

Former GPL Coal Depot, Southgate, Pickering, North Yorkshire

archaeological desk-based assessment

on behalf of
Lidl UK GmbH

Report 1991
July 2008

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1. Summary

- 1.1 This report presents the results of an archaeological desk-based assessment which was conducted in advance of a proposed development at the former GPL Coal Depot, Southgate, Pickering, North Yorkshire. The assessment comprised a search of pertinent documentary and cartographic records, and a field visit.
- 1.2 The works were commissioned by Lidl UK GmbH, and conducted by Archaeological Services Durham University.

Results

- 1.3 There is no direct evidence for prehistoric or Roman activity within the study area. Any as yet unidentified resource would be likely to have been truncated by later activity.
- 1.4 The proposed development area lies just outside the main area of medieval and post-medieval settlement within Pickering. Its low-lying position, next to a stream prone to flooding, would have inhibited settlement on the site at this time.
- 1.5 A mill is known to have been present on the site from the mid-19th century until its demolition in the 1970s. Foundations for this mill may survive along the western boundary of the site.
- 1.6 Apart from the mill, the only developments on the proposed development area during the 19th and 20th centuries has been in relation to coal depots.

Recommendations

- 1.7 No archaeological deposits have been identified which require preservation *in situ*. No archaeological works are required in relation to the buildings that are on the site.
- 1.8 It is recommended that a series of trial trenches should be excavated across the site in order to establish the nature and extent of any archaeological resource present which may be affected by the proposed development.

2. Project background

Location (Figure 1)

- 2.1 The site is located at the former GPL Coal Depot on Southgate, Pickering, North Yorkshire (grid reference SE 796 838). It covers an area of around 2,500 sq. m, and is bounded by Southgate and Hungate to the north, Vivis Lane to the west and Pickering Beck and the former railway line to the east (Figure 2).

Development proposal

- 2.2 It is proposed to redevelop the area as a supermarket together with associated car parking. The planning application reference number for the proposal is 08/00551/MFUL.

Objective

- 2.3 The objective of the scheme of works was to assess the nature, extent and potential significance of any surviving archaeological features within the proposed development area, so that an informed decision may be made regarding the nature and scope of any further scheme of archaeological works that may be required in advance of the proposed development.

Dates

- 2.4 The field visit took place on 18th July 2008. This report was prepared between 17th and 29th July 2008.

Personnel

- 2.5 This report was researched and prepared by Andy Platell, with illustrations by David Graham. The Project Manager was Daniel Still.

OASIS

- 2.6 Archaeological Services is registered with the **Online Access to the Index of archaeological investigationS** project (OASIS). The OASIS ID number for this project is **archaeol3-46228**.

Acknowledgements

- 2.7 Archaeological Services is grateful for the assistance of the Historic Environment Records Officer of North Yorkshire County Council and the staff of North Yorkshire County Record Office in facilitating this scheme of works.

3. Landuse, topography and geology

Landuse

- 3.1 At the time of the desk-based survey, the site was a disused coal depot, covered in scrub vegetation.

Topography

- 3.2 Pickering sits on the northern edge of an extensive low plain, the Vale of Pickering, with the land rising steeply towards the North York Moors to the

north. Until it was drained for agriculture, the Vale of Pickering was boggy and subject to flooding. Therefore, most settlements, including Pickering, are situated along the edge of this plain, and the main east-west route runs through these settlements. A river, Pickering Beck, flows southwards from the moors to Pickering through a deeply-cut glacial overflow channel; its valley forms the main north-south route to Whitby.

- 3.3 The proposed development area itself is sited on the southern side of the town next to Pickering Beck, at the point where it spills out of its valley into the plain at a mean elevation of approximately 30m aOD. This beck is renowned for rising rapidly following rainfall and still occasionally floods. The site therefore would not be favoured for historic settlement, except by buildings for which a streamside setting was essential, such as watermills.

Geology and soils

- 3.4 The solid geology under the proposed development area is Jurassic Upper Kimmeridge Clay although this is overlain by glacial deposits. Slightly to the north this changes to the Corallian Limestone, which has been extensively quarried to form the building stone for most of the older buildings in the town.

4. Historical and archaeological development

The prehistoric period (up to AD 70)

- 4.1 The area around Pickering is rich in prehistoric remains. Kirkdale Cave near Kirby Moorside has produced animal remains dating from the last interglacial period and is the only known site of this period in northern England. Star Carr, near Seamer is the site of an important Mesolithic settlement. The North York Moors contain numerous archaeological remains spanning the whole prehistoric period.
- 4.2 A Neolithic stone axe (MNY 3336) and a cup and ring marked stone (MNY 25448) have been recovered from the town although both are unprovenanced. The cup and ring marked stone is thought to have been brought from Ilkley Moor and is not local.
- 4.3 There is no direct evidence of prehistoric activity in the proposed development area but the evidence that the surrounding area was exploited in prehistory indicates that a resource relating to this exploitation may survive within the proposed development area.

The Roman period (AD 70 to 5th century)

- 4.4 A Roman road runs northwards from Malton to the Whitby area, passing to the west of Pickering. There are Roman forts and camps at Cawthorn, around 6km north-northwest of Pickering and a Roman site at Sinnington, 5km to the west-northwest. No Roman remains are known from Pickering itself.

The medieval period (5th century to 1540)

- 4.5 Although tradition, dating back to at least the 16th century, claims that Pickering was founded by a Brigantian king, Peredurus, in 270BC (Home

1905, 48-50), there is no evidence to support this myth. Modern research derives the name from the Anglo-Saxon personal name 'Picer' with the suffix 'ingas' (settlement of the people of), *i.e.* settlement of Picer's people (Smith 1928, 85). This appears to date the settlement to Anglo-Saxon times, although the only remains from this period yet discovered here are a fragment of a possible pre-Conquest cross shaft in the church (Home 1905, 88) and a trefoil brooch of around 900AD found in the town (Tyler 1979).

