

*BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY*  
*FIELD ARCHAEOLOGY UNIT*

**The Grange, Petersfield, Hampshire**

**An Archaeological Desk Top  
Assessment**

*B.U.F.A.U.*



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**An Archaeological Desk Top Assessment**

by

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# **The Grange, Petersfield, Hampshire: an archaeological desk top assessment**

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## **Summary**

An archaeological desk-top assessment was undertaken of land to the south of Hylton Road, Petersfield, Hampshire (centred on NGR MR 747 230) in October 1999 following proposals for the construction of a new supermarket. The assessment suggests that there may have been a medieval monastic grange on the site and that this formed part of an estate noted in the 17th century. A mill may have been present. Activities associated with the early post-medieval leather industry, particularly marked by pitting, are possible. The site lay within the grounds of Petersfield House between 1730 and 1790, when ornamental ponds and two grandiose stable blocks were constructed as landscape features. Buildings were demolished in 1730 to make way for the grounds of the house. Further work is recommended.

## **1 Introduction**

1.1 The following report has been commissioned by Healey & Baker on behalf of Tesco Stores Limited and represents an initial desk top assessment of the archaeological implications of a proposal for the construction of a supermarket on land located to the south of Hylton Road and to the west of The Causeway in Petersfield, Hampshire (centred on NGR MR 747 230). The land is currently occupied by a Grade II listed building known as The Grange. It is understood that there are currently proposals to convert this building into a doctors surgery. The assessment was undertaken by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit in October 1999.

1.2 The scope of the assessment report follows standards and guidelines for the preparation of archaeological desk-based assessments prepared by the Institute of Field Archaeologists and has comprised examination of the following:

the Hampshire County Council Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) data relating to the site and its environs,

listed building data relating to The Grange,

cartographic and aerial photographic data held by the County Council and by the Hampshire Record Office,

secondary historical and archaeological sources - the Victoria County History, publications of the Petersfield Area Historical Society, held at Petersfield Library, and relevant reports in the Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society,

English Heritage's Extensive Urban Survey for Petersfield (Edwards 1999)

1.3 The site itself has been the subject of a walkover examination. It is hoped that bore hole data from geological survey work undertaken for Healey & Baker will become available in due course. Data from this will be reported on as an appendix to the present report.

1.4 Thanks are due to archaeology staff at Hampshire County Council and to Graham Steaggles at East Hampshire District Council.

## **2 Historical, documentary, and archaeological background**

2.1 A barrow cemetery from the Bronze Age (*c* 2000 BC to 600 BC) lies on Petersfield Heath to the east of the town. The SMR records finds of mesolithic and later prehistoric flint within the town.

2.2 Finds of Roman pottery from the north side of Sheep Street suggested a possible Roman settlement (Fox and Hughes 1993).

2.3 Petersfield is thought to have been a 12th-century creation with burgage plots deliberately laid out to north and south of High Street terminating in an open market space, the Square, with, on its south side, the town's church. Later 12th-century documentary evidence referring to grants of a merchant guild to the burgesses of Petersfield suggest a planned new town (Beresford 1967). There are, however, indications that the origins of the town may have been more complex (Edwards 1999). The church itself is 1120 in date and rather larger than might be expected for a chapel of ease, while to its west there are indications that the area marked by The Spain and Sheep Street may have been earlier than the High Street layout (*ibid.*). The plan of this area suggests organic rather than planned growth whilst its inhabitants were allotted common lands in the Borough in contrast to the High Street occupants (Fox and Hughes 1993, 160). In addition Folly Lane on the north side of High Street could represent the remains of an earlier route running towards the Square (Edwards 1999).

2.4 There is, however, no suggestion that the town's origins lay very much earlier. Its absence from the Domesday record would seem to indicate a date of origin in the 12th century, and no pottery earlier than that date has been found in the, admittedly small-scale, excavations undertaken to date.

2.5 The later medieval prosperity of the town was based on wool, cloth, and leather manufactories (VCH 1908; Yates 1979, 12; Edwards 1999). These continued into the post-medieval period with the addition of income from hostelries and inns servicing the road between London and Portsmouth (Fox and Hughes 1993). There were changes in the plan and layout of the town and its roads. Petersfield House, built in the 18th century, was set within landscape features that required the demolition of town houses and the resiting of streets.

2.6 Excavations and watching briefs in the town have recorded medieval ditches, a timber structure, pits, hearths and wells, and post-medieval foundations, kilns, and a brickworks. The nearest archaeological work to the study area was the finding of limestone foundations, thought to represent those of Petersfield House at NGR MR 7470 2310 (SMR: SU 72, no 61).

2.7 Of the town's industries, leather making and fulling required a water supply. The town's tanneries were near the Forebridge in the 16th century (Yates 1979, 16), and river pollution by tanners is attested in this period (*ibid.*; VCH 1908). There would have been limepits in which skins were steeped (Yates 1979, 16).

