all trenches.

Trench 5 (Figs 2 and 4)

5.3 The earliest deposit revealed in Trench 5 comprised blue grey alluvial clay 5005, at approximately 1.5m bpgl. This deposit was overlain by buried topsoil 5002 which comprised brown grey silt clay approximately 0.05m in depth. The buried topsoil was in turn sealed by a layer of mixed silt clay made ground 5001, which was *c.* 1.2m in depth. Modern features were observed to cut the surface of this deposit (e.g ditch 5004). The made ground deposit was overlain by *c*. 0.3m of grey brown silty topsoil 5000.

5.4 No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks and, despite visual scanning of spoil, no artefactual 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 presence of made ground deposits in the north of the observed area suggests that the construction of the waste treatment plant led to truncation to the depth of completed groundworks.

6.2 In Trench 5 the made ground sealed a layer of buried topsoil, suggesting that this area may not have undergone the truncation observed elsewhere. It is possible that archaeological features or deposits may survive in this area, but were not exposed during the watching brief.

7. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Jay Wood, assisted by Alex Thompson, Peter Busby and Peter Searle. The report was written by Jay Wood and Charlotte Haines. The illustrations were prepared by Esther Escudero. The archive has been compiled by Jay Wood, and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Ian Barnes (MCIfA).

8. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) 2015 *Geology of Britain Viewer* http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html Accessed 29 September 2016

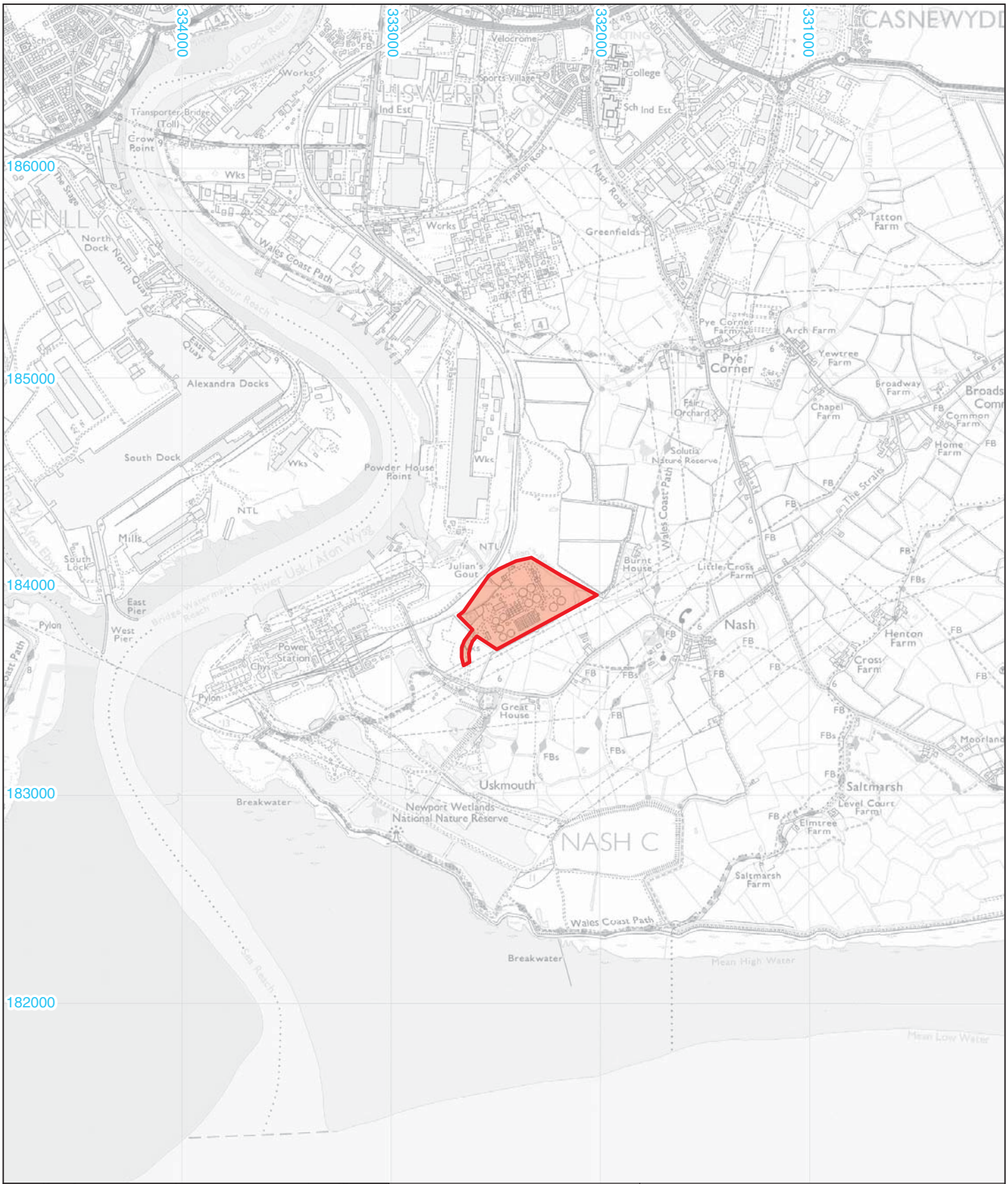
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2016 *Nash Waste Treatment Plant, Nash, Newport: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