- 4.6 Many of the streets in Pickering have the Scandinavian suffix 'gate' meaning street *e.g.* Burgate, Willowgate, Eastgate and Westgate (but not Southgate, which is a 20th century invention to rename the earlier Muck Lane). This suggests significant Norse settlement during the 10th and 11th centuries.
- 4.7 The Domesday Book records that in 1066 the Manor of Pickering was held by Morcar, brother of Edwin, Earl of Mercia. Morcar fought alongside King Harold during the abortive invasion by Harold Hardrada, King of Norway, but surrendered to William the Conqueror following the Battle of Hastings later that year, and was allowed to keep his properties. However, following William's imposition of new taxes, he joined the general rising of the northern counties in 1069, and fled to Scotland when William marched north (Rushton 2003, 34-6).
- 4.8 William exacted terrible revenge on the rebellious northern counties in the winter of 1069-70, destroying farms and villages to break the resistance of the people and impose his rule by force, in an action known as 'The Harrying of the North' (*ibid.*). The result of this can be seen in the Domesday account for Pickering. Whereas in 1066 Pickering contained 37 carucates of land with 20 ploughs, valued at £88, by 1086 this had been reduced to just one plough and valued at just £1. O. 4. (Home 1905, 90-1).
- 4.9 Morcar's estates, including Pickering, were seized by William. He built the castle, originally of motte and bailey type, either during this campaign or soon after. It was rebuilt in stone between 1180 and 1236. The castle remained in royal hands until 1267 when it was conferred with the title Earl of Lancaster on Edmund Crouchback, younger son of Henry III. It reverted to the crown again in 1322, following the execution for treason of Edmund's son Thomas but was reinstated to the Earls of Lancaster in 1326, becoming part of the Duchy of Lancaster when that title was created in 1351. Upon the elevation of the House of Lancaster to the throne in 1399 the Duchy reverted to the Crown and Pickering became a royal castle once again (English Heritage n.d.).
- 4.10 The primary function of Pickering Castle was to administer the Forest of Pickering, a royal hunting estate founded by Henry I, which originally stretched from the walls of York to the coast (Rushton 2003, 46). Records show that most of the medieval kings stayed at Pickering Castle at some time during their reigns (MacNab 1999).
- 4.11 There is a second motte on Beacon Hill to the west of Pickering Beck. No contemporary documentary records survive for this structure, although it is thought to have been constructed to assist in an unrecorded siege of the main

castle sometime during the civil war that characterized the reign of Stephen between 1135 and 1154 (English Heritage n.d.). A medieval hospital dedicated to St Nicholas is recorded at Keld Head, northwest of the town from at least 1301, when it was mentioned in the Lay Subsidy Roll. The date of its dissolution is unknown. The Castle, Beacon Hill Motte and St Nicholas Hospital are all scheduled monuments.

- 4.12 Pickering is recorded as a *vill* in documents throughout the 12th century but had acquired borough status by the early 13th century as several court records of 1206 mention *burgesses* (Tyler 1979). The town flourished during the medieval period due to patronage from royalty visiting the castle. A medieval coin (MNY 23664) has been recovered as a stray find from the town.
- 4.13 Potter Hill, with a reference to a pottery, is first documented in 1377/8 and 'Burghgate' (Burgate) is documented in 1438 (Tyler 1979, 8). A survey of 1476 records 63 burgesses and identifies the streets of Stanbrig (Bridge Street) Eastgate, Hungate, Smithy (modern Smiddy) Hill, Birdgate, Willowgate, Hallgarth, Muck Lane (modern Southgate) and Bakehouse Lane (modern Park Street) (*ibid.*). This therefore defines the area of the medieval town. To the east of the beck it consisted of north-south aligned streets between the castle and church and the east-west aligned streets of Market Place / Birdgate and Hungate / Eastgate, while west of the beck were Potter Hill and Westgate. They were connected by a stone bridge (Stanbrig) on the site of the current Bridge Street (MNY 23522). One of the arches of this bridge survived until the 19th century (Branse-Instone 2002). Although a road (Muck Lane, the modern Southgate) connected Hungate and Eastgate, there is no documentary evidence for settlement along this lane at this time. It is unlikely that there were two bridges in close proximity at this time, so the beck is likely to have been crossed via a periodically impassable ford here.

The post-medieval period (1541 to 1899)

- 4.14 The fortunes of the town declined in the 16th and 17th centuries and a rental of 1619-21 records all but one of the burgage plots as consisting of just cottages (Tyler 1979). Around the middle of the 16th century, Leland visited Pickering and wrote 'The toune of Pykering is large but not welle compact together. The greatest part of it with the paroch church and the castel is on the South Est part of the broke renning thorough the toune, and standith on a great slaty hille. The other part of the toun is not so bigge as this; the brook rennith bytwixt them that sumtyme regith, but it suagith shortely again: and a mile beneth the toun goith into Costey' [the Costa]. After describing the church and castle, he then added 'In the other part of the toun of Pykering passing over brook by a stone bridg of v arches I saw two things to be noted, the ruines of a Manor Place, called Bruses-Haul and a Manor Place of the Lascelles at Keld Head' (Home 1905, 150-1). The de Brus family held a manor in Pickering until forfeiting their lands in England following Scotland's wars of independence. Home (*ibid.*) identifies their Hall ('Bruses Haul') as being '...in a field to the west of Potter Hill where hollows and uneven places in the grass indicate the positions of buildings' (*ibid.* 154).

- 4.15 The fortunes of the town revived during the late 17th and 18th centuries due to the development of the linen industry. A survey of 1680 mentions linen weavers, fullers and a tenter garth, together with 195 houses and nine shops. During the 18th century, a paper making industry also developed, with a paper mill being present at Viver's Mill to the south of the proposed development area (Tyler *ibid.*).
- 4.16 The tithe map of 1839 (Figure 3) is the earliest accurate depiction of Pickering. This shows most of the town to lie east of Pickering Beck, along the east-west aligned streets of Eastgate / Hungate and Market Place / Birdgate / Smithy (now Smiddy) Hill, together with the north-south aligned Burgate and Bakehouse Lane (now known as Park Street). West of the beck, most of the buildings lie along Westgate and Potter Hill. A lane (the modern Southgate, not named on this map) is present connecting Westgate with Hungate, although it contains only a few scattered buildings rather than the terraces typical of the streets on either side.
- 4.17 This lane appears to cross Pickering Beck by a ford, with a small footbridge, only half as wide as the road, to its north. However, the map is not very clear on this point, as the streams are not clearly distinguished from the roads and comparison has to be made with later maps as well (see below). The Beck forms much of the eastern boundary of the proposed development area. Another stream forms the western side. This is particularly unclear on the map, as it appears to be a road branching off Southgate at its northern end and a stream joining the main beck at its southern end. Only by comparison with later maps can it be seen that the stream is culverted under Southgate. Its course north of here is not shown. Since a mill was present along its course (see below) it is likely to be a mill race coming off the main beck somewhere in the Potter Hill area, and may have been culverted as far as the southern side of Southgate. A second mill race is present to the east of the proposed development area, flowing from just south of the ford to rejoin the main beck slightly south of the proposed development area.
- 4.18 One structure is present within the proposed development area; a long, thin building orientated north-south in the northwest corner. Another smaller building is present close to the ford over the main beck, although this would lie outside the proposed development area. No indication is given on the plan about what these buildings were used for.
- 4.19 In 1840 a proposal was brought forward for a railway from Scarborough to York, via Pickering, where it would connect with the existing Whitby to Pickering line (this had been opened in 1835 and is present on the tithe map, to the north of the proposed development area). Plans for the proposal, held by North Yorkshire County Records Office (ref. QDP(M)31) include a large-scale map of Pickering with the proposed new line marked, and forming the eastern edge of the current proposed development area (Figure 4). The map is almost identical to the tithe map and is obviously a copy. Some minor changes are visible in the shape of buildings etc. although these may be copying errors. The map does show the ford and footbridge over Pickering

Beck more clearly than the tithe plan, although the mill race to the west is still undifferentiated from the road at Southgate.

