

Castlewood Leisure Park, Narberth Watching Brief



Report by: Trysor

**For Mr R Powell & Partners of Brookside Caravan Park, Narberth
Bridge, Narberth, Pembrokeshire, SA67 8RD**

January 2008



Brookside, Narberth Watching Brief

By

**Jenny Hall MIFA & Paul Sambrook
Trysor**

Trysor Project No. 2007/97

**For: Mr R Powell & Partners of Brookside Caravan Park, Narberth Bridge, Narberth,
Pembrokeshire, SA67 8RD**

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*Cover photograph: Woodland plantation prior to development at Castle Woods, Brookside, Narberth.
August 2007*

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1. Introduction

Mr R Powell & Partners of Brookside Caravan Park, Narberth Bridge, Narberth, Pembrokeshire, SA67 8RD, commissioned Trysor heritage consultants to undertake an archaeological watching brief on groundworks for 9 self catering holiday units, under planning application number: 06/1487/PA.

Castlewood Leisure Park, which is an extension to Brookside Caravan Park, lies only 200m to the south of Narberth town at SN11041428, in the county of Pembrokeshire. Access is gained via Mill Pond Lane, a minor road that runs eastwards off the A478 south of Narberth. The development site is in a field immediately to the south-east of Narberth Castle, although it is separated from the castle by a wooded stream valley.

2. The development

The development consists of 9 self catering holiday units, each measuring 20' x 40', with access roads, and parking for 20 cars. Service trenches and some landscaping accompanied the development. Prior to development, the land parcel was relatively thickly wooded with deciduous trees planted over 20 years previously. Most of these were removed in advance of groundwork beginning.

3. Conditions on the consent

In granting approval for the application, the Local Planning Authority imposed seven conditions on the consent; the seventh condition specifies the actions necessary to mitigate the impact of the development on the archaeological resource.

"The developer shall ensure that a suitably qualified archaeologist is present during the undertaking of any ground works in the development area, so that an archaeological watching brief can be conducted. The archaeological watching brief will be undertaken to the standards laid down by the Institute of Field Archaeologists. The Local Planning Authority will be informed in writing, at least two weeks prior to the commencement of the development, of the name of the said archaeologist.

Reason: To ensure the protection of items of archaeological importance."

Following the appointment of the contractor, the purpose of the watching brief was clarified by discussion with Cambria Archaeology's Heritage Management Section, who act as archaeological advisors to the local planning authority. According to the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* the purpose of a watching brief is:

*"• to allow, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established (or established with sufficient accuracy) in advance of development or other potentially disruptive works
• to provide an opportunity, if needed, for the watching archaeologist to signal to all interested parties, before the destruction of the material in question, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard
A watching brief is not intended to reduce the requirement for excavation or preservation of known or inferred deposits, and it is intended to guide, not replace, any requirement for contingent excavation or preservation of possible deposits.
The objective of a watching brief is to establish and make available information about the archaeological resource existing on a site."*



