



Mill Court, Ledbury Road
HEREFORD
HEREFORDSHIRE
NGR SO 51884 39896
Archaeological Watching Brief



March 2006
SMR 42837

Hereford Archaeology Series 697

This report is produced by

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS LTD

Manager : A Boucher BSc
Assistant Manager: N. Oakey BA MA MIFA

**UNIT 1, PREMIER BUSINESS PARK,
WESTFIELDS TRADING ESTATE,
FARADAY ROAD, HEREFORD
HR4 9NZ**

Tel. (01432) 364901
Fax. (01432) 364900

for: Lockett Property Holdings Ltd
Lockett House
13, Church Street
Kidderminster
Worcestershire
DY10 2AH

Archaeological Investigations Ltd is a trading company wholly owned by the Hereford City and County Archaeological Trust Ltd, a registered charity founded in 1997 to further the work of the City of Hereford Archaeological Committee (founded in 1974) throughout Herefordshire. The Company maintains a core staff with a broad range of expertise, whilst also making extensive use of specialist contract personnel. Besides working on the buried archaeology of Hereford and the country in general, the Company specialises in geophysical survey, historical illustration and the archaeological recording and analysis of standing buildings. Work is usually on a commission basis on behalf of organisations such as English Heritage, the National Trust, and the Landmark Trust. The Company also accepts commissions from local authorities and private developers and provides specialist consultancy advice in relation to archaeology in the planning process and general environmental issues.

Cover picture: Roadway into Site looking west.

Hereford City & County Archaeological Trust : Company Number 3283805
Registered Charity Number 1060840
Archaeological Investigations Ltd : Company Number 3356931 VAT 692 1750 23

**MILL COURT, LEDBURY ROAD,
HEREFORD**

Herefordshire
NGR SO 51884 39896

Archaeological watching brief

Text

B. Ward and N. Oakey

Illustrations

S. Porter

Site Work

B. Ward

Contents

1. Summary
 2. Introduction
 3. Historical Background
 4. Aims and Objectives
 5. Methodology
 6. Results
 7. Discussion
 8. Conclusion
 9. Bibliography
 10. Site Archive
Figures
-

March 2006

©Archaeological Investigations Ltd

Mill Court, Ledbury Road,
Hereford
Herefordshire
(NGR SO 51884 39896)

Archaeological Watching Brief

1. Summary

Archaeological Investigations Ltd was commissioned by Faithful & Gould, acting on behalf of Lockett Property Holdings Ltd., to fulfil a condition on planning permission for construction of domestic units, garages, access road and related service (DCCE2005/0977/F). The work took the form of archaeological monitoring of ground works at Mill Court, off Ledbury Road, Hereford.

Map regression showed that ponds or channels associated with the adjacent Scutt Mill crossed part of the Site in the middle of the 19th-century, but were backfilled by 1886, by which time the mill had converted to steam power. No evidence of these backfilled channels or any other archaeological features or finds were recovered during the watching brief. It is presumed that the backfilled channels lay to the east of the area stripped to natural.

Archaeological Investigations Ltd would like to thank staff from C.J.Pearce Ltd and Westdale Construction for their co-operation during archaeological monitoring.

The fieldwork was undertaken between 16th November and 14th December 2005 and the site archive will be deposited with Hereford Museum.

2. Introduction

The site (grid reference NGR SO 51884 39896) lies to the north of Ledbury Road (A438), Hereford and its western boundary is formed by the railway embankment and the eastern partially by Eign Brook (Fig 1). The area covers roughly 3600 m² (Chris Bolton, C J Pearce & Company Ltd *pers comm*).

Planning permission for construction of domestic units, garages, access road and related services (DCCE2005/0977/F) was granted by the County of Herefordshire District Council, subject to a number of conditions. Amongst them was the following,

“No development shall take place until the applicant or his agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the local planning authority. This programme shall be in accordance with a brief prepared by the County Archaeology Service.

Reason: To ensure the archaeological interest of the site is recorded.”

In response to Faithful & Gould, acting on behalf of Lockett Property Holdings Ltd., the Archaeological Advisor to the County of Herefordshire District Council, Julian Cotton, produced a summary brief, which encompassed a watching brief during groundworks. Archaeological Investigations Ltd (AIL) was contracted to fulfil the archaeological condition and drafted an agreed “written scheme of investigation” (AIL 2005).

The fieldwork was carried out intermittently between 16th November and 14th December 2005.

