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**An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment of
the Proposed Rigid Group Development, Selby, North Yorkshire**

NGR SE 6220 3200

prepared by

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HISTORIC MAPS
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the Proposed Rigid Group Development, Selby, North Yorkshire**

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Summary

A desk-based archaeological assessment has been carried out by John Samuels Archaeological Consultants on behalf of Scott Wilson Kirkpatrick in May 2002 in connection with the proposed extension to the Rigid Group Plant at Selby North Yorkshire

The study area is centred at NGR SE 6220 3200 The site covers about 5ha with the proposed redevelopment area covering about 2ha The site is located on the south bank of the River Ouse on roughly level ground lying at about 5 metres Above Ordnance Datum

The desk based assessment has indicated that there was little activity in the area before the settlement at Selby which was established before 1030AD The town expanded in size and increased in prosperity following the establishment of Selby Abbey in 1069 The historic town of Selby was a port and was located some distance to the west of the proposed development area which was open fields until enclosed after 1797 The proposed development area has seen various industrial uses including a clay pit for brick making in the south-eastern part of it The Lazy Cut a wharf associated with the Selby Canal was excavated through the northern part of the proposed development site From the beginning of the 20th century onwards the site has been used as a mill first as a flax mill and then for paper making from the 1930s onwards

The desk based assessment has indicated that there are no recorded sites or finds of archaeological interest within the proposed development area No evidence for pre-medieval activity has been found in the vicinity of the proposed development area There is a negligible potential for archaeological remains of prehistoric Roman or medieval date within the proposed development area In the northern part of the site the remains of the Lazy Cut almost certainly survive in buried form Other industrial features associated with the canal may survive in buried and truncated form in the northern part of the proposed development area These features are likely to be of negligible to local importance

The proposed development will have a slight effect on the setting of the grade II listed Bridge House and Lock House This should be mitigated by the general improvement of the condition of the proposed development area No Scheduled Ancient Monuments will be affected and the effect on the grade I listed Selby Abbey should be neutral overall There is no reason in principle why planning permission should not be granted for the proposed development

1 0 Introduction

- 1 1 Scott Wilson Kirkpatrick commissioned *John Samuels Archaeological Consultants* to carry out a desk based archaeological assessment of the proposed extension to the Rigid Group Plant at Selby North Yorkshire
- 1 2 The study area is located 750 metres south east of Selby Abbey centred on NGR SE 6220 3200 The site covers about 5ha with the proposed redevelopment area covering about 2ha The site is located on the south bank of the River Ouse on roughly level ground lying at about 5 metres Above Ordnance Datum
- 1 3 The development proposal involves the construction of several new sheds These will be of relatively light construction In addition some existing buildings will be extended
- 1 4 The desk based assessment has indicated that there are no recorded sites or finds of archaeological interest within the proposed development area No evidence for pre medieval activity has been found in the vicinity of the proposed development area
- 1 5 This report has been written by Dan Slatcher BA, MA, MIFA in consultation with John Samuels BA, PhD FSA, MIFA MLI

2 0 Methodology

2 1 This assessment conforms to Government Guidance to Local Planning Authorities *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 Archaeology and Planning* (PPG 16) DoE 1990 *The Hedgerow Regulations 1997* DoE 1997 advice from English Heritage *Management of Archaeological Projects* English Heritage 1991 and is based on the requirements of the professional standards *Code of Conduct* Institute of Field Archaeologists 1997 *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-based Assessment* Institute of Field Archaeologists 1999

2 2 Desk-top research undertaken by *John Samuels Archaeological Consultants* comprised analysis of relevant information contained in and provided by the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) documentary and cartographic searches of relevant material in published and unpublished sources were undertaken using the Record Office and our own library resources Information about Scheduled Ancient Monuments Registered Battlefields and Registered Parks & Gardens was obtained from English Heritage

2 3 A site visit and walkover survey was undertaken to examine the topography and current land use of the site and to identify any previously unrecorded above ground archaeology

2 4 Following the assessment conclusions were drawn and an indication provided of the archaeological potential of the proposed land for development and the importance of any sites directly affected or where their setting may be a consideration Where appropriate recommendations have been made

2 5 At the time of writing there is no nationally agreed method of measuring the relative importance of archaeological monuments PPG16 (paragraph 8) draws a distinction between nationally important remains and those of lesser distinction On this basis it is possible to distinguish between monuments of national regional local or negligible importance