- 4.20 The first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1859 (not illustrated for copyright reasons) shows the situation after the railway had been built. This crosses the beck to the east of the proposed development area and has a siding to its west. The ford and footbridge to the east of the proposed development area have been replaced by the current larger road bridge. The mill race to the west is shown as emerging from a culvert on the south side of Southgate (this road is given its former name of Muck Lane on this map), and is not shown to the north of the road. The proposed development area is split into two plots; a rectangular area in the north with a small building in its northwest corner, and a triangular area in the south with a long, thin north-south aligned building described as a 'bone mill' in it. The former can be identified on later maps as the coal yard and buildings still present on the site; the latter is similar in size, shape and orientation to the building on the earlier tithe map but is slightly further south. Either the tithe map is inaccurate or it is a separate building.
- 4.21 In 1873 a proposal was brought forward for a new branch railway from Pickering to Seamer. This would branch off the existing Pickering to Scarborough line just south of Pickering and run along the southern edge of the moors. The town itself would be unaffected but plans for the proposal, held by North Yorkshire County Records Office (ref. QDP(M)192) include a small-scale map of Pickering at the edge of the affected area (Figure 5). This shows a situation similar to that on the first edition Ordnance Survey map, although the bone mill is not shown. However, the level of accuracy of this small scale plan is unknown.
- 4.22 The second edition Ordnance Survey map of 1890 (Figure 6) shows a number of changes. The railway is unchanged around the proposed development area although there are new engine sheds, turntables and other buildings across the beck to the east. The mill race to the west of the proposed development area is no longer shown, and a walk, named as Vivis Walk, is shown in its place. This suggests the mill race had been filled in by this date.
- 4.23 The northern plot of land within the proposed development area is now named as a coal depot. The buildings in its northwest corner are unaltered. To the south, the mill is still shown, although it is now named as the Railway Mill (Corn) and lies on the edge of a second coal depot. This had railway sidings on its northern and eastern sides, accessed via a turntable off the main railway sidings. Since the mill race has been removed, the mill may by now be powered by a coal-fired steam engine.

The modern period (1900 to present)

- 4.24 The third edition Ordnance Survey map of 1912 (Figure 7) shows slight changes to the building in the northern coal depot, although the southern one (including the Railway Mill) appears unaltered. Outside of the proposed development area, the eastern mill race has been removed and the gas works has been constructed to the south.

- 4.25 One of the railway sidings in the proposed development area has been shortened by the time of the fourth edition of 1928 (Figure 8), but otherwise the site is unaltered. The fields to the west of the proposed development area are beginning to be developed and Muck Lane has changed its name to Southgate.
- 4.26 Later editions (not illustrated) show little change until 1969, when the railway is marked as being closed. However, all the buildings and other infrastructure are still present. By the 1979 edition the railway has been removed and the coal depots combined into a single plot, with the buildings on the southern depot (including the Railway Mill) having been removed. Some new hoppers are marked in the centre of the combined depot.

Previous archaeological works

- 4.27 A desktop assessment has been carried out for an earlier proposal that partly covered the proposed development area (MacNab 1999). There have been a number of cases of archaeological monitoring in the town (MAP 2004; 2005; Onsite 2003; Fern 2007; Ed Dennison 2007). Apart from a post-medieval building foundation found during monitoring at the library (Onsite 2003), none of these have identified significant archaeological remains.

The buildings

- 4.28 One building is currently present on the proposed development area. This is the former office of the coal depot, in the northwest corner of the site. It is a red brick structure of two storeys, with a slate roof and is of mid-19th century date (Figure 9).
- 4.29 A number of houses along Hungate are listed buildings. Numbers 26, 26A, 27, 29, 30 and 31 are all grade II and date from the 18th century. The Pickering United Reform Church, also on Hungate, was built in 1789 and enlarged in 1814. It is also grade II listed. No other buildings in the vicinity of the site are listed.

5. Site reconnaissance

- 5.1 A field visit was conducted, to help ascertain the potential of the proposed development area to contain any archaeological resource. The visit noted site topography, earthworks and areas of modern overburden, modern services, boundaries, buildings and other upstanding remains.
- 5.2 Most of the site is covered in tarmac, although this is in a poor state of repair and shrub vegetation is growing out of cracks in its surface (Figure 10). This shrub vegetation is particularly developed towards the southern end of the site.
- 5.3 There is a slight drop in ground level between the two former coal depots, with the tarmac surface sloping down from north to south at this point.
- 5.4 A number of modern brick walls project outwards from the eastern boundary wall at its northern end. Originally these would have divided the coal storage area into a number of compounds.

- 5.5 A drain was present immediately east of the buildings currently on site. No other services were present.
- 5.6 The tarmac surface, vegetation cover and ferrous litter on the site make it unsuitable for geophysical prospection techniques.

6. The potential archaeological resource

- 6.1 There is no direct evidence for prehistoric or Roman activity within the study area. Any as yet unidentified resource would be likely to have been truncated by later activity.
- 6.2 The proposed development area lies just outside the main area of medieval and post-medieval settlement within Pickering. Its low-lying position, next to a stream prone to flooding, would have inhibited settlement on the site at this time.
- 6.3 A mill is known to have been present on the site from at least the mid-19th century until its demolition in the 1970s. Foundations for this mill may survive along the western boundary of the site.
- 6.4 Apart from the mill, the only developments on the proposed development area during the 19th and 20th centuries has been in relation to coal depots.

7. Impact assessment

- 7.1 The proposed development has the potential to impact on any archaeological resource that is present through the construction of foundations, associated services and landscaping.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1 No archaeological deposits have been identified which require preservation *in situ*. No archaeological works are required in relation to the buildings that are on the site.
- 8.2 It is recommended that trial trenches are excavated in order to establish the nature and extent of any archaeological resource present that may be affected by the proposed development.