### **3 The site (the study area)**

3.1 The present standing building, The Grange, dates to the 18th century and was one of a pair of stables built for Petersfield House. The western block, apparently identical to the surviving eastern block has been demolished and now lies beneath a complex of Abattoir buildings. The Grange itself now lies on more or less derelict land (Fig 6).

3.2 The building is thought to belong to the second quarter of the 18th century (Grade II listing). The north and west sides have stone dressings for doors and windows with a pedimented doorway on the north side and a blocked carriage entrance on the west side. In sharp contrast the south and east sides have brick dressings indicating that the building served both as a stables block and as an essential element of the landscaping associated with Petersfield House. The north and west faces of The Grange would have been those viewed from the house.

3.3 The eastern end of the north range differs in its construction to the rest of the building. The south-east corner is marked by large ashlar blocks in contrast to the narrower courses used uniformly elsewhere.

3.4 The Abattoir buildings occupy the western part of the study area and comprise 20th-century structures surrounded by concrete aprons (Fig 6).

3.5 The stream running across the study area marks the southern limit of the town. This is noted in 16th-century documents as being used by tanners (Section 2.7).

3.6 The northern part of the study area is occupied in part by the Mint House, a commercial building currently in use, and by levelled areas marking former buildings. The Mint House was preceded on its site by the town's gas works, in existence in 1932, itself preceded by a building shown on 18th-century maps (Fig 3).

3.7 This area, north of the stream, would have lain within the grounds of Petersfield House for which areas of the town were cleared in 1730 (Fig 2).

3.8 The east side of the study area is bounded by Dragon Street, first noted in 1736 and the Causeway, noted 1723 (PAHS 1976). This line may have been marked in the medieval period by Ermyte Way, recorded in 1440 and by the Forebridge, first documented in 1439 (*ibid.*). Traffic towards Portsmouth in the early post-medieval period is thought to have passed to the east via the Sussex Road (Edwards 1999).

3.9 The road junction of Dragon Street and Hylton Road is marked by The Mint, giving its name to the present Mint House. In 1733 a dwelling house called the Mint was recorded and in 1741 a house formerly called the Mint, but these are not located. The place name seems likely to derive from mint gardens and beds (PAHS 1976).

## 4 The cartographic evidence

4.1 *Map of Grange Farm in 1676 (Fig. 1)*. The map is oriented to the east and somewhat compresses the study area. It shows the Portsmouth road, the Causeway, to the top. The fields can be linked to those shown on the OS 6" map of 1871 (Section 4.4). The long boundary between Grange Mead and Little Mead to the north and the fields to the south is marked later by a stream marked as a canal (Section 4.3). A long barn-like building is shown within the study area and a central cart door on its north side may be depicted. The name Barn Field for that south of the study area might be a further indication of the function of the long building. The map is shown as the frontispiece to Thomas (1980).

4.2 *Map of land in Petersfield in 1773 (Fig. 2)*. The map is oriented to the west. The map shows the outline of demolished buildings in the grounds of Petersfield House. The modern Hylton road is likely to replicate Widow's Row to the west terminating at the Mint to the east, in which case Petersfield House would lie outside the study area. The line of the blocked Green Street can be picked out. To the south, two ornamental water ponds are shown, as is the stream running from the west and terminating in a rectangular pond unconnected with the southernmost ornamental pond. The ponds have a narrow causeway across them running from north to south, to the east of which they narrow to form the stream under the Forebridge. Curiously, Petersfield House is not aligned on the vista to the south formed by the ponds and the stables, and this is likely to reflect the layout of an earlier building (Section 5.6). This may have fronted a street running south from the Square, perhaps the Grange Lane recorded in 1511. The map certainly indicates that this road continued south. The New Way and the circus with its statue of William III are shown to the north of Petersfield House. An L-shaped building is shown at the Mint lying within the study area.

4.3 *Map drawn to illustrate PAHS 1976 (Fig. 3)*. Taken from maps of 1773 and 1793. This repeats data from 4.2 but shows the twin stable blocks of the Grange. It also illustrates the canal running from the west. As was shown in 4.2, the canal terminates in a rectangular pond with the western stable block close by. There is also a second rectangular pond to its north. These may mark some kind of dam to their east, a possible indication of earlier features.

4.4 *Ordnance Survey 6" map, 1871 (Fig. 4)*. This shows the L-shaped building at the Mint still in place with the Gas Works now to the west within the study area. Both of the Grange stable blocks are present. The stream across the study area runs in a straight line and there is a parallel boundary to its south. Both these presumably mark canalised streams replacing the former ornamental ponds. A stream is shown running parallel with the Causeway and joining the east-west stream at the Forebridge.

4.5 *Ordnance Survey 25" map 1932 (Fig. 5)*. The L-shaped building at The Mint has now disappeared. The canal of 1773 is now shown as a stream running across the study area. The westernmost stable block is not convincingly shown and it may have been demolished by now although still marked by sheds and yards. The stream parallel with the Causeway is still shown.