National	Monuments that are scheduled and protected under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979) those suitable for scheduling or considered to be of national importance but not covered by the Secretary of State's criteria for scheduling
Regional	Sites listed in the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) or other sources which are of

a reasonably well defined extent nature and date and significant examples in the regional context

Local Sites listed in the SMR or other sources which are of very low potential or minor importance

Negligible Areas in which investigative techniques have produced negative or minimal evidence of antiquity or where large scale destruction of deposits has taken place (eg by mineral extraction)

2.6 The potential of a site to contain archaeological remains is based upon a consideration of its topography and the distribution and nature of recorded archaeological finds in the locality. It is measured on the basis of High Medium Low and Negligible

2.7 The setting of a monument is generally considered what can be seen or heard to and from the monument. Its impact can be assessed on the basis of Major Medium Minor or Insignificant

3 0 Archaeological and Historical Assessment

3 1 Selby is located on Lacustrine clays silts and sands (Van De Noort & Ellis 1999 10) The geology of the proposed development area is unknown but it is assumed that given the site location close to the River Ouse river alluvium covers at least some of the site

3 2 The proposed development area is located about 750 metres east of the centre of the historic core of Selby The County Sites and Monuments Record was searched Little recorded information on Selby is held by the SMR Entries are given in the table below

Table Entries from the County Sites and Monuments Record

SMR Number	NGR	Site Type	Period	Comments
9514 02	SE 613 324	town	medieval	
9514 07	SE 6188 3293	swing bridge	modern	bridge over Ouse
9514 071	SE 6188 3293	lift bridge	19 th century	old bridge over Ouse
9514 12	SE 6188 3229	railway station	19 th century	former railway station grade II Listed Building
9515 01	SE 6230 3214	Docks	19 th century	now filled in
9515 011	SE 6230 3214	warehouses along canal	18th/19th century	now demolished
9515 02	SE 6221 3219	canal lock	18 th century	grade II listed building
9519	SE 62398 31404	?burials	Saxon	detected through psychic methods
9519 01	SE 62398 31404	jewelled cross	Saxon	apparently also detected through psychic methods
9535	SE 62179 31580	chapel of ease	20 th century	no details

9526	SE 62248 31458	St Richards church	20 th century	no details
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- 3 3 Very few pre-Bronze Age finds or sites are known in the Vale of York (Van De Noort & Ellis 1999 128-129) No prehistoric sites seem to be recorded in the Selby area A Roman period site is known about 2 kilometres north of Selby at NGR SE 616 347 The site consists of a small cluster of cropmarks including two square enclosures On the north side of the River Ouse several Roman period sites are known (Van de Noort & Elhs 1999) However there appears to be little if any evidence for Roman period activity within Selby itself
- 3 4 There is some evidence for Anglo Saxon period activity in Selby Three wooden coffins from this period were found at Church Hill before 1912 (Page 1912 107) There may have been a village here by the 10th century Selby first appears in documents in 1030AD when the name was given as *Saleby* (Smith 1961 31) The place name is difficult to interpret but the most likely explanation given its location close to the river is that it means willow copse (Smith 1961 32)
- 3 5 Selby Abbey was founded in about 1069 under the patronage of William the Conqueror and was a Benedictine order (Page 1913 95) The establishment of the abbey increased the prosperity of the surrounding settlement and it was altered out of all recognition with a broad market place beyond the west gates of the abbey (Hey 1986 46) The abbey itself became a very wealthy institution and the abbott controlled the town (Sheeran 1998 11) Selby does not appear in the Domesday Book of 1086 but it is recorded that the abbott held land elsewhere (Darby & Maxwell 1962 12)
- 3 6 During the medieval period one focus of Selby s economy was the cloth trade This had begun before 1274 (Page 1912 407) The role of Selby as a cloth manufacturing centre continued into the 14th century and beyond (Page 1912 410) By the third quarter of the 14th century Selby was one of the second rank towns of Yorkshire with around 1000 taxpayers recorded (Sheeran 1998 24) During the medieval period if not before Selby became established as a port Lead was being shipped from Boroughbridge via Selby to London by 1179 (Raistrick 1970 60) Warehouses were built along the Abbott s Staith located due north of the abbey and so called from at least the 15th century onwards (Sheeran 1998 116) There are no recorded medieval or

earlier features within the study area and given the location of the site well away from the medieval core of the town it seems relatively unlikely that the site contains medieval or earlier remains. The question of remains relating to ship yards has been considered and it seems that a more likely location for such a feature if it existed would be to the north west of the Abbots Staith. There is no recorded evidence of medieval ship building or repairing at Selby.