9. Sources

Cartographic sources

- 1839 Pickering tithe map (N Yorks Record Office ref T/PR/PI/9/3-6)
- 1840 Scarborough and York Railway plan (N Yorks Record Office ref QDP(M)31)
- 1873 North Eastern Railway plan (N Yorks Record Office ref QDP(M)192)

- 1859 Ordnance Survey 1st Edition, 25" sheet 91/10
1890 Ordnance Survey 2nd Edition, 25" sheet 91/10
1912 Ordnance Survey 3rd Edition, 25" sheet 91/10
1928 Ordnance Survey 3rd Edition, 25" sheet 91/10

Other sources

Branse-Instone, E. 2002 *Pickering Bridge, Bridge Street: MPP alternative action report*, unpublished

Ed Dennison Archaeological Services, 2007 *St Peter and St Paul 's Church, Pickering; archaeological watching brief*, unpublished

English Heritage, n.d. Schedule of Historic Monuments entries for Pickering Castle, Beacon Hill and St Nicholas' Hospital

Fern, C. 2007 *Watching brief on land south of Ruffa Lane, Pickering, North Yorkshire*, unpublished

Home, G. 1905 *The Evolution of an English Town, Pickering*, London

MacNab, N. 1999 *Land of Hungate, Pickering, N Yorks., Report on an archaeological desk-top study*, unpublished

MAP, 2004 *The White Swan Hotel, Market Place, Pickering; archaeological watching brief*, unpublished

MAP, 2005 *No 4, The Market Place, Pickering, North Yorkshire; archaeological watching brief*, unpublished

Onsite Archaeology Ltd, 2005 *Pickering Library, Pickering; archaeological watching brief*, unpublished

Rushton, J. 2003 *The History of Ryedale, North Yorkshire*, Pickering

Tyler, A. 1979 *Historic town studies: Pickering*, unpublished report by North Yorkshire County Council

Appendix: Historic Environment Record

The tables include sites recorded within the vicinity of the study area (within an approximate radius of 0.5km from the site).

Historic Environment Record

PRN	Description	Date
3336	Pickering town	medieval to modern
3359	Skeleton reputedly found in thatch roof	unknown
3360	St Peter and St Paul Church	medieval
3362	Stone cross	unknown
12395	Stone axe	Neolithic
23522	Pickering Bridge	medieval
23664	Coin	medieval
23816	Viver's Mill	post-medieval
24072	Post-medieval building	post-medieval
24363	Pickering parish record	medieval to modern
24943	Viver's Mill	post-medieval
25448	Cup and ring marked stone	Bronze Age

Previous archaeological work

PRN	Description
235	Archaeological assessment, land adjacent to Hungate and Vivis Lane
595	Archaeological assessment, Pickering flood alleviation scheme
1185	Archaeological assessment for seismic survey of Marishes
1497	Archaeological assessment, Pickering Link Road
1761	Archaeological monitoring, Train Lane
2115	Archaeological monitoring, White Swan Hotel
2488	Archaeological monitoring, Pickering Library
2753	Archaeological assessment, no. 4 Market Place
3832	Archaeological monitoring, Ruffa Lane
3933	Archaeological monitoring, St Peter and St Paul's Church



Figure 9
The buildings on site, looking northwest



Figure 10
Interior of depot looking north



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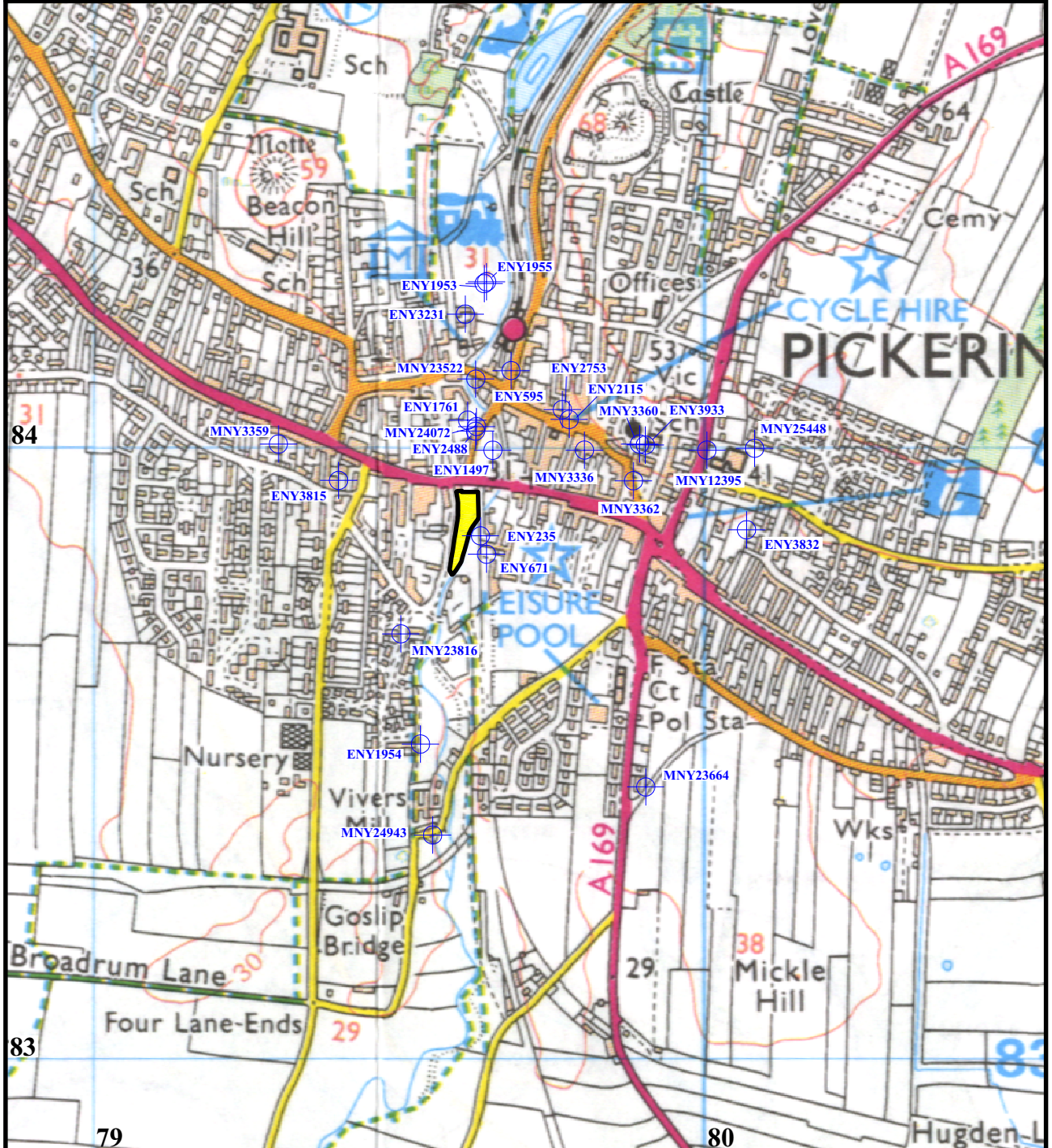
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Figure 1 Location of the proposed development area and
SMR sites