4.6 *The town map today (Fig. 6)*. Only one of the three streams still remains. The Abattoir (to the west of the study area) and the Mint House are now shown.

## 5 Suggested development sequence for the study area

5.1 The earliest reference to the Grange occurs in 1484 (PAHS 1976). Grange Lane was recorded leading to it from the town in 1511 (*ibid.*); this route has been lost in later alterations but may be suggested by the map of 1773 (Section 4.2). The name may be an indication of a monastic grange, a farm complex connected to a monastery and often run to monastic rule. The Premonstratensian house at Durford is the nearest monastic site, but granges were often separated by a considerable distance from the mother house. Hughes (1976, 112) suggested a connection between the foundation of Durford and of the town.

5.2 A feature, clear on later maps, marked as a canal in 1773 and visible in field boundaries in 1676 (Sections 4.1-4.3), may well represent a mill leat running from a junction with the stream to the west. This may suggest a medieval mill site perhaps associated with the suggested grange. Mills in the area were used for fulling in the 16th century (Yates 1979, 15).

5.3 The map of 1676 (Section 4.1) shows a building in the study area on the site of the standing building of today. It is a possibility that the east end of the north wing of the eastern stable block incorporates some fabric from this structure (Section 3.3). If this building is interpreted from the evidence as a barn it may represent a survivor of the structures associated with the medieval grange.

5.4 An estate held by Magdalen College Oxford was known as the Petersfield Grange in the 17th century. It comprised 73 acres and was valued at £55 per annum in 1677. It was held during the later part of the century by Arthur Bold. The property was chiefly in Weston but may have included the study area. The original of the map of 1676 (Fig. 1) is held by the college suggesting that the fields shown formed part of the estate. There was a substantial house associated with the estate since the tenant was bound to entertain the college president and travelling companions annually (Thomas 1980, 37).

5.5 In the early 18th century the area on the north side of the stream, within the study area and to its north was known as The Lawn, the name perhaps an indication of an open space (PAHS 1976). However it is known that Green Street, first recorded in 1421 and more or less replicated by the present Hylton Road (the northern limit of the study area), and Grange Lane ran in this area. There is, therefore, circumstantial evidence of a property in this area from the medieval period through to the early 18th century.

5.6 Petersfield House was built by John Jolliffe to replace his father-in-law's house in 1730 (Surry 1983). The southern part of the house may lie just within the study area. Large-scale landscaping was undertaken and a number of houses were demolished to accommodate the grounds. Green Street (Section 5.5) was blocked off. New Way was created to the north of the house with a circus, perhaps marking the formal entrance to

the house. The statue of William III, now in the square and in part paid for by John's successor William Jolliffe, stood initially in the circus (Sections 4.2 and 4.3).

5.7 The two stables buildings, one of which survives in the study area and belongs to the same date as Petersfield House, clearly formed part of a major landscaping exercise, much of it within the study area, to the south of the building. Two ornamental water ponds were laid out between the stables and the house. The canal (see sections 4.3 and 5.2) shown running from the west but not connecting with the ponds might be a contemporary feature although it is hard to see a context for it unless to supply a pond close to the western stable. This landscaping associated with a mansion has many parallels in a process starting in the 16th century for which there are local parallels (Roberts and Grover 1997).

5.8 Petersfield House was demolished in 1790 and its contents and iron entrance gates were removed to William Jolliffe's new house at Merstham in Surrey (Surry 1983, 28). In 1777 Jolliffe had disagreed with the town over his proposal to limit the New Way to his private use and this and other difficulties determined him to leave the town which was 'unpleasantly near my House' (*ibid.*).

5.9 Some building took place within the study area on the west side of the Mint. One building is shown on the maps in 1773 but was demolished by 1932. The name the Mint could be an indication of mint beds within the study area.

5.10 Hylton road, the northern limit of the study area, was constructed c 1850 (PAHS 1976).

5.11 The western stable block was apparently demolished between 1871 and 1932. The 'canal' is shown in 1932 as a stream running eastward across the study area to the Forebridge.

5.12 Construction of the Abattoir had taken place by the earliest air photographs studied from 1971 and after the map of 1932. The eastern stable block was used as flats in recent times and some alterations to the fabric, in particular the addition of some chimneys, have been noted (Grade II listing).

## **6 Further work**

6.1 A programme of trial trenching is recommended. Remote sensing by geophysical survey is unlikely to be productive due to previous ground disturbance and the presence of rubbish, leaving intrusive archaeology the only option.

6.2 It is recognised that a considerable degree of modern disturbance and below ground destruction has taken place, particularly beneath the Abattoir, but also on the south side of Hylton Road. In the latter case this area has previously been the site of a gas works. It is noticeable that the ground falls quite sharply to the south of Hylton Road on the west side of the study area and it is likely that some truncation has occurred here through terracing and levelling in the past.



6.3 The objectives of below ground examination would be as follows:

6.3.1 To test the suggestion that the study area may have been the site of a monastic grange (Section 5.1). This might only be achieved by the dating of pottery finds.