The underlying geology comprises red-brown blocky mudstone and marls associated with the Lower Old Red Sandstone and the site lies at approximately 52m OD.

3. Historical Background

No previous archaeological work has taken place on the Site or in the immediate vicinity and little early map evidence is available for the Site. For example, Taylor’s map of 1757 does not extend this far east, but bears a small note inserted at the western end of Ledbury Road indicating “to South Mill”. There appear to have been up to nine mills in Hereford c.1690 and a Scut Mill is shown in the vicinity of the site on Price’s map of 1802. By 1858 Curley’s more detailed map shows Scut Mill immediately to the east of the site (Fig. 2). It shows that the Eign Brook has been diverted and widened to form a pond. Water was either diverted to the north of the mill or channelled to power the mill wheels. The mill ground corn as did Eign (downstream of Scut Mill), Widemarsh and Castle Mills.

On 1st of June 1855 the railway between Hereford, Ross and Gloucester opened and Curley’s map shows it running on an embankment along the western boundary of the site.

In 1867 the occupant of Scutt Mill was Henry Giddings (Littleburys 1867, 254), but in a directory of 1876-7 there is no listing of a Mr Giddings or Scutt Mill under the sections for millers or corn dealers (Littleburys 1876-7, 319).

By the time of the First Edition Ordnance Survey of 1886 the system of leats and ponds around Scut Mill had disappeared, presumably all backfilled (Fig. 3). Eign Brook continued to flow to the north-east following a canalised version of the sinuous most easterly watercourse shown on Curley's map. Now labelled "Scutt Mill (Corn)", the mill apparently continued to function, presumably converted to steam power. The site itself appears to be occupied by formal gardens. Since that time the boundaries on the site have remained constant and the only buildings on it have been relatively ephemeral and related to gardening, as on figures 1 and 3. At the commencement of the project it was overgrown with scrub.

By 1890 "Scutt Mill house, Ledbury Road" was occupied by Daniel Saunders, "miller & corn merchant" (Jakeman & Carver 1890, 361) and he is still present in 1900 as "miller (Scutt steam mills)" (Kellys 1900, 84). Although listed in a section of millers, Mr Saunders does not appear as a corn merchant and by 1909 he is listed as "Saunders & Co millers (Scutt steam mills)" (Kellys 1909, 90). By 1913 the mill had ceased to operate and is registered under "Jay Wm. & Son, bldrs (Scutt mill)" (Kellys 1913, 92). Scutt mill is not mentioned in directories for 1917, 1929, 1935, 1937, 1941 (all Kellys) and 1950-1 (Hereford and District).

Despite this, the mill continues to appear on Ordnance Survey maps, labelled as "Scutt Mill". For example, in 1937 (not reproduced) the buildings are shown as in 1886, but with the addition of a quadrangle of smaller buildings to the north. By 1965 No 31a Ledbury Road (as shown on Fig. 4) had been built and the quadrangle arrangement replaced by ranges of garages, "Scutt Mills" remains unchanged. Much of the site was shown covered by deciduous trees at this time. In the early 1980s the mill building was described as a three-storey, timber framed building with brick nogging attached to the rear of a later building with Victorian frontage. The mill is described as "in a ruinous state" (Cross 1982, 48) and may have been derelict for many years. In the late 20th century it was demolished and a range of brick buildings, 1-11 Mill Court, built onto the northern end of the retained Victorian block, number 33 (Fig. 1).

4. Aims and Objectives

The main aim of the project was to enable archaeological features to be adequately recorded in the areas affected by the proposal.

The main objectives were to:

- a) Identify the date and nature of features being investigated
- b) Assess survival, quality, condition and relative significance of any archaeological features, deposits and structures within the study area
- c) Produce a record of archaeological features

- d) Publish the results in an appropriate format and secure the deposition of a full and ordered archive in a recognised depository.

5. Methodology

Two large mechanical diggers with 1.5m wide toothless buckets were used to reduce the level on the site (Fig. 3). Intermittent visits were made during excavation at times when new groundworks were known to be taking place.

Full context recording was not deemed appropriate as no archaeological features or finds were present during the excavation of the site. Instead site notes were taken during the work. The site was photographed using both black and white and colour film. A register was kept of the photographs.

6. Results

After clearing the pre-existing scrub on the site topsoil was stripped from the footprint of the access road and building plots to reveal natural red clay (Fig. 3). Towards the north west of the site the natural was more compact, more gravelly, and lighter in colour. The footprint was then reduced by a further 1 m and the natural clay was seen to be undisturbed.