GGAT (Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust) 2011a *Nash Sewage Treatment Works, Newport: Archaeological desk-based assessment.* GGAT Report No. **2011/040**

GGAT 2011b *Nash Sewage Treatment Works, Newport: Archaeological Watching Brief.* GGAT Report No. **2011/003**

APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	Depth /thickness (m)	Spot-date
1	1000	Layer		Topsoil	Brown grey silt clay			0.1	
1	1001	Layer		Made Ground	Mixed brown grey clay, gravel and silt, modern inclusions			0.5	
1	1002	Layer		Made Ground	Mixed blue grey clay and brown grey silty clay			>0.1	
2	2000	Layer		Topsoil	Brown grey silt clay			0.11	
2	2001	Layer		Made Ground	Mixed brown grey clay, gravel and silt, modern inclusions			0.53	
2	2002	Layer		Made Ground	Mixed blue grey clay and brown grey silty clay, modern inclusions			0.6	
2	2003	Layer		Alluvial deposit	Blue grey clay	>2	>2	>0.25	
3	3000	Layer		Topsoil	Brown grey silt clay			0.1	
3	3001	Layer		Made Ground	Mixed brown grey clay, gravel and silt, modern inclusions			0.5	
3	3002	Layer		Made Ground	Mixed blue grey clay and brown grey silty clay, modern inclusions			>0.6	
4	4000	Layer		Topsoil	Brown grey silt clay	>20	>10	0.1	
4	4001	Layer		Made Ground	Mixed brown grey clay, gravel and silt, modern inclusions	>20	>10	0.4	
5	5000	Layer		Topsoil	Grey brown silt clay	>25	>1.8	0.3	
5	5001	Layer		Made Ground	Mixed blue grey clay and grey brown silty clay, modern inclusions	>25	>1.8	1.2	
5	5002	Layer		Buried topsoil	Brown grey silty clay	>4.	>1.1	0.05	
5	5003	Fill		Backfill of ditch	Grey blue silty clay, soft, waterlogged	>25	0.9	0.3	
5	5004	Cut		Cut of ditch	NE/SW orientation, steep sides, concave base	>25	1.8	1.1	
5	5005	Layer		Alluvial deposit	Grey brown clay, firm	>25	>0.6	>0.3	



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Cotswold Archaeology

Andover 01264 347630
Cirencester 01285 771022
Exeter 01392 826185
Milton Keynes 01908 564660
w www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk
e enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