6.3.2 To attempt to locate the building shown in 1676 (Section 4.1; Fig 1).

6.3.3 To make an assessment of the structural relationships of the section of apparently earlier walling shown on the east side of the north wing of the Grange (Sections 3.3 and 5.3).

6.3.4 To test for any structures associated with the Grange. The stables may have been accompanied by farm buildings hidden from the view of the house (Roberts and Grover 1997).

6.3.5 To locate the 18th-century ornamental water ponds (Sections 4.2, 4.3, and 5.7). A pronounced dip in the footpath north of the Grange may well mark the line of the southern pond, its position elsewhere masked by overall levelled surfaces.

6.3.6 To locate the canal shown entering the study area from the west (Section 4.3). A north-south running trench on the west side of the Abattoir building is possible.

6.3.7 To examine the ground north of the stream. This is less promising than the area around the Grange (Section 6.2). Nevertheless, pre 18th-century buildings are likely on the south side of Hylton Road (Section 4.2; Fig 2), as well as landscape features associated with Petersfield House and, possibly part of Petersfield House itself.

6.3.8 To prospect for any evidence such as pitting for the tanning industry of the early post-medieval period (Section 2.7).

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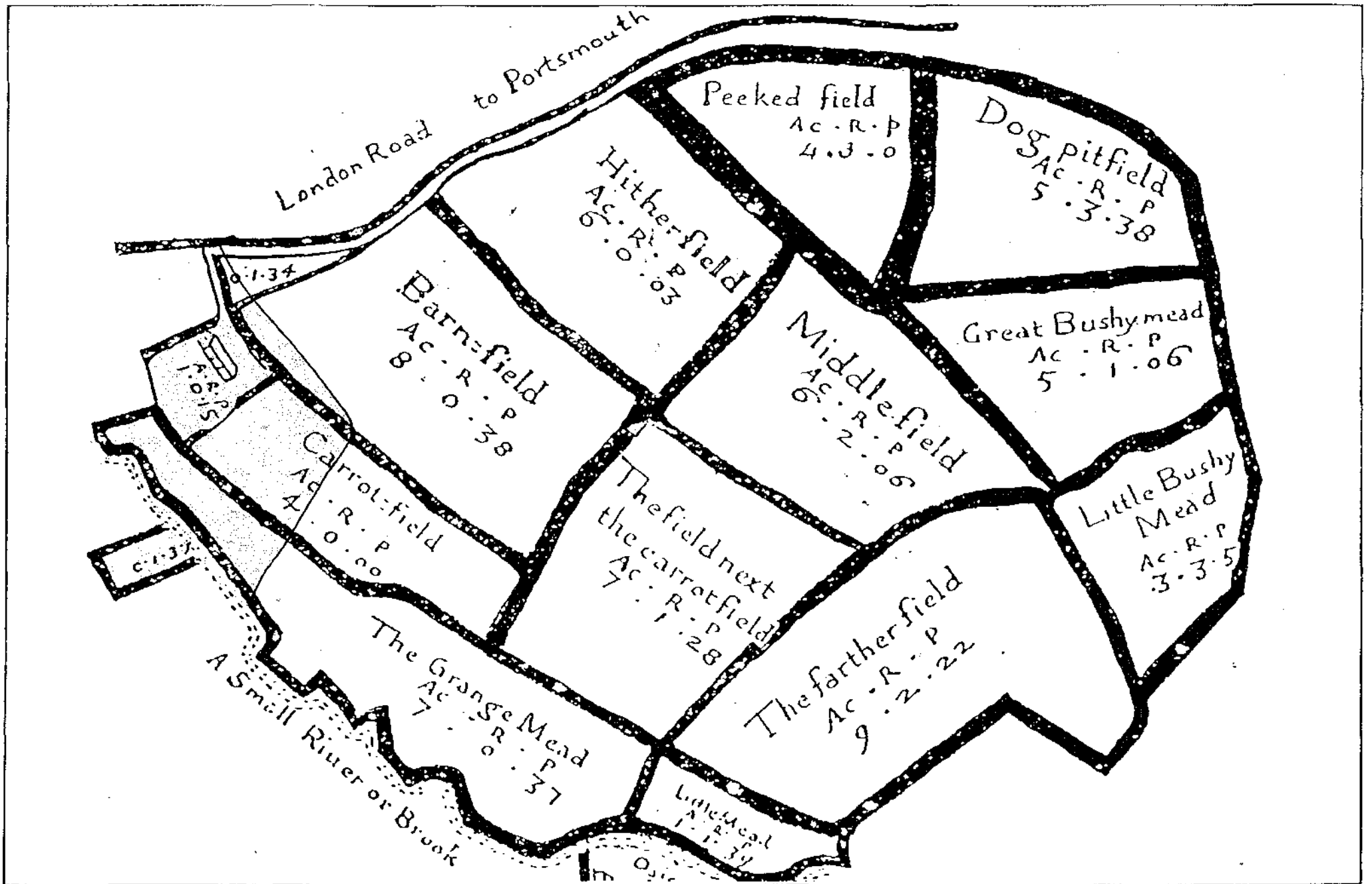


