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HERITAGE NETWORK



2 ROYSTON ROAD
Baldock, Herts.

(HN363)

Archaeological Evaluation Report



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THE HERITAGE NETWORK LTD

Registered with the Institute of Field Archaeologists as an Archaeological Organisation

Archaeological Director: David Hillelson, BA MIFA

Land at
2 ROYSTON ROAD
Baldock, Herts.

HN363

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Prepared on behalf of Pegasus Retirement Homes Ltd

by

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and

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Report No. 155

July 2002

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The cover illustration shows a detail from 'A View of Baldock in Hertfordshire' by F. Jukes, 1786.

The present study area is shown on the right of the picture.

Acknowledgements

The desk-based research for this project was undertaken by Helen Ashworth. Fieldwork was undertaken by Martin Lightfoot and John Bolderson under the supervision of Jonathan Hunn. Illustrations were prepared by Karin Semmelmann and David Hillelson, and the report was edited by David Hillelson.

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Summary

Site name and address:	2 Royston Road, Baldock, Herts.		
County:	Hertfordshire	District:	North Herts
Village/town:	Baldock	Parish:	Clothall
Planning reference:	01/01686/1	NGR (to 8 figures):	TL 2469 3410
Client name and address:	Pegasus Retirement Homes Ltd, 105-107 Bath Road, Cheltenham GL53 7LE		
Nature of application:	New housing	Present land use:	Garage and stores
Size of application area:	4000m ²	Size of area investigated:	128m ²
Site Code:	HN363	Other reference:	n/a
Organisation:	Heritage Network	Site Director:	David Hillelson
Type of work:	Evaluation	Finds location/Museum:	N Herts Museums
Start of work	11 June 2002	Finish of work	17 June 2002
Related SMR Nos.:	n/a	Periods represented:	Romano-British
Previous summaries /reports:	n/a		

Synopsis: As the result of an archaeological condition on the planning permission for the redevelopment of a petrol station and industrial estate at 2 Royston Road, Baldock, Herts, the Heritage Network was commissioned by the developer to undertake an archaeological evaluation of the site. The evaluation included desk-based research and fieldwork.

Six trial trenches were located across the proposed development area, avoiding the existing buildings. The desk-based research suggested a high level risk of encountering archaeological remains relating to the late pre-Roman Iron Age and Roman settlement, and to the medieval leper hospital of St Mary Magdalene which is believed to have occupied the site. Archaeological features and artefacts of Roman date, suggesting settlement between the late 1st and late 2nd centuries AD, were recorded in four of the six trenches across the site, located away from the Royston Road frontage. No medieval remains were recorded. The remaining two trenches were in an area which has been highly disturbed by modern activity.

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Introduction

1.1 This report has been prepared on behalf of the *Pegasus Retirement Homes Ltd* as part of the archaeological evaluation of a proposed development site at 2 Royston Road, Baldock, Hertfordshire. The planning permission for the development (ref. 01/01686/1), controlled by the North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC), has been subject to a standard archaeological condition which is to be met by following the provisions set out in the *Brief for Archaeological Evaluation* dated 26/03/02 prepared by the *County Archaeology Office* (CAO) of Hertfordshire County Council, acting as advisers to NHDC. The specification for the work is contained in the Heritage Network's approved *Project Design* dated May 2002.

1.2 The site is located on the eastern corner of the junction between Whitehorse Street, Royston Road, Station Road, and Clothall Road (see Figure 1). It forms a small industrial estate including a former petrol station, car showrooms, and warehousing. The redevelopment proposes the construction of a block of 50 sheltered apartments.

1.3 The site lies on the north-western edge of the Romano-British settlement at Baldock and on the north-eastern edge of the medieval settlement, within an 'Archaeological Area' designated in the North Herts District Local Plan. It was the view of the planning authority that there was a good chance that remains relating to late Iron Age and Romano-British occupation of the town will be encountered, as well as evidence relating to the leper hospital of St Mary Magdalene which is believed to have occupied the site during the medieval period.

1.4 The aim of the evaluation, which includes desk-based research as well as fieldwork, has been to establish an archaeological and historical context for the site, and to provide an assessment of the risk that development groundworks would encounter archaeological remains. The assessment has been based on available documentary and cartographic records, and a consideration of the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains identified in trial trenches.

1.5 The present report is intended to provide the planning authority with sufficient data to allow it to consider the archaeological implications of the proposed development, and thus to determine what further, if any, mitigation measures may be required to allow the development to proceed.

2 Desk-based Research

TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

2.1 The site is terraced into ground which rises towards the north and east. The existing ground level varies between 61.42mOD on the Royston Road frontage, to 62.44 mOD in the courtyard at the eastern end of the site.

2.2 Map sheet 147 of the Soil Survey of England shows the town of Baldock to lie in an area of Moulton series brown earth, formed by chalky, sandy and loamy drift over chalk. Sheet 221 of the British Geological Survey indicates that the site overlies Cretaceous Middle and Lower Chalk with a thin superficial covering of clay.

2.3 A ground investigation carried out on behalf of the clients confirms that the underlying geology is predominantly creamy white structureless chalk, overlain in places by light beige structureless chalk (MSS 2001). Across the site, the chalk is overlain by up to 0.90m of made ground.

ARCHAEOLOGY

2.4 The County Sites and Monuments Record (HCC) and the archaeological archives held by the North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC) were consulted for this project. Data on archaeological sites within a kilometre of the study area have been included in the present study.

Prehistoric

2.5 Baldock lies on the Icknield Way, an ancient trackway which linked East Anglia and Wessex. This is likely to have originally been formed by a series of individual tracks, which may have spread over a wide area, rather than one formal metalled route. Use of these tracks may well have depended on the weather conditions. Certain routes would probably have been impassable in the winter. Evidence of human activity, from the Neolithic period onwards, has been recorded along its length. The present site lies adjacent to the southern side of the line of the modern route and scattered evidence of prehistoric activity, in the form of artefacts or cropmarks recorded on aerial photographs, has been recorded within a radius of 1km.

2.6 Only limited evidence for early prehistoric activity has been recovered from the vicinity of the town. A number of *Palaeolithic* (c.450,000bc - 10,000bc) flint implements (HCC 217) were found on Walls Field, approximately 350m to the south-east of the present site. A possible *Mesolithic* (c.10,000bc - 3,500bc) flint implement (HCC 218) was recorded as having been found at an unspecified location near Baldock. It is now in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford.

2.7 There is more evidence of human activity from the *Neolithic* (c.3,500bc - 2,000bc) onwards. Pottery of this period (HCC 4705) was recovered from a pit in Walls Field, excavated in 1969, approximately 300m to the south-east. A number of flint implements,

including an arrow head, a knife and a scraper (HCC 358) were found within a kilometre west of the present site, along Icknield Way in Letchworth.

2.8 Aerial photography has revealed the remains of a number of ploughed out burial mounds of Neolithic or *Bronze Age* (c.2,000bc - 700bc) date, including HCC numbers 2310 and 2328, which lie to the south of the Clothall Road, approximately 950m south-east of the present site. A ring ditch is located on Clothall Common, approximately 1km south-east of the present site (HCC 2518). Others have been plotted in fields approximately 700m to the west (7422, 7423).

2.9 Further evidence of Bronze Age activity in the vicinity of the town comprised a cremation burial (HCC 10077) and a hoard (HCC 244). The cremation was discovered in the 1980s during groundworks in the area of the Tesco petrol station, approximately 750m south of the present site. The hoard, which consisted of a palstave, two axes, a sword and a number of ingots, was recovered from an unidentified location in the parish of Clothall, possibly within a kilometer of the present site.

2.10 Evidence for undated, but probably pre-Roman, territorial division within the landscape has also been identified. The line of a prehistoric linear ditch (HCC 6156) has been recorded lying approximately 1.4km to the south-east. It runs on a north-west south-east alignment and passes close to ring ditches HCC 2310 and 2328. To the north of this a pit alignment (HCC 2321) has been recorded running on a north-west south-east alignment across Clothall Common, approximately 900m south-east of the present site. Short lengths of pit alignments, which may represent a continuation of HCC 2321, have also been recorded during archaeological excavations at Hartsfield School and on the northern end of Clothall Common, approximately 300m north and east of the present site. Few dateable finds were recovered from these features, suggesting that they represented part of a boundary feature, rather than domestic pits.

Late pre-Roman Iron Age

2.11 The main settlement at Baldock had started by the mid 1st century BC. It appears to have begun in the vicinity of the springs of the River Ivel on the northern edge of the present town and spread southwards. The archaeological evidence suggests that it covered an area of approximately 20ha, spreading either side of the modern Clothall Road, with a number of funerary enclosures and cemeteries running north-west south-east along a chalk ridge to the east of the settlement (Burleigh, 1995, p.103; Thompson, 2002).

2.12 Some of the evidence for this period has been recovered in the form of chance finds, concentrating in the Walls Field/Clothall Common area to the north-east of the town. These finds include pottery of early 1st century AD date (HCC 106) from 'Homelands' on the Clothall Road, approximately 750m south-east of the site and a number of pottery vessels (HCC 1843) from Walls Field, approximately 450m south-east of the site. A 'thistle' or 'rosette' brooch (HCC 1081) dated to AD 25-50, was found in December 1934, in a ditch adjacent to the Walls Field cemetery, approximately 680m south-east of the site. A gold coin

of Cunobelinus, leader of the Catuvellauni tribe, has also been found at an unspecified location 'near Baldock' (HCC 4859).

2.13 A large number of human burials of Late pre-Roman Iron Age date have been revealed, either during archaeological fieldwork, or as the result of developer's groundworks in the vicinity of the modern town. Possibly the most significant burial was discovered in December 1967, when contractors were bulldozing the course of a new road at The Tene approximately 480m south-east of the present site. They disturbed a shallow pit containing a number of metal and pottery artefacts (HCC 1868). The items recovered from the pit comprised two pairs of iron firedogs, a bronze cauldron, two bronze dishes, a wooden bucket with bronze fittings, an amphora and the remains of a small pig. It has been interpreted as a 'Chieftain's Burial', but only a very small amount of cremated bone was discovered during the salvage excavation in January 1968, which included three bear claws, suggesting that the body was cremated wrapped in a bear skin. The lack of burnt bone indicates that the feature was intended as a memorial, rather than a grave.

2.14 Less elaborate Late Iron Age burials have also been recorded from Baldock. A cremation burial in a pottery vessel was discovered in 1975 (HCC 4280). The grave was revealed in a builder's trench on the site of the new Catholic Church, approximately 900m south of the site. A large number of Late Iron Age cremations have also excavated on the northern side of the town, between 300 and 500m east of the present study area, including several other ditched funerary enclosures, one of which contained another 'Chieftain's Burial', surrounded by satellite burials (Stead and Rigby, 1986; Burleigh, forthcoming; The Heritage Network, forthcoming).

2.15 Evidence for settlement of this period has also been recovered from archaeological fieldwork. Between 1968 and 1972 a series of excavation areas were opened on the northern side of Clothall Road, approximately 500m east of the present site (Stead and Rigby, 1986). A series of ditched enclosures, trackways and pits were revealed. Although archaeological excavation has been concentrated on the northern side of Clothall Road, evidence of occupation has been recovered from the south of the Clothall Road, including a large pit or ditch, which was found during the excavation of a foundation trench for a house extension at 37 The Twitchell (HCC 10945) approximately 250m to the south. The pottery from the feature indicated a date of between 0 - 50 AD (Stevenson, 1999).

2.16 The remains of a Late pre-Roman Iron Age ditch were exposed during archaeological evaluation at The Maltings on Royston Road (HCC 9674) approximately 420m north-east of the site. Pottery sherds, animal bone fragments and a coin of Nero were recovered from the ditch fill (Vaughan, 1998).

2.17 The evidence suggests that Baldock was '*a regionally important late Iron Age settlement*' (Burleigh, 1995, p.103). It is likely that the settlement consisted of a series of small farmsteads, with associated paddocks, vegetable plots and trackways (Burleigh, 1995, p.103). A surrounding territory has been identified, defined by a series of pit alignments, trackways and dykes, which extended for approximately 4.5km east of the settlement, thus forming a minor oppidum based on Baldock (Burleigh, 1995).

Late pre-Roman Iron Age/Romano-British

2.18 The settlement at Baldock that started in the 1st century BC continued into the Roman period (HCC 8). It lay either side of the Clothall Road, with cemetery zones to the north-east, south and west of the town. Most of the excavated sites have produced evidence of both Late Iron Age and Romano-British occupation or burial, frequently in the form of pottery vessels or sherds from the same site. Archaeological investigation to the rear of Pinnocks Lane (HCC 9924), approximately 550m south-east of the study area, revealed buried plough soils containing abraded sherds of Late Iron Age and Romano-British date and a number of pits, one of which contained pottery of Late Iron Age date (Holgate, 1995).

2.19 The archaeological evidence also suggests that Baldock may have acted as a cult centre during the Late pre-Roman Iron Age and into the Roman period. A number of wealthy burials have been found dating to this period, at least one in a ditched enclosure, surrounded by satellite burials. Cropmark evidence and geophysical survey also indicates the site of a Romano-Celtic temple and associated buildings on the southern side of Clothall Road (HCC 770) approximately 300m to the south.