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SMR site



proposed
development area



scale 1:10 000 - for A4 plot





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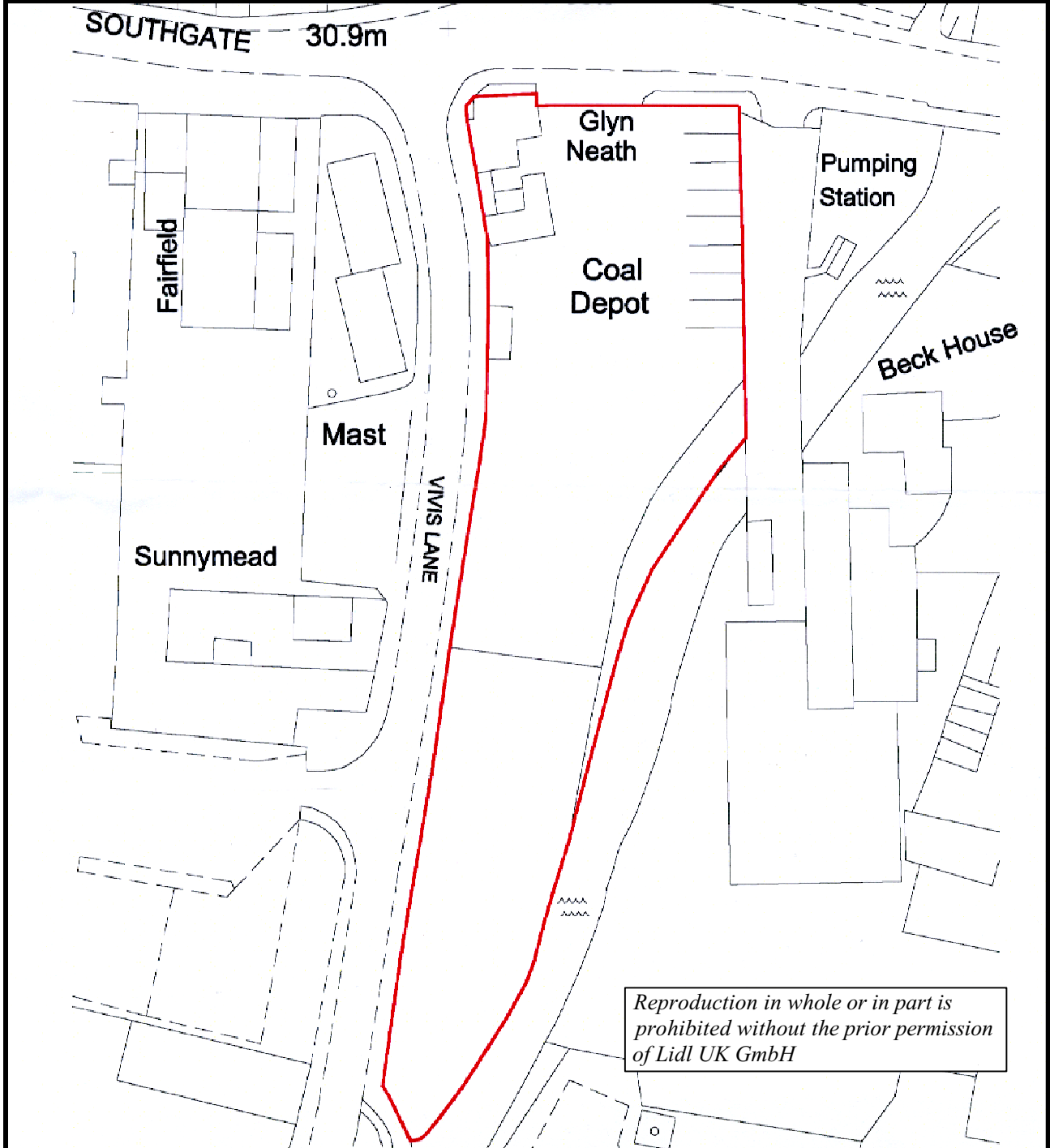
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Figure 2 Proposed development area *do not scale from this drawing*

on behalf of
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scale 1:800 - for A4 plot



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proposed development area





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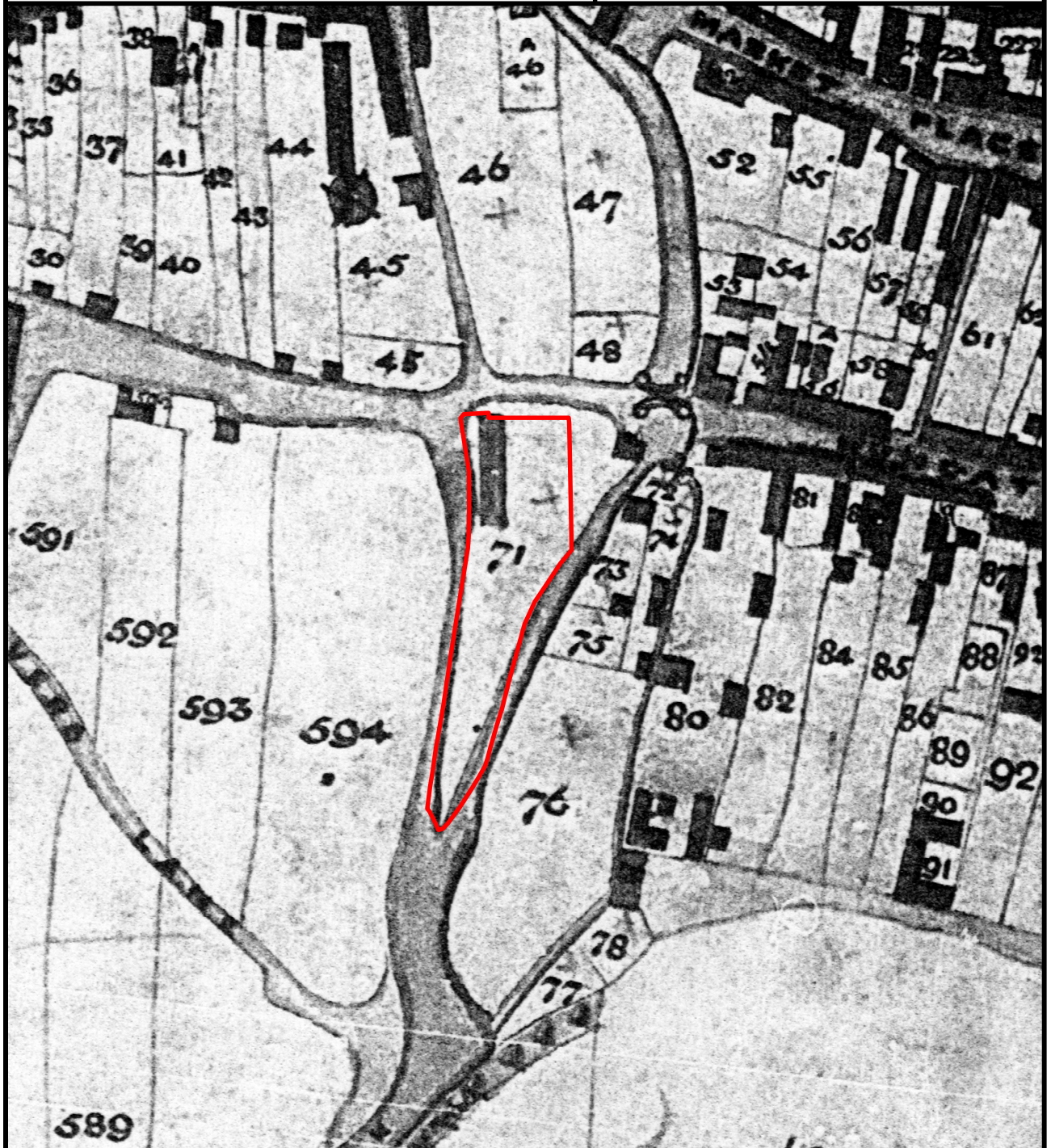
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Figure 3 Extract from the tithe map of 1839