A trench for utilities and drainage running alongside the road was dug a further 1.50m below the reduced level, again revealing only undisturbed natural deposits.

No significant archaeological deposits were observed on the site. Two fragments of animal bones as well as a few post medieval and modern sherds of pottery were observed during the excavation but not retained. The spoil heaps were also checked for any artefacts. Near the southern boundary of the site, outside the area of stripping, a few fragments of modern apothecary glass bottles were observed but not retained.

7. Discussion

No archaeological deposits were observed during the works. This suggests that the widened channel or leat to Scut Mill and the small building shown by Curley were outside the area of the groundworks, possibly within the north-eastern strip of the Site. No evidence was recovered for the usage of the area prior to the construction of the railway and this operation had left the Site somewhat isolated.

The area of compacted, gravelly and lighter natural in the north-western part of the site is adjacent to the culvert/s which take the Eign Brook below the railway embankment and may be associated with their construction or subsequent maintenance. Alternatively, it may represent a former channel of the Brook.

8. Conclusion

The aim of this project was to record, date and assess any archaeological features discovered during the excavation of the access road and foundations. It can be concluded that no archaeologically significant finds or features were present in the excavated area of the site.

9. Bibliography

AIL (Archaeological Investigations Ltd), 2005 *Mill Court, Ledbury Road, Hereford. Archaeological Proposal*

Cross, A.G., 1982 *Old Industrial Sites in Wyedean: a Gazetteer* privately printed