Fig.1 Regional Map

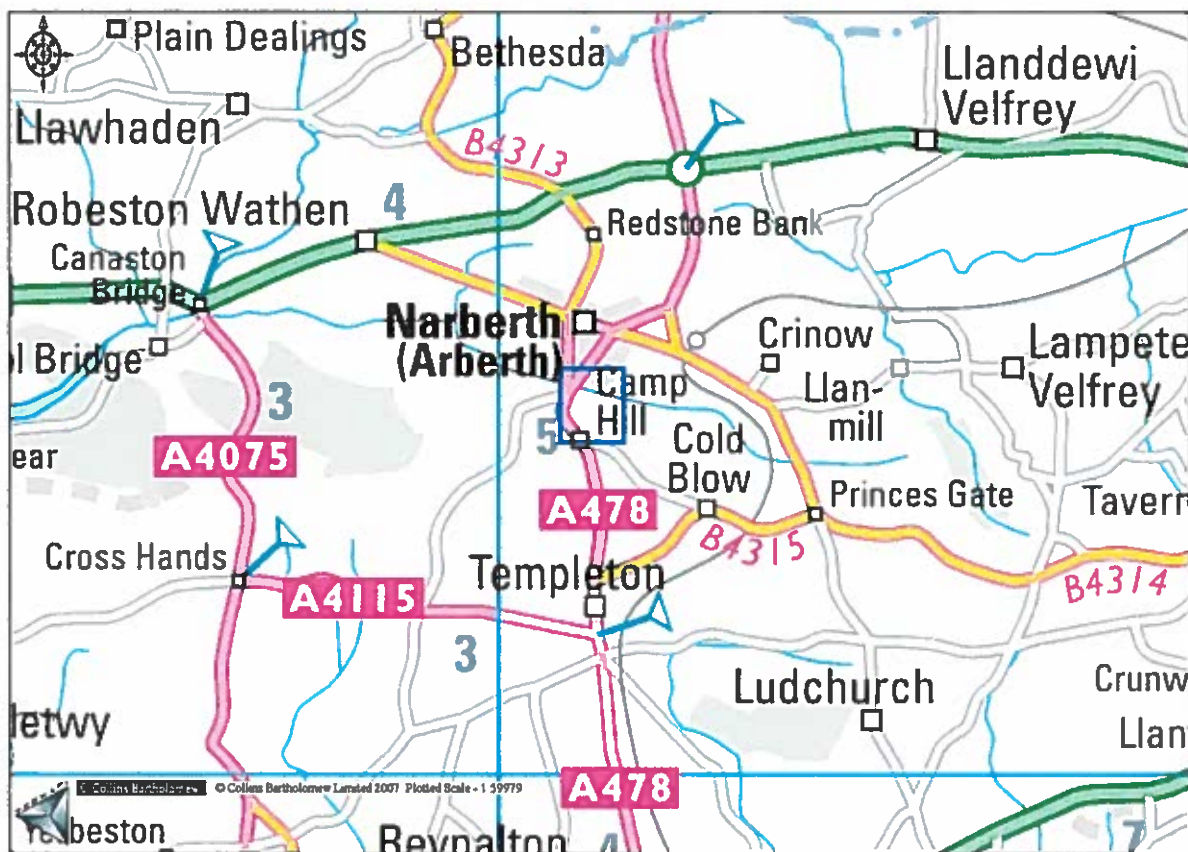


Fig. 2 Narberth area

4. The Watching Brief

In accordance with the conditions stipulated by the Local Planning Authority, Trysor undertook a watching brief to assess the archaeological impact of the groundworks at Castlewood Leisure Park. Trysor also carried out a pre-development walkover of the affected area, at the request of the Regional Development Control Officer at Cambria Archaeology.

The site visits were made on the following dates:

30th August 2007 – pre-development walkover

12th & 14th September 2007 – watching brief to observe groundworks on drainage and service trenches, road construction and landscaping.

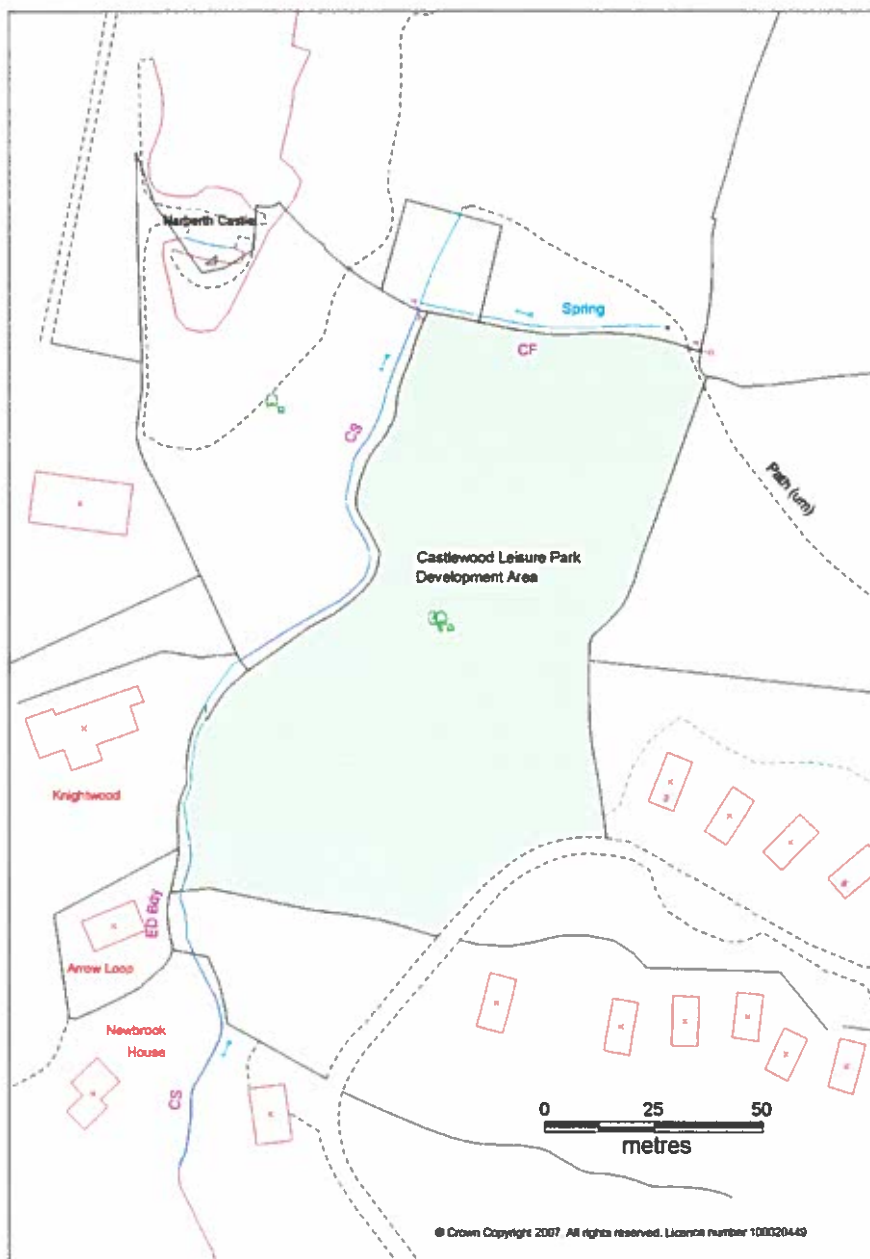


Fig.3 Site location



Plate 1: Castlewood Leisure Park Development Area prior to vegetation clearance, looking towards to the northern end of the site.

5. Historical Overview

The archaeological watching brief was requested due to the proximity of the development to Narberth Castle and town, which have medieval origins. The northwestern corner of the development area is only some 50m from the site of the castle, the fragmentary ruins of which can be seen through the woods, hence the name “Castle Woods” which is applied to the woodland on the southern side of the castle.

The stone castle was built sometime after 1257, probably in place of an early 12th century Norman earthwork castle (which may well have been located at another site, thought to have been Sentence Castle, Templeton, which lies further to the south). It had fallen into ruin by the 16th century and continued to decay until the 20th century. In 1999, Pembrokeshire County Council took over a 90-year lease from the private owner of the castle and the monument is also now in the care of Narberth Town Council and has been opened to the public. Today, the castle site includes the remains of four round towers, the hall and a vaulted cellar.

As a result of its location at the juncture of the historic main east-west and north-south roads in Pembrokeshire, Narberth town has grown alongside the castle. It became a market town during the 17th century, and was granted its charter by James II in 1688. To this day it has served as an important market town for eastern central Pembrokeshire.

There is currently no record of archaeological discoveries being made on the land being developed. There is also no indication from historic (19th century) mapping of any structures or historic features in the area concerned.



Plate 2: The ruins of the medieval castle in Narberth lie just 50m away from the Castlewood Leisure Park site. The castle is separated from the development area by the edge of the steep precipice on which the castle stands and the wooded stream valley below.

5.1 Past Land Use

According to the present owner, the land within the development site was arable land with a spring within it some 30 years ago. The trees earmarked to be cleared from the development site in 2007 were in fact planted by the present owner in the mid-1990s, and therefore the land in question is not part of the historic Castle Woods. Further evidence of this comes from the study of historic map evidence. The Narberth Parish tithe map survey undertaken in the 1840s identifies the development area as consisting of two field parcels (Nos. 1092 & 1100 on Figure 4). These fields were at that time known as Lower Moor and Upper Moor respectively. Lower Moor was at that time managed as meadowland, and Upper Moor as pastureland. This suggests that traditionally, the land here may well have been considered to be marginal land, which is perhaps borne out by the fact that a spring line seems to run through Upper Moor in particular, creating a partially wet environment. Even during the dry autumn of 2007, the land adjacent to the minor brook that forms the western edge of the development area was exceptionally wet.

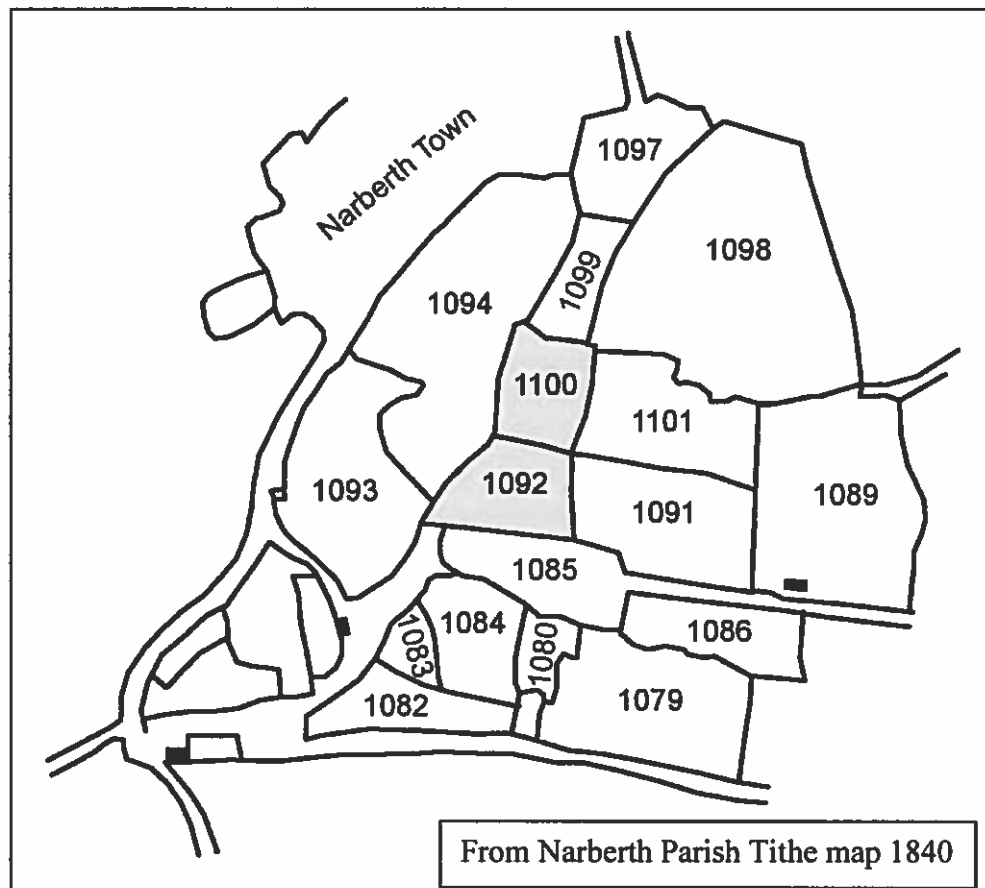


Fig. 4 Tithe map evidence

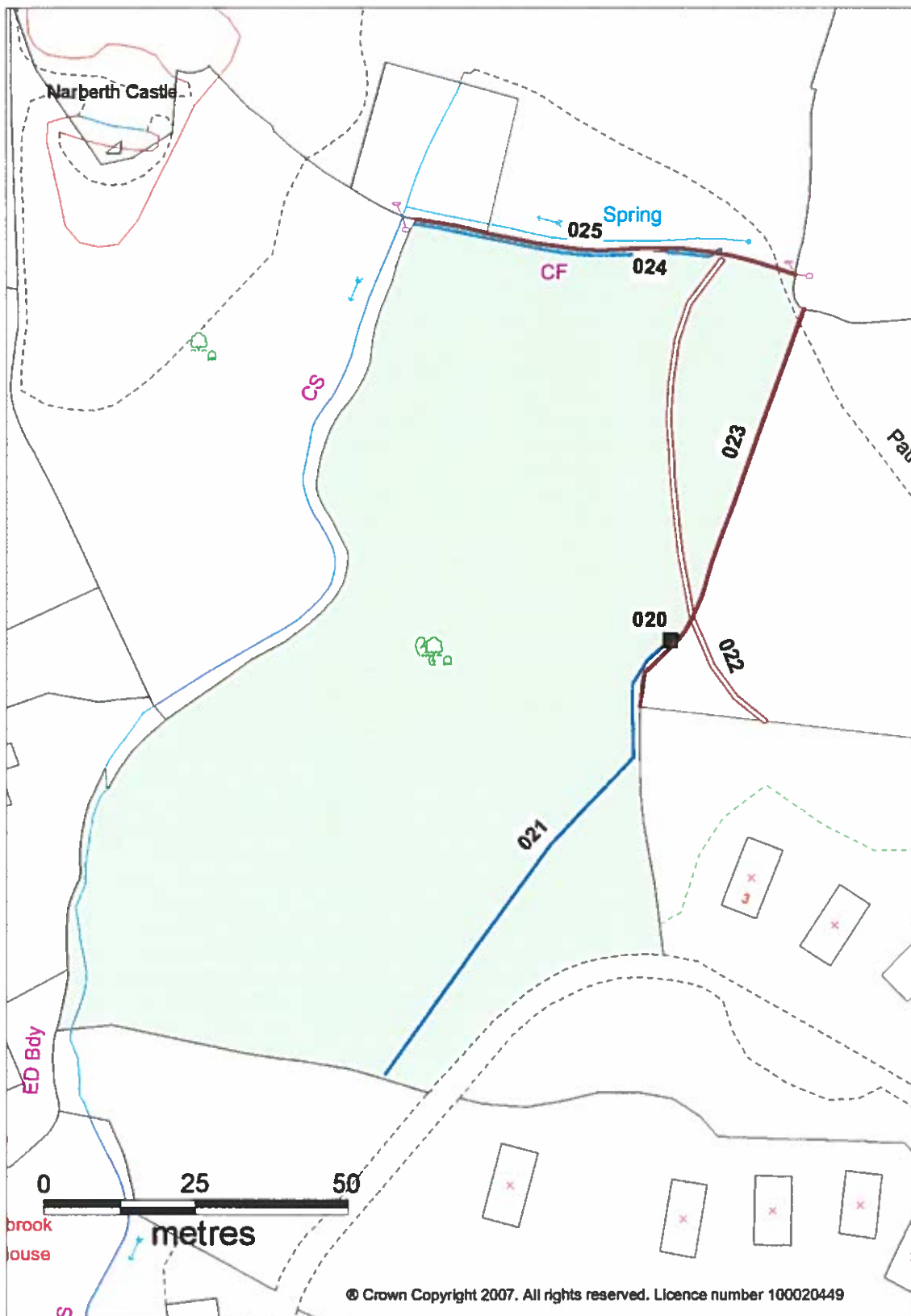


Fig 5: Plan of features recorded.



Plate 3: The line of the old trackway (Feature No. 022)



Plate 4: The brick-lined spring chamber (Feature No. 020)

7. Summary

Trysor undertook a watching brief at Brookside, Narberth, Pembrokeshire on September 12th and 14th, 2007, with regard to extension of the chalet park at Castlewood Leisure Park, Narberth.

The site comprised of a parcel of former agricultural land that had been planted with deciduous trees some 20 years previously. Most of this woodland was removed by the development. This revealed a clayey surface, which was relatively wet, due to the presence of a spring line across the site. The original names of the two former field parcels incorporated into the development area were Lower Moor and Upper Moor, suggesting that this had not been prime agricultural land in earlier times. Indeed evidence of attempts to drain the land was found in the form of drainage ditches cut parallel to some of the field boundaries at the northern end of the development area.

The watching brief found little of archaeological interest, although an old trackway underlying the post-mediaeval field system was noted. This pre-19th century trackway appeared to have been running southwards away from Narberth town towards the river valley below Narberth Castle. A 20th century chambered spring was also recorded, built from red bricks produced at the Goodwick Brickworks Ltd, which was operational between 1910 and 1969.

In conclusion, it was found that there were no significant archaeological implications to prevent the development proceeding.



Plate 5: Castlewood Leisure Park Development Area following the removal of trees and vegetation, looking southwards from the northern end of the site.

8. Archive

A paper archive has been deposited with the National Monuments Record, Aberystwyth including a copy of this report. The archive includes all written, drawn and photographic records relating directly to the investigations undertaken. Photographs are in TIFF format, following the standard required by the RCAHMW.

Further copies of the report have also been supplied to Mr Powell of Brookside, and Cambria Archaeology (The Dyfed Archaeological Trust).

9. Map Sources

1831 Ordnance Survey 1 inch : 1 mile map

1840 Narberth Parish Tithe Map & Schedule, National Library of Wales

1891 Ordnance Survey 1st edition 1:10560 map

APPENDIX 1: Site Stratigraphy**Layers**

Context Number	Depth	Description	Interpretation
001	0.20-0.30m	Yellow/brown clay loam	
002	-	Yellow clays and sands,	Subsoil
003	-	Blue/grey clay with some iron-panning	Wet area along spring line

APPENDIX 2: Archaeological Features

Feature Number	Description
020	A spring, within a 20 th century brick lined chamber with slate capstones
021	Drainage ditch associated with 020
022	Old trackway, which underlies boundary banks 023 & 025 and is cut by drainage ditch 024
023	Boundary bank along eastern side of area
024	Drainage ditch at northern end of area, cut to allow water to flow freely along the edge of the field, from a spring line down to the stream in the valley bottom. It cuts through trackway 022.
025	Boundary bank, running along the northern edge of the development area and parallel to drainage ditch 024. This overlies trackway 022, which reappears in the field to the north of the development area..

APPENDIX 2: Photographs

Colour digital photographs were taken of the of the development area, before any work took place, after the trees had been cleared and during deeper excavation work using a 7M pixel camera. The following table describes the content of each photograph included in the project archive and the locations of each provided in the following map. (Fig.5).

Photo ID	Description	Direction	Date taken
Brookside001	The area from the southeast corner prior to development	Looking north northwest	30/08/2007
Brookside002	Trees inside the area to be developed	Looking north	30/08/2007
Brookside003	Photo of feature 020, before work began on the site prior to development	Looking northeast	30/08/2007
Brookside004	Modern pathway through the trees prior to development	Looking north	30/08/2007
Brookside005	Line of old trackway (feature 022) as seen on 1 st edition Ordnance Survey map prior to development	Looking southeast	30/08/2007
Brookside006	Modern gateway and footpath at the northeast corner of the site prior to development	Looking northeast	30/08/2007
Brookside007	Watercourse from natural spring at the northern end of the development area	Looking east northeast	30/08/2007
Brookside008	Watercourse from natural spring with northern field bank on the right prior to development	Looking west	30/08/2007
Brookside009	Old drainage ditch running parallel to stream in valley bottom prior to development	Looking north northeast	30/08/2007
Brookside010	Trees in the southern part of the site prior to development	Looking north	30/08/2007
Brookside011	Modern drain, along line of previous open ditch (feature 021), after tree clearance and initial clean up	Looking southwest	12/09/2007
Brookside012	Feature 021, after tree clearance and initial clean up	Looking west northwest	12/09/2007
Brookside013	Feature 021, after tree clearance and initial clean up	Looking north northeast	12/09/2007
Brookside014	Further excavation work, keeping the line of the old trackway (feature 022)	Looking south	12/09/2007
Brookside015	Detail of drain (feature 020) after initial clean up, with slate capping removed	Looking northeast	12/09/2007

Brookside016	Detail of Goodwick brick from drain 020	-	12/09/2007
Brookside017	Detail of drain 020	Looking northwest	12/09/2007
Brookside018	North part of site after clearance	Looking north northeast	12/09/2007
Brookside019	South part of the site after clearance	Looking south southwest	12/09/2007
Brookside020	Features 024 & 025, after clearance (similar view to photograph 008)	Looking west	12/09/2007
Brookside021	Old trackway 022 with scale	Looking south	12/09/2007
Brookside022	Detail of drain 020 with scale	Looking north	12/09/2007
Brookside023	Old trackway 022	Looking northwest	12/09/2007
Brookside024	Discarded slabs that formally covered drain 020	Looking southeast	12/09/2007
Brookside025	Excavation for chalet base into slope at northern end of site	Looking south	12/09/2007
Brookside026	Excavation for northernmost chalet base at north end of site	Looking north	12/09/2007
Brookside027	After laying of new track base. Old trackway 022 is visible just above the new track line.	Looking north northeast	14/09/2007
Brookside028	Detail of wet area along a spring line at the north end of the development area during excavation, showing the clay deposits typical of the wetter ground	Looking northwest	14/09/2007

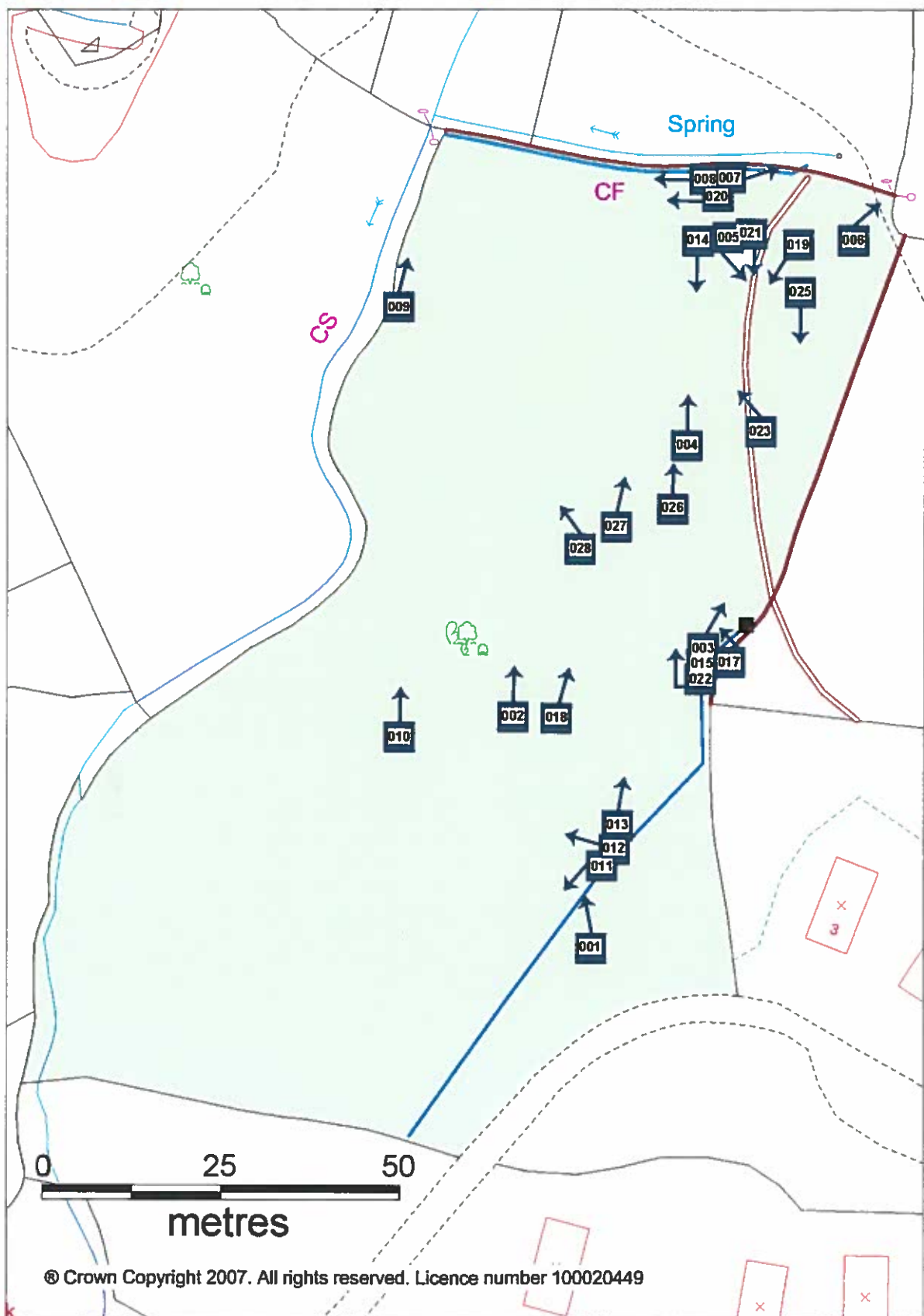


Fig.6: Locations and directions of photographs.