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scale 1:2000 - for A4 plot



proposed development area





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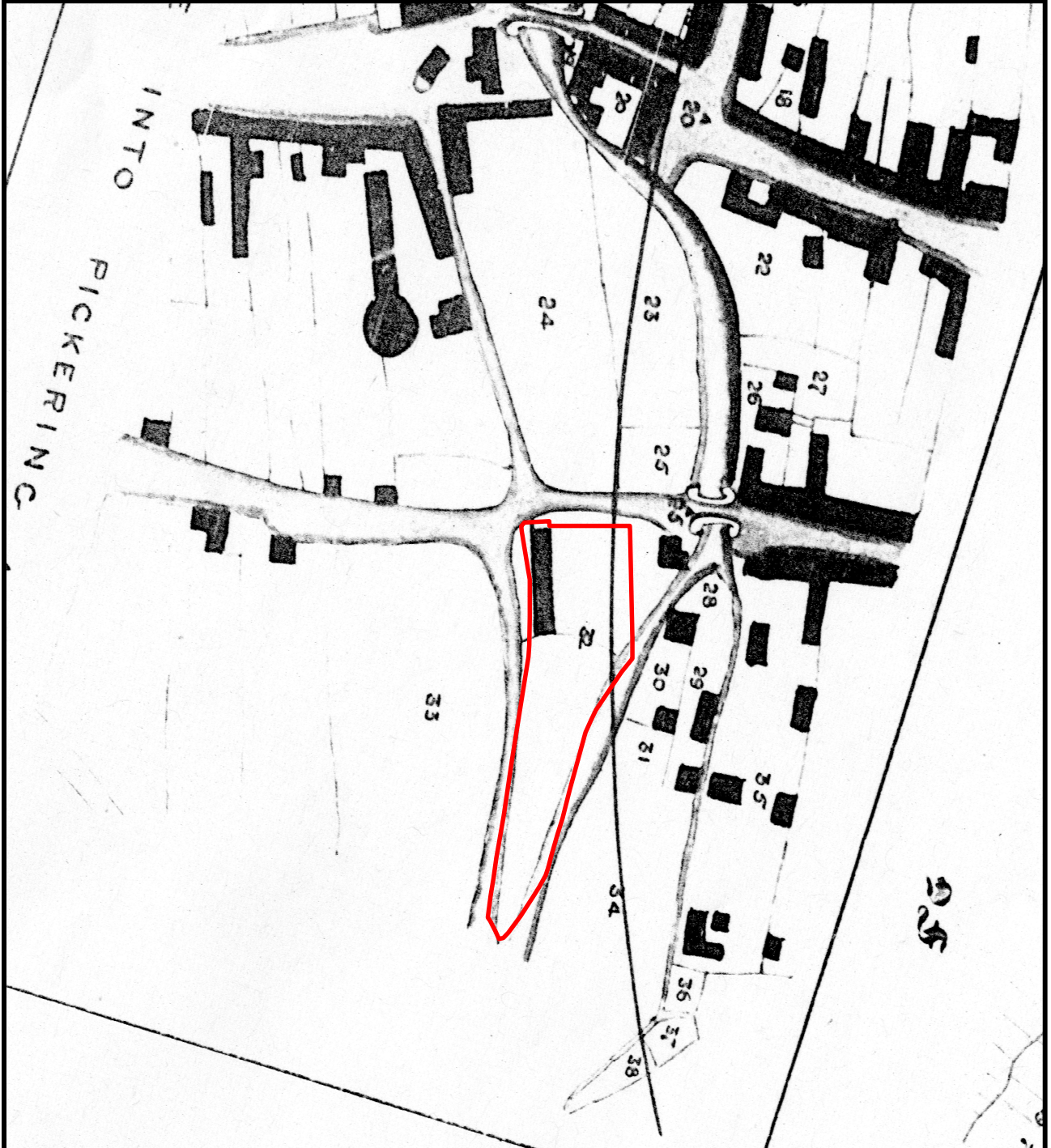
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Figure 4 Extract from a railway plan of 1840

on behalf of
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scale 1:2000 - for A4 plot



proposed development area





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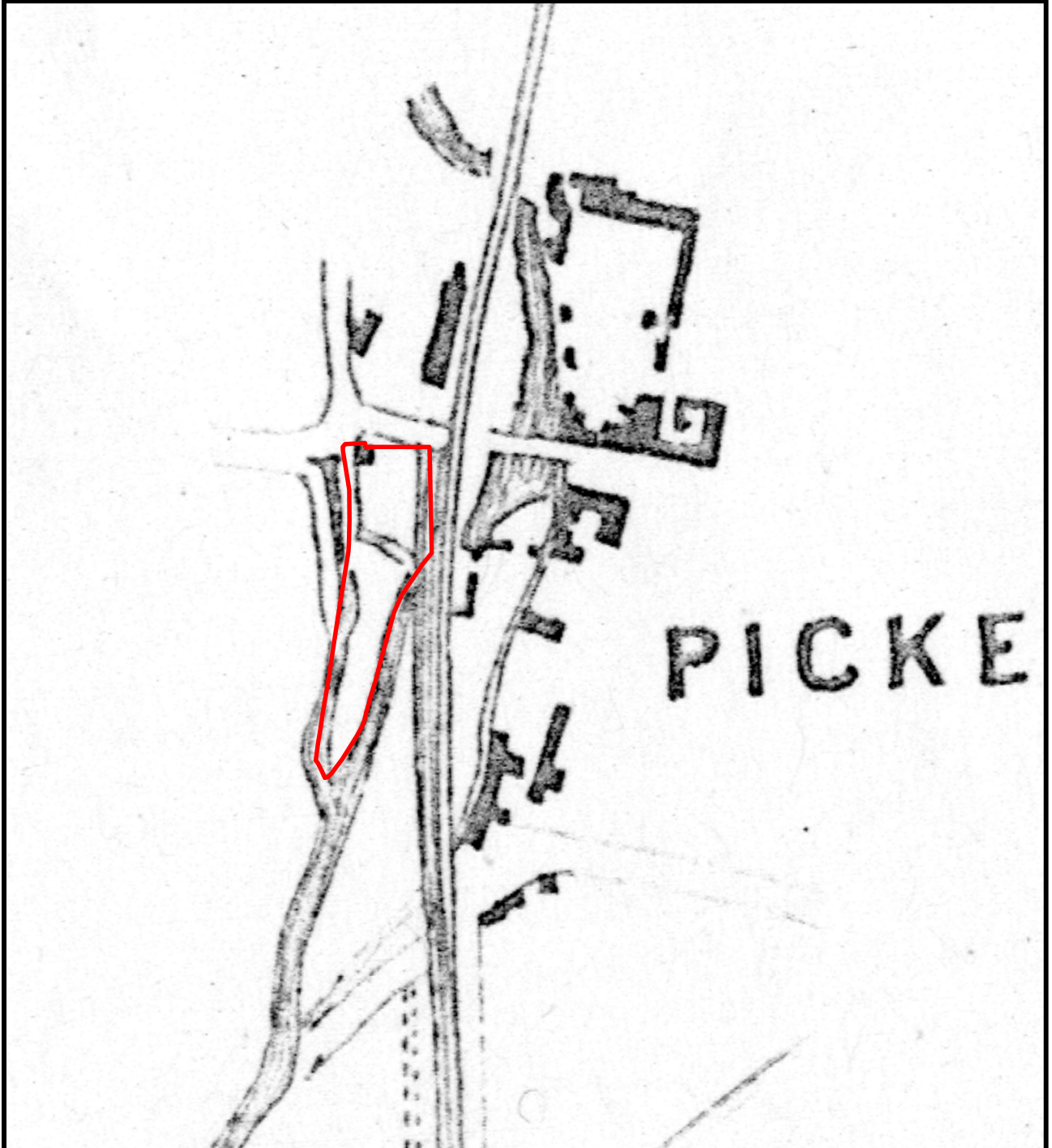
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Figure 5 Extract from a railway plan of 1873