Hereford and District Directory 1950-51

Jackman & Carver's Directory and Gazetteer of Herefordshire 1890 Hereford

Kellys Directory of Herefordshire and Shropshire 1900

Kellys Directory of Herefordshire and Shropshire 1909

Kellys Directory of Herefordshire 1913

Kellys Directory of Herefordshire 1917

Kellys Directory of Herefordshire 1929

Kellys Directory of Herefordshire 1935

Kellys Directory of Herefordshire 1937

Kellys Directory of Herefordshire 1941

Littlebury's Directory and Gazetteer of Herefordshire 1867

Littlebury's Directory and Gazetteer of Herefordshire 1876-7

www.smr.herefordshire.gov.uk *Historic Herefordshire On line*

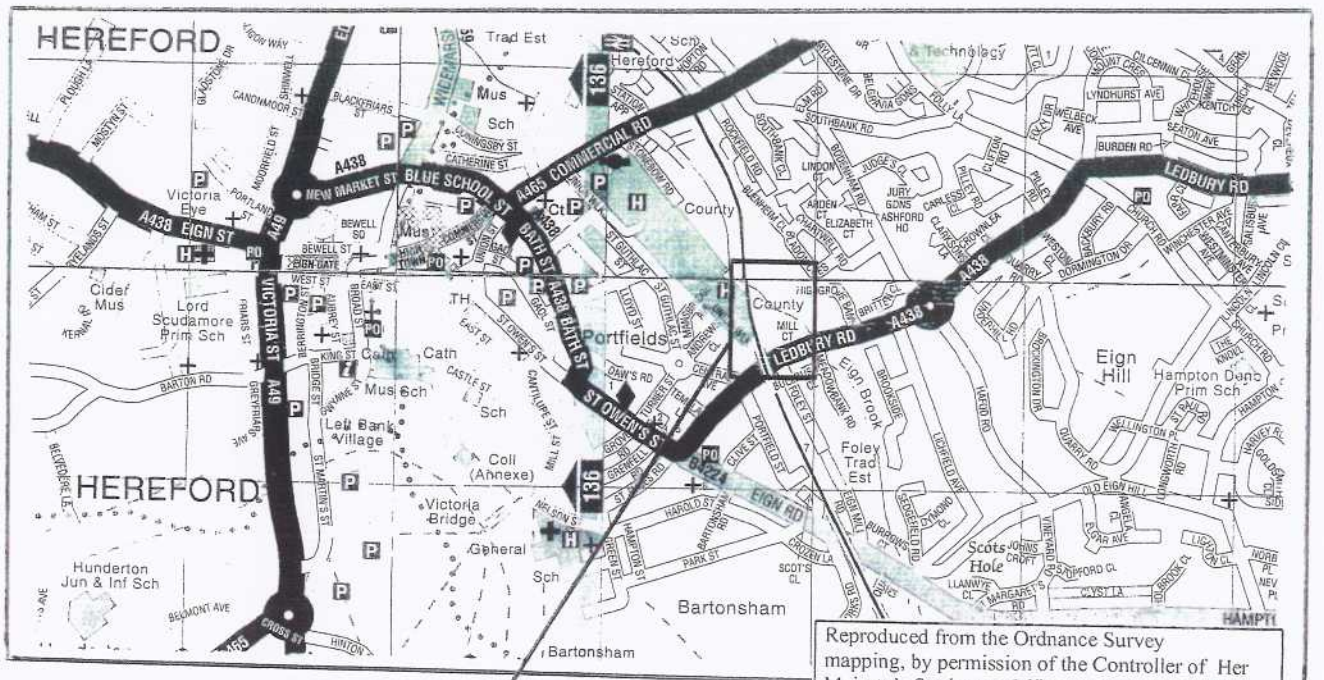
10. Site Archive

1. Document archive (notes from site note book, photo register and photographs)

The site archive is to be deposited with Hereford Museum, under Accession Number HFDMG 2005 – 169.

Figures

1. Location Plan
2. Curley's map of 1858
3. Extract from Ordnance Survey First Edition, 1886
4. Site Plan.



Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping, by permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office. Crown Copyright Archaeological Investigations Ltd. Unit 1, Premier Business Park, Westfields Trading Estate, Faraday Road, Hereford, HR4 9NZ. License No. AL100015338