Romano-British

2.20 Excavations in Baldock were first carried out by W.P. Westell, curator of Letchworth Museum, during the 1920s and 30s. Since then further work has been conducted by Dr I.M. Stead, during the 1960s and 70s, for the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works; by G.R. Burleigh, during the late 1970s, 80s and early 90s, for the North Hertfordshire District Council Field Archaeology Section, and more recently by The Heritage Network and other archaeological practices.

2.21 The Roman town at Baldock developed from the late Iron Age settlement. It grew up around the crossing of several major Roman routes, including the Icknield Way and the roads to Verulamium, Godmanchester and Braughing. The economic importance of these communication systems allowed the town to develop and grow. As a local market centre, acting for the surrounding agricultural communities, Baldock would have provided a wide variety of ancillary services. The emerging street pattern and the density of the buildings has been revealed by archaeological excavation, aerial photography and geophysical survey. Finds of expensive imported goods also indicate the town's prosperity during the Roman period.

2.22 Evidence for Roman occupation has been identified within 300m east and south-east of the present site. A series of archaeological excavations has taken place on the site of Hartsfield JMI school, which is located on Walls Field. The most recent excavation in 1997/8 (Hunn, 1998) produced evidence of two phases of activity on the site, the first dating to the late 1st and 2nd centuries AD and the second to the 4th/5th centuries AD.

2.23 Trial trenching in 1991 at Stationmaster's House, approximately 150m north-west of the study area on the opposite side of Royston Road, produced significant evidence of Roman activity (Atkinson, Burleigh and Went, 1992). The site lay on the north-western edge of the Roman town, close to the springs of the River Ivel. Exposed features included pits, ditches and a large Roman chalk quarry dating to between the 2nd and 4th centuries AD. A watching

brief maintained on the developer's groundworks in 1994 revealed further evidence of domestic occupation to the west of the quarry, possibly sited within a ditched enclosure (Ashworth, forthcoming).

2.24 Evidence of relatively well-preserved Roman features and a buried landscape were recovered from archaeological evaluation at 'The Engine' Public House (Richmond, Burleigh and Went, 1992). This site lies south-west of Stationmaster's House and approximately 150m west of the present site. Features exposed included pits and ditches. Some of the ditches may have formed parts of enclosures surrounding domestic settlement. A possible robbed out wall foundation, at least 14m in length, was also revealed. This may represent the remains of a substantial and important building at the junction of the Icknield Way and the road northwards through Godmanchester.

2.25 Excavations were undertaken in 1988 on the site of 5A Royston Road, close to the junction between Icknield Way East and Royston Road, approximately 150m to the north-east (Burleigh, forthcoming). A small number of inhumation burials of 3rd century AD date were revealed. The most significant was that of an infant, aged approximately one year, which was accompanied by a number of grave gifts, including a *Dea Nutrix* figurine.

Medieval

2.26 From the later third century, Baldock began to decline in size and population, until, by the late fifth century, the settlement was probably reduced to a few scattered farmsteads.

2.27 In the mid 12th century Gilbert de Clare, lord of the manor of Weston, gave 10 *librates* of land at the northern end of his manor, to the Knights Templar. The modern town of Baldock was founded in the area of this grant.

2.28 The present site lies on the northern side of the eastern boundary between Baldock and Clothall, close to the core of the medieval settlement of Baldock. Recent research undertaken by Mr Brendan King and members of the Baldock Local History Society, suggests that the medieval Hospital of St Mary Magdalene moved on to the present site in the fourteenth century (B.King, pers comm). Medieval deeds relating to the hospital appear to locate it in a field called '*The Brade*'. Brade appears to be a common field name in this area.

2.29 The evidence suggests that Brade Field lay on the northern side of Clothall Road, on either side of the Royston Road. A document dated 1440 (Harleian Charters 112F14) referring to the release of a messuage in 'The Brade' probably relates to the building known as Raeburn Court, on the opposite side of Royston Road. The property is described as lying '*next to Baldock, in the parish of Clothall*' and having one head on Brade Street and one head on Icknield Way. Whitehorse Street was formerly known as Bread or Broad Street, perhaps a corruption of Brade Street and it is possible that the name was also applied to the lower end of Royston Road.

2.30 The Knights Templar diverted the line of the Great North Road from its earlier Roman alignment, to run through their new town of *Baudac*, thus giving them the benefit of money

from passing travellers. The medieval alignment follows the modern High Street and Whitehorse Street. A double market place was established at the crossroads at the northern end of High Street and the western end of Whitehorse Street. Two small islands of buildings at the crossroads mark where permanent stalls may have stood.

2.31 A number of standing buildings in the High Street and along Whitehorse Street still show evidence of medieval construction, including Baldock Community Centre on the corner of High Street and Simpson Drive (Thompson, 2002). The parish church, dedicated to St Mary the Virgin, lies approximately 300m to the south-east (HCC 4062). It was originally founded in the 13th century and was altered in the 14th, 15th and 19th centuries.

2.32 Very little archaeological evidence of the medieval settlement has been recovered from the town. A small-scale excavation of a site on Pepper Alley, approximately 350m to the south, revealed a ditch and pit containing pottery of 14th or 15th century date (Burleigh and Stevenson, 2000). Redeposited pottery of 11th to 13th century date, was recovered from a post-medieval ditch on the same site.

Post-medieval

2.33 During the post-medieval period, Baldock became the first principal staging post on the Great North Road, between London and York. This is reflected in the number of hostleries built for the comfort and convenience of travellers. One of these inns, The Old White Horse, lies approximately 100m east of the study area (HCC 10886). It stands on the site of the former White Horse Inn, one of the principal coaching inns of the town. By the late eighteenth century the excise and post office were located in the building. Its importance is signified that by the late seventeenth century the street name was changed from Brad/Brade/Bread/Broad Street to Whitehorse Street (Armour and Hillelson, 1998, p.3). The core of the present public house is probably formed from the tap room of the White Horse.

2.34 During the post-medieval period malting for the brewing industry was one of the main industries in the town. At least seven maltings are recorded in Baldock, including Bygrave maltings on Royston Road (HCC 5344), approximately 430m north-east, at least three maltings close to High Street (HCC 5339, 5340 and 5343) and two maltings along Hitchin Street (HCC 5341 and 5342).

2.35 The site of two former maltings (HCC 5345) now converted to offices, lies approximately 70m south-east of the present site, at the corner of Whitehorse Street and Clothall Road. The maltings was established by the mid nineteenth century and continued in use until 1955.

2.36 The facade of Tesco's supermarket, approximately 700m to the south of the present site, is all that remains of a former film studio (HCC 9910). The studios operated from the early twentieth century until c.1925. From 1928 Kayser Bondor established a factory making artificial silk hosiery on the site. The area occupied by the former studios, factory and present supermarket was the site of The Elms (or Elmwood) manor, a late eighteenth or early nineteenth century country house set in parkland.

HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

General

2.37 The early settlement at Baldock grew steadily around the junction of several major roads, including the Icknield Way and Roman Road 220, later the Great North Road. The Icknield Way had been an important east - west route along the Chiltern escarpment, between East Anglia and Wessex, since the *Mesolithic* period (10,000bc-3,500bc).

2.38 It appears to have declined from the late third century AD. During the Saxon period settlement in the vicinity was probably represented by a number of scattered farmsteads.

2.39 The present site lay within the parish of Clothall until the nineteenth century. It formed part of the manor of Clothall, which answered for 7 hides and 3½ virgates (approximately 975 acres) in the Domesday Survey of 1086. Three smaller holdings were also recorded in Clothall. Before the Conquest the main manor was held by Alnod Grud, Archbishop Stigand's man. After the Conquest it was held by Osbern, as tenant of Bishop Odo of Bayeux.

2.40 A total of 27 people are recorded as living on the manor, giving an estimated population of between 120 and 130. Woodland and pastureland are also recorded.

2.41 Odo forfeited his lands in 1088, following a rising in Normandy against William Rufus. His lands were then assigned to members of the castle guard at Dover. Clothall went to the barony of Port of Basing. Records show that the Port family continued to keep a tenant on the estate at Clothall. In 1166 John de Port returned the name of Robert de Clothall amongst the knights who owed him service. Robert's holding was assessed at one fee, but early next century the tenant of Clothall owed 2 fees to the Port barony. It was rendered 3 times yearly, covering 24 weeks altogether. During 16th century Clothall still formed part of the king's 'Honour of Dover'.

2.42 In the twelfth and 13th centuries the family who rented the manor took their surname from their estate at Clothall. They held the manor until the mid thirteenth century, when Simon de Clothall was succeeded by his three young daughters, Emecine, Muriel and Maud. During their minority Robert de St John, Baron of Port, granted the lands to John de Gisors.

2.43 Clothall manor became known as Botteles in the later thirteenth century, following Maud's marriage to Richard de Bottele. Maud died childless and her share was divided between her surviving sisters. The smaller estate of Hauvills was added to the manor by the early fifteenth century after which Clothall manor was known by both names.

2.44 The town of Baldock was founded on a plot of land granted to the Knights Templar, a wealthy crusading order, by Gilbert de Clare, lord of the manor of Weston, in the mid 12th century. This land formed a triangle at the northern end of the manor, at the junction of the Icknield Way and Roman roads to Verulamium, Godmanchester and Braughing. The boundaries of the grant can still be traced in modern maps; the eastern boundary was formed by modern Clothall Road; the western by Weston Way; the northern by a stretch of the

Icknield Way and the southern by a trackway called Spital Way, now marked by South Road and Crabtree Lane.

2.45 A survey, taken in 1185, of the possessions of the Templars, shows that *Baudoc* (the name is possibly a corruption of Baghdad) was already established as a town, with 122 tenants recorded in an area of approximately 150 acres. Various crafts were represented amongst the population, including goldsmith, vintner, tailor, shoemaker and weaver (Beresford, 1988).

2.46 In 1189 Richard I granted the rights to a weekly market and an annual fair to the Knights Templar. Although the grant refers to Baldock as a *borough*, no evidence of *burghage* tenure has yet been located and the town did not later send members to Parliament. In 1199 King John granted the Templars the right to hold a fair at Baldock on St Matthew's Day and the following four days (21 - 25 September). This grant was confirmed in 1227 by Henry III. The fairs were also held in the double market place.

2.47 Gilbert de Clare's original grant of land to the Knights Templar was confirmed in the early thirteenth century by William Marshal, earl of Pembroke, and husband of Gilbert's granddaughter, Isabel. The Templars continued to hold Baldock until the dissolution of the order in 1309 on charges of heresy. Shortly afterwards Baldock was acquired, along with other Templar properties, by the Knights Hospitaller, who held it until the dissolution of the order in 1540.

2.48 Baldock was a successful market town throughout the medieval and post-medieval period. The chief industry was malting, used in brewing beer. Several maltings and breweries were established in the town by the end of the eighteenth century.

Site Specific

2.49 The present site lies on the medieval parish boundary between Clothall and Baldock and formed part of the manor of Clothall. It lay on the western edge of Clothall Common, former common land lying between Clothall village and Baldock, which was divided into irregular strips by balks (narrow earth banks topped by grass or bushes) until the early 20th century. The footpath which runs south-east from Royston Road along California Lane is still known as 'The Balks'. The common was divided between three landowners in the late nineteenth century, the rector, the Marquess of Salisbury and Miss Cotton Browne (Page, 1912).

2.50 In circa 1200 Hugh de Clothall founded the Hospital of St Mary Magdalene in Clothall parish, but '*juxta Baldac*', that is near Baldock. It was originally established to care for lepers and, like other such foundations, was 'on the highway', but away from centres of population (Thompson, 2002). The original hospital appears to have been sited on one side of the road, with the chapel on the other side as a document, dated 1274, records that the master was given permission to divert the road and bring the chapel within the same enclave, provided that this did not inconvenience the people of Baldock (Thompson, 2002).

2.51 The original site of the hospital lay more than a mile from town and was frequently attacked by armed robbers. In 1307 it relocated to a more secure spot at 'The Brade', but the brethren were bound to continue the services at the old chapel. By the time it was moved the foundation was no longer described as a leper hospital, but may have functioned as an almshouse (B.King, pers.comm.) and the new site was deliberately chosen to be near plenty of neighbours. The chapel was presumed suppressed in 1547, but the hospital may have survived. In 1617 it, and its lands were granted to the earls of Salisbury.

2.52 Although the location of both hospital sites has been lost, recent research by the Baldock Local History Society suggests that the original site may have been near Spital Hill, on the road to Wallington, a continuation of Spital Lane, now called South Road, which formed the southern boundary to the parish of Baldock. The proposed position for the relocation site is on the south side of the Royston Road, in the immediate vicinity of the present study area, which appears to have been called 'Hospital Close' in the eighteenth century. A deed, dated 1772, transferring the ownership of the study area from Nicholas Honour to Mary Grave (the mistress of the earl of Salisbury) apparently gives the property the name Hospital Close (HALS D/Ex852/T4).

2.53 An engraving entitled 'A View of Baldock in Hertfordshire' by F.Jukes, dated 1786, depicts the present site. It was drawn from the footpath known as 'The Balks', looking south over a rural scene towards Clothall Road. The study area lies on the right of the picture and is shown occupied by a number of buildings, possibly a maltings, since a malting chimney is visible above the roof of the right hand structure. The most interesting building is that to the rear of the possible maltings, it appears to be older and may have formed part of the hospital buildings.