on behalf of
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0 100m

scale 1:2500 - for A4 plot



proposed development area





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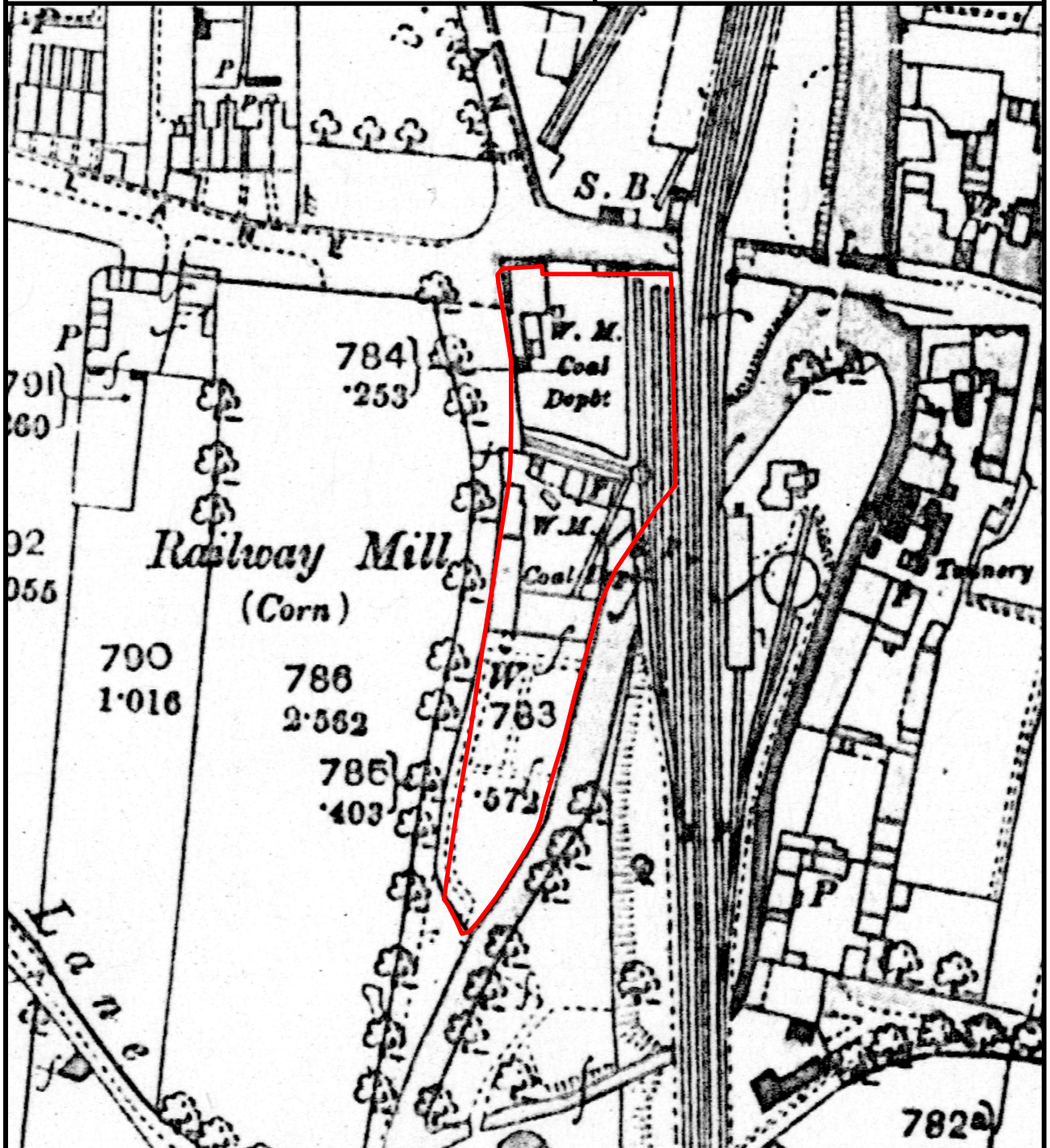
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Figure 6 Extract from the 2nd edition OS map, 1890

on behalf of
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scale 1:1250 - for A4 plot



proposed development area





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archaeological desk-based assessment