Fig. 1

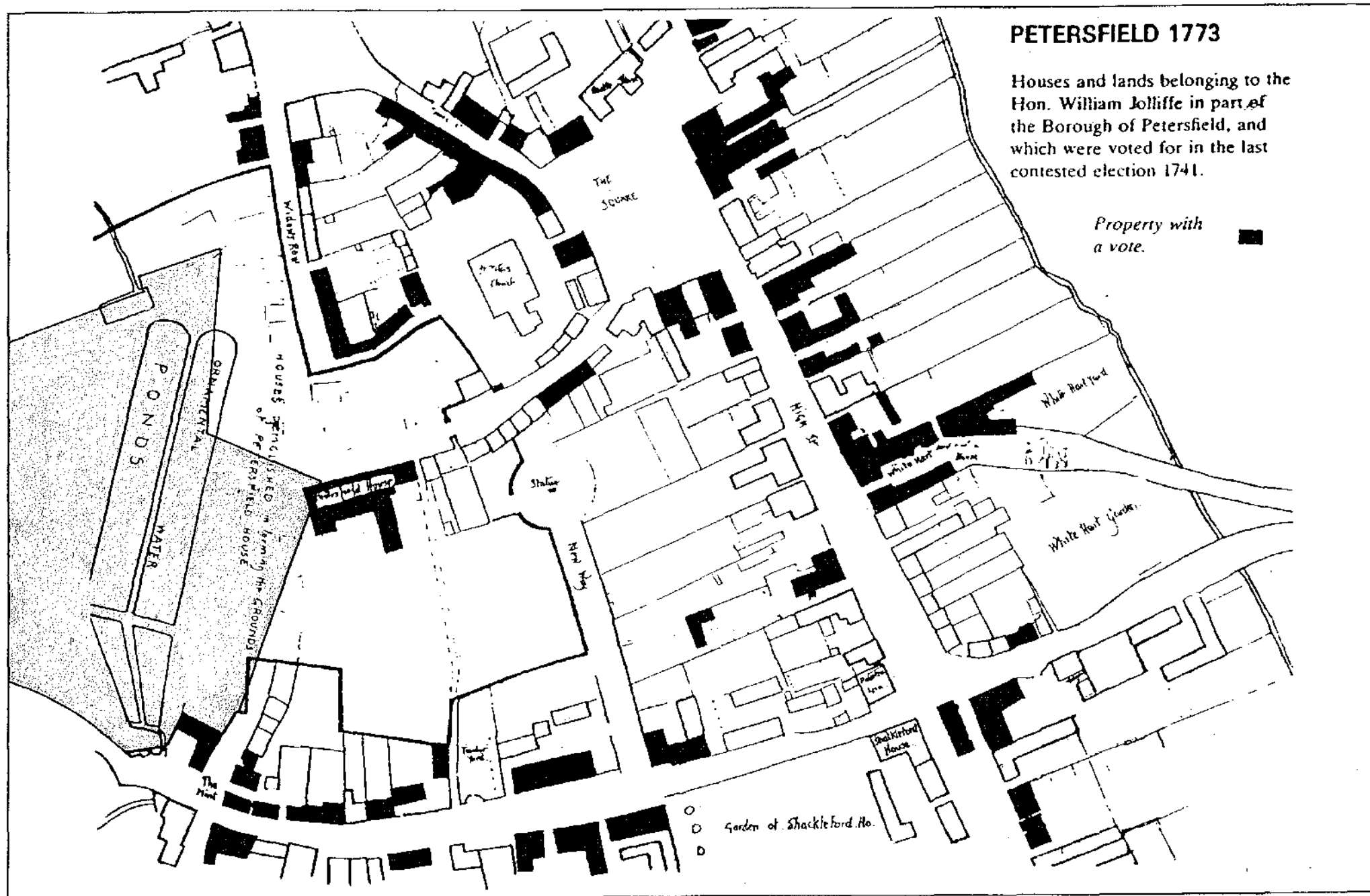


Fig.2