2.54 One piece of evidence which may support the proposed relocation site of the hospital is the presence of the plant called *dittander*, which grows along the south side of Royston Road. The plant was used to treat leprosy sores and has been found growing on or near the sites of other leper hospitals. Its natural habitat is damp ground, preferably salt marsh and it is rare inland. A colony of the plant has been known at Baldock since 1929 (Mabey, 1998, p.152). Although by the time the hospital relocated it may have not been exclusively for the care of lepers, the plant would probably have still been cultivated in the herb garden.

2.55 Nineteenth century maps show that the study area formed the part of Baldock known as Clothall End.

CARTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE

2.56 The earliest map consulted was the Clothall Tithe map (HALS DSA 4/31/2) dated 1842 (see Figure 2). The area of the present site covers Plots 8, 9 and 10. These were surrounded by open land called Walls Field, originally part of Clothall Common.

2.56.1 Plot 10 lay on the corner of Clothall Road and Royston Road, a building is shown sitting in the south-western quadrant of the plot, very close to the Royston Road. The line of the eastern boundary has survived until the present day. The Tithe Award

(DSA 4/31/1) dated 1842, lists the plot as being owned by John Izard Pryor and occupied by John Pryor. The property is described as a garden and gardener's cottage, measuring 1 acre and 16 perches.

2.56.2 Plot 9 lay immediately north-east of plot 10. The Tithe map shows that it was an irregularly shaped property, divided into two smaller plots, each with its own building. It was recorded as cottages and gardens, owned by the earl of Salisbury and occupied by Sergeant Ayscough and others and measured 2 roods and 34 perches.

2.56.3 Plot 8 lay north-east of plot 9. No buildings are shown in this plot.

2.57 The 2nd edition 25" scale OS map, dated 1898, showed that the building on plot 10 had increased in size (see Figure 3). A glasshouse had been erected to the east of the building. A pump is marked on the north-eastern side of the house. Photographs taken at the turn of the twentieth century show how close to the road the building was sited (Maddren, 1994, pp.44-5 & 71). A rear boundary had been inserted at the angle of the north-eastern boundary, between plots 9 and 10, apparently reducing the size of the property.

2.57.1 Substantial changes had taken place to the former plot 9. It appears that the original buildings had been demolished, or altered significantly and had been replaced by a Victorian farm. The original house in the centre of the plot had been enlarged and an associated L-shaped outbuilding erected to the north, along the Royston Road frontage. A separate enclosed farmyard lay to the north-east, with a range of buildings along the road frontage, and a smaller building in the south-eastern corner. The construction of the farmyard appears to have increased the size of the property, taking land from the plot to the north-east (plot 8 on the Tithe map) which was also owned by the earl of Salisbury.

2.58 The site layout remained basically the same in the early 1920s. The 1922 25" OS map (see Figure 4) shows that the building in the south-eastern corner of the farmyard had been enlarged to cover the full length of the northern boundary, and a new structure erected on the same alignment to the south. Aerial photographs held by the Baldock Local History Society, dated 1925, show the farmhouse and farmyard.

2.59 The layout of the site remained much the same until the late 1950s (see Figure 5). The line of Grosvenor Road, to the north and east, was laid out by 1938. By 1959 the buildings along the Royston Road frontage in the north-eastern plot had been demolished, leaving those set further back. The house on the corner of Clothall Road and Royston Road still existed. It is possible that the house had been extended to cover the footprint of the earlier glasshouse.

2.60 A garage was established on the north-eastern half of the site by 1966 (see Figure 6). The OS 1:25000 scale map, dated 1972 but surveyed 1966, shows a long rectangular building following the line of the boundary between plots 9 and 10 on the Tithe map. The building, or petrol pump canopy, shown in the centre of the garage forecourt sits more or less on the footprint of the large house shown on the 1898 OS map. The structures along the north-eastern boundary replaced the line of buildings shown on the 1922 OS map. It appears that the plot boundaries remained essentially the same, with the north-eastern boundary marking the furthest line of the buildings shown on the 1922 map.

2.60.1 The corner house in the south-western plot had apparently been reduced in size. The rest of the plot was open.

2.61 By 1986 the corner house had been demolished as part of the road widening at the Royston Road/Clothall Road junction. The site boundary now ran on a roughly north - south alignment. The building, or canopy, in the centre of the garage forecourt had apparently been demolished and replaced by an L-shaped building along the front of the plot (see Figure 1).

3 Fieldwork

METHODOLOGY

3.1 The proposed development covers an area of approximately 0.4 ha (1 acre). Six trial trenches were excavated around the outside of the standing buildings, with a total area of 128m² and representing an approximate 3% sample of the area (see Figure 7). Overburden was removed using a wheeled JCB 180° excavator fitted with a breaker and a 1.6m wide toothless ditching bucket.

3.2 Spoil from the various stages of groundworks was inspected for archaeological artefacts.

3.3 The trenches were cleaned by hand, and all potential archaeological features were sampled to ascertain their nature, depth, date, and quality of preservation.

3.4 All work was carried out in accordance with the detailed method statement contained in the Heritage Network's approved *Project Design*, and followed the relevant sections of the Heritage Network's *Operations Manual*.

RESULTS

Trench 1

3.5 Trench 1 was located in the eastern corner of the site. It measured 1.6 x 15m, and was aligned east-west (see Figure 8).

3.6 Four possible features were identified in this trench. All were highly disturbed by root action and may be entirely natural in origin despite the fact presence of Romano-British pottery in fills (103) and (105). The recorded contexts are summarised below.

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Max Tb. (mm)	Level (OD)
100	Layer	Modern Overburden / Surface	340	62.4
101	Layer	Grey-brown clay with 5% chalk fragments: Disturbed sub-soil	500	
102	Layer	Dirty white natural chalk		61.49
103	Fill	Dark grey clay with some chalk fragments and sand: Fill of [104]	300	
104	Cut	Irregular possible pit or posthole of likely RB date		61.79
105	Fill	Dark grey clay with some chalk fragments and sand: Fill of [106]	340	
106	Cut	Irregular feature, which may be due to faunal or floral activity despite a sherd of RB pottery found in the fill		61.77

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Max Th. (mm)	Level OD
107	Fill	Dark grey clay with some chalk fragments and charcoal flecks: Fill of [108]	180	
108	Cut	Irregular though possible posthole		61.6
109	Fill	Dark grey clay with some chalk fragments and sand: Fill of [110]	100	
110	Cut	Likely to be a natural feature		61.66

Trench 2

3.8 Trench 2 was located in the southern half of the courtyard formed by the standing buildings. It measured 1.6 x 15m, and was aligned north-south (see Figure 9).

3.9 Five possible features were identified in this trench. The two ditches [204] and [220], both of which yielded Romano-British pottery, along with posthole or pit [210], represent the only convincing archaeology. The other features may be accounted for by root activity, although [208] may represent a gully running into ditch [204]. Unfortunately, it is badly truncated by a modern trench [206]. The recorded contexts are summarised below.

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Max Th. (mm)	Level OD
200	Layer	Modern surface and overburden	380	61.63
201	Layer	Grey clay with 5% chalk fragments	550	
202	Layer	Natural pea-grit and chalk		60.75
203	Fill	Dark brown silty clay with 5% pea-grit: Fill of [204]	400	
204	Cut	N – S running ditch of likely RB date		60.53
205	Fill	Dirty brown builder's sand	90	
206	Cut	Modern builders cut, truncates gully [206]		60.71
207	Fill	Dark grey silty clay with 5% pea-grit and some chalk fragments: Fill of [208]	150	
208	Cut	Possible gully		60.56
209	Fill	Grey brown silty clay with 1% pea-grit: Fill of [210]	250	
210	Cut	Possible post hole		60.46
211	Fill	Grey – brown silty clay with some flint and chalk fragments: Fill of [212]	150	
212	Cut	Possible linear feature		60.58
213	Fill	Dark grey silty clay with some chalk fragments and pea – grit: Fill of [214]	120	
214	Cut	Irregular, probably a natural feature		60.56

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Max Th. (mm)	Level GD
215	Fill	Grey brown silty clay with some flint and chalk fragments: Fill of [216]	120	
216	Cut	Irregular and likely to be root activity		60.57
217	Fill	Dark grey silty clay with some flint and chalk fragments: Fill of [218]	120	
218	Cut	Possible post hole		60.63
219	Fill	Mid grey silty clay with 5% pea-grit: Fill of [220]	400	
220	Cut	NE – SW running RB ditch		60.34

Trench 3

3.11 Trench 3 was located in the northern half of the courtyard formed by the standing buildings. It measured 1.6 x 15m, and was aligned east-west (see Figure 10).

3.12 Only one archaeological feature, pit or posthole [304], was evident in this trench. No finds were recovered. The recorded contexts are summarised below.

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Max Th. (mm)	Level GD
300	Layer	Modern surface and overburden	400	61.53
301	Layer	Dark brown clay with some brick and chalk fragments: Disturbed subsoil	500	
302	Layer	Natural pea-grit and chalk		60.62
303	Fill	Grey brown silty clay with some pea grit and chalk fragments	210	
304	Cut	Possible pit or post pit		60.45

Trench 4

3.14 Trench 4 was located to the south-east of the canopy for the former petrol station. It measured 1.6 x 10m, and was aligned northeast-southwest.

3.15 This trench was totally devoid of archaeological features and was significantly disturbed by modern services and deposits. The recorded contexts are summarised below.

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Max Th. (mm)	Level GD
400	Layer	Concrete surface	150	61.4
401	Layer	Gravelly, silty clay with some sand	450	
402	Layer	Dirty white natural chalk with flints		60.74

Trench 5

3.16 Trench 5 was located to the southwest of the kiosk for the former petrol station. It measured 1.6 x 10m, and was aligned northwest-southeast.

3.17 This trench was devoid of archaeological features with the exception of a nineteenth century wall [503]. The recorded contexts are summarised below.

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Max Th. (mm)	Level OD
500	Layer	Modern concrete surface	150	61.45
501	Layer	Light – mid grey/ orange gravelly, silty clay and sand with large angular chalk and flint and brick fragments	850	
502	Layer	Dirty white natural chalk with some flints		60.47
503	Structure	Late C19 th wall aligned NE – SW		61.01

Trench 6

3.19 Trench 6 was located in the western corner of the plot. It measured 1.6 x 15m, and was aligned north-south (see Figure 11).

3.20 Five possible features were identified in this trench. These include three linears [604], [606] and [613], a possible cess pit [609], and a shallow cut [611] which may represent the remains of either a pit or a ditch. Finds collected include Romano-British pottery, and large amounts of animal bone and oyster shell. Pit [609] produced the most finds and, while its function is not entirely clear, it appears finally to have been used as a dump for general rubbish and cess. The recorded contexts are summarised below.

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Max Th. (mm)	Level OD
600	Layer	Modern Tarmac over orange sand	100	61.66
601	Layer	Dark brown silty clay	900	
602	Layer	Dirty white chalk		60.68
603	Fill	Mid grey – brown clayey silt: Fill of [604]	250	
604	Cut	Shallow ditch of probable RB date		60.41
605	Fill	Light brown clayey silt: Fill of [606]	120	
606	Cut	Shallow gully		60.52
607	Fill	Mid grey brown clayey silt, some charcoal flecks and sub – angular chalk fragments, flint and oyster shells: Secondary fill of [609]	700	
608	Fill	Mid green – brown silty clay with some chalk and flint fragments: Primary fill of [609]. Sample no. 1	200	
609	Cut	Sub – rectangular pit of RB date.		59.63

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Max Th. (mm)	Level OD
610	Fill	Dark brown clayey silt with some charcoal, chalk and flint: Fill of [611]	250	
611	Cut	Possible shallow ditch or pit of uncertain date		60.36
612	Fill	Light grey brown clayey silt: Fill of [613]	120	
613	Cut	Narrow gully		60.52

FINDS ASSESSMENT

Concordance of Finds

	Pottery		CBM		An.bone		Shell		Glass		Slag		Fe. nails		Flint		Comments
Cont	Wt	No.	Wt	No.	Wt	No.	Wt	No.	Wt	No.	Wt	No.	Wt	No.	Wt	No.	
103	5	2															
105	1	1													3	1	abraded & residual
203	25	4			65	4											
207			90	1	5	1											p-medieval peg tile
209	5	1															
219	115	6	20	3	605	26											1 1st/2nd. 7th (intrusive)
603			205	4													p-medieval peg tile
607	2300	75	205	6	1465	23	680	31									late 2nd
608	735	26	1005	3	790	11	70	3	5	1			3	2			late 2nd
610			805	15							85	3					p-medieval peg tile
Totals	3186	115	2330	32	2930	65	750	34	5	1	85	3	3	2	3	1	

Pottery

Introduction

3.23 A total of 115 sherds of pottery, weighing 3186g, was recovered from seven stratified contexts during the present evaluation.

3.24 The pottery was in variable condition, ranging from small, abraded fragments to sizeable, relatively unworn, sherds. The condition of the pottery from each context was shown on the pottery recording forms by use of a letter code, from A to E. A signified a context containing complete, or almost complete vessels; E signified a small group of abraded, mainly undiagnostic sherds, that were likely to be residual within the context.