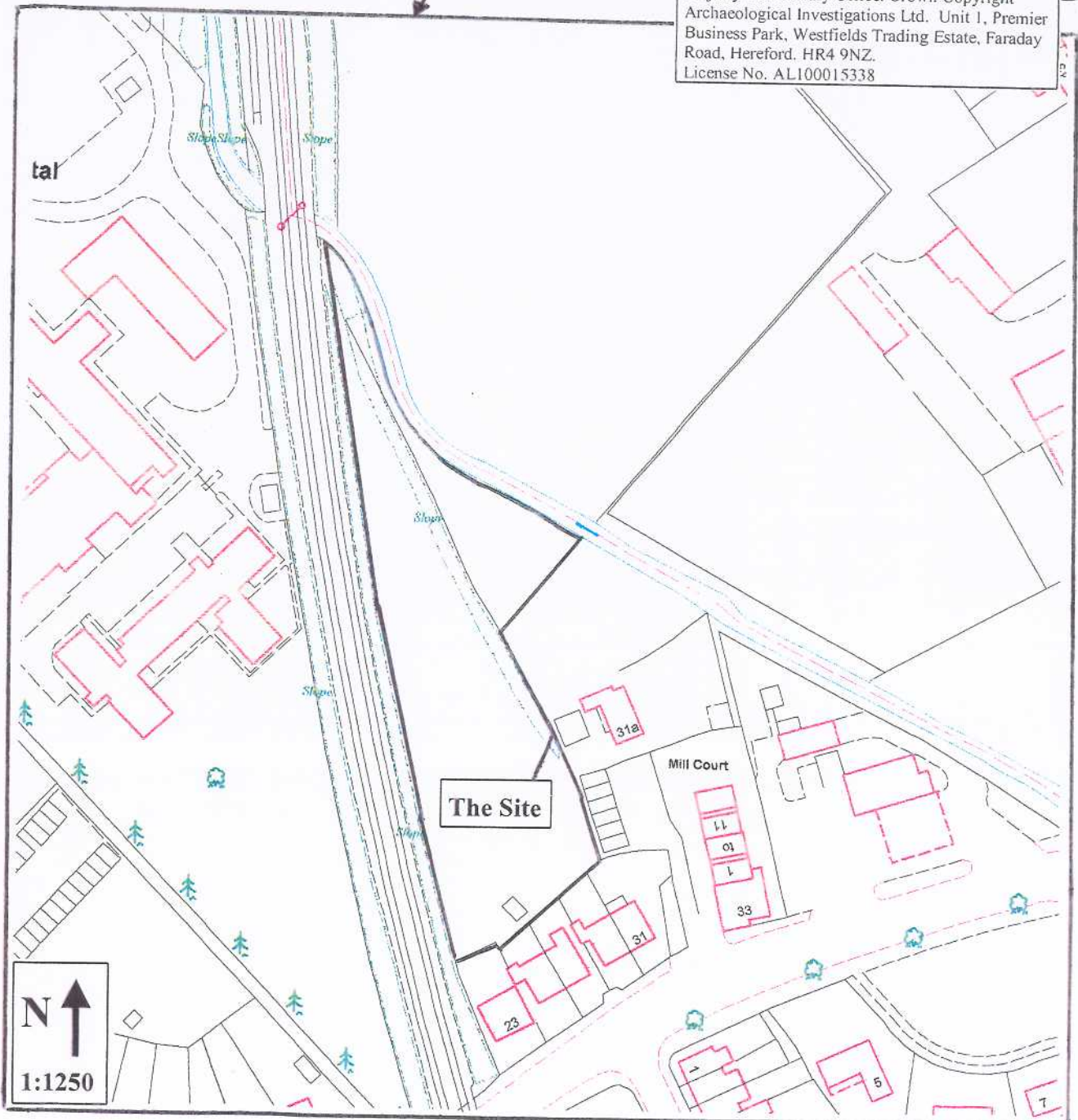


Figure 1. Site Location

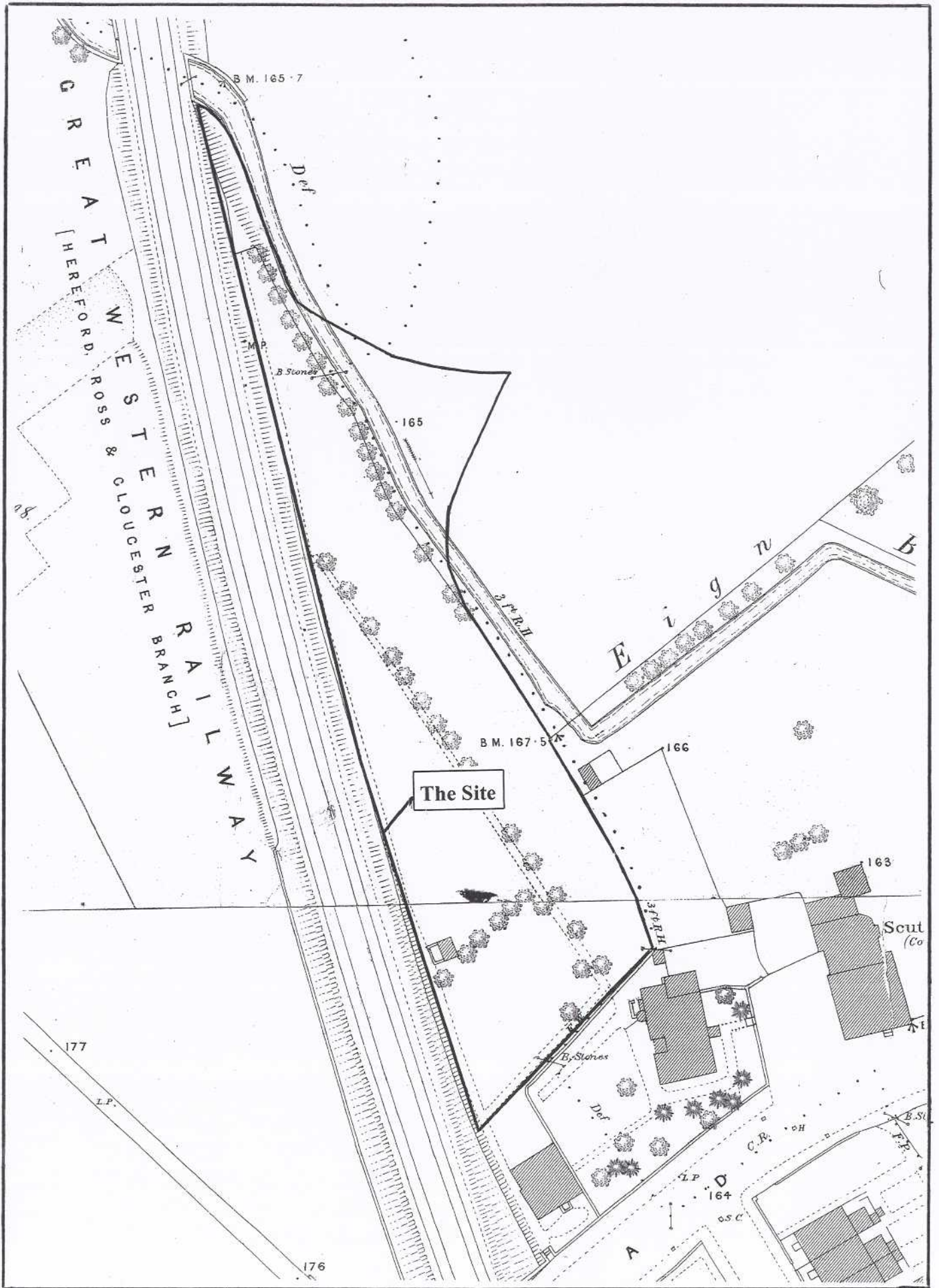