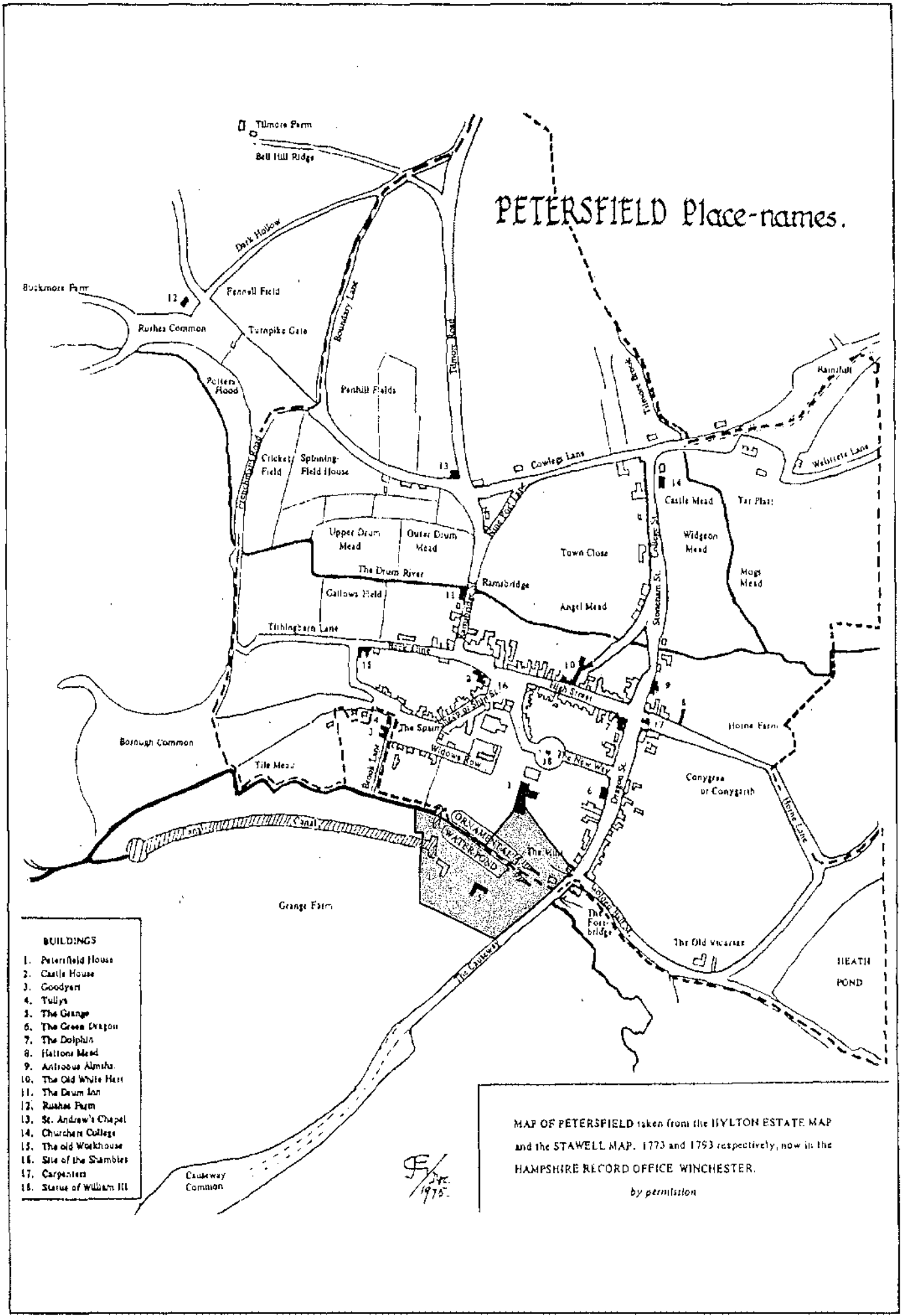


Fig.3