Methodology

3.25 The pottery from each context was divided into broad fabric groups, such as grog-tempered wares, shell-tempered wares and Hadham grey wares, on the basis of visible inclusions. These were then weighed and counted to provide an indication of the relative importance of the sources of pottery supplying Roman Baldock.

3.26 Where possible diagnostic sherds, such as rims and bases, were paralleled with published examples. A date was then assigned to each context on the basis of the fabric and forms present.

Chronology

3.27 Only pottery dating to the Romano-British period was recovered from the present site, despite the potential for medieval and early post-medieval features identified in the desk-based research.

3.28 The Roman pottery assemblage revealed two phases of activity on the site, the earliest dating to the late 1st century AD, the latest dating to the later 2nd century AD. No evidence of activity between these two phases was recovered during the present evaluation.

3.29 Phase 1 (mid - late 1st century AD) was characterised by grog-tempered and Early Roman sandy wares, which were recovered from two ditches in Trench 2, cuts [204] and [220]. Ditch [204] lay at the southern end of the trench (see Figure *) and was truncated by linear [206]. It is possible that it may originally have joined ditch [220] at the northern end of the trench to form part of an enclosure.

3.29.1 The material from the two ditches was mainly worn, undiagnostic bodysherds, indicating that they may have been residual in the fills. However, no pottery of later date was recovered from either of the ditches, which suggests that the pottery may have been deposited as part of a deliberate backfilling of the features, possibly in the 2nd century at a time when this part of the Roman settlement was becoming occupied.

3.30 Phase 2 (mid - late 2nd century AD) was characterised by grey wares, shell-tempered wares Verulamium region wares and samian. Phase 2 pottery was recovered from scattered features across the site. Abraded sherds of mid to late 2nd century date were collected from a small pit or posthole, cut [104], in Trench 1, and from a posthole, cut [210], in Trench 2. The bulk of the pottery was found in the two fills of pit [609] in Trench 6 at the south-eastern side of the site (see Figure *).

3.30.1 The sherds from pit [609] comprised large, relatively unabraded pieces, including substantial parts of several vessels, suggesting that this was their primary place of deposition. The amount of pottery, and the vessel forms recovered, indicates domestic occupation in close proximity and that this feature acted as a refuse pit.

3.30.2 It would appear that much of the pottery reaching the site was supplied by local and regional industries, including Hadham, Harrold and Verulamium. Of the vessel forms

recovered jars predominated. The remains of 5 identifiable jars, with bodysherds from at least 5 others were recovered. These came from kiln sites at Hadham, Harrold and Verulamium. Parts of at least 3 greyware dishes, including two complete profiles and a base sherd were also collected. Other forms identified include sherds from a poppyhead beaker and a greyware folded beaker.

3.30.3 Imported wares are represented by samian vessels and a single tiny fragment of colour coat ware. Parts of at least 6 vessels were recovered, the majority appears to be central Gaulish in origin, with at least 2 vessels from the kiln site at Lezoux. Forms represented include at least half of a form 37R bowl, fragments of at least 1 form 37 bowl, including decorated bodysherds, part of the base of a form 18 or 18/31 base and part of a cup base.

3.30.4 Three stamped bases were recovered. The products of two of the potters, *Albucius* and *Sextus*, have previously been recorded in Baldock (Stead and Rigby, 1986, pp 203 & 211). The third stamp is, so far, unidentified.

Conclusions

3.31 The pottery assemblage from the present site reflects the type of material recovered from other sites in Baldock. It adds further to our knowledge of settlement patterns within the Roman small town.

3.32 The pottery recovered during the present project indicates use of the site in the period immediately after the Roman conquest. No evidence of earlier activity was collected from any of the features revealed. The site seems to have lain on the edge of the post-Iron Age settlement, possibly in an area dedicated to agricultural activities, since the pottery recovered was abraded and chiefly undiagnostic.

3.33 At some point in the 2nd century AD the site seems to have been taken into occupation and the earlier features backfilled. By the late 2nd century a rubbish pit was dug on the site, probably to service a single household. The recovered pottery suggests a moderately wealthy establishment, they could apparently afford to discard numbers of samian vessels.

Ceramic Building Materials

Introduction

3.34 A total of 32 pieces of brick and tile, weighing 2330g, was recovered from six stratified contexts during the present evaluation. The material varied between large unabraded pieces and smaller broken fragments.

Discussion

3.35 Two phases of activity were represented in this assemblage. The largest group, by number, comprised post-medieval peg tile fragments. These are commonly found on urban sites and were recovered from the fills of one feature in Trench 2, gully [208] and two in

Trench 6, ditch [604] and feature [611]. They represented the only dateable finds from these features.

3.36 Twelve pieces, weighing 1030g, were recovered from the fills of pit [609] in Trench 6 and ditch [220] in Trench 2. Both have been dated to the Romano-British period. The material recovered from pit [609] is in the form of large unabraded pieces, suggesting the presence of a substantial structure in the vicinity. That from ditch [220] is much smaller and abraded, suggesting that the material is possibly intrusive.

3.37 The Romano-British material may represent both tile and brick. Two curved pieces of *imbrex* roof tile were collected from fill (607) and three large flat pieces, which may have been used either as bricks or as *hypocaust* tiles, were recovered from fill (608).

Conclusion

3.38 The ceramic building material recovered from the present site indicates evidence of two phases of activity. The first phase dates to the late 2nd century AD and is represented by large unabraded fragments of roofing tile and possible bricks, indicating the presence of a substantial building in the vicinity, which is likely to have stood close to the junction of the Icknield Way and the road from Braughing. Evidence for another substantial and important building, on the opposite side of the crossroads, was revealed during archaeological fieldwork at 'The Engine' public house on Station Road (Richmond, Burleigh and Went, 1992).

3.39 The second phase is represented by fragments of hand-made post-medieval peg tile of probable 18th/19th century date. These are common finds on urban sites.

Glass

3.40 A single undiagnostic fragment of pale blue glass was collected from fill (608), the lower fill of pit [609]. It forms an irregular rectangle, measuring 2mm in depth, 35mm in length and varies between 17mm and 33mm in width. The piece is slightly curved, indicating that it may have formed part of a glass vessel. A number of small flaws can be seen in the glass, which is probably of Roman date.

3.41 Other glass fragments have been recovered from archaeological fieldwork in Baldock, from both settlement and funerary deposits.

Iron Objects

3.42 Two almost identical iron hob nails were collected from fill (608) in pit [609]. The circular heads measure 7mm in diameter and the shanks measure 9mm in length. They taper in width from approximately 4mm below the head to 1mm at the point. One of the nails has a slightly bent shank at the point.

3.43 Their presence in the lower fill of the pit suggests they are Roman in date and probably indicates the throwing away of a broken sandal.

Animal Bone

3.44 A total of 65 pieces of animal bone, weighing 2930g, were recovered from the fills of 4 features. The material came from gully [208] and ditches [204] and [220] in Trench 2 and pit [609] in Trench 6.

3.45 The assemblage comprises broken fragments of cattle and sheep/goat long bones, cattle mandibles and fragments of rib. This type of bone has been found on other Romano-British sites in Baldock.

Oyster Shell

3.46 A total of 34 oyster shells, weighing 750g, was collected from the fills of pit [609]. The assemblage comprises complete, or almost complete, shells. They were probably marine oysters, a popular delicacy in the Roman period, which were transported inland, packed in barrels with brine or spices. These are not uncommon finds from Roman Baldock and indicate the use of the pit for the disposal of domestic refuse.

Flint

3.47 One fragment of possible worked flint, weighing approximately 3g, was recovered from fill (105), the fill of a natural feature. It possibly represents the end of a larger tool as evidence of retouching can be observed along the unbroken bit of the edge.

DISCUSSION

3.48 The trial trenching of the present site revealed a number of cut features and layers across the site. Four phases were recognised, on the basis of types of fill and finds recovered:

- ♦ *Phase 1* dated to the mid - late 1st century AD. Two ditches in Trench 2, cuts [204] and [220] were assigned to this phase.
- ♦ *Phase 2* dated to the late 2nd century AD. Identified features of this period comprised a pit, cut [104] in Trench 1; a posthole, cut [210], in Trench 2; and a large sub-rectangular pit, cut [609] in Trench 6.
- ♦ *Phase 3* dated to the 18th and 19th century. Identified features of this period comprised a gully, cut [208]; a 19th century wall, context [503] in Trench 5; a ditch, cut [604] and a ditch or pit, cut [611] in Trench 6
- ♦ *Phase 4* represents the modern use of the site as a garage and comprised the modern overburden identified in all trenches and a builder's feature, cut [206] in Trench 2.
- ♦ All other features were undated.

3.49 No evidence for the site of the relocated medieval Hospital of St Mary Magdalene was identified during the present project. This indicates either that the hospital may have lain further away from the junction between Clothall Road and Royston Road than has been suggested, or that its remains have been destroyed by later activity. Given the survival of the Roman features this second theory is unlikely.

3.50 The Roman finds assemblage, which comprises pottery, ceramic building material, animal bone and oyster shell, indicates domestic occupation in close proximity to the site. The presence of brick and tile pieces in pit [609] suggests that it was housed in a substantial building, possibly either the home of a relatively wealthy inhabitant or the site of an inn located at the junction between the Icknield Way and the road from Braughing.

4 Risk Assessment

General

4.1 The present site lies at the south-western end of the Royston Road, in an area of archaeological sensitivity on the northern side of the Roman town, and close to an important cross-roads.

Prehistoric

4.2 The sources consulted suggest that there was limited early prehistoric activity in the vicinity of the present town, but this includes *palaeolithic* flint implements (SMR 217) from Walls Field, within 500m of the study area, and a possible *mesolithic* flint implement from an unspecified location.

4.3 *Neolithic* and *Bronze Age* burial mounds and ring ditches have been recorded in the vicinity of the town, and a *Bronze Age* cremation burial and hoard suggest settlement at this period. *Neolithic* pottery has been recovered from Walls Field (SMR 4705), and from Clothall Common. The Icknield Way, which passes close to the study area, is also believed to date from at least this period.

4.4 An undated but probably pre-Roman pit alignment (SMR 2321) runs north-west to south-east across Clothall Common, and a number of the pits were excavated at Hartsfield School on Walls Field, within 500m of the study area. It is possible that this alignment, which appears to represent a boundary feature, continues north-west to meet the Royston Road/Icknield Way.

4.5 No features or deposits, and no artefacts demonstrably dating to the prehistoric period were recorded in the course of the fieldwork on the site, but on the basis of the desk-based research there may be considered to be a low to moderate risk that archaeological remains of this date might be disturbed in the development of the site.

Late pre-Roman Iron Age

4.6 The present site lies within the suggested area of the *Late pre-Roman Iron Age* settlement. It lies to the south of the springs of the River Ivel and approximately 70m south of the ancient line of Icknield Way.

4.7 Evidence for this period has been recovered from a number of archaeological investigations in the immediate vicinity of the site. A line of funerary enclosures has been identified approximately 300m to the north-east, and settlement evidence, including pits, ditches and the truncated remains of circular buildings has been recovered from excavations to the east and north-east of the site.

4.8 No features or deposits, and no artefacts demonstrably dating to the *Late pre-Roman Iron Age* were recorded in the course of the fieldwork on the site, but on the basis of the

desk-based research there may be considered to be a moderate to high risk that archaeological remains of this date might be disturbed in the development of the site.

Romano-British

4.9 The present site lies on the north-western edge of the *Romano-British* small town close to a crossroads which would have been very active at the period. Archaeological investigations on sites within 300m to the north-east, east, north-west and west have produced a considerable body of evidence both for settlement and burials.

4.10 The pottery recovered from the field evaluation suggests two principal phases of activity on the site, from the immediate post-conquest period (mid-late 1st century AD) to the mid-late 2nd century AD.

4.11 On the basis of the fieldwork, supported by the desk-based research, there may be considered to be a high risk that features, deposits and artefacts of this period might be disturbed in the development of the site.

Anglo-Saxon

4.12 No evidence for *Anglo-Saxon* activity has yet been recovered from Baldock. It appears that the settlement declined after the 5th century AD, possibly leaving a few scattered farmsteads, for which no evidence has yet been recovered. Occupation of this period has been recorded over a kilometre to the south-west, at Blackhorse Farm and Green Lane.

4.13 No features or deposits, and no artefacts demonstrably dating to the *Anglo-Saxon* period were recorded in the course of the fieldwork on the site, and on the basis of the desk-based research there may be considered to be a low risk that archaeological remains of this date might be disturbed in the development of the site.

Medieval

4.14 During the medieval period the study area lay right on the boundary between Baldock and Clothall. It formed part of the manor of Clothall. Recent research by the Baldock Local History Society has indicated that the Hospital of St Mary Magdalene, originally founded for the care of lepers in c.1200, may have relocated to the present site in the early fourteenth century (Brendan King, pers.comm.). The unexpected presence of the plant *Dittander* growing wild along the southern side of Royston Road may indicate the proximity of the hospital site. *Dittander* was used in the treatment of leprosy during the medieval period.