- 3.7 Selby Abbey was dissolved in 1539 (Page 1913-99). The abbey church was retained as the parish church (Hey 1986: 127). The abbey site was sold in 1542 to Sir Ralph Sadler and the manor passed through various hands (Brabner: 339).
- 3.8 Selby remained an important port until the establishment of the Aire and Calder Navigation, the canal from the River Aire to Airmyn, 8 miles lower down the Ouse from Selby by an Act of Parliament of 24th August 1698, led to the decline of the town. The new canal carried nearly all traffic on the River Aire and bypassed Selby to the River Ouse. The lower section proved difficult to maintain, however, and in 1774 an Act of Parliament (14 Geo III 1774) was passed enabling the construction of the Selby Canal from Haddelsy on the River Aire to Selby (Raistrick 1970: 136-137). It may have been the construction of the canal which provided part of the impetus for the enclosure of the area following an Act of Parliament passed in 1797.
- 3.9 A small area of land was purchased by the canal owners in Selby at the junction of the new canal and the River Ouse (Duckham 1967: 73). Part of this 8 acre estate was located within and just outside the proposed development area. By 1790 a small cut was made running parallel to the River Ouse. This was known as 'The Lazy Cut'. Along here were constructed warehouses, a counting house, a rigging house, tarring house and a sail makers shop. There was also a dry dock and other small port facilities. Presumably this feature allowed for the transfer of cargo from canal barges onto larger vessels.
- 3.10 A map of 1790 showing the proposed development area indicates that most of these features were not in place by that time. A warehouse, the Yarmouth Warehouse, is shown within the proposed development area, with a further warehouse just outside it. The Lazy Cut lies within the proposed development area. Immediately south of the Lazy Cut is a ropewalk, apparently belonging to Mr Foster.

- 3 11 The next available map is the Ordnance Survey (OS) edition of 1851. This indicates that the area immediately south of the Lazy cut has been divided into small parcels presumably to accommodate the buildings described in paragraph 3 10 above. In the southern part of the proposed development area a brick works has been established. To the west of this along what became Denison Road housing has been constructed. An aerial photograph of c. 1954 shows these buildings. They appear to be of 19th century origin. The rope walk has been moved to the east outside the proposed development area.
- 3 12 The next available map is the OS edition of 1893. The brick works in the south eastern part of the proposed development area has expanded considerably. To the west of the proposed development area is an area marked as ship yard. There are no buildings in this area apart from the coal wharf at the south of this land parcel. The location of the dam across the western end of the Lazy Cut may indicate that it was possible to drag boats onto dry land here. To judge from the annotations on the map it may be that this parcel had been landscaped by this time. The eastern part of this land parcel lies within the proposed development area. At the northern end of the proposed development area a braid mill had been constructed. This is likely to have been steam powered.
- 3 13 The OS edition of 1908 indicates that the brick works had been abandoned. The braid mill had been expanded in size slightly and the Lazy Cut had been filled at its eastern end and allowed to silt up to the east of the braid mill. A small section immediately east of the braid mill may have been infilled by this time. Again there is no evidence of any facilities associated with the ship yard at the west of the proposed development area. To the east of the braid mill a ship yard had been constructed.
- 3 14 An indenture of 1919 indicates that the main part of the proposed development area was called the Selby Flax Station and was in the ownership of the Earl of Londesborough whose ancestor had purchased the manor of Selby in 1854 (Morrell 1867: 275). This parcel included the property. The land immediately west of this parcel was ascribed to the Aire and Calder Navigation.
- 3 15 A site plan of 1928 shows that the plant had been expanded considerably since 1919. A de-seeding facility indicates that the plant was still a flax mill. The area to the west of the flax mill