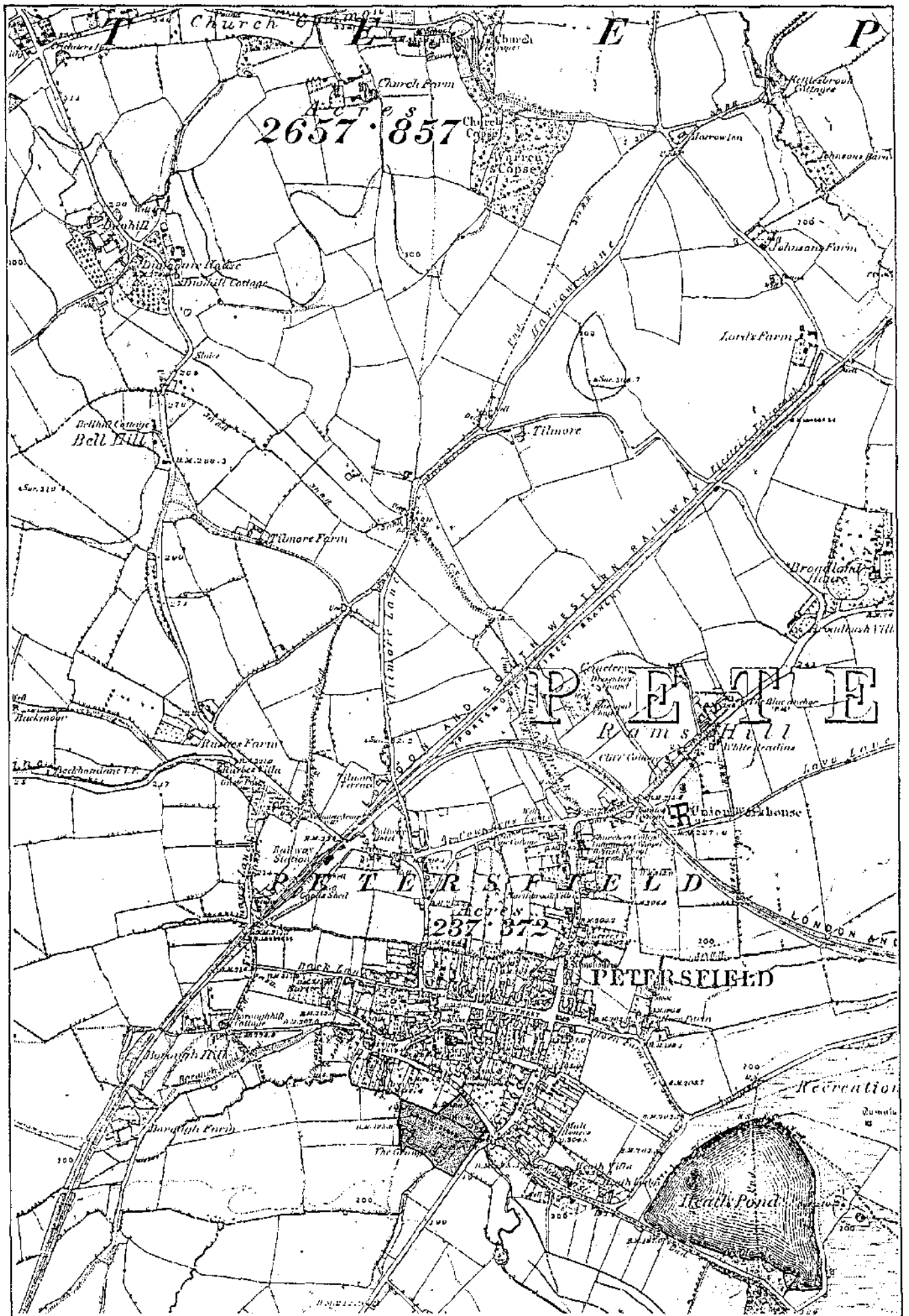


Fig 4

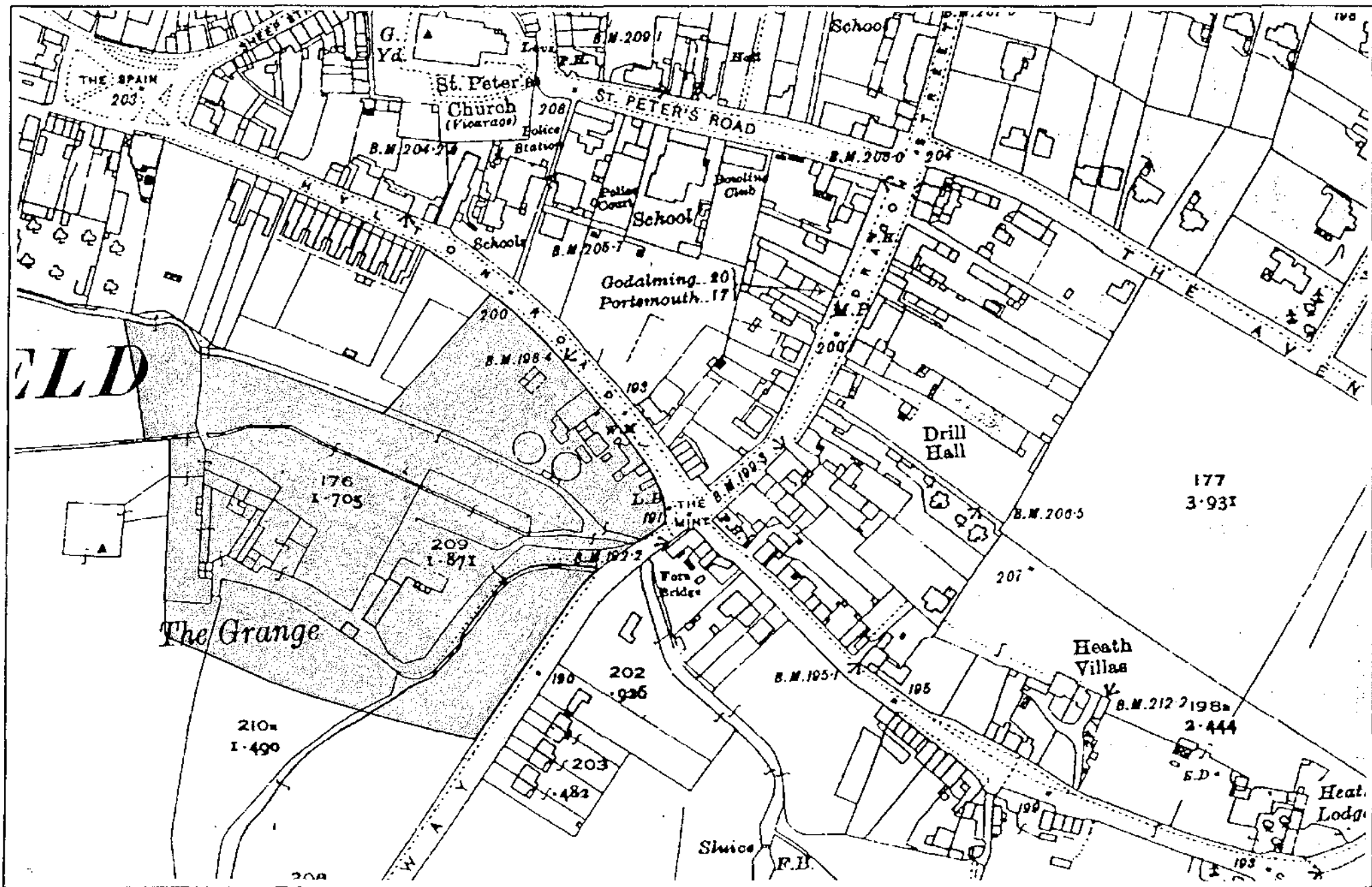