4.15 Documentary evidence supports this theory. Deeds held in the Salisbury Archives at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies and the British Library show that the hospital and its associated chapel was not suppressed after the Reformation in the sixteenth century. In the early seventeenth century the hospital and its lands was acquired by the earl of Salisbury. The study area appears to have been known as Hospital Close in the eighteenth century. An engraving dated 1786 appears to show a medieval building located on the present site (Brendan King, pers.comm.).

4.16 No features or deposits, and no artefacts demonstrably dating to the *Medieval* period were recorded in the course of the fieldwork on the site, although this did demonstrate heavy disturbance on the Royston Road frontage. On the basis of the desk-based research, however, there must be considered to be a low to moderate risk that archaeological remains of this date might be disturbed in the development of the site.

Post-medieval

4.17 Cartographic evidence has shown that the site had been occupied by a number of buildings since at least the mid-nineteenth century. These were described as gardeners' cottages by the Clothall Tithe Award (HALS DSA 4/31/1). The lower plot was owned by John Izard Pryor, lord of the manor of Baldock, the upper plot by the earl of Salisbury.

4.18 Pictorial evidence suggests that the study area may have been occupied by a maltings during the eighteenth century. An engraving by F.Jukes, dated 1786, appears to show a number of buildings on the site, one of which had a malting chimney.

4.19 Documentary evidence suggests that the hospital of St Mary Magdalene, and its lands came into the possession of the earls of Salisbury in the early seventeenth century. It therefore appears that the most likely site for the hospital is the northern of the two plots. This is also, unfortunately, the one most disturbed by the modern garage.

4.20 A number of features and artefacts dating to 18th or 19th centuries were recorded in the trial trenches on the site. These include a gully [208]; a wall [503]; a ditch [604] and a ditch or pit [611].

4.21 On the basis of the fieldwork, supported by the desk-based research, there may be considered to be a high risk that features, deposits and artefacts of this period might be disturbed in the development of the site.

Confidence Rating

4.22 The general availability of documentary material for the desk-based research was good and it has been possible to provide a comprehensive overview of the development of land use on the site and in its vicinity. The confidence rating for this stage of the work is therefore considered to be high.

4.23 Although no demolition had taken place on the site prior to the evaluation, it was nevertheless possible to locate the six evaluation trenches so as to coincide with the areas of likely disturbance. The overall sample ratio of 3% was adequate, given that approximately half of the site will remain open, and a significant depth of overburden might be expected to protect potential archaeology in these areas. The weather was largely dry, providing good conditions for the identification and recording of features and deposits. On this basis, the confidence rating for this stage of the work is considered to be high.

Conclusion

4.24 The present evaluation has demonstrated a high risk that the development of the site might encounter and disturb archaeological remains of *Romano-British* and *Post-medieval* dates, with a reduced risk for remains of other periods. It is likely that the Royston Road frontage, within the area defined by the former petrol station, has been highly disturbed, and the likelihood of good archaeological survival in this area is less than for the remainder of the site. It has not been possible to assess the affect on buried deposits of the foundations of the standing buildings on the site.

4.25 It should be noted that there is up to 0.90m of made ground across much of the site, suggesting that potential archaeological features and deposits might remain protected in situ during and after the completion of the development groundworks.

5

Sources Consulted

*ARCHIVES***Baldock Local History Society**

Brendan King's notes on the site of the relocated hospital.

Also copies of:

Harleian Manuscript 112 F14, dated 1440, release of a message in 'The Brade' (British Library)

Salisbury Archives 138/20, 1734 copy of a document originally dated 1618, Sale of lands in Clothall to the earl of Salisbury (Hatfield House)

Salisbury Archives 138/18, 1558, Presentation of George Burgoyne to the hospital of St Mary Magdalene (Hatfield House)

D/Ex852/T4 1772 Transfer of title between Nicholas Honour and Mary Grave (HALS)

F.Jukes, 1786, A View of Baldock in Hertfordshire (Baldock Museum)

Aerial photographs, 1925, Baldock (Baldock Museum)

Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies

DSA 4/31/1	1842	Clothall Tithe Award
DSA 4/31/2	1842	Clothall Tithe Map
DSA 4/11/1	c.1850	Baldock Tithe Award
DSA 4/11/2	c.1850	Baldock Tithe Map
D/EGm/335	1960/1	Notes on 16th century cottages on Royston Road, Baldock
26293	20thC	Tracings from a book of plans of Bygrave, Quickswood & Clothallbury estates, drawn by Edward Johnson 1808
OS 25" series	1898	Hertfordshire sheet VII.8, 2nd edition
OS 25" series	1922	Hertfordshire sheet VII.8, 3rd edition
OS 6" series	1884	Hertfordshire sheet XII, 1st edition
OS 6" series	1901	Hertfordshire sheet XII.NE, 2nd edition
OS 6" series	1921	Hertfordshire sheet XII.NE, revised 1938
OS 6" series	1925	Hertfordshire sheet XII.NE, revised 1950
OS 1:25,000	1960	Sheet TL 23 SW
OS 1:1250	1967	Sheet TL 2434 SE
OS 1:25,000	1968	Sheet TL 23 SW
OS 1:25,000	1972	Hertfordshire sheet TL 2434 - 2534
OS 1:10,000	1986	TL 23 SW
OS 1:1250	1995	Sheet TL 2434 SE

Hertfordshire County Council Sites and Monuments Record (SMR)

see Appendix 1

North Hertfordshire District Council Field Archaeology Section Records

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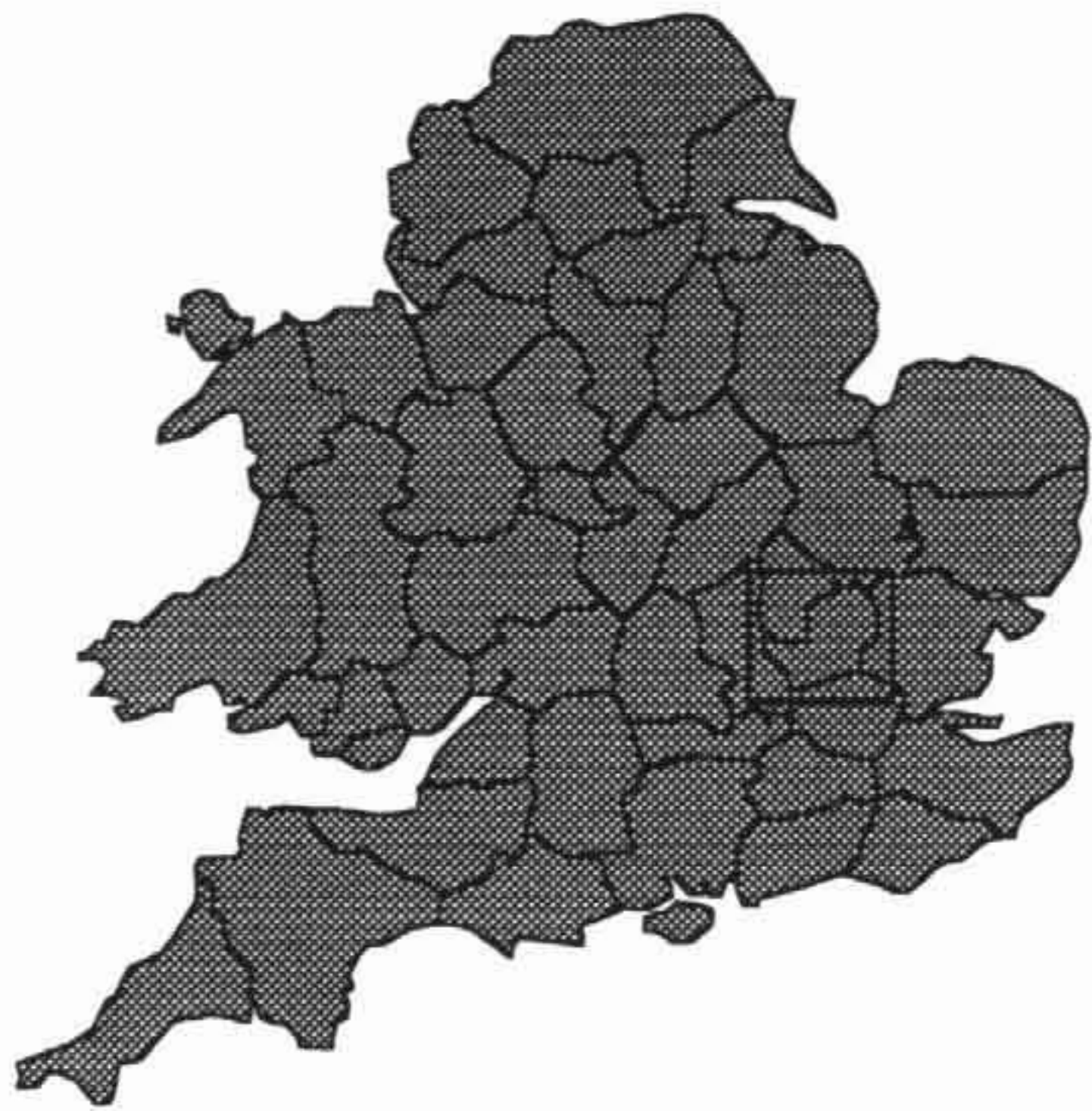
6**Illustrations**

Figure 1	Site location
Figure 2	Tracing from Clothall Tithe Map
Figure 3	Ordnance Survey 25" series, 1898
Figure 4	Ordnance Survey 25" series, 1922
Figure 5	Ordnance Survey 6" series, 1950
Figure 6	Ordnance Survey 1:1250 series, 1967
Figure 7	Site layout
Figure 8	Trench 1
Figure 9	Trench 2
Figure 10	Trench 3
Figure 11	Trench 6

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Land at 2 Royston Road, Baldock

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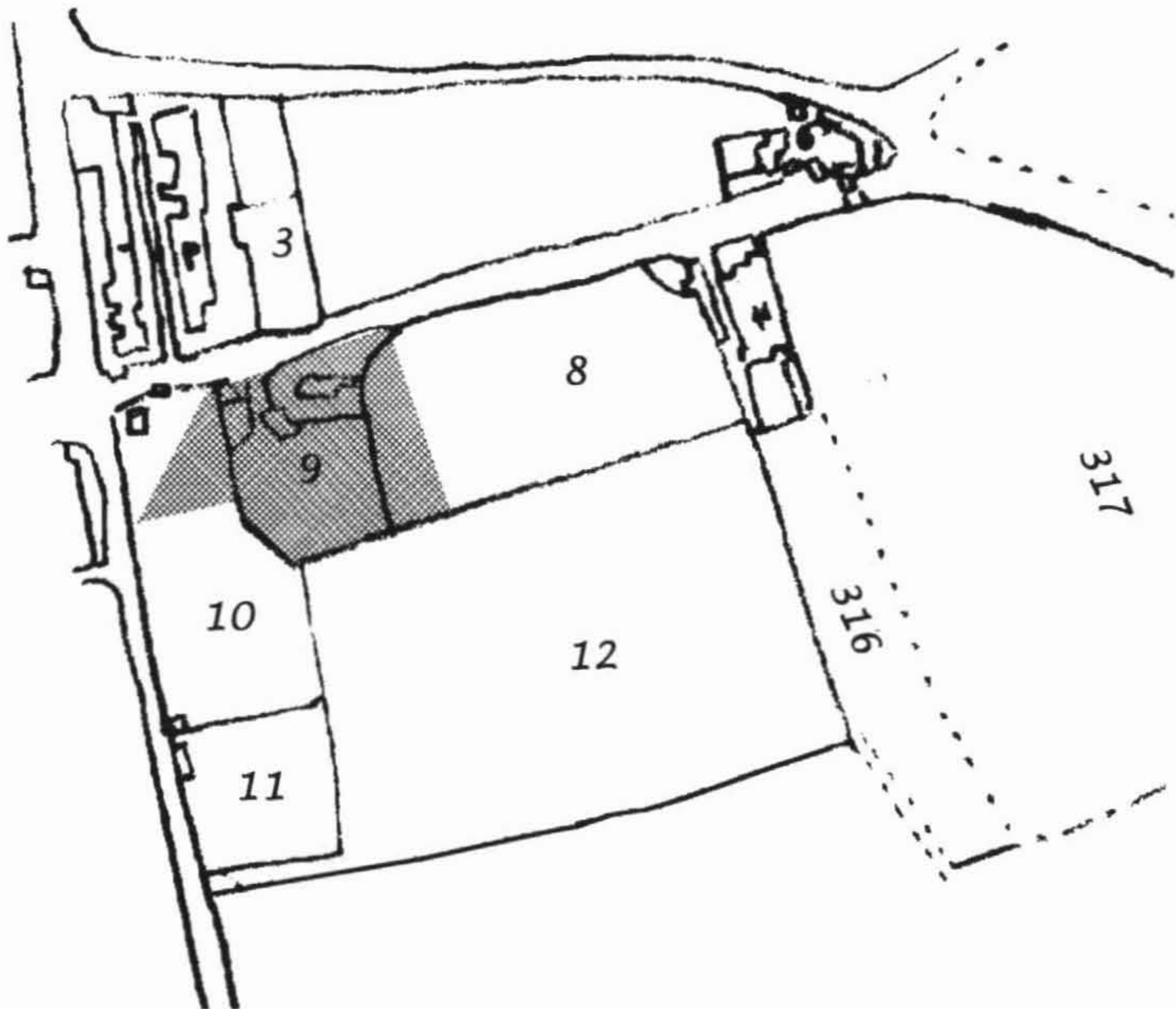


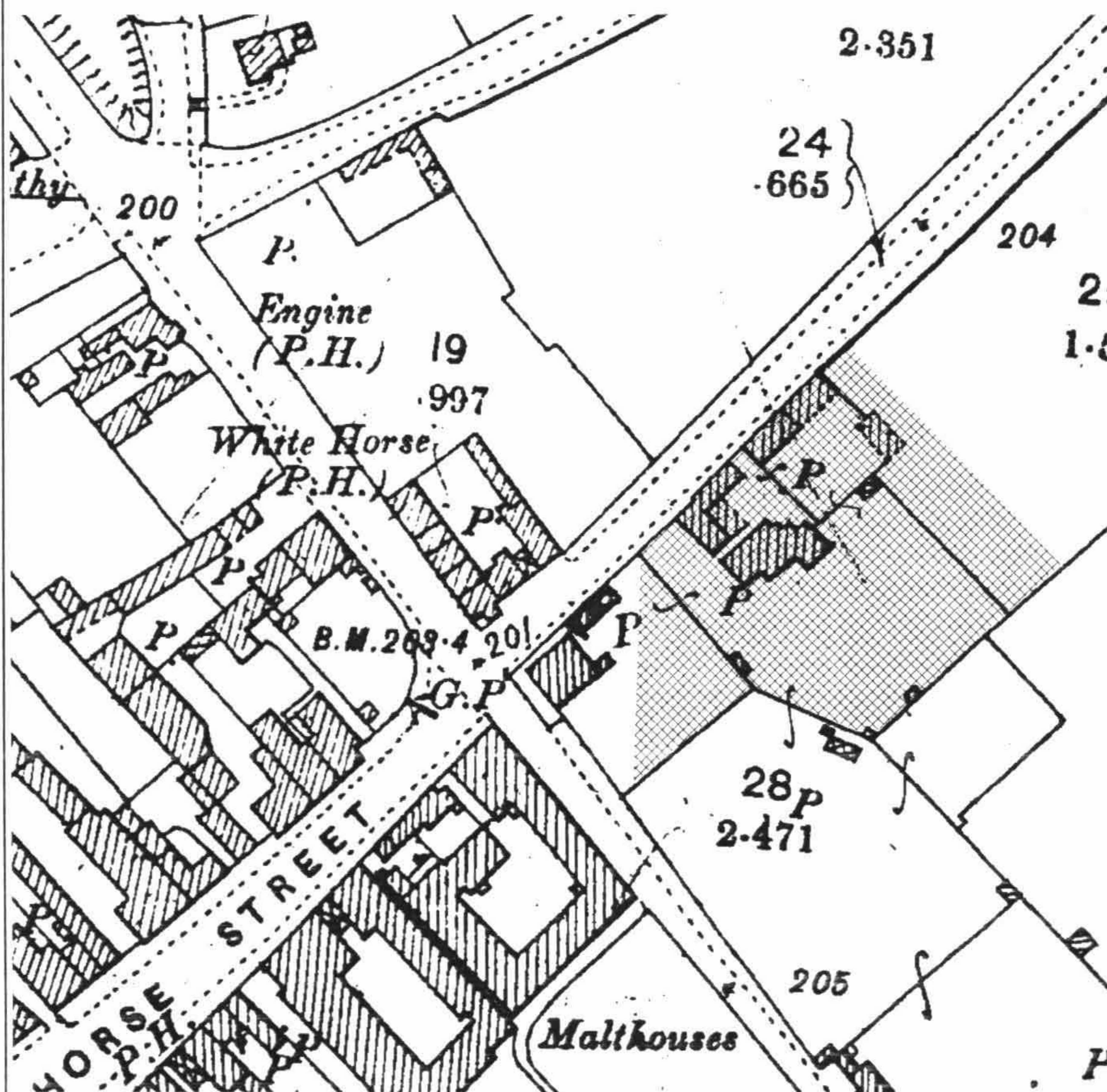
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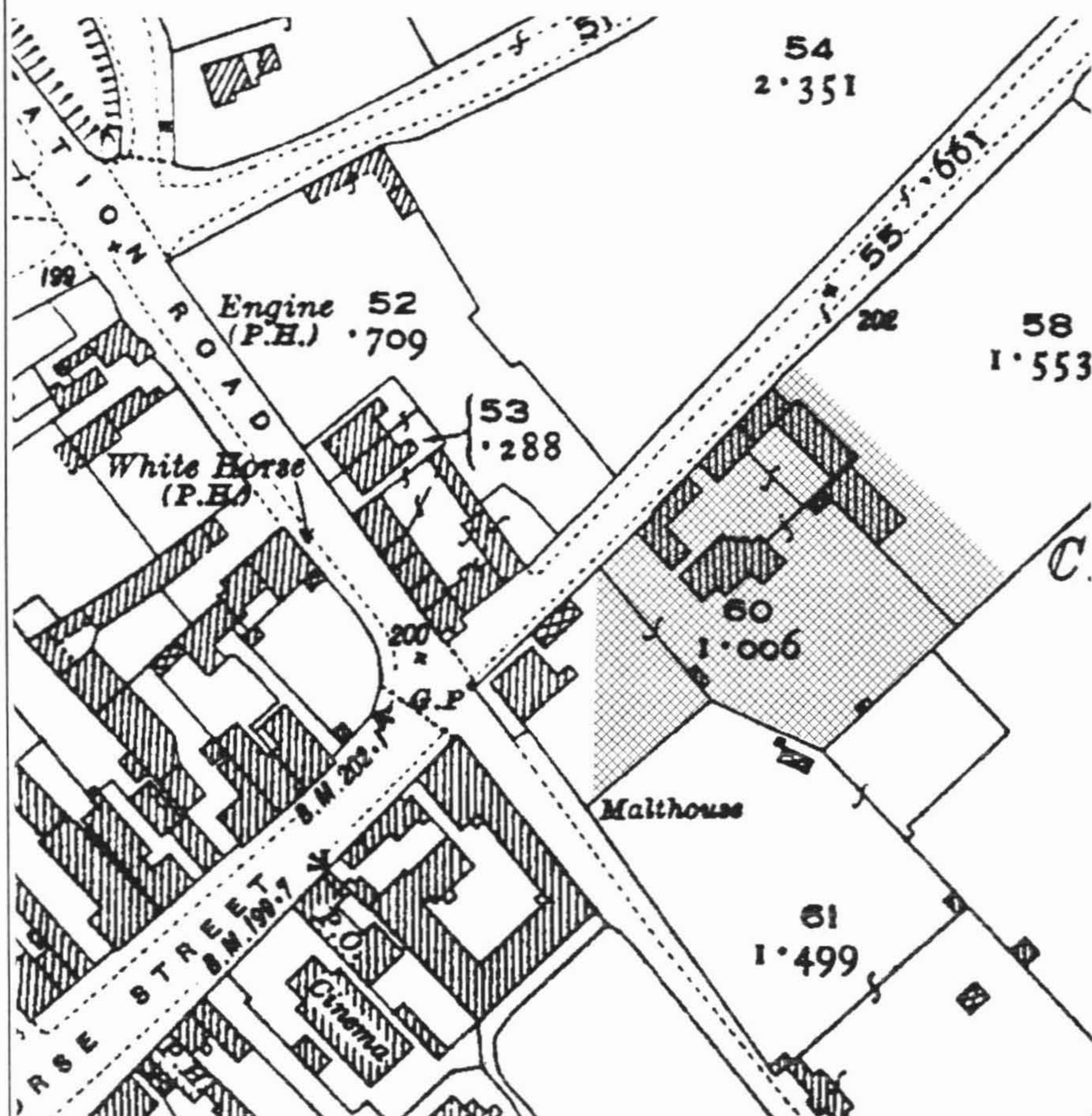
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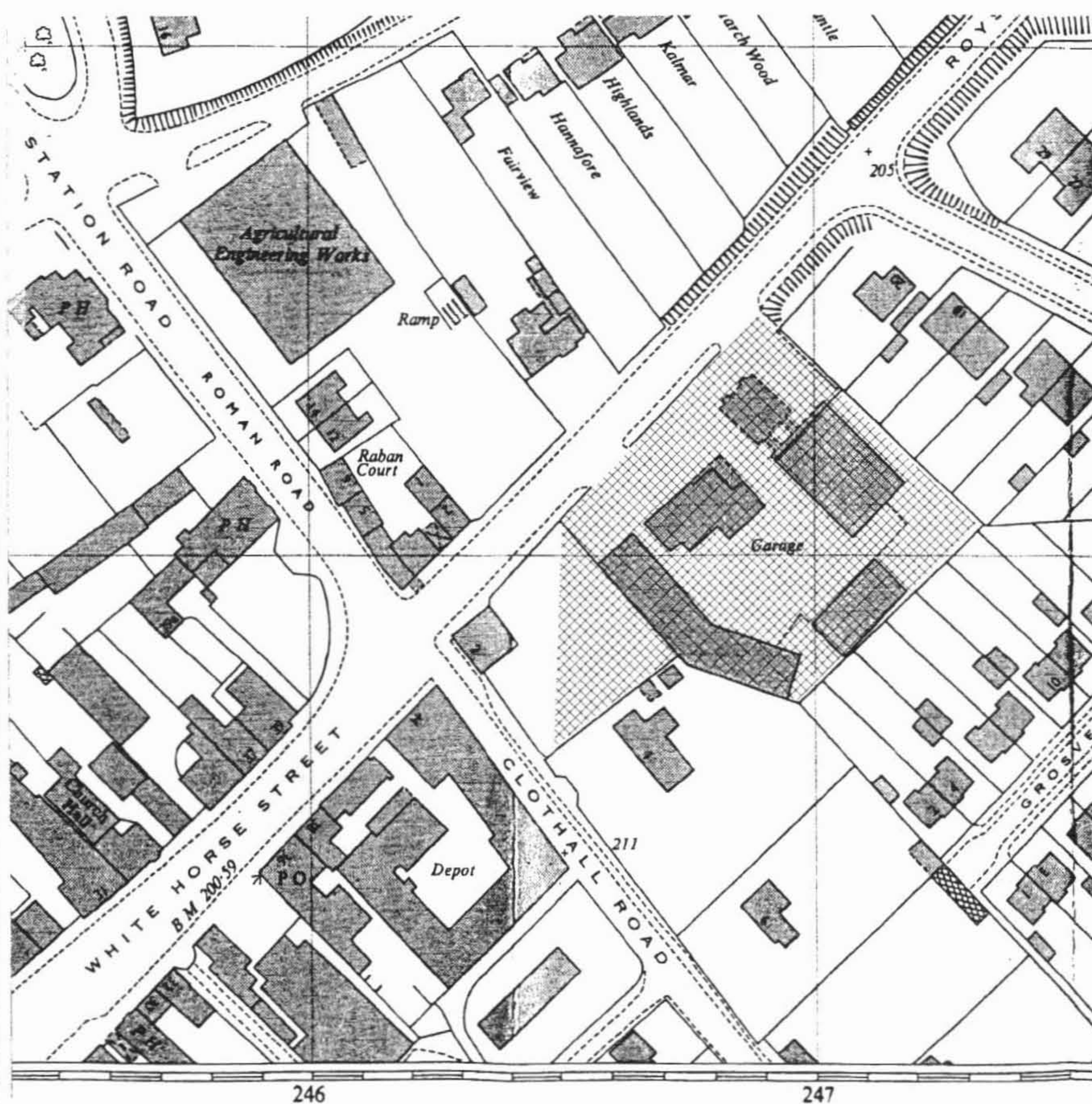
Figure 1