Figure 3. Ordnance Survey First Edition 1886

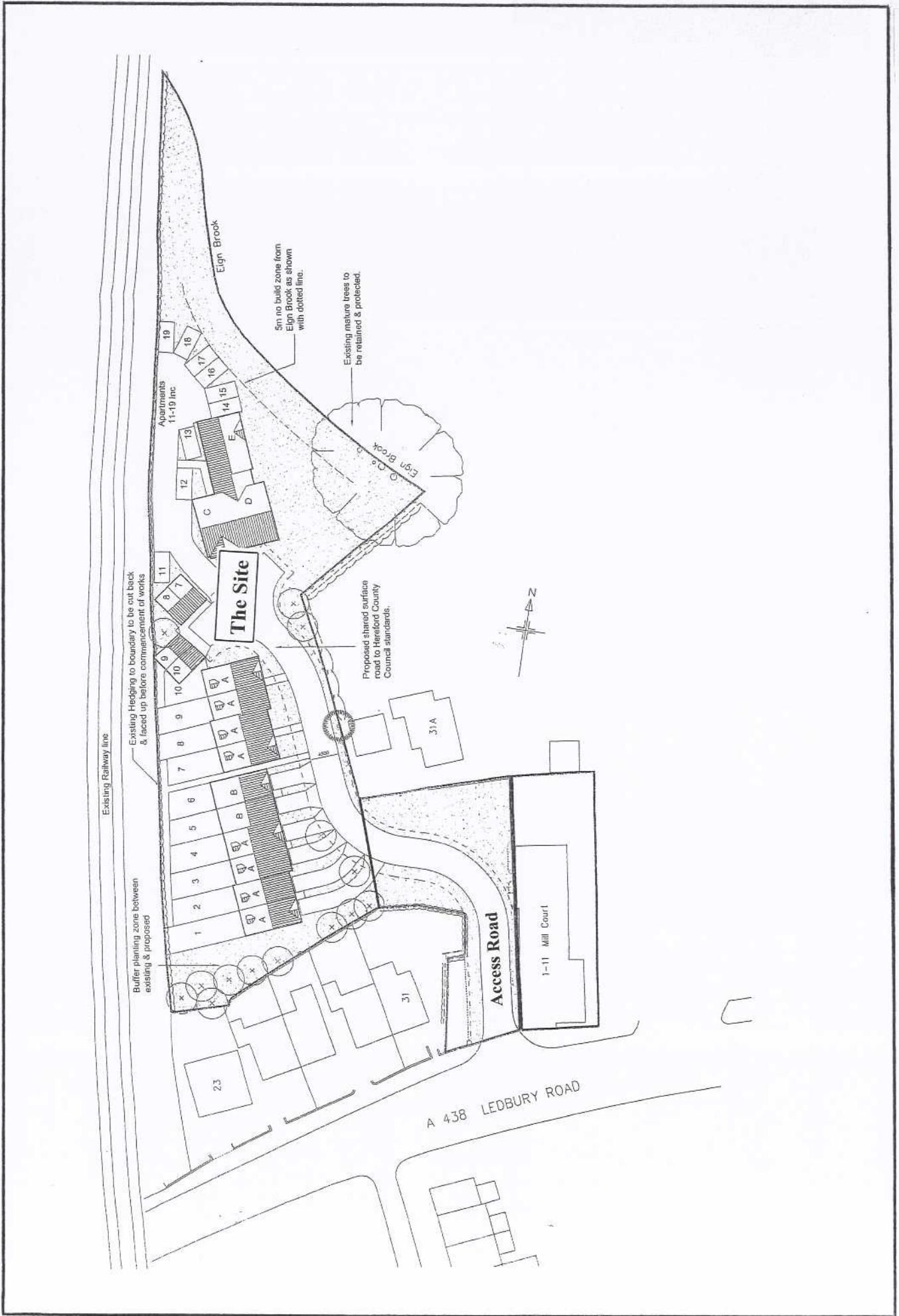


Figure 4. Site Plan
Scale 1:750