Fig 5

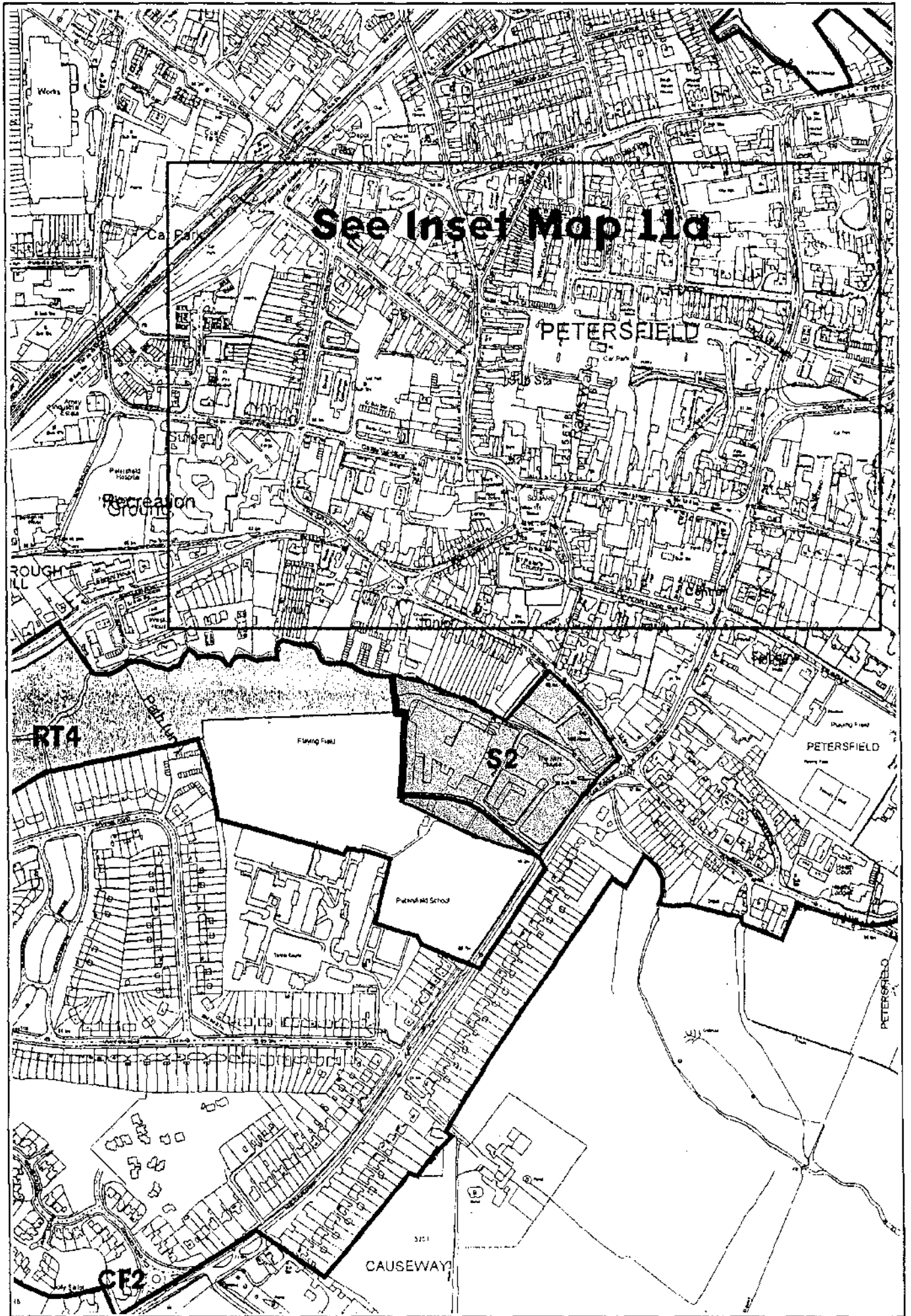


Fig. 6