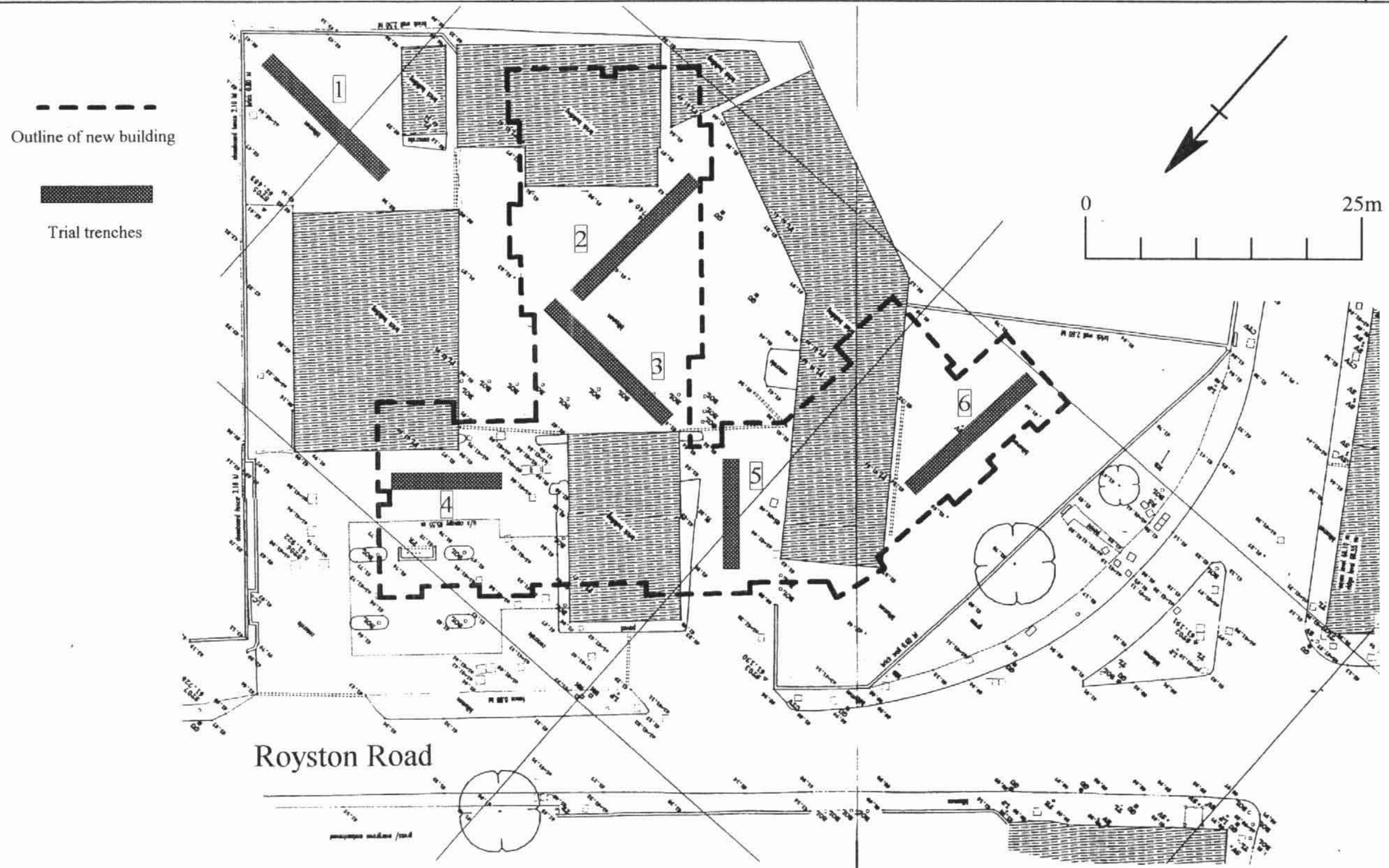








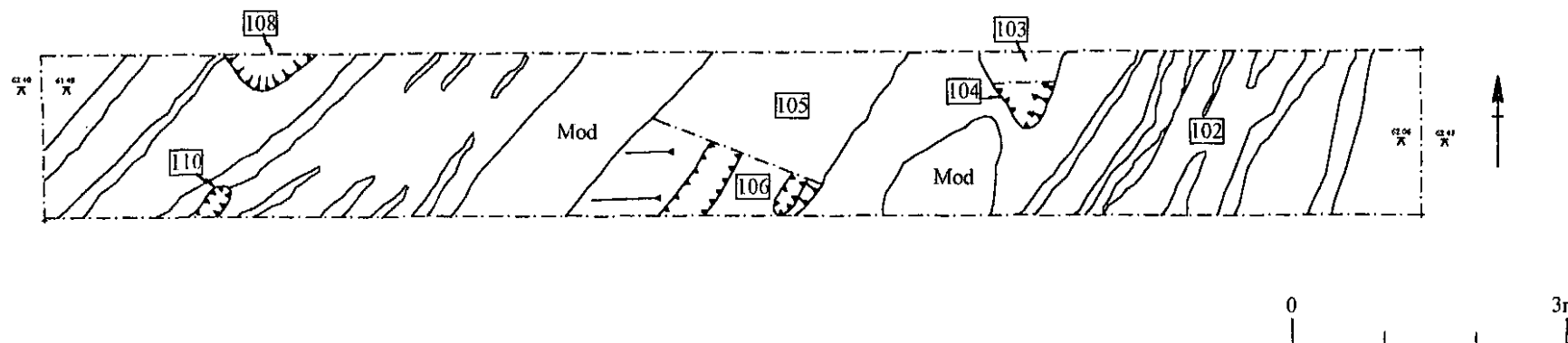




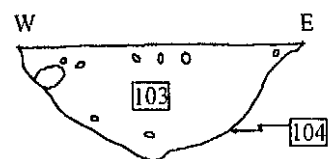
Site layout

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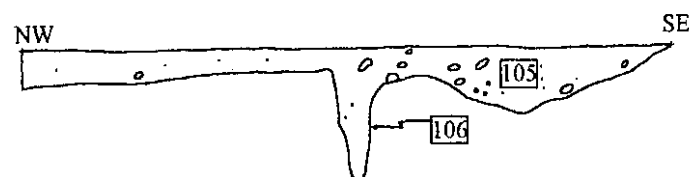
Figure 7



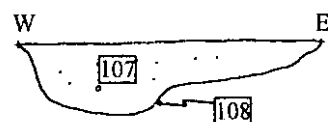
South facing section of [104]



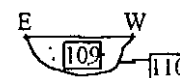
South-west facing section of [106]

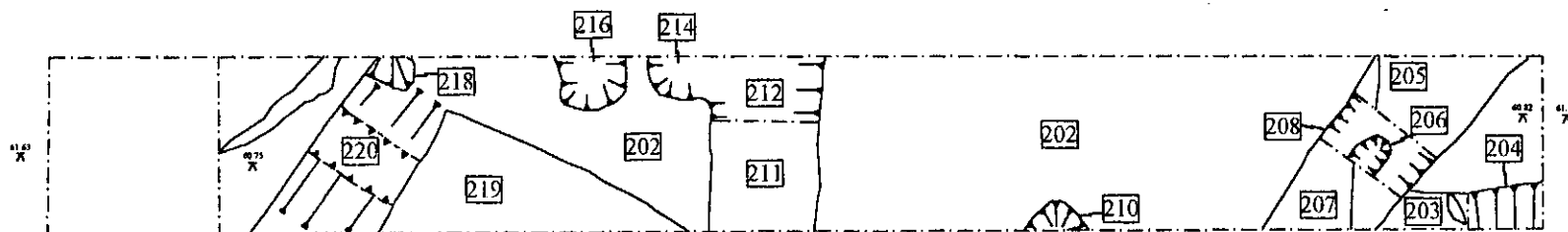


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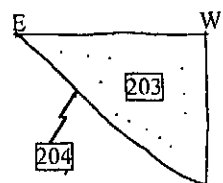


North facing section of [110]

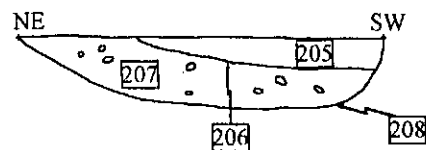




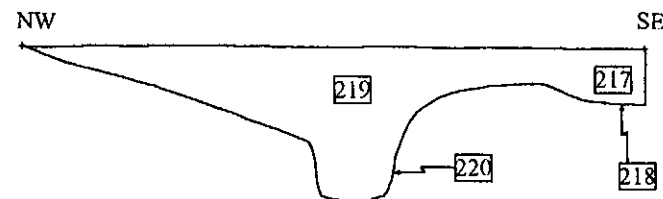
North facing section of [204]



North-west facing section of [208]



South-west facing section of [220] & [218]



East facing section of [210]



West facing section of [212], [214] & [216]



Trench 2

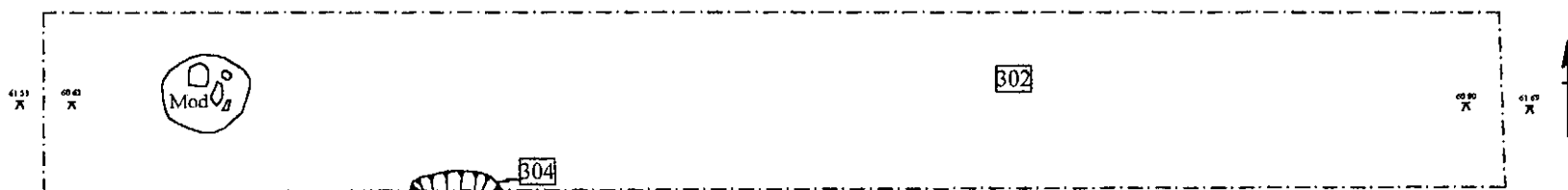
Scale as shown

Figure 9

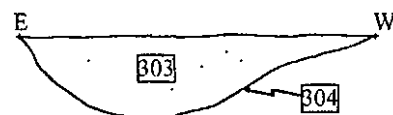
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2 Royston Road, Baldock

HN363



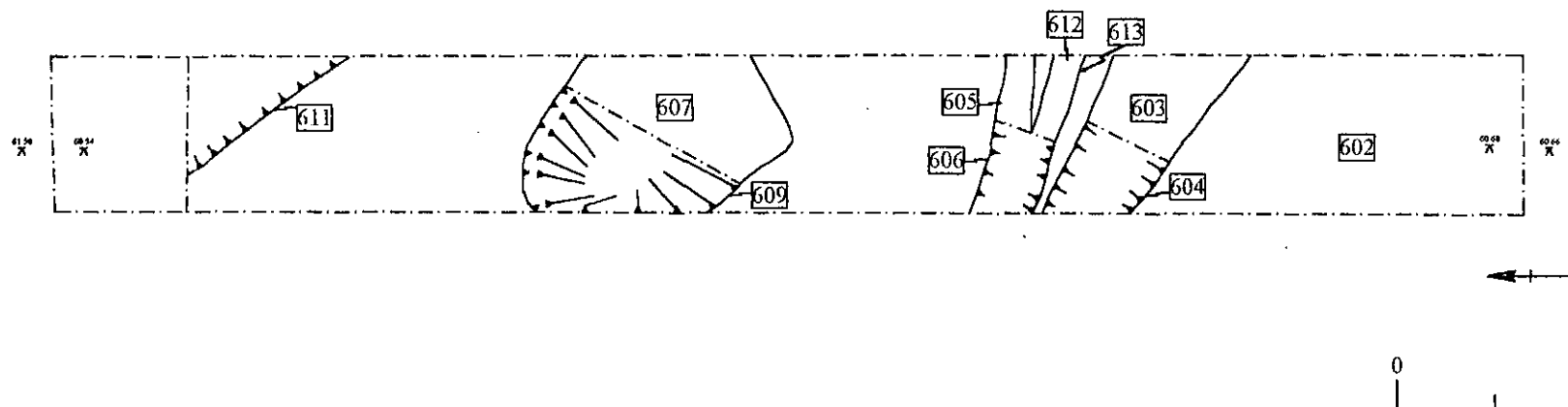
North facing section of [304]



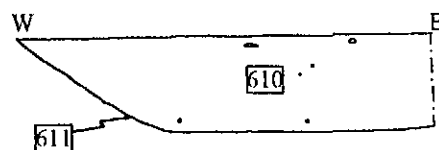
Trench 3

Scale as shown

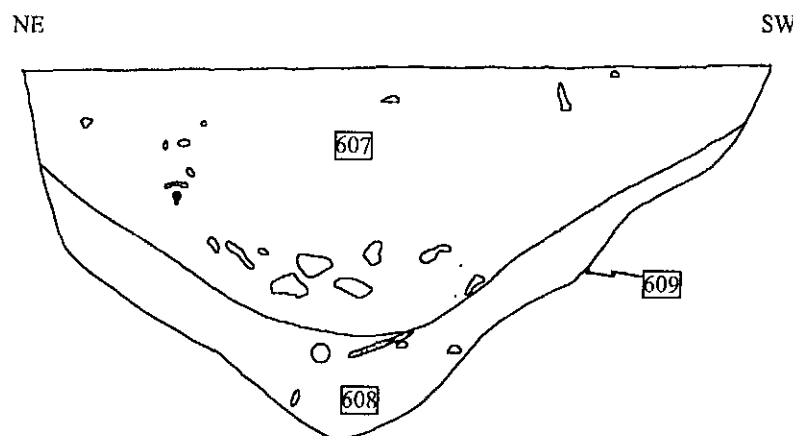
Figure 10



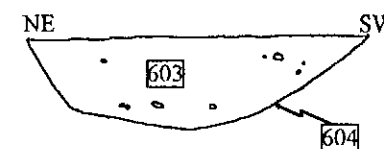
South facing section of [611]



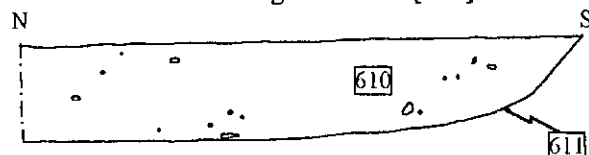
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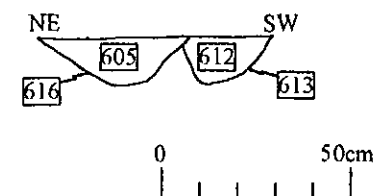
North-west facing section of [604]



West facing section of [611]



North-west facing section of [606],[613]