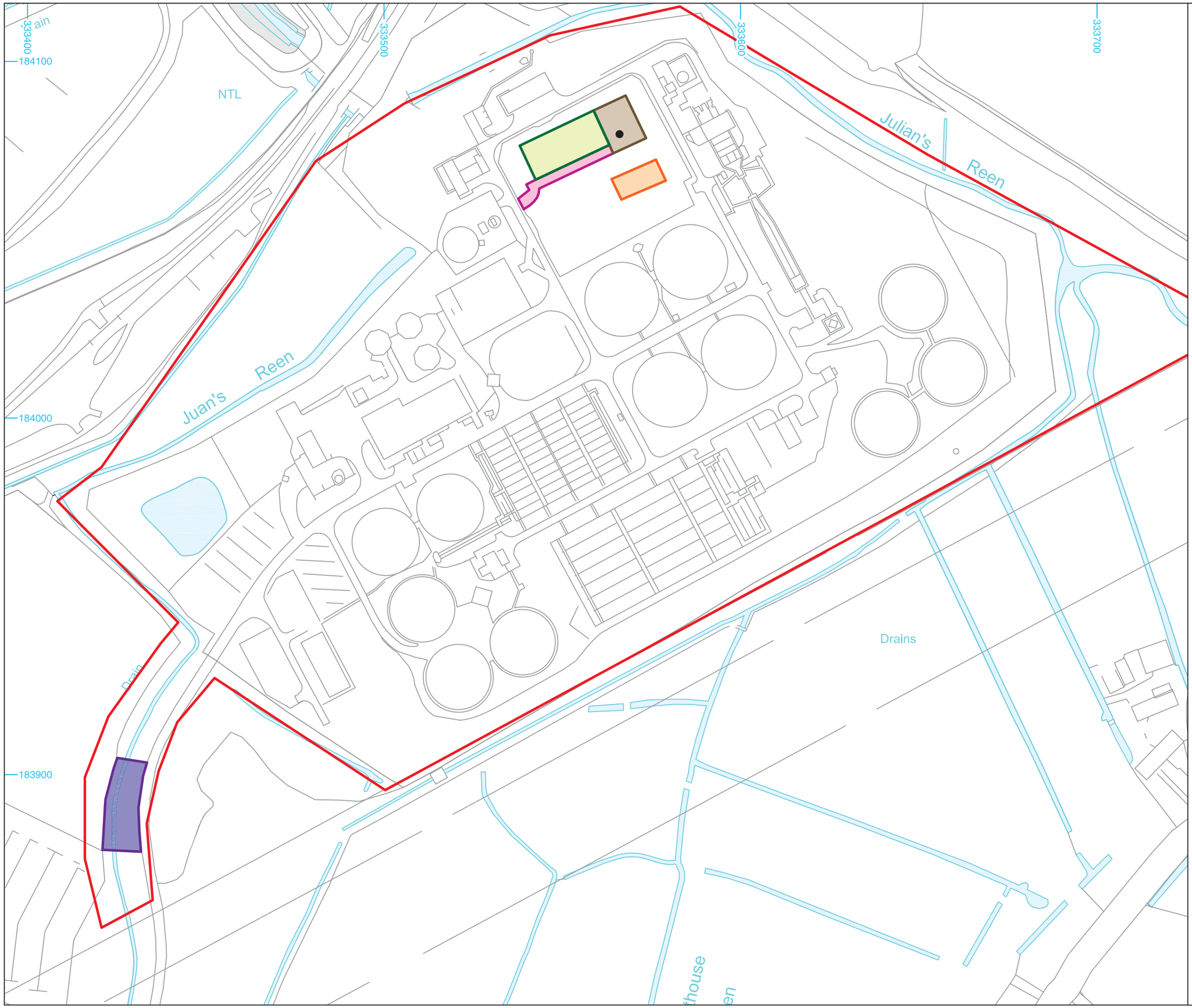
PROJECT TITLE

Nash Waste Treatment Works, Nash Newport

FIGURE TITLE

Site location plan

DRAWN BY	**EE**	*PROJECT NO.*	**6018**	*FIGURE NO.*
CHECKED BY	**DJB**	*DATE*	**21/11/2016**	**1**
APPROVED BY	**IB**	*SCALE@A4*	**1:25,000**	



Cotswold Archaeology
Andover 01264 347630
Cirencester 01285 771022
Exeter 01392 826185
Milton Keynes 01908 564660
w www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk
e enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

PROJECT TITLE

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FIGURE TITLE

The site, showing location of groundworks

DRAWN BY	**EE**	*PROJECT NO.*	**6018**	*FIGURE NO.*
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APPROVED BY	**IB**	*SCALE@A3*	**1:2000**	

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Trench 3 looking north

Cotswold Archaeology

Andover 01264 347630
Cirencester 01285 771022
Exeter 01392 826185
Milton Keynes 01908 564660
w www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk
e enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

PROJECT TITLE

Nash Waste Treatment Works, Nash Newport

FIGURE TITLE

Photograph

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Trench 5 looking north.

Cotswold Archaeology

Andover 01264 347630
Cirencester 01285 771022
Exeter 01392 826185
Milton Keynes 01908 564660
w www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk
e enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

PROJECT TITLE

Nash Waste Treatment Work, Nash Newport

FIGURE TITLE

Photograph

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Cotswold Archaeology

Andover Office

Stanley House
Walworth Road
Andover
Hampshire
SP10 5LH

t: 01264 347630

Cirencester Office

Building 11
Kemble Enterprise Park
Cirencester
Gloucestershire
GL7 6BQ

t: 01285 771022

Exeter Office

Unit 53
Basepoint Business Centre
Yeoford Way
Marsh Barton Trading Estate
Exeter
EX2 8LB

t: 01392 826185

Milton Keynes Office

41 Burners Lane South
Kiln Farm
Milton Keynes
Buckinghamshire
MK11 3HA

t: 01908 564660

e: enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk