



LINDSEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

Land South of Cherry Holt Lane, Stamford

NGR: TF 0352 0709

Site Code: SBE 00

LCNCC Museum Accn. No.: 2000.86

Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment

**Report prepared for
Mr V. Harrison**

**by
G. Tann**

**LAS Report No. 410
April 2000**

Lincolnshire County Council
Archaeology Section
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Contents

List of Figures and Plates

Summary	1
Introduction	1
Geology	2
Archaeological and Historical Context	2
Site Visit	5
Impact of the Proposed Development on Surviving Archaeological Remains	5
Discussion	6
Conclusion	6
Acknowledgements	7
References and Background Sources	7
Appendix 1: Summary List of Archaeological Sites and Artefacts (Source: Lincolnshire Sites and Monuments Record)	

List of Figures and Plates

Figures

- Fig. 1** Location of Stamford (C based on the 1958 Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 map, Sheet TF 00. © Crown Copyright, reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO. LAS Licence No. AL 50424A).
- Fig. 2** Location of the Application Site (based on the 1999 Ordnance Survey 1:1,250 map supplied by the client. © Crown Copyright, reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO. LAS Licence No. AL 50424A).
- Fig. 3** a) Speed's Map of Stamford, 1600, showing the friary buildings;
b) Plan of Stamford (undated), showing the Black Friary grounds. BL MS Add 11564 art 10, fol.20v-21r.
- Fig. 4** Enlarged extract from Knipe's Map of Stamford, 1833, showing garden plots in the Blackfriars Estate.
- Fig. 5** Extract from the 1842 Tithe Map for St. George's parish, Stamford. The application site lies within plot 146 (traced from LAO B260).
- Fig. 6** The application site in 1899 (reproduced at enlarged scale from the 1901 Ordnance Survey 1:2,500 map, Sheet 151.5.).
- Fig. 7** The application site as shown on a conveyancing drawing, 1958 (supplied by the client).
- Fig. 8** The application site in 1977 (based on the 1977 Ordnance Survey 1:2,500 map, Sheet TF 02-03. © Crown Copyright, reproduced at enlarged scale with the permission of the Controller of HMSO. LAS Licence No. AL 50424A).

Plates

- Pl. 1** Cherry Holt Lane (looking west). The site is marked by the estate agent's board.
- Pl. 2** Un-named lane leading south from Adelaide Street, formerly continuing to the river. (Looking south, with the site at the end of the existing lane).
- Pl. 3** Lamp unit and power supply at the western end of the demolished toilet block (looking east).
- Pl. 4** Site layout, looking NW.
- Pl. 5** Site layout, looking east.
- Pl. 6** Pitched limestone rubble exposed in rabbit hole at the NE corner of the site.

Land South of Cherry Holt Lane, Stamford Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment

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Summary

The site lies within the grounds of a thirteenth century Dominican friary, but probably about 80m from the main buildings. After dissolution of the friary in 1538, a house was built within the grounds, at which time the site may have been woodland. When the house was demolished in the late eighteenth century, the grounds were used as gardens, and remained in use as such until the mid nineteenth century. A map of 1833 shows the layout of this area in detail. Development of the Blackfriars Estate after 1840 seems to have had little impact on the site, apart from a lane across its western side. A few small outbuildings are recorded on nineteenth century maps near the NW corner. A toilet block was built along the northern boundary, and the demolished remains survive. The lane to the west was incorporated into the site after 1977. The site was last used for car storage. The assessment found no records of archaeological features having existed on the site.

Introduction

Lindsey Archaeological Services (LAS) was commissioned by Mr V. Harrison in April 2000 to undertake a desk-based assessment of a plot of land east of Stamford town centre (Figs. 1 and 2). The assessment was required in advance of a decision on land purchase and does not form part of a planning application. The client had been in contact with the South Kesteven District Council Community Archaeologist who had advised that a desk-based assessment would probably form the first element of any pre-determination scheme of works if a planning application for the site was submitted. Mr Harrison proposes to apply for permission to construct a warehouse within the site.

During research for the desk-based assessment, the following sources were consulted:

- Lincolnshire County Council Built Environment Office, Sites and Monuments Record (SMR),
- Lincolnshire Archives Office (Enclosure map, Ordnance Survey maps, manuscript maps and other documentary and published sources)
- Lincoln Central Library Reference Department, Local Studies Collection
- South Kesteven Community Archaeologist's parish folders
- Site visit

Site Location

The c.0.14ha. rectangular plot is bounded to the north by Cherry Holt Lane (Fig. 2; Pl. 1). It lies at about 22.5m OD on a limestone slope 80m north of the River Welland. In recent years the site has been a goods yard and a car storage area, and is bounded to east, south and west by electricity substation premises.

Geology

The plot of ground lies within the extensive local exposures of the Lincolnshire Oolitic Limestone Series (LAO: HIG 18/8/7 1890). Although no borehole information was available, the site may be covered by alluvium from past flood events. The surface of the site is partly sand and small gravel, but it is unclear whether topsoil has been removed or covered.

Archaeological and Historical Context

The Primary Record Numbers (PRNs) of entries on the Lincolnshire County Council Sites and Monuments Record are given in bold. A summary of the entries in the vicinity is given in Appendix 1.

Roman

Stamford was neither a Roman urban or military occupation site, but stray finds have been made particularly on the west side of the present town, close to the Roman road which runs between Great Casterton and Durobrivae (Peterborough).

Saxon and Medieval

The medieval town of Stamford extended on both banks of the River Welland, but the nucleus of the settlement developed, and remained, on the north bank. A substantial settlement appears to have developed on the site of modern Stamford by the late ninth century with evidence of a major pottery industry, iron working and quarrying. Until the Norman Conquest in 1066, Stamford was one of the Five Boroughs of the Danelaw. The Danish Borough lay east of the Market Place but only extended as far as St. George's Street, to the west of the proposed development.

The line of the medieval and later Great North Road exhibits two abrupt bends in Stamford. Its original course appears to have been straight, heading for a stone ford. It is thought that after an eleventh century marketplace was sited immediately to the west outside the town core, and two churches were built, the road deviated to serve the market. Later streets were aligned on the new course, producing a change in the town's topography (Hoskins 1967, 24-6)

In the early Middle Ages Stamford occupied an ideal position for a market town, a centre for industry and for trade to the continent, with evidence for imported French and Spanish pottery from excavations. There were fourteen parish churches, a quasi-university and numerous religious houses (Mahany 1978). The medieval town expanded beyond the Danish Borough in all directions, the eastern limits of the town defences being Brazenose Lane.

The application site lay in St. George's parish, outside the Danish and medieval town centres. It was in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries that the extramural area was settled by several religious houses, their position at the edge of the town acting as a symbol of their outreach to rural communities (Platts 1985, 211). Stamford's religious houses seem to have withstood the fourteenth century succession of plagues without a distinct decline in their status, perhaps as a result of gifts from desperate citizens (Rogers 1983, 42). This may have been reflected in the economic fortunes of lay settlements in the vicinity of the Friaries and Priory.

The application site lies within the grounds of a Dominican (Black Friars) institution (SMR **30620**), founded on a ten acre site between St. Leonard's Street and the River Welland in about 1241. The friars seem to have numbered up to 40 during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, declining to 34 in 1337 (Knowles and Hadcock 1971, 219).

The land block owned by the friary appears to have been defined by the modern Gas Street (to the west) and Cherry Holt Road (to the east). The site of the Black Friars' church and buildings is shown on Speed's plan of the town and an undated plan of the seventeenth century (Figs. 3a and 3b; Speed c.1600; BL MS Add 11564 art 10, fol.20v-21r). Speed drew a representation of the church, with friary buildings adjoining it to the SE, and a series of linear paths or walls south of the nave. The undated plan is much less detailed for the town, but shows trees forming a hedge or arrangement to the SW of the buildings.

It is assumed that all or most of the buildings were above the flood plain, and archaeological observations in 1974 and 1977-8 suggest that the hub of the friary activity was towards the western end of the modern Adelaide Street (RCHM(E) 1977, 69-70). Foundations found at the corner of Adelaide Street and Brownlow Street in 1974 survived to about 1m in height, and had clearly been substantial (typescript report in parish file, HTL). In 1244, Henry III gave the friary a grant in respect of their conduit (aqueduct), which was fed by a spring in Northamptonshire. This indicates that the conduit (presumably of wooden pipes) crossed the Welland, and would have led up the floodplain to the friary buildings. No trace of this feature has been reported, A directory of 1842 describes the Black Friary as dedicated to St. Mary and St. Nicholas, and stated that it had originally possessed extensive gardens extending down to the river.

Post-medieval

The friary complex was disbanded after the Dissolution in 1538, at which time it was valued at almost £73. Although much of its church was extant in 1600, and dovecotes were present in 1695 (SMR **30661**), all trace had been removed by the nineteenth century (White 1842, 764).

Between 1574 and 1611, Sir Edward Heron built a house (SMR **30659**, **30660**) which was bought by Richard Cust in 1654. A 1615 letter describes the property as "*very well walled roundabout, and in the mydst a fayre hows that was built by Baron Hearon... There is a good deal of wood of it, fishponds and other comodytis...*" (quoted by Drakard 1822, 605). An illustration, dated 1719, shows the house surrounded by trees, and no detail of the grounds is visible (Vander Gucht/Tillemans 1719). Heron's house was demolished sometime between 1775 and 1782, and the site became gardens, eventually owned by John Cust (Earl Brownlow). The complexity of the site layout in 1833 is depicted on Knipe's plan of the town (Fig. 4; Knipe 1833). Some of the garden areas fall within definable irregular parcels which may fossilise a medieval pattern. This pattern was lost when Earl Brownlow subdivided the land block, termed the Blackfriar's Estate, into rectangular plots for residential development and held the first of three sales in 1840. Documents detailing the projected sale, held by Lincolnshire Archives [2BNL/15/10], were undergoing re-cataloguing in April 2000 and were not available for study.

A medieval ring was found in 1816, and another in 1821 (SMR **30686**) on the Friary site, probably close to Adelaide Street. Redevelopment of the site of the post-medieval house and its grounds as the Blackfriars Estate led to the discovery of skeletons on the northern side of Adelaide Street in 1840 and 1847, stone architectural fragments close to Nos. 33-35 to the south of Adelaide Street in 1845, and a stone coffin near No. 7 Adelaide Street in 1909 at a depth of about 1.5m. Residential development in the area seems to have faltered shortly after 1845, and the land south of Adelaide Street, originally destined for large detached properties, remained undeveloped after its sale in 1844. It was used as garden land for town residents who had no gardens attached to their houses (RCHM letter, undated). The application site lay in the centre of a large, irregular holding in 1842, owned by Amelia Selby, and classified as gardens and buildings (Fig. 4; LAO B260). The street name Cherry Holt Road may record a cherry orchard, but there are no indications that this is a medieval name. The road, unlabelled, is first shown on the 1833 map by Knipe. Cherry Holt Lane is more recent still.

Modern

The Ordnance Survey map of 1901 shows two small buildings near the NW corner of the site, but the smaller scale revisions of the 1920s show the site as completely clear (Fig. 6; OS 1901 and OS 1958). At that date a NW-SE lane led from the bank of the River Welland to Adelaide Street, but the lower part of this lane has since been extinguished and the section close to Cherry Holt Lane incorporated into the application site (PI. 2). By June 1951, an air photograph appears to show some structures along the north and west edges of the smaller site area (RAF 1951). A copy of a conveyancing plan of September 1958 shows the plot to be bounded to the south by an orchard, and appears to mark structures along the northern boundary in the position of the toilet block (Fig. 7). The site is shown at 1:10,560 scale on an indistinct air photograph of 1966 (HSL 1966).

The 1972 Ordnance Survey map shows two structures along the northern edge of the site, one of which appears to be the toilet block (OS 1972). In 1977, the north-south lane leading off Adelaide Street ended at the southern end of the application site, but had not yet been absorbed into it (Fig. 8; OS 1977). No buildings are marked within the site at that date.

Site Visit

A visit to the site was made on 4th April 2000 in good lighting conditions. Cherry Holt Lane is a roughly metalled thoroughfare, as is the lane leading north to Adelaide Street (Pls. 1 and 2). Land north of Cherry Holt Lane has been developed, while land to the west, south and east of the site contains electricity substation structures. The site is bounded by a steel security fence on all sides, with a broad gate in the NW corner. The site level is about 0.75m lower than Cherry Holt Lane, sloping slightly down towards the SE. The area appears to have been levelled, possibly with a removal of soil.

The last use of this plot was for car storage, and a spotlight and adjacent power supply are close to the northern fence (Pl. 3). No overhead electricity cables cross the site, and no service trenches were seen within it. There may be some underground cabling around the internal perimeter.

The concrete slab base of a rectangular building occupies the centre of the northern site edge, extending about 6m into the site. This seems to represent the site of a former toilet block. An open broken ceramic drain was seen against the northern boundary, associated with a surface residue which could have been sewage washed out by heavy rain the preceding day. Immediately to the south of the slab, the ground is distinctly wetter.

A spread of stone chippings, contemporary with the car storage use, leads from the gate across towards the eastern side of the site and back to the western fence (Pls. 4 and 5). Between these access paths, the exposed ground is sandy gravel with some sandy loam, covered with moss, low grass and surface weeds. There is evidence of rabbit activity. In the NE corner of the site a rabbit hole has uncovered two adjacent pitched pieces of thin limestone rubble, but the significance, if any, of this is not known (Pl. 6).

Impact of the Proposed Development on Surviving Archaeological Remains

There is a tentative proposal to construct a warehouse within the site, using the existing sewerage connection to the former toilet block, if possible. No details of the proposal have been seen by LAS.

The excavation of foundation trenches or pad points for a warehouse would probably remove any archaeological deposits which they encountered. Damage to any surviving deposits would probably be limited to the extent of new foundations, and possibly to drain trenches across the site if required.

Discussion

The documentary, cartographic and published sources located during this desktop study have all appeared to indicate that the proposed development plot was open, undeveloped land until the later nineteenth century, when small structures were built within it, near its NW corner. Since then, development appears to have been restricted to small brick buildings along the northern boundary, used as a toilet block. The reason for a toilet block in this position has not been established, but it may have served a mid-twentieth century goods yard on the site.

The site's position within 80m of the River Welland means that prehistoric and Roman activity on the light sands and gravels of the site is possible, although it probably lies within the flood plain. The absence of any records of archaeological discoveries from the gardens formerly on this site tends to discount the existence of a Roman site.

During the medieval period, the site lay within the grounds of the Dominican friary, but was about 80m SE of the suspected position of the friary buildings. Documentary references to a conduit, dovecotes and fishponds could all allude to features between the friary and the river, but no closer location for them is available.

Post-medieval land-use is more certain. The plot was apparently planted with trees by the start of the seventeenth century, as part of the grounds of Heron's house. At the end of the eighteenth century, the house was demolished and the grounds converted to a patchwork of garden plots which survived at least until 1833; the pattern of gardens recorded on Knipe's plan might be recoverable (Fig.6). Development on the site would all appear to be later than 1840, when construction of the Blackfriar's Estate was begun, but even then this site remained virtually undeveloped. The difference in land use could explain the absence of reported archaeological finds near Cherry Holt Lane, compared with the findspots along Adelaide Street.

Twentieth century activity on the site was apparently restricted to a goods yard (with a toilet block) and open storage of cars.

Conclusion

Archaeological evaluation of the site might reveal archaeological features representing an assortment of possible past activities, but nothing in this search indicated the certainty of any significant remains. Consultation with the South Kesteven Community Archaeologist will be required to ascertain whether any further archaeological investigations will be required prior to development, if this were approved.

Acknowledgements

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Lincolnshire County Council Built Environment Team (especially Judy O'Neill); Jo Simpson (South Kesteven Community Archaeologist); the staff at Lincolnshire Archives, and Lincoln Central Library (Local Studies).

Illustrations were prepared by Mick McDaid, and the report was collated and produced by Jane Frost.

G. Tann
Lindsey Archaeological Services
5th April 2000

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OS 1958 Ordnance Survey 1:10,560 map Sheet TF 00 NW. Revised before 1930.

OS 1972 Ordnance Survey 1:2,500 map Sheet TF 02-03.

OS 1977 Ordnance Survey 1:10,560 map Sheet TF 00 NW.

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Lincolnshire Sites and Monuments Record Summary

Key

NGR National Grid Reference

PRN Lincolnshire County Sites and Monuments Record Primary Record No.

PRN	NGR	Description
30732	033 073 033 075	Stamford ware and other Early Medieval pottery, found 1956. Roman Castor ware sherds 1977. Medieval pottery kiln, 1962; early Stamford ware pottery wasters 1976 but no trace of clay extraction pits.
30738	034 074	Four pits, with Saxo-Norman Stamford ware pottery; service trench, East Street. Saxo-Norman pottery and iron slag; junction of St. Paul's St. and Brazenose Lane, 1963.
30620	034 071	Trial excavation 1974, off Brownlow St.; medieval pottery and 17th century pit.
30659	035 071	Post-medieval house on Blackfriars site, demolished 1782.
30660	035 071	Documentary record of fishponds, 1615.
30661	035 071	Documentary record of dovecote and fishponds on site of Friary, 1695.
30686	0349 0717	Site of Dominican Friary (Black Friar's), c.1241-1538 part of church survived to 1600. Two medieval rings, found 1816 and 1821.
30730	035 073?	Medieval pottery and wasters; ?kiln site, found in back garden 1968; this may be a dump of kiln waste.
30737	035 073?	Saxo-Norman pottery, Undeveloped and Developed Stamford ware; green glazed ridge tiles. Found Pinfold Lane, 1973.
30684	0360 0756	Roman figurine (?Concordia) from household shrine, Melbourne Road, 1973.
30692	038 075	Roman coins from garden on Uffington Road, 1977.

The SMR positions of the Friary and subsequent house do not coincide with the locations of architectural fragments, skeletons and other finds from Adelaide Street.

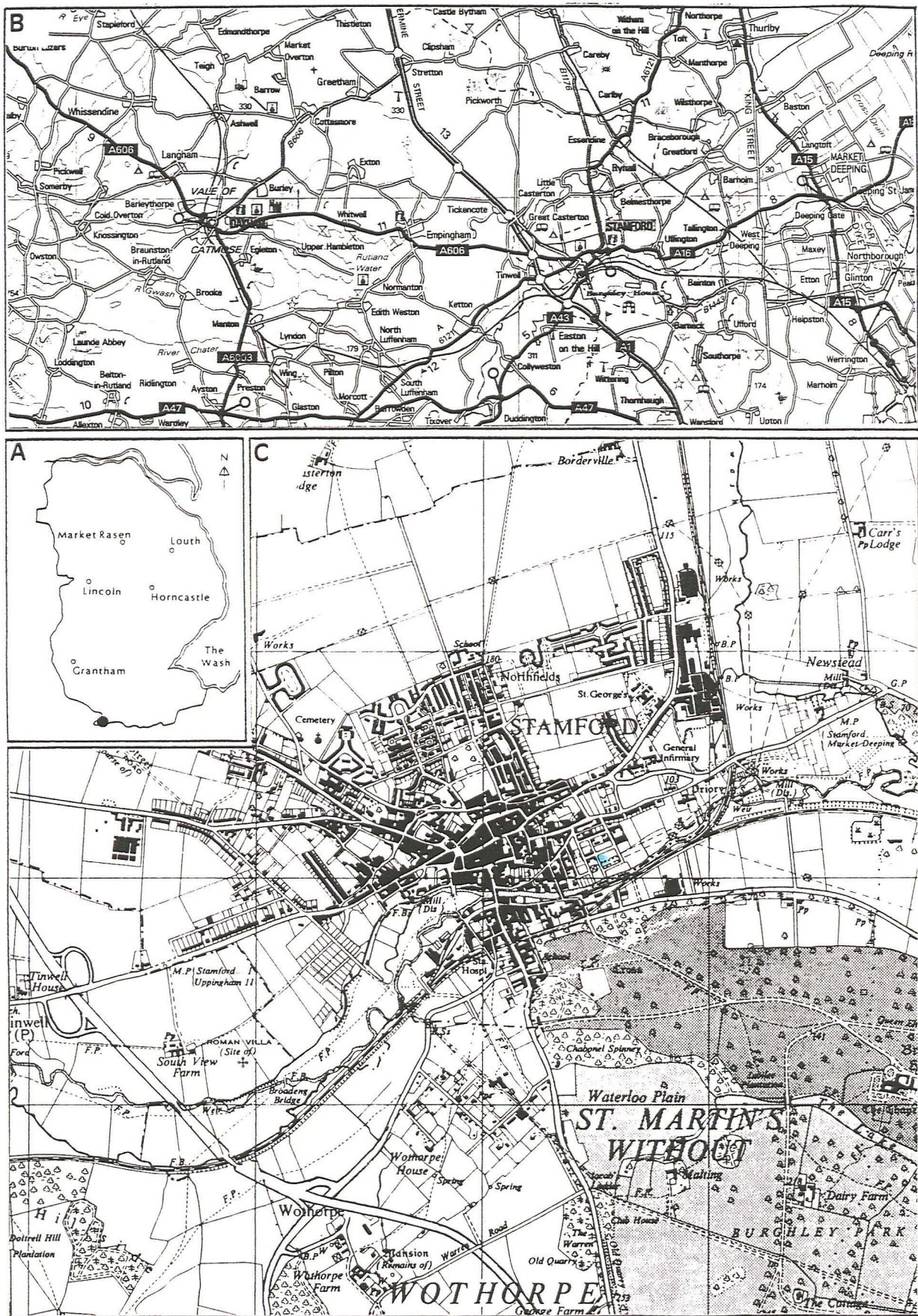


Fig. 1 Location of Stamford (C based on the 1958 Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 map, Sheet TF 00. © Crown Copyright, reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO. LAS Licence No. AL 50424A).

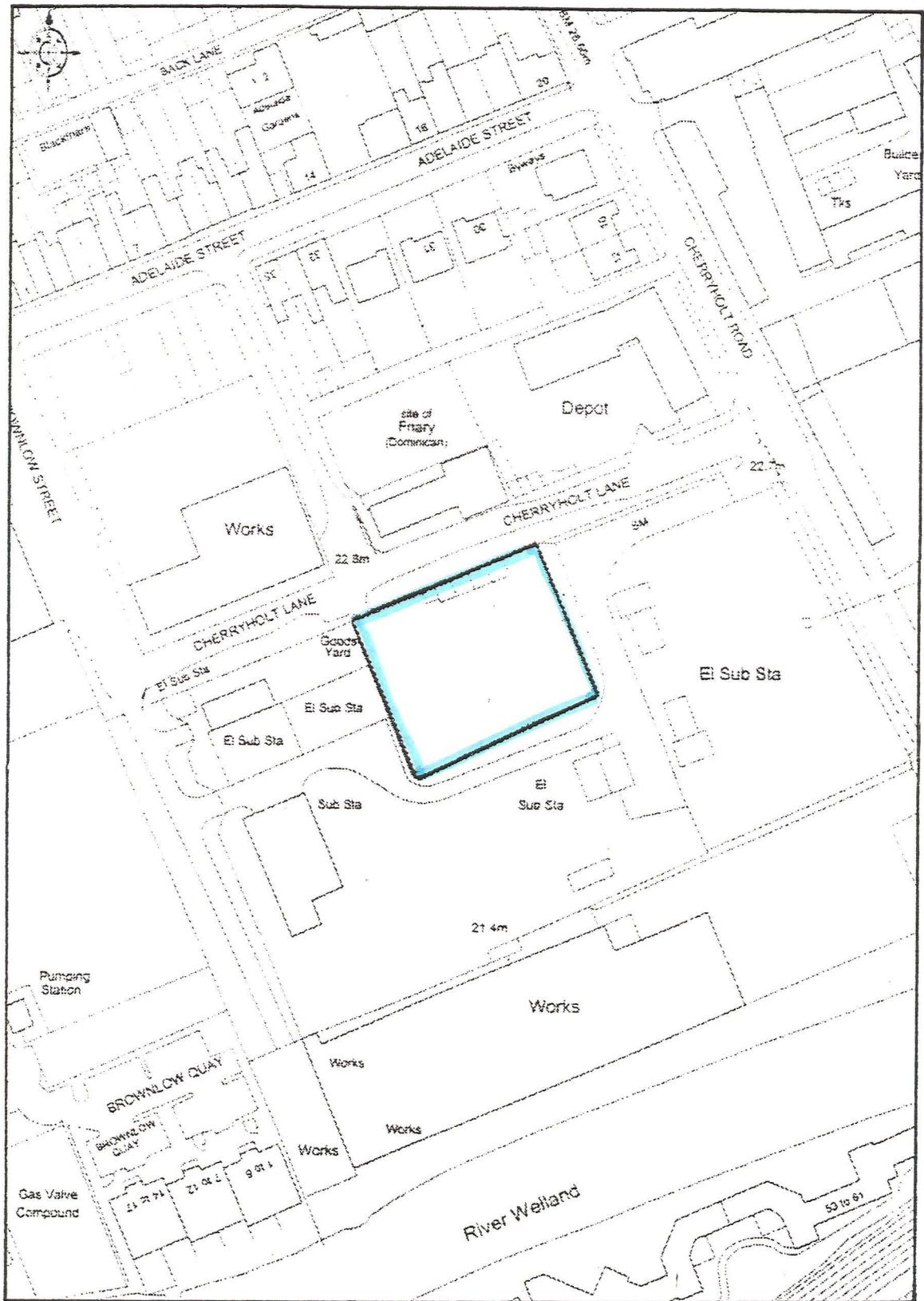


Fig. 2 Location of the Application Site (based on the 1999 Ordnance Survey 1:1,250 map supplied by the client. © Crown Copyright, reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO. LAS Licence No. AL 50424A).

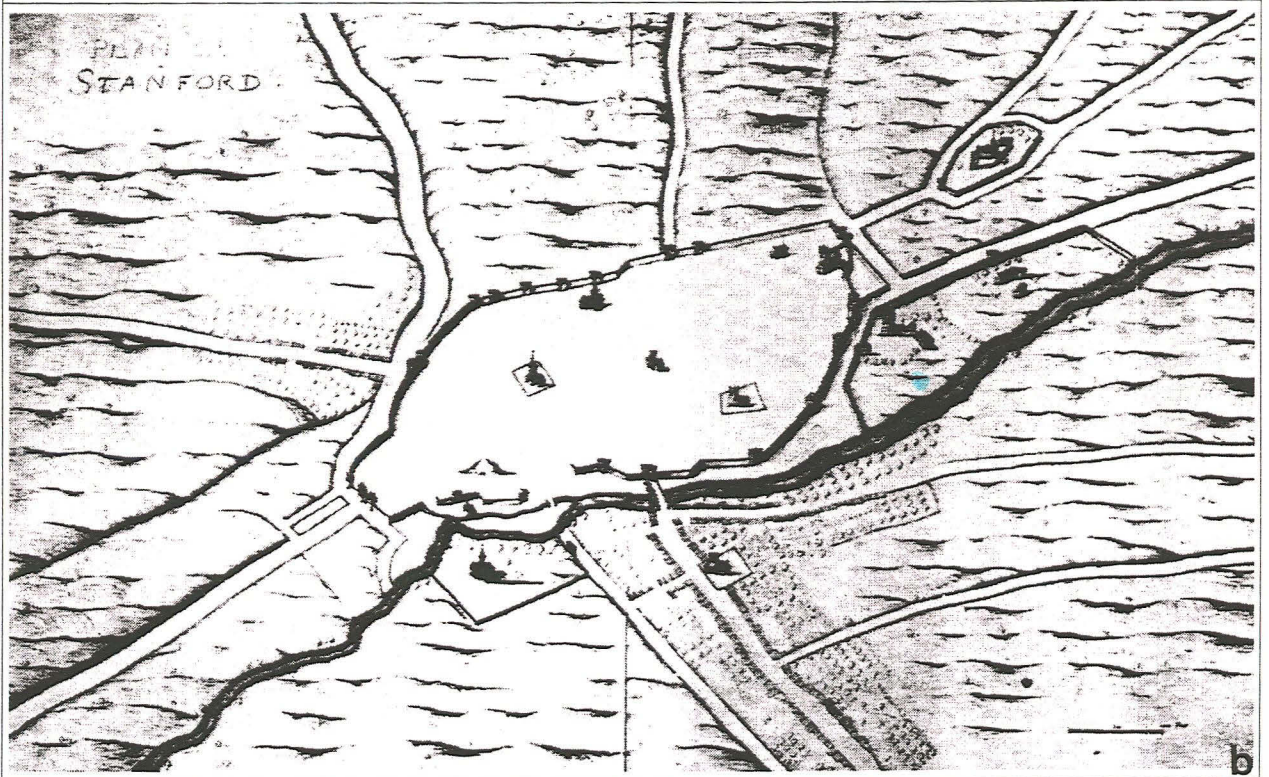
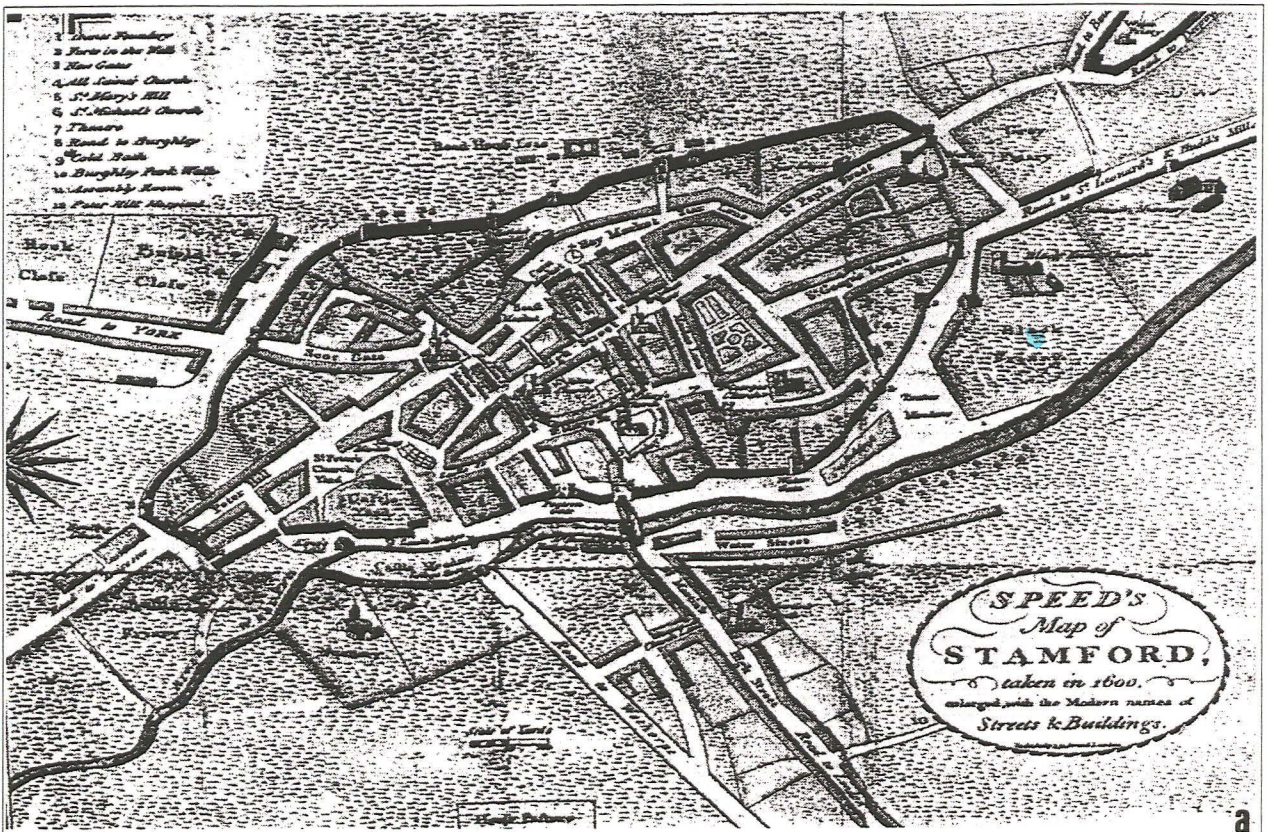


Fig. 3 a) Speed's Map of Stamford, 1600, showing the friary buildings;
 b) Plan of Stamford (undated), showing the Black Friary grounds. BL MS Add 11564 art 10, fol.20v-21r.

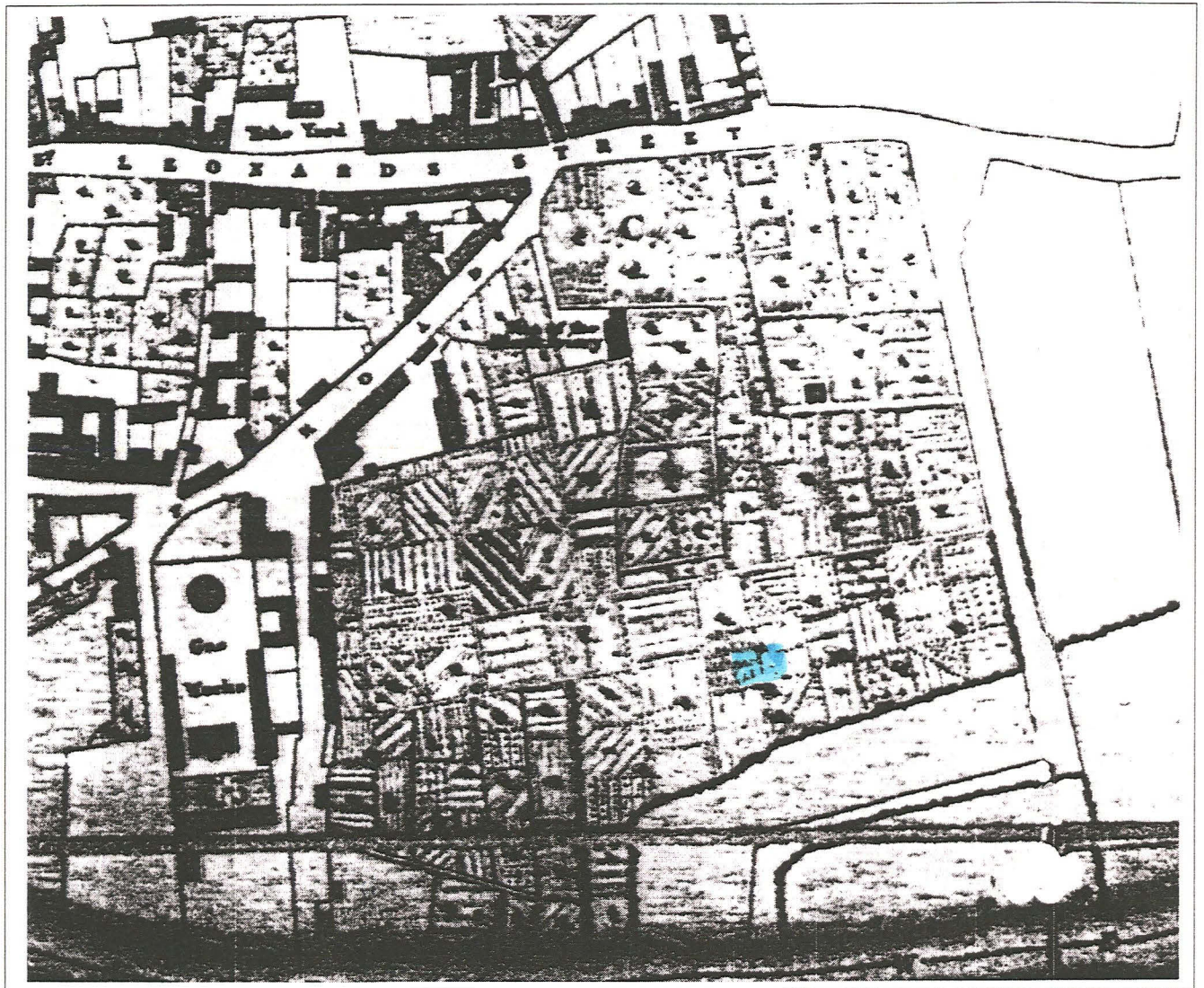


Fig. 4 Enlarged extract from Knipe's Map of Stamford, 1833, showing garden plots in the Blackfriars Estate.

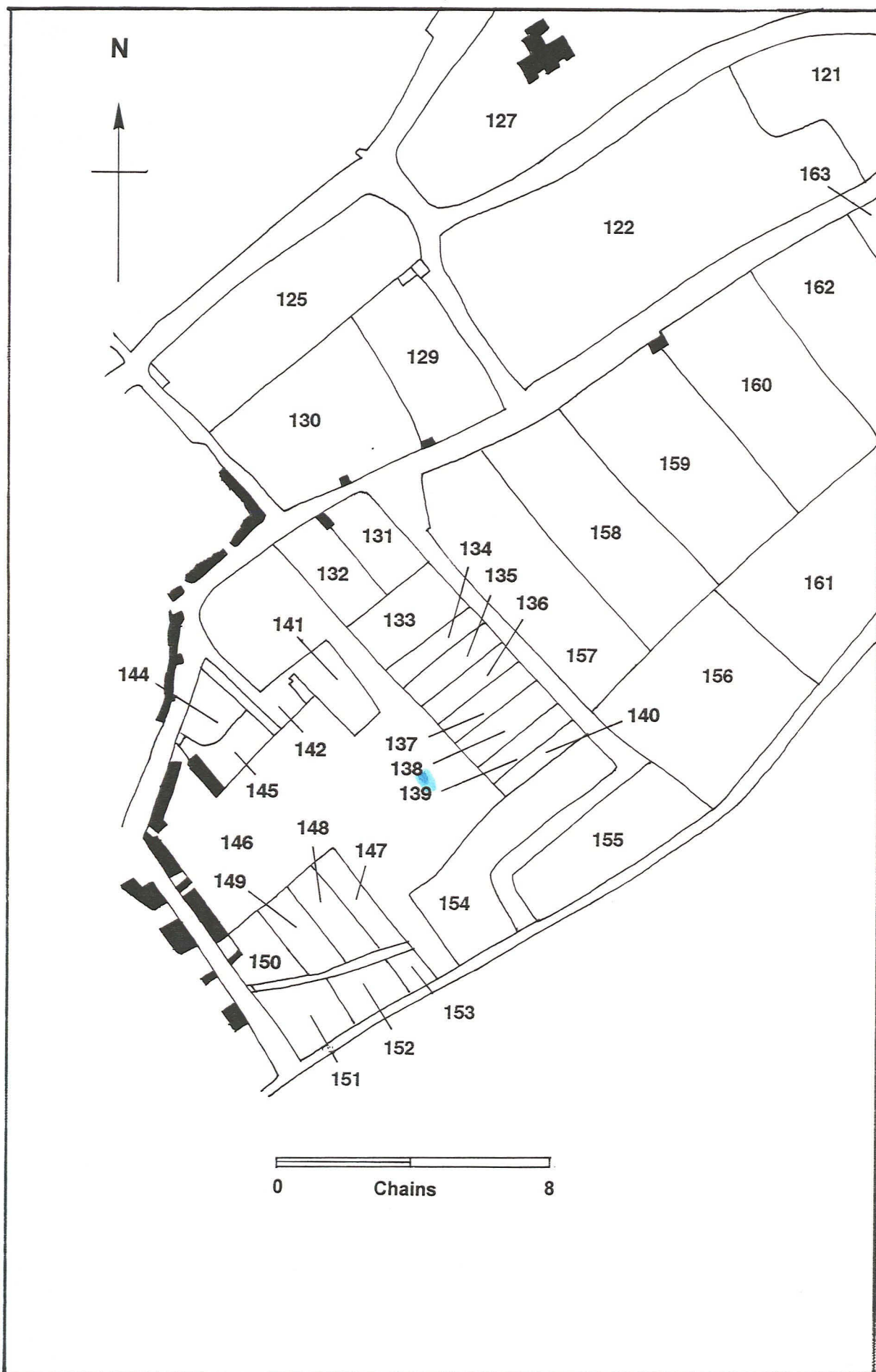


Fig. 5 Extract from the 1842 Tithe Map for St. George's parish, Stamford. The application site lies within plot 146 (traced from LAO B260).

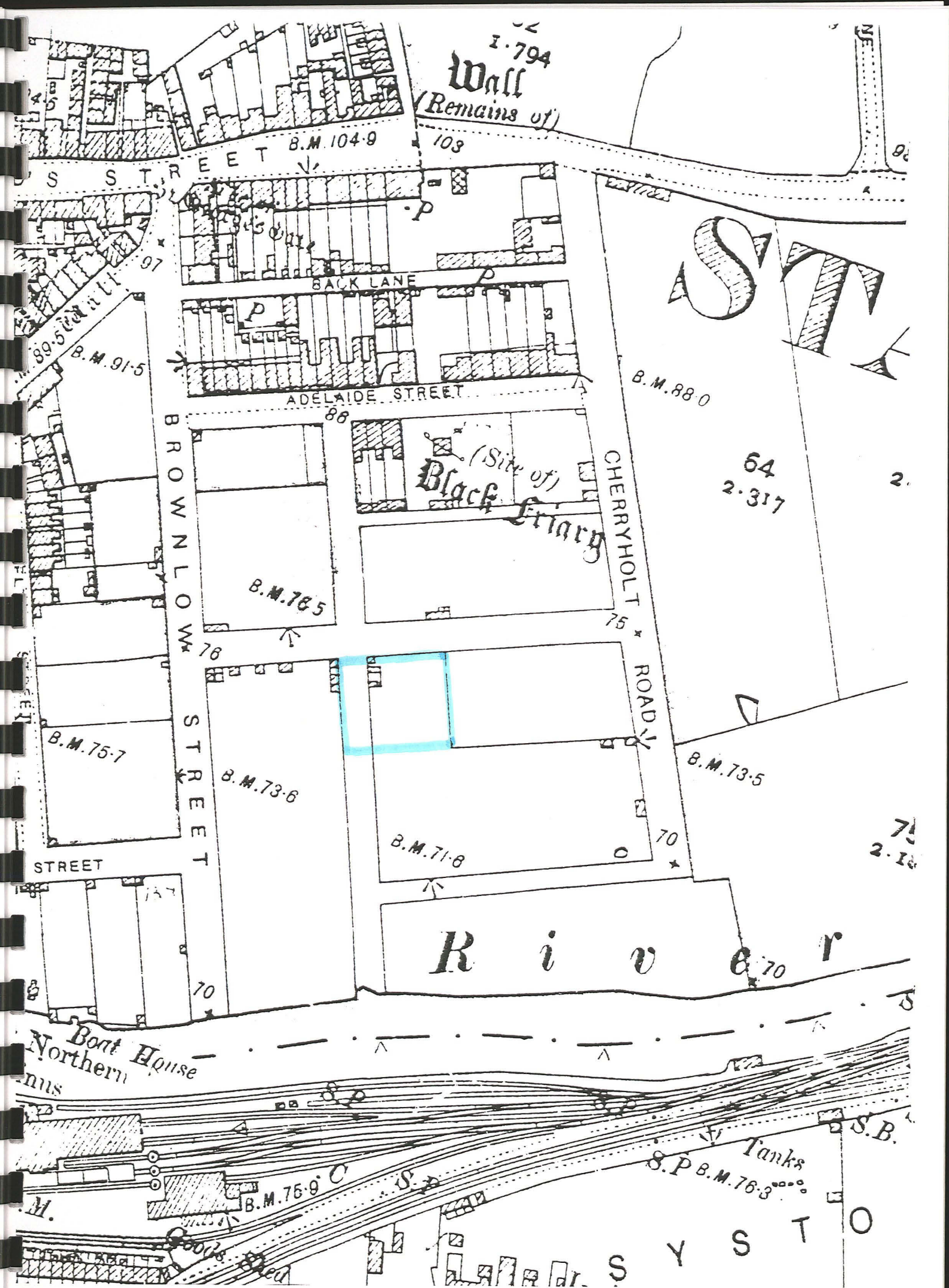


Fig. 6 The application site in 1899 (reproduced at enlarged scale from the 1901 Ordnance Survey 1:2,500 map, Sheet 151.5.).