is marked as meadow

- 3 16 By the OS edition of 1938 the mill was in use as a paper mill. The original braid mill had either been demolished and rebuilt or extensively reworked. The Lazy Cut to its east had been entirely infilled to the east of the mill and largely blocked to the west of the null. A single warehouse associated with the Lazy cut survived but was disused to the east of the mill. To the north of the Lazy Cut a jetty had been constructed to access the River Ouse from the paper mill. The western part of the proposed development area is marked as shipyard. There are still no facilities associated with this function shown. The paper mill itself had expanded to cover much of the proposed development area. The housing along Demson Road survived but the buildings marked as Abbey View may have been incorporated into the paper mill complex. The shipyard to the east of the paper mill site had expanded.
- 3 17 An architect's plan dated August 1939 shows the proposals for building warehousing adjacent to the River Ouse at the northern part of the proposed development area. These had apparently been built by September 1940 as indicated by a block plan of that date however as built they seem slightly larger than as designed.
- 3 18 Two aerial photographs show the proposed development area as it was during the 1950s. The first taken in c. 1954 shows the pond as being rather larger than its present size. The second taken in c. 1959 shows Rostron's Paper Mills as the site then was with warehousing along the river frontage. The extent of infilling of the Lazy cut can be seen. Lock House and Bridge House grade II listed buildings of the early 19th century can be seen.
- 3 19 By the OS edition of 1964 the original braid mill had been subsumed into the paper mill complex although the original building may have survived at this time. The Lazy Cut had been almost entirely infilled and had reached its current size.
- 3 20 The pond at the south-east of the proposed development area once the clay pit of the brickworks had been reduced in size. And the mill expanded over the infilled part. There had been substantial budding along the Demson Road frontage. To the west new buildings had crossed the boundary into the containing the ship yard.

3 21 By the OS edition of 1982 further construction had taken place at the southern part of the proposed development area particularly with a large building in the south west fronting Demson Road A similar disposition can be seen on the 1989 OS edition

3 22 There have been numerous changes since 1989 with clearance of buildings at the north of the proposed development area and their replacement with modern sheds on a reduced footprint

3 23 Assessment of Likely Impact of Development

3 23 1 There are several listed buildings nearby The closest to the proposed development area are Lock House and Bridge House grade II listed buildings located on the north side of the Lazy Cut adjacent to the existing paper mill Clearly re-development of the north-western part of the site will have an effect on the setting of the listed buildings The effect will take the form of bringing industrial buildings closer to the listed buildings However it should be borne in mind that the listed buildings were in themselves constructed to serve an industrial site the canal that there have been shed type industrial buildings close to the listed buildings in the past and that there are industrial buildings close by at the present time It is believed that for these reasons the effect on the setting of the grade II listed buildings will be relatively minor

3 23 2 Selby Abbey church is a grade I listed building It is not visible from the proposed development area The church tower was not accessed for this survey although it is highly likely that the proposed development area is visible from the tower Given that the whole of the Rigid Group site is industrial in nature and that the scale and height of the proposed development is comparable with the currently existing site it is believed that the effect on the setting of this building will be neutral

3 23 3 The nearest Scheduled Ancient Monument is the Abbot's Stairthes (County number 387) located at NGR SE 616 326 The proposed development will have no effect on the setting of the SAM

3 24 Impact of the Development on the Archaeological Resource

3 14 1 Archaeological remains on this site if any survive are likely to be industrial in nature and post

medieval in date. The most likely remains to survive are those of the Lazy Cut, the construction of which would in itself have had a severe impact on any previously existing waterside features. The proposed development will probably have very little impact on this feature if the intended piled foundation design is used. There have been several phases of development over the site, particularly the northern half. There is no evidence of any features of archaeological interest in the southern half of the proposed development area. There may have been a shipyard associated with the canal adjacent to the Selby Canal. There are no recorded structural features associated with this site. The extension to the east of the current Rigid Paper site and into the former shipyard intrudes into an area of land which formerly contained a travelling crane. There is no evidence of any archaeological features in this area, other than the remains of the Lazy Cut.