Appendix 1

Sites and Monuments Record Data

HCC No	Period	NGR	Distance	Details
6372	Prehistoric	TL 250 347	c.700m NE	Cropmarks of parts of rectilinear enclosures, others lie to the north (HCC 2380). Interpreted as a possible field system of Iron Age or RB date
217	Paleolithic	TL 250 339	c.350m SE	Flint implements found on Walls Field
218	Mesolithic	TL 24 33	within 1km	A chipped flint chisel or fabricator, now in Ashmolean Museum, Oxford
358	Neolithic	TL 24 34	within 1km W	Flint implements, including arrow head, knife & scraper, Icknield Way, Letchworth
4705	Neolithic	TL 249 339	c.300m SE	A pit containing Neolithic pottery was excavated on Walls Field in 1969.
244	Bronze Age	TL 24 33	within 1km	A hoard, comprising a palstave, 2 axes, a sword & ingots. Now in St Albans Museum
10077	Bronze Age	TL 2475 3334	c.750m S	Bronze Age cremation found during groundworks on Tesco petrol station in mid 1980s
2310	Bronze Age	TL 2526 3333	c.950m SE	Cropmark of plough-raised round barrow, c.19m in diameter
2328	Bronze Age	TL 2528 3334	c.980m SE	Cropmark of plough-raised round barrow, c.20m in diameter
2518	Bronze Age	TL 2561 3361	c.1kmSE	Cropmark of circular single-ditched enclosure, c.30m in diameter. Other cropmarks, including a pit alignment (2321) & ditches (2479, 2517) lie to N
7422	Bronze Age	TL 2394 3409	c.750m W	Cropmark of plough-raised round barrow
7423	Bronze Age	TL 2395 3411	c.700m W	Cropmark of probable plough-raised round barrow
106	Late pre-Roman Iron Age	TL 252 336	c.750m SE	LPRIA pottery found at 'Homelands', Clothall Road, Baldock
112	Iron Age/ LPRIA	TL 24 33	within 1km	Coins, incl gold copy of Phillipus stater, c.160-140BC & coins of Cunobelinus, c.15-40AD
1843	LPRIA	TL 251 340	c.450m SE	LPRIA pottery, Walls Field, Baldock
1868	LPRIA	TL 2481 3365	c.480m SE	Wealthy 'Chieftain's' burial, The Tene, Baldock
4280	LPRIA	TL 248 332	c.900m S	LPRIA cremation burial, found 1975 during construction of new RC church. Roman pottery sherds also found on site
4859	LPRIA	TL 24 33	within 1km	Gold coin of Cunobelinus found nr Baldock
7353	LPRIA	TL 2520 3394	c.600m SE	Cropmarks of square enclosure, interpreted as LPRIA square barrow, Clothall Common
9674	LPRIA	TL 2505 3430	c.420m NE	Linear ditch containing pottery sherds & animal bone, The Maltings, Royston Road
1062	LPRIA	TL 2485 3419	c.220m NE	Bronze coin of Nero, California Lane
10945	LPRIA	TL 2469 3383	c.250m S	Pit or ditch, 37-39 The Twitchell, contained several relatively complete, but shattered pottery vessels
8	LPRIA/Roman	TL 250 339	c.400m SE	Late Iron Age & Roman settlement, lying either side of Clothall Road, with cemeteries to NE, S & SW. Main settlement started by mid 1stC BC & continued to 4thC AD.
483	LPRIA/Roman	TL 243 341	c.400m W	Pottery vessels, probably from mid 1stC AD burial, Icknield Way, Baldock
1081	LPRIA/Roman	TL 252 337	c.680m SE	'Thistle/rosette' brooch, dated AD 25-50, found in ditch adjacent to Walls Field cemetery, Dec. 1934
9924	LPRIA/Roman	TL 2492 3363	c.550m SE	Scatter of abraded LPRIA/early RB pottery from buried plough soil, identified in archaeological evaluation, 1995, 18 Pinnocks Lane.
9940	LPRIA/Roman	TL 2498 3313	c.1km SE	Abraded pot sherds, dating 1stC BC-3rdC AD from buried plough soil, Providence Court

9994	LPRIA/Roman	TL 2513 3361	c.700m SE	Parallel triple ditches, c.70m long identified from geophysical survey. Sections of the ditches excavated 1968 & produced LPRIA/RB pottery
10792	LPRIA/Roman	TL 249 340	c.250m SE	Evidence of settlement, exposed in archaeological evaluation at Hartsfield School, 1995
447	Roman	TL 2468 3388	c.220m S	Coin of Constantine, minted in London AD 320-1, found 1978, 12 Thurnall Close
482	Roman	TL 2479 3320	c.900m S	Burial group of 5 vessels, dating c.AD65, London Road
486	Roman	TL 246 342	c.100m NW	Pottery flagon, found at the Stationmaster's House, Icknield Way, in 1910
487	Roman	TL 246 331	c.1km S	2 rubbish pits containing animal bones, pottery and coins of late 3rd - late 4th century date
488	Roman	TL 252 336	c.720m SE	Well discovered at Homelands, Wallington Road in 1930 & explored to depth of 21ft (c.7m)
529	Roman	TL 2484 3378	c.370m SE	Mid 4thC coin, found 1977 at 33 Clothall Road
622	Roman	TL 240 335	c.1km SW	Coin of Constantine, found on Brandles Close school playing field, April 1978
770	Roman	TL 247 338	c.300m S	Cropmarks of Romano-Celtic temple
1055	Roman	TL 2484 3377	c.370m SE	Coins of Constantius II, found 1973, gardens of 35 Clothall Road
1056	Roman	TL2485 3376	c.400m SE	Six 4thC coins, gardens of 37 Clothall Road
1057	Roman	TL 2486 3375	c.400m SE	Coin of Gratian, found in garden, 39 Clothall Rd
1058	Roman	TL 2481 3413	c.150m NE	Coin of Magnentius, found 1960, in garden of 13 Grosvenor Road
1059	Roman	TL 2470 3405	c.70m SW	Coin, probably of Constantine II, found in garden of 4 Clothall Road
1060	Roman	TL 2485 3364	c.500m SE	Coin of Constantine I (307-337), found July 1963 in garden of 27 Pinnocks Lane
1063	Roman	TL 248 338	c.350m SE	Mid 2ndC - 4thC coins, probably from Walls Field cemetery
1065	Roman	TL 250 337	c.530m SE	Coin of Vespasian (AD 69-79) & pottery sherds, found 1922, Clothall Road
1066	Roman	TL 248 342	c.200m NE	Inhumation burial, probably late 3rdC in date, California Lane
1068	Roman	TL 248 340	c.200m SE	Smashed pottery vessel, possibly cinerary urn, found 1932 off Clothall Road
1069	Roman	TL 24 33	within 1km	Pottery found 1930, during widening of London Road (coins also found, HCC 2270)
1070	Roman	TL 247 340	c.150m SE	Pottery, including samian sherds, found 1955, at the Telephone Exchange, Clothall Road
1073	Roman	TL 2492 3368	c.500m SE	Occupation evidence, east side of Pinnocks Lane
1075	Roman	TL 241 339	c.600m SW	Pottery and bone, Norton Crescent
1076	Roman	TL 249 341	c.220m NE	Well, 36 ft deep (c.11m) was found in a garden on California Lane in 1932.
1078	Roman	TL 245 342	c.200m NW	Possible Romano-British building foundations
1079	Roman	TL 2476 3403	c.130m SE	Finds, including bones, pottery & a mid/late 4thC coin were found at 7 Grosvenor Rd in 1961.
1080	Roman	TL 245 339	c.250m SW	Pottery vessels & a ditch, containing bones, shell and pot sherds, were found during construction of a house on High Street in 1934
1256	Roman	TL 244 344	c.420m NW	Coin, possibly of Constantine III (406-11) found on Salisbury Road in September 1973.
1421	Roman	TL 24 33	within 500m	Cremation burial, with brooch, found just off Icknield Way
1456	Roman	TL 242 340	c.500m SW	Pottery sherds of mid-late 1stC found 23 Norton Crescent
1840	Roman	TL 247 341	c.50m NE	Pottery, including a butt beaker, samian & castor ware, found at 'Mr Lee's house' Royston Road, early 1930s
1842	Roman	TL 247 341	c.50m NE	Pottery, including imitation samian bowl, found during excavations at Clothall End in 1932.
4279	Roman	TL 248 332	c.900m S	Cremation burial, with grave gifts found during work in the grounds of Convent of Providence

4627	Roman	TL 2500 3445	c.550m NE	Supposed line of Roman road, Viatores no. 168(A), running to TL 2635 3500
4686	Roman	TL 2500 3365	c.580m SE	Supposed line of Roman road, Viatores no. 22, running to TL 2835 3000
6082	Roman	TL 248 335	c.600m S	Late Roman cemetery, exposed by development at The Tene. Salvage excavation took place, but many burials destroyed. Occupation evidence also recorded in the area
10916	Roman	TL 2542 3385	c.700m SE	Cremation burial excavated at 14 Westell Close, 1999. Probably part of known extensive mixed rite cemetery
10987	Roman	TL 2445 3402	c.220m SW	Inhumation burial, Orchard Road
11413	Roman	TL 2473 3392	c.150m SE	Postholes and ditches excavated, 19 Clothall Road
9	Medieval	TL 245 338	c.300m SE	Centre of medieval town
4062	Medieval	TL 244 339	c.300m SE	Parish church, dedicated to St Mary, 13th century origins
5339	Post-medieval	TL 2467 3365	c.450m S	Former maltings behind 41 High Street
5340	Post-medieval	TL 2445 3373	c.420m SE	Former Seven Roes maltings, Park Street
5341	Post-medieval	TL 2431 3381	c.440m SE	Former maltings, 16B Hitchin Street
5342	Post-medieval	TL 2433 3379	c.450m SE	Former maltings, 33 Hitchin Street
5343	Post-medieval	TL 2455 3365	c.460m SE	Former Lion Maltings, N side of Mansfield Road
5344	Post-medieval	TL 2505 3433	c.430m NE	Former Bygrave Maltings, N side of Royston Road
5345	Post-medieval	TL 2462 3403	c.70m SE	Former maltings, corner of Whitehorse Street and Clothall Road. Two maltings, constructed round central yard. Operated until 1955.
5531	Post-medieval	TL 246 343	c.200m N	Baldock railway station, opened 1850
5621	Post-medieval	TL 241 341	c.550m E	Railway bridge, Norton Road, Letchworth
5622	Post-medieval	TL 2450 3426	c.220m NE	Railway bridge, Baldock station, rebuilt 1923
6336	Post-medieval	TL 24 33	c.250m SE	Lock-up cage, stood on Middle Row, Whitehorse St, built 1787.
10820	Post-medieval	TL 2422 3350	c.730m SE	New Farm, Park St. Late 19thC planned farm
10886	Post-medieval	TL 2457 3410	c.100m E	The Old White Horse PH, Station Rd
10872	Post-medieval	TL 2447 3371	c.420m SE	Archaeological evaluation to r/o 24 High St revealed a number of post-med features, including a brick wall and quarry pits.
10926	Post-medieval	TL 243 340	c.370m SE	C17th building and C19th cottages at Butler's Yard, Orchard Rd
11197	Post-medieval	TL 2458 3376	c.350m SE	Site of 37-mile marker on Great North Road, east side of High Street
11199	Post-medieval	TL 2444 3390	c.300m SE	George and Dragon Inn, 2 Hitchin Street
11200	Post-medieval	TL 2458 3369	c.400m SE	White Lion Inn, 46 High Street
9910	Modern	TL 2466 3342	c.700m S	Site of former film studios & silk hosiery manufactory, Tesco supermarket
481	Unknown	TL 248 343	c.230m NE	Skull of young person, found 1961
485	Unknown	TL 248 331?	c.600m SE	Inhumations found 1947 on Pinnocks Lane
1031	Unknown	TL 2563 3371	c.1km SE	Cropmark of sub-rectangular enclosure, Clothall Common. Other cropmarks in the vicinity
1067	Unknown	TL 247 342	c.100m NE	Inhumation found near Royston Road by Westell in 1928
1077	Unknown	TL 2495 3341	c.750m SE	Unidentified iron object, 18-20 South Road. Found close to C2nd burial
1095	Unknown	TL 2525 3400	c.600m E	Cropmarks of scattered maculae, Clothall Common
2321	Unknown	TL 255 338	c.900m SE	Cropmarks of a pit alignment, Clothall Common
2390	Unknown	TL 2535 3407	c.650m E	Cropmarks of 3 parallel linear ditches, aligned NE-SW, Clothall Common
2479	Unknown	TL 2555 3385	c.870m SE	Cropmarks of 5 linear ditches, aligned NW-SE, Clothall Common. 2 of the ditches cut northern side of enclosure (HCC 1031), others appear to lead to enclosure entrance
4905	Unknown	TL 253 339	c.650m SE	Cropmarks of series of rectilinear enclosures, comprising at least 10 enclosed units
6173	Unknown	TL 2530 3385	c.700m SE	Cropmark of sub-rectangular enclosure

7742	Unknown	TL 2560 3382	c.950m SE	Cropmark of 2 sides of rectilinear enclosure
7745	Unknown	TL 2526 3397	c.600m SE	Cropmarks of 3 large pits, Clothall Common
7746	Unknown	TL 2516 3398	c.500m SE	Cropmark of short length of trackway
7747	Unknown	TL 2514 3408	c.480m E	Cropmark of incomplete rectangular enclosure
7748	Unknown	TL 2497 3410	c.300m E	Cropmark of rectangular enclosure, with attached rectilinear ditches to NW