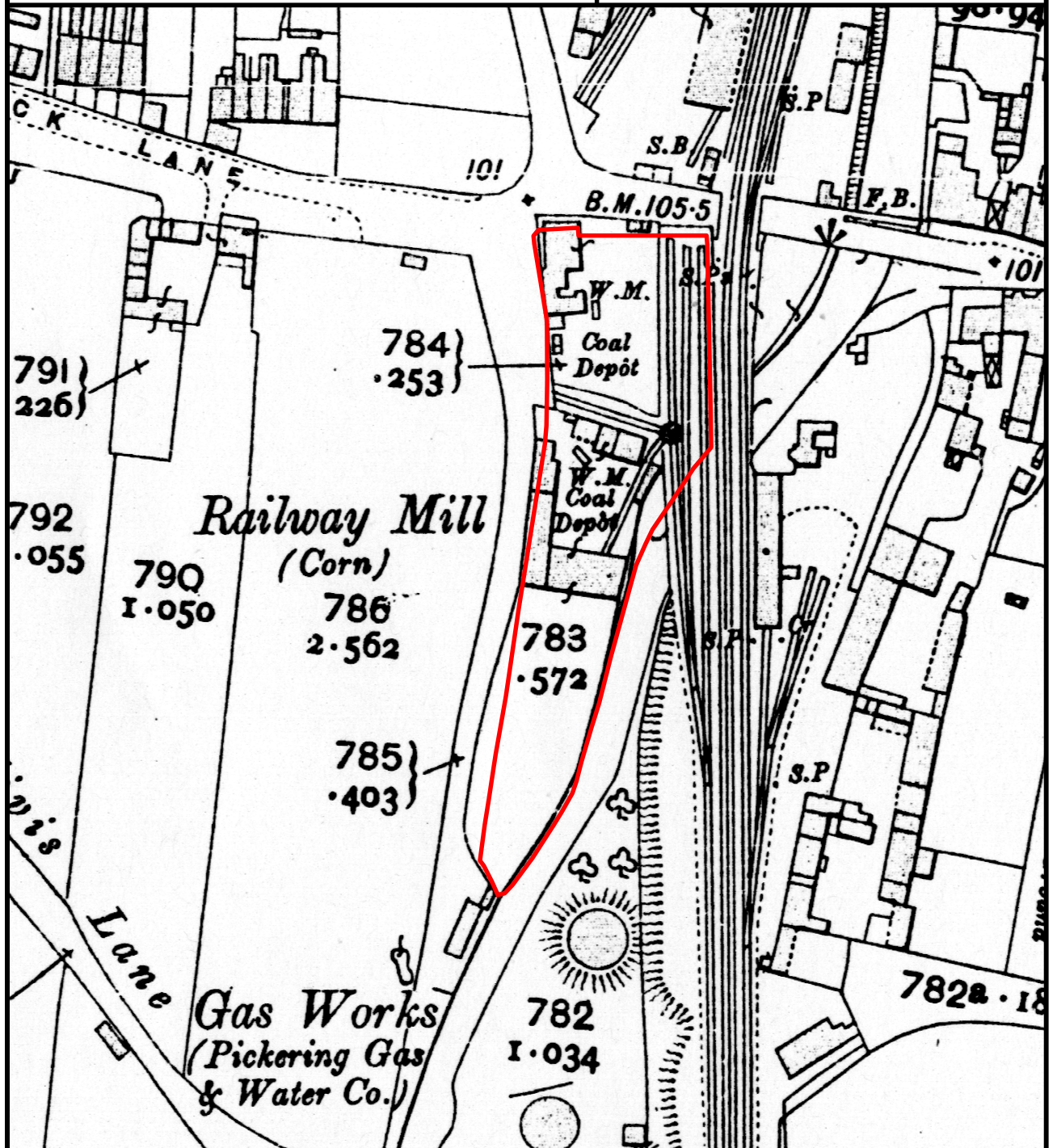
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Figure 7 Extract from the 3rd edition OS map, 1912

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scale 1:1250 - for A4 plot



proposed development area





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archaeological desk-based assessment

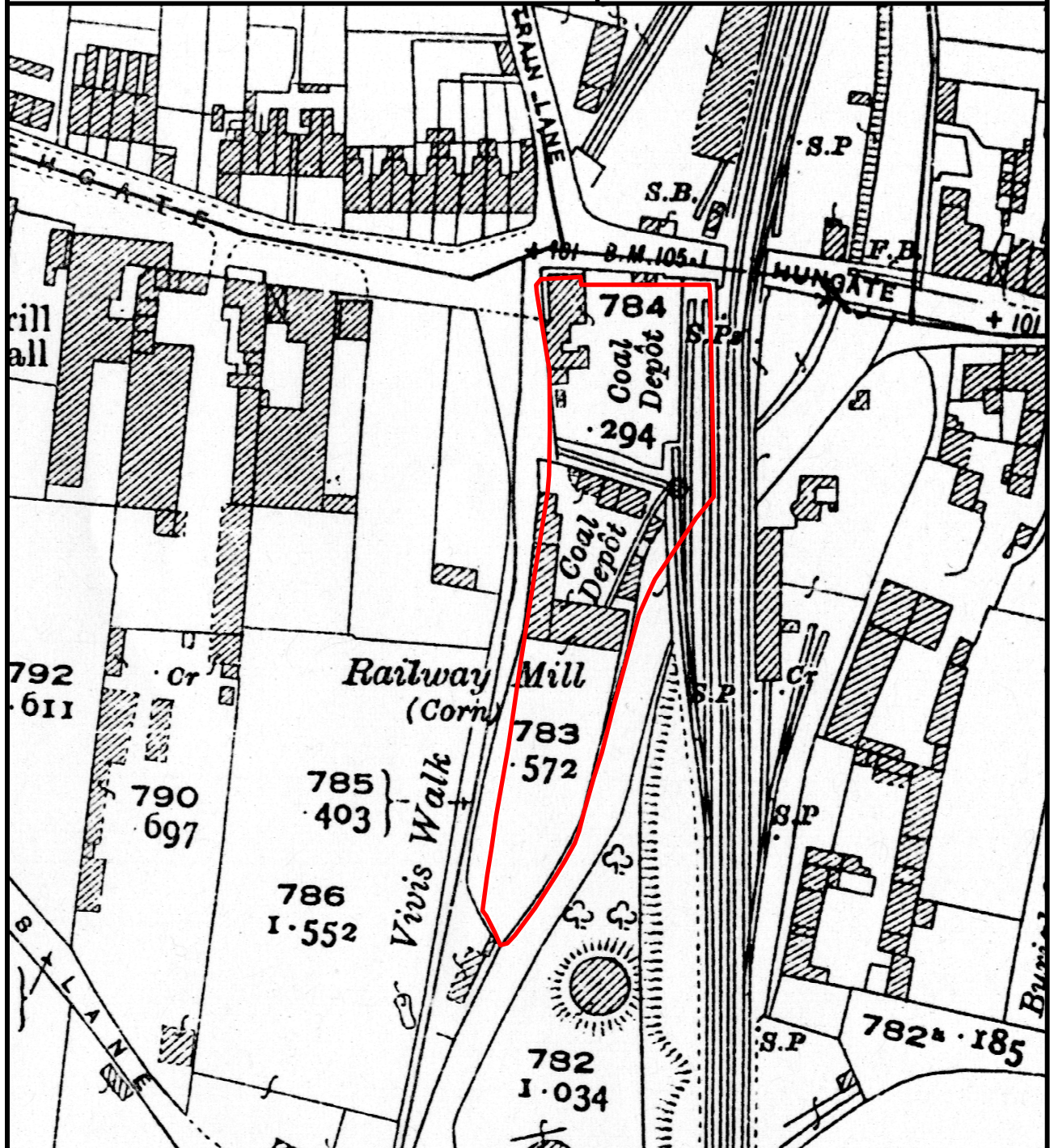
Report 1991


Figure 8 Extract from the 4th edition OS map, 1928

on behalf of
Lidl UK GmbH



scale 1:1250 - for A4 plot



 proposed development area