4 0 Conclusions

- 4 1 The desk based assessment has indicated that there was little activity in the area before the settlement at Selby which was established before 1030AD. The town expanded in size and increased in prosperity following the establishment of Selby Abbey in 1069. The historic town of Selby was a port and was located some distance to the west of the proposed development area which was open fields until enclosed after 1797.
- 4 2 Following the construction of the canal and enclosure of the land the proposed development area has seen various industrial uses including a clay pit for brick making in the south-eastern part of it. The Lazy Cut a wharf associated with the Selby Canal was excavated through the northern part of the proposed development site. From the beginning of the 20th century onwards the site has been used as a mill first as a flax mill and then for paper making from the 1930s onwards.
- 4 3 There is a negligible potential for archaeological remains of prehistoric Roman or medieval date within the proposed development area. In the northern part of the site the remains of the Lazy Cut almost certainly survive in buried form. Other industrial features associated with the canal may survive in buried and truncated form in the northern part of the proposed development area. These features are likely to be of negligible to local importance.
- 4 4 The desk-based assessment has indicated that there is no reason in principle why planning permission should not be granted for the proposed development.

5 0 Figures

Figure 1 Site Location

Figure 2 Relevant SMR Entries

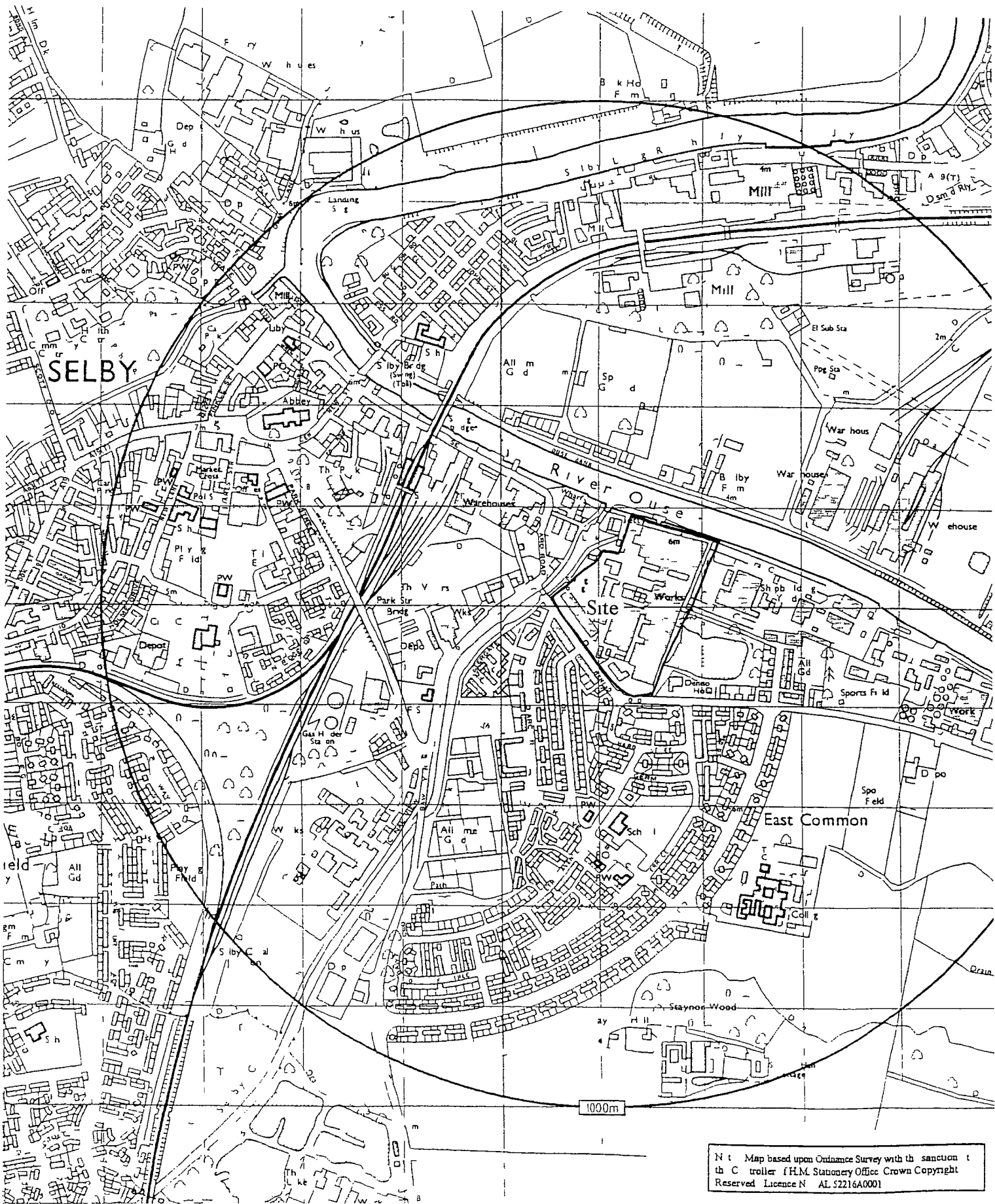


Figure 1 Site Location

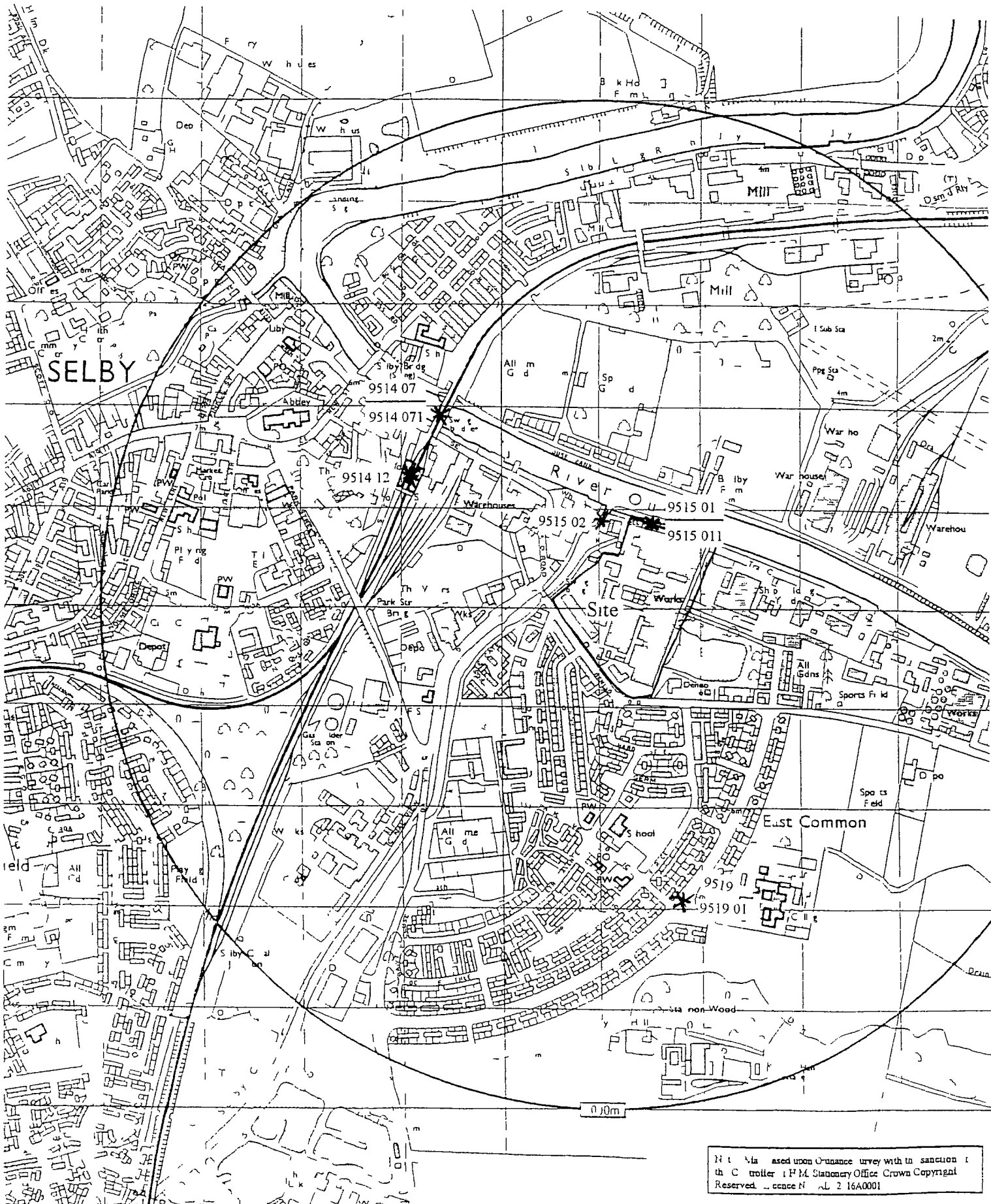


Figure 2 Relevant SMR Entries

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