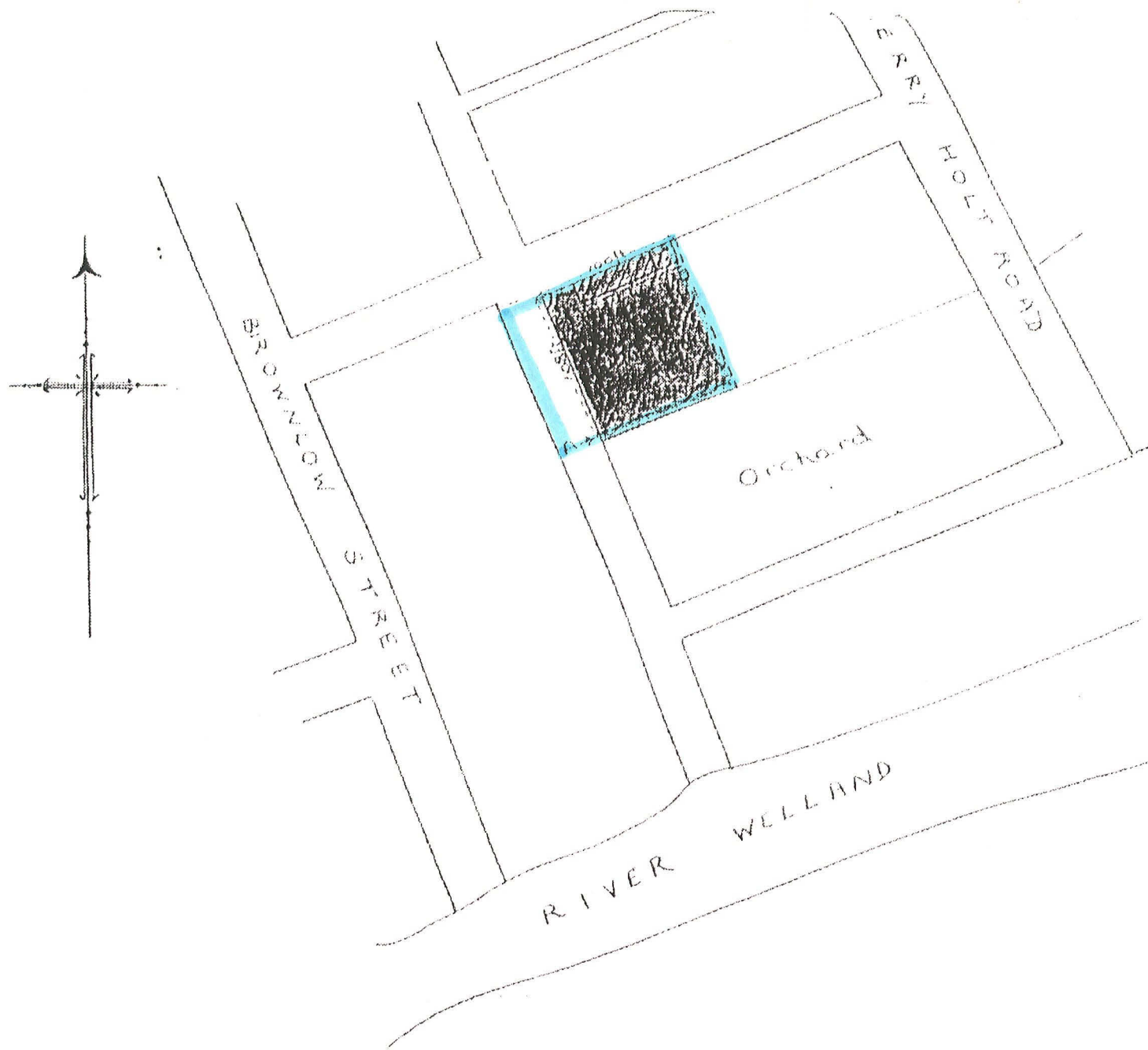


Fig. 7 The application site as shown on a conveyancing drawing, 1958 (supplied by the client).

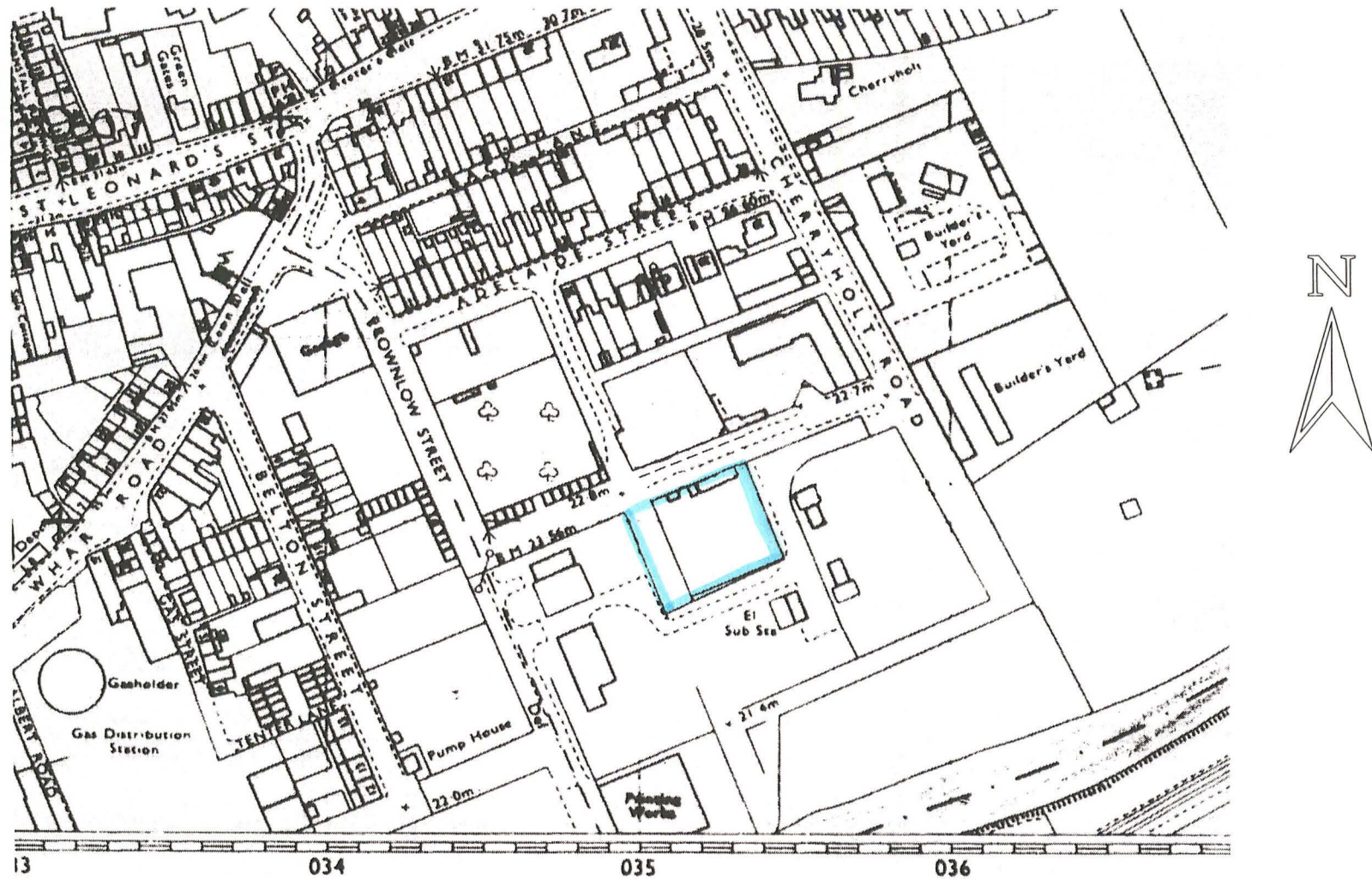


Fig. 8 The application site in 1977 (based on the 1977 Ordnance Survey 1:2,500 map, Sheet TF 02-03. Crown Copyright, reproduced at enlarged scale with the permission of the Controller of HMSO. LAS Licence Number AL 50424A).



Pl. 1 Cherry Holt Lane (looking west). The site is marked by the estate agent's board.

Pl. 2 Un-named lane leading south from Adelaide Street, formerly continuing to the river. (Looking south, with the site at the end of the existing lane).





PI. 3 Lamp unit and power supply at the western end of the demolished toilet block (looking east).

PI. 4 Site layout, looking NW.





Pl. 5 Site layout, looking east.

Pl. 6 Pitched limestone rubble exposed in rabbit hole at the NE corner of the site.

